

THE White ensign

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVY MUSEUM JOURNAL



NAVY MUSEUM

Te Waka Taonga o Te Taua Moana o Aotearoa

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GUEST EDITORIAL

I joined the navy in 1949 as a Seaman Boy and was serving in TAUPO at the outbreak of the Korean War I turned 18 a few months later. I was too young to realise what the political implications were of the war- it was an adventure to be experienced, I didn't even know where Korea was. During the shelling at Yang Do the Captain of the gun even stuck us "young uns" under the cradle of the gun for safe keeping.

Our adventure started at Sasebo in Japan, the USA's war port. We entered the harbour which was jammed full of American destroyers and cruisers and other ships. It was an awe inspiring sight, sixteen nations had come to help. We had one day to take on stores and fuel and then we headed to the West Coast of Korea. We arrived in late summer and from the sea the land looked barren.

On several occasions we operated in the Han River estuary and observed a napalm strike by USS RENDOVER aircraft. I remember clearly the vivid red and black smoke of the napalm exploding along the ground as we observed from the ship. The dead bodies floating past the ship in the ebb tide was not uncommon.

Patrolling with American ships along the East Coast and out towards the Russian border we swept for subs. We played a cat and mouse game up and down this coast taking out tunnels, bridges and trains. Our job was to interrupt their supply lines but as quickly as we took out bridges and tunnels the North Koreans built them again. We rarely went ashore.

Onboard conditions were harsh. We had inadequate wet and cold weather gear - a British issue duffel coat that the wind whipped up, sea boots and stockings and a pair of long johns. We were grateful for the NZ Patriotic Board's present of woollen gloves and balaclava. Heating was poor and we were sleeping down below the waterline and it was cold. The inside doors of the upper deck would ice over in winter.

Food was out of the deep fryer but I was young and had no complaints. Washing conditions were tricky especially with water rationing in the summer despite the distillation units onboard ship.

On our return to New Zealand it was all rather low key. We were met by our families, the Chief of Naval Staff and North Shore's MP George Gair. After that it was business as usual and on to our next posting.

The people of Korea will always hold a place in my heart. The government of the Republic of Korea remains grateful to this day for our nation's support.

Commander Daniel "Sandy" Herlihy, RNZN Retired.
President Korea Veteran's Association, Auckland Region,
New Zealand. May 2010.



contents

ISSUE 10 WINTER 2010

- 02 **Guest Editorial**
Sandy Herlihy
- 04 **The United Nations War**
Russ Glackin
- 10 **Kiwi Frigates**
Richard Jackson
- 16 **Bob Marchioni**
Neville Peach
- 20 **Pirates? The HUPEH Incident**
Peter Dennerly
- 26 **A Korean Four Leaf Clover**
Michael Muschamp
- 33 **From the Collection**
Korean Medals/Hale Collection
- 34 **Our Sailors Speak**
Kelly-Ana Morey
- 36 **The Past as a Prologue**
Devonport remembers
- 38 **Did you know?**
Turtle Ships
- 39 **In Memoriam**
Letters to the Editor

Front cover photo: This fragment of a White Ensign was flown by HMNZS TUTIRA during the landings at Inchon in Korea, 1950. The frigates were steam powered and so this flag is blackened with funnel soot. The wording on the hoist remembers the landings at Inchon South of the 38th parallel. (2006.1558.8)

Back cover photo: Ceremonial life buoy from HMNZS TUTIRA.

Far left: Sandy Herlihy poses at home by a painting of TAUPO at Yang Do which he had commissioned by artist Kevin Willcocks. The destroyer in the back is USS SHELTON

United Nations and Republic of Korean servicemen gaze out at the estuaries and islands of the Korean coastline from their outpost. Two UN warships are visible in the estuary. c1951.

Hale Collection

THE UNITED NATIONS WAR

The United Nations Resolution on June 25, 1950 condemning the North Korean attack on South Korea and demanding their withdrawal by a vote of 9-0 in the Security Council was a unique event and possibly one that will never be repeated. They had come out in support of one faction over another. The result was the United Nations War in Korea, a coalition of forces led by the United States to repulse the North Korean invasion of its neighbour.

New Zealand's involvement with the UN coalition in Korea was the result of an increased awareness of communist threats to its region's stability. This led to a greater focus on Asia and Chinese communist expansion in its defence planning thus providing the immediate context for the ANZUS Pact signed with the United States and Australia in 1951. The war was a watershed in New Zealand's security and defence arrangements.

THE FAILURES OF THE PAST

History is littered with examples of nations that have committed flagrant acts of armed intervention in the affairs of others but it is only in modern times that the Great Powers have attempted to control the aggressive hostility of nations against others by creating a system of international collective security to ensure lasting peace. All have failed in the face of the inability to reach consensus on what constitutes

a threat of peace.

The League of Nations that emerged in 1919 from the ashes of the Great War soon became mired in sterile debate and failed to achieve an international consensus to halt the aggression of Fascist Germany and Italy in the 1930s. But the concept of international collective security again become a reality at the end of World War II with the creation of the United Nations. The objective and the means to attain ▶



AAS 0060

Above: The USS ENDICOTT, a WW2 destroyer minesweeper, transferring ammunition to TAUPO at Yang Do Island. TAUPO and ENDICOTT worked together around Yang Do, with sailors often visiting the other ship for recreation.

Below: This American occupation money and British "Military Payment Certificates" were used to obtain goods and services during the war.



06 THE WHITE ENSIGN WINTER 10

it remained the same as in the past but the UN too was destined to founder on the old problem of how to achieve Great Power consensus on international security. Aggressive, totalitarian communism was considered a major threat by the western democracies but it was not an attitude shared by Soviet Russia and Communist China so any attempt in the UN Security Council to secure a consensus to blunt continuing communist expansion seemed doomed to failure.

POST-WAR COMMUNIST EXPANSION

In the years following the end of the War in 1945 Soviet-sponsored communism had advanced beyond an experiment in one nation to become an immediate physical threat in Europe, Asia, Latin America and the Middle East. The western democracies were badly frightened by the disappearance of Eastern Europe under the cloak of Russian domination while Greece, France and Italy seemed close to collapsing into communist totalitarianism. The West was reeling under the rapid communist expansion in the immediate post-war years. The United States had come to consider it increasingly likely that Soviet Russia would launch a hostile operation to test the will of the West probably in Berlin, Greece or Turkey so it came as no surprise when the communists went to war in South Korea.

Below: This Minhinnick Cartoon "The Comrade" from the NZ Herald 4 July 1950 depicts PUKAKI and TUTIRA steaming out the Rangitoto channel into the Hauraki Gulf on their way to the Korean War. As mother New Zealand waves farewell, the nation's communists skulk in the undergrowth.



SECURITY COUNCIL REACTION

The sudden North Korean military invasion of South Korea in 1950 was an act of blatant aggression of a nature not unfamiliar in history but in this case it was unencumbered by the political confusions, tangled international loyalties and conflicting motives that in the past had made collective, concerted intervention difficult. It became a very real opportunity for the United States to blunt Soviet communist aggression. When the United States received a request from South Korea on the 24 June 1950 for a delivery of arms to fight off the North Korean invasion, they made the decision to send the issue of the invasion to the United Nations.

The next day the UN Secretary General requested a meeting of the UN Security Council which met that afternoon. The Soviet delegate refused to attend. The Russians had earlier walked out of the Security Council in January in protest at the UN refusal to seat Communist China in place of the Nationalist Chinese and were determined not to return. In the absence of the Russians and Communist China, a UN Resolution to condemn the North Korean attack and call for the withdrawal of their forces south of the 38th Parallel was passed unanimously by a 9-0 vote. The UN intervention in Korea was thus "a fluke of history," a consensus decision for collective action made possible only by the absence of Soviet Russia, the unintended result of their boycott of the UN Security Council. For the first time a collective decision had been made by an international organisation to intervene



Geospatial Intelligence Organisation

Above: The main ports and the 38th parallel which marked off North from South Korea are shown here.

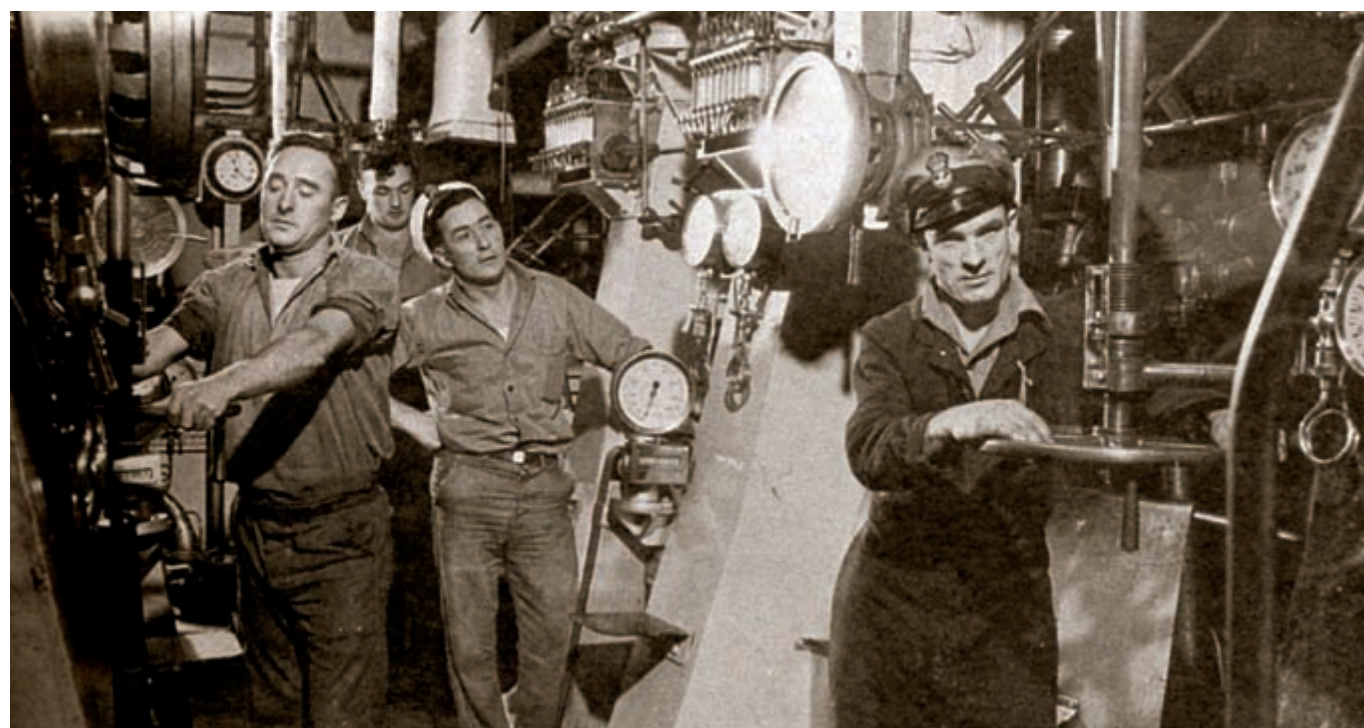
in a military conflict ... and to date it has been the last!
The United States pledged full support for the UN Resolution and President Truman agreed to enter the Korean War without consulting Congress whose duty alone it is to declare war. It was a popular decision.

Armed with a second UN Security Council resolution calling on all UN member nations to assist South Korea and restore international peace and security to the area, Truman sought support among the United States' principal allies and every other non-communist power with the resources



This United Nations Safe Conduct Certificate for use in the Korean War states in several languages " Attention United Nations Soldiers: This certificate guarantees good treatment to any Chinese or North Korean Soldiers desiring to cease fighting. Take this man to your nearest officer and treat him as an honourable prisoner of war. Signed Mathew B Ridgway Commander in Chief United Nations Forces."

2006.502.1



Above: The frigates were steam powered and the boiler room was the warmest place in the ship-great during Korea's freezing winters but difficult during her extremely hot summers. Here PUKAKI's boiler room crew pose for the camera. c1950

to make even a token commitment to the UN cause in Korea. The United Nations action was now under the command of the United States Supreme Commander in the Far East, General Douglas MacArthur. It was time for the West to stand up and be counted.

WHY DID NEW ZEALAND BECOME INVOLVED?

Australia and New Zealand were quick to respond. Royal Australian Navy destroyers already on station in Kure in Japan were immediately offered to the UN and were joined soon after by a fighter squadron of the Royal Australian Air Force based near Hiroshima. New Zealand offered two RNZN frigates which sailed for Japanese waters at the

end of June 1950.

The geopolitical landscape of the Asia-Pacific region had been profoundly transformed by World War II. Britain emerged from the war with its power and status irreparably weakened and it could no longer defend its far-flung Empire. Japan's defeat had been achieved by the prime intervention of the United States. Added to these convulsions were the strategic realities of the post-war order. The Cold War had split the war time coalition, had added the spectre of international communist expansion to New Zealand's traditional fear of Asian aggression and strengthened the perception that only the United States could ensure New Zealand's security. Collectively these

alterations to the world order demanded a reassessment of New Zealand's security arrangements.

Immediately post-war New Zealand initially clung to its traditional relationship with Britain for economic and defensive reasons but was now also bolstered by a guarantee from its war-time ally, the United States. New Zealand's security relied on Anglo-American co-operation in world affairs. The focus remained on Europe and the countering of a Soviet threat to Western Europe. New Zealand thus rejected any Asian focus considering that it was too far away and only a threat if it fell under Soviet domination, an attitude in growing contrast to Australia.

But Asia was changing rapidly. The

People's Republic of China was established in 1949. Britain was struggling to counter communist insurgency in Malaya. France was at war to retain control of its Indo-Chinese colonies. When North Korea invaded its southern neighbour, New Zealand interpreted the attack as part of a larger pattern of Soviet-inspired communist expansion and promptly contributed to the United States-led coalition mobilised under the UN banner.

Following quickly upon the RNZN frigates, New Zealand sent the 16th Field Regiment of Artillery to Korea with the hope that it would eventually become part of a Commonwealth formation. They were followed soon after by an Australian infantry battalion (3 RAR). The Commonwealth Force in Korea took some time to evolve but when Britain proposed that its promised Brigade Group merge with the Australian and New Zealand contingents a Commonwealth identity was firmly established among the other UN contingents in Korea.

IMPACT ON NEW ZEALAND?

Participation in the United Nations War in Korea with the United States provided the context for New Zealand to acquire an American security guarantee, the ANZUS Pact of 1951. The war in Korea did not bring an end to New Zealand's traditional reliance on Britain for its security but it led to a greater reliance on the United States and a greater focus on Asia as a result of the growing apprehension about the expansion of Chinese communism. Thus did New Zealand begin its inexorable march to involvement in the Vietnam War.

RUSS GLACKIN ■

1 Hastings, Max, The Korean War, Michael Joseph, London, 1987. p5



ARMISTICE

The Armistice signed in July 1953 brought an end to the Korean War and remains in place to this day. It has been suggested that the Russians and Chinese finally came to the peace table out of concern that the United States might be on the point of using tactical nuclear weapons.

After the truce 12,773 UN personnel were exchanged for 75,000 North Korean and Chinese POWs. It is estimated 336,500 UN and South Korean service personnel were killed, missing or wounded. Estimates for the North Koreans are 620,260 and 909,600 Chinese. Over 2 million civilians were killed during the fighting in North Korea representing over 20% of the North Korean population in 1950.

There is still no peace treaty ending hostilities between North and South Korea today. Since 1953 there have been many low level skirmishes. Recently these centred around disputed islands on the west coast. All remain unwilling to reach a peace treaty, North Korea's recent acquisition of nuclear weapons probably ensuring that it will remain elusive into the distant future.

MICHAEL WYND



Right: Non-regulation items of uniform were often made and decorated by the Ship's company. Peter Carter wore this silk scarf embroidered with PUKAKI's badge with his raincoat when going ashore. Date unknown.

Left: United Nations badge and beret.

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KIWI FRIGATES

The New Zealand frigates which served in the Korean War were part of the Commonwealth navies' West Coast Support Group. In this article Richard Jackson explains how the Kiwi frigates fitted into the multi-national United Nations fleet and what duties they performed.

IRON CURTAIN ACROSS EUROPE

As early as 1946 Sir Winston Churchill warned that 'an Iron Curtain' had fallen across Europe. Two years later the Soviet blockade of Berlin proved to the West that the Cold War was a reality.

In 1948 our Navy took delivery of six Loch-class frigates for Anti-Submarine Warfare (ASW) and escort of shipping. The Loch-class were the best ASW ships then available, the ultimate U-boat hunters from WWII. Our six were only 3 or 4 years old, sea-worthy ships armed with the heavy 'Squid' ahead and sophisticated sonar and throwing depth charge mortars.

Strategic planning was soon set aside when, in June 1950, North Korea attacked South Korea. Within days the defence of South Korea had become a United Nations sanctioned operation and the Commonwealth navies, alongside the United States Navy, were soon committed to active service off Korea.

MULTI-NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

New Zealand agreed to commit two frigates during the conflict. Ultimately

we deployed all six frigates in eight individual deployments of about 12 months each. When, on 1 August 1950, the first two ships sailed into Sasebo, Japan (which had already become the United Nation's primary naval base) they joined American, British, Australian, Canadian and Dutch warships. The naval war off Korea was, from the start, a multi-national campaign¹.

After the first urgent weeks while the Pusan perimeter was hastily reinforced and defended, UN sea power—including the two NZ frigates—enabled the Allied armies to land at Inchon, cutting off the North Korean Army and transforming the campaign. But at the end of 1950 China intervened with many thousands of 'volunteers'. Once the battle-line was stabilised during 1951 the land war settled into a static campaign of attrition.

TASK FORCE 95.1

The UN navies' role was to cover the flanks of the UN armies, while using the mobility and reach of sea power to prevent North Korea (or the Chinese) from using the sea. The UN ships and naval aircraft attacked North Korean bases, interdicted supply lines and defended the off-shore islands.

The ships of the Commonwealth navies formed the core of the West Coast Support Group, Task Force 95.1. This British-led task force was made up of:

- A carrier task group, centred on a light fleet carrier with Sea Fury and Firefly aircraft and escorting destroyers.
- A blockading force of cruisers, destroyers and frigates operating close inshore.
- A screening force escorting supply ships, landing craft and replenishment tankers.
- A minesweeping force with covering ships.
- A task group of Republic of Korea Navy vessels.

Task Force 95.1 was commanded by ▶



Above: Neville Peach's original ink sketch on ROTOITI's letter head blue paper shows the "Korean Situation as at 17/12/51".



Above: This watercolour Crossing the Line Certificate from HMNZS PUKAKI on her way to Korea on 18 August 1950 is titled "Domain of the Golden Dragon-Ruler of the 180th Meridian" and shows dragons, mermaids and shells.

Below: This Crossing the Line Certificate issued to Leading Writer I Chambers on the 7 November 1950 shows the HAWEA surrounded by wonders of the deep-mermaids, Neptune and sea creatures.



a British Rear Admiral, the second in command of the Royal Navy's Far East Station.

In parallel, larger task groups of US Navy ships and aircraft from the US Seventh Fleet operated off Korea's east coast. A US Admiral was in overall command of UN naval operations. The east coast/west coast division between the USN and Commonwealth navies was not ironclad; the Commonwealth ships also operated on the east coast in conjunction with the USN, while American cruisers, destroyers and occasionally battleships operated in the west. The British aircraft carrier while on station alternated its patrols on the west coast with a USN escort carrier.

COMPLEX FLEET ENVIRONMENT

Our Loch-class frigates were thus operating in a complex fleet environment off Korea. The two deployed New Zealand frigates were mostly allocated to the west coast blockading force. The British had some two dozen ships allocated to the Far East Station and generally half of them, including an aircraft carrier, were deployed under UN command to the war in Korea. Canada deployed two or three destroyers throughout, while Australia also sent destroyers and frigates. For two deployments (one during the conflict and one immediately after the ceasefire) the carrier HMAS SYDNEY operated in place of a British carrier.

The Commonwealth naval forces generally operated out of Sasebo or Kure in Japan, with Hong Kong as their usual rest, recreation and refit base. Warships in 1950 were dependent on high frequency (HF) Morse radio, with Very High Frequency voice radio for inter-ship and ship-to-air communications. Automatic radio teletype was a new technology, but not widely available and our frigates were dependent on Morse operators tapping out each signal. British shore stations were available at Hong Kong and Singapore, otherwise the ships' radio operators could contact Waipoua Wireless Telegraphy station directly when conditions were right³.

NATO⁴ was barely a year old and common naval tactical procedures were still evolving. The Commonwealth navies were all trained to RN standards and procedures and the RNZN at that time



ONCE THE BATTLE-LINE WAS STABILISED DURING 1951 THE LAND WAR SETTLED INTO A STATIC CAMPAIGN OF ATTRITION

ABOVE: Neville Peach recalls taking this photo of the American Naval base at Sasebo in Japan. "This photo doesn't do justice to the sight. Sasebo was a small harbour filled with destroyers, cruisers, aircraft carriers and attack transport ships. There was constant activity with ships' boats commuting back and forth from ship to ship and ship to port. It was exciting, busy and purposeful". This photo shows from left to right the US Navy Destroyers JAMES E KYES, HIGBEE and SAMUEL N MOORE.

was still quite dependent on British loan officers, so operating together was not difficult. Similarly the Dutch Navy had deployed British-built ships and they too had adopted RN procedures from their experience of operating with the RN during WWII.

DEMANDING CONDITIONS

Conditions on the west coast of Korea were demanding for inshore naval operations. Many small islands, tortuous channels, a large tide range (of about 10 metres) and fast tidal streams made for difficult operating conditions. In addition there were fog and cold winds off the continent and in the winter there was ice. The available charts were poor and out of date. Many of the Commonwealth frigates spent some time on survey duties, often within gun range of the enemy shore.

The warships' blockade mission

was directed at small craft. There were South Korean fishermen who were allowed to fish, South Korean guerrillas who were resupplying islands or infiltrating the mainland, and North Korean craft attempting to infiltrate behind UN lines. For example the blockade force in August 1951 comprised a British cruiser, HMS BELFAST, three Canadian destroyers, two British frigates and one Australian frigate, along with HMNZS HAWEA⁵.

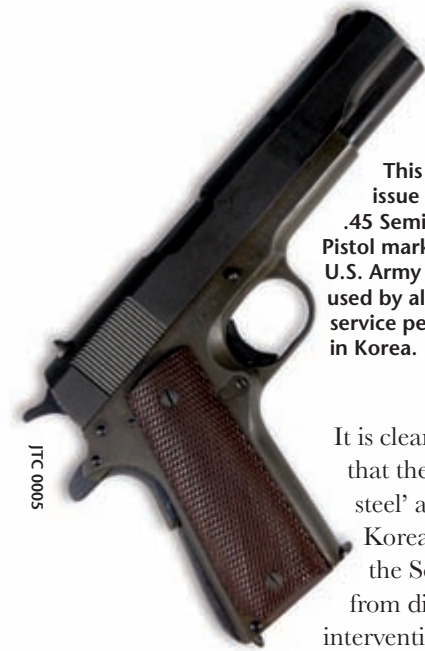
MINESWEEPING

Mines were a constant worry. After the successful delay to the Wonsan amphibious landing in October 1950 due to extensive communist minefields, the North Koreans laid more extensive minefields. Mines would break adrift and float south and our ships had to keep a constant lookout, often including a sailor stationed in the eyes

of the ship (on the tip of the bow) a cold and lonely watch. Individual ships were frequently tasked with overseeing flotillas of Japanese or Korean manned minesweeping craft.

The importance of minesweeping is one of the most-forgotten lessons of the Korean sea war. The lesson resonated in the contemporary RAN and RNZN leading Australia to offer New Zealand four of their war-built Bathurst-class minesweepers. During 1952 four of these ships were sailed to NZ, while the minesweeping depot at Islington Bay on Rangitoto was restocked with sweeping gear⁶.

Our frigates' sonar was constantly active because there was a submarine threat. In fact the Soviet submarine fleet based in nearby Vladivostok never challenged the UN naval forces, although Stalin did send Soviet pilots and Mig15 fighters to contest the skies over Korea. ▶



This standard issue American .45 Semi Automatic Pistol marked 1911 A1 U.S. Army was the type used by all American service personnel in Korea.

It is clear today that the 'ring of steel' around Korea deterred the Soviets from direct naval intervention, whereas the fiction that Koreans or Chinese were flying the fighters was easier to maintain. What does this mean?

False submarine alarms did occur. In May 1951 HAWEA made a Squid attack on what was assessed as a rock or wreck. In her later 1953 deployment HAWEA made another attack on a 'poss-sub'

which was found to be a wartime wreck. To maintain ASW proficiency (and have a change of scene) some of our ships were included in periodic ASW exercises with American submarines off Japan⁷.

BATTLE OF THE ISLANDS

One distinct naval campaign was the 'Battle of the Islands' during the winter of 1951-52. The front line on land was static but the North Koreans sought to retake islands off North Korea held by the South. The UN navies were tasked to defend the islands and that involved continual patrols in coastal channels and responding to requests for assistance from the island garrisons. Most of the islands were off the west coast and the Han River estuary became a familiar patrol and bombardment location for the ships of the blockading force.

However one of the South Korean-held islands on the east coast was Yang-do, near the Korean border with Russia. The South Korean troops on Yang-do were led by a US Marine officer. TAUPO happened to be operating off the east coast on 20 February

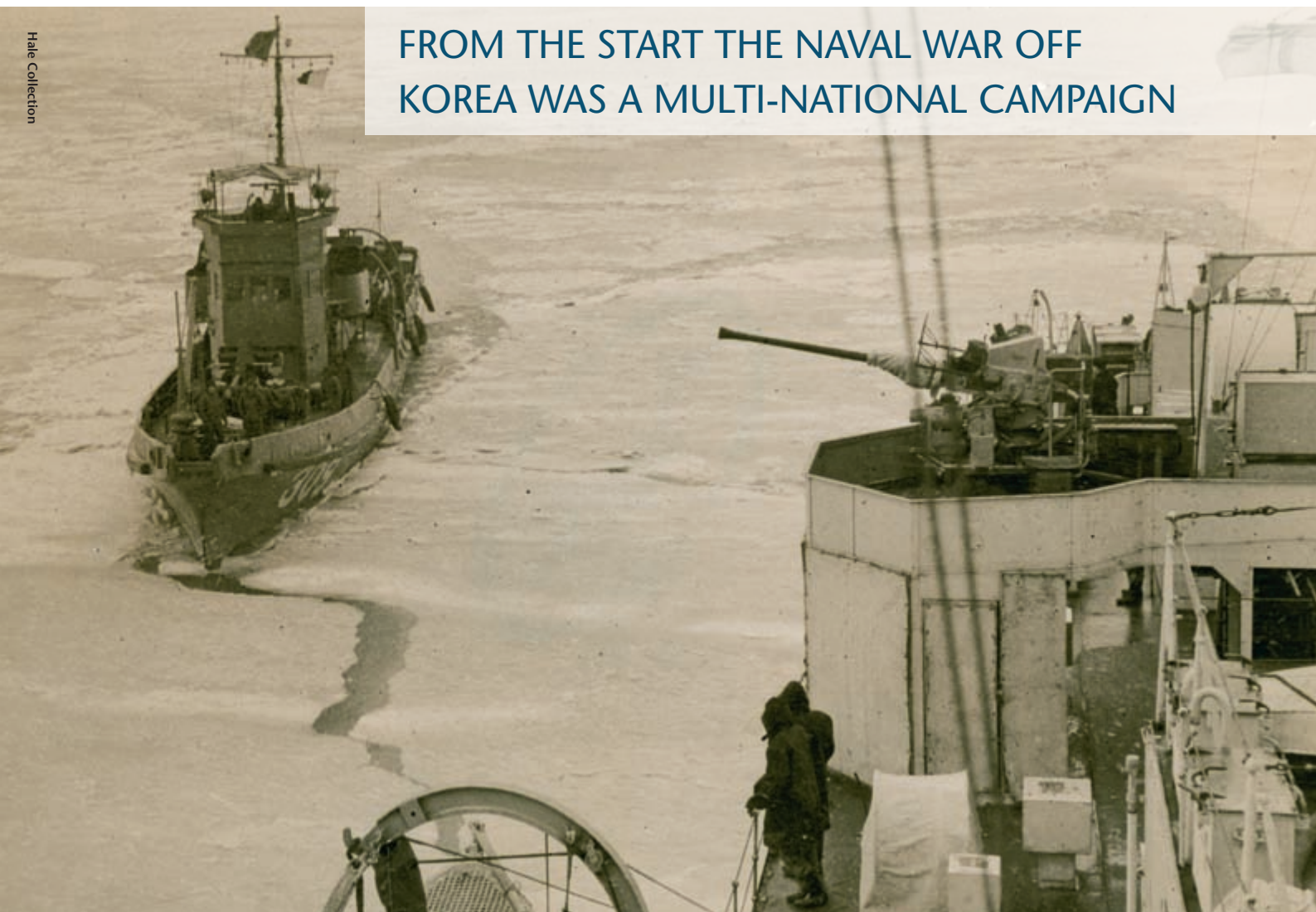
1952 when, at 0115 (local time), she received a report that the island was about to be invaded⁸. TAUPO closed the island along with the US destroyer ENDICOTT. At 0245 TAUPO illuminated a contact with starshell, sighting a motor junk and several sampans. TAUPO engaged successfully with Bofors and the pom-pom at about 3200 metres range⁹. After four hours of silence (enemy troops on Yang-do were fighting the garrison) a radio message advised of enemy sampans leaving the island. At 0645 these were engaged by TAUPO, our frigate sinking ten, but North Korean shore batteries opened up and TAUPO was near-missed, the shell splash soaking the pom-pom crew. Another US destroyer SHELTON, engaged the enemy batteries with her six 5" guns, but in the growing light TAUPO had to retire another 3000 metres seaward. As a result some six enemy sampans got away (TAUPO felt SHELTON could have closed in and fired more effectively).

Later that morning TAUPO landed her medical officer and a first aid



ABOVE: This gun crew wearing action working dress are on HAWEA patrolling the Han River in 1951. The Han River had extremes of tides as can be seen from the tidal marks along the coastline. Note also the vulnerable village dwellings along the river bank. Sandy Herlihy remembers that the tide would sweep in and when the tide turned it would carry with it dead bodies, a gruesome sight for those patrolling the river. He also remembers watching from the ship as the land was being napalmed by United States aeroplanes and the villagers running to get away from the burning chemical.

BELOW: South Korean gunboat cuts through the ice as it comes alongside TAUPO 1950.



FROM THE START THE NAVAL WAR OFF KOREA WAS A MULTI-NATIONAL CAMPAIGN

party to assist with the South Korean casualties; later, TAUPO transferred the more seriously wounded troops to the USS ST PAUL, a heavy cruiser. The garrison, assisted by the UN ships, had defeated a company-sized assault by the North.

The Battle of the Islands was a good example of the reach of the UN navies; however as part of the armistice many of the islands in the north were

subsequently evacuated and turned over to North Korea. The maritime demarcation line has remained a source of tension ever since.

The Korean War was a limited, conventional conflict. For the UN navies, with no matching enemy naval forces to counter, it was littoral warfare and, as such, can provide useful lessons for today's navies. Fundamentally the UN campaign in defence of South

Korea was underpinned by allied sea power. Without the warships, troop transports and supply ships, the West could not have defended South Korea or prosecuted the campaign. For three years the large-scale land war was dependent on seaborne supplies and the shield of the UN warships and in this RNZN ships played a full and proud part. ■

RICHARD JACKSON

COMPARATIVE NATIONAL NAVAL EFFORTS DURING THE KOREAN WAR
Not including USN or RN ships

RNZN	2 frigates on station: 6 frigates in 8 deployments Deployments of 12-14 months
RAN	2 warships on station: 4 destroyers in 8 deployments and 4 frigates in 4 deployments Deployments of 6-7 months
RCN	2-3 destroyers on station: 8 destroyers in 19 deployments Deployments of 8-12 months.
THE NETHERLANDS	1 warship on station: 3 destroyers and 1 frigate in 4 deployments Deployments of 11 months
THAILAND	4 frigates in two deployments of two ships each. First deployment of 4 months, second of 12 months.

1 McGibbon, New Zealand and the Korean war, Vol II p 3

2 MP Cocker, West Coast Support Group; Whittles Publishing UK, 2003

3 After the official signals were sent, the ships could also handle personal telegrams. [Note for younger readers; telegrams were like text messages, except they were delivered by the Post and Telegraph office to recipients in hard copy!] Vice Admiral Sir Neil Anderson was a Lieutenant and navigator of ROTOTI. He was getting married and recalls the radio operators patiently taking down long telegrams from his future mother-in-law describing lengthy wedding details.

4 NATO: The international North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was established in 1949 for collective security.

5 Cocker, p 26

6 The RNZN decided to retain the ships' Australian names as a gesture of appreciation for the gift.

7 McGibbon, NZ and the Korean War, Vol II Combat Operations. P 171 and p 340.

8 Ibid, p 283

9 Bofors – the famous 40mm Bofors gun which were mounted on our Loch-class in place of Oerlikon guns. Pom-pom, the British quad-mounted, water-cooled 40 mm gun firing 2 pound shells (0.8kg).



2006: 1410:69

BOB MARCHIONI

Nineteen-year-old Able Seaman Robert (Bob) Marchioni was the only New Zealand sailor to lose his life as a result of direct contact with the enemy in the Korean War of the early 1950's. He was born in Taihape on 1st April 1932 and joined the Royal New Zealand Navy as an Ordinary Seaman in October 1949 at 17 years of age.



DRAFTED TO ROTOITI

After completing his Basic Common Training at HMNZS Tamaki on Motuihi Island in the Hauraki Gulf, Marchioni was drafted to one of New Zealand's recently acquired, ex Royal Navy, Loch Class anti submarine Frigates, HMNZS ROTOITI on 31 July 1950.

ROTOITI, with her Ships Company of 120 men, was on a Pacific Islands cruise 'showing the flag' when the Korean War broke out. Her captain at the time was Lieutenant Commander A C B Blomfield, DSC and three bars, who decided that, as his ship was war-ready, Korea was the place to be. So the former WW2 Motor Torpedo Boat Officer ordered a course set for Korea! Navy Office in Wellington, however had other ideas, and ordered him to resume his cruise which was to complete in Auckland within a few weeks.

Back in New Zealand, two other Frigates, HMNZS TUTIRA and PUKAKI were hastily prepared and despatched to join the United Nations Fleet in Korea.

Following a short period of leave, refitting and personnel changes, ROTOITI was soon ordered to replace PUKAKI in Korea. Her new captain was New Zealander Lieutenant Commander B E Turner, a New Zealander with WW2 experience. The Ships' Company comprised about 50% New Zealanders the remainder being mainly WW2 experienced ex-Royal Navy ratings. The Officers, also with extensive WW2 experience, were predominantly Royal Navy on-loan to the RNZN. The First Lieutenant and Navigator joined the Captain in the distinction of being New Zealanders.

So it was into this environment that Ordinary Seaman Bob Marchioni, along with about 25 other New Zealanders, was drafted onto ROTOITI in 1950.

Above left: This original sketch by Neville Peach refers to ROTOITI's first landing party on 11 July 1951. It shows the lay of the land and lists the results of the raid including the capture of two North Korean prisoners.

Left: Admiral Scott-Moncrief presents Bob Marchioni with his memento when ROTOITI won the Fleet Pentathlon sports in Sasebo, Japan. The sports consisted of swimming, running, pistol shooting, fencing and the Carley Float Race, 1950.



Peach Collection

Above: ROTOITI 4 inch Gun Crew, "action-ready." Able Seaman Marchioni poses right front.

CIGARETTE ROUTE

ROTOITI relieved PUKAKI of the latter's duties patrolling in the Yellow Sea off the West Coast of Korea (designated 'Cigarette Route' as it was part of the supply line into Sasebo) with powerful United Nations naval elements. Their job was to deny the North Korean Communist Forces access to off-shore islands and South Korea's coast-line and ports.

For the first few months no offensive activities, such as bombardment of shore based targets, was permitted even though enemy activities ashore were observed from the seaward vantage point.

Patrols under these conditions, often in adverse weather conditions,

observing and waiting, were long and boring. There were however frequent working contacts with United Nations Fleet elements, including battleships, aircraft-carriers, cruisers, destroyers, frigates, minesweepers and South Korean patrol craft.

ROTOITI LANDING PARTY

When the no-shooting bar was lifted it enabled patrolling ships to engage enemy activities as they saw fit. It was in this environment that ROTOITI's captain approved the formation of a Landing Party comprising his fittest young men to undergo a short period of training with the 41 Independent Royal Marine Commando when ROTOITI was next in the Japanese



Peach Collection

Above: It was a welcome break from shipboard routine and the “tin can” for sailors to go ashore and just enjoy strolling around and meeting with the villagers. This photo shows sailors talking with villagers beside rice paddies, in the distance are ROTOITI, a South Korean Patrol ship and a merchant ship at anchor.

port of Kure for recreational leave and ship maintenance purposes. The week of training was devoted mainly to tactics involving stealth and concealment, armed and un-armed combat and taking of prisoners. Bob Marchioni was not involved in this training activity.

On 11 July 1951 not long after resuming her ‘Cigarette Route’ patrol activities, ROTOITI’s Captain decided to launch a speedy daylight attack against an observed position behind enemy lines. The purpose was to secure prisoners for intelligence purposes. At around midday, under cover of a bombardment by ROTOITI’s 4 inch gun and Bofors anti-aircraft guns, her motor boat beached at Sogon-ni point

and landed a two man assault party armed with sub-machine guns and grenades. Supporting the assault was a command and cover party armed with Bren Guns and rifles.

The assault party left the boat at the double. The bombardment ceased and the pair scaled a small cliff to attack Communist soldiers in their fox holes. A brief encounter left one enemy dead and two taken prisoner. The whole party, including captives, safely withdrew under cover of further bombardment and rejoined ROTOITI after an absence of possibly only half an hour.

Five weeks later on 26 August another raid took place in order to take enemy prisoners. This was from the same

Sogon-ni locality. Bob Marchioni couldn’t but help know about the obviously impending raid. He tackled his Captain face-to-face and begged that he be included in the assault party. That was how Marchioni became involved.

MARCHIONI KILLED

The assault party this time comprised a small section of Royal Marines from HMS CEYLON plus three of ROTOITI’s landing party two of whom participated in the original successful raid. The assault party was supported by a well armed command and support group from ROTOITI. On the pitch black minutes after midnight, the raid was launched from ROTOITI, using a motor boat borrowed from another frigate plus ROTOITI’s motor boat. Just prior to and during the initial stages of the raid being launched from ROTOITI, the cruiser CEYLON, positioned about 10 miles north of the intended assault position, opened fire with her main armament in a spectacular diversionary star-shell display to distract the enemy’s attention.

The preparedness of the combined raiding party, including a few US soldiers involved in Korean West Coast Islands security, included appropriate briefings, the wearing of dark clothing and blackened hands and faces with weapons and accoutrements adjusted to obviate unnecessary noise.

The raiding party landed, not without incident, in the pitch blackness of night



Above: Marchioni (left) and Devereaux (right) at mess time. Devereaux was the Able Seaman who painted “Jetty Smasher” on the Darwin wharf when ROTOITI collided with it on the way to Korea. This scene is typical of a Loch Class mess table. In summer the mess decks were very uncomfortable.

and set about their allotted tasks. The assault party silently approached the enemy position to find a group of Communist soldiers staring out to sea watching Ceylon’s star-shell display. A sudden noise drew the enemy’s attention to the presence of the raiders. Everyone went to ground, sub-machine gun and heavy machine guns shots were fired and a hand grenade thrown. Bob Marchioni was killed by the first burst of enemy sub-machine gun fire. There was now no option other than for the raiders to withdraw. Their presence was known and the likelihood of more casualties was imminent.

Back at the command and support position near the landing place, Lieutenant Webber fired a green flare from a Very pistol – ordering a withdrawal to the waiting boats. In the dark, the assault party began their controlled but hasty retreat. They took Bob Marchioni with them over extremely difficult terrain. It was an exhausting task for Leading Seaman Norman Scoles, British Royal Marine Noel Harker and Corporal McGregor who carried Marchioni while being hotly pursued by the enemy.

Unhappily Able Seaman Robert Marchioni never made it back to the boats and his ship. Permission was sought the next day to recover Bob and bring him home, but this was withheld by the Fleet Authority and a possible disaster averted. Instead, Padre Harry Taylor conducted a Memorial Service on ROTOITI’s quarterdeck, within sight of the place where he died in the Service of New Zealand.

There is no known grave marking his final resting place. He still lies in enemy territory. We only hope that they were kind to him. ■

NEVILLE PEACH

Lt Commander Neville Peach Rtd was part of both of ROTOITI’s landing parties as a member of the two Bren light machine gun teams. Later in his naval career he was to win the Royal New Zealand Queen’s Medal on ten occasions (including eight years in a row) for Service Rifle Shooting. The navy museum holds his invaluable personal collection on his service in Korea.



AAR 0006

The two disconsolate North Korean prisoners who were both captured while onboard ROTOITI from the first successful raid, 11 July 1951.



2006.998.25

Above: This 100 won note with its didactic image of peasant workers was taken from one of the North Korean prisoners captured in ROTOITI’s first landing party. Neville Peach wrote on the note “Taken from North Korean Prisoner of War 11 July 1951”.

BELOW: Two newspaper articles about Marchioni’s death and Scole’s heroism during the ill-fated July landing are part of the museum’s ephemera collection.



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2006.1411.1



On 25 October 1951, on a fine sunny Thursday afternoon HMNZS ROTOITI was on passage from Kure to Hong Kong on the first leg of its 5,500 nautical mile journey home after an absence of just over a year. After some ten months continuous operations as part of the United Nations force in Korea all were looking forward to a relaxing visit to Hong Kong after the austerity of Sasebo and Kure.

Left: In the difficult stormy and often foggy conditions off Korea it was inevitable that some accidents would occur. ROTOITI collided with the Dutch destroyer PIETHIEN in fog; she bumped the British tankers GREEN RANGER and WAVE SOVEREIGN during replenishments at sea and had close encounters with three others (a cruiser, an LST and a sampan) during coastal operations. It reads Hong Kong 1952 Collision Experts, Anchors Away.

Background image: The HUPEH as seen from the ROTOITI 25 October 1951.

HARSH CONDITIONS ONBOARD

ROTOITI has been described as being hard to serve in. It was not in any way configured for the conditions experienced off Korea, being extremely hot in summer and freezing cold in winter, with inadequate ventilation for either. To add to these conditions there was constant water rationing. The showers, in which the 114 men had to do their all washing, including the body, were only open for 15 minutes each day – something that was not in force in the other New Zealand ships. The standard of food was not particularly high either.

DIFFICULT DEPLOYMENT

It had been an eventful deployment to date, starting with a disastrous visit to Darwin, the ship's first port of call after leaving Auckland. On berthing there the ship hit the jetty hard, smashing some of the support piles and making a large hole in the port bow. Later that day the wife of the Naval Officer in Charge was boarding the ship when the gangway collapsed and she fell into the harbour. The seaboard was immediately manned and lowered, but as one of the able seamen in the boat recalled, "it began to get dark". In the haste to lower the boat the officer in charge had forgotten to look down and the boat had been lowered into the gash barge which was secured alongside. Fortunately she was eventually recovered safely.



2006.606.176

Above: Christmas card from HMNZS ROTOITI BRITISH FAR EAST FLEET HONG KONG. Inside written in ink is the greeting to those back home "From P.O.M.(E)s." c 1951.

During operations off Korea the ship had been involved in minesweeping operations, shore bombardment up the Han River and had twice landed some of its personnel behind enemy lines. On the first landing two prisoners were taken but on the second the force ran into stiff opposition and young

19 year old Able Seaman Bob Marchioni was killed. With all this now behind them thoughts were on home and the ship began the transition to the peace-time routine, with ammunition which had been kept in the ready-use lockers being ditched over the side. ▶

PIRATES?

The HUPEH Incident



Fleet Trophy

SS HUPEH IN DISTRESS

By mid afternoon the ship was off the west coast of Taiwan when a 'Mayday' signal was received from the SS HUPEH which was coming out of the Yangtze

Above: Silver bowl presented to ROTOITI by the China Navigation Co Ltd "in appreciation of the rescue of SS HUPEH pirated off Shanghai 25 October 1951".

River (off Shanghai), saying that it had been attacked by pirates. The HUPEH was a merchant ship of 2,827 tons, built in 1933 and operated by the China Navigation Company. She was on passage from

Tientsin to Hong Kong. At first Commander Brian Turner, the Captain of ROTOITI only took a mild interest in the message but it quickly dawned on him that ROTOITI was the nearest ship and immediately turned north to

intercept and increased to maximum speed. Given that the top speed of a Loch class frigate was only 20 knots it would take about 10 hours to reach the ship's reported position and it was doubtful if it would be intercepted as it could be well away from the vicinity by the time ROTOITI arrived. Having received approval from the Commodore Hong Kong, the ship's operational authority in that area, ROTOITI steamed on and eventually arrived in the general area around midnight.

All radar contacts were investigated one of which took the ship 10 miles to starboard of its course towards the last reported position of the HUPEH, but which proved to be another ship. Having identified this ship ROTOITI turned back towards the north when another radar contact was made, 10 miles further to starboard. When ROTOITI closed that contact the vessel was found not to be showing any lights. Passing under its stern the 20 inch signal lamp illuminated the ship's name, 'HUPEH' and the port of registry, 'Hong Kong'. Going 10 miles off course to investigate the first contact proved to be a stroke of good fortune because without having investigated that contact,



2006.1066.46

The museum has an extensive ships models collection. This is a side view of a scale model of ROTOITI as she was in 1949 just prior to the Korean War. It was donated to the museum by Mr D. Rowson.



the limited range of ROTOITI's radar would not have located the HUPEH. With the ship now positively identified ROTOITI opened out on the HUPEH's beam and ordered the ship to stop, firing a starshell to emphasise the order. The HUPEH continued steaming and Commander Turner ordered the 4inch gun to fire across its bow. A 2,000 yard deflection was set on the gun and two shots were fired, one of which accidentally landed quite close to the HUPEH. This still did not have the desired effect and so the pom poms and the .5inch machine gun, which had tracer ammunition, were ordered to fire over the ship.

NEGOTIATIONS

Meanwhile the ship's boarding party were mustered on the quarter deck and issued with their weapons, Lanchester sub-machine guns and pistols, and collected their equipment which included grappling hooks for climbing up the ship's side and chains and padlocks for securing doors and hatches on the boarded ship. The core of the boarding party was the landing party, the veterans who had gone ashore three months earlier, supplemented by other specialist personnel. While it was entirely feasible to put the boarding party on board the HUPEH, the most effective method was to place ROTOITI alongside. There would inevitably be casualties and there would most likely have been severe damage to ROTOITI itself. Commander Turner considered this a last resort.

The spectacular effect of the tracer rounds passing over the ship did not

"actually you don't have to worry too much about the pirates, but have you got a cricket team on board?"

have the desired effect and the HUPEH continued steaming, but a response to ROTOITI's radio signals was at last received. The Master said that the pirates would kill all the passengers and crew if any attempt was made to board the ship and requested that no action be taken at that time as the pirates were considering their position. A further message followed later stating that the pirates would protect the passengers and crew if they were given safe passage ashore. This was accepted and ROTOITI followed the HUPEH southwards, while advice was sought from the Commodore Hong Kong. ▶



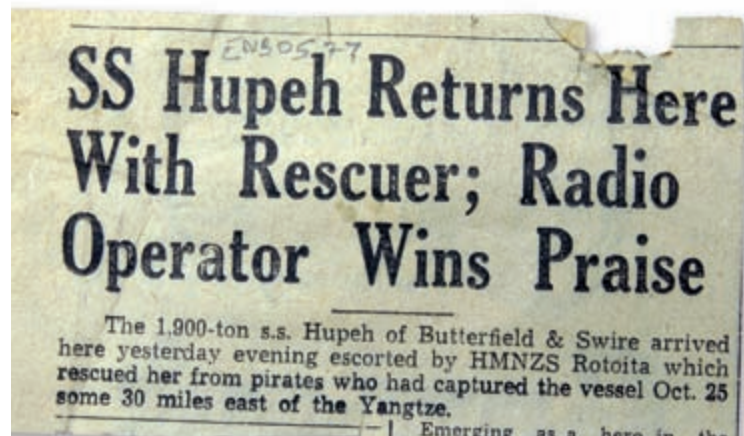
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Above: This "Dhoby washing machine" – a galvanised bucket purloined from the stores and a T shaped plunger which would be plunged up and down in the bucket.



Above: HMS COSSACK presented this plaque to ROTOITI to commemorate their shared experience and comradeship during the Korean War. The two huias and akatea vine of ROTOITI's badge celebrate the leadership of the famous chief Rangitihia.

Below: Newspaper of the day praises both HUPEH's wireless operator Tsang Kau and the ROTOITI for saving the HUPEH from capture..



STAND-OFF

At about 8.00am the next morning the ships approached the Quemoy Islands (now Chin-men Tao), a few kilometres off the mainland, which were and are still under the control of the Nationalist Chinese Government. ROTOITI entered Chinese territorial waters. As the HUPEH anchored in a secluded bay a large Nationalist Chinese gunboat came out of the bay. She was armed with a 40mm Bofors gun and circled ROTOITI at a distance of about 50 yards with its gun trained on the frigate, which in turn trained its 4 inch gun on the gunboat. On board ROTOITI was an elderly missionary who was taking passage to Hong Kong and who spoke Chinese. Commander Turner asked him to speak to the Captain of the gunboat, but he was so scared that he was unable to do so. Realising that the situation had to be defused, Commander Turner ordered the 4 inch to be trained fore and aft and the gunboat responded similarly. At about this time a Chinese Nationalist Liberator bomber flew low over the ships

with its bomb bay open, making about a dozen passes.

While this stand-off was taking place the pirates were being ferried ashore in the HUPEH's lifeboat keeping with them the Engineer of the HUPEH, an operation that took three trips. With tensions lowered the Captain of the gunboat hailed ROTOITI in English stating that the pirates were Chinese Nationalists and requested that they be allowed to retain possession of the HUPEH's lifeboat, which was refused.

ACT OF EXTORTION

Once the 49 'pirates' were all ashore the HUPEH hoisted its boat and under the escort of ROTOITI sailed for Hong Kong, where they subsequently arrived in a blaze of publicity. It was subsequently believed that this incident was simply a normal act of extortion whereby the Chinese Nationalist Navy would stop ships and demand money before they were allowed to continue their passage.

The ship's owners, Butterfield and

Swire, the parent company of China Navigation, were naturally most pleased with the outcome and presented the ship with enough beer to allow the issue of a bottle to each man each day until the ship reached Australia. In March 1952 when another Swire ship, the MV ANSHUN was in Auckland a luncheon was held on board for those involved at which a silver rose bowl was presented to ROTOITI in commemoration of the incident.

PIRATES ANYONE?

This was not however, ROTOITI's only incident involving pirates on its return passage to New Zealand. A few weeks later while to the north of Borneo a signal was received from Tawau reporting that pirates were operating along the coast and requesting a naval presence. ROTOITI was in the area and ordered to investigate. The ship berthed in Tawau at 'action stations', ready to immediately sail again on patrol. There it was met by the District Officer, a man of the old school with a

patch over one eye, who when asked about the pirates, responded that "actually you don't have to worry too much about the pirates, but have you got a cricket team on board?" The basis of the request was to have some competition for the local sportsmen, which ROTOITI managed to fulfill for a day or so.

On 22 November 1951 after a deployment that had lasted just over 13 months ROTOITI finally berthed in Auckland. Just over six weeks later, having recommissioned with a new crew the ship sailed from Auckland on 7 January 1952 for its 2nd deployment to Korea. ■

PETER DENNERLY



Peter Dennerly was a career naval officer, then Director of the Navy Museum and subsequently the RNZN Historian. He retired in 2005.



This North Korean flag was given to Able Seaman Bill Heenan by a 15 year old Korean boy who had removed it from a North Korean soldier after he had cut his throat. The boy gave it to thank Heenan who was coxswain of the motor boat carrying out an island evacuation.

A KOREAN FOUR LEAF CLOVER

In 1950 the Royal Navy trained junior officers from all Commonwealth countries as well as other “friendly” nations. After training the cadets were posted to “The Fleet”. Michael Muschamp was one of these cadets and in this article he relates his lucky escapes during his time in Korea.

The British Fleet consisted of a couple of battleships, sundry aircraft carriers and a dozen cruisers. There were plenty of smaller craft such as destroyers, frigates and submarines also and on promotion to the exalted rank of midshipmen we were dispatched to either a battleship, a carrier or a cruiser.

THE FIRST LEAF

With two other Kiwi midshipmen, three RN and a couple of Indians, having chosen the Far East Station as it was closest to home, we were appointed to

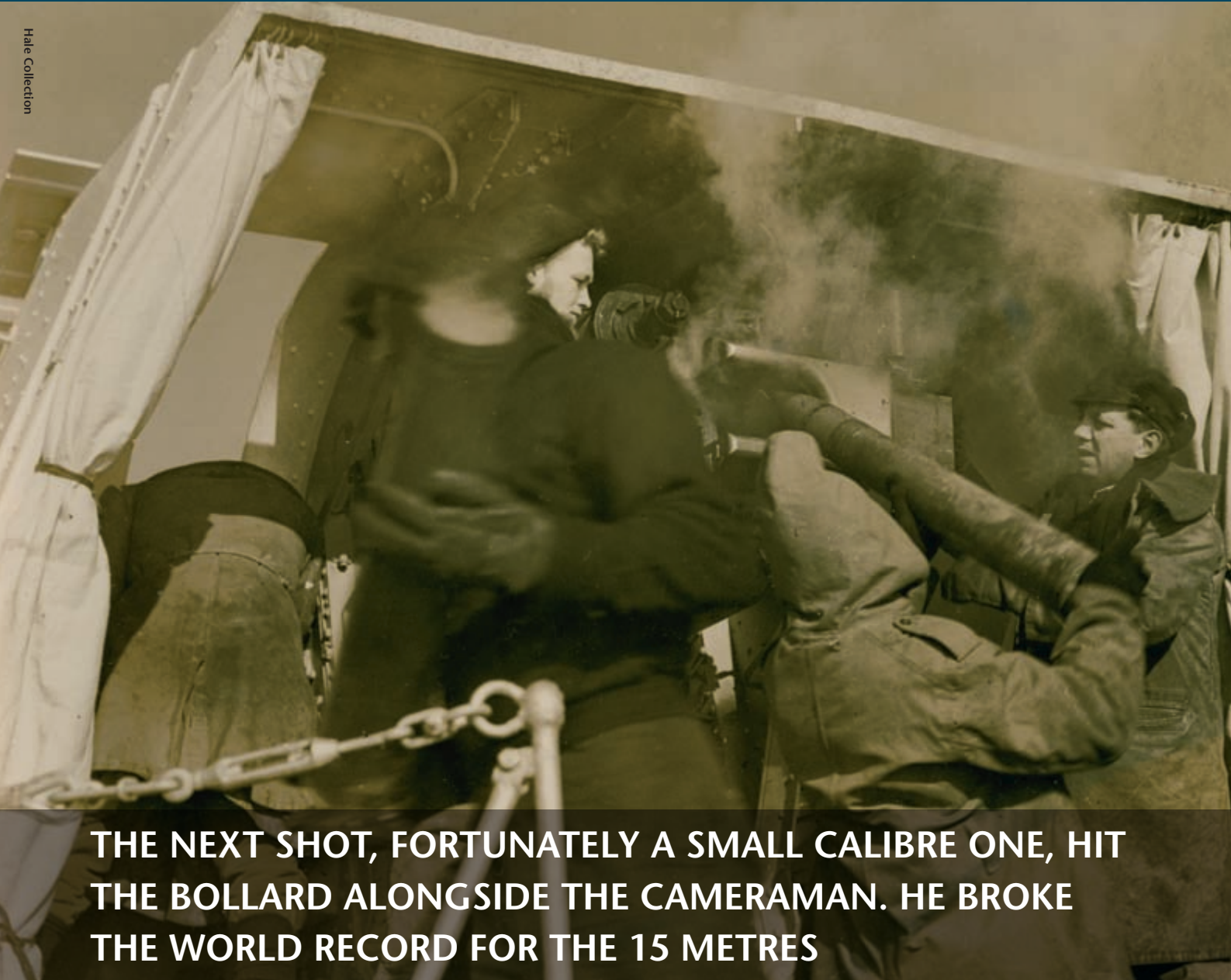
the Colony Class ship, HMS JAMAICA. With the main armament of nine 6” guns, eight 4” ‘dual-purpose’ guns and an assortment of anti-aircraft weapons as well as 21’ torpedoes, the ship was classified a ‘light cruiser’, a ‘heavy’ one being a vessel with 8” main armament.

Leaving Hong Kong in mid-June, we were on our way northward to ‘fly the flag’ on a visit to Japan. A day out of our first port of call, Nagasaki, the Korean War broke out and we were immediately attached to the US Seventh Fleet.

Early on the morning of the first Sunday in July, we encountered what transpired to be the whole of the North Korean navy, or at least the seagoing portion thereof.

A brilliant summer morning, the sea glistening, the land to our port side grey and unwelcoming, we were off the east coast, just north of the 38th parallel, the demarcation line between North and South Korea set in stone by the post-WWII disarmament conferences.

With our ship were an American ▶



THE NEXT SHOT, FORTUNATELY A SMALL CALIBRE ONE, HIT THE BOLLARD ALONGSIDE THE CAMERAMAN. HE BROKE THE WORLD RECORD FOR THE 15 METRES

Above: Ramming the shells home. Note the gloves and cold weather clothing but lack of ear muffs or anti flash.

light cruiser, the USS JUNEAU, and a British frigate, HMS BLACK SWAN. Sighting half-a-dozen small craft, all wearing the North Korean ensign, all three ships opened fire.

As they say, 'a brisk action followed'. The enemy was identified as E-Boats (fast motor torpedo boats or MTBs) but only fired small-calibre guns despite the fact that we were almost sitting ducks for a close-quarter torpedo attack.

It was all over in less than an hour. Four of the E-Boats were sunk (three by our guns), one ran aground and one high-tailed it seawards. BLACK SWAN was ordered by the Admiral on JUNEAU to chase, a somewhat futile gesture as, 'downhill with wind astern', the frigate's top speed was about 18 knots while the MTB could

easily manage twice that. Obviously, the worthy Admiral had not consulted his 'Jane's Fighting Ships'!

Survivors were fished out of the water and interrogated by our RoK (Republic of Korea) liaison officer.

"Ask them why they didn't fire their torpedoes" he was told.

"They say that the Russians were going to teach them how to fire them next week."

Blimey Charlie, as the Poms would say. Had they been able to use their torpedoes, it might well have been a very different story. We were only a few hundred metres off the very unwelcoming cliffs in a broadish bay.

What was a UN naval 'triumph' might well have been a disaster, with ships sunk and plenty of casualties.

THE SECOND LEAF

A month or so later, we were again off the east coast, bombarding the railway line which ran along the cliff face. Unfortunately, a shore battery 'got our range' and JAMAICA was hit several times.

The main damage was caused by a hit on the mainmast, shrapnel raining down on the guns' crews beneath. Several were killed and ten or so wounded and, from my action station on the gun direction platform, directly abaft the bridge (closer to the stern), I looked aft to see, to my horror, a headless corpse. Not a pleasant sight for anyone, let alone an eighteen-year-old.

I quietly mused, "if that shell had hit the foremast instead of the mainmast, that headless body could well have been mine".

All those killed, save one, were soldiers from the Middlesex Regiment. They had been part of a draft of about thirty who had taken passage in JAMAICA en route for some 'R & R' in Japan.

When hostilities had started, the Captain had asked if any of the army personnel would be willing to spend two weeks on board, rather than visiting the fleshpots of Tokyo. To a man they volunteered.

This was an enormous bonus for JAMAICA was at 'peacetime complement' and without the 'brown jobs' we could only man half our main armament and 4" guns. The casualties were all on the after gun deck, manning the anti-aircraft weapons.

As if that weren't bad enough, when the regiment was sent, en masse, to Korea in September, the first casualties they suffered there were as a result of 'friendly fire', our valiant American allies, mistaking one hill for another a few miles away.

THE THIRD LEAF

Three months later, the North Korean army had pushed the UN forces back to the 'Pusan perimeter', an area of about 80km by 80km in the south-east corner of South Korea.

Things were not exactly looking rosy for it seemed highly likely that the communist north would achieve its primary aim, that of an ice-free port on the Korean peninsula.

To the rescue came none other than General Douglas ("I shall return")



Light depth charge fired from mortar similar to those used in Korea.

MacArthur. In a master-stroke, he led an invasion force of some 80,000 troops well behind the enemy lines at the west coast port of Inchon.

With total mastery of the seas, a powerful naval force, which included the battleship USS MISSOURI, several US heavy cruisers and two RN cruisers, JAMAICA and KENYA, as well as a score of destroyers, bombarded the port for two days before the troops landed. Only fairly light resistance was met and Inchon, the port of and gateway to the capital, Seoul, was secured within a few days.

At dawn on the second morning after the landings, the ship's company of JAMAICA were at "Repel Aircraft Stations" (where all but the main armament guns are manned), when two propeller-driven aircraft appeared over the fleet, which was at anchor, a few hundred meters from the shore.

Now, while the North Korean army was very substantial, nothing had been seen of any air arm and it seemed that these planes were, perhaps, from the RN aircraft carrier HMS TRIUMPH, for the two US carriers at sea off the west coast were equipped with Phantom jets.

One of these dropped a bomb close to the US cruiser ROCHESTER, causing no damage. Our American cousins were obviously having a Sunday morning lie-in, for they studiously ignored the attack. This aircraft then turned and strafed JAMAICA, causing some damage and several casualties. As it passed overhead, without any apparent sound, it exploded, having been hit by our anti-aircraft guns on the port side.

I was at my Action Station which, as it was on the starboard side, received only a few bits of shrapnel. Several of these, struck the gun-sight which I controlled, one, a 20mm shell, passing between my legs. I did, in fact, sustain a 'wound' — a tiny shard of glass on my forehead, but sadly (and fortuitously) nothing worthy of the name of a 'real wound'.

The second aircraft, having seen the fate of its mate, decided that discretion was definitely the better part of valour and sped away without firing its guns, in this, echoing the non-action of the US Navy. ▶

Below: TAUPO transferring ammunition and Able Seaman McGeorge and empty shells from the Bofors gun after the Yang Do action.





Above: Sextants were used for navigation and comprised both a telescope and protractor for measuring angular distance above the horizon.

I had a small piece of anonymous fame when the London *Sunday Express*, which had a journalist aboard JAMAICA, reported that ‘a midshipman had a narrow escape when the gunsight he was working was severely damaged’.

THE FOURTH LEAF

Almost exactly a year later, by this time promoted to the dizzy rank of Acting

Sub Lieutenant, I was serving in the frigate HMS AMETHYST, a ship which had, two years earlier, attracted world-wide fame when she escaped from capture by the Chinese communists as they made their way south in their overthrow of the forces of the Nationalists under Chiang Kai-Shek.

She had made her way, without anything like adequate charts, some 200 miles down the Yangtse, under almost constant fire from the shore, finally breaking out of the river and into the sea south of Shanghai.

The Captain thereupon sent the memorable signal, “Have rejoined the fleet. God save the King.”

Several other RN ships had come under fire and one, the heavy cruiser, LONDON, was badly damaged. Her place on the Far East Station was taken, towards the end of 1949, by JAMAICA.

Stirring stuff, indeed. In parenthesis it is worth mentioning that JAMAICA had been transferred from the America and West Indies Station. By the time the vessel finally reached England, in March, 1951, she had spent almost three years away from her home port and very few of her officers and ratings had spent less time

away from home. This time AMETHYST was not ‘up the Yangtse’ but in the Han River estuary, on the west coast of Korea, a few miles north of the 38th parallel, conducting a survey of a large tract of virtually enclosed water.

This, even in peacetime, would have been quite a hazardous operation, for the tide rose and fell some 10 meters and the current often exceeded six knots.

In wartime it was another matter altogether for, while friendly forces controlled the southern shore, Very Unfriendly Folk were encamped on the northern one.

AMETHYST, because of her comparative size, was at anchor, out of range of the unfriendly fire, while a small Republic of Korean gunboat, with the frigate’s navigating officer, a couple of ratings and the ‘Sub’ slowly made its way to a point about four kilometres from AMETHYST.

Aboard the gunboat was a small motor-boat, which would carry the ‘Sub’ and a leading seaman, to a point about 800 metres from the shore, the whole performance being recorded by a cameraman from the British forces film unit on board the gunboat.

His remit was to produce a film for consumption on American TV in the hope that the Great US Public might be ►

HMS JAMAICA

Few are aware that three RNZN Midshipmen, John Burgess, Michael Muschamp, and Tom Riddell took part in the only surface engagement of the Korean War between UN Naval Forces and the North Korean Navy. They were cadets in the RNZN and in 1949 were sent to train in the Royal Navy and were posted to HMS JAMAICA. They were serving in JAMAICA during the action of 2 July 1950.

Three days after the North Korean offensive against the South opened on the 26 June 1950, the Royal Navy offered the fleet of its Far East Station to the US Naval Forces Far East in support of the United Nations Korean operations. The first Royal Navy vessels to arrive off the coast of Korea were the cruiser HMS JAMAICA, the frigates HMS BLACK SWAN, ALACRITY and HART. They had been part of the RN fleet that

included the aircraft carrier HMS TRIUMPH that had been steaming in the Japanese Inland Sea when the war broke out. They joined the East Korean Support Group who were tasked to harass the left flank of the advancing North Korean forces. These North Korean naval forces that opposed them consisted of 50 light naval craft, sufficient to deal with the South Korean Navy’s 40 small craft but woefully inadequate to ensure superiority at sea against aircraft carriers and cruisers.¹

HMS JAMAICA and BLACK SWAN were cruising in company with cruiser USS JUNEAU off the Korean east coast on the morning of 2 July 1950 when four North Korean torpedo boats and three Motor Gun Boats were discovered heading south after escorting a coastal fleet of ten trawlers with ammunition for the North Korean People’s Army. As the cruiser and frigate went to intercept the trawlers the North Korean Motor

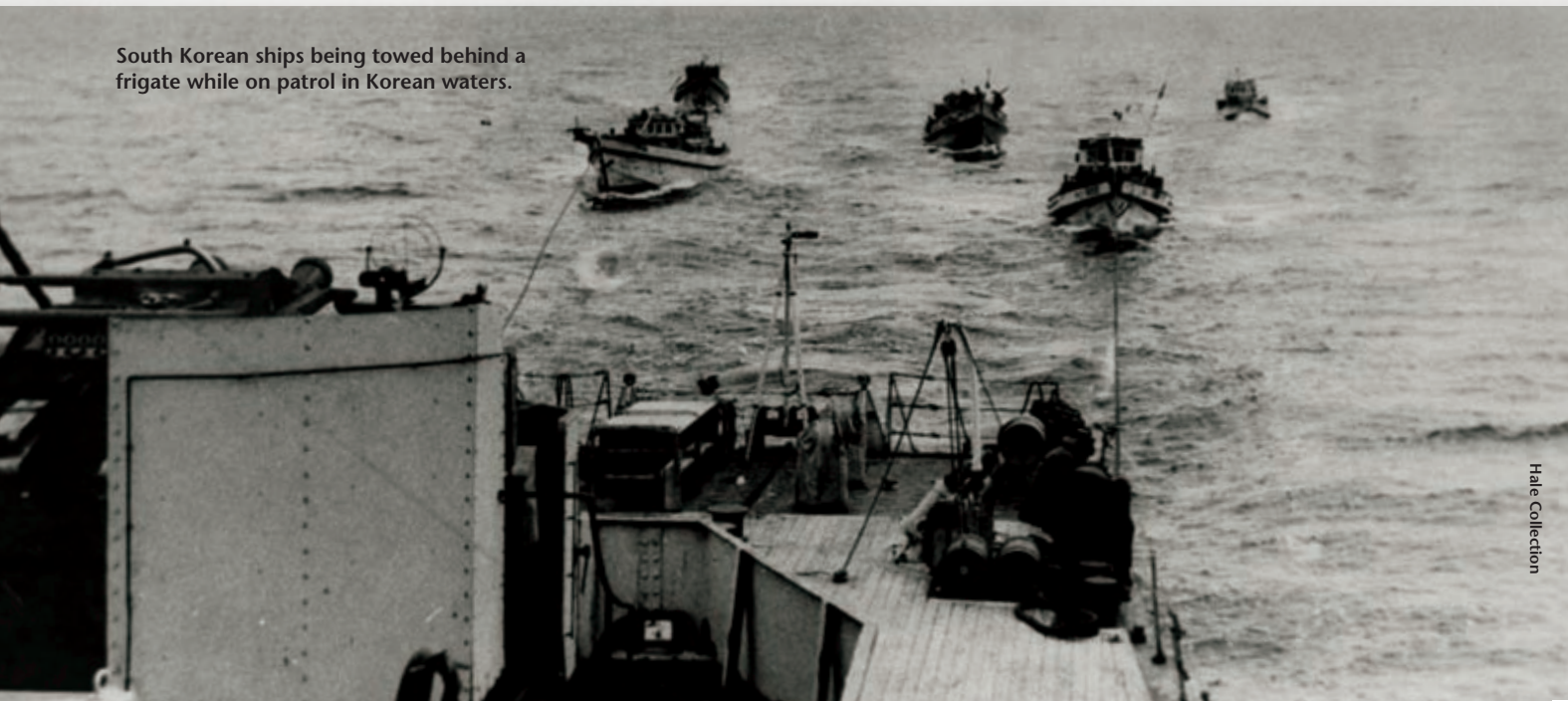
Torpedo Boats attacked. Midshipman Michael Muschamp was asleep when the ship was called to action stations: “A very perturbed 18-year old donned clothes, anti-flash gear and a tin hat in triple quick time. I made my way to my action station on the bridge . . . I soon saw what all the fuss was about. There were six small craft, trapped between three UN warships and the shore, firing what appeared to be 20mm and 40mm cannon at JUNEAU and JAMAICA. The two cruisers got the range of the craft and sank four within ten minutes. Another ran ashore in flames and the sixth escaped seaward.”² JAMAICA rescued many of the North



This Cold weather jacket was made up of a khaki green waterproof outer and a sage green woollen inner worn separately or together and was worn by the donor, Tom Riddell, when a Midshipman in HMS JAMAICA during the Korean War. Riddell was undergoing officer training in the Royal Navy and was posted to JAMAICA in the Far East Fleet when the Korean War broke out. JAMAICA became part of a United Nations Task Force operating off the Coast of Korea. Along with fellow RNZN trainees, John Burgess and Michael Muschamp, he was one of the first New Zealanders to participate in and see action in the Korean War.

THE FIRST ROYAL NAVY VESSELS TO ARRIVE OFF THE COAST OF KOREA WERE THE CRUISER HMS JAMAICA, THE FRIGATES HMS BLACK SWAN, ALACRITY AND HART.

South Korean ships being towed behind a frigate while on patrol in Korean waters.



Hale Collection

Koreans in the water and they were interrogated by the ship’s South Korean liaison officer. Muschamp remembers that when they were asked why they had not used their torpedoes they replied ‘The Russians were going to teach us how to fire them next week.’²

The North Korean Navy never sought battle again. This allowed the UN Naval Forces free rein off the coast of Korea and allowed them to support the land campaign through shore bombardments and air strikes from carrier-based aircraft.

MICHAEL WYND
 1 John R.P.Landsdown, *With the Carriers in Korea: The Sea and Air War in SE Asia 1950-1953*, Wilmslow: Crécy Publishing, 1997, p.7.
 2 Michael Hickey’s *Korean War: The West Confronts Communism 1950-1953*.

persuaded that nations other than their own and South Korea were in the 'great struggle against Carm-you-nism'

My job was to take 'horizontal sextant angles' (no GPS then), the leading hand would record them and they would be analysed by the navigator, who had been doing the same highly technical piece of work aboard the gunboat.

The motor-boat was about to be launched when the Unfriendlies started to shell the gunboat, their first shots falling well short. Then a large splash close to the ship suggested that they were getting the range.

Standing in the 'eyes of the ship' (as far forward as he could without actually falling overboard), the cameraman thought, "the next shot will hit the bridge. What a pic that'll make."

The next shot, fortunately a small calibre one, hit the bollard alongside the cameraman. He broke the world record for the 15 metres, while the gunboat got under way in a hurry.

I watched this performance from the comparative safety of the 'disengaged side', thanking my stars as we quickly got out of range.

Sad to say, that same cameraman was later captured by the Chinese and imprisoned under the most vile of conditions for more than two years.

Next day, in the safer surrounds of the lee of the southern shore, I was in the small motor-boat, doing my horizontal sextant act, when we were 'buzzed' by a low-flying extremely fast jet aircraft.

I was almost certain it was not a MIG-9 from the Chinese or North Koreans, but, taking no chances, I slid over the side of the motor-boat and into the (very shallow) water.

"Not to worry, sir," quoth the leading hand, as we clambered back aboard, "it was a Yank."

About a month later, the Captain

of AMETHYST, Commander Peter Fanshawe, sent for me. He was a somewhat austere man and, many years later, I discovered why he was not exactly a 'Cheerful Charlie Chester'.

He had been shot down as a naval flyer in 1941 and sent to the infamous Stalag Luft Nord. There he was one of the chief planners of what became known as 'The Great Escape', though he himself did not escape.

"Oh, Sub." he said with a quiet grin, "You know that aircraft that buzzed you in the Han River?"

"Yes, sir, of course."

"Well, I've just heard that it was indeed, a US Navy Phantom. You were bloody lucky. The clot of a pilot had mistaken the White Ensign you were flying for the North Korean flag. The only reason you weren't shot up was that he had expended all his ammunition."

A sideline to all this occurred a couple of months later.

With another Kiwi, I had applied for permission to 'find my own way back' to the UK, where we were due to spend two years on technical courses. Courtesy of the Royal Canadian Air Force, we flew via Shemya in the Aleutians and Anchorage, Alaska to Tacoma in Washington State.

From there, we thumbed and bussed our way down the west coast to Los Angeles and one day, standing on the famed corner of Hollywood and Vine, a very pretty girl came up to me and said,

"Gee, can I have your autograph?"

Fame at last, I thought. That film must have hit the TV screens in California.

She examined my signature.

"What's this? Ain't you Richard Widmark?" ■

MICHAEL MUSCHAMP



KANIERE: Kia Maia "Be Firm"



PUKAKI: Kua Pukekotia "To become Wise"



ROTOITI: Takaia "Bind Together"



HAWEA: Kia Toa "Be Brave"



TAUPO: Kia U "Stand Fast"



TUTIRA: Tutira Upoko Pipi "Tutira the place where heads are broken"

The Loch class frigates that went to Korea did not have gyros on their gun mountings. This meant guns always had to be aimed by elevating and training by hand to compensate for the movement of the gun platform which was continually moving with the ship's movement. This B.L. Mk III bombardment level was filled with a heavy fluid which had to be heated before the level could be fitted to the gun mounting and used. The instructions inside the box detail safe ways of heating the fluid. It was last used in Loch Class frigates in Korea.



Michael Muschamp joined the RNZN as a cadet in 1949. He served in Korea's post-armistice period in PUKAKI (1953-54) and BLACK PRINCE (1954-55). He was the Naval Aide de Camp to His Excellency the Governor General in 1955-57 and was the first member of the NZ regular forces to have this post. He has lived in Australia since 1970.

KOREAN MEDALS

The Navy Museum holds a comprehensive collection of medals, decorations, badges, and insignia. Service during the Korean War has been recognised by three different medals, two types of which the Navy Museum holds. In addition medals for Distinguished Service were also awarded during the Korean War.

The United Nations Medal (Korea) was awarded for service during the Korean War and for service in the twelve months that followed the Armistice. The ribbon is in the United Nations colours, a blue

background with a series of vertical white stripes. The reverse of the medal has the text "For service in defence of the principles of the charter of the United Nations".

The Korea medal was awarded to all British Commonwealth forces who served between 2 July 1950 and 27 July 1953. It has a yellow ribbon with two vertical blue stripes. The reverse of the medal features Hercules wrestling with the Hydra. (One of the ten labours of Hercules was to chop off the many heads of the Hydra. An impossible task without help). In 1950, the Republic of

Korea offered the Korean War Service Medal to British Commonwealth service personnel in recognition of their significant contribution to the War. However at that time medals from non-Commonwealth countries could not be accepted by Commonwealth service personnel which meant this offer was not able to be accepted until 2001. We currently do not have an example of this medal in our collection. For further information look on the NZDF medal website: www.medals.nzdf.mil.nz ■

KATHERINE BOL



Left: This Distinguished Service Medal King George the Sixth (KG VI) was awarded to Able Seaman Button for actions ashore in the landing party from ROTOITI, Korea 17 July 1951. It is roughly engraved A/B E.J. Button NZ 11418 RNZN.



Right: Leading Seaman C. Kruse was awarded two medals for his service in Korea. The yellow and blue striped medal is the Queen's medal for Korea and the blue and white striped medal is the United Nations medal for Korea.



THE HALE COLLECTION

The Hale collection of photographs and their original negatives were taken by Commodore Hale during his service in the Navy. It is a very important and significant collection for a number of reasons. Not only was Hale a very competent photographer, he was also one of the senior officers in many of the ships he served on which gave him quite unique access to situations that were not normally well documented (such as the Korean War shore parties). His photographs depict a slice of NZ naval history through one man's eyes, spanning from 1944 through to 1960s, which gives a level of personal continuity that is lacking in many of the Navy Museum photographic collections.

Hale's images are all original and in good condition. Commodore Hale

spent several days with Paul Restall, the museum's photographic archivist who accepted the collection on behalf of the museum, adding background information to each photograph. Having the opportunity to add quality, descriptive information first hand from Commodore Hale makes this an invaluable collection.

It is estimated that the Hale collection contains around 1200-1500 negatives, up to 500 prints and 250 transparencies. The images include the Korean War, the ENDEAVOUR's visit to Antarctica in 1957, the Christmas Island nuclear bomb tests, the Westport coalminers strike in 1951 and the 1944 Landing Craft Infantry (Large) delivery convoy, 1944. ■

CLAIRE FREEMAN



Above: A traditional Korean boat with slatted lugsails photographed by Hale during his service in Korea.



DLA0069

COMMANDER JAMES CYRIL LANCASTER DAVIES

Oral Historian Kelly Ana Morey has selected excerpts from two oral histories from sailors who served in Korea. Commander James Davies served in ROTOITI in 1952 during the ship's second deployment to Korea.

There were many incidents in Korea, one of them in particular, I think was a remarkable occurrence when we first arrived off the Korean coast. On this particular afternoon we sailed up the Han River, and it was just on four o'clock in the afternoon . . . when all of a sudden an enemy battery on the other side, on the northern side, opened fire on us, quite unexpectedly. We saw these large spouts of water coming up alongside the ship from near misses, and it was extremely difficult to pinpoint where it was coming from . . . I was on the bridge, looking up at the hills there, and all you could see was this tiny little flash, and then later on there would be a puff of smoke. But almost immediately these large spouts of water would come alongside. The first lot was ahead and the second lot

Above: Commander Davies as he was when he joined in 1945 as an Ordinary Seaman.

Below: Padre Harry Taylor conducting an onboard church service while serving in Korea, 1952.

was astern, and it was looking very much as though the third lot was going to be right on target on us in the middle. At this particular time, up in the crow's nest was a young seaman boy Vellenoweth, He was only sixteen years old but he had been in an awful lot of scrapes on board the ship, but it was his fortune, good or bad, to be the lookout at this particular time. We had Chaplain Taylor on board, always known as Padre Harry. When the shelling started, the captain was giving the order to the officers to take cover, and out of the corner of his eye he saw Padre Taylor climbing up to the crow's nest. Padre Taylor had looked up and he had seen Vellenoweth up there in the crow's nest all alone with these shells landing. He went up there and coming up behind Vellenoweth, he put his hand on his shoulder.

Vellenoweth told me afterwards, he said, 'I felt as though this was my father's hand on my shoulder, saying, "It's all right lad, I'm here, you're not alone".' This was Harry Taylor. He was a man of God, so perhaps it *was* the Father's hand there. He had that instinctive ability to see a situation, sum it up and know the right thing to do. I can still hear the captain of the ROTOITI saying, 'Padre come down from there', and the padre not hearing the order. Fortunately the Captain's attention was diverted to other more pressing engagements. We simply slipped the anchor, turned 180 degrees, full steam, the absolute maximum that we could get which was something a little bit over 20 knots, and made a hasty retreat. That really was our baptism of fire, and a very exciting introduction to the Korean War. ■



DUA0114

LEADING COOK THOMAS ABBOTT

Leading Cook Thomas Willie Abbott had only been in the navy for a year when he was posted to the Loch-class frigate HMNZS HAWEA in mid-1952.

At night time we would do patrols. We were an anti-submarine frigate and we used to support the minesweepers and the Republic of Korea Marines. They had what they called Technical Advisers and we would take them up the coast and drop them off on patrols. We would drop them off to attack villages, installations and things like that. I was on the starboard Bofors, number 3 ammunition right next to the bridge.

We went in to support the Korean Marines, attacking an installation on a hill. Now this was a big gun. It was bigger than our 4-inch and it was on rails. When anything went near it, it rolled back and they put the shutter down, so you could never get at the thing.

The coastline was very much like the Manukau Harbour, a lot of mud flats and little tidal estuaries and things. We left it a bit late. It was getting on to daybreak, and we were trying to get out through these channels. The skipper stood us down, thinking everything was over and as soon as we turned our back and started to come away from the shore this gun mounted on these rails was pushed out and they started firing shells every which way. The skipper couldn't get smoke from the engine room, because they wanted all the steam that they could get. He sent down a message to the galley, that was the ship's company and the wardroom galley to make smoke, so we made smoke to try and camouflage the ship. Anyway with the splashes of the shells on either side, we got out of that.

Above: Cooks, stewards, writers and medics originally wore square rig, which included peaked caps such as this.



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Above: Original matchbox and matches from HAWEA commemorating the Korean War 1952-3.

The interesting thing about that of course was that there were layers of ships out beyond us. There were destroyers, then the cruisers and then the OCEAN and the GLORY, the aircraft carriers . . . What happened was the cruisers started lobbing shells. They sent planes off one of the carriers and they dropped napalm bombs and they pretty well cleaned them up. We took another party in the next night and cleaned the whole thing up. ■

I felt as though this was my father's hand on my shoulder, saying, "It's all right lad, I'm here, you're not alone"



AAS 0084

DEVONPORT REMEMBERS

On Devonport's foreshore sit three memorials to the Korean War – the TUTIRA gun, the Pusan Rock and the latest addition, the KANIERE gun.

As HMS LOCH MORLICH, TUTIRA saw service in WW2 as an anti submarine escort. She was commissioned into the RNZN in 1949 and following the loch (or lake) naming tradition she was named after Lake Tutira on the east coast of the North Island. HMNZS TUTIRA served in the Korean War from July 1950 to May 1951.

When the ship was decommissioned from the RNZN this gun was removed and gifted to TS TUTIRA, Levin's Sea Cadet Unit. Later in 1998 when it was donated to the North Shore City Council it underwent refurbishment by the Naval Base's Fleet Maintenance Group's Weapons Shop. It is now situated pointing out to the Auckland Harbour outside the main gates of the Naval Base and serves to remind visitors of the RNZN's part in the Korean war.

TUTIRA's motto is taken from the proverb "Tutira Upoko Pipi" which means "Tutira the place where the heads are broken." The proverb reflects the Tutira people's battles of the past, when they fought against repeated enemy attacks until they were left alone. ■

Below: The Pusan Rock and memorial plaque.



Below: The Pusan Rock and memorial plaque.

KANIERE GUN

An artifact that has not been on public display before will be exhibited along Devonport's waterfront when the main armament gun from the Loch Class frigate HMNZS KANIERE is put into position at the new Navy Museum at Torpedo Bay. This 4 inch gun was originally gifted to Auckland's Museum of Transport and Technology in the 1960s and donated to the Navy Museum in 2002.

The KANIERE gun was refurbished by VT Fitzroy in 2009. Repainted and provided with a new tarpion for the end of the gun barrel and a canvas curtain, the foot plate was found to be too rusty to be refurbished so a replica was made from the original plans. KANIERE served at the Korean War in the 1950s and this gun was used for both shore bombardment and surface action. The placement of the gun on public display on 22 April 2010 helps commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Korean War this year. ■



Above: The KANIERE Gun being moved into place at the new Navy Museum site at Torpedo Bay Devonport.



Left: Wooden battle honours board commemorating KANIERE's part in the Korean War. KANIERE's badge features the Kakapo, one of the world's rarest birds, once abundant on the shores of Lake Kanieri.

Right: This light box is believed to have been fixed to the roof of HMNZS TAUPO's motor boat during her service in Korea. It was a general purpose fixture for Loch Class frigates' motor boats for night time identification.

PUSAN ROCK

Another memorial to the Korean War, the Pusan Rock, sits to the left of the TUTIRA gun. A plaque in front of the rock commemorates the NZ government's commitment to the defence of the principles of the charter of the United Nations. The New Zealand navy was among the military

forces provided to the United Nations to repel aggression against the Republic of Korea from 25 June 1950 -27 July 1953 and for peace keeping operations until July 1956. The frigates HMNZ Ships TUTIRA, PUKAKI, ROTOITI, HAWEA, TAUPO and KANIERE served in Korea bringing the number of New Zealand sailors deployed to Korea

to over 1600. Two sailors lost their lives during the war. The rock displayed in the shell garden in front of the plaque was provided by the Korean city of Pusan in 2000 in recognition of RNZN support to the Republic of Korea during this time. ■

CLIFF HEYWOOD



TUTIRA Gun outside Devonport Naval Base.

TURTLE SHIPS

In the 16th century there were two major invasions of Korea by Japan. One of these was defeated at sea by the famous Korean Admiral Yi Sun-sin.

GMA 0027



2006.998.17

ABOVE: This model was presented to Rear Admiral J O'C Ross RNZN by Vice Admiral Kim Yong Kwan of the Republic of Korean Navy during OTAGO's visit to Korea in 1968.

Admiral Yi repelled the Japanese invasion by resurrecting the Korean's famous invention, the Turtle Ship or Geobukseon. The Turtle Ship had five different types of cannons and a completely spiked covered deck designed to both protect against cannon fire and repel boarders. This spiked deck

was an excellent military design as the Japanese traditionally boarded their enemies' ships with grappling hooks and then defeated them in close hand combat. The iron spikes stopped this.

Yi has been credited with this invention but his own diaries state that

he studied Korean designs from as far back as 200 years before 1591, when Yi's new Turtle Ship was used against the Japanese. The Turtle Ship was between 30-37 metres long with a dragon's head at the bow, underneath which was a large anchor. The dragon's head puffed out sulphurous smoke which helped hide

the movements of the ship in close combat and also frightened the Japanese sailors. Poisonous material could also be burnt in the dragon's head as a form of chemical warfare.

The large anchor at the bow had a wooden crest (in the form of a face) below it. These were used to ram enemy ships. What made the ship even more formidable was its maneuverability. It could turn on its own radius and 70 oarsmen meant it could do it at speed. There were 10 oars on each side (the model shows only 7) with two masts and two sails for motive power.

The armament was impressive, with eleven cannon portholes on each side plus two in the bow and two in the stern. In addition a cannon could be fitted into the dragon's mouth. Volleys of cannonballs were aided by wooden bolts 60 to 90 centimetres long which had iron fins to help them make maximum impact. The Japanese had traditionally used small arms together with their boarding strategy, but they were hopelessly outgunned. The Turtle Ship's seungja cannon had a range of 200 metres, while the lighter hwangja cannon had a range of 1200 metres. The main tactic of the ships was to ram the enemy ship and blast him with cannon fire. As well as the oarsmen there were between 50 and 60 fighting sailors on board at the Captain's command which made this a formidable vessel. ■

BELOW: Korea was an isolated agricultural society in the 1950s.



Hale Collection

Two New Zealand sailors died serving in Korea. Ordinary Seaman W.H. Cooper (NZ 12902) died during TUTIRA's initial deployment in July 1950. He was lost overboard between Hong Kong and Sasebo.

Able Seaman R.E. Marchioni (NZ 13155) died during the second landing conducted by ROTOITI in 1951.

LEST WE FORGET



2006.1424.5

ABOVE: Commemorative scroll for Seaman W.H. Cooper who drowned off the coast of Korea 29 July 1950.

We have received many letters to the Editor following our last issue on the Battle of the River Plate including this letter from the Minister of Defence:

Dear Terry Manson
Congratulations to you and everyone involved in the Battle of the River Plate commemorative issue of The White Ensign.

The White Ensign is always a well written and well presented publication, providing real insight into our naval history. In particular it highlights aspects of our history which are not so well known, such as the German raider's attack around our coasts in 1940. A complete set of issues comprises a unique resource.

On this occasion, dealing with perhaps the most significant event in New Zealand's naval history, the magazine is an exceptional record of the morning of 13 December 1939. Every article brought out a different and interesting aspect of the engagement and the people involved. The range of images and attractive layout complemented the stories very well.

In his guest editorial Vince McGlone writes of the pride the 321 New Zealanders on board HMS ACHILLES felt when the New Zealand Blue Ensign was raised before the action. ACHILLES, later HMNZS ACHILLES, and the Battle of the River Plate are icons of New Zealand naval history. You have done them, and us, proud in this first-class publication.

WAYNE MAPP
MINISTER OF DEFENCE

MUSEUM CLOSES ONLY TO REOPEN

The Spring St Navy Museum closed its doors to the public on the 1st of May. It will reopen at Torpedo Bay in Devonport. The new site has rich heritage significance. For further updates on the new museum visit our website www.navymuseum.mil.nz.

We would like to thank VT Fitzroy for their generous donation towards the redevelopment of the new Navy Museum at Torpedo Bay.

