



Navy News

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ASSAULT ON THE ROCK

New print from the Admiralty Collection

p27



New NATO allies come in from the cold

p22-23

FIVE-POWER SHOW IN FAR EAST EXERCISES



● FIRST replenishment at sea (RAS) by the new RFA tanker Wave Knight was carried out off Plymouth with the Type 23 frigate HMS Sutherland (see page 4).
Picture: LA(PHOT) Shaun Barlow

A ROYAL Navy task group, headed by aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal, is to undertake a major deployment which is planned to take the White Ensign to the far side of the world.

Details of Naval Task Group 2003 (NTG03) were announced by Defence Minister Adam Ingram, who said that the focus of the deployment will be Exercise Flying Fish, a multi-national exercise in the Far East.

Flying Fish is a regular feature of the Five Powers Defence Arrangement (FPDA), a grouping based on the Asia Pacific region which also includes the UK with Australia, New Zealand, Singapore and Malaysia.

But the group will also undertake a number of other exercises, both bilateral and multilateral, as well as visiting more than 25 countries to pursue the Navy's defence diplomacy mission, supporting UK interests overseas and demonstrating commitment to the security of the Gulf and Asia Pacific regions.

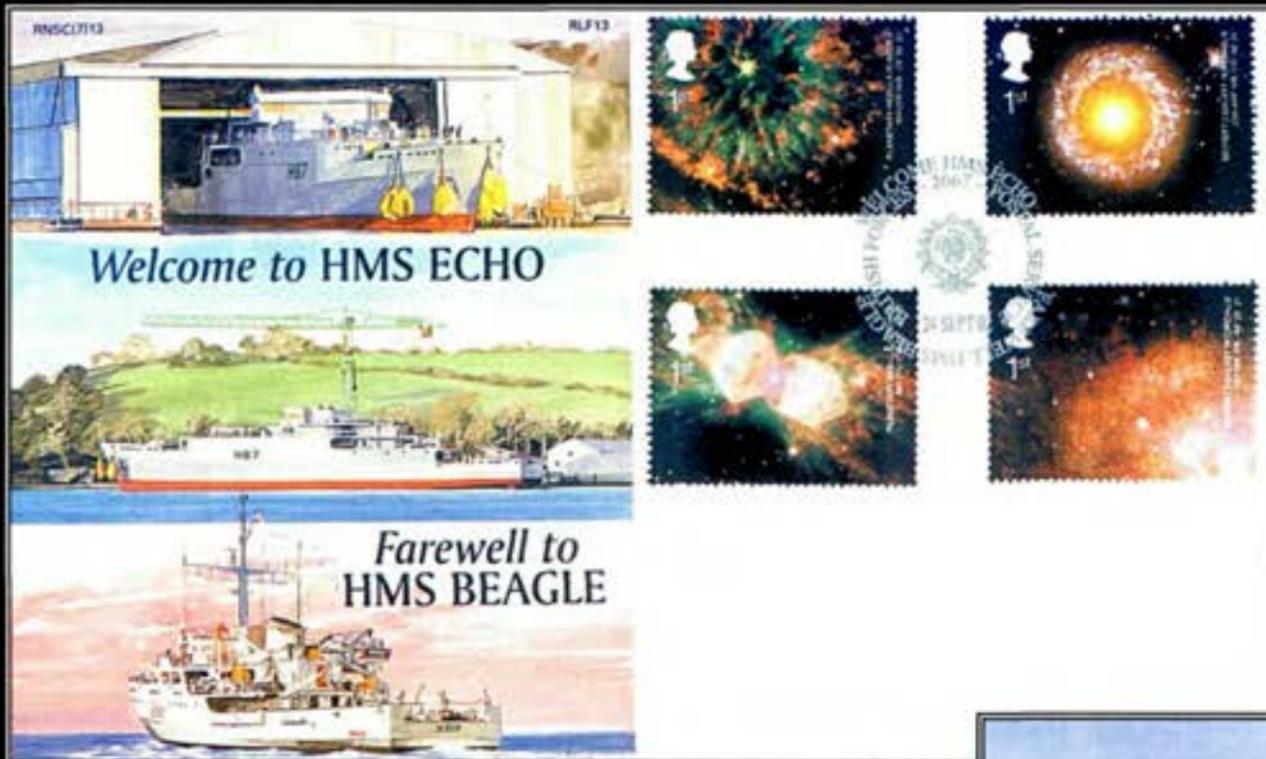
Passage exercises have already been planned with the Egyptian, Indian and Pakistani navies, and planners are confident that the Royal Navy's excellent bilateral relationships can help build bridges between nations.

The group will be joined by a French warship for elements of the

● Turn to back page

■ VOLUNTARY DONATIONS FROM PAY – p31 ■ LETTERS – p6,7

Stamps echo cover theme



LATEST cover issued by the Royal Naval Philatelic Society this month celebrates two of the Senior Service's survey ships – and by purest chance carries an apt set of stamps.

Marking the departure of HMS Beagle (she decommissioned in February 2002 after 34 years' service) and the arrival of the new, multi-role hydrographic and oceanographic survey ship HMS Echo (below), it bears a series of stamps featuring spectacular photographs of the stars.

Contact the RNPS on 01730 231668 for details. HMS Echo begins her Preliminary Safety Trials on January 6 and is set to commission on March 7. Along with her sister ship HMS Enterprise, currently being built in North Devon by Applodre Ship Builders, HMS Echo will work with the Fleet in worldwide operational roles, including support for mine warfare and amphibious tasks, as well as carrying out specialist survey work. She will be available for over 334 days a year – a 50 per cent improvement on previous RN Hydrographic vessels – and features an all-electric propulsion system incorporating 360 degree podded thrusters, another first for the RN. See also page 4



Slow crawl back to full strength

FULL time trained strength of the Royal Navy at October 1, 2002 was 37,440 – 1,130 below the requirement.

But the latest Quarterly Manning Statistics produced by the Defence Analytical Services Agency show that Naval gains rose by 8.7 per cent over the previous 12 months – rather better than the Army (7.1) and RAF (4.1) rates – while the Naval trained outflow fell by 11.8 per cent (3,630 compared with 4,110) in the same period.

As to equal opportunities, in each of the past five quarters the proportion of females in the UK Regular Forces had risen slightly for each of the Services.

At October 1 females accounted for 9.9 per cent of officers and 8.3 per cent of Other Ranks.

It was still not possible to update the ethnicity data as the exercise to recode individuals, in line with the new 2001 Census codes, had not yet been completed.

FIGUREHEADS



HMS CANOPUS

ONE OF the most historic figureheads to survive in any British collection is in fact French in origin.

HMS Canopus, a 2nd rate of 80 guns, was built in Toulon in 1796 as Le Franklin and was captured two years later at the Battle of the Nile, being next in line to the ill-fated L'Orient when she blew up.

For a time Le Franklin was herself in danger of fire on her own deck. This was soon extinguished, however, and she surrendered with almost half her crew dead and wounded. Nelson gave her the name Canopus after the ancient Egyptian city.

Thereafter Canopus was considered one of the fastest sailers in the British Fleet – and so she missed the Battle of Trafalgar due to being sent on to Gibraltar for stores. Canopus was later used for harbour service and at Plymouth as a receiving ship before being sold out of the Service and broken up in 1887.

The figurehead, in the collection of the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich, is a large, 10ft bust of a classical warrior with a plumed helmet.

It bears no resemblance to Benjamin Franklin, the distinguished American scientist and author who was famous as a diplomat in Paris after the Declaration of Independence, when he enlisted French help for the colonists and negotiated peace with Britain.

It is thought to have been fitted before the ship was given his name.

Reservists' pay comes in line with Regulars'

PAY 2000 has finally been delivered for the Reserve Forces – after many months of planning and discussion they have been brought into line with the pay structure of Regular Service personnel.

In the period since the introduction of Pay 2000 for the regulars there has been an "unduly complicated" process with transferring reservists' pay accounts between the various pay systems as individuals were mobilised or took up FTRS contracts and then reverted back to Reserve service.

A spokesman for the Director Naval Reserves told *Navy News* that, with Regulars and Reserves both on the same Pay 2000 structure, this would be a thing of the past.

"Incremental pay will be one of the many benefits which will start to reward reservists. Like the regulars, initially everybody will transfer to the new system with their existing basic pay including five year LSI plus Length of Service pay if drawn.

"This will ensure that nobody will take a pay cut on transition to the new system."

The pay structure is underpinned by job evaluation and as far as possible Reservists have been placed in the same pay ranges as those of the Regular Services.

Not all Reservists have transferred onto the new pay system – Medical Officers are planned to follow once their common terms and conditions of service have been agreed with the Territorial Army and Royal Auxiliary Air Force. Full rules of the new pay structure have already been published in preparation for the launch of the new system and these can be found in BR1950 (Naval Pay Regulations) Chapter 41.

Details of trades to ranges allocations, some questions and answers and related issues for FTRS personnel may be found on the 2SL/CNH Website.

MS support group seeks up to 250 more members

EVERY year a surprising number of Service personnel are diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis (MS).

The days following diagnosis are usually traumatic. Can life ever be the same again? What will be the effect on career and family.

Ten years ago Sue Smith of the Royal Navy and RAF officers Kim Bartlett and Suzanne Crighton found themselves in the same position. In turning to each other for support, they decided to form an organisation to offer assistance to other Service personnel diagnosed with

MS. Within weeks, Mutual Support, the Armed Forces Support Group of the MS Society, was formed.

Since its creation with just three members, Mutual Support has grown steadily and now has a membership of over 200 retired and serving personnel.

Affiliated to the MS Society, it has charitable status and works closely with Service charities and welfare organisations.

Statistics suggest that there may be as many as 250 Servicemen and women with MS who are not in contact with Mutual Support, however.

Chairman Roger Langdon told *Navy News*: "Our members are treading, or have trodden, the path that the newly diagnosed must follow and they are ideally placed to offer guidance, comfort and information.

"The simple act of talking to someone who has been through it themselves can allay many of the fears, anxieties and sense of isolation that occur during the difficult period following diagnosis."

Contact him on 0208 773 9065 or by e-mail to rogerlangdon@hotmail.com

The Royal Navy's German airship

ONE OF the Royal Navy's first airships was actually built in Germany – HMA No 4, pictured here over Portsmouth Harbour in 1913.

The Navy had tried hard to buy a Zeppelin following clandestine visits and flights on the commercial versions, but the German government would not allow a sale.

So the German Parseval company was approached, and again the government tried to block the sale. But at this time Parsevals were not getting much support owing to the popularity of the Zeppelins, so they agreed to sell one of their latest, non-rigid designs.

P.18 (N0 4) was delivered to Farnborough in 1913, accompanied by four engineers from the Parseval works to show the Royal Navy crews how to assemble and operate her. Powered by two engines, an unusual feature was her variable-pitch propellers, which had steel blades which could be changed in mid-air in case of failure.

A machine-gun position, served by an access-tube, was fitted on top of the envelope.

HMA No 4 proved so successful that three other ships were ordered – but with the outbreak of war in August 1914 these were no longer available.

She carried out the first war patrols over the Thames Estuary, flying from Kentish Knock to Barrow Deep on August 5, 1914,

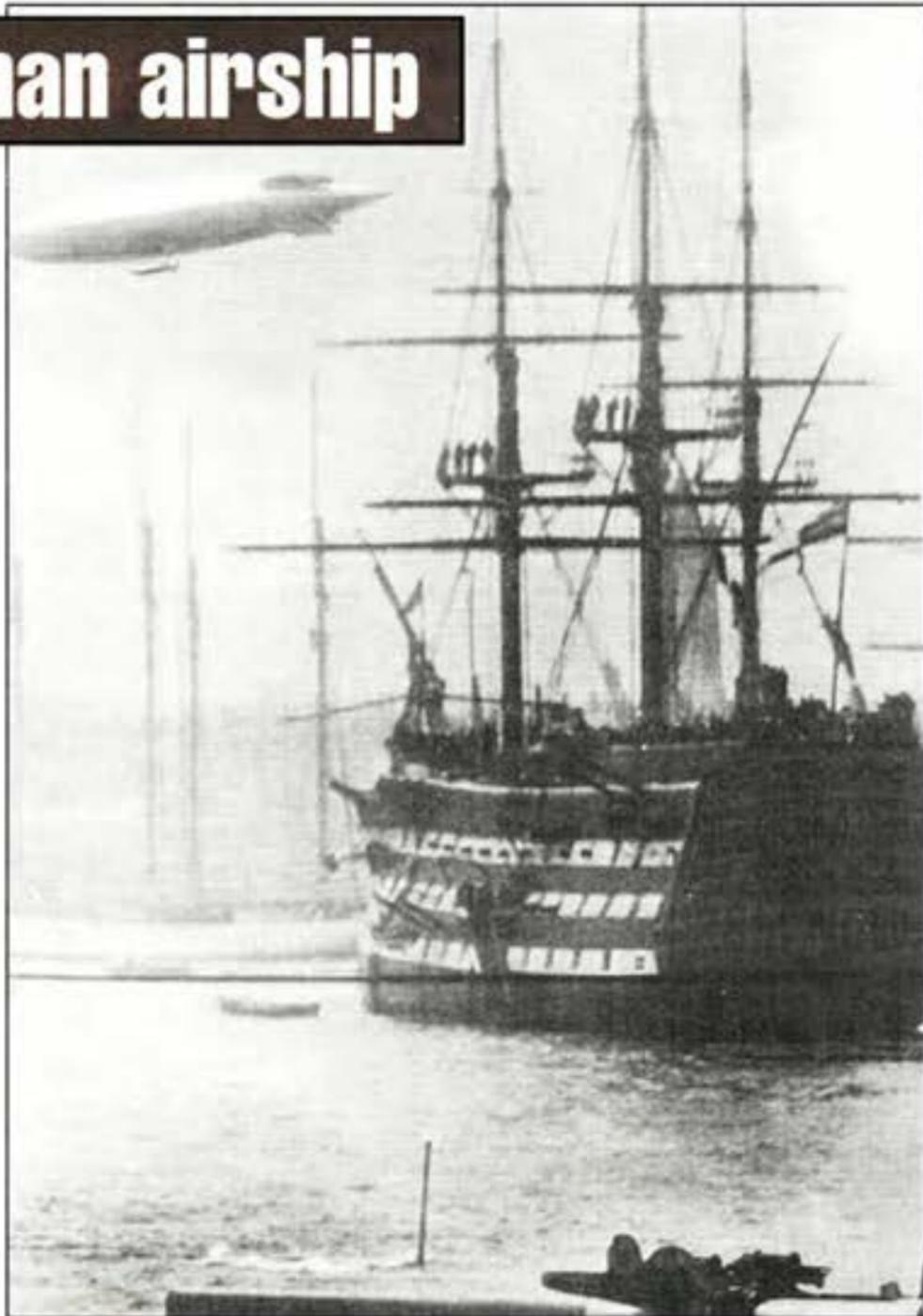
commanded by Capt J. N. Fletcher. Returning in the early morning, she was fired upon by British Territorials – despite her White Ensign. Meanwhile the War Office was deluged with reports of a German Zeppelin flying up the Thames.

No 4 also escorted troopships carrying the BEF to France, protecting them from U-boats.

On one of these early patrols she actually did shed a propeller blade. The spare was refitted as she drifted in the wind with engines stopped and Coxswain Cook later related that the wind carried them over the Belgian coast. It was dusk before the repair was completed and the crew could see flashes of gunfire on the Western Front.

During 1915, No 4 was reconditioned by Vickers at Barrow. On November 22 she collided with a shed in dense fog and on December 27, 1916 she sustained slight damage on landing owing to a down gust. She was finally deleted at Pulham on July 17, 1917.

HMA No.4's story is told by *Ces Mowthorpe in Battlebags* (Sutton £12.99). The picture is taken from Portsmouth – *The Good Old Days* by Anthony Triggs (Halsgrove £19.95)



Par populaire demande, et pour definitely la dernière fois, le retour de –

RUSSIA NOW 'AN EQUAL PARTNER' – PM

NATO accepts seven new members

NATO has formally accepted seven new members from the old Soviet bloc in the largest single expansion in its 53-year history.

NATO heads of state invited Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia to join, bringing membership up to 26 in what American President George Bush described as a "decisive" and "historic" moment.

Mr Bush is also reported to have described NATO as his country's "most important global relationship".

The fifth enlargement of the organisation came at a two-day summit meeting in Prague which will look at how NATO can best deal with the threat of terrorism and speed up the machinery in order to respond more swiftly to flashpoints.

The new members are expected to become fully integrated into the organisation in 2004, after they

have signed and ratified the North Atlantic Treaty, the founding act of NATO.

The North Atlantic Treaty Organisation was formally launched in April 1949 as a Western response to post-war Soviet expansion, and grew into a powerful regional defence group.

Ten Western European countries – Belgium, Denmark, France, Iceland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal and the UK – signed the treaty in Washington, along with the United States and Canada.

One of the founding principles is still central to the organisation – an armed attack against any single member is considered an attack against the entire alliance, drawing a collective response.

Greece and Turkey joined in

1952, and West Germany followed three years later – which helped prompt the Soviet Union to create its own version of NATO, the Warsaw Pact.

The third enlargement brought Spain on board in 1982, and a trio of former Soviet bloc states joined in 1999 – the Czech Republic, Hungary and Poland.

With the end of the Cold War and the break-up of the Warsaw Pact, NATO is refocusing on new challenges, including a response to attacks such as those on the United States on September 11, 2001.

The Royal Navy provides ships to a number of permanent NATO forces, with Standing Naval Force Atlantic (SNFL) and Standing Naval Force Mediterranean (SNFM), which celebrated its 10th anniversary in 2002, maintaining

the highest profiles.

The actual units involved in these forces change with time, and command is rotated around the member states.

In his statement to Parliament on the summit, Prime Minister Tony Blair said the invitations to the new seven member nations would not be the last.

"The UK will help those who want to join, and who meet the criteria, to succeed in the future," he said.

NATO continued to build new relationships outside its formal membership, that with Russia having been "transformed" over the past year.

"We now work with Russia as an equal partner, cooperating in a wide range of areas. A good example is the Balkans, where NATO and Russia are together making an immense contribution towards our goal of a peaceful and stable Balkans playing a full part in the European family.

"My great hope is that we are now beginning to include the new Russia as a real partner in meeting the new threats we face."

NATO was also pursuing its practical co-operation with Ukraine, and strengthening its wider partnerships with the Mediterranean, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

"NATO needs to develop new capabilities. The Cold War is over. There are new missions and new threats. The key is flexibility of response, adaptability of military forces, and modernisation of defence capabilities."

The Prague Summit agreed on three new instruments to help meet these challenges.

● A new NATO Response Force to provide effective forces available at short notice.

● All Allies committed to improve their capabilities in specific ways to support and equip forces that are flexible and deployable.

● A revised, reduced and refocused command structure.

☐ See Newview, page 20 and centre pages feature

JACK ET JACQUES

Leur Finale Bow

(Au troisième étage de la Tour d'Eiffel, Paris)

'Jack! Mon ami! Nous n'avons pas met pour dix-huit mois ou more! Où avez vous been?'

'Dans un mission secret, Jacques mon vieux. J'étais jetté dans la guerre contre le terrorisme par Président George Bush lui-même.'

'Oh, pull l'autre one, Jack...'

'Non! C'est vrai, Jacques! George m'a dit, quand j'étais en exchange duty à SACLANT: "Jack, après votre succès dans *Le Hunt Pour Rouge Octobre*, *Patriot Jeux et Clair et Présent Danger*, j'ai un job spécial pour vous!" "Vous avez le wrong Jack. M le Président!" j'ai exclaimé. "C'était Jack Ryan!" Mais il a pris pas de notice. Il continue: "Vous allez tout de suite aux Reichenbach Falls, Switzerland, où Osama bin Laden a son banque account. C'est somewhere en Europe, je crois. Vous grapplez avec Osama aux said Falls, et puis vous tombez à la mort dans l'eau. Osama, that is – pas vous. C'est une bonne idée, n'est-ce pas?" "Mais je ne peux pas nager, mon Président!" je l'ai dit. "Quoi?" GW a dit. "N'avez vous jamais vu *Butch Cassidy et le Sundance Kid*? C'est mon film favori! Vous serez alright – mais make sûr qu'Osama ne survive pas...'

'Eh bien, Jack – vous avez tué Osama, l'Empereur de Crime Internationale?'

'Er, non. Il n'a pas turned up.'

'Mais vous avez been away pour dix-huit mois, Jack!'

'Ah, oui... Les expenses étaient bon, Jacques – et il y a une jolie barmaid au Bar Moriarty dans l'Hotel Sherlock Holmes qui est très accommodating... J'y retourne demain, Jacques! Venez avec moi! C'est libre d'income tax, mon vieux, libre d'income tax. C'est le seul way pour sauver nowadays. Quand vous décidez, envoyez à moi un message. Je vous rencontrais quand vous voulez – et quand nous nous rencontrons, c'est vous je veux voir, pas le police... Et ne soyez pas so gloomy! Après tout, ce n'est pas so awful! Vous savez qu'est-ce que c'est que le fellow a dit, en Italie pour 30 ans sous les Borgias ils avaient la guerre, terror, le meurtre, le bloodshed. Ils ont produit Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci et la Renaissance. En Suisse ils avaient brotherly love, 500 ans de démocratie et paix, et ça produit quoi? L'horloge de cuckoo. So longue, Jacques...'



Illustrations par TUGO.



● FLASHBACK: HMS Manchester alongside in Lisbon, Portugal for the 30th anniversary of STANAVFORLANT on January 21, 1998



First live RAS for tanker

THE ROYAL Fleet Auxiliary's new large fleet tanker RFA Wave Knight has carried out her first 'live' replenishment at sea (RAS) off Plymouth, linking up with Type 23 frigate HMS Sutherland to provide fuel while both ships were under way.

The 31,500-tonne tanker is currently carrying out trials and training exercises in the Plymouth operating areas before she joins the RFA flotilla.

Although she has carried out RAS passes with sister RFA ships, the operation with Sutherland was the first with a warship – and no doubt the first of very many.

Wave Knight was built by BAE Systems at Barrow-in-Furness, and was launched in September 2000. After fitting out and trials she was handed over last November.

She and her newer sister, Wave Ruler, are a new class of large, double-hulled fleet replenishment tankers, with a service speed of 18 knots and a fuel capacity of 16,000 cubic metres, including 3,000 cubic metres of aviation fuel.

The ships can also carry 380 cubic metres of fresh water, 500 cubic metres of dry cargo and eight 20ft refrigerated containers.

Wave Knight has a large flight deck and a hangar, and can operate all Royal Navy helicopters.

For defensive purposes she has two 30mm cannon and two Phalanx close-in weapons systems.

When operational, the Wave sisters will have a crew of 80 RFA personnel – who are civilians – plus 20 or so RN personnel.

Wave Ruler, launched in February 2001, is also in the Plymouth areas now, carrying out basic safety training before she too embarks on RAS trials.

Vaccine offer

THE MOD is to offer smallpox vaccines to a small number of specialist military personnel who may face a greater risk of exposure to the disease.

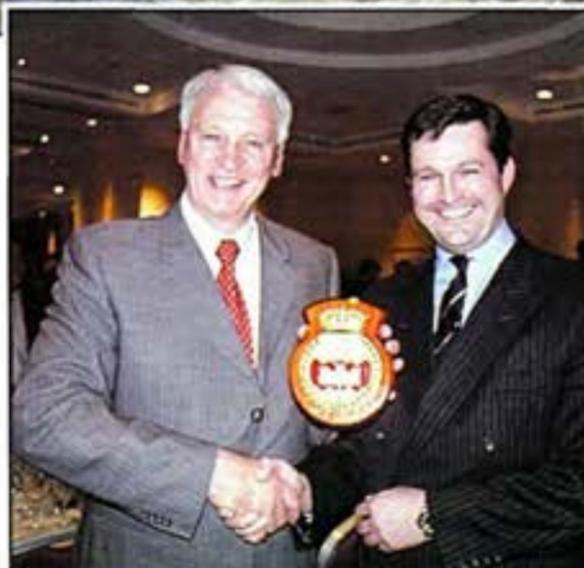
In a written statement, Defence Minister Dr Lewis Mooney said those covered included NBC (Nuclear, Biological and Chemical) specialists and medical personnel who would be at the forefront of a defensive response, including vaccination teams.

The MOD said such measures are constantly under review, and that "the current assessment is that there is no immediate threat to our Armed Forces from smallpox", describing the move as "sensible precautions".

The Department of Health has also announced their plans to vaccinate a similar group.



● New patrol ship HMS Tyne on speed trials in the Western Solent last month



● Newcastle United manager Sir Bobby Robson (left) is presented with the ship's badge from HMS Tyne by Commanding Officer Cdr Craig Gilmour

Tyne in the fast lane

NEW offshore patrol vessel HMS Tyne has now completed the first stage of her contractor's sea trials.

The River-class ship has most recently been conducting speed trials in the Western Solent.

Now her ship's company are look-

ing forward to moving on board, and are busy learning all the systems and procedures prior to an intensive period of training and trials early this year.

The ship, one of three in the class, has also been busy forging links in North Lyneside.

Her Commanding Officer, Cdr Craig Gilmour, recently attended a charity lunch in Newcastle in aid of the St Oswald's Jigsaw Appeal.

The afternoon was a great success, raising £15,000, and there were many celebrities present, including Newcastle United manager Sir Bobby Robson.

Sir Bobby, a hero on Tyneside, will hopefully visit the ship when she calls in at the city early this year.

Several members of the previous HMS Tyne, a depot ship built during World War II and broken up at Barrow in the 1970s, have now been in contact with the ship, and they are keen to hear from more.

Anyone interested should write to HMS Tyne at BFFO 412.

■ HMS Severn launched – back page

Missile debate is advanced

DEFENCE Secretary Geoff Hoon has published a public discussion paper on missile defence.

The document examines the critical issues in the debate about the UK's possible need for a missile defence system.

It provides background information on global missile capabilities and technical details on how a means of defending against ballistic missile attack might be achieved.

It also reviews some of the policy considerations which the Government is addressing in examining missile defence issues, how we might respond to any US request for the use of missile facilities, and whether the UK might seek to participate in missile defence programmes.

Mr Hoon said: "Missile defence is a complex and fast-moving subject of growing global importance.

"The potential threat from

the proliferation of ballistic missiles is increasing, not least owing to the potential for their combination with weapons of mass destruction.

"We have a responsibility to take stock of the issues involved, and to consider or options for addressing this potential threat."

The discussion paper is available on the MOD's website, www.mod.uk, or as a hard copy from the Ministry of Defence.

Frigates blaze a trail on their deployments

THREE frigates have returned to the UK within days of each other following notable deployments in very different parts of the world.

First back was Devonport-based Type 23 frigate HMS Argyll, which had been on patrol in the Gulf.

During her successful Armilla deployment, the ship's boarding teams investigated 113 vessels ranging from small dhows to large container ships – and in the process discovering more than 10,500 tonnes of smuggled oil.

She had precious little time to acclimatise – she carried out her first boarding within an hour of taking up station, and found 300 tonnes of illegal oil on a dhow.

Argyll left the UK in May, and operated in the northern Gulf with many allied warships – including units from the US, Australia, Canada and Japan – to enforce UN sanctions against Iraq.

The deployment also introduced a new secure command and control system to operations, allowing boarding parties on seaboats to access automatic navigation and position tracking information, and

operate at greater ranges.

Argyll has been relieved by destroyer HMS Cardiff, and now undergoes maintenance.

Close behind Argyll was sister Type 23 frigate HMS Westminster, which had undertaken a pioneering deployment which relied on electronic charts rather than traditional paper and pencil.

Westminster sailed from Portsmouth for patrols in the South Atlantic in August, and the performance of the ECDIS navigation system during her trip has won a big thumbs-up.

Commanding Officer Cdr David Reindorp said: "Obviously we had paper charts as back-up, but we did not have to turn to them once.

"The electronic system proved very reliable and we have written operational procedures to assist other Royal Navy ships in getting the best out of it."

Westminster was also testing the Navy's new Improved Action Working Dress, a rig which is for use on board while on duty. It

replaces shirts and overalls with more practical roll-neck jumpers and combat-style trousers with large pockets.

Westminster called in at eight ports, including Dakar in Senegal, Rio and Salvador in Brazil, and Montevideo in Uruguay.

And mid-December saw the return of HMS Grafton after one of the most successful drug-busting deployments to the Caribbean in recent years.

The Portsmouth-based ship prevented hundreds of millions of dollars worth of drugs reaching the streets, and in several high-profile cases she and her Lynx were involved in high-speed chases.

She also saved two lives at sea – a battered yachtsman and a cast-away at sea for 26 days in his crippled boat.

The Lynx was put to good use detecting camouflaged marijuana plantations in inaccessible parts of the Caribbean rainforest, allowing police to move in and destroy the crops.

Among the islands visited by Grafton was volcanic Montserrat.

Pioneering Reservists on board survey vessels

AN INNOVATIVE sponsored Reserve scheme is to place contractor's support staff on board new Royal Navy vessels alongside the ship's company.

VT Integrated Logistics, part of the VT Group (formerly Vosper Thornycroft), is participating in the scheme as part of its 25-year contractor logistics support commitment to oceanographic and hydrographic survey ships HMS Echo and HMS Enterprise.

The 90-metre vessels were built under a prime contract with VT, and in service will carry full-time support staff employed by VT but who will be special members of the RNR.

Their day-to-day task is to assist in the efficient running of the two ships and to support the survey systems.

They will work alongside the Royal Navy crew, and will continue to provide that support at all times – including deployment in operational areas.

VT Integrated Logistics General Manager Ian Corner said: "This will be the first time that sponsored reserves have become effectively full-time members of a ship's crew.

"It is an innovative solution that enhances our long-term contractor logistic support commitment to the two ships.

"We have worked closely with the Directorate of Naval Reserves (DNRes) and the Survey Vessels IPT to produce this solution."

The VT reservists have undergone Royal Navy training and, by living on board and working alongside sailors, will become an integral part of the ship's company.

They will wear a VT uniform at sea, but will change into Naval uniform when required.

"This is a new application of the sponsored reserve principle, and we have recruited specialist and highly-focused personnel to carry out the role," said Mr Corner.

Submarine refit costs increase

THE COST of building refit facilities for nuclear submarines at Devonport have risen, which means the MOD has put almost £200 million more into the project than was originally budgeted, according to a report by the National Audit Office (NAO).

But Defence Procurement Minister Lord Bach stated that the contract with DML was "one of the largest and most complex civil engineering projects ever undertaken in Europe", and said he was disappointed that the NAO did not consider the effect of regulatory-driven nuclear safety cost increases, and whether they were reasonable.

Lord Bach said under revised terms, DML were paying £43 million, and that it was vital that the refit of HMS Vanguard should not be delayed, compromising the UK national deterrent.

Air defence study

STUDIES into an air defence system which produces an all-encompassing radar picture of the skies around a fleet will proceed following the signing of an £11 million contract between the MOD and Lockheed Martin UK Integrated Systems Ltd.

The Co-operative Engagement Capability (CEC) combines information from a ship's radar with data from the rest of the fleet, giving an almost perfect real-time picture of the aerial battlefield – and a better chance of dealing with aircraft and missiles.

This contract seeks to bring the system to Type 23 frigates – Type 45 destroyers are the subject of a separate study with BAE Systems.

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Ships of the Royal Navy No 566



Baltic summer for Atherstone

THE YEAR 2002 proved a packed one for HMS Atherstone, one of the Navy's eleven Hunt class mine countermeasure vessels (MCMV).

Over the past year, Atherstone has visited no less than ten foreign ports, taken part in two major multi-national exercises, been involved in live operations and protected the coastline of Britain on fishery protection duties.

After her major refit in 2001, propulsion, communications and accommodation were all upgraded. This work session also saw the addition of a two-man compression chamber that meant Atherstone's mine clearance divers can operate in depths of up to 80 metres.

HMS Atherstone was the first of her class to have a chamber of this type fitted.

Early in 2002 the MCMV took up duties as part of the On Call Force, along with visits to Amsterdam and Hamburg.

The summer months saw Atherstone in and around the Baltic where she took part in Exercises Blue Game and US Baltops along with other British, European and American ships.

During these exercises, Atherstone took the lead of a four ship Task Element that included two Polish and one German MCMV.

Under the Partnership for Peace agreement, HMS Atherstone with Pembroke, Ramsey and the French ship Orion cleared 150 square miles of seabed off the Lithuanian



● Mine countermeasures vessel HMS Atherstone has been involved in major multi-national exercises and fishery protection patrols

port of Klaipeda. This area of the Baltic was mined heavily during World War II and was later used as a munitions dumping ground during the Cold War.

This deployment gave opportunities to visit ports in Poland, Russia, Latvia, Estonia and Norway. Indeed, Atherstone was part of Russian Navy Days in Archangel where she was open to the public.

After the summer, the MCMV switched to fishery protection duties, patrolling the eastern coast of England with standoffs in Newcastle, Hull and Lowestoft. During her fish

eries, the MCMV got to enjoy fireworks night off the port of Whitby and watched the town's celebrations.

Atherstone finally returned to her home port of Faslane on November 29, having spent seven months of the year away from home.

The present Atherstone is the third Royal Navy ship to bear the name. The first was an Ascot-class paddle minesweeper built in 1916 that served in the Firth of Forth and the Humber until being paid off in 1924.

The second Atherstone was also a Hunt, but a Hunt-class

destroyer. This was the first of the Type I batch of 1,000-ton destroyers to be built.

Launched in December 1939, she joined the Orkneys and Shetland Command based at Scapa Flow and escorted convoys between the Orkneys and the Clyde.

In the latter half of 1940, Atherstone was based in Portsmouth where she was bombed and severely damaged while escorting a convoy.

Once repaired, Atherstone returned to the fray once more, sinking two German coasters off the island of Alderney, escorting the damaged Warspite, and rescuing the 63 survivors after the HMS Aldenham had been fatally damaged by a mine in the Adriatic.

By the end of the war, Atherstone had been reduced to the status of a reserve ship and was finally broken up in the Clyde in 1957.

Facts and figures

Class: Hunt Class mine countermeasures vessel
Pennant number: M38
Builder: Vosper Thornycroft, Woolston, Southampton
Launched: March 1, 1986
Accepted: November 28, 1986
Commissioned: January 17, 1987
Displacement: 685 tons
Length: 60 metres
Draught: 3.2 metres
Speed: 14 knots (max)
Complement: 44
Propulsion: Two Ruston-Paxman Deltic diesel engines developing 1,900bhp; one Deltic diesel for pulse generation and auxiliary drive; bow thruster
Weapons: One gyro stabilised 30mm cannon; two general purpose 7.62mm machine guns
Countermeasures: Two RCMDs Mk1 submersibles with mine disposal charges; towed acoustic generator; mechanical Oropesa sweeps; magnetic influence sweep; mine clearance divers

BATTLE HONOURS

English Channel.....1940-42
St Nazaire.....1942
North Sea.....1942-3
Atlantic.....1943
Mediterranean.....1943
Sicily.....1943
Salerno.....1943
South of France.....1944
Adriatic.....1944
Kuwait.....1991

AIRCRAFT OF THE ROYAL NAVY No 75



● The Sea Scout Zero SSZ36 airship with handlers at RNAS Capel

Picture: Fleet Air Arm Museum

Sea Scout Zero airship

THE Sea Scout Zero (SSZ) non-rigid airship was generally known as the 'Zero'. Airships searched the seas during World War I for mines and submarines, and acted as scouts for the ships of the surface fleets.

This Zero aircraft was carefully designed to incorporate improvements on its immediate predecessor, the Sea Scout Pusher (SSP).

The ash-frame car was aluminium covered and, apart from the three cockpit openings, watertight. Streamlined and boat-shaped, this meant that the airship could land on calm water.

The Zeros were three-man airships, with a Wireless/Telegraphist Operator in the front cockpit, the pilot in the centre seat and the engineer aft. The W/T Operator was armed with a machine gun, but this was principally used to destroy floating mines. There was the capability to carry an aerial camera, but this piece of surveillance kit was seldom fitted.

Powered by the 75hp Rolls Royce Hawk

water-cooled engine, which was the only engine to be designed specifically for non-rigid airships, these craft had a maximum speed of 53mph.

Two 110lb bombs, or one 250lb bomb, were carried just forward of the engine.

The first prototype completed trials in September 1916 and by July the next year 16 Zeros had been delivered to the RNAS. In total, 66 of these airships served with the Royal Navy.

The envelope of the Zero encompassed 70,000 cu ft with its two ballonets, and air was supplied from an air-scoop.

The aircraft stretched 143ft with a diameter of 32ft. The cost of the aircraft is assessed at approximately £5,000.

The SSZ36 in the photograph was built at Wormwood Scrubs and spent a total of 644 hours in the skies. It ended its days in October 1918 after a defective envelope caused it to crash into trees at Capel.

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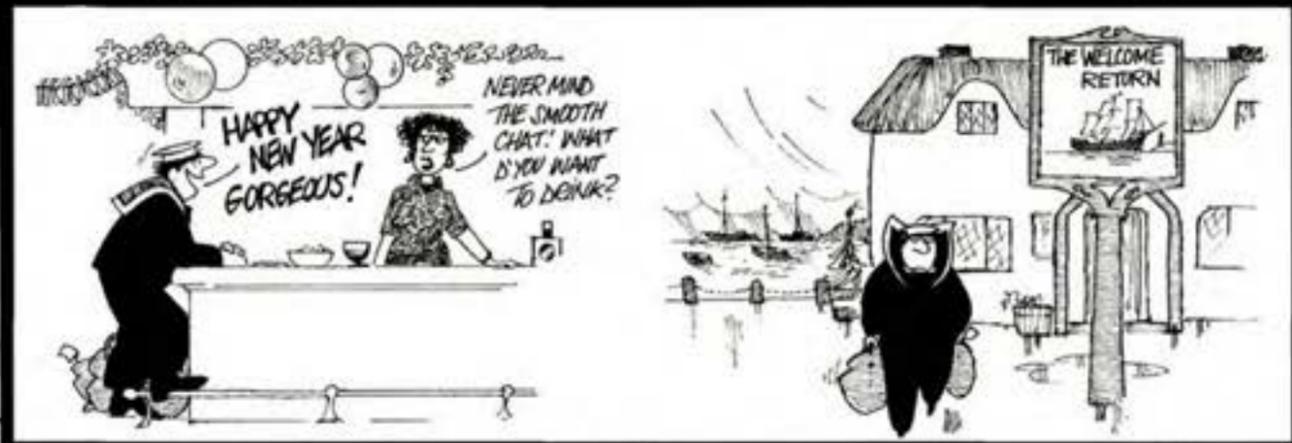


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JACK



Toowhit-toowong



I AM sure you will get a few comments about the identity of the owl 'Tiny' featured on the cover of your December issue - but just in case you don't...

It is not a Little Owl but a Scops Owl (*Otus scops*). Little Owls do not have 'ear' tufts, and lack the cryptic bark-like patterning, particularly on the crown.

Most Scops Owls migrate from southern Europe to spend the winter in Africa. This one obviously got tired and decided to have a rest en route. I attach a picture I took of a Little Owl locally this autumn for comparison. - **A. Easton**, Lowestoft.

Flower renamed

AN AUSSIE born and bred, I served under the Red Duster of the British Merchant Navy and was fished out of the drink three times by the RN after sinkings by enemy action.

HMS Rhododendron picked me up in the North Atlantic and I remember the late Capt Harold Cheaterman telling me that when she was laid down they were originally going to call her HMS Pansy - but this was quick-smart changed. - **E. Smith**, Bargarra Beach, Queensland.

Not so - it was the Flower-class corvette HMS Heartsease, completed in June, 1940, that was first called Pansy. Built by Harland & Wolff, she was transferred to the US Navy in March 1942 as USS Courage - Ed

Firefighters' strike causes another heated argument

THE FALLOUT from the firefighters' strike appears to me to have raised an issue fundamental to the wellbeing of RN and Armed Forces personnel.

With the Firefighters constantly in the headlines for a better pay deal, we, the Armed Forces, hard put upon with increases in lean manning and Topmast initiatives to contend with, have virtually no way of bringing our case to the public arena with regard to a substantive pay increase.

It seems that the Firefighters are well-served by a union which, following years of 'restructuring' and 'modernisation' of its organisation, has finally drawn a line in the sand and demanded a remuneration package commensurate with the level of risk, increased workload and professional skill required to carry out the role they do so well.

Why then do the RN/Armed Forces not have similar representation?

I appreciate that our model would have to follow something more akin to the Police Federation (with its non-striking policy) but surely the time has now come to put the case forward for a more modern Navy, with representation available to all ranks at all levels with the chance when necessary, to

bring our case to a wider audience for more open debate.

Pay is always a hot topic in whatever walk of life, never more so than the RN! The Armed Forces Pay Review Body does a good job in evaluating the roles undertaken by Service personnel and puts forward every year sound reasons and judgments on how our award is concluded for that respective year.

However, if public sector pay spirals due to over inflationary pay awards, then who will be there to champion the cause of Jack and Jenny, eight months out of 12 deployed in a Type 23? - **CPOWTR R. Galpin**, HMS Drake

Monster waves

I READ an article in *The Observer* about stories of giant waves that defy all scientific understanding.

"These mammoth events are not tidal waves or tsunamis... Nor are they caused by earthquakes or landslides. They are single, massive walls of water that rise up - for no known reason - and destroy dozens of ships and oil rigs every year."

I remember reading a story of the cruiser HMS Sheffield which, while cruising off the east coast of Africa, was struck at night by a large wave.

The bridge being 200ft from the bow and 50ft high, it was still covered by 2ft of water. - **C. Taylor**, Ilford

RAAF also assisted

T. J. Voltz rightfully claims recognition for the two RNZN ships that assisted HMS Nottingham when she went aground off Norfolk Island.

Introducing more widgets both real and imagined

QUITE right about Moutbatten's 'Fizzing widget nobody wanted' (November issue). As Capt Harris says, the invention was a disaster, plus a waste of taxpayers' money from start to finish.

The money should have been spent on supplying AA guns and ammo to defend ourselves against enemy aircraft, both in the Norwegian campaign and the battle for Crete.

I was a young leading stoker in HMS Kipling as part of the 5th Destroyer Flotilla, with Moutbatten in HMS Kelly as Captain 'D'. The device was fitted to all the ships but to my knowledge was only tried out once. According to popular opinion, that was once too often. - **J. B. Sinclair**, Rotherham

VERY many years ago, when I was a Boy Seaman serving in HMS Termagant, there were certain experiments being conducted with a new piece of equipment.

Termagant was attached to the Third Submarine Flotilla at Rothsay at the time and we would go out every day and act as target ship for budding young submarine commanders.

This particular piece of equipment was called an 'Autolocus' (or something like that) and was a device for smelling out submarines whilst snorkeling.

Can anyone throw any light on the matter? - **R. Hanley**, Telford

I WAS very interested in the piece about the Sampson Radar Ball (November issue).

I recall that back in the 1960s when I was a POME in the minesweeper HMS Belton, we were heading up the east coast on the top side of Scotland when the skipper, Lt Cdr Rowbottom was aware of a Russian whaling fleet in the area.

He asked me if I would assist the Bunting Tesser to put some oddments on to the radar mast to fool the Russians once we got near them. We came up with several ideas, but as usual the skipper had the last say. Jumper Cross and I climbed aloft and lashed a milk crate and a toilet brush as high as possible. - **R. Aveling**, Sheffield

●FOOLING THE RUSSIANS: HMS Belton arrives at Leith.

Genuine Charles

A CORRESPONDENT mentioned an ex-German yacht being unofficially known as HMS Prince Charles.

Your readers may be interested in the real HMS Prince Charles of World War II.

She was one of four Belgian Railways passenger ferries converted into landing ships.

The other three were Prince Leopold, Princess Astrid and Princess Josephine Charlotte. Each carried some 250 infantrymen for assault landings in their eight LCAs.

Prince Charles (Cdr Dennis) and Prince Leopold carried Commandos for the raid on Vaagso and Maaloy islands on December 27, 1941.

Eighteen months later Prince Charles and her sister ships took part in operation Husky when Rangers of the US Army landed at Gela on the south coast of Sicily.

By late June 1943 Sicily had been cleared of enemy troops and Prince Charles was tasked to Palermo to re-embark US Rangers for an assault landing on the left flank of the main landing at Salerno.

In the last quarter of that year, the four LISs were withdrawn to UK waters to prepare for Operation Neptune, when Prince Charles renewed her partnership with the US Rangers, putting them ashore on Omaha Beach. - **E. Fletcher**, Kingsbridge, Devon

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.



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John bounced back – and now he's cooking with gas

LEAPING out of aircraft with an 80lb backpack and yomping across moorland bogs during the Falklands War meant that former Royal Marines Sgt John Cook was a supremely fit man. But that punishing exercise took its toll.

He was medically discharged in 1989 after 17 years' service, suffering from the Falklands equivalent of trench foot. For 11 years John, from Bridgwater, struggled on as a contract manager for a security firm, but by the time redundancy struck he was at an all time low.

"I was terribly depressed," he said. "I had heart problems, diabetes, osteoarthritis and trench foot and felt I had no future at all."

"I decided that I needed a complete change of direction. I was fed up with security work and so I started investigating

at Somerset Careers Office and found information about Queen Elizabeth's Foundation and I discussed it with the disability employment officer at the Job Centre.

"I was accepted by the Training College in Leatherhead, Surrey, to study domestic appliance maintenance and it has given me a new lease of life. It has given me a goal to go for and I haven't looked back."

The Training College takes students from all walks of life, but John carries on a military connection that goes back to 1935, when it opened primarily to help disabled ex-Servicemen.

It now caters for people who have been disabled since birth and also for people forced into a career change by accident or illness. Disabilities range from lost limbs to depression; dwarfism to dyslexia.

And like John, many of the ex-servicemen and Falklands veterans who come to

the college now are suffering from depression and disabilities caused by the long-term effects rather than the immediate effects of war.

They can choose from a range of courses including engineering, building trades, business administration, computer maintenance and horticulture, getting to grips with a new career in a very supportive and caring atmosphere.

John passed his domestic appliance maintenance course with flying colours and was given a work placement with British Gas in Bridgwater in March 2002. He loves his job, travelling around and meeting people and after six months was taken on full time as an official British Gas engineer.

Thanks to Queen Elizabeth's Foundation, he has reclaimed his future. – Jane Garrett, Queen Elizabeth's Foundation, Leatherhead



'Just Nuisance' funeral attended by crowd of 400

REGARDING N. Taverner's letter about the famous Great Dane AB 'Just Nuisance', I remember he would have nothing to do with commissioned officers, or even petty officers, but would accept their pats as they passed by.

His real "Sunday Go To Meeting" name was "Pride of Rondebosche" and he was born on April 1, 1937, volunteered on June 6, 1939 and commenced his service on August 15 that year.

His records show his trade as "Bone Crusher" and he was also entered as "Scrounger".

Many visitors to HMS Afrikander knew him. The picture of him lying in a hospital bed at

Simon's Town brought back many sad memories for me.

He was suffering from paralysis of his hind quarters and the paralysis slowly spread until it became evident that his life was close to the end.

The nurse in the picture was nurse "Ticky" Davics. Nuisance was put to sleep on April 1, 1944 and Capetown lost a very valuable and loyal asset.

The burial took place at Klaver Camp and he was given full Naval Honours, with over 400 people in attendance.

He is still remembered by a statue situated under the palms of Jubilee Square, keeping a close watch over Simon's Town Harbour.

I have a full scrap book of pictures of Nuisance and it is one of my most treasured possessions. – K. Eyre, Sheffield.



Top class at Shotley

I DISCOVERED this photograph among my father's effects after he died last year at the age of 98.

He served in the Royal Navy from 1918 until 1933 and told me he was the first boy to achieve 100 per cent in his telegraphist exams.

On the back he had written: "Taken after final exams for boy telegraphist at

HMS Ganges, Shotley, Harwich 1918. Instructor – PO Tel Kidd. Reputed to be the finest wireless operator in the Grand Fleet.

"Our class obtained the highest marks ever achieved up to that time. Highest 100 per cent. Lowest 92 per cent." – W. A. Vandersteen, Winchester

Birthday bomb scare

AS A special treat for my 80th birthday, my son organised a visit to HMS Collingwood for me.

The last time I was there was August 28, 1941, as a young Ordinary Seaman. We endured many air raids at that time, but even then I fell in love with the Navy and still am after all these years. All my war I served in Coastal Forces, a great band of brothers.

By coincidence, we had a bomb scare while staying in Portsmouth this time! It seems a 650lb bomb was found near 12 and 13 dry dock, so everything was shut down, including the place where we were staying near the harbour!

My visit to Collingwood was so interesting and my thanks go to Marie Loney and Lt Cdr Bill Legg for treating us to a day to remember. – S. A. Read, Leicester

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People in the News

● Twins Gerald and John Ross with Lt Neil Benstead



Fingerprint expert nets RMR award

ROYAL Marines Reservist Colonel Paul Jobbins has received the OBE from the Prince of Wales.

Col Jobbins has been with the RMR since 1972 and has seen active service in the Falklands, the Republic of Former Yugoslavia and Sierra Leone.

He was the British Military Liaison Officer in Freetown during a tense and unpredictable period and was heavily involved in the rescue of members of the Royal Irish Regiment from the 'West Side Boys'.

In his other life, Col Jobbins is a fingerprint expert for the Avon and Somerset police who have fully supported his reserve career.

Doubles trouble still on the go

IDENTICAL twins Gerald and John Ross are still causing consternation in their dual wake.

The pair, who first featured in our May 2002 edition, have now completed their Marine Engineering Mechanics' training at HMS Sultan and have finally gone their separate ways to seagoing drafts.

John can now be found in Type 22 HMS Chatham and Gerald is on Type 23 HMS Monmouth.

But wherever they go, we can guarantee they will still leave a trail of people with double vision.

RM chef cooks up a storm

A ROYAL Marine chef, Sgt Mike Beaton, has been pulling in the crowds at this year's Good Food Show.

Mike has been showcasing his culinary talents along with some of the most respected chefs in the industry.

And he's proven himself no cold dish in the cuisine stakes, even catching the eye of a TV producer who thinks his style might transfer well to the small screen.

Television chef Brian Turner was also at the event held in Birmingham and is often called on to judge catering competitions for the Services.

He said: "Joining the Royal Marines or Royal Navy as a chef not only offers some of the best training in catering, it's also a

wonderful way to see the rest of the world. Whenever I've been a judge at any of the Navy's catering events, I'm consistently impressed by the high standard of cooking."

Mike in true Royal Marine style was utterly confident that his cookery skills could take the heat against the big boys.

"I'm used to cooking in all sorts of conditions, though obviously not up against such tough competition. I'm hoping that our stand at the NEC will show that Royal Marine cuisine is creative, tasty and can compare favourably with the best in the industry."

"Oh, and the chance of an exciting and challenging career in the Royal Marines isn't bad either!"

Over 3,000 catering students packed the event and the Royal Marine chef drew a crowd as he performed his culinary marvels.

He did let slip during the show one of his special tips for a top-class curry. Apparently his secret ingredient is the addition of a 'Bounty' chocolate bar to his spicy speciality.

Mike Beaton took on intensive training to become a Marine Commando before joining the RM Chef Display Team. As a result of his training he has travelled the world and set up field kitchens wherever he has seen service.

Sports lotto win

OM ROGER Smith won top prize of £5,000 in the RN&RM Sports Lottery while training at the Submarine School at HMS Raleigh.

Roger said: "I have always thought the sports lottery to be a worthwhile cause, as the funds provide so much equipment which people in the Service use regularly, and there is always a chance of winning."

"I was extremely happy to discover that I had won first prize - just in time for the party season!"



● Sub Lt Abigail Stead with Capt Gustavo Jordan, Chilean Navy

Abigail excels at BRNC

THE Armada de Chile prize was awarded to Sub Lt Abigail Stead by Captain Gustavo Jordan, Head of the Chilean Naval Mission in London.

Capt Jordan attended the Armada de Chile Divisions at Britannia Royal Naval College as guest of honour to present the award.

This coveted accolade is given to the young officer who has proven himself or herself at every level of training at the College and made a significant contribution in the professional, sporting and social fields.

Abigail is in her third term as a Flight Officer; both grandfathers were in the Armed Forces, one Army and one RAF but Abigail decided to carve out her future in the Senior Service.



● Sgt Mike Beaton and chef Brian Turner at the Good Food Show

Boat man is top snipper

FINELY-CRAFTED coiffures are not the normal stock-in-trade of your average submariner, but CPO David Perrin has been given the title of Most Outstanding Hairdressing Student at the Plymouth College of Further Education (PCFE).

David is currently working as an instructor at the RN Submarine School at HMS Raleigh, but started his new vocation three years ago when he was looking at his life outside the Service.

Taking evening classes for the first two years, he worked in a salon called Incuboots for experience in his limited spare time. He can also be credited with a number of smart and stylish haircuts to be found on the heads of Service and civilian personnel at the Torpoint establishment. The RN helped fund his training with grants.

David said: "I am thrilled and delighted to have won this award and I now hope to leave the Service at the end of my contract and run my own salon in due course."

Steve's new first

STEVE Pickford of the Learning Centre at 1 Assault Group RM in Poole has notched up another first in his collection.

He is the first MOD employee to complete the NVQ level 3 in Advice and Guidance, and his earlier achievements include the accreditation of the Poole Learning Centre and the introduction of the first NEBS Management Course in RM Corps Learning Centre.

Bright spark at Thunderer

THE NATIONAL Grid awarded a top prize to Lt Marc Fulton of Thunderer Squadron at Southampton University for outstanding performance in Electrical and Electromechanical Engineering.

Marc is the only Senior Upper Yardman at Thunderer and has won this award against tough competition at one of Britain's best engineering universities.

He first joined the Service as an Artificer Apprentice and has worked his way up through the ranks until successfully going for commission in 2000.

MIKE Noonan, chairman of the Bulwark, Albion and Centaur Association, presents the book 'The Silver Phantom' about the WWII cruiser HMS Aurora to Capt Hamish Reid, Master of the P&O liner Aurora during 'up spirits' attended by over 30 ex-RN and RM passengers and three former Navy staff on the cruise-ship.



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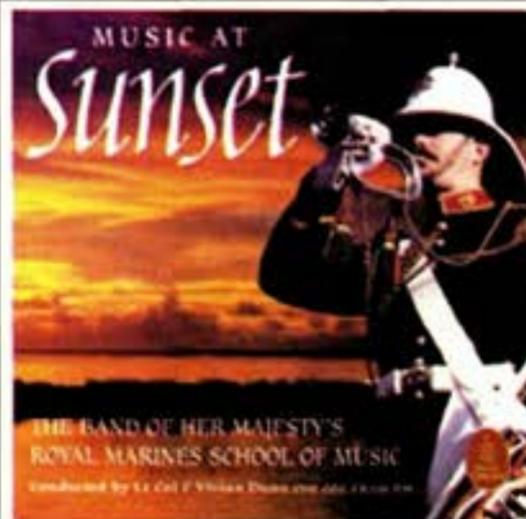
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Helping Hands

BBC's bonus from Senior Service

MOTORBIKING, abseiling, cycling, car-washing and coffee-drinking are just some of the ways that costs kept rolling in for the BBC's Children in Need appeal.

Out to top last year's £17,000 total, the Royal Navy Motorcycle club set out from HMS Sultan to make their way around the various Naval and Marine establishments in the country.

A group of aviation experts from the Aircraft Integrity Monitoring unit, including CPOs Pete Myatt and Paul Triggs, cycled from Gosport to St Athan to bag over £1,000.

Batman and Snow White turned up for parade at HMS Sultan along with a bunch of pirate chums, and the normal military marching tunes were replaced with a medley of Village People hits. This sponsored event contributed part of Sultan's £3,300 total.

Down the road at HMS Collingwood, an 'Allo 'Allo coffee morning matched up with car-washing, gate collections and cake-baking garnered over £2,000.

And across the water at Portsmouth Naval Base, 34 senior members of staff abseiled their way to over £1,800.



● Rachel Baxter, the sickbay receptionist at HMS Neptune, braves a bath full of baked beans for the Clyde Naval Base's Children in Need efforts

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Scottish antics for bear relief

NO-ONE missed out on HM Naval Base Clyde's fundraising efforts - civilian and military personnel from the naval base, RNAD Coulport and Babcock Naval Services joined forces to bag a big cash bundle for the 2002 Children in Need Appeal.

HMS Neptune sickbay receptionist Rachel Baxter took a bath full of baked beans for the sake of Pudsey's charity. It's not clear the benefits of tomato sauce for the skin, but her brave deed alone raised over £1,500 for the good cause.

Talking of bravery, three PO(MA)s in the sickbay volunteered to have their chests waxed for donations. And two women were sponsored to abseil with the Royal Marines.

A sponsored silence was the

more sedate option for another two of the base's personnel. And everyone tucked in to Pudsey bear cookies baked by the galley staff of HMS Vengeance.

A team from the Clyde Naval Base appeared live on Children in Need at the BBC's Glasgow studios when they handed over their Pudsey money.

Pudsey puts Culdrose through their paces

NOT to be outdone in the teamworking stakes, the Culdrose community pulled together to net £1,500 for the BBC's bear-faced charity.

Thirteen of the fittest personnel volunteered to row 100 miles, cycle 237 miles and bench press 185 tonnes (the weight of a squadron of Merlins) in the space of just one day.

The punishing 24 hours were broken up when hungry Naval families arrived to buy a special Pudsey hearty breakfast feast while cheering on the weary challengers.

LA 'Ben' Gunn, Community Centre chairman said: "We are all absolutely delighted with the generosity of the people who supported the event, we have done even better this year than last and are always keen to support this worthwhile event."

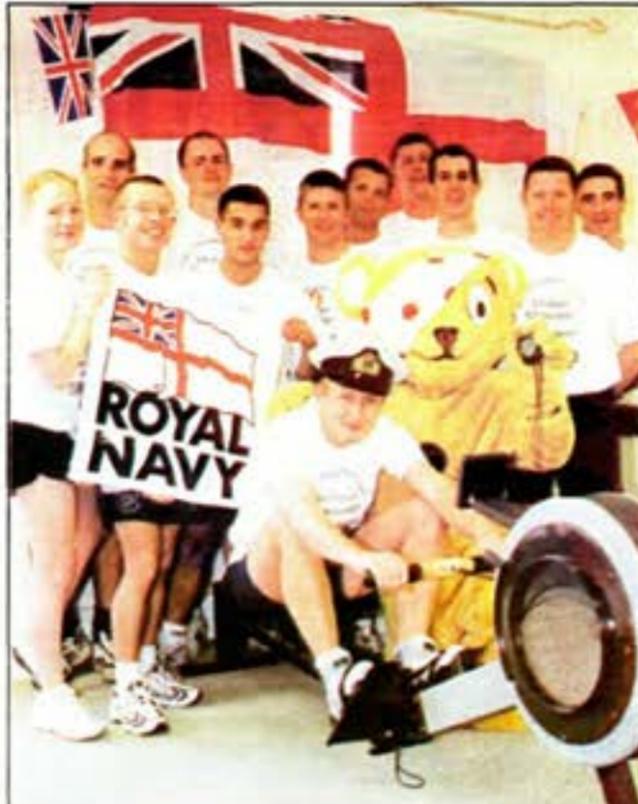
No Teddy Bear's picnic for MWS man

IN A PHENOMENAL fundraising effort for Children in Need, Lt Mike 'Forrest' Oakes took on the extraordinary task of running the 170 miles from Collingwood's Maritime Warfare School to Raleigh in 48 hours.

Despite an unplanned detour to the New Forest and the temporary misplacement of the support car, the team from the Junior Warfare Course 18 with their true long-distance runner Lt Oakes cut the time on the road down to just 24 hours and raised over £1,000.

Explaining how he achieved this multi-marathon feat, Lt Oakes said: "All you have to do is focus on one thing. Think of the thing that matters most to you in the entire world."

"Keep that thing in your mind, focus upon it and let it sit on your shoulder whispering encouragement and no matter how hard the challenge, no matter how much the pain, that one thing will get you through. So where does the power come from? From within."



■ CDR Wayne Keble, the commanding officer of HMS Richmond, was first in line to be tested as a potential bone marrow donor for the Anthony Nolan Trust.

Eighty-four members of the ship's company of the Type 23 frigate were tested in a single day in response to a request by the ship's Navigating Officer whose sister is fighting a life-threatening form of leukaemia.

If you would like more information on becoming a donor and are between 18 and 40, then contact the Anthony Nolan Trust on 020 7284 1234 or e-mail: newdonor@anthonyolan.org.uk

■ CHILDREN in the Rainbow ward of Mount Vernon Hospital in Northwood must have thought the chocolate fairy had paid a call.

These youngsters were the lucky recipients of a chocolate galloon made by POCA P Ludgrove for the Joint Support Unit's Trafalgar Night Dinner at the Northwood Headquarters.

■ THE Fleet Information Management Unit on Portsdown Hill got into the flow with the SSAFA Golden Jubilee Big Brew Up.

They decided the way to go was a Mad Hatters Tea Party. PO(W) Mair Anderson-Day along with Diana Holden and Sara Rutter organised the tea-party atmosphere.

Over 100 people took part, many of them taking up the theme of the day with their silly hats. Officer in Charge Lt Cdr Tony Knight judged the winning entry to be on the head of WWtr Gemma Davies.

■ FOLLOWING on from a summertime visit to present a cheque for £1,500 to children's hospice Demeiza House in Kent, CPO Mark Collins exchanged gifts with volunteer worker Ivy Chapman.

In the summer Ivy asked Mark if he collected ship crests, as her mother had been given a crest from HMS Royal Oak in honour of Ivy's father who had served on board the warship but had died in 1920. With no children or close relatives, Ivy asked if Mark would like to have the crest.

Mark was delighted with the offer and told of his own family connection with the Royal Oak. His great uncle Leonard Soul survived Scapa Flow to be lost six months later in his next ship.

An open day at the hospice later in the year proved the ideal opportunity for an exchange of gifts. Mark gave Ivy an HMS Illustrious Millennium Commissioning book which he had helped to compile during his time on board the carrier.

In return, Mark accepted the crest saying that it would be treasured in his family for many years to come.

■ THE RNAS Culdrose Church of Scotland vicar the Reverend Stan Kennon drafted in friends and colleagues with the lure of tea and sticky buns for SSAFA Forces Help.

The temptation of a fresh brew and home-baked delights brought in a total of £100, which was then doubled with a further £100 from the Culdrose chaplaincy.



● Rev Stan Kennon



Ice ship melts Brazilian hearts

ICE patrol ship HMS Endurance was fulfilling two of her main tasks within hours of arriving in a South American port.

The Red Plum, named for her bright red hull, had covered 4,000 miles of her annual deployment to the Southern Hemisphere when she arrived for a four-day operational stand-off in Salvador, a former capital of Brazil and a city of 3 million noted for its colour and vibrancy.

On the same evening as she arrived, Endurance hosted an official reception for local and national dignitaries, civilian and military – the Royal Navy enjoys close links with many South American navies, including the Brazilians, and such defence diplomacy is seen as a vital role of the Senior Service.

Another key task was the distribution of hundreds of toys gathered by a charity 'Task Force Brazil' to orphans at a local home named Irma Dulce.

In return, 30 children and helpers visited the ship, where they were given a tour and stayed for lunch – a simple and inexpensive act of kindness which means a great deal to children who have next to nothing.

Such community work is an important element in any port visit, and work parties of this nature are invariably oversubscribed when the invitation is put to a ship's company.

Endurance, a 6,500-ton ice-breaker, is now on the second leg of her long journey south, heading for the Falklands – around 2,500 miles south of Salvador.

Here she fulfils another of her tasks, as a visible presence in the region, as well as supporting science and survey work.

Up to and around Christmas she is due to be concentrating on the sub-Antarctic island of South Georgia before she heads even further south towards the Antarctic peninsula.

While in the Falklands the ship will undertake a spell of operational sea training, and there will be an intensive two-day exercise entitled Polar Haven.

See also pages 13 and 15



● Lt Katie Nunnen, Flight Observer with 212 Flight 815 Naval Air Squadron on board HMS Endurance, with children at the Irma Dulce orphanage in Salvador



Great Scots dash for cash

FULL pelt round the upper deck of HMS Edinburgh, CPO Steve 'The Running Man' Ripley raced CPO Mike 'The Power' Perfect in a pursuit race to raise £350 for the Erskine Hospital Trust Convalescent Home.

Collingwood race

THE 2002 Collingwood race was an opportunity for Cdr Kevin Robertson of the Communications Warfare Training Department to gather in a cash total of £253 for the Shaw Trust organisation in Portsmouth. The Trust provides support to people with mental health problems in the local area.

The massed runners of the Maritime Warfare School raised £500 at the 10km race for Multiple Sclerosis charities.

Burning desire to run

A team of staff from the Phoenix firefighting school at HMS Excellent, Whale Island, ran the Great South Run on behalf of the charity CLIC (Challenging Childhood Cancer and Leukaemia).

The runners raised £1,276 for the charity that helps the families of children living with these difficult conditions.

● Cdr Bug Wrightson, PO Betsy Baker, Nick Nicholson (CLIC), CPO Nick Smith, PO Chris 'Bungy' Williamson, Cdr Nick Hudson and foreground Lee Weeks and PO Jack Russell.



Bedtime stories at HMS Raleigh

BEDS have proven big-time sources of charity windfalls at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

The Artificer Apprentices of Figgard Squadron have collected over £2,500 in a sponsored bed push around the grounds of the establishment.

Each of the four divisions pushed the bed for 90 minutes each, covering a distance of more than 24 miles. Even more impressive when you hear the bed had to be carried the last few laps as the wheels had fallen off!

This money is going to the squadron's adopted charity, the Guide Dogs for the Blind Association. The tradition of raising money for the training of a guide dog has been going on for over 40 years at the Cornish training base.

WO(MEA) Paul Simpson, Figgard's Charity Officer, said: "The day was a great success with all involved working extremely

hard. The trainees should be very proud of themselves for raising such a substantial amount for charity."

Beds were also essential for the Walker Division at Raleigh's raffle draw. The winner OM Adam Bows enjoyed the top prize of breakfast in bed, served by his Divisional Officer Lt Simon Paget.

Adam also got to lounge about indulging in an extra hour-and-a-half lie in while the rest of his messmates tidied up around him.

Trainee Chef James Rattenbury won the opportunity for his boss PO Richard Duffield to iron and press his white shirts.

The raffle raised a total of £412 for the Friends of Laylands' Respite Care Home in Liskeard. The home cares for profoundly disabled children with severe learning difficulties.

Reservist clammers charity peak

A RESERVIST from HMS Calliope Sub Lt Allison Moseley has recently returned from Tanzania where she took part in a seven-day trek up Mount Kilimanjaro, the highest peak in Africa.

She insists that at the summit she took time out from admiring the view to catch up with the latest edition of the Navy News.

Allison was sponsored in her adventure and raised £960 for the British Heart Foundation, Marie Curie Cancer Care and the Bubble Appeal.

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Knockout total!

A raffle at the Plymouth Area and Naval Air Novice boxing championships raised £2,000 for National Children's Homes. Picture: Shaun Barlow

Arbitration decision gives RN a breather

AS NAVY News went to press, the national firefighters' strikes planned for the festive season had been called off as the Fire Brigades Union and employers took their cases to the arbitration service ACAS.

Around 19,000 military firefighters – including more than 2,000 from the Royal Navy – were not now expected to be called on until the New Year at the earliest, depending on the outcome of the talks.

The next two strikes, of 48 hours each, have been provisionally planned for January 28 and February 1 – and the military crews and their Green Goddesses remain on standby in case they are needed.

The dispute between firefighters and employers started with a 40 per cent pay claim by the Fire Brigades Union.

Union officials were awaiting the official publication of the Bain Review as Navy News went to press, linking a pay increase of 11 per cent over two years to changes in working practices.



● Royal Navy firefighters tackle a blaze in an outbuilding in Southsea during the most recent national strike by Fire Brigades Union members

Picture: LA(9107) Sean Clew

Firefighters 'coped well'

MILITARY personnel have coped well with the task of covering for striking firefighters, according to a Government assessment.

The COBR (Cabinet Office Briefing Room) report into emergency cover for the eight-day strike from November 22 to 30 said Joint Operational Control Centres (JOCCs) fielded 30,278 emergency calls in the period, of which five per cent were immediately filtered out as being non-emergency.

Multiple calls for the same incident meant that there were actually 20,237 incidents, and in 40 per cent of those the police arrived in advance and turned the military teams back as they were not required.

Military teams attended 10,793 incidents, and fire brigade members attended a further 1,367.

Some 25 per cent were found to be false alarms, and of the remainder, 83 per cent were non-life threatening – the COBR report recognises that military firefighters far exceeded their original remit, which was to concentrate on the protection of life.

There were 12 fire-related deaths during the period, which is average for that time of the year, but the total number of calls was well down on an average November period – around 45,000 calls would normally be expected.

Three-quarters of the incidents reported to JOCCs were between mid-day and midnight, and the Ministry of Defence has indicated that it may change the rotas to reflect this workload – the military operate a two-shift system with around 6,250 firefighters available for each 12-hour period.

In all, around 19,000 military personnel have been involved in Operation Fresco, using 827 veteran Green Goddess fire engines, supported by 331 specialist Breathing Apparatus Rescue Teams (BARTs) and 59 Rescue Equipment Support Teams (RESTs).

Although Green Goddess availability was high, at 99 per cent, the report recognised that these vehicles are "not ideal assets", and

there was an increasing use made of red fire engines "Red Goddesses", with limited equipment on board) as military teams were trained to use them – from 27 at the start of the eight-day strike to 834 by the end.

The Fire Brigades Union, which has agreed to take the dispute over pay and modernisation issues to the arbitration service ACAS, agreed before the strike that any so-called "gold command incidents", major incidents such as terrorist attacks or a train crash, would be attended by firefighters whether on strike or not.

And although there were a number of significant fires which were tackled by military teams, there were no gold command incidents.

The report also notes that disruption to normal life was minimal. Fears that infrastructure could be badly affected proved unfounded – for example, the Underground system in London ran 97 per cent of scheduled services, and just 22 deep-level stations were shut because of their access routes.

The full report can be found at the Number 10 website at www.number-10.gov.uk



● Salty Bear, the mascot of HMS Newcastle provided by the pupils of Marine Park School, Whitley Bay, lends a hand to his shipmates Lt Urwin, OM Cox and LMEM Truscott in Worthing



● NA 'Doc' Banner tackles a fire at a textiles factory in the East Midlands. Doc and the rest of the 'BART-men' – the nickname given by local children to Breathing Apparatus Rescue Teams – had a busy shift, starting with a road accident where a mother and daughter had to be cut free, followed by the rescue of a man from a 30ft shaft, a fire at a manor house and finally the blaze at the factory, where access for the Green Goddesses was hampered by parked vans

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● Green Goddess crews from Type 42 destroyer HMS Exeter, based at HMS Collingwood, added an unusual twist to the standard aircraft, aircrew and equipment picture when they lined up with their Green Goddesses at the Fareham training base.



Brazil scores with visitors

IN A break from operational duties around the Falkland Islands, HMS Leeds Castle paid a five-day visit to Rio Grande Do Sul in southern Brazil.

The ship was met by a warm welcome from the Brazilian Navy, being berthed in a prominent position astern of the sail training ship Cisne Branco.

During the second day she was open to visitors for four hours and received over 400 guests, despite heavy rain and thunder.

In a re-run of the World Cup quarter final, the ship's company enjoyed a football match organised against the Brazilian Navy ship

Babitonga (formerly HMS Arun).

The game kicked off in scaring heat with the Brazilians showing off their legendary skills and flair. By the end of the first half Leeds Castle were losing 4-0.

The second half was more evenly balanced with goals from S/Lt Jeff Johnston and OM(C) Woody Woodhouse – but the Brazilians snatched a late goal to seal a flattering 7-2 win. During the fifth and final day the Commanding Officer Lt Cdr John Garratt and 12 of the ship's company paid their respects

to Admiral Tamandare, patron of the Brazilian Navy, placing a floral tribute on his grave before a lunch hosted by Vice Admiral Pimentel at the HQ of the Brazilian 5th Naval District.

On leaving Brazil, the ship made a fast passage back to Port Stanley – into some heavy weather – to pick up HE the Governor Donald Lamont and convey him to Mare Harbour as part of his final departure programme from the Falklands.

● **RESPECT:** Lt Cdr John Garratt salutes the grave of Admiral Tamandare

Sheffield memorial parade preserved on videotape

HMS SHEFFIELD Association have produced a video of their Annual Parade and Memorial Service, in memory of the sinking of the destroyer during the Falklands War.

The Service at Sheffield Cathedral was attended by veterans from far and wide, who paraded through the city, led by mounted police in full ceremonial uniform, complete with lance.

The salute was taken by the Earl of Scarborough, Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire, accompanied by the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, the Master Cutler, the Mayor of Barnsley and the Chief Constable of South Yorkshire.

The video, produced by the University of Sheffield Media Department, runs for around 40 minutes. It may be obtained for £6 inc pp from Alick Boswell, Woodford Cottage, 18 Western Drive, Claybrook Parva, Lutterworth LE17 5AG.



Revenge returns

MICK Harding's magnificent 8ft 6in working model of the battleship HMS Revenge, first built at RN air station Culdrose in 1974, has been restored by him over the past 17 years to her 1939 state and is seen here before relaunch at Coronation Park, Helston.

Mick, who retires from 750 Sqn this year, hopes to exhibit the model at Bude this Easter

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Make your party go with a bang . . .

OUR favourite Christmas card came from RN bomb disposal team Southern Diving Unit 2, featuring their new six-wheel-drive all-terrain vehicle.

Where once a Landrover and transit van were used to carry the five members of Portsmouth-based SDU2 and all their gear and inflatable dinghy, now the distinctive Pinzgauer can accommodate the whole lot in one vehicle specially kitted out for the use of Navy divers.

Said Lt Cdr David Welch: "We've got some good capacity now, a purpose-built vehicle that can stow everything correctly."

SDU2 are the first of the RN diving units to receive the new off-roader, with nine ordered in total.

And as they say in their card, they're "equally at home in a Green or White goddess".

● Our thanks to our many readers who also sent Christmas cards to Navy News



Bugler (99) at concert

SINGLED out for special mention at the Royal Marines School of Music Christmas concert at St Mary's Church, Portsmouth was a member of the audience who had served in both world wars.

Major Peter Best noted that Steven Butcher (99) had joined the Royal Marines as a Boy Bugler.

At the end of 1915 the RM Band Service reached almost 1,500 all ranks, of which 93 were Band Boys.

George Moody, who joined in 1912 at age 15, served in Admiral Jellicoe's flagship at Jutland and left one of the most interesting accounts of the battle. Each of the three RN battleships sunk carried a Royal Marines Band.

Freedom 'for those who keep us free'

TYPE 23 frigate HMS Richmond has paid a high-profile visit to London after completing a stint of basic operational sea training.

She navigated through the Thames Barrier before mooring in the Pool of London alongside the World War II cruiser HMS Belfast.

One of the highlights of the visit was the granting of the Freedom of Entry to the Borough of Richmond-upon-Thames to the ship's company in a colourful ceremony outside York House, the borough's civic offices in Twickenham.

More than 150 guests attended, including councillors, local MP Vincent Cable, residents of the Royal Star and Garter Home and representatives from Kneller Hall.

After inspecting the ship's company, the Royal Marines Band, Royal Naval Association Standard Bearers and local Sea Cadets, the Mayor Cllr Douglas Orchard presented the Freedom scroll to Richmond's Commanding Officer, Cdr Wayne Keble.

Formal permission was then requested for the ship's company to exercise their rights to march through the streets of Twickenham with bayonets fixed and swords drawn.

Led by the Royal Marines Band, they were joined in the march by representatives of the Royal Naval Association.

Said Cdr Keble: "It was an enormous privilege for HMS Richmond to be granted the Freedom of the Borough and for us to take part in the ceremony – and wonderful to see the public welcoming us with applause en route."

"It is very rare that we get the opportunity to put on our full regalia and the ship's company thoroughly enjoyed doing this."

Council Leader Cllr Tony Arbour said: "I was proud to officially welcome and honour the crew of HMS Richmond. This civic and Naval ceremony demonstrated Richmond's pride in our borough and 'our' ship."

"It was wonderful to be able to celebrate our freedoms by granting the Freedom of the Borough to those who keep us free."

The ship held a Ship Open to Visitors session in conjunction with the Directorate of Naval Recruiting and many organised school tours – and a children's party – were also welcomed on board throughout the four-day visit.

As Navy News went to press the ship was alongside in Portsmouth for Christmas and the New Year before a maintenance package in preparation for deployment early in 2003.



● FREEDOM VISIT: HMS Richmond passes the Thames Flood Barrier on her way into London

Bordeaux last stop for Southampton

DECEMBER 11-14 proved bittersweet days for the ship's company of Type 42 destroyer HMS Southampton.

On her way home from a three-and-a-half month stint escorting the carrier HMS Ark Royal on the Argonaut deployment, the Portsmouth-based warship stopped off in Bordeaux to take part in the ceremonies for the celebrated action by the Royal Marines 'Cockleshell Heroes'.

This was to have been attended by the last surviving member of the team Bill Sparks, who sadly died a few days earlier, and the loss of the chance to meet this legendary figure was keenly felt by the ship's company.

A Meridian TV programme in 'The Last Of . . .' series was also shown a few days after Bill's death (see also page 25).

HMS Southampton had just finished a round of visits around the Black Sea where the Ukraine, Romania and Bulgaria all warmly welcomed their RN visitors before

they moved on from Istanbul to Izmir to take part in the Turkish exercise Dogdu Akdeniz with a multi-national task force.

Southampton has been one of the busiest warships of the RN over the past 18 months. She sailed in August last year for exercise Saif

Sareca II but was overtaken with world events post-September 11.

Then within a few months back alongside at Portsmouth she made visits around the country as part of a major RN careers drive before embarking on the Argonaut deployment in August 2002.

FAA in action

TWO major new exhibitions were opened at the Fleet Air Arm Museum by its patron, former Navy pilot the Duke of York.

The first concentrates on aircraft carriers and is a development of the original Carrier exhibition, which opened to great acclaim in 1994.

Developments in audio-visual technology have now added spectacular action scenes to the flight deck section – these, like the original attraction funded by Sir Donald Gosling.

The second exhibition, Projecting Power, covers the dozens of operations across the world in which RN personnel have participated since World War II.

Details of opening times on the museum website at www.fleetairarm.com

'Undervalued' artificers to get new WO2 rate in 2004

A NEW Warrant Officer II (WO2) rate for artificers is to be introduced in 2004.

In a personal letter to them all, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Peter Spencer – who leaves the Navy this month – recognised that since the introduction of the Charge Chief Petty Officer (CCPO) rate over 20 years ago, this non-substantive rate had had "poor standing" amongst the artificer corps.

"CCPOs have considered that the rate fails to recognise or reward them for the extra responsibilities, training and qualification involved, or the need to achieve success in a formal selection procedure," he wrote.

"As a non-substantive rate, they have no military authority over the CPO and their extra basic pay is not reflected in their pension; they remain pensioned as a chief petty officer."

"These perceptions have been compounded by Pay 2000 which involved capping the CPO Artificer at Pay Level 7, in order to sustain a pay differential between CPO and CCPO rates and to incentivise CPO Artificers to qualify and seek selection for CCPO."

"Meanwhile, non-technical CPOs have access to Pay Levels 8 and 9. This has been a hugely emotive issue that has done much in the minds of the Artificer Corps to contribute to a general feeling that they are undervalued."

"The Navy Board fully recognises the value of the Artificer Corps and has therefore taken the decision to introduce a new rate of Warrant Officer II in place of the CCPO rate from April 1, 2004, which will allow sufficient time to

make the necessary detailed changes.

"This will apply to artificers only, specifically AEAs, Communications Technicians, Medical Technicians, MEAs and WEAs."

"With the rate comes the status of a Warrant Officer and a higher pension which reflects the substantive nature of the rate. However, it has not yet been possible to resolve the pay cap issue, simply because this would require agreement across the Services which would have significantly delayed any decision."

"The possibility of introducing a WO2 into the Royal Navy has been considered, on and off, for a number of years. More recently, the introduction of this rate was considered, and dismissed, by the Bett Report (the Independent Review of the Armed Forces Manpower, Career and Remuneration Structures of March, 1995).

However, the Army and the Royal Marines continue to retain the WO2 and find it a compelling contribution to their operational effectiveness between their CPO and WO1 equivalents. In seeking to address the anomalies of the CCPO rate, a detailed study has already considered a proposal to abolish the rate by recategorising the billets at either the WO or CPO level.

But this was dismissed as being impractical on structural grounds and because it would introduce unacceptable levels of risk associated with the retention and development of ratings within the Artificer Corps.

WO2s will be addressed as 'Sir/Ma'am' by subordinates and as 'Mr/Mrs/Miss' by superiors.



Ark men of the sixties sought

THE BRITISH Military Powerboat Trust (BMPT) is looking for those men who cared for HMS Ark Royal's Captain's boat back in 1966-67.

The Trust has won a Heritage Lottery Fund grant to restore the 25ft boat back to her high-point in the mid-1960s.

Fast Motor Boat No. 43957 started life in 1943 and was initially used by HMS Diadem as the ship-to-shore officers' motorboat. After a period out of service in Chatham, the little boat was whisked up north to the commissioning of the fourth HMS Ark Royal in the 1950s.

There the 25ft boat was made bright in colours of red and white, and ornately decorated and embellished by silver serpents.

And it is to this incarnation that Rodger Cruttenden-Woodhams, leader of the voluntary restoration team, plans to return the little boat. And to make sure he gets it right, he is looking for the Leading Seaman plus his two-man crew of Able or Ordinary Seaman and 1st or 2nd Mechanical Engineer - because these are the men who can answer all his questions.

The British Military Powerboat Trust sets out to restore and preserve significant examples of historic military craft which can then be exhibited ashore and on the water.

If anyone can help with information about Ark Royal's Captain's boat and her crew's whereabouts, contact Rodger Cruttenden-Woodhams on 01425 629851.

The British Military Powerboat Trust is based in Marchwood near Southampton, call 023 8042 8443.

Pat on the back from NAO

THE MINISTRY of Defence has welcomed the note of encouragement sounded in the National Audit Office's Major Projects Report (MPR) 2002.

The annual report assesses the performance of some of the MOD's largest defence equipment procurement programmes.

The report highlights include that the MOD has succeeded in reducing the overall cost of its 20 biggest projects for the third successive year; and the extent of the delay has been reduced.

Across the 19 projects with approved in-service dates, the average delay is now nine months compared to 27 months in MPR 2001.

Horsea death

A ROYAL Navy officer has died in an accident at the Defence Diving School complex at Horsea Island, in Portsmouth Harbour.

Lt Paul McAulay (27), who was married, died on the evening of Thursday November 28.

An investigation into his death is under way.



● The ceremony at the Turkish naval base in Aksaz to hand over command of the Standing Naval Force Mediterranean from the British to the Dutch Navy

Mediterranean Force handed over to Dutch

THE STANDING Naval Force Mediterranean (STANAVFORMED) has seen a change of command from the British hands of Cdre Angus Somerville to Cdre Philip Wirth of the Royal Netherlands Navy.

During Cdre Somerville's time in command, STANAVFORMED has conducted Operation Active Endeavour, NATO's maritime operation in the eastern Mediterranean as

Medical review

THE MOD has announced a set of measures to improve manning and retention in the Defence Medical Services following an extensive review.

The review decided the three issues to address were overstretch, pay and pensions, and quality of life. It recommended a series of measures covering remuneration and non-financial issues, including gratuities of up to £50,000 for recruits to specialties in short supply, interim improved pension arrangements pending a final salary scheme in 2005/6 and new pay arrangements.

part of the international campaign against terrorism.

The force has also been involved with intensive sea training, including taking part in NATO exercises Dogfish, Co-operative Partner and Dynamic Mix.

At the handover ceremony which took place at the Turkish Naval Base at Aksaz, Cdre Somerville said: "In the past 12 months the Force has adapted itself to the new strategic environment."

He highlighted: "During 225 days of patrolling, more than 35 ships with two submarines, have hailed over 8,000 merchant vessels and monitored others in co-ordination with US and other national surface and air assets.

"Our role has been to provide presence and surveillance in the eastern Mediterranean in a war unlike any we have experienced before."

In his closing comments Cdre Somerville praised all those involved with the Force: "NATO is changing and faces many challenges along the way, but with people such as you at its heart, NATO can retain the strength that has characterised its last 50 years and

so, in the future, be a force of security, stability and peace."

STANAVFORMED was activated on April 30, 1992, when eight Allied naval units started flying the flag in Naples, Italy. It provides a continuous maritime presence in the Mediterranean.

Glasgow start for centenary

THIS year 2003 will be the centenary of the forming of the RN Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) and its modern equivalent the RN Reserve (RNR). To mark the occasion there will be a number of events around the UK.

It is fitting that the first of these takes place in Glasgow as it is from there that the first Reservists paraded in 1903.

A service of commemoration will be held in Glasgow Cathedral on March 8, 2003, followed by a march.

Contact Cdr J.M. Chalmers RNR on 01475 724481 ext 4342.

■ THE MOD has announced that in its contingency planning Reservists have not been called out for possible operations against Iraq and there are no immediate plans to do so.

End of an era



AFTER more than 40 years in the same building at RNAS Culdrose, the Royal Naval Hydrographic, Meteorological and Oceanographic School, known as the Met School, is leaving its west Cornwall base to move together with its sister school in Devonport Naval Base.

The merged sections will become the Maritime Warfare School, Hydrographic, Meteorological and Oceanographic Training Group.

Events are planned to mark the end of meteorology training at Culdrose including a ceremonial meteorological release and closing ceremony on February 26, followed by an informal social function. The hope is to bring together serving and former Met School staff.

For full details telephone 01326 557284.

Victory in dark corner

CONSTABLE sketches of HMS Victory have been found by Sotheby's in Glasgow. The drawings by artist John Constable were hanging on the wall in a dark corner of a family sitting room.

The owners claim Constable in their family tree but did not realise the drawings' potential £55,000 price tag. The auction will take place at Sotheby's in March.

Cattistock bump

HMS Cattistock was slightly damaged after hitting a jetty in Portsmouth Naval Base. FSL is carrying out repairs with replacement composite panels and the MCMV is anticipated to be out of dry dock in January.

Thanksgiving day

DEVONPORT Naval Base opened its gates in early December to welcome guests as part of Plymouth's American Thanksgiving Festival.

Christmas card from chilly south

Picture: LA(Phot) Phil Wareing



SERENADED by a carol-singing seal, HMS Endurance has sent back a Christmas message of goodwill to all readers of Navy News.

WAEM Karen Wilson of 212 Flight and LPT Yorkie Tate are pictured with their one-seal chorus at Grytviken in South Georgia.

The ice ship is busy carrying out hydrographic tasks and supporting the British Antarctic Survey during her first work period around the Antarctic island.

Christmas day will be spent at Grytviken with a church service in the chapel on the island.

Endurance is participating in an educational project through a website which tracks her progress and uses her route and activities as the basis for a wider understanding of conservation and the natural world.

Through an independent website www.visitandlearn.co.uk the project introduces topics which will relate to subjects covered in Key Stages 2 and 3.

It has the backing of the Navy, the British Antarctic Survey, the Falklands Tourist Board and the Natural History Museum in London

and its Australian cousin the Natural History Museum of Victoria.

Three schools in Portsmouth, Milton Cross, St Luke's and Portsmouth Grammar School, have offered curriculum advice, and will suggest revisions over the course of the first year of the project.

Members of the ship's company will contribute explanations of activities they undertake during the deployment.

They will also describe their role on the Navy's ice-breaker, making the project valuable in spreading awareness of the Royal Navy and careers in the Service.

The project has three main educational aims.

First to broaden people's understanding of the natural world. Then to enrich people's awareness of the processes of scientific natural history. Finally the work should increase knowledge of the work of museums, the Royal Navy and the British Antarctic Survey.

THE COLOURS of the FLEET



THE COLOURS
of the FLEET



THE UNION FLAG

The National flag of the United Kingdom is worn as a Jack in the bows of all HM ships in commission when in harbour or at sea when dressed with masthead flags. This is the position from which the name Union Jack is derived although it is generally known by this name through common usage. It is also flown during Courts Martial and is the Distinguishing Flag of an Admiral of the Fleet.

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HMS GLASGOW

One of the Royal Navy's Type 42 air defence destroyers, on patrol in the South China Sea

This splendid shot of HMS Glasgow ploughing through the South China Seas is just one example of the twelve superb photographs included in this year's calendar.

Each photograph measures approximately 30cm x 30cm and makes an impressive gift when framed.

Other ships featured are:-

HMS Cornwall, HMS Iron Duke, HMS Invincible, HMS Trumpeter, RFA Orangeleaf, HMS Fearless, HMS Endurance, HMS Vanguard. Also, FA2 Sea Harrier, Merlin helicopter and the Royal Marines in action.

2003 CALENDAR

The theme for the 2003 calendar is - Colours of the Fleet. Twelve different flags are depicted, together with potted history.

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● WO Allister Woodward, Executive Warrant Officer in HMS Chatham

Picture: Drake Photographic

'I'm the sea daddy of all sea daddies'

THE START of the year 2003 sees an increasing number of Naval ratings come under the reach of the Executive Warrant Officer, the new shipboard personnel manager under the Topmast system.

"Basically I see myself as HMS Chatham's Human Resources manager," said Executive Warrant Officer WO Allister Woodward, "dealing with all the Topmast issues, of course, but also problems with drafting, welfare, medical and getting people on and off courses."

He admitted that his role had some of the ship's company baffled when he arrived on board on September 19: "The people at first looked at me as if I had two heads or they couldn't understand what a warrant officer was doing on board. They weren't quite sure how to respond to me at first."

"In fact I think a couple of the younger lads looked at the badges on my arm and wondered if I was the NAAFI manager."

The first task he had on joining the ship was getting people to understand what Topmast squadding meant. As Executive Warrant Officer he works closely with the department co-ordinators to make sure the balance of ratings on board is right to keep the ship running.

As warfare ratings are the only ones affected at this point, this means close collaboration with their co-ordinator, the Chief Operations Missileman (ChOpsM).

"I put it on board as like the old football team. The co-ordinators are the coaches, and they run their team. Now they've got x amount of players that play for their team but they can only put 11 on the field at any one time."

"I sit back there in the grandstand as a manager, and make sure that the co-ordinators aren't taking the mickey out of some players by playing them every time, getting them really tired, and other players are sat on the sidelines for months on end not getting the chance to play."

When WO Woodward first arrived on board the Devonport frigate, the ship went straight into a period of deployment operational sea training (DOST). It meant he didn't have time to sit down with ratings to go through his Topmast role.

But it did give him a chance to show his operational duties. "In my job I do roving patrol, the same as the Executive Officer. I was out on

the ground passing information back and forth to HO1, but also going round making sure morale was kept high. Normally I carry a bag of sweets with me and throw the odd sweet at them and make sure they are still smiling."

Since then the new Chatham EWO has been walking his patch, making himself visible and going down to the messes. He has sat there listening to the lads and lasses, answering all the questions that are fired at him about what this new squad system means.

But after six weeks the message is starting to get out there and WO Woodward is finding an increasing number of feet treading the path to his door looking for his help.

"The first guy I sat down with I asked 'What is Topmast?' and he looked at me as if I'd grown the other head. This morning I had a guy in who explained to me fully what Topmast was about. So the message is getting about without me, they're telling each other now."

"People are coming up to me now and saying: 'This is what I would like to do, sir.' We then go through it and say: 'Right, this is what the ship requires, this is what the department needs and this is what you want. So let's see if we can put them all together.'"

This approach of balancing all three of these areas is already starting to pay dividends for the men and women of HMS Chatham.

"One instance is this young girl, it's her sister's graduation from university. Now she said 'I'd like to attend it because the whole family are going.' And I've said 'Well, let me put it in the plan, let's see what we can do.' We've sat down with her and the co-ordinator and said 'Yeah, we can figure that one out, we can get you home for that.'"

For another lad in the Type 22 frigate his wedding in 2004 is already marked down on the planning tool to allow for leave two weeks before and two weeks after.

The system is working currently on six-month block planning over the course of the rating's four-year draft but in time this forward look will extend. WO Woodward sits

down with each of his ratings and spends 30 minutes talking to them about their careers, their future plans and what is important to them right now.

The Navy has firmly sharpened its focus on to the individual and the EWO is on hand to listen and respond to the sailor's needs.

To date only warfare junior rates are within the Topmast scheme but marine engineering and supply and secretariat ratings come on line in April.

"I'm looking forward to it now. I can see there's lots of people out there that can be helped," said WO Woodward.

Ships are manned with a 133 per cent squad, with the extra third of the ship's company providing flexibility to move people from shore to sea and back again according to the requirements of both Navy and individual.

"I think the most valuable skill for any EWO is to be approachable because at the end of the day if you're not approachable in this job then people won't talk to you."

"It is one of those things that people need to be willing to come and talk to you. I think that the skill that the Navy has given me over the past 28 years is the understanding of people and the diverse backgrounds they come from."

The EWO's small team consists of a Regulating Petty Officer, who is also the Assistant EWO, a Leading Regulator and a Leading Physical Trainer. The EWO heads up this small group known as the Executive Sub Department.

It's clear that WO Woodward is relishing the challenges that his new role is bringing and gets a buzz from making a difference to the lives of those on board.

The Commanding Officer of HMS Chatham, Capt The Hon Michael Cochrane has made his EWO's status clear and distinct. "I think of myself as everybody's big brother. I don't belong to any branch on board so I've got no part to play in any of their day-to-day running. It makes life easier."

He ended: "I'm the sea daddy of all sea daddies. That's what it boils down to."

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At Your Service



Reunions

February

HMS Penelope Association: Open to all who served in the cruiser 1936-44 or frigate 1963-90, or relatives, hold a reunion in Blackpool, from February 14-15. For details of the reunion and membership contact Mike Bee (Secretary) HMS Penelope Association, 1 Oddfellows St, Milfield WF14 9AB, email mike.bee@btworld.com, or see website at: homepage.btworld.com/mikebee/index.htm

March

HMS Caledonia through the 80's reunion: at the Holiday Inn, Birmingham, on March 1. Details from Duncan Gow on 01436 674321 extn 4283 or Ian Brownley on 023 9254 2452.

Royal Naval Artificer Apprentices Centenary Celebration, March 14-16: Nostalgic visits to Portsmouth establishments ending with a banquet in the Guildhall, Portsmouth, on March 15. Enquiries to Chairman, Fingard Association, on 023 9259 3867 or see www.fingardassociation.org Admission to the banquet is by ticket only.

HMS Wizard & HMS Cadiz Association reunion March 28-31 at Llandudno. Growing membership. All commissions, tanks and rates welcome. Details from Tom Fox, Marchion, Church Lane, Menden, Coventry CV7 7YX, tel: 01676 523296.

April

HMS Cossack Association (L03 and D57) 1938-1959 reunion at Eastbourne in April. To join the Association and for more about the reunion contact George Toomey on 01734 872116 or visit the website at www.hmscossack.freezone.co.uk

HMS Swiftsure Association, cruiser and submarine, buffet lunch reunion on April 5 at the Sea Cadet TS Swiftsure, Aldershot. Details from David George, 'Mullion', Shipton Green, Bichenor, Chichester PO20 7BZ, tel: 01243 512998.

Bounty Boys reunion from April 25-27 at Bradley Court Hotel, Filly Rd, Scarborough. Contact Fred Panton on 020 7228 2379.

May

HMS Adamant Association reunion in May in Skegness. For information contact A E Walker on 01977 700638.

HMS Cleopatra Old Shipmates Association AGM and reunion at Cairn Hotel, Harrogate, in May. Details from CPO Warwick Franklin at the Armed Forces Careers Office, Mount Wise, Plymouth on 01752 501787 (w) or 01752 366611 (h), or email wmf@nclinklin@btopenworld.com

HMS Constance 1945-51 Association reunion at the Bull Hotel, Peterborough, on May 9-11. All who served in the ship between 1945-51 are welcome. Details from Ernie Balderson, 43 Old Place, Stealford, Lincs NG34 7HR, tel: 01529 413410.

Loch Class Frigates Association seek shipmates from any of the frigates. Meet your 'old ships'. Reunion takes place at Ramada Jarvis Hotel, Gouffault, from May 9-11. Write for details of membership and reunion to Judith Bardsley, 6 East Parade, Barnoldswick, Lancs BB18 6DD, tel: 01282 812529 or email: judithbardsley@aol.com

HMS Cassandra Association reunion at the Stretton Hotel, Blackpool, from May 16-18. New members are most welcome. Contact Bob Sheeh on 0114 230 7007 or Joe Ince on 023 9237 5945.

V & W Destroyer Association reunion at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry from May 16-19. Enquiries to C. Fairweather, Stable Cottage, Colchester Rd, West Bergholt, Colchester CO6 3JQ, tel: 01206 240614.

HMS Opossum reunion at the Trecam Hotel, Bubbacombe, Devon from May 16-19. All serving members of Opossum's six commissions are welcome. Details from Eddie Summerford, 28 Greyhound Rd, Linsfield, Bury BL9 6PN, tel: 0161 764 8778.

HMS Rules/655 Sqn FAA reunion at the Adelphi Hotel, Liverpool, from May 16-19. Details from John Robson on 029 9079 6538 or Ted Restall on 0117 932 7074.

LST & Landing Craft Association reunion, Sand Bay Holiday Village, Weston-super-Mare, May 19-23, with Remembrance service at Bristol Cathedral on 21st. Details: Mike Crosswell, 01757 288752, email: miker@parrucking.freezone.co.uk

HMS Faulkner Association reunion from May 20th to 22nd at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth. Details from C. Heuer, 89 Bowers Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 1BH, tel: 01266 756141.

HMS Forester (H74) reunion at York House Hotel, Eastbourne from May 23-26. Contact D Headford on 01226 740637.

HMS Gloucester (1909-41) reunion from May 23-25 at Royal Fleet Club, Devonport. Details from Noel Haines, 60a Forest Rd, Harlow, Essex LE9 2BG, tel: 0116 296 2805.

Algerines Association (Fleet Minesweepers) 1942-52 reunion at the Norfolk Hotel, Blackpool, from May 8-11. Any prospective new members who served on Algerine-class minesweepers can get further details from George Patience, tel: 01495 450629.

HMS Whitesand Bay Association reunion at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth on May 28. Still seeking anyone who served on board. Details from Hedley Markin, 16 Burbridge Close, Colcot, Berks RG21 7ZU or email: haxk@ip@btinternet.com

23rd Destroyer Flotilla Association reunion in the Senior Rates Mess, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth on May 31. Details from Bill Swift, 37 New Rd, Lovedean, Waterlooville PO8 9RU, tel: 023 9259 1032.

June

HMS Highflyer 1945-62 reunion at the Antabador Hotel, Scarborough, June 10-13. AGM and reunion dinner on 11th. Details from John Gieger-Wingett on 023 9259 3542, email: john@jywing.freezone.co.uk

HMS Hunter/807 Squadron FAA reunion from June 10-13 at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth. All ranks and ratings welcome. Details: Jack Price, 01543 422759, email: jack@pnceo20.finet.co.uk

HMS Brecon L76 reunion in Blackpool on June 15. First and second commissions 1942-45, also any crew or ex-crew of the present HMS Brecon (M29). All welcome. Contact Phil Rogers on 01628 624740.

523 & 524 Recruit Squads, Royal Marines reunion on June 21 at Royal Sailor's Home Club, Portsmouth. Contact George Chandler on 023 9241 2895 or Don Pimp at 92 Pound Rd, East Peckham, Tonbridge TN12 5BL, tel: 01622 871573.

July

HMS Glasgow (G21/D88) Association reunion in Portsmouth on July 5-6. Details from Alan Mercer, 89 Royal Ave, Hough Green, Widnes WA9 8HJ, tel: 0151 510

Calling Old Shipmates

1945.
HMS Rooke/Comcoen Gibraltar, 1978 reunion at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, July 12 for those based at Rooke/Comcoen. Contact Jeff (Taff) Thomas on 01495 260915, email: Jeff@thomas-11.finet.co.uk or Tom Henderson at Tom.Henderson@igs.com

August

HMS Stalker/809 FAA Squadron reunion August 9 at Waverley Hotel, Pedley St, Crewe, tel: 01720 256223. Relatives of past members will be made welcome, also members of HMS Hunter and HMS Attacker. Contact Jess Holmes on 01675 463327 or D.C. Roberts on 01782 561052.

September

718 Squad, Royal Marines (1959-60) second reunion from September 25-27 at CTCRM Lyngstone - 19 of the 42 so far. Contact Mike Orens on 0161 980 2209 or email: Mike.Overs@bt.com

October

HMS Sirius - The Fighting Forty - reunion in Plymouth on October 4. Two years was not enough for 150 Dog Dogs. Large SAE and some info to Andy (Finn) Ayles, 56 Pounds Park Rd, Pevenell, Plymouth PL3 4DH or email: aayes@msmarins.info

Friends of HMS Crane 1943-62, UZ3F/123, will hold a reunion at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth on October 10-11. Guests also welcome. Details from John Cantle on 01822 834398.

HMS Westcott reunion, Skegness, October 16-19. Enquiries to C. Fairweather, Stable Cottage, Colchester Rd, West Bergholt, Colchester CO6 3JQ, tel: 01206 240614.

HMS Trafalgar Association reunion from October 17-19 in Portsmouth. Ship's companies of all commissions and anyone associated with the ship is welcome along with guests. Details from Taff Pugh, 13 Florid Pedrog, Whexham LL12 7PL, tel: 01978 262566 or mobile: 07971 812820.

November

128 MQC, HMS Sultan: David Batchelor hopes to organise a reunion for members of this course who passed out in December 1973. Contact David on 023 9271 6472 or write to the Secretary, Gosport RMA, Fareham Rd, Gosport.

LST & Landing Craft Association 60th Anniversary of D-Day June 5-7 2004: Coaches and ferry arranged Portsmouth to Anomanchies and Outehram, approx cost £55, no meals included. Details: Mike Crosswell, 01757 288752, email: miker@parrucking.freezone.co.uk

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Over to You

Submarine P48: Sunk December 25 1942. Does anyone remember crew member J.P. Key? Please email his sister at hyd@breeze.com

John Cedric Thomas (Ricky or Taffy): His daughter seeks friends of her late father who may have photos of him and his service. Ricky came from Aberdeen, served 22 years and was at HMS Condor in the 50s. He went to RNAS Culrose as an air fitter after leaving the Service. Contact Dawn Mackenzie, 16, South Street, Ayr, South Ayr, Angus DD11 1BQ or email: dawn@btinternet.com

Jim Field's father served in HMS Wren, a Black Swan-class sloop commissioned in 1943, and also a Famine B Class (ML853) during the war. Jim is trying to get hold of some ship's technical drawings of either of the vessels as a present to him. Any advice or info gratefully received. Write to Jim Field, 35 Manor Rd, East Preston, W. Sussex BN16 1QA or email: jimfield7@bt.com

M O'Shaughnessy was a set of bells during the POs Mess, HMS Amazon decommissioning raffle. These bells are unusual, made up of three saluting gun shells, with a plaque stating that the shells originated from rounds fired across the bows of HMV Britannia, while acting as Royal Yacht Guardship during the honeymoon of the Prince and Princess of Wales. He would appreciate any assistance in authenticating this statement and the authenticity of the bells. Contact M O'Shaughnessy, CPO (EWO), UK Element, NCSS Latina, BFPO 8, or email: oshaughnessy@yaho.co.uk

Stewart Jackson is trying to find a PO's gift tie pin, as worn before the advent of epaulettes. If anyone knows where he can get one or has one to sell, he would appreciate it. Contact Stewart Jackson, 43 Hill House Drive, Chadwell St Mary, Essex RM16 4DS, tel: 07919210510 or email: stewart@43home.fs.business.co.uk

Northern Gem: Nicola Bacon is trying to find out about her father-in-law's Naval career. William Henry Bacon served in Northern Gem in World War II. If anyone has any info or photos of him or the ship, contact Nicola at 8 Birdnest Ave, Leicester LE3 9AT, tel: 0116 2997243 or email: nicky.bacon@btworld.com

Clive Hughes seeks photos of RNAS Anthon - he was stationed there in late 1956 to early 1958 at the time of closure. Contact Clive Hughes, Chy-Kembo, Craigend Farm Cottage, Kinglassie, Lothlydie, Fife KY5 0UE or email: clive@nclinklin@btopenworld.com

Does anyone remember CPO (Stoker) Glynder (Taff) Harrison who served in the Royal Navy from 1940-62? Debbie Nowell is trying to find any info about his career. He was Welsh, born in Tylonstown, but married a Torpoint girl and settled there. Any info to Debbie Nowell, 16 The Lathes, Norwich, NR3 3DY, tel: 01603 474728 or email: thenorweb@aol.com

HMS Hood/HMS Airedale: Michael Coker's uncle, William Charles (Bill) Holland, served in Hood from 1936-40 as AB, LS and PO Torpedoman. He then served in Airedale as PO TGM from November 1941 to June 1942 when he was killed in action at the time of the sinking of Airedale. Michael would like to hear from anyone who knew him. Contact Michael at 11 Camden Close, Chislehurst, Kent BR7 5PH, tel: 020 8295 3537 or email: mjcocker@compio-marine.co.uk

Lindsay Ashwood seeks anyone who knew her father, Alan Ashwood. Alan trained at HMS St Vincent, possibly in the mid-50s, and served in HMS Ark Royal and HMS Eagle. He came out of the Navy around 1970, and died unexpectedly 21 years ago.

HMS Chinkara (landing craft base, Cochlin) 1944-46, and Wrens of HMS Nightjar (Bakkip): Join in with the annual Nostalgia Gathering. Lots of albums etc. Contact Colin Baker, Malkin Cottage, Lt Edeleston, Preston PR3 0YQ, tel: 01995 670495 or email: colin@bakker.finet.co.uk

HMS Kenya: George Farr would like to contact Terence Brogan; both Signalmen in HMS Kenya 1949-51. It is rumoured that Terence, known as Bulch, transferred to the RAN after 1951. Contact Mr G. Farr, 88 The Normans, Slough SL2 5TV, tel: 01753 570271, email: g.g.farr@btopenworld.com

HMS Neptune 1950: Seeking James William (Mac) Phillips (Mac) with whom Bernard McPhillips (Mac) served at HMS Neptune January to July 1990. He also served on board HMS Exeter during the Gulf Conflict, while Bernard served on board HMS Ark Royal attached to 820 NAS. They both served in the Supply & Secretariat Division. Contact Bernard at 772 Granton Crescent, Edinburgh EH6 1NZ, tel: 0131 552 3075 mobile: 07949 007193 or email: bmcphillips@btopenworld.com

Mark (Max) Sylvester: Mark's ex-wife Dee is trying to contact shipmates of Mark ex-HMS Fife, roughly the early to mid-1980s. He will be 40 this month and his daughter is trying to arrange a surprise party for him to be held in Worthing on January 11. If anyone remembers Max and would like to attend, contact Dee on 07818 412727 or email at Deedee.Palmer@btinternet.com

Michael (Mick) Hewitt: Ex-RO1(T) who served on Hermes 1975-77. He married an Australian and emigrated to Australia in about 1983. Paul Frewell has lost touch and wants to re-establish contact. He is believed to be living in one of the major cities on the south coast of Australia. His family used to live in Lewes, Sussex. Contact Paul at West Kirkcargill Farmhouse, Dundrennan, Kirkcubright DG6 4DQ, tel: 01557 500295, email: paul@kirkcubright@aol.com

An old DIEMS sailor from WW2 seeks two old shipmates, Eric (Mo) Maidment from Farnham, Surrey, and Frank Keeley from

London. Both seamen gunners on HMS Fort La Traite. Write to 27 Byron Ave, Southend-on-Sea SS2 5HL, or email D.E.M.Sheppard (son) at dshppard@handbag.com

Alexander 'Mac' McQuarrie served in the guided missile destroyer HMS London as a stoker in the late 1960s. Before that he served in HMS Gurkha. He still lives in Scotland and would like to hear from old shipmates willing to drop him a line. Contact his son, Derek McQuarrie, 7252 East Medina Avenue, Mesa, Arizona, 85208, USA.

WWTR Lesley Kingsbury would love to hear from any of her old friends. She is now living back in Ipswich and misses the old days. She was in the WRNS from 1990 to 1995, mostly in HMS Nelson and HMS Dolphin. Tel: 07984 185054 or email: Thar.Curvine@wan-thai-restaurant.freezone.co.uk

George Watkinson served in HMS Wrenbrel in the North Atlantic, Russian Convoys and South Pacific. He is now 95 and in good health. He is always recounting the events and experiences he had during his time with his ship and his daughter, Beryl (Beryl) Watkinson, wondered if any shipmates are still around who may like to contact him, either by email: 2lndc560@aol.com or direct to him at 8 Wilton Ave, Hampden Park, Eastbourne BN22 9HZ

Burbs' Burrage (Keith) served as a RFP in HMS Tantar from 1969-72 and wants to contact old friends for a reunion too! He's made contact with Gaz Brentnall after 30 years. He would also like to obtain a copy of the commissioning book. Contact Keith at the Smithy, Tilley Village, Wem SY4 5HE or email: keith.burrage@btopenworld.com

HMS Collingwood, L1265 class 1962-83: Bill Bruen, Andre Besson, 'Snowy' White, 'Jumper' Collins et al, where are you now? Also, HMS Intrepid, 1980-82; Kim Dark, 'Yokkie', Harry Harrison and other members of 3M2 mess or anyone who was part of the 'Cruise ship' Intrepid during the Falklands Conflict. Contact Mike Fleming, 48 Northumberland Close, Warfield, Bracknell RG42 3XD, tel: 01344 451487 or email: jmb@fleming48.freezone.co.uk

HMS Raneer: S. Tiffin seeks ex-shipmates from when they were serving in Raneer, loading aircraft headed for the Burma campaign. Cliff Fryer and Spike Dowly are in a photo belonging to Mr Tiffin, taken on a run ashore to Andy Wong's Skyroom in San Francisco. Contact S. Tiffin at 2 Falconry Court, 7 Fairfield South, Kingston-on-Thames, Surrey KT1 2UR or tel: 020 8549 0326.

HMS Maidstone, Wizard, Salisbury and Defender 1954-67: Pete Hayward seeks anybody who remembers him from any of these ships (especially the 84 commission in the Defender). CPO Wacker Payne - where are you, you Buffoon? Contact Pete at 134 Millfield, Creekmoor, Poole, Dorset, tel: 01302 468409 or email: peter@btopenworld.com

HMS Norfolk, Orient 92 trip: Steven Barr seeks anyone who was in the 39 man mess, especially Brum Fielding and Woody. Contact Steven at 20 Barnview Terrace, Banbridge, County Down, tel: 028 4062 2175 or email: murelock321@hotmail.com

HMSm Other 1979-84: Ginge Crossley seeks pals from submarines Fin Whale, Otter, Osiris, SM1 to help him celebrate his 50th. Contact him at 6 Ridgeway, West Cloene, Chesterfield S43 4LS, tel: 01246 812968, email: roffin.crossley@bt.com

Sam Weller, where are you? You were best man at Rob Guyatt's wedding in 1965. You were serving at Fraser Gunnery Range, Eastney. Also seeking any other old oppo from St Vincent, Leopard, Caution, Bermuda, Hartland Point, Ikkford, Maryton, Tiger, Devonshire and Glasgow. Contact Rob

Guyatt on 023 9225 7033 or email: rob957279@btworld.com

Bob Cooper seeks former shipmates. Bob served in the RN 1939-48, including Royal Sovereign, Odyssey, Pembroke, and Nile and basis Stag, St Angelo and Rook. Contact daughter Jeanne Fisher, 179 Qjawa Rd West, Leithbridge, Alberta, Canada T1K 5L2 or email: j-pfisher@telusplanet.net

HMS Dolphin WW1: Margaret McKenzie, born 1923, originally from the Isle of Lewis, wants to hear from anyone who served with her at Dolphin during WW1, especially Dennis Price (from Hereford) and Johnny Fuller. Contact through her daughter, Erica Deben-Campbell, Gentianastraat 13, 6002 PA, Weert, Netherlands or email: edeben@home.nl

HMS Excellent, 1904: Chris 'Spiky' Hughes seeks Bob Patten, who served with him at Excellent, and last known to be in HMS Sheffield, 1992. Ring Chris on 07814 048209 or email: chrisandrob7517@hotmail.com

HMNZS Arabis (K365): Angela Harrison seeks anyone who served in Arabis between 1944-6, particularly Alec Townsend, Jack Dundy and George Leonard. Searching on behalf of Jack Ferguson, Striving Arabis Piper (44-6). Contact Angela at 6 Shell Gardens, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 8HJ or email: touchyfeehy@btopenworld.com

RNH Haslar 1973-82: Graham Buddie seeks members of the Medical Branch at Haslar at this time and remember him. Contact him at 2 Leicester, Crown Wood, Bracknell RG12 0TS, tel: 01344 482072, email: graham.buddie@btworld.com

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Squad time set to exceed sea draft

ALL CHANGE IN GS ENGINEERING DRAFTING!

2003 sees a number of changes in the D2 Drafting Section.

With WEMs having already amalgamated with the WEA plot to form the D2WE Section in mid-Dec 02, TOPMAST will change the ME AB's drafting modus operandi from 1 Apr 03.

Lt Cdr Maddock's retirement in Mar, after almost 21 years at the helm of WE drafting, will complete a round of personnel changes.

Visitors will also find a new layout in the section resulting from revised staffing levels.

MEMs - TOPMAST

The TOPMAST Squad roll-out for ME Able Rates will be begun on 1 Apr 03 and all ships, apart from some minor exceptions, will be 'Squadded' by Oct 03.

There will also be a much-reduced number of shore drafts for AB MEMs. The current number of approximately 250 will reduce to around 70, which will be mainly in the Devonport and Portsmouth areas.

The increased numbers in the Squad means that some personnel will remain in their base port to complete harmony time when a ship sails; this will allow everyone

in the Squad to achieve their harmony without having to cycle through short MTA drafts.

This also means that the average length of time in a Squad will be greater than the current length of sea draft.

Everyone in a Squad will therefore have their Estimated Relief Date (ERD) set at 48 months after joining their ship, the drafting desk will be issuing new draft orders with the amended dates during the coming months.

If you are unsure about any of this information, or are not sure what action you should take as a result of it, contact your DO, EWO or your local Regional Drafting and Career Adviser (RDCA) who will also be able to give assistance, including details of shore billets remaining after Apr 03.

At a more senior level, there is still a shortage of POMEMs and LMEMs, so now is the ideal time to finish that task book, sit the requisite watchkeeping certificate and get fully qualified - there is no time like the present to be promoted within the Branch.

MEBD continues apace and all Mechanics are reminded that on completion of the common LMEMOC, the SQs L or M are no longer applicable.

Divisional Officers please note that when these personnel are pro-

moted on completion of course, they are not to retain the old SQ. When promoted, they are designated LMEM, POMEM, CPOMEM or WOMEM and will continue to be 'SQless'. Please ensure the correct administrative action is completed.

MEAs - A SINGLE CATEGORY

MEBD introduced the 'common' or 'SQless' MEA and the concept of definition of job requirement by rate/adqual, rather than rate/SQ.

This has been taken forward by TOPMAST and from Jan 03 MEA SQs will cease to exist.

With MEAs already drafted using MEBD principles and the historical and significant disparity in ATA achieved by MLs and ELs (up to 12 months) eliminated, this change should have minimal impact on the D2MEA plot.

Whilst this will be good news for many, the prevailing geographic aspiration/billet imbalance, particularly in Devonport and Faslane, dictates that not all individuals' preferences can be met.

Although every effort is made to meet individuals' aspirations within the constraints of Service requirements, Drafty has to rely on information supplied on DPPs and C240s.

It is essential that these are up-

to-date, accurate and honest, particularly with respect to recommendations for instructional duties, and small ships.

AMALGAMATION OF WEA AND WEM DRAFTING.

Since the Naval Drafting Directorate (NDD) was re-organised in the mid-1990s, WEMs have been drafted by the Warfare Drafting Division (D1) and WEAs by the General Service (GS) Engineering Division (D2).

The number of source branch WEMs continues to gradually decline, and following the transfer of their Branch Management to the GS Engineering Branch Manager in the Directorate of Naval Manning, it was decided to transfer responsibility for the appointing and drafting of all WEM categories from D1 to D2 Division with effect from 16 Dec 02.

TOPMAST has also applied the 'SQless' principle to the WEA Sub-Branch and from Jan 03, WEA SQs will cease to exist.

After this date, CND will continue to maximise WEAs' previous experience by utilising Type and Stream drafting in accordance with the existing rules in BR 14.

The D2 Drafting Commander is



'That's probably earmarked for training in firefighting and driving Green Goddesses!'

now the Appointer for GS WO(WEA)s and WO(WEM)s and D2WE Drafting Section (formerly D2WEA) is now responsible for the drafting of all other WEA and WEM categories.

Details of relevant NDD personnel with telephone numbers are:

D2 Cdr Steve Foster (93844 2494); **D2WE** Lt Cdr Les Maddock (tbrb NTBR March 2003) (93844 2524); **AD2WE1** POWEM(O) Danny Kay (93844 2527); **AD2WE2** L W E M (R) Harry Harrison (93844 2315); **AD2WE3** Mrs Val Hobbins (93844 2525).

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Building with an eye for the birds . . .

THE CONTRACT for the Royal Navy's new Fleet headquarters on Whale Island, Portsmouth has been awarded to the Bristol firm CH Pearce Construction Ltd.

The £16 million contract was signed in December and work begins next month. Completion is expected to be at the end of March 2004, with occupation by the end of May.

Design of the building, at the south-west corner of the island, is said to be inspired by the sea forts in the Solent. It will be built of brick on the seaward side with a tower at the southern end.

The surroundings will be landscaped, with trees and plants selected for their ability to withstand strong sea breezes and to harmonise with the surrounding Area of Special Scientific Interest. The five-storey

building was designed by an integrated project team, with Pick Everard as project managers and Architecture PLB as peer architects.

Total cost of the headquarters will be just under £25 million – £16 million for the building itself and a further £9 million or so for IT equipment, furniture and office infrastructure.

Preparation work, including the demolition of old roof butts, was completed on site by the beginning of October so as not to disturb the migrating birds which spend every winter near the site.

The first turf will be ceremonially turned by the Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Jonathon Band at the end of this month.

● **IMPRESSION:** How the new Fleet HQ will look when it opens in 2004



Free offer – let the Navy come to you

WOULD you like a free presentation on how the Senior Service operates in 2003?

The Royal Navy Presentation Team are touring the northern half of England in January and February, calling at Stoke-on-Trent, Bromsgrove, Bridgnorth, Scarborough, Bishop Auckland, Tynemouth and Hexham.

Using a fast-moving 35 minute multi media presentation, they describe the role of today's modern Navy, its people, equipment and plans for the future.

They have a set programme of venues, talking to a wide cross section of the community – business, industry, education, charities, local government, media and the church.

But if you think your friends, family or business colleagues would like to know more, a tailor-made presentation package can also be made available, suitable for educational establishments, clubs and organisations such as ex-Service groups, Rotary, Lions Clubs and Women's Institutes as well as corporate or business organisations.

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□ For details, contact the RNPT at 11/12 Tedder Close, West End Road, Ruislip, Middlesex HA4 6NR. email rnp1@gtnet.gov.uk. Fax 0208 841 7880 or visit their website at www.royal-navy.mod.uk

New guard force of all ex-Service personnel takes over

THE NAVY welcomed the arrival of a new dedicated armed guarding force made up of ex-Service personnel when 22 members of the Military Provost Guard Service arrived to take up duties at HMS Raleigh.

By the end of the year a total of 340 MPGS personnel will be deployed at RN and Royal Marine establishments, releasing the same number of Naval personnel to join waterfront squads as part of TOPMAST, the Navy's new personnel management system.

Flag Officer Training and Recruiting Rear Admiral Peter Davies told *Navy News*: "This is a win, win situation for the Navy. We are putting an experienced, dedicated and cost-effective armed guarding force into the majority of our shore establishments, made up of highly trained ex-Service personnel and this will now enable us to free up more of our sailors for front line service where they are needed."

MPGS personnel will carry out the full range of security duties in Naval establishments to the highest professional standards, along with civilian security personnel – however, unlike other security organisations they are armed.

The Navy Board agreed in March 2002 that MPGS would provide armed guards for Naval shore establishments. The MPGS was first established in 1997 and

already provides nearly 600 armed guards for Army establishments all over the country.

Eventually all three Services will have MPGS guarding shore establishments and airfields.

All agree to join the Army on a three year renewable contract on a military local service engagement and can serve up to the age of 55 in an establishment within 21 miles of their chosen area of service.

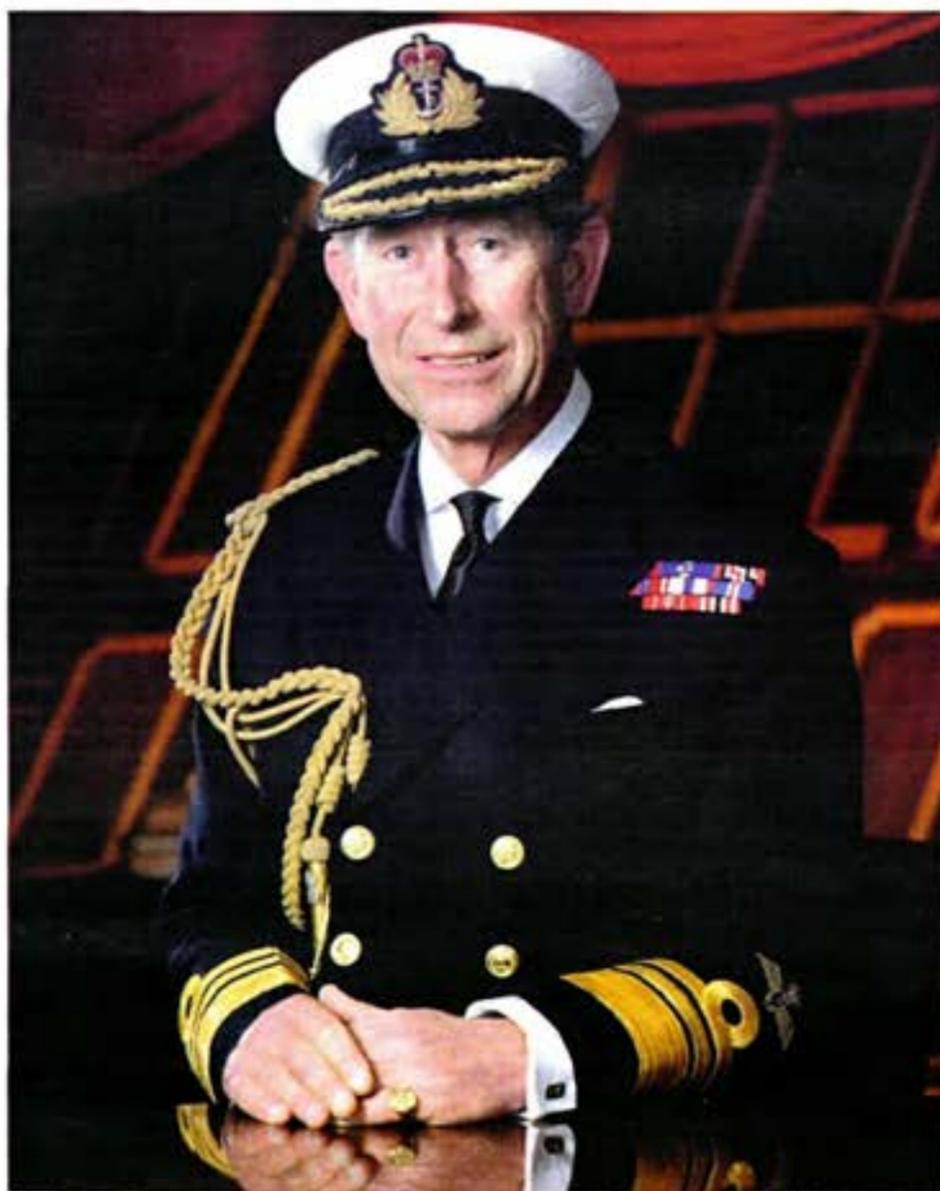
Admiral Davies added: "This is an excellent opportunity for those who have left the Naval Service or other armed forces to continue to make a key contribution to UK defence, enjoy many of the benefits of Service life but also have the added advantage of domestic stability."

The Guard Force trains at Worthy Down, Winchester on a two-week course including instruction on powers of arrest, powers of search, use of force, patrolling techniques and incident handling.

Lt Cdr Jonathan Worthington has been responsible for overseeing the introduction of 166 MPGS into NRTA sites. He said: "The initiative has proved hugely popular with ex-Navy personnel who are keen to come and work in NRTA training establishments."

"Many have phoned in and said they miss the camaraderie and other advantages of Service life and welcome the opportunity to enjoy again such benefits as access to excellent sports facilities, free healthcare and affordable accommodation, while being able to settle down in a particular geographical area."

□ For details of vacancies contact Lt Cdr Worthington at NRTA, Victory Building Tel 02392 727345 or PO Stewart Guest, MPGS Recruiting, Worthy Down Tel 01962 887239.



● The Prince of Wales in his new uniform as a vice admiral was photographed in the Great Cabin of HMS Victory by PO(PHOT) Richard Moss

Sunset in the Arabian Gulf

HMS CUMBERLAND is seen at sunset in the Arabian Gulf, where she was on duty over the Christmas period, in support of the coalition effort in the war against terrorism.

The Type 23 frigate had earlier paid a four-day visit to Muscat, renewing old ties with the Omani armed forces – she had lately had two Omani officers on board undertaking their six-week Initial Sea Training programme from BRNC Dartmouth.

Cumberland is expected home late next month. Her tasking has included intercepting terrorist lines of communication in the Gulf of Oman; enforcing the UN embargo on Iraq in the Persian Gulf; and intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance in the Gulf of Aden and off the Horn of Africa.



Taste for teenagers

FIFTY teenagers from Birmingham and Coventry got a taste of Navy life at HMS Forward – including the assault course and practising rock climbing on a revolving 'wall'.

They were taking part in a 'Get to know the Navy' event organised by the RN Diversity Action team, whose role is to encourage more people from the ethnic minorities to consider joining the Senior Service.



NEWSVIEW

No monkeying with terrorists

THE admission of seven more countries to the NATO alliance is a step in the right direction towards what is increasingly becoming a global alliance in the war against terror – one in which the world's navies take a strong role.

Because this is truly a war that knows no frontiers – and certainly not a war that is confined to the West, as the recent attacks in Bali and Mombasa have shown; the targets may have been primarily Australian and Israeli nationals, but they have also caused casualties among those of the countries in which they occurred, who have no particular ideological quarrel with Al Qaeda and their associates.

They also caused damage to the economies of those countries, which depend heavily on the tourist trade.

These peculiarly fanatical terrorists do not differentiate between countries that take a lenient or an aggressive view of their activities, or between those who support the policies of the United States and their allies and those who oppose them.

As our Prime Minister has observed, there is no appeasing – or indeed reasoning with them: "They won't go more lightly on us if we are less outspoken in our condemnation of them. Their enemy is anyone who isn't them and they feel as strongly, sometimes more so, against the moderate Moslem as they do against the Christian or Jew or Hindu."

But while the public needs to be aware of the potential threats they pose, it does not need to be needlessly alarmed by irresponsible exaggerations of their actuality, as with the recent smallpox example.

In 1900 Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes who also predicted global catastrophe in one of his Professor Challenger stories, *The Poison Belt*, considered the greatest danger confronting the 20th century was "an ill-balanced, excitable and sensation-mongering press".

That may still hold good for the present one, too.

Writing about the same time, in his story *The Stolen Bacillus* H. G. Wells mused upon the consequences of a terrorist obtaining biological weapons – in this case the cholera germ, "a cultivation of the actual living disease bacteria... Bottled cholera, so to speak".

In the story, an anarchist, which is what terrorists were called a hundred years ago ("These Anarchist-rascals are fools, blind fools – to use bombs when this kind of thing is attainable," the Bacteriologist unwittingly advises him) steals a sample of what he wrongly supposes to be bottled cholera and infects himself with it, striding off towards Waterloo Bridge "carefully jostling his infected body against as many people as possible".

It turns out the bacterium was something else entirely that caused "blue patches upon various monkeys", so Wells made light of the matter – but his point was clear, nonetheless, for:

"... he ran away with it to poison the water of London, and he certainly might have made things blue for this civilised city."

AWARD FOR BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC SERIES

Alison voted top maritime writer

PRIZE for the top maritime journalist of the year has been awarded to Alison Kefford of the Southampton Evening Echo, for her articles on the city's affiliated ship, the Type 42 destroyer HMS Southampton.

She received the Desmond Wettern Media Award, an engraved ship's decanter and a cheque for £1,000, presented by Countess Mountbatten of Burma, president of the Maritime Foundation, at its 20th anniversary dinner at the Fishmongers' Hall.

The award was made in recognition of the outstanding journalistic contribution she has made in working closely with HMS Southampton to give "a comprehensive and accurate picture of life on board a modern Royal Navy warship, and its duties in the contemporary world, including the war against terrorism".

Said Alison: "I am absolutely thrilled to receive this award. Without doubt the current policy of increasing media access to the Royal Navy is the way forward."

A second award, the Mountbatten Maritime Prize of an engraved silver Armada Plate, was made to Andrew Williams and the BBC Battle of the Atlantic Team for their powerful series, which vividly brought to a very wide audience the joint contribution of the Royal and Merchant Navies to Britain's survival in World War II.

Said Andrew: "We're all delighted. We all felt it was an important series to make – so many programmes have been made about the Battle of Britain, but the all-important struggle against the U-boat at sea has really been neglected. "In the words of one of our contributors, Admiral John



Adams: "I don't think that many people thought of us, quite frankly – people didn't see the sunken ships or the men who never made it."

"I hope we have made some small contribution to redressing the balance."

Guest speaker was Rear Admiral Jeremy de Halpert, Deputy Master and Elder Brother of Trinity House.

The awards are made in memory of Desmond Wettern, writer on maritime affairs for over 30 years, most memorably as Naval Correspondent of the Daily Telegraph.

Sponsors include the Telegraph Group, the Swire Group, BAE Systems, P&O Nedlloyd, the Chamber of Shipping, the George John Livanos Trust and the Wettern Trust.

● Above: Alison Kefford receives a bottle of port to fill her engraved ship's decanter from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Alan West and Gillian Wettern. Below: BBC producer Andrew Williams collects his Armada Plate from Countess Mountbatten



Critical role for reactors at Vulcan

NUCLEAR-driven warships are strange beasts.

On the one hand, awesome powers are being tamed, requiring sound technologies, vigilance and no margin for errors.

But on the other hand, the basics of nuclear propulsion are as simple as boiling a kettle.

Water is heated into steam, which is forced through a turbine, and with the aid of a gearbox the propeller spins.

That hasn't changed in more than a century – and is still at the heart of the Royal Navy's nuclear submarine force, which is essentially a steam-driven flotilla.

Vulcan, the Naval Reactor Test Establishment on the north coast of Scotland near Thurso, is a crucial factor in the safe running of British submarines – and its role is expanding as its expertise is brought to bear in other, related disciplines.

The small site, set amidst the splendour of the mountains and sea cliffs of Caithness and fringed by an ever-changing sea, features a small Naval staff (currently five), who head up the organisation, and a large number of Rolls-Royce workers – around 300.

And here, next-door to the famous golf-ball reactor of the civilian Dounreay nuclear plant, Royal Navy reactors have been put through their paces in a rigorous regime of tests since the first – Core A – went critical in 1965, eight years after work began on building the complex.

That sophisticated assembly of radioactive fuel modules and control rods heated water in a primary circuit, which passed its heat to water in a secondary circuit, creating the steam which drove the turbines.

The materials and specifications have changed over the years, but the concept is the same.

That first core, along with subsequent versions (B, Z, G and H) were all built by Rolls-Royce in Derby, which has been operating the reactors and associated equipment at Vulcan

Mike Gray looks at the vital work carried out at the Naval Reactor Test Establishment in the north of Scotland

from day one.

They came to Vulcan to be tested ahead of use in submarines, so that any problems which may have arisen in a particular reactor would have arisen at Vulcan long before it became a problem in an operational boat.

The land-based reactor is always at least two years ahead of its sea-going counterparts – in the case of Core A, depletion occurred by 1967, by which time a great deal of experience and useful data had been gathered for operational purposes and for feeding back into the development of new reactors.

The Vulcan reactor – designated Dounreay Submarine Prototype 1 or DSMP – doubled as a full-size training rig, allowing RN nuclear plant operators to gain hands-on experience.

But by the time Core A was burned out, a simulator had been opened, and training transferred on to it that same year.

Core A was removed in March 1968, and after the plant was overhauled, Core B was installed – which gave Vulcan the honour of achieving the first refuelling of a submarine reactor in the country.

Maintenance and refuelling procedures still number among the prime tasks of the Vulcan site.

Core B went critical in June 1968, and far outperformed its predecessor before it closed down, its job done, in 1972.

By this time the Admiralty Research Test Establishment, as it was originally known, had been commissioned as HMS Vulcan (the HMS prefix was lost again in 1981), and Core Z was the centre of attention.

That reactor had been installed in 1974 after another major refit to the DSMP, and it lasted more than

a decade. Core Z is fitted to the Navy's current fleet of hunter-killer S- and T-boats.

At that point DSMP was defuelled and decontaminated and, with half an eye to its Scottish heritage, renamed LAIRD (Loss of Coolant Accident Investigation Rig Dounreay), starting a new lease of life as a simulator.

The kettle analogy comes into its own here – the reactor was replaced by a powerful electrical heater which could accurately replicate the pressure and temperature in a genuine reactor-driven

system at the point of shut-down.

LAIRD was thus able to demonstrate that the support systems around the radioactive core could cope with the most difficult of accident conditions – loss of coolant.

Indeed, with more than 250 separate trials having been run in five years, LAIRD has amply proved the ruggedness of Rolls-Royce's engineering in a series of simulated catastrophes.

LAIRD has now moved on to a third major career, as an integral part of the programme to refurbish pumps (see next month's *Navy News* for full story).

In place of the old DSMP is its modern equivalent, the STF, or Shore Test Facility, in which the latest reactor, Core H, is performing well as it progresses through its trials period.

Contract maps out future for trials site

VULCAN sits on a site leased from the UK Atomic Energy Authority, but which once formed part of Fleet Air Arm station HMS Tern II, created in 1944 and transferred to the Air Ministry ten years later.

The remains of a concrete runway can be seen to the south east of present-day Vulcan, and the control tower is now the visitors' centre for the civilian Dounreay plant.

But as that facility becomes history – it has not generated electricity commercially for more than ten years – Vulcan continues to look to the future, with a 13-year contract which arises from a partnering arrangement between the MOD and Rolls-Royce.

That VTOM (Vulcan Trials, Operation and Maintenance) contract keeps Vulcan at the very heart of the Royal Navy's

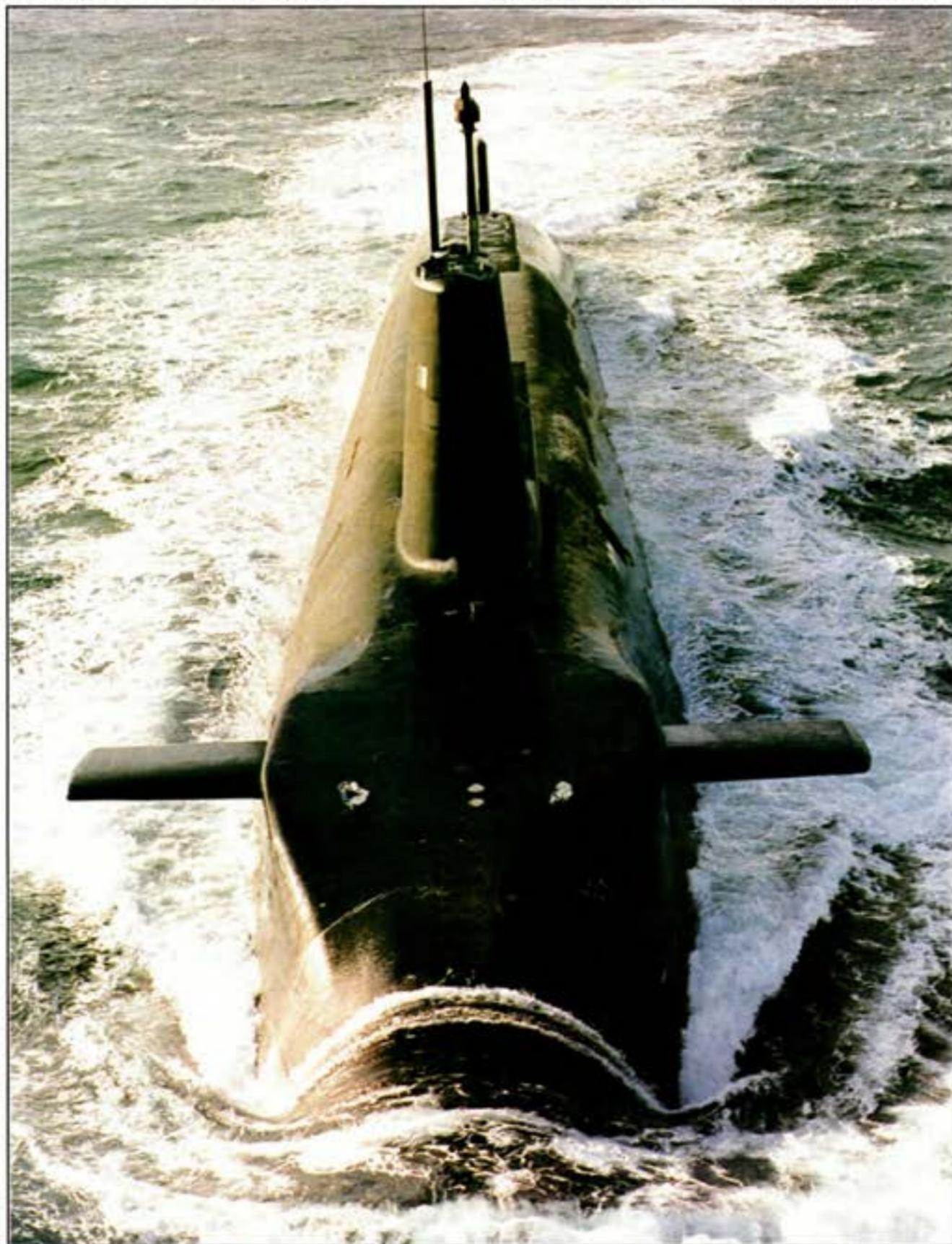
submarine programme until at least 2014.

As such the Naval Superintendent Vulcan – Cdr Charles Hume has recently taken over the post from Cdr Simon Middlemas – has had the title project contract manager added to the collection of other tasks which fall to him as head of the establishment.

Cdr Hume's deputy, Lt Cdr Barrie Cran, said: The five of us in the Royal Navy here have our fingers in virtually every pie on site – it's a very varied life.

"You do find you have a lot of authority and autonomy in your own world.

"Vulcan is self-contained, and you find yourself involved in activities that are carried out by the Commander-in-Chief Fleet's staff, the Submarine Support integrated project team, and the Naval Bases."



Work done at Vulcan in the north of Scotland has ensured the safe operation of nuclear submarine reactors from the Valiant class in the early 1960s to HMS Vanguard (above) and her sisters – and on to the next generation of Astute-class boats

Safety cases lie at core of RN operations

ALTHOUGH testing the reactors which power the Navy's submarines is perhaps the glamorous end of the business, Vulcan does not just put the nuts, bolts and pumps through their paces.

While it remains primarily a test-bed for submarine power plants, it is also instrumental in ensuring that operating procedures are up-to-date and within rigorous safety parameters.

"We do have tremendous relevance for the Submarine Flotilla," said Lt Cdr Barrie Cran, Deputy Naval Superintendent Vulcan.

"If we didn't do our jobs, then the Fleet would suffer the consequences."

When reactor cores have burned out, they are dismantled and the components are examined to compare them with predicted performance, allowing the designers to modify the next generation of reactors accordingly.

Elements of Cores G1 currently sit in an 18ft deep fuel storage pond within the Shore Test Facility.

The water in the pond is scrupu-

lously clean, making it a useful workspace for those carrying out post-irradiation examinations (PIEs).

The STF is now operating with a modern safety case and leads the way in making sure that these requirements are used not only to ensure safety but to make sure that those who operate thereactor know and understand what they have to do.

By identifying the restrictions that the safety cases may bring early, it allows the work to be done to make sure that the submarine flotilla can continue to operate in a world of ever-increasing regulation.

The STF also trials the operating procedures, especially when there has been a major change in design, which in turn guide the operators of boats at sea and contributes enormously to the training of RN personnel who will live and work in the Vanguard and Astute-class submarines for decades to come.

Next month: New contract pumps up workload at Vulcan

Castle is at he



Patrol ship HMS Dumbarton Castle has been proving a tower of strength in her role as command platform for a NATO minehunter squadron.

Dumbarton Castle took over as Flagship of MCMFORNORTH - Mine Countermeasures Force North - on May 24 last year, when Cdr Adrian Cassar assumed the post of Commander of the NATO force at a ceremony at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth.

By the time she is relieved as flagship, Dumbarton Castle - which has spent a good deal of her time over the years as resident patrol vessel for the Falkland Islands will have spent almost 250 days at sea.

She has steamed 10,000 nautical miles since May, providing command and support facilities for 56 officers and 300 ratings in the Force - one of four such immediate reaction groups within NATO.

As the name indicates, MCMFORNORTH looks after the mine countermeasures needs of the northern part of Europe, with MCMFORNSOUTH assuming that role in the Mediterranean.

Along with the bigger ships of STANAVFORLANT or SNFL, the Atlantic group of frigates and destroyers, and the Mediterranean version, STANAVFORMED or SNFM, these forces are at 48 hours notice to deploy for operations in times of crisis, tension or war.

The activities of the Force are directed by a small multinational staff. This includes a Belgian MCM specialist, Lt Cdr Yvo Yaenen, supported by UK personnel, including Surg Lt Nick Martin, CPO Si Thornley, CRS Pods Podbury, CY Gary Stevens, LSTD Mac Mackie and LWTR Dave Britchford.

Dumbarton Castle herself provides other key members of the small team - Staff Executive Officer Lt Paul Daly, Staff Navigator Lt Lyndsay Netherwood and Engineer Lt Pete Young are all co-opted from the ship.

MCMFORNORTH is a permanent force, usually consisting of up to seven MCM vessels and a command ship.

Formerly Standing Naval Force Channel, since 1973 the group has encompassed ships from Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands, the UK, and more recently, from Denmark and Norway.

The newest addition to the team has been the Polish unit - a first for both Poland and for NATO.

The trendsetter for the former Iron Curtain state was ORP Mewa, a minehunter which was sworn into



the force in a ceremony at Swinoujscie in October, in the presence of the Commander-in-Chief of the Polish Navy.

The ships of the force may be classed as minor war vessels, but their importance is reflected in the amount of investment NATO navies put into their MCM operations.

NATO navies need to ensure they can deploy safely from home ports, on passage to operating areas, and can gain access to ports, harbours, anchorages or ever beaches.

The threat from mines exist in waters as deep as 300 metres and extends to the beach, with anti-invasion mines just below the surface of the shallow water.

Deep-water mines may contain 5600kg of high explosives, but ever 10kg in an anti-invasion mine could cause serious damage to a landing craft.

The fate of the USS Tripoli and USS Princeton in the Gulf War of 1991, which were put out of service for months by mines, indicates the potential hazards faced in modern conflicts.

Modern mines use plastics to make them more difficult to detect using sonar, and may have an in-built 'brain' which recognises a particular type of ship which it has been programmed to attack.

In such cases the mine will lie dormant as other ships or submarines pass by, and is only activated by the unique acoustic or magnetic signature of its intended victim.

But there are also the relics of bygone wars - the remnants of old minefields, or the ordnance dumped on the seabed which could still prove a danger to modern shipping.

In NATO circles, the thinking is increasingly that a new generation of remote underwater craft, working autonomously from their control ships, could be used to detect mines with a view to avoiding them in the short term, rather than clearing them immediately.

MCMFORNORTH not only provides a short-notice anti-mine capability, but also acts as a test bed for the evaluation of new tactics and procedures.

It also gives the various navies a chance to test their capabilities. **MCMFORNORTH visits St Malo in northern France in July, when the ships were open to visitors on the spectacular historic waterfront (left)**



● The distinctive twin-hulled minehunter Hinnoy, a Norwegian minehunter, during her time with the MCMFORNORTH (above)

● Sailors from various navies in MCMFORNORTH get together for sightseeing while their ships are in La Coruña in Spain (left)



Pictures: CPO(PHOT) Bernie Pettersen (NATO)

art of the Force

and sailors a chance to see what is new in the field of mine countermeasures, as new ship designs and equipment are always being introduced to the force.

For example, a recent member of the Force was the Norwegian Oksøy-class minehunter Hinnøy, commissioned in 1995, a distinctive craft which uses an air cushion created by the interaction between the two hulls of the ship.

A ship will usually be attached to the Force for between four and six months.

Since the UK took over the lead in May, the Force has conducted exercises and training with Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) in Devonport and out of Faslane, and deployments have been made to Spain, Portugal and the Baltic.

Operation Open Spirit took the Force to the bay of Riga, where shipping lanes were cleared of explosives left from the two world wars and the Cold War era.

In this case, 13 nations (Belgium, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Latvia, Lithuania, The Netherlands, Poland, Rumania, Russia and Sweden) under the direction of the German Minesweeper Flotilla, contributed ships, with MCMFORNORTH playing its part.

42 mines were destroyed, largely the old buoyant contact mines from World War I which were laid in

dense fields in the region. It is estimated that up to 80,000 mines were laid in the Baltic during the wars, and the Soviets added to the problem by dumping bombs, torpedoes and rockets in the post-war period.

MCMFORNORTH allows for plenty of professional and social interaction in locations as diverse as sunny Lisbon in the summer to the freezing Baltic states in the winter.

Weather conditions from benign to distinctly lumpy test the skills of the sailors, while 'crosspols' - exchanges of sailors between ships - help the various navies understand a little more about the way each conducts its business.

Training opportunities are also grasped, from the routine business of minehunting to casualty-handling, salvage and firefighting.

Among the ports visited by Dumbarton Castle were Ostende, Vigo, Porto, Falmouth, Glasgow, Hamburg, Rostock, Riga, Helsinki, Turku, Gdynia and Frederickshavn.

Denmark is due to take over command of the Force in May.

As Navy News went to press Royal Navy minehunter HMS Pembroke was due back in Portsmouth after spending four months in the Mediterranean with MCMFORSOUTH. See Navy News Online for more details.

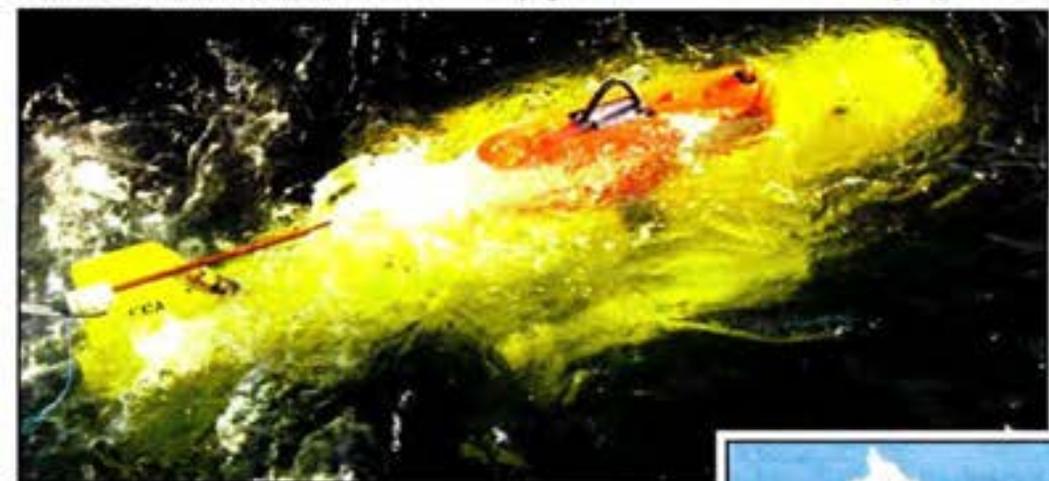
Newsview - page 21



● HMS Dumbarton Castle during the visit by MCMFORNORTH to La Coruña during the summer (above) Hunt-class MCMV HMS Ledbury was also in the Force at the time, and HMS Walney has also been attached to the group



● Versatile Danish Flyvefisken-class patrol craft HDMS Hajen, here in minehunter configuration, leads a line of MCMFORNORTH ships out of Riga. Polish minehunter ORP Mewa takes a wave astern of Hajen.



● Dutch Alkmaar-class MCMV HNLMS Makkum lowers her remote submersible into the water prior to detonation of a device during Operation Open Spirit (above)

● A mine detonation erupts to the surface of the sea during Operation Open Spirit (below). Such explosions can be spectacular - pictured right is a World War II Mk 25 surface mine containing 250kgs of TNT, detonated using a 100kg mine disposal charge. The black dot (arrowed) is a one-metre long ship's fender, placed on the surface over the mine to show its location.



● Polish sailors on ORP Mewa make the most of the snow that MCMFN encountered during their visit to Riga during Open Spirit by making a snowman gangway sentry.



At Your Leisure



Battleship ideal

Royal Navy Dreadnoughts, as portrayed by W. L. Wyllie. A 1903 paper by an Italian naval designer, Gen Vittorio Cuniberti entitled *An Ideal Battleship* for the British Navy first gave the idea of all-big gun ships a public airing when it was published in Fred T. Jane's *All the World's Fighting Ships*.
 – From a new paperback edition of *The History of the Ship* (Conway £19.99) by Richard Woodman

Classic history reissued in six volumes

WILLIAM James' classic six-volume *The Naval History of Great Britain During the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars*, first published in 1822-26, is now reissued by Conway Maritime Press. Each volume, indexed separately for the first time, is available at £25 with a 20 per cent discount for the full set. James was a lawyer by profession before turning his hand to naval history in reaction to suspect accounts of the 'famous' victories of the US Navy over RN ships during the War of 1812.

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Raising the Kursk

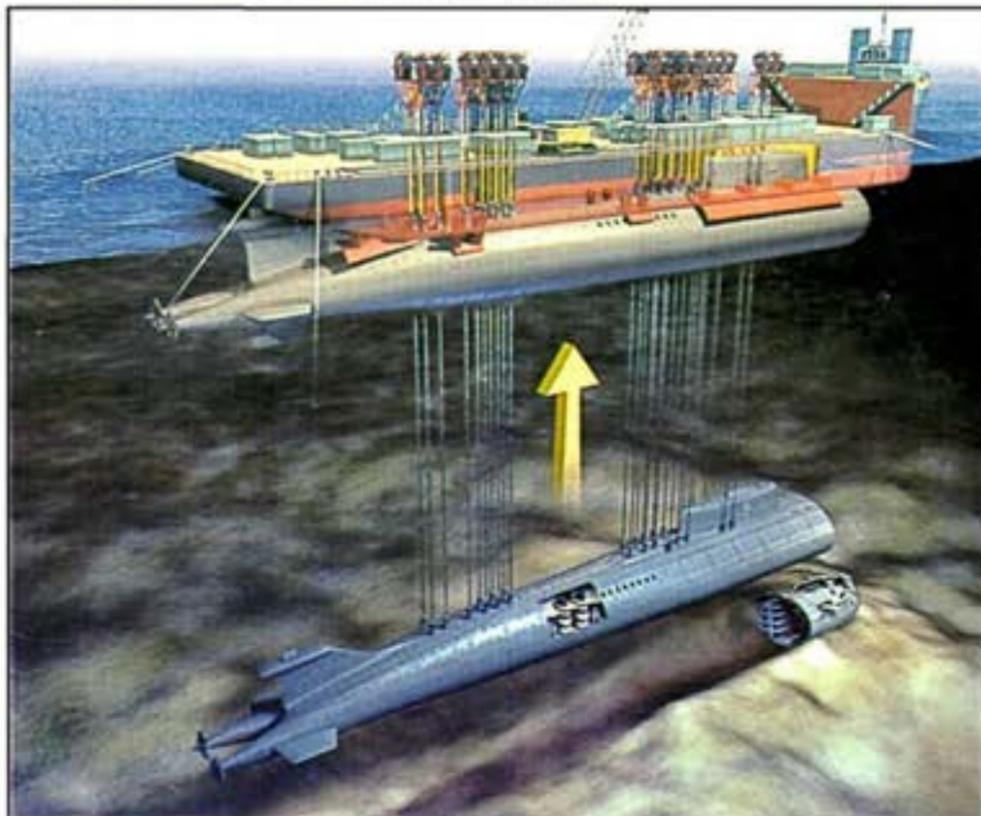
WEIGHING almost 24,000 tons underwater – and lying 350ft below the surface of the chilly Barents Sea – the massive Russian submarine Kursk presented a formidable challenge to the two Dutch companies charged with bringing her to the surface and back to dry dock.

Secured by hydraulic cylinders positioned on either side, a remotely controlled cutting chain severed the 65ft long damaged front section. Divers then used high-pressure water jets to cut holes through the outer and inner hulls along the length of the submarine.

The Giant 4 barge, fitted with sophisticated lifting equipment and with its hull modified to hold the raised sub, was positioned above the Kursk by eight lines anchored to the seabed (see

below). Once all holes had been cut, heavy duty lifting cables were lowered from the barge and anchored into the holes with specially designed plugs. Once each plug was inserted, its arms unfolded under the beams and the inner skin of the submarine, anchoring the plug securely to the structure. The lifting was then precisely controlled, with the force on each bundle of cables set individually to minimise the tension on the Kursk's hull.

The story is told in *Lost Subs* by Spencer Dunmore (Perseus Press £24.99) and *A Time to Die* by Robert Moore (Doubleday £10.99) – which suggests that even after British and Norwegian rescuers were summoned to the scene they were fed constant misinformation, even over which way to turn the valves on the escape hatches.





Bordeaux raid told from the other side

THE NAME of Bill Sparks, who has just died at 80, will forever be connected with the legendary Cockleshell Heroes raid (Operation Frankton) on Bordeaux harbour in December 1942.

This costly (only two of the ten Commandos survived) and daring operation caught the public's imagination.

Bill escaped back to the UK and lived to fight another day – and now to tell his story in *Cockleshell Commando* (Pen & Sword Books £19.95), not to be confused with his earlier and fuller account of Frankton, *Last of the Cockleshell Heroes*.

This new book also takes the reader on operations in the Aegean before the scene switches to the Far East and the Malayan Emergency, when he served in the Malay Police.

He tells how he handled "celebrity status" (Anthony Newley played him in the film) and as a bonus includes the fascinating and thorough German report on the Bordeaux raid which has never been published in English before.

This provides a chilling insight into the ruthlessness of the Nazi regime. After interrogation with "no methods barred" two of the team, Mick Wallace and Jock Ewart, who had been taken prisoner were shot against a wall in a courtyard where they had been imprisoned at the Chateau Magnol. Their bodies were then taken into woods and buried but,

despite extensive inquiries, the location of their graves has never been discovered.

Admiral Erich Raeder, C-in-C of the German Navy at the time of Frankton, was reportedly outraged by the executions.

Said Bill: "Mick and Jock never disclosed a thing under interrogation; had they done so the raid would certainly have failed."

"Without doubt I owe my life to them. They were Mentioned in Dispatches. They should have been awarded VCs."



● **COCKLESHELL HERO:** The late Bill Sparks, DSM



TERENCE Cuneo's action-packed painting of the assault on Limbang by L Company, 42 Commando in 1962 is one of many fine illustrations in the pocket-sized *A Short History of the Royal Marines* published by the RM Historical Society at £6.

This includes a wide range of appendices covering everything from the Colours, traditions, memorable dates, music and a comprehensive chronology of the 'Soldiers who served at Sea' who turned into the modern-day Commando force which provides the manpower for most of Britain's amphibious capability.

Most of the 100 photographs come from the vast RM Museum collection.

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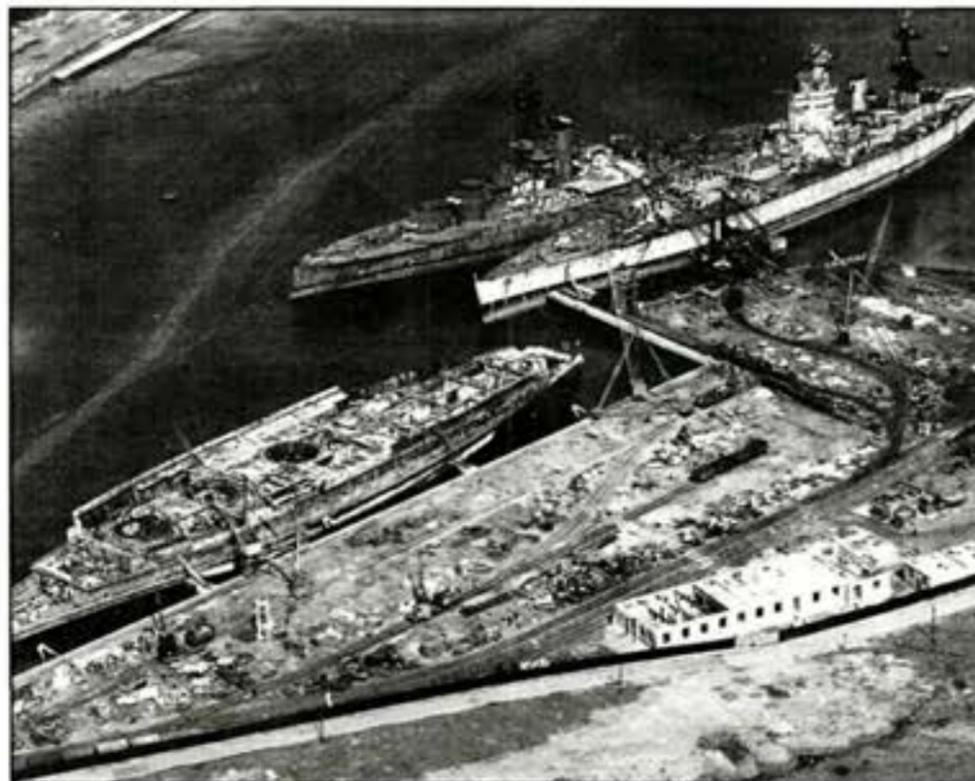
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End of an era

The breaker's yard: Thomas W. Ward & Co, Inverkeithing, May 24, 1949 - Empire Day (Queen Victoria's birthday) and the eighth anniversary of the loss of HMS Hood. HMS Rodney is in the finishing berth, with HMS Revenge outboard of HMS Nelson.

1949 saw the scrapping of 500,000 tons of ships in Britain, the equivalent of all the battleships allowed the country under the terms of the Washington Treaty, or more than 300 destroyers.

- From Battleship by H. P. Willmott (Cassell £30)



NoticeBoard

THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

NAVY NEWS looks back through its pages to recall some of the January headlines of past decades...



● Wearing her own special submarine-sized garland, HMS Odin sets off from the Hawaiian haven of Pearl Harbour

40 years ago

THE FIRST of the Navy's nuclear-powered submarines HMS Dreadnought began her seagoing trials.

The £20 million vessel set out into the sea at Morecambe Bay for 24 hours to carry out machinery and manoeuvrability trials, but not submerging.

With her full complement of 88 on board, and an extra 20 scientists and experts to fill up any spare space, in her first trials Dreadnought performed well in difficult conditions and notched up higher speeds than expected.

30 years ago

THE BALMY South Seas gave submarine HMS Odin a goodbye to remember at the end of their visit to Pearl Harbour in Hawaii.

Hula-hula girls in grass skirts and flowers waved the submarine off to her duty station at Sydney in Australia.

Not to be outdone, Odin wore her very own submarine-sized flower garland as a mark of respect to their congenial hosts.

This was not the only idyllic stop for the submariners, as the South Pacific island of Tonga had welcomed them earlier.

20 years ago

THE LATEST in the line of nuclear-powered hunter-killer submarines, HMS Turbulent took to the waters for the first time at her launch at Barrow-in-Furness.

Lady Cassidi, wife of the then Commander-in-Chief Naval Home Command Adm Sir Desmond Cassidi sent the 4,500-ton boat down the slipway.

Sister boat HMS Trafalgar had at the same time just started to be put through her paces on her contractor's sea trials.

Both submarines were built by Vickers Shipbuilding Ltd.

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Deaths

POAER Charles Ramsden, HMS Campbellton Flight, November 15.
Lt Cdr C.A. Crumplin, HMS Cullingwood, November 24.
Lt Paul McAuley, Aged 27, November 28.
Lt Cdr M.R. 'Jack' London, Aircraft accident, December 5.

Marine Bill Sparks DSM, Last of the Cockleshell heroes that paddled canoes through German defences to attack merchant ships at Bordeaux. Joined RN aged 17 and served in Renown (Malta convoys) before joining Boom Patrol Detachment with Operation Frankton in Bordeaux and also operations in Mediterranean and the Aegean. Retired in 1946. Aged 80, November 30. See book review on page 25.

Dr Chris Howard Bailey, Internationally respected academic, oral historian and author. Joined the Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, in 1991, latterly Keeper of Collections and Director of Publications. Aged 52, December 5.

Major General E.G. Derek Pounds, Commanding general, Royal Marine Commando Forces 1973-76. Initially saw service in Kent and Berwick (Russian convoys) in WWII; 45 Cdo (Hong Kong, North Africa, Haiti); 41 (Independent) Cdo in Korea in 1950 (US Bronze Star); 45 Cdo as a captain in 1952 and mentioned in dispatches in 1956 (Cyprus); also involved in attempt to recover Suez Canal; next with 42 Cdo in Bulwark in defence of Kuwait in 1961; 2C then CO of 40 Cdo in jungle operations in Borneo; returned to UK in 1967 as CO of 43 Cdo; retired as major general in 1976 and appointed CII. Aged 80, November 7.

Lt Cdr Desmond Dickens RNR, Merchant sealer who took part in Operation Pedestal from Malta, originally in cargo liner Dorset then on American oiler Ohio where he helped to man the armament. Rose to captain in New Zealand Shipping Company. Retired from RNR in 1962. Aged 78, October 23.

Lt Cdr John Hoggard, Joined RN at outbreak of WWII and served as navigator in Voltaire before being sunk off Spain in 1941. Made three escapes from captivity until finally being sent to Colditz Castle. On release in 1945, posted to Newfoundland in Far East and while visiting Australia, invited to take part in first Sydney-Hobart yacht race. Left service in 1947. Chairman of Colditz Association in last years. Aged 82.

Sir John Nightingale, Chief constable and police reformer who served with the RN as an anti-submarine officer during WWII. Aged 80, October 1.

Isaac 'Ike' Crickshank, Served 1956-66. Aircraft Handlers Association, November.

Lt Cdr Robert William Meade Walsh, Served with Squadrons 142 (Eastbourne), 111 (Dress during Battle of Britain), 805 (Western Desert), 885 (3 Wing at Lee-on-Solent) in 1945 became CO of 1831 Squadron. Post war, served at Lossiemouth, Lee-on-Solent, HMS Vanguard and Theodos. Retired from service 1958. Aged 85, October 31.

William John Bell Tipping, PO Seaman Served 1931-1955. Ships include HMS Foresight, Aged 87, October 16.

Douglas Hague, AB, HMS Peacock Association Ships include Raleigh, Anson, St Angelo (Greece), Peacock, Victory, Gosamer. Aged 74, September 25.

Stewart Cockell, AB, HMS Peacock Association. Ships include Raleigh, Peacock. Aged 72, November 15.

Ted 'Stanley' Mathews, AB, HMS Peacock Association. Ships include Montclare, Victorious, Peacock, Raleigh, Victory. Aged 72, November 10.

Dryden Gallimore, Stoker. Served in minesweepers during WWII. Ships include Invention, Highflyer, Barbara and Duncansby Head. Aged 75, October 17.

C.L. 'Geordie' Crossman DSM, CPO Cox. Submariners Association, Sunderland. Served in submarines 1940-67 in Otus, Oms, Sleuth, Sturdy, Saga, Talent, Tactum, Shelmar, Tabard, Tudor. Aged 81.

C. 'Charlie' Fletcher, AB, Submariners Association, Morecambe Bay. Submariners served in Oberoi, H43, H44, P39 and Turbulent. Aged 83.

L.R. Roy Moulton, ERA3, Submariners Association, Merseyside. Served in submarines 1940-46 in L26, P511, Supreme, Tartarus, Tabard, Ambush. Aged 81.

T. 'Danny' Mulgrew, Stoker PO. Submariners Association, South Yorkshire. Submariners served in: Sealion, Tradewind, Seasort. Aged 91.

G.C. 'George' Philpott, EM1, Submariners Association, Morecambe Bay. Submariners served in Andrew, Aurora, Tactum, Sea Devil. Aged 71.

A. 'Tony' Ross, CPO Elec. Submariners Association, South Yorkshire. Served in submarines 1968-88 in Warspite, Sovereign, Spartan, Superb. Aged 55.

B.W. 'Brian' Smith, POME, Submariners Association, Essex. Served in submarines 1948-60 in Tally-Ho, Tabard, Trespasser, Sangaris, Teredo, Talent. Aged 72.

L. 'Larry' Stammers, Sig YO, Submariners Association, SE Kent. Served in submarines 1941-48 in Sunspot, Parthian, Unsparring, Torbay, Volatile, Trespasser. Aged 79.

Cyril Wilson, GCY (CYS), Served 1938-61. Chairman HMS Kelly Association, Kenya (Korean War) and Larsons Malta Association. Aged 81, November 23.

Keith Adams, AB, Served in Triumph, Corunna (1950/53), 4th Destroyer Squadron Association. Aged 72, November 1.

Jim Fox, Served in Tartar, Somali, Punjabi. Served in convoys Atlantic, Russian and D Day Invasion. Tribal Class Destroyers Association.

George Mays, Served in Berwick on Russian Convoys and the destruction of German Pocket Battleship Scharnhorst. Tribal Class Destroyers Association.

M.R. Parkin, AB, HMS Cossack 1945-47. Cossack Association and 8th Destroyer Association.

G.T. Atkins, RM, HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association. Served in Ajax 1947-48. November 13.

Geoff Woodhouse, Algerines Association. Served in Mameluke, Malta, July 1.

Cyril Jeffs, Algerines Association. Served in Chameleon, September 14.

Marlin B. James, Algerines Association. Served in Trustlove, October 6.

Sir John E. Willison, Algerines Association. Served in Sylvia, October 20.

Harry Bann, Algerines Association. Served in Hellisay, November 14.

Mark Hunt, GCY, Joined at Ganges 1938. Served in Renown and other ships (WWII), Ladybird and Tyne (Korean War), aircraft carriers as FOAC staff (Suez crisis) and ships include Vanguard, Kranji and Loch Quich. Retired 1962. Renown and Ladybird Associations. Aged 80, November 18.

S.I. 'Taff' Thew, Mechanician, Joined RN in 1961 and served in Albion, Reclaim and Forth before MOC at Sultan 1968-70, Blake, Lincoln, Brighton, Plymouth, Neptune and Naval Party 1810 on Stena Seaspread during Falklands Conflict. Aged 58, November 14.

Jack Baldwin, Served in Birmingham, Dolphin, Redpole, Bellerophon, Myngs, Vernon, Tiptoe and Thermopylae. HMS Bruce Association. Aged 70, December 1.

John Luxton, Served in both WWI and WWII. Saw action against Russian Bolsheviks in Palestine and against Chinese High Sea pirates. Ships include Endymion, Monarch, Sturdy and Durban. Aged 101, November 20.

Jack Hildreth, PO, Served in WWII in Cullin Sound and Calicos. Aged 82, November 25.

ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS

Lt W.J. Botting RNRV, Served: Venture.

Lt Cdr E.C. Childs, Served: President, Drake, Terror, Bermuda, Mercury 11, Indefatigable, Victory and Tamar.

Lt Cdr R.A. Gings VRD RNRV, Cdr L. Gowland, Served: Ark Royal, Vernon, Craik, Froisher, Birmingham, Fary, Bath and Tamar.

Cdr A.C.W. Jones DSC, Served: Saker, President, Drake, Centaur and Vernon.

Lt Cdr D.G.T. Lane, Served: Tiptoe, St Angelo, Token and Melway.

Third Officer C.M. Mellors WRNS, Cdr R.A.P. Mountfield DSC, Served: Adventure, Excellent, Belfast, Woolwich, St Vincent, Mercury 11 and Drake.

Capt M.W. Peters, Served: Malaysia, Jackdaw, Glory, President, Fulmar, Eagle, Seahawk and Daedalus.

Lt Cdr A.M. Ralph, Served: Excellent, Nigeria, Mercury, Terror, Adamant, Tyne and Nalo.

Cdr J.G. Wemyss, Served: Swifsure, Drake, Plover, Crossbow, Reclaim, President, Whitty, Lochinvar, Osprey and Neptune.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Jim Gorham, Harwich, founder and president. Served in Stanwort as a Stoker and also London. Flower Class Corvette Association. November 12.

George Arthur Ludbrook, Sudbury, Harlesea and Hedingham. Served V and W Destroyers. Aged 78.

Robert 'Darby' Allen, Londonderry. Served in Royal Arthur, Raleigh, Drake, Unicorn, Sea Eagle, Tarmagant, Ark Royal and Falcon. November 5.

Lawson, French, Skipper and District. Served as telegraphist in no.9 Mess in HMS Vesper (1943-45) and in 1990s was chairman of HMS Vesper Association. November 23.

Connie Hirst, Trafford, associate, October.

Derek Kemp, Loughlin, founder, former vice chairman and standard bearer. Veteran of Russian convoys in HMS St Kitts, October.

James Bracegirdle, Rochdale. Served in Newfoundland, Raleigh (training). Aged 76.

Raymond Grindrod, Rochdale. Served in Ilustrious, Implacable. Aged 74.

Douglas Suddaby, OA PO, Rochdale. Served in Newcastle, Implacable, Russian Convoys. Aged 83.

H.A. 'Bert' Bircher, PO Cook, Chelmsford, past hon. secretary of the Russian Convoys Association (East Anglia). Served 1941-46. Ships included Porcupine, Kent and Anson. Aged 80.

Joe Dacey, CPO, Crawley, life member and former branch secretary. Last ship HMS Belona. Aged 80.

John 'Jack' Dewey, Ludlow and district, vice chairman. Served 1940-45, ships included Venus, Wizard, Kempenfelt. Aged 80, November 13.

William Morris, Runcom, associate. Aged 71.

Ken Hawkins, Cardiff, Russian Convoys Club. Aged 87, November 26.

J. Lansdown, Birkenhead, associate, September.

T. Birkett, Birkenhead, associate, November.

Ted Wolf, CPO, Ulbridge. Served 1936-49 in Warspite and landing craft. Recalled for Korea.

Ken Tittley, AB, Welshpool, founder and life member. Served 1940-47 and 1950-52 (Korea). Ships included Ark Royal (survivor), Victory (Barracks), Swale, Excellent, Nelson and Warrior. Also member of Burma Star, Normandy Veterans and River Class Associations. Aged 80, September 23.

Stuart M. Cockell, Wakefield, Founder member of HMS Peacock Association, served 1945-48. Life-long supporter of Sea Cadet Corps. After RN service returned to Wakefield Sea Cadets as civilian instructor to Lt Cdr (1961) and president (1999). November.

Sports lottery

2 Nov 02: £5,000 - LMEN J. Steel, HMS Sultan; £1,500 - MNE S. Quinn, 42 Cdo RM; £500 - WWTR C. Cooper, HMS Neptune.

9 Nov 02: £5,000 - MUSN D. Davies, RM Band Portsmouth; £1,500 - Capt D. Hunt RM, 546 NAS; £500 - MNE R. Morris, 42 Cdo RM.

16 Nov 02: £5,000 - LOM(C) M. Gower, HMS Chiddingfold; £1,500 - CPOAEA P. Fairbank, 848 NAS; £500 - POSA D. May, HMS Glasgow.

23 Nov 02: £5,000 - OM R. Smith, HMS Raleigh; £1,500 - POSA A. Allen, RNLO Cyprus; £500 - OM N. Browns, HMS Leeds Castle.

30 Nov 02: £5,000 - OM(UW) F. Pugliano, HMS Southampton; £1,500 - CPOMEA S. Mills, NEF; £500 - LS(SR) P. Glover, Naval Party 1016.

For more information on the RN & RM Sports Lottery, call 023 9272 3806.

Operational Honours

Operational honours 2002: QCVS - WO(AH) Peter J. Hoaly

Submissions for the next edition of Navy News must be received before: January 10

Appointments

His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales to be promoted Vice Admiral on 14 Nov 02.

Acting Cdr M.J.D. Beardall to HMS Cardiff as CO on 3 Jun 03.

Lt Cdr R.A. Wiltcher to UK Support Unit Southlant as CO on 25 Mar 03.

Cdre J.R. Fanshawe to Fleet Waterfront Organisation Devonport as Commodore Devonport Flotilla on 12 Dec 02.

Cdre R.D. Leaman to UK Maritime Battle Staff (UKMAR-BATSTAFF) as Commander UK Task Group on 7 Jan 03.

Cdre A.J. Rix to Directorate General Corporate Communications as Director Corporate Communications (Navy) on 7 Jan 03.

Capt S.C. Martin to Sultan Admiralty Interview Board as Board President on 7 Jan 03.

Lt Col T.P.W. Middleton to 539 Assault Squadron RM as CO on 2 May 03.

Lt Cdr P.A.E. Brown to HMS Grimsby as CO on 28 Nov 02.

Lt S.M. Armstrong to HMS Archer as CO on 15 Apr 03.

Capt S.B. Charlier to HMS Cornwall as CO on 5 Dec 02.

Cdr M.C. Cree to HMS Gloucester as CO on 21 Jan 03.

Cdr P.W. McDonnell to HMS Vigilant (Port) as CO on 17 Dec 02.

Cdr G.A. Newton to HMS Vigilant (Port) as CO on 11 Feb 03.

Lt Cdr D.H. Wilkinson to HMS Callistock as CO on 15 Apr 03.

Swap drafts

LSA Alexander, Contact and draft: HMS Gloucester, 9375 54959. Will consider: any Portsmouth ship-draft.

Ratings seeking to swap drafts must meet the requirements of BR14, article 6506. 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 must be made on Form C240 to NDD, Century Building.

THE ROCK UNDER FIRE, 1782

LATEST print from the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office's Admiralty Collection shows a Plan of the Bay, Rock and Town of Gibraltar in 1782.

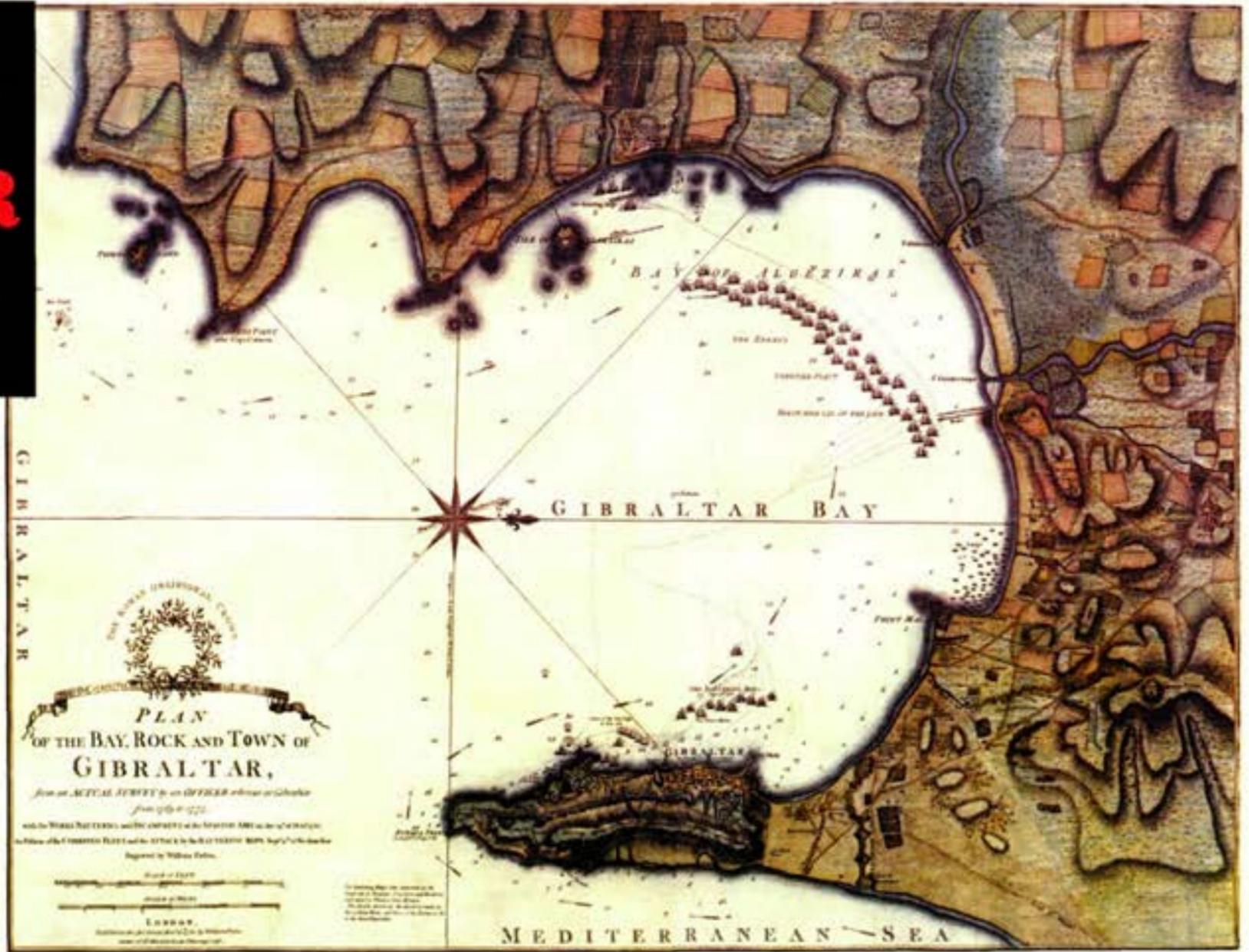
Drawn from a survey by an officer who was at Gibraltar from 1769 to 1775, the original chart was engraved and published by William Faden in January 1783.

It shows the works, batteries and encampment of the Spanish Army on October 19 1782 and the position of the Combined Fleet and the attack by the battering ships on September 13 that year. The attack saw all ten of the Spanish ships destroyed. Seamen from HMS Brilliant reinforced the garrison.

The print can be obtained for £15 by mail order from The Sea Chest Nautical Book Shop, Queen Anne's Battery Marina, Plymouth, Devon, PL4 0LP. Tel 01752 222012 or on-line at www.seachest.co.uk

The original document is held in the archives of the UK Hydrographic Office at Taunton, publisher of Admiralty charts used by the Royal Navy.

● Today's Gibraltar Squadron special feature next month



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Royal Naval Association



Flowers are placed on the grave of Walter Burke, one of the heroes of Trafalgar at All Saints Church, Wouldham in Kent.

Generations honour a hero

MEMBERS of the West Malling branch and local schoolchildren bridge the generation gap once a year when they get together for a ceremony honouring the memory of Walter Burke, one of the heroes of Trafalgar.

Burke was purser aboard the Victory, in whose arms Nelson died during the battle, and he is buried in the grounds of All Saints Church at Wouldham in Kent.

Gala dinner for anniversary

A GALA dinner was the choice of members to mark the 21st anniversary of the Bodmin branch.

The coming of age party was held in the Westberry Hotel, and the guest of honour for the occasion was the Commodore of the Royal Navy's initial entry training establishment HMS Ralagh, Cdre Laurie Brokenshire.

The occasion was attended by the Life Vice President of No 4 Area, S/M Vera Bell, who proposed the toast to the Association.

Flowers have been placed on the grave of Walter Burke for more than a century, but when West Malling branch started honouring his memory more than ten years ago, local schoolchildren began taking part in the ceremony every Trafalgar Day.

The children respond enthusiastically, bringing their own floral tributes to place on the grave.

Once these are in position, the

vicar reads Nelson's prayer, the branch standard is dipped and the Last Post is sounded.

Afterwards, all gather in the church where scenes from Nelson's navy are re-enacted by the children.

Then it is off to the schoolhouse for tea and tiffers, and the presentation of some Trafalgar memorabilia by the branch, rounding off a memorable day for all concerned.

Regalia is restored to Harare

"YOU MAKE us proud to be members of the RNA," writes S/M Basil Barron, skipper of the Harare branch, in a letter expressing "heartfelt" thanks to branches in the UK for their "incredible support" to their less-fortunate shipmates.

Thanks to this support, the regalia and items lost when their venue was invaded during Zimbabwe's presidential election – as reported in *Navy News* in July – have been replaced.

Basil also expressed his gratitude in having RNA subs to headquarters catered for over the next three years.

This means a great deal to members, he states, the majority of who are pensioners. With the Zimbabwe dollar at an all-time low and inflation high, there is no way they could raise funds to remit to

the UK.

Elaborating further, Basil said: "At Independence our dollar was on a par with the pound sterling."

"You can imagine what it is like today to have to fork out what was £500 for bread and milk for a day – if you can find a shop that has any. Now the rate of exchange is around 2,400:1 and getting worse."

Despite inflation, food shortages and the loss of members, who have left the country, the branch keeps the flag flying, and recently installed one Associate Member.

They also welcomed the secretary of Sidcup branch during his visit to Zimbabwe.

S/M Barron concludes his letter of thanks with the cheerful news that members managed to celebrate Trafalgar Day and the 26th anniversary of the branch.

They also took part in a Remembrance parade at the Cenotaph, in Harare gardens, with representatives of Australia, Canada, France, the United States and Britain.



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Why not use this event for your Association Reunion

Freighter victims recalled

AFTER the fall of Hong Kong, British PoWs were rounded up for transport to Japan in the Lisbon Maru, a freighter of 7,000 tons.

In contravention of the Geneva Convention, the ship had no marking.

Below deck, confined in appalling conditions, were 1,816 prisoners, many with dysentery. There was little water, few latrines, and very little room.

In early October 1942, as the ship was heading to Japan, she was torpedoed by an American submarine. More than 830 prisoners died in the incident, among them AB Ernest Bickmore and CPO Frederick Johnson.

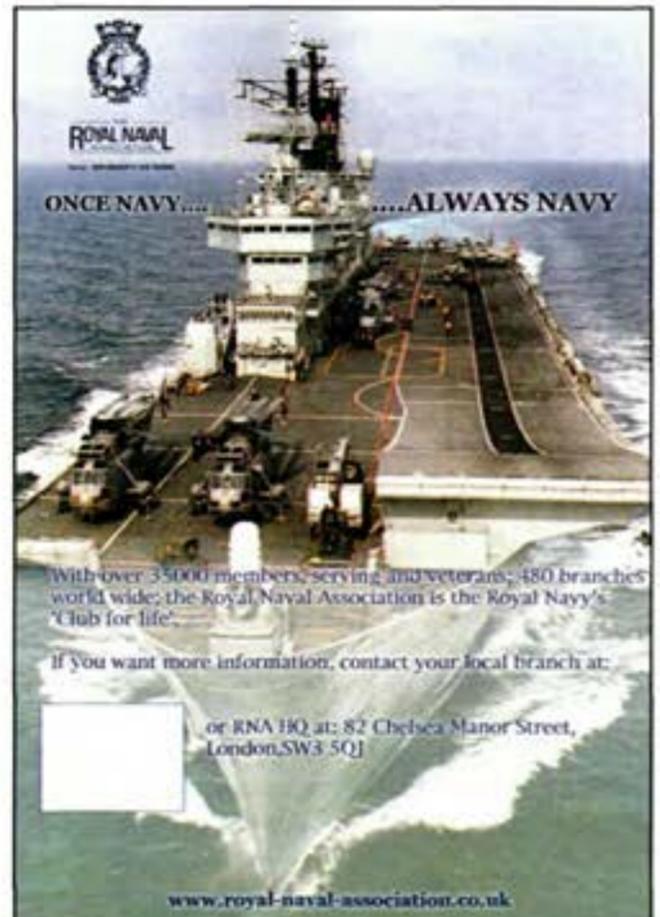
On the 60th anniversary of the sinking of the Lisbon Maru, the relatives of the two men met for the first time at a memorial service, arranged for them by the Chatham branch, at the request of the brother of AB Bickmore.

The service was held at the Naval War Memorial at the Great Lines, Gillingham, conducted by branch chaplain Rev David Preston.

The branch standard was carried by S/M Don Richie, and Whitstable SCC provided bugler PO Mark Wilkins.

Roughly 50 members of the Bickmore and Johnson families, with members of the branch, attended the service – the first opportunity they had had in 60 years to formally mourn their loved ones and lay wreaths.

The Bickmore relatives included five brothers and a brother-in-law, who served in the Forces during and after the war. Relatives of CPO Johnson included his son, Frederick, who was only five years old when he lost his father.



This is the second poster in the RNA's latest poster campaign, featuring aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal. The campaign seeks to drive home the message that the Royal Navy is a 'club for life'. Each poster has details of how to contact RNA Headquarters, and features a blank space for individual branches to insert their own details.



Trafalgar painting for Stan

THE TRADITIONAL Trafalgar Day celebration coinciding with the Merthyr Tydfil branch President's Night Dinner and Dance took place at Merthyr Tydfil Rugby Club.

Among the guests at a large attendance were the retiring President, S/M Stan Thomas, the Mayor and Mayoress, Cllr Alan and Mrs Sheila Davis, and the branch President elect, S/M David Lewis and his wife Joan.

Stan, who was president from 1988 until last year, was presented with one of Turner's famous portraits, 'Victory at Trafalgar', in recognition of his dedication and support to the branch.

Stan and David were also presented with RNA Life certificates, membership and badges.

Rallying call

AT THE latest St Matthew's Fair, first held in 1266 and resurrected in 1976, the Liskeard Town Crier, S/M Frank Beer, a stalwart member of the Liskeard branch, invited fellow town criers to sample the wares of the RNA stall.

Despite some smooth talking the town criers were not ready to be recruited, but the stall raised £182 for branch funds.

Swiss shipmates seek a branch of their own

Canals are on agenda

THE CURATOR of the Inland Waterways Museum, Tony Condor, and his wife were guests of honour at the Gloucester branch Trafalgar Dinner.

Thanks to Mr Condor, members are now better informed about the history of the inland waterways and how canals and barges assisted the Royal Navy through the ages, including World War II.

Following dinner, life memberships were presented to branch president S/M Alf Finch and former chairman S/M Stan Joiner in recognition of long, loyal service.

For services rendered to the club and the branch over many years, a tankard was presented to S/M Tid Ferris as a special award.

Piped aboard

CHAIRMAN S/M Peter Newton was piped aboard on being invited with members of Worthing branch to inspect the ceremonial guard and divisions of TS Vanguard.

After Stand Easy they were invited to the main deck to witness a display by the new TS Vanguard Band, directed by Lt Claire Hunt.

Before leaving, S/M Newton praised the work being done by the Sea Cadet Corps and to cement relations with the branch a £200 cheque was presented by branch vice president S/M ray Bealing to Sylvia Simmonds, chairman of TS Vanguard.



SHIPMATES in Switzerland were delighted to be able to watch a performance by the Royal Marines Band Plymouth, in their adopted home country.

But the 30 or so members were unable to lay on a Swiss branch welcome - as they have not yet got enough members to justify full branch status.

S/M Eric Jackson explained that all members in Switzerland are in the RNA HQ branch in Chelsea - and are hoping that another 20 or so members will come forward

across the cantons to enable a Swiss branch to be commissioned.

Eric can be contacted by phone/fax on 022 341 1309.

The Royal Marines Band, under the direction of Maj Mills, was performing at the Aventicum Musical Parade in the Roman Arena in Avenches, and Eric says that despite a storm one evening, the locals showed a great deal of appreciation for the Royals.

In the audience was a group from the RNA, the RAFA and the Royal British Legion, as well as the British Consul General and his wife, Ian and Betty Croes.

PROs meet up with Pam

AREA public relations officers had their first chance to meet the new head of RNA PR, Pam Healy, at their regular meeting at headquarters in London.

Pam, a lieutenant commander in the Royal Naval Reserve, takes over as Head of Communications and PR this month.

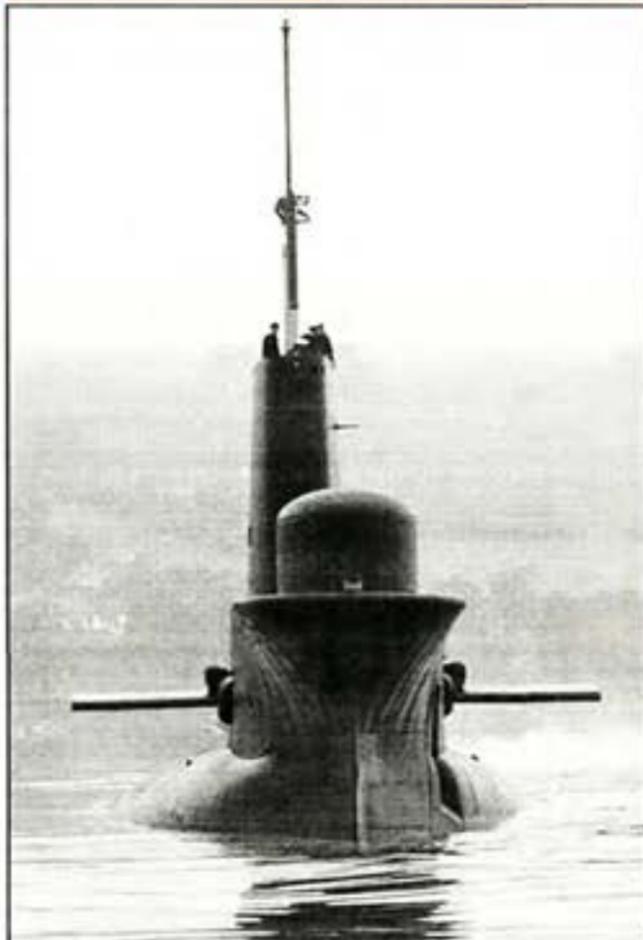
Also present were the outgoing General Secretary, Capt Bob McQueen, and his successor

Commodore Barry Leighton.

Both men spoke of the need for an effective PR strategy to help counter the steady fall in numbers.

Area representatives were briefed on forthcoming PR highlights, including the Making Waves TV series, the International Festival of the Sea in Edinburgh, and the build-up to the 200th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar in 2005.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



The mystery ship in our November edition was HMS Vigilant.

The winner of the £50 prize for identifying her was K. Jenkins of Swansea.

Can you name this submarine, which like our September competition has a Shakespearean connection?

The correct answer wins another £50.

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

Closing date for entries is February 7, 2003. 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 March edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 95

Name

Address

My answer

● Eric Jackson and former WRN Ritchie Pannetti join the Royal Marines Band Plymouth at the Aventicum Musical Parade in Switzerland



● The Commanding Officer of HMS Portland, Cdr Richard Thomas, meets members of Portland branch after the annual branch Remembrance service

Portland CO visits Portland

UNDER marching orders from S/M C.H. Thompson, the parade marshal, 45 members of the Portland branch paraded to Portland Cenotaph, with standard carried by S/M Ben Cartwright, for the Remembrance Day service.

The service was attended by the Captain of HMS Portland, Cdr Richard Thomas, Lt Matt Feeney, WRN Clare Maidment and OM Graham Walker.

A wreath was laid on behalf of

Farewell, Bob

ON A farewell visit to Hanworth branch, General Secretary Capt Bob McQueen was paid a warm tribute for his work during his term of office by branch president Capt Peter Hames, and wished many happy years of retirement.

His successor, Cdre Barry Leighton, takes over this month.

Founder link

A £500 CHEQUE was presented by the Llanelli branch to the Mayor for his hospice appeal, following an enjoyable Trafalgar Dinner attended by 51 members and guests.

Present also was the son of one of the branch founder members, S/M David Matthias, ex-Lt Gunnery Officer, now Lt Col (Army), who did the honour of being president of the night, and did a great job.

the branch by president S/M S. Bartholomew.

After the service, everyone adjourned to branch headquarters for a warming tot served by rum bosun S/M Peter Shoesmith.



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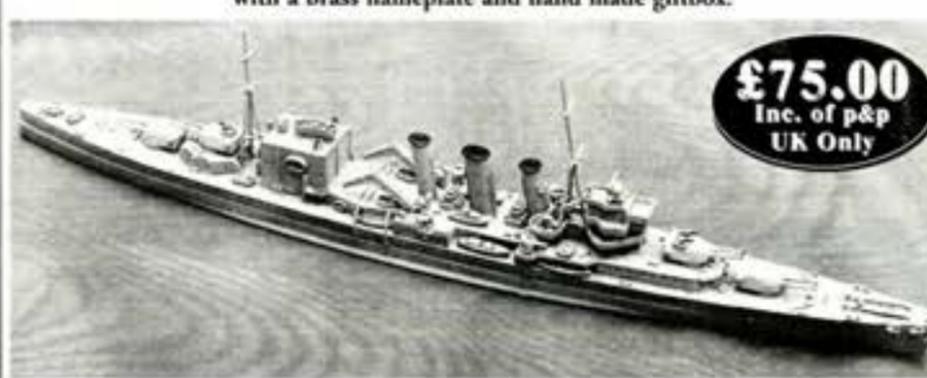
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At the heart of the Affinitas philosophy is a recognition that

standard "off-the-shelf" insurance products are often unsuitable for Service personnel.

A lack of insight and detailed knowledge on the part of some insurers has meant that Service personnel are sometimes discriminated against in terms of the cover provided and premiums charged.

As with any business, the key to success is knowing your customer. All but two of the Affinitas staff are former serving personnel, with a strong Naval contingent, including Rear Admiral Andrew Gough, Cdr

Andy Lawrence and CPO (WRNS) Jo Hopkins. The result is a team with an in-depth understanding of the issues facing current and ex-Service personnel.

In choosing a partner to work with Affinitas in delivering a better deal, it was important to find a company able to articulate the needs and concerns of Armed Forces personnel to the insurance and financial services providers and to break down their misconceptions.

Heath Lambert Group has been selected because, it is well known for its pioneering and innovative approach on behalf of client groups which have found themselves disadvantaged by ignorance and misconception on the part of insurers.

By working with underwriters, putting in front of them experts able to educate them as to the realities of the situation, Heath Lambert has achieved significant breakthroughs in terms of the cover and premium terms.

Heath Lambert also has considerable experience in the Armed Forces sector, working on a number of projects with the UK Ministry of Defence and various other national Armed Forces in different parts of the world, including a very successful relationship with the USAA which has spanned thirty years.

Through a programme of discussion and education, Affinitas and Heath Lambert aim to develop access to a range of insurance products and financial services specifically designed for the UK's Armed Forces - serving and retired.

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● For six-year-old Owen, son of former POWEA Kendall, life was transformed when money from the various Naval charities that gain from Voluntary Donations from Pay was used to give him his own room with specialised facilities

A world of difference for half a day's pay

MONEY from the Navy's Voluntary Donation from Pay scheme is making a difference to the lives of people across the country, helping both serving and former Naval personnel and their families.

Some examples of the good work going on by Naval charities include:

■ Owen Kendall, the disabled six-year-old son of former POWEA Kendall, benefitted when the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT), the RN & RM Children's Fund and the Navy Special Fund contributed towards the cost of an extension to the family home to provide Owen with his own room with specialised facilities.

■ James Hagger is an ex-Radio Operator who was medically discharged from the Navy when he broke his neck and was paralysed from the chest down with restricted hand and arm movement. The RNBT and the Navy Special Fund provided grants to convert part of his garage into an exercise and physiotherapy room.

In a thank you letter, James said: "The extra space I have been given in my bungalow has given me a new lease of life."

■ Jake and Joshua French are the autistic sons of an ex-submariner and the family live in Portsmouth.

The RN & RM Children's Fund is helping to fund a two-year programme for Joshua, while the Local Education Authority are providing limited assistance for Jake.

■ Lucy Godden, the seven-year-old daughter of CPO Godden, lives on the Isle of Wight and attends a special school. The RNBT and RN & RM Children's Fund have bought a computer to help Lucy at home with her learning difficulties.

■ The severely disabled son of a lieutenant commander has been helped by grants from the Royal Naval Benevolent Society for Officers which have been used to purchase a special bed and to fund changes to the family home to enable the child to be moved in and out of the house more easily.

■ A former Wren whose

two children are frequently hospitalised with asthma has used a grant from the WRNS Benevolent Trust and the RNBT to buy a gas fire for the sake of the children's health and used some of the money to pay off part of the debts run up by her ex-husband.

For people signed up to the scheme, a regular small deduction is taken from their monthly pay cheque before tax.

The government then boosts the total with an additional 10 per cent.

So what does this mean? For a £3.90 loss from the pay packet, £5.50 will go into the charity coffers. For a Leading Rate, a donation of half a day's pay each year will cost less than £3 a month.

By filling out a form C53 or C52, this becomes an easy, hassle-free way to help people in the Naval family. The end result is maximum win for minimum effort.

Any questions, contact Lt Cdr Tony Cooper, the Royal Navy Charities Liaison officer on 023 9272 4506.



● James Hagger was a Radio Operator in the Navy until he broke his neck and was paralysed. Money from the Naval charities allowed the conversion of his garage to an exercise room.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

MAKE a voluntary donation from pay in support of the Naval welfare charities.

The scheme allows a donation of half a day's pay – or other sum – each year which is then bumped up with a further 10 per cent by the tax man for a cash bundle to those charities that care for Naval people in need,

both current and former.

Just get in touch with your UPO and ask for form C53 (half day per year) or C52 (other sum). Fill it in and the appropriate fraction will be automatically taken monthly so you will hardly notice.

But it will make a big difference to those now and in the future in need of extra help.

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New education officers head out to nurture talent in ships at sea

Fleet taps into lifelong learning

THE ROYAL Navy has created a team of Fleet Education Officers who are tasked with improving the delivery of education and personal development initiatives to the front line.

The Fleet Education Officer (FEDO) came into being as a result of the Defence Training Review which recommended the provision of a 'Lifelong Learning service'.

Eight FEDO posts have been created, with Lt Cdr Andrew Griffiths as Senior FEDO. The remaining officers will be lieutenants.

Half of the posts have already been filled, and they are currently completing training, and will be ready to deploy this month.

The remaining FEDOs are expected to be in post by April of this year.

FEDOs will visit ships for between four to six weeks, subject to accommodation availability and the circumstances of the particular unit.

They will be responsible for stimulating learning activity on board the ships, supporting the unit's own Education and Resettlement Officer and, where possible, actually instructing sailors themselves.

The emphasis is on delivering 'one-to-one' interviews to the ship's company, using each sailor's Personal Development Record (PDR) as the basis of the individual strategy, which can include personal development, professional



● Senior FEDO, Lt Cdr Andrew Griffiths (left) and Lt Graeme Brooks, the Executive Officer of HMS Ledbury, which acted as a trial ship for LeaRN4Life

development or resettlement.

Further support is offered through Base Learning Centres, though at sea FEDOs will be equipped with laptops and course software.

The introduction of the full FEDO teams will coincide with the launch of the Enhanced Learning Credit, a Government incentive for Armed Forces learning - after a qualifying period, up to £6,000 can be claimed over three years to support personal development.

The whole scheme, dubbed LeaRN4Life, has been designed to

fit in with TOP-MAST initiatives, and is integral to the Waterfront Training and Education Centres.

Although not yet fully operational, the scheme has already been tested on mine countermeasures vessel HMS Ledbury - starting modestly and learning as the scheme is rolled out across the Fleet.

Senior FEDO Lt Cdr Andrew



Griffiths said: "The Royal Navy recognises that there is a lot of talent in the force, and it wants to develop it and bring it to the fore."

For more details on the role and programme of FEDOs, contact the FEDO office at HMS Nelson on 9380 23441.

Phil is a shining example

PHIL Parvin is an example of the kind of candidate which LeaRN4Life will help in future.

Lt Cdr Parvin was named AMBA MBA Student of the Year for 2002 - a prestigious award against the cream of British and overseas business students.

He found himself with time on his hands as his submarine was in refit, and he didn't fancy just wasting time and money propping up the bar.

"I was looking for something to make myself more marketable in areas of senior management," said Phil, "and I spent several months looking around."

He had, since 1997, had an inkling an MBA might be what he was looking for, but at the time did not qualify for the finance or time to take it full-time through the Navy, which left him with the option of distance learning and funding most of it with his own money.

And the Open University seemed to be the best form of delivery, as they had plenty of experience of military students who were subject to different



● Lt Cdr Phil Parvin

pressures from their civilian counterparts.

And Phil certainly presented them with a chance to prove their flexibility - he took one exam on a nuclear submarine in the Indian Ocean during the early stages of the war on terror, and his paper could not be delivered to markers for several weeks, as there was no email. It was eventually sent home with another officer via Diego Garcia.

That devotion to his studies is marked on the big map which the Open University keeps of all its students worldwide - in this case, Phil's 'classroom' is one of two submarine silhouettes planted on the edge of the map, as the exact geographic location could not be revealed.



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New sports hall on the way for Ruthin

RUTHIN SCHOOL is a co-educational day and boarding school situated in Ruthin, Clwyd. The school has announced that it has submitted a planning application to build a £850,000 sports hall with all its associated facilities. This is the largest capital project upon which the school has ever embarked. The sports hall will provide excellent indoor facilities

that will cater for badminton, basketball, volleyball, five-a-side football, tennis, netball, cricket nets, archery, hockey and a host of other sporting activities.

This exciting development comes after a year which has seen excellent academic results for the school, and the installation of a new state-of-the-art information technology suite.

Educationally, A level and GCSE results for 2002 were impressive, with the past year seeing the school's best results ever for A levels.

The pass rate stands at 98 per cent with an impressive 62 per cent

achieved at A-B and 76 per cent at A-C.

All those who applied have achieved university entrance. In terms of league tables, the school would have ranked in the *Daily Telegraph* league table in division 2 on the basis of grades A-B, if the school had met the criterion of 45 or more candidates.

At GCSE level performances were equally good. The percentage A*-C stands at 86 per cent with 87 per cent of the grades achieved being A*-C.

Truly exciting developments are on the cards for a school founded over 700 years ago.

Scholarship success at Portsmouth

PORTSMOUTH High School has been described as one of the leading schools in the south-east. As an independent school for girls aged from 4 to 18 years, the school forms part of the Girls' Day School Trust (GDST), the biggest group of independent schools in the UK.

Portsmouth High School is characteristic of the GDST philosophy with its profile of sustained academic achievement, its attraction to families from a diverse social, economic and cultural backgrounds and its strong foothold in the local community.

Recently Portsmouth High School became one of six schools to be awarded two HSBC scholarships. Peg Hulse, headteacher, said: "The HSBC scheme is designed to encourage access and diversity in secondary education, offering financial assistance to pupils from the maintained sector and overall it will eventually support several hundred children throughout the country - we are proud to be involved."

The two recipients in 2002 were Hope Davies-Barr and Felicity Woodrow who were invited by HSBC to a lunch and an award ceremony in London, along with 50 other pupils from around the country who have been specially selected to receive the HSBC Scholarship.

Major development work is underway at the school including a new Early Years building and a new sports hall and technology suite. This building work combined with the new scholarships, and added to the existing bursaries and scholarships funded by the GDST, supports a deep commitment to the future and to offering the very best in education.

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The cornerstone of the school's belief is that it is the happy child who learns, the one with self-confidence that best meets his or her potential. This was recognised as a strength of the school by a recent Independent Schools Inspection team.

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Mayville welcomes visits by prospective parents who are invited to telephone the school for an appointment or to obtain details of the entrance examinations in January.



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Rookesbury Park School appoints new Housemother

INDEPENDENT preparatory school Rookesbury Park in the heart of the Meon Valley has appointed Vicky Blackman as the school's new Housemother for the boarders.

Rookesbury Park School takes boys and girls from the age of 3 up to 13 years and offers day school and the options of flexi, weekly or full boarding.

Vicky began her career as a trainee nurse at the Royal Isle of Wight School of Nursing. She has had experience as a middle-school housemistress and more recently as a specialist teacher of English and drama at the Archbishop King Middle School in Newport, where she became the year 7 tutor.

"I am thrilled to be part of a caring, family-oriented environment, set in such beautiful and peaceful surroundings," said Vicky. "Although I found teaching very rewarding, I decided that pastoral care is something I enjoy more and am pleased to have joined a supportive team of staff and delightful group of boarders."

Drum up Wellington principles

THE WELLINGTON School Corps of Drums has a long history of taking part in many local events throughout Somerset and Devon, including the annual Remembrance Day Parade through the town of Wellington.

Pupils at Wellington School can join the Corps of Drums in the third year (year 9), a year before they are eligible to join the Army or Naval sections of the school's Combined Cadet Force.

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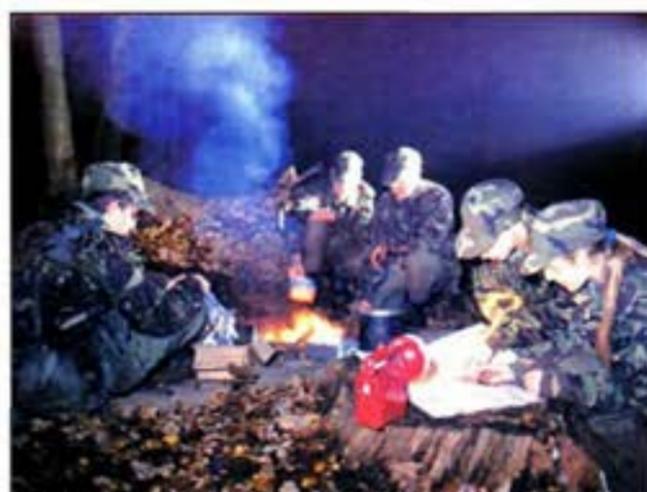
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• Bearwood College encourages outdoor pursuits

Lessons for life at Bearwood

BEARWOOD College is a small co-educational boarding and day school of 350 pupils aged from 11 to 18 in Wokingham, Berkshire.

The school aims to ensure that every boy and girl achieves their optimum academic potential, backed by high-quality pastoral care. The school cultivates a diverse community of young people whose hallmarks are self-confidence, responsibility and consideration.

The focus of virtually all activity at Bearwood is the House, where the academic, extra-curricular and social progress of each pupil is

managed by their houseparent and individual tutor.

In each House, every pupil finds a 'home from home' and a set of relationships that enables him or her to strive and thrive.

The college is located in an historic mansion house, set in a beautiful 250-acre estate. The college runs a wide-ranging sports, activities and outdoor programme.

Staff qualified in outdoor pursuits organise mountain trips, skiing and snowboarding, off-shore yachting, the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, the Combined Cadet Force and expeditions.

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Shebbear thrives despite competition

SHEBBEAR College is a thriving independent school set in 85 acres of beautiful Devon countryside, where although the college is in a highly competitive local market with four surrounding independent schools, pupil numbers are rising.

The college is a Methodist foundation and operates under the direction and support of the board of management for Methodist residential schools with authority devolved to a local governing body responsible for all aspects of the college's performance planning and development.

In November of last year, the college had 260 pupils, including 85 boarders. The school has been co-educational for eight years and the ratio of boys to girls is almost 60:40, with the percentage of girls continuing to rise.

There is a head of kindergarten (15 pupils) and head of junior school (60 pupils) who report directly to the headmaster. All three schools are located adjacent to one another.

There are 29 teaching staff with a further 30 support staff, including four classroom assistants and a librarian.

The philosophy of the college is that it seeks to harness to the full young people's capabilities in both the academic and social spheres.

All pupils and staff take part in the after-school activities programme. There is an accent on the promotion of friend-family community in which the chaplain plays a strong role.

The college has an excellent record of preparing pupils of all abilities for life, and helping them to become responsible members of society.

Assisted places at West Hill

THE HEADMASTER of West Hill Park School in Titchfield, Edward Hudson, has announced new 11+ assisted places for the September 2003 intake.

These awards will be for children with ability, potential and those who will contribute to school life. Parents considering entry to this prestigious preparatory school will be attracted by the considerable added value such a school can offer their child.

Not only does West Hill Park have outstanding teaching facilities including the latest technology in the classrooms in the form of interactive whiteboards, all supported by enthusiastic teaching staff, but it also has the most amazing sporting, musical and dramatic facilities to rival any senior school in the area.

Sixth form centre opens at Queen's College

A NEW era has begun for sixth-formers at Queen's College with the opening of the Jane Given Sixth Form Centre at the Taunton independent school.

A major £250,000 refurbishment project has transformed former lower school dayrooms into a centre for independent learning, combined with social facilities.

Rev Dr Dick Jones, chairman of the board of management for Methodist independent schools, performed the opening ceremony and congratulated the headmaster, Chris Alcock, and his team for creating such an impressive resource.

"This centre is a very visible sign

of the independence our sixth-formers now have," said Mr Alcock. "It is part of a pattern of change that sees them no longer having timetabled lessons on Saturday mornings or having to wear school uniform.

"By giving them this greater degree of freedom and management of their school lives, we feel we are best preparing them for the transition to university.

"What is so gratifying is how well they are responding to the challenge. There is a real buzz of hard work, commitment and enjoyment around the place."

The new sixth form centre is hosting an open evening for prospective pupils on Friday, January 17 from 6pm to 8pm.



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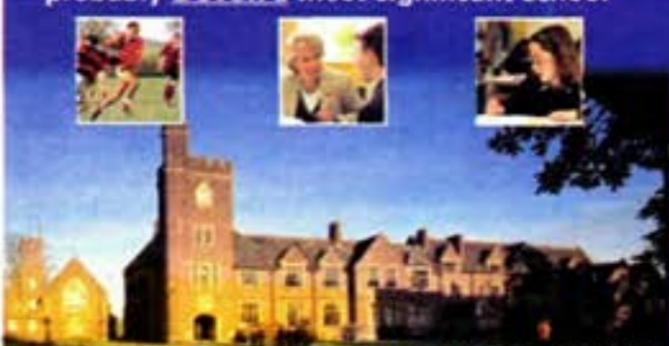
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Education

Ambassador from St John's pioneers new Australian link-up scheme

AS PART of his Christmas break in Sydney, Victor Jamieson represented his school, St John's College in Southsea, in a new initiative from the Britain-Australia Society, forging links between children in the two countries.

The plan arose from a discussion between Victor's father, Grant Jamieson, and the headmaster of St John's College Lower School, Tony Shrubbsall.

"Our family trip to Sydney would necessitate Victor missing the last couple of days of term, so I felt there should be some educational value to it," explained Mr Jamieson.

"After discussions with the headmaster, I decided to look on the Internet for other schools based in Sydney that could be potentially twinned with St John's College as a De La Salle trust school."

Unfortunately the De La Salle school that Mr Jamieson found in the vicinity did not have a junior school, so he contacted the Britain-Australia Society to see if they had any useful links.

"I was told that the society was trying to find the opportunity to launch their new 'E-PALS Scheme'. The timing was perfect and Victor was enthusiastic about it, so I arranged a meeting between the society, the college and myself."

As head boy of St John's College Lower School, Victor has been asked to take messages from his schoolmates to Balgowlah Heights School, Sydney.

"The children have been asked to make profiles of themselves with personal details such as interests and hobbies, messages and photos," said headmaster Tony Shrubbsall.

"We have been looking for an IT project as part of the curriculum and I think we have found one that will be received enthusiastically. It will be very exciting for the children to make contact with others their own age, but on the other side of the world."

"Victor is so popular with all the other pupils, that there can be no doubt that he will be well-supported and that this would prove an amazing legacy for future head boys of St John's to take up."



St John's College

Lower School Southsea, Hampshire
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 Email: info@stjohnscollege.co.uk
 Web: www.stjohnscollege.co.uk

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YOUNG READERS CLUB

Young Readers Club, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

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Could you be member of our Press Gang?
Last year our Press Gang visited some great places around the country and wrote some brilliant reports.
We're now looking for new Press Gang members.
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If we like your letter we'll send you some free tickets to a place near you. Off you go on the visit and then write us a report. If you are picked as a Press Gang member your report will appear in Navy News or on the Navy News website www.navynews.co.uk
Send your letter to The Press Gang at Young Reader's Pages, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 4HH. Don't forget to include your name and address.

TIME TO GET FIT!

What New Year's resolutions will you be making? No more chocolate? Less time on the Play Station? Being nice to little sisters and brothers? Getting fit?

Write to us at the usual address and tell us about your resolutions for the New Year.

ON THE MOVE

Please don't forget to tell us when you change address or move, we have had lots of your Christmas cards returned to us.

Young Readers Club

Competition Rules:

All Young Readers Club competitions are open to readers aged 16 or under, except employees and their families of Navy News or any company associated with the competition. The decision of the judge is final. Full competition rules are available by contacting us at the usual address. 1 entry per person.

PASS ME THE SAW!!! ROYAL NAVY MEDICINE



If you were below decks in Nelson's time that's what you may have heard the surgeon say to his men as he prepared to fix an injury to a sailor's arm or leg!

Surgeons in the Royal Navy today may still use a saw for operating but at least the sailor will be fast asleep under anaesthetic!

In old days the best a sailor

could hope for was to be knocked out or given lots of alcohol.

Things have moved on a long way since the time when sailors were operated on, in dark, hot, dirty conditions below decks. The Medical Branch is a really important part of the Royal Navy and its highly trained staff provide medical skills

for the Fleet and for the Royal Marines. Medical officers, Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nurses, Medical Technicians and Medical Assistants provide treatment and care in hospitals, Naval establishments and afloat.

There's even a Defence Dental Agency to look after the Royal Navy's teeth!

Civilian Doctors and Nurses also work at the Navy's establishments.

If you've always wanted to be a doctor or a nurse, and you also want to travel the world and enjoy being part of the Navy, you can find out more about the medical branch at the Royal Navy's web site. Just log on to www.royal-navy.mod.uk.

NAVAL MEDICINE - THE EXPERTS

These days we often hear about new ways of treating sick people and new cures for diseases. The Institute of Naval Medicine is the place where research is done to improve the health of the men and women of the Royal Navy.

The Institute is based on the South Coast of England and not only do its experts research into the best way to treat people who are sick, but they also look at ways of preventing injuries and illness.

Here are just a few of the things its clever staff are working on:

- Helping to develop the Royal Navy's Fitness Test policy
 - Looking at the design for a safety helmet for boat crews
 - Finding ways to reduce burns in Navy fire fighters
 - Looking into the features needed in suits for wearing in cold waters
- The Institute also provides doctors and scientists who give advice on specialist areas such as diving, submarines and radiation. Some of this sounds a bit like Q in James Bond! But it is these experts who could help prevent a serious emergency under water or in the surface fleet.

NAVAL TERMS...

What did you say?

We've got some more fantastic phrases for you!

ACE

- Something that please a sailor very much

BABIES HEADS

- Tinned Steak & Kidney Pudding

JOLLY ROGER

- A Pirates flag

LOTMAN

- An old-fashioned term for a pirate

MANACLE

- A Handcuff

TRAIN SMASH

- A fry-up with eggs, bacon and tinned tomatoes

FIGHTING FIT

Sailors in the Royal Navy are encouraged to keep fit, ready for anything.

Although there's no physical test required before joining the Navy it's pretty clear that anyone wanting to join and stay should be able to do these tests:

Men have to

- Run 1.5 miles in under 11 minutes
- Do 39 sit-ups in no time limit
- Do 23 press-ups in no time limit
- Do 23 burpees (squat thrusts) in no time limit
- Sprint 300-m in 59 seconds

Women have to

- Run 1.5 miles in under 13 minutes
- Do 29 sit-ups in no time limit
- Do 17 press-ups in no time limit
- Do 17 burpees in no time limit
- Sprint 300-m in 72 seconds.

Could you do this? If you're going to try you must make sure a responsible person is there to supervise you, that you've had lots of practice at exercise and you've warmed up first!



As well as encouraging people to keep fit there are loads of sports played by the Royal Navy. There are teams for Polo, Parachuting, Rugby, Rowing, Cycling and even Rally Driving!

MEMBERS BIRTHDAYS

Jack	Absalom	Kate	Ireland	Evan	Shelley
Steven	Allcock	Charlotte	Ireland	Conor	Shane
Stephen	Aspin	Amber	Jones	Ross	Sketchley
Jacob	Bushell	Adam	Jones	Gemma	Smith
Amiee-Leigh	Cannon	Thomas	Morrant	Shannon	Spayne
Lauren	Cannon	Sarah	Murphy	Adam	Spivey
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YOUNG READERS CLUB

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YOUNG READERS CLUB



MEMBERS ONLY COMPETITION DESIGN US A BIRTHDAY CARD!!

We are looking for a new birthday card for the Young Readers Club and we would like one of you to design it.

The design must be A5 Size (148mm wide and 210mm high) and feature 'Techno Cat' along with the Young Readers Club Name. The more bright and colourful it is, the better.

The best designs will be published in the Young Readers pages and the winner will have their design made into a birthday card. This will become the official Young Readers Club birthday card and will be sent to all Young Readers Club members on their birthday for the next year.

Entries must be in by 28th February 2003 and should be sent to the usual address. All entries will receive a prize from the Young Readers Club goodie bag!!

(We regret we cannot return any drawings sent in for this competition)



Sea Cadets

Steadfast says goodbye to two key players

TS STEADFAST has lately said goodbye to two more of its leading lights.

Lt Cdr Peter Mould has retired as Commanding Officer of the Kingston-upon-Thames unit, after an association lasting nearly 50 years.

He joined as a cadet in 1954 at the age of 12 and rapidly rose through the ranks. After a short period as CO of Putney unit, he returned to his roots at Kingston in 1989. He now continues as National Sea Cadet Ceremonial Officer.

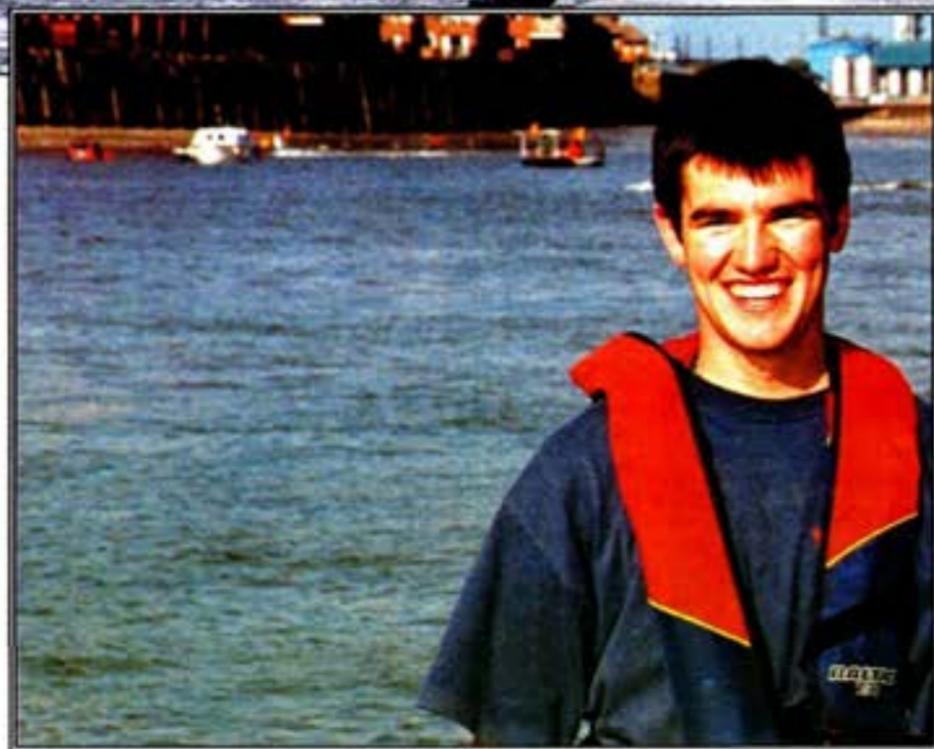
Peter is succeeded as CO by Sgt Brian Walsh, who joined Steadfast in 1982, reaching the rank of sergeant of the Marines Detachment in 1993.

Meanwhile PO James Duffy has left to join the Royal Navy.

James joined the unit in 1992 and became a petty officer in 1996.

He always had a strong reputation as a seaman, concentrating on pulling, sailing and power boating, and was known as a first class coxswain supporting cadets in the Great River Race.

● Above: Lt Cdr Peter Mould steps out at the Trafalgar Day parade in Trafalgar Square. Below: PO James Duffy



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New Jersey CO



LT PAUL EVERY of Jersey unit receives the Cadet Forces Medal for 12 years' service from the Commander HMS Excellent, Cdr Bug Wrightson.

Lt Every was at the Sea Cadet Training Centre at Whale Island, Portsmouth to undertake his Command Course before taking over as CO of the Channel Islands unit.



Cadets have been in Cecil's line of work for 50 years



OVER 50 years' service as a trainer with the Sea Cadets in York made Lt Cecil 'Tug' Wilson a natural for the BT ChildLine Awards for Services to Children 2002.

Tug (79) joined the Royal Navy and spent World War II with the Dover patrol. When he left the Navy in 1946 he became a printer with his local paper, where he stayed for 42 years.

Today he still works tirelessly organising courses and trips for his Cadets with whom he is often found playing rounders and football in the local park. "I love every aspect of the Sea Cadet Corps and I have no intention of giving up yet," he says.

Steve Brown, one of the three cadets who nominated him for the award – £2,000 for a charity of his choice, and engraved jade glass trophy and a personal cash prize – said: "If it wasn't for Lt Wilson I would have ended up hanging around on street corners and getting into trouble. He trained me to be a different person."

"Lt Wilson is such a top bloke – he's always there for the Cadets and gets a buzz when we do well. I'd like to be involved in the Sea Cadets for the rest of my life, like him."

Kristin Bryson nominated Cecil because: "He is the kindest, most trusting, nicest man that I have come across in the cadets and outside. I am proud and honoured to know Lt Wilson and be one of those cadets who has been taught by him."

Kristin is Norwegian and moved to York at the age of 10. She says she was really shy then, but is confident now – thanks to Lt Wilson. She now teaches with the Sea Cadets and wants to join the Royal Navy when she leaves university.

James Ireland chose to nominate Lt Wilson on behalf of all the cadets. He said: "The ex-cadets, present cadets at the unit, the staff and I would like to thank him on behalf of all future cadets for the great love, devotion and diligence he has shown us all."

Lt Wilson received his award from ChildLine Chair Esther Rantzen at a sumptuous Christmas lunch at the BT Tower in London.

ChildLine is the UK's free, 24-hour helpline for children and young people, staffed by trained, volunteer counsellors. The number for children to call is 0800 1111. For more information visit ChildLine's website at www.childline.org.uk

● **'TOP BLOKE':** Lt Tug Wilson receives his award from ChildLine Chair Esther Rantzen

Frank's gift recalls his Drum Major glory days

TO HELP TS Legion reform a Drum and Bugle Band, retired Bristol Sea Cadet officer Lt Frank Marsh has given the Cheltenham unit a Corps of Drums.

Frank joined TS Adventure at Bristol at the age of 14 in 1947.

Before he left at 17 to join the RNVR at HMS Flying Fox he had been highly successful in ceremonial drill and the Drum and Bugle Band, of which he was Drum Major.

He completed his National Service in the Royal Navy and returned to TS Adventure where he became an instructor, later being commissioned as an officer.

He retired in 1965 to follow a career in London West End theatre management, which included a return to Bristol in 1976-77 when he managed the Bristol Hippodrome.

Later he moved to Chatham where he was a senior member of a group of volunteers who campaigned to save Britain's last surviving World War II destroyer HMS Cavalier.

Frank returned to live in Bristol in 2000, rejoining TS Adventure to serve on the management committee. He looked up four of his cadet friends who played in the old Drum and Bugle Band of the early 1950s and encouraged them to help reform it after a lapse of 35 years.

Frank has fond memories of Cheltenham going back to 1959 when he started his career as a trainee cinema manager at the Gaumont in Whitcombe Street.

All-action adventure out in Akrotiri

FULL use of Limassol Services Sailing Club was made by Greenock unit during their annual camp at RAF Akrotiri, Cyprus.

TS Gold Rover were able to run RYA Sailing and Power Boat courses – but the most popular activity was the two-day visit to Watermania, the theme park in Fassouri.

Each cadet achieved either a sailing or powerboat qualification, though, and there were also calls at the Air Field (where the fire station was seen responding to a real incident) and the Search and Rescue station and Air Traffic Control – again the scene of much activity where Tornado squadrons were practising take off and landing.

A call at Paphos provided parasailing and a trip in a glass-bottomed boat.

VISITING the world's most southerly unit was the Admiral of the Sea Cadets, HRH The Duke of York – seen here with His Excellency the Governor of the Falkland Islands, Donald Lamont.

The Duke met up with TS Endurance while attending a Falklands War 20th anniversary commemoration together with 250 veterans of the conflict in the Memorial Wood, which has one tree planted for everyone who was killed.

Endurance are furthest south



Talent hunt for staff at Stoke

STOKE-ON-TRENT are on the lookout to recruit more staff – especially as all their senior rates are female.

"Some of our younger male cadets could be forgiven for thinking they've joined the Girl Guides!" says TS Talent Chairman Steve Taylor.

"We would very much like to hear from ex-RN or ex-MN personnel in North Staffordshire. As wonderful as our POs are, we would like to recruit some gentlemen to bring some equilibrium to the gender balance – although ex-Wrens are welcome as well. Call us on Tuesday and Friday evenings after 7.30pm on 01782 280539."



King Alfred cleans up at tattoo

ROYAL Naval Reservists from Portsmouth claimed a clean sweep in a high-profile field gun tournament in the Midlands.

The team from HMS King Alfred overcame their arch rivals from HMS Forward from Birmingham in front of a full house of 9,000 in the National Indoor Arena to clinch all three main awards in the Golden Jubilee Birmingham Tattoo.

Led by their Field Gun Officer, Lt Cdr Jim Drury, HMS King Alfred won the fastest time, aggregate cup and overall trophy.

Lt Cdr Drury said: "It was a fantastic achievement, with all the crew's efforts over the last eight weeks of training producing the most exciting and spectacular show."

"The keys to our success were hard training, team work and dedication. There was a brilliant spirit among the team."

The Birmingham event attracts participants from throughout the UK as well as Russia and the USA, including bands, singers, dancers and re-enactment groups from the Living History Society.

Boxers in fine form as showdown looms

THE ROYAL Navy boxing squad is in high spirits this term after convincing victories in Bedford, Bristol, London and Portsmouth.

Not only the reliable and more experienced squad members, but also the recruitment and development of new talent, have maintained the steady progress over the last couple of seasons.

Amongst the many impressive bouts at the opening show was POPT 'Jay' Steele's showdown against a very experienced Home Counties heavyweight champion.

After some fierce right-handers, which floored his opponent, Steele brought about an abrupt conclusion in the third round by stopping his opponent.

At the same venue Mne Kev 'The Baby-faced Assassin' Green scored two standing counts following impressive combinations.

The show continued with victo-

ries from fellow Scot Mne Jim Cuisack and Mne Dave 'Hurricane' Tang, while Mne Andy Lowe's fancy footwork and accurate punching proved too much for his aggressive opponent.

The annual Western Counties Select show followed shortly afterwards, and the momentum was maintained with eight victories from ten bouts.

The show then moved on to London, with another impressive display, and finished against the Southern Counties at Portsmouth, just before the squad left for Australia (see below).

They now have to focus on the Combined Services show, to be held at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth

on January 29 and 30. The doors open for the finals on January 30 at 6.30pm, with the first bout at 7.30. Tickets at £5 are available from the Officer of the Watch at the main gate of HMS Nelson.

Meanwhile at Novice level there have been several Command area contests which led to finals at HMS Nelson, which hosted with professionalism and flair - credit to Cdre Amjad Hussain's PT staff, particularly WOPT Bobby Fung and POPT Q Shillingford, among others.

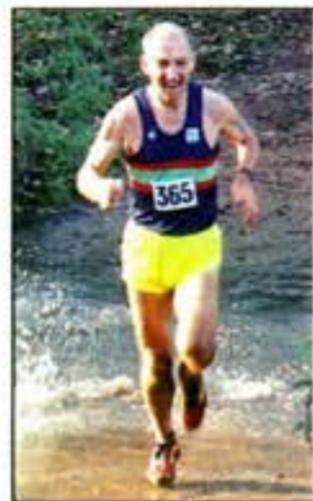
There were some excellent individual performances, notably from Mne O'Connell, awarded the runner-up to OM Boyle as best boxer.

A strong Royal Marines squad

took the team honours, ahead of Portsmouth, with Naval Air Command third.

The winners were: OM Yeardsley (Flywt); OM Quinn (Bantamwt); MEM Boyle (Featherwt); MEM Watts (Lightwt); Mne Rymer (Welterwt); AEM Perkins (Light middlewt); Mne Mulville (Super heavywt); LPT White (Special cruiserwt); Mne Baylon (Middlewt); Mne Smith (Heavywt); Mne Symons (Cruiserwt); Mne Taigh (Light Heavywt).

The finals of the RN Inter-Unit Cup will take place on Thursday February 13 at HMS Collingwood, Farnham.



● Steve Payne was the third RN men's runner home

Women win while men take second

THE ROYAL Navy Ladies cross-country team took a strong Bideford team by surprise at Exeter to snatch the South West Championship title by the closest of margins. Only 3 points separated the first 3 teams with RNAC on 260 points, Bideford on 259 and South Devon on 258 points.

RNAC were led home by POWWTR Vicki Norton (DLO Bath), who battled against a stitch in the last mile to hang on to seventh place after being in the top five for most of the race.

With such a tight race unfolding behind her, Vicki's determination to maintain her position was vital and she was well supported by good runs from the rest of the team over a demanding course.

Primarily a triathlete, Vicki has stepped up her running training lately and it is certainly paying dividends that will bring her into contention for the Navy title and an Inter Service medal in early 2003.

Lt Cdr Wendy Scott (HMS Raleigh) was next in, in 14th place. Wendy is fast recovering from her marathon efforts in Washington where she led home the RN ladies with a 3.13 clocking and should be rounding into her best form in time for the major competitions in the New Year.

The scoring team was closed by Lt Linda Lawrence (RNAS Cuddestone) in 22nd and newcomers to this year's team, Lt Amy Gaunt and Lt Val Stamper (both BRNC) had promising runs in 53rd and 57th respectively.

This was the first time that the ladies have won an RNAC fixture and with the South West Championships incorporated with the league race they certainly chose a tough field to achieve it. The course presented a tough challenge with a long steep climb and a double river crossing on each lap.

The men's team came close to making it a double celebration for the club, but this time Bideford proved too strong.

Mne Pete Belcher (RN&RM Careers) headed the RNAC team in fifth, with POPT Sean Childs (BRNC) just behind in sixth.

WO Steve Payne (RM Bickleigh) faded slightly after strong early running, but was happy to hang on in 11th and with LS Pete Waumsley (HMS Nelson) 20th and Lt Charles Fisher (BRNC) 34th, the team finished well clear of Exeter Harriers.

With the Championships including the Westward League competition, the result puts the men's team second in the league going into the New Year just behind Bideford.

Anybody interested in cross country should contact Lt Graeme Riley on 9352 33293. It is a sport for all standards and all comers are welcome to run for the club.

Navy fighters edge score in Australian tournaments

NAVY boxers have just returned from a tour to Australia which pitted them against a New South Wales Select and provided a warm weather training camp in preparation for the Inter-Services Championships this month.

The squad stayed at HMAS Kuttabul in Sydney, training in the gym and at world champion Kostya Iszyu's gym in Sydney.

The squad, which consisted of 15 boxers, three coaches, two officials and two staff, boxed two shows, both at the Ex-Serviceman's Club at Coogee Randwick in Sydney.

In the first show, the tourists won four out of six bouts.

Mne Adam Swainston won a close bout, finishing strongly to clinch a points decision - and that with only an hour's notice to box after the original fighter failed to show up.

Mne Graham Alderson came up against a strong opponent who was always coming forward, but a warning for the local fighter in the third round swung the tie for the Royal.

Mne Dave Tang's tall opponent made a difficult target, and Tang was comfortably beaten on points.

OM Sean McDonald's came up against a lively teenager who rocked the Marine in the final round to tie the bout on points, but McDonald won on the countback.

Mne Andy Lowe started slowly and seemed to give his opponent too much respect at first, and

although he jabbed his way back, he lost on points.

OM Tony Hindley took a points decision in a scrappy fight, tiring in the third but hanging on in his first bout since last January because of operational commitments.

The second show saw the Australians putting together a very strong squad from all over New South Wales, determined not to lose against the 'Poms'.

The first bout, a rematch for McDonald, was an absolute war with both boxers going hammer and tongs at each other. McDonald survived two standing counts but lost on points.

Mne Adam Swainston found his bout difficult to get into, and coach Tommy McPhee threw in the towel in the third.

AEM Vaughan Perkins won by walkover when his opponent failed his medical.

Mne Stuart Ellwell faced a cocky opponent, with lots of show-boating and jesting to the crowd

but soon knuckled down when Ellwell dropped him in the first. The stocky Ellwell went on to win narrowly on points.

Mne Barney Barnett faced a powerful boxer who caused real problems. Barnett was floored twice in the third, at which point the referee stopped the contest.

Mne Jimmy Gaskell, suffering a shoulder injury, boxed well early on but lost 20-12.

OM Neil Suko won by walkover when his opponent pulled out at the last minute.

POPT Jason Steele boxed the Australian No.2 Jamie Withers, losing 36-22 to a very tough opponent in a bout that won both fighters a standing ovation.

Mne Mick O'Connell won a scrappy fight on a countback.

The final score after the two shows was 8-7 to the Royal Navy, a great result after a hard two weeks training and two shows against some tough opposition.

Students head to Scotland

ABERDEEN Universities' Royal Naval Unit (URNU) has been tasked to organise the annual URNU Sports Weekend, which this year will be staged at Faslane in Scotland in March.

The event, which has been

staged in the Portsmouth area in recent years, is expected to attract around 500 students for the sports Olympiad.

The Guest of Honour over the weekend will be FOSNNI, Rear Admiral Derek Anthony.



● Lt Simon Hammock and Lt Ian McTeer compete in the Heineken World Open Catamaran Regatta in Aruba

Lottery win sparks fast-cat challenge

A LOTTERY win presented two Royal Navy pilots with the chance to challenge top-notch yachtsmen in a Caribbean paradise.

Lt Simon Hammock came up trumps in the RN and RM Sports Lottery, and with his winnings he bought a Hurricane 5.9 racing catamaran.

And Simon, having enlisted the help of fellow pilot Lt Ian McTeer, first sailed it in anger in the Heineken World Open Catamaran Regatta in Aruba, against some of the best catamaran sailors in the world.

Despite having relatively little 'cat' experience, and no time to train for the event before or after the yacht was shipped out to the Caribbean, the pair quickly picked up knowledge and tips from the fleet assembled in Aruba.

And conditions were perfect for transferring their dinghy skills to fast cat racing.

With a host of Olympic contenders and national champions advising them on technique and tactics, the end of the week saw them maintaining speeds well in excess of twenty knots, finishing their last race third in class.

Overall, the pair were placed a respectable 25th out of 42, despite breaking the boat and not finishing two of the races.

Lt Hammock commented: "It was extremely fortunate that we were both available to compete in the event, and we are very grateful to the

Lottery, RNSA, VSS fund, Naval Air Command and HMS Heron's PT staff for the financial backing and support we have received.

"We are now waiting for the boat to return to England so that we can begin training towards next seasons UK nationals - albeit in a slightly colder environment..."



● The Royal Navy men's and women's volleyball teams line up at Sydney during their tour to Australia

Volleyball teams go on tour

NAVY volleyball squads flew out to Australia to take part in the annual Australian Defence Force Tournament.

The men and women touched down in Sydney for a couple of days acclimatising, training and sightseeing, before moving on to Canberra for the competition itself, which was sponsored by Saab.

The Australians split up into territorial teams, and the Royal Navy men's team finished fourth overall in their section, while the women were fifth in their event.

The tournament began with a one-day beach competition, followed by a more orthodox event indoors, which stretched over six days.

New squad members are always welcome - contact your PTI for more details.



Early exit for League team

A COMBINATION of operational commitments and opposition on top form led to an early exit from the 2003 TXU Energi Challenge Cup for the Navy Rugby XIII.

Although Cottingham Tigers were languishing in the bottom three of their division, with two wins from seven, when the draw was made, by the time the match was played the Tigers were on a three-match winning streak – and firefighting duties had ruined RN preparations.

The first half was even, with the RN shading possession as they played up the slope – and they would have been ahead had Super League referee Steve Presley not given a couple of marginal forward pass decisions against them.

The home team countered by pressuring the RN defence with high attacking kicks, a ploy which led to the only try of the half when a fumbled kick allowed the home side to score a converted try under the posts.

The Navy reduced the deficit before half time with a long-range penalty from LOM Whiskey Walker.

Despite the scoreline the RN were still in the game, and with the slope in their favour in the second half hopes were still high.

Both defences remained on top, and another promising Navy attack was again cut short by a whistle for a forward pass at the death.

The midpoint of the second half saw the game turn in favour of the home side when an injury to one of the Navy's key players, Mnc Jordan James, was followed by a brilliant solo try for Cottingham, and the Tigers went on to win by a flattering 34-2.



● Issy Gay in action

They have since gone on to claim a place in the third round.

The defeat by the Tigers was an even bigger disappointment for one visitor as it was his last game as a member of the Royal Navy.

Stand off AB Neil 'Issy' Gay has been a stalwart of the side almost from the beginning of Rugby League as a Navy sport and will be sorely missed not only for his Rugby skills but his enthusiasm for the game and his sense of humour. All concerned with RNRL wish 'Issy' all the best for the future.



● Members of 801 Naval Air Squadron climb Mt Whitney, the highest peak in North America at over 14,000ft, during a detachment to Point Magu and China Lake, California. The squadron took part in AMRAAM missile trials, firing five missiles in various profiles

Flying start to cup campaign

THE NAVY'S South West Counties Cup campaign got off to a flying start when the senior side beat Somerset FA 3-2 at RN air station Yeovilton.

The competition is split into regional groups before the knock-out phase begins, and pits the Senior Service against the football associations of Somerset, Devon, Gloucester and Guernsey.

On a bitterly cold evening, the new-look Navy side played strong, committed football against a country side boasting established players from Bath City and former players from Yeovil Town.

The Navy started well, but found keeper Malissa in good form, saving well from POPT Haigh (HMS Edinburgh) and Mnc Bochenki (45 Cdo) inside 15 minutes.

With Mnc Carr (JSU Northwood) dictating play from the middle of the park, the Navy dominated, and Somerset were restricted to a couple of snap-shots on the break from striker Ficker.

But there was no Dark Blue breakthrough in the first half, and it remained goalless at the interval.

The second half began with the Navy back on the offensive, but although Haigh went close with a near-post header on 50 minutes it was the visiting side who struck first, with Yeovil old boy Paul Thorpe heading the ball home.

The sailors stormed back, and only desperate defending kept them at bay.

Gillard was booked for a foul on Haigh on the hour, and the resulting free kick compounded the punishment as Carr's shot from 20 yards took a deflection and crept into the corner of the net.

The Navy pushed on in search of a winner, and were rewarded in the 75th minute when LMEA Alex Allen (HMS Sultan) beat two men on the edge of the box before slotting past the keeper inside the post.

But with their noses in front, inexperience showed as the Navy relaxed slightly, and were made to pay as Somerset surged forward, with Thorpe unsettling the home defence.

OM McGill (HMS Newcastle) made a fine save to deny an

Indoor cricket

THE Royal Navy Cricket Club have secured the Indoor School of Excellence at the Somerset County Ground at Taunton on January 29 and February 19 between 1000 and 1600 for coaching sessions.

Any aspiring RN representative cricketers – seniors, Under-25s or ladies – should contact either Lt Col Tim Webster RM (93785 4014) or the RNCC Secretary, Lt Cdr David Cooke (9380 23741), as soon as possible.

equaliser, but from the resulting corner he could do nothing as the ball was lashed home in a goal-mouth scramble.

The referee played six minutes of added time, and was checking his watch when Haigh was given a little too much space and thumped a stunning 25-yard shot into the top corner to snatch the game.

Team manager COPT Neil Frame said: "I was delighted the lads kept going, playing good foot-

ball to give us a winning start in the group.

Royal Navy team (4-4-2): McGill, Craddock (HMS Sultan), Groundsell (RM School of Music), O'Neill (HMS Caledonia), Carr, Preston (HMS Newcastle) (sub Garrett (HMS Illustrious), 85), Stevens (HMS Drake) (sub Foxhall (HMS Sultan) 60), Lister (HMS Collingwood), Haigh, Bochenki, Allen. Sub not used: Johnson.

Thoughts turn to tennis

AS WINTER sets in, thoughts in one section of the Navy's sporting fraternity turn to next summer and action on the tennis courts.

The RNLTA are keen to take the best available team to the inter-Services competition at Wimbledon in August, and to that end has organised a series of coaching weekends.

These weekends, dotted across the Naval estate, are open to all-comers and designed to feed through to a series of fixtures culminating in the annual challenge against the Army and RAF at the home of lawn tennis in SW19.

The first session is at the Devonshire Club in Plymouth on January 25-26, with the second at the Indoor Tennis Centre in Portsmouth on February 8-9, both co-ordinated by Chris Usbourne – tel 9380 24193.

The third session is at the Helensburgh Lawn Tennis Club under the guidance of Steve Losh, on 93255 3745.

After these sessions, further group events will take place leading to the inter-Service B competition at Aldershot in April, and on to the main event in August.

Fixtures also take place at the Queen's Club and against the AELTC during a busy season, presenting tennis players with a unique opportunity to play at the top clubs in the country.

There is also an opportunity to represent the Service overseas with a tour planned for August to the United States – full details are available from Cdr Simon Brand on 96161 8109.



● HMS Heron forwards (green and yellow) drive in for the ball

Revenge for Heron

HMS HERON exacted revenge for last year's Lambs Navy Rum Rugby Union Knock-out Cup final defeat when they beat the students of Dartmouth 23-20 in an exciting match at The Rectory, Plymouth.

Watched by a crowd of around 200, including Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, Heron got off to a blistering start, scoring seven points in the first two minutes through effective mauling and a line-out.

Heron added a penalty, and almost touched down again, but BRNC, backed by vocal support, forced their way back into the game with an unconverted try and a penalty, followed by a second

unconverted try.

But Heron came back with a goal and a penalty before the break to lead 20-13 going into the second half.

The second half was as exciting as the first, but points were harder to come by.

In the gusty wind, penalties were missed and a forward pass stymied a BRNC try, but it was Heron who added to their score first with a penalty on 65 minutes.

BRNC bounced back and were awarded a penalty try with just ten minutes to go, bringing them to within three points of their rivals and heralding a frantic finale, but neither side could break through giving the airmen the victory spoils. Man of the Match was AEM Over of HMS Heron.

As Navy News went to press, details were just emerging of new sponsors for the annual highlight of the Royal Navy Rugby Union season, the Army v Navy match at Twickenham.

This season's game is scheduled for Saturday May 3, and the defence industry giant Babcock has just signed a £55,000 deal to cover the sponsorship of this prestige event, which attracted more than 42,000 spectators last year when the Army regained the trophy. The ticket hotline is at 0870 444 6633.

Climb support

PELI Products are to supply a range of protector cases and torches to support the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Everest North Ridge.

More than 30 of the lightweight crushproof cases will be on the trip, which aims to climb the world's highest mountain in the 50th anniversary year of the first ascent by Hillary and Tenzing.

All Peli cases and torches have NATO stock codes and are used extensively by armed forces, fire brigades and police across the world.

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FAR EAST GROUP TO DEPLOY

From page one

deployment, following the success of FS Aconit's participation in NTG 2000. The French unit on this occasion will be FS Primauguet, which will be part of the deployment for a 'significant' part of the programme, according to planners.

Flying Fish will this year be hosted by Malaysia, and will take place off the Malaysia and Singapore peninsula, starting in June.

This year the RN is chiefly playing the role of the bad guys, attacking the Five Powers group, although there will be UK elements on both sides. The RAF is also taking part in the programme this year.

One of the key aims of the first part of the deployment, as the ships head through the Mediterranean and the Suez Canal into the Middle East, will be to maximise training opportunities, generating a capable task group which can sustain itself to the Far East and back again.

The task group will be commanded by Rear Admiral David Snelson, in his role as Commander UK Maritime Forces (COMUKMARFOR), on board Ark Royal – the ship he commanded until last year.

Accompanying the carrier will be Type 23 frigate HMS Marlborough, destroyer HMS Liverpool, supply ship RFA Fort Victoria and tanker RFA Orangeleaf.

There will also be a "submarine presence" for elements of the deployment, although no one boat has been assigned for the whole trip.

Among the countries on the schedule are Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Brunei, China, Japan, Singapore, Malaysia, India and Pakistan.

The Far East marks the limit for the main body of the task group, which will then take a fast route home, but HMS Marlborough is due to press on and will then visit Australia and New Zealand.

For the rest of the group, the deployment is confined to the northern hemisphere – but when the route takes the ships less than 50 miles from the Equator planners have built a small 'excursion' into the programme, diverting the flotilla into the southern hemisphere and allowing the younger members of the ships' companies to experience the Royal Navy traditions of 'crossing the line'.

The group is due to set out in the middle of this month and should return to the UK by August – in time for the school holidays.

NTG 2003 will be the latest of a series of far-reaching deployments which take place around every three years.

It has been in planning since February 2002, but the programme has been designed to be flexible as the political situation around the world develops, and as is always the case with such deployments, contingency plans are drawn up if the programme has to change.

"NTG 2003 will sail ready to undertake any operations the Government directs us to undertake," a Royal Navy officer said.

Although no political decision had yet been made, as Navy News went to press the Ministry of Defence announced that plans were being made for war with Iraq.

Moves were being made towards such measures as chartering ships to carry heavy equipment to the Gulf.

Reservists had been contacted, although none had as yet been called up.

Leo's lifesaver

WREN Operator Maintainer Amy Stubbs, currently serving in HMS Manchester, carries 11-week-old Leo Chailioner from a smoke-filled block of flats in Southampton. Amy was part of the Armed Forces Operation Fresco, supplying fire cover during the firefighters' dispute. More pictures on page 12.

Picture: CPO/PHOT/Wayne Humphreys



Top fighter pilot dies in training flight crash

ONE OF the Navy's best-known fighter pilots has died in a training flight crash at RAF Wittering.



Lt Cdr Martin London (above) – known throughout the Service as 'Jack' – died when his RN T8 trainer Sea Harrier crashed during a conventional take-off on a training exercise on December 5.

The much-decorated pilot, described as a legend in the Navy, died after ejecting from the aircraft shortly before it hit the ground and burst into flames.

The trainee on board – who has not been named – was injured, but the injuries were described as "non life-threatening".

Convention dictates that the instructor in two-seat training aircraft does not eject from the stricken plane until the student has got clear.

Lt Cdr London had served 24 years in the Fleet Air Arm, including missions in the Gulf, the former Yugoslavia, and in Sierra Leone.

Only a week before the crash he appeared on BBC1's 999 programme, reliving the time his Harrier canopy shattered at 40,000ft and he managed to bring his aircraft safely back to the carrier.

Lt Cdr London was serving with 800 Naval Air Squadron on board HMS Invincible in January 1998, and while flying at high altitude over the Gulf of Aden his canopy exploded, filling the cockpit with a maelstrom of sharp fragments.

One shard ricocheted off his helmet and embedded itself into his seat only inches from his head.

Despite rapid decompression and the swirling debris, Lt London – as he was then – demonstrated superb flying skills and composure, sending a mayday message before

rapidly bringing the aircraft down to 3,000ft in around 30 seconds.

That plunge was so fast that he suffered windburn to his eyes, but he managed to fly it 70 miles back to the carrier. The incident earned him the Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air.

Lt Cdr London recently completed a two-year tour with 801 NAS aboard HMS Illustrious. He

was the Royal Navy's most distinguished and experienced serving Sea Harrier pilot and was also renowned for his role in teaching young pilots. An inquiry has now been set up to investigate the accident in which he died.

Both men involved were from 899 Naval Air Squadron, based at Yeovilton, Somerset, on attachment to Wittering.

Nottingham returns

HMS NOTTINGHAM returned home to Portsmouth on December 8, five months after suffering serious damage when she grounded on Wolfe Rock off the coast of eastern Australia.

After a six-week piggy-back voyage on board the Dutch heavy lift ship mv Swan, she had her fastenings removed in Portsmouth before being refloated in the Solent.

She was then towed back into Portsmouth harbour for dry-docking in preparation for her £26 million repair by Fleet Support Ltd. The job is likely to take up to 18 months.

All the expertise available at Portsmouth Naval Base was involved in this complex operation which had to take account, among other things, of tides and currents as well as weather.

Those involved in the planning and execution of Nottingham's safe arrival included personnel of the Royal Navy, the Warship Support Agency and FSL.

Since the ship underwent an extensive refit in 1999, which extended her operational life to 2012, a full repair



HOME AGAIN: HMS Nottingham enters the dock in Portsmouth where she will begin her refit

was found to be the most cost-effective solution and Defence Procurement Minister Lord Bach hailed the decision as "good news for the Royal Navy".

HMS Glasgow is to be reactivated rather than held at a lower state of readiness while Nottingham is being repaired.

Severn starts out



HMS Severn, second of the Royal Navy's River Class patrol ships, takes to the water at Vosper Thornycroft's Woolston, Southampton yard.

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