

## THE AUTHOR

Brought up with a love of the sea and some experience in small boats in the South of England, Barry Thompson went to sea at the age of 17, joining his first ship shortly after the Second World War as a cadet with the Port Line.

Barry then served with the P & O Line during which time he spent short periods as staff captain and in command. He also served with the Royal Navy.

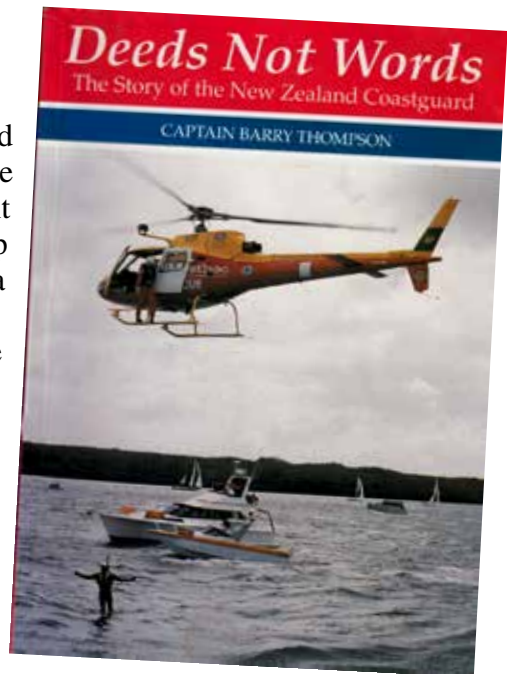
In 1962 he married Diana, a Kiwi, and 'swallowing the anchor' settled in Auckland where he has since managed to mix his interesting career as a marine surveyor with other nautical interests ashore.

Having retired from full time business, he now works from home as a consultant to the shipping and insurance industries.

Barry served on the executive of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service for about 12 years. He was its commanding officer in 1966 and president between 1976 and 1978, the only person to have served in both capacities.

He has been researching Coast Guard history for about 15 years, on an off, and has devoted hundreds of hours to writing this book which has been largely a 'labour of love'. He writes for a hobby and is co-author of a book on the Spirit of New Zealand, the author of a text book on marine surveying, and of many articles in the boating press.

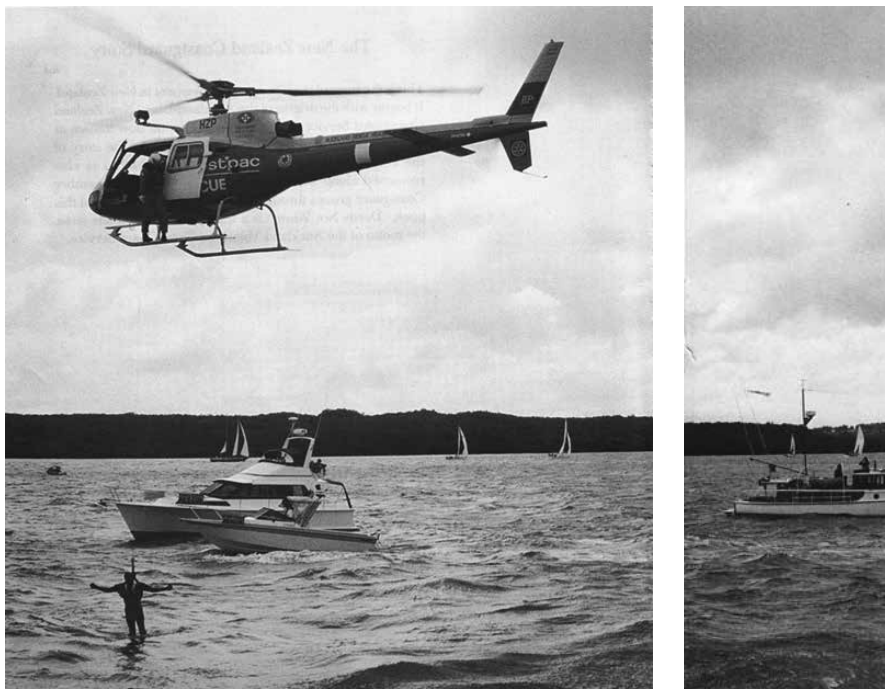
Much of Barry Thompson's spare time is devoted to the Spirit of Adventure Trust as its deputy chairman and as relieving master of Spirit of Adventure and Spirit of New Zealand. He is also a volunteer with the National Maritime Museum where he is a skipper of the brigantine Breeze and the scow Ted Ashby.



*Captain Barry Thompson*

# Deeds Not Words

The Story of the  
New Zealand Coastguard  
CAPTAIN BARRY THOMPSON



This is the story of the Coastguard movement in New Zealand. It begins with the origins of the Auckland-based New Zealand Coastguard Service in 1935, an organisation now known as the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service. The story of the Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation is also recounted along with details about more than 40 member Coastguard groups throughout New Zealand.

The title of this book, 'Deeds Not Words' is a translation of *Facta non verba*, the motto of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service.

Dedicated to all Coastguard volunteers over the years and their supportive, long-suffering wives, and partners.

THE AUCKLAND VOLUNTEER COAST GUARD SERVICE INC.  
with the support of BP Oil New Zealand Limited

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GOVERNMENT HOUSE  
*New Zealand*

**Foreword**

Even though the waters of the Hauraki Gulf are comparatively calm and sheltered, there are still many small boats that get into difficulties, every year. So, in the nearly 60 years since it was founded, there have been hundreds of occasions when the vessels of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard have sailed to the rescue. And instead of wet or tragic ends to many boating expeditions, the Coast Guard has ensured, time and time again, that the “safety of lives at sea” was protected.

Behind every one of these rescues was the organisation that kept the effort going. “Deeds, Not Words” is the story of the events, the people, the vessels, the dangers and the dramas that make up the proud history of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard.

As you read this book, please keep in mind all the unmentioned others who have contributed an essential service to Auckland and its boaties. Without the Coast Guard, Auckland’s reputation as “The City of Sails,” would have been much more expensively earned.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Catherine Tizard".

Dame Catherine Tizard GCMG, DBE  
Governor-General of New Zealand

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**ABBREVIATIONS USED**

NZCG	The New Zealand Coastguard
NZVCG	The New Zealand Volunteer Coast Guard Service
AVCG or Service	The Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service
RNZCGF or Federation	The Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation
RNZNVR	The Royal New Zealand Naval Volunteer Reserve
ASLSA or 'Surf'	Auckland Surf Life Saving Association
AMRC or MRC	The Auckland Marine Rescue Centre
RNLI	The Royal National Lifeboat Institution
SLBI	The Sumner Lifeboat Institution
RIB	Rigid Inflatable Boat

## Preface

New Zealand has one of the world's most extensive coastlines relative to its land area and it also possesses many large inland lakes which provide opportunities for pleasure boating. Largely as a consequence, but no doubt also on account of the maritime heritage of many of its principal peoples, particularly Maori, British and Dutch, it has, per head of population, one of the largest numbers of pleasure craft in the world.

Search and Rescue (SAR) services for pleasure boating have developed differently in various parts of the world and until quite recently in New Zealand, apart from the Police input, they have been very largely achieved with public contributions of time and money. This has given SAR services here both strengths and weaknesses; so that it is interesting to compare New Zealand's 'formula' with, for example, that of the United Kingdom or of the United States. (These are made in Appendix 'H'.)

With the lack of any serious Government initiative until the 1970s in providing 'close-to-shore' SAR services through the Police it is not surprising that the New Zealand boating fraternity, with the encouragement and active support of the Police, should have taken the necessary steps to develop them, for the need is considerable. In many cases the same organisations that have grown up to provide SAR services also provide for the public's boating education in the hope of preventing the need for a call upon their rescue services. Many of these private organisations which provide the services in New Zealand have, in recent years, been grouped together under the collective name of 'Coastguard'. Although in a few cases their actual names do not incorporate the term, their activities all have a common link. Those with which this book is concerned are all members of the Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation.

The oldest of them all is the Sumner Lifeboat Institution, based at Christchurch and founded in 1898. It holds a very special place in the

story of the New Zealand Coastguard but it is far from being the largest organisation in the Federation. That distinction goes to the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service which is the second oldest, and by far the largest coastguard, in the country.

Partly because of its relatively early origin, but particularly because it is established in the country's largest city and started to develop rapidly at the time when pleasure boating also began its spectacular growth, the Auckland Coast Guard has tended to be the model for many others that have since been formed. This is not to say that their development has always closely paralleled that of the Auckland service in every case, as local needs have invariably had a significant influence, but in many cases there is a close similarity in the way in which they operate.

This may be seen as something of an accolade for the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service which today is certainly an outstandingly successful organisation and role model. The truth is that the fundamentals of its operation are almost inevitably those of any successful volunteer SAR organisation: enthusiastic and competent operators ashore and afloat, good team work, good organisation, sound finances and suitable radio and mobile equipment.

The New Zealand Coastguard has its origins in 1935 as the maritime arm of the Legion of Frontiersmen and became the New Zealand Coastguard in 1937 or 1938. It is known today as the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service and has had a most varied and interesting history.

Largely because of its age and size, but also because of its influence on the development of the Coastguard movement in New Zealand, it is appropriate that it should be the central figure with its story occupying a large portion of this book.

For the past 20 years or so it has been a stable and very soundly operated service but this was not always so. In its earlier years it had many ups and downs, the former often exciting and

the latter frequently dramatic, but somehow it always just managed to survive. In 1950 there was talk of disbandment and even in 1964, when membership had dropped as low as 22, the Service never completely disappeared. Like the Phoenix it 'rose from the ashes' to become stronger than ever and today it has about 5000 members. Most importantly, its finances are now very soundly based, a situation which it never managed to achieve in the first half of its life.

During the 1960s, SAR organisations were beginning to spring up around the country as boating activities burgeoned. By the end of the 1970s the movement had mushroomed significantly due largely to the work and influence of the Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation.

Each individual SAR unit which is an affiliate of the Federation has its own personal story of 'blood, toil, tears and sweat', and of courage too, by those who founded it and who today keep it operating as part of the New Zealand Coastguard. Some have already published their story for all to enjoy, others are about to do so and it is perhaps surprising that the Auckland Coast Guard, now nearly 60 years old, should not have done so before now.

Since 1976 when several organisations played a part in setting up the Federation, both the AVCG and the Federation have grown significantly. The book therefore continues the story of the Coastguard in New Zealand by covering the history and progress of both organisations, with a further chapter on all the other members of the Federation.

Above all, the story of the New Zealand Coastguard is about people - of interesting personalities, of dedicated enthusiasts and occasionally of heroes. It is one which has fascinated me. Because I believe many New Zealanders who are involved in search and rescue work will find it interesting too, I have researched its background and tried to present a lively, personal and interesting account of some of the events which have led to New Zealand having such an effective and vital

asset as its Coastguard.

The research has not been easy as the records are fragmented or missing entirely. Perhaps I may be allowed to take this opportunity to make a plea to anyone, particularly those holding office in both volunteer and professional organisations, to act responsibly when called upon to dispose of records. While their worth, if any, may appear to be minimal, there may later be historians to whom their value will be inestimable in compiling an account of an organisation's past. There are often museums which would be pleased to receive such documents for this purpose.

May I also suggest that it is never too soon for every affiliate unit of the Federation to start recording its history even though, in some cases, it may be many years before it amounts to a story to be told to a wider readership.

In researching Coastguard's history I have had the greatest difficulty in locating records older than about 10 years and have been grateful to those 'magpies' who like me, had stored the odd document from the past in their basements. Very little has been held in responsible repositories, but where this has been the case I must also express my thanks to those who took the trouble to deposit their records with them and to those who made them available to me.

I have taken considerable trouble to provide an accurate account of events and to make it as complete as possible. In some instances there has been conflicting evidence and in such cases I have invariably tried hard to resolve it but I could occasionally have been mistaken. I believe that there are few errors but where readers have information which I do not possess I hope they will understand my difficulties due to the lack of adequate records.

Names and dates in the appendices, particularly the earlier ones, have presented some difficulty. While I am satisfied that they are substantially correct I have to accept that, in a few cases, they may be slightly in error. Some of the photographs are not as clear as I might have wished but many are old

and, in some cases, I have had to rely upon photocopies from newspapers and magazines where the originals are no longer available.

Although many of the earlier characters died before I was able to talk to them, I was fortunate that when I started my research some 10 or more years ago, at least two of the most important figures of the earlier years were still active, and I was able to yarn with them although both were then well into their eighties. It was not always easy to keep them to the subject of my particular enquiries but their verbal wanderings did occasionally include a tantalising piece of unexpected information. This often led me on another quest or provided added colour helping to bring alive for me the real interest in my research - the personalities who have made the Coastguard of New Zealand what it is today.

The New Zealand (now Auckland) Volunteer Coast Guard Service and the Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation have been blessed, ever since the former's founding nearly 60 years ago, with hundreds, perhaps thousands, of very dedicated men and women whose contribution to the cause has been tremendous. It would have been pleasing to be able to mention them all by name but this is clearly impossible.

Those who have held major offices, have been made life and honorary members and have been the recipients of awards, have been named in Appendices A, B, C and D. In other cases I have been obliged to adopt a fairly strict policy on the use of individual names and I realise that the omission of the name of someone who has given valuable service can cause disappointment to the person concerned. I apologise to them and can only ask their understanding in the hope that they will feel that the success of the Coastguard movement, as it is today, is the greater tribute to their efforts.

In fairness, it has been reluctantly decided that those living today should only be mentioned by name in the main text of the book if they fulfil certain criteria. These criteria are:

that they have served the organisations as a president, commanding officer or as a member of the staff, or that they have served in other than a customary Coastguard activity (e.g. honorary architect, solicitor etc). They are also mentioned if they were not Coastguard members at the time reference is made to them, or if the exclusion of their mention for some particularly meritorious work on Coastguard's behalf would significantly detract from the completeness or balance of this record.



*C. B. Thompson  
Auckland  
1 July 1995*



## **SPECIAL NOTE ON THE NAME ‘COASTGUARD’ or ‘COAST GUARD’ ?**

The original Service, founded before the Second World War, was titled ‘The New Zealand Coastguard’ — note that Coastguard, in the original title, is one word only. In 1947 ‘Service’ was added to its title, and when the major reorganisation took place in 1964 the further word ‘Volunteer’ was added. The organisation then became ‘The New Zealand Volunteer Coast Guard Service’, and readers will doubtless observe that two separate words were then used.

While carrying out the research for this book I have not found any satisfactory explanation for the change from ‘Coastguard’ to ‘Coast Guard’ in 1964, and can only remark that in the United States of America two words are used for its service whereas in the United Kingdom the single word is used. We know that the Service was originally modelled on that of the United Kingdom, but by the 1960s the US Coast Guard was probably better known, and was perhaps more influential, in New Zealand.

This may have had some bearing on the changed spelling. When the Federation was formed in New Zealand in 1976 it used ‘Coast Guard’ initially but, partly because the media appears to prefer it, a change was made after the ‘Royal’ prefix was added in 1985.

The records of the Registrar of Incorporated Societies now show ‘Coastguard’ as one word. However the initial letters ‘C and ‘G’ are still used when abbreviating the ‘Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation’ (RNZCGF). For many years, at least until the end of the 1970s, Aucklanders and many others invariably referred to the service in the north as ‘The Coast Guard’.

Such was the prominence of the Auckland Service relative to any other that it was seen as being ‘The Coast Guard’. Now with the national Federation’s high profile and increased influence, the public is, more and more, seeing it as ‘The Coastguard’, with the Auckland Service being frequently referred to more specifically as ‘Auckland Coast Guard’

or ‘the AVCG’.

It is now almost universal practice to apply the term ‘Coastguard’, if unqualified by any geographical adjective, to the Federation, and to the wider grouping of coastguard organisations.

Although the Federation started its life in 1976 using two words in its title I have generally disregarded this and only use ‘Coastguard’, the single word which now appears officially in its title. I also refer to it simply as ‘the Federation’, but because the Auckland Service has not seen fit to change its title I have continued to use two words when referring to it.

Finally, I should mention that when using the term as an adjective, the single word ‘coastguard’ has been used throughout the book, regardless of the unit to which it refers.

In summary, I have recognised both the spelling and the changed public understanding of ‘Coastguard’ as follows:

When referring to the original Service (before 1964) - by its full title or the single word ‘Coastguard’.

After 1964, when Volunteer was added - by its full title or ‘The Auckland Coast Guard’ or ‘The AVCG’.

When referring to the Federation (from 1976 when it was formed) — by its full title, the ‘RNZCGF’, ‘the Federation’, or ‘Coastguard’. When used as an adjective - as ‘coastguard’

## Acknowledgements

The absence of any records held by the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard relating to its activities earlier than about 1976 when the Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation was formed has made the compiling of its history very difficult. Fortunately I started the research for this book in the early 1980s, when two of the prominent early figures in the New Zealand Coastguard Service were still alive. I am particularly grateful for having then had several opportunities for a yarn with the late Captain John Eastmure who lent me useful material, some of which is now held by the Auckland Museum Library. I also have very pleasant recollections of the hours I spent with the late Bart Middlebrook who was always ready to help me.

I was fortunate too, in that there are still several pre-war or early 1940s Coastguard members alive who have been most generous in giving their time to answering my queries to the extent that their memories (and occasionally newspaper cuttings and photographs), would allow. Ken Kane, Roy Everson, Doug Hazard, Trevor Brown, Max Rolfe and Bob Wilson provided valuable information or photographs of the early days.

Unfortunately, until one has a reasonably clear understanding of a subject, it is difficult to know what questions to ask and in the early days of my research I failed to ask some of the more searching and penetrating questions that have since been shown to be necessary.

In many cases, after a good deal of searching, I have been very fortunate in finding several descendants of some of the prominent figures in Coastguard's early history. Without exception they have been most helpful with photographs, scrapbooks and other details. They are, sons or daughters, Graham and John Eastmure, Gary Daverne, Ron Attwell, Peter Holloway, Captain Alec Wood (Hobart), Captain Ian Bradley, Lesley Bradley - Vine, Mathew Calder, and grandsons, Lester and Peter Calder.

As the reader will learn in due course, for

many of its earlier years Coastguard went through several cycles of prominence and almost obscurity. One of the former occurred about 1955 and over the next five years or so a number of very enthusiastic young men (no record of any women) served in Coastguard. There are several ex-officers and cadets from this era, some of them still associated with marine activities in Auckland and many of whom have retained a strong affection for the old Service. A group of them staged a reunion a few years ago when they enjoyed an evening yarn about old times - no doubt with some embellishment! Many of them have been most patient and helpful' during the course of my enquiries and I therefore thank most warmly Len Pike, Vince Martin, Clive Dadson (and Myrna), David Leese, Ron McPherson, Harry O'Rorke, Warwick Faulconbridge, Barry Cleale, Iain McGibbon, Bob Vela, Eric Duthie and Garry Swift. Without their help the record of the mid-1950s and early 1960s would have been very incomplete.

Most of my research and illustrations has come from private collections and recollections but some of Coastguard's history is contained in newspaper and magazine articles, official records, and correspondence. I wish to thank the following institutions for ready access to their material and for the assistance of their staff: Official Secretary, Government House, Wellington; General Assembly Library, Wellington; National Archives of New Zealand (Auckland and Wellington); Alexander Turnbull Library and the National Library; New Zealand Herald and its Photographic Department (Joanne Buchanan); News Media Ltd. and its Illustrations Dept. (Cynthia Shaw) [It holds the copyright for much of the Auckland Star material]; New Zealand Women's Weekly (Louise Richardson); New Zealand's Boating World (Andrew Mitchell); New Zealand Automobile Association; National Maritime Museum Library (Robyn Mason); Auckland War Memorial Museum Library (Gordon Maitland); New Zealand Defence Department; Department of Survey

and Land Information; Auckland Public Library; Auckland City Council; Registrar of Incorporated Societies; Air New Zealand (Captain Brian Crooks — Archivist); Ports of Auckland Ltd; Roman Catholic Diocese of Auckland (Father Bruce Boland — Archivist); the Presbyterian Church; Merchant Service Guild; New Zealand Returned Servicemen's Association (Auckland Branch); Legion of Frontiersmen (Colonel D. S. Funnell QSO and Lt. A. Snodgrass); the Solent Preservation Society (Ray Gasbridge); Tower Life Ltd; Westpac Rescue Helicopter.

Because of the contribution made to the community by Coastguard, the above organisations which made photographs available did so without charging their customary reproduction fee. The following individuals, also professional photographers, kindly did so too: Harold Mason, John Lesney and Terry Pearce. Similarly, Eric Heath, a past Dominion cartoonist, generously allowed me to reproduce one of his cartoons.

Many officers, executive committee members, staff and ordinary members of the Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard Service and the Royal New Zealand Coastguard Federation, past and present, gave me information and photographs, or read parts of the typescript to check for errors. Without their help this book would probably never have seen the light of day. In many cases they are long-standing friends and colleagues with whom I served for a time. In particular I wish to thank Richard Perkins, general manager of the AVCG, Alan Haddock and Bill Skelton of the RNZCGF, for their encouragement, support and assistance with detail. I am also grateful to Barry Young and Bill Hamling who helped by reading parts of the draft and by lending photographs. Others who provided valuable help with information were: Keith Archer, Roy Chaafe, Stuart Dalton, Ted Ewbank, Len and Kay Gilbert, Michael Grace, Bert Hammer, Fred Hilditch, Dick Hillary, Trevor Kelly, Monty McHugh, David and Diana Pitham, Clive Power, Lawrence Ryan, Michael Saull, Dave Silwood,

Kevin O'Sullivan, Harvey Sheppard, John Taylor, John Terry, Ces Todd, Jane and Robyn Wordsworth. Also, thanks to the presidents and secretaries of the various Coast Guard Federation members who responded to letters requesting information on their organisations.

Several overseas organisations were helpful and their assistance was appreciated. They were: Registrar General of Shipping and Seamen (United Kingdom), Royal National Life Boat Institution (United Kingdom) (Mrs Woodroffe); Australian Volunteer Coast Guard Association (Captain M. Wilson, national public relations officer); Canadian Coast Guard (Yves Leclerc, acting regional superintendent of operations, Dartmouth, Nova Scotia); South African Department of Transport (Capt. R. J. Sanders, principal officer, Shipping Directorate, Durban.)

There are a number of individuals not connected with the above organisations whom I also wish to thank for small kindnesses, as follows: Ms Jenny Neo for research in Wellington on my behalf; R. J. McDougall and his book 'New Zealand Naval Vessels' Tim' Windsor, designer of Coastguard's first cutter; Mrs Joyce Allen (Queensland); Captain David Balderston; Captain Rex Carter; Hon. Martyn Finlay QC; Gaynor Jackson Jnr; David Johnson; Les Jones; Mac McLeod; Mrs J. Mattson; Mrs Rosemary Pijacun; Roy Vaughan; D'Arcy Whiting; Peter and Anita Weston (Sydney).

Credits for photographs are given beside them wherever their origin is known. In other cases I am unaware of their origins and can only thank those who took them or made them available. I hope that they will enjoy seeing them in print.

Thanks are also due to BP Oil New Zealand Limited who gave financial assistance with the publication.

For guidance in preparing the typescript and in final presentation of the book for publication I am particularly grateful to Gordon Ell of Bush Press. His support for Coastguard's work, and his assistance to me,

went far beyond the call of duty. Thanks also to Sarah Ell of Bush Press, for much of the editing, and to Derek Cookson, whose fine art work graces the colour pages. Lastly, but not least, I thank my daughter Kate for reading the proof with a most constructive and critical eye and my wife Diana who also proof-read some of the chapters. In particular I thank her for keeping me well supplied with cups of tea and for displaying the utmost patience whilst I neglected my household duties for so long.

BT

8 July 2015

*The President Auckland Coastguard Inc.*

*PO Box 2195, Shortland Street*

*Auckland 1140*

*Dear President Keith,*

*RE: DEED NOT WORDS ISBN 0-473-03411-5*

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*I wish to record Jasper Robertson's assistance in making this arrangement and for his work in digitalising the book's text.*

*Best wishes for the term of your office as President.*

*Yours sincerely,*

BT

## **THE BADGES OF THE NEW ZEALAND COASTGUARD SERVICE**

Mounted on this shield is the badge of the New Zealand Coastguard Service. It almost certainly originated from the design of the officers' cap badge and was designed by Captain Eastmure. It has much in common with those of the Royal and Merchant Navies. The crown is unusual and its design is probably unique, although it clearly derives its general concept from the heraldic naval crown. The Coastguard crown is a variation of it and comprises a gold King Neptune's trident in the centre, flanked on each side with the sail of a galleon having a flag at its masthead.

The centre of each sail is red, representing the Merchant Navy (the Red Ensign), the remainder of the sail being silver. Outside each sail is part of the stern of a galleon, with a lantern, in gold. The whole is surmounted on a base, with jewels, similar to that of the naval crown. One of the principal devices on the badge is the lifebuoy symbolising the life-saving role of the Service. The centre comprises a red cross, representing the ambulance work which the New Zealand Coastguard started in 1938.

A silver fouled anchor, mounted over the cross, occupies the focal point in the centre and is similar to that used by the Royal Navy in a heraldic context.

Around and outside the upper part of the lifebuoy, and under the crown, is a scroll carrying the Latin version of the Coastguard motto, *Facta non Verba*. (Deeds not words). The scroll beneath the lifebuoy carries the name of the Service which has undergone several changes over the years.

Whether the badge and scroll were used with the original tide, which omitted the word 'Service', is uncertain. The words used on the lower scroll in the illustration on the right are those of the organisation's name after 1944.

With the major Coastguard re-formation of 1964 the word 'Volunteer' was added on the scroll and replaced 'New Zealand'; the letters 'NZ' were added on the bottom part of the

lifebuoy itself. The major name change in 1967 then resulted in a further alteration to the badge, when 'Auckland' took the place of 'NZ' on the lifebuoy, and this remains the position today.

### EARLY CAP BADGES OF THE COASTGUARD

The officers' cap badge (opposite, bottom left), having some resemblance to that of the Royal Navy, is similar to the Coastguard badge described above except the red cross and the scroll do not appear on it. Its black velvet centre has a silver fouled anchor mounted on it and is encircled by a silver lifebuoy.

This device is surmounted by a gold Coastguard crown, with the whole being surrounded by a wreath of laurel leaves. Because of the difficulty in reproducing complex designs (i.e. part of a galleon's stern), in embroidery, this part of the crown on the cap badge was a compromise. Since the cap badge was probably the origin of the badge illustrated on the shield it appears that the correct detail, as intended by Captain Eastmure, has never been portrayed correctly on the badge of the Service.

The earlier artists presumably did not appreciate the origin of the symbols flanking the galleon sails. The Coastguard chief petty officers' cap badge (bottom left) has a similar black velvet centre with silver anchor surmounted by the Coastguard crown.

The leaves which surround it are like those in the cap badge of their Royal Navy counterparts. Petty officers, (centre) and all other members, wore a larger silver fouled anchor on a raised black velvet centre with a silver and gold Coastguard crown surmounting it. Instead of leaves the badge had a circular gold wire scalloped device surrounding it.



After 1964 the 'new' Auckland Volunteer Coast Guard retained many of the earlier badges.

Apart from being worn as part of the uniform of the Headquarters Division personnel between 1966 and 1968, the officers' cap badge was worn on yachting caps by the skippers of some rescue cutters and auxiliaries.

For several years a cloth version of the Service's badge was also worn on their blazers. In recent years the RNZCGF has used a blazer badge consisting of its colour-slashed logo with the white anchor, the whole being encircled with a gold rope and the words 'Royal New Zealand Coastguard'.