

## RMS Rangitane Guestbook July 2008 to November 2012

Date: Wednesday 13th of June 2012, 15:48:28, GMT

IP: 68.89.173.194

Host: adsl-68-89-173-194.dsl.hstntx.swbell.net

Name: Richard Overall

Email: brit1941@yahoo.com

Web: <http://www.rms-rangitiki.com>

Location: Houston, Texas

Message: Trevor ~ congratulations on publishing the new book concerning the sinking of the 'Rangitane' and its aftermath. I look forward to reading it as it is yet another step in the preservation of the story and history of this particular ship, her two sisters, the NZSCo., and the 'forgotten service, the Merchant Navy as a whole.

---

Date: Saturday 19th of May 2012, 0:55:27, GMT

IP: 90.222.212.152

Host: 5aded498.bb.sky.com

Name: Malc Cheeseman

Email: malccheeseman@msn.com

Web:

Location: England

Message: My father was Alf Cheeseman and he was in the engine room when the ship was attacked. He spent the rest of the war in a prisoner of war camp , Milag near Hamburg . He passed away in 1991 but left me his Red Cross Log book, which has photos and drawings added by his inmates and friends. I have transfered some of this to disc and hope to be able to put it onto a website .If anyone has some advice on the best way to do this it would be welcome.

---

Date: Saturday 5th of May 2012, 2:35:40, GMT

IP: 188.222.202.182

Host: 188-222-202-182.zone13.bethere.co.uk

Name: John Byrne

Email: jonjo55@hotmail.com

Web:

Location: York UK

Message: Marjorie Moore - where are you my first real love, we met on the Rangitane in 1963/64. She was born in New Zealand, however could be anywhere now. Why did I let you go and it is too late now, but would love to just make contact and see you even just a photo would be great. If anyone knows Marjorie ( she would be about 69 now ) please email at jonjo55@hotmail.com Thanks so much

---

Date: Tuesday 27th of March 2012, 2:36:07, GMT

IP: 67.163.105.54

Host: c-67-163-105-54.hsd1.va.comcast.net

Name: Roy Gee

Email: rpgeejr@yahoo.com

Web:

Location: Virginia, USA

Message: My father-in-law, Ernest Smith, was a crewman on M/V RANGITANE in 1936. Ernest immigrated in 1922 to Australia from England at the age of 14, and became a marine engineer. He sailed on many ships. I have in my possession two handcarved wooden cups on the bottom of which Ernest had penned "Pitcairn Island, 1936, E. Smith, S/S RANGITANE." These cups are a pair, right and left hand forming the base holding what appears to be a flower which forms the cup. Ernest and his wife Doris left Australia in 1942 and settled in the United States where he continued with his career as a marine engineer. Other than these souvenirs from Pitcairn Island, I don't know anything about Ernest's 1936 voyage on the RANGITANE, or even if he made more than the one trip. My wife recalls her father mentioning the stop at Pitcairn Island. I'm not sure what job he did as part of the crew, although he likely worked in the engine room. Ernie Smith passed away in 1997 age 89.

---

Date: Tuesday 20th of March 2012, 15:52:13, GMT

IP: 173.73.98.99

Host: pool-173-73-98-99.washdc.fios.verizon.net

Name: Audrey Riccobono

Email: pgricco@yahoo.com

Web:

Location: USA

Message: My second cousin John McLaughlin was a butcher on the RMS Rangitane that was sunk by the Germans in 1940. He was interred in German Stalag XB near Breman. He was a POW from 1940 until liberation in 1945. I am hoping someone has some information on John and would help us complete his story. His family lived in Liverpool.

---

Date: Thursday 2nd of February 2012, 10:27:22, GMT

IP: 122.58.65.142

Host: unknown host

Name: robin burton

Email: fishfingers4@hotmail.com

Web:

Location: new zealand

Message: my parents came to nz in 1940 aboard the Rangitane

Thomas Jones and wife Doris(both deceased)

my brother was just 2yrs old, my mother used to tell me all about the trip out from England, i have some photos, would be nice to hear from others

---

Date: Sunday 25th of December 2011, 17:30:51, GMT

IP: 2.97.72.141

Host: host-2-97-72-141.as13285.net

Name: Peter Oman

Email: peter.oman@hotmail.co.uk

Web:

Location: Southampton Uk

Message: My uncle Chris Pring is staying with us at Southampton - UK. he was a steward on the Rangitane when it was sunk and thereafter taken to Milag in Germany.

He is now 90 and living in Highcliffe.

Anyone wanting to contact him please reply.

Peter

---

Date: Sunday 20th of November 2011, 22:30:28, GMT

IP: 96.238.202.92

Host: pool-96-238-202-92.bing.east.verizon.net

Name: Patrick MacGregor

Email: p.macgregor@nysha.org

Web:

Location: USA

Message: My great Uncle was Harry Anker. We have a photo of him and some crew we believe was taken in captivity. I also have a letter from Harry after he was returned to England. He talks about disturbed days and nights but they have been blessed so far. He was killed in German bombing on July 22nd 1944.

---

Date: Thursday 12th of May 2011, 17:05:15, GMT

IP: 188.222.202.182

Host: 188-222-202-182.zone13.bethere.co.uk

Name: John Byrne

Email: jonjo55@hotmail.com

Web:

Location: York UK

Message: I sailed and worked on Rangitane as Asst Steward in 1963/64, met a girl called Marjorie Moore from New Zealand, wrote many letters but lost contact - love to know if anyone knows her, just for me to make contact would be amazing after all those years

---

Date: Monday 2nd of May 2011, 13:56:11, GMT

IP: 86.184.252.107

Host: host86-184-252-107.range86-184.btcentralplus.com

Name: John Glover

Email: johngordonglover@gmail.com

Web:

Location: england

Message: My father Roland Frank Vincent Glover served with the NZSCo from about 1927 to 1945.

My sister was christened in feock in Cornwall in 1935 when Dad's ship (Rangitiki or Toto)was moored in the roads at Falmouth.

My sister does not know who her godfather was but says he was with dad and later transferred to another ship that was lost during the war when he also died..

As a really long shot - does anyone have details about a relative who was a godfather to Marilyn Glover?

thanks for the site -fantastic

---

Date: Saturday 9th of April 2011, 23:42:13, GMT

IP: 69.81.91.80

Host: user-1212mqg.cable.mindspring.com

Name: mike huwer

Email: cophemike1@yahoo.com

Web:

Location: Dayton Ohio USA

Message: Nice site. A lot of good information.

Thank You for your work,

Mike

---

Date: Saturday 25th of December 2010, 11:56:14, GMT

IP: 81.151.239.236

Host: host81-151-239-236.range81-151.btcentralplus.com

Name: Tim Steele

Email: vanfinder@btinternet.com

Web:

Location: Liverpool

Message: My Uncle seaman J G McNulty

sailed on Tane and later died on Orion. Thanks so much for the information on behalf of my mother, his baby sister.

---

Date: Friday 20th of August 2010, 0:47:56, GMT

IP: 58.172.145.147

Host: CPE-58-172-145-147.cqzg1.ken.bigpond.net.au

Name: Jules Normington

Email: popodudi@bigpond.net.au

Web:

Location: Sydney, Australia

Message: Hi there Trevor...it's about 3 years since I posted here, but have finally found some of the photos Dad had of time on board and time on Emirau...some have names on the back, some don't. But if you can email me, I can work out how to get them to you so you can post them here. Some of the names in the pix include

(some with abbreviated job description): DON SINCLAIR (2nd Elec.); CHARLIE REED (Eng.); ALAN BARLEY; ROBERT TAYLOR (4th Mate); TED CAMERON; WILLIE McLEAN; 'MUTTY' ALMOND; TOMMY EDGAR (2nd Eng.); JOHN COLWELL (3rd Eng.); 'JOHNNIE' JOHNSON (Chief Elec.); 'WEE WILLIE' \_\_\_\_ (Eng.); JOHN WALKER (Deck Mechanic); CAPT. UPTON; Mr. RAMSAY; Mr. RENNIE; BILL WARD; 'SNOWY' \_\_\_\_ (5th Eng.); plus there's a large pic of 15 men with the notation: "Group of Engineer Officers from the M.V. Rangitane, taken on Emirau Island. Dec. 1940. We were left here by German Raiders." (The fact that Dad wrote 'here' not 'there' is unusual, but I doubt the pic was really printed while on the island, as it effectively suggests.) - where he's not known or recalled their names, other photos just say 'Navy Gunner', '4th Engineer', '3rd Mate', 'Chief Officer'... There's also a newspaper clipping from 3 Jan. 1941 from a Townsville newspaper with a pic of a large group of about 30 sailors on the rescue ship (I can see Dad, and Charlie Reed and Alan Barley amongst them), plus another pic of a Mr. R. Idiens of the Chatham Islands, with his daughters Miria (looks about 11 or 12) and Wendy (about 2 or 3) - they had been on the Holmwood. There's also a huge full-page article from a Christchurch newspaper dated 28 Sept. 1991, with a then current pic of Mrs. Hetty Idiens and her daughter Wendy. Hetty had kept a diary and many excerpts are within the long story. Interesting to Rangitane families, as from the minute they were captured, their stories are effectively the same, of course. There's also a Sept. 1941 cutting from Sydney's "Sunday Sun" newspaper, wherein Charles Cooke relates his story, entitled "The Germans Took My Island", written by him on a visit to Sydney at that time. Another large cutting dated 3 Jan. 1941 tells the Emirau story too, plus a separate tale of Father Denis Kelly (from the Rangitane). All very interesting stuff! Anyway, let me know how is the best way to send copies of all this. My email is: [popodudi@bigpond.net.au](mailto:popodudi@bigpond.net.au) Bye now...cheers, Jules Normington

---

Date: Thursday 20th of May 2010, 21:20:21, GMT

IP: 81.104.196.218

Host: cpc1-grim3-0-0-cust217.nott.cable.ntl.com

Name: gloria

Email: [zgloryerm2@ntlworld.com](mailto:zgloryerm2@ntlworld.com)

Web:

Location: england

Message: this is the ship that my mum left new zealand on 14th April 1933 which was her 6th birthday. I would love to get hold of a passenger list for this particular sailing if anybody knows if one is available. My mum believed that her mother had drowned in the big flood in 1931. Her father was originally from Scotland so he sailed with his 3 children to return to his homeland where his parents and sisters would look after the 3 young children. It was not until recently that I found out this was not true and that her mother had not drowned but her parents had divorced...

---

Date: Wednesday 19th of May 2010, 9:44:51, GMT

IP: 125.238.133.107

Host: 125-238-133-107.jetstream.xtra.co.nz

Name: David Sharp

Email: g-dsharp@xtra.co.nz

Web:

Location: BOP New Zealand

Message: An excellent site. We have been trying to trace various relatives by the name of Sowerby and came across L Sowerby. We are trying to find out what happened to our relative Leo Graham Sowerby and thought this might be him. When we first read the NZ Maritime Index of persons on the Rangitane, when the vessel was attacked, we incorrectly presumed he was killed on it, then when looking through the passenger list one of us didn't read the headings correctly and again thought he died. Then the lady of the family noticed he did not die on the ship but went to New Guinea. He was an Assistant Stuard on the voyage. We wonder if anyone knew this gentleman? David Sharp

---

Date: Saturday 17th of April 2010, 11:19:53, GMT

IP: 121.90.254.176

Host: unknown host

Name: Judith Lannam

Email: lannam.jmh@gmail.com

Web:

Location: Tauranga, New Zealand

Message: T.A Hooper is my Dad. He joined the Fleet Air Arm/RAF along with two friends Jack Dark and Max H Burn. Pre 1993 as preparation for a family reunion Dad agreed to let me record his memories of the 'Rangitane', 'Emirau Island' and rescue back to Australia. Reading the transcript of the commission of enquiry seems to corroborate what he recorded.

---

Date: Wednesday 14th of April 2010, 10:54:19, GMT

IP: 121.74.147.61

Host: 121-74-147-61.telstraclear.net

Name: Pauline Ross

Email: igrossnz@clear.net.nz

Web:

Location: Rotorua NZ

Message: T A Hooper is my Dad. He is still very much alive about to turn 90 this year. I am his eldest daughter. He has told us some of his experiences while on the Rangitane and how he was dropped off on Emirau, and considers himself as one of the luckier ones, not having to go into POW camps as others did. My son told me of this website and have been absolutely engrossed in reading this, as some things seem so familiar because of what Dad told us.

---

Date: Sunday 11th of April 2010, 2:40:34, GMT

IP: 218.102.168.182

Host: pcd636182.netvigator.com  
Name: Angus Hardern  
Email: Angushk@netvigator.com  
Web:

Location: Hong Kong

Message: I was watching a BBC series "Behind Closed Doors" last night about the secret deals made between Hitler and Stalin as part of the German-Soviet Non-aggression Pact. Apparently, alarmed at Germany's swift invasion of France, Stalin decided to maintain helpful relations with Germany and allowed the Komet, (the German Raider responsible for the sinking), to traverse the Arctic Ocean with the help of Soviet icebreakers and hence, undetected, to the Pacific.

---

Date: Sunday 28th of March 2010, 6:50:41, GMT  
IP: 121.215.234.50  
Host: CPE-121-215-234-50.static.qld.bigpond.net.au  
Name: John Lewis  
Email: jlewis@optusnet.com.au  
Web:

Location: Brisbane

Message: My father was H R (Chuck) Lewis of the RNZAF and listed on the Rangitane manifest.

Dad spoke very little of his war experiences. He endured four and a half years as a POW till the wars end.

He wrote a diary of his time on the Rangitane and the Orion and subsequent internment in Germany and Poland. Along with his diary and extensive research available I have been able to write a detailed account of his war years for his children and grandchildren. He died 25 June 1998 aged 82

Thankyou for putting together a wonderful site

---

Date: Wednesday 14th of October 2009, 17:55:33, GMT  
IP: 193.35.12.2  
Host: unknown host  
Name: Malcolm Shaw  
Email: malcolm.shaw@itv.com  
Web:

Location: Brighton

Message: My father was Ian Shaw, RNZAF, mentioned in the story and on the passenger list. After spending the war in POW camps, he came to England and stayed. He passed away in 2004. Read his obit

here: <http://www.alumni.auckland.ac.nz/uoaf-ian-shaw>

---

Date: Wednesday 2nd of September 2009, 7:43:14, GMT  
IP: 222.154.234.143  
Host: 222-154-234-143.adsl.xtra.co.nz  
Name: Steve Schmidt

Email:

Web:

Location: Picton New Zealand

Message: Rangitane passenger R O Schmidt was my father. He spoke very little of the experience however I remember seeing a photo of dad in his cut down pajamas with 3 or 4 other men on Emirau. He also contracted malaria while on the Island. After being rescued and returned to NZ where he was a test pilot at Woodbourne Marlborough for the rest of the war.

---

Date: Sunday 23rd of August 2009, 22:24:07, GMT

IP: 122.57.28.108

Host: 122-57-28-108.jetstream.xtra.co.nz

Name: Ann Lindsay

Email: annandbryan@xtra.co.nz

Web:

Location: Christchurch NZ

Message: My Uncle Richard was on the Rangitane when it was sunk, he was with the fleet air arm, his name is listed in the passenger list ie; R. O. Schmidt. I only have childhood memories of what my parents told me, but he has two surviving sons who may have more info for this site.

---

Date: Wednesday 22nd of July 2009, 23:22:56, GMT

IP: 92.24.36.194

Host: unknown host

Name: David Toy

Email: davidtoy@hotmail.co.uk

Web:

Location: Seaford UK

Message: My late father was born in Wellington NZ in 1902 and joined the NZ navy in the early twenties. He met my mother in UK and she moved to NZ. They both returned to UK in 1936 to start a new life in England. They traveled on the Rangitane to UK in 1936. I still have a copy of a dinner menu dated 26 October 1936.

My father became an engineer in the Merchant service in the UK. Very good website

---

Date: Monday 6th of April 2009, 13:55:06, GMT

IP: 195.93.21.34

Host: cache-los-ab02.proxy.aol.com

Name: Anne Morrison

Email: anne558@aol.com

Web:

Location: Cumbernauld Scotland

Message: My Uncle Donald Macaky was on the Rangitane and I have a copy of an article from the West Coast Advertiser dated May 9th 1941 telling how he was one

of the seamen who went by boat from Emirau to radio for help for those abandoned there by the Germans.

---

Date: Friday 28th of November 2008, 16:16:49, GMT

IP: 86.165.156.20

Host: host86-165-156-20.range86-165.btcentralplus.com

Name: calum maciver

Email: calum78@googlemail.com

Web:

Location: Invergordon

Message: what a great site just found it,I sailed on Ruahine the last three trips what a great crowd that was on her,hope to hear from some of the old crew.Keep the site going. calum.

---

Date: Thursday 9th of October 2008, 6:43:59, GMT

IP: 218.189.133.211

Host: unknown host

Name: Richard D T Poole

Email: rpoole@egssurvey.com

Web:

Location: Hong Kong

Message: My father was 3rd mate on the Rangitane when it was attacked in 1940. He was one of the lucky ones who was put ashore on Emirau Is. It was my father's camera that took the pictures of the survivors on the island, he had kept the camera secret from his German captors everything else having been confiscated. Someone else had managed to smuggle a film ashore which didnt fit my father's camera, and I always remember the stories of how they managed to cut the film to fit the camera, all done under a blanket to avoid the film becoming exposed. Whilst my father died in 1989 my mother still survives and carries many of my father's memories following that war time event so long ago. I am pleased to see that the memory of the Rangitane is still alive.

---

Date: Monday 8th of September 2008, 12:11:55, GMT

IP: 195.137.121.177

Host: i-195-137-121-177.freedom2surf.net

Name: john byrne

Email: jonjo55@hotmail.com

Web:

Location: york uk

Message: I was an Assistant Steward on the Rangitane in 1963/64 and met Marjorie Moore

( passenger ) on a trip from New Zealand to England. We wrote to each other for a while but lost contact, and I have always wondered what happened in her life and would love to make contact. She would be aged about 65/66 now and if anyone has recollection please email me at [jonjo55@hotmail.com](mailto:jonjo55@hotmail.com). Many thanks - John Byrne

---

Date: Monday 11th of August 2008, 20:06:32, GMT

IP: 82.153.26.188

Host: unknown host

Name: Reg Godwin

Email: reg@freeola.com

Web: <http://www.watkinsguitars.co.uk>

Location: Devon

Message: I am seeking information or memories of Ordinary Seaman Reg Watkins from the Rangitane sinking. Reg was born in East London and after the war went on to start a successful guitar and amplifier manufacturing company, WEM, with his brother Charlie in Chertsey.

Congratulations to Trevor on a comprehensive and fascinating website.

---

Date: Thursday 31st of July 2008, 19:58:43, GMT

IP: 86.154.136.124

Host: host86-154-136-124.range86-154.btcentralplus.com

Name: Trevor Bell

Email: thebells@btinternet.com

Web: <http://www.rangitane.co.uk>

Location: UK

Message: This is the first message on the new guestbook - just to prove that it works!

---

## RMS Rangitane Guestbook until 4th October 2007

**104** Date: 2007-10-04 03:20:18

*Betty Thompson [nee Fryer] ( [george-t@clear.net.nz](mailto:george-t@clear.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:*

I, at the age of 14 years came to New Zealand to live with my father of whom I never really knew. My mother died at my birth in 1924 and I was raised from a baby by my grandparents. On the death of my grandparents I travelled to New Zealand on the Rangitane, leaving London the day before armistice day 1938 and arrived in Wellington, New Zealand at Christmas of that year. As I travelled alone, I was chaperoned by a lovely American couple who were to make New Zealand their home. I am now 83 years of age and I can recall the wonder of the sea voyage, as this was my experience, having been raised in the coal mining area of South Wales. I shall never forget, while I am alive, the trip to New Zealand and the wonderful weather

experienced on my arrival.

**103** Date: 2007-09-19 20:43:22  
*Gro Larsen* ( [athene@start.no](mailto:athene@start.no) / no homepage) wrote:

Oiler on board Ringwood - Frank Larsen was my uncle. I didn't know anything about this- it's strange to read this knowing he was onboard Orion all the time while this was going on. I do not think he told anybody about this. He wasn't set free on the island, and were brought to Bourdaux and then to Germany and spent some time in different camps before he was released and sent to Norway on M/S Donau. Do anyone have any pictures from Ringwood, is there anyone who knew Frank or have any pictures from this time?

**102** Date: 2007-09-11 17:54:04  
*bob murdoch* ( [bob.murdoch@telenet.be](mailto:bob.murdoch@telenet.be) / no homepage) wrote:

Excellent site. Very interesting amount of information of the war-time work of the radio officer. I was a peace-time one, 1958-1962 then ashore in both UK and NZ. It is great that some people go to the trouble and work that you have, to keep this history alive.  
THANK YOU very much

**101** Date: 2007-09-02 22:58:31  
*cynthia taylor* ( [skipping-stone@excite.com](mailto:skipping-stone@excite.com) / no homepage) wrote:

my father was a british 4th navel officer on the ship -- RG Taylor (robert gordon) -- he was a reserved man and i only heard him mention it -- also know that his 2nd wife has a book that was written about the event -- i was under the impression that it was a limited copy -- thank you for more info as a result of your research --

**100** Date: 2007-08-29 08:18:55  
*jack cotter* ( [papanui@chariot.net.au](mailto:papanui@chariot.net.au) / no homepage) wrote:

I sailed AS 2nd Refrig. Eng with Tom Edgar[then Ch.eng] and Sam Strickfuss [refrig.greaser] on the M.V.Northumberland Aug.1959/June 1960.The 2 reminisced on Christmas Day about the tragic events. There was not a dry eye in the Saloon.Sam apparently pestered shore staff to let his sons sail with him, which was apparently against regulations, as they had lost their homes in the London Bombings.The father was definitely Sam and not as you have in the crew list. He was awarded either the M.B.E Oor B.e.m on his retirement at the end of that voyage

**99** Date: 2007-08-14 05:26:38  
*Zb.Z.Bieniaszczyk* ( [captziggy@yczc.org](mailto:captziggy@yczc.org) / no homepage) wrote:

My Dad Jan Bieniaszczyk was one of the M/S "Batory" crew member heading for England on board S/S "Rangitane". After capture by "Orion" he spent rest of war as P.O.W. in Marlag und Milag Nord ( Bremen, Germany ).

Die in 1966 age 43.

Hi was also friend of Mr. BRUNO BARYLA

**98** Date: 2007-07-20 13:53:48  
*Elizabeth Gee (nee Williams)* ( [arthabethgee@aol.com](mailto:arthabethgee@aol.com) / no homepage) wrote:

My Father, Henry Stewart Williams was on the Rangitane when she was sunk by the Germans and was on Emerau afterwards. He died in 1982 (at the age of 83) leaving four children, and twelve grandchildren. There are now two more generations of our family.

**97** Date: 2007-07-20 04:37:42  
*Roger Dowding* ( [roger\\_dowding@bnz.co.nz](mailto:roger_dowding@bnz.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Have already corresponded with Trevor Bell, my father Mac Dowding passed away in 1999 is mentioned in the "story" he is also known as one of the Rangitane boys who finished up in Europe courtesy of the Orion and has an all expenses paid trip through various prison camps in Europe Germany Poland even up near Russia. A lot of the story is in the book under 10 flags published in English in the 60's and made into a movie starring Charles Laughton amongst others - book originally written in German - published late 50's I have a copy in reasonable condition-English version.

As with many others Mac rarely spoke of the Rangitane and the events of the war -POW etc.

Our family have read the story including Mac's brother Eddie who is now aged 88 and lives in Auckland N.Z. where Mac also lived, the family migrated from Somerset in the 1920's when Mac and Ed were both young.

Trevor, thanks for story again.

**96** Date: 2007-07-17 17:05:34  
*Brenda Mathews* ( [brenda@mathews.fsworld.co.uk](mailto:brenda@mathews.fsworld.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

I've just googled "Rangitane" and intend to study your website in more depth later, but just wanted to say hi.

I have a vast collection of unusual hankies (!) and a few years ago found a hand-painted one of HMS British Strength, showing also the boat that sank it in 1943 and the one that transported the POWs to Marlag and Milag Nord Camps. I spent years researching it and found the internet invaluable. I was emailed last night by a John Kennedy telling me he has a similar hanky showing the Rangitane, brought home by his POW father, who was also in Milag Camp. Hence my interest now in that ship!! All good wishes to you.

**95** Date: 2007-06-15 00:27:20  
*Hamish Panton* ( [hamish@pantonconsulting.co.nz](mailto:hamish@pantonconsulting.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Great site. I too discovered it by accident while trying to resolve a discussion about when and where the Ballantynes Dept Store fire was (ChCh NZ of course!).

My dad was one of the Fleet Air Arm recruits heading to Britain on the Rangitane. The film archive of the "survivors" arriving in Australia I've downloaded shows him really well - he's the chap eating the ice-cream! We've had a still photo of that, so it was great to see the moving images!

Dad died in 1995, but my mum (who he married not long after returning to NZ) is still alive, and is looking forward to seeing the film when we next see her. Thanks for all the research and information on this site. It makes compelling reading!

**94** Date: 2007-06-05 05:03:01  
*Cheryl Millar* ( [cherylmillar@primus.com.au](mailto:cherylmillar@primus.com.au) / no homepage) wrote:

I am the eldest daughter of A C Millar from Invercargill who died 20th February 1983. I want to know more about what happened on Emirau ?

**93** Date: 2007-05-31 03:37:40  
*Ron Kee* ( [juliaronkee@yahoo.co.nz](mailto:juliaronkee@yahoo.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

.Listed under crew and passengers is a Mr A.C.Miller,Invercagill,N.ZFleet Airarm. The surname MillAr not Er.I am his brother in law.He was known as Cleland and unfortunately died some years ago.His wife Adele is still alive and living in Invercagill.

**92** Date: 2007-04-24 08:52:18  
*Joanna Thorburn* ( [jmthorburn@xtra.co.nz](mailto:jmthorburn@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

My Grandfather was J Gordon Penman - 5th Engineer on the RMS Rangitane.What fantastic information - I could not stop reading. Than you - I look forward to further updates.  
Joanna

**91** Date: 2007-03-05 16:21:42  
*Alice* ( [kama105@slingshot.com](mailto:kama105@slingshot.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I was a passenger on Rangitane Sailing from Wellington August 1955. I would love to hear from other Passengers

**90** Date: 2007-02-04 10:53:31  
*Violetta Faust Baryla* ( [violafaust@wp.pl](mailto:violafaust@wp.pl) / no homepage) wrote:

My father was Rangitane crew BRONISLAW BARYLA.  
Violetta Faust Baryla

**89** Date: 2007-02-03 21:13:21  
*maciej* ( [macias@o2.pl](mailto:macias@o2.pl) / no homepage) wrote:

Hello

I found this site when I was looking for traces of my grandfather, he was Polish in crew of "Batory" traveling with children from U.K to New Zealand and Australia, then he was on "Rangitane" probably as mechanic, his name was Bronislaw Baryla and he was from Poland, after the ship was sunk he was take aboard Orion(?) and traveled under a deck to Stalag near Bremen (Germany), he was liberated by British troops.

Thank You for all Your work to gather all those fascinate informations, Greetings from Poland!

Maybe somone have photos of the crew before the last trip?

**88** Date: 2007-01-18 03:15:04  
*Robin Brettner* ( [shandilo@dodo.com.au](mailto:shandilo@dodo.com.au) / no homepage) wrote:

Thankyou for the wonderful collection of information on the ill fated Rangitane. I was an infant of 17 months on board the 'Tanie' with my six week old brother Trevor & parents, John Robert Baron (Barrie) & Dapne Ida Brettner in Dec '39 Jan 40, travelling from England to Australia via New Zealand. I was aware of the loss of the ship but not until reading your summary was I aware of the circumstances or details of her loss. Thankyou again & good luck with your future endeavoures.

yours faithfully. Robin Milford Baron Brettner.

**87** Date: 2006-12-24 11:10:20  
*Gordon Carmichael* ( [Gordon.Carmichael@anu.edu.au](mailto:Gordon.Carmichael@anu.edu.au) / no homepage) wrote:

I was a passenger on the second Rangitane from the UK (presumably London) to Wellington in the first half of 1952. I was aged 4 at the time. If anyone can tell me the precise dates of departure and arrival in Wellington of that voyage, or where I could find that information, I would appreciate it. As far as I know the latter date was some time in June 1952, and departure was of the order of six weeks before that, but I would like to know the precise dates.

**86** Date: 2006-11-13 22:45:10  
*jim corbett* ( no email / no homepage) wrote:

was a passanger in 1966 from wellington to london via tahiti jamaica bermuda I was 12

**85** Date: 2006-11-09 16:07:49  
*leslie knight* ( [christine.knight@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:christine.knight@blueyonder.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

my dad was a steward on the ship when it was sunk, we know he was prisoner of war for 4

years, he did not talk about the war much, but we know in the camp he helped in the hospital.

He is on your list. Henry Knight, British, from London. He lived in London all his life with his wife Grace. They had three daughters and one son. He passed away on 12.09.1985.

**84** Date: 2006-10-26 20:22:06  
*Ian Smith* ( [iancs@hoburne5.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:iancs@hoburne5.fsnet.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

Came upon the site by chance. My father was an NZSC officer all his working life. His name was Joseph (Joe) Smith who retired in 1960. A Chief Engineer for many years and was lucky to survive as opposed to so many.

**83** Date: 2006-10-02 03:57:50  
*Graham Dowsett* ( [gdowsett@cox.net](mailto:gdowsett@cox.net) / no homepage) wrote:

My father, Albert Dowsett, was a steward on the Rangitane when she was captured and sunk in 1940. He died in 1970. Dad did not speak very much in detail about the sinking or life on Emirau but I knew that he and several others (I had no idea it was as much as 500 people) were put on a small island.

Great job Trevor in putting all this history and information together. If you or anyone has information regarding my father from those times I would very much like to hear from you or them.

**82** Date: 2006-09-29 14:51:20  
*Mae Miller* ( [maemiller@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:maemiller@blueyonder.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

Great page it brought back memories. I along with my Mother and two brothers sailed on the "Rangitiki" on 4th August 1940 from Greenock. I was at that time Mae Hamilton and 8 years old, what an adventure. I have quite a bit of memorabilia of the journey, including passenger list, menus and photos.

**81** Date: 2006-09-03 00:23:05  
*Patrick O'Brien McEnaney* ( [vistasatenas@hotmail.com](mailto:vistasatenas@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I worked on the Rangitata & the Ruahene (sic) in the 1950's as a steward. I remember the "Tata" stopping in the afternoons sometimes for a couple of hours to give the engines a rest & sleeping on deck or on the forward hatches because it was too hot below deck. The crew films & the "Sods Opera's" A lot of hidden talent came to the fore with the crew concerts. A big thank's to the people who put this site together.

**80** Date: 2006-07-30 05:08:52  
*Brian Davis* ( [briandavis@ihug.co.nz](mailto:briandavis@ihug.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

A most interesting web-page. Thank you. My mother, brother and I (age 7) travelled on the sister ship Rangitiki sailing from Greenock on 4 August 1940 and joining convoy OB 193. The convoy was attacked on the following night sinking S.S. Boma, but we reached Wellington safely on September 11. We were most interested in the Rangitane's fate later that year.

**79** Date: 2006-06-12 08:55:39  
**Hardern** ( [Angushk@netvigator.com](mailto:Angushk@netvigator.com) / <http://www.angelfire.com/biz2/angussilkshongkong>) wrote:

I just happened to be looking through a very old photo album which showed my mother in 1931 aboard the MV Rangitani.  
Out of idle curiosity I typed in the name of the ship and came across your extraordinary story about the ship's fate.  
Most interesting!

Angus Hardern HONG KONG

**78** Date: 2006-06-05 10:19:38  
**Lindel Kirk** ( [lindelkirk@xtra.co.nz](mailto:lindelkirk@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

My mother who died Dec.2005 often talked about her brother Jack King who was a passenger on the Rangitane. He signed a form saying that he would not actively fight against the Germans so after he returned to NZ he was an instructor in the Air Force & was killed in a flying accident on the 14.1.1943. He is buried at Waikomete Cemetry in the prodestant soldier section, block B, section 4a, plot 28. Mum knew very little about his experiences as he had been told not to talk about it , though he did tell her tha tthere had been trouble between some of the men. He had just graduated as a chemist from Otago ( I think) & convinced the Germans that he was on holiday not going to fight. I'm thrilled to find this site as we have always wanted to know the full story, thanks

**77** Date: 2006-03-14 21:54:17  
**Jeremy Addis** ( [booksi@eircom.net](mailto:booksi@eircom.net) / no homepage) wrote:

My sister Val and I (then aged respectively 11 and 9) were passengers on RMS Rangitane's last voyage to NZ, of which we have very happy memories -- and of Capt. Upton. Marvellous site! We knew only parts of the story. Thanks for all your work.

**76** Date: 2006-02-13 14:04:50  
**pamela** ( [pamelagrahamtlc@hotmail.com](mailto:pamelagrahamtlc@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I've really enjoyed the Rangitane story, and have printed it out to send to my father (aged 76) He was born in Christchurch (of N. Irish parents) who returned home after about 8 and a half years when he was six years old. He travelled on the Rangitane and remembers it as very new. This was probably 1936/7. He remembers the Captain let him ring the bell from time to time - he was one of the few children on board. I don't know if it was Captain Upton

- I suspect it was just before he became master. Thank you for all the hard work in putting this together.

**75** Date: 2006-02-09 16:00:59  
*Julrs Normington* ( [popodudi@bigpond.net.au](mailto:popodudi@bigpond.net.au) / no homepage) wrote:

PS....Trevor, I gather you may have a copy of the full list of signatures of the 'no fight' declaration of the Rangitane's crew as deposited on Emirau...I'm wondering if I could possibly get a copy of it as it may well have my Dad's signature. It would mean so much to me. Thanks matey!! Cheers, Jules

**74** Date: 2006-02-09 15:34:40  
*Jules Normington* ( [popodudi@bigpond.net.au](mailto:popodudi@bigpond.net.au) / no homepage) wrote:

It's been amazing to find this site, and I thank you for going to the effort to record these events. My Dad was John Robert Normington, an engineer on the Rangitane when she was captured/sunk. He told us lots about his time on it and these very events when we were kids - my brother and I would pester him to hear another tale as 8, 9,10 year olds. He told us often about how he befriended a couple of the Kulmerland crew, as he'd motorbiked through Europe in the early 30's and knew some of the places they came from. They taught him some German and he subsequently taught me as about an 8 year old how to count and some basic lingo....it later became my best subject at High School...an indirect result of his time on board that supply ship. He also gave me a tiny pack of cards when about that same age, that one of them had given him. He told us about the paper he had to sign in order to be released on Emirau, and he was very proud of the fact that he stuck to his word - he showed us many photos he'd taken on the Rangitane and on Emirau. I still have the grey army blanket he was given by the Aussies when rescued, with his name handwritten on a tag and sewn into one corner at the time...one of my most treasured possessions. He spent the rest of the war in Sydney building fighter bombers (Beauforts) at Kogarah, and travelled to New Zealand in 1947 where he met my Mum and had our family there, living in Takaka, and then Nelson. He (and Mum) moved to Tasmania in 1996 (at the age of 90!) since all 3 of we sons had moved to Australia, two of them in Tassie, where my Mum was from (I'm in Sydney). One of his best friends on board was John Colwell, who came to visit us in NZ when we were kids, and when Dad died (born 28 Oct.1906, died 25 May 1999) I searched all manner of phone books and found John Colwell's number, rang and spoke to his wife - she said he'd died two years previously. I've recently discovered all his diaries, which even Mum never knew he had, and he records the events of the sinking and subsequent days/weeks. I also found a handwritten list of MANY of those aboard...many with home addresses in the UK or wherever, including some German names separately. This I gather was done on board the Kulmerland, no doubt to serve as a record and to let families know should anything untoward happen. He'd also copied out the wording of the paper they'd signed to remain his reminder of that promise...that's there too. As kids the names Orion, Komet, Kulmerland, Holmwood, Triona, Triadic, Triaster were all well recognized and in our vocab, so to speak. Somewhere (and I'm not sure exactly where as I write) I have all those photos of Dad's, relevant to this time and these events, including pix from when they arrived in Townsville etc, which I imagine you may well be keen to see (?). I'm pretty sure he's pencilled the names of each person in them on the back. I'll have to have a good fossick. Again, it was

wonderful to stumble on this site. Cheers, Jules

**73** Date: 2006-01-28 08:32:29

*Joseph Squires* ( [flitcham@sympatico.ca](mailto:flitcham@sympatico.ca) / no homepage) wrote:

My father (Joseph Squires) was "head barman" on the Rangitane during the 1930s, up until around 1939. Does anyone out there remember him, or maybe got served by him at some point. My dad took a photograph of George Bernard Shaw standing at the rail on one of his trips to New Zealand, which was rare because Mr. Shaw did not like his picture taken. I think my dad must have offered him a "free one" in a trade-off for his photograph?

**72** Date: 2006-01-01 21:13:57

*Tony Millatt* ( [tonymillatt@ukgateway.net](mailto:tonymillatt@ukgateway.net) / <http://www.nzmaritimeindex.org.nz>) wrote:

Thanks for all the detail work that has gone into telling the story so well. You may already know, but there is a large (4 feet long) model of the RANGITANE in the New Zealand National Maritime Museum in Auckland. But, after the war, they changed the name on the model to RANGITATA - a sister ship. You can see that the final two letters (the changed ones) have tarnished whereas the rest of the name is still bright and shiny. After the war, NZS built another RANGITANE - a passenger ship which continued in service until 1967. I did half a trip on her as Radio Officer in 1962. Recently, "Sounds Historic" on Sunday Evenings on New Zealand National Radio broadcast some recordings of the Chief Engineer of the HOLMWOOD telling the story of her sinking by the raiders, and the subsequent adventures of the crew and passengers.

**71** Date: 2005-12-09 01:39:54

*derek casey* ( [derekcasy68@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:derekcasy68@yahoo.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

my uncle was James Gorman. is it true he was interned in Auswitch. thankyou.

**70** Date: 2005-11-26 13:32:19

*frank cookson* ( [fcookson@mac.com](mailto:fcookson@mac.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Fascinating account ,my dad was Harold Cookson(17yrs) one of the 20 survivors from the Baltanic meant to be returning home but ended up a POW and was not released from the Komet.

**69** Date: 2005-11-06 09:47:59

*Emily Russell* ( [DeanEmilyAlexa@xtra.co.nz](mailto:DeanEmilyAlexa@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

My grandfather was Frederick Howells, Chief Butcher on the Rangitane.

**68** Date: 2005-10-17 04:48:46  
*maryanne* ( [DringF@bigpond.com.au](mailto:DringF@bigpond.com.au) / no homepage) wrote:

Just a thank you for this web page My father was on the Rangitane his name was Reginald Bowering sadly he died in 1994. He did not talk about that time much , so it is nice to be able to read about it

**67** Date: 2005-10-01 08:54:21  
*Chris Wilson* ( [temby@xtra.co.nz](mailto:temby@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

I note that the crew member GWL Wilson is incorrectly recorded. He was my father and it should read GWI Wilson, George William Irwin Wilson 3.1.1916-13.9.2005

**66** Date: 2005-09-25 01:32:17  
*Tony Smith* ( [absmith@ubiquossisp.com](mailto:absmith@ubiquossisp.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Congratulations on publishing these accounts of Rangitane and subsequent events. I am Tony Smith born London 17 November 1926 and was in Batory for voyage UK-Australia as CORB No.318. Subsequently becoming Marine Manager of Blue Star Line Australia Pty Ltd. I am aware of the fondness and respect in which Miss Herbert-Jones (escort) aged 21 years was held by all..

**65** Date: 2005-07-27 15:11:22  
*Jan-Marie Claridge* ( [janmarie\\_claridge@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janmarie_claridge@yahoo.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

Hi, I am the granddaughter of Joseph Claridge who was a member of the crew. Sadly my grandfather died many years before I was born but I do know he very rarely spoke about his time on the ship and the island. We would love to hear from anyone who may have information regarding my grandfather.

Regards

JM Claridge

**64** Date: 2005-07-25 21:46:37  
*Rev. Robert A. Davies* ( [bobwhoisbob@rogers.com](mailto:bobwhoisbob@rogers.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Elsie May Davies (nee Ockendon) was the first wife of my grandfather, Emlyn Davies - the Baptist Clergyman in North Finchley, London, England. She had at least two younger brothers (as evidenced by a wedding photo). We have some records of her education, including references from Oxford, where she met my grandfather. She was a teacher by profession, and letters or reference from different schools suggest she was quite well liked. Our family story is that her health would be improved by some time south for "better air". Escorting children provided an ideal means. We do have the cables and letters confirming her loss and then death.

Her husband, my grandfather Emlyn Davies, remarried Elizabeth Bowden, a young widow

herself. The Lord eventually called them on to ministry in Canada at Yorkminster Baptist Church (now Yorkminster Park Baptist) in Toronto. Their children, Mary and Robert, were both raised to know of Elsie as Aunt Elsie.

A book on Emlyn's life "Emlyn Davies: Man of God", was written by Alfreda Hall through Welch Publishers, and offers some report of his loss of Elsie.

Thanks for this page

Bob Davies, Newmarket, Ontario

**63** Date: 2005-06-14 14:14:56  
*J.S.Geddes* ( [john.geddes@tesco.net](mailto:john.geddes@tesco.net) / no homepage) wrote:

The meaning of BAMS was in fact (British Armed Merchants Ships)

Ex/RO

**62** Date: 2005-06-10 00:28:39  
*Louise Davies* ( [blueze@infogen.net.nz](mailto:blueze@infogen.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

My father, Alan (Sweeney) Jones, RNZAF, who was on the "Rangitane" and travelling to England for a six week gunnery course before becoming a W.Op/AG. also became a POW in Germany until 1945. I have been recording his personal account (he is still alive) of his capture and internment in various POW camps, and your document was able to fill in a few gaps. Thank you.

**61** Date: 2005-06-05 21:17:35  
*Ian Maxwell* ( [maxwelli@extra.co.nz](mailto:maxwelli@extra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Excellent. Thomas A Hooper Fleet Air Arm was my wife's great uncle. After signing the declaration he returned to New Zealand and spent the rest of the war as a farmer.

**60** Date: 2005-05-21 13:14:29  
*Phillip Ray* ( [philltrefor@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:philltrefor@yahoo.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

Hi

I would be interested to hear from any one who survived the attack on the "Rangitane" and specifically if you knew of an Assistant steward called Charles Walter Ray also known as Philip.

He was my Grandfather and I am researching my family history.

I look forward to hearing from anyone.

Many thanks.

Phillip Ray

**59** Date: 2005-05-08 15:15:39  
*Ann Hentschel* ( [ann@ebtech.net](mailto:ann@ebtech.net) / no homepage) wrote:

Hello:

Excellent website and so much like my story of the SS Nerissa - [www.ssnerissa.com](http://www.ssnerissa.com) Just came across your website when I was looking for information about the CORB evacuation of children to Canada during WW2. The Nerissa brought children to Canada in Sept. 1940, just prior to the sinking of the 'SS City of Benares'. Best regards, Ann Hentschel, Sarnia, Ontario, Canada.

**58** Date: 2005-04-18 11:32:03  
*Graham Murray* ( [gzbzebk@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gzbzebk@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

My father was John Murray. He was in RNZAF and in 1940 at age 21 set off for England on Rangitane. The war was over by the time he got there. He was not able to leave at Emirau. Instead he was taken on to Germany where he was POW till April 45.

thebells Rangitane Story URL - What a treasure trove. It is great to see so much all in one place. Well done.

Incidentally the Holmwood was heading for Lyttleton, not Lyttelwood.

This search started when my children were watching the dvd "Titanic" and I agree with the suggestion of a blockbuster or TV series, probably starting with the departure of the Holmwood from Waitangi and ending at Emirau

**57** Date: 2005-04-06 14:37:05  
*Ian Hay* ( [lanhay10@aol.com](mailto:lanhay10@aol.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Fascinating story. As an ex-Merchant Navy Radio/Electronics Officer I remember attending a 1 day MN Coding Course run by the RN, and as mentioned by a previous correspondent, I never saw or heard of a MN coding book since then!!

**56** Date: 2005-03-07 04:27:54  
*Patrick Kelly* ( [pnkelly@shaw.ca](mailto:pnkelly@shaw.ca) / no homepage) wrote:

Very interesting. Greetings to sll. Always interested in seagoing or shore based wireless stations or wireless men of any period. ex-RCNVR Navcal Telegraphist.

**55** Date: 2005-02-16 09:10:27  
*Nicholas Brooke* ( [edmund@ihug.co.nz](mailto:edmund@ihug.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Your website has provided much interesting information. My grandfather, D.I. (Iain) N. Maclean was a passenger on the Rangitane. He went on to become a New Zealand district court judge for approximately twenty years, and died in 1990. He never really talked about

his experiences, so any information is appreciated.

**54** Date: 2004-12-22 00:15:59

**Malcolm Cheeseman** ( [mac@tacc.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:mac@tacc.fsnet.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

My father was on the rangitane and i have a red cross book full of info,pow drawings photos of milag ,extracts of letters from home ,details of ships sunk by enemy action..etc

**53** Date: 2004-11-26 17:04:32

**Trevor Bell** ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

The father of the Strickfuss boys was indeed called Samuel, not Stanley. I will correct the text on the next update.

**52** Date: 2004-11-25 23:51:03

**Ann Strickfuss** ( [ann\\_strickfuss@hotmail.com](mailto:ann_strickfuss@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Hi, what an interesting site and very sad. I haven't read it all yet but will be back. Are you sure Samuel and Fred Strickfuss' dad was called Stanley. I believed him to be Samuel born 16/11/1889 who was the brother of my husband's grandfather.

**51** Date: 2004-11-10 16:16:39

**Gavin Shaw** ( [Gavin\\_shaw2002@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Gavin_shaw2002@yahoo.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

I'am looking into my Grandad's (LAC1660831 William Thomlinson) past for him durring the World War Two. The Rangitane took him accross to Africa from England where he spent three years with the BNAF. So thanks for this information on the Rangitane. If anyone knows my Grandad don't hesitate to get in contact with me via email.

**50** Date: 2004-10-19 21:54:37

**Roy Prince** ( [spectrum@inreach.com](mailto:spectrum@inreach.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Interesting stuff. Takes me back. I'd like to point out that the N Atlantic BAMS area 1A changed at 40 degrees W to BAMS area 2A and traffic was transmitted from Halifax Radio CFH/VAS and from Amagansett Radio New York WSL, also from Washington on Long Wave NSS.

**49** Date: 2004-10-01 08:59:02

**Richard Fernley** ( [richard@rfalimited.demon.co.uk](mailto:richard@rfalimited.demon.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

I trained as a Radio Officer at Norwood Technical College between 1969-1972 and during the final term attended HMS Chrysanthemum on the embankment in London to undertake

the Merchant Navy Coding Course. The course took a day and we were instructed by the RN to code and decode basic signals in the event of war. I entered the Royal Fleet Auxiliary for which most of my job as a Radio Officer was that of cypher work - and I never heard or saw a merchant coding book to this day - even Chrysanthemum has gone!

**48** Date: 2004-09-29 15:41:46  
*George Carr* ( [georgedcarr@aol.com](mailto:georgedcarr@aol.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I just like to say I enjoyed your fascinating story of the Rangitane. (I admire all the time and effort that has gone in to this project.)

**47** Date: 2004-09-23 16:08:46  
*John Thorpe* ( [jt006b3051@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:jt006b3051@blueyonder.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

A really good read that should be a blockbuster film.

**46** Date: 2004-08-17 09:56:32  
*Bert Aliffe* ( [BertAliffe@aol.com](mailto:BertAliffe@aol.com) / no homepage) wrote:

No comment

I Sailed in Rangitiki, 3rd. Electrician 1945

**45** Date: 2004-08-03 09:23:21  
*Gerardine* ( [gerardinehy@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gerardinehy@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Hi, my Dad was a passenger on the Rangitane in 1939 its final voyage before being sunk on its return. I was wondering if anyone knew him or his friends, Dad was Sean/John Cooney, 29 yrs from Oranmore Carnmore, Co Galway, Eire and his friends Mick Sheridan, Paddy Bourne and Nora Egan. Thank you

**44** Date: 2004-07-23 04:04:46  
*minette mchugh* ( [mchuge@acrc.com.au](mailto:mchuge@acrc.com.au) / no homepage) wrote:

I have been searching for some time now regarding info on the Rangitane/Batory. My husband and I moved to SA and bought a home in Grange. When Joyce, the elderly lady next door passed away, her god daughter came upon a case of personal items, photos, letters, books, paper clippings and telegrams.

It turns out they did belong to or were received from a Miss Doris Beeston. The letters were sent to her mother and sister

( Joyce the elderly lady next door ). The letters were written by Doris while she was in England on her study tour , on her being asked to be a CORB escort, while on the first trip back on the Batory, the little holiday in NZ and the return trip to England on the Rangitane.

About this time there was an auction of this hall and mansion in North Adelaide. The hall was called The Doris Beeston Hall and the mansion was the former HQ of the SA Kindergarten Teacher's Ass. I went along for a look and to hear the history behind the buildings. We also found a street within the local area named Beeston Way. This only fuelled my thirst to know more.

So for the past couple of years I have tried to find out more about this mysterious Doris Beeston.

Imagine my delight when I came upon this site. Thank you. I will be fairly busy from now on and hope to find an appropriate institution which may be interested in safe guarding the family momentos belonging to Doris Beeston.

**43** Date: 2004-06-01 18:40:40  
**Robin Phillips** ( [phillirl@yahoo.com](mailto:phillirl@yahoo.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Hi , My name is Robin Phillips, my family & I living in New York State, in the United States. I have just started doing Genealogy work on my family. My mother told me a story about my great grandmothers brother Henry Anker, he was on the RMS Rangitane as a member of the crew. After being released by the Germans from the POW camp Henry came home to England. He was trying to live a good & happy life when he & his wife were killed when the Germans bombed England.

**42** Date: 2004-06-01 11:48:41  
**Charles Brasell** ( [c.brasell@paradise.net.nz](mailto:c.brasell@paradise.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Lot of work gone into this site Trevor, good work too. I was researching Angus (Scotty) Cambell, Chief Officer of the Holmdale, who was also marooned on Emirau with the Rangitane prisoners.....Many thanks.

**41** Date: 2004-04-09 08:21:37  
**Trevor Bell** ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

With reference to the previous posting from David Trotman concerning Percy Parker.... please would David send me his email address: I have a few snippets of information about Percy Parker.

**40** Date: 2004-04-08 08:54:51  
**David Trotman** ( no email / no homepage) wrote:

Percy Parker was my uncle, he was listed as RNZAF, my uncle had been in the RAF for about 10 years at the time of the sinking & was only seconded to the RNZAF as aero engine fitter corporal, he completed his service in the RAF as a Flight Sergeant, he rarely spoke of the sinking only to say it was the most frightening experience he had ever had.

**39** Date: 2004-02-07 21:59:30  
*Jack Johnston* ( [jack.j@paradise.net.nz](mailto:jack.j@paradise.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

As a passenger on the Rangitane when it made a previous visit to NZ in December 1939 I was very interested to find this site and finally discover what happened to her on her fatal trip. My congratulations on the presentation of this story.

I well remember the trip out and all the concern that there was about the presence of German raiders. We were given to understand that the Captain had diverted from the usual course in an effort to escape them, thereby making us quite a bit late arriving in New Zealand. I would welcome an e-mail from any other passengers.

**38** Date: 2004-02-01 11:50:08  
*John B Davies* ( [jbdavies@maxitec.co.za](mailto:jbdavies@maxitec.co.za) / no homepage) wrote:

A postscript to my note Number 10 of 11 Jan 2003. Roy married, had a son and a daughter, and in retirement lived in Milford-on-Sea, Hampshire. He died suddenly aged 76 in 1989

**37** Date: 2004-01-17 14:49:38  
*Paul Claridge* ( [paul@claridge659.fsnet.co.uk](mailto:paul@claridge659.fsnet.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

I was delighted when I found your site and was able to get so much detail about the Rangitane. As shown on the crew list my father J. Claridge was assistant steward on this ship when it was captured. Unfortunately my father died some years ago, before ever recounting his story in any detail. I know that he was one of those left on an island, which I now believe to be Emirau, but that was all he ever told me. I would love to learn more and of course would be delighted to hear from anyone who knew him.

**36** Date: 2004-01-17 05:29:03  
*Jim Payne* ( [jimp@homemail.com.au](mailto:jimp@homemail.com.au) / no homepage) wrote:

Came across your site while searching for info on the City of Benares sinking for my father, because a friend of his who died on 1 January 2004 was the skipper of the Sunderland that spotted the lifeboat containing the last survivors from that sinking. Congratulations on your research and presentation of the Rangitane story.

**35** Date: 2004-01-15 10:23:29  
*michael pleeth* ( [michael@pleeth.freeseve.co.uk](mailto:michael@pleeth.freeseve.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

I would like any information about Rinella Wireless Station, Malta from, say, 1940 to 1948. What was the frequency of the BAMS transmissions and what power was used. Details and news of naval personal would be of interest

**34** Date: 2004-01-13 22:07:38

**Richard Overall** ( [tgca2000@yahoo.com](mailto:tgca2000@yahoo.com) / no homepage) wrote:

My father, C.P. "Mick" Overall sailed on the Rangitiki from its second voyage to its last to/from New Zealand. He was the Chef for many of those years, but he rarely spoke of the war years. Finding this website and reading of the last hours of the Rangitane brings home just how stressful being a Merchant Seaman must have been in those days - no wonder Dad didn't want to revisit them very much.

**33** Date: 2004-01-07 21:02:28

**Fritz Gaede** ( [fritz.gaede@fritz-gaede.de](mailto:fritz.gaede@fritz-gaede.de) / no homepage) wrote:

I am putting together facts of all vessels sunk by Orion, german raider as my dad (died already) sailed on Orion during the raid of the Rangitane, and who wrote a book (not published)

With regards and regret to all victims.

Fritz Gaede

**32** Date: 2003-12-16 19:47:34

**peter ellerton** ( [p.ellerton@btopenworld.com](mailto:p.ellerton@btopenworld.com) / no homepage) wrote:

i was a Rangitoto engineer

**31** Date: 2003-11-10 14:24:08

**Heather Kingsford Thiffault** ( [hthiffault@hotmail.com](mailto:hthiffault@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

My Dad Fred is a Survivor of the Rangitane. It is his 80th birthday in January and we are trying to come with some surprises for him. Do you know if there are any other survivors from the ship? Is there any way to contact them? Thanks Heather

**30** Date: 2003-10-26 11:23:06

**Noel Brettner** ( [n.brettner@clear.net.nz](mailto:n.brettner@clear.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

What an amazing, wonderful website!. My parents & two older brothers emigrated to Australia on the Rangitane back in December 1939. My eldest brother Robin recalls that after Capetown?, they hit the 'Roaring forties'; missed Melbourne; being blown right past!. So they disembarked at Wellington NZ, where they stayed for two? weeks, waiting for passage to Sydney!!. Any suggestions on where I can access passenger lists?.

**29** Date: 2003-09-27 04:45:13

**Geoff Sommerville (Slim)** ( [geoffs@paradise.net.nz](mailto:geoffs@paradise.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

It was along time ago but I remember some of it quite vividly - although I realise that memories can be fallible and some of them may have become distorted over the years

**28** Date: 2003-09-23 02:53:11

**Neill Atkinson** ( [neill.atkinson@mch.govt.nz](mailto:neill.atkinson@mch.govt.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

I am an historian from Wellington, NZ, currently researching a book on NZers in the merchant marine during WW2. I would be very interested to talk to any surviving Rangitane crew members in NZ. I know there are several ex 'passengers' here, including RNZAF wireless operator Alan Jones, who recently featured in an oral history book on NZ POWs called 'Inside Stories', edited by my colleague Megan Hutching. Congratulations on a most informative site.

**27** Date: 2003-08-03 19:43:42

**Trevor**

**Bell** ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / <http://www.thebells.btinternet.co.uk/rangitane/>) wrote:

Thanks for your posting Irene. A copy of newspaper article would be most welcome!

**26** Date: 2003-08-03 02:25:33

**Irene McArthur nee Brabbins** ( [caiseal@ozemail.com.au](mailto:caiseal@ozemail.com.au) / no homepage) wrote:

Have been searching for days trying to find out about the Rangitane. My Uncle was on board crew & was rescued. He came to Australia & met his brother (my father). My dad was in the RAAF & there is a story about this in the newspaper at that time. I am trying to get a copy of this when I am in Sydney next. Will send a copy of it if you would like it... Thanks Irene

**25** Date: 2003-07-21 13:39:45

**Heather Thiffault** ( [hthiffault@hotmail.com](mailto:hthiffault@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Thanks for doing this research. Not only has it peaked my Dad's (Fred Kingsford, survivor) interest but also that of my two sons aged 11 and 13 who have always wanted to know more about what happened to my him in the South Pacific. I am making a copy to take to my nephew in the states who will now have a written account of what happened to his Grandpa. Dad had the chance to speak to his class about the Rangitane during our visit to Tulsa near Remembrance Day last year.

**24** Date: 2003-06-09 21:17:24

**Martin Walsh** ( [budwalsh@cogeco.ca](mailto:budwalsh@cogeco.ca) / no homepage) wrote:

I have downloaded the file for a survivor of the Rangitane OS Fred Kingsford he was delighted with the information. Now we know he really was a POW

**23** Date: 2003-04-29 17:15:03  
*Trevor Bell (Webmaster) ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:*

In response to the posting by Michael Roberts, all I know about Merchant Navy codes is on the Codes page of the Rangitane web site. Let me know if you find anything else!

**22** Date: 2003-04-28 14:53:00  
*michael roberts ( [pluscat@hotmail.com](mailto:pluscat@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:*

Could you suggest a starting point for someone wishing to study the MNC. (WWII British Merchant Navy Codes)

Would you recommend a visit to the PRO Kew?

Glad of your assistance.

Regards

ROBERTS

**21** Date: 2003-04-27 19:34:38  
*Trevor Bell (Editor) ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:*

In reply to Cecilia Agger's posting, May Morrison was not on the Rangitane and she is not listed in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission list of WWII casualties nor in Michael Fethney's list of all CORB escorts in his marvellous book.

**20** Date: 2003-04-26 12:28:17  
*Cecilia Agger ( [cecilia.agger@talk21.com](mailto:cecilia.agger@talk21.com) / no homepage) wrote:*

My father had a great aunt whom he was told went down with the Rangitiki, however this appears to be not the case, as this vessel was scrapped in 1962. The Rangitane seems to be more likely. Her name was Laura Mary MORRISON, but she was known as "May" and she was an Evacuee Escort. Does anybody know anything about her or can point me in the right direction? Great Site! Thanks.

**19** Date: 2003-04-22 13:19:22  
*David Kennedy ( [uggles5@bigpond.com](mailto:uggles5@bigpond.com) / no homepage) wrote:*

Looks grand,

Just time so far for a quick scan but notice Fremantle is spelled Freemantle.

David

**18** Date: 2003-04-01 13:52:25  
*Monica Surridge* ( [monica.surridge@blblon.co.uk](mailto:monica.surridge@blblon.co.uk) / no homepage) wrote:

My father, Haydn Price, was an assistant steward on the Rangitane. Thereafter he worked at the Shipping Federation at Prescott Street London EC for 34 years. He died in July 1987 - aged 76 years.

**17** Date: 2003-03-12 14:44:19  
*Adrian Cooper* ( [jacooper@wandbox.fr](mailto:jacooper@wandbox.fr) / no homepage) wrote:

My father was a friend of Captain Upton and our family lived almost opposite his house in Carlisle Road Hove. My father died in 1939 when I was 10 but my sister and I remember Captain Upton going to work in London during the war in his uniform after he came back to England from Australia. My sister, Mrs Edgley lives in the same house today, number 87 and when he retired Captain Upton taught me to drive and I was one of his first pupils. I passed my test first time!

**16** Date: 2003-03-10 20:10:13  
*Karl Henrik Henriksen* ( [khhe@statoil.com](mailto:khhe@statoil.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Hello

I am the grandson of Vinni`s captain Helmer Henriksen (his fully name was Karl Helmer Henriksen). He died in 1971, 86 and a half year of age. After the war he served on another Vinni, which was Nortraships D/S Leiv Eriksson during the war. He retired in June-1947. As my grandfather I have been a sailor for 26 years, before I start working in The North Sea, serving for the Norwegian Oil Company Statoil on the Gullfaks "C" platform.

Regards  
Karl Henrik Henriksen

**15** Date: 2003-02-13 02:37:59  
*S.J.McBride* ( [MMCBRIDES@AOL.COM](mailto:MMCBRIDES@AOL.COM) / no homepage) wrote:

A wonderful example of much research and a fitting tribute to all Rangitane passengers and crew. Many thanks

**14** Date: 2003-01-27 16:03:02  
*Trevor Bell (Editor)* ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Reference David Webber's posting no 13 - there are two printers listed in the crew because Frank Ellison who was a steward was learning the job because Edwards was due to leave the

job.

- 13** Date: 2003-01-27 09:47:39  
*David Webber* ( [dwebber@paradise.net.nz](mailto:dwebber@paradise.net.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

A most interesting a/c. I have a copy of Sandbach & Edges book. As an ex-printer of Rangitiki in the '50s was intrigued to see two printers listed, they would have been very cramped for space! In my time the Tiki's bosun was ex-Tane. He had very fruity u/class accent from being placed in an officer's POW camp.

- 12** Date: 2003-01-15 04:55:26  
*James Duncan* ( [tremsoff@xtra.co.nz](mailto:tremsoff@xtra.co.nz) / no homepage) wrote:

Greetings from Auckland N.Z.  
thrilled to have discovered this site. My Grandfather the late Mr Bill Collison was a Tourist B steward on the Rangitane, and survived the sinking, life on Emirau etc. He passed away in 1982.  
New Year greetings to all  
James D

- 11** Date: 2003-01-14 16:54:36  
*John B Davies* ( [jbdavies@itec.co.za](mailto:jbdavies@itec.co.za) / no homepage) wrote:

My apologies are due. In my last note I stated that Roy Poole's parents were Frederick and Edith. They were in fact Frederick POOLE and Nora HIGGS. Edith HIGGS was another sister. I am sorry for this confusion.  
John

- 10** Date: 2003-01-11 15:41:45  
*John B Davies* ( [jbdavies@itec.co.za](mailto:jbdavies@itec.co.za) / no homepage) wrote:

Cyril David Roy POOLE (usually called Roy) was 3rd Officer of the Rangitane having been born on 14 May 1913 at 67 Sedgley Road West, Tipton, Staffordshire. This is almost as far from the sea as is possible in England. His father Frederick Jesse Cooper POOLE had broken from the very strong family tradition of coal mining by graduating, becoming a school teacher and then Secretary (later Director) of Education for Sedgley. Roy broke the tradition further by going to sea.

The Rangitane episode was known in outline but little detail by the family. My Mother Brenda POOLE was Roy's cousin. Frederick (Roy's Father) and Horace (Brenda's Father) were brothers and their Mothers - Edith (Roy's) and Lilian (Brenda's) HIGGS were sisters. Although that relationship was close, contact was not. Roy married and had children but I know nothing more of that.

Roy travelled to New Zealand after the war and made contact with Hector COOPER in Auckland who was a distant relation of his and therefore mine.

Trevor has gathered a great deal of information about this little known episode of maritime

history and presented it to us in a pleasantly digestible form.  
Trevor "Well done"

**9** Date: 2003-01-09 06:35:59  
*Diana Milne (m.Mexsom)* ( [dianmex@hotmail.com](mailto:dianmex@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I was pleased to come across more info on the Rangitane and other vessels attacked by the raiders. My great Aunt was Florence Mundie even after her ordeal she lived well into her 80's back in Aberdeen where she died in March 1982 the vessel Culmerland I've got noted here the Cumberland? (mixup?) the Suarts were:the Chief Justice and Mrs W.H. STUART X the Friendly Islands !!!!!!!@###  
If it hadn't been for an engineer who heardFlo calling out and he and the Chief Engineer both helping her to first dress her in a boiler suit, all her clothes \were burnt off her,and then taking her to a boat she would have gone down with the ship.  
all the best for future instalments.Diana

**8** Date: 2002-12-25 11:19:37  
*alan carter* ( [alanc1946@hotmail.com](mailto:alanc1946@hotmail.com) / no homepage) wrote:

great web site well done on researching it so well, the personal details make the story so human  
alan

**7** Date: 2002-12-05 02:54:44  
*Patrick Stiven* ( [cranmore72@yahoo.com](mailto:cranmore72@yahoo.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I sailed on RMS 'RANGITOTO' in 1950 as Writer, and Sid Clarke, Writer from 'RANGITANE', was one of my coworkers - he was put ashore on the island - don't know how he got back to U.K.  
Excellent site - great information -

**6** Date: 2002-11-22 11:29:17  
*Fred Andrews* ( [R266198@aol.com](mailto:R266198@aol.com) / no homepage) wrote:

A very interesting web page. Did any of M.N. P.O.W.s know Richard Foxley taken prisoner from the Barque Killoran? He was a New Zealander, an apprentice and was 16 years old at the time of his capture.

**5** Date: 2002-11-11 21:32:51  
*Ivor Lloyd* ( [irlloyd@btinternet.com](mailto:irlloyd@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Re Note No 2 . I gave wrong e-mail address.  
It is irlloyd@btinternet.com

**4** Date: 2002-11-06 21:36:31  
*Richard Harden* ( [richard.harden@btinternet.com](mailto:richard.harden@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Good to see a new site about the Rangitane. My father, who is still alive, is Billy Noel Harden who was one of the "Rangitane Boys" - the group of NZ airmen who were captured and eventually sent to POW in Germany. We have been keeping a look out for new information on the web for some time as he likes to see photos etc. Pride of place on his fireplace is a picture of MV Rangitane taken we believe in Auckland. Anyone wanting to know the associated story about the German raiders should find a copy of "The Black Raider" by Kurt Weyher and Hans Jurgen Ehrlich. Long since out of print but may be available through 2nd hand bookshops. Not a huge amount about Rangitane, but a fascinating documentary about a little known subject. This book has a photo of the Rangitane in the process of sinking, a copy of which my father would like - does anyone know if this is available on the net?  
all the best  
Richard Harden

**3** Date: 2002-11-04 02:28:21  
*Raymond Jones* ( [Raytaffjones@aol.com](mailto:Raytaffjones@aol.com) / no homepage) wrote:

I sailed as Quatermaster on the final voyages of the last RUAHINE in 1968, the Bosun was Ron Smith a survivor from RANGITANE. He was a real gentleman and a fine seaman. I have some newspaper cuttings about his life which appeared in an Auckland newspaper during our last voyage there.  
Interesting Site  
Best Wishes  
Ray Jones

**2** Date: 2002-11-02 17:31:44  
*Ivor Lloyd* ( [irlloyd@brinternet.com](mailto:irlloyd@brinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Just to say Hello and to say how much I enjoyed reading the Reports re the Wireless Messages etc. I am an ex Radio Officer 1942 - 1956.

**1** Date: 2002-11-02 16:39:49  
*Trevor Bell* ( [thebells@btinternet.com](mailto:thebells@btinternet.com) / no homepage) wrote:

Somebody has to be the first to post a message, so it may as well be me!

