

WT 18/5/1229

31st July, 1967.

The Commodore,
Auckland

HMNZS WAIKATO: REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

Sir,

I have the honour to submit the following report of the proceedings of her Majesty's New Zealand ship Waikato under my command for the month of June, 1967.

The appearance of the New Zealand coastline on radar during the early hours of 1st June, marked the end of a long voyage home. A welcome detection. During the last night at sea a trial was carried out with a Department of Civil Aviation aircraft to determine the effect of Type 965 radar on AIR NAVAIDS. This trial not only appears to have reassured everyone this radar will not be a menace to air navigation or television around the coast but also as a bonus S.S.B. voice communication with the aircraft proved the value of that equipment. During the trials stations as far afield as Honolulu and Tahiti were heard clearly.

June 1st, with the ship anchored at KAWAU, was a busy day of Customs and Agricultural Department clearance, clean ship, and final preparations for the visit to Tauranga and Press, Radio and Television interviews. Generally the press etc., were very interested and co-operated but a few "fastballs" were delivered by one or two zealous young reporters. These were parried successfully but it would have been useful to have had a brief on Naval Board or "Official" attitudes to current defence matters especially controversial ones. The presence of HMNZS MAKO to carry personnel and stores to and from shore was most helpful.

June 2nd, the official day of arrival at Tauranga, was as perfect as it could possibly be. A cloudless sky, warm sunshine and the gentlest of breezes. After embarking the Assistant Harbourmaster (Lieutenant Commander Hodgkinson RNZNVR) by helicopter which returned and landed at a specially arranged site on the jetty, the ship, dressed with masthead flags, steamed passed "The Mount" up the channel to her berth. Being such a perfect day many people lined the foreshore or put to sea in small craft to witness the arrival. The setting and the weather presented the perfect backdrop and judging from the newspaper photographs of the ship looked very impressive.

The ship was officially welcomed by Mr. Walsh M.P. for Tauranga representing the Minister of Defence who at the last moment unfortunately could not attend, the Chief of Naval Staff, Rear Admiral John O'C Ross C.B. and their Worships the Mayors of Hamilton, Tauranga and Mount Maunganui. After a short ceremony the ship's company were free to meet their relatives and friends, 600 of whom were gathered on the jetty.

The program of the visit is at Annex C. It was a very full program considerably aided by the overwhelming hospitality of the people of Waikato and Bay of Plenty. There was no doubt Waikato regarded WAIKATO as "their" ship but Tauranga and Mount Maunganui were not going to be outdone. The highlight of the visit was of course the presentation of the charter of the city of Hamilton to the ship on 3rd June. Again the weather was kind, providing a perfect period in the middle of the day when approximately 150 of the ship's company paraded in front of the Civic Chamber in Hamilton. The parade consisted of a colour party, guard and three platoons.

After inspecting the parade and the RNZN Band which was also present, his worship the Mayor of Hamilton Dr. D. Rogers read the charter and then presented it to me. After a short speech in reply I presented to his worship the Mayor of Hamilton an oil painting of HMNZS WAIKATO which we, the first ship's company, had specially commissioned for the purpose of providing a lasting acknowledgement of the honour the city

had bestowed on the ship. The ceremony ended with a march past of the Parade followed by a "fly past" by WAIKATO's wasp. The bearing and drill of the guard and ship's company on parade was very favourably commented upon by all who witnessed it. The event can be summed up most appropriately by a newspaper picture caption which appeared next day "OURSHIP – THEIR CITY".

The genuine and overwhelming interest in the ship by both people of Waikato and the Bay of Plenty's showed itself. The program at Annex C gives the "official" entertainment but does not show the private entertainment which was given e.g. one publican gave a special supper dance for the ratings and their wives staying in his hotel. Some 2000 books which when weeded out have provided a permanent library of approximately 800 books of reference, classics, and good novels were presented to the ship. This all started through a remark of one Radio Commentator that the ship seemed to be short of good books. Five organisation's presented trophies and three others have asked for an indication of what they can do for the ship. The individual interest in the ship was demonstrated by the large numbers who visited her during the "open to visitor" periods. A total of approximately 28,000 (7,000 Saturday 16,000 Sunday 5,000 Monday). Many more were deterred by the long queues.

On Sunday 4th June a party from the ship attended the presentation of the Acheron Bell to the Gate Pa Church by the Chief of Naval Staff. A very impressive ceremony which reminded many of those present of the part a Navy plays in the history and development of a country.

After a most memorable visit for both the ship and I hope, Tauranga, Mount Maunganui, Hamilton and people of Waikato, the ship sailed at 1130 on Tuesday 6th June. The chairman of Harbour Board made special arrangements for families to sail in the Tug to watch a departure, and many people lined the shore to wave us farewell. Unfortunately the Wasp had failed to start and had to be left behind making its way direct to Hobsonville the next day. A short stop at Orakei Basin to unload ammunition and then berth at Calliope at 0900 on Tuesday 9th June. For the first time the weather let the ship down as it poured with rain. However it failed to dampen the ship's company or the families and friends on the jetty as within an hour many were on their way on leave.

It was, I believe the most successful visit which laid a very sound relationship between Waikato and WAIKATO. A lot of functions were fitted into a short space of time and the Liaison Officer Lieutenant Commander D.B. Dommet RNZN is to be commended for his efforts and organisation.

During the period of this report the health and morale of the ship's company has been very good indeed.

I have the honour to be,
Sir,
Your obedient servant,

(E.C. Thorne)
CAPTAIN RNZN

Copy to:

The Deputy Sec of defence (Navy),
Navy Office,
WELLINGTON.

Enclosure A – D to WT 18/5/1229 dated 31st July, 1967.

ANNEX A to WT 18/5/1229 dated 31st July, 1967

MONTHLY STEAMING FIGURES – JUNE 1967.

Distance Steamed	414
Hours Underway	26
Miles per ton of Fuel	5.6.
Total distance steamed since commissioning	21655
Total hours underway since commissioning	7541

ANNEX B to WT 18/5/1229 dated 31st July, 1967

LIST OF CALLS

Official calls at Tauranga and Auckland were considered paid and returned.

ANNEX C to WT 18/5/1229 dated 31st July, 1967

OFFICIAL ENTERTAINMENT AND RECREATION

On Monday 5th June at 1930 Captain E.C. Thorne and Mrs Thorne entertained :-

Dr Dennis Rogers and Mrs Rogers – Mayor of Hamilton.

Mr A.R. Harris and Mrs Harris – Mayor of Mt Maunganui.

Mr D.S. Mitchell and Mrs Mitchell – Mayor of Tauranga.

at a dinner party held on board.

On Friday 2nd June at 1830 the Officers held an Official Cocktail Party for 200 guests. Guests were from Councils and Organisations in the Hamilton, Tauranga and Mt Maunganui districts.

RECREATION

WAIKATO v MT MAUNGANUI RUGBY FOOTBALL CLUB

DREW 15all

ANNEX D to WT 18/5/1229 dated 31st July, 1967

FOREIGN FISHING VESSELS ENCOUNTERED

<u>Date</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Reg. No.</u>	<u>Position</u>	<u>Distance offshore</u>	<u>Activity</u>
2 nd June	Osei Maru No.2	F01-103	37°10'S 167°06'E	9.2 miles	stopped dories lowered, setting lines.
