

CHAPTER THREE - Part One

Prior to drafting on to HMNZS Royalist 25 January 1965, we did a two week painting and chipping course on the old Loch Class frigate, Kaniere, which was tied up at the Training Jetty. Our instructor was a Leading Seaman whose name escapes me but his first and middle initials were KT. He didn't stand on ceremony or rank and we were permitted to call him KayTee. He introduced us to the technical details of the four inch paint brush and chipping hammer, which resembled a mini mountaineer's ice-pick. The chipping hammer was known to go through metal decks on ships that had been worn away by many years at sea. Along with these items we were also acquainted with various grades of sandpaper, Admar (brown undercoat paint for metal) and topcoat (in those days our ships were painted a duck egg blue).



The day came for us to draft on to Royalist and all the ODs that were going, were mustered into one large platoon and with Anti-Gas Respirators slung over one shoulder, resting on left hip, kitbag over the other, we were marched over to Calliope Wharf where our home for the next 12 months awaited us. Our civvies had been packed away in our suitcases and placed in a lay apart store as Junior Rates were only allowed to wear uniform ashore in NZ and overseas. This was to prove detrimental to one of my shipmates later on.

We filed on to the Quarterdeck and summoned by Divisions to the Regulating Office, where we were issued our a joining routine card, liberty card, messdeck number, locker number and key. The Leading Hands of the messdecks then took their divisions down to their respective living quarters. The Leading Hand of the Sparkers Mess - 6 Mess - was LRO Rick Nutt. The Buntings were aft of us in 10 mess. The two messdecks were on the Port side forrard, 3 Deck and separated only by a dwarf bulkhead. One would have thought that 8 followed 6 but as this was the navy, logic didn't seem to follow. We were separated by the two messdecks (Seamen) on the Starboard side by A Turret barbette.

Once we had stowed our gear away in our lockers, Rick then took us around the ship to fill in our joining card, including picking up our hammocks from stores. We then returned to the messdeck, put our hammocks up so that we could lash them up and then stow them away in the hammock stowage area. We were then taken up to the Bridge Wireless Office on 01 Deck, Starboard side, where we told which watches we were going in to plus Action Station post, Emergency Station, Liferaft Station and special duties. I was in 2nd Port Watch, Action Station - Ultra High Frequency Office - can't remember emergency and liferaft stations but my special duty was Portable Radios - Portables! What a contradiction in terms!

Broadside messing was the type used on Royalist. We ate, relaxed and slept (not often) in the one space. Each messdeck had a set of mess traps which contained the usual condiments plus tins of herrings-in-tomato sauce, sugar, butter, condensed milk, cups, dinner plates, dessert bowls, knives, forks, spoons and a toaster. At meal times, duty watch personnel (known as Duty Cooks, according to which watch you had or were going on) went up to the Main Galley on 2 Deck and fetched a large fanny of hot water for doing the dishes, a large pot of tea and a large tray of duff (dessert) containing one portion per person. Each member took a dinner plate up to the Galley where the cooks would ladle out your portions, which you then took back down to the messdeck to consume. After the meal, Duty Cooks then washed the dishes and cleaned down the tables, swept the deck and generally tidied up. There was a rumour that the tea had Bromide in it to stop us from having naughty thoughts but this was counteracted by the Ki (dark, Pussers chocolate) because one would invariably wake up with a flag pole flying beneath the top sheet.



6 Mess - Bonce (John) Craig, Bud (Colin) Abbott (RIP) and Don Mihaere. The head in the foreground belongs to Skin Porteous

Bud and Don were both in the same watch known as the Black Watch. POOW was Bonga Crengle, LHOW was Joe (Bruce) Aranga, plus Bud, Don and Lionel Tuhiwai. Bud was actually a young lad from Nottingham and had no iwi connections. In 1965, Royalist had a wartime complement of around 550 with substantial numbers making up the Communications Division. 1 x Lt (SCO), 23 Radio Operators, 1 Electronic Warfare operator and 21 Signalmen.

Harry Alderton, Lt (C), RNZN was the SCO.

Sparkers: (RO (General))

CRS Crighton

RS Crengle

RS Laycock

RS Sefton

RS Tilton

LRO Aranga

LRO Bretherton

LRO Catlow - Mike's sub-specialisation was (W) for Electronic Warfare

LRO Nutt

LRO Tritt

ABs/ORDs

Abbott

Craig

Dell

Maindonald

Mihaere

Miles

Ohlsen

Pennyfather

Porteous

Seymour

Simonsen

Tottman

Tuhiwai

Wood

Buntings: (RO (Tactical))

C/Yeo Black

C/Yeo Wilson (RNZNVR) did Yeoman of the Watch duties

Yeo Herd

Yeo Mills

Yeo Picket

LRO Baker

LRO Guilford

LRO Harper

LRO Rodgers

ABs/ORDs

Ainsworth

Cupples

Fowler

Kyne

Lawford

Mitchell

Parker

Parry

Phillips

Purves

Ratu

Withers

For the rest of January post refit sea trials kept the ship's company busy and she was reported operational at the end of the month. Royalist was fully occupied as Guard Ship during the Auckland Anniversary weekend regatta in the last weekend of January and 1st February. We sailed for Waitangi 4th February to take part in the Waitangi Day celebrations.



Lawn Control, Waitangi 1965

I'm operating the Type 622 HF portable transmitter/receiver. It took two men to lift it as well as two heavy 12 volt batteries - one to use and one as a spare. My PO and L/H decided to leave me to it as they went to check that all was well elsewhere. Anchored out were Royalist, Rotoiti and Lachlan. A couple of MLs were there to act as liberty boats to get the Royal Guard ashore, etc. At sunset, my job as Lawn Control was to coordinate the ships' lighting to come on at the same time with the order "Standby to Execute - standby, standby - Execute". Thankfully, all the ships' lights came on at the same time!

On completion of Waitangi Day we sailed back to Auckland for a workup in the Hauraki Gulf. The workup continued until the end of February, when we entered harbour for our final preparations for sailing for Pearl Harbor.



Royalist sailed 15th March for her final deployment



LRO(W) Mike Catlow - the only EW onboard