Refit to Refit

There are still many on board HMS ARGYLL who are able to claim that they took her out of her last refit 5 years ago in Rosyth. Since that rainy June day the ship has sailed the Atlantic Ocean (twice), the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean as well as over 10 different seas. She has run her diesel generators for over 80,000 hours and spent 1298 days at sea; a credit to the hard work and dedication of her Ship’s Company who have worked tirelessly to make it all happen.

Since returning from deployment the ARGYLL team have not taken their foot off the pedal and have continued to drive hard all the way to the end as we rapidly approach our next refit. Despite the upcoming refit period the ship has continued to remain at a high readiness state holding Fleet duties, requiring the ship and its Company to be ready to put to sea within 24 hours. Personnel have taken this responsibility in their stride and can be proud of the professionalism with which they have undertaken this duty and dealt with the uncertainty that comes with it.

The ship has been activated twice for National Contingency Operations including the protection of our territorial waters, and has taken part in a number of training serials. This included Staff College Sea Days in which she was able to demonstrate her prowess, in conjunction with HMS BULWARK and RFA BLACK ROVER, to over 300 senior officers from all three services from more than 20 different nations.
Whether personnel have been drafted to the ship from refit, the first deployment to the Gulf, the second to the South Atlantic or the final one to the Caribbean, whether they were there for the Ship’s 21st birthday, or have only been with us since our recent tasking in the English Channel, they have made ARGYLL what it is and enhanced its reputation as a happy, efficient ship. As we approach our non-fleet date and personnel say goodbye and move on to their next drafts it is with great pride that we can all say we have been part of this illustrious chapter in ARGYLL’s history.

As I come to the end of my time in HMS ARGYLL, I reflect on the enormous privilege I have enjoyed during my tenure as the Commanding Officer; the highlight of course being our deployment to the Caribbean and United States. This was probably one of the most successful deployments to the region in recent times with the apprehension of almost 2 tonnes of cocaine and 13 drugs smugglers, our assistance following the Hurricane which struck Bermuda and the hosting of their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall. As we move into a busy maintenance period for the ship, most of our Ship’s Company are going to work elsewhere within the Royal Navy and I look forward to hearing how they get on in their future jobs.

I am extremely proud of ARGYLL’s achievements since I took Command, and at this point I am convinced that we are the best frigate in the Fleet. This couldn’t have been done without the hard work, commitment and dedication of my Ship’s Company; their flexibility and quite frankly the fact they just get on with the job at hand.

I must thank all of the family and friends of the Ship’s Company for their support throughout our deployments. Without you I don’t think we could be at the standard we are at today.

Cdr Paul Hammond RN