



## Russian Convoy Club of New Zealand

**Newsletter**  
August/September 2019

Dear shipmates, families and friends

### New Zealand signs defence agreement with China

Minister of Defence Ron Mark has signed a Memorandum of Arrangement Concerning Defence Cooperation with China's Minister of National Defence, General Wei Fenghe in Beijing.

The Ministers signed the arrangement following their bilateral meeting, in which they reviewed the state of the defence relationship.

"China and New Zealand cooperate across a range of areas. This arrangement provides a strong framework under which we can continue this cooperation. It recognises our ongoing intention to maintain dialogue across a range of levels in the defence relationship, to build our understanding of each other and promote positive links between our people" said Ron Mark.

The Arrangement recognises some specific areas of common interest, including humanitarian assistance and disaster relief, as well as international peace cooperation activities.

"From my discussions and the signing of this arrangement, it is clear to me that our two defence establishments can achieve a lot together", commented Minister Mark. "We already share commitments to United Nations peacekeeping missions, most notably in South Sudan. Our militaries are also conducting joint planning activities to ensure we work together effectively on disaster relief."

"With the increasing impacts of climate change being felt in our region and globally, most notably through damaging weather events, these strong relationships will be key in ensuring any combined support we provide is effective".

### Merchant Navy Day 2019 : 80<sup>th</sup> Maritime Festival



Summary highlights of events to take place in Wellington during the 80th Anniversary Maritime Festival.

Thursday 29 August 2019

- HMNZS Otago arrives 10:00
- Luncheon on board for invited guests

Friday 30 August 2019

- Schools Careers Day 14:00 > 1800

Saturday 31 August 2019

- Maritime Festival and Careers Expo 10:00
- Open day of Ships, Maritime Expo, Wellington Museum
- Navy Band provides musical entertainment
- On water activities including Coastguard and Police
- Demonstration of Distress flares inner Harbour (WVCG)

Sunday 1 September 2019

- Church Service, Wellington Cathedral 10:00
- HMNZS Otago, Cocktail Party (invitation only) 18:00
- Ceremonial Sunset parade 17:45

Monday 2 September

- Screening of the 'Cruel Sea' with social function 18:00 at the Penthouse Cinema in Brooklyn (function afterwards)

Tuesday 3 September 2019 Merchant Navy Day

- Commemoration Service, Pukeahu 11:00

Wednesday 4th

- HMNZS Otago departs - Farewell

### Ushakov Medal



Eighty-seven New Zealanders have been awarded the Ushakov Medal by the Russian Government. The medal is awarded for bravery. RCCNZ is requesting anyone holding this medal to contact the Club with their name and medal number – it's a four digit number most likely 17\*\* or 18\*\* - engraved on the medal obverse or in the small booklet that came with the medal. The information is requested on behalf of the North Russian Convoy Museum Project in Aultbea, on the shores of Loch Ewe in Wester Ross, Scotland, which would like to keep an historical record of servicemen (RN, RNZN, Merchant Navy etc.) who were awarded this medal. Contact details are at foot of this newsletter.

### RNZN appoints first female Combat Specialist

PO Samantha Carter of Taupo has become the first female Petty Officer Seaman Combat Specialist in the history of the Royal New Zealand Navy (RNZN).

PO Carter was 17 when she joined in 2008. "My mum did all the research, printed out the forms, and got me over for a coffee," she said. "She knew there was something more for me. Without her, I wouldn't have ended up anywhere."



Seaman Combat Specialists are the “gunners” of the Navy, required to handle small arms, carry out seamanship evolutions and ceremonial duties for their trade and the RNZN.

The role appealed to Petty Officer Seaman Combat Specialist Carter. “It’s about serving your country in a warfighting context. It’s about seamanship, being at sea, handling weapons, driving boats.”

After graduating from Basic Common Training, Petty Officer Seaman Combat Specialist Carter completed her trade training and has posted since to RNZN ships HMNZS Te Kaha, Te Mana, Otago and Hawea. She has been posted overseas on Royal Australian Navy frigate HMAS Melbourne, on counter narcotic and anti-piracy patrols in the Gulf of Aden.

“I was part of the boat crews for boardings,” she said. “A highlight of the trip was when the boarding party detained nine Somalian pirates. We then transported them back to the coast - that was an awesome experience.”

She is currently the Petty Officer Seaman Combat Specialist on frigate HMNZS Te Kaha, and will rejoin the ship in Canada next year after its refurbishment is complete.

---

## Colour added to Arctic Convoy images : Part 2

In our last newsletter we featured colourised images by Welsh electrician Royston Leonard of the Second World War Arctic Convoys. In this edition we show further images.

Black and white images have been transformed to show the harsh life on ships heading to and from freezing ports in the Soviet Union - an operation Winston Churchill described as 'the worst journey in the world'.

Images like these are featured in British author Michael D. Carroll's book, *Retrographic* which features the colourisation of historical images. The book is available online from [Book Depository](#).



Crew try to heave up the snow-encased anchor

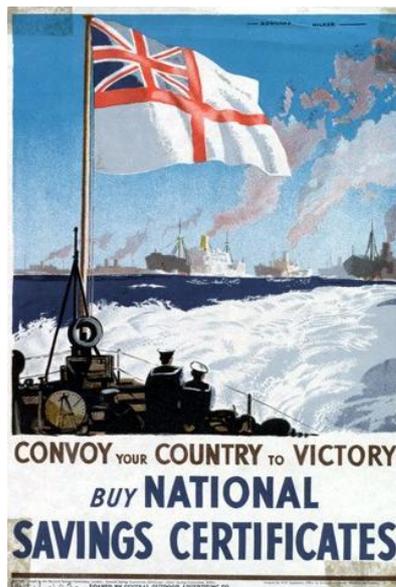


Merchant ships underway in calm seas



Convoy sails through the Arctic

Source: The Sun



### Diary Dates

**Club Meeting,  
Anzac Lounge,  
Lower Hutt  
Memorial RSA**

Thu 29 August 2019  
at 1100hrs

**Christmas  
Gathering at Otaki**  
Thursday  
21 November 2019

*A World War II pilot is reminiscing before school children about his days in the air force. "In 1942," he says, "the situation was really tough".*

*The Germans had a very strong air force. I remember, "one day I was protecting the bombers and suddenly, out of the clouds, these fokkers appeared. I looked up, and right above me was one of them.*

*I aimed at him and shot him down. They were swarming. I immediately realised there was another fokker behind me."*

*At this instant the girls in the auditorium start to giggle and boys start to laugh. The teacher stands up and says, "I think I should point out that 'Fokker' was the name of the German-Dutch aircraft company".*

*"That's true," says the pilot, "but these fokkers were flying Messerschmidts."*

---

### Up Spirits!



Derek Whitwam  
President  
Russian Convoy Club of New Zealand  
(04) 971 4636 E-mail: [atired.92@gmail.com](mailto:atired.92@gmail.com)  
Web: [www.russianconvoyclub.org.nz](http://www.russianconvoyclub.org.nz)