Message from the Commanding Officer

A sincere welcome to the latest edition of our newsletter and our first since deploying. It has been another exceptionally busy but successful period that has focused on a hometown visit to Lancaster, preparing the ship for this current deployment, and then conducting a number of defence engagement visits during our first month away. Sailing from Portsmouth on 21 March was a hugely proud day for us all because it represented the culmination of 15 hard months preparing for this next chapter of overseas operations. It’s certainly a marathon deployment and one we all relish but it is a long time away from home and therefore your continuing support to us is even more appreciated. Thank you for such a spectacular send off – it meant so much to see hundreds of you waving us goodbye from the foreshore and Round Tower. As ever we are very grateful for all your love and support and I look forward to keeping you updated on our progress.

Rededication of The Freedom of the City Scroll

IN February, 85 members of the Ship’s Company paraded outside Lancaster Town Hall. This parade was the highlight of the Ship’s visit to Liverpool and marked the formal re-dedication of the Freedom of the City of Lancaster Scroll. The parade was inspected by the Worshipful Mayor of Lancaster, Councillor Susie Charles at the Town Hall’s Memorial Gardens. The last time sailors from HMS Lancaster exercised their right to the Freedom of the City of Lancaster was 8 years ago, but this parade proves that the links between City and Ship are as strong as ever.

Liverpool Visit

THE Ship berthed at Liverpool Cruise Terminal with the beautiful backdrop of the city of Liverpool for a 4 day visit. The schedule for the time in Liverpool was packed, and included hosting pupils from De La Salle School, St Helen’s Sixth Form College, Holy Family Catholic High School, as well as giving tours to the region’s engineering students. It allowed many of the Ship’s Company who lived locally to invite friends and family to witness the occasion, and many reported an immense feeling of pride at being back in their home city with the Ship.

A Special Evening for Partners

PARTNERS of the Ship’s Company were treated to a special casino themed night of entertainment at the Royal Beach Hotel in Southsea. After a 3 course dinner, the band struck up giving partners the opportunity to meet each other in a relaxing environment before the Ship deployed. The casino tables were a big hit! (but fortunately, it wasn’t real money! – Ed)
Ship Open to 2,000 Visitors

WHILE in Liverpool, HMS Lancaster opened its gangway to over 2,000 members of the public, giving them the opportunity to have a look around the Ship. Different displays were set up all around the upperdeck including the new Wildcat helicopter and the various weapons systems. The visitors literally came in their thousands and there was a queue of people 100 metres long waiting for their chance to see our special Ship and its state-of-the-art capabilities.

School Children Visit in a Bus Named Lancaster

THE week before HMS Lancaster deployed, 24 excited pupils from Funtington Primary School, West Sussex, visited to have a look around the Ship. The tour of the Ship included visits to the bridge, operations room and upper decks followed by juice and cake in the Wardroom. The trip was made even more exciting as the children were driven from their school to the Ship on First Bus’s special HMS Lancaster bus, complete with HMS Lancaster livery. The children experienced what it would be like to live and work on board, and had a great learning day out away from the classroom.

Fleet Engineering Excellence Award

HMS Lancaster’s Marine Engineering Department was awarded the prestigious Fleet Engineering Excellence awarded by Rear Admiral Jess CBE, who came on board to present the prize. The prize is award to the top Engineering Department in the surface Fleet and recognises the hard work that Lancaster’s engineers have put in over the past year. Well done!

First New Uniform in 70 Years!

LANCASTER has been given the honour to be the first ship to deploy in the Royal Navy’s new uniform. The new uniform brings to an end 70 years of the old-style light blue shirt and dark blue trousers. The Ship’s Company have really taken to the new uniform: it’s more comfortable, looks smarter, and provides sailors with more protection. The additional pockets also make life easier when carrying the necessary tools too. National media descended on the ship for the first day in the new uniform, taking pictures and interviewing members of the Ship’s Company. You may have seen us on the national BBC News!

Football with Liverpool FC

DURING the visit to Liverpool, the Ship’s football team took on Liverpool FC Foundation’s Military Veterans in a friendly match. The team enjoyed world class facilities as the match was played at Liverpool FC’s Academy in Kirkby. Unfortunately the Ship’s team suffered a rare defeat, but the standard of football was high and kept the crowd on their feet throughout.