



THE CLAYMORE

HMNZS OTAGO ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

#98 Autumn 2018

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

“It is better to know nothing than to half-know a lot”

Greetings all. Hopefully you have escaped unscathed from the gales and floods of the past few weeks - it is Mother Nature balancing out the past months good weather.

Reunion 2018 – Well what can I say apart from it really was a great weekend. One of the best yet and despite a couple of “technical hitches” that arose, everything went well. We had the pleasure of hosting the Commanding Officer of HMNZS *Otago*, Lt Cdr Lorna Gray and five of her Officers and ship’s company. Lorna was our guest speaker on Friday evening and Captain Andy Watts gave us a most enlightening talk on Saturday evening. The food was excellent and the ambiance marvelous. Being a relatively small venue, everyone mixed and talked to each other. We were meant to visit the *Otago* but unfortunately, she was still in Dry Dock, but HMNZS *Wellington* was a great second choice. Everyone was friendly and really helpful, and even one of the Babcock employees provided us with an unplanned very much appreciated shuttle to and from the ship.

Lunch was provided in the *Philomel* Vince McGlone Dining Room, followed by an afternoon in the Ship Simulator. Our host Stephanie Rushby gave up her Saturday afternoon to flash up the simulator. We experienced a whole range of sea conditions, some of which made a few stagger and feel a little queasy, she showed us simulated attacks from aircraft, a Submarine popped up beside us coming into Sydney Harbour, plus we had air balloons and the Red Baron also did a fly past. We all had the opportunity to have a drive, in fact it was difficult to get some of them away from the controls. It really was a great experience and highly recommended should you get the opportunity to give it a go.

The Church Service on Sunday was well attended and not only did Chaplin Colin Mason give us a relevant inspiring service, he also provided the music from his own Magic Music Maker (A UE Boom Box paired to his phone).

My only drip is that a small few “just turned up to see who was there” on the Friday night and did not register or pay their way. I would like to remind those that they are not being fair to their shipmates.

I would like to thank the organizing committee and all those who attended. I hope you enjoyed the reunion as much as I did. You will be pleased to learn that planning has already started for the 2019 Reunion, albeit, it will be on a smaller scale.

Finance – As we usually do, we made a small loss on the reunion as we like to give back a little to those who support it. However, our finances are in a very healthy state and we continue to operate within our budget.

Membership – The Secretary will soon be removing from the database a number of members who have not renewed their Subs for the past three years as they have not responded to numerous reminders sent to them. On a positive note, we also gained some new members from the Reunion.

HMNZS Otago P148 – Our “little sister” was in dock during the reunion weekend and our ship visit looked doubtful. However, Lorna arranged for us to visit her sister ship HMNZS *Wellington* and for that we are truly grateful. Our guides from the *Otago* and the ship’s crew of the *Wellington* were fantastic. Everyone was so helpful and friendly.

Claymore – As always, please remember the Editor welcomes dits, photographs etc. and we know from the reunion there are plenty of both out there. So, come on, don’t keep them to yourself; share them. You can send them to Gerry Wright gerrywright@xtra.co.nz .

To conclude, every kind wish to you all. Keep warm and dry and keep taking the pills.

Jim

James F Blackburn BEM Ld’H
President

Our sister Otago

For the last few months HMNZS OTAGO has been undergoing a heavy maintenance period, which happens every two years. Throughout her six weeks in dry dock OTAGO underwent many upgrades ranging from a new air conditioning system to a new cooling system for the engines. Whilst undergoing the maintenance period members of Ship’s Company have been completing courses. Some have even had the opportunity to work with NZ Customs at the Port of Auckland, searching merchant vessels for unauthorised items.



HMNZS OTAGO Ship’s Company standing beneath the ship in dry dock

In April OTAGO hosted the OTAGO Association. This included multiple events where Ship's Company were able to interact with the members of the OTAGO Association. The events were two dinners, a ship's tour and a church service. The response from the crew who attended was that it was a great experience being able to bond with previous serving personnel.

ANZAC Day was another big event for OTAGO. The Ship's Company were divided into different groups to attend multiple services. A group of 10 went to Dunedin to commemorate ANZAC Day where they attended the Dawn Service and Civic Service. The group also cooked a breakfast which was available to all personnel that attended the ceremony. During their time in Dunedin, the group visited a veteran's home to share morning tea together.

2018 Reunion

Did you miss the reunion at the Poenamo Hotel? About 40 joined for a meet and greet on Friday night despite the noisy band in the next room. On Saturday we visited HMNZS *Wellington* for guided tours. Why *Wellington*? you ask. *Otago* was in the dry dock and OSH rules didn't allow us on board. Then we wandered across to *Philomel* for lunch. That was a five star meal and service. How things have changed for the better.

In the evening we had a formal dinner. There was a choice of Lamb Shanks or Pork Belly for the main course. Captain Andy Watts talked about our future navy ships.

On Sunday morning the church service was a little late and followed with a BBQ. Bravo Zulu to the function organisers.

Future Reunions

Your Committee has decided that the 2019 reunion will be limited to a dinner in Auckland probably on 6 April, 2019.

But, the 2020 reunion will be the 60th anniversary of *Otago*'s commissioning so it should be a great show. However, the place has yet to be decided. Dunedin would be great as that was her home port. But Tauranga/Armitage is also in the running because the reunion that was held there in 2011 was outstanding. So let Jim <jimblackburnem@gmail.com> know your thoughts so we can begin planning the event.

SLOPS

The present state of Otago Association slops stands at:

ITEM	PRICE	Number
Badge (Emb Large)	\$14.00	1
Badge (Emb Small)	\$10.00	7
Beanie	\$20.00	2
Lapel badge	\$7.50	11
Polo Shirts	\$40.00	3
Ship's crest	\$60.00	3
Tie slide	\$10.00	11
F111	\$5.00	4

Contact John Bass at John.c.bass@slingshot.co.nz to purchase any item.

HMNZS Endeavour final resting spot

Endeavour arrived and was run ashore on the ship dismantling beach of Alang, India, on 28 April.

Maurice Mitchell

It is with sadness that I report that our committee member Maurice has crossed the bar after a few month's battle with cancer. His funeral will be held on Wednesday 9th May 2018 at The Remuera Club, commencing at 11 am.

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Make Time For Safety. It Is Better To Be 5 Minutes Late In This Life and take a bolicking Than Many Years Early In The Next.