

COMMANDING OFFICER HMS SCOTIA

Commander Tom Knowles BA(Hons), PG Dip., MA, FSA (Scot), FCMI, Royal Naval Reserve.

Tom Knowles is the Head of Grants with Historic Environment Scotland (the lead public body for the Historic Environment) and he is responsible for distributing £15M annually across a wide range of programmes in support of Scottish Government objectives. As a graduate of both Kings College London and University College London, and an Archaeologist by training, Tom has expanded his academic and practical qualifications to include Finance, Urban Conservation and Defence Studies.

In his spare time, Tom is committed as an Officer in the Maritime Reserves, an organisation he joined from Cambridge University Royal Naval Unit (URNU) in 2002. During his Initial Officer Training Tom was selected as a Guard Officer for the 2002 Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph and on passing fleetboard, was nominated as the Queen's Colour Officer for the 2003 presentation of the Sovereign's Colour to the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR), to mark its centenary. In 2005, Tom led the Guard troop for the Royal Navy at the Edinburgh Military Tattoo, the first time the Royal Navy has provided a ceremonial function at this international event.

In the meantime Tom joined the Submarine Operations specialisation, passing his boards for both Duty Submarine Controller and Submarine Advisory Team Watchkeeper. He has served shoreside and on a number of Royal Navy and coalition warships in many NATO and Joint Warrior Exercises, exercising Tactical Command over submarines from the UK, France, United States, Netherlands, Germany and Norway.

Concurrent with his Operational Role advancement, Tom has held a number of Reservist unit, HQ and specialisation appointments, including: Executive Admin Officer HMS President; Training Officer London URNU; SO3 Command, Leadership and Management Team (Reserves); 1st Lieutenant for HMS SCOTIA; SO2 Command, Leadership and Management Team (Reserves); Executive Officer of HMS Scotia and SO2 Submarines.

In 2015, Tom took sabbatical leave from his civilian employer and whilst on a Full Time Reserve Service contract, attended the Advanced Command and Staff Course 19. Mixing with regular counterparts from the UK Armed Forces, Civil Service and overseas colleagues, Tom was able to apply his reservist viewpoint to great effect and was awarded the Commandant's Commendation for an exceptional contribution to all aspects of the course.

Returning to his civilian employer, Tom assumed command of HMS SCOTIA in September 2016.

Tom is married to Hannah, a food journalist, and they have a daughter who was born in 2014. He has little spare time beyond his commitments to family, civilian employment and the Royal Naval Reserve, but enjoys watching rugby and splitting logs.