

# NAVY

T O D A Y

SAILOR OF  
THE YEAR 2021  
HMNZS MATATAUA  
IN ICELAND  
HOMEPORT APP  
WINS AWARD

# ILLEGAL FISHING TARGETED



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*“I’ve always had supportive people around me and I feel like any challenges have been achievable because of the support I’ve had.”*

– Leading Marine Technician (Propulsion)  
Jemma Hokai-Mataia, Sailor of the Year



**Navy Today** is the official magazine of the Royal New Zealand Navy. Established to inform, inspire and entertain serving and former members of the RNZN, their families, friends and the wider Navy Community.

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**Front cover:**  
A SH-2G(I) Seasprite lands onboard HMNZS WELLINGTON after conducting flight training and manoeuvres at sea.

**Photographer:**  
CPL Dillon Anderson



NZNavY [navy.mil.nz](http://navy.mil.nz)



NZDefenceForce



# Yours Aye

Chief of the Navy



Rear Admiral David Proctor  
Chief of Navy

As 2021 draws to a close, I am mindful it has been a year characterised by unique challenges and much sacrifice by sailors and their whānau. I am especially aware of the hardships faced by those overseas and the majority of the Navy families who reside in Auckland. I thank you for what you have done in response to the pandemic.

Balanced against the many challenges, 2021 has also been a year where we have seen our ships and sailors doing much mahi in and around New Zealand, in the Pacific, and wider around the globe, returning to places we have not operated in for a number of years. From Iceland, to the Middle East, to South East Asia, to Canada, with our South West Pacific neighbours and friends, and many other places in between, we have seen teams of sailors serving as outstanding ambassadors of Aotearoa.

And of course, the year is not finished and the tasking continues. As I type this Yours Aye article, HMNZS WELLINGTON is arriving on station in the Solomon Islands. At the request of the Solomon Islands' government, WELLINGTON has been deployed to provide support and a stability presence. This operation was not planned and I regret the short notice that will have upset the plans of her crew and whānau.

Below I repeat the message sent by the Maritime Component Commander, Commodore Garin Golding, RNZN, to the ship as she departed Devonport:

*As you make way towards the Solomon Islands I wanted to thank each and every one of you for the professional, timely and proactive approach I have witnessed in response to this emergent task. I acknowledge that you*

*have spent a relatively long period of time at sea in recent months where you have directly contributed to regional stability and security through tasks such as delivery of vaccines and the patrol of our partners' EEZs.*

*Your current task will, once again, demonstrate our commitment to regional peace and stability by reassuring the people of the Solomon Islands by being a visible presence. I know you will maintain this operational mindset by maintaining a readiness to respond to emergent tasking.*

*I also wish to acknowledge the support provided to you all by our friends and whānau at home. This is, more than ever, at the forefront of our minds at this time of year as we look towards the festive period. Your continued devotion to duty at this time is greatly appreciated and I wish you all every success for the coming weeks.*

Albeit targeted to WELLINGTON, I note the message could apply equally to all sailors who have been required to serve away from home this year. Your duty has helped others.

Regards 'duty and service', I am immensely proud of the security and military effect Te Tāua Moana o Aotearoa has provided in 2021. Notwithstanding the testing environment, the Royal New Zealand Navy has undoubtedly delivered its mission and "advanced New Zealand's interests from the sea". To you, my comrades, through your efforts and professionalism you have brought great credit to the Navy and delivered security and confidence to Kiwis during a time of fear and uncertainty. You have also contributed security and stability to our friends and

partners around the world, representing Aotearoa/New Zealand at the very highest level. Iwi Heramana you should be proud of what you have achieved; I thank you for your service.

As I look ahead to 2022, I see a year of new opportunities for ships and sailors to get to sea and deploy through the Pacific and wider. I see a year where we focus on strengthening our culture through the leadership and work of the Maritime Culture Guardianship Board, and that of every sailor, while also applying effort in our chosen specialist areas, and of course continue our necessary leadership training. And while COVID-19 will not go away, we are now in a very different position to where we were 12 months ago. I am committed to us developing ways whereby we can get back to using sport and team activities as a critical enabler to building crew cohesion and operational preparedness. We can manage the risk... risk is our job, it is what we do every day. Fun is also our job... it should be what we do every day. Let's get after it in 2022!!

As I reread the above, a whakatauki perhaps best captures my thinking;

***"he moana pukepuke e ekengia e te waka" – a choppy sea can be navigated.***

It has been a challenging year, however, through the professionalism of you, the people of Te Tāua Moana o Aotearoa, and the support of our families and wider iwi heramana, we have achieved much and are in a great position to advance confidently into 2022 – a year where I encourage a focus on ourselves as naval professionals, on regenerating our naval capability... and fun, lots of fun!

**He heramana ahau**

*“You learn a lot about yourself, and it challenges the way you think. I enjoy hearing different perspectives from others.”*

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## SAILOR OF THE YEAR

**LMT(P) Jemma Hokai-Mataia**

**Recruit Training Squadron Instructor –  
Fleet Personnel and Training**

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Leading Marine Technician (Propulsion) Jemma Hokai-Mataia enjoys both the challenges and diversity that come with being a sailor in the Royal New Zealand Navy. Now, as the Sailor of the Year for 2021, she'll be a voice for junior sailors and drive initiatives on their behalf.

She says the nomination and eventual award came out of the blue. "It's daunting, but I'm excited," she says.

Each year the award is given to a junior sailor who takes action to make a significant and positive contribution to the RNZN and New Zealand Defence Force, and who personifies the core values of the service.

Originally from Auckland, LMT(P) Hokai-Mataia joined the Navy in 2013, two weeks after her 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. "My dad told me to get a trade, to have something to fall back on. I saw the Navy as a good opportunity to provide a trade, and my family was very supportive".

"I didn't know much about marine engineering to begin with, but I thought the trade looked interesting when I read about it. I've really enjoyed my roles as a marine technician."

After Basic Common Training and her trade training she posted to HMNZS CANTERBURY and has been involved in Humanitarian and Disaster Aid Relief missions to the Pacific Islands. Posting to frigate HMNZS TE KAHA, she helped deliver the ship to Canada and did two postings in support of the ship's Frigate Systems Upgrade.

She is currently operating "out of branch" as a Recruit Training School (RTS) instructor for the Basic Common Trainees. Her Sailor of the Year citation praises her work ethic with the recruits, describing her as an "exceptional leader... a passionate, well-respected and influential instructor, composed at all times".

She says instructing is challenging, but in a good way. "You learn a lot about yourself, and it challenges the way you think. I enjoy hearing different perspectives from others."

Her biggest challenge in her career is similar to many others – COVID-19. "There was a lot of uncertainty around COVID when we were on ship. But we were looked after pretty well. I've always had supportive people around me and I feel like any challenges have been achievable because of the support I've had."



# UNITED STATES NAVY ARRIVES

There's nothing like a blustery northerly to welcome a foreign ship to Wellington.

Escorted by HMNZS TAUPO, Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS HOWARD arrived in Wellington on Friday 26 November, the first United States Navy vessel to visit New Zealand in five years.

HOWARD had already put in some time with the Royal New Zealand Navy near Great Barrier Island earlier in the week, conducting a two-hour replenishment-at-sea evolution with HMNZS AOTEAROA to top up her tanks. The two ships also practised Replenishment at Sea approaches and Officer of the Watch manoeuvres as training for both crews.

Of the entire crew, only her Commanding Officer, Commander Travis Montplaisir, had been to Wellington before. He told reporters

he had been talking up the port visit. "New Zealand is an amazing country and an amazing partner. I'm very excited to represent the United States Navy and the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet here and we are very much looking forward to it."

HOWARD's visit to Wellington is a routine port visit, typical of the movements of a US Navy ship in the Indo-Pacific. "It's a visible sign of commitment to our allies, partners and friends. We do our best work working alongside those allies, partners and friends and it enables us the opportunity to conduct interoperability events, like with refuelling with the New Zealand oiler just a couple of days ago."

He said AOTEAROA was a "fantastic" ship and the crew were exceptionally professional. "The event was absolutely seamless, and they were kind enough to give us some additional time afterwards to run practice runs. We were very honoured to have an opportunity to work with them."

HOWARD had at least 14 days' isolation at sea prior to her arrival in Wellington, and all crew had to have tested negative for COVID-19 before disembarking, as well as being fully vaccinated.

She is the same class of ship as USS SAMPSON, which came to the Royal New Zealand Navy's 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and International Naval Review in 2016. During that visit, SAMPSON became involved in the combined task force response to the Kaikōura earthquake.

Rear Admiral David Proctor, Chief of Navy, said the New Zealand Defence Force and the US Navy have a long history of engagement and working together. "The latest example of which was the interaction by HMNZS TE KAHA and HMNZS AOTEAROA with US Navy and other partners' ships off Guam." (See *Navy Today October*).

# STRONG MESSAGE TO ILLEGAL FISHERS

New Zealand's contribution to the fight against illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the Pacific is something the Royal New Zealand Navy takes seriously, even in pandemic times.





## Last month HMNZS WELLINGTON undertook a maritime resource border protection operation in the Western Pacific, running from 8 to 30 November.

The patrols, coordinated with the nations of Fiji, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Tokelau, were backed up with aerial surveillance using an embarked SH-2G(I) Seasprite helicopter and a P-3K2 Orion from No. 5 Squadron.

It's an important job in support of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), says Commander Joint Forces New Zealand Rear Admiral Jim Gilmour.



"The quotas and rules that the FFA have in place are there for a reason, ensuring the fisheries are managed effectively for future generations. The New Zealand Defence Force has the capability to assist the FFA and our Pacific neighbours to maintain and uphold those rules."

No boardings of foreign fishing vessels were carried out, to ensure a contactless mission, but the crew monitored and recorded activity. Twenty-four vessels from a range of countries were identified in the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), high seas corridors and high seas pockets, and were reported to the relevant authorities.

WELLINGTON's work included coordinated patrols with the Republic of Fiji Navy's Guardian-class patrol boat SAVENACA. Commanding Officer of WELLINGTON, Lieutenant Commander Philip Davies, said although there was no opportunity to interact with the crew at a personal level, the ships operating together provided the chance to practise communicating through various means and manoeuvring while in close proximity.

"These skills are important when we may be called on to assist in a response to a natural disaster. Coordinated patrols also demonstrate New Zealand's commitment to combatting illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing in the region."



Within days of returning from fisheries patrols, HMNZS WELLINGTON and her Ship's Company departed for the Solomon Islands on December 6, to support New Zealand's stability and security mission. She is part of the NZ government response to a formal request for assistance from the Solomon Islands Government following civil unrest in the country. NZ Army and NZ Police left earlier on Royal New Zealand Air Force aircraft.

"2021 has definitely showcased the 'workhorse' nature of a Royal New Zealand Navy Offshore Patrol Vessel, even in a pandemic," says LTCDR Davies. "We have delivered scientists to the Kermadec Islands, travelled thousands of nautical miles to deliver COVID-19 vaccines to the Pacific, and we've only just returned from fisheries patrol duty in the Western Pacific. This operation to the Solomon Islands, in support of the maintenance of peace and stability, is what our Ship's Company is trained, equipped and ready to do, and we are proud to be assisting."





# Defeating the Device

You can't deploy much further than Iceland. *Navy Today* catches up with the divers at Exercise Northern Challenge.



It's a first for the Royal New Zealand Navy – having a team at NATO's premier Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) exercise held in Iceland over a three-week period.

The annual Exercise Northern Challenge, hosted at the Icelandic Coast Guard facility in Keflavik, involves around 17 countries coming together to practise responding to real-life terrorist incidents involving improvised and military explosive devices.

Petty Officer Diver Luke Leadbetter, HMNZS MATATAUA, says the Navy have been sending one or two people each year in a directing staff role, but this time nine personnel, including a medic, logistics supply specialist and five operators, were able to attend as part of a Maritime Explosive Ordnance Disposal (MEOD) Team.

MATATAUA's Clearance Divers are the only trade in the New Zealand Defence Force that conducts maritime ordnance disposal.

"Those years we've been sending people as directing staff, that's allowed us to get a foot in the door. It's about half a decade of groundwork to get to this point."

The focus of the exercise is on the operator, aiming to sharpen their technical skills to effectively neutralise devices in scenarios that become increasingly complex and reflect real-world situations or challenges.

"The team leader will get the tasking, and the MEOD team will go out to the Area of Operation, do the work, while directing staff are there, assessing. Each evening, all the directing staff will go off, and critique what they saw. It's about constant evaluation and improvement." For this exercise PODR Leadbetter was deployed as one of the directing staff.

In other Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) exercises there are other elements at play, including networking with other non-EOD units and practising communication and integration. "But this is purely about the operator. This is real stuff. You've got IED's with technical switches, wi-fi armed, radio activated, all sorts of things. Every device they have to defeat, is a device that has been used in anger somewhere in the world. It's happened before. Our job is to solve the puzzle. If you have to do this for real, there's no space for making mistakes. But we have very good

processes, extremely well-thought-out Standard Operating Procedures."

Some tasks would involve land-based devices, but most were in the water. Actors were used as 'witnesses', people who had seen a device and were reporting it to authorities, and the MATATAUA MEOD operators would have to question them to try and get an idea of what they faced.

Able Diver Jamie Bell says the high-threat environment was a big learning curve, with other nations having more experience than New Zealand. "We got on with it. A lot of the NATO guys were happy to share their tips and tricks, which was quite cool. We'll take this back to New Zealand. It was great to be part of the first team from New Zealand to go."

PODR Leadbetter says New Zealand did well at Northern Challenge. "When the assessors sit down at night, going over what went well and what didn't, you get a gauge of where we stand in the world. New Zealand was getting really good feedback, and we can be really proud of where we stand. We know we could be a real asset for our allies. We've proven we can do this, and definitely left Iceland with our heads held high."

# AROUND THE FLEET

## SEA TRIALS CONCLUDED

### HMNZS TE MANA

In late November in Esquimalt, Canada, TE MANA's sea acceptance trials period concluded, marking yet another milestone in the Ship's Frigate Systems Upgrade story. Ahead are more sea training weeks, including a short passage to Seattle, as the ship and her company prepare for the passage to New Zealand early next year.



## WELCOME HOME

### HMNZS CANTERBURY

Sporting a very nice paint job is HMNZS CANTERBURY, captured by Navy photographer PO Chris Weissenborn on her arrival back in New Zealand on 23 November.

CANTERBURY has been in Singapore since August, undertaking her 15-year survey and docking maintenance. The work included new underwater hull coatings, removal and maintenance of the propeller shafts, rubber stocks and underwater valves. The side and stern ramps were removed for overhaul and the topsides and shell plating received a new paint scheme.

Ahead is a modernisation of the Embarked Forces' heads and bathrooms, and the replacement of the galley floor.





# MAINTENANCE TICKED OFF

## HMNZS MANAWANUI

HMNZS MANAWANUI eased out of the Calliope drydock on 16 November, following a three-month maintenance period. 2022 will be a busy year for MANAWANUI as she implements training at sea, including crane operations and Maritime Explosive Ordnance Disposal training.



# SYDNEY

## HMNZS TEKAHA

Snapped by Navy enthusiast Chris Sattler, HMNZS TEKAHA is looking sharp as she enters Sydney Harbour on 15 November. The Australian stop was near the end of an Operation Crucible deployment that included joining the UK Carrier Strike Group and Exercise Bersama Gold with the Five Power Defence Arrangements partners in Singapore.



# HOMEPOR

## NAVY MOBILE APP SAILS OFF WITH INNOVATION AWARD

*From left, Scott Sargentina, Public Affairs Manager - Navy; Grace Poole, Navy Information Manager; Russell Martin, Navy Portfolio Manager; CAPT Shane Arndell, Assistant Chief of Navy - Delivery.*



HomePort, the mobile app designed to give Royal New Zealand Navy personnel immediate access to the administrative information, processes and regulations they need to know for their role, has been awarded New Zealand Defence Force Innovation of the Year.

The app replicates the detailed information contained in the Navy Divisional Handbook and makes it available as a downloadable app that all personnel can access 24/7.

The idea for the app came from a workshop three years ago when problems over access to important administrative information were raised.

“The feedback that drove the project was that no sailor is going to carry around a weighty divisional handbook,” said Russell Martin, Navy’s Portfolio Manager. “Many junior sailors don’t have regular internal online access to find the information they need. But they all have mobile phones and they all use apps. This is where the HomePort app idea was born.”

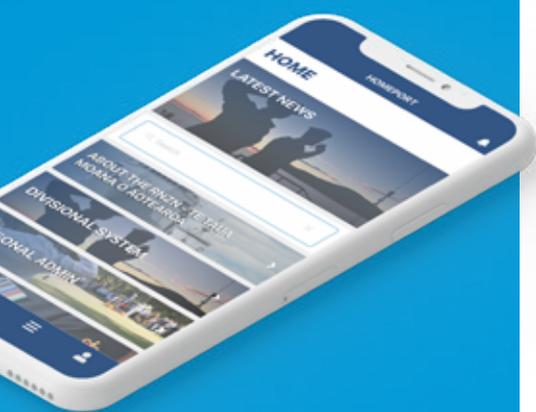
Now sailors can access almost everything they need to know about their Navy, when and where they need it. Resettlement assistance, leave queries, financial advice, urgent

contact details for base welfare support, career guidance and even how to tie a cap tally. HomePort also allows for important notifications to be transmitted direct to registered users, as well as displaying the Navy’s Facebook page.

Only six months after launch of HomePort, two-thirds of Navy personnel have downloaded the app and more are registering each week. Further enhancements to the app are planned to ensure that HomePort is constantly evolving and providing the functionality and value that personnel are looking for.

The Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral David Proctor, has been a key supporter of the HomePort project from the start as he wanted to remove the hurdle of sailors getting the information they needed. He was impressed that the idea for a Navy tool came from the Navy itself.

“Innovation doesn’t just come from international think tanks or idea incubators. In HomePort’s case, it has come from sailors who simply asked ‘can we do better?’ Three years later, and with a lot of effort from a lot of people, we can say ‘yes we can and yes we have’. Receiving the NZDF Innovation Award is testament to that.”



# DO YOU WANT TO MAKE A TANGIBLE CONTRIBUTION TO SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE NAVY? TAKE ACTION NOW TO GUIDE THE NEXT GENERATION OF TALENT INTO THE RANKS

Our future workforce needs help navigating the journey from civilian to sailor and Navy recruiters are at the forefront of our engagement. It's a rewarding job, adding tangible value with a real sense of purpose. And there is nothing like the feeling of pride in seeing your recruits graduate as sailors in the Royal New Zealand Navy.

You'll also directly influence your trade by raising awareness of the opportunities available and mentoring high quality recruits through the application process.

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*“If you ever wanted a role, where you can influence and your own personal experience is valued then recruiting is it. An awesome opportunity to showcase your learned skills and passions to the next generation.”*

LT Nathan Atkinson RNZN

## LIFE OF A NAVY RECRUITER

Your day will be focused around achieving two objectives;

- Attracting candidates
- Processing candidates

Day-to-day your role will vary based on which objective you are working on

Attracting candidates includes:

- Conducting experience events on bases, including Defence Careers Experiences and Defence Experience Days;
  - Visiting local high schools;
  - Attending careers expos and other engagement events;
  - Navy trade-specific engagement;
  - Career advice and guidance;
  - Anything that involves interacting with the public.
- Processing candidates includes:
- Supervising recruit fitness testing;
  - Conducting one-on-one interviews with candidates;
  - Completing reports and documentation;
  - Assisting future sailors through the application journey;
  - Providing one-on-one support to recruits for your trade.

## WHY SHOULD I APPLY?

The perks:

- High degree of trust and freedom to achieve your objectives
- Flexible work schedule
- See tangible results for your efforts
- Opportunities to engage with the NZ public outside of main centres
- Working in a tri-service environment

The challenges:

- Will need to work outside of traditional work hours (some evenings and weekends) however,
- You will accrue time in lieu
- Fair amount of travel
- You'll be provided with a work phone, laptop and vehicle and have a chance to see the country!



## HOW DO I APPLY?

**Required rank:** PO or CPO

**Application Process:** Talk to your career manager. Potential recruiters are interviewed by our staff to determine their suitability. You will be required to work autonomously, handle private information discreetly, and engage with young people in schools and the community.

**For enquiries into becoming a recruiter, please email:**

W/O Carol Voshaar, Recruiting Organisation Warrant Officer:  
carol.voshaar@nzdf.mil.nz

For those interested in upcoming recruiting events, please email your respective Regional Recruiting Officer:

**Northern:**  
defencecareersnorthern@nzdf.mil.nz

**Central:**  
defencecareerscentral@nzdf.mil.nz

**Southern:**  
defencecareerssouth@nzdf.mil.nz

## NOT KEEN TO JUMP IN FULL TIME?

You can represent your trade in your local community by signing up to the Recruiting Ambassador Programme ([link located at the bottom of the ILP Homepage](#)).



## SAILOR AWARDED FOR EFFORTS TOWARDS INCLUSIVENESS

Commander Trevor Leslie has been awarded the NZDF's Peter Rule Inclusion Award for 2021.

The annual award recognises New Zealand Defence Force personnel who have made a positive contribution to diversity and inclusion in the workplace, and CDR Leslie as Head of Trade for the Royal New Zealand Navy Dive Team impressed the judges with his commitment to improving the culture and gender diversity amongst the RNZN Diving Trade.

As Head of Trade for the Navy Divers, CDR Leslie instigated a programme for divers built around Te Ao Māori that aims to grow a positive, inclusive and high performing culture for divers.

One that values whanaungatanga (the building of relationships), ako (learning) and growing Te Reo Māori capability and connection through creating diving-specific haka, waiata and karakia.

CDR Leslie has also made efforts to increase gender diversity within the Navy divers. He championed a mentoring programme for women interested in military diving, facilitated the commissioning of an academic study to support female recruitment and selection strategies, established diving representation on the Gender Advisory Board, and initiated projects aimed at delivering more gender-appropriate diving equipment and systems utilising technology and lightweight composite solutions.

His leadership and advocacy is already achieving results with the last RNZN Defence Diver Course (graduating in June 2021) passing three female students, which was 50 per cent of the course. Through his mentorship

programme the Navy has received several expressions of interest from women across the NZDF wanting to undertake the next professional diver transfer course.

CDR Leslie has been in the Navy since 1986, qualifying as a Navy Diver soon after joining. Since then, diving, explosive ordnance disposal and mine clearance has been the bulk of his Navy career.

CDR Leslie is pleased to accept the award, but says the success is not his own.

“While I may have set the tone and conditions for a positive diversity and inclusion culture, the success can be attributed to all the personnel within the RNZN Diving Trade who have fully embraced the programmes and initiatives and turned them into positive action.”

The award honours a pilot whose distinguished 20-year career was ended in 1975 because of his sexuality.

## MILESTONE TICKED FOR NAVY PILOT



There's pride, there's excitement and there's an entire future to look forward to. But most of all, it's a massive relief to graduate, says our newest Navy pilot.

Ensign Andre Debenham, 22, from Christchurch, was awarded his pilot's brevet at the graduation of the 20/01 'Wings' Course at Ohakea last month. He was among eight pilots graduating, including five Air Force and two Royal Australian Navy pilots, from the Flying Training Wing at Ohakea.

"It was a long 18 months," says ENS Debenham, "and it's a massive relief at the end of it. It was definitely one of the hardest things I've ever done – although I feel like anything I do from now is probably going to be the hardest thing I've done."

He's earned his brevet on the T-6C Texan II fixed-wing trainer, operated by No. 14 Squadron. The ultimate destination for a Navy pilot is the Seasprite SH-2G(I) helicopter, operated by No. 6 Squadron in Whenuapai, so his next step is the six-month conversion course to rotary flight, on the Air Force's A109.

ENS Debenham says he has always aspired to be a military pilot since he was young, when his late grandfather took him to air shows at the now-retired Wigram Air Force Base. He studied engineering at the University of Canterbury in 2018 before being accepted as a pilot.

"I applied for both Navy and Air Force. I was really keen to fly helicopters and I was open to either option. I got the job offer from the Navy and thought, let's go."

Prior to the 'Wings' course, ENS Debenham undertook the 22-week Junior Officer Common Training (JOCT) course in Auckland. "I did JOCT 19/02, just before the lockdowns. It was a real eye-opener into Navy culture and a great experience to be trained in Navy leadership."

He says the 'Wings' course is tough.

"You're going to struggle at some point – we all struggled at different bits, but we all had each other's backs, and we helped out as much as possible. Camaraderie is really strong."

His training has to take a short pause as he takes his turn with Operation Protect, the NZDF's support to the Managed Isolation Facilities in New Zealand. He's now doing a six-week rotation as a Managed Isolation Facility assistant at the M Social hotel in Auckland.

"There's a while to go, but I'm looking forward to getting out on operations with No. 6 Squadron. It will be really cool."

If he was to give a pep talk at his old school, Cashmere High, he would tell people it's challenging. "You might think, you aren't good enough. But if you want it enough, do your research and give it 100 per cent. It's worked for me so far."



# OUR PEOPLE



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1. Sailors promoted and awarded aboard HMNZS TE MANA. From left, LSCS Tema Viliamu (promoted); ACSS Renee Lawton (awarded her first Good Conduct Badge); LSCS William Smart (awarded his third GCB); LCSS Epoki Sakisi (awarded his second GCB).

2. SLT Shannen McErlain receives a Commanding Officer's commendation from CDR Alastair Howieson, HMNZS WAKEFIELD.

3. LT Maddy Win, HMNZS WELLINGTON's Engineering Officer, catches up on paperwork during Operation Calypso.

4. RADM David Proctor, Chief of Navy, with the Commanding Officer of visiting US Navy destroyer USS HOWARD, CDR Travis Montplaisir.

5. From left, ACWS Briar Miller (Scott Base Comms Op), LMED Max Neustroski (Scott Base Comms Op) and ALSS Jana Ebbett (McMurdo Logistics General Assistant), deployed to Scott Base as part of Operation Antarctica.

6. It's early days for the Movember moustache for trainee OMED Matthew Shore, BCT 21/2.

7. MID Aaron Barron puts in the hard work for Bellona Division during JOCT 21/2's Efficiency Cup trial.

8. A/CDRE Shane Arndell, Deputy Chief of Navy, stands with AM Kevin Short (right), Chief of Defence Force, following A/CDRE Arndell's promotion.

9. LSTD Daniel Hill sets the table in the wardroom of HMNZS WELLINGTON during their Operation Calypso mission.

10. JOCT 21/2's Bellona and Royalist Divisions get ready to go head-to-head for the honour of the Efficiency Cup.

11. HMNZS TE KAHA's Ship's Company form a 'gumboot' on the flight deck in support of Gumboot Friday, a charitable trust that helps support young New Zealanders with depression. The crew raised \$2,429.14, topped up by the Ship's Welfare Committee to reach \$6,000 donated.

12. CPOLSS Ben Owens, HMNZS TE MANA, receives a Commanding Officer's commendation from CDR Mike Peebles for "ongoing outstanding work" during the ship's Frigate Systems Upgrade.

13. POSCS Thomas Katu entertains his shipmates in his messdeck in HMNZS WELLINGTON.

# CROSSING THE LINE



When a Navy vessel crosses the Equator, it can prompt a 'Crossing the Line' ceremony, a lively Navy initiation not often photographed. LWT Isaac Inwood-Reardon gives us an insight during HMNZS TE KAHA's deployment in South East Asia.





The honour of crossing the equator, and being inducted into the realm of King Neptune and forever labelled a trusty 'Shellback', is not given lightly to 'Tadpoles' – those who have never had the honour.

And so, on the morning HMNZS TE KAHA crossed the Equator during her Operation Crucible deployment, King Neptune – and his assistant, Davy Jones – held court in his throne on the flight deck while his 'Bears' rounded up the Tadpoles summoned to appear and be initiated.

Usually the Tadpoles are facing a serious charge – presuming to cross the line without seeking the consent of King Neptune. The speeches are grandiose, the costumes and props are elaborate, and the rituals of the lively and rough ceremony are steeped in history. The Tadpoles are expected to be reluctantly hauled before the court, endure various indignities such as being covered in muck, hosed down and made to lie prostate before the King, before being dunked in salt water – the final baptism into the Ancient Order of the Deep.

The event is designed as a break in routine and a hilarious morning of enjoyment and levity.

A Golden Shellback is a sailor who has crossed the equator where it intersects with the International Date Line in the Pacific Ocean. Last year the Ship's Company of HMNZS MANAWANUI earned the honour during their deployment to Rim of the Pacific Exercise in Hawaii. Even rarer is an Emerald Shellback, a sailor who crossed the equator at the Prime Meridian in the Gulf of Guinea near west Africa.

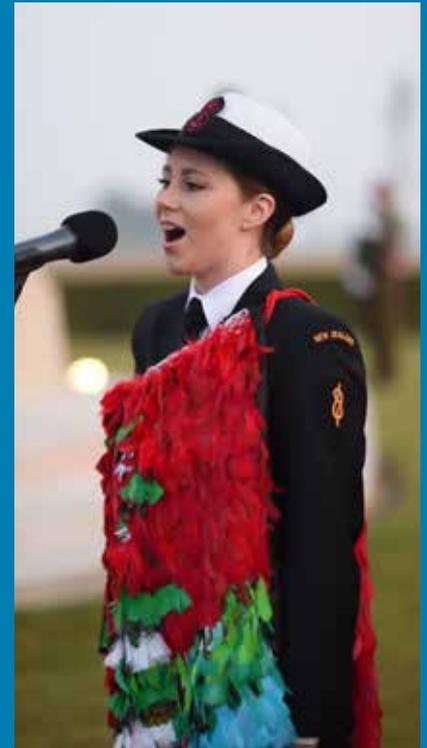
LWT Inwood-Reardon, already initiated to the Order of Shellbacks, was able to document the event, taking over 400 photographs.

"Crossing the line ceremonies are not usually documented, and when they are, there are very few photos of the event taken or released. So to have this many photos vetted and released to the Ship's Company is not common. The photos were well received!"



# ‘WELLNESS’ SUPPORTER NAMED DEFENCE VOLUNTEER OF THE YEAR

An Auckland naval reservist who developed a charity dedicated to the trauma of first responders has been chosen as the New Zealand Defence Force Volunteer of the Year.



Able Musician Rebecca Nelson, who joined the Royal New Zealand Navy Volunteer Reserve as a part-time vocalist in 2014, has created Te Kiwi Māia (The Courageous Kiwi).

Its objective is to provide rehabilitation, recovery and respite to New Zealand Defence Force personnel and first responders, who – as a result of their role in safeguarding and caring for New Zealanders – have physical or psychological injuries.

AMUS Nelson has a close friend who suffered from depression after being medically discharged from the Royal Marines due to a back injury. Her friend's journey to recovery involved the British charitable organisation Help for Heroes, which has inspired AMUS Nelson to create a similar charity in New Zealand.

Over two years AMUS Nelson has built relationships and connections within the first responder community, resulting in the first “Wellness Workshop” last year. The charity's goal is to have their own facility where people in need of their services can take time to recover.

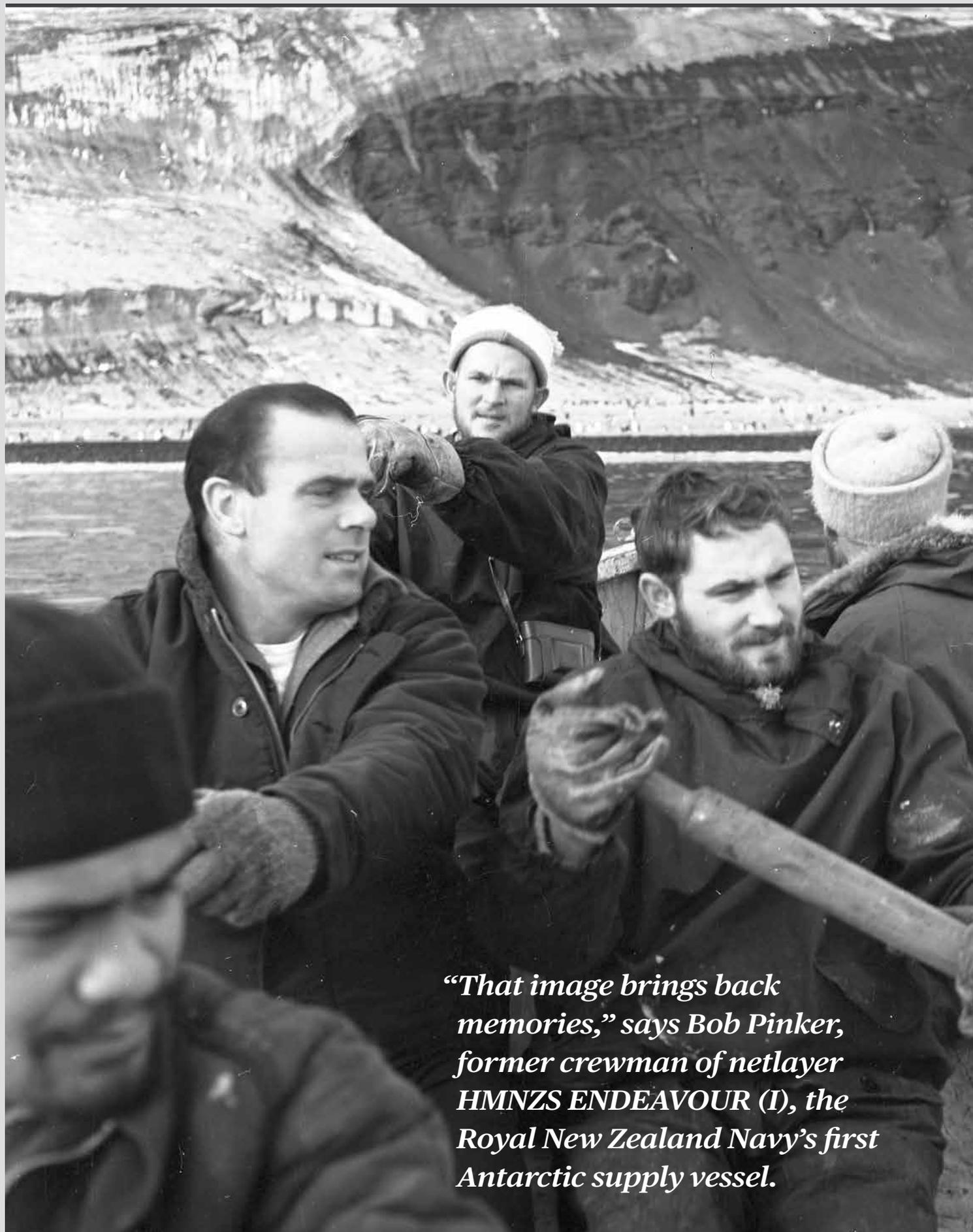
A recent boost for the charity came from former All Black Sir Buck Shelford, competing in the TV programme *Celebrity Treasure Island*. Shelford, a former Navy sailor, pledged his winnings from the show to Te Kiwi Māia.

AMUS Nelson, who is attached to Reserve Unit HMNZS NGAPONA, says she still hasn't taken in the news of winning the NZDF award properly. “You don't always get thanked as a volunteer, so it's wonderful to be acknowledged.” She is aware of how many people – Defence Force, veterans and first responders – would potentially have need of the charity; it's something she carries with her as she works.

Her other charity work this year included being a committee member at the Devonport RSA, a Poppy Appeal ambassador, and the ongoing restoration of over 130 headstones of service personnel at the O'Neill's Point Cemetery in Devonport – initially on her own, but now with support from the Navy and Sea Cadets. In her classical singing profession, she has recorded three albums, performed the national anthem at All Black matches and has frequently sung for residents at retirement villages.

“I'm still singing at events, but that's currently on hold right now because of COVID. The Te Kiwi Māia work is getting so much bigger, and there's so many people involved. There's an amazing advisory board, helping with the growth and decision-making, and we wouldn't be able to do what we do without them. I don't see the success of Te Kiwi Māia as a goal in its own right – it's about the mutual success of all organisations in ensuring the wellbeing of all those who put themselves at risk for other New Zealanders.”

She isn't able to share future plans at present, but says 2022 will be a “huge” year for Te Kiwi Māia.



*“That image brings back memories,” says Bob Pinker, former crewman of netlayer HMNZS ENDEAVOUR (I), the Royal New Zealand Navy’s first Antarctic supply vessel.*

*When HMNZS AOTEAROA heads to Antarctica next year, it will be the first visit and resupply to McMurdo by an RNZN ship in over fifty years. Editor Andrew Bonallack talks to former crewmen about the first missions to Antarctica in the late fifties.*

He's looking at the image opposite, taken in the beginning of 1958 near Cape Evans, Antarctica. "In the bow, facing aft, is Able Seaman EA 'Tag' Wilson, while on the left rowing is Chief Joiner E Voison." He recognizes Able Seaman Brian 'Brushes' Nolan on the oars on the right, notable for being the youngest RNZN seaman to serve in the Korean War at age 16. The closest person to the camera is Able Seaman Ray Tito. A year earlier, A/B Tito had hoisted the flag at the new Scott Base, built to support New Zealand's participation in the Commonwealth Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1957-1958, the overland crossing of the continent by British explorer Vivian Fuchs with Sir Edmund Hillary in support.



In the picture, the crew are on their way to Scott's Hutt at Cape Evans to screw a brass plaque to the hut. "I'm in the boat somewhere. I had a special drill the Navy gave me, and I wouldn't lend it to Voison."

This was during EM1 Pinker's second trip to Antarctica, on board ENDEAVOUR I, also the ship's second mission to the continent (1957/58). The wooden-hulled ship had been purchased and commissioned to transport and support the Expedition and a year earlier (1956/57) had transported Sir Edmund Hillary and his team, Hillary's Massey tractors, two aircraft, dog teams and the

components for Scott Base, which the ENDEAVOUR crew helped build. In the 1957/58 season, Hillary used the tractors to create supply depots between Scott Base and the Pole for Fuchs' transcontinental journey from the opposite side of Antarctica (Hillary famously decided to continue on and reach the Pole before Fuchs).

Mr Pinker ultimately did nine trips to Antarctica in his Navy career. In 1956 he remembers boarding ENDEAVOUR in Bluff in December, with 18 dogs and a load of mutton for dog food. He says ENDEAVOUR had stopped at Wellington, Lyttelton, Dunedin, apparently fundraising for the Expedition on the way down from Devonport. "We had about 50 fruitcakes donated from a local high school, and schoolgirls were knitting us gloves and scarves to take with us." Mr Pinker had obtained a 16mm projection licence, in order for him to show movies on the trip down.

"We didn't celebrate Christmas until 29 December, when the ship stopped in the ice. I've got a picture of Hillary sitting on the ice next to the ship eating Christmas dinner."

He remarks that the White Ensign they sailed under was a different one than today (the Navy Ensign changed from the Royal Navy White Ensign to the New Zealand version in 1968). "I remember the crow's nest often was in a ball of strange colours they called St Elmo's Fire."

His nine trips including missions in the second HMNZS ENDEAVOUR, the former USS NAMAKAGON (AOG-53) that he helped deliver from the United States to New Zealand in 1962. He says in January 1957 the USS NESPELEN (AOG-55), a sister ship to the NAMAKAGON, berthed alongside them in McMurdo Sound,



and he reckons that inspired the purchase.

"ENDEAVOUR I was very comfortable," he says. "She was a diesel electric ship and a wooden ship, she wasn't cold like a steel ship. She made very little water, and the galley got most of it. There's no water in Antarctica. It took a gallon of diesel to make a gallon of water. But we had plenty of beer - Leopard lager."

Mr Pinker had received training in diesel electric engines in Australia, at a time when the usual propulsion was steam turbine. It made him valuable for both ENDEAVOUR I and II.

There are a variety of stories of clashes between Sir Edmund and the ship's Commanding Officer, Captain Harry Kirkwood RN. "I remember Hillary wanted to send messages out without the Captain's approval and the Captain said, there's only one captain on this ship. Get down below."

This acrimony is something Ann Nolan, Brian's widow, remembers from her husband's stories.

*Above: HMNZS ENDEAVOUR I stops for Christmas. Sir Edmund Hillary is in the dark blue on the left eating Christmas lunch. Photo supplied by Bob Pinker.*

# H M N Z S E N D E A V O U R I



“What Captain Kirkwood said was law,” says Mrs Nolan. “He was a cleanliness fanatic which was a good thing on a ship but that is where Hillary and Kirkwood’s friendship came to grief. Hillary was not used to such a regime of cleanliness and Kirkwood’s rules were “my ship, my rules, like it or leave” and everyone accepted that except Hillary.

“Captain Kirkwood loved the ship as he had captained it when it belonged to the Falklands Dependency and called the JOHN BISCOE. He was a real English gentleman and the crew referred to him as “my father”. He was such a nice man and kept in touch with Brian and I after he retired in England. He used to say that he would sail anywhere in the world on that ship.”

A classmate of Mr Pinker’s, LME Mervyn Tyree, was also among the delivery crew for ENDEAVOUR II, and thinks he and Bob are the only two of that crew left alive. He also notes they are the only two people left who have stood on the decks on all three ENDEAVOURS, thanks to the pair being invited to the decommissioning of fleet tanker ENDEAVOUR III (which never went to Antarctica) in 2017.

He remembers ‘bad years’ when the ice was so bad the ships couldn’t get into McMurdo. “Everything would have to be offloaded, to go into sledges towed by tractors. It could be 11 miles.” The second ENDEAVOUR was a huge improvement, he says, but it wasn’t really designed for the ice. “After one mission, you could see the ice had pushed in the hull against the ribs, all the way along.”

Another former sailor, Geoffrey Bourke, was a junior watchkeeper in ENDEAVOUR I for the 1958/59 mission to Antarctica. He served in the Navy from 1951 to 1985, finishing as a Commander. He’s not so sure the ship was that comfortable. “We had bunks, but the sailors used to take their hammocks because it was more comfortable. She had a round bottom and would roll.”

*From top: HMNZS ENDEAVOUR in Antarctica; Ice building up on ENDEAVOUR I (1958); Sled dogs on the deck of ENDEAVOUR I, 1958.*

## H M N Z S E N D E A V O U R I



The crew would be acclimatised to the cold by the time they got to McMurdo. "The ship wasn't air-conditioned or any nonsense like that. It could be beautiful outside if the wind wasn't blowing. You could be wearing a pair of shorts with heavy boots and socks, playing soccer. The penguins would come up to you, because they hadn't seen a human before."

When they reached McMurdo, they would come alongside the ice. "The trucks would come alongside, the stores people would unload all the stuff, and the trucks would drive back to McMurdo. It was a chain gang of trucks, going around and around until the ship left."

Two things struck him about the continent. "Mt Erebus, which looked like a hill but was higher than Mt Cook. And there's nothing red. It takes a while for you to notice that. That's why an orange snowcat stands out for miles and miles."

ENDEAVOUR paid off on 7 November 1961 and was sold to Shaw Steam Ship Co. in Canada the following year. Renamed ARCTIC ENDEAVOUR, she was used for sealing in the Arctic until she sank at her moorings in November 1982 and was broken up in 1983. ENDEAVOUR II decommissioned in 1971.

*From top: The crew photograph Emperor penguins (1958); British explorer Vivian Fuchs' Tucker 6.5-tonne Sno-cats are loaded onto ENDEAVOUR I, not long after the successful overland crossing of Antarctica (completed 2 March 1958).*





## 80 YEARS AGO New Zealand's worst naval tragedy

On the morning of 19 December 1941, Royal Navy cruiser HMS NEPTUNE struck four enemy mines and sank off Libya. Seven hundred and sixty four men lost their lives, including 150 New Zealanders.

Colleen Appleton, the niece of Able Seaman Norman Cook RNZNVR, is a regular attendee of the Naval Memorial Service for HMS NEPTUNE at Devonport Naval Base.

"My uncle Norman Cook served with the RNZNVR in Wellington, leaving New Zealand on 2 May 1940 on the troopship RMS AQUITANIA to Scotland, leaving behind his pregnant wife Mollie who gave birth to his son William Henry who was born on 19 June 1940 – six weeks after Norman sailed from NZ."

In early 1941, New Zealand answered the British Admiralty's call for more sailors. NEPTUNE was approved as a New Zealand-crewed vessel, in the manner of HM Ships ACHILLES and LEANDER, but she was reassigned to the 7<sup>th</sup> Cruiser Squadron in the Mediterranean, attached to Force K in Malta.

Thirty kilometres off Tripoli, Force K sailed into an uncharted deep-water minefield. HMS NEPTUNE struck three mines and sank within minutes of striking the fourth.

AS Cook was 23 years old.





## MEDALLIC RECOGNITION FOR SOUTH EAST ASIA

Ex-Navy personnel who undertook service in defence of South East Asia from February 1959 to January 1974 can now benefit from an eligibility extension for the New Zealand Operational Service Medal (NZOSM).

The NZOSM was instituted in 2002, for operational service since the end of the Second World War.

From 1959, the New Zealand Defence Force committed an infantry battalion, one or two RNZAF squadrons and one or more RNZN frigates or cruisers in Malaya/Malaysia or Singapore as part of the Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve (FESR) and New Zealand's 'Forward Defence' policy – in effect a strategy to keep communism as far from New Zealand as possible. The major focus was the threat of limited war with China that would impact on South East Asia. RNZN ships spent about six to nine months at a time in a wide range of locations in South East Asia, while homeported at Sembawang Naval Base in Singapore.

There was also an ongoing communist terrorist insurgency in Malaysia, a fraught relationship with Indonesia which resulted in conflict, and war in Vietnam.

In 1971 the FESR was scaled down to the Australia New Zealand United Kingdom Force (ANZUK), which ran until 31 January 1974 and included a frigate deployed to South East Asia for periods of three to six months.

ANZUK was then replaced by New Zealand Force South East Asia (NZFORSEA) from 31 January 1974, with forces based in South East Asia but in a non-operational role. From early 1975, there was no longer a continuous RNZN warship presence in South East Asia. NZFORSEA was based in Singapore until its withdrawal in 1989.

Following a review this year, Minister of Defence Peeni Henare says the extended eligibility “recognises the valuable contribution to the defence of South East Asia by veterans who served in Malaysia and Singapore, but were previously excluded as they were not required to deploy into combat theatres, such as Borneo or Vietnam”.

An eligible veteran must have been posted or attached for seven or more days with FESR, ANZUK or associated units during the dates specified. Service in NZFORSEA (1974-89) remains ineligible under the reviewed criteria.

It is estimated around 4,500 veterans will be able to apply.

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**For an application form, go to [www.nzdf.mil.nz/pam](http://www.nzdf.mil.nz/pam)**



# Our Rūnanga

## Te Taua Moana Marae

*Ko Uika te maunga,  
Ko Ngā awa e rua te awa,  
Ko Te Kurae a Tura te whenua,  
Ko Te Taua Moana te Marae,  
Ko Iwi Heramana te iwi*

*North Head is the mountain,  
Ngā Awa e rua is the sacred river;  
The headlands of Tura is the  
sacred land,*

*Te Taua Moana marae is the  
RNZN spiritual refuge,  
The sailors are the people*

### **Te Rūnanga o Te Taua Moana Marae (assembly or council)**

The role of Te Rūnanga is to act as a servant and representative of Iwi Hēramana for promoting the spiritual, cultural, social and economic development of the Iwi.

Te Rūnanga is the guardian (kaitiaki) of the Navy's tikanga. Te Rūnanga will monitor tikanga at Te Taua Moana Marae and official Navy activities, and will ensure that the tikanga of Te Taua Moana o Aotearoa is followed at all times.

### **Elected Rūnanga Members**

#### **CO-CHAIR**

**Commodore Melissa Ross**

CDRE Ross, of Ngāpuhi descent, is the first woman in New Zealand naval history to achieve Commodore rank and the first woman to be posted as Deputy Chief of Navy.

She grew up in Kawerau and trained in mechanical engineering at Christchurch Polytechnic, while also representing New Zealand in volleyball. Two years in, her sister-in-law serving in the Navy, suggested the Navy as a career. She joined the Navy in 1993 as a Marine Engineer Officer and was one of the first women to serve in frigates.

Her promotion to Commodore took place at Te Taua Moana marae in December 2019.

This month she has taken up a six-month appointment as Joint Head of Managed Isolation and Quarantine, taking over from Brigadier Rose King.

#### **CO-CHAIR**

**Lieutenant Commander Josh Aperahama (elected)**

*Ki Rangi, Ki Papa, Ki uta, ki tai,  
Ka eke ki nga waka o te motu,  
Ko Te Iwi Heramana e ara e!*

*He uri tenei o nga waka Takitimu raua ko  
Ngatokimatawhaorua, Tipu ake au i te  
papakainga o Ahuriri, engari ka au ki te  
mana whenua o Heretaunga, ki Omaha.*

*17 nga tau ahua i roto i te Taua Moana,  
i timata au he kaupukaha pukenga.  
A, i huri ahau hei opiha kaupukaha.*

*I taku wa i roto i te weruweru Taua  
Moana, eke ahau ki nga waka Kahu,  
ratou ko Manawanui, Te Kaha,  
Canterbury, Te Mana, Otago.*

*I whakawatea e au te Taua Moana i te  
timatanga o tenei tau, eke ai ki te taumata  
LTCDR. Kua piria tenei ki Ngapona hei  
whakaputanga.*

*He kaimahi ahua o Babcock i te herenga  
waka o Tamaki inaianei, Ko taku hianga  
hei tautoko i te iwi heramana i roto i te  
runanga, ko taku moemoea kia kitea he  
Aotearoa e mawhitiwhiti ana nga ao e rua,  
nga reo e rua, hei tautoko tenei kaupapa,  
kei te timata ahau hei kaiarahi mo  
te hinonga tarai waka taua mo te iwi  
heramana, mo Aotearoa.*

*Kia koutou eke nagaru ai; tu maia ma  
runga waka, wehikore ma runga papa  
pounamu o Tangaroa.*

To our creators, Rangi and Papatuanuku,  
To the land and sea,  
We board our waka from across the  
nation, Arise, Te Iwi Heramana!!

I am a descendant of the Takitimu and  
Ngatokimatawhaorua waka and grew  
up in Napier with whakapapa to Omaha  
Marae in Hastings.

After 17 years in the Navy, joining as a  
Marine Technician, I left earlier this  
year as an Engineering Officer in the  
rank of LTCDR.

During that time I served in  
HMNZ Ships KAHU, MANAWANUI,  
TE KAHA, CANTERBURY, TE MANA,  
and OTAGO.

Today, I am a Reservist with HMNZS  
NGAPONA and work for Babcock at the  
Devonport Naval Base as the Fleet and  
Asset Program Manager.

My desire is to support the rūnanga and  
our sailors to realise a shared vision for  
Aotearoa, opening opportunities for all in  
Te Ao Māori, language and cultures.

Initially I will focus in areas for the linking  
of our Marae to our people through some  
of the upcoming projects.

To those on the seas, stay strong, ever  
fearless, and I wish you smooth seas.

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**Assistant Chief of Navy  
(Personnel and Training)  
Captain Jon Beadsmoore**

CAPT Beadsmoore, of Royal Navy origins, moved to New Zealand in 2005. He has been the Commanding Officer of HMNZS TE KAHA and Capability Manager for the Frigate Systems Upgrade. Other posts have included Commander Directorate of Sea Power and Warfare, the Maritime Component Commander's Executive officer and Chief Staff Officer Operations to the Joint Forces Commander.

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**Māori Cultural Adviser  
Warrant Officer Te Kani Te Wiata**

*Ko Taimui, Ko Te Arawa ngā Waka,  
Ko Taupiri, Ko Ruawahia ngā Maunga,  
Ko Waikato, Ko Tarawera ngā Awa,  
Ko Waikato, Ko Ngāti Rangitīhi ngā Iwi,  
Ko Tūrangawaewae, Ko Rangitīhi ngā  
Marae, Ko Te Kani Te Wiata ahau*

I joined the RNZN in Jan 1979 in the Weapon Engineering Branch and am currently serving as the Māori Cultural Adviser to the Chief of Navy. I have been in the role for the last six years.

I have been involved with the Marae since the opening on 15 April 2000 and the Rūnanga pre-opening with breaks when I was deployed to sea-going Units.

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**Māori Cultural Education Officer  
Mark Simpkins**

Mr Simpkin's iwi is Te Arawa. He has served 27 years in the Navy, finishing as a Chief Petty Officer Diver. He has been the Māori Cultural Education Officer for eight years. Mr Simpkins has been on the Marae staff from 2003 to 2007, and has been a rūnanga member since 2000.

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**Warrant Officer  
Bernie Reihana**

*Ko Pukeone me Tu Ao Wharepapa  
ngā maunga,  
Ko Motueka te awa,  
Ko Ngāti Rarua me Ngāti Tama me,  
Te Atiawa ngā iwi,  
Ko Te Awhina te marae,  
Ko Bernie Reihana ahau*

Tenā koutou  
I hail from the southern slopes of Taranaki Maunga and was raised on our whānau marae Aotearoa in Okaiawa before eventually moving into town (Hawera) at an early age.

I attended secondary school in Auckland and Wellington but returned to Hawera at every opportunity. Not so much these days (which is a shame) but principally – Taranaki is home for me.

I departed the RNZN in March 2020 having served a short lifetime as a Hydrographic Survey Technician and attaining the rank of Warrant Officer. I am currently a serving Reservist in HMNZS OLPHERT, I continue to support our Te Tāua Moana whānau and the development of cultural awareness across our VR sector.

My current role is Kaitohutohu Māori in the National Road Policing Centre in Police National Headquarters Wellington, a non-sworn civilian position maintaining positive connections with our iwi Māori across the motu.

Having been part of the marae since its establishment – I am most happy to continue to contribute to the development for our turangawaewae – “he heremana ahau”.

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**Commander Wiremu Leef**

*Iwi affiliation: Ngapuhi, Te Rarawa*

I joined in 1991 as Midshipman, serving for 22 years until leaving as a Commander. I rejoined in August 2020 to assume command of HMNZS MATATAUA, my current role. I restarted my Te Reo journey this year and hoping to complete L1 & 2 soon, have renewed my whanaungatanga with the Marae as part of this journey. I have been privileged to have been allowed to mihi a few times on the Marae over the last several months as part of my ako.

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**Chief Petty Officer  
David Tapene**

*Iwi affiliations: Te Rarawa, Ngāti Hine,  
Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Porou*

I have served in the RNZN for 20 years. My current roles is Kaiwhakahaere (Operations Manager) Defcommsta Devonport. I have been involved with Kapa Haka at the marae and I will take up the marae manager position in 2022.

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**Lieutenant Korin O'Brien**

*Iwi affiliation: Ngāti Porou*

I have served for 23 years, as a former Chief Petty Officer and now commissioned (late 2019). My current role is Directing Staff at the Officer Training School. At the marae, I am a former marae co-ordinator and the first female Marae Manager.

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**Petty Officer Physical Training  
Instructor Te Teira Maxwell**

*He uri teenei o ngaa hapu katoa o  
Ngati Rangiwewehi.*

I was fortunate to be brought up in Te Awahou, just 300 metres from my Marae. On our Papa Kainga we had four houses, my Nan, koro and the oldest mokopuna lived in one and three of my grandparents' children (and their kids) lived in the other three. We would spend our days on our bikes swimming at the river and playing at the marae with all our other cousins. So when I joined the Navy and was introduced to Te Tāua Moana Marae, just like a whole lot of people that have a strong upbringing in Te Ao Māori who first join the Navy I thought “I don't want anything to do with this Marae”.

I joined the Navy in 2009 as an OCSS and changed over to be a PTI in 2014. I am working at LTS facilitating the leadership framework to our future leaders. As a recent member of the Rūnanga I spend as much time as I possibly can to support kaupapa at Te Tāua Moana Marae. LDG sees every uniformed member of the Navy come through the gates and I am fortunate to be able to speak or assist those that speak at the powhiri when they join. I was also a part of the 21<sup>st</sup> birthday for Te Tāua Moana Marae and with the help of the other PTIs in the Navy we organised the Pa (whutuporo) Wars.

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**George McGarvey**

*Ko Hori Taranaki McGarvey toku ingoa  
Ko Tuhourangi Ngati Wahiao,  
Te Arawa toku waka.*

I joined the RNZN in January 1972, leaving in 1992 as a Chief Petty Officer Seaman. I rejoined in 1997 as a CPOS to take on the position as the Marae Projects Office, to build the marae. Soon after the official opening in April 2000 my title became RNZN Marae Manager. I left the RNZN in 2002 and I am currently working at Tai Wananga Kura as Director of Operations and Finance.

# Crossed the Bar



**Captain (Rtd) Cornelia (Corry) Beentjes, WRNZNS, RNZN**

Died 29 September.

Corry Beentjes, the first female Captain in the RNZN, served in the Navy for a combined 32 years between 13 April 1970 and 19 May 2002. She initially joined the Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service (WRNZNS) as a Wren Stores Accountant. When the WRNZNS was disestablished in 1977 she commissioned as an Ensign into the RNZN, finally retiring as a Captain on 20 May 2002. A strong leader, she inspired many women to follow in her footsteps. She was instrumental in developing the logistics and supply chain in the NZDF and during her work in the early days of the Anzac Ship Project in Canberra.

Okioki i roto i te rangimarie wahine nui



**Neil Harton**

Neil Harton died on 29 October, aged 104. He joined the RNZNVR and rose to the rank of Lieutenant, serving as a motor torpedo boat commander in the 55<sup>th</sup> MTB flotilla during the D-Day landings at Normandy. MTBs were assigned to protect the minesweepers

clearing a path for the invasion fleet. He was awarded the French Legion of Honour in 2014. He served for over four years during World War II and expected to continue service in the Pacific, but with a scar on his lungs and severely underweight, he returned to New Zealand. He recovered and then worked in accountancy until he retired in 1977. His memoir, Temporary Acting Gentleman-Seaman, can be found at Alexander Turnbull Library.

*(Adapted from an obituary from the Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand)*



**Brian Breen**

HMNZS LEANDER and Battle of Kolombangara veteran Brian Breen died in September, aged 96. He joined the Navy aged 16 in 1942 and had his first sea posting in LEANDER the following year. He was on board when a torpedo struck LEANDER on 13 July, and remembers wondering if they were going to stay afloat. 28 men lost their lives that night. The ship managed to limp to Tulagi for repairs. Brian later joined HMNZS ACHILLES during the landing on Okinawa and finished his service in mineweeper HMNZS ARABIS sweeping for German mines off the Mercury Islands. In civilian life he was a teacher, retiring as deputy principal. His grandson, Matthew Breen, is a Marine Technician in the Navy.



**Elisabeth Susan (Sue) Commons (nec Morris)**

Sue Commons died 21 October, aged 84, in Surrey, England.

Sue Morris (Commons) was the first direct entry officer to become Director, WRNZNS, and she was the only person not born in New Zealand to hold the appointment. Originally from England's Isle of Wight, Sue came to New Zealand as a girl. She joined the WRNZNS at the beginning of 1958 and became Assistant Secretary to the Commanding Officer of HMNZS PHILOMEL. An appointment to Navy Office followed as Wrens Unit Officer, HMNZS WAKEFIELD, a task which included working in the Director of Manning's office.

Third Officer Morris returned to Auckland in 1961 to become Quarters Officer at Elizabeth House. Promoted to Second Officer the following year, Sue became Wrens Unit Officer and Superintendent, WRNZNS on the staff of the Commodore, Auckland. She held this appointment for five years and then returned to Wellington, where she succeeded First Officer Maureen MacNab as Director. Like her predecessor, Sue married while holding the top post in the WRNZNS so it was as First Officer Commons that she retired from the WRNZNS in October 1970.

*(Biography adapted from Grant Howard, Happy in the Service: An Illustrated History of the Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service 1942-1977, p.94)*



### Nigel Foster

Nigel Foster, who retired as a Petty Officer Radio Mechanic, died on 1 September, and is particularly remembered for a *Navy Today* story about his Identity Card, lost when he was a Junior Electrician recruit in HMNZS OTAGO, Pearl Harbor, in 1968. The card was discovered by a dredger in 2018 and an image was posted on Navy social media in attempt to find its owner. The post went viral, remaining to this day the most successful Navy Facebook post at over 24,000 shares.



### John Armstrong

On 10 November World War II veteran John Armstrong died, aged 97. He joined the Navy at what was a turning point for the New Zealand Naval Forces – the question of entering New Zealand candidates for training (in England) and service as commissioned officers, detailed in the Naval Report to 31 March 1939 as under “careful consideration”. The scheme was approved in the financial year ending 31 March 1940 and announced later in the year. With the change of name from NZ Division of the Royal Navy to “Royal New Zealand Navy” on 1 October 1941, LT Armstrong was part of the first ever selection of officer cadets for the RNZN when he joined in November.

One week shy of his 18th birthday, he and other officer cadets

travelled to the United Kingdom as Special Entry Cadets to train at Dartmouth Naval College. As a midshipman, he later served in the Eastern Fleet for 20 months and returned to England for more training, then as a Sub Lieutenant posted to a destroyer in support of post D-Day operations. As a full Lieutenant he saw service as a watchkeeper in HMNZS ACHILLES in Japan, then returned to England to qualify as a Lieutenant Gunnery specialist. He finished his service in 1951, having served in HMNZ Ships TAUPO and BELLONA.



### John Vincent Thomson

John Thomson, BEM was, at the time of his death on 7 October, believed to be the last survivor of the Battle of the River Plate in 1939, serving in HMS ACHILLES against German ‘pocket battleship’ GRAF SPEE.

In a letter to *Navy Today* in 2015, he described how much he enjoyed the 75<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the battle, informing the Chief of Navy he would return for the 80<sup>th</sup>.

Born in 1922, he joined the Navy on 10 October 1938 as a Seaman Boy Second Class on one shilling per week. He served in ACHILLES, GAMBIA, BELLONA, BLACK PRINCE, HAWEA, ROTOITI, TAUPO and shore establishments TAMAKI, IRIRANGI and PHILOMEL. He was awarded the British Empire Medal in 1959.

After retiring from the permanent forces as a Warrant Officer Master At Arms, he spent several years mentoring young members of the Navy Cadets. He eventually retired in 1975. According to his family, he often said his greatest lesson from his time in service was to accept and respect the authority of more senior officers. “It created great humility and removed any status or ego.”



### Honorary Captain Dame Catherine Tizard

The Royal New Zealand Navy acknowledged the passing of former Auckland Mayor and Governor General Dame Catherine Tizard, on 31 October. Chief of Naval Staff Rear Admiral (Rtd) Fred Wilson appointed Dame Catherine an Honorary Captain on 2 October 1998, along with her husband Bob Tizard, Minister of Defence during the Anzac Frigate project. “She had been a great supporter of the Navy, both as Mayor and GG, attending many functions and events in those capacities,” said RADM Wilson. “She never failed to engage with everyone present, from the bottom to the top, and was a great role model in demonstrating determination and achievement. And to top it all off, she had a great sense of humour, that left all around her both relaxed and warm in her presence.” RADM Wilson reinstated the practice of Honorary Captains and the Tizard’s were among the first recipients.

### Richard (Dick) Rigarlsford

World War II veteran Dick Rigarlsford, who died on 14 August aged 98, trained with just the second training class at HMNZS TAMAKI. He served with HMNZS ACHILLES from August 1941 to late 1943. The ship was damaged during fighting at Guadalcanal, and during its refit in England Dick trained as a torpedoman. He posted to HMNZS GAMBIA for South Atlantic convoys, then fought against the Japanese in the Far East. He was discharged due to illness in October 1945.

# RECORD-BREAKING BEEP TEST

A junior sailor has broken the Navy record for the Multi-Stage Fitness Test – and he may have equalled the world record as well.

Ordinary Electronic Technician Marek Schirnack, who joined the Navy last year from Wairoa, has scored 17.1 in the MSFT, popularly known as the 'beep test'. Within a 20-metre area, a person runs back and forth, timed to a rhythmic beep. It starts slow, but the speed increases between half a kilometre per hour to one kilometre per hour at each level.

The test must be passed to be qualified 'Fit For Operational Service', and to give you an idea of the scale of his achievement, a sailor of OET Schirnack's age would normally only need to attain Level 7.1 for a standard pass, or 10.04 for a first class pass.

It's the first level 17 run recorded in the Navy's history. He now features on [www.topendsports.com](http://www.topendsports.com), which details the "World Best Beep Test Scores". He sits first-equal with former Australian Rules player Jose Romero and just ahead of famous UK middle distance runner Sebastian Coe.

OET Schirnack has previously broken records, including the record recruit score for the MSFT and the fastest time last year in the Navy cross-

country. He has a long legacy of athleticism, playing for Wairoa Athletic Rugby Football Club for several years. But he says this particular record required months of dedication and advice, in between studies for his trade and his seamanship qualification courses.

"I had to experiment with a few different training methods, and spent a lot of time at the drawing board with my Dad, Jason Schirnack, who unofficially is my coach, and Petty Officer Physical Training Instructor Texas Ngarongo-Porima. We focused on areas for improvement such as turning, acceleration and drive from the line and also focused on strengthening my frame to handle the stop-start nature of the test. In all honesty it was a lot of very ugly repetition, and I had to spend a lot of time in uncomfortable zones to get the growth required to break the record."

The support he received made a huge difference. "My partner, Ordinary Logistics Supply Specialist Teresa Clair, and my family are both extremely supportive of my sporting endeavours. POPTI Ngarongo-Porima has always been there to talk and give up his time for me if I ever felt down about how training had gone. I also had a huge amount of support from within my trade, especially from the senior staff at the Weapon Engineering School."

He says he was "humbled" to get the record. "Rather than seeing it as a chore, I tried to find enjoyment in getting into that comfortable state, knowing it was having huge benefits."



He says joining the Navy has given him a hunger to push the standard higher where sports and records are concerned. "I am a lot more goal-oriented now. The Navy has instilled a pride within me to make the most of opportunities, and to bring pride to Wairoa and show other young people it can be done. Wairoa sometimes gets flack in the media, and the pathways for young people aren't always there. That's what makes success from those from Wairoa within our ranks so much more important. If we pave the way for other young people to follow in our footsteps, then that is the bigger picture for me – and the ultimate reward."

# 15 ROUNDS

## WITH COMMODORE SHANE ARNDELL



### 01 Job title and description:

Deputy Chief of Navy

### 02 Date joined RNZN:

14 February 1990

### 03 First ship posted to:

HMNZS SOUTHLAND  
(Leander-class Frigate)

### 04 Best deployment:

I would have to say Op TIKI VI (HMNZS TE MANA) in 2013/14, but a very close second was HMNZS TE KAHA in 1999, with Antarctica, Timor Crisis and UN Sanctions Against Saddam Hussain in Iraq – what a year for a Junior Officer!

### 05 Hometown:

Mount Maunganui

### 06 Primary, intermediate, high schools:

Mount Maunganui College

### 07 Favourite book:

*Call Sign Chaos* – a biography of USMC General Jim Mattis

### 08 Favourite movie:

Naturally, *Top Gun* but closely followed by *Hunt for Red October*

### 09 Favourite album:

Pink Floyd's *The Wall*

### 10 Favourite song:

Pink Floyd, *Wish You Were Here*

### 11 Favourite holiday destination:

Anywhere tropical with a pool, beach and golf course

### 12 Outside of work, what's a couple of things you enjoy doing:

Playing Golf

### 13 What's something about you that not many people know?

I have a very good green thumb for gardening

### 14 A person that taught you a valuable life/Navy lesson was... and the lesson was:

From the book above. Have a passion to read. Have a sense of duty to serve well as a leader of people. Demonstrate a willingness to engage with anyone and have an enduring desire to listen to what others have to say.

### 15 How would you describe the Navy in 10 words or less:

Life-long adventure where no two days are the same!

## APPLICATIONS SOUGHT

### REGIONAL NAVAL OFFICER (RNO) TASMAN (NELSON) & WAIKATO (HAMILTON)

Applications are being sought for the position of Regional Naval Officer (RNO) Tasman (Nelson) and RNO Waikato (Hamilton) in the Naval Reserve.

RNOs are drawn from the local community; they are chosen for their links with Local Government, Iwi, port companies, local business, the media, schools and/or the wider community. They may or may not have had previous military service.

RNOs represent the Navy in their region, working to lift the level of knowledge about the Navy in every community and facilitating local naval activities.

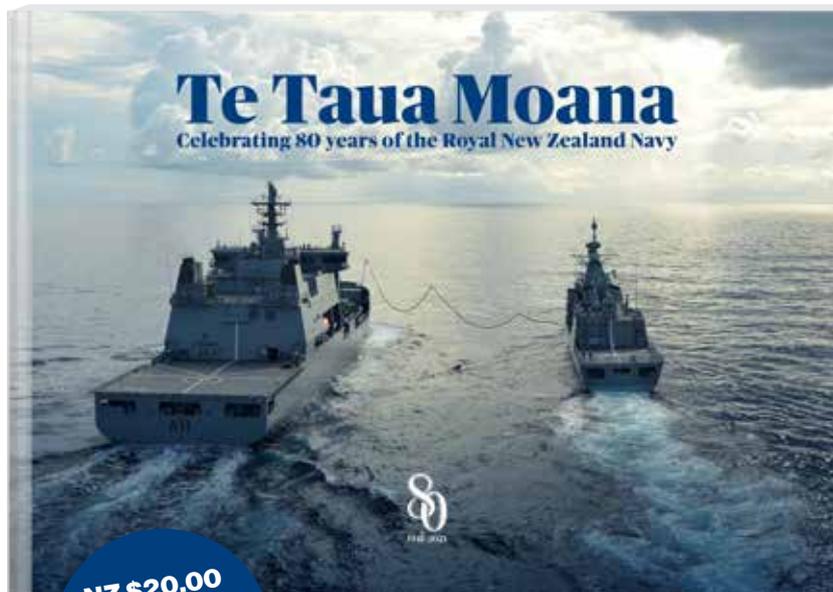
The successful application will be appointed as a Lieutenant Commander, Royal New Zealand Naval Reserve, after accepting an initial three-year offer of service.

Please contact Dianne Fowler at [Dianne.Fowler@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:Dianne.Fowler@nzdf.mil.nz) or CDR Clive Holmes, RNZN at [Clive.Holmes@nzdf.mil.nz](mailto:Clive.Holmes@nzdf.mil.nz) before 31 January 2022 for further details.



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