

Navy News

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MARCH 2001

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The ship that's helping to give Freetown a future

centre pages



Squadron rescue record

p21



RACE TO SAVE D-DAY SURVIVOR p26

MULTI-SKILLS TO

SCORE ON PAY 2000



Westminster cuts a dash

SHARPENING up with NATO's Standing Naval Force Atlantic is the Type 23 frigate HMS Westminster. Having completed operational work-up the frigate squadron now has Caribbean drug-runners in its sights as it works closely with the US Coast Guard and Drug Enforcement Agency.

MEMBERS of Naval branches required to be multi-skilled will tend to score higher under a new pay system to be introduced from April 1.

From then, Pay 2000 will bring about the biggest shake-up for a generation in the way the Services' basic incomes are assessed.

Job evaluation will be a cornerstone of the new system and will take account of the different kinds of work undertaken across the Armed Forces. It will then make comparisons across a very large number of civilian jobs.

It means the end of the 'all of one company' pay system and a switch to a scheme which will make it easier for the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) to compare military salaries with those in modern civilian life.

The evaluation process is concerned with the job and not the job holder. However, it does take account of the need for multi-skilling and multi-tasking.

The scheme has cost £44 million to introduce and by the time it has settled down in about 2013 will have cost another £49 million. It stems from the Bett Report of the 1990s, which showed that with the growth of joint operations there is an

increased need for a pay system common to all three Services.

So now, a complex maze of 1,500 different pay rates is being swept away to be replaced by two pay tables each with just 39 rates.

The Royal Navy, in line with the other Services, is keen to point out that the new system is not regarded as performance related, although there is a built-in need for people to achieve satisfactory performance before they can progress to the next incremental pay level.

Under the system, many RN and Royal Marines personnel will receive two pay rises a year - that recommended annually by the AFPRB and an incremental award under Pay 2000.

Although rates of pay for equivalent ranks doing different types of work will often vary, no one will take a pay cut on moving to the new system.

Even if ratings on promotion move from a higher pay table to a lower one, they are guaranteed a rise of at least two per cent. And the new system will allow pay rewards to be given to those who achieve qualifications early.

In its report this year the AFPRB says it

■ Turn to page 12

Annual rise higher than inflation

AN ABOVE-inflation pay award of 3.7 per cent for the Armed Services includes significant increases in extra pay for fliers and submariners.

Payable in full and not staged, the award recommended by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body has been accepted by the Government. And the Services are at pains to point out that the rise is quite separate to the changes being introduced by Pay 2000 in April.

The new daily enhanced rate of £32.15 a day flying pay for observers is for lieutenant commanders and below who have been receiving top-rate flying pay for at least four years.

The enhanced rate for pilots (lieutenant commander and below) rises to £34.22 a day, and the top rate for all aircrew goes to £29.04.

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QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ON THE NEW PAY SYSTEM p12

Navy News aid sought to solve body mystery



POLICE have asked *Navy News* to help in identifying this man whose body was found in Barnet over two years ago.

A panther-like tattoo on the man's left forearm has led police to believe that he may have been a sailor at some time in his life.

He was found on November 30, 1998 in a small wooded area on St Kitts End Road and is thought to have been dead for three days before he was found. Foul play is not suspected. Traces of prescribed drugs associated with psychiatric illness were found in his body, but he died of hypothermia, not an overdose.

All efforts by the police to identify the man have drawn a blank. He was white, 50-60 years old, 6ft tall, and of medium to heavy build. He had blue-grey eyes, collar-length grey wavy hair, and the top of the middle finger of his right hand was missing. He had an old, irregular scar on his right shin.

When found he was wearing a green, waxed, Barbour-style jacket, a grey blazer, white jumper, white shirt, dark blue trousers and brown suede boots.

Anyone who has information should contact PC Briony Richardson at Barnet Borough Division of the Metropolitan Police on 020 8733 4592.



● The curious Panther-like tattoo which police think may link the dead man to seafaring.

Rescue crews mark 60 years of life-saving

TENS of thousands of people have reason to be grateful to the Royal Navy and RAF search and rescue service which celebrated its 60th anniversary in February.

Co-ordinated from the Aeronautical Rescue Co-ordination Centre at RAF Kinloss in Scotland, Sea King helicopters have rescued more than 13,000 people in the past ten years alone.

Last year the busiest rescue flight was that of 819 Naval Air Squadron based at HMS Gannet next to Prestwick Airport.

The flight's 274 call-outs last

year included a quick response to lift a 51-year-old yacht sailor from his vessel off the west coast of Scotland after he had broken his pelvis.

The man, Alan Turner, was receiving treatment at a specialist accident and emergency unit within 50 minutes.

Last year there were 1,750 search and rescue incidents – a rise of 5.5 per cent over 1999. Besides operating the 819 Squadron flight from Gannet, the Royal Navy have a 771 Squadron flight at RN air station Culdrose, while the RAF operate six flights and the Coastguard four.

■ 819 Squadron in action – page 21.

WARSHIP MAKES A LASTING MARK IN WEST AFRICA

Type 23 frigate in Ghana exercise

FOR WHAT is believed to be the first time, the navies of Britain, the USA and Ghana have exercised together.

Largest of the warships involved was Type 23 frigate HMS Iron Duke. She had been visiting the Ghanaian port of Tema during a logistics break as Atlantic guard-ship off Sierra Leone.

The other ships were the 360-ton patrol craft USS Tempest, the 389-ton Ghanaian patrol vessel Achimota and her sister-ship Yogaga. The two Ghanaian vessels represent almost half of the country's tiny navy.

The exercise took the form of manoeuvring and station-keeping. Exchanges were also arranged between the ships' companies.

Among visitors to Iron Duke in Ghana was the country's former president, Ft Lt Jerry Rawlings, who attended an official reception on board.

He recently stood down as president in accordance with the country's constitution after democratic elections had voted in President Kuffuh. The reception was attended by British diplomats, high-ranking Ghanaian officials and representatives of Ghana's Navy.

After the visit Iron Duke returned to her patrol off Sierra Leone where since the new year she has been supporting peace-keeping operations. She was due back in Portsmouth on February 23, having been relieved on patrol by HMS Glasgow.

IRON DUKE'S NAME GIVEN TO SCHOOL



● HMS Iron Duke takes the rearmost position in this picture by Lt Paddy McWilliams. USS Tempest is off the Royal Navy ship's starboard bow while the Ghanaian patrol craft Achimota leads with her sister-ship Yogaga taking up station to port.

A SIERRA Leone school for orphans built mainly by sailors from HMS Iron Duke has been named after the frigate.

Bestowing a rare honour, the country's leader, President Kabbah, decreed that the school be known as Iron Duke Community School as a thank-you to the sailors who spent hundreds of man-hours constructing the building measuring 30 by 20 metres and containing six classrooms.

Built on scrubland on the outskirts of Freetown, the school caters for 300 children aged from three to 13.

The project was started by sailors from HMS Argyll and HMS Ocean in September and was continued in earnest by Iron Duke's ship's company. To complete the work the ship disembarked about 25 sailors each day for several weeks while she was on patrol.

Project leader, CPOMEA Dave (Chippy) Milne, said: "I've built a couple of garden walls in my time but nothing on this scale. We have quite a lot of skill on board, and a few people had done some brick-laying before."

"We gathered sand from the beach and let rainwater wash the salt from it before mixing it with cement provided by the British High Commission. You make a mould, then you go away."

Two sailors die after falls ashore

TWO young sailors – OMs David Taylor and Matthew Lewis – have died after separate night-time accidents while on runs ashore from their ships.

OM(EW)2 Taylor was killed when he fell from a parapet in Gibraltar while his ship, HMS Lancaster, was alongside at Gibraltar on January 25. Another sailor who also fell sustained a broken ankle.

The second death came in the early hours of February 8 when 18-year-old OM(AW)2 Mathew Lewis apparently fell from the waterfront at Devonport as he was returning to his ship, HMS Sheffield.

His body was recovered from the water. A police investigation took place, but they do not suspect foul play.

Fancy seeing you here!

HMS Montrose has completed annual noise-ranging in Loch Goll and Loch Fyne in Scotland. While moored off Inverary, Mid Erin Simpson, who lives locally, was visited by her parents who spent the day on board and were treated to a tour of the Type 23 frigate by their daughter.

Erin's father, Leonard, is a former CPOMEA who has previously served in HM ships Newcastle, Hermes and Invincible.

Streets of courage honour Enigma heroes

NAVAL heroes of World War II's Enigma code-cracking campaign will now be remembered through street names in the home town of one of them.

Grazier Avenue, Brown Avenue and Fasson Close will be included in a 194-dwelling Mcleans Homes development at Kensington Gardens in Tamworth.

AB Colin Grazier from Tamworth, and Lt Tony Fasson died while recovering Enigma coding material from U-559 after it had been forced to surface in the Mediterranean by the destroyer HMS Petard. Naafi canteen assistant Tommy Brown survived the boarding but was killed later in the war.

Grazier and Fasson received the George Cross and Brown the George Medal, but the secret nature of their feat could not be recorded until well after the war.

Two other streets in Kensington Gardens – Petard Close and Bletchley Drive are named after

Grazier's ship and the top-secret, Enigma-breaking HQ at Bletchley Park.

With the support of *Navy News* the *Tamworth Herald* launched a campaign two years ago to build a memorial for the three men. So far an appeal has raised over £13,000 to provide a town-centre memorial by international sculptor Walenty Pytel.

Phil Shanahan, chairman of the memorial committee and Deputy Editor of the *Herald*, said the names of the three men were now indelibly engraved into the structure of Tamworth.

"Two years ago Colin Grazier was barely known in Tamworth," he said. "If we have achieved one thing, it is that he is now getting some of the overdue glory he deserves."

Contributions to the Colin Grazier Memorial Fund are still being sought. Cheques should be made payable to the fund and sent to *The Tamworth Herald*, Ventura Park Road, Bitterscote, Tamworth, Staffs., B78 3LZ.



● Tamworth street signs naming HMS Petard's Enigma heroes are held by (l-r) John Harper, Phil Shanahan and Rob Tanner.

FLYING VISIT

NEW Chief of the Defence Staff Admiral Sir Michael Boyce made a number of visits in the days before he officially started his new job – and the first was to an establishment familiar to Royal Navy pilots.

No.1 Flying Training School, at RAF Linton-on-Ouse, is the first step on the fast jet training path for RN pilots – and the oldest military air training school in the world, founded in 1919.

In a mixture of simulators and the Tucano training aircraft, students prepare themselves for the rigours of conversion to jets at RAF Valley.

Admiral Boyce is seen with (left to right) Fg Off Lucy Robinson, Wing Cdr Pete Round (OC Training Wing and Chief Instructor), Lt Tim Davies, Lt Jason Flintham (1FTS Flight Commander) and Capt Adrian Morley, RM.



DU: 'No significant risk' say NATO's medical men

Three way split

HMS DULVERTON, one of the RN's three Northern Ireland Patrol Vessels, teamed up with the RAF for a Search and Rescue exercise off the Irish coast.

Two canoeists, braving the elements, were said to have run into difficulty "somewhere between Killeel and Annalong".

The Dulverton, along with a Wessex helicopter from 72Sqn and the Killeel lifeboat were mobilised – and the aircraft quickly located two very small contacts in a large search area.

Despite being winch capable, the Wessex was unable to winch direct from the canoes – but by now a Pacific from the Dulverton and the lifeboat were able to close in.

Both were rescued into boats and a casualty airlifted to hospital. For real, both lives would have been saved.

Said the Dulverton's CO, Lt Tom Sharpe: "Exercises such as this are critical to foster inter-Service understanding, so that come the real event, when conditions will inevitably be unfavourable, the efficiency of the rescue effort is maximised."

● The RAF Wessex of 72 Sqn practises winching and recovery drills at the conclusion of the exercise with HMS Dulverton.

CONTINUED media speculation about the effects of depleted uranium – contained in rounds arming the Vulcan Phalanx close-in defence system carried by some RN warships – has prompted further reassurance by the Surgeon General, Lt Gen Robert Menzies.

In an earlier statement he made it clear that risks to health from DU were "very small indeed" and easy to guard against.

Screening would be offered to anyone who had any concerns about their personal health.

Following further media coverage from so-called leaked documents – some of which have anyway been openly published for many months – these have been made available in full with more information on the MOD and single Service websites.

"The conclusion from all this remains the same as it was at the time of my previous message," says Gen Menzies. "We do not believe that there is any significant health risk to UK Service or civilian personnel as a result of exposure to DU."

"DU is not dangerously radioactive. It is a lot less radioactive than naturally occurring uranium to which we are all exposed every day

in the soil around us, our drinking water, and our food.

"Despite the many claims made, there is no scientific evidence that DU has caused ill health to anyone. There is no doubt that some Service personnel who served in the Gulf or the Balkans have suffered health problems since then. But that is only to be expected amongst a group of such size and age range.

"Indeed, a scientific study has shown that the percentage of deaths from cancer amongst a group of Gulf War veterans is slightly lower than that for a similar sized group of Service personnel who did not deploy to the Gulf.

"The US Government has very carefully monitored the health of some of its soldiers who were injured when DU rounds accidentally hit their vehicles during the Gulf conflict. Some 15 of them still have DU shrapnel embedded in their bodies ten years on – yet there have been no signs that the

DU, as opposed to their injuries, has caused them any health problems."

Gen Menzies points out that DU is widely used in a range of civilian applications, such as shielding in hospitals to protect radiographers and patients from radiation during X-rays.

"The mortality rates of Gulf veterans are being monitored closely and compared with a group of Service personnel of similar size and age who did not serve in the Gulf. The latest figures show that 69 Gulf veterans have died from all forms of cancer, compared to 77 from the group who had not served in the Gulf.

"Both these figures are markedly less than the 100-120 deaths that statistically could be expected amongst a similarly-sized group of the same age and sex from the civilian population in this country.

"Our position is unchanged. We have known about DU for a long time. We recognise that there could be a small risk to our Service personnel from DU dust if they work unprotected close to a vehicle hit by DU ammunition. That is why since the time of the Gulf War we have issued guidance to soldiers about the protective measures they should take.

"The conclusion that there is not a significant health risk from exposure to DU, providing the proper procedures are followed, is not just mine. It is shared by all the surgeon generals of NATO countries."

Meanwhile the scientific evidence would continue to be kept under careful consideration. Work was in progress to identify an appropriate voluntary screening programme for MOD Service and civilian personnel and details would be announced soon.

JACK ET JACQUES L'Hélicoptère Français

(Une conversation surpris par Lt George Franklin à bord d'HMS Northumberland un peu avant d'Exercice SARMENT.)

"Vous avez un petit problème avec vos hélicoptères, Jack?"
"Quoi? Je ne comprends pas, Jacques. Quel problème est ça?"

"Vos têtes de rotor – elles sont toutes cassées, n'est-ce pas?"
"Ah, oui – pas de problème maintenant, though! Nous l'avons résolu par deploying les techniques de management innovatives, les brochures glossies et le forward thinking."

"Donc, pourquoi sont tous vos hélicoptères à Yeovilton et pas en mer?"

"Ah, c'est un autre problème, Jacques. Nos aviateurs, ils ont passé trop de temps reading les brochures glossies, au lieu de flying."

"Alors – HMS Northumberland, elle ira au Méditerranée sans son hélo?"

"Hélas, oui."

"Mais c'est très simple, Jack! Nous avons beaucoup de hélicoptères! Et les aviateurs courageux et enthousiastes aussi!"

"C'est une bonne idée, Jacques! Aussi, depuis le withdrawal de notre hélo, le Wardroom de HMS Northumberland n'a personne qui peut marcher la machine de DVD!"

"Marché conclu, then! C'est un deal! Le NAAFI, il nous fournira tout l'équipement? Les provisions essentielles? Les Gauloises, par exemple?"

"Nous ne permettons pas autoriser l'utilisation des drogues douces, Jacques..."

● Et le voici! L'hélicoptère Français, embarqué à bord d'HMS Northumberland! Vive l'entente, eh?



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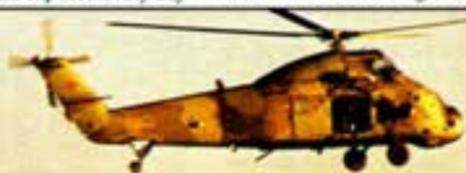
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Marines helped to make Kosovo safer

ROYAL MARINES of 45 Commando deployed to the volatile Presevo Valley in southern Serbia after clashes between Albanian extremists and Serb forces.

Recent months have seen numerous border incursions and skirmishes in the Ground Security Zone, a three-mile wide buffer zone between Kosovo and Serbia.

And KFOR's response was to send a multi-national force to the border to work alongside American troops in an effort to stem the illegal flow of men and equipment across the Kosovo boundary with southern Serbia.

45 Commando Group formed part of the KFOR Operational Reserve force which was deployed to the Presevo region, and the men spent six weeks patrolling a section of the boundary.

The initial force was a mixed Royal Marine/Army troop with Company HQ from 7 Battery, and then 120 RM ranks from X Company, 45 Commando.

Bad weather, difficult terrain and the real danger of being shot at by ethnic-Albanian extremists enhanced the experience and the professionalism of all ranks resulted in substantial successes.

More than a dozen rebels were arrested, including two rebel commanders, the smuggling trade was disrupted and there were also sig-



● **SLEIGH RIDE:** Royal Marines from Zulu Company 45 Commando with Serbian children in the village of Devet Jugovica in Kosovo. The unit helped to create a safe environment for all.

nificant weapon seizures.

X Company were replaced by a multi-national company in late February after a successful mission which saw close co-operation with the Americans. The deployment also proved the worth of the BV206 all-terrain vehicle, which was the only vehicle that could manoeuvre over the challenging terrain.

The opportunity to operate in the Presevo Valley was made possible by the Commando Group's success in Pristina where the Royal Marines helped to create a safer, more secure environment.

Four lines of operation were employed, security operations, civil-military operations, support for the Kosovo and United Nations Police and a wide range of information operations, and their efforts were rewarded by a dramat-

ic reduction in the number of security related incidents in the city over the last six months.

The Commando Group's operations were planned and conducted in concert with the United Nations Police and the Kosovo Police Service, and typical security tasks included patrolling, guarding vulnerable persons and designated sites, and observation across the city from static sites.

During the tour more than 90 criminals were arrested as a direct consequence 45 Commando Group's actions, 300 weapons were confiscated, 12,000 rounds of ammunition were seized and 9,500 vehicles were searched.

Scores of property and ground searches were conducted with the most significant, Operation Norfolk, involving more than 300 Royal Marines and 30 United Nations Policemen.

Operation Norfolk involved a simultaneous search of 11 properties and led to the arrest of three people suspected of involvement with murder and organised crime, as well as the confiscation of numerous weapons. Another operation led to the arrest of 12 Albanians who were illegally selling passports in Pristina.

The Unit was also called in to deal with several major incidents, including the bombing of the Serb Ambassador's house when one person was killed and two were injured, an RPG (rocket-propelled grenade) attack on an apartment block housing Serbs in Pristina, several grenade and petrol bomb attacks on vulnerable buildings and gun fights which had escalated from arguments and feuds in the city centre!

Other incidents included the illegal firing of weapons, bomb hoaxes and suspect explosives devices which required the Explosive Ordnance Disposal

(EOD) team to deploy 50 times in the Pristina area.

Three elections took place in Kosovo just before Christmas. Two related to the Serbian government but the main focus was the Kosovo Municipal Election which took place at the end of October. Mass rallies preceded these elections with thousands of people taking to the streets, but they all passed without incident.

During their tour, the Unit actively engaged the local community in a range of Civil-Military Operation projects and some 370 projects were completed as a result of the energy and drive of the Company CMO Sgts and their teams.

And low-level training was provided for the Kosovo Protection Corps (the former Kosovo Liberation Army) in the form of land navigation, communications and leadership skills which added value to their transition in becoming an effective disaster relief organisation.

Lt Allan Youp, PRO of 45 Commando Group said: "Although there is still much to be done in Kosovo, tangible progress has been made in Pristina and this has been possible through highly successful co-operation between the people, the police and KFOR.

"This co-operation has helped



● **DEADLY HAUL:** A weapons cache uncovered by X Company, 45 Cdo Group. It contained an anti-tank launcher, Kalashnikovs, machine gun, sniper rifle, hand-grenades and assorted rockets and ammunition.

reduce crime and violence in the region and Operation Agricola IV has been a great success. This is due to the professionalism and dedication of all ranks from the Royal Marines, Royal Navy and Army that form 45 Commando Group."

The 1st Battalion the Duke of Wellington's Regiment replace the Commando as the Pristina Battle Group at the beginning of March. As Navy News went to press the men were on their way back to RM

Condor in Arbroath and were due to take some well-deserved leave before returning to duty.

After reorganising into the new Commando 21 orbit in May the Commandos will be focusing on conventional operations, expeditionary and amphibious skills.

And with two major exercises planned in the next ten months, including the huge Combined Operations Exercise Saif Sareea in Oman, 2001 will be another busy year!



● **EYES:** Royal Marines of 45 Commando Group man an observation post on top of a block of flats high above Pristina.



● **PATROL:** L/Cpl Steve Haydock leads a joint British/American patrol along Zegra Valley in the Presevo region of Kosovo. The border zone has seen numerous skirmishes between Albanian extremists and Serb forces.

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Fijian passes Commando course

FIJIAN national Eroni Cinavillakeba achieved a life-long ambition when he was accepted into service with the Royal Marines in January.

The 27-year-old from Lau in Fiji trained as an engineer but an uncle who served with the Royal Artillery said that if he wanted to be 'the best of the best' he should go to England and join the Royal Marines.

He came to Britain in May 2000 and joined 788 Troop at the Commando Training Centre, Lympstone, and after thirty tough weeks of training he passed the course and was officially accepted into service on January 27.

His mother flew over from Fiji to watch the passing out ceremony and the parents of 788 Troop were entertained with a performance of the 'haka' war dance made famous by the New Zealand All Blacks.

Eroni is now serving in 45 Commando and his next goal is to represent the Corps at

rugby having already proved to be a very capable flying winger.

Royal Marines spokesman Lt Col Kevin de Val said: "While there is a tradition of Fijians joining the British Army we have had very few joining the Royal Marines.

"Marine Cinavillakeba has done very well in training and set a fine standard for his countrymen. I hope we can attract more like him."

● **PROUD:** Eroni Cinavillakeba and his mother after the passing out ceremony at CTC Lympstone.





Facts and figures

Class: Landing Ship Logistic (LSL)
Pennant number: L3505
Builder: Alexander Stevens, Glasgow
Completed: 1967
Entered Service: 1970
Post-Falklands repairs and modifications: Tyne Shiprepairers, 1985
Lloyd's Classification: +100 A1 +LMC Class 1
RO-RO Passenger
Port of Registry: London
Displacement: 6,400 tonnes
Length: 135.8 metres
Beam: 18.2 metres
Draught: 4 metres
Speed: 16 knots max
Complement: 53
Military lift: 340 troops (534 hard lying); 18 MBTs; 34 mixed vehicles; 120 tons POL; 30 tons ammunition; one 25-ton crane; two 4.5-ton cranes. Capacity for 20 helicopters (11 tank deck, 9 vehicle deck)
Main machinery: Two ten-cylinder turbocharged Mirreles National diesels plus one 400hp bow thruster
Aircraft: Aft flight deck: one spot for Sea King of Lynx; vehicle deck: one spot for Chinook, Sea King or Lynx
Weapons: 20mm Oerlikons and 7.62mm machine guns

BATTLE HONOURS

Normandy..... 1944
 South Atlantic
 1982



● RFA Sir Tristram, with Mexeflote self-propelled floating platform strapped to her side.

Versatility is RFA's strength

FOR a ship that was once bombed and abandoned, RFA Sir Tristram has proved a very useful asset.

Sir Tristram is one of five landing ship logistic (LSLs) in the RFA, supporting amphibious operations by landing troops, tanks, vehicles and other heavy equipment in port or on any suitable shore.

To allow this, she has doors in the bow and stern, allowing rapid loading and unloading, and her shallow draught allows her to run on to a beach to unload in areas where there is no secure port.

As such, she is part ro-ro ferry

and part landing craft.

She can operate large helicopters from her flight deck aft and the vehicle deck amidships, and such versatility makes her a valuable addition to operations by UK, NATO and United Nations forces.

Sir Tristram can also act as a command and support ship for RN mine countermeasures vessels (MCMVs) when they deploy overseas, her role as mother-ship including full engineering support.

Sir Tristram's superstructure was badly damaged when the ship was bombed at Fitzroy during the Falklands War, and although she was initially abandoned, she was later used as emergency accommodation before being sea-lifted back to the UK.

She was then completely rebuilt and up-dated, with almost ten metres added to her length, and her new superstructure was of steel rather than aluminium.

She returned to service in 1985, and supported British forces in the Gulf War and the former Yugoslavia, as well as playing her part in numerous exercises and operations around the world.

In November 1998, Sir Tristram played a major role in the relief operations following the devastation caused by Hurricane Mitch in

Central America. As part of a RN task group, she worked with British and Dutch marines, helping with relief supplies and medical aid to Honduras and Nicaragua.

The year 2000 was a busy one for the ship. She spent the first half in the Amphibious Ready Group, taking part in exercises in the Mediterranean and in operations in Sierra Leone.

After a spell of maintenance in Portsmouth, she supported the Royal Logistics Corps millennium event, berthing alongside HMS

Belfast in London, then went to the Baltic as command and support ship for MCMVs, visiting Stockholm and Riga.

Since the beginning of this year she has been supporting the Royal Marines in Norway for their winter deployment, and is due back in her Marchwood base at the end of this month.

But it will only be for a few days, as she is due to take over from RFA Sir Percivale in Freetown, capital of Sierra Leone, supporting British forces ashore.

Trawler amongst the honours

RFA SIR Tristram's only predecessor was a modest vessel – but she still managed to win a Battle Honour.

That ship was an Admiralty trawler of the Round Table class, built by Lewis in 1942, and weighing in at 440 tons.

The eight-strong class were for the most part employed as minesweepers, and could be equipped with a range of devices and systems to counter the threat of mines, including acoustic and magnetic.

HMT Sir Tristram was just over 40 metres in length,

with a beam of a little over seven metres and a draught of 3.5 metres.

She had a single-shaft, triple-expansion engine, giving around 600hp, giving her a speed of around 12 knots.

The Round Table class had a complement of 35, and each ship's armament consisted of a single 12pdr quick-firing low-angle gun and three 20mm anti-aircraft guns on single mountings.

HMT Sir Tristram won her Battle Honour during the Normandy Landings in 1944, and she was sold in 1947.

AIRCRAFT OF THE ROYAL NAVY No 53



Henri Farman

THE HENRI Farman pusher biplane was among the first aircraft to equip the fledgling Royal Naval Air Service, and reputedly it was this type that in August 1914 led the Battle Fleet to sea.

Underpowered even by the standards of its time, the two-seat Henri Farman F. 20 was too slow, at 60mph, and too difficult to maintain in the field – and could not carry a useful bomb load. Nevertheless the aircraft was among the assorted types equipping the first RNAS units sent to France and in support of the Dardanelles campaign.

However, a version made of steel and re-engined with the 140hp Canton Unne in place of the 80hp Gnome – the F. 27 – proved more effective and in 1915 was capable of dropping a 500lb bomb, the biggest available at that time.

The type was among those that made the earliest bombing attacks on Zeppelin sheds, an aircraft piloted by S/Lt J. S. Mills dropping four 20lb bombs to destroy LZ 38 in its hangar at Evers.

Some aircraft were fitted with a Lewis gun in the forward cockpit.

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Letters



JACK

BY TUGS



Paladin enigma

EACH year some of the surviving veterans of the World War II destroyers HMS Petard and HMS Paladin attend a reunion, during which each tries to score brownie points over the other.

Both ships were real fighting ships with a record second to none. However, as a neutral observer I find that the Petards score heavily because of the publicity given to their capture of U559 and the Enigma code documents.

The benefits of this capture are well known, but what is not so well known is that some three months later HMS Paladin captured U205 in the Med, which was taken in tow by the corvette Gloxinia, but sank, later to be salvaged and entered, from which Enigma code documents were recovered.

Ron Maflin, who was coxswain of the motor boat which ferried the boarding party to U205 after she was depth-charged to the surface, will testify that Warrant Gunner (T) Constable, commanding the boarding party, handed down to him a box which at the time he thought was a wireless set.

I am trying to find any means of substantiating the claims of Paladin that this box could have been an Enigma machine. If so, they score a few points over Petards because Paladins can then claim to have captured both machine and documents.

Petards score points with their hero Tommy Brown of North Shields, whereas Paladins' Cyril Dawson of Sunderland was wounded in the surface gun battle before U205 surrendered, not from any action by U205 but from a freak accident with Paladin's own pom-pom gun (which killed four and wounded 30 of her crew). - G. Pinfield, Consett, Co Durham.

Letters to the Editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication. email correspondents are also requested to provide this information

Destroyers designed to last and last

I READ with interest your article about the Chilean Naval ship Blanco Encalada, formerly HMS Fife (January issue).

Our old ship HMS Decoy was sold to the Peruvian Navy in 1970 and is still at sea. When I tell you that she was launched in 1949 it is even more remarkable.

I wrote to Lt Cdr John Rodriguez of the Peruvian Naval Information Department who sent me some photographs of her and passed my letter on to a Mr Fernando Byrne, who had been the Marine Engineer Officer during the refitting of the Decoy and HMS Diana at Cammel Lairds yard in 1970-73 prior to the official hand-over to the Peruvians.

The Diana became BAP Palacios and the Decoy BAP Ferré. Lt Cdr Byrne subsequently became Engineer Officer during the Ferré's first commission.

Both ships were modernised extensively during the 1970s. They were fitted with helicopter landing platforms and also carried eight Exocets. The three 4.5in mountings were retained though new fire control systems (Italian NA 10) were fitted. Cdr Byrne told me that the Ferré was one of the first ships to fire the Exocet missile.

After the modifications, full power trials were carried out and unfortunately the ship's speed was cut to 32 knots. There were further

refurbishments in the 1980s and up to the present day. Unfortunately the Palacios was decommissioned two years ago but the Ferré has just completed another "mini refit" and is due to carry on for at least two more years.

I hesitate to boast that our old ship is the oldest ex-RN destroyer still in service. Unless, of course, you and your readers know different! - J. W. Harvey, Weston-super-Mare.

Quite right to hesitate. Mr Harvey - the Egyptian El Fateh (ex-Zenith, ex-Wessex), launched in 1944 and sold in 1955, is still afloat and used primarily for harbour training. She was last seen at sea in 1994, though. - Ed.

● Built to last - the Peruvian destroyer Ferré (ex-HMS Decoy).



Coal dust, not cordite caused explosions

WITH reference to the interesting letter on unexplained naval disasters (January issue), the explosion of HMS Vanguard was mentioned as having occurred at Chatham in 1917.

It actually happened at Scapa Flow, early in the middle watch on July 9, 1917 when the Grand Fleet was anchored there.

Readers may be interested to know that it was later attributed to an explosion of cordite in the magazine of a 12in turret, believed to be No X, that traditionally manned by the Royal Marines.

The storage of cordite was an ever-present hazard in those days. It is said rumours of sabotage were allowed to spread because the Admiralty thought it better for the men's morale!

Some idea of the force of the explosion may be realised from the fact that 150lb bags of flour were found three quarters of a mile inland - that is, one and a half miles from where the Vanguard was anchored.

My father, Cecil Blunt, was at the time a 19-year-old 2nd Lieutenant of Royal Marine Artillery on board and had had charge of X turret at the Battle of Jutland because his superior was ill with sciatica at the time.

His luck held this time, too, as he was one of ten officers from Vanguard who were on their way back from a concert party in HMS Royal Oak when the explosion occurred.

Only they and the picket boat's crew of four were saved apart from two other ratings who were lifted from the water alive. Over 700 men perished. - A. C. Blunt, Sharpthorne, West Sussex.

THE CONCLUSION that HMS Natal was lost because of unstable cordite is totally opposite to a report that came out in the 1970s which claimed that divers had found the magazines and shell rooms intact.

It was discovered that it was the custom for large ships to have an "emergency only" coal bunker which was filled up and then never touched.

This bunker was therefore never hosed down as the working bunkers were. This allowed the coal to become bone dry and it let off a very fine dust that filled the air inside.

The dust was then set off by static electricity which built up and it was from this discovery that the problems causing explosions in super tankers were identified. I remember this report well as it created great Mess Deck discussion. - W. H. Smith, Stafford.

Band of brothers

I FOUND a reference in a newspaper of May 12, 1900 to a woman who had seven sons serving in the Navy, with an eighth about to join up, too.

It said that "in consideration of this remarkable fact, Mrs Cater, of Madeira Cottage, Torquay, has received the gift of a £5 note from the Queen."

"They are," says Sir Fleetwood Edwards, writing in the Queen's name, "sons of whom any mother might well be proud."

This must be a record! - R. Chitty, Liskeard.

Rum under review

I AM trying to discover when rum jars were first introduced and why? All rum jars bear the printed acronym 'SRD', but what did this stand for?

The Imperial War Museum asserts that the full title is "Supply Reserve Depot" as a rum jar in the museum's collection bears an official seal with this wording. But this begs the question of what a Supply Reserve Depot was.

Was it always the case that rum jars in Naval service were hampered in wicker baskets to protect them from damage? In Army use they seem rarely to have enjoyed the same protective covering, though they must have been equally open to hard knocks.

Were rum jars ever re-used in the Navy? I can find no evidence of this having been done in the Army. When did the use of stoneware rum jars die out? They would appear to have been in circulation well into the 1960s, but were they being used up until the issue of rum ceased, or had they been replaced by more modern means of storage before that? - S. Disbrey, Tunbridge Wells.

Navy News?

YOUR suggestion that the Navy's corporate image needs changing (Newsview, January issue) is wrong. What needs changing is this country's education policy.

The call you said you had from "almost certainly a university graduate" about a "fry-gate" indicates the same.

As does the fact that only a few months ago my paper-boy handed me my copy of Navy News saying: "Here's your Navy News, sir!" - W. E. Jones, Pontypool, Torfaen.

Jervis Bay memorial

THIRTY relatives of the crew of HMS Jervis Bay flew to St John, New Brunswick, to mark the 60th anniversary of her action against the Admiral Scheer.

My thanks to the shipping companies and charities who helped raise £5,800 towards the cost of air fares and accommodation.

The Royal Canadian Legion has a branch called The Jervis Bay Memorial Branch No 53 and they have constructed a park and cenotaph to the memory of the 198 officers and men who died in the ship, which dry-docked frequently in this city.

A march past by veterans and Army, Navy and Air Force personnel, with a prize-winning pipe band in attendance, was well received and despite the emotional stress of the memorial service, all relatives were glad to have made the trip. - M. Chappell, Edenbridge, Kent.



No. 560 47th year

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● HMS Bedouin



Bedouin brought back

READING of the Royal Oak and her sinking on October 14, 1939 (February issue) we were in Scapa Flow at the time in HMS Bedouin.

I well remember that night – it was like a Wild West rodeo as the destroyers picked up their hooks and endeavoured to depart to the high seas in an orderly fashion.

One of the survivors was Capt Oram – and by a strange quirk of fate he came on board the Bedouin on escaping from the submarine Thetis in Liverpool Bay in June, 1939.

I do hope that as the Royal Oak is the graveyard of those who were lost, its sanctity will be preserved from the amateur divers hunting for relics.

Another item, on page 23, caught my eye – the mail drop. How well I remember the Sunderlands on the northern patrol at the beginning of the war. Often they would drop us a bag of mail, and how welcome that was on patrol between Bear Island and the Denmark Straits.

And on page 37, happy memories of the old destroyer HMS Boxer. She was in all sorts of jobs – and of course Bedouin was in company with her when we picked up the Enigma machine from U-110. – W. H. Bradshaw, Romford, Essex.

Letters



Duchess made 'every stitch' of Ensign

I AM trying to discover whether the Duchess of Albany did indeed make the White Ensign that the battleship HMS Neptune bore into battle at Jutland in 1916.

Her daughter, Princess Alice, Countess of Athlone, claimed in a 1966 book that the Duchess, a daughter-in-law of Queen Victoria, had made "every stitch" of it. But I've been unable to find another reference to the royal gift.

At the outbreak of World War I the battleship HMS Neptune was presented with a White Ensign by one of the senior houses at Roedean School.

The Ensign is on display by the entrance to the school chapel today. Could it have been the Roedean Ensign that snapped in the breeze at Jutland and not the Duchess of Albany's? – S. Webbe, Esher, Surrey.

Possibly both did. Roedean School confirms that an ensign was presented to HMS Neptune at that time – along with three more, to HMS Hercules, Canterbury and Collingwood. In action, a ship also wears a battle ensign, or several of the same, to ensure that the colours remain flying whatever the damage received. The Duchess of Albany was the widow of Queen Victoria's haemophilic son Prince Leopold. – Ed.

No mate of mine

A CURIOUS personnel situation exists within one of the Naval IPTs at Abbey Wood, Bristol.

A serving lieutenant commander of the WE persuasion plus a CCME and CCWEA have as their immediate superior a C1 grade civil servant who in turn reports to a serving commander of the ME persuasion. Nothing unusual in that – except that the civil servant is an RNR Acting Able Rate Communicator.

The AB was recently despatched to sea for three weeks' training in a large surface combatant and whilst on board not surprisingly had occasion to ask a Chief for directions to a certain compartment.

The information was freely given and the AB departed with a cheery "Cheers, mate!"

The Chief called the AB back to inform him in no uncertain terms that he was not "his mate" etc, etc.

Said Chief (CCMEA) has now joined the project not realising the significance of and more probably not even remembering the incident. We await further hilarity. – G. Duffy, Dousland, Devon.

Billy and friend

I WAS pleased to see the letter from Billy Roper concerning the reunions and visits from survivors of the Scharnhorst (November issue).

It may be of interest that Bill served in HMS Belfast at the time when she was so badly damaged by a magnetic mine.

I enclose a photograph of him with the Belfast's ship's parrot 'Mary Neaters' during the time he worked (as I did) on the staff after she was made a museum ship run by the Belfast Trust. – Jim Hines, Rustington, West Sussex.

Sent to Colditz

NEXT month will see the 60th anniversary of the loss of the Armed Merchant Cruiser HMS Voltaire, April 4, 1941.

The ship was sent out from Port of Spain to find the German raider Thor.

At dawn the two ships met in mid-Atlantic, but soon Voltaire was outgunned, outranged and on fire and she sank with much loss of life.

Fortunately the Thor lowered boats and picked up survivors who were landed in Germany and endured four years' captivity.

Myself and one other officer ended up at Colditz – J. Hoggard, Bosham, West Sussex.

HMS Voltaire was the first Armed Merchant Cruiser to be sunk by a German raider as opposed to a naval ship. The Thor, and her sisters Atlantis, Orion, Widder, Penguin and Komets, were much more strongly built and gunned than the British AMCs – Ed

Muzzled moggy

I HAVE a number of postcards of HMS Neptune's cat 'Side Boy' (Letters, January issue). They belonged to my wife's father, J. H. Downer, who joined the Neptune in 1912 as a Leading Seaman (Gunner). He was rated PO in 1917 and served in her until the end of the war. I assume that Side Boy was with them at Jutland. My wife remembers her father telling her that he was a very large cat and that he lived to a good old age. One of his favourite places to sit in was the muzzle of a 12in gun. – J. Foster, Sidmouth, Devon.



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Sea graves: Veterans views sought by MOD

OPTIONS about what can be done to prevent the desecration of Britain's sea graves have been put forward to 'interested parties' – mainly organisations campaigning for greater protection.

A consultative document on the protection of military maritime graves was launched on February 14 by Defence Minister Dr Lewis Moonie.

In a foreword he said: "I am determined to do all that practically can be done to offer protection of wrecked military vessels. These are sensitive matters and it is best to move forward wherever possible with the agreement of all parties."

Subject to the results of consultation, the document pledges that MOD intends, as a minimum, to:

- Assert rights of ownership over wrecks.
- Support diving organisations' educational campaign and code of practice.

- Publicise guidance.
- Determine candidates for designation of controlled sites under the Protection of Military Relics Act 1986.

- Take part in initiatives by other organisations.

- Support international protection of wrecks.

However, the document does point to what is seen as the greatest difficulty faced by any protection measures – enforcement.

It says: "Obtaining evidence to prove that an offence has been committed on a military wreck in UK or international waters some miles offshore and several metres below the surface, where visibility could be very limited, may be extremely difficult."

Among the interested parties is the Royal Naval Association in which there is a ground swell of support for curbs on invasive diving on sea graves. However, the Association's leadership is reserving opinion until it considers the Government's document.

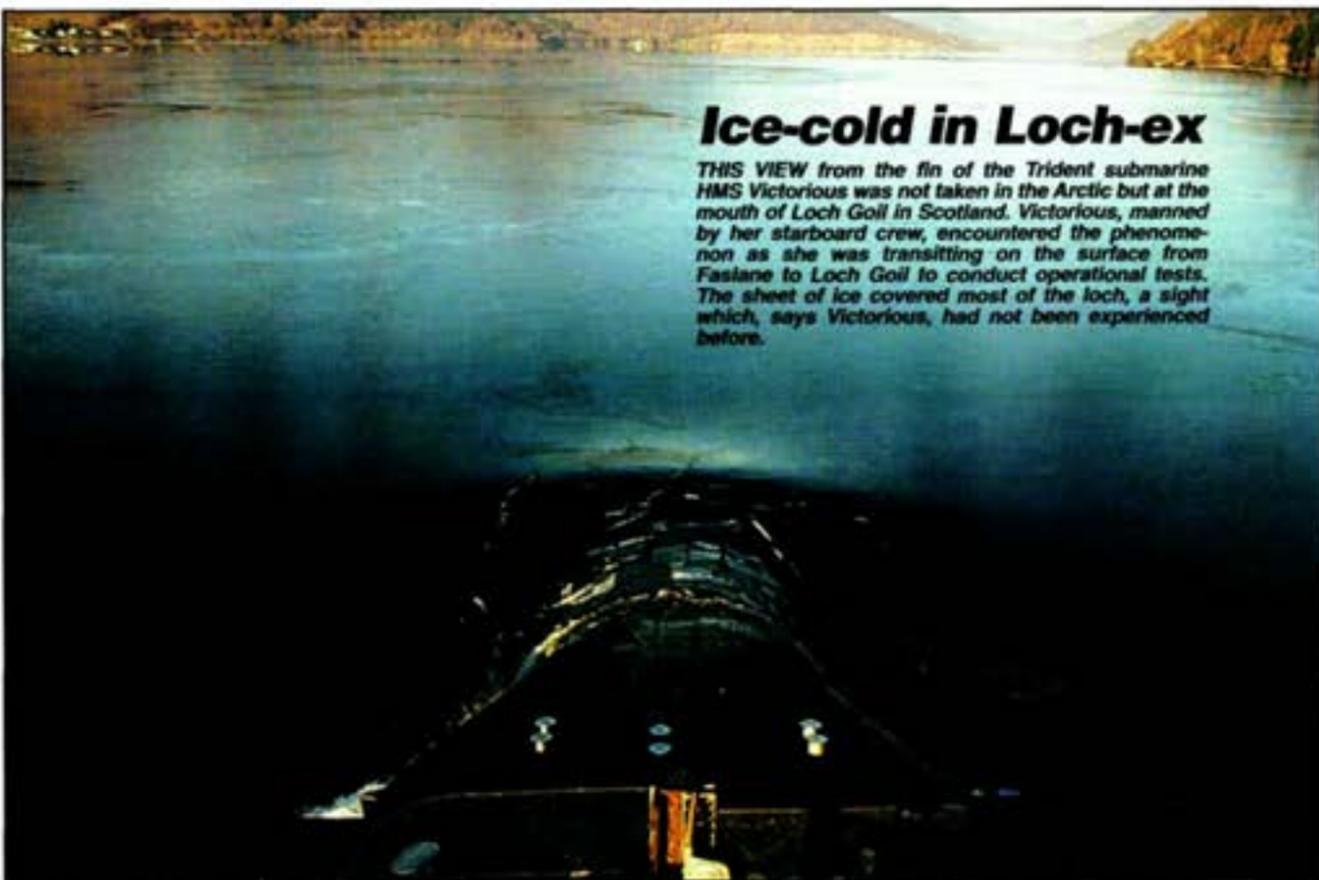
RNA General Secretary Capt

Bob McQueen RN (ret'd) told *Navy News*: "The policy of drawing media attention to the problem is working. What we lack is any realistic proposal for enforcing existing legislation."

Meanwhile, MOD is supporting an amnesty to encourage divers to return relics they may have taken from wrecks. It has been offered by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.

The amnesty runs until April 23 and applies to the 36,000 wrecks in British waters. Anyone holding relics is asked to notify the Receiver of Wrecks at Southampton on 023 8032 9474.

■ RNA anger – p27.



Ice-cold in Loch-ex

THIS VIEW from the fin of the Trident submarine HMS Victorious was not taken in the Arctic but at the mouth of Loch Goll in Scotland. Victorious, manned by her starboard crew, encountered the phenomenon as she was transiting on the surface from Faslane to Loch Goll to conduct operational tests. The sheet of ice covered most of the loch, a sight which, says Victorious, had not been experienced before.

Swift pay-outs to ex-POWs praised

THE GOVERNMENT'S War Pensions Agency has won veterans' praise for its swiftness in making the £10,000 payments promised to Far East prisoners of war in November.

The 14,000 ex-gratia payments began to be paid from the end of January, which meant that the WPA processed claims in just two months – and over Christmas and the New Year.

General Secretary of the Royal British Legion, Ian Townsend said: "The War

Pensions Agency has done a wonderful job in processing so many claims so quickly for the first batch of payments. It is really good to hear how the WPA staff have become so involved in understanding the Far East POWs' story."

The WPA has worked with the Ministry of Defence, Cabinet Office, Foreign and Commonwealth Office and the Treasury to make the payments.

For the first time quarterly war pensions figures have been published as a national statistic. They show that dis-

ablement first claims in the first three-quarters of last year fell from 2,451 to 2,140 while the number of new claims from widows fell from 771 to 703.

More than four out of five disablement pensions were awarded at the 50 per cent rate or less, the largest group having pensions at the 20 per cent rate. Less than one per cent received the full rate.

Average weekly pension is £58.58 with the average received by widows being £164.28, just under half of that being made up of supplementary allowances.

Fears over explosives end with damp squib

CLEARANCE of explosives at Devonport in readiness for construction of an ammunition facility has been completed.

Despite concerns expressed by the news media and sections of the community about the number of wartime explosives that may have been lying on the river bed, only one piece of ordnance of any significance was found.

It was a World War II depth charge which was removed and safely disposed of by Royal Navy clearance divers.

Some hard rock was found during dredging and from February 5-28 that was being dealt with by controlled explosions.

The Navy said the immediate river area was cleared before blasting, which was not visible from shore and not causing undue noise.

Force Z visit plan by RBL

A VISIT to Malaysia to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the sinking of the Force Z warships HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse is being planned by the Royal British Legion.

Provisional dates are December 5-15 this year with a service on site on December 10.

Anyone interested should contact Piers Storie-Pugh, Head of Remembrance Travel, Royal British Legion Village, Aylesford, Kent ME20 7NX.

Firepower show opens

THE STORY of Naval firepower from gunpowder to the Exocet missile will be told at a new, interactive museum opening in Gosport on March 24.

'Explosion' – the Museum of Naval Firepower – is sited at Priddy's Hard, and the opening weekend will feature special events around a World War II theme.

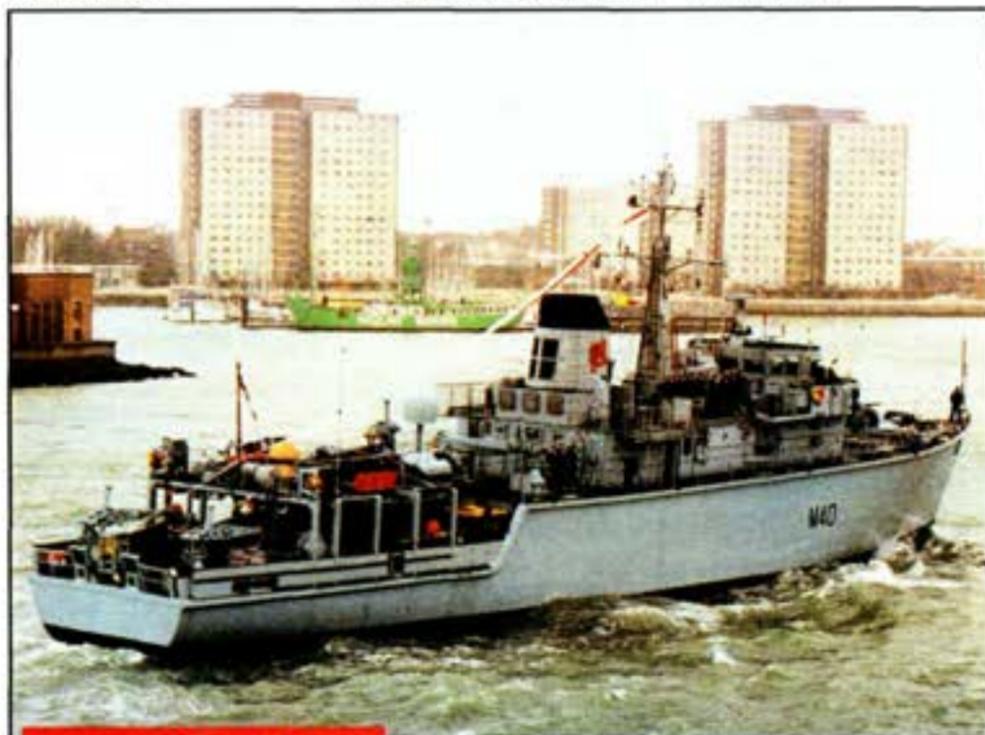
Housed in 18th century buildings which formed a Royal Navy armaments depot, the £3.5 million museum has been funded by the Millennium Commission.

Falklands War museum plan

PLANS to set up a museum at San Carlos in the Falklands to commemorate the war of 1982 have been launched by the islands' Development Council.

Robin Gibbons of Falklands Conservation has donated two portakabins to house the museum.

Now the search is on for badges of ships and units which took part in the campaign. Anyone willing to donate badges should contact Robin Gibbons, Kestrel House, La Rue des Fontaines, Trinity, Jersey JE3 5AQ. Badges should be sent to the Falkland Islands Development Council, Falklands House, 14 Broadway, Westminster, London SW1H 0BFL.



Berkeley goes to her new owners

HMS Berkeley, pictured here arriving at Portsmouth for the last time, was due to be handed over to the Greek Navy at Portsmouth on February 28.

The Hunt-class vessel will be known as HS Kallisto in Greek service, joining her sister-ship HS Europa – formerly HMS Bicester.

Berkeley paid off on January 30 after 12 years service with the Royal Navy, including operations in the Gulf and Strait of Hormuz in the late 1980s. During her career she has visited 108 ports and steamed over 200,000 nautical miles.

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Please note... you must be over 18 to advertise in this column

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ATTRACTIVE lady graduate, 40, single, catholic. Seeks similar sincere male Officer for friendship. Photo please. **Box Mar 01**

ATTRACTIVE hard working nurse, 38. Would like to correspond with naval gentleman. **Box Mar 02**

TRACY 31, St Albans. Seeks naval penfriend. Photo appreciated. **Box Mar 03**

LINDA, 40, slim, attractive. Wants penpals 35 upwards. A.L.A., Photos? **Box Mar 04**

NEIL 23, Sailor, outgoing. Seeks females, 18-28 for fun/correspondence. **Box Mar 05**

TINA 48, divorced. Seeks naval/marine/RFA male penfriend. A.L.A. **Box Mar 06**

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LISA 31, excellent sense of humour, fun personality. Seeks naval/marine male penfriend. **Box Mar 12**

BLUE EYED brunette, 31, enjoys music, travel, cars. Seeks genuine naval/marine male for penfriendship. **Box Mar 13**

NEIL 38, likes Battleship models. Seeks naval penpal. Photo appreciated. A.L.A. **Box Mar 14**

RUGGER LAD, 6'1", very fit, ex-forces, G.S.O.H. Seeks marine pen pals. **Box Mar 15**

FUN LOVING female, 19, blond, blue eyes, 5'4". Seeks male for friendship/relationship. **Box Mar 16**

SARA 42, divorced mum, W.L.T.M. male Navy/Marines or Officer. Photo appreciated. A.L.A. **Box Mar 17**

MICHELLE, 28, tall, dark. Seeks similar, honest, fun, genuine guy. **Box Mar 18**

FUN LOVING, female 32, down to earth, no ties, W.L.T.M. male for friendship/relationship. **Box Mar 19**

JILL 39, easy going, attractive blond. Seeks naval gent for friendship. **Box Mar 20**

FEMALE 34. Seeks male G.S.O.H. who enjoys music, cinema, pubs. **Box Mar 21**

LISA 21, likes reading, writing, travel. Seeks male penfriend. A.L.A. **Box Mar 22**

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You must be over 18 to advertise in this column.

People in the News



● CPO Karen Phillips from HMS Collingwood.

Engineers honoured

ENGINEERING excellence has earned awards for two Royal Navy Chief Petty Officers at RN Air Station Yeovilton and HMS Collingwood.

CPO Tim Page's outstanding engineering management skills helped his flight of two 815 Naval Air Squadron Lynx helicopters to complete 210 flying hours, with only three per cent of sorties lost, during a difficult deployment. His achievement was recognised with the presentation of a medal and certificate in the Worshipful Company of Engineers Awards 2000.

Another RN award-winner is CPO Karen Phillips from HMS Collingwood who was presented with a Prize for Special Merit in the IIE Young Woman Engineer of the Year competition.

She was presented with a certificate and cheque for £300 by the Science Minister, Lord Sainsbury, at a ceremony at the Royal Society for the encouragement of Arts, Manufactures and Commerce in London.



● CPO Tim Page from RN Air Station Yeovilton.

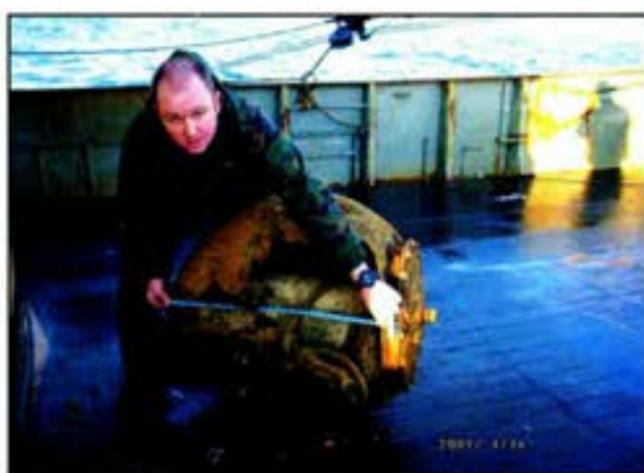
Divers destroy dangerous mine

A ROYAL NAVY ship engaged on fishery protection duties in the North Sea found a Dutch trawler had caught more than it had bargained for - a World War II mine!

The German sea mine saw daylight for the first time in well over half a century as the beam trawler 'Martha Lena' hauled in her nets as part of a routine fishery protection inspection off Lowestoft in Norfolk.

As luck would have it, the ship conducting the inspection was the Portsmouth-based Hunt-class minesweeper HMS Cattistock which had all the expertise on board to deal with the weapon.

The badly-corroded mine was considered to be stable, although with approximately 100 kilograms of high explosive still intact it was potentially deadly. So a five-man RN team, led by the coxswain of HMS Cattistock, PO Diver Stuart Russell, attached plastic explosives



● MINE: PO Diver Stuart Russell measures the badly corroded but live German sea mine aboard the Dutch fishing vessel.

to it and lowered it back to the seabed.

Once the Dutch fishing vessel had sailed clear, HMS Cattistock - which had been patrolling the area to keep other vessels clear - exploded the mine to remove the potential threat to fishermen,

mariners or simply people on beaches where the weather and North Sea currents could have taken it.

The Commanding officer of HMS Cattistock, Lt Cdr Steven Holt, said: "The ability to undertake such an operation as the disposal of dangerous ordnance highlights the flexibility offered by Royal Navy units employed in fishery protection duties." He also commended his ship's company for their efforts under difficult circumstances.

The mine clearance team were PO(D) Stuart Russell from Hull, LS(D) Jeff Smith from Portchester, Hants, AB(D) Neil Turner from South Shields, AB(D) John Asbury from Great Barr, Birmingham and AB(D) Jobi Hanfrey from Chatham, Kent.

But in the event of a vessel fishing illegally, could the discovery of a mine distract the attention of the Royal Navy from fishery protection duties?

Lt Cdr Holt said: "I don't think so. In this case, we completed the original inspection as planned!"



● THE TEAM: LS(D) Smith (left) AB(D) Asbury, PO (D) Russell, AB(D) Hanfrey and AB(D) Turner.

Prizes for men who set 'Sub' standard

PRIZES have been won by three submariners for their performance during a demanding period of training at Clyde Naval Base.

OM(WSM) Peter Stratford was presented with the Wally Lambert Trophy as the student rating who displayed the best attitude during his time at the Trident Training Facility.

The trophy, a fisherman statuette given to the (then) Royal Navy Polar School by the widow of Lt Cdr Wally Lambert, a keen fisherman who died shortly after leaving the Submarine Service, was presented to OM Stratford by Capt Malcolm Avery, Capt Sea and Shore Training.

Fifteen other ratings at the Trident Training Facility successfully completed a demanding 10-day practical assessment phase known as VALIDEX and POWEA Mark Hemmings and POWEA Nicholas Barks both received Herbert Lott awards for coming top of their respective classes.



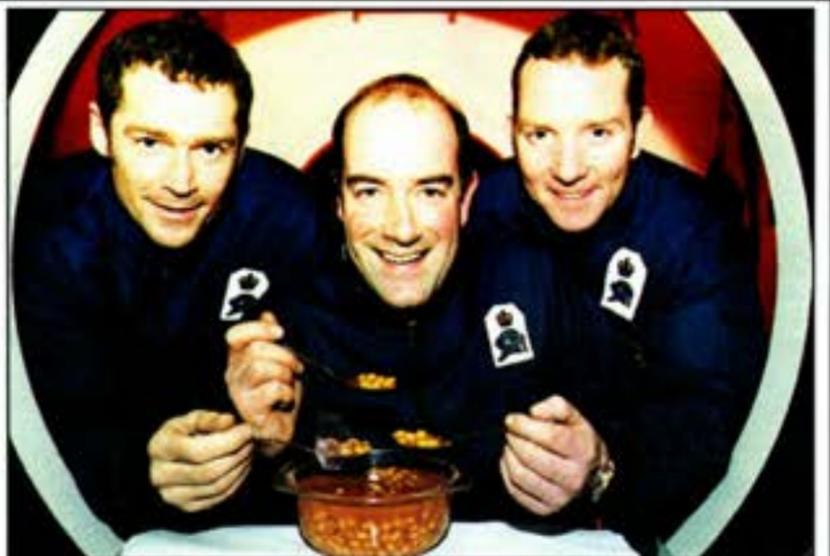
● OM Peter Stratford who was presented with the Wally Lambert Trophy by Capt Malcolm Avery.

Just like three Beans in a pod!

PICTURED inside one of the Northern Diving Group's decompression chambers enjoying a snack are (left to right) PO Diver Billy Bean, CPO Diver Graham Bean and PO Diver Tony Bean.

Although the three unrelated 'Mr Beans' have known about each other since they joined the 250-strong Clearance Diving Branch their meeting at Faslane was the first time that they had all met up serving in the same place - or 'bean' together!

Graham (Northern Diving Group) moved up to Faslane in October and Tony has another year left to serve in HMS Penzance. But as Billy was due to leave HMS Inverness in February they decided to seize the moment for a photograph.



● PO Diver Billy Bean, CPO Diver Graham Bean and PO Diver Tony Bean.

People in the News

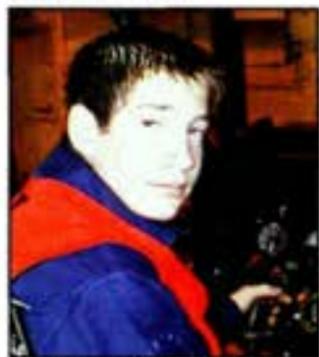


● **TOP CLASS:** POMEA 'Leon' Spink at HMS Sultan.

Knockout results

PO Gary Spink did so well on his Marine Engineering Artificer course at HMS Sultan that he picked up prizes worth almost £1,000.

Gary, known to his mates as Leon, left Sultan with an impressive array of trophies and a BTEC National Diploma in Engineering. He is due to join HMS Cumberland.



● **Jamie Murray at Yeovilton**

High flier of the future?

BUDDING pilot Jamie Murray had the time of his life during a week of work experience at RNAS Yeovilton.

He spent his time learning as much as possible about the Fleet Air Arm and the aircraft based at Yeovilton and enjoyed a thrilling flight through Cheddar Gorge in a Sea King.

"The flight was a superb end to a week I will never forget" said Jamie. "It has inspired me even more to a career in the Fleet Air Arm."

Mugs mark 100 years of submarines

VETERANS from Essex marked the 100th anniversary of the Submarine Service by commissioning 100 commemorative mugs.

Men from the Essex branch of the Submariners' Association are pictured toasting past and present members of the 'Silent Service.'



Picture: The Southend Observer

Meet the Royal family!

WHEN Vincent Brunning passed Commando Training at Lympstone he became the third member of his family to wear the coveted Green Beret.

His twin brother Leon is a member of the Fleet Royal Marines Protection Group at Arbroath and his father Martin, a former RSM with the REME, passed the All Arms Commando Course in 1975 before serving with 3 Commando Brigade.



But the family connection with the Corps doesn't end there. Another guest at his passing out parade at the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone was his sister Carmen, who had flown back from Kosovo where she has been serving as the Education Wren for 45 Commando Group Royal Marines!

● **PROUD DAY:** Royal Marines Vincent and Leon Brunning are pictured with their sister Carmen, father Martin, mother Sandra and their little brother Sean.

Cow rescuers had no 'udder' options

AIRMEN from 848 Naval Air Squadron at Yeovilton found themselves on the horns of an unusual dilemma after a call for help from the RSPCA.

A cow had fallen into a steep ravine at Charcombe near Bath, and when all other efforts to reach it had failed it seemed that a helicopter was the animal's only chance.

RSPCA Inspector Glyn Roberts rang Yeovilton for help and a few minutes later, Lt Paul Hannigan, Lt Gary Stubbs and Royal Marines C/Sgt Tony Wood were heading for the scene in a Royal Navy Sea King.

When they arrived the airmen managed to solve the problem using an 80-foot strop and a livestock sling to winch the cow to safety, and

the animal went on to make a full recovery.

The cow was not the only one to be 'over the moo-n' with the success of the mission - RSPCA Commendations were later issued to all three airmen for their efforts. After thanking the trio, Inspector Roberts said: "There was simply no other way we could have got it out."



● **FREE AT LAST:** The injured cow is winched to safety by a Sea King helicopter of 848 Naval Air Squadron at the end of a difficult and delicate operation.



● **Lt Paul Hannigan (left) Lt Gary Stubbs (right) and C/Sgt Tony Wood (centre) at the presentation of their RSPCA Commendations.**

CAPTAIN IN CAPTIVITY

RNR CAPTAIN Sir Donald Gosling was 'captured' on film at a party given for friends and family in Hampshire recently.

The snap of Sir Don (below) was submitted by Capt Scott Lidbetter, Commanding Officer of HMS Ocean.



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Job evaluation – how it works for you

JOB EVALUATION (JE) under Pay 2000 enables the Armed Forces Pay Review Body to recommend pay levels broadly comparable with those in civilian life for jobs at similar levels.

Comparisons are not made job-for-job as there are often no precise civilian equivalents, but they are made by comparing the range of jobs at each rank with a range of broadly similar posts.

JE allows the size of a post to be determined by measuring its work content against key factors:

- Knowledge, skills and experience.
- Complexity and mental challenge.
- Judgment and decision.
- Use of resources.
- Communication.
- Working conditions.

As civilian and Service jobs are scored using the same system, it is possible to make comparisons.

In 1997 a new system was introduced which covers everyone from the First Sea Lord to ABs. At the same time the AFPRB introduced a new civilian pay database covering

many thousands of civilian jobs which provides improved comparability.

Using that model, ratings are given a whole trade score (WTS). That is the weighted average of scores at each rank within a trade and is based on a sample of jobs reflecting the areas of employment within a trade.

The numerical assessment for each trade at each rank enables them to be compared in terms of job weight.

At present it has not been possible to achieve a WTS for officers, and their posts are judged individually.

Work is going on to see how the grouping of officers can be achieved and on what basis.

JE measures Service jobs in peacetime, including training and exercises, but not in actual operations or war. It is considered that the qualities needed at such times are "intangible".

Independent consultants employed by the AFPRB concluded that when assessing pay comparability, the civilian database being used by the Armed Forces was as good as any used by commercial organisations.

JE is concerned with the job not

the job holder and does not take into account an individual's abilities except to assume an average performance. And it does not take into account hours worked – which is reflected in the X-factor in pay.

However, it does take account of the need for multi-skilling and multi-tasking such as RAS (replenishment at sea) and firefighting parties. That is why branches which spend more time at sea will tend to score higher than similar branches that do not.

Questions and answers on Pay 2000

Is Pay 2000 being introduced to cut costs?

No. The first principle of the new system is that you will move from your current rate of pay to one that is either equal to it or higher on the Pay 2000 structure. No one will have a pay cut on transfer to the new system.

Is there a higher and lower pay table?

The difference between the highest and lowest whole trade score (WTS) at each rank is so great that more than one range is needed for a fair remuneration package for all.

Why has the RN moved away from 'all of one company' (AOC)?

The wide spread of WTS showed that some trades have significantly weightier jobs in JE terms that oth-

ers, which means that the AOC principle is no longer sustainable. The AFPRB is finding it increasingly difficult to deliver pay which is 'broadly comparable' with civilian counterparts while the Navy pays its people under AOC.

Can someone be in the higher range at one rank and in a lower range at another rank within the same Armed Service?

Yes. There are some trades where JE suggests that they should be in the higher range at one rank and in the lower range at another rank, reflecting changes in role and job weight.

How many increments are there in each range for ratings and RM other ranks?

There are nine at AB, Marine, L/Cpl, CPO, CCPO, CSgt and

WO2; seven at leading hand, Cpl, PO, RM Sgt, WO and WO1.

Why nine increments at some ranks and seven at others?

It reflects the complexity of JE scores at these ranks and ensures no one suffers because of differences in the rank structures of the three Services – for example, Navy personnel cannot become WO2s, although personnel in the RM and Army can. It also takes into account the average time in rank for all three Services.

How will people move up the increments?

All will be able to move up the increments annually, normally starting from Level 1 in each rank. However, when someone has spent a long time in a rank they may, on promotion, move on to a higher level to ensure a pay rise on promotion. Annual progression will continue from that level.

How is incremental progress monitored?

An incremental basic date (IBD) will be calculated and held on the pay computer record for each individual on transition to Pay 2000. The IBD will be the key date from which entitlement to increment levels of pay is determined. It will normally be the effective date of promotion (seniority date) and will be used to determine future incremental progression.

How does someone qualify for annual increments?

They are based on three criteria: experience in rank, qualifications and satisfactory performance. Progression will be barred in some instances until attainment of a qualification – for example, PE for higher rate or achieving OPS. There will be opportunities to gain accelerated incremental progression (AIP) as a reward for early achievement of qualifications.

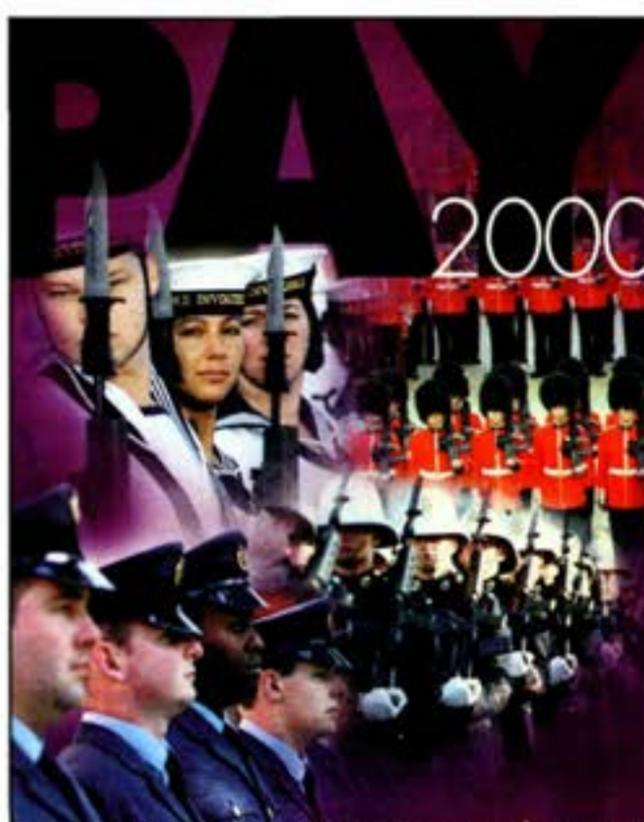
How can people gain accelerated incremental progression?

Up to 24 months' AIP can be awarded during a rating's career. A minimum of three months and a maximum of 12 can be awarded at any one time. Branch managers in the Directorate of Naval Manpower have allocated AIP to support their branch structures, and details are published in the updated BR1950.

What happens when someone reaches the top of a range without being promoted?

They will stay on the top increment and still receive the annual pay award on April 1 each year.

What happens if the pay rise on promotion places someone on the next range



● The booklet produced by the Ministry of Defence intended to explain the intricacies of Pay 2000.

at a higher point than the bottom incremental level?

This may happen, for instance where a trade is in a higher range at a lower rank and in a lower range at the next higher rank. In these cases the individual will be placed on the relevant increment on the next range which ensures a minimum two per cent rise on promotion.

Further incremental progression will be in accordance with normal criteria – experience, skill and satisfactory performance.

What happens if the pay rise on promotion places someone above the highest increment in the next range?

They will be placed on a specially determined rate of pay which is calculated by applying the two per cent rise on promotion to the existing rate of pay.

What will be the rules for those rated Local Acting?

Very similar to those for substantive promotion, with a minimum of a two per cent rise. Time spent in Local Acting rank (or Acting for RM) will count for incremental progression in the substantive rank when relinquished.

Are there intentions to introduce performance related pay?

No. However, the requirement for people to achieve a satisfactory level of performance to merit pay-level progression is considered entirely appropriate and has received widespread support.

What arrangements are being made to transfer those already serving on to the new pay system?

Everyone will move to the incremental point on the appropriate range which is equal to, or immediately above, their current rate of pay. No one will take a cut in pay and many will receive a slight increase.

Those who move across to a higher incremental point than that to which they are entitled under the progression criteria will remain at that point until fully qualified to move up.

Those who move to a level equal to or lower than their seniority will progress on the anniversary of their promotion.

If someone's current basic pay (and LSP) is higher than the top incremental level for their rank, they will receive a specially determined rate.

Will it be possible to tell the difference between that part of pay under the new system and that resulting from the AFPRB pay award?

Yes. April's pay will be based on the current pay rates converted into Pay 2000 rates. May's pay will include the 2001 pay award with back pay to April 1. This clearly will show everyone the effect of moving to the new system.

Will pensions be affected?

Pensions will continue to be based on a representative rate of pay for rank and length of service.

However, the point on the current pay scales used now to set representative rates of pay will no longer be appropriate, and work is going on to select new ones within Pay 2000. Nonetheless, an individual's pension will not be less than under the current arrangements.

ANNUAL RISE

■ From front page
Commanders on appointment will now get a new rate of £30.07 flying pay, with increased tapered rates at six and eight years' seniority.

Submariners are getting a five per cent rise in submarine pay and in nuclear propulsion pay – formerly known as nuclear propulsion senior rates supplement.

Nuclear propulsion pay will also now be received by sub lieutenants and lieutenants at category A levels (£13.84) on completion of their engineer officer-of-the-watch board.

Additional pay will rise by 3.7 per cent for divers, hydrographers, Special Boat Squadron members, parachutists and mountain leaders. Reserve

THE NEW RATES

DAILY PAY rates from April 1 including the 3.7 per cent annual pay rise as well as transition to Pay 2000 are as follows (lower-range rates initially with higher-range rates in brackets):

RANGE 1
Marine, AB and L/Cpl (nine levels): 1 – £33.07 (£33.07), 2 – £35.02 (£38.38), 3 – £36.96 (£42.36), 4 – £40.20 (£45.55), 5 – £42.36 (£50.38), 6 – £44.13 (£52.83), 7 – £46.03 (£55.25), 8 – £48.13 (£57.72), 9 – £49.88 (£60.55).

RANGE 2
Leading Hand, Cpls (seven levels): 1 – £54.28 (£56.37), 2 – £56.81 (£59.95), 3 – £57.80 (£63.51), 4 – £59.56 (£64.99), 5 – £60.46 (£66.57), 6 – £61.19 (£67.95), 7 – £62.02 (£69.43).

RANGE 3
PO, Sgt (seven levels): 1 – £62.81 (£68.54), 2 – £64.44 (£70.31), 3 – £66.06 (£72.09), 4 – £66.73 (£73), 5 – £67.93 (£74.42), 6 – £69.31 (£75.84), 7 – £70.93 (£77.26).

RANGE 4
CPO, CCPO, CSgt, WO2 (nine levels): 1 – £69.31 (£77.31), 2 – £70.42 (£79.19), 3 – £72.71 (£81.07), 4 – £74.41 (£82.95), 5 – £75.43 (£84.84), 6 – £77.31 (£86.71), 7 – £79.19 (£87.97), 8 – £81.07 (£89.23), 9 – £82.91 (£90.49).

RANGE 5
WO, WO1 (seven levels): 1 – £79.95 (£87.69), 2 – £81.51 (£89.33), 3 – £83.07 (£90.78), 4 – £84.64 (£92.35), 5 – £86.20 (£93.91), 6 – £87.69 (£95.48), 7 – £89.33 (£97.04).

OFFICERS
Minimum and maximum: S/Lt – £61.91-£68.42, Lt – £78.94-£93.89, Lt Cdr – £99.44-£119.10, Cdr – £140.25-£155.03, Capt – £162.41-£179.51, Commodore – £194.81-£203.11.

MULTI-SKILLS SCORE

■ From front page
is satisfied that job evaluation has been fairly applied and "is sufficiently robust to underpin the new pay system". It says the evaluation factor recognises the additional responsibilities associated with leadership "and span of control" but does not allocate job score on the basis of rank as such.

The report also says: "The main priority has been to draw together three very different career structures within a single pay system which is flexible enough to meet the pay needs of each Service while removing the inconsistencies of the previous pay structures."

Band rates have been increased by the same amount as have pay for work of an objectionable nature, all rates of separation allowance, Northern Ireland Residents Supplement and Reserve Forces basic pay.

Pay for work in unpleasant conditions rises from 71p a day to £1.

Food charges for married and single personnel rise by 3-4p a day. Family accommodation charges go up by 5.7 per cent for best quality to lower rates for poorer accommodation. Single accommodation charges are increased by three per cent for the best, decreasing to no rise for the worst.

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THAT'S MY GIRL!

MILLIONS of people sat glued to their TV sets to witness British yachtswoman Ellen MacArthur crossing the finish line of the Vendée Globe round-the-world race on February 11.

And as her epic voyage came to an end more than 300,000 spectators descended on the port of Les Sables D'Olonne to welcome the 24-year-old as she claimed a place in sailing's record books.

Less well-publicised is the fact that Ellen received a morale-boosting visit from her parents when she was still 120 miles from the coast of France – by courtesy of the Royal Navy.

As her race neared its thrilling climax, Ken and Avril MacArthur embarked in a Sea King helicopter from RN Air Station Yeovilton which had

Royal Navy reunites yachting hero Ellen with proud parents

been commandeered with the assistance of Britain's Naval Attaché in Paris, Capt Allan Adair.

Joining them on the flight were Ellen's brother, cousin and uncle, a BBC film crew, a French cameraman, CPO Alrcrewman Larry Slater and LA(PHOT) Mark Hipkin from the Surface Flotilla Photographic Unit.

After 90 minutes in the air, 845 Naval Air Squadron Lieutenants Rob Fisher and Mark Purvis located Ellen's

yacht 'Kingfisher' and contacted her on the helicopter's radio.

Capt Adair, who was also on the flight, said: "It was a gorgeous day and Ellen was making about 15 knots in light airs with a great deal of sail up. We circled around the boat a few times and her parents were able to speak to her on the VHF radio.

"Although they had kept in close contact throughout the race it was the first time that they had seen Ellen for more than three months and it was a

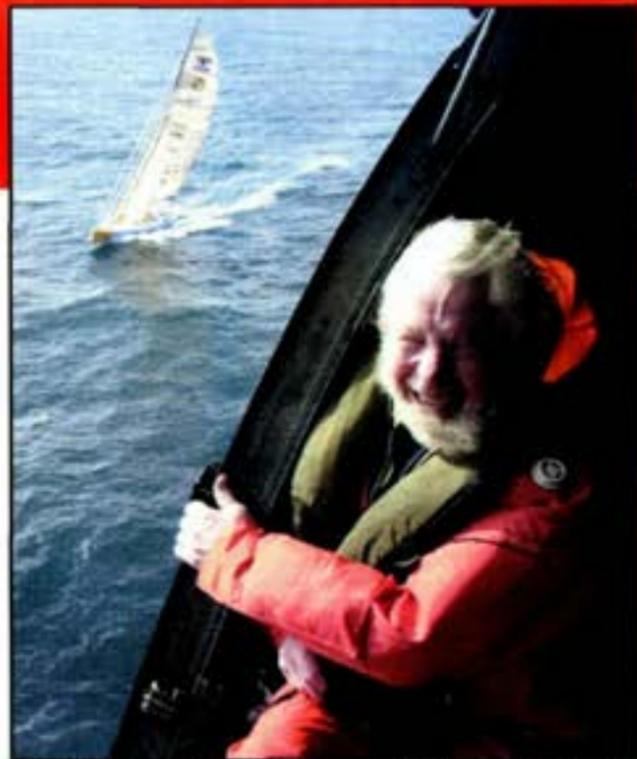
really happy occasion, it was fantastic.

"They were so grateful, really touched. It was also their first flight in a helicopter and Ellen's parents were just chuffed to bits."

■ The timing of the Sea King's short excursion to France was extremely fortunate for a CPO on board HMS Coventry who suffered a suspected heart attack.

HMS Coventry had just completed a series of ASW exercises and was heading for Bordeaux when CPO Chris Westall was taken ill, and as the ship didn't have her own helicopter he was taken to La Rochelle by a French search and rescue aircraft.

Capt Adair visited him in hospital and a transfer to the Royal Hospital, Haslar, was arranged using 845's Sea King. CPO Westall was expected to make a full recovery following surgery.



● **OVERJOYED:** Ken MacArthur sees his daughter for the first time in three months. The Navy Sea King also had Ellen's mum, brother and cousin on board. Picture: LA(PHOT) Mark Hipkin.

Missile system installed for £1



● **IF THE CAP FITS:** The men who will work with the Sea Ram line up in front of the missile launcher before it is swung into place on board HMS York.

WHAT will £1 get you these days? A no-frills hamburger, a short bus-ride – or maybe a sophisticated close range missile defence system!

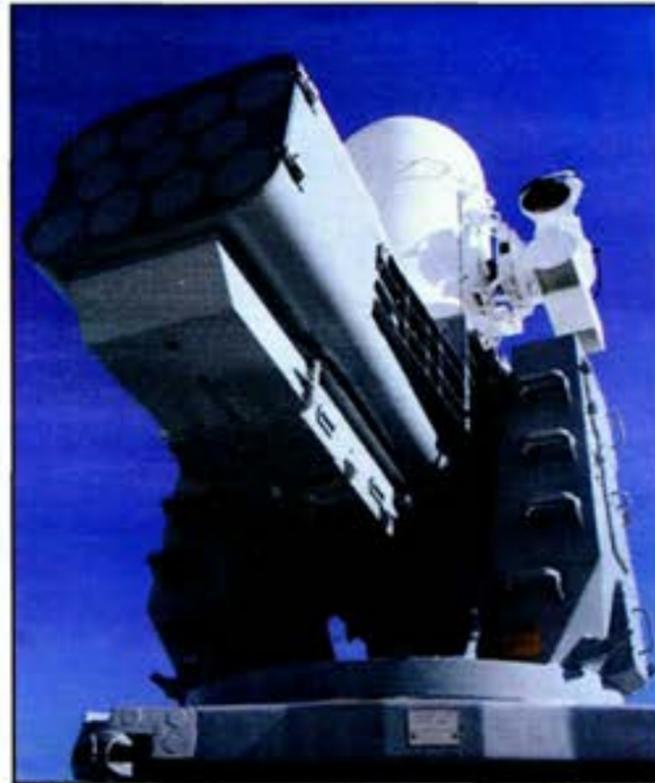
Just such a system has been installed in destroyer HMS York for the Royal Navy to evaluate until the end of the year.

The tab is being picked up by an international consortium led by Raytheon Systems Ltd, and the £1 payment was required to give the contract a nominal value.

Sea Ram marries elements of the successful Phalanx close-in weapon and the RAM (rolling airframe missile) guided missile, effectively pushing back the point at which a ship's self-defence weapons engages incoming threats.

Whereas Phalanx – a high-speed gun – fires at missiles or aircraft very close to the ship, Sea Ram launches fire-and-forget missiles which can hit a target up to six miles out, and can also counter the threat of helicopters, light aircraft and small, high-speed surface craft.

It also has the benefit of using proven hardware – the compatibility with Phalanx means much of the equipment, sensors, support systems and training required to deploy Sea Ram are already in place on Phalanx-equipped ships such as HMS York, who will retain her existing Phalanx on the star-



● **SEA RAM:** The close range defence system installed in HMS York marries Phalanx and Rolling Airframe Missile technology.

board side during the trials.

With a combination of Phalanx's sensors and quick-response times, and the accuracy and extended range of the RAM element, Raytheon and partners – including RAMSYS of Germany, Hunting

Engineering and Thales Optronics (formerly Pilkington Optronics) – hope Sea Ram will prove tempting to the Ministry of Defence. As a private venture, initiated by Raytheon, the consortium has 'lent' the system to York until her

next spell of maintenance in December to allow it to be proved under real conditions at sea.

There will be no live firings – the RAM element has already undergone more than 150 test runs in the United States, with a success rate greater than 95 per cent.

The arrangement does, however, allow the MOD to have a good look at Sea Ram with little outlay, and no formal commitment to buy, while if – as Raytheon confidently expects – the system wins RN approval, then sales could materialise in other countries.

This is the first ship installation – carried out under contract by DML – in the world, and some of the ship's company of York had to undergo training in preparation for the arrival of Sea Ram.

The Type 42 destroyer, under the command of Cdr Paul Porter, was due to start a shakedown programme at the end of February, and her programme includes dedicated Sea Ram trials during the year.

Although there is currently no UK requirement for Sea Ram, the trial allows the Navy to have some influence over future development, at minimal cost to the taxpayer, and if there is a future order, the procurement process will be much shorter.

The Sea Ram consortium will get critical feedback in such areas as poor-weather performance and ease of use by operators.



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MOD report predicts nature and causes of future conflict

A REPORT published by the Ministry of Defence considers the likely causes of future conflicts and how war will be waged thirty years from now.

'The Future Strategic Context for Defence' is not a Government policy document but it attempts to identify long-term trends to assist the military planners who prioritize the development of defence capabilities.

Where the Strategic Defence Review of 1998 was designed to enable Britain's Armed Forces to meet the challenges they will face up to 2015, the new report looks ahead as far as 2032 to consider the nature and the causes of possible future conflicts.

It's predictions included:

■ Wars over increasingly limited resources such as water and fossil fuels, with environmental factors such as global warming, flooding and other natural disasters sparking conflicts by displacing large populations and increasing pressure on land.

■ Population growth from six billion to eight billion by 2032. While the number of young people in other parts of the world is expected to grow rapidly, the opposite will be true in Europe, making recruiting more difficult and putting pressure on defence spending as the West cares for its ageing citizens.

■ An increasing threat from biological and chemical weapons as their production and delivery becomes simpler and cheaper. The report also envisages the potential for genetic and biogenetic terrorism through the spread of diseases and contamination of food.

■ The proliferation of conventional weapons through sales from former Soviet states, giving Russia's sale of Kilo-class submarines to Iran, Algeria, India and China as an example.

■ Military involvement in urban peacekeeping operations and in Government efforts to combat drugs smuggling and international crime as gangs become more sophisticated and better armed.

■ Continuing instability in the Balkans, the Middle East, the Caucasus and Transcaucasus, North Africa and South Asia.

The report identified the need for conflict prevention through better economic and political intelligence, miniature machines for battlefield intelligence, reducing the exposure of front-line personnel and minimising casualties, and the importance of maintaining public and media support for operations.

The need to foster the military capabilities of European and other friendly nations was highlighted and the report recognised the critical role which Britain's relationship with America plays in the maintenance of our technological capabilities.



Drafty: The Supply Branch



Supply in big demand

The Supply Drafting Team

D4: Cdr Stephen Carter 2381
AD4GS (WOs): CPOWtr Paul Hodgson 2443
D4C (Medical): Lt Cdr Bill Durning 2570
D4C1: POWWtr Dawn Green, 2445
 (Ibfb Tracey Hopkins Mar 20)
D4D (Stores/Writers): Lt Cdr Bryan Ward 2455
D4D2 (L&SR Writers): POWtr Keith Gilchrist 2505
 (Ibfb Steve Wemyss 24 Apr)
D4D4 (AB Writers): LWWtr Mel Harris 2285
D4D3 (Stores): POWtr Steve Wemyss 2444
 (Ibfb Tracey Burstow Apr 24)
D4E1 (SR CAs): CPOWtr Mick Aitken 2446
D4E3 (JR CAs): POWtr Ollie Burton 2446
D4E2 (SR Stewards): POWtr Nick Hutchinson 2575
D4E4 (JR Stewards): WWtr Clare Ives 2575.

Situations vacant

CPOAEM(M)2 Exchange with the Army. Sea-going, based at RAF Wattisham, Lynx helicopters, 18 months from May.
POAEM for Defence Intelligence and Security Centre at Chicksands, Bedfordshire. Combat after capture instructor. 18 months from May.
CPOAEM(M) and **POAEM(M)** for the CHF at Yeovilton. Commando Circuit (CPO) and Fuel Bowser (PO) duties. Required Jan and May respectively for 18 months.

FOR MANY years, New Entry RN Stewards and Chefs spent a long time ashore before joining their first ship.

First they would undergo basic and professional training courses at the Royal Naval Supply School in HMS Raligh.

Then these men and women were moved to a shore establishment, working for a fixed period (four months for Stewards and ten months for Chefs) to consolidate their new found skills as Part Four Trainees before going to a complement billet in a ship or front line naval air squadron.

In the mid nineties, in the aftermath of the Defence Cost Study, fleet reductions and redundancy schemes, it took well over two years to get many of these ratings, particularly Chefs, into their first ship.

Changes in Naval Manning Policy have brought the Part Four Training Scheme to an end.

Now the emphasis on Supply specialisation training is to take them from New Entry up to the minimum skill level, Operational Performance Standard (OPS), required to fill a complement billet in a Destroyer, Frigate or Submarine.

To meet the higher skill levels required, Part Three Training at RNSS has been expanded to allow some time to consolidate and put the theory into practice before being drafted afloat. It means the

	New Entry	Pt 3 Trng	BSSC/ P/Ts	1st Sea Draft	Shore Service	Sea Draft
Chefs (MAF)	2 mths	6 mths	1 mth	24 mths	5 mths (MTA)	24 mths
Subs	2 mths	2 mths	1 mth	24 mths	5 mths (MTA)	24 mths
WSub	2 mths	2 mths	1 mth	18 mths	6 mths (Approx)	18 mths

	New Entry	Pt 3 Trng	SM Trng SMQ	1st Sea Draft	Shore Service	2nd Sea Draft
SM Chs	2 mths	6 mths	4 mths	27 mths	6 mths (MTA)	27 - 33 mths
SM Subs	2 mths	2 mths	4 mths	27 mths	6 mths (MTA)	27 - 33 mths

Steward Part Three course is now nine weeks instead of six, and 21 weeks for the Chefs (previously 15).

On successful completion of Part Three, graduates attend Basic Sea Safety Course (BSSC) before stepping aboard a front line unit.

There may be a short interval in a shore establishment before joining a ship, but this period will be kept to a minimum and may be filled by other courses like First Aid or NBCD training in readiness for that all-important first job afloat.

A similar pattern of initial training for all Supply specialisations is now well underway in the Supply School. Already some New Entry Writers, Stores Accountants and Stewards have completed the enhanced Part Three course.

Some of the Stewards are now at sea, but with less pressure on the Sea Bill for Writers and SAs, they can expect some time ashore in a complement billet before joining a ship. Because the Chefs complete a much longer training course, the

first graduates under the new training regime will not be joining ships until late April.

They will relieve ABs due a draft ashore who, after some well earned sea leave, will be warmly welcomed by the shore employers who have had to bear the brunt of gapping since the demise of ratings coming out of the Supply School to Part Four training.

The expected drafting and career plan for Chefs and Stewards for the first five years is shown in the top table.

In practice this means that New Entry Chefs will be getting to their first ship about seven months earlier than under the previous training scheme. For Stewards the reduction will be about two months. Suitable candidates (ideally volunteers) for SM Service are now being selected at the Part Three stage.

They will move straight across to the Submarine School and can expect an initial career path along the lines given in the second table printed above.



● Besides the jobs remaining in the three main Baseport areas, and in spite of uniformed manpower reductions ashore, a number of Catering Service billets remain in other parts of the UK and NI, as shown on this map. For more information contact your DCMLO or log on to 2SL's website from the MOD Network.

Graphics by WOM Catherine Smart

Extensions of service and full time Reserves

The demand for Naval Chefs and Stewards is constantly outstripping the actual manpower available, creating vacancies both afloat and ashore.

Opportunities now exist not only for Chefs and Stewards but also SAs and Writers, particularly at Junior Rate level, to apply for an

extension of service of up to two years. Alternatively, those on the verge of leaving the Royal Navy may find the options under the scheme of Full Time Reserve Service more attractive.

For more information on extensions of service read NMA Gosport's signal 081351Z DEC 00 or contact your Divisional Officer.

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Norfolk sports latest gun

HMS NORFOLK has become the first ship in the Royal Navy to be fitted with a new 4.5-inch Mod 1 Gun, the latest evolution of the tried and tested 4.5 Mod 0 Gun which has been in service since the 1970s.

The ship has just emerged from an extensive refit at Devonport where DML removed the old gun and its associated below-decks equipment and prepared the compartments for the new gun to be installed by BAE Systems.

The primary role of Norfolk's new weapon is to provide Naval gunfire support to troops ashore, a tactic which was used successfully during the Falklands War in 1982.

Recent trials of the gun at the Royal Navy School of Gunnery at HMS Cambridge have shown that the Mod 1 Gun, known colloquially as 'the electric gun', is even more reliable than its predecessor. As well as being able to fire standard 4.5-inch rounds, the Mod 1 will also be capable of firing extended range ammunition.

HMS Norfolk, the first Duke-class Type 23 frigate to be built for the Royal Navy, will set sail at the end of March for its post-docking sea trials where the new gun will be fired for the first time from a warship.

A chance meeting last summer has brought a special honour to Devonport-based HMS Norfolk. As the ship passed Plymouth Hoe on her way back from exercises at the end of July last year she attracted the attention of a bottle-nosed dolphin and the meeting was captured on film by LWEM Mac McKnight.

The photograph (Navy News P1 September 2000) was passed to the National Marine Aquarium in Plymouth who have established that it was the first time that this particular dolphin had been seen in this area, and the dolphin has been named 'Norfolk' in the ship's honour.

The photo also allowed the dolphin's markings to be catalogued, allowing scientists to identify 'Norfolk' wherever sightings are reported.



LWEM Mac McKnight, Rolf Williams from Plymouth Aquarium and Cdr Laurie Smallman, CO of HMS Norfolk with the catalogue showing the dolphin's markings. The ship's new gun can be seen in the background.

Refit makes HMS Nottingham top destroyer

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Navy News / Chatham Navy Days Competition, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 3HH
 To Arrive no later than Friday 6th April 2001

What is the name of the largest warship to be on show at KM Chatham Navy Days this year?

What is the Dutch ship Tydeman?

Name

Address

Postcode Phone No

E-Mail Address

Be sure to visit the Navy News stand!



HMS NOTTINGHAM has rejoined the Fleet after a multi-million pound refit which has made her the most advanced destroyer in the Royal Navy.

The ship was handed over to DML at Devonport Naval Base 18 months ago for significant improvements to her command system, sensors and weapons.

And for the last three months HMS Nottingham has had to contend with gale force winds and stormy seas as she completed an extensive package of sea trials as far afield as Scotland and Western Ireland.

On completion, a rededication ceremony was held at Portsmouth Naval Base when the salute was taken by Mrs Henrietta Wood, the ship's sponsor, and her father, the former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Henry Leach, whose wife launched the ship twenty-one years ago. Other VIPs included Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Alan West.

The ship's return to active service caused great interest in the city and shire of Nottingham and the Lord Mayor, the Chairman of the County and the High Sheriff all attended the rededication, as well as representatives of the ship's affiliated units.



REDEDICATION: HMS Nottingham's sponsor, Mrs Henrietta Wood, inspects the guard of honour during the rededication ceremony at Portsmouth Naval Base.

Another guest was the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Cdr Barry Maine, and Naval tradition was upheld by the cutting of a rededication cake by Able Seaman Chris Tebble, the youngest member of the 230-strong ship's company, and Julie Farrington, wife of the ship's CO, Cdr Richard Farrington.

HMS Nottingham's return to Portsmouth will be a relief for many members of the ship's company who live in Hampshire and have been making the long trip down to Plymouth for duty and Cdr Richard Farrington says that

his crew are looking forward to the challenges ahead.

One of Nottingham's first tasks will be a test-firing of her Seadart Anti Aircraft Missile, followed by a visit to Gibraltar where the ship's company will let their hair down before a gruelling period of operational sea training at Plymouth in April.

The next big date in HMS Nottingham's diary is the weekend of June 9 when the ship's company will be visiting Nottingham to exercise their rights as Freemen of the City.

Marlborough in Middlesbrough

HMS MARLBOROUGH enjoyed a five-day visit to her affiliated town of Middlesbrough, her first visit since the granting of Freedom of the Borough last year.

During her stay Marlborough built on the already thriving affiliation with the area and caught up with old friends, as well as making many new ones.

The Type 23 frigate was berthed at Cammell Lairds shipyard throughout the visit which began with the ship hosting a reception for Council officials and local dignitaries on Thursday, February 8.

While the ship's rugby and football teams took on a local Territorial Army Unit and Middlesbrough Rugby club, HMS Marlborough was able to offer sailors from the local area the rare opportunity to show friends and family around the ship.

Sea Cadets and school children were also invited and the ship hosted Naval careers advisors from the

fertile recruiting area of the North East who were briefed on the opportunities the RN offers.

Capt Duncan Potts, CO of HMS Marlborough, said the ship's company had been looking forward to the visit and he was delighted to have been able to bring the ship back to visit so soon after receiving the honour of the Freedom of the Borough.

Campaigning for better pensions

WHEN THE Armed Forces Pension Scheme was introduced 30 years ago it was seen as one of the best in the world.

But as time has gone by various shortcomings have been identified and the body which has done most to press for change is the Officers' Pensions Society.

The name is historical and relates to the time when only officers were on pensionable terms, but the successes the Society has had over the last 55 years have benefited all ranks.

The Society works tirelessly on behalf of all three Services and its work currently focuses on three main areas. These are:

Retrospection: The OPS says that improvements in the AFPS by successive Governments have not allowed retrospection, leaving various groups excluded from the ben-

efits, particularly widows of post retirement marriages, widows of men who retired prior to 1973 who receive only a third of a pension, and widows who wish to remarry but risk losing their pension.

Pay restraint: The Society also says that pay restraint policies from successive Governments have created iniquitous 'pension troughs' where people retiring with the same rank and length of service receive higher or lower benefits than those immediately before or after them (Navy News P12 February.)

Overdue review: The Society believes that other public and private sector pension schemes have improved in terms of value to their pensioners and dependants but the AFPS is being left further and further behind.

The Society says that the long-running MOD Pension Review is overdue.

To bring about change, the OPS lobbies the MOD, Ministers, MPs and Government, directly, through the media, and, it says, through the courts if necessary.

The Society aims to provide formal, carefully researched evidence to the MOD and the House of Commons Select Committee and has regular contact with Services chiefs. It also handles over 400 enquiries a month and offers members, for a modest subscription fee of £20 a year, a useful referral service on a full range of issues and a free magazine twice a year.

For more details contact the Society on 020 7820 9988, fax 020 7820 9948, visit the website www.officerspensionsoc.co.uk or send an e-mail to memsec@officerspensionsoc

Chatham Navy Days

THREE Royal Navy vessels will be among 11 warships gathering at this year's Chatham Navy Days on May 26-28.

The largest of the warships, Type 23 frigate HMS Kent, will be accompanied by mine-hunter HMS Walney and her sister ship HMS Cromer.

NATO's Standing Naval Force Channel will make up most of the other warships and the Netherlands is also sending their oceanographic research ship Tydeman.

Marines in concert

THE BAND of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth holds Spring Concerts on March 8 and March 29 at St Mary's Church, Fratton Road, Portsmouth.

Tickets costing £5 (£4 for pensioners and students) are available from the Concert Secretary, RMSM, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Cheques made payable to RMSM Band Fund should be sent with a SAE.

Website for families

THE Association for Royal Naval & Royal Marines Families is going from strength to strength.

The group is about to publish the third issue of their magazine 'The Blue and Green Family Scene' and is setting up its own website.

If you haven't seen the magazine, edited by Louise Sharland, make sure you get the next issue by calling 01752 789444.

At the end of March the Association says farewell and good luck to its Chairperson, Maxine James, who is coming to the end of her two year term.

Maxine's successor Lesley Smith will be appointed on April 1 and the Association says it is looking forward to working with her.

'Smile please, Mr President'

CPO(PHOT) Kev Preece was put on the other side of the camera for once when he was introduced to the President of the United States, George W. Bush. Mr Bush was paying a call on the Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, Gen William F. Kernan, at the NATO HQ in Norfolk Virginia, where Kev is SACLANT's Chief Photographer. Remarkably, this was said to be only the second visit there by a US President, the first being by President Eisenhower.

Double Dutch score is just mine blowing!

PORTSMOUTH-based HMS Cattistock has blown up a World War II mine caught in the nets of a Dutch fishing boat – only days after an almost identical operation with another Netherlands-based vessel.

The second big bang involved a mine caught by the beam trawler *Cornelius Jannetje* as the fishermen hauled in their nets for a routine inspection by HMS Cattistock – by chance a mine countermeasures vessel doing a 12-month stint of fishery protection duty!

The explosive catch was made in the North Sea some 35 miles off Great Yarmouth, an area extensively mined during the war. British mines were laid to protect the vital east coast convoys,

German ones to pick off merchant ships and their overworked Naval escorts.

Extensive minesweeping was carried out after the war, but a considerable number were not located.

HMS Cattistock's mine clearance team boarded the Dutch vessel, led by Lt Darren West. They discovered that the mine was a British S Mark 6, some 12ft long by 2ft wide and containing nearly half a ton of high explosive.

They countermined it with plastic explosive, lowered it carefully to the sea bed and set it off when the area was clear of shipping.

The earlier incident involved a smaller, badly corroded German mine caught in the nets of the *Martha Lena* – also about to undergo a fisheries inspection by HMS Cattistock about 40 miles off Lowestoft. This too was countermined and disposed of.



Gloucester grabs another headline

AN UNERRING knack of getting into the headlines has earned the Type 42 destroyer HMS Gloucester the Desmond Wetheron Trophy for the year 2000.

The trophy, initiated in memory of the distinguished maritime journalist by his widow Gillian, is presented each year to the ship or Naval air squadron that has done the most to promote the Service in a positive way.

The award takes the form of a decanter full of port and it was presented to the ship's CO, Cdr David Heley, at Portsmouth by C-in-C Fleet Admiral Sir Alan West – seen here with Gillian on board the ship.

There will be more chances for HMS Gloucester to remain in the headlines this year – in March she embarks on a seven-month deployment to the Far East where she will take part in exercises as far afield as Singapore and Brunel.

Orkney turns to Nelson

POST sale arrangements for the former HMS Orkney to the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard had a small team from Flag Officer Sea Training on board for four days at Devonport.

They were there to ensure the Island-class Offshore Patrol Vessel, renamed TTS Nelson, was properly equipped and prepared for the passage to her new home.

The ship will be the largest in the Coast Guard and it is expected that she will be used as a command platform for their smaller Fast Patrol Craft.

To assist in the handover and passage to Trinidad, via Lisbon, Las Palmas and Dakar, she was joined by CPOMEA(ML) Pete Slidell and POMEM(L) Dave Patience – both ex-HMS Orkney Ship's Company.

War wreck to be moved

A WORLD War II wreck which is the final resting place of 690 British soldiers and sailors is to be moved to protect the lives of present day mariners.

Destroyer HMS Wakeful was torpedoed off the coast of Belgium on May 29, 1940 after picking up hundreds of men from Bray Dunes during the evacuation of the British Expeditionary Force from Dunkirk.

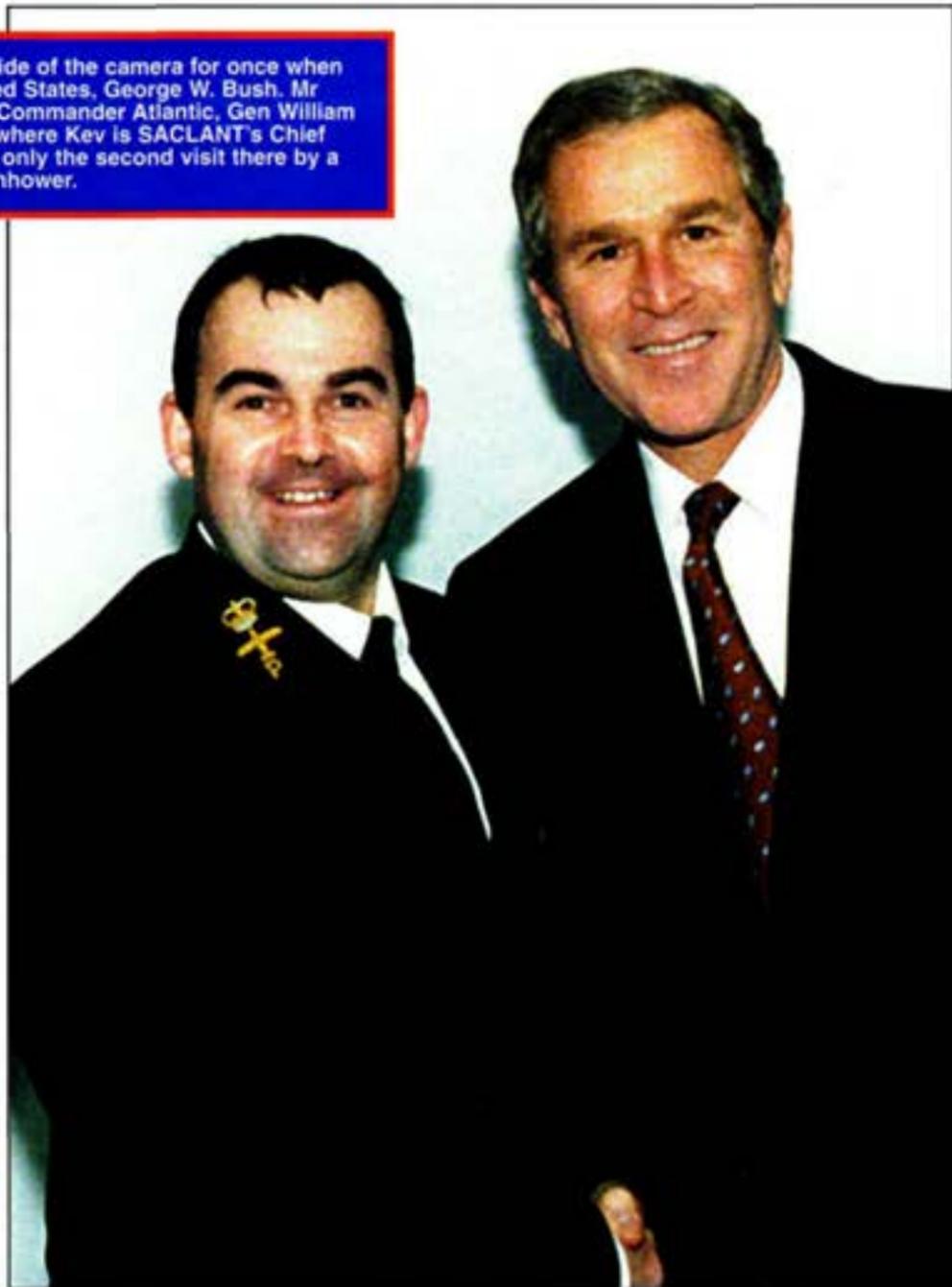
Increasing size of merchant ships means that the wreck, only 57ft below the surface, now poses a real danger.

The Belgian-funded operation will involve digging a deep trench before huge floating cranes are deployed to lift the two halves of the V&W-class destroyer into her final resting place.

MOD plans to consult the veterans organisations and will try to contact families of those known to have been on board so that a ser-

vice of rededication can be held.

● HMS Wakeful on her way to Dunkirk, May 28, 1940.



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Sea Cadets



Minesweeper driven to a new home

TS Dido have now got their own minesweeper – well, a pretend one anyway.

It's a float that for some years took part in the Cromer Carnival – where the branch of the Royal Naval Association offered it to any RNA or Sea Cadet unit prepared to collect it.

The Bolton unit jumped at the offer – and appealed in their local paper for help in transporting it from Norfolk.

James and Peter Wilkinson of the Salford firm of Austin Wilkinson and Sons Ltd – a member of Pallet Line plc – arranged to collect from Matthew Starling of Swafeld, North Walsham, who agreed to provide lifting gear to load the float onto the lorry.

David Roberts of Cromer towed the float to Swafeld from the Northrepps farm where Major Anthony Gurney has provided a berth for it for the past two years.

It will now be used to raise funds for TS Dido and local charities.



'Clubs' still on course at 82

STILL helping TS Aberconny cadets steer a true course is 82-year-old CPO William 'Clubs' Austin, seen here at the Deganwy unit awards evening with Cadet Debbie Ryan.

'NAVY LARK' IS A SIGNAL SUCCESS

BUCKNALL cadets staged a gang show to raise money for a much-needed new headquarters.

'A Navy Lark', starring 30 cadets, was featured at the Mitchell Memorial Theatre, Hanley.

The show revolved around an imaginary

TV Channel, 'Talent TV', and included sketches based on programmes such as *Star Trek* and *Bill and Ben*.

It raised £1,600 towards the £25,000 costs for new premises.

● **SIGNAL SUCCESS:** *having a bit of a lark are (left to right) Sarah Bagnell, Natalie Banks, Sarah Grocott and Jordan Griffiths.*

£25,000 boat 'rescued' for Derby

A SURPLUS to requirements £25,000 rescue boat has been acquired by TS Derby – by a former cadet who is now a pilot for a shipping company.

Capt John Temple was piloting the container ship *Atlantic Conveyer* at Liverpool when he spotted the boat on the deck.

It was originally provided when the ship was being built with the capability of being converted with a flight deck for the Ministry of Defence.

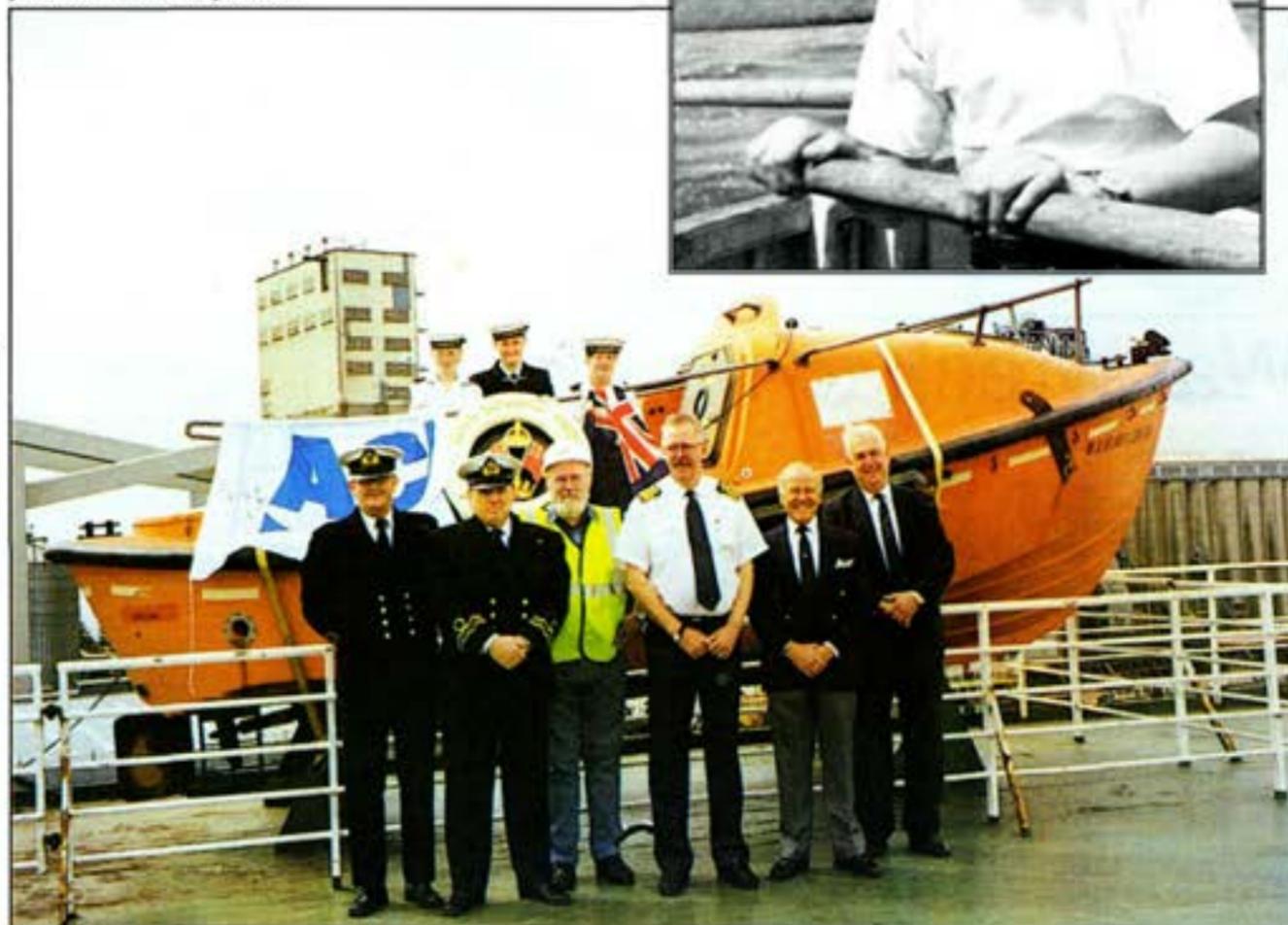
But the flight deck was never added and the ship came into service as a merchant ship. (The first *Atlantic Conveyer* was the only merchant ship sunk during the Falklands war, hence the planned building of her successor as a multi-purpose vessel).

Capt Temple wrote to the owners, Lennart Wikstrom ACL Gothenburg – who were delighted to hand the rescue boat over to the Cadets.

King George's Fund for Sailors acted as "honest brokers" for the handover of the 6.5 metre boat – renamed *Safety Boat Atlantic Conveyer*. It can carry up to 18 people

and has a top speed of eight knots. Lord Derby has agreed that it can be used by the Cadets on his lake on the Knowsley Estate

● **Capt Temple (right) with Derby unit cadets and the rescue boat on board *Atlantic Conveyer* and (inset) as a 16-year-old West Derby cadet.**



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Sea Cadets



THERE'S ROOM FOR ONE MORE ON TOP AS IT'S -

All aboard the SCC sub-bus!



THE SEA Cadets have hit on a novel idea to mark the centenary of the Silent Service – they've made a submarine out of a London bus!

Not a full working model, mind you – but the result is so atmospheric that during "sea trials" at Plymouth and in Trafalgar Square, wartime submariners who stepped aboard felt an eerie sense of déjà vu...

Heavily armed with the latest hi-tech boredom-busting virtual weaponry, the sub-bus is now taking to the road to give youngsters a taste of life beneath the waves.

The veteran 1960s Routemaster has been kitted out with a fully operational attack periscope plus sonars and hydroplanes together with computer-driven action stations console.

And the sub-bus experience

has visitors stalking enemy vessels and selecting targets with active and passive sonars, performing intricate manoeuvres as the "boat" closes in for the kill to fire the latest on-screen missiles and torpedoes.

"We wanted a mobile display unit to sell Sea Cadets and the Navy ethos to an increasingly discerning youth market," explained sub bus skipper Roger Busby – the SCC's head of public relations.

"And the romance of the Submarine Service with a hundred years of heritage to draw on is an ideal vehicle for inspiring the youth of today."

Former Royal Shakespeare Company chief stage designer Alastair Minnigin, whose company AGM One at Greenwich had worked on displays for the Dome, was commissioned to convert the classic Routemaster.

The Navy came up with hands-on simulators to add an authentic touch as the two decks were transformed into the submarine's action stations – complete with a replica Tigerfish torpedo.

The sub-bus has quickly proved to be a perfect showcase for the SCC – even attracting praise from the RN Submarine Museum at Gosport, which provided a gallery of images of submarines through the ages to complete the picture.

Now an ambitious road show programme, including Chatham Navy Days, the Bath and West Show and the International Festival of the Sea at Portsmouth, is set to celebrate the Submarine Service Centenary.

Talks are also being held with the National Maritime Museum with a view to taking part in its outreach programme of visits to schools and community venues.

"In rolling out our road show to the public we also hope to bring a little of the magic of the Silent Service to supermarkets and motorway service stations," said Roger.

"And the experts tell us all we need is one final touch of authenticity – the evocative aroma of hot diesel and boiled cabbage."



● SILENT RUNNING: the SCC sub-bus surfaces on Plymouth Hoe – with the control room open to visitors



● UP PERISCOPE: a would-be submariner closes in for the kill in the control room of the Sea Cadet Corps sub-bus.

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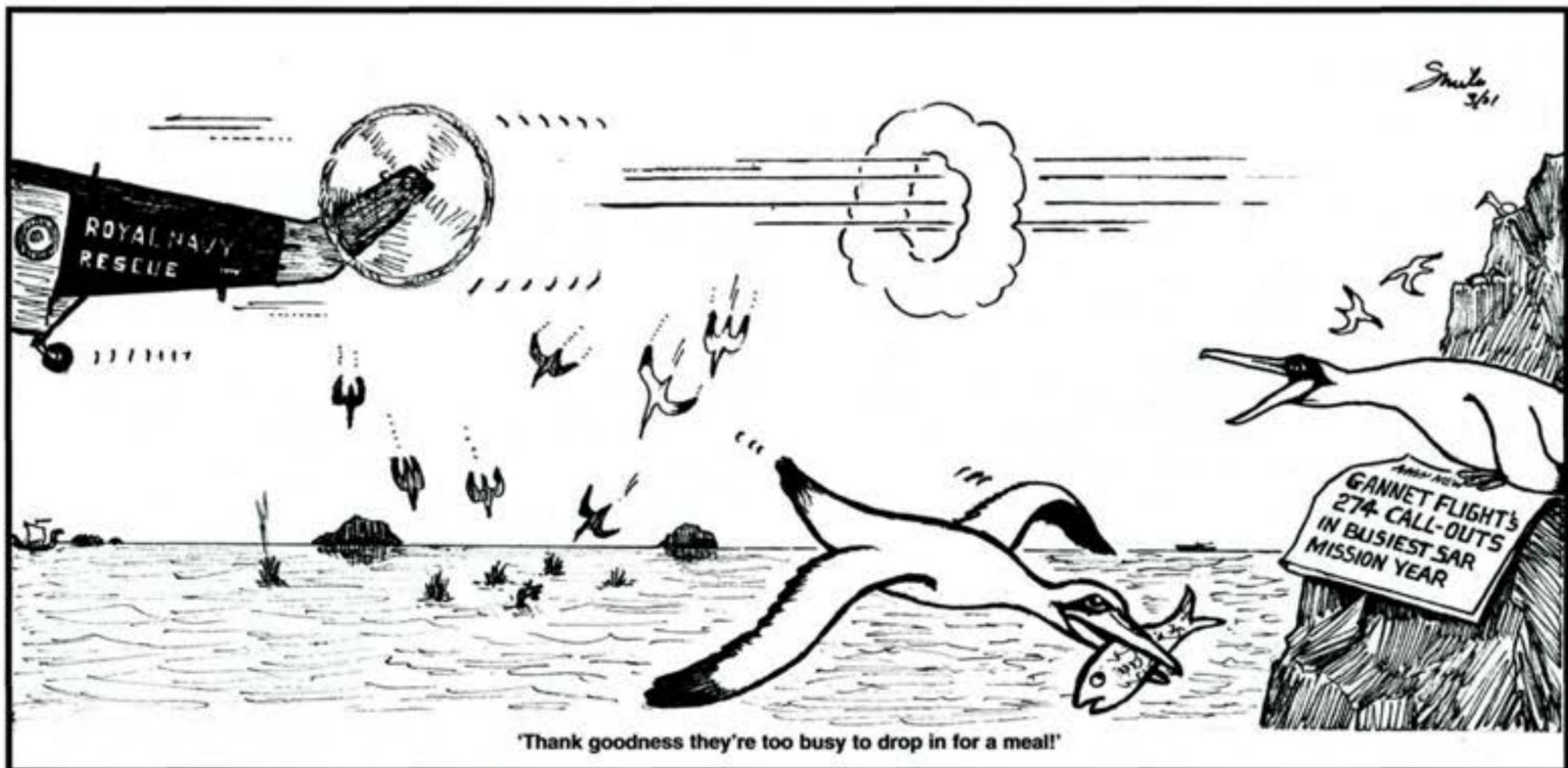
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NEWSVIEW

Future wars and present danger

AT THE Rededication of HMS Nottingham the C-in-C Fleet Admiral Sir Alan West noted that the Royal Navy currently had 50 ships employed in ten operations worldwide. "That's quite a thought in so-called peacetime," he said.

His remark came just a couple of days after the Ministry of Defence published a report on *The Future Strategic Context for Defence* – and underlined its unsettling assessment of a world in which the end of the Cold War has seen the spread, rather than containment of potential areas of conflict.

Although its authors admit at the start that accurately predicting the future course of military events is "a tricky business", many of its prophecies seem solidly based on processes and trends that are already in place – and in many cases well advanced.

They are not all political threats, either – global warming is seen as a prime cause of increased strain on military resources, with rising sea levels and an increased incidence of natural disasters leading to more and more demands for assistance while water and other resource scarcities may lead to tension and conflict.

Other causes for concern will come through the growth in sales of weapons by former Soviet states – Russia's sales of Kilo-class submarines to Iran, Algeria, India and China are cited. And through ever-more sophisticated international crime operations, particularly drug smuggling.

And who can deny the likelihood of continuing instability in such areas as the Balkans, the Middle East, Africa and South Asia?

Last month saw the arrest of over 350 anti-Trident demonstrators at Faslane. The end of the Cold War has led many to argue against our possession of an independent nuclear deterrent, yet the report says we can expect some states to continue to pursue programmes to develop nuclear, biological and chemical weapons – even in the face of international condemnation.

"The expansion of electronic communications and the Internet and continuing growth in the volume of international trade will make it increasingly difficult to contain the spread of relevant technology and know-how," it warns.

And while at present the UK remains out of range of missiles and aircraft from these states, well before 2030 it is likely that one or more of them will have ballistic missiles capable of reaching us.

While the decline in the number of submarines held by potential adversaries is likely to continue, modern, quiet submarines are becoming more widely available. It is felt that naval mine countermeasure warfare – a field in which the Royal Navy is recognised as a world leader – will become more and more important as naval forces move their operations into the littoral support of land operations.

The report also takes note of the fact that the character of future conflict will continue to present a physical and moral challenge to Service personnel as they face up to "extreme danger, rapidly changing circumstances in conditions of chaos and uncertainty, and severe physical and mental demands."

There is no sign that these pressures are likely to diminish, it concludes. While there continues to be no direct military threat to the UK itself, on the periphery of Europe – and in the Balkans – there are instabilities and tensions which are likely to remain potential sources of problems for European security.

As an argument for the maintenance of top quality, well-balanced Armed Forces – both in terms of materiel and personnel – this document can hardly be bettered. And if much of it comes down to sheer common sense, that's no criticism.

1901



2001

● A specially commissioned Submarine Centenary Flotilla Pennant can be flown from the bridge ensign staff of all RN submarines to mark this special year. The pennant, designed by Capt Malcolm Farrow, features the RN submarine badge on a white background with black bars above and below, with the centenary dates in yellow.

Astute starts taking shape

IN A ceremony which looked to the future and to the past, a Government minister officially laid the keel for the Navy's next attack submarine and launched the centenary celebrations of the Silent Service.

In the huge Devonshire Dock Hall of BAE Systems Marine at Barrow-in-Furness, Baroness Symons, the Defence Procurement Minister, said that submarine designers had always used the most advanced techniques of the day to build their vessels, and what was true 100 years ago was still the case today.

"HMS Astute will be one of the most capable boats of its type in the world," she said.

"The ceremony took place close to the spot where the Navy's first submarine, Holland 1, was built 100 years ago, forging a link between the shipyard and the Silent Service which is still as strong today.

The three-boat Astute-class contract, worth around £2 billion,

sees BAE Systems Astute Class Ltd as the prime contractor, responsible for design, build and initial in-service support of the submarines.

Baroness Symons confirmed that the Government is now considering a second batch of three boats, rather than two, but a final decision would not be taken until 2002.

The ceremony, watched by hundreds of BAE Systems employees as well as company and Royal Navy VIPs, took place beside a huge drum-shaped slice of the Astute's hull, which will form part of the reactor compartment – the vessel is to be built in prefabricated modules.

Although based on the Trafalgar-class, it became apparent to designers that the old philosophy of designing a submarine as small as possible to improve performance no longer made sense.

So in order to accommodate the Rolls-Royce PWR2 pressurised water nuclear reactor which will power it, and to make access easier and allow a modular build, Astute and her sisters Ambush and Artful

weigh in at 7,500 tonnes submerged, around a third as large again as the T-boats.

However, the new submarines will be built 20 per cent faster than their predecessors, and their through-life costs will be ten per cent cheaper.

Astute boats will have 50 per cent more firepower than T-boats – there are six torpedo tubes instead of five, and the submarines can carry a mix of up to 38 weapons, including Spearfish or Tigerfish torpedoes and Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles.

In addition, the Astute-class will feature non-hull penetrating optronic periscopes, and the reactor core – Core H – is designed to last the full 25-30-year lifespan of the submarine, which will cut out costly and time-consuming refuelling.

The build programme for Astute is "still on schedule and within budget" according to BAE Astute managing director Kevin Taylor, which means she should be launched in 2004 and enter service the following year.

Said Flag Officer Submarines Rear Admiral Rob Stevens: "This is a really historic occasion, when Astute really begins to take shape."

X-craft VC at keel laying of new boat

TWO illustrious wartime submariners – one a holder of the Victoria Cross – were guests at the keel-laying ceremony for HMS Astute.

Vice Admiral Sir Arthur Hezlet was commander of HMS Trenchant, which sank the Japanese cruiser Asigara with a precise salvo of torpedoes in the Far East, while Lt Cdr Ian Fraser took his midget submarine into the heart of Japanese-occupied Singapore and, with great difficulty, had charges placed beneath the Japanese cruiser Takao.

His diver, James Magennis, also won the VC in the action.

Lt Cdr Fraser acknowledged the gulf between the days of his boat, XE-3, and the Trident submarines of today, both built at Barrow.

"The X-craft was built here in 1942, it was 53ft long and about 27 tons," he said.

"I have been to sea in a Vanguard-class boat, and there was no sensation of movement. The people are different, too – the lads who operate these submarines are so educated."

The centenary celebrations continue with events in Barrow over the Spring Bank Holiday (May 4-7) and the Holland 1 exhibition at the RN Museum in Gosport, featuring the preserved boat, is scheduled to open on May 12.

The focus moves to the Clyde when Faslane hosts events between May 28 and June 5, Devonport has its day on July 7, and Portsmouth chimes in with the International Festival of the Sea on August 24-27.

The Corporation of London hosts a celebratory luncheon on September 17 and the Submarine Association holds a reunion at Fort Blockhouse, formerly HMS Dolphin, on October 5-7.

A centenary thanksgiving service is to be held at Westminster Abbey on November 2.

□ HMS Vengeance in service – see back page.



● An artist's impression of the new Astute-class submarine, now in build at Barrow-in-Furness

Navy rescue cell is busiest in UK

THE ROYAL Navy's Search and Rescue (SAR) helicopter flight of 819 Naval Air Squadron has been named the busiest in the country during 2000.

Based at RN air station HMS Gannet, adjacent to Prestwick Airport on the west coast of Scotland, the squadron operates across south and west Scotland, north-west England and out into the North Atlantic, 200 miles west of Ireland.

The SAR flight received 274 call-outs last year, including the rescue of injured or stranded walkers and climbers from mountains, winching injured or ill seamen from ships at sea, and transferring seriously-ill patients from the Hebrides to specialist care units in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

John Spellar, Minister for the Armed Forces, said: "There are many people both here and abroad who owe their lives to the men and women of 819 Royal Naval Air Squadron, and I congratulate them for their dedication and professionalism."

The unit has two dedicated rescue helicopters, manned by four crews, who are available to help round the clock in all weathers.

The teams train continuously with the Coastguard, mountain rescue teams and other emergency services - last year also saw 819 participate in the largest train crash exercise north of the border.

There are 12 search and rescue flights around the country.

Two are operated by the Royal Navy - 819 and 771, at RN air station Cudrose in Cornwall - six are RAF, and four Coastguard.

The SAR cell of 819 NAS consists of two dedicated Mk 5 Sea King helicopters, flown by four air crews of four, with a member of the medical staff accompanying



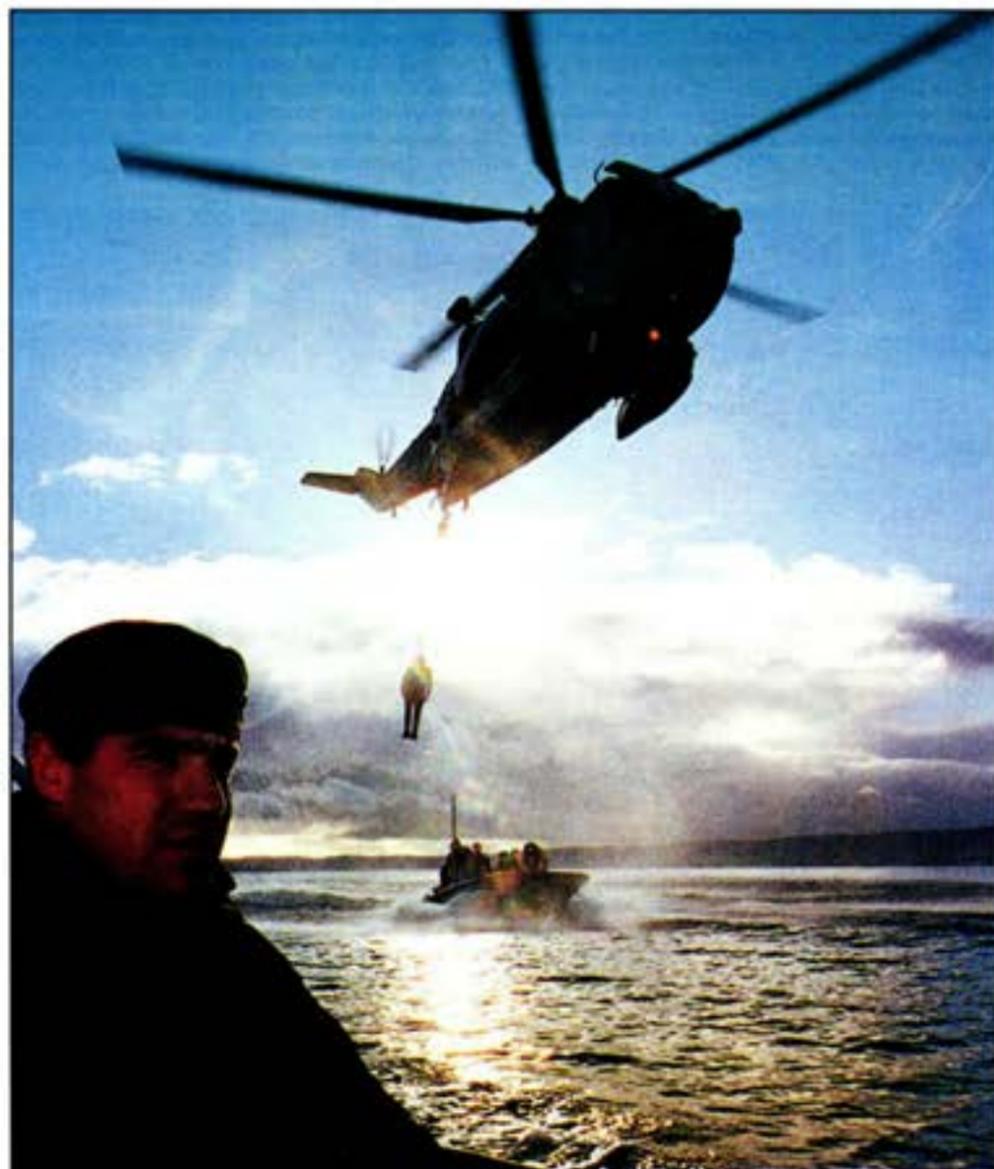
each mission.

The squadron engineering team supports both the SAR cell and the anti-submarine warfare (ASW) aircraft which are operated by the squadron.

The ASW element of 819 NAS will be relocating to HMS Seahawk at Cudrose in the coming year, but the SAR cell will remain at HMS Gannet.

● Aircraft of 819 Naval Air Squadron Search and Rescue (SAR) Cell operating over mountains of the Highlands of Scotland and at sea with amphibious forces, practising winching techniques.

Pictures: LA(PHOT) Rattler Morgan (HMS Gannet)



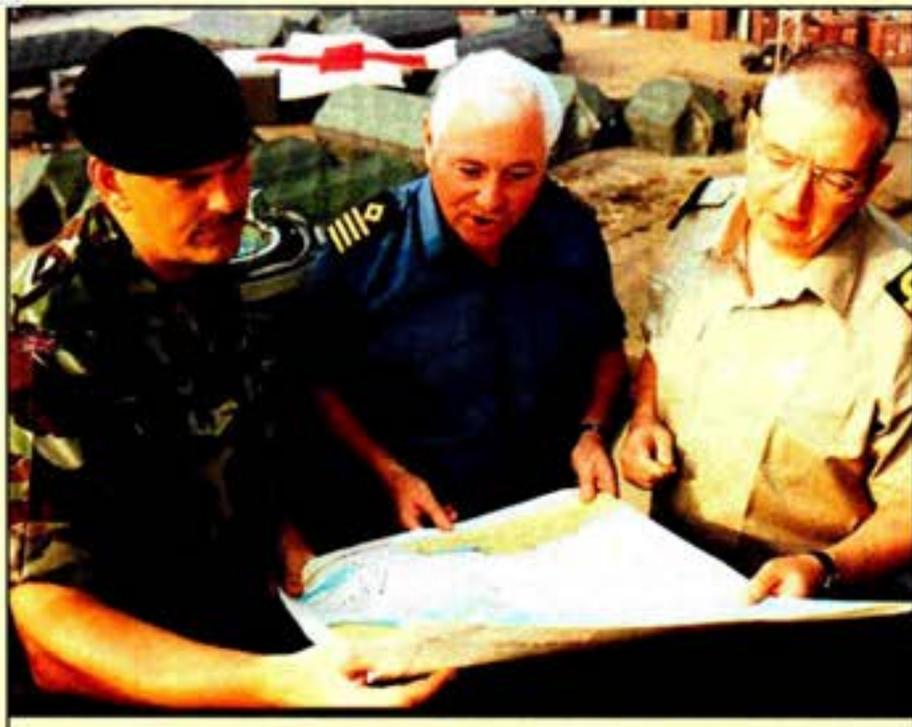
LIBERTY & LIVELIHOOD

MARCH IN LONDON Sunday 18th March 2001

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Countryside Alliance



● **IN CHARGE:** Capt Alan Roach, Commanding Officer of RFA Sir Percivale, with Senior Clinician Surg Cdr Phil Barker (right) and Army Captain Steve Hall, OIC 34 Field Hospital.



● **SAILING:** Local fishermen sailing past RFA Sir Percivale in Freetown Harbour. The port was closed when the ship first arrived but it is now getting increasingly busy.



● **GUARD:** A Royal Marine of 539 Assault Squadron patrols the harbour. Sir Percivale is in the background.

Sir Percy back to life

HOME for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Sir Percivale is usually Marchwood Military Dock, Southampton but for the last nine months the landing ship has been operating in one of the most and more exotic climes at Freetown, Sierra Leone.

The ship's job is to support British Forces based ashore and she provides secure, air-conditioned accommodation, stores, rest and recreation facilities for the troops.

Sir Percivale's presence in Freetown has also become a symbol of security for the increasing number of merchant ships which are calling there. The tense situation which prevailed when the ship first arrived has relaxed and much reconstruction work is under way in and around the port.

Speaking from the bridge wing of RFA Sir Percivale, the ship's Commanding Officer, Capt Alan Roach, said: "With room to accommodate and feed up to 300 troops, cranes to load stores, the ability to operate Mexiflotes and landing craft, this ship is ideally suited to the task of logistical support in Freetown. As long as British Forces remain here in considerable numbers, the role of the ship is crucial."

With brightly-painted fishing vessels sailing by, bulldozers levelling another area for container stowage and ship's berthed astern unloading cargoes, Capt Roach described the changing situation.

"When the ship first arrived the port was closed. Now the situation is much improved and the port is bustling - container ships arriving all the time, extensive rebuilding of the port infrastructure. The British presence, including RFA Sir Percivale, has brought much confidence to the area."

The 50-man crew of Sir Percivale are all civilian personnel of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, but a small detachment of Royal Marines of 539 Assault Squadron, from Turnchapel, Plymouth, are based on board to crew the landing craft.

They are well-versed in the ways of the RFA as they spent much of last year based in RFA Fort Victoria during her round-the-world deployment with Naval Task Group 2000.

Also attached to the ship are soldiers of 17 Port and Maritime Regiment from Marchwood who operate the Mexiflote - a large self-powered raft which is used to transport military vehicles and equipment from Lungi airport to Freetown, a 45-minute voyage.

The ship can cope with an embarked force of more than 300 Service personnel and their vehicles, providing accommodation, food and laundry facilities. Much of the support for British Forces ashore,

Report and pictures from Paul F... and Mark Hipkin in Sierra Le...

including stores and victuals, is centred on Sir Percivale and she is pivotal in the overall effort of British efforts to support the Sierra Leone Government and bring stability to this much troubled country.

In February RFA Sir Percivale took on yet another role - supporting a mobile hospital (reminiscent of MASH) which was erected on the jetty adjacent to the ship in just four days, by thirty men and women of the Army's 34 Field Hospital Troop.

The Senior Clinician for the Hospital is the Navy's Surg Cdr Phil Barker, who is normally based at the Royal Hospital, Haslar, Gosport, and has a team of military specialists ready to undertake sophisticated medical operations should the need arise.

Surg Cdr Barker said: "With just under 1,000 patients in theatre it is important that we provide a high quality facility here. There are good reasons to support the port, not the least being that RFA Sir Percivale provides us with comfortable accommodation, a good, level area, well-situated.

We have five doctors, two consultants, two anaesthetists and a physician, five RGNs, a total staff of just over 30. We have a very sophisticated unit and we can provide the same level of care as any hospital in the UK. We have a fully-equipped operating theatre and an intensive care unit."

Life for the ship's company of RFA Sir Percivale is now inevitably a very busy one, but, when the opportunity arises, there are opportunities for the crew to go ashore to the beach for relaxation.

The most popular one, Lumley Beach, is a 15-minute drive away, but most of this time is spent in the frantic traffic chaos that exists in the streets of central Freetown.



● **WELCOME:** Children at Cape Community School sing a welcome song for RFA sailors.

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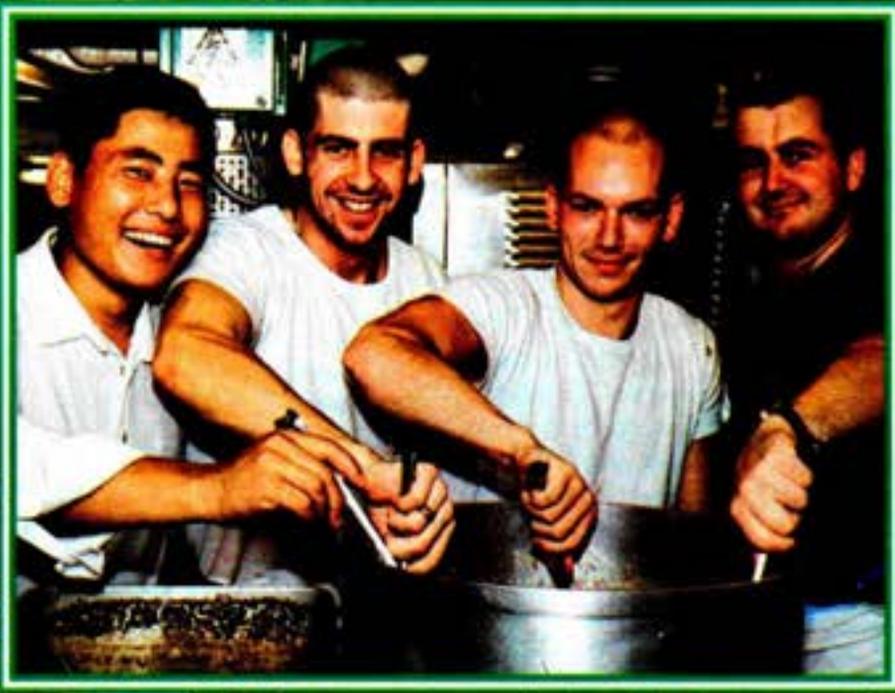


Although most areas of Freetown are still out of bounds for British personnel, the district immediately outside the port has a few local bars, notably one called 'The Canteen', which are on-limits and which provide an occasional change to life on board. The rule is still, though, only to go ashore in groups.

Other opportunities to strike up relationships with local organisations have come through charity work at Cape Community School, where the RFA's crew has been carrying out building and maintenance, and the school has been regularly helped out by sailors from other Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships when they have visited Freetown.

Another charity school, run by the British EducAid organisation, also has a good liaison with the ship.

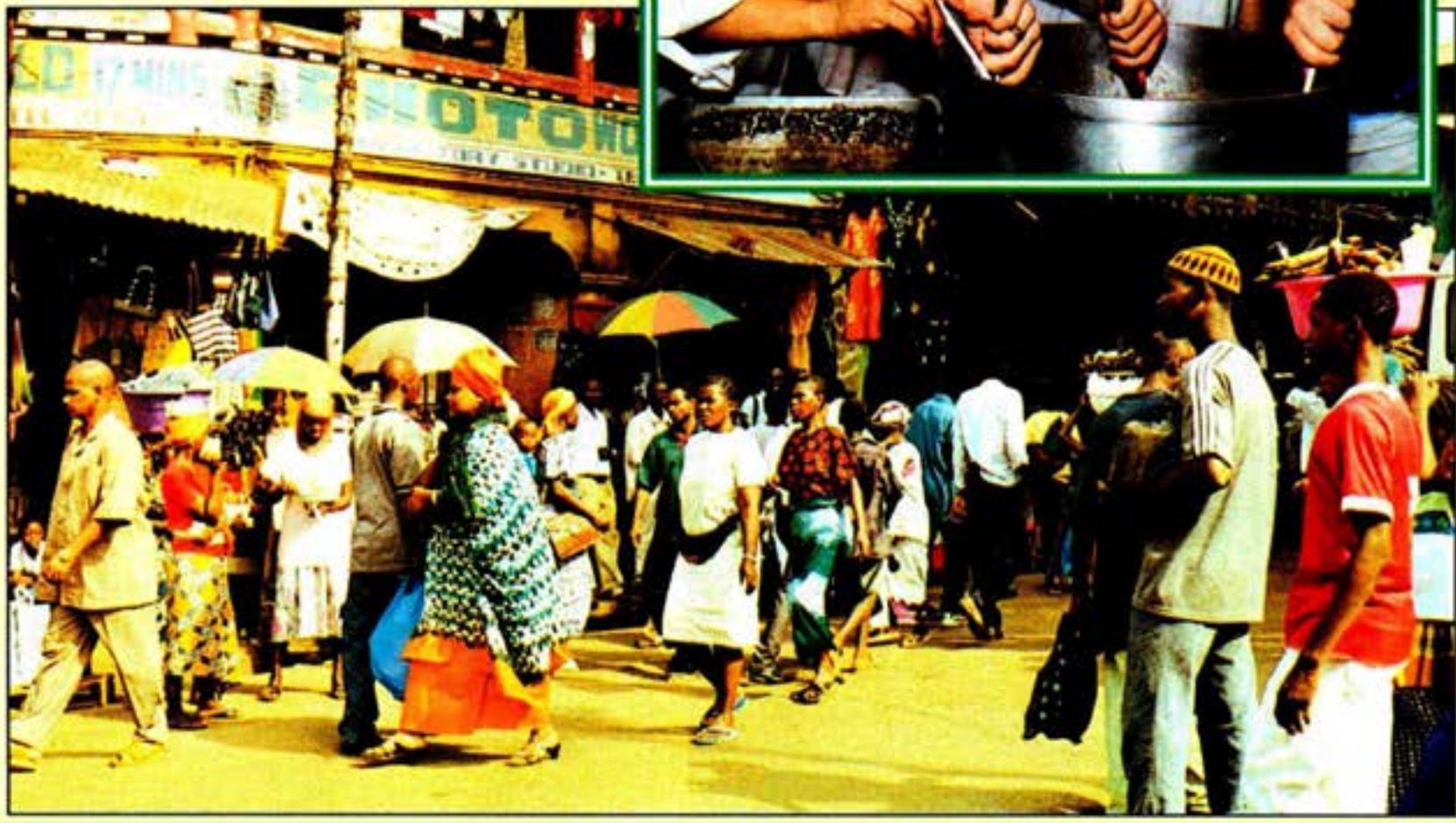
- **MASH:** The Army Field Hospital which has been erected alongside RFA Sir Percivale (above).
- **TOO MANY COOKS?** Not when you've got more than 300 people on board who all need feeding!
- **BACK TO LIFE:** The bustling streets of Freetown in Sierra Leone, (below) where British Forces are helping to bring stability after years of fighting between the Government and rebels.



ND MECH



revor Hall and Dave Smith.





The GANG PLANK Club



Cap'n Plank Says



Up Anchor me hearties. It be time for me and me crew to get on the high seas again.

Everything be ship shape. But, Arrh! Where are we going this year, can ye guess? I be thinking that we should be sailing around this 'ere Great Britain. So watch out for me galleon in a port near ye!

And listen, good landlubbers' do ye want to be in me Press Gang? Well, then, I be looking forward to reading them there reports!



We're looking for three lucky Navy News Young Readers to join our very special PRESS GANG.

Throughout the year the Press Gang will be asked to report on special events for the Gang Plank pages. Your reports will appear in print with your name on

Date for your diary...Don't forget!

It's Mother's Day on 25 March!

Mums always prefer something you've made yourself so get cracking now! Cards are easy to make and can be decorated in lots of different ways.

them in one of our special supplements!

Want to be one of our Press Gang?

Just write Captain Plank a report about one of your favourite subjects. Your report must be no longer than 200 words. Write your name and address on the back of the paper and send it to The Press Gang

You make little boxes, decorate them and fill them with sweets or chocolates.

Bunches of flowers are nice but they don't last that long so why not plant some bulbs in a bowl now? Your Mum can watch them grow! You

at the Gang Plank club. Your report must reach us by 20th March. Press Gang members must be under 14.

A special panel of judges, including our very own Navy News Editor will judge your reports. Three lucky winners will be chosen and we will give them their very first Press assignments!!

could even grow some useful herbs for her to have in the kitchen.



STOP PRESS!

"Pupstars" chosen Technocat has really enjoyed watching "Popstars".

Well, he's just received news that these five cuddly "Pup" toys have been chosen as "Pupstars" for The Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. If you want to find out more about the tough judging, the tears and the joy, then log on to www.pupsclub.org.uk.



The Pup Stars (top left to bottom right) Penny, Peds, Prince, Paddy, Pippa

Watch out for Action Stations!

What costs £14 million pounds, lives in Portsmouth and is about to bring the Royal Navy alive for everyone? It's ACTION STATIONS - the new attraction in

Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard! It's going to be amazing! We'll be bringing you more news but if you want to be one of the first people through the doors put this date in your diary - May 26

THE MESS DECK

Wow, the crew all say a big Thank You for all your great letters this month! Megan Cox, we loved your drawing of Captain Plank and Fidget, his parrot! Samantha Tattam, you write a wicked story - watch out for our Easter Supplement! Thomas and Chloe - glad you liked the Boat Show, Jack just loved the big yachts! We're pleased that James Harding liked Legoland, we think he's got brill handwriting!!! James Clarke is nuts on Submarines, he's going to be very happy this year with all the 100 years celebrations!

That reminds us - has anyone else got any subjects they're really mad about? LET THE GANG KNOW!!

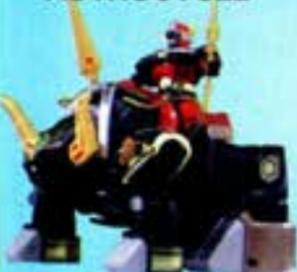
www.navynews.co.uk/gangplank



WIN!



ASTROCYCLE



TORO ZORD

BAN DAI

CLEYC OSRAT
RDOROTOZ
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TSEBYT
CKREOL

For a chance to win one of these COOL Bandai Toys... Unscramble the words in the square. Each one is a toy pictured here!

Send your name, address and answers on a postcard to:-

'The GangPlank Club'

Navy News - HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH

Closing date for entries - 31st March 2001

The editors decision is final - relatives & employees of navy news are ineligible.

WIN!



MEGA ZORD



BETTY'S LOCKER

WARNER HOME VIDEOS TO WIN!

Warner Home Videos release the first two volumes of the Pokémon TV series. 'I Choose You! Pikachu!' and 'The Mystery of Mount Moon'. On general release from 12th Feb 2001, Price £9.99



To win one of these videos send us your name, age & address on a postcard marked 'Pokémon' to:

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Closing Date For Entries: 31st March 2001

The GANG PLANK Club

Please enroll me as a member of The Gang Plank Club. I enclose a PO/cheque (payable to Navy News) for: £4.25 1 year UK - £7.50 2 year UK (saving £1)

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Joined by: Parent Grandparent Other
Do you have any Brothers Sisters Ages
Special Interests: Sport Music Film/TV
Friends Reading

Join the Gang Plank Club and receive a fabulous Goody Bag! Send your completed form, together with a postal order/cheque for £4.25 or £7.50 to: 'The Gang Plank Club' Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH call 023 9273 3556 or 023 9282 6040 (24 hr Answerphone) We will also accept payment by:- Visa, Delta, Access, Mastercard or Switch on orders of £5.00 or over

May 24, 1941: at the maximum range of their radar contact, the cruisers Norfolk and Suffolk nervously shadow the Bismarck through the night.....

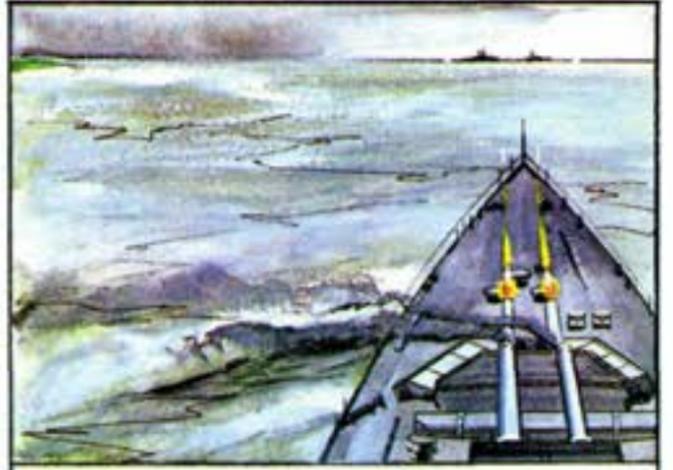
THE BISMARCK



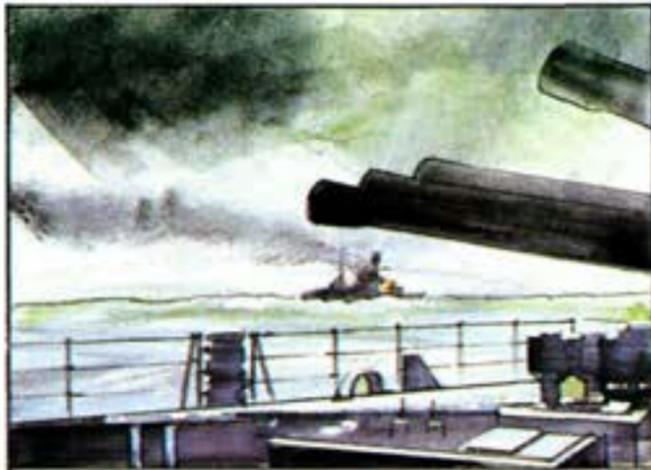
THE BRITISH SHIPS ARE FEARFUL THAT LUTJENS, KNOWING HE IS BEING FOLLOWED, MIGHT SUDDENLY TURN BACK AND DESTROY THEM.



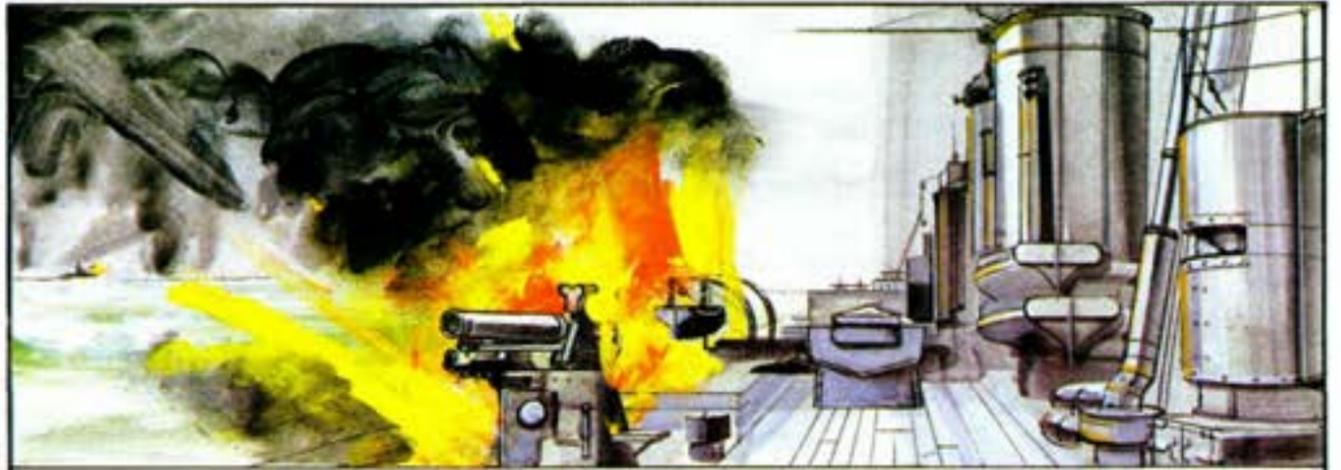
0545: ADMIRAL HOLLAND IN THE HOOD - HAVING WISELY KEPT RADIO SILENCE - SIGHTS BISMARCK AND PRINZ EUGEN OFF HIS STARBOARD BOW - AND AT ONCE HEADS TOWARDS THEM WITH THE PRINCE OF WALES.



0552: AT A RANGE OF 14 MILES, ALL SHIPS OPEN FIRE.



THREE MINUTES LATER, HOLLAND SIGNALS PRINCE OF WALES FOR A TURN TO PORT TO ALLOW FULL BROADSIDES AT THE ENEMY.



BUT THEN SALVOS FROM BISMARCK PENETRATE HOOD'S ARMOUR AND REACH A MAGAZINE BELOW ONE OF THE MAIN TURRETS - PACKED WITH 100 TONS OF AMMUNITION...

🎉 Birthday Congratulations! 🎉

- | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|
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| Lizzi Armitage | Piers Elliot-Saunders | Lauren Mundy |
| Jack Arnold | Jamie Elton | Lydia Mundy |
| Reece Bailey | Sean Elvidge | Imogen Napper |
| Kelly Barber | Andrew Ferguson | Hayley Oflay |
| Kieran Barber | James Ford | Martha Oswald |
| Katie Barker | Daniel Game | Seth Oswald |
| Katie Barnett | William Geat | Keith Oxborough |
| Lewis Barrett | Aaron Gladding | Ben Packham |
| Jonathan Bathard | Sophie Green | Lisa Padmore |
| Heather Bell | Kimberley Griffin | Alan Paterson |
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| Jonathan Borias | Christopher Haskins | Robert Plater |
| Sophie Bradshaw | Alexander Hutton | Johannsson Pye |
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| Lesley Brodie | Jessica Hughes | Thibaut Rawlings |
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| Michael Brown | Sophie Jackson | Alicia Rogers |
| Stephanie Brown | Michael Jeffries | Kirsty Rogers |
| Robert Browne | Alex Jones | Adam Rolfs |
| Lee Buckley | William Jones | Gregah Roughhead |
| Mark Bull | Alex Jones-Hackie | Rhys Scourfield |
| Codie Burchell | Alex Jowle | Adam Sindre |
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| Jordan Burnham | Yasmine Kent | Carmel Squibb |
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| Martin Calder | Martin Kerrigan | Charlotte Stevens |
| Joseph Campbell | Alisha Kilic | Keith Stevens |
| Oliver Chadwick | Thomas Ladyman | Adam Stirton |
| James Chippendale | Adam Langley | Matthew Swann |
| Scott Clewes | Richard Le Lorr | Natalie Tatum |
| Freddie Collins | Reece Leonard | Benjamin Taylor |
| Stephanie Cooper | Bethany Lever | Isobel Taylor |
| Will Cooper | Adam Lewis | Amy Thackeray |
| Jade Cope | Leo Licheri-Hood | James Ware |
| Alice Coulton | Charlie Locke | Matthew Wathan |
| Rebecca Courtney | Kieran Loveday | Cherie Weir |
| Daniel Crockett | Craig Lake | Andrew Wells |
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| Fiona Deane | William Marshall | Emma Whiteley |
| Marlie Denny | Thomas Martin | Louise Williams |
| Samantha Drain | James McArdie | Claire Wood |
| William Duell | Caitlin McKechnie | Keiron Wood |
| Matthew East | Stephanie Mills | Sean Woodcraft |
| | Joel Mitton | Benjamin Youngs |

ARE YOU A BIG ANIMAL LOVER?

DO YOU CARE ABOUT WILD ANIMALS?
WELL, MIND YOUR RUBBISH!



Susie and Jack are really worried!

They've found out that we human beings are not being careful about how we get rid of our rubbish and that's a real problem for animals.

Susie went to see the RSPCA and found out what we can all do to stop harming animals with our rubbish.

Plastic bags - can blow away, or trap and suffocate animals which climb inside. They may even be mistaken for

food. Tying a knot in plastic bags before you throw them out can stop them blowing about. Or better still - re-use them!

Yoghurt pots - animals can get their heads stuck inside. Take the lids off completely and scrunch them up.

Plastic drinks can holders - animals can easily get tangled up or strangled. Cut the loops holding the binding together before you throw them out.

Glass - can cause serious injuries to both animals and people. It should never be left lying around. Glass bottles can be recycled.

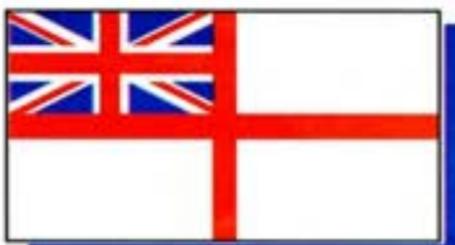
Rubber bands - can trap and entangle animals. Snip them up before you

put them in the bin.

Supermarket trolleys - believe it or not farm animals and wildlife have been found stuck in them and badly injured. Please make sure that you take them back.

Balloon releases - don't take part in them. Balloons can end up in fields or the sea where animals can mistake them for food. Floating balloons look just like tasty jellyfish to sea birds and turtles. Before throwing out used balloons, snip them up into tiny pieces.

Cans - can cut and trap animals. If you can't take your cans for recycling, remove the lid, drop it to the bottom of the can and pinch the top shut.



The White Ensign Association

Telephone: 0207 407 8658

Web: www.whiteensign.co.uk

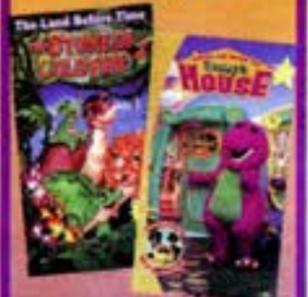
Your Naval Charity providing free, friendly, unbiased help on finance, personal matters and employment

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VIDEOS TO WIN!



Out on general release
'Come On Over To Barney's House'
'The Land Before Time'



To win one of these COOL videos, send your name, age and address on a postcard to: 'Barney' or 'Land Before Time' videos, The GangPlank Club, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Closing Date: 31st March 2001



Race against time to save D-Day survivor

ONE OF the last surviving war vessels that took part in D-Day may be broken up unless a permanent home can be found for her, writes Anton Hanney.

The 97ft-long Yarmouth Navigator, with a career spanning almost half a century in Ministry of Defence service, could be lost to the nation

unless a campaign to save her succeeds.

Built as HM Motor Fishing Vessel 1502 - MFV 1502 - the Yarmouth Navigator, as she subsequently became known, is the last of a class of naval maids-of-all-work still in MOD condition. During World War II they were numbered in their many hundreds.

Over the past ten years the vessel has been in the care of Lt Cdr John McGuire RNR (ret'd) at a berth in Plymouth. But now her

home is being redeveloped and the Navigator cannot stay.

"Unless we find a new home for her - at least temporarily - in the next few weeks she is going to be lost," said Dave Fricker. He and Rob Kennedy - his colleague in the Chart Maintenance Unit in Portsmouth Naval Base - are members of the Small Craft Group which is dedicated to building up a comprehensive history of the MOD's small vessels from the 1930s onwards.

They see the Yarmouth Navigator as a living and irreplaceable element of that history. She took part in the 1994 D-Day anniversary Fleet review and last year was listed - along with the Warrior and HMS Victory - by the National Historic Ships Committee.

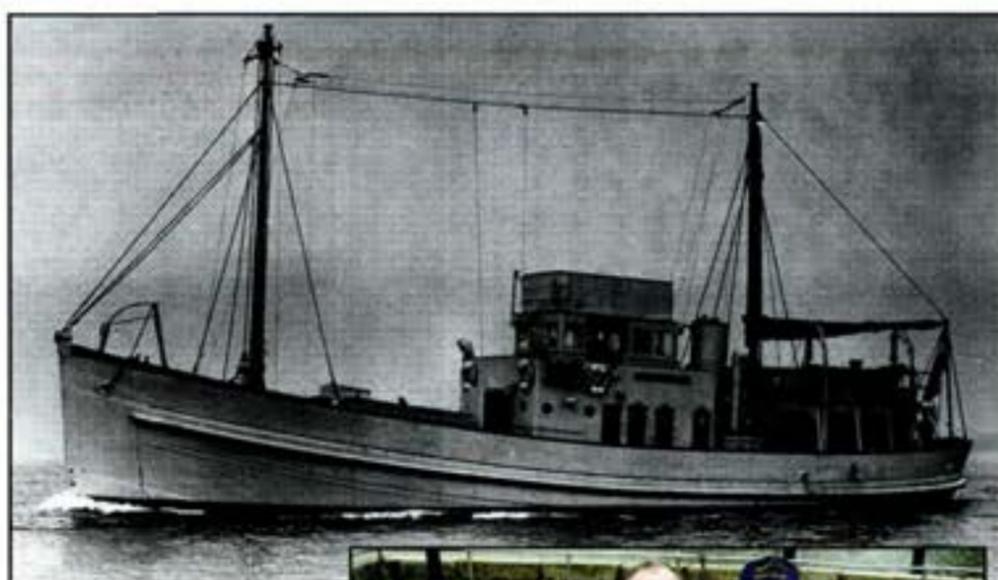
Dave said: "So far we have received several offers and we are in the early stages of negotiation with interested parties. One of the possible sites may be her old home at Gunwharf in Portsmouth.

"However, she is in need of a refit and we are seeking financial help in the form of sponsorship to be able to achieve that."

The Navigator had a remarkable



Yarmouth Navigator in her final MOD configuration pictured departing her Portsmouth base.



MFV 1502, alias the Yarmouth Navigator, showing her original masts. RIGHT: some of the ship enthusiasts who are trying to save her. Dave Fricker is on the right with (from left) Willie Aitchison, Colin Murphy, Trevor Pearce and Dave's father, Maurice. They are holding the ensign of the War Department and the badge of the RASC, both of which the Navigator wore.



Picture: The News, Portsmouth

career. Built in 1943, she served successively with the Royal Navy, Royal Army Service Corps, Royal Corps of Transport and the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service.

She is one of the very few survivors of the 1953 Fleet Review at Spithead - and over the years took part in another three. When she was finally retired in 1991 she was the oldest sea-going vessel in MOD service.

Built at Lowestoft, she is, says Mr Fricker, the last '90-footer' MFV still in her final MOD appearance. "It would be a tragedy if she was now lost to the nation," he said.

During the war she was based at HMS Vernon in Portsmouth and was the last MOD vessel in service designed to go to war with auxiliary canvas sails. For many years after the war she was based at Yarmouth in the Isle of Wight where she acquired her name.

In 1962 she took part in the final sail-past from Yarmouth to mark the closure of the 300-year-old garrison there.

She was then based at the Gunwharf site in Portsmouth until her retirement. After 1991 Lt Cdr McGuire ensured that she saw several more years service in a Sea Cadet training role in the West Country.

Recently an independent volunteer trust was conceived to save the Navigator, but the lack of a local

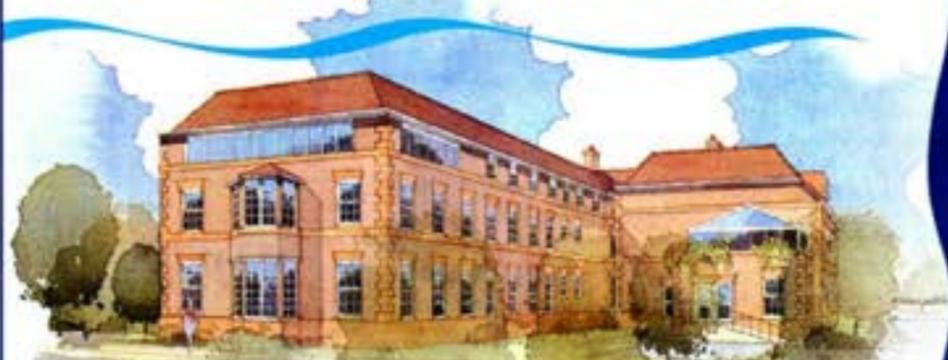
berth and other support "totally thwarted all its efforts", said Mr Fricker.

"Of the Portsmouth locations available, Gunwharf would be the obvious choice, with her links going back there to the 1940s," he said. He and Mr Kennedy are also exploring the possibility of trying to obtain a berth at Lowestoft, the MFV's birthplace and headquarter-

ters of the RN Patrol Service Association made up of former Navy personnel, many of whom manned the Navigator and vessels like her.

Anyone interested in helping should contact Mr Fricker on 023 92 722715. He would also like to get in touch with anyone who served in her or has wartime photographs of her.

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Veteran's epic journey

AFTER AN epic 4,350-mile voyage in a rusting, World War II tank landing ship, a crew of US Naval veterans in their 60s and 70s arrived in the USA as part of their plan to turn the vessel into a museum.

The veterans found the dilapidated LST 325 in Greece, and with the help of 150 US sailors based there they had her repaired sufficiently to make the journey, BP providing the fuel she needed.

But while still in the Mediterranean, the LST developed engine trouble and, ignoring coast-

guard advice to abandon the venture, the 29 veterans stayed on board and spent two weeks in Gibraltar for repairs - with the help of the authorities there.

They left The Rock on December 12 for the Atlantic crossing. Continuing mechanical problems forced them to steer the vessel manually for the transatlantic trip which took four weeks, a journey made more uncomfortable by faulty lavatories and a plague of cockroaches.

Finally, against the odds, LST 325 arrived safely at Mobile, Alabama on January 10.



OUR JANUARY winner is K. Ryall of Sidmouth, Devon, for identification of three ships of the Inshore Surveying Squadron - Egeria Echo and Enterprise (entering Lowestoft for the eighth reunion of the RN Patrol Service Association in 1983).

K. Ryall, whose answer was drawn at random, wins £30. The two names - and two flags - under which this month's ship served are required for another £30.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3PH. Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is April 15. More than one entry can be submitted, but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our May edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

PICTURE PUZZLE

MYSTERY PICTURE 73

Name

Address

My answer



RNA backing grows for action over sea grave plunderers

GOVERNMENT action to protect Naval sea graves from divers bent on pleasure or profit has been called for by the South West Area of the Royal Naval Association.

Members of the Association's No 4 Area, stretching from Bristol and Bournemouth to Lands End, gave unanimous support to a motion at their Area meeting calling on the Government to invoke the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 in its entirety and as a priority.

The proposal came from Newton Abbot branch chairman Shipmate John Kiff who said all Naval war graves, including sunken vessels and aircraft, should be designated as Controlled Sites under the Act with a 100-metre exclusion zone for 100 years from the time of loss.

Shipmate Kiff's motion at the Torquay meeting was seconded by Wells (Somerset) branch and will now go forward to the RNA's National Council. It will almost certainly be considered at the RNA's annual conference at Clacton in June.

After the meeting, Shipmate Kiff, a retired CPO diver said: "This is extremely encouraging and shows that people are putting their weight behind the Naval graves campaign."

"I have a feeling that the Ministry of Defence may try to sidestep the issue, but I am hoping we will see the Protection of Military Remains Act up and running by the end of this year - as it should have been 14 years ago when it was first introduced."

The move is aimed at protecting war graves from invasive diving and plundering of the sort suffered by HM submarine A7 off Cornwall, HMS Dasher in the Clyde, HMS Natal in Cromarty Firth, HMS Ark Royal off the Spanish Mediterranean coast, and HM ships Repulse and Prince of Wales in the South China Sea.

Chairman's OBE 'for all members'



NATIONAL Chairman Shipmate Fred Chambers has been awarded an OBE for his outstanding work for the RNA and the Northumbrian War Pensions Committee.

Fred joined Tyne branch of the Association almost 40 years ago. He was elected branch chairman in 1970 and three years after that became Area and National Conference delegate. He was chairman of Tyneside Festival of Remembrance Committee for ten years.

In 1978 he was a founder of Gateshead branch and has been National Council member for No 11 Area for the past 15 years.

Elected National Vice Chairman in 1994, he has held his present post for four years. Fred says he regards the award of an OBE as an honour for all his shipmates in the Association.

Around the Branches

Kidderminster

In appreciation of his 25 years' service to the branch, Shipmate Will Farley was presented with an inscribed silver tray. It also bore an inscription dedicated to his late wife, Gwen, who with her husband worked hard to put the branch on the firm footing it enjoys today.

Will, a former prisoner of the Japanese, served the branch by turns as president, chairman, Area delegate and standard bearer, but he has had to withdraw from active service through ill-health.

Welshpool

To commemorate the millennium the branch hosted a Combined Services dinner dance at the Town Hall.

Guest of honour among the 160 shipmates and friends present was the Mayor, Cllr Sybil Pryce, accompanied by Cllr Ann Holloway.

Other guests included the Rev and Mrs R. Jones, members of Oswestry branch; members of the Royal British Legion, and members of the Associations of the Royal Welch Fusiliers, Normandy Veterans, Parachute Regiment and RAE.

A raffle raised £116 for branch funds.

Carshalton

The friendship between branch members and residents of the Royal Hospital Chelsea was renewed when the branch held a social in the Chelsea Pensioners' honour.

In return, members of the branch, and those of Mitcham, Morden and Wimbledon, were invited to the Hospital for similar entertainment.

Spennymoor & Ferryhill

Chester-le-Street Sea Cadet staff hosted members of the branch for a seasonal dinner. The branch



Picture: The Sentinel, Stoke-on-Trent

and cadets have a close relationship as both the Chester-le-Street unit chairman and former CO - Shipmate Bob Budd and Lt Cdr (SCC) John Moss-White - have become branch members, the new CO being Lt (SCC) Margaret Moss-White.

The meal was prepared by the cadets and staff at the unit.

Portsmouth

Branch secretary Shipmate J. A. White was standing down at the annual general meeting on March 11 due to eye trouble.

Shipmate White has been a life member since 1948 and served almost 30 years as membership secretary and 21 years as standard bearer.

Rosyth (West Fife)

To mark the branch's golden jubilee, a weekend of events will include the Area standard bearers competition on Saturday May 5, and on the Sunday members will take part in a parade led by a Royal Marines Band.

That will be followed by a church service and later a buffet lunch hosted by Fife Council.

Newbury

A memorial service for HM submarine Tigris, sunk in the Gulf of Naples in 1943, was held at St Nicholas Church. The branch's standard was among those on display.

Atherton

Retiring chairman Shipmate Frank Berry made a surprise presentation of a life membership certificate to the branch president, Shipmate Bernard Leaver. In turn, Bernard presented a Certificate of Appreciation and an engraved tankard to Frank.

Both ceremonies took place under the newly refurbished badge

of the wartime destroyer HMS Ulysses. The crest was originally presented to the former Atherton Urban District Council by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty in recognition of the town's support during Warship Week in 1942.

Frank has served as chairman for six years and is a veteran of the destroyer war in the Far East, serving in HMS Roebuck.

Atherton's new chairman is Shipmate Peter Wilkie who as well as being welfare officer and PRO for the branch, is secretary of the North-West region of the LST and Landing Craft Association.

Ipswich

The branch, which celebrates its golden jubilee in June next year, welcomed the personnel of HMS Grafton, their adopted ship.

Crawley

Members plan to celebrate the branch's 50th anniversary this year in the company of its only surviving founder member, Shipmate Syd French, branch president.

Members have collected more than £4,000 for the Poppy Appeal.

Chichester

Branch welfare officer Shipmate Harry James presented a basket of fruit to wartime veteran Freddie Hard when he visited him. Freddie served in HMS Hood before her last deployment 50 years ago.

Katie puts her stamp on Stoke

MEMBERS of Stoke-on-Trent branch show off their new badges of office presented by ex-Wren Shipmate Katie Cooke.

The badges are in memory of her late husband, John - a branch member for many years - who died in 1999 after a long illness.

They are inscribed with his name and bear the title of the office and the RNA crest.

Katie, a Wren Cook from 1941-49, met John following the death of her brother in the Royal Artillery. They married in 1947 and moved to Stoke five years later. When John retired from the Navy as a PO in 1956 he and Katie joined the RNA.

The officers with Katie are (l-r) Lt Fred Sigley (president), Derek Johnson (secretary), Norman Heath (welfare officer), Bill Sentence (chairman) and Barry Hood (treasurer).

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● Lt Lisa Thomsen and veteran Leonard Wells at a service for the 5th HMS Southampton. Picture: Andy Scaysbrook, Southern Daily Echo

Valiant efforts recalled

HMS SOUTHAMPTON held a memorial service for her WWII namesake on the 60th anniversary of her sinking in 1941.

Thirty veterans from the 5th HMS Southampton attended the emotional ceremony, which recalled their valiant efforts to save the ship on January 11, 1941, after attacks by German bombers. The ship was eventually abandoned and sent to her final resting place, 250nm from Malta, by five torpedoes from HMS Diamond.



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Smugglers threaten the safety of all Gulf shipping

HMS CUMBERLAND has completed a series of boarding operations in the Gulf which shows there's much more to the Armilla Patrol than catching 'sanctions-busters.'

The frigate, currently in India, carried out 41 boardings during her Gulf patrol and found four ships were flouting UN trade sanctions against Iraq.

And the smugglers typified the sort of high-seas danger that the Type 22 frigate is trying to keep out of busy sea-lanes, protecting law-abiding mariners.

Cumberland's CO, Capt David Cooke, said: "What we were finding with illegal cargoes was that they were in small, ancient tankers, most of the order of 30-40 years old, and the agents would run them with little or no maintenance and scant regard for safety. They would run them into the ground."

"Their ships are a menace - there have been problems with the ships having been in danger of sinking or causing a major oil spillage."

"As seafarers we think everybody should be extremely concerned about the nature of these unseaworthy, ill-maintained vessels in what is a very busy maritime area."

Lt Mike Northcott, the ship's Deputy Weapon Engineering Officer, is one of Cumberland's two Boarding Officers.

"Of the four smugglers we dealt with last time out, we only found one decent ship" said Mike, who



SUNRISE: HMS Cumberland from the deck of smugglers' ship Zainab. Picture: Lt Mike Northcott

spent half of his 27th birthday on a particularly unpleasant vessel, the Zainab.

"Most of them are very old, with a very low standard of navigation and poor maintenance. The engines are normally very old, and they usually go to sea with very little fresh drinking water and very poor sanitation."

One ship, the Federal, was possibly the worst of a very bad bunch, and as its engines could not be restarted, it had to be towed to the UN zone.

"The state of the galley was dreadful, covered in filth" said Mike. "There were cockroaches everywhere, food was rotting in cupboards and in the galley, and there were rats around."

"On the Zainab, one deck of accommodation had been com-

pletely abandoned by the crew, and there were signs that there had been an electrical fire. I took about two steps down - there was no light - and I could hear all these rats squeaking and scurrying in the false ceiling.

"I opened up one compartment, a store room for dry rice and flour, and you couldn't see the floor for rat droppings and dead rats."

"My initial thoughts when I saw the state of the ship was 'Disgusting! How can you live like this?'"

"But then I saw a picture in a crew-member's cabin - a bunch of well-fed, happy men having a good time on the quarterdeck of a well-maintained ship, and I twigged - this was the same ship and the same crew."

"But since it had been taken over and run by Iraqi shipping

agents, for about six months, the crew had not been allowed off the ship or to contact their families. They had been denied medical attention, their food was disgusting and they were forced to live in squalor.

"They had not been paid either - it was effectively a modern form of slavery. For the crew, who were not actively or willingly smuggling, being caught was welcome."

"When a ship is impounded, the illegal cargo of oil is sold and the proceeds go to the UN Humanitarian Fund for Iraq."

"The ships are auctioned off, and the money raised goes the same way - to the people of Iraq - and the crew of the impounded ship is repatriated at UN expense."

When boarding parties return to Cumberland, the Medical Officer, Surgeon Lt Jude Scaton, is waiting on the quarterdeck with a large container of disinfectant.

Clothing is checked for cockroaches, and analysis of the container has revealed cockroach eggs, though the preventive measures have so far kept Cumberland clear of such invaders.

In addition to checking shipping, Cumberland also took part in a number of bilateral and multinational exercises, including Arabian Shark, an anti-submarine warfare exercise which involved six navies.

As Navy News went to press, HMS Cumberland was just completing her formal visit to Mumbai for the Indian Navy International Fleet Review.

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Old Mel won business – and influence

THE GIEVES element of Gieves & Hawkes can trace its direct ancestry back to 1785 and the genial tailor Melchisedek Meredith, who won friends and custom at his business in the High Street, Portsmouth.

Old Mel's fondness for uniform, and the fact that the Royal Navy was by then formalising its regulation dress, gave him a golden opportunity, which he took with both hands.

Among his clients were Nelson and Hardy, and their lustre rubbed off on Meredith to such an extent that he

became a part of those higher echelons of society with which he did business.

Meredith's son inherited a successful business, but one which was heavily in debt, but young Augustus's interest lay in the medical profession, and neighbouring tailor John Galt bought it up.

The name Gieve first entered the picture in 1852, when James, who worked on

Galt's bank account, joined as a partner.

The business showed enterprise in pursuing trade, fitting out a large yacht as part tailor's workshop and part amenity ship and sailing her out to the Crimea.

By 1887 the partnership had ended, and as the Navy continued to prosper under the "Two Power Standard" – by which the Royal Navy would be more than a match for any two rival maritime powers – the firm known as Gieve & Co continued to expand, with new premises opened at all the main Naval depots such as Chatham and Plymouth.

There was also a branch in London, to allow Edwardians to go racing at Ascot

or collect a gong at the Palace, safe in the knowledge that they were dressed correctly for the occasion.

The civilian side was not neglected, with Gieve's catering for the officers on crack transatlantic liners and opening branches at major public schools between the wars.

"We are still seen as an, maybe the, authority, on matters of little importance but which count for so much – attention to detail," said Robert Gieve, vice-chairman of Gieves and Hawkes.



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Tailors' website is an echo of the past

NEWLY-promoted? Need a new ball dress coat? Or perhaps a new skeleton?

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A daily, comprehensive list of ship's movements reveals where the consignment is best delivered, and off it goes.

Not a demonstration of the power of the Internet, although Gieves & Hawkes is taking its place on the WorldWide Web.

In fact, Gieve's, tailors (under various names) to the Navy for more than two centuries, were offering the service described above almost 100 years ago.

In an early version of the Internet portal, Gieve, Matthews and Seagrove, as it was then known, provided free catalogues to officers which not only allowed them to order uniforms (it included swatches of material) but also furnished them with a wealth of information, such as postal rates, sporting dates, Derby winners and tram times.

The main purpose of the *Useful Information* for a

Snow Boots £10 9 6



Naval Officer catalogue was the innovative telegraphic code, which married a comprehensive range of possible requirements with a list of single code words.

So an officer requiring a new regulation folding cocked hat would simply cable the word *Alopecy*, along with his name, rank and ship, and the Eastern Telegraph Company would pass his order to Gieve, Matthews and Seagrove, using the address "Uniform, Portsmouth".

A number of words were left blank, so an officer could choose a word and agree a meaning before he sailed.

Robert Gieve, vice-chairman of Gieves and Hawkes, said: "I had always wondered what my grandfather meant when he looked pleased and commented that it was a good month for Amblygons.

"I later found that Amblygon was in the emergency section, and meant "All gear lost; proceed immediately with new uniform", so it was good for business.

"We had all measurements of account-holders, all written by hand, and at every opportunity we updated the records.

"RN officers are like everyone else – they suffer from slipped chest, so we could act blind if records were up to date."

Clerks would then consult the daily Admiralty bridge list, and the order would be dispatched.

It was not just clothing that could be ordered through Gieves. The skeleton, referred to above, was a request by a naval doctor, who needed to study anatomy while at sea, while the occasional car was obtained, to await return on leave.

Mr Gieve, said: "We went way beyond the bounds of practical good sense, but it was tremendous fun."

Mr Gieve said it would be "madness" not to put their tri-Service inventory of items on the website – the site itself has been functioning for a year for information, but as *Navy News* went to press the full military shopping element was due to open, the target date being March 1.

"It's not novel in any way, but it is novel in that we take pride in a personal service that is not person-to-person, but through a dedicated site," said Mr Gieve.

"The military website is an additional service, while the customary personal offering continues in all our Gieves & Hawkes shops in the UK.

"But then, this is nothing new, of course – what were we doing 100 years ago?"

"In those days, if you were half-way round the world you couldn't use any of those means of communications we take for granted today.

"You could write, but it might take weeks. It could come Grey Funnel, if you could catch a ship coming home, and Gieve's has used Grey Funnel for aeons, thanks to those who carried something to expedite a thing for a fellow officer. But that would take time.

"Gieve's used the Eastern Telegraph Co, and they used punched tape, which succeeded Morse.

"So you couldn't send a telegraphic message saying: "Please send me grey flannel trousers with turn ups," etc.

"It was lengthy, and was relayed through any number of stations and could be lost or altered in the transcription. Bits of words may get lost, so a pair of lieutenant commander's trousers could be delivered as a pair of commander's trousers, and the recipient may think we knew something they didn't – which we frequently did.

"Some 98 per cent of people joining the Senior Service came to us then – mostly officers, although we never turned anybody away. We were the specialist – others looked after the lower deck.

"Years ago we would reach out to those who could not cross the threshold to one of our shops by way of a catalogue, or by maintaining a personal contact through

Gieve's representatives in amenity ships.

"I'm excited by the website because for me it just demonstrates how Gieve's has had to reinvent itself, in terms of resources and outreach, to customers as those customers' needs change."

The composition of the Navy in past centuries meant that Robert Gieve's great-great grandfather was touting for business with 11-year-olds on board ship.

Now officers make their acquaintance at a later stage, and tastes have changed.

"It's a woolly-pully, dress-down culture in the Services, as it is in the City of London, but mercifully in the military there are still guidelines," said Mr Gieve.

The advice offered in the *Useful Information for a Naval Officer* catalogue was seen as part of Gieve's commitment to serving the Navy.

"It was almost like a Wisden, only with underpants in it, and

'It was almost like a Wisden, only with underpants in it...'



the copy was gratis."

Gieve's also offered sister publications for Army officers and colonial administrators, spanning the entire empire.

It was in competition with the Hawkes version, and the rivalry between the businesses – Hawke's predated Gieve's by four years – only ended when the latter bought out the former in 1974.

Gieve's also presumed to offer instructions, under the guise of advice, on *How to Become a Naval Officer*, with tips on replying to invitations and behaviour in wardrooms. As *Customs and Etiquette of the Royal Navy*, Gieve's advice survived until the 1980s.

"Gieves is almost like an arm of the Royal Navy, and we hope we could still be seen as fulfilling that function. We are still willing, keen and able," said Mr Gieve.





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Early birds on disc

A North Sea series airship of the Royal Naval Air Service – one of over 400 images from the CD *Early Aviation: the Pioneering Years through to the First World War*, taken from the archives of the Royal Aeronautical Society (Realvision Imaging Solutions, £9.95)

How Graf Spee paid the price

HANS Langsdorff, captain of the Graf Spee, is remembered as a humane and honorable man.

But in *The Price of Disobedience – The Battle of the River Plate Reconsidered* (Sutton £19.99) Eric J. Grove shows that, while he was also an exceptionally talented naval officer, he had a fatal streak of rebelliousness that led him to make a disastrous miscalculation.

He also argues that Graf Spee was not quite the formidable fighting machine she was made out to be.

The Panzerschiff "pocket battleship", while exceptionally well-armed for a ship of her size, may have been a fearsome foe for a single enemy cruiser that chose to stand and fight – but any number of enemies would give her serious problems, as she could not divide the fire of her main armament.

Moreover, any ship built down to her limited, fixed displacement was bound to have weaknesses – and Graf Spee's fundamental flaw was weak armour. "Pocket battleship" implies battleship standards

of protection: Graf Spee was an averagely protected and very heavily armed cruiser, not a capital ship.

In heading for the River Plate – as his RN opponent, Commodore Henry Harwood, brilliantly calculated he would – Langsdorff disobeyed strict orders not to engage with enemy warships.

He was also unlucky that Harwood happened to be the Royal Navy's leading theoretical expert on the tactics of dealing with commerce raiders.

The head of the German Navy, Admiral Erich Raeder – himself an expert on commerce raiding – had concluded from his study of World War I operations that they would have been much more effective if the German cruiser commanders had avoided action with Allied ships.

Officers – such as Graf von Spee himself – had then let their aggressive instincts run away with them. Twenty-five years later, Langsdorff was to make the same, fatal mistake.



THE USE of the three great Cunard liners *Queen Elizabeth*, *Queen Mary* and *Aquitania* as fast transatlantic troop transports was one of the great high-risk operations of World War II.

Yet it was vital to the build-up of US troops in the British Isles in preparation for D-Day.

Sailing unescorted and carrying up to 15,000 men at a time, a single torpedo from a U-boat could have resulted in one of the greatest military disasters in history.

"They shortened the war in Europe by 12 months," said Winston Churchill. "Britain's three proudest liners," President Truman called them – and now their story is told by the former cipher officer of the *Aquitania*, Alistair Satchell.

Liner shuttle that shortened the war

Based on his diaries, *Running the Gauntlet* (Chatham £20) gives a unique insight into this unprecedented wartime "shuttle service" with graphic accounts of the dangers faced, not only from U-boats and enemy aircraft, but also from the elements as the liners crossed the stormy North Atlantic overloaded to an extent never anticipated by their designers.

Most importantly, the author reveals for the first time how decoded Enigma signals were central to the success of this operation, enabling the troops for the invasion of Europe to cross the Atlantic in time for the 1944 deadline.

Satchell, a lieutenant in the Royal Australian Navy Volunteer Reserve, was one of two cipher officers in the 46,000-ton *Aquitania* – by far the slowest and therefore the most vulnerable of the trio.

He sailed in all the ship's 53 Atlantic crossings between New York, Halifax or Boston and Scotland, spending 395 days at sea.

The book describes several running battles between U-boat wolf packs and convoy escorts waged concurrently with the passage of the *Aquitania*.

A comparison of her movements with those of one particular U-boat captain, Herbert Werner, discloses

that between May 1943 and April 1945, their paths could well have crossed or converged on no less than seven different occasions.

While this account is based on the author's experiences in the *Aquitania*, it is also essentially an account of the basic operations of the other two ships.

They had in common aspects of their operations which did not apply to any other troopships – they shared the same anchorages in the Clyde and adjoining docks in New York and Cunard officers and crew members were generally rotated between them.

It is a tribute to the British Merchant Navy, to the Allied Naval and Air Forces and to the Cunard Line that not a single life was lost amongst American, Canadian, Australian, British, New Zealand and other nationalities, men and women numbering just over one million, who crossed the Atlantic in them.



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CORNWELL John Travers VC Boy, First Class Royal Navy

Born: 8 January 1900 - Leyton, East London
Died: 2 June 1916 aged 16. Died of wounds in Grimsby District Hospital, Lincolnshire, following his VC action at sea off Jutland
Buried: i) Common grave at Grimsby Cemetery. ii) 29 July 1916 at Manor Park Cemetery, E. London, Section 55 West. Grave 13. Headstone quietly awaiting orders. Surrounded by the gun crew's dead and wounded, he stayed by his post until the end of the action.
Deed/Service: 31 May 1916. Although mortally wounded early in the Battle, he remained alone in an exposed position by his gun on HMS 'Chester', quietly awaiting orders. Surrounded by the gun crew's dead and wounded, he stayed by his post until the end of the action.
Commemoration: i) Headstone. ii) Name on the HMS 'Chester' Memorial in Chester Cathedral. iii) A ward and suite named for him in the Royal Star & Garter Home, Richmond, Surrey. iv) Cornwell Close, Plover, Gosport, Hampshire. v) Brass plaque in Walton Road School, Manor Park - now the John Cornwell School. vi) Six cottages for retired sailors in Hornchurch, Essex named for him. vii) Display in Cadets Building, Trenchard, HMS Dolphin, Gosport. viii) Medals at the Imperial War Museum.

Battle of Jutland, North Sea
 POSTHUMOUS
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Gazette: 15 September 1916

Monumental guide to VCs

DAVID Harvey spent a staggering 36 years writing his magisterial two volume guide to VC headstones and memorials *Monuments to Courage*.

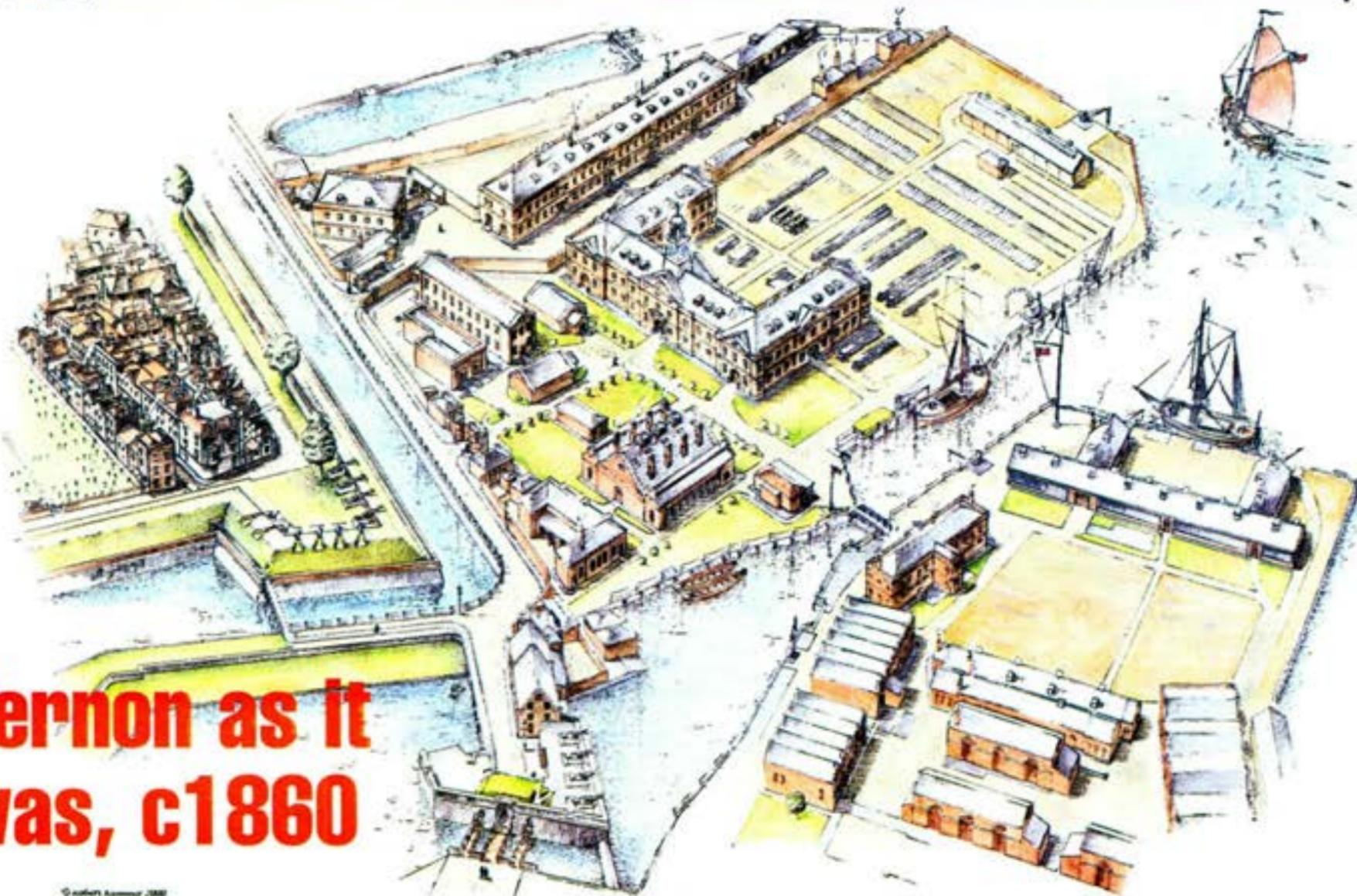
Available from sole distributor P. da Costa at 124 Outlands Drive, Weybridge, Surrey KT13 9HL, the set costs a fairly monumental £75 plus £6.50pp – but all proceeds go to the Royal Star & Garter Home for Disabled Ex-Servicemen at Richmond.

Himself badly disabled and confined to a wheelchair after a hit-and-run accident in 1992, the author has pinpointed the final resting places of all but a few of the 1,322 recipients of the highest award for gallantry – including hundreds laying in unmarked graves around the world.

The catalogue is embellished with over 5,000 photographs and a wealth of fascinating detail. A typical entry – for the Boy VC Jack Cornwell – is shown here.



At Your Leisure



Vernon as it was, c1860

© Robert Kennedy 2000

Gunwharf Quays, the £150m development of the old Gunwharf/Vernon site at Portsmouth, was due to open as *Navy News* went to press last month.

Meanwhile local artist Rob Kennedy, working with Portsmouth history enthusiast David Fricker, has produced an impression of how the place looked in 1860, shortly before it was decided to fill in the fortifications of what had been the Navy's main ordnance yard since the late 1600s.

The imposing Vulcan building in the centre of the picture, built as a land service store in 1811, is now the centrepiece of the residential development.

Copies can be bought from Seabreeze Gallery, Osborne Rd, Southsea at £15.

ScreenScene – by Bob Baker

Visions of the future we're not comfy with

NEARLY a century's worth of science fiction movies, and not one of them managed to predict the mobile phone.

Even Stanley Kubrick in 2001 thought of communication developments only in terms of being able to see the person you're talking with. And yet of course there would be mobile phones! How could they miss it! Amazing how inevitable things seem, once they've happened.

Now we have *The Sixth Day*, an Arnold Schwarzenegger action movie set a decade or two down the line. Tobacco has been banned and nicotine is regarded as an aphrodisiac; packets of unfiltered Full Strength change hands surreptitiously in underground car parks.

When Spot the dog dies, all you do is bring the body to a branch of RePet Inc., who clone a bit of tissue and ten minutes later you're taking home a frisky Spot II. Human cloning is illegal but everybody knows it goes on. Anti-cloning vigilantes/terrorists are active and violent.

It all certainly has the ring of plausibility. The plot has been constructed in accordance with the image requirements of its star, accommodating the maximum number of shoot-outs and punch-ups, and from that point of view none of it needs to be taken seriously.

But it's significant that the film failed at the US box office.

A few years back Michael Keaton starred in a comedy about cloning, *Multiplicity*. No one went to see it. Now we have a Schwarzenegger thriller about cloning and that too is spurned. It seems that the very subject generates a fingernail-on-the-blackboard response, making something basic in the human psyche feel very uncomfortable indeed.

The most memorable aspect of 2001 was HAL, the affable spaceship computer who sets about murdering the entire crew. The second science fiction movie this month, *Red Planet*, is full of echoes of 2001, HAL and so on. Like the Kubrick film, it concerns a mission to Mars led by a character named Bowman (gender switch: this Bowman is played by Carrie-Anne Moss).

Disaster strikes again, of course, the villain being the ship's robot AMEE, who's also female in a robot-y sort of way, while the on-board computer contents itself with a series of gloomy prognostications.

This is mainstream, entertaining sci-fi, with quite a convincing Mars – revealed in the end credits to be bits of Australian and Jordanian wilderness artfully cobbled together.

THE AIRCREW ASSOCIATION

For details contact
Fred McMillan,
Tel/Fax: 01753 526960
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At Your Service



Over to You

Memorial at Consett, Co. Durham: George Pattison wants to know more of a Geo McClam Pattison, killed at Alexandria in 1882, as named on this memorial erected by the men of HMS Superb. Contact 15, Williams Close, Dawlish EX7 9SP, tel: 01626 865733.

Frank Woolley, HMS Quality, WWI: Seeking info from anyone who knew him, or from family. Contact Frank Hebdon, Hoe Croft, Winsor Lane, Hinson, Southampton SO40 2HG, tel: 023 8081 2972.

HMS Defender: Will Wildgoose has a pewter tankard inscribed Many Happy Returns to HMS Defender 8th Jan 1953, with RHKYC plus a dragon on the reverse. If anyone recognises it, they can have it for the cost of postage. Contact Will at Westleigh, 10, St Saviour's Rd, Coalville LE67 3DF, tel: 01530 831511, e-mail: wildgoosewill@supanet.com

Mystery vessel: D.A. Wade seeks information on RN vessel pennant number DV4, which operated out of Grimsby in the latter part of WWI. Contact D.A. Wade, 4, Littlemead, Birchwood Estate, Hatfield AL10 0UH, tel: 01707 265967.

Sid Garside: Brian Bates seeks info from anyone who served with RN Signaller Sid 1939-45, or the ships in which he served: AMC Salopian 1940-41 and LST Bachachero 1941-45. Contact 01305 263824.

Doreen and John Keeble: Mrs Irene White seeks news of Doreen and John, who lived in married quarters at Tovey Rd, Rosyth, before leaving with their children for Singapore, in 1974. Contact Irene at 64, Pottergate, Norwich NR2 4BN.

David Hill was Michael Morrissey's uncle. He joined the Royal Navy in April 1941 and served in HM ships Royal Arthur, Pembroke, Victory and Shrapnel to 1942. He was in SS Khedive Ismail, which was torpedoed by a Japanese submarine in 1944. If you have any information or photos, please contact Michael at Chestnuts, Straight Half Mile, Maresfield, E. Sussex TN22 2RH, e-mail: mickam@btinternet.com

Dave Sowdon, secretary of the World Ship Society Naval sub-committee, is researching Admiralty Coastal Salvage Vessels built 1943-5, and seeks readers who served in, or worked in any of them. Contact Dave at 25, Godwin Drive, Nailsea, Bristol BS48 2XE, tel: 01275 851470, e-mail: davesowdon@blueyonder.co.uk

MISSING NAVAL CADETS

Joined May 1959 as Officer Cadets. Now 60yrs old. Reunion at BRNC August 2001.

TRR (Tom) WOODFORD Guernsey WJ (William) WATTS Fowey GS T (Tim) SMALLWOOD Chetnole AC (Tony) SHEPHERD S.Wales IA (Ian) SHAW Pangbourne Coll CJ (Chris) HALE Lancing College CI (Chris) COWAN Cheltenham Coll MRO (Mike) BOARDMAN Rhodesia
Contact info pse. to N. Morrison
Tel/Fax: 01822 853320

DO YOU REMEMBER HMS AMETHYST? AND THE YANGTZE INCIDENT 1942? COME AND HEAR WHAT REALLY HAPPENED. WHO? WHAT? WHEN? WHERE? HOW? ALL PROCEEDS TO NAVAL CHARITIES. ALL TICKETS £5 22 APRIL - DETAILS NEW THEATRE ROYAL PORTSMOUTH 023 9264 9000.

HMS Belfast 1939, HMS St Vincent 1931: Fred Dicken was at St Vincent circa 1931, and in Belfast for the commissioning of HMS Belfast, and was in her when she struck a mine in 1939. Son Terry seeks his service history - contact him on 0208 877 0114, or e-mail: twdicken@aol.com

HMS Marazion, believed based on the Yangtze circa 1912. Alex Plank seeks photos, advice and info - contact him at 20, Candemakers Park, Edinburgh EH11 8TH, tel: 0131 664 5965, or e-mail: aplank@btinternet.com

HMS Tyne: Ted Harrison seeks a copy of a photo of the shooting team, 1966-67, on the quarterdeck; team captain Lt Cdr Derrick. Contact Ted at 37, Ford Park Rd, Mutley, Plymouth PL4 6NU, tel: 01752 225470.

HMS Topaze: Richard Woodward has a diving manual inscribed W.A. Baddock, A.B., HMS Topaze, Sept 28, 1914, at Portland. Any info about diver or ship to Richard at The Paddock, Dove Lane, Rochester, Staffs ST14 5LA, tel/fax: 01889 591650.

SS Solon 2: Chris Cookson seeks information on his uncle, LS George Wilson, who was seconded as a gunner, and was killed when Solon 2 was sunk by U-508 off British Guyana. Contact Chris at 463, Stourport Rd, Kidderminster DY11 7BD, e-mail: c.cookson@btinternet.com

HMS Broadwater: Chalky White has built a memorial website to the destroyer, one of 50 ex-US ships transferred to the RN in 1940; she was torpedoed in the Western Approaches in October 1941; see <http://pages.british-library.net/chalkywhite>

HMS Hartland Point, Helensburgh, 1953-4: Christine Mitchell seeks information. Contact her at e-mail christine.mitchell@btinternet.com

HMS Kite: Chris Chaplin seeks anyone who survived the sinking of HMS Kite on August 21, 1944. Do you recall his uncle, Stevie Mills, who didn't survive? Contact Chris at Camella, 20, Market St, Devoran, Truro TR3 6QA, tel: 01872 865011, e-mail: camella@ntworld.com

Port T, Gan Island (Maldives): Jon Gettens seeks info on Port T during the 1940s. Contact 53, Park Hill Rd, Otford, Kent TN14 5QH, tel: 01959 523840, e-mail: jgettens@aol.com

HMS Royal Harold, RN shore establishment in Germany: V. Hoeking has five editions of Buzz magazines (1947) and two editions of Globe and Laurels (1946), which he is willing to exchange for editions of HMS Ganges magazine. Contact him at 37, Wayside, Marston Green, Birmingham B37 7AY, tel: 0121 779 3525, e-mail: hoeking@hocking1.freemove.co.uk

The Ton Class Association seek photos, stories etc. from anyone who has a connection or served aboard Ton-class minesweepers over the last 50 years, to help complete full records of the 119 ships. All items sent will be returned ASAP; scanned photos welcome. Contact Pk Fumival, webmaster@fca2000.co.uk, 19, Willow Drive, Dunnington, Salisbury, Wiltshire or tel: 01980 653607 or 07941 471580.

WWII and the Caribbean

London-based TV producers wish to contact veterans who served in the Caribbean theatre between 1941 & 1945. We are especially keen to speak to those with experiences of U-Boat activity in the region.

Please contact:
Tony T & Rebecca Goldstone,
28c Loraine Road, London N7 6EZ, England.
Tel. 0207 686 5101
Fax. 0207 686 1399
Email. toyyt@patootes.freemove.co.uk

Reunions

March

HMS File 1962/85: If anyone would like to take part in a reunion, contact Max Sylvester at 30, Cissbury Rd, Worthing BN14 9LF, e-mail: markysylve@virgin.net

HMS Jaguar Association reunion at Jaguar Cars, Coventry, on March 31. Contact Alan 'Gupta' Saxton, tel: 0115 9507741 ext 265 (day) or 0115 9222585 (evenings and weekends) or e-mail: easysaxton@aol.com

April

Hood Division Aircraft Artificer Apprentices 1943-46 reunion April 7. Contact Dave Lane, 130, Hendford Hill, Yeovil BA20 2RG, tel: 01905 475642.

HMS Excalibur "Swordsman Association" reunion on April 7 at RMA Royal Leamington Spa. Details from George on 0151 625 1432 or e-mail george@prose.freemove.co.uk

HMS Vengeance Association reunion at Nottingham on April 20-21. Details from D. (Lew) Lewis, 122, Mill Lane, Portslade, Sussex BN41 2FH, tel: 01273 881330.

HMS Cambrian reunion, Kings Hotel, Chatham, April 20-22. Contact Don Macdonald on 01344 774386, e-mail: don@famron.freemove.co.uk

HMS Consort Association reunion at the Trecam Hotel, Babbacombe, April 20-22. Details from T.J. (Bud) Flanagan on 0151 425 2744.

HMS Decoy last commission 1967-70 reunion at the New Continental Hotel, Plymouth, April 20-22. Contact Alf Singleton, 42, Uplands Crescent, Fareham PO16 7JY.

HMS Serene 1944-47 reunion on April 28 at the Day Centre, Lingfield, Surrey. Details from Eric Drummond, 5, Green Way, Syke Lane, Scarcroft, Leeds LS14 3BJ, tel: 0113 289 2222.

May

BRNC Dartmouth - SD36 reunion for course members and wives/partners at HMS Collingwood on May 4 at 1900. Details forwarded by e-mail or post to those Lt Cdr Steve Horrell has contacted. BRNC staff from 1986 are welcome to attend. Contact Lt Cdr Horrell on 023 9270 2461, e-mail: hair@btinternet.com

HMS Peacock reunion May 4-6 at RMA HQ, Royal Leamington Spa. Details from Ted Collier, 8, Aston Lane, Remenham Hill, Henley-on-Thames, Oxon RG9 3EL, tel: 01491 574241.

HMS Cavalier Association reunion at the Riviera Hotel, Weymouth, May 4-7, including a drum-head service of dedication of the Association Standard. Contact D. Thompson, 18, Grace Rd, Worle, Weston-super-Mare BS22 7DT, tel: 01934 520216.

RNA, Rosyth/West Fife Branch: Golden Jubilee weekend May 5-6. Area standard bearers competition and buffet dance on May 5; parade, church service and buffet lunch on May 6. Contact D. Scarlett, 29, Kirk Brae, Kincairdine, Alloa FK10 4PY.

Annual Royal Marines Memorial (Graspan) Parade at the RM National Memorial, The Mall, London, May 6 at noon; muster on Horseguards at 1130hrs. Passes required. Contact Jim Elard, 20, Hawfield Bank, Orpington, BR6 7TA.

HMS Fisgard Apprentice entry May 7, 1951, Series 12: 50th anniversary get-together is being arranged for May. Anyone interested contact Ted Summerscales, Treetops, Church Hill, Godshill, Isle of Wight, tel: 01983 840244, e-mail: rosted@ic24.net

LCG & F Association reunion at the Home Club, Portsmouth, from May 9-11. Contact V. Copeland on 02476 451645 or M. Allen on 01933 279401.

HMS Comus reunion at York, May 11-13. Friday 1930. Bootham & Monks Con Club, Clarence Rd.

At your Service entries

Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.

Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.

Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.

There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

Saturday 1930, buffet and dance at York Health Services Club. Contact Geoff Harper on 01302 708135.

HMS Cleopatra, cruiser or frigate, reunion at the Grand Hotel, Plymouth, from May 11-14. Details from F.E. Daniel, 45, Giebo Rise, Kings Sutton, Banbury OX17 3PH, tel: 01295 810024.

HMS Kipling (G91) reunion at the Ashburn Hotel, Fordingbridge, Hampshire, on May 12. Contact Norman Roake, 33, Wickens Meadow, Rye Lane, Duntun Green, Sevenoaks TN14 5JB, tel: 01959 524586.

Submarine Coxswains Association reunion at Fort Blockhouse May 18-19. Contact Sterling Hayden on 01329 315913 for details. Please note: this is a revised date.

HMS Widemouth Bay 1944-57 reunion on 18/19th May 18-19 at the Angel Hotel, Royal Leamington Spa. Contact Bob 'Topsy' Turner, 17, Mill Way, East Grinstead RH19 4DD, tel: 01342 323801.

HMS Warspite Association reunion at the Hotel Prince Regent, Weymouth, from May 18-20. Details from R. Foster on 01753 653915.

HMS Fiji: Frank Agass plans to be in Crete for the period covering 22nd May, the day Fiji was sunk. He hopes to hire a boat to take him to the location so he can throw a wreath into the water. He seeks others of the ship's company who may wish to join him and help defray the cost of the boat hire. If anyone has a similar plan, he would willingly join in. Contact Frank at 108, Sandy Lane, St Ives, Ringwood BH24 2LG, tel: 01425 473880.

23rd and 26th Destroyer Flotilla reunion in the WCs and CPOs Mess.

HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, at 1800 on May 26. Details from Bill Swift, 37, New Rd, Lovedean, Waterlooville PO6 9RU, tel: 023 9259 1032.

HMS Hood Association reunion dinner on May 26 at the Home Club, Queen Street, Portsmouth. The AGM will be in the Brock Bar at 1700. Tickets, at £18, from K.A. Clark, 57, Bereweeke Ave, Winchester SO22 6BL. The St George's Church service is on May 27 at 1100, and the Boldre Church service is on May 29.

June

14th Carrier Air Group 1947-52: 50th anniversary of First Korean Operational Tour; reunion at the Fleet Air Arm Museum, RNAS Yeovilton, on June 9. All who served at any period may attend. Contact Ken Lambert, 17, Walgrave, Orton Malborne, Peterborough PE2 5NR, tel: 01733 234655.

HM ships Glorious, Ardent and Acasta: A memorial service to dedicate a commemorative plaque to those who died in the action off Norway will be held on June 10 at St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, Devonport. Former crew, aircrew, survivors, and relatives of victims welcome. Details from David Woodcock, 15, Green Lane, Dalton-in-Furness, Cumbria LA 15 8LZ, tel: 01229 462414.

HMS Solebay reunion at the Home Club, Portsmouth, on June 16. Contact Malcolm Clarke, 164, Southmead Rd, Westbury-on-Trym, Bristol BS10 5DR, tel: 0117 962500, or e-mail: solebay@tost.demon.co.uk

RNR Degaussing Branch reunion on June 23 on HMS President RTC.

Details from Lt Cdr Christine Gauden RNR, 6, Rebecca Court, 8, Crystal Palace Park Rd, London SE26 6EF, tel: 020 8778 1071.

41 Commando, Royal Marines (Deal) 1977-1981 reunion in the Quarterdeck, Deal, on June 30, cost £26 per head on a first-come, first-served basis. Details from Graham Dear, 19, James Hall Gardens, Deal CT14 7SZ, tel: 01304 363523.

July

HMS Glasgow (C21/D88) Old Boys Association reunion at Portsmouth on July 7-8. Details from Allan Mercer, 89, Royal Ave, Hough Green, Widnes WA8 8HJ, tel: 0151 510 2445.

September

HMS Anson reunion, Royal Sailors Home Club, Sept 11-14. Contact Len Kemp, 3, Fleming Close, Watnal, Notts NG16 1JY, tel: 0115 913 4213.

HMS Renown Association reunion at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, from September 20-24. Details from Alan Ware, 4, Silverdale, 13, Lancaster Rd, Birkdale, Southport PR8 2LF, tel: 01704 560481.

HMS King George V and Shipmates of HMS Punjabi reunion at South Parade, Portsmouth, Sept 27 to October 1. Details from Jack Kilsby on 01327 703479 or Bart Kent on 01277 214810.

HMS Juno Comms Dept 1970-1972 reunion in Chatham on Sept 29. Details from Rob Monaghan on 0208 291 9164, e-mail: rob@telexcc.co.uk or see www.hms-juno.co.uk

Calling Old Shipmates

(REM) Rick Welstead was at Killylane Radio Station, HMS Gannet, Co. Londonderry, 1956-58. He was at the wedding of Bill Hanna and Paddy Iredale, 1957. Contact Bill at PO Box 12, RR5, Dundalk, Ontario, Canada N0C 1B0, tel: 00 1 519 925 3259.

HMS Terror: Seeking members of the miscellaneous mess or from W/T Suara, April '47 to Aug '49. Contact John Barrett, 24, The Spinney, North Cray, Sidcup DA14 5NF, tel: 020 8302 9503.

812 and 804 Squadrons (14th CAG), HMS Theseus touring the Far East, Australia, and NZ in 1947. Old shipmates should contact Bill Grice, 4, Newfield Close, Nornanton, West Yorks WF6 1SJ, tel: 01924 892246.

Calling Stephen Birkett and anyone else who served with Mick Rutherford on HM ships Ganges, Crossbow, Anzio and Manxman 1959-89. Contact Mick at 46, Skye Edge Rd, Sheffield S2 5HB, tel: 0114 276 8269, e-mail: mjrutherford@supanet.com

Roy Luck: Served 1961-73 in HM ships Adamant, Hampshire, Chichester, Whitby and Tyne, then Devon Fire Brigade. A surprise retirement party is being held on April 7 at HMS Drake, Devonport, at 7.30pm. Contact daughter Andrea Merrifield on 01752 344228 (evening) or 01752 797250 (day), or e-mail: andrea.merrifield_bf@btinternet.com Please note that names will be required to obtain access to HMS Drake.

Simon (Bing) Crosby seeks the following from Nelson and in HMS Ark Royal: SA Pete Massey, SA Steve McQueen, SA Bungy Edwards and Williams and WTR John 'Easy' Ryder. Ring 01642 277847 or e-mail: pardon.watson@ntworld.com

HMS Bushwood/HMS Gombroon 1945-46, Far East: Stoker Roy Tinsley wants to hear from shipmates, especially Jack (Gary) Garraway. Contact Roy at 46, Springbank Close, Farsley, Pudsey LS28 5EW, tel: 0113 256 4075 or e-mail: scubbs@ukonline.co.uk

HM ships Bulwark, Albion and Centaur Association: All branches, squadrons and RM welcome, and those interested in the vessels. Contact John Truscott, 023 9243 1150.

Knut Clunies Ross, DEMS Gunner: Ross and R.W. Clarabut met in Durban, 1943, where Ross was a survivor from SS Llanashe. They served in MV Highland Monarch, Stratheden, survived the Bombay explosion and joined MV Sophocles. Contact Mr Clarabut, 321 North Ave, Southend SS2 4EH, tel: 01702 612187.

Phil Houghton (LAEA when he left), joined at HMS Raleigh in May '89 and served at HMS Daedalus (Artificer training), HMS Birmingham for WIGS 90 and RNAS Portland 702 Squadron. Contact Phil on 0151 293 0557, or at 43, Gondover Ave, Orrell Park, Liverpool L9 8AY, or e-mail: Philanddelly@aol.com

Clive Pennyfather: Alan Forsythe seeks Clive, originally from Hillsborough, Co. Down. He joined the RN in 1959-60 as an artificer, and is believed to have married a girl from the Winchester area. He is probably 66-68 years old. If anyone knows of him contact Alan at 86, Grove Rd, Spa, Ballynahinch, Co Down BT24 8PW, tel: 028 9750 1688 or e-mail alan.spatec@btinternet.com

HMS Liverpool: Anyone interested in a reunion of first commission from build at Cammell Lairds to be held at HMS Egglest at a date to be arranged sometime in 2001 - please contact

Barry Campbell on 0151 256 5109, e-mail: b5my@aol.com, or Tommy Gromes, e-mail: gromest@aol.com

HMS Sheffield D80 (Falklands): Bob Mullen hopes to organise a May reunion in the Portsmouth area. If interested, contact Bob at 1b, Malta Rd, Portsmouth PO2 7PZ, tel: 023 9271 0406, e-mail: bobmullen@btinternet.com

CPO Peter Duhig ex-aircraft mechanic, seeks anyone who remembers him. He left in 1970, having served on most air stations and various front and second-line squadrons. Contact him at 15a, Lander Gardens, Woodvale, Perth, West Australia 6026, or e-mail: pcduhig@global.net.au

HMS Delight 1965-67: Seeking Jack Davies, then an LM(E) who lived in the Manchester area. Contact Monty Banks, 01922 403878, or e-mail: Ivan...@btinternet.com

560 Entry Artificer Apprentice (HMS Collingwood): Roland Attridge wants to hear from class members with a view to holding a reunion this year. Contact Roland at 18, Fernlea Way, Dibden Purlieu, Southampton SO45 5SG, tel: 023 8084 9419, e-mail: roland.attridge@ukonline.co.uk

Fearless and Intrepid: Fred Gumbleton served in both in the 1980s and seeks shipmates who recall him, particularly Dave (Oggy) Allen and Geoff Meacham. Fred joined Fearless as an Artificer Apprentice in 1979 and left Intrepid in 1988 as a CPOMEA(M). Contact Fred at 2, Cherbourg Grove, Port Kennedy, WA 6172, Australia, or e-mail: bailey@southwest.com.au

HMS Edinburgh: Shaun Lee seeks Tommy Grimes PO(R), or maybe CHOPS(R); served in Edinburgh 1990. Write to 28, Asgard Way, Grimsby DN33 3RJ, tel: 01472 871804, e-mail: shaunlee@eezonet.com

HMS Raleigh, Benbow 50's, December 1964: Steve Bradshaw hopes to arrange a reunion for all from this entry, including John Bell, Carl Bone, Tall Belfast, Jumpy, Dean Moriarty. If anyone is interested, contact Steve on 01744 609602, or e-mail: sales@express-computers.com

LSTD Dave (Hammy) Hamilton 824 (A) Frt 1981-83 wants to hear from anyone who served on (A) Frt at that time, especially during the Falklands War, or from any stewards in Cudmore 1977-84, or anyone who knew him. Contact 020 8903 9779 or e-mail: fiammie@disi52.fsnet.co.uk

Ron Cox is trying to contact shipmate Allen F. Lilley, who started service in 1951, would now be about 68. They trained at RNAS Bramcote then went to RNAS Cudmore 736 Sqn, then to RNAS Lossiemouth 1954-55. Allen, possibly from Colerme, was Ron's best man on April 9, 1955. Contact Ron at Greensleeves, Llanfairynhorney, Holyhead LL65 4LL, tel: 01407 760592, e-mail: r.l.cox@btinternet.com

Johnny Westbrook: Bob Olding joined HMS Fisgard as an Artificer Apprentice on January 3, 1975, and left in June that year. He seeks news of Johnny, or any photos. Contact Bob at 85, Charlton Close, Bournemouth BH9 3PS, tel: 01202 520817

HMS Dauntless: Janet Hultberg Puckett seeks ex-Wrens with whom she was stationed at HMS Dauntless in 1967. She went on to HMS Goldcrest (Brawdy) HMS Mercury, (Soberton Towers), Jenny Cardno, Maggie Wray, Sue Tofts, Judy Hurst. Write to Janet at 217, Fowler St, Cortland, Ohio, USA

44410, or e-mail: gwentusa@aol.com

HMS Intrepid: Al Burdett seeks any muckers in the comms dept Oct 1987 to May 1990, especially Michael 'Sheepy' Shanks (D211) and Gary 'Baz' Barrett. Contact Al at 48, Kinross Rd, Lillington, Leamington Spa CV32 7EF, tel: 01926 421944, e-mail: alburdett@btinternet.com

HMS Fleetwood: Keith 'Yorky' Rayner seeks crew members, particularly 1951-1953. Contact Keith at 11, Newfield Cres, Acklam, Middlesbrough, Teesside, tel: 01642 281392 or e-mail: krayner@ntworld.com

HMS Whirlwind: Bob Charleson, ex-stokers' mess, seeks two old shipmates, Jimmy Fiers and Kenny Aynes, ex-HMS Whirlwind 1940-45. Contact Bob at 25, Sinsley Court, Wardley, Swinton, Manchester M27 9FL, tel: 0161 793 0192.

HMS St George: In 1945 Exmouth 44/144 classes formed the Guard of Honour for the visit of the King and Queen to the Isle of Man. Roy Cocker has photos and a list of names, and is happy to send copies to old classmates. Contact Roy at 141, Highfield Lane, Newbold, Cheshirefield S41 8BB, e-mail: roycocker@onestel.net.uk

HMS Avenger: S. Torrens seeks any first commission (79-80) ship's company, specifically comms div, foot-ballers, or anyone with info, particularly Topsy Turner, Jumper Collins, Trevor Walsh, Quentin Winkle, Alan Freeman etc. Contact S. Torrens at 43, Whitworth Close, Gosport PO12 3PF, e-mail: scousetorrens@hotmail.com

HMS Loch Lomond (Loch Class Frigates Assn) seeks shipmates, 1956-7: Derek French, Ted Murray, Peter Blogg, Jim Hancock, Bill Lamb and 'G' Roberts. Loch Class includes the Bay Class. Contact John Hanson, The Castle, School Lane, Bricklet Wood, St Albans AL2 3XS, tel: 01923 673563.

HMS Bileston 1970-74: Gary Faulkner seeks anyone who served in this minehunter with him and is interested in a reunion, including Ginge Denyer, Shorty Lougher, Pedlar Palmer, Chris Page, John Pennington, Sharky Ward etc. Contact Gary at 14, Eastlands Close, Tunbridge Wells TN4 8JX, tel/fax: 01892 532713, e-mail: gazz13@btinternet.com

HMS Hero 1936-9: Contact Doug Grainger, 525, Aldorran Ave, Naimo, BC V59 3L9, Canada, e-mail: ve7maa@home.com or Reg (Tug) Wilson, 3 Herald St, Rowes Bay, Townsville, North Queensland 4810, Australia, e-mail: tugwilson@telstra.easymail.com.au

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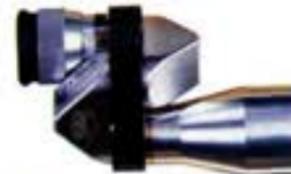
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Don't let your break be a thieves holiday

Thinking of taking an Easter break next month? Before you go, it makes sense to protect your home and property as much as possible to avoid coming back to unnecessary damage or theft.

Thieves are always on the lookout for the tell-tale signs of an empty home – so anything you can do to ensure there are no clues is worthwhile.

But it is not only thieves you need to consider. Weather damage can also be a problem in your absence, and fires and burst pipes can go undetected for a long time.

By following some simple precautions you should be able to really enjoy your holiday knowing you have protected your home as best you can.

And the same precautions can apply for Naval personnel when away at sea. For example, tell as few people as possible that you will be away, and ask a neighbour or friend to keep an eye on your home.

Ask them to remove mail from the letterbox – a clogged letterbox

is a sure sign that the house or flat is empty. They can also make your home look as though it is lived in by closing curtains occasionally to give the impression someone is living there. Timers can also be used to switch off or switch on lights at realistic times.

Another tip is to ensure that valuable items such as electrical equipment cannot be seen easily by anyone looking through your windows.

Try to leave your garden reasonably tidy as an uncut lawn is another sign to potential thieves that there's nobody home. Make sure your garage is locked and any garden equipment or tools are locked away.

Ladders in particular should be well hidden and secured. If you have a connecting door between your garage and house make sure it is locked before you leave. But don't lock any internal doors as

they could be damaged if you are unfortunate enough to have a burglary.

Make sure all windows and external doors are properly locked – but don't make the mistake of leaving a key hidden in the garden. The places you think no one would dream of looking in or under are well known to the experienced burglar.

Perhaps the most obvious thing to do is cancel deliveries of milk and newspapers. It is surprising how many people forget to do that.

As far as weather and other damage is concerned, it's a good idea to carry out checks on things like roof tiles, guttering and satellite dishes to make sure they are secured properly in case of severe weather conditions.

Internally you should ensure there are no taps with minor leaks which could develop into major leaks in your absence. Ensure all electrical wires and switches are safe, and unplug as many items as

possible to try to reduce the risk of fire that could be caused by faulty electrics.

All these precautions are basic common sense. However, we all need to think carefully before we go away on holiday – or for any other occasion – to make it as difficult as possible for anyone waiting for the opportunity to break into an empty home.

So, to sum up, here are our Top Ten tips to safeguard your home when you are away:

- Tell as few people as possible that you will be away.
- Make sure there are no tell-tale signs such as mail, milk and papers.
- Try to make your home look occupied while you are away.
- Remove valuable items from view.
- Leave your garden tidy.
- Lock away tools and ladders.
- Ensure all external doors and windows are locked – but don't lock internal doors.
- Don't hide keys outside.
- Check for possible electrical faults and water leaks.
- Make sure all your property has been adequately covered by insurance

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WHEN the Royal Yacht Britannia was sailing home to Portsmouth for the last time in December 1997, the main roads were gridlocked and I had to make a rapid re-route through the lanes to get the long-lens photograph I wanted from the top of Portsdown Hill.

Fortunately I had one of the most sure-footed motors around, the then just-launched Volvo V70 Cross Country, a nimble all-wheel drive turbo-charged estate which didn't bat an eyelid at lanes slippery with mud and leaves.

That very capable machine was essentially a modified V70, but now there is a new V70 XC which is very much a stand-alone model - longer, wider and taller than the ordinary street version, with wider front track and a third more ground clearance to compare

favourably with a Land Rover Discovery.

It is not intended to be a pure go-anywhere off-roader, but a wagon that is a pleasure to drive and ride in with normal black-top conditions, but also well up to dealing with mud, snow and rough tracks when the need arises.

Of course, this past winter has meant - certainly in my native rural Hampshire - that normal road conditions have included many lanes flooded for months resulting in serious potholing, and the new XC was certainly in its element.

I wasn't going green-laning in it, but the XC's versatility was dazzlingly illustrated for me the day I took a back lane to avoid one flood and met a brace of big trucks heading for a landfill site.

To my left was a bumpy verge transformed into ten inches of glutinous mud, the only other option a quarter-mile reverse, and so - trusting to the publicity material - I took to the mud with a deep breath.

I need not have worried. The XC, with skid-plate protection underneath a no-cost option,

sailed through as if it was an asphalt layby - no slithering, wheel-spinning or understeer and the long-reach suspension articulating beautifully.

If the standard traction control came into play I did not notice, and certainly the 200bhp, 2.4-litre engine with light pressure turbo provided no embarrassment.

This five-cylinder power plant will propel the car from standstill to 60mph in about 8.5 seconds and on to 130mph, and yet, despite the permanent all-wheel drive, I averaged around 28mpg.

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Inside, as this was the £31,410 SE specification model, there was leather upholstery, walnut wood-effect trim, electronic climate control, cruise control, and an information centre including trip computer.

Even on the standard model, priced at £28,910 with the same mechanical specification, there are air conditioning, dual-stage drive and front passenger airbags and side curtain, load cover for the large cargo area, and alloy wheels.

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Helping Hands



● Rebecca Jones, with help from Lt Jeanette Downing-Waite and mum Tanya, tries out a computer games console bought with money raised by the Royal Naval Engineers Quart Club. Seven-year-old Rebecca suffers from a terminal bowel disease, and the engineers got to hear about her plight when Tanya worked at Devonport Naval Base for Lt Downing-Waite.

Picture: LA(PHOTO) Richard Matley

Global tour ship helps hospice

SAILORS in HMS Sutherland used their spare time during a global deployment to raise cash for charities in the ship's home port of Plymouth.

Norris continues tradition

NORRIS the dog is continuing a tradition of 40 years at Figgard Squadron, HMS Raleigh.

The Artificer Apprentices of 003 Entry took part in various events to raise money for the Guide Dogs for the Blind during the term, handing over a cheque for £2,270 at the end of term prize-giving ceremony – bringing the total raised by the squadron for guide dogs in 2000 to £5,120.

As the Type 23 frigate made her way around the world with Naval Task Group 2000 the ship's company organised a number of events on board, including relay races, raffles, a village fete complete with stalls and a host of other sponsored events to raise cash for the less-fortunate.

One of the main organisations to benefit from their efforts was St Luke's Hospice in Plymouth, a charity which is close to the sailors' hearts as their former NAAFI Manager, Falklands veteran John Leake DSM, was treated there.

HMS Sutherland's Commanding Officer, Cdr Paul Thomas, Petty Officer David Lee and the ship's current NAAFI Manager, Dean Kelly, visited the hospice at Turnchapel to present the money and meet staff and patients.

Simon bids to tame the Sahara

SENIOR rate Simon Newbound plans to motorcycle his way across the Sahara Desert to help two British hospitals.

Simon, a CPO (Sonar) in HMS Talent, is using his own leave to undertake the trip, which should last about six weeks.

The challenge is to ride a BMW R1150GS bike some 6,000 miles across harsh terrain in high temperatures.

Simon said: "The reason why I am doing this crossing at this time of year is because it's the only window available when the temperature will be bearable – it could still be up to 40C."

The intrepid submariner, who is a member of the BMW Motorbike Association, has been supported by BMW, who provided special clothing and protective gear for the trip.

He has done his own homework on the route, and believes apart from the heat and loneliness, ensuring he has enough water for each leg of the trip will be the

hardest part.

Simon aims to raise £10,000, to be split between the children's ward at Derriford Hospital, Plymouth, and Manchester Children's Hospital.

Anyone wishing to support Sahara Crossing for Kids can send cheques, payable to Sahara Crossing for Kids, c/o CPO (Sonar) Simon Newbound, HMS Talent, Devonport Naval Base, Plymouth PL2 2BG, or pay into a charity account with Barclay's Bank: sort code 20-68-10, account number 10116971.

You can also follow Simon's progress on the Internet at www.aroundtheworld-bmw1150GS.com

Winning ticket

VICE Admiral Sir Jeremy Blackham drew the winning ticket for the KGFS 2000 national raffle at the London Boat Show. The winners were Mr and Mrs M. Brockway of Burford.

No effort spared for Royal British Legion

THE FIRST Poppy Appeal golf classic tournament has raised more than £6,000 for the Poppy Appeal.

Golfers at 50 municipal and private clubs across the country braved poor weather to play the competitions, and each club winner received a specially-minted gold medal.

The Royal British Legion's Corporate Fundraising Manager, Mike Cummins, said: "We have had huge interest from golfers who want to support the Legion through their favourite hobby, so we are now planning a second tournament for this year."

Information will be available from Peter Smith from Easter on 0121 747 3912, at seniors-golf.association@virgin.net, or 22, Castello Drive, Birmingham B36 9TB.

■ If you missed out on a place in the London Marathon, there is still Boston or Amsterdam.

The Legion has secured rare charity places in both races (Boston on April 16, Amsterdam on October 14), and trips are being run to see some of the sights of New England and the Netherlands in connection with the races.

For details of entry fees, costs of

travel and minimum pledges, contact the Marathon Hotline on 0207 973 7285, or marathons@britishlegion.org.uk

■ FORMER CREA Graham Matthews is aiming to complete one million metres on a Concept rowing machine in aid of the Poppy Appeal.

Graham (61), who served from 1956-79, started his epic row at the Felpham Time Zone in July, and aims to clock up the distance in under a year.

On April 22 he will row the marathon distance while the London Marathon is on.

Anyone wishing to sponsor him should send cheques, payable to the Poppy Appeal, to 35, Rife Way, Felpham, West Sussex PO22 7BF.

Good show against the odds

MILITARY and civilian staff at RMB Chivenor and in Kosovo overcame the odds to notch up almost £30,000 for various charities and good causes.

The Chivenor Open Day in July was rained out, and personnel have been deployed to the Balkans, but all-out efforts – from fund-raising to helping out at a

Christmas party at a nursing home – yielded a total of £29,256.

In addition, the rear party of the tri-Service base in North Devon provided five contingents for local Remembrance Day parades.

With the return of personnel over the next couple of months, the base hopes to make 2001 even more successful.

Hikers raise over £4,000



● Hikers from HMS Bangor enjoy the view.

FIVE hikers from HMS Bangor have opened the ship's charity account with a donation in excess of £4,000.

The hike, along the tough West Highland Way, and finishing with an ascent of Ben Nevis, was the first event staged by the ship since build.

The money raised will allow Clifton Special Needs School in Bangor, Northern Ireland, to buy more specialist equipment for the disabled pupils.

Led by Lt Paul Guiver, Executive Officer of the Sandown-class minehunter, the team hiked 105 miles, enduring bad weather and blisters, but finished as planned in four days.

Sponsors included Divex, Solent Divers, Carlton Technologies and Bradbury's jewellers. A repeat performance is being contemplated for later this year, with a target of three days.

In Brief

MONEY raised at St Ann's Church in Portsmouth Naval Base has been presented to Chaplain of the Fleet Ven. Simon Golding for the Chaplaincy Millennium Appeal for Mozambique.

The £8,500 was raised from collections, quiz evenings, a sale of home-made preserves and a concert where most performers were members of the congregation.

THE seven-day ascent of Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa by 22 members of the ship's company of HMS President, led by Lt Cdr Peter Baker RNR, raised £11,000 for Barnardo's.

Members of the RN Reserve unit in London handed the cheque to the Lord Mayor of London's appeals manager to pass on to the Newham Family Trust.

BAD weather failed to dampen the spirits of members of the Senior Upper Yardman's Course from BRNC Dartmouth, when they helped on a community project.

The team excavated trenches, laid pipes and cleared pathways at the Lower Sharpsham Barton Farm, near Totnes, a working farm providing day services to adults with learning disabilities.

Meanwhile, 19 Young Officers from Lion Division spent a weekend decorating the Dartmouth Community and Youth Centre.

A PARACHUTE jump by WEA Andrew Cook meant he could present a cheque for £340 to Macmillan Cancer Relief.

Andrew, who is training at HMS Collingwood, did the jump with fellow trainees.

SYNDICATES of students from Glasgow and Strathclyde University RN Unit raised £500 at their horse-racing night for East Park, a home for children with special needs.

CPO RAY Longhurst will be running the London Marathon next month in support of KGFS and CLIC. Sponsors should contact him at 39, Churchill Walk, Saltash PL12 4PG, e-mail Ray@Longhurst42.freeserve.co.uk

DEVONPORT Naval Base postman Dave Batten collected £275 around the base and ships in aid of the Asthma Trust Fund at Derriford Hospital. Dave, whose wife, daughter and two grandchildren all suffer from asthma, has now raised £1,500 in five years.

FUNDS raised at RN air station Culdrose have been donated to three organisations: £2,000 each to St Julia's Hospice, Hayle, and the Leonard Cheshire Home, Marazion, and £1,000 to the Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen.

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Appointments

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Vice Admiral J. Band to be Deputy C-in-C Fleet in succession to Vice Admiral Sir Fabian Malbon, May.

Capt T. P. McClement to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff in succession to Rear Admiral J. M. Burnell-Nugent, April 23.

Surgeon Capt G. W. Myers to be Director Naval Dental Services and Clinical Services in rank of Surgeon Commodore, July 20.

Capt T. P. Fraser to be CO HMS Cardiff and Capt D. June 5.

Cdr B.J. Key to be CO HMS Lancaster, May 18.

Cdr D. Dutton, to be CO HMS Glasgow, May 22.

Cdr J. N. Ferguson to be CO HMS Vengeance (Starboard), April 24.

Cdr J. I. Humphreys to be CO HMS Victorious (Port), July 17.

Cdr K. E. Blount to be CO HMS Somerset, April 27.

Lt Cdr M. Lister to be CO HMS Chiddingfold, April 24.

Lt Cdr M. I. Newland to be CO HMS Leeds Castle, March 14.

Lt Cdr J. S. Petherick to be CO HMS Hurworth, June 12.

Lt Cdr T. J. Guy to be CO HMS Shoreham, July 11.

Lt Cdr P. C. Ireland to be CO HMS Brocklesby, June 26.

Lt Cdr D. Cartwright to be CO HMS Alderney, June 19.

Capt I. N. Pilling RFA to be CO RFA Gold Rover, Dec. 4.

Capt R. G. Ferris RFA to be CO RFA Diligence, Dec. 20.

Capt L. M. Coupland RFA to be CO RFA Sir Geraint, Jan. 3.

Capt J. Murchie RFA to be CO RFA Fort Austin, Jan. 8.

Capt J. P. Huxley RFA to be CO RFA Sir Tristram, Dec. 15.

Swop drafts

MEMI Kirkland, HMS Brocklesby, BFPO 241 (Faslane ext 7282), will swop for any Portsmouth draft, preferably not deploying.

OM(AW)1 G. M. Smyth (Nav's Yeo qualified), 3G Mess, HMS Sheffield, BFPO 383 (deployed Feb. 8 for WGS), will swop for any Plymouth Type 22 not deploying.

STD Snoxell, 6E1 Mess, HMS Illustrious, BFPO 305 until March next year. Will swop for any Portsmouth or Plymouth Type 23 or 42 deploying.

LMEM(L) Sheriff (07714214205), drafted HMS Fearless, March 26. Will swop for any sea-going ship, preferably Type 23.

WSA C. Peters, HMS Drake DPL, since Oct 5 Woolcombe Block, HMS Drake, Plymouth (07747798030), will swop for any Portsmouth shore base.

LOM(C) Rhodes, 39 Man Mess, HMS Somerset, BFPO 395, will swop for any Portsmouth Type 23 deploying or not.

MEMI John Harvey (Scale 8), HMS Brocklesby, BFPO 241, will swop for any Portsmouth small ship. Will consider Type 42/23.

LMEM Stokes, Building Services Team, JSU Northwood, Sandy Lane, Northwood, H46 39P. Will swop for any Plymouth shore draft.

LCH Richardson, Neptune Galley, HMS Nelson (0300 24139), drafted HMS Quorn, June 4. Will swop for any Portsmouth or Plymouth ship.

RATINGS seeking to swop drafts must meet the requirements of BR14, article 0506. In particular, they should be on or due the same kind of service - sea or shore; have time to serve in their current draft; be the same rate; and be of similar experience. All applications for swop drafts are to be made on Form C240 to NDD, Centurion Building.

Prince's WW2 experience

THE PRINCE of Wales has paid a visit to the Second World War Experience in Leeds, meeting staff and volunteers - which includes veterans from 1939-45.

The centre, at York Place, is a charitable foundation dedicated to the rescue of all forms of evidence of personal experience of the war, including the personal testimonies of around 1,700 people, civilian and military, from Britain, Europe, the Commonwealth and USA.

In memory of CCWEA (ret'd) Albert Chadwick "Chad" Died suddenly at home in Tobermory Isle of Mull Thursday 1st of February. Served in HM Submarine Revenge, discharged HMS Neptune July 1988

NAVY NEWS looks back through its pages to recall some of the March headlines of past decades . . .

THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

40 years ago

AN ORDER was to be placed for a new assault ship, announced Lord Carrington, First Lord of the Admiralty, in his statement on the Navy Estimates. The ship would be finished in three years and would carry landing craft which could be launched from a dock area astern.

The seventh Porpoise-class submarine, HMS Walrus, was accepted into service.

30 years ago

THEME of the Defence White Paper was "consolidation and stability" - and it was noted that there had been a 23 per cent rise in recruitment. There were still serious shortages in some categories, but, said Navy News, there was "a growing number of satisfied customers among men already serving".

Hopes were reported to be fading for the preservation of the cruiser HMS Belfast which had



● 1961 - HMS Walrus enters service

paid off. What appeared to be the final nail in the coffin of the plan to make her a tourist attraction was the refusal of the Government to give financial aid.

20 years ago

SERVING personnel were to be given first refusal in the sale of many married quarters. The move was an interim measure until the Ministry of Defence could afford a discounts scheme on quarters sales, postponed because of lack of funds.

Defence Secretary John Nott made his first visit to the Navy by being winched on board the frigate HMS Broadsword and HM submarine Spartan off the Cornish coast.

Deaths

OM(EW)2 David Paul Taylor, HMS Lancaster, Jan. 25.

AEM1 Richard John Baker, RNAS Yeovilton, Jan. 27.

AEM1 David R. Hale, 846 NAS (RNAS Yeovilton), Feb. 7.

OM(AW)2 Matthew J. Lewis, HMS Sheffield, Feb. 8.

Vice-Admiral Sir Roderick Macdonald

KBE, Chief of Staff to C-in-C Allied Forces Southern Europe (NATO) 1976-79. Served 1939-79. Appointments: Belfast, Valiant (Mediterranean), Fortuna (Mediterranean), Indian Ocean, Atlantic, Southland, Mayneff (coastal convoys, Normandy landings), Cockade (Pacific), Leeds Castle (CO 1953), Eastington (CO), Walserton (CO and 104th Minesweeping Squadron - Cyprus anti-Eoka campaign), MID, Commander Sea Training 1959-61, HMS Falmouth (CO), Commander Naval Forces and Joint Force Commander Borneo (1965-67), Indonesian Confrontation, CBE, Galatia (CO and Captain Londonderry Squadron), CO First Frigate Squadron Far East 1969, Captain of Fleet 1970-72, HMS Bristol (first CO 1972-73), Chief of Staff to C-in-C Naval Home Command 1973-76. Played rugby for United Services XV 1950. Second career as painter - one-man exhibitions in Naples 1978; Edinburgh 1980, 1989; London throughout 1980s and 1990s. Author of The Figurehead 1990 - book of wartime sketches. Younger brother of Trinity House, vice-president 1976-85 and Fellow Nautical Institute, Chairman of Isle of Skye Piping Society and of Inverness Sea Cadet unit. Trustee of Clan Donald Lands Trust. Member of Association of RN Officers, Jan. 19, aged 79.

Commandant Dame Nancy Robertson

OBE, Director of WRNS 1954-58, served 1939-58. Appointments: Orkney 1939-42; CO Liverpool Outer Ports Area, Western Approaches 1942-44; Chief Officer WRNS Ceylon 1944-45 (OBE); Superintendent WRNS (Training & Drafting) 1952-54 (CBE). OBE 1957, Dec. 26, aged 91.

Cdr Peter John Messervy MBE, GM, diving and salvage expert, served 1936-70. Became PTI and boxed and played rugby for Navy. Won ABA championship 1950. Ships: Resolution, Royal Sovereign, Badger (Harwich), Assegai (Durban), Resource, Elin, Freebooter, Duke of York, Unicorn (Korea). Trained as diver HMS Vernon 1934. Attached Lochinvar with Fleet Bomb and Mine Disposal (MBE); Far East Fleet and Mine Disposal Officer (MBE); Terror, Singapore 1957-60 - George Medal for salvaging six live torpedoes from sunken Japanese submarine in Singapore Roads. Working in adverse conditions, minimal visibility and using a flame cutter close to warheads, he completed the task in six weeks. MBE; HMS Vernon 1960-62 (Mining Officer); HMS Plover (CO); 1962-64; Osprey, Vernon 1964-66; Reclaim (CO); 1966-68. Deputy Superintendent Portsmouth Dockyard 1968-70. As general manager of Vickers Oceanic, headed rescue of two men trapped 1,600ft deep in submersible Probes II - the deepest and longest underwater rescue at sea, Jan. 11, aged 80. Daughter Gay Messervy (01243 573709) arranging memorial service.

Ronald Clark MBE, secretary Swindon branch of SSAFA Forces Help. Served WW2. Ships included Saumarez (Atlantic and Russian convoys including Battle of North Cape, Normandy landings, Far East including sinking of Japanese cruiser Haguro. Member of HMS Saumarez Association, Jan., aged 77.

Nelson Jellicoe Kitchener Hubbska, ex-PO Tel. submarine, served 1938-45. Born Trafalgar Day 1915 and named by patriotic parents. Boats: H28, H33, Odin, Roquai (Malta "magic carpet run"), Tribune, Salyr, Unga, Truant, Awarded Royal Humane Society Medal in 1949 for saving life. Founder member and former standard bearer of London branch of Submariners Association, Dec. 30, aged 85.

Lt Cdr T. L. Janion, served 1933-62. Ships: Rodney, Orion, Ramilies, Witch, Blankney, London, Truelove, Assistant Captain Devonport Dockyard, MID, Dec. 26, aged 63.

Vic (Yogi) Marshall, ex-AB, served 1943-56. Last ship HMS Whitesand Bay. Korean War veteran, Dec. 26, aged 69.

Robert L. G. McCrindle, ex-CPOSA, served 1948-71. Ships: Drake, Illustrious, Loch Lomond, Malcolm, Lochinvar, Collingwood, Tamar, Neptune, Victory, Jan. 6, aged 70.

Ken Crook, ex-L/Std, served WW2. Ships included HMS Parrot, Rodney. Member of the River Class Association.

David Pass, ex-L/Torpedoman. Ships included Parrot, Rodney. Pacific veteran. Member of River Class Association.

Derrick (Punch) Wilcott, ex-Sto WW2. Ships included HMS Formidable 1943-46. Jan. 22.

James (Jim) Crabtree, ex-CPO electrician, served 1944-76. Ships included Collingwood, Mohawk, Jan. 2.

Frank Gillett, member of HMS Comus Commodore, Jan. 17.

Lt Cdr Donald Watson RNR, RVD, served 1939-46 (former Pangbourne College and Port Line). Ships: Douglas, Cape Portland, Northern Chief, Loch Duivigan.

Robert Chipkin, ex-PO(R), served 1965-71. Ships: Undaunted, Loch Fada, Leopard, Jan. 31, aged 95.

Donald G. Brand, ex-Tel. Ships included HMS Obedience, LSTs. Member of HMS Obedience Association, Feb. 1, aged 80.

Lt Cdr John E. Hamilton-Jones, Ships: Benwick, Unicorn, Engadine, WW2 veteran of Arctic and Mediterranean convoys and Pacific, Jan. 19, aged 76.

Lt Simpson Herbert (Harry) Wragg, former FAA photographic officer, joined as rating and oldest member Nuneaton. Served in Coastal Forces, Jan. 6, aged 91.

Freda Brewitt, Brentwood.

Philip Gawler, Brentwood.

Chris Buisit, Bury St Edmunds, Ex-RM, served 1938-47. Ships included HMS York (Atlantic convoys, Norway, Mediterranean, Malta convoys, Crete - wounded survivor. Escaped Germans by stealing fishing vessel

and reaching Egypt). Veteran of D-Day. Aged 81.

Ken Jones, founder member, life member and vice president Wrexham, Ex-Sto WW2. Ships included HMS Pytchley, Jan. 19, aged 76.

John A. Martin, Birchington on Sea and former member Southend on Sea, Aged 75.

Eric Wolvey, chairman Royal Turbidity Wells. Served in landing craft in landings in Sicily, Salerno and Normandy, Jan.

E. Conway, Hemel Hempstead. Service: Maynard (LR2), Member of 1st Destroyer Flotilla Association.

Peter Coxall, Hemel Hempstead, Ex-RM commando. Veteran of WW2 landings in N. Africa, Sicily, Arzi, Normandy.

Joy Stevenson, associate member Londonderry, Jan. 28.

A. Barrowclough, Dewsbury, Bailey & Birstal, Jan.

J. Mooney, Dewsbury, Bailey & Birstal, Ex-FAA, Jan.

Clarence (Chick) Worthington, Newark, Ex-PO(D). Service (from 1938): Ganges, Hawkins, Penelope, King George V, Nile, Birmingham, Cormorant, Usk, Stag. Member

of HMS Ganges Association, HMS Penelope Association and North Russia Club, Jan. 23 while holidaying in Morocco.

Raymond Thomas Ashby, Nuneaton, Ex-AB, Jan. 26, aged 77.

R. Saunders, Maidstone, Ex-AB TM in Coastal Forces. Served 1943-47. Aged 75.

Victor Paul Hockley, West Lothian, Ex-FORMEA(P), served 1952-78. Ships: Kappel, Birmingham, Malcolm, Augusta, Sultan, Caprice, Lowestoft, Bacchante, Apollo, Jan. 28, aged 65.

John T. Ledden, Sidcup. Served in WW2. Ships included Pembroke, Nigeria. Veteran of Malta convoys, Aged 76.

John Ashford, Sidcup. Ships: Shropshire, Cowslip, Musketeer, Aurora. Member of Duke Association, Aged 76.

Lawrence Gormley, St Helens, Ex-Sto, John Loftus, St Helens, Ex-AB.

George Edward (Joe) Baldry, Ipswich. Invalided out in 1936 after injury with HMS Royal Oak gun team. Other ships: Arctura, Pembroke, Ganges, Moth. Worked in munitions WW2. Aged 90.

John Maslin, president Cardiff, Jan. 27.

Icanus, Bellona, President, Minerva, Manuman, Cochran, Victory.

Lt Cdr H. J. Watkins, Served: Vega, Walpole, Troubridge, Telcott, Chameleon, Duke of York, Drake.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

A. C. (Chas) Lord, Weylyn Garden City, Ex-AB, served 1943-48. Ships: Ganges, Bramble, Redpole. Member of M5-Herts. Div. of HMS Ganges Association, Jan. 12, aged 73.

Peter Walker, Bridlington, Ex-AB. Ships included HMS Concord 1953-55. Member of 8th Destroyer Flotilla Association, Jan. 18, aged 69.

George Ewart Haines, life vice president and oldest member Nuneaton. Served in Coastal Forces, Jan. 6, aged 91.

Freda Brewitt, Brentwood.

Philip Gawler, Brentwood.

Chris Buisit, Bury St Edmunds, Ex-RM, served 1938-47. Ships included HMS York (Atlantic convoys, Norway, Mediterranean, Malta convoys, Crete - wounded survivor. Escaped Germans by stealing fishing vessel

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John Maslin, president Cardiff, Jan. 27.

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6th Frigate squadron in battle at Devonport

A RARE meeting of all ships of the 6th Frigate Squadron at their base port was used to host an F6 sports day at the Wyvern Centre.

Teams from all ships took part, including HMS Portland, the newest arrival to the Devonport Type 23 community, and they took each other on at five-a-side soccer, bucketball, hockey, volleyball and 'chain of command' tug of war.

The soccer was fiercely contested with some thrilling matches but HMS Somerset was crowned champion after their extra skill spelled defeat for HMS Portland in the final.

The bucketball began in a more composed manner but soon required the intervention of the PT staff to moderate some of the enthusiastic play and HMS Monmouth's team battled through to win, fielding the ship's rugby team in a decidedly hard-fought contest!

HMS Argyll ruled the volleyball court while all teams found the hockey tough with only six players on a full-size pitch. In the final, a strong HMS Monmouth fought off a well-organised HMS Montrose team to win 2-1, but by the final whistle both teams were glad to finish.

The final event, the Chain of Command tug of war, also came as a relief as skill and dexterity could be replaced with bulk and brawn in a knock-out competition.

Some strong verbal support added to the excitement and after much toing and froing HMS Argyll managed to pull HMS Northumberland's team to win the Tug of War Trophy.

With more than £500 spent on trophies and tankards, the prize-giving was a fitting end to a highly successful afternoon.

The trophy for overall winner was presented to HMS Monmouth's LPT Karl Jones by Capt F6, Capt Tony Johnstone-Burt, although Montrose finished joint first.

Rugby club heads for the Netherlands

THE AFNORTH Knights rugby union club will be holding their fifth annual international 10s tournament in Brunssum, the Netherlands, from May 12-13.

The event is open to all Service and military personnel, male and female.

Anyone interested in playing should contact Gareth Whiffen on 0031 45 5262428 (fax 0031 45 5262161) or Alan Matthews on 0031 45 5262266.

The address to write to is Knights RUF, NRS Admin, RHQ AFNORTH, BFPO 28.

Sport



Iron Duke shatters relay record

A COMPREHENSIVE fitness package arranged by LPT Dean (Club) Scales for the ship's company of HMS Iron Duke paid dividends during the ship's six-month deployment as Atlantic Patrol Ship (South).

Early morning circuit training, weight lifting sessions at lunchtime and two more circuit training sessions in the evenings helped to harden-up the crew.

And their fitness level were proven during the Mike Till Relay Challenge in which Iron Duke shattered previous record time of ten hours 20 minutes and 43 seconds.

The Challenge sees 100 runners running a mile around the deck in a relay race which commemorates CPO Mike Till, a keen runner and participant in the 100-mile relay who died on board HMS Sheffield.

The best time was posted by Lt Chris Bowen at 5 minutes, an impressive feat given the tight turns and ring bolts encountered around the upper deck.

The final leg was run by the oldest man on board, the XO, Lt Cdr David Baker (39) who completed his mile in 5 minutes 33 seconds, giving a total time of just 9 hours 57 minutes and 40 seconds, the first time that the ten-hour barrier has been broken. The average time of the runners was 58.6 seconds, and average speed of 10.04 mph!

Disaster strikes Navy skiers at Megève

ROYAL Navy Ski Captain Jeff Choat came a close second in the men's individual competition at the British Services International Ski and Snowboard Championships at the French resort of Megève.

Choat gave the favourite Army team Captain Sacha Zvegintsov an early scare when the two skiers tied for first place in the downhill, the 'Blue Riband' event of the competition.

Each recorded a time of 1:29.44, only the second time that there has been a tie in the last five years, and Choat put him under pressure all the way, finishing second in the slalom and second in the super G.

Jamie Black, who won the men's prize for most improved skier, Jamie Mitchell and Mark Campbell provided good support for Choat in helping to record team second places in the downhill, the super G and the giant slalom.

But disaster struck in the penultimate event, the slalom. Two racers were disqualified and Roland Schofield fell, tearing ligaments. It was cruel luck for Schofield who was returning to the team after a two year absence and it meant that the team could not record the minimum four times from the six nominated racers.

The result was that the team could not be placed in the slalom and could not record a final championship position, allowing the RAF to take second place behind

the Army which won the coveted Sir Arnold Lunn Trophy for the 13th consecutive year.

After the race Jeff Choat said: "We had a stronger team than last year and were beating the RAF convincingly, and were unfortunate to have two guys disqualified in the slalom and one that did not finish."

"One of our new people, Jamie Mitchell, skied very well. He is a good prospect for the future and Jamie Black also skied very well."

The women's team put up a brave performance, with all the odds stacked heavily against them.

They arrived at Megève with only four skiers, the squad ravaged by injuries and absences enforced by work commitments.

Gillian Murdoch, who was almost a beginner when she was chosen for the team, joined last year's competitors Kate Nurton, Carol Strong and Rachel Morgan, and she was quite literally taken from snowplough to super G in four weeks before the competition.



Nick Earl, Manager of the Royal Navy Snowboarding team, shows how it's done during the Tri-Service Championships.

She said: "My team mates were brilliant. They said 'just enjoy it and try to get down'. It has been great fun and I can't wait until next year."

It was no surprise that the team finished third in the super G and giant slalom, and in the slalom the story was the same as the men's. The team failed to record a minimum of four times and were eliminated.

In the individual competition Carol Strong finished fourth and Kate Nurton was eighth.

The Royal Navy snowboarding team was more successful, recording second place in the first year that the Tri-Service championships has included the sport. The RN finished second behind the RAF in all three events.

Snowboard team manager Nick Earl said: "Everyone was encouraged by the results. We had some really good results in the dual slalom and giant slalom but the snowboarder cross was disappointing."

Winter sports competition proves as popular as ever

THE ROYAL Navy Ski and Snowboarding championships at Les Arcs proved to be a popular and successful event with 500 RN personnel taking part and more than 800 overall writes Cdr Gary Skinnis.

The first of the two weeks was devoted to all levels of instruction, from for those who had never skied or snowboarded before all the way to expert race training.

The second week was mainly a busy series of races at Command, Unit and Individual levels together with continued training at all levels conducted as the race programme allowed.

In the men's section Lt Jeff Choat, the RN Men's Captain, was the pick of the skiers followed by newcomer S/Lt Jamie Mitchell, while CWPT Carol Strong, the ladies Captain, was again pick of the ladies with Lt Kate Nurton not far behind.

Lt Andy Naylor took major honours among the snowboarders with CPO Mick Arrowsmith showing great promise. The event was blessed with superb Alpine sunshine and although some of the

pistes were a little icy in places, conditions overall were very good.

The forecast fall of snow happened on the final day and, although it did not affect the racing, there were some interesting drives off the mountain the following morning.

□ The championships remain the largest participatory event in the Naval sporting calendar and plans are already in hand for the return to Les Arc in January 2002.



● CWPT Carol Strong: The Royal Navy Women's Captain was top female skier at Les Arcs and she ranked fourth at the Tri-Service championships at Megève.



● L/Cpl David Tang (RMR Bristol), who won the Telemark novice competition and took the Basic Men's title at the RN event.

RN squashed at Temeraire

DESPITE missing some of its better players through operational commitments, the Navy had a number of successes to cheer about at the Inter Services Squash championships at HMS Temeraire.

Although the senior squad lost 5-0 to a very strong Army team, they managed a most creditable 2-3 defeat to the RAF, with LWTR Jason Youdale playing in his last Navy competition before leaving the Service, defeating the RAF number one 9-0, 9-0, 9-0.

The Veterans team, hoping to retain the trophy they won last year, beat the Army 4-1, but fielding an injury weakened team on the final day lost to the RAF 2-3.

The Under 25s had a 5-0 walkover against the RAF who were unable to raise a side, but lost convincingly to the Army 3-0. The Ladies spoilt RAF plans by defeating them 3-2, but again lost to a very strong Army team 5-0. The Army also took the Seniors, U25 and Ladies titles while the RAF won the Veterans cup.

LWOM(C) Helen Chalmers was presented with Combined Services colours, and Commodore Richard Pelly presented RN colours to veterans CPO Ian Binks, Cdr David Langbridge, Lt Cdr Martin Jukes, seniors LA(SE) Craig Robinson, POPT Jason Wallace, BCSgt Craig Burns, U25s Simon Backhouse, OM(C) Lewis Colley and from the Ladies team to OM(C) Mary Belayse-Smith.

■ A few weeks earlier, HMS Temeraire hosted 12 competitors in the RNSRA year 2000 Veterans squash championship which was re-scheduled to separate them from the main open championships last October.

Predictably, the top four seeds comfortably reached the semi final stage where Lt Cdr Robin Young overcame Commodore Richard Pelly with a resounding 3-0 success and Lt Cdr Martin Jukes faced a 'not 100 per cent' CPO Ian Binks. Jukes ran out a 3-1 winner, but met his match in the final where Robin Young made light of his work using guile, skill and fitness to take his third title in four years, 3-0.

In the Plate, CPO Dave Stickland beat Cdr Chris Lightfoot in a no nonsense 3-0 match.

Badminton domination

TWO PLAYERS dominated the Royal Navy Badminton Championships at HMS Sultan.

HMS Glasgow's LS Gary Pearce defeated Lt Cdr David Hill from HMS Heron to become the men's champion.

And Northwood HQ's LWTR Tracy Hopkins accounted for Lt Louise Eastwood from HMS Sultan in the ladies' final.

Pearce partnered Lt Roger Kennedy of 849 NAS to win the men's doubles and Hopkins and Eastwood took the ladies doubles title.

And when LS Pearce and LWTR Hopkins teamed-up to face Lt Eastwood and Lt Cdr Hill they added the mixed doubles title to their collection after a closely-fought final.

The restricted men's doubles was won by Nelson's MEM Matt Bowyer and Dartmouth's OC Robert Aldous (who won the U21s) while Cdr Rod Steel won the veteran's events, winning the singles, and doubles with Sultan's CPO Billy Smith.

Tough guys come up smiling



FOUR tough competitors from HMS Excellent entered the arduous Tough Guy Challenge at Wolverhampton, completing the ordeal in just over two and a half hours.

(From left) POPT Spike Hughes, LPT Paul Newcombe, CPO Cuz Curran and LPT Rex Staples finished a ten-mile cross-country course, then tackled The Killing Fields, an obstacle course of freezing mud (the water temperature was well below freezing) with 22 different challenges. The four finished 1,225-1,228 out of 6,000 entrants.



RN is poised for national boxing glory

Marine leads British XV to 35-0 victory in Kosovo

A STUNNING 35-0 victory over French forces by a British Army and Royal Marines XV thrilled a large and vocal – if bemused – crowd at the 15,000-seat National Stadium in Pristina, Kosovo.

The Brits extended their lead to eight points by half time when their captain, Capt Paul Kearney RM, charged down a clearance kick to follow-up with a score.

By the beginning of the second half the British were securing steady possession, and in the last 20 minutes piled on the pressure against their broken opponents.

The Austerlitz Trophy was presented to Capt Kearney by the Commander of UN Forces in Kosovo, Italian General Cabriosa.

Navy to play Army on Argyle turf

FOR THE first time an inter-Services football match will be played on a league ground when a Navy v Army event is played on Plymouth Argyle's turf on March 14.

Capt David Tall, chairman of the RN Football Association, said the Services were very grateful to the club for allowing them to play on its ground. "We want as many people from Devon and Cornwall to come along for a great family evening and to cheer on the Royal Navy team," he said. Entry is free.

During the evening (kick-off 5pm) local children will try to beat former Argyle keeper James Dungy in a half-time penalty shoot-out competition.

May 5 set for Twickenham

THE ARMY v Navy Rugby Union match for the Willis Trophy will be played at Twickenham on May 5 (kick-off 3pm). For tickets call 0870 444 6633 (fax 023 9272 5472) or e-mail www.navyrugbyunion.co.uk. Tickets are £12.50 and £5 for children and OAPs, with discounts for families and schools.

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FOUR Royal Navy boxers have made it to this year's Amateur Boxing Association quarter-finals, putting the RN team in its best position in the national rankings for a decade.

Three of the four – Mne Jimmy Cusick, OM Tony Hindley and OM Kev Davie – took part in the Combined Services Boxing Championships at RAF Uxbridge where the Navy team's victory confirmed its strong position.

The fourth, Mne Nick Isherwood, was awarded a bye to the next round.

Cusick, Hindley and Mne Mick O'Connell had to box preliminary bouts against champions.

RN light welterweight champion Cusick (40 Cdo) proved too fast and strong for the RAF's Stuart O'Donnell in a bout stopped by the referee in the fourth round, while cruiser-weight Hindley's powerful performance won him the award for the championship's best boxer. He took less than two rounds to knock out Britain's No. 2 ranker with a devastating right cross.

Navy heavyweight champion

O'Connell clearly outscored last year's class B national champion with a combination of punches to the Army man's head and body.

In the first of the five finals OM Kev Davie's persistent attacks ground down Army champion Steve Richards, a final-round assault earning Davie his second Combined Services crown in succession.

Cusick, fighting Army man John Cronin, produced three rounds of non-stop action, switching his target from head to body in the fourth to clinch a unanimous decision in his favour.

Mne Graham Alderson, who arrived in UK only three weeks before the event, put in a fine performance against England international Pte Steve Briggs. But when the Army man caught his opponent with a stiff punch, Alderson was given a mandatory standing count and the fight was stopped.

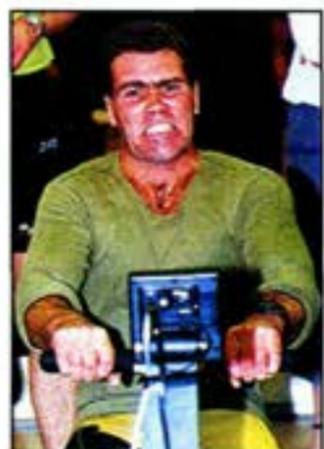
Hindley continued his victorious

Indoor rowers' world title bid

ONE OF the victors in the RN and RM indoor rowing championships, Lt Phil Rogers, was preparing to represent Britain and the Royal Navy in the world championship event as *Navy News* went to press.

His team-mate at the event in Boston, USA, is Lt Cdr Neil McMullen. Both work at HMS Sultan.

Previous winners of the



● At the pain barrier – Lt Cdr Richard Cowley (Defence Diving School) in the 4,000m team event.

world event have been Olympic rowers Steve Redgrave and Matthew Pinsent.

In the RN and RM championships, under the auspices of the Amateur Rowing Association, Phil achieved the superb time of 6 min 14.5 secs in the male 30-39 heavyweight category.

Neil and Phil went on to compete in the 2000 Concept II National Championships at Reading, coming third and sixth respectively in the men's 2,000m open, putting the Naval Service in indoor rowing's top rank.

The RN and RM event, sponsored by Concept II, included a notable performance by Bugler Zoe O'Gorman (RM Band Portsmouth) who won the female open (20-29) 2,000m in 7 min 54.3, Bugler Brown winning the corresponding male category in 6 min 40.4.

WO1 Strathern (RM Stonehouse) won the male 40-plus event in 6 min 28.1.

Other results:
Large-unit 4,000m team event – Stonehouse A (12 min 7.2); D0FF/SM team category – HMS Southampton (12 min 5); fastest team – HMS Temeraire (11 min 37).

Deployed ships and units:
HMS Dulliverton – five wins in men's individual 2,000m small-ship category; HMS Middleton – small-ship team 4,000m (12 min 31.5); LCH Turner, HMS Herald – men's open heavyweight D0FF/SM (6 min 35.3); LS Bore, HMS Liverpool – men's 30-39 lightweight (7 min 5.2); C/Sgt Breach, HMS Endurance – men's 30-39 heavyweight (6 min 22.3); Lt Atkinson, HMS Herald – female open lightweight (8 min 17.9).

HMS Iron Duke won the D0FF/SM 4,000m team event and HMS Endurance the corresponding female category.



● Man of the tournament, OM Tony Hindley, powers his way to a CSBA cruiser-weight title.

Picture: SAC Lisa Bennett, RAF

campaign by outpointing the Army champion Vince Jones despite having a sore right hand from the previous day. O'Connell was not so fortunate in his final, losing in a disputed decision to Pte Nathan Siggs, last year's champion and England's No. 4.

Lightning seemed to strike twice for the Marine when he was disqualified in his bout against the RAF champion when the referee accused O'Connell of landing a punch after an order to stop. A complaint lodged by the RNBA failed to reverse the decision.

Royals in cross country triumph

A STRONG Royal Marines contingent proved dominant in the RN Cross Country Championships run on a Brown-down course that was at its best.

All three medals in the senior men's race were scooped by the Corps, first place going to Mark Croasdale with Cpl Gary Gerrard holding off a fast-finishing Mne Wayne Dashper for the second spot.

Junior men's winner was Mne Parrington who led home a strong RM group from CTCRM to take the team prize. However, MEM Adams (HMS Sultan) battled gamely to get in among the Royals to finish third.

The ladies race proved a nail-biting affair, with newcomer STD Kelly Wharton carving her way through the field to push POWWTR Vickie Norton all the way. Behind them, WWTR Nickie Bush and POWWTR Lindsay Gannon were in a sprint-finish, with Nickie getting the verdict by the thickness of her vest.

Surprise result of the day was a victory over the Royal Marines by the Portsmouth veteran men's team.

Now it is hoped that a short training weekend in Portugal will get the RN team in good shape for the Inter-Services Championships at RAF Halton on March 2.



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Voyager Salty Bear's big welcome home

GLOBAL media star Salty Bear is back home after seeing the world – and is ready to pick up his education where he left off.

Salty, from Marine Park First School in Whitley Bay, hitched a lift with destroyer HMS Newcastle during last year's Naval Task Group 2000 deployment, and sent the children details of his adventures.

He logged up three TV appearances and made it into several newspapers while he was away, watched over by his sea daddy, Lt Cdr Mike Maxwell-Cox.

He was joined on his travels by Nellie the Elephant, who was given to the ship by a little girl in Russia.

Now, around 30,000 miles on, the call of the sea has faded, and while his ship was making a home visit to the Tyne, Commanding Officer Cdr Steve Pearson accompanied him back to his school.

"Salty has been to the top of Mount Fuji and to the Great Wall of China, though he declined to go parachuting," said ship's Public Relations Officer Lt Cdr Peter Richardson.

According to Cdr Pearson, "Salty Bear is very much looking forward to visiting his friends on the ship when HMS Newcastle returns to the city at the end of the year."



● Cdr Steve Pearson, CO of HMS Newcastle, with Salty Bear at Marine Park first School, Whitley Bay. Picture: LA/PHOT Dave Whitaker

Sailors return to Ark

FIRST members of HMS Ark Royal's ship's company are due to move back on board at the end of March.

The embarkation of more than 200 Royal Navy personnel marks a milestone in the return to service of the aircraft carrier. She is undergoing the final phase of a £116 million refit at Rosyth to allow her to take the Navy's new Merlin anti-submarine helicopters.

Ark's Commanding Officer joins in April and sea trials are due to begin in July. It is expected that the ship will arrive back at her Portsmouth base in late August, with a rededication ceremony planned for November.

Navy apology to Wren in bullying case

AN APOLOGY and an undisclosed sum in compensation has been given by the Ministry of Defence to LWPTI Kieron Martin who claimed she was bullied by a senior rating because she was pregnant.

Mrs Martin (28) will leave the Service in April. She said before an Employment Tribunal in Southampton that she was made to work longer hours at HMS Sultan because she was about to go on maternity leave.

Her daughter was born with multiple congenital problems in 1998 and died aged four months. MOD made the payment after the first day of the tribunal hearing.

Mrs Martin received the written apology from Rear Admiral Roger Lockwood, Chief of Staff to the Second Sea Lord.

Murder charge PO remanded

A ROYAL Navy petty officer accused of the murder of a fellow sailor and a barman had his case adjourned until March 27 when he appeared at Winchester Crown Court.

Alan Grimson, who was remanded in custody, is charged with the murder of 18-year-old sailor Nicholas Wright of HMS Edinburgh and 20-year-old Sion Jenkins of Southsea, Portsmouth.

Grimson made his first court appearance in December 1999 after human remains were found near Winchester two years after Nicholas Wright went missing.

Last of the Tridents is ready for patrol

FOURTH and last of the Royal Navy's Trident submarines is now available for operational service.

HMS Vengeance has completed intensive trials including the successful test launch of an unarmed missile. She joins her sister-vessels HM submarines Vanguard, Victorious and Vigilant in maintaining Britain's nuclear deterrent patrols.

The patrols were started by Polaris-equipped submarines more than 30 years ago, the first Trident boat, Vanguard, embarking on her first patrol in 1992.

Arrival of Vengeance at Clyde Naval Base, Faslane, on February 13 was greeted by about 800 anti-nuclear protesters who blocked the main road into the base at Helensburgh. More than 350 were arrested, including Labour MP for Glasgow, George Galloway. Some were charged with minor offences.

Meanwhile repair work has started on HMS Tireless in Gibraltar, and it is hoped that it can be completed by the end of March.

The Trafalgar-class attack submarine put into Gibraltar when a small leak was detected in her reactor coolant system last year.

Checks revealed the same problem in six other attack boats, and a programme of repairs is well under way, with HMS Torbay – already in refit – also being worked on. It is hoped a number of the affected submarines will be back in service by the summer.

£50,000 bonus offer to RN Harrier pilots

MORE than three-quarters of the Royal Navy's Sea Harrier pilots are being offered £50,000 each to stay on as Service pilots for the next five years.

As part of this year's pay award, the Armed Forces Pay Review Board recommended the 'financial retention incentive' as an interim measure to address a critical manning problem.

It has long been recognised that the financial rewards for good, trained pilots in commercial

aviation have been difficult to match. This latest, and by far the largest, retention bonus is being offered to 34 of the Navy's 41 fixed-wing fliers.

The targeted group is made up of officers who have completed their original six-year return of service after training.

In the meantime, aircrew retention measures will be reviewed on a tri-Service basis and with Treasury participation. It will be completed by the autumn in time for the Armed Forces Pay Review Body's recommendations on next year's annual pay round.

In a separate scheme aimed at general aircrew retention throughout the Services, a two-year bonus plan is being introduced which offers two annual payments – on April 1 this year and on April 1 next year – as a holding measure until the result of the aircrew retention review.

Payment of the bonuses will be subject to personnel not having applied for premature voluntary release or retirement that will result in their leaving before April 2003.

The payments will vary between £2,000 and £10,000 depending on a number of factors including rank, age and length of service.



Princess to launch Albion

THE PRINCESS Royal will launch the first of the Royal Navy's new

assault ships, HMS Albion on March 9. Princess Anne will send the 17,000-tonne vessel down the slipway at BAE Systems yard at Barrow-in-Furness. Albion and her sister-ship HMS Bulwark will replace HM ships Fearless and Intrepid, and are due to enter service in 2003.

The Princess Royal will be accompanied by her husband, Commodore Tim Laurence. Also present will be Controller of the Navy Rear Admiral Nigel Guild.

Big Wave on the way

THE SECOND of the new fast tankers for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, RFA Wave Ruler, is pictured after her launch at Govan, Glasgow by Elaine Dumelow, wife of Defence Secretary Geoff Hoon.

The 35,000-tonne vessel is due to start trials in a year's time and will join her sister-ship RFA Wave Crest which is fitting out in Barrow-in-Furness following her launch there in November.

Built by BAE Systems, Wave Ruler will be able to carry 15,000 tonnes of fuel to support Royal Navy warships worldwide. She has a large flight deck and hangar for Merlin helicopters and will be fitted for the Phalanx close-in weapons system.

Among the guests at her launch was the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Nigel Essenhigh; the Controller of the Navy, Rear Admiral Nigel Guild; and Commodore RFA, Commodore Peter Lannin.

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