

# The ALBION Chronicle

HMS ALBION's Newsletter for families and friends

Issue 3 | Oct 2017



## RE-DEDICATED BY ROYAL APPOINTMENT

HMS ALBION was re-dedicated into the Royal Navy front line Fleet on 21 July whilst alongside in Plymouth in the presence of her sponsor, Her Royal Highness The Princess Royal, as guest of Honour. Re-dedication is an auspicious day for the Royal Navy, ALBION and the City of Plymouth, marking the beginning of the next chapter in the ship's life as it becomes the UK's very high readiness amphibious assault ship.

As is tradition, the Captain, Officers, and crew of 350 Royal Marines and sailors formed up on parade in their best uniform, with swords and medals in front of families, friends, affiliates and VIPs from across Defence and industry.



The Chaplain of the Fleet, The Venerable Ian Wheatley QHC Royal Navy, provided a blessing and prayed for the safety of the crew and all who sailed in her on future operations, with the Band of the Royal Marines Plymouth completing the ambience. Her Royal Highness toured the ship and took the opportunity to meet the families as well as awarding long service and good conduct



medals before joining the youngest member of the crew, 18 year old Engineering Technician Kyle MacDonald, in the long-established tradition of cutting the specially made re-dedication cake, prepared locally by Navy chefs at HMS RALEIGH.

### Personal from the Captain, Tim Neild

Dear family and friends,

Welcome back to the quarterly Ship's Newsletter. A lot has happened since I wrote to you in June: We have Re-dedicated the ship to the Fleet in the presence of our sponsor-HRH the Princess Royal; undergone extensive sea trials-putting the ship and its equipment through its paces; paid a visit to Den Helder in Holland to host a UK/NL amphibious operations conference; signed off the contract for the 2 year £90M mid-life upgrade and formally been returned to the operational Fleet.

We are currently at sea making final preparations to undertake 6 weeks of intensive Operational Sea Training. By Christmas we will have tested the full range of ALBION's Swiss Army knife capabilities and honed our war fighting skills, ready to respond to any National tasking as directed. It's going to be hard work and I am very grateful to you for your continued support, which helps us all deliver success on operations.

I look forward to writing to you at Christmas, by which time we will be the UK's very high readiness amphibious assault ship!

*Tim*



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# MEET THE PMO!

Each issue we will be interviewing a member of the Ship's Company in order for you to better understand some of the roles on board. This issue we spoke to Surgeon Lt Cdr Steph Ingram-the Principle Medical Officer (PMO)

**What is your role on board?** Principal Medical Officer – Head of the Medical Dept, providing primary care and occupational healthcare to Ship's Company, and Medical Advisor to the Command.

**What does a typical day look like for you?** I will normally get up at 0530 and go to the gym followed by breakfast and admin. Fresh Cases clinic starts at 0800, where all new medical problems are assessed by the Medical Assistants. Between 0900 and 1200 I have a clinic where I will see all sorts of problems from musculoskeletal problems and skin rashes to chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, and everything in-between. Over lunch I'll catch up with admin or have a cup of tea with the Chaplain to discuss any pastoral / welfare issues onboard. Afternoons are less structured and will often be a mixture of seeing patients, meetings, training and admin. I'll also liaise with HMS Drake sickbay, DCMH and RNRW Welfare on the more complex cases.

**Favourite aspect of life on board HMS ALBION?** Working with the 'black stripe navy' ie out of the safe shoreside sickbay environment.

**Most challenging aspect of life on board HMS ALBION?** Navigating the tricky and often challenging task of ensuring the medical condition doesn't impact on the job, and the job doesn't impact on the condition.

**Interests or hobbies?** Keeping fit, yoga and extreme sports. I am the Royal Navy Snowboard Team Ladies' Captain and last year I established the RN Wakeboard Team, which I am currently the Chairwoman of.



*Surgeon Lt Cdr Ingram attending the RN wakeboard championships*

## FIRST OVER SEAS VISIT-DEN HELDER

ALBION undertook its first overseas visit last month, arriving in the Dutch Naval Base at Den Helder to host a UK-NL amphibious conference, supported by principal staff from the UK's Commander Amphibious Task Group, 3 Commando Brigade Royal Marines HQ and Commander Operations Staff Northwood. A key meeting, aimed at continuing a long standing naval and commando partnership between the NL and UK governments and a great opportunity to discuss the next 3 years of amphibious interaction. Sailing following a superb visit, ALBION detached 4 Assault Squadron Royal Marines in two large landing craft, to hone navigation skills conducting a long range independent transit back to the UK. Exercise Den Helder Dash, as the training serial became known, saw a 45 strong Royal Marine detachment navigate through the inland waterways of Holland from Rotterdam to Vlissingen before crossing the English Channel and returning to their homeport in Plymouth in challenging conditions – Force 9 and lumpy English Channel.

## ALBION 'BAKE OFF' FOR CHARITY

The Ship's Company recently held a 'bake off' on board, to pitch their culinary skills against one another and to also raise money for a worthwhile cause, Claire House Children's Hospice, one of the ship's affiliated charities.



*A Merlin helicopter from 814NAS conducts the first deck landing on ALBION in over 6 years!*

**'Jack Speak':** 'Scran'; Naval name for food. Derived from SCRAN rations (Sultanas, Currents, Raisins And Nuts)



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