



Russian Convoy Club of New Zealand

Newsletter
July/August 2016

Dear shipmates, families and friends

We hope you are all well and getting through the winter OK. I recently had a nice long chat swinging the lamp over the phone with Bill Chapman (KG5) of Tauranga. Many thanks Bill.

And still the convoys are being commemorated. On 3 April 2016 a plaque was laid in the village of Merstham, Surrey organised by the local branch of the Royal British Legion.

On ANZAC Day a wreath was laid on behalf of the club by the President at the Pukeahu War Memorial Park ably backed up by several of our members seated in the Veterans section.

Legion d'Honneur and other commemorations



On 27 April 2016 five of our members were awarded the Legion d'Honneur by the French Ambassador at a function held at the Embassy residence in Wellington in the company of family and friends (picture below). These were Stan Welch, Chris King, Syd Wells, Frank Jones and Derek Whitwam. Ron Hancocks' family were thrilled to receive his posthumous award by post.

Our Napier members Stan Douglas and John Whitehead received their awards by post on 16 March 2016.

During ANZAC weekend HMNZS Te Kaha visited Napier and was granted the Freedom of the City followed by a march through the city to the Returned and Services Association clubrooms. Stan and John were then formally presented with their medals by Rear Admiral John Martin, New Zealand Chief of Navy. This was followed by a rousing haka by the ship's company. Congratulations to both members. We haven't had word of any other member receiving the award but we're keen to know if there are any.



Members of the RCCNZ received their medals from the French Ambassador to New Zealand (far right) in the presence of the British High Commissioner (far left).

On 9 May 2016 Victory in Europe Day was commemorated at our plaque on the Wellington waterfront in the company of H.E. The Russian Ambassador, Valery Tereshchenko and his wife Alexandra.

Other wreath layers included H.E. Johnathon Sinclair, British High Commissioner, Commander Andrew Law RNZN on behalf of Rear Admiral John Martin, Chief of Navy and Chris King representing the Russian Convoy Club of New Zealand.

Those of our members who were able to attend gathered at the Wellington Club, at the invitation of the Ambassador, to celebrate Russia's National Day on 9 June 2016 - a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

As an aside would any member who has changed their email address from that shown on our website please let me know.

Commemoration in Archangelsk

On the 30 and 31 August 2016 there will be a celebration in Archangelsk commemorating the 75th anniversary of the arrival of "Convoy Dervish". The New Zealand Ambassador to Russia, H.E. Ian Hill has requested we send a message to the city.

A visit to Foreign Affairs in Wellington resulted in a video message being filmed which it is understood will be dubbed into Russian and shown by the Ambassador who will be representing New Zealand at the commemoration.

A peak into the future

Preview of what a RN warship may look like in years to come



Britain's Ministry of Defence laid down a challenge and the youngest and most intelligent engineers and scientists answered that challenge in a big way. These great minds were asked to come up with what they envisioned as the future of the battleship.

The current design is quite impressive with its extremely advanced technology and weaponry. "Dreadnought 2050" is a tri-hull design made of an ultra-strong, see-through acrylic unlike the typical steel ship. It has a quad copter tethered to the ship that has carbon nanotubes used to transport power for sensors and a laser gun used for defence to eliminate any posing threats. It is also armed with weaponry used to cover great distances.

The bow is equipped with an electromagnetic rail gun that can take down an enemy hundreds of miles away. The outrigger hulls are armed with two tubes containing "supercavitating" torpedoes that travel so fast they actually vaporize the water around them creating an air pocket that enables them to fly through the water. There is also a flight deck in the aft section of the ship that can serve as a launching pad for drones that are made aboard the ship using 3D printing technology and a moon pool to launch amphibious troops when necessary.

Editor's note: By then you'll probably need a Doctorate to qualify for Able Seaman. Wonder if they'll still teach rope/wire splicing and knot tying?

Crossing the bar



We are sad to advise that the following members have passed away during the past couple of months and their names have been added to our Roll of Honour. Our deepest condolences are offered to their families:

Michael Biegel	SS Dolabella	MN	8 May 2016
G.B.W. (Brian) Johnson	HMS Keppel	RN	29 April 2016
Kenneth Newton	HMS Glasgow	RN	28 May 2016
David Owen	HMS Striker	RN	17 July 2016

Establishment of the Polar Convoys Association, London

We've received the following communication from London. If you would like any further information please let us know. Alternatively, you are welcome to contact Eugene at the websites listed in the message.

Dear Friends!

I hope you are keeping well. Please accept my admiration of your website and the activities that you are initiating. We would like to let you know that Victory Day London (United Kingdom) and the Polar Convoys Club (St. Petersburg, Russia) have initiated the Polar Convoys Association www.polarconvoys.com. We are inviting all your existing members, their relatives and friends of those who 'crossed the bar' to join us in order to create a global network of remembrance.

With all best wishes

Eugene Kasevin, VICTORY DAY LONDON

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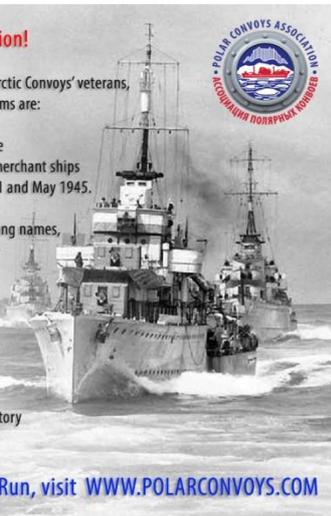
Welcome to the Polar Convoys Association!

To join the Polar Convoys Association is FREE for the Arctic Convoys' veterans, their family members and friends. The Association's aims are:

1. To unite the descendants of shipmates world-wide by reconstructing ship companies of all military and merchant ships of all 79 convoys that took place between August 1941 and May 1945.
2. To preserve the history of Arctic Convoys by collating names, photographs, letters and stories, to be freely available for knowledge and research of future generations.
3. To keep its members up-to-date with the latest news news and forthcoming events world-wide and to invite its members to take part in the events whenever possible.

You are invited to recreate and preserve the heroic history of Arctic Convoys with the Polar Convoys Association!

To join us and begin your Murmansk Run, visit WWW.POLARCONVOYS.COM



Royal New Zealand Navy to commission new supply tanker

The New Zealand Government has approved the purchase of a new naval tanker for the New Zealand Defence Force which will be ice-strengthened and winterised for operations in Antarctica, Defence Minister Gerry Brownlee says.

The project will cost NZ\$493 million and will support a full range of NZDF deployments, including maritime sustainment and humanitarian and disaster relief operations. The vessel will be built by South Korean firm Hyundai Heavy Industries and is expected to be delivered in 2020.

It replaces the 30-year-old tanker HMNZS Endeavour, which currently provides fuel to Royal New Zealand Navy and other partner nations' ships and embarked helicopters, and supplies fuel and fresh water to support land operations. The new tanker will undertake a similar role.

"The Defence Force can't operate without fuel, water, ammunition and other bulk goods, and the most effective way to deliver fuel to ships, aircraft and vehicles deployed overseas is by tanker.

"This vessel will be significantly larger, will be able to refuel two ships at a time while underway, carry and refuel Defence Force helicopters, produce and store water, and store and transport bulk goods. The Government has also opted to include ice-strengthening and winterisation features, representing a very useful enhanced capability when compared to the current tanker.

"This will allow it to deliver fuel and other goods to support Scott Base and McMurdo Station, during summer months once an icebreaker has cleared a path. It is important that New Zealand has a significant asset capable of supporting our presence in Antarctica and our interests in the Southern Ocean more generally.

"It will increase New Zealand's contribution and help further demonstrate our long-term commitment to the Antarctic Joint Logistics Pool with the United States," Mr Brownlee says.

The recently-released Defence White Paper placed greater emphasis than previous White Papers on protection of Southern Ocean resources and supporting New Zealand's civilian presence in Antarctica. HMNZS Endeavour is due to retire in 2018.

Editor's note: Better than even chance it won't look anything like the Dreadnought 2050!

Saving reputations

A famous admiral and an equally famous general were fishing together when a sudden squall came up. When it died down both eminent warriors were struggling helplessly in the water. The admiral floundered his way back to the boat and pulled himself painfully in. Then he fished out the general, using an oar.

Catching his breath, he puffed: "Please don't say a word about this to anyone. If the Navy found I can't swim I'd be disgraced."

"Don't worry," the general said. "Your secret is safe. I'd hate to have my men find out I can't walk on water."



Keep up to date with what's happening in the Royal New Zealand Navy. You can access free copies of *Navy Today* at the RNZN's website or write to The Editor, Defence Public Affairs, H/Q NZDF, Private Bag, Wellington and request to be placed on the mailing list. Web address:

<http://www.navy.mil.nz/nap/navy-today/default.htm>

Next meeting

Our next meeting will be held in the ANZAC Lounge at the Lower Hutt Memorial RSA, Udy St, Petone, Lower Hutt at 11.00am on Thursday 25 August 2016.

Up Spirits!



Derek Whitwam
President

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