

ROYAL NEW ZEALAND NAVAL WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION INC.

Including WRNZNS 1942 – 1977

National Patron: Miss M.H. (Midge) Lee

National President: **Margaret Mitchell** (Wilkins 1388), 87-C Yorke Road, Haruru Falls, Paihia 0200
Ph 09 402 6699, e-mail: margaretmitchell@xtra.co.nz

National Secretary: **Jill Thompson** (Franklin H28504), P O Box 96 Paihia 0200 Ph: 0212744426,
e-mail jill.thompson@clear.net.nz

National Treasurer: **Corry Beentjes** (H29619) 182 Miromiro Rd, Maungaraki, Lower Hutt 5010.
Ph: 04 5870092. Email: cornelia@xtra.co.nz

National Executive:

Margaret Dallard (1430), 3/85 Meeanee Road, Taradale, Napier 4112 Ph: 06 845 1288,
e-mail: pawz.md@clear.net.nz

Sue Maguire (Willard 1399), 151 Waimairi Road, Ilam, Christchurch 8041.
Ph: 03 3584142, e-mail: sue_evanmaguire@clear.net.nz

Jan Luttrell (Hynd 1442), 34-B Claude Street, Claudelands, Hamilton 3214.
Ph: 07 855 3862 (after 6.00 pm), e-mail: luttrellcastle@xtra.co.nz

Margaret Snow 72 Mount Marua Way, Timberlea Upper Hutt 5018. Tel 04 528 8185,
email: pandmsnow@paradise.net.nz

May 2010

From the President:

Greetings to all,

As this newsletter goes out we are just coming back to earth after another great reunion fades behind us. I trust that those 93 who attended enjoyed themselves and that your reunion committee's efforts were worth it. It was logistics challenge with us so spread around the country but thanks to the on-site naval person it eased our load. Our thanks go to Cathy Knight for her efforts.

Lloyd and I only returned home last week after continuing around the South Island following reunion. We headed off down the West coast to Bluff, and even managed to make it to Stewart Island. We came back up the East Coast spending time with family and friends. You wouldn't believe it, but as we got nearer to Auckland, Lloyd decided that we needed to go all the way to the North Cape before heading home. Why, just because we could, and so he could say we went from the North Cape to the Bluff and Stewart Island in one holiday. It was nice to catch up with Ex Wren friends and thank to those who hosted Lloyd and I on our journey. We completed our bucket list before completion, whitebait in Hokitika, salmon at Haast, oysters in Bluff, fresh blue cod at Stewart Island. Crayfish in Kaikoura and the paua fritter. Oh yes fresh flounder at Opononi. We saw the albatrosses' in Dunedin, sea lions in the Catlin's and soaked in the hot pools at Hanmer springs, so much for the kids inheritance! I enjoyed it, and we had perfect weather with only one miserable day in the 6 ½ weeks.

In the last newsletter I asked for your short summary of your service life but no one has fronted up yet, come on pen to paper! Well enough from me, I trust that you are all well and take care this winter. God bless you all.

Margaret Mitchell.

Important Date: Annual Church Service at 10.00 and on completion the National AGM, Sunday 25 July 2010 followed by a light luncheon

Last Post

Name	Service Number	Date of Passing
Diana Cowie (Tapper)	584	5 March 2010
Hilda Gray (Smith)	20	11 May 2010
Valmai Moss (Paulin)	18	May 2010

Absence of National Treasurer:

Corry is having a lovely holiday overseas and will be back in early June 2010. Any cheques that have been sent in during the last month will be waiting for her; she will then take all necessary action.

Purchasing of Crested badges and Crested Notepaper

These orders will now be taken by Corry Beentjes by sending her a cheque to: National Treasurer, 182 Miromiro Rd, Maungaraki, Lower Hutt 5010. Badges are \$10.00 and Notepaper packets are \$5.00

WRITERS REUNION – LABOUR WEEKEND 22-24 OCTOBER 2010 IN AUCKLAND; *Open to all ex and serving Writers. For information visit the Writers website www.rnznwriters.com for all details.*

NEWS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY

AUCKLAND

Greetings from Auckland Branch. As you have no doubt heard from many different people, the Reunion in Nelson was a huge success for all that attended. I got home back to Auckland and was totally shattered, however, it was all worth it. Up and onwards towards the next one in 2012! The AGM was held last Sunday and the following are the Executive and Committee members:

President Jill Thompson
Treasurer Carole Maddix
Secretary yet to be filled

Committee members: Lynda Gage, Patricia Nixey, Margaret Lynne, Noeline Wright and Mary Melrose. Pauline Martin has finally been able to stand down as Treasurer after 8 years! We thank you very much Pauline. We also congratulate Lynda Gage on becoming a grandmother again, to her 10th Grandson! Thanks also to Joan Venus for laying a wreath on our behalf at the Devonport ANZAC service.

Best regards to all.
Jill Thompson
Branch President

CHRISTCHURCH

Greetings to you all from Christchurch.

What a great time we all had at our Reunion in Nelson. It was wonderful to renew old friendships once again, and Nelson turned on some glorious weather for us. Congratulations to the reunion committee for a job well done.

Helen Robinson "Robbie" will be on a cruise with her daughter and grandson during August, and in October she is to become a grandmother again. Judith Waddell (Humphries) and partner Ken have just been to Aitutaki in the Cook Islands for Jude's son Jason's wedding. Jude says they had a fabulous six days on that most beautiful and romantic island.

Jan Maw (Lauder) has grand daughter Jordan beginning the first Limited Service Volunteer (LSV) course to be held in Hobsonville Auckland. The course duration is for six weeks and is designed to give young people self discipline, personal development and employment skills. Maybe Jordan will follow her grandmother into the services.

Sue Maguire (Willard)

WELLINGTON

The following is the committee for Wellington Branch:

President Corry Beentjes
Secretary Marie Reille (Churchill)
Treasurer Pauline Patterson (Hayward)

Committee members: Diane Tews (Sherborne), Margaret Dallard, Margaret (Meg) Pilcher (Waddell) and Margaret Snow (Smith). Our thanks to the two retiring committee members, Margaret Bell and Jennifer O'Donnell. Margaret's valued input on the Wellington Branch Committee for the last 3 years has been very much appreciated. ~ We wish them well. ~

Nelson Reunion. Wellington Branch is proud to boast about the fact there were 10 of us there. I have a few written comments about the reunion to share with you all; I will add the rest in the next newsletter as they come to hand.

Highlights of the Nelson Reunion.

Pauline Patterson

When I attend a Reunion I always hope that I will meet someone from my class of August 65. With this reunion being in the South Island, and knowing that there are a few in the Southern regions I was ever hopeful. Pleased to say I was not disappointed. Katherine Orłowski (Scott) found me and although we had both changed a bit the years melted away and two young wrens stood there again. This for me was the highlight of the reunion. Katherine and I had some long chats and I caught up with the whereabouts of several other old classmates. This reunion was the friendliest I have attended with all ages getting together and really enjoying themselves.

Meg Pilcher

Briefly -- The highlight for me was the tour of the Taupo, interesting to see all the modern things now available to make life easier for those on board. Another aspect of the reunion, which was so clearly apparent, was the better mixing of the various age groups. I had a ball. It was a good choice of venue, good hotel, and great staff, most willing to help, even for the request for more wineglasses in my suite. Hotel was central to a number of interesting places to visit or shop. Finally the whole thing was not over organised.

Marie Reille

I loved the special comradeship that was felt amongst us all at the reunion, everything went so well if there were any hiccups we didn't know about them. Having everything in one venue was a big bonus. But the highlight for me was seeing 14 Ex WWII Wrens; it was absolutely amazing seeing you all there, I know you all helped make the reunion as successful as it was.

ANZAC Wreath

Midge Lee did us proud once again with the honour of representing the RNZNWA in laying the wreath at the Cenotaph. ~ Thank you Midge. ~

Bereavement:

Sadly Pauline Patterson's husband William or Paddy, as a lot of us knew him, passed away on Tuesday the 27th of April 2010. Our thoughts and love go to Pauline and her family.

To others that have lost loved ones recently our thoughts and love go out to you all at this sad time. Regards Marie

BAY OF PLENTY

A group of us down here in the Bay of Plenty met at the Tauranga RSA on Friday, 30 April for a lovely lunch and a great catch up - AND it was really neat to have Pauline Martin join us, now that she has moved down this way. Vivienne Andrews and I had the privilege of laying the wreath on behalf of the Royal New Zealand Naval Women's Assoc (Bay of Plenty) at the 9.30 Civic Service at Mt Maunganui on a lovely sunny Anzac Day morning. Our next get-together is at the Mt Maunganui RSA on Friday, 18 June at 11.30am. Regards to EVERYONE from us ALL down here in the Bay.

Sadly Hilda Gray, service number 20 passed away on 11 May 2010 and her service was conducted by Heather Waldron, service number 1108.
Blessings, Rona

Here is a story from Anne Hine (nee Ashby). Anne has recently had a novel published called "Worlds Apart". Congratulations on your success Anne.

"When Jill suggested I write an article I filtered through the many highs of my 21 years with the RNZN. I chose my most satisfying and rewarding posting.

In May 1980 I was posted –kicking and screaming – to the New Entry Training School in Tamaki. While I loved training communicators, I had no interest in turning civilians into sailors. I knew I'd hate the job and being a watch keeper (very rare attendance at divisions) and a graduate of 3 whole weeks of basic training, I knew nothing of what I was expected to teach these girls.

Fear drove me through my first 3-month class - the third male/female integrated training course. Fear of my own shortcomings –(night time study kept me ahead of my trainees, but the physical stuff, I hopefully hid my inadequacies) – but more a fear that my inexperience would let "my ladies" down. Girls trained exactly as their male counterparts, and I discovered, didn't expect any privileges because of their gender. From the 5am dip in the sea – yes it was winter – through the hours of parade training, classroom study, running/gym training, washing, ironing, spit polishing, repeated kit musters – they performed as well as any male class. Then there was the week long exped, the sailing, the shooting, the confidence course. More things I'd never experienced but was now 'teaching' - it was a daunting time for me.

I was less than politely informed by senior training staff after proudly watching my whole class pass out of their Basic Common Training that it was actually my job to 'weed' out anyone not 'suited to Navy life' before graduation. Whoops, the free-thinking hippy who looked like a

scrabag most of the time probably fitted that category. However, her pride and that on her parents' faces at graduation, it was well worth my superiors' censure.

My second class would be different. I was now more confident and self-assured. I'd taken on board the criticism I was too soft and toughened up. Look out. I was ready for them. However, the 14 girls in my division were again the cream of any group imaginable. Guilt sat heavy as I almost daily threw beds on the floor, tipped out drawers, scrunched up almost perfectly ironed uniforms, stepped on spit polished boots – they rarely deserved the 'discipline' I dished out. Three showers after one PE session? Was it my fault they needed practise to fall in, double from the gym to their dorm (about 600mtrs), get showered (in only 6 showers), dressed, hair up and fallen in on the parade ground in ten minutes? I'll leave that incident for Janet to expand on – I understand it's one of her fondest memories.

Girls were still a novelty in this training environment and they were often the brunt of "jokes" by senior sailors (but never their own male classmates) eg. Thunder flashes thrown at them in the Whangaparaoa Tunnels, being hosed down with fire hoses during sport. Their fortitude in ignoring/coping with such stupidity amazed me.

These amazing young women went on to serve Queen and country for a huge accumulation of years. I'll forever stand in awe of them. What they achieved, what they learned, what they became during those 3 months, truly humbles me. Their bond transcends friendship and I'm so grateful they allow me to be part of their very special relationship.

Stories of those days are not mine to tell – instead I encourage these girls to share their memories with you all. And from BCT intake 3/80 - we pledge to track down as many classmates as possible and get them joining the Assoc and attending reunion in 2012.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Royal New Zealand Naval Women's Association Incorporated will be held at The Seminar Centre at HMNZS Philomel Devonport, Auckland on Sunday 25 July 2010 commencing at 1045 a.m. or as soon as possible following the Church Service (The Seminar Room is at the rear of St. Christopher's Chapel in the Naval Base, Devonport). The Church Service starts at 1000.

All remits are to be received by the National Secretary no later than 20th June 2010.