

The

ALBION

HMS ALBION's newsletter for families and friends

Issue 01 | February 2017



ALL ABOARD!

For the first time in almost six years, nearly 350 sailors and Royal Marines moved back on board HMS ALBION at the end of January, marking a major milestone of her multi-million pound refit.

Until recently, HMS ALBION has been staffed by a relatively small team of Royal Navy and civilian contractors overseeing 500 people who have been working tirelessly (it is estimated that over 1.2 million man-hours of work have been needed so far) in order to get the ship ready for her to re-enter active service later this year. The occasion was marked with an official handing over ceremony and the galley staff prepared a fish and chip lunch. The first meal to be prepared on board in 6 years!

Numerous aspects of the ship have been upgraded since the project commenced in mid 2015. The major refit package of upgrade works includes more than 110 improvements. The largest of which being the improved propulsion and combat systems. The new propulsion system will also benefit from a new fresh water rather than salt water cooling system-which will be essential when the ship operates in warmer climates. The new combat computer brain will manage the upgraded weapons and sensors, which includes a more capable surveillance radar and improved defensive weapon system, Phalanx. Additionally, some 25 miles of new electrical cables have been installed, 2 miles of pipework replaced, 100 pumps... continues overleaf



Members of the Ship's Company moving their possessions on to HMS ALBION

Personal from the Senior Naval Officer
Cdr Stuart Yates RN

Dear families and friends,

A warm welcome to the first edition of the 'ALBION Chronicle', one of many means of keeping you updated and informed of our adventures.

I have the reigns until our new Captain, Captain Tim Neild, joins in mid March. The crew are rapidly breathing life back in to HMS ALBION; regenerating Ship's systems, equipment and routines, while restocking stores and replenishing fuels. In partnership with Babcock Marine, we are making good head way and are on track to return to sea in the summer in preparation for trials and operational sea training.

Bringing a warship back to life and taking her to sea is a huge privilege and responsibility for us all. While it is an exciting time, it also involves a lot of hard work and personal commitment. I am grateful to all of our families, affiliates and friends for their support during this regeneration period. You are all key members of the 'ALBION Family' and the Ship could not achieve its successes without your continued support. In the meantime, we will keep you updated as the year develops including highlighting opportunities when you will be able to visit us onboard.



Cdr Yates takes care and protection of ALBION from Babcock in Jan 17

Stuart

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... overhauled, 1,500 valves replaced and 20,000 square meters of steel in 34 ballast tanks preserved - enough to cover three football pitches.

Work will now continue on board with a view of the ship being ready for sea by summer. After which a period of sea trials will take place to ensure that both the ship, and her crew are ready and set for operations.



Chefs serve up the first lunch of fish and chips

ALBION'S COMMANDOS

4 Assault Squadron Royal Marines (4ASRM) as the resident Royal Marines unit on board HMS ALBION provide the ship with her ability to physically move personnel and equipment over the sea to the coast anywhere in the world. The Squadron consists of 83 Royal Marines, 8 Landing Craft and some highly specialised vehicles and equipment that make the business amphibious surface manoeuvre as efficient as possible. Now the sole LPD ASRM, the Squadron has remained at very high readiness throughout the transition from BULWARK to ALBION. In order to achieve this, they have been busy conducting a series of demanding core training exercises; conveniently assisted by the challenging landscape and micro climate of Dartmoor being only a 'stones throw' from Devonport!

Following the annual and mandatory training tests, the ASRM exercised its ability to move out of the Ship's routine and into a more typical Commando role, deploying to Dartmoor early on a dark damp February morning for Ex FROSTY RESPONSE.

What followed was a challenging yet rewarding week with the ASRM revising its core Commando skills, from team and section strength attacks by day and night, along with day and night navigation exercises with increasing weight and distances. The week culminated with the teams extracting by foot. A short opportunity to thaw out offered an ideal chance to chat to some of the locals before then returning to ship to de-service all of the equipment. A hearty thanks must be given to 1 Assault Group Royal Marines who supported the training with instructors, vehicles and tentage.

The ASRM are now progressing with their annual tests; conducting live firing marksmanship training with all of their weapons systems to maintain their level of operational readiness.



'Jack Speak': 'Babies Head'; a tinned steak and kidney pudding



Our two Phalanx CIWS, awaiting to be fitted



The new Ship's Company and civilian contractors gather on the vehicle deck to celebrate the achievement of the ship's staff move onboard



Left: For the first time in 6 years, all four of ALBION's engines have been run to 100% load. SLt Chris Mullen, the propulsion engineer officer, said 'all four engines performed exactly as

expected, with the two main engines producing 6.25 Mega Watts each and the two auxiliaries producing 1.56 Mega Watts each'. All four engines have been completely overhauled during ALBION's refit.



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