

## CHAPTER 10 - HMNZS Tasman

Posted into Tasman 19 November 1976. HMNZS Tasman had been commissioned June 1975 to take over the training side of HMNZS Philomel.

Communications Training Officer was Lt Gary Houghton, who was relieved by Lt Cdr Lance Pickett and some instructors that I remembered were POYS Frank Rands, POYS Tom Hiini, PORS Chuck Berry, POEW Lionel Tuhiwai and PORS Rex Edwards. The main course that I would be instructing for 1977 would be Advanced Radio consisting of LRDs Chris Bond and Bruce MacDonald.



Advanced Radio 1/77

LRO Bruce MacDonald, Lt Gary Houghton, CPORS Jim Dell and LRO Chris Bond

On 1 October 1977, Navy Order 137/77 instructed the changing over of Rank and Branch titles. Chief Radioman became Chief Petty Officer Radio Supervisor, etc.

I discussed with the CTO about changing the format of Radio Communication Organisation for the Advanced Radio Course and the external examination administered by the Fleet Examination Centre. The Comms School had probably been the first in the RNZN to adopt objectivised training for Basic Classes where students were taught object matter on what they should know and not taught under the old subjectivised system where a whole lot of shit was thrown at a blanket in the hope that some of it would stick in the minds of young students. The new method of training was backed up by sending students to their first postings armed with a Task Book to be completed both ashore and at sea. The School didn't have all the radio equipment necessary to teach students; it was therefore essential that they should have completed their training in the first 12 to 18 months of leaving the School.

A different type of training was needed for the Advanced courses, particularly with regard to Communications equipment and Radio Communications Procedures that a PORS would encounter on different allied stations, including the RN, RAN and USN. With that in mind, emphasis on RCO would centre around the Fleet Communications Orders contained in the various allied publications. The students would spend up to two weeks at sea, preferably on both classes of RNZN frigates to cover COMIST and ICS equipment and order and maintain a Maritime Rear Link with Navcommsta Waiouru then change over to a Mobile Fixed Service with the RAN. The external Fleet Examination would no longer be multi-choice but would cover Fleet Procedures and the students would be given the appropriate publications to use during the exam. A Supervisor wasn't expected to remember every detail in his head but as long as he knew where to look, he shouldn't have any problems. That was the theory behind it anyway. I made up three different exam papers for the FEC for them to randomly select for different years.

Toward the end of the Advanced Radio Course 1/77, I had arranged for the class and myself to go to sea on Otago and then Waikato. The two LROs were given the responsibility of running the Radio Departments under both ships Radio Supervisors and myself. We joined Otago in Devonport, sailed for the week, went to Napier for the weekend and the following week, rendezvoused with Waikato where the three of us went over by a light jackstay transfer.

I joined the RNZN Badminton Club, which played in the North Shore League and competitions would sometimes be held up to three nights a week. I also took to pounding the streets, which I hated but had to get fit for competitive badminton. I think the President of the navy club was Phil Neil - CPORP. Beeps Hambrook was also a member and he had lost a lot of weight and was looking quite gaunt.

One weekend, I think it was Frank Rands who organised a barbecue on Motuihe Island. Transport was a rescue boat from the Naval Air Support Unit at Whenuapai. The boat picked us up at Devonport Naval Base and an enjoyable day was had by all.



Basic RO(W) 1977 - 2nd class of female ROs to join the Navy

Rear Rank: L-R: Jan Holt, Debbie Harris, Gail Ulrich, Vicki Womphrey, Lee Hatton, Janice Balmforth

Front Rank: L-R: Ali Margetson, Toni Whitfield, Lt Cdr Minnie Pickett, PORS Wayne (Chuck) Berry, Debbie Foley

Don't really remember (or didn't want to) much else of that posting except that my marriage was going downhill.