



# NAVY NEWS

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## EYE ON HELMAND

Baggers keep watch

## NAVAL ACES

Fleet Air Arm supplement

## BRAVE BY NATURE

Front-line honours



# IRON AWAY

HMS Iron Duke's Lynx, from 815 Naval Air Squadron, conducts weapons drills in the Atlantic as the frigate continues to hunt down drugs runners - see page 2. Picture: LA(Phot) Stuart Hill



# GLOBAL REACH



## Fleet Focus

WITH all the talk of Britain going soft, of the Navy 'not being what it used to be' and the like, there's a timely reminder that there are men and women in this sceptred isle who possess 'the right stuff' – in spades.

As befits **3 Commando Brigade's** lead role in Afghanistan over the winter of 2008-09, its personnel and the myriad of disparate units earn the bulk of the operational awards, including the first Military Cross for a female sailor (see pages 4 and 5).

3 Cdo Bde are home, but the Afghanistan mission for the RN, a burden largely borne by the **Commando Helicopter Force**. They've now been joined by the Baggers of **854 NAS**. For the first time we lift the lid on their vital mission over Helmand (see opposite).

Linked with the campaign against the Taliban is the dragnet thrown across the Indian Ocean by Allied nations to tackle drugs/arms/people smuggling and piracy, a mission currently performed by sisters **Cumberland** and **Cornwall** (with a little help from **RFA Wave Knight**). We've an in-depth article on their combined activities (see pages 23-25).

On the other side of the world, **HMS Quorn** has made a rare crossing of the Atlantic to visit the Big Apple with a NATO minehunting force (see page 7).

One thousand miles to the south there was some 'top bombing' from **HMS Victorious** which fired a Trident missile (minus warhead, *naturellement...*), one of the last acts of emerging from refit (see page 5).

And a little further south still, there's the **Iron Duke** putting the knife into drug runners (again) and gearing up for the hurricane season (see right).

In the southern hemisphere **HMS Gloucester** has been showing what she can do to defend the Falklands by hosting local dignitaries (see page 14).

And survey ship **HMS Enterprise** found the wreck of a Battle of the Atlantic victim during her work off the African coast (see page 10).

Two Royal Marines – **Lt Col Kevin Oliver** and **Maj Tony Lancashire** – navigated a section of the (in)famous North-West Passage in a tiny boat (see page 14).

And even further away from the UK – but in a location not quite as remote – various sailors and submariners enjoyed several months on exchange with the navies of New Zealand and Australia on **Exercise Long Look** (see page 18).

In home waters, **HMS Ark Royal** was treated to an air show by the Red Arrows to mark her emergence from a mini refit (see page 9), while her sister **Illustrious** is gearing up to bring the curtain down on Fly Navy 100 celebrations with a visit to Liverpool (see page 7).

**HMS Daring** was one of the stars of the show at **Navy Days** (see page 22). She's also our ship of the month (see page 12).

Current and former **Fleet Air Arm** personnel gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum to consecrate a monument to fallen fliers in the centennial year of naval aviation (see page 10).

It's not the only act of remembrance this month: **HMS Portland** joined submariners past and present at the dedication of a memorial to the wartime base in Dundee, **HMS Ambrose** (see page 8).

Further north, the men of the **Northern Diving Group** returned to the wreck of **HMS Royal Oak** to commemorate the 70th anniversary of her loss; we've some stunning images of their dive (see page 19).

And finally, there was a broadside from **HMS Victory** to mark the official launch of the National Museum of the Royal Navy (see page 13).

## Hungry Ducks strike again



**TIMING is everything in warfare, co-ordination the key to success.**

The *Navy News* team laboured for many hours (*news to me – Ed*) to produce their finely-crafted August and September editions.

And within minutes of the presses rolling, the jungle drums began beating... News from the Caribbean... Drugs bust... HMS Iron Duke...

Last month, we featured the seizure of £33m of cocaine when a go-fast was intercepted off the South American coast.

This month, the ingredients are almost identical. Drug runners. Eastern Caribbean. Cocaine (not quite as much). Go-fast (not quite so Gucci). Interception by Lynx and sea boat. All right about the time we were adding the finishing touches to our September issue.

So here's what you missed: a patrol aircraft spied a suspicious craft tearing through the sea and directed the Portsmouth-based frigate to close in – which she did, by night, sending her Lynx aloft and putting her RIBs in the water with their RN crew and US Coast Guard boarding officers aboard.

As the boats approached the go-fast, bales began to be tossed into the ocean. All had been ditched overboard by the time RIBs and go-fast met, but the Coast Guard team reckon around 150kg cocaine was dumped with a wholesale value of £6m (the street value is roughly double).

And for those readers who wonder why a British warship is chasing drug runners in the eastern Caribbean, 4,000 miles from home, well this particular 'takedown' was a co-ordinated strike which involved the UK's Serious and Organised Crime Agency – unofficially dubbed Britain's FBI.

"Coming so soon after our drugs seizure last month, this additional success – which has disrupted the flow of drugs out of South America – is clear proof that the Royal Navy is making a significant contribution to the international counter-narcotics mission in the region," said CO Cdr Andrew Stacey.

"All my sailors are hungry for further action."

Which they might get any day – although it's the gods rather than the go-fasts which are likely to provide the excitement.

The ship is now into the second half of her deployment, with the emphasis shifting to disaster relief rather than stopping drug runners now that the hurricane season is upon us.

To prepare for the demands which that period places on man and machine, the Type 23 needed a two-week break in Bridgetown, Barbados, to prepare for the rigours to come.

The engineers overhauled machinery after three months of demanding operations chasing drug runners (including two successful busts) around the Caribbean.

Some sailors found time to fly their families out to enjoy the Barbadian sun, others took part in community projects around the island.

Lt Steve Taylor led a team of volunteers to fix the house of a local veteran during a community day arranged by the Barbados Legion.

Meanwhile, deputy logistics officer Lt Gary Turner hosted 40 youngsters from the National Council for Substance Abuse aboard Iron Duke.

"We gave the children, all of whom have had their lives affected by drugs, an overview of our law enforcement work and our recent counter-narcotics successes," said Lt Turner.

"The students seemed to thoroughly enjoy the visit and had a great time meeting the ship's company."

On the sporting front, the Iron Duck's rugby team suffered the first defeat of their 'tour' at the hands of Barbados RFC. The ship's golfers took their clubs to the exclusive Royal Westmoreland, a par-72 course favoured by former Ryder Cup winner Ian Woosnam. And for the first time, the frigate mustered a basketball side under the direction of LWEA Simon 'Bish' Bishop.

And all the while, the engineers were still at work caring for the frigate ready for what

promises to be a gruelling autumn

One ship and 190 men and women cannot, of course, save the world. Whenever Iron Duke has visited islands in the eastern Caribbean, she's shared her knowledge of disaster relief with local authorities.

Such as the Trinidad and Tobago Coastguard whose personnel spent a day aboard the frigate to observe the way she does things – all very useful as next year the Commonwealth nation will get patrol vessels very similar to our own HMS Clyde.

Cdr Stacey and his deputy XO Lt Cdr Alasdair Peppe joined the nation's president and other VIPs at Independence Day celebrations, while the rugby team challenged Trinidad Enthusiasts to a game.

The Iron Ducks have built up a bit of a reputation on their 'tour', but weren't quite strong enough to beat the home side. Nor too were the ship's golfers, who were beaten during a contest with local talent at the Millennium Lakes Golf and Country Club.

By the time the golfers and rugby players returned to the ship they found a 'pleasant' surprise. The 'mobile FOST team' were visiting to make sure the ship's company were still running at full tilt. Nor was there any let-up for the 815 NAS flight, who were inspected by a roving Fleet Air Arm team.

Thankfully the guests were only on for a few days. They were deposited in Puerto Rico, where the sailors let their hair down – apart from those who were hosting the country's Secretary of State Kenneth McClintock or those climbing rocks on a mini-expedition to the rainforest.

Mercifully, the ship wasn't called upon to assist in the wake of the first hurricane of the 2009 season.

Hurricane Bill skirted the Caribbean before heading up the Eastern Seaboard of the USA and Canada without causing any significant damage.

Wait. What's that? The drums are beating again... Picture: Lt Gary Turner, HMS Iron Duke

# Cloak and Bagger



● Dust devils – a Sea King pilot demonstrates the art of landing in the Afghan desert

THEY already fear the Reaper.

Now insurgents in Afghanistan beware the Bagger as the Navy's unique airborne surveillance helicopter joins the hunt for the Taliban in the skies of Afghanistan – flying over tracts of Helmand previously regarded as terrorist safe havens.

We can reveal that Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea Kings – commonly known as Baggers thanks to the large grey 'sack' which contains the aircraft's state-of-the-art radar – are playing a key role over Helmand.

Their commander says in the first months of operations, the Bagger crews have fed vital intelligence to Allied forces tackling the Taliban insurgency.

It's the first time the Mk7s have deployed over land, building on lessons learned in Iraq six years ago when the latest variant of the Bagger was in its infancy.

The eye-in-the-sky Sea Kings have been around since the mid-80s, serving principally as airborne early warning.

That role began to change when new radar, Searchwater 2000, was fitted at the beginning of the 21st Century.

Designed to identify potential aerial targets, crews found the new radar system was also capable of tracking both maritime and land targets – as the helicopters demonstrated during the 2003 campaign to oust Saddam Hussein.

Back then, the ground role of the Baggers – in official military parlance SKASaC (pronounced 'skayzac') – was in its infancy. Six years down the line, those skills have been honed – and committed over land in earnest for the first time.

854 NAS with Sea King Mk 7s and support personnel was dispatched east to Camp Bastion in May.

After a month acclimatising to conditions and exercising with Allied forces in theatre, the Sea Kings were sent aloft on missions from the middle of June onwards.

"The job is to throw a light into areas which are regarded as a black hole – vast areas outside the 'green zone' in Helmand – and give the commanders on the ground an idea of what is going on," explains Cdr Matt Avison, Commander Sea King Force. "Almost every sortie has produced useful information and there have been many – and significant – results."

A few months ago we reported on the impact the Reaper aerial drones – owned by the RAF, but some are flown by Fleet Air Arm pilots – were having on ground operations in Afghanistan.

So why the need for 854?

Well, for a start, you can never have too many eyes. But more importantly, Sea King does what Reaper doesn't – it looks at the bigger picture.

"Reaper looks at a relatively tiny area – all with fantastic high-definition video footage," says Cdr Avison.

"But to find the needle in the haystack, you need to know where the haystack is in the first

place – and that's where we come in."

Put simply, the Baggers look at a wider area, find something of interest, at which point a Reaper or troops can be sent in for a more detailed look, or as Cdr Avison puts it, an extra layer in the intelligence picture which begins on the ground and ends in space with satellite surveillance.

Now it's in theatre, SKASaC will be there for the foreseeable future; 854 return home this month with its sister squadron 857 trading places.

"We are going out well prepared, well kitted out – you won't hear any complaints from the lads and lasses about equipment," said Lt Cdr Steve Lynch, 857's CO.

"Most of the personnel are delighted to be doing a job that is operational."

The Mk7s were fitted with a defensive aid suite, new engines and extra armour for their Afghan mission. In the coming months special rotor blades – already used by Jungly Sea Kings in theatre – will be added which will allow the Baggers to fly higher and longer.

The squadrons' personnel have also been prepared for their new mission thoroughly, including some infantry training.

"If you're working alongside soldiers, it's important that you're not a dead weight on the ground," says Cdr Avison. "Whether you're up in the air or on ground, you have to go through five weeks of training – and that's how it should be."

Aside from running around with SA80s, first 854 and now 857 have undergone intensive training by day and night in the skies of Cornwall.

That's meant long hours, irregular hours (a lot of flying in the dark to master night vision goggles courtesy of the nice chaps at 771 NAS – more from them next month) putting demands not merely on the Bagger community, but the Culdrose community.

"Air traffic controllers, the logisticians getting all the kit ready, the galley working into the night to feed our guys – the support from everyone on the base has been fantastic. People have always said: 'What do you need?'"

If the response from the team at Culdrose has been heartening, then the feedback from commanders in Helmand has given air and ground crew a lift.

"For our men and women, this is a challenge – and I've been surprised by just how quickly we've shown we can shift from sea to land," Cdr Avison adds.

"Allied commanders in Afghanistan are really impressed with what we've achieved so far – no-one else in the world has the ability we have. Whatever the battlefield – land, sea or air – we can work in it, day or night, all weathers."

■ **Next month:** How 771 NAS trained the Bagger crews for their Afghan mission



## New Marines company for rehabilitation

ALPHA, Kilo, Whiskey Companies have already carved their names in the annals of Royal Marine history.

Now add the name of a new company to those illustrious ranks: Hasler.

It's the first dedicated RM unit to tackle the three Rs – recovery, rehabilitation and re-integration – to help commandos wounded in the line of duty (or seriously injured in accidents for that matter) return to front-line duties, or prepare for life outside the Corps.

At present, green berets wounded in Afghanistan are helped to recover by working alongside their comrades in the various Royal Marine units such as 40, 42 and 45 Commandos.

That will still continue – but for serious cases, Hasler Company will oversee what it calls the Royals' 'recovery pathway'.

The new unit, based at Drake, expects to nurture around 20 commandos at any one time.

Around £300,000 has been spent adapting a building with ramps, toilets and showers to take the men's injuries into account.

Besides Hasler Company's dedicated staff, the recovering Royals will also be able to call upon the expertise of Headley Court in Surrey and the South West Regional Rehabilitation Unit, also based in Drake.

By bringing the wounded marines together in a single company, the Corps believes each man will help his comrades along the 'journey back to business', thanks to support, advice, and not least the Royals' legendary banter and spirit.

"Every one of the men will have his own needs, they may have suffered horrible injuries, but they are still Royal Marines," said Maj Pete Curtis, Officer Commanding Hasler Company.

"Along with Service and civilian charitable help, Hasler Company will help them make the transition successfully either back into a full-time Service environment or into the wider civilian community."

Brig Gordon Messenger, who led 3 Commando Brigade during its recent deployment to Afghanistan (see right), formally opened the new company HQ and pledged the utmost support for the men who would serve in it.

"Hasler is of paramount importance and we are committed to supporting casualties and others with complex personal challenges for as long as they – and their families need it," he added.

"This is not just about serving people deploying to and returning from Afghanistan and other theatres, but it does mean we are able to deal with the unfortunate legacy of Afghanistan through this new dedicated unit."

The company is named for Maj 'Blondie' Hasler, leader of the Cockleshell Heroes, who was subsequently invalided out of the Service.

As a civilian, he went on to be a renowned yachtsman who designed pioneering steering equipment.

## Blast kills commando

A Royal Marine was killed by an explosion while on a foot patrol in the small hours of August 29 near Gereshk, regarded as one of the focal points of the insurgency in Helmand.

Five other troops patrolling with him were injured by the blast.

The green beret's family asked for no further details to be released.

# ...Acts of bravery

**H**ER face smeared with the blood of the man she has just saved, AB Kate Nesbitt grabs a bottle of water in the aftermath of battle.

Minutes before the 21-year-old medical assistant had ignored the hail of bullets first to race across open ground, then to spend three-quarters of an hour saving the life of a wounded soldier.

Her actions that day near the town of Nawa in Helmand province earned the young junior rating the Military Cross – the first won by a female member of the Naval Service.

She was one of 45 sailors, Fleet Air Arm personnel and Royal Marines honoured for deeds in Afghanistan during the 2008-09 deployment by 3 Commando Brigade.

Their commander, Brig Gordon Messenger, said he felt "delighted and hugely privileged to receive the bar to his DSO" – it's the first bar in the Senior Service for more than half a century – for his deeds in Helmand.

But he added: "My strongest emotion would be admiration for all my fellow recipients."

Seven green berets and sailors were also recognised for their efforts in Iraq, while three airmen were rewarded for bravery at home on Search and Rescue missions in the latest series of Operational Honours announced by Whitehall.

As befits military awards, their recipients invariably play down their bravery and their citations rarely convey the full extent of the courage shown or the drama of the moment...

... Such as the citation for Sgt Noel Connolly, also awarded the Military Cross: "Connolly's quick thinking and bravery ensured that a detonation attempt by a suicide bomber was foiled. He carried out a life-saving act of gallantry and also proved to be an outstanding Troop Sergeant during all phases of war, particularly under intense enemy fire."

The NCO's act – generally described as "rugby-tackling a suicide bomber" – saved an estimated two dozen lives.

He grabbed the bomber – who was reaching for the detonator on the handlebars of his motorbike – and hauled him off. The bike was found to contain more than 150lbs of explosive. The would-be bomber was sentenced to 18 years behind bars.

"I'm not brave – somebody had to stop him," Sgt Connolly said.

As for his Military Cross, it is not for his actions, he says, but "for every bloke in the troop – a collective honour".

He continued: "I would happily pin this medal to any man in my troop. They performed countless acts of bravery on a daily basis out there on the ground."

"I have been given the privilege and the honour to wear this very special award, and I do so for all the men of Lima Company and 42 Commando Royal Marines. This is for the Corps."

Mne Steve Nethery, of 45 Commando, regularly displayed courage "above and beyond the call of duty".

On one occasion he twice dashed across open ground, unarmed and under heavy enemy fire, first to save a wounded comrade, then to prevent vital equipment falling into insurgents' hands. "His repeated bravery," says his citation, "undoubtedly saved lives."

The 23-year-old from Edinburgh is "chuffed to bits" to be receiving the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross.

His 45 Commando comrade, Cpl Bradley Malone, has also been awarded the CGC for three stand-out acts of bravery.

He broke cover and moved across open ground to rescue his troop sergeant who was alone on the battlefield in the middle of an ambush. His "fighting prowess



AB(MA) Katie Nesbitt, the first female recipient of the Military Cross in the RN.



Lt Cdr Gavin Simmonite, awarded the DFC for nursing his crippled helicopter home.



Surg Lt Henry Dowlen, made an MBE for his leadership of a medical centre.



Sgt Noel Connolly, awarded the Military Cross for 'rugby tackling' a suicide bomber.



Brig Gordon Messenger, 3 Cdo Bde's CO, earns a bar to his DSO for "outstanding and inspirational command".



Mne Steven Nethery receives the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross for saving a comrade and kit under enemy fire.



Cpl Bradley Malone, awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross for braving an ambush to help his troop leader.



Lt Cdr Alison Hofman receives the Royal Red Cross 1st Class for running an exemplary hospital at Camp Bastion.

and gallantry turned the tide of the battle and led directly to the successful extraction of 10 Troop from a deadly ambush."

On hearing of his award, Cpl Malone said: "You come back and reflect on what has happened out there; you feel quite humble about the lads' actions."

"There's a lot of men in 45 Commando that have been brave day in and day out."

An ambush also provoked an outstanding act of individual bravery from Mne Sam Alexander.

When his troop leader was struck down by enemy fire, he picked up a machine-gun and advanced – alone – towards the Taliban firing the weapon until it ran out of ammunition. He then resorted to using his pistol which he fired at the foe until it too ran out of bullets.

All the time the green beret was "completely exposed to heavy and accurate enemy fire". His single-handed efforts allowed his comrades to tend to the troop commander; they earned the 26-year-old the Military Cross.

Sea King pilot Lt Cdr Gavin Simmonite is awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross for demonstrating "exceptional airmanship".

His citation continues: "His aircraft was so severely damaged by enemy fire that under normal circumstances it should have been landed immediately."

"He was able to nurse the aircraft back to a friendly location and in doing so saved both the aircraft and his crew."

Surg Lt Henry Dowlen is made an MBE for his "exemplary"

command of a medical centre "in one of the most challenging areas in Afghanistan". It cared for more than 450 Service personnel and 200 Afghan Army and Police. The workload was relentless, the resources limited, the determination selfless.

His devotion was matched by that of Lt Cdr Alison Hofman of the Queen Alexandra's Royal Navy Nursing Service who ran the hospital at Camp Bastion, tending to Allied, Afghan and enemy wounded.

She receives the Royal Red

# on a daily basis... Victorious brandishes her Trident

Pictures: PO(Phot) Dave Husbands, 3 Commando Brigade



Sgt Andrew Leaver earns the Military Cross for actions which not merely saved the life of a wounded colleague but also spared his unit further casualties. He led a group of men to rescue the wounded man in the midst of a Taliban ambush. In doing so, he showed "considerable presence of mind and rapid response to an extremely dangerous situation" which "not only ensured the timely evacuation of a casualty but prevented his colleagues from being overrun by the enemy or killed in the cross fire of an ambush." On hearing the news of his award the NCO said: "It makes me feel immensely proud, immensely honoured – I couldn't have done it without the help and support of the men that served around me."



There's the Military Cross too for Cpl John Ballance for braving ferocious enemy fire to ensure comrades could be rescued. The 26-year-old, serving with 45 Commando, showed "outstanding, selfless gallantry" when he ignored the "heavy weight of enemy fire", according to his citation. He "relentlessly cleared a route towards stricken casualties" with the aid of a fellow trooper. The citation continues: "With complete disregard for his own safety, he repeatedly ran from cover into withering fire to manage the evacuation of a casualty." The award left the keen rugby player from Northampton feeling "humbled and proud". He added: "It is a great reflection on the unit and the battlegroup as a whole."



Lest we forget, there are still sailors and marines in Iraq, among them Cpl Greg Llewellyn who was part of the Royal Navy-Royal Marines team helping to train the Iraqis aboard the Khawr Al Amaya oil terminal, one of two which pumps the country's chief export into waiting tankers. When tragedy struck the KAA, the corporal's "quick thinking and selfless leadership" saved the life of a man injured in an accident. He receives the Queen's Commendation for Bravery. "At the end of the day I was just doing my job," said the veteran of Sierra Leone, Afghanistan and Northern Ireland. "There were many other lads doing much the same thing, but this is of course a very special award. I will wear it with immense pride."



Lt Cdr Andrew 'Tank' Murray and his crew from HMS Gannet were called to rescue climbers trapped by an avalanche near Glencoe. After three abortive attempts to reach a casualty, he ditched fuel to a minimum and stripped his Sea King of all personal survival gear so he could airlift a rescue team in. When the injured climber was found he needed immediate evacuation. Working in extremely confined conditions, with the snow 're-circulating' reducing visibility badly and with just a few feet of clearance between the rotor blades and the mountain side, Lt Cdr Murray hovered the helicopter for five minutes while the casualty was brought on board. The pilot demonstrated "selfless courage" and "exceptional flying skills". He receives the Air Force Cross.

## Victorious brandishes her Trident

HMS Victorious is a proverbial stone's throw away from resuming the Navy's most important mission after a successful test firing of a Trident missile. Each nuclear deterrent submarine fires its primary weapon (minus warhead...) at least once per commission. Victorious was the second V-boat to undergo a four-year refit at the bespoke facility in Devonport (Vigilant is currently receiving the same treatment). She emerged from that £270m 'long overhaul period' in the summer of 2008 and has spent the 12-plus months since undergoing thorough trials. Pretty much the last act of that thorough work-up is Demonstration and Shakedown Operations and for that a V-boat has to leave Faslane and head to King's Bay in Georgia – home of the US Navy's ballistic missile boats. After two test Trident missiles (one primary, one back-up) were loaded at the US base, Victorious headed to the ranges off Cape Canaveral in Florida. And there she fired one of the Tridents. According to the official report: "The launch and subsequent flight were entirely successful and tested the full range and accuracy of the Trident system." It took 18 months of planning to reach that moment, both by the ship's company and by Strategic Weapons team from the Defence Equipment and Support. Victorious is due to resume deterrent patrols after a five-year absence towards the end of the year.



Lt Col Alan Litster RM, Chief-of-Staff of Task Force Helmand, is made an OBE for "leading by example" performing "a role central to the success of one of the most complex counter-insurgency campaigns in recent times." The officer was, says his citation, "the driving force behind the headquarters. In extremely difficult circumstances and despite unremitting pressure, he produced a consummately professional performance." Lt Col Litster says the award is "a direct reflection of the hard work and commitment of the 250 men and women who served with me in the Task Force Headquarters. "I saw them perform to extraordinarily high standards in a difficult and challenging environment and appreciated their courage, dedication and humour."



Lt Col Jim Morris RM receives the Distinguished Service Order for his actions commanding 45 Commando. He led his group of 1,000 men "from the front, in the most austere environment and facing constant danger," says his citation. "Frequently out on patrol, sharing and understanding the hardship faced by his troops, he tirelessly championed their welfare and wellbeing, whilst ensuring that they made a significant contribution to the wider campaign." Said Lt Col Morris: "I am hugely honoured to receive this award following such an intense and gritty operational tour for 45 Commando. I shall wear it with pride but I shall do so in the full and humbling knowledge that it represents the endeavour, commitment and sacrifice of every single member of the battle group."



Lt Col Charlie Stickland RM is made an OBE for his leadership of 42 Commando and Regional Battle Group (South) in Afghanistan. The 41-year-old officer gave a "bravura performance" in charge. His citation continues: "Against a high operational tempo Lt Col Stickland demonstrated tactical excellence and deeply-impressive judgement, his planning and execution of a demanding sequence of audacious operations drew praise from the multinational community. His achievements throughout a high-profile and demanding tour were truly remarkable." Lt Col Stickland said that he would wear his honour on behalf of "all the 'smiley boys' of 42 Cdo". He continued: "There are extraordinary men doing extraordinary things all over there."

Cross 1st Class for demonstrating "vigour and determination. Her leadership, energy and enthusiasm were remarkable and in the finest traditions of the Service." And like most of her comrades, she says her award is really a team effort, "reflecting the hard work carried out by everyone at Bastion. "This award recognises the whole hospital team who delivered exceptional trauma care in difficult and demanding circumstances." As for the Navy's first female recipient of the MC, she too was

ambushed while on patrol with 1 Rifles. A bullet struck the body armour of Cpl John List and ricocheted through his lip, smashed his jaw and came out of his neck. AB Nesbitt rushed over open ground under heavy Taliban fire and found the wounded soldier was, understandably, struggling to breathe. The medic created an airway through the nose to help Cpl List breathe as bullets whistled past her, striking the ground. The soldier was subsequently

carried to a helicopter, flown to hospital and is now recovering from the injuries he sustained during that attack in March. Her Military Cross citation says she "made the difference between life and death". As for the awardee, she says: "I would have been over the moon with a good report. "Being described as a hero is just too much – I did my job the best I could." See page 36 for a full list of operational honours





## Keeping you in touch

**WelComE (Welfare Communications Everywhere) –** providing communication services to link entitled UK military personnel on operational duty with their families and friends back home.

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## Albion is (re)fit for purpose once more

THIS is the impressive view from the bridge of Her Majesty's Ship Albion (apologies, we can't do anything about the grotty weather) as she leaves Plymouth for trials.

The assault ship has recently completed a £30m refit in her home port and is now working up towards assuming the role of Britain's amphibious flagship, taking over from her sister HMS Bulwark.

Albion's overhaul saw more than 12 miles of cabling installed, one mile of welding completed

and 25,000 litres of environmentally-friendly paint applied to the hull (it also makes Albion scythe through the waves more efficiently). In all, the nine-month revamp devoured nearly half a million 'man hours'.

To shake off the cobwebs of all that time in Devonport, the ship underwent three weeks of sea trials before the summer break to test handling and radar and defence systems, but now the real



task of reactivating Albion in earnest begins – starting with some work off Portland.

The ship's dedicated commando landing craft and boat unit, 6 Assault Squadron Royal Marines, rejoined this month and exercises off Scotland plus a spell of Operational Sea Training with the team from FOST are imminent.

In between all the tests and trials, there has been time for a little relief: the ship

has hosted a families day, invited affiliates from Hastings on board and staged an *It's a Knockout*-style competition.

Once trials and OST are complete, Albion's due to take over flag duties from Bulwark in January, then sail for Norway for winter war games with the Royal Marines in the Arctic.

Later in the year she's earmarked to deploy for the USA on exercises.

Picture: LA(Phot) Luron Wright, HMS Albion

## Tall act follows HMS Mersey

FISHERY patrol ship HMS Mersey was given the honour of leading the finest sailing vessels in the world out to sea.

The River-class vessel served as guardship for the famous 'Parade of Sail' which marked the departure of the Tall Ships from Belfast – the culmination of their Atlantic Challenge 2009.

In excess of 500,000 people visited Belfast during the four-day maritime spectacle where aside from Mersey and the Tall Ships, there was also amphibious support ship RFA Mounts Bay on show (the duo also appeared at Plymouth Navy Days – see page 18). Both military vessels were open to the public in Pollock Dock.

"We were overwhelmed at the public response to the Tall Ships event and to the welcome we received from the good people of Belfast," said Mersey's CO Lt Cdr Carl Wiseman.

"The number of people who came up our gangway to have a look around exceeded our expectations.

"And of course, what an honour to take pride of place at the head of the fleet as the Tall Ships sailed down the Belfast Lough."

During the departure parade, Mersey played host to several local VIPs, including the Lord Mayor of Belfast Cllr Naomi Long and Northern Ireland's energy minister Arlene Foster.

## Daring deal

UPTO 120 jobs – mainly in Portsmouth – will be sustained until 2017 thanks to a £309m contract to look after the Type 45 destroyer fleet.

All six ships will receive their 'in-service support' – ie maintenance – from BVT Surface Fleet, the firm which built the vessels.

As of yet, only HMS Daring has arrived in Portsmouth; she'll soon be joined by Type 45 No.2, Dauntless, while the fifth ship of the six-strong class is launched on Trafalgar Day at Govan.

The maintenance package comes into effect in January.



● A machine-gunner stands guard on HMS York during boarding exercises in the Bay of Biscay

Picture: PO 'Dutchy' Holland, HMS York

## York's lucky FRUKUS

PIRATES. There's no getting away from them. Not even in York. That's HMS York, mind you (just in case you feared Long John Silver and his swashbuckling chums had sailed up the Ouse).

The newly-refurbished destroyer was Britain's 'player' in an international exercise designed to test navies' response to a pirate attack.

FRUKUS (France, Russia, UK, US) has been running for the past six years improving co-operation between the four nations' fleets.

The constituent nations take it in turns to host the exercise; last year it was the Russians, although the event was just F and R with no British or American involvement.

This year, however, there was a full house: aside from York there was the Russian destroyer Severomorsk, the veteran French frigate Tourville and the frigate USS Klakring.

The week-long exercise began in Brest then headed out into the Bay of Biscay – where the weather was clement for the duration luckily.



The same could not be said for the waters of the great Belgian port of Antwerp, visited by the Type 42 for a weekend's break.

It was fine when York arrived in the Scheldt... but when it came to depart a few days later, the team on the bridge (or anywhere else on the ship's upper deck) couldn't see the opposite bank of the river – which is around 800 yards wide at this point.

Thankfully, the weather cleared up downstream, permitting York to 'put her foot down' and make Portsmouth in just nine hours – following her refit, she's the fastest 42 in the Royal Navy with a top speed in excess of 35kts.

After a spell of maintenance and upkeep in her home port, York's now in the middle of eight weeks of Operational Sea Training which should finish at the end of the month.

Following that she'll prepare for her first post-refit deployment, heading to the Falklands to relieve HMS Gloucester shortly before the end of the year.

## Carriers valve for money

THERE may – or may not – be 4,000 holes in Blackburn, Lancashire. There certainly are 12,000 valves in Peterhead, Aberdeenshire – the latest multi-million-pound order for the next-generation carriers.

Whitehall has placed £52m of contracts with firms around the UK for various machinery, equipment and fittings for HM Ships Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

The valves – yours for £16m – from Score Marine were ordered alongside waste management systems (£15m) from Bristol firm Babcock Strachan and Henshaw, pipes (£2m) from Pipex in Plymouth, and lighting/light panels (£3m) from McGeoch Technology in Birmingham.

As the contracts were signed, the pieces of the huge, complex carrier jigsaw are slowly beginning to fit into place. The first components of Queen Elizabeth have been delivered to the Forth, where both carriers will be assembled before entering service in the middle of the next decade.

Shipwrights at Appledore in North Devon have built around a dozen blocks which will make up the sponsons for the carrier's flight deck – the first of 20 such shipments from the yard to Rosyth over the next three years.

Once on the Forth, the team at Babcock link these 20 to 40-tonne sections into 300-tonne finished sponson blocks, then outfitting can begin with cabling, ventilation, kit and the like.

Both ships will be comprised of around 1,500 such sections which will eventually be assembled in Rosyth's No.1 Dock.

That dock has undergone 18 months of work to accommodate the new carriers. Although long enough, No.1 was built with ships with 'V-shaped' hulls in mind.

Engineers had to cut back the huge granite steps which form the sides of the dock.

The result is now a dock which is 30ft wider at the bottom than it was before.

More work is still needed at Rosyth, including widening the entrance to the basin and the installation of a crane capable of lifting 1,000-tonne sections.

## Lusty fly past over Mersey

HMS Illustrious will take centre stage as the curtain comes down on Fly Navy 100 celebrations this month on the Mersey.

The nation's flagship visits Liverpool from Thursday October 22 to Tuesday October 27 and will serve as the launchpad for some of the aircraft taking part in the final 'Balbo' fly past of this centennial year of naval aviation.

Around 40 current and historic helicopters, jets (including two Harriers from the Naval Strike Wing) and prop-driven aircraft are due to take part in the Balbo formation - named for the pioneering Italian inter-war aviator who flew co-ordinated large groups of aircraft.

The formation, tiered at different heights, will fly along the Mersey from south to north, passing over the carrier, moored at the Cruise Liner Berth, at 2pm on Friday October 23.

The RN Balbo has been a regular sight at airshows over the summer (scooping the 'best in show' award at the Royal International Air Tattoo at Fairford).

If you miss that, you can catch the Black Cats Lynx helicopter display team performing that same afternoon at 4pm at the Albert Dock.

There will also be air displays at the same location on Saturday (2.30-3.30pm) and Sunday (11.30am-12.30pm).

And there'll be a static display of Naval aircraft between the Mersey ferry terminal and the Liver Building open daily between 10am and 4pm.

Illustrious will be open to the public on Sunday (1pm-5pm) and on Monday (10am-4pm) and she's also hosting a charity concert by the Band of HM Royal Marines on the Saturday evening.



## Montrose's refit over

HMS Montrose is back at sea after nine months in the hands of Babcock in Rosyth dockyard.

More than seven miles of cable have been installed, as well as two 30mm automatic guns to improve close-in defence against surface threats, a transom flap (a 'spoiler' on the stern to make the ship travel more quickly), some 180 new underwater valves, the latest MOD computer network, and a new command system (DNA(2)), while environmentally-friendly paint has been applied to the hull during the Type 23's £15m refit.

The frigate is currently undergoing sea trials off the east coast before formally rejoining the Fleet and returning home to Devonport later in the year.

## Sensor ships in Pompey

FIVE warships gathered in Portsmouth to join HMS St Albans for electronic warfare trials.

Turkey's TCG Orucreis, France's FS Latouche Treville, Norway's HNoMS Otto Sverdrup, the Dutch HNLMS De Zeven Provinciën and Spain's SPS Alvaro De Bazan will work with The Saint to test the various sensors and systems of an international force.

After a briefing by the warfare and weapons experts from HMS Collingwood, the ships headed out into the Channel to fend off a series of air attacks, including some by Harrier GR9s, and simulated anti-ship missile threats.

# New York times

### SMALL ship, Big Apple.

Royal Navy warships are infrequent visitors to the city that never sleeps. Visits by British minehunters are even rarer, so make the most of it.

Which the crew of HMS Quorn did, although their time in New York came at the most poignant moment for the city: September 11 commemorations.

The Hunt-class warship is Britain's current representative on NATO's Standing Mine Countermeasures Group 1.

The entire force - the Danish HDMS Thetis, Norway's HNoMS Rauma, HNLMS Urk from the Netherlands, Belgium's BNS Lobelia, Estonia's ENS Sakala and HMCS Goose Bay and Shawinigan from Canada - visited New York and their ship's companies took part in ceremonies at the site of the World Trade Center.

"It is only right that we should stand shoulder to shoulder with our NATO colleagues to remember those who were lost," said Quorn's CO Lt Cdr Tim Neild, who laid a wreath at the Twin Towers' site on behalf of his ship and the Senior Service.

"It is a great privilege and an honour to bring a Royal Navy warship to New York, especially during such a significant and poignant period such as the anniversary of 9/11."

The ship also hosted New York dignitaries and representatives of the military and emergency services to commemorate the 2001 tragedy.

It wasn't all sombre in the Big Apple, thankfully. There were also celebrations to mark 400 years of ties between the city (which was once known as New Amsterdam) and the Netherlands.

And there was an obligatory rig run, taking in the 'crossroads of the world' - Times Square - and climbing (well, catching the lift) to the top of the Empire State Building.

The NATO force typically confines its duties to European waters but has braved the Atlantic crossing to enhance its knowledge of minehunting in different environmental and oceanographic conditions.

The ships are also due to take part in an exercise with a US Navy carrier battlegroup as well as working with US and Canadian warships off the Eastern Seaboard.



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# We can – and will – do more

"CAN more be achieved? Yes, it can be. Should more be achieved? Yes, it will."

Such were the forthright opening words of defence minister Kevan Jones to representatives of charities, support groups, Forces – serving, front-line and veteran – gathered at Whitehall for the MOD's Welfare Conference.

Their aim was to discuss care and support for men and women who lay – and have laid – their lives on the line for this nation's defence.

The conference heard that the Service Personnel Command Paper had passed its first year anniversary, and the principles contained within of 'no disadvantage' and 'special treatment where appropriate' for the military community were beginning to become embedded in civilian life.

But for many the issue is about how to spread the word of these important changes to all those who need to know.

And that is not just through the departments of Whitehall and the councils of the UK.

It is also to each member of the 'military community', encompassing within its reach the men and women of the current Armed Forces, their families, and those who have ever served within the military.

The conference welcomed speakers from the Department of Health, the Department of Schools, Children and Families, and Kent County Council to bring their own perspective and experience to the debate.

But it was the view from theatre that brought many of the abstract ideas up against the harsh reality.

42 Commando's Commanding Officer Lt Col Charlie Stickland spoke of the "cerebral soldiery" demanded of his men in Afghanistan, clearing a compound one day, sitting down to drink tea with the village elders the next.

His men lived among the people the majority of the time, not within the Forward Operating Bases.

He said: "Basic mail was absolutely fundamental to people's morale. The little satellite phones were absolutely fabulous."

He added: "There is huge faith in the casualty system. That is hugely important for the moral component."

"I did have men airlifted out all over Southern Afghanistan. In terms of those men, the system works."

He also stressed the improvements in the rear organisations in theatre: "It is a hugely powerful resource to the man in the field to know that you're well-supported behind."

He did point out some failings in the limited JPA provision for his men.

The commando officer then focused on the time back at home for his men, the essential need for R&R and the process of post operational tour leave (POTL) for 'normalisation'.

He spoke about bringing all his men back to Bickleigh Barracks two weeks into the POTL period.

Col Stickland joked: "The reason we bring them back is they've eaten their parents' fridge empty and drunk all their father's beer, and in all honesty their civilian friends are bored of all the stories they have to tell."

"But they need to come back to the brotherhood, to the clan."

"The parades are utterly marvellous, the groundswell of affection it shows for us."

The Royal did add one final note of warning about the possible long-term effects of the Afghan campaign in the coming decade, however:

"We have a potential car crash out there. How do we track our people, how do we track them when they go outside, and how do we care for them subsequently? So I think it is a very relevant debate."

"Information is fundamental. We need to give them the information when they are in the service where to ask for help."

The green beret was followed by Col David Richmond, who walked to the podium with the aid of a stick, and began with the admission: "I have the unenviable title of being the senior casualty."

As commanding officer of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, Col Richmond was shot in the leg by a single AK47 round north of Musa Qaleh in June 2008.

He brought to the room his own experiences of the confusing period of immediate treatment and the long process of recovery: "It's a marathon, not a sprint. And that's a difficult concept for angry frustrated young men. Because they want to recover quickly."

He praised the superb work of Selly Oak Hospital – "I wasn't treated any differently from any other patient. Nor should I have been" – and paid tribute to the unit's support to the families of those in its care.

But he added: "Recovery has not finished when you leave Selly Oak. You are barely at the beginning of your journey."

Col Richmond highlighted the need for the welfare 'bubble' not to stop when a Service person left Selly Oak.

He described Headley Court as "the jewel in the crown", and urged all those present to put every effort into ensuring the quality of the treatment there endures.

But he brought to the room a caution about the perception within the Forces of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.



● Submariners from HM Naval Base Clyde form a guard of honour at the dedication of the Dundee memorial

Pictures: LA(Phot) Stu Hill, FRPU North

## To the eternal patrol

SEVEN days after the solemn voice of Neville Chamberlain dolefully announced that Britain was at war with Germany, HMS Triton was patrolling the Norwegian coast when she spied a submarine on the surface of the North Sea.

The boat refused to respond to recognition signals flashed on the Aldis lamp. Triton sent two torpedoes into her side.

Thus perished HMS Oxley, the first British submarine lost in World War 2; all but two of her crew died.

Seven decades on, there is now a memorial to Oxley – and five other boats 'on eternal patrol' – at the former base from whence she sailed.

Submariners from HMS Neptune and sailors from HMS Portland gathered with WW2 veterans, international dignitaries, and some of the widows of the 296 men lost operating from HMS Ambrose in Dundee.

The Tayside base was used not just by British deeps but also their comrades from Norway, the Netherlands, Poland, France and the Soviet Union.

Boats from Ambrose focused



Six Dundee-based submarines were lost during the 1939-45 conflict: HMS Oxley, sunk in error by HMS Triton; HMS Thames, probably the victim of a mine; HNLMS O13 and O22, also probably the victims of mines; the Norwegian Uredd destroyed by a mine near Bodø; and the Soviet B1 (formerly HMS Sunfish) sunk in error by the RAF off Norway.

their efforts in the northern North Sea and Arctic, conducting patrols in and around Norwegian shores, intercepting U-boats bound for the Atlantic, and attempting to safeguard convoys to and from Russia.

Seventy years on, only the two docks and the former cipher/WRNS office (now converted into flats) survive of Ambrose.

RNXS veteran and local historian Dr Andrew Jeffrey was determined to see the sacrifices made by Ambrose men of all nationalities honoured.

His efforts bore fruit when developer Unicorn Property Group donated the land on the site of the former base for a monument, titled 'Still on Patrol'. It was formally dedicated at

a ceremony last month with the Duke of Gloucester performing the unveiling honours.

Also attending were the crew of Dutch torpedo recovery ship HNLMS Mercuur, the head of the Silent Service Rear Admiral Mark Anderson and Flag Officer Scotland Northern England and Northern Ireland, Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster.

"This was the only Allied submarine base without a memorial and now we have something really special," said Dr Jeffrey.

"There were a lot of people at the ceremony with tears in their eyes – veterans from Norway, from France, widows from the Netherlands.

"The international good will surrounding the monument was tremendous – as was the naval presence. The result was a wonderful day, something quite special."

Post submarine ceremonies in Dundee, HMS Portland remained on Tayside to open her gangway to visitors before making her way around to Faslane.

There she'll take part in the latest Joint Warrior war games (previously Joint Maritime Course/ Neptune Warrior) which starts at the beginning of this month.

## Royals test pirate boat

IT'S small, it's black, it goes like the clappers – and it could be the next weapon in the war against pirates.

Currently whizzing around the Solent is a new fast craft developed specifically with boarding operations in mind.

The Pacific 950 (the 950 stands for centimetres – the length of the boat, or 31ft in old money – has been tested by the Royal Marines and by their French counterparts.

The Arctic 28 is the commandos' current weapon of choice when it comes to boarding/anti-terror operations.

But with Whitehall looking to shift away from petrol-driven boats – both for safety and economic reasons – the firm behind the Arctic 28 (a) went metric (28 stands for feet) and (b) went diesel.

The result is the BVT Halmatic P950 which has spent the spring and summer undergoing extensive tests and trials.

The firm has moved from its well-known sheds at Portchester to an old store in Portsmouth Naval Base. It's not a shipyard but a 'small boat centre of excellence'.

The move has allowed Halmatic to revamp its production line allowing it to produce its small craft/RIBs faster – and more efficiently. It is currently half-way through producing Pacific 24 sea boats for the Fleet.

So far just two P950s have been produced at trials models (yours for about £1m, depending on what military kit you'd like installed).

The P950 is wider and longer than the Arctic 28s it is designed to replace, nearly matches it for speed – but driven by two diesel

engines – and can reach 30kts from a standing start in seven seconds.

As it stands at present, the P950 is too big to be carried by the destroyer/frigate fleet, but it could be carried by the RN/RFA's amphibious vessels, or dropped out of the back of a plane.

It's designed to carry up to 16 commandos in full kit, or kayaks/inflatable boats/grenade launchers/machine-guns depending on what the Royals need to do.

The Navy News team aren't huge fans of RIBs. We have a tendency to (a) get wet (b) suffer sea sickness and/or (c) hobble off like Quasimodo with crippled backs after the boat's repeatedly landed back on water with all the give of a block of concrete.

Well, after a spin in the Solent in a sea state 3-4, we only suffered (a) – fairly inevitable when you're racing along at 40+ knots in a open boat. And, for a craft which punches through the sea at a fair pace, it's surprisingly quiet; flat out, the drone of the engine is largely drowned out by the slap of the boat hitting the waves.

"The MOD wants to get away from petrol-driven boats for various reasons in the next few years," explains Andrew Hughes, programme director at BVT Halmatic. "We've pre-empted them with the P950, which has also been designed with boarding operations, so anti-terrorism and anti-piracy, in mind."

Picture: BVT Surface Fleet



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# Arrows aimed at Ark

## I SEE no ships...

Yes, we know these are the Red Arrows.

Yes, we know they're RAF.

But (a) it's a very nice picture – plus the man behind the camera's a matelot, LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson – and, more importantly (b) the beneficiary of the display was Britain's most famous active warship.

The legendary display team put on quite a show in recognition of HMS Ark Royal's emerging from refit.

The carrier has been alongside in Portsmouth most of 2009 undergoing a £12m overhaul. That's now finished – and the occasion was marked in style.

The Red Arrows have been affiliated with Ark throughout her life and put on a magical show over the carrier, over Fleet Headquarters on Whale Island, over HMS Victory and over Portsmouth Harbour.

Watching the spectacle on the carrier's flight deck were the ship's company – plus friends and family invited aboard to see the new-look Ark.

The fly past was just one treat lined up for the ship's company on the ship's return to the Fleet.

They paraded for full ceremonial divisions on the flight deck, where they were addressed by Second Sea Lord (and former captain of Ark) Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, while the band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth provided musical accompaniment.

Ark's refit means her days of doubling up as a 'second HMS Ocean' – a helicopter/Royal Marines assault ship – are over and she can resume her more normal role as a springboard for Harrier operations, taking over from her older sister HMS Illustrious.

But with Ark out of the jump-jet 'game' for several years, there's a fair amount of re-learning old skills ahead, as well as shaking off the cobwebs after seven months in port.

Other improvements carried out by BVT in her home port include a new computer network, overhauled engines and gearboxes, and a fresh coat of special 'intersleek' paint which helps the carrier to cut through the seas more quickly – and hence more efficiently.

Once Ark's trials are complete she will take over as Fleet Flagship and, once fully operational, the carrier is due to deploy to the USA in 2010.



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# Plan for 'Little Ships' TV film

THE BBC is planning to make a documentary on the Little Ships of Dunkirk and would like to speak to Royal Navy veterans who took part in the evacuation.

Linda Sands is the producer/director for the one-hour BBC4 project, which is due to be filmed and broadcast next year.

Linda is keen to make contact with those on the ships during Operation Dynamo in 1940, including Royal Navy personnel who commanded the Little Ships.

Initial contact would be in the form of a chat so that Linda can get an idea of their experiences, with a view to following up some individuals at a later date on camera.

Linda can be contacted at [linda.sands@bbc.co.uk](mailto:linda.sands@bbc.co.uk) or 028 9033 8270 (work) or 07876 754606.

Operation Dynamo, in the early summer of 1940, was instigated when Allied troops became trapped by the German Army's thrust to the Channel coast.

With the threat of a significant part of the British Army being captured or destroyed, a hastily-assembled flotilla of warships and merchantmen was sent across the Channel to bring the soldiers to safety.

Although a large proportion of the work was done by warships – many of them destroyers – in a carefully co-ordinated operation, it was the Little Ships which captured the public imagination.

Many small craft made the trip across the Channel, largely crewed by RN and Reservist personnel, and were most commonly used to ferry troops from the beaches out to the warships, while overhead the RAF went head-to-head with the Luftwaffe.

More than 330,000 troops were spirited away from under the noses of the Germans, with a further 220,000 being rescued from other ports, though at least 5,000 men died and more than 230 ships were lost.

## Air bursaries announced

THE Royal Aero Trust has announced its bursary scheme for young people for the 2010 season.

The bursaries include the Peter Cruddas Foundation Scholarship worth up to £1,000, two further bursaries each worth up to £750 and additional bursaries worth up to £500 each.

They are available to UK citizens aged between 16 and 21 who wish to further their interest in either air sports or aviation.

Closing date is March 31 2010, and further details are available at [www.royalaeroclubtrust.org](http://www.royalaeroclubtrust.org)

# Fleet Air Arm memorial dedicated

A NEW Fleet Air Arm memorial has been unveiled and dedicated at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

The ceremony was led by Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, head of the Fleet Air Arm, and attended by serving and ex-serving members of the FAA and their families.

The memorial is in the form of a plinth of Portland stone supporting a granite aircraft carrier, set in an avenue of oak

trees with a grove of four rowan trees commemorating the four FAA recipients of the Victoria Cross.

It commemorates the 6,000-plus members of the Fleet Air Arm and its predecessor, the Royal Naval Air Service, who have been killed since the service was created 100 years ago.

A flypast featuring Harriers from the Naval Strike Wing formed part of the day's programme.



● (Above) Vic Read, former aircraft engineer, at the dedication of the Fleet Air Arm Memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum (see left). In the background is the Royal Navy hot air balloon, one of the air assets deployed at the ceremonies  
Pictures: LA(Phot) Pete Smith, FRPU (East)

# U-boat victim discovered

THIS colourful shape is one of the thousands of victims of the Battle of the Atlantic swallowed up by the ocean nearly seven decades ago.

And now the last resting place of the steamer *Marlene* can be formally marked on mariners' charts, thanks to the efforts of HMS *Enterprise*.

*Enterprise* is conducting a prolonged survey of West African waters, in particular the coastline of Sierra Leone.

And there, some 70 miles west of the capital Freetown, her echo sounder picked up a large man-made structure 80 metres down on the edge of the continental shelf.

Further investigation using the sidescan sonar revealed the contact was a 450ft ship, largely intact apart from a damaged stern, resting on her starboard side. The seabed around the site was scattered with debris, possibly remains of her deckhouses and masts.

A check with the UK Hydrographic Office in Taunton revealed the wreck to be that of the ageing steamer *Marlene*, bound for the UK from Calcutta carrying 8,700 tons of cargo, include 1,500 tons of pig iron.

It was her misfortune to steam across the path of U-boat ace Kapitänleutnant Georg-Wilhelm Schulz in U124 on April 4 1941.

The German boat had been stalking shipping off Africa for six weeks since leaving Lorient, sinking five freighters. The successes

earned Schulz the Knight's Cross, the German equivalent of the VC.

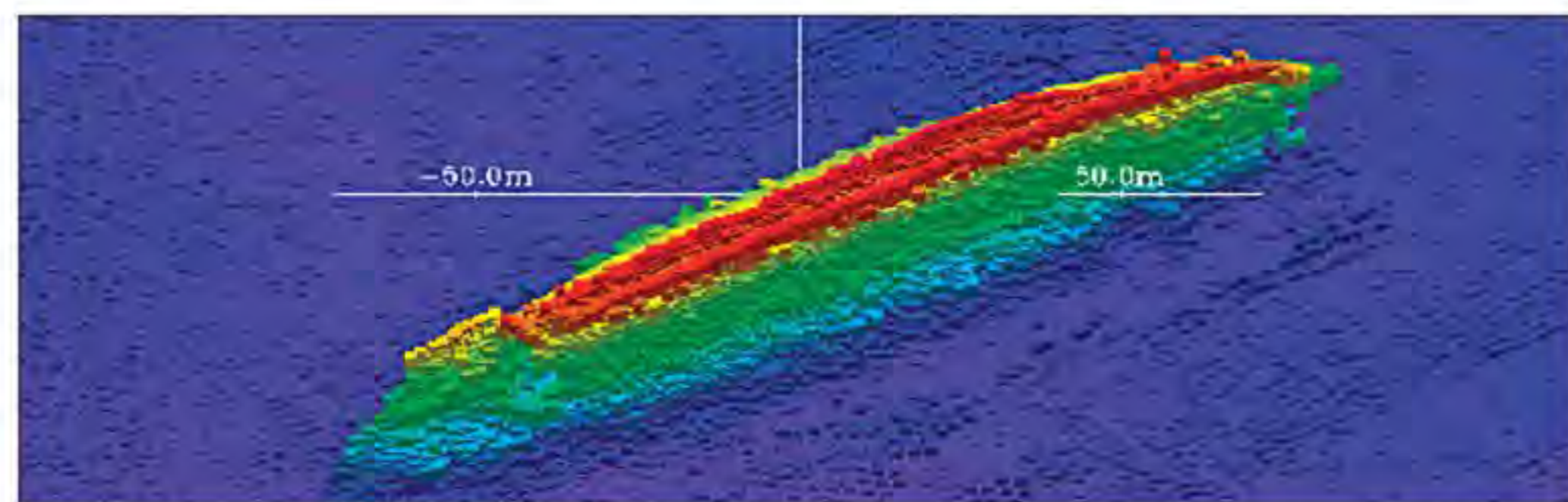
News of the award reached Schulz on April 4 1941 – just as he was trailing his next victim.

Despite the obvious U-boat threat off Freetown, *Marlene* sailed alone, her master Henry Lascelles zig-zagging as a precaution.

After five hours stalking the steamer, Schulz fired a torpedo, which missed. He spent two hours manoeuvring to get a better position, and this time he stopped *Marlene* dead in the water.

Schulz surfaced to finish off the crippled vessel with his deck gun, sending a dozen rounds into the hulk. It took a third torpedo to finally sink her. At just past midnight on April 5, the ship sank, taking 13 of her 60 crew with her.

*Marlene* was originally listed as lost at 8°15'N, 14°19'W – co-ordinates which were determined to be too vague back



● HMS *Enterprise*'s sonar scan of the SS *Marlene* in 80 metres of water off the west coast of Africa

in 1941 to be officially charted.

Thanks to *Enterprise*'s work, the *Marlene*'s wreck can now be formally recorded on future Admiralty Charts.

"She may have lain broken on the sea bed for 68 years, but the SS *Marlene* had one final duty

to perform," said Lt Nick Taylor, *Enterprise*'s oceanographic officer, "as a calibration target while we were conducting an upgrade to our echo sounder."

"That ensures that all the data collected meets the stringent criteria of a modern survey."

As for Schulz and U124, he would become Germany's 17th highest-scoring ace, while the boat would become the fourth most successful German boat of the war. She was sunk with all hands – with another ace at the helm, 'Jochen' Mohr, in April 1943.



● S130 is moved into the restoration shed at Torpoint

# Unique S-boat saved for restoration

SIX decades ago this fearsome craft scything through the waves at speed was a sight which struck terror into the heart of many a mariner.

And it could be a sight once more thanks to £3m plans to restore the sole surviving S-boat of World War 2.

S130 is a survivor of numerous skirmishes and clashes with Allied forces in the North Sea and Channel between 1943 and 1945, including interrupting the infamous Exercise Tiger D-Day rehearsal at Slapton Sands.

They were known as E-boats by the Allies ('E' possibly stands for 'enemy') but, more accurately, S-boats by the Germans ('S' for *schnell* – fast).

With the collapse of the Third Reich, the boat fell into British hands – and was brought to HMS Hornet in Gosport, where she began a second life.

British engineers stripped the boat's weaponry, fitted new radar kit and extra fuel tanks, painted the hull white, then sent her back to Germany with a Royal Navy crew.

Operating from Kiel, S130 – now renamed

P5230 – did what she had done during the war: harry and pursue the foe, swapping cameras for guns, and British warships for Soviet ones.

The flotilla of converted S-boats was used to gather intelligence on the Red Fleet, taking photographs and picking up other useful information, then escaping the Soviets' clutches at high speed.

Later the boats were used to insert agents into the Soviet-occupied Baltic states under the banner of the 'British Baltic Fishery Protection Service', employing German former S-boat crews to carry out the missions – under the White Ensign.

Efforts to infiltrate the Baltic with agents largely failed, but the intelligence gathering proved extremely successful until the unit was disbanded and the boats were handed over to the nascent *Bundesmarine*.

S130 finally served as a training boat, paying off as recently as 1991. She was turned into a houseboat, before eventually being bought for restoration by military enthusiast/collector Kevin Wheatcroft (he paid the princely sum of

£1) who already owns Panther, Sherman and Cromwell tanks in an 'arsenal' of some 200 vintage vehicles.

"From the moment I saw this resilient lady, I knew I had to see her restored – and at sea again," said Mr Wheatcroft.

"We are committed to making it happen. It will take time, attention to detail, lots of money and help, but it's too important an opportunity to miss for our ancestors and future generations."

The boat is now in the hands of specialist restorers in Torpoint, but aside from the considerable amount of money needed to renovate S130, the team is also keen to hear from any Coastal Forces veterans who served in S-boats during their RN days to make the restoration as accurate as possible.

More details are available from the Wheatcroft Collection at The Farm, Lutterworth Road, Arnesby, Leicestershire LE8 5UT or [info@s130.co.uk](mailto:info@s130.co.uk)

You can learn more about the S130 project at [www.s130.co.uk](http://www.s130.co.uk)

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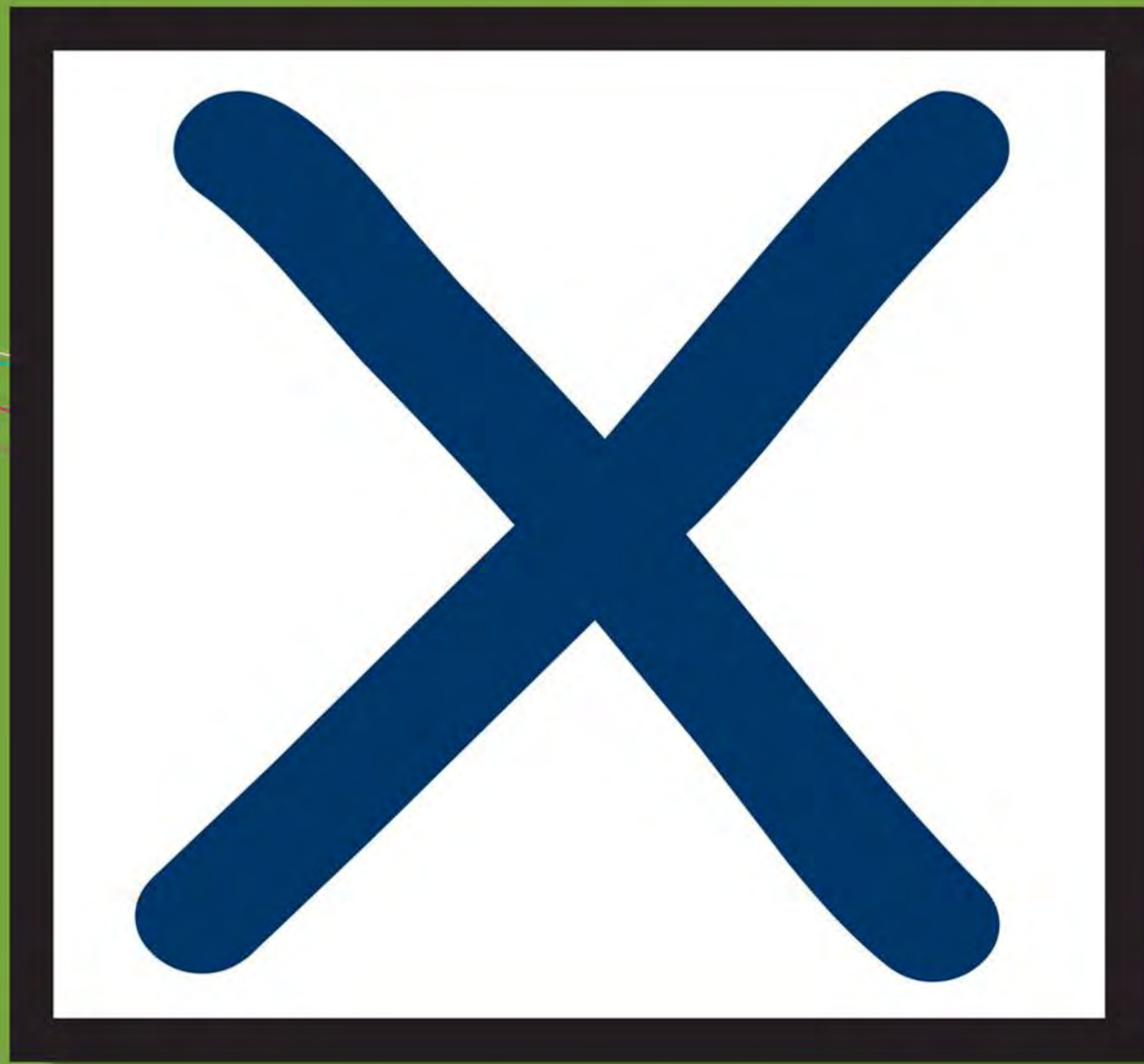
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# Billion pound brain



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You could buy a dozen Cristiano Ronaldos.

Or you could buy one HMS Daring.

In fact we bought six, but it's the lead ship of the Type 45 class which has grabbed most of the attention.

She's officially been in Royal Navy hands since the end of last year, she was commissioned in the summer, but it won't be until some time in 2010 that HMS Daring is finally declared operational – and ready to deploy.

The reason why it takes so long from launch (February 2006) to operational status is the great leap forward.

Roughly 80 per cent of the kit inside Daring – from the Sampson radar inside the 'spinning egg' atop the main mast to the electric propulsion system in the engine room – is new to the RN.

But it's not just new technology which sets the ship apart from her predecessors, but new thinking.

Aside from the rather spacious accommodation (four and six-berth cabins are the 'worst' of the personal spaces aboard) and individual, instead of communal, heads and showers – making each one unisex – there are numerous empty compartments.

With an eye to the future, the Navy left space for technology which might be needed over the ship's 40-year lifespan, rather than having to shoehorn new kit in as it does with ships designed in the 70s, 80s and 90s.

Not everything about Daring is new, however. The wardroom is 'blessed' with the chintz patterns



which have covered warship seats for decades.

Apart from Daring's general facts and figures, here's a few Top Trump-style statistics to wow (or possibly bore) guests at dinner parties. The long-range multi-function radar can pick up aircraft – or missiles – up to 250 miles away (roughly Portsmouth-Brussels) and track up to 1,000 targets.

Her power plants could supply enough electricity for a town of

80,000 people (e.g. Gosport) and there's enough electrical cabling to circle the M25 three times (350 miles).

The destroyer has spent almost her entire career in the water undergoing tests and trials either at sea or alongside.

More follow this autumn, including further tests on her Sea Viper missile system (no firings, sadly) and a spell with the Flag Officer Sea Training.

FOST will welcome Daring back

in the spring when she undergoes Operational Sea Training for the first time.

She's already acquired plenty of affiliates, notably the city of Birmingham and the island of Guernsey.

Despite her name Daring possesses not a single battle honour from her previous six incarnations.

The lineage begins in 1804 with a 12-gun brig. The destroyer ancestry starts in 1893 with a

vessel which served for 19 years.

The name was resurrected in 1932 with a D-class destroyer. She was sunk by the legendary U-boat ace Otto Kretschmer with all but five of her hands 50 miles east of John O'Groats in February 1940.

The most recent bearer of the name is probably the most famous. D05 was one of eight Daring-class destroyers which served the RN from the 1950s until the 1970s.

The ship which gave the class its name joined the Fleet in 1952

**Facts and figures**

Class: Type 45 destroyer  
 Pennant number: D32  
 Motto: *Splendide audent* (brilliantly daring)  
 Builder: BAE Systems, Scotstoun/Vosper Thornycroft, Portsmouth  
 Laid down: March 28, 2003  
 Launched: February 1, 2006  
 Commissioned: July 23, 2009  
 Displacement: 8,000 tons  
 Length: 500ft (152m)  
 Beam: 70ft (21.2m)  
 Draught: 24ft (7.4m)  
 Speed: in excess of 30 knots  
 Complement: 190 (can accommodate up to 235)  
 Propulsion: 2 x Rolls Royce WR21 gas turbine-driven alternators; 2 x Wärtsilä diesel generators; 2 x Alstom electric propulsion motors  
 Armament: Sea Viper anti-air missile system featuring Aster15 and Aster30 missiles held in SYLVER launcher; 1 x 4.5in Mk8 main gun; 2 x 30mm guns; Surface Ship Torpedo Defence system  
 Helicopter: 1 x Lynx or 1 x Merlin

## photographic memories



THIS month's delve into the archives of the Imperial War Museum leads us to the Suez campaign of 1956. Hawker Sea Hawk FGA 6 pilots of 897 Naval Air Squadron are debriefed by the intelligence officer aboard HMS Eagle after returning from preliminary air strikes against Egyptian targets. On November 1, Fleet Air Arm Wyvern, Sea Hawks and Sea Venoms from Eagle and Bulwark, supplemented by RAF aircraft, bombed Egyptian airfields and had gained total air superiority by the end of the following day. This prepared the way for the joint British and French landings on November 6. (MH 23489)

■ THIS photograph – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk), by emailing [photos@iwm.org.uk](mailto:photos@iwm.org.uk), or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

## HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.66

### Lt Antony Fasson and AB Colin Grazier GC, Tommy Brown GM

THE sea lanes between Port Said and Haifa offered rich pickings for the German wolves.

Here was a lifeline of the Empire, the gateway to Suez.

Yet in his month-long patrol, *Kapitänleutnant* Hans Heidtmann had found few targets.

Heidtmann was one of the intake of the 1934 class of officers, the fabled 'Crew 34'. Of the 291 cadets who entered the naval college that year, one third would command a U-boat – and one in six would die in charge of a submarine.

Crew 34 would spawn aces – Schnee, Topp, Endrass – as well as many stolid, capable, if unspectacular U-boat commanders. Hans Heidtmann belonged to the latter.

In ten patrols in command of U559, Heidtmann had accounted for just half a dozen vessels, including the sloop HMAS Parramatta.

Patrol number ten had brought just a single 'kill', the 200-tonne sailing ship *Bringhi*, driven on to a reef outside Alexandria.

As befitted the importance of Suez, the great canal and its approaches were heavily guarded by British forces, among them His Majesty's Ship *Petard*.

Shortly after mid-day on October 30 1942, the destroyer arrived at 31°47'N, 33°24'E where that morning a Sunderland flying boat had picked up a suspected U-boat on radar.

Four warships joined *Petard* on the hunt for the boat. For ten hours they harried the submarine with ASDIC – sonar as we now know it – and depth charges, nearly 300 in all.

*Petard* was the crux of this concerted effort, driven by her CO Lt Cdr Mark Thornton, a man with a singular ambition: he wanted a U-boat. Not a sunken one, mind you. Thornton wanted to capture one.

Shortly before 11pm on October 30, Thornton had his chance as Hans Heidtmann brought his crippled boat to the surface. There she was damaged further by nearly 200 rounds from *Petard's* upper deck guns.

As the U-boat men abandoned the submarine and jumped into the Mediterranean, Thornton ordered his sailors to jump over the side and swim aboard U559.

Three men responded: XO Lt Antony Fasson, AB Colin Grazier, and 15-year-old NAAFI canteen assistant Tommy Brown (he'd lied about his age to join up).

Fasson smashed his way into Heidtmann's personal cabinets and retrieved a haul of secret documents, which Brown carried up the ladder and passed to shipmates who'd rowed rather than swum across to U559.

With the documents secured, Fasson and Grazier turned their attention to some of the boat's instrumentation – despite the fact that water was swilling around U559 and rising rapidly.

It was clear the boat was sinking. From the top of the conning tower, Brown hollered: "You had better come up!" Fasson and Grazier tried to climb up but were beaten back by the inrush of water. Brown jumped into the Med and was picked up by *Petard's* whaler.

It was nearly a month before the codebooks the trio had saved from U559 reached Bletchley Park – and several weeks after that before the cryptanalysts were able to break the U-boat cipher, *Shark*. As a result, sinkings of shipping halved in January and February 1943.

Two months later, Hans Heidtmann belatedly received the German equivalent of the VC, the Knight's Cross, for his war service; his masters in Berlin were unaware of his failure to destroy the crucial codebooks entrusted to his possession.

Antony Fasson and Colin Grazier were both awarded the George Cross and Tommy Brown the George Medal. Like his shipmates, he never received his decoration, dying in a house fire in early 1945.

All three have a far more personal memorial in Tamworth, Grazier's hometown.

Six decades after their sacrifice, three anchors with an entwined chain were erected in the town centre. On the Sunday nearest October 30, locals celebrate 'Grazier Day' and toast their hero with a pint of Grazier ale.



## Slick work with the tanks at Thanckes

ON THE list of things you don't want to happen, apart from the Aussies winning the Ashes, a visit from the taxman, and receiving a copy of Ant and Dec's autobiography for your birthday, a fuel dump going up in flames on your doorstep probably figures quite highly.

So it's a good job we practise to make sure that doesn't happen – as the residents of Torpoint discovered.

They live on the doorstep of Thanckes depot – opposite Devonport Naval Base – one of six in the UK fuelling the fleet.

Thanckes comprises more than a dozen above-ground tanks and has provided fuel for Royal Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Allied warships for more than 80 years (in many cases via the original tanks which were built across the water in the dockyard).

Some of the tanks hold Dieso, which powers the Fleet, some Avcat for ships' aviation assets, and a handful are used by vessels to dump waste oil and bilge water.

All in all, it's not something you want to catch fire, but if it does...

And so the RN, the Defence Fuels Group (responsible for the depot), local authorities and the emergency services staged a day-long 'what if' test of their response to a disaster at Thanckes.

The disaster was a fuel tanker crashing into one of the storage tanks after its driver suffered a heart attack. That caused a fuel spillage, fire, and a huge (imaginary) plume of black smoke towering over Torpoint.

As in the case of a real accident, all Cornish households within 1,000 metres (3,280ft) of Thanckes – around 3,000 residents in all – were alerted, while across the water in Devon, Plymouth City Council was doing the same.

In the event of a real fire, roads would have been closed, homes evacuated and the like. In this instance, the wind whipped up and spared homes being affected.

"It's in our interests – and in the interests of the public – that we keep refreshing our contingency plans and take any fresh thinking into account," said Insp Martin Williams of Devon and Cornwall Police.

Capt 'JJ' Taylor, Devonport's Captain Base Safety, added: "We all work together closely anyway, but this was a chance to show the people of Torpoint – and further afield – that we work in their interests and take their safety, and that of the staff of the depot, very seriously."

## RN role under mag spotlight

IF YOU need reminding of the importance of the RN and the sea to our nation's prosperity (and hopefully *Navy News* readers shouldn't...), then there's a new publication supported by the Senior Service to get that message across.

*Global Force 2009* was formally launched by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope at the Defence Systems Equipment International exhibition in London's Docklands.

Admiral Stanhope described the 110-page booklet, produced in conjunction with Newsdesk Communications, as a "clear and easy-to-read account of the day-to-day operations of the Royal Navy across the globe".

It casts its net across the entire spectrum of RN/RM activities, including conflict in Afghanistan, the importance of protecting Britain's sea lanes, defending against aerial, seaborne and underwater threats, and the importance of the Trident deterrence.

The booklet is aimed at movers and shakers in society, such as industry leaders, explaining what the Senior Service does – and why it's vital to the well-being of the nation.

A downloadable version is available for free from [www.royalnavy.mod.uk/upload/pdf/RNGF09\\_sep09\\_72dpi.pdf](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/upload/pdf/RNGF09_sep09_72dpi.pdf)

Picture: LA(Phot) Terry Boughton, FRPU East



# National treasures

**THE most famous vessel ever to bear the prefix HMS will remain a commissioned warship, flagship of the Second Sea Lord, fully funded and supported by the Royal Navy.**

Rumours that Nelson's flagship was to be decommissioned – or even sold off – were rife in 2008, following a review into her upkeep and funding.

Despite assurances at the time that she would remain in commission, there was a public outcry when it was feared HMS Victory's future was under threat.

The news was announced by defence minister Baroness Taylor at the launch of the National Museum of the Royal Navy in the Victory Arena in Portsmouth.

It was followed by a dramatic celebratory broadside of 64

cannon from the ship, directed by Master Gunners Charles Payton and Martin Bibbings.

From next year, the new National Museum of the Royal Navy will be responsible for the heritage part of the ship, including visitors and marketing.

The National Museum will also embrace the four existing naval museums; the Royal Naval Museum in Portsmouth; the Submarine Museum in Gosport; the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton and the Royal Marines Museum in Southsea.

Up to now the Navy has been the only one of the Services not to have a national museum. The aim is to retain the strong individuality of each museum, but pool resources in administration and management to promote the nation's naval heritage more successfully.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir

Mark Stanhope explained: "The bringing together of the museums will allow all of us to understand better our cultural identity as an island nation – one with a seafaring tradition, dependent on maritime trade and the freedom of the seas."

He said an understanding of the past was vital for Navy's future. "A powerful heritage underpins our strong ethos, values and fighting spirit. It is the business of all of us to be the guardians of this tradition and to safeguard it for our successors, and I am certain the National Museum of the Royal Navy will play a central role in that process."

Plans are under way to improve

the visitor attractions at all the museums, including the possibility of adding a 20th-Century warship to the Portsmouth museum.

The director general of the National Museum, Dr Dominic Tweddle, said: "The museum was established to support Victory and it's an excellent museum for the age of sail, but visitors complain – quite rightly – that we need more about the 20th-Century Navy."

"We are creating new galleries which will give us the space to extend our displays and hold special exhibitions. Ideally I hope we can get a 20th-Century warship here. It might be HMS Caroline, which is in Belfast, or it might be another warship with a

good service record."

He added: "Another aim for the future is to put a cover over the Victory Arena. It would be expensive, but on the other hand it costs a lot of money to maintain Victory where she is, open to the elements."

It was also announced that the wreck found earlier this year in the English Channel is almost certainly 'the other HMS Victory,' Admiral Balchin's flagship, which went down in a storm in 1744, with the loss of all hands.

The MOD and Department for Culture, Media and Sport will start a consultation later this year about what should be done with the wreck.



● Heart of Oakham... Sailors and RAF personnel parade the freedom scroll through the centre of Rutland's county town

Picture: SAC Sarah Hanson, RAF Cottesmore

## Harriers honoured

FOR the first time naval airmen and ground crew joined their RAF comrades as their achievements in Afghanistan were honoured in their 'home town'.

Five years' commitment at Kandahar by Joint Force Harrier – the combined RN-RAF jump jet unit based at RAF Cottesmore – came to an end in the summer when the Tornados finally took over providing ground support.

The Naval Strike Wing and RAF 1(F) and IV Squadrons had taken it in turns to aid ground forces tackling insurgents in Afghanistan, flying more than 8,500 sorties in the process.

To mark their return, a freedom parade was organised in Oakham, 'capital' of Rutland – and the nearest town to Cottesmore.

The air station has enjoyed the freedom of the small town for 21 years, but has not exercised that privilege since 2004 – when RN jump jets were still based in Yeovilton – thanks to its commitments in Afghanistan.

Cdr 'Stinger' Rae, deputy Joint Force Harrier commander, led the parade by 200 RN and RAF personnel and Oakham mayor Cllr Jan Fillingham took the salute, while Harrier fly pasts were conducted by naval and air force pilots.



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# In it for the long haul...

WHERE Franklin failed, two Royal Marines succeeded in a craft just 17ft long.

Lt Col Kevin Oliver and Maj Tony Lancashire navigated the fabled North-West Passage in northern Canada in an open boat.

The duo set off from the small town of Inuvik in north-west Canada – roughly 200 miles from the Alaskan border – and arrived 42 days later in the town of Gjoa Haven on King William Island (which lies about 1,300 miles from Winnipeg) after covering the central section of the passage.

That journey took them through 1,400 miles of inhospitable seas and terrain, through temperatures which could reach 30°C by day but plunge to -6°C by night. They faced pack ice, bears, storms and, despite all that talk of global warming, 90 per cent more ice than normal for this time of year.

A specially-designed sailing and rowing 'cruiser', Arctic Mariner, was their home for the six-week odyssey. It was reinforced to cope with the ice and crammed with food, survival kit and communications.

When there was no wind, the duo rowed. And where there was no ocean, the two commandos hauled their craft over the ice, some 100 or so miles inside the Arctic Circle – at roughly the same latitude as Narvik.

They bumped into another vessel negotiating the North-West Passage, the Round the Americas yacht which is sailing around the continent raising awareness of the environment.

The Americans were impressed by the Brits. While they were dressed tip to toe in cold weather gear, they found the Royals strutting around in flip-flops.

"One thing was clear," said Herb McCormick. "If these guys were running the 'British Empire,' there'd still be one."

There were some "heart-stopping moments" on the journey, as Lt Col Oliver put it, notably some encounters with the local bear population.

"It was not all plain sailing, but it was a great adventure – we've had an awesome experience in the Arctic. We've put our boat through hell but she's been superb."

His shipmate added: "Every one of the 42 days has offered a unique experience – from the Arctic landscape and wildlife to the incredible hospitality that we met in the northern communities."

Both men are specialists in Arctic or mountain warfare. Lt Col Oliver also sailed a balsa raft down the Amazon while Maj Lancashire is an expert in small boat operations.

Their epic Arctic journey finished not far from where Franklin's expedition to find the northern sea route between the Atlantic and Pacific ended in tragedy 160 years ago.

Despite modern navigational aids and charts which the ill-fated explorer and his men did not have, the North-West Passage remains a daunting prospect.

"You can only fight nature up here to a degree," said Lt Col Oliver. "In a small unpowered boat you can only do so much and we always said we needed preparation, skill, patience and luck to make the passage."

The obvious question is: why?

Well, apart from the fact that Royal Marines have a habit of doing this sort of thing, the two officers have raised more than £10,000 for injured comrades.

The charity Toe in the Water aims to help Servicemen and women back to fit, active lives after injury by means of sailing. See [www.toeinthewater.org](http://www.toeinthewater.org) for more information.



● Pirate Pete Clayton 'encourages' shipmates to clean HMS Liverpool's flight deck

## In need of the aargh force

HOLD on. Isn't the Navy supposed to be stamping out piracy, not encouraging it?

So why is there a man with a dodgy eye patch, sword and hook for a hand demanding sailors clean HMS Liverpool?

Well, it's all part of the veteran destroyer's efforts to look spick and span.

The destroyer – the oldest surface ship in the Fleet – is at the end of a lengthy refit which will carry her through to the end of her active life.

She faced a final inspection from the taskmasters of the Flag Officer Sea Training before returning to sea last month, the first stage in a lengthy work-up to operational readiness.

And it wouldn't be right if the FOSTies found the Liver Bird in a dirty state, so it was time to revive an old RN tradition – a whole ship upper deck scrub.

And when we say 'whole ship', we mean 'whole ship': officers and ratings, from CO Cdr Ollie Hutchinson down to the most

junior AB – all were needed to get rid of the grease, dust, rust, sand and other gunk (technical term – Ed) which had accumulated on the ship's upper deck.

With all that scrubbing – not just brushes but jets, dustpans, even toothbrushes for those awkward nooks and crannies – there was no point wearing your finest uniform, so 'pirate rig' was permitted.

Normally that means donning any clothes (such as T-shirts bearing Liverpool's unofficial motto 'Ninjas not whingers'), but some such as Pirate Pete – aka officer of the watch Lt Peter Clayton – went a step further. Although a sword's not a lot of use for cleaning, you can at least attach a cloth to the end of the hooked hand...

Aside from a little gentle encouragement from Pirate Pete, "audio-based entertainment" was the order of the day to spur the sailors on with 'DJ' PO Dane Smallbone blaring tunes over the upper deck (Chas 'n' Dave full blast anyone?). Bacon butties and

an early finish possibly provided greater incentive...

"I've been in the Navy for 18 years, but this is the first time I've seen this done – to dedicate a day for the entire ship to clean is pretty unusual," said PO(Pers) Lee Chadaway.

Lt Matt Ellicott added: "We've been out of action for nine months and we want Liverpool to look in the best possible state when the FOST staff come on board. Because it's been a team effort, we can look back at the ship now and say she looks sparkling."

"Many years ago most ships had a fresh water washdown involving the entire crew at the end of a lengthy refit, so we made the most of this opportunity to bring back the tradition."

An autumn of trials now beckons for the Portsmouth-based destroyer before Operational Sea Training in the New Year. After that she serves as HMS Ark Royal's trusted escort when the carrier deploys to the USA next spring and summer.

## We got a job in Stanley...

THE Fighting G has been showing off what she can do with a demonstration to the good folk of the Falklands.

HMS Gloucester anchored off Stanley then ferried 70 locals aboard (or one in every 44 islanders...) including Governor Alan Huckle to demonstrate what the Type 42 destroyer brings to the Falklands 'party'.

CO Cdr Iain Lower (who was previously in the islands in charge of guardship Leeds Castle a few years back) and his team laid on an 'action stations' demo for Falklanders, showing how sailors on the bridge and in the operations room would deal with a possible threat.

Sailors were also put through their paces putting out a mock fire while the engineers showed how they would respond to problems in the machinery control room.

The visit was rounded off with a briefing for the Falklanders on the wider role of today's Senior Service.

Having laid on a one-ship demonstration, the Portsmouth-based warship then took part in a more dynamic display, this time with 50 guests embarked, featuring fending off a fast inshore attack craft, a maritime interdiction strike by the destroyer's 815 NAS Lynx, a little naval gunfire support, and a bit of refueling courtesy of RFA Gold Rover.

Stanley might seem like the end of the earth... but at least they speak English.

Not so the towns and ports on the shores of Brazil, where nine Fighting G men found themselves on the ultimate road trip.

The destroyer dropped them off in the northern port of Suape, giving the sailors five days to reach Rio, 1,800 miles away, one map to help them on their way and lashings of sun cream.

And so began Brazilian Surprise, the surprise being that none of the matelots spoke Portuguese (not that much of a surprise actually).

First stop was a mere seven miles away, the fishing town of Porto de Galinhas.

"The place was utterly deserted," said a slightly disconcerted S/Lt James Bradshaw. "It was only when the Brazilian football team scored and hundreds of people came running out onto the street in jubilant celebration that the penny dropped."

After a meal of chicken hearts and fish, the G men settled down in accommodation which was basic to say the least and made them feel grateful for the comparative luxury of a 25-year-old Type 42 (not a phrase which appears regularly in these pages).

The next day, Brazilian Surprise began in

earnest with a 20km trek along pristine sandy beaches to the Maracaípe estuary, where the sailors switched to dune buggies for the remaining 10km to Tamandare.

"Our driver assured us that he knew the way and that he was known to his friends as Rubens Barrichello," said S/Lt Bradshaw. "Neither was entirely true."

After a four-hour bus trip, the sailors arrived in the bustling city of Maceio, where a local under 12s football team challenged the Brits to a match on a palm-shaded pitch by the sea-front. "We went, we played and we were thrashed," said S/Lt Bradshaw. "It's the taking part that counts, isn't it?"

Still, at least they could relax the next day on a 14-hour bus journey. Unfortunately, said journey took the men along the Linha Verde highway – the most dangerous road in Brazil, infamous for its potholes, dangerous bends and even more dangerous overtaking.

How glad they were therefore to get back on the briny. Not the Type 42, but the fastest boat the lads could barter for in the small port of Valença.

That craft took them to the island of Morro de Sao Paulo for which the word 'idyllic' seems a little understated: it possesses the ruins of a Portuguese fort, a lighthouse, three mountains covered by jungle, endless mangrove swamps, an ancient monastery. Offshore there are reefs where you can swim with sharks. And there's a beach where you can (and we believe the Gloucester men did) party long into the night.

The pleasure/pain principle demands a little payback. The next morning the sailors donned rucksacks once more and headed inland, through rainforest to the Fonte de Cue waterfall.

With the sun at its zenith and temperature and humidity as high as the sailors had experienced, the 25km trek felt more like 100.

At the end of that trek, there was a boat ride across the bay to the regional capital of Bahia, Salvador.

They found the city in carnival mood with the streets of Salvador's old town crammed. It would have been rude not to join in. So having partied through the night (again) the sailors headed straight from the carnival to the city airport for a pre-dawn flight to Rio.

"Brazilian Surprise will be long remembered, but as our aircraft turned in to land and we could see Gloucester in the docks below, we were all relieved to have made it back home," said S/Lt Bradshaw.

### BLESMA BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION

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## Junglies back to Bosnia

THE last time the fliers of 845 NAS were in Sarajevo, the Bosnian city was racked by civil war.

A decade on, personnel from the Jungly squadron returned to Bosnia – this time to escape from the stresses of conflict.

Nineteen air and ground crew from the Yeovilton-based squadron headed to the Balkans for 'decompression' after a demanding tour of duty in Afghanistan.

While there are still many visible signs of the war, the 845 team found Sarajevo in 2009 to be a vibrant and exceptionally welcoming city.

The decompression trip mixed adventurous training, a little culture, and a little education.

Some of the older 845 guys had served in Bosnia during the civil war, most had not.

The visit started with a reception at the British Ambassador's residence.

The following day was a city tour courtesy of a veteran of the Bosnian Army during the civil war in the 90s.

The tour painted a desperate picture of the struggle to hold the city in the war, which brought the fliers' experiences in Afghanistan into sharp focus.

The visitors were also shown an 800 metre tunnel – dug with shovels alone – under the city airport which effectively fed Sarajevo during the siege.

The remainder of the week focussed on white water rafting and hill climbing, but the 845 men's hosts also shared their experiences of the civil war.

"Many of the scars left by the war are physical and clear to see but it was also evident that many are emotional and will take years to heal," said Lt Ed Vaughan.

"We bore witness to the many redevelopments that have happened since the war, however we left only too aware that much work is still to be done."



# Divers on stamp duty

NOT actual size...

Showing off a new series of stamps depicting Royal Navy uniforms through the ages are frogmen from the Fleet Diving Squadron and HMS Brocklesby, seen here with the set of six images in the dive training tank on Horsea Island.

(If you're struggling to identify the chaps behind the masks, l-r it's LS(D) Ross Binns, LS(D) Max Steelson, AB(D)s Luke Halbaver, David Boswell, and Christian Millington and PO(D) Ken Smith.)

The RN is the third of the three Armed Forces to be honoured by the Royal Mail; you could lick the Army in 2007, while the RAF went postal last year.

The first class stamps feature a present-day flight deck officer, a wartime CO complete with duffel coat and mug of cocoa, and a Wren from 1918 demonstrating how to use a gas mask.

The 90p stamps depict an able seaman from the days of *Pax Victoriana*, a Royal Marine from 1805 and an admiral from a

decade earlier, 1795.

The Royal Mail has also produced a number of collector's items to coincide with the issue of the new stamps including a first-day cover, stamp cards (postcards featuring larger versions of the portraits) and a 'prestige stamp book' which recounts the tale of naval uniforms from the age of sail to the 21st Century.

The individual stamps or sets are available from post offices or at [www.royalmail.com](http://www.royalmail.com)

Picture: Emma Critchley, Troika/Royal Mail

## Royal first for Heron

FOR the first time in its seven-decade history, there's a Royal Marine in charge of RNAS Yeovilton.

Brig Mark Noble has served at the Somerset air station on three occasions in his career in the Corps, but for his fourth spell at Yeovilton he succeeds Cdre Chris Palmer as Commanding Officer.

"I'm fortunate to have great people who are united by a common purpose of delivering to the front line at a time when it is needed the most," he says.

Aside from elements of the Commando Helicopter Force committed in Afghanistan at present, the base is home to 815 NAS, Europe's largest helicopter squadron providing ship's flights for the destroyer/frigate fleet, and their training squadrons, as well as the experimental Lynx unit, 700W NAS.

And there is one pure Royal Marine presence on site: Yeovilton is home to Royal Marines Armoured Support Group in charge of the commandos' Viking vehicles.

## Dozen years of freedom

THE men and women of HMS Raleigh through marched through the streets of their home town – 12 years after first being granted the right.

The good folk of Torpoint bestowed their highest honour on the training establishment back in 1997, since when its personnel have marched through the streets of the small Cornish town roughly every two years.

The Band of HM Royal Marines Plymouth led the parade, which began at the top of the hill, continued down to the ferry lanes and ended back in the town centre at the Comrades Club where mayor Cllr Mike Pearn took the salute.

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**News  
in brief**

A MARATHON awards ceremony in the heart of England set the seal on the Joint Force Harrier contribution to operations in Afghanistan.

The RAF's Deputy Commander-in-Chief Operations, Air Marshal Iain McNicoll, presented 91 honours and awards at RAF Cottesmore – 87 of them for Operation Herrick, with RN personnel making up more than a quarter of the number.

Air Marshal McNicoll praised the support of friends and families during the Force's five-year contribution in Afghanistan.

THE Princess Royal was guest of honour at HMS Collingwood's annual ceremonial divisions.

The Princess also presented medals and awards, escorted by Cdre Steve Kirby, the Commodore of the training establishment.

Among those to receive an award was POMA Marc Salama, currently at the Maritime Warfare School Phoenix Training Group at Whale Island.

Marc received the Op Herrick Afghanistan campaign medal having completed a six-month deployment with 1st Bttn The Rifles, serving as both a front-line soldier and as a medic.

RABBI Arnold Saunders has been appointed the first Jewish Civilian Chaplain to the Military, responsible for the spiritual and pastoral care of serving Jewish personnel in all three Services.

Rabbi Saunders said: "I am looking forward with relish and excitement to the challenges that lie ahead and look forward to working with my fellow CCMs and all military chaplains."

"I would like to pay tribute to the Rev Malcolm Weisman, who has given distinguished service as the Honorary Senior Jewish Chaplain to the Military for many years."

STAFF at the Queen's Harbour Master's office in Plymouth helped Miss Cornwall to a prize at the Miss England competition.

They donated £50 from coffee mornings to Charlotte Holmes, who won the Miss Charity award and the Fresh Modelesque title.

Charlotte (20), of Torpoint, visited port control stations overlooking Plymouth Sound to thank staff and raise more cash.

She added that she hoped Miss Devon did not mind her slipping across the border and encroaching on her 'patch'.

TWO Navy medical assistants got a little help for their wedding next year thanks to a prize at a show.

Alicia Drapier, who is engaged to James Patrick, made a last-minute decision to enter a competition organised by the Retail Bridalwear Association (RBA) at the spring National Wedding Show.

And as a result the couple now have a cheque for £1,000 towards the cost of their big day.

# New trophy honours victims of explosion

A NEW award has been created to commemorate the lives of two submariners who died in an explosion on board HMS Tireless under the Arctic ice.

The McCann Huntrod award will be presented annually to the most highly-rated engineering

technician and leading engineering technician on career courses at the RN Submarine School.

According to the authors of the award, LOM Paul McCann and OM Anthony Huntrod epitomised the essence of everything to which submariners should aspire.

The inaugural presentation

took place during the summer with the cup being presented to Matt Cousins, the most deserving candidate on the leading rates course, and Andrew Williams from the ET course.

Attending the presentation were the McCann and Huntrod families, who were accompanied by Cdre Jake Moores, Commodore Britannia Royal Naval College and president of the Board of Inquiry into the fatal accident on board Tireless in March 2007.

An honours board has been erected to record all the winners, along with a citation outlining the Tireless incident, and the attributes and achievements of Paul and Anthony.

For posterity the winners will be presented with engraved tankards while the cup will remain in a presentation case alongside the honours board in the atrium of the school, at HMS Raleigh.

Following the visit the McCann family travelled to Dartmouth with Cdre Moores to accept a cheque for £1,300 for the Paul McCann Fund for Needy Children, the charity Paul's parents established in memory of their son.

The cheque was presented by representatives of Endurance Division, the Senior Upper Yardman training division which, along with the RFA division, raised funds by organising quizzes, raffles and a race night.



● Vice Admiral Richard Ibbotson in historic diving dress with Lt Cdr Richard 'Soapy' Watson (right) and LS(D) Ian Rigg

## Something old, something new

VICE Admiral Richard Ibbotson, Deputy CINCFLFLEET, fulfilled a personal ambition on a visit to the Defence Diving School.

The Admiral was briefed on current issues, and it coincided with the completion of the trial of the new Clearance Diving Life Support Equipment (CDLSE).

But the Admiral, a former ship's diver, also took the chance to go in the lake in historic diving dress.

Together with Lt Cdr Richard 'Soapy' Watson, CDLSE Trials Officer, and LS(D) Ian Rigg

(CDLSE trial team member), using the new kit, they entered Horsea Lake, the Admiral assisted by members of the Historical Diving Branch, who turned the pump that supplied the air.

Lt Cdr Watson said: "The new diving equipment brings Naval divers to the very forefront of technology and capability, providing them with a single set that, depending how it is configured, can be used for shallow water work or take them to extreme depths."

## Big opportunity from Smallpeice

THE Royal Navy and engineering group Babcock International teamed up with educational charity the Smallpeice Trust to offer schoolchildren from across the UK the chance to gain an insight into nuclear marine engineering.

The four-day residential course for 13 and 14-year-olds took place at HMS Sultan, where the Royal Navy trains its marine and nuclear engineers.

Through a series of practical workshops and

lectures, the 50 budding young engineers learnt about nuclear power, including how a nuclear reactor works and the associated propulsion and electrical generation systems.

Social activities included a submarine museum tour and a visit to Action Stations.

Places for 2010 will be allocated on a first-come, first-served basis. To find out more, visit [www.smallpeicetrust.org.uk](http://www.smallpeicetrust.org.uk), or telephone 01926 333200.

## Double win for George

A SAILOR from Lüdenscheid in Germany picked up two awards at this year's Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS) annual awards ceremony at HMS Raleigh.

Logs George Mukasa was awarded the Robert Florence trophy as the student who gave the best performance during supply chain training, and the Robin Hodsdon Apprenticeship prize, given to the student who demonstrates the most development in all areas in order to achieve the apprenticeship.

George, who holds dual nationality, qualified for service in the Royal Navy as a Ugandan citizen, and began training in June of last year – winning the Owen Cup as top recruit during basic training.

A total of 30 awards were presented at the Cornish establishment, with a wide range of recipients, from sailors just starting out on their careers to others seeking promotion.

The ceremony also recognised the contribution made by DMLS instructional staff – and George Mukasa agreed, saying: "I wouldn't have achieved these prizes without all the support of my instructors."

## Flying colours

STAFF at the Helitots Day Nursery at RNAS Culdrose have become the first in Cornwall to achieve the CACHE Certificate in Early Years Foundation Stage Practice.

Helitots manager Janice Price said: "I am very pleased with all the girls' hard work and we are now seeing the benefits of the training within the nursery."



● Paul and Annette Read at the RN Submarine Museum admiring the 'Submariner Statue', modelled on Paul's father Reginald

## Father was face of Submarine Service

A CHANNEL Islander travelled to the RN Submarine Museum to see an iconic statue which was modelled on his father.

Paul Read only recently found out that Reginald was the man behind the image of the Silent Service.

The 'Submariner' has become the public face of the Service, reproduced in various materials including lead from the batteries of Holland 1, the Navy's first submarine.

The Queen was given a silver replica of the Submariner in 1958 when she presented her Colour to the Submarine Command.

Museum archivist George Malcolmson said: "LEM (Leading Torpedo Operator) Reginald Lawrence Read was picked to model for the artist Gilbert Ledward."

"How he was chosen remains something of a mystery, but the popular story is that Reginald's handsome looks and fine jaw line meant that he was volunteered."

## Eleven months aloft

A SENIOR rate with the Commando Helicopter Force has spent almost a year aloft during his working life – but reckons he could manage the same again.

CPOACMN Andy Vanes, based at RNAS Yeovilton, was told that he had clocked up 8,000 hours on return from an exercise on Dartmoor.

That worked out at 11 months, three days and eight hours airborne in a variety of aircraft and roles, according to number-crunchers at the Force.

Greeted with a celebratory glass of bubbly by the Commanding Officer of 848 Naval Air Squadron, Cdr Matt Grindon, and fellow aviators, Andy said he felt he had another 8,000 hours in him before he would be ready to hang up his flying overalls.

Andy joined the Navy as a chef in 1970 before transferring to aircrewman branch in 1977.

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## New Fijian officer blazes a trail

THE Royal Navy has welcomed what is thought to be the first Fijian officer to earn his commission.

S/Lt Atunaisa Vuniwaqa passed his Young Officers Fleet Board in May, having joined the RN as a MEM in 2002.

'Vinny' (pictured right) obtained an engineering degree from the University of the South Pacific and applied to join

the RN online, travelling to the UK twice for interviews, tests and a medical.

With Fiji depending on Australia and New Zealand for defence, Vinny could have opted to join one of their navies – but instead turned to the UK.

Vinny spent his Common Fleet Time in one of his former ships, HMS Ark Royal.







• Dave Thirkle

## 1,000 hours not flying for pilot Dave

TO PASS 1,000 hours in the pilot's seat is normally an achievement worth celebrating.

To pass 1,000 hours in the pilot's seat without ever getting airborne sounds more like an achievement to forget.

But in Dave Thirkle's case it was definitely celebrations – Dave is an aircraft taxi pilot at the RN School of Flight Deck Operations at RNAS Culdrose.

To mark Dave's 1,000th 'flying' hour CO Capt Graeme Mackay presented him with an Award for Special Achievement at an informal ceremony at the Dummy Deck.

Dave trundles Harriers around the deck, training flight deck crews prior to them deploying to sea.

The Harriers do not actually get airborne, but in every other sense they are the real thing – hot and noisy, creating a serious jet blast for trainees to contend with.

As well as being a mechanical engineering supervisor, Dave is the school's most experienced ground instructional aircraft taxi pilot – 22 years with the RN.

He started his zero-altitude career taxiing Hawker Hunters.

## 846 pilot wins Chapman prize

A PILOT with the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) has been given the coveted Darren Chapman award at RNAS Yeovilton.

The award was handed to Lt James Coleman, of 846 NAS, by Elizabeth Chapman, widow of Darren.

Lt Cdr Chapman was the CO of 847 NAS who was killed in action over Iraq.

The award is presented annually by the CO of the CHF to the front-line pilot who has demonstrated the highest personal, professional and leadership qualities.

Lt Coleman completed "two exemplary tours" to Afghanistan, and earlier this year achieved his Arctic wings in Norway, capping it by carrying out a rescue mission in appalling weather to save the life of a passenger in a crashed civilian helicopter.



• FOST staff battle a capsizing RIB at the RNLI training centre in Poole

## RN on a roll with the RNLI

STAFF from Flag Officer Sea Training's Portsmouth HQ in Leach Building have visited the RNLI's training centre in Poole.

The team, headed up by Cdre Campbell Christie, experienced the practical nature of RNLI training, which involved them capsizing a RIB and carrying out liferaft drills.

The RNLI is able to simulate rough seas, noise, darkness and even a helicopter lift.

Cdre Christie, responsible for training and education across the RN, said: "The RNLI have developed an impressive training organisation which has the flexibility to adapt to the changing needs of their volunteers."

"I'm always pleased to be able to have the opportunity to share good practice, and this visit had the added advantage of being a great team-building activity."

# Faslane medic trains Afghan nursing team

A NAVAL medical assistant based at Faslane used her specialist knowledge to train a group of Afghan nurses.

Natalie Chinniah deployed to Helmand in September last year with the Joint Forces Medical Group.

Coalition forces are attempting to stabilise the nation, and a crucial component is the development of the Afghan health service.

Natalie was involved in a project that will enable Helmand's provincial hospital in Lashkar

Gah to operate its own ambulance service.

She volunteered to teach a trauma management course over a two-month period to 12 nurses, and all graduated successfully at the end of March.

Natalie was awarded a Certificate of Recognition by Col Greville Bibby, Deputy Commander Task Force Helmand.

But the medic was not there just to teach.

"I was regularly attached to a foot or vehicle patrol," said Natalie.

"And then, the next day, I could be on standby as part of the quick reaction force and so be ready to react to any type of medical emergency."

"I could then be on guard duty or be the duty medic for the next 24 hours. The work is definitely varied."

She saw her fair share of action on this, her second tour of duty to the country, having been shot at and been on the receiving end of rocket attacks.



## Face it – Nelson is a hero

A STUDY initiated by Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum confirms what the Senior Service has always known – Lord Nelson is a hero.

An analysis of Nelson (pictured above), part of a celebration of more than 150 years of the rum, reveals that the square forehead, set-back ears and Roman nose all point to traits which mark out a hero.

The Roman nose indicates a good manager and delegator, a square forehead shows an individual who initiates ideas for others to carry through, the ears suggest a visionary and a head wider at the back than the front denotes a competitive individual.

The study, of 1,000 people across the UK this summer, also revealed that the Royal Navy and Army are considered the most heroic people in society (41 per cent) followed by doctors and paramedics (25 per cent) and police and fire services (23 per cent).

## Women's work

A PARTY of 16 Year 10 students have visited HMS Ark Royal as part of the NavyWISE residential work experience week with the Royal Navy organised by Women Into Science, Engineering and Construction (WISE).

The group was hosted by CPOET(ME) Julia Warren, LET(AE) Keele and LET(WE) Adele Flounders.

# From boy sailor to second-in-command

AN OFFICER from Torpoint has gone back to his roots by taking up a home-town appointment at the place where his Service career began 32 years before.

Cdr Mick Harris has taken over from Cdr Mike Flynn as

the Commander HMS Raleigh, making him the second-in-command at the RN's new entry training establishment.

Cdr Harris first entered the gates of Raleigh as a 16-year-old boy sailor in August 1977.

Following his basic and specialist training to qualify as a caterer,

Cdr Harris served in a number of ships as he scaled the promotion ladder, reaching the rank of chief petty officer in 1990.

He was selected for officer training at Dartmouth in 1991, and subsequently saw service at sea and ashore, including HM ships Invincible and Sutherland

and an exchange with the US Navy in Pennsylvania.

In 2005 he became career manager for more than 260 logistics officers, and was Staff Logistics Officer with Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) at Devonport before joining HMS Raleigh.

Among the first duties of the new Commander HMS Raleigh will be to take part in the Freedom of Torpoint parade through the streets of the town, due to be staged as *Navy News* went to press.

Cdr Harris said: "My memories of Torpoint from when I first joined the Service are few as my time was filled with the whirl of activity that is new entry training."

"However, on my return to Raleigh as a leading hand in 1980 I settled in the community and have been a Torpoint resident pretty much ever since, allowing for various drafts and appointments away from Devonport."

"I am incredibly honoured to be returning to Raleigh some 29 years later as the Commander and am looking forward enormously to the many challenges and opportunities this will present – for example, the Freedom of Torpoint parade in my home town."

Cdr Flynn has now taken up an appointment as Executive Assistant to FOST.



• We're in charge: from left, Lt Cdr 'Oscar' Whild (current CO of HMS Victory), Lt Cdr John Scivier, Lt Cdr Frank Nowosielski, Lt Cdr Mike Cheshire, Lt Cdr Charles Addis and Lt Cdr Bill Pearce

## Six COs on one ship

FIVE former commanding officers of HMS Victory joined the current incumbent to help celebrate the 250th anniversary of the laying of their old ship's keel.

Although the keel-laying, on Monday July 23 1759, took place at Chatham, where Nelson's flagship at Trafalgar was built, a series of special events was staged at Portsmouth, where she has sat in dry dock since 1922.

One of the private events was a reunion dinner, hosted by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan

Massey, in Nelson's Cabin for all the surviving COs of the ship.

As far as can be established, there are only eight previous captains of Victory still alive.

Of those eight, three were unable to attend, but those who were able to join the current CO, Lt Cdr 'Oscar' Whild, were Lt Cdr John Scivier (March 2006-September 2008), Lt Cdr Frank Nowosielski (May 1998-March 2006), Lt Cdr Mike Cheshire (September 1993-May 1998), Lt Cdr Charles Addis (January 1982-January 1986) and

Lt Cdr Bill Pearce (July 1968-June 1970).

Lt Cdr Whild said: "It is an honour to be a member of such an exclusive club, and this reunion is one of the highlights of a very successful week of events to mark our 250th anniversary."

Visitors to the Historic Dockyard were invited to descend into the dry dock beneath the hull to view the keel at close quarters.

There were also special talks by the Keeper and Curator of Victory, Peter Goodwin.

## Home straight for capital trio

THREE London veterans have been serving out their final assignments together in Whitehall.

CPOWEM(R) 'Razor' Blades, MAA 'Mitch' Mitchell and CPOWEM(R) 'Topsy' Turner have between them put in more than 70 years service.

The trio are now winding down their careers at ISS St Vincent, the DE&S ISS (Defence Equipment and Support Information Systems and Services) Communications Centre adjacent to Old Admiralty Building.

In an informal ceremony staged on the St Vincent balcony overlooking St James' Park, Capt Dain Morrill presented each senior rate with a Second Sea Lord's Valedictory Certificate in appreciation of their long and faithful service.

## CHRISTMAS CARD APPEAL

Every year the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society pays over £1m in grants to the dependants of those lost at sea, as well as sick, disabled and retired seafarers struggling to make ends meet. Please help us to continue this important work.

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# Opposites attract

**SUN, sand, sea and Sydney Opera House – yes, it can only be the Antipodean delights of Long Look.**

The annual exchange between the UK and Australia or New Zealand on the opposite side of the globe has now been running for over three decades, and this year has proven another success. This year there were 19 participants from the Royal Navy, writes *WO Andy Whale*, including divers, submariners, engineers, chaplains, logisticians, warfare specialists and even a musician. With the team predominantly based in Sydney and Auckland, many took the opportunity to explore the sights on offer in the two cities.

Lt Dan Greenwood of HMS Vanguard, based in Sydney for the exchange, explained: "Given that this was their winter the temperature rarely fell below 15° C.

"The city is simply stunning with so much to do from surfing on Bondi, walking over the arch of the Sydney Harbour Bridge, to being able to take in the huge variety

of wildlife – not to mention the fantastic nightlife!" LLogg Joe Dwyer of HMS Lancaster found the exposure to Maori culture through the exchange to be a real insight.

"The Marae Maori welcoming service was one memory I will never forget during my Long Look experience. I was very naive about the seriousness of the Maori culture and how important it was to New Zealand and to the Maori people.

"The Marae explained the significance of the carvings, their beliefs and how they affect their everyday life, which I found fascinating."

Not all the team were based in the principal cities. Diver AB Willie Bowman deployed to Cairns with his dive team and spent much of his time honing his skills on the Great Barrier Reef.

This was in-between assisting with underwater ship repairs and checking Cairns Harbour for IEDs and mines.

Meanwhile LLogg(SM) Roy Ashcroft from HMS Trafalgar was posted to the Australian Submarine Base in Perth. He was mainly employed as a valet and driver – meeting virtually all the senior Royal Australian Navy (RAN) officers and most of the senior politicians, including Prime Minister Kevin Rudd.

Some of the exchange positions brought an element of sea time. POMEM 'Richie' Goode of HMS Liverpool was assigned to two different RAN vessels and took part in many exercises around Indonesia and the South China Sea.

Raleigh's PO(CISSM) Michael 'Sandy' Sandbrook and Nottingham's LET(WE) Kelda Hoggarth were also despatched

to Royal New Zealand Navy ships and managed to see the coast and outlying islands of the nation sailing in and around the Tasman Sea and Pacific Ocean.

Participants embraced the 'work hard, play hard' ethos of the exchange, with CPOs Bird and Walker from HMS Collingwood sharing professional experiences and demonstrating different working practices.

But they still managed to find time to embark on a long weekend winetasting tour, along with Musn Rendell and LS Unsworth, in New South Wales.

"Being able to do things like this is all part of the Long Look experience," said CPO Walker. "Even during a four-month exchange you can only scratch the surface of this vast country."

Everyone taking part in Long Look had the chance to grab some leave – some toured New Zealand or Australia, others holidayed with relatives that had flown from the UK to join them.

And there was even a first for Long Look when one participant got married during the exchange. A particularly poignant moment was when the RN men and women took part in the ANZAC Day ceremonies. All the participants felt they were privileged to be involved in the commemorations.

LA(Phot) 'Iggy' Roberts from HMS Neptune said: "We were involved in a 1.5 mile march through Sydney city centre.

"The crowd were sometimes ten deep in places, producing an exceptional atmosphere.

"The RAN led the march followed by the war veterans, totalling nearly 10,000 people. All in all it was a truly memorable day."

If you're tempted to get involved for 2010, then Long Look is available to all RN and RM personnel from junior officer through to leading hand.

Applications are being accepted now, and forms can be found on RNTM 146/09.

● *The iconic images: anticlockwise from top right: LLogg Roy Ashcroft meets iconic wildlife; LS Unsworth on board an RAN minesweeper enters Sydney Harbour (with iconic skyline); Lt Dan Greenwood ticks another iconic box on Bondi beach*

● *The Service images: Mne Rendell plays with the RAN Band; the ANZAC Day ceremonies; and LA(Phot) 'Iggy' Roberts on duty on ANZAC Day*

● *Inset: A New Zealand Maori wood carving*



● (Left) Divers 'Buffer' Lund and 'Fergie' Ferguson examine a gunner's seat on the wreck of the Royal Oak and (right) the Battle Ensign is secured to the propshaft of HMS Royal Oak; it is changed each year by Royal Navy divers on the anniversary of the sinking

# Deep Respect

**THESE** haunting images show one of the greatest – and most tragic – names in the annals of the Senior Service, 70 years after the waters of Scapa Flow closed over her.

This is the wreck of HMS Royal Oak and these are the men of the Northern Diving Group inspecting her.

Few have seen what lies beneath the waves – Royal Oak is a war grave protected by law – but the Faslane-based divers visit the site to survey the hull and check the site for any ammunition that has found its way on to the seabed.

One date in the group's calendar is never forgotten: each year to mark the anniversary of the battleship's loss – October 14 1939 – the divers return to the stern and raise a battle ensign over the wreck as a mark of respect and tribute to those lost. The sight of the ensign raised above the wreck is both humbling and poignant.

There was little or no current running across the hull but Royal Navy divers who bear the responsibility of securing the ensign have never known the flag to fail to unfurl and fly as if in a stiff breeze.

The battleship is never

left without a battle ensign. Each October, the previous year's ensign is recovered, cleaned of the marine growth before being presented to the Royal Oak Association, and a fresh flag secured to the prop shaft to await next year's ceremony.



Today HMS Royal Oak lies on her starboard side in 30 metres (98ft) of water, her decks tilted at 45° and her upturned hull rising to within five metres (16ft) of the surface.

On calm, clear days the wreck is visible from the surface, her presence reinforced by the rainbow hue of small droplets of fuel oil that leak from the wreck.

Underwater, the sheer size and scale of the battleship is apparent. The upturned hull stretches beyond the limits of visibility, blanketed by the filter feeders and marine growth.

Dropping over the port side the deep shadow of the wreck initially restricts the view, but as the eyes adjust to the gloom the structure and purpose of the wreck reveals itself.

Weapons of war are now encrusted in marine growth, softening the hard lines of steel and disguising their original purpose. The 6in casement guns along the port side in 20 metres

**Photojournalist and diver Simon Brown was invited to join the men of Northern Diving Group as they visited the wreck of HMS Royal Oak to mark the 70th anniversary of her loss. These are his images and his account of the dive.**

(64ft) of water are covered in plumose anemone and one of the original barrels had become home to an edible crab.

In deeper water the softer, delicate filter feeders that dominate the shallows give way to harder marine growth.

Here the wreck has more form and shape, and recognisable objects such as the Admiral's barge can be found lying on the seabed next to the broken and twisted remains of the fighting deck, still complete with range finding equipment and speaking tubes.

One of the masts has flattened the stern section of the barge but the wooden bows and brass air inlet that fed the small steam engine are in excellent condition, considering their age.

Further forward and close to the seabed the boxes of ready ammunition lie stacked, and close by the multi-barrelled anti-aircraft gun they would have fed is still fixed in its mounting.

But the most impressive firepower was her main armament. When the ship sank, the 15in guns swivelled on their mountings and the barrels now lie embedded in the seabed, but the top covers of the turrets have fallen off and revealed all eight of the enormous breeches.

Higher up the superstructure a pair of large calibre anti-aircraft guns point skyward and on a bulkhead lay a paravane, an example of anti-mine warfare

equipment.

At the stern are four large prop shafts and the huge single rudder, now covered in anemone. The bronze propellers themselves were removed for scrap in the 1950s, but all other attempts to salvage the wreck were prevented by public outcry.

Royal Oak rests here thanks to the skill of German submariner Günther Prien.

On the night of October 13 1939, Prien navigated U47 through Kirk Sound, scraping past the blockships in the narrow channel between Lamb Holm and the mainland, penetrating the defences of the anchorage of the Home Fleet.

Germany and Britain had been at war for six weeks. German intelligence had revealed a weak point that could be exploited.

Fearing air attack, most of the fleet, including the battle cruiser HMS Hood and the aircraft carrier HMS Furious, had been ordered to disperse the previous night leaving just one capital ship and four cruisers remaining at anchor.

Prien missed the heavy cruiser Belfast, but after searching the harbour spotted HMS Royal Oak stationed in Scapa Bay, providing anti-aircraft cover for the anchorage and the town of Kirkwall.

At just after 1am on the morning of the fourteenth, Prien ordered a salvo of four

torpedoes from the bow tubes. One of the torpedoes failed to launch, two missed their target but the fourth struck the starboard bow of HMS Royal Oak, waking her crew.

Onboard, the cause of the explosion was thought to be an internal explosion. A U-boat operating in Scapa Flow was not thought possible.

On U47 Prien waited for the response that never came. The order was given to reload the bow tubes before launching a second salvo and this time three torpedoes found their mark, striking Royal Oak amidships.

During the resulting chaos Prien turned U47 towards Kirk Sound and escaped on the ebbing tide, slipping through the blockships and hugging the shore of Lamb Holm before returning to Germany for a hero's welcome.

After losing power Royal Oak was plunged into darkness, quickly listing to starboard as the seawater flooded in. In fewer than 14 minutes the ship rolled over and sank, sealing the fate of 833 of her crew.

Seven decades later, diving the wreck is a very moving experience and evidence of what happened to the ship and her crew are everywhere.

From the twisted steel where the first torpedo struck the bow, to the rows of open portholes hanging inwards along the port side or the stern section of the barge flattened under the collapsed superstructure – all poignant reminders, but the most haunting sight was a deck hatch, hanging open to reveal

a ladder that stretched into the darkness, deep below decks. It was impossible to not look at the ladder and think of the last set of boots to climb its rungs.

Over the last 70 years the wreck has become many things. The provenance of the wreck and its legal protection have ensured it has remained relatively untouched, complete with much of its original navigation and fighting equipment.

The Royal Oak is now the sole example of a British battleship in shallow water anywhere in the northern hemisphere, and is perhaps the finest preserved example of early 20th-Century naval technology.

But the wreck is more than a museum or historical record. The soft marine life has blanketed the hull with delicate growth and the iron and steel of the ship has become in its own right a monument to the crew. The wreck is as peaceful and as tranquil as any graveyard above the waves, draped with the delicate touch of marine life. HMS Royal Oak is now a place of stunning beauty.

Simon has donated the image of the White Ensign wrapped around the propshaft (top right) to the Royal Oak Survivors Association, ten of which will be signed by some of the remaining ship's company. Proceeds will be used to help fund the building of a permanent memorial in Scapa Bay.

Each print is A1 in size, reproduced on archival paper, and available from October 14.

For more details visit [www.simonbrownimages.com/html/hmsroyaloak.html](http://www.simonbrownimages.com/html/hmsroyaloak.html) or call 01252 653759.

● How many men this way came? (Right) An open hatchway and ladder leading to Royal Oak's innards and (left) the hand wheel of a 15in gun breech



## Tubby's legacy

TALBOT House in Poperinghe Flanders was created by the then Garrison Chaplain the Rev Tubby Clayton in 1915 as an all-ranks club.

The House remains, catering for the needs of the grandchildren and great grandchildren of the original Tommies who came to see Flanders Field and the Menin Gate.

The House now has a visitor centre and 18 bedrooms for guests, and welcomes thousands of children each year for tours around the house – and each gets a cup of tea and a scone just as they did back then.

But the House relies on volunteers to keep it running, and people to help with the maintenance of the building.

Find out more at [www.talbothouse.be](http://www.talbothouse.be), or call Anneliese in Belgium on +32 57 33 32 28.

# Gannet go for it

IT STARTED off as a street party idea, but grew into a festival – the Party at the Castle.

The men and women of Gannet Search and Rescue Flight and the Scottish Air Traffic Control Centre in RAF Prestwick joined forces to put together a small fundraising event, but it grew and grew.

PO Marcus 'Wiggy' Wigfull said: "The idea originally started off as a party in our street to raise a few quid, but has since morphed into a mini-festival type affair."

"This is primarily thanks to some enthusiastic organisers and some extremely generous local sponsors."

The first Party at the Castle in aid of Help for Heroes has raised almost £12,000 through the hard work of the small and dedicated team, heading up by Flt Sgt Scott Boothroyd of RAF Prestwick.

Sadly the weather in Scotland scuppered two of the evening's highlights – low cloud prevented the dropping-in of the Army's Parachute Display team the Golden Lions. And presumably the same low cloud and weather conditions meant the SAR Sea King was out on a rescue, with six jobs stacked up, and couldn't fly past the do.

The evening's entertainment on the ground all performed with flying colours, headlined by Pop Idol winner Michelle McManus, and followed by bands Sonnet 56 and the Kitty Cat Dolls, plus comedian Billy Kirkwood ("all Scottish and all local to the Glasgow area", stressed Wiggy).

Family, friends, affiliates and guests all gathered for the event at Loudon Castle in Ayrshire – including one father, former Naval



● Gannet folk and guests: Lt Si Hammock, PO Wiggy Wigfull (centre white shirt), singer Michelle McManus, Lt Cdr Bryan Nicholas CO Gannet (far right)

man Ric Cobb, who hopped on to his bike to pedal from his home in Montrose to Loudon Castle, garnering over £1,000 in sponsorship and collection for the fundraising evening.

A charity auction really pulled in the cash, with a holiday to the West Indies donated by businessman David Henderson, a computer given by Oricom and David Bailey, and a VIP visit to BBC Scotland organised by Jackie Bird pushing the bidding upwards.

But the evening's successes are not enough.

Wiggy promises: "Next year we hope to increase the numbers to around 2,000 people. The building blocks are in place."



## Relaxing with Raleigh

TRAINEE sailors from HMS Raleigh have built a beautiful and relaxing garden for residents at Pengover House care home in Liskeard.

This is the final fruition of a bulk of work begun in January last year.

The Up the Garden Path project pulled in over 650 trainees, putting in some 3,575 man-hours of work.

Sailors, staff and residents gathered to mark the official opening of the garden in early August.

Instructor CPO Toby Spear led the trainees throughout the project: "All the trainees' contribution involved over the last 18 months had completed their basic training and were awaiting their specialist courses to begin."

"While most visited Pengover the once, about half a dozen were able to take part in the work on two or more occasions."

"This has been a great way for them to put the teamworking skills they learned during their basic training into action in a practical environment."

He added: "They have all benefited from this experience in many ways and we are pleased that the result of their work has provided the residents and staff with a pleasant garden area to relax, enjoy the fresh air and the Cornish sunshine."

Pengover is a residential home for older people run by Cornwall Care.

## Pootling end to end on mopeds

A BIT of mild jesting has resulted in a charity challenge for two aircraft engineers from RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

Some mild mockery of Stephen Thomas' little 50cc scooter included the joke that it could only reach a maximum speed of 50mph and how long would it take for him to ride from John O'Groats to Lands End.

Stephen said: "At first I laughed but then a cog clicked – why don't I find out and show them that scooters are great?"

Stephen is joined by another enthusiast (and another Stephen) Stephen Oxborrow who will be found upon his trusty (and in

the former Stephen's opinion probably overpowered) 125cc moped.

The two are seeking to raise money for Cancer Research UK – Stephen Thomas lost a schoolfriend to cancer and his partner's brother died five years ago from Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. Stephen Oxborrow's father was diagnosed with the same condition almost four years ago, but after a year in chemotherapy he has been in remission since February 2006.

If you would like to show your support to the mopedding Stephens, visit [www.justgiving.com/longwaytolandsend](http://www.justgiving.com/longwaytolandsend)

## Super selling Scotts

A TEAM of volunteers from HMS Scott headed to their affiliated charity, the Child Development Centre at Plymouth – formerly known as the Scott Hospital.

The Naval folk – Lt Cdr Harper, Lt Ives, Lt Nash, CPO Coles, LET Smith, LMA Trotter, LMA Jones, ET Kerr, and AB Sheehy – took charge of the Treasure Hunt, the children's play area and the book stall.

According to the Scott team: "This was done with great vigour; utilising all our best sales techniques learnt from *The Apprentice*."

"We like to think that this worked, the book stall made a healthy profit as did the Treasure Hunt – Lt Nash was in charge and miraculously managed to avoid scaring any of the children for the whole time, an achievement in itself!" (Lt Nash's propensity towards child-scaring remains a mystery to us here at Navy News – Ed.)

All reports say that the day was overall a great success, with plenty of money made and all involved having a good time.



● Band C/Sgt Ross Hunt (right) is almost through his marathon and is still going strong with Lt Cdr Paul Burton by his side. On the far left treadmill Capt Ben Key, Commanding Officer of HMS Illustrious, runs along with the duo for support whilst the ship's company cheer the men on

Picture: LA(Phot) Kelly McAlinden

## Make mine a marathon

FUNDRAISING on board carrier HMS Illustrious during the summer Band C/Sgt Ross Hunt took to the running machine to tackle a sponsored marathon for charity Musequality.

The seasoned marathon runner collected over £500, saying: "We raised money for the charity in a busking event in June and I wanted to increase

the amount of money that we donated."

Half-marathons were also undertaken by Lt Cdr Paul Burton, the ship's Senior Marine Engineer, and Lt Penny Armand-Smith, one of the carrier's meteorologists and oceanographers on board.

Other members of the ship's company also ran a mile in support alongside the charity runners.



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**news in brief**

■ **THOSE** Birdmen of Lincoln have taken to the skies once again, with a Naval team from RAF Digby in Lincoln heading south to Worthing to take part in this year's Birdman Competition.

The team, titled 'Katie's Flying Scotsman' in honour of the late BFBS reporter Katie Roy hope to have raised £7,000, shared among charities the BFBS Big Salute, Bonner House (a residential care home in Digby) and Lives (Lincolnshire Integrated Voluntary Emergency Service).

You can find out more at [www.katiesflyingscotsman.co.uk](http://www.katiesflyingscotsman.co.uk).

■ **IN SINGAPORE**, Cdr Paul Haycock, the Royal Navy Liaison Officer presented a cheque for \$1,000 Singapore – or £430 – to Cdr Ross Forman of the Gurkha Contingent Singapore Police Force.

The money was raised at the 2008 Trafalgar Night Dinner for donation to the Gurkha Welfare Trust. The Gurkha Contingent pipes and drums support the traditional Mess Dinner, the annual remembrance service at the Kranji War Memorial, and the Queen's Birthday Reception at the British High Commissioner's Residence in Singapore.

■ **THE** coveted Trophy of Gold award was won by Lt Gordon 'Knocker' White's team Homo Erectus at this year's Mangold Dangling competition at Abbeywood.

Knocker's team in fact netted several trophies over their 13 competitors, including: Dangling Champions, Best Dressed, Welly Wanglers (male and female), and Wheelbarrow Racing.

Sadly there is no record of who won the Spoon of Doom.

The 'ancient sport' of mangold dangling is best described as human skittles, well, human skittles while standing on one leg on top of a beer barrel...

The annual event is organised by the Royal Naval Engineers Quart Club, and this year's event raised £600 for the Chew Lake Association of Disabled Sailors.

■ **PETERSFIELD** High Street rang with the sound of the RN's Field Gun run when Petersfield Rugby Football Club tackled the tough, energy-sapping 'short' version of the run, collecting £2,500 for charity.

This fundraising idea for Help for Heroes perhaps unsurprisingly had a naval originator – Steve Penberthy, the club's director of rugby, also happens to be sports administrator at Portsmouth's HMS Temeraire.

He said: "We have many of our brave young people out in theatre, and this was a wonderful opportunity for the club and the town to show our support for them."

■ **WHEN** the Portsea Community Football Team realised that their fitness was somewhat lacking, they turned to the Navy for help.

LPT 'Shorty' Short from Nelson Gymnasium and LH 'Franky' Powell from Semaphore Tower stepped up in response to the call, getting the 18-28 year-olds prepared for their first bleep test of pre-season training.

■ **FORMER** POWEA James 'Soapy' Watson has set himself up as a 'tough guy', tackling a tough endurance course to raise awareness of a charity that he is setting up called the Dave Green Foundation in memory of a friend who developed septicaemia from a sore throat.

■ **THE** three military forces joined with the police forces of Devon and Cornwall, Warwickshire, South Wales, and West Midlands for a plane-pulling competition at RAF Brize Norton, raising money for BLESMA – the British Limbless Ex-Service Man's Association that has been helping men and women for 75 years.

Anyone wishing to support this compound service effort can visit [www.justgiving.com/brizenortonplanepull](http://www.justgiving.com/brizenortonplanepull).



● St Dunstaner Peter Bradshaw (foreground) during this year's HMS Sultan Summer Camp prepares for a flight in a glider

# St Dunstaners' delight

**THE** summer months bring young and old Servicemen, both blind and partially sighted, to the annual summer camp at the Gosport peninsula.

Since 1944, Summer Camps have been taking place each year for the blind Servicemen of St Dunstan's, first at HMS Daedalus, due to the drive of Mrs Avis Spurway and her husband the vicar of Titchfield, then with the closure of the site it moved to HMS Sultan.

And the men and women of the current Service who are on hand to bring the days of the camp alive have long been known as the camp's Guide Dogs.

This year's ten-day camp at HMS Sultan brought together 23 St Dunstaners of various ages and 26 'Dogs', organised by Sultan's David Burrows and sponsored by WO Martin 'Bill' Bailey.

The activities on offer – all provided in a safe environment with 'Dogs' on hand to promote confidence – included: gliding, sailing; sea and fresh-water fishing; archery; ten-pin bowling; golf; canoeing; motorcycle rides; and RIB rides with the Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue Service.

In addition this year Cdre Al Rymer, commanding officer of HMS Sultan, personally invited the St Dunstaners to attend the end-of-term ceremonial divisions.

The St Dunstaners and Dogs were sat together in the VIP seating area, applauding the platoons as they marched past.

The interaction between the veterans and the serving personnel reinforced the common military bond and added to the sense of occasion for all there on the day.

A strong cadre of willing helpers, clubs and establishments have been forged over the long years of the camp's existence, ensuring continued support to this seasonal event.

Originally the helpers were members of the HMS Daedalus Fleet Air Arm Field Gun Crew, but now volunteers from HMS Sultan and the neighbourhood step forward to ensure that their guests enjoy every day of the experience.

Both campers and Dogs described the 2009 event as a great success and told of their thorough enjoyment of the week's activities.

St Dunstaner David Weltman said: "I haven't laughed so much in years."

And Bob Crossan added: "I've had a fantastic time, could I please come back again next year?"

And one other sentiment echoed among the St Dunstaners and Dogs – in the words of Clive Jones: "I've had a brilliant time."

"This has been a great camp – with such good friends."



● St Dunstaner Bob Crossan at the bowling alley



● Terry Otterwell in the Sultan Gym on Sports Day  
Pictures: LA(Phot) Darby Allen



● HMS Chatham's crew chat with former CPO 100-year-old May

# Past and present catch up at Pembroke House

**SAILORS** from the present generation have been carrying out volunteer work to help veterans from another era.

Members of the ship's company from HMS Chatham gave up time to decorate parts of Pembroke House residential home in Gillingham, Kent.

Work was done on the reception area, lounges, the bar and 'bridge' area – a lounge with ship's wheel as the centrepiece – and they also had time to weed the garden and tidy up the car park, flower borders and patio.

In between the hard work they took the chance to talk to residents, joining them for lunch and taking part in a quiz.

Some of the funding for the work came in the form of money raised by the ship's company of minehunter HMS Pembroke, while the Merchant Tailors' Company – one of Chatham's affiliated organisations – also

made a generous donation.

CPO 'JC' Cameron-Wood, one of the leaders of the working party, and whose father is a past chairman of the RNBT Pembroke House Committee, said: "Since the new extension was built in 2000 the facilities for the residents have dramatically improved."

"I hope that our week's efforts can mean money is channelled to other projects within the home."

Vice Admiral Fabian Malbon, president of the RNBT, said: "Much was achieved in fellowship terms between the serving men and women and those in their twilight years."

Pembroke House, close to the Historic Dockyard at Chatham, is a nursing home for ex-RN warrant officers and ranks below.

Originally built in the 1920s as an orphanage, it was taken over by the RNBT as a residential home in 1952.

# Bulwark's boost with bikes, baths and buns

**BIKES**, baths and buns were among the methods used by HMS Bulwark to raise £1,000 for BLESMA, the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association.

The assault ship's padre, Rev Mike Hills, said that the ship took every opportunity to contribute towards charitable causes during the recent Taurus 09 deployment.

"The unique nature of BLESMA is that they provide continuity of care, from the point of need to the grave if necessary," he said.

"Their inspirational and vital contribution to the tri-Service community is second-to-none, and members of the ship's company use much of their spare time dreaming up new ways of raising money in support of this and other worthy causes."

"The more athletically-able have collected sponsorship for triathlons and such like whilst others deploy their creative gifts to bake buns, donate baths, hold race nights and generally add value to morale in the process of generating donations."

"Consequently, everybody 'wins' to an extent."

# Hat-trick of wins for climbers

**A** ROYAL Navy team of climbers has completed a hat-trick of wins in a tough challenge – and notched up almost £100,000 for charity in the process.

Competing as Va Va Victory, the four men – Lt Cdr John Scivier, LPT Dave Berry, PO(AWT) Robert Brown and Lt John Webb – took part in the Wooden Spoon Four Peaks Challenge.

That requires three of the team to climb Ben Nevis, Helvellyn, Snowdon and Carruntuohill, peaks in Scotland, England, Wales and Ireland respectively – an overall climb of 14,000ft, which they achieved in 11 hours, 12 minutes and 9 seconds.

The fact that the team worked – Lt Cdr Scivier, team captain and driver, stepped in as climber when Dave Berry picked up an injury – ensured that Va Va Victory were able to complete the task and post a time.

And for the third year out of three the team came home with the Most Funds Raised Award – pledges of £30,000 meant the climbers have garnered £94,833 since 2007.

The Four Peaks Challenge is one of the main events for Wooden Spoon, the charity of British and Irish rugby, which raises money for disadvantaged youngsters and their families.

Va Va Victory was so named because three of the four members served together in HMS Victory in 2007.

Lt Cdr Scivier said: "Fundraising has been particularly difficult this year, in view of the economic environment, and we have had to be a little more inventive to secure the £30,000 we had targeted."

"We are immensely proud to have won the award for the most funds pledged for the third year running."



# Happy Days

IT IS (a) unusual and, generally speaking, (b) unwise to upstage the Royal Marines.

But as the green berets knuckled down to their trademark display taking down 'terrorists' on the Hamoaze, the youngsters of Tameside Sea Cadets knuckled down to their trademark display: performing on the window ladder.

And so it was that the hundreds of people gathered on the vast deck of RFA Mounts Bay found themselves captivated not by Royals' jumping out of helicopters and whizzing about in raiding craft, but by the gymnastics of Sea Cadets to a *Thunderbirds* and *Superman* soundtrack.

So for those who didn't see the 'dynamic display' on and above the water at this year's Navy Days in Plymouth, here's what you missed.

It was typical bad-guys-seize-tug-demanding-response-from-Sea-Kings-Merlins-raiding-craft-HMS-Tracker-green-berets-abseiling-from-helicopter-with-gunfire-rippling-across-the-water fare - all carried out with typical aplomb, as you'd expect, by the Royal Marines (aided by their Fleet Air Arm and Surface Fleet brethren, of course).

Meanwhile the cadets - who performed their famous ladder display at half past the hour aboard the auxiliary, hence the 'clash' with the commandos - completed their performance to generous applause from the crowd aboard the large landing support ship.

As the cadets finished, a torrent of people headed for the passageways in the RFA's superstructure.

"Either it's raining or a display's finished," C/Sgt Roger Elsley, Mounts Bay's senior warrant officer, observed drily.

*Both actually.* But they were interested in what was aboard Mounts Bay (roughly 500 people filed through the ship every hour). Where else, for example, could youngsters squirt fire hoses or build Airfix kits (dozens of visitors could be found pensively fitting together small plastic models in the ship's cavernous loading dock)?

Mounts Bay was one of a dozen warships, submarines (including the Dutch Walrus) and auxiliaries on show from the very small (Tracker) to the very large (Ocean), from the veteran (Trafalgar and Roebuck) to the brand new (Daring).

Or as one elderly visitor buttonholed a member of the Type 45 destroyer's ship's company: "You're the oldest ship in the Fleet. When are you decommissioning?"

*In about 40 years... (I think he confused Daring with HMS Exeter - Ed.)*

There was a constant stream of visitors passing through Daring. Steep ladders meant they couldn't get up to the bridge, but they could see the cutting-edge ops room. There they would have found CPO(AWT) Dean Button, not just a good advert for the ship, but for the RN.

"I love my job," he told visitors. "I cannot wait to get to work in the morning."

The senior rate is CHOPS(R) - the ops room chief when it comes to all things radar. He and 24 shipmates volunteered to show the public around Daring.

"People are interested in what

they're getting for their money," he said of his £1bn warship.

"It gives us a chance to brag about what we do - and this ship is worth bragging about. You look at the lads showing people around and they're smiling - although they do get a bit annoyed when the public call Daring a 'boat'. She's a ship, not a boat. Boats sink, ships don't."

Navy Days was the RN's showcase event of 2009... and like every other showpiece in 2009 it wasn't exactly blessed with the finest of weather.

But that didn't stop more than 20,000 people filing through the Devonport gates.

Once inside they found a 'village' dedicated to the Royal Marines (complete with enormous cardboard cut-out green beret), marching bands plus Her Majesty's own Royal Marines band performing, they saw the Royal Navy Raiders parachute display team drop in, trailing White Ensigns beneath them, the Hawk jets from FRADU passing low over the water, the Black Cat Lynx display team pirouetting in the sky, and, if not distracted by the Sea Cadets, that display on the river.

At least one in 24 visitors to the show (1,048 persons to be precise) toured HMS Tracker (the smallest vessel on show by some 1,623 tonnes) which just made it to the two-day event.

The patrol boat left home in Portsmouth on Commanding Officer Lt Conor O'Neill's second day in charge, sailed straight into near gales which forced her to take shelter in the sanctuary of Dartmouth, and by the junior officer's fifth day in command he and his ship's company - full-time RN sailors and students from Oxford, Oxford Brookes and Reading universities - were performing in front of several thousand people.

Navy Days hasn't been staged in Devonport since 2006 (although there was a similar 'Meet Your Navy' event last year in Portsmouth). It does, concedes Lt Cdr James Edwards, Somerset's weapon engineer officer, "demand quite a lot of work".

But he continues: "Our people really enjoy talking to people, giving them an understanding of what we do.

"There's a general ignorance about the Navy in Britain, but that's not mirrored by the people who attend Navy Days - and they're particularly impressed by the attitude of our young sailors."

Some of the older ones were quite enthusiastic too. "I want to be a gunbuster," one youngster told CPO Steve Hull aboard Somerset. He picked the right man, for the chief looks after the frigate's guns... and promptly gave the boy a special tour of the relevant parts of the ship.

But then that's what Navy Days is about. Sure people want to see how £1bn of taxpayers' money's been spent, they want to clamber around the biggest ship in the RN (HMS Ocean for the record), but all that hi-tech kit is nothing without the people behind it.

■ Navy Days next year moves back up the coast to Portsmouth from July 30-August 1



WAVE KNIGHT

# Frigates in harness



## TWO Type 22s operating with two forces – but with a single purpose.

The frigates find themselves east of Suez guarding sea lanes along which chug the merchant vessels which keep Britain supplied with fuel, food and consumer goods.

Two 22s is not an indication of overlap or overcapacity in the provision of forces in the waters off the Horn of Africa, but a sign of intent by leading military nations of the world.

And that intent is to prevent pirates posing a threat to free trade on the high seas.

HMS Cornwall is in the region as part of a task force, Standing NATO Maritime Group 2 (SNMG2), acting as flagship for the group's commander, Cdre Steve Chick RN.

Cdre Chick has made it one of his top priorities to improve co-ordination across the maritime forces in the region during the NATO force's four-month deployment.

As well as visiting the European Union Maritime HQ at Djibouti, linchpin for Operation Atalanta, and the Coalition Maritime Forces HQ in Bahrain, Cdre Chick has dashed up, down and across the Gulf of Aden to meet his counterparts on the flagships of the Chinese, Indian and Japanese task groups which are also scouring the seas for pirates.

By doing so the commodore hopes to explain his thoughts, get

a feel for their aims, and avoid inefficient replication.

That way the British warship, commanded by Cdr Johnny Ley, will be playing its part in making life easier for the patrolling ships, and harder for the pirates.

Those on board Cornwall have been awaiting the seasonal upsurge in piracy, which was expected after the abating of the monsoon at the end of August, but by mid-September that had not yet happened.

Testament to the co-ordination between groups and the sheer number of warships in the vicinity or a change of tactics by the pirates?

Too early to tell, is the general verdict from those at sea, but they hope it is a sign that they are making a difference.

Another strand in the anti-

piracy strategy is the enlisting of local Coast Guard units.

Exchanges have been conducted to explain the roles and aims of the international maritime forces, and to encourage local efforts, particularly at the shoreline.

This also reinforces the message that pirates are becoming isolated within their own communities – a vital development if piracy is to be permanently stamped out.

All this activity has meant plenty of work for the ship's company, embarked Flag staff, and the flight crew of Rattler, Cornwall's Lynx, which has had to carry out surface reconnaissance missions as well as replenishments and passenger runs for the widely-travelled commodore.

Cornwall has also had her own patrols to carry out in and around the Internationally Recognised

Transit Corridor (IRTC) – a widely-publicised and heavily-policed sea lane along the centre of the Gulf of Aden through which merchant shipping is advised to pass.

And although warships may be on the lookout for ne'er-do-wells, they are still there to help in whatever way they can.

Thus a typical encounter saw Cornwall attend to the needs of the El Salam, a dhow which had radioed for help after its engine died.

The frigate stood by the dhow – a sitting duck in such dangerous waters – and applied some engineering first aid until the stricken ship's owners could get a sister dhow out to tow the vessel to safety.

On reaching the halfway point of

Continued on p24

● Anticlockwise from top: RFA Wave Knight crashes through the sea during a replenishment with HMS Cornwall; Cdre Steve Chick is winched on to the deck of HMS Cornwall from a Merlin after visiting another ship in the task group; LA(METOC) Matt Jones releases a weather balloon on board HMS Cornwall; Mne Billy Weir is ready with his SA80 Carbine during exercises with the Somali Coast Guard; HMS Cumberland alongside in Karachi, Pakistan with Chinese Fuchi-class replenishment vessel Qiandaohu

Pictures: PO(Phot) Owen King (Cornwall), LA(Phot) Steve Johncock (Cumberland)





# Two 22s, C

Continued from p23

her deployment – and after almost a month at sea on continuous patrol – Cornwall put into Dubai for some mechanical maintenance and a break for her sailors, some of whom met up with their families.

Dubai was also the destination for sister ship HMS Cumberland, but the weeks leading up to her self-maintenance period were a little different to those of Cornwall.

The 'Mighty Sausage', conducting Maritime Security Operations as part of coalition task forces, had met up with Cornwall in the Gulf of Aden during August, prompting Capt David Dutton, Commanding Officer of Cumberland, to observe that "it was pleasing to see two operationally-focused deployed Type 22s in the same area doing important work in demanding conditions."

But Cumberland had an out-of-area visit to make Rattler releases before she was back in harness, to the great Pakistani port city of Karachi.

While the visit was designed to strengthen ties between the two navies, including briefings and exercises, for some it opened the door to new experiences, such as those of the Cumberland kabaddi team – most of whom had never even heard of the

game before the visit.

The Cumberland team were welcomed to the Pakistan Navy Recruit School, PNS Himalaya, where the match was staged, by an impressive brass band.

The basic rules and tactics of Asian-style kabaddi were explained to them – not a million miles from a combination of British Bulldog and rugby 7s while holding your breath – then it was straight into action.

As expected, the host team took an early lead as their visitors got a feel for the game, but slowly the Cumberland team dragged themselves back into contention.

Logs (SC) Chris Potheary and ET(WE) Andy Kirkcaldy showed some nifty footwork, coupled with strength and speed, to gain points when attacking, while LPT 'Blood' Reid showed off his own fancy footwork

during half-ti

The final 55 – not bad last...

After the match, staff and students were welcoming a whole team in

"It's a crack to play again

From the young(ish) P Type 21 frig

And 21 years – Cumberland with a group of 21 veteran P

● Clockwise from top left: HMS Cumberland stands by as her sister ship Cornwall meets and patrols with Cornwall; Somali Coast Guards head off a dhow seen from Cornwall in Karachi; Cumberland at sea; Rattler, Cornwall's Lynx, fires her rockets from the Gulf of Aden from Cornwall; Cornwall's PO Des O'Connor directs HMS Cornwall assist El Salam, a dhow which suffered engine failure. Pictures: PO(Phot) Owen King (Cornwall)







# one objective



...me to keep the crowd entertained.  
...score was Himalaya 67, Cumberland  
...for a first attempt. But possibly not the  
...match Lt Andrew McAllister said: "The  
...students at PNS Himalaya were very  
...nd, after only one game of kabaddi, the  
...s hooked.  
...king game, and plans are already in place  
...when we are back in the UK."  
...new to the familiar – in March 1988, a  
...O(MEA) Mark Edwins was serving in  
...ate HMS Alacrity, now PNS Badr.  
...ars on Mark is a lieutenant commander  
...d's Marine Engineer Officer – and went  
...o of shipmates (including another Type  
...O(CIS) 'Stretch' Long) to tour Type 21

PNS Khaibar, formerly HMS Arrow.  
Most of the ship was still familiar to the pair, and Lt Cdr Edwins said: "It was a tremendous thrill to revisit a Type 21, 21 years after having last served in one, and see that they were still wearing well."  
"The Pakistani Navy are doing a wonderful job of looking after these great-looking ships and that is very reassuring."  
Indeed, marine engineers at Karachi have managed to extend the life of both the Tyne and Olympus gas turbine engines by several thousand hours with no loss of power and the full blessing of Rolls-Royce.  
On sailing from Karachi, Cumberland conducted joint training with PNS Badr, then the two parted

company, Badr to prepare for exercises with the Chinese Navy and Cumberland to rejoin her counter-terrorist and anti-piracy patrols.  
The frigate has since been busy monitoring the movements of cargo and fishing dhows in her patrol area, establishing the normal pattern in order that suspicious activity can be more easily recognised.  
Breaking off from her Coalition Task Force (CTF) 151 patrols in and around the Gulf of Aden, the Type 22 made a brief call at Salalah in Oman to stock up and embark high-priority items to make repairs.  
Both frigates are due to be deployed until the end of the year, when they will return to their home base of Devonport.

...boarding parties investigate a dhow; a  
...d back to Boosaaso after a successful  
...; sailors from Cumberland play kabaddi  
...flares; LS(AWT) Abram Giles dives into  
...ts Rattler during night flying; engineers  
...trouble; Cumberland (foreground) and  
...mwall) and LA(Phot) Steve Johncock (Cumberland)



## Paulton's perfect

I'M NOT normally driven to taking time out to 'big up' companies or businesses for making gestures towards our Armed Forces, but felt the need to make an exception in this case.

I was recently fortunate enough to be in receipt of free tickets to attend Paultons Park, near Southampton, on one of the two Forces Days they held.

We found out about this through our local Hive at Yeovilton and I am sure that all those who found themselves enjoying the sunshine (and free entrance) at the park would agree that Paulton's provided a fantastic occasion in a very understated manner.

My (almost) three-year-old had a wonderful time and spent the whole day amazing us with her new-found enthusiasm for one ride after another.

If this event is to be followed by similar days in the future then I feel it only right to express my thanks to Paulton's for a wonderful day out enjoyed by the many 'Forces Families' that we saw on the day, and a special thanks from young Orla - who keeps reciting to daddy how she "saw penguins and went on the Teacups, and Vikings, railway, Ladybirds..." and so on.

It won't be long before we find ourselves back there reliving that day. Well done to Paulton's for giving young Service families a fantastic day out.

- CPOAET(AV) R P Kemp,  
Merlin IPT

## K not OK

The review of *K Boat Catastrophe* in your August edition delivered a lambasting which I believe was ill-deserved.

The book certainly makes no pretensions to intellectual brilliance, but it is responsibly researched, is accurate on the facts of that little-known disaster, expresses tenable opinions on the debatable aspects, and is a worthwhile addition to the library of naval history.

The author is indeed a "brown job", but one with few of the limitations sometimes associated with that ilk and with an affection for the Navy. He sought professional advice from three sailors with extensive experience of sea command, two of them flag officers, one of whom is a very eminent submariner. They are well-qualified to assess the events and errors of that dreadful night in a way which one with a purely academic background, however well-informed, is not.

There is no room here to discuss every point made by Prof Grove, but K-class apologists should perhaps recall that the Fleet Submarine concept, which gave rise to the K-Boats, was no flawless success even with the application of nuclear-age technology.

I do wonder whether the comment in the review that the author "has had little contact with naval historians" gives a clue to the disdain of one such historian, and I recommend that readers should base their judgement on the book itself rather than on the savaging by *The Grove Review*.

- Peter Grindal, Olveston,  
South Gloucestershire

CLASSIC  
**JACK**



BY TUGS

# Repeat performance

YOUR VERY complimentary review of the book *Loyal and Steadfast* (April) resulted in a complete sell-out of copies within days, as we started receiving orders and cheques from all parts of the UK as well as Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the US.

As publication of the book had been a high-risk, non-profit project it removed a great weight from our shoulders not to have dozens of unsold books on our hands and very little money left in our funds.

But such was the impact of the review that many *Navy News* readers failed to obtain a copy, as we had no option but to return the cheques and unfilled orders along with an appropriate apology.

We have continued to receive orders for the book, which has led to the decision by the committee of HMS Consort Association to risk a second edition which became available in mid-September.

I say 'risk' because we are naturally bound by the publishers to order in high minimum quantity, or pay an exorbitant price for publication.

Even now there will be a marginal loss on the project but we will not be unhappy about that as our main objective was to tell the tale of HMS Consort to as many people as possible, particularly with regard to the true story of the events of April 20, 1949, which came to be known as 'The Yangtze Incident.'

The second edition of *Loyal and Steadfast* is now available to *Navy News* readers who were disappointed in not obtaining a copy last April, as well as those who have ordered since.

It can be ordered from Mr T J Flanagan, 7 Ennis Close, Hale Village, near Liverpool, L24 5RT, priced £11 per copy which includes postage and packing, cheques payable to HMS Consort Association.

- Terry Hodgins,  
HMS Consort Association,  
Abergavenny, Monmouthshire



● Booking her place in history - HMS Consort, one of the 'forgotten ships' of the Yangtze incident

... FURTHER to the very interesting piece on HMS Amethyst (August) readers may be interested to know that a 78rpm record was produced under the Philips label titled *The Amethyst March*.

This was the music from the film *Yangtze Incident* and was played by the Band of the Royal Marines School of Music, conducted by Lt Col (later Sir) F Vivian-Dunn.

An interesting aspect of the recording is that it includes actual naval gunfire sound effects.

- Roy Stevens, Woolston,  
Southampton

... IN 2003, Laura Rossi, in conjunction with the Torbay Brass Band, composed a march, *Salute to the Amethyst*, for the Remembrance Parade at Teignmouth.

I was invited to attend and it sounded good to me!

She was awarded Best Film Music Composer.

- J French, Cheltenham

... ONE or two things in the exploded view of Amethyst jarred.

For example, I doubt very much if she had stabilisers, we didn't in a Type 12 frigate 10 years later. The sketch shows bunks in the messdeck - surely not? - hammocks!

It would have been useful had the ASDIC dome been identified and a number of other identifications use a rather strange terminology.

I recall similar comments on your Ark Royal supplement and suggest that in future you run these past an appropriate contemporary.

Should you ever do the Southampton-class cruisers I offer myself. I still have my Midshipman's journal with a detailed and tallied exploded view, cribbed from what was then known as DCHQ.

- Cdr Julian Loring, Downton  
According to the experts at the

Naval Historical Branch, Amethyst was fitted with stabilisers, but there's less conclusive evidence on bunks/hammocks.

As for a cutaway diagram of a Southampton-class cruiser, we did produce one of the modified Town-class HMS Belfast a decade ago - Ed

## No way to say goodbye

I FEEL that I have to write to *Navy News* just to get things off my chest!

I left the Navy last month after 30 years' service and feel that the way servicemen and women are discharged is appalling.

I felt extremely emotional at the total lack of respect from the MOD. I was sent a small *HM Armed Forces Veteran* badge along with a certificate of service, and the biggest insult was a small A5 certificate from the Under Secretary of State for Defence that wasn't even signed.

These items are now in the back of a cupboard because I feel ashamed to have them on view.

I feel that we all deserve much more respect after serving our country and I sincerely hope that the MOD will look at this closely when they discharge people from the Armed Forces.

- Mike Brown, ex-LMEM(M)

## No-one better than Hoagy

WITH REFERENCE to your August *Heroes of the Royal Navy*, I was acquainted with Hoagy Carmichael in the latter part of his naval life.

He finished up as a full commander, OBE, and a finer fellow you would never meet.

He was for many years the officer in charge of the North West Area Sea Cadet Corps and he was fully active in all that went on.

I am 81 years old and throughout my life they came no better than 'Hoagy'.

- D R Scrivener,  
Fleetwood, Lancs

## 391 beat 102 by a good 7kt

I WOULD like to suggest that the statement on page 10 of the September issue - that MTB 102 was the fastest wartime vessel with a speed of nearly 50 knots - is arguable.

At Plus 8 boost on the three 1,500 hp Packard engines the four (torpedo) tube, 73ft Vosper HMMTB 391 did 57 knots on the measured mile during log trials.

She was light though, with practically no crew and no ammunition or stores.

- Lt Cdr A D Fletcher, Beech Hill, Berks

# opinion

IT'S ALWAYS a risky business to invite the TV cameras into your workplace or your home (same place, if you're a sailor) to make a fly-on-the-wall documentary.

The results tend to show you 'warts and all' - which of course is why these programmes make compelling viewing.

And it's so good to see the Royal Navy featured on prime-time TV for once that we have to overlook a few warts...

The current series of *Warship*, running on a Monday night and featuring HMS Bulwark, seems to have polarised opinions among our readers (see the opposite page).

Mr Galinski, unimpressed by tattoos and runs ashore, asks if the *real* Royal Navy is still out there? Lt Cdr Lester May, on the other hand, thinks Jack was ever thus.

The views expressed in *Navy News* do not necessarily reflect those of the Ministry of Defence

Perhaps Mr Galinski and the others who have not been impressed with *Warship* will be reassured when they read pages 4 and 5 about the latest operational honours.

Our sailors and Marines showed famous courage at Trafalgar 200 years ago, just as they showed it in every century before and since.

And on that note, many historians agree nowadays that women played a bigger part in Trafalgar than was ever officially acknowledged.

So Kate Nesbitt, the medical assistant whose outstanding bravery in Afghanistan made her the first woman in the Navy to be awarded the MC, may be part of a longer tradition than we realise.

# NAVY NEWS

Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH  
October 2009 no.663: 56th year

**Editorial**  
Managing editor:  
Sarah Fletcher (023 9272 4194)  
Editor: Mike Gray  
(023 9272 5136)  
News editor: Richard  
Hargreaves (023 9272 4163)  
Production editor:  
Helen Craven (023 9272 5067)  
Fax 023 9283 8845  
edit@navynews.co.uk

**Business**  
Business manager:  
Lisa Taw 023 9272 0494  
Subscriptions 023 9272 6284  
subscriptions@navynews.co.uk  
Accounts 023 9272 0686  
Advertising 023 9272 5062  
advertising@navynews.co.uk  
Graphics and Reproduction:  
023 9272 2010  
Fax 023 9283 0149



● The Warship film crew record some aerial footage of HMS Ocean Picture: LA(Phot) Bernie Henesy, HMS Ocean

# TV hell or Five star?

IT IS pointless trying to get through to the MOD, so as you have your finger on the pulse, I thought I'd drop you a line.

My 21-year-old son wishes to join up, and as a life-long supporter, I finally got him consider the Navy. As a first step, we watched *Warship*. I could not believe my eyes. Was the whole thing a joke, produced by the RAF or Paras to make the Service look stupid?

Bulwark is one of the major units of the Fleet, and on the evidence of the show, it seems to be a cruise ship, crewed by half-witted drunks obsessed with the next tattoo, the Marines a foul-mouthed, arrogant and unprofessional rabble, with no respect for anybody or anything, and the officers' only interest seeming to be the next *cordon bleu* meal. (Come to think of it...)

The final indignity was the 'honour guard' who did not even know how to hold an SA80. (And the PO thought they were wonderful.)

Isn't Bulwark stuffed full of Marines? Can they hold a weapon? Surely they weren't all up the jungle eating snakes?

I remember a ceremony called 'Sunset' that made you proud to be British, and made the hairs on any part of your body stand up.

I may well be a Little Englander, but I am also old enough to remember a TV show called *Sailor*,

which did wonders for the Navy, and reminded us civvies that it was still the best in the world (and still showed memorable runs ashore).

I also know Trafalgar was 200 years ago, and that the world has moved on, but please get back and tell me what we watched was a huge joke, and that the *real* Navy is still there. Or was it always just a figment of my imagination?

Because if the Navy we saw is the real thing, then we're all in trouble. My son spent the rest of the evening falling about laughing, and abusing me and the Service, which was painful.

But at least neither of us will watch it again.

— Alan Galinski, Sheffield

...HAVING missed the third part of the second series of *Warship* on Channel 5, I was pleased to find that I could watch online on Demand Five, a service of which I was hitherto unaware.

This really is a very good television series, with many aspects of the ships' eventful lives being seen on camera and with some engaging matelots and bootnecks as central characters.

To me, these folk seem just like those we old 'uns knew at sea in decades past, and give every confidence that the Navy is in good hands today.

I hope that the production serves the Royal Navy and Royal Marines well and, of course, the

programme makers.

Indeed, I rather hope that Channel 5 will consider releasing a DVD of the two series of *Warship*. Meanwhile, it would be good were there obvious links on the Royal Navy website to the TV series and to the Demand Five website, so that the series gets the widest possible audience.

As much capital should be made of this programme as possible.

— Lt Cdr Lester May (ret'd)  
Camden Town

# Hunting the Komet

STORIES about HMS Quorn (September, page 6) always invoke memories for this writer, who served on her Hunt-class predecessor in 1942 and 1943.

The story of the present-day ship that bears the name conducting a service of remembrance 65 years to the date since the destroyer was sunk was particularly touching.

Through the internet I have seen the ship's casualty list, and remember some of the men with whom I served.

Among the memories of my time aboard Quorn is of the October night in 1942 when, in company with Hunts Glaisdale, Cottesmore, Eskdale and Albrighton, and other units, we took part in the sinking

of the Komet, an armed merchant cruiser that was attempting to break out of the Channel to go on another cruise looking for more Allied shipping to sink.

As I recall, Quorn was a happy ship, and the 14 months I served aboard her were the happiest of the five years I served in the Navy.

I send greetings to the present-day crew, and continue to look for more stories of the ship's accomplishments in the *Navy News*.

— Ken Tipper,  
Ocala, Florida

You won't have to look quite so far for her this month — she's currently off the Eastern Seaboard of the United States with a NATO task group; see page 7 — Ed

## JACKPOT!



A £25 Amazon voucher to the author of the letter which impresses, moves or amuses us the most.

— she's currently off the Eastern Seaboard of the United States with a NATO task group; see page 7 — Ed

■ Carry on reading... There are more of your letters on page 35

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# Archive informs Navy of tomorrow



● (Above) The title page from the first edition of Mercator's collection of maps, introducing the concept of Atlas to such books



● Mercator's version of the Isle of Wight



● An illustration from a wartime handbook. Admiralty Librarian Jenny Wright wonders if this is the reason buses tend to arrive in convoys...



● A mariner's view of New York in 1671, taken from the seminal Seller's English Pilot

D a Flag hoisted up for Ships to come in to the Harbor E the Prison or Tollbooth F the Generals house G the Gallows H the Packhouse or Storehouse

## WHAT would you look for among the books of a good library?

Good stories, naturally. Exotic locations. Books that educate without preaching, maybe.

Stirring history might be another attraction, with strong characters – bold (and sometimes flawed) heroes, brooding or misguided villains – and breath-taking illustrations.

The Admiralty Library, which celebrates its 200th anniversary this year, can boast all that, and much more besides.

It not only refers back – and some of its collection are of colossal historical value – but also supports the Royal Navy of today and of tomorrow.

A dusty, dry repository of archaisms it most certainly is not.

It owes its existence to the organisational skills of civilian John Finlaison, who was appointed as first Librarian to the Admiralty in August 1809.

Finlaison is regarded as the first (unofficial) Government actuary, and his expertise in creating and applying mortality tables opened up a whole new world of national statistics.

As Keeper of the Records, Finlaison was asked to devise a plan for arranging the records and dispatches at the Admiralty, the legacy of the first Admiralty Hydrographer, Alexander Dalrymple.

His system of analysis and indexing for immediate retrieval of any document was so successful that it not only formed the basis for the Admiralty Library, but was also adopted in France, Russia and Austria, and Finlaison is reckoned to be one of the founding fathers of the National Archive.

His work meant that a disparate collection of charts, reports, sketches, logs and the like could be brought together cohesively, put into use and published where necessary.

It also meant that new members of the Admiralty Board (and Finlaison's successors) could pick up the baton with ease – the Scot had essentially created a corporate memory, an early version of the current Naval Historical Branch, of which the Admiralty Library is a major constituent.

The next major innovator arrived

a century after Finlaison in the shape of William Perrin, who created the classification scheme which is still used today and who later wrote an authoritative history of British flags at sea.

"The Admiralty Library has always been a working collection – there to provide the information that the Admiralty needed," said current Admiralty Librarian Jenny Wright, the first professional librarian in two centuries.

"And we have kept old material because it is still useful – even very old material.

"It might be needed in a legal case, for example.

"And the fact that we retained plans for an early extension of the dockyard in the 1860s – plans which Defence Estates did not have – proved very useful in preparatory work for the arrival of the new aircraft carriers.

"It can also help in cases involving those who might seek to plunder shipwrecks.

"We even have material on explosives which has been useful. An Explosive Ordnance Disposal team could only find the specifications for a particular type of British mine here.

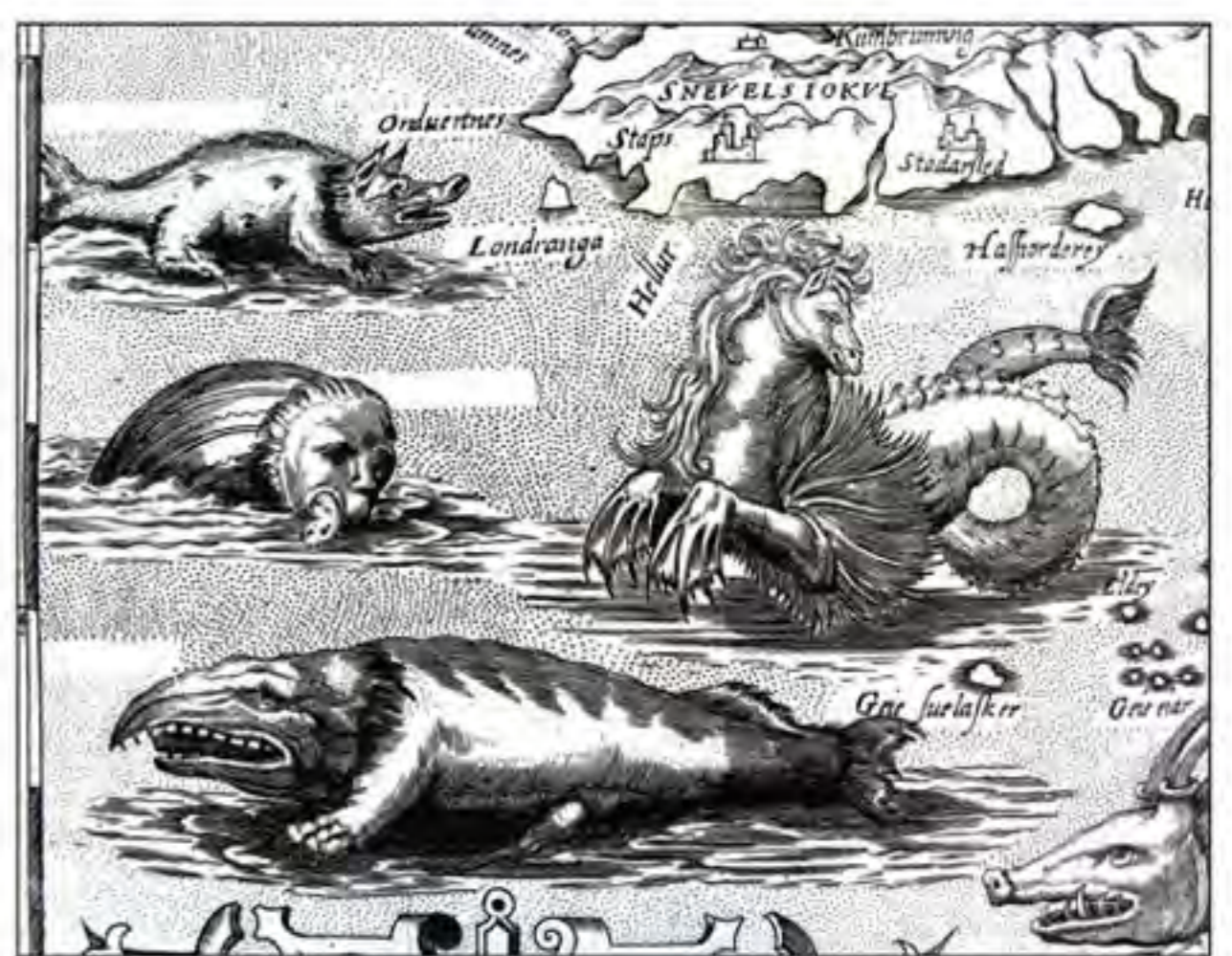
"There were only 24 made – it was a complete disaster – but one was washed up on an Italian shore.

"They had to come to us to see which wire to cut, so to speak.

"More recently one team needed to know what type of torpedo would be found on board a particular type of U-boat as they wanted to deal with a wreck in British waters."

The Library receives requests for information from all over the world, and often the inquirer finds he or she has just scratched the surface of a veritable treasure trove.

A Japanese professor recently booked in to look at Anglo-Japanese relations before World War 1, and



● Fanciful exotic wildlife in the seas off Iceland – a direct copy of Mercator's illustrative monsters as seen in Jallot's atlas



● (Left) Henry West's signal book from Trafalgar

– as well as senior Naval officers – have called upon the expertise of the Admiralty Library to identify a map or chart which would match the status and nation of the recipient.

The Library contains more than just maps and charts, stunning though they are – there are also accounts of voyages, first editions of pioneering scientific books, accounts of Admiralty business and so on.

So, besides hand-coloured charts prepared by Captain James Cook himself is an early 19th century first edition of *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, covering Cook's ill-fated third voyage of exploration.

Admittedly, the book has been defaced by someone scribbling comments in the margins.

Fortunately the scribbles are by that Hollywood-style villain William Bligh, of mutiny on the *Bounty* infamy, a brilliant technician but rather less capable man-manager.

Among his somewhat querulous annotations is one that an observation in the published work is totally incorrect, while on another page a fellow mariner is described as spending most of his time asleep or eating but otherwise serving no useful purpose.

Other items are more humble in appearance but are still much-prized.

In the Library's collection of signal books, for example, is one belonging to Henry West, which was in the pocket of the Master's Mate of HMS *Africa*, Henry West, during the Battle of Trafalgar.

The Admiralty Library always seeks new books to buy, but in recent times has probably added more from the break-up of other libraries across the Ministry of Defence.

The Royal Naval College at Greenwich yielded numerous useful items, as did the clearing out of the old War Office Library.

There are also occasional gifts and manuscripts sent in by members of the public or ex-matelots – the Library's modest budget does not stretch to trawling the shops and websites of antiquarian booksellers.

Staff are interested in any genuine Naval books, maps and the like, and can suggest an alternative home if it would be more appropriate.

"We have been offered items once or twice when we have said to the donor 'I think you might want to see about getting that sold on the open market – do you realise the value of this?'"

Apart from the historical collection, the Library also boasts an unrivalled 'normal' collection which is the staple fare for researchers and staff alike – one of the best collections of books on the RN that exists.



● A sketch of a French warship in the Dardanelles, produced by Lt Cdr Rowland Langmaid, then a midshipman

stumbled across a whole raft of material on the Russo-Japanese War in which he became engrossed.

The Library has many visitors from all over the world because the Library has global reach, just as the Royal Navy was (and is) a global organisation.

The Library alone, not counting the NHB archive, contains around 180,000 volumes.

Putting a value on that is virtually impossible – "every shelf has something amazing on it," said Ms Wright.

Individual pages from historic atlases may sell for thousands of pounds on the open market, yet the Library may have a complete bound volume of those maps.

There are items of astonishing beauty, one being "one of the great books of the world," according to Ms Wright.

A first edition of Mercator's Atlas dates from the 16th Century, and the vibrant colours belie its age (other atlases go as far as to include gold leaf to pick out highlights).

The volume's title page features the mythological Atlas, complete with celestial and terrestrial spheres, lending his name to all subsequent map books.

The volume, a seminal work in the study of geography, now worth hundreds of thousands of pounds, was bought by Dalrymple on September 2 1786 for five shillings.

Another book contains the geographical thoughts of classical scholar Ptolemy, as printed by Erasmus in Basel in 1533; this book demonstrates an early form of identification, where the title was handwritten across the edges of the pages and the book placed on a shelf 'back-to-front'.

Blaeu's *Atlas Major* of 1662, in 12 volumes, has been described as the most beautiful atlas in the world; it was so highly prized that it was given as gifts between heads of state.

Gifts involving reproductions of old charts or maps are still in vogue today, and senior politicians – including the Prime Minister and Defence Secretary



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**NAVY NEWS**

Jan 10

Fri 1	Wed 13	Mon 25
Sat 2	Thu 14	Tue 26
Sun 3	Fri 15	Wed 27
Mon 4	Sat 16	Thu 28
Tue 5	Sun 17	Fri 29
Wed 6	Mon 18	Sat 30
Thu 7	Tue 19	Sun 31
Fri 8	Wed 20	
Sat 9	Thu 21	
Sun 10	Fri 22	
Mon 11	Sat 23	
Tue 12	Sun 24	

December 2009      February 2010

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**Branch round-up**

THE grey matter of shipmates from Littlehampton branch was put to the test when they and their guests took part in a quiz night.

Questions covered a range of topics, including mottos, geography and sport.

S/Ms Anne and Peter Palmer set the questions and acted as quizmasters.

Contestants enjoyed a fish and chip supper during the interval, and a raffle was also held; everyone left a little older and a little wiser having had a good evening.

**CHESHUNT** branch managed to muster 50 members for a visit to the Royal Hospital Chelsea.

Several of them walked round the well-kept grounds, and there was a chilli con carne served in the mess.

Next on the branch agenda was a visit to Welwyn Garden City for a chance to experience the big brass band sound.

MORE than 250 family, shipmates and friends – along with 21 standards from the RNA and RBL – attended the funeral of S/M Ron Wheeler, a stalwart of Hanworth branch.

S/M Ron, who was married for 53 years to Joan, was standard bearer for many years at Hanworth, whose chairman S/M Terry Lowden said the branch had "lost one of its best and most loyal shipmates."

**THE Dauntless Association**, an informal group which holds reunions of serving and ex-WRNS, stages its next gathering from October 30 to November 2 at Mill Rythe on Hayling Island, at a cost of £110 per person.

See [www.dauntlesswrens.co.uk](http://www.dauntlesswrens.co.uk) for more details.

**GRANTHAM** branch celebrated its 20th anniversary at a social evening to which members of Bingham, Newark and Sleaford branches were invited.

During the evening Life Membership certificates were presented to Grantham branch president S/M Phillip Green and treasurer S/M David Watson.

**MEXBOROUGH** branch member S/M Garfield Ardron, a Normandy veteran, has been presented with the badge 1944-2009 by S/M James Batty, who put a good deal of effort into getting it through "difficult channels."

The secretary agreed to the presentation as James is an associate member who is also a member of the Royal British Legion.

**CRAWLEY** branch was at the forefront of Armed Forces Day, having been given two days' notice by the local council.

The day started with prayers in the Memorial Gardens, followed by a march to the town hall. Branch chairman S/M Jack Woodhouse raised the special flag.

**PLYMOUTH** branch veterans, partners and friends gathered at the WOs and SRs mess to commemorate Black Tot Day, the withdrawal of the daily rum issue from sailors in July 1970.

Branch rum bosun S/M Bob Shaw ensured a fair distribution to all, and a raffle raised £101.

# Last survivor pays tribute to shipmates

A MEMORIAL service for a wartime ship spanned the decades and confirmed the strong bonds that exist between mariners.

The last survivor of the sinking of the armed trawler HMS Hayburn Wyke five miles off Ostend, in Belgium, was instrumental in organising the event.

S/M Fred Jenkins, of Cardiff branch, is now nearly 90, and two years ago, with the help of the Belgium branch, he returned to the spot where his ship was sunk by a German midget submarine in the early hours of 1945.

In 2007 he laid a wreath on the sea, but he always hoped to create a more permanent memorial to the 22 shipmates who died – Fred was one of just four survivors.

This summer his wish was fulfilled when he attended the unveiling of a memorial plaque in the English Church at Ostend.

The tribute was read by Cdr Gavin Short, chairman of the Belgium branch, and standard bearers from the Belgian Navy attended.

Fred, accompanied by the secretary of Cardiff branch S/M Brinly Chard, told his story during the service, and thanked colleagues and the people of Ostend.

S/Ms Michael Rose and John Mummery, chairman and secretary of Belgium branch, were also in the congregation.

The priest-in-charge of the church, the Revd Dr Clifford



● The medals proudly worn by S/M Fred Jenkins, survivor of the sinking of HMS Hayburn Wyke

Owen, spoke of how moved he had been at a service in Portsmouth Cathedral 25 years ago when the remains of sailors from the Mary Rose were interred.

He said that the service chosen was one the sailors of 1545 would have recognised – a pre-Reformation communion in Latin – but after the eucharist, six modern RN ratings acted as coffin bearers to carry the bones of their forebears down the aisle.

The interment prayers were from the contemporary 1980s liturgy of burial.

"It was most moving," said Revd Owen.

"Two things came across most

and be silent, it will seem only yesterday since it happened.

"Secondly, the bond between sailors is just as strong as it ever was.

"It was from just such a bond that Fred Jenkins felt motivated to initiate this memorial, and the bond for this memorial for Hayburn Wyke was made even greater because of the Second World War.

"We must never forget that for those caught up in conflict, when the reckoning is done, war can never be a matter of statistics.

"Though conflict is between nations, groups, ideologies, empires even, yet at the point where the shots are fired, it is local.

"That is why it is so important that names are read.

"In the battle, they were chums, they exchanged jokes, and cigarettes; they gave each other courage and hope. They left behind families."

He continued: "The irony and the tragedy in the sinking of HMS Hayburn Wyke was that it took place on New Year's Day – that day when we usually stand in new chronological territory, thinking high thoughts of the future.

"I wonder how many on Hayburn Wyke on that New Year's morning in 1945, as they shared their New Year's tot of rum together, talked about whether the war would really end that year?"

## Hearing check available to expats

EXPATS around the world can now benefit from a simple online hearing check thanks to RNID, the Royal National Institute for Deaf People.

The check, which can help people identify whether they may have a hearing loss, is available at [www.rnid.org.uk/hearingmatters](http://www.rnid.org.uk/hearingmatters), and uses background noise levels to simulate various social environments.

Although not a medical diagnosis, it allows English-speaking people abroad to test themselves without having to contend with language issues.



● S/Ms Gary Cardwell (left) and Pete Childe, of Stocksbridge and Deepcar branch, after the Billy the Kid Dash

## Dash raises cash

TWO members of Stocksbridge and Deepcar branch have taken part in a race which commemorates a Royal Marine killed in Afghanistan.

S/Ms Gary Cardwell and Pete Childe ran in the Billy the Kid Dash, organised by the family of Royal David Marsh, who died last year.

The 3.5-mile charity Dash

follows the same route that David ran each morning when he was home in Sheffield on leave.

Some 1,500 runners took part, and all proceeds will go to the Royal Marines Benevolent Fund.

S/M Pete ran in an HMS Albion T-shirt, given to him by the CO of HMS Albion, Capt John Kingwell – Pete served in the old Albion from 1959-64.

powerfully from that service. First there was clearly a bond between seamen the world over.

"Men whose lives are spent on the seas have an affinity and respect for each other which more than rivals other professions.

"Secondly, in that service time collapsed. It was as though the Mary Rose disaster had happened only a few days before, not four-and-a-half centuries.

"Today, on this special occasion, I would suggest that both of these elements are present also.

"It is 64 years since HMS Hayburn Wyke was sunk off Ostend, but as we pause in a few minutes' time to read the names



## Carrier shapes up

THE keel of the new carrier was laid down last October and she should be finished within months.

No, not one of the new state-of-the-art Queen Elizabeth-class leviathans, but a scale model of the old Ark Royal of nearly 50 years ago.

Using Admiralty plans and original photos, the model (pictured above and below) will end up 6ft 6in long, and is under construction just three miles from the namesake's birthplace at Cammel Laird on the Mersey.

The model is being built by Stephen Heptonstall at the behest of his cousin John Williams, who served in the carrier from 1961-63 – the configuration which has been followed for the model.

"It took a great deal of persuading my cousin Stephen to build her – the deal was that I do all the research and he would do the building," said John.

"Steve is a perfectionist when building models, so everything had to be right."



● Peter and Pearl Roalf  
Picture: Cambridge Newspapers Ltd

## Diamond and Pearl

HARLOW branch chairman S/M Peter Roalf and his wife Pearl have celebrated their Diamond Wedding – and raised £150 for the Essex and Herts Air Ambulance in the process.

Peter, who is also secretary of the Essex branch of the Fleet Air Arm Association, and Pearl, an associate member of the RNA, were joined by their daughter, who had travelled from Australia.

The donation was as a result of a 'no presents' decision by the couple.

## Earl's family given print

WHILE visiting the West Country S/M Tom Naish, of Bridgend branch, presented a print of his old ship, HMS Whitesand Bay, to Plymouth branch.

S/M Tom also hoped to present a print to a member of the Edgcombe family, owners of land at Whitesand Bay in Cornwall.

Having established that a brother of the Earl still lived in the area, S/M Tom headed along a track and found a man planting flowers.

On asking the 'gardener' where he might find one of the Edgcombes, Tom was told he was speaking to one – the earl's brother Julian, upon which the print was handed over in an impromptu ceremony.

## Laundry mogul Mr Shao dies

ANOTHER iconic figure from the heyday of the Royal Navy in Hong Kong has gone with the death of laundry mogul Mr Shao.

Mr Shao went to sea as an 'Unofficial Laundryman' with the Navy in 1952, serving on a number of ships including Devonshire, Diamond, Cardiff, Bulwark, Ark Royal and Illustrious.

He was known for his cheerfulness, and like his compatriot Jenny Side Party, Mr Shao was a proud ambassador for the Navy.

With the handing back of Hong Kong to China in 1997 looming, Mr Shao and Shao Brothers Ltd, of which he was chairman, linked with Serco Ltd to win the initial RN Laundry Services contract.

## Hazel rewarded

S/M HAZEL Poynder was rewarded for 23 years loyal service as treasurer of the Guernsey Association of Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Hazel, an ex-Wren, was presented with an engraved vase by branch president Capt Peter Voute.

## Naval Quirks

SCURVY WAS THE BIGGEST KILLER IN THE ROYAL NAVY UP TO THE 1800s..



..TROUBLE WAS, THERE WAS NO CITRUS FRUIT OR FRESH VEG IN THE SAILORS' DIET AND SO NO VITAMIN C..



MIND YOU, SCURVY ONLY APPEARED AFTER AT LEAST 6 WEEKS AT SEA, SO THERE WAS NO DANGER ON SHORTER VOYAGES..



SORRY CAP'N - DID YOU SAY SOMETHING?



## 90 up for association

A LANDLOCKED naval association recently celebrated its 90th anniversary – and members wonder if they have the oldest organisation of its type in the country.

The Birmingham and District Royal Naval Association (Admiralty Approved) – not, despite what its name may suggest, a branch of the RNA – held a dinner for 40 members, wives, widows and friends.

Principal guest was the chairman of the Birmingham Nautical Club.

Many members have been on

board for 40 years or more, and among the group's past presidents was a former Lord Mayor of Birmingham, Alderman Simpson, who joined the Royal Marines at the age of 14 in World War 1 (having convinced recruiters he was 17), and he served as a lieutenant in the RN in World War 2.

Just about every theatre is represented, from the Pacific (including a survivor from the Prince of Wales) through the Mediterranean to the Arctic.

The Association meets regularly at the Birmingham Nautical Club.

## Wetherby party get sea time on River Tees

WETHERBY shipmates enjoyed a busy summer programme, starting with a trip to Stockton-on-Tees for 20 members of the branch.

They were hosted by the RNA Club in Stockton before taking lunch on a river cruiser along the Tees.

Social secretary S/M Vince Parks said: "Everybody enjoyed a fine day, a good meal and a chance to get some sea time in."

Attention then turned to the HMS Ceres reunion, which was based at the Crown Hotel in Harrogate and included a day trip to the Beamish open air museum.

Branch secretary S/M Richard Knight said: "Over 140 veterans and their partners attended, representing the WRNS and male colleagues who had trained at HMS Ceres in Wetherby prior to its closure in 1958, RNR personnel from Ceres Division, HMS Sherwood, Carlton Barracks, Leeds and RNA members from Wetherby and Harrogate."

Then it was time to pay tribute to one of their own - S/M Reg Maycock, who over the past ten years has held the post of secretary, standard bearer, representative on Wealstun Social Club and now vice chairman.

President S/M Eric Drummond presented Reg with a ship's crest, supported by a written citation - and Eric added that "Reg's duties as standard bearer have been a credit to the branch due to his immaculate turn-out on all occasions."

## Terry is tops

THE Hanworth branch Shipmate of the Year award has been presented to branch chairman S/M Terry Lowden by No 1 Area chairman S/M Alan Robinson.

The award reflects S/M Terry's service as chairman of his branch, vice chairman of No 1 Area, branch delegate and RNA representative at the return of those Service personnel killed in the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts.

# Sheppey pays tribute



Standards on parade as the village of Eastchurch, on the Isle of Sheppey, celebrates the centenary of Naval aviation

YEARS of hard work paid off when the centenary of the Fleet Air Arm was celebrated at the village of Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey.

The local parish council instigated the event five years ago, and the RNA and Fleet Air Arm Association helped develop it, taking a leading role on the second day.

Saturday had been about manning the Isle of Sheppey branch stall, but Sunday saw the Association join with the FAAA to start the ball rolling with a church parade, led by

the Whitstable Sea Cadet Band, the FAAA national standard and RNA Area 2 standard.

There followed some 34 standards from various organisations, including four ship's association standards, representing - among others - HMS Glory, the Bulwark, Albion and Centaur Association, HMS Cavalier and HMS Phoebe; around 60 to 80 'hands' marched and helped to fill the church to capacity.

On leaving the church the participants moved across the road to the memorial where a service was held.

Three standard bearers stood in the churchyard, where the victims of several early air accidents were buried.

Three buglers took positions on top of the church tower, allowing the Last Post to carry across the graveyard and memorial.

As the parade moved off to the arena the Sheppey Sea Cadets, with their field gun, took their place at the rear - their support for the event, and that of the Whitstable Sea Cadet Band, was much appreciated by all involved.

Former Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Adrian Johns took

the salute at the arena, and after colours there was a chance to enjoy a range of activities and entertainment, including a display of handling a field gun by the Sheppey cadets.

The day closed with Sunset, and with a number of individuals receiving presentations, including S/M Peter Roalfe - born and bred at Eastchurch - who was given his life membership.

The success of the weekend owed much to the efforts of the Area 2 Parade and Ceremonial Officer and of the various RNA and FAAA branches which helped out.

## VIP day for Marshland Museum

BIGGER, yet still perfectly formed - the Marshland Maritime Museum, according to S/M Keith Norton, of the City of Ely branch.

S/M Ken was referring in particular to the red, white and blue-letter day for Mike and Jo Smith, who created the museum at Clenchwarton, to the west of King's Lynn, to house Mike's considerable collection of Naval memorabilia.

The size of the collection meant there was a need for expansion - hence the gathering of 60 or so people representing groups such as the Ganges Association, the Ton Class Association, Norwich branch, King's Lynn branch, City of Ely branch and the D Boats Association, of which Mike is president.

On cue at eight bells the Mayor of King's Lynn and West Norfolk, Cllr Michael Pitcher, did the honours by cutting the ribbon, followed by "splicers and canteen messing of the highest order, with a superb raffle to follow," according to S/M Keith.

The raffle raised more than £800, which will be split between Help for Heroes and the provision of a new roof for his original museum building.



Area 4 Chairman S/M John Stuart (centre) presented jewels of office to Saltash branch president S/M Bill Dent (right) and branch chairman S/M David 'Tiny' Lockwood. S/M Stuart is also a member of Saltash branch

## Spirit of the Beehive recalled

TWO memorials to the Coastal Forces' part in the fight against fascism have been unveiled in Felixstowe, home of the shore establishment HMS Beehive from July 1940.

One is at Landguard, a viewing area for shipping using the ports of Felixstowe, Harwich, Mistley and Ipswich, the other - a commemorative plaque - was dedicated within the Port of Felixstowe close to the Dock Basin, the actual site of HMS Beehive.

The basin is now being filled in as part of an expansion project.

Almost 1,000 operations were carried out by motor torpedo boats, motor gunboats and motor launches from Beehive during the war, engaging the enemy in the North Sea and Channel.

Among those attending the Landguard ceremony were Antony and Robert Hitchens, sons of the celebrated wartime MTB officer Lt Cdr Robert Hitchens.

## £50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our August edition (right) was HMS Jamaica.

She featured in *The Battle of the River Plate* (known in the USA as *Pursuit of the Graf Spee*).

Mr M Dyer, of Gosport, answered correctly, and wins our £50 prize.

This month's ship (above) was one of a class of six post-war ships which proved useful in later frigate designs.

What was her name, and can you identify her sister ship, which gave her name to the class and shares a Yorkshire connection?

We have removed her pennant number from the picture.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.



Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Closing date for entries is November 13. 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 December edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

The winner of our Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum prize was Mr M Gilhespy of Hartlepool.

He too sent us the correct Caribbean-influenced answer to our puzzle in the August edition, and will shortly be receiving his bottle of rum and two glasses.



See next month's Prize Puzzle for a chance to win £50 or bottles of Wadworth's Swordfish, a five per cent ale which blends Wadworth 6X and Pusser's Rum.

### MYSTERY PICTURE 176

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News and information for serving personnel

# Marines soak Sienna

THERE must have been some arguments in the office of the Royal Marines Commando Display Team (RMCDDT) when the call came in... "We need you to rescue Hollywood star Sienna Miller from 'insurgents' on the River Thames."

And so, the beautiful blonde actress was duly saved from the rebel hordes and delivered safely – although somehow her white shirt managed to get wet (and transparent) en route – to the press launch of her new film *G.I. Joe* on board HMS Belfast.

Although the film itself did not get the best of reviews, the audience would have enjoyed the new recruitment advert for the Royal Marines film *Swamp Ambush* which was shown before it.

Of course, it's not just on celluloid that you might have spied the RM team, whose summer events kicked off in style at the Armed Forces Day celebrations at Chatham Historic Dockyard.

"Chatham Armed Forces Day was a perfect celebration of the Royal Marines showcasing their specialised skills," said Maj Bruce Foster of the RM Outreach Team.

"We had Marines fast-roping from a Sea King on to a Rigid Raider at speed to arrest insurgents much to the delight of the 30,000 crowd.

"The RMCDDT allows the public to see the Commando ethos in action."

But rapid roping and rigid raiders are not the only commando skills on display at these

events, which often include demonstrations of hand-to-hand fighting, climbing simulators and similar static attractions.

The RMCDDT are trained specialists in unarmed combat, helicopter and structural abseils, high aerial slides, and qualified supervisors of the rock-climbing walls.

If your unit or organisation could use the services of the RMCDDT for a public event, send your bid (with preferably at least 12 months' notice) to:

Maj Bruce Foster RM  
Corps Colonel Dept  
CTCRM  
Lymptone  
Exmouth  
EX8 5AR  
01392 414154

## Praise for rehab centre

THE South West Regional Rehabilitation Unit at Devonport Naval Base was hailed by Kevan Jones, the Under Secretary of State for Defence.

He toured the centre and described it as an example for the rest of the country in providing dedicated service for injured military personnel needing help to return to work, whether injured in training or in theatre.

The minister said: "The Royal Navy and Royal Marines are ahead of the game on this issue here in the south-west."

"This is pioneering work providing a rehabilitation pathway called 'Journey back to business' from either injuries in Afghanistan, training or from their day-to-day job.

"This is exactly what is needed with casualties coming back from Afghanistan and for the transition either back into the world of work within their units or into civilian life."

He added: "This is a centre of excellence and the other Services are learning about it. It is a kind of one-stop service because of its location as a regional centre."

The Devonport-based Rehabilitation Centre is close to the NHS Derriford Hospital with its military staff and the Recovery Cell, and the new Hasler Company Royal Marines.

## Patients first at Raleigh centre

A PATIENTS group at HMS Raleigh has become the first in the Royal Navy to be affiliated with the National Association for Patient Participation.

The HMS Raleigh Patient Participation Group was launched in May, and is similar to groups operated in civilian surgeries to allow two-way communications between the practice and its patients.

CPO James Smith, Raleigh's practice manager, chairs the group; he said: "Patients have more to offer doctors than just their illnesses."

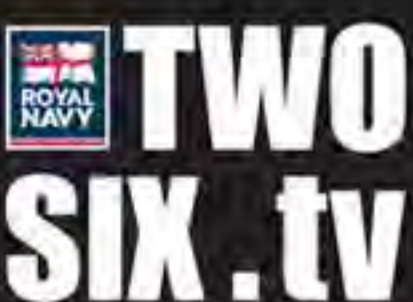
"We are looking for ideas on how to improve the health care services we provide. This could be about setting up a new support group or changes to our procedures."

Ideas taken up so far include opening the medical centre earlier for sailors who need to see a doctor as a fresh case. In addition, the new times are more compatible with the basic training programme for new recruits.

The National Association for Patient Participation is a registered charity, and affiliation allows each practice to apply to the Royal College of Surgeons for a grant.

CPO Smith said: "We have applied for a grant of £3,000, and if successful, we will be looking to our Patient Participation Group to come up with suggestions on how that money should be spent to benefit those under our care."

The group, comprising of five sailors from various departments at the base, meets monthly.



## JPA focus

THE JPA Information Forum has highlighted a couple of useful pointers for people plunging into the JPA system.

■ *Self Service User Guide*  
The Self Service User Guide gives step-by-step instructions on how to update information or submit claims for allowances on JPA.

A quick look at this will more than likely answer any question you may have.

It can be found at the JPS Portal, selecting Library then Self Service User Guide.

■ *Access to the JPA via the internet*

Are you one of the few that does not have regular access to JPA via the MOD Intranet? If so, you could be a candidate for an Internet Access to Shared Services (IASS) card, which will enable you to access JPA via the internet (with some limitations, eg no OJAR/SJAR facility).

Contact WO1 Steve Campbell on 93832 3579 or by email FLEET-DNPS BIS PSO SO3 for further information.

## High on a hill sits FCISSU

THE official reopening of F and G legs at the Fleet Communication Information System Support Unit at Portsdown Hill was carried out by Cdre Richard Jackman.

This significant refurbishment and expansion project was required following the extensive growth of Information Systems within the Joint Service Environment and more importantly to provide the support infrastructure required for the DII(FD) system, which is due to be rolled out across all three Services in the near future.

Ultimately intended to replace such systems as CSS, RAFCIS and JOCSS, a number of these deployable Secret network systems will be based at Portsdown and RM Stonehouse in preparation for deployment with such units as Maritime Battle Staff (MBS) and 3 Commando Brigade.

Once deployed these systems will be established, maintained and administered by the unit's personnel who will remain with the headquarters at the DII(FC) subject matter experts.

Reflecting the joint nature of the task, the unit is commanded by RFA I/O Steve Taylor and currently consists of over 60 personnel drawn from RN, RM, RFA, civil servants and MOD contractors.

These personnel are divided among Portsmouth, RM Stonehouse, Faslane and Marchwood, whilst FCISSU also have personnel permanently embedded within the MBS and in MCC Bahrain.

FCISSU are tasked to provide a 24/7 global support service to CINC Fleet's deployed Communications and Information Systems, supporting both legacy CIS and future deployable DII systems.

Effectively a CIS support 'one-stop shop' for the Fleet and RFAs, the unit not only services, fits, supports and rectifies these systems, it is also involved in the deployment of new systems such as Fleet Interim Mobile System.

# Pensive about pensions?

YOU may have read recent newspaper articles portraying an envy the private sector has towards perceived 'gold-plated' public sector pension schemes, writes Lt Cdr David Marsh, Pensions secretary of the Forces Pension Society.

This envy grows ever greater as more and more private sector companies close their final salary pension schemes, not just for new recruits, but for existing employees too, and substitute them for either a defined contribution scheme or offer a group 'private pension' scheme with some form of contribution by the company into the employee's plan.

This growing envy is compounded further as members of defined contribution pension plans and private pension plans have, over the past 15 months or so, watched in horror as their pension-pot values have reduced significantly because of the current world financial crisis and the crashing markets in which their pension funds are invested.

Given the manner in which 'final salary' pension schemes are falling by the wayside in the private sector, I suspect most of you, after leaving the Armed Forces, will not be lucky enough to find an employer with such a pension scheme in place, and will end up in either a defined contribution company pension scheme, a group company pension scheme or having to set up your own private pension plan.

None of these three options is anywhere near as valuable as a final salary pension scheme.

Today everybody is allowed to be in possession of a pension valued at £1.75m (this excludes the state pension) before they begin to incur a penal rate of income tax, over-and-above the tax they can expect to pay on their pensions anyway.

To do this with a defined contribution pension, group company pension or private pension is very simple – it is the amount of money in the fund at the point of cashing it in to buy your pension.

Your Armed Forces pension does not have a fund and so there has to be a formula constructed to assess its value.

Luckily the Inland Revenue's formula is easy – it is the value of your annual pension multiplied by 20, plus your gratuity; in effect, your pension multiplied by 23.

Putting this into practice, let us take a look at a Warrant Officer leaving the Armed Forces at age 55 having completed 37 years' service on AFP575.

The pension awarded on exit is £20,300 per year; applying the formula of multiplying the pension by 23, the value of this pension is £466,900.

How does that compare with a defined contribution scheme's

## Problems in sharing on divorce

THE differences for couples divorcing under the new pension scheme AFP 05 when compared to AFP 75 have been highlighted by Chris Upfield, a specialist in the subject at law firm Coffin Mew.

According to Chris, the differences cause a number of difficulties for judges and legal practitioners in formulating an approach which achieves fairness between Service personnel and their spouses at the time of divorce.

"Under AFP75, there were already some issues that arose, such as the doubtful underlying accuracy of the Transfer Values (CETVs) produced, particularly in the case of Service personnel leaving service in their early 40s," he said.

"The AFP75 pension and lump sum benefits could nonetheless be accessed immediately on leaving service, whereas the AFP05 pension is preserved to age 65 before it can be accessed."

The compensation for the AFP05 pensioner is that the valuable EDP lump sum and income benefits can usually be accessed at a much earlier age.

However because these benefits do not form part of the pension, they cannot be made the subject of pension-sharing orders.

Therefore the spouse of an AFP05 pensioner is potentially more prejudiced on divorce than that of an AFP75 pensioner, reckons Chris.

An EDP lump sum and income stream is a factor a judge must consider, yet it is often not known at the time of divorce if or when an EDP will be received.

The EDP income payments are another issue – they may form the only income available to retired Service personnel who have been unable to find work in the civilian world, so why would it be fair to divert a proportion to the spouse immediately when the spouse may be in work with a good income?

Chris warns: "There can be no standard approaches to AFP05 on divorce. The circumstances of each individual couple will be looked at in deciding what the fairest approach to take is."

## Trophy lives



TROPHY P9224 is a large decorated silver bowl around the sides of which are enamelled colour views of the city of Gloucester, the City Arms and Naval emblems.

The central feature is a model of the tower of Gloucester Cathedral and the trophy was presented to the light cruiser HMS Gloucester by the city in 1910.

Amongst the battle honours for HMS Gloucester is the second battle of Cape Finisterre, which took place on October 14 1747 during the War of the Austrian Succession.

The first battle of Finisterre had been in May of that year, when a French convoy of 30 ships had been routed by Admiral Anson's squadron of 14 ships.

The French needed to reopen the supply routes from North America and in the October assembled a total of 252 merchant ships off La Rochelle; eight men-of-war from Brest would escort this convoy.

Although North America was largely a secondary theatre during this war, it was a source of raw materials for both the British and the French.

To counter the French convoy, led by Commodore the Marquis de l'Etandue, the British despatched Rear Admiral Sir Edward Hawke from Plymouth on August 9 with a force of 14 ships, which included the 50-gun, fourth rate HMS Gloucester.

The two fleets met in the early morning, approximately 200 miles from Ushant and Hawke, believing he faced a superior enemy force, formed line of battle.

Realising this not to be the case, he compensated for the inferior firepower of his ships by directing them to concentrate on one of the enemy at a time.

When the long-range artillery duel failed to materialise he then ordered 'General Chase', allowing his captains to take independent action and to overhaul the French line.

The French lost 4,000 men and had six warships captured, but most of the merchantmen managed to escape and continue across the Atlantic.

However the majority were hunted down and later captured in the West Indies.

This defeat finally convinced the French of their feebleness at sea; they made no further efforts to breach the British blockades and most French colonies, particularly in the Caribbean, soon came close to starvation.

See also the review on page 41 of *The Age of the Ship of the Line* written by Jonathan Dull for more analysis on the rival navies

News and information for serving personnel



# NFF building for the future

WOW, writes Kim Richardson of the Naval Families Federation about a letter received at their offices: "I am always impressed with the work that the Families Federations undertake and I greatly value the close working relationship we have."

"So I was particularly pleased to have the opportunity to visit the Naval Families Federation in September. I already know Kim well, and it was good to meet the rest of the team."

"Readers of *Navy News* should know what a dedicated and talented team they have working on their behalf, and I am very grateful to them all for their important contribution to the effectiveness of the Naval Service."

The statement arrived after a visit to the NFF at Castaway House by the Under Secretary of State for Defence and Minister for Veterans Kevan Jones MP, during which he also met representatives from charities based there.

In the words of someone famous 'the system works' - the issues raised by families in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines communities reach the ears of those that make the decisions.

The comment from the Minister highlights just how your views and experiences get to their intended destination.

Some of the timely subjects that we have been talking to families about during the last month include:

**Affordable Housing under the Key Worker Scheme.**

At first glance it seems that only two straightforward choices are available to satisfy the delicate balance of work/home interests - either buy your own or apply for Service Families Accommodation (SFA).

If the route you are favouring is to buy your own home then take a look at the options that are out there. Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) specialise in offering free advice to Service personnel and their families, whatever format the family takes.

The status of being a key worker in the eyes of the Government means that all Service personnel have access to their affordable housing schemes, so if maybe you are a single parent or enjoy your life as a couple without getting married, the schemes could be well worth exploring further.

Contact details can be found on the NFF website.

**Continuity of Education Allowance**

For all parents the happiness and choices made for children's education is of utmost importance and subtle changes in the rules



Kim Richardson (left) and colleagues at the NFF with defence minister Kevan Jones

governing Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) may not have made themselves obvious to families using this scheme.

The Children's Advisory Education Service (CEAS) are the specialists in policy and practice, and changes that you are either thinking of making or plans that are hatching should include a call or written communication to CEAS, who will be able to help navigate the current rules and how they apply to families.

**Modern Housing Solutions**  
Modern Housing Solutions (MHS) have announced the launch of their approved pre-payment cleaning scheme which is rolling out across the whole of the UK.

Families living in SFA can arrange for a no-obligation quote from the appointed company, who will guarantee the cleaning meets move-out standard.

Leaflets on the scheme are available via DE Housing Officers, who can provide them as part of the pre-move out visit.

**Rowner housing**  
Some of you may have received letters about the proposed changes to housing in Rowner; please see the NFF website and follow the links for further information.

**Reporting back to you...**  
We received a letter into our offices on August 17 from the Under Secretary of State for Defence, progressing some of the agenda items discussed as part of the regular families forum meetings; this is what is being said:

**Flexibility of employment to facilitate childcare.**

"Recent AFW work has focused on completing guidance to the chain of command on arrangements for safeguarding the children of Service families - this is required for the full implementation of the Armed Forces Act 2006 by October, and also as a result of the Baby P enquiry."

"Once this is complete the focus of work will move to the creation of guidance for the Services on the management of childcare."

"We shall be looking to underscore the importance of flexibility in the allocation of duties in order to enable Service personnel to meet their obligation

both to their military duties and to their family."

**Definition of a Family.**  
"I know you are all concerned about policy guidance on the definition of a family. You are well aware that this is not a simple issue and has very significant ramifications (not just financial)."

"We are looking to produce Terms of Reference for this major piece of work over the next few months with a view to commencing the study later this year."

"It will be important that we engage with all who have an interest, which will obviously include you. It may be that this work will form part of forthcoming defence review."

Rome wasn't built in a day, but it did get built. Your feedback and experiences are what enable us to voice the collective views and concerns of Naval and Marines Families - please keep them coming.

The Naval Families Federation is contactable via [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk), 02392 654374, or: NFF, Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.



- GALAXY BRIEFS**  
Galaxy 07/09: The Elizabeth Cross and Memorial Scroll  
Galaxy 08/09: First Sea Lord's headmark document  
Galaxy 09/09: The Sun Military Awards ('Millies') - message from First Sea Lord  
Galaxy 10/09: Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) - 2008 results.  
Galaxy 11/09: Defence Secretary priorities and objectives

**ROYAL NAVY TEMPORARY MEMORANDA**

- RNTM 122/09: The Royal Navy day by day  
RNTM 126/09: Guidance and policy for Fleet internal communications  
RNTM 127/09: Naval service amenity fund approved grants  
RNTM 128/09: Completion of survey of leave  
RNTM 130/09: Desmond Wettern Fleet award 2009  
RNTM 146/09: Long Look 2010 - annual exchange of personnel between RN, RAN and RNZN  
RNTM 150/09: N-Trust - Scheme details and notice of increase to contributions and benefits  
RNTM 153/09: Guide for conducting safety, health and environment accident/incident investigations  
RNTM 155/09: Armed Forces Act 2006 - Revision of RN publications  
RNTM 161/09: White Ensign Association autumn term visit programme 2009  
RNTM 162/09: Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) training  
RNTM 164/09: Divisional management and documentation - disposal of ROARRS 1 & 2

- DINS**  
DIN 2009DIN01-121: Armed Forces childcare voucher scheme  
DIN 2009DIN01-126: The wearing of uniform in public - standards of dress and behaviour  
DIN 2009DIN01-169: Armed Forces Pension Scheme 1975 (AFPS 75) commutation  
DIN 2009DIN01-171: HM Forces Railcard - revised administrative instructions  
DIN 2009DIN01-172: Day of prayer for the Armed Forces - November 5 2009  
DIN 2009DIN01-173: Electoral registration - members of the Armed Forces and their spouses/civil partners  
DIN 2009DIN01-181: Armed Forces weight management policy  
DIN 2009DIN09-010: The Sun Military Awards 2009

- DIBS**  
27/09: The Elizabeth Cross and Memorial Scroll  
29/09: First anniversary of the Service Personnel Command Paper - main achievements and next steps  
31/09: Armed Forces Compensation Scheme (AFCS)  
32/09: Access to swine flu advice and antiviral treatment  
33/09: New guidelines for Service and MOD staff using social media  
35/09: Secretary of State's policy statement on safety, health, environmental protection and sustainable development

## Out and about

IF you would like to catch up with the Royal Navy Presentation Team during one of their stints around the country, they can be found at:

- October 13:** St Magnus Centre, Kirkwall; **October 15:** The Town House, Inverness; **November 2:** Greenwich Theatre, Greenwich, London; **November 18:** The Deep, Hull; **November 19:** Sheffield United Football Club, Sheffield; **November 30:** HMS President, London

If you would like to attend, call 020 8833 8020/8022.



The team from the UK Strategic Weapon Facility at the US Strategic Weapon Facility Atlantic in Georgia

## Rocket men

THE TEAM responsible for the management of the UK's Strategic Weapon Facility have been awarded a commendation by General Sir Kevin O'Donoghue, the Chief of Defence Materiel.

Lt Cdr Stuart Hobson, the officer in charge of the Strategic Weapon System Building at Faslane Naval Base, and Graham Potter, RNAD Coulport's depot operations manager, were given the certificate after a successful programme of work that has supported the work to bring HMS Victorious back into the Fleet and to offload HMS Vigilant's weapons and missiles to take her place in refit.

To add a further challenge, this cycle just happened to coincide with a major US and UK inspection, designed to keep an eye on the team's efficiency.

"It is fantastic that the work of our team at SWSB and Coulport has been recognised," said Lt Cdr Hobson. "They really pulled out all the stops to help keep the deterrent programme on track despite manpower shortages and a volatile submarine programme."

"Add to this the fact that there was a major inspection during the work and you can see why it's a significant achievement."

The pressures mounted on the team were not just man-made however. When 16 of them travelled to the US Strategic Weapon Facility Atlantic (SWFLANT) in Kings Bay, Georgia, to help with the load and offload of the submarine's missile delivery system they were forced to take shelter from a tornado.

"The winds were so powerful", said Lt Cdr Hobson, "that they actually ripped off the roof of the explosive handling jetty."

"The submarine was safely berthed at the time and no one was hurt, but it was still a hairy moment."

"Luckily the US has a second handling jetty and we moved there and resumed working."

So at the conclusion of their hard work, the team have received a commendation, seen a submarine safely back at sea, and won praise from the US and UK inspectors who said they "showed best practice for procedures in weapon handling".

Lt Cdr Hobson concluded: "I cannot emphasise how well our team has performed. Their versatility, flexibility and expertise are extraordinary and I congratulate every last one of them."

## Ocean experts

A CENTRE of Excellence in Naval Oceanographic Research and Education (CENORE) has been set up among the University of Plymouth, Flag Officer Sea Training - Hydrography and Oceanography, and Britannia Royal Naval College.

The Centre provides a focus for RM personnel seeking academic degrees and offers a platform for the development of research and enterprise activities of mutual interest.

CENORE is based at the University campus, virtually and physically, associated with the new School of Marine Science

and Engineering. Dr Richard Thain and Dr Duncan Priestley, who are both based at BRNC, will be the research and education coordinators for the new centre.

Dr Priestley said: "This is an exciting venture which brings together the university and Royal Navy, allowing a synergy of experience and the development of new approaches."

"By strengthening links with the Royal Navy it drives forward the university's enterprise agenda, and significantly enhances the educational opportunities for specialist personnel."

## Living a life online

NEW guidance has been issued in DIB 33/09 on the subject of online self-publishing, social networking and user-generated content - or in its native tongue, blogs, forums, Twitter, Facebook and other web-based activities.

The MOD has stressed that it is keen to have Service personnel talk about what they do, but highlights the need to protect security, reputation and privacy.

Online posts about factual matters which are unclassified, uncontroversial and non-operational are up to the individual, but if in doubt, people should seek advice from their chain of command.

The information specifically identified for authorisation pre publication is:

- relates to operations or deployments;
- offers opinions on wider defence or armed forces activity,

or on third parties without their permission;

attempts to speak, or could be interpreted as speaking, on behalf of the Service or the MOD;

relates to controversial, sensitive or political matters.

People are encouraged to follow the same high standards of behaviour online as would be expected elsewhere.

The DIB also points out the need to protect personal information which may leave the individual vulnerable to hackers, online fraudsters and the like.

Perhaps one of the most salient pieces of advice reads: "Don't publish anything you wouldn't be happy for your parents or your children to see."

Recent cases against bloggers such as the police's Nightjack have shown that anonymity is not guaranteed online.

## Nature at Faslane

A NATURE reserve sandwiched between Clyde Naval Base and RNAD Coulport has been awarded the 2009 Sanctuary Silver Otter Environmental Projects award.

The Peaton Hill Reserve was given the accolade in recognition of five years of significant development. The reserve was set up in 2004 when the MOD and the Scottish Government's natural environment advisers saw the benefits of transforming the site.

The site supports a number of species: hen harriers, black grouse, grass warblers, toads, common frogs, and smooth newts.

The team responsible will receive their award this month at a presentation at Whitehall.

**DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE ARMED FORCES**

THE ARMED FORCES' CHAPLAINCIES AND THE MILITARY CHRISTIAN ORGANISATIONS WOULD LIKE TO INVITE YOU TO JOIN THEM FOR A DAY OF PRAYER FOR THE ARMED FORCES.

- ON:** Thursday, 5 November 2009  
**AT:** St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 4JJ  
**TIMING:** 1245 - 1600  
**DRESS:** Working dress or civilian equivalent

The main service will take place from 1245 - 1345, followed by refreshments in St Martin's Hall. There will then be an opportunity for prayer followed by a short act of corporate worship ending at 1600.

**RSVP:** [forcesprayerday@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:forcesprayerday@yahoo.co.uk) or 02392 814410

For more information: [www.pray4ourforces.org.uk](http://www.pray4ourforces.org.uk)

You are most welcome to join us for all or part of the programme: If you can't join us, please pray with us on the day.





Picture: LA(Phot) Shaun Barlow



# World of sport

**ANY major deployment by a task group means plenty of hard work for all concerned.**

And after the hard work, there are golden opportunities to challenge a local team at your (or their) favourite sport, to keep fit, or just to unwind.

Take Taurus 09 – more than 3,000 sailors, Royal Marines and Gurkhas in a flotilla around 12 strong (ships dipped in and out en route) including assault ships Bulwark and Ocean, frigates Argyll and Somerset, three RFAs and two nuclear submarines, not to mention elements of six Naval air squadrons.

The exercise to the Far East gave Capt Mike Farrage, Director of Naval Physical Development, and his regional physical development teams the chance to pull out all the stops in terms of supporting physical activity during the deployment.

Leading PTs, whether from PORFLOT, DEVFLOT or FASFLOT, are routinely sent out to deployed units for low-level support, travelling to the Gulf or the Med, perhaps, to help set up events.

But Taurus was the first chance for the teams to flex their muscles in a major exercise, and the full range of support was offered, from advice and inspections to sending white jackets out to help at the sharp end, whether by leading adventurous training (AT) expeditions or officiating at more formal sports events.

That is not to say that the embarked experts were not up to the job – the assault ships each carry a POPT while LPTs cater for the needs of the frigates – but the sheer breadth and scale of some undertakings required a little more input.

Such as the olympiad held on the site of the former HMS Terror in Singapore at the end of an operational stand-down, featuring teams from Ocean, Somerset, New Zealand ship Te Mana and

– somewhat against the odds – RFA Wave Ruler; the tanker was undergoing maintenance, so to assemble a team of 12 from its modest crew was quite a coup.

POPT Rob Greetham and LPT ‘Kenny’ Kennet arranged a programme featuring rugby 7s (male and female), soccer 6s, volleyball and tug o’ war, with some 170 sailors and Marines taking part; Ocean took the overall laurels (although not surprisingly the Kiwis were too strong with the oval ball).

There were football, cricket, basketball, volleyball and rugby fixtures pitting ship teams against each other and local sides as the deployment made its way from nation to nation, while even the golfers occasionally got the chance to show their prowess.

And ships also amused themselves, such as when POPT Lenny Armstrong organised a full-blown Field Gun competition on Bulwark’s flight deck, with teams representing various departments and Royal Marines.

Other flight-deck sports are a staple of such deployments – deck hockey, brighter cricket, bucketball and dodgeball among them.

In terms of AT, supported by the Sports Lottery and Navy Command through Operational Welfare Packages, mountain biking, white-water rafting, sailing, climbing, skiing, scuba diving and trekking all featured in the list of achievements, giving sailors and Royals a chance to test themselves and prove they possess the grit which Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey is looking for.

But there is also a need for a complete break and to switch off. And where better to do that than in the Maldives?

Built into the Taurus 09 programme was a massive task group banyan – a Senior Service picnic or barbecue.

Around 1,200 people landed on an island for water sports, beach games, sunbathing and a lunch complete with crates of goffer. That’s right – soft drinks all round.

When Bulwark went alongside in Gibraltar on the homeward leg she had embarked in her the Ocean boxing team, presenting the first opportunity in five years for a Fleet-sponsored boxing event.

Both ship squads were coached to a high level for novice contests, and with an enthusiastic crowd of 350 cramming the flight deck, bolstered by visiting families, and the Rock providing a dramatic backdrop, the fighters delivered a memorable evening’s entertainment.

Bulwark took the honours, and the presence of experienced RNBA officials helped make the event even more valuable for participants.

Taurus also allowed the top brass at Temeraire to breathe new life into a number of Fleet competitions, which used to be competed for over six-month periods.

Thus Bulwark won the title for the Suez row and AT, while Ocean were top dogs for the 50x1km row.

For the record, HMS Westminster – not a Taurus ship – took the Gib Rock Race title for the first half of 2009, while another three competitions are in

line for a revival.

Lt Cdr Gary Mills, SO2 Regional Physical Development, said the deployment was a fair reflection of how Temeraire – the home of RN physical training and sport – ensured they are doing their bit to support operational capability.

Key messages – including “fit to fight, fit for life” and “time for sport, not time off for sport” – indicate a desire to keep physical fitness at the heart of the RN ethos, and the Temeraire team is investigating every avenue to ensure ships and deployed units are supported.

That might mean sourcing the right fitness equipment – some kit will simply not fit in a Trafalgar-class submarine, for example – or setting up an RN Fitness Test on a jetty half a world away.

Apart from the obvious health benefits, there are other gains from such activities.

Leadership qualities come to the fore in AT scenarios, while the chance to let off steam after a long period at sea is also a good reason to pound a mountain bike across dirt tracks in Turkey or bounce around in a white-water raft.

**Regional Physical Development Teams:**

Northern Region and FASFLOT: WO1(PT) Paul Nash, **DES NBCC-WOPT North** tel 93255 3615

Eastern Region and PORFLOT: WO1(PT) Ian Binks, **DES NBCC-COB-PT&RO** tel 9380 22828

Western Region inc DEVFLOT: WO1(PT) Neal Frame, **COB-daro** tel 9375 68158

Royal Marines: Maj Paul Curry, **CTCRM-LDGR-IPTRM** tel 93785 4008

Naval Air Command: Lt Paul Mitchell, **YEOVILTON-PT & RO** tel 93510 6200

DIN with full details to follow in due course.



● Anticlockwise from top: Happy faces (except from the chap steering...) on a white-water rafting trip in Turkey; Ocean and Bulwark battle it out in the boxing ring in Gibraltar; mountain bikers in Turkey; Ocean sits offshore in the Maldives during a banyan for 1,200; taking a dip in a boom net on a sailing trip

## Bangalore on Solent

IN OCTOBER 1941 I met Glyn Chivers at the Naval Recruiting Office in Cardiff. We were just 18 years old and had volunteered for the Royal Navy.

On the train to Gosport, where we were heading for the New Barracks, we met a petty officer who knew Glyn, and when he asked where we were heading he told us this story.

In the 1920s a firm of architects had received orders to design a naval barracks for Gosport and an army barracks for Bangalore, in India.

The plans were put in the wrong envelopes and certainly at Gosport the barracks had a parade ground with buildings at the ends and sides with veranda doors about 12ft high and rooms that stretched from the front to the back.

- David Somme, ex-PO Radar Mech, Mitcheldean

## Miggie maybe

AT THE risk of being accused of living in the past (at 77 one cannot look too far into the future!) I would suggest, with reference to Charles Lawson's letter (September) that there are many, many more ex-matelots than serving.

Indeed, 50-odd years ago one rarely saw Navy News on the messdeck and today I doubt that it would exist without its 'ex' readers.

However, back to the point, I refer to the article/photo (September) about women's hockey. The lady, far left, back row, is, I believe Chief Wren Radio Mech 'Miggie' Mayhew.

She was a very good all-round sportswoman who also played for the Home Air Command, not only at hockey but tennis.

How do I know this? My wife (née Maureen Kelley) played for the command in both sports in the 50s.

- B S Jarman, ex-POREI(A) ex-ChWEM (R) RNR, Southampton

# Our branch is no longer distressed

I FEEL that I must write to counter some of the remarks made by Lt Cdr Parkin (letters, June) on the incorrect flying of the Union Flag at the Royal Naval Comrades' Club in Lake Road, Portsmouth.

Firstly, apologies on behalf of the club that the flag was inadvertently flown upside-down for a while - as soon as this was pointed out to us it was rectified.

Secondly, the club is not the RNA HQ itself (which is in Semaphore Tower in HM Naval Base) but the Portsmouth Branch RNA HQ.

As soon as I was notified about the flag being flown incorrectly, I returned the telephone call (I trust leaving a polite message!) and contacted the club about it. Unfortunately a number of somewhat cross RNA folk kept going in to complain and the club staff may have turned the flag over a few times in response!

Thirdly, we are sadly not a 'legion of infallible supermen' but a dwindling band of all-too fallible folk of both sexes, but always welcoming of visitors - all current and ex-RN folk are welcome. By the way, the flag is not visible from the pavement so folk frequenting the club would not be aware of the faux pas.

We trust that the Union Flag is no longer indicating or causing distress - maybe we should invest in the White Ensign next time, easier to put up the right way - but would we be treading on toes if we displayed one?

- S/M Revd David Stephen Butler, Secretary and Chaplain, RNA Portsmouth Branch

## Not the Raleigh I knew

I REFER to the photograph on page 12 of the July edition of new recruits at HMS Raleigh allegedly learning how to pull what appears to be a 32ft cutter on dry land.

This does not ring true on three counts, it's a posed photograph, or a hoax, or all three.

1) Raleigh cap tallies? Wartime cap tallies bore the inscription 'HMS' only.

2) Pulling a boat dressed in No.1s, wearing a cap, and a gas mask slung over your shoulder? Defies belief!

3) Unless the oars - and they don't appear to be - were restrained hydraulically or mechanically or by some other means, the rowers would have been flat on their backs at the first pull.

- G Thomas, (1938 entrant) Wimborne, Dorset

The photograph formed part of a photographic essay following a man's progression through training, so Mr Thomas is probably right, it is a posed photo dreamt up by the RN Public Relations team of the time - Ed



## It's a dog's life in my mick

AS I was swinging in my hammock I was wondering which of the Navy's finest were the last ships to have hammocks and hard layers? (Not counting HMS Victory.)

I was on HMS Puma, one of the Leopard-class frigates. She paid off in 1972 when I was still ship's company.

After two years all I walked away with was a combative tie and my mick which still comes out every summer.

I am now a prison officer dog handler at HMP Highpoint, in Suffolk.

My dogs are both drugs dogs but my spaniel is also one of only ten mobile phone detection dogs in the world.

- Edward Cragg, Suffolk

## National pride in all nations

THE ARTICLE on page 13 of your July edition refers to the veterans returning to the beaches for the D-Day 65th anniversary.

I am a former Royal Marine and have lived in Canada for over 40 years. I am proud to be a Canadian citizen, but will always remain British at heart.

I love the Navy News and have subscribed to it for quite a few years, and I read every page.

Imagine my horror when I read the aforementioned article and got to paragraph three.

How could you have managed to leave out of the list of dignitaries our Canadian Prime Minister, Stephen Harper?

He was front and centre with the others and the Canadian National Anthem was played.

I'm sure I do not have to remind you of the part Canada played on D-Day - they were actually the only troops to take their objective on 6th June, and many men were lost.

The veterans are so very proud of the part they played as Allies of the British, Americans and all the other countries.


- Michael Cubitt, RMA, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone. We do, however, publish many on our website, [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk), accompanied by images.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



## NOTICEBOARD

### Reunions

**OCTOBER 2009**  
Calling all ex-Bay Class Frigate men: Our numbers are reducing annually so why not have a 'Bay-class reunion'? Particularly those who served in Korea, but are others welcome. Contact Doug Turk at [doug.turk@ntlworld.com](mailto:doug.turk@ntlworld.com) or tel: 01252 377481.

**Dauntless Association (Wrens):** A weekend party for ex Wrens, RN women and their friends and family. A celebration of 60th anniversary of the reforming of the WRNS is taking place from October 30 to November 1 at Mill Rythe Holiday Village, Hayling Island, Hampshire. For more details contact Mrs Nicki Smith at [bassguitar66@googlemail.com](mailto:bassguitar66@googlemail.com) or see the website at <http://www.dauntlesswrens.co.uk> or tel: 07827 931864.

**Royal Naval Writers' Association (RNWA):** The World's Oldest Military Association. The 122nd RNWA reunion dinner takes place at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, 7pm for 7.30pm until 1am on October 9. Cost £33 per person for a three-course meal plus wine with guest speaker Capt. Pennefather (Retd). Serving and ex-serving Writers and serving Logisticsians (Personnel) and guests welcome. To obtain tickets and details, contact: RNWA Secretary Les Heyhoe at [les@heyhoe.com](mailto:les@heyhoe.com) or tel: 07950 934888.

**Portsmouth Fieldgun Association:** Ten-year commemorative dinner. Cessation of the Royal Turret and Command Field Gun, WO & Svr Rates Mess, Whale Island on October 10 commencing at 1030. For more details contact Rob 'Bum' Wyatt at [robddon.wyatt@ntlworld.com](mailto:robddon.wyatt@ntlworld.com) or tel: 023 9235 6868.

**NOVEMBER 2009**  
**HMS Ambuscade Association & Type 21 Club Members:** The Ambuscade Association will be meeting in Plymouth on November 6 at the St Levan Inn, Devonport from 1930. Ex-Ambers and all 21 Club members from any commission are very welcome to this annual pilgrimage for an informal get together with a few drinks and oysters. Contact Mark Eeckelhurst at [mark@sharpleygroup.com](mailto:mark@sharpleygroup.com) or see the website at <http://www.ambuscade.org> or tel: weekdays on 01925 839592.

**HMS Collingwood Association:** Turkey and Tinsel weekend and reunion at the excellent Bancourt Hotel, Torquay, November 6-9. All members and partners welcome. Programme includes coach trip with buffet lunch, dinner followed by live entertainment on two evenings, Remembrance service. Visit our website at [www.hmscollingwoodassociation.co.uk](http://www.hmscollingwoodassociation.co.uk) or contact Brian Cox at [briancox@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:briancox@blueyonder.co.uk) or write to 8 Colesbourne Road, Cheltenham, GL51 6DL.

**Battle of Quiberon, 250th Anniversary:** "Come cheer up my lads, 'tis to glory we steer". November 20 2009 is the 250th anniversary of the Battle of Quiberon Bay. This dramatic naval victory was the turning point in the Seven Years War and the heroic daring of Admiral Sir Edward Hawke established a tradition of uncompromising maritime warfare that carried directly down to Trafalgar. *Hearts of Oak* was written to mark the battle's successful defeat of the French. The tiny church of St Nicolas, North Stoneham, near Southampton, is the final resting place of Admiral Lord Hawke and the anniversary is being marked there with a series of exciting events. For further details please go to <http://www.bassetparish.hampshire.org.uk/quiberonbay250/> or contact Martin Kelly at [kelly@lordswood@aol.com](mailto:kelly@lordswood@aol.com) or tel: 023 8079 0821.

**Submarine Renown Association:** 2009 reunion will take place in Leicester from November 20 to 22. Further details: [subrenown@ntlworld.com](mailto:subrenown@ntlworld.com) or tel: (0116) 2912195.

**FEBRUARY 2010**  
**HMS Penelope Association:** Reunion and AGM in Blackpool, February 2010. For details of the reunion and AGM or membership contact the secretary, Mike Bee at [mike.bee@ntlworld.com](mailto:mike.bee@ntlworld.com) or visit the website at <http://homepage.ntlworld.com/mike.bee> or write to secretary, HMS Penelope Association, 1 Oddfellows Street, Mirfield, WF14 9AB.

**177 (Blackpool Airport) Squadron Air Training Corps:** Celebrate their 70th anniversary on Friday February 12 2010. They will be hosting a formal military style dinner and prize-giving at Blackpool's Premier hotel, The Imperial on that evening. Our guest of honour is confirmed, a senior serving RAF officer. We would like to be able to have at the dinner as many cadets, parents and also as many ex cadets and squadron staff as possible as well as any surviving members of the original 177 SQN RAF who flew Beaufighters in Burma. If there are any ex-cadets out there currently serving in the Regular Forces, we would love to have you present at the celebration in your uniform. More details are available from the Squadron. Email: [oc.177@aircadets.org](mailto:oc.177@aircadets.org) see the website at <http://www.177sqnafc.co.uk> or tel: 01253 403664 and leave a message.

**RN Shipmates Association:** The reunion for all who served in the Royal Navy and who thought they had swallowed the anchor is booking very fast. February 19-22 on the Isle of Wight. (Get some 'sea time' in again.) Partners and wives welcome to this great

weekend. Details from RN Shipmates, Mike Crowe at [mike@rneba.org.uk](mailto:mike@rneba.org.uk) or 7 Heath Road, Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 8PG. Miss it and you miss a Tot issue.

**MAY 2010**  
**HMS Protector Association:** Annual reunion to be held at the Shanklin Hotel, Shanklin, IOW from May 7 to 10. Contact Doug Harris at [dougatspindrift@aol.com](mailto:dougatspindrift@aol.com) or download the form from <http://www.hmsprotector.org> or tel Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116.

**HMS Yarmouth:** Reunion will be held in Torquay from May 14 to 17. £115pp for three nights, dinner, B&B (Gala dinner on Saturday, no single supplement). Contact John Bryant, 47 Lavender Way, Bradley Stoke, Bristol, BS32 0LR or tel: 0117 947 0122.

**JULY 2010**  
**D-Boats Association:** Annual reunion will take place in the WO, SR & SNOs Mess, HMS Nelson on July 3 and 4. On the 3rd, march past 1145, Tot time 1200. Further details on the reunion or how to join the association can be obtained from Mike Smith at [dboats@iscali.co.uk](mailto:dboats@iscali.co.uk) or see the website at <http://www.d-boats.co.uk> or tel: 01553 765530 or write to 206 Main Road, Clenchwarton, Kings Lynn, Norfolk, PE34 4AA.

**SEPTEMBER 2010**  
**S40 Entry, Aircraft Artificer Apprentices:** It is our 50th Anniversary in Sept 2010 so what better time to have a reunion weekend? But where is everyone after all this time? I am offering to coordinate a get-together if there is sufficient support. Please get in touch with me, Mike Norman at [marinor@talktalk.net](mailto:marinor@talktalk.net) or tel: 01935 426826. Please pass this on to others in S40 that you are in touch with.

**OCTOBER 2010**  
**The Ganges Association, USA Division:** 2010 reunion will be for the period October 1 to 18, 2010 onboard the Celebrity cruise ship 'Mercury', out of San Diego to Cabo San Lucas, Mexico (several times), Acapulco, Huatulco, Puntarenas, Costa Rica, through the Panama Canal, Catagena, Colombia, Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic and into Baltimore Maryland USA. Visit/guided tour of the US Naval Training Academy Annapolis and a shopping spree and lunch at the 'Pusser's' shop/restaurant in Annapolis. Basic interior staterooms start at US \$1,190 per person. Port charges and taxes are an additional US \$563.68 per person. For further information contact Derek Henshaw (AAA Travel) at [dhenshaw@aaaouth.com](mailto:dhenshaw@aaaouth.com) or tel: 727 584 7678 ext 2224 or Peter H Palmer at [palmerp@gte.net](mailto:palmerp@gte.net) or tel: 727 584 7143.

### Ask Jack

**HMS Arethusa 1979-82:** Keen to contact ex-POMA Ian Douglas who served onboard Arethusa at the same time as John Baker. We met up several times in Gosport and the last time was in Southsea in 1984-85. He was working in a Portsmouth hospital. If you can help contact John Baker at [bakersutton@btinternet.com](mailto:bakersutton@btinternet.com) or tel: 07808 961521.

**HMS Collingwood Association:** Were you there? Whether you were electrical branch, weapons branch or any branch, whatever you were there for, we want to hear from you. Why not join us, we have two reunions a year, a newsletter and a website. We support H4H by sponsoring the women of the marine assault course team 'Wives Do It Wet and Dirty'. We are also starting a golf section. Visit our website at [www.hmscollingwoodassociation.co.uk](http://www.hmscollingwoodassociation.co.uk) or contact Brian Cox at [briancox@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:briancox@blueyonder.co.uk) or write to 8 Colesbourne Road, Cheltenham, GL51 6DL.

**HMS Eagle:** I am an ex Chief Radio Supervisor, I am not sure if the abbreviation CRS is still known. I served 1946-48 and 1952-73 and my last commission was also HMS Eagle's last commission, purely coincidentally of course. I have now passed the 80 mark and I am wondering if any other long in the tooth ex communicator can remember a humorous article that purported to point out the difference in time needed to train a wartime Sub Lt and a Sparkler/Bunting. The article appeared in a copy of *The Communicator* magazine. It was in verse form and all the good-humoured nickey-taking was needless to say on the side of the comms lads. Some time ago I wrote to HMS Mercury but that establishment seems to have been absorbed. Can anyone help? Cheers and Cries of especially to any Ex Fleet Chiefs of 3J3 mess Eagle. Contact Mr R S Parker at [parker415426@talktalk.net](mailto:parker415426@talktalk.net) or tel: 01524 415426.

**Festival of Remembrance 1982:** Does anyone have any photographs of this event held at the Royal Albert Hall? I was a member of the Royal Navy Display Team at that event

with the window ladder and want to show my grandchildren what I looked like with hair! Contact Eggy Heppburn at [eggy.heppburn@btinternet.com](mailto:eggy.heppburn@btinternet.com) or tel: 07776 117781.

**HMS Gloucester:** I am looking for information regarding my dad, Mark 'Jimmy' Rimmer. He served in Nottingham, Marlborough, Sultan, Nelson, and was serving in Gloucester when he died in 2005 when I was nearly 5. I am seeking anyone who can tell me about him? Does anyone have a recollection of him or any information or photos. Any help would be appreciated - Aeron Rimmer (aged 9). Contact Aeron at [s.rimmer2007@btinternet.com](mailto:s.rimmer2007@btinternet.com) or tel: 023 9266 5116.

**LCGP3:** I recently acquired a shipbuilder's plate from what I believe to be a Royal Navy vessel. The type or number is designated LCGP3 (Landing craft?) and was built by Brooke Marine, Lowestoft in 1961. I would like to know the size of the vessel and where she was stationed. Please contact Tony Sharp at [tonysharp.787@fsmail.net](mailto:tonysharp.787@fsmail.net) or tel: 01822 834889.

**Tricorn Hat:** My husband joined the RN in 1969 and transferred to the RAN in 1991 and is currently serving as a Commander. Recently my mother died and I was given my father's RAF hat from WW2. I also served in the WRNR for over 15 years as a Second Officer. Thus we have decided that we would

like to display all three hats in our house in a prominent position. The problem is the Tricorn Hat - we lost everything, including my WRNR uniforms in Sydney's bush fires of 1994. The question is, we wondered if it would be possible to get a Blue Tricorn Cap Badge. My Tricorn was of the old style and thus to buy a Gold Badge would not be true. We would like to Ask Jack if any member out there has a Blue Tricorn Officer's badge that they would be willing to part with and post to Australia and, of course, we would be happy to pay any expenses. We can purchase a Tricorn Hat here. If you do not think this is possible, then any other suggestions on how to get the Blue Tricorn Officer's Badge would be much appreciated. Please contact Lynne Singleton at [singleton57@bigpond.com](mailto:singleton57@bigpond.com) or write to Rothiemoon, 57 Winchester Avenue, Lindfield, NSW, 2070, Australia.

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Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in November's Noticeboard must be received by **October 12**



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# NOTICEBOARD

## THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES 1979

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...

### October 1969

QUESTIONNAIRES about bell-bottoms were going out to ships all over the Fleet as the Navy reviewed its uniforms.

The other big talking point (sartorially at least) was hair – and Navy News sympathised with young sailors who felt their chances of ‘trapping’ were much reduced by their regulation 1950s short back and sides.

Indeed, a member of the Navy News staff had picked up a sailor thumbing a lift home who confessed that being allowed to grow sideburns was the one regulation whose change would most improve his life.

It was unfair, opined Navy News, to condemn sailors to second place in the romance stakes “while dollies go for the fellows with the modern styles.”

### October 1979

OCTOBER'S Navy News was decidedly sombre, with a goodly part of the paper devoted to Admiral of the Fleet Earl Mountbatten, who had died at the end of August when the IRA blew up his boat on a family holiday.

The front page showed his coffin on a gun carriage in the September sunshine outside Westminster Abbey. His black charger, Dolly, is standing with her head bowed and her master's boots reversed in the stirrups.

The Navy took a major part in his funeral on September 5, with sailors drawing his coffin through London. Ratings from HMS Mercury made up the coffin bearer party for the burial at Romsey Abbey and the firing party was drawn from 45 Commando Royal Marines.

### October 1989

“CIVVIES to clean ships” was the headline, with the news that homecoming sailors were about to get a hand with the chores.

Contracts were being finalised in Devonport, Portsmouth and Rosyth for teams of civilian cleaners with high-tech equipment to clean surface ships in refit and operational time.

It was planned to provide every ship with a deep clean and some painting inside and out every six months.

The idea was to reduce the drudgery for sailors, allowing them more time for leave, courses, sport, team training and recreation, and thereby improve retention as manpower was tight.

## Deaths

Rear Admiral Sir David William Haslam. 1942 he went to sea as a midshipman in the light cruiser Birmingham, then the Australian destroyer Quickmatch and the battleship Resolution, taking part in Indian Ocean convoy operations and the taking of Madagascar from the Vichy French. After North Sea convoy duty in Vivien he opted to become a surveyor in 1944 and was appointed to the armed yacht White Bear carrying out surveys at night between Japanese lines in Burma, mapping unexplored estuaries. After the war he surveyed wrecks in the North Sea; seconded to the RAN for two years working on the Great Barrier Reef; then navigator and subsequently 2iC of the Scott, Dalrymple and Vidal from 1949-58 conducting survey work in home waters, the Persian Gulf, East Africa, the Mediterranean, West Indies and Belize (a shallow area in the Gulf is named Haslam's Patches). Promoted to commander 1957; in 1964 he rescued 180 women and children from the Zanzibar Revolt in which thousands were killed – appointed OBE. He surveyed the North Atlantic seabed to confirm the safety of deep-diving submarines and to provide navigational references. After a tour in Whitehall as assistant hydrographer he commanded Hydro surveying the Solomon Islands, Hong Kong and Papua New Guinea – awarded the Admiral Sir George Back Award in 1974 by the Royal Geographical Society. After a tour at Hydrographical HQ, Taunton as Assistant Director (Naval), promoted to rear-admiral and Hydrographer of the Navy 1975-85; elected a Younger Brother of Trinity House in 1976. President of Derby and Taunton Sea Cadets, Derby RNA and Friends of HMS Vidal Association. August, Aged 86.

Capt Sir Edward Archdale. Entered Dartmouth 1935. After war broke out he continued his training in Vindictive and Edinburgh. 1940 he was midshipman to Sabre, which made several voyages to Dunkirk, eventually evacuating 5,765 soldiers and which later evacuated more troops and civilians from ports in north-west France and Alderney. After completing his training in Hood and Bulldog he volunteered for the submarine service. 1942-43 he completed 12 war patrols, mainly with P42, Unbroken; he manned the three-inch gun where within moments of surfacing, he was able to hit his target – awarded a DSC for the damage inflicted on the Italian cruisers Bolzano and Muzio Attendolo by one salvo of four torpedoes. He returned to teaching at the gunnery school Excellent, then gunnery officer of Daring. 1956-58 he was fleet gunnery officer on the staff of the Commander-in-Chief, Mediterranean 1959-62 a member of directing staff of the RN Tactical School then served two years at the Admiralty. His last appointment was as Captain of the Dockyard and Queen's Harbour Master, Chatham. July 31, Aged 87.

Lt Cdr Reginald 'Mac' Samples DSO. As observer in one of the antiquated Swordfish aircraft of 825 Squadron that made a torpedo attack on the Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen in the English Channel in 1942 he was awarded the DSO for his conspicuous gallantry; he was badly injured and after convalescence he was posted to RNAS Fighter Training Station at Yeovilton and demobbed 1946. July 31, Aged 90.

Bryan 'Jacko' Jackman. CPOMEM. Served 1952-75 in Loch Tralag, Challenger, Maidstone, Chevron, Brenchley, Troughbridge, Verulam, Barrosa, Victorious, Intrepid, Fearless, Berry Head and Hermes. August 23, Aged 74.

Douglas 'Doug' Richardson. AB. Served 1963-73 in Cavalier and Caprice (1968) and HMS Caprice 1968 Association. August 6, Aged 64.

Mary Smallpage (née Berry). Land Army. Daughter of the MD of Piperskils Yard in Sunderland and 'christened' Morecambe Bay at the Sunderland shipyard November 1 1944. Associate member of HMS Morecambe Bay Association. August 15, Aged 89.

Henry Alexander Marsden. Leading Signaller 'Bunce'. Served 1941-45 Landing Craft 455 and Brocklesby. August 17, Aged 86.

John H S Houghton. PO MEM(M). Joined as a boy entrant 1961 leaving for three years and rejoining he served 22 years in Loch Fyne, Orion, Torquay, Euryalus, Danae (1st and 2nd commissions, it was also his final ship) and Leander; Malaysia Campaign. After training at Sultan he joined Hermes, Raleigh (training new entries) then Drake working on casualty action centre during the Falklands War. August 23, Aged 64.

Joe Foggo. HMS Caledonia 1937 Boy's 1939 Association. August 2, Aged 87.

John 'Jack' Leadbetter Mulligan. Yeoman of Signals. Served 1939-54 in Queen Elizabeth (onboard when she was badly damaged by Italian limpet mines in 1941), Tobruk in an LCT, Malta Convoys and survived the sinking of M/V Pampas (1942). Special Service duties North Africa coast (42-43) then Shiant (43-44), Glory when the Japanese signed the surrender on board; Widemouth Bay on anti-piracy patrols off the China coast, Dutch-Indonesian Conflict and Palestine Patrols (46-47); Loch Arkalg (48-50), Superb – American & West Indies Station (50-52) and Surprise when she acted as Royal Yacht for the Coronation Review at Spithead 1953. Widemouth Bay Association, life member, former president, vice chairman and press officer of the Royal Naval Patrol Service Association and life member of The George Cross Island Association. August 28, Aged 85.

Walter William Roland Walker DSM. Gunner on Landing Craft. Served 1941-45. Joined on his 18th birthday. Earned DSM at Battle of Anzio for continual firing after his landing crew had been destroyed by enemy fire. September 6, Aged 85.

R A 'Bob' Tidd. AB. TM. Submarine service 1942-46 in Oberon, Truclent, Truant and Auriga. Submariners Association, Bath branch. Aged 84.

Tony Deacon. AB (Asdic). Served in Loch Fada, Loring and Emerald. HMS Loch Fada Association. September 9, Aged 84.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION  
Henry John Raikes. Coder. Served Mermid (1943) also in Malta under the command of CinCMed. Past treasurer Bridgend RNA. June 15, Aged 84.

Ron Fielding. Served Bastion, Bossington, Leopard and Llandaff. National Council member and standard bearer for No.10 Area; also chairman and standard bearer for Salford RNA. August 25, Aged 67.

Ron Wheeler. Past standard bearer Hanworth RNA.

Alfred Finch. Chief PO Ordnance Artificer (CHOA). His favourite ship was Maori, President Gloucester RNA. August 17, Aged 92.

Bernard Spencer RM. Served 1942-45 in the Burmese and Pacific theatres. Longest serving member of Dursley & District RNA and branch chairman 1986-89 and 1992-95. August 24.

Lt Cdr Phil Humphries RNVR. Served 1940-46 and 1951-55 in Pembroke, Collingwood, Sunflower, King Alfred, Armadillo, RN Commandos, Glenroy, Lizard, LSTs 373 and 413, Duncansby Head, Berry Head and Tiree. One of the first officers to train the RN Commandos. Bexhill branch, August 13, Aged 87.

John 'Jack' W Mead. Leading Seaman LTO. Served 1942-46 in Orwell, Chelmer and Eskimo. Life member Thurrock/HQ. August 6.

George Langley. AB. Ganges Boy. Served in Scott, Jaguar, Crossbow and Eagle. HMS Ganges Association, Ton Class Association and Basingstoke RNA. May 10, Aged 68.

Neville 'Ken' Keenan. AB. Ganges Boy. Served in Ashanti, Hubberston also submarines Alaric and Alderney. HMS Ganges Association and Basingstoke RNA. July 17, Aged 63.

Fred Gwilliams. Electrical branch. Served 1954-61 in Vanguard and Diana. St Helens branch. Aged 76.

Sam Hill. AB. National Serviceman. Served 1947-49 in Maidstone and also played rugby for the RN. Treasurer and Trustee of St Helens RNA.

Gillian Drury. Associate member Henlow branch. August 11.

Sheila Scott. Wren SW/OP. Served 1944-47 at Crosby Hall Chelsea, Lochinvar and NCSO Ramsgate. Secretary from 1988 and a life member from 1999 Henlow RNA. August.

Sheila Clarke. Associate member and welfare committee member Wigston & District branch. August 2.

Michael John Billeit RM. Ipswich branch. Aged 77.

John Arthur Underwood. PO Supply. Ipswich branch.

'Jim' Williams. L/AFD FAA. Served 1943-46 at Ringtail working on Barracuda aircraft. Margate branch. August 26, Aged 83.

Mike Rockett. Fleet CPO. Ganges Boy and served 24 years. Former secretary then chairman of Loughton RNA, also secretary to Loughton RBL. September 5, Aged 77.

Terence 'Terry' Cooper. Tel(S). Served in Ganges, Drake, Vanguard, Ulster (D83), Ladybird (Sasebo-Japan), Tyne, Victory, Mercury and Osprey (TTB). Founder member of HMS Ladybird Association, member RN Amateur Radio Society (G3YHA) and York & District RNA. August 27, Aged 76.

LST & LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION  
A G Wilson. Served LCIs and LCTs. June 21.

K E Low. Served LCAs, LCT 1001 and LCT(R). July 31.

J L Sones. Served LCT 7058. August 15.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION  
Peter Mowlam. AM(A)1. Served 1945-47. Joined at Gosling, trained at RAF St Athan then Hornbill (R&D Unit) and Vulture (741B Squadron). Essex branch. August 26.

James Bright. AM(O)1. Served 1943-46. Hitchin branch. July 20, Aged 85.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION  
Maurice Avery. Sto/Mec. Served in Stormcloud. June 13, Aged 81.

Roy Morris. Sto. Served in Fancy. July 20, Aged 91.

George Fordham. AB Served in Harrier, Associate member. July 24.

Edward Partridge. AB. Served in Coquette. July 26, Aged 85.

John Corbin. AB. Served in Espiegle. July 26, Aged 87.

Horace Gammon. Sto/Mec. Served in Myrmidon. September 10, Aged 84.

George Langley. AB. Ganges Boy. Served in Scott, Jaguar, Crossbow and Eagle. HMS Ganges Association, Ton Class Association and Basingstoke RNA. May 10, Aged 68.

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Horace Gammon. Sto/Mec. Served in Myrmidon. September 10, Aged 84.

## Honours

The list recognises service on operations in Afghanistan and Iraq and national operations for the period October 1 2008 to April 30 2009:

**AFGHANISTAN**  
Bar to Distinguished Service Order (DSO)

Brigadier Gordon Kenneth Messenger DSO, Royal Marines  
Distinguished Service Order (DSO)  
Lt Col James Andrew John Morris, Royal Marines

Officer of the Order of The British Empire (OBE)  
Lt Col Alan Litster, Royal Marines  
Lt Col Charles Richard Stickland, Royal Marines

Member of the Order of The British Empire (MBE)  
WO2 Kevin John Cheeseman, Royal Marines  
Maj Adam Timothy Stephen Crawford, Royal Marines

Surg Lt Henry Dowling, Royal Navy  
Maj Tristan Harris, Royal Marines  
Maj Ross Walker Preston, Royal Marines

Royal Red Cross  
Lt Cdr Alison Jayne Hofman ARRC, Queen Alexandra's Royal Navy Nursing Service

Conspicuous Gallantry Cross (CGC)  
Mne James Malone, Royal Marines  
Mne Steven Nethery, Royal Marines  
Military Cross (MC)

Mne Samuel Alexander, Royal Marines  
Cpl John Ballance, Royal Marines  
Cpl Richard Bateman, Royal Marines  
Maj Richard John Cantrill, Royal Marines

Sgt Noel Gerard Connolly, Royal Marines  
Sgt Andrew Leaver, Royal Marines  
MA1 Kate Louise Nesbitt, Royal Navy  
Distinguished Flying Cross (DFC)

Lt Cdr Gavin Ian Simmonite, Royal Navy  
Mention in Despatches (MiD)  
Cpl Russell Howard Coles, Royal Marines  
L/Cpl Steven Daniel Fyfe, Royal Marines

LMA Richard Hogben, Royal Navy  
Acting Cpl Adam Mabrouk, Royal Marines  
Cpl Samuel Joseph McCormick, Royal Marines

Sgt James Ian Melhuish, Royal Marines  
Marine David George Middlemas, Royal Marines  
Cpl Scott Muir, Royal Marines  
Mne Iain Andrew Penrose, Royal Marines

Cpl Mathew Silcock, Royal Marines  
Maj Nigel John Powell Somerville, Royal Marines  
Acting Sgt Jason Paul Walker, Royal Marines

Maj Andrew Patrick Leonard Watkins, Royal Marines  
Cpl Andrew Watt, Royal Marines  
WO2 Adrian Webb, Royal Marines  
Cpl Thomas Webster, Royal Marines  
Cpl Edward James Winslow, Royal Marines

Trooper Mark Adams, Royal Marines  
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)  
Cdr Gail Margaret Axon, Royal Navy  
Sgt Derrin Mark Canterbury, Royal Marines

Sgt James Horrocks, Royal Marines  
Acting WO2 Garry Mason, Royal Marines  
Col Andrew Thomas Westenberg, Royal Marines  
Cpl Elvet Llewellyn Williams, Royal Marines

Maj Julian Graham Wilson, Royal Marines  
IRAQ  
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Major General Andrew Salmon, Royal Marines

Officer of the Order of The British Empire (OBE)  
Col David Christopher Michael King, Royal Marines  
Col Peter George David Taylor, Royal Marines

Lt Col Colin David Ward, Royal Marines  
Mention in Despatches (MiD)  
Mne Lee Tyers, Royal Marines  
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Cpl Gregory Llewellyn, Royal Marines  
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)  
Lt Col Matthew John Andrew Jackson, Royal Marines

Capt Duncan Thomas George Quayle, Royal Navy  
NON-COMBATANT AWARDS  
Air Force Cross  
Lt Cdr Andrew Sidney Murray, Royal Navy

Queen's Gallantry Medal (QGM)  
Acting CPO ACMN David Paul Rigg, Royal Navy  
Queen's Commendation for Bravery in the Air (QCBA)  
PO ACMN Marcus John Wigfull, Royal Navy

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)  
Cdr Richard Lindsey, Royal Navy

## Assignments

Brig E G M Davis RM to be Brigade Commander Headquarters 3 Commando Brigade from July 2010.

Capt M D Tarr to be Captain of the Base HMS Neptune from April 2010.

Capt P J Thicknesse to be promoted Commodore and to be Commander British Forces South Atlantic Islands from December 1 2009.

## Talking Navy News goes digital

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth. Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

## NAVY NEWS

# SHIP of the MONTH

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## SEND FOR FREE PHOTOGRAPH LIST!

(Older photographs will be in Black & White)

## Swap drafts

ET(ME) Mangles drafted to MCM2 Squadron Portsmouth currently would like to swap for any CVS, Type 42 or Type 45. Contact 0753 840 0748 or email scottmangles@hotmail.com.

## Sports lottery

August 22: £5,000 - AET W R Barrett; £1,500 - PO O'Shea; £500 - PO S R McInnes.

August 29: £5,000 - Lt R A Lightfoot; £1,500 - OM2 B J White; £500 - Cpl W N MacFarlane.

September 5: £5,000 - ETME F Dowdall; £1,500 - Surg Lt J I Robin; £500 - NN M Clements.

September 12: £5,000 - AB P H McDuff; £1,500 - Lt A D News; £500 - Lt J K Weller.

## Contact sheet

Ministry of Defence: 0870 607 4455, www.mod.uk

Royal Navy recruitment: 0845 607 5555, www.royalnavy.mod.uk

Veterans Agency: 0800 169 2277, www.veterans-uk.info

Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600  
RN and RM Service records: 023 9262 8779 or 023 9262 8667

Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

RNB: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnb.org.uk

British Legion: 08457 725725, www.britishlegion.org.uk

Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, www.nff.org.uk

Seafarers UK: 020 7932 0000, www.seafarers-uk.org

SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975, www.ssafo.org.uk

RN Community: www.rncommunity.org.uk  
Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, www.royalnavalmuseum.org

Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565, www.fleetairarm.com

Royal Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385, www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk

RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217, www.rnsubmus.co.uk

National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, www.nmm.ac.uk

Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320, www.iwm.org.uk

## NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.

Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.

Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.

There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.



# Single-minded sailors

YOU can't tell from this picture, but this is the flagstaff of HMS Puncher with the White Ensign billowing in the summer breeze as the patrol boat escorts record-breaking yachtsman Mike Perham home.

At 17 years and 164 days, the teenager became the youngest person to single-handedly sail around the globe.

Not one but two Naval vessels – and a helicopter – honoured his achievements at the end of his 30,000-mile odyssey.

HMS Mersey and a Sea King from 771 NAS escorted Mike and his boat Totallymoney.com (wonder who the sponsors are? – Ed) into Falmouth after he crossed the traditional Lizard/Ushant finish line.

The teenager – whose grandfather served in RN minesweepers during WW2 – is two months younger than the previous record-holder, American Zac Sutherland.

After the celebrations in Cornwall, the yachtsman guided his craft up the Channel to Portsmouth for an official homecoming; he began his global challenge at Gunwharf Quays in November 2008.

And it was there that he was welcomed back by thousands of well-wishers... and one RN patrol boat.

HMS Puncher, which typically provides training for London's University Royal Naval Unit, met Totallymoney.com off Cowes and then accompanied the yacht into Portsmouth Harbour.

"I've made it and I can't believe that the Royal Navy have supported my return – I feel extremely honoured," said the teenager.

Puncher's CO Lt Tim Leeder added: "Mike sets a fine example to young people today – his record-breaking achievement adds immensely to this country's distinguished maritime heritage."

Picture: LA(Phot) Karen Williams, FRPU East

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Applicants would already live in Scotland or Northern Ireland or be prepared to move there. The post would suit Lieutenants RN/Captains RM or Lieutenants Commanders/Majors RM.\*

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Mil: 938027735

\*Reservist Officers of these ranks may also be considered.



## Government funded skills

IN TODAY'S competitive market, studying for a new skill can give you the edge, indicate your commitment to learning and show you are taking charge of your own development.

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Martin Ladd, formerly a captain in the Royal Navy and now director of the Hampshire-based training company Brighter Prospects Limited engaged in the Government-funded Skills Accounts project, said: "These are the very good reasons why people should be opening a Skills Account today."

The Learning and Skills Council says that learning something new could be your first step towards opening up new opportunities.

Martin continued: "We were selected by the Learning and Skills Council to be one of the training providers in the Skills Account trial in the south-east of England."

Just email [martinladd@pitman-winchester.co.uk](mailto:martinladd@pitman-winchester.co.uk).

## Looking for a new life down under?

THE Royal New Zealand Navy is responsible for the maritime defence of New Zealand and its interests.

The Force's vision is "to be the best small-nation Navy in the world", reflecting the unique nature of our business upon the oceans.

The Navy is based at Devonport, Auckland, where the shore establishment HMNZS Philomel is responsible for administration, supply and training support to the sea-going ships.

The Navy's routine operations stretch across the South Pacific and South East Asian regions, but its roles in international peacekeeping and regional security also mean ships and naval personnel have served further afield.

The Navy of today is an innovative and dynamic organisation that makes a significant contribution, both in New Zealand and overseas. This maritime capability is delivered through ships and people – and the 'right' people are the

most important element of this capability.

Everyone has the opportunity to contribute to making the NZ Navy a world-class organisation and the culture encourages people to use their skills to 'make a difference'.

The Navy is expanding to become a more responsive and versatile organisation. To help achieve this it is increasing its recruiting pool to include candidates with current or previous service in the Royal Navy in UK.

There are vacancies across a variety of branches, especially Hydrographic (Leadings Hands, Petty Officers, Chief Petty Officers), Marine Engineering, Weapons Engineering, Communications, and Diving.

If you are interested in joining the RNZN then go to the website – [www.navy.mil.nz/join-us/uk](http://www.navy.mil.nz/join-us/uk) or give them a bell on +649 445 5071.

The RNZN Recruitment Team will be in Plymouth on October 7 and Portsmouth on October 15 and Faslane on October 26.

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Salary increments up to £27,325 will be performance related and there are promotion opportunities. This is a Ministry of Defence non-reserved post, for which applicants must be British citizens, citizens of the Irish

Republic, a Commonwealth state, or EEA nationals. Successful applicants will require security clearance; you will therefore need to have resided in the UK for a minimum of 5 years. Re-location expenses of up to £8,000 may be applicable.

Please visit [www.ukho.gov.uk](http://www.ukho.gov.uk) for an information sheet and an application form. Alternatively, you can contact the Recruitment Team at the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, Admiralty Way, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2DN.  
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**Thurs 15 Oct 09 1000-1200**  
 RRC Portsmouth, Rodney  
 Block, HMS Nelson  
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[mwilson@ctp.org.uk](mailto:mwilson@ctp.org.uk)

**Mon 26 Oct 09 1000-1200**  
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**HOW TO REPLY:** Any person who writes to an advertiser must use a stamped envelope bearing the advertiser's box number clearly in the bottom left hand corner. The letter should then be enclosed in a second envelope and addressed as above.

We cannot guarantee that unstamped letters will be redirected.

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● The apotheosis of the age of sail – the destruction of the Franco-Spanish fleet at Trafalgar as depicted by William Wyllie's legendary panorama Picture: Royal Naval Museum



## You little inkers

MONTH after month we fill these pages with tales of death, destruction, damage, disability and other horrors of war.

So how nice to lighten the mood for once with a breezy jaunt through the halcyon days of end of Empire, of tea parties and ceremonies.

There was a Cold War to be won, of course, plus one brief but very 'hot' one in the Falklands during the three-decade career spanned by Cdr Roger Paine.

But why read all about that when there are tales of irate cooks (before they were given today's rather cumbersome moniker), bothersome pets, dignitaries in need of ice in their drinks, faux pas at dinner parties (the author was referred to constantly as "the officer who called Invergordon a dump" at one function... in Invergordon), and the like to read? And stories involving royalty and a loo are always worth repeating...

**Call The Hands** (Book Guild, £10.99 ISBN 978-1-84624-3189) is a miscellany of tales and anecdotes mainly from the quirkier side of Cdr Paine's career.

Some of the events and occurrences he recounts have probably passed into history. But some are still valid today.

Like that of the cook who slaved in the galley to produce a cake for 200 guests at a visit to the Seychelles. It was a beautiful piece of baked craftsmanship, lovingly topped with the islands' flag. The wrong flag that is. (It changed four times in the 20th Century, which accounts for the blunder.)

With food colouring all but run out for the correct red, green, yellow, white and blue flag, the cook reverted to Plan B: ink. Guests were none the wiser, nor the children of a local orphanage who were presented with the inky cake the following day.

For all the light-hearted anecdotes, however, the author is at pains to point out, that the RN takes its traditions seriously. It always pauses to pay tribute at 36°11'N 6°23'W and 3°33'N 104°28'E – the sites, respectively, of the Battle of Trafalgar and the sinking of Force Z.

# Sail of the centuries

JONATHAN Dull is an American historian of the 18th Century who has already published studies of the French Navy in both the Seven Years' War and the War Of American Independence, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

Both won him awards and good reviews, such as Professor Rodger calling the former "a tour de force in combined diplomatic, political and naval history."

His new book – *The Age of the Ship of the Line: The British and French Navies 1650-1815* (Seaforth, £25 ISBN 978-1-84832549-4) – is a study of the maritime dimension of the major wars from 1650 to 1815, based on the importance of battle fleets in these conflicts. Dull emphasises the key role played by fleets made up of the 'ships of the line' that form his title.

As in his previous volumes, he puts the maritime operations into their overall strategic and diplomatic context which means there is much fascinating material on the general history of the period. It is easy for amateurs to get lost in such background discussion but this author is too professional to fall into this trap and his account is admirably balanced.

It is balanced in another way too. As an American, the author is able to take an admirably neutral perspective in a period where most accounts come from the British point of view.

The author's knowledge of the French side of the story gives the book a rather Gallic flavour but the British side is well known by the Anglophone audience whereas

## The Grove Review

the French is not. Most readers will learn something from the book and see well-known events in new ways.

The book is short but generally well-written and is an engaging read. Originally published by the University of Nebraska Press it is fully-equipped with endnotes which both display the author's mastery of the literature and give critical guidance for further reading.

The author points to the fundamental advantage that allowed Britain to prevail in the conflicts he reviews. Insular Britain was able to put more investment into its navy than continental France.

In the War of the Austrian Succession of 1744-48, Britain spent the equivalent of 71,300,000 French livres per year on the navy, France less than half that figure, 32,170,000 livres.

In the Seven Years' War the annual figures were even more in Britain's favour, 111,160,000 livres against 36,670,000.

The British Admiralty and Navy Board were getting more than three times the annual provision of their French counterparts.

Only in the American War of Independence 1778-82, with no continental opponent and Britain forced to deploy larger ground forces, was France able to approach Britain's expenditure, 138,435,000 livres against Britain's 157,900,000.

No wonder Britain was able to afford more ships of the line than France as well as a higher

proportion of more heavily-armed ships.

France had a much larger population than Britain and higher overall government income but, as Dull points out, much of the latter "was spent on pensions, public works and administration".

The classes represented in the British parliament allowed themselves to be taxed to a remarkable degree. British 18th-Century taxpayers were paying twice to three times as much per head as their French counterparts.

The British government was also credit worthy and its investors willing to accept lower rates of interest. On such mundane but crucial foundations were the achievements of Anson, Hawke and Nelson built.

Dull sympathetically explains the difficulties the French had in manning their ships with effective crews, an absolutely fundamental factor when men were the mechanism of the ship, both in terms of propulsion and armament.

Even before the Revolution French fleets could be manned, with "novice sailors" prevented from training to efficiency by British blockaders. Thus was Conflans' fleet "run ashore" by Hawke "steering to glory" in Quiberon Bay in the "wonderful year" of 1759.

The balance of training of the two fleets was the decisive factor.

What made it all the worse for the French, as Dull points out, was that it was already clear that invasion was not possible but Conflans' sense of honour forced

him to unnecessary action and defeat.

One reason for French difficulties in 1759 was the serious epidemic that had affected its fleet sent earlier successfully to relieve Louisbourg in North America. When it got back to France its contagions spread to the ports of Brest and Rochefort. Nearly half the fleet's personnel strength of 12,000 died. A similar fate had overtaken a French expedition to Cape Breton Island in 1746.

The superior standards of cleanliness in British ships were a major strategic advantage throughout this period.

Although the author admits that Britain's overall advantages were decisive, he puts forward the interesting argument that the more centralised French political systems did have some advantages, producing "tough and skilled" administrators who could turn situations round quite quickly when required.

An example of this was when Andre Jeanbon Saint-Andre managed to replace the grievous losses of 1793 and put 50 French ships of the line into service the following year.

Sadly, however, a lack of crew training was again endemic, not helped by the disastrous effect of the Revolution on the French officer corps and Saint-Andre's own mistake of January 10 1794 in abolishing the corps of naval artillerymen.

Dull's conclusion is that "on balance, the British Navy was strongest at the bottom with its incomparable sailors and shipboard officers, while the French was

strongest at the top with its often excellent naval ministers."

The author is clearly saddened by what he sees as the rather unnecessary conflicts of two countries he likes and respects. He points to the period of Anglo-French alliance after 1716 as almost a golden age and characterises the mid-18th Century as an era of "foolish wars." He is critical – probably rightly – of the factors that caused Britain to attack Spain in 1739 and those which persuaded Louis XV to escalate the European conflict shortly afterwards.

Louis' 1744 plans to invade England to install a Stuart king under the cover of only 15 ships of the line have all the realism of Hitler's impractical invasion plans of almost two hundred years later, and the latter had more excuse.

The account is short and generally comprehensive but I would have liked a bit more in places, notably on the War of the Third Coalition after Trafalgar. The book's title is also a bit misleading: perhaps the subtitle should have read 'A Strategic History of the Maritime Wars 1650-1815.' Nevertheless, these are only quibbles.

I can recommend this excellent book most heartily as a highly-accessible balancer to more conventional naval histories of the period.

Prof Grove will be outlining the RN's crucial contribution to victory in the Great War during a talk at the Royal Naval Club and Royal Albert Yacht Club in Pembroke Road, Old Portsmouth. The lecture – 'The Shaft of the Spear' – organised by the Society for Nautical Research (South) takes place at 2pm on Saturday October 10. Admission for non-members is £2. Details on 023 9283 1461.



# The WAFU over GAFA

FOR a supposedly unpopular war, Afghanistan is proving to be very popular at the bookstands.

We've had accounts from the guys on the ground – such as Mark Ormrod's gritty *Man Down*. We've had an account from the fast jet jockeys – Adrian Orchard's *Joint Force Harrier*. And we've had the measured eye of a historian – Ewen Southby-Tailyour's *3 Commando Brigade* – taking a more detached view of operations.

Royal Marine Major Mark Hammond adds to that groaning bookshelf with *Immediate Response*, (Penguin, £17.99 ISBN 978-0718-154745), an account of life as a Chinook pilot over Afghanistan.

The book describes two tours of duty in Afghanistan (although the author focuses on the first in 2006).

*Immediate Response* is a quick read – it rattles along. There's some choice language (particularly during an account of a night-time delivery of munitions to a far-flung outpost). There's some scathing criticism of the BBC who reported that a Chinook had gone down with all crew – when it was actually a Nimrod (they'd blundered badly three years before when two helicopter collided on HMS Ark Royal and flashed up images of the wrong type of Sea King...).

Mark Hammond seethed. He had to ring his wife to tell her he wasn't dead. The demand for 'news' outweighed common sense, respect for families, caution, the need



● Maj Mark Hammond RM in front of his Chinook in Afghanistan. Note the Minigun sticking out of the side door

to take a step back and wait for the dust to settle. "The news game had become a dirty business with 24-hour news channels generating a greed for information that too often came at the expense of truth," the



Royal fumed.

This is a brutally honest account of life on the ground and in the air in Afghanistan. Maj Mark Hammond shares his feelings of life and death. You understand his pain when a wounded soldier his Chinook has rescued dies on the ramp. He concedes that fliers are "up their own arses" – with good reason; they sit in the cockpit and "make big things happen." And he realises that to many people bootneck banter might seem "a tad full-on".

Hammond questions some of the tactics which meant several outlying bases were "just like the Alamo". But he does not question the war itself.

"This war is about keeping Britain safe from terrorists – terrorists train in Afghanistan," he stresses. "This conflict, which is being played out thousands of miles away from the UK, is taking the lives of our sons and daughters. All the papers were interested in were the lives of stupid, gormless chavs who have a high profile but contribute nothing."

Good to see things have changed since 2006 then...

*Immediate Response* will introduce some

new words to your vocabulary: Teletubbies (the Taliban). PONTIs (Persons of No Tactical Importance – most of whom seemed to inhabit Kandahar Air Base). GAFA (the Great Afghan Fuck All – the vast tracts of wasteland in Helmand). Lively (heavy incoming fire). Sparky (ditto). Apaches 'schwack' or 'mallet' enemy positions.

As for the foe, well the Taliban aren't the cardboard cutout villains of Hollywoodland. "We had to take our hats off to the Taliban," writes the Chinook pilot. "We had burnt them, we had bombed them, we had mortared them and we were shooting at them. The Taliban were not cowards – no matter what we threw at them they were prepared to have a go."

Mark Hammond was awarded the DFC for his bravery and skill in picking up casualties under heavy Teletubbies fire in September 2006.

It's something he plays down with typical RM understatement. It was, he told the Queen as she pinned the medal on his chest, a bit scary.

Also being honoured at the Palace that day was actor Hugh Laurie for services to drama. He was made an OBE. He received the full Royal Marine banter treatment...

"My wife is so happy that you are here," he told the star of *House MD*. "She loves ER."

Five per cent of royalties from *Immediate Response* go to Help For Heroes.

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# London does the chance

A SHELTERED harbour in South Wales or on the East Coast of Scotland, or maybe a lazy river in East Anglia, is where it all started.

It all got a bit more serious in the waters of Bristol, or perhaps Nottingham.

And by the time the whole show moved on to London and the vast, historic Royal Victoria Dock there was an awful lot more than pride at stake.

The beauty of the Sea Cadet Corps National Combined Regatta is that, in theory, every cadet stands a chance of making it through to the big stage.

In practice, of course, there are the thoroughbreds of the competition – those units, districts and areas who steamroller their opponents as they add to their illustrious records.

But there are others for whom a place among the elite at the Nationals is a fantastic achievement, or who can look back with pride at running the favourites close in the area and district competitions.

The setting for the Nationals is impressive, and the scale of the 'stadium' is matched by the scale of the logistics required to ensure the event goes off without a hitch.

The man responsible for that is Lt Cdr (SCC) Phil Patterson RNR, HQ Staff Recreation Officer.

"In plain terms, I co-ordinate all the administration, logistics, communications – everything there is to bring an event like this together," said Phil.

He finds an appropriate venue, books it, finds accommodation, organises staff to run and officiate at the event and makes sure the equipment is all there and ready.

In terms of people it is a question of liaising with the areas, the end result being 453 cadets aged between 12 and 17, and 153 members of staff, turning up for a smooth-running competition.

2009 was the fourth time the ExCeL had been used, and the routine is now established.



## Everyone's a winner, but not everyone get a prize

JUST competing at the National Combined Regatta in London is an honour – but not everyone takes home a prize.

Stonehaven dominated the pulling (see p45), winning the Ridgewell Cup for Junior Boys and the Hornblower Cup for Open Boys, also helping Northern Area to take the overall pulling title and the Dawson Trophy, with the North West taking second place.

Port Talbot took pride of place in the Girls Junior, winning the Wain 1999 Cup, while Henley took the Girls Open and the Burton Cup.

The Yole rowing did not count towards the main points tallies, but was still fiercely contested.

The Open Mixed Cup went to Romsey, of Southern Area, while Neath (South West) won the Junior Mixed Cup.

The overall Yole trophy, the Narvic Cup, was shared by North West and South West Areas.

Turning to the paddlesports competition, it was the South West teams which turned in the headline performances, winning three of the four events – the Open Boys (Mike

Poole Cup), Open Girls (Ulster Cup) and Junior Boys (Nottingham Cup).

Their win in the Open Girls was particularly emphatic, finishing 27 points ahead of their nearest rivals, Northern Area.

The Junior Girls title (and Barbara Simpson Cup) went to the North, but with the South West taking second, they were clear winners of the Armitage Trophy for paddlesports.

Portsmouth took the honours for the South in the Pulling Boat Handling (Mitchell Trophy), also finishing second to Maryport (North West) in the Sailing Boat Handling (P&O Trophy).

With Gravesend winning the Power Boat Handling (the Stirling Wheel), the South were comfortable winners of the Stena Sealink Trophy for overall boat handling.

And when all the results were in and the points tallied, it was the teams from the South who were celebrating as their area took the overall regatta title, and with it the Navy League Cup.

In second place were the North and Northern Ireland, with the South West coming in third.

● Clockwise from top right: Competitors head off towards the City skyscrapers at the western end of the Royal Victoria Dock; cadet helpers line up on a pontoon; sailing boat handlers go through their paces; kayak crews wait for a race to be called; a paddlesports race passes under the footbridge; true colours – from left, the Henley girls show off a new version of the Southern Area kit, while representatives of the North, Northern Ireland, Eastern, London, the North West and South West demonstrate their support; pulling crews from the South (dark blue) and North West go head-to-head; two 'spectators' enjoy the sunshine; kayaks line up at the pontoon before a race; a Northern Ireland competitor prepares her kayak for a race; paddlesport crews on the pontoon in front of ExCeL



# Week gives all to ExCeL

Event organisers said they get "tremendous" support and co-operation from ExCeL, and as locations go it is hard to beat.

Cadets and staff are accommodated on site, the youngsters 'camping' in the vast exhibition space and the adults in nearby meetings rooms.

Lt (SCC) Kevin Perkins RNR, the superintendent of the Royal Victoria Dock Boat Station, which sits at the western end of the facility, said it is all about convenience.

"The cadets can get up, get washed and have breakfast then just step outside and it is all there for them," he said.

"There is no need to bus them in from elsewhere, or bring the equipment from all over the country."

Supplying the equipment is Kevin's part of the show, as the regatta is run on his patch.

"We are mainly the London Area boat station, though Eastern units use us as well," said Kevin.

"We had to bring in five boats from the Welsh Harp boat station, but the rest is all ours."

"There are a dozen ASCs and 14 powerboats, doing all different jobs - safety, tow boats and some for competitions."

"The only things the areas have to bring in is their own canoes."

Preparations for the combined regatta take around two weeks.

The first sees Kevin put in plenty of scrubbing and polishing, bringing the boats up to the required standard for competition after a full season's use.

By the second week he is also involved in preparing the various courses, laying some 50 different marks in the mile-long dock - and as the water is 30ft deep that requires plenty of weights to keep them in place.

Towards the day of the competition Kevin and his two colleagues have been joined by a further three staff, and as the big day looms the national boat team weighs in as well.

Talking of weighing in, the half-ton ASC, or Admiralty Sailing Craft, enjoyed something of a swansong this year.

Waiting in the wings is the

'plastic fantastic', a new version which will be lighter, more manoeuvrable and easier to pull, and is likely to all but eclipse the venerable ASC (though there will no doubt be those purists who will ensure it never quite disappears).

That, however, is for the future, and the 2009 regatta saw the usual feats of skill, strength and stamina on a warm day under a blue sky.

And the competition itself is the responsibility of Lt Cdr (SCC) Dave Hanley RNR, HQ Staff Officer Boats, who with his team presides over the on-water activity, including judging.

Dave's efforts ensure that all the preparatory work by Phil and Kevin, and many more besides, come together into a seamless series of races, allowing the cadets to turn up and concentrate on their performance without any distractions or stresses.

Dave was content with the way the 2009 regatta was unfolding: "It gets better every year," he declared.

As to the competition itself, the paddlesports were staged at the western end of the arena, with boat-handling in the middle and pulling at the east end, up towards Silvertown and the airport from which a steady stream of jets roared over the proceedings.

The noise of their engines was frequently surpassed by the sound of cheering along the ExCeL railings as races finished in front of the hundreds of spectators, the participants identified by the bright colours of their respective areas.

With the final prizes handed out it was time to prepare for the big disco (courtesy Roger Moody and his gang), then those who were staying for one more night returned to their respective 'campsite' - the area is divided into male and female sections, and the divide is strictly policed.

And that was that.

A couple of days to clear up and dismantle the courses, and then the whole show moved on to Southport for the next red-letter day in the Sea Cadet calendar - the sailing regatta.

See next month for a report from Merseyside.

**Pictures: Alex Lloyd**



## Unit adds standard to collection

MEMBERS of the former Tunbridge Wells Royal Marines Association branch have been hosted by the Marine Cadets of Tunbridge Wells unit.

The evening started with the Colours, with MC2 Montandon as commander of a guard provided by the detachment.

After Colours the branch chairman inspected the guard and other members of the detachment.

With the formalities over a continuity drill display was performed to the 30 members of the branch who attended.

The display, written by S/Lt (SCC) Groves RNR, the unit's First Lieutenant, showed the cadets' competence and ability at ceremonial with the SA80 rifle accompanied by traditional military and more modern chart music – with no words of command.

The evening, organised by detachment commander Sgt (SCC) Martin, concluded with the branch standard being presented to MC2 Evans and the safe custody of the unit's Marine Cadets before a buffet was enjoyed by all.

This presentation now adds to the unit's collection of affiliated insignia; a similar evening in 2008 saw Tunbridge Wells RNA's standard given to the unit for safekeeping after the branch closed, coupled with the presentation of the last White Ensign flown by the unit's namesake HMS Brilliant on her final voyage into Devonport before decommissioning in 1996.

All are proudly on show on the unit's Main Deck.

## Long Eaton form new affiliation

LONG Eaton unit has taken delivery of some top-notch Navy memorabilia, thanks to a new affiliation with the HMS Protector Association.

The Battle Honours board and deck plate from the old ice patrol ship, plus a cup and shield, were presented to the unit at a fundraising barbecue held at the Seven Oaks Inn at Ilkeston.

Attending the barbecue was the Mayor of Erewash District Council, Cllr Terry Holbrook, who has chosen the unit as one of his charities for his year of office.

Also present was the chairman of the HMS Protector Association, Keith Towle, and members of the association committee – one of whom, Stan March, once served in HMS Indomitable, which is also the name of the Long Eaton unit's training ship.

A more formal presentation took place later at the unit HQ, when AC Alex Brown presented his cap tally to Keith Towle for the benefit of Stan March, while an HMS Protector ship's badge was handed to the Mayor's cadet, LC Natalie Walton.

The Protector Association has pledged to offer support to the cadet unit wherever possible, and hope the affiliation will prosper.

## Course supremo wins award



THE man behind one of the Sea Cadet Corps' most ambitious courses has been rewarded for his dedication to youth organisations.

Lt (SCC) Tony Smith RNR, who developed and now runs course C64 Adventure/Military Training from SCTC Inskip, has been awarded a Clasp to the Cadet Forces Medal.

Tony (left of picture) was presented with the award by Lt Cdr (SCC) Barry Glanville, Superintendent of SCTC Inskip, at the conclusion of this year's exercise.

Tony said: "I suppose around 1,500 cadets have gone through courses I have organised, and it gives me immense pleasure to think they have got so much joy out of it all."

Picture: SqnLdr Eddie Chaloner RAFVR(T)



● Cadets Matt and Courtney show off their cookery skills with celebrity chef Nick Martin at the Whitehaven Food Festival

# Whitehaven's cooking

MEETING celebrity chefs, rustling up tea for jet skiers, showing visitors round someone else's tall ships – Sea Cadets take it all in their stride.

Whitehaven unit was on duty at the town's two-day Food Festival, where three tall

ships were among the visitors.

One of them, the Zebu, was short-handed over the weekend, and was considering closing to the public when the cadets stepped in.

"We had a call from the Festival Company who explained the problem and asked if we could provide two or three cadets and a member of staff to help with the

tours," said unit chairman Chas Tinkler.

"The cadets were more than happy to lend a hand and we organised a rota to ensure that the ship was properly crewed and able to take visitors."

Another attraction was a programme of demonstrations by celebrity chefs including Jean Paul Novelli, Nick Martin and Ainsley Harriott.

Two cadets went along hoping to show Nick a Marine Cadet ration pack and watch his show, but ended up on stage with him, cooking chicken chili with rice – from the 'rat pack' – and seafood risotto.

In another part of the harbour cadets were keeping the Xtreme JetSki display team supplied with flasks of hot tea.

PO (SCC) Stuart McCourt, TS Bee's First Lieutenant, said it had been a busy but very enjoyable weekend.

"Most of our cadets and staff were away on annual camp and this left us with only half a dozen or so cadets," he said.

"But, when they weren't cooking or sampling the food, they have had a go at archery, been riding on Segways and tried on deep-sea diving equipment."

To round things off, Ainsley Harriott made a special visit to the Sea Cadets' stall, where he spent 15 minutes or so looking at the display, chatting to cadets, signing autographs and having his photograph taken.

"He's really nice and very friendly" said one cadet, "and much taller than he looks on TV."

## Caterham rebuild a better future

CATERHAM unit TS Zephyr showed remarkable stoicism when vandals smashed in the front of their HQ.

The latest bout of vandalism occurred just three days after repairs were completed following an earlier attack.

But seizing the opportunity, the unit undertook an ambitious building project worth more than £15,000 – more than the unit's annual income – not simply to repair the damage but also to bring the accommodation up to modern standards.

The project, now almost completed, involved the fitting of a state-of-the-art fire alarm system (worth almost £5,000,

and donated by Direction Fire Ltd), emergency lighting, cooking facilities, disabled ramps and improved fire exits.

The work was funded by a Surrey Grass Roots project, a grant from the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, and a sky-dive by 17-year-old cadet, POC Richard Fearis, which raised £2,200.

Caterham moved into the wooden twin-hut building 12 years ago when their old barracks was sold off for redevelopment.

The site is owned by the South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (SERFCA), which has supported the work, but the unit is responsible for maintenance and upkeep.



● The UK cadets with IMC delegate Vice Admiral John McAnally

## Italian perspective

SIX cadets – five from Portrush unit and one from Bristol Avonmouth – represented the UK at an International Maritime Confederation (IMC) sail training camp in Italy.

The camp was held at Sabaudia in central Italy, around 100km from Rome, where the Italian

Navy used to train competitors for international sports.

The two-week camp included activities such as sail training, rowing, volleyball and football.

There were also excursions, including one to Rome, and the camp was well supported by the Italian Navy.

## Around the units

CADETS from the South West Area stepped out in style whilst putting on an armed guard drill display for HMS Raleigh's Open Day.

Two female Senior Rates and 45 Sea and Marine Cadets performed two impressive displays in front of large crowds.

None of the cadets had done drill with an SA80 rifle before the start of the week, but with the help of Raleigh's senior parade instructor, PO 'Fred' Perry, and one of the Area's staff drill instructors, CPO (SCC) 'Snowy' Dawes, the cadets blossomed into a superb guard, winning praise from the Captain of Raleigh.

ST ALBANS cadets were delighted to receive confirmation of a £10,000 grant from the Big Lottery 'Awards for All' scheme.

Together with £5,000 from Grassroots, the money will help refurbish the unit HQ at Westminster Lodge, built in 1974 and now in need of major maintenance.

TWO members of Evesham unit are planning to make tandem parachute jumps this month to help towards the running costs of TS Explorer.

Unit management team chairman Rosemary Naylor and colleague Kathy Woodward are set to make the leap into the unknown, and are seeking hard cash as well as a soft landing.

IT'S NOT every day that you find a group of Sea Cadets helping the mayor pack bags at the local supermarket.

But had you been at one of the Tesco stores in Halifax that's what you would have seen – 12 cadets from Huddersfield unit spent a couple of days lending a hand to shoppers, while Cllr Arshad Mahmood, Mayor of Calderdale, pitched in and chatted to the youngsters.

The cadets raised more than £350 for the Mayor's charity, the Supporting Us Supporting Each Other Trust for youngsters with diabetes.

HINCKLEY cadets pushed themselves to the limit with an 11-hour fund-raising challenge.

In the spirit of the Royal Marines' *per mare, per terram* (by sea, by land), the cadets travelled the 22 miles of the Ashby Canal, first by kayaking from Bedworth to their Hinckley HQ then yomping to the finish at Snarestone.

The event raised just under £1780 for Help for Heroes, and Lt (SCC) Paul Horton RMR, Detachment Commander, said he was proud of the cadets' efforts.

MEMBERS of the Leith (TS Howe) and Edinburgh (TS Trinity) units joined war veteran Alf Tubb at a ceremony in a local cemetery where a memorial was unveiled by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission in memory of cabin boy Reginald Earnshaw.

Reggie was probably aged 15 when he died in July 1941 on the SS North Devon, having lied about his age to join when he was 14.

His shipmate Alf, a former machine gunner, spent four years trying to find Reggie's unmarked grave.

Alf had shot down one of the aircraft which attacked the ship, but could not rescue his friend from the engine room because of escaping steam.

POC Josh Falconer, of Northampton and Wellingborough unit, spent a week at sea on the yacht TS Leopold Muller, earning his RYA Day Skipper ticket.

During the same cruise Harry Boyde (15) was selected to be part of the 2010 Sea Cadet yacht racing squad.

Seven cadets from the unit also went to sea, this time in TS Royalist, visiting Plymouth, Dartmouth and Brixham.

Members could choose between two summer camps – one on board HMS Bristol in Portsmouth Harbour, the other including abseiling and sea survival techniques at Inskip, Lancashire.



● Nick Nicklin and his wife Lynn

## Farewell to Corps stalwart

SOUTHERN Area staff have bid farewell to stalwart supporter. Lt (SCC) Nick Nicklin RNR at a formal dining-out at HMS Collingwood.

Nick joined the Royal Navy in 1962 at HMS Ganges and served in a number of ships, including Duncan, Nubian, Chichester and Bristol, as well as RFAs Sir Lancelot and Diligence – then MV Stena Inspector – during the Falklands Conflict as a gunnery rating.

Formerly an air cadet, Nick joined the Corps after 24 years in the Service, and throughout his 23 years in the Area Office Nick has enjoyed a reputation for his support, guidance and advice.

Capt Jonathan Fry, outgoing Captain of the Sea Cadet Corps, said they would all miss Nick's "legendary ability to beg, steal or borrow just about anything from within the Dockyard to further the Sea Cadet cause."

He was presented with a letter opener in the form of a Naval officer's sword and a voucher for a flight in a World War 2 Harvard Trainer.

## Stockport hotshots

STOCKPORT unit won the Tipner Trophy for the best Sea Cadet shooting team for the third year running.

The team – PPO Joe Corr, TI Lee Bradley and AC Colin Greaves – also won the Sheerness Trophy as the best cadet team over two distances. Lee won silver at 600yds, the Marine Medal for highest aggregate score by a Marine Cadet, bronze in the individual (two points behind Joe, who took silver) and bronze in the Navy League.

Joe also took the Squire Trophy for highest-scoring individual cadet at the meet and silver in the Navy League.

The unit also put up a good show in the Stockport Carnival, where the good ship HMS Hawkins put in an appearance.

The unit takes its name from the warship that was commissioned in July 1919 and was adopted by the borough in World War 2.

Exactly 90 years on from her commissioning the ship was recreated as a float for the parade.

## Powerful supporters

EDMONTON unit has received a welcome boost thanks to members of the Electricity Alliance.

National Grid set the ball rolling with a £5,000 donation which will help renovate the unit's galley, shower block and boat shed by the River Lee.

The Alliance, a partnership between National Grid and Balfour Beatty, is working in the area, refurbishing overhead electricity lines between Waltham Cross and Tottenham.

And Alliance contractors Red 7 Marine also did their bit by offering three boats to add to the TS Plymouth fleet.

Edmonton CO CPO (SCC) Tony Stevens said: "We're really grateful to the Electricity Alliance for their support – it's a great boost to the young people who use the facilities."

All in all a successful year so far for Edmonton, having just won a burgee for the first time in its 62-year history.

# Sea Scouts celebrate centenary

THERE is more than one Naval organisation celebrating their centenary this year.

Up there with the Fleet Air Arm is the Admiralty Recognised Sea Scouts, part of the Scouts Association.

And 1st Watchet Sea Scouts (RN Recognised Troop 63), from Somerset, have thrown themselves into several events to celebrate the anniversary, in addition to a successful bi-annual Admiralty inspection.

The scouts attended two camps based around Brownsea Island, the birthplace of scouting, and Poole Harbour.

The first saw 18 members of the Watchet troop and the Mariner Explorer Sea Scout unit spend a weekend at the harbour, sailing from Poole to Brownsea Island and pitching camp on the site of Baden-Powell's original scout camp.

Later in the summer 28 from the same

groups enjoyed an eight-day summer camp in Dorset and the Studland Peninsula, undertaking a range of activities including gliding, kayaking, rowing, mountain biking, orienteering, swimming and archery.

Given Lord Baden-Powell's Naval antecedents – his grandfather was an admiral – the troop felt that returning to the birthplace of scouting was an appropriate way to celebrate the centenary.

# Stonehaven maintain regatta reputation

NOT much time for rest over the summer holidays for the cadets and staff of Stonehaven unit.

With minds focused on local and national events, it has meant hard work – but the rewards have been worth it.

The unit again ran the car park for the Stonehaven Highland Games, raising £250 to add to the £250 raised at a stall at the Harbour Hi-Jinks – a day of *It's a Knockout* type activities – including raft races – on the water.

The TS Carron team also collected the P&J Trophy as runners-up at the event, despite the usual shenanigans where the cadets tend to behave more like pirates than representatives of the Senior Service.

The Hi-Jinks followed hot on the heels of the unit's annual golf outing for adults and supporters, with Alistair Reid taking this year's Cargill Trophy.

The following weekend saw Northern Area Officer Cdr Colin Redstone visit the unit to train and assess the cadets in their paddlesport qualifications.

Having seen the quality of kayaking and canoeing at the unit, Cdr Redstone was delighted to present a range of British Canoe Union awards.

The pulling specialists at the unit were busy concentrating on the National Combined Regatta in London (see pp42-3).

Evening training sessions (with extra morning sessions, starting at 6am, in the final days before



● Sea Cadets on a paddlesports weekend at Stonehaven

the competition) ensured the 23-strong team was in top form before heading south.

And the contingent recorded some of the best results in the unit's illustrious history – it has represented the Northern Area every year since 1960, which they believe is an achievement unmatched in the Corps.

All 23 returned with medals as

the unit won the double for the third time in their history, winning both the Boys Open (a record 12th win) and Junior (a record 10th win) pulling events, cementing their reputation as the most successful boating unit in the UK.

The Girls Open pulling team took third place, helping the Northern Area to first place in the overall pulling competition for the

Dawson Trophy (Peterhead also played their part with a fourth place in the Girls Junior).

In the Pulling Boat Handling Stonehaven were second to Portsmouth, and Northern came third overall – Newburn, the other Northern representatives, managed sixth in the Sailing Boat Handling and second in the Power Boat Handling.

# Group visits Bermuda



BRITISH Sea Cadets took part in a historical re-enactment of the discovery of Bermuda during an exchange trip to the Atlantic island.

Hosted by TS Admiral Somers, the Bermuda unit, the British cadets, along with Canadian and American colleagues, visited historical sites on the island, including the Maritime Museum in the old Royal Naval Dockyard.

And as 2009 marks the 400th anniversary of the discovery of Bermuda, the cadets used one of the Bermudians' ASC boats to help represent the shipwrecked mariners of the Sea Venture struggling ashore during a hurricane in 1609 – and the youngsters showed their pulling prowess and boat-handling skills in the process.

Pictured left after visiting Bermudian premier Dr Ewart Brown, are (from left) POC Adam Parry (Hinckley), POC Stuart Jolley (Northampton), POC Laura Hartwell (Hinckley), S/Lt John Hutchinson (Jarrow), LC Rebecca Nadolski (Stratford-on-Avon) and POC Michael Collar (Whitstable); the group also called in on the Governor of the island, Sir Richard Gozney.

# Displays win praise

TWO Sea Cadet units played prominent roles during the Fleet Air Arm centenary celebrations at Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey.

The Sheppey unit attended with their field gun, marching with the parade and then performing demonstrations of handling the gun (see right).

Meanwhile the Whitstable Sea Cadet Band led the church parade on the Sunday.

The participation of both units was much appreciated by organisers, members of the RNA and the many visitors who attended.



# Marine Society is in the Matrix

THE Marine Society has achieved the Matrix Standard – the nationally-recognised quality mark for organisations which provide information, advice and guidance.

It is a first such award – made by the Department for Business, Information and Skills – in the maritime sector.

The Marine Society, part of the Marine Society & Sea Cadets (MSSC), provides a range of services to enhance the learning, professional development, well-being and lifestyle of those who serve at sea.

Dealing with 5,000 enquiries annually, the charity is a respected source of freely available, authoritative, impartial and confidential advice and guidance on matters of concern to those who serve in the RN, RM and RFA.

Brian Thomas, director of seafarer operations, said: "We pride ourselves on making sure that seafarers receive the best help."

"This rigorous Matrix assessment of how we do what we do enables us to map our effectiveness."

"We can demonstrate that the information, advice and guidance we offer is of the highest standard."

"This is a source of satisfaction for us and it will be reassuring for our RN beneficiaries, too."

## Andrew to walk the Great Wall

A SEA Cadet PO is to walk parts of the Great Wall of China this month to raise funds for Richmond unit.

PO Andrew Bell-Wright will trek five sections of the wall, each entailing up to seven hours walking.

Andrew has been training in Snowdonia, the Lake District, the Brecon Beacons and along the Thames footpath.

Money raised will go towards a new minibus – the current one is going to have to be modified or taken off the road in the near future to comply with emissions regulations.

Donations via [www.justgiving.com/andrewbellwright](http://www.justgiving.com/andrewbellwright)



● Ellesmere Port cadets with supporters, including their MP Andrew Miller and their Reutlingen hosts

# Mersey to the Rhine

ELLESMERE Port Sea Cadets have completed an epic journey on some of the great rivers of Europe.

Having trained on the Caledonian Canal and at Holyhead, the expedition began on the Thames, powering along from HMS President to the Houses of Parliament for a formal send-off.

Among those doing the sending off were Kevan Jones, the defence minister responsible for cadets, and the Ellesmere Port MP Andrew Miller.

The cadets took their two RiBs on cross-Channel ferry and headed to the historic city of Woudrichem

in the Netherlands, where they launched on to the River Waal.

Using three teams of three to rotate the crewing of the boats, the party moved on to the Rhine and the Neckar, covering over 1,000km in a record-breaking trip which saw them greeted at Reutlingen in Germany by the *Oberbürgermeister*, Barbara Bosch.

Andrew Miller and his wife had also flown out to greet the voyagers.

After setting up a stall in the town square to let the locals know who they were, the cadets loaded up the trailers and started the long haul back across Europe to Cheshire.

## Novices lead resurgence

A DAY of strong and gusty winds, with occasional sunshine, greeted rowers from all three Forces at this year's Joint Services Regatta.

The event was held at Dorney Rowing Lake, Berkshire – the location for Olympic rowing events in 2012.

The Royal Navy rowing squad coped well with the difficult conditions on the water and avoided capsizing, although members of the other Services were not so lucky, including a crew who had only been rowing for a week.

In particular the Royal Navy novices did very well proving that recent grass roots rowing has been profitable. The sport is open to all those who would like to give it a go as much as it is for the more experienced oarsmen and women out there.

The men's squad won the novice fours and pairs events, and teamed up with rowers from Welbeck College to win the intermediate fours as well.

In resurgence, the women also won their novice fours and pairs events in grand style. The women's Inter-Service fours event, although won by the Army, saw a plucky fight to the end between the RAF and RN crews, with the RAF taking second place by the narrowest of margins ahead of the never-say-die RN women.

Not disheartened, in the women's open eights race (again won by the Army) a determined RN crew who had not rowed together before the race took second place, well ahead of both the Sandhurst and RAF crews. This bodes well for the 2010 rowing season.

During the break in racing for lunch, the RN put on a lively series of exhibition Cornish gig racing events, seeing gig crews from HMS Raleigh and BRNC Dartmouth competing for South West area supremacy before offering others a chance to take to the water and give gig rowing a try.

To widen the Navy's rowing repertoire further, it was announced that the Navy's first coastal rowing boat had been cut and was to be delivered in good time to afford RN coastal rowers the opportunity to compete at the next FISA World Coastal Championships, to be hosted by Mayflower Rowing Club in Plymouth, on the 23-25 of this month.

If there are oarsmen or women out in the Fleet who would like to row or scull, or indeed anyone out there who would like to give rowing a try, please contact the RN & RM Amateur Rowing Association Secretary Lt Cdr Karen Allsford at [karen.allsford580@mod.uk](mailto:karen.allsford580@mod.uk) or 9621 83455/0207 218 3455.

## Reservists take polo title

ON A warm but damp day at Tidworth, the reservist forces of the Army and Senior Service – the TA and RNR respectively – met on the polo field.

It was expected to be a mud bath but surprisingly was a fast-flowing match with the Navy side winning 4½ goals to 1½.

The RNR unfortunately could only find two players and were supported by Gnr Nicky Hewer RA from the Army and Lt Cdr Al Wilson from the regular Service – both of whom scored the Navy's goals.

At the end of the match so much goodwill and humour abounded that the final result had very little significance.

After great camaraderie and backslapping it was thought the event should become a permanent fixture in the polo calendar.

It is hoped that this will act as a useful and important recruiting tool for both the TA and the RNR and encourage any serving reservists who may wish to play next year.

# Trafalgar defeat for French



**ADMITTEDLY, not as crushing as that one, but still sweet...**

When HMS Trafalgar was enjoying an operational stand down in Brest, the ship's company were challenged to a football match by their hosts, the crew of ballistic missile boat Le Triomphant.

With the French Navy beaten by the RN in the rugby union (and the national side defeated by England in the Six Nations) there was some national pride to regain.

Good job Traf were 'up for it' then. LET Jackson lead the Brits on to the pitch where they were greeted by outstanding support from the rest of the ship's company.

The first half was a fairly subdued affair as a result of Traf acclimatising to the Brittany heat and recovering from an active night out.

After a much-needed half time break, both

teams came out for what would shape up to be a fabulous second period.

Blistering runs down the right from LET 'Zooie' Twycross lead to decent attempts on goal by CPO Douglas and Trafalgar's XO Lt Cdr Scott Johnson.

It was Le Triomphant who broke the deadlock, however, after AB(CISSM) Miller fouled in the penalty area.

Trafalgar were 1-0 down, but not out. Showing great resolve and fortitude AB(CISSM) Chris 'Ronaldo' Ovel slid a great ball forward to the XO, who was bundled over by the French defence right on the edge of the area.

A free kick was awarded much to the displeasure of the crowd. AB(SSM) Launce took it, laying the ball to AB(CISSM) Puddephat who fired it straight into a French hand resulting in the award of a penalty.

With the ball on the spot, up stepped Traf's

star goalkeeper LS(CISSM) 'Nobby Le Chat' Clark, who slotted the kick calmly past the waiting keeper.

It was 1-1 and with full time approaching both sides pushed harder.

The French defence kept out efforts from Trafalgar attacking midfielder AB(SSM) Greensmith, while the Brits only managed to hold on until the final whistle thanks to some amazing tracking back by defensive LMA 'Basketball' Bastianpulle.

Not content with a draw both sides agreed to finish the match with a penalty shoot-out. With the French goalkeeper distracted by some fancy footwork and pulled faces, Trafalgar achieved a 5-3 victory on penalties.

The day ended in victory but everyone knew it was a hard-fought and closely-won match; the next visitor to Brest had better start practising now.



## XC ecstasy for RM

THREE green berets from the RNR Cycling Association competed at the final round of the Southern Cross Country (XC) series in Pippingford, East Sussex – and all were placed high enough to finish in the top 15 of their respective categories.

Even though Maj Andy Plewes suffered a puncture on the second lap, he managed a top-20 finish in the race, giving him seventh overall in the XC Series.

Maj Steve McCulley (pictured left with a bloody knee following a tumble) claimed 14th in the final round and 15th overall, while ex-marine Scott Easter, now an associate member, put in a great performance for third in the sports race and 7th overall in the series.

The Southern XC attracts up to 500 racers at each of its six races spread across the South West, South and South East.

Each race has a slightly different lap-length; on average a sports rider would complete three laps in approximately 1h 15m-1h 40m, while a masters rider would complete four laps in approximately 1h 40m to 2h.

Riders can earn points from any round, but they have to compete in the final round and their final placing is based upon the best five from six results.

This year the RNRMTA MTBers saw racing action in Bordon, Ringwood, Pippingford (twice – different courses), Devizes and Alton, with the Southern XC Champs (a stand-alone race) doubling at Alton with a series' race.

## 110 in 100

NOW by our reckoning it won't be Fly Navy 110 for a good decade.

Unless you're a naval hang glider. To celebrate the centennial of maritime flight, Lt Cdr Rob Dowdell 'climbed aboard' the RN Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association's Moyes Litespeed for a marathon flight.

Actually, it was much longer than a marathon flight – four times longer.

Employing navigational techniques used by his forebears a century ago, ie the Mark One eyeball and a map, the officer negotiated his way from Builth Wells in Wales, past the busy airspace over Bristol, around the ranges of Salisbury and finally touched down at Fordingbridge in Hampshire.

The flight took six hours and Rob, by day CO of 700W NAS, the recently-formed squadron which is paving the way for the next-generation Lynx, covered in excess of 110 miles.

He used rising columns of warm air (thermals) to 'power' his glider from Wales to Hampshire, reaching 5,000ft as he crossed the River Severn (pictured right).



## The things people will do for a medal...

Continued from page 48

my 30-metre waterproof watch actually wasn't. From that point I had no idea what the real time, or race elapsed time was: we set off at 6.10am (apparently).

There was no starting gun, but as soon as I saw the other 1,500 people swimming in the same direction, I joined them.

This was going to be the first time I'd swum 2.4 miles. After the first five minutes of people swimming over me I got into a rhythm.

After 1h 48m I got out of the water. I could physically feel the blood drain down from the top of my body and down to my legs.

I walked to transition, got into my bike gear and then really started shivering.

I got on the bike and it felt like it had square wheels and every nut and bolt was loose. After half a mile, I and the bike settled down. It was a three-lap course and after an initial downhill there were two steep climbs one after the other.

After that the next section was exposed and very windy but settling on to the aerobars helped.

I had strapped my Garmin GPS to the handlebars and used that purely as a timer. The ride was fairly uneventful and I finally finished pedalling after 7h 53m.

It wasn't until the last three or four miles on the bike that I thought about the marathon.

It was also at this time that my left knee started to ache. After about 400m of the run it really started to hurt; this was the first time I thought I wouldn't be able to finish.

I pressed on, stopping occasionally to stretch out. The run was fairly flat. Ten miles from the reservoir to a park outside Bolton town centre, eight miles back the way you had just come then turn and run back to the park, out of the park and into Bolton itself.

During the run my brain had just three commands: run, walk, drink. Nothing else mattered.

I was forced to use a run/walk strategy as I was so tired and my knee was crying out for me to stop.

Finally the end was in sight, the red carpet up to the finish. This had a great atmosphere, it was starting to get dark, the floodlights were on and the crowd were cheering.

The man with the microphone called out my name and then those words that I had waited 14h 37m to hear: "You are an Ironman."

The cough hadn't affected me and my knee soon recovered. Would I do it again? Yes."

Paul's not the only RN triathlete who's been in action.

CPO Scott Markham (MASF Culdrose) took fourth place in the Double Iron UK held over two days around Lichfield.

As the name implies it's a 4.8-mile swim, 224-mile ride and double marathon – with no breaks in between.

The field consisted of 53 determined athletes and is gaining a reputation as an event to aspire to in the Ironman fraternity.

The swim takes place in a 25m indoor pool. The 304 lengths were a 'gentle warm-up' to the main events.

The bike ride followed a 14-mile loop (to be completed 16 times, – most of it in a downpour) while the marathon comprised 42 laps of a 1.2-mile course which passed 'attractions' such as The Devil's Staircase and Blair Witch Woods...

The senior rating crossed the line in 25h 53m in his first attempt at this discipline (for the record, the individual times were: swim 2h 23m 28s; ride 13h 35m 50s; run 9h 54m 31s).

Low points were falling asleep on the bike, nearly crashing into a wall, the rain, and pretty much every lap of the double marathon.

It obviously was far too easy for Scott. Next year he's entering a triple ironman.

## RNRU aim to hold on to cup

THE RN hosts naval rugby union sides from around the former Empire as it defends its Commonwealth Cup title this month.

Teams from South Africa, New Zealand and Australia will lock horns with the Senior Service over six days of first-rate rugby in Plymouth.

All matches will be played in a league competition at Plymouth Albion's Brickfields ground with the RNZN and RAN beginning proceedings at 4pm on October 6.

At 7.15 the same day the Royal Navy and South Africa kick off their campaigns.

The second round of matches takes place on October 9: RAN vs South Africa at 4pm; RN vs RNZN at 7.15pm.

The third and final round of the competition occurs on October 12: RNZN vs South Africa, 2.30pm; RN vs RAN at 5.30pm.

As an added bonus, the best players from all the navies will form the Combined Navies Barbarians to take on Devon and Cornwall on October 15 at 6.30pm.

Tickets are available on the gate – £5 for adults, £3 for under-18s and free for U16s.

The cup dates back to 1997 when RNRU invited the RNZN to tour the UK.

The RAN rugby side also intended to tour the UK in the same year, so it was decided to hold a tri-navy tournament, to be held every three years.

During the 2003 tournament held in Auckland New Zealand, officials from the South African Navy visited to determine if they could also join.

South Africa was invited to participate, bringing the total to four navy teams, and the new Commonwealth Cup, which is sponsored by defence firm Babcock, was born.

Throughout their stay, the visiting teams will be hosted by the RN: the South Africans will be staying at Dartmouth, the Kiwis at Raleigh and the Aussies at Drake.

More details at the website [commonwealthcup.webeden.co.uk](http://commonwealthcup.webeden.co.uk)

## Hoop-erstars begin season

INVITED to an open tournament in Cornwall, the Royal Navy and Marines Basketball Association's (RNMBA) season got off to the most impressive for many a year.

Building purposefully on the improvement seen in April's close-run Inter-Service tournament, the Senior squad, was strengthened by the return to fitness of Lt Berron Parker (Whale Island) and a number of young players (notably Mnes Thompson, Boden and Coyle). The weekend saw two wins from a three-game tournament with the Senior Service pitched against tough opposition.

Following a hard session of initial training at RNAS Culdrose's enviable sports facilities, a demanding first game on Saturday saw the RNMBA recover from a ten-point deficit in the third quarter to defeat Cornwall Cougars 68-64.

This was followed on Sunday by a second victory over an enhanced Cornwall side 79-69 before a 90-77 defeat in the final game (just 30 minutes after their last) against National League Division 2 outfit Marjons Cannons.

An outstanding all-round team performance – coach Sgt Marty Page (RM Poole) did not want to single out any one individual for particular praise because everyone played their part in what was a hugely uplifting opener to a season that already looks bright.

Next up for the RNMBA is the Inter Command tournament at CTCRM on October 17-18.



## Racing red white and blue (part 1)

SPECIALLY painted in Fly Navy 100 colours, this is Lt Cdr Mark Scott racing his Yamaha R1 in round four of the Wirral Hundred Motorcycle Club superbike competition.

By day, Mark is Commanding Officer of 705 NAS – the helicopter training squadron based at RAF Shawbury in Shropshire.

And by night (well, weekends actually but it sounds better) he clambers on to his racer.

The bike has been re-sprayed in the Fly Navy 100 livery for the 2009 season.

It may not necessarily have made a difference to results on the track... but it had made a difference.

"Since the new Fly Navy paint scheme there has been a lot more interest in the bike," said Mark.

"I was surprised to see how many people in

the crowd have connections with the Fleet Air Arm and the Royal Navy."

So far this year Mark has finished 18th, 15th and 13th giving a total of four championship points.

The first round at Ty Plas race circuit on Anglesey was an ideal opportunity to run the bike for the first time after being laid up for the winter.

The second race at Oulton Park was dry and sunny and despite a slipping clutch, the officer managed his first points-scoring finish.

Sadly in the trophy race later in the same day the clutch failed completely, requiring a full clutch change before the third round back on Anglesey.

With a new clutch Mark managed to knock one second off his lap time, averaging 71 mph

per lap, earning a 13th-place finish.

Round four was also staged on Anglesey. Things went well in practice and the first race saw a 14th-place finish.

The second race ended on lap eight (of ten) when Mark high-sided going into the notorious corkscrew bend before the start finish straight.

Not much damage to either bike or rider, so you'll see the Fly Navy 100 Yamaha Racing Team back at Anglesey on October 3 and 4.

The last race of the season is back at Oulton Park in Cheshire on October 24-25... which handsily ties in with HMS Illustrious' visit to Liverpool for the end of Fly Navy 100 celebrations (see page 7).

Mark is also supporting the charity Shelter Box, who have loaned him a tent for use in the paddock.

## Racing red white and blue (part 2)

BRAVING the UK's fastest circuit – Thruxton – Brig Mike Hickson raced his Mallock Mk20 once more for the RN Automobile Club.

A Classic Clubmans double header (qualifying and race on the Saturday and another qualifying and race the following day) supported the International French and British truck racing annual meeting.

Large crowds and some damp weather on the Saturday saw 21 Classic Clubmans line up on slicks for qualifying and Brig Hickson, averaging 105 mph, was pleased with a solid seventh in a very competitive field. Some close racing and a number of good battles during the ten laps of the race saw the brigadier retain his seventh position.

Having learned from his experiences on the Saturday and having made some adjustments to his car overnight the brigadier managed to run significantly quicker in qualifying on the Sunday and was pleased to end up fifth on the grid.

The race that followed was a real battle, with places changing hands on virtually every lap and cars running very close together. Racing very closely with two other cars the officer alternated between fourth and sixth.

Brig Hickson finished in sixth, 0.6 secs behind the fifth-placed car with the car one place down just 0.2 secs behind him.



Picture: PO Dutchy Holland, HMS York

## Bickleigh young riders shine



A TEAM of 20 riders and horses from Bickleigh Saddle Club, accompanied by supporters and family and friends, travelled the long route from the South West to compete at the RNRM equestrian Championships held at Sparsholt College in Hampshire.

The Bickleigh riders competed in all disciplines within the competition against some of the best riders from not only the Royal Navy and Royal Marines but also the Army and RAF.

After the long journey and a night spent camping nearby to their horses the Bickleigh riders performed excellently on the first day of the competition, picking up several rosettes including first and second for the team event and the 'best young rider' trophy which

was won by AB Laura Mealing and presented by Rear Admiral Simon Charlier.

After a well-deserved barbecue on the Saturday evening and another night under canvas the competition on Sunday continued at an increased pace.

The Bickleigh riders again competed in all events, including the show jumping relay against the clock, entering five teams who were all cheered along by a vocal group of loyal supporters who had travelled up for the weekend.

The club is based at Bickleigh Barracks, Plymouth, and membership is open to all Service personnel and their families. Details on 01752 727038 (mil 93788 7038) or [www.royalnavyequestrian.co.uk](http://www.royalnavyequestrian.co.uk)

● LPT Emma Phillips vaults over one of the jumps at Sparsholt

## Navy Days hits hockey

THE scene was set for improved attendance at the revolutionary Navy-wide mixed seven-a-side hockey event with up to two dozen teams earmarked to head to Portsmouth.

But thanks to Navy Days which meant leave was cancelled in Plymouth, around 14 teams dropped out of the event.

On the plus side about 100 commemorative medals were given out to members of the seven teams which contested one day of the envisaged three with 21 matches played on an 'all play all basis'.

The reduced event had the look of an inter-branch event rather than inter specialisation.

Submarine stalwart PO(Logs(SC)) Steve Parfitt was unable to travel but produced a team from Neptune – all Jack and Jenny Dusties – who played their hearts out.

The Naval Air Command team were still on tour in Holland when the event began but they still managed to get a team – complete with a pilot under training and an observer and representatives of most FAA branches.

The Royal Marines have always supported this event and Royal being Royal, they always come to win. A sprinkling of wives and female guests made up for a lack of female Bandidos and Royal achieved what they set out to do: first place overall – no cups, just the same medals as everyone else, but once again, the marines have the bragging rights.

There was a big 'thank-you' to all the Warfare people who turned up: there were EWs in the shape of Lt Cdr Lee McEvoy and AB Lee Kadis (who broke a finger – the weekend's only casualty).

Former CPO EW 'Cokey' O'Kane, as a guest, submariner Gav Gettings, schoolie Giles Dunn, guest goalkeeper MEA Singer, navigator Dee McKenna, PWO Lt Cdr Sharky Ward, the three HMs, Navy chairman Cdre Mark Darlington and his sons Josh (14) and Noah (12) completed a splendid family-orientated team.

Staking a strong claim for Man of the Tournament were Lt Cdr Brian Sweeney, the ME team organiser and HMS Sultan's hockey officer, and former lieutenant and Navy U23 boss, now civilian instructor at Sultan, Richard Croker.

## PTIs peak of perfection

ROYAL Navy physical trainers from Portsmouth set a new record for the gruelling 24 Peaks Challenge in the Lake District.

The team from HMS Nelson beat 15 other defence or nautical teams from across the UK, climbing 24 peaks in 16 hours 23 minutes – shaving more than two hours off the previous record set last year.

The victorious quartet comprised CPO Ronnie Scott and LPTs Kev Green, Les Dennis and Matt Shortt.

LPT Carl Thorpe was forced to retire through injury after climbing four peaks and the team's efforts were co-ordinated by safety driver LH Frankie Powell.

"We pushed our pace for the duration with a maximum stop of five minutes every three hours which also included a map check, water and food stop," said Kev.

"We came up against teams who had competed in previous races who were aware of most grid references so had the edge in navigation.

"We found the whole challenge tough as we made it tough on ourselves by pushing the pace hour after hour.

"We didn't expect to win or break the record but through team work and cheerfulness in adversity we overcame wind, rain and pain to win."

The event is on track to raise more than £90,000 for Seafarers UK.

**Next month**



**Joint account - in Scotland for international war games**



**Waves and waves - a week of adventurous training at Culdrose**



**Club feat - the front-line role played by 771 NAS**

**Plus**

**Going down to Southport, going to have ourselves a time... Sea Cadets hold regatta on Merseyside**



● 'chuting gallery... CPO Steve 'Shaka' Hähn (824 NAS) and PO 'Pony' Moore (HMS Triumph) unfurl the White Ensign over Beni Mellal in Morocco with the Atlas Mountains in the background

# Beni hills ideal for skydivers

**TWENTY Royal Navy skydivers headed for the Atlas mountains for a rare - and stunning - foray into foreign skies.**

And 20 Royal Navy skydivers, you'll be pleased to know, came back from foreign skies - seven of them as newly-qualified jumpers.

Exercise Freefall Africa (you can guess what's involved and where it was) took seven complete novices - Surg Lt Eames (submarine training), AB Tinsley (HMS Triumph), LH Wyatt (Westminster), LH Legge (SFM Devonport), LS Patterson (820 NAS), POPT Murphy (RAF Halton), and L/Cpl Hogg (847 NAS) - to Beni Mellal in Morocco (about 100 miles northeast of Marrakech).

All wanted to throw themselves out of a perfectly serviceable aircraft. And who is the RN to reject such a perfectly reasonable request...

The accelerated freefall (AFF) course is designed for people who wish to learn how to skydive from scratch.

It comprises an initial ground school, seven jumps under the control of AFF instructors, and a low-level 'Hop and Pop' jump. The final stage consists of ten solo consolidation jumps, after which they are fully qualified skydivers.

The first load took off with advanced instructor Lt Cdr Gibbs (NCHQ), AFF instructors Cpl Tuckley (1 Para) and Stuart Murtha, formation skydive coaches CPO Hähn (824 NAS) and PO Moore (HMS Triumph), and experienced skydivers CPO Brown (702 NAS) and Lt Adams (849 NAS).

As the aircraft, a Pilatus Porter, climbed through the Atlas Mountains to 15,000ft above the dropzone it became clear that the scenery on the way to altitude would be almost as exciting as the skydive back down to earth.

Despite the realisation that Africa was clearly not always bikini and shorts weather, the seven students were soon able to put the skills they

had been taught into practice, 13,000ft above where they stood.

Although not all of the students had the opportunity to jump on the first day it wasn't long before all had successfully completed their first skydive, some needing slightly more encouragement than others; one of the instructors was heard to say to one reluctant jumper: "You've had two children, how can anything seem hard after that? Get in the door!"

In addition to the AFF course, there were also five intermediate skydivers who had already completed a qualifying course: PO O'Rourke (847 NAS), CPO Parkin (847 NAS), PO Gregory (HMS Vigilant), Cpl Ellis-Stansfield (AFCO East), and Mne Kennedy (847 NAS).

The next stage for these skydivers was to further advance their skills whilst in freefall, not just on their own but in formation with others as well. This progression of training under qualified formation skydiving coaches would earn them their FS1 (Formation Skydiving 1) qualification.

To achieve that, the students were required to complete a skydive with three other jumpers in which they had to achieve a minimum of four specified formations relative to each other, in approximately 35 seconds.

In doing so, they would demonstrate that they could move in all directions, work at close proximity to other jumpers in the air in a safe, controlled manner, and move into clear airspace from the other jumpers to facilitate a safe deployment of their parachute.

They were coached throughout this progression by CPO Hähn, PO Moore and Lt Cdr Gibbs, with assistance from CPO Brown and Lt Adams.

"It was impressive to see the effort that was put in by everyone to overcome sticking points - including PO O'Rourke's tendency to fly in a circle and PO Gregory adjusting his fall rates to work with some of the smaller skydivers after

racing the aircraft down earlier in the week, and almost winning!" said CPO Hähn.

When not in the air the students and instructors alike could either be found at the hotel poolside, or sitting around the balcony debriefing area in the setting African sun.

In addition to a chilled beer there were classic evenings such as the quiz night, with the surprise appearance of everyone's favourite quiz master: Bananaman. Only a POPT could find space for fancy dress when the rest of the skydivers had been so limited on luggage allowance due to the amount of equipment required...

Throughout the progression of the intermediate skydivers the AFF students continued to literally fly through the required levels.

LH Legge continued to have difficulty overcoming her fear at the door, but it was with determination, a smile, even the occasional tear, and the support of her instructors and fellow students that she achieved not only her personal goals, but also joined her fellow students in completing all 18 AFF jumps to qualify for a licence.

It is perhaps more impressive that all the students achieved this milestone as well as learning to pack their own parachutes after each jump.

Since returning from Africa, all of the students have continued to skydive.

LH Legge has overcome her door phobia, and has since completed numerous canopy handling courses, while Surg Lt Eames has demonstrated a natural ability for formation skydiving and is close to achieving his formation skydiving certificate.

The intermediate jumpers all represented the Navy at this year's Inter-services Parachute Competition, while the coaches obtained their required demonstration clearance and are now part of the Royal Navy Raiders Parachute Display Team.



## The things people will do for a medal...

**EIGHTEEN months ago, Lt Paul Goddard spied an Ironman medal in an antiques shop in Weymouth. "The only way to own one was to buy one," the submariner (pictured above) based at DSTL Winfrith reasoned.**

Ironman requires a 2.4-mile swim in a reservoir ("I couldn't swim a stroke of front crawl"), a 112-mile bike ride ("I hadn't ridden for years"), followed by a marathon ("I was a runner so I had some base fitness").

And so began the road to Bolton, hosting the UK race of the 2009 Ironman championships.

Some 1,500 athletes from three dozen nations descended on the Lancastrian town.

Few last-minute preparations for the race could have been worse than those of the submariner. We'll let him tell the story...

"The first bout of sneezing came on Thursday: this was the first time I thought that a year's worth of training for Ironman could be in jeopardy.

Friday was the full-on nose blowing every ten minutes, Saturday seemed to ease up, Sunday the head and eyes started to ache and my sides were stone cold. Monday I felt so bad that I stayed in bed and Tuesday wasn't much better.

Wednesday I felt well enough to go to work and Thursday I managed a short swim; this aggravated my throat and I developed a cough. Saturday we set off for Bolton.

As we approached the car park/field the traffic was at a standstill. We eventually got into the waterlogged field only for the car to get stuck in the mud.

Luckily some local scallies helped to push me out. I cautiously drove to the other end of the field. I was the last one; they closed the field and then allowed cars to park on the road that I had just spent an hour queuing on.

Now a short walk with the bike down towards the reservoir and another field that resembled Glastonbury. Registration was straight-forward and quick albeit muddy. They announced that the race brief would be in the Reebok Stadium in Bolton. So back to the car for more mud surfing.

I went to bed at 7pm, my two-year-old daughter thought that screaming the hotel down was much more interesting than going to sleep.

She eventually went to sleep at 8pm. I on the other hand didn't sleep a wink until I got out of bed at 3.30am for my breakfast of muesli and room temperature milk. I left the hotel at 0400 to go to the Reebok stadium. I was then bussed to the start.

Next was to put the wet suit on and walk 400m to the reservoir. We entered the water at 5.50am: this was the first time I'd seen the reservoir.

All my open-water training had been in the sea so it was quite pleasant not to taste salty water.

It was at this point I realised  
 Continued on page 46

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# Dawn of aces

## The birth of naval aviation Part 2

### STRIKE AT THE ZEPS

#### THE CHRISTMAS STAR

##### THINGS TO COME

THERE was a hum in the Essex air at dusk two days before the first Christmas of the war.

Nine seaplanes, all built by Short Brothers, hopped across the mouth of the Orwell from the fledgling air station at Felixstowe and set down in the Stour off Parkeston Quay, Harwich.

As night enveloped the harbour, mechanics folded the wings of the aircraft back and cranes hoisted the planes on to three former cross-Channel ferries. Never vessels of particular beauty, the silhouettes of all three were now spoiled by sheds – primitive hangars – on the stern.

Before dawn on December 24, HM Ships *Empress*, *Engadina* and *Riviera* slipped away from Harwich and headed out into the North Sea, accompanied by a flotilla of cruisers and destroyers.

The man leading this unusual force, Commodore Reginald Tyrwhitt, thought little of the scheme dreamed up by the planners in the Admiralty, Plan Y, as it was codenamed, was a leap into the unknown, a strike at the Zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven by seaplanes – and seaplanes alone. "Should the sheds not be found, they are to attack the enemy's ships or any positions of military importance."

Twice before Tyrwhitt and his force had sailed, twice the weather had prevented the seaplanes from taking off. The commodore was livid. He had led his ships into harm's way for nothing. "I am sick to death of everything connected with aviation," he fumed. "At very great risk, we did our part and they utterly failed to do theirs. We had the finest show in the world at our mercy and could have done it with ease if only those idiots had known their job."

But today, this holiest of days, Tyrwhitt felt the guiding hand of the Lord accompanying his warships. As the force approached the German fortress island of Heligoland, a bright light burned through the low-lying fog to the east. Perhaps it was a searchlight, maybe even a Zeppelin.

"Do you know that it is Christmas Day and that light bears due east?" Tyrwhitt's navigator Bertram Watson pointed out. "It then dawned on me," the senior officer recalled, "that this was the Star in the East. From that moment on, I had no doubts or fears. I firmly believe the Almighty arranged for that star to act in this peculiar manner."

Under the dull, early morning light of a midwinter's day, the seaplanes were swung out, their wings unfolded on the water. Pilots and observers clambered in. The mechanics gave the propellers a jolt and seven aircraft – two would not start – began gathering speed in the Heligoland Bight.

None could fly faster than 80mph. The slowest could manage a mere 65mph. Between them they carried a little over 800lb of explosive.

The seven seaplanes set a course for the left bank of the Elbe estuary. Their destination, as laid down in their orders, the Zeppelin sheds at Cuxhaven. In fact, the sheds lay half a dozen miles south of the small fishing town on the edge of the village of Nordholz.

Nordholz was the spiritual – and actual – home of German naval aviation. One in every two airships Germany flew between 1914 and 1918 operated from Nordholz.

The twin sheds, each just short of 600ft long and almost 100ft high, were marvels of modern engineering, mounted on a gigantic turntable



● A flight lieutenant in a SSZ airship – Submarine Scout Zero class – prepares to drop a bomb by hand from the rear cockpit of the gondola

which moved the entire structure so the leviathans could be launched into the prevailing wind.

The Royal Naval Air Service had already shown that these monsters, seemingly invulnerable in the air, were vulnerable on the ground after destroying one in a shed at Düsseldorf ten weeks earlier.

The gods might have favoured Tyrwhitt as he launched his seaplanes almost within sight of the German fleet, but they did not favour the pilots and observers who arrived over the mainland to find the Cuxhaven peninsula sheathed by fog this Christmas evening.

None of the aircraft found the sheds. Indeed, few found any targets of military importance – although the drone of their engines could be heard through the fog by German ground crews at Nordholz. Two bombs were aimed at the hydrogen gas plant nearby, but they drifted into a wood and exploded harmlessly.

Elsewhere, the naval aviators reported spotting gun batteries, ships, perhaps a seaplane base. They released their bombs and headed back out to sea to rendezvous with their carriers.

Had the raiders struck the Nordholz sheds, they would have found them empty. For while the German Fleet took few steps, if any, to deal with the intruder on its doorstep, the Navy's air wing responded vigorously. Two Zeppelins, L6 and L5, were dispatched from Nordholz to intercept the English force with apparent impunity.

Seaplanes also took up the hunt. They found the *Empress*, lagging behind the rest of the force thanks to poor-grade coal. They straddled the converted ferry – two bombs landed within 50 feet of the ship – despite



● A very fanciful contemporary propaganda postcard produced by the French 'depicting' the Cuxhaven Raid

the *Empress* zig-zagging furiously and her ship's company taking pot shots at the Germans with rifles.

L6 now closed in – her pennant number clear to anyone on the upper deck of the *Empress*. On his flagship, HMS *Aethusa*, Reginald Tyrwhitt dismissed the Zeppelin. "Stupid great things, but very beautiful. It seemed a pity to shoot at them."

It did not seem a pity aboard HMS *Empress*, whose sailors were directing all their firepower at the airship lumbering 2,000ft above them, while the Germans poured machine-gun fire down on the seaplane carrier. The Zeppelin dropped its load – three 100lb bombs. All missed, but not by much. Concerted fire from Tyrwhitt's ships finally drove the airship away.

As for the Cuxhaven attackers, they were struggling to find their mother ships. Disorientated by the morning fog or running short of fuel, four of the planes never made it back

to the carriers. The crews ditched their aircraft in the North Sea and were picked up by submarine E11 or, in the case of one flier, by a Dutch trawler; he eventually found his way back to Britain via Holland.

With the skies empty, Reginald Tyrwhitt turned for home. "I wish all ships a Merry Christmas," he signalled his force from the *Aethusa*.

Thus ended what became known as the Cuxhaven Raid. In its aims, it had singularly failed. The Zeppelin sheds still stood, no damage of any significance had been inflicted on the Kaiser's empire.

Yet like so many deeds in the opening months of the Great War, Cuxhaven was a passage of what could be possible. Dreams and imagination outmatched the tools of the day.

"One can well imagine what might have been done had our seaplanes carried torpedoes," wrote the attack's leader Sqd Cdr Cecil L'Estrange Malone – an odd chap who would later become an anti-communist MP, and then a committed communist who wanted to swing Churchill from a lamppost. "Several of the ships in the Schelling Roads would have been torpedoed."

While their Army brethren were kicking footballs around in France and Belgium, on Christmas Day 1914 a handful of British naval aviators set the pattern for every strike by a carrier force – Termini, Pearl Harbor, Midway, Palembang, two Lima, Suez, the Falklands – in a century of conflict: surprise, launch, attack, recovery.

In 1914, the mid was more H G Wells than Nelson, or even Jellicoe or Beatty. But the Cuxhaven attack was the shape of things to come.

### THE U-BOAT MENACE

#### 'SUBMARINE DESTROYERS'

##### DEAD OR EARN THE VC

Thursday February 4 1915 was a glorious winter's morning in the great port of Wilhelmshaven.

A tug made its way across the harbour carrying His Imperial Majesty, Kaiser Wilhelm II, and his leading admirals. It would take a few minutes for the vessel to reach the battle-cruiser SMS *Seydlitz*, almost fatally wounded at the Dogger Bank ten days before.

The Dogger Bank had been a wake-up call for the German Navy. The rather loose handling of shells and charges in battle – which had almost done for the *Seydlitz* – was overhauled. The action had been yet another failure orchestrated by Admiral von Ingenohl, in charge of the High Seas Fleet. The admiral was sacked. In his place stepped Hugo von Pohl, an advocate of the U-boat.

To Hugo von Pohl, the submarine war was being waged too timidly – as he told the Kaiser forcefully on this short tug ride across Wilhelmshaven harbour. Pohl browbeat Wilhelm into submission. That same day, the official organ of government, *Deutscher Reichsanzeiger*, warned:

The waters around Great Britain and Ireland, including the whole of the English Channel, are hereby declared to be a war zone. From February 18, every enemy merchant vessel encountered in this zone will be destroyed, nor will it always be possible to avert the danger thereby threatened to the crew and passengers.

It was a declaration of unrestricted U-boat warfare.

Germany's means to wage such a war were meagre – three dozen boats of which perhaps only one third were taking the fight to the enemy at any one time – but across the North Sea, the Admiralty was worried.

Finding, let alone destroying, a German submarine in early 1915 was a mixture of luck and vigilance. Aircraft were dispatched on patrols, but as the Cuxhaven raid had shown, the seaplanes of early 1915 was unreliable, its duration at best three hours, its payload puny. The Admiralty turned to airships – 'submarine destroyers' as the ebullient First Sea Lord 'Jacky' Fisher called them. "It will make your mouth water and your sleep easy at Scapa," he assured Jellicoe, the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet. "Everyone thinks I'm mad but I really am not!"

Fisher was not mad. He was forceful and fast. The call went around the Grand Fleet for 18, 19, 20-year-olds, mostly midshipmen, men who had already showed they possessed the ability to lead – and to navigate. Some volunteered. Some were volunteered. Mid Thomas Elmhurst of the battle-cruiser HMS *Indomitable* was singled out by his captain and ordered to report to Fisher.

"You young gentlemen are going to fly," the admiral told them. "You'll probably be dead within a year – or you may get the VC."

The prospect of glory didn't especially entice the young men – but flying pay and the chance to get away from dreary Scapa Flow did.

Before March 1915 was out, the first of these midshipmen were in Dover – flying the very first of Fisher's submarine destroyers, SS1.

Submarine Scout 1 was rudimentary – a 140ft long 'blimp' with a gondola, the fuselage of a Bristol BE2C, backbone of the Royal Flying Corps in the first half of the war – slung precariously beneath it. The blimps were cheap – £2,500 apiece – generally reliable and invariably effective. At first the crews dropped bombs by hand. Later a more 'sophisticated' method developed: the bombs would be slung over the side, held in place by ropes which were cut using knives when it came to attacking a target.

"To fly a ship on a nice day was a really delightful experience," Lt Frederick Verry enthused. "One felt that the air was entirely one's own – you could go where you liked, fly at what height you liked, what speed you liked."

Nice days in the North Sea were rare. The men were never warm in their open cockpits, the wind would batter them and the rain poured down their necks. And if things went wrong in a Submarine Scout, it was particularly unpleasant. At 7,000ft, the engine of SS14 – dragging the airship through the sky at up to 50mph – packed up. "We took it in turns to climb out and stand on the skids to try to spin the propeller – which wasn't very funny, considering you'd a drop of 7,000 feet if your foot slipped," recalled pilot S/Lt Thomas Williams. The effects failed, the airship plummeted to the ground – but landed safely. The junior officer made for the village store, bought some chewing gum, plugged the holes in the radiator, poured in water from the village pump and the blimp returned to base.

If flight was perilous for the crews, it was scarcely less dangerous for the men handling the battlebags on the ground. When the airships returned to base, they would throw down their trail ropes for the ground staff to catch – but if they caught it before

Continued on page 11



● (Left) The master of the skies in the spring of 1917... Sopwith Triplanes of No.1 Squadron RNAS - 'Naval One' - at Bailleul, near Ypres; nearest the camera is N5454 flown by Australian F/Lt Richard Minifie who scored 17 of his 21 kills in Tripes and (above) the triplane's successor, Sopwith Camels, of No.3 Squadron RNAS lined up at Bray Dunes in January 1918

**CHEERIOH!**

The seaplane is my Hoodoo,  
I shall not fly another,  
It maketh me to come down on  
rough waters,  
It spoileth my reputation.  
Though I fly from the harbour  
It returneth by towing.  
Its Magneto discomforts me.  
Its tank runneth over.  
Its rods and its engines fail me.  
Yea, even by mechanics is my name  
held in laughter.  
Though I strive to overcome them  
Its weaknesses prevail.  
In the hour of my need its engines  
mook me  
And bring me down with great  
bumpings,  
And there is no health in it.  
Verily, verily, if I continue to fly  
theses things  
I shall end by drowning.  
For my friends they desert me  
And call me a Jonah.  
My luck smelleth to Heaven  
And I am disheartened,  
Therefore shall I turn my hand  
elsewhere  
And become a tram driver.  
For again I say unto you, that of all  
pilots  
I am the most unlucky,  
Yea, damned unlucky.  
- song of WW1 seaplane crews

worsened by the inferior machines it flew.  
In the autumn of 1916, the Army pleaded to the Navy for assistance. The Royal Naval Air Service answered the call.  
Canadian F/Lt S/Lt Raymond 'Collie' Collishaw was among those aviators sent to France, first to Nancy, then to Cambrai, finally to Flanders. He had downed four enemy aircraft to date. It was not the tally, but the manner of his victories which impressed.

Flying alone over French lines in a Sopwith 1½ Strutter (it had one and a half struts, hence the name) in October 1916, Collishaw was pounced on by six Albatrosses. Hopping over the trees, the Canadian not merely managed to evade his pursuers, he sent two crashing into woods in flames. So impressed were the French by the action they witnessed that day, they awarded the naval flier the *Croix de Guerre*.

By the time of Raymond Collishaw's arrival at Fumes, the Strutter had been replaced by a legendary aircraft, the Sopwith Triplane.

In the spring and summer of 1917, the 'Tripe' was the interceptor of the day. It was, Collishaw recalled, "a delightful machine" - immensely manoeuvrable, able to climb to almost 20,000ft, fast. Its only drawback was that it was undergunned.

The Canadian was given command of one of Naval Ten's three flights, B. The men painted the tails and cowlings black to distinguish them from A and C Flights; then gave each aircraft suitable names - Black Death, Black Prince, Black Sheep and, Collishaw's own, Black Maria. Black Flight was born.

Naval Ten was finally thrown into the fray in earnest in early June, committed in support of the attack at Messines - prelude to Third Ypres. The Albatross was Raymond Collishaw's unfortunate prey: nine fell victim to the Canadian's guns in the first week of June.

Those 'kills' made Collishaw an ace. They earned him the DSC. He would add the DFC and DSO and bar to his name before the war was over. And through it all, he retained his sense of humour, his generous, warm nature - pictures invariably show him smiling. He told his fellow aviators - most of Black Flight were kinfolk from Canada - to live life to the full. "I encouraged plenty of singing and drinking at night, though many pilots found it very difficult to drown their sorrows. If you got a half-day off, you'd go to the nearest town and raise hell."

The men would be airborne at least twice, sometimes as many as four times a day, flying two-hour patrols at a time. The strain gnawed at the nerves of many. "I used to grit my teeth so tightly when I was under the tension that my jaws would be sore



● The smile belies the brain of a born killer - Sqn Cdr Raymond Collishaw, the Royal Naval Air Service's leading ace of the Great War

just from grinding my teeth," recalled Collishaw's Naval Ten comrade, the boyish-looking Mel Alexander. A two-hour patrol was akin, said Alexander, to "carrying a ton of lead". He watched as a squadron with a paper strength of 15 pilots lost more than 60 men during the spring and summer of 1917: killed, wounded or nerves shot away.

"The bad time for the pilots was at night, knowing they might be making their last patrol on the following morning," Raymond Collishaw recalled. Yet he never lost his wonderment at the war in the air, enthralled by the "theatre in the clouds" as he called it.

"Fighter pilots on both sides played to audiences of infantrymen cheering them on from the trenches below," he continued. "The waltz started when one plane would get on the tail of another. The two aircraft would fly in ever smaller circles until finally one could bring his guns to bear on the other - then the dance ended."

By the end of the summer of 1917, Collishaw had chalked up his 38th victory, 34 of them in the Tripe. Kills, tallies, numbers - he became the first man to shoot down six enemy aircraft in a single day, July 6 - meant little to the Canadian. "Most of the 'stars' were extremely conscientious about making sure they were given full credit for their victories," one fellow pilot recalled. "Collishaw wasn't like that. He seemed at times indifferent to confirmation of his victories." Not merely did he not claim victories, Collishaw would even 'give away' his kills to novice pilots to bolster their confidence. "If he and a rookie fired on the same plane, Collie would always maintain that it was the rookie's bullets that had got it."

Such magnanimity was even extended to the Hun. "The fighter pilot never thought of the man in the machine," Collishaw said. "He didn't see him - he thought of the enemy aircraft simply as a target, as a kind of game which he had to assault."

Game or not, Raymond Collishaw was an outstanding player. No naval aviator shot down more enemy aircraft than the Canadian - 60 in all. Only five men in the Great War claimed more kills.

By the time of kill number 60, the Tripe had long since faded into history. Its star was brief but bright - like the men who flew it. Its pre-eminence in 1917 has largely been eclipsed by its German copycat, as favoured by the Red Baron, and by the aircraft which replaced it, the Sopwith Camel.

**BOATS WITH WINGS**

**THE SPIDER WEB  
DREARY PATROLS**

A little after dawn on September 22 1917, Canadian F/Lt Norman Ansley Magor headed out over the North Sea in his Curtiss H12 flying boat. For the next five or so hours, the four-man seaplane would patrol its allotted sector of the 'spider web', an invisible grid overlaid on the sea to help aircraft locate submarines. Invariably the searches were futile, but if there was a chance of spotting a U-boat, it was normally at dawn - after a night spent recharging the batteries by running on the surface.

An hour into the routine patrol, Magor and his comrades were roughly 35 miles east of Felixstowe, cruising along at a little over 4,000ft. Half a dozen miles away was an unmistakable sight - a 'submarine of a very large type, about 200 to 250 feet showing above the water'. The boat immediately began to dive, spooked by the growl of the Curtiss' two Rolls-Royce Eagle engines. Magor pushed the seaplane down to 800ft, then dropped two 230lb bombs. Both landed just behind the conning tower, one a direct hit.

"The submarine was seen to turn upside down, and a large bubble with wreckage and large quantities of oil subsequently appeared."

The doomed boat was the small coastal boat UB32 - not 200 to 250ft long, but a mere 120. Small or not, she had been responsible for sending nearly 43,000 tons of shipping to a watery grave, although her final 12-day patrol proved fruitless.

Magor's flight that morning was one of more than 700 conducted that month in home waters and the North Sea by patrol planes and airships. Between them, they reported 28 sightings of enemy submarines - and attacked 18 of them. UB32 was the only kill.

In fact, UB32 was the only 'kill' by British aviators in the entire war. Kills, however, only tell half the story.

As with everything else in these pioneering years of aviation, the first patrols over the North Sea in the opening months of the year were basic, rather hit-and-miss, but always fraught with danger.

Apart from the Submarine Scout blimps, land-based aircraft, or aeroplanes with floats to take off from - and land on - water, would head out over the Channel or into the North Sea on reconnaissance patrols.

Henry Allingham climbed into an Avro biplane as a mechanic/observer. There wasn't a great deal he could do in either capacity - he couldn't fix the engine in flight, only listen to its pitch and advise the pilot whether he should continue or turn back; as for weapons, all he had was a Lee Enfield rifle, plus two homing pigeons to signal back to base - if they found it. "I don't know what I'd have done if I had encountered a German ship. It was pretty futile to pitch a slow-moving aircraft into a hail of fire let loose by a ship."

Allingham had decided the naval air service was the life for him. A coach builder by trade, Allingham loved things mechanical - he even owned a Triumph TT motorbike. But he also liked the atmosphere

in the new service - it wasn't so formal, so stuffy as in the Grand Fleet. An officer berated a handful of Australians posted to the air station at Great Yarmouth for failing to salute him.

"Do you know who I am?"  
"No idea, cobber."  
"I'm in charge..."  
"Good on yer, mate. You've got yourself a good number. See you around."

Such an attitude to life was perhaps understandable given the horrific casualty rate aviators suffered. Landing was what they feared most - and a crash landing invariably sparked a conflagration. Men "burned up". Allingham remembered, "in a matter of seconds. There was nothing anyone could do." There was no thought of rescuing the trapped airmen. The ground crew stood back, waiting for the fire to burn itself out.

The Avro and other earlier aircraft were never going to be the panacea to the U-boat menace.

It was only with the right machine - the Curtiss H12 flying boat, nicknamed the Large America - and the right method - constant, patterned patrols over the North Sea - that the aerial campaign against the U-boat began to pay dividends. The searches focused on waters around the North Hinder lightship, 50 nautical miles east of Felixstowe. An invisible octagonal grid radiated from the ship. It came to be known as the Spider Web. We can do no better than allow one of the spiders, Canadian pilot Sqn Cdr Douglas Hallam, who flew about this web from the outset, to describe how it worked:

**This tremendous spider web was 60 miles in diameter. It allowed for the searching of 4,000 square miles of sea and was right across the path of the submarines. A submarine ten miles outside it was in danger of being spotted, so at cruising speed it took ten hours for a U-boat to cross it. Under ordinary conditions, a [flying] boat could search two sectors - a quarter of the whole web - in five hours or less. The tables were turned on Fritz the hunter; for here he was the hunted, the quarry, the fly that had to pass through some part of the web. The flying boat was the spider.**

Hallam arrived at Felixstowe in the spring of 1917 with the grand-sounding title Commanding Officer War Flight. He had one shed, two flying boats and a handful of men. "There was no intelligence hut, no flying office, no telephone in the shed, no pigeons," he recalled. Hallam himself had never flown in the new Curtiss seaplane, although his co-pilot had, but neither man had ever seen a U-boat.

The Curtiss carried a crew of four: two pilots, an engineer and a radio operator. For the next 18 months, these Large Americas and their British counterparts, the Felixstowe F2, would prow the spider webs - apart from the North Sea there were similar patrols in the Channel, Irish Sea and Bristol Channel - constantly.

"More often than not, the patrol would be carried out in the most filthy weather I have ever flown in. The North Sea was full of fog

and rain most of the time," recalled Scottish-born Canadian F/Lt Robert Lockie.

"A good day was a rarity. I still look back on it and wonder just how we did it, but it is a fact that I have flown for eight hours at a time with no cloud-flying instruments at all."

The strain of these missions was no less demanding than combat over the Western Front - or life in the trenches for that matter.

"Trips of six to eight hours at a stretch seem to do a lot of pilots in," one officer wrote. "Six to seven hours over a barren and sullen sea, where engine failure does not mean imprisonment but starvation, frequently followed by death."

It was ditching, more than crashing, more than encounters with the Hun, that weighed most heavily on the fliers' minds. A carrier pigeon arrived back from Large America 8666 bearing a desperate message from its commander, F/Lt Vincent Nicholl: "We are not far from the coast as we keep seeing small land birds. Sea is still rough. Machine intact still. We will fire Verry's lights every 45 minutes tonight." Nicholl and his crew were eventually rescued. Henry Allingham remembered another Curtiss which ditched. With no functioning radio and no carrier pigeons, it was five days before the crew were rescued - by chance - by a passing destroyer. They had survived by drinking water in the engines' radiators.

At the height of the war against the U-boat, the RNAS devoted nearly 300 seaplanes and 100 airships to defeating the German submarine, either conducting routine reconce patrols or providing air cover for convoys. On just eight occasions did a U-boat dare to attack shipping when there was air power present.

Kills may have been few, but the *U-Boatman* was ever fearful of the British seaplanes. On a fine day in late June 1918, *Kapitelwasser* Werner 'Fips' Fürbringer was taking his new charge, UB110, along the Flanders coast to Ostend for repairs. As his nickname suggested, Fips was an affable character who got on well with his men. He also possessed a ruthless streak: only five men sank more Allied shipping in the Great War. Four years of war had taught Fips to be cautious - especially now as the tide of war was beginning to turn against the Reich. Two aircraft appeared overhead and turned towards his boat. His officer of the watch assured him they were German.

"Fair enough," said Fürbringer, "but I think I'll still give the aircraft alarm all the same."

As he did so, the aircraft dropped to 500ft, the rounds on their fuselage clearly visible. The machine-gun on UB110's upper deck began to spew lead and iron while Fürbringer took evasive action. A large dustbin-shaped object fell from one of the aircraft. "This looked so comical that we all burst into laughter," the U-boat commander recalled. The submariners stopped laughing when the bomb crashed into the sea 100ft away. A second landed barely 50ft from the U-boat.

The second aircraft now closed in. His first attack was wide of the mark. But not so the second. His 'dustbin'

Continued from page 1

it touched the ground and earthed, "a man could easily get more or less electrocuted," recalled Lt Victor Goddard. "A chap could take a very nasty shock - enough to make him fall backwards." Even when earthed, the ropes were dangerous - they could easily drag men across the ground at speeds up to 20mph before sufficient sailors could grab hold to bring the blimp to a halt.

More than 150 Submarine Scouts were built - later models, the SSZ (Z for Zero) were given purpose-built gondolas, although the crew were still exposed to the elements. Despite 'Jocky' Fisher's 'submarine destroyer' tag, not one U-boat fell victim to these blimps.

"We never saw a submarine," Lt Victor Goddard conceded. But, he added, "when I or any of the others were about no ship was ever attacked by a submarine."

**TRIPES OUTFOX HUN**

**CANADIAN 'COLLIE'  
ACE OF ACES**

On a mid-spring day in 1917, the latest pilot assigned to 'Naval Ten' - No.10 Squadron Royal Naval Air Service - arrived in the village of Fumes, a dozen miles from Dunkirk.

It wasn't just the Army which was being ground down by the bitter fighting on the Western Front. The battles of the Somme and, later, Arras severely denuded the Royal Flying Corps - whose position was





● 'A good day was a rarity...' (Left) Coastal-class airship C23A on convoy duty in the North Sea and (above) a Curtiss H16 flying boat, N4060, outside its hangar. The flying boats and airships were mainstays in a sustained anti-submarine effort in the final 18 months of the war. Despite few kills, these dreary, unending patrols ensured that few U-boats dared attack shipping

landed so close "that the whole boat trembled like a struck gong". Relatedly the guns of the German batteries along the Flanders coastline opened up. Too late: the aircraft were heading back to base.

## THE ZEP KILLERS THE HUN RESPOND

### A COLD FISH

It wasn't merely submarines which the Curtiss seaplanes hunted. In a war where technology and innovation was rapidly becoming the key to victory, wireless gave the British an edge over the Germans. Zeppelins dispatched over the North Sea on reconnaissance flights sent back regular radio reports to base – radio reports which were intercepted by the Admiralty. At dawn on May 14, FR Lt Christopher Galpin took a Large America towards the Terschelling Bank where intelligence reported a German airship was on patrol.

L22 had taken to the skies before dawn, conducting a routine patrol of the waters off the West Frisian Islands. The weather was poor – heavy clouds and a stiff breeze. Kapitänleutnant Martin Dietrich-Bielefeld had no reason to suspect today's search of the North Sea minefields would be any different from previous tedious patrols.

At the end of one run through his allocated sector, Dietrich-Bielefeld turned the leviantion about when, out of a cloud bank at 5,000ft, came Galpin in his Curtiss. He had left his position in the cockpit behind to man the forward gun while a senior rating stood by on the aft machine-gun. From 50 yards, he peppered the Zeppelin with incendiary bullets. The gun jammed. He grabbed the second machine-gun and almost emptied its magazine.

L22 did not respond. Nor did she burst into flames. The flying boat began to turn to make a second pass, when suddenly Galpin noticed "a slight glow inside the envelope". By the time the seaplane had completed its turn, the stern of the Zeppelin was alight and the craft was at a 45° angle, plunging towards the sea. Another five seconds, and the leviantion was falling vertically. The rear gunner could clearly make out "L22" painted near the nose before the flames consumed the envelope. He then watched as two men jumped out of the burning monster – without parachutes; death by falling was preferable to death by conflagration.

"When the airship had fallen to about 1,000 feet, four large columns of water went up in quick succession – either from bombs or engines becoming detached," Galpin wrote. "After 45 seconds, the envelope was burned off and the bare skeleton plunged into the sea, leaving a mass of black ash on the surface from which a column of brown smoke about 1,500ft high sprang up and stood."

Galpin's rear gunner grabbed a notepad and wrote a note for his flight commander: "Do you think he ever saw us?" L22 had not, but within a month, the Germans realised their airships were in danger from enemy aircraft over the North Sea: L40 (attacked twice), L46 (badly damaged), L43 (destroyed).



● Everything Raymond Collishaw was not... Germany's leading naval aviator Friedrich Christensen – wearing the Pour le Mérite, his nation's highest decoration, around his neck

And it wasn't merely Large Americas which took the fight to the foe. Fighters launched from tiny "runways" built over the barrels of guns were also being sent into North Sea skies. On the morning of August 17 1917, FR S/Lt Bernard Smart climbed into his Sopwith Pup aboard HMS Yarmouth and set off in pursuit of L23 off the coast of Jutland.

It took Smart a dozen minutes to climb to 9,000ft before he closed in on the Zeppelin from the stern. He came within 20 yards of the airship, peppering her with incendiaries, before pulling away as flames broke out. First the stern burned, then the forward part. Like L22 before it, L23 crumpled, crashing into the sea, sending a column of thick black smoke skywards. Smart saw at least one crewman jump out and descend by parachute. He was never found. All 18 men aboard L23 perished.

The Germans responded to this threat with flying boats of their own to intercept British seaplanes and airships. The Huns' weapon of choice was the Hansa-Brandenburg W12, smaller, faster, more agile than its foe – but then it was a fighter.

No-one mastered the W12 better than Oberleutnant Friedrich Christensen.

Christensen was not a typical aviator – he was in his mid-30s when he trained as a pilot after serving in motor torpedo boats and as a merchant mariner. As the fourth year of the Great War began, Christensen already had 400 flights and 1,100 hours under his belt and was regarded as Germany's "best and most successful naval aviator."

He arrived to take charge of the air station at Zeebrugge on the first day of September 1917 and, in the words of his biographer, "maintained German air superiority along the Flanders coast until the end of the war" – as the ill-fated crew of C27 found on the morning of December 11 1917.

About to turn for home, Christensen's flight of three seaplanes spied a blimp and pounced on it from above. The Coastal-class airship was already ablaze by the time Christensen arrived on the scene and joined in the unequal battle.

C27 plunged into the North Sea, its nose still intact as it struck the water, killing all five crewmen. The whole tragedy was filmed by C27's comrades in her sister ship, C17.

The kill was credited to Christensen (and he also credited it to himself in his post-war memoirs): "One of our naval aircraft, under the command of Oberleutnant zur See Christensen, destroyed the English airship C27 during a reconnaissance flight over the Broad Fourteens on the morning of December 11. The airship fell into the sea in flames."

Christensen earned Germany's highest decoration, *Pour le mérite* – the Blue Max – for his "considerable number of victories" and for attacking "many enemy ships and Dover with bombs."

His tally of kills would rise to 13 by the war's end; he also almost added submarine HMS C25 to his list of victories. The German and four comrades found the boat on the surface off Harwich one day in July 1918 and immediately attacked, strafing the submarine with machine-gun fire which killed the CO Lt David Bell and three lookouts. The body of one of the dead men was jammed in the hatch. His shipmates had to hack his legs off before they could toss it over the side and the hatch could be closed. Bombs and bullets pierced the pressure hull – the gaps were plugged with the men's clothes – before the boat could be towed back to harbour.

Like the Red Baron, British had a begrudging respect for Friedrich Christensen – "a consummate airman, an excellent shot and sportsman" – but he was no gentleman like Raymond Collishaw, not least because he would claim his wingmen's victories.

Both Christensen and Collishaw would serve in the second global conflagration a generation later. The Canadian would command RAF formations in North Africa and Scotland before settling down to retirement and happily answering questions from historians and enthusiasts about his days in the cockpit.

Friedrich Christensen resumed his career as a merchant sailor until the Nazis called on him to join the nascent Luftwaffe. He served eagerly, heading the National Socialist Fliers' Corps, an organisation which ostensibly promoted gliding but in reality provided the air force with men who were already partially-trained. Christensen would ultimately become the senior military figure in occupied Holland, ordering brutal reprisal actions against the Dutch civilian population. When one German was killed by partisans near the village of Putten, he told his men: "Das ganze Nest muss angesteckt werden und die ganze Bande an die Wand gestellt" – the entire nest must be set on fire and all the bandits must be put up against a wall. Putten was razed and more than 650 men sent to labour camps; most never returned. So much for chivalry and knights of the sky.

## SHIPS WITH WINGS

### 'LAUNCH PLATFORMS'

Ever since the Admiralty had decided to invest in heavier-than-air craft, it had sought to take them to sea.

But how to take aircraft to sea was the question – it would take the Admiralty most of the war to find the answer.

Curchaven had shown what aircraft launched from the sea could achieve – but the seaplane carrier was far from

the ideal battlewagon. Offloading the aircraft was slow – and impossible if the sea was rough. The same went for recovery.

The ship itself offered a more stable platform – but it needed a flat, uncluttered deck, a 'launching platform'. So, one was created. One was built on HMS Vindex, another on HMS Campania.

Campania was a former Cunard liner and veteran of the North Atlantic crossings. In the first months of war she was snapped up by the Admiralty, who began to convert her into a seaplane carrier.

Over her bow and forecabin a ramp was constructed, 165ft long in all, sloping gently towards the bridge, a 'launch deck'. A seaplane with detachable wheels would sit on this tiny 'runway', the ship turned into the wind, the aircraft engine revved up and then launched. As it lifted away from the deck, the wheels fell into the sea, where they were picked up by a motor boat crew.

It was impossible to land on the deck of Campania, or the even shorter 'launch platform' on the Vindex. The aircraft would either return to base on land, or set down in the sea for recovery by crane.

If it sounds rudimentary, it was – but not as basic as the launch platforms built on top of turrets and gun barrels on cruisers and capital ships of the Grand Fleet. At most the pilot could hope for a runway of 80ft. As the aircraft continued on its downward trajectory swooping down "like a swallow", Lt Victor Goddard recalled. With skill, and perhaps a bit of luck, it could gain sufficient speed to remain airborne. Without skill or good fortune, the aircraft would stall and crash into the sea. Even a successful take-off "would only miss the crest of the waves by a couple of feet," Goddard recalled. "It was an extremely hazardous operation and I used to watch these pilots with great admiration for their courage and skill."

The admiration for these pilots grows with the realisation there was little, if any, hope of recovering the aircraft. At the end of their missions, the planes would have to ditch, their pilots hope for rescue. Even the Admiralty conceded that it was "inhuman" to ask pilots to set their aircraft down among the waves. They had little chance of survival. The Sopwith Camel, the standard fighter by the beginning of 1918, always tipped forward sharply when it ditched and the pilot was thrown against the machine-gun and killed or severely wounded.

## 'MUCH COURAGE'

### GENESIS OF THE CARRIER

The only solution was to land on a ship. For that, the Navy needed something fast – and something with a flight deck.

The former it possessed in abundance. The latter it did not. The covetous eyes of naval aviators fell upon HMS Furious, a super battle-cruiser in the final stages of completion.

Furious would have been one of the most potent weapons in the Grand Fleet's armoury, her 18in guns able to strike targets 20 miles away. The Commander-in-Chief, David Beatty, was loathe to lose her.

The result was one of the most bizarre ships ever to hoist the White

Ensign, a warship in transition between two eras, the head of a carrier, the body of a dreadnought.

Furious' forward 18in turret was removed and a flight deck and hangar put in its place. The aft gun, however, was left *in situ*.

Fliers were given a flight deck 228ft long and 50ft wide at its broadest (it narrowed substantially towards the bow) from which to launch and recover.

Between the aft and forward of this strange hybrid was Furious' superstructure. There was no thought of flying over the length of the ship before touching down on deck. No, landing was more akin to setting a Harrier down 60 years later, as Maj Geoffrey Moore recalled: "We had to fly alongside the ship, then slip in sideways, centre ourselves over the fo'c'sle and alight." Deck hands would crouch down, waiting for the aircraft's wheels to touch the deck, then dash out, jump up and grab hold of the plane. Furious' captain, Wilmet Nicholson, dismissed the whole affair. "You might as well take a revolver and blow your brains out."

Sqn Cdr Edwin Harris Dunning (pictured below) was determined to prove Nicholson wrong. At 11.10am on August 2 1917, with Furious ploughing through Scapa Flow at 26kts, he slipped his Sopwith Pup over the forward deck, bounced once, then came to rest as his shipmates grabbed the aircraft.

Five days later Dunning tried again – in more blustery conditions. He made one landing but was unhappy with his performance and took his Pup up again. He made three attempts before touching down – but too far forward. He tried to power away, the engine choked, the Pup stalled and began to fall over the side. Photographs famously show his shipmates trying to grab it, but the aircraft fell into Scapa. Dunning was knocked unconscious as the Sopwith struck the water. He drowned before the aircraft could be recovered.

In a war where 'cannon fodder' has so often been used to describe the victims whose names filled column upon column of the newspapers, for once the powers that be acknowledged that an individual had made an inestimable contribution to the national effort. It told his parents:

The Admiralty wish you to know what great service he performed for the Navy. It was in fact a demonstration of landing an aeroplane on the deck of a man-of-war whilst the latter was under way. This had never been done before; and the data obtained was of the utmost value. It will make aeroplanes indispensable to the Fleet and possibly revolutionise naval warfare. The risk taken by Squadron Commander Dunning needed much courage. He had already made two successful landings but expressed a wish to land again himself, before other pilots did so and in this last run he was killed.

Dunning's death was not the end of carrier aviation but the beginning. Furious returned to the dockyard for yet more alterations – this time to remove her aft gun

and replace it with a landing deck; constructors left Furious' funnel and superstructure intact, however.

Instead of men dashing out to stop landing aircraft, a new method was tried to 'catch' planes setting down: wires were strung lengthwise along the deck. They would trap hooks fitted to skids on the aircraft – which replaced traditional wheels.

If the wires failed to stop aircraft on the 200ft landing deck, there was a device of last resort: a huge net stretched across the deck behind the funnel to finally bring any errant aeroplane to a halt.

Landing remained a hazardous business. Minus wheels, aircraft hit Furious' deck hard, damaging the undercarriage – and more often than not, the pilot as well. And leaving the superstructure in place caused severe problems for incoming pilots. The hot exhaust gases from the funnel were the least of the fliers' troubles: the funnel, bridge and mast affected the airflow so severely, recalled pilot Geoffrey Moore, that "we just dropped on the deck like shot partridges".

Put simply, it was too dangerous to land on Furious. So pilots didn't – they reverted to ditching in the sea or putting down on *terra firma*. It was a far from an ideal solution, but undeterred, the Admiralty committed Furious and seven Sopwith Camels into battle.

## AT DAWN WE STRIKE

### THE TONDERN RAID

#### THE FIRST CARRIER

Eight miles inland from the North Sea, close to the base of the Jutland peninsula, three huge sheds dominated the low-lying terrain of Schleswig-Holstein. The Germans gave all three names – Toska, an enormous double shed which could house two airships, the smaller Tobias which held a training balloon, and Toni, in the process of being dismantled. From here Zeppelins L54 and L60 had both taken part in raids against the British Isles.

Despite the successes of aviators in British skies or over the North Sea, hunting the German airships in flight was still a largely unrewarding affair. As it had been in the very first days of the war, when naval fliers had struck at Düsseldorf, "the place to attack Zeppelins was at their bases."

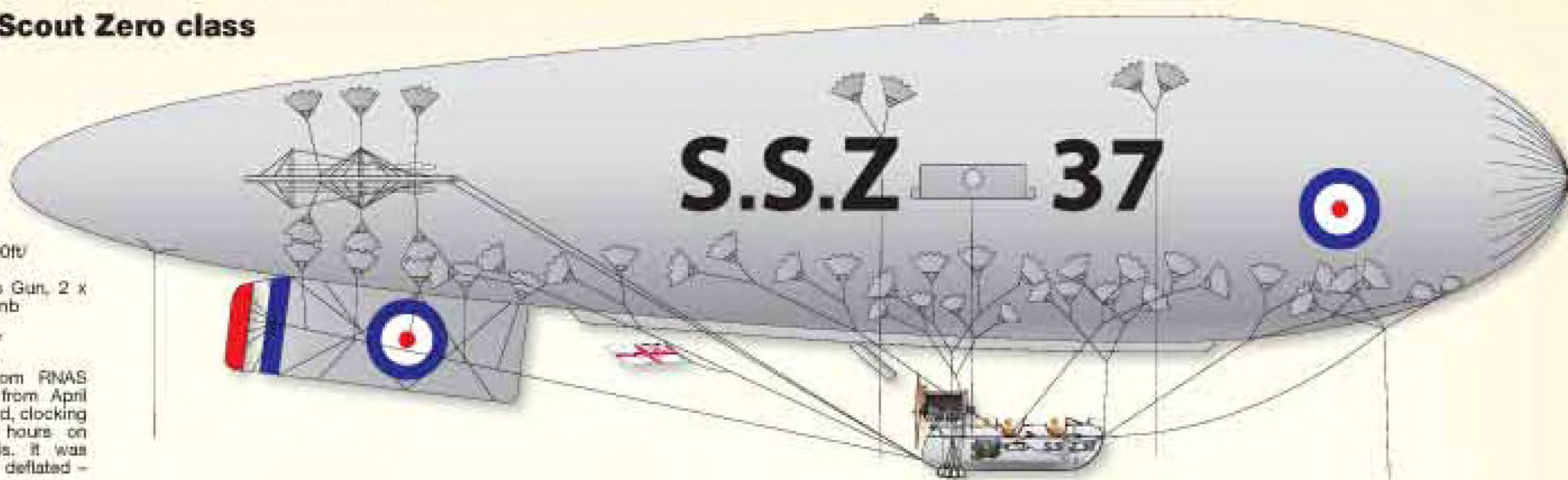
● Continued on page iv



## Submarine Scout Zero class

Crew: 3  
 Length: 143ft  
 Diameter: 30ft  
 Volume: 70,000 ft<sup>3</sup>  
 Useful lift: 1,334 lb (605 kg)  
 Powerplant: 1 x Rolls-Royce Hawk generating 75 HP  
 Speed: 53 mph  
 Rate of climb: 1,200ft/min  
 Armament: 1 x Lewis Gun, 2 x 110lb or 1 x 250lb bomb  
 Cost: £5,000  
 Introduced: April 1917

SSZ 37 operated from RNAS Pembroke in Wales from April 1918 until the war's end, clocking up more than 875 hours on anti-submarine patrols. It was decommissioned - or deflated - in January 1919.



Continued from page 11

declared Richard Bell-Davies, the second naval aviator to earn the VC.

Through the spring of 1918, pilots in Sopwith Camels practised low-level approaches at Turnhouse in Edinburgh - today the site of the city's international airport.

As with the attack on Cuxhaven, three and a half years before, bad weather twice thwarted the strike at Tondern, but on the morning of July 19, seven Camels, each carrying two 50lb bombs, lifted off from Furious' launching deck before dawn and headed east.

It was light by the time the unmistakable sight of the giant Tondern sheds came into view. William Dickson watched as his comrade W D Jackson dived towards the largest of the three structures, dropping two bombs. One landed to the side, the other struck the centre of the shed. It was followed by a 50-pounder from Dickson and two from Flt Lt Norman Williams.

"The shed then burst into flames and enormous conflagration took place, rising to at least 1,000ft, the whole shed being completely engulfed," Dickson wrote in his official report. Zeppelins L54 and L60 had been destroyed, although the shed itself surprisingly remained intact.

There was uneven ground fire from a handful of anti-aircraft guns and rather more accurate machine-gun and rifle fire, but it could not stop Bernard Smart, killer of L23, dropping one bomb on Tobias. A cloud of smoke and dust was thrown up, but Smart could not tell whether there had been an explosion as in Toska.

"The whole surroundings were thick with mechanics or soldiers armed with rifles and machine-guns, which gave so disconcerting a fire that I dived with a full engine to 50 feet and skimmed over the ground in a zigzag course to avoid it," he recalled.

The airship inside Tobias did not explode, neither did a truck carrying hydrogen cylinders, but otherwise the Tondern raid - the first successful carrier strike in history - had achieved its aims. Two airships had been reduced to twisted heaps of metal and never again would the base be used to launch attacks on the British mainland.

Yet Tondern was not an unqualified success. Only Dickson and Smart found the fleet and were picked up after ditching in the North Sea. One Camel and its pilot simply vanished. Four more landed in Denmark. Their crews took no more part in the war.

It was a loss rate of men and machines that naval aviation could not bear, but back in the UK the solution was at hand: the world's first true aircraft carrier.

HMS Argus embodied all the experience, all the knowledge of shipbuilding and handling aircraft at sea that Britain possessed in 1918.

Pictures of Argus - a converted Italian liner - with her zebra-esque dazzle paint convey the impression of a large vessel. She was not. Her flight deck was short - 350ft - and narrow - 85ft. But it was a continuous deck, unimpeded, no funnels, no masts, indeed no superstructure at all (the bridge was actually under the flight deck). Pilots liked her. The turbulence which bedevilled their landings on Furious was gone.

It was the autumn of 1918 before HMS Argus joined the Fleet and her days were devoted by trial take-offs and landings. She would take no part in the war, despite grandiose plans for her to launch a dawn strike by torpedo bombers against the German Fleet in harbour - a plan realised by the Japanese two decades later at Pearl Harbor.



It will make aeroplanes indispensable to the Fleet and possibly revolutionise naval warfare... Shipmates try to catch Sqn Cdr Edwin Dunning as he touches down on a ship under way - HMS Furious at Scapa Flow - for the first time in the history of aviation

## END OF THE RNAS

### AMALGAMATION

#### AN ERA PASSES

By the time Argus appeared, the Royal Naval Air Service was no more. The domain of the aviator belonged to a new, independent armed force, the RAF.

In business, by the summer of 1917 Britain's aerial forces needed shaking up. Naval aviators were far more likely to find themselves attacking Zeppelins over London or wrestling with the Red Baron above the trenches. Even David Beatty, Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet, conceded that the number of naval aviators employed on strictly naval tasks was "a very small proportion".

South African general and politician Jan Smuts was the man charged with overhauling Britain's aerial policy. He set about his task with vigour - and alacrity. Five weeks after being given the task, he reported his findings: Britain needed one, not two, aerial forces, under the direction of a single organisation, an air ministry.

Smuts' report, whose worthy title - *Air Organisation. Second Report of the Prime Minister's Committee on Air Organisation and Home Defence Against Air Raids* - belied its significance, was the genesis of the Royal Air Force.

An Air Ministry, the equivalent of the Admiralty and the War Office, would "control and administer all matters in connection with aerial warfare of all kinds whatsoever". It would wage its own war: Smuts dreamed of a day "not far off" when air forces would lay waste to "enemy lands", cities, industries, centres of population "on a vast scale". Of



Small and slow, but the progenitor of carrier aviation, HMS Argus - the world's first true aircraft carrier

course, "from time to time", the Army or Navy might wish to use aircraft. The Air Staff would naturally "attach them" for the duration of any operation.

Within two months, Smuts' recommendations had been approved by the powers that be. Within four, they were enshrined in law. The Admiralty didn't put up too much of a fight - although it did argue that new force or not, the Royal Navy needed its own air branch. Its arguments fell on deaf ears.

Lt Bernard Isaac, who had sailed to France with the RNAS at the beginning of the war, wasn't surprised. The Fleet was dominated by men who idolised the "big gun". There was even one in charge of the RNAS, Isaac fumed, Rear Admiral Charles Vaughan-Lee. He was a "a naval man who cares nothing for the Air Service, has no knowledge of aviation, nor had he taken any interest in the subject before his appointment." It was not unknown for Vaughan-Lee to refer to the RNAS as "the circus".

aviation and surrendered the air wing to "the guardianship of an unknown and alien stepmother".

Hallam paused. He and his fellow aviators had nothing to feel ashamed of. "It was a small service that had done great things," he declared proudly. For the last time his comrades joined him in a toast to the king in the surroundings of their mess. At midnight, their service ceased to be.

"How this khaki!" fumed Hallam. "I feel hardly human."

## A KEY TO VICTORY

### 'COMPLETE HOTCH-POTCH'

At the stroke of midnight on Monday April 1 1918, the Royal Naval Air Service passed into history and the Royal Air Force was born.

Four years before it had numbered barely 700 men operating fewer than 100 aircraft. Today it possessed just short of 3,000 aircraft and more than 55,000 personnel assigned to around 100 air stations and air bases in Britain and abroad.

The transition from RNAS to RAF was far from smooth. It was, recalled Thomas Thomson of No.17 Squadron on the Western Front, "a complete hotch-potch". He continued:

The ex-RNAS rating would take off his hat to receive his pay, the Army man would keep his hat on. The ex-RNAS man would double across the parade ground, the ex-RFC man would march across it. Naval squadrons still sat down to toast the king, whereas the army people got up. It was absolutely ludicrous - Fred Karmo's Army!

It was easier for fliers on the Western Front to attune to the new

Service than it was elsewhere. They already worked hand-in-hand with the RFC. "We very soon got over our regrets," naval aviator Flt Lt Aubrey Ellwood, one of Raymond Collishaw's Naval Three Aces, recalled six decades later. "None of us in the RNAS wanted to be amalgamated. Nor do I expect did the RFC want to be amalgamated. Differences were put aside. After all, Ellwood observed, "we were exactly the same as them except we wore different uniforms".

Squadrons were renumbered - 200 was added to every RNAS formation on the Western Front. Raymond Collishaw, now a squadron commander in charge of No.3 Squadron, found himself a major commanding No.203 Squadron. Flight commanders became captains, petty officers were now known as sergeants. Henry Allingham's service number F8317 became RAF 208317. He exchanged the rank of mechanic first class for aircraftman.

Despite the new rank, the new number, the new uniform - pale blue - Henry Allingham always considered himself "a Royal Navy man". In time, he would become our last link with these pioneers of naval aviation. He would come to write their epitaph:

I'm extremely proud of the achievements made by the RNAS. We certainly made an impact both at sea and, of course, on the Western Front. Without those early days and our scrappy little biplanes, World War I couldn't have been won.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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