

Today in History

4 February



1975 First woman to swim Cook Strait

American Lynne Cox swam from the North Island to the South in 12 hours 7 minutes. She battled heavy seas and strong winds and on two occasions the Cook Strait cargo ferry *Aratika* hove to alongside the swimmer to protect her from the wind. The ferry flew the American flag as another gesture of support.

The 22.5-km crossing of Cook Strait has always been a massive challenge to long-distance swimmers because of its treacherous tides and changeable weather. Following the first unsuccessful attempts by R.G. Webster and Lily Copplestone in 1929, several other people tried but failed to conquer the strait. The first successful crossing was made by Barrie Devenport on 20 November 1962. The first non-stop double crossing was made by Philip Rush on 13 March 1984. The current record is held by Casey Glover, who swam the strait from north to south on 13 April 2008 in 4 hours 37 minutes. The youngest conqueror of Cook Strait is Aditya Raut, who was aged 11 when he performed the feat on 20 February 2005.

Image: Lynne Cox (Te Ara)

External links

[Open water swimming \(Te Ara\)](#) [First woman to cross Cook Strait \(Te Ara\)](#)



1985 USS *Buchanan* refused entry to NZ

The New Zealand Labour government refused the USS *Buchanan* entry on the grounds that the United States would neither confirm nor deny that the warship had nuclear capability. David Lange's government, elected in July 1984, had made clear its intention to pursue policies that would establish New Zealand as a nuclear-free country. This was a popular stand, and by the end of the year nearly 40 towns and boroughs had declared themselves nuclear-free. Labour announced its decision to ban ships that were either nuclear-powered or -armed. The US maintained its position and a stalemate was reached.

The US decided to test the new government's resolve. In late 1984 it requested a visit by the guided missile destroyer USS *Buchanan*. The *Buchanan* was an older ship, and the Americans hoped that the likelihood it was not nuclear-armed would allow it to slip under the political radar. 'Near-uncertainty was not now enough for us,' Lange recalled. 'Whatever the truth of its armaments, its arrival in New Zealand would be seen as a surrender by the government.' He hoped that the Americans would offer to send something less ambiguous, but it was the *Buchanan* or nothing.

On 4 February 1985 the government said no. Within days Washington severed visible intelligence and military ties with New Zealand and downgraded political and diplomatic exchanges. US Secretary of State George Schultz confirmed that the United States would no longer maintain its security guarantee to New Zealand, although the ANZUS treaty structure remained in place.

Image: USS *Buchanan* anti-nuclear cartoon

Internal links

[Nuclear-free legislation - nuclear-free New Zealand](#)

Timeline See

Month Calendar

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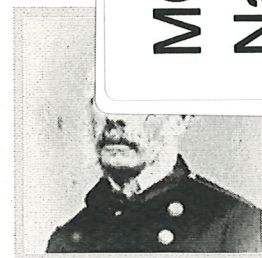
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Duncan Cameron

The historian James Belch believed Cameron was not only the best European commander to serve in New Zealand but 'among the best of Victorian generals'.

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This Week in History



18 July 1855 NZ's first postage stamps go on sale



19 July 1982 Privy Council rules on Samoan citizenship



20 July 1965 Riots rock Mt Eden prison



21 July 1865 Capture of Weraoara pa



22 July 1987 Lotto goes on sale for first time



23 July 1952 Yvette Williams leaps for gold at Helsinki



24 July 2000 New Zealand soldier killed in Timor-Leste

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