



THE CLAYMORE

HMNZS OTAGO ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

#93 Autumn 2017

PRESIDENTS CORNER

Courage is knowing what not to fear

Greetings to you all, The winter cold snap has given us a “wake up” call recently and I hope this finds you all keeping well and dodging the colds and Flu.

REUNION 2018. This is planned and the venue booked, at the Remuera Club in Greenlane for the 13-15 April. As always, we welcome any other ex RNZN people, or as it has come to be known as “All Ships”. A reunion Sub-Committee has been convened and is already busy organising this event, so please reserve this weekend and come and support YOUR Association.. ..It would be a great help if you would register your attendance as early as possible...PLEASE don't leave it till the last bell.

Whilst on the subject of reunions, I previously asked you to give some thought about the frequency of these – whether we continue to hold them annually, or two yearly, or even go to three yearly.....I have had a little feed back, but now I ask you to give your opinion, by phone, email or any other means to myself or the Secretary.

FINANCE. As always. I am pleased to tell you that our finances are satisfactory..... We are managing well.

MEMBERSHIP. The sad saga of the Grim Reaper continues and again some members have Crossed the Bar. Please, whenever you can, try to recruit a new member. They are out there, bring them into the fold.

OTAGO P148. Recently I represented the Association at the Change of Command Ceremony, where Lt Cdr Lorna Gray took over from Lt Cdr Andrew Sorrenson. The opportunity was taken to talk to the new C.O. about the close affiliation we have with the ship and she is very keen to foster this. Our discussion was fairly brief but a further meeting is planned in a few months' time, after the ship's return from its Patrol up in the Islands.

CLAYMORE. The editor, Gerry Wright, asked a question at the very top of the last Claymore”...he would like some answers please...and also... what about some “dits” and some photos too.. Come on “let's be ávin yer”.

WEBSITE. You will have noticed some activity and changes to this....Fred Wilson has volunteered to take it over as Webmaster and is slowly bringing it more up to date - a mammoth task...so be patient.

Look after yourselves and “keep taking the pills”... we want to see you at the Reunion in April.

Every kind wish

Jim Blackburn. BEM. Ld'H.

President.

HMNZS OTAGO

Change of Command.

FIRST FEMALE COMMANDING OFFICER OF A NEW ZEALAND WARSHIP.

The new Commanding Officer of the Off-shore Patrol Vessel, HMNZS *Otago* Lieutenant Commander Lorna Gray said she gets seasick. (Haven't we all?)

"It can be torture," she said: ironic, given Lorna Gray has just been made the first female Commanding Officer of a Royal New Zealand Navy warship, the HMNZS *Otago*.

Thirty years ago women were forbidden to serve in naval ships now one is at the helm.

But gender doesn't come into it for Lorna Gray: "It's about knowledge and experience," she said. The 34-year-old joined the Royal New Zealand Navy in 2005, and has served in *Wakakura*, *Manawanui* and *Te Kaha*.

She has completed numerous deployments in the Pacific and South East Asia regions, and two six-month tours of duty as a UN military observer in Syria and Lebanon.



Lt Cdr Lorna Gray receiving her command from Lt Cdr Andrew Sorrenson

Being made commanding officer of the *Otago* was a homecoming of sorts for the Taieri Plains native.

Having climbed the ranks as a warfare officer, she knew becoming Commanding Officer was a possibility – but said it wasn't something she had expected.

Lorna Gray enlisted at 22, after completing an honours degree in political science and English at the University of Otago.

There was "no pull to the Navy at all" Lorna Gray said. She thought she would end up working in diplomacy or policy analysis.

The only time she had considered a career in the military was when she saw *Top Gun* at 12 years old.

“I wanted to be an A-14 fighter pilot. “But then my dad told me we didn’t have A-14s in New Zealand, so there went that idea,” she said.

She forgot all about that dream, until one year she went to Warbirds over Wanaka with her family. The Navy recruiting bus was there. “The only reason I went in was to get out of the rain,” she said.

“If the sky hadn’t opened at that moment just as I was walking past the recruiting bus I probably never would have joined the Navy.”

Twelve years on, that thought was “pretty crazy”. Just last week she was in “a desk job of sorts”, advising other ships in her role as an above water warfare expert. Now she’s back at sea.

The team in *Otago* are currently preparing to deploy to the Pacific Islands for a fisheries patrol.

Ed: We wish Lt Cmdr Gray all the best for this important appointment.

Change of First Lieutenant

In May, Lieutenant Daniel Wierenga was relieved by Lieutenant Samuel Fox. Below is Sam’s first report on OTAGO’s activities.

HMNZS OTAGO and her crew have been tirelessly working over the past few months to get the ship ready to deploy to the South West Pacific during the winter months. Following an important maintenance period with a large number of crew change out, OTAGO headed back out into the Hauraki Gulf for sea check and trials. It was smooth sailing as the ship breezed through all the trials and proved that she was ready to start workup training.

Following the Change of Command which saw LT CDR Gray take command from LT CDR Sorenson we were straight out back into the Hauraki Gulf to commence workup. The enthusiastic and motivated attitude of all on board saw us tackle every challenge that was presented. During the workup OTAGO exercised numerous damage control incidents, machinery and equipment breakdowns. We also conducted boardings, search and rescue exercises and towing exercises of numerous commercial vessels that we could expect to come across in our upcoming deployment. OTAGO was also able to exercise her 'muscles' with a number of warfare exercises completed which saw us conduct heightened security entries and exits into port, combating inshore attack craft and conducting a fire power demonstration. OTAGO was able to achieve a significant amount of training in a short two week period which saw the crew grow closer together and together achieve a "fully prepared for operations" status across the board. The crew are now turning their attention to preparing for our upcoming deployment to the South West Pacific in support of MPI fisheries patrols. This will see the ship's company away from family and friends for a short period but allow everyone the opportunity to put all the great training into practice. Everyone on board is looking forward to heading to warmer climates over the winter period and returning to the Deep South later in the year.

Sam

FORD vs. WINDOWS

For all of us who feel only the deepest love and affection for the way computers have enhanced our lives, read on. At a recent computer expo (COMDEX): Bill Gates reportedly compared the computer industry with the auto industry and stated, "If Ford had kept up with technology like the computer industry has, we would all be driving \$25 cars that got 1,000 miles to the gallon."

In response to Bill's comments, Ford issued a press release stating:

If Ford had developed technology like Microsoft, we would all be driving cars with the following characteristics (and I just love this part):

1. For no reason whatsoever, your car would crash twice a day.
2. Every time they repainted the lines in the road, you would have to buy a new car.
3. Occasionally your car would die on the freeway for no reason. You would have to pull over to the side of the road, close all windows, shut off the car, restart it, and reopen the windows before you could continue. For some reason you would simply accept this.
4. Occasionally, executing a manoeuvre such as a left turn would cause your car to shut down and refuse to restart, in which case you would have to reinstall the engine.
5. Macintosh would make a car that was powered by the sun, was reliable, five times as fast and twice as easy to drive - but would run on only five percent of the roads. .
6. The oil, water temperature, and alternator warning lights would all be replaced by a single "This Car Has Performed An Illegal Operation" warning light.
7. The airbag system would ask, "Are you sure?" before deploying.
8. Occasionally, for no reason whatsoever, your car would lock you out and refuse to let you in until you simultaneously lifted the door handle, turned the key and grabbed hold of the radio antenna.
9. Every time a new car was introduced car buyers would have to learn how to drive all over again because none of the controls would operate in the same manner as the old car.
10. You'd have to press the "Start" button to turn the engine off.

PS - I'd like to add that when all else fails, you could call "customer service" in some foreign country and be instructed in some foreign language how to fix your car yourself!

Today's Sailor

I recently looked at the qualifications of today's naval recruits. Go back 50 years and I doubt that many of us would have met the minimum standards of today. Some Able Rates today have University papers. I failed School Certificate Carpentry yet was selected through the Upper Yardman Scheme for promotion and later had several sea commands.

Gerry

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