



NAVY NEWS

AUGUST 2019



AUSSIE RULES

Marine Oliver Carter of 40 Commando during a patrol in Queensland, Australia, while on Exercise Talisman Sabre. (see pages 20-21)

Picture: LCpl James Clarke

INSIDE: PEREGRINE TROPHY BALTIC PROTECTOR CASD50 ROYAL NAVY AIR DAY





ROYAL Marines are dropped into the waters off Estonia as the UK's new Joint Expeditionary Force completed its final exercise in the Baltic.

In Kolga Bay, two dozen miles east of the capital Tallinn, British and Estonian air, ground and naval forces combined for the first act of the final stage of the Baltic Protector deployment for political and military leaders of nine nations.

The demonstration opened with a pair of RAF Typhoon fighters screaming overhead. As spectators' eyes followed the disappearing jets, a Merlin of the Commando Helicopter Force appeared over the water and eight Royal Marines 'heli-casted' – jumping from the helicopter into the choppy waters below before swimming towards two inflatable raiding craft that sped towards the Baltic coastline.

They silently dropped the marines on to the sand and as the men moved up the beach, an Estonian reconnaissance trooper emerged from the woods to guide the commandos ashore.

As the demonstration continued, two Royal Marines Wildcat helicopters hovered just off the beach, using their thermal imagery cameras to scan for enemy units before Army Air Corps Apache thundered in to provide cover for the main landing.

A group of Offshore Raiding Craft, capable of speeds of up to 40 knots, disembarked groups of commandos to forge a beachhead ahead of the marines' heavy kit brought ashore by larger landing craft: a column of Viking armoured vehicles rumbled on to the beach and into the treeline to link up with their Estonian comrades.

As they rolled up to the outer perimeter, more Merlins, Wildcats and Apaches flew overhead and commandos 'fast roped' on to the ground to reinforce the outer cordon – bringing the demonstration to an end.

In theory, the defenders of the beachhead would be expected to hold out for up to 72 hours before being

relieved.

As a heavily-used range, Kolga features a network of trenches and numerous electronic targets which give the impression of enemy forces trying to overrun the beachhead.

"The landings were a great experience and this facility is really good, we have been able to use all of our weapons here – including the grenade machine-gun, 50 calibre heavy machine guns," enthused Lance Corporal Jake Flannery, 26, of X-Ray Company, 45 Commando.

"We have also had supporting fire from artillery and mortars which has made this a really realistic experience."

His company commander, Major Sam Hughes, added: "We're no longer in the game of opposed landings."

"We now have the ability to land at a time and place of our choosing before hitting the enemy where they least expect it. In this scenario, the Estonians had secured the beach and we moved in to reinforce their position."

The demonstration was the curtain-raiser to the final exercise of the two-month-long Baltic Protector deployment which has tested the Royal Navy-led task group in the North Sea (working with the Danes and Norwegians) and central Baltic (working with the US Navy and NATO).

In the final stage of the deployment, the emphasis was on working with the traditional 'Baltic states' to demonstrate how UK forces – in this instance led by flagship HMS Albion – would be deployed to the region in the event of a possible crisis.

"This exercise demonstrates our continuing commitment to Estonia and the security of the Baltic Sea Region," said task group commander Commodore James Parkin.

The deployment involved 4,000 personnel from the JEF nations – the UK, Netherlands, Denmark, Norway,

Sweden, Finland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania – and seen nearly 40 ships join the kernel of the task group formed around HMS Albion.

Fresh from Tallin, JEF moved to the Gulf of Riga where Royal Marines 'liberated' the island of Saaremaa.

Estonia's largest island – seven times the size of the Isle of Wight but with only a quarter of the population – occupies a commanding position at the gateway to the Gulf of Riga.

For the purposes of this exercise, the island had been swallowed whole by an aggressive neighbour – played by men and women of the Estonian Defence Forces who'd grown up on Saaremaa and therefore knew every rock and tree upon it.

To beat them, Albion launched a series of dummy raids on the sands of Saaremaa by helicopter and landing craft to draw in the defenders... while the real 'invasion' took place on the other side of the island.

Royal Marines of Yankee Company, 45 Commando – based aboard support ship RFA Lyme Bay – were quietly put ashore by boats before yomping across Saaremaa, linking up with covert reconnaissance teams who'd spent 24 hours on the island monitoring the 'enemy' unseen.

With surprise on their side, the commandos then attacked the well-defended main Estonian position from an unexpected direction.

With British Army Apache helicopters working for the Estonian side, the more numerous Estonian troops rallied and conducted a successful blocking action to repel the advancing marines. Rather than follow a pre-determined plan, this war game was 'free play': no participant knew the outcome as the exercise began. Instead, a series of military 'referees' determined who were the victors of the Battle of Saaremaa – and picked the defenders (the commandos claim it was a draw...). With the fighting over, breakfast was brought ashore from



Deep impact in Baltic

Lyme Bay and family and friends of the Estonian troops were then treated to a display of UK military equipment, including weapons, Viking vehicles, Apache helicopters, and various landing craft.

"It's been good for us in Estonia – we got the opportunity to land the Vikings on to the beach and meeting the Estonian Defence League at the end of the exercise, sharing breakfast with them, was a great chance to get to know them," said 32-year-old Sergeant Dave Clowes of the Royal Marines' Armoured Support Group.

Lieutenant Colonel Duncan Forbes, in charge of 45 Commando, added: "My Royal Marines, and our partners in the Estonian forces relished the opportunity to conduct challenging training in this environment. Complex training brings out the best in commandos and it is a delight to operate alongside our Estonian partners."

Some of the Royal Navy's smallest ships also got a piece of the action as seven P2000 fast patrol boats took part in the Baltops exercise.

The 54-tonne boats, typically used to give university students an insight into life in the Royal Navy, have been 'attacking' the numerous warships mustered for the US-led workout... just as British motorboats caused havoc in the Baltic in 1919.

Coastal motorboats – smaller, lighter but slightly faster than the P2000s, and armed with just a single torpedo and several machine-guns – were used extensively by the Royal Navy during the Russian Civil War.

A century later and among the numerous tasks today's P2000s – including HMS Blazer, Smiter and Express – were given during Baltops was testing the response of warship crews to attacks by fast moving pirate/terrorist craft.

Earlier in Baltic Protector, Royal Marines from 45 Commando and 24 Commando Royal Engineers – the marines' dedicated sapper unit – and the Army's Working Military Dogs unit were invited to unleash hell over

several days in a ghost town in Latvia.

For three decades, Skrunda-1 was a key base, its huge radars providing early warning of approaching NATO aircraft coming from the west, the town was closed to anyone but the 5,000 Russians who lived and worked there.

With the end of the Cold War, the Russians pulled out, the radars were blown up and the town – 60 buildings and structures, including a school, barracks, mess and married quarters – left to decay, until the Latvian military took it over and turned the 250-acre site into a training range.

Around 300 British and Latvian troops – mostly National Guard – joined forces to practise their urban combat skills overall several days.

The marines showed the Latvians various techniques to turn the multi-storey blocks which dominate Skrunda-1 into fortresses – making the enemy fight for each room, à la Stalingrad 75 years ago: barbed wire was rolled out, windows barricaded with sandbags, doors blocked with piles of rubble.

And the sappers of 24 Commando then demonstrated how to force their way into such buildings – some still adorned with faded kitsch mosaics of Lenin on the walls – from the basics of man-handling rubble and other obstacles out of the way, to cutting through barbed wire and using explosives charges for 'forced breaches'.

And once an entry was forced, specially-trained dogs were sent in to sniff out explosives and booby traps – or attack 'enemy' soldiers.

"Skrunda is unlike anything I have ever seen," said Major Mike Richardson of 24 Commando. "Here there's a feeling of authenticity – it's excellent, really good for training. And as an engineer, the highlight is getting to use explosives to blow up things."

"It's also been useful for understanding language, tactics and how everything fits together. We learned things from the Latvians, they

learned things from us."

Chief among the 'live dems' – live demonstrations – Major Richardson and his men relished was blowing up a brick chimney (in war a potential observation post or sniper position), bringing it toppling to the ground safely in a confined space.

The 'fighting' in Skrunda-1 in the Courland region – 90 miles west of the capital Riga – formed the final element of the Latvian 'chapter' of the UK's Baltic Protector deployment.

The deployment also saw Royal Marines storm Lithuanian shores. By Merlin helicopter and Offshore Raiding Craft, Royal Marines assaulted the pristine sands at Palanga, Lithuania's premier seaside resort as part of a day of demonstrations which saw amphibious troop carriers, landing craft and troops swarm on to the beach, just north of Klaipeda, Lithuania's main port.

Troops from 45 Commando joined Romanian, Spanish and US Marines on Palanga's 18 miles of beach. The Brits of Yankee and Zulu Companies either rapid roped from troop-carrying Merlin Mk4s of 845 Naval Air Squadron, embarked on RFA Argus, or leapt ashore via ORCs, while Romanians and Spanish waded ashore in amphibious armoured vehicles and the Americans parked landing craft on the shoreline.

Overheard Harriers provided air cover – launched from the Spanish carrier Juan Carlos. Less overtly, Royal Marines prepared for the beach assault with a few days of close quarters battle training on the ranges at Ravlunda, 50 miles east of Malmö, while teams from 539 Assault Squadron Royal Marines staged a series of covert raids from RFA Lyme Bay along the Lithuanian shoreline to gather intelligence about 'enemy' movements and positions.

Much of Baltops was directed from the American Navy command ship USS Mount Whitney, home to the UK Maritime Battle Staff and Rear Admiral Andrew Burns, an RN officer who's was deputy commander of the US Second Fleet.



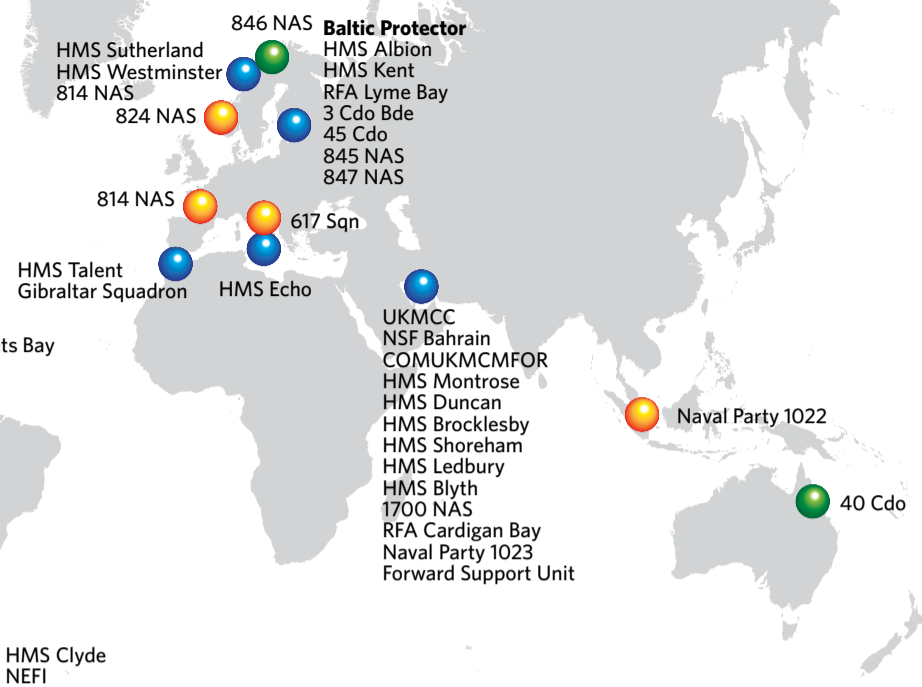
Pictures: PO (Phot) Si Ethell; LPhot Paul Hall and LPhot Belinda Alker

Training or on patrol around the UK

- HMS Queen Elizabeth
- HMS Argyll
- HMS St Albans
- HMS Forth
- HMS Medway
- HMS Magpie
- HMS Pursuer
- RFA Tideforce
- RFA Tidesurge
- 820 NAS



17(R) TES



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

FLEET FOCUS
Protecting our nation's interests

WE MAY be into the traditional summer leave period, but the plot on our global chart is probably the busiest it's been all year. So we'll begin with what's not plotted on it: the nuclear deterrent submarine on patrol.

After May's ceremony in Westminster Abbey, the 50th anniversary of the continuous deterrent provided by R and now V-boats – and the huge national endeavour behind them – was marked in the submarines' home base throughout **Operation Relentless**. Friends, family and veterans were invited to watch ceremonial divisions led by the bomber crews (see page 9).

Also calling Faslane home now is **HMS Talent** which completed the final patrol from her Plymouth home for the past 29 years and then headed to Scotland as part of the concentration of all boats on the Clyde (see page 13).

Doing their utmost to find boats like Talent were **HMS Sutherland** and **Westminster** plus the Merlins of **814 NAS** on NATO's Dynamic Mongoose exercise in northern Norway (see page 13) and, further south, the Merlins of **824 NAS** on the Norwegian sub hunt Rogue Falcon (see page 17).

And also in Norway, but inland, were student aircrew of **846 NAS** learning the art of flying commando Merlins around the mountains in the Arctic summer (see page 16).

There have been debuts aplenty by **F-35 Lightnings** over the past few weeks: firstly Cyprus, the maiden overseas deployment for the FAA/RAF, then the short hop to Italy before returning to Marham (see page 14).

The stealth fighter also paid its first visit to **Yeovilton's International Air Day** – one of 26 displays laid on for more than 35,000 punters at the Fleet Air Arm's annual showcase (see page 17).

Not content with Norway, **814 NAS** also put in an appearance in the Bay of Biscay at NATO's annual Tiger Meet, for all squadrons with a tiger theme/crest/mascot (see page 16).

HMS Ramsey has completed the first half of her attachment to NATO's northern Europe minehunting task force, SNMCMG1, and returned to Faslane for summer leave (see page 13).

HMS Sutherland and **30 Cdo** have both been testing the new anti-ship and anti-aircraft **Lightweight Multirole Missile**, also known as the **Martlet**, on the range in Cardigan Bay (see page 7).

Royal Marines of **40 Commando** are among 34,000 military personnel from the US, New Zealand, Japan, Canada and host nation Australia taking part in one of the largest military exercises Down Under since WW2: **Talisman Sabre** (see the centre pages).

In home waters, **HMS Argyll** monitored a Russian task group led by the Admiral Gorshkov... new patrol ship **HMS Forth** did the same for new Russian patrol vessel Vasily Bykov and **HMS St Albans** kept an eye on Chinese destroyer Xian, all in the English Channel (see page 6).

And in the Gulf, **HMS Montrose** has been called on to escort some UK-registered tankers through the Strait of Hormuz amid increased regional tensions with destroyer **HMS Duncan** and frigate **HMS Kent** also deploying to the region in support of the free, safe movement of trade at sea (see page 5).

RFA Mounts Bay continues to hop around the islands of the Caribbean working with local authorities to prepare for the impending storm season (see page 11).

The RN's key summer deployment, **Baltic Protector**, is now over with flagship **HMS Albion** (one of numerous participants) back home in Plymouth. The two-month run-out of the new Joint Expeditionary Force closed with a major amphibious exercise in Latvia and Estonia (see pages 2-3).

And finally... if you like the hi-quality imagery from RN photographers filling these pages, then the very best shots from the past 12 months have been singled out by industry leaders for the **2019 Peregrine Trophy** awards, highlighting the talent behind the lens documenting the RN and RM in action in stills and moving imagery (see pages 18-19).

An inclusive navy

VIEW BRIDGE from the BRIDGE

THE recent announcement that Alan Turing would feature on the new £50 note will surely be recognised by many as fitting recognition of a national hero.

Turing might not have served in the Royal Navy himself, but there can be no doubt his ground-breaking work has had a major bearing on the past, present and future of the Naval Service over the last 80 years.

His now famous work to break the enigma codes at Bletchley Park in 1941 made a huge contribution to the eventual Allied victory in the Battle of the Atlantic in the Second World War, while his post-war successes as a pioneer in the field of computer science and, latterly, as the father of artificial intelligence provided the theoretical basis for the incredible technologies now entering the Fleet through Programme Nelson.

It's perhaps incredible then to think that both during his life and for over half a century afterwards, his achievements were largely overshadowed by his homosexuality, something that led to his prosecution, the removal of his security clearance and barred him from continuing his cryptography work at GCHQ.

But then again, those joining the Navy today might be equally surprised to discover that as recently as 20 years ago sexual orientation was also a barrier to service in the armed forces.

The strong Naval and Royal Marine presence amongst hundreds of service personnel marching at Pride in London this year

(see page 22) is just one indication of how far we as a service have come in the last two decades; the shift from 84th to 15th place in Stonewall's ranking of LGBT+ employers over the last three years is another good indication that we're moving in the right direction.

For that matter, it's also encouraging to have been recognised within The Times Top 50 employers of women this year – this from a Navy that 30 years ago did not allow women to serve at sea, whereas today every branch and arm is open to everyone regardless of gender.

Nevertheless, for all this progress, there is undoubtedly more we can do if we are to be regarded as a truly diverse and inclusive organisation.

Realising this goal calls for a genuinely tolerant culture across the entire Naval Service.

The recently published report into inappropriate behaviours across the armed forces gave plenty of cause for optimism about the culture we already have in the Service, but also identified that there was evidence of persistent and unacceptable levels of inappropriate behaviour.

Our policy in this regard is absolute: this sort of behaviour is

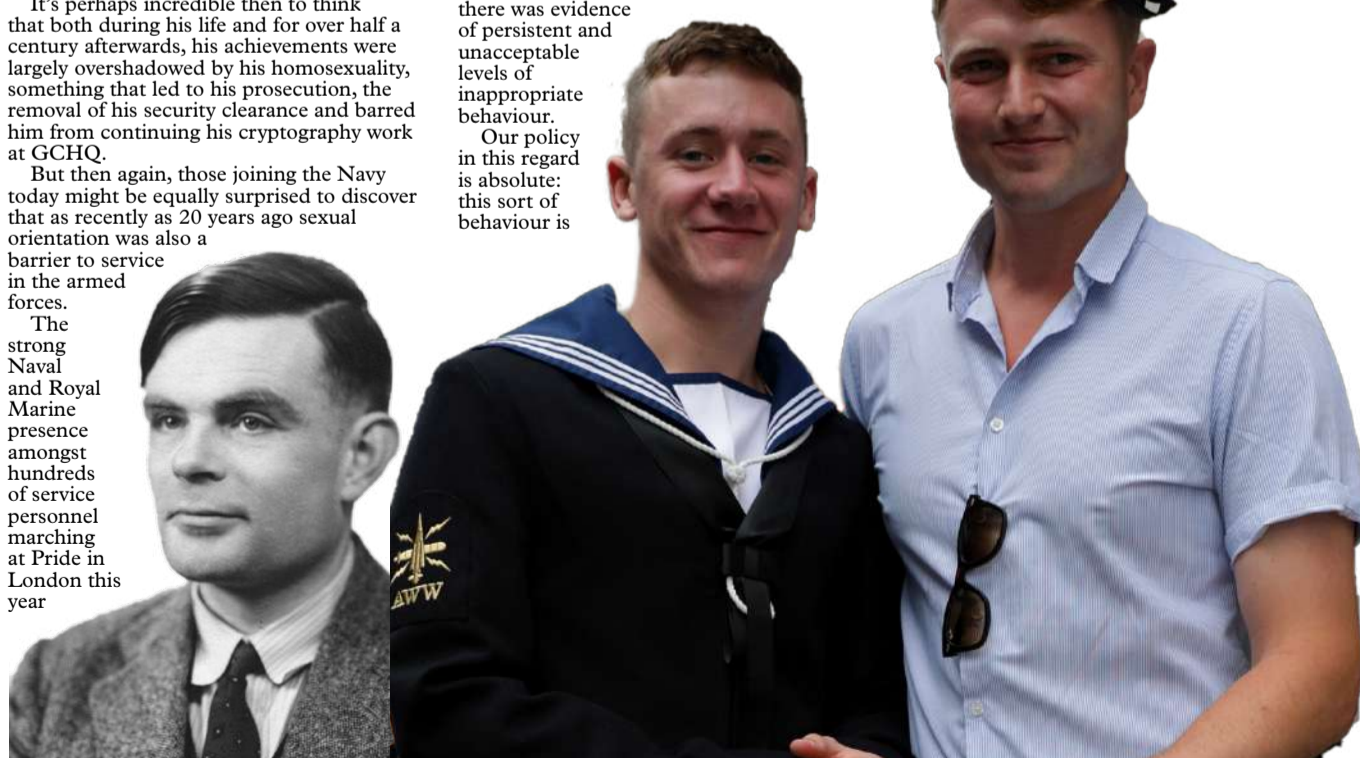
corrosive to the team as well as damaging both to individuals and to our hard-won reputation as a fighting force, which is why we insist upon the highest standards of conduct and professionalism by everyone who wears our uniform, at all times.

There might be some who ask why it matters.

The answer, quite apart from the fact that it is the right thing to do, is simple.

To retain our operational effectiveness and stay ahead of the competition in today's increasingly complex and challenging security environment, we need to be able to draw upon the widest possible talent pool and make best use of that talent.

Who knows where the next Alan Turing will come from, but wherever they are, let's make sure it's the Royal Navy that stands to benefit from their genius.



KEEPING THE PEACE



Ships safeguard free flow of trade as UK seeks to ease Middle East tensions

SAILORS and marines have been praised for their role in ensuring the safe passage of merchant shipping through the Gulf at a time of heightened tensions.

The ship's company of HMS Montrose were singled out for their actions protecting the MV British Heritage through the Strait of Hormuz after an attempt by Iranian vessels to hamper her movements.

Royal Navy warships are continuing to provide a maritime security presence in the Gulf to reassure merchant shipping and safeguard the free flow of trade.

Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan is joining the Type 23 frigate and other ships on patrol in the region.

Meanwhile Defence Secretary Penny Mordaunt praised the crew of Montrose for their professionalism in 'upholding international law'.

Commander Will King, the Commanding Officer of HMS Montrose, said: "The Royal Navy continues to conduct maritime security operations in the Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and Gulf of Oman.

"We are continuously monitoring the security situation here and are committed to maintaining freedom of navigation in accordance with international law."

The Strait of Hormuz is one of the most vital waterways in the world for international trade.

One third of all the world's oil carried by tankers passes through the Strait of Hormuz with an average of ten tankers sailing through every day carrying upwards of 17 million barrels of oil.

There are seven Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary Vessels, with embarked Royal Marines, now committed to the region.

HMS Montrose is stationed in Bahrain until 2022 as part of the Royal Navy's permanent presence in the Middle East.

Destroyer HMS Duncan now joins her, alongside HMS Ledbury, HMS Brocklesby, HMS Shoreham, HMS Blyth and RFA Cardigan Bay who are already in theatre.

Tanker RFA Wave Knight and Type 23 frigate HMS Kent will also arrive in the region later this year, relieving other ships.

Earlier last month, Royal Marines boarded a tanker bound for Syria in support of a Royal Gibraltar Police operation to enforce EU sanctions against the conflict-torn nation.

Marines from Devon-based 42 Commando boarded the MV Grace 1 from a Wildcat helicopter under cover of darkness.

The commandos had been requested to assist with the operation due to their specialist boarding skills, to ensure Royal Gibraltar Police officers could

gain access to the vessel at sea in a safe manner.

As *Navy News* went to press, the British government was working on securing the release of a British-flagged oil tanker seized by Iranian authorities in the Strait of Hormuz.

The Stena Impero was boarded in Omani waters and now sits under guard in the port city of Bandar Abbas.

Defence Minister Tobias Ellwood said Iran had committed a 'hostile act'.



Main image shows HMS Montrose. Inset, HMS Duncan alongside in Souda Bay. Left, a Royal Marine involved in the MV Grace boarding operation in Gibraltar.



Lancaster prepares to return

FOUR years since her last mission and two years since she began a massive overhaul, the Queen's frigate – HMS Lancaster – is back in the water and preparing for renewed action.

Crew are due to re-join the Type 23 frigate this month, breathing new life into the 4,500-tonne warship which has been a building site since 2017.

The Red Rose emerged from the giant frigate shed in Devonport where most of the work has been carried out and is now aiming to return to her homeport of Portsmouth in time for Christmas as she builds back up to re-join the Royal Navy fleet.

Lancaster – whose sponsor is the Queen in her role as Duke



of Lancaster – has undergone extensive upgrades mirroring the major changes across the frigate flotilla, such as the new Artisan 3D radar, improved navigational radar and new-generation Sea Ceptor missile system which replaces the now-retired Seawolf as the ship's shield against air attack.

In addition, the backbone of the ship has been strengthened with 200 new steel inserts fitted to reinforce Lancaster in heavy seas.

The newly-installed kit will be commissioned in the autumn ahead of planned initial sea trials early in 2020.

Having floated up in February, she was removed from the refit sheds out into the basin where work has been ongoing to ensure the ship's company meets the move on board date.

From just six crew joining in April, numbers have grown rapidly; 130 sailors are set to move on board Lancaster this month.

With new crew members joining, it has been a chance to rebuild relationships with affiliates.

The ship's company headed to the Armed Forces Day parade in Morecambe.



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Patrol ship becomes the Forth of firsts

IT'S been a month of firsts for Forth, Britain's newest operational warship: first fish, first Russians, first visit to Liverpool.

Barely had the patrol ship – first of five second-generation Rivers entering service – completed her training than she was enforcing fishing regulations in the Western Approaches on behalf of the Navy's oldest unit, the Fishery Protection Squadron.

The UK has the fifth largest economic exclusion zones in the world with 80,000 nautical square miles of sea to patrol and crew of the Portsmouth-based ship were soon stepping aboard trawlers south of Ireland.

Overseeing safe boat operations as the fish teams inspected hauls was coxswain Petty Officer 'Geoff' Hurst.

"It can be quite daunting at first for those that haven't done it before, but as their experience increases it becomes more comfortable," he said.

Once on the trawlers, comms specialist Leading Hand Hannah Chenery – on her first fish patrol – was fascinated seeing "how other people make a living from the ocean in what can be very harsh conditions".

First patrol done, HMS Forth paid her first visit to a non-military port with a short stop in Liverpool, before making a dash for the Channel to keep an eye on the latest Russian warship passing the UK: new patrol vessel Vasily Bykov.

Forth located the vessel before following her movements alongside Royal Navy aircraft from Culdrose-based 824 Naval Air Squadron and Yeovilton-based 815 Naval Air Squadron.

"As a brand-new addition to Fleet, this was an ideal tasking for HMS Forth to display the versatility and capability of our ship," said Executive Officer Lieutenant Sam Fields.

"This is normal business for the Royal Navy, being prepared at all times to respond to any vessels in the UK's area of interest."

Elsewhere, her sister ship HMS Medway also made her maiden visit to Liverpool.

She stopped off at the cruise terminal for a few days before continuing her own sea trials and patrols around the UK.



Saint shadows Chinese warship through Channel

WITH the white cliffs of Kent in the background, Chinese destroyer Xian makes her way through the Dover Strait – watched all the way by HMS St Albans.

While most of the UK was wrapped up with the Cricket World

Cup/Wimbledon men's singles final or British Grand Prix, the Portsmouth-based frigate was monitoring the progress of the new air defence destroyer as it sailed up the Channel.

The Type 23 frigate continued

to keep an eye on the Xian as the Chinese vessel continued into the North Sea and through the UK's area of interest.

"This is normal business for the Royal Navy, keeping watch over UK waters at all times, 24/7," said

Commander John Cromie, the Saint's Commanding Officer.

It was the fourth time in little over a week the frigate had passed Dover as she conducts maritime security operations in home waters.

Navy's oldest frigate is back on UK patrols after Far East mission

HMS Argyll prowls home waters soon after return from Asia deployment

FRESH from a nine-month deployment to the Far East, HMS Argyll is back in action patrolling UK waters.

The Type 23 frigate, the oldest in the fleet, was called upon to shadow a Russian naval task group through the English Channel and North Sea.

Sailing to meet the task group on a Sunday, she kept watch on the three ships including frigate Admiral Gorshkov as they passed close to UK territorial waters.

Argyll met the task group at the top of the Bay of Biscay and shadowed the ships through the English Channel, Dover Strait, and North Sea.

The Royal Navy frigate later detached from monitoring the task group and now continues her duties in UK waters, remaining ready for short notice tasking as required.

Commander Andrew Ainsley, the Commanding Officer of HMS Argyll, said: "This task highlights the utility of HMS Argyll which in the last ten months has deployed around the globe on operations."

"Keeping watch on UK waters is normal business for the Royal Navy, and we stand ever ready to move at short notice to help keep Britain safe."

A Merlin helicopter from 814 Naval Air Squadron, based at RNAS Culdrose, was also dispatched to assist in monitoring the task force which included an ocean-going tug Erebus and salvage tug Nikolay Chiker.

HMS Argyll's 175 sailors have returned to operational duty following a nine-month deployment to the Asia Pacific region over the last year.

Their deployment included exercises with the Japanese and US Navies in the Pacific as well as exercises with Singapore, Malaysia, Australia and New



Left, HMS Argyll (background) with the Admiral Gorshkov passing through the English Channel. Below, HMS Argyll.



Zealand in the South China Sea. As a high-readiness unit, HMS Argyll may be called upon at any time to help prevent arms trafficking, people smuggling, conduct counter-terrorism operations, maritime search and rescue, or escort duties.

She is equipped with state-of-the-art sensors and weapon systems and can operate the Wildcat maritime helicopter.

After monitoring the Russian task group, Argyll paid a brief visit to Sunderland before resuming operations. Argyll returned to UK waters in March, just days after rescuing the crew of a blazing container ship off the French coast.

On her deployment the warship covered the equivalent of one and a half times around the globe as she sailed to Tokyo and back via Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the Gulf, Pakistan, Singapore, Malaysia, Brunei, Diego Garcia, Greece and Malta.

Her crew safeguarded shipping passing Yemen - in the face of threats of attacks on vessels from rebels, relying on her Sea Ceptor defence system to watch for potential missile attacks.

KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

Follow @HMS_Forth on Twitter to keep up with their activities



HMS Forth, foreground, accompanies the Russian Navy corvette Vasily Bykov through the English Channel.

PICTURE: LPHOT SAM SEELEY



KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

Follow @HMS_ARGYLL and @RoyalNavy on Twitter

SHOOTING STARTLET

IF YOU can dodge a wrench you can dodge a ball...

And if you can down a drone, you can sink a speedboat...

Sailors and Royal Marines demonstrated the utility, versatility and, most importantly, the lethality of the Navy's new missile, Martlet, shooting up drones in the sky and on the surface off the Welsh coast.

Martlet – also known as the Lightweight Multi-role Missile – was designed to be fired by Wildcat helicopters to take out small boats which posed a threat to the Fleet, alongside the heavier Sea Venom for dealing with larger warships.

But the missile system has proved so small, lightweight, portable and adaptable that it could also be used as a surface-to-surface (ship versus ship) and surface-to-air (ship/ground troops versus aircraft).

So both Royal Marines and HMS Sutherland headed to ranges in southwest Wales to test the modified Martlets.

The Air Defence Troop of Plymouth-based 30

Commando IX Group took aim against Banshee drones flying over the Bristol Channel at Manorbier, near Pembroke.

The SAM version of Martlet is fired from a small shoulder launcher; the operator guides it using a joystick which controls a laser beam along which the projectile flies (*top right*).

And marine+Martlet=deadly, with 18 missiles bang on target.

The new missile – which can travel more than six kilometres – is intended to complement the High Velocity Missile (HVM) currently used by marines and soldiers for air defence.

Meanwhile, a few miles to the north in Cardigan Bay, cameras on a target boat captured the final fractions of a second before Martlet smashed into it (*bottom right*).

The Fighting Clan fired four Martlets at the fast-moving target – test shoots designed to see whether the last line of defence for a major surface ship can be bolstered.

All ships are armed with a series of machine-guns and Mini-guns (manually-operated Gatling guns) to fend off small craft, while some are also equipped with Phalanx automated guns which spew

out a hail of bullets at incoming aircraft, missiles and threats on the surface.

Recent incidents where both merchant and military shipping have been attacked by manned and unmanned surface and air systems armed with explosive devices, underlined the risks faced by Royal Navy units deployed in danger zones.

One potential solution: a modified Martlet so a launcher could be fitted to the existing 30mm automatic gun (*centre right*).

Just five months after the idea was mooted, the Plymouth-based frigate was off the Aberporth Range at the southern end of Cardigan Bay facing a fast inshore attack craft tearing across the water.

After first proving that the gun could still fire accurately with the missile fitted – 120 rounds obliterated a large red 'killer tomato' target – and that the sensors behind Martlet could track its radio-controlled foe at ranges of up to five kilometres,

Finally, four missiles were fired – one to test the effect of the Martlet 'blasting off' from its launcher on the

gun mounting and the side of Sutherland (the missile accelerates to one and a half times the speed of sound in an instant), three packed with telemetry to measure the missile's accuracy (ordinarily the weapon carries a 3kg warhead).

It was all recorded by high resolution cameras so the team from manufacturers Thales and military scientists can analyse the effects in minute detail.

"The current defence against fast inshore attack craft, the 30mm gun, is highly effective for closer-range engagements," said Lieutenant Commander George Blakeman, HMS Sutherland's Weapon Engineer Officer.

"By adding the missile to the gun mount it is anticipated it will extend the reach of the ship's defensive systems – key to successful defence against fast craft using swarm attack tactics.

"The Fighting Clan has always had a reputation for being at the forefront of innovation and we were delighted to be chosen to support this trial."

As for the original air-launched version of Martlet, it was successfully tested from ground-based launchers on the range in Wales earlier this year.



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Marking milestone



SERVING Royal Navy submariners, veterans, families and support workers gathered to mark 50 years of the Continuous At Sea Deterrent (CASD) at HMNB Clyde.

Since 1969 at least one Royal Navy ballistic missile submarine has been at sea on patrol, providing the UK's continuous nuclear deterrent and sending a clear message to would-be aggressors.

During that entire time the submarines and their crews have operated from and been supported by HMNB Clyde in Argyll and Bute, Scotland.

In recognition of that huge endeavor during the last 50 years, and Clyde's key role in delivering it, the naval base hosted a military parade, in front of Princess Royal and some 700 visitors.

In what is thought to be the biggest single gathering of Royal Navy submariners since WW2, the visitors were treated to the usually secret sight of a Vanguard-class submarine completely out of the water, when the base's massive shiplift facility opened its doors to reveal one of the 16,000-tonne vessels undergoing routine maintenance.

First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin said: "For 50 years



our submarine-borne nuclear deterrent has provided the ultimate guarantee of our nation's security and to this day remains the first priority for the whole of Defence. The Royal Navy's unbroken track record of continuous at sea deterrence for the last half a century is a source of enormous pride for the Service, and is testament to the skill, professionalism and commitment of the whole Defence enterprise behind this remarkable national endeavour, especially the submariners and their families who have sacrificed so much over the years in defence of our country."

Beginning with the Resolution-class submarines in 1969, and transferring to the Vanguard class in the 1990s, the mission has seen a deterrent submarine at sea continuously during this entire time.

During her visit the Princess Royal presented awards to military and civilian staff. Gold Deterrent Patrol Pins – given to those who have completed 20 or more deterrent patrols – and HM Naval Base Clyde Long Service Pins – for those completing 30 years' service at Clyde – were among the awards.

One of those receiving an award was Chief Petty Officer Karl Davies, who received a Gold Deterrent Patrol Pin.

"This gold pin recognises not only my personal achievement but the support I have been given by my family and friends," he said.

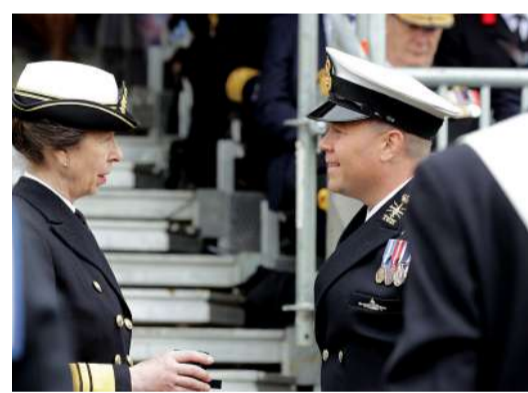
Rear Admiral John Weale, head of the Royal Navy Submarine Service, said: "It is fantastic to see so many members of our submarine community here today for this special event.

"Whether they are submariners, MOD civilians, industry partners or family members, each has supported the successful delivery of this important defence capability.

"We are all very proud of what we do, and that pride does not diminish once we leave the Service.

"That is why I am also delighted to see our veterans here today. Those on parade represent the full 50 years of CASD and I would like to thank them for their hard work and continued support."

Talent arrives in Faslane, page 13



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Pictures: PO (Phot) Jay Allen and LPhot Will Haigh

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Hoping for fair winds



THE Navy's Caribbean patrol ship RFA Mounts Bay joined sailors, soldiers and airmen on the biggest workout in the region this year.

The amphibious support vessel – on a three-year mission to reassure inhabitants of British territories in the Caribbean, tackle drug trafficking and provide assistance in the wake of a devastating tropical storm or volcanic eruption – linked up with forces from across the Americas for Tradewinds.

The exercise has been running since the 1980s and is aimed at getting all those nations with an interest in the security of the Caribbean/Gulf of Mexico/North, Central and South America to work together.

The 2019 version of the exercise was split into two stages; the first around the Dominican Republic, the second around the small Commonwealth island chain of St Vincent and the Grenadines, all under the direction of the US military's Southern Command in Florida.

For her part in Tradewinds, Mounts Bay worked with nine nations from the Americas and Caribbean – Dominican Republic, Haiti, Canada, USA, Guyana, Jamaica, and Mexico, Bermuda, Barbados – for the annual test of dealing with a myriad of potential problems in the Central America/Caribbean region, everything from disaster relief (highly likely) to countering drug runners and smugglers (a constant threat) and terrorist attacks (always possible).

The highlight was a gunnery exercise laid on by the Canadians who launched a Hammerhead remote-controlled boat from their patrol ship HMCS Goose Bay.

It zipped around the column of ships mustered for the exercise towing a target, testing each gunnery team in turn. Mounts Bay was the last ship in the line – and hence the last to fire. The hail of bullets spewed out by her Mk44 miniguns promptly obliterated the target.

Also getting the chance to lay down some lead were the troops from the ship's specialist Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief detachment, aboard to provide brains, brawn and expertise in the aftermath of a hurricane – such as restoring power and water supplies.

In some circumstances they are also expected to provide security and, if necessary, help local authorities restore order (as occurred in the British Virgin Islands after the severe storms of 2017).

So 24 Commando Royal Engineers went ashore to practise ground security exercises with Dominican Republic army and navy personnel.

"Tradewinds was a well-resourced and smoothly-executed exercise," said Capt Thomas Booth 24 Cdo

RE and in charge of the disaster relief troops on Mounts Bay.

"It presented an exciting and unique training environment for members of the unit and allowed them to develop skills that they may not otherwise use in the UK."

Edward Rogers, deputy head of training at US Southern Command, said many of the lessons learned during Tradewinds were valid far beyond the Caribbean – chiefly the ability for military of different nationalities with different equipment, often speaking different languages to work together to a common goal.

"Whether this is your first Tradewinds or you've been in multiple ones, it's an important exercise. It is really an enduring promise between the Caribbean and the Americas, where we come together once a year to execute training that is very critical.

"It builds friendships, trust, and partnerships and solidarity with all the participants."

Mounts Bay then called in on Grand Cayman to conduct a humanitarian relief exercise. Her Wildcat helicopter flew over the island while personnel landed vehicles and aid ashore using her Mexi-flote raft. The shore teams were made up of elements of the embarked CR Troop 24 Commando Regiment Royal Engineers, 17 Port & Maritime Regiment Royal Logistic Corps, and ship's crew.

On behalf of Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, Minister for the Overseas Territories and Commonwealth, Mounts Bay hosted a reception for the Governor, Premier and visiting Premiers from the UK OTs attending the UK OT Trade Summit.

As a final preparation for the 2019 hurricane season, RFA Mounts Bay conducted a humanitarian relief exercise, landing

personnel and vehicles, at Crocus Bay, Anguilla. This involved transport of the Crisis Response Troop by Mexe-flote raft to the beach, supported by other personnel, and a transit in land.

The Commanding Officer of Mounts Bay, Capt Jed MacAnley, said: "This exercise at Anguilla has afforded us the opportunity to make our final checks on readiness for the 2019 season, we are hoping for a quiet year but are prepared for the worst."

While ashore Crisis Response Troop conducted remedial work at the Zenadia Juvenile Haven and exercised self-sustainment over a 36-hour period.

Captain Booth added: "The project at Zenaida Haven gave us the chance to improve the quality of life of the young adults that live there.

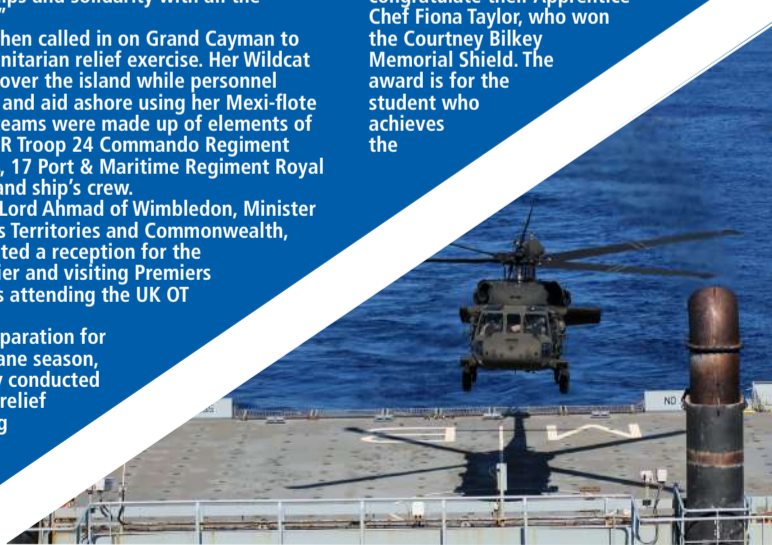
"It provided us with some worthwhile training and gave the tradesmen amongst the troop the opportunity to practice their trade skills in anticipation of the Caribbean Hurricane Season 19."

The ship took time out to congratulate their Apprentice Chef Fiona Taylor, who won the Courtney Bilkey Memorial Shield. The award is for the student who achieves the

highest result during their training year.

APP (CH) Taylor, pictured above right, said: "It's a proud moment for myself and for the logistics and supply team on RFA Mounts Bay."

Pictures: LPhot Paul Halliwell



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● Main image: The crew of HMS Talent line up for a photo in Gibraltar; Clockwise from left, paying respects in Crete; Being escorted out of Devonport; Arriving at HMNB Clyde; the crew on top of the Rock



AFTER three decades operating out of Plymouth, hunter-killer submarine HMS Talent is now part of the Faslane clan.

Having completed her final operational patrol from her long-standing home in Devon – a stint on operations in the Mediterranean – the Trafalgar-class boat was escorted out of Plymouth Sound by tugs Forceful and Adept.

And a short while later, the Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron and MOD police launches welcomed Talent to the Clyde, where the entire Submarine Service is being concentrated from next year.

Talent's last tour of duty before heading north took her to the Med for a series of exercises with NATO submarines, testing participating crews in a series of challenging scenarios simulating conflict in the Middle Sea region.

Taking a break from one of these exercises allowed the boat – which celebrated her 29th birthday whilst away – to visit both Souda Bay in Crete and Gibraltar.

In Crete, the ship's company paid their respects to Commonwealth servicemen who gave their lives in defence of the island in May and early June 1941.

The commemorations were especially poignant as the grandfather of Talent's Coxswain Stu Marr fought in the battle, he was among those in attendance and especially proud to be there honouring the memory of his forebear.

Following another period beneath the waves, the crew's next opportunity to step ashore was during a port visit to Gibraltar – a regular stop for Royal Navy warships and boats operating in the Med, but livened up by the presence of USS Olympia – the oldest operational counterpart of Talent in the US Navy.

To mark the rare meeting, the Brits invited their American cousins aboard, where submariners were treated to a US Navy tradition (the promotion and oath swearing of two officers) and a Royal Navy tradition (the presentation of dolphins to two officers who've demonstrated they know every inch of Talent and what to do in an emergency) before enjoying fine British dining (cheesy hammy egg).

The two crews hit the sports pitch for a game of football/soccer (4-2 to Talent), American tag football (a surprise 6-0 win for the Brits who'd never played the game before) and volleyball (2-1 to the Olympia).

Not exhausted by their

sporting endeavours, one third of Talent's crew also ran from the naval base to the top of the Rock – a tradition for any RN vessel visiting Gibraltar. Sub Lieutenant Harry Cottenham posted the fastest time (24m 57s), 24 seconds faster than Lieutenant Joe Hatherall... who was 46 seconds ahead of third-placed CPO David 'Digger' Gardner.

This final Plymouth patrol saw 16 submariners receive the coveted dolphins and qualify as fully-fledged submariners, ten crew promoted to leading hands and petty officers, while the three chefs worked around the clock to serve four meals a day (more than 30,000 meals).



Faslane's got Talent

Crews rise to subs challenge Summer sojourn for HMS Ramsey

THE Navy's premier submarine killers joined the largest hunt in northern waters this year.

Half a dozen warships, plus submarines, maritime patrol aircraft and helicopters waged a ten-day battle in the Arctic circle for NATO's Dynamic Mongoose exercise, involving more than 2,000 military personnel from nine nations.

Leading the charge for the UK was frigates HMS Sutherland and Westminster and three Merlin Mk2 helicopters from 814 Naval Air Squadron.

NATO hosts two major anti-submarine warfare exercises every year, one off Sicily (Dynamic Manta), the other off Norway (Dynamic Mongoose), with regular Royal Navy participation in both.

Beyond testing the abilities of different submarine hunting ships and submarines to work together to find underwater prey, the two exercises pose very different environmental challenges – the depth, temperature and salinity of water all affect the performance of sonar.

The waters off Troms and Nordland, where Dynamic Mongoose took place, are a chilly 7-11°Celsius – half as warm as those off Sicily now. Another challenge was the constant daylight there is at this latitude – it's known as the land of the midnight sun – with no sunsets or sunrises for two months in high summer it can disrupt sleep patterns, although sailors are

used to operating around the clock.

The bulk of the surface ships who took part – including HMS Westminster – are drawn from NATO's Northern Europe task force, Standing Group 1, bolstered by Sutherland who joined her sister in the port of Narvik fresh from successful missile trials in the Irish Sea.

The ships, led by the destroyer USS Gravelly and including the Turkish frigate TCG Gokova, took part in 20 training serials, while the aircraft completed 62 missions.

"To have so many surface ships, submarines and aircraft together for training provided us with a great opportunity to not only prove our ability to work with other units but also hone our renowned anti-submarine warfare skills," said Sutherland's Operations Officer Lieutenant Commander James Mitchell.

The Merlins from the Flying Tigers hopped 1,500 miles from their base at Culdrose in Cornwall to the remote Norwegian Air Base on Andøya, 150 miles inside the Arctic Circle, after several fuel stops along the way.

One of the Merlins operated from HMS Sutherland for the duration of the exercise, the other two joined the hunt from Andenes airfield daily, while HMS Westminster was supported by her smaller, nimbler Wildcat.

MINEHUNTER HMS Ramsey is home for a brief summer break, the first half of her six-month NATO mission complete.

The Sandown-class ship – based in Faslane – has dealt with mines past and present, taken part in the biggest war game of the year in the Baltic and flown the flag for the UK at Europe's biggest summertime public event in her three months attached to Standing Mine Countermeasures Group 1.

It's the task of the force to keep abreast of the latest developments and threats posed by mines, tackle any unexploded ordnance they come across, promote the work of the alliance and keep the seas clear and safe for all lawful seafarers.

Ramsey joined the international force – comprising minehunters from the Netherlands, Norway, Germany, Belgium and Denmark, whose HDMS Thetis is group flagship – in Gothenburg in April.

After getting to know the rest of the force and their slightly different ways of working – Ramsey, for example, is a specialist in hunting for mines in deeper waters; her sonar detaches from the hull and can be lowered dozens of metres – and conducting

combined training, the ships were asked to help the Dutch deal with wartime ordnance dumped off their coast.

Operation Beneficial Cooperation was prompted by a salvage operation, recovering objects washed off a merchant ship in January, which uncovered several mines.

During a five-day sweep of those waters, the international force found 14 mines and 12 other items/pieces of ordnance, all of which were neutralised by being safely blown up by divers or robot submarines such as Ramsey's Seafox system placing small charges to detonate the explosives.

That was immediately followed by present-day challenges posed by BALTOPS, the American-led annual exercise which has been run since the early 1970s.

The last act of the first half of Ramsey's deployment was to represent the Royal Navy alongside her NATO colleagues at Kiel Week, one of the world's largest maritime festivals and the biggest public event this summer anywhere in Europe (it drew an estimated 3½ million visitors).



Contest builds on success

ASPIRING engineers are being challenged to design a disaster-relief ship.

The contest, which builds on the success of the Year of Engineering campaign last year, sees the Royal Navy team up with the UK Naval Engineering, Science and Technology (UKNEST).

This competition is aimed at children in Years 1-11 and challenges them to use their knowledge and imagination to design a disaster-relief ship.

The teams should submit their design on an A3 PDF poster, highlighting the key design features of their vessel and include a short report (maximum two A4 pages) explaining the development and reasoning for their ideas.

Each entry will then be judged by a panel of experts, with the best three in each age category winning an iPad for their school or youth organisation.

The age categories are for Years 1-6 and Years 7-11.

The competition will be open for entries until December 1 2019, after which the winners will be selected and notified.

As one of the flagship initiatives in support of the government's Engineering: Take A Closer Look campaign, the naval engineering competition has been launched to encourage an interest in engineering and demonstrate how engineering shapes our everyday lives.

Captain Matt Bolton said: "In providing a global presence, the Royal Navy is frequently called upon to help people and their communities in the face of natural disasters by providing humanitarian aid and assistance.

"Our ships and sailors are always well prepared and trained for any such unexpected eventuality, but our ships are not necessarily designed for this specific role.

"The task we have set our young naval engineers this year is to design such a vessel, taking into account the dangers they may face and the help they may need to provide.

"It is a difficult, real-world problem and I am sure we will see a breadth of imaginative, innovative and creative ideas."

Chairman of UKNEST, Muir MacDonald said: "The exciting ships, submarines and their technologies the navies of the world enjoy would not exist without the amazing people who invent, create, design and maintain them.

"Last year's competition confirmed the extraordinary ideas different school teams came up with and were presented with great passion and effect in their designs."

Further details can be obtained at uknest.org

£85m deal for frigate engines

THE Ministry of Defence has signed an £85 million contract with Rolls-Royce to maintain the engines of the Royal Navy's Type-23 frigate fleet.

The contract includes a comprehensive support package to Spey gas turbines, including the overhaul of engines, provision of spares, as well as engineering and safety support.

The contract will see Rolls-Royce overhaul 30 Type-23 engines from the UK and NATO partners Belgium, Portugal and the Netherlands.

The contract is expected to deliver a £35 million increase in savings to the MOD over the next eight years, by incentivising Rolls-Royce to improve repair schemes, minimise unnecessary work and procure spares at a lower cost. This will result in shorter, less expensive overhauls.



Riding high as seaside town pays tribute

SAILORS from the Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS) represented the Royal Navy in Bridlington as the town marked Armed Forces Day.

The town council granted the Royal Navy Freedom of Entry and a platoon of 24 trainee chefs, stewards, writers and supply chain specialists exercised this privilege by being part of the parade.

They were joined by Commodore Phil Waterhouse, the Naval Regional Commander North and the Isle of Man, two

members of their instructional staff and the Commandant of the DMLS, Commander Suzi Nielsen.

Presenting the Freedom of Entry Scroll to Cdr Nielsen, the Mayor of Bridlington, Councillor Liam Dealtry, said: "I take great pleasure in welcoming the Royal Navy's Defence Maritime Logistics School to Bridlington.

"As a proud Bridlingtonian, and also the Mayor of Bridlington on such a special day like today, it simply doesn't get any better."

The DMLS is based at HMS Raleigh and is the modern-day equivalent of HMS Ceres; the shore establishment in Wetherby where members of the supply and secretariat branch trained between 1946 and 1958.

While in Bridlington, the sailors visited the Royal National Lifeboat Institution where they presented a cheque for £500.

The money was raised by donations from customers eating in the Catering Services Realistic Working Environment; a mock-up of a galley and dining room in a ship.



Survey ship in spotlight

AFTER 26 engagements and events in just six days, survey ship HMS Enterprise left the capital star struck.

The hydrographic vessel returned to open waters to continue her scientific and navigational mission following a high-profile visit to London's docklands.

Enterprise was used for pretty much every opportunity imaginable during her time at West India Dock from celebrating the role of women in engineering to receptions (including one of the first official engagements for new First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin), tours by the general public, participation in historic ceremonies and ensuring the British people were fully informed about the weather.

A record number of visitors toured Enterprise when she opened her gangway to the public: more than 3,000 people signed up for the ticket-only experience which gave them chance to chat with crew, get their hands on some kit, try on fire-fighting uniforms – despite the searing temperatures – and imagine commanding the ship from her bridge.

Sailors left Enterprise behind and travelled three-and-a-half miles upstream to take part in an ancient ceremony in the grounds of the Tower of London.

Back in the 14th Century, any ship visiting the capital was at the mercy of the monarch who demanded payment for the privilege of sailing up the Thames – normally some of the goods they were transporting, today it's morphed into the 'Ceremony of the Dues', performed in full view of tourists to one of London's most popular attractions.

Enterprise Commanding Officer Commander Cecil Ladislaus led his sailors through the Tower's West Gate, where they were challenged for entry by the Yeoman Gaoler armed with his famous axe.

Beefeaters (aka Yeoman Warders) escorted the sailors through the tower grounds to music from a Corps of Drums before handing over their tax or dues – in the form of a barrel of rum – to the tower's Constable General the Lord Houghton on Tower Green, the historic site of ten executions, including three former queens of England.

HMS Pursuer to the rescue

THE crew of HMS Pursuer rescued sailors who were in difficulty off the Isle of Wight.

The P2000 was conducting navigation training when they answered a call for assistance from HM Coastguard.

Sailors were stranded dangerously close to the Needles after the drivetrain aboard their craft broke.

Pursuer managed to throw a heaving line to the boat and recovered the crew aboard their RHIB.

While the rescued sailors enjoyed a meal, the fast patrol boat attached a line and towed the craft to Lympington on the mainland, where they were safely delivered to the local harbour master.



Italian workout after successful Cyprus task

THE Royal Navy's new fighter jets have successfully completed their first operational missions.

Fleet Air Arm pilots joined their RAF counterparts on operational flights over the skies of Syria and Iraq, as part of the ongoing fight against Daesh.

It follows a successful training period in Cyprus, known as Exercise Lightning Dawn, aimed at building capability for the aircraft and supporting elements.

Due to the exceptional performance of the aircraft, pilots, and support staff during this time, it was decided that they were ready to make their operational debut from RAF Akrotiri, alongside the Typhoons.

The Lightning force is jointly operated by the RAF and Royal Navy. With the ability to operate from land and sea, the F-35 forms a vital part of delivering a 'carrier strike' capability to the UK when combined with Britain's new Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers.

First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin said: "It's great to see our F35B Lightning jets already proving themselves on operations so early in their life cycle, ably demonstrating the fantastic capability these world-leading aircraft offer.

"This autumn, our aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth will return to



the East Coast of the United States to conduct Operational Trials with our Lightning Force, taking this fifth generation capability to the next level as they prove their ability to operate from the sea.

"For decades to come, this exciting new combination of aircraft carriers and F35B Lightnings will provide a potent, globally deployable carrier strike capability, a powerful conventional deterrent and the centrepiece of our country's expeditionary forces."

At the conclusion of Lightning Dawn, two F-35s arrived in Italy to conduct bilateral training with their Aeronautica Militare counterparts from 32 Stormo based at Amendola, near

Foggia, pictured top.

Officer Commanding 617 Squadron, Wing Commander John Butcher, pictured climbing into his plane in Cyprus, said: "It has been an absolute privilege to operate alongside the Italian Air Force, a key NATO ally and European friend who also operate Lightning. The mission we flew together today was very successful and proves again the interoperability between nations flying F-35."

The next step in the development of the F-35 will be the standing-up of 207 Squadron at RAF Marham later this summer. 207 Squadron will be the Operational Conversion Unit for RAF and RN pilots.

Later in the year, 617 Squadron will embark in HMS Queen Elizabeth for the first time. The UK jets will conduct Operational Tests, alongside 17 Test and Evaluation Squadron, onboard the carrier in the USA during the WESTLANT 19 deployment.

The UK currently owns 17 F-35B aircraft with the reformed 617 Sqn arriving back in the UK last year. More jets are due in Britain over the coming years, including the imminent arrival of 207 Sqn at RAF Marham, and there is an overall plan to procure 138 aircraft over the life of the programme.

Fraggle rocks

LIEUTENANT Commander Ross Spooner investigates the Fraggle Helicopter during a scuba diving expedition to Cyprus.

He was among a team of 12 Royal Navy personnel from 824, 814, 820 and RNAS Culdrose support sections who took part in Exercise Dark Hawk.

Using Dhekelia Army Base as their home for the ten-day expedition, the team picked up their kit from the nearby Joint Service Adventurous Training Wing.

The water was warm and crystal clear, making it easy to spot the remains of an old armoured car and a few detached sunken pontoons.

The team dived a site called Green Bay, where the first turtle of the trip was spotted.

The first three days were spent training students to qualify five sports divers and enable them to dive to 25 metres.

A cliff with a chapel and a set of steep steps down to a small cave were also dived on.

The next day the team headed to a site called Cow Cave – imaginably named due to the little cave cows hide in to cool down – that's next to the site. This site was a mixture of sea grass and boulder fields, but it allowed the team to take the new sports divers to 25m starting their depth progression. The second dive

of the day was particularly interesting, on a site called Tunnels and Caves. It allowed several means to enter the water, including a 3m high entry from the cliff or sliding through a hole just big enough for a diver into a submerged cave.

Different diving pairs opted for different entries, but both proved popular.

Day four was the start of boat diving and the team had use of a small hard boat along with its skipper.

They did a couple of local shallow sites called the Fraggle and Power Station. The Fraggle is a mixture of small wrecks, including a rock barge and old Army Sioux Helicopter, which went down in 1966.

The Power Station dive site was quite different, it was a depressed large bowl in the rock on the sea floor that you enter via a small tunnel on one of its sides. This is surrounded by sand and sea grass which is providing a shelter for lots of young fish.

The team finished the day off with a night dive off the jetty outside the dive centre.

This proved to be very popular with numerous sightings of octopus, baby cuttlefish and an abundance of cornet fish.

Day five saw the divers visit one of the highlights of the trip, the Zenobia wreck.

The large ferry, which sank carrying lorries in 1980, lies on its side with the bottom of the ferry 41m down and the top 17m below the surface.

Abundant
marine

life can be found, with schools of fish, including grouper, barracuda, kingfish, jacks and trigger fish, as well as moray eels, stingrays, turtles and octopus. Its ferry and much of the cargo are intact, making it fascinating to explore.

The two dives allowed many expedition members to swim through the wreck along the upper car deck, some expedition members also managed to get to the truly massive propellers.

The following day featured dives on an old sunken Royal Navy Warship call HMS Cricket which lies at 30m on the sea floor. She is upside down which exposes her very triple rudders which are home to lot of lionfish (a pretty fish with very poisonous spines running all over it).

The WW2 river gunboat was anchored in Larnaca Bay and was used as target practise before it sank during a storm in 1947.

The highlight of this wreck is the ability to swim underneath her and being able to look up into her internal structure, which made it a very pretty wreck to dive.

The team then revisited the Fraggle as a second dive which provided a treat in the form of a turtle sleeping in the wreck of the helicopter.

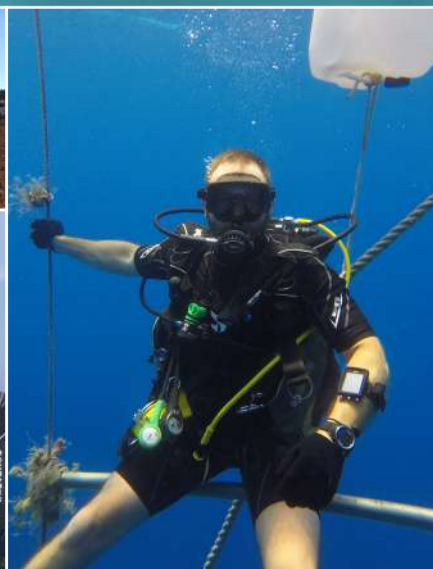
The next day the team returned to the Zenobia. The last diving day was a day for junior expedition members to try planning the diving and they decided to have Zenobia exploration day - this meant everyone went to different parts of the wreck with some diving through the dining room with natural light piercing through the windows above.

Others went and found their way into the middle car deck and found the captain's car.

The last days of the expedition were used to clean and return kit, allow expeditions members to see some of the local culture and of course buy the obligatory fridge magnets.

The team included: LAET James Rogers, CPO Mike Evans, Pete Hawkins, PO Lynn Reed, WO1 Jay O'Donnell, Lt Cdr Malcolm Smye, AET Rueben Brown, AET Alex Robinson, AET Antony Bowes, AET Joshua Sharp and Lt Cdr Alastair Castle.

Report: LAET Rogers
Pictures: LAET Rogers, PO Reed, Lt Cdr Castle, AET Brown and AET Robinson



CROWDED SKIES

STUDENT aircrew took a big step towards earning their coveted Wings after mountain training in Norway. The Operational Conversion Flight of 846 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) deployed to the Arctic Circle to give trainees the chance to plan and execute a transit across Europe in their Merlin Mk3 helicopters.

Exercise Nordic Hammer

saw pilots and aircrewmen from 30 Course of the Commando Helicopter Force's training squadron fly from their home base of Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton, in Somerset, to Bardufoss.

While overseas they practised take-offs and landings in the snow-covered, rocky mountains with peaks of more than 5,000ft.

During summer, temperatures are a lot milder than the -30°C the region endures in the winter. But the mountains still provided challenging flying conditions for the students to complete basic training on how to operate safely and effectively in a harsh environment.

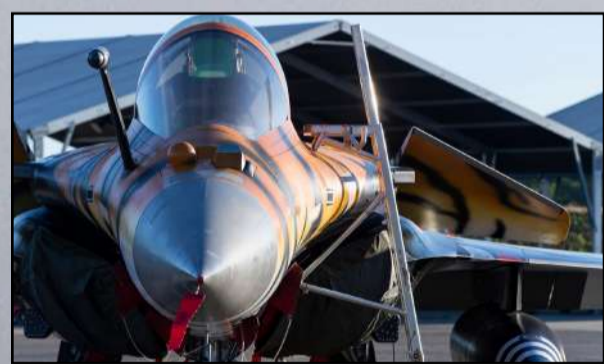
Lieutenant George Day, a student pilot, said: "Learning to operate the aircraft safely in such a dangerous and unpredictable environment is a vital skill for us."

"We therefore practise approaches in a variety of different conditions in the Arctic mountains of Norway." Exercise Nordic Hammer helps prepare the aircrew for 846 NAS' frontline role of dropping off or picking up Royal Marines, anywhere in the world.

The Commando Helicopter Force has a long history of activity at Bardufoss Air Station having used it during the winter to train front-line personnel in extreme cold weather warfare. The training, known as Exercise Clockwork, has been taking place in Norway for the past 50 years.

Lieutenant Alex Craig, detachment commander and helicopter pilot instructor, said: "The training area around Bardufoss is perfect for teaching the advanced skills of operating a Merlin in the mountains."

"The terrain is a real challenge with peaks of up to 5,500ft. It gives training you can't possibly hope to recreate anywhere in the UK."



WHEN are gazelles, hornets, pumas and falcons actually tigers?

When they are all members of an elite NATO aviators' club, that's when. Tiger-themed squadrons from across Europe – including the Flying Tigers from RNAS Culdrose – converged on southern France for a two-week workout over land and sea to test the ability of 18 different aircraft types from 13 nations to fight side-by-side.

The submarine hunters of 814 Naval Air Squadron clocked up more than 40 hours in French skies at **Tiger Meet 2019** as fighters,

bombers, helicopters jostled for air supremacy on numerous missions from working with a French frigate to hunt down enemy warships to supporting an airborne assault in the Pyrenees mountains. Since 1961, any NATO squadron

which features the head of a tiger in its crest has been invited to a 'Tiger meet', this year hosted by the French Air Force's Escadron de Chasse 3/30 Lorraine (EC 3/30) at Base Aérienne 118 Mont-De-Marsan, 80 miles south of Bordeaux.

Many participants adorn their aircraft with impressive Tiger art (due to the special composite material Merlins are made of, sadly, the most 814 are allowed is the black outline of a tiger's face on the nose). Most have some form of Tiger mascot (in the form of a cuddly toy).

Such light-hearted moments aside, the fortnight-long exercise is serious business; so complex are many of the different scenarios played out that planners spend more than a year designing them.

The bulk of Tiger squadrons are fast jet units – F-16 Falcons, F-18 Hornets, French Rafales and Mirages, Eurofighter Typhoons – but there were also nine helicopters and a giant E-3 Sentry 'eyes-in-the-sky' involved in the

2019 meeting.

For the duration of the exercise, the Merlin was on standby as the duty rescue helicopter should any fellow Tigers suffer a mishap (they didn't). In addition, the Fleet Air Arm fliers were called to feed intelligence to their comrades, command and control – a sort of flying air traffic control centre – ferrying troops and equipment around the large exercise area. The Merlin's engineering detachment ensured the helicopter never missed one of its 19 allocated sorties.

"This was my second NATO Tiger Meet and one of the most valuable experiences of my Royal Naval career," pilot Lieutenant Tom Wallis enthused.

"It was hard work but I have again learnt a lot from working with other NATO squadrons. I was mission commander for one exercise which saw me commanding nine helicopters to deliver troops to the Pyrenees."

"We had to take on real jets simulating an air-to-air threat and real surface-to-air missile system simulating

a ground-to-air threat."

814's Senior Observer – navigator/sensor/weapons specialist – Lieutenant Commander Tony Sherwin was attending his first Tiger Meet and found the experience invaluable.

This was my first NATO Tiger Meet. It proved to be long hours and hard graft but everybody pulled together and we really demonstrated how capable the Merlin Mk2 is in the hands of 814's Flying Tigers."

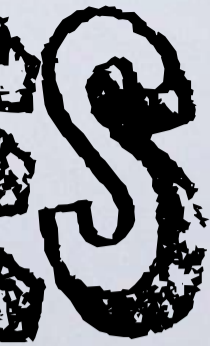
Newly-qualified observer Lieutenant Jay Butler added: "Tiger Meet was the most challenging and rewarding flying I have done to date. The exercise has given me the opportunity to see just how capable and multi-role the aircraft can be at an early stage in my flying career."

"On one sortie there were over 40 jets airborne either trying to shoot us down or trying to protect us and I was in command of completing the mission safely."

The detachment is now back home in Culdrose, but 814 are already planning their participation in 2020's Tiger Meet which will take place in southern Portugal.



Pictures: PO(Phot) Des Wade, L/Cpl James Clarke, 814 and 824 NAS



WITH wing vortices leaving white streaks in sullen Somerset skies, an F-35 Lightning

wows 35,000 spectators at the **Royal Navy International Air Show**.

The UK's new stealth fighter made its debut at the show... one of 25 aerial displays during five hours of flying.

Public and enthusiasts say the variety and scope of the 2019 show made it the best for several years – and one of the best on a busy display circuit.

There was a welcome return to Yeovilton by Harrier jump jets; the base was home to the legendary aircraft for nearly 30 years.

This time it was Spanish Navy Harriers over the air station, the Iberian display team making their first appearance at the show in the US-built version of the jet, the AV-8B.

Another old friend – and air-show opener – was the only working Westland Wessex HU5 in the world, restored to flying order by Historic Helicopters in Chard and painted in traditional RN search-and-rescue blue/red. And he's been doing the rounds at commando bases and air stations, so it wasn't too much of a surprise to see 'iron man'/'rocketeer'... aka Richard Browning in his Gravity flying suit/jet pack hovering and 'slip streaming', flying the White Ensign above the ground in front of the crowds.

It's not all about the airborne displays – there's a substantial show on the ground as well.

Potential next-generation engineers were encouraged, inspired and amused in the Science Technology Engineering Maths area by Titan the Robot, where there was also the chance to chat with real-life FAA

engineers and pilots.

The Wildcat Training Centre was open to the public again, offering young people the opportunity to learn how we train our helicopter crews.

And just for a bit of light relief... During a pause in flying, an Extinction Rebellion protestor set off on his bike flying a 'Climate emergency' banner, bemoaning the jet fuel being 'wasted' for entertainment purposes as 'immoral'. He was chased by firefighters in their engine... then on foot when his cycle chain broke... and was wrestled to the ground.

Ok, back to the skies... and making a most welcome reappearance, the Fleet Air Arm's own display team, the Black Cats. The past few years have been a bit on/off for the cats as the Lynx was retired and replaced by the brand-new Wildcat.

"It's great that the Black Cats are back at Air Day," said pilot Lieutenant Chris Rebeck.

"Today's demonstration of our Wildcat skills signifies a real step up from the Lynx.

"I hope everyone enjoyed the day as much as I and my Royal Navy counterparts did."

Apart from a bit of squeeze to get out of the car park and congestion on the routes leading away from Yeovilton, they did. Among the verdicts from punters: "a great day out for all the family"; "a highly-enjoyable day"; and "a very entertaining finale".

The show closes with a spectacle no other air display in the UK can match: the commando assault, with booms, bangs, fire, fury, and some choice over-acting from Royal Marines as the full panoply of naval air power and commando strength and guile is brought to bear against insurgents.

It's the first time the commandos' new battle wagon, the Merlin Mk4 – converted for operations at sea (folding tail boom,

folding rotor, entirely digital cockpit) – has taken part (sadly it's painted grey, not traditional RM green).

They disgorged 16 Royal Marines at a time on to the Yeovilton soil. In a flash the terrorists were subdued... and the air show was over.



SUBMARINE hunters spent a fortnight tracking underwater foes in Norway's narrow fjords as they honed skills to meet the growing Russian challenge.

Trainee and experienced aircrew from 824 and 820 Naval Air Squadrons spent a fortnight near Bergen trying to track down two elusive submarines – using the world's number one submarine-hunting helicopter.

With the Royal Navy – and NATO – re-focusing their efforts in the North Atlantic in light of increased Russian activity, anti-submarine warfare in the Royal Navy – typically delivered by a combination of Merlin helicopters, Type 23 frigates and Trafalgar or Astute-class hunter-killer submarines beneath the waves – is undergoing a renaissance.

Culdrose squadrons decamp to Sicily every year for NATO's Mediterranean submarine hunt, Dynamic Manta, testing their ability to track underwater foes in warmer climes.

And for the past couple of years, Merlin Mk2 crews have taken advantage of Norwegian hospitality for their Rogue series of anti-submarine exercises – last year Rogue Wizard, this year **Rogue Falcon**.

The Norwegians offered their main naval base at Haakonsværn, just south of Bergen, as home to the Merlin detachment, plus the frigate Roald Amundsen at sea, for the duration of the exercise.

Two Merlins with air and ground crew were sent from Culdrose via Prestwick and the Shetlands to Norway – a journey of nearly 950 miles which allowed rookie pilots, observers and aircrewmen to plan a lengthy flight through busy UK airspace instead of the five-minute hop to their normal training areas off the Lizard peninsula.

Lurking in the North Sea and fjords around Bergen – where the water temperature is similar to that off the Cornish coast, but depth and salinity are completely different – were two diesel-powered submarines: Norway's Utsira and Germany's U-36.

The Merlin crews flew daylight sorties to locate, track and attack the submarines, first in open waters, then in the more confined environment of the narrow, deep fjords of the Hordaland region.

"To come here and operate against a foreign submarine in their own backyard is both a privilege and a challenge," said Sub Lieutenant Micky Hutton, a student observer – in charge of the submarine hunt by operating the hi-tech suite of sensors in the back of the Merlin.

"We're extremely thankful to the Norwegian and German crews for the opportunity to further develop our skills."

Working alongside him as a sonics operator was trainee leading aircrewman Will 'Tugz' Brown: "The environment is just so different from that off Cornwall – the deep fjords mixed with the fresh water glacial runoff make locating submarines extremely challenging.

"Thankfully, training in our aircraft and simulators prepared us well for the exercise."

Student pilot Lieutenant Callum Moir said the two weeks in Norway had been a "fantastic boost" for everyone involved.

"So far in our careers we have only operated in the UK and it's testimony to our years of training that we have been able to deploy two aircraft across the North Sea and operate them effectively against foreign submarines in the deep Norwegian fjords."

Downtime with the German and Norwegian submariners also gave the aviators a different view of the hunt, as student observer Sub Lieutenant Nik Wielbo explained: "It was very helpful to hear how helicopter anti-submarine warfare tactics affect submariners. I gained a really valuable insight into our work as a result."

Detachment Commander Lieutenant Hannah Best said the fliers returned to Cornwall having learned invaluable lessons.

"The North Atlantic remains one of the most important areas of operation for the Royal Navy," she added.

"The techniques and experiences are transferrable across a range of environments and the excellent training opportunities, sharing deep specialist knowledge, contributes to maintaining our tactical edge."



STILL IN THE HUNT

Frigates and Merlins on NATO sub hunt exercise Dynamic Mongoose, see page 13



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PICTURE THIS

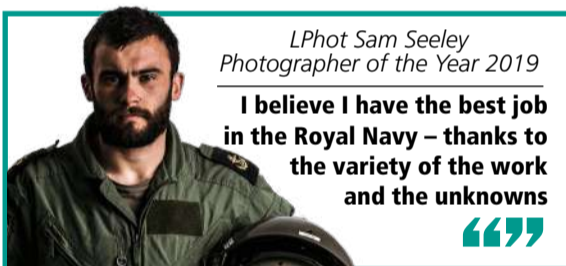
THESE are the award-winning pictures taken by the Royal Navy's photographic branch during an action-packed ten months on deployments all over the world.

From emotional homecomings, exercises in the scorched deserts of Oman, the freeze of the Arctic, and jungles of Belize to operations in waters all over the world, specially trained sailors and marines with a camera in hand are on the front lines capturing every dramatic moment.

The best of these images and videos are then judged by a panel of experts and the annual Peregrine Trophy awards are dished out to those who have captured the highlights of life in the Naval Service from behind the lens.

The Peregrine Trophy is a chance for recognition and 2019's set of pictures are nothing short of spectacular, as the branch marks its 100th anniversary.

There are hundreds of jobs in the naval service but, as photographer of the year 2019, Leading Photographer Sam Seeley admits, there's only one that gets to sample



*LPhot Sam Seeley
Photographer of the Year 2019*

I believe I have the best job in the Royal Navy – thanks to the variety of the work and the unknowns

“”

all of them.

The photographers, nicknamed The Photos, go wherever the action is hottest, they cover Royal Marines in extremes of temperatures and follow ships on maritime security operations across the oceans.

Sam said: "It is humbling to win this award and have your work appreciated. I believe I have the best job in the Royal Navy – thanks to the variety of the work and the unknowns.

"One day you're with the Royal Marines storming a beach and the next you're landing in a helicopter on the back of a frigate in the North Sea. This job gives you some real money-can't-buy moments."

Sam joined the Royal Marines when he was 20, gaining his coveted green beret and deploying to Afghanistan with Taunton-based 40 Commando where he trained the local Afghan police. He later specialised as a mountain leader, and ultimately joined the Surveillance Reconnaissance Squadron before becoming a Royal Navy photographer.

Joining up as any other rating into a particular trade such as logistics, engineering or warfare specialists, RN photographers work hard to excel at their chosen field before being accepted into the elite photographic branch.

This year the awards were judged by Jane Sherwood of Getty Images, Richard Collins of Practical Photographer magazine, Maya Germaine of the Walker Photographic Agency, Jack Ashdown from Great State, Mark Tattersall of Artlab Films, and Vince Knight of Vince Knight Productions.



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FIND OUT MORE

- ▶ Visit royalnavy.mod.uk/peregrine
- ▶ Want to join? Read RNTM 01-040/19
- ▶ Keep up with the photos at facebook.com/royalnavyphotographers/



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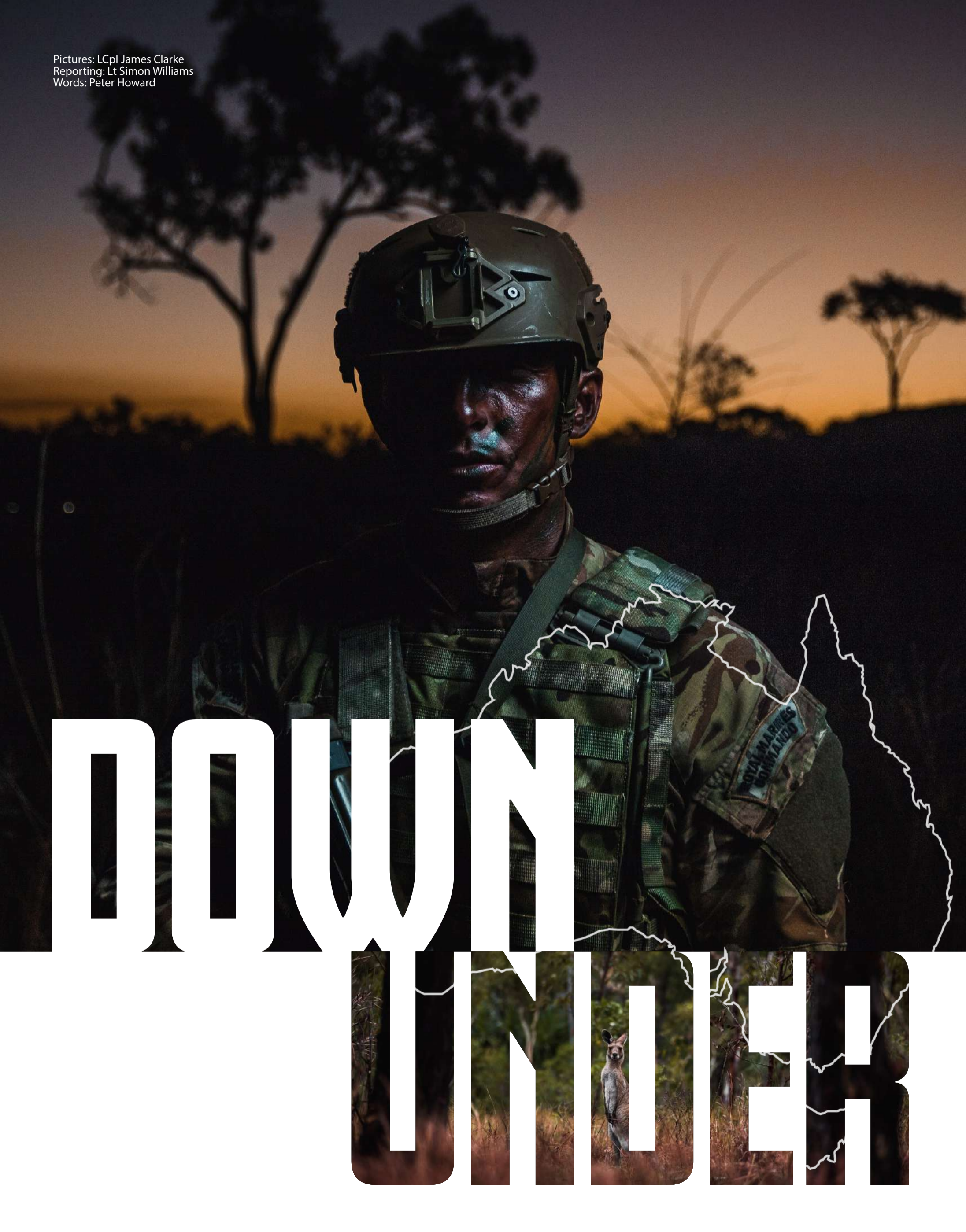
THE WINNERS

- › **The Peregrine Trophy**
Fleet Regional Photographic Unit West
(picture 12)
- › **Royal Navy Photographer of the Year 2019**
LPhot Sam Seeley (picture one)
- › **The Commandant General Royal Marines Portfolio Prize**
30 Commando (picture six)
- › **The Best Maritime Image Award**
LPhot Will Haigh (picture seven)
- › **The Maritime Air Prize**
LPhot Kyle Heller - Merlin (picture four)
- › **Global Operations Category**
PO Phot Dave Jenkins (picture ten)

- › **Best Image and Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity Family and Friends Award**
LPhot Barry Wheeler (picture eight)
- › **The People's Choice Award**
LPhot Rory Arnold (picture two)
- › **The Spirit of Diversity Award**
LPhot Barry Swainsbury (picture nine)
- › **Engineering Excellence Award**
PO Phot Dave Jenkins
- › **Royal Navy Short Film Digital Story Telling Video Award**
LPhot Dan Shepherd
- › **Royal Navy Video Award**
LPhot Sam Seeley

- › **Student Award**
LPhot Dan Shepherd
(picture five)
- › **Royal Navy Amateur Photographer of the Year 2018**
LCpl James Clarke
(picture three)
- › **Royal Navy Amateur Maritime Image Award**
Lieutenant Commander Ollie Clarke
(picture 11)
- › **Royal Navy Amateur Open Category**
LCpl James Clarke
- › **Sea Cadet Open Category**
OC Alessandro Aquar

Pictures: LCpl James Clarke
Reporting: Lt Simon Williams
Words: Peter Howard



DOWN WINNER

THE latest test for the Royal Marines and their new ways of working took them 10,000 miles down under to Australia.

Among the creepy crawlies, kangaroos and koala beers, Command Company of 40 Commando have been working on the Future Commando Concept in the rural areas of Queensland in northeastern Aus.

Soon they will be testing new team structures and ways of operating alongside allies on Exercise Talisman Sabre, a biennial outing for Australian and United States forces.

This time around, the UK and other more regularly attendees to the exercise, Japan, New Zealand, and Canada, are adding to a potent 34,000-strong force, including 30 ships and 200 aircraft.

On this mission, the Royal Marines are acting as true commandos; wreaking havoc behind enemy lines before the bulk of allied forces arrive on the front lines.

Before this all kicked off, the 40 Commando marines did their own training in this rare foray to Australia.

On the orange dirt and the golden sands of the Shoalwater Bay training area and training forests, near Rockhampton, the Green Berets have worked on how they will line-up on the battlefield of the future.

"It embraces a 'commando first' initiative where everyone is foremost a commando, and then handpicked for the various skillset required for the task, including snipers, signallers, recce and medics," said Lieutenant Simon Williams of 40 Commando.

The Future Commando Force has Royal Marines embracing new technology and developing new tactics to outwit the enemy.

"The commandos have grasped new command structures, breaking the typical specialisation-exclusive troops into bespoke mixed-teams,"



added Lt Williams.

This first phase of their deployment to Aus has seen them work with reconnaissance specialists from the Australian Defence Force, 2nd Royal Australian Regiment.

Now they head on to HMAS Canberra, the Royal Australian Navy's flagship and helicopter landing dock, ahead of joining the large-scale war games.

The company will then test what they've been working on as part of a 'pre-landing force'.

That means the marines will insert behind enemy lines, days before the main force, to disrupt 'enemy' forces before the huge numbers flex their muscles.

The marines will target enemy infrastructure in their new multi-role teams and take out forward positions to clear the path ahead.

In preparations for this, the marines have been observing enemy positions and calling in fires, before assaulting a missile installation.

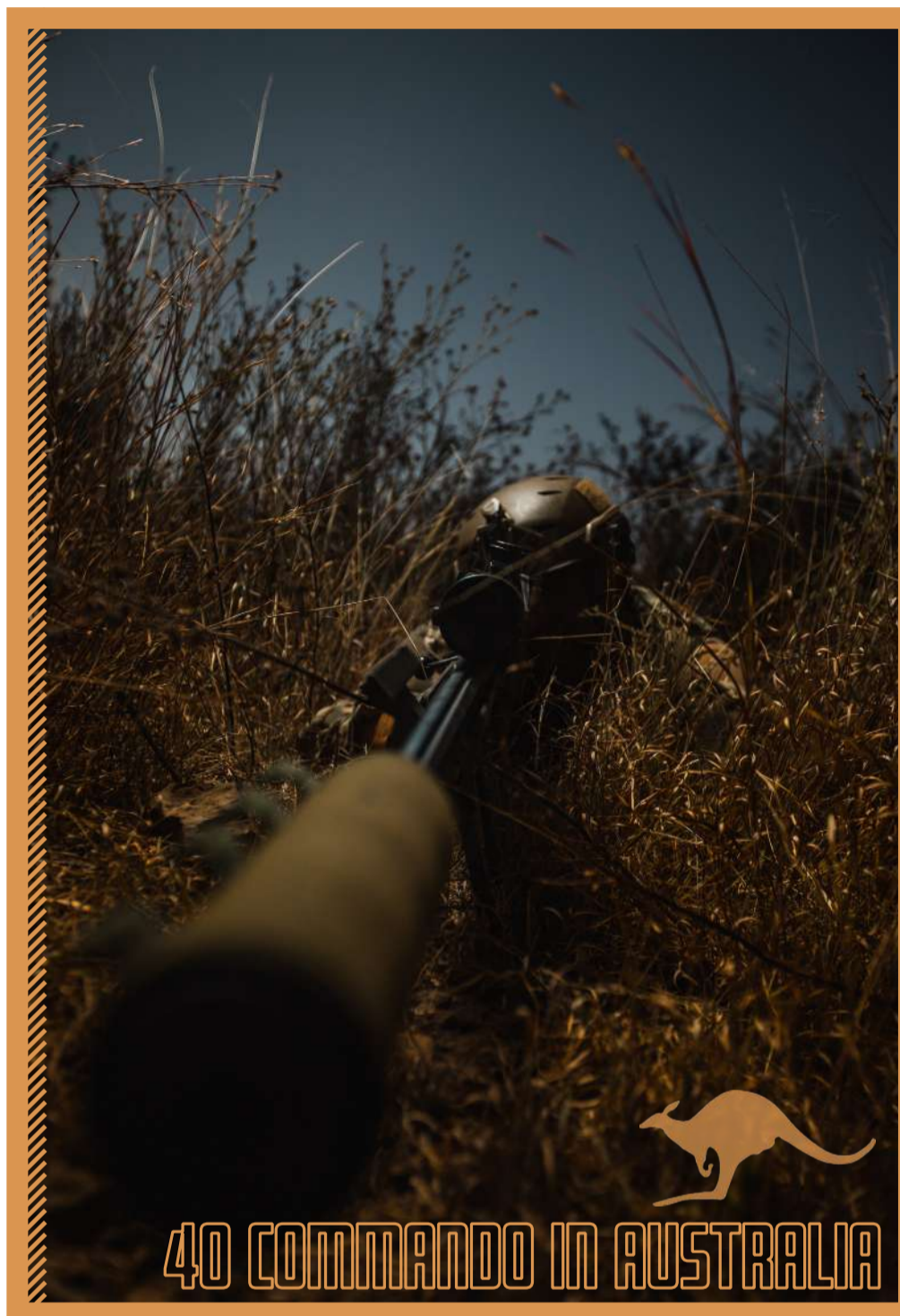
"Even though it's winter, the conditions have been tough – hot and dry with loose rocky ground – making the insertion yomp exhausting," said Lt Williams, about the company level training which precluded Talisman Sabre.

"This deployment demonstrates the Royal Marines' ability to rapidly integrate and operate in support of a variety of global partners."

• Next month's *Navy News* will include the latest reports from Exercise Talisman Sabre.

KEEP UP WITH 40 COMMANDO

Follow @40commando and @RoyalMarines on Twitter





Sailors and Royal Marines go on the march to show support to the LGBT+ community

WORDS: SAM BANNISTER PICTURES: LPHOT JOE CATER



Deafening cheers from a million-strong crowd followed sailors and Royal Marines as they showed their support for the LGBT+ community at Pride in London.

The streets were awash with colour and costumes as the armed forces and Defence civilians joined the community celebration.

Dozens of sailors and marines marched proudly past some of London's most iconic landmarks, to send a message that the Naval Service welcomes all talent to its ranks regardless of sexual orientation or gender identity.

They were joined by Defence Secretary Penny Mordaunt and senior naval officer Rear Admiral Jim Higham, who marched alongside the military contingent.

The celebration marks almost 20 years since the ban on LGBT+ serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines was lifted.

Lieutenant Amy Skinner, 35, from Kingston, said: "I've had the honour to march at Pride a number of times and always feel how much of a celebration it is.

"Pride is an opportunity to be ourselves, be together and celebrate but also show support to those across the world who are not so fortunate to be able to be free."

The Naval Service's involvement in the parade was co-ordinated by Compass, the Royal Navy's sexual orientation and gender identity network.

More than 200 members of the armed forces took part in the events, including reserves, civilians, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary and all fighting arms of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

The marching platoons were led by the Central Band of the Royal Air Force, rousing the crowds with everything from regimental marches to covers of Queen, Elton John and the Village People.

While the rest of the Pride in London parade came to a halt near Trafalgar Square, the military contingent continued its march along Whitehall to salute the Cenotaph in poignant recognition of the many LGBT+ people who have served in the nation's forces throughout history.

Able Seaman Tom Mitchell, 19, from Liverpool, said: "This year was my first time marching in Pride with the Royal Navy and it was an incredible experience.

"The atmosphere was buzzing and the crowd cheering us on makes it an incredibly special day.

"People ask us why we do it because there is more acceptance of LGBT+ people in the UK nowadays but there is still a need for it.

"The Royal Navy represents the people of the nation that we serve, and it's important we show people that the Naval Service is accepting of people whether they're gay, bi, trans, or straight."

If you want to join the Compass network, for LGBT+ members of the naval service and their allies, send an email to compass@royalnavymail.mod.uk.

It is important we support events like this. In some countries it is still punishable by death or prison to be gay.
PO MICHAEL SPEEDIE

Why Pride?

NEXT year marks 20 years since LGBT+ people were no longer banned from serving in the UK's armed forces.

So with such darker days in the past, why do sailors and marines still need to take part in Pride?

Petty Officer Michael Speedie, 33, from Glasgow, said: "Although the day where I would have been banned from serving in our nation's armed forces is long past, it is still important for us to be here showing our support to the community. In some countries it is still punishable by death or prison to be gay.

"Gay, bi, and trans people in the UK and abroad still suffer hate crime and discrimination and we have to let people know there is no place for that within the Naval Service.

"Your sexual orientation or gender identity really has no bearing on your ability to serve – it's your individual skills as a person that matter."

Last year the government commissioned a major study into the lives of LGBT+ people in the UK.

Two-thirds of respondents said they avoided holding their same-sex partner's hand in public for fear of a negative reaction. It also found negative experiences in people's safety, health, education and employment.

It also found negative experiences in people's safety, health, education and employment.

This year marks 52 years since the partial decriminalisation of homosexuality in the UK, and six years since the UK voted to legalise same-sex marriage, giving same-sex couples the same legal rights as straight ones.

But more than one in three LGBT+ people in the UK report having suffered abuse because of their sexuality or gender. Homosexuality remains illegal in 72 countries and is punishable by death in eight nations.

Able Seaman Robbie Mason, 21, from Manchester, said: "After attending my first Pride I've come to realise even more how imperative it is that we continue to take part in these events.

"The Royal Navy is a role model to other organisations showing that accepting people of all sexual orientations and gender identities is vital for an effective team.

"My partner watched us marching and left that day knowing that I am completely accepted and valued in my place of work no matter what."





Freedom of flight for Culdrose crew

Sailors exercise right to march with parade

CHILDREN cheered as the volunteer band of HMS Seahawk led around 100 sailors marching through the streets of Helston.

The sailors, from Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose, were exercising their right to the freedom of the town.

Children from the town's three primary schools and secondary school, alongside many members of the public, lined the streets to watch the annual parade.

Behind the colour party, bearing the naval White Ensign, came the guard, followed by a platoon of sailors from the air station and the HMS Seahawk field gun crew.

They assembled this year outside the Guildhall, where the mayor of Helston, John Martin, was invited to inspect the assembled sailors by the commanding officer of Culdrose Captain Anthony Rimington.

The idea this year was to hold the ceremony in the centre of town so that people could see more of the parade.

The mayor, John Martin, complimented the sailors on their turnout for the event, which he described as a "very significant occasion for the town".

He said: "As usual, you are all of impeccable appearance and an absolute credit to the Royal Navy."

"I especially hope this message of comradeship can be relayed to those currently serving away from home."

"Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose is an important part of the life and culture

of Helston, not only for civilian workers but for the many service personnel, and I hope this ceremony strengthens this tie between us and long may the freedom of Helston remain."

Capt Rimington said it was a great honour for everyone at Culdrose to be allowed to exercise their right to march through the town.

He said it was an exciting time for the air station, which is working closely with the navy's new aircraft carriers and leading the way with new technology such as remotely piloted aircraft, which he expected would play an increasingly important role at Culdrose in the next 12 months.

"All of these innovations and different activities require people, such as the men and women of the air station that you see in front of you today," he said.

"We are hugely grateful for the honour you give us for allowing us to march through your town with, as the old saying goes: 'bayonets fixed, colours flying and band playing'."

The sailors then marched off down Coinagehall Street in time for a fly-past by a helicopter from 824 Naval Air Squadron.

In a new move this year, children from the town's three primary schools, Parc Eglos, Nansloe and St Michael's, followed the procession and marched down Coinagehall Street themselves.

Report by Graeme Wilkinson



Top, a sailor from HMS Seahawk awaits orders as part of the guard in the annual parade through Helston. Above, sailors march past as the town's mayor takes the salute.

PICTURES: PO(PHOT) DAVE GALLAGHER

Altar cloth returned to its historic home

HMS Victory has seen many ceremonies and religious acts in her long, proud history, but rarely, if ever, has a piece of cloth been celebrated before.

But full ceremony was given to the transfer of an historic altar cloth from the Navy's most famous warship to its most famous house of worship.

The cloth, believed to be more than 100 years old, is thought to have arrived on Nelson's flagship during World War 2 when St Ann's Church was bombed at the height of the Blitz.

Services were moved a few hundred yards to Victory – where the cloth has remained until now, when it has formally been retired.

It left the man o'war in the hands of Victory's Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander B J Smith and was carried in procession to St Ann's in Portsmouth where a guard of honour comprising youngsters from St Jude's School welcomed the religious artefact.

"It's an ancient custom to lay up in church the consecrated emblems of duty and service," said the Rev Adam Gay, chaplain of St Ann's.

"With St Ann's being the spiritual home of the Royal Navy, it's right and fitting for the altar cloth to be laid to rest here within Portsmouth Naval Base."

Base team race to help beat cancer

ON THE hottest afternoon of the summer, military and civilian staff at HMS Collingwood took part in the establishment's annual Race for Life.

The aim was to complete a 5km course and raise money to help beat cancer.

Employees from all departments came out to run or walk, gathering on the parade ground for a warm-up in preparation for the challenge.

Then the race began, with all participants successfully completing the distance.

Leading Physical Trainer Charlotte Pape, who organised the day, said: "Race for Life is a great event to raise awareness and money for Cancer Research as cancer affects one in two people."

"Around 350 people attended dressed in pink or fancy dress and we raised £443."

Lieutenant Commander Steve Marsh came second in the event. He said: "I fully embraced the race for life with pink clothing, enjoying the fun atmosphere with my fellow competitors and helping to raise funds for such a worthwhile cause."

Wheely good fun at Sultan

THOUSANDS turned out to enjoy the fun of the HMS Sultan Summer Show. A main arena crammed full of action included performances of stunts by Bolddog Lings Freestyle Motocross Display Team and the Team Green Rockets Children's Motorcycle Display Team, local youngsters from the Royal Naval Volunteer Cadet Corps competing in Field Gun Competition, a performance by the award-winning HMS Sultan Volunteer Band and a procession of classic steam vehicles. Outside of the arena a large-scale Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) area brought the subjects to life, with visitors also able to enjoy classic cars, a steam fair and a fun and games arena crammed full of free activities. Captain John Voyce, the Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan said: "HMS Sultan has strong links with our local community and we were delighted to welcome so many people into the establishment for our summer show."

Ralph is still running the gun aged 61

A RESERVIST from HMS King Alfred has taken part in the seventh field gun competition of his career – and now has his sights on the eighth.

Chief Petty Officer Ralph Swindell recently took part in the RNRMC field gun competition at HMS Collingwood as part of the maritime reserves field gun crew.

The 61-year-old joined the Royal Navy in 1975, but now teaches Initial Naval Training to new recruits at HMS King Alfred as a reservist in Portsmouth.

He now hopes to run in the field gun competition for the eighth time next year.

CPO Swindell said: "When you are standing on the line in front of the public on competition day, and running up and down the track as part of a crew, you know that you have succeeded and made the grade. It's a fantastic team sport which embodies all the core values of the Royal Navy."

At 61, he is one of the oldest field gunners to take part in the historic competition, which is held annually at HMS Collingwood.



He has served on a variety of ships including HMS Anglesey, HMS Fearless, HMS Sheffield, which he joined before going to the Falklands war, HMS Manchester, which he served on during the first Gulf War, and HMS Liverpool.

He says one of the highlights of his career was conducting disaster relief operations following the Montserrat volcano eruption, while serving in HMS Liverpool.

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Sailor and proud mum reunited by shipmates

Spirit of camaraderie as recruits arrange a surprise for classmate at HMS Raleigh

RECRUITS at HMS Raleigh secretly organised for a fellow trainee's mum to fly from the Caribbean to see her son's passing-out parade.

Quaci Crosby was among the latest group of trainee sailors celebrating the end of their ten-week basic training at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

He had no idea his mum, Althea, would be among the group of families and friends invited to the parade.

Unknown to him, his classmate Cameron Hawes had secretly paid for and organised his mum's flight so she could be there for her son's big day.

Recruit Crosby, aged 26, said: "It was important to have my mum here because joining the navy was one of my dreams.

"Seeing that she is here to share it with me is the best thing that has ever happened to me in my life. I have no words to explain how grateful I am to Cameron for what he has done for me today."

Mum and son were reunited when Althea was given the honour of presenting her son with his Royal Navy epaulettes, marking his official transition from Recruit to Able Seaman.

She said: "I was excited and nervous all at once. He had been trying to Facetime me and I had to decline the call to keep it all a big secret. It was thrilling and wonderful. It was great to be here and see all of the recruits. I am so proud."

Recruit Hawes sought the assistance of his own mum, Sarah Hole, to put in motion his plan to bring Althea to the UK. Sarah transferred some of Cameron's savings to Mrs Crosby so she could pay for the flight.

"I phoned my mum and said I wanted to do something. Before I joined the Royal Navy I worked in a sports centre and I saved as much money as I could.

"Everyone in our training class is close, but Crosby and I have been best friends from the start really. We share the same opinions on most things and he's always had my back. I've found training really stressful, but he's been really supportive."

After Recruit Hawes told HMS Raleigh's training staff and his fellow trainees what he had done, the surprise became more of a team effort.

He added: "I asked if anyone would else would like to contribute, to make it a group thing, rather than just me, and we've raised about £500, which is nearly half the cost of the flight. It's been quite hard to keep it a secret. As the day grew nearer we started to get excited."

Recruit Hawes' mum Sarah arranged and covered the cost of Mrs Crosby's transport to Plymouth and her accommodation. She also mobilised the support of other families to help host Mrs Crosby during her stay in the UK.

His generosity later earned him a surprise of his own when he was presented with a commendation by HMS Raleigh's Commanding Officer, Captain Rich Harris, during the passing-out parade.

Capt Harris said: "A key part of our training at Raleigh is to instil our core values into those who join the RN – courage, commitment, discipline, respect for others, integrity and loyalty.

"This act embodies many of those values and is a firm example of the teamwork, camaraderie, and mutual support that we require from our

“”
It was very important to have my mum here because joining the Royal Navy was one of my dreams. I have no words to explain how grateful I am.

RECRUIT QUACI CROSBY



Above, Recruit Quaci Crosby with mum Althea Crosby and Captain Rich Harris. Right, the moment Quaci and his mum were reunited. Below, Recruit Cameron Hawes with Quaci. Bottom left, recruits throw their caps into the air at the end of the formal passing-out parade. WORDS: NICKI DUNWELL PICTURES: LPHOT MARK JOHNSON



people at sea. Nonetheless, Recruit Hawes, his fellow recruits and the families have taken extraordinary measures on this occasion and are highly commended for it."

While the two recruits are now due to go their separate ways for the second stage of their training – Recruit Hawes is heading to HMS Sultan, while Recruit Crosby will stay at HMS Raleigh – they are adamant they will stay in touch.

Recruit Crosby added: "We've been close since day one. During training

he has been motivating me and I've been motivating him as we pushed forward. It is like he's a brother to me. It's been amazing. I'm really happy we got to pass out in the same division and get to start our new lives at the same time. Although we'll be separated I'll be visiting him and he'll visit me."

NOW WATCH THE VIDEO

Watch the touching reunion online by visiting youtube.com/royalnavy.





Divers turn riders for battlefield tour

EIGHTEEN sailors. Eight days. Seven hallowed sites. Six hundred miles.

That's the challenge set by Portsmouth-based Fleet Diving Unit 2 over one week in August.

The team from Horsea Island – a mixture of 18 divers and mine warfare specialists, all experts in finding explosive ordnance in very shallow waters – are hitting the roads of France to pay homage to Britain's WW1 and WW2 fallen, and raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

The 600-mile ride starts at Dunkirk, scene of the 1940 evacuation, passes through the Somme battlefields of 1916 and 1918, then heads down into Normandy with the emphasis on remembering the men and women of D-Day, 75 years on since the landings.

The riders will lay wreaths at specific memorials and sites as they pedal around the region, from Pegasus Bridge and the remains of the Mulberry Harbour to the new UK memorial and the five invasion beaches. They'll also stop at La Cambe Cemetery, last resting place for more than 21,000 German defenders of Normandy.

The cyclists set off on August 14 and intend to complete their epic tribute on August 21.

You can show your support for the team via: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/FDU2

Victory Walker turns last corner

COMMANDER Jane Allen, the Victory Walker set off from HMS Victory on October 21 2017, to walk anti-clockwise round the coast of mainland UK raising money for two naval charities, the WRNS BT and RNRMC. Having overcome a major injury, Jane has made significant progress since her last update when she began walking along the South West Coast Path. Here is her latest news sent from deepest cream tea country.

After Somerset I moved quickly into North Devon where I saw dramatic cliffs, had rain, strong winds, savage gradients and some sunshine thrown at me as I passed through familiar names such as Porlock, Lynmouth, and Ilfracombe.

There followed some gentle sandy respite by Woolacombe and Saunton beaches. Thereafter, the Taw and Torridge river estuaries provided flat walking and we made a pit-stop at RM Instow. Later, I passed through Appledore, a town that is eerily quiet since the shipyard closed earlier this year.

After Westward Ho! I regularly gained (and lost) height as I made my way towards Clowelly. This was the start of some extremely demanding days ahead. There were times, after yet another blistering ascent, when I emerged from woodland to see fabulous views up and down the coast – it made my heart-pumping efforts worthwhile.

Gradually, I eased towards Hartland Point, where the Bristol Channel ends and the Atlantic Ocean starts. This stretch of coast from Hartland Quay to Bude has suffered badly from cliff erosion; I kept well back from the edge, particularly as I was experiencing strong and blustery winds, sometimes accompanied by squally showers.

My knees creaked as I made my way down into a succession of steep valleys: In one I saw a most welcome sign – Cornwall/Kernow. At last, I'd crossed the border into the most westerly county of England.

Bude was alive with surfers and shops selling everything from pasties to windbreaks.

Widemouth Bay, another surfers' paradise, was simple to reach before the arduous task of more savage climbs and descents to Crackington Haven. Underfoot, sections of the path had eroded, while loose stones and shale required careful, steady steps. Onwards to Boscastle I was provided with some extremely majestic (but exhausting) scenery, including going over Cornwall's highest coastal point – unpretentiously called High Cliff – all 731 feet of it.

By the time I'd reached Tintagel I'd become utterly confused. Like Wales, where numerous place names began with 'Llan', in Cornwall I'm never far from a place beginning 'Tre' or 'Port' – no wonder I forget where I've been and where I'm going.

Arriving in Padstow, two things immediately struck me: I'd never go hungry here, and neither do the swarms of seagulls



• Jane shares a joke with Gordon 'Tanky' Fowlein; Jane at Land's End



that fly regular circuits, waiting to swoop on any unsuspecting chip eater. I lost count of pasty and ice cream shops in this town made famous by Rick Stein's fish restaurant.

After rounding Trevose Head, there followed a string of surfing beaches including Constantine, Watergate Bay, Fistral, Godrevy and Gwithians. Sweeping golden sands and the Beach Brigade were left behind me, only to be replaced by precipitous cliffs and Cornwall's industrial past. I moved from slate quarries into a wilderness landscape, where mounds of spoil and former mine buildings from tin and copper mining days were all clearly visible.

This fascinating heritage coast took me closer to Hayle where, on Gwithian's dunes, winds of 50mph whipped and swirled sand making the air thick with fine grey particles. Breathing, seeing and walking were all made difficult. I was reminded of the sandstorms I'd experienced while serving in Baghdad, Iraq.

More old mine buildings and engine houses appeared on my way to Cape Cornwall, one of two Capes in the UK. The other is Cape Wrath in NW Scotland which I walked across last year. Ahead stood Land's End. It was an exciting moment arriving at this landmark.

Rounding Land's End was a very special moment: it marked the end of my second John o' Groats to Land's End adventure. My first in 2007, via a more direct route, saw me walk 1,200 miles over 13 weeks. My second, as part of the Victory Walk lasted 37 weeks (excluding injury recovery time) and saw me walk 2,955 miles via the wriggliest route possible: across the top of Scotland, then southwards down the entire western coast of mainland UK. On this occasion, when I stood at that famous signpost it was bright sunshine, not the driving rain I'd experienced in 2007.

Having turned my last major corner, I set an easterly course along which I was treated to a string of pretty coves and fishing harbours as I made my way to Penzance and beyond. Before reaching Penzance,

my 'bootometer' clocked 5,000 miles at Mousehole. With the Victory Van being unable to squeeze through the narrow streets, we took our official 5,000-mile photograph just beyond Penzance, using the beautiful St Michael's Mount as a backdrop.

Reaching Lizard Point, the UK mainland's most southerly point was another big moment. Having already conquered the most easterly, northerly and westerly points, the Lizard completed my collection. I also planned to enjoy a cuppa in the UK's most southerly café, but after a long day's walk found it to be closed; one grumpy walker slouched away in disgust!

Since rounding Land's End commitments have increased and will continue to do so. At Praa Sands we met some members of West Cornwall's Branch of the Association of Wrens. A bottle of 'fizz', a homemade cake and a cheque donation were all gratefully received. Next stop was RNAS Culdrose where I enjoyed coffee and biscuits with women serving at HMS Seahawk, before setting off to collect donations from around the squadrons.

More recently I met up with Gordon, a 94-year old D-Day veteran. Known as 'Tanky' he arrived at the pub dressed in blazer with medals shining. Amongst his collection he proudly wears the *Legion d'Honneur*. He served as a butcher on board HMS Aristocrat, a paddle steamer converted for anti-aircraft duties and was in the thick of it. Fascinated by his nickname, I learned it was because he'd been given an additional daily duty of 'sounding' the fresh-water tanks!

'Tanky' remains a staunch Royal Navy supporter, arriving at the Polgooth Inn on his mobility scooter with a white ensign fluttering from the rear! Accompanied by his daughter (on foot) our happy evening reminded me of why I'm doing this walk – for veterans just like him and serving personnel alike.

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

Triple joy for SSAFA

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Greenwich Hospital have awarded £107,550 in three grants to support SSAFA's Forcesline, Casework and Mentoring services.

The ongoing partnership between SSAFA, RNRMC and Greenwich Hospital will continue to help support both serving personnel and veterans, as well as their families.

Last year, SSAFA's casework service supported 35,819 cases, with 3,961 naval beneficiaries receiving support throughout 2018. This new funding ensures that members of the Navy family will be supported in their time of need.

Sir Andrew Gregory, CEO at SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity said: "These exceptionally generous donations from The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and from Greenwich Hospital will allow SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity to continue its vital support to current and former members of the Naval Service as well as their families."



All aboard the bus

RUMBLING around the streets of Plymouth for the rest of the year is this specially-painted Citybus championing the work of the Royal Naval and Royal Marines charity.

The double-decker received a fresh lick of paint, a varied cast of characters from across the Naval family and the charity's new tagline 'By your side' in time for Armed Forces Day at the end of June.

Unveiled at HMS Raleigh, the bus was parked up at Plymouth's Armed Forces Day event and is now on the Citybus inventory, running on routes around the city and putting in an appearance at special RN/RM-themed events in the area.

"The bus will be in service across our network following Armed Forces Day to help promote the vital work the charity does to support naval families," said Citybus managing director Richard Stevens. "Many of our employees are former service personnel, so this is a cause that is close to our hearts here at Citybus."



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Into the depths to revisit the Kaiser's lo

OLD enemies. Long-time friends.

In the cold, dark depths of Britain's largest natural harbour, British and German divers fix wreaths on the remains of what was once the second largest navy in the world, one century after the greatest act of mass suicide in naval history.

Here, between the islands of Cava and Barrel of Butter, in the country's largest natural harbour lies the wreck of the cruiser Dresden, deliberately sunk by her crew to prevent her falling into the hands of

an enemy power.

One hundred years after the kernel of the German High Seas Fleet was scuttled, British and German sailors joined Orkney Island leaders and local schoolchildren in the same waters to remember one of the most remarkable naval incidents of all time.

The wreck of the Dresden, one of fewer than ten ships which remain from the 'grand scuttle'; most were salvaged between the wars.

Dresden was one of five cruisers scuttled on June 21 1919. Fifteen out of 16 battleships and battle-cruisers

and three in every five of the 50 German destroyers interned at Scapa were sunk. Nine Germans were killed and 16 were wounded, shot at by British sailors as they rowed ashore having sabotaged their ships.

The scuttling prevented the German fleet from being distributed among the victorious Allied powers one week later when the Treaty of Versailles was signed, officially ending the war with Germany.

The act provoked widespread scorn at the time – although privately senior

Royal Navy figures were delighted that their fleet's superiority would not be eroded.

And in Germany, the man who led the illegal act, Rear Admiral Ludwig von Reuter was hailed a hero.

During the centenary service, the bell from one of the scuttled German ships, the Von der Tann, was rung by York-Ludwig von Reuter, the admiral's grandson.

Wreaths were laid by the two most senior naval officers present, Rear Admiral Stephen Haisch, from the German Navy, and Captain Chris Smith, Royal

Navy Regional Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland.

"Commemorating what happened here 100 years ago also brings to mind how far we have come since those dark days. How from enemies we, the United Kingdom and Germany, have become true friends," said Rear Admiral Haisch.

"Today, our nations stand side by side on the world stage, upholding the joint values we believe in."

Captain Chris Smith added: "I am honoured to stand alongside Rear Admiral

Haisch in friendship on this day, looking back to a time when our countries were not as close as we have since become – and to represent the Royal Navy as we complete the task of commemorating the sacrifice made by so many during the course of what we now call the First World War.

"Today has seen sailors of both the Royal Navy and the German Navy jointly recognising a part of our collective history and doing so as allies, demonstrating that out of the adversity which once divided us we have forged a lasting friendship,

Memorial revamped

AFTER 65 years' battering by the elements, the monument to men who took the fight to the enemy in the Navy's smallest craft has been restored and rededicated.

One in every 12 vessels in Coastal Forces was lost between 1939 and 1945 – but the small boats claimed far more 'kills' than casualties suffered: in more than 900 actions they sank an estimated 400 enemy vessels, including four dozen of their German counter-parts, the feared E-Boats, plus more than 30 midget submarines, downed 32 enemy aircraft and sowed numerous minefields.

At their peak in 1944, the force counted 3,000 officers and 22,000 men, responsible for around 2,000 craft which were charged with safeguarding coastal waters, attacking enemy shipping and conducting clandestine raids against occupied Europe.

HMS Hornet in Gosport – today the Hornet Services Sailing Club in Fort Blockhouse – was regarded as their spiritual home and, post-war, was chosen as the site of the national memorial, unveiled in September 1954 by Catherine Hitchens, widow of Coastal Forces hero Lieutenant Commander Robert Peverell Hitchens (two DSOs, three DSCs and three Mentions in Despatches), killed during a minelaying operation off the Dutch coast in April 1943.

Sixty-five years later the



couple's granddaughter Tamsin Clive (pictured above by LPhot Barry Swainsbury) unveiled the restored memorial during a ceremony attended by the Coastal Forces successors, 1st Patrol Boat Squadron with its fast patrol boats HMS Biter and Trumpeter, veterans, veterans' groups, and a brass quintet from the Band of HM Royal Marines Collingwood, while Chaplain of the Fleet the Rev Martyn Gough led proceedings.

"It really is a great honour to be standing here 65 years after my grandmother Catherine unveiled this memorial here," said Ms Clive. "This ceremony of rededication is a moment when we can all once more honour both those who died and those who survived."

"This is a chance to remember

that Coastal Forces were a vital part of Britain's defence, especially along the south coast and up the eastern seaboard. People – often volunteers – gave an awful lot to try to keep us safe. The chance to come back and reflect after 75 years on the service they gave in wartime and afterwards is still important."

Coastal Forces veteran George Chandler was delighted to see the monument rededicated. "It means respect for those that died," he said.

"I lost 19 good shipmates during the war so when I come here I see them all, and it can be very emotional let me assure you, you know when you've lived and fought with people, you never forget them."

Coastal Forces were eventually disbanded in 1957.

Magnificent men among magnificent mountains

COMMANDOS past and present gather at their spiritual home – Spean Bridge memorial just outside Fort William – for the annual celebration of commando spirit and commemoration of commando sacrifice.

Forty Royal Marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group in Faslane – turned out in support of the annual Royal Marines Association parade... having completed a seven-mile speed march, following the original route which their WW2 predecessors had to complete during commando training from Spean Bridge railway station to Achnacarry House, home of the Commando Training Depot from 1942 to 1945.

The memorial service, taken by the Reverend Mark Allsop Royal Navy – 43's chaplain – included prayers and readings, while 43 Commando's Regimental Sergeant Major Warrant Officer 1st Class Al Sullivan read the role of honour in memory of fallen comrades.

Wreaths were laid by Colonel Andy Muddiman, 43's Commanding Officer, WO1 Dave Mason, Corps Regimental Sergeant Major, and Danny Cox of the Royal Marines Association.

As well as men from 43 Commando, the marching contingent to the memorial comprised of a local pipe band, Royal Marines Association members, the Royal Marines Motor Bike Association and X-Ray Company Royal Marines Cadets.

The cadets made the trip all the way from Sheffield – where they are part of 302 Sea Cadet Corps – for the second year running. Also in attendance, was Major General Martin Smith (retired), former Commandant General of the Royal Marines between 2014 and 2016.

"I can think of nowhere better to bring the Royal Marines Family together than at the annual Spean Bridge parade. Veterans, serving members of 43 Commando looking every inch the part and cadets commemorating commando history in the foothills of the magnificent mountains where it all began," said Major General Matt Holmes, Commandant General Royal Marines.

After proceedings, participants decamped to Ben Nevis Hotel in Fort William for lunch and a chance for the serving personnel and veterans to exchange stories.

Picture: LPhot Will Haigh



Florida Falkland veterans gather A new standard in Stourbridge

FROM the Falklands to Florida. Logan's Steakhouse in Kissimmee on the outskirts of Orlando was the venue for a commemorative dinner for veterans of the 1982 conflict now living or working in the Sunshine State.

Nine South Atlantic Medal recipients were present, along with their wives, plus a few others who served in 1982 but didn't sail with the task force.

After being piped to the table, a short 'thank you and a fine meal, Cdr Nobby Hall – a sub lieutenant aboard HMS Andromeda in 1982 – regaled guests with nautical tales from a career spanning four decades.

After a short photo session, the floor was opened to event organiser Lin Thomas.

For the benefit of the sole pongo, Lin explained why the toast to the Monarch is done by the Royal Navy while seated.

Also toasted, and remembered each and every day, were absent friends and those still on patrol.

A NEW standard will be paraded by Stourbridge and District branch at all events and ceremonies shipmates attend for years to come.

The branch's well-used old banner was laid up in the town's St Thomas' parish church before the Rev Andrew Sillis blessed the replacement flag in the presence of RNA National President Vice Admiral John McAnally.

The event was well supported by Stourbridge shipmates and branches across No.8 Area, including s/m Peter Godwin, No.8 Area National Council Member, and the Royal Marines Association. Staff and Cadets from TS Centaur (Dudley), assisted in keeping things running smoothly. Standards were paraded by The Association of Royal Yachtsmen, Birmingham Central and Tewksbury branches of the RNA, The Royal British Legion (Stourbridge Branch) and TS Centaur.

Following the service shipmates retired to the Royal British Legion Club in Stourbridge for a well-deserved tot, light refreshment and the added, unexpected bonus, of a demonstration of belly dancing by a group of women called Habibi.

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st fleet

which I think is the best tribute we can pay to those whose memory we honour on this day."

The sinking of the fleet was witnessed by 160 children from Stromness who were on a school outing in Scapa Flow aboard a local pleasure steamer. Their descendants filled a ferry for the memorial service 100 years later.

The flotilla then continued to Hoy and a service at Lyness Royal Naval Cemetery where the German dead are buried.

Picture: Marjo Tynkkyinen



Appeal to rebuild WW1 monument

THIS is one of the most hallowed sites in modern naval history – lying partially in ruins.

The monument to the sailors and Royal Marines killed in the Battle of Arras in 1917 has been partially destroyed by a car accidentally smashing into it and needs rebuilding.

The Royal Marines Charity is backing a £6,000 fundraising campaign to restore the monument, with the Commonwealth War Graves Commission offering to carry out the work.

The memorial at Gavrelle was erected nearly 30 years ago when historians and veterans decided the actions in the village and sacrifices made here in April 1917 deserved belated recognition.

Over six days the **Royal Naval Division** – a mix of sailors serving in the trenches as soldiers and Royal Marines Light Infantry – suffered 3,794 dead, wounded and missing, including the bloodiest day in the Corps' history when 846 marines became casualties.

Funded by donations from Royal Naval and Royal Marines Associations across the land, the memorial recreates the ruins of a red-brick cottage typically found in the region 100 years ago, adorned with a three-ton anchor which was recovered from the seabed and donated by the Royal Navy, while plaques mark the names of the naval formations which once fought here.

Since the memorial was dedicated in May 1991, it has become a regular site of pilgrimage not just for families of those lost at Arras but serving personnel and reservists retracing the division's path in the Great War; each visiting group left cap tallies tied to the anchor as a mark of respect.

The monument was sited on the old German front line. Today it's just a few feet from the main dual carriageway between Arras and Douai... and earlier this year a French motorist left the road and hurtled into the memorial; legal efforts are being made to recoup some of the cost of rebuilding the monument, but it will probably need donations, time and labour to restore the memorial.

"I am a passionate follower of the Royal Naval Division and have visited there many times," said logistician Petty Officer John 'Kipper' MacRae of East Midlands reservists unit HMS Sherwood. "The memorial is in a shocking state and to see it like this is heartbreaking, Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Marines units in particular need to be made aware of the state of this memorial – and would possibly contribute towards rebuilding this unique and totally naval monument."

You can show your support at: www.justgiving.com/campaign/GavrelleMemorial

End of the Crane gang

NEARLY six decades after their ship bowed out of service, the men who kept the name of **HMS Crane** alive have decided to call it a day.

The association of former shipmates is disbanding due to aging members and declining numbers, passing into history by passing its collection of memorabilia to good causes.

Its archive – including impressive scale replicas of the Black Swan-class sloop at different points in her 19-year career – has found safe 'berths' with Marshland Maritime Museum, near Kings Lynn, and the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

A veteran of the Battle of the Atlantic, Sicily and Normandy landings in WW2, the ship earned the post-war nickname 'Wanchai Chicken' as she spent 12 years based in the Far East until she was paid off.

Aside from destroying two U-boats, Crane is also believed to

be the only ship to have brought down a jet fighter by non-radio-controlled gunfire when she was mistakenly attacked by Israeli Mystère aircraft during the Suez Campaign of 1956.

Bethnal Green adopted Crane in 1943. With the borough now part of Tower Hamlets, the association has maintained strong ties with the council, donating the ship's bell and crest and attending November ceremonies. It's donated a 37in model of the ship, made by Peter Parkington from Ipswich, who served aboard as an AB in 1957-59.

It will join existing artefacts as a focus for remembrance in the new Town Hall (former Whitechapel Hospital) when that is inaugurated in 2021.

Marshland Maritime Museum is a small privately-run affair in Clenchwarton near King's Lynn, Norfolk, home to more than 3,000 items and exhibits connected with the Royal Navy from the Victorian era to the present day.

Ready, iready

THE annual RNA national conference gives members the chance to shape the future of the association – and this year delegates' opinions were captured using the latest technology.

Conference is a combination of annual general meeting and social gathering, allowing shipmates to catch up with old friends as well as scrutinise and decide on strategic issues, writes Mike Gray.

At Wyboston Lakes Resort delegates made their feelings known instantly through an electronic voting system brought along by the RN's Personnel Liaison Team, who delivered a presentation on how sailors and marines feel about life in the Naval Service.

At such presentations, sailors and marines respond to questions using an electronic voting system, giving instant feedback on key issues.

Central Office posed their own questions on Conference and the wider aims of the association – and while initial results appeared to support current strategies, General Secretary Capt Bill Olyphant will be analysing the data in more detail.

Shipmates were privileged to be given an update on current RN and RM deployments by Naval Secretary Rear Admiral Mike Bath before they were formally welcomed to the area by Cllr Gordon Thorpe, Mayor of St Neots.

National President Vice Admiral John McAnally thanked 6 Area and St Neots branch for organising the conference – project manager S/M Geoff Apperley was later presented with a Certificate of Appreciation.

Admiral McAnally and National Chairman S/M Keith Ridley reflected on highlights of the past year, including the award-winning Project Semaphore, created to alleviate digital isolation amongst older members, and the start of



planting the Jutland Wood in Surrey, in memory of those who died in the Battle of Jutland in 1916.

Other high points included the hosting of the International Maritime Convention, during which a ceremony was held to mark the centenary of the end of World War 1, the success of the fleet of RNA minibuses, the Shipmates and Oppos scheme – an 'arm round the shoulder' for those leaving the Service – and the mentoring of trainee sailors, reinforcing the links between the association and serving RN personnel.

"The RNA has a great story to tell – we are a small charity with a big brand and an even bigger heart," said Admiral McAnally. "We look after our shipmates and oppos, our projects are relevant, and we lead the Naval veteran community in engagement with the serving Navy."

Prizes for recruiting were then presented, with awards going to 3 Area, Waterlooville, Horsham, Torrevieja and Japan branches, and the prize for most Gift Aid returns was shared by 8 and 9 Areas.

On the business side, delegates approved three linked National Council motions allowing a member who has been awarded a Certificate of Appreciation to be considered for service on the Standing Orders Committee, while the sole branch motion means the 2021 conference will be held at the Britannia Hotel in Nottingham.

S/M Gareth Booth, Branch Recruitment and Retention Adviser, advised shipmates of the support available to branches as they seek new members and encourage existing shipmates to keep renewing their subscriptions.

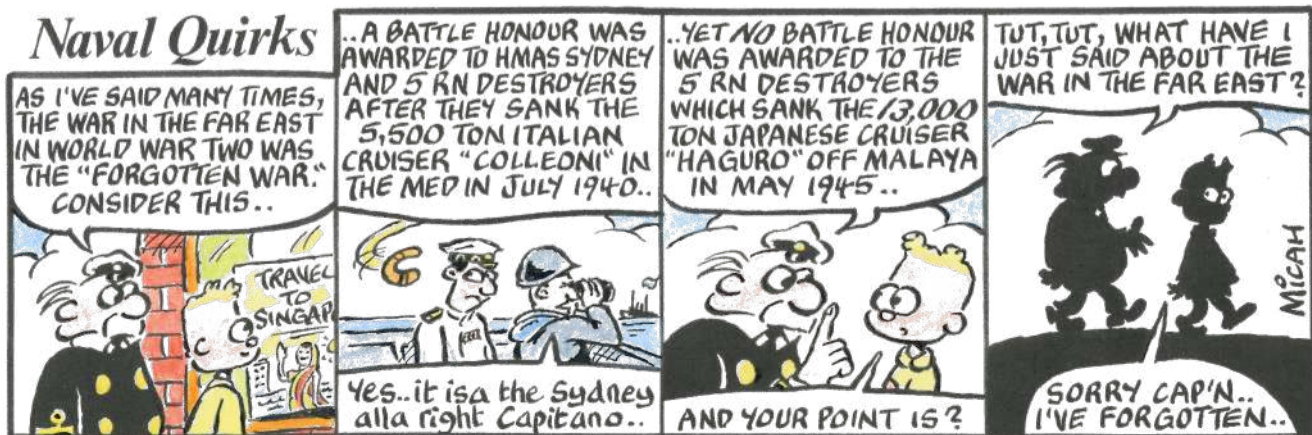
The final business of the

Conference was a report on the ongoing work of the Central Membership Study Group, set up as a result of a decision at last year's conference in Dublin, which is looking at the pros and cons of a centralised database of members.

Diners at the gala dinner were treated to an entertaining display of drill by a team of Sea and Royal Marines Cadets from Leighton Buzzard unit, put through their paces by National Standard Bearer S/M Dave Corrigan, who works with the unit.

The following day the Ven Martyn Gough, Chaplain of the Fleet, led a church service, speaking of the factors that unite sailors, a shared experience that sets them apart from their fellow citizens and reinforces the RNA watchword of 'Once Navy, Always Navy'.

Picture: Assistant General Secretary Nigel Huxtable



Remember Norway

WITH the 80th anniversary coming up next year, historian, teacher and researcher Tim Kundu wants to put the 'forgotten' Norwegian campaign back on the map.

Mr Kundu, who teaches across London and Essex and lectures in the campaign to students, believes the 1940 campaign, and the RN's role, deserves far greater recognition than it receives at present.

He wants to see the government hold a service of thanksgiving to mark the 80th anniversary and remember the 2,500 British sailors and marines, plus 1,869 soldiers and airmen killed during the two-month battle.

He's keen to interview the last veterans of Norway – the youngest are in their late 90s – to record their experiences for posterity, but ultimately see a documentary made on the campaign to bring it to a wider audience.

If you are able to put Tim in touch with Norway veterans or support his campaign for wider recognition of the battle in the UK, he can be contacted at timkundu@hotmail.com or 0775 7708 544.



Family ties are strong

A FATHER from Nottingham has explained how his experiences in the Royal Naval Reserve and Sea Cadets has helped create a strong bond with his son.

Petty Officer Andrew Maltby, aged 50, works for Nottingham City Transport and serves in HMS Sherwood, the East Midlands' only RNR unit, he also volunteers with the Sea Cadets in Long Eaton.

He has found that his naval connections have helped fuel his relationship with his son, Thomas Foster-Maltby aged 12, who is currently a Sea Cadet at TS Indomitable.

Speaking with deep pride Andrew said: "It does give us something else to bond over because we've got similar interests, he's always asking me questions about things and I'm always teaching him things."

"One day I walked into my bedroom at home and he'd got my photo albums out and happened to have the ones of my time as a Sea Cadet as well as the early days of my naval career and was going through them all."

"His grandfather who is sadly no longer with us was an ex-submariner as well, so he's heard daring tales from his time in the service and he started asking me questions about my experiences and I just happened to say would you like to go to the Sea Cadets and he's still there two years later."

"He's talking about joining the Fleet Air Arm; initially he was talking about aircrew however my dad persuaded him to become an engineer."

Andrew joined the Naval Reserve at the age of 16 with plans of going into a career in the Royal Navy full time but due to other demands on his time never quite made it to the service but has instead spent 34 years in the reserves.

He explained: "The adventure and the different way of life has really kept me interested."

"I've spent lots of my time away at sea. I love the Communications Branch and I've just stuck with it throughout my time and I think if you cut me in half it would say navy through the middle."

As well seeing personal benefits from the time Andrew has spent in the navy and the Sea Cadets, his wife has also been impressed with the achievements both he and his son have made.

Andrew concluded: "My wife is really proud of both of us, she is proud of our son for getting involved in the Sea Cadets because like most kids these days he likes his Xbox but the Sea Cadets gives him something else to thrive on. It has done his confidence a world of good and it's also helped him succeed at school."



Alessandro's amazing photographic feat

A PHOTOGRAPH looking down the ski ramp of the Royal Navy's future flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth earned a Sea Cadet a prize in the prestigious Peregrine Trophy.

Officer Cadet Alessandro Aquar, pictured above with Vice Admiral Ben Key, Chief of Joint Operations, is a member of the City of London Sea Cadet unit.

His photograph won the Sea Cadet Amateur Open Category, awarded to the single best photograph of a Sea Cadet theme that combines technical excellence, creativity and impact.

Alessandro received his award from Admiral Key at a ceremony at Admiralty House in London.

Peregrine Trophy winners, see pages 18-19.



Veteran helps tell Afghanistan story



● Ben Abbott and fellow Afghanistan veteran Mike Little

A FORMER Whitehaven Sea Cadet and veteran of the war in Afghanistan has been helping Cumbria's Museum of Military Life stage an exhibition recording the ordinary soldier's experience of Afghanistan.

Former Whitehaven cadet Ben Abbott was just 22 years old when he went to Afghanistan as Kingsman Abbott of the 1st Battalion the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, attached to an Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Search team.

He is one of a small group of 18 veterans, several of whom are from Cumbria, working with the Museum on a project, funded by the Armed Forces Covenant Fund, to produce a backdrop film of oral recordings for the exhibition, as well as a contemporary archive.

Their recollections have been filmed, recorded or written down and the result is an exhibition which is extremely moving, and occasionally humorous.

Jules Wooding, Learning and Access Officer at Cumbria's Museum of Military Life said that the British Army has had a long connection with Afghanistan, having fought in four conflicts over the past 180 years with many lives lost.

"Our exhibition gives a unique insight into the lives of those who were recently there. From ammunition to ablutions, solar showers to spiders, and camp cots to combat medics, it is important to understand how our armed forces lived and worked in a hostile climate, where



● The Mayor of Carlisle, Marilyn Bowman speaking with Jules Wooding and Ben Abbott at the exhibition

conditions were harsh and the terrain unforgiving.

"Although this particular exhibition is only temporary, we hope that the project will continue to develop. If you were in Afghanistan serving with either the Navy, Air Force or Army and resident in Cumbria, or if you served with the Duke of Lancaster's Regiment, we want to hear from you and your families."

To thank the team of veterans a 'preview' evening was recently held,

attended by Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant for Cumbria, Claire Hensman, Carlisle's Mayor, Marilyn Bowman and other invited guests.

The exhibition Blood, Sweat and Tears - Afghanistan, The Untold Story is open daily in Alma Block in Carlisle Castle between 10am and 6pm and runs until September 4 2019.

For more information about the exhibition or to contact Jules Wooding, please email enquiries@cmoml.org

Cadets re-enact D-Day actions

WITH Warsash's Sea Cadets Royal Naval Parade (RNP) inspection being the same month as the D-Day 75 commemorations; it seemed fitting that the theme should also reflect on the momentous events planned for June 5 1944 (more on that later).

The cadet's teamed up with D-Day historian Stephen Fisher (who is currently working on the restoration of LCT1707 for the National Museum of the Royal Navy) and travelled to Normandy prior to the RNP and researched the story and walk routes.

They toured the beaches and the significant sites, including Pegasus Bridge, where they met Madame Gondre, whose café is next to the bridge; she has the distinction of being one of the first people liberated by the Allies on the eve of the main assault.

The RNP started traditionally enough with a parade, despite a significant proportion of the unit's parade square being cordoned off for the major redevelopment of the Warsash Maritime College site.

Parade over, the cadets dispersed to their syndicates, ready to tell the D-Day story and how it is relevant to the various courses and qualifications they have achieved in the last year.

The navigators briefed the VIPs and inspection team on the route to Normandy and the obstacles encountered, such as the German mine barrier and the range of their shore batteries using copies of declassified charts made for the operation.

They were able to explain how HMS Medusa (then HDML1387), was able to maintain her station as the "swept channel" marker through the minefield with an accuracy of a modern GPS thanks to her very top secret electronic navigation equipment made especially for the assault.

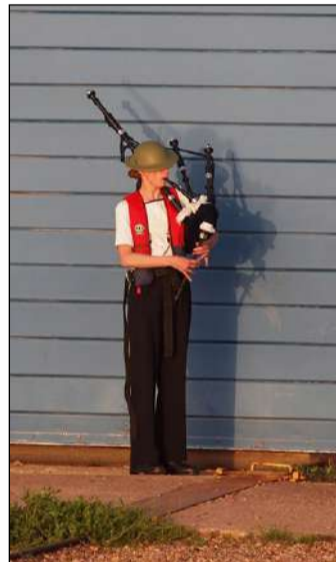
Again using copies of the original charts and data, the meteorology cadets briefed, how a British Met Office civilian James Stagg, persuaded the Supreme Allied Commander Eisenhower that the assessment of the American forecasters was flawed and that the operation must be postponed by 24hrs (to June 6).

Briefing this was a daunting prospect for the cadets, given that the Southern Area Officer is a RN specialist met forecaster and former CO of the Armed Forces joint operational weather centre (JOMOC).

The communicators re-sent and received the original coded signal "Ham and Jam" signifying that Pegasus Bridge had been captured.

They also briefed how the allies were able to intercept German signals thanks to the capture of German Enigma cypher machine and the work of the code-breakers at Bletchley Park.

Included in their display was a genuine



German Enigma machine, supplied courtesy of their Morse code instructor Alan Watson, the chairman of the Medusa Trust.

On the water the, "landing craft (Trinity's) hit the beach," discharging the troops ashore to the sound of bagpipes, played by the unit's very own cadet "pipe major," exactly as Lord Lovatt's did, as they fought their way up the beaches on their way to Pegasus Bridge, to relieve the glider troops who captured it earlier that night; but also, as they embarked into ships for Normandy from the very site now occupied by Warsash Sea Cadet unit.

Any "wounded" were treated at the field hospital set up on the beach by the cadet first aiders, demonstrating their newly-acquired life-saving skills.

For the finale, the Junior Sea Cadets had cultivated a "Dig for Victory" garden for the Home Front and then closed the display to words of Laurence Binyon's immortal poem "They shall not grow old" whilst laying wreaths at the tombstones of the fallen."

A number of observers admitted that they had to choke back the odd tear or two.



Commission scrolls for unit officers

OFFICERS of the Cheshire & Staffordshire District Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets, were presented with their Commission scrolls by guest of honour, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar.

The ceremony took place at Stoke-on-Trent Sea Cadets unit, TS Talent.

In addition to receiving his Commission, the CO of Stafford & Rugeley unit, Lieutenant (SCC) Lee Townsend RMR received the Cadet Forces Medal (CFM) from Admiral Soar.

The CFM is awarded in recognition of 12 years uniformed service in the Cadet Forces.

Also present at the ceremony was Area Officer, Commander Charles Bagot-Jewitt RN, who presented the District Trophy to Lt Cdr (SCC) John Matthews RNR, District Officer.

In the picture from left to right is 2nd row, Rev Keith Stewart, Lt David O'Donnell, Sub-Lt Bev Morton, Lt Bruce Luckman, Lt Deborah Smith, Lt Karen Black, Lt Townsend,

Front Row. Sub Lt David Eivers, Lieutenant Commander John Matthews, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, Commander Charles Bagot-Jewitt RN, Lt Cdr Graham Townsend.

Picture: Natalie Edwards

Six of the best boats

SIX new boats are being donated, which will be rotated around the country to deliver keelboat training amongst the 15,000 Sea Cadets across the UK.

Guests were invited to experience a taste of the programme which the Sea Cadets youth charity will be able to deliver thanks to the support of Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou.

The training made possible through the RS21 keelboats will focus on delivery of RYA qualifications and league competitions across at least eight boat stations nationally.

These boats are expected to provide a minimum of 12 years of service for the benefit of over 1,000 cadets per year.

Sea Cadets charity Chief Executive, Martin Coles, said: "We are extremely grateful to Sir Stelios for the fantastic opportunity these keelboats will provide our cadets.

"Many of our young people come from inner city communities or disadvantaged areas and would never have imagined being able to access sail training in such fantastic vessels, maybe even inspiring a future career in the maritime sector.

"So for many of our cadets, these keelboats mark the beginning of a life that would not otherwise have been available to them."



Affiliation acknowledged

THE captain of HMS St Albans visited a school in the East Midlands to acknowledge a new affiliation.

Bedford Modern Combined Cadet Force has formed a new affiliation with the Portsmouth-based Type 23 frigate.

Commander John Cromie, the CO of the frigate, visited the school, along with the deputy logistics officer Lt David Jones.

Cdr Cromie was given a tour of the school facilities by the CCF's Senior Cadets and presented the school with a ship's plaque.

Contingent Commander Alex Smith said: "The affiliation has come as great news and we are very much looking forward to spending time with the ship's company.

"HMS St Albans provides an important focal point for the CCF RN Section, and our cadets are already taking pride in following her exploits."

Penarth pay tribute to men lost in HMS Glamorgan

THOSE lost aboard HMS Glamorgan during the Falklands conflict were remembered by Penarth Sea Cadet Unit.

The unit also bears the same name as the destroyer, which was struck by an Exocet missile on June 12 1982.

Penarth Sea Cadet Corps held their annual Remembrance Parade in the presence of the Lord Lieutenant for South Glamorgan, Mrs Morfudd Meredith, and the SCC District Officer, Lieutenant-Commander Peter Killick, along with other distinguished guests, parents and friends.

The parade was led by Chief Petty Officer John Callaghan, who was a member of HMS Glamorgan's crew in 1982 and is now a SCC staff member at TS Glamorgan.

After the formal Colours routine, wreaths were laid by the Lord Lieutenant, the unit's Officer-in-Charge, Midshipman Joshua Biundo, and the unit's youngest member, Junior Cadet Cerys Stonehouse.

Prayers for the men who were so tragically killed on that fateful day were led by the unit's Administration Officer, Miss Maria Biundo.

The roll of honour reads:

POAEM(L) Michael Adock; CK Brian Easton; AEM(M)1 Mark Henderson; AEM(R)1 Brian Hinge; (LA) CAEMN David Lee; CK Brian Malcolm; AEA(M)2 Kelvin McCallum; AB(R) David McCann; MEM(M)2 Terry Perkins; LCK Mark Sambles; LCK Tony Silience; STD John Stroud; LT David Tinker; POACMN Colin Vickers.



New family flats open

EXTRA family accommodation is now available in Portsmouth Naval Base.

Three self-contained family flats were opened in Dreadnought block – at the Queen Street entrance to HMS Nelson – at the beginning of 2017 to allow single, divorced, or separated Naval personnel to spend time with their children.

So popular have they proved – all three flats are often booked – that the decision was taken to turn more office space in the block into flats.

The result is two new apartments, one named after WW1 VC winner Arthur Harrison, killed at Zeebrugge in 1918, the other after CPO Kate Nesbitt, the first woman in the Naval Service to be awarded the Military Cross after saving the life of L/Cpl Jonathan List under enemy fire in Afghanistan ten years ago.

“The flats have been a godsend to me and my daughter, and we cannot praise the flat, the people that run them and the facilities within the flats enough,” one regular flat user told Admiral Sir Philip Jones, who formally opened the new accommodation on his final day in post as First Sea Lord.

“Having the option of HMS Nelson naval accommodation allows us more time together and a solid base to then enjoy things to do around Portsmouth.”

“The facilities are superb, with a large range of toys, books, DVDs, the option to use the Wii, along with board games that we often use if the weather is unfavourable.”

The flats can be booked via NAVYNBCP-NAVYMEWS@mod.gov.uk or call 02392 7222090 / 9380 22090.

Unify? Go for it

THE first eight stewards and chefs have successfully completed their conversion to caterers as Project Unify gets going.

Unify is the name for the initiative to merge the two arms of the RN's catering services – chefs and stewards; the former are being taught ‘front of house’ skills, the latter must learn how to cater for hundreds of sailors and marines, from cheesy hammy eggy up to fine dining.

Chefs and stewards have previously merged into catering services specialists at the senior rate level, but this is now shifting to all junior rates – a change which posed the team at HMS Raleigh “a sizeable challenge”, said Lieutenant Commander Gary Whittles, in charge of the Catering Services Squadron.

“The training delivery team comprised staff from the Defence Maritime Logistics School, Fleet Logistics Organisation, waterfront staff and, most importantly, chefs and stewards currently with frontline units to ensure that it captured the views of those tasked with delivering at sea.

“I am absolutely delighted and impressed with the quality of AB(CS) delivered to the Fleet.”

That's the view from the top. What about those on the first course?

Steward Simon Taylor originally completed his steward training in 2008 and re-joined the RN in 2015.

“It's a well-structured course and the instructors treat you like adults, even though you are still in the training environment,” he said. “I would tell anyone who is



● AB(CS)s Bithiah Dopwell (left) and Simon Taylor prepare the ballotine of chicken

MEANWHILE, 32 men and women from across the logistics world have been honoured at the school's final annual awards held at Raleigh.

Among those recognised were Wtr Sophie Colebourn, who took the Terry Bloomer trophy for the student who displays the best qualities of personal endeavour, diligence and tenacity. Petty Officer (Supply Chain) Chinyama Kankinza received the Commandant

DMLS prize.

During a five-week course to prepare him for his current rank, the 40-year-old was tasked to lead his fellow course members in a project to deliver a new management guide for Navy Command Headquarters – a guide which received considerable praise from senior officers.

Wtr Mark Cook received the RM Writers Association Trophy for his efforts during training.

considering Project Unify to just go for it.”

Charles Wittington, a steward for five years, was the first submariner to come forward for cross-training. “I volunteered

for Project Unify as I wanted a greater challenge after being a steward for so long and see it as an opportunity to get extra qualifications and to better myself.”

Steward Shemley McCoy, who joined the Royal Navy in November 2017 and served in HMS Queen Elizabeth, added: “The best part of the course is the Realistic Training Environment as it reflects life onboard a ship.”

Although designed as a Phase 2 course, the students were not required to live onboard and were not subject to the same leave restrictions.

Chefs and stewards were introduced to Project Unify through a series of roadshows.

The eight pioneers arrived at Raleigh in mid-January... and 21 weeks later passed out as Able Seamen (Catering Services).

The training included the tri-service course Defence Chef Basic (Alpha), which delivers the building blocks of the culinary arts, and Defence Chef Basic (Bravo), a bespoke maritime element which covers the unique nature of serving at sea in a time-critical working environment.

The final assessment was a four-course meal attended by Captain Fi Shepherd, Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (Logistics Operations and Plans) and Commander Suzi Nielsen, Commandant of the DMLS, students, family and friends.

“I was incredibly impressed by the exemplary standards which the pioneer course has attained and wish them well as they return to sea to showcase their new skills,” said Capt Shepherd.

“This moment marks an exciting step forward for the catering services community – an opportunity for chefs and stewards to cross-train as catering services specialists, learning new valuable professional and life skills.”

While the new AB(CS) return to the Fleet to complete their task books and ultimately earn the industry-recognised Production Chef Modern Apprenticeship, the second and third Project Unify courses are already under way with more planned before the year's end.

Any chef of steward interested in making the transition should speak to their Divisional Officers and career managers.

Comms Shack

IT HAS been a busy few months for us all and I hope everyone is following our WE Blog, writes *WO1 Daniel Castle* (daniel.castle304@mod.gov.uk).

We have seen the introduction of IER training back on our qualifying courses (QC), also the return of RCP.

We've signed up over 45 people to the BCS standard – available to all – and our LET QCs now have an apprenticeship attached. All this is down to branch members and their continued dedication to get us back on track.

2SL has allocated funding to us to continue with the full redesign of our ET, LET and POET QCs by April 2020.

We have also released an RNTM which covers all LETs impacted by the Faraday QCs – are you a hybrid LET(WE) WECIS? If so, take a read.

I've visited a number of courses passing out from WETG, plus Dauntless and Northumberland's teams. It was good to see the dedication of the CIS personnel aboard, striving to deliver OC to their respective commands.

We have also seen our first CPOET(CIS) join PORFLOT, which has resulted in greater support for our ships in Portsmouth; DEVFLOT's CPOET(CIS) joins in January – again moving in the right direction.

I end this article with a promise and a challenge. The promise: we have a full understanding of the issues that are impacting our people. Under projects such as Mountbatten we are getting there so standby we are about to increase baud speed!

And the challenge: When I visited Northumberland I saw a W1 group working extremely hard... but in the same way we always have. So, with the hybrid ET(WE) CIS you have, look at your group and find ways to maximise your teams. If that means moving away from standard MCO, internal and external comms manning then try new ways of working and let us know your successes and failures.

ASK YOURSELF:

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

If the answer to any is yes then...

APPLY TO BECOME A CAREERS ADVISER.

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

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

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

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

For more information contact:

POSTN- 01929 403172

Mil- 94374 3172

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



Public support is plain to see

ENJOYING a breather in the shade of a searing summer's day are sailors from Portsmouth Naval Base – including crew of HMS Diamond – attending this year's National Armed Forces Day event in Salisbury.

Long linked with the Army thanks to the vast training area of Salisbury Plain, the historic city was chosen to host the main celebration of service personnel and veterans in 2019 thanks to inhabitants' ongoing support for the military, especially in the wake of last year's Novichok chemical weapon attacks.

Being landlocked meant the Army and RAF had slightly more to offer when it came to displays (Red Arrows, Paras...), but there was the precision of the RM Band leading a military parade through the heart of Salisbury, before heading to Hudson's Field for the main public showpiece.

An estimated 40,000 people visited the arena where static and moving displays were laid on and, most importantly, there was a chance for people to chat with – and show their appreciation for – the men and women of the three Services.

Those who stayed to the end saw the military bands replaced (though not upstaged) by the Kaiser Chiefs.

The RN's principal – though



not sole – input into proceedings was at Salisbury, both Portsmouth and Plymouth staged naval-themed affairs, out of an estimated 300 Armed Forces Day events, many attended by serving personnel... at a time when the Forces are committed to 35 operations in 30 countries.

All RN, RM and RFA personnel who made an effort to mark the day received a BZ from new First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin.

“These events are important in reminding the public of the vast range of effects delivered by their Armed Forces, and we can see

in the terrific turn-out for all the events how much they enjoy the opportunity to meet, understand and thank us for the contribution that we deliver at home and around the globe 24/7, 365 days a year.

“Following so closely on from the tremendous events around D-Day 75th and Continuous At-Sea Deterrent 50th anniversaries, this has been a remarkable period of successful engagement for the Naval Service and my thanks again to all of you who have dedicated time, effort and enthusiasm to making it so.”

Picture: CPO(Phot) Owen Cooban, FRPU East

Where to Look

Galaxy

02/19 First Sea Lord Supersession

DINs

Personnel

2019DIN01-093 PAX Personal Accident and PAX Life Insurance – Data Protection Act 2018(DPA 18) – Privacy Policy Notice and Individual Consent

2019DIN01-092 Utilisation of Defence Travel

2019DIN01-091 Information and Digital Excellence Awards – 2019

2019DIN01-090 The Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport in the UK – Mentoring for Military and MOD Civilian Personnel

2019DIN01-089 Commission Extension to Retirement Age 60 (CE60) for regular and Reserve Naval Service Officers for 2019

2019DIN01-088 Fiji Support Network 2019 Roadshows

2019DIN01-082 Changes to Part 5 of the Armed Forces Act 2006: investigation and referral of changes

Security and Intelligence

2019DIN02-008 JSP 541 – MOD Information Security & Computer Network Defence (Organisation & Reporting Procedures)

Defence Policy and Operations

2019DIN03-018 UK-Israel and Occupied Palestinian Territories (OPTs) Travel

Defence Equipment and the Defence Estate

2019DIN04-079 BATCIS Declaration of Obsolescence: Lightweight Tablet Data Terminal and Lightweight Manportable Data Terminal

2019DIN04-075 Obsolete Notification – Talon is a lightweight, unmanned, tracked military robot.

2019DIN04-074 Out of Service Notification – ABACOT purpose-built remotely controlled platform

2019DIN04-073 Obsolete Notification – PANAMA Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV)

2019DIN04-072 Draw down & disposal of SARBE 7, Fast Find Max G, Fast Find 220 & G2R Personnel Locating Beacons (PLB's)

2019DIN04-071 Obsolete Notification – Buffalo Mine-Protected Clearance Vehicle (MPCV)

Defence Management, Organisation and Business Practice

2019DIN05-015 Contact with Parliamentarians

2019DIN05-012 Establishment of the Maritime Deployed Hospital Group (formerly Maritime Deployed Hospital Care)

Safety, Health, Environment, Fire

2019DIN06-018 DSA 02: Defence Land Safety Regulator Policy and Regulations for Health, Safety and Environmental Protection

Training and Education

2019DIN07-075 UK Special Forces Selection Application Instructions: 22 SAS, SBS, Special Reconnaissance Regiment, 18 Signal Regiment, and Medical Support Group

2019DIN07-074 AT: Post-monsoon mountaineering expeditions to Nepal (2020)

2019DIN07-073 Military Training Element (MTE) HMNB Clyde Joining Instructions

Finance, Accounts and Budgeting

2019DIN08-006 Non-Entitled Cash Casual Meal Charge for Financial Year 19/20

Sports and Social events

2019DIN10-027 Royal Navy Judo Championships 05 Sep 19

2019DIN10-026 Dedicated Accommodation for Naval Service Sport

RNTMs

Personnel

01-053/19 Naval Service Mentoring Network

01-052/19 Change to the Pre-Selection and Pre-Promotion requirements for POET(WESM) and associated note

01-050/19 Royal Navy Personal Mobile Phone Application

01-049/19 Naval Servicewomen's Network Conference Mar 4 20

01-047/19 BRd 3(1) Naval Personnel Management – Publication of June 2019 Edition

01-045/19 EGS Branch and Career Management Online Breakfast Clubs

01-043/19 Advanced Coach Supervision Network

01-042/19 Introduction of the Warfare Senior Upper Yardman (Warrant Officer) scheme: requirement, criteria and commission options

Policy and Operations

03-024/19 Assessment of NATO Experimental Tactics

03-023/19 Rollout of new format explosives log in RN surface ships and RFA

03-022/19 Naval Gunfire Support Training Team (NGS TT) assistance to NGS Gunex live firing on land ranges world-wide

03-021/19 Transfer of a platform's Unit Maintenance Management System (UMMS) afloat database to the Ships in Refit Server (SiRS) facility prior to extended maintenance periods

03-020/19 Transfer of name of NP1600 to Reserve Engineering Branch

03-019/19 Promulgation of RNCpD3 (ACP 176 RN SUPP-3) (Royal Navy Local Area Communications Organisation)

Equipment, support and estate

04-028/19 DE&S Land (STSP lethality) supplied Small Arms support solution in RN Surface Ships and RFAs

04-027/19 Global Maritime Support Framework

04-026/19 Op Kindle – The rollout of electronic Kit Records within the Naval Service

04-025/19 Guidance for the local management of Chef gaps in the Naval Service

Cricket star, Merlin star, Rising Star

AN INFLUENTIAL figure on the cricket pitch, golf course and in helicopter hangars, Lieutenant Commander Hazelle Garton has been named one of the Forces' Rising Stars of 2019.

The air engineer officer was singled out by judges of the We Are The City awards, which champions the UK's leading female figures in all walks of life.

Each year it picks 100 role models from across industry and professions – public sector, media, digital, banking and so on – out of over 1,000 nominees.

Lt Cdr Garton (pictured holding her award with her boss, Commander Polly Hatchard), who's been in the Royal Navy since 2008, was named in that top 100 – and in the top five in the defence world.

She is one of the UK's greatest female cricketers – she only retired from the county level last year, standing down as one of the top ten all-time wicket takers in the women's county championship; she continues to captain the Royal Navy and UK Armed Forces ladies' teams.

The latter role took her to captaining a tour of Kenya where the naval officer also helped provide coaching for around 200 local children living in slums and worked with community group Opening Boundaries to raise awareness of domestic violence (45 per cent of women in Kenya have experienced it).

On top of all this, Hazelle also plays golf off a ten handicap for the RN and her local side.

And then there's the demanding day job working in the Merlin Delivery Team at DE&S Yeovil, ensuring that the state-of-the-art helicopters leave the facility for front-line Fleet Air Arm squadrons to the highest possible standard.



"I was shocked and humbled to have been recognised simply for doing the job that I love and having the privilege to captain UK Armed Forces and Royal Navy women's cricket on tours that have been used as a vehicle to make a difference to young people's lives," said Hazelle.

Commander Hatchard put her forward for the award – and is delighted with the outcome.

"I am so proud of Hazelle's

achievements," she said. "She is a truly remarkable and yet very humble individual, who has already achieved so much during her time in the RN and I know she is capable of so much more."

"As a busy air engineer officer, she applies limitless flair, drive and total focus on delivering amazing quality and as a sportswoman, she's taken Royal Navy women's cricket and golf to extraordinary levels."

Striding Forward in Brum



JUNIOR rating Jordan Molloy momentarily leans out of line in the Guard of Honour formed by Birmingham-based reservists as HMS Forward hosts 20th birthday Ceremonial Divisions on a scorching summer Saturday.

Reserve and regular personnel, the Royal Marines Band plus more than 100 Sea and Royal Marines Cadets drawn from across the West Midlands and environs paraded for John Crabtree, Lord Lieutenant of the county, as well as the Lord Mayor of Birmingham Mohammed Azim and the Mayors of Solihull (Stuart Davis) and Wolverhampton (Claire Darke), and the RN's Regional Commander Brig Jock Fraser, joining friends and families at the unit's Tilton Road home just east of the city centre.

Despite being 75 miles from the sea, Forward has more than 150 Maritime Reservists – both RN and RM – on its books, with the goal of training them to support and serve side-by-side with their regular counterparts on ships or land operations, and also to offer medical training and experience.

"HMS Forward sits at the heart of the naval family in the West Midlands and it was fantastic to see so many Sea Cadets participating in the parade. The Royal Navy continues to enjoy outstanding support from the people of the West Midlands and it was a real pleasure to meet so many guests representing the public that we serve," said Brig Fraser.

The RN's bonds with the region will be cemented next month when the Freedom of the City of Wolverhampton is bestowed on Forward and, much further down the line, the fourth Type 26 frigate will be named HMS Birmingham.



• It's a 1SL-fie... First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin (bottom left) poses with a focus group at Culdrose

Admirals on tour access all areas

THE Senior Leadership of the Royal Navy spent a week touring Naval bases, air stations, Royal Marine barracks and headquarters around the country together, speaking to over 3,000 sailors, marines and civil servants about their vision for the future of the Service.

Admiral Tony Radakin, Vice Admiral Nick Hine and Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd have all recently assumed their new roles as First Sea Lord, Second Sea Lord and Fleet Commander respectively, and will all be in post at the top of the Service for the next three years.

Their 1,600-mile round trip spanned most of the country – from London to West Cornwall and from Portsmouth to Scotland.

Met by packed auditoriums everywhere they went, the whistle-stop tour was a chance for the three Admirals to explain their collective view of the Naval Service and the exciting transformation journey the Royal Navy has embarked upon to enhance the Fleet's operational effectiveness and improve conditions for those who serve and their families.

Meanwhile, focus groups at each location gave them a chance to discuss in greater detail some of the key day-to-day issues that need addressing.

Admiral Radakin said: "It was really important to me

that I get out early in my tenure to describe in detail my vision of an even better Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary, and to get feedback on those ideas directly from those who will be at the forefront of this fantastic journey."

The First Sea Lord continued: "And I'm really glad I have. Our visits have reaffirmed for me just how good all of our people are at what they do, whether delivering operations or in a myriad of vital support roles."

"It's humbling to see how invested they all are in our Service, and it's clear from speaking to them that they're up for the challenges ahead."

"With their energy and talent to draw upon I'm even more certain we will succeed in making the Service even better and ready to fulfil its role, meeting the Defence need to respond to the changing security context."

Feedback from sailors and marines attending the events was mostly positive, welcoming the visit by all three of the Navy's top leaders at the same time and the opportunity to speak to them in person; many were particularly interested to see how the Navy's transformation programme would affect them personally and came away excited about the plans for the future of the Service.



Royal birthday treat

PRINCESS Anne and First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin were the guests of honour at HMS Excellent's Warrant Officers, Senior Rates and Senior Non-commissioned Officers' mess to mark its tenth anniversary.

More than 100 mess members and guests enjoyed a Royal Garden party in glorious summer sunshine.

Petty Officer Conor Grieve, the youngest member of the mess, said he was nervous about meeting Princess Anne but she proved to be "brilliant" and the

experience will live long in his memory.

A plaque to mark the occasion was unveiled before the royal guest left.

Proceedings concluded with a performance of the hornpipe from the current PTI course and a *Beat Retreat* courtesy of the Band of the Royal Marines.

"The mess and the mess members delivered a fantastic event to mark this occasion," said WO1 'Bouncy' Castle who had a key role in organising proceedings.

Deaths

Morris Smith, L/Tel. HMS Cheviot 1945. Died December 2018.
Derek Sadler, EA. HMS Cheviot. Died January 2019.
Surg Vice Adm Alasdair J Walker QHS CB CBE, MDG(N), CNMO, Surg Gen British Armed Forces. RNH Derriford, Plymouth, Haslar. HMS Illustrious, Plymouth, Neptune, Centurion. Died June 1, aged 62.
Rear Adm Timothy M Bevan CB, ACDS(I), ACDS (Pol). BRNC Dartmouth, RNC Greenwich, DN Plans. HMS Ariadne, Excellent, Minerva, Carysfort, Decoy, Naiad. Died June 6.
Cdre David Pentreath CBE DSO. HMS Drake, Daring, Tamar, Osprey, Dryad, Plymouth, Neptune. RNSC Greenwich, DNR, Nav Sec, NDC. Died June 26, aged 86.
Cdre Oliver P Sutton CBE. HMS Albion, Lochinvar, President, Scylla, Drake, Weapons Dept (N). Died June 12, aged 93.
Capt RM David B Ellis. HQ 3 Cdo Bde RM, 42 Cdo, 43 Cdo. Died June 22, aged 81.
Lt John B English, Eng Sub. HMS Caledonia, Victorious. Died June 3, aged 84.
Cdr RNR Michael W E Parker RD. HMS Northwood, Eastlant HMS Northwood. Died May 30, aged 97.
Lt Cdr Peter Redpath MBE. HMS Raleigh, Fulmar, Ark Royal, Heron.

Aircraft Dept Naval, A and AE Boscombe Down. Died May 22, aged 90.
Lt A M J (Mike) Shearing. 891, 849A, 849B, 849HQ, 893, 89, 899 NAS. NASU Changi. Died June 1.
Arthur James Simmons. Joined the RN in 1942. Served as a Coder on Flower-class Corvette HMS Rhododendron 1944-45. (Arctic Convoys and D-Day landings) In autumn of 1945 drafted to HMS Holm Sound (Fleet Air Arm repair ship) and sailed to Australia. Returned to UK in April 1946 and civilian life. Received the Arctic Star (2013) Ushakov Medal (2014) and Legion d' honneur (2015). Died April 9, aged 95.
Arthur Marsh, AB Asdics SM. Served from March 1942 to July 1946 in HMS Raleigh, Osprey, Inglefield and CFB Malstic Oldest member of Bude Branch. Died June 23, aged 95.
Christopher Horn, CPO. Served for 27 years in 1970s and 80s in HMS Eskimo, submarines and a diver. Chris died on June 14 in Glasgow. At his favourite restaurant in Helensburgh they set up a small shrine to Chris and raised £425 for RNRMW.
Ron Brown AB. 1948 HMS

Cheviot. Died October 23, 2018
Harry Houghton, AB. 1958 HMS Cheviot. Died April.
Samuel James McCombe, CPO. Served in the Royal Navy for 22 years. Died April 29, aged 91.
John 'Gordon' Harker, FCPO. Joined 1944 and served in RNAC Kete, HMS Aurora, Liverpool, Dryad, Victorious, Bermuda, Hermes, Tiger, HQ BAOR Rheindahlen. Retired 1978. Died March 24, aged 91.
Terence Mendonca 'Gandhi'. Served during 1970s to early 80s, including HMS Newcastle from 1976 to 1982. Died July 7, aged 62.
Denis James Cleary 'Jim', AB Gunner. Served from 1947 to 1954 in Med on HMS Childers, in Sasebo, Japan on HMS Ladybird, saw action in Korea aboard HMS Mounts Bay. Member of Ipswich RNA and BKVA. Died June 2, aged 89.

Submariners' Association
Colin Hutchinson CCMEA. Served Feb 1975 - Jun 1996 in HM Submarines Sovereign Spartan Trafalgar Revenge Talent. Barrow In Furness Branch. Died June 2, aged 62.
Geoffrey Arnold CPO Mech. Served 1953 - 1963 in HM Submarines Artemis Tireless.

Australia Branch. Died June 3, aged 86.
Adrian Harrison OEM1. Served 1971 - 1979 in HM Submarines Grampus (71-72) Churchill (74-76) (78) Courageous (78). Gosport Branch. Died June 15, aged 72.
Peter Tilley CPO WEA. Served 1973 - 1995 in HM Submarines Narwhal Dreadnought Turbulent. Portsmouth Branch. Died June 18, aged 63.
Edward Gibson ME1. Served Feb 1964 - May 1969 in HM Submarines Orpheus(PT3)(64) (Ambush Oberon White S/Crew)(65) Andrew(66-67) Osiris(68). Sunderland Branch. Died June 19, aged 78.
John Taylor PO RE. Served Jan 1945 - Nov 1946 in HM Submarines Unsparring Tally-Ho.. Dolphin Branch. Died June 20, aged 93.
Barry Gibbs CCWEA. Served Dec 1966 - May 1994 in HM Submarines Artful Resolution Repulse Revenge. West Of Scotland Branch. Died June 21, aged 75.

Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNOC
Capt RNR R K Sard. Sussex Division RNR.
Lt RNR A C Jackson.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery boat in the June edition of Navy News (right) was the T-class submarine HMS Telemachus, which sank the Japanese submarine I-166 in the Strait of Malacca in July 1944. Trevor Skelton, from Scarborough, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.



This month's mystery ship (above) is a patrol boat, the third Royal Navy ship to bear the name. Built by Fairey Allday Marine in Cowes, Isle of Wight, she was launched in 1983 and was sold to Lebanon in 1992.
1) What was her name? and 2) what did the Lebanese Navy rename her?
Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers

will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Entries must be received by September 14. 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 October edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 294

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

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Reunions

HMS Ark Royal Association. Our reunion dinner takes place at the Union Jack Club in London on September 7. For information email enquiries@hmsarkroyalassociation.org or visit hmsarkroyalassociation.org
83 Flight BRNC 77/78. Reunion at Victory Services Club, London, W1 on Friday September 6 2019. Email pete.yeats@btinternet.com
HMS Ulster. A reunion will be

held in Torquay from September 20 to 23. For details contact Norrie Millen at ulster@candoo.com
HMS Eagle: The Friends of HMS Eagle reunion weekend will be held at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Portsmouth, from September 27 to 29. Contact the main organiser, Danny du Feu. Email: ddf.photography@gmail.com or phone 07711 083465.
HMS Troubridge Final

Commission Association: Annual reunion takes place at the Adelphi Hotel in Liverpool from October 4 to 7. Contact Bryan Pace at Romft1@gmail.com or via hmstroubridge.com
Weapon Mechanics Association: The 2019 annual reunion takes place at the Bear Hotel in Havant, from October 11 to 13. For further details contact Peter Andrews at weaponmechs50@btinternet.com or phone 07411 807552

The Survey Ships Association: The 25th reunion takes place at the Mercure Chester North Woodhey House Hotel, from Friday October 25 to Monday, October 28. For information on membership and reunions send a SAE to: The Secretary, SSA, 16 Quay Ostend Cliff Park Great Yarmouth Norfolk NR31 6TP. Or phone 07974156996
HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans' Association. The 2019 reunion takes place at the Coniston Hotel in Sittingbourne, from October 4 to 7. For further details please contact enquiries@iowtours.com.
HMS Superb (Cruiser) Association. The annual reunion and AGM takes place at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent, on October 4 to 6. For details contact Robin Smith at 173 London Road, Rainham, Kent, phone 01634 362379 or email robinsmith173@yahoo.co.uk
HMS Undaunted, Eagle and Yarmouth Association. Reunion takes place at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, from October 18 to 21. Contact Alan 'Whiskey' Walker on 01268 548041 or email whiskey666@outlook.com.
HMS Lowestoft Association. Reunion takes place at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from October 4 to 7. For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or contact: ian@hmslowestoft.co.uk. Tel: 07778 546861
HMS Mohawk Association. Reunion takes place at the Kegworth Hotel, Packington Hill, Kegworth, from November 1 to 4. For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or email Bob Proud rob.proud@mypostoffice.co.uk
HMS Relentless Association: The 2019 reunion takes place over the weekend of November 22-25 at the Hotel Royale, Bournemouth. All ex-'Rusty R' members 1942-1968 welcome. Contact Association Secretary at Secretary@hmsrelentless.co.uk (Tel: 02392 599640), or to book direct with SFEVENTS email hmsrelentlessreunion@sarahfletcherevents.co.uk (Tel: 01452 813173)
HMS Broadsword Association: Biannual reunion and AGM takes place at the Best Western Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, on Saturday May 23, 2020. The reunion is open to anyone who has served on Broadsword. For details visit hmsbroadswordassociation.co.uk or contact Bill Skilliter wistheplumber@yahoo.co.uk

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Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Swap Draft columns in September's Noticeboard must be received by

AUGUST 15, 2019

Gunning for glory



● Above, the team from Greater Brighton Metropolitan College in action
Below, Cdre Graeme Little with members of the winning RAF Cosford team



ORGANISED by the Royal Navy, the Junior Leaders Field Gun competition took place at HMS Collingwood.

The competition is designed for competitors aged 16 to 24 and the crews are made up of young people who have either recently joined the armed forces, just begun apprenticeships with the University Technical Colleges, are attending local community colleges or are part of the Military Cadet Forces.

With no previous field gun experience, here teams compete to build and transport a field gun and limber up, back and home, along a specialised marked track measuring 85 metres. Stopping only to complete specific actions and all with the aim to run home penalty free and with the fastest time.

The teams train hard Monday through Thursday and compete in a three-heat competition starting Thursday afternoon and running to the close of play on Friday.

RAF Cosford's team won this year's contest in a time of 1.27.81, followed by HMS Sultan in 1.26.55.

Fareham College won Plate One while the Sea Cadets won Plate Two.

The Junior Leaders Challenge is the only competition open specifically for new recruits and youths, offering them a chance to work as a team and challenge themselves in a unique setting.

Teams participating this year were: HMS Sultan, HMS Neptune, RAF Cosford, RÈME, Itchen College, Fareham College, Chichester College, Greater Brighton Met, Royal Hospital School, Sea Cadets, Aston University Engineering Academy, Derby Manufacturing UTC, UTC Portsmouth, Greater Peterborough UTC, UTC Thames & Tamar (UTC Plymouth & Elutec), ALET Warriors (South Wiltshire UTC & Reading), and UTC Barbarians (Scarborough & South Devon UTCs).

Commodore Graeme Little, Chairman of the RNRMC Field Gun, said: "Junior Leaders is so much more than a competition. Whilst the competition is an inevitable focus, the event is a week-long experience for young people, immersed in a Naval Service environment, to develop a range of key leadership and teamwork skills.

"I never cease to be impressed by the achievements of the young people – the progress that they make through the week is always a huge sense of achievement to the individuals and all those involved in the process."



● Above, the Sea Cadet team competing at the Junior Leaders Field Gun contest;
Right, HMS Neptune's team in action
Pictures: Keith Woodland and Lt Cdr (SCC) Victoria Marson RNR



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Creator of a naval power

ADMIRAL Sergey Gorshkov was one of the towering naval figures of the 20th Century.

Placed by Khrushchev in command of the Soviet Navy to convert it into a reduced modern missile-based force, over the next 30 years he exploited favourable political circumstance under Brezhnev to establish the Soviet Navy as a global challenge to the West, *writes Prof Eric Grove.*

The United States Naval Institute have published a new biography – **Admiral Gorshkov: The Man Who Challenged the US Navy** (ISBN 9781682473306), authored by Norman Polmar, behind the excellent Naval Institute Guide to the Soviet Navy that went into five editions between 1977 and 1991; retired Rear Admiral Thomas A Brooks, a former Director of US Naval Intelligence; and George E Fedoroff, Senior Intelligence Officer for Russian matters within the American Office of Naval Intelligence since 197. Former US Secretary of the Navy John Lehman, who played a major role in countering Gorshkov's fleet, provides a foreword.

The book places Gorshkov (pictured in typical Soviet portrait pose, right) in his Russian context with the troubled, episodic nature of Russian naval history since Peter the Great. It then covers Gorshkov's early life. He was born in western Ukraine, son of a schoolteacher who took his family to Kolomna, southeast of Moscow, on his promotion to superintendent of schools there. The authors give a useful potted history of the troubled times in which the young Gorshkov grew up and make a convincing case that this encouraged him to enter the Navy rather than follow his father into teaching. He entered the Frunze Naval School from which he graduated in 1931. His first ship was a Black Sea Fleet destroyer followed by a minelayer in the Far East. He was then given command of a patrol ship of the soon-to-be-renamed Pacific Fleet in which he made his mark.

Gorshkov, unlike many more senior officers, escaped Stalin's purges. Interestingly he only joined the Communist Party in 1942 – a fact that may, paradoxically perhaps, have protected him. The late 1930s saw him enhance his reputation, command a destroyer and then a destroyer squadron, in the Pacific. His reputation saved him from Stalin's wrath over the loss of an incomplete destroyer under tow.

He was transferred to the Black Sea Fleet in command of another destroyer squadron and then attended the Voroshilov Naval Academy before his course was cut short because of the deteriorating international situation in April 1941. He returned to the Black Sea as a Captain First Rank in command of the Fleet's cruisers.

The war provided Gorshkov with both combat experience and a useful set of personal contacts. Initial actions saw him become the youngest admiral in Soviet history aged 31. He was then posted to the Sea of Azov in command of a flotilla of mobilised civilian vessels. He did his best with inadequate resources, forced to withdraw through the Kerch Strait and take part in the defence of Novorossiysk. This brought him together with General Grechko, later Minister of Defence and a useful Gorshkov ally. He also came into contact with a Colonel Brezhnev, destined for higher things...

As the tide of war turned Gorshkov played a major role in offensives from the Crimea to



THE GROVE REVIEW

the Danube. He returned to senior positions in the Black Sea, eventually succeeding to Fleet Commander.

Stalin died in 1953 which led directly to Gorshkov's eventual elevation to command of the Navy in 1955-56. Gorshkov was, however, biding his time. The fall of Khrushchev allowed him to make the case for a powerful global fleet, including 'large aircraft-carrying cruisers'. He also put his name to some significant writings that developed Soviet naval theory to a new, higher plane.

The story is well told by the authors although slightly better editing might have dealt with contradictions, including a confusing reference to the projected nuclear-powered Project 1143.7 carrier becoming the current Admiral Kuznetsov. It did not and was scrapped on the stocks, as stated later in the book.

In general, however, the book is well informed and enlightening. My only other criticism is that more might have been made of the anti-Gorshkov influence of Admiral Amelko who, at the Adderbury Talks I organised dismissed the 1988 book *The Navy as 'Gorshkovschina'*, not so authoritative as this book's authors seem to think.

Admiral Gorshkov: The Man Who Challenged the US Navy is listed at \$39.95 in the USA/£40.95 in the UK. It can be obtained much more cheaply in pounds on the internet.

As the authors point out, Gorshkov is the godfather of the modern Russian as well as the old Soviet navy. We therefore need to know as much as possible about him and this book is an excellent start.



• A Soviet Kotlin-class guided missile destroyer keeps a close watch on HMS Ark Royal and her Buccaneers during NATO's Exercise Northern Wedding in September 1970



Rowers rerun 1919 race

YOU'VE dropped your phone...

A mobile falls out of the pocket of one of 18 RN personnel propelling the Queen's rowbarge Gloriana along the Thames at this year's Henley Royal Regatta.

The rowers volunteered to fight for the nation's honour in a race last staged in home waters 100 years ago: the King's Cup.

The 1919 race involved six allied powers as a way to reunite the world. Australia won and took

the King's Cup back home. Since then it has been contested in their national rowing championships but has never left Australian shores.

The six original teams – US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, France and the UK – were joined by the German and Dutch rowing teams. It was also the first time mixed teams have taken part.

Head of the RN crew, Commander Perry Stowell said:

"It was a real honour to row the Queen's barge while representing the Royal Navy at this historic presentation of the King's Cup. The team represents all ranks and rates of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines who were delighted to take part in such an auspicious event."

Despite heavy competition, the US crew were the eventual winners, crossing the finish line by three-quarters of a length.

HMS Warrior re-imagined

A FOUR-year multi-million-pound revamp of veteran ironclad HMS Warrior will help ensure she remains a floating museum for at least another 30 years.

A £3.2m National Lottery handout helped with the massive restoration project on the Victorian warship, in particular replacing the bulwarks on her upper deck.

After three decades' exposure to the elements in Portsmouth, they were corroding, allowing water to seep into the ship and potentially damage her.

As well as restoring the bulwarks, the four-year programme has revamped the experience for visitors, opening up new areas aboard, and allowed historians to digitise the huge archive linked with Warrior so it is available online, such as details of her 'tour of Britain' in 1863 when she was visited by an astonishing 700,000 people in 12 weeks.

And a dozen areas of the ship including the captain's cabin, galley and cabins belonging to senior officers have been opened to the public for the first time.

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THE Royal Navy Ice Hockey Association has taken home the Inter Service Cup, breaking a six-year hold by the Army.

It has been 11 years since the navy lifted the trophy and it took an intense penalty shoot-out against the holders in the final for them to achieve the feat.

It was a successful trip to Sheffield for the Royal Navy in the annual UK Armed Forces Ice Hockey Tournament as they also retained the Tri-Service Cup – coming out on top against 14 teams from the Royal Marines, the Army and the RAF.

The week started with the Tri-Service Tournament. The RN Kings and RM Bootnecks competed in different group stages each with seven teams vying for a top-two finish and a place in the play-offs.

Day one saw the RN Kings win both their games against Army sides the Royal Signals A and the RLC Chiefs A. RM Bootnecks were held to draws in their opening fixtures against RAF Lossiemouth and the Army All Stars.

The second day of the competition saw the Royal Navy team maintain their 100 per cent win record, picking up wins against the RAF Bluewings and the Army Infantry. The Bootnecks followed suit getting their two first wins of the tournament against the RAF Vulcans and the RLC Chiefs B.

On the final day of the Tri-Service Tournament, the Kings beat REME A and REME B to finish top of their group table. Meanwhile, the Royal Marines won their last two games against the Royal Signals B and Army Sappers to finish second in their group – setting up a semi-final between the two Naval Service sides.

In a closely-fought game, the RN Kings won 2-0 to advance to the final where they would face other semi-final winners Army Sappers.

The Bootnecks went into the third place play-off game but lost 5-3 against REME A.

In the final, the Kings exerted their dominance, finishing 7-0 winners against the Sappers to retain the Tri-Service Cup.

Team captain Engineering Technician Gary Parker won Tournament Most Valued Player for the fourth time.

As the week progressed, it was time for the main event. The Army were looking to make it seven years

in a row for the Inter Service Cup while the Royal Navy Destroyers were looking to get their hands on the title for the first time in 11 years.

The side were confident going into their first game off the back of the Kings and Bootnecks' successes earlier in the week.

First up for the Destroyers were the RAF Aces – a team they had beat in their last two meetings. And the Royal Navy team romped past them 11-3, setting up a repeat of last year's final against the British Army Blades.

A large crowd gathered at iceSheffield to see the two sides battle it out in what would be a physical game.

After 10 minutes, the Destroyers broke the deadlock and took a 1-0 lead into the second quarter. But the Blades fought back and dominated, getting a goal to tie the game at half time.

After the restart, the Royal Navy side asserted their authority and team captain Parker scored to put them in front again.

But hopes for a first Inter Service win in 11 years were put on hold as the Army equalised with three minutes to go.

Overtime was a cagey affair with neither team wanting to make a mistake and with tiredness setting in, the five minutes finished without a deciding goal. The game would go to penalties.

The Destroyers stepped up but their first shot went wide. The Blades failed to capitalise on the miss and also went on to miss their first penalty.

Leading Seaman Jamie Fitzpatrick, Destroyers assistant captain and head coach, stepped up next and slotted the puck into the net to give his side a 1-0 lead.

The Army missed their second, giving Able Seaman William Stennett the chance to win it for the Royal Navy.

Showing no signs of nerves, he squeezed the puck under the netminder and into the goal to crown his side Inter Service Champions.

RN Destroyers manager and association general secretary CPO Paul Shannon said: "It's been a long time coming. We have worked tremendously hard as an association over the past four years to get to this position and the goal now is to come back next year and retain this title."





Cordial squash test in Malaysia



THE Royal Navy squash team faced tough competition during a recent tour to Malaysia.

The 12-strong squad of Royal Navy and Royal Marine personnel landed in Kuala Lumpur and had no time to waste before their first fixtures, battling jetlag, 30°C heat and no air conditioning on the court.

First up was Kelab Negara, a team based at a golf club in the suburbs. Leading Air Engineering Technician Conrad Young faced junior player KP, with the game resulting in long physical rallies and close game scores.

LAET Young managed to save crucial game balls on more than one occasion but lost 11-9 in the fifth and deciding game.

Colour Sergeant Dave Green had better luck,

emerging victorious after a five-set match.

The team then travelled to Pahang State Academy, in Kuantan, where they managed their first overall win of the tour on particularly humid courts. They won 7-5 in an area never visited before by Royal Navy squash players.

Highlights included a close tie between Leading Engineering Technician (Marine) Owen Goodridge and Viva – who won by a narrow margin.

Ladies captain Lieutenant Danielle Welch won the third game in her match after going down two-love, but she was unable to take the fourth losing 11-9.

Time after the games was spent playing friendly matches against various opposition team members, with speeches and then a shirt swap.

The squad returned to Kuala Lumpur for a highly-anticipated final set of fixtures against the Malaysian Navy.

As well as some excellent squash, the visit provided an opportunity for both sides to chat and share experiences.

Lieutenant Harriet Delbridge said: "All in all the tour was an excellent opportunity for those developing members of the squad to experience the high level of squash played in Malaysia, and for the top seeded players to play against some serious competitors."

The team are now looking forward to putting their skills to the test at the Festival of Squash, held at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth between December 4 and 6.

Aled Jones is on song

CORPORAL Aled Jones ended nearly 20 years of hurt for Royal Navy and Royal Marines cyclists by winning the Inter Services Criterium Championships in Redditch.

It was at the beginning of the millennium the last time an RNRMCA rider took individual glory at an inter service event, but Cpl Jones finally threw that miserable record in the bin with a majestic ride in front of thousands in the Worcestershire town.

RNRMCA went into the event with a nothing to lose attitude, backed with the desire to make the other two services suffer if they wanted to win. The Royal Navy and Royal Marines team were written off before the start, with both Army and RAF confident it would be settled between them.

In a thrilling atmosphere, Cpl Jones came to the fore on the 1.4km circuit, with its famous unicorn hill climb tackled more than 20 times.

The field was strung out with lungs bursting and legs burning as the race progressed.

With that, the cream rose to the top with Cpl Jones joined by two Army riders and another from the RAF.

After 45 minutes of hard racing, it came down to a final climb of unicorn hill.

Cpl Jones dug deep and with fists in the air he crossed the line in top spot.



Back in old territory

ROYAL Navy gliders have returned to their old Daedalus airfield home – but only temporarily for a motor gliding camp for student pilots.

For the first since the former naval air base was taken over by Fareham Borough Council four years ago, navy gliders were back at Solent Airport, which was first used by the RN in 1917.

Portsmouth Naval Gliding Club (PNGC) were at Daedalus for a Touring Motor Glider camp, during which they spent a week teaching novice glider pilots flying and navigation skills.

An enthusiastic group of nine Navy and Army student pilots learned advanced cross-country navigation on scenic flights around the Isle of Wight and the South Downs.

They also shared the skies with a Spitfire as it took off from Daedalus.

Commander David SCOPES (DCTT Sultan), said: "The course offered a great introduction to the sport of gliding and soaring with the added flexibility of being able to stay airborne longer simply by using the engine."

INTERESTED IN GLIDING?

Contact Dickie Croker on richard.croker109@mod.gov.uk.
Further information on rnsga.com

Fiji fever at RNAS Culdrose

A CORNISH rugby player and Royal Navy sailor has headed off to Fiji to prepare for the games of his life.

Sam Matavesi is representing Fiji in the Rugby World Cup – to be held this September in Japan.

The 27-year-old lives in Camborne and is well known in Cornwall as a player with the Cornish Pirates rugby team. For the last two months, Sam has been on loan to French side Stade Toulousain, which has just taken the National Premiership league title.

Alongside his rugby, Sam also works as an able rating in the supply chain department at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose, which he joined in July 2017.

His supervisor, Petty Officer Dean Jones, said: "Sam is a noisy, larger than life character. You can usually hear him before you see him. We wish him all the best from here at Culdrose. One of the games is on at 11am in the morning so we might have to down tools and cheer him on."

"I think it's fair to say that everyone in the supply chain department has now become Fiji's number one fans."

Sam's work involves issuing stores to all Culdrose squadrons. Anyone who has driven past the station towards the Lizard peninsula will have seen the large green building named W16 with the sign 'RNAS Culdrose Supply Chain Department'.

Sam has already gained experience playing for Fiji six times with games against Scotland, Uruguay and France. He has also represented the Royal Navy at Twickenham three times against the army, been on a USA tour for the navy and been selected for the combined services and Fleet Air Arm rugby teams.



Scores settled in gulf rugger

ALTHOUGH there's been a permanent Royal Navy minehunter presence in the Gulf for more than a decade, only now is there a rugby match to settle bragging rights.

Lieutenant Kyle De Banks, RN, HMS Blyth's Executive Officer, organised the inaugural clash between sailors from Faslane (his ship plus HMS Shoreham, both from 1st Mine Countermeasures Squadron) and sailors drawn from Portsmouth's 2nd MCM Squadron, currently crewing sister ships HMS Ledbury and Brocklesby.

Bahrain RFC was the setting for the North vs South contest, played in the early evening to escape the worst of the punishing Middle East summer heat.

The Southerners took a 12-0 lead into the break, courtesy of two tries from Diver Ryan McMenemy.

After half time, Lieutenant Tom Brown reduced the deficit after he and the rest of the pack bundled the ball over the line following a penalty.

Both teams continued to fight hard until the last minute, but without any further scoring and the game finished 12-5 to the Southern team.

Commander Simon Cox, in charge of all the RN's Gulf-based minehunters, presented the trophy to the winners, praising the passion of the game, saying it was one of the best amateur games of rugby he had watched.

"I have been a fan of rugby for 20 years and I saw the highest quality of rugby and competitiveness here tonight," he told players.

Thirteen is unlucky for some

THIRTEEN is unlucky for some, but definitely not for the Royal Navy's Track & Field team.

The squad came away from the Inter Services Championships with 13 medals; that's two golds, five silver and six bronze.

It was not a bad day's work at the competition, hosted the RAF at Nuneaton, with the two victories coming in the 400m race, while Sub Lieutenant Kiani Pay of HMS Drake collected FOUR medals on her own.

Leading Engineering Technician Rachel Barber from HMS Sultan won her race on her debut in the Inter Services before Naval Airman Dale Willis of HMS Queen Elizabeth crossed the line first in the male race.

They were joined on the podium by Chief Petty Officer Liz Edwards from HMS Drake who won silver in the hammer throw, while Surgeon Lieutenant Rachel Aldridge of Commando Logistic Regiment came in second in the women's 800m as well as picking up a bronze in the women's 1500m. Sub Lt Pay collected silver in the shot put and javelin and completed her impressive haul by grabbing bronze in the triple and long jump.

Meanwhile, Leading Air Engineering Technician Mark Duffett from 825 Naval Air Squadron took second in the men's 3k steeplechase, and also got a bronze in the 1500m.

Completing the bronze medal haul were Able Seaman Andrejs Safars (Royal Navy Reserve) in the men's 800m and Able Seaman Niamh Rowley of HMS St Albans in the pole vault.



It's all rosy for showjumpers



ROYAL Navy horseriders returned with an impressive haul of rosettes from the Army Showjumping Championships in Melton Mowbray.

The RN team were somewhat outnumbered by their RAF and Army rivals, but still made a great impact with their seven riders and eight horse-strong contingent.

Leading Chef Ashleigh Durston and her horse Ernie took sixth place in the 1.10m Olympic qualifiers, second place in the 70cm and a fourth spot in the 80cm class grassroot competition.

Meanwhile, Petty Officer Amy Taylor riding Nicky came aware with a fifth in the 1.10 Olympic qualifiers and a fourth in the 60cm, while Able Seaman Clara Birley, riding her own horse Caley, collected vital Olympic qualifying points.

In the highly-competitive junior classes, the RN contingent of Lieutenant Commander Nicole Sheriff-Vonk and Torka, Lieutenant Wendy Hems on Toska and Lieutenant Lauren Webber on Harry and Bert sealed three third places and two fourth spots across three classes in a field of more than 50 horses.

The feature Army Loriners Leg saw three new RN riders compete for the first time in this important Inter-Services Team competition.

Lt Cdr Sheriff-Vonk, Lts Hems and Webber were the new faces and came in third after a valiant display.

On the team showjumping day, Lt Webber and Midshipman Emily Hoare, on her own horse Eric, joined forces with an Army rider to make up a mixed team which unluckily finished just outside the placings.

The week concluded with the much-anticipated derby day classes, 21 mixed jumps made up of fixed fences, ditches, banks and standard coloured showjumps. Lt Hems riding Toska, and PO Taylor on Tonka, took to the arena for the junior class (having just been told that the horses had never jumped in a derby before) and acquitted themselves brilliantly with determined riding, resulting in PO Taylor placing fourth having completed the course in a quick time.

Mid Hoare and Eric bravely tackled the bigger senior derby course but it proved not to be their day.

"Collectively we were denied that elusive first-place finish, but that did not dampen spirits and they now have something to chase as the season progresses, said Lt Cdr Sheriff-Vonk.

Channel vision for Slade on sweet Sixteen

PETTY Officer Phil Slade has returned to Dartmouth after achieving his aim of sailing solo to the Channel Islands in an open top dinghy, named Sixteen, measuring just four metres in length.

The 34-year-old left Britannia Royal Naval College, where he works as a seamanship instructor, on Monday June 24, in the four-metre long dinghy, heading for Guernsey. His intention: to cross the Channel and raise money through sponsorship for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines (RNRMC) charity.

He arrived 19 hours later, tired and cold but happy to have got to Guernsey. Supporting him on route were two yachts from BRNC crewed by eight Officer Cadets on adventurous training.

PO Slade, who was born on the island, said: "The crossing over to Guernsey was a real mixed bag. There were times when the wind was in a perfect direction and Sixteen was sitting perfectly in the water and just sailing really well. Then there was the opposite end of the scale where the wind dropped off completely just as I was crossing the traffic separation scheme which meant I had to get dragged to safety by the support yacht. At one point I was surfing waves and crash gybing in the dark which put me in real danger of capsizing. It was the torrential rain though that sapped my body heat, but knowing the signs of hypothermia I was able to avoid becoming a casualty."

On arrival in Guernsey, PO Slade had to re-think his plans for moving on to Jersey the next day.

He explained: "Once we got into St Peter Port, we had a decision to make as there was a forecast for strong winds from Wednesday onwards which would have made continuing with the planned programme dangerous. The decision was made to cancel the visit to Jersey and return to Dartmouth the same day, leaving only four hours after arriving. I am quite pleased that all of the safety planning worked out and we were able to self sustain with no input from outside authorities despite the weather not playing."

Prior to joining the Royal Navy PO Slade was a keen sailor and his Naval career has allowed him to continue with his hobby. In 2016 he completed his first Bosun sailing challenge; a world-record breaking non-stop trip from Plymouth to Portsmouth via the French coast. PO Slade beat this record by sailing non-stop from Plymouth to Holyhead in 2017.

He said: "Sailing has been a passion of mine for many years; the ability to harness the power of nature, using nothing but the wind and the tide to power your boat is something special. To be able to use this amazing sport to raise money for charity is simply an honour."

So far this challenge has raised £1,618 for the RNRMC: the principal charity of the Royal Navy, which exists to support sailors, marines and their families, for life. Anyone wishing to show their support for PO Slade can do so online at: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/bosunchallenge

Having joined the Royal Navy in 2003, PO Slade has served at sea on board minehunters and frigates and ashore with 30 Commando Royal Marines in Plymouth.



Bunch of oars

BRITISH Olympic gold medallist Peter Reed shared rowing tips with sailors on a visit to Falmouth.

He couldn't resist the opportunity of taking a turn at an oar out on the water, after he had officially named two gigs used by personnel from RNAS Culdrose.

Earlier, he had spoken to sailors at the air station at Helston about motivation, and how pushing yourself out of your comfort zone can lead to extraordinary results.

Peter, who was part of the four-man teams to win gold at the Beijing 2008, London 2012 and Rio 2016 Olympic Games, is also a Lieutenant Commander in the Royal Navy.

He said: "A gig is a different boat than I am used to but the principle of getting some exercise in rowing with like-minded people, it's all the same. I still love the sport and to have the opportunity to come here and do this is very special."

During his talk at Culdrose, Peter spoke of the punishing training and intense pressure involved in

competing at the highest sporting level.

He said: "I remember at London 2012, we didn't go to the opening ceremony as we were racing the next day. Would going to the ceremony make the boat go faster? No, it wouldn't, so we watched the ceremony on the TV. My emotions were all over the place, so I watched about ten minutes of it and then turned it off and went to sleep."

"To be honest, London 2012 was the most extreme pressure I've ever felt, and I've never felt anything like it again. The worst of the pressure came from the expectations of the nation – we were British rowers and we were expected to win."

He said that adding to the pressure was the presence of their rivals – the Australian team which was making a determined effort to take gold.

Next morning, in the stretching tent limbering up for the race ahead, Peter added: "I remember looking outside at the pouring rain and we could see the

Australian team preparing, and I thought: 'they really don't like this weather'.

"Half an hour later, we're sitting at the start line and we're looking at the crowds thinking: 'there's no way Australia is going to beat us'.

"Then came this roar from the crowd. It came down the river and hit us like a wave and we knew, it was for us. Six minutes later, and we were spent – completely empty. We broke the world record that summer, at five minutes 37 seconds, and it still hasn't been beaten."

He said the hardest part of winning a gold medal was putting it away, clearing your mind of the victory to starting afresh for Rio Olympics. He added: "For me, it's easier to come back after you've been a loser. You need that hunger."

Peter went on to win gold again at Rio, his third gold medal. Now retired from the Olympics, he has retaken up his navy service career.

Not all Wight for island racers

PESKY wind.

A crew from HMS Collingwood attempted the Isle of Wight Round the Island, but were foiled by the wind, or lack of it anyway.

The crew set out on their yacht, Sea Nymph III, at 0600 on the 50-mile sail around the island race.

They made great early progress, storming towards the Needles by 1030, having made it through the Hurst Point tidal gate successfully. The crew were desperate to do so after last year's failure to make it through and were hopeful of making the finish.

The Sea Nymph, skippered by Chaplaincy Team Leader Mike Meachin, with Leading Seaman James Kirk as mate, and Petty Officer Andy Fannan, Bandsman Brian Tregaskes, ABs Chaz Evans and Louis Wedgewood, RFA Communicators Dale Jordan and Kieran Cussen as crew, were forced to take a wide course around the Needles.

The subsequent five hours were a fight against the tidal stream as they run aground to the east toward St

Catherine's Lighthouse, but with the wind remaining constant and with tidal help, they were back on track.

They reached St Catherine's Lighthouse stern by 1500 when the wind died, leaving them and all the fleet drifting helplessly, but at least moving in the right direction.

Spirits were still high but at 1745, with little chance of making the finishing line within the time limit, they, together with all the other Round the Islands racers, retired, turning on the engines and making for home.

Mike said: "Out of our group of 170 yachts we were 19th when we were forced to retire."

"A creditable performance as only 277 yachts of the entire race of 1210 finished due to lack of wind. The team worked really well together throughout the day however, special recognition must go to Kirky (L/S James Kirk) for his planning and admin and Bandsman Brian for some excellent cheese toasties."

"We got much further than last year – 2020 here we come."



GREENED UP

ROYAL Navy windsurfers went hunting for the best winds in Europe as they looked to gain the edge in future competitions.

The annual development camp took place at the iconic windsurfing spot of Vasiliki, a town on the southern tip of Greek island Lefkada in the Ionian Sea, where a local thermal wind known as 'Eric' provides superb conditions for windsurfing.

The large sheltered cove beach with sandy shoreline is popular with windsurfing tourists the world over, and the RN outfit couldn't resist the opportunity to test themselves against Eric.

The development camp saw 12 RN windsurfers head for the Ionian Sea island, with complete beginning, intermediates and those with advanced and instructional skills all in attendance.

This meant that outside of dedicated lessons, the beginners could gain more intensive tuition as the team came together to share their skills and expertise.

The beginners developed quickly throughout the week covering fast tacks, gybes, beach starts, heli-tacks and were using harnesses by the last day.

"I had such an amazing experience. For a complete beginner, to be around so many skilled windsurfers within the team that had an

unmistakable passion for the sport was great. It was much harder than I had anticipated, but I felt proud toward the end of the week when I could comfortably execute a beach start," said Writer Louise Dorsett.

The intermediate and advanced groups were also able to develop their skills further – particularly when Eric kicked in hard during the afternoons.

Warrant Officer First Class Dave Strudwick gained the team's personal best speed of 31.78 knots (around 35mph).

Others were planing and using foot straps for the first time by the end of the week.

The area is also famous for its cycling and the group headed on a 17-mile cycle in 30°C heat on the local route known as the Syvros Loop, which includes an elevation gain of 1,507ft.

KEEP UP WITH THE WINDSURFERS

Visit msa.org.uk and search windsurfing.

