

NAVY T O D A Y

HMNZS MATATAUA
VISITING DIVERS

WHO PAYS WHEN
YOU FUEL AT SEA?

NAVY GARAGE
BAND CORRELLA



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“When we told them we would sail to Tonga in 24 hours, and they would be unlikely to see their loved ones before sailing to Antarctica, it didn’t seem to faze anyone. They just wanted to get out there.”

– Commander Dave Barr, newly appointed Commanding Officer, HMNZS AOTEAROA



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Front Cover:
Personnel from HMNZS MATATAUA undergo surf training with a zodiac at Piha Beach.

Photographer:
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Yours Aye

Flag Lieutenant



I was offered the opportunity by the Chief of Navy to write this 'Yours Aye', marking my last month in the role of Flag Lieutenant. I had to accept. It was not an order from an Admiral that made me accept – it was the opportunity to share some of the experiences and lessons that being posted as a Flag Lieutenant; being posted to Wellington; and being exposed to Senior Leadership have taught me.

My first big lesson was having greater exposure to Te Taua Moana Marae. I now realise this was an opportunity available to me for the whole time I have been in the Navy; however, not knowing much about the Māori culture, I hadn't been onto the marae since the pōwhiri where my JOCT was welcomed in 2014. I encourage those that haven't had much to do with the marae to give it a go. It is always a welcoming place to go, and offers great exposure to tikanga in a friendly environment. There is no judgement if the only waiata you know is Tutira mai, and the food is ka pai! A memorable experience for me was during Te Taua Moana Marae's 21st Birthday celebrations last year at the Kawe Mata event. This event saw sailors of the RNZN "bring" their relatives that have passed, to have them welcomed onto the marae. It was deeply emotional and it was clear how much our sailors value their bond with the marae, to want to bring their whānau onto it.

The second lesson was one that is normally associated with this role – international travel. Albeit 2021 was a COVID-19 year; I still got two opportunities for overseas travel. The first was to the Cook Islands to attend the South West Pacific Heads of Maritime Forces Forum. This was in the weeks following HMNZS WELLINGTON's visit and OP PACIFIC VACCINATE, and it was enlightening to see how RNZN's assistance really helps our Pacific neighbours. My second trip was to the United States of America, with the main purpose of accompanying CN's attendance at the US International Seapower Symposium in Rhode Island. There were a lot of international engagement activities, and witnessing diplomacy at work, first hand. My big learning though, was how much work goes into these international trips. It is not a chance to do the tourist track – it is late nights planning for the next day; writing notes; getting time-sensitive information to New Zealand; and of course, trying to stay on top of all the work that you are missing while you are at the conference. Of the three weeks away, I only had one evening to be a tourist – and that's because I wasn't invited to a dinner CN went to!

Thirdly, I wanted to share my experience of being posted to Wellington. This was my third period of being posted here, with the first two as a Midshipman in the Maritime Regulator team. It is an incredible experience and I hope more Ratings

and Junior Officers ask to come here. Wellington is a great city with a lot of "life" and I have run into politicians and celebrities on a weekly basis on my walk to work. Workwise, in Defence Force Headquarters (and Joint Forces Headquarters), you are exposed to so much insight: be it why a decision is being made; which group in the organisation does what, what their relationships are; and many other eye-opening discoveries. There are a multitude of personal and professional development opportunities that you are encouraged to take. It is a corporate environment in Defence House (where I was), and no matter what your rank is, you work in close proximity, and build a good relationship with the Senior Leadership of the Navy, the rest of Naval Staff, and the wider Defence Force. And that leads me to my last point...

The biggest learning I have had while in Wellington is how incredibly passionate our Senior Leadership are. They put in so much work, care so much about sailors and their whānau, and come up with the most out-of-the-box ideas to get things done. It makes me very proud to serve in Te Taua Moana o Aotearoa.

Thank you for the opportunity to be heard.

He heramana ahau.

Lieutenant Alex Pereyaslavets
Flag Lieutenant



Chaplain Richard Lander



NEW SENIOR CHAPLAIN APPOINTED

Chaplain Richard Lander was appointed as Senior Chaplain (Navy) on 11 March.

CHAP Lander is a former Otago University Medical School electron microscopist and youth pastor, who founded Freedom Church in Nelson with his wife. He later led a church in Papakura and was inspired to join HMNZS NGAPONA as a Navy Reserve padre. He was offered a Regular Force position, graduating from JOCT 17/01 in June 2017.

The Senior Chaplain acts as a key point of reference to Senior Leadership regarding morale and wellness, hauora within the force, and provides advice and support in matters of culture and ceremony. The current incumbent, Chaplain Christopher Haines, is departing the Service after a long career.

ROTOITI AND PUKAKI SOLD TO THE REPUBLIC OF IRELAND

The New Zealand Defence Force will sell the two decommissioned Inshore Patrol Vessels ex HMNZS ROTOITI and PUKAKI to the Republic of Ireland Department of Defence. The announcement was made on 2 March.

The vessels are being sold for NZ\$36 million. A condition of the sale is for work to be undertaken to regenerate and modify the ships to an operational seaworthiness standard. This work will cost about NZ\$16–\$19 million and be carried out in New Zealand commercial shipyards.

Built in Whangarei and commissioned into the Navy in 2009, during their service the two ships have been deployed on fishery monitoring, search and rescue, border security and maritime surveillance operations around New Zealand's 15,000km coastline.

However, a few years ago a project team within the RNZN identified that a better capability outcome would be achieved utilising the current offshore patrol vessels HMNZS OTAGO and HMNZS WELLINGTON, supplemented with a Southern Ocean Patrol Vessel planned for the future.

“Our Navy has a greater need to project a presence further afield,” said Chief of Navy, Rear Admiral David Proctor, “and that’s something the inshore patrol vessels simply weren’t built to do.”

Formally decommissioned in October 2019, the two ships have been the subject of interest from a number of overseas navies.

RADM Proctor said the two remaining IPVs in the RNZN fleet, HMNZS HAWEA and HMNZS TAUPO, still have a valuable role to play in meeting the tasks required of the Navy.

“Local fishery monitoring and border protection patrolling will still be conducted but these ships also provide important Officer of the Watch training and command opportunities for our junior officers.”

Once the upgrade and modification work is completed on the vessels, they are expected to be commercially sea-lifted to the Republic of Ireland in late March or April 2023.



S1 Katrina Koch-Underhill (left) and S1 Sarah Gunderson.

IF SHE CAN DO IT, I CAN DO IT

In the world of clearance diving, females are rare. *Navy Today* talks to Royal Canadian Navy divers Sarah Gunderson and Katrina Koch-Underhill, seconded to HMNZS MATATAUA.

The Royal New Zealand Navy has female ship's divers, but we have yet to achieve a qualified female clearance diver. Which is why Sailor First Class (Diver) Sarah Gunderson, 24 and Sailor First Class (Diver) Katrina Koch-Underhill, 25, are aware of what they represent to female sailors in the RNZN.

A Navy clearance diver is trained in mine clearance and underwater explosives. They also search for missing persons and conduct underwater engineering on ships and structures.

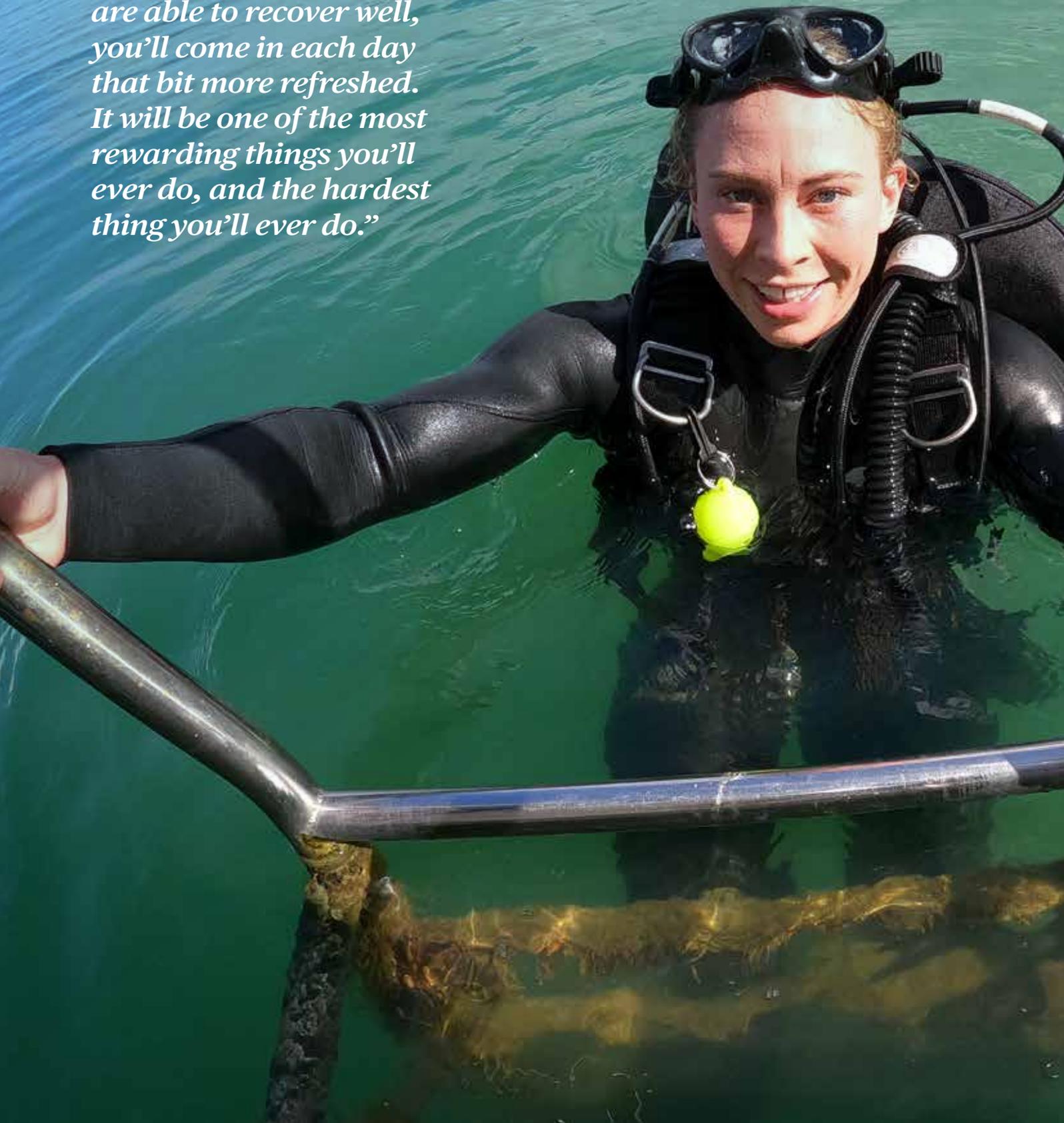
The first woman to qualify as a clearance diving officer in Canada was in 1993, but it was a decade later when two non-commissioned females qualified.

Today, there are only three women in the trade in the Canadian Navy, including S1 Gunderson and S1 Koch-Underhill.

The pair, based in Esquimalt, Victoria, says there was a request from HMNZS MATATAUA to have them come to New Zealand and train with the Clearance Dive Group for several months.

"And who would turn down a trip to New Zealand?" says S1 Koch-Underhill. In her own time she's a dedicated soccer player and mountain biker who has already discovered the trails in Rotorua. She's learning to surf in Taranaki and loves skiing. Gunderson loves trail running and is a connoisseur of good craft beer.

“Come to the diving course as well prepared as you can, because that will make every day that little bit easier. Physically, if you are able to recover well, you’ll come in each day that bit more refreshed. It will be one of the most rewarding things you’ll ever do, and the hardest thing you’ll ever do.”





The pair, who have been clearance divers for two years, are serious about their trade and there's no doubting their qualification was one of the hardest things they've ever done in their lives. S1 Koch-Underhill was a port inspection diver – a Naval reservist trade in Canada. “I had never dived outside of the military,” she says. “I was at the University of Victoria (Canada), and I heard about this trade being opened up to people off the street. I thought, instead of paying a load of money to learn to dive – a lot of money for a young person – I could train and get paid to do it.”

She later trained and qualified as a clearance diver, joining the regular forces in August 2020.

S1 Gunderson joined the Navy in 2015 as a Naval Combat Information specialist. She had a secondary role on the ship's dive team and was enjoying that a lot more than being in an operations room. Both Gunderson and Koch-Underhill ended up on the same course together.

The pair were also encouraged by a female clearance diver who had been through the course three years earlier. “It was someone to look up to,” says S1 Gunderson. “If she could do it, I could do it. And that's one of the reasons we're here in New Zealand – to show women that it's possible.”

Doing the course together was a big factor. “I was so grateful to have Sarah in the changing room with me. We were always together – I couldn't imagine being the only female. You need to be an independent person, but that would have taken a bit more mental effort, always being around the boys.”

S1 Katrina Koch-Underhill emerges from the harbour at HMNZS MATATAUA's jetty.



S1 Koch-Underhill says the course in Canada is modern in its culture and education and has eliminated a lot of the “old school” boys’ club rituals. “There was a time when you ran people into the ground. If you messed up, you did push-ups. Sure, there’s still a bit of that, but now you get told to set up the dive site. Set up the safety boat. Do it again and again so the training is ingrained in you.” The course, without question, is tough, she says. “It’s long, it’s challenging, you’re getting up at 4.30am, you’ve got two night dives a week. But we had a really great group of really switched-on people. The guys were fantastic. So it was tough, but it was manageable.”

S1 Gunderson agrees. “Everyone was there to support each other, to pick you up. We wanted everyone to succeed, rather than have a competition of who was best. With that mentality it made each phase of the course a lot more fun.”

She remembers the Sub-Surface Breathing Apparatus (SSBA) phase, with hoses pumping air from a surface vessel to the diver, and the thrill of going deeper than she had ever gone before.

As a qualified clearance diver, she likes how every day is different. “You’re not doing the same tasks every day. Nothing is ever going to

run perfectly smooth. You’re thinking, problem-solving all the time. It makes coming to work really enjoyable, and you like the people you work with.”

There’s always something to do, says Koch-Underhill, whether it’s diving or looking after your equipment. “You feel like you’re learning something new every day.” Both of them say the work-life balance was attractive. “Sure, you can get called in on the weekends, but the balance is good.”

What are some of the hardest aspects of the job? “Canadian waters are much colder than here,” says S1 Koch-Underhill. S1 Gunderson’s least favourite job is changing the underwater sonar dome on ships. She is keen to stress that Canadian Navy ship drivers are not prone to bumping their sonars on the sea floor, but every so often covers need replacing. “They are long jobs, and you can’t talk to each other underwater, so it’s kind of hard to say, ‘shift it a bit to the left’.”

The pair are working as part of the ‘family’ within HMNZS MATATAUA and are training alongside the New Zealanders. The equipment is a bit different to what they’re used to, something they’re getting to grips with. “Next week will be diving with the rebreather equipment. And there’s talk of doing SSBA dives from HMNZS MANAWANUI.”

S1 Koch-Underhill would recommend that females interested in qualifying should look at a one-on-one training programme with a Physical Training Instructor beforehand. S1 Gunderson agrees. “Come to the diving course as well prepared as you can, because that will make every day that little bit easier. Physically, if you are able to recover well, you’ll come in each day that bit more refreshed. It will be one of the most rewarding things you’ll ever do, and the hardest thing you’ll ever do.”

CHANGE OF COMMAND FOR DEVONPORT NAVAL BASE

■ By Simone Millar
Senior Communications Adviser (North)



After 33 years' service in the Royal New Zealand Navy, Commander Julie Simpkins has taken up the role of Commanding Officer of HMNZS PHILOMEL.

Much of CDR Simpkins' career has been in logistics. Along with ship and New Zealand shore-based logistic roles it also included two overseas postings, firstly as a logistic New Zealand Liaison and desk officer in support of operations in Afghanistan and East Timor when posted to Australian Joint HQ, and as the Logistic and Asset manager in the Anzac Support Programme. She's now turning her attention from her last role of commanding Naval Specialist Training to running the Home of the Navy.

She is looking forward to supporting the Navy's home base, which enables the full range of programmes required to enable the Navy to fulfil its mission of advancing New Zealand's interests from the sea.

"E kitea ai ngā taonga o te moana, me mākū koe. If you seek the treasures of the ocean, you'd better get wet," says CDR Simpkins.

"This means several things to me including: embodying our values Tū Kaha, Tū Tika, Tū Tira, Tū Māia – Courage, Commitment, Comradeship and Integrity. Also accepting out of challenging times can come opportunity and if we want change or a better outcome it means persevering and being invested and involved."

A ceremony took place at the Navy Museum in Torpedo Bay on 10 March, to mark the Change of Command, when Commander Phil Wheadon passed over the ship.

CDR Wheadon will return to his work in engineering and says the COVID-19 pandemic had been a challenge during his time in command.

"It has been an absolute privilege to lead and guide such a dedicated group of naval and civilian staff that is the HMNZS PHILOMEL Command Team.

"We have clearly had a tremendous challenge as we have responded to both Delta and Omicron outbreaks within the overall COVID-19 pandemic," he says.

Originally from land-locked Feilding CDR Simpkins began her naval career as a sailor and her love of the sea has only grown from there.

"My grandmother always said I have maritime roots, as my great-grandfather was in the Merchant Navy. Now I can't imagine not living close to sea and in the latter stages of my career I have enjoyed the odd sea ride when I get the invitation and opportunity" she says.

CDR Simpkins says she's enjoyed every role she's had in the Navy and that being in the Service is so special, as it gives you a sense you're contributing to something greater.

"You get lots of 'good' memories along with some tough times in the Service. I've been in the Service for 33 years and I've had so many highs, and that's what's pulled me through the tough or frustrating periods, the pieces of gold that you feel you're contributing to something bigger than yourself, that's what's important," she says.

CDR Simpkins is looking forward to providing steady service to the fleet as the Navy regenerates its people from a training and operational perspective.

"PHILOMEL is the Home of the Navy, Kāinga o Te Taua Moana Aotearoa. It is a place where all Naval personnel will have served in some capacity, we arrive and depart on our ships – so it has an emotional connection at times. It is a place we share alongside the Devonport community and I feel a sense of pride that I will have the opportunity to fill the role of Commanding Officer. Our whole purpose is in the maritime space, being war fighters and warriors of the sea. I'm looking forward to getting back to the business of being the Navy and seeing our sailors reconnect as part of that," she says.



TAUPO PROVIDES CLOSURE FOR FAMILIES

It would be safe to say some crew members had the worst night at sea of their careers, says HMNZS TAUPO's Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Fletcher Slierendrecht.

Last month, on 20 and 21 March, the Inshore Patrol Vessel pushed through a violent storm to reach the vicinity of North Cape, to join the search for 10 fishermen from the charter vessel ENCHANTER.

TAUPO, which had been at sea for two weeks prior, was in the Hauraki Gulf conducting Officer of the Watch training. At 2100hrs a Mayday relay call came through. In the midst of a storm, an EPIRB (Emergency Position-Indicating Radio Beacon) had been activated near North Cape.

"There was no more information," says LT Slierendrecht. "MANAWANUI and CANTERBURY were also out and they gave us a call to confirm we had the same distress message. We were the duty Search and Rescue vessel and we gave the Rescue Coordination Centre a call. We were 180-odd miles away, it wasn't going to be a quick response."

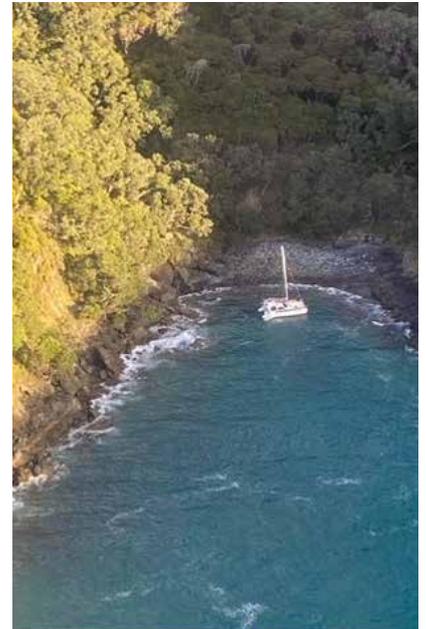
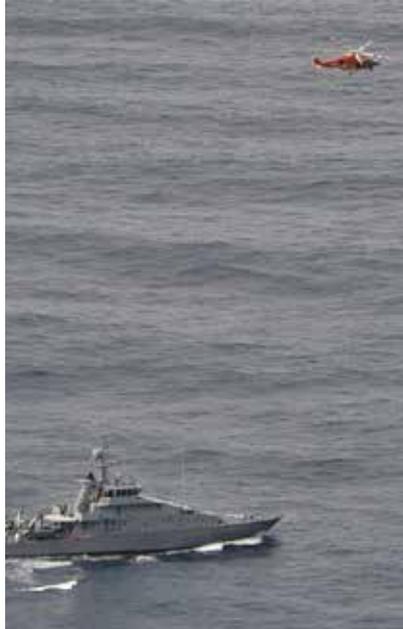
It was confirmed it was a real alert, from the charter vessel MV ENCHANTER, on its way back from Manawatāwhi/Three Kings Islands, 53km north-west of North Cape. Can you respond, asked the RCC. Within an hour Joint Forces New Zealand had tasked TAUPO, and the ship was on her way.

They were heading into the same weather system that had struck the ENCHANTER. "It was a particularly violent night at sea, and it was approaching the limits of what an Inshore Patrol Vessel can handle. I'm sure there will be people on board who will say it was the worst night at sea in their careers. There was a six-metre wave face, with a short wave period, and wind gusting to 45 knots. We were rolling up to 40 degrees; people were getting thrown out of their bunks."

There was some consideration to turn around. "The storm was going south, we were heading north, and we were already in it. Without anywhere to shelter, the best decision was to push through."

During the night the Westpac rescue helicopter reached the floating wreckage of ENCHANTER, winching five fisherman aboard. Five remained missing.

"By the time we got to the Bay of Islands, the wind had died off and we could increase speed. We got to the location at 11am, something like 14 hours after the initial activation which we knew was an extremely long time to be waiting for help to arrive."



A Coast Guard vessel, three commercial boats and the Westpac rescue helicopter were in the vicinity of the wrecked ENCHANTER, helping in the search. Two bodies had been recovered from the water by the helicopter, while a third had been recovered by one of the vessels. TAUPO took charge, using updated weather information from a morning RNZAF P-3 Orion flight to work out likely drift patterns. Within an hour, another body was found, and taken aboard the commercial vessel. "The decision was made to transport the bodies ashore in the helicopter. We were the only platform the helicopter could winch from, so we sent a boat across with a medic and a small team, to prepare and move the bodies to TAUPO for winching off."

TAUPO, running low on resources, had to depart for Devonport in the early evening with one person still missing. He was eventually found by the New Zealand Police Dive Squad inside the ENCHANTER wreckage.

LT Slierendrecht says the tragedy will likely take a couple of days to sink in. "You don't feel too much at the time. You're being professional, you're focused on the task, doing your job and letting the team do theirs."

He is proud of his team. "Every Commanding Officer likes to talk about how good their Ship's Company is and I would do exactly that. It's a fairly junior but high-performing team. For our Able Medic who led the body preparation and transfer, this is her first in-charge role aboard a Ship. The whole team showed really good resilience after a sleepless night. They pushed through, within safe limits, and delivered a professional service. A lot of the time, we're training. With this, we're trying to save people's lives. That's what kept the team going."

When TAUPO arrived in Devonport, the padres came down to bless the Ship, her Company and seaboat. They were joined by the Navy psychologist. "People are okay," says LT Slierendrecht. "They were grateful to be involved in an operation that made a difference. The police found the final body and that is pretty good closure. We gave it a good crack to do as much as we could and would have stayed longer if possible. The support networks have kicked in and that will continue."

TAUPO RESCUES CATAMARAN CREW

When sailing catamaran BELEVEER suffered an engine failure near Great Barrier Island on 6 March, HMNZS TAUPO was in the vicinity to act on their Mayday call. The vessel was blown onto rocks at Rangiwahakaea Bay, with five crew members making their way ashore and raising the alarm. TAUPO, 55 miles away, proceeded at best speed, with the Westpac rescue helicopter sending them images to help plan the rescue. Although the Coast Guard arrived shortly before TAUPO, the rescue required TAUPO's seaboat. In darkness, BELEVEER's crew put on lifejackets and swam the short distance to the seaboat, which then transferred the crew to the Coast Guard.

Above: The BELEVEER aground at Great Barrier Island.



BE DECISIVE WITH SURF

HMNZS MATATAUA's divers and hydrographers have an expert relationship with the waves, either under them or mapping what's beneath them. But surf has its own set of rules.





If you want to train in boisterous surf, you can't get much better than Auckland's famous Piha Beach.

Last month HMNZS MATATAUA put its diving and hydrographic coxswains through a bouncy instruction in taking a fully-crewed zodiac boat through the surf.

In surf rescue programmes on TV lifeguards make it look easy, but it's anything but, and indeed two Piha surf lifeguards were on hand to help guide the novices in the techniques.

Petty Officer Diver Te Pumautanga Campbell says all their coxswains have to learn the skills required to take a team – loaded up with weapons and dive sets – through a surf zone.

“For people who have only driven boats on flat water, it's extremely tricky. There's a technique to approach a wave safely, without flipping the boat and putting the crew in danger. But there's a lot of battering and getting knocked around in the learning.”

Going “full tack” at a wave will probably ruin your whole day. “You'll flip the boat straight over. It's a common mistake, speed, and people come off second best. What you do is you speed towards the wave, then come off the power. Come over the wave, and then speed down the wave.”

The other common fault is panic. “You've got to be quite decisive, when choosing your track. If you dither, you're too late, you'll flip.”

The teams also train at righting the zodiac in the water, if their boat ends up upside down.

PODR Campbell says MATATAUA has kept training as compartmentalised as they can, with the divers and hydrographers keeping separate training times and in ‘bubbles’ in case someone gets COVID-19. “Getting COVID would affect our ‘Notice to Move’ time of six hours if we get a call.”



A PASSION TO SUCCEED

There might be a very busy year ahead for HMNZS AOTEAROA, but her new Commanding Officer knows he's backed up by a first-rate crew proven through international exercises, humanitarian relief and Polar operations.

On 16 March Commander Dave Barr took command of AOTEAROA from Captain Simon Griffiths, uttering "I have the ship" and receiving the symbol of command, a carved Kauri staff name Tai-Panuku (Smooth flowing tide), which was created on behalf of Ngāti Te Whiti, the iwi in AOTEAROA's ceremonial home port, New Plymouth.

CDR Barr is a former Royal Navy submariner from Northern Ireland, joking that he got the "knives and forks" course on how to "talk properly" when he joined the Royal Navy in September 2000. "I grew up as a kid watching war movies with my Dad. I was aware of all the things going on in the world and I wanted to make a difference and help people." He was fascinated by submarines and 1990s spy thriller *The Hunt For Red October* had been a hit when he was young. He got his wish, but with the Cold War ending, he found himself constantly at sea, posting from boat to boat.



“There was a sniff of a job in New Zealand. My mum had travelled the world in the 1960s, not common for a Northern Irishman. She spent a year in New Zealand. I thought if she liked it, I would love it. I don’t do things by half-measures. I got on a plane in 2007 with no clue what to expect.”

His first job was as navigator in AOTEAROA’s predecessor, HMNZS ENDEAVOUR. “It was a complete culture shock coming to New Zealand,” he says. “Someone once said to me, it’s easier to integrate into a non-English speaking country, because you already expect it to be totally different. You think New Zealand might be the same as back in the UK, but it’s not.”

CDR Barr has served in HMNZS TE KAHA, returning to the United Kingdom to complete his Principal Warfare Officers’ course, then to HMNZS TE MANA, including anti-piracy deployments near Somalia. He’s been an Operations Officer with Combined Task Force 151, tackling piracy from the Combined Maritime Forces headquarters in Bahrain. He’s been the Executive Officer of ENDEAVOUR up to her decommissioning, and had his time as the operations commander at Joint Forces New Zealand, running the NZDF’s global operations. He’s also run a Task Force of 600 people involved in Operation Protect, the NZDF response to the COVID-19 pandemic in New Zealand.

“I get policy,” he says, “but I love working hard to solve a crisis. It was a time when the country was about to split in two with different lockdown levels, cutting people off from their loved ones. That’s why I joined the Navy, to respond and help and try to do good.”

He certainly has had that in the five months he’s been Executive Officer of AOTEAROA, and he’s looking forward to more. “We were gearing up for some pretty intense polar operations, and getting back into it after Christmas leave. There was the eruption at Tonga, and it all got put on hold. Tonga needed fresh water and sure enough, 24 hours later we were underway. We had been learning about ice, and we were off to the tropics.”

There’s something about “tanker driving”, says CDR Barr. “I’ve been on a lot of ships in the Royal New Zealand Navy. But I’ve done five years of tanker driving with ENDEAVOUR and five months so far with AOTEAROA, and there’s something about tanker operations I love. And AOTEAROA is so much more than just a tanker.”

AOTEAROA’s foundation – the Ship’s Company – makes it possible. “It’s their unbridled passion to succeed, to be the best they can be – it’s evident every day, but no more so when we told them we would sail to Tonga in 24 hours, and they would be unlikely to see their loved ones before sailing to Antarctica. It didn’t seem to faze anyone. They just wanted to get out there.”

This year CDR Barr, AOTEAROA and her crew will continue the checklist for the ship’s operational release, much of which will be achieved during the largest maritime exercise in the world, Exercise Rim of the Pacific in Hawaii. It will be combined with a six-month deployment that should, for the first time since the pandemic started, involve traditional ‘runs ashore’.

CDR Barr and his family are currently based in Navy housing in Auckland and have a residence in Upper Hutt, but he has a powerful affinity with New Plymouth, AOTEAROA’s home port. “I consider New Plymouth is where I’m grounded to and belong in New Zealand. It was my first port visit. I got to climb Taranaki maunga that weekend. The mayor invited me to consider that no matter where I ended up living in New Zealand, I should consider Taranaki my home. I’m so humbled to be considered New Plymouth’s Commanding Officer of her ship, and I look forward to getting a home port visit with them in the years to come.”

Career management's an art form

Ken Bancroft was barely 16 when he joined the Royal New Zealand Navy on 23 May 1973. In February Warrant Officer Marine Technician (Propulsion) Bancroft was awarded his fourth clasp to his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, indicating a service of over 42 years.

In fact it's closer to fifty years, although there's been a break of three years when Ken retired after 20 years' service and was employed as a RNZN civilian before re-entering as a Warrant Officer. Originally from Westport, a seaport full of colliers and cement ships, Ken's father was a merchant seaman so the sea was already in his veins. Ken held three part-time jobs while at school and always had a mind to become an engineer. He reckons he had been a bit tiresome to his mother as a teenager; she wholeheartedly approved of him joining the services.

"Initially I passed well enough to become an apprentice but they didn't wear sailors' rig back then. Their uniform was the same as a senior rate, with a red badge on the cap to denote you were a junior rate, like the bandies [members of the Navy Band]. I wanted to look like a sailor and wear 'square rig', so I joined as an Engineer Mechanic – different to a Marine Engineer Artificer (MEA), which was a four-year apprenticeship."

His first ship was HMNZS WAIKATO at the end of 1973. "She was a tight-knit ship. We had this old girl down in Waikato district who used to knit us mooloo beanies." WOMT(P) Bancroft is referencing either 'Mum' Milnes from Cambridge or Betty Wilsher, who knitted beanies in Waikato colours for the crew up to 1983.

"It was very labour-intensive back then, with steam boilers and turbines. You started in the boiler room – the worst place, with steam leaks and screaming turbines, and worked your way up the ladder."

He's done nine deployments to Singapore (among other places), starting in the days when New Zealand maintained a frigate presence in the country. "I've always enjoyed Singapore, and we were virtually living there for the first two years of my career." Unless you were on duty, personnel stayed ashore in Terror Barracks, which was then part of Singapore Naval Base.

"During the time in Singapore you'd sail away for three to four weeks for exercises and the like, visiting ports like Philippines, Hong Kong, Thailand and South Korea. You'd come home to New Zealand around December, via port visits and exercises, and be home for Christmas before sailing again after Christmas. I think 1974–75 was the last of the really long trips."

WOMT(P) Bancroft has served in Whitby/Rothesay class frigates HMNZS OTAGO and TARANAKI, Leander Class frigates WAIKATO, WELLINGTON and CANTERBURY, other ships such as HMNZS INVERELL, TUI, ENDEAVOUR, MANAWANUI and MONOWAI and in the Protector Fleet with HMNZS HAWEA and CANTERBURY. He remembers a horrible Southern Ocean patrol in mine-sweeper INVERELL in 1976 for her paying-off deployment. "She rolled like a pig. I was sea-sick solid for two weeks when I first joined her until I got my sea-legs back again."



Warrant Officer Marine
Technician (Propulsion)

Ken Bancroft

“The triple expansion reciprocating steam engines were a different thing though, all exposed con rods and crankshafts lubricated in a bath of sugee, which was the term we used for the lubricant which was an emulsified mixture of oil and water. The stuff flung everywhere, so you definitely needed a shower after your watch. Great environment to learn the true basics of engineering though.”

A key memory of Ken's career was bringing HMNZS MANAWANUI (III) (ex-Star Perseus) into RNZN service. He posted as Engineer Officer 1989–1993 first as a Chief Petty Officer then promoted to Warrant Officer in the role in 1991. “I threw my life and soul into introducing her into service, to turn her into the diving ship she became, surrounded by like-minded and passionate people.” He was awarded the MBE for his efforts, something that “blew him away”, he says.

He's served in HMNZS CANTERBURY (F421) three times, with a key moment being the establishment of the Peace Monitoring Group in Bougainville

after the civil war, and HMNZS CANTERBURY (L421) three times, with recent key moments being Pacific Partnership 2013 and deployment to Kaikoura after the Kaikoura earthquake in 2016.

He says he feels 'blessed' in his current role as Warrant Officer Career Management (Navy), a culmination of 17 years of career management experience. “I was the first Career Manager Technical in 1998 under the new construct, which split into Marine and Weapon Engineering later that year, filling the CMME role for six years. I was awarded the NZ Meritorious Service Medal in 2004 in recognition of this. I was appointed as the inaugural Fleet Training Coordinator after Project Gap in 2005, which was charged with the management of training bunks and OJT personnel on all fleet units and I was heavily involved setting up career management for the Naval Reserves, and was their Career Manager for four years from 2006.”

He was recently awarded a Chief of Navy commendation for his personnel management work during the initial nine months of Op PROTECT.

His advice to anyone is if you don't want to come to work, you shouldn't be here. “I get up every morning wanting to come to work. I love working with people and being honest with people. My personal view is that Career management isn't a science, it's an art form, and I like to think I've figured it out. It's certainly a buzz when you run into people who remember you as their career manager – in a good way mostly.”





OUR PEOPLE

1. ALSS Shekania Cherrington (left) and ASCS Dayna Baxter practise seamanship skills on the flight deck of HMNZS WELLINGTON.

2. ASCS Dayna Baxter shows her support for International Women's Day #breakthebias HMNZS Wellington during OP PACREL in Tonga.

3. CDRE Garin Golding presents an MCC Commendation to POMT(P) Benjamin Griffin on board HMNZS CANTERBURY.

4. Chief of Navy, RADM David Proctor, presents LT (former WO) Steve Bourke with his 4th clasp to his Long Service And Good Conduct Medal, indicating over 42 years of service.

5. SLT George Young during Officer of the Watch manoeuvres between HMNZS WELLINGTON and HMNZS CANTERBURY during the transit from Tonga to New Zealand.

6. OSCS Reuben Foote receives his promotion to Able Rate, with ASCS Lachlan Butler and ASCS Kaharu Mendes doing the honours with the rank slides aboard HMNZS WELLINGTON.

7. LCWS Sam Hardy on the bridge of HMNZS WELLINGTON during Officer of the Watch Manoeuvres.

8. Happy Birthday to POCSS Sammy Boyle aboard HMNZS WELLINGTON.

9. Promotion of ASCS Joeddick Pulevaka to Leading Hand on board HMNZS WELLINGTON.

10. ASCS Lachlan Butler prepares for the Sunset Ceremony on the flight deck of HMNZS WELLINGTON at anchor in Nuka'alofa harbour.

11. POSCS Sloan Paniani prepares members of HMNZS TE KAHA's Ship's Company at the ship's Change of Command ceremony at the Navy Museum.

12. POCSS Te Naawe Tupe with CDR Zia Jones, Te Naawe's uncle. The pair were in Wellington for CDR Jones' promotion.

13. CDR Martin Walker, CO of HMNZS CANTERBURY, and LET Brendon Watts promote AWT Mikayla McDowell to LWT.



Photo: US Navy

Who pays for what?

Pay at the pump or at the counter? When it comes to a Replenishment at Sea involving thousands of litres of fuel, the process of payment can be complex. Bruce Wooller, former Principal Advisor Logistics Engagement at Defence Logistics Command, explains how it works.

Over the last year, HMNZS AOTEAROA has been dispensing fuel to other nations – a lot of fuel. It is usually done via a Replenishment At Sea (RAS), where a ship steams alongside AOTEAROA and a fueling hose from AOTEAROA is passed across the gap, all done while on the move. It was particularly the case during the Tongan crisis in February, for British, American and Tongan vessels, but also last year for Australia, Singapore and America during Exercise Bersama Gold in South East Asia.

It might look like in the short term that we're dispensing millions of litres of fuel across the South Pacific to any ship that pulls up abeam. But it's not a one-way street, and not just about fuel – or even money. The New Zealand Defence Force benefits from the advantages and capabilities enjoyed by larger nations, and indeed, would not be able to grow its own capabilities or sustain many of its operational deployments without international logistics agreements and arrangements that supplement our own logistics capacity.

So countries – particularly countries that are used to working together – work it out beforehand. The most common concept is a Mutual Logistics Support Arrangement, where two nations agree basic terms, conditions and procedures whereby each nation provides support to the other. It's not specific to an activity, and doesn't cover weapons or transfer of equipment that could fall foul of international laws and regulations. As well as planned-for situations, it can cover unforeseen circumstances.

Mr Wooller says the Single Service and Joint Force planners sit down to standardize the arrangements under the MLSA's, once or twice a year. They look at who they have relationships with, and who they don't. If there's an exercise coming up, the countries are contacted and letters of arrangement or implementation arrangements (IA's) are established to set up a payment methodology.

These Implementation Arrangements (IA), allow two nations to carry out an activity they have agreed to tackle together. They outline who does what, and who provides what services. These are useful for combined operations, such as Afghanistan or Timor Leste.



'Payments' can be an Exchange in Kind (replacing the logistics supplies or services with something very similar) or Exchange of Equal Value (providing something different but of very similar value).

There are occasions when we don't charge. "A good example is the Kaikoura earthquake in 2016. There were three international warships with helicopters who went down to provide humanitarian aid. We refuelled the ships and helicopters and didn't charge them."

But in other instances, it does come down to money, a reimbursable transaction in cash or credit card or funds transfer in the currency of the nation providing the support or in another currency decided by the supporting nation.

Squadron Leader Michelle Goulden, Adviser Logistics Engagement, says if a country lacks a formal arrangement, they could come to a multi-national exercise prepared to pay in cash. "Some nations have shown up with literally bags of cash."

At sea, if a Navy ship from a country without prior arrangements turned up alongside AOTEAROA wanting

fuel, the Navy will ask for options to charge that nation, says Mr Wooller. "Sometimes a requesting nation will ask to bill it through a country that has a relationship with them and us, and then that mutual country pays us or gives us credits."

The 'bag of cash' scenario occurred during a refuelling at sea between HMNZS ENDEAVOUR and a foreign destroyer north of New Zealand, prior to the International Naval Review in Auckland in 2016.

Commander Martin Doolan, then Commanding Officer of ENDEAVOUR, recalls the ship wanted to pay by cash – \$US 250,000.

"We met up with ships from three countries off North Cape, where we refuelled all three ships prior to escorting them to Devonport Naval Base to participate in the 75th Anniversary of the RNZN," he says.

"Just prior to conducting the RAS with one ship, they asked if they could transfer the payment via a jackstay during the refuelling." A jackstay is a line stretched between two moving ships, with a pulley and hoist attached, to transfer parcels and – in the past – people. During a RAS, it is common for ships to pass small gifts across.

CDR Doolan took a short moment to visualise a quarter of a million dollars dangling on a line between two fast-moving ships.

"As you might imagine, my concern was over when exactly the cash became ours? If it passed the halfway mark and then, for whatever reason, fell into the sea, was it our money or theirs? Needless to say, we chose not to 'cross that bridge' and while we did fuel them, we deterred them from conducting the payment."

Mr Wooller points out that the Captain of a ship has a lot of discretion. "Captains have asked me, what are the rules? What do you recommend? We give them the solutions, the options, if they are going to refuel a ship. But we don't tell them how to do their job."

Defence Logistics Command keep an eye on prices – especially fuel – and look for the best options. The NZDF has an arrangement with Singapore, to buy fuel from the United Kingdom facilities there at a better price and quality, and NZDF does this with other nations as well. It could be in future that AOTEAROA makes a regular run to Singapore and other allied nations.

NO MATTER WHAT, YOU FRONT UP

Ron Rowe would tell today's sailors, there is enormous mana on those who came before you in the Royal New Zealand Navy. That mana comes through them now. "On your journey, each of you will add to the whakapapa. We are from the sea, we come from the sea. We belong."



Mr Rowe's journey started in 1954 at the age of 15, travelling on a New Zealand Railways bus from Napier and being sworn as a Seaman Boy Second Class in Auckland. He had been inspired by the look of the uniform on older friends who had joined.

His first year was spent training in all aspects of seamanship, with rigorous training on Motuihe Island delivered by senior NCOs, all veterans of World War II and Korea. "We didn't realise it at the time, but we left training knowing a great deal about seamanship and accepting discipline across all facets, standing us in very good stead. A fair number of 'boys' went on to become very young NCOs as a result of the training."

As an interesting aside, he comments that Seaman Boys, or Boy Telegraphists / Boy Signalmen's service time didn't begin until they turned 18. "Our time, until 18, was known as 'boys' time' and never counted for service in any way. Yet for many boys it was a great start to their opportunity for achievement."

Within days of being on the 'Rock' [Motuihe] one of the instructors asked: has anyone played in a brass band before? Mr Rowe had been learning music from the age of nine and had been playing actively in a band in Napier for nearly seven years. He hadn't learnt the old adage of 'never volunteer' and put his hand up.

"I had a sort of an audition and became a silver bugler. Within a couple of months, I became a leading boy. At nearly 16, I began my leadership role in the Navy, leading 25 buglers and drummers.

"This meant I began learning ceremony, things to do, things not to do. There were Compulsory Navy Ratings (men doing Compulsory Military Service in the Navy) in the division above us and some of them played in a brass band. So we had quite a large band. At this time the band in the Navy was the Royal Marines, and we played with them on occasions, most notably the sunset ceremony."

In February 1955 he and the other Silver Bugler carried out the Commemoration ceremony on the Treaty Ground at Waitangi. He would go on to do four other Waitangi celebrations, including one in 1963 as part of the colour guard. He remembers telling the Air Force photographer: if you can get a shot of me and the Queen, you can have my rum.

In September 1955 he was drafted to HMNZS BELLONA when the ship was returned to the Royal Navy, with the crew bringing HMNZS ROYALIST back to New Zealand. Mr Rowe became the 'Commander's runner' (the Commander being the ship's Executive



Ron Rowe and his wife Ngaire.

Ron Rowe (first on the left) amongst a group of 12 buglers, including some Compulsory Naval Ratings doing their Compulsory Military Training for three months. His Good Conduct Badge denotes him as a Leading Boy.

Ron Rowe among the guard at Waitangi, 1965.

Officer, Commander John O'Connell Ross – later Chief of Naval Staff). As the runner and lead bugler, he was always on the bridge, because with cruisers and larger ships there were bugle calls to be made.

“It meant that I was at the centre of things, at age 16. I wanted to be absolutely sure that every piece played on the bugle had to be the best possible. Not only were the bugle calls heard all over the ship, but heard by other ships and senior officers. In a place like Grand Harbour in Malta, the bugle calls reflected our ship, our mana. It had to be right.” He would sound the Last Post at 2100, and he remembers how ROYALIST's Commanding Officer, Captain Peter Phipps (a future Chief of Defence Force) would always take the time to thank him.

Mr Rowe would later become a Leading Seaman at age 19. After 10 months' study at HMAS CERBERUS in Australia, he became the first Leading Seaman to become a Gunnery and Missile instructor, at age 22. He moved up the ranks, from Petty Officer to Acting Chief Gunnery Instructor, and his sights were firmly set on Commissioning from the Ranks as a specialist gunnery officer. It was going “extraordinarily well”, he says.

“In 1964 our daughter was born. She was just weeks old but she had a birth defect and was very ill. My wife and I made a decision, I would come out of the Navy in late 1966. It was quite a wrench, but Ngaire and I agreed not to look back but to look forward.”

The first step was three years of night school. Mr Rowe initially worked for BP Oil and Europa Oil, and has built up a career both in management, consulting and teaching in Polytechnics/Institutes of technology over many years.

But there are also the decades of volunteer service for both himself and his wife Ngaire, whom he's been married to for 61 years. He joined a local Lions Club soon after leaving the Navy. He chaired liver transplant appeals in the mid-1980s, a catalyst for the New Zealand Liver Transplant clinic. He also chaired the Whanganui Hospital Chapel rebuilding appeal. He chaired the New Zealand South Pacific Leadership programme and was a member of the Lions Clubs International Leadership Faculty from 1995 to 2000. In 2001 he was a key note speaker at the United Nations International Year of the Volunteer, (topic servant leadership).

At age 70, he and his wife were international volunteers to Papua New Guinea and Samoa with

Volunteer Service Abroad for two years. He has been involved with the New Zealand Institute of Management since 1970 and chaired the Hawke's Bay branch. He was originator of the Trust to raise the river ship Waimarie from the Whanganui River bed. He was a member of the task force reviewing and restructuring the governance capability of the Royal New Zealand Returned and Services Association in 2014. There's more, but the catalogue of roles and awards is too lengthy to list.

He can't say no, it seems. “My wife would tell you exactly that.”

Recently he's been in discussion with the Warrant Officer of the Navy about messaging he can deliver to our sailors today.

“I have been very fortunate in so many ways. There is no doubt whatsoever that it was the Navy which set the path for my journey in all that has happened through to today. In my relatively short time (12 years) in the Navy, I got various leadership roles at an early age, and with it came the understanding, that no matter what, you fronted up. You can't hide from your responsibilities. That is something I've carried through into civilian life, and it's helped me considerably.”

Longing for home and family





I'll be going away

How many days I can't say

Just know I'm coming home soon

After my stint on the ocean

It's a song written by the sailor, for the sailor, and it's something that all seafarers can relate to.

New Zealand reggae-fusion band Corrella, who released the song *Seafarer* at the beginning of the month, started as a Navy garage band in 2016. Since then the band has developed from a garage band playing covers to a recognised originals band making their mark on the New Zealand music industry.

Five of the seven band members are serving or ex-Navy. Petty Officer Combat System Specialist Te Naawe Tupe, rhythm guitarist, says the band formed among HMNZS CANTERBURY sailors originally. "It was a group of guys that played for cocktail parties. I've played in bands my whole life, and when I joined the Navy I got involved in one of their practices."

The band's name pays homage to the Navy housing on Corrella Road in Belmont, Auckland. "When you're down that street, you're transported out of the city back to the feel of the country and coastal towns where we come from. Our band name represents all of us, out of where we belong but still able to feel at home."

There are two singers, former Petty Officer Pipiwharauoa Campbell and civilian Rebekah Brady. Petty Officer Electronic Technician Codi Wehi-Ngatai is on bass guitar. Former Able Electronics Technician Moresby Kainuku and Able Musician Tom Scrase are the lead guitarist and drummer, while civilian Taulu Schuster is on the keyboard.

The band is busy with gigs, which can be problematic with short-notice deployments. Both POCSS Tupe and POET Wehi-Ngatai are posted to CANTERBURY, which required them for CANTERBURY's scheduled

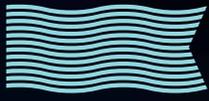
maintenance period in Singapore last year and Operation Pacific Relief in Tonga in February. "The last two years have been the most rewarding for our band, but also the most difficult. We released our first album onto Spotify, Apple Music and YouTube, but we were dealing with COVID lockdowns and being deployed."

Their jobs at sea inspire their lines. POCSS Tupe wrote their number one track, *Summertime in Aotearoa*, which is doing the rounds in New Zealand. "I was at sea, on a trip to Asia. We travelled all over the place, different summers around the world, but you come home and there's no summer like summer in New Zealand. It's sunshine kissing the water and pohutukawa blooming."

It's the deployments, and the strong Navy presence, that inspired Campbell to pen *Seafarer*, as a heartfelt dedication to families sailors have to leave behind, every time they go to sea. "Serving the country is a very honourable and rewarding job, but it can be difficult to part ways with family members and loved ones for extended periods," says POET Wehi-Ngatai. "The song really captures that feeling of longing, and the unique bond between a sailor, and the people at home waiting."

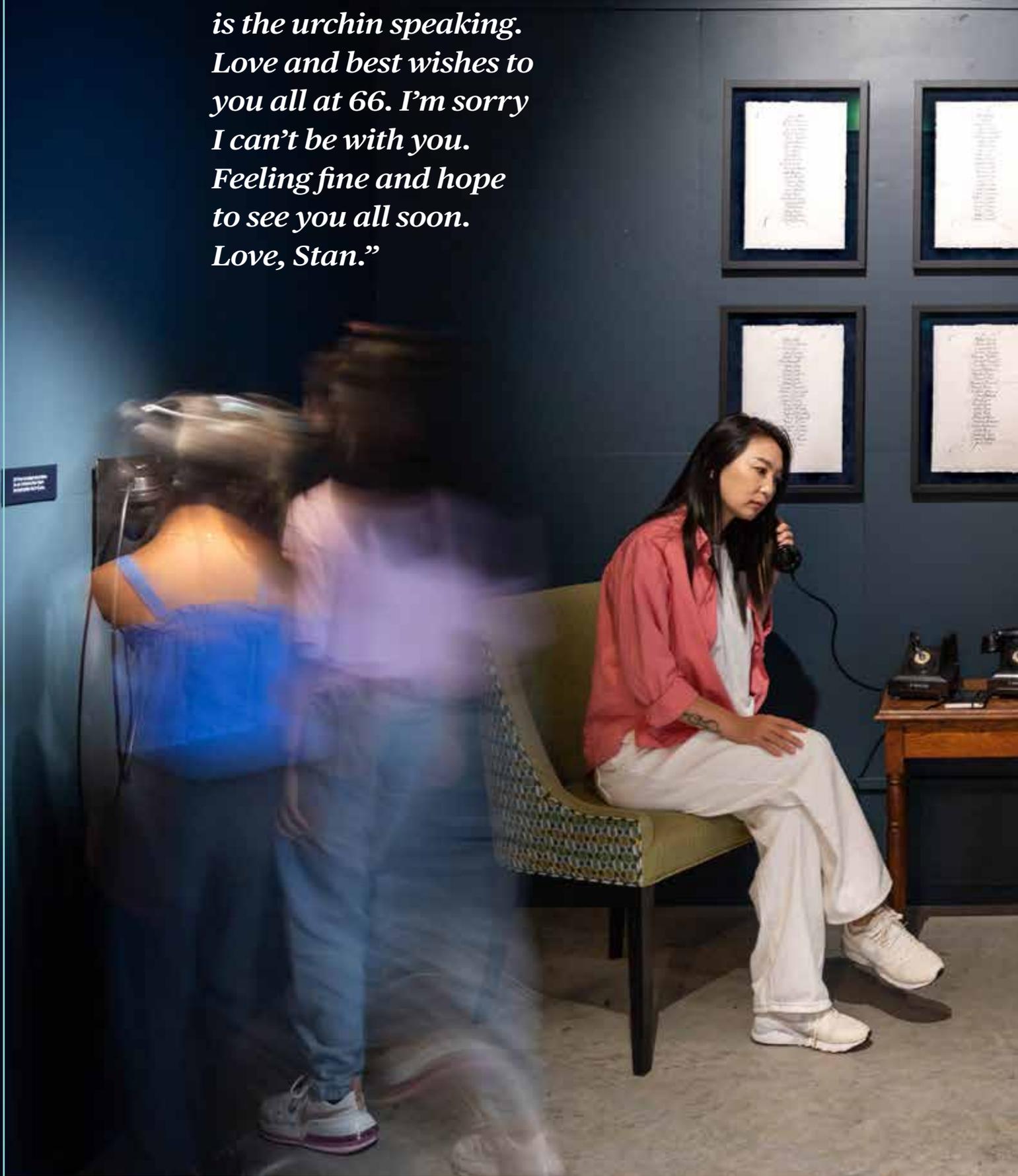
As a senior rate, POCSS Tupe strongly relates to the idea of lifting spirits. "Our job is to keep morale up, keep the team happy. We strive hard to do that at sea, and that relates to what we do on stage. We're up there to make people happy."

From left, Taulu Schuster, Rebekah Brady, Te Naawe Tupe, Moresby Kainuku, Tom Scrase, Pipiwharauoa Campbell and Codi Wehi-Ngatai.



TORPEDO BAY
NAVY MUSEUM

*“Hello, mother dear, this
is the urchin speaking.
Love and best wishes to
you all at 66. I’m sorry
I can’t be with you.
Feeling fine and hope
to see you all soon.
Love, Stan.”*



VOICES OF LOVE AFTER 80 YEARS



The voice of Leading Seaman Raymond Stanley Percival 3420 RNVR, the son of Edward and Elsie Percival of Wadestown, Wellington, rings as clear as a bell at the National Museum of the Royal New Zealand Navy, despite the scratchy background and occasional clonks. It is the first time his voice has been heard in 80 years.

The radio recording is from November 1941, featuring some of the 150 New Zealanders serving aboard Britain's HMS NEPTUNE, a Leander-class light cruiser.

While in Alexandria, Egypt, 50 of those New Zealand sailors joined Arch Curry from the New Zealand Broadcasting Service to record Christmas greetings for loved ones at home, for the weekly radio broadcast 'With the Boys Overseas'.

The prospect of being recorded for the nation on radio makes the men speak a little formally, but you can easily hear the fitness, good health and good cheer of invincible young Kiwi men having the adventure of a lifetime. They could easily be speaking from a safari or mountain expedition. There's no sense of wartime or dangers. The messages speak of being fit and well, and being happy to get regular mail and parcels from home. With only 50 men selected, some pass on additional messages to their shipmates' loved ones.

Thirty six days later, on 19 December, HMS NEPTUNE struck four Italian-laid mines off the coast of Libya and sank with the loss of 764 lives. All 150 New Zealanders died, the largest loss of life in New Zealand Naval history.

The Museum's new exhibition, Neptune Calling, commemorates 80 years since the disaster. The recordings have been loaded onto vintage phones for visitors to sit and listen to in a quiet, reflective space.

Communications manager Jane Cotty says the museum feels an enormous sense of responsibility towards these recordings. "They are a very real, tangible link to 150 young men who never made it home. They represent an enormous loss felt at the time throughout the nation; every city and almost every town lost young men they knew and loved. This loss is still keenly felt in many families.

"We feel very privileged and honoured to be able to make it possible for family members of those who died, and our wider visitors to learn more about these men and the sacrifice they made."

The wreck site of HMS NEPTUNE in the Mediterranean Sea was discovered in 2016 and is an official Commonwealth War Grave. The 150 New Zealanders are remembered on the Memorial Wall at Devonport Naval Base and individually on various memorials around the country.

The exhibition will be open throughout 2022, free of charge.

Acknowledgements:

Radio New Zealand and Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision

A NAVAL FOCUS IN HAWKE'S BAY

It's not just about being the Navy's representative in the region, says Lieutenant Commander Paul Eady, and it's not just about the public relations. It's also being the region's voice to the Navy.



LTCDR Eady, ex-Regular Force Army and Navy, has been the Regional Naval Officer for Hawke's Bay since 2020, taking over from former Napier City Council Chief Executive Wayne Jack. LTCDR Eady also works for the council, as an Asset Management System Specialist.

He's one of 10 Regional Naval Officers who maintain a connection with local authorities, veterans, the Port and other organisations the Navy might need to get involved with.

Napier is his home town, but LTCDR Eady has been around. His father was a World War II veteran who had fought his way across Italy with the 24th Battalion, 2NZEF, and he grew up hearing a lot of war stories. "When the Navy recruiting bus came to school in the fifth form, I thought, that's it, but my hearing wasn't good enough." He had better luck with an Army medical, going from the Territorials to full-time as a movement operator. He had a second shot at the Navy, getting in as a Marine Technician in 1997. He commissioned in 2000 in the Marine Engineer Officer branch, training in England and then serving in frigates HMNZS CANTERBURY and HMNZS TE KAHA.

He left regular service to work on hydro projects in the South Island, and joined HMNZS PEGASUS as a Reservist, despite being located in Central Otago. After study at the New Zealand Maritime School in Auckland, he worked in Merchant Marine for six years, getting his ticket as a Chief Marine Engineer and becoming the Fleet Manager for Port Otago. In 2016, he started working for Napier City Council and four years later, he got the tap on the shoulder from his departing CEO. Would he consider being the Regional Naval Officer?

"I wanted to do it because I'm quite passionate about the Hawke's Bay. I've always seen it as home. And the Navy, as an institution, has a lot of value to offer New Zealand if we could link into the provinces and the regions. With someone like me, there's an ability to reach inside the Navy, have the sort of discussions with people that the traditional command chains might not be able to facilitate. We have a bit more autonomy, especially ex-Navy RNOs. We know the right places to go, to get a question answered. To be that voice of the region, it's quite a privileged position."

His work can involve the mayor, government ministers and Members of Parliament. He stays connected to the local Navy community via the RSA and the Ex-Naval Mens Service Club.

"It can be like being a Commanding Officer – making the call and going for it. You have to have confidence and be comfortable working at a high level and managing expectations. We're fortunate that the Naval leadership is quite supportive of us getting on and doing what we do."

Having an active person in uniform provides a focal point for other NZDF personnel, Cadet Forces, Reservists and Unit Commanders. "Across the three Services, it feels like there's a bit of momentum building in Hawke's Bay."

CDR Paul Eady (right) works with New Zealand Remembrance Army volunteers cleaning graves in Napier.

An Essential Service

Navy Today talks to Norma Bucknell, veteran of the Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service during World War II, on the eve of her 100th birthday.



Norma Bucknell

It was a sense of being wanted, says Norma Bucknell.

Norma was among around 700 women who joined the Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service (WRNZNS), established in mid-1942. Norma's parents had died by the time she had turned 16 and wartime service was also a way of gaining some independence.

The 'Wrens' were particularly in demand for signals. They were trained in various types of communications work, including visual signallers, telephonists, teleprinter operators and telegraphists.

"We felt like we were an essential cog in the machine," she says. "That recognition of appreciation goes a long way."

Norma didn't know anything about the Navy – apart from dating a sailor who "sailed away" – but she had been a Girl Guide and had instruction from the Army in Morse Code. The director of the WRNZNS was Chief Officer Ruth Herrick, who had been the Chief Commissioner for Girl Guides in New Zealand. Norma says if you were a Girl Guide, you got a foot in the door.

She reckons there were about 15 Wrens working in Lyttelton at the Signals Department Office. Norma, service number W99, stayed with an aunt and her sons in Christchurch and travelled by train to Lyttelton each day, working as a radio operator. "We had train passes. If you had night duty, you weren't allowed to go back to the city on the late train. There were one or two rooms in the old Navy building and you stayed the night. You had to walk sideways, just about, to get into the room."

She remembers being woken by an almighty scream one night and banging her head on the ceiling, wondering what had happened. Her room-mate, Molly, had leapt out of bed after discovering a large rat had settled on her after devouring a large quantity of chocolate. "Molly really liked her chocolate."

Her work was in decoding. "We were divided into two big sections. There were those doing the Morse Code, and those like me who were decoding. You were working with groups of numbers. I remember we had to decode six numbers, in groups of six numbers."

N O R M A B U C K N E L L



1 0 0 Y E A R S O L D



LT Kyle Butcher and Norma Bucknell, 100 years old, with staff from Ranfurly House.

Norma turned 100 on 30 March, enjoying a special celebration at the Ranfurly House in Three Kings, Auckland. Commander Julie Simpkins, Commanding Officer of Devonport Naval Base, was not able to be present due to being a COVID household contact, but she had an online chat with Norma during her birthday. Norma was presented with a personal letter of congratulations from Rear Admiral David Proctor, Chief of Navy, and his coin.

Norma says she would have loved to go overseas, and even her transfer to Wellington felt like a big adventure. "When I left Lyttelton, I got on the ship early and went up on deck to wave goodbye. My Aunt had come over from Christchurch – I think she thought I was going to Antarctica. There were three tipsy sailors, with flowers tied up with a bow of toilet paper, singing, *You are my Sunshine*."

Night duty in Wellington involved spending the night at the Wellington Museum after 11pm in a room full of stuffed animals. "It smelt like a museum. I didn't last long." She also wasn't impressed with the idea of the Salvation Army Women's Hostel, with a queue of 100 lining up for breakfast. She ended up boarding with a friend and her mum, who were delighted Norma loved to cook.

A particular memory in Wellington was meeting First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who came to New Zealand in 1943 to visit the United States forces, look at the work of the American Red Cross and study the contribution of New Zealand women to the war effort. Norma and another girl were waiting outside a Navy, Army and Air Force (NAAFI) Club when a big car with an American flag stopped outside.

"Out hopped Eleanor Roosevelt and her entourage. She stopped and said something to us about our uniforms which I didn't really understand because of her accent. She shook our hands and went indoors."

There was no particular notice made of women in uniform, she says. "By this time the general public were used to uniforms. I had a 'boiler suit' uniform, and I had shirts, jacket and skirt. We had to do our own washing and ironing. I had about 30-odd starched collars with studs. The one thing I do remember were the horrible stockings. Those Grey Lisle stockings turned mauve after a few washings."

One moment of excitement was receiving an urgent coded message from the Interislander ferry. "A person on deck thought he had seen a submarine in the moonlight. I suppose it could have been."

Norma met her future husband, Tom, at a dance in Wellington. Tom was in the Air Force and they stayed in touch, marrying after the war was over.

After Wellington, Norma returned to Lyttelton, this time in a Wrennery, a Wrens Hostel in town. "It was a lovely time. All the girls had different jobs but we got on famously. There were a lot of laughs and lasting friendships."

When the war ended Wrens' work devolved to paperwork. Norma was posted to HMNZS PHILOMEL in Auckland but didn't like the work. "It was terribly boring." She applied for her discharge and got it.

Tom became a lighthouse keeper after the war in some remote locations, including Cuvier Island, south-east of Great Barrier Island, for over four years. "Being a Wren, I would probably say, lends itself to being a lighthouse keeper's wife. I would run to the light, across the causeway, pull up the curtains. All that getting up early stood me in good stead. I've never had a problem getting up."

The couple have two children and Tom has since died. Norma retired to Christchurch, but moved to Auckland following the Christchurch earthquakes and hasn't returned.

Additional material from "75 Years of Memories - Women in the Royal New Zealand Navy" by Anne Hines.



Commander
Martin Doolan

New Director of Naval Safety

A former HMNZS ENDEAVOUR Commanding Officer and Acting Captain Fleet Operational Readiness has taken up the role of Director Naval Safety and Health, starting 1 March.

Commander Martin Doolan had a highly successful 25-year career with the Royal Navy before arriving in New Zealand in 2009 as a lateral recruit.

As a Lieutenant Commander, he posted immediately to sea in HMNZS TE MANA, had a short posting as Commanding Officer of HMNZS WELLINGTON before joining the Maritime Operational Evaluation Team (MOET), first as the Fleet Warfare Officer and then as the Fleet Seamanship and Executive Officer, with promotion to Commander.

On returning to sea CDR Doolan commanded tanker HMNZS ENDEAVOUR until the ship decommissioned in 2017, before assuming the role of Chief of Staff to Captain Fleet Operational Readiness (CFOR). He subsequently returned to MOET, this time as CDR MOET before being promoted A/CAPT in order to take up the role as CFOR in 2021. Having now relinquished his A/CAPT rank, CDR Doolan takes up his new Director of Navy and Health role.

CDR Doolan holds a Bachelors Degree (BA(Hons)), a Masters Degree (MA) in Defence Studies and a second Masters Degree (MSc) in Maritime Technology.

Readers may not be aware that CDR Doolan is a highly qualified and experienced football coach. Once his playing days were well and truly over, he became the Head Coach for the RNZN football team before stepping up as Assistant Coach for the NZDF. In 2018 he led the very successful NZDF Football tour to the UK, combining both sport and ceremonial duties for the commemoration of the 100th anniversary of WWI.

Inspiring The Future



Inspiring The Future is an exciting new programme for primary and intermediate schools across Aotearoa New Zealand. Run by the Tertiary Education Commission, it has been created to broaden young people's horizons, and help challenge stereotypes that can limit their potential.

At an Inspiring The Future event, young people learn about different jobs and why people love doing them, as well as how those people got started in their careers.

We need sailors to represent the NZDF

Inspiring The Future needs people from different walks of life to share their stories. It is a great opportunity for you to inspire young people who may never otherwise consider a military career.

Through representing the NZDF you can influence the next generation into making a career in the military a possibility. Your story can help to show young people that anyone from any background can join.

Why Inspiring The Future?

We know from research in Aotearoa and overseas that young people often have narrow ideas about their future.

We also know that a lot of our recruits were inspired to join by a friend, family member or someone they met from the NZDF.

That's why you can be a role model for young people, by volunteering alongside other members of the community at an Inspiring the Future event. By taking part, you can showcase your job to the community while opening children's eyes to more possibilities.

Speaking at an in-school event is also a great opportunity for professional development!

How an event works

The events are run in a '20 questions' format during school assembly. Role models initially appear in civilian clothes and the audience asks 'Yes/No' questions to try and guess what each role model does for a job. The role models then go change into their uniforms or work clothes, and share with the audience about their job. It's a great way to remove biases and show our school kids that they are not limited by gender, ethnicity or background.

There are in-person and online event options so that anyone has the opportunity to take part, no matter where they live.

How do I join?

Just head over to the Inspiring The Future website and sign up! You'll be asked to complete an online profile and a criminal record check form.

Your profile will be visible to schools on the website after the police check has been completed. Teachers in your area can read your profile and invite you to participate in Inspiring the Future events.

Signing up as a role model doesn't mean you have to participate in events. You can accept or decline as many event invitations as you wish based on your availability.

You will also get support and resources every step of the way, so it's easy and fun.

What is required from you:

1. Complete the online profile located on the website and a criminal record check form.
2. 4–5 hours of time for in-person Inspiring The Future events, or 1–2 hours plus a half hour pre-meet for online events.
3. Your 1 Up and/or 2 Up's approval to attend. A dot point brief for your command chain is located on the 'Recruiting Ambassador Programme (RAP)' intranet page via the ILP. For additional assistance, please email DROPS@nzdf.mil.nz, subject line 'Inspiring The Future'.

Sign up

You can sign-up to be a role model at inspiringthefuture.org.nz.

REUNIONS

'Hydro' Reunion on Labour Weekend 2024, Gisborne

In October 1949 the RNZN created the Hydrographic Services. In October that same year HMAS LACHLAN was commissioned into the RNZN as HMNZS LACHLAN and served with distinction until decommissioning in 1975.

During this phase Survey Motor Launches TARAPUNGA and TAKAPU served as well, from 1950 to 1980, then sold off to civilian skippers/owners.

From 1977 to 1998, HMNZS MONOWAI took over from LACHLAN and served with distinction also.

From 1979 to 2000 Inshore Survey Craft (ISC) HMNZ Ships TARAPUNGA and TAKAPU superseded the SMLs.

From 1997 to 2012, HMNZS RESOLUTION (Ex USS TENACIOUS) superseded MONOWAI and the ISCs.

On decommissioning HMNZS MANAWANUI (III) took on Hydrographic duties alongside Dive and HMNZS MATATAUA capabilities, a role filled by HMNZS MANAWANUI (IV) today.

The 75th anniversary reunion is being planned to take place at the major survey ships' home port of Gisborne on Labour Weekend 2024. It is planned to have HMNZS MANAWANUI in port for the weekend, and maybe one or two existing MLs. The only criteria is you have had to serve on any of the ships/vessels. Any branch or rate. For more information contact Thane Zander at zappydodah@hotmail.com.

Intake Reunion

RNZN 1/73 Intake Reunion to be held in Nelson, January 20–22, 2023. Any interested personnel can email Gary Howard, gchoward@xtra.co.nz.

Celebrating 80 years of Motor Launches – Easter 2023

In April 1943 the first of 16 Harbour Defence Motor Launches arrived in Wellington, all borne on USS Liberty Ships. From 1943 to 2023 these vessels have been seen around the coast. The celebration is for 80 years' service, both in the Navy and also civilian ownership.

The last serving MLs decommissioned in 1984. Of the original 16, eight still live in varying stages of repair (three in Kopu Shipyard, one in Wellington, one in Riverton and one in Brisbane). Two fully operational MLs (PAEA and KUPARU) steam out of Whangarei.

Contact Thane Zander at zappydodah@hotmail.com.



In search of stories from New Zealand's 'Silent Army' during World War II

Historian and author Renée Hollis is searching New Zealand for untold stories from on the service of New Zealand women during World War II, at home and overseas.

The social history project will focus on the experiences of New Zealand women during World War II, sourced from letters and diaries from women who helped keep the home fires burning or served overseas.

'I am looking for stories that have never been shared before that will

give the reader a real insight into what women's lives were really like during World War II,' she said.

Sources could include those who can recall childhood memories of wartime, mothers raising children while their husbands were fighting overseas, volunteers, land girls, women who worked in the factories as well as the Red Cross, the Women's Auxiliary Army Corps (WAACs), the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAFs), the Women's Royal New Zealand Naval Service (Wrens).

She is also very interested to hear about the experiences of New Zealand women who

served overseas as nurses, pilots, ambulance drivers or entertainers.

Letters and diaries must be submitted by 19 June 2022. Material can be emailed to [Renée at newzealandsilentarmy@gmail.com](mailto:newzealandsilentarmy@gmail.com), or can be posted to

Renée Hollis
P.O. Box 85
Nelson
7040

Please make sure that you include a return address. Renée understands how precious these items are and will take great care of them. After she has read the material, she will return all items via courier.

15 ROUNDS

WITH CAPTAIN LISA HUNN



01

Job title and description:

Assistant Chief Of Navy (Strategy and Engagement)

02

Date joined RNZN:

1990

03

First ship posted to:

HMNZS ENDEAVOUR

04



Above: HMNZS TE MANA, with CDR Lisa Hunn in command, on her way to winning the prestigious Naval Surface Fire Support Rodeo competition at RIMPAC 2018.

Best deployment:

OP CRUCIBLE 02/2018 in Command of HMNZS TE MANA and the circumnavigation of the Pacific Ocean to deliver HMNZS TE MANA to Esquimalt, Canada.

05

Hometown:

Wellington (go the Hurricanes!)

06

High school:

Newlands College / Pakuranga College

07

Favourite book:

The Lord of the Rings Trilogy



08

Favourite movie:

Too many to name, but anything Sci Fi.

09

Favourite album:

Pink Floyd – *The Wall*

10

Favourite song:

Queen – *Bohemian Rhapsody*

11

Favourite holiday destination:

Anywhere immersed in nature

12

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

Getting out into nature (sailing or bush walking)

13

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

I took an 'off ramp' from the Navy in 2012 for 2 years to study Fine Arts at Whitecliffe College of Arts and Design.

14

A valuable life/Navy lesson for me is?

As a leader, strive to keep space and time in your life to think and develop leaders for the future.

15

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

An organisation of opportunity and exceptional people delivering for NZ.



An illustrated guide to medals, honours, orders and awards

The Navy Museum has a limited set of superbly illustrated, newly released A1 posters available, showcasing the medallic and honours recognition to our personnel since 1945.

Pick up a set of three from the Navy Museum.
Recommended donation of \$5 per set.