

Keith Everitt was a cadet on *Rakaia* from 7<sup>th</sup> March 1966 to 28<sup>th</sup> March 1968 – Voyages 42 to 45 – and he has very kindly provided a synopsis of Voyages 44 and 45. Voyage 45 was the last voyage undertaken by *Rakaia* in the role of a Cadet Training Ship.

**RAKAIA – VOYAGES 44 AND 45  
BY  
KEITH EVERITT**

**Voyage 44 – 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1967 to 7<sup>th</sup> August 1967**

Glasgow to Auckland

*Rakaia* left Glasgow on the 24<sup>th</sup> March 1967 at 1100, which was much too early for the cadets, as they had only one night there, and many had expected to be there for the weekend. The ship then steered northwards and went around the north of Scotland and on down the North Sea to Bremen. To get into Bremen a passage through the mine fields has to be used and there was quite a lot of excitement when it was learnt that the entry buoy to this channel was missed and it was decided to go across the mine field instead of going farther south to the next channel. Luckily we never hit anything and we arrived safely at Bremerhaven, where we anchored at 1100. We left the anchorage at 1830 and docked in Bremen at 2330 on the 27<sup>th</sup> March. The weather there was not very good, as it rained on and off for most of the day. Those of the cadets who could get ashore on the night of the 28<sup>th</sup> did so, as I don't think any of them had been there before. We sailed the next day, 29<sup>th</sup> March, for Hamburg at 1400.

We arrived in Hamburg at 0400 the following day. The weather was again wet and slightly cold. As all of cabin 9 were free that evening, and I had been to Hamburg before on *Glenfalloch*, I was able to show them around and between us we had enough money and enough knowledge of German, for us to have a great time. Whilst in Hamburg one of two leopards, we were to take to New Zealand, was put on board. It was a female and turned out to be very quick tempered. We left Hamburg for Antwerp at 0400 on the 31<sup>st</sup> March.

We arrived in Antwerp at 0800 on the 1<sup>st</sup> April. The weather was more pleasant and the sun shone for most of our stay there. Whilst there some of the cadets went on a tour of the countryside, I was unable to go as I was on gangway duty. As I had been to Antwerp twice before, once on *Glenfalloch* and once on *Rakaia* on my first trip (voyage 42), I was able to show my cabin mates around Antwerp, and we spent one evening watching the film "Tobruk". We left Antwerp at 1000 on the 5<sup>th</sup> April and arrived the same day in Rotterdam. I had been to Rotterdam before, again on *Glenfalloch*, so I was able to show some of my fellow cadets around. We left Rotterdam at 1800 on the 8<sup>th</sup> April. On the way down the river I was able to get a good look at the new *Glenalmond* (Glen & Shire Line). She was berthed at the liquid latex wharf, which is on the river. Our next and last port of call before the Atlantic crossing was Le Havre. We arrived at 1000 on the 9<sup>th</sup> April. Our stay there was short as we left the following night the 10<sup>th</sup> April at 2000.

The Atlantic crossing was not out of the ordinary until the 19<sup>th</sup> April, when the engines broke down at 1948. One of the eccentrics had cracked. We were at a stand still the next day. The engines started again during the early morning on the 21<sup>st</sup> April, only to stop again at 0725. The engines started and stopped throughout that day, eventually starting again at 1050 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> April. We arrived at Curacao at 0900 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. We were berthed for refuelling at Caracas Bay, so some of the cadets went swimming. We left Curacao at 1630 on the 23<sup>rd</sup> April. The Caribbean passage was uneventful and we arrived at the Panama Canal at 0830 on the 25<sup>th</sup> April. We passed through the canal straight away and were in the Pacific heading for New Zealand.



The Author Taking A Break From Ball Hammering The Mainmast – Panama Canal Transit

We were to have called in at Pitcairn Island, but this was missed out due to the earlier delays. The crossing was not to be so fast though. On the 7<sup>th</sup> May the engines broke down again at 1145. Whilst we were stopped the Doctor caught some sharks. The engines started again at 1230 on the 8<sup>th</sup> May, only to stop again at 1000. They started again on the 9<sup>th</sup> May at 1030. Everything was ok until the 15<sup>th</sup> May, when the engines stopped again at 0524. A full-scale operation was put in motion to try and make a temporary repair. Shackles and bottle screws were used to hold the parts together which had broken. The engine started again at 0800, but a speed of 4 to 5 knots was all

that could be maintained. We eventually arrived in Auckland at 1400 on the 16<sup>th</sup> May, one day late.

### Around the New Zealand Coast

Whilst in Auckland the engine was given a very strenuous check and some of the faults were repaired, but it was found that we would have to go around the coast on 7 cylinders. I was unable to go ashore in Auckland, as I hadn't said my Rules of the Road. There were two football matches, which we won, but this was not enough to entitle us to enter the Auckland Shield this trip. We left Auckland at 1345 on the 24<sup>th</sup> May, for Napier. On the way to Napier we encountered some Japanese fishing vessels, and had a close shave by an underwater research ship, which was setting off underwater explosives. We anchored off Napier on the 25<sup>th</sup> May and went in at 0630 the following morning. There was a shortage of labour, so cadets unloaded the cargo and we left Napier at 1650 on the 27<sup>th</sup> May, heading for Wellington.

We arrived in Wellington at 1130 on the 28<sup>th</sup> May. Whilst in Wellington, the 3<sup>rd</sup> trippers and two 4<sup>th</sup> trippers took their lifeboat tickets. We departed from Wellington for Lyttleton at 1400 on the 31<sup>st</sup> May. The arrival in Lyttleton was delayed awaiting the pilot. We eventually berthed at 1720 on the 1<sup>st</sup> June. Nothing much happened in Lyttleton except for the senior cadet "Jag" was cancelled. We sailed from Lyttleton at 1100 on the 3<sup>rd</sup> June and anchored off Timaru that night. We went in on the 4<sup>th</sup> June at 0740. I passed my Rules of the Road that day and went ashore for the first time this trip. We left Timaru at 1910 on the 6<sup>th</sup> June. We arrived at Port Chalmers at 0730 on the 7<sup>th</sup> June. As we were supposed to go to Dunedin, this was a disappointment to the cadets, as we were some way from Dunedin. Whilst in Port Chalmers I went into Dunedin to visit friends I made last time I was there. I had a great night out. We sailed at 0700 on the 11<sup>th</sup> June to return to Timaru and arrived at 1630 on the same day. The ship's dance was held at Timaru on Friday 16<sup>th</sup> June, so the day before was spent getting the boat deck ready. The dance was a success and everyone enjoyed themselves. We sailed from Timaru at 1600 on the 20<sup>th</sup> June, heading back to Wellington. Our arrival in Wellington was a wet one and it wasn't too warm. On the Friday a "Jag" was held for all the cadets, for a change, which was most thoughtful of the senior cadets, especially as it was the last one of the coast.

### Wellington to Liverpool

We departed from Wellington at 2230 on the 24<sup>th</sup> June, with a full load and deck cargo on top of No's 1, 2 and 5 hatches. The weather was not all that exciting as it was cold and windy. The next day was again the 24<sup>th</sup>. From our departure from Wellington, to our arrival at Pitcairn, the weather was rough. We arrived at 1115 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> July and unloaded the cargo into their two launches and one of the long boats. That day was the first really sunny day since we left New Zealand.



Tug Of War



Obstacle Course – Chris Marriot On The Ropes

We departed from Pitcairn at 1500 the same day. From then on the weather gradually improved. We arrived at the Panama Canal at 0130 on the 13<sup>th</sup> July and went through the canal at 1145 that day. The canal passage was slow and we left the canal at 2145 that night. We arrived at Curacao at 2200 on the 15<sup>th</sup> July. We refuelled and took on fresh water and left Curacao at 0410 the next morning. We then had the Atlantic before us. The weather was exceptionally good, with calm seas and a blazing sun. The cadet's sports day was held on the 22<sup>nd</sup> July. Port was lucky enough to win.

## **Voyage 45 – 1<sup>st</sup> September 1967 to 28<sup>th</sup> March 1968**

### Glasgow to Wellington

Voyage 45 started off very badly. After a split leave, the cadets returned for what was hoped would be a short stay in London, before sailing to New Zealand. That is not quite what happened though, because of a dock strike called by the Port of London Liaison Committee. Our stay was not as boring as it might have been, because of the outings arranged by the company. The cadets were taken on a Nuclear Defence course, at which they were instructed on the methods for combating the results of Atomic Warfare. We were told that fallout would be our major hazard and were shown on film, and instruction, how to combat this danger. The course was very constructive and I think it cleared up many aspects of atomic warfare that troubled the mind. We now know how to survive such a war, a thing that seemed impossible before hand. A fire-fighting lecture was also arranged and so was a visit to the Maritime Museum at Greenwich. The delay in London was found to be going on too long for the General Managers, so they sent their ships to other ports. *Rakaia* sailed for Glasgow on the 14<sup>th</sup> November 1967, arriving there on the following Friday. We were there for a much longer stay than last trip, so the cadets were able to see more of Scotland than before. I took advantage of this and went to Edinburgh one Sunday. As my father had been there before so he told me what to see. Loading was completed on the 29<sup>th</sup> November and we sail for New Zealand at 0700 on the 30<sup>th</sup> November.

The Atlantic crossing was not the smoothest, with strong winds and rough seas. The calmer weather eventually arrived about two days out from Curacao. We arrived at Curacao on the 12<sup>th</sup> December at 0200. We departed, after refuelling and taking on fresh water, at 1130 on the same day. The Caribbean was not as pleasant as it usually was, but this did not slow us down at all as Panama was reached on the morning of the 14<sup>th</sup> December. We had a quick passage, during which we passed *Nottingham* in the locks, and we were in the Pacific, New Zealand bound, by 1500h.

The Pacific was much calmer than the Atlantic and good weather was experienced from then onwards. Christmas was celebrated six days out from New Zealand, in bright sunshine (Temp. in cabin 92 degrees F). Up to Christmas the ships speed had been very good, averaging around 16 knots, so to many of us it was not much of a surprise, when the N.U.C. black balls went up on Christmas morning. Many of us have had plenty of experience of the temperaments of *Rakaia*'s engines. On Christmas Eve a carol service

was held in the anteroom. As always the cadets Christmas diner was a fancy dress affair and was enjoyed by all. Engine repairs were finished on Boxing Day and full speed was reached again. Boxing day evening brought forth the cadets concert. This was completely arranged by the cadets and everyone who watched enjoyed it and thought it a resounding success.



Christmas Festivities – Chris Marriot and Rob Hughes

### New Zealand Coast

We arrived at Wellington on the 3<sup>rd</sup> January 1968. For all of us, it was going to be the last time on the coast aboard *Rakaia*, so it was decided to make it the best coast yet. The only thing that spoiled this prospect was the short stay we had in each port. We were in Wellington for 9 days, which was the longest time in port for the whole coast. Whilst there, a weekend trip was arranged by the “Flying Angel” sailors club for 6 cadets. They stayed with families in Masterton, which is just outside Wellington. They all had a great time. Soccer was also played in Wellington. In fact the first match was played on the evening of the day we arrived. It was against *Hinakura* and was arranged prior to our arrival by *Hinakura*’s U/C 4<sup>th</sup> Mate, who was a cadet on board *Rakaia* until the end of the last trip. We managed to win this match 9 – 0 and were invited aboard *Hinakura* afterwards. Another match was arranged against a Shaw Savill ship. This proved to be a tough battle and the resulting

score was 1 – 1, which was a fair outcome. A “Jag” was also held and was the success everyone hoped it would be. The last activity in Wellington was the inter-watch shooting match, which Starboard won. We sailed from Wellington on the 12th January.

Our next port was Nelson, which we arrived at on the following day the 13<sup>th</sup>. Not much was arranged for this port as none of us had been there since voyage 42. The weather was glorious, especially on the day of the outing to the beach. The outing was arranged by the local Sea Rangers, and we spent the day at a Sea Scout camp along the coast from Nelson. The day’s activities were swimming, sailing and sun bathing. To finish off, a pulling race was held. This turned out to be a slight embarrassment to us, as out of the five boats that took part, we came 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> and the girls came 1<sup>st</sup>. There were a lot of excuses afterwards, but everyone enjoyed the race. We sailed for Lyttleton on the 17<sup>th</sup> January.

We arrived at Lyttleton on the 18<sup>th</sup>. The idea of a good coast seemed to have died by then as only an inter-watch football match was played, which starboard won 4 – 2. A “Jag” was held and was again a great success. Our stay was for only two days. We sailed for Bluff on the 20<sup>th</sup>.



Meat Loaders – Bluff

We arrived at Bluff on the 21<sup>st</sup>. There was not much hope for a good time in Bluff as it’s quite some way from the nearest large town. In actual fact two few things happened. The inter-watch whaler race was held, which starboard won. A football match against the Southland F.C. was arranged and a coach took the team plus supporters to clubs grounds. The match was a very tough

one, with Southland proving their superiority by winning 4 – 3. The stay in Bluff lasted for 5 days. We sailed for Timaru on the 26<sup>th</sup>.



Lively Weather – New Zealand Coast

We arrived at Timaru on the 27<sup>th</sup>. The ships dance was held here, as it was the last trip. This was the last port before we sailed for home. We sailed from Timaru on the 2<sup>nd</sup> February, so ended *Rakaia*'s last coast as a cadet ship, not quite what was expected and rather short.

### Homeward Bound

Except for the bad weather, the Pacific crossing was uneventful until our first break down. This was on the 10<sup>th</sup> February and lasted from 1510 until 1840. The next break down was the following Wednesday, and this lasted from 1845 to 2100. We arrived at Panama on the 21<sup>st</sup> February at 0200. We were at anchor at Balboa until 2145 that night, when we started the canal transit. We were through the canal by 0700 the following morning, when we anchored off Colon to pick up stores. We eventually got under way at 0915 on the 22<sup>nd</sup> February. We then sailed for Curacao, which we arrived at on the 24<sup>th</sup> February at 1030. We stayed at Caracas Bay for 8.5 hrs, during which time most of the cadets went swimming. We departed from Curacao at 1900 the same day.

The following afternoon, Sunday the 25<sup>th</sup>, was the cadet's sports afternoon. The High jump was the first event, which I won for Port. The shot putt followed, again won by Port. The sack race was next and this proved to be



Starboard's first win. This was followed by the long jump, which Starboard won. Starboard also won the wheelbarrow race. Port won the tug of war; Starboard won the link race. Port won the team jump and the fisherman's race. Starboard won the chariot race. The last event was of course the obstacle race. Port managed to win this, though the Starboard Watch Captain had the fastest time. This was followed by the Grand Tug of War.

The rest of the Atlantic crossing was uneventful. We arrived in London on the 8<sup>th</sup> March, and completed docking at 2310.

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