HMS ARGYLL IN THE CARIBBEAN SEA

Since the last edition HMS ARGYLL has visited two more ports and spent a considerable time at sea.

Prior to entering Port Au Prince in Martinique HMS ARGYLL was able to further strengthen the international relationship between the UK and France by conducting a set of dawn manoeuvres in close proximity to the French Ship Germinal before swapping a few personnel for the transit in to port. This opportunity provided the Ship’s Company with a chance to refresh drills and procedures which are essential when working in international task groups.

The French were extremely hospitable throughout our stay and put up a good fight in the rugby, holding our unbeaten rugby team to a 7:7 draw. HMS ARGYLL’s basketball team played their first game in conditions better suited to lazing on rocks as demonstrated Fort Saint Louis’ resident iguanas.

Anguilla was our final destination before our three week stint at sea conducting Counter Narcotic operations and, despite being at anchor a mile from shore, Ship’s Company managed to make the most of our brief stay in this Overseas Territory. PWO(A), Lt Cdr Wheen, was overcome by the island’s beauty and the apparent proximity to land and volunteered himself for a sponsored swim to shore. Even for such a mighty mine clearance diver it was an arduous task. He battled the offshore wind, currents, and reportedly sharks, to make it ashore in an impressive 49 minutes. Ship’s Company donated £1032.51 in sponsorship for the Maisie Gibbins Star Tribute Fund which is raising money for the Bristol Royal Children’s Hospital.

HMS ARGYLL continued her assistance to the Overseas Territories in Anguilla by using her subject matter experts to assist the local Governor and government with their disaster relief plans.

Our period spent assisting the Overseas Territories has been very rewarding and constructive. While the visits have been brief, we gained so much valuable experience from each and every one.

BRAVO ZULU*

Congratulations LS (UW) Ed McFarlane who received his 3rd Good conduct badge as well as being recognised for promotion to PO (UW)

BZs to ET Allatt, ET Young and ET Wyatt for passing OPS boards

All those hailing from the North East give a big BZ to ET Allatt for organising Yorkshire night. There were a surprising number of whippets present.

The whole ship is very proud of the Fuelling Team who since deploying have embarked over 100,000 litres of Fuel, including an epic 10 hour fuel ship in San Juan this month

* Bravo Zulu was the traditional naval signal sent in WW2 signifying a “well done” from a Senior Commander to a Ship
HOT OFF THE PRESS

At the time of writing our recent successful counter narcotic mission has just been declassified.

We can proudly report that HMS ARGYLL has denied the drugs trade in excess of 650kg of pure cocaine and captured 5 drugs runners who are now in American law enforcement custody ready for prosecution.

Despite the poor weather and sea state for small vessels attempting to cross the Caribbean Sea, HMS ARGYLL was working on a hot lead within days of arriving on task. To that end HMS ARGYLL carefully positioned herself in the optimum location for the interdiction and conducted the final preparations. After many hours of long work and with the assistance of the specialist personnel who had previously embarked, the Ship was able to surprise the target vessel and conduct the next stage of the counter narcotics operation.

In order to successfully prosecute these smugglers the Ship needed to collect the evidence which was found very well wrapped and protected from the elements in large bundles. These bales of cocaine were brought on board the Ship and securely locked away until the Ship was able to land both the personnel and the evidence in Florida prior to proceeding alongside for the maintenance period.

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It was apparent to the teams as they boarded the vessel used to smuggle the drugs that it was in a bad state of repair after the heavy weather, and had become a hazard to ships at sea. Prior to proceeding on her way the ship was compelled to sink the vessel preventing it from becoming a hazard to navigation.

From the Captain
Cdr Paul Hammond RN

Greetings from the Caribbean!
After our intense period of visiting and assisting the Overseas Territories with their disaster relief planning, it has been a relief to remain at sea for an extended period of time.

Ship's Company quickly regained their sea legs switching seamlessly in to operational mode.

Their efforts and hard work have not gone un-rewarded and I am proud of their professionalism which has shone through during this varied period at sea.

During my weekly stand-easies with the mess decks I am acutely aware of how much you at home mean to my men. They remain grateful for all your support, as do I. I hope that these up coming weeks along side provide a welcome break and enable those unable to join us greater opportunities for you to hear from your lads.

Kind Regards – Paul Hammond

HMS ARGYLL would like to thank the following for donating to the ship’s raffle

Ahoy There!
HMS ARGYLL is keen to receive pictures of your loved one as a baby or small child. We will be challenging Ship’s Company to guess who that baby is. Please send your photos to; HMSARGL-CIS-ISMgr@MOD.UK (Files should ideally be no larger than 1 MB) - please include the full name of your sailor with the photograph.
Monkey is missing! Can you find him hiding in this photo?