

The Rose

The Official Newsletter of HMS MONTROSE

Issue 07 | December 2018



A MESSAGE FROM THE CAPTAIN

Hello and welcome to Issue 7 of 'The Rose', the Official Newsletter of HMS MONTROSE. It was hard to avoid the festivities onboard Montrose this year, as she continued her Pacific Journey. Decorations went up, Christmas Trees were dragged out of void spaces between the decks, and trickles of Christmas Jumpers began to appear during the evenings. Festive cheer aside, there was work to be done for HMS Montrose! She conducted defence engagement in Chile as part of Expo Naval,

which culminated in a visit from HRH Princess Anne. We tackled some very rewarding community outreach, as well as some physical tackles on the rugby pitch. A centenary year, the ship celebrated her 100th birthday and this was all before the Ship's Company managed to enjoy their festive Christmas BBQ on Easter Island. 2018 has been a very successful year for HMS Montrose, and with a new year comes new challenges as she crosses the Date Line and sets her eyes towards Asia.

December has been a varied month, starting with a Royal Visit in Chile and ending in a tiny island in the middle of the Pacific. We've been lucky enough to enjoy some unique experiences as we've made passage across the widest ocean on the planet. I hope your Christmas and New Year celebrations went well back home, and thank you for everything that you sent out to us. Thank you also for bearing with us during our short period of communications difficulties. We have commenced our programme of families' events, with the Panto in Plymouth as well as our first Coffee Mornings. We have funding to support events around the country, so if you have ideas, or know of groups of families who could get together, please let us know, through your loved one onboard, and they can help put an event together.

We are now heading towards Asia, and some of the more operational areas of our deployment. There may be times when we have to deliberately restrict communication to and from the ship to operational reasons. We try to keep this to a minimum and will use the welfare system, when we can, to let you know that we have done this, so you don't worry. We can always receive military communications, and so if you need to get in touch in an emergency, the Joint Casualty and Compassionate Centre (JCCC) can still reach us.



HRH Princess Anne inspects the Royal Guard

Cdr Conor O'Neill RN

HMS Montrose hosts Royal Visit at Expo Naval



The Armada de Chile (Chilean Navy) celebrates their 200th anniversary this year, and HMS Montrose has represented the Royal Navy at the birthday celebrations for a long standing ally of the United Kingdom. Following a multi-national exercise with the both the Chilean and US Navies, the newly upgraded Type 23 arrived alongside Valparaiso, Chile with the former Type 22 Frigate, HMS SHEFFIELD, now Chilean Naval Ship Almirante Williams berthed outboard.

Across the following nine days, the ship hosted a wide range of dignitaries and senior officers, with the UK delegation was led by Her Royal Highness the Princess Royal and the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Philip Jones. They hosted a reception onboard in honour of the 200th anniversary celebrations, attended by the Commander in Chief of the Armada de Chile, Admiral Julio Leiva Molina, as well as the heads of the Royal Australian and Royal New Zealand Navies, and the Commander of the US 4th Fleet. The reception, and all the ceremonial surrounding it was supported by the Royal Marines Band from HMS COLLINGWOOD, who spent over a week in Chile performing at a variety of events.

Prior to the reception, The Princess Royal presented a Fleet Commander's Commendation to Chief Petty Officer "Taff" Edmunds and a Long Service and Good Conduct Medal to Chief Petty Officer "Eddie" Yates.

Chief Petty Officer Edmunds said "It was a real honour to get recognised for the Fleet Commander's Commendation and was extra special to have it presented it by Her Royal Highness".

The reception ended with The Princess Royal taking a Royal Salute from HMS Montrose's Guard of Honour, before departing to Escuela Gran Bretana, a local school for disabled children in which Sailors from the ship had been conducting an Outreach Project, cleaning a overgrown garden and refurbishing buildings.

Midway through the visit HMS MONTROSE sailed as part of an International Fleet Review, in which she was re-united with two fellow Type 23s; Chilean Naval Ships ALMIRANTE CONDELL (ex-HMS MARLBOROUGH) and ALMIRANTE LYNCH (ex HMS-GRAFTON) as well as the US Ships Somerset and Wayne E Mayer, the People's Liberation Army Navy Hospital Ship PEACE ARK, and a dozen ships from other South American Navies. In total 24 ships and 2 Submarines sailed past the Chilean Navy Ship SARGENTO ALDEA, where the President of the Republic of Chile Sebastián Piñera and HRH The Princess Royal took the salute.

Montrose Outreach

The first of these activities was at the Escuela Gran Bretaña, a school for the disabled that was established nearly 50 years ago with support from the British community in Chile. At the school, eight sailors from HMS Montrose assisted with clearing overgrown vegetation and rubbish and in addition brightened up some of the classrooms with a lick of new paint. Leading Engineering Technician Dan Adamson said "This was a great opportunity to assist the school which I found really rewarding."



Lt.Cdr McKay and Sub-Lt Wadley talk to the McKay school

At another local school with British connections, the MacKay School, HMS MONTROSE sent a platoon of sailors to support the unveiling of a recommissioned Roll of Honour. This listed the names of students and masters of the school who went to fight in the trenches of France and Belgium during the First World War. HMS MONTROSE's Executive Officer, Lieutenant Commander Tom McKay spoke at the ceremony about the sacrifice the students and masters made, highlighting the poignancy of it 100 years since the end of the Great War, in the presence of the British Honorary Consul in Valparaiso, Mr Iain Hardy. As Montrose set to leave Chile, the Ship's Company could look back and feel proud that they were able, in their own small way, to give back to the communities and personnel who had hosted them so superbly during their stay in Chile.



LET Adamson and Wtr Amor

Miracle on Montrose at 34° S (and a little bit West)

The sailors of HMS Montrose, half way across the Pacific Ocean during a global deployment, have finished off their Christmas celebrations with a short visit to the UNESCO World Heritage Sites on Easter Island.

Being away from loved ones over Christmas is always hard, however the Ship's Company made the best of the situation by enjoying the traditional events of the festive period, topped off with a once in a lifetime visit.

Celebrations began on Christmas Eve with a nativity play on the Flight Deck, with sailors dressing up to act out the roles of Mary, Baby Jesus, the Wise Men and others who star in the Christmas story. Once the acting was done, the singing commenced, with a service of seven lessons and carols into the afternoon. Finally, the Ship's Chaplain, the Revd Peter Dixon RN, held a Midnight Service, 4 hours behind the UK, reflecting



Santa's Little Helpers (Lt.Cdr Ashton and Sub-Lt. Crouch) xmas cheer

"For many of us, this was our first Christmas away from home, let alone our first Christmas on board a warship, but in the retelling of the Nativity and the singing of carols, the spirit of Christmas flowed in abundance. As Christmas Day dawned, many gathered on the flight deck in festive attire for a unique Christmas service with the sun beating down and the Pacific swell rolling us from side to side."



19 heads are better than 1 on Easter Island

2Deck – CIS

This month in 2 Deck we are shining a light on the saviours of Christmas, and the hard work of the Communications and Information Systems' WE sub-department. On the run up to Christmas Montrose sailed to the dark side of the moon, and with 2 days to go communications with home hit problems – almost like having you phone on zero bars. Under the guidance of PO Wilderspin the team tackled the problem head on, liaising with engineers across 3 time zones and over 2 continents to perform nothing short of a Christmas miracle! Finally as the early morning twilight broke over the bridge on Christmas morning, after several sleepless nights from the team, the Ship's Company woke to open their presents and the word got around that the WE's delivered the greatest gift possible – the ability to call home.

Meanwhile, throughout Christmas Eve, the Ship's Officers assisted the Chefs in preparing all the vegetables and meat for the dinner to come. On the day itself, by military tradition, the Officers serve all other personnel onboard, manning the serving counters and dining halls as a full three course Christmas dinner was laid on, with the Captain and Executive Officer carving the joints. Having enjoyed dinner with their mess mates, everyone spent the afternoon and evening opening presents, whether from home or from the numerous departmental and mess-based Secret Santas, ringing home or relaxing in the sun of the South Pacific.

Just after Christmas Day, HMS Montrose anchored off Easter Island in the Pacific. Everyone onboard got the chance to go ashore to see first the ancient statues, known as Moai, at Ahu Tongariki, then the quarry from which the stone came at Rano Raraki, before having a chance to relax at the sandy beach of Anakena and enjoy a Christmas BBQ, made possible thanks to a generous grant by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity. The captain said,

"In the middle of our Pacific voyage we all got to enjoy a truly once in a career opportunity to visit the ancient civilisation of Easter Island." He added "We know that our families are working hard at home keeping things going whilst we are way, and we are all grateful for the support they and our friends give us, especially during the festive period. I'm also very grateful to the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity for their support to the visit – it has made our deployed Christmas very special!"

Montrose Turns 100

It is fair to say December was a busy month for HMS Montrose, and with defence engagement, the Christmas flurry, and all the visits to some quite remote parts of the world, there was still an opportunity to give some thanks and celebrate a very special birthday to the old girl herself.

HMS Montrose turned 100 this December, and the Ship's Company celebrated in a very appropriate manner (with cake). Once everyone was assembled on the flight deck the cake was cut, with the honours given to the youngest member onboard AB McKenzie-Baldwin. The Executive Officer Tom Mckay, then addressed the Ship's Company about the importance of remembering these events and that 100 years of the Montrose namesake could only be truly honoured by granting leave to her crew 100 minutes early.

Officer of the Watch 4, Sub-Lieutenant Peri Stynes commented on the events:

"Very often we get so caught up in our own lives and personal milestones that it's easy to forget our [The Navy's] rich history, and honouring 100 years of the Montrose name sake is one of the few times we truly take the time to step back and realise this. Here's to the next 100!"

AB McKenzie-Baldwin cuts the cake celebrating 100 years.



HMS MONTROSE PHOTO OF THE MONTH



The remote Island of Pitcairn, home of the Bounty Mutineers.

RNRMW NATIONAL
FORCES FAMILY EVENT

Royal Hospital Chelsea - London

SATURDAY 9TH FEBRUARY 2019

Refreshments and Food will be available

Don't miss out!

RNRMW would like to invite Naval Service Personnel and their Families to a National Forces Family Event (NFFE) on Saturday 9th February from 1.00pm at the Royal Hospital Chelsea. For more information please visit the Royal Navy Website events calendar: <https://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/news-and-latest-activity/events/community-events/ffe-chelsea>

