



NAVY NEWS

DECEMBER 2021

DESERT DAGGERS

ROYAL Marines from Alpha Company, 40 Commando, train in their new off-road buggy as Littoral Response Group (South) conduct exercises in the Californian desert (see pages 16-17)

PICTURE:
LPhoto Joe Cater



Inside: ■ **Forward deployed OPVs** ■ **HMS Dragon**
■ **30Cdo and 45Cdo training** ■ **Royal Navy Remembrance**



Magnnum



YOU probably wouldn't want this view of HMS Tamar in Portsmouth Harbour.

Not snorkelling, at any rate.

But in the warmer waters of Hawaii...

Pearl Harbor - home of the US Fleet in the Pacific - became the latest stop for the ship (and astern of her, sister HMS Spey) as the duo make their way gradually to their patrol zone of the western Pacific rim and Asia after brief ports of call in the Caribbean and San Diego.

The visit to Pearl Harbor was substantially longer - allowing for maintenance, resupply, R&R, adventurous sporting activities, joint training with the US, and joint acts of remembrance.

For many Britons - and probably many Americans too - Pearl Harbor is synonymous with December 7 1941, the 'day of infamy' when the Pacific Fleet was attacked at its moorings by Japanese aircraft, bringing the USA into the war.

Spey and Tamar's visit coincided with Veterans' Day in the USA and Remembrance Day in the UK - both November 11.

The ships were able to participate in both - thanks to their watch rotation of sailors.

So while Spey's ship's company were playing their full part in events in Honolulu, the patrol ship's Operations Officer Lieutenant Tim Wood was in Moray, representing the RN alongside personnel from the RAF's affiliated 120 Squadron (Poseidon maritime patrol aircraft based at Lossiemouth) and local dignitaries.

At 1100 Hawaiian time, some ten time zones behind the UK and under similarly sombre grey skies, Spey held her own service alongside in Pearl Harbor, within sight of the flag of the United States of America fluttering over the USS Arizona memorial.

Attending alongside the ship's company were a cohort of 15 officers under training, recently arrived from BRNC Dartmouth, who experienced their first Remembrance Service in uniform.

"These Officer Cadets will have spent Remembrance Day in the past reading news articles, watching the service in London on television or maybe by watching a parade from the

sidelines," said their instructor, Chief Petty Officer 'Darby' Allen.

"Part of their training is to experience events like this from the other side of the fence - as a member of the military. I'm grateful that they have experienced the privilege of attending a Remembrance Service on board one of Her Majesty's Ships and I hope they keep this moment in their memories for a long time to come."

Lt Cdr Ben Evans, the Ship's Commanding Officer, along with one representative each from the wardroom, senior and junior rates messes, attended the Natatorium Memorial - an open air swimming pool built to honour Honolulu's WW1 dead, making it among the most unusual monuments to conflict in the world - for the November 11 service.

He said: "The invitation to attend the Veterans' Day Service at the Natatorium in Honolulu came as a huge honour and I am very pleased to have been able to attend. I chose to bring with me one Officer, one Senior Rate and one Junior Rate - to make sure that all levels of my crew were represented here today.

"The act of Remembrance is everyone's solemn duty, and we are all proud to represent the United Kingdom as well as the Royal Navy and HMS Spey here in Hawaii.

"It was an honour to speak with veterans of the United States military after the service, as well as with younger generations from many different groups like the Army Junior Reserve Officer Corps, to find out some of their stories.

"Everyone has been very welcoming and I must thank the people of Hawaii for inviting us and including us in their commemoration."

And on board, at 1100 exactly, Able Seaman Fox, the gangway Quartermaster, took up his Bosun's Call and piped The Still.

As the shrill whistle pealed over the main broadcast, conversations stopped, tools were placed on the deck and sailors, officers and contractors stood in silence for two minutes.

Some chose to bow their heads, some stood with eyes closed, others stared into the distance in the direction of the mountains of the island of Oahu - but all held

their thoughts to themselves in silent respect to the fallen of conflicts both recent and those consigned to the annals of history.

"It is absolutely not lost on me that we are here in Pearl Harbor close to the 80th anniversary of the attack which brought the United States into World War 2," said Lieutenant Michael Royle, Spey's Navigating Officer.

"It is incredibly important to continue to hold these services every year, to continue to mark conflicts past and to reaffirm the commitment to remembering the fallen. Many of us have connections with the military through history - my grandfather was an officer in the Polish Army in World War 2 - and we mark the day in our own way. Some of us are a little quieter than usual on the day, some of us try not to think about it, but all of us stop at 11 o'clock and take a moment to remember."

There is no greater reminder of sacrifice in Hawaii than the gleaming white USS Arizona memorial which sits over the battleship of the same name and draws more than two million



Force



people a year.

Among them in 2021 were the ship's companies of Tamar and Spey.

Barely ten minutes into the attack on December 7 1941, the Arizona was torn apart when a bomb pierced her armour-plating and detonated the battleship's forward magazine – an explosion in similar fashion to those which devastated Royal Navy battle-cruisers at Jutland and HMS Hood earlier in 1941.

The blast effectively tore the battleship in two and killed 1,177 officers and men. Just 335 sailors survived the cataclysm. All but 75 of the victims are entombed in the wreck.

The loss of the Arizona accounted for nearly half of the American casualties in the Pearl Harbor attack – while images and footage of the horrific explosion provided some of the iconic scenes of World War 2 in newsreels and documentaries to this day.

Three days later, the Royal Navy suffered its first major blow of the war with Japan when bombers sank battleship HMS Prince

of Wales and battle-cruiser Repulse – sent to the Far East to deter aggression by Tokyo – off the Malaysian coast with the loss of more than 800 lives.

While the superstructure and some elements of the ship were subsequently salvaged – like much of the Pacific Fleet damaged on December 7 1941 – the decision was taken not to raise the Arizona, but turn her into a memorial.

The British sailors were also invited aboard USS Missouri – the Mighty Mo – the battleship which hosted the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay in 1945 and went on to serve until the 1991 Gulf War.

There is, of course, more to Honolulu than Pearl Harbor. The several-week layover in Hawaii allowed sailors from both ships to explore islands only infrequently visited by Royal Navy warships.

Spey headed to sea with the US Coast Guard cutter Joseph Gerczak, where she had a go at towing and the Americans practised board and search techniques (USCG Law

Enforcement Detachments are a mainstay of counter-narcotics operations by RN/RFA vessels in the Caribbean) with those Officer Cadets coming in handy, playing the role of awkward merchant mariners who would rather not be boarded/inspected.

The welcome was rather warmer for Tamar's medical team who were shown behind

scenes at the Tripler Army Medical Center, a massive, coral-pink 110-year-old hospital complex with 1,000 beds (that puts it on a par with Derriford in Plymouth or Queen Alexandra in Portsmouth), state-of-the-art kit, including the medical simulation centre.

And, best of all, the extended visit to Hawaii allowed for a bespoke adventurous training package to be delivered to

both ships - six days apiece by an RN team who made the 7,000-mile journey out to the Pacific to deliver it.

Each crew was treated to six days of solid sporting activities each for both crews, including mountain biking, stand-up paddle boarding, hiking and snorkeling across Honolulu and stunning locations such as Waimea Beach, home to some of the biggest waves in the world.

Sailors took full advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to enjoy activities in a world-renowned outdoor 'adventure playground'.

Many of the ship's company were exposed to AT for the first time in their careers, including comms specialist Petty Officer Hayley Shakeshaft.

"I've just paddle boarded in Hawaii with turtles – this is the best job in the world," she said.

An element of leader and revalidation training was also provided and more AT is planned later in the ships' Indo-Asia-Pacific deployment, including leader courses in mountain

biking and stand-up paddle boarding, which should prove beneficial to both ships during this enduring overseas deployment.

Some of the sporting kit was loaded aboard Spey before the ships left Portsmouth in September – part of a trial by the adventurous training team to make it easier/cheaper to deliver their courses without always needing to turn to local providers.

"The opportunity for Tamar and Spey's task group personnel to embark on safe, organised adventurous training is an opportunity to cherish," said Commander Teilo Elliot-Smith, Tamar's Commanding Officer.

"We have had the perfect combination of an exotic location in Hawaii and incredible outdoor pursuits at land and sea, offering something for everyone.

"Every sailor has had the opportunity to get stuck in and, witnessing their new opportunities taken, self-confidence has grown, and individual skills developed is terrific. It is exactly what we wanted, it is what the

RN Adventurous Training Team excels at and I could not be happier. At times like this we really are living the advert."

Adventurous training is a Category A PFS (Personnel Functional Standards) requirement with the RN's men and women entitled, where operationally possible, to five days per annum.

Given the global nature of RN operations, the AT team has delivered its physically and mentally-challenging training activities in locations as distant as Oman, Crete and the Pacific this autumn.

They'll be back on Spey and Tamar too... but not in Honolulu.

The pair are pushing west across around 4,000 miles of ocean to truly begin their Asia-Pacific deployment around the western Pacific Rim – making them the Royal Navy's first permanent presence in the region since the handover of Hong Kong a quarter of a century ago.

Pictures: LPhoto Rory Arnold and Lt Cdr Shaun Roster



Engineers in top gear

Sharkey's jaws-dropping career

WHEN Kate Morgan signed up for the RFA, Alan 'Sharkey' Ward was coming to the end of his 22 years. His first 22.

A couple of dozen years later and... with 44 years in the RN under his belt, the senior rating became the latest sailor to be recognised for 5,000 days at sea.

Such is the remarkable service Sharkey has given, the Secretary of State for Defence Mr Ben Wallace took the time to congratulate him and listen to a dit or two when he visited HMS Argyll during the DSEI fair in London in September (pictured right).

Anyone who receives the LSA5K (Longer Separation Allowance 5,000 Days) award – presented jointly by the Service and RNRMC – has spent at least 13 years and nine months at sea, away from loved ones.

In Sharkey's case, he's slung his hammock in 11 Royal Navy ships since joining up in 1977. That's the year of the Queen's silver jubilee... the launch of carrier HMS Invincible (long-since razor blades – indeed the only RN ship still in service is HMS Victory... Dad's Army was coming to the end of its original run... the M5 had just opened and Roger Moore's James Bond was averting nuclear armageddon in *The Spy Who Loved Me*.

Sharkey went on to serve on HMS Invincible's first commission, as well as minehunters, survey vessels, frigates and destroyers.



The Falklands proved to be the defining moment in the career of the then 21-year-old marine engineer mechanic serving in survey ship HMS Herald.

His experience in dealing with the casualties from RFA's Sir Galahad and Sir Tristram has seen him dedicate himself ever since to mentoring young sailors in damage control and firefighting so they can fight and win the internal battle.

Anyone serving in Argyll is always welcome to the Chief Stoker's Office for a posh coffee and a chat – as long as they put a pound in the charity pot.

A dedicated advocate of veteran charities, he has returned to the islands a number of times since, maintains close links with the area and people and is a trustee of and active fundraiser for Forgotten Veterans UK and the Falklands

Veterans Foundation, offering a hand of friendship to many and together with his wife Jo, raising over £10,000 for the Falklands Veterans Foundation alone. True to his advocacy of those two charities, he's sharing the £5,000 he won equally between them.

Determined to give him something he can't donate or give away for charity, his boss marine engineer officer Lieutenant Commander Andy Nolan and Dave Lockwood, the CEO of Babcock Marine, presented Sharkey with a plaque celebrating his career, and then surprised him with a cheque for £5,000 from Babcock to further the work of Forgotten Veterans UK.

On leaving Argyll Sharkey is returning to the Falklands for his last tour, where he will once again take on responsibility for the upkeep of the many memorials and war graves on the islands, as well as providing engineering support to HMS Forth, the RN's permanent patrol ship in the region.

"Sharkey is the absolute epitome of what it means to serve and we are hugely fortunate to have him on board," said Commander Charlie Wheen, Argyll's Commanding Officer.

"A font of knowledge, a great example to all of us and ever ready to keep us on our toes, thousands of sailors over the years have benefitted from his mentoring, and I hope there will be plenty more yet to come."



Kate's propelled to new heights

2021 began with the RFA's first female captain commanding a ship and draws to a close with another trailblazer becoming the first female captain of engineering in the auxiliary service's 116-year history.

Captain (E) Kate Morgan heads a team of specialists who help maintain the Tide class of four tankers which are integral to the Royal Navy's carrier group operations for the next quarter of a century.

There are 502 engineers of all ranks, ages and experiences across the RFA. Just 20 of them are women.

Which is 19 more than when Kate Morgan joined the Service in 1998 – she was the first qualified female engineer in its history... although she didn't know it at the time and nor did it faze her when she did find out.

"Although there are still only 20 female engineers in the RFA, there are a lot more women in other roles across the service. And the RFA world when I joined 23 years ago was very different.

"Today, the RFA – and the wider Armed Forces – are improving and encouraging diversity, supporting initiatives like STEM. Women can succeed – and are succeeding.

"It's a good environment, there's great training and very, very good opportunities both ashore and at sea to develop a good career. And you get paid to do it

"But you also realise that you're part of a bigger picture, supporting the Navy and the UK worldwide. I could be working on a commercial tanker or a cross-Channel ferry, but this is the career I chose."

That she did is down to a chance encounter in a hotel in Cardigan where Kate was working in the late 90s.

An RFA chief steward popped in for a meal one day and began chatting about his career and service. The young hotel worker showed a great deal of interest, the sailor provided some pamphlets and the rest is history. She never saw the steward again.

"It was the surrounding support and training and the opportunities of the RFA which attracted me. And when I joined my aim was always to get to the top."

Twenty-three years later she has a string of qualifications to her name, sea time in ships as varied as RFA Argus (aviation training/floating medical centre), Bay-class amphibious ships and a clutch of tankers old and new, and numerous posts and assignments ashore.

Two moments stand out – one sobering, the other exhilarating.

Early in her career she was serving in tanker Orangeleaf in the Middle East which was due to refuel the American destroyer USS Cole – but could not. The American warship instead put in to Yemen to take on fuel and was attacked by suicide bombers, killing 17 crew.

"That really brought home that what we do does make a difference, does have an impact on the world," she says.

Fifteen years later she was back in the region with the head of the RFA visiting support ship Fort Austin – which meant flying out to the carrier USS Carl Vinson first and the experience of landing and taking off from a 'cats and traps' ship.

"It was a great experience – watching a flight deck filled with F18s heading off on missions, meeting admirals directing the operation, and also seeing the RFA playing its part and realising once again you're part of a bigger picture."

Saving time to save lives

THE collective font of knowledge shared by 847 Naval Air Squadron's aviation technicians will save time – and possibly lives – if their Wildcats are activated at immediate notice.

They can now be where they are needed anywhere in the world 24 hours faster than before.

The squadron's engineers used the mock-up of a giant RAF C17 transporter aircraft at Brize Norton to see if they could cut down on the amount of changes they needed to make to ready the hi-tech helicopter for transport.

Wildcats support battlefield operations by the Royal Marines around the globe – anything from acting as airborne eyes and ears of the commandos, to calling in air strikes and ferrying personnel and supplies around.

Parts have to be removed and the aircraft loaded aboard the transporter in a particular way – a process known collectively as the 'tie-down scheme' – to make the Wildcat safe for travel, before being reassembled at the destination, sometimes by the same engineers, sometimes by their colleagues.

Typically it's taken a six-strong team one and a half days in the UK to disassemble the Wildcat, and two days at the end of the flight to get it back into an airworthy state.

The tie-down procedure was drawn up seven years ago as the Wildcat was entering service. 847's engineers reckoned they could squeeze some extra hours out of the process based on their worldwide experience and took two of the helicopters to the RAF air base to practise (pictured).

Air engineer Petty Officer Richard Plummer was involved in the initial trials and was eager to see his experience used to help save time – vital in particular if the squadron is mobilised to support disaster relief operations.

"Having done multiple C17 moves over the years it was easy to see areas where the approved tie-down scheme could be improved upon," he said.

"After the successful trial I was pleased to see many of my recommendations have been implemented – this will benefit



the whole Wildcat force for years to come."

Now by leaving all four rotor blades on the front-loaded Wildcat (previously two were removed) and ensuring the rescue hoist remains fitted (again previously removed for transport, then reassembled – a time consuming job, made more demanding because it involves removing explosive cartridges and a lot of associated paperwork), the engineers have carved half a day off each end of the disassembly/re-assembly process.

The new procedures meet all the various complex rules and regulations, as well as the load limits for the RAF transporter, much to the delight of 847's technicians.

"Through an innovative yet simplistic approach we have been able to reduce the maintenance burden on my engineers," said Chief Petty Officer Terrance Greig, Senior Maintenance Rating with the squadron's A Flight.

"Utilising real-life experiences, gained over several years, has allowed the tie-down scheme to be improved, ensuring Wildcat AH are available for operational tasking as soon as possible."

Artisans needed to replace Artisan

FEW pieces of kit have to work around-the-clock in conditions as punishing as the Gulf heat than HMS Montrose's principal radar. Failure is not an option.

With the frigate deployed to Bahrain until at least next year, neither is bringing her 7,500 miles home to replace it.

So engineers had to do what had never been done before: replace the system outside the UK.

Artisan is the principal medium-range eyes of the Fleet, fitted to all frigates and capital ships, able to see targets up to 200 kilometres – 125 miles – from the ship and, thanks to its software, keep tabs on 900 targets simultaneously, including missiles inbound at three times the speed of sound.

Montrose's Artisan has been spinning

almost non-stop since the ship emerged from refit in December 2017.

And since she arrived in the Gulf in the spring of 2019 as the Royal Navy's constant 'big ship' presence in the Middle East under the ever-growing forward presence programme, the frigate and her radar have been heavily in demand.

Over a few days, RN Weapon Engineers, supported by experts from BAE Systems – who produce Artisan at their Isle of Wight facility – changed the radar at the UK Naval Support Facility in Bahrain.

They had to remove the antenna to get to the heavy turning unit beneath, allowing the replacement to be installed, followed by complex testing and calibrations to allow the frigate to continue her security mission.

"The ability to conduct an engineering task such as this thousands of miles away from our home port demonstrates the commitment to transform its operating model to a forward deployed Navy," said Montrose's Weapon Engineer Officer, Lieutenant Commander Steve Jones.

Commander Paul Irving, commanding Montrose's Port crew, underlined the importance of the maintenance work.

"My 997 radar provides a critical and lethal edge to Montrose," he explained. "The fact that this task has been achieved so successfully, at reach from the Royal Navy's traditional support networks, shows just how serious the Navy is about locating our ships around the world to participate in maritime security operations alongside allies."

Inspiring apprentices

THE hardest working, most dedicated and innovative young sailors and Royal Marines converged on HMS Victory for the RN's Apprenticeship Awards.

More than a dozen awards were presented by Colonel Ade Morley – Head of the Training Management Group to individual winners/runners-up and one unit for personal and collective commitment and achievements within their departments which made them stand out from their peers.

Probationary Leading Engineering Technician Charlie-Ann Neave was one of two winners of the personal achievement award.

During her time aboard flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth, she came to the fore, mentoring shipmates, taking on extra duties and responsibilities in her free time, and – according to the carrier's senior engineers – setting an example of the calibre of engineer which the future RN will rely upon.

Weapon engineer Nathan Brown collected the L3 Engineering Award for his dedication to tech aboard frigate HMS Montrose in the Gulf which maintained the morale of his 200 shipmates.

With the ship conducting lengthy, tense and strenuous maritime security patrols – frequently in the Strait of Hormuz – the usual support for the ship's TV system was unavailable.

Instead, in his own time, the leading engineering technician built an in-depth knowledge of the system, used contacts in Bahrain and the UK to get stores and spare parts, and systematically fixed the system – all while toiling in 40-degree heat in the antenna dome.

The nominations highlighted a variety of accomplishments, skills and dedication by RN personnel across the board including flight deck repairs, participating in Project Power Loop (helping



● **The successful apprentices with Col Ade Morley aboard HMS Victory**
Picture: LPhoto Belinda Alker

Level 3 Marine Engineering Apprentice of the Year: LET Kwesie Harewood (FSU Portsmouth)
Level 2 Marine Engineering Apprentice of the Year: ET1 Samuel Creak (MSU)
Level 3 Weapons Engineering Apprentice of the Year: LET Nathan Brown (HMS Montrose)
Level 2 Weapons Engineering Apprentice of the Year: ETWE Joseph Smith (HMS Westminster)
Logistics Apprentice of the Year: Wtr1 Charlotte Wells (RNAS Culdrose UPO)

to develop a curriculum for the Remote Systems training in RNAS Yeovilton). The leadership skills exhibited by apprentices put forward was incredibly impressive, invariably belying their junior rank.

“These achievements demonstrate why apprenticeships remain at the heart of training across all branches,” said Commander Sara Balls, who runs the RN's apprenticeship programme.

“The training being delivered, and the accreditation being achieved, is providing essential foundation blocks for personnel to build successful careers and to reach their full potential.”

As well as individual

Aviation Apprentice of the Year: AET Daniel Barton (846 NAS)
Apprentice Personal Achievement Award: P/LET Charlie-Ann Neave (HMS Collingwood) and LET(WE(SM)) Steven Cook (HMS Collingwood)
Best Level 2 Apprentice-Royal Marine: Mne Jake Thompson (42 Commando)
Apprenticeship Champion of the Year: CPO David Worley (Warfare Branch Management)
Fleet Commander Award for the best Unit: Submarine Support Group HMS Devonport

apprentices, the awards also recognise those who nurture, encourage and support these men and women: CPO David Worley from Warfare Branch Management was named Apprenticeship Champion of the Year.

Chief Worley has been instrumental in the development and implementation of the L3 Data Technician Standard for the Warfare Branch. This has been a hugely important step in how the Royal Navy accredit the work which this very unique branch do.

He's injected expertise, dedication and passion to the L3 Data Technician Standard to bring this project to completion – work which would normally be

carried out by an entire team, not a single individual.

This was the second year of the Best Unit award, presented to the Submarine Support Group in Devonport for the exceptional support it's provided to apprentices in the Silent Service.

The team is so proficient in mentoring apprentices that it can carry out assessments for navy apprentices within very strict guidelines laid down by the Institute for Apprenticeship.

The lessons learned during the process development with the Submarine Support Group have been invaluable and has enabled end-point assessments to be delivered throughout the Royal Navy, including aboard ships on global deployment.

And the drive to nurture and encourage apprentices reaped regional rewards in the South East.

The RN was named the 'Macro Employer of the Year' – the best industry or organisation with more than 5,000 employees when it comes to the commitment shown to apprentices – and the success that apprenticeships have brought the business or organisation.

The Navy took the title ahead of Thames Valley Police and also collected the Recruitment Excellence Award for demonstrating innovation in recruiting fresh blood to ensure there is a diverse workforce.

This year focused on employers who retained apprentices and supported them throughout the pandemic, as well contributing to the nation's recovery.

CPO Worley added to his Apprenticeship Champion of the Year award by being highly commended in the same category in the regional awards.

The regional winners now go into the national awards – now in their 18th year – where the best apprentices/apprenticeship schemes in the land will be singled out from more than 1,000 original entries in the competition.



Cdres Stacey (left) and van den Berg share a joke aboard De Zeven Provincien as the ceremony begins
Picture: LPhoto Robert Oates

Proost to 60 years of FOST in translation

The British and Dutch Navies celebrated 60 years of joint training with a ceremony in Plymouth aboard the latest ship to benefit.

Since the autumn of 1961, the Royal Dutch Navy has put its faith in a Royal Navy-led team to prepare its warships – 168 to date – for whatever operations they might face around the world.

Right now that includes HNLMS Evertsen which is an integral part of the UK's Carrier Strike Group, sailing alongside HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Indo-Pacific.

Evertsen was readied for that mission by the team at FOST, based in Devonport, the Royal Navy's world-renowned training regime.

Aboard Evertsen's sister ship De Zeven Provincien, senior British and Dutch sailors celebrated 60 years of success – and committed to continue to work together.

The Dutch frigate is coming towards the end of her time with FOST which is preparing her for NATO duties in the new year, when she'll become flagship of a task group operating in northern European waters.

Commander Fleet Operational Sea Training Commodore Andrew Stacey said the two nations – and navies – enjoyed “an especially close band”.

He continued: “It's extraordinary to think that over the past 60 years FOST has trained 168 Dutch warships – an average of three ships each year. This a testament to the faith the Royal Netherlands Navy has in us, for which we are very grateful.

“I am pleased that the Dutch value FOST as the organisation

of choice to deliver first-class operational sea training to its ships.”

Commodore Peter van den Berg, from the Dutch Navy's plans section, said: “Sixty years of the Royal Netherlands Navy participating in FOST is a great milestone.

“Fleet Operational Sea Training is important for us to maintain our readiness and further improve international cooperation with NATO partners. With the support of FOST, we can guarantee and maintain the operational capability of our Fleet. Together, we stand stronger.”

The Netherlands' long-term commitment underlines the international nature of the organisation which draws on expertise of sailors from around a dozen allies and partners and has providing training for ships from more than 20 navies down the years – many of them, like the Dutch, repeatedly sending their ships to Fleet Operational Sea Training (until June 2020 known as Flag Officer Sea Training).

“FOST is a simple four-letter abbreviation, but it is a name that is synonymous with the highest standards of training and operational capability. It is respected, revered, perhaps even feared,” Commodore Stacey added.

“Sailors who have been through FOST share a common experience: long days, a lack of sleep and hard work.

“But what is really encouraging is that they all say they have learned a great deal and now feel much more confident in their ship, their shipmates and the very complex capabilities of a modern warship.”

Sir Ben Key takes the reins as new First Sea Lord

THE torch of Naval leadership changed hands as Admiral Sir Ben Key became the nation's most senior sailor.

Aboard Nelson's flagship Victory, he took over as First Sea Lord from Admiral Sir Tony Radakin, whose 29 months at the helm end as he moves on to become the new Chief of Defence Staff.

He formally handed over command of more than 30,000 men and women, more than 90 warships, nuclear submarines and support vessels, the helicopters and jets of the Fleet Air Arm and the elite Naval infantry of the Royal Marines to the man who has been Chief of Joint Operations and a former Fleet Commander.

During his command, Admiral Key will see the lead ships of two new classes of frigate – submarine hunter HMS Glasgow, the first of eight Type 26 warships and general purpose HMS Venturer, the maiden Inspiration-class/Type 31 vessel – enter the water and will continue the transformation of the Royal Navy spearheaded by his predecessor, re-shaping the Service to meet the challenges and demands of the mid-21st Century.

The historic setting of HMS Victory's great cabin was the venue for the transfer of office. Proceedings then shifted to Victory's quarterdeck and the last act of the ceremony, where Admiral Radakin's standard was lowered and Admiral Key's flag raised in its place.



Posthumous medal among awards

TEN Royal Navy sailors have been recognised for exceptional work and dedication on the front line in the 56th Operational Honours and Awards List.

In addition to the UK honours list, the late Major General Matt Holmes was awarded the Legion of Merit – a prestigious honour from the United States Armed Forces.

The medal is granted to individuals who demonstrate an exceptional level of meritorious conduct.

US authorities granted the honour to Maj Gen Holmes, the former Commandant General of the Royal Marines, for the ‘outstanding leadership and personal initiative’ he showed during his service in Afghanistan three years ago.

The UK honours list includes a CBE for Commodore Dean Bassett for his time as the United Kingdom Maritime Component Commander – the senior Royal Navy officer in Bahrain.

He was responsible for all

Commander in the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE)
Commodore Dean Bassett

Officers in the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (OBE)
Commander Murray Adam
Captain Fiona Percival

Member of the Military Division of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE)
Lieutenant Commander Paul Inglesby

British naval forces in the Gulf region and running a multinational coalition during a time of intense international scrutiny.

Commander Ollie Hucker, the former Commanding Officer of HMS Montrose, is among those awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service for his efforts in the same region.

The frigate is deployed east of Suez for three years as part of the Navy's Forward Presence

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)
Chief Petty Officer M Craib
Lieutenant Martin Head
Commander Ollie Hucker
Petty Officer R Jenkins
Chief Petty Officer G Thompson

Queen's Commendation for Bravery
Petty Officer J Norfolk

US Legion of Merit
Major General Matt Holmes

programme which ensures vessels spend more time at sea in an operational theatre – and their crews enjoy more settled, planable lives.

Cdr Hucker (pictured in his chair on the frigate's bridge) was recognised for ‘exceptional leadership and drive’ that got the best from his ship's company in a demanding environment.

Cdr Hucker, who now serves as the Royal Navy's Commander Sea Training, said: “I am humbled and honoured to have

been recognised in this way, along with a number of my ship's company.

“It recognises how the challenges of COVID did not impact on our delivery of operations during a challenging period, which was truly a team effort. This is testament to everyone's hard work, whether it was monitoring merchant shipping through the Strait of Hormuz or the multiple drugs busts we had during our time at sea.”

■ **Tributes to General Holmes, see page 27**



Thank you for MEWSIC

THE RN's Electronic Warfare branch will receive a £100m injection of enhanced kit to allow more simultaneous detection and identification of radar signals over a greater frequency range than current capabilities.

That will lead to faster decision-making and enhanced situational awareness in the ops room and improved anti-ship missile defence capability.

Known as Maritime Electronic Warfare Systems Integrated Capability (MEWSIC), this is the first phase of a £500m EW upgrade programme for Type 45 destroyers, 26 and 31 frigates, as well as Queen Elizabeth-class carriers.

Babcock, Elbit and QinetiQ will work alongside DE&S, the RN and Government's Defence Science and Technology Laboratories to design, manufacture, deliver, integrate and support the enhancements, supporting/creating 170 jobs, mostly in the South West.

Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Albion
HMS Portland
HMS Argyll
HMS Tyne
HMS Severn
HMS Mersey
HMS Magpie
HMS Sabre

Project Wilton
RFA Mounts Bay
814 NAS
815 NAS
824 NAS



17 TES SQN

40 Cdo
30 Cdo IX Gp

Gibraltar Squadron

HMS Scott

HMS Medway
RFA Wave Knight

HMS Trent

HMS Protector

Carrier Strike Group 21

HMS Queen Elizabeth
HMS Defender
HMS Kent
HMS Richmond
RFA Fort Victoria
RFA Tidespring

42 Commando
815 NAS
820 NAS
845 NAS
617 Sqn
HNLMS Evertsen

HMS Tamar
HMS Spey

Operation Kipion

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

British Defence Singapore Support Unit

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



GLOBAL | MODERN | READY

SO THAT'S 2021 done then.

It ends with much achieved, numerous milestones passed, RN personnel widely deployed around the globe, on duty at home, and more to be accomplished in 2022 as the RN continues its mid-21st Century evolution.

Above all, it ends the year with a new hand on the tiller: **Admiral Sir Ben Key** took over as First Sea Lord, while his predecessor **Admiral Sir Tony Radakin** moves on to become the first Senior Service Chief of Defence Staff in nearly 20 years (see page 5).

The headline deployment of 2021 has been **HMS Queen Elizabeth's** maiden tour of duty, which is drawing to a close with the task group now back through Suez and due home in its many bases before Christmas after seven months away (see centre pages).

Otherwise, the other big success of the year has been the new generation of River-class Offshore Patrol Vessels, continuing to quietly but firmly make their mark on the world stage. **HMS Medway** has been island-hopping in the Caribbean demonstrating her disaster relief skills and joining in independence commemorations ashore (see page 19).

Off Africa **HMS Trent** is demonstrating the vessels' versatility by embarking Royal Marines of **42 Commando** for combined maritime security training with naval and enforcement forces in the Gulf of Guinea (see page 14-15).

And **HMS Tamar** and **Spey** are now making their way across the vast expanse of the Pacific from Pearl Harbor to their new permanent patrol area. The duo made the most of a lengthy maintenance/logistics/crew change stop in Hawaii to make friends with the US Navy, remember both nations' war dead, and experience some adventurous training in a unique setting (see pages 2-3).

Formally standing up the first of the Royal Marines' new **Littoral Response Groups** is a big step forward courtesy of a successful workout of the Royal Marines element of LRG(South) – earmarked for the Middle East – thanks to a desert trial of kit, tactics, tech, comms and training by **40 Commando** alongside US and Dutch counterparts at Twentynine Palms in California (see pages 16-17).

40's Arbroath-based comrades from **45 Commando** will be the sharp sword of LRG(North) focused on Norway and the Arctic. With the annual winter deployment looming, 45 headed into the Highlands to refresh their mountain warfare skills (see page 13).

And **30 Commando IX Group** honed tactics in defending against attacks from aircraft and drones in the Mojave Desert. During a mock battle against US Marines, the Air Defence Troop of 30 Commando IX destroyed 'enemy' air superiority using their high velocity missiles and lightweight surface-to-air missiles (see page 11).

Gunners on **HMS Argyll** tested a new mounting to improve the accuracy of their heavy machine-guns and fend-off fast attack craft (see opposite).

HMS Dragon and **HMS Albion** have both been working with our French allies. **Dragon** honed her air defence skills – and allowed French naval aviators to practise their carrier strike proficiency off the coast of Brittany (see page 9). Not too far away the UK's amphibious flagship was being hauled through the Channel by French support vessel FS Garonne as the latter tested her heavy towing ability (see right).

None of this excitement would happen without the skill and dedication of the RN's rich seam of engineers – marine, weapon and air – whom we celebrate on page 4, from the first female **RFA Captain Engineer** to the **847 NAS** team who shaved a day off transporting a Wildcat overseas (which may save lives in a humanitarian disaster) and the experts on **HMS Montrose** who toiled in broiling Gulf heat to replace her Artisan radar – a first outside the UK.

The men and women of the Gibraltar Squadron now have their hands on the first of their two new £5m patrol boats, **HMS Cutlass**, which was delivered to the Rock from Merseyside (see opposite).

Beyond Spey and Tamar paying their respects in Pearl Harbor, personnel from **BRNC Dartmouth** and **Commando Helicopter Force** took Normandy veterans back to the beaches – something denied them by Covid back in June (see page 31). And crew from **HMS Protector** joined islanders in St Helena in a service of thanksgiving for sailors who tackled the scourge of slave trafficking in the 19th Century (see page 30).

And wherever they were around the world, sailors and Royal Marines paused to reflect on sacrifices made by Servicemen and women past and present on **Remembrance Day** (see pages 28-29).



ONE of Britain's biggest warships was towed through the Channel to help the French test the power of a new specialist ship.

The FS Garonne hauled huge assault ship HMS Albion past the coast of Devon to assess its pulling strength and abilities – as well as hone Anglo-French naval co-operation and the Royal Navy's own emergency procedures.

The Garonne is one of four new specialist Loire-class support ships built for the French Navy designed to provide a multitude of services, from supporting diving operations and dealing with pollution in the aftermath of a spillage at sea, to assisting submarines and surface ships, including salvage operations.

Classified as *bâtiments de soutien et d'assistance métropolitains* – metropolitan support and assistance ships – they've also been designed with the ability of towing France's next-generation carrier due to enter service in the mid-2030s and displacing 75,000 tonnes.

While sailors train extensively to fix problems without the need for outside help, sometimes damage is too extensive or breakdowns are beyond solving 'in house' – and the ship requires towing to a safe haven.

With HMS Queen Elizabeth deployed and her sister Prince of Wales undergoing maintenance in Portsmouth Naval Base, the next largest British warship HMS Albion – 18,500 tonnes, 176 metres long, 29 wide – acted as the 'breakdown victim' to test the Garonne's towing ability.

The Plymouth-based amphibious assault ship pretended to be dead in the water in the



Channel – with the Garonne throwing her a line, figuratively and physically.

From the British side, the complex seamanship exercise was overseen by the MoD's Salvage and Marine Operations (SALMO) team which provides salvage, towing, and heavy lift capability.

"Exercises such as this are fundamental to ensuring an enduring seamanship capability between international maritime partners is maintained. This tested HMS Albion's ability to be towed safely in the event of an emergency," said David Price, the SALMO representative onboard HMS Albion.

Commander James Walton, HMS Albion's Second in Command, added: "Our French Naval counterparts are highly skilled and professional – it was a delight working with them."

"The ability to integrate quickly and effectively with international partners is a key component to operating as a global navy, supporting global Britain."

Before participating in the Towing

Exercise, Garonne carried out intensive trials and training to prove her ability to work with NATO's Submarine Rescue System (NSRS).

The jointly owned UK, French and Norwegian system is capable of diving down to a submarine in distress, docking with the escape hatches and carrying out an evacuation.

One of the key parts of the system is a Remotely Operated Vehicle (ROV) used to confirm the location of disabled submarines and supply them with life support equipment and to clear any debris or wires entangling the vessel.

The NSRS team – headed by Commander Richard Cragg Royal Navy – worked with Garonne's crew with the ROV to carry out tests with new technology which will speed up emergency reaction time.

The NSRS is designed to be transported anywhere in the world within 72 hours to support the global submarine rescue network and is based at the home of the UK's Submarine Service at Clyde Naval Base in Scotland.

This was the first deployment of the NSRS to the Loire-class, which will provide a new level of operational flexibility for the system following the successful training off the South Coast of the UK.

On top of this joint working, last month destroyer HMS Dragon also took part in an intensive workout with French warships and air power off the Brest peninsula, Exercise Sky Sharks, to ensure greater integration between the two navies.

HMS Argyll tests new mounting which makes the 50 cal an even more

Lethal Weapon

GUNNERS have given the thumbs-up to a new gun mounting tested on HMS Argyll to destroy small, fast-moving targets.

The frigate served as the testbed for a week of gunnery trials against small targets – speedboats, jet skis and the like – which are hard to hit, even with the panoply of small arms fitted to RN ships.

Gunnery teams can call upon a range of weapons – Miniguns, machine-guns, heavy-machine guns and SA80 rifles – to fend off what are known as ‘asymmetric threats’.

All rely on the skill of the gunners – and the stability of the ship itself as a gunnery platform – to be effective.

The .50 calibre heavy machine-gun – known colloquially as the ‘50 cal’ – is among the most potent weapons gunners can bring to bear, so when a potential improved mounting was developed for it, the Navy’s tech specialists, NavyX, wanted to test it.

Known as the ASP – Agile, Small-deflection, Precision – mounting, it was tested on the ranges at Aberporth in Cardigan Bay by the Plymouth-based warship with gunners taking aim against both a static target and a moving radio-controlled target boat.

Over a week of trials, the team put down nearly 5,000 .50 calibre rounds – 3,500 fired using the new mounting, 1,450 from a heavy machine-gun on a traditional ‘soft’ mounting to allow for comparisons.

They conducted more than three dozen gunnery shoots in different scenarios and weather conditions to give both mountings a comprehensive workout.

Seven of Argyll’s ship’s company were taught how to fire a .50 cal loaded on to the new mount. They found it easy to use – and their



gunnery improved as the trials went on.

“Once I got used to it, the concept is very straight-forward. I found the ability to acquire targets a lot easier and more precise with the joystick on the mount itself,” said HMS Argyll Leading Seaman ‘Smudge’ Smith.

“With the mount stabilising itself it allowed us to give a longer, more accurate burst of fire which enables us to eliminate threats quicker and at greater ranges.

“This would be a great addition in firepower to RN warships and enhances the ship’s force protection capabilities.”

Initial findings from the trials suggest the ASP means gunners can

- hit targets at greater distances
- aim more accurately in rough sea states/weather
- concentrate their fire better rather than disperse shots

The data from the trials, funded by the Defence Innovation Fund, run by the Royal Navy’s innovation experts NavyX and supported by the Defence Science and Technology Laboratory, will be analysed to determine whether the mount would benefit the Fleet.

“Continuously improving the accuracy and firepower of our force protection weapons is an everlasting requirement of the Royal Navy,” said Lieutenant Commander Steve Lovatt from the Navy Develop team, which is looking at ways to bolster force protection among other enhancements to the Fleet.

“We are using the trial analysis to seek future investment as part of our force protection capability.

“We’ve been impressed by the results and it demonstrates the important work of NavyX to rapidly trial new technology with immediate in-service benefit.”

Blade of glory

The first of two new ‘guardians of the Rock’ has arrived in Gibraltar ready for testing by the Royal Navy. Small, fast and agile, HMS Cutlass has been delivered to the naval base ahead of patrols of territorial waters – part of a £10m investment in the Gibraltar Squadron to upgrade its craft.

Cutlass – and her sister Dagger, due to be delivered in the spring of 2022 – are the permanent replacements for HMS Sabre and Scimitar which safeguarded Gibraltar’s waters for nearly two decades.

They returned to the UK in the summer of 2020, since when HMS Dasher and Pursuer have acted as the principal Royal Navy presence around Gib, joining the squadron’s Pacific 24 RIBs on patrols.

Cutlass’ first Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander Adam Colman said the boat would increase the squadron’s ability to provide maritime security and enforce UK sovereignty of Gibraltar’s waters.

“She’s begun a series of trials under the Blue Ensign to further

test her capabilities in the theatre she will operate in,” he added.

“Once these trials are complete, she will conduct the Royal Navy’s safety and readiness checks which will ensure the vessel and crew are ready to conduct operations.”

Built by Merseyside-based Marine Specialised Technology, the new boats are 19 metres long – slightly longer than Sabre and Scimitar, slightly shorter than Dasher and Pursuer – can hit speeds of 40 knots and are equipped with three machine-guns and the latest electronic/optical equipment to assist in identifying potential threats.

The squadron provides security in British Territorial Waters, keeping close watch over Gibraltar’s shores, reassuring its 34,000 inhabitants, demonstrating UK sovereignty, exercising with local and visiting forces, and provide protection to visiting warships, submarines and support vessels alongside their civilian counterparts in the Gibraltar Defence Police force. Its boats are on the Rock around the clock – 365 days a year.



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SHARK AND THE DRAGON



DESTROYER TRAINS WITH FRENCH IN TASK GROUP EXERCISE

HMS Dragon has defended a joint UK and French task group against fast boats and attacks from the air during intensive exercises.

The Type 45 destroyer worked alongside frigate Aquitaine, anti-submarine destroyer Latouche-Tréville and offshore patrol vessel Jacoubet as a task group off the coast of Brittany.

A series of exercises saw Dragon defend herself against fast, in-shore attack craft as she navigated her way out of the sheltered bay of Brest.

The Portsmouth-based ship was then tasked to provide protection and support to Aquitaine and had to show she could rapidly identify and respond to potential threats to the task group, including from Rafale fighter jets, NH-90 helicopters, drones, Hawkeye tactical airborne early-warning aircraft and surface threats.

Commander George Storton,

Commanding Officer of HMS Dragon, said: "Exercise Sky Sharks has been an excellent opportunity to once again develop UK and French integration and demonstrate the capabilities of our exceptional people working with cutting-edge technology.

"Despite challenging weather conditions, our teams came together to plan and execute the testing exercise scenario against the highly-capable assets of the Marine Nationale.

"Dragon absolutely cherishes opportunities such as these and we look forward to much more in the future."

Lieutenant Damien Tocquer is a French Exchange Officer from the French Navy currently serving as a Principle Warfare Officer (Above Water Warfare) on HMS Dragon.

He added: "As a French Navy Exchange Officer on board HMS Dragon, participation to Exercise Sky Sharks has been a pleasure and a great opportunity.

"The Royal Navy and Marine Nationale are both working incredibly hard to increase their lethality and operational efficiency by using cutting-edge technology and forefront tactics.

"Sky Sharks demonstrated once again how this shared aspiration for excellence can lead to success when fighting together in a challenging environment."

Exercise Sky Sharks built on work HMS Dragon conducted alongside the French Navy and other NATO partners earlier this year on Exercise Formidable Shield.

After working with the French, the ship spent some time in Porto, Portugal, before heading to Gibraltar.



● Above: HMS Dragon alongside in Brest, France.
Below: HMS Dragon defends herself against fast-attack boats in Exercise Sky Sharks



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THE A-TEAM || THE AIR DEFENCE TROOP OF 30 COMMANDO SHOW THEIR FIREPOWER IN DESERT BATTLE

ROYAL Marines experts in defending against attacks from the air destroyed 'enemy' air superiority during a five-day battle across the Mojave Desert.

Air Defence Troop of Plymouth-based 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group deployed to California to stress test new tactics as part of the commando element of the newly-formed Littoral Response Group (South).

The new response group will focus on world events east of the Suez Canal when it becomes operational next year with the addition of amphibious ships and aircraft.

It is all centred around 40 Commando – see more on pages 16 and 17 – but specialists from around 3 Commando Brigade also bolt onto the response group to add to its punch, from artillery to armour.

Air Defence Troop are part of 30 Commando,

the eyes and ears of 3 Commando Brigade who were formed in the Second World War by a team of Naval Intelligence Officers (including Ian Fleming, author of the James Bond novels).

The troop is made up of 53 marines equipped with high velocity missiles and lightweight surface-to-air missiles who defend their commando brethren from enemy air attack on land and around coastlines.

They lead the way in UK Defence in their area of expertise and are embracing new ways of working to counter the threats of a modern era.

Along with working with their counterparts from the US Marines' 2nd and 3rd Low Altitude Air Defence Battalions, Air Defence Troop were tasked with protecting allied forces during a five-day 'battle' in the desert which saw commandos work with forces from the Netherlands, United Arab Emirates, Canada and the USA work

together to defend three urban sprawls from their adversary, made up of US Marines.

It was the finale of two months of exercises, known as Green Dagger, which sharpened the commandos for operations next year at one of the largest military training facilities in the world at the vast US Marine Corps training facility at Twentynine Palms.

Air Defence Troop were fed intelligence that their 'enemy' were likely to strike hard and fast with their air superiority, using Super Cobra attack helicopters, Osprey tiltrotors and Sea Stallion helicopters. The troop had three teams carefully deployed in positions across the battlefield, 'destroying' three Super Cobras and a Sea Stallion in the first few hours of the exercise.

The commandos – with small teams deployed across a wide area – continued to have success, hitting helicopters but also convoys with surface-

to-surface missiles.

They trialled the MRZR vehicle for their purposes too. The American-made Polaris MRZR-D4 is an ultralight 4x4 off-roader that can carry up to four commandos and reach speeds of 60mph for rapid movement across the battlefield.

It is ideally equipped for raiding missions that Royal Marines are now focusing on as part of their modernisation and restructuring, which will ensure they are ready to counter the threats of a modern era.

Air Defence used the vehicle to keep moving into positions and hamper 'enemy' efforts, eventually forcing them to change tactics with air superiority lost.

The troop also helped Charlie Company of 40 Commando take a key position and foiled a counter-attack by their 'enemy' and engaging two more Super Cobra helicopters.





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HANG ABOUT

ARCTIC PREPARATION RAMPS UP IN THE HIGHLANDS

ROYAL Marines of 45 Commando have stepped up their preparations for the Arctic wilds with a foray into their traditional playground of the Northwest Highlands.

The Arbroath-based commandos are readying for three months in northern Norway starting next month but have first tested their mettle across the cold and wet Highland peaks.

Based out of Cameron Barracks, Inverness, 45 Commando's fighting companies and their comrades from Commando Logistics Regiment and the Royal Artillery's 29 Commando 7 (Sphinx) Battery have been participating in Exercise Green Claymore.

The training was also a meeting of green berets.

The US Army's 1-10th Special Forces Group (Operational Detachment Alpha) or 'Green Berets' joined the commandos – who wear their own coveted green beret to signify completion of the gruelling All Arms Commando Course at Commando Training Centre in Lympstone – as they prepare to deploy to the Arctic together.

A rigorous mountain warfare training programme saw commandos train day and night and through all weather conditions (mostly rain) under the watchful eye of the Mountain Leader Cadre, the Royal Marines who specialise in mountain and Arctic warfare.

Colour Sergeant Taylor, 45 Commando's Mountain Leader 1, said: "To be able to survive in and fight in some of the most inhospitable conditions, commandos fundamentally have to sustain a higher level of resilience.

"It's an inescapable fact that this means hardening individuals through arduous training; this is exactly what mountain training offers. The progression from the basic course through to the final training exercise

is rightly steep to ensure that 3 Commando Brigade can employ resilient personnel to the Arctic."

The first week, which forms the basic course, started with a chance to refresh navigation skills whilst increasing duration and elevation of routes, with increasing weight to bear. Interspersed with the daily marches, briefs were delivered on topics such as long range communications equipment, kit preparation and mountain tactics.

For the majority of ranks who have progressed on to the advanced course, weapons and ammunition scales have been added to the already-heavy loads as the commandos have been building an appreciation for what it means to act as small teams in the challenging mountainous environment.

Skills and tactics in mountain warfare differ from those in other environments and need to be practised to achieve success in mountain operations.

The nature of the ground sometimes presents obstacles, such as river crossings and cliff faces, and the Mountain Leaders have been demonstrating how to tackle these. Surveillance and reconnaissance training also formed an integral part of Green Claymore.

The third and final week put everything to the test in a Field Training Exercise – an opportunity for battlefield commanders to hone their tactics and strategies across the mountains while each commando has been able to sharpen their own individual understanding of operating in this unforgiving environment.

The first marines will fly out to Norway shortly to begin preparations for the winter deployment in Norway.

TRENT'S AFRICA PATROL

WHAT SAILORS AND ROYAL MARINES ARE DOING IN THE GULF OF GUINEA



HMS TRENT joined the international fight against piracy in West African waters to help protect the more than £6 billion of UK trade that passes through the region.

The patrol ship is in the Gulf of Guinea – one of the world's piracy hotspots – as the UK looks to improve security and help prevent widespread piracy which has seen international shipping suffer, seafarers' lives put in danger and damage caused to the economies of nearby nations.

During her three-month deployment, Trent has visited Nigeria, Ghana and Senegal to foster ties and train local forces, equipping them in the fight against illegal activity, and spoken to local fishermen to understand patterns of life during security operations in the Niger Delta.

HMS Trent carries a specialist team of Royal Marines from 42 Commando who are experts in boarding operations, known officially as Maritime Interdiction Operations. The commandos have been sharing knowledge and expertise in the skills needed

to board, search and – if needs be – seize suspect vessels.

Trent's mission also included French-led multinational exercises, known as Grand African Nemo, during which the ship worked closely with the Togolese, Nigerian and Benin Navies, while also operating with the Italian frigate Marceglia as part of international efforts.

The deployment of the patrol vessel is a clear signal of the UK's commitment to the region.

HMS Trent's Commanding Officer, Commander Tom Knott, said: "I am extremely proud that HMS Trent is spearheading the Royal Navy's return to West Africa and the Gulf of Guinea. My sailors and Royal Marines are highly trained in the delivery of Maritime Interdiction Operations and are working alongside regional partners to re-establish our understanding of this complex and vast waterspace.

"Alongside the UK's 2021 co-chairing of the G7++ Friends of Gulf of Guinea we are targeting a collaborative approach to improving maritime security

and to reassure the merchant shipping community.

"This will be an enduring commitment to West Africa, so far we've already enjoyed hosting school children, conservation groups, government representatives and military leaders on board Trent to build stronger links with the community and explain exactly why Trent is deployed to this region."

The UK co-chaired the G7++ Friends of the Gulf of Guinea conference with hosts Senegal during HMS Trent's stop in Dakar at the end of November.

The meeting brings together nations to deal with illegal activities at sea in the region and Armed Forces Minister James Heappey visited Trent in the Senegalese capital.

Meanwhile, Ghanaian Navy officer, Lieutenant Christian Obeng Baah, has spent time learning from the Royal Navy aboard HMS Trent alongside fellow Ghanaian officer Lieutenant Isaac Yaw Abban.

Lt Obeng Baah said: "I feel the United Kingdom and Ghana has a rich history of comradeship and this is being deepened by our time on HMS Trent.



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Royal Marines wave goodbye to a fisherman in the Gulf of Guinea during HMS Trent's patrol of the region, which included talking to locals to get a better understanding of patterns of life in the West African region



Royal Marines from 42 Commando carry out boarding training with the Nigerian Navy, during a week of work with the Nigerians and a stop in Lagos

Pictures by PO Phot Alex Ceolin

"The deployment of a Royal Navy Ship in the Gulf of Guinea is a step in the right direction and depicts the unflinching support of the UK Government to its allies especially in the Gulf of Guinea in dealing with piracy, unregulated fishing, smuggling of drugs, arms and other illegal activities."

Soon after *Navy News* went to print, HMS Trent visited Cape Verde where sailors and marines were to train the Cape Verde Coast Guard in how to plan and conduct vessel boarding operations to support counter-narcotics missions.

The ship was then set to continue to The Gambia before continuing her long-term deployment to the Mediterranean that has seen her operate as far east as the Black Sea since she left the UK at the end of March.

HMS Trent carries a 17-strong contingent from 42 Commando, which trains partner forces in skills like boarding and searching of suspicious vessels, as well as evidence handling and medical skills.

This is one of the specialist areas Royal Marines of

42 Commando can turn their hands to, with marines regularly deploying in small teams to provide world-class training in a range of skills that can help nations counter illicit activity around their coastline and within their borders.

As well delivering training to partner nations, 42 Commando are experts in boarding operations helping fight against illegal activity like piracy, drugs-smuggling and terrorism.

The Plymouth-based unit deploy in small teams on Royal Navy warships around the world and are also tasked with rescuing isolated personnel – like downed pilots or British citizens at risk – from behind enemy lines.

"Activities include the conducting of Maritime Security Operations, reinforcing relationships with West African partner forces, and demonstrating the UK's commitment to security in the Gulf of Guinea – an area of confluence for illicit activity," said Captain Tosh Westbury, who is in command of the Royal Marines on board Trent.

"The Royal Marines Boarding Team aims to be a part of the solution to these growing concerns.

"In the short-term, it is capable of drawing intelligence from UK/EU Government agencies through HMS Trent, to carry out maritime interdiction operations.

"This would prevent a portion of illicit goods entering West African coastlines, which would also deter the broader trafficking network within the Gulf of Guinea. To provide more longevity, the team is also focussed on developing the partner force capabilities of West African states, to enable them to police their own shores with greater success.

"This is achieved by providing training to partner forces when the ship visits any one of the countries throughout this deployment.

"The boarding team has learnt much from this deployment already. Such lessons will continue to shape the capability which 42 Commando Royal Marines provides the Royal Navy, particularly for future operations within the Gulf of Guinea."

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THE DESERT IS OURS



Picture by PO Phot Si Ethell

COMMANDOS SHOW THEIR METTLE IN FIVE DAY BATTLE IN THE MOJAVE

ROYAL Marines have put the seal on desert exercises with an intensive five-day battle in California alongside allies across one of the largest military training areas in the world.

Commandos have spent the past two months in the Mojave Desert preparing for deployments next year as part of the newly-formed Littoral Response Group (South), which is one of two new Royal Navy task groups centred on commando forces set up to respond to world events.

Experts from across 3 Commando Brigades came together to form the LRG – with Taunton-based 40 Commando at its heart – at the vast US Marine Corps training facility at Twentynine Palms in California.

The conclusion of the exercises, known as Green Dagger, was five days of gruelling warfighting which saw allied forces – from the US, Canada, United Arab Emirates, the Netherlands and UK – join forces to take on a highly-equipped US Marine Corps adversary.

The exercise focused around three urban sprawls which were defended by allied forces, the largest of which consisting of 1,200 buildings purpose built for militaries to test themselves among.

The LRG won decisive battles early on and gained ground from their enemy, but, with the US Marines pushing into allied territory, Royal Marines and their allies carried out raids behind enemy lines to stop further counterattacks.

“Our success has proved the new commando force concept is more lethal and sophisticated

than ever before and I am immensely proud of every member of the LRG and their vital contributions,” said Lieutenant Colonel Andy Dow, Commanding Officer of 40 Commando.

“Operating alongside our partners from the USA, Netherlands, Canada and the UAE gives us a fantastic opportunity to test, integrate and continue to push our capabilities in new and innovative directions.

“Throughout this deployment our focus has been on integrating game-changing capabilities from across the commando force to deliver disproportional effect in the face of a free-thinking peer adversary.”

The exercise concluded with a last-minute ‘enemy’ assault which was repelled, leaving allied forces in control of over two thirds of the entire ‘battlefield’.

The commandos took advantage of one of the best military training areas in the world to experiment with new tactics and share knowledge with allies.

This deployment has ultimately readied the commando element of LRG(S) for operations next year, joining its sister task group, Littoral Response Group (North), ready to react to unfolding events around the world.

The LRG North has already deployed to the Baltic this year and has a focus on events across Europe, while LRG South will operate east of the Suez Canal.

LRG South is expected to be functional next year with the addition of amphibious ships and aircraft.



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THE Royal Navy's task group in the Caribbean has spent the past few weeks preparing communities in the region against natural disasters.

HMS Medway and RFA Wave Knight, the Royal Navy's regular presence in the area in 2021, have visited a number of islands to share their knowledge and expertise should a hurricane hit.

Sailors from River-class patrol ship Medway worked with officials from the British Virgin Islands to improve their disaster-relief plans. A four-day visit saw humanitarian relief specialists show off some of their equipment and skills while some of the ship's company joined the Islands' Department for Disaster Management to develop their ability to react if the worst were to happen.

Together, they studied communications during and after a major hurricane and looked at their capability to carry out initial damage assessments and restore vital services.

Commander Brian Trim, commander of the Royal Navy task group, said: "The depth and breadth of experience amongst the experts at the table-top exercise was really impressive. The many lessons and ideas that were shared with my team will help to improve plans for disaster relief in the Virgin Islands. I'm truly grateful to everyone for giving of their time for the exercise."

Sailors and 3 Commando Brigade's Crisis Response Troop also headed for Queen Elizabeth II Park to show islanders the various bits of kit and some of the techniques used to restore infrastructure after a hurricane.

A crowd watched a demonstration of chain-saw clearance techniques and asked questions regarding the equipment on display, which included quad bikes, trailers, tools, shelters and ration packs.

Meanwhile, Royal Fleet Auxiliary support ship RFA Wave Knight spent time in St Vincent and the Grenadines, where Prime Minister Dr Ralph Gonsalves and other guests were welcomed on board. They were able to see first-hand some of the

humanitarian assistance and disaster relief (HADR) capabilities that are held on board, demonstrated by 24 Commando Royal Engineers Crisis Response Troop.

The ship's commanding officer Captain Ali Clack said: "This is RFA Wave Knight's second visit to St Vincent and the Grenadines this year. Our last was in June when we moved humanitarian aid donated by the people of Barbados in response to the devastating eruption of La Soufrière.

"During this visit we were able to display some of the task group's other humanitarian and disaster relief capabilities and discussed how the UK can further support the region as it emerges from a globally difficult year."

In September, the 815 NAS Wildcat embarked on Wave Knight supported St Vincent and the Grenadines by transporting replacement seismic monitoring equipment on to the summit of La Soufrière volcano, which had been damaged by the eruption in April.

Further support was provided on this most recent visit when two sorties took place - one for scientists to gather data and the second for the Minister of Finance Camillo Gonsalves to survey the damage done by the eruption and volcanic flow.

Lieutenant Keith Webb, 210 Flight Commander, 815 Naval Air Squadron, said: "The Royal Navy has a proud history of scientific endeavour, and to be able to contribute to the work of the National Emergency Management Organisation by monitoring an active volcano was a privilege.

"And it contributed to our continuing mission of humanitarian aid and disaster relief in the Caribbean region - I only regret that the weather prevented us from doing more."

During the past five months the Caribbean Task Group has also completed two HADR exercises in Montserrat and the Turks and Caicos Islands, working together with the local Regiments to share knowledge and experience.



● (above) HMS Medway Commander Chris Hollingworth meets with officials from the British Virgin Islands; (right) A Wildcat helicopter of 815 NAS embarked on RFA Wave Knight flies above St Vincent and the Grenadines; Sailors of HMS Medway meet local children from the British Virgin Islands; (below) HMS Medway alongside in Curacao.

LPhoto Finn Hutchins

DISASTER PREP FOR CARIBBEAN ISLANDS



MILESTONE MOMENTS



● (above) HMS Kent spends time in Kenya, training with the Kenya Armed Forces. (below) The frigate arrives in Bangladesh and commemorates lives lost in conflict.

Pictures: LPhoto Dan Rosenbaum

Two port visits will be ones to remember for sailors on board HMS Kent.

As the frigate headed west, on its long journey from the Pacific Ocean to the UK, it stopped in Bangladesh and Kenya.

Her trip to Bangladesh is the first time a Royal Navy ship has visited the country in more than a decade while her port stop in Mombasa gave the ship's company a memorable safari experience.

KENYA

Sailors on HMS Kent trained alongside Kenyan Armed Forces during a visit to eastern Africa.

The frigate had a busy period transiting the Indian Ocean, working with the multi-national task group Combined Task Force 150 on counter-narcotics operations.

And their time in Mombasa was equally hectic with a series of exercises planned with the Kenyan military.

Kent's embarked Royal Marines of 42 Commando provided two-days of intensive boarding training with the Kenyan Special Boat Unit, a branch of the Kenyan Special Operations Squadron.

42 Commando deploy in small teams on Royal Navy warships around the world and provide the ships with the ability to intercept drugs smugglers, pirates and terrorists. Their specialist knowledge and expertise was on show during the training which culminated in a live boarding exercise with a Kenyan coast guard vessel.

On land, a team of Kent's firefighting and damage control experts trained with their Kenyan Navy colleagues at the recently-opened Kenyan Navy School of Firefighting.

Following initial briefs, they oversaw drills and procedures building on an established relationship with the UK's Portsmouth-based HMS Phoenix Damage Control and Firefighting School and the Kenyan Navy.

Commander Matt Sykes, Commanding Officer of HMS Kent, said: "Kenya's inclusion in the Carrier Strike Group deployment is very much a demonstration of the deep and longstanding UK-Kenya relationship.

"We are hugely grateful to the government of Kenya and the Kenyan Armed Forces for their support during HMS Kent's visit."

With some time left in the country, Tsavo East National Park and Taita Hills Wildlife sanctuary organised safaris for the ship's company to see elephants, giraffes and lions – a highlight of the deployment for many of the sailors.

Meanwhile, the ship's personnel were able to give back to the community by volunteering personnel to help in painting two children's homes.

Reverend Moses Muli, Port Chaplain at the Mombasa Mission to Seafarers, said: "I was very much touched with the humility of the sailors who committed their resting time to do something that will leave a mark in people's hearts."

BANGLADESH

HMS Kent received a warm welcome in Bangladesh – the first time the Royal Navy has visited the nation in more than a decade.

The frigate sailed up the Karnaphuli River and was welcomed into Chattogram by the Bangladeshi Navy. Kent's visit, the first by a Royal Navy ship since 2008, was aimed at strengthening ties between the country and the UK and showing the UK's commitment to the region.

It also gave the ship's company the chance to go ashore and enjoy a range of activities.

Cdr Sykes said: "We are hugely grateful to the government of Bangladesh and the Bangladesh Navy for their support for HMS Kent's visit. Bangladesh's inclusion in the Carrier Strike Group deployment is very much a demonstration of the deep and longstanding UK-Bangladesh relationship."

A number of ship's tours were provided while Kent was alongside to give visitors a flavour of life in a UK warship. Meanwhile 42 Commando again shared their knowledge, this time with a joint training session with Bangladeshi Special Forces on boarding techniques. There was also time to relax, with facilities provided in both the Bangladesh Naval Academy and boat club for sport and recreation, including a volleyball match against a Bangladeshi Navy team.

Kent's time in Bangladesh concluded with a ceremonial visit to the Chittagong Commonwealth War Graves, where Cdr Sykes and embarked Chaplain Father Stephen Ashley-Emery conducted a ceremony among the World War Two war graves, attended by crew from Kent and their Bangladeshi counterparts.

AB Taylor McKenzie, one of the youngest members in Kent felt grateful and proud to visit the Commonwealth War Graves.

"Armed forces from two completely different countries coming together to remember World War Two was a wholesome experience and I especially liked the words of the Chaplain, who emphasized the importance of spreading love and peace. We will remember them," AB McKenzie said.



ARMED with a new lightweight missile system, HMS Defender's Wildcat took to the skies above the Pacific Ocean.

The helicopter carried several Martlet missiles designed to protect the UK's aircraft carriers from attacks by swarms of small boats.

The moment of firing, pictured below, marked a key milestone of the UK Carrier Strike Group's global deployment.

It is the first time this type of missile has been launched on frontline operations by the Royal Navy after rigorous testing at ranges off the UK coast by the Yeovilton-based Wildcat Maritime Force last year.

And it was up to 815 Naval Air Squadron embarked on Type 45 destroyer HMS Defender to ensure the tests were carried out during recent operations.

The Martlet lightweight missile was successfully fired at an inflatable target in the sea – known in the navy as the big red tomato.

In 0.3 seconds, the missile detached from the Wildcat HMA Mk2 helicopter, accelerating to one-and-a-half

times the speed of sound towards its target.

The purpose of the missile system is to add another layer of protection around the Royal Navy's aircraft carriers, with the Wildcats able to carry up to 20 of the laser-sensor missiles that can be used against stationary and moving targets.

Captain James Blackmore, Carrier Strike Group's Air Wing Commander, said: "Martlet is a new air to surface lightweight multi-role missile recently introduced into service for the Wildcat helicopter and provides an offensive and defensive capability against small boats and maritime targets that may pose a threat to the Carrier Strike Group.

"The Wildcat is a phenomenally versatile aircraft and the inclusion of up to 20 missiles on each of the four embarked aircraft adds

yet another potent capability to the Air Wing and the Carrier Strike Group.

"This first firing during an operational deployment not only gives confidence in the end to end weapon kill chain but also offers an overt demonstration of one of the many strike capabilities provided by the Air Wing from within the





Task Group.”

HMS Defender is currently deployed with the UK Carrier Strike’s Group on its maiden global operational deployment.

And the Martlet missile, available for all Wildcats deployed on the task group, is part of the ring of protective steel around carrier HMS

Queen Elizabeth.

Frigates HMS Kent and HMS Richmond also embark Wildcats along with Type 45 destroyer HMS Diamond.

Meanwhile, HMS Queen Elizabeth adds Merlin helicopters and F-35 Lightning stealth fighter jets to the protective ring.

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Sailors drive ambulances in Wales

ROYAL Navy sailors are swapping missions on ships and aircraft for duties as ambulance drivers across Wales to help alleviate pressure on health services.

The authorities have asked for military help to ease the strain on health services with unprecedented demand and continual pressures because of Covid.

Fifty sailors and airmen from the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force are the second group of volunteers to come forward and will join 50 British Army soldiers from 4 Regiment, Royal Logistic Corps, already driving ambulances across Wales.

In total 129 personnel are supporting the NHS in this, with 100 driving ambulances and a further 29 in support roles.

The Welsh Ambulance Service NHS Trust trained military personnel in how to deliver support on emergency callouts and familiarised them with the vehicles and equipment they will be operating.

The military ambulance drivers will assist in patient handling, but will not be conducting any patient treatment beyond the help a paramedic would normally call upon from a public bystander.

Royal Navy Chief Petty Officer Adrian Davies from Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton, Somerset, said: "We're here to train with the NHS Welsh Ambulance Service and help out in any way we can, in a non-clinical role. It's a very worthwhile cause.

"Working together with the other services here is great, we've come together well, it's a good mix. I will be stationed in Cardigan on the west coast and looking forward to working with the professional paramedics."

Lieutenant Commander Graeme 'Geordie' McCutcheon, from Jarrow, volunteered to drive non-emergency ambulances to allow the trust to free up resources for front-line services.

The 52-year-old pilot and instructor is usually based at air station Culdrose in Cornwall with 750 Naval Air Squadron.

He said: "When I heard they were looking for volunteers, I didn't hesitate. I like to make time to see how I can give something back to the community. I've been a school governor, a volunteer children's swimming coach and a leader with the Scout Association.

"This is such a worthwhile cause and you can't



beat the NHS for the amazing work they do. If they need help, then I am happy to step up and help where I can."

It is the third time the military have supported the West Ambulance Service through the pandemic as part of the Military Aid to the Civil Authorities (MACA) arrangement.

More than 200 British Army soldiers have already assisted the Trust's Covid-19 effort by driving and decontaminating ambulance vehicles as part of Operation Rescript.

More broadly, around 20,000 military personnel have been supporting public services across the UK during the pandemic as part of a 'COVID Support Force.'

Lee Brooks, the Trust's Director of Operations, said: "We're proud and grateful to have the military working alongside us once again, who did a superb job of assisting us on two occasions previously last year.

"Having our Armed Forces colleagues back on board will help us put more ambulances on duty so we can get to more patients, more quickly, while the extreme pressure continues.

"Essentially, they'll work with one of our clinicians on an emergency ambulance responding to the full range of emergency calls.

"The winter period is our busiest time, and having military support will bolster our capacity and put us in the best possible position to provide a safe service to the people of Wales."

Veteran motors for SSAFA

ROYAL Navy veteran Andrew Marshall is currently on a drive around the UK coastline to raise funds for SSAFA.

Andrew, 49, turned his life around thanks to the Armed Forces charity after a few struggles over recent years.

He served as an Aircraft Engineer in the Fleet Air Arm on Sea King helicopters on front-line squadrons operating off HMS Invincible and the support ship RFA Argus, leaving in 1995 after seven years' regular service before putting in a further three in the Royal Naval Reserve.

However, personal battles including anxiety over his business, debt, alcohol dependency, a brush with the law, and the breakdown of his marriage took their toll on Andrew, one problem adding to the weight of the others, leading to his mental health declining.

Andrew, now studying Health and Social Care at the University of Sunderland, said: "I had all of these red flags and warnings, but I still thought I could turn things around. I was wrong; I had waited far too long to reach out for help.

"That point came in 2018, and I reached the lowest point in my life. I had been through years of emotional stress, turmoil and reached a point that I felt the best thing for everyone would be if I was no longer here. I was so poorly with my mental health that I tried to take my own life.

"But I did eventually reach out and contacted an alcohol help service in South Shields. Staff there started to help unravel and help me start my recovery. I joined NAAFI Break, a local ex-forces charity really to socialise



and give some structure to my week. There, I met a lady from SSAFA who helped me with my financial and housing problems."

Andrew said that SSAFA has helped his recovery immeasurably since then, adding: "SSAFA's caseworker helped me secure housing as I was losing my home at that time, and also helped with furnishings, carpets, and some initial bills and debts."

Explaining why he decided to drive the coast of the UK in a converted minibus called Roxy for charity and to highlight concerns about men's mental health, Andrew said: "When I was ill with my mental health, I developed severe anxiety which affected all aspects of my life, one of the biggest impacts was my ability to drive.

"Over the years, the anxiety became much worse, it seemed

as though the distance of where I could drive was becoming smaller and smaller. The anxiety became so acute, that eventually I could no longer drive. I couldn't even drive to my support meetings which were less than a mile away.

"I faced my challenges and in June 2020, I bought a Ford Transit minibus that I started to convert into a campervan. My reasoning was that if I started to panic when I drove anywhere, I could pull over and stay in Roxy until it passed."

He expects the challenge to take up to four weeks and to help him raise funds visit [justgiving.com/crowdfunding/andrew-marshall-gb-coastline-in-roxy](https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/andrew-marshall-gb-coastline-in-roxy).

You can also follow Andrew's adventure on Facebook and Instagram.

To find out more about SSAFA, visit [ssafa.org.uk](https://www.ssafa.org.uk)



Commandos remember fallen comrades

COMMANDOS new and old gathered at the iconic Commando memorial in Fort William, Scotland.

Royal Marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group, based at Naval Base Clyde, gathered alongside veterans and their families from across the country to support the annual Royal Marines Association (RMA) parade.

The memorial service, taken by the Reverend Mark Dalton RN, included prayers and readings. A roll of honour was read in memory of fallen comrades.

Commanding Officer of 43 Commando, Colonel Ben Foster who attended this year's event said: "Today was fantastic, it was great for 43 Commando Royal Marines Fleet Protection Group to be amongst the RMA at Spean Bridge. A very special location on a very special day, it's great for serving members of the Royal Marines past and present to be able to come together in such a significant location."

Alongside the Royal Marines from 43 Commando were members of the RMA, a local pipe band and local Royal Marine Cadet units.

The Royal Marines Charity celebrates its 75th anniversary in 2021, marking the foundation of one of its predecessor organisations, the Royal Marines Association (RMA), in 1946.

To commemorate 75 years of the association and to raise funds, personnel took part in Commando Paddle 75 challenge.

Following in the footsteps of the 'Cockleshell Heroes', serving Royal Marines alongside veterans paddled 120 nautical miles over five days, from 43 Commando based at HMNB Clyde to Fort William, Spean Bridge.

The area is affectionately known as 'Commando Country' as this was the Commando training ground during World War 2.

The area surrounding the memorial has special significance to all Commandos.

Tests developed in the Spean Bridge training areas are still used today to see if new recruits have what it takes to wear the coveted green beret.

Pictures: LPhot Barry Wheeler



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Carrier backs fitness campaign

BRITAIN'S biggest warship has given her backing to a national fitness and fundraising drive to help the UK's veteran community.

Aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales provided the setting for the launch of the Royal British Legion Industries' 'Tommy 10K' campaign.

The initiative, now in its second year, aims to raise money for the armed forces community by encouraging people of all abilities to walk, run or wheel 10 kilometres.

Tommy 10K was born in the middle of the pandemic, raising an impressive £250,000 to support the charity's work with veterans.

Related to but separate from the more familiar Royal British Legion, Royal British Legion Industries are focused on providing employment, accommodation and welfare facilities to veterans and people with disabilities through a variety of programmes, including their own accommodation village.

WO2 Duncan Thornhill, HMS Prince of Wales' Warrant Officer Caterer, supported last year's Tommy 10K and thought the ship would make the perfect backdrop for the 2021 launch event. He's signed up over 40 members of the ship's company in support.



"Last year during the pandemic I got into running and needed something to keep me motivated through the autumn-winter months," Duncan explained.

"I saw the advertisement on Facebook for the RBLI Tommy 10K and thought that it was perfect.

"In joining their Facebook group, I discovered a fantastic community made up of totally different people from all over the UK, with the same aim - to raise as much as we could.

"The support and encouragement from the group

was great and it's a privilege to be a part of."

"When we managed to raise £250k, it was the icing on the cake."

His Commanding Officer, Captain Steve Higham, added: "It's fabulous to be the host of the Royal British Legion Industries' Tommy 10K. Fitness is a key part of being in the RN, combined with raising money for veterans, the Tommy 10K offers the perfect opportunity to get out there and do something good for both personal health and the armed forces community."



RN chefs cook up a storm

TWO catering teams from HM Naval Base Clyde have competed at the City of Glasgow College against two teams of catering Students in a 'cook and serve' competition.

The Royal Navy and City of Glasgow College "Cook and Serve" competition was first held in 2019. This year's competition was hosted at the College's Cathedral Street Campus.

The chefs and front of house teams were given the use of the Scholars training restaurant, a professional set up that is open to the public. It allows the students to cook and work in a supervised environment prior to working in the hospitality industry.

Scholars also provided a different environment for the Royal Navy catering teams, more accustomed to working in the galley.

The three person teams consisted of two chefs and one 'front of house', who would also be judged on their knowledge and technical serving skills. The teams had to deliver a three-course menu – starter, main and a dessert course. They were given a budget of £120 and had to produce the meal to the judges under tight time constraints.

The competition aims to further cement the developing relationship between the Royal Navy and the City of Glasgow College. The hospitality industry has struggled over recent times; this competition serves to further ties between the sailors and their student counterparts 'stoking the fire' and inspiring a love for cooking in a fun and challenging kitchen environment.

The difficult task of leading the judges from the College and the Royal Navy at this year's show-down was Gordon McIntyre, World Skills training lead who judged 'front of house'. Alongside him with the envious task of judging this year's culinary delights was Evan Welsh, Catering Specialist at Hobart UK.

May Donald, Associate Dean of Culinary arts and Baking, one of the Architects of the 'Cook and Serve', said: "The students are desperate to get back to normality so it's great to have this interaction with the Royal Navy. Morale is really high in the kitchen and it's great to see".

The trio from the HM Naval Base Clyde-based Waterfront Logistics Support Group (WSLG) 'cooked up a storm' with a mouth-watering starter of pan seared Rainbow Trout with minted pea puree. For mains there was trio of duck, served with creamed baby leeks, pickled cherries, carrot purée, braised red cabbage accompanied with a cherry jam. Adding a touch of flair to the desert, apricots were flambe'd table side and served alongside a ginger beer cake and pear sorbet.

Petty Officer (PO) Dan Carrington who was this year's RN lead for the competition, said: "We really wanted to get this competition going again, sharing experiences and knowledge.

"The only time our caterers get chance to cook and show off their flair is at mess dinners, and these opportunities don't come around very often. When they get to enter competitions like this, they get excited, it gives them that opportunity to get a lot more creative."

It all 'panned-out' for the Clyde-based WSLG team who were the overall winners of the competition, taking home the gold medal.

PO Dan Carrington added: "As the City of Glasgow College won the competition in 2019 it was a great feeling to see the Clyde-based WSLG team win this year. It was a very close competition. Working with the City of Glasgow College has been an amazing experience not only for our teams, but for the students as well. It gives the students at the College a great insight into what our catering teams do within the Royal Navy."



Sultan goes pink

HMS Sultan Medical Centre hosted a *Bake Off*-style cake sale as part of 'Wear It Pink' for Breast Cancer Now, the research care charity.

Bakers from across HMS Sultan donated cakes and competed for the title of 'Star Baker', trying to impress the expert judge, Base Warrant Officer, Warrant Officer 1 Glynn 'Paul Hollywood' Fellows.

The winner was Medical Centre, Occupational Health Nurse Shirley Rawlings with a strawberry and raspberry pavlova.

Deputy Practice Manager, Petty Officer Medical Assistant Hannah Hendzel said: "Wear it Pink provides a great opportunity to highlight breast cancer and show our support for those who are working on research."

The event raised a total of £339 in cash and text donations.

Find out more at: <https://www.wearitpink.org/>



Engineers thanked

REAR Admiral Malcom Toy (left) paid tribute to the hard work of air engineers in maintaining the Royal Navy's fleet of Merlin Mk2 helicopters.

On a visit to Culdrose, home of the submarine-hunting variant of the helicopter, as a senior air engineering mentor, he praised the dedication of sailors at the air station, especially the senior rates who he said underpinned the efforts of the entire team.

The Merlin, he added, was a complicated aircraft which required specialist knowledge to be maintained to the exacting standards demanded by the Royal Navy.

Singled out for special praise was (from second left) recently promoted WO1 Tim Andrews and, for their long service and good conduct, CPO Paul 'Bob' Hoskins, POs Chris Lewis, Danny McDougall and Mike Hay, as well as PO Steve Thornhill who has just left the navy and was thanked for his exemplary commitment over the last 31 years.

Actress joins RNBT as vice patron

ACTRESS Jenny Agutter, well-known to TV viewers as Sister Julienne in *Call the Midwife*, was made a Vice Patron of The RNBT, the naval benevolence charity based in Portsmouth.

Jenny accepted an invitation to be the guest of honour at RNBT's annual presentation at HMS Collingwood.

Jenny already had a close connection with the work of RNBT, particularly RNBT's Care Home, Pembroke House in Gillingham, Kent.

She spoke of her early upbringing in an Armed Forces family, her father in the Army and her mother a WAAF and the camaraderie of service life.

The presentation gave Chairman Captain Nick Fletcher the opportunity to highlight the successes of the Trust during the pandemic and beyond.

He updated the audience on the great progress made with RNBT's new care home, Admiral Jellicoe House, currently under construction at Locksway Road in Portsmouth.



The home is on track for opening in June 2022, during RNBT's Centenary Year.

Captain Fletcher also mentioned the centenary events planned, which include a Thanksgiving Service at Portsmouth Cathedral on May 7 2022.

Chief Executive, Commander Rob Bosshardt, highlighted

the achievements of the small RNBT headquarters team, 'open for business' despite three lockdowns, 'responding magnificently to the challenge of keeping the benevolence process running', awarding over 1,400 individual grants and helping a total of 2,600 people through financial assistance, residential care and holistic support.

New help for the RM family

THE Gordon Messenger Centre was officially opened by the Royal Marine General after whom it is named.

The £2.4 million centre near the Commando Training Centre in Lymington will provide a new community facility for the entire Royal Marines family and will support serving Royal Marines, veterans and their families through various events, activities, and meetings.

While there are other similar Armed Forces centres around the country, this is the first of its kind for the Corps. It is set to benefit more than 50,000 serving personnel and their families over the next 30 years.

The pressures upon service families are increasingly widely recognised; better support is crucial to ensure that the correct care is available to Royal Marines and their families.

Demands for accessible resources to combat mental ill-health and stress are increasing. Additional practical resources were needed to support the entire Royal Marines family.

Following an initial statement of requirement from CTCRM in 2014, which arose from the families based there, a Navy-led Community Needs Analysis confirmed that a facility was needed at Commando Training Centre.

The Royal Marines Resilience Centre concept was simple; to build a venue that could host a diverse range of support services, accessible to all, in one location.

The centre will provide an open location to regularly meet other people "in the same boat", to share problems and solutions, with access to a wide range of bespoke support.

Financing the Gordon Messenger Centre was a joint effort between many charitable organisations.

In April 2018 the RNRMC's Trustee Board released £250,000 to support the build and this was added to by a collection of major donors, including Mrs Lisa Ronson, The Mrs Nancy Warren Charitable Trust, The Gosling Foundation, The Royal British Legion, The



Swire Charitable Trust, The Naval Children's Charity and Mundy Group. The project's largest funder was the RNRMC's sister charity, RMA – The Royal Marines Charity, which contributed over £1m.

The design of the centre was based on the input of a CTC community working group, while a number of companies and individuals delivered the project, with Midas Construction Ltd as the main contractors.

It has a conference hall which can be subdivided, meeting rooms, café, seating area, communication booths, creche and outdoor play area.

Mandy Lindley, RNRMC Director of Relationships and Funding said: "We are delighted to see the Gordon Messenger Centre officially open.

"Projects like this sit at the heart of the RNRMC's support and it is essential that

our Royal Marines beneficiaries have facilities that can bring the whole community together.

"We hope that the centre will be used and enjoyed for many years to come."

Jonathan Ball, Chief Executive of RMA – The Royal Marines Charity, added: "The Gordon Messenger Centre will provide a safe space for building mental resilience in the Corps family and provide a range of facilities for every part of the Royal Marines family.

"It will be a one-stop shop that epitomises what the charity is about: comradeship, compassion, collaboration and commemoration. We haven't had anywhere we can focus on all these things until now."

Centre Manager Gaby Wright is now building a volunteer group to assist with the hosting of activities. Email navytrgctcrmc@mailbox.mod.gov.uk



Support continues for injured personnel

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) works closely with Hasler Naval Service Recovery Centre (NSRC) and provides funding to support the recovery of Wounded, Injured and Sick personnel.

The RNRMC recognises the importance of supporting Hasler Company in their vital work to help recuperate WIS personnel and prevent disengagement from the Service.

Hasler Naval Service Recovery Centre is designed to professionally command, co-ordinate and administer a bespoke recovery pathway for each assigned rank and to provide effective assistance and support to them and their families. The RNRMC provides grant funding to Hasler for items such as specialist wheelchairs, support for speech and language therapy, art therapy sessions, as well as respite breaks to aid recovery.

Earlier this year the RNRMC supported Exercise Country Retreat 3, which provided 12 Wounded, Injured and Sick

Service Personnel (WIS SP) from Hasler a respite break at Pentillie Castle, Cornwall.

The break gave individuals an opportunity to take time out from the daily routine of rehabilitation at HMS Drake and focus on the development of personal goals relevant to their bespoke recovery pathway.

The week included numerous activities designed to enhance the wellbeing of the WIS SP whilst also building self-confidence.

CPO Sid Street said: "The time spent at Pentillie was so relaxing. It proved to be completely rejuvenating and refreshing. Being around like-minded people with similar illness or disability helps you to put your own mind into perspective. I will take away the strength brought by others, and the calmness of such a tranquil venue."

LH Sarah Warren added: "The week gave me a much needed opportunity to relax. I'm forever being told to slow down and give my body chance to recover, being at Pentillie enabled me to do just that."

Morale-boosting treats

WITH Covid restrictions still making runs ashore impossible in some places, Royal Navy sailors are frequently finding themselves unable to enjoy some of the basic perks that service life usually has to offer.

The RNRMC have stepped in throughout the pandemic to help improve the experience for those stuck on ships and thousands of miles from home, and recently have supported sailors aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth with some morale-boosting treats during their stay in Japan.

The aircraft carrier was docked in the port of Yokosuka for a series of exercises and engagements as part of the UK's commitment to strengthening ties with Japan. However, due to Covid concerns the crew were restricted to the ship during their stay and were unable to experience Japanese culture first hand.

In response to this, the RNRMC were able to act quickly



and provide the funds to allow 'goodie bags' to be assembled for all sailors aboard the ship. This was in addition to treats that were donated by the community on the US base in the port.

A message of thanks to the RNRMC from HMS Queen Elizabeth's official Twitter account reads: "We also received support from @RNRMC who kindly enabled gift bags for the ship. Thank you! 1,500 'gizzet' bags to provide a souvenir of Japan for every soul on board: magnets, postcards, snacks, art."

New shop for gifts

THE RNRMC online shop has been run in-house for the past few years, but as demand has grown for RNRMC products, so has the need to streamline the operational process.

To ensure continued efficiency, the RNRMC have now joined the newly-formed Royal Navy Shop. The shop will also bring together Royal Navy and Royal Marines products from other charities and organisations.

The new shop offers a full online shopping experience and the fulfilment of orders.

Tim Cope, Royal Marines Shop Commercial Director, said: "The Royal Navy Shop offers a Naval 'department store' online. The range of products available is huge and proceeds help support the Naval community."

Visit royalnavyshop.co.uk to see the range. ■ At the end of one of the most difficult years the nation has faced, we invite you to stand by our side in supporting our Naval family.

Buying a virtual gift from the RNRMC Charity Gift Shop will ensure vital support is there for the people of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, past and present. Whether you choose a gift towards supporting those in uniform and their dependents, or those whose service is behind them – your kindness will be a lifeline for those who need it the most.

Find out more at rnrmc.org.uk/charity-gift



Tribute to RM Major

ROYAL Marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group took part in a charity relay event in memory of Major Chris Moses, a former Royal Marine at HM Naval Base Clyde.

Six Royal Marines took part in the event which took place over 24 hours with three sets of pairs running two 13-mile legs in memory of Chris who died in January 2020.

As well as running to raise cash for two charities very close to Chris' heart – The Royal Marines Charity and Erskine – the organisers also came up with the idea of mounting a memorial plaque at the cairn on the top of Beinn a' Mhanaich, the mountain above Faslane which they were running up and down in Chris' memory.

At the time the Royal Marines submitted a request to the Ordnance Survey Team for the Cairn at the top of the mountain to be re-named Moses Cairn in memory of Chris and it was confirmed that this will go ahead and will be visible from April 2022 in OS Mapping.

Chris often donated to the Royal Marines Charity and Erskine hospital and he would be pleased that a total of £8,000 has now been raised in his name and split between the two charities.

It was Major Kane Holford and Warrant Officer 2 Richard Hayden, who together came up with the idea of mounting the memorial plaque on the mountain overlooking Faslane with a charity run to commemorate Chris' life.

WO2 Hayden said: "I am pleased to have been part of this meaningful event to remember Chris. As well as raising some money for charities that were important to Chris, we have made sure his name will live on at the top of Beinn a' Mhanaich, a place close to where he lived and worked."

Chris, who joined the Royal Marines in 2005 and spent much of his career in Scotland working as both the Training Officer and Operations Officer at 43 Cdo, and he also spent time at 45 Cdo in Arbroath.

Book celebrates food and the RN

BRITAIN has always had a rich naval history, with food often playing a central role on ships and at events from the staple 'hard tack' biscuits of Admiral Nelson's days to the sumptuous feasts prepared by today's Royal Navy chefs.

Celebrating and showcasing the traditions and innovations of this unique culinary world is *Galley – The Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity Cookbook*.

Thanks to the sponsorship of ESS Defence, all proceeds from the sale of every copy will go towards the charity's work in support of serving personnel, veterans and their families.

Galley shines a light on the skill and talent found within this demanding industry, thanks to the contributions of 20 professional chefs with a connection to the Royal Navy. Each has shared a starter, main and dessert – some from competition-winning menus – alongside their journey through active service and beyond. There's also a mouth-watering seven-hour lamb recipe from Michel Roux Jr, who himself served in the French military and has endorsed the book:

"I am so proud to be supporting The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and the incredible projects and facilities it provides to improve the lives of Royal Navy families and veterans," he said.

"Not only is this book filled with delicious recipes for you and your family, but every purchase will serve to improve the quality of life for all those who serve and enable this wonderful charity to continue its incredibly worthwhile work."

The book also features a foreword by The Princess Royal.

In addition to the recipes, the book is packed with insights into Navy life and traditions. From the strictly observed toasts of Trafalgar Night, commemorating Nelson's victory, to the story of how a handwritten recipe book by a naval chef who served from 1923 to the end of World War 2 came to light, there's much to learn in this fascinating collection of naval trivia and British maritime history.

For anyone with an interest in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, or any keen cook wanting to throw the perfect dinner party, *Galley* offers inspiration and information in a book like no other which supports a highly-deserving cause.

Galley – The Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity Cookbook is a 240-page hardback and retails at £25.

It will be available to purchase from Waterstones.com and the Royal Navy online shop. *Galley* can be purchased from royalnavyshop.co.uk with 20 percent off until December 21.

For centuries, the Royal Navy has defended our island's shores. As a maritime nation we have always depended on the sea and the sacrifices made by the people of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and their families.

Please help us protect their future, and all of ours, by leaving a gift in your Will.



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rnrmc.org.uk



UNITED WE MOURN

THE CORPS AND COMMANDO FAMILY REMEMBER MAJOR GENERAL MATT HOLMES

UNITED the Royal Marines and commando family have mourned the loss of one of their own. A 'tenacious' and 'passionate' leader who dedicated his life to his commando brethren.

Major General Matt Holmes died at the age 54 at his home in Winchester on October 2 and his loss has been felt deeply across the corps he was devoted to for more than 30 years, serving as Commandant General from 2019-2021 and on operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and Northern Ireland.

Tributes have flooded in from across the tight-knit commando community, the military and political sphere, and beyond.

General Matt was also awarded the prestigious Legion of Merit from the United States armed forces after his death.

Inscribed into The Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge reads the iconic words 'united we conquer'.

The bronze statue pays homage to the British Commandos and their daring missions in the Second World War, but the stunning location in the Scottish Highlands is also a place where families and the comrades of fallen commandos from more recent conflicts come to mourn and reflect.

It is a close family and together, united, they mourn General Matt's loss.

Here, the Royal Marines, represented by the Commanding Officers of 3 Commando Brigade's various units, pay homage to their well-respected and inspirational leader, giving insight into who General Matt was and the impact he made during his life.

Colonel Rich Maltby, Commanding Officer of Plymouth-based 47 Commando Raiding Group, said: "General Matt was a tenacious, passionate and dedicated Royal Marine who cared deeply for his people.

"Our paths crossed many times and he personally helped me on several occasions. Small in stature but huge in personality, he will be sorely missed."

Colonel Ben Foster, the Commanding Officer of Clyde-based 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group, the guardians of the UK's strategic nuclear deterrent, said: "The tragic passing of Major General Holmes caused all members of 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines to



Major General Matt Holmes' military career of more than 30 years saw him lead the Royal Marines as Commandant General from 2019-2021 and serve on operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Kosovo and Northern Ireland.

pause and reflect on his distinguished career in which he set the standard for so many Royal Marine officers: leading those under his command often in the most demanding operational situations, always protecting the wellbeing and best interests of his marines.

"He is remembered as a commando's commando, committed to operational success and the betterment of his troops. For 43 Commando his removal of the Directed Specialisation Scheme allowed young marines to be given the opportunity to experience operations directly after leaving recruit training.

"Additionally, his advocacy of the Future Commando Force initiative and position at the helm of this transformation continues to provide opportunities for commando forces delivering vital no-fail nuclear security operations.

"Maj Gen Holmes' legacy will endure. His inspiration, humility, drive and determination will be missed by all the men and women – Bootneck, matelot or civil servant – of 43 Commando."

Lieutenant Colonel Rob Jones, Commanding Officer of Commando Logistic Regiment, said: "General Matt's untimely loss is an unmitigated tragedy for the Royal

Marines and the wider Commando Family, and has been felt deeply and personally by us all.

"An inspiration to so many of us, he led with distinction for over 30 years, commanded on operations at every level, and cared deeply and passionately about his people.

"As we, the men and women of Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines, reflect on his loss, we recognise that it is incumbent upon each of us to celebrate his extraordinary life – each in our own way – and to be the very best custodians of his memory that we can be.

"As I reflect on my memories of General Matt, there are a few things that stand out for me. He was an exceptional Commandant General Royal Marines, who guided our corps through one of the most challenging and turbulent times in its recent history; who introduced a new manning model for our most junior people that will positively influence the careers of marines for decades to come; and who revolutionised the way we train our commanders to maximise their talent.

"He was a committed and courageous leader, tested time and again through the furnace of war, who



epitomised the sentiment 'serve to lead'; an approach he embodied as my Commanding Officer in Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 5.

"That tour was kinetic and gruelling, harrowing for some, and saw the loss or serious injury of a significant proportion of our more than 1,000-strong battlegroup during some of the fiercest fighting of the Afghan Campaign.

"General Matt earned every ounce of his Distinguished Service Order for his uncompromising leadership in the face of overwhelming adversity; for caring passionately about his people and for never putting himself first throughout his long career; a commando in the truest sense. The thoughts of the men and women of Commando Logistic Regiment Royal Marines are with his family at this difficult time. Rest easy Sir, always in our hearts."

Lieutenant Colonel Ed Hall, Commanding Officer of 45 Commando, said: "The tragic death of Maj Gen Holmes has been incredibly difficult for the whole of the corps, and 45 Commando was especially saddened to lose such an inspiring and dedicated former officer.

"Maj Gen Holmes served at 45 Commando Royal Marines as the



Operations Officer from August 1996 to December 1997 and it is a source of pride that he had these formative years at RM Condor.

"As CGRM, the whole Royal Marines family was extremely fortunate to be led by an individual who maintained the utmost passion and respect for the corps and the service personnel who worked in and alongside it.

"Maj Gen Matt Holmes' legacy stands as a shining example of what selfless dedication to country, cap-badge and those you lead looks like.

"The thoughts and prayers of 45 Commando are with Maj Gen Holmes' family at this very difficult time.

"Per Mare, Per Terram."

Lieutenant Colonel Andy Dow, Commanding Officer of 40 Commando, said: "40 Commando mourns the loss of Major General Holmes, a devoted leader admired by the entire corps, who served with distinction for over 30 years.

"A generous and selfless man who dedicated his life to his country. Matt served at 40 Commando early on in his career, deploying to Norway and Northern Ireland. We send our deepest and sincerest condolences to his family and to all of those closest to him. Our

thoughts and prayers are with you all. Once a marine, always a marine."

Lieutenant Colonel James Lewis, Commanding Officer of 42 Commando, said: "The loss of General Matt Holmes has been felt across the whole of 42 Commando. There are a number who were lucky enough to serve under him at different times.

"As a unit we have reflected on the changes that the General wrought on the Royal Marines, the Royal Navy and wider Defence. General Matt's energy, his effort and his entire purpose was always set against making the lives of the individual marine better.

"For 42 Commando his loss is particularly personal. He was a Troop Commander, Company Commander and, famously, Commanding Officer of this unit before becoming our Commandant General.

"The command of 42 Commando coming at the point where the unit faced the upmost challenge of Operation Herrick 5.

"His leadership during that operation must be considered one of the high points of an impressive career. General Matt was a friend, ally and mentor to many of us. He will be sorely missed and his memory cherished."

Colonel Neil Wilson and Lieutenant Colonel Kieran Phillips - Honorary Regimental Colonel and Commanding Officer of 29 Commando respectively – also shared their tributes.

"He led many of us in battle, was an inspiration to us all, and shared in our grief following the loss of comrades," they wrote in a statement.

"Many of us worked closely with him during that period, and we are part of a small, intimate commando community.

"We will all be affected in some way, or have friends who are affected by his death. We must be mindful of this and grieve together, talk to and look after each other."

Current Commandant General Lieutenant General Rob Magowan said: "It matters not that he was a General, but it does that he is a Royal Marine. I remember and celebrate him, alongside all those who he is with now. We are one family, together, just as we learned, and as we trained, alongside each other at the Commando Training Centre. Once a marine, always a marine."



Wherever they were in the world, Royal N



Commodore Jim Perks, head of the Submarine Service, joined personnel for the Remembrance Service in Glasgow
Picture: LPhot Barry Wheeler



Royal Marines attended a service at RM Stonehouse memorial garden in Plymouth
Picture: LPhot Joe Cater



Commanding Officer of HMS Medway, Commander Chris Hollingworth lays a wreath in Curacao
Picture: LPhot Finn Hutchins



Above, a service of Remembrance at the Fleet Air Arm Church at Yeovilton
Picture: PO (Phot) Dan Shepherd
Left: Personnel took part in the Portsmouth Guildhall service
Picture: LPhot Matt Bradley



Above: Submariners attended services during the annual memorial weekend in London
Picture: LPhot Kevin Walton

Left: Sailors from the new Type 26 HMS Glasgow attended the Remembrance Sunday service in her namesake city
Picture: LPhot Barry Wheeler

Below, from left, Personnel from RNAS Culdrose attended a service in Helston;

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key stood alongside fellow Service chiefs for the service at the Cenotaph in London;
Picture: PO Phot Dave Jenkins

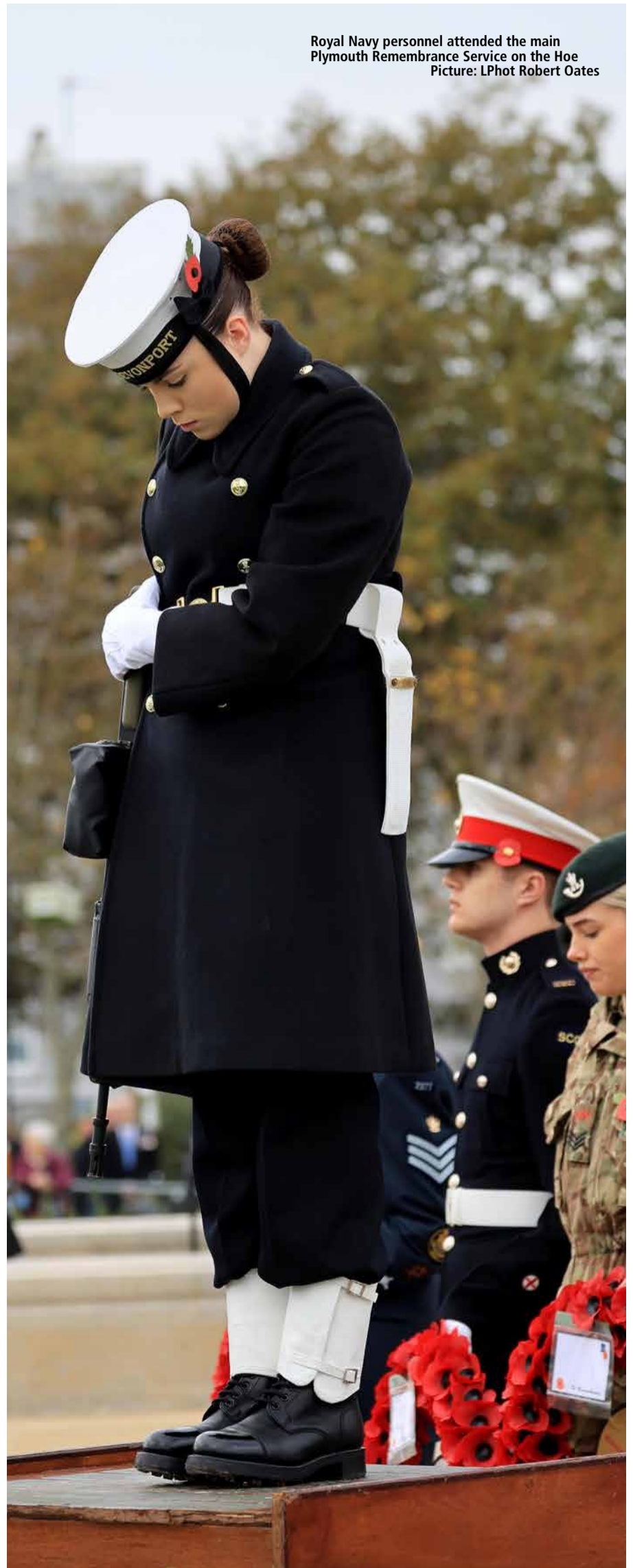
Personnel aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth paid their respects during a service as the carrier sailed through the Red Sea
Picture: LPhot Unaisi Luke



Navy personnel stopped to pay tribute and remember the fallen



Royal Navy personnel attended the main Plymouth Remembrance Service on the Hoe
Picture: LPhot Robert Oates

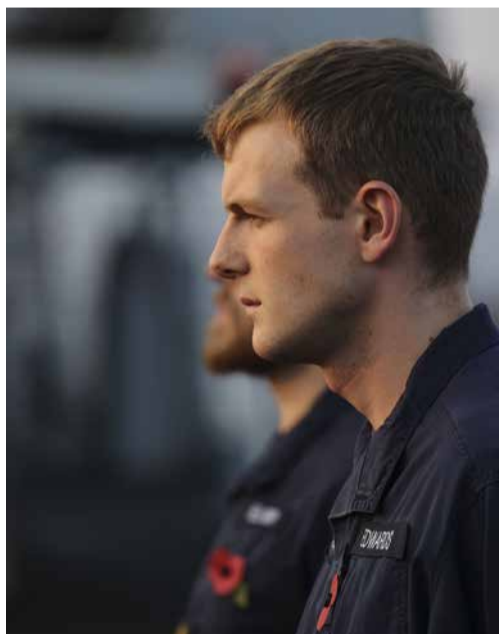


Top: HMS Trent held a service while alongside in Ghana
Picture: LPhot Alex Ceolin

Left: Personnel aboard RFA Tidespring marked Remembrance Sunday while transiting the Red Sea

Below left: A service was held aboard HMS Kent on Armistice Day as the Type 23 frigate patrolled the Indian Ocean
Picture: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum

Below: Wreaths are laid at Britannia Royal Naval College
Picture: Martin Thomas





Protector remembers RN's slave-trade fight

CREW of ice ship HMS Protector paid their respects to the thousands of sailors who helped put an end to the slave trade.

They joined leaders of St Helena in a service of remembrance and thanksgiving for the men of the West Africa Squadron – and the tens of thousands of slaves they liberated.

For more than half a century the tiny island – smaller than Edinburgh – was the hub of the fight against the evil trade by the Royal Navy squadron.

And for 30 years, the captains and crews of slave ships captured by the Royal Navy were brought to justice in a court established by the Admiralty, while freed slaves were allowed to settle in St Helena – or move on.

Some stayed, but many moved to the West Indies, Cape Town or Sierra Leone – founding the present-day capital Freetown.

But thousands of freed slaves never had the chance to enjoy their liberty due to the maltreatment at the hands of their captors; an estimated 8,000 died and most were buried in Rupert's Valley to the east of Jamestown.

In all, around 150,000 Africans were liberated by the West Africa Squadron – crammed into 1,600 slave ships captured between 1808 and 1860.

Falklands veterans invited to day at the Arboretum

TEN thousand veterans, civilians, and family members are invited to the National Memorial Arboretum on Tuesday June 14 next year to mark 40 years since the end of the Falklands conflict.

The Royal British Legion has joined forces with the Staffordshire memorial site for a day-long series of events and commemorations – small and large – to remember personnel involved in Operation Corporate and the sacrifices they made in the spring of 1982.

Fortieth anniversary commemorations will take place in the UK and Falklands throughout April until Liberation Day.

The morning of June 14 at the arboretum will be led by individual military units and guests will have the opportunity to visit their respective memorials and participate in unit/regimental activities.

In the afternoon the RBL will host a secular ceremony, which will include a live link up with the ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission Cemetery in Stanley.

For details: www.britishlegion.org.uk/get-involved/remembrance/remembrance-events/falklands

The cost to the Royal Navy was heavy: one sailor died for every nine slaves freed – 17,000 men over the 52-year period – either in action or of disease.

Among the losses was ten-gun sloop HMS Waterwitch which spent 21 years hunting down slave ships until one sank her in 1861.

The memorial to Waterwitch's crew in Castle Gardens provided the setting for the service of remembrance attended by islanders and Protector's ship's company, including the island's Lord Bishop, Dale Bowers, and Governor Philip Rushbrook.

Commander Tom Boeckx, HMS Protector's Executive Officer, said the men and ships of the West Africa Squadron deserved honouring and remembering just as much as Nelson, HMS Victory and other more famous contemporaries who faced just as much danger "in pursuit of a better society and world".

And he praised islanders for welcoming and tending to freed slaves landed on St Helena – at great personal risk given the high levels of disease.

"It is a privilege for me to be able to remember my predecessors in the Navy and yours from St Helena, to celebrate the enduring relationship between the Navy and the Island," he told all present at the service.



Model clue to next meeting

A DISPLAY of painstakingly-built model ships at this year's RNA National Conference was a foretaste of what shipmates can expect next year.

Planning is already well under way for the gathering in Portsmouth next summer, and organisers are hoping to showcase a fast-growing part of the Association: special interest groups.

Shipmates are already united by their links with or love of the Senior Service, but the 11,000-plus members not surprisingly have a wide range of interests beyond the RNA.

Up until recently RNA branches have, with the exception of the HQ Roll, been geographically-based, with members generally joining a branch close to where they live.

But with the success of the association's forays into virtual meetings and events during the pandemic – such as Wrexham's Tot Time and the Dit On podcasts – an initiative which began several years ago with the RNA Riders Branch has been given a new lease of life.

The Riders branch supports all the values and ambitions of the wider RNA, but also aims to bring together shipmates who have a passion for and an interest in motorcycling.

In addition, they seek to fundraise for the RNA, and to provide an Honour Guard for funerals of serving and veteran shipmates, as well as attending parades at various remembrance and Armed Forces events.

Now the concept of Special Interest Groups has started to take hold, and the Association is encouraging members to expand the range based on the shared interests and hobbies of their shipmates.

Hence the profile of the model makers, headed by S/M Gary Daisley, which was formed at the start of this year.

The group, which has around 60 members, covers all types of models, from those built 'out of the box' using commercial kits to items completely

built from scratch using blueprints and information in the public domain.

According to S/M Gary, "it doesn't matter if your interest is in shipping, trains, planes or automobiles; human figures, historic figures, alien figures or fantasy figures; powered models that float, fly or roll; if they are of museum quality or just for fun, all are welcome and everyone is encouraged to share their knowledge and experience online."

Examples of the group's work on display at the Conference in Nottingham included ships by S/M Ken O'Brien, of Southend-on-Sea branch.

Former sailor Ken, pictured above, has been modelmaking for around nine years, starting with plastic kits then moving on to models built entirely from scratch using balsa wood in combination with other materials.

One of his models – aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth – is 1/350 scale, built using whatever details he could glean from public sources including photographs.

Another model he displayed, river gunboat HMS Dragonfly, has a special place in Ken's heart, as it is the ship on which his father served during the war in the Far East; Dragonfly was sunk in February 1942, but Ken's father survived to spend the rest of the war as a POW.

Ken managed to obtain the plans for Dragonfly from the Imperial War Museum, and like his version of Queen Elizabeth, it is radio-controlled working model; he sails them with the Maldon Blackwater Model Boat Club in Essex.

Another Special Interest Group covers the fishing fans amongst the association's ranks, embracing fly, coarse, deep-sea fishing and angling.

Other groups cover rugby union, sailing, motorhomes, caravans and camping, insignia and badge collecting, golf, genealogy, equestrianism, cycling, classic cars and American football – more details are available at <https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/groups/>



Victorian coin found on Victory

A COIN placed under the mast of Nelson's flagship HMS Victory and discovered in perfect condition 127 years later has gone on show as part of Trafalgar Day commemorations.

The farthing – worth ¼ pence when issued in 1894 under the reign of Queen Victoria – was uncovered in the base plate of the 32-metre, 26-tonne mast section which was temporarily removed from Victory as part of the latest phase of her restoration.

The coin is on display in the National Museum of the Royal Navy's newest gallery – HMS Victory: The Nation's Flagship, which charts the history of Britain's most famous warship and those who served in her.

The tradition of placing coins under their ship masts may date back to Roman times – although it's not practised by today's shipbuilders.

This particular coin was put in place when rotten Douglas fir masts on Victory installed in the 1850s were replaced by ones taken from HMS Shah in 1894.

The Head of Conservation at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Diana Davis, found it when she was examining the base plate, once the mast had been lifted out.

In perfect condition it would feature Queen Victoria's head on one side, with her hairstyle documented to 1874-94 and Britannia on the other with a lighthouse in the background – but the farthing has corroded over time, so this is less clear.

"We had wondered if there would be a coin under the mast, to follow with naval tradition, and imagine our excitement when the coin was found and news rapidly spread through the team who were sworn to secrecy whilst we conserved it and made plans to put it on display," explained Rosemary Thornber, Principal Heritage Advisor for HMS Victory.

"It's been a real privilege to research it and to see the damage that had been caused by the pressure from the mast sitting on it. Whilst on paper it's not particularly rare, the fact that it occupied such an intriguing place for so many decades and now its imprint is part of Victory's fabric, makes it invaluable to us and our visitors will love to see it."

The mast's removal is part of a 20-year-long conservation project.

York welcomes funnel of love

THERE'S a reminder of destroyer HMS York now hanging proudly on the walls of the city's civic offices.

The Type 42 was decommissioned nearly a decade ago after a 30-year career which included involvement in the 2003 conflict in Iraq, the evacuation of Lebanon in 2006 and the Libyan Civil War in 2011.

Yorkshireman and Type 42 veteran Commodore Phil Waterhouse, the RN's Regional Commander for Northern England, formally presented the icon of the ship to the city's Lord Mayor, Reverend Councillor Chris Cullwick and Council Leader Councillor Keith Aspden.

The Navy's donated the badge in recognition of the city's ongoing links with the Senior Service – HMS Dragon has picked up the affiliation baton vacated by HMS York –



Lord Mayor of York, Rev Councillor Chris Cullwick with council leader Clr Keith Aspden and Cdre Phil Waterhouse

and its support for the military family under the Armed Forces Covenant.

"The funnel badges presented

were, we think, the original ship's fit since her commissioning in 1985," Commodore Waterhouse said.

"Having sat in storage since at least 2012, it is fitting that they are on display in the wonderful City of York as an enduring reminder of the city's connection to the Royal Navy."

The funnel badge – which features the crest of the City of York (a red cross with lions passant rather than the ship's badge, which features the white rose of Yorkshire) – was one of seven in the hands of the Portsmouth-based Disposal and Reserve Ships Organisation which looks after vessels once their active careers are done.

York went to the breaker's yard in 2015 – but not before anything of use/value/historical significance had been removed, including the 30kg badges.

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We wish all our members a very Merry Christmas and a very happy and peaceful New Year



THE SANDS OF TIME

ON THE now-silent, virgin sands of Coleville-Montgomery, former sailor Frank Baugh stands in front of a small wooden cross and casts his mind back 77 years ago.

Here on the morning of June 6 1944, scores of men poured out of Frank's landing craft and stormed the vaulted Atlantic Wall.

They broke through it. But at terrible cost, a cost the now-98-year-old remembers all too well.

The former signaller was one of seven Normandy veterans who returned to the beaches and bocage to honour their comrades thanks to a team of volunteers.

Covid restrictions prevented the Spirit of Normandy Trust and its volunteers – including Warrant Officers Baz Firth (RN Leadership Academy) and Glenn Carter RM (Commando Helicopter Force), plus Baz's son James who's an RAF Cadet – accompanying veterans back in June.

But come autumn, with borders reopened, the commemorations of the 1944 campaign could take place – in much quieter circumstances, permitting private tours of some of the key sites such as the Pegasus Bridge Museum.

At nearby Ranville cemetery James paid tribute to his great uncle Elwyn Davies, one of those who seized the bridge in the first hours of D-Day, but was killed in action 12 days later.

The group also honoured a promise to 97-year-old Billy Ness to remember his comrade; Billy took part in the 75th anniversary commemorations in 2019 but recently succumbed to cancer.

In Coleville-Montgomery (Sword Beach in 1944), veterans – including former sapper Harry Billinge who's become a TV regular over the past few years – received special medals and a book each from the mayor and met former French commando Léon Gautier.

On June 6 1944, Frank Baugh watched Léon, his comrades, and the commandos led by Lord Lovat storm ashore.

The former landing craft crewman



A Royal Marine veteran wipes away a tear as he remembers a comrade and (right, nearest the camera) RAF Cadet James Firth, WO2 Glenn Carter and WO1 Baz Firth prepare to place wreaths at the new British Normandy Memorial which opened this year.



Pictures: Arthur Edwards

asked the Firths to take him to the water's edge so he could remember his shipmates.

"He gave us a first-hand account of what he experienced, as he described the scene it was truly humbling indeed," said Baz.

"He then walked to the edge of the lapping sea and laid a cross in the sand and stared out over the sea for a few minutes before returning in tears. He apologised and we asked what for and he explained that he can't ever forget those mates that never came back, his abiding memory is of his friends, face down in the sea and knowing there was nothing he could do for them.

"We explained he didn't need to apologise for anything."

Other emotionally-charge events included a memorial service at the new British Normandy Memorial – dedicated

this year, but on a much smaller scale than planned due to the pandemic – and a VIP reception in Caen's city hall hosted by the deputy mayor.

There were further acts of remembrance at Bayeux Cemetery, a look around the panoramic 360-degree cinema in Arromanches and a private tour of the Juno Beach museum, remembering Canadian forces especially, sealed a moving week for the veterans and the volunteers.

"Being able to share the time with our VIP Veterans was simply such a humbling opportunity," said Baz. "I commend it to anyone if the opportunity should arise to take part.

"To think that after 77 years that it still has such a huge effect on them really hammers home what they witnessed and endured for us so we may enjoy our freedom today."



Culdrose unite with RAF for tribute to Dambuster

NAVAL aviators from Culdrose joined their RAF counterparts in honouring legendary Dambuster Guy Gibson 77 years after he was killed in action.

They gathered in the Cornish fishing village of Porthleven to pay their respects to the wing commander, who died aged 26 after more than 170 sorties over enemy territory.

Immortalised thanks to his bravery and skill in leading the attack on the Ruhr dams in May 1943, he was killed when his Lancaster crashed in the Netherlands in September 1944 after a night raid on the industrial city of Mönchengladbach.

The pilot's mother has long-standing links with Porthleven and Gibson himself often returned to the village on leave during WW2.

His ties with Porthleven are recognised with a street named in his honour, a memorial in the village cemetery and a plaque on the wall of the village's famous Bickford-Smith Institute clocktower building which overlooks the harbour.

It was there on a grey, windy October day that organiser Beatrice Kerno of the Porthleven Old Cornwall Society, Mayor Councillor Mike Toy and representatives of the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and Royal Canadian Air Force remembered the pilot, laying wreaths beneath the memorial plaque.

Lieutenant Commander Keith 'Daisy' Adams has previously served on the squadron Gibson once led, 617 – the Dambusters – who today operate the F-35B stealth fighter from RAF Marham and the deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The air engineering officer is now at the cutting edge of future technologies, working on remotely-piloted air systems at RNAS Culdrose.

He said: "The RAF are rightly proud of all those who served on the Dambusters squadron, a



tradition still honoured by 617 Squadron to this day.

"As an air engineering officer with the Royal Navy, I too felt that sense of history as I served alongside my RAF colleagues. We remember their sacrifice. It was fortunate that I am now based at RNAS Culdrose and can make that link to Porthleven."

Representing the Royal Air Force was Flight Lieutenant Jon Lord, based at RAF St Mawgan, near Newquay, who said: "Remembering the sacrifices of our service personnel and keeping their stories alive in our communities across Cornwall and beyond is one of the most important roles that we can fulfil.

"The story of the Dambusters is one of innovation and adaptability, something synonymous with the RAF, and a heritage we are extremely proud of."

Major Jon Juurlink of the Royal Canadian Air Force, who is on exchange with the Royal Navy at RNAS Culdrose, added: "People may not realise that 30 Canadians flew under the command and leadership of Wing Commander Gibson during the Dambuster raids. I'm honoured to have had the opportunity to recognise that contribution and remember his legacy."

Thinking of donating to the submarine museum?

SUBMARINERS thinking of making a donation or leaving a bequest to the museum in Gosport which champions their deeds should know the process has changed.

The Royal Navy Submarine Museum no longer exists as a charity with its own finances, but is part of the wider National Museum of the Royal Navy (which embraces

the FAA, RM, RN and Explosion museums, HMS Victory and Trincomalee).

Future donations/bequests should be directed to either the Friends of the Submarine Museum (Charity No 1046251, Haslar Jetty Road, Gosport PO12 2AS) or directly to the National Museum.

Those wishing to donate are encouraged

to consult solicitors and use a form of words such as: 'I give, free of tax, the following legacies...'

Since 1995 the Friends have given £428,748 to the museum, their latest financial support funding the creation of a 'Digital Book of Remembrance' for submariners which will be accessible 'on-line'.



End of an era for the Flower-class

THE Flower-class Corvette Association has held its final reunion after 40 years.

Founded by Cyril 'Stevy' Stephens, the FCCA Standard now lies in All Hallows Church, South Cerney, Gloucestershire.

Over the years shipmates have been reunited and children and grandchildren learned a little of what it meant to be a Corvettier as hundreds attended the association's annual reunions in Leamington Spa.

Stevy died in 1997 and it was decided in 2019 that the association should close.

A solitary veteran attended a ceremony to mark the closing of the association, with a Sea Cadets from TS Bacchante (Leamington and Warwick Sea Cadets) providing a Guard of Honour.

The FCCA Book of Remembrance continues to be maintained. Contact Anne Seymour (Stevy's daughter) on 01285 861490.



HMS George – still afloat

ROYAL Navy veteran George Drewett celebrated his 100th birthday with a cake.

George who, along with wife Winifred appeared in *Navy News* in May 2020 celebrating their diamond wedding.

The couple marked George's centenary with a garden firework party, surrounded by some of their many children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and one great great grandchild.

Henry honoured for saving dad



New facilities are opened

CAPTAIN Gavin MacDougall, Head of Cadets, Youth and STEM in the Royal Navy, has officially opened two brand-new LIBOR-funded facilities for Royal Navy Cadets and Youth in Cornwall and Portsmouth.

Ablly assisted by Cadets from Taunton School and Plymouth University Training College, Capt MacDougall first opened the facility at Ferry Cottage, Jupiter Point in East Cornwall, close to the Royal Navy's Initial Training establishment at HMS Raleigh.

The Small Boat training base is used by HMS Raleigh to train new recruits in boat handling and marine craft skills.

The following day Capt MacDougall opened the second facility on Whale Island at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

This project also complements the existing Cadets and Youth infrastructure located on the island which helps the deliver the Royal Navy's enduring defence task commitment to its Cadet and Youth cohort.

Completed against challenging timelines during Covid restrictions and within budget, the new facilities will meaningfully enrich and enhance the delivery of around 700 training camps and courses annually in the Plymouth and Portsmouth areas.



New HQ for Dover and Deal

A SPECIAL evening was enjoyed by the staff, volunteers and cadets of Dover and Deal Unit for the official reopening of their refurbished new headquarters.

In addition to Commander SCC Peter Gooding from the Corps, the unit was able to welcome the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Nick Marden DL, The Bishop of Dover and Canterbury, the Rt Rev Rose Hudson-Wilkin, The Mayors of Dover, Deal and Sandwich, the Chairman of Dover District Council the Kent County Councillor for Integrated Children's Services as well as representatives from Dover Harbour Board and Dover Port to the event.

Mr Marden performed the traditional ribbon cutting on behalf of the Lord Lieutenant of Kent while Bishop Rose gave a stirring address to the cadets and inducted the new unit Chaplain, Kevin Jacob.

HENRY Collett from Hipperholme near Halifax, has received a national award from the British Heart Foundation (BHF) after coming to the aid of dad Jules.

Thirteen-year-old Henry, a sea cadet at Huddersfield Unit, performed CPR on his 56-year-old father, Jules, when he collapsed.

Father and son were jogging and had just reached the top of a hill when Jules became unconscious and stopped breathing, Henry told BBC Breakfast.

"My dad looked at me and said, 'I don't feel so good' and then fell. I went over to him and he was breathing really weird. It sounded like he was taking too long to take another breath."

Henry said he used his dad's phone to call for an ambulance and was told to start CPR.

"What went through my head was: what you do in the next ten minutes could save him. I'm just a child and I need my dad to be around, so I knew I had to do something," explained Henry.

The teenage cadet, who learned CPR at Sea Cadets, began applying chest compressions before being helped by a passer-by. They took over CPR while Henry rushed to the nearby rugby club to retrieve a defibrillator.

His dad was then taken to



hospital where he was fitted with a heart-starting device. He expressed how incredibly proud he is of his son.

"It's truly amazing what Henry did that day. We were out in the middle of nowhere, but Henry stayed calm and kept a level head. For someone his age to do that is

incredible," said Jules.

"I was told that Henry acted very fast and was in control of the situation. I'm alive because of Henry, and if it wasn't for him, I wouldn't be here. It's a very poignant thing to sit and understand that your son has saved your life."

Henry's life-saving actions were recognised with a CPR Hero Award during the British Heart Foundation's virtual Heart Hero Awards.

"CPR is so important to me because without it, my dad wouldn't be here now. Everyone should learn CPR, as you never know when you might need to use it," said Henry.

"I was so happy when dad woke up. It feels amazing to win this award."

BHF Chief Executive Dr Charmaine Griffiths said: "We are just so proud to recognise Henry with this award honouring his truly life-saving actions."

"It is also a powerful reminder of why CPR skills are so important for all of us. For every minute that passes without CPR and defibrillation, a person's chances of surviving a cardiac arrest out of hospital falls by a devastating 10 per cent."

"The most important thing to remember is that you must act when someone suffers a cardiac arrest. Call 999, start CPR immediately, and ask someone to bring the nearest defibrillator if one is close by. These simple actions could help save a life."

The BHF's Heart Hero Awards are held each year to recognise brave individuals dedicated to beating heartbreak. The event showcases inspiring people who have shown courage, resilience, compassion and bravery in the face of adversity.

Pilot returns to his former Sea Cadet unit

LIEUTENANT Simon Marr was a sea cadet at Avonmouth when he was a teenager – and has now returned, after ten years' absence, to work as a staff member.

Since leaving the Avonmouth Unit in 2010, Simon has joined the Royal Navy as a pilot and Air Engineer Officer.

The unit is thrilled to have him back and the cadets are looking forward to benefit from his STEM and naval expertise.

Simon is also a RYA Day Skipper and hopes to share his navigation and seamanship skills with the cadets as well as his passion for mountaineering and rock climbing.

"I was 13 when I joined cadets," recalls Simon. "A school friend who lived opposite invited me and I joined as I liked the sound of the activities and the opportunities it gave me."

"I used to see them rowing on

the river and that gave me the inspiration to join."

"Sea Cadets allowed me to do things none of my peers in school at the time could do – tall ship and dinghy sailing, motorboat navigation, mountaineering."

"It taught me teamwork and leadership skills, laying the foundations of the Naval Officer I am today. I'm honoured to have the opportunity to give something back to the unit."

Simon has been working with the junior cadets and will soon be supporting senior cadets too.

"It's a way of thanking Sea Cadets for what it gave me as a teenager."

"It played a big part in how I have developed and grown," Simon said.

"I would encourage young people to find their local unit, pop along and see what their next adventure could be!"



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Climate inspiration for new art installation

AN art installation at the popular Pulteney Bridge in Bath was temporarily erected to raise awareness on climate change – with local Sea Cadets involved every step of the way.

The ‘sinking house’ sculpture was installed to mark the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) in Glasgow.

The red 5.5m by 3.5m house, which appeared to be semi-submerged in the waters of the River Avon, featured a sculpture of a person on its roof, clinging on to a cord. The cord read ‘COP26’ and was attached to the bridge.

The City of Bath Sea Cadets Unit were engaged from the beginning of the project, donating their pontoon to help float the structure and create the submerged effect. The art installation is said to represent the ‘tipping point’ of the climate emergency.

“Our unit was approached by the sponsoring architects, Stride Treglown, for the loan of one of our pontoons so that they could construct the art installation on it,” explained the Chair of City of Bath Sea Cadets Unit, Richard Danns.

“We agreed to the loan and, after further discussions, we agreed that our headquarters could be used as the construction, launch and recovery site for the installation.”

“The Officer in Charge and I believed it would be an excellent way for our cadets to witness a project aimed at raising awareness, understanding and support of the challenge of climate change,” Richard continued. “The project generated great interest from our cadets as well as the people of Bath, visitors to the city and international media.”

Inspired by Greta Thunberg’s ‘Our house is on fire’ speech at the 2019 World Economic Forum and influenced by the devastating floods in Europe this year, the installation represented how COP26 offered the world hope and a lifeline to avert disaster.

The picturesque setting ensured that the sculpture was photographed by thousands of visitors, who then shared it with their networks, thus raising awareness of climate change.

Local craftsmen constructed the house out of timber to ensure the structure was low carbon. Efforts were made to minimise transport emissions and keep the installation as sustainable as possible. When the installation was dismantled in November, the timber was donated to a nearby wood recycling project.

Councillor Sarah Warren, Deputy Leader of Bath and North East Somerset Council and Cabinet Leader for Climate and Sustainable Travel said: “The council is proud and excited that Stride Treglown and Format Engineers have worked with the community, businesses and a local artist to bring this concept to life in the centre of our city.”

“The art installation will hopefully inspire conversations about the long-term impacts of climate change and the importance of working collaboratively to protect the environment.”

Local artist, Anna Gillespie, who designed and created the sculpture said: “The iconic Pulteney Bridge is known throughout the world and is the perfect location to send the message about the need for action.”

“The recent floods signify just a small part of the effects of climate change: we must all act now to save the planet.”

“It was a great project for our unit to be involved in and has definitely raised our profile locally with the participating companies, the local council and the public,” said Richard.

“A final bonus is that the launching system designed by format engineering has great potential, with some adaptation, to solve a boat launching and recovery problem our unit has, hence saving us significant investment in a new slipway or crane.”

Tree tribute to Prince Philip

SEA cadets from Buxton Unit planted a memorial tree in honour of the late Duke of Edinburgh as a way of remembering his many decades of service to the Royal Navy and as Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps from 1952 to 1992.

They were joined by High Peak Mayor, Councillor Paul Hardy and three surviving veterans of the High Peak’s former Royal Navy Association branch. Reverend Andrew Parker from the Buxton Methodist Church and former chaplain of the unit led the ceremony, held at the Pavilion Gardens. The White Ensign flew for the day from the Bandstand Flagpole in the Pavilion Gardens.

Trevor Johnson, a Trustee of the Buxton Unit, said: “The young cadets are well aware of the Duke’s achievements and naval service before he married the Queen.”

He added that the unit was doing its bit to maintain the gardens, which are an important part of the town’s heritage.

Prince Philip’s legacy includes the creation of the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme, which has inspired and encouraged hundreds of thousands of young people across the UK and many other countries.

The tree dedicated to Prince Philip stands close to two other trees, one planted in October 2005 to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Admiral Nelson’s victory at the Battle of Trafalgar and the second planted in June 2016 to celebrate the centenary of the naval Battle of Jutland during the First World War.

The Buxton Sea Cadets unit was established in 1961 and has achieved remarkable success in national sailing competitions over the years. They are currently recruiting for cadets and adult volunteers to assist with work including administrative tasks and the training of cadets and other volunteers. For more information, please email buxtonseacadets@gmail.com

Trafalgar day with a difference

TRAFALGAR DAY commemoration by Sea Cadets looked a little different this year – instead of hundreds of cadets gathering in London’s Trafalgar Square, units and districts held local parades at the heart of their communities.

Practical restrictions around large-scale events owing to the pandemic made it difficult to go ahead with one of Sea Cadets’ biggest national events. At the same time, it presented an exciting opportunity to build stronger links with community members and ensure they were all able to join in on the fun.

London Sea Cadets held a parade at the Lower Grand Square quadrangle of the Old Royal Naval College in Greenwich on October 21.

There’s a special link between Trafalgar Day and Greenwich, as Nelson’s body lay in state at the Royal Hospital in Greenwich in 1805. Many of the seamen who served at Trafalgar were also admitted to this hospital.

Wreaths were laid by the principal guests

and a short service and the reading of Nelson’s Prayer took place before the parade marched off, with the senior VIP taking the salute.

More than 160 cadets and 50 volunteers from across ten units in East Kent got together to hold a parade for the public at Dover Castle.

It was followed by a service in the ancient church of St Mary in Castro, in the grounds of the castle.

“It is so important that we try to bring the district calendar back into play, for the wellbeing of all units and the wider Sea Cadets organisation,” said the District Officer for East Kent, Lt Cdr (SCC) RNRK. D. Martin.

“The cadets learn about the world outside their own unit and develop those lifelong friendships which are a hallmark of the Sea Cadets movement.”

Manchester District also held their Trafalgar Day parade, which included many VIPs such as the Deputy Lieutenant

of Greater Manchester, the Mayors and Mayoresses of Stockport and Salford as well as the Mayors of Oldham and Tameside.

Sea Cadets remember their roots and commemorate Nelson’s victory at Trafalgar on October 21 1805.

It’s the most important day in the naval calendar, defining British maritime power for decades and highlighting the significance of a strong Royal Navy.

Sea Cadets have marched through London on the closest Sunday to October 21 for 100 years – you can watch a 1938 SCC parade at www.britishpathe.com/video/sea-cadets-parade-traffic-square.

Trafalgar Day is an opportunity for cadets to come together socially and demonstrate their values. It’s also a chance for cadets to present their leadership, self-discipline and teamwork skills during marching, performing and drill, following in Royal Navy traditions.

Sea Cadets plan to return to the usual national events programme in 2022, restrictions permitting.



Kindness rewarded

A 14-year-old cadet from London has been honoured with the British Citizen Youth Award (BCyA) medal.

Able Cadet Carlos-Ricardo found out that a neighbour’s mother in Peru was terminally ill and her daughter couldn’t afford to travel to South America and be with her. He began fundraising to make this possible.

Aiming to raise £500 towards her travels, he actually raised more than £2,500, enabling his neighbour to reach her mother.

Carlos-Ricardo also sourced an additional £1,000 of medical supplies to be included in her aid.

Having lost his grandmother to cancer, this was a cause very close to Carlos-Ricardo’s heart. His neighbour reached Peru just in time to be by her mother’s side before she died in December 2020.

The cadet from the Edgware and Mill Hill Unit was nominated by Lt Cdr David Lewis to be enrolled onto the BCyA Honours List.

“I feel so humbled to have been nominated for this year’s British Citizen Youth Award,” said Carlos-Ricardo. “I am delighted to have been added to the roll of honour 2021 and I am overjoyed that my efforts have successfully changed the lives of other people.”

At the beginning of the year, Carlos-Ricardo ran the length of the Isle of Wight (45km), raising £580 for NHS Charities.

His mother, Alejandra, said: “Naturally, I am absolutely exhilarated that Carlos has been recognised and honoured for his humanitarian work.”



United for awards

FOUR Ballymena Sea Cadets were able to successfully complete their Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award Expedition.

In their unit’s first expedition post lockdown, the cadets were also able to extend an offer to have two army cadets from Ballymena and Antrim Detachments, C Coy, 1st (NI) Battalion ACF to join them.

“Covid-19 has stopped so many activities over the last 18 months,” Ballymena Sea Cadets Chairperson, Ruth Verner said.

“When the opportunity arose to be able to assist the army cadets it made sense to enable both groups to complete their expedition together. I hope this will be the first of many occasions the forces are able to collaborate this way, and give our young people the opportunity to expand their social circles by working together. I congratulate all six cadets on their achievement and encourage them to progress to the Silver level of the Award.”

Cadet Joseph said: “I really enjoyed this weekend because we learnt new skills, such as map reading. It was hard work walking so far, especially while carrying our rucksacks, but we all got on well as a team and kept each other going. It was really good fun getting to know the other cadets and I was sad when we all said goodbye at the end.”

Cadet 1st Class Luke added: “Walking with the Army Cadets on our Duke of Edinburgh Bronze is a memorable experience that I won’t forget. I can only be grateful that I got the opportunity to experience it.”

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Gloves are back on

BOXER Ryan Harvey is a picture of concentration as the first of the 2021 Royal Navy Individual Championships took place at Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth. HMS Drake-based AB(UW) Harvey, who fights at cruiser-weight, was among fighters in action in the newly-opened Arthur Harrison VC Gymnasium, named in honour of an iconic English rugby player and Naval Officer, who died in World War 1. There as the college's VIPs for the evening were Martin Johnson, former England Rugby team captain, who led the England team to victory in

the 2003 World Cup, and Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd, former Royal Navy Fleet Commander. A total of 19 boxers took part in the competition over nine bouts. They were representing themselves rather than their units in a new format designed to be inclusive of boxers from all regions. It allows boxers to enter any event across the country, making it easier to work around operational commitments. Competition Boxing Supervisor Lt Cdr Graham Blick said: "Boxing is the toughest individual sport in the world, which takes tremendous courage, self-belief, self-discipline, and the highest standard of fitness, both physical and mental. "These are, of course, exactly the same attributes that a fighting force such as the Royal Navy expects from its servicemen and women, not only in day-to-day life, but particularly when such people are deployed on operations."



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Athletes honoured aboard aircraft carrier

THEY carried the weight of the nation in Tokyo this summer, and around 30 of Team GB's athletes were treated to time away from training to visit HMNB Portsmouth for a reception on aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales.

All the Olympians and Paralympians invited share a link to the ship through an association with her home port of Portsmouth; with Wales; with Scotland where she was assembled; or with Liverpool and Bristol – the two cities she has an affiliation with. Members of the GB sailing team were also invited.

Guests included Portchester-based bronze-winning BMX biker Declan Brooks, Portsmouth Paralympian triathlete Lauren Steadman, who trained in HMS Temeraire's pool before winning gold, and para-cycling gold winning couple Neil and Lora Fachie who were born in Aberdeen and Liverpool.

For Lauren, it was a chance to thank the Royal Navy for allowing her to train at HMS Temeraire earlier in the year when all other local pools were closed due to Covid restrictions, and her best training options were either the chilly winter sea or driving to Bath five days a week.

She said: "I think I would, in another lifetime, have loved a job in the military – it's very similar, the

protocols and mindset that you have as an elite athlete.

"As an athlete you need to be as efficient as you can be, so driving two hours to do a swimming session was not efficient, so the fact I could get up in the morning and just drive three minutes and get my session done was great."

After lunch with Commanding Officer, Captain Steve Higham, the athletes were taken on a tour of the ship which included meeting some of the Royal Navy's elite athletes.

Among them were powerlifter Petty Officer Wes McGuinness, ranked 7th in the world in his category, and Brett Wild who will be acting as guide for para-skier Millie Knight through their world cup campaign and at the next Winter Paralympics.

Neil Fachie said: "We have teammates who have served, it's one of the interesting sides to the Paralympics that you get those who have been wounded and some of them have gone onto great things. And we have friends who have served in the Navy and it was nice to tell them we were coming down here today, they were very jealous."

Declan Brooks said: "It's obviously a privilege to be here and with me being just down the road it is a great thing to come in and say hello."



LAET(M) Phil Cook and LAC Barry Connolly during the Yorkshire rally

Air engineer takes top rally driving title

LEADING Aircraft Engineer Technician Phil Cook has been crowned the winner of the UK Armed Forces Rally Team Championship.

Phil, who is based at RNAS Culdroe, took the title alongside co-driver Leading Aircraftman Barry Connolly.

Phil, from Wales, joined the UKAFRT after attending a rally in 2019, and took his first victory with LAC Connolly at the Bovington Stages Rally in 2020.

Thanks to COVID19, Barry and Phil's next event was not until June 2021 on the Flying Fortress Stages Rally in Northamptonshire, where they suffered a puncture, so third position was the best the crew could salvage.

Having taken part in the 2021 Goodwood Festival of Speed in July, it was time to prepare for the Scottish Rally.

With a DNF (did not finish) on the Scottish Rally the UKAFRT Championship was now down to

the wire for Barry and Phil.

The next and last event for the UKAFRT was on the Trackrod Rally of Yorkshire. With his love of rallying always at the forefront of his mind, Phil wanted nothing more than to prove his worth at this rally and to win both the event and the 2021 UKAFRT Championship.

Both Phil and Barry performed brilliantly with a careful and controlled event (although not without some drama) and the win was theirs!

"If you love motorsport, it really doesn't get any better than this," said Phil.

The UK Armed Forces Rally Team is a tri-Service team chaired by Commander Bryony Carpenter Royal Navy, with Major (Retd) Alan Paramore MBE as Team Director (alan.paramore861@mod.gov.uk). For details email info@armedforcesrallyteam.co.uk, or contact LAET Phil Cook (Phillip.cook278@mod.gov.uk)

47Cdo put footballers through paces



PLYMOUTH Argyle Football Club Youth Academy players got close to the Royal Marines Landing Craft and Amphibious experts at HM Naval Base Devonport, with a visit to 47 Commando Raiding Group Royal Marines.

During the visit organised by Sergeant Ross McNeil from Royal Marines Tamar, the academy players were shown 47 Cdo's

Offshore Raiding Craft (ORCs), as well as a trip on the river Tamar, where they got to experience the ORCs in action.

On returning to dry land they were put through their paces with some leadership tasks conducted in one of the unit's hangars.

47 Commando (Raiding Group) Royal Marines, formerly 1 Assault Group Royal Marines (2001-2019), provides the Royal

Marines expertise and training in small boat operations, both amphibious and riverine.

In addition, it trains and parents the Assault Squadrons of the Royal Marines (ASRM) and their landing craft detachments.

It is based a Royal Marines Tamar in HMNB Devonport.

Picture: LPhoto Mark Johnson

Rowers tested in live contests

ROYAL Navy Indoor Rowing emerged from the global pandemic hoping for a return to the atmospheric settings of live race floors.

However, the success and development of remote online racing saw two early-season events continuing online with RN ergers competing from a combination of gardens, garages, conservatories and utility rooms.

The British Rowing Virtual Championships (BRVC) was conceived in 2020 to provide dry land erg opportunities for 'On The Water' (OTW) rowers to compete in the absence of their traditional summer programme.

This continued into 2021 and five RN ergers tested their off-season training development over 2k, with Lt Josh Berg (URNU Yorkshire) also doubling up with a 500m.

WO1 Shaun Gibbs (RNAS Yeovilton) has begun to reap the benefit of longer term structured training within the Royal Navy Indoor Rowing Performance Programme (RNIRPP) under the tutelage of Cdr Jim Thomson (Navy People), demonstrated by his men's heavyweight 40+ 2k second place in 6 mins 17.4 secs.

CPO Claire Drew (CNR) finished fifth in the women's heavyweight 40+ 2k in 7 mins 33.7 secs, again just a few seconds short of a personal best.

Also a fifth-place finisher was former World Champs Bronze medalist Lt Cdr Craig Guest (HMS Portland) in the men's heavyweight 30+ 2k in 6 mins 33.5 secs.

Just one place behind, battling and exchanging places for the entire race, was Lt Josh Berg (URNU Yorks) in 6 mins 36.1 secs, utilising spare capacity to good effect to finish eighth in that category's 500m in 1 min 24.8 secs. Team Manager Paul Winton was also a sixth-place finisher in his 2k category.

The annual Devon Indoor Rowing Championships later took place, with races over 5k and 1k.

WO1 Shaun Gibbs rowed an exceptional 1k to win the men's heavyweight U50 race in 2 mins 55.4 secs – a world-class time for any age group.

Also rowing to victory in a world-class time was C/Sgt James Wade (RM Stonehouse) with a men's heavyweight U50 5k time of 16 mins 14.2 secs.

CPO Claire Drew was second in the



Clockwise from top left, PO(ET) Emily Fray rows her debut 2k RNIRC race; Rowers from the The Sultan MASSIVE group warm up prior to RNIRC 2k; WO1 Mark Branson recovers after setting world leading 2k time of 6 mins 59.1 secs for his men's lightweight 60+ category

women's U50 heavyweight 5k in 19 mins 41.0 secs. Team Manager Paul Winton was a third-place finisher in his 5k category.

The global Indoor Rowers League (IRL) also commenced, with eight monthly challenges of 4 mins/1609m/6344m/5k/1min /2k/10k/500m to keep all involved honest.

Royal Navy ergers have long been prevalent in the IRL, with all of the aforementioned well placed alongside nearly 50 other colleagues.

Teams of ten, with eight to score, also feature in a league table, with the RNIRPP team placed third.

IRL scores are processed in a number

of ways to allow meaningful comparison amongst all, thus scores are normalised to account for: age, gender and heavyweight versus lightweight.

Consequently, after the initial four-min challenge, C/Sgt Wade (second) was just ahead of WO1 Gibbs (third) for uncorrected scores, but the positions were reversed once scores were corrected, but just by 0.1 sec.

Anyone can sign up for IRL, geared for participation and development, at www.indoorrowers.org

RNIR contact is paul.winton177@mod.gov.uk

Catching the waves



MORE than 40 surfers competed at the 2021 Royal Navy Royal Marines Surfing Championships at Penhale in Cornwall.

The competition was open to regulars, reservists and veterans and all were looking to take the champions title, last awarded in 2019.

Competition Secretary WO2 Warren Keays-Smith RM called the competition on early on the first morning of the four-day waiting period, to take advantage of favourable surf and weather conditions.

First in the water was small field of bodyboarders; eight competitors whittled down to a final four in what were effectively two round-one semi-finals. A shock defeat of the favourite left the final wide open, and victory went to LAET Matt Gough.

As the tide pushed in and the conditions continued to improve, next to surf was the women's division.

A very close final was difficult for the judges to pick apart, but newcomer MA Tayla Davin took the top spot with her consistency and good wave choice.

With 28 entrants for the mens' open – the biggest field in recent years – round one heats took up the early part of the afternoon, with the large crowd enjoying the sunshine in the dunes overlooking the competition area, and the chance to 'free surf' when not in the water competing.

Finally, as day one drew to a close, the first heats of the mens' longboard decided who went straight to the semi-finals and who would have to surf again in the last-chance repechage.

Day two dawned not quite as bright and sunny as the previous day, but the surf was marginally larger and with light winds the competition was a go.

With a significant number of surfers still in the running in both the open and longboard competitions, WO2 Keays-Smith had his work cut out coordinating heats to keep the day



running smoothly.

As the swell peaked mid-afternoon, the mens' open concluded tucked in against the cliffs of Penhale point.

A nice 'right' was peeling down the beach, ultimately giving AB Jake Sage the chance to show off some excellent high-performance surfing and take the trophy in his first RNRMSA Championships. A spot on the 2022 team for the Inter-Service competition beckons.

After a short interval to complete the stand-up-paddle surf final – congratulations PO Mark Richardson – the 2021 Championships concluded with the mens' longboard final.

In the first minute of the heat, four of the five surfers paddled for the same wave with the ensuing near-misses providing some nail-

biting action for the crowd in the dunes.

Combining graceful footwork with more progressive performance-based turns, WO2 Keays-Smith emerged the eventual winner of a final packed with high-quality surfing.

Alongside the Championships, the RNRMSA offers an annual calendar of beginner weekends, intermediate training sessions, and surf camps/tours abroad.

To find out more and to become a member visit www.surfnavy.com or search for the Surf Navy group on Facebook.

Report by Lt Cdr Mike Curd
Pictures by Lt Cdr Mike Curd
and AB J King

Successful golfing debut for UKAF

ROYAL Navy Leading Hand Ryan Moore enjoyed a successful golfing debut for the UK Armed Forces.

The 29-year-old, who currently plays with a handicap of plus 2, was selected to play a combined Public Services team consisting of representatives from the Police, Fire Service and the Civil Service, at Coxmoor Golf Club in Nottingham.

"The end result for the fixture between UKAF Golf and the Public Services saw a victory to UKAF winning the match 10-8," said LH Moore.

"It was a great experience to represent the UKAF and was ever sweeter to get the win and a nice way to conclude the golfing season.

"My emphasise now switches to off season practice in preparation for 2022 and the new season ahead.

"Being in the Royal Navy has given me the opportunity to play some of the best courses in the UK. Something that would cost a lot of money if I was to do it of my own back.

"I have met some great people and being part of a team is so important. The next aim is to win the Inter-Service Championship, something that as yet I have been unable to achieve."

Joining the Royal Navy at the age of 16, LH Moore arrived with a handicap of seven, having played golf at his school in Ivybridge. He was initially told that he wasn't at the level to represent the Royal Navy and that he needed to reduce his handicap to five.

LH Moore met that goal fairly quickly and won his first RN Championship in 2015. Now nearly ten years on from his first Navy Championship, he has won the RN Championships twice and played eight consecutive Inter-Service championships.

Explaining his love for golf, LH Moore said: "I enjoy the freedom; it's played outside, it's a sport, but quite a chilled sport, and it has its own physical demands.

"You have the self-challenge or it can be incorporated into a team, when you are still playing for yourself, but you come

together overall, like for example in the Ryder cup.

"You can also track your performance because it is done by score, so you can see that your scores are getting better to give you that drive and that sense of achievement to work on. You can set yourself goals and tick them off."

LH Moore joined HMS Raleigh in April 2021, straight from a sea-going draft on board HMS Albion.

He is currently a member of the divisional team responsible for taking the recruits through their ten-week initial naval training course.

LH Moore said: "I enjoy working with the recruits. I'm a writer by trade, which is a lot of desk work and it's good now to be involved in some hands-on training.

"We go out with the recruits and do the exercises with them, so I'm seeing a different side of the RN to my usual job.

"I like seeing the change in the recruits, as we take them from civilians and turn them into military personnel."



£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the October edition of *Navy News* (right) was the Type 21 frigate HMS Active, which was renamed PNS Shar Jahan when sold to Pakistan in 1994.

Keith Simmons, from Dorchester, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.

This month's mystery ship (above) is a V-class destroyer which was launched on February 23 1943 and saw service during WW2.

1. What was her name and 2. What was the name of the Japanese cruiser she helped sink in May 1945?

Please complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

We will also accept emailed entries to subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk with



December Mystery Ship in the email header.

Coupons and emails giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Entries must be received by January 13. 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 February edition.

MYSTERY PICTURE 322

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: news@royalnavymail.mod.uk or editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk
- If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
- Please send in reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event. There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
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ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS

Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY

DEC 2021 No. 809: Founded 1954

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Published by Navy News, Navy Command HQ, Portsmouth and printed by Walstead UK.

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Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Swap Draft columns in January's Noticeboard must be received by

DECEMBER 3 2021

Deaths

Brian 'Chunky' Scovell. Aircraft Mechanic A/E served 800 Sqd. Eagle during the Beira Patrol 1965. Died in Canada on October 3, aged 77.
Arthur Hamilton AB. Member of the HMS Liverpool Association. Served HMS Liverpool, Renown, Chiddingfold, Hunt-class Destroyer Squadron and also Combined Operations. Died November 10, aged 96
Alan Arnell, LAM A/E. Joined RN in 1955. Served in HMS Bulwark, Hermes, Gamecock, Fulmar, Condor, Ariel, Daedalus, and Heron. Founder member of Bognor Regis RNA. Died October 18, aged 84.
Clifford 'Cliff' Knott. Joined the RN in 1947 as a 15-year-old "Ganges Boy Sailor". He moved to Chatham Barracks in 1948 before being posted to HMS Superb and served on her for three years. In 1951 he joined HMS Birmingham and served in the Korean War. In 1954 he was back in Chatham as part of the "Barrack Guard". In 1955 he joined HMS Narvik, and was present at "Operation Mosaic" the UK Nuclear Tests in May 1956 on the Montebello Islands. He was de-mobbed in 1957. Died October 30, aged 89.
Cdr Alistair M Bruce. HMS Alderney, Manxman, Neptune, Renown, Dolphin, Defiance, Revenge, and Centurion. FOSM. Died Oct 22, aged 87.
Lt Cdr John D M Collingridge. HMS Wasperton, Sea Eagle. Dir Naval Air Warfare. Died Oct 3, aged 89.
Lt Cdr Kenneth G Dowle. HMS Triumph, Excellent, Victory RNB, Sussex Div RNR. Adty Int Board HMS Sultan. Died Oct 7, aged 89.
Capt Geoffrey Jaques. HMS Revenge, Dolphin, Trump, Neptune. Ass Controller Polaris. Died Oct 13.
Surg Cdr Ronald S Mackinnon. NH Haslar, Malta. HMS President, Drake. Died Sept 25, aged 87.
Cdr John L Mellow. HMS Collingwood, Bulwark, Collingwood, Vernon, Andromeda, Nelson, Osprey. ACR. Died Oct 26, aged 88.
Capt Anthony Short. HMS Ganges, President, Bulwark, Victory RNB, Nelson, Brit Defence Staff Canberra. DNMT, FOSNI, AIB Sultan. Died Oct 11, aged 92.
POMA Christopher 'Doc/Horse' Radford. Joined

April 1957. Served Medical Branch aboard HMS Lion 1961-62, HMS Ashanti 1966-67, HMS Whitby 1967-68, HMS Troubridge 1968-69, HMS Hydra 1969-70 and 1974-76, HMS Birmingham 1976-79. Died November 5.
Frank Hubbard, AB. Served from 1943 to 1947 in HMS Europa, Irwell, Eaglet, and Pembroke. Awarded Arctic Star. Member of Norwich Branch of RNA from 1997 to 2008. Died October 27, aged 95.

Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNO

Vice Adm Sir John M Forbes KCB. HMS Triumph, Drake. Nav Sec. DN Plans. BRNC Dartmouth. Died Oct 24, aged 96.
Cdr Stephen W Howick. HMS Carysfort, Hydra, Fife, Amazon, Active, Nelson. MOD Bath. RSRE Malvern. RNEC Manadon. Died Oct.
Lt Cdr Roger Tritton. HMS Ark Royal, Blake, Berwick, Ashanti, Dryad, Naiad, Cochrane, Alfriston, Swallow. Capt Port Rosyth. Died Oct.
Lt Cdr RNR R D Bridge. Severn Div RNR. RNR Unattached. Died Oct.
Cdr Michael A Phelps. HMS Fearless, Penelope, Sultan, Gloucester, Excellent, Nelson. HM Royal Yacht. Fleet Eng Staff Portsmouth. Capt Naval Drafting. Died Oct.
Lt Cdr Alfred W R Wilton. HMS Mercury, Chawton, President, Centurion, NATO. Died Oct.

Submariners' Association

Alistair Jonathan Lyall MBE Commodore. Served from Sep 1967 to Oct 1997 in HM Submarines Onslaught (x2), Porpoise, Andrew, Sovereign, Odin, Oberon, and Sceptre. Member of Dolphin Branch. Died October 2, 2021.
Ian F Whittle AB UW3. Served from 1954 to 1958 in HM Submarines Alaric, Springer, and Tapir. Member of Essex Branch. Died October 2, 2021.
Jim Thompson LME. Served from Nov 1953 to Jul

1974 in HM Submarines Alaric, Telemachus, Thorough, Astute, Andrew, Anchorite, Ambush, Alliance, Grampus, Token, Astute, Odin, and Alcide. Member of Gosport Branch. Died October 20, 2021.
Mike J Horne RO1. Served from 1969 to 1974 in HM Submarines Olympus and Aeneas. Member of Dolphin Branch. Died October 25, 2021.
John Middleton M(E)1. Served from Aug 1961 to Aug 1965 in HM Submarines Sea-Scout and Truncheon. Member of Nottingham Branch. Died October 29, 2021.

Reunions

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association: The 2022 annual reunion takes place at the Red Lea Hotel in Scarborough, from May 13 to 16. Contact Secretary Denis Askham at 07773651213 or email askhamd3@gmail.com

HMS Mohawk Association. Our next reunion will take place at the Mercure Dolphin Hotel in Southampton from Friday March 25 to 28 2022. For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or contact Bob Proud at rob.proud@mypostoffice.co.uk

HMS Fearless: Our 40th anniversary reunion takes place in Portsmouth from May 28 to 29, 2022. Tickets for the gala dinner at the Royal Maritime Club need to be booked in advance and are £60 per head. Book via: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/hms-fearless-82-40th-anniversary-reunion-tickets-189862392527>. On May 29 we will muster at Gosport bus station at 9.45am ahead of a service at 11am and a parade via Gosport High Street to a reception at Walpole Park. Details available on Fearless Old Boys Facebook page or SAMA82 website.

Ask Jack

HMS St Vincent March 1953 - Duncan 21. Trying to contact former classmates and also TS Arethusa 1950/53. I also went to the following ships, Loch Ruthven 53/54 Dryad 54/55. HMS Newcastle Far East 55/57, Dryad 57/58. HMS Victorious 58/60. Dryad 61 Left Navy March 61. Leading Seaman RP2. Belong to associations at St Vincent and Victorious. tonyturner36@hotmail.co.uk



HMS Matchless: My step father served on the Matchless and ran the Matchless Association until his death a few years ago. We still have 2 of the association's ties and wondered if you might have any suggestions as to how we might reach any of the veterans still alive (or their relatives) who might treasure one?
Norman.haynes@ntlworld.com

The charity Front Line Naval Chaplain: We are looking for information about a WW2 'bish', the Rev Martin Martin-Harvey DSC. Records about Martin-Harvey, a temporary RNVR chaplain, are incomplete. So far researchers have pieced together that he served in the famous Pedestal convoy to Malta in 1942, praying with dying men then later committing their bodies to the deep. Later, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross for actions while serving

in the cruiser HMS Sirius (possibly when the ship was bombed, suffering 14 killed and many injured, during the bombardment of Kos): a quotation believed to be from the citation says the award was for "keeping up the morale of the ship's company at a time of stressful service."

He later went ashore on D-Day, having "had the good sense to take off his clothes and carry them on his head while wading ashore, thus ensuring a dry ship-shape condition in which to engage the enemy" - he was possibly serving with the Royal Marines at the time - he is listed at Bickleigh in 1946. After the war he became the chaplain of St Lawrence College, in Ramsgate.

Simon Springett
frontlinebish@gmail.com

G Clarke: While clearing out the loft of a flat in Edinburgh that I am about to sell, I came across a kit record book for a G Clarke - service number D199758 - along with some other minor memorabilia. If anyone wishes to claim the items please contact me.

Dr BA Hobbs.
Bruce.hobbs@geophys.co.uk

HMS Diana and Vigo: I am researching family history and would like to get in touch with any RN personnel who served with my father CPO Sam Bell on either HMS Diana or Vigo and also from any who took part in the Monte Bello nuclear tests.

David Bell
169 Truro Drive, Plymouth, PL5 4TR,
01752707177 or email Fortitude1944@btinternet.com.

December 1958: I travelled home for demob in December 1958 from Malta to Devonport but can't remember the name of the fleet carrier I was on. We arrived in Devonport on a Tuesday near Christmas and I was demobbed two days later.

A Wright, former telegraphist
28 Poplar Avenue
Kirkby-in-Ashfield,
Nottingham NG17 7GX

HMS Raleigh - Drake 25s - 21st June 1977: Looking to contact fellow shipmates of the infamous class of Drake 25s and planning to have a reunion, after the pandemic. Already in contact with a number of classmates. Any members out there, that wishes to connect, please contact me directly.

David Cannon
dcannon8bells@outlook.com

HMS Dainty: My father Reg Grogan is trying to contact Dave Irwin and 'Crash Carl', with whom he served with aboard HMS Dainty.

Lisa Hughes, 07834269050

HMS Norfolk: I am after information about the ship's first commission. I was in the Royal Navy for six years, then in the RFA for seven. I joined Norfolk while she was being built at Swan Hunter on the Tyne in 1970 until 1972. When we arrived in Portsmouth in January 1972 I am sure we stayed alongside for about six months or so. The only time I recall us going to sea was for Sea Slug trials and a visit to Malta.
Dennis Gilmore
dennisgilmore@live.co.uk

Sailor saves neighbours Awards for volunteers

A SAILOR from HMS Collingwood put himself in harm's way to save his neighbours during a fire.

Petty Officer Jon Thorner, 41, was relaxing at his partner's home in Portsmouth's Nelson Avenue when a large bang from outside made him spring into action.

Together with his partner, Gemma, he realised there had been a huge explosion in a neighbouring home and ran towards the scene, where he could see flames already engulfing the property, at the same time calling the emergency services.

Once at the house, he could see an elderly gentleman in the garden, confused, dazed and suffering from burns.

Debris blocked the front gate and Jon kicked this aside, guiding the man to safety, before noticing an elderly woman trapped in the hallway. The windows, doors and frames had all been blown out by the blast and this, together with her injuries, meant she was unable to escape the flames.

Jon entered the property, lifted her onto his shoulder and ran back through the debris and away from the house. Looking

back, he could then see flames billowing out of the door where seconds before the woman had been standing.



Jon said: "The emergency services arrived very quickly, and I wish to thank them as they are the true heroes who do this every day.

"I also want to thank the neighbours who fetched blankets for the couple and buckets of water to cool their burns. When the fire service arrived, they asked me to stay with a hose and cool the burns down while we waited for the ambulance.

"I used my Navy training to keep the victims calm, coherent and as comfortable as possible and tried to get as much information from them to hand over to the ambulance service. I just did what needed to be done."

Since the incident, the police have contacted Jon with a view to nominating him for a community bravery award and the local fire service have invited him, Gemma and his children to the station so they can thank him personally.

THE contribution made by a dedicated team of volunteers who worked to help get an exhibition launched on time during the pandemic has been recognised at the prestigious 2020 Marsh Award for Museum Learning event held at the British Museum.

Thirty-three volunteers from the National Museum of the Royal Navy and Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust won the South East England regional award for their work on Diving Deep: HMS Invincible 1744 at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

The volunteer team consulted with the project manager and exhibition designer to find ways to ensure that all the touching and smelling - the fun family activities in the exhibition - could continue whilst also being Covid safe. The team used interpretation to design hand sanitising activities integral to the experience. Characters from the exhibition encourage visitors to sanitise their hands throughout.

Eileen Clegg, Community Archaeologist at the National Museum of the Royal Navy who led the team and nominated them said: "Despite a global pandemic, this group of volunteers worked against the clock online and in person during national lockdowns to successfully install the exhibition in time for its opening."

The year-long exhibition tells the story of Invincible; her capture, the contribution she made to the Royal Navy and ship design and her subsequent sinking in 1758 and rediscovery by fisherman, Arthur Mack, nearly 200 years later. It showcased some of the objects and findings from the Diving Deep: HMS Invincible 1744 archaeological excavation.



NEW facilities for Royal Navy Reservists at HMS King Alfred were rededicated in the presence of Prince Michael of Kent, Commodore-in-Chief of the Maritime Reserves.

The ceremony marked the end of a major refurbishment programme which saw historic Semaphore Tower and surrounding buildings in Portsmouth Naval Base repurposed as a first-class training centre for the Maritime Reserves.

Commander of the Maritime Reserves, Commodore Mel Robinson, said: "The journey leading up to today has been one of teamwork, collaboration and success.

"Working closely with our partners across industry and the Royal Navy Infrastructure Team, we have built a state-of-the-art facility which will provide a home for the Royal Naval Reserve, the Royal Marines Reserve and the University Royal Naval Unit attached to Portsmouth and Southampton Universities."

The new centre is part of a transformation programme that will see HMS King Alfred become a waterfront regional training hub. This will make the unit a focal point for not only local Reservists, but from across the UK.

The Commanding Officer of HMS King Alfred, Commander Andrew Robinson, said: "As one of the largest Reserve units in the UK, these new modern and fit-for-purpose facilities will allow us to enhance our training, attract new talent and continue to contribute our specialist skills to the Royal Navy in support of global operations."

An act of rededication was performed by the chaplains of HMS King Alfred in front of family, friends and guests.

They were treated to a musical medley performed by the Royal Marines Band before witnessing His Royal Highness Prince Michael strike the ship's bell for the first time.

The Prince joined the youngest member of the unit, Katie Stocks, in cutting a celebratory cake before viewing the new training facilities and talking to guests.

Pictures: LPhot Belinda Alker



Forging closer ties with communities

THE Royal Navy's home in London hosted Tower Hamlets community leaders to forge closer ties with one of the most diverse societies in the UK.

Nearly 100 people from across the community converged on the capital's Royal Naval Reserve Unit HMS President for an evening introducing them to the Maritime Reserves, the Royal Navy and Defence as a whole.

Among the advocates present on behalf of the Senior Service was Honorary Captain Durdana Ansari, pictured above.

"I'm so grateful to the Royal Navy," she told community leaders. "I've found my best friends here. We are making a difference. Your children will become the finest officers and ratings in the Royal Navy and their legacy will remain for generations. If James Bond can become a Commander, don't you think this is the best place to go!"

Guests were treated to a cookery lesson from Commando Chef Colour Sergeant Mike Beaton, pictured right, and an unarmed combat demonstration from commandos from RMR London, before joining Commodore Mel Robinson, Commander of the Maritime Reserves, for Ceremonial Sunset.

"Our home in Tower Hamlets is one of the most diverse parts of the United Kingdom," Commodore Robinson said. "And we in the Royal Navy –

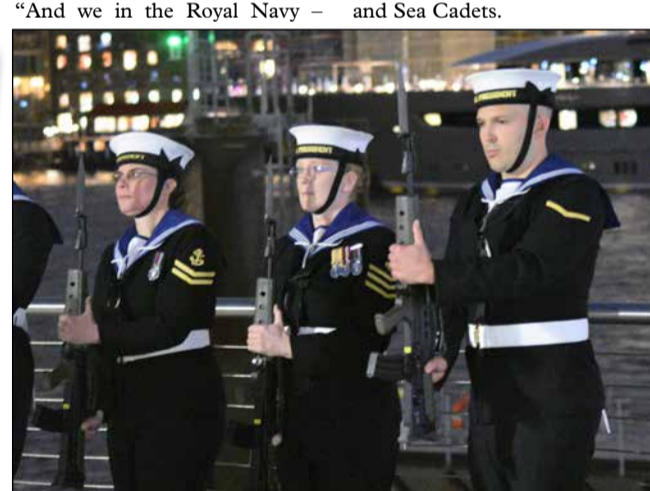
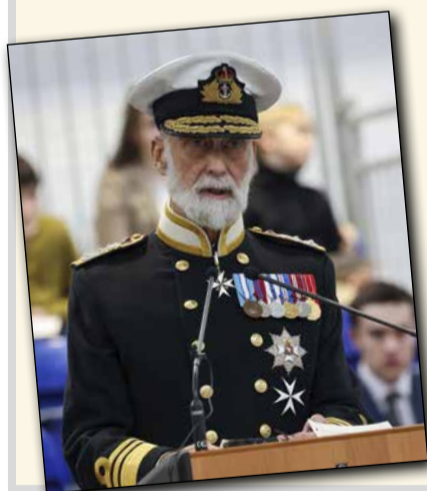


Regular and Reserve – take a great deal of pride in ourselves for our active and ongoing campaign to encourage people from across our society to get to know us, to understand the value the Royal Navy adds to British society, and, where appropriate, to look into joining us."

President has been based at St Katharine's Dock, just downstream of Tower Bridge and within the Borough of Tower of Hamlets, since the late 1980s.

As well as being home to reservists based in and around the capital, it serves as the HQs of the Naval Regional Commander and Sea Cadets.

Ringling in new era for reserves



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IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS OUR HELP, PLEASE CONTACT US
 T- 01737 360 106 E- admin@royalalfred.org.uk www.royalalfredseafarers.com

