Ship’s Painting

As many onboard will remember whilst stood in Procedure Alpha, HMS SUTHERLAND announced her arrival into Sydney by sailing past the world-famous Sydney Opera House and under the Harbour Bridge. To mark such a momentous occasion the Wardroom has commissioned a bespoke painting from a local artist mirroring the now famous picture which was used as the cover for Navy News. This is a truly stunning piece and the artist has gone to great lengths to ensure its accuracy for those who were present on the upper deck. The Wardroom is very keen that this painting is for the whole Ship. As such, a limited run of numbered prints will be available to purchase, so that every sailor can have a memento of the Ship’s Far East deployment.

HMS Sutherland’s Charity Challenge

This year has seen the start of HMS SUTHERLAND’s Charity Challenge where the ship will aim to raise £1000 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marine Charity by the end of Spring 2019. First was the cake morning hosted by LPT Roach and the new YOs in which Ship’s Company munched their way through a mountain of cake and baked goods raising £160. Next were the Wardroom and the PO’s mess who both sold raffle tickets in hopes of participants winning steaks, pork loins and sausages in the meat raffle, raising £55 and £33 respectively.

Burns Night

Fair fa’ your honest, sonsie face! A day which combines haggis, whisky and poetry, the Wardroom celebrated Burns Night on 24th January to celebrate the life and works of Scottish poet Robert Burns. The first Burns supper was held in July 1801 when nine of Burns’ close friends gathered to mark the fifth anniversary of his death. Taking place at Burns Cottage in Alloway, the night consisted of a haggis supper, performances of Burns’ work and a speech in honour of the great Bard (now known as the Immortal Memory). The night was such a resounding success they
decided to hold it again, beginning the tradition we still enjoy to this day. On completion of the meal the Officers played traditional Wardroom ‘games’ and toasted his memory.

**Sutherland chooses New Flag**

More than 3,000 people turned out to vote during the month long competition following a backlash over the committee’s original choice of a swooping eagle on a yellow and red background with three stars. The winning design depicts a white flag overlaid with Saltire and Nordic crosses to denote Sutherland’s unique Viking history, with a golden sun constructed from the arms of the crosses symbolising the sun raised high in the south for the county’s origin name *South Land*. The historic moment was marked by a poignant flag raising ceremony with members of HMS SUTHERLAND leading proceedings during a ceremony at the Highland Council’s offices in Drummuie, Golspie. In addition to the flag unveiling ceremony, the sailors were also able to visit Dunrobin Castle and meet the local community before returning to Devonport.

**Merlin takes over Wildcat**

It’s goodbye Wildcat and hello ‘flying frigate’, the Merlin Mk2 for HMS SUTHERLAND. Marking a switch in focus from the ship’s recent deployment to hunting (and potentially killing if necessary) hostile submarines. The Merlin brings what has been described as a ‘second operations room’ to the mission, with the helicopter’s observer and aircrewmen using sonobuoys (expendable buoys which are dropped to listen for the presence of a boat) or dipping her sonar to locate and track the underwater target, before launching Stingray torpedo to neutralise any threat. The Merlin and members from 829 Squadron will remain with us whilst we are employed as Fleet Ready Escort and Towed Array Patrol Ship.

**Our Future Programme**

The next major milestone for HMS SUTHERLAND is a period of high readiness for contingent national tasking around the UK in the New Year. To prepare for this task, the Ship has conducted ASW, ASuW and AAW training both at sea and within the Royal Navy’s high tech simulator at Maritime Composite Training System (MCTS) in Devonport. Once the ship returns to sea, trials will be conducted to ensure both the ship and the crew have assimilated this training to regain our war-fighting cutting edge and are ready for the challenges national tasking.