



NAVY NEWS

JUNE 2019

Viper venom

HMS Defender fires a Sea Viper as the Type 45 destroyer takes part in the multinational missile defence exercise, Formidable Shield. (See Pages 2-3)

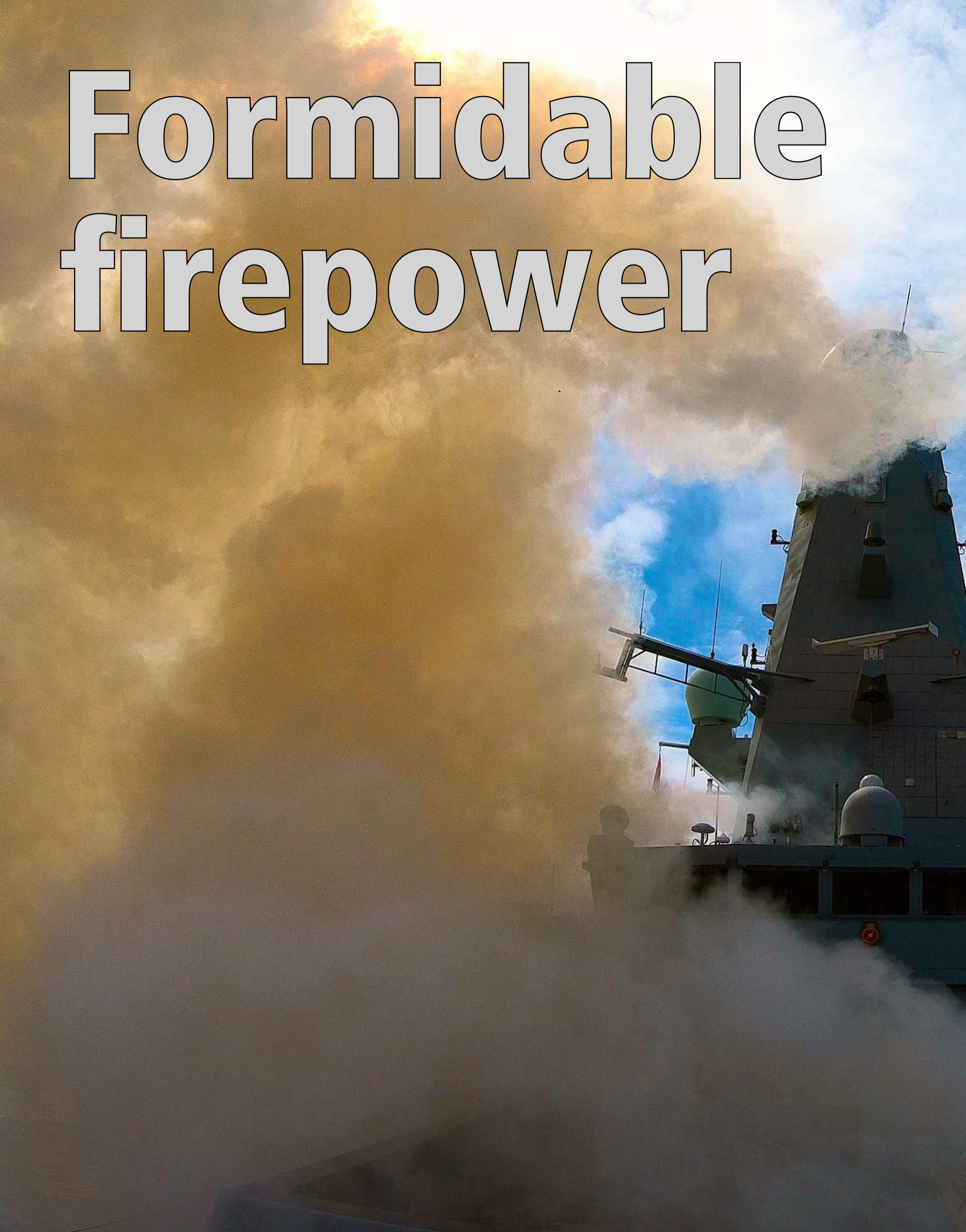
Picture: LPhot Pepe Hogan

INSIDE: DUNCAN'S HECTIC TASKING

ROYAL MARINES LOOK TO FUTURE



Formidable firepower



A CLOUD of smoke engulfs HMS Defender as she tests her main weapons system.

The Type 45 destroyer launched a Sea Viper missile as part of Exercise Formidable Shield, off the coast of Scotland.

Travelling at four times the speed of sound, the 450kg Aster 30 missile was launched from the Portsmouth ship before obliterating a Firejet drone target designed to simulate a projectile attack on Defender.

The drone was 11ft in length, can fly between 20ft and 35,000ft, and can reach speeds of 530mph.

This is the first time Defender has taken on that particular target – one that is more challenging as it flies faster and lower than others before it.

Senior Warfare Officer Lieutenant Commander Daniel Lee said: "Being able to be part of Defender's regeneration, culminating in the first In-Service firing against a fast-moving, low-level target has been a rewarding experience."

"Proving the effectiveness of the Sea Viper system against a more challenging target reassures us in the ability of Defender to deliver on operations as an Area Air Defence Destroyer."

Sea Viper is the combination of the Sampson radar system — the distinctive spinning spiked ball on top of a Type 45 destroyer's main mast — and the Aster missile system in a silo on the foremast.

The system tracks aircraft and other objects across thousands of miles of airspace, identifies threats, and destroys them when necessary.

These were all put to the test during Formidable Shield with almost every nation involved firing

missiles throughout the ten-day exercise.

A number of national firsts were recorded, including the first engagement of a supersonic target by an Aster 15 air defence missile fired from the French frigate Bretagne and the Royal Canadian Navy successfully engaging a supersonic target with an Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile.

Equipped with a Wildcat helicopter from Yeovilton-based 815 Naval Air Squadron, state-of-the-art Sampson radar and the Sea Viper missile system, Defender was ready to work alongside nine other countries at the Hebrides Range in Scotland.

Led by the US Navy's Sixth Fleet from STRIKEFORNATO CTF 64 in Naples, Italy, the exercise was the largest of its type with 13 ships, more than ten aircraft and more than 3,300 personnel taking part.

Lieutenant Commander Ben Shirley, HMS Defender's Weapon Engineer Officer, said: "Maintaining our relationships and working with other nations is vital to the defence of our coastline."

"Operating with NATO, with a number of other nations, has given us a fantastic opportunity to witness other nations' missile defence systems."

"It has also given us the ability to better understand how well our own systems perform in a variety of conditions against a variety of targets."

Joining Defender for the exercise were ships from Canada, Denmark, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Spain, and the United States.

They participated in more than a dozen successful live-fire and simulated engagements against

subsonic, supersonic, and ballistic targets.

"Formidable Shield allowed us to train together as a multinational force to provide capable, credible deterrence against aggression," said US Navy Capt. Shanti Sethi, commodore of Combined Task Group – Integrated Air and Missile Defense (CTG-IAMD).

"There is no substitute for actually operating together to integrate our defences against real targets in the air and space."

Guided missile destroyer USS Carney conducted simultaneous defensive scenarios by firing a Standard Missile (SM)-2 while tracking targets.

The USS Roosevelt conducted a SM-3 firing with a simulated ballistic missile target while concurrently engaging Hebrides Range-launched Firejets with SM-2 missiles.

US Air Force F-16 Fighting Falcons from the 480th Fighter Squadron in Spangdahlem, Germany, were designated as "opposition forces" and fired supersonic AQM-37D aerial targets during several exercise scenarios.



KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

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Pictures: LPhoto Pepe Hogan, FRPU North



Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Sutherland	HMS Magpie
HMS Northumberland	RFA Tideforce
HMS St Albans	RFA Tidesurge
HMS Forth	814 NAS
HMS Trent	846 NAS
HMS Tracker	



On patrol somewhere beneath the Seven Seas is one Vanguard-class submarine and an undisclosed Trafalgar or Astute-class boat

FLEET FOCUS
Protecting our nation's interests

FIFTY-one years ago this month, the Royal Navy undertook the burden of performing the nation's ultimate mission: nuclear deterrent patrols.

It was another 12 months before round-the-clock patrols began – today Operation Relentless, or the **Continuous At Sea Deterrence** – occasion for a series of events half a century later, keystoned by a service of recognition attended by the Duke of Cambridge and 2,000 serving and ex-deeps, plus family members (see page 9).

Once upon a time, submariners were viewed as no better as pirates – a tag they turned on its head by flying the Jolly Roger to celebrate success in battle... and now celebrated with an exhibition in Portsmouth (see page 32).

HMS Defender provided fire, fury and (most importantly) accuracy to NATO's missile defence exercise Formidable Shield 2019 off the Hebrides with a Sea Viper 'kill' (see pages 1-3).

And her sister **Duncan** has been exceptionally busy in the Mediterranean region on national and NATO duties (see pages 19-21).

Also on NATO duties are around 70 RN/RM personnel at the **Allied Command Transformation Headquarters**. We focus on life in Norfolk, Virginia, in the latest of our series on the alliance's 70th anniversary (see pages 14-15).

Frigate **HMS Northumberland** became the latest RN warship to keep an eye on the Russian bear, in the form of Udaloy-class destroyer Severomorsk passing the UK (see opposite).

211 Wildcat Flight are fully prepared for the 'war on drugs' after a fortnight's training with the US Coast Guard in Florida before they join **RFA Mounts Bay** (see page 6).

It's been a busy month for **1 Assault Group RM** who've been looking to the past (comparing amphibious operations then and now in the run-up to D-Day 75 – see page 13), present (gunnery training in southwest Wales – see page 17) and the future (hosting an innovation day – see page 6). They also found time to dispatch a training team to Kenya to teach board-and-search techniques to local authorities (see page 5).

If you think taking a dip in Gareloch is cold, then try ice diving in Canada. **Northern Diving Group** did as they joined comrades from the host nation and USA to observe the art of plunging into near-freezing waters... underneath a sheet of ice (see page 7).

The waters were slightly warmer for **HMS Ramsey**, dealing with WW1/WW2 munitions dumped in the Baltic (also page 7), and considerably warmer for the **Gulf-based minehunters** taking part in an Anglo-Franco-American exercise, Artemis Trident (page 7 again).

Meanwhile in Dartmouth, cadets were given a possible glimpse of the future of minehunting when unmanned trials boat **Apollo** sailed up the river to demonstrate the potential of autonomous vehicles (see page 6).

Some of the smallest vessels on the RN's books flexed their collective muscles in the Solent with the annual **1st Patrol Boat Squadron Exercise** involving almost every P2000 (see page 11).

And at the other end of the size scale... Some 140,000 tonnes of naval might gathered together for the first time for combined training. Not our two new carriers, but tankers **RFA Tideforce** and **Tidesurge**, newly-refitted one-stop supply ship **RFA Fort Victoria** and aviation training/medical ship **RFA Argus**, together off Plymouth (see page 10).

After several years south of the Equator, **HMS Protector** came home to Plymouth (then sailed almost immediately for a summer refit in Middlesbrough – see page 14).

Ahead of Armed Forces Day on June 29, there's a day dedicated to the work of Reservists (cunningly called '**Reserves Day**', June 26). We showcase some of the people Churchill called 'twice a citizen' on page 18.

And finally, it was a battle royale between Royal Marines and their USMC counterparts in a sort of marine Olympics. Who won **Virginia Gauntlet II**? Turn to pages 36-37 to find out...

Fitting tribute

Preparing to honour heroes of D-Day

VIEW BRIDGE from the BRIDGE

AT 0400 on June 5 1944, General Eisenhower, Supreme Commander Allied Expeditionary Forces Europe, made the "final and irrevocable" decision to land the forces under his command in Normandy on June 6, now known to all of us as D-Day.

So began Operation Neptune, the codename for the assault phase of Operation Overlord which would ultimately lead to the liberation of North-West Europe.

The naval component of Operation Neptune, under the command of the Allied Naval Commander Expeditionary Force, Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay, comprised an incredible maritime force totalling 1,212 Allied warships, 4,125 amphibious craft, 735 ancillary craft and 864 merchant ships, as well as 200 naval aircraft.

To this naval force fell the task of carrying the Allied landing forces across the channel to assault the five Normandy beach sectors that stretched the length of the Seine Bay.

To focus on the beach landings alone though would underplay the complexity of the task that faced Ramsay's fleet.

Minesweepers forging a path ahead of the main assault force; mighty battleships bringing their 15in guns to bear to bombard enemy shore batteries; scores of warships screening the main assault force on all sides from submarine, shipborne or air attack.

All of these elements and many more besides were vital to support the armada of specialist amphibious shipping – and plenty of non-specialist craft too – that delivered the unprecedented force of men, vehicles and stores from our shores to those French beaches.

In spite of marginal conditions, by midnight on June 6-7, 132,815 men had been landed from the sea to secure a defensible beach head spanning all five sectors; their foothold reaching several miles in land.

With Allied sea power securing unfettered access to the English Channel, many more troops would follow in the coming days and by the time a month had passed, more than one million men had made the crossing

to France.

Sustained by a logistics chain that stretched back across that same narrow stretch of sea, the Allied forces began their fight towards victory in Europe.

Mounting an operation on the scale of Neptune drew on every port, harbour and inlet from Cornwall to Kent.

As for the initial assault force, while our American allies destined for Utah and Omaha beaches mounted their initial assault forces in Dorset and Devon, it was in the waters around the Solent that the majority of British and Canadian assault convoys destined for Juno, Gold and Sword beaches on that fateful day were loaded and assembled.

And with that in mind, there is surely no more fitting a venue than Portsmouth for world leaders and veterans alike to gather on June 5, 75 years after the Allied invasion force departed these shores, to reflect on the enormity of Operation Neptune and to give thanks for the incredible bravery, determination and sacrifice of all those who took part in the biggest naval and amphibious operation ever mounted in history.



● Canadian troops land at Juno Beach on D-Day

Frigate switchcraft

Type 23 swaps anti-submarine warfare for escorting duty



● Type 23 frigate HMS Northumberland (foreground) escorts Russian Navy destroyer Severomorsk through the English Channel
Picture: Lt Cdr Mike Howe

ROYAL Navy warship HMS Northumberland escorted a Russian destroyer through the English Channel. The Devonport-based Type 23 frigate was activated to meet the Severomorsk, a Udaloy-class guided missile destroyer. The Russian ship passed through the English Channel on the way back to her home port of Severomorsk, in Northern Russia, after operations in the Mediterranean. HMS Northumberland is one of the Royal Navy's ships kept at high readiness to protect the integrity of UK waters. Before shadowing the Russian vessel, the ship had been honing her submarine-hunting skills in the waters off the UK. Commander Ally Pollard, HMS Northumberland's Commanding Officer, praised her ship's company for their efforts over the past few days.



She said: "This has been a particularly intense period for HMS Northumberland. "It is credit to the team on board that they have been able to switch from the demands of anti-submarine warfare to conduct escorting duties through home waters with such ease. "This is normal business for the Royal Navy, being prepared at all times to respond to any foreign warships in the UK's area of interest." As a high-readiness unit, HMS Northumberland may be called upon at any time to help prevent arms trafficking, people smuggling, conduct counter-terrorism operations, maritime search and rescue, or escort duties. She is equipped with a Merlin helicopter of Culdrose-based 814 Naval Air Squadron, state-of-the-art radar and the Royal Navy's new Sea Ceptor missile system.

Marines share expertise

ROYAL Marines have been showing Kenyan security forces how to improve their ability to fight piracy, illegal fishing and drugs trafficking in the Western Indian Ocean. Specialists from 1 Assault Group Royal Marines' Board & Search School and troops from 43 Commando's landing craftsmen travelled to Mombasa, Kenya's second-largest city and one of Africa's biggest trading hubs, to deliver training and share expertise. The contingent, made up of Royal Marines and Royal Navy ranks, were part of the Tri-Service British Peace Support Team, an organisation that aims to aid United Nations and African Union Peace Support Operations.

The group sought to understand the current situation that is impacting Kenya's economy and create a coherent strategy for the future as they look to shore up security in the Indian Ocean port. That, along with the first steps of training, meant Kenyan security forces are now becoming better equipped to deal with the threats they face and have a clear plan to continue protecting their waters. The majority of Kenyan trade comes through the city of Mombasa and there is a strong belief in the country that a lack of proper policing of home waters robs the country of wealth and prosperity. Around 30 personnel from a

variety of Kenyan agencies came to train and learn how to conduct success board and search of suspicious vessels. The first part of the training consisted of classroom-based sessions on board-and-search operations at sea. Then, phase two saw coastguard, police and port authority teams work together to put into practice their new skills at sea. The training included an opening and closing ceremony attended by high-ranking dignitaries, which included a demonstration of the skills learned during the sessions. A further training package is now being arranged later this year.



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Wildcat fights with Iron Eagle

YOU can go fast in a Go-Fast but you can't go Wildcat fast...

815 NAS aviators catch up with 'drug-runners' in speedboats off Florida as they prepare to do the job for real.

211 Flight chased down US Coast Guard personnel playing the role of traffickers in waters off Jacksonville as they tried to outwit – and outrun – the British helicopter (top speed 190mph).



The Coast Guard use a 'tactical training boat' which possesses the characteristics (chiefly size, speed and manoeuvrability) of the 'go-fast' boats employed in the illegal narcotics trade to move drugs from South to North America.

The helicopter and the air and ground crew supporting it will soon join RFA Mounts Bay, the British support ship on a three-year deployment to the Caribbean.

The vessel dedicates roughly three quarters of the year to joining the international struggle against drug-running and the rest of her time on standby to respond to hurricanes devastating communities in the region.

Last year 207 Flight scored three busts, stopping drugs with street value in excess of £114m reaching their destinations.

And over the winter, with a US Coast Guard helicopter embarked, Mounts Bay has helped to stop the flow of some drugs, with traffickers ditching their cargos in the Caribbean when sighted.

The Coast Guard team at Jacksonville are regarded as the world leaders in 'airborne use of force' to stop traffickers in their tracks.

The fortnight's training for the 28 British personnel – Exercise Iron Eagle – ended with Wildcat working with a Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment Team (the legal authorities for busts in the Caribbean).

"This training in Florida is invaluable as it allows the crew to fly in theatre conditions against something similar to the boats we can expect to meet. We're now looking forward to going down range and doing the dance with the bad guys," said Lieutenant Lee Holborn, the Flight's Commander.

"Wildcats from 815 NAS are key players in the war on drugs, feared by the drugs runners – when they see us in the sky and know their time smuggling drugs is shortly to be over."

His flight will spend seven-and-a-half months aboard Mounts Bay, which has spent the past few weeks in Charleston undergoing post-winter maintenance in preparation for her third hurricane season in a row.

As well as Wildcat, a specialist team of Royal Marines and soldiers are also about to join the auxiliary as her Humanitarian and Disaster Relief Troop, able to repair basic amenities, patch up damaged buildings, clear blocked roads, provide security and reassurance... and a little muscle... to badly-hit communities in response to acts of God.



Autonomy, autonomy, they've all got autonomy...

MAKING its way up the Dart estuary past sights sailors have known for decades and centuries, is this the future of mine warfare?

When the current generation of mine countermeasures vessels – Hunt and Sandown-class ships – are eventually retired, they are more than likely to be replaced by partially-crewed or fully-automated craft.

The RN's technology trials teams have already been working with Halcyon, a 12-metre-long unmanned trials boat which can launch and recover small submersibles to find and destroy mines as part of a £117m joint project with the French to

develop a system to keep 'the man out of the minefield'.

The next step up from Halcyon is USV (Unmanned Surface Vessel) Apollo, demonstrated by defence firm Thales to the Royal Navy's leaders of tomorrow.

The company has turned part of the Royal Marines' old 539 Assault Squadron base at Turnchapel in Plymouth into a maritime technology centre for developing unmanned boats and submersibles.

Apollo is conducting trials off the Devon coast, involving trailing its minehunting sonar array – the bright yellow torpedo-esque device stored aft – through the Channel.

The trials team took a break from those tests to head up the Dart and demonstrate Apollo to cadets from Britannia Royal Naval College at Sandquay in the shadow of training ship Hindostan... previously Sandown-class minehunter HMS Cromer. She was designed in the mid-to-late-80s and was, metre for metre, the most expensive warship in the world.

Three decades later and former RN clearance diving officer John Hunnibell, who's now trials manager for Thales at Turnchapel, explained that Apollo was the "the first of a kind" of vessels "capable of detecting, classifying and disposing of mines and bombs at sea – without having

a human operator anywhere within a minefield".

Not only can Apollo be programmed to search for mines in a specific patch of water – and neutralise any explosive devices it finds in that stretch – but it is designed to avoid obstacles or other vessels operating in the same waters.

Lieutenant Commander Scott Hamer, one of the staff at BRNC, said: "The group of budding warfare officers appreciated the chance to have a look at Apollo and get a glimpse of the new technology that they will possibly work on during their time in the Royal Navy."

Picture: Courtesy of Thales

Reality for Royals?

Marines test how new tech could help on future ops

ROYAL Marines have been looking to the future at new ways in which they might be sent into battle.

Amphibious assault specialists, Plymouth-based 1 Assault Group Royal Marines (1AGRM), brought emerging civilian technologies to their RM Tamar base in Devonport Dockyard for an innovation day.

The idea was to study and think about how new tech can be brought to the battlefield.

It allowed the coxswains and operators of 1AGRM's raiding craft the opportunity to open their minds further to future developments, using augmented and virtual reality kit, as well as the chance to question how unmanned systems can help them on operations.

As those on the frontline, the Royal Marines are looking to their commandos to give direction and share ideas as to how they could operate in the future.

"This has been about exploring how we can take surface manoeuvre forward and all the different technologies that are out there," said 1AGRM's Commanding Officer, Colonel Chris Haw.

"It's not something we can specifically use today but something that has potential to be employed in the future."

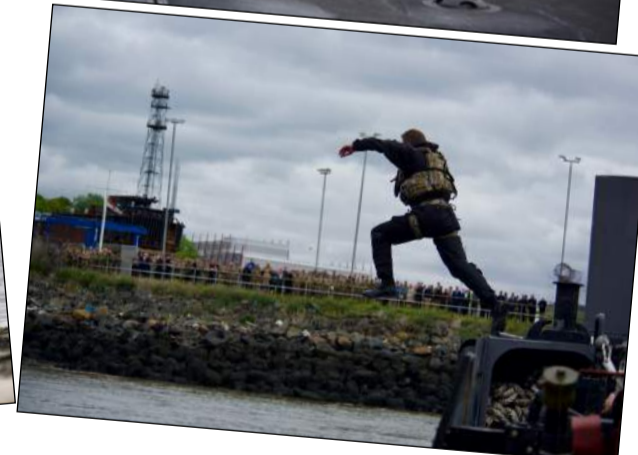
New assault ships are being considered by the naval service, which would form the backbone of a littoral strike group, a force made up of different elements of the Royal Navy fleet and the future commando force.

Those potential new developments are entwined in how 1AGRM are trying to think about how they work.

Plymouth and Birmingham University gave presentations on autonomous vehicles and augmented and virtual reality respectively, while the Royal Navy's DARE Innovation Team were also in attendance.

Augmented and virtual reality may potentially be important in 1AGRM's teaching role – the unit are specialists in training for small boat operations – and this was a chance to see how that could work.

As part of the day's demonstrations, the unit's landing craft were used to launch men in 1000bhp jet suits, while quadbikes that transform into jet skis showed possible ways in which Royal Marines can quickly get from sea to land and into the heart of combat.



They welcomed ex-Royal Marines Reservist Richard Browning – nicknamed the 'real-life Iron Man' – and his Gravity jet suits to demonstrate some of the aviation technology currently in development.

Amphibious vehicle experts, Gibbs Amphibians, put on a demo with one of their high-speed craft, the 140bhp Quadski, which can reach up to 45mph on sea or land.

The company also brought their four-wheel drive Humdinga – basically a large pick-up truck – which can reach speeds of up to 30mph in the water and 80mph on land.

"This area that 1AGRM focuses on in surface manoeuvre, no one else

in conventional defence is looking at it," said 539 Assault Squadron Officer Commanding, Major Matt Baylis.

"In terms of coming up with innovative ideas ... if you're a rifleman, there are regiments of riflemen, if you're a signaller, there are companies of signallers, but if you're a coxswain with commando skills, there's only place for you and that's here at 1AGRM.

"But that commando with his coxswain skills, he can be coming up with ideas of jet packs, quadbikes that turn into jet skis.

"It could be getting that across the digital pipeline from the frontline back to a virtual, augmented or mixed reality command centre back here at 1AGRM.

"These guys are the users and the subject matter experts and it's their advice that ultimately we as middle management can turn to make these things happen."

Col Haw added: "I think it's really important we get people thinking along the right lines but we also get the innovations ideas primarily from the guys bottom-up, so the operators, the guys that are doing the coxswaining in the difficult conditions.

"They are the guys who know how these things can be done differently.

"This is designed for people to open their minds about what's out there and how they might do things differently in the future as we develop into the future commando force."

Diving into the freezer

ROYAL Navy divers joined their Canadian and American counterparts in frozen British Columbia to observe the dangerous art of diving under ice.

A six-strong team from the Northern Diving Group based at Faslane made the 12-hour/4,400-mile trip to Victoria on Vancouver Island to learn about the skills, techniques and equipment needed to plunge into near-freezing waters – with the surface covered by a thick layer of ice.

Ice diving would be a useful additional string to divers' already-impressive bow, especially with a resurgence in operations and training in the Arctic.

After instruction in the theory of ice diving in the classroom with the Pacific wing of the Canadian Fleet Diving Unit, the teams headed out on to a frozen lake, 1,369 metres (nearly 4,500ft – or higher than Ben Nevis) above sea level.

The water itself was just above freezing – perhaps 1 or 2 degrees Celsius – while the outside air temperature averaged 15 degrees below zero.

Those conditions alone demanded special care was taken to prepare equipment – and divers, who are susceptible to non-freezing cold injuries.

But to get to the water, chunks had to be cut in ice at least one metre thick – hence the chainsaws.

Several holes were carved out, with huge blocks of ice weighing more than a tonne at a time lifted out using hoists.

To protect the divers from the elements ice shelters – tents – were built over the holes as colleagues donned thermal protection and checked equipment thoroughly.

Diving is dangerous even in the most benign of conditions

and warmest of waters. Ice diving is about as dangerous as it gets: there is little, if any, visibility once under the ice, equipment has the potential to freeze and the slightest imperfection in the dry suit such as an ill-fitting seal exposes the diver to ice-cold water swilling around... and hypothermia.

Should anything go wrong, divers have to react almost instantaneously and get to the relative comfort of the diving shelter – seconds can be the difference between life and death.

Nearly six months before the two-week training exercise, the Canadians had placed several objects on the bed of the lake before the surface froze over.

It was left to the divers to recover them using specialist underwater navigation and sonar equipment, simulating a salvage operation from a crashed aircraft.

Which they did over four days in the near-zero waters.

As the dive sites were in the middle of a lake, the daily 'commute' required the use of skidoos, and the Brits had the chance to try their hand at snowboarding and catch an ice hockey match before jetting back to the Clyde.

"Despite the challenging conditions, the exercise proved to be extremely rewarding and beneficial," said Warrant Officer 1st Class Si Crew.

"We were able to draw from the Canadians' vast amount of ice diving experience; that, plus the information we gained from observing, will make a significant contribution towards the Royal Navy's continued development of extreme cold weather diving and any future ice diving capability requirement."

The Faslane divers intend to return to Canada for the next ice exercise in two years' time.



Glasgow begins to take shape

THIS is the first of the Navy's next-generation frigates, gradually taking shape in a huge shed on the Clyde.

This is HMS Glasgow, the lead ship in the new City-class, successor to the workhorse of today's Fleet, the Duke-class Type 23 frigates.

Eight of these Type 26 ships will replace the 'souped-up' submarine-hunting variant of the 23s (those equipped with Sonar 2187 – the towed array streamed from the quarterdeck) from the middle of next decade. (The five general purpose 23s, such as HMS Montrose, will be superseded by the Type 31e frigate which is still at the design stage.)

Work has been under way on the £1.2bn warship since mid-July 2017 at BAE Systems' yard in Govan. She'll comprise more than 60 blocks in her finished form, with all but half a dozen of those giant segments in place by the end of next year.

The size of the vessel and the Govan shed means the ship will be pieced together in two huge sections: first the forward part of the frigate, followed by the stern.

Once the two parts are joined on the slipway outside the shed, the main mast and bridge section will be lifted into place and the mostly-complete frigate will be taken downstream for fitting out at BAE's yard on the north bank of the Clyde at Scotstoun.

All of which is a couple of years off. For now, Vice Admiral Chris Gardner wanted to see how far Glasgow had progressed in his new role as Chief of Materiel (Ships) at the Defence Equipment and Support organisation – the arm of the MOD which oversees new projects and programmes and provides engineering and technical support to existing military kit.

"You can now stand inside a Type 26 as the zones come together and get a real sense of HMS Glasgow as she takes shape," he said.

Three ships have been ordered from BAE: Glasgow, Cardiff and Belfast, while the remaining five vessels in the class have been named: Birmingham, Sheffield, Newcastle, Edinburgh and finally London.

The admiral also dropped in on 'mega Medway' – No.2 of five new RN patrol ships – which is about to sail from Scotstoun on her second period of trials; all five vessels have been built in Glasgow, four are in the water and one, HMS Forth, is in Royal Navy hands.

Baltic waters are safer thanks to HMS Ramsey

NINE bombs, torpedoes and warheads from the 20th Century's conflicts cannot harm Baltic fishermen and seafarers thanks to HMS Ramsey and her NATO allies.

The Faslane-based minehunter has completed a fortnight looking for discarded, dumped and unexploded munitions off the coast of Lithuania – waters which were heavily mined in both world wars.

Ramsey is one of seven ships assigned to NATO's Mine Countermeasures Group 1, a force which patrols the waters of northern Europe all year round, practising dealing with the latest mine threats and occasionally switching to concerted historic missions.

Exercise Open Spirit is an annual 'fixture' for the task group, focused on making the waters off Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia safe. This year the exercise concentrated its efforts off Klaipeda, Lithuania's principal port. Mines were used extensively to block the Baltic in both world wars and bombers returning from unsuccessful missions also dumped their payloads at sea.

Having joined the NATO group in Sweden last month and paid a visit to Klaipeda, Ramsey sailed for two weeks of round-the-clock minehunting, with her 45-strong crew working six-hour watches to ensure not a minute was lost searching for unexploded munitions.

"Hunting for live ordnance is what we trained for and Exercise Open Spirit has been a great opportunity to conduct mine warfare in a live environment," said HMS Ramsey's youngest sailor, mine warfare specialist Able Seaman Robyn 'Bob' Lockwood, 20.

Ramsey's Navigating Officer, Lieutenant Henry Kilby, 24, added "Open Spirit was a fantastic opportunity for the Royal Navy to work closely with our NATO allies and keep maritime trade routes open."

Nine pieces of historic ordnance were located by the force over the two weeks of Open Spirit – and neutralised.

Minehunters complete Anglo-French-US workout

ROYAL Navy minehunters helped 'clear' more than 70 miles of shipping lanes in the Gulf as they worked out with French and US counterparts.

More than 700 sailors, divers and aircrew and ten ships flexed their collective muscles in the central Gulf for Artemis Trident, a test of the three allied nations to keep shipping moving should anyone try to mine these busy waters which are so vital for world trade.

The three navies split their forces into three task groups, each taking charge of one. Under Royal Navy control for the duration of Artemis Trident were mother ship RFA Cardigan Bay and HMS Ledbury, plus a US Navy minehunting team and the French ship L'Aigle.

The other RN participant in the exercise, HMS Shoreham, came under French command as a Marine Nationale battlestaff set up shop aboard

USS Lewis B Puller, which performs a role similar to Cardigan Bay – but is also home to minehunting helicopters.

They were set the task of clearing paths for a humanitarian aid task force to reach a disaster zone through mined waters – and also potentially-mined harbours.

For good measure, exercise directors threw in the threats of attacks on the three task forces by aircraft and shipping, and tested Royal Marines in the art of fighting their way through a ship – Cardigan Bay.

Ledbury and L'Aigle (Eagle) also made use of Cardigan Bay by 'rafting up' – treating her starboard side as a jetty or quayside to come alongside to take on supplies such as fuel, water, spare parts and ammunition.

They were both attached to Cardigan Bay as the auxiliary's flight deck hosted a huge MH-53E

helicopter. Fully loaded, the Sea Dragon is more than twice as heavy as a Fleet Air Arm Merlin and is used to drag minesweeping gear through the water or carry up to 30 troops into battle.

"There are many similarities between all three mine countermeasures communities – from the comradeship and professionalism onboard these small ships, to the quest to embrace emerging maritime autonomous technology," explained Commander Steven White, the Royal Navy officer in charge of operations aboard Cardigan Bay.

"Mine warfare is a complex and dangerous business that many people do not understand. These exercises allow me – along with my fellow task group commanders, and commanding officers of ships and diving units – to practise and refine our skills and procedures so we are ready when called upon to do this for real."

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Submariners' sacrifice is recognised

THE Duke of Cambridge led tributes as the nation marked the sacrifices demanded of submariners and their families by the UK's longest military operation.

The honorary head of the Royal Navy's Submarine Service joined veterans and serving personnel, families – people who have built and maintained vessels – described as more complex than the Space Shuttle – and naval and political leaders past and present in Westminster Abbey for a 'service of recognition' to mark 50 years of maintaining the nation's nuclear deterrent on unseen and unheralded patrols.

Since April 1969, one British ballistic missile submarine has always been on patrol – collectively more than 350 have been completed – carrying the nation's ultimate weapon as a deterrent to any foe, maintaining the safety and security of the UK and its allies.

It is a mission the Submarine Service expects to perform for another half century with the UK committed to replacing its existing flotilla of four Vanguard-class deterrent submarines – all based at HM Naval Base Clyde in Western Scotland – with four next-generation Dreadnought-class boats, the first of which is currently under construction in Barrow.

And ahead of the service, the nation's most senior sailor, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones, revealed that the fourth and final Dreadnought will carry the name HMS King George VI – the very first warship to do so.

The emphasis of the service, however – as it is throughout the 50th anniversary year – was on the human element of the UK's longest military mission as much as the submarines and the cutting-edge technology which drives them.

This was underlined by two of the people addressing the 2,000-strong congregation: Marine engineer Leading Seaman Ed Owen, *pictured above left*, who has completed two deterrent patrols aboard HMS Victorious and Vengeance, and Isobel Fraser, who has raised a family over 38 years as a naval wife – and 29 deterrent patrols by her husband Stewart.

"Being a submariner requires a large personal sacrifice," Ed explained.

"On patrol there are no phone calls, no emails and no social media – restrictions on personal freedoms which other people take for granted.

"It involves extended separation from my partner, family and friends. During the past 11 months I have spent just eight days with my girlfriend."

The strain on family life was echoed by Mrs Fraser whose husband had missed more Christmases,

birthdays, anniversaries, school sports days and parents' evenings than she could remember, "living like a one-parent family" for months at a time.

She said the end of each patrol was filled with joy and relief as she and the couple's sons Donald and Callum were reunited – and above all pride.

"The pride I felt watching you sail home – knowing you were there," she told the abbey of her husband's return. "And in our dreams and our hearts and our prayers – you were always there."

The service was conducted by the Dean of Westminster, the Very Reverend Dr John Hall, who said in his Bidding: "For the past 50 years, Royal Navy submariners have patrolled the oceans and seas of our world, sometimes for many months at a time, burdened with a force able to engender a greater destructive power than has ever been seen on earth."

"Today we thank God that this continuous at sea deterrence, part of a balancing of forces between the most powerful nations on earth, has had the effect of maintaining peace and security between the nations. We pray that the Royal Navy may never be required to deploy these terrible forces in war and that they may continue to deter their use by others."

"We give thanks for all the thousands of people who have designed, built, supported, and crewed the submarines during these past 50 years and for their families, and we continue to pray for the life and work of the Royal Navy, in particular for its submarine service."

Rear Admiral Tim Hodgson, the UK's Director of Submarine Capability, said most Britons were unaware of the huge civilian 'army' behind each deterrent patrol: 30,000 men and women from civil servants through shipwrights, electricians, welders, computer technicians and scientists "ready to answer the call of our country should our most desperate hour come."

The Duke of Cambridge – Honorary Commodore of the Submarine Service – read a passage from the Bible underlining the importance of peacekeeping before joining guests at a reception, chatting with families and thanking crew of all eras for efforts which are otherwise acknowledged only by special pin badges with which deterrent patrol submariners are decorated.

Pictures: LPhoto Paul Halliwell



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Let's RASzle dazzle 'em



NEARLY 140,000 tonnes of Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships combined for replenishment at sea (RAS) training off the south coast of the UK.

The rare sight was part of RFA Tideforce's sea trials and saw the hulking tanker work closely – very closely, in fact – alongside her fellow RFA ships, Tidesurge, Fort Victoria and Argus.

Tideforce – the fourth and final of the Royal Navy's super-tankers designed to support Britain's two new aircraft carriers – was the first of the Tide class to refuel one of her sister ships while underway.

It was an impressive sight, pictured, as Tideforce manoeuvred close to Tidesurge, running her rig to her sister ship to complete

the first 'Tide to Tide' RAS, while Fort Victoria tracked closely behind.

Tideforce also received Fort Victoria's stern rig over her bow, another Tide-class milestone.

Earlier, casualty/aviation support ship, Argus, which recently completed her Basic Operational Sea Training, also joined Tideforce to complete her RAS hat-trick.

Captain Sam Shattock, Tideforce's Commanding Officer, said: "Replenishment at sea (RAS) is the core function of an RFA tanker and it has been highly rewarding to demonstrate that function in RFA Tideforce through her RAS trials.

"The intense replenishment at sea trial period included a number of firsts. The first

solid stores RAS reception by a Tide-class tanker and the first Tide-to-Tide RAS using two seven-inch hoses at the same time.

"Tideforce is making good progress towards acceptance into service and will support the fleet for years to come."

As part of Tideforce's progression into full operation, she is required to prove her primary capability, which is to replenish carrier task groups.

After an extensive refit, Fort Victoria was also required to test her new carrier support stores rig, as she too prepares to keep the UK's new carriers supplied.

Tideforce now continues her steps towards full operational status before Operational

Sea Training. Meanwhile, Tidesurge is supporting Flag Officer Sea Training (and will be embarking Naval air squadrons to carry out deck landing exercises).

Captain Miles Lewis of Tidesurge said: "Wow what a finale to my six months on Tidesurge to undertake replenishing with Tideforce and Fort Victoria.

"My time as CO has seen numerous firsts for the Tide class being achieved on Tidesurge, from Chinook landings to berthing trials in Loch Ewe and the successful completion of BOST. As I leave I wish the ship well on her next tasking and look forward to re-joining in September."

Picture: LPhot Paul Hall

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Punching

Orchestral manoeuvres in the Solent for 1PBS

HMS PUNCHER flies the blue and yellow Flag Gulf – we are the guide – as she leads 12 vessels for the annual 1st Patrol Boat Squadron exercise. Puncher was joined by Archer, Biter, Blazer, Charger, Example, Exploit, Explorer, Express, Pursuer, Ranger, Smiter and Trumpeter for a series of manoeuvres in the choppy Solent. Five of the squadron's ships are based in HMNB Portsmouth, while the others are based around the UK.

As well as providing training for students from their affiliated universities, the P2000s support the wider Royal Navy Fleet, often taking on the role of attack craft in maritime exercises. Commanded by lieutenants with a ship's company of just five, each of the vessels can also accommodate up to 14 students.

Commanding Officer of 1PBS, Commander Milly Ingham, said: "It's a great exercise because, in the future, the Commanding Officers of these ships will go on to command again. Basic skills such as manoeuvring will be really important."

"One of my Commanding Officers is 23 and one is 24. Where else in industry would you give such a huge responsibility to such a young person?"

The ships sailed out of Portsmouth Harbour to practice a number of complicated sequences – at speed and in close proximity – testing the navigating skills of the commanding officers.

Lieutenant Samuel Stallard, CO of HMS Puncher, said: "It's rare that this sort of thing happens anymore, sailing 13 ships and doing all sorts of manoeuvres."

"The chance to have a go at doing it, to be in charge and be the lead ship is a good feeling."

The small ships also welcomed the Commanding Officer of one of the largest as Captain Steve Moorhouse, CO of HMS Prince of Wales, joined the crew of HMS Archer, which is affiliated to Edinburgh URNU.

The Archer-class ships were joined by a Merlin Mk2 from 814 NAS at RNAS Culdrose. Also on the Solent was the US Coast Guard tall ship Eagle, the only active square-rigger in US government service.

The sailing ship, which is assessing officer candidates on its spring training cruise, was making her way into Portsmouth for a brief visit.

The Border Force cutter Seeker and the World War 2 motor launch Medusa were also out on the Solent.

Pictures: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum, RN POTY

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*There is a new test used for fuel consumption and CO₂ figures. The CO₂ figures shown, however, are based on the outgoing test cycle and will be used to calculate vehicle tax on first registration.



Taking a dip

D-Day vehicles put through their paces 77 years after first beach trials at Royal Marines base



• Modern Royal Marines uniform (left) and a US uniform from D-Day (right)



• Modern Royal Marines Viking vehicle (left) and an old Royal Marines DUKW vehicle (right)



• Royal Marine veteran Clifford Coates chats to 1AGRM Regimental Sergeant Major WO1 Lee Drinkwater about his experience during D-Day
Pictures: LPhot Paul Hall

WATER laps over the bonnet of a Willys MB jeep, seeping through all the gaps of the vehicle's bodywork.

As it continues to descend, cold water rushes into the cab soaking the driver and passenger.

Fortunately, they are dressed in dry suits and are able to quickly exit the water housed in a dip tank at Royal Marines Instow.

This would not have been the case for the original passengers of the 75-year-old jeep who would have been driving it onto the beaches of Normandy.

They would have faced murky, salt water, wet, slippery sand and the threat of bombs and gunfire.

In the lead up to the anniversary of D-Day, commandos from 11 Amphibious Trials and Training Squadron put the Second World War vehicle through its paces, testing it against its modern-day equivalents.

The dip tank at the north Devon base, an outstation of 1 Assault

Group Royal Marines (1AGRM) simulates a landing craft and is used to see how amphibious vehicles deal with being submerged in water.

The facility was built in late 1942 as a training and testing facility for troops preparing for the invasion of Nazi-occupied Europe.

Now, it is responsible for developing new equipment to meet the needs of today's Royal Marines.

In a two-mile radius of Instow, there is easy access to sheltered and open water but also five of the seven beach types found on the planet – making it an excellent place to test and develop new kit.

Colonel Chris Haw, commanding officer of 1AGRM, said: "This base was used during the Second World War to waterproof and trial tanks and vehicles what would go on to Normandy. It was a centre for innovation then and it continues that today.

"We trial all the new equipment coming in and we teach people how to waterproof vehicles like jeeps.

"Today was about showing what we do now at Instow but also remember the courage and determination shown by all our predecessors."

D-Day veteran Clifford Coates and the private owners of World War Two vehicles were invited to Instow to meet the squadron and see the facility.

As part of the day, the D-Day jeep and one used by current marines were driven through the base's dip tank.

Mr Coates, from Biddeford, served in the Royal Marines during D-Day as a coxswain on one of the landing crafts.

The 95-year-old said: "The build up to D-Day was all about training, training, training. We trained so much that running on the beaches was like running on a normal road.

"When we set off, there were thousands of landing craft. I had never seen so many vessels in my life."

Speaking about the base at Instow, Mr Coates added: "The training at Instow was very important. How successful we were depended on the training here, it was most essential for us."

Historian Tony Koorlander agreed that Instow was an important location and remains one today.

"I have spoken to US troops who were stationed in Instow during the war and they said if it wasn't for the innovative ideas here, they would not have stood a chance in getting their equipment on the beaches at D-Day," he said.

LEARN MORE ABOUT D-DAY

For more information on D-Day and the 75th anniversary visit royalnavy.mod.uk



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Protector sight not seen for four years

FOUR years, six circumnavigations, three different commanding officers and one new (old) nickname – just a few of things that have passed since HMS Protector last saw English shores.

The Antarctic patrol ship returned to her native Plymouth after a mammoth scientific mission in the Southern Hemisphere.

Not since autumn 2015 has the Red Plum (a sobriquet she's 'borrowed' from her predecessor HMS Endurance, also painted a distinctive red and white) been in home waters, using facilities in South Africa to carry out much-needed maintenance rather than make the 10,000-mile journey back to the UK when each austral summer ended and prevented further research around the frozen continent.

Instead, she spent the austral winter off Africa – west and east coasts – using her sonar suite and small hi-tech survey launches to gather reams of data about waters poorly or infrequently mapped... data sent back to the UK Hydrographic Office so it can improve the charts used by mariners (including the RN) the world over.

The unique nature of the icebreaker's peaceful scientific/environmental work meant the

ship also called in on countries and ports rarely visited by Royal Navy vessels: Brazil, Chile, Uruguay and Argentina – where the crew were thanked for their efforts to find the missing submarine San Juan.

Working with British Antarctic Survey scientists and their American counterparts she's helped study a glacier the size of England; scientists were concerned about the possibility of a 20cm sea level rise should the Thwaites Glacier be shown to be melting in the long term.

Earlier in her extended mission, Protector sailed around the entirety of Antarctica for the first time, opening up the Ross Sea at the McMurdo and Scott bases and building relationships with a range of countries.

All this and more meant the survey vessel clocked up 157,204 miles – more than six times around the globe – since leaving Falmouth.

Her crew haven't been away as long as their ship; one third of the ship's company change places every few weeks.

"Our deployment has been awesome – we've visited New Zealand, South Africa and Argentina to name a few, and in 2016 we circumnavigated Antarctica for the first time," said Captain Matt Syrett.

Echo visits Georgia again

ROYAL Navy survey ship HMS Echo has arrived in Georgia – her second visit to the eastern European republic in five months.

The Plymouth-based research ship has sailed into the port of Batumi as she squeezes as much as possible into a three-week spell in the Black Sea.

Echo will work with the Georgian Coastguard at sea on combined exercises, building on the relationship the two established when the Royal Navy ship visited the country in December.

And on this occasion, Echo was also hoping to hold an open day for the public while alongside.

Commander Matthew Warren, HMS Echo's Commanding Officer, said: "I am delighted to return to Batumi where we have enjoyed such a warm welcome from our Georgian friends and allies.

"I look forward to working with the Georgian Coastguard once again towards our common aim of peace and stability within the Black Sea."

Prior to visiting Georgia, HMS Echo negotiated the Turkish Straits, first the Dardanelles and then the Bosphorus, focussed on making the most of a three-week period in the Black Sea.

While there, the ship worked closely with Britain's allies to reinforce freedom of navigation within the region.

That's included a visit to Constanta – Romania's oldest city – where her sailors carried out survey training with the host navy which included a demonstration of survey motor boat Sapphire's advanced capabilities. The small craft is designed to operate independently, allowing access to shallow or confined areas where the ship herself cannot operate.

Lightning to hit Yeovilton

LIGHTNING is forecast at the Fleet Air Arm's premier public showcase as the UK's new jet fighter makes its first appearance.

The F-35 Lightning will stage two flypasts – one slow, the second fast – at the RN International Air Day in Yeovilton on Saturday July 13.

Aside from occasional ceremonial appearances, such as over Rosyth, and a display at RIAT last summer, the only chance to see the fifth-generation stealth fighter has been living near RAF Marham or serving aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The jet will provide the striking power of the UK's two new aircraft carriers – and takes

a huge step towards front-line operations with them when 617 'Dambusters' Squadron – comprising RN and RAF ground and aircrew – embark on Queen Elizabeth for trials off the Eastern Seaboard of the USA.

Before then, there's a first overseas training deployment to Cyprus and the Yeovilton air show debut in front of an anticipated 40,000-strong crowd.

As well as the live jet fly-past, there will be a model of the F-35B on the ground and a chance to clamber into the replica's cockpit.

Tickets for air day are available at royalnavy.mod.uk/airday with a discount in advance (£7 off for adults, £5 off for children).

Flying the flag

ROYAL Navy personnel working at the heart of NATO are living proof of the benefits of seeking a career move to experience life in the US of A.

Twenty dark blue uniforms are among the 900 staff at Headquarters Supreme Allied Commander Transformation (yes, that's its name) at Norfolk in Virginia.

One of the two NATO strategic commands, the site is 'home' to military and civilian personnel from 34 allied and partner nations.

The RN personnel are part of the 140-strong UK military footprint in Tidewater, southern Virginia, which is the largest concentration of UK military personnel in the USA. Of the 140 Brits there, 70 are RN.

Organised around four principal functions of strategic thinking; development of capabilities; education, training and exercise; and co-operation and engagement; the headquarters is arranged into four directorates of Capability Development, Strategic Plans & Policy, Resources & Management and Joint Force Development, made up of military and civilian personnel.

With 2019 the 70th Anniversary of NATO, the HQ has completed its restructuring to ensure that it remains robust and flexible, enabled to take quick and decisive action in response to political decisions.

Earlier this year, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones visited HQ commander, General André Lanata to discuss the role of Allied Command Transformation and in particular the links between the Royal Navy's transformation programme and the goals of ACT as NATO's Warfare Development Command.

The visit also gave the First Sea Lord the opportunity to meet some of the Royal Navy personnel.

He then went on to present Long Service and Good Conduct Medals to seven NATO personnel from the Royal Navy, British Army and Royal Air Force.

Work is very much balanced with leisure time and a number of RN personnel joined colleagues at the 66th annual Norfolk NATO Festival's Parade of Nations – the only parade in the US which honours NATO.

Downtown Norfolk was transformed into a lively and colourful atmosphere where spectators watched a stunning procession of more than 100 parade units composed of local and visiting high school bands, US and International Military bands, and skilfully handcrafted floats representing the pride and culture of each of NATO's 29 member nations.

The parade also featured many local community organisations and festival partners, showcasing the close partnership and collaboration between ACT and the Hampton Roads region.

General Lanata and Kenneth Cooper Alexander, Mayor of Norfolk, alongside Scott Jackson, Chairman of the Virginia Arts Festival, and Simon Scott, Chairman of the

Norfolk NATO festival were in attendance to celebrate NATO's diverse culture, friendships, and achievements.

The festival also celebrates the supportive relationship between NATO's Allied Command Transformation and the Hampton Roads region as well as ACT's contributions to the area.

The theme of this year's festival was "A Salute to the Women of NATO".

In support of the parade, the UK fields a float using iconic British images and is well renowned for presenting a new creation each year.

In preparation for this event, several members of the UK military team working in NATO gave up some 300 hours of their own time to plan, design and execute the national contribution in the form of a representation of the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The ship became a familiar sight last year during the Westlant 2018 deployment, particularly as she regularly visited Norfolk during the course of the F-35B trials. Atop the "ship" the Queen, escorted by the Duke of Edinburgh and female representatives from each of the Services,

Following the parade, attendees continued the celebration at the International Village located in Town Point Park which featured tents from each of the NATO member nations.

Visitors had the opportunity to meet member nation representatives and interact with Allied Command Transformation staff to learn more about NATO and the specific work of ACT.

General Lanata made his way through the village, stopping at the different tents and engaging with visitors, ACT staff, and families as well as enjoying the multicultural and cheerful setting.

"We feel at home here at NATO's home in America and also in the Norfolk community," said General Lanata.

Chief Petty Officer Bernard "Bernie" Dath has been awarded the Allied Command Transformation Military Member of the Year to recognise his outstanding professional performance, leadership, self-improvement, as well as command and community involvement.

Later this year, Chief Dath will mark his 27th year in the Royal Navy and has served



for RN at NATO

at NATO Allied Command Transformation since July 2015, although he will be moving to his next assignment later this year.

"My tour here at ACT has been really interesting," said Chief Dath. "The experience of being in a multi-national environment benefits military members and civilians so much. We all learn how work can be done more effectively and how to adapt new techniques.

"Being at a headquarters that represents and reinvigorates innovation always has you thinking, how can I do my job better tomorrow than what I am doing today?"

Over his three-year tour he has experienced many proud moments and memories including working with the City of Norfolk and the Virginia Arts Festival to represent the United Kingdom during the Virginia International Tattoo.

Chief Petty Officer Donna Hughes, who has been working in HQ SACT since December 2015, has been awarded a Certificate of Commendation for her leadership, professionalism, and vigilance in an extremely demanding assignment.

As the lead administrator for high-profile Coalition Warrior Interoperability

eXploration, eXperimentation and eXamination eXercise (CWIX) and the Think-Tank for Information, Decision and Execution Superiority (TIDE Sprint), she directly contributed to the unprecedented growth of both events.

With nearly 30 years experience, CPO Hughes began her career as a member of the Women's Royal Naval Service in 1989 and was one of the first to volunteer to go to sea in March 1990, subsequently integrating into the Royal Navy in 1993.

Returning to the UK this year, she will be taking up her next post in NCHQ CNPERS, working as the Logistics Board Secretary in the RN Promotions Office, Victory Building in Portsmouth.

An assignment to Norfolk provides an ideal opportunity to balance career satisfaction and the demands of work whilst seeking adventure across the 50 states and beyond.

Although it can sometimes seem that our two great nations are divided by a common language, the Brit Community go to great lengths to educate our warm hosts of 'The Queen's English'!

In return, you have access to quality family housing in the Norfolk and Virginia Beach areas, and whilst commuting by car is necessary for all but a dedicated few, it puts you within easy reach of the many world-class beaches.

Schooling is predominantly provided to the UK families by the State through the Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS).

With a diverse community and the largest school division in Hampton Roads it continues to outperform school divisions across the nation on key academic indicators.

Research is a must for those interested to make themselves familiar with the differences between UK and US State schooling.

The cost of living is generally more than most expect, although not prohibitively so, and is sufficiently compensated through LOA.

If you are interested in a posting to HQ SACT, tell your Career Manager and update your JPA preferences; volunteers are always welcome.

Report: Lt Cdr Steven Holloway



● Pictured right, from top, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones with personnel receiving their Long Service & Good Conduct Medals and clasps; (left to right) CPO (Wtr) Bernie Dath, Wg Cdr Jon Millington, Wg Cdr Simon Twose, Lt Col David Blow, Capt David Dominy RN, CPO(CIS) Pete Spurling, CPO Donna Hughes; The UK contribution to the NATO Festival Parade of Nations: (left to right) Lt Cdr Jon Boughton, Sam Boughton, Lt Cdr Steve Holloway, Mrs Amy Durham (aka The Queen), Cdr Paul Durham (aka The Duke of Edinburgh), CPO(Wtr) Jo Higgs, Lt Col Abby Parkinson, Wg Cdr Ruth Wilson, Lt Col Terry Price; The HMS Queen Elizabeth float; PO(Wtr) Lou Syms and Lt Cdr Steve Holloway holding the International Cup for best flatbed float at the NATO Festival Parade of Nations; Downtown Virginia Beach; CPO Bernie Dath receiving his Military Member of the Year Certificate from General Andre Lanata; CPO Donna Hughes receives her HQ Supreme Allied Commander Certificate of Commendation from Admiral Manfred Nielson, the Deputy Supreme Allied Commander



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SHARP SHOOTERS



Pictures: LPhoto Barry Wheeler

ROYAL Marines gunners and coxswains have been sharpening their ability to accurately hit 'enemy' targets from their fast raiding craft in rough seas as part of Exercise Dragon Fire.

539 Assault Squadron of 1 Assault Group Royal Marines and gunners of Air Defence Troop, 30 Commando IX, have spent two weeks at the Castlemartin Ranges in Pembrokeshire, unleashing fire and fury on shoreline targets on the tactical phase of the exercises.

Using the fire support variant of the Offshore Raiding Craft (ORC), which are bristling with armaments, the marines fired on targets from the sea day and night as part of essential training.

The ORCs are powerful but small – they can reach up to 50mph and are able to carry General Purpose Machine Guns (GPMG), .50 Heavy Machine Guns (HMG) and Grenade Machine Guns (GMGs).

Understandably for their size, they are rarely stable in any waters, let alone the choppy seas around the Welsh coast, making this the ideal test for gunners and coxswains.

"You definitely need to be aware of everything that's coming in and understand how it will affect the craft that will in turn affect the gunners," said Lance Corporal Jake Fonseca, coxswain, 2 Troop 539.

"There's been quite a lot of sea state, so when we had more junior coxswains on the craft it's quite key to get a grip on them to ensure they understand their situational awareness and pre-empt any waves heading your way, especially when the gunners are getting the rounds down.

"It's very important to keep a stable firing platform. The coxswains of 539 are at a high level – most of the lads are at a pretty high level with keeping things stable."

All the weapons on board the ORCs require highly proficient operators, able to deliver accurate fire to shore from a fast-moving craft in up to sea state three.

This responsibility falls to Air Defence Troop in 30 Commando IX, who remain at high readiness to deploy with 539 Assault Squadron on operations across the globe.

This training, called the Small Craft Gunners' Course, refreshes the coxswains and gunners on how to operate together, conducting basic sea to shore firing at both day and night, static and underway.

Many of the techniques, words of command and items of equipment are unique to ORC gunnery and demand hours of training to master.

The opening two-week section of the course achieves an initial level of expertise, before the marines return for the tactical phase of the training.

This incorporates a ground combat element to test control and ability to operate with friendly forces closing the target.

"Regular and frequent refreshment of competency is paramount if we are to ensure our constant readiness for operations," said Captain Jack Denniss, Operations Officer, 539 ASRM.

Sergeant Matt Goldsworthy added: "539 can deploy up to eight boats, dropping off boats ship-to-shore or even from land-to-land, making important trips shorter."

“ You have to be capable of manoeuvring a boat that can do 40 knots, but you've got the firepower and the troops to think about too. ”



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Spotlight on unsung heroes



RESERVISTS from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines are currently supporting operations worldwide.

However, the contribution they make to UK armed forces often goes unrecognised.

As such, an annual Reserves Day was created to highlight and recognise their valuable contribution. This year the day falls on June 26.

Here we give a snapshot into the work of Naval Service reserves.

HMS HIBERNIA reservist AB Matthew Taylor lived the dream during his deployment in HMS Montrose.

He joined the ship in Talcahuano, Chile, while she was undergoing maintenance, which gave him time to get to know the crew and see some of the local sights before sailing.

Due to the short notice of his mobilisation, AB Taylor didn't have the standard pre-deployment training before joining the ship.

This training is normally used to refresh reservists as skill fade is common because of the nature of the job.

However, due to his previous courses and experiences through the Royal Naval Reserves, he was up to the same standards as the full-time crew in seamanship and weapons competency making it an easy transition into life on board ship.

During his time away on board HMS Montrose, the ship visited Easter Island, Pitcairn Island, Tahiti, New Zealand, Australia and Singapore.

AB Taylor's role on board was varied and meant he worked on routine maintenance, watch keeping on the bridge, took part in swimmer of the watch drills and other sea boat exercises.

He was involved in evolutions on the fo'c'sle of the ship meaning that at any time of the day he could be called to deal with the anchor or any other parts of the ship equipment.

For example bringing the ship into harbour in 39-degree heat in Tahiti and taking the 03:00 – 05:00 watch through the Torres Strait.

It was an extremely memorable first mobilisation for Taylor who earned his promotion to AB1 while on board.

"It had been my main goal when deployed on Montrose to be able to work hard, and get my task book signed off quickly, meaning I could receive my qualification from the Commanding Officer himself," he said.



● AB Matthew Taylor pictured on Easter Island, below, and left, receiving his promotion from Cdr Conor O'Neill, CO of HMS Montrose

P-p-perfect for Tom



MEET Reservist AB Tom Clark, from HMS Eaglet.

He is supporting the Royal Navy as a seamanship specialist on HMS Clyde.

Pictured enjoying a day off in South Georgia, he says: "This is such an awesome opportunity to do something completely different and to travel the world."

"I only left school last year and I've already done some incredible things in the Reserves."

When not maintaining sea survival equipment, driving the ship when acting as the quartermaster or under taking gangway

duties as part of the ship's protection force, Tom performs environmental tasks, such as cleaning up plastic and debris from otherwise-pristine beaches.

This allows him to get up close and personal with the unique wildlife...something eco tourists pay thousands of pounds to see.

"I've had the opportunity to go ashore and see some amazing settlements, four different types of penguins, and loads of other marine life."

"I've also been on exercises in the field with the Army, and made some amazing friends."



Tributes to veterans

TWO of the longest-serving members of the Royal Naval Reserves have been commended for their commitment to the service spanning five decades.

A special event was held at HMS President to mark the retirement of Chief Petty Officer, Evadne Gordon, after almost 42 years of service.

Evadne, from Hackney, was the longest-serving female member Naval Reserves, joining the Senior Service in 1977, and will remain a close friend of the ship's company.

Warrant Officer Tony Matthews also recently celebrated his 37th year of continuous Royal Naval Reserve

service, completing his 25th year at HMS President.

Tony was the first ever RNR Warrant Officer, and first RNR Senior Rate to receive the Queen's Volunteer Reserves Medal.

Commander Maritime Reserves, Commodore Martin Quinn, said: "This year marks WO Tony Matthews' 37th year in the RNR and 25th year at HMS President. A consummate professional, his service in the RNR has been underlined by hard work, integrity and commitment to the Naval Service. He is truly indistinguishable from his regular counterparts."

Hot stuff for RMR

MEMBERS of RMR Bristol's 118 Troop enjoyed an explosive time during Exercise Thor's Hammer on Dartmoor.

The exercise formed part of the troop's tactical recruit training phase to help prepare them for the Reserve Forces Commando Course.



KEEP UP WITH THE RESERVES

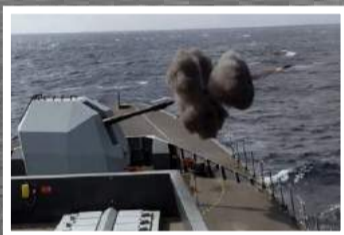
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Duncan's on target...



1 COMBINED FORCES WITH TWO US AIRCRAFT CARRIERS



2 GUNNERY FIRING SKILLS TEST



3 JOINED ITALIAN EXERCISE



4 MET UP WITH HORIZON CLASS

Destroyer shows her flexibility (and musicality) on ops

THEY call themselves the 'last and best' of the Royal Navy's Type 45 destroyers.

And while their five equally-accomplished sister ships might contest that claim, they can't deny HMS Duncan is certainly putting in the effort on her current deployment.

In only a few weeks Portsmouth-based Duncan has met up with two US carrier battle groups, put her gunnery skills to the test, supported Italian naval war games and joined forces with their French air defence cousins.

Add to that the accomplishments from the early part of their deployment – chief among them supporting French aircraft carrier FS Charles de Gaulle on counter-Daesh operations – and they have racked up some hefty achievements for only six weeks at sea.

And to round it all off, they celebrated by raising the hangar roof with the first outing of their ship's band... but more on that later.

Having already provided air defence and escort duties to the French carrier strike group, HMS Duncan moved on to join 200,000 tonnes of naval might as she worked simultaneously with two American aircraft carriers in the Mediterranean.

Duncan slipped seamlessly into the USS John C Stennis and USS Abraham Lincoln carrier battle groups, honing skills needed to work with Britain's new Queen Elizabeth-class ships. The Stennis was making her way home to Norfolk, Virginia, after operations in the Middle East while her older sister USS Abraham Lincoln was in the early stages of a deployment which will take her to the Gulf and Pacific before arriving at her new home of San Diego.

"The meeting of two of these colossal ships is a sight to behold and for Duncan to be integrated so well with the US carrier

groups can only be positive as we look into the future deployments of our own carriers," said Lieutenant Commander Duncan Abbott, the British destroyer's senior warfare officer, who joined the Stennis to observe a 'big deck' carrier in full flow.

"This is maritime force on an epic scale."

HMS Duncan's Principal Warfare Officer, Lieutenant Commander Ben Dorrington, said the Royal Navy/NATO/US Navy link-up boded well for future international and carrier operations, especially as next year HMS Queen Elizabeth is lined up to work closely with units from a variety of NATO nations.

"Interactions like this are becoming increasingly common. They enable NATO partners to hone their skills and develop procedures for future operations," he said.

"It is particularly important when we think forward to the deployment of our own carrier next year and the integration that will take place with our NATO allies."

Having demonstrated her ability to slot in with the US carrier groups, Duncan moved on to the next part of her mission – firing 66 shells down on a tiny piece of Greek soil to flex her muscles with intensive gunnery practice.

The warship tested her marksmanship with devastating accuracy, striking the rocks of Karavia, a tiny island north of Crete – from a position some ten miles to the east. Hovering a safe distance from the target, the sensors on board the Wildcat can direct and fine tune the targeting chain to provide

Duncan continuous updates on the enemy's movements. The fall of shot was guided by a specialist observer or 'spotter' in Duncan's Wildcat helicopter from the Royal Artillery's 148 Battery.

Making sure the Mk8 Mod 1 4.5in gun functioned throughout the concerted shoot was Chief Petty Officer John Davies, the weapon's senior maintainer, and his team.

The many moving parts in the gun mechanism are expected to allow the ops room team to fire up to 23 rounds a minute at targets 15 miles away.

The gun is electrically and hydraulically driven – the motors must be able to move up to 33 tonnes in weight to ensure the training of the turret and elevation of the barrel.

Despite the level of computerisation/automation in the 21st Century, a gunnery shoot remains crew-intensive with seven sailors at their posts throughout.

"This type of shoot is always one of the most exhilarating," said CPO Davies.

"As the chief maintainer I will direct the gun from below, feeding the rounds and monitoring the systems. The noise, as it shoots, is deafening – the vibrations are all around. It is fantastic to be so close to the action."

Having proved her prowess on the ranges, Duncan moved on to spend two

weeks off the coast of Italy, joining eight other countries and 57 ships, helicopters and aircraft in the Italian exercise Mare Aperto.

Duncan conducted six anti-submarine and 11 air defence exercises in seven days before the participating units divided into opposing forces to test their abilities against each other.

As one of the most capable air defence vessels within the NATO group, Duncan was tasked with providing air and surface defences as the exercise moved through the Messina Strait which divides Sicily and mainland Italy.

And with that job well done, it was time for Duncan's crew to enjoy a brief respite.

Six of Duncan's crew formed a band – cheekily nicknamed Duncan Disorderly – to entertain their fellow shipmates after weeks of hard work.

Transforming their hangar into a makeshift stage...



and on song...



TURN OVER



HMS DUNCAN



...they looked every bit a rock band. Music filled the hangar as the six musicians performed their debut gig. The band

comprises frontman ETME Joe Truscott, vocalist LS Amy Maddison, bass guitarist LS Anthony Catlin, drummer CPO Blair Templeton, saxophonist Lt Jo Peacock and (in bearded disguise) Commanding Officer Cdr Tom Trent as lead guitarist.

ETME Truscott said: "Despite having played in bands before, this was my first gig on board.

"The experience was very different, considering the audience this time was made up of peers and shipmates.

"It has been a busy time on board, as an engineer, so nights like this are really special and it's certainly something I would love to do again."

Playing songs spanning decades, the six-strong band showcased their talents in an evening of live music enjoyed by all on

board. With their ship's busy programme sure to continue, the ship's company took a well-earned break to support the band and have a sing-a-long.

The gig was one of many events held on board while others planned include barbecues, quizzes and a ship-wide Cluedo.

Lieutenant Commander Paul Caddy, HMS Duncan's second-in-command, said these events are crucial for team ethos.

"It was fantastic to be able to lay on a gig during our time away, especially after the hard efforts made by all our ship's company while on operations.

"These events are important to the maintenance of morale during deployments abroad – allowing relaxation as well as offering a chance for team building. I enjoyed every minute."

The night started off with a Caribbean-style barbecue, organised and cooked by the logistics department, which got good reviews from the ship's company.

Leading hand Maddison said: "This was a fantastic opportunity for the small cadre of Caribbean personnel currently serving in HMS Duncan, to not only showcase their fantastic culinary skills but to also share in Caribbean culture with the rest of our ship's company.

"We received great reviews so it is something we will certainly look to do again in future."

But it wasn't long before Duncan was back it again, rejoining the UK's NATO allies on patrol in the Med.

The ship's band, meanwhile, are on a temporary hiatus – not due to creative differences or primadonna personalities – but to concentrate on their relentless delivery on operations.

NOW GO ONLINE

Watch the band playing and Duncan's guns firing by following @HMSDuncan and @RoyalNavy on Twitter or Facebook.



All eyes on the skies as twitchers meet

THE Royal Naval Birdwatching Society held its annual meeting at RAF College Cranwell.

This somewhat unusual venue was selected by Lieutenant Phil Boak, currently working as a Leadership Instructor at the Officer and Aircrew Training Unit at Cranwell.

The weekend was attended by 11 personnel, who enjoyed the change from the usual south coast venue.

The society was established in 1946 dedicated to the observation, recording and study of seabirds. Today it is as much concerned with their conservation.

Plastics and chemical residues have been recorded in all oceans and across the food chain, as illustrated in *Blue Planet*.

The gathering in Lincolnshire gave the opportunity to plan research efforts on the Shetland Isles where a joint Royal Navy/RAF team will be gathering data to assess changes in UK breeding seabird populations.

The last counts were made in 1999 and this latest effort will inform future actions for conservation.

Another team will deploy to the mountains in Madeira to monitor a small nesting population of the rare Zino's Petrel.

The birds fly in from the sea to nest sites at 2,000m after midnight. Trapping with mist nets enables birds to be marked with numbered rings, weighed and measured to monitor health and nesting progress.

A further group will deploy to south-east Australia to gather data on offshore petrels, shearwaters and albatrosses.

In between making these plans the group made an excursion to some of the local sites of historical and ornithological interest along The Wash.

A total of 52 bird species were recorded at the RSPB reserves of Freiston Shore and Frampton Marsh.

Lt Boak said: "It was great to have members of the Royal Naval Birdwatching Society visit RAF College Cranwell. Not only did they get to sample the excellent wildlife and heritage, but they got to see the spiritual home of the Royal Air Force, where I have been lucky enough to work for the last 18 months on an exchange posting. Such events and occasions to promote interservice ties should be taken at every opportunity."

To find out more about the RNBWS, and ways to get involved, contact Lt Boak at philip.boak743@mod.gov.uk.



Insight into day in the life of maritime police

FROM patrolling the River Tamar and surrounding seas for anything suspicious, to escorting warships into Devonport Naval Base and suicide prevention, the working days of an Officer of the MOD Police Maritime Unit are as far from a desk job as any.

A day in the life of a Police Maritime Officer begins at 5.30 in the morning when they arrive on base, and get kitted up with protective vests, radios and for some the Heckler & Koch MP7 assault rifle, taser and pepper spray.

After this they brief before three officers then change over with the current patrol team on their triple manned Police Launch - changing periodically between the four main patrol areas; the seawall, a static in Plymouth Sound, beyond the Tamar Bridge and a relieving vessel.

The officers and patrols run 24/7, 365 days a year and are always on call for any emergencies.

The team has use of three Pacific 24 Ribs and five 15 metre Launches - that are to be replaced within the next two years. The new launches will have ballistic protection and come with all new state of the art technology such as new radar, radios and navigation plotters.

One of the main problems faced by the team on patrol are jet skiers showing off and speeding or getting too close to the many warships and vessels using the Port and Devonport Naval Base.

This can cause big problems especially if they are in the way of ships trying to manoeuvre in



Plymouth Sound.

Another unfortunate problem faced by the unit is people taking their lives in their patrol areas or around the harbour.

Escorting naval vessels into Devonport and putting up a police cordon around these vessels helps keep other boats away and allows clear navigation. On the river they are also looking for more serious problems such as criminal acts as well as information received about suspicious vessels.

"I believe we provide a good service to the Royal Navy," said Inspector Luke Halls, MOD Maritime Police Unit.

"We help as a deterrent and protection of the Base from the waters around Devonport. Our unit also deploy Officers around the country, looking after the ships in those areas, in fact we currently have two officers up in Scotland helping the maritime units based there."

Pocket rockets race for glory

STUDENTS representing six Plymouth secondary schools, competed in the Race for the Line competition at HMNB Devonport.

Hosted by the major Landing Craft Engineering facilities at Devonport, 1 Assault Group Royal Marines, gave over one of their maintenance hangers for the competitors to build their rocket-powered cars.

"This is the South West final for the National 'Race for the Line' STEM event," said Richard Newsome, Commercial Director of the Learning Partnership.

"It's a prestigious competition, involving year seven students from over 400 school across the country.

"Three teams will go forward to the National finals at the Imperial War Museum site at Duxford and compete against the other regions.

"The winning team isn't just the fastest, they are judged on their designs, artistic application on their cars and those students who have shown many STEM skills. They are supported by a whole host of activities from across the armed forces and the business world, where a lot



of companies are becoming interested in how the STEM gap in the UK is being addressed."

The competition is intended to inspire the engineers and scientists of tomorrow. Between 70 - 80,000 students are involved nationally.

The rocket cars, designed and built by them are made from foam and projected along a wire by a small rocket propellant.

The three fastest cars on the 15m track were declared the winners and progressed to the national finals at Duxford.

"Students get a chance to engage with engineers as well as get a hands-on experience by solving engineering problems,"

continued Richard.

"It's a great opportunity to practice what they're learning and look at practical engineering in a work place environment like the dockyard. Working here alongside Hovercraft and attack boats is a wonderful experience for them."

Presenting prizes and praising the level of enthusiasm, imagination and energy of the students was Devonport Flotilla's Senior Commander Engineer, Commander Mark Jones.

"It was actually quite good fun building and racing our car," said Katie Wilkinson, 12, from Sir John Hunt Community Sports College.

"I think we did pretty well, there were some faster cars. We made ours lighter and put a tail fin on it to guide it on a straighter course."

"It was scary being the first team to fire off their car," said Geronimo Connatty, 11, of Lipson Co-operative Academy.

"Our car performed as best as we could have hoped, it was a little bit of a shame that it was so windy though, we were probably a bit slower than we'd liked. I'm not especially bothered that we didn't win, it's been really cool just taking part and competing all together."

Pictures: LPhoto Paul Hall



Tri-service tour of navy's oldest and newest

A TRI-service contingent of instructors and trainee pilots, from No 3 Flying Training School based at RAF College Cranwell and RAF Barkston Heath in Lincolnshire travelled to Portsmouth to visit HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Victory.

The aim of the visit was to introduce staff and students to the Royal Navy's newest and most advanced warship, informing them about the way in which aviation is organised at sea, life on the maritime front line and also about the history and ethos that has shaped the senior service.

Once aboard, students were given a flexibility

held within HMS Queen Elizabeth's steel structure.

Personnel were shown around the flight deck which covers four acres (equivalent of four football fields) capable of carrying up to forty F-35 aircraft, as well as state-of-the-art weaponry and communications systems. HMS Queen Elizabeth also has a cinema, a games room, five gyms, a chapel and medical centre.

In sharp contrast the team visited the Royal Navy's most senior ship HMS Victory. The differences between the two vessels were incredible; superbly demonstrating how the culture and tempo of warfare has adapted

and evolved over the centuries from a relatively slow and strategically challenging art of warfare to a much faster and dynamic era of maritime history. The opportunity to view the behemoth that is HMS Queen Elizabeth from the poopdeck of HMS Victory was an opportunity not to be missed. The visit culminated with an invitation to HMS Victory's wardroom.

Sub Lieutenant Harvey Ashdown said: "Members of all three services, all equally likely to serve on HMS Queen Elizabeth were honoured to have been given this tremendous opportunity and were enthused by the exciting future for UK carrier aviation."

Feathering the engineer nest



AS part of the government's Year of Engineering 2018 campaign the Royal Navy and UKNEST organised a Naval Engineering Competition to challenge schoolchildren to design a vessel that could rescue 1,000 people from the sea.

Launched in the Palace of Westminster in April last year by the government's Year of Engineering Envoy, Stephen Metcalfe MP, the competition attracted over 200 entries from schools and youth organisations, involving around 1,200 children.

The winners of the competition were announced in December, with three prizes awarded per age category.

Eight schools and one Sea Cadet unit representing all regions of the UK were each presented with an iPad to help develop STEM activity and encourage more young people to get involved in engineering.

Two of the prizes were presented by the First Sea Lord, Adm Sir Philip Jones, at Birkenhead School.

The winners were:
5-11 age group: The Grove School, Totnes; Coaley Academy, Coaley; Overmonnow Primary School, Monmouth

11-16 age group: Budmouth College, Weymouth; Birkenhead School, Liverpool; Bell Baxter High School, Fife.

16-18 Age Group: Birkenhead School, Liverpool; Wallsend Sea Cadet Corps, Newcastle Upon Tyne; Ricards Lodge High School, London

Captain Matt Bolton RN, the RN Year of Engineering lead and also one of the judges, said: "It is fantastic to have had so many young people from across the UK involved in this new competition and to see how imaginatively they have approached a difficult engineering challenge.

"We know that the sea can be a dangerous place and by challenging young people to solve a real-world problem I hope we have helped to demonstrate the important and exciting role that naval engineers play in society.

"The competition was a huge success, established in support of the national Year of Engineering, and I congratulate the winners and all the competitors, and look forward to seeing more creative and innovative designs in the years to come."



The Year of Engineering 2018 has been a huge success for the RN; with over 7.5million people reached on social media and over 1.2million through *Navy News*, as well as over 350,000 face-to-face interactions between schoolchildren and RN STEM Ambassadors, accounting for over one third of the government's overall national target.

It is crucial that the Year of

Engineering legacy is sustained and the government has recently announced that this will be taken up by Chris Skidmore MP, the newly-appointed lead minister for engineering skills assisted by Nusrat Ghani MP.

The Royal Navy will continue to be a key strategic partner in the ongoing "Era of Engineering" campaign through outreach, generating media



● 310 James Jackson, the Garner family and Commodore Richard Lord RN (Rtd)

New home in Gib for model of Victory

A MODEL of HMS Victory was loaded onboard RFA Fort Victoria and is heading for Gibraltar.

The ship's Captain, Karl Woodfield, said that he was delighted to take the metre-long model on its voyage to Gibraltar en route passing through the Cape Trafalgar battle area and then following much of HMS Victory's original track in 1805.

The model was made by Captain Alan Garner MN (1939-2015) after his retirement from Wightlink Ferries and many years at sea.

It took over three years of painstaking dedication and photographs of the assembly are being provided with the model.

Following the death of their mother, sons Philip and Rob Garner asked the new Gibraltar Officers' Mess at Devil's Tower Camp if they would like the model.

The Mess was delighted by the offer and said the model would have pride of place, especially at Trafalgar Night.

Following the on-load the visitors had an excellent brunch and a fascinating tour of the ship.

A presentation ceremony at the Mess is planned for August.

Three Peaks challenge awaits Collingwood team of 12

TWELVE members of HMS Collingwood's Above Water Training Element are to push themselves to the limit to help seriously-ill children and their carers.

The team are planning to tackle the National Three Peaks Challenge, Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Snowdon in just 24 hours this month.

Working as a team, they will travel from HMS Collingwood in Fareham to begin their challenge by climbing Ben Nevis, 545 miles away.

The route up Ben Nevis is just 5.28 miles, but with an ascent of a gruelling 1345 metres. As soon as they descend, there is no time to rest before speeding off to Scafell Pike to climb another 978 metres.

This leg will be especially challenging for the team since it will be completed entirely in darkness, beginning at midnight.

The last leg will see them arrive at Snowdon at about 8am ready to tackle another 1,085-metre ascent. They will then descend from Snowdon by midday, just 24 hours since they began.

The idea for the challenge

came from Petty Officer Warfare Specialist (Above Water Training) Jason "Smudge" Smith.

He said: "I'd lost two stone in weight and needed something to keep me motivated to continue my fitness regime.

"I liked the idea of the Three Peaks Challenge, especially the idea of doing it within a 24-hour period.

"The real challenge though, is going to be keeping 12 people of varying fitness and experience together, especially during the night climb. Hopefully keeping the aim of the climb in mind (and lots of Haribo) will keep us focussed."

The climb was inspired by the work of The Amelia-Mae Foundation, which supports families affected by Neuroblastoma, an aggressive childhood cancer.

The team aim to raise £5,000 to enable a child suffering from Neuroblastoma and their family to visit Disneyland Paris for a break and to aid recovery.

The team have a JustGiving page and donations can be made via [justgiving.com/teams/awt3peakschallenge](https://www.justgiving.com/teams/awt3peakschallenge)



Triathlon Pete brings in cash for scouts

WARRANT Officer Pete Nash, the Maritime IX Group General Service Engineering Warrant Officer, based in HMS Collingwood, Fareham, completed the London Marathon.

As well as running the marathon as a personal challenge, WO Nash ran to raise funds for the 1st Stubbington Scout Group, raising £700 to help fund building upgrades.

WO Nash completed the 26.2 mile course in 4 hours, 5 minutes; 25 minutes ahead of his anticipated time.

In the course of completing the marathon Pete also completed the London Classics Challenge: this required him to complete the London Marathon, the Prudential Ride 100-miles cycle event and the Serpentine Swim – a 2-mile swim of the Serpentine within Hyde Park.

On completing the marathon and the challenge, WO Nash said: "Thank goodness that's over. Thanks to all who supported my efforts both financially and through positive encouragement."

His next big challenges for 2019 are the Outlaw Ironman distance triathlon in July and Ironman Wales in September.

The Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund

The only charity dedicated to supporting children whose parents serve, or have served, in the Naval Service.

Originally set up as an orphanage, we now assist children with a wide range of needs and at times of family crisis. Applications can be made at any time and those seeking assistance can contact the office directly for an application form, or download it from our website.

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RNRMCF Registered charity number: 1160182 • Patron: HRH The Duke of York, KG, GCVO, CD

In brief

■ **BOLDDOG** Lings Freestyle Motorcross Display Team will be wowing the crowds with their mid-air stunts at the HMS Sultan Summer Show 2019.

Taking place on June 15 and 16, the show will feature a main arena packed with live entertainment, a large-scale Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics area, a steam fair and a kid's zone crammed full of free activities.

Gates will open at 10am both days, with tickets available at £25 family (2 Adults & 2 Children*), Adult £10, OAP/Disabled £6, Child £5 (5-14) with under 5s free.

Discounted advance tickets* will be available for purchase both online and from local stores until Thursday June 13. For further details visit: royalnavy.mod.uk/sultan-show

■ **PERSONNEL** from across HMS Sultan met for a cake sale in support of The Leprosy Mission 'Heal Nepal'.

With the Chaplaincy adding to the fundraiser from the Church of England fund and the Chaplaincy fund, the total raised was £734.73, with UK Aid taking it to £1,469.46.

■ **FORMER RN** Chief Petty Officer Jim Watret held a bucket collection and raised £2,766.10.

Jim, who works as a fundraiser for Erskine Home for Veterans just outside Glasgow, was joined by 15 sailors from HMS Prince of Wales and marines from 43 Commando.

■ **STUDENTS** from Dartmouth Academy have been rewarded for their positive behaviour for learning with a visit to Britannia Royal Naval College.

The group of 12, who are currently in year 10 at the academy, spent a day at the college finding out about the Royal Navy, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and taking part in some of the training.

■ A **GROUP** of teenage girls from Park Community School, Havant visited HMS Sultan for some inspirational briefs from Royal Navy women.

The students were brought in to the establishment by the Girls Network.

To learn more about the Girls Network visit: thegirlsnetwork.org.uk/

■ **FOUR** members of Babcock staff based at HMS Collingwood will be enjoying some of the best views in London when they undertake a charity walk in aid of Blesma, the limbless veterans' charity.

As *Navy News* went to press, Sue Haigh, Nathan Stevenson and Mick Curtis from the Future Training Unit and Teresa Curtis from the Royal Naval Leadership Academy were walk in across the roof of the O2 Arena in London which, at its highest point, is 52 metres above the ground.

They are raising money for Blesma. Donations can be made online at www.justgiving.com/teams/O2.



● Brothers Jesse Lowe and Daniel Rome passed out, along with Karl Edwards, who is following in dad Terry's footsteps

Family affair for future leaders

ONE hundred and 18 future leaders were welcomed into the Naval family after completing their training at the spiritual home of the officer cadre.

Watched by their families and friends, the officers took to the parade ground at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth to mark the successful completion of their 29-week conversion into junior naval leaders.

Admiral Tim Fraser, Chief of Joint Operations, took the salute and inspected those on parade at BRNC's first passing-out of the year – known as Lord High Admiral's Divisions, with the senior officer representing the Duke of Edinburgh.

Among the successful cadets was Sub Lieutenant Daniel Rome from Ivybridge near Plymouth, who joined originally as a rating ten years ago – one of 19 officers on parade who'd been promoted from the ranks.

He was watched, among others, by his younger brother Seamanship Specialist Jesse Lowe who completed his basic training at HMS Raleigh just three weeks ago.

"My brother definitely played a part in inspiring me to join the Royal Navy," said Jesse. "He told me about all the opportunities the Navy offers and where he's been. I'm proud of him. We grew up together and he's someone to look up to. My passing-out-parade passed in a bit of a blur, but when we were dismissed I knew I'd achieved something."

The passing-out platoons also included five officers from four different countries who had trained alongside those destined for a career in the Royal Navy.

And just for good measure, the RN's vital support arm, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, greeted eight new officers.

Officer Cadet Karl Edwards has followed in his father's footsteps in joining the RFA. He said: "Having grown up around the RFA, I am looking forward to an exciting and diverse career at sea as a deck officer – much to my dad's disappointment seeing how he is an engineering officer."

Dad Chief Engineer Captain Terry Edwards RFA, who joined in 1978, added: "It is really an absolute pleasure to see Karl

join the RFA as a deck officer, as, given the engineering ability displayed whilst growing up, it means he won't be in the engine room breaking one of the ships!"

Congratulating the successful cadets, Captain Jol Woodard, BRNC's Commanding Officer told the officers' families they were worthy of wearing the uniform of their Service and leading young men and women as their forebears had done passing out at Dartmouth for more than 100 years.

"These young officers have met the stringent standards we expect of them," he declared. "They have been tested, stretched and assessed in a wide range of challenges in the classroom, on Dartmoor, the river, and at sea."

"They have risen to the challenge and are ready to proceed from the College to the more specialised training centres, where they will be prepared for their future roles."

"While their time in the Royal Navy may test them to their limits at times, it is a career that is wholly rewarding, exciting and respected and I wish them well for the future."

Herbert Lott award for PTIs

THE Physical Training team at HMS Collingwood were recognised for their outstanding achievements this term when they were presented with the Herbert Lott Award by the Executive Officer of the Base, Commander Mark Walker.

The award acknowledges a busy term of events and achievements by the PTIs including, among others, establishing a long-term partnership between HMS Collingwood and Portsmouth Football Club Academy. The club has renovated several pitches and created several more on spare ground. In return, they now hold their league fixtures there on Sundays.

The PTIs also organised Collingwood's first Crossfit Contest and the Eastern Region Boxing Dinner, together with personal appearances at the Tudor Lodge Nursing Home to cheer up residents.

Members of the team also created an assault course for students from Fareham's Rainbow Centre. They also visited Leesland School on Armed Forces Day to inform the children about aspects of life in the military, including leading them in light exercises.

The Herbert Lott citation read:

"The PT department has been singled out for a Herbert Lott team award in recognition of many achievements in recent months. They have on several occasions, sometimes individually but mainly as a team, promoted core ethos, been involved in charitable events and helped to build the reputation of HMS Collingwood in the wider community."

"Efficiently going above and beyond their day-to-day business the whole department has been an exemplar in demonstrating how to take on and succeed in whole ship activities."

Chief Petty Officer Physical Training (CPOPT) Nick Kent said: "The team work extremely hard promoting Physical Development whilst also supporting the local community and they are thoroughly deserving of this award."

Hot stuff for Oxford URNU

THE Oxford University Royal Navy Unit toured the hottest place in the Solar System, the Joint European Torus nuclear fusion reactor operated by the Culham Centre for Fusion Energy, United Kingdom Atomic Energy Authority in Oxfordshire.

Oxford URNU had the opportunity to explore the Culham site.

The tour was led by scientist Chris Warrick, communications manager at UKAEA. After an initial safety briefing, the group had a short lecture on the science behind fusion, the technology that makes it possible, and the major engineering challenges.

This was followed by a tour of the MAST and JET reactors as well as a tour of the robotics and training facilities.

Requiring temperatures of up to 150,000,000 degrees Celsius - 10 times hotter than the Sun - nuclear fusion is a potential source of seemingly unlimited energy.

OC Thomas Davis said: "It is amazing to show the unit where I work for my PhD research and show fellow officer cadets one of the pioneering centres of the worlds on tackling long-term energy production."

OC John Hasbani added: "The visit was a great chance to learn about a field I would never normally research myself and gave us opportunities to speak with experts in nuclear fusion."

Deeps digging deep to raise funds to fight cancer

TWO submariners based in the South West are on the run to raise money for the Macmillan Cancer Fund.

Warrant Officers Damien 'H' Holloway and Julian 'Frank' Spencer are both committed runners, who this year have set themselves the challenge of competing in a number of marathons, half marathons and endurance events, under the name Current Semper – meaning 'always running' in Latin.

H's programme of events will also include cycling. He started with a 71-mile sportive cycle race in Devon starting at Exeter Race Course in which he achieved a silver award.

Other big cycling challenges include the 100km Dartmoor Classic in June and another 88-miler across Dartmoor, that starts at 9pm from the Barbican and goes through the night.

Meanwhile Frank has so far entered 40 races, including two ultra runs of 32 and 44

miles. He'll also be running in the Cornish Grand prix and multi-terrain series.

The 52-year-old said: "Since joining the Royal Navy in 1991 I've always run to maintain my fitness to supplement other sports like football, hockey and boxing but as I've progressed through my career, and aged, running is now my primary sport."

"I have represented both HMS Raleigh and HMS Drake in the South West Cross-country league and the South West Region in the regional championships."

"Last year I covered 1,400 miles and competed in 45 races and 33 park runs including 13 half marathons and five marathons."

H ran around 1,156 miles individually in 2018, while also taking part in two marathons, 12 half marathons and a team 24-hour event. He set up Team Resurgam in 2016 and last

year he, Frank and the other team members collectively raised £3,411.49 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Team Resurgam are currently the Plymouth half-marathon Services challenge champions. The team will continue in 2019 and the two Submariners will join them for the Equinox 24 run in September. However, this time Frank and H will be running independently to see how many laps around Belvoir Castle they can complete in a 24-hour period.

H runs in memory of two of his shipmates, Anthony Huntrod and Paul McCann, who died on HMS Tireless in 2007. The 44-year-old has previously raised money for a charity set-up in Paul's name.

H and Frank have set themselves a target of raising £1,500 and have a set up a page online for supporters at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/Team/CurrentSemper





Victory Walker moves again

COMMANDER Jane Allen, the Victory Walker set off from HMS Victory on / October 21 2017, to walk anticlockwise round the coast of mainland UK raising money for two naval charities, the WRNS BT and RNRMC. After suffering a major injury in February, her last update confirmed physio had finally started and she was hoping to have a phased return to walking. Here's Jane's latest news.

Things have moved on apace since my last update and at last I have better news. My physio exercises, although time consuming, helped me achieve some tentative trial walks. After almost ten weeks off the road I stepped off again. Returning to the scene of accident, pictured above, was not something I particularly relished, but I knew I had to start where I left off. This time I took particular care not to trip over that rock and take a second tumble! That first short walk, where on safety

grounds I was accompanied, indicated I could probably cope providing I wore an adjustable shoulder brace and used my one-shoulder cross-body backpack. After that initial walk others followed: these helped me rebuild confidence, fitness and stamina.

On the physio's advice, I'm still required to do two 45-minute sessions of exercises a day, and am limited to about ten miles daily (instead of my usual 15 or so). However, at least that's getting me moving and ever closer to Pompey!

Before we finally left our waterside apartment at Milford Haven, we also had to be confident that I could live and move around in the Victory Van.

Again, we conducted some trials before we loaded and squashed our belongings back into the van. We are now living the compact life of submariners once more.

Since then I've been able to discard my one-shoulder backpack in favour of my trusty red rucksack.

The 'Miles Walked' on the back of the Victory Van had been stuck at 4,300 for almost three months, so it was a great feeling to hit 4,400 and, more recently, 4,500 when I entered Swansea.

During this time, I was asked to be guest speaker at the WRNS BT Annual General Meeting at the historic and elegant Trinity House in London.

Attended by the Royal Patron of this charity (and also Patron of RNRMC), this was an important assignment and an opportunity for me to reactivate fundraising interest after my extended period of recuperation.

Happily, as a result of this, donations have started to come in again – but more are always welcome.

The Victory Walk is raising money for two Naval charities, WRNS BT and RNRMC. To donate go to www.Virginmoneygiving.com/victorywalk17-18. To find out more about Jane's Victory Walk go to www.victorywalk.uk



• The team carry the field gun through HMNB Clyde

Field gunners keep going - for 52 hours

FASLANE-based HMS Neptune Field Gun Crew held a 52-hour endurance event to raise cash for a couple of good causes.

The event was held in the HMS Neptune Supermess.

The four-part challenge was set up to commemorate the 120th anniversary of the Siege of Ladysmith and each part represented an element of the transit of HMS Terrible and HMS Powerful to Durban where they helped the British Army who were besieged in the garrison town of Ladysmith in 1899.

To kick-start the event, Captain of the Base, Captain Craig Mearns ran for one-hour – this signified the "Passing of the Order".

On completion of the run, the HMS Neptune Field Gun Crew deadlifted the weight of six guns, each weighing half a metric tonne each. This was followed by a 19-hour row to replicate the sea transit of HMS Terrible and HMS Powerful to Durban.

Next, The HMS Neptune Field Gun Crew picked up their guns once again before a 20-hour cycle which simulated the train journey from Durban to the outskirts of the garrison town of Ladysmith.

The guns were lifted one more time before a final 12-hour run to represent the march to the front line and the subsequent relief of Ladysmith.

The event was closed with the

Field Gun and Limber being marched by the crew through the Naval Base with a salute to the Captain of the Base.

As well as marking the 120th anniversary of the Siege of Ladysmith, the event also raised more than £3,000 for the RNRMC and the Defence National Rehabilitation Centre.

"This was an excellent event that epitomised the ethos of field gun and captured the imagination of a swathe of base personnel, hence the outstanding sum raised for charity. What a brilliant way to start this field gun season," said Capt Mearns.

The DNRC was chosen by the wife of Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Ryan Thomas, who ran for the HMS Neptune Field Gun Crew during the 2017 season and has subsequently suffered a severe illness.

Petty Officer Kev Laing, a trainer with the Field Gun Crew and organiser of the event said: "The event could not have gone any better, it was great to raise money and awareness for two deserving charities which have been assisting a fellow Field Gunner, Surg Lt Cdr Ryan Thomas and his family in his recovery.

"In addition, it gave us an opportunity to develop the already excellent team spirit of HMS Neptune Field Gun Crew in preparation for the demands of field gun track training."



• Jane celebrates a milestone, left, and, right, met up with RM veteran, Captain Derek Sparks on the Gower Peninsula



• Capt Mearns with members of personnel who took part

More children benefit from sports camps

AN extended funding partnership between the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Kings Camps is about to enable more children and young people from Naval Service families to access sports and activity camps right across the UK and at a significantly subsidised rate of £60 per week.

In addition to operating Kings Camps for 1,800 children at eight Royal Navy bases, Naval Service families can now access Kings Camps at 55 locations across the UK, from Aberdeen to Cornwall.

For the last ten years, the RNRMC-Kings Camps partnership has grown due to the hugely popular and highly valued sports and activity programmes for five to 17 year olds which provide children with engaging, healthy and fun activity weeks and parents with an affordable, safe and positive childcare option for the school holidays.

Richard Holmes, CEO of Kings Camps, said: "We're a not-for-profit with a vision of a world where children love being active, so we are absolutely delighted to be strengthening our partnership to enable thousands of children from Naval Service families to be active, have fun and learn together, and to be significantly helping Navy families.

"The fantastic contribution by the RNRMC enables us to provide a five-day experience for just £60 per child; this represents a reduction of around 66 per cent off our standard charge."

Adrian Bell, CEO of RNRMC, is equally as pleased with the partnership.

"The feedback we've had from Royal Navy and Royal Marine families that have accessed this service has been overwhelmingly positive, so to be able to extend this opportunity to Naval Service families wherever they live in the UK is an obvious next step."

Around 1.5 million children have attended Kings Camps since 1991.

Kings' national network of programmes are based at schools and universities with exceptional facilities and they feature at HMNB Clyde, RNAS Culdrose, Northwood Joint Forces, HMNB Devonport, HMS Collingwood, HMS Temeraire, RNAS Yeovilton and CTCRM Lympstone.

Full information can be found at kingscamps.org and bookings can be made by calling the Kings Camps booking team on 0114 263 2160 between 9am and 5pm, Monday to Friday.



• Children have lots of fun at the Kings Camps held throughout the UK

Sands of memory

THE sands at Slapton in Devon were imprinted with bootprints – 75 years to the day that a D-Day practice landing there turned into a bloodbath.

British and American sailors and troops stood shoulder-to-shoulder on the southwestern shore of Lyme Bay – just as they did in April 1944 – to remember men killed during Exercise Tiger – a tragedy covered up at the time and forgotten for the next 30 or so years.

Practising an assault on a Normandy beach, a force of slow-moving landing ships and craft, laden with troops and their kit, was intercepted by German torpedo boats which caused havoc – chaos compounded by a string of errors or failures on the Allied side (radio problems and the absence of an escorting RN destroyer due to repairs).

Two landing ships were sunk, one was set ablaze, a fourth was damaged by friendly fire.

Many American troops had not been briefed how to don lifejackets and plunged into the Channel, where they drowned or succumbed to hypothermia.

An estimated 749 men died – their sacrifice marked by an art installation of their bootprints on the sand created by artist Martin Barraud, the man behind the WW1 'silhouette Tommy' statues placed around the country to mark the 100th anniversary of the Great War.

Senior US and UK military officers joined veterans' groups, reservists from HMS Vivid in Plymouth, locals – whose efforts down the years were instrumental in bringing the tragedy to the public's attention, including the installation of a Sherman tank as a memorial – and descendants of those who took part in the exercise for a service of commemoration.

Although there is a small number of veterans who took part in Exercise Tiger still with us, none was in good enough health to make the pilgrimage to South Devon.

Laurie Bolton, niece of 19-year-old Sergeant Louis Bolton, spoke on behalf of relatives visiting from America.

"My uncle was on the tank deck of LST 531 during Exercise Tiger when two torpedoes struck them," she said.

"It feels very rewarding that those who died are being remembered, this was an important event leading up to D Day, and those who survived were told never to speak about this tragedy, even after the war was over. We greatly appreciate the Services being here today and showing their support."

Brigadier Jock Fraser, Naval Regional Commander Wales and Western England, was the senior RN representative at the "poignant commemoration marking the sacrifice made by so many US servicemen 75 years ago.

"It was a particular honour to meet family members of those lost in this tragedy, especially those who have travelled from across the Atlantic to be at Slapton Sands."

Rear Admiral David Manero, America's senior defence attaché in the UK said the sands at Slapton were redolent with what happened in April 1944.

"I carry with me an enormous amount of pride in being here and remembering the bravery of the soldiers and sailors who took part in the rehearsal 75 years ago," he said.

"They came here to these beaches where bravery abounded and where this Sherman tank memorial recognises the importance of the role they played in one of the greatest invasions the world has ever seen."



Tiffs roll back to the summer of '69

FORMER Tiffs returned to the home of marine engineering to see the progress made in the 60 years since they passed out.

Five veterans of HMS Figsard Series 35 Class, who joined the RN at HMS Figsard as artificer apprentices in January 1959, headed to HMS Sultan to mark six decades since the class's 60th anniversary.

After a year's training at HMS Figsard – based at Torpoint from 1946 until 1983 when it became part of HMS Raleigh – trainees were offered the choice of training to become a 'tiff' in one of five categories: engineering, ordnance, electrical, air and shipwright.

When Figsard passed into history, Sultan

in Gosport took over artificer training until the role was phased out in 2010.

Today its museum houses the collection of artefacts and memorabilia from Figsard – and serves as the perfect venue for the class' reunion.

"We first visited the museum ten years ago and get together every five years for a reunion. They offer a great opportunity for comradeship and to chew over the past," said Geoff Hughes, whose test pieces and kit from training are on display in the museum.

"Quite a few of the group who joined up went on to have a full career – a number reached the ranks of captain or commander.

"We had a great time. They were grand days and the whole process of learning the craft and the education were very, very important. I still think of myself as an artificer, as the Navy really made me."

An Artificer 151 Dinner for all those who trained as tiffs will take place at HMS Sultan on June 29 – see tiffs-reunion.org.uk/about.html.

If you are an ex-tiff but not a member of the Figsard Association, visit www.thefigsardassociation.org.

And for details of the Marine Engineering Museum, see marine-engineering-museum.org.uk/index.html.



£1.5m museum plan

HISTORIANS plan to build a £1.5m new museum in the Falklands so the story of 1982 can be properly told in time for the conflict's 40th anniversary.

The team behind the Falkland Islands Museum and National Trust have already raised one third of their total as they strive to erect a new gallery and exhibition hall in Stanley.

The islands' museum (pictured) is situated in the former government dockyard (Royal Navy ships today use East Cove military port, a good hour's drive outside the capital as their base), with the maritime museum housed in one of the oldest buildings in Stanley, the old Central Store built in the late 1840s.

There are displays on the 1914 Battle of Coronel, off the coast of Chile, and its aftermath, one month later, the first Battle of the Falklands.

The 1982 conflict is covered relatively briefly through the film *Through Children's Eyes* which covers the events of April–June 1982 through the perspective of islanders who were children at the time of the invasion.

Islanders are determined that should change by 2022, allowing the ever-growing collection of artefacts, memoirs, diaries, photographs and ephemera from the conflict to receive a proper showing courtesy of the new annex.

That collection has been considerably bolstered by the Type 21 Club and veterans of HMS Avenger in particular.

Seven 21s were involved in the Falklands task force, two were sunk (Arden and Antelope), two more were damaged.

Avenger was more fortunate than her sisters as she was not damaged (she's also thought to be the only warship to have shot down an Exocet missile with a shell, thanks to her 4.5in gun) and took the surrender of more than 1,000 Argentine troops at Fox Bay, the largest settlement on West Falkland.

Nearly 37 years later, Lady Josephine White, the widow of Avenger's CO at the time, Sir Hugo White, visited Stanley on behalf of the Type 21 Club (Sir Hugo was life president until his death in 2014) to pay her respects to her late husband's grandfather, Captain Frank Brandt, killed in charge of HMS Monmouth, lost with all hands at Coronel and remembered on a memorial tablet.

At the museum, she handed over Avenger's diary of the 1982 campaign, the personal diary/account of Kevin O'Neill (air picture supervisor in Avenger's ops room) to Richard Cockwell, chairman of trustees; in 1982, he was the manager at Fox Bay in 1982 and liberated by Sir Hugo and the crew of Avenger.

"These items are all valuable additions to our collection and will be useful for our new

Lookout Gallery and Exhibition Hall which we hope to open in 2022, the 40th Anniversary of the War," said Alison Barton, the museum's manager.

"In the new Lookout Gallery and exhibition hall, which is in the planning stages at the moment, we will be able to display more items and tell the events of 1982 in more detail than we can at the

dockyard site and have space to show other large items in our collection that we cannot house at the dockyard site."

Financial donations can be made to their account at Gibraltar International Bank via bank transfer; email Alison Barton at manager@falklands-museum.co.uk or see www.falklands-museum.com for details.

From Florida to the Falklands

THIS is the impressive display put together by student Maureen to explain to schoolmates the 'triumph and tragedy' of the Falklands conflict.

Except that standing next to her isn't her dad, but a relative stranger, Dougie Douglas.

And Maureen has no direct links with the 1982 conflict. She's not even British.

But the Florida schoolgirl was struck by memorials she saw on a family trip to Argentina that she chose the war as the subject of her 6th Grade (first year of secondary school in the UK) history project.

She used the power of the internet to locate veterans through the SAMA82 organisation, interviewing eight via phone and Skype, among them Dougie, survivor of HMS Coventry's sinking and today a native of Florida.

"The interview was very well organised, the questions were topical, and a few of my answers were a little hesitant as, even though the events of 1982 are always in my mind, sometimes I get a lump in my throat and a tear in my eye at the memories," said Dougie.

The former Type 42 and Royal Yachtsman was invited to join Maureen at Tallahassee Community College as a 'living exhibit' at her Triumph and Tragedy project presentation.

As the events of 1982 are not taught in American or British schools, the subject was unusual and the judges were interested to hear Maureen's explanation of what she'd done, how the conflict started and the fact that Mrs Thatcher decided to send a military force to liberate the islands.

Together with photographs, a short PowerPoint presentation and accounts and interviews with the men of 1982, Maureen put on an impressive display for the judges who scored her in the top five of students for her efforts – even more remarkable as most youngsters had spent a year putting their presentations together, not ten weeks.





Farewell Mr Chairman, Hello Mr President

IT IS the end of an era for Dorchester branch when S/M George Osborne, chairman since its inception in 1999, decided to step down...aged 97.

George (pictured above with his Arctic Star and, below, as a senior rate in the late 50s) joined the Royal Navy in 1938 as a gunnery rating and spent much of WW2 in cruiser HMS Sheffield – including the Bismarck chase and the sinking of the Scharnhorst, plus Arctic and Malta convoys.

In his two decades as chairman, George has not only worked tirelessly to support his fellow members but also went out of his way to support, and to encourage branch members to support, other veterans' associations – particularly at memorial parades when surviving members of those associations were few. Examples are the annual Tirah Memorial service in Dorchester for Samuel Vickery VC and others of the Dorset Regiment and the RAF Air Gunners Association Battle of Britain service at Warmwell, Dorset.

He also organised a lunch in Dorchester for veterans, including Land Girls, to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of WW2. George's passion even extended to remembering our allies; he proposed that the branch purchase two benches and two picnic tables for the Kingston Maurward Visitors Centre. These were dedicated to those who served this country during the world wars including American and Commonwealth Forces who were based in the Dorchester area just before D-Day.

He has always been passionate about supporting veterans and ensuring that the youth of today know of the sacrifices made by many during World War 2 and subsequent conflicts; each year George speaks to the children of a local school about Remembrance Day and its significance.

And just for good measure, he's also been a driving force behind establishing Dorchester's Armed Forces Day.

Though his chairman duties are over, those of branch president now begin as he was elected to the post by shipmates.



Adrian saddles up for T42 comrades

IF YOU see this chap – or more likely his backside – while you're driving round Britain in the coming weeks, honk your horn... and cross his palm with silver.

Former sailor Adrian Netherwood is getting in the saddle for a seven-day epic ride from Rosyth to Portsmouth at the end of June.

Adrian served in the RN for 18 years – above the waves in Ashanti, Aurora, Ajax and 'Geordie Gunboat' HMS Newcastle, then beneath them in Conqueror, Revenge and Otter, while his sons Josh (HMS Westminster) and Dan (Royal Marines) have followed him into the Senior Service.

It's his time in destroyers which he fondly remembers so much so that he's teamed up with the Type 42 Association, with the aim of raising £10,000 split

between Combat Stress and the RNRMC.

Adrian's been training for several months for the ride, split into seven legs, taking many of the cities associated with the popular class of destroyers... as well as their two base ports during four decades of service.

The 42s famously saw action in every major combat involving the Royal Navy from the Falklands to the civil war in Libya, with two of the class – Sheffield and Coventry – sunk in the South Atlantic in 1982 with the loss of 40 lives.

Many survivors suffered – and continue to suffer – from PTSD, one reason why Combat Stress will benefit from Adrian's peddling... backed up by a support team from the destroyer association.

He's due to arrive by the Solent

in time for the association's reunion/charity day.

His 469-mile ride takes him on day 1 from Rosyth to Berwick (74 miles); day 2: Berwick to Newcastle (75 miles); day 3: Newcastle to York (91 miles); day 4: York to Sheffield (55 miles); day 5: Sheffield to Coventry (91 miles); day 6: Coventry to Newbury (87 miles) and day 7: Newbury to Portsmouth (via Southampton) (70 miles).

"It would be brilliant to see a friendly face en route so if you would like to join me and do a section or part of one, please contact me," Adrian said.

He can be contacted at: woolcity@blueyonder.co.uk or 07714 291896.

You can help him towards his £10k goal at www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/david-morris-673.



Yangtze veterans recall 1949 deeds

THE 70th anniversary of one of the first showdowns of the Cold War was commemorated by sailors and veterans at HMS Collingwood.

The 'Yangtze incident' in the spring of 1949 saw HMS Amethyst trapped on the famous river when she was sent to the then capital of China, Nanking, to act as a guardship for the British Embassy.

Instead, the frigate came under fire from Communist forces 70 miles short of her destination. In trying to escape the gunfire, the ship ran aground, 17 crew were killed and ten more wounded, including CO Lieutenant Commander Bernard Skinner who later succumbed to his injuries.

A two-month-long rescue operation ensued. HMS Consort attempted to re-float Amethyst but was forced back by intense shellfire. Cruiser HMS London and the frigate HMS Black Swan were sent to assist but were also forced back.

Amethyst's crew eventually managed to re-float the ship and Lieutenant Commander John Kerens, the Assistant Naval Attaché in Beijing, was able to get on board and assume command.

Early in July 1949, the ship made a breakout attempt under cover of darkness. Despite artillery fire, treacherous sandbanks and a barrier in the river, Amethyst successfully reached Shanghai and re-joined the British Far East Fleet.

She arrived in Hong Kong under a glare of publicity from the world's press and eventually ended up on celluloid in a 1957 movie.

Since then, beyond the realm of naval historians and veterans' groups, the deeds and hardships of the spring of 1949 have largely faded from memory.



● Amethyst veterans Ray Calcott (left), Stewart Hett and a stuffed toy version of Simon, the ship's famous cat who saved rations by keeping the rats at bay in the memorial lobby to the Yangtze incident at HMS Collingwood

But not at HMS Collingwood, where there is a foyer dedicated to the Yangtze incident, while the bridge simulator is named Amethyst.

So the Fareham establishment was the obvious setting for veterans, their families and serving personnel to devote a day to remembering the sacrifices made 70 years ago. Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, Mayor of Fareham Cllr Susan Bayford and Collingwood's CO Captain Rob Vitali were the hosts, naval historian Dr Duncan Redford provided the 21st Century take on the incident, and Collingwood's chaplain the Rev Thomas James led a service of remembrance.

After dining, the guests were shown the Amethyst simulator which trains bridge teams in the art of safe navigation.

"I never expected half of this

very nicely arranged," he said.

"It was interesting to hear the lecturer talk about the incident, but of course I was there at the time and remember it well.

"I'm really pleased that HMS Collingwood keeps a lobby in Endeavour Building with all of the Yangtze memorabilia."

New role for old hand Les

FORMER CPO(MA) Les Yeoman has taken on the role of 'lead mentor' guiding young men and women through their training at HMS Raleigh.

Les, who has 33 years of service in the RN/RFA under his belt, heads 21 RNA volunteers who offer moral support, advice and share their experiences with people undergoing the transition from civilian to serving personnel.

The scheme has been in place for 11 years, with Les mentoring for the past four, helping trainees through some of the tougher physical/mental challenges such as exercises on Dartmoor and outdoor activities at Pier Cellars.

"Meeting new recruits on day one and seeing them smartly turned out at the passing-out-parade in week ten is very rewarding, having been allowed the privilege of imparting our experience and knowledge," said the 69-year-old.

– I've really enjoyed it," said 90-year-old Amethyst veteran Ray Calcott.

"I was a seaman in charge of the A Gun, when the first shell came over, I remember it as clear as day."

Shipmate Stewart Hett was a lieutenant, forced by circumstance into the role of Amethyst's second-in-command at the age of just 22.

"The commemorative day was

New home for plate in Falmouth

FALMOUTH branch handed over a treasured memento of one of the Cornish port's sons to the town's council for permanent display.

Telegraphist John Kenneth Ainsworth Parnell (Service number D/JX 194166) was killed aged 22 on June 16 1942, one of 87 men lost when cruiser HMS Hermione was torpedoed in the Mediterranean.

His family evidently commissioned a commemorative silver tray which eventually ended up in the hands of an antiques dealer.

With none of the sailor's family traceable, shipmates voted unanimously to buy the plate rather than see it melted down for its silver value.

In its display case, the four-inch diameter tray has been looked after by S/M Mick Stevens, who's brought it along to the branch's meetings for several years.

That was until veterans decided the plate deserved a permanent home and agreed to donate it to Falmouth Town Council. S/M Mick, who's also branch chairman, presented the silver tray to Mayor Cllr Grenville Chappell (ex Ganges Boy) for safekeeping.

After a little lobbying, the branch also succeeded in encouraging the town council to sign up to the Armed Forces Covenant.

Councillors agreed unanimously, culminating in Brigadier 'Jock' Fraser RM, Naval Regional Commander South West, signing the document on behalf of the MOD and Cllr Chappell signing on behalf of the town.

Monument rededicated

COLCHESTER Branch of the Submariners' Association will rededicate the imposing memorial in Shotley churchyard – 100 years to the day after it was first dedicated.

The impressive 10ft monument – a column with four bronze dolphins at the base and the figure of Madonna on one side –

remembers men of the 8th and 9th Submarine Flotillas who gave their lives in the Great War, plus the ten Harwich-based boats lost between 1914 and 1918.

Veterans of all branches of the Armed Forces and Senior Service are welcome to attend the rededication in St Mary's Church in Shotley on Wednesday June 26 at 3pm.

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Weston take honours for fourth year in row

WESTON Sea Cadets took part in the National Drill and piping competition, representing South West Area in the Guard section of the contest.

The cadets had already won at district and area level and were now up against five teams for the national award which they were also defending their three-year reign.

The cadets had put months of hard work and commitment into practising for the competition and went out and did themselves with proud with their routine.

The hard work paid off with the team coming first – so they are National Guard champions for the fourth consecutive year.

L/C Darcie won Best Guard Commander.

South West Area cadets all took home medals for their different parts of the competition, coming second or third, which meant that the South West Area was first overall.



Busy year for Ben

TS Glamorgan's Leading Cadet Ben Price has been appointed the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for South Glamorgan 2019.

The appointment is in recognition for his outstanding contribution to Penarth Unit.

A popular cadet, Ben was presented with his award by the Lord Lieutenant, Mrs Morfudd Meredith at a ceremony at Maindy Barracks in Cardiff.

Ben's main duties for the coming year will be acting as assistant to the Lord Lieutenant at various official engagements within the county of south Glamorgan.

Ben is pictured with Mrs Meredith.

... and for Stoke PO

A CADET from Stoke on Trent Sea Cadets has been appointed as a Lord Lieutenant's Cadet.

The prestigious appointment has been awarded to Petty Officer Cadet Statham.

Lords Lieutenant cadets are selected in recognition of the outstanding example and dedication they display, as a cadet and member of the community.

During the next 12 months she will accompany the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Mr Ian Dudson, in his duties and will attend distinguished occasions with him.

Her Commanding Officer Sub Lieutenant (SCC) David Eivers RNR said: "I am very proud of what Petty Officer Cadet Statham has achieved through her own hard work and commitment."

"She is a leading example to young people in the community, a credit to herself and the Sea Cadets in Stoke-on-Trent."

POC Statham is pictured at the front of the photograph.

Picture: Tom Eivers



Tanker treat for Greenock cadets

AFTER helping inaugurate their ship into the Royal Fleet Auxiliary family, four Sea Cadets were rewarded with a trip at sea in new tanker RFA Tidesurge.

Greenock Sea Cadets – aka TS Tidesurge – were instrumental in helping VIPs and guests enjoy the occasion when the 39,000-tonne floating service station was dedicated earlier this year.

Four youngsters – Cds Sophie Hearl, Abi Gallacher, Alesha Deeny and Ewan Kininmonth – plus their CO Lt Cdr Michael O'Connor and PO John Regan made the 470-mile trip from the south bank of the Firth of Clyde to Portsmouth, where Tidesurge was paying a short port visit.

While in Pompey, the cadets were granted free access to the National Museum of the Royal Navy – HMS Victory, WW1 monitor M33, HMS Warrior and more.

On the ship, the cadets gained experience in visual signalling, learning flag hoists and their meanings, putting their seamanship theory into practice with rope work and splicing, and were given a trip out on the ship's Pacific 24 boat.

The youngsters also received a tour of the engine room and were invited to watchkeep on Tidesurge's spacious bridge.

The cadets had been affiliated with veteran tanker RFA Gold Rover; when she retired, Tidesurge – the third of four Tide-class ships built to support HMS Queen Elizabeth/Prince of Wales and their task forces – agreed to pick up the mantle and the unit was renamed in the new vessel's honour.

After activities in and around Portsmouth Harbour, the ship headed north... back to Greenock.

"We loved being on board RFA Tidesurge – and having opportunity to put the theory the cadets have learned back at the unit into practice," said PO Regan.

His CO Lt Cdr O'Connor added: "It's a start of another era for TS Tidesurge, hopefully our relationship will mature as well as our previous relationship with RFA Gold Rover."

Captain Miles Lewis, Tidesurge's first commanding officer, said he and his ship's company had thoroughly enjoyed "sharing sea time with the TS Tidesurge cadets."

"I hope this is the first of many visits to encourage some of Greenock and District Sea Cadets to consider the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as a future career option."





Albion treat for cadets

TWO Landing Craft from HMS Albion, the Royal Navy's Flagship, visited the Port St Mary on the Isle of Man.

The Landing Craft played host to local Army and Sea Cadets before greeting local dignitaries and bringing them to HMS Albion for a short tour.

Pictures: PO (Phot) Dave Jenkins



Sun's out, time to hit the water

THE boating season has begun for cadets from Northampton and Warsash.

Cadets from Northampton spent a week on the water at the Sea Cadet training centre in Thrapston, gaining new qualifications in sailing, power boating and windsurfing.

Not only did the Cadets take part in the Easter camp gaining 38 Royal Yachting Association qualifications and clocking up over 1,000 training hours on the water but Northampton's Royal Marines Cadets detachment spent a weekend at Bodney Camp learning field craft and undertaking teamwork training with cadets from across X-Ray Company Royal Marines Cadets.

As well as the camp many cadets took the opportunity to get away on other courses. Three attended TS Ganges, Cambridge Sea Cadet Unit for their St John Activity First Aid Course. They all passed with flying colours, learning new skills that they may have to call upon in the future.

Also the whole ship's company said a fond farewell to Petty Officer Cadet Aaron Dixon who turned 18 after eight years in the Sea Cadets.

Aaron, who joined TS Laforey in March 2012, is the current National powerboat handling champion and had the honour of being the Lord Lieutenants Cadet for Northamptonshire.

The unit is hard at work preparing for the forthcoming afloat competitions in sail, power, windsurfing, kayaking, canoeing and rowing.

Plenty of fun is now being had afloat on the River Nene and we are looking forward to a great season. There are many opportunities available for cadets to participate in and the full unit calendar can be found on calendar.northamptonseacadets.org.uk, along with further course and event details.

Warsash Sea Cadets continue their association with historic ships with a spectacular finale to their Tactical Communicators course.

This time cadets assumed the role of yeoman for the D-Day veteran HMS Medusa, as she took part Royal Navy's 1st Patrol Boat Squadron's annual 'squadex', see page 11.

Keen to take part in the squadex, the cadets spent the day at HMS Collingwood mastering the art of tactical communications; both voice and visual.

Using the Royal Navy Amateur Radio Society's clubhouse as a classroom, they were taught the theory of fleetwork, before putting



● Above, cadets from Northampton sailed and windsurfed, some more successfully than others...

it into practice on Collingwood's parade ground and the training signal masts.

The cadets joined HMS Medusa at her Gosport base, sailing soon after to rendezvous with IPBS in the eastern Solent.

Mentoring the cadets was an RN AB Seaman Specialist who had recently



● From top, Warsash Sea Cadets aboard HMS Medusa during the IPBS squadex; left, signal work at HMS Collingwood

graduated from Collingwood and also embarked for the day.

Providing a signal service to Medusa's captain whilst holding on in a choppy sea state was a challenge that couldn't be replicated and 'sea legs' were rapidly acquired.



History at Milford Haven

A ROYAL Marines Cadet has made at Milford Haven by his promotion to Cadet Sergeant.

The highest rank that can be achieved by a RM Cadet was the accolade for Cadet Corporal Max Thompson.

The Cadet Sergeant promotion board is held at a national level, with the eligible cadets from all over the UK attempting the difficult assessment weekend.

The board covers uniform standards, ceremonial, map reading, weapons handling, lesson delivery, advanced fieldcraft and leadership.

Max was the unit's first attempt at the National Board and, following successful reassessment in map reading, he has been promoted to Cadet Sergeant.

He is also the only Cadet Sergeant that either South or West Wales Districts have seen

for nearly eight years.

Lieutenant (SCC) William Elliott RNR, the Commanding Officer, said: "I am extremely proud of the hardwork and determination that the now Cadet Sergeant Max Thompson put into being able to reach this point and also for putting Milford Haven on the map nationally because of the still young Royal Marines Cadet Detachment.

"This is a fantastic achievement and all those connected to the unit are very proud of you."

If you are interested in joining Sea Cadets or Royal Marines Cadets then visit milfordhavenscc.org.uk, search on Facebook or come along Tuesday and Thursday, from 6:30pm until 9:30pm.

Pictured is the new Cadet Sergeant Max Thompson and CO Lt Elliott.



Warm send-off for ice official

FORMER Penarth Sea cadet AC Cameron Loxton, an off-ice official with the Cardiff Fire Ice Hockey Club, was given a resounding send off at his last game before joining the Royal Marines Band Service.

The whole team celebrated with Cameron, who has been the away goal judge since the team was formed in 2015.

Team Captain Alan Armour presented Cameron with a framed signed team picture as a reminder of his time with the club and the two championships he's seen the team win.

Back these rising stars

TWO Royal Navy sailors have been shortlisted for a national award celebrating the UK's female 'rising stars'.

Ten women from across the defence world – serving personnel, civil servants and industry – have been shortlisted for the fifth We Are The City Rising Stars awards, with Chief Petty Officer Anne Miller-McCaffrey and Lieutenant Commander Hazelle Garton singled out for the efforts.

The awards – supported by *The Times* and *Sunday Times* – focus on the achievements of women below senior management or director level across a broad spectrum of careers and activities (charity work, law, education, science, media, the public sector) with the winners announced on July 3 at London's Sheraton Hotel.

They will be determined in part by the votes you cast via the awards' website risingstars.wearethecity.com.

CPO Miller-McCaffrey has served for three decades as a specialist in education,

training and instruction, and now represents the RN in the military's diversity engagement team. She's a passionate supporter of Navy football and hockey especially and an ambassador for the Association of Wrens. The senior rating is now collecting oral histories from women who served in all three Forces through the decades.

Air engineer officer Lt Cdr Garton has spent more than a decade with the Fleet Air Arm, serving around the globe from helping trainee Lynx crews and maintainers earn their spurs with 702 Naval Air Squadron to two years with helicopter carrier HMS Ocean and then a draft to new carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth to pave the way for her introduction into service. Today she's in charge of ensuring all Merlin helicopters receive the correct engineering support throughout their lifespans... as well as captaining the RN and UK Armed Forces cricket teams... and representing the Navy at golf, playing off a handicap of 10.

The place to be for safety

HMS Montrose has been singled out by the Royal Navy's second most senior sailor for its outstanding safety record and culture.

Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd named the Type 23 the Navy's 'safe guardian' of the past 12 months, presented to the warship or unit which demonstrates the highest standards of Safety, Health and Environmental (SHE) protection on board.

The mantra is simple: doing things safely is a priority – a safe ship is a more effective ship and benefits everyone on board.

Montrose has just completed a mammoth passage from Devonport to Bahrain via the Caribbean, Pacific and Indian Ocean – a voyage which took her six months and 47,000 miles... on top of a busy period of work-up, Fleet Ready Escort duties and a short stint in the Baltic.

Such operational pressures could force safety to take a back seat, but throughout this busy period the SHE team on board the frigate ensured that time constraints did not compromise the ship's company's safety; her record was exemplary throughout.

During a further period of Operational Sea Training assessors again noted how well the team had performed.

Commodore Steve Dainton, the Royal Navy's senior officer



east of Suez, presented the Safe Guardian award to Commander Conor O'Neill (pictured above) shortly before the crew who brought Montrose to the Gulf returned to the UK at the start of crew rotation which will allow the ship to operate in the region for up to three years.

"It has been a team effort since day one," said Sub Lieutenant

Craig Wadley, the ship's assistant safety, health and environmental officer.

"Despite all the changes we have faced in recent times, the team have risen to the challenges and ensured that HMS Montrose and her crew have remained safe throughout, thus enabling us to deliver the operational success we have had."



£9m new gym makes BRNC cadets fit to lead

THIS is the state-of-the-art £9m new gym complex which in just 12 months' time will keep the Navy's future leaders fit.

After nearly 120 years' service the original gymnasium at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth is being retired in favour of a 21st-Century sports, fitness and physical training centre.

Captain Jol Woodard, BRNC's Commanding Officer, symbolically cut the first patch of soil allowing builders Keir to move in and begin work on the new structure, which will be constructed using environmentally-friendly materials and keep energy use to

a minimum when it opens early in 2020.

"The new gym is an essential addition to the facilities here at BRNC – it will allow us to deliver 21st Century physical training to the standards required by the modern Navy for everyone at the College," said Capt Woodard.

"It will include a multi-purpose main hall where cadets undergo the bulk of their military fitness training and be kitted out for a wide range of sports – fitness and competitive sport remain a vital part of military life."

The finished centre will be equipped for up to 800 people, including cadets and BRNC staff.

Wrack your brain for RN's gain

DO you have a brain wave that might make life easier for you and shipmates/comrades?

Then Brain Waves want to hear from you.

They're looking to reward sailors and Royal Marines who come up with ideas which

- improve operational effectiveness;
- improve quality;
- improve the design, use or maintenance of equipment;
- improve health and safety;
- benefit the environment (including sustainable procurement);
- remove unnecessary bureaucracy;
- and/or save the MOD money.

If it sounds a bit like the long-running GEMS initiative, well, it

is... but since February it's been given a fresh name – Brain Waves – and fresh impetus, making it easier for people to come forward.

Since the GEMS initiative was introduced 23 years ago, more than 5,000 suggestions have been submitted.

The initiative was given a fresh shot in the arm last year – Navy Command co-ordinator WO1 Spike Hughes received 134 submissions, more than double the average over the previous five years. Two out of five ideas came from Royal Marines, 30 per cent from the Surface Fleet with the rest of the RN/RM/RNR/MOD making up the remainder.

And ideas which were turned into actions earned their originators collectively more than £35,000 in bonuses.

But the team behind it still felt GEMS needed a bit of modernising (including



Small but perfectly formatted

ENGINEERS aboard new patrol ship HMS Medway have been singled out for the efforts to fit the RN's workhorse IT system earlier and 450 miles from where originally planned.

The second of the RN's new-generation River-class patrol ships was due to receive a package of enhancements – 'alteration and addition' – once she got to her future home base of Portsmouth, like her older sister HMS Forth...

...Until the decision was taken to carry out the work on the Clyde... which would have meant a considerable delay to installing the MOD's DII computer/comms system and its off-ship link (NSSL Global Advanced IP Communications System – or NAICIS for short).

That posed comms experts aboard the patrol ship – led by Petty Officers Will Davies and Dan Stone (pictured above), plus LET Ray Hamilton – shipbuilders BAE and Japanese IT/tech firm Fujitsu with the challenge of fitting the system in six weeks in the midst of all the activity aboard: ship's company moving on board, preparing the ship for sea for the second time and all the attendant exercises (such as firefighting and damage control).

And if that wasn't enough, there were only certain 'transmission windows' when 'off-ship' communications could be carried out... notably when there was no crane work or painting being conducted on the upper decks/quayside at Scotstoun.

The team met the deadline and completed harbour trials – ahead of schedule – earning collective praise from Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Ben Power, and individual praise for PO Davies, Medway's inaugural 'sailor of the month'.

"This is a proud day for myself and my team," said Will. "It's great to receive recognition after all the long days and evenings."

"As a ship's company we have achieved so much recently including the ship's company moving on board. I'm just glad I was able to fulfil my end of the bargain."

So far Spike – whose motto is "it's never too late to innovate" – has received 63 suggestions under the Brain Waves banner, so the initiative is on track to beat the last year of GEMS, with the men and women of HMS Duncan (currently on deployment) leading the ideas chart with 17 suggestions to improve life/operations on a Type 45 destroyer.

More information on Brain Waves can be found at def-ideas.wazoku.com, or you can contact Spike on spike.hughes700@mod.gov.uk.

ASK YOURSELF:

- Were you made in the Royal Navy?
- Do you want to give others the opportunity to make it in the Royal Navy?
- Are you seeking a rewarding Second Career?

If the answer to any is yes then...

APPLY TO BECOME A CAREERS ADVISER.

Flag Officer Sea Training is currently seeking RN and RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCO Service Leavers and former Service (those that left Service under 3 years), to work in Armed Forces Careers Offices which are listed on the map.

Positions are nationwide, employed on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) (NCS) Limited Commitment.

Salary starts from £30k with promotion opportunities to rise to £43k.

FTRS rates of pay apply (Reviewed annually and pensionable).

For more information contact:

PSTN- 01929 403172

Mil- 94374 3172

E-mail- Jane.anneda513@mod.gov.uk



Helping Hans over the water

01 Personnel
 2019DIN01-053 Dental Treatment Rates Overseas
 2019DIN01-060 Increase on the rate of Excess Fares Allowance for Public Transport Users
 2019DIN01-061 Diplomatic Clearance Procedures for France
 2019DIN01-062 Defence Pride 19
 2019DIN01-065 MOD Education Support Fund 2020

03 Defence Policy and Operations
 201903-008 Driving Overseas
 201903-009 Requests for Maritime Defence Engagement
 04 Defence Equipment and the Defence Estate
 2019DIN04-044 The Defence Equipment Sales Authority Disposal of Domestic and Office Furniture
 2019DIN04-047 ISS Contractor Logistics Support Arrangements for UHF Satcom, SMC2 Systems
 2019DIN04-049 Prepayment Purchases of RN Clothing from Stores

06 Safety, Health, Environment, Fire
 2019DIN06-006 Claims and insurance provisions for the use of MOD vehicles in the UK and Overseas and Confirmation of Motor Liability
 2019DIN06-009 Process for calibrating and bump testing the Zellweger/Honeywell impact confined space monitor

07 Training and Education
 2019DIN07-050 Joint Battlespace Management Course and Tactical Air Battlespace Management Courses
 2019DIN07-052 Defence Cyber Education and Training
 2019DIN07-053 Adventurous Training – Planning Pre-Monsoon Mountaineering Expeditions to Nepal (2020)
 2019DIN07-054 RM Officer Career Development programme
 2019DIN07-055 Intelligence Surveillance and Reconnaissance Foundation Course
 2019DIN07-056 Naval Service – Executive Masters Programmes through the Defence Academy – starting in academic year Sep 19 – Aug 20
 2019DIN07-059 Nuclear Department Course Dates Apr 19 – Mar 20
 2019DIN07-060 Astute Class Training Service (ACTS)
 2019DIN07-061 UK Volunteer Reserves International Training

09 Honours, Awards, Royal and Ceremonial Events
 2019DIN09-003 Nige Prouse Award
 2019DIN09-005 Armed Forces Day Campaign 2019

10 Sports and Social
 2019DIN10-019 Royal Navy and Royal Marines Mountaineering Club – Sport Climbing Championships
 2019DIN10-020 NAVYfit Campaign, Festivals and Health Fairs
 2019DIN10-22 Armed Forces Parachute Championship 2019

RNTMs
 01 Personnel
 RNTM 01-024/19 Personnel Support Group (Portsmouth) – relocation details and revised joining instructions
 RNTM 01-025/19 UGAS(SM) and AA(SM) Gains to the Trained Strength (GTS) point
 RNTM 01-026/19 Royal Navy Medical Services clinical leadership and advisory positions
 RNTM 01-027/19 Revised policy and eligibility criteria for candidate presentation to the 2019 POMAS(M) selection board
 RNTM 01-028/19 PE-OPDEF and PERREQ procedures
 RNTM 01-029/19 Engineering General Service (EGS) Warrant Officer 1st class (WO1) Marine and Weapon Engineering progressive career paths
 RNTM 01-030/19 Recruitment and Retention Pay (Naval Service Engineer) guidance
 RNTM 01-031/19 Clarification of the Medical Technician Cadres non-selective promotion requirements
 RNTM 01-032/19 Naval Service General Duties Medical Officer supervision and Annual Appraisal Review Panel
 RNTM 01-033/19 Naval Service Recovery Pathway assurance process

03 Policy and Operations
 RNTM 03-010/19 HM Operational Guidance 01-18 amendments and additions

04 Equipment, support and estate
 RNTM 04-013/19 Introduction of the MJDI Hand Held Device to ships and submarines
 RNTM 04-014/19 Decommissioning of Royal Navy JACKDAW node
 RNTM 04-015/19 Scheduling of Surface Ship Fleet Time Support Periods
 RNTM 04-016/19 Books of Reference made obsolete

05 Management, organisation and business practice
 RNTM 05-009/19 First Sea Lord's 2019 Senior Officers' conference
 RNTM 05-010/19 1SL's Warrant Officers' conference 2019

06 Safety, Health, Environment and Fire
 RNTM 06-005/19 Navy Command Safety Occurrence Reporting, investigations and recommendation tracking

07 Training and education
 RNTM 07-028/19 Introduction of Common Fleet Time for Training Manager Young Officers
 RNTM 07-029/19 Royal Navy Leadership Academy (RNLA) Coaching Courses
 RNTM 07-030/19 Introduction of mandatory 53018 for Engineer Officers
 RNTM 07-031/19 Future management and delivery of Naval Core Training (formerly Core Maritime Skills)
 RNTM 07-032/19 Submarine Qualification Course North (SMQ(N)) Joining Instructions
 RNTM 07-033/19 Dstl UQG Acoustic Analysis courses 2019-2022

NAVAL officer Lieutenant Commander Serena Scott has received a rare honour from Germany for her exemplary conduct in a foreign exchange posting.

She's one of only a few non-Germans to receive the Bundeswehr Ehrenkreuz (Cross of Honour) in Bronze, awarded for her exceptional contribution at the 'German Dartmouth': Marineschule Mürwik.

The Cross of Honour is ordinarily only awarded to members of the German Armed Forces who have given exceptional service to the military. In very rare cases it can also be awarded to civilians and foreign military personnel, who have performed exemplary and meritorious service.

Thanks to a twinning agreement with its Royal Navy counterpart in Dartmouth, Britannia Royal Naval College, the officer spent 2½ years on exchange at Mürwik – a similarly grand Edwardian (more accurately Wilhelmine) building in a similarly stunning setting overlooking the natural harbour of Flensburg on the border with Denmark.

Her job was to act as divisional officer to some of the 250 *Offizieranwärter* (officer cadets), with time concentrated on teaching seamanship and navigation, as well as some maritime law – all in German – plus some time assisting students with their English, which is the language of radio comms and many NATO posts.

Bringing a depth of experience to the role, Lt Cdr Scott, a training manager and former Fleet Air Arm observer, made the most of the foreign posting; initially coordinating with BRNC for German Cadets to join the RN Officer Cadets for leadership training on Dartmoor; then



arranging for three P2000 patrol boats, to “drop in” to Flensburg to refuel and conduct their practical navigational exercises with German Cadets.

When the Germans' sail training ship was out of action, she liaised for space onboard helicopter carrier HMS Ocean to give her cadets some concerted sea time... on operations in the Gulf.

Deploying with another 40 cadets in HMS Ocean the next year the RN officer also embarked with a division on board frigate FGS Lübeck for three weeks training in the Baltic, when a German officer was unable to do so.

At a time when the German Navy was reviewing its traditions, Lt Cdr Scott embodied and promoted the RN ethos. She introduced some formal functions to Mürwik, including

a traditional Trafalgar Night, with a band from the King's Division providing sea shanties and chocolate men o'war for completeness.

Not everything was a *Spaziergang* (cake walk), but the staff at the Marineschule, who nominated her, said Lt Cdr Scott was an inspirational figure, “an extraordinary woman and an outstanding officer” filled with passion for the navy and “obvious joy” for her assignment.

The Cross of Honour, was presented at the German Embassy in London by the Defence Attaché, Brigadier General Ralf Raddatz.

“I am very honoured to receive this recognition for such an exceptionally rewarding posting, through which I have made so many lasting friendships,” said Lt Cdr Scott who's currently serving at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth.

Ocean icon finds a home on the Wear

THERE'S a permanent, loving home for the bell of one of the Navy's greatest modern warships.

The city which took HMS Ocean under its wing for her two decades of service is now home to the brass object, presented by the helicopter carrier's final commanding officer Capt Rob Pedre.

He handed over the heavy bell to the North East city's outgoing mayor Cllr Lynda Scanlan so it can go on permanent display outside the parlour in Sunderland's Civic Centre.

Ocean decommissioned in spring last year, since when she's been sold to the Brazilian Navy, found a new home (Rio) and a new name (PHM Atlântico).

Before being handed over to our South American friends, some UK military kit was removed from the Devonport-based warship (the largest vessel in the RN until HMS Queen Elizabeth appeared on the scene) as well as more personal, historic items such as name plates, battle



honours boards and the bells.

Capt Pedre told Cllr Scanlan and other guests gathered outside the mayoral offices that everyone associated with Ocean, which saw action in Sierra Leone, Iraq and Libya during a busy and varied career, “treasured” the ship's bonds with Sunderland.

“It's fitting that our ship's bell

should come home to Sunderland as an enduring testament of those lasting links between us,” he continued.

“And it is fitting that the largest operational warship in the Royal Navy was adopted by the great city of Sunderland, which was once known as the ‘largest shipbuilding town in the world’

Scrantastic bomber patrols on Vengeance

WHEN we said a couple of months ago that the best scrans in the Fleet could be found aboard HMS St Albans we, of course, meant the surface fleet...

If you want the best scrans beneath the waves, get a draft to HMS Vengeance's Port crew whose eight chefs and caterers received the Fleet Catering Award for their efforts of the past 12 months.

Judges said the galley team overcame the traditional challenges faced by all submarine crews to serve up “balanced, interesting and healthy meals long after the fresh produce has run out”.

“Food is massively important on board,” said Warrant Officer Michael Ellison, a logistics expert with the Submarine Flotilla's Catering Services Waterfront Support team. “On patrol basic things become very important and the quality of the food is a fundamental part of maintaining morale. The chefs on board will prepare a meal every six hours.

“It takes around three days to store a submarine with fresh, frozen and dry goods, and the way we get supplies on board hasn't really changed from Nelson's day. It's a whole crew commitment and everyone gets involved

in a human chain running from the dockside to inside the boat.”

He continued: “There are freezers and fridges on board of course, but every bit of available space on a submarine is used. We must plan carefully because you don't want fresh food stored in a hard-to-reach place at the back where it will go bad.”

The catering award didn't have to be moved far for the presentation – just dusted off outside Vengeance's trophy cabinet where it's been for the past 12 months, having previously been won by the V-boat's starboard crew.



Have-a-go Jo takes charge of tanker

THIS sailor lark is so easy anyone can drive the third largest ship in the Naval Service after just one day on board...

Helping to safely direct a replenishment at sea on RFA Tidesurge, the third of four 39,000-tonne tankers – second only in size in the naval inventory to HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales – is Lady Joanna Woodcock, the huge tanker's sponsor.

She joined the new auxiliary for two days at sea – her third visit to the ship, and one very much hands-on.

Typically the role of sponsor – akin to being a godmother, bestowing good luck and divine protection over a ship and all who sail aboard – involves attending ceremonial events, occasionally dropping in on the vessel to catch up with sailors on progress and events, while the ship's company write regular updates describing activities.

Lady Woodcock, whose husband served as Second Sea Lord between 2015 and 2018, flew out to South Korea for the official naming ceremony (all four Tides were built at the Daewoo yard) in August 2017 and re-visited the vessel 12

months later, now in Falmouth where Tidesurge underwent her military conversion.

As well as being Tidesurge's guardian, Lady Woodcock is also a wife, mother of two, owner of three gun dogs, and is a member of the Independent Monitoring Board for Ford prison near Arundel, monitoring day-to-day life in the prison ensuring proper standards of care and decency are maintained.

None of which is quite as much fun as driving a £113m military tanker through the Irish Sea. In addition to taking opportunity to steer the ship, Lady Woodcock also acted as ‘batman’ at the replenishment point, signaling to HMS Defender as the destroyer prepared to take on fuel.

“I really enjoyed my time on RFA Tidesurge and I'm proud to serve as Lady Sponsor. Having the opportunity to sail with the ship and to get to know the crew certainly gave me a better insight into the role of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

“After many years of being left at home whilst my husband went to sea it's be wonderful for the roles to be reversed.”

New 2SL for 'Naval family'

THERE is a new ‘head of people matters’ in the RN with Vice Admiral Nick Hine assuming the post of Second Sea Lord, taking over Vice Admiral Tony Radakin.

The latter handed over his wide-ranging responsibilities – recruiting, training, sport, diversity, welfare and support for families – as well as naval bases and facilities, aboard HMS Victory.

“While the title of Second Sea Lord is nearly as old as Nelson's flagship, I am privileged to take up this role in 2019 and lead our modern, dynamic and world-class Naval Service,” Admiral Hine said.

“This is a time of great change for the whole Naval Service and its wider family, as we continue driving developments to outpace and outperform our potential adversaries.

“Without our people, there is no capability. Our hard-working men and women, their families, and the civil servants and contractors who work alongside us, are vital to enabling our success. I look forward to representing our Naval family as their Second Sea Lord.”

Admiral Hine has served as a commissioned officer above and below the waves for 34 years, commanding HMS Blackwater, Talent and Westminster, and completed operational tours in Northern Ireland, Kosovo and Iraq.



● HMS Unseen's Roger; the boat received special permission from author Leslie Charteris to use his 'Saint' figure for cloak and dagger ops



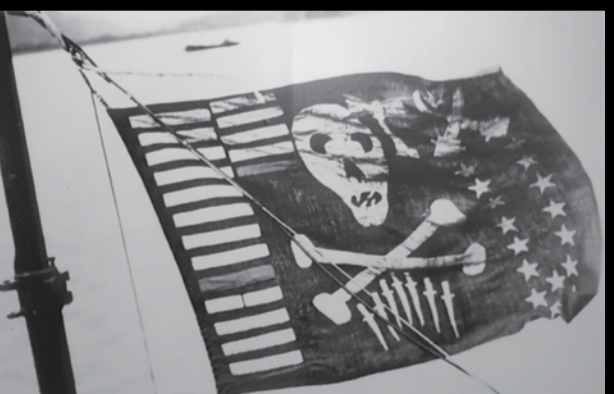
● The heavily-adorned Jolly Roger of HMS Unruffled, scourge of the Axis powers in the Mediterranean in 1942 and 43 especially – in the flesh (left) and flown by her crew (right); the dog in the lifebelt represents the recovery of a chariot (human torpedo)



● The very rare red Roger captured in 1790 by Admiral Richard Curry



● HMS Safari's battle standard now (above) and then (below)



SKULLS OUT FOR SUMMER

AS STANDARDS go, it's more famous than the White Ensign, probably more recognisable than the Stars and Stripes or even the Union Jack.

It stands for the very best of human attributes: courage, skill, ingenuity, determination.

And the very worst: greed, avarice, debauchery and slaughter.

And you can find it all in an old storehouse in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Running all summer at the National Museum of the Royal Navy is a temporary exhibition on the Jolly Roger – as historians put it 'a symbol of terror and pride' (there's a *Horrible Histories* version for youngsters which is on display till the end of the year).

The museum wanted to not just tap into the long-standing fascination with pirates (given renewed impetus thanks to the not-entirely-historically-accurate *Pirates of the Caribbean* series...) but celebrate the Royal Navy's role in helping to quash the illegal activity (past and present) and especially focus on a Submarine Service icon.

First, a bit of history. No-one knows where the name comes from. Possibly, but unlikely, from bastardised French ('Joli rouge' – pretty red, nickname of one Bartholomew Roberts... aka Black Bart, who liked to wear a bright red jacket). Or maybe the Anglicisation of Indian Ocean pirate Ali Raja. Most likely? A derivation of Old Roger, nickname in early 18th Century Britain for the Devil.

The skull and crossbones emblem – not present on every pirate flag – was borrowed from the plague/disease flag which ships of the day raised to warn other mariners to stay away.

But buccaneers also adorned their battle flags with skulls, skeletons, skeletons speared by daggers through the heart and the like. Some were red – signifying that the crew were prepared to show spare their prey, providing they surrendered immediately (no quarter would be given if they offered battle). And black signalled no mercy would be shown.

The bottom line is... there's no typical pirate flag... and very few such banners remaining.

"It's rare for textiles from this era to have survived. Flags were easily damaged in action, so while there may be surviving fragments left, intact standards are exceptionally unusual," explains senior curator Victoria Ingles.

Which is why one of the prize exhibits is a red pirate flag seized by Admiral Richard Curry in a skirmish off North Africa in 1790; it has remained in the family's hands ever since.

And that's the other thing about pirates. Despite the popular image – from Douglas Fairbanks and Errol Flynn through to Johnny Depp – piracy has never been confined to the

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ON THE SURFACE

ATTACK ON RAILWAY LINE

MINELAYING

DESCENT BELOW
MAXIMUM DEPTH

to become accepted by all submariners.

"In World War 1 some crew actually found the Jolly Roger was a bit boastful, so it certainly wasn't universally adopted. It's World War 2 where it really becomes part of Submarine Service," Victoria explains.

As with real pirates, there is no such thing as a standard submarine Jolly Roger – each one is hand-made by the crew using whatever cloth (usually signalling flags) they could get their hands on (HMS Clyde only had an old Royal Mail red and blue standard...), while boats operating on the Malta run received beautifully-produced silk flags made by the island's nuns in gratitude for beating the Axis blockade.

And each standard was adorned with a symbol to signify each successful action.

"The symbols show the sheer scale of operations – submarines were not just there to torpedo ships. They took part in a myriad of different missions," Victoria adds.

As can be seen inset – the emblems quickly became standardised across the Silent Service.

But there are one-offs. Crew of Polish submarine Dzik ('Wild boar') embellished their roger with a husky, having taken part in the invasion of Sicily (Operation Husky).

And bombarding Monte Carlo with her deck gun, HMS Sickle accidentally hit the world-famous casino; the incident was recorded on the battle flag with the ace of spades.

"Flags are visually striking – they really catch your eye straight away and tell a story. Or at least hint at a story..." says Victoria.

And then there's the bizarre Jolly Roger nightdress the crew of HMS Torbay made as a wedding gift for their commanding officer – VC winner Anthony Miers, a cool, rather stern character (and considered a war criminal by some for shooting shipwrecked Germans) – featuring the Union Flag, skull and crossbones and a submarine silhouette. "Mrs Miers probably never wore it..."

Given the infrequency of submarine combat post-WW2, the flags have largely dried up. But the tradition has not gone away (and remains somewhat frowned upon by the powers that be). HMS Turbulent fired five Tomahawk cruise missiles and was the springboard for two special operations during the 2003 campaign in Iraq – spelled out on her Jolly Roger which is the most modern flag on display.

Nor have the pirates gone away. The RN was heavily involved in curtailing their actions off the Horn of Africa ("pirate alley") a decade ago.

It's still there. And elsewhere. Gulf of Guinea. Philippines. Malacca Strait. South America. Last year there were more than 200 attacks or incidents. None, however, involved raising the Jolly Roger...

■ Jolly Roger: A Symbol of Terror and Pride runs until August 28.

● (Along the bottom, l-r) HMS Sickle, which claimed two U-boats sunk (but only one, U-303 was confirmed); Chinese pirates who seized the SS Namao in 1890 await beheading; and HMS Turbulent brings the Silent Service into the 21st Century in Iraq, 2003



The forgotten hygiene genius

PROFESSOR Ken Shaw firmly believes that Dr James Lind (1716 to 1794) should be regarded as on a par with more well-known naval heroes like Nelson and Collingwood

So much so that he has written a new book on the man and his legacy, writes Stuart Reed.

“Doctor Lind was a physician a century ahead of his time. His observation and research work helped admirals and their seamen conquer Britain’s foes, by promoting improved provision of fresh victuals and greater hygienic discipline at sea, rendering the crews much fitter to fight,” says Prof Shaw (pictured beneath a portrait of his hero).

“In his field Lind led the way for the establishment of a system of replenishment at sea and a greater understanding of tropical diseases.”

Professor Shaw’s book lifts the lid on the dreadful living conditions of sailors in the Royal Navy in the 18th Century and centres on the life and work of Lind. This slim volume is packed with fascinating historical facts which still have a bearing on the modern day health of military personnel.

Having obtained his medical licence, Lind joined the Royal Navy aged 23 in the lowly position of surgeon’s mate. He served at sea in the Channel and the West Indies, encountering the ravages of scurvy first hand.

Promoted to the full rank of ship’s surgeon aboard HMS Salisbury, Lind is credited with pioneering the first random controlled medical trial, which forms the basis of clinical research today. His innovative studies paved the way for lemons, oranges and, later, limes to be



carried by ships to combat scurvy.

For ten years Lind returned to medical practice in his home city of Edinburgh, but was then persuaded by Lord Anson to return to naval duties as chief physician at RNH Haslar, a post which he held for 25 years. Despite onerous clinical responsibilities, often seeing over 400 sick seamen a day, he worked prodigiously to improve the health of sailors on board ship and in hot climates.

This was the time of the Seven Years’ War when life at sea was a health-and-safety nightmare. Lind was well aware of the rigours of lengthy offshore patrols designed to keep French shipping in port.

Appalling weather conditions and the risk of injury, the lack of fresh provisions, contagious diseases spreading in cramped, dirty conditions as well as poor personal hygiene all threatened to weaken sailors’ abilities to fulfil their duties. Men who were pressed into service from prisons and the gutters of ports brought body lice and disease with them.

Lind’s observations and his written essays helped the Royal Navy identify these problems. Recognising the circumstances and conditions in which infection and disease proliferated, he was on the very brink of understanding the role of germs in spreading disease but, sadly, this eluded him.

The book explains how British ships’ crews won wars largely because they were fitter than those of their enemies. In the wider context, better diet at sea possibly gave the Navy longer reach to help Britannia rule the waves and colonise a worldwide empire. Today Doctor Lind is rightly regarded as the father of naval hygiene

Prof Shaw’s enthusiasm for James Lind’s work shines out from the pages of this book. He too is an academic by inclination and is currently Emeritus Professor of Medicine, University of Portsmouth. The author also has a long association with RNH Haslar and the Institute of naval medicine where he has received valued expert help from Jane Wickenden, its historic collections librarian.

■ **The Life and Legacy of Doctor James Lind** (price £3) is available through the Portchester Hub (admin@portchesterca.org.uk) or St Mary’s Church Office (02392321380).

A chain of tragedies

IN A month when we have been remembering the sacrifices made maintaining the nation’s nuclear deterrent, here is a rare – and timely – reminder of the dangers submariners face every time they put to sea.

Kursk (Blu Ray/DVD from £7.99 online) is a big budget (c.£30m) documentary-drama depicting the worst submarine accident of the 21st Century.

Belgian Matthias Schoenaerts plays the fictional engineer officer Mikhail Averin (mirroring the real Dmitri Kolesnikov, the senior officer trapped with 22 comrades in the last compartment) and French actress Léa Seydoux his wife Tanya.

Otherwise, the film is true to the facts (it’s based on an account of the tragedy by ITV news correspondent Robert Moore... who pops up as a reporter at one point) with Brit Colin Firth

stepping into the uniform of real-life senior RN submariner Cdre David Russell.

The facts are pretty horrific. Kursk was an Oscar-II hunter-killer, the apotheosis of Soviet submarine design at the end of the Cold War. She was twice the size of her Royal Navy T-boat contemporaries with a distinctive con and an instantly-recognisable ‘fat’ hull.

In August 2000, she joined the Northern Fleet on its summer exercise in the Barents Sea.

The movie paints a pretty bleak picture of the state of the Russian Navy at the time. Its men were poorly paid. Officers and their families lived in the same drab functional apartment blocks as the men. And the material state of the Fleet was far from first-rate.

And yet, the men themselves were proud of their service

and shared the same bond as submariners the world over.

Their undoing was an out-of-date dummy torpedo due to be fired during the exercise.

The RN ditched high-test peroxide as a fuel source in the 1950s; it was far too volatile. The Soviet Navy did not.

Shortly before firing on August 12 2000, the torpedo exploded, almost certainly killing everyone in the Kursk’s torpedo compartment.

The blast crippled the boat and drove her into the seabed 100 metres down, yet most of the crew survived.

It was a second explosion – the remaining torpedoes detonating as their warheads ‘cooked off’ – which proved devastating, causing the entire forward section of the boat to implode (both explosions are chillingly recreated).

Just two dozen men in a stern engine compartment survived. The bulk of the

film is devoted to their efforts to remain alive, botched Russian efforts to rescue them and finally the intervention of the British rescue submarine LR5 after lobbying by Cdre Russell.

This is not a Hollywood film and there is no Hollywood ending. Every man on the Kursk died (the last horror the survivors endured was a flash fire caused by a contaminated oxygen generation cartridge).

It’s a reminder that governments change, but attitudes take longer to shift (the response of the Russian Navy and government was distinctly Soviet), that no short cuts should ever be taken with safety, especially on nuclear submarines, and that submariners face dangers every time they sail above and beyond their surface fleet comrades.



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HMS Tracker hosts VIPs

ROYAL Navy sailors hosted the Lord Lieutenant of Renfrewshire, Colonel Peter McCarthy, along with a number of other guests on board HMS Tracker.

The guests were picked up at Kip Marina, Inverkip, by Lieutenant Samuel Velickovic, the Commanding Officer of the Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron.

After being welcomed on board by Lt Velickovic and crewmembers, the guests were taken out to sea where the Faslane-based P2000 patrol boat took part in some Operational Sea Training with two of the Royal Navy's mine counter measure vessels, HMS Grimsby and HMS Hurworth.

HMS Tracker and her crew had to pretend to be the "enemy" for the duration of the training – this meant harassing the two minehunters until they had no option but to respond and engage with HMS Tracker.

At this point Tracker and her crew sprang into action and demonstrated to the visitors how they would react to various emergency situations on board such as damage to the ship, fire on board, flood or man over board.

Also on board for the visit were leaders and staff from organisations which provide support to young people from minority groups in Glasgow and across Scotland. Among them were Raza Sadiq and Sabrina and Fiaz Khan from Active Life Club, a popular club for ethnic



minority youths in the Glasgow area and Tariq Iqbal, a leader of the Scottish Communities Initiative, whose aim is to create a more equal, just and educated Scotland.

Lt Cdr Gary Farmer has worked with both groups to establish partnerships with a view to providing opportunities for young people to challenge themselves and develop and grow a wide range of skill sets.

The guests were invited to see first-hand the range of transferable skills such as time management, working as a team and other hands-on skills, which the Royal Navy can offer. The aim is to get some of the young people to sea in the near future to let them experience for themselves what a career in the Royal Navy could offer them.

Also attending the visit were Her Majesty's Deputy

Lord Lieutenant, Rector David Girdwood DL, Mr Bruce Reidford, next Deacon Convener, Matthew Stewart, City of Glasgow College Nautical Faculty and Elspeth Talbot, local business woman, Solicitor and Trustee of Trades House.

Lt Velickovic said: "All of the guests were impressed with how professional the crew were throughout the day and each of them left with a better understanding of the Royal Navy and what we do, how we train and the high standards we maintain."

The Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron are based at HM Naval Base Clyde and help protect high-value shipping on the Clyde.

The Squadron consists of two P2000 Patrol Boats, Tracker and Raider, and are part of the Faslane Flotilla which operates the ships and submarines berthed at the Scottish port.

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£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the April edition of *Navy News* (right) was the torpedo boat destroyer HMT Laurel, which served with the 3rd Destroyer flotilla.

Keith Bennetts, of Solihull, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.

This month's mystery boat (above) is a T-class submarine which spent much of WW2 in the Far East. She also spent nearly ten years serving with the Australian Navy before being scrapped in August 1961.

1. What was her name, and 2. which submarine did she sink in the Strait of Malacca?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, *Navy News*, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers



will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Entries must be received by July 11. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our August edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

Reunions

HMS Iveston: A reunion to mark the 28th year since the Mediterranean deployment of January to May 1991, takes place on June 15 in the Portsmouth area. If you served during this time, please contact Shaunmckeever@yahoo.com or telephone 07547 934424.

HMS Manchester: The second reunion will be held in the WO, SR and SNCOS' Mess at HMS Nelson from June 7 to 9. For details visit: 2ma.org.uk or email stevie27@hotmail.com or iantids@ntlworld.com

HMS Liverpool Association: A reunion will be held on Saturday June 22 at the GI's Association Whale Island Portsmouth, mustering at midday. For details contact secretary John Parker at infor@hmsliverpoolassociation.org.uk or call 02392521222.

Britannia Yacht Club's 60th anniversary dinner takes place at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth, on Thursday June 20. Guest speaker is Captain Sir Robin Knox-Johnston. Tickets for the three-course dinner are £45pp. Mess dress/black tie. For further details contact Lt Cdr Tilda Woodward on tilda.woodward258@mod.gov.uk

TIFF151 Artificers reunion takes place at HMS Sultan's WO&SR Mess on Saturday June 29 from 7pm. Email Sultan2019@tiffs-reunion.org.uk to register your interest and purchase tickets. £20 per person, maximum of two tickets per application.

HMS Ark Royal Association. Our reunion dinner takes place at the Union Jack Club in London on September 7. For more information email enquiries@hmsarkroyalassociation.org or visit hmsarkroyalassociation.org

HMS Ulster. A reunion will be held in Torquay from September 20 to 23. For details contact Norrie Millen at ulster@candoo.com

HMS Eagle: The Friends of HMS Eagle reunion weekend will be held at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Portsmouth, from September 27 to 29. Contact the main organiser, Danny du Feu. Email: ddf.photography@gmail.com or phone 07711 083465.

HMS Troubridge Final Commission Association: Annual reunion takes place at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool from October 4 to 7. Contact Bryan Pace at Romft1@gmail.com or via hmstroubridge.com

Weapon Mechanicians Association: The 2019 annual reunion takes place at the Bear Hotel in Havant, from October 11 to 13. For further details contact Peter Andrews at weaponmechs50@btinternet.com or phone 07411 807552

The Survey Ships Association: The 25th reunion takes place at the Mercure Chester North Hotel, Woodhey House Hotel Cheshire, from Friday October 25 to Monday, October 28. For information on membership and reunions please send a SAE to: The Secretary, SSA, 16 Quay Ostend Cliff Park Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR31 6TP. Or phone 07974156996

HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans' Association. The 2019 reunion takes place at the Coniston Hotel in Sittingbourne, from October 4 to 7. For further details please contact enquiries@iowtours.com.

HMS Superb (Cruiser) Association. The annual reunion and AGM takes place at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent, on October 4 to 6. For details contact Robin Smith at 173 London Road, Rainham, Kent, phone 01634 362379 or email robinsmith173@yahoo.co.uk

HMS Undaunted, Eagle and Yarmouth Association. Reunion takes place at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, from October 18 to 21. For details contact Alan 'Whiskey' Walker on 01268 548041 or email whiskey666@outlook.com.

HMS Lowestoft Association. Reunion takes place at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from October 4 to 7. For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or contact: ian@hmslowestoft.co.uk. Tel: 07778 546861

HMS Mohawk Association. Reunion takes place at the Kegworth Hotel, Packington Hill, Kegworth, from November 1 to 4. For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or email Bob Proud rob.proud@mypostoffice.co.uk

Deaths

CCY Holborn Gerald "Binnie" Hayles DSM. Joined 1934, left 1954. Served in HMS Resolution, HMS Havock, HMS Crocus, HMS Terror, HMS Loch Lomond, HMS Sheffield, Malta Comcen (Lascaris) and HMS Ganges. Awarded DSM at Dunkirk. Member of Ipswich CTC RNR in late 1960s. Died April 27, aged 100.

Lt P K (Peter) Arbuthnot. RN. Joined RN in 1950 as an aviation cadet on an eight-year short-service commission. Served in 825 NAS, and flew 119 sorties over North Korea, operating from HMS Ocean. Took part in Coronation flypast in 1953. Converted to jets and joined 809 NAS. Retired 1956.

Donald Forcey, Ordinary Seaman. Served in RN from Feb 1949 to July 1956 on HM Ships Victorious, Liverpool and Duchess. A member of the HMS Liverpool Association, Alresford RNA and the now-disbanded HMS Duchess Association. Died April 8.

Joseph Patrick Kilroy. Normandy Veteran. Joined Royal Navy in 1942 Served in Battle of the Atlantic and in the Arctic Convoys. Was in first wave on Gold Beach, Arromanches, as a Royal Navy beach Commando. Awarded the Arctic Star and the *Legion d'Honneur*. Member of RNA, North Manchester Branch. Died February 27, aged 94.

Capt David W Ashby OBE. HMS Heron, Relentless, Saker, Centurion, Centaur. RAN. Bangladesh Navy. Jungle Warfare Wing Latimer. DGNPS, NATO. Died March 6, aged 86.

Lt Robert K Ledsom. HMS Centaur, Cavendish, Corunna, Scorpion. Died April 5.

Cdr Michael E Mocatta. HMS

President, Seahawk, Ariel, Victorious, President, Barfleur. Dir Gen Aircraft, Defence Procurement Executive. Died March 22, aged 91.

Capt Edward M S O'Kelly. RN Coll Greenwich, HMS Sea Eagle, Vernon, St Angelo, Battleaxe, Broadsword, Gravelines, Defender, MMS1584. Admiralty Interview Board HMS Sultan. Def Policy Staff. Central Defence Staff. Died April 13.

Lt Cdr Colin H Seaward OBE. HMS Centaur, Cleopatra, Vernon, Aberford, Constance, Wild Goose, Milne. ANA Moscow. DNI/NID. Died April 14, aged 92.

Lt Cdr Douglas R Taylor MBE. HMS Heron, Pembroke, President, Seahawk, Gamecock, Glory, Ocean. Dir Gen Aircraft (Navy). Died March, aged 89.

Cdr John C Webb. HMS Mercury, Bellerophon, Hampshire, Girdleness, DGW(N). NOD. RNC Greenwich. ASWE. Naval Secretary. Died April, aged 89.

POME Chris Stephens. Served 1957-1969. HMS Loch Fada. Served in Gulf and Far East. Also served in Hartland Point and Ulster and shore bases Ganges, Raleigh, Victory, Sultan and Lochinvar. Member of HMS Loch Fada Association. Died April 28, aged 77.

Jack Winstanley, stoker. Served from 1947 to 1952. Founding member of SOCA Derby and member of both Derbyshire Submariners Association and Nottingham SA. Died May, aged 90.

Nigel 'Slinger' Wood CPO (Std) Served December 1958 - December 1980 in HMS Victorious, Eagle, Ark Royal, Urchin, Ajax, Achilles, Fife, RNAS Yeovilton, Culdrose, HMS Drake, Nelson, Pembroke, Portland

and served the Queen on her Silver Jubilee in 1977. Died May 3 2019, aged 79.

Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNOC

Capt Patrick A C Harland OBE. HMS Albion, Victory RNB, Mercury, Saker, Nelson, Afrikander, Solebay, Truelove, Royal Charlotte. NATO. Dir Naval Signals.

Lt Cdr Eric W Greetham. HMS Fulmar, Eagle, Bulwark, Seahawk, Collingwood, Nelson, Weapons Dept Naval.

Submariners' Association

Jim Johnstone LOEM. Served 1961 - 1967 in HM Submarines Narwhal, Sealion, and Valiant. Blyth & Wansbeck Branch. Died April 5, aged 78.

John Billington CPO Elec. Served 1942 - 1947 in HM Submarines Scorchers, Seascope, Amphion, Meteorite, U1407. Merseyside Branch. Died April 15, aged 96.

David Gunter CPO MEA. Served Aug 1979 - Aug 1993 in HM Submarines Churchill (11/79-06/86), Renown (90-91). Beds & Herts Branch. Died 17, aged 65.

Donald Morgan CPO Coxn. Served Dec 1954 - Jul 1972 in HM Submarines Tireless (2), Subtle, Thule, Anchorite, Oracle, Alaric, Tapir, Auriga. Merseyside Branch. Died April 18, aged 87.

Mike Kingshott FCPO MEA(P). Served Sep 1962 - Feb 1982 in HM Submarines Porpoise, Talent, Warspite, Resolution and Courageous. West Of Scotland Branch. Died 19, aged 82.

Ask Jack

Minesweepers. For many years I have wondered why the pennant numbers of the HMS Vernon Training Squadron Ton-class minesweepers of the 1950s-70s were painted red as opposed to traditional black.
At one time I thought it may be routine for ships of the training squadrons to have red pennant

numbers but have since learned this is not the case. Could anyone enlighten me? John Soanes. Jsoanes@btinternet.com.

LRO Steve Tilley. Last known address was London. He was my bestman. Please contact Stanley Begg at 289-232-4502, Mississauga, Ontario, Canada.

MYSTERY PICTURE 292

Name
Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

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»» RUNNING THE GAUNTLET

They came, they saw, they conquered.

ROYAL Marines returned from across the Atlantic with a haul of silverware from their sports tour, Virginia Gauntlet Two.

In all it was a pretty damn one-sided affair, as they took on the United States Marine Corps in various sports over two jam-packed weeks.

The number of wins were numerous and the number of defeats can be counted on one hand, but the most memorable victories came in the Virginia Gauntlet Trophy and also the boxing as the Royal Marines came back to retain their Zeebrugge Trophy in a 5-5 draw.

There were more than 250 Royal Marines on the tour, spread across different sports and states from north to south of the US.

Attention was mainly focused on the Virginia Gauntlet Trophy games, which the Royal Marines mopped up 4-1 with ease to keep the silverware they first won back 2012.

It all started with a resounding 6-1 win in the football, which followed straight after the opening ceremony at Quantico's Butler Stadium.

An early goal from the hosts saw the Royal Marines go behind, but they soon took control and hit six unanswered goals.

The commandos were soon 2-0 ahead after winning a Ryder Cup-style golf tournament and already their US counterparts were staring defeat in the face.

It was close out on the Medal of Honor Golf Course, but the Brits edged it 12.5 points to eight.

"With the scores all square after two days, everything was still there to play for going into day three, but our marines dug deep to grind out the win and in turn put the team 2-0 up in the race for the trophy," said Sergeant Kristian Foster.

The basketball event came just in time for the Americans. The warm embrace of one of their national sports meant they briefly stood a fighting chance of staging a comeback.

It was no embarrassment for the Royal Marines basketballers. The match ended 73-62 and there were some surprised faces in the USMC camp that the Brits could shoot hoops as well as the Yanks, even if they did lose.

Command Warrant Officer 2nd Class Greg Hill of the USMC said: "The Royal Marines surprised us a little bit by how good they were, but this is one of our national sports – we were always going to win in the end."

The Americans sensed a chance to make it 2-2 heading into the skeet (clay shooting), but the Royal Marines were in no mood to mess around.

The ruthless commandos hit 1,061 clays out of 1,200 to claim a decisive win.

The hosts hit 993 of 1,200, but it wasn't enough to keep them in the running and, with one sport still to play, the Brits were champions.

The icing on the cake came as the Royal Marines twice defeated



Picture: PO (Phot) Si Ethel

the USMC at rugby.

After a couple of early tries it was difficult for the USMC to get back into the game and the British took a decisive 29-0 win the first match.

USMC took an early lead in the second showdown, but the Royal Marines finished strongly to take a 19-7 win.

Captain Sam White of the USMC said: "The game is about competition between two teams but more importantly it's about developing that camaraderie and *esprit de corps* we have had for hundreds of years."

After the final whistle, Colonel William Bailey reluctantly presented the Virginia Gauntlet trophy to Lieutenant Colonel Steve Crouden to bring the Virginia Gauntlet Trophy tournament to a close.

"The wide score does not tell the true story of this amazing tournament, many of the events were on a knife-edge throughout," added Sgt Foster.

"The golf was still up for grabs going into the last two holes on the final day of the tournament and the skeet was also taken by a narrow margin."

With one trophy in the bag, it was time for the Virginia Gauntlet tour's grand finale, a boxing night at a packed-out Barber Hall at Quantico Base.

The Royal Marines had to fight back from the brink of defeat

but managed to retain the Zeebrugge Trophy with a draw.

It was 5-3 to the USMC after the first eight bouts and the Royal Marines knew they could not afford any further defeats in the final two showdowns.

Mne Joseph Leddington secured a split decision win over Corporal Oubigee Jones to make it 5-4 and then it was all down to Mne Matthew Fenwick to grab a victory which would see the Royal Marines take the trophy home.

"As I was about to walk to the ring, my coach said to me 'it's all on you Fenners, so no pressure'," said Mne Fenwick.

"The atmosphere was amazing, the noise from the crowd got me so motivated I knew I was going to get the knockout in the first round."

After two minutes and 15 seconds of the first round, Mne Fenwick let rip with a right hook, left hook combination to the head and dropped his opponent, Cpl Keandre Blackshire, to his knees.

Despite beating the count, the referee deemed Cpl Blackshire unable to continue and the Royal Marines could celebrate retaining the trophy.

After winning it on home turf last year, the 5-5 draw here was enough to keep the silverware (a team must win it outright to prise it away from the holder).

For the second time in two days, Col Bailey had to begrudgingly

hand over a trophy to the Royal Marines after presenting the visiting Brits with the Virginia Gauntlet Trophy.

The commandos had to dig deep to make their comeback to seal the trophy for a second year running.

After losing the first two bouts, it looked like the visitors would be handing over the silverware to the USMC.

Mne Taz Campbell and Mne Dan Ward stopped the rot, making it 2-2 on the night before the Royal Marines headed into the intermission 4-2 down.

Mne Matthew Garrett brought it back to 4-3 by defeating Cpl Jabrill Noel but the USMC came back strongly in bout eight.

The slick skills of Cpl Felipe Ninofernandez secured a win for the USMC, taking the score to 5-3 with just two bouts to go.

The crowd kicked into action with a chant 'Royal, Royal' and 'Swing Low Sweet Chariot' and that raised it for the British.

After Mne Leddington's win, it was all down to Mne Fenwick against Cpl Blackshire.

The bout started at a fast pace with both boxers taking the centre of the ring and trading punches from the opening bell.

The frantic pace could not sustain itself and after two minutes and 15 seconds of the first round, Mne Fenwick made his move.

His combination had Cpl Blackshire on his knees and, after the referee deemed him unfit to continue, the Royal Marines claimed a huge victory.

Top of the pops...



THE Royal Navy Dressage, Show Jumping and Eventing team punched above their weight at the UK Armed Forces Championships at Addington Equestrian near Buckingham.

The show jumping team of Lt Wendy Hems on Toska, Petty Officer Amy Taylor on Nikky and Marianne Morffew on J, all jumped clear rounds to triumph in a 34-team field.

Lt Cdr Jill Monnox on Sonny stormed their Sunday dressage tests – winning both the Elementary and Novice classes.

There was also an all-Royal Navy podium at the Saturday dressage event. Marianne Morffew on J, Lt Cdr Monnox on Sonny and Corporal Sara James on Euro swept the accolades in the Elementary Class.

The Championships also hosted the first leg of the Loriners Inter-Service Team Trophy.

This involves each team performing four combinations of dressage tests with the best three scores counting towards a final total.

The RN team of Lt Cdr Monnox on Sonny, Lt Cdr Vicki Sollitt on Nelson, Petty Officer Sophie Fuller on Infnaty and Cpl James on Euro were beaten into second by a very strong Army team.

There were plenty of other Royal Navy names in lights, too.

Lt Cdr Nicole Sheriff-Vonk (RNLN), currently on exchange at MWC and in her first season on the DSJ&E squad, jumped a brilliant and fast clear round on Toska in the 90cm event (the largest of the Championship with 60+ other riders) to win.

PO Fuller on Infnaty notched up valuable Olympia qualifying points by jumping a double clear to finish second in the 1.10m show jumping class and then repeated the same brilliant performance in the 1.15m class for another runners-up spot.

Lt Hems on Toska also achieved a second place in the 1m outdoor class.

Other RN performances saw ribbons for top six finishes.

In all a positive start, which bodes well for the rest of the 2019 season.

A warm up in Bristol

ROYAL Navy runners warmed up for their inter-service fixtures at the Great Bristol 10km.

There were some hot times from the RN contingent, promising much heading into the services campaign.

Paul Smith topped the lot, running an impressive race in 34 minutes 8 seconds to finish in 25th.

Just 20 seconds later, Smith was joined by Mark Duffett, who crossed the line in 34 minutes and 28 seconds to secure 29th place.

Tom Dallamore followed in 36 minutes and 57 seconds, ahead of Cameron Smith in 37 minutes and 42 seconds and Chris Johnson in 38 minutes and 37 seconds.

Leanne Kirk came home in 55 minutes and 27 seconds, behind Chelsea in 41 minutes and 50 seconds.

If you think you might be interested in running, please email Lieutenant Phil Boak on philip.boak743@mod.gov.uk.

Young bucks test

A NAVAL Service duo took on students in the Universities and Colleges Sport orienteering championships in Scotland and came away with their heads held high.

There was a bit of an age difference, but in a competitive field the UK Armed Forces team finished just a place off the podium in fourth overall in the relay event.

Lieutenant Commander Olly Nokes and Colour Sergeant Alex Heath (Royal Marines), pictured right in action, took on the rough mountainous course and came in 69th and 74th respectively out of a field of 92 in the individual event.

Both LtCdr Nokes and CSgt Heath – the first Royal Marine to repre-

sent the UK Armed Forces team since the incredibly talented Major John Rye – continued their performances in the relay, helping close the gap on the leading universities to creep close to the podium.

The fourth place finish shouldn't be sniffed at – the university teams have runners who regularly compete for Great Britain, so this was a good outing for the team.

If you're interested in getting involved in orienteering, please contact Lt Cdr Nokes on oliver.nokes466@mod.gov.uk

Or, alternatively, search Royal Navy and Royal Marines Orienteering Club on the NavyFit Portal and on Facebook.



Last-gasp triumph for Eastern in T20 finale

THE Royal Navy's Eastern Region outfit took a last-gasp victory over the Royal Marines Cricket Club at the latest inter-regional tournament in Portsmouth.

The Twenty20 competition helped blow off some pre-season cobwebs and it was certainly hotly contested, with Eastern running out eventual winners with a final ball catch at the boundary.

The tournament between Eastern, Western, Fleet Air Arm and Royal Marines Cricket Club saw tightly-fought matches throughout at Temeraire and Burnaby Road.

It also gave the development and senior men's team selectors much talent to consider.

The final, between Eastern and the Royal Marines was a brilliant example of competitive T20 cricket.

Eastern, won the toss and elected to bat and put in a fantastic performance, scoring 156 for four wickets – including an impeccable 47 from 'man of the match' Commander Antony Bosustow.

The Royals were clearly up for the challenge and battled hard to maintain the run rate, including a commanding performance from Colour Sergeant Ash Morris, who smashed the ball all over the ground.

It meant as the match drew towards the end, it looked like the Royals had won.

However, an impressive bowling and fielding performance in the last two overs, meant that it came down to last ball, with a six needed to win.

Eastern took victory with a superb catch on the boundary to take the silverware.

The winner's trophy was presented by the former Pakistani cricket international player Younis Ahmed to Viv Richards, pictured right.

Meanwhile, the Royal Navy's Women's Cricket team played six Twenty20 matches on their debut tour outside of Europe in Barbados.

RNWCC defeated Barbados Junior Women's team twice but, after games against Barbados Select XI and University of Barbados, the home sides came away with a 4-2 overall win.

Special mentions should go to Petty Officer Lou Worsfold for a top score of 72+ with a tally of 175 runs at an average of 35, and to AB Halima Khan (six wickets at an economy rate of 4.9), and LAET Emma Dell (five wickets at a strike rate of 14.40).

The tour also supported UK charity Opening Boundaries in spreading the message of the importance of gender equality.

The team ran community coaching sessions and also painted a block of the Gordon Greenidge Primary School.

If you are interested in becoming involved in cricket, as a player, umpire, coach or official, or you just want to follow some of the games: further details on the RNCA on royalnavycricketassociation.com.



SOMERSET County Cricket Club will now benefit from the 'commando values' of the Royal Marines.

An initiative will see Taunton-based 40 Commando and Somerset share expertise in health and fitness as well as science and medicine.

"We look forward to inviting Somerset to our base at Norton Manor to show to them why the Royal Marines are one of the most respected fighting forces in the world," said Lieutenant Simon Williams (Royal Navy) of 40 Commando.

"Working alongside 40 Commando, Somerset will enhance their winning spirit through our 'commando values' – excellence, integrity, self-discipline and humility.

"Somerset and 40 Commando both share the same enthusiasm and drive for the highest standards and professionalism – I am sure we will learn a great deal from each other."

On top of sharing knowledge, Somerset will now be offering work experience to commandos preparing to leave the Royal Marines.

Lt Williams added: "This mutually beneficial relationship is an extremely exciting opportunity for us.

"We are also grateful for the support for the club are providing to our serving men and women, they will get a huge amount of enjoyment from the matches and the hosting of Taunton's Armed Forces Day."

This new partnership has been set-up to benefit the wider community, but also for mental health awareness purposes too.

"We will also be working together to deal with issues such as mental health awareness across both parties and the wider community," said Somerset Commercial Director, Suzanne Roper.

A tough start



THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Racing team had a tough start to the Armed Forces Race Challenge at Brands Hatch and sit third after the opening stop of the campaign.

In a race weekend blighted by problems, Keith Attwood was the shining light, taking second in class and fourth overall in the first race of the day, before his car was struck down with mechanical issues, meaning he had to retire from the second race.

After the dust settled on the opening race weekend of the season, the RNRM team found themselves behind the Army and RAF and are only ahead of the veterans' team heading into the second stop at Anglesey next month.

Individually, the standings after round see Attwood in fifth, Gareth Moss in eighth, Lewis Pemble in 18th, Adam Dewis in 19th and Steve Hutchings in 20th.

Meanwhile, Royal Marines veteran Mark Inman was in great form, coming first in the second race of the competition after a runners-up place finish in race one.

It was mainly a juggling act with the conditions at Brands Hatch.

After a chaotic qualifying session, which saw two stoppages due to a track incident, the team were actually in good stead.

Attwood lined up in fifth with veteran Inman behind in sixth, Dewis further back in 11th with Hutchings (13th), Moss (15th) and Pemble (20th).

Now it was a decision over to go for wet or dry tyres.

It was clear when race one got underway in rain, sleet and hailstones, the dry option was not the one and would cost many drivers.

Despite the tricky track, after eight laps, most of the RNRM cars had climbed towards the front of the field.

That was until the Ford Fiesta of rookie Richard Beaumont spectacularly span three times at the Surtees and Clearways complex.

Beaumont's race finally ended after sliding wide and into the gravel trap outside of Paddock Hill Bend. A red flag immediately followed, ending the race with the guest BMW M3 GTR victorious, with Inman in second.

In overall fourth place, and second in Class C, was Attwood in the Mini with the best result for the RNRM team. Moss came eighth, Hutchings 12th and Lewis 16th.

Ahead of race two, the track had partly dried out and the tyre strategy was simple – semi-slicks.

Unfortunately for the RNRM team a number of issues meant three of the team's drivers had to retire.

Firstly Hutchings in his Peugeot 106 pulled into the garage with engine trouble after the formation lap.

As the race began Attwood got a great start and pulled out to overtake the bunching three cars in front of Dewis, Moss and an RAF driver.

But they were unsighted of a stalled BMW M3 further ahead.

Quick reactions avoided a heavy rear impact, but contact was inevitable. This resulted in the race being stopped and Attwood retiring. Moss also sustained some damage in the melee, losing all coolant and so forcing his retirement as well.

On the restart the remaining cars got off the grid in order and lap times began to tumble as cars spread out and drivers pushed on a completely dry track.

After 13 laps, veteran Inman in the VX220, took the chequered flag in first place. The three official RNRM finishers crossed the line. Dewis came seventh, Lewis 19th, Rich 24th (and 5th in Class D).

To get involved and to find out more information please visit nrmsa.co.uk.

Bikers are in groove

THE opening round of the Inter-Services Motorcycling at Brands Hatch saw some good finishes and plenty of drama for the Royal Navy riders.

The newest rider to the team, Lieutenant Commander Llewellyn 'Derek' Thomas – whose poorly R1 had to be worked on until the early hours before race day – came home with a few scrapes and plenty of memories after a 'rollercoaster weekend'.

He also gained a new Zoolander-inspired nickname.

For not being an 'ambi-turner', he was named Derek, after main character from the hit film, *Derek Zoolander*.

"This was the first race weekend for me and what an incredible experience," Lt Cdr Thomas said.

"Chasing down the Army in the military race was the high point, until a lowside crash trying to put down the power on the cold side of the tyre coming out of the only sharp left on track.

"That was a lot less painful than my new nickname, however, gifted for not being an 'ambi-turner'... Derek."

Qualifying saw Corporal Charlie 'Chippy' White start in 19th and climb four places in race one, finishing 15th overall, before the second outing of the day saw him finish 16th.

A broken throttle cable made 'Chippy' not so chipper, withdrawing from race three, before he got the bit between his teeth in the fourth and final outing.

"I was determined to do well," he said. "I had a great start again pushing up five places before turn two.

"I latched onto the group I had been chasing all weekend. Lap after lap I was overtaking the riders in this group and eventually led the group with a lap to go."

Chippy didn't get the best run on the home straight but managed to seal a third place finish in his class (12th overall).

Chief Petty Officer Stuart 'Goody' Goodson secured 14th in qualifying in the Golden Era Superbike competition and seventh in the Inter-Services race.

"Race one went well initially making a good start but unfortunately I couldn't hold off some of the more modern and more powerful machinery that was also sharing the grid," he said.

"I had a few good battles on track but ended up a lowly 19th overall at the end but fifth in my class."

CPO Goody withdrew from race two after his bike lost power, but he pulled out his spare bike for the military race, with some quick thinking from LA (AH) Alan Curtis and CPOAET Adam Myhill swapping the dry wheels from his broken bike onto the new one for the race ahead.

It was a race against time to be ready, but Goody did make it, although had to start at the back of the grid in 30th.

He climbed an impressive 15 places to finish 15th.

He said: "Despite the misfortune of starting at the back, I had the most fun ever during that race. It was certainly one to remember and I couldn't have done it without the help of the pit crew."

In the following two races he finished fourth in class twice with 16th and 12th place finishes in the overall standings.

Meanwhile, things didn't go entirely to plan for Sergeant Luke Terry.

An oil leak saw him black flagged in qualifying and the time spent fixing the leak meant he missed race one, eventually starting race two at the back of the grid.

He climbed three places before a superb battle in the military race saw him edge past James 'Jimmy' Cotrell on the home straight, after some major braking issues.

"All in all, a very busy and stressful weekend with many lessons learned, ready for vast improvement in the next round," he said.



Gliders take the lift

ROYAL Navy Gliding & Soaring Association and Seahawk Gliding Club headed to the Black Mountain in Wales for Adventurous Training to experience ridge and wave soaring.

They had excellent flying conditions the whole week and they experienced good ridge and thermal lift plus a little wave conditions as the sunset during the first three days.

This allowed them to explore the area and achieve a number of duration flights.

The last two days were more settled, however, this was perfect for working on circuits to land on a relatively small-sized grass airfield with sloping runways in challenging conditions.

The team achieved a number of notable British Gliding Association qualifying flights.

Commander Barney Wainwright made one and two hours Bronze Cross Country duration flights, plus a

field landing.

Lieutenant Commander Paul Callaghan sealed two hours Bronze Cross Country duration flight and Bronze Exam.

Mr Nic Barretta made his five-hour Silver Certificate duration flight, while Lieutenant Commander Rob Dowdell and Lieutenant Tom Luscombe both made first solo flights Talgarth.

Expedition leader, Lieutenant Commander Chris Bryning, said: "Once again Talgarth has come up trumps, great weather, a warm welcome and some outstanding ridge and wave soaring for a bunch of flat lander pilots. We will be back again next year."

For more information on gliding opportunities available to all RN personnel, no previous flying experience required, contact Lt Cdr Bryning, Secretary RINGSA at sec@ringsa.com.





DINGHY DOUBLE

ROYAL Navy dinghy crews scored a double triumph as they defeated the best of the RAF and Army.
A dozen members of the RN dinghy sailing squad headed to Bowmoor, north of Shrivenham in the Cotswolds, for the Inter-Services team racing championship, spread over three blustery days when Storm Hannah made things 'interesting' for all participants.
Having pitched tents by the lake as the bad weather set in (the less adventurous stayed the night in the mess at Shrivenham), contestants split into A and B teams for a series of round-robin heats before the two teams in each 'league' raced for the overall trophy and plate title.
With more wind than in the previous few years' competitions combined, strong gusts and shifting conditions, the scene was set for an exciting two days of racing.

The first round robin saw pretty much level pegging from all A and B teams as some highly-competitive racing kept everyone on their toes.
It was the second series of encounters where the two RN teams began to dominate proceedings, winning more races than their counterparts to pull away on the leader board.
The final round robin confirmed the two leading teams – RN and RAF – in both groups, although the races were relatively close – and punctuated by multiple capsize.
The RN B-Team went on to defeat the Air Force 2 races to 1 to lift the plate title, while their A-Team colleagues notched up an unassailable 2-0 lead in the main event to complete a double victory after two exciting days on the water.

