



NAVY NEWS

MARCH 2022

Corporal Ash Marsh of Commando Logistic Regiment during the ski-training phase of the Royal Marines' Cold Weather Warfare Course in Norway ahead of the country's largest military exercise in more than 30 years.

(see pages 11 and 19-21)

PICTURE: PO Phot Si Ethell

Snow patrol

Inside: ■ HMS Spey in Tonga ■ First Sea Lord's vision for RN





STAND BY FOR ACTION

BRITAIN'S biggest warship is up for her biggest challenge.

As you read these lines, HMS Prince of Wales is preparing to slip her mooring in Portsmouth Naval Base and head way up into the Arctic – her debut in the High North (indeed no RN carrier has ventured so far north in several years) and her debut as a floating command centre for NATO's most important naval force.

Since the turn of the year, the ship has been earmarked as the home of the Commander UK Strike Force, the RN-led multi-national staff placed in charge of the NATO Response Force.

On paper that means directing a series of international exercises

throughout the year.

But should world events dictate, the force could be mobilised to respond in short order – anything from humanitarian aid/evacuation operations all the way up to conflict as required.

For now, however, minds are focused on Cold Response 2022, the largest winter exercise Norway has hosted in 30 years (see pages 11 and 19-21), and choreographing several ships and aircraft assigned to the Prince of Wales' group.

To focus those minds, the carrier

spent three weeks off the South Coast conducting final training and preparations, including with units who may take part in the month-long Arctic workout.

Enter the Chinooks of 27 Squadron RAF and maritime Wildcats of 825 Naval Air Squadron (although its another Wildcat unit, 847, operating the helicopter in Norway).

The work of the 'wokka wokkas' with the carrier underscored

a) how busy HMS Prince of Wales has been;

b) how much she has achieved in a short time.

Not two-and-a-half years after her flight deck welcomed its first aircraft (a Merlin Mk2 on September 23 2019), the 1,000th landing occurred.

Leading Aircraft Handler Tom Lenszner safely guided down Chinook ZD 984, crewed by Flight Lieutenant John Parry, Flight Lieutenant Andrew Broadhead, Sergeant McClymont and Master Aircrew Jones.

"It's a massive privilege to share this milestone with the ship," said Flt Lt Parry of 27 Squadron "as a Welshman, to deploy on to the Prince of Wales, the largest warship the Royal Navy has ever operated has been amazing, and to top it off with the 1000th deck landing is something I'll enjoy back in the crew room with my fellow aviators."

The landing was part of broader training by the helicopter squadron from RAF Odiham in Hampshire. Three Chinooks embarked on the carrier as their aircrew earned deck qualifications

deeming them safe to operate from Prince of Wales by day and night.

And the carrier's air department used the short embarkation to hone their handling/marshalling skills, including moving a 99ft-long 11-tonne Chinook from the flight deck to the hangar deck, courtesy of one of the huge aircraft lifts (large enough to accommodate two F-35 stealth fighters... or one Chinook).

The smaller Wildcats also perfected their skills in day and night operations on and off the carrier's enormous flight deck, learning or rejuvenating the art of flying at sea, practised load lifting and winching drills.

In all, the helicopters conducted more than 350 deck landings during their short but intensive stint aboard.

In addition, some of the staff who'll be deployed with Prince of Wales when she sails on NATO exercises used the sea time to get used to life on board and ensure seamless interaction between the multi-national team and the ship's company.

"The last few weeks saw early integration of some of the Commander Strike Force's staff into the ship to support the teams on board so they are ready to operate as the NATO command ship later in the year," explained Warrant Officer 2nd Class Simon Rogers, part of the CSF operations team.

In addition, the 700-strong ship's company practised gunnery skills, air defence exercises, navigation, and everything required to safely operate a fifth-generation aircraft carrier.

Petty Officer David Finney-Young said the ship's marine engineers had also

made full use of the winter shakedown.

"As an engineer at sea you're never 'off the clock' – there's always something to do," said the senior rate, who's responsible for the high-voltage electrical system.

"You need to know the systems inside and out. You can't call anyone out at sea, you've got to fix it there and then.

"So we've honed our skills so that we're ready the next time we go to sea we can tackle anything which comes at us."

Ops room supervisor Leading Seaman Kevin Burgess added: "We've brushed our cobwebs off from Christmas leave.

"We've trained everyone for when we deploy, made sure that the ops room is set up, so that when we are under pressure, you know that no-one is going to crumble."

The carrier also took on three million litres of fuel (enough to keep over 50,000 family cars going...) courtesy of refuelling on-the-go with tanker RFA Tidesurge, which is accompanying HMS Prince of Wales when she heads north, as well as HMS Defender, HMS Richmond and the USS Roosevelt at the core of the NRF group initially.

"The past few weeks have seen us finish our preparation to be the NATO Command Ship in 2022," said Captain Steve Higham, HMS Prince of Wales' Commanding Officer.

"The whole team here are ready to respond to any tasking that comes our way and we look forward to welcoming Rear Admiral Utley and his staff for Exercise Cold Response."

Pictures: LPhotos Ben Corbett and Bill Spurr



Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Prince of Wales	HMS Ledbury
HMS Albion	HMS Magpie
HMS Northumberland	HMS Sabre
HMS Portland	Project Wilton
HMS Argyll	814 NAS
HMS Kent	815 NAS
HMS Tyne	824 NAS
HMS Severn	825 NAS
HMS Mersey	



17 TES SQN

Gibraltar Squadron
HMS Scott
HMS Echo

3 Cdo Bde
CHF

HMS Medway

HMS Trent

Operation Kipion

HMS Tamar

UKMCC
NSF Bahrain
IMSC
COMUKMCMFOR
HMS Montrose
HMS Middleton
HMS Bangor
HMS Chiddingfold
HMS Penzance
1700 NAS
RFA Lyme Bay
Forward Support Unit

HMS Spey

HMS Forth
NEFI

HMS Protector

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



GLOBAL | MODERN | READY

ROYAL Marines are once again honing crucial Arctic warfare skills in Norway (see pages 19-21) as they prepare for important exercises alongside NATO allies in the region.

This year marines will lead the UK involvement in **Exercise Cold Response**, featuring 35,000 troops from 28 nations, supported by a task group, including **HMS Prince of Wales**. The aircraft carrier is preparing for her biggest challenge (see pages 2-3) as she heads to the High North on her debut as the command ship for NATO's most important naval force.

The wings of the Royal Marines – **Commando Helicopter Force** – have also arrived in the High North (see page 11) ready to support their colleagues on the ground. Three troop-carrying Merlin helicopters from **845 NAS** and four Wildcats from **847 NAS** made the epic five-day journey from their base in Somerset to Bardufoss in Norway.

Royal Navy officer **Lieutenant Commander Dave Pitt** became possibly the very first Pitt to set foot on the chain of islands bearing his name (see pages 14-15). He and his shipmates spent the night in the Pitt Islands as **HMS Protector** conducted her second patrol of Antarctic waters this year.

Meanwhile, **HMS Protector's** crew have been making the most of adventurous training, sport and outdoor activities (see page 37).

HMS Spey delivered critical water and medical supplies to Tonga (see pages 16-17) in the wake of a catastrophic tsunami. Her crew offloaded 30,000 litres of bottled water, medical supplies and sanitation and baby care products.

The Royal Navy's newest hunter-killer submarine **HMS Anson** (see page 5) has completed her first dive in a dock in Barrow, where architects, experts and engineers were able to calculate the Astute-class boat's precise weight, stability and centre of gravity.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key has set out his vision for the Royal Navy to 2035 and beyond, see right.

Assault ship **HMS Albion** joined forces with her Dutch counterpart **HNLMs Karel Doorman** (see page 6) to hone their skills in two key tasks – delivering humanitarian aid and support and a large-scale civilian evacuation.

HMS Montrose made her second drugs bust within ten days during a patrol of the Gulf of Oman (see page 9). The ship's boarding team of sailors and Royal Marines of **42 Commando** captured more than one tonne of illegal narcotics.

Also in the Middle East, and solar and wind-powered drones have been tested in the Gulf by a Royal Navy-led task force to bolster security (see page 9).

One of the teams behind the scenes of the UK Carrier Strike Group deployment – the Royal Navy's **Fighter Control Team** – step into the spotlight (see page 27) as they reveal their vital work providing tactical command and control to the fighter jets and helicopters of the fleet.

The aviators of **820 Naval Air Squadron** are relishing another jam-packed year after eight months of intensive operations on the UK Carrier Strike Group in 2021 (see page 13). The Culdrose-based Merlin squadron are gearing up for more missions, building on their successful global deployment to the Indo-Pacific and back.

Aviators from **824 Naval Air Squadron** plucked a kayaker from the icy waters of the Channel after his craft capsized (see page 7).

Sailors from **HMS Forth** raised the Union Flag on the site of the first British settlement in the Falklands – replacing one battered by the fierce South Atlantic elements (see page 35). The bleak, remote settlement of Port Egmont was inhabited for less than a decade and abandoned nearly 250 years ago.

Former **Royal Marine Rian Ilett** has published a book detailing his battlefield and brain tumour experiences in a bid to inspire others (see page 23).

Gibraltar-based **Ministry of Defence Civil Servant Kevin Manasco** plans to walk around and to the top of the Rock three times in a row as part of a number of sporting challenges over the next few months (see page 24).

The men who tried against the odds to stop a breakout by the German Fleet were formally remembered – for the final time – on the site where they flew from to face a bitter fate (see page 37). Serving Royal Navy personnel joined family members, friends and descendants, for the 80th anniversary of the **Channel Dash**.

Finally, Royal Navy and Royal Marines winter sports enthusiasts returned to the ski slopes in France for the return of the **Inter-Services Ski and Snowsport Championships** (see page 36) after a hiatus of two years.

1SL's RN vision

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key evoked President Kennedy and the age of the moonshot as he set out his vision for the Royal Navy to 2035 – and beyond.

Admiral Key says the scale of the challenges – and opportunities – facing the Service over the next dozen years are as bold and ambitious as the space programme and the race to the moon six decades ago.

The era will be characterised by two new classes of frigate, a new generation of nuclear deterrent submarines led by **HMS Dreadnought**, support and survey ships, and increasing use of crewless systems and technology – all helping meet the ambition of becoming the foremost naval power in Europe.

And acknowledging the scale of the threat, he said the Royal Navy – and the nation – had to rise to the challenge posed by Russia's resurgence and any potential threat to peace and stability.

In a wide-ranging speech – his first since taking over the Royal Navy last autumn – on the anniversary of the launch of the revolutionary battleship **Dreadnought** in 1906, the admiral set out his goal of forging a bolder, more potent, offensively-minded Fleet to 2035, equipped with the latest tech, including drones and crewless systems, its ranks filled with the nation's best, brightest, drawn from every race and social background.

Addressing defence and industry leaders in Rosyth, where the first of a new generation of warships, **HMS Venturer**, is under construction, Admiral Key said the investment in the new Type 31 frigate was symbolic of the Government's belief that a thriving, successful Royal Navy was key to national success and prosperity.

After two decades largely focused on operations on land – notably in Iraq and Afghanistan – the First Sea Lord believes the coming decades will be dominated by the oceans.

"The geopolitical tectonic plates are moving," he said. "It feels as if we are returning to a maritime era. Our Government realises that, with decisions in the Integrated Review making some significant and profound investments in what we do."

"It feels to me a little bit like a moonshot moment... Rather as President Kennedy all those years ago, I'm confident today that we have been given by the Prime Minister, a very clear vision to be the foremost naval power in Europe."

Admiral Key said he had accepted the challenge – but stressed it was not about becoming the biggest navy, with the largest vessels and most sailors, but about "packing more punch" with the ships, aircraft and submarines at its disposal and "working hand in glove, not just with our allies around the world, but with our industrial partners to

maximise every drop of energy and resource into achieving our shared aims."

To do so, he said, would require facing some "hard truths": the Navy should be prepared to retire old ships, weapons systems or sensors and invest in more modern solutions at times, taking the same calculated risks with business decisions that it took on front-line operations.

And he issued a "call to arms" to industry to work side-by-side with the Navy to harness new technologies and new ideas to the benefit of all.

He sees a bolder Navy "less wedded to defensive systems", equipped with "hypersonic weapons", with lethal firepower "at our fingertips", pilotless drones sharing the flight decks of carriers with F-35 stealth fighters and Royal Marines "returning to their commando roots" by conducting hi-tech raids unseen from specialist support ships.

But it's also a navy supporting, training and working with its allies and partners around the world, delivering humanitarian aid, its ships acting as "floating embassies for the United Nations".

Admiral Key says such a Navy must reflect the nation it serves, its ranks filled with "the right workforce regardless of background, gender, educational attainment".

2022 has already seen the first female admiral in the Royal Navy's history – "not before time". Soon all four of its training establishments will be commanded by women.

"We're making some progress," he said. "But we need to be honest, it's not enough. We need to show people across the nation. That regardless of what you look like, where you come from, the accent that you have, the perspectives that you want to offer, that to be made in the Royal Navy means for us to embrace you."

"I want us to be able to shout with confidence from the rooftops not only that we thrive off the diversity amongst our people – that background doesn't matter. What you bring to work does."

For the past five years, Admiral Key has directed front-line operations: firstly as the Royal Navy's Fleet Commander, more recently as the UK's Chief of Joint Operations.

Throughout, he said he had "seen what Russia is doing. I say to my Russian

counterparts: we are watching you and we will match you".

He also warned that Britain could not "take its eyes off China" which was investing massively in its Fleet, "modernising and building its armed forces at an astonishing rate and deploying them around the world at speed".

Admiral Key acknowledges that the Royal Navy – or UK – cannot match its potential adversaries and challengers ship for ship, but it could be harnessing the latest technology and by working with its allies "making us far greater than the sum of our parts".

Last year's Carrier Strike Group deployment – led by **HMS Queen Elizabeth**, supported by ships, sailors and air power from the USA and Netherlands, and involving dozens of allies and partners on the way to Japan and back offers a glimpse of such a future.

And the past 12 have also underlined the Royal Navy's renewed global ambitions: its ships and submarines operated in both polar regions, in all the oceans of the world and crossed every line of longitude, something it has not done for some time.

To match ambitions and live up to the vision of the foremost naval power in Europe,

Admiral Key said the decade ahead for the Royal Navy was "exciting, but the scale of the challenge is huge" as it introduced a flurry of new ships and new equipment and adapted to new ways of working and thinking.

"We can't afford to stand still, because the world in which we are operating is also not standing still. The threat is setting the pace, and that is what we need to respond to."

Read the speech in full at royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity



Anson dives in



The Navy's newest hunter-killer submarine HMS Anson has completed what a submarine should do – submerge – for the first time.

The fifth Astute-class boat – £1.3bn of cutting-edge underwater naval power and technology – has successfully come through her first dive in the safety of a dock in Barrow.

The trim dive – carried out over two days – allows architects, experts and engineers calculate the boat's precise weight, stability and centre of gravity, all key factors in Anson's performance when she formally joins her four older sisters already in service with the Royal Navy's submarine flotilla.

The dock at BAE Systems' Barrow-in-Furness yard – where Anson has been built over the past 11 years – features a giant chasm or 'dive hole'.

Long and wide enough to accommodate a Royal Navy nuclear submarine, even at 25 metres (82ft) it's not quite deep enough to cover an A-class boat entirely, but it does leave only the conning tower and tailfin protruding from the cold waters of the Devonshire Dock.

The dive is a slow process as the 60 crew, engineers and shipwrights check for the hull's watertight integrity and move around trolleys collectively carrying 16 tonnes of lead weights so naval architects can confirm the stability of the 97-metre-long nuclear submarine at sea.

"The start of the trim and basin dive is a key step in the commissioning of HMS Anson," said the boat's first Commanding Officer, Commander David 'Bing' Crosby.

"This successful first dive of the RN's newest Fleet submarine is a direct result of weeks of intense, driven, joint team progress, in particular since Christmas."

Initial feedback from the test dive is a resounding thumbs up, allowing the BAE-Anson team to push ahead with the remainder of her testing and commissioning programme, preparing the boat for her maiden voyage.

Commander Crosby continued: "All involved should be very proud; the entire enterprise has again come together to achieve this evolution safely and on date – clear evidence of our joint approach and demonstrates what we can achieve when we all pull together."

"I would like to thank my team who have

all worked wonders over the last few weeks to support and assure this event."

John Moorby, BAE Systems Submarines Astute Programme Director, hailed "a significant milestone in the submarine's test and commissioning phase."

He added: "It demonstrates the continued successful collaboration between BAE Systems, the Submarines Enterprise, and our suppliers on delivering this national endeavour for the UK Royal Navy."

That national endeavour continues – not just with completing Anson, but also the sixth and seventh boats in the Astute-class, HMS Agamemnon and Agincourt, and HMS Dreadnought, the first of the next-generation nuclear deterrent submarines, all under construction in the gigantic Devonshire Dock Hall which dominates the Barrow skyline.



£1bn work at Devonport begins to support fleet for years to come

A TEN-year £1bn transformation of Devonport Naval Base has begun to allow the yard to support the Fleet well into the middle of the 21st Century.

Babcock has started work first demolishing – then rebuilding – the base's No.10 dock, ready to carry out deep maintenance work on the Royal Navy's flotilla of Astute-class

hunter-killer submarines.

The dock has been used extensively over the past five years to carry out maintenance on assault ship HMS Bulwark, Royal Marines landing craft and decommissioned submarine HMS Courageous, which serves as a museum to Cold War submariners.

Over the next five years, No.10

Dock will be transformed to support the Astutes; planning and preparation will be completed by 2024 with construction of the new-look facilities by 2026.

The work began with the demolition of existing infrastructure around the dock, setting the ball rolling on work across the yard to improve existing docks and basins

and develop new facilities. The work will create more than 600 jobs over the next five years, as well as pumping money into the local economy through the supply chain.

"The demolition of the first building is a major milestone for everyone involved," said John Oliver, Babcock's Strategic Infrastructure Director.

"These projects will not only change the skyline of the site, but through collaborating with some of the UK's construction industry leaders, we are making infrastructure changes that will support Royal Navy programmes, secure the site's long-term future and the local economy and deliver critical national defence outputs."



Pictures: L'Phot Juliet Ritsma

DISASTER-RELIEF RUN-OUT FOR ALBION

CREW of the nation's amphibious flagship proved themselves 'masters of disaster' after a wide-ranging weekend workout.

Assault ship HMS Albion joined forces with her Dutch counterpart HNLMS Karel Doorman to hone their skills in two key tasks: delivering humanitarian aid and support and a large-scale civilian evacuation.

Victorian forts outside Torpoint – Tregantle and Scraesdon – sprang back to life as they served as the processing hubs for scores of students from Somerset and Loughborough, who played the roles of victims, casualties and evacuees to give the training added scale and realism, before they could be 'evacuated' to safety via Jupiter Point.

And Bull Point on the Plymouth side of the harbour was ravaged by fire and flood, leaving collapsed buildings, trapped civilians, and basic amenities – electricity, fresh water and sewers, telephone lines – knocked out.

It was down to the Anglo-Dutch sailors and marines to restore order and then restore key services.

"Exercises such as this ensure that our people are poised and prepared," explained Commander Paul Thomson, Albion's head of weapon engineering. "The exercise involved restoring fractured infrastructure, providing food and water, and restoring essential services such as sanitation and electricity at multiple sites in the Plymouth area."

The waters of the Hamoaze and Lynher buzzed with boats as Albion and Karel Doorman landed vital aid and people with specialist skills ashore, along with equipment to support the relief effort.

Albion used her landing craft – designed to transport Royal Marines, armour, vehicles and equipment ashore – to instead deliver stores, food, water, and medical supplies.

And the assault ship's cavernous vehicle deck – which usually houses those vehicles – was transformed into a mass reception area and her dining rooms and living areas were converted into temporary accommodation to house

the evacuees. As the intensity of the exercise increased, it culminated with an 'entitled person's evacuation' – which calls for not merely transporting civilians to safety, but correctly processing people, providing assistance, medical aid where needed, often food and water.

It's something the Royal Navy has considerable experience in carrying out: its ships evacuated civilians from Beirut and Libya in 2006 and 2011 respectively amid a worsening situation ashore, and Albion's sister HMS Bulwark was at the forefront of operations in the Mediterranean in 2015 dealing with the flow of migrants from North Africa.

And events such as Covid or flooding in the UK in recent years have demonstrated that the military is as likely to be helping in Cumbria and along the Severn than in after a hurricane in the Caribbean or earthquake in the Pacific.

"You see the Royal Navy providing aid and support during the hurricane season in the Caribbean and in other parts of the world," said 25-year-old Engineering Technician Lauren Bannister from Blackpool.

"To be able to take the engineering skills I use onboard and practise them ashore during a realistic and

challenging exercise gives me the confidence that we can provide humanitarian support when required."

The combined exercises on the Tamar and around Rame Peninsula brought the curtain down on an extensive three-week package of operational training for Albion ahead of a demanding 2022.

"My crew have worked hard with the Royal Navy's Operational Sea Training team over the past three weeks getting ready for a challenging year ahead," said Captain Simon Kelly, Albion's Commanding Officer. "Exercises such as this – which include support and liaison with the Foreign Commonwealth and Development Office – ensure that we are ready to assist with humanitarian and disaster relief anywhere in the world."

“ Exercises such as this ensure that our people are poised and prepared ”





The Merlin Mk2 returns to RNAS Culdrose with the kayaker; Left, the aircrew, from left, trainee observer Lt Dan Cochrane, on exchange from the Royal Australian Navy, pilots Lt Pascal Munster and Lt Cdr Olly Hill, trainee observer Lt Robert Templeton and observer instructor Lt Phil Reid

Merlin crew to the rescue

ROYAL Navy aviators plucked a kayaker from the icy waters of the Channel off the Lizard Peninsula after his craft capsized. Pilot Lieutenant Commander Olly Hill and his crew were about to begin a practice search-and-rescue drill when they picked up an SOS and their mission became a proper lifesaver.

The kayaker had capsized while paddling off the Lizard Peninsula and made an urgent mayday call on his radio. His message was picked up by a Merlin Mk2 helicopter crew in Falmouth Bay, who happened to be practising search and rescue winching with trainee aircrew.

They immediately flew towards the search area, close to cliffs about one mile

south of Coverack.

Falmouth Coastguard was already coordinating the rescue and the Lizard RNLI Lifeboat was also launched as the drama unfolded.

In charge of the navy helicopter, from 824 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Culdrose at Helston, was pilot Lieutenant Commander Olly Hill.

He said: "We were literally just about to start the training when we picked up a garbled mayday message.

"We all paused and just listened, and we heard the message again. It was hard to understand but we heard the man say



Coverack – we were only five minutes away."

In the rear of the aircraft was trainee observer Lieutenant Robert Templeton, who was already kitted out to go down the winch line for his training exercise.

He was the first to spot the kayaker clinging to the side of his upturned craft as the helicopter circled the search area, close to the rocky shoreline.

He was quickly lowered on a line by the instructor while the helicopter hovered above the exhausted kayaker.

"This was actually the first time I've ever done this," said Lt Templeton.

"We didn't really adapt anything, and we carried on just as though it were a training exercise rather than real-life. It was a team effort and we all worked together to make sure it had a successful outcome."

Lt Templeton was lowered into the water beside the man and the pair were soon winched safely back up to the helicopter. The kayaker was cold and shocked but otherwise appeared unhurt.

Matt Rogers, Team Leader at the Maritime and Rescue Coordination Centre at Falmouth, said: "The Royal Navy helicopter was training nearby in Falmouth Bay when they heard the distress call and made immediate contact

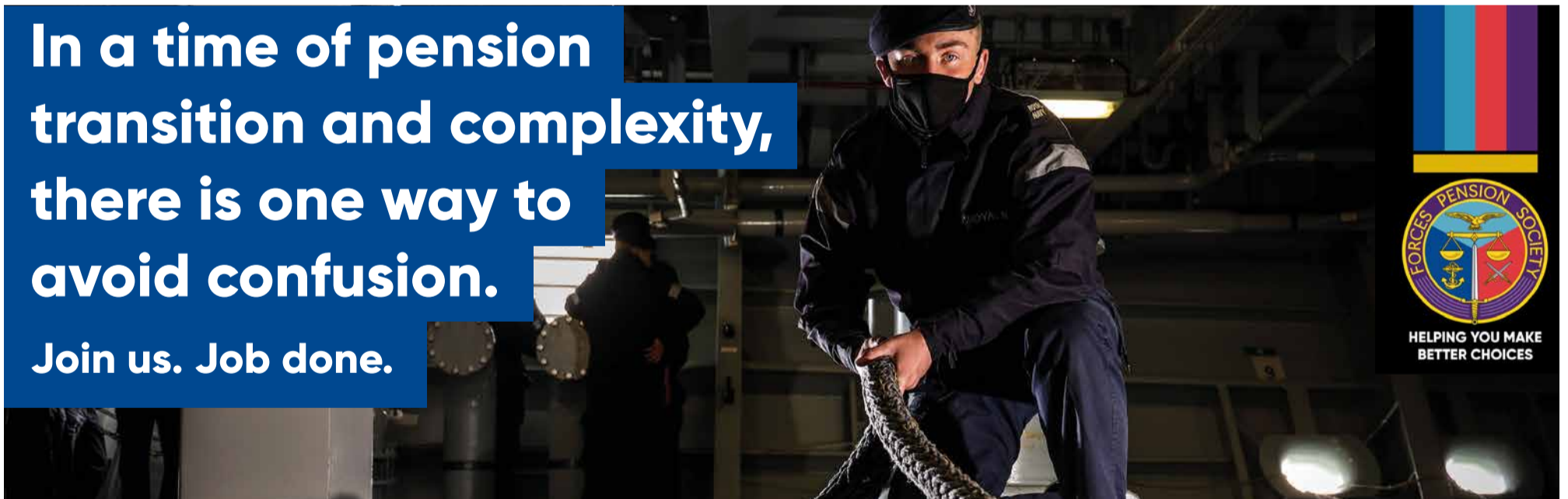
to respond. Their quick actions meant they located the casualty within minutes of arriving on scene.

"The helicopter transported the casualty to RNAS Culdrose, where naval medics and Coastguard Rescue Teams attended to him. It is a great example of how we operate as one big team when it comes to search and rescue - the navy crew were happy to lend their services, and we were happy to receive them."

Although the military handed over civilian search and rescue duties to the coastguard in 2016, the Royal Navy continues to train its crews in these invaluable skills in case of emergencies at sea.

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Additionally, from this April, everyone still serving on AFPS 75 and 05 will be transferred to AFPS 15, involving further calculation complexity.

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Montrose bags second drugs bust

THE Royal Navy dealt its second multi-million-pound blow to drug traffickers in the Middle East in days.

More than one tonne of illegal narcotics was captured by HMS Montrose – over £8m of drugs on the back of a £15m haul just a few days previously, as reported in last month's *Navy News*.

In a nine-hour operation in the Gulf of Oman, the ship's boarding team of sailors and Royal Marines of 42 Commando recovered 150 kilogrammes of heroin, 250 kilogrammes of methamphetamine and 665 kilogrammes of hashish – depriving criminal and terrorist networks of vital funding.

The boarding teams approached the suspect vessel on two of Montrose's Pacific 24 boats, before seizing the dhow and conducting a search, with the frigate's Wildcat helicopter monitoring events from above.

The illicit substances were seized and brought back to HMS Montrose for analysis and destruction. It's estimated the wholesale value of the drugs totalled more than £8m.

The frigate's delighted Commanding Officer Commander Claire Thompson said: "I am yet again incredibly proud of the hard work and dedication my crew continue to put into conducting these operations."

"Another large seizure of illegal drugs, demonstrates our commitment to stopping the smuggling of narcotics, and having been joined by the National Crime Agency for the period, really demonstrates a collegiate approach to an international problem."

Joining the ship for the bust was Kevin Dawson from the National Crime Agency – responsible for tackling organised crime, drug trafficking and other major crimes in the UK – who found the experience invaluable, and was also able to underscore the significance of the ship's success to the sailors and Royal Marines.

HMS Montrose has been deployed to the Gulf region for more than 1,000 days. Operating out of Bahrain, she supports maritime security operations and multi-national task forces in the Middle East, and protecting the interests of the United Kingdom and its allies.

As with her earlier success, Montrose was

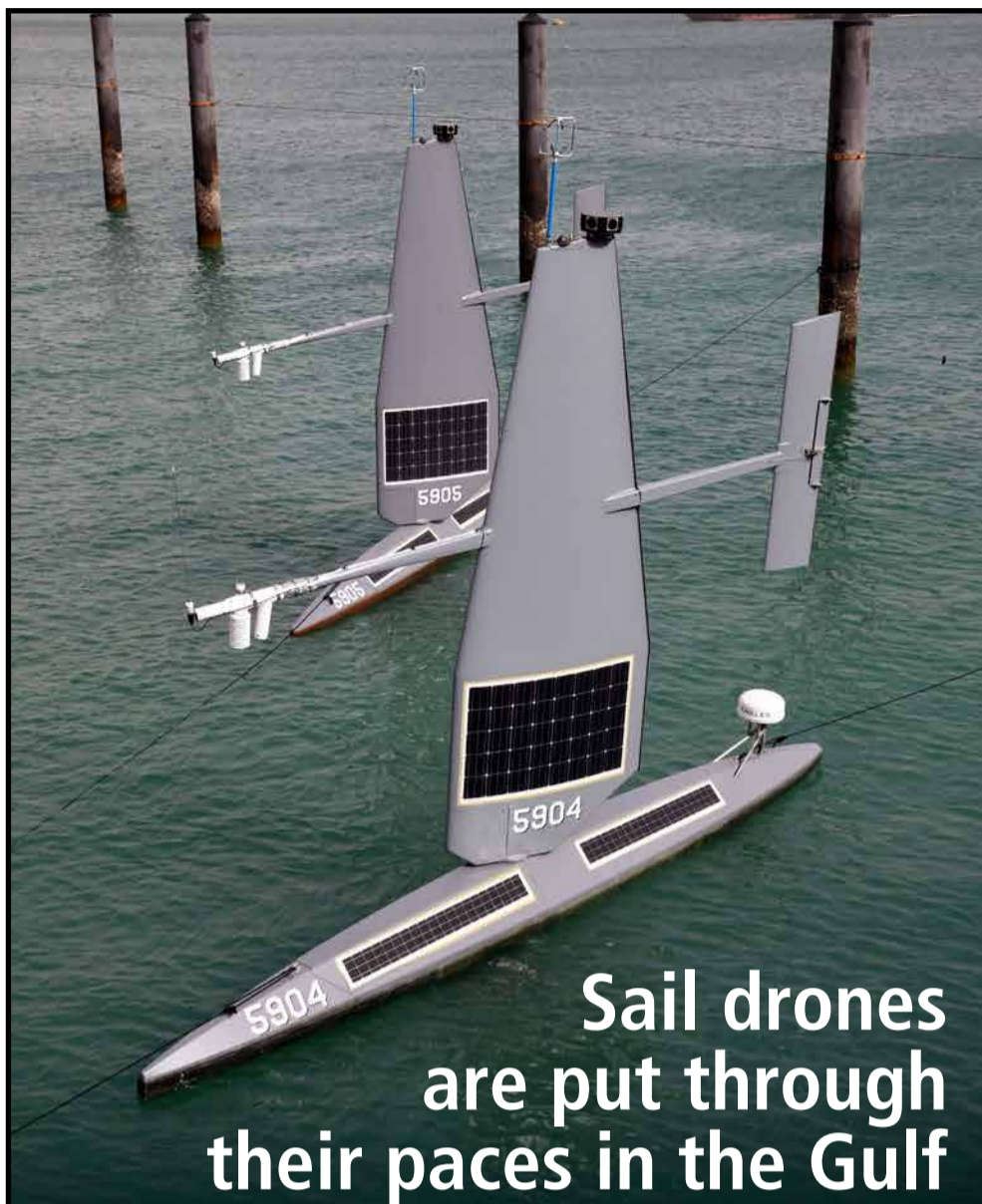


assigned to the international Combined Task Force 150, dedicated to counter-terrorism duties.

Its Pakistani Navy commander Commodore Vaqar Muhammad said: "This seizure is a manifestation of the resolve and commitment of surface and air assets supporting CTF 150 to suppress and deter illicit activities at sea."

"Once again, the professionalism and dedication of HMS Montrose is commendable. CTF 150 continues to maintain a robust presence to support freedom of navigation to seafarers."

Commodore Adrian Fryer, UK Maritime Component Commander and the senior Royal Navy officer in the Middle East, added: "For the second time in ten days HMS Montrose, working together with our international partners, has seized a significant quantity of illegal drugs. This is another fantastic result and the whole ship's company can be proud of what they have achieved."



Sail drones are put through their paces in the Gulf

SOLAR and wind-powered drones have been tested in the Gulf by a Royal Navy-led task force to bolster security.

Sail drones – which look like sailboards, but are packed with cutting-edge sensors to monitor activity – were trialled in the approaches to Bahrain by the team running Operation Sentinel.

The multi-national task force – commanded by the Royal Navy's Commodore Don Mackinnon – is responsible for the security of merchant shipping passing through some of the region's narrowest and dangerous waters, such as the Strait of Hormuz, gateway to the Gulf, and the Bab-al-Mandeb at the foot of the Red Sea.

The task force uses a combination of small patrol vessels to keep an eye on goings on and larger warships, such as frigate HMS Montrose (although she's currently assigned to another task group dealing with terrorist activities) to provide reassurance and protection to the hundreds of oil and gas tankers, bulk carriers and cargo vessels operating in the region.

Sail drones are already in use with the US Navy, who loaned them to the Bahrain-based task force to test how they might use them on a security patrol, working hand-in-hand with surface ships.

The drones rely on wind and solar power to patrol continuously in pre-programmed patrol areas. They were able to alert the Sentinel headquarters ashore about an unidentified vessel approaching Bahrain.

The staff then alerted a nearby Bahraini patrol

vessel, the Al Muharraq, pictured inset, to intercept and investigate while the headquarters continued to observe the entire situation remotely.

Once it had confirmed the vessel as a friendly merchant ship, and with no further action required, the Al Muharraq returned to its original patrol and the drones resumed their own silent vigil, without the need to refuel or replenish.

The trial proved that collectively, the drones and patrol vessel were able to patrol and monitor a far greater area of sea than an individual warship working on its own.

"This exercise was a perfect demonstration of our progress towards delivering a genuinely 'digital ocean'," said Commodore Mackinnon, "one where navies increasingly employ a combination of manned and unmanned systems, on, above, and below the surface, which deliver unparalleled situational awareness and operational choice to the commander."

Combined Task Force Sentinel which he leads is the operational military arm of the International Maritime Security Construct, a coalition of eight like-minded nations committed to ensuring Freedom of Navigation and deterring state-sponsored malign activity at the region's choke points. Its ships, aircraft and personnel are currently taking part in International Maritime Exercise 2022, a huge multi-national test of 60 nations, 50 ships and many new and innovative technologies. It's the largest naval exercise in the Middle East, and the largest exercise for autonomous and unmanned systems anywhere to date in the world.



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Send in the Clouds

The wings of the Royal Marines have arrived in the High North ready to support their commando brethren on the ground after an epic five-day journey.

Aircrews spent 20 hours in their aircraft, dodging storms, flying through snow showers and squalls, over forbidding mountainous terrain and contending with temperatures well below zero on the ground and in the air as they covered 1,800 miles from Somerset to deep inside the Arctic Circle.

From their base at Yeovilton, the helicopters hopped via military and civilian airfields across England, Scotland, the North Sea, then up the Norwegian west coast to their final destination at Bardufoss – the hub of Royal Marines' Arctic training.

Three troop carrying Merlin helicopters of 845 Naval Air Squadron and four battlefield Wildcats from 847 NAS are supporting the commandos' initial winter training, followed by the largest military exercise in Norway in more than 30 years, Cold Response, which begins next month, see pages 19-21.

Civilians can make the trip from Yeovilton to Bardufoss in a few hours – a drive to Heathrow, then a flight to Oslo and an internal flight on to the destination.

A Merlin averages around 120kts – 138mph – and refuels generally every three to four hours. And hi-tech though the helicopter is, it still demands total concentration at all times, especially when over the mountains of Norway when weather is frequently poor. No cruising at 35,000ft on auto pilot...

"When the weather is poor and visibility reduces, the formation gets closer together to ensure we keep visual with one another as going into cloud in these sub-zero temperatures is not always an option due to the height of the ground around us," explained pilot Lieutenant Andy Duffield.

"The Arctic is one of the greatest, yet unforgiving, flying environments in the world. Timely decisions are critical to mission success.

"Temperature inside the cab are absolutely fine – although all doors and windows are firmly shut throughout!"

Over the five days, the route took the Merlin crews from

- Yeovilton to Lossiemouth (refuelling at RAF Leeming in North Yorkshire)
- Lossiemouth to Sumburgh in Shetland (storms and strong winds stopped the onward flight to Norway)
- Sumburgh to Bergen (in perfect weather)
- Bergen to Brønnøysund (refuelling at Ørland near Trondheim, battling squalls and snow showers throughout)
- and Brønnøysund to Bardufoss (refuelling at Bodø on the edge of the Arctic Circle, in typical 'Junglie' weather: low level flights through the fjords, finding gaps in the weather to progress).

Due to the pandemic, it's been two years since the squadron last conducted extensive training in the High North.

"The Arctic has offered us little respite from the outset with the inclement weather we've

experienced," said Lieutenant Commander Tom Nason, the detachment commander. "Thankfully, despite these conditions it took little time for both our aircrew and engineers to reacclimatise; lessons have been quickly re-learned with the 'old guard' coming to the fore to guide those experiencing their first taste of this majestic region."

In each Merlin there were two pilots, two

“The Arctic is one of the greatest, yet unforgiving, flying environments in the world.”

– LIEUTENANT ANDY DUFFIELD

aircrewmembers and five engineers to carry out any maintenance needed on the various legs up to Bardufoss.

The engineers' proved vital in Brønnøysund for fitting protective extreme cold weather covers over the helicopters – not something they do routinely in Norway as there are extensive hangars at Bardufoss.

Among those delighted to see the Merlins at the small coastal airport – it typically only deals with a dozen small commercial flights a day – was security guard Tore 'TK' Slettvold Kolltveit who clicked away with his camera.

"What a treat – I was so lucky to be allowed to take some pictures and, as a keen plane

spotter and aviation buff, this was just like Christmas Eve," he said.

With temperatures well below zero and bad weather passing through, the protective covers did their job and ensured snow did not freeze to the airframe/blades.

And with a tight weather window the next day, the covers proved crucial. Removed swiftly, they allowed the Merlins to lift off promptly and reach Bardufoss just ten minutes before the airfield closed – and thus ensured the fliers didn't have to stop mid-way for another night.

Pilots and crew of 847 Naval Air Squadron – who've brought a maritime version of the Wildcat (HMA2) out to Norway for the first time alongside their normal attack/battlefield variant – were spared the long flight from Yeovilton to Bardufoss.

Instead, their helicopters were shipped out by RAF C17, but even that takes nearly three days: one day in the UK to prep the aircraft, then the flight and finally a day and a half in Norway to reassemble/reconfigure the Wildcats and conduct pre-flight checks.

But that is a whole day faster than on the last Clockwork thanks to some pioneering work by 847's engineers last year which shaved half a day off each end of the loading/unloading

process. Both detachments are now knuckling down to their training alongside Army Air Corps Apaches ready to participate alongside other NATO airpower deployed to Norway for this month's Exercise Cold Response.



Main picture by Lt Andy Duffield



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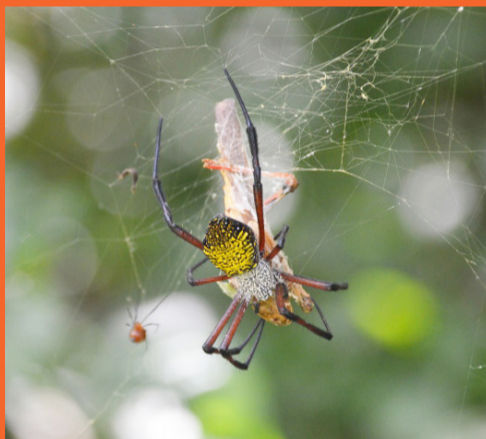


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INTO THE JUNGLE



THE navy aviators of 820 Naval Air Squadron are relishing another jam-packed year after eight months of intensive operations on the UK Carrier Strike Group in 2021.

The Culdrose-based Merlin squadron are gearing up for more missions, building on their successful global deployment to the Indo-Pacific and back.

Based on UK flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth, the specialist Mk2 helicopters proved their ability to support the aircraft carrier during a range of tasks from international training to defence engagement.

And the Carrier Strike Group's journey to the Pacific and back also gave the men and women of 820 NAS the chance to learn some crucial skills, including how to survive if their helicopters were forced to make an unexpected landing.

During a stop in Guam, HMS

Queen Elizabeth's Survival Team put together a bespoke jungle survival course.

Survival is a crucial part of aircrew training and the port stop allowed 820 NAS to get hands on and learn new skills in the hot, humid conditions of a jungle. Across two days, the crew put up with regular rainfall, insects, dense undergrowth and a myriad of wildlife.

The training was split across two days – day one covering important areas of survival (protection, location, food and water) while day two covered jungle techniques.

Lieutenant Andy Miller, a pilot for 820 NAS, was on the survival course. He said: "We learned how to build jungle shelters, how to locate, purify and store water, and were given a veritable smorgasbord of jungle scran. This included insects (high in protein), heart of palm (high in carbohydrate), and

coconuts.

"In the evening, we built a fire and cooked a delicious meal of steak carpaccio with coconut shavings, roasted purple yam with a sprinkling of grasshopper, all washed down with tepid jungle water."

During their overnight stay

in the jungle, the team were faced with a wild boar, along with the constant hum of insects and pattering of rain on their hammocks.

Day two saw the team learn jungle-specific survival techniques and put their

skills from the day before to the test.

Despite the hot conditions and a horror-movie quantity of huge spiders, all four teams were able to safely navigate their way back to base where they were greeted with cold refreshments.

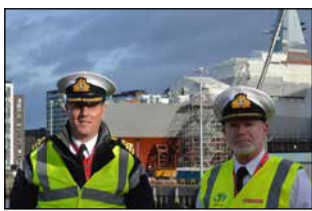
Lt Miller added:

"Everyone was tired but had thoroughly enjoyed the experience of surviving in the jungle for a few days."



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Honorary tours new Glasgow

BRITAIN'S next-generation submarine hunter welcomed Glasgow's first citizen for a tour of the warship which will carry the city's name around the globe.

The Lord Provost and Lord-Lieutenant of Glasgow, the Right Honourable Councillor Philip Braat was shown around HMS Glasgow, the first Type 26 frigate being built at BAE Systems' Govan yard.

Holding the honorary rank of Captain in the Royal Navy, and visiting in that capacity, Captain Braat was welcomed by Commander Philip Burgess, the frigate's Senior Naval Officer alongside the first members of



HMS Glasgow's ship's company, who themselves had only joined just over three months earlier.

In addition to gaining an insight into the capabilities that the Type 26 class will deliver to the Royal Navy, Captain Braat also learnt how these trailblazers have been laying the engineering and management foundations for how the new anti-submarine warfare frigates will operate when they enter service later this decade.

"Joining HMS Glasgow at this stage of the ship build is a fantastic opportunity for the ship's engineering management teams to work closely with our counterparts in both the Ministry of Defence and BAE, effectively working as one team, to ensure the ship enjoys a seamless transition into operational service" explained Cdr Burgess.

Capt Braat was given a guided tour of the Fabrication and Ship Build Outfit Halls to witness first-hand the complex design and manufacturing stages required to build the next generation of Type 26 City-Class frigates, culminating in a walkaround of Glasgow herself.

The ship sits on the standings at Govan having been rolled out of the sheds last year in two giant sections, which have now been joined.

With the Duchess of Cambridge – known as the Countess of Strathearn when she's in Scotland – as her Sponsor, HMS Glasgow is due to enter the water for the first time later this year.



Dave feels right at home



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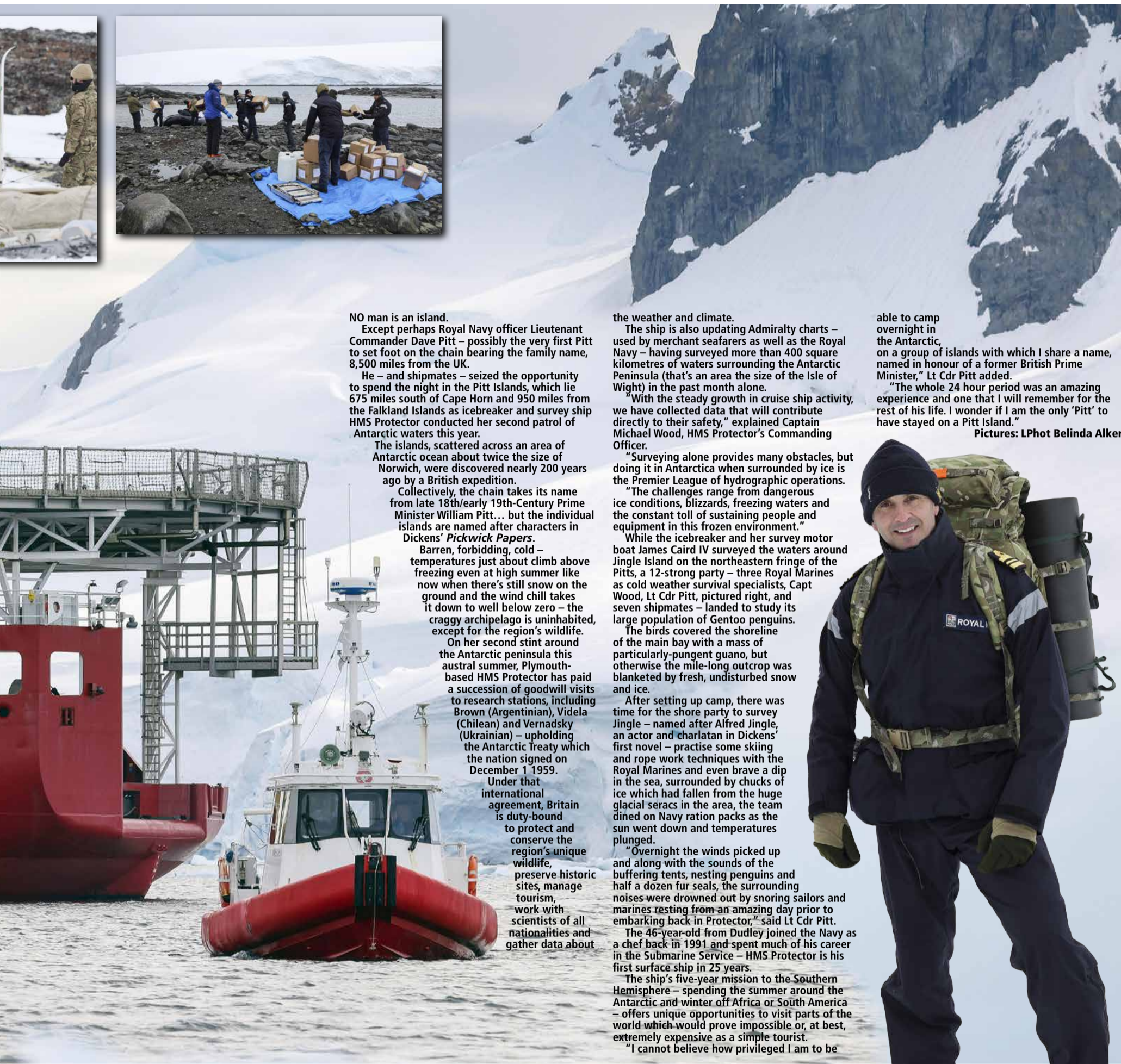
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NO man is an island.

Except perhaps Royal Navy officer Lieutenant Commander Dave Pitt – possibly the very first Pitt to set foot on the chain bearing the family name, 8,500 miles from the UK.

He – and shipmates – seized the opportunity to spend the night in the Pitt Islands, which lie 675 miles south of Cape Horn and 950 miles from the Falkland Islands as icebreaker and survey ship HMS Protector conducted her second patrol of Antarctic waters this year.

The islands, scattered across an area of Antarctic ocean about twice the size of Norwich, were discovered nearly 200 years ago by a British expedition.

Collectively, the chain takes its name from late 18th/early 19th-Century Prime Minister William Pitt... but the individual islands are named after characters in Dickens' *Pickwick Papers*.

Barren, forbidding, cold – temperatures just about climb above freezing even at high summer like now when there's still snow on the ground and the wind chill takes it down to well below zero – the craggy archipelago is uninhabited, except for the region's wildlife.

On her second stint around the Antarctic peninsula this austral summer, Plymouth-based HMS Protector has paid a succession of goodwill visits to research stations, including Brown (Argentinian), Videla (Chilean) and Vernadsky (Ukrainian) – upholding the Antarctic Treaty which the nation signed on December 1 1959.

Under that international agreement, Britain is duty-bound to protect and conserve the region's unique wildlife, preserve historic sites, manage tourism, work with scientists of all nationalities and gather data about

the weather and climate.

The ship is also updating Admiralty charts – used by merchant seafarers as well as the Royal Navy – having surveyed more than 400 square kilometres of waters surrounding the Antarctic Peninsula (that's an area the size of the Isle of Wight) in the past month alone.

"With the steady growth in cruise ship activity, we have collected data that will contribute directly to their safety," explained Captain Michael Wood, HMS Protector's Commanding Officer.

"Surveying alone provides many obstacles, but doing it in Antarctica when surrounded by ice is the Premier League of hydrographic operations.

"The challenges range from dangerous ice conditions, blizzards, freezing waters and the constant toll of sustaining people and equipment in this frozen environment."

While the icebreaker and her survey motor boat James Caird IV surveyed the waters around Jingle Island on the northeastern fringe of the Pitts, a 12-strong party – three Royal Marines as cold weather survival specialists, Capt Wood, Lt Cdr Pitt, pictured right, and seven shipmates – landed to study its large population of Gentoo penguins.

The birds covered the shoreline of the main bay with a mass of particularly-pungent guano, but otherwise the mile-long outcrop was blanketed by fresh, undisturbed snow and ice.

After setting up camp, there was time for the shore party to survey Jingle – named after Alfred Jingle, an actor and charlatan in Dickens' first novel – practise some skiing and rope work techniques with the Royal Marines and even brave a dip in the sea, surrounded by chunks of ice which had fallen from the huge glacial seracs in the area, the team dined on Navy ration packs as the sun went down and temperatures plunged.

"Overnight the winds picked up and along with the sounds of the buffering tents, nesting penguins and half a dozen fur seals, the surrounding noises were drowned out by snoring sailors and marines resting from an amazing day prior to embarking back in Protector," said Lt Cdr Pitt.

The 46-year-old from Dudley joined the Navy as a chef back in 1991 and spent much of his career in the Submarine Service – HMS Protector is his first surface ship in 25 years.

The ship's five-year mission to the Southern Hemisphere – spending the summer around the Antarctic and winter off Africa or South America – offers unique opportunities to visit parts of the world which would prove impossible or, at best, extremely expensive as a simple tourist.

"I cannot believe how privileged I am to be

able to camp overnight in the Antarctic, on a group of islands with which I share a name, named in honour of a former British Prime Minister," Lt Cdr Pitt added.

"The whole 24 hour period was an amazing experience and one that I will remember for the rest of his life. I wonder if I am the only 'Pitt' to have stayed on a Pitt Island."

Pictures: LPhoto Belinda Alker

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HMS Spey sails towards New Zealand ship HMNZS Aotearoa to receive fuel during disaster relief operations in Tonga

Picture by Sergeant Maria Eves of the New Zealand Defence Force

TONGAN RESPONSE

A ROYAL Navy ship delivered critical water and medical supplies to Tonga in the wake of a catastrophic tsunami.

As soon as HMS Spey arrived in the Tongan capital Nuku'alofa on the island of Tongatapu, her 50 crew began off-loading 30,000 litres of bottled water, medical supplies and sanitation and baby care products.

The islands' capital is serving as the hub for an international aid effort supporting the stricken Commonwealth nation.

The aid, which Spey collected from Tahiti, will be distributed around islands most severely affected by the tsunami, which was triggered by an extremely rare underwater volcanic eruption on January 15, destroying homes and covering the area in volcanic ash.

Chief Petty Officer Ash Head led efforts by the entire crew to unload stores in the scorching sun with the scenes of destruction clearly visible as sailors worked, with debris and ash covering houses and trees nearby.

He said: "It is hot out in the sun, so it is good to see the whole ship's company working together, rotating positions where needed and keeping water bottles topped up."

"We are looking after each other and we are glad our work can support international aid efforts and help Tonga."

Due to Tonga's Covid regulations, Spey's sailors have not been allowed ashore, so the ship's crane and a significant team effort was required to ensure everything was delivered safely.

Engineering Technician Jack Parker, 24, from Emsworth in Hampshire, was involved in the efforts.

He said: "The Royal Navy has always been involved in humanitarian aid - you always see it in the Caribbean and this is the first time in a while we have had the chance to help in the Pacific. It is something we should do and I am glad to be helping."

Sub-Lieutenant Kate Winter assisted with the planning for the relief mission - then got stuck in helping unload the aid.

"When Spey was re-tasked to help disaster relief efforts in Tonga there was a lot of planning needed at short notice," the 23-year-old from Gosport in Hampshire explained.

"I researched and briefed our sailors on the needs, culture and Covid status of Tonga so that we can provide help safely and in the most appropriate way. Once the planning was done and we arrived, I have been helping unload stores like everyone else on ship."

New Zealand ship HMNZS Aotearoa and Australian ship HMAS Adelaide arrived as Spey was unloading to deliver their own supplies, as the international effort to support Tonga shifted up a gear.

Commanding Officer of HMS Spey, Commander Michael Proudman, said: "I am immensely proud of my ship's company. Their flexibility, hard work and speed of reaction in assisting our Commonwealth friends in Tonga. We wish the people of Tonga the very best in their recovery from this terrible disaster and stand ready to assist in any way we can."

For sailor Glenroy Cupid the Royal Navy aid efforts in Tonga hold a personal importance after seeing his homeland of St Vincent in the Caribbean suffer in the wake of its own natural disaster last year.

Supply Chain Rating Cupid is a logistician aboard HMS Spey. ▼



HMS Spey rafts up to New Zealand ship HMNZS Aotearoa to receive fuel



HMS Spey loads up water in Tahiti before heading to Tonga



The patrol ship unloads supplies in Tonga



▼ Among the 50 sailors on board are others like Glenroy who are from fellow Commonwealth nations and have a great sense of pride in helping another country from the global network of nations.

For SC Cupid, though, there has been added emotion this week during the delivery of crucial aid – including bottled water, sanitary products and medical supplies – to Tongan capital Nuku’alofa on the island of Tongatapu.

The sailor is from St Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean, which was hit by its own natural disaster after the eruption of the La Soufrière volcano last year, and is proud to be now supporting efforts in Tonga.

He watched on from more than 4,000 miles away in the UK as his homeland suffered terribly, sending back his own supplies via mail as the islands were covered in a thick layer of volcanic ash – similar to scenes in Tonga right now.

Tanker RFA Wave Knight delivered 135 pallets of emergency assistance to St Vincent in April 2021 after the intense volcanic activity had forced an evacuation, displacing 14,000 islanders.

“Lots of my friends and family in St Vincent were affected by the volcano,” said Glenroy, who has been heavily involved in the delivery of aid to Tonga alongside his comrades aboard Spey.

“I was in the UK at the time and I couldn’t get back but wanted to help so I mailed my own boxes of supplies.

“Royal Navy ships are often in the Caribbean and RFA Wave Knight was sent to St Vincent. Here in the Pacific it is only right we help too.



SC Glenroy Cupid watches as water he helped to unload is craned ashore in Tonga



Sailors from Spey work together to unload water



Sub-Lieutenant Kate Winter

▼ “Even for a small ship like Spey, help is still help and people feel important if the UK and the Royal Navy are there giving support and reassurance.”

Glenroy grew up in Kingston in St Vincent and played cricket in school and primarily knew of the Commonwealth through sporting links and the Commonwealth games.

He joined the RN and has forged friendships with fellow sailors from around the Commonwealth, including Sub-Lieutenant Daniel Basel from South Africa, who is also aboard Spey.

“I had a cousin who was in the Royal Navy, and my neighbour is a retired Royal Marine and this made me consider opportunities in the UK,” said Glenroy.

“The Commonwealth link to the UK made this possible and allows me to work in the Royal Navy.”

For SLt Basel, growing up in Durban, South Africa, then studying engineering in Pretoria he had wanted to join the military and similarly looked into the Royal Navy as a different opportunity that was open to him as a member of the Commonwealth.

He said: “Living in South Africa, I was not often exposed to the relationship between Commonwealth countries and I had not

thought much of it except as a link for me to work in the UK.

“However joining HMS Spey in the Pacific is the first time I have been involved in any aid operations, and seeing the substantial links Britain has to countries like Tonga has highlighted the Commonwealth in new ways.

“I am very glad that we can be involved and support.”

HMS Spey remained in Tongan waters after delivering her aid and has been supporting a mission to restore the islands’ communications network and working closely with the New Zealand and Australian navies.

“It will put the Tongan government back in touch with all of the outlying islands so that they can start to really gather that picture and to be able to decide where the supplies are most needed,” added Cdr Proudman, about their recent mission.



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ALL ROADS



A soldier of 24 Commando Royal Engineers yomping with full field kit in Norway whilst on his Cold Weather Survival Course during Winter Deployment 22

Picture by PO Phot Si Ethell

ROYAL Marines are once again honing crucial Arctic warfare skills in Norway as they prepare for important exercises alongside NATO allies in the region.

The commandos are the UK's experts in operations in all extremes of environment, including the frozen mountains and fjords of the Arctic Circle – one of the harshest environments known to man where the sun doesn't rise for two months of the year and temperatures can plummet below -35°C.

Every winter the next generation of Royal Marines head to the high north to train in surviving, moving and fighting across the rugged coasts and unforgiving mountains of northern Norway, demonstrating the UK's commitment to protecting one of its closest NATO allies.

This year, marines will spearhead the UK involvement in Exercise Cold Response, supported by a task group of Royal Navy ships and aircraft, including aircraft carrier and NATO command ship HMS Prince of Wales.

The Norwegian-led exercise, in March and early April, involves 35,000 troops from 28 nations, with allied warships and aircraft working closely together as the powerful task force tests its ability to protect Norway from modern threats.

Before the icy combat of Cold Response, commandos must take on the intensive Cold Weather Warfare Course run by Royal Marines Mountain Leaders, the Arctic and mountain warfare specialists who train commandos in the valuable skills needed to fight and survive in the snow and ice.

That includes emergency shelter building and jumping into freezing water – known as the ice-breaking drill – to test responses to cold shock.

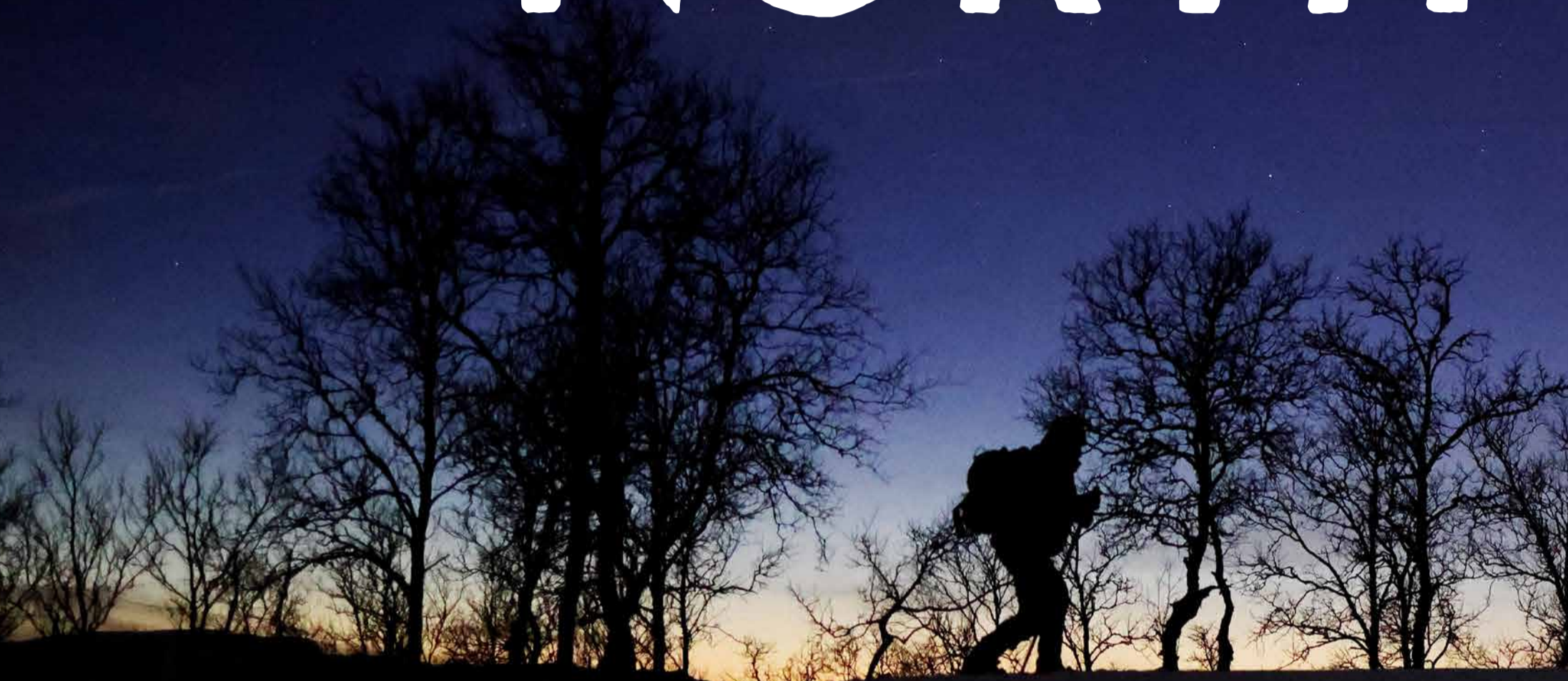
The commandos are also taught navigation skills before taking to skis and snow shoes to learn how to quickly get across the ice and out-manoeuvre adversaries carrying weapons and equipment across training areas in the mountainous Troms and Finnmark county in northern Norway.

Lance Corporal Jack Cooper of 40 Commando said: "This is my fourth Norway. Just surviving here presents unique challenges, but if you can operate here, you can operate anywhere."

Royal Marines deploy to Norway at the invitation of the Norwegian government and continue to do so to remain at the cutting-edge of Arctic combat, ready to fight in the region whenever called upon.



LEAD NORTH



» "Norway is an incredibly harsh environment, but with a few specialist skills and doing the basics well, sustaining and operating out here is a lot more manageable," said 19-year-old Marine Mark Clarke, who has been learning to build a range of shelters for Arctic survival.

The training course has been extended by a week this year to get marines more experience and develop further confidence.

Colour Sergeant Taylor, 45 Commando's Mountain Leader 1 said: "In terms of the training benefit, we're in a really good position. I'm expecting the companies to maximise their interaction with this demanding environment, so that they grow as an effective fighting force."

Adventurer, TV presenter and Royal Marines Honorary Colonel Bear Grylls dropped in to see the training and take on the infamous ice-breaking drill.

He said: "It's always inspiring to spend time with the Commandos – seeing them demonstrate their unique winter survival combat skill set in such challenging conditions is a reminder of what heroes they are."

"For a young marine the Arctic is such an amazing experience, and if they can operate here then they can operate anywhere."

Meanwhile, commandos at the very tip of the spear have also been unleashed in the wild Arctic to hone their own specialist cold weather combat skills.

By ski and snowmobile, the men of the Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron (SRS) have made the most of the mountainous Blatind Ranges in Troms County, northern Norway.

The squadron – drawn from Plymouth-based 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group – is a specialist team of commandos who forge the way ahead for their fellow green berets to follow.

They are trained to gather valuable information on the terrain, the enemy and suitable beach landing places for larger amphibious forces to come ashore.

The squadron comprises highly-trained Royal Marines Mountain Leaders – experts in reconnaissance, mountain and arctic warfare – who must keep themselves sharp for operations behind enemy lines, no matter how extreme the environment.

The SRS has used this deployment to the Arctic Circle to fine-tune cold-weather skills and develop new techniques using snowmobiles – or Oversnow Reconnaissance Vehicles (OSRVs) to give them their full name – and skis.

The commandos have been unleashed on live firing exercises and focused on drills to break contact with an enemy, using their snowmobiles to quickly move across the snow-covered battlefield, focusing on speed, aggression and



A Royal Marines of Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron tears across Blatind Ranges in Troms County, northern Norway, on a snowmobile during live firing exercises
Picture by PO Phot Si Ethell

The aurora borealis shimmers in the sky overhead as a Royal Marine yomps through the Arctic wild during the winter deployment in norther Norway
Picture by PO Phot Des Wade



Royal Marines of 47 Commando working with Skjold-Class corvettes of the Royal Norwegian Navy in Sorreisa, northern Norway

Picture by PO Phot Si Ethell

using the environment to their advantage.

Sergeant Cowell, who organised the training, said: "The squadron performed to an extremely high standard in horrendous conditions. Highlight of the week was the squadron putting their dry drills into practice and going live with break contact on the OSRVs."

Mountain Leader 2, Corporal Edworthy, added: "The recent range package attended by 1 troop SRS proved pivotal in developing and enhancing our standard operating procedures in an extreme cold weather environment.

"The troop excelled in the transition from operating in a temperate environment to breaking contact on skis and OSRVs in extreme conditions."

It's just one phase of the squadron's intensive Arctic deployment that will also see them carry out beach reconnaissance, which involves studying the rugged Norwegian coastline and the seabed to gather valuable information on the best landing places for amphibious forces to come ashore.

While on the coast SRS will also practise helicasting techniques – being dropped from a helicopter with their boats into icy waters and making their way to the beach.

The commandos will also trek long distances on ski patrols – known as long-range ski insertions – traversing the inhospitable terrain to gather information on enemy movements and positions.

At the fjords, the raiding specialists of 47 Commando have been working alongside Norwegian stealth missile ships.

These Plymouth-based marines are experts in small boat operations, both amphibious and riverine.

The Raiding Squadron have been working closely with the Royal Norwegian Navy's Corvette Squadron in the icy fjords.

A reconnaissance team from 47 Commando launched ashore in Inflatable Raiding Craft (IRC) from the Skjold-Class Corvette tasked with locating suitable beaches for amphibious landings.

Under the cover of darkness and on completion of the reconnaissance tasks the commandos extracted back to the Corvette and on to their base location, some 54 nautical miles away.

Royal Marines have been operating with allied forces in Norway for over five decades.

They pride themselves on their ability to work with their extensive network of partner forces around the world, and the Arctic is no exception.

Participation in the upcoming Exercise Cold Response will showcase and cement NATO's commitment to the high north.

Captain Alec Trigger of 47 Commando, said: "Operating in Norway provides its challenges, especially on the water, but I've enjoyed the opportunity to test our capability in arduous conditions alongside our allies."

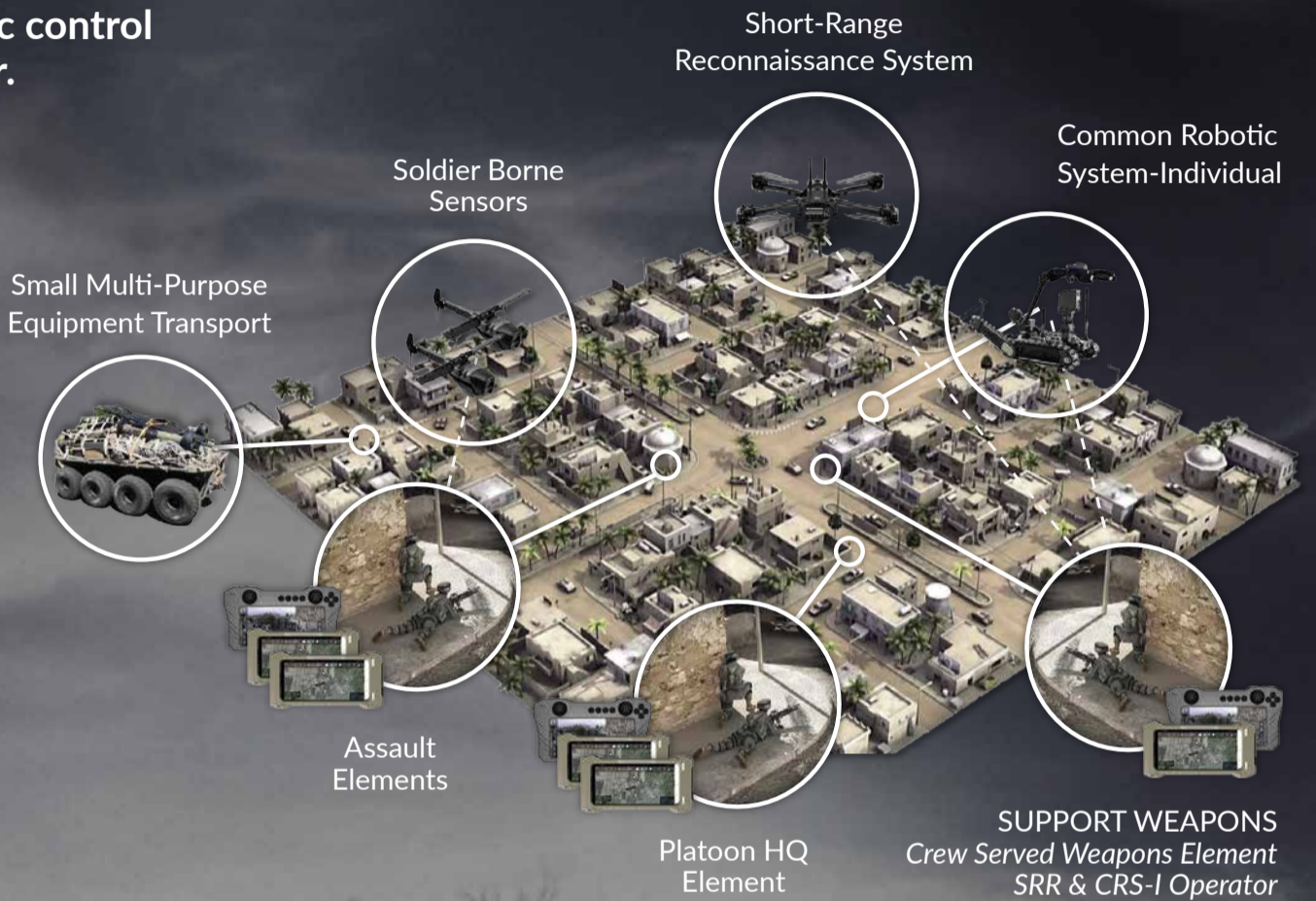
Sergeant Thomas Thornton added: "I've been lucky enough to work closely with the Corvette Squadron in previous years, but it was great to link up again, build on previous training and standard operating procedures and see how much we can push the joint capability."

KINESIS TACTICAL CONOPS

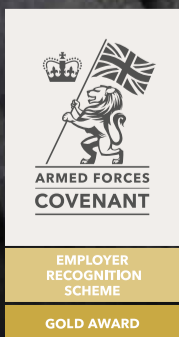
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Marine's battle to inspire others



A FORMER Royal Marine has written his first book – while battling brain cancer – in a bid to inspire others.

Veteran Royal Marine Commando Lance Corporal Rian Ilett was diagnosed with a grade 4 glioblastoma multiforme (GBM) in March 2019.

The father of two, 33, from Hampshire, was given less than 18 months to live when doctors discovered the aggressive glioblastoma multiforme in his front right temporal lobe.

Now nearly three years post-diagnosis, Rian has shared his unique journey in his book *Every Day Is A Battle: Fighting demons, Jihadis and terminal cancer*.

Rian's shock brain tumour diagnosis came after he was hit by an anti-tank missile in an ISIS attack in the Middle East in January 2019.

Rian, who served 15 years in the armed forces, said: "I suffered injuries, including concussion and ringing in my ears, so I was flown home for tests at the Royal Centre for Defence Medicine (RCDM) at Queen Elizabeth Hospital Birmingham.

"The tests didn't reveal anything of concern and, keen to get back to work, I persuaded my chain of command to allow me to return to the Middle East to resume my duties."

Rian was due to be back in the UK the following month for R&R, so agreed to go back to Birmingham for an MRI scan during his break.

It was during that scan that doctors discovered a 'mass' in his brain.

Rian said: "When they told me they'd found something, at first, I thought it must have been connected to the incident the previous month.

"I had a combination of military and NHS consultants.

"The military doctors tended to be more forthright and one of them sat me down and said it was a tumour and that it looked like cancer."

On March 20 2019, Rian had a craniotomy to debulk the tumour. The operation, carried out by neurosurgeon Dr Ismail

Ughratdar, was successful but the biopsy results revealed the aggressive nature of the tumour and Rian was given a stark prognosis of 12 to 15 months.

He said: "I didn't let it get me down. What choice did I have but to just get on with it?"

"The next step was six weeks of daily radiotherapy and concurrent chemotherapy, taken in tablet form.

"I was also put on a clinical trial, which involved having intravenous chemo but that soon stopped, as it was impacting my eyesight. I continued on the oral chemotherapy, finishing my last cycle in December 2019."

Rian returned to work while still on treatment but no longer able to deploy overseas, he was tasked with organising pre-deployment packages for colleagues who were going on tour.



He said: "It was very frustrating not being able to deploy myself. I was usually the first man to volunteer for operations. I kept up my fitness, however, going to the gym everyday while I was on chemo even though doctors advised against it.

"I really believe that it helped me to cope with it. During my last cycle, I even managed to take part in a race up the highest peak in south Wales, Pen y Fan, beating quite a few of my peers, who were in good health."

When the coronavirus pandemic hit the UK in March 2020 and Rian was told to stay at home, rather than go into work, he started putting pen to paper.

He said: "Having never even read a book before, I embarked upon writing a memoir. The idea came from people close to me, who encouraged me

to write about my many and varied experiences. I really enjoyed the process. Sometimes I'd phone people to chat about a particular period and it was a good opportunity to catch up with people I hadn't spoken to for a long time. Around 21 months after I first started writing, in December 2021, my book was released on Amazon."

One of the main themes of Rian's debut book is overcoming adversity. He's 'laid everything bare' in the hope that it will help others.

Rian said: "I saw too many people in the cancer treatment centre, who seemed to have given up on life. My main message is that even when the odds are stacked against you, a positive mindset goes a long way.

"I was medically discharged from the Marines in December 2021 but my fight is far from over. The book is my story of never giving up. Despite being told I should have been dead more than a year ago, I am still here to tell this tale."

Rian is working with the charity Brain Tumour Research, to help raise awareness of the fact that brain tumours kill more children and adults under the age of 40 than any other cancer yet historically just one percent of the national spend on cancer research has been allocated to this devastating disease.

Mel Tiley, community development manager for Brain Tumour Research, said: "Rian's story is one of hope and inspiration. I'm not surprised he's received such positive feedback for his book already, many of the reviews touching on Rian's incredible strength and positivity through such tough times.

"Rian's brain tumour diagnosis is a stark reminder of the indiscriminate nature of the disease. It can affect anyone, at any time. As a charity, our vision is to find a cure for brain tumours.

"We're building a network of experts in sustainable research at dedicated Centres of Excellence whilst influencing the Government and larger cancer charities to invest more nationally.

"We thank Rian sincerely for working with us to help raise awareness of brain tumours and the issues surrounding the disease."



New head for children's charity

THE Board of Trustees of the Naval Children's Charity have appointed Christopher Tite to succeed Alistair Sheppard as the new chair of the charity on March 24.

Christopher is a member of the Greenwich Hospital Advisory Board (a Crown foundation and the Navy's oldest charity) and a trustee of other significant charitable and private trusts. He was previously a trustee of the Fleet Air Arm Museum and the Tall Ships Youth Trust.

Mr Sheppard said: "I am delighted that Christopher brings his extensive experience from the naval charitable sector that will ensure the great work and momentum of the Naval Children's Charity continues."

Mr Sheppard has overseen a period of great success and change in the Naval Children's Charity's near-200 year history. During his tenure, the charity has undergone a change of name and a transition from long-serving CEO Monique Bateman to current chief executive Clare Scherer.

The strategic overview he led during 2019 broadened the scope of the charity's services.

NCC now provides support for all Naval children, not just those in distress, with a particular focus on

the development of resources including children's books *Zoe and The Time Penguin* and *Henry and the Time Rabbit*.

Over the past five years, the team has grown to five dedicated caseworkers, delivered resources to thousands of children across the UK and awarded more than 5,000 grants to naval families.

Clare Scherer, Chief Executive, said: "We owe a huge debt of gratitude to Alistair for his outstanding work, leading the charity through a strategic overview, change of name and clear focus on the future work supporting our Naval Children. I am delighted with the appointment of Mr Tite and look forward to working with him to develop our support and help to our Naval Children."

The Naval Children's Charity has been helping Naval Children since 1825, for nearly 200 years. It helps children, up to the age of 25, whose parents have served in the Naval Service (Royal Navy, Royal Marines, QARNNS, WRNS, Reserves or Royal Fleet Auxiliary).

Around 2,000 children are helped directly each year and many thousands more through the charity's resources and work with communities and other organisations.

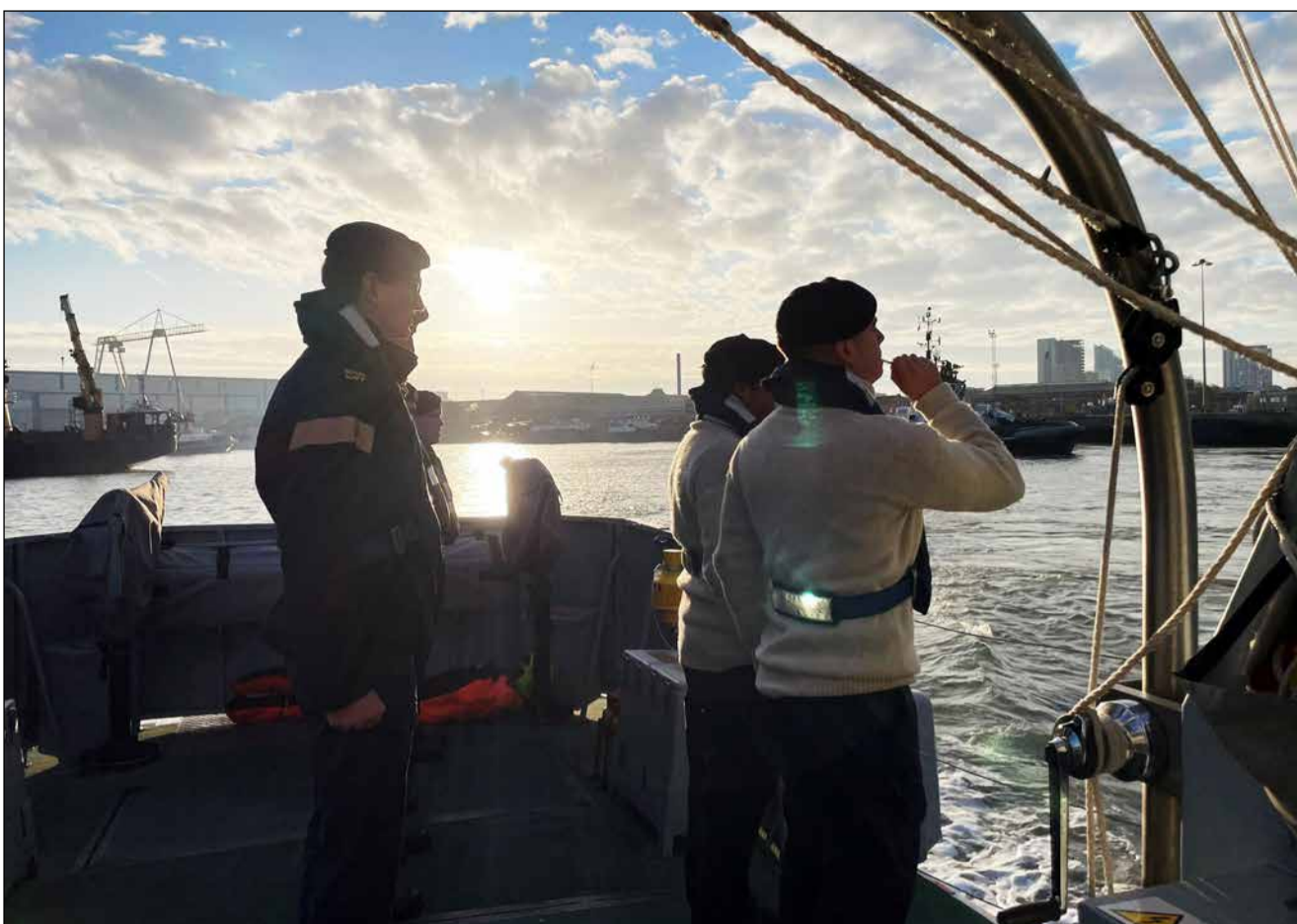
Registered charity number: Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund 1160182

Naval Children's Charity

Supporting children whose parents serve or have served in the Naval Service.

Naval Children's Charity
311 Twyford Avenue, Stamshaw,
Portsmouth, PO2 8RN

www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk
023 9263 9534
caseworkers@navalchildrenscharity.org.uk



Trainees spend first days at sea with Sabre

PHASE 2 trainees from HMS Collingwood have spent their first days at sea onboard HMS Sabre, a Scimitar-class patrol vessel of the Coastal Forces Squadron.

Taking six trainees per day, Sabre's four-strong team took them through basic seamanship and navigation serials, as well as introducing them to ceremonial and shiphandling aspects of their training.

Alongside the practical elements, daily transits out of Portsmouth and navigation training around the Solent also gave the

students the chance to see the fleet in which they will shortly be serving.

The experience also provided them the opportunity to learn about the operational outputs of the Coastal Forces Squadron.

Commanding Officer of HMS Sabre, Lieutenant Chris Cotterill, said: "Having conducted similar training for Victory Squadron last year, my team and I were keen to continue supporting the Phase 2 element of HMS Collingwood and provide practical, hands-on training serials. The feedback from

the trainees has been positive throughout."

Vessels of the Coastal Forces Squadron routinely undertake training and engagements with a wide variety of naval personnel.

Sabre has also been providing contingency for operations along the South Coast; recent taskings include assisting with Fleet Operational Sea Training, Phase 2 and RNR training and providing security for HMS Queen Elizabeth's homecoming late last year.

Kev's challenges for key charities



A MINISTRY of Defence Civil Servant is aiming to raise thousands of pounds for charity by completing a number of sporting challenges over the next few months.

Kevin Manasco, who works for British Forces Gibraltar, plans to walk around and to the top of the Rock three times in a row for his main challenge in September.

The father of two hopes to raise both awareness and money for Cancer Relief Gibraltar and Little Smiles Charity during the event.

Kevin, 42, an accounts clerk within the MOD, said: "I chose Cancer Relief as they offered great support to my mum, who unfortunately passed away from this terrible disease last January.

But they also helped me and her partner during and after her illness.

"So, I will be doing this in memory of my mum, dad, grandmother and my friend Tristan, who unfortunately lost their battles.

"I will also have in my thoughts those that are currently fighting cancer and those who lost their battle and their families.

"I have also chosen to raise money for Little Smiles Charity as they do excellent work for children with special educational needs that attend St Martins School and Early Birds Nursery.

"These include summer programmes, after school clubs and Christmas and Halloween parties, to name just a few."

Kevin will also host several other charity events in the coming months, where he hopes to raise even more money for the charities.

He did a spinning and a fitness class in February and plans an essential services 5-a-side football tournament on April 24 and a pool tournament on June 11.

There will also be a collection on May 7 outside Morrisons.

He added: "I'd like to encourage people to join in with the fundraising too, by having a cake sale or organising dress down days at work for example. I can then share these events on my social media.

"I am very grateful for the support I have already received, it has been fantastic, and the challenges haven't even begun yet."

Alternatively, visit his Just Giving page, which can be found by searching: "Kevin's 3 Round & Up Challenge."

A Facebook page under the same name, has all information, updates and will post pictures of events as well as providing information on how to donate.

For more information or to donate large amounts of cash or a cheque, contact Kevin on email at sharkgib@hotmail.com

Party time as charity marks its 106th anniversary

VETERANS held celebrations to mark Royal Star & Garter's 106th birthday.

Tea parties were held in each of the charity's three homes, which were decorated with bunting and banners.

Royal Star & Garter provides loving, compassionate care to veterans and their partners living with disability or dementia.

It was established in 1916 to care for

severely injured young men returning from the battlegrounds of World War 1, following concern expressed by Queen Mary. She charged the British Red Cross Society with the task of finding a 'permanent haven' for severely disabled young men returning from the trenches in Europe.

Last year, the Homes in Solihull, Surbiton and High Wycombe held low-key celebrations

to mark the anniversary due to Covid restrictions, but this year staff were able to throw tea parties where they tucked into cake and played games.

Director of Care Pauline Shaw said: "We have been providing compassionate care, offering meaningful activities and supporting wellbeing for 106 years, and I'm glad residents were able to help us celebrate our birthday."

Duo plan three-peaks challenge in full firefighting rig

A ROYAL Navy sailor is joining forces with a firefighter for a three peaks challenge.

AB Duncan Fraser and Joseph Hawke, who works for Lancashire Fire and Rescue Service, aim to climb Ben Nevis, Scafell Pike and Mount Snowdon wearing full kit and breathing apparatus.

The pair will also cycle between each peak, a total of around 500 miles, and aim to complete the challenge in six days in April.

The pair, who are raising funds for the Firefighters Charity and Mind, last year completed the Wainwright coast-to-coast path in full firefighting rig.

"We are very aware that the last couple of years have been anything but normal, and it cannot have been easy for all charities and organisations," said AB Fraser, who is based in HMS Queen Elizabeth.

"Therefore we are setting ourselves this challenge in hope we can provide a little bit of a difference for our charities.

"The Firefighters Charity has been chosen by us as we believe they offer immense support to firefighters and their families nationally, and know first hand the importance such a service has to the dedicated firefighters who have provided a vital service to the UK throughout their career.

"Very similar to The Fire Fighters Charity, we have just chosen Mind as we believe they offer life-saving support to people who need it the most. It's no great secret that mental health has become a growing public health concern, it's affecting more and more of us in the UK and has had a huge impact on our physical and mental health during the pandemic. We need to find better ways to protect our mental health and we feel MIND offers that help."

You can support the duo by visiting: [gofundme.com/f/joyce-duncs-tour-de-peaks-challenge](https://www.gofundme.com/f/joyce-duncs-tour-de-peaks-challenge)



Princess Royal catches up on charity's work



THE RNRMC hosted its Patron, Her Royal Highness, the Princess Royal, at the charity's head offices on Whale Island in Portsmouth.

The Princess Royal has been the RNRMC's Patron since the charity's inception in 2007 and continues to take an active interest in the work that the RNRMC do to support the Royal Navy community.

During her visit, the Princess met RNRMC staff from across all departments and listened to a presentation on the charity's new Transition Support Service.

The RNRMC were also running a workshop, entitled 'Making a Difference', which brought together RNRMC-funded organisations and charity partners from across the UK to explore ways in which partnership working could be improved to better support joint beneficiaries.

Following her visit to the RNRMC offices, the Princess Royal joined the workshop, and took part in discussions across several tables.

Adrian Bell, CEO of the RNRMC, said: "Her Royal Highness, The Princess Royal is a true friend to the Royal Navy community and her Patronage of the RNRMC is hugely valued by the charity."

"We are delighted that the Princess was able to visit our organisation; her conversations with our team and active participation in our workshop reflect the Princess' interest and dedication to the RNRMC's work supporting sailors, marines, and their families, for life."

Relaxation area for RM recruits

A NEWLY-refurbished outdoor space was officially opened by Rear Admiral Jude Terry, Director People & Training, at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines, near Lympstone.

The outdoor space sits next to 'Jollies,' a dining facility mainly used by Phase 1 and 2 recruits, and has been transformed thanks to a grant from the RNRMC, working in partnership with the Royal Marines Association, and supported by additional funding from the Nuffield Trust and Rebalancing Lives fund

In warmer months, many recruits wished to socialise outdoors, however the area was originally laid with unsightly paving slabs, many of which were broken, and the whole space was unappealing.

It was clear that the land's potential was not being met and there was an opportunity for development. The area adjacent to 'Jollies' was a perfect spot for use as a year-round, high-profile setting that could accommodate quality furniture and overhead cover, with stunning views across the River Exe Estuary.

Royal Marines selection is some of the most demanding military training in the world and the need for recruits to be able to switch off and socialise with one another is crucial for good morale and mental health.

Without this opportunity, individuals may experience a loss of ability to adapt to normal changes and stress, difficulty with concentrating, being persistent at tasks and pacing oneself, or trouble maintaining social relationships.

The transformation of a previously unused and neglected space will provide personnel with a welcoming area to relax and wind down at the end of training days filled with arduous and stressful physical and psychological challenges.

Having sought designs and quotes from various contractors, a local landscaping company were selected to provide the facility that is now in place.

With grant funding from by RNRMC and RMA-TRMC, in addition to the Rebalancing Lives Fund, Nuffield Trust and CTCRM, totaling £120k, the current site is now complete.

It is now a refreshing and uplifting community area for socialising in a large expanse of enclosed courtyard, with covered areas for shelter, oak sleeper beds and planting to soften, extensive new hard standing areas and steel corten screens.

Major Mark Latham has overseen the project and said: "The new outdoor area will provide a vibrant social area for all ranks at CTCRM."

"With views over the Exe estuary, people will be able to relax and socialise in a setting befitting their wellbeing expectations."

"I am confident that personnel will welcome the initiative to improve the 'lived experience' and appreciate the funding that has been provided to enable this project to be completed."



The new recreation space, above, and how it looked prior to the work, below



Books for all to support our families

FOR the past few years, the Naval Families Federation (NFF) has been providing book resources to currently serving Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their loved ones.

The Family Resource Project has now come to an end, but we are delighted to announce the launch of 'Books for All' with wider eligibility, thanks to funding from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Dealing with separation is part and parcel of RN/RM Service life. Be it weekend, exercises or deployment, it impacts on our families' wellbeing and family life.

Several years ago the NFF set up a book resource project that aimed to provide reading books to their beneficiaries to support resilience and enhance coping strategies.

That project proved popular and provided fantastic feedback from our community:

"It's a brilliant initiative and the selection available is great. I love that there's choice for all age groups. I highly recommend it."

"I just wanted to say a massive thank you for the resources that you sent us. The books are wonderful and will be useful."

"Brilliant book would definitely recommend to all forces families as it supports combat stress which is a very taboo subject."

The new project will adapt the current extensive book list, which includes a wide range of topics for all ages.

The books can help to explain deployments and separations to youngsters, address anxiety and mind management to combat the challenges Service life may bring, provide support at times of loss and bereavement, and much more.

The project, which was launched last month, will provide Service personnel and their loved ones one book per family member.

In recognition that RN/RM children experience the most parental absence of all three Armed Forces, we have extended the eligibility to schools with at least one RN/RM Service pupil enrolled.

Limited to ten books per school, staff are welcome to put these in their library or use them in any particular work they do with Service children.

For further details visit nff.org.uk/books-for-all/

Falklands 40 grants

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity has established a Falklands 40 Fund to support the participation of veterans and their families in activities and events to mark the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict.

What activity could this grant funding support?

- Small grants to support activities of remembrance and commemoration in 2022 to mark the 40th anniversary of the Falklands war.

- Support will be aimed at naval and marine associations and other community-based groups that support those that

served in the conflict.

- Grants could support contribution to travel to national events for a group of people.

- Grants could cover venue hire, refreshments for local activities and their promotion.

How to apply:
The application form will be available by emailing mygrant@rnrmc.org.uk to request a Falklands 40 Online Application.

Awards will be made from 1st January 2022 and throughout 2022.

For application guidance please visit: www.rnrmc.org.uk/apply-grant/falklands-40-fund



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CONTROLLERS

AT THE READY



LAST year the Royal Navy's Carrier Strike Group sailed more than 43,000 nautical miles to the Pacific Ocean and back.

Over the course of seven months, the F-35 Lightning jets deployed on HMS Queen Elizabeth completed 1,278 sorties and flew more than 2,200 hours.

And while joint RAF/Fleet Air Arm 617 Squadron and US Marine Corps' VMFA-211 Squadron were at the centre of those flights, behind the scenes the Royal Navy's Fighter Control team were hard at work.

They provide tactical Command and Control to the fighter jets of the fleet – deploying on ships to support a range of exercises and operations.

During the Carrier Strike Group deployment, Fighter Controllers were embarked on Type 45 destroyers HMS Diamond and Defender and UK flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth – the task group's experts in air defence.

From these warships, they initiated and directed the jets and other aircraft, planned missions, allocated airspace, wrote task orders and liaised with US and NATO allies.

Their knowledge and skill was on show during US-led Op Shader – air strikes against Daesh.

While in the eastern Mediterranean, the Fighter Controllers were on standby 24/7 to manage the interception of aircraft in defence of the strike group.

Lt Ben Gisborne was a Fighter Controller on HMS Diamond. He said: "It is hugely satisfying to be able to put into practice what you have learned."

"Initiating the scramble of the latest fighter jets in the Royal Navy, directing the aircraft during intercepts and managing the air battle in the real-world domain is greatly rewarding."

It is not only the UK assets Fighter Control has to work with. Last year, they worked with US, French and Italian pilots while also liaising with other Control units both at sea and on land.

Quick detection and identification is always mission critical in order to defend and the primary aim of Fighter Control is to locate, identify and allocate missions on force packages to intercept the enemy aircraft.

Given how dynamic the situation can be, there is also a requirement to have good two-way with the Combined Air Operations Centre (CAOC) to determine external assets which may be available to offer support.

With this in mind, planning is critical and the controllers are expected to be well versed to fighter

tactics, immersing themselves in the tactics from the cockpit and have an in-depth understanding of what the pilot may need and want during intercepts.

They also have to recognise which aircraft can be allocated for a mission and where they may need to operation. This means their knowledge of both friendly and enemy craft's capabilities and limitations is important.

And what about becoming a Fighter Controller? There is a 24-week course at RNAS Yeovilton to learn airspace control and tactics; a gruelling initial phase 13-week course providing a meteorology qualification, and testing awareness in air traffic control and of fighter tactics.

The students are expected to complete three sorties a day, all of which are assessed to give a real-time indication on their readiness to join the fleet.

Having passed the initial phase of training, the next phase at Collingwood concentrates on tactical administration and control from sea in more demanding situations.

Once qualified, they are ready to join Royal Navy warships on the frontline. But the role also offers an exchange job with the French Navy and FS Charles de Gaulle.

Lt Timothy Duxbury has been a Fighter

Controller for two years. He said: "Becoming a Fighter Controller in the modern Royal Navy, with the F-35s now operational alongside the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers, is hugely exciting."

"It offers an insight into modern warfare from an early stage and puts you at the forefront of mission planning and operations."

"Having the opportunity to direct and control F-35s in live operations is fantastic and wildly rewarding."

There are around 30 Fighter Controllers and instructors in the Royal Navy currently, with fierce competition to get on the course (which only has four spaces).

Selection can be varied but ordinarily takes place at the Junior Warfare Officer level. Some will attend the course immediately after IWO(C) whereas others may complete a first complement assignment as an Officer of the Watch – a role the Fighter Controller can do while embarked on a ship.

With renewed Carrier Strike Group operations, the Fighter Control team are a crucial part of Royal Navy operations.

To apply, candidates should contact the Lt Cdr Thompson, Chief Instructor at the Royal Navy School of Fighter Control.



INTRODUCING MYRFA

MyRFA is now live and available to all members of the RFA, providing access to simple, useful and flexible services from your personal mobile device.

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View and accept or decline appointments.

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View and update your COVID status.

App now extends to the RFA

FIRST there was MyNavy. Now there's MyRFA which offers many of the same or similar features to allow the Service's personnel manage their careers and lives.

Available to all members of the RFA, it provides access to simple, useful and flexible services from your mobile device(s).

Through MyRFA you can:

- update and review your Covid status;
- receive timely and secure comms and information;
- review key personal information;
- see past, present and future appointments.

The app can be accessed via the MyNavy icon on Defence Gateway.

As for MyNavy itself, it's introduced an integrated 'Have Your Say' feedback tool.

It's designed to allow all users to easily share their thoughts, ideas and suggestions to help in the development of new features based on fulfilling users' needs.

Planning makes perfect NFF offers books for everyone

TWO officers who played key roles in UK operations in the Pacific have been recognised for their efforts by one of the nation's most senior commanders.

Commander Rory West and Lieutenant Commander Alan Darlington each received commendations from the head of UK Strategic Command, General Sir Patrick Sanders, for their work dealing with crises and planning a key deployment respectively.

Commander Rory West served with Joint Forces Headquarters from March 2019 until last April and was commended for his part in evacuating the second flight of British nationals from Wuhan in January 2020 as Covid spread.

As leader of the Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team under Operation Broadshare, he was responsible for coordinating the Team's actions

That included understanding the intent of the UK and Chinese Governments as the situation became increasingly tense, the 1,100km road move from Beijing to Wuhan through multiple checkpoints and processing each of the British nationals at Wuhan airport.

"The fear on the faces of the Chinese staff was very real and this fear led to some difficult moments, particularly when passengers got stopped at multiple levels of immigration," he said.

"Donating some spare children's masks went a long way to prove to the Wuhan officials that the team were not hostile."

Although he was singled out for his efforts in China, the evacuation was just one of several operations he undertook while with the headquarters.

In September 2019, he deployed with his team to the Bahamas in response to Hurricane Dorian. While RFA Mounts Bay offloaded emergency relief stores, the team provided protection to an FCO Rapid Deployment Team and assist the Bahamian Government in their recovery planning.

And just before Wuhan, Cdr West deployed as one of multiple teams in the wake of the killing of Soleimani to monitor events and be prepared to react swiftly in the event of an Iranian escalation.

And he was sent to Cuba in



Commended: Cdr West (left) and Lt Cdr Darlington

March 2020 under Operation Broadshare to assist the repatriation of a cruise ship with 684 elderly UK passengers.

With many of the passengers suffering from symptoms and others in risk categories, Cdr West's team included medical expertise to ensure correct loading on to specially-laid-on British Airways flights.

At the end of 2020, through to his departure, West headed a small team to write the initial plans for an evacuation from Afghanistan – plans which were

subsequently enacted by his successors in August last year.

Lieutenant Commander Alan Darlington was commended for his work planning and supporting the UK's Navy's most important deployment in a generation, the maiden mission of HMS Queen Elizabeth and her Carrier Strike Group to the Pacific and back.

Alan joined the PJHQ planning division in September 2020 and conducted seven months of intensive planning for Operation Fortis, operating an international fifth-generation

carrier task force in areas of the globe where the Royal Navy has not routinely operated, so the scale and complexity of the task were not lost on him.

He liaised closely with various partner nations, establishing a truly collaborative, global network of support throughout the various phases of the deployment, creating new ways of working, building on and cementing the strong bonds that exist between allies.

Having demonstrated the Royal Navy's ability to operate at reach and as part of a multinational coalition, successfully enforcing the rule of law on the high seas, partaking in various exercises and upholding the values of the United Kingdom, the seven months of preparations more than delivered.

"It has been an absolute privilege being a part of the UK's largest deployment in decades and to see my friends and colleagues return safe and sound after such a long period away, is very rewarding," he said.

"To be nominated for formal recognition is always humbling, it is an honour to be awarded the commendation."

BOOKS to help Naval families deal with a range of issues and challenges – some unique to Service life, others typical of growing up, are being made widely available from today.

Thanks to funding from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the Naval Families Federation is making 'Books for All' available – not just to the huge RN family, but also schools attended by children of Service personnel.

Books for All takes over from the Family Resource Project which has provided reading material for serving personnel and their loved ones. The additional funding allows the team to broaden eligibility; any school with at least one pupil of a serving Royal Navy sailor or Royal Marine is entitled to free books – and parents/guardians/carers are encouraged to engage with their local school(s) to get them to sign up.

And as well as physical tomes, the initiative also embraces the eBook age.

The books are aimed at both youngsters of all ages and adults and cover a broad range of issues, from bedtime stories, dealing with feelings/disappointment, help for children with special needs and books aimed at teenagers and, for adults, parenting skills for dealing with offspring of all ages.

In addition, there are books dealing with the impact of military life covering themes such as deployments and separation as well as loss and bereavement.

The full catalogue can be found at nff.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Book-list.pdf

You can order your books via nff.org.uk/books-for-all. You are allowed one book for each family member serving in the RN/RM and you will be asked to provide your/their Service number.

Schools are limited to ten books, staff are welcome to put these in their library or use them in any particular work they do with Service children.

While every effort will be made to process orders quickly, the project is not supported by extra staff, so the NFF team ask for your patience.

Agile Tigers prepare for assessment

THE Flying Tigers of 814 NAS have become one of the first FAA units to embrace agile ways of working.

The Merlin Mk2 squadron at Culdrose is preparing for its two-yearly Naval Flying Standards Assessment which involves oodles of work to ensure everything is shipshape.

Senior aircrew adopted 'agile practices' developed by the software industry and are now used in the private sector.

It allowed them to see clearly what needed to be done, provided focus, improved decision making, and removed blockers which might have slowed them down.

The team, including the senior pilot and senior observer, broke tasks down into small tangible pieces, as these typically flow through a system or process faster than large pieces of work.

In charge was Lieutenant Commander Steve Hayton, who admitted he was sceptical of the agile ethos at first, but has since embraced it.

"The fact is, we would not be in the position we are in now if it wasn't for this process," he said.

"There is still the same amount of work that every squadron has to do, but what we have here is the framework of getting that done more efficiently.

"If you're working as part of a team, by using this process, everybody can see that and they approach the work in a different way. It has saved us time."

The Allen family values equality all the way

HUSBAND and wife officers Nick and Fran Allen are the perfect example of equality.

The couple met as trainees at BRNC in 2011, commissioned together, married in 2016, and will now be promoted to lieutenant commanders together.

They take it in turns to be the primary carer of their two children, boys aged two and four, so the other can deploy to sea.

Both also serve at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose. Nick is an anti-submarine warfare helicopter pilot with 820 Naval Air Squadron while Fran is a Meteorological Officer with a specialism in warfare training.

Lieutenant Fran Allen, 32, said: "I think it's really great that we've both reached the stage in our careers where we are promoted at the same time – it shows that there really is no difference between being a man or a woman in the Royal Navy."

Lieutenant Nick Allen, 36, said: "They career-manage us so we alternate who is the primary carer for the children and which of us is deployable every two years. In the navy of course, you have to be prepared for long periods at sea. The other partner still has to work full-time as well.

"I've just done the last two years as



the carer while I was working as an instructor, which is not a deployable position, and now I've joined 820 squadron so I can go to sea again while Fran has been away around the world."

820 Naval Air Squadron is the dedicated squadron which protects the UK's aircraft carriers.

Fran added: "Although we are both serving naval officers, to be honest I don't think we are any different to any other two-parent working family. It's just that one of us goes away for some months of the year."

Picture: LPhot Barry Swainsbury, RNAS Culdrose

Project Renown gives power to its people

THE 'People workstream' of Project Renown is aimed to increase Fleet availability by driving behaviours and simplifying processes to reduce frictions, frustrations and obstacles.

Since Renown was established, it's become clear that individuals across the ships enterprise (Royal Navy & DE&S in particular) are best placed to identify problems and are also best placed to identify and implement solutions.

It is this belief that means Renown has been built on feedback from individuals across the enterprise and has been designed by the business, for the business.

What does this mean in practice?

When the people workstream wanted to identify the behaviours which are central to increasing availability, it undertook some academic research, engaged a behavioural scientist, and looked at previous Ships Support Transformation engagement with the community. It then reached out to dozens of volunteers across the ships enterprise to give them the final say in what mattered most to those who understand our business best. That helped the team identify the seven behaviours that are most important when it comes to improving availability.

The people team then asked you to help us better understand these behaviours across the enterprise. Over 3,000 people across DE&S Ships, the Royal Navy and

UK StratCom have been asked to provide feedback, feedback which will form the basis of the people workstream's next steps and plan.

In addition to the behaviours survey and plan, the people workstream is committed to supporting personnel by offering everyone across the ships enterprise the opportunity to share challenges and get involved in embedding the Renown vision.

The team have set up several engagement sessions with Rear Admiral Jim Higham (the Renown sponsor) already with simplification champions, volunteers and change advocates.

They will continue to organise sessions which allow personnel to share with Renown some of the frictions/frustrations and opportunities for improvement which they know exist so that collectively the team can get after these to improve the lived experience of individuals across the ships enterprise and in turn, increase ship availability.

There are plenty of opportunities to get involved with Renown – either getting directly involved with a workstream, sharing thoughts/ideas for improvements with the team in engagement sessions or linking into Renown through a (Royal Navy or DE&S Ships) Change Advocate Network.

Alternatively, you can contact the team directly at des-ships-spt-renowncomms@mod.gov.uk.

Many races, one Navy one voice

THERE'S a new network to act as a central point of contact for – and champion of – all issues relating to race and racial diversity across the Navy.

The Royal Navy Race Diversity Network will be able to support its diverse membership and promote an inclusive culture across the Service.

The network brings together the entire Royal Navy family – sailors, Royal Marines, civil servants, RFA – and pushes this agenda with a single united voice.

Existing groups such as the Commonwealth Network will continue, dealing with issues which affect RN personnel from overseas, such as visas, immigration and family matters.

And the Race Diversity Network will concentrate on race issues which affect people from the UK and elsewhere.

Because the uncomfortable truth is that discrimination exists in British society; the Royal Navy cannot – and should not shy away from that.

So the network aims to encourage and reinforce commanders' confidence in taking action and engender a culture of anti-racism, supported by partner organisations such as the RN Commonwealth Network, RAF BAME Network and Army Multicultural



Network.

Honorary Captain Durdana Ansari formally launched the network at HMS Collingwood on February 9, joined by the new group's senior members and the RN's 'race advocate' Rear Admiral Mike Utley.

"Members of our ethnic minority communities have so much potential in them and our armed forces need to create an environment to embrace them," she said.

"It will be detrimental to the health of our nation if we discourage 14 per cent of our population from taking a role in national defence only because of racial, religious, or ethnic bias against them.

"I see employee support networks such as the Race Diversity Network as a positive step to creating a healthy environment where everyone can thrive."

If you're interested in joining/supporting the network, or require its guidance and advice, contact network chair Lance Corporal Jack Kanani RM – pictured addressing guests at the launch by LPhot Lee Blease – at Jack.Kanani100@mod.gov.uk or Commander Adrian Visram (Adrian.Visram785@mod.gov.uk).



Thomas is the top Jack Dusty

IF YOU want the most dedicated logistician in the Navy, you need to go to the Gibraltar Squadron.

Leading Supply Chain Thomas Williams has been singled out above hundreds of colleagues across the Senior Service to receive the 'Fleet Jack Dusty' award.

The 32-year-old was honoured not merely for his knowledge of – and dedication to – his specialist field, where he displayed the "highest professional standards and commitment", but also his broader work around the Rock.

As well as ensuring the squadron has all the logistical support it requires 1,000 miles from the nearest Royal Navy base, the leading hand has proved himself a highly effective operator on the water, regularly at the helm of Pacific 24 Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats at short notice.

The RIBs join HMS Dasher and Pursuer patrolling territorial waters, protecting visiting warships and upholding British sovereignty.

"I was really surprised to receive the award. With so much going on fleet wide throughout the last year I think it highlights the importance of the squadron and what we do here," Thomas said.

"Not only has it given my family and myself the unique experiences of living in Gibraltar, exploring the Iberian Peninsula and meeting many new friends, professionally it's a once-in-a-career opportunity to excel in my primary role and also get heavily involved with operations – something which my role wouldn't normally do."

The father of two, originally from Tamworth, Staffordshire, is nearing the end of his time with the squadron after two years on the Rock before transferring to Culdrose.

His Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Christian Lowe said the logistician stood "well above his branch peers" and set "an example to others on how to fulfil both support and operational roles".

New link-up for college

The King's Institute for Applied Security Studies (KIASS) will deliver future command and staff academic provision for the Royal College of Defence Studies in London, and the Joint Services Command and Staff College at the Defence Academy in Shrivenham.

The partnership combines the knowledge and expertise of three world-renowned institutions – King's College London, policy research organisation RAND Europe and Cranfield University.

By joining forces intend to improve professional defence and security education for UK military personnel, civil servants and their allies.



Relaxing weekend helps recovery

A GRANT from the NAAFI Covenant fund gave military personnel in the South West recovering from illness and injuries the chance to enjoy a weekend retreat.

Members of the RN, RM and Army in the Devonport's Personnel Support Group headed to North Cornwall for a couple of days of yoga/wellness/well-being exercises and stances.

The weekend introduced many to yoga and a well-being programme, which also included an introduction to the living yoga method (breath work, cold-water immersion therapy, woodland walks, meditation and a fire pit 'release ritual'), all under the direction of former Royal Marine Rob Colley.

"Yoga and meditation really helped me to transition from the Service," the ex-commando said. "I was really keen to get involved. Since qualifying as an instructor, I've wanted to help injured and sick service personnel, this was a fantastic opportunity to give something back."

The 12 "wounded, injured or

sick' personnel who attended included Janett from the RN Recovery Centre Hasler.

"Although I undertake regular Yoga practice, I have never had the privilege to attend a dedicated retreat – it met every expectation I had.

"I think they got it just right, it was a brilliantly executed. I loved how it was busy but also allowed us time for rest between the different activities. The new living yoga breathing techniques we learned will undoubtedly help me with the lung damage caused by Covid."

The weekend away was organised by recovery manager Chief Petty Officer Angie Cheal.

"I was inundated with applicants and hope to secure additional funding to run three more retreats, in addition to the six other recovery weeks that we have planned for this year," she said.

"I've had some really very positive feedback from those who attended the retreat, I'm optimistic that we can run more and help those who need it."

Better support, better value and better availability

THE Marine Systems Transformation (MaST) programme has been designed to deliver a step change in Marine Systems Support performance.

Through commercial simplification and introducing a new operating model, it will make a significant contribution to the goals of the Naval Enterprise Support Strategy (NESS) and Project Renown, which aims to achieve more than 80 per cent ship availability by 2026.

By the end of the decade, the Royal Navy will be 50 per cent 'heavier' (more platform tonnage) than it was in 2016.

A bigger footprint means that to support a Global Britain, and a Global Navy, we need to ensure our platforms, systems and equipment are operational globally. That means improving our ability to:

- deliver the right parts to the right place at the right time – for both planned and unplanned maintenance;
- provide strategic repair capabilities that reduce the cost of ownership without compromising safety or availability; and
- Access specialist equipment related technical advice and expertise.

MaST will ensure the timely provision of marine systems spares, repairs and technical advice.

Our current approach often falls short of the needs of our customer and is overly complex, resource intensive and time consuming.

The MaST team sits in MSS within DE&S and is made up mostly of civil servants and RN personnel, plus SME private sector support providing the team with specific knowledge and expertise.

MaST will increase the availability of equipment and thereby platforms via a three-pronged approach:

- a simplified commercial landscape with fewer contracts providing agility and flexibility both to vary the requirements but also, critically, to accelerate the delivery of urgently-required parts;
- a simplified funding and approvals approach that shortens timescales and reduces

the internal burden such that our people will be able to undertake value adding analysis activity that quickly resolves problems; and

■ reconfigure and simplify our operating model to align with platform-centric class cells.

MaST's initial goals are:

- increased platform availability – deliver the support requirements for current platforms and future platforms, such as Type 26, on time and in full;
- an MSS operating model 'fit for the future', ensuring the MSS organisation, its people and operating procedures can rapidly meet the Royal Navy's support requirements for the future;
- Improved value for defence – generate greater levels of competition in a wider market, ensuring that commercial arrangements are simple, fit for purpose, flexible and deliver the best value for money; and
- Safety – ensure safety remains at the heart of all MSS support to the RN and perform the scope of its support activity cognisant of safety risk.

MaST will deliver a range of benefits to MSS and the Navy. Benefits including, but not limited to:

- reduction in availability lost due to system or equipment availability issues;
- on-time delivery of spares for more efficient FTSPs and shorter upkeeps increases platform availability;
- increased value for money; and
- improved support output performance that meets the Royal Navy's requirements as set and agreed in the Command Acquisition and Support Plan (CASP) agreed with DE&S.

For further information on MaST or Project Renown please email: DESShips-Spt-RENOWNComms@mod.gov.uk.



Malay medal for Clive 60 years on

THE Malaysian Government presented former sailor and SSAFA volunteer Clive Matthews with the Pingat Jasa Medal for his service during the Malaysian conflict of the 1960s.

Clive, who lives near Kingswood, Surrey, had been out of uniform for 50 years when he contacted the Malaysian Embassy about the Pingat Jasa Medal.

After completing communications training at HMS Mercury at the age of 16, Clive was then sent to the Far East Fleet, where he served in HMS Bulwark and HMS Brighton from November 1964 to July 1965.

Clive missed the original deadline to apply for the medal in 2005 but applied via the Malaysian Embassy in 2019 and was awarded the medal in 2021.

For the past 16 years, Clive has been a volunteer with SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, in the Reigate and Banstead areas. In 2017 he received the Mayor's Award in Reigate for his volunteering work.

Clive said: "Volunteering for SSAFA has been a major part of my life. To know that I have helped so many people make it all worthwhile, and having the Pingat Jasa Medal is just a nice homage to that young sailor all those years ago."

Can you save Bronington?

ENTHUSIASTS are staging a final bid to save 'Prince Charles' warship HMS Bronington.

The minesweeper, which was commanded by the then Lieutenant Wales for ten months in 1976, sank at her mooring on Merseyside six years ago (pictured below in January last year).

The recently-formed HMS Bronington Preservation Trust Ltd believes there is a last chance to save the ship – now nearly 70 years old – before the elements finally take their toll.

It's looking to raise around £5,000 for a dive survey – the first stage in a grand plan to raise Bronington, pump-out the flood water and then turn her into a working ship once more through continued fund-raising, sponsorship and grants.

The trust wants to see the wooden-hulled ship used to deliver yachting and diving courses, teach navigation, be hired for fishing/diving trips, filming, and used by Sea Cadets and the Prince's Trust.

If those goals prove too much due to cost and unavailability of equipment, then Bronington would revert to becoming a static display alongside or in a dry dock, open to the public, similar to her successful years as a museum ship on the Manchester Ship Canal.

World-famous Merseyside shipbuilder Cammell Laird has agreed to take Bronington into their dry dock for restoration under their apprenticeship scheme in stages if the funding can be found.

Bronington is one of around 120 Ton-class minesweepers built in the 1950s. With hulls of mahogany, the Tons were among the last wooden warships built for the Royal Navy before it switched to today's plastic-hulled minehunters in the 1970s.

The minesweeper served for nearly 35 years, finally decommissioning in 1988 after which she became a museum ship firstly in Manchester, then

on the Wirral Peninsula.

The trust looking after her – and other vessels, including Falklands veteran HMS Plymouth – folded in 2006, since when Bronington has been neglected, eventually sinking at her moorings in Gilbrook Basin in 2016.

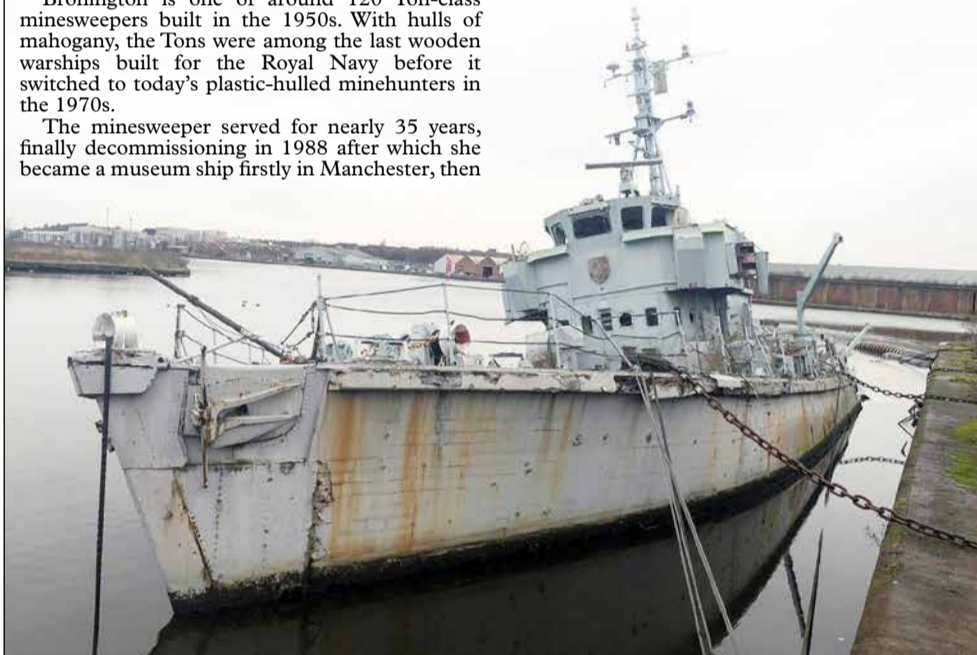
Despite being on the list of 200 key vessels relating to the UK's rich maritime history, her status as part of the 'National Historic Fleet' will not spare her the breaker's yard (HMS Plymouth was broken up nearly a decade ago).

Mike McBride, who served as the Weapon Engineering Officer of sister ship HMS Iveston, which frequently conducted minehunting/sweeping duties side-by-side with Bronington, said Prince Charles continued to take a keen interest in the fate of his former ship and was "humbled" by the renewed efforts to save and restore her.

"Due to her worsening condition, this will be the final push to save HMS Bronington," said Mr McBride.

"We are asking for help to get his project off the ground. Any donation – large or small – will be gratefully received. Should the project be abandoned, all donations will be donated to Forces charities."

So far, the trust has raised just over £3,000 towards its target. Further donations can be made via www.gofundme.com/f/help-restore-hms-bronington



Yomp and circumstance

VETERANS of the Falklands campaign have until the end of April to register their interest in one of this year's key 40th anniversary events.

Four decades to the day that the fighting in the South Atlantic came to an end, the **National Memorial Arboretum** near Lichfield will be the setting for a 'liberation day' commemorative event, organised by the Royal British Legion on June 14.

It is inviting veterans, civilians, and bereaved family members to join them to remember the sacrifices made and the freedom regained by the inhabitants of the remote island community.

Those who wish to attend should either contact their respective regimental or service association to register interest, contact the Legion directly at falklands@britishlegion.org.uk.

Distance, cost, the few flights to the islands – and extremely limited space on them – plus Covid quarantine rules all make a return to the Falklands for veterans difficult this year, although the MOD is striving to make as many 'veterans' pilgrimages' take place as possible.

For those unable to return to the islands, in the UK there are numerous anniversary events – national, regional, local and unit focused – running from early April through to the end of June.

Aside from the liberation day event in the arboretum, the other national commemoration is the **40th Anniversary Service of Thanksgiving at St Paul's Cathedral** (home of the national Falklands monument) on April 5 (invitation only; invitations now closed).

The service is being organised by the South Atlantic Medal Association 82 – the umbrella organisation for Falklands veterans.

It's holding its annual general meeting in Derby from April 1-4, including a service at the National Memorial Arboretum on April 3.

The **Royal Naval Association** is combining its annual general meeting weekend and parade with commemorations in Portsmouth (June 17-19).

Friday 17th is dedicated to the theme of 'reunite with an evening reception on HMS Warrior, a civic dinner hosted by Portsmouth City Council and a chance for RNA Special Interest Groups, including golfers, cricketers and classic car enthusiasts, to get together.

The RNA's AGM will be held on Saturday morning, and the theme for the rest of the day is 're-live', which will include a Falklands Forum at HMS Nelson Wardroom, featuring a panel of South Atlantic veterans.

Sunday June 19 is dedicated to remembrance, including a service of at the Falklands Memorial near the Square Tower in Old Portsmouth.

An application form for ticketed events, can be found on the RNA website at royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/downloads/2022/

And there is a commemoration at the **Falklands Memorial Chapel** in Pangbourne College, near Reading, on June 12 (details: <https://falklands-chapel.org.uk/annual-service/>).

Regional commemorations are planned in **Liverpool** (April 25) and **Hull** (June 17-19), a freedom parade for veterans in **Gosport** (May 29) and **Plymouth** (June 14).

As for unit/ship associations, green berets of **42 Commando** will remember fallen comrades in Plymouth on June 11, veterans of destroyer **HMS Cardiff** will converge on their namesake city (May 27-29), while former shipmates of assault ship **HMS Fearless** and survivors of **HMS Coventry** will gather in Portsmouth (May 28-29) and **HMS Glamorgan** veterans meet in the home of the RN the following week.

Later in year, the annual Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph in Whitehall will have a strong Falklands theme.

For details, see sama82.org.uk/40th-anniversary-overview/ and rbl.org.uk/falklands40.

Meanwhile Emsworth Museum in Hampshire is focusing on the role of a single ship to tell the story of 1982.

It's selected **HMS Antrim**, which first led the operation to liberate South Georgia, then joined the main effort to re-take the Falklands themselves, during which she 'collected' a 1,000lb bomb which passed through her main missile magazine and thankfully failed to detonate.

The museum's Christopher Morrison wants to hear from her ship's company, or any from the Royal Marines/Army, and any families, who were involved with HMS Antrim in 1982 to help complete the exhibition, which will run on weekends (Saturdays 1030-1630 and Sundays 1430-1630) throughout May at the site in North Street. Contact morric@aol.com.



K13 remembered

SUBMARINERS past and present gathered at Faslane Cemetery to pay tribute to the pioneering submariners of HMS K13, lost when they boat sank on trials in Gareloch in 1917.

The boat's bell was sounded 32 times for each soul lost when the revolutionary steam-powered boat went down on trials.

Shipwrights and observers from HMS K14 were also aboard the ill-fated boat. Her CO Godfrey Herbert succeeded in reaching the surface and raising the alarm, ensuring 42 men were eventually saved.

The submarine was later raised from Gareloch and returned to service as HMS K22.

Reverend Mark Noakes, Chaplain of the Submarine Flotilla, led the service, which was attended by Captain Irvine Lindsay, Captain of the Submarine Flotilla, who praised the "great courage" of the "genuine pioneers" of the Service.

Picture: LPhot Finn Hutchins, FRPU North



Naval Quirks

DURING THE FASHODA CRISIS OF 1898, THE FIRST SEA LORD, REFERRING TO POOR SECURITY, STATED –



– THAT NAVAL ORDERS SENT TO THE PORTS "ARE IMMEDIATELY PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPERS –



– "AND THEREBY FURNISHED TO THE PROSPECTIVE ENEMY."



GET YER "EVENIN' NOOZ – LATE EDITION!"



Ah, at last! – our orders!



A final salute to brave men

FOR the last time, men who tried against the odds to stop a breakout by the German Fleet were formally remembered on the site from where they flew to their bitter fate.

Eighty years almost to the minute that six Swordfish torpedo bombers lifted off from Manston airfield in Kent, family members, friends and descendants joined serving sailors and aviators, veterans groups and enthusiasts to pay tribute to the heroes of the Channel Dash.

Around 150 people – including 825 Naval Air Squadron, sailors from HMS Kent (paying a weekend visit to her ‘hometown’ of Dover just down the coast) and HMS President, Sea Cadets from Ramsgate, the RAF’s Central Band and representatives of 72 Squadron (which trains the fast jet pilots of tomorrow) gathered in a hangar on the edge of the now-dormant airfield for an act of recognition, reconciliation and remembrance.

In the dark days of February 1942, three German heavy ships – battle-cruisers Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and cruiser Prinz Eugen – plus a thick ring of escorts and protective umbrella of Luftwaffe fighters broke through the Channel from their base at Brest to Germany.

On the afternoon of February 12, the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force made concerted efforts to stop the ships, beginning with a near-suicidal attack by six Swordfish bombers of 825 NAS, temporarily operating from the RAF station.

None returned. All but five of the 18 aircrew were lost. No hits were scored on the enemy ships as the Swordfish were blasted out of the squally Channel skies by German fighters and naval anti-aircraft guns.

Carol Lee’s late husband Edgar was just 20 and the only man in Swordfish ‘G’ not to be wounded when it was shot down having made a torpedo run, probably against the Gneisenau, and subsequently crashed into the Channel. Lee freed himself, then his badly-injured pilot Brian Rose, helping him into a dinghy. He could do nothing for gunner Ambrose Johnson, slumped over his gun and trapped in his seat. The Channel swallowed the Swordfish whole, taking Johnson with it.

A quiet, modest man like all of his generation, Edgar Lee only came to talk about his wartime experiences decades later when historians and associations began to show renewed interest in the action, especially the Channel Dash Memorial Trust whose efforts especially over the past dozen years had done so much to keep the memories alive.

“Edgar was never a man to put himself to the fore, but he would have been proud and above all really would have appreciated that people still remember,” she said.

“People need to remember what they did – thanks to the events like this and the memorials in Ramsgate and Dover, those men, their bravery and sacrifice, will always be remembered.”

Les Sayer would have been among those on the memorials, but for attending a course in Scotland.

He swapped places with fellow Telegraphist/Air Gunner William Clinton, who died with the squadron’s commander Eugene Esmonde – “a quiet man, but he would stand up for his men to the hilt”, posthumously awarded the VC for his actions – and observer William Williams.

His widow Valerie said the men grew to understand such bitter twists of fate and always felt the loss of airmen on both sides given the dangers they faced.

Rear Admiral John Roberts was serving aboard battle-cruiser HMS Renown in the Denmark Strait, waiting for a possible breakout by Hitler’s flagship Tirpitz when news of the dash came through. At the time he regarded it as a missed opportunity “to really demonstrate our control of the Channel” and predicted “uproar in the papers and Parliament” (there was).

From the distance of 80 years, he views the failed operation in the wider context of the war at the time.

“It was a bad period of the war – we had just lost the Prince of Wales and Repulse, the Battle of the Java Sea, things were not going well in Africa,” he said.

“The awful thing was that the Swordfish was wonderful at night, or even by day when there were no fighters.

Neither applied in the Channel Dash.”

Which is something today’s 825 NAS personnel pick up. The Swordfish may be large and lumbering – top speed 90kts/100mph when weighed down by a torpedo – but it was proven weapon which had twice changed the course of the war, crippling the Bismarck and knocking out the kernel of the Italian Fleet at Taranto.

“The Swordfish was a proven capability. Had it received the proper fighter protection on the day, who knows what would have happened,” said the squadron’s senior observer Lieutenant Commander Douglas Keenan.

“Instead it was outgunned, outpaced, outpowered, outnumbered. It’s like an aerial version of the Charge of the Light Brigade.

After spending most of the past 70 years dormant, save for brief re-births in the early 60s and the Falklands, 825 stood up again in 2014, and personnel immediately sought stand-out deeds in its history.

“Everyone on the squadron is familiar with the Channel Dash,” Lt Cdr Keenan added. “The Swordfish is raw aviation – imagine being up there. It’s cold. It’s slow. You’re in bulky clothing, it’s Biggles-esque. Everything is manual. Flying a ‘stringbag’ there were no bells or whistles.”

The 18 aircrew are remembered on the 825 NAS memorial in Ramsgate, erected in 2010. But the Dash was a concerted effort by air and sea.

Twenty-seven sailors in HMS Worcester were killed in a ‘death ride’ against the enemy ships later that afternoon.

No man who took part in the Dash is with us any more, but the memories of Bill Wedge, Worcester’s pom-pom gunnery officer, were recorded shortly before his death and shown at the memorial event.

He described the destroyer’s charge to within 2,000 yards of the German heavy ships – with typical understatement – as “a bit of action” which left the Worcester peppered with shells, including at least one 11 in hit. With the destroyer disabled, he contemplated the end. “I remember thinking: my mum will be a bit fed up about this.”

Worcester survived. Bill Wedge lived to the age of 98.

The RAF also made sustained efforts to stop the breakout – and suffered a casualty rate every bit as horrific as 825 Squadron’s.

Flying Officer Edward Graham de Twenebroke Symons, a 30-year-old Canadian-born gunner killed with his three crewmates when their bomber was shot down off the Dutch coast – one of nine Hampdens lost; no man survived.

He came from the East Sussex village of Hartfield, represented by James Castle, carrying the Royal British Legion standard – one of a dozen on parade from veterans’ organisations and associations.

“People don’t always realise that the Channel Dash was such a combined effort of the British Forces. There were many acts of selfless bravery that day – by the Royal Navy in the air and at sea, and also by Bomber, Fighter and Coastal Commands,” he said.

“It really was a combined effort – you could sum it up as: if it flies, if it sails, we’ll throw it at them – and they did, though the results were tragic.”

Around 30 wreaths were laid in the hangar following a drumhead service; they were re-laid the following day at the Operation Fuller – the codename for the efforts to stop the breakout – monument in Dover.

The memorial – like the one in Ramsgate – is a permanent legacy of the Channel Dash Memorial Trust which was formed with three key themes in mind: recognition, reconciliation – Germany and the German Navy were represented – and remembrance.

Having achieved those goals, its chairman and former sailor Malcolm Godfrey said the 80th anniversary was an apt moment to hold the final major act of commemoration.

“For many years the Channel Dash was seen as a failure – it’s only more recently that we have come to recognise and celebrate acts of selfless bravery,” he added.

“Eighteen men got into those aircraft knowing that they would probably not come back. Their actions demonstrate the bravery which we like to think we possess in ourselves in the hardest hours.”



Pictures: LPhot Garry Smith



Meet the First Sea Lord

THE 2022 First Sea Lord's Cadets' investiture was held on board HMS Victory in Portsmouth.

The event marked the handover of the 2021 1SL Cadets to the 2022 1SL Cadets, who took up their new appointments on January 1 2022.

The 2022 First Sea Lord's Cadets from SCC are: Petty Officer Cadet Alex Robertson (Lincoln Unit); Leading Cadet Zunara Kaisar (Enfield Unit); Petty Officer Cadet Mirren McIver (East Kilbride Unit); Cadet Corporal Lucy Taylor (Sefton Unit), Petty Officer Cadet Alexandra Snell (Milton Keynes Unit) and Cadet Corporal Megan Rowley (Redditch & Bromsgrove Unit).

Also appointed were Petty Officer Cadet Jessica Sansom (HMS Collingwood RN VCC) and Cadet Sergeant Charlie Gill (Gosport Division RM VCC) from the Volunteer Cadet Corps as well as Cadet Warrant Officer 2 William Waters (Sherborne School), Petty Officer Cadet Meghan Ballard (Phoenix Collegiate) and Leading Cadet Jack Bollom (Taunton School) from the Combined Cadet Force (CCF RN-RM).

The six teens, who represent each of Sea Cadets' geographical areas, and the other five cadets were presented with their certificates and badges in the Great Cabin on board HMS Victory by the First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key KCB CBE.

The cadets then had a tour of the harbour by boat which included HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Duncan before enjoying a buffet lunch in the Wardroom at HMS Nelson.

The First Sea Lord's Cadets are regarded as some of the very best cadets from their respective organisations and play a crucial role in shaping the future of the Corps.

It's a unique opportunity to have their voices heard and to inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

Throughout the year, the First Sea Lord's Cadets attend a number of high-profile events, representing the Corps at official ceremonies, functions, formal parades and ship visits.

It also offers them a privileged insight into higher naval policy and work of senior Royal Navy serving officers.



First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key aboard HMS Victory with his 2022 intake of cadets

Pictures: LPhoto Kevin Walton



Petty Officer Cadet Alex Robertson joined the junior section of Lincoln Sea Cadets aged ten.

Initially quiet and shy, he impressed his instructors and progressed quickly through the junior modules winning his unit's Junior Sea Cadet of the Year award in 2016.

As a diligent, enthusiastic and hardworking, Alex is an exceptional role model for other cadets in his unit and across Eastern Area.

It was no surprise to those that know him that he has gone on to earn an impressive number of exceptional passes on the assessments at both his promotions boards to Leading Cadet and Petty Officer Cadet.

His list of accomplishments includes RYA YSS Stage 4, RYA Powerboat Level 2, Rowing Coxswain, British Rowing Go Row 2 and the British Canoeing Foundation Safety Rescue Training award.

Aged just 14, he took charge of his unit's successful unarmed squad for the Eastern Area competition against cadets much older

than himself; going on to win the Team and Squad Leader trophies.

In his unit he can be relied upon to take on various leadership roles with ease, he is an approachable senior cadet who the younger cadets look to for guidance and inspiration clearly appreciating his caring nature. Alex sets himself an extremely high standard in everything he does and strives to ensure others achieve this too, his endless enthusiasm inspires other cadets to follow his example.

During lockdown Alex recorded instructional videos that we shared with the cadets and he was awarded with a Lincolnshire County Council "Covid Teen Heroes" award.

He has continued the same way for the last 18 months, either teaching on Zoom or assisting with boating at the unit for our cadets and for cadets from other local units during the Summer Active programme.

Away from Sea Cadets Alex enjoys playing the guitar and has started his A levels with ambitions to join the Royal Navy as an officer.



Leading Cadet Zunara Kaisar joined Enfield Unit's Junior Sea Cadet section in 2016 and it was obvious from the start that her enthusiasm would carry her on a path of distinction inside and outside of Sea Cadets.

Her achievements to date include her Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Emergency First Aid at Work, BTEC Level 1 in Teamwork and Personal Development through CVQO, along with qualifications in Aviation, Seamanship and Navigation to name but a few.

She is patient and compassionate to her fellow cadets and can often be found helping them gain new skills in the subjects she has skills in.

She has become a fine example to her peers and visibly enjoys passing on her experience to others.

Her Sea Cadet unit has fallen on hard times and due to the pandemic and all that's come with it, their building has been closed for the last 18 months.

However, the unit is parading at another location and against the odds, with Zunara's capable assistance, is doing well.

Through the lockdown, she worked hard to help cadets who struggled with the sudden social changes thrust upon them and continues this now helping to develop their skills in the unit's temporary home as well as keeping a check on their well-being.

Zunara is a hardworking, enthusiastic cadet who has achieved much so far, but remains humble about her abilities and grateful for the opportunities the Sea Cadet organisation has given her.

She is always seeking out the next challenge and is fearless in trying something and challenging.

Outside of her busy academic and Sea Cadet schedule Zunara finds time to support other charities and is often seen helping the Macmillan Cancer Charity stall in Enfield.

Zunara is a keen reader, enjoying fantasy novels and she is currently undertaking her A-Levels with the aim of going on to study Economics and Cambridge University.



Petty Officer Cadet Mirren McIver from East Kilbride Sea Cadets is a truly exemplary cadet in all respects, a natural leader and an inspirational figure to other cadets.

She joined the unit's Junior Section aged ten in 2016 and has progressed through to the rank of Petty Officer Cadet impressing her instructors at every stage with her determination, confidence and maturity. Mirren always strives to be the best that she can be and shows leadership qualities in abundance.

On the water Mirren is an exceptionally talented individual, having gained the prestigious Master Coxswain Award which requires a combination of hard to attain afloat awards.

She is a Paddle sports Instructor, Rowing Coxswain, holds her RYA Level 2 Powerboat licence as well as RYA Sailing Stage 3. She is also working towards her Offshore Watch Leader qualification on the Sea Cadets' offshore power vessels.



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Area's class of 2022 cadets

Mirren has represented Clyde North District and Northern Area Sea cadets at a number of Area and National competitions, including Kayak Water Polo, Swimming, five-A-Side football and Piping.

Within Clyde North District, she is a visible presence and is highly respected by her peers. She has a maturity that belies her years and looks after those around her, especially younger cadets.

She leads the Clyde North District Cadet Forum with aplomb, clearly passionate about strengthening the cadet voice at all levels of the organisation.

In addition to her cadet achievements Mirren is an avid musician, playing in both her school band and the Northern Area Sea Cadet band. She has a particular talent for the saxophone which she plays at grade 5.

Her passion however is acting, she appears on stage with her local theatre group and is currently at college studying drama with ambitions of pursuing an acting career.



Cadet Corporal Lucy Taylor

joined Sefton unit in 2015 as a Junior Sea Cadet following her family into the Sea Cadets.

In 2018 she transferred across to her unit's Royal Marines Cadets detachment and has thrived as a Royal Marines Cadet, making it to the rank of Cadet Corporal.

She excels with her military skills and clearly enjoys utilising her experience to teach newer cadets in the unit. Lucy embodies all of the qualities expected of a senior cadet, well mannered, mature and responsible, she is an excellent role model for her peers.

Lucy has thrown herself into the various opportunities available through Sea Cadets gaining a variety of qualifications on the water and on land. She is an accomplished windsurfer, holding the RYA Stage 2 qualification and recently winning gold at North West Area regatta.

She is also a qualified rowing coxswain, intermediate first aider and has earned the basic rock-climbing qualification.

Lucy has already proved herself to be an outstanding ambassador for the Sea Cadet Corps, performing duties as a wreath bearer at the Sea Cadets National Trafalgar Parade in 2019 and leading the North West Area Cadet Forum with maturity and enthusiasm.

Lucy is autistic but has never let this limit her participation with Sea Cadets. She has spoken passionately about the challenges and opportunities of neurodiversity to other cadets inspiring them to support others and flourish themselves.

Through lockdown Lucy teamed up with her sister and developed lessons for other Royal Marines Cadets to keep them engaged through virtual training, her imagination and positivity through this time have contributed massively to the success of her detachment.

Outside of Sea Cadets Lucy enjoys singing and has spent time volunteering for a local mental health charity. She is currently studying A-levels in psychology, modern history and philosophy and is hoping to go on and study law at university.



Petty Officer Cadet Alexandra 'Sasha' Snell

joined Milton Keynes in 2015 as a Junior Sea Cadet following in the footsteps of both her older brothers.

Sasha's sea cadet career has been exemplary, progressing to

the rank of Petty Officer Cadet demonstrating her determination, self-awareness and superb communication skills along the way.

Sasha has played a pivotal role in the Southern Area Cadet Forum and growing cadet voice in the Area. She passionately advocates for her peers and younger cadets, working proactively on issues and developing the forum experience.

In her community Sasha has helped the Mayor with a local cycle project as well as involving herself heavily with Refugees Welcome MK raising awareness and supporting a cause she is passionate about. She is a fantastic ambassador for Sea Cadets and was selected as Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Buckinghamshire in 2021.

She is at home on the water and has gained the prestigious Master Coxswain Award which combines several hard to gain waterborne qualifications.

Her accomplishments afloat include a plethora of RYA qualifications including Essential Navigation and Seamanship, Day skipper Theory, Powerboat Level 2, Stage 2 Windsurfing and she is an RYA Dinghy Instructor. Sasha is always keen to use her abilities to help other cadets learn to sail and is planning to teach courses to her fellow cadets at Thrappston Boat Station.

She is also working towards her Paddle sport and Rowing instructor qualifications, meaning that she will be an instructor in the three main afloat disciplines. To achieve this despite the disruption caused by the lockdowns is testament to her determination to achieve.

Alexandra aspires to become a Marine Biologist and wants to travel the world; she is currently studying A-levels in Biology, Geography and Psychology. She is a multitalented sportsperson playing for her school's netball team as well as enjoying horse riding.



Cadet Corporal Megan Rowley

joined the Royal Marines Cadet Detachment at Redditch and Bromsgrove Sea Cadets in 2017. Initially shy, she quickly grew in confidence.

Megan's initiative, emotional intelligence and enthusiasm set her apart from her peers. She is humble and considers others before she considers herself.

Megan can often be found supporting younger cadets in the unit that are struggling and recently took it upon herself to organise a thank you from the cadets for all the volunteers in her unit.

Megan's confidence had a turning point and grew immensely when she was selected to be part of a young team from Redditch and Bromsgrove's Royal Marines Cadets representing Alpha Company at the Gibraltar Cup competition.

Despite their in-experience the team attacked the competition with true commando spirit, their cheerfulness and determination shone throughout the weekend.

Always prepared and forward thinking, Megan steps up in her unit without prompting and often helps deliver training to other cadets.

Megan has gained qualifications in aviation, paddle sports, windsurfing as well as fixed seat and sliding seat rowing. Her passion however is helping other cadets through the forums where she has been incredibly active. She has established a highly-effective unit forum as well as taken

a lead role in her District and with Alpha Company, especially making sure that underrepresented cadets are involved. She is keen to improve communication between cadets and adult volunteers at all levels.

When Megan is not taking part in activities with Sea Cadets, she enjoys horse riding, scuba-diving and walking her three cocker spaniels.

Megan is a young carer, helping at home to look after her sister whilst studying three A-levels in Applied Science, Sport and Health and Social Care. Her aspiration for the future is to join the Royal Navy as a Nursing Officer.



Petty Officer Cadet Jessica Sansom

joined the VCC RN-RM six years ago, she quickly gained promotion to Leading Hand and subsequently to Petty Officer.

She is an important member of HMS Collingwood RNVCC and ensures that the highest standards are always maintained.

One of the proudest moments of her time in the VCC so far, was taking charge of the Cadet platoon when they were invited to take part in ceremonial divisions at HMS Collingwood in front of the Former First Sea Lord.

The first time that a VCC platoon had taken part in a Royal Naval Ceremonial Divisions. When F2F activities were suspended, PO Cadet Sansom's enthusiasm did not wane and she managed to complete not only her Bronze Award for the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, but she also became one of the first cadets in the VCC to complete the Silver Award, gaining her a DoFe merit in the process.

She volunteers as a young Leader for the Guides and enjoys being part of a team that helps young girls to learn new skills.

In September 2021 she enrolled at Fareham College to study the Uniformed Public Services course and has so far obtained her level 3 First Aid at Work Course and has been undertaking various team building roles, helping her build towards applying to join the Royal Navy as a Warfare Officer.

Her hobbies include swimming, horse riding, reading and she really enjoys cooking/baking and likes to experiment with cake recipes to personalise cakes for her family and friends.



Cadet Sergeant Charlie Gill

joined Gosport Division Royal Marine VCC in September 2018 at the age of 12.

He very quickly embraced the organisation and has been fully committed, with a dedication and enthusiasm that is outstanding for one so young.

His communication skills are excellent, added with a self-confidence he can direct and guide a group or individuals when and where required. This was evident whilst attending the Lee-on-the-Solent Victory Festival in September 2021, where the Cadet Force Adult Volunteers were very impressed by his command, leadership and management and ability to galvanise his group during a high-profile and public event.

Intelligent, mature and articulate, he has thrived on the added responsibility that has come with early advancement and promotion and approaches all tasks in a calm and controlled manner but remains determined to succeed in all cadet activities.

These excellent attributes, allied with a sound sense of RM core values and ethos, allow him to provide invaluable coaching and mentoring, particularly on training nights, where he is always on hand to help and support cadets.

Charlie is in his final year at Meon Cross school where he is the Deputy Head Boy voted in by his peers and teachers, clearly a high achiever and academically bright, sitting his GCSEs in May with a predicted high level of success, he will also sit the higher Maths Free standing examination, which is governed by Oxford and Cambridge Universities.

He moves into higher education at Barton Peveril Sixth Form College later this year where he will be studying for his A-Levels in maths, further maths, chemistry and physical education.

Charlie prides himself on his personal fitness, always first to volunteer and represent the unit at sporting activities, he has previously been a member of a winning Field Gun Crew and has his sights firmly set on team selection for the 2022 season.

Outside of cadets, his sporting activities continue with cross country and rugby at county, with his local club being Gosport and Fareham RFC.

His long-term ambition is to join the Royal Marines as an officer and remains an asset to Gosport Division RM VCC.



Leading Cadet Jack Bollom is an outstanding cadet within the Taunton School CCF.

He joined in Year 10, which is customary for most students in the school; however, he very quickly stood out among his peers as a remarkable leader.

His peers' admire his prodigious character and his staff have been impressed with the tenacity he has approached the challenges that have been set before him. He has set his sights on a career in the Royal Navy.

The skills he has acquired through his time so far in the CCF, and the skills that he will continue to hone, will set him up for impressive Service.

Jack has excelled in all areas of the syllabus and has risen through the ranks quickly as a result. He has also gained an insight into the RN as a wider field, through further reading and research.

These have led the section commander to be able to rely on him as a role model to his peers, who thoroughly uphold the core values of the RN.

His initiative when working as a leader during PLTs and his kind nature makes him a very easy person to follow. He has the wonderful skill of inspiring his teammates with solutions, while also taking on board others' suggestions when they are valuable to the development and completion of the task.

Jack was also an impressive contributor on the Taunton School CCF tri-service activity week, last summer, and had the chance to attend a Field Day at HMS Raleigh where he was a part of the opening ceremony of Ferry Cottage.

Jack is a very experienced long-distance swimmer and has completed swims such as the Solent swim.

He is also a prominent member of the school's sailing club working his way towards his RYA Qualifications after only starting less than a year ago.

In the classroom Jack studies a wide range on GCSEs including economics, computer

science and German alongside the core of sciences, maths and English. Jack is looking to pursue a career in medicine and is aiming to study maths and biology at A-Level.



Cadet WO2 William Waters joined the CCF at Sherborne School at the beginning of Year 10.

His deportment and standard of dress within the Section are always of the very highest order.

In addition to this he can be entirely relied upon to

give his best each and every week during parades, in thinking through challenges and opportunities and in other more adventurous activities.

His knowledge of the composition and workings of the Service is quite extraordinary. In classroom instruction he has been exemplary, impressing all who hear him with the depth of his understanding and by the very fine way in which he is able to inspire interest and enthusiasm among the other cadets.

On account of these factors, he is widely respected and indeed looked up to both by his peers and by the junior cadets.

Indeed, the news of his appointment to 1SL Cadets was very warmly welcomed throughout the Section.

William is currently studying at School for his A-levels in philosophy, geography and history.

He has a varied range of hobbies including cycling, sailing, rowing, reading about the history of the RN, history in general and learning about the Navy and Defence matters.



Petty Officer Cadet Meghan Ballard

from Phoenix Collegiate CCF has progressed and achieved endlessly since the day she joined cadets in May 2018, being a great team player and young leader within the unit.

Her passion for cadets stems from her great uncle who retired as a Lieutenant Commander, serving as a flight engineer in the Royal Navy.

During her time as a cadet Meghan has grown from strength to strength, she demonstrates the core values endlessly and always wants to do better for herself and her peers.

Meghan has completed the junior leadership course at HMS Raleigh and continues to be hungry to develop by being an integral member for Phoenix Corps of Drums.

She has command over 55 cadets and maintains discipline, guidance and followship to the highest standard.

Moving into 2022 Meghan is taking a development role to work tirelessly with the younger cadets and junior NCOs, to closely monitor so she can utilise her many attributes to the betterment of the section.

Meghan has a tremendous following at Phoenix, within the CCF and whole school, she is held in the highest regard by all of her teachers as a true asset and role model.

Outside of CCF Meghan has a passion for horse riding, she competes across the country and trains her horse daily which she thoroughly enjoys.

In her downtime she likes to swim and read away from studying criminology and engineering at A-level where she hopes to utilise these skills in her future endeavours.

Pair are picture perfect

THE Sea Cadet winners of the RN's Peregrine Trophy competition were Able Cadet Jonas Verner and CPO George Aitchison.

Cadet Verner, of TS Waveney, Ballymena Unit, took a winning photo depicting OC Patrick blowing the Bosun's Call during evening colours at Ballymena Unit, which is one of his regular duties on parade night.

For the first time, the Royal Navy's annual photography competition also included volunteers, with CPO Aitchison from City of London Sea Cadets Unit snapping up the prize for the SCC category.

His winning photo, entitled 'Fancy a Lift' features PO Paul Preston from Winsford and Northwich Sea Cadets. In the photo, PO Paul is showing George how to assist someone to shore. The photo was taken at Errwood Reservoir in the Peak District National Park, Derbyshire.

"It was fantastic to see my



photograph chosen as the winner of the new category for Cadet Instructor Amateur Photographer," said George.

"As an amateur photographer in the Sea Cadets I've always been in awe of the quality of the Peregrine Trophy pictures I've seen in the Navy News. To be placed alongside these awesome pictures from all over the Naval Services was a dream come true!"

AC Jonas attended the awards ceremony in Trinity House, London, where he was presented with the RN's Peregrine Trophy for the 'Cadet Amateur Photographer of the Year'.



The judging panel included individuals from Getty Images, The Times and the BBC.

The Peregrine Trophy is the Royal Navy's yearly photographic competition, recognising the diversity, talent and creative set of skills of Royal Navy photographers.

Sweet way of saying thank you

CADETS and volunteers from the North West Area warmly supported Chris Lamb's Chocolate Orange Challenge between October and December 2021, collecting over 600 chocolate oranges as a way of saying thank you to emergency service staff across the area during the festive season.

Chris Lamb, a former sea cadet, first started the challenge when his newborn son, Elliott, was in hospital in 2008. At the time, Chris gave each of the hospital staff a chocolate orange to show his appreciation for the care shown to his son.

Sadly, Elliott passed away at Alder Hey Children's Hospital, Liverpool, in December 2010, aged only four.

Chris decided to continue collecting chocolate oranges in memory of his son and as a way of thanking emergency services staff, who had looked after his son so well throughout the four years that Elliott was in their care.

Sea cadets and Royal Marines cadets from Blackburn, Blackpool, Chorley and Preston units have joined in to help him in the yearly Chocolate Orange Challenge.

Cadets and volunteers collected and personally hand delivered hundreds of chocolate oranges to their local hospitals, emergency departments, police stations, fire stations and mental health services as



a way of saying thank you for all their hard work and spreading some festive cheer among emergency service staff across the North West.

Over the past ten years, over 100,000 chocolate oranges have been collected, with people sending them in from all across the UK as well as from far flung as Australia, Canada and the USA.

"It just started off with one chocolate orange all those years ago and the challenge continues to grow year on year," said Chris. "It helps me to stay close to Elliott's memory and to carry on telling his story."



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Forth flies the flag

SAILORS from HMS Forth raised the Union Flag on the site of the first British settlement in the Falklands – replacing one battered by the fierce South Atlantic elements.

The bleak, remote settlement of Port Egmont was inhabited for less than a decade and abandoned nearly 250 years ago.

But the site is marked to this day with the Union Flag flying over the foundations of the handful of buildings which once formed the small 18th Century settlement on Saunders Island.

It's the duty of the Royal Navy's current patrol ship permanently based in the islands to visit outlying islands and communities and also maintain some of the memorials peppered around the Falklands when opportunity arises.

The British flag was first planted on what is now Saunders Island – the fourth largest in the Falklands,

around 100 miles west of the present-day capital Stanley – on January 23 1765 by Commodore John Byron.

He described it as "one of the finest harbours in the world. The whole Navy of England might ride in perfect security from all winds."

To mark the 257th anniversary of the landing, Forth's sailors hoisted a fresh flag on the pole.

The shrill note of the boatswain's call pierced the Falklands winds as the new flag was hoisted in a unique set of 'Colours' and the sailors saluted.

Although Egmont is now uninhabited, British settlers returned to the island; Forth's shore party called on the settlement owners following the ceremony as part of the ship's mission to reassure Falkland Islanders.

What struck the sailors was how little the

natural harbour had changed since Port Egmont was founded: the ship was treated to a view that wouldn't be too dissimilar from the one seen from Commodore Byron's ships, HMS Dolphin and Tamar.

"It was interesting to see this site which is so important in the history of the Falklands," said Lieutenant James Uglow, Forth's First Lieutenant.

"As the Falkland Island Patrol Vessel, there is a great sense of pride in quite literally keeping the flag flying in the Falklands."

The first vessel in the five-strong Overseas Patrol Squadron based in Portsmouth, Forth has now spent two years deployed in the islands with her crew rotating through – 12 weeks on, six weeks off – to maintain a permanent presence.

The ship will spend the coming months preparing for Falklands 40 commemorations, carrying out maintenance on war memorials and honouring veterans of 1982, alongside her training and patrol programme.



Peak performance from carrier crew

SIXTEEN shipmates from the nation's flagship battled foul weather conditions to scale the highest peaks in England, Scotland and Wales inside 24 hours.

Despite snow, poor visibility, rain and darkness, the team from HMS Queen Elizabeth conquered a snowy Ben Nevis in Scotland (1,345m), moved on to scale Scafell Pike (978m) in the Lake District and finally conquered Mount Snowdon (1,085m) in Wales.

The time on the stopwatch: 16 hours. And more than £2,600 of their £3,000 target for Help for Heroes raised.

"It was tough going in places, but we're trained to overcome such challenges and we achieved it with only a few bruises and blisters to show for it," said organiser, 27-year-old Naval Airman Kieran James.

"It was, clearly, a good physical test for us, something that would live long in our memories, and, logistically, over and done with quickly.

"We're hoping people will support us via justgiving.com/fundraising/qehandlers3peaks and pledge a few pounds to help us help veterans who have been left with something significantly more substantial than bruises or blisters as a result of serving their country."

The team comprised (deep breath): organiser James, from Aylesbury; his fellow NAs Lewis Nelson, 24, from Southend; Rhys Gwilliam, 25, from Llanelli; Sean Hainey, 27, from Salford; Peter Savage, 33, from Barrow-in-Furness, Lucas Jones, 30, and Kim Hartley, 25, both from Burnley; Leading Airmen Pete Medhurst, 31, from Crewkerne, James Milner, 27, from Portsmouth, and Joe Wrigley, 24, from Great Yarmouth; Leading Aircraft Controller Mitchell Farr, 24, from Thorndon; Petty Officers Liam Forgeron, 33, from Portsmouth, Wayne Bowring, 40, from Weymouth, and Brian Johnston, 34, from Bolton; Chief Petty Officer Ray Richardson, 36, from Newcastle; and Warrant Officer Scott Iszard, 46, from Torquay.



WordSkills hopefuls put through their paces at HMS Sultan



AERONAUTICAL engineering apprentices, vying for a place in the WorldSkills UK (WSUK) International Team, visited HMS Sultan in order to hone their skills for the International Finals 2022 in Shanghai, China.

Three apprentices from across industry were invited for a week of intensive training ahead of the final selection event in April, which will decide the final candidate who will represent the UK in Shanghai in October.

Under the tutelage of WSUK's Chief Expert James 'Jimmy' Callaghan, and

with support from the Defence College of Technical Training's Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School, the candidates practised various mechanical and avionics techniques.

Jimmy said: "The week at HMS Sultan is really good for us as it has all the training facilities we need for all the basic disciplines that the competition requires.

"We also hire a house out locally, so we get to cook and live together and talk WorldSkills all the time.

"The advantage of bringing all the apprentices together is that it helps

bring out their inner competitiveness and it allows them to learn best practice from one another. They know that team moderation is right on the horizon and that if they're not selected at that point then they will miss out on the final."

Among the competitors bidding for a place in the final was Adelle Hughes, a third-year apprentice from Raytheon UK.

Adele, pictured, said: "It's quite intense, as we're covering something new, but it's been really good. It's been good to see the skills that I've learnt and see them being used in competition.

"The training is also helping me at work, as it reinforces the importance of following procedures. It's also been interesting to mix with other apprentices from across industry.

"Being involved with WorldSkills has been excellent as it's also really helped me with my confidence.

"When I was in school, I didn't really have anyone to talk to me about apprenticeships as it was all focussed on university, so working with WorldSkills is really important to me as it helps other young people realise that these opportunities are out there."



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Young boxer trains with RN fighters

The great-great-grandson of Royal Navy explorer Edgar Evans has been training with the Service's boxers.

Tyler Ford, 14, from Swansea in South Wales, is the Welsh national ABA amateur boxing champion and also a nine-times world kickboxing champion.

His great-great-grandfather was Petty Officer Edgar Evans, a member of Captain Scott's ill-fated Terra Nova Expedition to the South Pole in 1911-12. He died on the Ross Ice Shelf in Antarctica in February 1912.

Tyler, who has ambitions to join the Royal Navy and its boxing team, spent a day with Navy Boxing at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth, where he trained at the RN gym under the watchful eyes of Royal Marine and Royal Navy boxing coaches.

Tyler, who was joined by his training partner Cassius Walker-Hunt, was also welcomed aboard HMS Prince of Wales for a tour.

"Tyler was very grateful to the Royal Navy for all the support they have offered to him over the years," said his dad Anthony. "He is looking to join the Royal Navy after attending college and particularly hopes to join the Royal Navy boxing team."

He was also inducted into the Martial Arts hall of fame when he was just eight years old, and has a British Citizen Award from Westminster Palace, given to people for 'exceptional endeavours'.

Tyler has also been trained in doing his own stunts with weapons, horse riding and wire work and, as a member of the



Flashing Blades Stunt and Combat Team, has worked on films such as *By Any Name*, *My Bloody Banjo*, and *Terra Nova*, based on his great-great-grandfather's life in which Tyler played a young Edgar.



Jockeys star at Sandown

THIS year's Grand Military national hunt horse race meeting takes place at Sandown Park on March 8.

The meeting consists of six races, four professional and two for military jockeys: The Queen Elizabeth the Queen Mother Memorial Amateur Handicap Hurdle Race; and the Grand Military Gold Cup.

Potential jockeys come from across the three Services and they represent a wide rank range – their standard has never been higher.

The Grand Military meeting provides a thrilling day of quality racing in a relaxed environment to meet former comrades and celebrate service in the Armed Forces.

Premier tickets can be purchased at the discount price of £14, redeemable with the promotional code GM2022 when booking in advance at Tickets at Sandown Park.



RN Telemark Team captain Capt Gordi McCrae at Meribel

Marking great return to action



THE Royal Navy Telemark Team returned to the snow after a gap of two years in a bid to defend their title at the 2022 Inter Services Ski and Snowsport Championships in Meribel.

The Senior Service got off to a great start, winning the first Giant Slalom event, but ended up finishing second overall to the Army.

The RN team managed a two-week training camp in Tignes ahead of the championships, where they could only take a five-person squad.

Royal Marines Colour Sergeant Steve Farrant was the top RN skier, managing a podium place in every race, finishing second in the Giant Slalom and third in both the Classic and the Sprint.

In the individual competition the Royal Navy Team managed three skiers in the top five, with C/Sgt Farrant finishing third, Capt Gordie McCrae RMR finishing fourth and Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw fifth.

The RN Telemark Team consisted of Capt McCrae (Team Captain), Capt Pete Bird RMR, C/Sgt Farrant RM, Lt Cdr Shaw and Sgt Andy Spain RM. Capt Bird and Sgt Spain were awarded their RN Telemark Colours for attending the Inter-Service Championships for the first time.

The Countess of Wessex, patron of the Inter Services Snow Sports Championships, visited competitors in Meribel.

During her visit the Countess spoke to military competitors taking part in Alpine, Telemark and Snowboarding.

The event, last held two years ago, was opened by General Sir Patrick Sanders, President of the UK Winter Sports Association.

Athletes from the Royal Navy, Army, RAF and the Armed Forces Para Snow Sports team competed in the 15th championships to be held in the French resort.

Telemark Racing is a form of downhill racing on telemark bindings with a 'free heel' over a race course that includes a jump and a skating section. Anyone interested in trying Telemark will be able to do so at taster sessions at the Royal Navy Ski Championships in Les Arcs in March and in Stubai Glacier in May.

Telemark tasters and racing will also be available at the RN Indoor Festival and Race at Milton Keynes in the autumn.

A growing number of women are becoming involved and the aspiration remains to enter a women's team into the 2023 Inter-Service Championships. All events are open to all full-time and reserve services.

Anyone interested in trying Telemark or attending any of the above events can find more information by contacting Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw on ramsay.shaw771@mod.gov.uk or 07815 019270.

Details of the 2023 Navy Telemark Championships will be released via a DIN in September this year.

Further information on Telemark skiing can also be found on the RNRM Telemark Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/RNRMTelemark/>



Clockwise from top, the RN Telemark Team, from left, Sgt Spain, Capt McCrae, C/Sgt Farrant and Lt Cdr Shaw with the Countess of Wessex; Sgt Spain on the slopes; C/Sgt Farrant takes silver in the Giant Slalom; C/Sgt Farrant celebrates with Capt McCrae



Report: Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw



PHYSING WITH IDEAS IN THE FALKLANDS

THE Falklands – it's all penguins and battlefield tours isn't it?

Well no, because it's also a perfect place for adventurous training, sport and outdoor activities, especially at the height of summer.

HMS Protector's crew took full advantage of the opportunities to stretch their legs during their first break from patrolling Antarctica.

East Cove port serves as the key logistical/maintenance/support hub for the icebreaker when she's operating in the South Atlantic and fringes of the frozen continent (as well as also providing a home for patrol ship HMS Forth).

While stocking up on supplies for the next stint in the Antarctic (now underway) and a rotation of one third of the crew, those sailors and marines not needed on board enjoyed a range of activities organised by new clubz Leading Physical Training Instructor 'Lozza' McCarthy, *pictured right*.

At sea she's responsible for running

regular circuits to keep her shipmates motivated, as well as a well-equipped gym.

In the Falklands, she sorted out sea kayaking in the relatively-sheltered waters of Yorke Bay, near Stanley airport, rock climbing, a hike with members of the Antarctic Heritage Trust up Mount Harriet outside the Falklands capital (and also hallowed ground for 42 Commando who captured it in 1982 in the final battles for the islands), possibly the world's most southerly park run, and some six-a-side football in the indoor facilities at Mount Pleasant.

"Upon joining Protector in the new year, it's clear to see how respected and how much work my predecessor has put in ensuring the gym and personnel on board were ready for this long period away from home,

"I will work hard to continue his efforts with the ship's company over the next two years while we're deployed and I've been looking forward to providing some great sporting opportunities in some of the unique places we're visiting this year.

"With the ship working in some of the most inhospitable environments in the world, it's important that the ship's mental and physical health is priority number one and I will put 100 per cent effort into achieving this."

Protector visits Pitt Islands, pages 14-15



£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the January edition of *Navy News* (right) was an Argentine patrol boat captured by HMS Cardiff in the Falklands in June 1982, and renamed HMS Tiger Bay.

Ian Richardson, from Durham, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers. This month's mystery ship (*above*) is a cruiser which served in WW1 before being sold in 1921 and broken up in 1940.

1. What was she renamed? and 2. What was her original name?

Please complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

We will also accept emailed entries to subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk with **March Mystery Ship** in the email header.



Coupons and emails giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Entries must be received by April 12.

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 May edition.

MYSTERY PICTURE 325

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: news@royalnavymail.mod.uk or editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk
- If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
- Please send in reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event. There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
- Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
- The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

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Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Ask Jack columns in April's Noticeboard must be received by

MAR 15 2022

Deaths

Thomas Shirley, LME. Joined HMS Ganges aged 15. Served in ships including HMS Dundas, and served aboard ships patrolling Suez Canal. Was involved in recovery of those who died in the TSMS Lakonia cruise ship disaster in 1963. Died January 2.

Michael 'Slinger' Wood, CPO (CHOEL). Served from 1956 to 1980 in HMS Agincourt, Centaur, Undaunted, Diamond, Jaguar, Bacchante, Scylla, Collingwood, Warrior (WFTS), Pembroke, and Victory. Member of 4th Destroyer Association. Died January 23, aged 82.

Lt Cdr Colin McCanna. Served in HMS Intrepid during Falklands Conflict. Died in Canada January 2.

Capt Anthony J Oglesby OBE. HMS Blackpool, Osprey, Nelson, Centurion. C-in-C Nav Home. Died January 30, aged 90.

Lt Terry J Fletcher. HMS Eagle, Heron. Sea Vixen and Phantom Observer. Died January 25, aged 81.

Cdr Michael J Priestley. HMS Lynx, Mercury, Cleopatra, NATO, Ark Royal, Osprey, Seahawk. 800/801/808 NAS. Died December 2.

David Edward Glee. Joined Royal Navy at HMS Ganges in 1957 and served in HMS Broadsword, Protector and Victory. Died January 27, aged 79.

Paul Marulli de Barletta. Served from February 1970 to July 1994 in HMS Ganges, Raleigh, Sultan, Monkton, Drake, Lincoln, Landaff, RNH Haslar, Victory, Seahawk, RFA Engadine, RNMS RNH Haslar, HMS Charybdis, Royal Arthur, Southampton, and RH Haslar. In 1985 awarded Ruth Carter prize for nurses; 1987, LS and GC Medal; 1990, General Service Medal (Gulf); 1991 Sick Berth Petty Officers Efficiency Medal. 2016 Awarded Order of St John for Excellence in the field of Military Medicine. Died January 11, aged 67.

Norman Robinson. Served during WW2 in HMS Belfast on Arctic Convoys and at D-Day, receiving medals for both. Member of HMS Belfast Association and a founder member of Skipton and District Branch of the RNA. Died October 10, 2021, aged 97.

Raymond Sharp. Served in HMS Ganges, Bulwark, Falmouth, Vernon and Rook. Member of Skipton and District RNA. Also volunteer on the Worth Valley Railway, where the *Railway Children* was filmed. Died January 4, aged 70.

Horace (Roy) Webb, CPO Mech1. Served from 1956 to 1980 in HMS Ganges, Malcolm, Gambia, Striker, Sultan, Eagle, Berryhead, FMU Singapore, Portland FMU, Blake, and Diego Garcia. Last role as instructor at Sultan. Died December 9.

Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNOC

Rear Admiral Tom Bradbury. FOAIB & Chief Naval Supply & Secretariat Officer 1977-79. Served 1939-1979. Paymaster Midshipman in HMS Liverpool and HMS Warspite, both seriously damaged in action. Various port parties in the Desert War, North Africa.

Reunions

HMS Mohawk Association. Our next reunion will take place at the Mercure Dolphin Hotel in Southampton from Friday March 25 to 28. For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or contact Bob Proud at rob.proud@mypostoffice.co.uk

HMS Collingwood Association: Our next reunion and AGM will take place at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth from Friday April 29 to Monday May 2. For details contact Peter Lacey 07775941505 or email: placey173@gmail.com or Nina Young Travel Design 07588814126, email: info@nytd.uk.

HMS Lowestoft: The 10th HMS Lowestoft Association reunion will take place at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Hants, on April 12/13. All who served in Lowestoft during her RN service (1961-1985) are welcome to attend (including wives/partners/guests). Bookings direct with hotel, for further details and a booking form please email: admin@hmslowestoft.uk

HMS Nottingham: A reunion for ship's company 2000-02. at RNR Eaglet, Liverpool Docks. Saturday May 7 at 1430 for 1500 start. Full details and registration from Alan.Murrell535@mod.gov.uk. Cost £10 per head.

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association: The 2022 annual reunion takes place at the Red Lea Hotel in Scarborough, from May 13 to 16. Contact

Ask Jack



RNR SIGN: I found this hardwood sign in my shed and wondered if anyone would like it. It is 79cm by 50cm and I am in Exmouth, Devon.

Graham Wright
wrightgj@btinternet.com

HMS Dainty: My father is trying to contact Dave Irwin and 'Crash Carl', with whom he served with aboard HMS Dainty. My dad's name is Reg Grogan.

Lisa Hughes
07834269050

PITTOCK: I have two grandparents who died in action during WW1 and WW2 and cannot obtain

HMS Scylla (at D-Day, also seriously damaged), HMS Theseus, HMS Ceres, Flag Lt to Head of British Naval Mission, Greece and BRNC Dartmouth. Staff of FO Germany, HM Destroyers Chaplet and Chevron, HMS Victorious, Sec/Naval Secretary, HMS Tiger, HMS Lion, HMS Hermes, Secretary to Controller of the Navy. Commanded (as Commander) HMS Jufair early 1960s, (as Captain) HMS Terror 1970-71. Died December 29, aged 99.

Lt Cdr Thomas Edwards MBE. HMS Fulmar, Raleigh, Neptune, Tamar, Royal Arthur, Rhyl. NATO. SNO Falkland Isl. Died in January.

Capt Clifford J Caughey. HMS Nelson, Fife, Lochinvar, Juno, Ariadne, Cochrane, RCDS, President, NATO Rome. Died in January.

Lt Cdr G G Prall. HMS Pembroke, Jamaica, Tyne, Ceres. Died January 10, aged 99.

Cdr Colin S Cochrane. HMS Torquay, Victorious, Ganges, ACR, DNW, CNH Reserves. Died in January.

Cdr John G Pangbourne. HMS Zulu, Llandaff, Terror, Nelson. Naval Sec. RNC Greenwich, BRNC Dartmouth. Died in January.

Lt Cdr Jim W Rose. HMS Verulam, Albion, Dolphin, Vernon, Excellent, RM Eastney, Army Man Services Gp. Died in December.

Lt Cdr John M H Davies. HMS Collingwood, Intrepid, Osprey, Tiger, Daedalus. MOD Hydrog. Died in January.

Capt Peter Hames. HMS Puma, Terror, Cambridge, Berwick, Centurion. NATO. Died in January.

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association

Harold "Buck" Buckley, stoker. Associate member. Died December 22, aged 79.

Richard Palmer. Lt Cdr. HMS Bulwark 69/71. Died January 8.

Keith Newey. Cook. HMS Albion 62/64. Died January 12.

Peter "Jack" Benny, CPO. HMS Bulwark 70s. Died January 10.

Lt Cdr Edward M Dowzer. HMS Fulmar, Ark Royal, Seahawk, Hermes, Ark Royal, Rooke. DNR. RNPT. Died January 16, aged 85.

Capt Peter A N Foster. HMS Kent, Ark Royal, Hermes. DG Ships. RNEC Manadon. DGNMT. RCDS. Died January 13, aged 86.

Capt RM Christopher J R Goode MBE. ITCRM/CTCRM. Died December 28, aged 83.

Lt Cdr RNR Peter Nobbs. HMS Sussex, Vivid, Solent. Jan 26. Aged 88.

Submariners' Association

David A Clutten, RS. Served 1969 to 1978 in HM Submarines Onyx 1970, Conqueror 1970 to 1974, Opossum 1976, Orpheus 1976 to 1978. Member of

Colchester Branch. Died December 2.

Gerald Bevan, Stoker Mech. Served Dec 1949 to Dec 1952 in HM Submarines Alderley XE7 XE8 Member of Wales Branch. Died December 7.

Peter R B Greenfield, L Sig. Served 1953 to 1958. In HM Submarines Seascope 1953 and Seneschal Tally-Ho, 1953 to 1958. Member of Australia Branch. Died December 12.

Colin L Hunt Tel. Served 1944 to 1945 in HM Submarines Unruly, U1105, and Surf. Member of Gatwick Branch. Died December 13.

Stanley Gould, LS RP3. Served Jun 1947 to Jun 1957 in HM Submarines Seneschal, Artemis, Telemachus, and Tactician. Member of North Staffs Branch. Died December 13.

Anthony G Richards LS RP2. Served 1963 to 1967 in HM Submarines Oberon and Finwhale. Member of Australia Branch. Died December 16.

David J Macleod CPO MEM(M). Served 1974 to 1994 in HM Submarines Renown 1974 to 1977 and 1985 to 1991, and Repulse 1978 to 1981. Member of Scottish Branch. Died December 25.

William Hoy, CRS. Served Jul 1948 to Mar 1973 in HM Submarines Alcide, Token, and Repulse. Member of Southampton Branch. Died December 27.

Graeme Hall, MEM(L). Served 1989-1998 in HM Submarines Conqueror, Oracle, Spartan, Vanguard, and Victorious. Member of Blackpool and Fylde Branch. Died December 29.

Paul William Hartley, LOEM. Served 1966 to 1974 in HM Submarines Cachalot 1966 to 1969, and Sealion 1969 to 1974. Member of Merseyside Branch. Died January 14.

Michael J Taylor CRS. Served 1966 to 1976 in HM Submarines Opossum and Finwhale. Member of Wales Branch. Died January 16.

Clive Gregory Cooper, PO MEM. Served 1958 to 1979 in HM Submarines Rorqual, Ambush, Teredo, Totem, Talent, Token, Trump, Grampus, and Porpoise. Member of Gosport Branch. Died January 17.

Ian Hugh Pirnie CB DL Rear Admiral. Served Nov 1965 to Feb 1993 in HM Submarines Resolution and Repulse. Member of Barrow-in-Furness Branch. Died January 17.

Selwyn Andrew Rushton, L Stoker. Served 1954 to 1958 in HM Submarines Tiptoe. Member of North Staffs Branch. Died January 20.

David Edge, PO Ck. Served 1967 to 1981 in HM Submarines Repulse, Resolution, Sovereign, Splendid, and Valiant. Member of Exeter Branch. Died January 24.

Andy J Verdi, CPO Coxn. Served 1959 to 1979 in HM Submarines Seneschal, Acheron, Tiptoe, Walrus, Ambush, Aeneas, Otter, Narwhal, Onyx, Olympus, and Resolution. Member of Gosport Branch. Died January 27.

hotel or NigelJest@hotmail.co.uk

HMS Troubridge: Final Commission Association 1966-69 2022 reunion will be at the North Euston Hotel, The Esplanade, Fleetwood FY7 6BN October 3 to 7, 2022. Contact Bryan Pace at Romft1@GMail.com or visit <http://HMSTroubridge.com>

Royal Navy Photography Branch: Reunion planned for Friday November 4 to Monday November 7 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. All ex and serving photos, plus partners, welcome to mark the 103rd anniversary of the branch formation. Weekend includes tours of Portsmouth and the naval base, a gala dinner, and an annual meeting. Contact Danny du Feu. ddf.photography@gmail.com; Tel: 07711 083465.

HMS Ganges: A 60th anniversary celebration is planned for 54 Recruitment November 1962 Hawke 291 and 292 classes at Chatham in November. Any old boys who are interested please contact Robin Potter at r.potter60@talktalk.net

HMS St Vincent March 1953- Duncan 21. Trying to contact former class mates of mine and also TS Arethusia 1950/53. I also went to the following ships, Loch Ruthven 53/54 Dryad 54/55. HMS Newcastle Far East 55/57, Dryad 57/58. HMS Victorious 58/60. Dryad 61 Left Navy March 61. Leading Seaman RP2. Belong to associations at St Vincent and Victorious. tonyturner36@hotmail.co.uk

Secretary Denis Askham at 07773651213 or email askhamd3@gmail.com

HMS Fearless: Our 40th anniversary reunion takes place in Portsmouth from May 28 to 29. Tickets for the gala dinner at the Royal Maritime Club need to be booked in advance and are £60 per head. Book viz: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hms-fearless-82-40th-anniversary-reunion-tickets-189862392527>. On May 29 we muster at Gosport bus station at 9.45am ahead of a service at 11am and a parade via Gosport High Street to a reception at Walpole Park. Details on Fearless Old Boys Facebook page or SAMA82 website.

Fulmar Mountaineering Club: A reunion of the RNAS Lossiemouth-based club takes place at The Palace Hotel, Buxton, Derbyshire, from May 13-16. Contact Bud and Lin Abbott on linwhis5@gmail.com

HMS Cleopatra Old Shipmates Association: Our 37th AGM and Reunion takes place on May 20-23 at the Sketchley Grange Hotel, Hinckley The weekend includes the AGM, gala dinner and a visit to the National Arboretum. Contact Honorary Secretary Warwick Franklin on 01752 366611 or warwick_franklin@outlook.com

HMS Aisne Last Commission 1966 to 68: A reunion is planned at the Best Western Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from June 10 to 13. Contact the

photographs of them. One was AB James Arthur Pittock P/SSX5991, who died April 8 1940 on HMS Glowworm. The other was Stoker John Cooper 5685s who died on HMS Vanguard, on July 9 1917. I have tried all records with a nil result so can any of your readers help?

John Pittock
ex Leading Stoker
johnnp46@yahoo.co.uk

HMS Matchless: My step father served on the Matchless and ran the Matchless Association until his death a few years ago. We still have 2 of the association's ties and wondered if you might have any suggestions as to how we might reach any of the veterans still alive (or their relatives) who might treasure one?

Norman.haynes@ntlworld.com

Charity Front Line Naval Chaplain: We are after

information about a WW2 'bish', the Rev Martin Martin-Harvey DSC. Records about Martin-Harvey, a temporary RNVR chaplain, are incomplete.

So far researchers have pieced together that he served in the famous Pedestal convoy to Malta in 1942, praying with dying men then later committing their bodies to the deep.

Later, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for actions while serving in the cruiser HMS Sirius (possibly when the ship was bombed, suffering 14 killed and many injured, during the bombardment of Kos).

He later went ashore on D-Day, having "had the good sense to take off his clothes and carry them on his head while wading ashore, thus ensuring a dry ship-shape condition in which to engage the enemy" - he was possibly serving with the Royal Marines at the time - he is listed at Bickleigh in 1946. After the war he became the chaplain of St Lawrence College, in Ramsgate.

Simon Springett
frontlinebish@gmail.com

Bristol fashion

Reservist praised for work keeping sea lanes open

RESERVIST Petty Officer Simon Davies has been recognised for his dedication to keeping the sea lanes of the Middle East safe and open for fellow seafarers.

The senior rating was named 'warrior of the month' for his contribution to the international effort guiding shipping through choke points in the region.

Simon, a Maritime Trade Operations (MTO) specialist, is mobilised to Bahrain as part of the UK's contribution to an eight-nation coalition, the International Maritime Security Construct, which runs Task Force Sentinel.

Quickly gaining the trust and respect of his full-time counterparts as a duty watchkeeper, he became the first RN Reservist to take the title.

His role as group watch officer makes him responsible for the operations room whilst on duty, and he also trains other Gulf Cooperation Council military personnel to provide support and reassurance to mariners operating in the region.

"I'm delighted to be recognised for the contribution I've made to the Royal Naval Reserve and to operations in Bahrain," he said.

"Although I have worked with other nationalities in NATO, this is the first time I've worked directly with our allies in a single team.

"It's been extremely interesting to discover the various cultural differences between our various fleets and ways of working.

"Training service personnel from nations where English is not the first language has been the most rewarding and proves with a common mission, we can all deliver to



affect an outcome which keeps us all safe."

The mission in Bahrain is the fifth time the reservist – based at HMS Flying Fox in Bristol – has been mobilised into regular service, most recently last year as part of the military's support to the pandemic response.

His Commanding Officer back in Bristol, Commander Chris Parry, said PO Davies was "an ambassador and credit to the Maritime Reserves and to HMS Flying Fox in particular.

"His exemplary conduct and dedication is in keeping with the highest traditions

of the Royal Navy and he follows in the footsteps of HMS Flying Fox's ships company in deploying individuals on operations at home and across the globe."

PO Davies' specialist branch works with the Merchant Navy and shipping industry to make sure all are aware of the latest threats, dangers and issues, and advise commanders on how best to keep sea lanes open for trade and logistics. They also research patterns of life in an area working closely with other interested parties stakeholders on matters which could adversely affect shipping.

Tri-Service Tracey is rewarded

EFFORTS to keep the Covid pandemic in check – especially during its darkest hours in the nation's capital – earned reservist Lieutenant Tracey Parrott the gratitude of some of the UK military's biggest supporters.

The RNR officer – who's served in all three Services during a 22-year career and is currently attached to the Naval Regional Command Eastern England – received a Certificate of Appreciation from the Richardson Brothers Foundation for stepping up to the plate as part of the national effort dealing with the Coronavirus.

Tracey answered the call for volunteers to assist with the Covid community mass testing programme as part of Operation Rescript and was swiftly selected to join a tri-service team to work with the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

She was initially deployed to the West Midlands but when the team leader in London needed compassionate leave, Tracey stepped into that role establishing the city's regional liaison team.

She headed a strategic planning team based at the DHSC with responsibility for internal and external communications and working patterns. Their overall aim was to provide asymptomatic test centres to help prevent those without symptoms from spreading coronavirus. Her team worked with 33 boroughs across London, as well as the Joint Military Command (London), NHS Track and Trace, and the head

of Public Health England.

She worked relentlessly for four months in London, advising boroughs implementing community mass testing, updating them on DHSC information, planning and logistics – earning the nickname "Tri-Service Tracey" as a mark of the trust and experience. For those boroughs which requested military support, she assisted in scrutinising and finalising their planning submissions.

Those efforts brought her to the attention of the Richardson family, long-time supporters of the UK Armed Forces, especially the Royal Navy, including ships and units associated with the West Midlands (such as HMS Daring and Coventry), sponsor various awards, support commissionings, dedications and launches, and donate specialist event equipment to vessels.

"Working with the London Boroughs, their Public Health England specialists and the private sector demonstrated how tirelessly they all worked during the pandemic – we all worked long hours but it was worth it when we saw the results of our efforts," said Tracey.

"I would like to thank the Richardson family for their recognition of my services to the Covid effort – it is my first award after 22 years across the Royal Air Force, Army and Royal Navy, so it is much appreciated".

The presentation was assisted by Commodore Jamie Miller, who served in the RN for 48 years – most recently as Regional Commander for Wales and Western England which brought him into contact with the Richardson family.



Marines welcome 24 new green berets

THERE are two-dozen new Royal Marines ready to give their all for Queen and Country wherever the call may come after completing their '36-week job application'.

312 Troop, The King's Squad, formally passed out for duty at the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines in Lymington in front of their families, friends and VIP Rear Admiral Jude Terry, the Royal Navy's Director People and Training and Naval Secretary, who took the salute and inspected the successful green berets.

Out of an initial intake of 55 recruits in April 2021, on this occasion, the King's Squad included ten original members, the remainder having joined from more senior Troops after recovering from injury, illness, or requiring more time to achieve the Commando standard.

Throughout, the trainees repeatedly demonstrated their professional competence, passing through individual skills taught in Phase One training and working together at Section and Troop level throughout Phase Two.

Of the 27 who started the Commando Test week, all but three succeeded – and they will give it a second crack shortly with another Troop.

Prior to the tests they completed a physically and mentally-demanding final exercise which took them across many of the South West's most demanding training areas, before tackling the four Commando tests: the Endurance Course, a nine-mile Speed March, the Tarzan Assault Course and the infamous 30-mile march across Dartmoor, each with just 24 hours' rest and recovery.

"Back home I was a student and served in the Canadian Army Reserve," said Marine Jacob Coutu. "I knew I wanted a military career and I wanted to be part of one of an elite fighting force. I knew they were accepting Commonwealth applicants, so I applied and was accepted and began my 36 week job application."

The Commando Medal was awarded to Marine Hal Bartlett who demonstrated unselfishness, cheerfulness under adversity, courage and determination throughout his training – qualities which define the commandos' spirit and ethos.

Marine Jacob Gawith wore the coveted King's Badge as the best all-round marine in the Squad – a decoration he will display for the rest of his career in the Corps.

"Today is an amazing and really special, I'm so proud."



Committed Culdrose duo

PERSONNEL at RNAS Culdrose have received awards for their service.

CPO Jon Jordan received a Volunteer Reserves Service Medal, while LH Ben Illsley was presented with his first good conduct badge.

CPO Jordan's citation said he is dedicated and thoroughly professional with a very comprehensive local knowledge of both RNAS Culdrose and HMS Gannet, built on the back of his regular service and RNR service time.

As one of the last full-time meteorologists to be based at HMS Gannet his knowledge of the local effects at Prestwick is invaluable.

Currently serving on an FTRS contract as the Met

Office manager 'JJ' has been instrumental to the smooth running of the office for the last two years and was a large contributing factor in the 'good' awarded by FOST in our AV last summer (mainly as a result of his attention to detail).

Ben Illsley is an excellent killick and his ability to lead shines through.

A keen sportsman Ben plays rugby and is a keen waterman, be it stand-up paddleboarding or surfing.

He is great at mentoring and supporting the ABs on his watch.

His background on the Fleet Mobile teams as a support to ASW in the North Atlantic stands him well from a tactical POV and he is absolutely operationally focussed as a result of this.

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