Our First Month in Theatre
At the start of December, MCM 2 Crew 8 made their way out to the Persian Gulf to take over HMS Chiddingfold for the next 7 months. A week after taking over the ship, she was on task and ready in all respects for the challenges ahead.

Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Andy Brown said, “It has been an extremely busy year for Crew 8 as we prepared and trained for Op KIPION and I am immensely proud of our achievements. It is always difficult being away from our families and loved ones and even more so at this time of year. However, in the same professional manner in which we have prepared for the deployment we are ready to enjoy Christmas with all the normal traditions and festivities”.

Having spent a period at sea conducting routine tasking, Chiddingfold returned to her base port in Bahrain for a short, festive stand down. Coming alongside on a very merry Christmas Eve, the crew spread the festive spirit by holding a carol service and being treated to a hearty Christmas dinner.

'Hoc Aspera Terrent - Difficulties be Damned'
Despite being far from home, Santa still managed to make a detour out to the Ship, climbing down the funnel to deliver a sleigh full of ‘Secret Santa’ gifts. The biggest gift was from the RNRMC who, with a generous welfare grant for improvements, provided a TV and sound system for each mess, making life onboard more comfortable and enjoyable.

ET(WE) Young (26) is now on his second deployment away from home, “It is always hard to be away over Christmas and away from family and friends but in the standard RN spirit, everyone is getting stuck in, making the best of the situation and having a good time.”

**New Year in the Sun**

HMS Chiddingfold brought 2014 to a close with a routine visit to Abu Dhabi, UAE where the yachts of the ‘Volvo Ocean Race’ were also in port before commencing the 3rd leg of their 9 month epic race. Building on an already strong relationship between the RN and the wider maritime community, race sponsor Inmarsat - key figures in the global mobile communications and satellite industry and providers of the Paradigm phone system, vital to keeping ships company in touch with their loved ones - provided the RN with an invitation to the race awards night.

‘Nec Aspera Terrent - Difficulties be Damned’
Hosted by Andy Start
(Director of Global
Government, Inmarsat), the
RN was represented by
Capt Warwick (Deputy UK Maritime Component
Command) along with the command team of HMS
Chiddingfold. Throughout the evening, awareness of RN
capabilities and contribution to wider UK interests in the
area was significantly increased amongst the partners,
sponsors, officials and crews of the race. The guest
speaker, Chris McLaughlin (Senior VP for Internal Affairs
and Marketing Communications, Inmarsat), referenced the
importance of naval contribution to maritime security and
reducing the risk of piracy, particularly relevant with the
same leg being suspended in the last race in 2011 due to
high threat levels.

The CO of HMS Chiddingfold, Lt Cdr Andy Brown said "It
was a privilege to be involved in such a significant race
and I am proud of the Royal Navy’s contribution to
ensuring free and unhindered access to the sea over recent times, which has undoubtably
played a part in enabling this leg of the race to proceed."

The hospitality shown by the industry was reciprocated with a visit to the RN warship for several
senior managers of Inmarsat. A capability demonstration was carried out to increase knowledge
and awareness of the specific tasks carried out by MCMVs and the wider role of the RN in the
region, maintaining freedom of navigation and assurance of the continued availability of sea
lanes for global trade. This included a brief on the overall RN mission as well as the practical
demonstration of a variety of equipment throughout the ship such as the remote Mine Disposal
System (SeaFox), the diving element and the force protection capability available from the ship.

Andy Start said: “Everyone amongst the visiting team were universally impressed by the visit -
your crew were incredibly hospitable, professional and informative. It was a real treat both to
see how our satellite equipment is being used by one of our most important customers and to
understand your broader mission as a ship and as the broader Navy here in the Middle East.”

Sailor of the Month
The first of our Sailor of the Month awards goes to
AB(MW) Lewis Young - or ‘Po’, as he is affectionately
known on board. AB Young takes all aspects of his
job in his stride and is willing to go above and
beyond; a fine example of which was volunteering to
assist the galley team in the Crew Christmas dinner
which was a big success! As a keen photographer,
many of his photo’s have featured in this newsletter.

AB(MW) Lewis Young is awarded Crew 8’s Sailor of the Month
To the Rescue…
On returning from Abu Dhabi, Chiddingfold was requested to make a detour to hunt down and collect a ‘bomblet’ that our US Navy counterparts had unfortunately lost on the sea bed. Launching Seafox into the abyss, the mighty Crew 8 located the device and the dive team recovered it in smart fashion. In keeping with the festive spirit, it was returned wrapped as a Christmas present to our USN colleagues who were exceptionally grateful of the quick, efficient mine hunting ability of the RN.

Lt Cdr A Brown returns the lost US Navy Bomblet

Sports
With warm weather making for very pleasant outdoor sport at this time of year, Crew 8 has been making the most of the facilities available to them alongside in Bahrain. This has included several football fixtures at the Bahrain Rugby Club, regular visits to the outdoor swimming pool, gym, volley ball courts and other facilities at the base. More recently the USS Devastator (Chiddingfold’s sister ship from the US Navy) invited Crew 8 to partake in a BBQ and sports day. Always up for some spirited competition the whole crew made their way to the Football (american) Fields to enjoy a BBQ, American Style. The crews mixed to play with each other in Touch American Football and ‘Soccer’ as our US Friends like to call it.

Crew 8 getting stuck into some Touch American Football Photo By USS Devastator

Flash Goes on Deployment

Flash, the Crew 8 mascot, has been keeping spirits high every step of the way, from helping Santa deliver presents down the funnel to keeping a watchful eye for our sailors with his rifle. Photos by AB(MW) Young

‘Nec Aspera Terrent - Difficulties be Damned’
Kids Corner

HMS CHIDDINGFOLD’S WORDSEARCH

Try and find these words:

Arabian
Bahrain
Gulf
Chart
Chiddingfold
Diver
Engineering
Fishing
Mine
Minehunter
Radar
Seaboat
Seafox
Skiff
Hunt
Marine

COLOUR THE DIVER!

Have a go at colouring in the diver in these colours:

1 - Yellow
2 - Blue
3 - Purple
4 - Green
5 - Pink
6 - Light Blue
7 - Light Green

Useful Contacts

Royal Navy Website
www.royalnavy.mod.uk/welfare

Naval Families Federation
www.nff.org.uk

Royal Navy Royal Marines Welfare
Tel: +44 23 92728777
Email: navypers-welfare@mod.uk

‘Nec Aspera Terrent - Difficulties be Damned’