

NAVY NEWS

Off-sale date: December 21, 2010

DECEMBER 2010
£2.20



Somali pirates surrender to Royal Marines whose heavily-armed patrol boats and mother ship, RFA Fort Victoria, stand guard. The interception was one of a series of blows dealt the brigands by British Naval Forces operating off the Horn of Africa. See pages 2-3 for details
Picture: LA(Phot) Al Macleod

BUSTED

■ DARING IN NEW YORK

■ FAREWELL TO THE S-BOATS

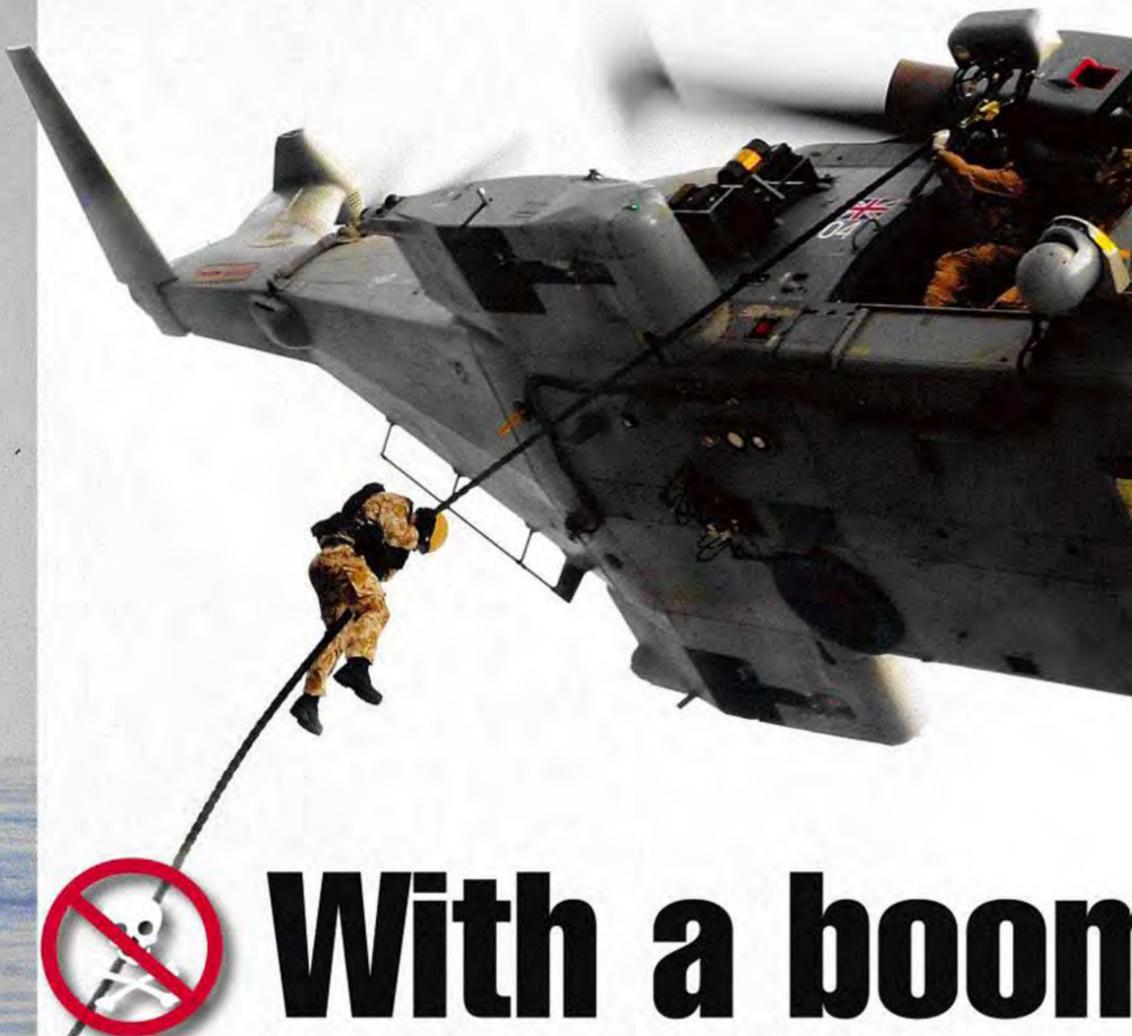




● HMS Montrose and her two RIBs make speed towards a pirate action group, watched by the frigate's Lynx, Vixen and (above) an explosive end for a pirates' mother ship under the guns of RFA Fort Victoria's Royal Marines



● HMS Northumberland's RM boarding party practise rapid roping drills with the frigate's Merlin



With a boom

MONSOON season is over.

Piracy season is upon us. And with it, too, anti-piracy season.

More favourable weather has seen a surge in brigands leaving Somali shores in search of prey.

In doing so, they have provided rich pickings for the concerted Royal Navy/Royal Marines/Fleet Air Arm and Royal Fleet Auxiliary effort to stamp out such freebooting.

Five 'pirate action groups' have either been eliminated or their attacks thwarted in the past month or so – in some cases with spectacularly fiery results.

The latter came courtesy of Operation Capri – a combined ship-helicopter-commando sucker punch delivered by RFA Fort Victoria.

When the one-stop support ship came across a suspicious whaler off the Somali coast, she sent her Royal Marines boarding team to investigate.

The commandos from Fleet Protection Group RM found a ramshackle boat crammed (a) with pirates and (b) boarding ladders; the crew admitted they had tossed their weapons overboard as the marines bore down on them.

Under interrogation, the brigands claimed to have been at sea for 45 days. The whaler's engines had failed, food had run out and they had resorted to using a boarding ladder as a mast for a makeshift sail.

The Royals confiscated all remaining pirate kit on the boat before blasting the decrepit whaler to kingdom come. The pirates escaped more lightly, being dropped ashore on the Somali coast.

"In many ways the pirates were lucky that we found them – they would not have survived indefinitely," said Capt Rob Dorey RFA, Fort Victoria's Commanding Officer.

Their boat is not the only one condemned to Davy Jones' Locker by Fort Vic.

The ship's 820 NAS Merlin spied a suspected 'pirate action

group' – a whaler towing a skiff – while on a recce off the Somali coast.

As the helicopter flew over, its crew noticed that the whaler was stocked up with fuel barrels, while four of the nine men aboard sought to hide from the eyes in the sky...

...Which, of course, looked rather dodgy and prompted a full-scale boarding response by commandos aboard Fort Victoria, who were dispatched by sea boat.

The pirates tried to make for the Somali shoreline but couldn't outrun either the RIBs or the Merlin and eventually gave up the unequal struggle.

Upon boarding the Royals found the whaler packed with piratical paraphernalia: six AK47s, a rocket-propelled grenade launcher, two hand-held GPS units, three boarding ladders and four mobile phones.

All nine men were transferred to the skiff, whose engine was permanently disabled by the green berets. Being good eggs, the Royals gave the pirates oars and told them to paddle for shore...

...And then they set about blowing up the whaler with all its weaponry and kit.

"One cannot help but get a sense of satisfaction at the sight of a bunch of chastened suspected pirates being landed ashore, tails between their legs and the tools of their trade disappearing with a boom and a flash of flame," said a lyrical Col Mark Gray RM, in charge of the commando anti-piracy task force aboard Fort Victoria.

"Contrary to the Hollywood legend, there is nothing romantic about pirates and piracy. It is a blight which has struck the shores of Somalia and strikes at the very heart of the UK's national interests.

"Countering piracy is one of the Royal Navy's key roles even in this day and age."

No such fiery results from the guns of HMS Montrose this month, but then you don't necessarily need to fire your

weapons to have an impact.

Sometimes presence is everything. Presence of the Type 23... or her Lynx 'Vixen'. Both have been harassing the pirates by night and day, making it clear the ship was ready to pounce on any attack skiffs that were launched.

Some mother ships returned to anchor off their pirate camps when they spied Montrose or her helicopter.

As did a group of brigands who stormed the German merchantman MV Beluga Fortune making her way to South Africa.

The crew retreated to a 'citadel' – a safe room where the pirates would not be able to get at them and take them hostage. It also allowed them to flash that distress signal – picked up by Montrose nearby.

With the outline of a Type 23 appearing on the Indian Ocean, the pirates fled, but not before setting fire to part of the Beluga Fortune's superstructure.

"It would appear that the pirates simply gave up and left the ship," said Montrose's CO Cdr Jonathan Lett.

Once close enough, Montrose sent her boarding party on to the Beluga Fortune. The commandos found the merchant ship ransacked and its crew unnerved by the attack. They continued their journey south – sending regular updates on their progress to Montrose.

They also evidently sent some reports to Berlin... for a message of thanks reached the frigate from German Foreign Minister Dr Guido Westerwelle via his British counterpart William Hague:

It was a great joy and relief to hear news of the successful operation off the Horn of Africa. The valiant work of the British Navy played a decisive role in freeing the German cargo ship Beluga Fortune from the clutches of Somali pirates. The swift rescue is a fine example of international co-operation in combating piracy.



... and a flash...

Before the international community pats itself on the back too much, however, the pirates are still scoring successes, such is the scale of the problem – and the size of the ocean.

The MV Aly Zoulfecar was hijacked between the Comoros Islands and Dar Es Salaam in Tanzania; the pirates took 29 crew hostage.

Montrose's Lynx was sent to investigate – and found pirates crawling over the vessel, brandishing their weapons at the helicopter.

Air power is a key factor in defeating pirates: Vixen has been busy flying hours of sorties up and down the coast of Somalia conducting intelligence and reconnaissance missions of the known pirate camps to gather information on the freebooters' movements and those of their craft.

But the Lynx's most important mission this deployment – wiping out a pirate action group as it stalked a North Korean merchantman, which we reported last month – very nearly didn't happen.

Until just a few hours before the frigate received the mayday from the MV Mi Rae, Vixen was out of action with a main rotor gear box problem.

With 203 Flight wondering if they'd ever get their day to fight the Somali pirates, a Merlin from 820 NAS kindly delivered a replacement gearbox at sea via vertical replenishment – no mean feat as said gearbox and container weighed one tonne and was the size of a small car.

The flight's maintainers then got to work over the following week changing the gearbox at sea (a feat reportedly never before accomplished at sea in a Type 23).

Barely was Vixen declared serviceable than she was called upon to intercept the pirates...

"After a frustrating start this has turned into an extremely successful deployment – it just goes to show what a small band of professional, dedicated and hard-working maintainers can achieve," said 203 Flight

Commander Lt Stuart Irwin.

"The incredibly challenging maintenance issues, which would have been difficult to rectify ashore let alone at sea on operations, have all been overcome by the maintainers with ingenuity, intelligence and above all good humour."

Lt Irwin continued: "I have no doubt that there are people in merchant ships at sea who safely reached their destination only because we were able to stop the pirates before they could attack – we were only able to achieve this because of the dedication of the 203 Flight maintainers, and their ability to keep our Lynx flying despite encountering some of the most complex maintenance issues I've seen at sea. I couldn't have asked any more of them."

The Royal Navy is, of course, not the sole warrior in the struggle against piracy; Montrose was attached to a Danish-led NATO task force (F236 is now on her way home).

As part of that international effort, the frigate visited Dar Es Salaam where Montrose's commandos offered advice on board and search techniques, close-quarters battle and contact drills to the Tanzanian People's Defence Force.

The visit coincided with Remembrance Sunday; 50 sailors and marines attended a service at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in the Tanzanian port where 1,764 Allied dead, mostly from the fighting for German East Africa in WW1, are buried.

Eleven hundred miles to the east of Dar Es Salaam lies the idyllic archipelago of the Seychelles.

And it was there that Montrose's marines again were called upon to help train local forces, while the frigate's ME department was asked to sort out the engines of a Seychelles Coast Guard patrol boat.

"Eight hours, three goffas, six bottles of water and a chicken and rice meal later the task was complete," said CPO Simon Bray.

His boss, marine engineer

officer Lt Cdr Duncan Humphery, added: "It's fantastic to be able to say we have achieved something out here which makes all our hard work all the more rewarding and we've visited some amazing places which make the trip that bit more special."

Montrose is not the only Type 23 to call on the Seychelles recently – nor the only Type 23 returning to Devonport from anti-piracy duties.

HMS Northumberland has dropped off the media radar for much of her deployment as she's been doing quite a lot of undercover stuff aimed at disrupting the activities of the Somali pirates.

That's also meant few port visits (admittedly it's a part of the world not necessarily renowned for runs ashore...) so what time there has been on dry land has been seized with both hands.

Enter a two-day stand-down in the Seychelles – the second visit to the islands (the previous stop-off was in June).

The return visit afforded a rematch for Northumberland's 1st XV against an expat rugby team (the latter triumphed) but a more successful run-out for the footballers, who trounced the Seychelles Defence Force 8-2.

Ten sailors also tried out scuba diving for the first time; the waters around the islands are regarded as among the best in the world for divers.

And that was two days gone in the blink of an eye. Back to sea and a gunnery exercise as the ship returned to ... a true baptism of fire for the frigate's new Captain of the Turret, CPOET(WE) 'Bagsy' Baker.

Both Montrose and Northumberland are due back in Devonport before Christmas. The latter ship's chalked up two milestones during her eight months away; the odometer has now passed the 500,000-mile mark, while her flight observer, Lt 'Les' Sharples clocked up his 1,000th flying hour (you'd never believe it from his youthful looks...).

■ **Fleet Focus and our global map can be found overleaf**



● Not an episode from the Battle of the Atlantic, but all that is left of a pirate action group after Fort Victoria has dealt with it and (below) watching you watching us... Montrose's Lynx flies over a mother ship



● Wave your hands in the air if you're pirates and you can't spell fish... A group surrenders to HMS Montrose's Lynx

● Royal Marines practise their marksmanship skills aboard RFA Fort Victoria





Fleet Focus

SO THAT was 2010.

Not an especially great year for the Senior Service. We lost more than a dozen Royal Marines to the insurgency in Afghanistan.

We lost our flagship, our jump jets and our Type 22s to the defence cuts, not to mention several thousand men and women who are the lifeblood of the Service.

Still at least the year ended with a bang. Several bangs as counter-piracy task forces – **HM Ships Montrose and Northumberland, 820 NAS, 815 NAS, RFA Fort Victoria, Fleet Protection Group RM** – struck at brigands off the Somali coast (see pages 2-3).

HMS Cornwall is heading east to join the effort; passing through the Med she saved the lives of several sailors in a tiny RIB (see page 7).

Already east of Suez is **HMS Cumberland** which has relieved **HMS Somerset** on Telic duties in the northern Gulf (see page 6).

In Type 45 land (it's just off the M275...), **HMS Diamond** has begun her inaugural trials under the White Ensign, while ship No.4 in the £6bn programme, **HMS Dragon**, has put to sea for the first time (see page 6).

Meanwhile, the class progenitor **HMS Daring** has completed exercises with the USS Enterprise and visited New York for the first time, hosting the Captain of the (Starship) Enterprise, actor Sir Patrick Stewart (see page 9).

The sun is rising on Daring's career; on **HMS Sceptre's** it is about to set. We pay tribute to the last of the S-boats (see pages 10-11).

Many of Sceptre's crew will find themselves serving in **HMS Ambush**, the second of seven Astute-class boats, which is due to be launched in Barrow this month (see page 10).

Prince William visited Faslane to present the first deterrent pins to submariners who've served in **V** and **R-boats** on strategic defence patrols (see page 23)...

...While his aunt, the Princess Royal, thanked the men of **HMS Talent** for their commitment on recent patrols (see page 18)...

...And her mother bade farewell to her flagship, attending a 25th birthday ceremony for **HMS Ark Royal** in Portsmouth just days after the shock announcement of the carrier's imminent decommissioning (see page 15).

Naval Harriers of **800 NAS** put in probably their final appearance with the Fleet by taking part in **Staff College Sea Day** demonstrations (now renamed Maritime Combat Power Visits) in the Solent (see pages 24-25).

Sailors and Royal Marines at home and abroad paused – as did the nation – on November 11 to pay their respects to the fallen (see page 14 for a round-up of ceremonies).

Bad weather – Hurricane Tomas to be precise – kept **HMS Manchester** busy in St Lucia; with tanker **RFA Wave Ruler**, she provided vital aid (see pages 20-21).

Bad weather also postponed the return of Britain's biggest warship, **HMS Ocean**, to Devonport after her tour of the Atlantic 'rim' (see page 5).

During Ocean's stay in Nigeria, she worked with **1 Assault Group RM**, who've completed their training of local maritime forces (see page 19).

There are encouraging things happening in the world of mine warfare: there's the **first female clearance diving officer** (see right), while one of the doyens of the branch looks at the technology driving the **future mine-countermeasures fleet** (see page 26).

And finally, a Merry Christmas to all our readers and the men and women of the Naval Service, wherever they are this Yuletide.



Blazing a trail for females

LISTENING closely to her instructor, Lt Catherine Ker takes a brief breather on a training vessel on her way to creating a small slice of Royal Naval history.

The 28-year-old has become the Service's first female clearance diving officer, formally passing out of the Defence Diving School on Horsea Island.

In doing so she joins a branch with a proud heritage stretching back to 1952 (although mine clearance diving officers didn't appear on the scene for another 14 years).

"Finding out that I had passed was one of the highlights of my career so far, it has been my aspiration since I joined the Royal in Navy in 2006 to qualify as an mine clearance diving officer," said Lt Ker.

"It has been a hard and demanding course, and to succeed as the first female has been a great achievement. The support of my fellow course members and instructing staff has been great."

She's now been assigned to Mine Counter Measures Squadron 1, Crew 7, based in Scotland, joining as operations officer and responsible for detecting and disposing of sea mines.

The junior officer isn't the first female in the Naval Service to qualify as a diver; two wrens passed the port diving course back in the late 80s and there have been female ship's divers (a function no longer performed).

But otherwise, the branch has remained closed to

the fairer sex on medical grounds.

That was until experts at the Institute of Naval Medicine in Alverstoke reviewed the health impact of diving.

After a lengthy study they concluded that women were at no greater risk of suffering from decompression illness than male divers.

That means that the professions of Mine Warfare and Clearance Diving Officer and, for ratings, Clearance Diver, are now open to both sexes.

The branch is not expecting a flood of inquiries from female personnel, but Superintendent of Diving Cdr Chris Baldwin said some ratings had already expressed an interest in joining the branch.

"The entry standards in terms of physical fitness levels are gender neutral, with no reduction being permitted for female candidates," he stressed.

"I believe that such a move is to be welcomed – as we must always be able to select from the best and therefore we need access to the widest possible pool of candidates."

The Navies of Canada, the USA and New Zealand also encourage female divers.

Britons keen to follow in Lt Ker's footsteps can find details of the clearance diving branch in 2010DIN07-056 and BR1066 Article 1603.

And finally... No we've no idea why the image is monochrome, but it does give it a nice feel...

Memorable visit to Kent

THERE were occasions celebratory and solemn when **HMS Chatham** headed up the Medway to visit her namesake town.

The visit of the Type 22 fell over the Remembrance period, and the frigate's ship's company were understandably out in force at events in and around the Kentish town.

The ship provided a guard at Great Lines Naval War Memorial in Gillingham, where Commanding Officer Cdr Simon Huntington laid a wreath, before moving on to Rochester Cathedral for further tributes to the fallen, including turning the pages of the Royal Marines' memorial book held by the house of worship.

At the same time another guard was in Victoria Park, Chatham, where XO Lt Cdr John Patterson performed the wreath honours.

Platoons from the Type 22 could also be found in Rainham, Gillingham and Brompton.

And on a lighter note... sailors took part in a ceremony handing over the bell from the WW1/2 dreadnought **HMS Queen Elizabeth** to the new bearer of the name, the future aircraft carrier; the bell eventually ended up in the hands Chatham's Historic Dockyard Trust, who have donated it to the 65,000-ton leviathan.

On the Saturday of the stay in Chatham, the ship's gangway was opened to visitors; 2,500 locals took advantage of the hospitality and toured the Type 22.

The visit to Kent comes in Chatham's 20th year – something which deserves celebrating.

A dinner was held to mark the occasion with Lady Oswald, the wife of former First Sea Lord Admiral of the Fleet Sir Julian Oswald, the guest of honour.

She and Cdr Huntington were joined by all but three of the ship's previous captains, among them the current Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar.

Overall Cdr Huntington said: "This was a truly memorable stay in Chatham – it felt more like a homecoming than a visit."



By George, we're busy

THE most active flight deck in the Fleet this autumn belonged not to a carrier, assault ship or even a frigate, but RFA Fort George – typically a one-stop support ship for the Fleet.

But for seven weeks the auxiliary was at the hub of flight training in UK waters.

First aboard were 824 NAS – the Merlin training squadron from Culdrose – before Fort George headed to North-West Scotland for Joint Warrior... swapping one bunch of Merlins for another as 814 joined the ship.

The Flying Tigers squeezed in 90 hours of flying during the fortnight with Fort George on the Joint Warrior exercise before disembarking to work with HMS York and a Sea Dart launch (not, mercifully, at the Merlins...).

While York was blasting away with her missiles, Fort George was making for the Bristol Channel to meet up with the RFA.

A Search and Rescue Sea King – painted in the Crabs' distinctive yellow livery – from Chivenor flew on board as the RAF trained four pilots in the art of deck landing and taking off, something they'll probably be asked to perform for real as air-sea rescue crews.

Now we can't have RAF SAR muscling in our patch too much. So with one bright yellow Sea

King 'parked' on Fort George's flight deck, two more veteran whirlybirds flew on to the RFA... in the more familiar red and grey of 771 NAS.

"It was very unusual to see a bright yellow aircraft on the flight deck of Fort George – and even more unusual to see it behind grey and red aircraft," said Lt Matt Weetch, the RN aviation support officer aboard Fort George.

Like their 22 Sqn counterparts, the Ace of Clubs were on board to hone deck landing skills – which they did over four days of intense flying activity.

With three Sea Kings aboard Fort George, it also meant some good practice for two Flyco officers who oversee deck operations – and for the RFA deck handlers, who were bolstered by personnel from the Maritime Aviation Support Force in Culdrose, who support aviation across the RN and RFA.

As the SAR helicopters departed, three more Sea Kings arrived – this time the green junglies of 848 NAS, ready for ten days of training at sea. And if that wasn't enough, the Crabs returned, this time in the form of a Chinook, eager to pick up five days of sea time.

In total over seven weeks, Fort George was at flying stations for 328 hours and 36 minutes (just shy of a fortnight) 290 deck landings... and 290 launches.



O be joyful

A WAVE and a smile from sailors aboard HMS Ocean – but loved ones had to wait an extra day for this sight.

Foul weather in the Western Approaches delayed the return of Britain's largest warship – and the end of (arguably) the best deployment on the RN's 2010 calendar: a four-and-a-half-month tour of the North and South Atlantic.

And so on a Saturday, not Friday, and in autumn sunshine, not autumn rain, with the Band of HM Royal Marines providing the music and hundreds of family members providing the atmosphere, Ocean made her belated reappearance in Devonport.

The 16,000-mile round trip began back on June 10 and saw the Mighty O take part in the Auriga 2010 amphibious/carrier strike exercises off the Eastern Seaboard, 'pumping iron' alongside US Navy task groups. Counter-drugs work in the Caribbean followed, then beach landings with Brazilian marines near Rio (plus a visit to that great city); Nigerian independence 50th anniversary celebrations; security patrols in the Gulf of Guinea; a return to Sierra Leone ten years after Ocean was instrumental in putting an end to the civil war; a whistle-stop visit to the Cape Verde Islands; and finally a run ashore in Lisbon.

In all, the helicopter assault ship has conducted five amphibious exercises with the forces of five nations, trained 300 sailors and marines from nine nations, hosted royals, two presidents, ministers from the UK and abroad, six international conferences, and dispatched its men and women to help community projects for impoverished youngsters in three countries.

All in all, quite busy...

The last significant activity came off the 169th largest nation on earth (aka the Cape Verde Islands – ranked 147 places below the UK on the list of most populous countries).

Six members of the islands' Law Enforcement Detachment joined the helicopter carrier for the 800-mile passage from Sierra Leone to Cape Verde.

They took part in boarding exercises with Ocean's sailors and Royal Marines... while the Cape Verdeans shared their knowledge of local waters, which proved invaluable for briefing 815 and 847 NAS Lynx on

their patrols as they scoured the ocean looking at maritime traffic.

The two countries signed an agreement last year to work together to fight drug trafficking – an agreement which brought a recent success for HMS Gloucester and a Cape Verdean Coast Guard team, who jointly snared a yacht carrying £40m of cocaine in September.

Once closer to Cape Verde, the ship embarked the islands' Fusiliers for exercises with 539 Assault Squadron Royal Marines, including a beach landing and some live weapons firing – watched by the islands' Chief of Defence Staff, Col Fernando Carvalho Pereira.

After a chance to let hair down in Lisbon at the weekend, Ocean made a beeline for Devonport.

"If you want to illustrate the sort of things navies can do for you, just take a look at what Ocean has been doing in the United States, in Brazil, Sierra Leone and Cape Verde," said CO Capt Keith Blount.

"In fact Ocean has packed in the full range of tasks a Royal Navy ship would perhaps be asked to do in a year – in only five months. I could not ask any more of my people – they have been fantastic and very professional.

"Our ability to engage and work with other navies and maritime agencies worldwide, while building relationships with other nations, is an important element of developing trust. It contributes directly to the peace we can so easily take for granted."

Once alongside, Ocean will undergo essential maintenance following her Atlantic exertions. Longer term, her fate is uncertain with the Navy weighing whether she or HMS Illustrious, about to emerge from refit in Rosyth, will be the nation's on-call helicopter carrier.

Until that decision is made, Capt Blount said it was 'business as usual' for his ship's company.

"The future is uncertain about the ship, but now we will be spending precious time together as a family," said Sarah Dowse, waiting with children five-year-old Imogen and Noah, just eight months for CPO Martin Dowse.

"It was hectic with Martin being away with such a young family. Imogen has been counting down until daddy's arrival from 67 'sleeps' ago. She wants to go to the beach with her daddy and to have a barbecue."

Hmmm. It's not really the weather for that...

Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool, HMS Ocean



Look who's stalking



WHY it's the sailors of HMS St Albans, carrying out board and search training aboard the former minehunter HMS Brecon – now a training vessel at HMS Raleigh.

The Saints are only just back from six months of pretty much non-stop board and search ops in the Gulf and environs...

...And they'll be off doing board and search ops again in the New Year.

But there's always room for top-up training, hence the trip to the West Country and the Board and Search School, run by 1 Assault Group RM.

Seventeen members of the frigate's boarding team decamped to Cornwall for lectures followed by boardings by air and sea.

The school has a mock-up of a merchant ship in the form of the MV Cossack building (named for the WW2 destroyer which famously snared the German supply ship Altmark and gave the world the cry 'The Navy's here').

More recently the school's been bolstered by the more realistic addition of Brecon (she also serves as a floating classroom and gives raw recruits a taste of life in a mess deck) with Raleigh staff and personnel playing the part of not-necessarily co-operative merchant crew.

During their time at Raleigh, the Saints must be able to demonstrate their physical fitness and weapon-handling skills before moving on to the act of boarding by boat and helicopter and conducting a thorough search, as well as questioning the crew – and maintaining order.

As for HMS St Albans herself, she spent four days at West India Docks visiting the capital.

The ship hosted a reception, closing with Ceremonial Sunset performed by the Band of HM Royal Marines.

CO Cdr Tom Sharpe paid official calls ashore including to the Tower of London and Trinity House, while his ship's company hosted VIPs, the public, cadets and affiliates, including the good folk of St Albans.

FORCES
CarsDirect 

The name you can trust

www.forcescarsdirect.com

We go the whole nine yards & then some to make sure you get the best deal around

 Kia Cee'd 3 1.6 CRDi 5dr Our Price £13,995 <small>save £2710</small>	 Honda Civic Si 1.8 5dr Our Price £14,995 <small>save £3325</small>	 Ford S-Max Zetec 2.0 TDCi Our Price £17,495 <small>save £5195</small>
---	---	--

Calling all Navy & Marine personnel

Save up to **30%** on the normal UK RRP.

We've got thousands of new and used cars and bikes to choose from with exclusive discounts just for you.

 Honda CBR600RR Only £7,695	 Honda VT1300 CX Fury Only £11,195
---	--

Special Forces Finance Rates and Part Exchange Scheme.

Tel : 01522 814 010
 E-mail : info@forcescarsdirect.com
 Web : www.forcescarsdirect.com

Prices correct at time of print.

Barrow boys head to Gulf

JUST days after handing over the keys to their old ship, the crew of HMS Walney will pick up a new set as they take over HMS Pembroke in Bahrain in the latest round of crew exchanges to maintain a sustained minehunting presence in the Gulf.

Walney decommissioned in October, a victim (as well as survey ship HMS Roebuck) of spending cuts announced late last year.

In a 19-year-career, the mine warfare vessel clocked up 212,000 miles at sea, dropping in on 120 different ports.

Aside from a short-notice deployment to work with NATO minehunting forces, the ship's final months were spent working up to prepare the ship's company for a six-month stint on their sister ship in the Middle East.

The very final act of Walney's career was to sail to Portsmouth from Barrow – the last port of call and the ship's affiliated town; a good 400 Cumbrians paid their respects to the ship and its sailors one last time.

Aboard for the 500-mile passage from the North-West to Portsmouth were six VIPs, among them Admiral Sir Nigel Essenhigh, the father of Walney's CO Lt Cdr Angus Essenhigh.

His ship is being sold to the Estonian Navy where she'll join her sisters Bridport, Inverness and the first-of-class Sandown, all now flying the Estonian flag.

HMS Mersey heads home

A FRENCH trawlerman received a £2,000 fine for illegal fishing after being caught by HMS Mersey.

A boarding team from the patrol ship found the Breizh Arvor 2 was using undersized nets – which prevent young fish escaping and thus prevent fishing stocks being restored – when they carried out a routine inspection in the Channel.

The boat was detained and escorted into Plymouth, where its skipper was prosecuted on behalf of the Marine Management Organisation, the government department responsible for overseeing fishing in UK waters.

During a break from fishery duties, Mersey berthed on the eponymous river at Liverpool's impressive new cruise liner terminal for a visit to her affiliated borough of Sefton (about half an hour's drive north of the city centre).

Half the ship's company found time to spruce up the grounds of St Joseph's Hospice which supports the families of people who are terminally ill and is the chosen charity of Sefton's Mayor.

CO Lt Cdr Carl Wiseman also presented the hospice with a £200 cheque, the proceeds of the Mersey-2-Mersey charity run, which the ship's company had completed during patrols of the UK's fishing grounds.

Divers blow up NAAFI bomb

NAVAL divers blew up a World War II bomb found during construction work in the heart of Plymouth.

The 70kg German bomb was unearthed by builders erecting a block of student flats on the site of the old NAAFI building in Notte Street.

While police sealed off the area and evacuated people, experts from Southern Diving Unit 1 were called in.

Lt Cdr Richard Talbot drilled into the bomb, which was in a poor state after seven decades, and poured a saline solution into the fuse mechanism to neutralise it.

The device was now safe to move. It was taken under police escort to Millbay Docks, then out into Cawsand Bay where it was played on the seabed and blown up in a controlled explosion.

Sparkle in the rain

DESPITE the ominous clouds gathering over the Solent, this is a sight to be celebrated.

This is Her Majesty's Ship Diamond sailing for the first time under the White Ensign – the third of Britain's six Type 45 destroyers to do so.

Since arriving in Portsmouth in late September under the Blue Ensign, D34 has been alongside. She's been formally handed over by builders BAE Systems to the RN and undergone four weeks of training and preparation before a team from FOST inspected her.

They tested the 180-strong ship's company with a 'fast cruise' – a day at sea... without actually leaving the jetty.

The FOSTies throw everything at a ship – fire, flood and the like – and, if they're satisfied, they allow a vessel to put to sea for real.

Some of Diamond's ship's company – Logistics officer Lt Cdr Steve Boot and Executive Warrant Officer WO1 Thomas 'Sharkey' Ward – have seen all this palaver before on HMS Diamond. Not D34, but D35... the previous bearer of the name.

Sharkey joined the RN in September 1979 followed one month later by Steve, both as rookie marine engineering mechanics.

Their hands-on engine/boiler room training was provided by HMS

Diamond, which spent a decade at Royal Clarence Yard in Gosport as a training ship for HMS Sultan throughout the 1970s and into the '80s until she was broken up in 1981.

In the subsequent three decades, Sharkey's served in Leanders, T22s and T23s and HMS Cottesmore in his chosen branch, before joining HMS Portland as EWO, and now Diamond in the same capacity.

His shipmate has switched branches twice, first to reggie (for nearly 20 years), then joining the officer corps as a logistician. In six varied years as a loggie, Lt Cdr Boot has served with the UN in Cambodia, helped evacuate British nationals from the Lebanon during the 2006 crisis and completed a tour of duty with 3 Commando Brigade in Afghanistan.

All of their experience should serve the double Diamonds (sorry) in good stead as the Type 45 embarks on extensive trials (although they may struggle to find a boiler room aboard...).

Those extensive trials include sea safety training, before testing her radar and ability to operate helicopters from her sprawling flight deck.

"It's a steep learning curve for each and every one of us – not a day has gone by without an inspection of some sort, but you can feel the enthusiasm on board, with everyone eager to get to sea and really start transforming Diamond into a front-line warship," said Cdr Ian Clarke,

Diamond's Commanding Officer.

"The ship's company has worked extremely hard over the last four weeks and passing the Ready for Sea date inspection was just reward for their efforts. The foundation is now in place for Diamond to begin operational training."

As Diamond heads off on trials so, too, Type 45 number four.

HMS Dragon – emblazoned with a huge red mythical creature on her bow – headed down the Clyde for the first time on four weeks of initial trials off the Scottish west coast.

D35 is in the hands of a mixed crew: sailors and engineers from builders BAE Systems, RN personnel and contractors.

"We've been looking forward to Dragon spreading her wings," said Cdr Ian Jackson, the ship's Senior Naval Officer.

"There is always a sense of anticipation when proceeding to sea, particularly so when the final lines were slipped and we made our way down the Clyde."

"It has been very pleasing to see the many strands of work finally coming together to produce a ship that is ready to go to sea. Dragon is in great shape and we are proud to have worked alongside our BAE colleagues to make this happen."

Once the trials end at the beginning of this month, Dragon will return to BAE's Scotstoun yard for continued fitting out, then a further period of trials, before she's handed over to the RN in the second half of next year.

Picture: LA(Phot) Kyle Heller, FRPU East



... and sparkle in Bahrain

FROM the flight deck of his ship, Cdr Andrew Burns watches tugs help HMS Cumberland into her berth in Bahrain.

It is a sight which means one thing for the 200 or so men and women of his ship's company: home.

After 122 days of patrolling the Gulf, the Type 23 is making for home, while her Devonport-based comrade is beginning her first stint safeguarding Iraq's oil platforms – the two ships parted company just hours after this photograph was taken, Somerset having formally handed over duties to the Fighting Sausage.

'Safeguarding the oil platforms' is the ultimate mission, but over the past seven years the role of Telic guardship has evolved significantly, such that what were once called boardings are now 'approach and assist visits' as Somerset's boarding team of RM/RN

personnel offered assurance and assistance to the crews of some 250 merchantmen, principally operating around the Al Basrah terminal – the newer of Iraq's two platforms.

With the Iraqi Navy and Marines increasingly taking over protection of these structures and waters, the Telic guardship has found a much wider role in the Gulf, attaching to Combined Task Force 152 and patrolling from the Strait of Hormuz to the shores of Kuwait and Iraq on the lookout for illegal activity: people/arms/drug smuggling and potential terrorist movements.

There's also increasing 'regional engagement', ie working with the neighbours; in Somerset's case that meant working with the forces of Qatar, Oman, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and the UAE during her stint east of Suez.

As for Cumberland, conducting her final deployment, there was some cheer as she knuckled down to Telic duties: 50 sacks of mail were waiting for the frigate in Bahrain – the first the ship's company had received since a brief visit to Palermo in Sicily on the way out

Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge, FRPU East



Edinburgh's adventure resumes

UNDER sullen Solent skies the Fortress of the Sea was formally welcomed back into the Fleet.

In doing so, the curtain came down on more than three decades of overhauling Type 42 destroyers – HMS Edinburgh is the very last of her class to receive a refit.

The £17.5m revamp, carried out by BAE Systems in Edinburgh's home port over an 18-month period, will see the ship through to the end of her career, three years' hence, when she will be the very last 42 in service.

Edinburgh emerged from refit – propulsion machinery, auxiliary and weapons systems, sensors and accommodation were all enhanced, replaced or upgraded – in September, since when the ship's been undergoing extensive trials.

She broke off that work-up for the formal act of recommissioning in the shadow of HMS Victory, in front of hundreds of guests, headed by Major General Garry Robison RM, the Navy's Chief-of-Staff (Capability).

After a 30-minute rededication service, conducted by the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Rev Scott Brown, there was the chance for the 225-strong ship's company and friends and family watching proceedings to tuck into the commissioning cake.

There were three people – not two – thrusting a knife into said cake. As well as Lt Cdr Gillian Russell, the wife of Edinburgh's CO Cdr Paul Russell, in time-honoured fashion the youngest sailor(s) helped her with the knife: 17-year-olds ABs Jonathan Thorne and Katie Hickman share the same birthday.

Cdr Russell said he was delighted so many loved-ones could be in Portsmouth to witness Edinburgh's rebirth.

"The Navy places tremendous demands on us all and the support of our families and friends has played a major part in helping HMS Edinburgh get back to sea in such good order."

"We are very proud of our ship and what we have achieved so far, and this is just the beginning of our adventures."

Further trials are lined up for the destroyer before she embarks on two months of Operational Sea Training in the hands of the Flag Officer Sea Training, after which the Fortress of the Sea will be ready to deploy once more in the spring of 2011.

Medals for Baggers

THE unstinting deeds of the Baggers in Afghanistan – in the air and on the ground – were recognised by Britain's second most senior sailor.

Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, Commander in Chief Fleet, visited the home of the Navy's eyes in the sky to thank 854 Naval Air Squadron – just days before the unit returned to theatre.

The squadron's Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea Kings provide invaluable support to Allied forces in Afghanistan; the helicopters' state-of-the-art radar – designed originally to detect aerial threats – also allows the aircrew to monitor movements on the ground.

854 has completed two tours of duty in Afghanistan, taking it in turns with its sister squadron at Culdrose, 857, to keep tabs on the insurgents.

The information the two squadrons gather is fed both to the UK's Task Force Helmand and the USA's Task Force Leatherneck – formed by the US Marine Corps – in southern Afghanistan, providing real time support to troops on the ground.

Admiral Soar thanked the 854 men and women for their efforts – and their families for the support they gave – and presented 17 of their number with the Afghanistan Medal.

854 have now traded places in Helmand with 857 once more.

771 respond to flash floods

SEA Kings from RNAS Culdrose acted as vital 'eyes in the sky' when flash floods struck swathes of Cornwall.

Helicopters from 771 NAS (plus their RAF counterparts from RMB Chivenor) were scrambled when upwards of 2in of rain were dumped on central Cornwall in one day.

The St Austell area – including Lostwithiel, Mevagissey and Par – was particularly badly affected as streams and rivers burst their banks and cascaded down streets and into homes.

Despite the widespread devastation caused by the flooding, no lives were threatened thankfully by the rising waters.

That meant that neither the RN nor RAF helicopters were needed to winch people to safety (unlike during the flash floods at Boscastle in 2004).

But the 771 fliers were called upon to search for people thought to have been washed away with their cars – one towards the sea, one towards Siblyback Lake on Bodmin Moor.

For the most part, the helicopters used their bird's-eye view to direct the emergency services on the ground to those in need of help.

"What would normally be routine calls for 'blue light' services suddenly became more dangerous," said 771 NAS CO Lt Cdr Chris Canning.

"In incidents like this, our helicopters prove essential, pointing the other emergency vehicles in the right direction."

His senior observer, Lt Cdr Lee Kennington, added: "Although not specifically life threatening, I was able to see flooding of about two to five feet in places – there was obviously a lot of damage to the communities of eastern Cornwall."

Lucky Gamble saves lives

THIS is the moment sailors from HMS Cornwall save the lives of five men in the middle of the Mediterranean.



The five have the eagle eyes of Lt Cdr Steve Gamble, the frigate's flight commander, to thank for their salvation.

He spied something floating in the Middle Sea as his Lynx carried out a routine patrol on maritime security operations.

That something turned out to be a crippled inflatable boat, its transom broken during several days of bad weather in the Med, with five men clinging to it.

F99 made for the inflatable, some 60 miles off the Algerian coast, and put her sea boat in the water to recover the five men, before ferrying them back to the Type 22 for treatment for cold and exhaustion from Cornwall's medical team.

"I just happened to glance out of the port window of the aircraft as we turned to approach the ship and caught a quick flash of colour, which I first thought was a fishing float," said Lt Cdr Gamble.

"However, not having seen any fishing activity in the area we decided to have a closer look and to our surprise it was five people clinging to the remains of a dinghy. It was simply pure luck that we spotted them."

Cornwall's crew learned from the five sailors that the inflatable had overturned several hours earlier and five other people on it had been thrown into the sea. The frigate conducted a search for them but found no trace.

The five survivors were landed in Algiers when the frigate paid a short visit to the African port.

The Fighting 99 (the old 'ice cream frigate' tag was dropped to give Cornwall a more wary fee) is conducting her very last deployment.

She decommissions next year after 23 years' service as all four remaining 22s pass into history, axed under October's Strategic Defence and Security Review.

The frigate only came back from east of Suez in March after a punishing 226-day deployment putting the screws on pirates...

...And it is to the Gulf of Aden that she heads again... to put the screws on pirates.

In the six months the frigate's been at home in Devonport she's undergone some maintenance, her crew have enjoyed some leave, and then there were two months of operational sea training.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, FRPU East



Registered Charity No. 210760 Est. 1885, Registered Charity (Scotland) No. SC048816



SSAFA125
FIRST IN LAST OUT

"I can't thank SSAFA enough. Your help really made a difference to my family when things were getting tough."

When Dylan was born with a life-threatening liver problem he desperately needed a transplant. At a difficult and stressful time for his mum and dad, SSAFA Forces Help was at hand for the family. We provided a trained volunteer to look after the children while Dylan's parents visited him in hospital, and assisted them with the financial burden of regular hospital visits.

WWW.SSAFA.ORG.UK
020 7403 8783

Faslane highlights safety

MINISTRY of Defence Police at Clyde Naval Base have been gearing up to play their part in National Road Safety Week.

As *Navy News* went to press the police at Faslane were due to be holding enforcement and education initiatives aimed at raising awareness of safe motoring.

The carrot and stick approach will include speed and vehicle checks in the base, and a crackdown on use of mobile phones, and failing to wear a seatbelt, while driving, as well as the offer of safety advice.

PC Tracy Ross said: "The objective of the week is to promote safe driving and to make drivers aware of their responsibilities towards their vehicles and other road users, including cyclists and pedestrians."

As well as various points around the base, checks will also be carried out in access roads to the base and at Service family accommodation areas in Helensburgh.

The MOD Police will be working in partnership with Strathclyde Police, the Vehicle Operator Services Agency (VOSA) and Argyll and Bute Council.

Police at Faslane regularly hold such events – the last, in June, saw a day of checks on HGVs, vans and trailers entering the base.

On that occasion, in just one three-hour period, three drivers were given a 'delayed prohibition' ordering them to take their vehicles to a garage, while another five received an 'immediate prohibition' which saw their vehicles taken off the road straight away because of safety fears.

Merlins at BUTEC

A DETACHMENT of Royal Navy aircrew and engineers have spent a week testing the Merlin helicopter's sensors and weapons in Scotland to bring them up to speed for operational requirements.

The team of 20, led by Lt Cdr Iain Macfarlane, are the Merlin HMI Operational Evaluation Unit, part of Culdrose-based 824 Naval Air Squadron.

During the week on the British Underwater Test and Evaluation Centre (BUTEC) near Skye several trials were carried out, including simulated Stingray torpedo attacks.

Trials data will be analysed by the Maritime Warfare Centre, who use it to formulate cutting-edge tactical advice.

Flight observer Lt Lauren Hulston said: "Rigorously testing the Merlin's systems and weapons ensures that the crews are ready for whatever operational tasking we may be given."

"Trials like this are essential for us to maintain our readiness."

Fearless Kate 'is an inspiration to us all'



CELEBRATED Royal Navy medic Kate Nesbitt has been presented with a high-profile magazine award for bravery – by the soldier whose life she saved under fire.

LMA Nesbitt, 22, won the Ultimate Fearless Female category of the *Cosmopolitan* Ultimate Women of the Year Awards, which were handed out at a celebrity-stuffed ceremony at Banqueting House in London.

Kate, who currently works at the MOD Hospital Unit at Derriford in Plymouth, was on patrol in Afghanistan in March 2009 when an ambush was carried out and a man was reported as having been hit.

L/Cpl Jonathan List, of 1st Battalion, the Rifles – part of 3 Commando Brigade – had been shot in the left side of his face, and the bullet had ricocheted out of the side of his neck.

Kate was told to wait until it was safe to attend to him, but she decided to go to Jon's aid immediately, racing 60 metres under fire to get to the injured soldier, who was struggling to breathe through blood and a smashed jaw.

As a Royal Marine supported the injured man's head, Kate opened Jon's airway with a tube and treated him with intravenous fluids, staying by his side for more

● Kate Nesbitt with L/Cpl Jon List (right) and actor/TV and radio personality Reggie Yates

Picture: Cosmopolitan

than half an hour to stabilise him as bullets flew around them.

When the ambush finally ended, Jon was flown out by helicopter and Kate continued the patrol with the rest of her team.

The acting leading hand was honoured with the Military Cross for "exemplary gallantry during active operations against the enemy", becoming the second female member of the Armed Forces, and the first from the Royal Navy, to receive the award.

Kate was handed the award by Jon – whose baby daughter bears the middle name Kate in her honour – watched by celebrities from television, radio, music and sport, including fellow award-winners Christine Bleakley (*Ultimate TV Presenter*), Fearnie Cotton (*presenter, judge and Ultimate Celebrity Who Made Us Care*) and Nicola Roberts (*Ultimate Fashionista*).

Kate said: "It was a fantastic evening, but I felt really nervous."

"There were some really glam girls there."

Cosmopolitan editor Louise Court said: "Kate is an inspiration to us all, and her dedication to the Royal Navy, her colleagues, and the public is simply astonishing."

"This year's awards have once again provided us with an opportunity to honour some of the nation's most inspirational women."

"It's amazing to be able to meet people like Kate, and celebrate their personal achievements as well as the positive impact they have had on others."

Matt realises his Street value

A HIGHLY-decorated Royal Marine has been given a unique honour in his home village.

WO1 Matt Tomlinson has been granted the Freedom of Street in Somerset – the first honorary freeman of the area.

Hundreds of residents lined the pavements to cheer and wave flags as the Royal and his family were carried in a 1916 La France open-topped car on a parade through the village, led by a marching band.

WO Tomlinson, who has been awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Cross and the Military Cross in the past four years, then attended a ceremony at a local school where he was presented with a scroll of the freedom of Street by parish council leader Brian Beha.

Cllr Beha said: "We all enjoy

our freedom here, but we are all aware that freedom isn't free – it is bought for us by the people who are willing to fight for it."

In his acceptance speech the senior NCO paid tribute to his colleagues from 40 Cdo RM, saying: "I ask that you join me in welcoming them home, and that you remember everything they've done, remember their injured and never forget the fallen."

The commando, based at 1 Assault Group RM at Devonport, said: "The day was fantastic – a real honour to be granted the status in a town where I grew up from the age of two until I joined the Corps."

"About 300 people lined the High Street to witness the event, and the same amount attended the ceremony at Elmhurst School."

"At the school a presentation was delivered by the school's Year Five children about my life in Street and my career in the Corps."

"The parish councillor read portions of my citations for the CGC and MC."

"It was a really great day and an opportunity to thank the people of Street for their support to myself and the wider Armed Forces."

"A collection was also made for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity which raised

approximately £400."

WO Tomlinson was awarded the Military Cross by the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace earlier this year.

He won the medal during a tour of duty in Afghanistan when, as a member of 3 Commando Brigade, he braved grenades and gunfire to rescue an injured soldier and to recover the body of another colleague killed by an explosion.

The Conspicuous Gallantry Cross was awarded for bravery in Iraq in 2006, when his actions under fire saved the lives of the 16-strong US Marine Corps assault force he was commanding.



● WO1 Matt Tomlinson, his wife Sharon and children Harvey (7), Ellis (14) and Daniel Brian (5) are carried through Street in an open-topped World War 1 era car



Glamorgan memorial shipped out

A CONSIGNMENT of granite has reached the Falkland Islands, ready to be transformed into a memorial for the men who died aboard the conflict's 'forgotten ship'.

County-class destroyer HMS Glamorgan was withdrawing from the gulfline off the Two Sisters ridge, having bombarded enemy positions in support of the British advance on Stanley, on June 12 1982 when the Argentines fired an Exocet from a makeshift launcher ashore.

Glamorgan took evasive action, minimising the effect of the strike near the hangar, but the ship still took considerable damage, and 14 sailors died in the explosion and fire.

The ship was saved, but with the Argentine surrender just 48 hours later the incident was somewhat overshadowed.

Now former navigator Ian Inskip's dream of erecting a memorial to the ship and crew is nearing reality.

Foundations have been laid at Hookers Point in such a way that the main Welsh granite memorial is set square on a bearing of 210° true, which means that after reading the inscription a visitor will be looking in the direction where, 19 miles out to sea, the destroyer was hit.

The memorial bears the names of the 14 victims of the attack, who are also represented by 14 round granite setts set in amongst square blocks for the ship's company.

Once finished, the memorial will be covered until its dedication in February, when it is hoped around 40 members of the ship's company and families will be able to attend.

www.hmsglamorgan.co.uk

Training is quickly put into practice

A JOINT training exercise became a joint rescue when Royal Marines and lifeboat crew were asked to help a vessel in distress.

The Royals were on board a Dutch Navy Combat Boat for the exercise with the crew of the Dart Inshore Lifeboat when an 11m motor yacht en route from Portugal to Portsmouth suffered a mechanical failure out to sea and began to take on water.

The two crew decided to head for Dartmouth under sail and asked for assistance to enter the harbour.

The Swedish-built CB912 is on extended trials with Dutch Navy and Royal Marines, and it was a simple job to tow the stricken yacht on a long line to the harbour mouth, when the Dart lifeboat took over.

The exercise was held under the supervision of Lt Col Bob MacDonald RM, the two-man Dutch crew being Sgt Dennis Meijer and Sgt Robert Bits Jongsma.

Lt Col MacDonald said: "It was a pleasure and a privilege to train with the RNLI, and a great benefit to all to be involved in a real call-out as well. It certainly made our day."

CB912 is one of two Swedish CB90 boats on long-term operational trials with the Swedish, Dutch and British marines.

The loan craft have been converted to be carried in the davits on both Dutch and British amphibious ships, and the trials will continue into next year.

specialist legal advice to forces personnel

- Arrested?
- Need assistance for Police Interview/Court Martial?
- Suffered a Military Injury?
- Need advice on AFCS claim?
- Have you had a medical negligence claim?



We can also advise on: Employment Issues, Family Problems, House Purchases and Wills

contact

Nigel Burn, Gilbert Blades, Tean Butcher or
Louisa Donaghy
Bank Street, Lincoln LN2 1DR
Tel: 01522 512345 between 9am - 5.15pm
or for Military Discipline Matters only contact:
Nigel Burn Mob: 07775 860608 after 6pm

wilkin chapman
epton blades
solicitors

www.wilkinchapman.co.uk

A LEADING SPECIALIST IN MILITARY LAW





'A sensational ship...'

NOW in a cold and dark winter, here's something to warm the cockles of our hearts (with apologies to one W S Churchill for paraphrasing a famous Naval speech...).

This is the torchbearer of the future Fleet shepherded by launches and a New York Police Department helicopter towards a berth on the Hudson River.

HMS Daring spent four days in New York on her inaugural visit to the Big Apple.

And what a visit. It really couldn't have been any more A-list...

You want to host a dinner for the UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon, the United Nations' Security Council and twenty UN Ambassadors in the destroyer's ward room?

You want to hold a reception for 120 VIPs, including the British Consul Sir Alan Collins?

You want to promote the 'Cultural Olympiad' in 2012 – a celebration of the best of British art to coincide with the Olympics – by hosting some of Britain's most famous actors?

You want a rig run in Times Square?

You want to call in on the New York Stock Exchange and Wall Street?

Yep, that was all possible.

New York was the final scheduled port of call for HMS Daring on her first 'mini deployment' – two-plus months operating off the Eastern Seaboard of the United States. And it was a visit to remember.

It began with a formal reception for experts in the security field and a ceremonial sunset (the Port Authority Police Department Honor Guard providing the bugler).

Barely had the guests departed than the chefs and stewards were gearing up for another high-profile function.

With the UK holding the presidency of the UN Security Council last month, a suitable location was sought for the regular dinner for council members. Enter one Type 45 destroyer...

As well as dining in Daring's wardroom (which now has a fine wooden table and is, thankfully, much less sterile than when the Navy News team last visited), the UN VIPs were treated to a guided tour of Britain's most advanced warship.

They weren't the only ones to look around Daring while the ship was berthed on the Hudson. The ship's company also hosted New York schoolchildren, who left the destroyer with various mementos, including England football strips.

Daring's Commanding Officer Capt Paddy

McAlpine paid formal visits to the New York Stock Exchange and City Hall and paid his respects at the site of the World Trade Center and the British Memorial Garden in Hanover Square (near Wall Street) where the 67 Britons killed in the September 11 atrocities are remembered.

And there were some lighter moments. The ship's company headed off on a rig run (which basically involves being treated like royalty by New Yorkers: free travel on the subway, moving to the front of queues, free drinks). Other Darings enjoyed a glimpse of cutting-edge British (and French) technology with a tour of a Concorde, now part of a museum on the neighbouring berth.

The visit closed with a celebration of the best of British art.

Alongside the Olympic Games in 2012 there'll be a 'Cultural Olympiad', a showcase for every aspect of UK art (an 'industry' worth more than £4bn annually to the nation's economy).

Some eighty leading figures from the creative world were invited aboard Daring to highlight the impending celebration, among them Sir Patrick Stewart (younger readers will remember him from X-Men, slightly older ones from Star Trek: The Next Generation, and older ones still for a string of Shakespearan performances...) and Joanna Lumley (for whom the description 'national treasure' probably applies).

- Joanna Lumley

"HMS Daring is a sensational ship and the crew is the crème de la crème. I loved every second of my time on board and was struck again by the extreme youthfulness of those who are prepared to lay down their lives in service of our country. As an Army brat myself, I felt I was amongst family."

Of course, Daring didn't cross the Pond merely to hob-nob with the powerful and famous. The main reason for her transatlantic crossing was a workout with the USS Enterprise battlegroup (you might recall the picture of her with the Big E in last month's paper...).

After that photograph was taken, Daring and the USA's most famous aircraft carrier knuckled down to a Comptuex (Composite Training Unit Exercise) – a sort of OST/Joint Warrior exercise to test every facet of the Enterprise group ahead of its deployment next month.

For Daring the mission was obvious: defend the task group from aerial attack – known as 'Red Crown' duties – and co-ordinate Allied aerial assets.

And the Septics don't do things by halves when it comes to these exercises: 346 aerial sorties were flown by friend and foe while D32 was in charge of safeguarding the task group.

In doing so, says Daring's Commanding Officer, Capt Paddy McAlpine, the ship "provided the best area air picture of any platform to go before".

For the Americans, the chance to see Daring in action offered their Navy a glimpse into things to come; the Pentagon is currently building next-generation air defence destroyers, the Zumwalt-

class – which are even more futuristic-looking than the Type 45s... and cost an eye-watering £3.7bn a pop.

So what's been accomplished during Daring's relatively brief deployment?

Well, according to her Executive Officer Lt Cdr Rob Steadman, the ship and her 180 sailors have achieved "a fair amount":

- first test of the Type 45's ability to work with our US allies;
- first test of providing area air defence for a battlegroup;
- first sustained period in defence watches;

- first warm-weather trials (off Florida) to prepare for any future deployments east of Suez;

- first long-range test of the Type 45 logistics chain (which came in handy when some engine parts were needed);

- first replenishment at sea with a foreign tanker;

- first nighttime replenishment at sea;

- first Pickle Night at sea.

Hmmm. 'A fair amount' seems a bit of an understatement...

Pictures: New York Police Department

THE ROYAL NAVAL BENEVOLENT TRUST SUPPORTING THE RNBT FAMILY

FINANCIAL YEAR 2010/2011
Numbers helped and charitable spend to date 2356 and £535,220

Men and women in the Royal Marines and Royal Navy serve their country, often at times of danger: the RNBT serves them and their families, at times of need, throughout their lives. Your donations help us to help them.

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust

Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 8RN

t 023 9269 0112 f 023 9266 0852 e rnbtr@rnbtr.org.uk w www.rnbtr.org.uk





Picture: LA(Phot) Stu Hill, FRPU North

Sight for Soar eyes

CHRISTMAS comes early to the Silent Service this year.

Nine days early to be precise, with the launch of the second boat in the £7bn Astute programme: HMS Ambush.

The 7,400-tonne attack submarine is due to be rolled out of its shed at Barrow-in-Furness on December 16 – more than seven years after she was laid down and 13 years after Whitehall placed the order for the boat.

Back then John Major was prime minister and the yard at Barrow came under the banner of GEC Marconi Marine (one of at least ten names in its 140-year history...).

Thirteen years, three premiers and one name change (the Barrow yard now falls under the banner of the BAE behemoth) and Ambush is ready to take to the water.

Performing the honours will be the boat's sponsor, Lady Soar (pictured above), the wife of Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar (himself a deep).

She dropped in on Ambush in the final stages of build last month, spending two days with the ship's company, touring the boat thoroughly and presenting medals to LCH Daly (Afghanistan) and CPO O'Neil (a clasp to his Long Service and Good Conduct) before dining with CO Cdr Peter Green and his officers at their Trafalgar Night celebrations.

Lady Soar returns to the cavernous Devonshire Dock Hall (all 270,000 square feet of it...) on December 16 to formally name Ambush at the 'launch' ceremony.

Once proceedings inside the hall are complete, Ambush will be inched outside where a ship lift (capable of carrying vessels three times the A-boat's displacement) will lower the submarine into the dock for outfitting and testing.

As Ambush emerges, boat No.3, HMS Artful, continues to take shape. Indeed, the submarine now resembles just that – after slotting the command deck module into place, the final butt weld was carried out and Artful is now a complete hull.

The keel of boat No.4, HMS Audacious, was laid last year and major steel work is progressing well, while early work on boat five (HMS Agamemnon) has started and materials for boat six (HMS Anson), including her reactor core, have been ordered.

Under last month's Strategic Defence and Security Review, the government committed to seven boats in the Astute programme (the last submarine in the class will be HMS Ajax).

■ HMS Astute is undergoing repairs in her Faslane home after running aground off the Isle of Skye in late October.

The boat was stuck on a silt bank for the best part of 12 hours after a transfer of personnel went wrong.

The submarine was further bruised when she collided with a tug trying to free her; that damaged her starboard foreplane.

Astute returned to the Clyde under her own power and was hauled out of the water using the ship lift to allow a closer look at the damage after divers had inspected her initially off Skye.

Investigations into the grounding are continuing.



**The Royal Navy & Royal Marines
Children's Fund**

Registered Charity No. 1075015

PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN

The RN & RM Children's Fund is a National Charity based in Portsmouth. We care for children of men and women who have served or are serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Originally set up as an orphanage, we now assist children with a wide range of needs and at times of family crisis.

Applications can be made at any time. Those seeking assistance can contact the office direct for an application form:-

Monique Bateman
or Laurene Smith
RN & RM Children's Fund
311 Twyford Avenue
Portsmouth
PO2 8RN
Telephone: 023 9263 9534
Fax: 023 9267 7574
Email: rnchildren@btconnect.com

Farewell, Sceptre, and

"I THINK after 32 years we've just about ironed out all the problems," smiles CPO Joe 'Genghis' Gahan.

Such self-deprecation is, of course, typical of the Silent Service.

But it masks the fact that at the very end of her life Her Majesty's Ship Sceptre is as potent as she's ever been.

"Operationally we're just as capable as any other boat in the Navy – on our final deployment we were available for sea on 275 days and we do the same job as an Astute or T-boat," Cdr Steve Waller says proudly.

He's the last of 16 men to bear the title Commanding Officer, HMS Sceptre.

She certainly looks the business. Sceptre doesn't look like a 32-year-old warship. There may be lots of wooden cabinets in the compartments, but the weaponry – Spearfish torpedoes and Tomahawk missiles – is identical to the Trafalgar class. The control room's packed with all the gadgetry you'd expect to find in a modern warship.

Sceptre's passing is dictated by her reactor life rather than by the condition of the boat or the equipment inside.

"She's in good nick – as far as I'm concerned, she's still a young girl," says PO(WEM(O)) George Thompson.

Shipmate LET Andy 'Ucks Me' Hey (he doesn't use the F word, replacing it, *Father Ted*-fashion, with 'ucks' and 'ucking'...) agrees.

"They might be over-engineered, but that amount of redundancy gives us so much confidence," he says.

"Over the years they've really proved themselves – they're the Volvos of the submarine world."

The Sceptre story begins on November 1 1971 when Ted Heath's government placed a £59m order with the then Vickers yard in Barrow for the



On December 10 Britain's second generation hunter-killer submarines pass into history when HMS Sceptre – 'Honour with authority' – decommissions in Devonport. Richard Hargreaves visited the last of the S-boats.

fourth of what would be a class of six Swiftsure-class Fleet submarines.

It was another two and a half years before her keel was laid, and the same length of time passed again before the boat was ready for launching.

That honour was performed by Lady White (sadly, no longer with us) who sent Sceptre down the slipway on November 20 1976 not with a bottle of champagne against the hull but cider (fittingly, there'll be plenty of the drink to go around at the decommissioning ceremony, as well as other tipples...).

Sceptre, like her sisters, was built to keep an eye on the Russkis (and evidently enjoyed a few scrapes with the Soviet Navy...) before adapting to the post-Cold War era.

Her final 'run-out', an eight-month deployment to the Indian and Atlantic Oceans was as varied as any in her history. 31,000 miles later she arrived at Devonport trailing her decommissioning pennant. She has not moved under her own power since – although Sceptre has been held in readiness just in case Fleet needed her (it hasn't...).

The final months have not been without their challenges. For a start there's the strain on the crew's families.

Sceptre's a Faslane boat. She's paying off in Devonport – more than 500 miles (or a nine-hour drive) away.

To ensure there's plenty of family time for the 100-plus ship's company, they've enjoyed two weeks on, two weeks off since decamping to Devon.

"It has been a bit of an upheaval, but our families have been very supportive," says Cdr Waller.

The other challenge is keeping submariners motivated on a boat which is unlikely to go to sea again. Most routines have been maintained (although the galley's no longer serving scran). There's still scrubbing out (for health and safety reasons, not just for cleanliness...) and a fair bit of adventurous training and sport.

But in a matter of days all that ends as the White Ensign is lowered for good (officially, December 31 is Sceptre's last active day in the Fleet even though she decommissions three weeks earlier), and the dismantlers move in to start stripping Sceptre out.

PO Thompson has already decommissioned Sovereign. He'll be part of the same process now on her sister.

In the very final days there'll be just three men on board; two aft, one forward keeping watch.

"It's a very eerie experience – everything's stripped out. Everything. You're just left with an empty shell. And because everything's been taken out you hear some very strange noises against the hull. It can be a bit unsettling."

The decommissioning process is lengthy; there'll be men aboard the boat until some time in 2012 (it's all determined by the rate at which Sceptre's reactor cools – and that cannot be speeded along).

Anything which can be re-used, will be re-used – although much of the equipment is imperial. None of this centimetres, metres, bars rubbish. It's all feet, inches and PSI.

But then that gives you an idea of how long these boats have been around. They were designed when Harold Wilson

was PM (the first time around). Before man landed on the moon. When computers were the size of a house. When TV was black and white. When eight-track cartridges and cassette tapes were the future of popular music.

I was about to add 'before Sceptre's crew were born'. But that's not necessarily true...

"I'm the youngest senior rate in my department," says Genghis. He's 47. The crew, like the boat, is "ageing". There's a good number of men in their 40s, a few in their 50s aboard. In most cases they're here because they want to be.

"Many of them were offered other boats, but they wanted to stay with Sceptre," says Cdr Waller. "The ship's company take great pride in being the last of the S-boats. That makes my job much easier."

His ship's company talk of the 'old girl' or the 'old lady'. Many wouldn't give a XXXX for any other type of boat...

You didn't ever fancy T-boats or bombers, I ask Genghis.

There's a look of horror at the prospect of the former. As for the latter, it's the 'timeshare Navy' – "two crews sharing the same boat at different times," he explains. ('Timeshare Navy' is one of the more polite terms for the V-boats used by their hunter-killer oppos...)

Of course, as men of Sceptre scatter when their boat pays off they will be drafted to other classes of submarines. A decent number will be joining HMS Ambush, launched just a few days after Sceptre decommissions.

Much as he loves these boats – he's spent 20 years on Swiftsures – Ucks acknowledges that "technology has to move



● The submarine didn't take the game of hide and seek especially seriously... HMS Triumph makes a rare appearance on the surface during Perisher while a Merlin stands guard

Pingers enjoy Arran nights

SO WHAT'S being pinged like?

Well, why not ask the latest students to test their abilities on the Submarine Commander's Course - aka Perisher - who felt the full force of RN anti-submarine warfare assets (2 x Merlin helicopters, 2 x Type 23 frigates) off Scotland.

The helicopters from two front-line Naval Air Squadrons - 814 (which typically deploys with a carrier) and 829 (the dedicated Type 23 Merlin squadron) set down on Her Majesty's Ships Monmouth and Iron Duke off the Isle of Arran.

And thus began a 48-hour game of cat-and-mouse in the Firth of Clyde as the prospective submarine COs tried to keep HMS Triumph out of harm's way from first light to well into the night.

For the 23s there was the chance to fire up the sonar and work hand-in-hand with the helicopters to deliver that knock-out blow against their quarry.

And for the Culdrose-based squadrons, as well as training the aircrew, there was a chance to re-live all the trials and tribulations of maintaining a £40m aircraft at sea in a cramped and not always stable environment - a test especially for the Flying Tigers; 814 became accustomed to rather more spacious surroundings on Ark Royal over the summer in the USA.

"The opportunity to operate against live submarine assets was not to be missed," enthused Lt Mark Gilbert, an observer with 829 NAS.

"The experience and training gained this weekend has been invaluable, the simulator can train you to a high degree, but nothing can beat a 'live' contact.

"Scotland is a beautiful part of the country and having already served for a short while as a Search and Rescue observer at HMS Gannet, it was nice to return again to familiar surroundings and faces."

and we thank you

forwards".

"I thrive on something to do, a challenge, learning a new boat, new kit. There are some guys on here who will never go to sea again. That's their loss."

Some Sceptres look at their boat's passing pragmatically.

"A boat is just a boat - it's the people that make it," says Genghis, who's spent two decades in Swiftsures.

"Mind you, if I was talking to a bomber queen I would tell you this is the best boat ever with the best runs ashore and she always ran smoothly."

LS(CSSM) 'Spud' Murphy, on the other hand, will be emotional come December 10.

"I get a lump in my throat seeing my old boats laid up here in the basin, so I will definitely have one when Sceptre goes as well," he says.

"It's not just a boat. This is my last S-boat, in fact my last boat full stop." He leaves the Service next year to go into primary school teaching.

He has nothing but affection for the Swiftsures. "You find there are more friends on here than acquaintances." Perhaps, he suggests, it's because they're based in Faslane and largely crewed by Northerners and Scotsmen...

Most of his shipmates share Spud's affinity for the boat - they wear 'HMS Sceptre: End of an era' wristbands such is their pride.

"If you get a crew like we have, you have a great family," says PO Thompson; he's spent 34 years in the Service, splitting his time between O-boats and, since the early 90s, S-boats.

"Sceptre's been a very good boat - I'm proud to have served in her."

There is, says Cdr Waller, "ultimate pride in being the last of the S-boats."

"We're conscious that we're flying the flag as the last of class."

"December 10 draws a line under the Swiftsures. It's not just the end of a boat, it's the



HMS Swiftsure (in service 1973-92)
Cost £37m



HMS Sovereign (in service 1974-2006)
Cost £31m



HMS Superb (in service 1976-2008)
'With strength and courage'
Cost £41m



HMS Spartan (in service 1979-2006)
'Courage with great endurance'
Cost £69m



HMS Splendid (in service 1981-2004)
'Splendidly audacious'
Cost £97m

Six S-boats were built for the Submarine Service by the Vickers yard at Barrow between 1969 and 1981 at a cost of £330m.

Between them the boats have given their nation 165 years' service since the first of class, HMS Swiftsure joined the Fleet in 1973.

HMS Splendid became the first boat in the Fleet to be fitted with Tomahawk cruise missiles, which she fired in anger both in the Kosovan and Iraqi campaigns.

end of an era. It will be a sad day. Sceptre's done wonders."

So don't mourn Sceptre or her sisters. Celebrate them, all they've achieved, all the men who've served in them.

"These boats are great," says Ucks. "It's been a great experience."

So what's his abiding memory of time in S-boats?

"Sending Cherry B to the bottom," he says in a flash.

Cherry B? The Cherry B was before my time as a naval hack. I look blankly. (She was, of course, HMS Charybdis...)

"Cherry B? What was 'er real name," Ucks shouts.

"Cherry B?" a voice bellows down the passageway. "We sank her with Spearfish."

Confirmation, if ever it were needed, of the old adage: there are two types of warships, submarines and targets...

PUT DOWN THE UCKERS AND PICK UP THE PHONE FOR YOUR BEST CAR DEAL



Europe's Largest Tax Free Dealer
Now Brings You Unbeatable UK Deals Too

TAKE ADVANTAGE OF EXCLUSIVE DEALS ACROSS
23 DIFFERENT MANUFACTURERS
LOW RATE FINANCE & FULL PART EX-FACILITIES
PLUS THE BEST MILITARY PRICES AVAILABLE.
CALL US TODAY WITH YOUR "BEST DEAL"
AND WE'LL SHOW YOU A BETTER ONE... SIMPLE!!

"No Hi Finance Rates, No Middlemen. Deal Direct With Us From Order To delivery"



Owned and operated by ex-Royal Navy personnel, so understanding your needs better than any other car dealer



Call Us On **01273 574000**
Fax 01273 679967 German Freephone 08001 800 560
WWW.GRIFFINTAXFREE.COM

Ave, Dauntless



Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan, RN Photographer of the Year

IN WHAT'S been a fairly dark year for the Naval Service, the success of the Type 45 destroyer programme has been a shining beacon.

While most of the media attention has focused on T45 No.1, HMS Daring (first BOST, first deployment) her younger sister Dauntless has been quietly getting things done.

Well, mostly quietly. You can't launch a Sea Viper missile without a big whoosh.

That successful firing (the first time a Type 45 has fired its main armament, as we reported last month) has crowned a year crammed with milestones for D33:

- first manoeuvres by two Type 45s together at sea;
- first encounter between a Type 45 and an Astute-class submarine;
- formal commissioning ceremony in Portsmouth;
- first appearance at Navy Days;
- first appearance at Southampton Boat Show;
- first visit to her affiliates.

After all that excitement, the dying weeks of 2010 were rather less dramatic: trials off the South Coast and a spell alongside in Pompey.

But things hot up in the New Year. With Sea Viper now fired, Dauntless is just one hurdle away from joining the front-line Fleet and heading off on deployment: Basic Operational Sea Training.

In addition to things warlike, Dauntless has found time to begin bonding with her affiliates in earnest.

With the passing of HMS Newcastle, D33 was eagerly snapped up by Tynesiders as 'their' ship – and the new destroyer inherited some of the Geordie Gunboat's ties.

Among them is the Percy Hedley Foundation which helps people with disabilities in the Newcastle area. To add to its coffers, six Dauntless crew – Lt Ellie Berry, WO1 Geoff Howells, CPO Jamie Vaughan,

PO Andy Duchene, Wtr Dave Logan and AB Sam Waller – completed this year's Great North Run.

Sadly they didn't do so in Roman Army costume – but the 190 crew take advantage of most opportunities to don breastplates, tunics and helmets for worthy causes (most recently at Southampton Boat Show).

They take their lead from the ship's badge which features Horatius Cocles (Horatius, the One-Eyed) who, legend has it, single-handedly halted the Etruscan Army by standing firm on the Pons Sublicius bridge near Rome in 509BC.

As with the rest of the Type 45 fleet, Dauntless is bound with two localities; the second in D33's case is Great Yarmouth which received its inaugural visit from the destroyer in October.

As in Newcastle, the crew took part in charity sporting events and opened the ship up to tours. East Anglians responded by brewing 70 casks of special Dauntless ale (for each pint inside there was half a tot of rum...).

The Type 45 is the fifth British warship to bear the name (we're discounting the fictional RN flagship from *Pirates of the Caribbean*...).

The Dauntless lineage begins in 1804 with an 18-gun sloop which was captured by the French three years later.

Dauntless No.2 was another sloop, which lasted from 1808 to 1825, then came a 24-gun frigate which served for four decades and saw action in the war with Russia.

The fourth Dauntless, a light cruiser, entered service just days after the Great War ended. She sailed with HMS Hood on the battleship's legendary 'Empire Cruise'. Dauntless No.4 served briefly in the Atlantic during WW2 before being sent to the Far East. She spent the final two years of the war as a training vessel and was broken up within 12 months of peace being declared.

The most famous HMS Dauntless never left these shores. For nearly 35 years it was the training establishment for Wrens at Burghfield near Reading. Fittingly, the Association of Wrens is one of the new Dauntless' affiliates.



Baltic1854
Crimea..... 1854-55
Atlantic.....1939

Class: Type 45 destroyer
Pennant number: D33
Motto: *Nil desperandum* (never despair)
Builder: BAE Systems, Govan/Scotstoun/Portsmouth
Laid down: August 28 2004
Launched: January 23 2007
Commissioned: June 3 2010
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 Wartsila 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

Facts and figures

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.80 – Capt Eric Brown DSC AFC

TRAILING an arrester hook a De Havilland Sea Vampire prepares to touch down on the deck of HMS Vengeance in the English Channel.

Our dip into the photo archives of the Imperial War Museum this month takes us back to 1951.

The pilot making the landing here follows a trail blazed six years before by the greatest aviator Britain has ever produced.

Dambuster Guy Gibson and Douglas Bader (of artificial legs fame) remain household names, but for breadth of experience, no British flier comes close to Capt Eric 'Winkle' Brown.

His accomplishments are one long list of superlatives: the Fleet Air Arm's most decorated pilot; most aircraft types flown by one pilot (487, as recorded by Guinness – although discounted are variants of particular models, such as 14 versions of Spitfires); most carrier deck landings (2,407); first landing on a carrier by a jet.

He interrogated the man behind the Third Reich's rocket programme, Werner von Braun, and the former head of the Luftwaffe (and Hitler's second man) Hermann Göring – a rogue with "likeable charisma".

Indeed the months after the war's end were a blur as Brown (pictured below in the cockpit of an 802 NAS Grumman Wildcat in 1941) flitted between airfields, test flying all manner of aircraft, questioning former foe, fending off tempting offers from civilian aircraft firms.

"No aircraft firm could ever give me anything like the wonderful variety of flying experience I was getting in the Service," he later wrote. He stayed in uniform.

Brown was driven by a passion that Britain should lead the world in carrier aviation, that the Royal Navy would forge ahead into the jet age.

On December 3 1945, the impatient test pilot took off from RNAS Ford in Sussex.

Brown's steed was a De Havilland Vampire – the second jet fighter to enter service with the

British Armed Forces.

As a prototype, the aircraft possessed no compass. Brown relied on a personal (and not entirely reliable) wrist compass. It guided him safely to HMS Ocean.

The first jet landing was almost anti-climactic. There were no second passes, no signals from the batsman on the deck to 'go around'. The Vampire made "a very gentle landing".

There was little fanfare. The aircraft was refuelled and Brown took off, roaring past the gofers on the island.

Three more times that day he brought his aircraft down on to Ocean's deck (the Vampire was damaged on the final landing, curtailing the trial).

But if not a false dawn, then December 3 1945 was a faltering dawn. The Royal Navy didn't move into the jet age with the Vampire (the Supermarine Attacker would be the Fleet Air Arm's first jet fighter); the Vampire's engine was sluggish and, worse, its fuel tank was tiny.

The Vampire's place in naval aviation history was assured, however; the model Eric Brown landed on Ocean, LZ551/G, is now on display at the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton.

As for its pilot, he remained in the Service for another 25 years, always at the cutting edge of flight – and always adding to that impressive tally of aircraft types.

Indeed, such is the respect in which he is held to this day, Capt Brown was consulted on the design of the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers.

■ THESE images – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



Escape from Athena – thanks to 771

ALTHOUGH they weren't called upon to rescue its crew, the fliers of 771 Naval Air Squadron helped ensure a factory fishing vessel did not sink off Cornwall.

The Athena caught fire 225 miles south-west of the Scillies and most of its 111 crew abandoned ship, leaving a firefighting team to try to contain the blaze.

Those who took to the lifeboats were picked up by another ship in the Atlantic.

But the fire on the Athena continued to rage and the Ace of Clubs were called on to ferry specialist firefighters aboard with the stricken vessel by now 15 miles off Lizard Point.

The Sea Kings winched experts from the Maritime Incident Response Group (set up under the banner of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency) on to Athena to assess the state of the vessel.

A few hours later, the helicopter was scrambled again, this time to ferry additional pumps aboard the Athena which was listing badly and in danger of capsizing. The Sea King also delivered replenishment breathing apparatus from Falmouth Fire Station.

And a few hours later, the 771 chaps were on the scene again; the vessel had been deemed unstable by the firefighters and evacuation was ordered.

A combined operation by Falmouth's lifeboat, a pilot boat and 771 ensured all 28 people still on the Athena were safely brought off.

All electrical supplies on board the Athena failed during this final evolution leaving the winching area in total darkness.

The ship did not founder, nor was this end of the Culdrose fliers' involvement.

Two days later they were called upon to pluck a salvage team to safety from the vessel as the weather off the Cornish coast deteriorated.

The Athena rescues came in the middle of several manic days off the Cornish coast which saw 771 scrambled ten times in under 100 hours.

The Sea Kings stood by to help the Polish sail training ship *Frederyk Chopin* with 47 people on board, including three dozen children.

The *Chopin* was dismasted in gales off Cornwall. She was eventually towed to Falmouth by a fishing boat without the need to rescue the crew.

The first and the last



● SARTU detour... Lts Tim Leckey (left) and Mark Rose on the tarmac at HMS Gannet during the final test of their abilities as Search and Rescue pilots

LIUTENANTS Tim Leckey and Mark Rose are the first: the first naval pilots to pass the new training course for Search and Rescue fliers.

And the last? Eight BOCs – the very final Basic Observer Course to receive instruction on the venerable Jetstream trainer, bringing the curtain down on more than 30 years of training at RNAS Culdrose.

We'll deal with the SAR chaps first. A shake-up of rescue training means less time on general helicopter instruction at RAF Shawbury...

...and rather more time on dedicated SAR instruction at RAF Valley, 80 miles to the northwest, under the new Multi-Engine Rotary Wing Search and Rescue course with SARTU, the SAR Training Unit.

The first few weeks of the new course begins at Shawbury and shares the same syllabus as those naval pilots going Jungly, Bagger, Merlin or Lynx.

After understanding the basics

of flying the Griffin (with real and simulated cockpit time) so students could handle the helicopter, the prospective SAR fliers parted company with their FAA comrades to focus on rescue training (they did make a few trips back to Shawbury to fly sorties which couldn't be conducted from Valley, and to make use of the Shropshire air station's simulators).

Thanks to its location on Anglesey's south-west coast, Valley is top-notch for learning the art of SAR – the environs offer lots of water (courtesy of the Irish Sea), lots of cliffs (handy if you're posted to Culdrose) and the peaks of Snowdonia (useful if you're posted to Gannet, who spend the bulk of their time plucking climbers and walkers off mountain tops...).

Once in the hands of SARTU the rookie pilots practise 'easier' facets of Search and Rescue missions – instrument flying, carrying underslung loads, manoeuvring in confined areas – followed by 'trickier' SAR ops: winching over water and on to boat decks, flying in the mountains and next to cliffs,

as well as picking up downed aircrew (the reason SAR units were born...), assisted by 'personal locator beacons'.

Another key part of the new course is the chance to use night vision goggles – mainstays of many rescue missions – culminating in four training flights using the cumbersome goggles, jinking between mountains and carrying out winching.

The training reaches its climax with a two-day Search and Rescue exercise – think Thursday War for SAR pilots (except that it's not on a Thursday. Or off Plymouth. Or involves FOSTies, low-flying Hawks...).

Trainees put all that they learned at Valley into practise, decamping first to HMS Gannet via the Isle of Man and Lake District.

They're expected to land on an oil rig and winch on to a passenger ferry before the very final test of the course – the 'wings trip' where the head of SARTU, Sqn Ldr Jamie Mitchell, assesses the pilots.

So no pressure there, then.

That 'wings trip' sees the students rescuing two downed fast-jet crew who've ejected over the Welsh mountains and need to be found, picked up and transferred to hospital.

Both naval aviators passed the inaugural course and formally received their wings from Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, the former head of the Fleet Air Arm and now the operating director of the Military Aviation Authority.

Meanwhile in southern Wales...

The last in a long line of helicopter observers who've trained on the Jetstream trainer courtesy of 750 NAS at Culdrose since 1978 found their navigational skills tested to the limit in the Brecon Beacons – and there wasn't a Jetstream in sight.

As officers, the eight rookie observers will be expected to work as a team and lead junior sailors. So to learn the arts of bonding and leadership, where better than a week at the RN's outdoor activity centre at Tal-y-bont.

The eight students were welcomed to Wales by torrential rain (we know, hard to believe in the autumn...) but their complaints about the climate were lightly brushed aside by instructors: if it's not raining,

it's not training.

Among the challenges the observers faced were navigation in the rain (and limited visibility), rescuing a 'lost child', negotiating a flooded tunnel, rescuing a downed pilot and stretching him across a river, and, once dried out, organise a pub quiz for junior rates undergoing leadership training at Tal-y-bont (minus pub... and minus alcohol).

The reward for all these efforts? Why, an intense training session courtesy of Army PTIs at a nearby barracks. Still, at least it was dry...

And so back to Culdrose, BOC and the Jetstream T2; the twin-prop bows out of service once the current course completes in 2011 with the (very similar looking – even down to the livery) King Air Avenger taking over.



Déjà vu – it's the Merlin Mk2

INWHAT has been a pretty bleak month for naval aviators, here at least is one welcome sight.

This is the world's first Merlin Mk2 taking to the skies.

Yes, we know it looks just like the old one – with the exception of the orange 'fishing rod' at the front.

But don't judge a book by its cover. It's what's inside that counts.

The Mk2 is the same airframe as the Mk1, which has been in service with the Fleet Air Arm since 1998.

But inside, the original wizardry which made the Merlin the best anti-submarine helicopter out there has been stripped out...

...and new-improved wizardry

has been installed. Basically improved computer power, improved avionics, enhanced radar and sonar and large touch-screen panels for the aircrew to improve the 'human-machine interface'.

Some 30 Merlins in the Royal Navy inventory will be upgraded to Mk2s under a £750m contract signed by Whitehall with defence giant Lockheed Martin, which has overseen the Navy's Merlin programme since the early 90s.

Four of those are dedicated trials aircraft, the first of which underwent a 35-minute test flight at AgustaWestland in Yeovil – the Merlin's builder.

The short flight checked the Mk2's new avionics, aircraft management system, cockpit

displays, communications and navigation systems.

Further trials will evaluate the aircraft's handling, avionics and mission systems before the next-generation Merlin is handed over to Boscombe Down towards the end of next year for extensive testing in the hands of RN aviators and experts from defence research firm QinetiQ.

After that, the first Mk2 is due to enter service with the Fleet Air Arm in 2013 and be operational the following year.

And the 'fishing rod'? Well it's actually a calibrated pitot tube which cross references the information on the aircraft's sensors with the data it picks up outside... Picture: Lockheed Martin

Empire strikes gold for Dan

TV PRESENTER Dan Snow has won a 'naval Oscar' for his series championing the Royal Navy's key role in forging modern Britain.

Dan and his *Empire of the Seas* – a four-part documentary screened on BBC2 earlier this year – were arguably the most high-profile winners at the annual Desmond Wettern Maritime Media Awards.

The ceremony celebrates all those who seek to promote the importance of the sea and the Royal Navy to the UK's security and prosperity; they take their name from Fleet Street's last naval correspondent, the late Desmond Wettern.

Countess Mountbatten of Burma presented the top prize – the Desmond Wettern Media Award – to journalist and broadcaster, Tom MacSweeney, a long-time presenter of Irish radio's weekly maritime programme *Seascope*.

Empire of the Seas took the Donald Gosling Award as the best television, film or radio production of the past 12 months.

The Wolf, the gripping tale of a WW1 German surface raider which led the Allies a merry dance, took the Mountbatten Maritime Award, collected by its authors Richard Guilliani and Peter Hohnen, who flew all the way from Australia to the Institute of Directors in London for the ceremony.

The best academic work of the past 12 months was Nicholas Black's *British Naval Staff in the First World War*; its author received the Society for Nautical Research Anderson Medal.

And there was a special Maritime Fellowship Award for American undersea explorer David Mearns for a lifetime of work solving the mysteries of the deep. He has found the wrecks of HMS Hood, the bulk carrier Derbyshire and 'Australia's Titanic' – HMAS Sydney.

As well as awards for journalists, authors and TV producers, the Wetterns also recognise Royal Navy and Royal Marines ships or units which keep themselves in the public eye.

The Desmond Wettern Fleet Award 'for the best media contribution' this year goes to HMS Kent which featured heavily in local, national and international media thanks to her appearance at a Swedish royal wedding and Armed Forces Day in Cardiff.

The small but very active (both in PR and in general terms) HMS Archer won the small ship award, HMS Turbulent was deemed the boat which did the most for Silent Service public relations and HMS Ark Royal was praised for its use of the internet and new media.

Finally, HMS Portland took the *Navy News* award for efforts to promote her activities on two demanding deployments through our pages. She set an example to which every deployed ship should aspire.

BRITISH LIMBLESS EX-SERVICE MEN'S ASSOCIATION

BLESMA supports all those ex-Service men and women who have lost limbs, the use of their limbs, or one or both eyes. At the outbreak of World War II and all conflicts since, many Members of BLESMA went to War young and whole. They came home disabled for life. The Association offers them the fellowship of shared experience, the welfare support they need and have fought for their interests over all the long years. Whilst we do not wish to receive new Members, due to the present situation and conflict in Afghanistan and as service life takes its inevitable toll, it is unavoidable that we shall do so. It is very important therefore that we are here to assist them in their recovery and rehabilitation from their injuries.

We receive no Government Grants and rely wholly on the generosity of the public.

Please consider making a donation now or a legacy in the future, however small, to:

Frankland Moore House, 185-187 High Road, Chadwell Heath, Romford, Essex RM6 6NA

Tel: 020 8590 1124

Fax: 020 8599 2932

E: headquarters@blesma.org

Web: www.blesma.org

Please consider giving to those that gave so much and ask for so little in return.

Registered Charity No's 1084189, SC010315



Nation stops to pay its respects

THE national focus for remembrance has since 1919 been a modest structure in Whitehall, opposite the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Designed by Lutyens, the Cenotaph (Greek for "empty tomb") was first built of wood and plaster, and was the centrepiece of the 1919 ceremonies to mark the first anniversary of the Great War armistice.

By the following year the simple, clean lines of the Cenotaph had been made permanent, with the original structure having been exactly recreated in Portland stone.

As is customary, the Queen, members of the Royal Family, senior politicians and Servicemen and women of all ranks joined with veterans, youth organisations and civilian groups on Remembrance Sunday to pay their respects to the fallen of all conflicts, right up to the current campaign in Afghanistan.

Armistice Day itself saw around 2,000 people gather for a service at the **National Memorial Arboretum** at Alrewas in Staffordshire.

The Duke of Gloucester was part of the congregation at the stunning **Armed Forces Memorial**, designed in such a way that at the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month, when a two-minute silence is called in remembrance of the cessation of World War I hostilities, a shaft of sunlight spears through the inner and outer walls, hitting the central bronze wreath sculpture – and despite grey skies, a beam of light pierced the gloom right on cue.

Music was provided by the Royal Marines Band, and Sea Cadets were amongst the 100 cadets at the service to reflect the Cadet 150 anniversary.

Ceremonies were held at the homes of all the Naval establishments.

These included **Clyde** personnel gathered at Hermitage Park in Helensburgh, with the HMS Neptune Volunteer Band providing musical accompaniment, while in the West Country almost 150 Servicemen and women from **Devonport Naval Base** attended ceremonies on Plymouth Hoe, where the Royal Marines Band Plymouth were also on duty.

Just along the coast, HMS Raleigh provided 450 sailors for a service in Horson Cemetery, Torpoint, around the grave of 44 sailors and 21 Royal Engineers who were killed when a German bomb hit their air raid shelter in Raleigh on April 28 1941.

During a moving ceremony at HMS Collingwood on Armistice Day, Executive Officer Cdr Chris Lade read out the names of the 31 Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel who lost their lives over the past year.

RN Air Station Yeovilton's service was held in 847 Naval Air Squadron's hangar, where sailors and Royal Marines were joined by civilian workers and children from three local schools.

One of the more remote services was at the Royal Marines Memorial at **Emmetts Hill**, on the Dorset coast, dedicated to all Royals who have died in conflicts since World War 2.

The memorial, in a small stone-walled garden, is on an exposed plot of high ground, typical 'bootneck' terrain, and during the ceremony it has become traditional, on the command of "about face", for all attending to face out to sea whilst the names of all Royals who have died in the past year – 20 on this occasion – are read out.

This year saw ferocious high winds during the service, making the trek from the car park treacherous, but there was still a strong turn-out by 90 members of 1 Assault Group RM at Plymouth, and the Corps bugler did an admirable job of making the *Last Post* and *Reveille* heard above the clamour of the storm.



● Four-year-old Molly Marsh remembers her father – Royal Marine David Marsh, who died in a roadside bomb in Helmand, Afghanistan, in March 2008 – at the unveiling of the new memorial to fallen members of 40 Commando RM at Norton Manor Camp

Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell

Royal Marines unveil monument to fallen

A NEW memorial has been dedicated to members of 40 Commando Royal Marines who have given their lives for their country.

The granite monument was unveiled at the Commando's base, **Norton Manor Camp**, Taunton, shortly before Armistice Day.

Paid for after a groundswell of public support for the unit, recently returned from operations in Afghanistan, and created by a Taunton stonemason, the black globe-shaped memorial was blessed by the unit's chaplain, Andrew Rawding, at a special ceremony.

Among those attending were some of the families of the 14 Marines who died in Afghanistan, civilian fund-raisers including Royal Marines Association branches and the Mayor of Taunton, Cllr Jefferson Horsley.

Lt Col Paul James, Commanding Officer of 40 Cdo, thanked the fund raisers and other who helped build the memorial garden site.

He said: "It is very moving to be here and to think this beautiful memorial and the garden was all made possible only through the generosity and kindness of people

who undertook it all while we were out in Afghanistan, largely without our knowledge.

"Both local people and others throughout the country helped raise money.

"It is a source of added pride to know that we have so much support, especially when people are giving their lives in combat."

A slow-growing memorial tree and dedicated plaque is planned for each of the fatalities in Afghanistan.

Claire Marsh and four-year-old Molly, the widow and daughter of Royal Marine David Marsh who died in a roadside bomb in 2008, placed flowers at his tree and plaque.

Claire said: "This garden is a lovely place to come and pay tribute to David.

"He was killed by an IED when driving with his colleague and friend Lt John Thornton on patrol with the fire support group. They were both killed together.

"The garden is an ideal place to meet other families, and I have spoken to John's family today.

"It is very comforting to share this support. It makes me extra proud of David to be here as part of the ceremony with Molly."

Lt Col James said: "It is a particularly proud moment to help launch the memorial and garden.

"It is a good place for families, friends and colleagues to come and reflect on the lives of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice.

"There is a sense of sorrow at this ceremony, but mixed with pride for what has been achieved by those with great valour, courage and selfless sacrifice.

"However, families who have lost sons will find that they have gained many others through support of the family of the Royal Marines, both past and present."

Ginge Rees, of the Bridgwater branch of the RMA, helped build the memorial garden paths and set up the tree memorials.

He said: "My previous unit was 40 Cdo, so I have a great affinity for them.

"Our branch donated £250 to the fund because we veterans feel every death. When one falls in battle we all feel that loss like a family.

"You can take the man out of the Marines, but not the Marine out of the man, and this applies throughout your life."

Journey south reawakens memories

SHIPS and units at home and abroad took time out from their busy schedules to reflect on the sacrifices made by comrades and predecessors.

And for one sailor, his current deployment allowed him to reflect on his time as a teenager sailing into danger.

Weapons engineer WO Gav Dunkley, 47, is the senior rating in HMS Gloucester, currently on patrol in the South Atlantic.

And 28 years ago, Gavin was on board County-class destroyer HMS Antrim as she took part in the mission to regain the Falklands – the teenager actually celebrated his 19th birthday on the passage south.

Although nobody died on board the ship, several men were injured when a bomb struck her in San Carlos Water during the amphibious landings.

He had not been back to the islands since.

Gavin read the Act of Remembrance on November 11 to the ship's company of the Fighting G during their service.

"Coming back to the Falklands after so many years has been an odd experience, reawakening many old memories," he said.

"Believe it or not, most of them are good – of service I am proud of, and of people I am proud to have known.

"I feel privileged to have been able to pay my respects here in person to all those who fell during the conflict."

Closer to home, many warships sent teams of sailors to join in civic ceremonies, as well as holding their own services on board.

HMS Ark Royal was at sea on Armistice Day, so some 400 of her ship's company – many with recent experience in Iraq or Afghanistan – gathered in her hangar for a service.

Others took part in ceremonies or appearances in Leeds and Glasgow (see page 46), while new Type 45 destroyer HMS Defender was also represented at the service in Glasgow Cathedral, in the person of Lt Adam Robertson.

A delegation from HMS Sutherland visited the historic namesake county, led by the frigate's CO, Cdr Roger Readwin, over the Remembrance weekend, with attendances at Brora, Golspie and Dornoch.

Staying north of the border, minehunter HMS Ramsey visited Dundee, culminating in a role for her sailors at the Festival of Remembrance in Caird Hall.

Sister ship HMS Penzance visited her namesake town in Cornwall, during which time a detachment from the ship marched through the town during the Sunday ceremonies.

Frigate HMS Monmouth pitched up in Cardiff to take part in events in both the capital city and her namesake town – and there was also a chance for sailors to get themselves involved in the rugby international between Wales and South Africa.

And HMS Bulwark was back in Durham to take part in a number of civic ceremonies, led by CO Cdr Nick MacDonald-Robinson.

Beyond UK shores, Naval personnel paid their respects at a service held in conjunction with allied forces in Bahrain.

Cdre Tim Fraser, Commander of the UK Maritime Command Component, laid a wreath on behalf of the Senior Service at the ceremony, held in the Christian Cemetery in central Manama.

UK forces at Kandahar Airfield in Afghanistan staged a ceremony at 11am local time, watched by coalition partners.

The CO and 35 members of the crew of HMS Turbulent were a welcome addition to the congregation at a service of remembrance in St George's Church, Lisbon.

And not too far away, on the homeward leg of her Atlantic Patrol Tasking (South) deployment, HMS Portland – with around 50 family and friends – having embarked in Las Palmas – held a service of remembrance in the hangar.

A royal goodbye for Ark Royal

THE sombre faces match the suitably solemn occasion.

For the final time Her Majesty the Queen inspects a Guard of Honour comprising men and women of Britain's most famous warship, HMS Ark Royal, on a gloomy but mild November Friday.

The Queen was the guest of honour as 25 years of loyal and proud service by the fabled aircraft carrier were celebrated in the ship's home of Portsmouth.

But there was, said Ark's Commanding Officer Capt Jerry Kyd, "added poignancy" to those long-planned birthday celebrations: little more than three weeks before the Queen visited, Prime Minister David Cameron announced the nation's flagship would pay off "with immediate effect".

The 1,000 guests – friends and family of the 650-strong ship's company – could have been paying tribute to HMS Indomitable this day.

But thanks to the forthright views of the Queen Mother, who insisted that the third of Britain's Harrier carriers should bear the name Ark Royal, the powers that be bowed to royal will.

She was right, of course. And for 21 years, from Ark's launch on the Tyne in 1981, through to her final visit for a recommissioning ceremony in 2001 – just six months before her death – the Queen Mother was the ship's avid sponsor and supporter.

Nine years later there could be only one guest of honour at this service of commemoration and celebration of Ark Royal's life. And so it was that the Queen inspected a Guard of Honour comprising members of the ship's company before climbing the gangway to chat with sailors and aircrew, including Army Air Corps personnel who brought an Apache gunship on board, about recent activities.

Following an all-ranks lunch Her Majesty returned to dry (well, damp given the weather) land to meet many of the organisations who've been affiliated with the RN's most famous current ship.

Before leaving, the Queen cut a silver jubilee cake – adorned with sailors of the various branches aboard – signed the ship's visitors' book and received a posy from ten-year-old Imogen Bellfield, daughter of Cdr Rob Bellfield, the ship's commander.

"To be the captain of this ship on this day fills me with immense pride," said Capt Kyd.

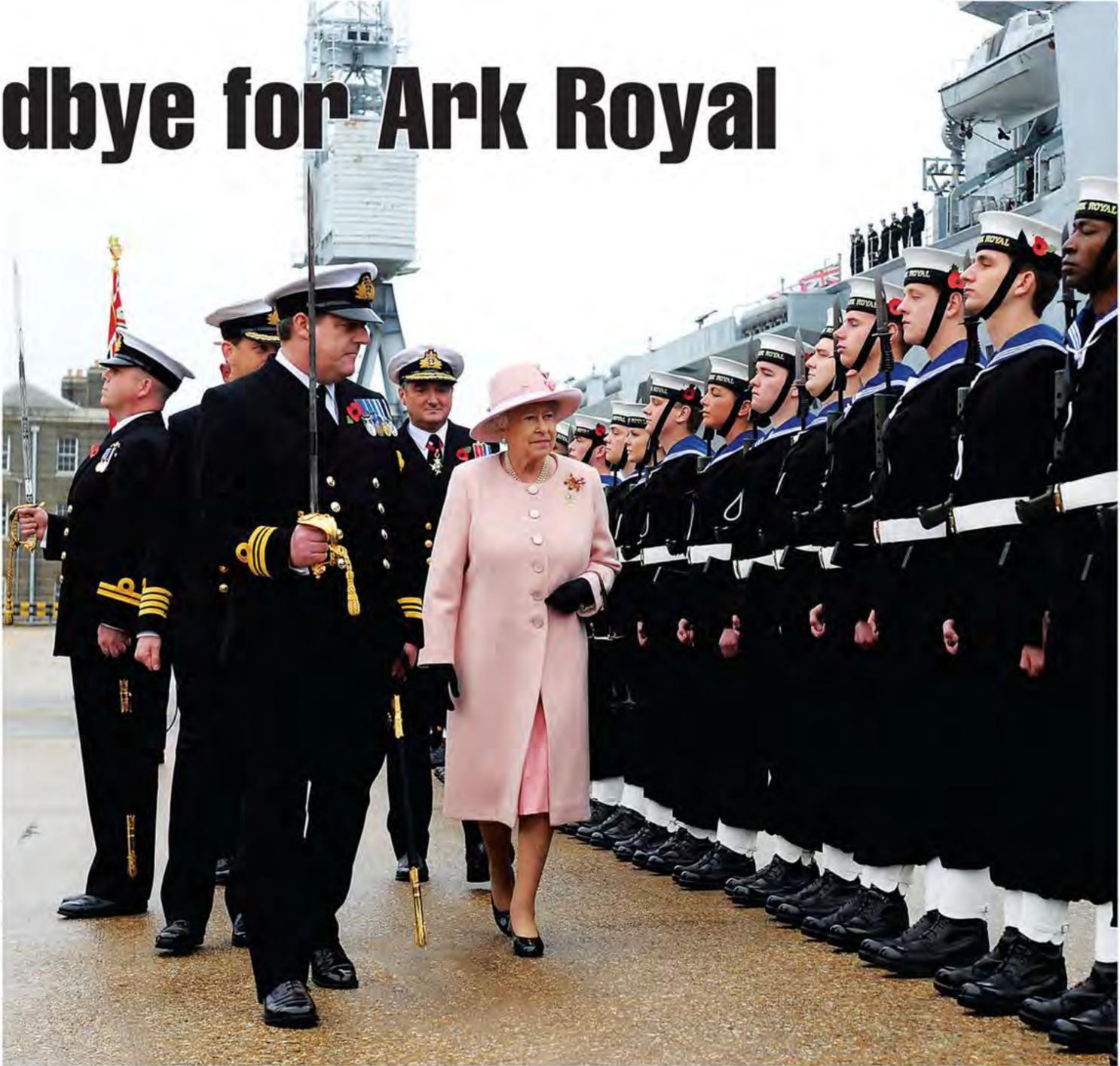
"As we embark on the last chapter in the life of this Ark Royal, her significant achievements of the last quarter of a century, including her battle honours in Bosnia and Iraq, will not be forgotten.

"The iconic name, Ark Royal, is synonymous with military excellence, and the five ships that have carried this most famous name for nearly 500 years of British naval history have faithfully served our country with distinction."

After the Queen's visit, Ark sailed for Glen Mallan in Scotland to offload ammunition before paying farewell visits to Newcastle (allowing Ark to say her goodbyes to Leeds, her affiliated city) and a well-deserved 'cultural visit' (aka run ashore) to Hamburg.

Weather permitting, the carrier will make her final entry to Portsmouth, flying her decommissioning pennant, on December 3, passing Round Tower at 9.30am.

Picture: LA(Phot) Abbie Gadd, HMS Ark Royal



LOCK ON TO MBDA SOLUTIONS

DEFENCE MATTERS
www.defencematters.co.uk

SENSE, SEEK, STRIKE: SEA VIPER / PAAMS
NAVAL AIR DEFENCE by MBDA

SEA DART - SEA WOLF - SEA SKUA - SEA VIPER

www.mbda-systems.com

MBDA
MISSILE SYSTEMS

Going the extra mile for George

PETTY OFFICER Scott Foskett ran more than 13 miles with a broken toe after pledging to give his sponsorship money to the hospital which looked after his son.

Scott, an instructor at HMS Raleigh, injured his foot a week before the Plymouth half-marathon.

He had promised to give the money he raised to Derriford Hospital Neo-Natal unit, which looked after his son, George, after a difficult birth last year, and he was determined to go ahead.

He said: "I'd never run a half marathon before. It was a lot of hard work and very tough but crossing the finishing line was an amazing feeling."

"To be able to donate £1,000 to the neo-natal unit to help them care for other babies like George made it all worthwhile."

George spent the first week of his life in the unit after being born with his umbilical cord wrapped around his neck and suffering seizures.

Scott's wife, Erica, said: "When Scott hurt his foot I thought that would give him the perfect excuse



● PO Scott Foskett and his son George

to pull out, but he carried on and both George and I are really proud of Daddy.

She added: "Scott trained really hard and went running every day he could. George is now a healthy 16-month-old little boy and we will be eternally grateful for the care he received from the staff at the neo-natal unit."



A yomp like old times

INJURED Royal Marines from Hasler Company, the Royals' rehabilitation facility, joined fellow serving and former Royals on the 12-mile 'yomp' across Dartmoor which has become an annual fixture.

The Royal Marines' Association Dartmoor Challenge saw 29 from the ranks of combat-injured Marines of Hasler Company joining 200 fellow serving Marines and their families for the hike.

RNRMC glory at Pompey

POMPEY players will be sporting the logo of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity on their shirts this season.

Portsmouth Football Club has joined forces with Havant-based Jobsite, the UK's first commercial online recruitment site, to support the RNRMC.

The club is also giving 1,000 Fratton Park match tickets to the charity to distribute throughout the 2010-11 season.

Robbie Robson, Chief Executive of the charity, said: "We're delighted to be building close links with Portsmouth FC."

"Through our network of charities we look forward to sharing the benefits a closer relationship will bring and particularly being able to give some families who may be having a tough time the chance of a great day out."

The route starts at Bickleigh Barracks on the edge of Dartmoor and finishes at the Plume of Feathers pub, in Princetown, taking in moorland tracks and granite tors, old mine workings, mediaeval burial mounds and huge granite crosses marking ancient routes across the moors.

As the Hasler group included single and double amputees, they did not all attempt the whole 'yomp' – among those who did was mountain leader C/Sgt Nige Lithgow, who carried the largest rucksack in the group.

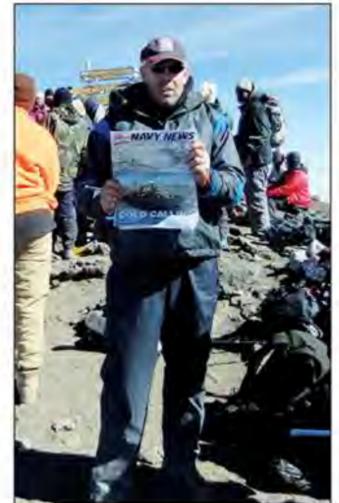
A group photograph was taken at South Hessay Tor (see above), overlooking the finishing point.

On arrival at the pub, Marine Moon summed up the feelings of the group saying: "This has made me feel like a Bootneck again."

The event has now been going for three years and raised money by sponsorship and donations for the Royal Marines' Charitable Trust, Help for Heroes, and St Dunstan's.

This year also included a raffle and an auction to raise money. The Tavistock branch of the RMA are the organisers, backed up by 42 Commando and local cadet detachments.

This year the main organiser was Falklands campaign veteran C/Sgt Yorkie Malone.



John takes Navy News to the top

NAVY News gets everywhere these days – and to prove it we couldn't resist a picture of our paper reaching the heights of the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro.

It was taken up there, for a little light reading matter perhaps, by regular Four-Peaker Lt Cdr John Scivier, who decided to expand his portfolio of mountains. He climbed the Tanzanian mountain in aid of Help for Heroes, for which he has currently raised more than £8,000.

John, currently seconded to the Civil Aviation Authority in London, said: "This was without a doubt the hardest – mentally and physically challenging – charity event I have ever done."

He added: "But the effort was small in comparison to the hardships and challenges faced by the troops H4H supports and the thought that I was helping in some small way was all the inspiration I needed."

See what he plans to do next at www.justgiving.com/JohnScivier-EverestBaseCamp2011

Rock finale at Culdrose

A WEEK of fundraising at the Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose culminated with a rock concert and grand raffle in the famous Blue Anchor pub in Helston, Cornwall.

A packed audience listened to local bands to set the scene for a fund-raising auction, which included a dress donated by Barbara Windsor and tickets to see *The Lion King*, donated by Sir Tim Rice.

The Culdrose Executive Officer, Cdr Jeremy Ovens, opened a family fun day at the Culdrose Community Centre, which featured a fly past by a Search and Rescue helicopter from 771 Naval Air Squadron, the famous Legion Bikers' Branch, vintage military vehicles, the HMS Seahawk Volunteer Band and a host of other activities.

The week's efforts raised more than £3,000 for the Royal British Legion.

Triumph of navigation

HMS RALEIGH'S Triumph Squadron donated £250 to three friends from Saltash who travelled 2,856 miles across Europe to raise money for Help for Heroes.

The three were taking part in the annual Screwball Rally, which drives through eight countries in five days, starting and finishing at Dover.

David Chapman, Morgan Jones and Chris Rout made the epic trip in their 1987 Ford Dorchester limousine, bought especially for the event.

The Triumph Squadron provides initial fire-fighting, damage control and first-aid training to new recruits and refresher course for experienced personnel.



Divers take a dip

A GROUP of 15 RN divers raised £8,500 after completing a mammoth 10½ mile swim around Lake Windermere to raise funds for Project Vernon and Help for Heroes.

The swimmers, mostly mine clearance divers from Horsea Island in Portsmouth, achieved their gruelling task within eight hours on a single day.

Organiser CPO John Ravenhall said: "This is something that we have wanted to do for a while and, being divers, a sponsored swim was the most obvious way of raising some money."

He added: "We've been training

since the start of the year but have been doing open water swimming for quite a few months now as well.

"We all try to train together but because we all have different timetables, that can prove to be a bit of a challenge."

The money will be split between Help for Heroes and the fundraising effort for Project Vernon, a charity which is aiming to build a permanent monument to HMS Vernon, the former Diving and Mine Warfare School which is now the site of the shopping and leisure centre Gunwharf Quays in Portsmouth.

LEANDER CLASS FRIGATE 1963

This model of the Leander Class Frigate represents the first batch of 7 vessels built with the narrow beamed hulls and the original configuration of 2 single 40mm Bofors guns, Limbo a/s mortar and variable depth sonar.

Models include HMS Leander, Ajax, Dido, Aurora, Penelope, Euryalus and Galatea Model measures 6.5" long mounted on a wooden plinth 11" x 2" with brass nameplate



£65.00
+ £3.00 p&p
UK Only

To order your model send your name, address and daytime telephone number, along with your cheque or credit card details to:

Skytrex Ltd, Unit 1 Charnwood Business Park, North Road, Loughborough, Leicestershire LE11 1LE Tel: 01509 213789 email: sales@skytrex.com www.skytrex.com

PLEASE ALLOW UP TO 28 DAYS FOR DELIVERY



Soup's up at Collingwood

Volunteers from HMS Collingwood took part in a sponsored walk with the charity Two Saints (ARC) which provides support to homeless people in the Fareham area.

They walked from the charity's office in Gosport to the bandstand in the town centre, and set up a soup kitchen to give soup and rolls to walkers and the general public.

The walk took place at the beginning of October, two days before 'World Homeless Day.'

Base Warrant Officer Mark Hannibal said: "The day was a great success and we were pleased to be able to help – we raised about £600 for a very good cause."

A FORCE FOR GOOD



● L/Cpl Ram Patten and the Royal Marine March for Honour team arrive at Yeovil, escorted by RN and RM Cadets, on their route to Wootton Bassett

Picture: LA(Phot) Gary Weatherston

To remember and to honour

WITH his daughter Melanie clinging on to him, Royal Marine commando L/Cpl Ram Patten set off down Plymouth Hoe as the high-profile March for Honour got under way.

His four-year-old daughter was again by his side at Wootton Bassett, the significant staging-post of the demanding national trek.

Together, at the opening of the Royal British Legion Wootton Bassett Field of Remembrance, they planted a cross in memory of all those who have served for this country.

The culmination of the Royal Marine's epic efforts to bring all the Services and the nation together at this time of commemoration was the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance.

L/Cpl Patten and his fellow marchers from across the Services carried the Book of Remembrance into the Royal Albert Hall, in the presence of the Queen and Prime Minister David Cameron.

The March for Honour called together all the Armed Forces from separate starting points around the UK.

The Royal Marine team set off from Plymouth, arriving by rapid-roping from a Sea King helicopter on to the Hoe. The Naval team left Portsmouth to a flypast from a Royal Navy Historic Flight Swordfish and a gun-salute from a field gun.

The Army team began their route-march from Cardiff's imposing castle, and the RAF headed south, beginning their voyage from the war memorial at Stamford, near RAF Wittering.

Each man – and one woman on the Navy team – carried 40lb packs, clad in identical dark shirts and military trousers, their belts and cap badges alone marking the separate Services. Members of the Royal British Legion Riders Branch accompanied the teams of walkers along the route.

The March for Honour was born of the determination of L/Cpl Patten, who struggled with post-traumatic stress disorder after a tour of duty in Afghanistan with the Corps.

L/Cpl Patten, who serves at the HQ of 3 Commando Brigade in Stonehouse, Plymouth, resolved "to give back to the entire UK community for the support for the Armed Forces".

He determined to honour



● L/Cpl Ram Patten sets off on the March for Honour from Plymouth Hoe holding his daughter Melanie

the Royal British Legion for the enduring help and service it has offered the Armed Forces for many years, and to show respect for those who have fallen in conflict across the generations.

The teams set off separately to meet at Wootton Bassett, the small market town has become synonymous with the conflict in Afghanistan – its inhabitants pay their respects when fallen Servicemen pass through on their way from nearby RAF Lyneham.

At Wootton Bassett, Prince Harry presented the team with the Book of Remembrance, listing the names of all military personnel killed in action since World War 2.

The final part of the March for Honour brought the teams together into one unit who, shrugging aside any weariness of the distance they had already travelled, trekked to central London from Wiltshire for the final remembrance events.

On the steps of the Royal Albert Hall, the 20 members were applauded for their speed march across the nation; a continuation

of the public support that had buoyed them all throughout the demanding miles.

Last words to the man himself who made this happen, L/Cpl Patten: "Thank you all for your support."

"It's been an incredible journey for us all – keep supporting our Armed Forces."

The March for Honour has already raised over half a million pounds, but the teams are keen to swell that impressive total yet more.

If you would like to show your support, visit www.marchforhonour.com/donate or text March to 70222 to donate £3.

■ The Royal Marine team were: L/Cpl Ram Patten, Matt Bennett (veteran RM), Sgt Kev Rose, Capt Ralph Cottrell, L/Cpl Sean Power RMR. The Royal Navy team were: CPOPT Jan Matthews, POPT Jason 'Taff' Gadd, POPT Suzie Parker, POPT Kev Green, LPT Leon Taylor.

Calling Wrens in need

THE year 2010 has marked the 90th anniversary of the Association of Wrens, and two of the UK's leading maritime charities, the Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society and the WRNS Benevolent Trust have teamed up to highlight the help available to former Wrens, who are believed to number 60,000 or so.

Cdr Rosie Wilson, Chairman of the trust, said: "There is a wonderful support network for former Wrens in the UK."

"We deal with around 450 individuals a year, but we believe there are many more we have not been in contact with who also need the support of charities."

The Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society provides nursing care and accommodation to elderly, sick, or disabled seafarers, their widowers or widows, and other dependants.

Four retired Wrens currently live at Weston Acres, its estate in Surrey.

For more information on the accommodation and services offered by the Royal Alfred Seafarers Society, visit <http://www.royalalfredseafarers.co.uk/>

Sharing a joke

A NEW jokebook, called *The Laughing Soldier: The British Armed Forces Jokebook* was launched at the end of November, created by Project 65 – The Veterans Charity.

Royal Marine Mark Ormrod and comedian Al Murray wrote the forewords for the book, which features jokes and message from politicians, comedians and the British public.

The book (ISBN 978-1-61200-038-1) will cost £6.99, and profits will go to the veterans charity.

Charity eats

RED Lion Foods have launched a range of foods available in supermarkets, and will donate all their post-tax profits to Armed Forces charities.

The organisation hopes to raise £30 million per year to fund support and rehabilitation work for the military.

Among the supermarkets stocking their goods, such as rice, bread, ham, tea bags and strawberry jam, are: Sainsburys, Waitrose, Morrisons, the Co-operative and Tesco.

Kind Raleigh

HMS RALEIGH'S Warrant Officer and Senior Rates Mess raised £650 for the Starlight Children's Charity and £650 for the RNRMC and the Royal Navy Benevolent Trust at a charity night organised by the Mess Social Secretary PO Gary Aiken and Mess Chef Marie Little.



Bear touches down

FLYING bear Amy experienced her first landing on to the deck of HMS Ark Royal, courtesy of a Sea King of 845 Naval Air Squadron.

Amy Bear (pictured above) is one of several toy bears which are used by charity Aviation without Borders to raise funds for its work.

Amy Bear the Third, to give her full name, has a pilot's logbook and will be put up for auction when she has enough flying hours.

845's Lt David Tindall said:

"It was great fun having Amy as part of the crew, we really enjoyed showing her the traditional jungle role of operating from seaborne helicopter platforms."

"She definitely seemed to enjoy the experience, as did we, especially because we could support such a worthwhile charity."

The charity is dedicated to providing humanitarian assistance through aviation services. Find out more at: <http://www.aviationwithoutborders.org/>



Commando spirit drops in

TOURISTS visiting the Tower of London were treated to an impressive display of commando skills as a team of bootnecks fast-roped from a helicopter onto the tower, before abseiling down to kick off the RM Charitable Trust Fund campaign (pictured above).

The start was signalled by a Royal Marines Band, followed by a briefing from Major General Buster Howes, Commandant General.

Serving and former Royals watched the impressive rope and abseil display, joined by former Marine and TV presenter Monty Halls and representatives from Hasler Company, the unit which manages the recovery of wounded and injured Marines.

The campaign aims to raise £6 million by the 350th anniversary of the corps in 2014.

Dawdler do MWS march

THE Devonport Dawdlers, a team of MOD staff and friends from Devonport naval base, have raised nearly £5,000 in events throughout the year, including a 24-hour Cancer Relay for Life event in Plymouth.

PHASE 2 trainees and Physical Training staff from HMS Collingwood raised £725 for the Royal British Legion with a march around the establishment with a field gun, accompanied by the CO, Cdre Tim Lowe.



MUSIC AT
Sunset
THE BAND OF HER MAJESTY'S
ROYAL MARINES SCHOOL OF MUSIC
Conducted by Lt Col F Vivian Dunn CWO ONE FRAM RM

Music from the Ceremonies of Beating Retreat and Tattoo

27 historic recordings, the best of the Royal Marines. Included are *Sunset*, *Crimond*, *Jerusalem*, *Land of Hope and Glory*, *Crown Imperial*, *Heart of Oak*, *A Life on the Ocean Wave*, *By Land and Sea*, *Rule Britannia*, *Emblazoned Drums*, *Mechanised Infantry*, *Sambre et Meuse*, *The Captain General*, *Viscount Nelson*, *Nightfall in Camp* and many more.

This CD brings together the majesty and excellence of the Band of HM Royal Marines School of Music under the baton of their distinguished first Principal Director of Music, Lieutenant Colonel Sir Vivian Dunn.

Compact Disc £12.00 (UK), £15.00 (overseas) incl p & p
 Make cheques payable to Eastney Collection
Eastney Collection, 60 Mayford Road, London SW12 8SN
 tel: 020 8673 6157; fax: 020 8772 9545; Email: eastneycol@aol.com
www.eastneycollection.com (most credit cards accepted)
A donation from each recording sold will go to the Deal Memorial Bandstand Trust Registered Charity No. 1045095

Be ye men of Talent

MEN of Talent celebrated their boat's 20th anniversary in the presence of a special guest.

The submarine's sponsor, Princess Anne, joined the deeps and their families in Devonport as the second youngest T-boat marked the milestone.

The Princess Royal was present at the submarine's launch in Barrow on an April day in 1988, again in Devonport when the boat was commissioned into the Fleet in May 1990 – and has returned on numerous subsequent occasions, but not since 2006 when the boat was rededicated following an overhaul.

The latest visit saw Princess Anne carry out a formal inspection on the parade ground at HMS Drake as the ship's company formed up for ceremonial divisions, watched by friends and family, with the Band of HM Royal Marines providing suitable musical accompaniment.

That was followed by a rather-less-formal birthday cake-cutting 'ceremony' and a chance to chat with the deeps and their loved ones.

Deeps being deeps they were keen to tell their sponsor about recent deeds (hence the wry look from the senior rate, pictured below by LA(Phot)

Steve Johncock of FRPU West); Talent only returned from a seven-month deployment east of Suez in the late summer.

Celebrations over, Talent is now undergoing a 15-month maintenance and refit period which will see her re-enter active service with the latest technological upgrades.

Talent is not the only warship to be graced by the Princess Royal's presence.

Five days earlier, she could be found on the newest addition to the Fleet, HMS Diamond.

The royal was guest of honour aboard the £1bn destroyer in Portsmouth Harbour as Diamond held her inaugural Trafalgar Night dinner.

CO Cdr Ian Clarke said his chefs and stewards "pulled out all the stops" to provide magnificent fare in Diamond's wardroom.

Aside from the usual Trafalgar Night goings-on, there was some unusual entertainment to bring an end to proceedings courtesy of Lts Rob Frost and Helen Oliphant.

The two junior officers played the trumpet and violin (not typically complementary instruments...) in rousing renditions of classic sea shanties.



May the horse be with you...

NOW this is something you don't see every day: a submariner in No.1s on horseback in front of Admiralty Arch.

The deep in question is WO2 Nick Robinson who took advantage of a tri-Service course to ride with one of the Army's foremost ceremonial formations, the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery.

The masters of ceremonial duty – mainstays of Trooping the Colour and, until its demise a decade ago, the Royal Tournament – throw open their stable doors and allow equestrian novices into the hallowed riding school at St John's Wood for a fortnight every year, offering a taster to all ranks across all three Services.

Among the successful applicants this year was the senior rating from the Submarine School at HMS Raleigh... who quickly found that his rank counted for zero when he arrived at the troop's barracks.

All 'students' were required to work alongside the gunners and bombardiers in the stable lines and attempt to scale the incredibly steep learning curve from the bottom up (no pun intended).

This meant a 5.30am start every morning getting acquainted with a stiff brush, pitch fork and shovel...

...Only when the mucking out was finished could there be any thought of saddling up.

"I'm not sure I was fully prepared for two hours of proper graft before breakfast and for the first couple of days I was definitely 'in-the-way-bloke'," says Nick.

As well as learning how to muck out, tack up, feed and care for the horses, the two weeks sees the new riders spend about 35 hours in the saddle, culminating with a six-fence showjumping competition and a ride through central London.

"The first day was pretty daunting for all, including the people who had ridden before. My only previous equine interaction was on Blackpool beach in the 1970s and I'm not sure ten minutes on Dobbin the donkey was going to cut much ice here."

By the end of week one, all riders were happily trotting and cantering and able to clear single fences, with the fund for 'unscheduled dismounts' mounting up nicely.

As well as expert riding instruction from the Troop's equine masters, the two-week course features sessions with the master saddler and the master farrier, giving a fascinating insight into skills not seen in the RN for centuries.

The middle Sunday was a rest day for the rookie horsemen. Unless your name is WO2 Nick Robinson. He returned to his nautical roots by taking part in the Great River Race with HMS Raleigh comrades on the Thames.

Gig crews are expected to row their boats 22 miles up the Thames from the Isle of Dogs to Richmond. The Raleigh crew crossed the line in 2h 51m – just behind a (much younger) Dutch Navy team – to take third place in the Services category.

And then it was back to the Dobbins – and more demanding 'manoeuvres': multiple jumps (which seemed to have been raised...) while the instructors were being more exacting, demanding fewer mistakes from riders.

They also introduced gun drill courtesy of some of the oldest serving artillery pieces in the world (they saw action in the Great War). The 13lb guns used by the Troop for ceremonial occasions are kept in a humidity-controlled compound and polished to a standard that has to be seen to be believed.

One gunner is responsible for the cleanliness of each gun and limber... and after a gallop and salute across Green Park on a rainy day, they certainly needed some work.

The skills taught to the riders over the two weeks were tested on the last day with a ride in the busy London traffic from St John's Wood to Buckingham Palace.

Mindful of the exceptional standards normally displayed by his soldiers, King's Troop Regimental Sergeant Major Warren Mahoney kept a watchful eye as the 12-strong course set out for the group photo in front of the Artillery Memorial in Hyde Park Corner. That was followed by a trot across Piccadilly Circus, around Trafalgar Square and a quick stop under Admiralty Arch.

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime, money-can't-buy experience and the memory will last long after the gluteal soreness subsides," says Nick.

Any sailors or marines who fancy spending two weeks with the troop can find details in DIN 2010DIN10-030.

NAVY NEWS



12 ISSUES FOR THE PRICE OF 10

* UK subscribers only

Please note, cheques payable to 'HMG1800' and not 'Navy News'

YES, I would like to subscribe to Navy News

(please refer to the table opposite for prices)

Send the completed form and payment to:

Subscriptions,
Navy News, HMS Nelson,
Queen Street, Portsmouth
Hampshire PO1 3HH, England

Tel: +44 023 9272 6284 (24hr answerphone)

Fax: +44 023 9273 4448

email: subscriptions@navynews.co.uk

2. CHOOSE YOUR SUBSCRIPTION 12/10

Region	Years	Rate	Tick
UK	One	£22.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
UK	Two	£44.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
UK	Three	£66.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseas	One	£29.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseas	Two	£58.00	<input type="checkbox"/>
Overseas	Three	£87.00	<input type="checkbox"/>

1. COMPLETE YOUR DETAILS

Name

Address

Postcode

Phone Number

Email

3. COMPLETE YOUR PAYMENT DETAILS

I enclose **Cheque** **Postal Order** **IMO**

in £ Sterling made payable to 'HMG1800'

I wish to pay by **Visa** **Mastercard** **Delta** **Switch/Solo**

Payment Amount £

Card Number

Start Date Expiry Date Issue No. CSC No.

Signature Date

This is a **New subscription** **Renewed subscription**

Start my subscription from month

School's out

IN SEPTEMBER, Maj Matt Churchward and Sgt Andy Middleton, both from 1 Assault Group Royal Marines (1AGRM), returned to Nigeria to cast an eye over developments at the Joint Maritime Security Training Centre (JMSTC) in Lagos.

The boat experts from the Royal Marines first visited the Armed Forces of Nigeria in 2009, and headed back earlier this year to hone skills as part of an ongoing training package.

Working in support of the in-country British Military Advisory Training Team (BMATT), 1AGRM's overriding mission was to train the first group of Nigerian instructors at the JMSTC.

This is part of a project within the African Conflict Prevention Pool that also included the provision of infrastructure and rigid inflatable boats as training craft.

On return the Royal Marines were pleased to see that the JMSTC building itself had been completed and was starting to develop into a credible training base. Previous advice and guidance had been well received and the Nigerians made it clear that they were capable of running their first training courses for Nigerian Army, Navy and Air Force students.

As the centre becomes established, it should start to improve skills in the areas of littoral manoeuvre and riverine operations, and sharpen operational capability within the Nigerian Armed Forces.

The facility was officially handed over from the UK to the Armed Forces of Nigeria on September 30 2010, by the Duke of Gloucester.

The Duke stated the importance of UK's commitment to Nigeria in a speech, before unveiling a plaque to open the centre.

He then took to the water to view demonstrations of an amphibious assault and boarding operations.

Over the same period, helicopter assault ship HMS Ocean visited Lagos as part of Nigeria's 50th anniversary of independence celebrations, which provided an excellent opportunity for some cross training with embarked forces that had sailed with the ship.

The JMSTC craft escorted HMS Ocean as she entered Lagos Harbour, before accompanying a boat group from 539 Assault Squadron Royal Marines (ASRM) to a forward operating base at the JMSTC.

The boat group consisted of a Landing Craft Air Cushion (Hovercraft) and a number of Inflatable and Offshore Raiding Craft, along with Landing Craftsmen and Armoured Support Group gunners, who seemed very keen to put the craft through their paces following a long transit on Ocean from Brazil.



Over the next few days, the Royal Marines from 539 ASRM worked with the JMSTC instructors, providing craft acquaint packages and demonstrating riverine tactics such as the use of the Offshore Raiding Craft in its fire support role.

Capt Oily Gray RM and C/Sgt John Hiscock from 539 ASRM were impressed by the enthusiasm displayed by the Nigerians and were keen to pass on their specialist skills.

The cross training package concluded with a well-played football match that ran to penalties after a 4-all draw at full-time.

Unusually for an English side, 539 ASRM came up trumps and won the match, following a save by PO Greig Gunning who was one of the Royal Navy mechanical engineers within the boat group.

HMS Ocean also provided two Lynx helicopters for aviation training at the JMSTC.

Maj Jon Parry and his team from 847 Naval Air Squadron conducted instruction in troop aviation drills, before completing a number of flying serials with the Nigerian instructors.

As well as delivering an interesting introduction to one of the UK's military helicopters, the training also highlighted areas of air-land integration that the Nigerians will hopefully start to develop during subsequent advanced training courses.

Before HMS Ocean departed for Sierra Leone, a final piece of cross training was achieved using the embarked Royal Marines from Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines (FPGRM).

These specialist troops used facilities at the JMSTC to conduct rehearsals of search and detention procedures, before moving on to practise boardings on a large dredger

craft within the busy Lagos Harbour.

Throughout this training, the Nigerians worked alongside the team from FPGRM, benefitting from the experience and developing possibilities for future training at the JMSTC.

The Nigerians are now fully prepared to run their first courses and have gained valuable experience following

HMS Ocean's visit to Lagos.

Future development of capability at the JMSTC will require a degree of continuing mentoring by 1AGRM and the BMATT, but the Nigerians have taken some considerable steps towards improving maritime security training in this strategically important West-African country.

■ Credit: Maj Matt Churchward



Ticking all the



● ABs Sandy, Smith and Faint pay their respects on board HMS Manchester on Armistice Day

ILLEGAL drugs seized? ✓
Humanitarian operations? ✓
Defence diplomacy? ✓

HMS Manchester has pretty much ticked all the boxes during her seven-month deployment to the Caribbean – and she is not due home until a third of the way through this month.

We have reported on her two major drugs busts, in our August and November editions, preventing cannabis and cocaine with an estimated street value of almost £20 million from reaching users.

And in October we told you how Cdr Rex Cox drove his ship hard through “sporty” heavy seas for 900 miles on the coat-tails of Hurricane Igor in case help was needed in Bermuda (it was, but only an aerial survey as the storm had weakened by the time

it brushed the islands).

And in the same article we told you of the work the sailors were doing ashore with community groups in places like Barbados and the Turks and Caicos Islands.

So, with all the boxes ticked, what else is on the list?

Well, plenty more of the same really – which is why the Busy Bee found herself on yet more “sporty” passages, this time surfing the wake of Hurricane Tomas as it threatened to wreak havoc across the Caribbean.

The warship was in Barbados when the call came to dash 100 miles north west to Soufrière, the former capital of St Lucia, now a town of 8,000 people.

LET(ME) ‘Tracy’ Chapman takes up the story:

“On Monday November 1 at 2230 we were ordered to sail from Barbados at 0900 on the 2nd, to make a hasty passage to St Lucia, which had been in the path of Hurricane Tomas, and as a consequence some areas had been devastated.

“So that evening I immediately started making preparations for the kit I knew I would have to consider taking with me, being one of the few members of the ship’s company trained to operate emergency equipment such as the ‘jaws of life’ cutters and spreaders, which the fire service use, and also the thermal lance cutting device and RAMSET rivet tool, which will punch through steel plate.

“On the morning of the 2nd more kit preparations took place, whilst we made passage, and I also tried to find any snippets of information that might allow us to make more specific preparations.

“At 1500 I was told six of the heavy rescue team would be going ashore, myself included, which I was happy about because I wanted to get ashore and make a difference to people who had been struggling for a number of days already.

“Then we were given eight minutes notice to make any personal preparations because we were to be on the helicopter that would take us up the volcano to the small remote village of Morne Fond St Jacques, and we would be staying over night.

“Once in the village, there

was much confusion as to what needed our immediate attention – it was getting to last light when we arrived, so firstly we had to ensure there were no casualties that needed immediate attention, because anything we might have to do would be soon hampered by nightfall.

“Our first job, however, was to rig up some lighting in a church as the biggest and main building, which was being used as temporary shelter for approximately 200 people.

“This task was completed swiftly with an ‘all hands in’ approach, and as soon as we fired up the generator and the lights came on, everybody’s spirits lifted, and the noise level increased as people started talking and laughing – it was a satisfying job, when the people were thanking PO Rogers and myself and saying ‘good job’ as we walked around the church.

“Myself and PO Dixon, another engineer, then wired a second generator into another building that was being used as a hospital/childcare centre and also a base for the aid workers that had arrived, and were preparing food for the people seeking shelter, so with full power back to the building they could use it to its full potential.

“We then found a room to base ourselves and all of our equipment in, and settled for the night as the aid workers and police said there was nothing more we could do until first light.

“In the morning, after a night’s interrupted rest (someone had to keep putting fuel in the generators), we made plans for the day to get two teams together to search for persons reported missing, whose homes had been washed away by landslides and the swollen river.

“We searched the 100-metre area around where this man’s house used to be, assisted by one of his friends, and thought we may have found some remains of the missing man after about 20 minutes, when a foul smell was discovered, but it turned out to be pigs’ entrails.

“The search continued in the sometimes waist-deep mud for around three hours, and then moved along 400 metres of the river downstream, during which time the team came across personal possessions and more pigs, but unfortunately no sign of the missing man.

“When we returned to our HQ for a water re-supply, our Officer in Command, Lt Cdr Thompson, informed us of another site where the locals needed help trying to locate another missing person, so an *ad hoc* team of the heavy and light rescue teams was put together and went off about three miles around the volcano to another small village of about 12-14 homes where a whole family lived in close proximity.

“We were met by a man who said it was his uncle who was missing, and showed us where his house used to be – it had been demolished by a landslide from



● CPO Robbie Roberts with the local petrol station manager on St Lucia, as pictured by CPO Whiskey Walker – who is himself pictured (right) helping to clear mud from the basement courtyard of the hospital in Soufrière, St Lucia



● HMS Manchester’s Lynx drops supplies at Soufrière on St Lucia – the ship can be seen on the horizon to the right

Picture: Lt Cdr Tim Bailey



● ETME Williams working in the ruins of a house at Morne Fond St Jacques

Picture: ETME Roycroft/ETME Charlie Jones



● HMS Manchester sailors conduct football coaching at the Amos Vale Ground in Kingstown, St Vincent

e boxes



● Lt Cdr Jim Thomson and a St Lucian take a break from clearing up at Morne Fond St Jacques
Picture: CPO Sullivan

about 200 metres up the hill, and huge trees five feet in diameter now laid where the house used to be.

"We used an avalanche probe to search between the logs and mud for any signs of a trapped body.

"After some time a possible location was identified, so work began cutting and moving the huge logs out of the way, our team amongst the missing man's family passing the heavy sections of tree along and clear of the area.

"The search didn't uncover the missing man's body, and after a few more hours searching we were unable to do more without some heavy lifting equipment to move the bigger sections of debris clear of the search area.

"We were then ordered to return to Manc for last light to give command a sitrep."

Another team from Manchester had barely clambered off the ship's Lynx before they were in business.

The five headed into the local mountains to recover an 83-year-old woman whose house was under threat from mudslides, and who could not make it down the muddy slopes without aid.

They quickly decided the best course of action would be to carry the woman down on a stretcher, so the sailors, along with five members of the community disaster relief response teams, battled down the three-mile mountain path, crossing rivers and muddy slopes, arriving in the local church just as their Navy colleagues reinstated the power and the lights came on.

Much of the damage caused by Tomas was through torrential rain – the equivalent of two years of rain fell on the slopes of the Soufrière volcano in one day, causing devastating and destructive mudslides and floods.

HMS Manchester maintained a close liaison with the local authorities and the Red Cross as they tackled a prioritised list of problems – including supplying a hot meal to hundreds of villagers, their first in almost four days.

Over 200 gallons of fresh water was supplied from the ship – particularly welcomed by the head and children of a local orphanage, whose supply had been cut off 48 hours previously.

At Colombette, where a massive mudslide had destroyed a number of homes, it was quickly apparent that the chances of anybody surviving were zero – a situation the Manchester rescue team felt should not pass without recognition, so a cross was made and a short prayer was read by ship's padre the Rev Mark Allsopp, who also provided support to relatives of the missing villagers who arrived during the search.

On return to Soufrière, the team were immediately dispatched to the hospital, where the basement courtyard and laundry were awash with up to 30 cm of muddy silt.

Manchester's matelots, using locally-supplied plant machinery, cleared the area in four hours, while another group used locally-sourced material and supplies from the ship to repair a large section of the hospital's metal roof, ripped off during the storm – a less-than-pleasant job in the full heat of the

afternoon sun.

Some tasks were more appealing, such as the swings that were built and the mini football pitch laid out to keep the children amused as rebuilding went on around them.

And all the while Manchester's Lynx was at short notice to fly any seriously-ill or injured patients above the road blocks to the island's main hospital.

Cdr Cox said: "HMS Manchester's ship's company has put in a magnificent performance over the last 48 hours and I am extremely proud of each and every one of them.

"Their efforts ashore in St Lucia have made a clear and significant difference to the hurricane-battered island.

"It has been humbling and a privilege to help the people of St Lucia as they attempt to get back on their feet following this terrible tragedy".

Manchester's consort RFA Wave Ruler was also involved, calling at Castries, the island's capital, to deliver 150 tonnes of drinking water and supplies of purification tablets.

In all, 14 islanders lost their lives, and 250 families were rendered homeless, but with the situation stabilised, Manchester and Wave Ruler had no time to rest on their laurels – a quick replenishment at sea allowed the destroyer to plough through more heavy seas as it chased Tomas, by now increasing in strength again, towards the Turks and Caicos Islands.

She arrived six hours after the storm had passed, followed some hours later by the RFA tanker, and Manchester's Lynx was once more sent aloft to report on damage – of which there was little, the low-lying British Overseas Territory being less prone to mudslides.

With the sincere thanks of the Governor of the islands ringing in their ears, the sailors of Manchester returned to anti-narcotics patrols while Wave Ruler moved on to Haiti to support a US Navy task group as the unpredictable Tomas raged on.

There have been some lighter moments, contrary to all the doom and gloom of her recent taskings.

Seven of her sailors, led by LPT Lucy Mckenna, organised a two-hour football coaching session for 45 boys aged 6-15 whilst on a port visit in St Vincent.

The coaching was an integral part of the RN Football Association's defence diplomacy policy, in conjunction with the Football Association's overseas initiative.

LPT Mckenna, a qualified FA coach, set out stances to develop the boy's dribbling, passing and shooting skills, then the session moved on to encompass attacking, defending and creation of space.

The session culminated with a series of five-a-side-matches where the boys displayed their competitive edge. At the end of the afternoon all the boys were presented with an England shirt.

As *Navy News* went to press, the destroyer was alongside in Havana – thought to be the first such visit by a Royal Navy warship in over 50 years.

● See next month's *Navy News* for a full report.

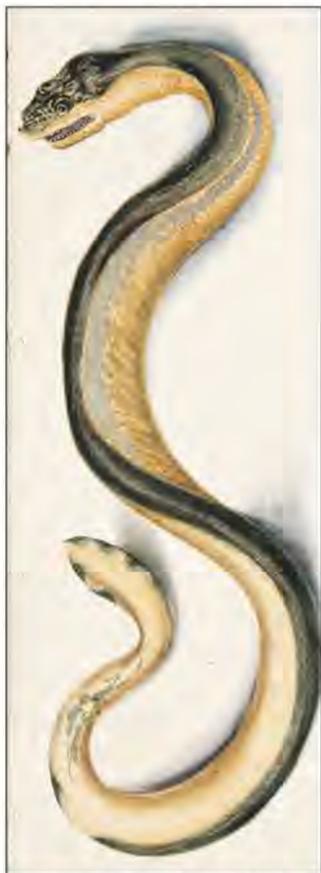


● HMS Manchester at sunrise in the Caribbean
Picture: Chris Terrill (Uppercut Films)



● (Above) A member of the Royal Navy rescue teams gets a helping hand in the mud that engulfed villages on the slope of the Soufrière volcano (Picture by Chris Terrill, Uppercut Films). (Below) HMS Manchester's Lynx helicopter at the rough-and-ready Morne Fond St Jacques landing site in St Lucia (picture by ETME Roycroft)





● A sea snake of the Southern Ocean, illustrated in the pages of the journal of Henry Walsh Mahon, surgeon aboard the 6th rate 28-gun HMS Samarang in 1846. Dr Mahon notes that this or a similar snake "bit an officer of the HMS Woolf who died within a few hours."

Doctor at sea – but little to laugh about

A SEVEN-FOOT worm, a voluptuous sailor, aggressive walrus and an Eskimo skull – not your normal *Navy News* fare.

Nor was it normal fare for the Royal Navy of the 19th Century, hence the meticulous notes made by the medical officers involved.

And it is the journals of these men, and hundreds of their colleagues, which have been catalogued and placed online by the National Archives in a project supported by the Wellcome Trust, a charitable foundation which seeks to improve human health.

More than 1,000 such journals are included in the project – ADM101 series – covering HM ships, hospitals, naval brigades, shore parties and emigrant and convict ships from the period 1793 to 1880.

Through extensive cataloguing, the records can be searched by the name of the medical officer, the patient, the ship or the illness or ailment.

But the officers did not confine themselves to medical matters alone – there are also watercolours,

sketches, hand-drawn maps, plans of ships and thumbnail guides to the exotic peoples and places visited, from pristine landscapes now long-forgotten to sea snakes.

The basic canvas is that of ship-board life, onto which the surgeons add colour and shade.

Clearly a Royal Navy ship was a dangerous place to be, whether facing the guns of the enemy or not, with tales of mutiny, dissent, gunfights and the inevitable courts martial, much of the mayhem being caused by drunkenness, according to William Warner, surgeon of HMS Ville de Paris on Channel service in 1813-14.

The natural world proved just as dangerous, as HMS Griper found on her voyage of discovery off the North American continent in 1824.

Assistant Surgeon William Leyson gave details of encounters with native Inuit people – at one point the sloop's First Lieutenant "procured a female eskimaux head for a grave" for closer study.

Griper led something of a charmed life – on occasions she was nearly lost in ice storms and fierce gales, and for almost a month in September Mr Leyson noted that the crew never considered themselves safe, for much of the time believed themselves in great peril and twice resigned themselves to their doom.

Even in the ship's boats the crew of Griper dined with death, on one occasion having to desperately fight off attacks by walrus.

Another ship, HMS Arab, had three men killed by a lightning strike at sea which splintered the main mast in the West Indies in 1799.

One man, at the very top of the mast, was untouched, but the bodies of the victims were kept until evening "to satisfy the credulity and superstition of sailors," said Surgeon Thomas

Tappen (whose favoured approach to bites and stings, whether from scorpion or tarantula, appears to have been the application of rum to the affected part).

A wide range of maladies was observed by surgeons, many gruesome, some extraordinary.

Young Thomas Tapper falls into the latter category – the 18-year-old, a sailor in HMS Dryad, was "taken ill" at Poros in 1828; the surgeon had been "frequently requested" to observe this patient, an excellent swimmer, bathe with the other boys.

The surgeon stated that "Tapper's breasts so perfectly resemble those of a young woman of 18 or 19 that even the male genitals, which are also perfect, do not fully remove the impression that the spectator is not looking on a female."

Combining the extraordinary and the gruesome is the boatswain's mate on the same cruise: "on the act of playing tricks upon one of his messmates, his penis was slit with a knife at about an inch."

A Mr Power, on board Irish emigrant ship Elizabeth, bound for Quebec in 1825, described how 12-year-old Ellen McCarthy was brought to him with a range of symptoms, including a pain in her belly, swollen abdomen, a foul tongue, quick pulse and hot skin.

It was not long before Ellen's mother presented Mr Power with a worm 87 inches long which the child had vomited; she later produced two more, of 13 and 7 inches.

The journal from another ship on the same route in the same year, the John Barry, noted that poor families suffered on board because they were not used to the richness of the food.

Many children died en route, according to the record, which added that in one family, the Regans, illness killed both parents but the three children recovered,

finding themselves orphans in a foreign land.

The tragedy of mass-infection is also covered; Staff Surgeon Godfrey Goodman's journal of his voyage with HMS Dido in 1875 discussed the measles epidemic which was possibly brought to Fiji by a party of rulers returning home in Dido after a visit to Sydney, Australia, where the disease was rife.

With high-level meetings between chieftains held within days of the party's return, the disease spread rapidly and is thought to have killed 40,000 people – almost a third of the population of Fiji.

Many illnesses baffled the medics – but some were spotted straight away, such as the one presented by convict Thomas Wyld on board His Majesty's male convict ship Albion in May 1828, bound for New South Wales.

Surgeon Thomas Logan's reaction to the claim of 'vertigo' was: "Suspected to be a sham. *Medicina expectans* [wait and see...]"

Regimes on board convict ships varied enormously, depending on the master and ship's company.

The John Barry – quite possibly the same vessel used to transport emigrants to Canada, as mentioned earlier – was a floating vision of hell in 1821, according to the observations of Surgeon and Superintendent Daniel McNamara.

Quarrels, simmering unrest and mutinies festered throughout the voyage, one man was flogged for disobedience, others get drunk and threaten to fire on unarmed men, one man is arrested trying to foment insurrection, while another was arrested after several men were shot, apparently while lying in their beds.

All the miscreants were guards – McNamara described the prisoners as "well-behaved and pay[ing] great attention", while their guards were "irregular in their conduct and almost mutinous."

Just a year later, William Rae, on the Eliza, also heading for New South Wales, outlined a very different scenario.

"Last evening several of the prisoners (amateurs), in testimony of the gratitude which they felt for the liberty they had hitherto enjoyed and the various indulgences which had been granted to them since their embarkation, entertained the



● Another illustration by Henry Walsh Mahon, showing the effects of disease on a prisoner on board convict ship Barrosa in 1841-2

officers with the performance of the play *Rob Roy*," said Mr Rae.

He also recalled how the keys to the ship's prison were lost when the second mate fell overboard.

"Last night, about 8pm, the deck being wet and slippery from rain, Mr R Bowen, the second mate of the ship with the prison keys, slipped and fell overboard [and was lost at sea]," he noted.

"This morning the prison locks were picked on account of the keys having been lost."

Mr Rae further suggested that spare sets of keys might be handy...

In addition to the words and the illustrations of newly-discovered places, people, flora and fauna, some surgeons also included beautifully-crafted and detailed sketches of the scars, marks and symptoms of numerous diseases.

Bruno Pappalardo, Naval Records Specialist at the National Archives, said: "Medical officers serving in the Royal Navy were required to submit detailed records of the health and treatment of those under their care in the form of journals, which are probably the most significant collection of records for the study of health and medicine at sea for the 19th Century."

For details on what is held in the archive and how it can be accessed, see www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/surgeonsatsea/



● Mata'utu Cathedral on Wallis Island, as illustrated in the journal of William Fasken MD, surgeon aboard HMS Fawn. The painting shows the Queen's House and French Cathedral on the island, which lies between Fiji and Samoa, in 1862

Archaic and relevant



THE log books of Royal Navy ships from a century ago are being scoured in a bid to help scientists better understand the Earth's climate.

These books contain a wealth of meteorological and historical observations, and it is hoped that members of the public will help with the mammoth task of transcribing information of note.

Visitors to OldWeather.org, which launched in mid-October, will be able to retrace the routes taken by any of 280 Royal Navy ships, including historic vessels such as HMS Caroline, the last survivor of the 1916 Battle of Jutland still afloat (pictured left).

By transcribing information about weather, and any interesting events, from images of each ship's log book, web volunteers will help scientists to build a more accurate picture of how our climate has changed over the past century, as well as adding to our knowledge of British history.

"These naval log books contain an amazing treasure trove of information, but because the entries are handwritten they are incredibly difficult for a computer to read," said Dr Chris Lintott of Oxford University, one of the team behind the OldWeather.org project.

"By getting an army of online human volunteers to retrace these voyages and transcribe the information recorded by British sailors we can relive both the climate of the past and key moments in naval history."

Dr Peter Stott, Head of Climate Monitoring and Attribution at the Met Office, said: "Historical weather data is vital because it allows us to test our models of the Earth's climate: if we can correctly account for what the

weather was doing in the past, then we can have more confidence in our predictions of the future.

"Unfortunately, the historical record is full of gaps, particularly from before 1920 and at sea, so this project is invaluable."

OldWeather.org forms a key part of the International ACRE Project, which is recovering past weather and climate data from around the world and bringing them into widespread use.

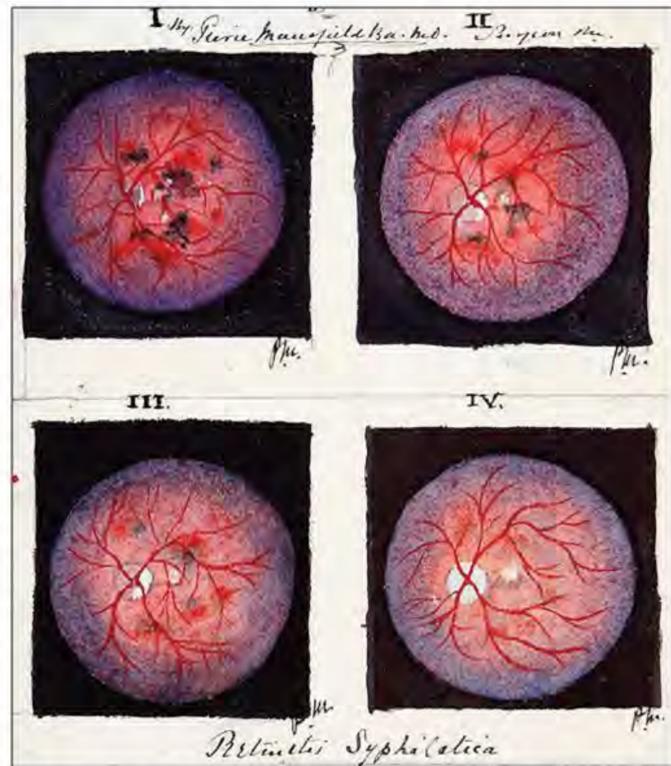
Most of the data about past climate comes from land-based weather monitoring stations which have been systematically recording data for over 150 years.

The weather information from the ships at OldWeather.org, which spans the period 1905-1929, effectively extends this land-based network to 280 seaborne weather stations traversing the world's oceans.

The 'virtual sailors' visiting OldWeather.org are rewarded for their efforts by a rise through the ratings from cadet to captain of a particular ship according to the number of pages they transcribe.

But it isn't just gaps in the weather records that the team hope to fill but gaps in the history books too – OldWeather.org is teaming up with naval historians in an effort to add to our knowledge of the exploits of hundreds of RN vessels and the thousands of men who served on them.

Ships covered by the project range from the well-known – such as HMS Invincible, which was blown up at the Battle of Jutland in 1916 with the loss of most of her ship's company – to the more modest, such as river gunboats HMS Gnat, HMS Mantis and HMS Moth, which patrolled the Rivers Tigris and Euphrates in a military expedition to Iraq.



● Watercolour illustrations of the eyes of Pte Christopher Walters RM, serving in the wooden screw sloop HMS Raccoon at the Cape of Good Hope in 1868. The patient was suffering retinitis syphilitica, an inflammation of the retina, resulting from syphilis, and ship's surgeon Dr Pierce Mansfield, in his medical and surgical journal, records his progress from February 13 (figure I) to March 5 (figure IV), when he was deemed well

New pins for life at the sharp end

THE men at the sharp end of the nation's defences have been formally recognised at a ceremony in Scotland.

Around 500 serving sailors who help maintain the UK's Continuous At Sea Deterrent were awarded patrol pins by Prince William – in his role as Commodore in Chief Submarines – at Clyde Naval Base, home of the Royal Navy's ballistic nuclear missile 'bombers'.

Every serving man who has sailed on a deterrent patrol for more than 30 days is eligible for



a silver pin – or recognition badge – while those who have completed 20 or more patrols have earned the gold version (pictured above).

And 20 patrols is a considerable commitment – when associated training and exercising is taken into account, that could add up to eight years below the surface.

Rear Admiral Mark Anderson,

said: "While the individual details of these prolonged and demanding missions must remain classified, each patrol confirms the abilities and resilience of a deterrent force vital to the defence of this nation and our close allies."

"Such patrols are conducted in complete isolation and usually at long distances from home, without the benefit of any form of external support."

"The crews are not permitted to tell their families where they are going or where they have been, and deployment and return dates cannot be disclosed."

"Radio silence means that for the duration of the patrol there is no outgoing communication with the outside world, including families."

"This discipline means that in addition to separation from their families, those on a deterrent patrol also have to tolerate extreme isolation from their loved ones."

"This award provides recognition of their great endeavours, professional skill, personal sacrifice and exceptional service in the maintenance of a Continuous At Sea Deterrent."

He added: "This award is also testimony to the commitment of the families the submariners leave behind."

The nuclear deterrent has been in the hands of the Navy for more than 40 years since Polaris superseded the RAF's Blue Steel stand-off missile.

The current Vanguard-class

boats – Vanguard, Victorious, Vigilant and Vengeance, armed with Trident missiles – have never missed a second of their round-the-clock task since taking over from the Resolution-class boats.

The 16,000-tonne leviathans are close to the size of an aircraft carrier yet are all but silent, their location revealed to neither RN or allied units.

Since the programme began with the deployment of HMS Resolution on June 15 1968, more than 300 such patrols have been carried out, and one of the four bombers is always on duty somewhere deep in the ocean.

The crews, of up to 130 men, work six hours on and six hours off, with every single sailor having responsibilities that are crucial to a patrol that could last for more than three months.

The official patrol pin is only being issued to serving personnel, and details of eligibility and how to obtain a pin are contained in RNTM 074/10.

The temporary memorandum does, however, recognise that there will also be demand from former deeps, and there is an assumption that such veterans would be able to obtain non-Service pins through naval tailors or dealers in memorabilia.

The patrol pin, which must always be worn in conjunction with the Dolphins, is based on an image of HMS Resolution, with a Polaris missile, wreathed in bands of electrons – to represent nuclear power – superimposed.



● Prince William presents patrol pins to ratings during the ceremony at Clyde Naval Base
Picture: PO(Phot) Ian Arthur RNR



● Trident boat HMS Victorious on the Clyde
Picture: AB Will Haigh

ISLAND NATION OFFICIAL NAVY NEWS AND ROYAL NAVY CALENDAR 2011

ON SALE NOW



This year our new combined Navy News and Official Royal Navy calendar for 2011 celebrates our Nation's affinity with the sea. For centuries our mariners have ploughed the ocean waves that surround this tiny island and the tradition goes on with today's Royal Navy. This calendar contains terrific images of ships, submarines, helicopters and fighter aircraft together with sailors and Royal Marines doing what they do best – protecting our Island Nation

£8.99 UK inc P&P

£12.99 EU & O/Seas inc P&P

Please allow 28 days for delivery

Cheques payable to "Eight Days a Week Ltd" to accompany orders.

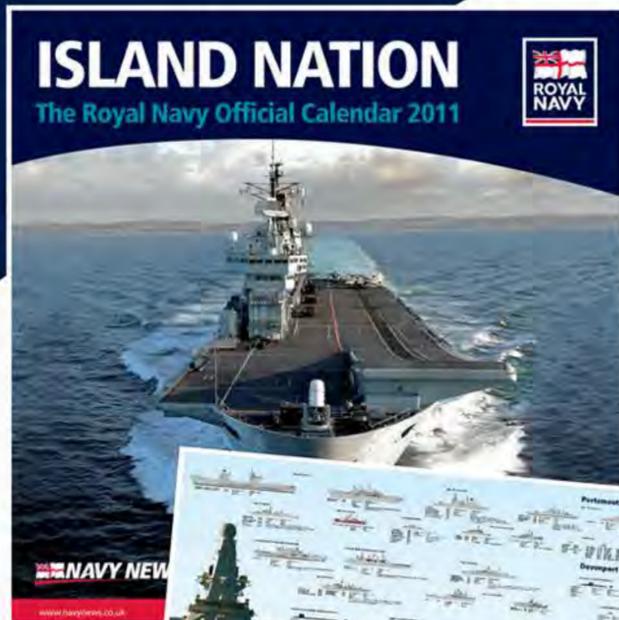


For orders outside the UK, payment can be made by Cheque/International Money Order in £ Sterling and drawn on a UK Bank.

to order simply phone 0121 333 1553 or write to:

2011 Navy News/Royal Navy Calendar Offer, Alltrade, 2 Ringway Business Park, Richard Street, Birmingham B7 4AA

Buy online at www.navynews.co.uk



INCLUDES SHIPS OF THE FLEET POSTER





STAND-BY

THERE are advantages to living in Gosport.

To be sure, there's no railway station, no cinema any more, nor hospital at Haslar, and a trip on the A32 at rush hour possesses all the joy of watching an autopsy.

But if you were walking down the shingly beach at Browdown overlooking the sheltered waters of Stokes Bay at, say, 2pm on Thursday October 28 2010, then you'd have been treated to the panoply of amphibious fire power the Royal Navy and Royal Marines can bring to bear when asked.

There were landing craft. There were raiding craft. There were 70 Royal Marines Commandos storming ashore with SA80 rifles at the ready. There was a Challenger 2 tank courtesy of the Army (but ferried ashore courtesy of 6 Assault Squadron Royal Marines). There was two rather large assault ships (HMS Albion and RFA Largs Bay). Further out to sea the guns of

HM Ships Kent and Chatham barked, the tiny patrol boat HMS Tracker made a nuisance of herself. Overhead buzzed Merlins and Sea Kings, while Harrier jump jets put in some of their final public appearances.

All in all, not a bad show... However good the good folk of Gosport are, this was not laid on for their benefit. The beach assault at Browdown was the climax of four days of demonstrations laid on by the Senior Service for its junior counterparts, VIPs, industry leaders and foreign guests.

Most of the 350 or so spectators hailed from the Advanced Command and Staff Course at Joint Services Command and Staff College - which has traditionally given this week of demonstrations the name 'Staff College Sea Days'.

But not any more. No, now it's a Maritime Combat Power Visit. It's also returned to the Solent after several years of being run in and around Plymouth.

Despite the change of name and change of location, the aim of the 'visit' is to give middle-ranking Army and Royal Air Force leaders an insight into what the Royal Navy does day-to-day (replenishments at sea, main gun, Minigun and machine-gun firings, helicopter transfers, Merlins ping-pong for submarines, warships fending off suicide bombers - the latter role played by HMS Tracker - then fending off attacks by Hawk jets) to the more complicated art of synchronising an air-sea assault.

It's not all action, however, for the staff college 'students': they also spent a day in the dockyard touring warships and receiving briefings from Royal Navy personnel on the Service's global missions, not least from the crew of Ark Royal, whose ship is about to pass into history.

"The students are lectured at Shrivenham about the various assets that each of the Services





FOR ACTION

has, but nothing beats standing in the hangar or on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier to start to fully understand just what this ship can do," Ark's Commanding Officer Capt Jerry Kyd stressed.

Sadly, Ark was alongside for the duration of the 'combat power visit'. It was left to HMS Albion to choreograph the final act.

At 1.56pm precisely (H-Hour minus four) two Harriers of 800 Naval Air Squadron – perhaps the last time Naval jump jets would work with RN warships – screamed low over Browdown, triggering two simulated 1,000lb

bomb explosions on the beach.

This was immediately followed by a barrage from Kent's 4.5in gun – simulations again throwing up explosions on the beach (it would be a tad dangerous to hurl high explosives for real at Gosport...).

With the preparatory bombardment complete, H-hour itself saw the first wave of landing craft from 6 ASRM swarm on to the beach and the assault on the enemy positions – manned by Initial Fleet Time Officer Cadets (*best use for them – Ed*).

When the cadets were neutralised and Browdown secured, it was time for the

landing craft to bring kit ashore: Vikings, Scimitars, Spartans (the armoured troop carriers rather than Greeks in loincloths...) and the crowd-pleaser, a Challenger 2 main battle tank, while two Jungly Sea Kings from 845 NAS dropped loads and troops on to the shingle.

And thus was the Battle of Browdown over.

The last act of the 'invasion' was to ferry the guests ashore by landing craft so that they could inspect the vehicles and weaponry used in the demonstration – and chat with the men and women operating it.



Remote-controlled future

TODAY the Royal Navy relies on its flotilla of specialist Mine Countermeasures Vessels (MCMV) and people, along with some newer technologies, to keep the seas its ships operate in safe from the threat posed by a hidden, silent, dangerous and effective weapon: the sea mine, writes Cdr Martin Mackey, mine warfare desk officer at the MOD.

A demonstration day at Bincleaves on the south coast allowed the Royal Navy to run through its plans to make the best use of unmanned vehicles and future vessels in the fight against these deadly waterborne weapons.

A weapon that has been deployed on countless occasions since it was first used during the American Revolution in 1776.

Its devastating effect has a huge psychological impact on those who have to operate in the face of them caused by the fact that many ships and lives have been lost as a result of sea mines since they came into being.

The US has lost more ships to sea mines than to any other weapon since 1950.

And, the damage caused to US Ships Tripoli and Princeton during the 1991 Gulf War are just two examples of the effect that such a relatively simple, cheap and easily-deployable weapon can have on the most modern yet unsuspecting warship when operating in areas that have not been cleared by the efforts of the mine-warfare experts.

The threat of Iraqi mines was ever-present in the second Gulf War in 2003 as well and – as with 1991 and on many other occasions since the World War 2 – the UK's MCM flotilla and its people were the vanguard of clearing the waters that others relied on.

This position has not changed. Today the RN has four MCMVs deployed in the Gulf operating alongside their US minehunting counterparts.

The threat of sea mines used in a conventional manner by a state or by terrorists will not go away.

Mines are becoming ever more complex and 'clever' and our means to deal with an evolving weapon that is readily available on the open market needs to keep pace.

The requirement for the UK to maintain its own ability to deal with the threat of sea mines was recognised in the Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR).

The SDSR stated that as part of the Future Force 2020 the RN will have: 14 mine counter-measures vessels, based on existing Hunt and Sandown-class ships.

In addition there will be a replacement programme which will also have the flexibility to be used for other roles such as hydrography or offshore patrol.

This will provide a significant level of security and protection of the UK's nuclear deterrent.

Future Force 2020 coincidentally marks the time at which the RN's current flotilla of MCMVs will have started to reach their planned retirement age.

The replacement programme to which the SDSR refers is the £1.4 billion MCM, Hydrographic and Patrol Capability (MHPC) project.

The project aims to manage the change-over from the RN's current ships to something new in the future, while maintaining its ability to deal with the constantly-evolving threat posed by sea mines.

The Hydrographic and Patrol part of the project recognises that whilst the capabilities needed to deliver all three elements of the project will be different, the ship could potentially be one of the same class.

This ship is commonly referred to as the MHP Vessel (previously known as the Future Surface Combatant C3 variant).

Additionally, the MOD's assessment is that there is a number

New technology is bringing whole new approaches to combat the mines that threaten the world's seas and waterways. By the time the next generation of British minehunting ships appear, unmanned underwater and surface vessels could be the tool of choice for blasting away the threat with its operator safely ensconced away from the danger-zone. The Royal Navy is honing its plans for the Future Force 2020, and demonstrated some of its methods at Bincleaves.

of activities that the hydrographic and MCM communities already do that in the future could be fused together.

For example, a considerable amount of peacetime mine countermeasures activity is about mapping the seabed.

The purpose of this is to get a good underwater picture and identify all the contacts that are already there so that if mines are subsequently laid, it will be much easier to detect those mines against a background of contacts that have already been surveyed and identified.

This is survey work, something that the Hydrographic specialists do routinely.

Indeed there is a strong impetus to align the work that both communities do today so that a piece of seabed only needs to be looked at once and the data collected meets the requirements of the different users.

The MHPC project seeks to ensure that data collection sharing by the Navy's minehunters and the wider maritime community can be improved.

With the planned retirement of the current ships expected towards the end of this decade and into the early part of the next, the MOD has been assessing how to replace the MCM capability delivered by its MCMVs and the Fleet Diving Squadron.

The need to find the most efficient, effective, safe and swift means to deal with sea mines in the future has meant a greater emphasis on improved awareness of the operating environment, a greater understanding of risks, and a wider choice of options to tackle the threat.

There are a number of concepts the MOD is considering that are expected to meet the demands of future commanders in dealing with mines.

The current frontrunner is one that relies on stand-off; off-board capabilities. The MOD has been considering this method since 2005. It is not alone in looking at it as many other nations are considering similar approach, particularly the US.

The concept relies on the use of unmanned vehicles delivered from a variety of platforms and locations with technology providing certain levels of automation or autonomy in the off-board systems.

Ultimately, when faced with the threat of the sea mine, these systems will keep people and ships out of harm's way whilst the unmanned vehicles detect, identify and destroy the mines.

Much wider areas can be covered by these vehicles than can be achieved by MCMVs, with rapid advancements in technology being the powerhouse behind the changes taking place.

Key to all of this is the ability to provide a commander with improved levels of intelligence and it is this activity where the HM and MCM communities' efforts will be joined up.

The RN is already using unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs) which enables it to meet some of its capability challenges particularly in shallower waters.

Using these unmanned vehicles now also helps safeguard the future by giving operators the opportunity to get their hands on the kit.

To look for mines the Fleet Unmanned Underwater Vehicle Unit (FUUVU), based in Portsmouth, has in its inventory the REMUS 100 and REMUS 600 – very shallow water and recce variants.

Additionally, the Fleet Diving

Squadron also uses the very shallow water REMUS and, when combined with clearance divers, offers the full range of search to destroy functions.

Both these units are supported by members of the hydrography, meteorology and oceanography branch (HM) who, all together, are learning the value of these systems in improving the RN's ability to conduct a number survey and mine neutralisation tasks more effectively.

The Recce vehicle has also been operated from the Hunt-class with plans to deploy from one of the survey ships soon.

On the MCMVs, the prime weapon system used to destroy mines is the Seafox one-shot mine disposal system.

The size and portability of Seafox open the possibility of the system also being operated from boats in the future. Work is currently under way to look at deploying the Seafox rounds from an Unmanned Surface Vehicle (USV).

As well as the equipment already in service, the RN is undertaking concept demonstration work looking at the increased use of off-board unmanned systems particularly in a minefield.

The demonstration day at Bincleaves, Weymouth, allowed the wider utility of unmanned systems to be put on show to a US, Australian and wider MOD audience.

The Littoral UUV, a demonstrator vehicle that can operate both in the open ocean as well as in ports and harbours, was in the water along with one of few vehicles in the world that has the ability to tow an influence minesweeping system.

The Flexible Agile Sweep Technology (FAST) comprises a large glass-reinforced plastic boat, a power pack, navigation systems and the tow modules. It can operate with or without people on board.

Whilst not the final product, what FAST, and in particular the boat, demonstrates is the utility of unmanned boats and vessels.

The unmanned boat is expected to be the work horse of the RN's ability to deal with mines in the future being able to deploy and recover UUVs that will search for the mines as well as the systems that will destroy them – whether by one-shot mine disposal vehicles or by towing influence sweeps and side-scan sonars.

The RN also has a plan to use Unmanned Aerial Vehicles to carry out survey and MCM tasks.

Over the coming few years, the stand-off, off-board concept will be put to the test by the UK.

Recognised as one of the world leaders in MCM and HM, the challenges the UK faces in meeting the capability needs of the future are not unique and it is not alone.

Many nations are facing the same question: do we keep what we have for longer; replace like with like; or go for something completely different?

The UK is working closely with the US, Australia and a number of other nations to answer those complex questions.

Recently the UK and French governments formally agreed to work more closely on defence and security matters with MCM being one area where both nations will join together to assess what MCM systems they need in the future.

All nations dealing with this understand that ships are likely to form just one part of the answer to delivering what needs to be seen in a much wider context: delivering capability.



● Farewell to the minehunter as we know it? HMS Walney (right) decommissioned earlier this year, but her sister ships in the minehunting flotilla are due to be kept busy for the next decade – however the future for minehunting might be remote-controlled or autonomous unmanned vessels (REMUS and Sea Fox are pictured left) operated from ships that combine the minehunting, survey and patrol roles.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan, LA(Phot) Pete Smith, PO(Phot) Ian Arthur RNR

Malaysia medals are presented

MORE than 500 ex-Service personnel gathered at in Portsmouth for two days of medal presentations – further tribute to the efforts of a small team of dedicated volunteers.

The awards being presented were the Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal, instigated by the Malaysian government for veterans who served in operations in Malaya/Malaysia between August 1957 and August 1966.

Early in 2006 Fred Burden, membership secretary of the National Malaya and Borneo Veterans Association (NMBVA) – which campaigned for formal recognition for Britons who had helped Malaysia gain and retain independence – told the Malaysian High Commission (MHC) that he and his wife Annie would also collate and process applications from non-NMBVA members.

Another member of the Association, ex-Pongo Mike Warren (who on occasions served alongside the Royal Marines during his days in the REME) and his wife Bev also offered to help, and they have been working away furiously ever since to ensure everyone eligible for the medal gets one.

A third volunteer, John Simcock, came on board the operation in 2007 and between them the volunteer team has collected more than 28,000 applications.

In order to save on considerable postal costs for sending out medals, recipients are invited to ceremonies staged around the country and overseas.

The Portsmouth event saw 520 people congregate at the Royal Maritime Club in Queen Street, where a five-strong delegation from the MHC, led by Brig Gen Othman Jamal, Military Advisor to the Malaysian High Commission in London, present the medals to veteran from all three Services.

The Portsmouth event was put together in its entirety by Mike and Bev Warren, entailing many hours on the phone to hundreds of potential recipients in addition to initiating and finalising arrangements for the venue.

With Portsmouth finished, the couple could turn their attention to Bristol, where a further 500-600 people are expected to pick up their medals in a two-day event at the beginning of this month.

But the finishing line is in sight – Mike, a member of the Royal Marines Association Blackpool branch, believes there are now fewer than 6,000 outstanding, a number which will have fallen again by Christmas.

If anyone believes they are entitled to the medal, they can check qualifying criteria at www.veterans-uk.info/medals/pingat.html

www.nmbva.co.uk gives details and dates of future presentations, and Mike Warren can be contacted at mikewarren44@yahoo.com

The Devonport experience

A survey of matelots based in the West Country has helped shape the new 'Devonport Experience' initiative.

Commissioned by the Naval Base Commander, the Commodore of the Devonport Flotilla and Babcock, the survey quizzed more than 100 people from 11 ships and submarines on all aspects of facilities and services.

Among the strengths identified was engineering support.

And regular gripes are being addressed – in the short-term new signs have appeared, along with bus shelters, smoking shelters, bike racks and a mobile catering van.

In the longer term the initiative should see other improvements brought in, such as better connectivity alongside, including email services.

Chatham remembers loss of Jervis Bay

ALMOST 200 people gathered in Chatham to mark the anniversary of the heroic loss of a wartime convoy escort.

On November 5 1940, as she was shepherding convoy HX84 eastwards across the Atlantic, armed merchant cruiser HMS Jervis Bay encountered German pocket battleship Admiral Scheer.

Jervis Bay was a converted ocean liner, hastily armed with World War 1-vintage 6in guns, and had sole responsibility for 37 merchant ships, but her CO, Capt Edward Fegen, knew she was hopelessly outgunned.

His only hope of saving her charges was to engage the Admiral Scheer, so Jervis Bay turned and steamed straight at the German, opening fire once clear of the convoy.

Admiral Scheer responded, wrecking the cruiser's bridge and shattering Fegen's arm.

And she continued to pound the stricken Jervis Bay, pounding her superstructure and holing her hull in several places, starting numerous fires.

The White Ensign was shot away, but a member of the crew nailed it back up as the mortally-wounded ship continued the one-sided battle for three hours.

By the time the Admiral Scheer could turn her attention to the convoy it had scattered, and the German warship caught up with and sank just six merchantmen.

By this time the hulk of the Jervis Bay had sunk over 700 miles off Iceland, taking her captain and 185 of his crew with him.

Of the 68 survivors, three more died after being rescued by a Swedish ship which found them.

Fegen was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross.

Jervis Bay, which spent 17 years shuttling passengers and cargoes between the UK and Australia before the war, had been allocated to the Chatham Division.

So it was appropriate that the ship should take pride of place at the new No.1 Smithery facility in Chatham Historic Dockyard.

The group of 180 people, most of whom were directly related to those who lost their lives 70 years ago, attended a commemorative service in the Royal Dockyard Church, organised by the Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust (CHDT) and led by the Rt Rev Dr Stephen Venner, Bishop to the Forces.

They then moved on to the renovated metal workshop for lunch and a reception, held in the gallery which contains a large-scale model of the Jervis Bay.

Mrs Iris Bagnall, sister of ship's carpenter Arthur Desborough, who died in the encounter, said: "It is heartwarming to know that they are being remembered."

Cdre Peter Lockwood, Head of the Australian Defence Staff in London, said: "The service was especially poignant to me in that it remembered a ship and her crew who hold a special place in the hearts of many Australians, both



● Relatives of sailors from HMS Jervis Bay gather around the model and display of the ship in No.1 Smithery at Chatham Historic Dockyard

past and present.

"Indeed, some of today's Australians have parents and grandparents who immigrated to Australia between the wars in the Jervis Bay and in her sister ships and her loss at the time, albeit in such courageous circumstances, was greatly mourned 'down under'."

Capt (N) Harry Harsch, Canadian Defence Liaison Staff London, said: "It was both a great honour and a sincere pleasure for me to represent Canada at this special and very moving event."

"There are many Canadian connections to the remarkable

story of HMS Jervis Bay, especially the 25 Canadians and Newfoundlanders who were part of her ship's company – 13 of who died that day and 12 who were among the 65 who survived.

"And, of course, there is also the fact that the convoy was one of the countless which sailed from Halifax to sustain the Allied war effort."

"As well, during the summer of 1940, just a few months prior to her loss, Jervis Bay refitted in St John, New Brunswick, where the name Jervis Bay lives on in a memorial to the action in the Ross Memorial Park, as well as in the

Jervis Bay Memorial Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion."

Bill Ferris, chief executive of the CHDT, said the event was "not only a fitting and memorable day, but demonstrates brilliantly how museum objects such as the magnificent model of the ship so prominently on display in our new No.1 Smithery, can stimulate real emotion and community engagement."

"The event would never have happened without the focus on this object and the story that it tells – we were incredibly proud to host it."

Reservists tackle high ropes rig

TACKLING the new high ropes training apparatus at HMS Raleigh can be a little intimidating.

So why not up the ante and throw a VIP onlooker into the scenario?

Prince Michael of Kent, Rear Admiral Royal Naval Reserves, spent a day at the Torpoint training establishment, watching Reservists from Plymouth unit HMS Vivid using the high ropes (as featured in November's *Navy News*).

Although primarily for the use of new recruits on the nine-week basic training course, the 13m-high installation can be used by other courses and units.

The equipment provides students with a range of challenges, from crossing ropes and walkways suspended between poles to climbing ropes and ladders – all the time safely attached to the facility by a safety harness.

Capt Steve Murdoch, the Commanding Officer of Raleigh, said: "The high ropes course is a valuable addition to the first-class training facilities we have here at Raleigh."

"It allows us to develop and test the physical and mental robustness of recruits while exposing them to controlled stress."

"We are very pleased that His Royal Highness found time to visit HMS Raleigh and for the opportunity to show him the wide variety of training conducted at the establishment."

During his visit Prince Michael also met a group of Royal Navy recruits tackle the assault course.

Having been met by a royal guard of honour, the Prince saw more ceremonial in the form of the passing-out parade, where he was the VIP inspecting officer.

Some 600 sailors took part in the parade, including almost 60 recruits who were marking the successful completion of their basic training.

Also on the parade ground were 14 Reservists from across the UK who had completed their own two-week basic training course, building on training and drill instruction at their parent units by immersing them in a Naval environment to develop team-working skills and hone their knowledge of Naval procedures, standards and practices.

Submariners visit Islay

TRIDENT submarine HMS Vanguard has strengthened its ties with Islay with a visit by members of the Port crew.

The bomber team met local charities on the island – known as the Queen of the Hebrides – took part in a 'work in the community' gardens project and had a meal with island councillors.

They also somehow managed to find a little time to visit two of the island's eight whisky distilleries...

A visit was also made to Derby at the invitation of the city's Submariners Association branch.

The deeps attended a Trafalgar Night dinner and a remembrance service at the National Arboretum.

There was also a tour of the Rolls-Royce plant which produces the latest Pressurised Water Reactor, PWR2 Core H, which powers the Astute-class submarines.

Deep Blue divers in the Red Sea



DEEP Blue might have been the title, but ten trainee frogmen found a rainbow in the waters of the Red Sea on a diving expedition to Egypt.

Ten members of University RN Units (URNUs) – nine from Oxford and one from London – were joined by an individual from the Northern Diving Group on Exercise Deep Blue, part of the RN's Adventurous Training programme, and organised by OC Giles Richardson.

Split into two groups, one for the six beginners, the other for those looking to build on their experience, the divers spent a week on the MY Liberty.

"The dives were spectacular!" said CPO 'Dan' Maskell, Oxford URNU coxswain.

"The brilliantly-coloured reefs were packed with fish, eels and other marine life."

"A personal highlight was watching a metre-long turtle munching on coral, quite unperturbed by our

● The Exercise Deep Blue divers pose for the camera in the Red Sea

presence, and plenty of lionfish, stingrays, moray eels, stonefish and scorpion fish were also sighted."

The teams managed a number of night dives, played with a school of dolphins, and had a look round the wreck of the British supply ship Thistlebom, whose holds are packed with wartime supplies including Jeeps, armoured vehicles and two steam trains.

Before they left the site the divers held a minute's silence in tribute to the five RN sailors and four merchant seamen who died on October 6 1941.

It wasn't all water-based – there were lectures, practical demonstrations and exams on the Liberty.

But it all came together in a final dive on the Egyptian minesweeper El Minya, sunk in 30m of water outside the harbour during the Six Days War.

At the end of the exercise the six beginners had qualified as sports divers, a clearance diver had achieved the same status, another sport diver completed her qualification and two dive leaders were closer to their Advanced Diver qualifying dives.



● Training in drill at HMS Raleigh in the 1970s

Apple-pie order at Raleigh

REGRETTABLY Andrew Lucas has the wrong Andrew in his letter (*Legendary Men, November*) as to my best knowledge Lt David 'Shovelface' Andrews retired some time ago, with his last job being that of security officer at HMS Drake.

As a young killick I served with him at HMS Raleigh, where he truly was a legend in his own lifetime, master of the parade ground and all areas within shouting distance of it.

Woe betide those who failed to salute him from at least 200 yards on his marches to and from the drill shed and the wardroom, and certainly woe betide those who failed to march correctly after lunch... "the apple should be clasped into the left side, right arm swinging shoulder height!"

I should know, for it was I who

carried said apple in a slovenly manner.

But my favourite Lt Andrews' dit?

I was duty killick some time in 1981, in the goldfish bowl (QM's caboosh) with the QM and BM at around 1945 when I walked Lt Andrews as Officer of the Day: "Right Quartermaster, rounds are complete and I'm just off over the wardroom, I don't want to be disturbed unless the anchor starts dragging or we lose station with HMS Fisgard."

What a star! They don't make them like that anymore.

— Cdr M T Harris, HMS Raleigh, Torpoint, Cornwall

JACKPOT!



A £25 Amazon voucher to the letter which amuses, impresses or enlightens us the most.

Ed's literary pretensions

THANK YOU for publishing my letter *Onward Christian Soldiers* (November)

But what did the editor mean by writing "...but I suppose we prefer to bow to the rising sun"?

I've asked my naval officer son if this is a well-known naval phrase or saying, but he said not.

I can hazard a guess, but would rather like to know exactly what the editor meant?

— Chris Bond, Poole, Dorset

It was not a reference to the Japanese flag (pace, another reader) but a quote from Jane Austen's great Naval

novel *Persuasion*:

"Don't talk to me about heirs and representatives," cried Charles. "I am not one of those who neglect the reigning power to bow to the rising sun."

Mr Bond wondered why we don't pen valedictories to senior people at the end of their illustrious careers.

We tend to write about newly-appointed ones instead, hence the reference to bowing to the rising sun.

I admit it was obscure, but I do like to get Jane Austen into Navy News where possible — Man Ed

Cleopatra, queen, ship and myth

IN ONE of October's letters, there was a question about HMS Cleopatra being different from the other Leander-class frigates which were all named after mythical people.

In mythology, Cleopatra was the daughter of Idas and Marpessa and married to Meleager. Hence fully mythological along with her sister ships.

Presumably some of the various late Egyptian queens called Cleopatra were named from that mythological origin.

I always assumed that many of the Leander-class frigates actually took their names from the World War 2 light cruisers, Cleopatra being the flagship of Admiral Vian at the Second Battle of Sirte, where they held off an Italian battleship.

— Chris Sergeant, Bessacarr, Doncaster



Don't pin your hopes on recognition

I WAS surprised to read about a deterrent patrol pin.

As an ex-bomber rating of 12 years we were told that no Cold War medal or any recognition for Polaris submariners would be struck.

Unseen, undetected and forgotten, where now after doing 30 days you get recognition; we were constantly playing cat-and-mouse with the Russians, who are now our friends.

So will we forgotten 'deeps' get anything for our service during the Cold War, or will we remain as we were in service, 'undetected and unseen'?

— Graham 'Bungy' Edwards, Manchester

Unwelcome cuts

THE RECENT Defence Review was, frankly, a disgrace, though sadly far from being the first such.

If the first duty of any Government is the 'safety of the realm' as the politicians are always, rightly, telling us, then the MOD should not have been included in the review at all.

How can national defence be subjected to such ridiculous reductions? Yes, the nation has to suffer cuts but doesn't anyone in the Government realise that our enemies don't subscribe to that idea, and are delighted when we engage in the 'slash and burn' activities?

They are more likely to attack when they see a nation lowering its guard — and that's what most of the reviews I have witnessed since the end of WW2 have done.

Not least when, in 1981, John Nott's Defence Review meant that we entered the Falklands War with our newest aircraft carrier already sold to Australia and the other teetering on the brink of being disposed of.

It was quite crazy and not only did we pay the penalty but that penalty for many Servicemen meant losing their lives.

The idea that we can manage without seaborne power is utterly ludicrous. I heard

a discussion chaired by Jeremy Paxman in which the same John Nott appeared.

He was still against carriers despite the near disaster he created in 1981 by trying to get rid of them.

From this it follows that Defence Ministers should always, always be people who are fully behind the Armed Services, as Dr Fox the current incumbent appears to be, leaving attempts to destroy them to others in Cabinet, or perhaps by appointments of 'advisors' to undermine the work of the actual Defence Secretary.

We should also beware of 'defence commentators/reviewers' etc, who have emerged from the woodwork recently, particularly in that section of our press which is pacifist and/or liberal with a small 'l' by persuasion, whose main aim is to undermine the strength and morale of our Armed Forces and reduce Britain's defence to that of a castrated mouse.

— John Gilbert, by email

...I CANNOT believe the powers-that-be are scrapping our flagship the Ark Royal after all the money they spent on her refit.

This has got to be the first time in English Naval history a serving flagship has come to this end. Lord Nelson would turn in his grave.



● HMS Ark Royal photographed soon after the announcement of the SDSR by PO(Phot) Ray Jones

opinion

CONGRATULATIONS to Lt Catherine Ker, who has become the Navy's first female Mine Clearance Diver.

Clearance diving is a tough and risky job which requires courage and a cool head, in addition to physical fitness and specialist skills.

The selection tests and qualifying courses are among the most demanding in the Navy, and we can be sure that no concessions were made to Lt Ker.

It was only earlier this year that the ban was lifted on women training as clearance divers.

There were several female ship's divers when that branch existed, but clearance diving was banned on medical grounds, as it was thought females were at greater risk of

decompression illness than men.

Once studies by the Institute of Naval Medicine concluded that was not the case, the door was opened to women to apply. Lt Ker was the first to go through and has set a great example.

Where she blazed a trail, other women will surely follow, until their choice of specialisation is no longer remarkable or newsworthy. Now Lt Ker will join the MCM1 Squadron in Scotland as the operations officer responsible for detecting and disposing of sea mines.

We wish her well in her career as a clearance diver. The course is famously tough, but it is good that the bar to success is no longer based on gender.

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD



NAVY NEWS

Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

December 2010 no.677: 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

Fax 023 9273 4448

General enquiries and

archives: 023 9272 5061/5064

CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGS



Picture: Imperial War Museum

Flying blind in the Swordfish?

WHO decided that an observer was redundant in the best three-man crew of the pride of the Fleet Air Arm?

I have studied the diagram of the Swordfish 'Stringbag' (November) and can see no trace of any sign of either the presence of this rather indispensable crewmember or of any provision to put him in the aircraft at all!

The TAG also seems to have not a lot of radio equipment, and certainly must have been in need

of tender care on landing, since he appears not to have been provided with much in the way of cockpit comforts, such as a seat.

My recollection of past service with this wonderful piece of RN naval aviation history is somewhat at variance with your otherwise well-presented diagram.

Lt Cdr Dennis Jones (Still proud to designate myself thus, despite Mr Holloway's displeasure), Shandon, Helensburgh

A nice little number

WITH regards to *Points* (November) about the official numbers for ratings, HMS Northwood RNR was commissioned in 1957 and the official numbers for the ratings started from NH1.

The Wrens had the prefix NHW. This system continued until 1977 when the unit was brought into line with the RN.

When I joined in 1975 I was NH506. If NHW300 happens to read this letter I send her my fond regards, but do not tell the wife.

— Brian J Bloom, ex CPO Ops HQ RNR Shenley, Herts

...I TOO joined the RN in 1966, my number was P/097249 and in the 1970s this changed to P/

D097249R and we were told this was to computerise us for pay.

— Hugh McFadden

The original letter asked about suffixes to official numbers.

A colleague in Naval Command HQ told us: "My understanding is that the letter at the end of pre-JPA official numbers is a check letter based on some form of mathematical algorithm of the digits in the official number."

"This served to validate the official number and was also supposedly designed to help prevent the unscrupulous from attempting to 'recruit' imaginary personnel into the Service and arranging to pocket their pay!" — Man Ed

We miss Flash Harry

I HAVE every sympathy with Lt Cdr Lester May (letters, October) who missed the *Sea Songs* from the Last Night of the Proms, but what else could you expect from an American conductor?

He's not really likely to glorify Britain, is he? Why a British conductor could not be found I do not know.

The Last Night has not been the same since 'Flash' Sargent died!

However, all is not lost. The entire suite is on a CD, *Spirit of Discovery*, published by The Gift of Music, no CCL CDG1054.

— George Thompson, ex-PO Radar Mechanic, HMS Nelson 1946-48, Northampton

Fireman's overcoat kept me warm

DURING the early 1970s I was seconded to the Engineering Wing of RAF Leuchars, in Scotland.

As a Fleet Chief Petty Officer one of my duties was to join the Air Force WOs' 'duty snow control officer' roster.

When called out we supervised the civilian snow clearance teams to keep the runways clear.

My naval raincoat seemed not up to the task on those bitter cold nights. I had always regretted the loss of the overcoat for non-commissioned officers.

On promotion to WO, the Army and Air Force were measured up for officer-style uniforms. The Navy did it on the cheap, requiring us to remove the chief's buttons, repair the holes and fix the coat of arms in place, still retaining the old uniform. I presume that is still the case today.

Sitting in my office one day, I was browsing through the latest 'slops' list covering the range of uniforms and accessories.

To my amazement, there it was — Overcoat, Senior Rate, for the use of.

I was delighted. Off I went to the clothing store at Rosyth, about an hour's drive.

The petty officer behind the counter thought I was joking until I showed him the list.

"Well we ain't got any and they are obsolete," he smugly informed me, but at least he added "sir" at the end. I was not a happy bunny!

Some time later, my wife and I were shopping in Dunfermline. I visited a shop selling ex-military clothing and there I found a brand new ex-Fire Service overcoat in black with silver buttons, epaulettes and a half belt. Perfect.

Replacing the buttons with RN types and slipping 'woolly pulley' WO's logos onto the epaulettes I was all set. Warm, cosy and smart. For the first few weeks, I had to constantly remind the Air Force personnel that I was not entitled to their salute, but that soon stopped.

I can't remember what finally happened to the coat, but nobody ever complained, and it was certainly worthwhile.

— Steve Chinnock, ex-WO, Honiton, Devon

LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.



Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



● The visiting party at Raleigh's sea sense training centre on the River Lynher

Picture: Dave Sherfield (HMS Raleigh)

VIP party tours Raleigh

THE Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall spent a day at HMS Raleigh to see how the Royal Navy turns civilians into sailors.

Lady Mary Holborrow and a number of her deputies met a group of trainees on the second week of their nine-week basic course as they tackled the new high ropes facility.

They also saw how decommissioned minehunter HMS Brecon is used to support training from her berth on the River Lynher, and again the visitors had the chance to talk to trainees *in situ* about their experiences of the Navy thus far.

Also on the agenda for the group was a look at the Damage Repair Unit, and a demonstration of how sailors are trained in fire-fighting techniques.

Capt Steve Murdoch, the Commanding Officer of Raleigh, said: "We were delighted to show Lady Mary and her Deputy Lord Lieutenants the diverse range of training carried out here at HMS Raleigh."

"Basic training is just one part of our business and the visitors were able to see some of the specialist training that we provide in areas such as seamanship to the wider Royal Navy in preparation for worldwide operations."

Milestones celebrated

TWO Observer instructors at Culdrose have reached milestones in their career – though one is some way ahead of the other.

RN Reservist Lt Cdr 'Dicky' Lewis, has clocked up 4,000 flying hours since first climbing aboard an 849 NAS Sea King as an Airborne Early Warning Observer back in the mid-1980s.

He passed the 4,000 mark as an instructor with the same squadron, now flying Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea King Mk 7s.

Lt Serena Davidson, the first female Observer instructor on the training squadron, has just passed her 1,000th hour aloft – and a pretty mixed bag those hours have been, from the jungles of Sierra Leone to the arid plains of Afghanistan.

And Serena was delighted to have celebrated the landmark with Dicky, who was her instructor when she achieved her very first flying hours.

Phoenix makes a difference

A NEW group of Phoenix Project students from Helston Community College have made their first visit to Culdrose to get a taste of life at a naval training establishment.

The youngsters joined an existing group which has been taking part in activities on the air station since February as part of a mentoring programme.

The MAD (Making a Difference) project follows on from the year the young people have spent with the Helston Phoenix Mentoring Team, and as well as activities

Shock to the system for Afghan fledglings

IT IS tough out on the ground in Afghanistan – the troops on patrol richly deserve that much-banded epithet 'hero'.

And it is tough in the air, especially for a Helmand rookie.

Royal Navy helicopter pilot Lt Charlie Talmage was just such a rookie at the start of the summer, when he began his first three-month operational tour to the country.

The 30-year-old officer lived in Camp Bastion, flying his Sea King Mk4 helicopter in and around the Green Zone in Helmand as part of 846 Naval Air Squadron, which with sister squadron 845 NAS, has been operating in Afghanistan for the past three years.

Lt Talmage's journey began with an air of trepidation when he boarded an RAF Tristar aircraft at Brize Norton for the first leg of the journey to Camp Bastion, via Kandahar.

The flight gave plenty of time to consider what lay ahead, trying to understand what sort of environment he would be working in for the next three months.

"Just as you have convinced yourself that you will be able to cope with the pressures ahead, you find yourself putting on helmet and body armour for the final descent into Kandahar," said Lt Talmage.

"There is a tension in the aircraft but everyone soon relaxes when the wheels touch down on the runway."

After a quick connecting flight, Charlie Talmage arrived at Bastion and was straight into three days of briefings on subjects as varied as air traffic control procedures to battlefield hygiene.

For the aircrew it's a welcome relief when they can swap the classroom for the cockpit.



● Lt Charlie Talmage in the cockpit of his Jungly Sea King

"It's why I have been training for four years – to actually do the job which the Junglies have been doing here in Afghanistan for three years," said Lt Talmage.

"But it's a shock to the system the first time you strap into the aircraft with the cockpit temperature above 50°C."

The first flights Lt Talmage completed were in-theatre training sorties consisting of day and night dust landings, allowing him to get used to flying the Sea King Mk4 in Afghanistan's challenging environmental conditions.

"Out here you are always flying the aircraft on the edge of its envelope," he said.

"You trust what you have learnt

during operational flying training back home and your confidence is boosted massively by the training sorties."

With training complete, the job begins in earnest.

Lt Talmage found his first few operational flights a real experience.

"It all looks so peaceful from altitude, but when you fly into the patrol bases at low level you can see close-up how professional the ISAF ground troops need to be to go about their daily business of bringing peace to the area," he said.

On average, a Royal Navy Sea King Mk4 pilot will fly about 120 operational hours during a tour,

and will face challenges of landing in confined spaces by day or night, with the potential to lose all visual references as the ochre Afghan dust blows around the cockpit.

"I learnt a lot, both about flying and the problems faced in helping the Afghan government, and have really enjoyed contributing personally to assist the effort on the ground," concluded Lt Talmage.

Whilst in Afghanistan the Sea King Mk 4s come under the command of the Joint Helicopter Force (Afghanistan) (JHF(A)), commanded by Lt Col Paul Tennant of the Army Air Corps.

JHF(A) in turn is part of the Joint Aviation Group (JAG), commanded by Capt Paul Shawcross RN.

And above JAG is the 3rd Marine Aviation Wing (Forward), run by Brig Gen Andrew W O'Donnell Jr USMC – which imparts a strong multinational, multi-Service feel to helicopter operations.

Back in the dark blue world, the Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) consists of five squadrons, four Naval Air Squadrons and a Combat Support Squadron.

The RN/RM CHF, established to operate helicopters afloat or ashore in support of UK forces, flies Sea Kings (845 and 846 NAS and 848 NAS Training Squadron) and Lynx (847 NAS) that specialise in amphibious warfare.

The pilots combine commando combat and survival skills with edge-of-the-seat flying, operating helicopters in extreme climates and conditions, in terrain ranging from the Arctic to tropical jungles.

Their work with Royal Marines and Army units in Borneo in the 1960s earned them the moniker 'Junglies', which current and veteran Junglies covet to this day.



● Abigail Thorn

Trophy has new setting

FOR the past two years, Chappel Church of England primary school in Essex has presented an award for outstanding achievement to a deserving pupil in the final year at the school.

The prize is awarded in memory of Les Sayer, and is given to a pupil who shows fortitude, compassion and strength of character, with or without academic aptitude.

These were the very qualities which made Les Sayer an exceptional individual – a man who started life as a Barnardo's Boy and went on to achieve great things during his life.

Les died at the age of 91 in November 2008.

The winner of the trophy – which features a Swordfish aircraft – in 2010 was Abigail Thorn.

The trophy, donated by the Royal Navy Historic Flight, has until now had no permanent home at the school.

That has now been rectified thanks to the generosity of Colchester building and joinery company A. Barber & Son, who made and installed a trophy cabinet especially for the purpose.

Observers on lookout for litter

A GROUP of Observer students from Culdrose joined a committed group of local civilians to carry out the annual Marine Conservation Society's Beachwatch Litter Survey at Hendra Beach, the east end of Praa Sands.

Part of a national event which has taken place every autumn since 1993, it involves a detailed survey of the rubbish found on some 400 beaches, along with the sources.

The resultant Beachwatch Report is instrumental in focusing the attention of Government, industry and the public on their responsibility to keep the seas and beaches clear of litter.

The Hendra Beachwatch was attended by 39 volunteers, including local residents and members of Helston Baptist Church.

The Observer students split into small groups and skirmished sections of the beach, presenting every 'non-natural' item found to the more experienced 'form-fillers'



● Members of 750 NAS and other volunteers at Hendra Beach

in the group who worked through a complex questionnaire.

A competitive spirit quickly grew and many over-enthusiastic racers for the most interesting pieces of litter ensured the task remained fun and was exhaustive.

The result was clear to see – this year the team removed 45kg, bringing the 12-year total

of rubbish removed to 645.5kg, or well over half a tonne.

The survey recorded over 3,000 items of rubbish, including polystyrene and plastic pieces, plastic nets, rope and line – all particularly hazardous to wildlife – even though the local authorities regularly clean the beach and litter bins are provided.

Catering with class

FROM beginners to those seeking to climb the promotion ladder, students at the Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS) have been awarded prizes to celebrate their achievements.

And members of staff also stepped into the spotlight, including Lt Jeff Wright, who received a commendation for his commitment to training junior officers undertaking their initial logistics officer course.

L/Cpl Mark Starling was the recipient of the first Terry Morris Award for fortitude – the only Royal amongst sailors on the 26-week Defence Chefs course, Mark impressed his instructors, despite no previous knowledge of the subject.

Cdr Nic Dodd, Commandant of the DMLS, said: "It is hugely important that we pay tribute to those staff and students who have achieved excellence, both to recognise their hard work and success and to encourage others to follow their fine example."

The prize-winners were: CH Cole, Std Davis

and Wtr Croston (HMS Montrose), Ch Stoko (Manchester), CH Mason (CHF), Mne Starling (FPG)RM, LCH Parry (St Albans), SC Mbah and LStd Cruickshank (Ark Royal), POCS Brown (Edinburgh), POCS Wiggins, Wtr Booker and Wtr Devereux (Nelson), LWtr Weir and POWtr House (MOD Main Bldg), LSC Francis (York), POSC Morgan (Neptune), S/Lt Gorst and Std Nadakuca (Cumberland), SC Adams (Drake), RFA CH Hartley (RFA Fort George), RFA Catering Assistant McKenna (Bayleaf), RFA Catering Assistant McKillop (Fort Victoria) Logs Walters (Scotia), LCdt Tree (Gravesend SCC Unit), Lt Thombs (Argyll), Lt Castleford (BF Falkland Islands).

Commendations: CPO Cliff (Raleigh), CPO Tilson (DMLS), PO Long (Cornwall), WO Costin (DMLS), Lt Wright (BRNC), Lt Cdr Matthew (DMLS).

■ Navy cooks up a storm – p38

Cornwall fetes 854 aviators

CORNWALL Council has recognised the work of personnel from Culdrose who have just returned from Afghanistan through a special reception at the Council's HQ in Truro.

Welcoming around 70 members of 854 Naval Air Squadron to the reception, Council Chairman Mrs Pat Harvey said: "I am delighted to have the opportunity to welcome such brave and dedicated personnel from RNAS Culdrose to County Hall.

"Everyone in Cornwall is very proud of the role you are playing in helping to protect both the local people and coalition troops in Afghanistan, and I am extremely honoured to be able to host this reception on behalf of the Council."

Men and women from 854 and 857 NAS have been serving at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan since June 2009.

Their role includes gathering vital intelligence and providing surveillance of activities and movements on the ground over large areas of the country.

The squadron, which comprises three aircraft, 26 engineers and 14 aircrew and support staff, flies both the day and night in extremes of weather.

Members of 854 Squadron came back to the UK in July, and have been training prior to their return to Afghanistan this month.

857 link is lost

THE last remaining member of the original 857 Naval Air Squadron has died.

A memorial service was held at Glensalmond College for Peter Adam in early October, with a large turn-out from family, friends and former colleagues.

Peter, who held the Distinguished Flying Cross, flew Avenger aircraft in 857 Squadron, which was disbanded in 1945 at the end of World War 2.

In 1944, aged 21, he flew his Avenger in the raid on Palembang, an attack which earned battle honours for the squadron.

The squadron recommissioned at Culdrose in 2006, and the following year, while 857 was on exercise at RAF Leuchars in Scotland, he visited the squadron and met his modern counterparts.

The current aviators presented Peter with a print depicting one of the squadron's aircraft, the Mk7 ASaC (Airborne Surveillance and Control) Sea King helicopter.

Lt Cheryl Gilbertson met Peter during his visit and said: "He had some wonderful stories about his time in the Fleet Air Arm and his training over the North of Scotland. He told us about landing at remote airfields to confirm his position - I am relieved to say that some of the navigation equipment and techniques used back then have improved considerably!"

Rare bible is presented

ADMIRAL Sir John Jellicoe commanded the Grand Fleet at the Battle of Jutland; it is perhaps a less well-known fact that he founded the Grand Fleet Fund for the benefit of his sailors and Royal Marines and their dependants that went onto become the RNBT.

RNBT's offices at Castaway House in Portsmouth is now home to several RN charities including the Naval, Military & Air Force Bible Society (NMAFBS) that traces its roots back to 1779.

In recognition of the excellent relationships between the charities at Castaway House, NMAFBS Director Lt Cdr Richard Prendergast presented a rare 1914 RN Active Service New Testament, with an introduction by Admiral Jellicoe, to RNBT Chief Executive Cdr Stephen Farrington.

This New Testament is now in a glass case underneath the admiral's portrait in Castaway House.



Talking Turku

WHEN HMS Penzance pitched up in Finland during a recent exercise, the British ambassador took the opportunity to step aboard and meet the ship's company.

Finland was hosting NATO's Northern Coasts 2010 exercise, a large-scale wargame involving ships, submarines, aircraft and other military hardware from a dozen nations.

British ambassador Matthew Lodge visited Turku, on the south-west coast of Finland (pictured left), to catch up with Penzance before the main phase of the exercise got under way, discussing the Sandown-class minehunter's role and her reception in Finland with her CO, Lt Cdr Steve Brown.



● LA(Phot) Ben Sutton

Ben hits the deck running

NAVAL photographers get to ply their trade in a wide range of situations - royal visits, ship ceremonies, exercises, group pictures, sports events, public relations work, technical shots, the list is pretty extensive.

But to do the whole lot in your first three weeks seems a trifle adventurous.

But that was the case for rookie phot Ben Sutton, 24, from Crosby, who joined the team at Clyde Naval Base in early October after three years in weapons engineering, mainly on Type 42 destroyers.

By the end of that month, LA(Phot) Sutton had worked on:

- The launch of HMS Duncan;
- A visit by Prince Michael of Kent;
- The decommissioning of HMS Walney;
- HMS Triumph returning to the Clyde (as featured across the whole of page 6 in our last edition);
- At sea with RFA Fort George;
- Aerial photographs of the naval base;
- Defect work in the studio;
- HMS Neptune Dental Hygiene Week PR shots;
- Briefing photographs for the Strategic Defence and Security Review;
- A visit and presentation by Prince William;
- Group shots for Royal Marines anniversary;
- Two football matches;
- PR shots for Clyde deeps helping a charity;
- Team shots of the Northern Diving Group;
- A cheque presentation at a local hospital.

And that was the abridged version of Ben's schedule...

Schools join with RM band

ROYAL Marines musicians have joined forces with children from the West Country to record Christmas carols and songs.

Five schools were invited to HMS Raleigh to work with the Plymouth band, with each school recording two songs and combining for a rousing rendition of *We Wish You A Merry Christmas*.

RM Director of Music, Capt Richard Long, said that with such a busy schedule, it was a fantastic opportunity to take a break from normal duties, which can include its secondary role undertaking medical and security tasks in support of operations in areas such as Afghanistan.

The recording took place in the Royals' own studio within the band complex.

The five schools involved were Carbeile Juniors, Torpoint Infant and Nursery, Fourlanesend Community Primary in Cawsand, Millbrook and Anthony Schools.

Julie Simpson, headteacher of Anthony School, said they planned to obtain a number of blank CDs to allow every child who took part to have a copy of the recording.

Soap star returns to his Naval roots

YES, that is Barry from *EastEnders*. In No.1s. At HMS Raleigh (the humongous sign is a bit of a giveaway...).

'Barry' - real name Shaun Williamson - passed out of the Torpoint training establishment back in 1984 as a teenager when a career in the Fleet Air Arm beckoned...

...and a quarter of a century later he returned to Raleigh for a TV documentary.

Quite a lot happened in the intervening 26 years...

Shaun's career with the WAFUs was cut short when it was discovered he was colour blind.

He changed branches to become a writer (hence the 21st Century Logs(Pers) badge, the modern-day equivalent), but decided it wasn't the life for him and left the Service.

The rest, as they say, is history. For a decade, Shaun was one of the central characters on the Beeb's top soap opera playing Barry, the hapless car salesman (the official biography calls him 'mug', 'bumbling' and 'one of life's failures'...) and, more recently, he's found a new audience playing a comical version of himself in Ricky Gervais' *Extras*.

But once Navy, always Navy...

So it was that AB Williamson returned to the establishment he passed out of for *Back on the Job*, which was due to be broadcast as *Navy News* went to press.

Shaun is one of four celebrities who were challenged to return to the jobs they performed before



● Shaun Williamson back at HMS Raleigh after 26 years

Picture: Dave Sherfield (HMS Raleigh)

they were famous; DJ Christian O'Connell (ex-binman) and former Boyzone singer Shane Lynch (ex-car mechanic) also feature.

Raleigh staff decided to give

the ex-EastEnders the basic entry trainee works: a spin in a RIB, time aboard training vessel Brecon, preparing kit (including Shaun's 'favourite', ironing), some PT, and a spot of drill on the

parade ground.

During filming, the actor spoke fondly of his year in the Senior Service - and found slipping back into some of the routines and disciplines remarkably easy.

Lighting up the skies

SETTLED weather and a packed programme helped attract more than 11,000 people to the annual HMS Sultan bonfire and fireworks display.

Pyrotechnics were, as the title suggests, the highlight of the evening, but there were plenty of other amusements to keep the punters happy, including a funfair, jugglers, fire-eaters and the ever-popular Titan the robot.

Just along the road and a few days later, HMS Collingwood also staged a firework display, which started with a thunderous bang when ET McLachlan - the youngest rating - and Cdr Tim Lowe, the CO of the establishment, lighting the bonfire.

Collingwood also had a children's funfair, and entry was free to all Service personnel and civilians employed within the base - though a donation for HCPT - the Pilgrimage Trust - was encouraged on the gates.

● The funfair in full swing at HMS Sultan's bonfire and fireworks display

Picture: LA(Phot) Darby Allen



'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

A good spot in Cartagena

THE USA Division of the HMS Ganges Association operates a long way from Shotley.

In truth, they actually operate a long way from the UK, so their events tend to sound a little exotic to our ears.

Take their fourth bi-annual reunion, which they just celebrated by taking a 17-day cruise on the 78,000-ton *Celebrity Mercury*.

They left San Diego and headed down the west coast of Mexico and Costa Rica, nipped through the Panama Canal, into Cartagena, Colombia, and the Bahamas before disembarking at Baltimore.

Whilst there they toured the US Naval Academy at Annapolis, and visited the Pussers waterfront restaurant and store.

All pretty exciting stuff – but the highlight?

For the Ganges boys, it surely had to be the moment they spotted HMS Portland, dressed overall, in Cartagena for Columbus Day.

Once Navy, always Navy – wherever you are...

President's verdict

RNA National President Vice Admiral John has laid out his views on the recent Government Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR).

On the RNA website, S/M McAnally explained that other commitments had prevented him from stating his views immediately, and that he had hoped the delay would let him "simmer down".

"But the more I think about it the more wound up I get," said the Admiral.

Even the context – the Main Effort in Afghanistan – means that in trying to avoid being accused of under-funding the conflict the Government is "drawing a very great chunk from the existing Defence Budget at the expense of all other operations and of future capability," said S/M McAnally.

"The Coalition has thereby institutionalised preparing for the last war

"I am indebted to Sir Jeremy Blackham for pointing out that we now plan approximately to halve the Navy considered necessary by the 1998 Strategic Defence Review despite a world of growing maritime significance and danger not least to our energy supplies."

For the full article, see www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/prespulpit.html



Some of the standards on display at the annual national Submarine Association memorial parade on the Thames Embankment
Picture: PO(Phot) Amanda Reynolds

Deep on parade

SUBMARINERS past and present gathered on the Thames Embankment for a parade in honour of the Silent Service.

The annual national Submarine Association memorial parade started at HMS President, on Victoria Embankment, and headed west for a couple of hundred metres to the Submariners Memorial.

The Royal Marines Band played, the Association was out in force, accompanied by



Eileen Nearne's ashes are consigned to the sea from one of BRNC's picket boats off Torquay

Heroine laid to rest

A WORLD War 2 Resistance heroine who survived capture and torture by the Nazis has been laid to rest at sea with the help of Britannia Royal Naval College.

Eileen Nearne died in Torquay in the summer at the age of 89, and was living alone at the time.

When council workers searched her flat in a bid to contact relatives, they found papers relating to her wartime role, over which she had kept quiet.

It turns out the quiet old lady had been 'Rose', a member of the British Special Operations Executive who had been thrown into the world of espionage and sabotage in occupied France at the age of 22 in 1944.

A fluent French speaker, she worked as a radio operator, helping set up the Wizard fundraising network in Paris.

But a series of narrow escapes from the Germans ended after almost five weeks when she was arrested and tortured, though she revealed no information, claiming to be a simple French girl out of her depth.

She survived concentration camps, making two escapes, finally returning to London when Europe was liberated.

Miss Nearne's wish was that her ashes should be laid to rest at sea, so two picket boats from the College sailed early one autumn morning for Torquay to receive the casket and take on board a small family party.

BRNC chaplain the Rev Andrew Hillier conducted the service, held near Thatcher Rock which, according to her niece, was a favourite spot for Miss Nearne as she tried to exorcise the lifelong ghosts of her wartime travails.



S/M Jan King

Respects are paid to stalwart

MEMBERS from across the country gathered to pay their last respects to one of the Association's true stalwarts.

S/M Jan King died on September 26 at the age of 83 after a life dedicated to the Royal Navy and the RNA.

Janet joined the Service towards the end of World War 2 as a Jack Dusty, but soon transferred to the Regulating Branch.

There, through the course of a 32-year career, she rose to the highest rank of Fleet Chief Petty Officer Wren Regulator – one of only six, and gaining the MBE in the process.

A keen supporter of the Scouts and Girl Guides, Jan also found that she needed to maintain her support for the Navy, so founded the Clacton branch of the RNA, where she remained secretary until her death, and was a member of the Association of Wrens.

She also served as Area 5 secretary and later chairman, and moved up from deputy to National Council member when her predecessor became unwell.

Jan maintained her enthusiasm until the end; even as her health started to deteriorate this year, she still talked about getting the annual conference back to Clacton – she had been instrumental in getting the event to Essex in 2001.

National President Vice Admiral John McAnally spoke at Jan's funeral of the comradeship of the Association and the fact that Jan embodied the principle of 'Once Navy, Always Navy'.

She was also, he noted, obviously very good at her job.

Demonstrating the respect Jan commanded, mourners included the National Chairman from near Birmingham, his immediate predecessor from Weymouth, the National Vice Chairman from Lincoln, the General Secretary and National Welfare Officer from Portsmouth, and many others.

Her own branch and Area 5 were well represented, and 14 standards were on parade.

Greenies gather

A REUNION of the RN Electrical Branch Association in Stafford brought two former shipmates together for the first time in 40 years.

Sean Hagger and Stephen Smith served together in HMS Hermes from 1968-70, so there was plenty of lamp-swinging to be done – a regular feature of such reunions.

Sean and Stephen laid a wreath at the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in memory of those Greenies who have crossed the bar over the years.

Cherry commended for Ajax civic links

A CANADIAN local government official at the heart of the link between her town and a Royal Navy association has been recognised by the British veterans.

Around 60 members of the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association and their guests gathered at the 45th annual reunion, held at the King Charles Hotel in Gillingham.

The guest speaker was Capt Stephen Harwood, whose father was in command at the Battle of the River Plate in 1939, who gave a most informative and interesting insight into the engagement.

Four members of the association who fought at the battle – John Garrard, Sam Shale and Ted Wicks from HMS Ajax and Basil Trott from HMS Exeter – were able to join the event.

And amongst those who attended was Mrs Cherry Sevigny, the Executive Assistant to the Mayor of Ajax in Toronto, who retired from her job this month.

Association members were delighted Cherry could attend the reunion with her husband Reid, and presentations were made in recognition of her outstanding work in developing and maintaining the close links between the town of Ajax and the association.

This was further endorsed shortly after the reunion when Capt Harry Harsch of the Canadian Navy, acting on behalf of the Canadian High Commission in London, presented Cherry with a Bravo Zulu certificate signed by the Commander-in-Chief of the Canadian Navy, to show their appreciation and acknowledgement of her work over the past 23 years.

Cherry has co-ordinated almost 100 street dedications – many of the towns streets are named after sailors from HMS Ajax – as well as numerous tree-plantings, and she also helped with arrangements for visits to Canada by Association veterans.



Capt Harry Harsch, of the Canadian Navy and acting on behalf of the Canadian High Commission in London, presents a certificate of appreciation to Cherry Sevigny

Warwick 'moved' by gesture

BACK in May the chairman of Padstow Royal British Legion, Alan Veck, along with branch and county members, laid a poppy wreath at the tree planted in memory of HMS Warwick at the National Memorial Arboretum.

The tree had been planted by

Warwick branch in conjunction with Warwick Town Council a year earlier, realising a brainchild of the late S/M John Coles, a past chairman of Warwick.

HMS Warwick was sunk off Trevose Head, near Padstow, in February 1944 by a U-boat.

Some of the members of the ship's company are buried in the churchyard at St Merryn, near Padstow, and the sinking is also commemorated on a plaque on Padstow Quay.

The same U-boat, U-413, commanded by Kapitänleutnant Gustav Poel, had also sunk the troopship SS Warwick Castle in November 1942, killing almost 100 of her complement of 462 in an attack 200 miles off Portugal.

U-413 met her fate six months after she sank HMS Warwick – the submarine was sunk in the Channel south of Brighton on August 20 1944 by depth charges from HM ships Wensleydale, Forester and Vidette, with only

one survivor from her crew of 46.

Alan and S/M David Butler, chairman of Warwick branch, were messmates on board HMS Londonderry in 1960-62, on its first commission, serving in the West Indies Squadron.

A picture of Alan laying the poppy wreath was recently passed to David by a shipmate at the 50th anniversary of the commissioning of the Londonderry, which Alan was unable to attend.

Warwick branch members were deeply moved and grateful for the gesture by the Cornwall Legion, and a letter of appreciation was duly sent to Alan.

The late John Coles was also involved in the planting of two trees with the help of Warwick Town Council, the Court Leet, King Henry VIII Trust and Warwick Castle Management, who grew the trees.

They were planted on the grounds of the castle in April 2008 in remembrance of both ships.

Newark pair bid farewell

LONG-standing members Ken and Coleen Bramley were given a fond farewell by Newark branch shortly before they departed for Australia.

Ken has been a member of the branch for more than 20 years, holding various posts including secretary and social secretary, while Coleen has provided wholehearted support to the branch – including the provision of wonderful buffets at social events over the years.

Both will be missed for the support they have given.

In recognition of this, and to provide a lasting reminder of their shipmates in the UK, branch president S/M George Woodward presented Ken with an inscribed tankard and Coleen with an inscribed trinket box.

The couple head Down Under to join their children and grandchildren.

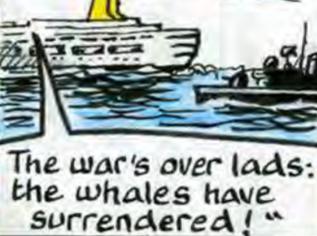
Naval Quirks

IN THE FALKLANDS WAR THE RN TASK FORCE WAS NATURALLY JUMPY ABOUT ARGENTINE SUBMARINES..

..RESPONDING TO SONAR NOISES – WHICH WERE PROBABLY JUST MARINE LIFE – WITH DEPTH CHARGES AND SOME 200 ANTI-SUB TORPEDOES..

..HENCE PROMPTING THE JOKE AMONG TROOPS ON THE "CANBERRA" –

SO "FREE WILLY" WAS A P.O.W. ESCAPE FILM THEN?



The war's over lads: the whales have surrendered!

A WHALE IS FOR LIFE NOT JUST FOR XMAS

Plotters plan for more

A GROUP of former radar plotters returned to their *alma mater* when they staged a reunion at the old HMS Dryad on Portsdown Hill.

Most of the 22 were ex-PRIs – plotting and radar instructors – who served at Southwick during the 1950s, 60s or 70s.

One of the organisers, Phill Hadfield, said: "Thanks to the Chief of Staff at the now Defence College of Policing and Guarding (HMS Dryad), Sqn Ldr Jeanette Van Halteren, the day was a great success.

"It began with a welcome and a superb presentation on Southwick House of the World War 2 map of the D-Day Landings, followed by a meander around our former home.

"For all you ex-Dryads, not too much has changed, all of us remembering what a great setting it was for a training establishment.

"On retiring to the Golden Lion many a story had to be told – remembering such things as being North Cross sentry and the woodcutting party."

Many attendees were ex-members of the defunct PRIs Association, but Phill hopes that the meeting will not be the last.

If anyone would like to contact Phill or fellow organiser George Allsop, email them at george.allsop369@btinternet.com or phillprhadfield@talktalk.net

Busy month

OCTOBER was a busy month from start to finish for Southend branch.

It began, appropriately enough, on the first of the month when members put on a display for an old Peoples's home to support Older Peoples Day.

And it ended, not so appropriately, with a Hallowe'en party for children on the 30th.

In between there was an official Trafalgar Dinner, with guest Sir Teddy Taylor, and a Trafalgar Night with traditional 'up spirits' at the club.

The annual collection that raised over £2,000 was held at three local supermarkets.

Navy pays tribute to Eastchurch pioneers

COMMODORE Fleet Air Arm Cdre Martin Westwood led tributes to the pioneer Naval aviators at an annual service of commemoration and flypast held at Eastchurch on the Isle of Sheppey.

The first Naval flyers began training on March 1 1911 at Eastchurch airfield, taught by instructors from the Royal Aero Club.

By 1912 an aircraft had taken off from a ship under way for the first time.

In a short speech Cdre Westwood drew parallels between the first Naval aviators and those of today, noting that the Fleet Air Arm had always been, and would remain, innovative, daring and cost-effective.

He emphasised the ongoing commitment of the Fleet Air Arm to current operations with aircraft, crews and maintainers serving in Afghanistan and wherever the Royal Navy is deployed.

Cdre Westwood remarked that this year saw the 70th anniversary of the attack at Taranto in Italy on November 11 1940 by Swordfish aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm operating from HMS Illustrious where, for the first time in history, a strike force from sea-based air power delivered a decisive blow to an enemy fleet which greatly benefitted the allied cause on land, at sea and in the air.

This was, in other words, a truly "joint" operation, he said.

Cdre Westwood thanked Swale



● A veteran Navy Sea Hawk draws plenty of attention during the ceremony at Eastchurch

Borough Council and Eastchurch Parish Council, who host the memorial, for their dedication in raising and maintaining the tribute, erected in 1955 following a public fundraising appeal.

Cdr Geoff Bowker joined him in thanking council staffs for their

help in organising the event.

The Royal Navy Historic Flight Sea Hawk flew overhead in tribute to the service rendered by generations of Naval airmen, and standard bearers from local Fleet Air Arm Association and RNA branches paraded in their honour.

Sea Cadets were on duty, and children from Eastchurch Primary School lined the route from church to memorial, while members of the local authorities joined in commemorations for the start of a tradition of innovation and service that continues to this day.

Hunt on for Italy veterans

THE Italy Star Association is looking for its missing members.

The organisation, which covers the Italian military campaign of 1943-45, believes there are possibly thousands of veterans who were awarded the Italy Star but do not know of the existence of the Association, which was started almost 30 years ago.

The Association aims to foster the comradeship formed during the war years through social activities, reunions and the like.

Apart from the troops, membership is also open to all RN and Merchant Navy personnel who gave Naval and logistical support, who will have been awarded the Italy Star decoration.

Associate membership is offered to relatives of Italy Star veterans.

Anyone keen to take up the offer should phone association National Secretary on 0208 241 0275.

Devon vs Cornwall

BUDE branch played a pivotal role in setting up a match between a golf club in Devon and a team from HMS Cornwall.

The veterans section at Holsworthy Golf Club took on a team from the 'Fighting 99' for the HGC vs HMS Cornwall Challenge Plate – and won both the trophy and the Stableford result.

"It was a real pleasure to receive the team from the frigate and they seemed to enjoy Jo's catering too," said S/M Bob Gelder, branch secretary and member of the veterans team.

"We look forward to meeting the guys again following their return to the UK after their deployment to parts foreign."

Glasgow members at Seafarers service

MEMBERS of the City of Glasgow branch attended the Seafarers service held at Glasgow Cathedral.

Shipmates were inspected by Naval Regional Officer Cdre Charles Stevenson, the service was conducted by the Rev Dr Laurence Whitley, and the Rev Andrew Allcock, chaplain to HMS Neptune, gave the sermon.

After the service the RM Band Scotland played a short concert.

Branches gather to reflect on Trafalgar

BRIDPORT branch managed to attract a Naval officer named Nelson to speak at their Trafalgar dinner, thanks to family ties.

Lt Cdr Chris Nelson, who was accompanied by his wife Nichola, happens to be the son of S/M Vaughan and branch secretary S/M Carole Nelson.

Members of Portland branch also attended, as did old friends from Bridport and Lyme Regis RAFA, with whom the branch shares various functions throughout the year.

The memorial service held two days later was also a good opportunity to present the Shipmate of the Year trophy, which went to S/Ms Graham and Betty Belsey.

Bourne branch celebrated Trafalgar Night in traditional style, with a bedecked hall and almost 110 members and guests sitting down to a four-course meal to the accompaniment of nautical music.

During the evening Life Membership was presented to branch president S/M Nobby Middleton, prompting a standing ovation.

Harrogate and District held their Trafalgar Dinner on the same night as Bourne, and enjoyed an "informative and humorous" speech from guest speaker Vice Admiral John McAnally, the national president, while enjoying an excellent meal at the Ascot House Hotel.

Wansbeck branch also took the opportunity of a good turnout to pay tribute to one of their loyal shipmates during Trafalgar celebrations.

Former chairman and long-serving committee member S/M Peter Wilson was awarded Life Membership by branch chairman S/M Brian Lawson.

Market Harborough branch



● Standards on display at Capt Edward Parker's tomb during the Trafalgar Day service of the Deal and Walmer branch of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men

celebrated the big day with 70 members and guests sitting down to a five-course formal dinner at the local golf club.

Guest of honour Capt Paul Quinn, the General Secretary of the RNA, and his wife Liz were piped in, and S/M Paul went on to outline plans for the future of the Association as well as examining the battle itself.

S/M Paul's predecessor as General Secretary, S/M Paddy McClurg, was guest of honour at the City of Inverness event, held at the Waterside Hotel.

S/M Paddy was presented with a 'kilt towel', and in return – to the surprise of the recipient – S/M Paddy presented Life Membership to branch chairman S/M Bob Coburn.

Egerton Park Indoor Bowls Club was the venue for the Bexhill-on-Sea branch dinner, attended by more than 40 shipmates and their guests.

Each diner was presented with an individually-named programme for the evening, produced by secretary S/M Fred Cayton.

Standards from Deal and Walmer, Ramsgate and Folkestone branches, along with Ramsgate RMA, the HMS Phoebe Association and local RBL branches were on display at the Trafalgar Day service organised by the Deal and Walmer branch of the Association of Men of Kent and Kentish Men.

The service was held in St George's Church, Deal, and on completion the 120 guests who attended watched as wreaths were placed at the tomb of Capt Edward Parker, situated in the church's Garden of Rest.

Capt Parker was one of Nelson's favourite captains, and the hero of Trafalgar attended Parker's funeral at the church in 1801.

Meanwhile, Cyprus branch welcomed back some familiar faces for their Trafalgar Night dinner at the Moniatis Hotel in Limassol – honorary life vice president S/M Nobby Hall and his wife Helen.

There was a BZ for vice chairman S/M George Williams, who found the venue and made all the arrangements.

£50 (AND WOOD'S RUM) PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our October edition (right) was HMCS Labrador.

The winner of our £50 prize was Mr Rudge of Paignton, while the bottle of Wood's Old Navy rum goes to Mr Long of Taunton.

This month we again have two prizes – our normal £50 and a bottle of Wood's Old Navy Rum.

To be eligible to win the rum you must confirm that you are 18 years old or over, and you must also live in the UK (including Northern Ireland, Eire and the Channel Islands).

The submarine pictured around 50 years ago (above) is doing what comes naturally, according to her name.

Built by Vickers-Armstrong in Barrow and launched in the spring of 1956, she was the name-boat of her class.

But the sleek black look went in the mid-1980s when she ended her days in a somewhat ignoble fashion,



painted fluorescent red and sunk by her own side. What was her name?

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 two winners. Closing date for entries is January 14 2011. 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 winners will be announced in our February edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 190

Name

Address

My answer

I confirm that I am 18 years old or over

ROYAL NAVY INTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS HUB

You can find all the Galaxy briefs, RNTMs, DINs, DIBs, 2-6 video archives and internal comms summaries gathered together at the *RN Internal Comms Hub* on the intranet. On the Royal Navy intranet site, look under *RN Information* heading in the left-hand column to find the link.



● The men and women of the Royal Navy working at ISAF Joint Command in Afghanistan

Picture: S/Sgt Joseph Swafford

Senior Service at ISAF Afghanistan

WITHOUT doubt the majority of the British men and women serving in Afghanistan are based as Task Force Helmand, but in Kabul there remains a small core of UK Servicemen and women – 63 in total, ranging from lance corporals to brigadiers – at the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) Joint Command.

Among their numbers is a dedicated band from the Senior Service including Arabic linguist CPOCT Jessica Parsons.

The communications specialist is based at the Joint Command in the role of Counter Improvised Explosive Device All Source Intelligence Warrant Officer Collector.

While the senior rate has no background in combatting IEDs, she admits to finding working in the department a steep but rewarding learning curve.

She said: "Working at the International Joint Command has given me a unique opportunity to be completely immersed in an operational environment that I wouldn't normally have a chance to experience."

"It has been eye-opening working with so many nations. I am reminded daily of the commitment and contribution of each nation to the operational arena."

In November the International Joint Command (IJC) celebrated its first anniversary of reaching full operational capability.

The IJC is the operational headquarters in Afghanistan, headed by Lt Gen David Rodriguez US Army, commanding all six of the regional commands – a total of some 150,000 troops.

It also has the responsibility to oversee day-to-day operations of coalition forces – which brings requirement to maintain and work within a close-knit team which includes the Afghan National Security Forces, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and the full breadth of the international community and civilian organisations.

The RN's current contribution includes roles within the legal, media and counter IED departments, along with liaison officers to the Regional Commands.



Stoking up the profession

AS MEMBERS of a professional body, RN Stokers are leading the way once again in forging links to external bodies.

In early November, a packed Brunel Theatre (pictured above) witnessed the second HMS Sultan Marine Engineering Professional Registration Event.

Staged once per term, and now open to all MEs across the RN, the event aimed to inform and educate the 300-plus audience on the advantages of Professional Registration and membership of a Professional Engineering Institution.

From ETs to officers, all ranks were represented, keen to find out what it means to be EngTech, IEng or CEng.

Following the formal part of the evening, the presenters manned their trade stands to answer questions and hand out information to those who wanted to know more about professional recognition and Continuing Professional Development.

Judging by the lingering throngs eager to find out more, this was a highly successful event.

Similar events are planned for February 24, June 9 and 27 October 27.

Any Marine Engineers wishing to know more about Professional Registration and membership of a Professional Engineering Institution should contact Lt Cdr Danny Owens (SULTAN-TOME, ext 6114).

NFF checks what the papers say

"WHAT'S next?" is the question that is being asked by families as a result of the outline announcements from the SDSR. And the simple answer is the detail is yet to be determined – so until those decisions are taken and announced we are all in the same boat, writes Jane Williams of the NFF.

The press are very keen to put forward ideas as to the content of these decisions, however, we have an undertaking from Second Sea Lord to keep us up to speed with developments as and when the Naval Service has them.

We have asked for the information to be delivered in small bite-sized easily-digestible chunks and have been reassured that that is exactly what we will receive.

We have introduced a new area on the website dedicate to the SDSR developments go www.nff.org.uk and click the SDSR button in the top right hand corner.

The next edition of *Homeport* featuring a front cover of SDSR-related snapshots (see right) is packed with everything we have to date, if you have a question and you are having difficulty gaining an answer then please get in touch.

Free accommodation in top London hotels

Back in October the *Daily Mail* carried a story about free accommodation in top London hotels for "serving soldiers and their families attending investitures or medal ceremonies".

The initiative by the W1 Association (which comprises some of the capital's top five-star hotels, including The Dorchester and Claridge's) means they can do "their bit to help the heroes".

NFF Chair, Kim Richardson, was a little disconcerted to see that the article focused on soldiers rather than addressing the hard work of all three Services.

The NFF is keen to ensure that the general public are aware of the efforts of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines out in Afghanistan and around the world.

With this in mind Kim penned an e-mail to the *Daily Mail* to suggest that if "this and other initiatives truly want to make a real difference to all our nation's heroes, remembering and acknowledging that personnel are drawn from all three Services would be a very good start."

Kim also had an opportunity to talk to the General Manager of one of the W1 hotels last week and asked him about the article.

He was quick to say that the article was incorrect and that the offer was open to all three Services.

Recipients of awards receive a list of all the top hotels in London offering free accommodation with the letter about their investiture.

The serving person can work through the list and ring to ask for accommodation.

The NFF want to put the record straight.

The initiative was put into place last year; it will continue indefinitely and is proving to be a hit!

Please note that a list of participating hotels will be supplied with the information pack that comes to award recipients.

Forces Pensions

Forces Pensions are an independent organisation that exists to ensure that serving and retired members of the Armed Forces, their widows, widowers, surviving partners, civil partners and dependants, receive the pension to which they are entitled.

It is an independent, not-for-profit organisation, allowing it to campaign objectively on behalf of their members and of members of the Armed Forces generally.

Farewell to Ark

CARRIER HMS Ark Royal will enter Portsmouth Harbour for the final time on December 3. The ship will be at Outer Spit Buoy at 9:15am; she will pass the Round Tower at approximately 9:30am and finally come alongside at 10:00am.

Subject to permission from their line manager, both RN and MOD civilian personnel are encouraged to come along and witness this

grand event. RN personnel who are outside of the Naval Base, either at the Round Tower or along the shore line are to be appropriately dressed, ie clean daily working rig with headgear.

It is anticipated that there will be a large presence of media witnessing the occasion.

Only personnel nominated by their Unit Press Officer should speak to the media.

Tickets from Santa

TICKETS for Troops have announced a Christmas giveaway of free tickets for the men and women of the Armed Forces and their families.

The world's biggest pantomime producer Qdos Entertainment had donated 420 tickets at 21 different theatres.

Keep an eye on the website www.ticketsfortroops.org.uk for the latest information.



For more information on the society, please visit their website www.forcespensionsociety.org or go to our website and follow the links via our 'Money' section.

Rowner demolition and regeneration

The NFF has offered to provide updated information to families regarding the Rowner regeneration programme alongside Defence Estates.

The updates will be posted onto our website as soon as we have them, as well as posting on our Facebook and Twitter pages.

Anti-social behaviour and crime

If any families are experiencing anti-social behaviour in their neighbourhood please contact Hampshire Constabulary either on the non-emergency crime number: 101 or via normal channels for emergencies.

Children's Education and Advisory Service

If you need to retain your Service Families Accommodation (SFA) in order for children to complete course study leading to public examinations (GCSE, A levels, BTEC, 1st Degree, Modern Apprenticeship), or if you have a child undergoing assessment for a Statement of Special Needs, or should you need to remain at a specific location as educational systems have been put in place for your child and it would be detrimental to alter them, then you can approach CEAS and request an impact statement to assist with the retention of SFA.

CEAS are able to guide families through the qualifying criteria for the impact statement as well as offering advice on a huge array of educational issues.

They can be contacted by telephone on: 01980 618244 (civilian) (9)4344 8244 (military) as well as via their website: enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions, to get in touch with NFF e-mail: admin@nff.org.uk, telephone: 02392 654374 or write to NFF, Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

where to look

DEFENCE INTERNAL BRIEFS
83/10: Foreign Secretary issues first quarterly report on Afghanistan: Foreign Secretary William Hague delivered the first of the Government's quarterly reports to Parliament on Afghanistan on October 27 2010, in which he said steady progress is being made although serious risks and challenges remain.

87/10: UK-France Defence Co-operation Treaty: On November 2, at the annual UK-France Bilateral Summit the Prime Minister and President Sarkozy announced a new programme of Defence co-operation.

89/10: Changes to PAX Insurance Scheme effective from January 4 2011: As part of the Budget in June this year the Chancellor announced a 1 per cent increase in Insurance Premium Tax from January 4 2011. As a result there will be a 1 per cent price increase to the PAX insurance scheme prices. This will take effect from January 4 2011 and will be reflected in PAX premiums for January onwards.

GALAXY MESSAGES
Galaxy 24-2010: Redundancy of Naval Service Personnel
Galaxy 25-2010: Personal from 1SL: 70th anniversary Battle of Taranto
Galaxy 26-2010: Personal from 1SL: Message to Navy Command civilian staff

DEFENCE INSTRUCTIONS AND NOTICES

DIN 2010 DIN01-194: Equality Act 2010 – Disability Discrimination

DIN 2010 DIN01-198: Imperial War Museum (IWM) – War Story

DIN 2010 DIN01-201: Volunteers for United Kingdom Special Forces Group (UKSF)

DIN 2010 DIN01-209: Status of sports in the Services

DIN 2010 DIN01-219: Armed Forces Childcare Voucher Scheme

ROYAL NAVAL TEMPORARY MEMORANDA

Issue 11/10 RNTM 217/10: Equality Act 2010

Issue 12/10 RNTM 223/10: Pay – Management of Engineer Artificers MEA and WEA (GS and SM) and AER for pay purposes

Issue 12/10 RNTM 237/10: Separated Service recording as a measure of harmony in the Naval Service

Issue 12/10 RNTM 238/10: Voluntary waiver of separated service in the Naval Service

Issue 13/10 RNTM 248/10: Basic Alcohol Education Courses (BAEC) 2011 dates

Issue 12/10 RNTM 237/10: Separated Service recording as a measure of harmony in the Naval Service

Issue 12/10 RNTM 238/10: Voluntary waiver of separated service in the Naval Service

Issue 13/10 RNTM 248/10: Basic Alcohol Education Courses (BAEC) 2011 dates

Issue 12/10 RNTM 237/10: Separated Service recording as a measure of harmony in the Naval Service

Issue 12/10 RNTM 238/10: Voluntary waiver of separated service in the Naval Service

Issue 13/10 RNTM 248/10: Basic Alcohol Education Courses (BAEC) 2011 dates

Training together in JPA

THE Defence College of Logistics and Personnel Administration have produced a single harmonised Phase 2 course for people in the Personnel Administration branches across the three Services.

The Army's Combat HR Specialists, the RAF's Personnel Support airmen and the Navy's Writers will complete a common course with the same lessons, courseware and exams.

The project was launched in September 2009, and the first courses went live at Worthy Down in April. The Royal Navy and RAF started their pilot courses in September this year, and the Royal Marines are working elements on the module into their existing training.

Army instructor C/Sgt Surya Gurung RGR said: "The Basic Military Administration course was focused more on repetition and reinforcement of basic Combat HR Spec skills."

"The Service Initial Personnel Administration Course demands more interaction from the students and focuses on understanding the purpose behind regulations and allowances and how to trace these back to source documents so students deal with material which is always up to date."

"More use is made of interactive technology and discussion groups. I spent much more time coaching, mentoring and assessing formal work."

"The course is challenging, and there have been teething problems but unit staff will be pleasantly surprised by the level of knowledge the students turn up with."

Subject matter experts from the Navy's Defence Maritime Logistics School worked with their counterparts to create a course to work for all three Services.

Names change, but the job lives on

DRAFTING has evolved considerably and rapidly in recent years – and Captain Naval Drafting, HMS Centurion and Draft Chits seem but a distant memory.

But the successors to that heritage live-on in the Navy Command HQ and JPA age, and the most recent developments in Junior Rate career management have only recently been announced.

On September 1, Waterfront Manning Offices were renamed Career Management Cells (CMCs) (as announced in RNTM 171/10) more accurately to reflect their function since Director Naval Personnel (DNPers) in Navy Command HQ took responsibility for the assigning of Junior Rates from Flotillas in 2007.

The primary role of the six CMCs – outstations to, but an integral part of DNPers, and located in the main base ports and naval air stations (plus Joint Force Harrier) – is the career management of junior rates apportioned to them.

Career management is defined in Personnel Functional Standards 2010 as: “The assignment of individuals in accordance with endorsed current and future Service requirements, exploiting skills, career development needs and, whenever possible, personal preferences, whilst providing advice on future career paths.”

A key point to note is that CMCs are responsible for the assigning of personnel to authorised JPA positions, and augmentation requirements.

CMCs are not responsible for the employment of personnel – this remains vested in ships,



Drafty's corner

submarines and other units, or for landed personnel, Temporary Employment cells and Recovery cells administered either by Naval Base Commanders or Flotillas.

The main base port CMCs – Devonport, Faslane and Portsmouth – are responsible for the career management of most Engineering, Logistics and Warfare junior rates of ships and submarines of those base ports plus allocated shore units and organisations, and a share of London-based and LFS positions.

The air station CMCs career manage aviation branch JRs (AH, AC, AE etc).

The Royal Marines, specialist, and smaller JR branches or sub branches continue to be managed by DNPers Naval Personnel

Teams (NPTs) based in West Battery in Portsmouth (the Hub – as opposed to CMCs which are known as the Spokes), and this includes medical branch, Naval Police, PTI, diver, and CT JRs, as well as the career management of all Royal Marines, officers and senior rates.

CMCs thus provide a fundamental waterfront manning function, and are readily accessible to EWOs and DEPCOs in particular, as well as welcoming HoDs and DOs and all others involved in manning issues.

Individual junior rates are also welcome to visit or contact direct their career managers in the CMCs to discuss current and next assignments.

CMCs have a crucial secondary role – leading on action in response manpower OPDEFs, PERREQs and other urgent operational requirements for all branches and all rank/rates (not just for JRs for which CMCs have routine career management responsibility).

This includes high-priority augmentation, exercise and events manpower demands, undertaken on behalf of DNPers' Augmentee and Crisis Manpower Planning cell (ACMP).

CMCs initiate manpower trawls and nominate, on behalf of and with the authority of DNPers, temporary or permanent reliefs to meet key manning deficiencies that impact on operational capability – be it gapping, training or competences shortfalls.

RNTM 196/10, Personnel OPDEF Procedures, has recently been published and is the key direction and guidance for all involved in this key OC issue.

High hopes and high ropes

NEVER expect the youngest sailor to do anything that you're not prepared to do yourself...

So leading by example at HMS Raleigh, the Torpoint establishment's CO, Capt Steve Murdoch 'christens' the new high ropes course – a sort of aerial assault course.

Already in place at HMS Collingwood in Fareham to test the mettle of potential leaders, the challenging course has now also been installed at Raleigh.

The high ropes (how high? 13 metres, or 42ft in old money) feature climbing ropes, ladders, walkways, a high beam, and a 'leap of faith' from a standing platform to a trapeze. (For safety reasons, recruits are attached to harnesses and supported by their classmates on the ground by ropes.)

After cutting a ribbon to formally open the aerial assault course, Capt Murdoch got into the swing of things.

“The high ropes course allows us to develop and test the physical and mental robustness of recruits, while exposing them to controlled stress. As I found, the high ropes is not rank conscious. They are a challenging test irrespective of your age and rank.”

Following the CO up the ropes was trainee AB(Sea) Lisa Aspley.

“I found the climbing up OK, but standing on the top of the pillar was a little stressful,” she said. “I really enjoyed it though. The confidence you get when you actually do something you have found tough is very rewarding.”

● On the ropes – Capt Steve Murdoch and AB(Sea) Lisa Aspley



Picture: Dave Sherfield

Location	In charge	2IC	Others
Devonport 9375	SO2 – Lt Cdr Peter Johnson 67744	WO1 Zac Newton 65431	HM Career Management – WO1 Daz Wake 65723 CM Supervisor ENG & LOGS – CPO Paul Bassett 67973 CM Supervisor WAR – CPO Tommy Cooper 67976 CM Supervisor SMs – CPO Coxn Jack Hawkins 67977 Augmentation – CPO Mike Smith 65848
Faslane 93255	SO2 – Lt Cdr Trevor Gladwell 6737	WO1 John Dickie 6133	CM Supervisor ENG SM – CPO Billy Myers 4384 CM Supervisor EXEC SM – CPO Chris Thomas 5997 CM Supervisor ENG GS – CPO Al Innes Thomas 6627 (tbrb CPO Robertson Jan 11) CM Supervisor EXEC GS – CPO Graham Walker 5580 Augmentation – CPO Joe McCannan 8365 (Joins Dec 10)
Portsmouth 9380	SO2 - gapped	WO1 Andy Strickland 20609	Augmentation – CPO Al Gower 25587
Culdrose 93781	WO1 Antony Snowden 2357	CPO Steve Tidswell 2427	
JFH 95351	WO1 Phil Price 7838	CPO Bryn Morgan(JFH ABs) 6819	JFH CMC LHs CPO Colin Edwards 7886, PO Richie Levers 6818, Recovery cell – LMA Ryan Summerfield 7834
Yeovilton 93510	WO1 Chaz Harvey 5393		

Changes to PAX in New Year

FROM January 4 2011, the price of the PAX insurance scheme will increase by 1 per cent, in line with the Budget announcement in June of a 1 per cent Insurance Premium Tax.

The PAX insurance scheme is optional, providing cover under the Armed Forces Compensation and Pension Schemes.

The revised monthly premiums, payable by a PAX policyholder for a single unit, are:

■ PAX individual, £3.94 per unit (previously £3.90), family £5.55 per unit (previously £5.50). The underlying premium rates remain the same.

■ Optional Life insurance is not subject to Insurance Premium Tax and remains unchanged at £1 per unit for an individual and £1.50 for family cover.

From January 4 2011, existing policyholders will automatically continue on the PAX Scheme with the revised premiums.

Further detail can be found at DIB 2010/89.

If you want general information on PAX, telephone 0800 212 480 from the UK or +44 20 8662 8126 from overseas.

It's your 2-6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

The 2-6 TV DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief providing an enhanced package for use in sharing information.

Feedback received regarding the new-look 2-6 TV DVD is encouraging. Your thoughts and opinions are invaluable.

Please forward any constructive ideas about what should be covered to WO1 Baz Cooke or Pauline Aquilina.

To feature in the Navy News 2-6 pages contact Lt Cdr Heather Lane or WO1 Cooke.

■ Lt Cdr Heather Lane, 93832 8809, FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC SO2

■ WO1 Baz Cooke, 93832 8821, FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC WO

■ Pauline Aquilina, 9621 85984



THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

(Charity Number: 266982)

Once Navy Always Navy

What the Association does:

- Supports the Royal Navy
- Enjoys social activities
- Remembers the fallen
- Looks after the needy
- Maintains Naval traditions
- Re-unites Shipmates
- Helps the disabled
- Cheers up the distressed
- Stands together in Unity



Full Members

Consist of Serving and Ex-Serving members of the The Naval Service, WRNS, RFA, RNXS and RMAS, regardless of Rank. Any person who served in the Naval Forces of a nation which is or was a member of the British Commonwealth.

Associate Members

Those in sympathy with our Objects, especially families.

Contact Nigel Huxtable at RNA HQ

Rm 209 Semaphore Tower, PP70, HM Naval Base, PORTSMOUTH PO1 3LT

Phone - 023 9272 3747 E-Mail - Nigel@royalnavalassoc.com

Website - www.royal-naval-association.com

Unity, Loyalty, Patriotism and Comradeship

NOTICEBOARD

Deaths

Cdr 'Tubby' Leonard. Joined the Royal Navy in 1944 and was taught to fly in Canada; he flew the Fairey Barracuda dive-bomber in the Far East but in post-war years converted to the Supermarine Walrus biplane and suffered severe injury in a forced landing. He moved on to fly helicopters and serving with 848 NAS arrived in the Far East (1953) with ten Sikorsky S55s, within weeks became troop-carriers and used during the Malaysian Emergency for more than 10,000 troops and 200 casualties. When a helicopter crashed in an inaccessible field he flew to the wrecked helicopter which had to be winched in seven lifts, each involving protracted hovering; he was awarded a DFC. In 1955 he flew his Westland Dragonfly helicopter from the deck of Vidal to deposit a group on the island of Rockall; the team cemented a brass plaque and the Union flag was hoisted over the tiny island and possession was taken in the name of Her Majesty; Leonard was appointed MBE. He commanded 825 NAS flying the Fairey Gannet in the anti-submarine role (he survived a mid-air collision), then served on the staff of the Joint Services Amphibious Warfare School. In 1960 he moved to Boscombe Down as a helicopter test pilot; he conducted auto-hover trials and trialled the Bristol Belvedere; on the Westland Scout he explored the "dead man's curve" – the lowest height and speed at which the aircraft could suffer engine failure and still regain autorotation to land, and was awarded an AFC in 1963, August 24, Aged 84.

Lt Cdr Anthony 'Steady' Tuke DSC. Joined the Air Branch 1938 and completed pilot training 1940; he joined 826 NAS, the first to be equipped with the Fairey Albacore. Whilst daytime bombing the invasion barges at Calais his aircraft was damaged and his observer and telegraphist air gunner were both badly wounded; he was awarded his first DSC for these operations at the age of 19. The squadron then joined Formidable and sailed to the Suez Canal, her aircraft attacking Italian forces at Mogadishu and Massawa on the way; and took part in the Battle of Cape Matapan in March 1941. Formidable and 826 Squadron were then involved in bombardment off Tripoli and covering convoys around Greece and supporting the Operation Tiger convoy to Alexandria carrying tanks and Hurricane fighters for the Eighth Army. During the evacuation of Crete, Formidable was attacked and damaged so he was sent into the desert to support the army, rejoining the partially-repaired ship on her way to America. Back in England he was appointed senior pilot of 819 NAS and in 1942 was seconded to Coastal Command for night operations, bombing and mining European ports. The Squadron embarked in the escort carrier Archer 1943 and provided anti-U-boat cover for two Atlantic convoys. Promoted to acting lieutenant-commander (now 22), he was appointed CO of 851 NAS formed at the US naval air station at Squantum, Massachusetts and in 1944 embarked to Colombo via Australia in the American-built escort carrier Shah; he

was awarded a bar to his DSC for his part, with the frigate Finchhorn and the Indian sloop Godavari, in sinking U198 near the Seychelles. He suffered an engine failure and had to ditch but was rescued by a dug-out fishing boat; he returned home in 1944 and joined the deck landing training school as Lt Cdr (Flying) at Peewit (where he met his wife in the WRNS); his final tour was in command of 783 Squadron and was placed on the retired list medically unfit due to war service in 1948. Fleet Air Arm Association, Essex Branch, August 15, Aged 89.

Lt Denis Norman 'Paddy' Davies RNVR. When war broke out he immediately presented himself as a volunteer at the British Embassy in Rio de Janeiro, where he worked for the British naval attaché dressed as a sub-lieutenant RNVR; he boarded a tramp ship for Liverpool and upon arrival was signed up as an ordinary seaman. He joined Ashanti on Russian convoy work where the renowned captain 'Dickie' Onslow recognised that he was officer material and advised that he should volunteer for 'special' service to speed the selection process. 1942-43 he joined No14 (Arctic) Commando and trained to attack the German battleship Tirpitz by kayak; he learned to navigate the coast of Scotland and practised placing limpet mines; but the attack was abandoned because when the little craft were loaded with mines they became unstable. Following the liberation of Corsica 1943, as operations officer of the North African Flotilla, a cover name for clandestine boat operations, he ran fast motor-boat crossings to France and Italy for saboteurs, propagandists, politicians, escape organisers for fugitive prisoners-of-war and shot-down pilots, as well as several female agents and some 80 agents were landed or recovered in 52 sorties. Working from a requisitioned villa in Bastia he participated in meetings between rival factions of the Secret Intelligence Service, the Special Operations Executive, the American Office for Strategic Services and the French Battalion de Choc, as well as the three regular armed services. His task was to identify precise locations that agents could land covertly by obtaining details of the enemy coastal defences and patrols likely to be met in the area. His adventures formed the basis for John Winton's novel *The Night of the Scorpion* (1994), September 3, Aged 89.

Lt Cdr Donald Robert MacQueen. Joined the Navy as a Naval Airman Second Class and after initial training at St Vincent learned to fly at Elmdon, Birmingham and at Worthy Down; he flew Swordfish with 823 and 810 Naval Air Squadrons from the carriers Glorious, Illustrious, Ocean, Vengeance and Theseus and took part in the lead-up to the capture in 1942 of Diego Suarez (Operation Ironclad). In 1943, using his favourite bats to guide young pilots, he was Britain's most experienced decklanding control officer (DLCO) and between 1943-46 he taught over 1,000 airmen (the total number of accidents was just 11); he was appointed MBE in 1946 for his services to aviation.

Later he was DLCO instructor in 768 NAS at Eglinton, near Londonderry and 1950-51 senior DLCO of the carrier Vengeance. He kept a meticulous log of those with whom he worked and by the time he folded his bats in 1952 reckoned he had handled more than 66,000 deck landings by nearly 50 types of aircraft, including a record of 775 in one day. After staff appointments ashore and a spell as personal pilot to the Flag Officer Air Home he retired from the Navy in 1960. September 1, Aged 89.

Lt Cdr Geoff Mason. Served 1941-72 initially joining as a Telegraphist he was promoted to CPO at 24, Warrant Rank at 25 and selected for advancement to Lt Cdr at age 42. Wartime service included Malta convoys and the Normandy Landings. He served in many establishments as well as the Persian Gulf in Loch Lomond (1961-62), Rosyth moving to Portland then finally as assistant project officer MOD Bath. He contributed a great deal to *Navy News* and naval history over the decades with his World War 2 ship histories which led to the publication of all the information on the website www.navalhistory.net Research activities included design and service of Loch and Bay class frigates and social conditions affecting Naval service. Articles published included *Pennant Numbers*, *Hydrographic Surveying and Salvage Work by HM Ships since 1945*. Loch Class Frigates Association, August 15, Aged 88.

Stephen 'Darby' Allan. CPO Diver. A veteran of the First Gulf War acting as chief of the Fleet Diving Unit deployed to Kuwait to clear the city's harbour, beaches and surrounding terrain of thousands of explosives and Hong Kong (1991-97) as part of the search and rescue team involved with the rescue and salvage following marine and diving accidents. In 2002 he moved to the Defence Diving School at Horsea Island as an EOD specialist and trainer, becoming chief instructor for the Clearance Diving Officers courses in 2003. He left the Navy to join the Mines Advisory Group (MAG) charity as a technical field manager in October 2006. Died in a landmine explosion in Sudan, Aged 52, October 15.

Keith Anthony Pratt. Charge Chief MEA(P). Served 1962-86 in Centaur, Urchin, Virago, Loch Killisport, Grafton, Blake, Hampshire, Ashanti, Tartar and CBIU. June 8, Aged 65.

Christopher Terrence Frederick Barnes. Leading Aircraftsman. Served 1949-57 in Illustrious, Royal Arthur, Gamecock, Daedalus, Siskin, Indomitable, Nuthatch, Heron and Centaur. Air Handling Association and HMS Indomitable Association, October 22, Aged 78.

Dennis A Ward. Served 1952-58 Montclair, Tenacious and mechanic aboard Warrior. H Bomb test May 1957. HMS Warrior Association, September 20, Aged 76.

Eleanor Bosworthick. When her husband Edgar 'Boz' Bosworthick (who died earlier this year) retired as secretary of HMS Unicorn Association in 1998, Eleanor became the driving force. She was elected

as membership/social secretary and her recruitment drives doubled membership during the past decade. October 28, Aged 86.

John Macgregor Reid-Henry. HMS Unicorn Association, 818 NAS, February 17, Aged 87.

Dora Walton. HMS Unicorn Association, January.

Raymond Gregory 'Pony' Moores. CMEM. Served in Raleigh, Unicorn, Triumph, Newfoundland, Surprise (Malta), Cambridge, Cavalier, and Minerva among others. HMS Unicorn Association, September 27, Aged 78.

Michael 'Mick or Mickey' Patrick Deary. NA 1st class, 847 NAS, HMS Unicorn Association, Aged 86 in Australia.

Lt K Edwards. HMS Morecambe Bay Association. Served as Gunner during Korean War. Also served at Excellent, September.

Cdr David John Lean. RNEC 1943-47, November 6, Aged 86.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Ken Wall. LAM(E) Fleet Air Arm. Served 1952-60 in Gamecock, Fulmar, Culdrose, Lossiemouth, Albion and Blackcap. A founder member of Warrington RNA becoming its chairman. Died whilst on holiday in Sri Lanka October, Aged 75.

Bertie Thorold. Wartime service onboard Roberts, Market Harborough branch, September, Aged 88.

Janet 'Jan' King. Fleet CPO Wren Regulator. Joined the WRNS near the end of the war as a Jack Dusty and served 32 years; awarded MBE for her service to the sea and a member of the Association of Wrens. Founder member of Clacton branch and remained secretary till her death. Secretary to Area 5 later becoming the Area's chairman; Deputy National Council member for the Area and took over as the National Council member when her predecessor became unwell, September 26, Aged 83.

Nancy Thompson. Wren SDO/Coder. Served 1943-46 in Marshal Sout (Portsmouth), Forward (HQ Newhaven) and Daedalus (Lee-on-Solent). Harrogate & District RNA, October 25, Aged 85.

Brian Peter 'Blackie' Blackford. AB. Served in St Vincent, Excellent, Paladin, Victorious, Rooke, Carysfort, Cavendish, Dainty and Troubridge. Member of 8th Destroyer Squadron and Kendal RNA, June 29.

Edward 'Ted' Walter Restall. Dursley and district RNA. Served as an AB during WW2, earning the 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic and Pacific Star, the defence medal and the war medal. Also member of HMS Ruler and 885 Squadron associations, November 6.

Stan Leggett. AB Quartermaster. Served aboard Dido-class cruiser but his greatest love was the destroyer Zephyr, where he was commended by his captain for steering her through the Portland tide race during very heavy weather. National Service rating 1947-49. Dagenham RNA, life member and treasurer for 30 years. November 1, Aged 80.

Jim 'Curly' Connolly. AB. Dagenham RNA. Served 1943-46. Served in Vanguard and Bay-class frigate. November 7, Aged 85.

Dennis Saunders. Ludlow and district RNA. Wartime veteran serving in Renown as a torpedoman. Aged 85.

Audrey Dahn. Ludlow and district RNA, associate member. Aged 77.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION
SA 'Stan' Gosden. Sto.Mech. Submarine service 1947-50 in Spitful, Sleuth and Satyr, East Kent branch. Aged 86.

D 'Chick' Henderson. L/Sto. Submarine service 1949-54 in Amphion, Alcide, Alaric, Seascout and Tireless. New Zealand branch. Aged 82.

R 'Ron' Holbrow. CERA. Submarine service 1941-45 in P222, Shakespear, Unshaken, Storm, Truculent and Sea Devil. Welsh branch. Aged 90.

J T 'John' Onions. PO GL. Submarine service 1942-50 in Shakespeare, Taciturn and Tabard. Colchester branch. Aged 89.

J T 'Jim' Owens. AB U/W2. Submarine service 1955-63 in Tapir (55-57), Turpin (57), Acheron (58-61), Sea Devil (62), Totem (62-63) and Tireless (63). Welsh branch. Aged 78.

G 'George' Pickup. L/Tel. WT2. Submarine service 1933-39 in L18, L19, Phoenix, L23, Sunfish, H43, H49 and Severn. Dolphin branch. Aged 98.

J R 'Rex' Richards. Cook (S). Submarine service 1949-58 in Sleuth, Ambush, Totem and Thermopylae. Dolphin branch. Aged 79.

T 'Tom' Smith. AB ST. Submarine service 1943-46 in Oberon 1, Unruffled and P46. Derbyshire branch. Aged 85.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION
Malcolm Armsden. LAF(A). Served 1942-46. Birmingham branch. October 11.

William Challis. NAM(E). Served 1949-57. Essex branch. September 27.

Alan Booton. AM(A)1. Served 1947-49. Daedalus branch. September 29.

LST AND LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION
C Stainton. Served on board LCH 317, LC(L) 312, LCT 1331 and LCT 7017. April 17.

S T Davidson. Served on board LBE 4, September 24.

K J King. Served on board LST 367 and LST 417, October 10.

S Ogilvie. Served on board LCF(M) Royal Marines, October 20.

Swap drafts

LET(WE) Musgrave would like to swap HMS Albion for any Portsmouth-based ship, type and deployment not important. Joining date is address 31 2011. Please contact by email andrewkmusgrave@btinternet.com or phone 0783 745 8193.

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.

Assignments

Cdre D L Potts to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be Commander UK Maritime Forces on January 26 2011.

Capt Alexander J Burton to HMS Bulwark as CO from December 7 2010.

Cdr Paul A Bristowe to HMS Somerset as CO from January 11 2011.

Cdr Charles David Lightfoot to be Queen's

Harbour Master Clyde from March 8 2011.

Cdr Richard G C Marshall to British Forces British Indian Ocean Territory as Commander British Forces at Diego Garcia from January 4 2011.

Lt Cdr Alasdair G Peppe to HMS Kent as CO from October 29 2010 (temporary command).

1970 1980 1990 2000 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of *Navy News* to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● HMS Upholder

December 1970

CHRISTMAS came early at the Rover's Return when two submariners paid a seasonal visit to Britain's most famous local.

M(E)1 Andrew Moloney and ME(1) David Hollier called in for a pint at the *Coronation Street* pub, or rather the Granada TV film set, during a visit of four submariners to Manchester, HMS Opossum, Artemis, Acheron and Oracle.

The deeps received a warm welcome from two of the doyennes of the soap opera, Betty Turpin (played by Betty Driver) and Annie Walker (Doris Speed).

In a crowded programme the boats entertained scores of visitors, including Bobby Charlton and Nobby Stiles. The submariners in turn were celebrated when they went ashore.

December 1980

FOUR sub-lieutenants who invented a cheap and effective modification to prevent engine-flooding in lifeboats were approached by the Royal National Lifeboat Institution which wanted to adopt their innovation.

The four, Pat Tiller, John O'Connell-Davidson, George Radker and Tim Roberts, had recently left the Navy's engineering college at Manadon, where they were the first SD officers to complete a submarine application course.

Their invention used wing tanks to trap water before it reached the engines, a known cause of flooding when certain types of lifeboats righted themselves after capsizing.

The RNLI believed adopting the invention would save thousands of pounds, as well as enhancing safety in its older class of lifeboats.

December 1990

HMS UPHOLDER, the first of the new generation of diesel-electric submarines, arrived at her home base of Gosport for the first time on December 12.

Launched in 1986 at Vickers Yard in Barrow-in-Furness, Upholder took her name from the top-scoring British submarine of the Second World War, commanded by Lt Cdr David Wanklyn.

The wartime Upholder sank three U-boats and a destroyer, damaged a cruiser and another destroyer, and sank or damaged 119,000 tons of enemy supply ships. The new Upholder was soon to be followed by her sisters Ursula, Unseen, and Unicorn.

December 2000

THE NAVY'S firefighting school held its last advanced course at Horsea Island, in Portsmouth, before packing up to head to its new home on Whale Island.

The Phoenix Nuclear, Biological and Chemical Defence School had opened as a temporary establishment – 42 years before.

It trained about 10,000 students a year in courses ranging from the Basic Sea Safety Course to advanced firefighting.

In 1999 the MOD signed a Private Finance Initiative with Flagship to take over the Navy's firefighting training.

NAVY NEWS

SHIP of the MONTH

Collectors' Corner

Build an exciting and interesting collection of B&W and coloured postcard sized photographs of ships and aircraft of the Royal Navy and RFAs.

Only **£12.50 UK** **£14.50 Overseas**

1 YEAR'S SUBSCRIPTION

Which includes **ONE NEW** postcard sized photograph of our featured vessel each month.



Photographs can also be purchased individually for £1.20 each (minimum of three).

Send Cheque/P.O. together with name and address of subscriber to
Anne Young at...

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

Or phone on – 023 9272 6284

Cheques made payable to: HMG1800

For orders outside of the UK, payment is to be made by cheque/International Money Order in £ Sterling

SEND FOR FREE PHOTOGRAPH LIST!

(Older photographs will be in Black & White)

Reunions

FEBRUARY 2011
HMS Penelope Association: Open to all who served in the cruiser 1938-44 or frigate 1963-92, or are relatives of those who did so. 25th annual reunion takes place at Blackpool from February 18 to 20. For details of the reunion and AGM or membership contact the secretary, Mike Bee at mike.bee@ntlworld.com or write to Secretary, HMS Penelope Association, 1 Oddfellows Street, Mirfield, WF14 9AB.

MARCH 2011
HMS Duchess Association: Reunion from March 11 to 13 at the Bay View Court Hotel, Bournemouth. All commissions welcome. For details contact Sharky Ward, 17 Marne Gardens, Lincoln, LN1 3UJ or tel: 01522 872998.

HMS Tiger Communications Reunion: Communicators (T, C and Ws) who served on board HMS Tiger are cordially invited to the Tally Ho sports and social club, Pershore Road, Birmingham, on March 19. £5 a head buffet within the WMP social club. There are additional details for March 18, for an evening at the Nautical Club in Birmingham and accommodation details. For further information contact Phil Tootill (ex RO1(T)) at p.tootill@sky.com or tel: 0121 580 8767. There are currently no limitations on numbers attending.

HMS Antrim: Next year (2011) is the 40th year of Antrim's Commissioning Ceremony. An informal 'swinging' of the lamp, sipping of bevies and much singing will take place from March 25 to 27 in Bournemouth. All association members and anyone who served on her are welcome. There is more information on the website at www.hmsantrim.org.uk or ring me, 'Bunty' Chris Williams on 01392 213585.

APRIL 2011
The Fourth Destroyer Association: HMS Agincourt, Aisne, Alamein, Barrosa, Corunna, Jutland, Matapan and Dunkirk are holding their annual reunion from April 8 to 11 at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham. All ships' companies welcome. Contact Terry Parker at mvdj.corunna@mypostoffice.co.uk or tel: 01303 249242.

V & W Destroyer Association: The next reunion is from April 8 to 11 at Weston-Super-Mare. More details from John Appleby, Little Pitchbury, Brick Kiln Lane, Great Horkeley, Colchester, Essex, CO6 4EU or tel: 01206 271458.

HMS Newfoundland Veterans: There will be a reunion of former shipmates from April 15 to 18 in Stafford. Details from Alan Waite on 01162 833266.

HMS Newcastle Stokers Mess (ML) 1988-92: A mini reunion of old mess mates will be held at the Maritime Club, Portsmouth at 1500 on April 30. For further details contact Jonathan Legg at jonathanlegg@gmail.com or tel: 07786 326720.

HMS Protector Association: AGM and reunion at the Royal Court Hotel, Coventry from April 29 to May 2. We shall be holding a reaffirmation and Memorial Service at the National Memorial Arboretum on April 30. All former shipmates and guests are welcome. Further details available from Doug Harris at Dougatspindrift@aol.com or tel: 01495 718870 or via the website at <http://www.hmsprotector.org> for booking form downloads.

MAY 2011
Joint Services Hosanna House Group: The next trip takes place from May 20 to 27 and we are now taking enquires for ex-service personnel with disabilities, for a respite break, one-to-one care, to incorporate the International Military Pilgrimage Lourdes France, flying from Exeter. For further information please visit our website at <http://www.jshhg507.com> or contact Richard Tipping on 01752 787697.

Royal Naval Electrical Branch Association: will be holding a mini reunion from May 6 to 9 at the Bancourt Hotel Torquay. Great programme including a bit of time afloat. Not in the association? Contact Mike Crowe at mike@rneba.org.uk, visit <http://www.rneba.org.uk> or RNEBA, 7 Heath Road, Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 8PG. (Also see October below for full reunion.)

HMS Verman Bay Association: Reunion at the Maritime Club, Portsmouth May 6 to 8. All ex-Bay-class welcome. Contact John Miller on 01744 602459 for details.

HMS Cambrian: Our next reunion for all who served on board the ship at any time will be at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, from May 13 to 15. Any old shipmates not yet in touch should contact Don Macdonald on 01344 774386.

Royal Naval Engineer's Association: 19th annual reunion on May 20-21 at the Nautical Club, Birmingham. Details from Bob Styants at bstyants@btinternet.com or tel: 0121 422 4115.

HMS Cavalier Association: Annual reunion and AGM at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry, from May 27 to 30. For full details contact the Dave Shardlow at davemooseman@hotmail.co.uk or Isle of Wight Tours Ltd, 3 New Road, Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 9JN.

OCTOBER 2011
Royal Naval Electrical Branch Association: Reunion will be held in Shanklin on the Isle of Wight from October 7 to 10. Get some 'sea time' in and join us for another cracking weekend. Put it in your diary now. Which ex shipmate will you meet up with? Two off HMS Hermes from 1970 met up at the last one and 'the lamp swung'. Further details on <http://www.rneba.org.uk> or RNEBA, 7 Heath Road, Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 8PG or mike@rneba.org.uk. If you had the distinctive lightning flashes on your branch badge, this is the place for you. Download a membership form of this rapidly growing association and a reunion booking form and relive the camaraderie of the Electrical Mess.

NOVEMBER 2011
HMS Lowestoft: To commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first commissioning a reunion has been arranged to take place at Chatham on October 21-22. All who served in HMS Lowestoft during her 25 years in service (1961-86) are welcome to attend. For further details please contact Ian Mckenzie at ian.mackenzie480@virgin.net or the website <http://www.sabie.co.uk/lowestoft/home.htm> or tel: 01935 825672.

Ask Jack

David Handscombe, Medical branch 1967-2002: I am hoping to arrange a surprise 60th birthday party in August 2012, probably in the Portsmouth area, (too far to travel to Isle of Man where we live) for my husband David Handscombe who left the RN in 2002 after 34 years in the medical branch. He served in Endurance, Illustrious, Invincible, RNH Haslar, Scotia, FOST, attached to RM, Air Sea Rescue, amongst other drafts. If anyone knows Dave and who would like to get in touch please contact me, Collette at chands5856@manx.net or tel: 07624 409820 (mobile). I can then organise venue etc.

William Alfred George Breeds: Seeking information about my uncle, born October 19 1917 in Hastings and died March 31 1976. He served in the Royal Navy 1940-42 before being invalided out. My mother didn't know of her brother until 2009, so didn't form any kind of relationship with him and any family who knew him have passed on. The only other information I have is that he was brought up by his grandparents and also played football in Hastings. There is also a family story that he was at Dunkirk, where he had the terrible job of helping to dispose of the dead. If anyone can provide information or a photograph could they contact Susan Legg, 4 King Arthur Drive, Yeovil, Somerset, BA21 3HZ.

HMS Ganges: Kenneth George Newson joined the RN as a Boy Seaman at HMS Ganges, Shotley, Ipswich in 1937. He became a qualified diver and as an Acting PO (Diver) he was a member of the team on board HMS Reclaim in 1951 that carried out dives to search and locate submarine HMS Affray. For the skill, courage and devotion to duty he received a commendation from the Commander-in-Chief, Portsmouth. This followed a MID awarded in 1945 for distinguished service. In the 1950s he served a commission in the Far East/Korea on board HMS Triumph. His cousin is interested to learn more about his life and times in the Royal Navy. If any old shipmates or members of the diving fraternity from that time remember Ken and have stories, memories of runs ashore or in fact any items of interest, please contact David Newson at david.newson4@btinternet.com or tel: 01473 720740.

Benbow 49 1988 or 22 years on: Doug 'Pincher' Martin ASA is looking for shipmates from this class to see who made it, where and when and what they are doing now. Would love to track down a class photo and see if all can be found. Instructor was 'Tug Wilson' POMEM Wilson, author of *Guns & Guts*. Sean Kitsom, Josh Buckwald, Pete Lansdell are just a few names that come to mind. Please contact Doug Martin at dougmartin4@btinternet.com or tel: 07979 704591.

Sports lottery

October 23: £5,000 - Mne J M Williams; £1,500 - Cpl C P Jones; £500 - WO2 C K Lambert.
 October 30: £5,000 - Lt V L Burcham; £1,500

- Lt S A McKeen; £500 - ETWE C W Potter.
 November 6: £5,000 - ETWE(SM) H J Ritchie; £1,500 - ETWE P W Ross; £500 - Lt B L Watson.

Trophy lives



IN LATE 1941, aware of the growing threat by Japan in the Far East and in the hope that a show of strength would deter military action, the Royal Navy dispatched the battleship Prince of Wales and the battle-cruiser Repulse to Singapore where they arrived on December 2.

The two capital ships should have been accompanied by the aircraft carrier Formidable but she sustained damage on sea trials and was unable to sail.

Under the command of Admiral Sir Tom Phillips and accompanied by the destroyers Electra, Express, Tenedos and HMAS Vampire, the small fleet was codenamed Force Z.

Following the Japanese attack on the American fleet at Pearl Harbour and rapid troop landings in north Malaya and south Thailand, Admiral Phillips planned to attack their troopships on Malaya's eastern coast before major enemy ships arrived to support the landings.

Accordingly Force Z sailed from Singapore on December 8 - but the RAF was unable to provide any form of air cover.

Poor weather concealed the initial movements of Force Z but, as they neared the site of the Japanese landings, it suddenly improved; with all chances of a surprise attack thus lost Phillips decided to return to Singapore.

While on passage he was informed of enemy landings at Kuantan on the east coast of Malaya but on arrival there

this proved to have been a false alarm; what Phillips may not have known was that he had been seen by a Japanese submarine which had reported his position.

At 1107 on December 10 Japanese aircraft sighted Force Z and attacked; Repulse was hit by a bomb in her hangar but the fire was dealt with quickly.

Enemy torpedo bombers turned their attention to Prince of Wales; she quickly sustained two hits which disabled her steering gear and reduced her manoeuvrability.

Repulse was then similarly attacked but managed to avoid all 19 torpedoes aimed at her.

A second wave of aircraft then arrived and achieved nine torpedo strikes, four on Prince of Wales and five on Repulse.

With his ship clearly crippled and beyond salvation, Captain Tennant gave the order to abandon ship and Repulse sank at 1233.

Prince of Wales finally sank at 1320, some of her crew were rescued by Express but both Captain Leach and Admiral Phillips lost their lives.

Trophy 21901 is an oil painting showing Repulse under air attack and with Prince of Wales listing to port in the left background.

This work was painted by F W Green, who was an Able Seaman in Repulse at the time of her loss.

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
- RN and RM Service records: 01283 227912, navysearchppgrc@ntn.co.uk
- Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk
- Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity: 023 9254 8076, www.rnrmc.org.uk
- RNBT: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnbt.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.rncom.mod.uk
- Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600
- 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.

Be quick with your festive photos

IT'S time to dig out all your old Navy photos.

Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum wants to track down all those rarely-seen photos of life on-board over the Christmas period and it has launched a nationwide search, offering entrants the chance to win £500 worth of gardening and power tools from Bosch's complete range.

But time is tight as the competition entries must be received by Sunday December 5.

Sarah Pace, Assistant Brand Manager at Wood's 100 Rum, said: "We at Wood's know how hard it can be spending time away from loved ones for weeks, if not months on end, especially around Christmas and it is because of this that we want to see in picture form exactly what it is like for those miles away from land over the Christmas period."

"We want to see all those pictures of Christmas on-board, be they happy, lonely, quirky or amusing."

But they must be your own pictures, or that of a relative, and should be accompanied by a sentence explaining what they mean to you.

In addition to the winning prize, the first three runners-up will win a bottle of Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum, the real original.

Entries can be made via:
 ● Facebook - If you "like" the Navy News Facebook page then upload your entries here. Pictures should be labelled 'Wood's 100 Christmas at Sea Competition'.
 ● Email - woods@lucre.co.uk. Subject headings should be 'Wood's 100 Christmas at Sea Competition'.
 ● Post - Wood's Rum, Steel House, Alexander Place, 13-17 Princess Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6DQ.

Entries are strictly limited to one per person and must be received by Sunday December 5 2010.

Please include your name, address and telephone number.
 The Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum judging panel will review all the entries and winners will be informed by Monday December 13 2010.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS
 1. This competition is open to all UK residents, (including Northern Ireland, Eire, and the Channel Islands) except for employees of the promoter, their immediate family and anyone else connected to the creation or administration of the promotion.

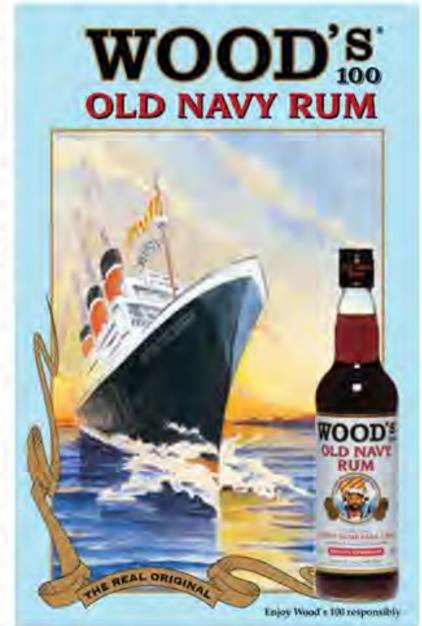
2. Entries must be received by Sunday December 5 2010 and the winners will be notified by Monday December 13 2010.

3. The winner's prize is £500 worth of tools from Bosch's Lawn & Garden and Power Tools range. For further information on Bosch's range, entrants should log on to <http://www.bosch-pt.co.uk/gardentools/> and <http://www.bosch-pt.co.uk/powertools/> for more information. Prize is subject to availability and is non-transferable.

4. Entries are limited to one per person.

5. There is no cash alternative available.

6. In the event of unforeseen circumstances, the promoter reserves the right to offer an alternative prize of equal or greater value.



7. The promoter's decision is final and binding. No correspondence will be entered into.

8. Entries become the absolute property of the promoter and will not be returned.

9. By entering the competition, entrants agree to be bound by these rules and by any other requirements set out in the promotional material.

10. By entering the competition, entrants agree that their entries can be posted on the Wood's 100 Old Navy Rum website and on other related online and print platforms.

11. Winner's names and counties are available 28 days after the closing date. Send a SAE to Wood's Rum, Steel House, Alexander Place, 13-17 Princess Road, Richmond, Surrey, TW10 6DQ.

12. Prize winners may be required to participate in publicity involving print and broadcast media.

13. Reproduction of entries

By entering your images into the competition, you grant to Wood's 100 and any of the official partners, sponsors or associates of Wood's 100 relating to the competition a worldwide, perpetual, non-exclusive, irrevocable licence to reproduce any of the images for any purposes in connection with promoting the competition including, but not limited to, the following purposes:

- a) judging the competition
- b) voting
- c) inclusion within the competition website, Navy News website, or similar print or digital media published by Wood's 100 displaying the winning and runners-up entries at public exhibitions promoting the competition
- d) inclusion within marketing and promotional materials (including emails, websites and press packs) for the competition and / or any exhibition
- e) sub-licensing the entries to the press for reproduction in connection with the competition and any exhibition
- f) allowing viewers of the website to view images on a computer screen, PDA or mobile telephone and store such pages in electronic form for their personal, non-commercial use

We do not claim unlimited licence for Wood's 100 or any of the official partners, sponsors or associates of Wood's 100 relating to the competition to reproduce your images outside of the terms set out above.

Where image reproduction is unrelated to the promotion of the competition then permission and royalties will be discussed and negotiated with the photographer concerned.

BRITANNIA SHIPPING FOR BURIAL AT SEA Specialist FUNERAL DIRECTORS
 Speak to John Lister
01395 568028
www.burialatsea.co.uk
email@burialatsea.co.uk

NAVY NEWS Back Copies
 Available from 1998 to the current edition
 Please call 023 9272 6284 for details or email: subscriptions@navynews.co.uk
Reporting from the Fleet

Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in January's Noticeboard must be received by **December 2**

Work starts on home for Mary Rose

WORK has begun on a new permanent home for the Mary Rose in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Construction of the museum began 28 years to the day since the timbers of the Tudor warship were raised from the bed of the Solent, having lain off Southsea for more than four centuries.

And it represents another major step in a conservation process which began in the early 1980s and will continue until 2016.

Local firm Warings won the £16.3m contract to build the new museum over the dry dock in which the ship is being preserved, part of an overall £35m project which is being supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund to the tune of £21m.

The new building is due to be finished in the autumn of 2012, at which point the hull itself will be reunited with the majority of the 19,000 artefacts recovered with her.

While construction of the timber-clad building is under way the ship will be away from public view, but in two years the preserving chemical sprays which keep the hull shrouded in mist will be finished and Mary Rose will have entered the final phase of conservation, a slow air-drying process.

But the existing Mary Rose Museum, 300 metres from the new site, remains open during building to showcase more than 1,000 Tudor artefacts, and vital fundraising continues apace – there is a £4m target to be met before the new museum can open its doors in 2012.

Up until her temporary withdrawal from view, Mary Rose was the only 16th century warship on public display anywhere in the world.

Launched in 1511, she was a favourite of Henry VIII, but sank while sailing to engage with a French fleet in the Solent in 1545.

www.maryrose.org

Life outside the workplace

SERVICE and civilian personnel at Clyde Naval Base were given a glimpse of life outside work in the base's new Supermess.

Clubs, welfare organisations, charities and Naval Base departments set up stalls in the new facility to demonstrate the wide range of activities and services available when people are not at work.

These included the HMS Neptune Sailing Centre, the base rowing club, Help for Heroes, the Naval Base Chaplaincy Service, the Defence Fire Service, the MOD Police, the Clyde Learning Centre and Faslane's medical centre and dental department.

Also there were representatives of the Naval Personal and Family Service, who usually operate out of Churchill Square in Helensburgh's Churchill Estate.

For fitness enthusiasts a PT stall was manned by CPOPT Stevie O'Neil, who helped organise the whole event.

Cdr Ian Riches, Clyde's Executive Officer, said: "The event has been a huge success and the Neptune Building Supermess has been the ideal venue."

"By positioning the stalls in the mall it means that we get the passing lunchtime traffic heading to the shops and messes for their meals."

Madron service

PERSONNEL from RN Air Station Culdrose took part in the annual Nelson thanksgiving service and parade at Madron parish church, near Penzance.

The service reflects the fact that the first news of the British victory at Trafalgar was passed to fishermen working in Mounts Bay by HMS Pickle as she made her way home from the battle, and the fishermen carried that news back to port, allowing an announcement to be made from the Assembly Rooms in Penzance on November 4 1805.



● Cpl Sutton of 42 Cdo RM in the Field Kitchen competition

Pictures: Andrew Linnett (DE&S)

Naval Service steps up to the hotplate

NAVY caterers put in their best performance in almost a decade at the Armed Forces' culinary showcase competition.

Exercise Joint Caterer 2010 – formerly the Combined Services Culinary Challenge – brought together more than 400 Service personnel and contract caterers for a three-day blow-out at Sandown Park race course.

And around 70 of them were representing the Senior Service (including the Royal Marines) at the annual flagship event, conducted by Defence Food Services (DFS).

The competition's new name reflects the fact that the skills on show are exactly the same

as those used on operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere, and is part of DFS's overall support of front-line commands.

Over the three days competitors battled it out against their Service rivals, being judged on their technical and craft skills as well as hygiene and safety methods.

Awards are given according to creativity, workmanship, composition and presentation – including taste.

A score in excess of 90 per cent will yield a gold medal, 75 per cent plus means a silver medal, 65 per cent plus a bronze medal and over 55 per cent means a certificate of merit.

The Naval Service Culinary Arts Team (NSCAT), ranging from the most junior chefs and

stewards to senior caterers, picked up eight gold medals, 12 Best in Class awards, 34 silver medals, 24 bronze medals and 16 Certificates of Merit.

That level of performance has not been achieved for nine years.

In one competition a team of military chefs also took on the culinary talents of TV chef Richard Phillips, challenging the celebrity to create gourmet dishes using ingredients from front-line ration packs.

Richard, a regular on *Daybreak* and *Ready Steady Cook*, said: "I have been so impressed by what I have seen today – not only the skills of the chefs but also their creativity in turning these rations into these fantastic dishes."

Also on show was the new lightweight patrol operational ration pack, currently being tested

in Afghanistan.

The pack is designed for troops undertaking patrols of ten to 12 hours, and is half the weight of the current 24-hour multi-climate pack.

New items include beef jerky and, for the first time in a ration pack, a sandwich.

There is also a self-heating bag that can be used to warm up food – an individual flameless heater called 'Hot Pack' allows troops to heat food pouches containing main meals to temperatures of up to 70°C.

With the tenth year of this event deemed a success, planning for Joint Caterer 11 will start in earnest in the New Year.

Those interested in participating and require any further information should contact the Fleet Catering Service Desk.

Who's cooking...

Open Hot Sweet class: Mr J Stock (HMS Nelson), bronze; **Open Duck Dish:** PO S Geldart (Ark Royal), merit; **Junior Lamb Dish:** CH P Hunt (Bulwark), merit; Mr K Ottaway (BRNC), merit; **Senior Fish Dish:** Cpl J Cox (DMLS), silver – best in class; CH G Wootton (RFA), bronze; **Junior Fish Dish:** CH K Taylor (Bulwark), merit; **Junior Chicken Dish:** Mne P Jackson (DMLS), bronze; CH P Greaves (Nelson), merit; **Open Vegetarian Dish:** LH S Dunne (RFA), bronze; **Senior Steward Restaurant, Flambé Dish:** LH M Theobald (COMUKTG), silver; **Inter-Service Open Steward Skills:** Std N Murray (Ark Royal), gold – best in class; LStd M Theobald (COMUKTG), silver; Std C Cormack (Bulwark), silver; **POSTd W Champs (Cornwall), silver; Std E Stewart (Ark Royal), silver; Std D Yevo (Nelson), silver; Std C Dungey (DMLS), silver; Std N Murray (Ark Royal), silver; Std A Tagivetaua (Ark Royal), silver; Std M Bridge (Ark Royal), silver; Std C Cannel (Nelson), silver; Inter-Service Senior Chef of the Year:** LCH D Wilson (CINCFLEET), merit; LCH A Jones (Bulwark), bronze; Cpl T Merrick (42 Cdo), bronze; **Inter-Service Junior Chef of the Year:** CH K Taylor (Bulwark), gold – best in class; CH S O'Garro (RNAS Culdrose), silver; CH H Grant (Culdrose), silver; **Inter-Service Open Cook and Serve:** CH G Wootton (RFA), bronze; LCH S Dunne (RFA), bronze; **POSTd W Champs (Cornwall), bronze; Sgt P Wilson (CTCRM), merit; Cpl R Wright (539 ASRM), merit; LCH D Price (SHAPE), merit; CH R Dale (Gloucester), silver; **POSTd P Robinson (DMLS), Gold – best in class; CH D Price (SHAPE), silver; Mne Urhegyi****

(FPGRM), bronze; Mne Gills (CLR RM), bronze; **Std C Dungey (DMLS), bronze; POC S Geldart (Ark Royal), merit; POC P Pringle (Bulwark), merit; LStd M Theobald (COMUKTG), merit; Inter-Service Open Field, Team Challenge:** Cpl T Merrick (42 Cdo RM), bronze; Cpl S Sutton (42 Cdo RM), bronze; Mne McCormick (42 Cdo RM), bronze; Cpl R Sexton (CHF Yeovil), silver; CH Walkers (CHF Yeovil), silver; Mne Hickey (CHF Yeovil), silver; Mne S Fowler (30 Cdo IX Gp), bronze; Mne Fairbank (30 Cdo IX Gp), bronze; Mne S Bruckshaw (30 Cdo IX Gp), bronze; Sgt B Broadhurst (CTCRM), gold; Mne R Blair (CTCRM), gold; CH Taper (CTCRM), gold; **Inter-Service Parade de Chef:** POC M Rowberry (RFA), silver – best in class; LHC T McAlpine (RFA), silver – best in class; LHC P Moon (RFA), silver – best in class; CH G Wootton (RFA), silver – best in class; **Front of House Parade de Chef:** CPOS J Brown (RFA – DMLS), silver; Std C Cannel (Nelson), silver; eight RFA trainees (DMLS), silver times eight; **Inter-Service Mystery Box:** CH K Taylor (Bulwark), merit; LStd M Theobald (COMUKTG), merit; **Senior Centre Piece:** Mrs M Conn (CTCRM), gold – best in class; **Senior Decorative Cake:** C/Sgt S Edwards (DMLS), silver; Mr P Roberts (DMLS), silver; Mr P Roberts (DMLS), gold – best in class; **Junior Decorative Cake:** CH R Cull (DMLS), merit – best in class; CH L Hutchinson (DMLS), merit; **Inter-Service Open Team Buffet:** LCH R Hoopy (Culdrose), bronze; POC M Rowberry (RFA), bronze; LHC T McAlpine (RFA), bronze; CH K Taylor (Bulwark), bronze; CH P Hunt (Bulwark), bronze; LHC D Wilson (CINCFLEET), bronze; **Raised Game Pie:** Mne M Whittle (FPGRM), silver; **Manager Award:** POC M Rowberry (RFA), best in class.

● A critical moment for the Royal Navy team in the heat and serve competition at Combined Services Culinary Challenge

Sultan team tours World War 1 battlefields

ENGINEERS from HMS Sultan retraced the bloody footsteps of Naval heroes when they made a pilgrimage to the Somme and Passchendaele.

A team of 20 officers and ratings from the Gosport training establishment spent three days in France and Belgium touring the former battlefields of the Royal Naval Division.

The Division, formed from sailors without ships at the beginning of the Great War, served with distinction in the Dardanelles and the Western Front throughout the four years of Armageddon.

It fiercely clung on to its Naval roots – retaining RN ranks and terminology, with battalions named for Naval heroes such as Nelson, Anson and Hood – and, by the war's end, was regarded by Churchill as one of the very finest units Britain dispatched to the front.

In earning such accolades and glory, the RND paid a dreadful price: come Armistice Day in 1918, the Division suffered 47,953 casualties killed or wounded – 40 per cent of the Royal Navy's entire losses during the war and three times the Division's 1914 strength.

To educate students (and staff) in the deeds of the sailor-soldiers, the establishment's Defence and Political Studies section organised a visit to the killing fields, taking in all the Division's major battle sites – the Somme and Ancre, Gavrelle (Arras), Vimy Ridge, Passchendaele and Ypres.

A short service and laying of wreaths was held at the Division's memorials at Beaucourt and Gavrelle, while Lt Brendan Wallis RNZN laid a wreath to his countrymen at the New Zealand Memorial in Gravenstafel, near Passchendaele.

There was more wreath laying in one of the iconic war monuments, the imposing Menin Gate in Ypres, which lists the names of the missing and sees the town's fire brigade perform the *Last Post* nightly.

It fell to the youngest trainee from Sultan, LET Stephen Little, to place a wreath as a pipe band performed *Abide With Me*. As he did so, the hairs rose on the backs of the necks of the engineers.

"This is a completely different experience to that of Normandy; here there isn't the personal stories, but the tale of a generation," said Sqn Ldr John Cairns, one of the organisers of the tour.

Lt Andy Young added: "When visiting the many cemeteries dotted among the battlefields, you're often struck by the incongruous fouled anchor headstone of an RND matelot, most often without a name."

Sultan runs two battlefield tours annually; one in the summer to Normandy, the second, in the autumn, to the Western Front.

Personnel interested in attending should contact Sqn Ldr Cairns or Lt Young on 93843 2354.

Launch Medusa is rededicated

THE Princess Royal has rededicated HMS Medusa, the wartime harbour defence motor launch, in Portsmouth Naval Base.

During her visit to the base Princess Anne met many of the ship's crew who have assisted with the restoration project, as well as representatives of organisations which have provided funding.

Medusa, built in Poole in 1943, was at the Normandy Landings and went on to become a survey vessel post-war.

She ended her service with the Royal Navy in 1968 and is now in the care of the Medusa Trust, acting as a memorial to those who served in the class of vessel.

The rededication ceremony marks the end of a five-year project which saw her refitted in Hythe with the help of the Heritage Lottery Fund – the project also helped train young shipwrights in traditional materials.

www.hmsmedusa.org.uk





Operational Languages

Opportunities to learn Arabic, Dari, Pashtu

The Directorate of Joint Capabilities are looking for personnel to learn operational languages. Applications are invited from Officers up to OF3 and other Ranks at any level, with at least 2 years seniority within their Service, to undertake language training.

Courses are conducted at the Defence School of Languages (DSL) Beaconsfield twice yearly, and we are currently inviting applications for the May 2011 and October 2011 courses. The courses last 15 months, and on completion you will deploy for 6 months as a Military Linguist to Afghanistan, CNATT, Umm Qasr, or UK MCC Bahrain.

Applicants who successfully complete the course will also be eligible for a financial award under the Defence Operational Language Award Scheme (DOLAS – DIN 2009DIN01-192). You will also qualify for additional operational language pay.

Selection is by interview, and candidates must be physically fit. Applicants must also have been released by their manning authorities for the language training and subsequent operational tour.

For further information and an application form see the following DIN: 2010DIN07-089, or contact CPO (AWT) Paul Baynes on (civ) 01980 615362, (mil) 94344 5362, or email wo-lcg@dolsu.mod.uk or DOLSU- LCG-WO.

Postal enquiries should be sent to:

Defence Operational Language Support Unit,
Bldg 1D,
Trenchard Lines,
Upavon,
PEWSEY,
Wiltshire SN9 6BE



Big screen berets

RUNNING ashore from an Offshore Raiding Craft, these Royal Marines from Mike and Lima Companies, 42 Commando, are about to hit the big screen.

From December 17 they're fronting the new-look nationwide recruiting campaign for the Corps, courtesy of a series of advertisements.

Directing the action in the four 30-second promotionals is TV/big screen director Susanna White (behind *Nanny McPhee* and *the Big Bang*), while cameraman Shane Hurlbut was director of photography for the blockbuster *Terminator Salvation*.

The campaign is due to run for three years and continues the existing recruiting theme – Royal Marines Commando: It's a State of Mind.

The advert receives its premiere in conjunction with the remake of the Disney sci-fi classic *Tron*, released nationwide eight days before Christmas.

Of the four adverts, one is generic, one is aimed at potential commando officers, another for the ranks, and one for reservists. Which advert airs in cinemas will depend on the current push for recruits.

The theme is the importance of the green beret (indeed, for much of the adverts you'll see only the top half of the marines' heads – the emphasis is very much on the coveted beret).

The footage was filmed on the Auriga deployment during the summer, with the team spending time with HM Ships Albion and Ocean off North Virginia and ashore at the US Marine Corps base of Camp Lejeune, where Auriga reached its climax.

There was more filming closer to home in and around Lympstone, working closely with the Corps Colonel Dept, Lt Col Matt Jackson and Capt Scotty Mills to capture footage of RM recruits under training.

"The new adverts provide the perfect message that we're looking to get across: the emphasis is on the Green Beret, its importance, the ethos behind achieving it," said WO2 Andrew Buckley of the Captain of Naval Recruiting.

As well as being shown on the big screen, the campaign will receive an airing on TV as well as the Internet.

Picture: PO(Phot) Nicola Harper, CNR



THE UNITED KINGDOM
HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE

Editor of Sailing Directions

The United Kingdom Hydrographic Office is the organisation behind the highly successful and trusted Admiralty brand, providing comprehensive world coverage of navigational charts, digital products and services to the mariner and international shipping.

If you are an experienced mariner with excellent writing skills, an aptitude for researching and assessing nautical information, possess good interpersonal skills and have a desire to apply your experience to a position ashore, the UKHO invites you to apply for a position as an Editor of Sailing Directions. The position involves the compiling and editing of sailing direction publications that are part of the worldwide Admiralty series.

There is an emphasis on continuing and maintaining a positive working relationship with port authorities and liaising with maritime authorities.

In this position you will create and maintain Sailing Directions, which need to be constantly updated. You will be responsible for assessing navigational significant information and liaison with other departments within the UKHO.

You will need considerable experience in shipping and navigation. You should be able to demonstrate a good level of English literacy and interpersonal skills, pay great attention to detail, exercise sound judgement, and have a good IT aptitude.

Starting pay will be based on experience and will be performance related. 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.

Please visit 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. Tel: 01823 723353, e-mail: recruitment@ukho.gov.uk

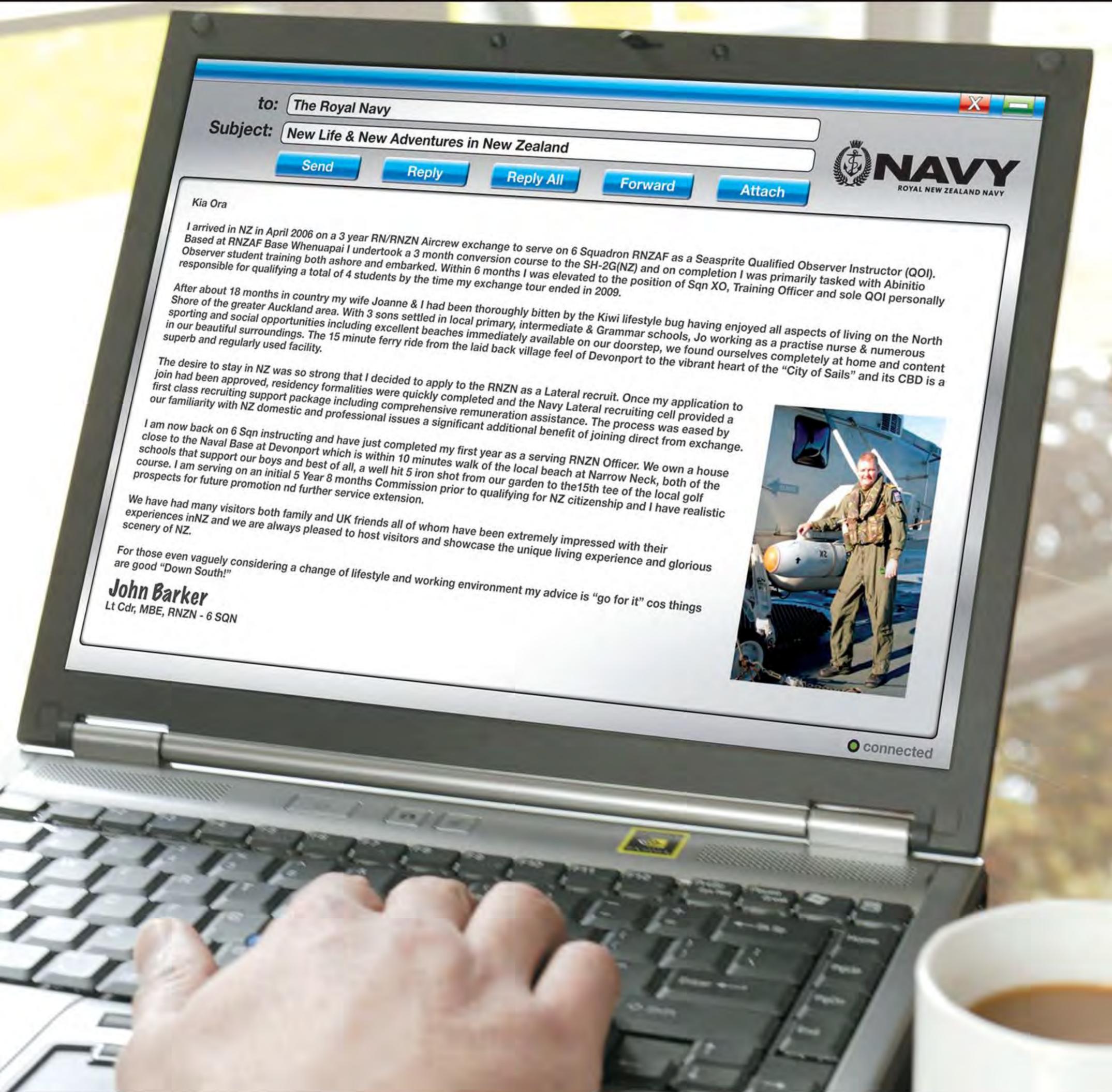
ADMIRALTY
CHARTS AND PUBLICATIONS

The MoD is an Equal Opportunities employer and seeks to reflect the diverse community it serves. Applications are welcome from anyone who meets the stated requirements.



100% NEW

NEW LIFESTYLE. NEW ADVENTURES. NEW ZEALAND. NAVY



to: The Royal Navy

Subject: New Life & New Adventures in New Zealand

Send

Reply

Reply All

Forward

Attach



Kia Ora

I arrived in NZ in April 2006 on a 3 year RN/RNZN Aircrew exchange to serve on 6 Squadron RNZAF as a Seasprite Qualified Observer Instructor (QOI). Based at RNZAF Base Whenuapai I undertook a 3 month conversion course to the SH-2G(NZ) and on completion I was primarily tasked with Abinitio Observer student training both ashore and embarked. Within 6 months I was elevated to the position of Sqn XO, Training Officer and sole QOI personally responsible for qualifying a total of 4 students by the time my exchange tour ended in 2009.

After about 18 months in country my wife Joanne & I had been thoroughly bitten by the Kiwi lifestyle bug having enjoyed all aspects of living on the North Shore of the greater Auckland area. With 3 sons settled in local primary, intermediate & Grammar schools, Jo working as a practise nurse & numerous sporting and social opportunities including excellent beaches immediately available on our doorstep, we found ourselves completely at home and content in our beautiful surroundings. The 15 minute ferry ride from the laid back village feel of Devonport to the vibrant heart of the "City of Sails" and its CBD is a superb and regularly used facility.

The desire to stay in NZ was so strong that I decided to apply to the RNZN as a Lateral recruit. Once my application to join had been approved, residency formalities were quickly completed and the Navy Lateral recruiting cell provided a first class recruiting support package including comprehensive remuneration assistance. The process was eased by our familiarity with NZ domestic and professional issues a significant additional benefit of joining direct from exchange.

I am now back on 6 Sqn instructing and have just completed my first year as a serving RNZN Officer. We own a house close to the Naval Base at Devonport which is within 10 minutes walk of the local beach at Narrow Neck, both of the schools that support our boys and best of all, a well hit 5 iron shot from our garden to the 15th tee of the local golf course. I am serving on an initial 5 Year 8 months Commission prior to qualifying for NZ citizenship and I have realistic prospects for future promotion and further service extension.

We have had many visitors both family and UK friends all of whom have been extremely impressed with their experiences in NZ and we are always pleased to host visitors and showcase the unique living experience and glorious scenery of NZ.

For those even vaguely considering a change of lifestyle and working environment my advice is "go for it" cos things are good "Down South!"

John Barker

Lt Cdr, MBE, RNZN - 6 SQN



connected

We are recruiting now! There are vacancies in a variety of branches, especially Electronic Warfare Specialist (Leading Hand), Marine Engineering Specialisation (Petty Officer & Lieutenant), Hydrographic (Leading Hand, Petty Officer, & Chief Petty Officer), Communications Operator (Leading Hand), & Divers (Leading Hand). Visit our website for more information: www.navy.mil.nz/join-us/uk



Talented Tykes pick up awards

THREE talented Sea Cadets from Yorkshire and the Humber have been awarded the prestigious Lord Lieutenant's Certificate in recognition of their outstanding service during their time in the Corps.

LC Tabitha Wood has been a member of York unit for four years, and is a leading light in the group's fundraising and community events.

A member of the unit's band – and having recently gained a drummer's badge – Tabitha has also managed to gain selection for two sea voyages.

Tabitha said: "Being a cadet has given me so many opportunities to pick up new skills, meet new people and get involved in great initiatives that I'm sure will benefit me in my future."

POC Lloyd Glanville, of Hull unit, joined the Corps seven years ago and has gained a Level 2 Award with the Institute of Leadership and Management.

As a cadet he has learned advanced sailing and communication skills, and was selected ahead of 2,000 other candidates for the first Sea Cadet Aviation Course.

Lloyd, who would like to become a doctor and join the Royal Navy as an officer, also took part in an international exchange to Hong Kong.

POC Holly Craven, of Wakefield unit, has in four years progressed to the highest rank within the cadet movement.

She recently became a Junior Sea Cadet instructor and is the unit Guard Commander.

As part of her unit's rifle drill display team, Holly was invited to take part in the Trafalgar Day parade in London last year, and she was chosen as TS Wakefield's Cadet of the Year.

Col Carron Snagge, Chief Executive of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association (RFCA) in Yorkshire and the Humber, said: "The Lord Lieutenant's Certificate is a prestigious award that recognises cadets who have performed above expectations."

"I'm delighted for Tabitha, Lloyd and Holly, who are shining examples of what can be achieved when young people involve themselves in extra-curricular activities."

Manx trip for Corps Captain

THE CAPTAIN Sea Cadets has paid a visit to the Isle of Man unit TS Manxman.

On his first official visit to the island in his Corps role, Capt Mark Windsor spent an afternoon looking over the unit's boating facilities in Port St Mary and meeting with officials from the Isle of Man government.

In the evening Capt Windsor attended a routine evening's activities at the unit, where he watched the cadets in action and spoke to the youngsters and the volunteers.

The cadets were a little nervous at first, but were soon chatting quite happily about their lessons, their experiences and their ambitions.

Capt Windsor, and North West Area Officer Lt Col John Davies RM, who accompanied him, were impressed with the rise in recruitment figures since March, and enjoyed being able to talk to members of the unit on an informal level.

Unit chairman John Tottenham said: "With over 400 Sea Cadet units in the Corps, the captain is unlikely to be able to pay a return visit to the Isle of Man for some time, but for TS Manxman it was a day in their history that won't be forgotten."



● WO Scott Stephenson RN with fellow judges at Crowborough

Naval perspective

AIR Cadets in the South of England were given a different perspective in their annual drill competition when a Navy expert was drafted in to help with the judging.

The Sussex Wing Field Weekend at Crowborough Camp was held in the early autumn, but it was a chance conversation at a family gathering last Christmas which resulted in WO Scott Stephenson, who serves at Dartmouth, pitching up at the competition.

Ft Lt Trishia Welsh, the Sussex Wing media and communications officer, put the proposition to Scott, her cousin, and he was happy to help out.

"There was no doubt that Scott was a hit with the rest of

the judging team and the cadets themselves," said Trishia.

"The other judges were of one voice when they said Scott had been massively fair in his marking of the cadet drill teams."

His scribe for the weekend, Sgt Rose Atherton, of 249 (Hailsham) Sqn, said: "Scott is easy to get on with, and the cadets have responded to his constructive criticism about their drill," while Sussex Wing Warrant Officer Colin Cordell described Scott as "a breath of fresh air," adding they would like to see him judging again next year.

Scott, who puts New Entry officers through their paces at BRNC, had nothing but praise for the cadets' standard of drill.

Ruislip galley opened

THE Mayor of Hillingdon, has formally opened the new galley at Ruislip unit.

Cllr David Yarrow was met by a Guard of Honour and inspected the cadets of TS Pelican on parade before opening the galley.

He sent on to tour the unit, speaking to cadets in their classes and presenting certificates.

The galley has recently been completely refurbished with a new cooker, sink unit, working surfaces and cupboards, and the opportunity was taken to install new doors.

TS Pelican raised 75 per cent of the costs of the project through local fundraising, with the rest being provided in the form of a grant from the local authority.

The new facility means that cadets can now undertake cook-stewarding classes, which have already begun.

During the evening the mayor presented canoeing certificates to Junior Cadets and warmly congratulated Marine Cadets George Wheeler and Jamie Hand, and OC Jennie Major, who each won three gold medals in the Sea Cadet district swimming gala, held at Barnet the previous weekend.

Ruislip collected 14 medals overall and finished second.

Ruislip also made an impact at the national sailing regatta in Southport when MC Oliver Di Bartolo won three bronze medals for yachting which contributed to the London Area team taking first place in the class.

Unit CO PO (SCC) James Parkinson said: "We were delighted to host a visit from the Mayor and to have the opportunity to show him what young people are able to achieve."

"The new galley which the Mayor opened marks a further step in our intention to provide facilities which help to widen the range of opportunities and new skills for our cadets to develop."

Lots of winners but South take honours

THE sun shone on Southport – and on the South in particular – during this year's national sailing regatta.

For it was the team from the opposite end of England which took the overall title as sailors and windsurfers battled it out at the seaside resort in Lancashire.

For much of the competition a moderate (if rather chilly) northerly wind blew down the Marine Lake, giving dozens of youngsters the chance to demonstrate their abilities in challenging conditions.

Although the South took the top title, successes were shared. The Open Bosun class was the only one which the South won outright, with the Ashford pairing of LCs Minshaw and Goldsmith winning two races and coming third in the other two to edge the North-West's Wallasey boat, crewed by LCs Bishop and Gibbins, into second place.

With the South's other dinghy, sailed by LC Baxendale and AC Bailey of Reigate unit, taking third spot, the South prevailed over the North-West (also represented by Blackpool) in second place and Northern Ireland (Carrickfergus and NI District) third.

The Junior Topper class was won by Eastern area, represented by Peterborough (Cdt Stow) and Mansfield (AC Hart), who took second and third spot respectively in the individual competition.

Joint second spot went to London (OCs Goddard and Marshall-Camm, both of Thurrock) and South (OC Barr of Gosport and OC Kinsley of Portsmouth), with the individual



● Southern Area sailors LC Baxendale and AC Bailey compete in the Bosun class

honours going to Cdt Martindale, of Bristol Adventure (South-West), who won three races and came second in the fourth.

The Open Pico title went to the South-West, with LC Metcalf of Torfaen notching two wins to take second place and POC Conboy (Coventry) also scoring a win to take third.

The individual winner was OC Norcross, of the local Southport unit, and his team – North-West – took second place, the other boat being sailed by OC Bojitchkov (Buxton).

Eastern's Mansfield pairing of

ACs Cotterill and Tinker managed third spot.

The Open PY class was taken by London's team of MC2 Dibartolo (Ruislip) and POC Chandler/AC Andrews (Walton-on-the-Naze), with North-West second (Cdt Middleton of Sefton took the individual title, while colleagues LC Essex and AC Naden of Buxton managed ninth) and South third (OC Kinsley of Portsmouth and LC Evans of Reigate).

Eastern swept the board in windsurfing, with Cpl Daldry (Hinckley), LC Rixon (Northampton) and OC Sedal

(Scunthorpe) winning the three classes.

That cemented Eastern's place alongside the South-West in second place just behind the South in the overall competition, with the North-West fourth, London fifth and the North and Northern Ireland joint sixth.

Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor said: "It is clear that our cadets enjoyed the event, with the competition fierce and the sailing skills on display a tremendous credit to the training given by our dedicated instructors throughout the year."

Warspite hails great river racers

THE Great River Race is not just about a great river race...

There is far more to the event than just a 21-mile row along the tidal Thames through central London, notwithstanding headwinds, a helpful fast tide and choppy water.

At least that was the experience of the 1st Cuddington (Warspite) Sea Scouts – although one victory and some spirited rowing certainly made their entry worthwhile.

'The Young Ones' – David Redrup, Andrew Lavington, Nicholas Moriarty, Sophie Mansell and Piers Reucroft, coxed by Don Everitt (pictured) – powered through in 3h 51m 8s to easily win the U14 trophy, also notching fourth place in the U16 category, being the first Warspite boat home, and finishing eighth in the Scout Affiliated class.

The Explorer team – Rob Stratton, Jack Lockyer, Gail Adam, Christine Stevenson and Kean Tilley, coxed by Emma Grant – not only gamely dressed as fairies, but also rowed their hearts out



– their reward was a narrow win over neighbouring unit Ajax.

The Dads and Friends team, many of whom have little rowing experience, put in an impressive time of 4h 10m, giving them 12th place in the Scout Affiliated class – and they raised more than £900 in sponsorship for the group.

And a team including new Group Scout Leader Richard Hunt raised more than £400 for Everyman, which works in the field of prostate and testicular cancer, with HSBC promising to double this.

There was also the training – in

the case of Richard's crew, only one person had a rowed a gig before, and their finishing time of 4h 17m was in part due to a hard two-hour stint one cold Sunday morning.

And there was the logistical side. Warspite elected to tow their four gigs to the start at Greenwich using a team of boats made up of Warspite, a Hardy Pilot, diesel launch Luxton and a RIB.

When it became apparent that a number of other Thames Sea Scout groups were having difficulties, their boats were added to the 1st Cuddington tow, which meant they

left Thames Ditton at 3am on the Saturday with 17 gigs in tow, which were at the start by just after 8am – a terrific effort by Gareth Thomas, Alan Pearson, Ian Smalley, Gareth Weeks, Peter Wadsworth, Tim Hampton and rowing reserves Charlie and Lauren.

The U14s win was particularly noteworthy, as their gig had been donated 18 months ago, severely damaged and holed.

Hard work reversed the damage, and this year's race was the first time it had been rowed since restoration.

Corps mourns stalwart

A SEA Cadet stalwart has died at the age of 81 after more than 50 years of involvement with the Corps.

Lt Cdr (SCC) John Lewington RNR (ret'd) first joined the Corps in 1949, and went on to become Commanding Officer of TS Hornet at Gosport and District Officer for Central District in Southern Area.

In civilian life John worked for the National Westminster bank, retiring as the manager of Portsea branch in 1989, and he was also an active member of the Royal Naval Association and the Duke of York Association.

Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor paid tribute to the "remarkable" motivation and commitment of volunteers such as John, adding: "I can only imagine the number of young people who will have gone onto much more fulfilling lives as a result of his selfless dedication."

John's contribution to the Corps is commemorated in the annual Central District competition, in which cadets compete for the Lewington Trophy.

Coastal trek

CADETS from North Wales participated in the annual poppy walk, trekking from Colwyn Bay to Rhyl.

The weather for the 13-mile stroll was good and the cadets enjoyed the opportunity to help raise money for the Royal British Legion through their sponsors.

By the end there were a few sore feet, but also smiles all round for achieving their goal.

One young participant, although admitting to being weary, asked whether they could repeat the exercise again the following week.

Cadets excel in 'vital role'

THERE is precision. Then there is military precision. Then there is Sea Cadet precision...

With so many elements to co-ordinate, the Sea Cadets' Trafalgar Day Parade in London requires masterful planning, hard practice and cool heads.

The parade ground is not ideal; Trafalgar Square is full of obstacles (fountains, steps, the odd column) and as well as serried ranks of tourists there was a full house of top brass and other dignitaries sitting on a makeshift grandstand along the steps on the northern side of the square.

But if they felt the pressure the participants didn't show it.

Tameside unit's six-strong display team turned on the style to impress onlookers on their window ladder, then the National Sea Cadet Physical Training Display Team took over with a demonstration of the Hornpipe and club-swinging – an echo of the old exhortation to 'dance and skylark,' according to the commentary.

The formal parade then started to form up, with platoons of Sea, Royal Marines, Army and Air Cadets marching onto the square – this year being the 150th anniversary of the cadet movement, the Sea Cadets' big day was opened up to the sister youth organisations.

The distant sound of military music gradually rose above the traffic, heralding the arrival of the Massed Band of the Corps, which performed with aplomb in the confines of that part of the square

north of Nelson's Column.

The arrival of the various ceremonial guards and a further element of the band – which seamlessly and slickly combined with the massed band – meant the parade was ready for inspection by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, who had watched proceedings with Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox.

And as Admiral Stanhope rose from his seat to carry out his review, Big Ben struck midday, indicating that the whole event was running with impeccable accuracy – a tribute to parade commander Lt Cdr Brian Moir, Northern Area Staff Officer Ceremonial, instructors and participants; the average age of the cadets on parade was 14 and they had had just three days' intensive practice.

Navy Board Cadets had prominent roles in the programme, with PO Paul Huggett (Southern) having the honour of bearing part of the Ensign that covered Nelson's coffin at his funeral in 1806 – a section was torn from the flag by sailors from HMS Victory and divided into scraps as his men sought a keepsake of the Admiral.

The Guard and Colour Party was provided by Northern and North-West Areas, while POC Rhianna Chilton of Fishguard unit, the South-West Area Navy Board Cadet, read Nelson's Prayer.

With a march-past rounding off formalities, the focus of the day moved half-a-mile along the Mall to Lancaster House, where a reception was held.

And it was another chance for

the cadets to shine in a different role – among those meeting and greeting or serving food and drinks were members of Hornchurch, Walton-on-the-Naze, Clacton and Colchester units.

Dr Fox said: "It was a really wonderful day which saw the bringing together of our heritage, our professionalism and our volunteers, Naval personnel and the cadets."

"The cadets did great honour to themselves, to their Service and to their country, and it was heartening to see the crowds round Trafalgar Square applauding them as they left – and it shows the vital role the cadets have in enhancing that link between the Armed Forces and the public."

"I was very proud, and not a little moved, by what I saw today."

Captain Sea Cadet Capt Mark Windsor said: "We have just enjoyed a brilliant commemoration of Admiral Lord Nelson's great victory at Trafalgar, and it provided a remarkable insight into what the uniformed cadet experience does for our young people."



● (Above) Tameside unit's window ladder display team perform at the foot of Nelson's Column in Trafalgar Square. (Below) The Massed Band of the Sea Cadet Corps performs

Pictures: PO(Phot) Amanda Reynolds



Parade roster

MORE than 70 units were represented at the parade in London, including those with roles in the service itself.

The participating units included: Aberdeen, Arbroath, Barrow-in-Furness, Birkenhead, Birmingham (Sherbourne), Birmingham (Vernon), Cambridge, Cheshunt, Chester, Chester-le-Street, Chippenham, Croydon, Dalbeattie, Dartford and Crayford, Dunbar, Dundee, East Kilbride, Edgware and Mill Hill, Edinburgh (Trinity), Edmonton, Enfield, Feltham and Hounslow, Finchley, Fleetwood, Gateshead, Grangemouth, Greenock, Harrogate, Hartlepool, Herne Bay, High Wycombe, Huntingdon, Huyton with Roby, Jarrow, Kettering, Kingston and District, Leith, Liverpool (City), Methil, Morecambe and Heysham, Musselburgh, Newcastle East, North Shields, Nottingham, Perth, Peterhead, Preston, Rhyl, Richmond, Ruislip, Runcorn, North Shields, Sefton, South Shields, Southwark, St Helens, Stafford and Rugeley, Stonehaven, Stretford and Urmston, Sutton Coldfield, Tameside, Tooting and Balham, Tunbridge Wells, Wallasey, Wallsend, Waltham Forest, Warrington, Weston-super-Mare, Whitstable and York.

More than 300 Sea Cadets were on duty on the big day.

Diana group renew link to Stonehaven

HMS Diana was commissioned in 1954 – the same year that TS Carron, the Stonehaven Sea Cadet unit, was established.

An obvious link, as acknowledged by the HMS Diana Association, a relative youngster having been established 18 years back.

"Our association members thought that it was the right time to resurrect our relationship as it is extremely important to keep the Senior Service to the forefront," said association secretary S/M John Fisher.

"With all the defence cuts taking place, and sadly seeing a shrinking Royal Navy, we feel it is imperative to support and help the Sea Cadets who will be our future Royal Navy."

The formal affiliation/adoption of TS Carron won unanimous support at the association's recent AGM.

"Our members are now looking forward to a constructive and long association and are very excited and enthusiastic about the future," said S/M Fisher.

"We are now in communication with the CO of the unit and between us we will establish a programme to enable the HMS Diana Association to ensure that all our efforts are directed in the best way for the TS Carron Sea Cadets."

First-aid hat-trick for Stockport From unit padre to Top Bish...

FOR the third year running, Royal Marine Cadets from Stockport unit won their class at the National Cadet Inter-Service First Aid Championship.

L/Cpl Adam McMillan, RMC1 Robert Edwards and RMC2s Gemma Gibson and Michael Broomhead competed against Sea Cadet teams from all over the UK as well as teams from the Army Cadet Force, Air Cadet Corps and Combined Cadet Force to win gold at the event, staged at Sandhurst Military Academy.

The team's achievement won them a place at the International Grand Priors First Aid Competition, competing against elite teams from St John Ambulance, St Andrew Ambulance, and from other services from across the British Isles and Malta, coming a very creditable fourth in their class.

This year's event was especially well-attended because of Cadet 150 celebrations, so to maintain the high standard previously achieved was particularly impressive.

Their instructor, Sgt (SCC) Bill Felstead, commended the team on their performance and said: "The team worked really hard and have



● The winning team from TS Hawkins, with instructor Sgt (SCC) Bill Felstead

done really well, particularly since three of the team members are new to the competition this year." Congratulations were added

from S/Lt (SCC) Anna Squires RNR, OIC of TS Hawkins, and Lt Cdr (SCC) Jim Garner RNR, Manchester District Officer.

HERTFORDSHIRE District welcomed a former colleague back as a VIP guest to their Trafalgar Night dinner.

The Ven John Green, outgoing Chaplain of the Fleet, found time in a busy schedule to attend the event with his wife Jan.

District Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) Margaret Coates RNR welcomed John before he gave his address and toasted the Immortal Memory.

But before he could do that, he was introduced by his first Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr (SCC) Ian Cowell, who was in charge of the St Albans unit.

"In 1985 St Albans unit was without an active unit chaplain," said Lt Cdr Cowell.

"The Rev John Green turned up at the unit and introduced himself as the curate of St Julian's Church and, as we were in his parish, felt he could offer spiritual guidance.

"For a short while John visited once a month; however, his visits became more regular and it wasn't long before he became a regular

attendee, throwing himself into the role of unit chaplain.

"One of the cadets died, and John was on hand to counsel both cadets and staff and subsequently conduct the funeral.

"John became an instant hit with the cadets and a friend to everybody.

"John asked me about the RN Chaplaincy Service as his curacy was coming to an end.

"I put him in touch with the RN recruiting service, who in turn directed him to the office of the Chaplain of the Fleet.

"The next thing I knew, John asked me for a reference and in 1991 he joined the Royal Navy as a chaplain. The rest, as they say, is history."

In his address, John made reference to the importance of his service with the Sea Cadets in preparation or his role as a chaplain in the Senior Service.

"It is with sadness that I leave my service with the Royal Navy, but fitting to finish where I started over 20 years ago," he said.



SUPPORT YOUR SEA CADETS

Volunteer, donate or even leave a legacy

Visit sea-cadets.org or call 020 7654 7000

SEA CADETS

A charity registered in England and Wales 313013 and in Scotland SC037608



● Pearly royalty at the gathering in the Guildhall Square in London

A right royal knees-up

SOUTHWARK Sea Cadets mixed with royalty at a celebration in London to mark the change of the seasons.

Pearly kings and queens from boroughs across the capital gathered in the square outside the Guildhall in the City of London for a lively programme of events, including maypole and morris dancing.

A pipe band and marching band provided music, mayors and dignitaries in red robes with gold chains paraded, there were people from Rochester in Dickensian costume, there were donkeys with carts and veteran cars and even the odd hobby horse prancing about.

And the cadets from TS Cossack were prominent at the annual event, demonstrating their whole-hearted commitment to the local community.

Meanwhile, two members of the unit have reaped the reward of months of hard work.

Callum Malone has completed his Silver Duke of Edinburgh Award, which involved extensive commitment in sections titled volunteering, skills, physical and expedition.

Callum is now planning to crack on with the Gold Award.

And Kerry Szmidi notched up her second BTEC Level 2 Diploma in music in less than 12 months.

Kerry had to follow a programme of planning, rehearsing and performing in order to gain this prestigious award – the CVQO (Cadet Vocational Qualification Office) NVQ distinction* pass which she achieved is equivalent to four GCSE A-grade passes.

That make four awards at distinction* in less than 12 months for Southwark unit, which they believe makes them one of the highest-performing units in the London Area.



Victory – at last

FINCHLEY unit finally clinched victory in the Chosin Cup expedition training competition – the first in 46 years of trying.

Team captain LC Connor Geraghty also took individual honours by winning the Reg Wheeler Trophy for leadership and navigation.

The competition, held at Longmoor, consisted of navigation

Newburn beat the odds to take sixth burgee

NEWBURN unit has been awarded a Sea Cadet burgee for the sixth year in a row – despite the constraints of a building project at the unit's headquarters.

The prized burgee was presented by Lt Cdr (SCC) David Finlay RNR to the Officer in Command, PO (SCC) Darren Tannock, and unit chairman Lindsay Miller.

In the past year or so Newburn, on the outskirts of Newcastle-on-Tyne, have won the Stephenson Trophy as national powerboat

champions as well as having a Portsmouth Yardstick team at the national sailing regatta, finishing eighth.

Newburn's HQ is currently undergoing £20,000 worth of building work, which includes redeveloping classrooms, the wardroom, toilets, stores, and creating a brand new CO's office.

PO Tannock said the unit's Royal Naval Parade fell bang in the middle of the building work, making preparations for the big day all

the more challenging.

The fact that cadets and staff achieved their aim was down to sheer hard work, getting the place shipshape in time and performing well enough on the night to claim the burgee.

PO Tannock has only been Officer in Command for 18 months, and was an ex-Newburn cadet himself 16 years ago.

PO Tannock said: "It is a great honour to win the burgee at what was my own unit as a cadet."

Queen celebrates 150th anniversary

THE QUEEN helped cadets celebrate the 150th anniversary of the youth organisation in Northern Ireland.

Beginning the second day of a visit to the country, the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh attended a reception at Hillsborough Castle, just outside Belfast to mark the anniversary, which has been celebrated through a series of high-profile events across the UK this year.

Prior to joining around 180 guests in the Throne Room and Drawing Room, the Queen met Brig Edward Smyth-Osbourne, Commander, 38 (Irish) Brigade and Col John Rollins, Chief Executive, Reserve Forces and Cadets Association for Northern Ireland.

The royal guest, accompanied by Brig Smyth-Osbourne, then met cadets aged between 14 and 17 years and their leaders from a variety of groups.

Meanwhile, in the Drawing



Room, Prince Philip, accompanied by Col Rollins, met a further group of around 60 cadets and leaders.

In Northern Ireland some 3,600 cadets and 500 adult volunteers make up the four cadet forces – the Sea Cadets Corps, the Army Cadet Force, the Air Training Corps and the Combined Cadet Force, whose 1,200 cadets are located at Bangor Grammar School, Campbell College, Foyle and Londonderry College, Royal Belfast Academical Institution and The Royal School Armagh.

Portrush unit TS Duke of York were represented at the event by cadets Ronan Sherman, Aaron Brogan and Eimile Sherman.



● The Queen meets Sea Cadets and Marine Cadets during a reception to celebrate the Cadet 150 movement at Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland

Prizes at Hastings

CADETS from Hastings unit were presented with a string of awards by a Royal Navy officer.

Cdre John Kingwell was guest of honour at TS Hastings' annual prizegiving night, handing over more than 40 awards in his new role as unit president.

Among those who were congratulated were 11-year-olds Aleisha Whitear and Samuel Mozundar, who were presented with the Commodore's Pennant, the highest award for Junior Cadets.

Elsewhere, 18-year-old Paul Huggett was given his Duke of Edinburgh Award, and numerous comrades of Paul's were congratulated for their work in shooting, church parades, physical training, boat work and a host of other categories.

Combined Forces take over Iveston

TWO cadet units which share an HQ went on a joint activity weekend for the first time in their history.

Newham Cornwell VC unit and 282 Squadron Air Training Corps live side-by-side at the Cornwell VC Cadet Centre in East Ham.

But the visit to TS Iveston, the decommissioned minesweeper which acts as a training facility in Tilbury Docks, was a first for the combined force.

Over the course of the weekend, sea and air cadets were able to take part in sailing, powerboating and pulling activities.

The odd capsized dinghy was not a problem, leading nicely into the Sea Cadet swimming test and water safety certificate – though the ten air cadets could not be persuaded to join in the swimming.

ATC staff were welcomed into the ship's wardroom.

"We undertake many water-based activities in the Air Cadets but not many courses," said Pilot Officer Booty, 282 Squadron's Commanding Officer.

"The Sea Cadets run many courses, and this could be the start of something new for our cadets."

The appropriately-named Cadet Nelson said: "It was something different for me."

"Being placed in command of a deck or the mess was a huge responsibility but I enjoyed it."

"As an Air Cadet it was great to sample another organisation, but I don't think I would trade in a trip in a glider for a session of rowing..."

After discussions with the Executive Officer of Iveston, Newham unit are now planning to hold a combined forces engineering BTEC award, run from their unit and Iveston.

Ipswich agree to share party cash

CADETS at Ipswich have been saving hard for Christmas, putting aside money at stand-easy over the year to ensure a memorable party.

But when they heard that a local school for disabled children had been burgled they knew what had to be done.

Cash taken from the Suffolk School for Parents had been set aside for a Christmas party for the pre-school children with motor learning difficulties.

But staff opening up the charity's premises one morning found that their safe, containing cash and electronic equipment, had been stolen overnight.

The safe was later found empty, dumped beside a main road in the county.

The theft threatened the children's party, as the cash had

been earmarked for presents and food.

Local paper the *Ipswich Evening Star* reported the theft, and that story was spotted by members of TS Orwell.

Without prompting, the cadets agreed to donate half of their savings to the charity to ensure the children's party can go ahead.

Unless they can raise funds quickly, the cadets will settle for a less lavish bash of their own.

Former Sea Cadet officer Mike Parry said: "This goes to show just how much the ethos and training the Sea Cadets provide have moulded the thinking and moral fibre of these young people."

"We should all be very proud of them! They are a credit to themselves, their parents, and of course, the Sea Cadet Corps."



● Capt Mike Walliker presents the Baden-Powell Challenge Award to Fiona

Captain presents top award

OVER the summer nine leaders and helpers from Basingstoke Central District Girlguiding took 20 Brownies and 18 Guides to a sleepover on HMS Belfast as part of the Girlguiding UK centenary celebrations.

One of the Guides, Fiona, had recently completed her Baden-Powell Challenge Award, and when the group found that Type 23 HMS Richmond was alongside the wartime cruiser, they approached the frigate and asked if the Commanding Officer or a member of the wardroom would be able to make the presentation.

And CO Capt Mike Walliker was more than happy to make the presentation himself on board his ship.

The Baden-Powell Challenge Award is the highest award a Guide, from the age of 13, can gain in that age group.

It consists of two parts, ten challenges and the Baden-Powell Challenge Adventure, and the award requires commitment – it is not unusual to take 12-18 months to complete.



● Cadets cycle to Stoke Bruerne to raise money for unit funds

Biking the canal

CADETS at Northampton and Wellingborough unit travelled the waterways to raise funds for their unit – but left their boats behind.

The youngsters and volunteers travelled the eight miles to Stoke Bruerne by bike, bringing in more than £200 for unit activities.

The unit's new Royal Marine Cadet detachment has also stepped up to the mark, undertaking its Staff RM Officers field assessment – and the cadets themselves were so pleased with the progress they have made that they held a special 'cammo' weekend for unit juniors so that they could demonstrate some of their new skills.

Rushden cadets have made a number of local visits, including a call on the Mayor of Wellingborough and a look round the fire station.

And, as usual, the unit hosted Rushden's annual Trafalgar Day parade, when more than 100 cadets paraded the Colour through the streets led by the Sea Cadet band from Kettering.

Grampian victories

GRAMPIAN District cadets left it late, but an outstanding performance at the Northern Area swimming gala swept the Montrose Trophy from the grasp of Clyde South District at the last sporting event of the year.

The district – comprising Peterhead and Stonehaven units – won all eight of the trophies up for grabs at the gala, held at HMS Caledonia's pool in Rosyth.

So with all the figures in, the final calculation for the Montrose Trophy, for the top sporting district in the North, placed the prize in the hands of the units from the north-east coast of Scotland.

Meanwhile, as *Navy News* went to press, Stonehaven was preparing to welcome the Lord Lieutenant of Kincardineshire, Mrs Carol Kinghorn, to the unit HQ for a presentation evening, during which the guest of honour will meet and inspect cadets and staff.

Writes of passage



Kiwis who could fly

IN LAST year's celebrations of all things Wafu-related, it was perhaps forgotten what a cosmopolitan force the Royal Naval Air Service and Fleet Air Arm were during their two sternest tests.

Indeed, the most recent naval aviation VC was earned not by a Brit, but by Canadian, Robert Hampton Gray.

He made the ultimate sacrifice – as did 179 Kiwis, whose stories are told in the official history, *Flying Navy: New Zealanders Who Flew in the Fleet Air Arm* (FAA Museum of New Zealand, NZ\$60 including P&P – c.£29).

David Allison's book is not a history of the arm he served in (he flew Corsairs in WW2 and later became curator of the New Zealand FAA Museum in Auckland) but an anthology of biographies of the fallen, from the biplane era over the Western Front to the jet age; the last man listed here was killed flying a Sea Hawk on a training mission at Lossiemouth in 1958.

What is clear from the 41-year span covered by this volume is that Kiwis served in every theatre and that naval aviation is a hazardous business, with or without the presence of the foe.

Indeed, a sizeable number of the 179 aviators died in accidents – wings snapped off, engines failed, there was bad weather, bad landings (not a few of those killed 'bounced' off the decks of carriers and fell over the side or smashed into a barrier – often killing deck hands in the process).

No New Zealand naval aviator earned the VC, but reading the accounts here, at least one was deserving.

Lt Cdr Ronald Richardson RNZNVR was among the Fleet Air Arm's most experienced fliers by the summer of 1944 and was given command of the newly-formed 1840 NAS which took part in three strikes against Hitler's last battleship, Tirpitz, in northern Norway.

Richardson possessed, said HMS Indefatigable's captain, "extreme devotion to duty and reckless gallantry".

He hit the Tirpitz twice with 500lb bombs and, for good measure, shot up some floatplanes on the water in the Norwegian fjord.

His luck ran out on the final attack in August 1944. The 27-year-old's Hellcat was subjected to withering flak and crashed into Tirpitz's bridge.

Both Indefatigable's CO and the commander of 1st Cruiser Squadron, Rhoderick McGrigor – a carrier advocate – recommended Richardson for the Victoria Cross.

The Honours and Awards Committee did not agree. From the safety of their committee room they decreed that the late aviator's bravery "did not quite attain the standard" required of a VC winner.

Nor even did the Kiwi earn the next-highest decoration, the DSO; it was not awarded posthumously.

The best those in the corridors of power could afford Ronald Richardson in his day was a Mention in Dispatches.

Thanks to Mr Allison's efforts (sadly he passed away not long after the book's publication), Ronald Richardson and his ilk have belatedly received a more fitting tribute.

Available from Flying Navy, PO Box 31-240, Milford, North Shore, Auckland 0741, New Zealand or by contacting rla.richards@clear.net.nz

THERE has been much written of late about the tragic expedition to find a North West passage led by Capt Sir John Franklin which was never seen again by European eyes after July 1845.

The two recent books by Professor Andrew Lambert have set a new standard, but this has not deterred other writers on the subject such as William Battersby, an investment manager with a long-standing interest in this sad but fascinatingly mysterious affair.

In *James Fitzjames: The Mystery Man of the Franklin Expedition* (History Press, £20 ISBN 978-0-7524-5512-9) he concentrates on the captain of Franklin's flagship, the sail and steam exploration vessel Erebus, whose rather exotic background the author has worked very hard to disentangle, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

Fitzjames, as suggested by his name, was illegitimate. His father was Sir James Gambier, son of Admiral James Gambier who had replaced Howe off New York in the American War of Independence.

Gambier's family interests obtained the 12-year-old Fitzjames a position as a Volunteer Second Class in the frigate HMS Pyramus, commanded by Fitzjames' second cousin Capt Richard Gambier.

Fitzjames' real age and place of birth were falsified in his initial records, a factor which has since created confusion about his background.

The young man was immediately thrust into the varied duties of the 19th-Century Royal Navy, carrying diplomats, engaging in experimental work on ship designs and deployment to Lisbon protecting British interests in the

The Grove Review

Portuguese civil conflict between its royal sons.

Fitzjames' great linguistic abilities made him valuable to Capt Sartorius who had replaced Gambier. Sartorius promoted Fitzjames to Volunteer First Class. He spent only a short time in this rank, however, and in his next ship he reverted to second-class status.

With promotion to officer rank apparently thus ruled out, influence was exerted by his adopted parent and his contacts to get him appointed as a midshipman to HMS Asia and later the 120-gun St Vincent, flagship of the Mediterranean Fleet.

Fitzjames himself was skilfully able to 'run rings round' both the Admiralty and his new Captain to obtain the position he coveted.

He had emerged as a determined and intelligent young man who was impatient, to say the least, with established rules when they did not suit his interests. No wonder he covered his tracks, to the confusion of later historians.

Through a little more economy with the truth Fitzjames passed for mate (sub-lieutenant) and then, rather impetuously, turned down two good ships to engage in exploration – a half-baked scheme led by a rather manic Colonel Chesney to link the Indian Ocean and Mediterranean through Syria and down the Mesopotamian

rivers to Basra.

Fitzjames helped man an iron paddle steamer assembled on the Euphrates, after which it was named.

After a series of rather amazing adventures, which Battersby describes well, Fitzjames returned to Britain to find himself again facing a struggle with promotion to lieutenant which Chesney and the East India Company eventually wrung out of the Admiralty.

Fitzjames next attended the new gunnery school aboard the hulk Excellent at Portsmouth before being appointed to Ganges, deployed to the crisis in the Levant.

The author's description of this campaign is a little confused but it is clear that Fitzjames played a key role in the coastal bombardments as well as being mentioned in despatches for a daring mission ashore at Beirut.

Fitzjames later distinguished himself again in the First China War being quite badly wounded while fighting ashore.

At Singapore he also did a great personal financial favour for the Barrow family, which acquired for him the gratitude and patronage of Sir John Barrow, Secretary to the Lords of the Admiralty.

This led to his appointment to command the sloop Clio, an active and significant ship, and then to an important position on the Franklin expedition, a command that miscarried and ended his promising career.

We have daguerreotypes [early forms of photograph] of Fitzjames taken just before the expedition set out and these are reproduced



Apocalypse (out) now

DIEHARD historians will probably balk at the idea, but the colourised history of WW2, *Apocalypse*, which has just finished screening on Channel 4, breathes fresh life into the subject.

This six-hour series (DVD £19.99 Blu-Ray £29.99) is a mix of authentic WW2 colour film with B&W footage which has been colourised – and done very well indeed.

Apocalypse is not without its flaws. The commentary is lacklustre (although there are some good first-person accounts), the war at sea is somewhat sidelined and as it hails from across the Channel it is very Francocentric (the laughable Saar offensive of 1939 receives more attention than the fall of Poland or Norway...).

Still, the colourisation is a winner; there are some haunting images of the aftermath of battle – all the more poignant because they're no longer monochrome.

■ We have five copies of *Apocalypse* to give away courtesy of Kaleidoscope Home Entertainment.

To win tell us the name of the director of *Apocalypse Now*.

Entries must reach us by midday on Monday January 17 2010.

Send your answer – including your contact details – to apocalypse@navynews.co.uk or Apocalypse Competition, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH.

A sting in the tale

WHEN war came to Europe in 1939, the Royal Navy was in a state of transition from old to new.

The Fleet was a mish-mash of vessels which had served in the Great War (the Revenge class and Queen Elizabeth-class battleships), – and those built in the 1930s to meet the growing international crisis (the King George Vs, Town-class cruisers).

The destroyer fleet was no exception. There were new G and H-class ships. And there were more than five dozen V and Ws – the apotheosis of British destroyer design in the Great War.

Ordered in the later stages of the Great War, some saw action, many did not – among them HMS Venomous, whose stirring story is excellently told by the late Robert Moore and John Rodgaard, who completed his friend's magnum opus.

A Hard Fought Ship (Holywell House, £18.99 ISBN 978-0-9559382-0-7) is a completely updated (and copiously illustrated) edition of a book which first appeared 20 years ago.

Venomous arrived on the scene too late to fight the Germans... but not too late to fight the Bolsheviks. She was sent to the Baltic to help the Estonians shake off the yoke of Moscow.

Thereafter she spent six years on Mediterranean duties before, like most of the V&W fleet, entering reserve.

With the clouds of war gathering, the destroyers were reactivated. They would prove invaluable.

Having helped safely escort the British Expeditionary Force to France in the autumn of 1939, Venomous found herself dispatched (as with many of her V&W sisters) to French shores in the spring of 1940 to evacuate the Tommies.

She was thrown into the cauldron at Boulogne, Calais and finally Dunkirk.

The backbone of the stirring tale of evacuation here is told through the account of the ship's CO, John McBeath. It is a classic of RN understatement; he calls the evacuation a "party", bombing by the Luftwaffe was "a bit of a dusting".

Venomous lived a charmed life at Dunkirk – not one man aboard was killed – and brought home 4,410 soldiers, a quarter of them Frenchmen.

Language barriers hampered the embarkation of the latter. The ship's company used a universal language to urge the *poilus* aboard. "A few blows were struck," recalled CPO Hugh McGeaney.

Damage to Venomous at Dunkirk was slight, but one blast had apparently split a cask of rum in the spirit store. It was a sufficient excuse for McBeath to order Splice the Mainbrace.

After duties in home waters, North Atlantic convoy escorts, a run to Russia shepherding PQ15.

Even though it was May 1942 when the Kola convoy ploughed through the Arctic, it was icy enough on the destroyer's open bridge for a cup of cocoa to cool in a minute "and the dregs in the cup would freeze solid after about five minutes," one junior officer lamented.

Things weren't much better in the Russian port of Polyarny, north of Murmansk.

Soviet hospitality extended to black bread, yak meat, and a film show. A Russian sentry was placed at the foot of the gangway to prevent the Brits going abroad. He was bribed with some scraps from the mess; to show his gratitude,

he nervously shouted "Churchill" and gave the sailors the V sign – V for Victory that is.

One month later and Venomous was in the Mediterranean, first supporting the Malta convoys, then the invasion of North Africa – Operation Torch.

In support of Torch, Venomous was sailing with the depot ship HMS Hecla and HMS Marne on the night of November 11-12 1942 when U515, commanded by U-boat ace Werner Henke, struck.

Hecla was fatally wounded by torpedoes; in echoes of the Hogue-Aboukir-Crecy disaster 30 years earlier, Marne moved in to rescue survivors – only for Henke to blow her stern off.

At this point Venomous struck back, charging at the U-boat, which loosed a torpedo (it missed by a good 30ft). The destroyer responded with a series of depth charges; sadly none damaged their quarry.

Instead, Henke compounded Hecla's misery, sending five torpedoes in all into her dying hull.

The final moments of Hecla's crew, as described here, are as stirring as they are harrowing.

Some men resigned themselves to their fate on her forecastle, singing *Abide With Me* and the naval hymn. Others sought to save themselves, leaping into the Mediterranean in the hope of clinging on to a Carley float – but there were too many men in the water and too few floats.

More than 550 men were rescued, many picked up by Venomous. Just short of 280 sailors died. One of the destroyer's crew was haunted by "the cries and curses of those who had to be left behind, a horrible sound."

It is such accounts which make *A Hard Fought Ship* a must-read.



INDEPENDENT PUBLISHER
SEEKS NEW NAVAL AND MILITARY BOOKS FOR PUBLICATION
 For further details please write to:
Melrose Books (ref: NN)
 St. Thomas Place
 Ely, Cambridgeshire, CB7 4GG, UK

 Phone: 01353 646608 Fax: 01353 646602
 Email: info@melrosebooks.co.uk
 Web: www.melrosebooks.co.uk

SECONDHAND NAVAL & MARITIME BOOKS BOUGHT & SOLD. Send for a copy of our free monthly catalogue. Books bought for cash. Gerald Lee Maritime Books, PO Box 259, Bexhill-on-Sea TN39 3DF. Tel: 01424 218007. Email: enquiries@leemaritimebooks.com

HP BOOKFINDERS: Established professional service locating out of print titles on all subjects. No obligation or SAE required. Contact: Moss Laird, Brig O' Turk, Callander, FK17 8HT Telephone/Fax: (01877) 376377 martin@hp-bookfinders.co.uk www.hp-bookfinders.co.uk



WARSHIPS
 INTERNATIONAL FLEET REVIEW

Monthly magazine with all the latest developments in the world's navies

Available from all good Newsagents

www.warshipsfr.com

HPC Publishing, Drury Lane, St Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN38 9BJ
 T: 01424 723167 E: subs@hpcpublishing.com





Football fans fête Forces

SAILORS and Royal Marines acknowledge the support of 44,919 football fans as they step on to the famous turf of Ibrox Stadium.

Personnel from HM Naval Base Clyde, Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines and ship's company from HMS Ark Royal – in Scotland to offload ammunition before paying off – were invited to attend the Rangers-Aberdeen clash as part of Remembrance weekend events in Glasgow.

Players wore poppies on their shirts and the fans held up individual placards in unison to create huge poppies in the stands, and at half-time the Senior Servicemen were asked on to the pitch – and promptly received a standing ovation.

Rangers and Aberdeen fans weren't the only football aficionados to fête Ark Royal's sailors.

On the same day another group from the flagship were in Yorkshire bidding farewell to their affiliated city. As part of that farewell, the sailors were guests of Leeds United when the Championship side hosted Bristol City.

Like Rangers and Aberdeen players, the two English teams also donned shirts adorned with poppies to mark the occasion.

And at half time, the Ark Royal contingent were invited on to the Elland Road pitch to the cheers of 27,000 football fans chanting 'Ark Royal', before marching off to a spontaneous, and reverential, silence; the sailors were taken aback by the overwhelming nature of their reception. Lt Andy Haywood spoke for all in describing it as an event which was "genuinely moving".

During the visit to Leeds, the carrier's rugby team had a run out against Roundhegians RUFC (a 20-14 victory for the matelots), while the footballers lost 3-2 to students from Leeds Metropolitan University.

Picture: David Donnelly/www.dgdonnelly.co.uk

John's Hungary for strongman success

THERE'S strong. There's Royal Marines strong. There's David Haye strong. And then there's John Strange strong.

The name might not be familiar, but the 25-year-old leading medical assistant, serving at MOD Corsham, is the 13th strongest person on the planet.

The submariner, the current Combined Services powerlifting champ, headed to Hungary and the World's Natural Strongest Man contest alongside heavyweights from Poland, Sweden, the USA, Romania, Northern Ireland, Canada, Australia and Scotland.

The sport celebrates those who strive to be strong without resorting to bodybuilding drugs, such as steroids.

The contest comprises lifting atlas stones (ball-shaped stones) weighing up to 160kg (25st) on to platforms up to 170cm high (5½ft); flipping a 500kg (78st) tyre; carry a 180kg (28st) husofell

stone (coffin-shaped stone) down a course; carry an implement known as a yoke, weighing 435kg (68st) along a course; and, finally, lift weights between 150kg and 220kg (23-34st) up two steps of 40cm (16in).

John managed to lift a 150kg atlas stone up to a 170cm platform, flipped the tyre over once, carried the husofell stone eight and a half metres (28ft), moved the yoke four metres (13ft) and made the first step with the 220kg.

When the points were tallied, the junior rate was ranked 13th.

The winner was strongman legend Hungarian Laszlo Fekete, who's lifted various versions of the title five times over the past two decades.

Thanks to his performance in Hungary, John's been asked to form a British Natural Strongman Federation and, hopefully, organise a strongest man contest in the Senior Service.

Comeback queens

THE RN Ladies have opened the 2010-11 season unbeaten – thanks not least to an impressive comeback.

The campaign opened at Victory Stadium with a new-look side, largely comprising fresh faces, taking on well-established Portsmouth team Widbrook United.

AB Sarah Mansfield (HMS Scott), one of the mainstays of the squad, was tasked with leading the attack and linking with the midfield as often as possible; the midfield four were playing together for the first time, – MA Lindsay Phillips (Collingwood) was the sole survivor from last season's team.

Wtr Jenny Conning (JFC Naples), making her debut as captain, organised the defence – which was quickly tested by a Widbrook team who were playing their ninth game of the season.

The opponents looked to get the ball forward quickly and were more organised and composed than the inexperienced sailors and took a 2-0 lead by the break.

Enter the proverbial game of two halves.

A couple of slight alterations to the RN's formation saw Mansfield playing a deeper role looking to get hold of the ball and be the creative player in the middle, also giving the midfield a bit more cover and experience in the centre of the park.

With both sides looking to attack the first 20 minutes of the second period passed quickly but with no real opportunities to note until a 65th-minute corner, swung in by debutant AB Hanna Canning.

United cleared the ball straight to Mansfield on the edge of the box who unleashed an unstoppable shot straight past the keeper.

That strike bolstered RN confidence and ushered in their best period of play in the match as they pushed forward straight away looking for the equaliser.



Inside with Lt Cdr Neil Horwood, RNFA

It came after 80 minutes from a great pass and involved AB Jess Riley Siggins (Heron) who was playing her first game in over a year.

Siggins played a give-and-go with Canning who forced her way into space to square for Phillips to side foot into the net.

The last ten minutes saw both sides seek a winner, but a draw was perhaps the fairest result.

The second game of the season was a fairly comfortable encounter at Yeovilton against Bridgwater – after a couple of early chances for the visitors were blocked by keeper AB Louise Worsfold (Nelson).

Those saves brought the RN to life, although it was well into the second half before their pressure was turned into goals.

On 55 minutes MA Lindsey Phillips (HMS Collingwood) made a great run down the right wing following good work from Siggins.

The resulting run and cross was cut out by the Bridgwater defence, but only cleared as far as Lt Laura Thombs (Argyll) who easily side-stepped an oncoming midfielder and slid the ball to Nelson's AB Kayleigh Edwards.

She adjusted her feet to get a quick shot away which was too good for the despairing dive of the Bridgwater keeper.

Good link-up play after 70 minutes between Thombs and Edwards enabled Edwards to find herself in space on the edge of the Bridgwater penalty area again. Despite having a lot to do, a great first touch split two defenders wide open, and she proceeded to move into space on the edge of the penalty area, going round the last defender and firing the ball confidently past a stranded keeper for a great score.

Ten minutes later the game was killed off courtesy of Phillips who exploited space behind the Bridgwater left back; she didn't hesitate in driving forward and unleashing a quality strike from the corner of the box which the keeper couldn't get close to. The Navy ran out 3-0 winners.

This was a good early game for the RN ladies, who showed that they could play some really good passing football.

Meanwhile the season has begun with one win and one defeat for the men's U23s.

Cambridge University were the opponents for the opening fixture.

On a near-perfect pitch, the RN began the game brightly against a technically-competent university team.

Despite a great deal of endeavour from the RN forward pairing of ET Jason Farnsworth (Edinburgh) and AET Musumeci (Heron) the game was goalless at half time.

The game opened up slightly in the second half and the RN were unlucky not to take the lead when an ambitious overhead kick from WEA Ritchie (Collingwood) hit the crossbar.

Cambridge began to press the RN; with the advantage of a good team understanding they initially hit the woodwork before the winner came from the penalty spot in the last 15 minutes.

The next outing saw the sailors take on Icarus FC – a side which draws its players from the RAF Officer Corps, providing a good mixture of both experience and youth.

The U23s began the game in a lively fashion. Some excellent movement down the left flank by debutant AET Danny Brookwell

(Culdrose) and a low drive across the six-yard box was met effectively by ET Farnsworth and the RN were 1-0 up after six minutes.

With momentum in the favour of the Senior Service, both Brookwell and AB Ross Beech (FPGRM) made advances down the left and right channels and were well supported by their respective full backs.

Brookwell grew in confidence and opted to take on the Icarus right back. With a brilliant run down the left beating three players; the 17-year-old struck the ball sweetly across the RAF keeper to take a 2-0 lead on 18 minutes.

AET Nikki Longstaff (Ark Royal) and LMEA Mario Biagani (Sultan) battled well in the centre of the field and ensured the opposition had little time to settle into their stride, but the game started to turn after 30 minutes and the Icarus pressure paid off with the RN conceding a soft goal to go in 2-1 up at half time.

The second period started as the first had finished with continued pressure from the opposition which led to a penalty being conceded that was confidently tucked away by the RAF.

It took the RN longer than it should have to get back into their stride, but eventually they started moving the ball effectively and creating the space to hurt the opposition.

With a couple of changes in the second half – Logs Nobby Hall (Ark Royal) and AB Dave McLoughlin (Vanguard) added fresh legs – the game started to swing back in favour of the Navy.

A move started and brilliantly finished off by AET Longstaff restored the RN lead.

Further pressure led to a penalty being awarded to the U23 and the fourth goal was slammed home by the ever-reliable left foot of McLoughlin.

Some poor defending in the final stages led to a third goal for Icarus but the Navy managed to hang on and came out 4-3 victors.



Raleigh's gym'll fix it

MOST things from the 1980s should be left there: mullets, shoulder pads, Kajagoogoo.

But the decade of big hair, yuppies, the Rubik's cube and fitness videos did have some redeeming features: the Falklands were liberated, Live Aid pricked the public conscience... and Kajagoogoo split.

And in the early 1980s the Royal Navy called time on a method of physical training which had served it for more than a century.

A generation later and the clubz at HMS Raleigh have resurrected Initial Military Fitness – aka Swedish PT (so called because it was invented by a Swede...).

The RN brought this form of exercise to Blighty and promptly introduced it to encourage fitness and instil discipline.

It's still in use in the Royal Marines, but it fell out of favour in the Fleet... until the call for 'more grit' went out... and IMF was reborn.

So today, men and women on only their second day in the Service are getting their first

taste of Senior Service PTIs and their first taste of this very regimented form of physical training.

So what is IMF?

Well, the instructor mounts a wooden horse at the front of the gym hall and lines up the 60 or so trainees on black spots marked on the floor.

And on these spots, the rookie sailors stand to attention, jump to face the corners, stand to attention, run on the spot, stand to attention some more...

Running up and down the sides of the hall, three PTIs – 'strikers' – ensure that standards are maintained by the trainees.

"Needs to be sharper."

"Don't move until you are told."

"Stop scratching."

The strikers move in and out of the rows, straightening arms, getting posture right.

"There's no hiding place," points out WO1 Dave Randle, Raleigh's senior clubz, overseeing this reintroduction of IMF on a trial basis.

"The Navy has always relied on the PT branch to instil discipline. It wanted its sailors to be more disciplined, more robust, to show more grit."

And today it's less grit than looks of sheer concentration/terror (it's a fine line...) etched on the trainees' faces.

"That was terrible," LPT Lee Carrie yells across the hall. "This is pretty simple stuff."

The sailors are, of course, only two days into their careers, so perhaps we'll let them off a little. But what IMF certainly does is instil immediate discipline.

The only sound in the hall is gym shoes pounding the floor followed by a few pants and sighs. The trainees do not utter one word.

"It is very satisfying giving this training," says WO Randle.

"You can see kids from all backgrounds picking up lessons they've learned, coming along, becoming more disciplined as we introduce civvies to military life."

Picture: Dave Sherfield, HMS Raleigh

Cricket courses on offer

A UKCC Level 2 cricket coaching course will take place at HMS Temeraire from February 7-11.

The course is designed for those who have an awareness of basic cricket skills and is the first step on the coaching ladder.

The course is administered by the Combined Services Cricket Coaching Association (CSCCA) and each Service has been allocated six places.

There are already a number of applicants; remaining places are 'first come, first served'.

Successful applicants will receive formal joining instructions nearer the date.

Contact Lt Cdr David Cooke, Secretary RNCC, on 02392 723741/9380 23741 or rns04@fleetfost.mod.uk.

If officiating is more your thing, the RNCU&SA (RN ACO) will be running a Level 1 ECB ACO cricket umpires and scorers course at Temeraire on February 7-9.

Each course consists of lectures, demonstrations and candidate involvement to ensure that attendees obtain a sound grounding in the laws of the game.

The course commences at 8.30am daily and ends at 5pm. An ECB ACO Level 1 exam takes place on the afternoon of the final day.

The instructional aspects of the courses are free to serving personnel although a fee of £30 is required for one year's membership of ECB ACO, a CRB Check, MCC Laws of Cricket booklet plus all course documentation and a workbook.

If available, candidates may also wish to purchase a *Tom Smith's Cricket Umpiring and Scoring* for £10.

Civilian personnel are most welcome to attend but in addition to the £30 fee there's an instructional fee of £50. Some elements of the instructional/ECB ACO fee may be re-claimed from your Education Arena.

Details from Lt Andy Stancliffe on 02392 625469, 93832 5469 or andy.stancliffe161@mod.uk.

Late late show on the ice

Continued from page 48 period with an overall score of 6-4 to the Spartans.

The third period saw both teams tiring a little and the high scoring rate slowed down, but between the RN and the Spartans there were five goals.

The teams traded goals at the start of the third period to bring the score to 7-5 but the RN then pulled the score back to 7-7 with only five minutes left.

The Spartans were then penalised for a few infringements late on in the period and were a man down for two minutes but the Navy could not capitalise on the extra man.

With 1m 45s to go, however, the Spartans were again down a man; this time the Navy were on target when ET Shaughnessy scored the winner with only nine seconds on the clock.

More details on the sport at www.rniha.org.uk or from Kevin Cave manager@rniha.org.uk, administrator LS(CIS) D Smalley rn-admin@rniha.org.uk, or treasurer Lt Lappin treasurer@rniha.org.uk. Training is at Planet Ice rink in Gosport every Tuesday at 10.30pm.

Because of Christmas, submissions for our January edition must be received by Monday December 6 2010.



Royals are indoor masters

THAT'S it son, let it all out...

CPO(PT) Lenny Armstrong feels the pain as an afternoon of indoor rowing at HMS Sultan reaches its thrilling climax.

More than 60 sportsmen from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, plus MOD civilians, converged on the Gosport establishment for the RNRM indoor championships.

They raced on Concept 2 machines either as individuals over 2,000m or, in teams, over 4,000m, writes LPT 'Scouse' Carley.

The fastest female was OC Leonard (Thunderer Sqn) who took the honours in 7m 30s, closely followed by Lt Thackray and LPT Hodgson (both HMS Sultan).

The male categories were split into age groups: U20 category Mne Mahoney (7m 1s); 20-29 age group - Mne Smaller (6m 57s); 30-39 - Mne Brown (6m 16s), the fastest time of the day; 40-49 Lt Cdr Stevenson (6m 38s); 50 and over WO Paul Winton (6m 48s).

The team event ensured the day ended with a superb finale: nine teams of four rowers and a cox competing at the same time.

The Concept 2's screen showed virtual 'boats' for each team racing side by side, allowing spectators to watch enthralled as the lead changed several times between Sultan's team of TMs and PTIs and marines from 42 Commando.

As the teams entered the final few hundred metres of this high-octane event the commandos demonstrated their supremacy and crept ahead to win by just four seconds from Sultan in a time of 11m 38s. Neptune took third with 11m 50s.

Anyone interested in taking up the indoor sport should ask their unit PTI or visit www.concept2.co.uk/challengeseries; those who fancy a crack at the outdoor version should contact Lt Roly Wilson of the Royal Navy Royal Marines Amateur Rowing Association on Sultan x3010 or sultan-stgme11@nrta.mod.uk.

Picture: LA(Phot) Darby Allen, HMS Sultan

Fox trot across Devon

TWO junior officers from Bristol's reserve unit HMS Flying Fox completed the challenging Coast-2-Coast race - an epic 140-mile linear journey from north to south Devon by foot, bike and kayak over two days.

Team Fox - Lts Henry Watts (on the left) and Mark Whiting - had to cope with tough conditions ranging from fog, wind and rain to glorious sunshine, plus a wide variety of different terrain and plenty of big hills, ascending 32,000 feet in total.

Starting at Foreland Point (near Lynmouth at the top of Exmoor) the duo travelled through the National Park, across Devon and down on to Dartmoor.

There they climbed to the top of High Willhays before heading back around Dartmoor and into Princetown. Then a cross-country stage saw them arrive in Totnes where they collected a kayak for the journey down the River Dart.

Arriving at Dartmouth, all that was left was the small matter of a 19-mile run to Prawle Point; arrival there completed the journey across Devon from tip to tip. In total the duo covered 32 miles on foot, 100 miles by bike, and eight miles in a kayak.

The reservists came a not-unrespectable 19th out of 34 teams competing with a finishing time of 21h 17m 36s.

"That was hard, really hard, but awesome fun," said Lt Whiting. "I couldn't have done it without my shipmate though. I found the cycling particularly tough so having him there to keep the pressure on me was vital. And I was proud to cross the finish line with 'Royal Navy Reserves' written across my chest."



Rob's rides to glory

RESERVIST PO Rob Smith was the RN's highest-placed rider at the 2010 Inter-Service mountain bike championships

Despite only being able to compete in six of the ten rounds, the 38-year-old from HMS Vivid took third place.

The bronze rounded off a "very enjoyable season" for the senior rating, who's been racing this season in pink to raise awareness of breast cancer.

He wore the kit to take part in the Inter-Service endurance championships in June and during his first 12-hour solo event in July when he achieved a top-ten finish. Rob was inspired to wear the jersey after his wife Jane and a colleague from HMS Raleigh, PO Laura Washer, were both diagnosed with breast cancer.

In recognition of his achievements this season he was presented with the RNRMCA President's Trophy by Cdre Mark Beverstock.

The award is an acknowledgment of Rob's role in managing the association's mountain bike endurance race team, his organisation of next year's Inter-Service competition and for the number of races he has taken part in this season as a representative of the RNRMCA.

"It was only when they began to list my results from this season that I realised how much I'd ridden this year," he said.

"I thought getting third in the Inter-Service champs was as good as it was going to get and now to be presented with this trophy I may have peaked too early in this only my second year riding and racing in RN colours."

In civilian life Rob works for VT Flagship at the Defence Maritime Logistics School in HMS Raleigh.

Soldiers out-fish sailors

CAMPBELL, Cary and Lodge Lakes on the Viaduct Fishery were the setting for the MOD versus Combined Services coarse fishing match.

Forty-eight anglers (six teams of eight) entered the match with teams from the RAF, two from the Army, two from the MOD and one from Maver Royal Navy, writes Sgt Ads Palmer RM.

The practice match the previous day indicated that the fishing was going to be slow due to the dip in temperature.

However, a couple of the lads did well, so the RN were feeling fairly confident on what it could class as a 'home venue'.

WO1 Shep Shepherd (FPGRM) carried out the all important draw, which after a bit of a chat and a lot of banter, we thought was a good one. CPO Mash Masheeder (RNAS Yeovilton) unbelievably drew the same peg that he had won the match from the previous day.

There was some very mixed fishing with Campbell Lake producing some excellent weights but Lodge proving very tricky.

After six hours of fishing Maver Royal Navy had been pipped at the post by just two points by the Army B team but still managed a very creditable second place.

It wasn't all bad as the team took the top three in the shape of CPO Masheeder, 151lb 6oz (first), CPO Nick Jones (SMQ South) 134lb 2oz (second) and Sgt Ads Palmer (RM Stonehouse) 96lb 15oz (third). Mash also won the best silver fish prize.

All three lads as well as Mne Craig Tucker (40 Cdo) won their sections, but unfortunately Cary Lake proved to be very peggy and the remainder of the results were mixed: third for Shep Shepherd, two fourth places for AET John Gaylard and PO Dodge Duan (both Yeovilton), and an unfortunate last for WO1 Pete Edwards (Yeovilton) - taking part in his final match for the RN. His two carp must have been the smallest in the lake.

The clash at Viaduct was not the only outing for the Combined Services. Sixty anglers from the RAF, Army, DSRA, Maver Royal Navy and the Police converged on Decoy Lakes for the CS-Emergency Services clash.

The lakes to be fished included Horseshoe, Willow, Beastie, Cedar, Oak and Yew. A closely-fought match followed with Maver Royal Navy finishing third out of the ten teams.

The team was actually joint second but beaten on weight by a DSRA team. Top performers included CPOs Masheeder and Jones and Mne Tucker who were all second in their sections.

Swiss role for shooters

TWO ratings from HMS Cambria - Leading Hands Bill 'Pedlar' Palmer and Steve 'Scooby' Drew - attended the 6th International St Barbara Shooting Competition in Liestal, Switzerland.

The event is open to military and police reservists from across Europe; this year 179 competitors from 11 countries (Austria, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Russia, Switzerland and UK) took part. Weapons used included the Sturmgewehr 57 and 90 assault rifles and the SIG P220 9mm pistol.

A good day's shooting was had by all with Bill and Steve obtaining respectful scores finishing mid-table.

Said Bill: "It has been worthwhile attending this event - not only did we have the opportunity to use weapons we would not normally have access to but we also made friends with many of the other competitors, so much so that invites were received to go to shoots in Hungary and Germany next year and also to return to next year's shoot in Switzerland that is due to take place in April."

Next month



SPORT



'Go out from the Ark' – farewell to a Naval icon: souvenir supplement



Data day affairs – the new intelligence team at the hub of RN operations



Are you Havana a laugh? HMS Manchester pays historic visit to Cuba

Plus

I'm a matelot, get me out of here – HMS Portland enjoys a trip to the jungle

The loneliness of the long distance climber...



PRESERVING a split second in time, this still image belies the fact that Surg Lt(D) Lucy Matthews is nimble – and extremely fast.

For this shot captures the Devonport-based dentist on her way to bronze in the women's international speed climbing event at a three-day contest in Edinburgh.

Eight members of the Climb Navy team headed to the International Climbing Arena in the Scottish capital, which was hosting two events: the Inter-Service and European military championships, writes Surg Lt Stephen Glennie, RNRMMC sports climbing representative.

So aside from the usual foes from the Army and RAF, there were climbers from Belgium, France, Switzerland, Netherlands, Romania and Spain to compete against.

The Inter-Service event represents the high point of the competitive climbing calendar with three disciplines covered: lead, bouldering and speed climbing, making for an action-packed competition.

A strong Royal Navy and Royal Marines team was fielded, despite set-backs due to both injuries and operational commitments, resulting in several trophies won.

During the qualifying stages some competitors struggled with the pressure of the surroundings and the tactics of climbing in a competition, which are very different to a leisurely weekend climb.

Impressive performances were made by Mne Mikey Lewis, nearly climbing the 6b qualifier route despite only starting climbing six months ago.

The Royal Marines also showed how tough (or maybe stupid!) they are as one continued to climb despite a broken wrist. Sgt Lee Jones was heard to say "it's a bit sore" despite looking like he was about to faint with pain...

Tricky final moves at the top of the qualifying routes left some competitors a little frustrated, but there was still all to play for in the speed climbing.

With some expert tactics and training, the RN speed climbing team, consisting of Mikey Lewis, Ollie Horst and Lucy Matthews, missed out on first place by half a second.

Other results included Lt Will Batho achieving a very respectable seventh in the British open men's category and Lucy nearly topping the British women's final to take third in the Inter-Service women's category. She also finished second in the British women's bouldering.

The event was an outstanding success for the RNRMMC, finished off in style with a curry supper and a night out to show the European competitors the joys of Edinburgh.

You can watch a video report of the contest at www.bfbs.com/news/scotland/climbing-competition-forces-finest-40660.html and peruse the full results at www.ukclimbing.com/news/item.php?id=58633

Late late show on the ice

The RN Ice Hockey Association season faced-off with a clash against the Milton Keynes Jesters at the rather unsociable hour of 11pm.

There were a few die-hard supporters at the Planet Ice rink in Gosport but otherwise it was quiet and eerie as the teams stepped on to the mist-covered ice, writes Lt Adam Lappin.

The game started at the usual high tempo and the Jesters caught the RN Kings out in the first minute with a quick wrist shot sailing past stand-in goaltender AET D Jones (Heron); as an

outfield player he stepped between the pipes for only the second time in an official fixture.

This was followed by both teams trading shots for the best part of the first period but Mne B Hubbs (fresh from Afghanistan with 40 Cdo RM) showed that he had not lost his touch after a seven-month absence by hauling the RN level after latching on to a perfect through pass from AET A Buckle (815 NAS) to fire past the MK goaltender.

The second period opened with Jesters taking the lead again before ET(WE) P Shaughnessy (Portsmouth Type 23 Pool) guided in a rebound after a hard shot fired in from the point by Steve Baker.

The Jesters went in to the dressing room at the end of the second period with a 3-2 lead but a player down after an innocuous challenge by James Morgan near the boards resulted in a Jesters player taking a trip to QA Hospital with a dislocated shoulder.

Within seconds of the puck dropping to start the third period, ET Shaughnessy weaved past the Jesters defence to level the score three apiece.

Team manager Kevin Cave made it 4-3 to the Navy after receiving a weighted pass off the boards from Lt Lappin (Nelson) to break away on goal and put a wrist shot just inside the post of the Jesters' goal.

This breakaway would be repeated at the end of the game when the Jesters pulled their goalie off the ice to add an extra attacker in an attempt to level the score.

In doing so they left an empty net and Cave was faced with the much easier shot on goal with no-one around him... The result could only be likened to a "hit the corner flag" moment in football as he missed the goal in spectacular fashion.

And with that the score remained at 4-3 to the RN Kings in their first victory of the new season.

The second match was also a late start (10.45pm) in the same venue, this time against local rivals

the Solent Spartans.

In a growing trend, the Navy went down to an early goal but almost instantly replied with a strike from ET Shaughnessy.

This would be the Navy's last goal of the first period and the Spartans went to the dressing room with a 3-1 lead.

The Spartans controlled most of the action in the second period but some impressive play by and goals from ET Shaughnessy and ET (WE) L Frost (Liverpool) and a good marshalling of our defence by Cpl J Underwood (RM Poole) meant that the teams were equal on scoring terms in the second

Continued on page 47

100% NEW LIFESTYLE. NEW ZEALAND. NAVY

See page 41 for information on the exciting new opportunities available now.

