

# THE FIGHTING 45

## Newsletter of HMS DEFENDER

Issue 06 | April 2016



## DEFENDER FLIES THE FLAG IN INTERNATIONAL EXERCISE

This month HMS DEFENDER represented Britain and the Royal Navy in the International Mine Counter Measures Exercise (IMCMEX). This is the largest anti-mine warfare exercise in the world, with over 30 nations, organisations, and international agencies participating.

DEFENDER led the UK's contribution to the exercise, which also included the Mine Countermeasure Vessels HMS CHIDDINGFOLD, MIDDLEDTON, and PENZANCE, as well as Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships Cardigan Bay, and Fort Victoria. The USA contributed 16 ships to the exercise, from the US Navy and the Coastguard. The Japanese also sent 2 ships. Many of the Gulf States were involved in the exercise through the Combined Maritime Forces based in the region.

The programme included a wide variety of training exercises covering all areas of defensive anti-mine warfare including detection, disposal, ships working as part of an international task group, and defending against simulated hostile attacks. The objective was to focus on serialized events that span the tactical and operational level, with an intent to confirm interoperability of coalition forces.

This training enables the forces involved to be prepared to defend key maritime trade routes from the threat of mine warfare in order to enable the global flow of commerce, ensure freedom of navigation, and to assist in preserving maritime security and stability worldwide.



## DEFENDER GETS THE ROYAL TREATMENT

**HMS DEFENDER conducted a sail past with two Cunard cruise liners, the Queen Elizabeth and the Queen Mary II, whilst on Operations in the Gulf of Oman.**

The ship took time out from the busy exercise schedule to rendezvous with the two cruise ships as they sail to the Arabian Gulf. DEFENDER launched her Lynx helicopter as the ship performed complex manoeuvres at close range to the massive cruise ships.

“It was thrilling to fly so close to these impressive ships” said Flight Observer Lieutenant Tom Wilson. “All the passengers come out onto the decks to wave as DEFENDER sailed past, it was spectacular to see from the helicopter.”

The Queen Mary II is the largest ship operated by the Cunard line, with the Queen Elizabeth coming in a close second. Among the passengers onboard were several Royal Navy VIPs and their families, including the Commander of the UK’s Carrier Strike Group, Commodore Jerry Kyd Royal Navy, the first Commanding Officer of the Queen Elizabeth Aircraft Carrier.

### QUEEN’S BIRTHDAY BASH

DEFENDER celebrated HM Queen Elizabeth’s 90<sup>th</sup> birthday whilst alongside in Dammam, in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The ship hosted an official reception and capability demonstration for key figures in the local military and business communities, as well as representatives from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the British Embassy.

The guest of honour was Her Majesty’s Ambassador to Saudi Arabia Simon Collis.

The event included demonstrations by the Operations Room and the Royal Marines Boarding team.

### CHARITIES UPDATE

HMS DEFENDER has set the challenge of raising £10,000 for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity during deployment. As part of this we are completing a challenge onboard to cover the massive distance from the Gulf to Twickenham, London, by running, cycling or rowing and we have 2 weeks to do it - **3156 miles in total!**

It is a huge distance to cover but as an already well formed team, this will be another challenge we will conquer.

We are raising money for the RNRMC as they have given DEFENDER a lot of support while being deployed.

If, you at home would be so kind as to sponsor us, you can donate at this page:

<http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserPage.action?userUrl=TimScrivener1&fald=700996&isTeam=false>

Alternatively you can find our page at ‘Virgin Money Giving’ by searching for HMS DEFENDER.

So far we have completed 1300 miles, with 1856 miles left to go. So far we have raised £700 (£837.50 with gift aid). Please donate to a great cause and show your support for all the hard work the ship’s company are putting into this huge challenge!