



NAVY NEWS

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END OF
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YORK GOES
FAR SOUTH

CLOUD &
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VOLCANIC ASH
DASH FOR
HMS ALBION

BEARING THE BURDEN

A Royal Marine of 40 Commando carries a 'wounded' comrade during the green berets' final rehearsal exercise for their mission in Afghanistan. See pages 10 and 14. Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell, 40 Cdo





GLOBAL REACH



Fleet Focus

THERE'S only one story on everyone's lips this month... if they could pronounce it.

The eruption of Mount Eyjafjallajökull in Iceland not only brought much of Europe to a grinding (or should that be grounding...) halt, it disrupted RN exercises and prompted a remarkable homecoming for **HMS Albion**, which ferried stranded troops and civilians from Spain to Portsmouth (see pages 4-5).

Otherwise, there are three dominant RN stories at present: Afghanistan, pirates and flagship deployments.

40 Commando have taken charge of Sangin district as they spend six months attached to an Army battlegroup (see page 10).

Any sailors or marines deploying to Afghanistan individually or in small groups must undergo thorough – and rather gory – combat training (**Individual Pre-Deployment Training**) which reaches its climax at Longmoor camp (see page 14).

HMS Chatham freed Indian sailors held hostage for several days by Somali pirates in the Indian Ocean (see page 21) while, further north, **HMS Lancaster** is patrolling 'pirate alley' in the middle of 'pirate season' (see opposite).

Instrumental to their operations – indeed all RN operations east of Suez – is the ability to board; training at **HMS Raleigh** has undergone a fundamental shake-up (see page 22).

And as for flagship deployments, well, **HMS Ark Royal** left Portsmouth to lead Auriga 2010... but a certain ash cloud hit some of her work up (see page 6).

Bomber crews will receive a 'pin' to recognise upholding the right of the line in **Vanguard-class** ballistic missile boats (see page 4).

HMS Sceptre is due to pay off this month when she returns from a deployment east of Suez; to celebrate the fact the crew have commissioned a special whisky (see page 15).

And staying with the Silent Service, **HMS Turbulent** is our ship of the month (see page 12).

RFA Largs Bay is back in the UK after delivering aid to Haiti (see page 4), while **HMS Monmouth** has returned from a six-month tour of duty in Iraqi waters (see page 7).

And **HMS Sutherland** is back with a bang – literally. We've an impressive shot of her night gunnery serial off Scotland (see page 8).

There's the rare sight of all three fishery protection ships – **Tyne**, **Mersey** and **Severn** – exercising together in the Solent (see page 15).

HM Ships **Liverpool** and **Manchester** both fired Sea Darts at trials drones ahead of their impending deployments. Manchester is heading to the Caribbean (see right); Liverpool is Ark Royal's guardian for Auriga.

Future carrier **HMS Queen Elizabeth** continues to take shape. Her bow has been 'launched' and moved to Scotland to join the rest of the ship (see page 9). Meanwhile plans for her escorts, the replacement to Type 22 and 23 frigates, the **Type 26** warship, have been unveiled (see page 9).

In the Gulf, **HMS St Albans** has been conducting night-time helicopter training (see page 17) while sisters **Chiddingfold** and **Atherstone** have been exercising with Allied forces in Qatari waters (see page 11).

At the opposite end of the temperature scale, monuments are due to be erected to Service personnel and civilians who have died in aid of scientific research in Antarctica (see page 23) while **HMS York** has been to the end of the earth, visiting South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands (see pages 24-25).

And finally... Say farewell to survey ship **HMS Roebuck**, a loyal and trusty servant of the nation which has decommissioned after a quarter of a century's service (see page 13).



Wanna be dartin' somethin'

NOT everything which flies was kept earthbound by Mount Eyjafjallajökull and its gigantic cloud of ash.

Like Sea Dart for instance. There was a salvo of the venerable air defence missiles racing through Scottish skies as two sisters tested their main armament.

HM Ships **Manchester** (pictured above) and **Liverpool** are both heading across the Pond on deployment.

The pre-requisite for either tour of duty (Liverpool's shepherding flagship Ark Royal for Auriga 2010, Manchester's bound for the Caribbean on a drug-busting/humanitarian aid mission) is that Sea Dart has been fired against a target.

Both Type 42s fired two Sea Darts at a remote-controlled drone target in the Scottish exercise areas in calm, but chilly conditions.

For Manchester, commanded by Cdr Rex Cox, the spell in Scottish waters permitted a chance to exercise with patrol ship HMS Severn... once commanded by a Lt Cdr Rex Cox.

Severn's gearing up for a spot of Operational Sea Training (conducted by FOST North) and used the encounter with the Busy Bee to carry out some Officer of the Watch manoeuvres.

As Manchester's bound for the Caribbean in hurricane season, she's been getting in some disaster relief practice.

The ship's company underwent three weeks of intensive training in the West Country before heading to Scotland.

Directed Continuation Training comes courtesy of those nice folk at FOST, who also test RN (and

foreign) vessels to the limit with Basic Operational Sea Training.

DCT's like a condensed version of BOST, but tailored to meet the specific needs of a ship about to deploy.

The Busy Bee will either be conducting board and search operations (in conjunction with a specialist team from the US Coast Guard) or clearing up in the wake of Nature's fury.

So three weeks of board and search/disaster relief training it is, then.

And for good measure, the FOSTies threw in a bit of fire, flood and battle damage aboard the destroyer to keep the ship's company on their toes 24 hours a day.

Disaster relief training comes courtesy of a special site at Bull Point, just around the corner from 'frigate alley' in Devonport, where all manner of calamities can be simulated – cars trapped in rivers, babies trapped in collapsed buildings, raging fires, downed power lines and general chaos.

And barely a mile away in the Lynher estuary lies HMS Brecon, key to RN board and search training.

The three weeks were wrapped up with a large-scale battle damage exercise overlaid with air, surface and submarine attack, testing Manchester's men and women's ability to cope with the very worst imaginable (simulated) catastrophe, all witnessed by senior inspecting officer, Capt Malcolm Cree, FOST's Director South.



● Cradle of life... A leading hand from HMS Manchester carries a (plastic) baby away from a flooded building at Bull Point

"Although this period of training has been challenging, the ship's company have approached it with their typical enthusiasm and determination and can be justifiably proud of their

performance," said Cdr Cox. "The ship's demonstrated that she is ready to deploy and be ready to provide support to the UK's overseas territories in the Caribbean."

YOU'VE seen a replenishment at sea before in these pages.

Many times.

But probably not like this.

On the right is Her Majesty's Ship Lancaster. Arcing over a few yards (we prefer imperial here...) of ocean are three gunlines, plus the larger refuelling pipe.

The recipient of these lines and tube is the Japanese fleet tanker JDS Mashuu.

Watching proceedings from on high is Lancaster's Lynx. And hanging out of the side of said helicopter is LA(Phot) Tel Boughton who captured the moment with this stunning shot.

Mashuu's an old hand at topping up Type 23 frigates; RN vessels have been making use of her copious reserves of oil for a good year or so.

As for the Red Rose, she's into the second half of a six-month-plus deployment East of Suez to tackle piracy/people trafficking/drug smuggling/illegal arms trade.

That led most recently to a six-week patrol working with two of the Combined Task Forces in the region: 150 (one-five-zero rather than one hundred and fifty) and 151 (one-five-one).

CTF 150 covers a vast domain encompassing the Horn of Africa, Arabian Sea and vast tracts of the Indian Ocean; 151 has a smaller realm, chiefly the Gulf of Aden and the 'transit corridor' used by shipping.

After her mid-deployment overhaul in Dubai, the Red Rose spent ten days attached to CTF 151.

We're now in 'Pirate Season' in 'Pirate Alley'. The winter's end and calmer seas entices the marauders from their lairs along the Somali coast.

The methods this season so far are the same as last year: a freebooters' (we're running out of pseudonyms for pirates...) mother ship sending out skiffs to carry out the attacks.

But the first attacks of the new season – there were a dozen unsuccessful and three successful raids in one week alone – revealed that the pirates were operating ever further from home waters.

Some 300 miles north-west of the Seychelles (that's 500 miles from the Somali coastline) the tanker MV Evita came under attack from pirates who fired their rifles and aimed rocket-propelled grenades at the vessel.

Evita managed to evade the brigands, but reported the attack to the RN-headed UK Maritime Trade Organisation in Dubai which monitors shipping movements in the region and is the vital liaison between merchant and military vessels.

CTF 151 flagship USS Farragut subsequently intercepted the pirates, American sailors boarded their skiffs, disposed of all the pirates' weaponry and sank the mother ship.

No such drama for Lancaster during her ten-day piracy sweep, but things became more interesting when she was attached to 150 and the task group's wider remit of strangling maritime crime.

The Red Rose's Royal Marines/Royal Navy boarding party inspected several vessels suspected of being in breach of international law. And for law-abiding merchant men and fishermen in the region there were 'reassurance visits' to explain the coalition's efforts to combat criminal activity.

In the middle of this busy period, Lancaster was visited by Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, who was dropping in on various RN ships and activities East of Suez, keen to learn more from the men and women on the 'ground' about current ops.

He arrived carrying a rather large award to present to the ship's company: the Rock Race Trophy is an impressive replica of said promontory presented to the vessel with the fastest combined time running from Gibraltar naval base to the top of the Rock in the past 12 months (the time to beat for other RN vessels visiting Gib is 2h 33m 27s).

Running isn't the only sport practised aboard Lancaster.

We've featured quite a lot of athletic activities involving the ship's company in our back pages.

We've not featured dodgeball. We've certainly not featured dodgeball involving players dressed as characters from the Village People.

Admittedly, not all players were dressed as cowboys, Indians, builders and policemen. Just the wardroom. Much to the amusement of the rest of the ship's company.

But it was the officers who had the last laugh. Despite some highly-accurate throwing from the RM sniper team aboard Lancaster... and thanks to some highly-agile dodging balls (hence the name), the officers triumphed – their first sporting victory of the deployment.



Moshi-moshi, Lancaster

Top bombing recognised

MEN who bear the nation's greatest burden will finally be recognised for their unique service.

The work of the ballistic missile deterrent submarines – known affectionately in the RN as 'bombers' – is the most silent aspect of the Silent Service.

More than 300 deterrent patrols have been conducted by Royal Navy submarines since HMS Resolution headed out on the inaugural one in June 1968.

There is always a British ballistic missile boat on duty, 365 days a year, somewhere beneath the oceans.

It is a burden borne first by the R-boats carrying Polaris nuclear missiles and, since the 1990s, by the current breed of V-boats and their Trident missiles.

To recognise the dedication of the men carrying out these patrols – officially the Continuous At Sea Deterrence – the Navy Board has acceded to the wishes of the bomber community and agreed to award a pin.

The highly-classified nature of these patrols means the men who carry them out are cut off from the outside world; they cannot tell loved ones where they are going – or where they have been – and there's no way they can send outgoing communications home.

In addition, there are the traditional hardships of submarine life – six hours on, six hours off for weeks on end in austere conditions.

The Royal Navy Deterrent Patrol Pin – a 2½in badge which features HMS Resolution with a Polaris missile and electron rings superimposed and a scroll inscribed with the motto 'always ready' – will be issued to serving personnel from this October.

Deepers who've completed between one and 19 patrols – only those of 30 days' duration or more will be counted – are eligible to receive a silver pin, while veteran submariners who've taken part in 20 or more patrols can receive an identical pin badge, but in gold.

Although the pin will not be issued to bomber veterans who are no longer serving, it is anticipated that – like submariners' trademark dolphins – the level of demand will provoke naval tailors and memorabilia manufacturers to produce their own badges.

More details can be found in RNTM 074/10.

Submariners should request silver pins from their divisional officers and gold ones from their commanding officers.

'Give me your tired, your po



PORTSMOUTH has witnessed hundreds of homecomings, but never one like this.

Normally children are on the jetty waving furiously and sailors are lining the sides of the ship.

This time the sailors were on the waterfront, the youngsters on the ship. Plus 450 soldiers, airmen, medics and staff officers.

After a 40-hour crossing of the Bay of Biscay and Channel, HMS Albion brought Service personnel and civilians to the mother country, the last act of a tortuous journey faced by travellers stranded when an Icelandic volcano erupted – and brought European air travel to a halt for a week.

Albion was dispatched from Antwerp to the northern Spanish port of Santander, where a mish-mash of troops – soldiers, sailors, airmen, medics, a handful of Australians serving with the UK military – were trying to get home from Afghanistan after a tour of duty.

The ship also collected 265 civilians stuck in Spain – some 'vulnerable passengers' identified by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, others holidaymakers simply desperate to return from all four corners of the globe.

Albion's ship's company gave up their bunks where possible to make life more comfortable on the crossing from Spain, while her galley prepared an extra 2,500 meals (chiefly fish

and chips and curry) to feed the unexpected guests.

There was nothing but praise for the RN from civilians and soldiers.

"The Navy really did this very well indeed," said one trooper.

"They had more than 1,100 people on a ship designed to carry 650 max.

"The crew, especially junior rates, marines and midshipmen, were impressive.

"The RN deserve credit for the way they handled the job."

The troops – with all their personal kit and a sizeable amount of equipment – disembarked first.

Waiting trucks and buses took them to their ultimate destinations: 9 Sqn RAF at RAF Markham, 33 Field Hospital at Fort Blockhouse, Gosport, a Chinook detachment from RAF Odiham to name a few.

As they stepped off the loading ramp whistles and rounds of applause rippled along Albion's upper deck as civilians – and ship's company – thanked the Servicemen and women for their efforts in Helmand.

As for the civilians, when it became time for them to disembark, a human chain of sailors formed on the steep brow to carry their luggage ashore.

Once on dry land they received ration packs to sustain them on the journey home and were bussed to Portsmouth Harbour

station for waiting trains... and a bit of a media circus.

"What a journey," enthused architect James Stacey. "The navy made us feel right at home and it was a privilege to share a ship with the people coming back from Afghanistan."

Stanley Johnson and his wife – the parents of London mayor Boris Johnson who were heading home from a trip to the Galapagos Islands – said the trip aboard Albion had been "an extraordinary couple of days".

Mr Johnson continued: "I would like to congratulate most enormously the Royal Navy for the way they have handled it.

"It has been a humbling experience because of the politeness, consideration and professionalism with which we have been treated by the Navy personnel."

Albion's logistics officer, Cdr Geoff Wintle, said there had been "a real party atmosphere" aboard.

"It was absolutely magnificent, helped by some wonderful weather and by frequent sightings of dolphins which the children particularly enjoyed.

"It's given civilians a real insight into life aboard a Royal Navy warship and a chance to mix with people returning from theatre.

"We had people all over the ship – sleeping in the vehicle



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'The basic human need t

"WE RETURN home privileged to have been able to represent the UK and happy that we have saved lives."

So speaketh the Commanding Officer of RFA Largs Bay, which is back home in the UK after a "whirlwind" two months which saw the ship help thousands of Haitians whose lives were affected by January's devastating earthquake.

Largs sailed in early February with aid donated by UK charities, British citizens and the Government (part of a £20m aid package to help the victims of the quake).

On top of her RFA crew and troops from 17 Port and Maritime Regiment, the ship carried a detachment of Royal Marines and RN personnel to help during the month or so which Largs spent around Haiti.

After offloading the donations in the capital of Port-au-Prince, she remained in Haitian waters to ship sustenance from the UN's World Food Programme to the country's outlying areas, notably the city of Gonaïves and the village of Anse-à-Veau.

Food to support 400,000 people for a fortnight was delivered to Gonaïves, while 20,000 people in and around Anse-à-Veau had fare for the same period.

It was only thanks to the ship's Mexeflote powered raft that food could be delivered to the latter, and even then a human chain had to be formed to carry the aid the final few feet to dry land.

Besides delivering food to Anse-à-Veau, engineers went ashore to fix the lighting in the village church

and tried to fix the water purification plant supplying locals with drinking water.

The work in Anse-à-Veau proved to be the end of Largs' mission; the ship turned about and made for Marchwood, which she reached just before Easter.

"The whole experience of sailing to Haiti and back in two months has been a whirlwind of planning and execution," said Capt Ian Johnson RFA, Largs Bay's CO.

"News reports do not prepare you for the reality. They are two-dimensional and miss out the smell and the feel of the hell that Nature has created.

Capt Johnson continued: "We did all that was asked – and more. Was it enough? The truth is, it will never be enough – many years will pass before Haiti is back to normality.

"That said, my people can say they helped, they helped in many ways and they can be proud of what they achieved."

Even so, the ship's company felt somewhat divorced from events on land.

"There was a feeling of frustration at not fulfilling the basic human need to help fellow humans," said Capt Johnson.

But there were also memories to last a lifetime, such as the 'Pied Pipers of Anse-à-Veau': two stewards (they're still called that in the RFA...) singing Everton FC songs to children.

"The kids didn't understand a word," said Capt Johnson. "If they only knew, they might have nightmares!"

...your huddled masses...'

deck, 200 people on camp beds. Every space on Albion was filled.

"It's been a unique experience."

Albion was one of three warships mobilised under Operation Cunningham to assist with the repatriation of Britons trapped abroad by the eruption in Iceland.

HMS Ark Royal broke off Joint Warrior exercises in Scotland to make for the Channel, while HMS Ocean was also put on stand-by.

Ark was released from tasking and told to resume preparations for her Auriga 10 deployment (see *overleaf*) while Ocean was still awaiting instructions as Navy News went to press.

The flight ban imposed following the drift of the gigantic ash cloud into European skies severely curtailed much of the aerial activity in Joint Warrior, including operations by the Naval Strike Wing aboard HMS Ark Royal.

But not everything Fleet Air Arm was kept on the ground by the volcano crisis: a Search and Rescue crew from HMS Gannet faced a 700-mile round trip to carry a critically-ill patient from Scotland to London.

Gannet's Sea King was the only aircraft in UK airspace able to make the flight at the time, carrying the sick woman from its base at Prestwick to Regent's Park in London, where she was transferred by ambulance to University College Hospital.



● "Every space on Albion was filled"... (Above) The ship's vehicle deck serves as a makeshift barracks for Service personnel returning from Afghanistan and (right) sailors and Royal Marines help Kenneth Koranteng ashore in Portsmouth; the youngster broke his ankle just 20 minutes into a football tour of Spain and (below) Albion's ship's company assist stranded holidaymakers in Santander



New 'lands in the south and Middle East

THOSE would be Portland and Northumberland respectively.

The two sister Type 23s – both based in Devonport – have left UK shores for lengthy deployments which will keep them away from Blighty until the tail end of 2010.

Portland is bound for the Falkands for the next six or so months, taking over from HMS York, interspersed with visits to Brazil and West African nations.

The frigate was sent on her way by Commander Operations, Rear Admiral Mark Anderson, who visited Portland before her departure to reinforce the importance of the deployment and wish her 180 men and women well.

Just a fortnight earlier Portland completed a six-week spell of OST which reached its climax off the ship's namesake island.

Northumberland meanwhile left Plymouth to the swirling strains of pipes played by Andy Grant and Stuart Kay of Morpeth Pipe Band.

Northumberland faces more than seven months away, most of those in the Gulf of Aden and waters off Oman. She's replacing HMS Lancaster in the international effort to prevent piracy/drug smuggling/people trafficking and other illegal activities in waters east of Suez.

Before departing, the ship hosted her sponsor Lady Kerr who presented the trophy named after her, awarded annually to the group of sailors who pulled the stops out in the preceding 12 months. The 2010 winners are the marine engineering department who replaced a diesel engine in record time – in Salalah, Oman.



pictures: la(photos) luron wright, hms albion, jay allen and keith morgan, frpu east

...to help fellow humans...'

● Troops manoeuvre RFA Largs Bay's Mexeflote towards the mother ship off Gonaives during the month-long Haitian relief mission LA(Phot) Pete Smith, FRPU East



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'Back in the task force game'

PASSING crowds gathered on Portsmouth's historic Round Tower, HMS Ark Royal heads off on the Navy's flagship deployment of 2010.

And one week later the plans for the early part of the Auriga 2010 exercises were in the bin, courtesy of one volcano in Iceland, lots of ash in the skies, and lots of aircraft on the ground.

Ark made initially for north-west Scotland and the latest Joint Warrior war games, the last chance to hone skills in home waters before heading across the Pond to work with Canadian and US forces.

The carrier served as home to Lynx, Bagger Sea Kings, Merlins and eight Harriers of the Naval Strike Wing for the Scottish exercises, which are aimed at testing the ability of all three Services to work together.

Not everyone aboard the flagship was seized by the prospect of Joint Warrior, admittedly.

"I googled Benbecula. It's like a chunk of Dartmoor which has been taken out and dumped off Scotland," sighed LAET Simon Young of 849 NAS. He misses the trip across the Pond – and hence the best runs ashore – with good reason; his partner's about to give birth.

Mercifully, Ark only saw the remote island and its environs for a week. A certain volcano intervened, grounded the Harriers and led to the warship being diverted south (see pages 4-5).

But when Auriga does get under way off the Eastern Seaboard, what can we expect?

Well, when it reaches its peak off Florida in July, it will see the carrier joined by HMS Ocean and Albion, plus American assault ship USS Kearsarge (a combination of Ark/Ocean, but twice the size...).

Initially, however, the core of the group is Ark with her 650 men and women, plus around 500 aircrew and maintainers

of the carrier's air group, and the staff of the Commander UK Carrier Strike Group, Cdre Simon Ancona.

The carrier's joined by French submarine FS Perle, destroyer USS Barry, plus more familiar escorts – HM Ships Liverpool and Sutherland and RFA Fort George.

The emphasis on the earlier stages of Auriga – Latin for charioteer – is on strike carrier operations operating with the US Navy and US Marine Corps.

Later on, Ocean, Albion and RFA Largs Bay plus the men of 3 Commando Brigade join in for large-scale amphibious exercises.

The net result, believes Cdre Ancona, is that the Royal Navy is "back in the task force game".

He continues: "The focus of all three forces at present is on current operations, but the core of the Royal Navy's ability is the carrier or amphibious task group.

"These are two elements of the Navy which we must maintain."

As for working with our American allies, you might think that co-operation is tuned to perfection.

Well, yes and no. Personalities change, kit changes.

"The ability to integrate is essential. Future operations will always be carried out in a coalition," says the commodore.

"But as systems become

more complex, so the ability to integrate becomes more complex."

For part of the deployment, Ark will be home to 18 US Marine Corps AV8Bs – the American version of the Harrier – building on the trail blazed by Illustrious on her visit to the USA two years ago.

Otherwise, says Cdre Ancona, Auriga is "a no-frills trip to the gymnasium".

He explains: "We've 40 years' experience of doing these exercises in the USA – it's the only place to do deployments of this type. The Eastern Seaboard has the ranges, it has the sea space.

"It's an exciting deployment. There's a lot of homework for us, but I believe it will be an extraordinary way of sharpening our skills."

Aside from visits to Norfolk, Virginia, Mayport and Port Canaveral in Florida, Ark, Sutherland and Liverpool are lined up to visit Halifax in July for centenary celebrations of the Royal Canadian Navy, which are due to be attended by the Queen.

Picture: LA(Phot) Kaz Williams, FRPU East



Black is back

THE Black Duke that is.

After 194 days away, most of them at the tip of the Arabian Gulf, HMS Monmouth returned to her native Devonport on the finest day of the year so far.

Outside the RN community, Operation Telic has largely passed into history.

But long after operations on land have ended, the Senior Service continues to conduct security patrols.

Although protecting Iraq's oil platforms off the Al Faw peninsula – the Al Basra and older Khawr Al Amaya terminals – remains the core duty of deployments to the Gulf, the Black Duke's spell in these waters saw repeated exercises with local and Allied navies.

Chief among these was probably the 'Thank You Kuwait' display/festival to show Britain's gratitude for the support the emirate has shown the UK, especially over the past couple of decades, and to thank the ex-pat community who always extend a warm welcome to visiting RN ships.

As part of those thank-yous, Monmouth hosted middle-ranking Kuwaiti officers attending the country's staff college to give them an insight into what a state-of-the-art warship can do.

There's also been a lot of work with the nascent Iraqi Navy whose boats and marines will eventually protect the oil platforms allowing the Royal Navy to concentrate on duties elsewhere.

On her journey to and from the Gulf, the Black Duke joined the international effort focused on curbing piracy in the Gulf of Aden (her Royal Marines boarding party wasn't called upon thankfully).

The trip out saw a visit to Alexandria. The homeward journey saw one to Valencia on the Spanish east coast.

That allowed the 174-strong ship's company to let their hair down and thoroughly flush the Gulf out of the

system before reaching Devonport.

The frigate was welcomed on the Costa del Azahar by ex-matelots from the RNA Moraira branch (it's about 60 miles south of Valencia if your Spanish geography's a little hazy) and Tony and Helen Hillman.

Tony and Helen Hillman? Well, they're the parents of the Black Duke's WO2(ET) 'Scotty' Hillman and live on the Costa Blanca.

Valencia was also the last venue played by The Black Dukes, Monmouth's rock band who've been keeping the ship's company entertained throughout the demanding six-month tour of duty.

And so to Devon and a beautiful Friday morning in mid-April and 500 families waiting on the jetty, including the Hickinbothams from Staffordshire.

They unfurled the largest welcome banner of the day for ET(WE) Liam Hickinbotham (although despite its size, they didn't have space for the surname...).

"This was Liam's first deployment and he has enjoyed all the visits to the different countries," said his sister Lara. "But we've all missed him – it's great to have him back home."

As for the junior rating's commanding officer, Cdr Tony Long, he was emphatic about what his men and women had accomplished: "We've achieved everything that has been asked of us."

"We've won international acknowledgment for our co-operation and interaction with regional navies, while the crew have worked hard and gained a great deal of professional pride from the six-and-a-half-month deployment."

"Families back home have been a key factor in our success – their support through e-mails, on the telephone and on community websites has been second-to-none. They deserve as many accolades as the sailors do for their superb support."

Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford, FRPU West



Swell start to a deployment

DEPLOYING minehunters generally don't go too long between port visits.

But when the ship's company of HMS Middleton left Portsmouth bound for the Gulf as part of the roulement of RN vessels in Bahrain, they probably didn't expect to be in port again after barely 200 miles.

With 60kt winds and an 11-metre swell forecast in the Bay of Biscay, the sailors decided to take shelter in Brest... where a sizeable proportion of the French mine warfare fleet was also avoiding the storm.

Middleton was holed up in Brittany for two days, but with a deadline for reaching Bahrain, the ship's company couldn't enjoy French hospitality for too long.

When a gap in the storm was spotted by forecasters, the ship set off once more bound for El Ferrol in Spain... before another gale battered Biscay.

The 'gap' proved to be less the 'calm before the storm' than the 'smaller storm before the raging tempest' – a five-metre swell and strong winds.

Now the Med typically is kinder to mariners than Biscay... but not for the Middleton men.

After a pleasant passage through the Strait of Gibraltar and a quick fuel stop in Alicante, the ship sailed into the teeth of a storm as she made for Souda Bay in Crete.

"With the crew now adjusted to this sort of weather, they took it in their stride," said CO Lt Cdr Richard Goldstone.

"Normal life – or as close as it can be when you and everything you put down that is not wedged in or tied down, flies across the ship with each wave – continued."

"We transited 2,800 miles, have been battered by storms, undertaken three unscheduled port visits and a significant ramp up in training and arrived at the eastern end of Mediterranean as planned."

In Souda there were four days of NATO trials to test the ship's equipment, a break in the capital Iraklion, lots of top eastern Mediterranean grub and even the occasional glimpse of sunshine.



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FIRST IN » LAST OUT

Crash of the Kryten

Picture: Surg Lt Donald Angus, HMS Sutherland



A FLASH of fire in the night from HMS Sutherland's main gun as the nation's most potent frigate vents her ire on the Cape Wrath ranges.

If you need proof that the Duke-class is fighting fit after an extensive £35 million refit in Rosyth then here it is.

Sutherland is one of two escorts for HMS Ark Royal on this summer's Auriga deployment to the USA.

But with the flagship directed south to take part in a possible evacuation of Brits from the continent, the Devonport-based frigate enjoyed a rather freer hand during the 'tweaked' Joint Warrior war games off north-west Scotland.

Joint Warrior was the first act of Sutherland's time with Auriga.

She was waved off from her home port on a fine April morning by family and friends, including the Deputy Commander in Chief Fleet Vice Admiral Richard Ibbotson who'd chatted with the ship's company before the frigate departed.

Courtesy of the major overhaul in Rosyth, Sutherland is lauded as 'the most capable 23 in the Fleet'.

She's the first RN frigate to be fitted with the updated Seawolf system (Seawolf Midlife Update or 'swimloo') which effectively doubles the range at which the missile can intercept incoming aerial threats.

Its advanced new sensors can track the smallest of threats travelling up to twice the speed of sound at truly impressive ranges.

So best test it then. A couple of booms and bangs later (actually, it's more of a very fast whoosh...) and Seawolf downed several aerial targets.

The update to Seawolf is just one of a series of upgrades Sutherland received during her lengthy spell on the Forth: there's the latest variant of sub-hunting Sonar 2087 (which has now been tested on extensive active and passive hunts); a new 4.5in 'Kryten' gun capable of firing long-range ammunition; the latest developments in automation have been incorporated in Sutherland's close-range weapon systems which significantly increases the accuracy of first-shot gunnery to improve lethality.

Finally, to cut down on fuel usage, there's a 'go faster spoiler' on her stern - aka a transom flap - and Intersleek paint applied to her hull to prevent marine organisms sticking to it.

In the run-up to Auriga, Sutherland has been fundamental in ensuring the next generation of specialist warfare officers, navigators and COs take up their next appointment fully-prepared for their role.

The ship set a record for the most rounds fired by a Kryten in a single day (247, if you were wondering) during Principal Warfare Officers firing serials.

Good weather during navigation training ensured the Fleet's future specialist navigators were put through their paces during high-speed coastal navigation runs by day and night.

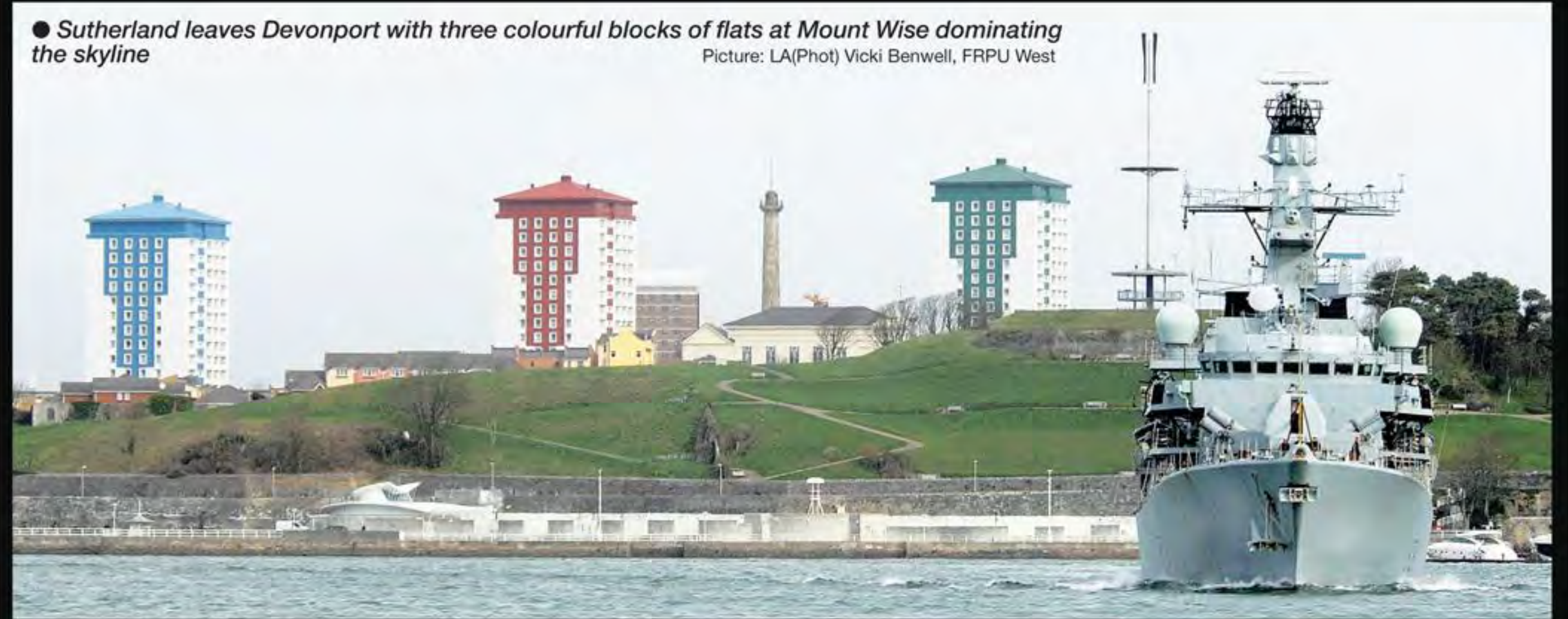
And just to keep the ship's company on their toes there was some additional training from the FOSTies during Joint Warrior ensuring the 180 men and women are on top of their game as the frigate makes for America.

"My team have been looking forward to this for a long time and have worked extremely hard to make sure we are ready in all respects for this exciting deployment," said Commanding Officer Cdr John Payne.



● (Above) On the lookout for fast-attack craft during Joint Warrior and (right) one of the new and improved Seawolf missile leaves its silo on HMS Sutherland

● Sutherland leaves Devonport with three colourful blocks of flats at Mount Wise dominating the skyline
Picture: LA(Phot) Vicki Benwell, FRPU West



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Prow day for Devon shipyard

NO, that's not a submarine, it's an aircraft carrier – an easy mistake to make.

And no, we haven't had a sudden attack of the Mr Magoos here at *Navy News*.

As you can see from the picture, one section of the new aircraft carrier which emerged from the gloom of the Main Building Hall at Appledore does bear a remarkable resemblance to the business end of a submarine.

But it is officially the bulbous bow section of the future HMS Queen Elizabeth, lovingly crafted from steel plates to allow the 65,000-tonne ship to slip through the water as efficiently and quietly as possible.

And those who crafted it at Babcock's North Devon shipyard, just along the River Torridge from Bideford, were invited to a special ceremony to send the bulbous bow (sub block VB001) on its way north.

Along with the next section up – at 112 tonnes, VB002 is a more traditional bow-shape, for the purists among our readers – the 293-tonne block had been mounted on a barge, the Osprey Carrier, ready to ship to Rosyth.

But with a capricious wind gusting around the shed, it was decided to complete the ceremony but delay the departure until calm prevailed.

That gave VIP guests the chance to thank the workers at the Appledore yard, many of whom had gathered in the building, for their efforts.

Among the guests was Vice Admiral Andrew Mathews, Chief of Material Fleet, who gave some indications as to why the Navy needed the new carriers.

The Admiral observed that 90 per cent of the world's population is close to a coastline, and while

"prevention is better than cure" there are some occasions when the "gentle reminder" of a carrier task group proves that you mean what you say.

Vice Admiral Mathews also pointed out that over half of American combat missions over land-locked Afghanistan are flown from aircraft carriers, which are secure and relatively easy to resupply at sea.

He also said that work had begun at five shipyards around the UK, with Cammell Laird coming on stream later this year, and that much of the equipment for HMS Queen Elizabeth – a defence asset, not a Royal Navy asset – was already in existence; the engines were being built and tested, the propellers were cast and work was nearing completion on the dock in Rosyth in which she will be assembled.

Archie Bethel, Chief Executive of Babcock's Marine Division, said the event was just as much about "celebrating the success of the Appledore workforce".

He said that the curvature of the bulbous bow section, built of high-tensile steel, made it one of the most complex sections of the hull, but it left Appledore "in budget, on schedule, with zero defects and within tolerance."

On completion of the speeches there was a ripple of fireworks along the dock and outside the massive door, which echoed round the shed as the Appledore Silver Band provided a rousing nautical soundtrack to the ceremony.

Around a dozen Sea Cadets and staff from the Barnstaple unit TS Valiant were on hand to witness events, as was a member of staff of the local Bideford unit TS Revenge.

But as proceedings came to a close, with the evening sun slanting through the doors and



● The bulbous bow of HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Main Building Hall at Babcock's Appledore shipyard

Picture: PO(Phot) Nicola Harper

windows, the tug experts deemed conditions still fell outside their safety envelope, so the barge remained in dock, allowing guests to take a closer look at the blocks before heading home.

The actual departure happened early the following day, which dawned cold and calm.

The 300-ton Dutch tug Vigilant, aided by Southampton tug Willpower, Babcock shipyard workboat Lundy Puffin and Bideford workboat Datchet, coaxed the 76-metre long barge out of the shed and a short distance downstream to New Quay, where they waited for sufficient depth of water to cross the sandbanks.

And having headed north out of the river, they then turned west and south, making the long journey to the Forth via the South and East coasts, thereby avoiding the inhospitable seas to the north of Scotland.

They arrived at Rosyth within a week, joining a sponson which had already been delivered from the Devon yard.

Major hull blocks from shipyards around the country will converge on Rosyth, with whole-ship assemble scheduled to begin at the newly-prepared No 1 Dock in late 2012.



● The bow sections are towed from the shed at Appledore by the tug Vigilant

Shape of things to come

WHAT comes after 22 and 23?

Why 26, obviously. This is an early glimpse of the Type 26 frigate, the future backbone of the Fleet.

Whitehall has signed a £127m deal with BAE Systems to design the replacement for the existing frigates which will begin leaving service at the end of the decade.

The four-year contract with BAE to design the future frigates is one of a number of contracts signed by the MOD in the past few weeks to help shape the RN for the next three decades.

It has committed to boats five and six of the Astute submarine project, pressing ahead with initial construction of the as-yet-unnamed fifth boat and procuring key items for boat number six.

And a 15-year deal has been signed with Babcock Marine for surface ship and submarine support and maintenance.

The Navy reckons the long-term contract should save the taxpayer more than £1bn by the time it ends in 2025.

As for Type 26, a team of 80 RN/MOD/BAE personnel is already working on plans in Bristol.

Over the next four years, as the design for the frigate is honed, the staff working on the project will swell to around 300.

The Type 26 is the first of three potential classes to arise from the Future Surface Combatant programme which has been looking into the needs of the 21st century Fleet for a decade or so.

The second class will be general-purpose warships which don't



possess the bespoke equipment on the T26s.

The third batch will serve as hydrographic/survey ships in place of the Echo class/HMS Roebuck, patrol ships in place of the River class and mine warfare vessels in place of the Sandowns and Hunts. The basic design will be identical, with equipment tailored to meet the demands of the specific task.

"You simply cannot have an effective Navy without capable frigates," said First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope. "The Type 26 combat ship will form the future backbone of the Royal Navy's surface force, alongside the new Type 45 destroyers."

"These ships will be highly versatile, able to operate across the full spectrum of operations."

The key role of the T26, like its predecessors, will be anti-submarine warfare, but the RN also wants to be far more flexible than existing classes of ships at dealing with a range of threats or situations, such as disaster relief.

The criteria laid down for the class include defending task groups and the strategic deterrent from submarines and other threats; putting troops ashore by boat or helicopter; surveillance and intelligence gathering; counter-terrorism/counter-piracy work; and disaster relief/humanitarian aid.

The first T26s are due to enter service at the beginning of the next decade, around the same time as the first Batch 3 Type 22 – HMS Cornwall – pays off. The Type 23s are due to begin decommissioning from 2023.

Come the 2030s, half the Fleet is expected to consist of the T26 and its successor.

And if you were wondering about Type 24s and 25s... The former was a general-purpose frigate, rather like the Leanders, aimed largely at the export market, while the Type 25 was a 'mini Type 22' intended to pack the same punch as the Broadwords, but at two-thirds of the cost. Neither ever got off the drawing board.



● Sea Cadets from Barnstaple unit TS Valiant at the ceremony in Appledore

Picture: Babcock

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Raising the standard

BILLOWING in the valley breeze, the banner of 40 Commando flies over Forward Operating Base Jackson for the first time.

The safety and security of more than 50,000 people is in the hands of 40 Commando for the next six months as they take charge of the Sangin district in Afghanistan.

Fortunately, the Norton Manor-based Royal Marines arrived in theatre before the Icelandic ash cloud grounded air travel across Europe.

That allowed the formal transfer of control of the region from 3rd Battalion The Rifles to go ahead as planned.

Over the preceding few weeks, the green berets and attached troops had been arriving in Forward Operating Base Jackson, the hub of operations in Sangin, for a comprehensive hand-over from their Army cousins.

Sangin was once a Taliban stronghold and the district has traditionally been one of the mainstays of the opium trade.

But Allied forces have spent the past four years attempting to drive the insurgents out of the area and encourage the region's farmers to grow crops

other than the poppy.

The area of operations was officially handed by 3 Rifles' Commanding Officer, Lt Col Nick Kitson, to his 40 Cdo counterpart, Lt Col Paul James, as the Army Colours were lowered and the 40 standard raised in their place.

"It's great to be here. It's an honour to take up the reins and having the opportunity to help the Afghans improve the lives of their people in Sangin and Kajaki," said Lt Col James.

The men of 40 Cdo arrive in Helmand for Operation Herrick 12 under 4 Mechanised Brigade, whose takeover from 11 Light Brigade in Afghanistan was severely disrupted by the volcano crisis.

Before heading east, the Royals headed for Salisbury Plain and a MRX - Mission Rehearsal Exercise (think Thursday War, but on land) - intended to mesh all the various units deploying on Herrick 12 and hone collective skills built up over months of pre-deployment training.

That meant exercising with Chinooks and Merlins, patrolling an Afghan village (which bears

a remarkable resemblance to a central European village built during the Cold War to train troops for combat on the continent), searching a bomb factory and clearing numerous

Taliban compounds, as each of 40 Cdo's companies operated from forward bases for 36 hours...

...which is something the commandos will be doing for the next six months from FOBs and smaller patrol bases.

As well as conducting reassurance/security patrols of Sangin and Kajaki (home to the hydro-electric dam which is vital for providing power to Helmand), the Royals will be mentoring Afghan National Police, operating alongside the Afghan National Army and supporting local reconstruction projects.

Before leaving Sangin, the soldiers held a 'thank you and farewell' shura - Arabic for discussion - with locals which also allowed them to introduce the green berets to district leaders... and recount the odd tale about their achievements during six months in the region.

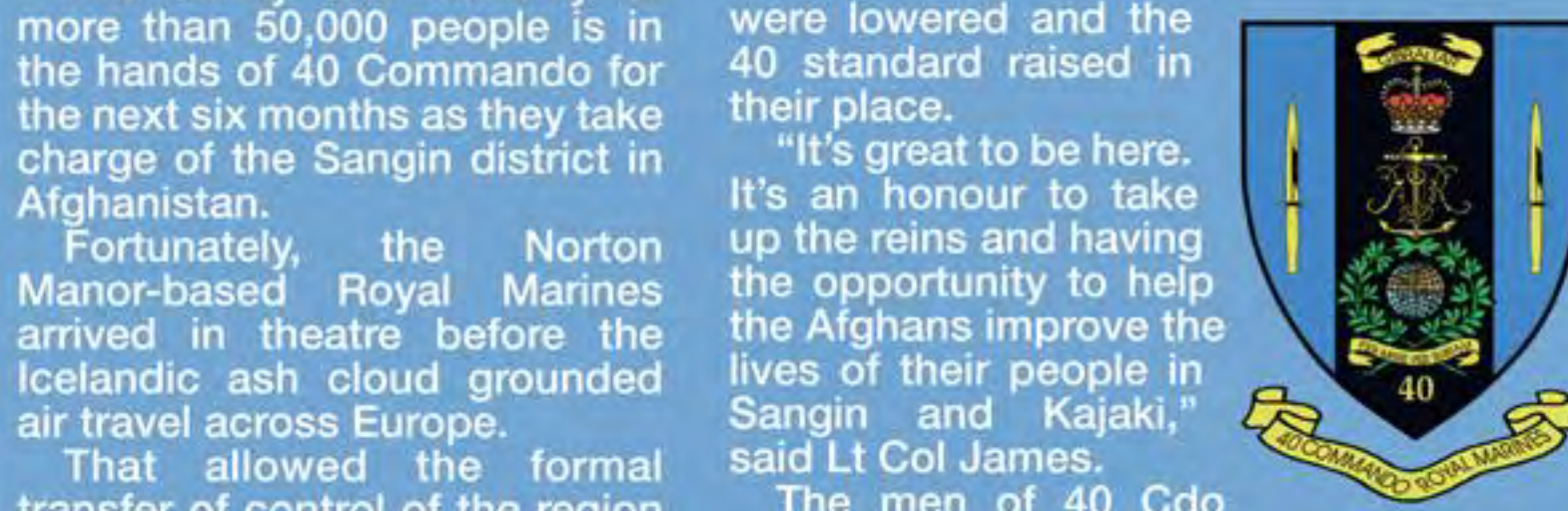
With the soldiers gone,

the Royals set about marineising their base at Sangin: the toilets are now the heads; the cookhouse is the galley, serving scran not scoff washed down with a wet, not a brew... all of which has caused much amusement among Afghan police and soldiers, plus the locally-employed nationals and interpreters who all live on the British bases and work with the commandos every day.

For around one in three 40 Cdo men, this is their second, third or even fourth deployment to the Sangin area. These Sangin veterans all commented on the significant changes that had taken place since they were last in the area.

The vibrant bazaar, which is just a few hundred metres from the main Allied base, is one of the most significant signs of progress achieved by the 3 Rifles Battle Group throughout their tour.

The locals and children are becoming increasingly friendly and comfortable with the presence of Allied and Afghan troops on their doorstep; the children are even starting to talk and play with the troops. That's a sign for many Sangin residents of real and tangible improvements to their quality of life.



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● RAF Chinooks deliver 40 Commando to FOB Jackson in Sangin



HEADING into the azure waters of the Arabian Gulf, HMS Atherstone follows a Qatari patrol ship, two RIBs, a Sea King and a merchantman as two weeks of naval exercises in the southern Gulf reach their zenith.

Two RN minehunters made the short trip from their base in Bahrain to Doha in Qatar (just 120 miles away) for war games involving three dozen nations.

Her Majesty's Ships Atherstone and Chiddingfold were Britain's representatives at Exercise Ferocious Falcon.

The first week focused on mine warfare, so it's handy there were two most able practitioners available in the form of the RN vessels and in particular their Seafox mine disposal system.

It was put to use, as were the two ships' dive teams, locating dummy mines on the sea bed off the emirate.

The first week of Ferocious Falcon also saw a good deal of interaction between the Brits and local defence forces, police and coastguard to strengthen communications between the ships and their hosts.

Then it was into Doha port for a weekend break in arguably the boom city in the region.

While there was some downtime (ie beachtime) for the two ship's companies, there was also a little flying the flag.

The sisters hosted 56 children and six teachers from Doha English-Speaking School.

They received guided tours of the Crazy A and Cheery Chid, got to grips with fire-fighting, saw Seafox and the diving kit, watched the mine disposal system in action (on video), sat in the captain's chair and had a good look at the weaponry laid out on the foc's'le.

"Everyone had a good time and brought a notable lift to the spirits of the ship's companies - Jack loves nothing more than to tell people what he does best," said Atherstone's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Gordon Ruddock.

Now we always say that you can never have too much falcon-related tomfoolery.

The second week began with the key part of the war games: Exercise Predatory Falcon.

Well, actually, the second week began with a shamal - the wind which blows down the Gulf sporadically bringing sandstorms and rough seas.

That didn't stop the climax of the Falcon exercises.

The Qatari Armed Forces staged anti-piracy exercises on the oil platforms which pepper their country's territorial waters, while a merchant ship was 'hijacked' in the approaches to Doha - then

stormed by security forces.

As Chiddingfold and Atherstone took up their supporting positions 200 yards abeam and astern of the merchant vessel with the Qatari Bashan-class patrol ship Al Deebel on the opposite beam, special forces were inserted by fast rope from a Sea King helicopter (the redoubtable whirlybird is a mainstay of the Qatari Air Force's rotary wing) whilst other troops quickly climbed on board from the sea having come alongside in fast RIBs.

Within five minutes the entire 162m (530ft) and eight decks of the ship had been secured and searched, with the hijackers led out on the upper deck, arrested and extracted by helicopter.

The whole exercise proved to be a success from both an operational and international liaison perspective.

"These two weeks at sea were extraordinarily productive," said Lt Cdr Ruddock.

"The opportunities to conduct varied and exciting training with many different nations and nurture stronger international working relationships in such a demanding environment are few and far between.

"What the Qatari Armed Forces have achieved here has been first-class and we are extremely pleased to have played our part in their exercise."

Enjoyable though the two Falcon exercises were, they probably weren't quite as enjoyable as three days of petrolhead ecstasy.

Two-thirds of the Chiddingfold's ship's company (30ish sailors) enjoyed time at the Bahrain Grand Prix - the curtainraiser of the 2010 Formula 1 season courtesy of Tickets for Forces.

A fortuitous meeting between the ship's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Jim Byron, and motor sport supremo Bernie Ecclestone resulted in the very generous gift of two VIP passes for the weekend (sadly Bernie's busy schedule meant he couldn't take up the ship's offer of a day at sea in return).

The passes allowed access to paddock and pit lane for the whole event and were shared out among the crew to give as many as possible a glimpse behind the scenes while allowing them to get up close to the action.

It went down particularly well with Logs Paul 'Geri' Halliwell, Chid's biggest motor racing fan, who not only saw the end of the race in the Pit Lane wall, but also met almost all his F1 heroes, and photographed the podium presentation.

He also managed to get on to the track itself before the race and appeared on the BBC coverage of the event, much to the delight of his 18-month-old daughter back at home, Lilly.



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Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell, FRPU North

Turbo-boosted Turbs



ABOUT to emerge from an overhaul following her exertions in 2009, hunter-killer HMS Turbulent is gearing up for her final year or so of a career spanning three decades.

Twice 'Turbs' was sent out on patrol on behalf of her nation last year, interspersed with a couple of port visits (Lisbon and Bergen).

Since then the engineers, electricians and boffins have been swarming over the T-class boat in her home in Devonport, upgrading and overhauling her systems.

And while they were busy, so too her ship's company who've spent a lot of time on simulators, learning to use the new kit which was being installed in the boat (such as the computer chart system WECDIS), as well as keeping old skills 'ticking over'.

There's also been fire-fighting and damage-control training, some leadership activities with the Royal Marines (courtesy of a "hoofing" visit to the assault course at CTCRM in Lympstone), and enough adventurous training and sport to make Turbulent the fittest Devonport unit (in the words of her CO Cdr Ryan Ramsey).

Time in base port has allowed the deeps to catch up with their affiliates: the people of Warrington, the Worshipful Company of Makers of Playing Cards, Oxford URNU, and Sea Cadet units TS Obdurate and Turbulent.

The boat's sponsor, Lady Cassidy, who launched the second of the nation's Trafalgar-class boats back in 1982, attended ceremonial divisions as part of the boat's rededication ceremony in January.

She also presented the 'man of the boat' trophy to the submariner who contributed most to life on board in the past 12 months: CPO(WEA) 'Dutchy' Holland.

Fund-raising activities have been focused on the Children's

Hospice South-West which runs homes in Bristol and Barnstaple and is building a third near St Austell at a cost of £5m.

Fans of Plymouth Raiders, the city's basketball team, donated £340 to the cause when Turbulent rattled tins and buckets at a home game, while this month the submariners will be sponsored when they hit the city's streets for the half-marathon.

As for Turbulent herself, once the maintenance ends this summer she'll conduct trials before Operational Sea Training and ultimately deployment towards the tail end of the year.

The present Turbulent – due to decommission in 2011 – is the fifth warship to carry the name; all but one of her predecessors met an unfortunate end.

The first Turbulent was a brig captured by the Danes in 1808.

Numbers two and four were both lost in action. Turbulent No.2, a Talisman-class destroyer, was sunk just three weeks into her active service, blown apart by the German battleship Westfalen in the night action at Jutland.

The fourth Turbulent is undoubtedly the most famous. In a career lasting only a year, she dispatched some 90,000 tons of enemy shipping in the Med under the command of the legendary Cdr 'Tubby' Linton.

She was depth-charged on more than 250 occasions, but it's thought a mine finally destroyed her off Sardinia. Nothing was ever heard of Turbulent after March 11 1943; her wreck has never been found.

As for number three, she was one of more than 60 ships built by the Admiralty to meet the challenges imposed by the Great War. She wasn't launched until six months after the war's end



Jutland 1916
Mediterranean 1942

Class: Trafalgar-class Fleet submarine

Pennant number: S87

Motto: *absit nomen* – May turbulence be absent

Builder: Vickers, Barrow-in-Furness

Laid down: May 8 1980

Launched: December 1 1982

Commissioned: April 28 1984

Displacement: 4,740 tons (surfaced), 5,200 tons (submerged)

Length: 280ft (85m)

Beam: 32ft (10m)

Draught: 31ft (9.5m)

Speed: c.32 knots

Complement: 130

Propulsion: 1 x Rolls Royce

PWR nuclear reactor; 2

x GEC turbines; 2 x WH

Allen turbo generators; 2 x

Paxman diesel alternators

Armament: Tomahawk Block

IV cruise missiles; Spearfish

torpedoes, Sub Harpoon

anti-ship missiles fired from

five torpedo tubes

and was paid off in the mid-30s as part of a deal which saw RMS Majestic converted into HMS Caledonia.

Battle Honours
Facts and figures

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No. 73 – Capt Frederic John Walker DSO



THIS is the moment of the kill.

Late afternoon, Saturday February 19 1944, some 700 miles west of Land's End.

The men of HMS Starling carry out 'Operation Plaster', unleashing a succession of depth charges.

The quarry is U264, pounded for more than ten hours by some 200 *Wasserbomben*.

Inside the submarine water sloshed around the crew's ankles. Equipment broke away from her pressure hull. A fire broke out in the engine room. Her commander, *Kapitänleutnant* Hartwig Looks, gave the only order he could: surface.

His action saved the lives of all 52 men on board. They scrambled out of their crippled boat and into the Atlantic.

The *Matrosen* – matelots – found two British warships circling U264: Starling and Woodpecker, two of the five vessels in the 2nd Support Group.

2SG were U-boat killers *par excellence*. The force began 1944 with seven kills to their name.

But the patrol which began in Liverpool on January 29 – to the tinny sound of *A-Hunting We Will Go* from Starling's loudspeakers – was U-boat destruction at its apotheosis.

In a three-week killing spree six boats fell victim to the depth charges of His Majesty's Ships Starling, Maggie, Wild Goose, Woodpecker and Kite:

January 31: U592
February 9: U762, U734, U238
February 11: U424
February 19: U264

With the exception of U264, every boat went down with all hands.

Seven days after the final kill, the ships – minus Woodpecker, lost after U764 blew her stern off – sailed up the Mersey in line formation, where they were welcomed by thousands of people, two bands, cheering Wrens, Admiral Max Horton and

the First Lord of the Admiralty, A V Alexander.

The latter hailed "one of the greatest cruises, the greatest cruise perhaps, ever undertaken in this war by an escort group".

The architect of this triumph was one Capt Frederic John 'Johnny' Walker (pictured below), a man who destroyed more U-boats than any other – at least 14, perhaps 20.

Walker had spent much of the inter-war years specialising in anti-submarine warfare.

But it was late 1941 before the Admiralty saw fit to allow the then 45-year-old to put his knowledge into practice.

He did so with aplomb in December of that year escorting convoy HG76 from Gibraltar to the UK.

Four U-boats fell victim to Walker's aggressive tactics, among them U567 commanded by ace *Kapitänleutnant* Engelbert Endraß.

It was the formation of the 2nd Support Group in the summer of 1943 which cemented Walker's reputation, however.

Two factors were key: the creation of dedicated hunting groups, rather than U-boat escorts, and what Walker called the 'creeping' attack.

One ship would direct another in for the kill, dropping a succession of depth charges at nine-second intervals. The method gave the foe no warning – and no escape.

By the spring of 1944, this was a proven method of U-boat killing. It was to Walker that the Allies turned to safeguard the Normandy invasion fleet from U-boat attack. The German submarines did not penetrate his shield.

The one victim of Normandy, however, was Walker. He died from a stroke on July 7 1944 caused by months of overwork and exhaustion.

A very public funeral in Liverpool and burial at sea followed, although Walker would probably have balked

at the former.

He hated the press accolades, the tag of hero. "Please don't call me the 'ace U-boat killer'," he pleaded during one public engagement. "That formidable character is a thousand British Jack Tars."

But after poring over German records and interviewing the former foe, the Admiralty historians declared five years later: "Capt Walker, more than any other, won the Battle of the Atlantic."

"No tribute could be too high for the work he carried out."

■ THESE photographs (A 21992 and A 21312) – 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.





● The decommissioning ceremony of survey ship HMS Roebuck at Devonport Naval Base

Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford

O woe Roebuck

FOR a ship whose initial role was to survey the UK's underwater continental shelf, HMS Roebuck is remarkably well-travelled.

By the time the White Ensign was lowered for the final time after

almost 24 years of service within the Royal Navy, the survey ship had visited 33 countries on four continents – a little further than her original remit.

She has steamed 431,000 nautical miles and completed 60 hydrographic surveys, covering

many thousands of miles of the ocean floor.

The legacy of Roebuck's work on these charts resides at the UK Hydrographic Office for use by all seafarers.

But of course Roebuck, the largest and last survivor of the Bulldog class of coastal survey vessels, did change somewhat over her long life – her original smart white and buff colour scheme of the hydrographic flotilla gave way to battleship grey in 1997.

An entirely appropriate colour as her most recent battle honour was for her work in the Al Faw Peninsula, where she charted the area ahead of the main task force's arrival at Iraq.

In addition to her survey role, she has recently taken on the role of flagship and command ship to the Commander Standing NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group 1 (SNMCMG1), acting as mothership to a multinational group of minehunters working

around the Baltic, Mediterranean and North Africa.

On her final entry into her home port of Devonport on March

18, the ship's commanding officer Lt Cdr Richard Bird said: "This is a sad, yet proud, day for the ship's company."

"During the past 24 years, HMS Roebuck has done some fantastic work worldwide supporting front-line operations."

He added: "Personally I have served in HMS Roebuck three times and have great affection for her – but a ship is more than a steel hull."

"It is the people who serve in her that give a ship her character and HMS Roebuck certainly has that."

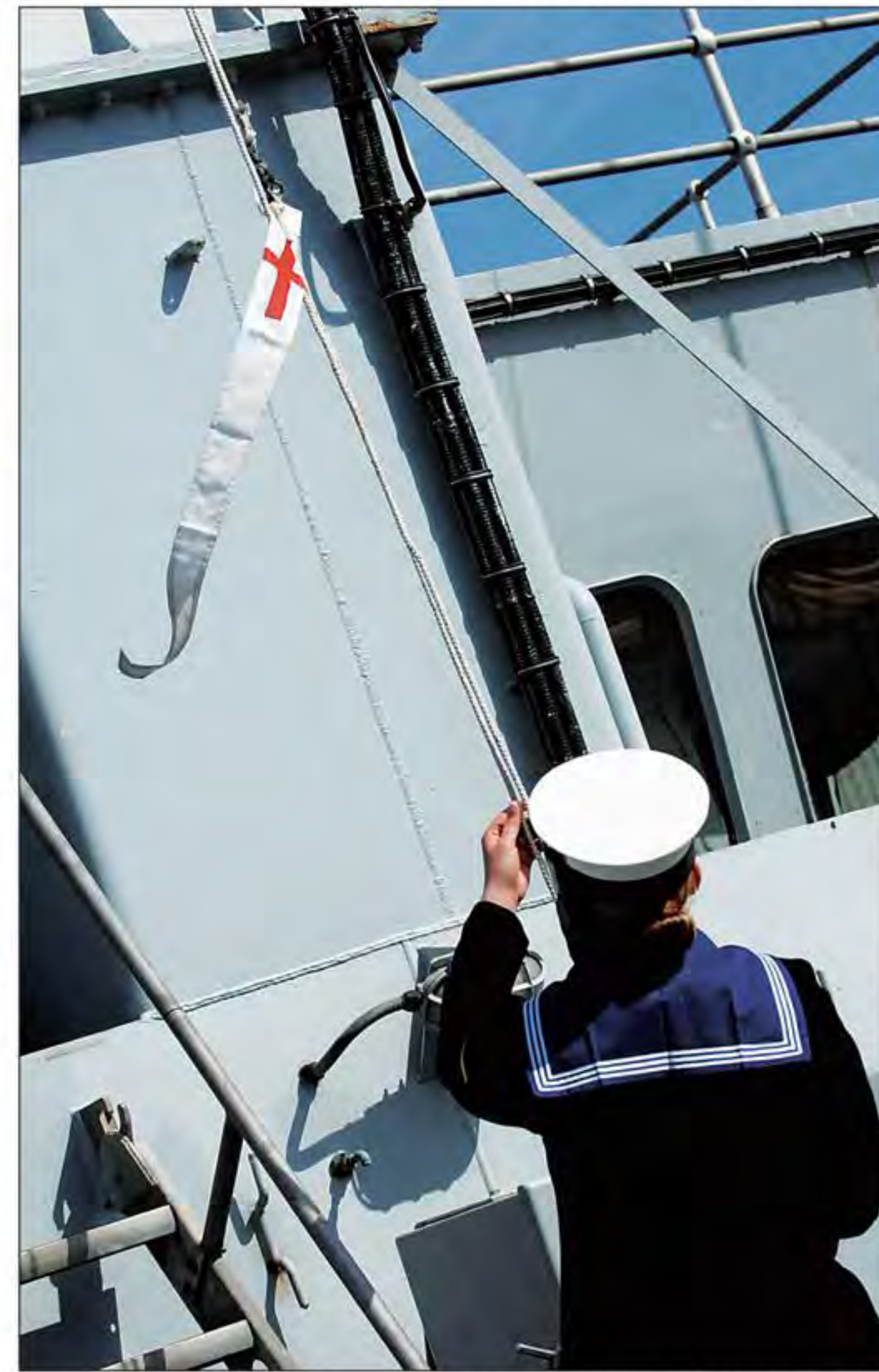
"It has been the highlight of my career to have had the opportunity to command HMS Roebuck and I am extremely proud of my ship's company and their achievements."

"They have remained cheerful and resilient right up to the end

It is the people who serve in her that give a ship her character and HMS Roebuck certainly has that



● The launch of HMS Roebuck in November 1985 at Lowestoft



● A sailor hauls down the commissioning pennant of HMS Roebuck
Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford

and they, like the ship, are a credit to the Royal Navy."

HMS Roebuck decommissioned almost one month later at a service attended by the ship's company, family, admirals and affiliate guests from TS Roebuck, Didcot Royal British Legion, the Worshipful Company of Instrument Makers among others.

And Lady Jill Cassels, the ship's sponsor, attended the ceremony

as guest of honour, cutting the decommissioning cake; and no doubt remembering the ship's launch back in November 1985.

Lady Cassels' husband Admiral Cassels was the last commanding officer of the destroyer HMS Roebuck, and with the passing of the survey ship the name Roebuck sits in the history books awaiting reincarnation for the 19th time.

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Morning gory

SOME things come naturally to Jack.

Improvisation. Can-do spirit. Cracking on. Ditching. Dripping.

And some don't.

Marching. Drill. Jumping out of the back of Land Rover hurling grenades.

Still, needs must...

Regular commuters on the A3 will be no strangers to the goings on at Longmoor Camp, the bangs, the flashes, the smoke billowing across a muddy expanse, the crack of rifle fire, men and women in full kit spilling out of the back of a Land Rover.

And nor, too, are some 1,000 sailors and Royal Marines who go through four weeks of OptAG each year to prepare for the rigours of Helmand.

Afghanistan has perhaps not featured as prominently in these pages since 3 Commando Brigade returned from Helmand last spring, but there's still a sizeable – and constant – Senior Service presence there.

Aside from the very visible airborne sight of the Commando Helicopter Force ferrying men and matériel around, and Bagger Sea Kings monitoring enemy movements and activity, there's a substantial number of sailors and marines at headquarters and forward bases, a very active explosive ordnance disposal team. And lest we forget, naval medics risk their lives daily heading out on patrols with troops on the ground.

In short, there are never fewer than 200 RN personnel in Afghanistan (plus a not inconsiderable number in Umm Qasr training the Iraqi Navy).

No-one who goes to Helmand goes without IPDT – Individual Pre-Deployment Training; Jack still resolutely refers to it as OptAG, but that's an Army phrase (*and we can't have that – Ed*).

That means two weeks either at Raleigh or Excellent learning how to don full body armour and shoot an SA80, before a week at HMS Nelson in the classroom on the laws of war, rules of engagement, and introductions to the cultures and languages of the region.

Finally, the students decamp (pun intended) to Longmoor for a week of intense in-the-field training: battlefield first aid, searching for home-made bombs, mines, conducting patrols, living in a forward operating base – basically everything that's expected of them in theatre.

Flash-bangs (the clue's in the title) provide some of the realism, more comes courtesy of Amputees in Action – people who've lost limbs in accidents, from disease or in combat.

They've provided 'actors' for *Saving Private Ryan*, *Gladiator* and *Band of Brothers*.

At Longmoor, they simulate casualties of bomb blasts complete with horrific injuries and fake blood.

Or, in the case of a group of marine engineers – dubbed the combat clankies – called upon to evacuate two casualties, a downed helicopter crew... with horrific injuries and fake blood.

"The medical make-up was amazingly realistic using amputees as casualties with false, damaged limbs – it looked like they had been blown up," says Lt Cdr Helen Ashworth, who's about to head to Iraq and the naval training team at Umm Qasr.

Such 'rescues' don't come naturally to clankies – or most matelots passing through Longmoor on the 12 courses run every year.

Harrier pilot Lt Neil Twigg has completed two tours of duty in Afghanistan supporting ground troops. Now he's on the ground as the vital liaison between fliers and soldiers, directing aerial operations.

"I've fired lots of rockets and released weapons from an aircraft, but I never picked up a rifle until four weeks ago.

"From that to running around doing patrols, contacts in vehicles – it's a steep learning curve."

It's also physically demanding. Pilots wear a lot of kit. But they also spend a lot of time on their backsides in the cockpit – it's the nature of the job.

"The hardest part of this was physically putting all this kit on and simply moving. Everything you do becomes quite slow and laboured – you soon run out of breath," Lt Twigg adds.

All of which is anticipated by the Royal Marine trainers.

"They start off at square one, working on a ship, and now we're trying to transform them as best we can for land operations," explains Sgt Phillip Camp RM.

A lot of RN training is for the possible but, mercifully, unlikely – task group under air attack, sea survival, submarine escape.

IPDT is for the possible and, sadly, highly likely. "We've had guys who we've trained getting in horrendous situations: having to fire weapons, shooting people, dealing with casualties. The feedback on the training we give them has always been good."

It's not all about fire and thunder, blood and guts. There's the 'light and sound' demonstration... which demonstrates how far light and sound travels at night when you bivvy. So no camp-fire singalongs then...

There's practical advice on moving in sandy terrain courtesy of the 'sandpit' (the nickname's not ironic...) and keeping your SA80 free of fine grains.

There's language training, teaching a dozen or so phrases which might come in handy on the ground.

And there's jumping out of the back of a Land Rover with your rifle at the ready. In an instant. *Sans* cracking your legs on the door frame. (The last bit was especially tricky...)

Not everyone minded the odd bruise, however.

"Getting in and out of Land Rovers, smoke grenades, flash-bangs. I'm just a small boy," says Lt Twigg.

But aside from that youthful enthusiasm, he realises the importance of these four weeks. This is the stuff of life and death.

"The little top tips they come out with, it's not stuff they're saying for the sake of it – it's genuine, life-saving stuff," Lt Twigg adds.

Mine Richard Fleming nods. He was last in Helmand in 2006 when there wasn't quite the same threat from makeshift bombs. Now he's returning to Afghanistan as an official driver.

"If you get hit by an IED, you know what to do next instead of panicking and looking around at people. You crack on with what you're doing and get out of the area," he says.

Longmoor is, of course, not Lashkar Gah. Hampshire is not Helmand. There's only so much you can replicate on an army training camp.

"Although I'm fully aware that this is only a basic level of training, I feel confident that I've the skills needed to deal with situations in theatre should they arrive," says Lt Cdr Ashworth.



Sisters in law (enforcement)

WHAT come in threes?

Not buses, obviously. You only get those in twos...

Trios. Triplets. Tenors. Degrees. Mile Islands. Kings of Orient. Dimensions. Blind mice. Stooges. Little pigs. River-class patrol vessels.

Admittedly there are four of the latter... but HMS Clyde is an enhanced variant, so strictly speaking doesn't count.

Plus she wasn't in town for a rare get-together by the RN's three fishery protection ships exercising together.

Her Majesty's Ships Mersey, Severn and Tyne are often at sea at the same time (they're on operations four out of every five days a year)... just not together.

But in the Portsmouth Exercise Areas, the triumvirate met up for a squadron exercise.

Severn and Tyne had just finished a spot of fishery protection duties, while Mersey was emerging from her annual

maintenance period.

After embarking the Captain Mine Warfare, Fishery Protection and Diving, Capt Mark Durkin, plus some of his staff and a team from the Flag Officer Sea Training, the combined exercises begin in earnest.

First up, fend off the killer tomatoes (a common foe in the Solent...). Mersey launched a large red inflatable before the trio took turns to dispatch this (rather docile) enemy.

Twice the ships passed the target, each sending 200 rounds from 20mm and upwards of 1,000 rounds from the machine-guns into the tomato which was fully deflated by the end of the gunnery practice.

Next up, Officer of the Watch manoeuvres and a photo exercise, plus some winch transfers courtesy of a Mk8 Lynx from 702 NAS, the Lynx training squadron.

Quite often it's some poor

unsuspecting rookie who gets roped in for dangling off a helicopter's winch.

But not on this occasion. No, the aircrew had the responsibility of lowering CINC Fleet, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, plus his flag lieutenant... and the ship's company of HMS Severn had the responsibility of receiving the two officers safely.

Which they did (Phew - Ed). That concluded the exercise and so it was back into Portsmouth.

"Every one involved, from all three ships' companies benefited from the exercise and honed skills familiar to all sailors. This was a great opportunity and hopefully will become a regular fixture in the life of the Fishery Protection Squadron," said Mersey's navigator Lt Chris Wood.

"Weeks of planning were involved to ensure our three ships, which normally operate independently of other naval units, were in the same place at the same

time so we could make the most of the opportunity to practise skills we seldom use - co-ordinated gunnery, tactical communications, helicopter transfers or close-in manoeuvring."

The exercise was the highlight of a get-together for the fishery protection squadron lasting several days. It saw the command teams of the three ships share their experiences with experts from the Marine Fisheries Agency.

While senior figures were locked in conferences, the rest of the ship's companies were locked in combat in the sport arena: bucket ball (think: basketball with a bucket) and Swedish longball (think: cricket merged with baseball). HMS Severn claimed the honours.

The fishery convention closed with an all-ranks dinner dance for sailors, squadron staff, MFA employees and staff from BAE Systems who own and maintain the three ships, with music provided by the RM jazz band.

Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool, RNAS Yeovilton



Dramatic end for Sceptre

WHAT finer way to celebrate the magnificent service HMS Sceptre has given her nation over three decades than a nice dram?

Not any old dram, but one specially-commissioned to mark the demise of the last Swiftsure.

The Faslane-based hunter-killer - currently on silent service east of Suez - pays off later this year after 32 years' service.

She's the oldest active British warship and the last of a class of boats which traces its heritage back to the early 70s.

As such, there's going to be quite a celebration to mark her passing. To help pay for the farewell celebrations, the boat commissioned 500 bottles of 12-year-old Highland single malt from local firm Clyde Whiskies.

Each numbered bottle features the code 'Dolphin 100'... We'll let Sceptre's WO2 Justin Beattie explain.

"The Dolphin code was an old-school way of submarine COs communicating with each other. I particularly like 52d. Feel free to google the code; there are various versions, none for the easily offended."

Well, it would be rude not to accept the challenge...

52. If you provide the fresh water, I'll provide:
- a. Soap.
 - b. Towels.
 - c. 60 dirty bodies.
 - d. Whiskey.
 - e. All of the above.

"With the passing of Sceptre ends an era," says her CO Cdr Steve Waller. "For more than 30 years, Swiftsure-class submarines have been undertaking all manner of operations for the Royal Navy and the UK as a whole. This is a fitting memento."

To reserve your bottle, e-mail WO2 Beattie at 380-nuc6@a.dii.mod.uk. Bottles are £38 each and will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis. The small profit made on each sale will go to the decommissioning fund.

Royals mimic CIMIC

GREEN beret Maj Matt Williams discusses a route through the snow-bedecked woods of Virginia with Mne Pannu Jaskaran as Royal Marine Reservists gear up for deployment to Afghanistan.

The part-time marines headed to Camp Pickett, 50 miles southwest of Richmond, to join Canadian and American troops for a fortnight of pre-deployment training.

Some three dozen Royal Marine Reservists are deploying to Afghanistan this spring on Operation Herrick 12, the latest roulement of British forces in Helmand.

They flew across the Pond for the two-week-long Exercise Southbound Trooper X, an annual exercise run at the US Army Training Centre at Camp Pickett.

Under the exercise's scenario - based on the experiences of Canadian forces - the reservists were given an area in an Afghan province where security had been established.

They had to decide how best to build up a relationship with locals by nurturing/rebuilding amenities and facilities to allow the government to start functioning properly and effectively.

That pretty much mirrors what the Civil Military Co-ordination teams - better known as CIMIC - do in theatre.

Aside from the 'hearts and minds' aspects of the exercise, there was also some full-blown combat, notably the 'kill house'.

They're used to train troops - the guys who wear black typically - in the art of urban combat.

"The kill house was obviously the highlight," said Cpl Gus Martin of RMR Scotland. "Back home they are few and far between."

"You pretty much have to be Special Forces to get regular training with them, so to get that facility in the package is pretty good."

Maj Matt Williams, Officer in Charge of RMR Bristol's training company, and a former regular Royal who's served in Iraq and Afghanistan, said Southbound Trooper had been "a great experience, a further opportunity to experience working with other nations - which in the current operational climate is particularly important."

Picture: Sgt Justin Paul Howe, US Army



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Cool appraisal of Cold Response

Lt Cdr Jools Haigh is a post-charge Pusser currently working as the Maritime Logistician for Commander UK Amphibious Forces.

As such he recently returned from Exercise Cold Response 2010 – his first experience of a Norwegian winter exercise.

Here is his account of the exercise.

I'VE heard all about winter exercises in Norway before, but never had the opportunity to participate myself.

Now I've finally had the chance to see it for real.

Over four weeks I saw the fjords, the snowy mountains and the spectacular Northern Lights; but the detail and complexity of the exercise itself was a mystery to this dark-blue Pusser.

In working it all out I've had the following thoughts.

The scenario could be taken from the recent history of any failing state – an unrepresentative government of an impoverished country (Eastland), struggling to find its way in a post 9/11 world, making a land grab to gain natural resources and a deep-water port.

At its disposal was a Soviet-era military, an extensive propaganda effort and the support of a part-time terrorist outfit calling itself the Eastland Tigers.

To counter this the UN Security Council issued a resolution giving NATO and an alliance of Scandinavian countries the lead in returning the invaded territory back to its rightful government.

NATO declared the creation of a task force of combined armies, air forces and navies – CTF 507.

More than 8,500 people were brought together to sweep across this frozen area of arctic Scandinavia to repel the invaders.

Of this, a sizeable chunk was maritime, which meant a fleet of ships and a landing force of light manoeuvre troops ready to regain control of the sea, storm the beach and fight their way inland to link up with the land force of the combined armies.

On paper, this maritime force of 3,980 people looked simple enough, a familiar management pyramid showing clearly who had authority over whom.

Tiers of HQ elements planned and managed the actions of ships, helicopters, boats and people to ensure the correct 'effect', with each subordinate level adding greater detail to the plan.

'Effect', by the way, isn't shock and awe style destruction; it is the erosion of the enemy's will to fight using all the tools at our disposal.

The biggest tools in this box were some (necessarily assertive) weapons and the warriors that wielded them.

However, political and legal advisors and media specialists were also embarked to exercise the not-inconsiderable influence of 'soft power'.

This sizeable military force was not an off-the-shelf, ready-to-go

train set.

In reality it was created at a pen stroke in NATO HQ and, once given a name, it filled up with appropriately-trained personnel and the kit needed to equip this complicated system of groups.

The make-up of this force was not simple.

In charge of the significant international maritime component was, perhaps surprisingly, not an admiral but Maj Gen Buster Howes RM.

As the two-star Commander of UK Amphibious Forces, his 55-strong HQ is made up of a majority of Royals, whose amphibious and littoral knowledge was supplemented by specialist naval and air staff, some of them American, French and Dutch officers.

When deployed away from Whale Island, his staff is further augmented by another 42 personnel, many of them reservists with specific, specialised skills.

For this exercise, Maj Gen Howes and his 97 staff were embarked in the Dutch amphibious assault ship HNLMS Johan de Witt, a highly-capable vessel with a two-spot flight deck, a large dock for landing craft, cavernous load space and accommodation for up to 400 amphibious forces and their equipment.

The impressive ship's large, integrated and technologically-advanced command centre enabled Maritime HQ staff to receive the flood of information from the battlefield, develop contingency plans, make decisions and then issue cogent orders.

Rapid connectivity and good IT meant their decision-making process was significantly faster than that of the enemy – and maintaining the initiative is key.

In that way Maj Gen Howes and his staff effectively stage-managed the building blocks, the groups of ships (amphibious platforms, two escort groups and a group of mine countermeasures vessels) and the brigade of international troops.

Each group had its own HQ and for this exercise assault ship HMS Albion happened to be carrying the two most significant teams.

Cdre Paul Bennett was in charge of the Amphibious Task Group, a variety of some 120 regular and reservist specialists.

Also on board was Brig Ed Davis RM, the commander of some 750 – mostly Royals – including 200 of his own HQ staff.

This was the business end of the landing forces, the backbone being 45 Cdo RM, and alongside them were the 200-strong Commando



● A Dutch landing craft operates from HNLMS Johan de Witt, and (below) Wave Knight on a replenishment in a heavy blizzard

Support Group, 50 or so artillery specialists from the Army's 29 Cdo, 60 staff of 24 Regt Engineers and a company of 120 personnel from the 2/25 US Marines.

The complexity of managing this formidable force was not helped by the fact it was scattered throughout the task group which, as well as Albion and Johan de Witt, included helicopter carrier HMS Ocean and the capable Mounts Bay which, although operated by the RFA, finds herself a long way up-threat.

This might sound highly organised and compartmentalised, but these military personnel do not think in such rigid terms.

They had been called in to represent their area of specialisation and for the exercise they came together in this system of teams in order to complete the task.

The scenario in Cold Response 2010 called for the fleet to fight its way into Vesterfjorden and on to liberate Narvik while under attack from enemy forces in submarines, fast attack boats and fighter-bomber aircraft.

Then they had to cope with floating minefields and terrorist arms smuggling operations amongst local shipping.

The 'enemy' were the Norwegian armed forces, who relished the opportunity to have a go at their allies and attempt to get one over.

For the initial three days, the naval contingent had to fight to protect their ships, taking the opportunity to practise gunnery, damage control and fire-fighting and, for the French frigate FS L'Herre, carry out a rare live missile fire exercise.

The amphibious landing forces spent the period in transit meticulously planning how they would overcome the enemy ashore.

Far from being a D-Day style single assault, the task force dispatched raiding parties and recon teams over a period of days, often in the middle of the night when temperatures were down to -15°C or so.

These teams carry out their set of tasks and are then withdrawn back to the ships to warm up, re-configure and de-brief.

Eventually, after intelligence had been gathered and a variety of enemy positions 'neutralised', the force conducted its main effort.

That meant putting troops and equipment ashore in three locations simultaneously for a three-day effort to link up with their Army allies and push the enemy back into their homeland.

During this period the entire force was as active as a wasps' nest poked with a stick.

The volume of traffic around the fleet from ship to shore

was hugely impressive – large amounts of troops, vehicles and equipment were ferried to and fro in surprisingly fast landing craft (six big LCUs that can carry 60 tonnes or 90 troops plus kit and 12 smaller LCVPs designed to ferry 30 people at speeds of up to 26 knots).

Helicopters shuttle about with artillery pieces under-slung while the enormous mexeflote, a giant powered raft, took the heavy equipment ashore.

Again, most of this happened in the dead of the cold Arctic night.

Once ashore the landing forces had to fight their way to their objective – the 'enemy' had the benefit of local knowledge, familiarity with the climate and complex defensive positions.

It's fair to say the fight doesn't all go the way of the allies.

Some teams found themselves overwhelmed by the enemy and 'lifted' – removed from the exercise to spend a few hours in the care of the Norwegian Army.

Nevertheless the force pushed through, mostly on skis carrying enormous personal loads (35kg or over 70lbs) plus weapons.

It's worth mentioning that the cold there simply cannot be compared to a UK winter's day.

Personnel ashore expended most of their energy just keeping themselves safe and mobile in the deep snow – having to remove a glove to pull something out of a pocket can be a serious undertaking in such conditions.

Once they got to their given objective they then needed to find the strength to engage and destroy the enemy.

It's no wonder that the



commandos have to be amongst the fittest and strongest in the Armed Forces.

At the end of the three-day assault the battle was won and, although the war continued to be planned, the exercise came to an abrupt halt.

After many months of planning, weeks on task and days in the field, the whole thing was over.

Kit was re-stowed back on the ships, the land forces were brought

back into the warm to be washed and fed.

And that was the end of Task Force 507; this leviathan was snuffed out and its personnel moved on to their next period of training, exercising or operations.

I go back to my regular job with COMUKAMPHIBFOR on Whale Island; never again will I look on blankly when others in the mess talk about the exploits of the 'Arctic Fox'.



● Maj Gen Buster Howes at the helm of a landing craft from HNLMS Johan de Witt



● A Dutch landing craft approaches HMS Albion

Pictures: Cdr Dave Burns (COMUKAMPHIBFOR)

Saint it black



NIGHT in the Arabian Gulf.

The Flight Deck Officer of HMS St Albans guides in Lola – the frigate's Merlin helicopter (no we don't know the story behind the nickname...) – while his team ready the fuel hose for a refuel, all witnessed by a senior officer.

The Saint is knuckling down to her first spell around Iraq's oil terminals (she's recently taken over from HMS Monmouth – see page 7), demanding but also rather monotonous work.

So to keep the ship's company on their toes, there's quite a bit of exercising: fire drills; flood drills; helicopter in-flight refuelling (*being practised here*); helicopter load lifting and winching (and not just on and off the flight deck); boarding party training.

Much of this was observed by Rear Admiral Amjad Hussain, Controller of the Navy – responsible for procurement and safety issues (he also wears a second 'hat' as Director (Precision Attack)).

When not exercising and practising, there's the small matter of protecting Iraq's oil terminals, KAAOT and ABOT, which are the mainstay of the country's economy.

The Saints' RN-RM boarding team have visited numerous dhows in the patrol areas – a tiny slice of the 2½ million square miles of sea in the Gulf which is patrolled by Coalition maritime forces...

... as witnessed by Britain's second most senior admiral, Admiral Sir Trevor Soar. The Commander-in-Chief Fleet joined the Type 23 during her stint around the two oil terminals.

As well as watching boarding operations and discussing the mission with CO Cdr Adrian Pierce and the ops room team, he also sat down with some of the more experienced members of the frigate's ship's company in the senior rates' mess to listen to the voice of the front-line Fleet.

And while HM Ships Atherstone and Chiddingfold could be found in Qatari waters for a major exercise (see page 11), the Saint was in Doha with Grimsby and Pembroke for DIMDEX.

If you guessed '-ex' stood for exercise, you're incorrect.

If you guessed '-ex' stood for exhibition, you're spot on. Doha International Maritime Defence EXhibition to be precise.

The three RN vessels joined warships from around the globe at the four-day showcase of naval technology and firepower.

St Albans was designated as the First Sea Lord's flagship for the exhibition; Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope headed a UK delegation on board which included the RN's senior officer in the Gulf, UK's Maritime Component Commander Cdre Tim Lowe.

The frigate hosted a large number of visitors, while all three ships offered tours demonstrating their technology and gave UK defence firms the opportunity to display their wares – with the added bonus of feedback from the men and women who use it daily, Jack, Jenny and Royal.

When the doors of DIMDEX closed, there was a sporting contest as sailors from numerous nations fought to take the much-coveted tug-of-war trophy.

Picture: LA(Phot) Steve Johncock, FRPU West

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A FORCE FOR GOOD



Climbing Everest in John's memory

TWO FRIENDS of John Thornton, a Royal Marines officer who was killed in Afghanistan in 2008, have set out to climb Mount Everest to raise money for a charity set up in his memory.

Matt Snook, 24, a Royal Marine from Bournemouth, and his friend Pete Sunnucks, 27, from Wolverhampton, (pictured above) an aspiring Royal Engineers officer, are scheduled to climb the risky North Ridge this month.

They hope to raise £100,000 to be split between the John Thornton Young Achievers' Foundation and Help for Heroes.

The JTYA Foundation provides scholarships and bursaries for training and personal development, with the simple objective of encouraging and assisting young people to live their dreams.

Matt and Pete have spent the last few months in training, building up experience for the

big climb.

They have climbed in the Alps, English Lakes and Scottish Highlands and have specialist endurance tasks ahead of them.

Matt said: "Many of our friends are serving in the Armed Forces, some of whom are deployed in Afghanistan, some are preparing to deploy and others have recently returned home.

"We want to raise money for Help for Heroes, to aid those who have suffered horrific injuries in the line of duty.

"We are also fundraising in memory of our dear friend John Thornton, who we tragically lost.

"It's a lifetime's ambition for both of us and an honour to be doing it for these charities."

To contribute to either charity and support Matt and Pete, visit www.justgiving.co.uk/everestforheroes

A fridge too far

FORMER Naval diver and sonar operator Matthew Hollox has taken on a 3,000-mile trek around the UK, taking with him a 200kg fridge...

Matthew's unusual companion joined him on his trek when a local club asked him to dispose of the appliance.

"It's definitely much heavier than I'd originally imagined, but it's waterproof and the right size for storing my equipment.

"It's ideal for displaying pictures of the servicemen who have died in Iraq and Afghanistan."

Matthew set off on his 'monumental walk' in January, and plans to return home to Nottingham in November zigzagging his way across the country.

His aim is to raise a significant amount of money for the National Memorial Arboretum Appeal.

In March he returned to Raleigh for the first time in 34 years, and met some of the trainee sailors.

He said: "It's quite emotional



Matthew Hollox visits Raleigh on his monumental walk

being back here. I've got good memories of Raleigh.

"It was really great to be with youngsters of my age, all wanting

to do the same thing."

If you would like to sponsor Matthew, go to www.justgiving.com/matthew-hollox.

Duncan's Hasler hike

DUNCAN Nicoll, a former RN sailor and father of two Royal Marines, has raised £3,000 for Hasler Company, the rehabilitation unit for

injured Commandos with his long-distance walk.

Duncan, 60, survived some of the worst weather the winter could throw at him as he walked 630 miles on the South West Coastal Path from Minehead to Poole in aid of the unit.

He slept in a tiny tent which he pitched on numerous golf courses, including a Paignton pitch-and-putt course from where he was moved on by police.

Duncan collected money as he walked, including donations from golfers and an American couple.

He said: "I saw the news of Hasler Company opening and Mark Ormrod the Marine who lost two legs and an arm in Afghanistan and I thought of ways I could help them out at my advanced age.

"One of my sons, Tom, served in Afghanistan when he was with 42 Commando and was injured, so it all means a lot to me and my wife."

He added: "The walk was hard, but the thought that the proceeds were going to a good cause kept me going through the toughest parts, mentally and physically.

"It was very touching and spurred me on even more when people stopped me and gave me money on the spot."

Two Devon villages have set aside their usual friendly rivalry to raise money for Hasler Company.

Noss Mayo and Newton Ferrers in South Devon have donated nearly £2,500 to the unit after a series of charity events.

Mike Leonard, editor of the area community newspaper *Private Nose* raised most of the money by an appeal through the pages.

The officer commanding Hasler Company, Major Pete Curtis, said: "I am impressed that two villages should come together like this and generously raise funds for Hasler Company.

"It shows the strong community spirit that still exists in places like that and what positive results it can achieve.

"The lads of Hasler Company are very moved also that they have been thought about by all the kind people of Noss Mayo and Newton Ferrers."

Hasler Company opened last September. It is based in Devonport Naval Base and manages the needs of Marines affected in various ways by combat and other aspects of service life.

The unit ensures that they receive the mental and physical support and services they need to regain health and fitness and think about their futures, whether in or out of the Royal Marines.

Around the UK in many ways

WHEN you're deployed to far-off shores one of the many things you think about is home, and the ship's company of HMS Pembroke were no exception.

MCM1 Crew 7, who joined the ship in the Gulf last August, started their deployment dreaming of rain and green grass.

But not for long; Coxswain PO(D) Garth Spence soon set them a challenge - to circumnavigate the UK using the gym equipment onboard.

So as Pembroke readied for sea for the first time with her new crew, she also left Faslane to begin her UK circumnavigation - with the aim of completing 1,820 nautical miles in eight months.

But as Pembroke isn't a large ship, squeezing gym equipment onboard was a challenge of its own, and many and various were the ruses the crew adopted, from using a cross-trainer on the upper-

deck to a bike in the hangar and a rowing machine in the gyro space.

Each time a piece of equipment was used the distance was noted and plotted on the chart, edging ever closer to the goal.

The crew relished the challenge and soon set up several mini competitions, most notably the sub-three minute group for 1km on the rowing machine.

There was a time coming towards the end of the deployment when there were fears that they wouldn't make it back to Faslane - but the crew pulled together over the last few weeks, hitting the gym equipment in the hope of reaching the target and burning a few calories for good measure.

They finally covered the last 200 miles in good time, not only making it all the way back to Faslane, but raising money for the RNRMC in the process.

h4h in brief

CHARITY Help for Heroes has hit its £40 million milestone - in just over two years since its launch.

The charity was launched in October 2007 and has received an average of £47,000 every single day ever since.

Its latest appeal, 'The Launch pad to Life', fund has enabled H4H to grant £20 million to help build four Recovery Centres for wounded servicemen and women.

The centres are planned to be in Catterick Colchester, Tidworth and Edinburgh.

RN support for H4H includes: ■ CPO Sam Gilmore, a WAFU chief serving in RAF Wyton on the Harrier circuit.

Sam and his RAF colleagues organised a bands evening in Bedford during a local beer festival to raise money for H4H.

■ C/Sgt 'Darby' Allen from 848 NAS, who is joining 'Everest 4 Heroes', eight military veterans from all three services who plan to climb Mount Everest in 2012, raising money by 'selling' off sections of the mountain per foot climbed.

Visit www.everest4heroes.com for more information.

■ The 'Ride to the Rock' team planning to cycle from Portsmouth to Gibraltar in September, and then race up the rock.

The team has already raised £200 by washing cars in the car parks at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

Vote RNBT

THE Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) is looking for new trustees.

The RNBT provides for serving and retired ratings and their families who find themselves in need or distress.

One of its founding principles is that it is run predominantly by current and former sailors and marines.

Eleven of the 17 trustees on the governing body come from this group and are known as Ordinary Member Trustees.

Under recent changes to the charter, the first elections for Ordinary Member Trustees take place in June.

If you are interested or want to contribute, please contact the RNBT's head office in Portsmouth on 023 9269 0112 or email rnbt@rnbt.org.uk.

Grumpy Shep

KEEN supporter of Naval charities Shep Woolley has released his sixth CD entitled *Grumpy Old Matelots*.

Although Shep's time as a performer on the boards more than doubles his time on board, he remains a keen fundraiser for Seafarers, Help for Heroes and the 'grumpy old matelots' of RNBT's Pembroke House.

The CD costs £10 with £4 postage and packing to J Woolley, 7 Livingstone Road, Southsea PO5 1RS.

849 go 831

A LOCAL Sea Cadet unit benefitted from the pedal power of 849 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Culdrose.

The airmen took to the static bikes at the base's fitness suite to cycle 831 miles in 12 hours - the equivalent of the distance from Lizard Point to John O'Groats.

The Falmouth and Penryn Sea Cadet Unit will gain £650 to buy a trailer to transport equipment and baggage to their various activities; and over £100 will be donated to a charity that is helping a local schoolboy Max Levene, who was paralysed in a rugby accident.

Some 56 members of 849 NAS took to the bikes to keep up an average pace of 16.9 miles per hour - and in the process caused one of the cycling machines to break down...

Event organisers Lt Craig Jordan and AET Simon Pomeroy praised everyone involved.

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ssafa in brief

SSAFA, the Soldiers' Sailors Airmen and Families Association, celebrates its 125th anniversary in 2010 with a series of events and fund-raising initiatives throughout the year.

The charity launched its annual Service Volunteer Awards at the John Logie Baird School in Helensburgh, where children held a party to mark the launch, with the help of the Clyde Naval Base Commander, Cdre Chris Hockley, and SSAFA Forces Help chairman Sir Robin Ross.

The awards will be presented by Prince Michael of Kent this summer.

Among those supporting the charity this year are:

■ The Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood, which presented cheques totalling nearly £4,000 to Claire Hoather, Director of Fundraising for SSAFA.

The money was raised by the Royal Navy Motorcycle Club and by a team of cyclists on a sponsored bike ride from Poole to Manchester and back to HMS Collingwood

■ Dave Jones, a SSAFA Caseworker on the Isle of Wight, who raised £210 from a 'Big Brew' and cake day held in HMS Warrior, in Portsmouth, with the help of former Wrens 'Rusty' Jones and Cheri Parsons.

SSAFA is offering summer activity breaks for young people with additional needs – principally disabled children, their brothers and sister, and young carers.

The week-long breaks, in Northumberland, Exmoor, or Fairthorne Manor, near Southampton, include riding, climbing, swimming and kayaking. SSAFA also needs volunteers to help run the holidays.

For more details email holidayprojectcoordinator@ssafa.org.uk

A row go

YEOVILTON'S 815 Naval Air Squadron B Section clambered aboard the base's static rowing machines for a 12-hour rowathon for Macmillan Cancer Support.

From 8am to 8pm, the 26 rowers – including the PT staff, the First Lieutenant, the Base Warrant Officer and a serving member of the French Navy – covered a distance of 191,636m or 118 miles.

Organiser LAET Dwain Powell said: "I organised this charity event in memory of a very close friend of mine who sadly passed away with cancer in December 2009.

"The aim was to row a distance of 165,000m in 12 hours and I'm glad to say we beat our target by a massive margin."

And a 20-strong team of runners from 815 Naval Air Squadron in Yeovilton donned their running shoes to compete in the Bath Half Marathon, raising money for St Margaret's Hospice Somerset and Dorothy House Hospice Care.

Bell ringing

SIX partially-sighted children from schools in Somerset tried their hands at a sport new to them when they visited RNAS Yeovilton to play Goalball.

Goalball, an Olympic team game designed for blind or partially-sighted athletes, was invented in 1946 and has been an Olympic sport since 1976.

It is played by teams of three who try to throw a ball embedded with bells into the opponents' goal.

The players were hosted by Leading PTI 'Ronnie' Barker, who helped sports officer and Goalball coach Rebecca Bartlett.

"The children did brilliantly at their first attempt at a difficult game," he said.

The team leader of the Vision Support Team, Marion Donaldson, was delighted with the day.

"Goalball proved a great success and they are all keen to have another go," she said.

Andrew's mile milestone

JUST as this edition of Navy News was hitting the streets, injured Marine Andrew Grant was gearing up for one of the biggest challenges of his life – to walk a mile in the Virgin London Marathon.

Andrew, 21, was seriously wounded in Afghanistan in February 2009 when he and a friend were caught in an IED explosion triggered by a trip wire.

Andrew sustained shrapnel wounds to all four limbs, the bones in his right leg were

smashed and his femoral artery severed.

He was in an induced coma for two weeks at Selly Oak Hospital in Birmingham, where he spent three months before moving to the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre at Headley Court.

Andrew plans to join injured army officer Phil Packer for the 24th mile of the route, in aid of SSAFA, the charity which helped him and his family during his time in Headley Court.

Andrew said: "For me taking

part in the marathon, albeit only a mile, is a great personal milestone as I have had a huge metal frame on my leg for over a year and haven't been able to walk unaided in that time.

"Not only is this a great opportunity for me to raise money and say thank you to SSAFA for all their help and support but also a great opportunity for me to challenge myself on a personal level which I am really looking forward to."

To sponsor Andrew and Phil, visit www.ssafa.org.uk

Hundreds of miles and smiles

SPORT Relief, that biennial fundraising event, has sparked the usual Naval enthusiasm, as people in bases around the UK took up the challenge of the Sport Relief Mile.

At HMS Collingwood, the Leading Physical Trainers hosted a Sport Relief Day, putting all PT classes through a mile on the Astro-turf before carrying out their normal lesson.

The base's field-gunners and executive department ran several times around the parade ground to achieve the mile equivalent (pictured right).

Collingwood's executive officer Cdr Chris Lade was towed around the base in aid of the charity in a seaboat.

The officer also took part in a sponsored treadmill run which drew in personnel from across the base to rack up a total of 97.6 miles and raising £550.

Up at Clyde Naval Base a team of eight rowers clambered onto their rowing machines for an indoor half-marathon row for Sport Relief.

Lt Cdr Louise Wooller, Lt Damien Ralls, David Rafferty, CPO Barry Greig, CPO John Eales, Cdr Martin Claxton, Lt Cdr Phil Blow and LS Dion Broadfoot each clocked up 21,097m on the machines and have raised over £1,100.

Personnel from all three Services at RAF Shawbury and the Defence Helicopter Flying School took to the airfield *en masse* to complete a mile for Sport Relief.

Amid the huge turnout, it was the Naval contingent from 705 Naval Air Squadron, led by CO Lt Cdr Mark Scott, who won the competition as the most impressively-dressed contingent. – not surprising really when you see the photograph (right).

The race gathered over £400 for the Sport Relief fund.

And it was back on the rowing machines at BRNC who set up a 24-hour rowing race on the quarterdeck.

Organiser LPT Charleine Wain set up a challenge between cadets and staff to cover the distance to HMS Temeraire – some 158 miles.

A total more than surpassed by both team's who raised over £1,000 between them.

Del boy gets on his bike

NEWS reaches us from Afghanistan that Del Tyler, currently serving there with 845 Naval Air Squadron, will celebrate his homecoming next month (June) not with a holiday but an 800-mile cycle ride around England.

Del and seven team-mates will set off from the Tall Trees Community Centre in Ilchester, near RNAS Yeovilton, on June 5 and return one week later, having cycled an average of 110 miles in two groups of four riders.



A day on skis for BLESMA

A TEAM from the Naval Outdoor Centre in Germany has raised more than £2,500 for BLESMA, the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association, with a gruelling 24-hour ski tour.

Starting at the bottom of the Ifen 2000 in Austria, the team, WO2 Paul Farr, POPTs Tony Newcombe, Johnathan Wilkins and Zoe Hennessey, LPT Jay Murphy, plus Dave Beuzeval, Vicki Warke and Jonathan May, led by the officer commanding the centre, Major Paul Gellender, climbed steadily for nearly four hours to reach the 1,981m top of the Steinmandl.

The snow conditions were extremely good, but at 1130 at night finding the way back down was seriously challenging, as they were moving by torchlight with a 300m drop to the left.

Next came the climb up towards the Hahlkopf during worsening weather and vicious snow, followed by a difficult descent and a very welcome break for dinner in the shelter.

After this short break the team continued their descent to the bottom of the Ifen 2000 and started the long skate out to the ski lift area.

Then it was fairly easy going for the next five kilometres to the breakfast meeting point – but in true military fashion they made the rendezvous an hour early, which gave the team time to find a bakery for a hot drink.

By now it was 0530 and the wind

was gale-force. The next climb was Kanzelwahn, 900m of ascent with conditions deteriorating by the minute and visibility down to 10 metres.

A three-hour ascent saw them finally making the top and lunch.

The skiers decided to ski down the piste on the Felhorn side, although the area had been closed by heavy snow. An hour later they reached the bottom, having put a fresh track down the entire mountain.

Now the end was in sight, a long slog of 650m up to the Sollereck, and at 1815 they made the top and skied off through knee-deep powder to the car park below and the waiting van.

Jonathan May, who organised the ski-tour, said: "The team had climbed just over 2,750m and travelled 35km in 24 hours, which considering the weather was a great effort."

"For many this was a first and looking back it's something that will stay with us all for the right reasons.

He added: "We all thought that the challenge was going to be difficult, but we never realised how hard it would actually be."

"But we were honoured to raise money for such a worthy charity as BLESMA, which helps people try and continue as normal a life as possible once they leave the Forces with a loss of limb or limbs."

To donate, go to www.justgiving.com/jonathan-may

Black Duke runs

ONE hundred sailors aboard HMS Monmouth donned their running shoes and ran a mile each to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Early on a calm morning in the Red Sea, Cdr Tony Long, Monmouth's CO, ran the first mile, setting a hard standard to follow with a time of under six minutes.

As the day progressed, the weather took a turn for the worse, with strong headwinds making each mile that little bit more challenging for runners trying to keep their balance, but the sailors battled on.

When the final runner, Logs Eddie Luscombe, came across the finishing line, the stopwatch read 10h 44m 24s.

The fastest times of the day were recorded by ABs Daniel Triffitt and Richard 'Taff' Griffiths, both achieving 5m 10s, but everybody had a personal challenge to make their best time.

The overall time will be entered in the Mike Till Trophy, awarded to the ship with the fastest time, and announced in July. The trophy's presented in memory of CPO Mike Till, a keen runner and participant in the 100-mile relay before his sad loss in HMS Sheffield in 1982.

The event was organised by LPT Howard Peplow, who said: "Over the last five months, the ship's company have worked hard at their physical fitness through circuit training with me and the equipment aboard."

"The 100-mile challenge proved an ideal means test their fitness, grit and determination to see how they improved over the deployment, whilst earning money for a fantastic cause."

For two marines from the boarding team however, the 'mile-athon' was not quite enough of a challenge – so Sgt Andrew Thomas and L/Cpl Matthew Edwards ran 50 miles each during the Suez Canal transit.

The Black Duke's running raised more than £1,600.

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Hounds at heart

NAVAL veteran Allen Parton is one of the driving forces behind new charity Hounds for Heroes.

The new charity aims to place trained assistance dogs with injured and disabled personnel from the Armed Forces or emergency services.

Allen and his labrador Endal have appeared in documentaries and their own book – Allen said: “I was always amazed at the public interest in Endal and my story, but I couldn’t accept that we were unique and why this sort of thing was not the norm – that just couldn’t be right?”

“Service dog Endal came into my life and became the best physical and psychological rehabilitation I could have ever received.

“He transformed not only my life but that of my family too. The benefits extended far past just meeting my own needs.”

He added: “EJ – Endal Junior – has continued to give me the same quality of life and independence that I experienced with Endal and every day our partnership grows stronger, together there are truly no limits to what we can achieve.

“I just wanted others to experience the same.”

And from this wish Allen discovered an entire network

of people who wanted to make Hounds for Heroes a reality.

The charity is drawing on the experience of other assistance dogs organisations in the UK and overseas.

Hounds for Heroes is aiming to raise £100,000 to buy, train and support five dogs. The first puppy is already named Juno after the D-Day landings and the intention is to keep the Services theme running for all the dogs.

Allen said: “I was the face of the Royal British Legion poppy appeal, which highlighted that there are over 900,000 injured Service men and women in the country today.

“Yet only a handful have chosen to have a life-enhancing assistance dog. Many perceive assistance dogs as a badge of disability or weakness.

“Hounds for Heroes intends to break this negative image and promote the dogs as badges of ability and honour.

“It is very difficult to explain to those that have never experienced it, but within the Services there is a very special camaraderie built of trust, loyalty and teamwork.”

The dog’s jacket will bear the Service emblem of the client’s regiment, ship or squadron.

If you would like to support these efforts visit www.houndsforheroes.com.



● Naval veteran Allen Parton and his assistance dog EJ are flanked by Hounds for Heroes trustee Clare Robinson and charity secretary Clare Frosbury of the RAF

Strictly successful

THE QUARTERDECK of Britannia Royal Naval College was transformed into a ballroom when 22 members of staff put on their dancing shoes to take part in *Strictly Come Dancing*.

To a variety of music played by the college’s Volunteer Band, under the direction of Phil Watson, the dancers started the evening off with a group Viennese Waltz before venturing on to the floor with their individual show dances.

The dancers represented all elements of staff at the college, with VT Flagship, Sodexo and Plymouth University lecturers all joining the naval contingent.

Names were drawn out of a hat earlier this year and the couples then received some basic dance lessons and advice from Brigitte Tardy, of Dittisham. They chose which dance they wanted to concentrate on, and then choreographed a three-minute routine.

Competitor and event organiser Lt Serena Davis said: “Fitting practices into our hectic weekly programmes was a major issue for all involved and nerves were



certainly running high as the evening approached, but we knew it would be fun and raise money for charity.”

On the night the audience were delighted by jives with lifts, turns and somersaults to amaze, elegant waltzes, leg-revealing tangos, incredibly swift quicksteps and a vibrant paso doble and cha cha cha. In line with the television show,

there were judges to comment on and mark the couples, but the audience had the final say.

The runaway winners were the padre, the Rev Nigel Beardsley and Leading PTI Andrea Marshall (pictured above), who delighted everyone with a fantastic quickstep to the song of Mac the Knife. More than £1,600 was raised for charity.

Rob’s in the pink

STANDING out in a sea of white shirts, keen cyclist Rob Smith will be doing his bit to raise awareness of breast cancer by taking to the saddle in a bright pink top.

Petty officer Rob, 38, a Royal Navy reservist from Saltash, is a member of the Royal Navy and Royal Marine Cycling Association and has been cycling seriously for five years. This year he is scheduled to take part in a number of mountain-bike races, and will ride out wearing his specially-made pink racing top, instead of the normal RNRMCA white.

Rob was inspired to wear the jersey after his wife, Jane, 42, and a colleague from HMS Raleigh, PO Laura Washer, 31, were both diagnosed with breast cancer (pictured together right).

Rob said: “Most people have their favourite charity so rather than pass round a sponsor form I thought I would do something to raise awareness of breast cancer and how important it is that everyone checks themselves regularly.”

Rob’s pink top had its first outing in March when he came 49th out of 75 in the Masters at the opening round of the National Series in Sherwood Forest.



Midnight sun for CHF fun

THIS year’s Clockwork deployment by the Commando Helicopter Force brought about some impressive fundraising for a Norwegian charity.

CPO Barrie Whitehead and C/Sgt Mick Acott organised a games night, a quiz night and a charity raffle, raising 10,000 Norwegian Kroner (about £1,000) for the Troms and Finnmark region Stotforeningen for Krefstyske Barn (SKB) association.

The SKB is run by volunteers and supports families with children with cancer.

Barrie and Mick were joined by LAET Nick James when they presented the money to the association in Tromsø.

They also spent the day with the families, Barrie took on the older children at ten-pin bowling, while Mick and Nick got to enjoy the soft-fun delights of a children’s playcentre.

Barrie said: “This is just the start for Mick and me, as this summer we are going to cycle unsupported from our base at Bardufoss to RNAS Yeovilton – a distance of 1,400 miles.

“The event is called the Midnight Sun Cycle commencing June 23 to July 12.”

Barrie and Mick will cycle from Bardufoss to Oslo via the Lofoten Islands, then travel down the popular western coastal route called the RV17, and the fjords in the south including the notorious climb up Trollstigen before finally arriving in Oslo.

They will depart Norway by air and then be joined in London at PJHQ in Northwood by other personnel from RNAS Yeovilton to complete the final day’s ride of 130 miles back to Somerset.

If you want to support them please visit uk.virginmoneygiving.com/midnightsuncycle.

From the jungle to the desert

LWEA John ‘Wiggy’ Bennett of HMS Illustrious is plunging into another endurance event – the veteran of the 2007 Jungle Marathon is in training to take on Racing the Planet – Australia 2010.

This is a 250km footrace across the Australian Outback, taking place as *Navy News* went to press.

John is raising money for two local special needs schools: the Macintyre School in Wingrave and the Sandon School in Grantham.

He said: “The opportunity to raise money for a sensory garden and a means for pupils, who otherwise wouldn’t be able to, to also take part in adventurous activities is fantastic.

“I chose Macintyre School because it is one of the charities that my ship supports, as one of the crew has a step-son there, and Sandon School, where my mum works, is a special needs school in my home town.

“I really cherish the freedom I have to just go out for a run anywhere; a lot of people just take their own abilities – walking, seeing, hearing etc – for granted so supporting these charities to enable kids to have a greater experience out of life is just brilliant.”

He added: “I’ve always wanted to go to the outback of Australia ever since watching *Crocodile Dundee* as a kid.

“I can’t wait to see the landscape, all the flora and fauna. In the Amazon I came face to face with a jaguar, swam with piranha, and saw many other amazing plants and animals.

“This time hopefully it’s be kangaroos, emus and crocodiles.”

Wiggy hopes to raise over £4,000, and can be supported through: www.virginmoneygiving.com/crocodilewiggy31.



Bring back the '80s

THE UNIVERSITY Royal Naval Units sports weekend in Portsmouth involved a range of sporting challenges, plus the unusual Inter URNU’s ‘80s biathlon – featuring the snakebite challenge and Wham! dance-off.

And of course, the rig was top-to-toe ‘80s...

Contestants were bolstered with Dutch courage by the snakebite (a potent brew of lager and cider, sometimes enlivened with a dash of blackcurrant), then took to the floor to show their disco credentials to the URNU’s own Simon Cowell, Cdr David Wilson Commander URNU.

Liverpool URNU came out triumphant; although not as triumphant as charity Afghan Heroes which benefitted to the tune of £500 from the betting and donations on the night.

Organiser Surg S/Lt Lizzie Walters of Sussex URNU said: “The generous giving, and betting as well as charity wristbands sold at the event, meant that a great total of £500 was raised for the charity Afghan Heroes, whose aim is to support troops on the frontline in Afghanistan and their families back home.

“A big BZ to everyone who took part and donated extra money, and for their fantastic costumes, we had ABBA, Ghostbusters, Cool Runnings, Baywatch, as well as many dudes and chicks, and a CO as Bananaman.

“Fantastic effort. Congratulations to all URNUs – see you next year.”

To find out more about the charity, visit www.afghanheroes.org.uk.

The Polar express

A FORMER Royal Marine Chris Foot and research scientist Dr Leanne Franklin-Smith have set out on the 2010 Polar Challenge, racing to the North Pole as *Navy News* goes to press.

The green beret has been helping the scientist get ready for their adventures in the frozen north, and this included a stint in Norway earlier this year to be put through a fast-track introduction to cold weather survival training and to see the real thing in action.

Leanne said: “I can tell you that after a five-day expedit we skied for seven to ten hours per day and slept in temperatures down to -30°C, the thought of getting clean was uppermost in all our minds, but the dip in an icy lake was definitely not my idea of the perfect ending!”

“It’s incredibly difficult to control your panic reflex, and it took me quite a few seconds to gather my thoughts after I hit the water, but eventually I was out, rolling in the snow and heading for my tent where the stove and dry clothes were.

“My hat goes off to the Royal Marine guys though – they went in fully clothed, with their skis on properly and still attached to their pulks to mimic a real-life situation for us, and even had to sing a song before they were allowed out.

“I had an amazing time in Norway, and it definitely boosted my confidence about the race itself.”

Leanne is fundraising for Help for Heroes, and hopes to raise over £10,000.

She can be sponsored online at www.justgiving.com/bearbabe.



Freedom of the seas

THIS is the reason why.

Indian sailors clasp the hand of HMS Chatham's Commanding Officer, Cdr Simon Huntington, after his sailors and marines freed them from pirate hell.

The frigate gave chase after the Somali brigands seized the Vishvakalyan in the eastern Gulf of Aden.

The pirates held the crew at rifle point, determined to use the dhow as a mother ship for further attacks on merchant shipping off Somalia.

They used it as the launchpad for one unsuccessful nighttime attack on a vessel on April 6.

News of that failed attack reached the ears of HMS Chatham, heading a five-strong NATO task force in the region.

She launched her Lynx immediately and found the dhow. For the next three days, Chatham shadowed the Vishvakalyan, buzzing her with Royal Marines in the frigate's sea boats and helicopter.

When the dhow ran out of fuel, the Brits brought the frigate's close-range weapons to bear while commando snipers kept the pirates in their sights.

At that point, the Somalis – armed with AK47s and rocket-propelled grenades – gave up and fled for their homeland in a small skiff.

The master and 14 other crew members of the Indian dhow were released and received medical assistance, water and fuel from Chatham before resuming their disrupted journey.

"We've actively disrupted a group of pirates who had hijacked this dhow, taking the crew hostage, and they were obviously intent on seizing a larger merchant vessel and its crew, for criminal means," said Cdr Huntington.

"I am extremely pleased that due to the actions of

my ship's company, HMS Chatham quickly found and intercepted them, forcing them to abort their mission.

"But what is most rewarding for all of us involved in this operation, is that we have secured the release of this dhow and her crew unharmed and without the need for an escalation in violence."

It's not the only good deed performed by the Devonport-based frigate – although it's probably the one which has earned it the most headlines.

A few days before the Vishvakalyan chase, Chatham could be found in Salalah in southern Oman.

The frigate's sailors and commandos spent two days at the British School Salalah... not brushing up on their spelling or times table but sprucing up the establishment.

The work ranged from painting the gates and computer room to emptying, sorting and re-packing a large store room.

The volunteers also enjoyed a kickabout with youngsters during break times.

The British School Salalah was founded 40 years ago, providing education for youngsters up to the age of 11 based on the National Curriculum in England and Wales.

"The men and women from Chatham helped us incredibly over these two days," said head teacher Chris Peedell.

"They ploughed through tasks that would have taken us months to do, in just a couple of days. We are extremely grateful."

Lt Alistair Crawford, who organised the party, added: "Everyone who volunteered to take part really enjoyed

meeting the children and helping to improve their environment."

And at the other end of the age spectrum (well, almost)...

When Lt Simon Bailey took over as the Type 22's operations officer, he found that older HODs prevailed.

The four Heads Of Department – ops officer, logistics officer Lt Cdr David Johnston, weapon engineer officer Lt Cdr Mark James and marine engineer officer Lt Cdr Steve Austin – are all Senior Upper Yardmen (SDs in old money) who, combined, have served their nation for 112 years.

"It is like any other Wardroom except for Horlicks in the coffee boat and cod liver oil behind the bar, although I do wish they would secure their walking sticks for sea," explained Executive Officer Lt Cdr 'Young John' Patterson.

"I am not sure if the HODS union should be described as the Wise or the Grumpy Old Men, but at least in their company I get to feel like a young officer again."

Young or old(er), the ship's company have now passed the half-way point in their seven-month deployment as flagship of NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2 under the command of Chatham's former CO Cdre Steve Chick.

From the Type 22 he and his staff direct the mission of USS Cole, Turkey's TCG Gelibolu, the Greek HS Limnos and Italy's ITS Scirocco to protect merchant shipping in the Gulf of Aden, the Horn of Africa and the Somali Basin.



● Main image: three sea boats leave Chatham at dusk in a show of force to corral the pirate-held dhow Vishvakalyan as a dolphin leaps out of the Gulf of Aden





Boarding school



"THIS is our main effort when it comes to sending a ship east of Suez," Maj Matt Hood says emphatically.

And – he might add – the Caribbean as well.

He is, of course, referring to the 'B' word: boardings.

The official term is 'maritime security operations', but in a nutshell it's changed little since the days of Nelson or the *Altmark*: sailors and marines with weapons climbing ladders or swinging on ropes to gain access to another vessel.

And if you were to ask 'what does the Navy do?' in the 21st Century, then 'boarding operations' probably sums up the global mission better than anything else: there's always an RN presence at the tip of the Gulf and in the Indian Ocean, most of the time too in the Caribbean.

"It's a sailor's duty to board," says Maj Matt Hood emphatically. "The nation expects its boarding teams to be fit and trained for the job."

The Royal Marine of 1 Assault Group should know. He was charged with a comprehensive review of RN boarding training to ensure that it meets current requirements.

Three years down the line he's adamant that there's been "a real shake-up" in the way boarding teams are trained.

The commando looked at other forces regularly conducting boarding operations on the seven seas, notably the Aussies – "their kit isn't as good, but there were some skills that we needed to improve" and the US Coast Guard – "very good indeed".

Incorporating some of those experiences, plus "the best of green and blue", the root-and-branch overhaul of boarding training is now in place at the Board and Search School, 1 AGRM, based at HMS Raleigh.

A few basic facts about boarding operations.

There are three types:

- **compliant** (the skipper allows a boarding party aboard);
- **non-compliant** (the skipper doesn't want a boarding party aboard);
- **opposed** (the crew will use force to prevent anyone coming aboard).

Traditionally, RN sailors have only done 'compliant'. Anything stronger requires the green berets.

"But the real world isn't quite like that," says Maj Hood. "A compliant boarding can escalate into a non-compliant for any number of reasons"

"It's no good suddenly saying: 'Royal, can you help?'" the green beret adds.

"A boarding team must be able to deal with an escalating situation. They must be able to deal with any form of escalation from aggressive crew members to close-quarters armed action."

So where once the boarding team courses lasted one week, now they run to four – two weeks for training individual skills and two weeks for training as a team.

Where once sailors conducted perhaps three practice boardings, now they perform a dozen – not as many as the Royals, admittedly, but a big step in the right direction.

And should a team be taken prisoner, they can call on their knowledge of 'conduct after capture' training.

"Boarding teams are prone to capture, that much is very clear," says Maj Hood. "They used to be shown a DVD – basically it was Ray Mears in a wood making fires. Now they do two days of training at St Mawgan."

That's home to the guys who teach Survive, Evade, Resist and Extraction (SERE) skills to downed aircrew among others (think *Behind Enemy Lines*).

"If you tell people that they could be captured, they quickly realise that what they're getting into is a serious business," the Major adds.

It's not just the boarding party who now pass through the BSS, but also the operations room team, the ship's flight and the CO.

"Commanding Officers do the course," says Lt Ronnie Biggs, Officer in Charge Board and Search School. "It's no longer a case of: 'Boarding officer, crack on.'"

Two years ago, the 15 sailors would arrive twice a month at the BSS for a four/five-day course. The planning board in the office would have gaps of two or three weeks at a time between courses. Not any more. "There's barely a free week all year," Ronnie points out.

Before there's any thought of boarding, there are two days of naval military skills tests – physical tests, weapon handling tests, the ability to climb a rope and move quickly and aggressively around a ship wearing the correct weapons and equipment. There's greater emphasis on weapons handling, boat skills, signals and communications, first aid, and above all, working as a team.

"Unless you do this as a whole ship, you're going to get it wrong," says Lt Biggs bluntly.

His Chief of Board and Search, CPO Ian Elsdon, adds: "You see the biggest difference working as a team from day one through to day 20, seeing people gel together."

The team gelling this week are mostly from HMS Northumberland... about to head east of Suez.

Some are new to boarding ops, others have been through NMT before, such as LLogs Elisa Robertson.

"Four weeks training instead of one has to be better," she says. "But this course is also a lot more hands-on. There's much greater emphasis on fitness. On the old course, we didn't do any shooting, this time we do."

Her shipmate AB Karl Chaloner adds: "It's important to do things as an entire ship – not just your own part of the ship. This training gives you a lot more practical experience."

If the new course is tough, Maj Hood makes no apology.

"You have to be fast, aggressive, purposeful," he says.

"Boarding on the high seas has always been at the heart of the reason that this nation has marines and sailors and we all have to be at the top of our game; that's what this is about – being the best at what we do."



Bulwark's got to lead old Durham town

Frozen heroes

SOME ships make do with one civic honour.

But not HMS Bulwark. She doesn't believe in half measures.

The assault ship is already the proud recipient of the Chairman's Medal from the County of Durham.

That came courtesy of the efforts by the ship's company to support under-privileged people in the region, notably by raising thousands of pounds for local charities.

Now the sailors and Royal Marines also enjoy Durham's highest honour, Freedom of the City.

A couple of dozen sailors, led by Commanding Officer Capt Gavin Pritchard, headed to the North East to receive the honour – typically bestowed on civic leaders and local worthies, such as the late England football manager Bobby Robson.

Capt Pritchard also unveiled a plaque in Durham Town Hall to mark the occasion.

On completion of the formal act of presenting the freedom scroll, the RN personnel were invited to a reception hosted by Durham's bodyguards, aldermen, councillors, and lord mayor.

In time-honoured tradition, the freedom scroll for the warship permits the ship's company to march through Durham with bayonets fixed, drums beating and so on... which Bulwark will do for the first time when the sailors lead the city's Armed Forces Day celebrations in June.

Bulwark has been bound with the historic university city since she was commissioned back in 2003.

The ship has just started a £30m refit – the first in her career – in her home base of Devonport following her exertions leading the Taurus task group to the Far East last year.

TWO sailors killed surveying the frozen continent are to be honoured by monuments in the UK and the South Atlantic as part of ambitious plans to honour those who gave their lives for scientific exploration.

Twenty-seven men and women working on behalf of the British Antarctic Survey and its predecessor, the Falkland Islands Dependency Survey, have died in the past 70 years in the pursuit of a greater understanding of the most hostile environment on the planet.

They are being honoured with memorials in St Paul's Cathedral, the Scott Polar Research Centre in Cambridge and probably the Falklands.

And alongside their names, those of two RN personnel: LS Reg Hodge and AB Mike 'Shady' Lane, killed by an explosion aboard HMS Protector in December 1963 while the Antarctic patrol vessel was using depth charges for seismic survey work.

AB Lane was blown overboard by the force of the blast (his body was subsequently recovered); LS Hodge was blown about 15ft from the epicentre of the explosion. Shipmates found him laying face down on the deck. Several comrades were injured by shrapnel.

"One of the flight deck plates was like a pepper duster and the plate under the explosion was bent like a piece of plastic," recalled AB Eddie Large, whose life was saved by instinctively ducking when he heard the blast.

"I will never forget that day – I can still see Reg's and Shady's faces – it's like watching the same film over and over."

Protector made immediately for Stanley in the Falklands where the two sailors were buried with full military honours.

Nearly five decades later, the RN continues to support the scientific mission in the Antarctic region – and the dangers were highlighted by the plight of Protector's present-day successor, HMS Endurance, which almost sank when her engine room flooded in late 2008.

As for BAS' losses, they range from downed aircraft and mountaineering accidents to being attacked by wildlife.

All will be remembered by a circular memorial plaque of Welsh slate featuring a relief map of Antarctica (pictured inset) which will be installed in the crypt at St Paul's.

A two-part sculpture is also due to be erected; half in Cambridge, the other in the Southern Hemisphere, probably in the Falklands.

Sixteen of the dead also have geographical features – mountains, headlands, islands – named after them. The aim of the memorial project by the British Antarctic Monument Trust is to ensure all those who were killed receive the same honour.

The trust is keen to trace relatives of LS Hodge and AB Lane – as well as families of the scientists and researchers who died – to inform them about the memorial plans.

Details are available from trust secretary Brian Dorsett-Bailey, 34 Essex Road, Watford, Herts WD17 4EP, e-mail briand_b@hotmail.co.uk.

More details about the project can be found online at www.antarctic-monument.org.

■ MEANWHILE in South Georgia...

Conservationists are hoping the thousands of sailors who've enjoyed the rare opportunity to visit this stunning island will dip into their pockets to save its wildlife.

Although it's renowned as the last resting place of Sir Ernest Shackleton (his gravestone is pictured, right, by PO(AWT) 'Dutchy' Holland of HMS York – more from them overleaf) and as the home of a wonderfully-rich assortment of seals and birds.

The latter are increasingly under threat from a rampant rat population which came to South Georgia with the first humans and have subsequently begun to devour many of the eggs laid by birds.

The rodents have all but wiped out the South Georgia pipit, which now lives only in rat-free surrounding islands and a tiny strip of otherwise inhospitable coastline.

The South Georgia Habitat Restoration Project aims to rid the island of rats in the largest scheme of its type in the world, a cull estimated to cost between £6m and £7m and lasting more than three years.

HMS Clyde's ship's company have already chipped in with £300, while some of HMS York's ship's company took part in the annual half-marathon which added another £1,300 to the fund. Rather larger figures have been donated by trusts and foundations to ensure the first phase of the killing begins.

That will see a test cull carried out around Grytviken next February with South Georgia hopefully rodent-free by May 2014 if the trial run and fundraising prove successful.

More details can be found at www.sght.org



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To the ends



IT'S not unknown for members of the Navy News team to brand the Falklands 'the end of the earth'.

They're not.

Nor is South Georgia, 900 miles away. No, you have to travel another 450 miles to the Southern Sandwich archipelago and the three islands in the Southern Thule group.

They are the end of the earth. Capt Cook certainly thought so. That's why he named them for the mythical land at the world's end.

They're also the southernmost realm in what was once the British Empire.

But being a bit 'out of the way', they don't get too many visitors.

Indeed, it's been nearly a decade since the White Ensign was last seen in these parts (the only witnesses being the local penguin populace - the islands are not inhabited by humans).

So time for a return then.

It fell to HMS York - Britain's fastest destroyer (top speed 35+ kts) - to stretch her legs. Being a thirsty beast, she took tanker RFA Wave Ruler with her.

Passage to South Georgia alone is challenging, even in benign conditions.

Reaching these islands means entering the Antarctic Convergence Zone where the waters of the frozen continent meet (or converge) with warmer Atlantic waters.

The result is quite a lot of fog, but also the appearance of a sizeable number of icebergs.

The ones which are two miles long and 150ft high are the easy ones to avoid (not least because they're picked up on radar).

What you really have to be wary of are 'bergy bits' (which are, er, bits of bergs that have broken off) and 'growlers' (ditto, but smaller). The former are about the size of a bus, the latter the size of a car.

You're not going to spot these on radar. No, you need the Mark 1 eyeball, a few hot wets and a bit of stamina. As darkness fell, York closed up on the bridge wings and foc's'le.

The extra pairs of eyes - engineers,

communicators, chefs (sorry, logisticians (catering services (preparation))) all chipped in - proved invaluable as the Type 42 made a few short-notice alterations of course.

Finally, in the small hours of March 26, Southern Thule appeared out of the mist and cloud, at once a stark yet beautiful sight.

All three islands which make up the small group - Thule, Bellingshausen and Cook - have belonged to Britain for more than 200 years, since Capt Cook discovered them.

They were the first slice of British territory occupied during the Falklands conflict - the Argentinians erected a weather station here in 1976 at Hewson Point...

...and they were the last slice of British soil (or rock and ice) to be liberated in the 1982 conflict, a week after Stanley fell. The illegal weather station was subsequently destroyed by the RN.

Nearly three decades later, it was time to hoist the South Georgia flag over Southern Thule as a reminder (to the penguins at any rate) of their owners.

And York would have done so but for (a) the weather and (b) the local wildlife.

A terrific swell running on to the treacherously-rocky shore made a landing by sea boat hazardous.

Tens of thousands of chinstrap penguins and thousands of elephant and leopard Seals covering the only flat area on the island ruled out any landing by York's Lynx.

Plan C then. Hoist the South Georgia flag and power past Southern Thule at full throttle.

NEXT stop Cape Disappointment (so named by Cook because he thought he'd found the frozen continent, but discovered South Georgia was merely an island) and a whistle-stop visit to the breathtakingly beautiful Drygalski Fjord.

Despite a bitter wind in excess of 50 knots funnelled down it, the glacier at the head of the fjord provided a most impressive backdrop for the photographers

on board.

Remaining clear ice at the fjord's head dash back out saw the ship around to anchor off the eastern side of the island.

In spite of the name (the title comes from the cliffs at dawn however, king penguins, snowy sheath large albatrosses on beach and turquoise

Completing a second replenishment of fuel in front of snow-pea menacing icebergs, then headed into the unique picture of the the Nordenskyold Glacier time a Wave-class ship magnificent surround

There followed the near King Edward F. Antarctic Survey here of the preserved forest at Grytviken.

Using a combination and the BAS's two propelled launches, who wished to get a days did so, touring foreboding, whaling machinery that stands of the bloody industry here.

In Grytviken's picture many of the ship's few minutes to sit with friends and families back home.

There was more 600 yards further a Cove and the outposts where 63 people are legendary Antarctic Shackleton.

Now we say contemplation... but the guardian of the evaded.

The gates to the 'guarded' by a pair smelly) elephant seal 'challenging and in



of the earth

of the free-floating ad, a tight turn and the destroyer heading Gold Harbour on the land.

There's no gold here the sun's rays bathing (and dusk). There are, ins, elephant and fur pills, and some rather no thrive on the fine waters.

nd and much-needed el with Wave Ruler aked mountains and York and her tanker umberland Bay for a two ships in front of acier - this is the first ship has seen these ings.

ree days at anchor 'oint and the British adquarters, in front mer whaling station

on of York's sea boat very-impressive jet- everyone on board shore over the three the rusting, yet still ships, buildings and as a stark reminder y which once thrived

ure-postcard church, company found a quietly and reflect on s 8,500 miles away

contemplation some round King Edward ost's small cemetery laid to rest, notably explorer Sir Ernest

there was more that was only after graveyard had been

the cemetery were particularly large (and al which made for a 'eresting' entry into

said cemetery.

York also landed an RAF explosive ordnance disposal team who regularly visit to destroy unexploded ordnance left over from 1982.

Nearly three decades on from the (brief) Argentine occupation 14 items were found and disposed of, much to the annoyance of the local fur seal populace, but less so to an elephant seal who didn't stir.

Port visits typically mean a bit of sport against local opposition.

And it was no different in South Georgia.

York's football team took on the BAS scientists (and some visiting 'yachties'), playing on a pitch which definitely favoured the home team. It could best be described as a bog with goal posts at either end (*sounds better than the Wembley pitch - Ed*). The destroyer men triumphed. There's a trophy to prove it - and it will be contested once more when the White Rose ship returns to South Georgia next year.

Team York were also able to provide an impressive number of athletes for the South Georgia half marathon.

Aside from the usual 13.1-mile distance to cover, there were the minor obstacles of a mountain climb and a gauntlet of fur seals to run.

There was more racing back on board: the WOs and CPOs mess hosted an evening of penguin racing on the flight deck.

Each syndicate provided a 'volunteer' dressed as a South Georgian native (ie penguin), while their shipmates dipped into their pockets.

After winnings had been paid out, roughly £700 was raised for the Children's Cancer Ward at Southampton General Hospital.

And wherever you are in the world, there's always time for cake.

The mini-deployment to the southern-most extremities of empire coincided with the destroyer's 25th birthday.

The Type 42 destroyer was accepted into service on March 25 1985 (the same day that *Amadeus* bagged the 'best film' Oscar at the, er, Oscars).

"To be in command of this fine old lady - the 12th warship to proudly bear the name York - is a rare privilege indeed," said her Commanding Officer Cdr Simon Staley.

"She may be 25 years old, but to know I drive the fastest destroyer in the Fleet and that we still pack a significant punch via missiles and guns, gives great heart.

"The ship's company are really terrific too and display all the grit, character and pride synonymous with the fine people of Yorkshire."

There's only so long you can spend eating cake or admiring glaciers. Eventually, you have to return to the Falklands and the rugged beauty of Mare Harbour to provide a reassuring presence to the good folk of these remote islands.

"We're now well established in the South Atlantic," said Cdr Staley.

"The unfettered training environment here has been fully exploited with regular exercises with the very impressive RAF Typhoons, the deployed Army regiment, and, of course, our maritime sisters Clyde and Wave Ruler.

"I am immensely proud of the professionalism and attitude of my ship's company who, day in, day out, give their all to fulfilling our important mission down here.

"The trip to the South Sandwich Islands and South Georgia was truly a well-deserved reward for them.

"We will all relish the memories of the training and mission achieved as well as the unique scenery and wildlife just experienced."

And any day now, the Falklands will indeed become a memory as the Type 42 prepares to hand over to HMS Portland which is taking over South Atlantic duties.

With thanks to Lt Cdr George Adams, MEO HMS York



pictures: It ben dando, 815 nas, po(awt) 'dutchy' holland, ab(ws) oldland, hms york





My days in the Mickey Mouse fleet

BILL Day's letter and photo *Crossing a stormy pond* (March) stirred a dormant memory of an experience I once had.

In 1949 I joined the Bristol Division of the RNVF, and was assigned my first bout of two weeks' sea training in HMS Venturer, the sea tender.

She was lying in Portland Harbour, and so the crew, composed of ODs like myself and much-decorated WW2 veterans, were taken by coach to join the ship.

The whereabouts of Venturer proved problematic as at first she could not be found.

Eventually she was discovered hiding between two sleek-looking corvettes, a tiny and dejected Motor Minesweeper.

That vessel, a knowledgeable shipmate informed me, is what is known in the RN as a 'Mickey Mouse'.

Get it? MMS, Jackspeak! And so we piled onboard, the engine was started, and off we went.

It was a magnificent day, a calm blue sea with an azure sky, as doing our 10 knots flat-out we surged across Weymouth Bay and out into the bounding sea, heading for a town called Randers in Denmark.

It was such good weather that hands to bathe was piped.

I was staggered to find that we were out of sight of land.

What a wonderful welcome we were given by the Danes, being the first RN ship there since the end of the war.

We made headline news, visited by the great and the good, taken on banyans, picnics and tours to see the graves of the Danish resistance fighters, brewery runs, and even taken to their homes for dinner.

Awestruck crowds lined the dockside every day to cheer us and our little ship.

The high point came when the Danish army invited the crew to their barracks for the day, and challenged us to a game of football.

We lost 10-1, but they had laid on a fabulous banquet in our honour with food and drink we had only dreamed about, Britain still being in the grip of rationing.

One of our sailors, a Welsh tenor, sang songs to the army by way of retaliation for our defeat.

Parting was such sweet sorrow as we sailed for Oslo.

On the way our first lieutenant decided that we should paint the ship's upper works to smarten her up, ready for an inspection by the UK Naval Attaché.

It was not until we tied up that

we saw that the paint was the wrong colour, being a dark grey. But nobody seemed to notice, so we had got away with it we thought.

JACKPOT!



A £25 Amazon voucher to the letter which amuses, impresses or enlightens us the most.

In Oslo our welcome was more downbeat, but the ladies of the Embassy took us sightseeing, and nightclubbing, before we left for home.

Reluctantly we sailed - we were half-way home when we were hit by a westerly gale right on the nose, and that was when the nightmare began.

Up the front end it was impossible to stand, eat, sleep or sit, all I could do was wedge myself in my bunk, be sick, and pray for deliverance.

We were going easily through 50 degrees, and I swear that at times we did the full circle.

Having got thrown over my board and out of my bunk time after time, I grabbed a pillow and a blanket, braved the cold and made for the engine room, to sleep in a calmer corner.

Eventually it ended when we staggered into the calm of Weymouth Bay on a grey misty afternoon.

And what we saw filled us with horror as we crept along.

There, anchored on the far side were elements of the Home Fleet.

A couple of carriers, a screen of destroyers, and right in the middle stood the mighty battleship HMS Vanguard, flying the flag of the Commander-in-Chief.

We had almost made it across when we were spotted.

Someone must have wondered about the strange two-tone vessel flying the white ensign, because an Aldis started to wink at us from Vanguard's bridge wing.

The following conversation reportedly took place: "What is she saying, Yeoman?" asked our captain.

"She is asking - 'What ship is that?'"

"What shall I answer, sir?"

"No answer. Eyes front!" said the captain sharply.

And so a Nelsonian blind eye was turned on the C-in-C's flagship, which signalled us twice more, before we slunk out of sight around the corner into Portland Harbour, and caught the coach back home to our day jobs.

That was the one and only time I set foot on a 'Mickey Mouse' with many varied memories.

But I salute the men like Mr Day who actually crossed the Pond in one, and went on to serve throughout the war in small ships. I call them real sailors, and unsung heroes.

God bless 'em!

- Alec McCoy, Heysham, Lancs

Amphion memories surface...

THIS picture of HMS Amphion was taken in 1944, exercising in one of the lochs, 3rd Division North.

It was given to me by the UC2, LS Norman Ellmore, now crossed the bar.

I'm sending it in response to the photo of the booties sitting on Sceptre's fin (page 6, December).

The booties were involved in training for stealthy insertion with Amphion at the time.

This involved the boat being at periscope depth, towing a rubber dinghy full of marines, with a rope around the 'scope.

Communication was difficult. Daytime training was OK because the skipper faced the 'scope aft and watched the operation.

Night-time was somewhat different. The dinghy couldn't be seen and obviously flashing a torch wasn't on.

A system of tapping on top of the periscope to pass rudimentary messages did OK.

However, it was found that if the boat was going a bit too fast it was impossible to haul the dinghy forward to reach the 'scope to tap on it!

A couple of times the booties tapped they were casting off but couldn't get the rope undone before the boat went deep.

The dinghy and all the equipment went down with it. Unfortunately some marines went down as well.



Amphion never went to war. I joined her as a killick stoker in '62, on the Singapore Squadron, 186ing in the South China Sea, Hong Kong, Yukosaka, Olongopo, Andaman Islands...

Where did it all go?

- Keith Hallam, Blackpool

We hark back to the Ark

THERE were several former Shipwright Artificers at the last passing-out parade of Artificer Apprentices at HMS Sultan, and we were proud to have been there.

We chippies can trace our ancestry back 6,000 years to the first recorded nautical craftsman - Noah.

We have proud and happy memories of life in the Fleet, maintaining ships and craft of all types, entailing work from stem to stern and truck to keel.

With the demise of the Artificer we wish our successors, the Engineering Technicians, a full satisfying career in the finest service in the world.

Have fun and enjoy your runs ashore in foreign ports.

- Lt Cdr Anthony Sears (Retd), President, The Royal Naval Shipwrights and Artisans Association, Cowplain, Hants

...I READ with great interest *Last Day of the Tiffies* (April). I was saddened, however, when I could not find any mention of shipwrights.

I recall that when I joined the RN in 1953 at HMS Fisgard after one year's general training we were offered a choice of five (not four) categories of artificer, namely Engineering, Ordnance, Electrical, Air, and Shipwright.

In the article the first four categories are well-mentioned, but nothing about 'chippie' except vaguely Rear Admiral Burgess's comment about a tin can floating on the water.

Chippie was responsible, among a whole host of other things, for that tin can, and without them the other categories of tiffies and indeed all other branches would have been redundant.

- Mick Tatnall, ex-WOMEA (H) Stithians, Truro, Cornwall

...IT WAS interesting to read about the last of the engine room artificers.

I have read the *Navy News* since retiring from the RN in 1972 after 25 years' service.

In all those years I have never read about the Shipwrights, later called MEA(H) - we seem to be a forgotten branch.

I was on HMS Ranpura from 1954-56 and our workshop stretched the whole length of the ship.

As a staff of 28 we had the knowledge and the machinery to build a battleship.

I have never worked as hard ever in my life, usually for those frigates and destroyers alongside for repairs, large and small, as when I joined the RN after a marvellous apprenticeship, which



● HMS Sultan says goodbye to the last of the Artificer Apprentices and marked by veterans

we served in RN dockyards Chatham, Portsmouth and Devonport.

We were then Shipwrights. After about two years, all artisans were phased out so we took on seven extra trades, which we were qualified to do, later we were renamed MEA(H).

I had a wonderful career, I hope we warrant a mention.

- S Pilcher, Walderslade, Chatham, Kent

...IN JANUARY 1939, 40 tiffy apprentices arrived at RAF Cosford, to train with the RAF apprentices.

They were joined by a second entry of 40 in September 1939. I was a member of that second group.

We remained at Cosford until Easter 1940, when all RAF apprentices moved to RAF Halton.

We moved with them and remained there until November 1940, when the Fleet Air Arm training establishment opened at Newcastle-under-Lyme, in Staffordshire.

Aircraft Artificer training continued there until Christmas 1945, when the establishment closed down and training was moved to Condor at Arbroath and Worthy Down in Hampshire.

The two entries at Cosford now must be in their upper 80s.

I only know of two other survivors. I wonder if there are any more? If so please contact me on 01782 633092.

- J E Carnill, Clayton, Newcastle-under-Lyme

...AS AN ex-tiff I was delighted with the tiffy coverage.

However, I would point out one glaring mistake (or was it an April Fool's Day intentional?) in the letter from Lester May.

It says *the blue and white bedpans, with the blue anchor at the centre, will be familiar.*

The anti-tiff lobby will have a field-day with this - baby tiffies with their own pots to pee in!

It should of course have read 'bedpanes' or, more accurately, 'counterpanes'.

These indeed did have a blue anchor on them with the reverse side a white anchor which was displayed for formal inspections.

The photo above this letter identified the instructor as Lt Ralph Thornton.

If it is, he is the double of ex-tiff Lt Jim Casey, DWEO in HMS Plymouth 1971-72, an all-round super guy and quite brilliant rugby player who represented the RN.

On the same page in the *Opinion* piece, the quote from Gill Harding refers to tiffies as the ones who 'kept the engines turning, the guns firing' etc.

This reminded me of a

newspaper cutting that Dave Lichfield, FCCEA on Plymouth 1972-73, kept in his wallet.

It was a report on a speech by Lord Mountbatten where he described his Artificers as truly 'princes amongst men.' Perhaps the result of proper potty training!

Finally, for any ex-tiffies who are not members of the Fisgard Association, log on to www.fisgardassociation.org.

This excellent site, run by ex-tiff Norman 'Nolly' Bland, will leave you knee-deep in nostalgia as well as supplying the details of all reunions in the UK and much, much more.

- Jim Dowsett, Plymouth

...WHILE I always knew that baby Tiffies were newly out of nappies back in the early 1950s I was unaware that they relied upon bedpans.

I am indebted to Lester May for this piece of information.

Could he have meant 'blue and white counterpanes'? I must admit though, that being able to discern the colour from a black and white film I do find rather intriguing.

- Derek Bridge, Chiang Mai, Thailand

I'm afraid the glaring mistake was mine, not Lester May's. The letters' page gremlin (for such there seems to be) changed his 'bedpanes' into 'bedpans' and I didn't even notice... - Man Ed

opinion

FOR a few days in April, the world suddenly became a larger place as the natural phenomenon of volcanic ash put a stop to the air travel which has turned it into a global village.

Cancelled flights led to inconvenience, misery and expense for families, holidaymakers, and business people who had to find their way across land and over the seas.

But if worldwide air travel stopped forever, what then? The world would become a different place, but the UK would not starve.

Currently only about one or two per cent of our fresh produce arrives by air, and although the growers would certainly feel the effects, most of us can live without Peruvian asparagus and Kenyan roses.

If on the other hand anything threatened our maritime trade, we would soon feel the effects. About 95 per cent of everything that comes into the UK comes by sea.

Within four days there would probably be power cuts because we import nearly 50 per cent of our gas.

Next would be food shortages, as most of the food we import arrives on container ships. They annually deliver about 586 million tonnes of freight to the UK's ports. The figure for air freight by comparison is about two million tonnes.

It was a timely reminder that we are an island nation, and our prosperity and livelihood depend on the sea, and in turn on the Royal Navy to keep the sea lanes open.

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

NAVY NEWS

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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



One of a kind?

HOW unique is this? During my 25 years I served on two warships that had the same pennant number - F88.

Ship number one, from 1962-63, was HMS Malcolm, a Type 14 anti-submarine frigate, operating with the Fishery Protection Squadron serving the Icelandic area, 310 feet, 1180 tons, crew of 140, conditions so bad that hard-lying money was paid, plus it rolled on wet grass!

The most exciting time during my draft, apart from eating lots of really fresh fish, was being diverted towards Cuba when the missile crisis was starting to kick off - and us with two 40mm Bofors and Limbos for anti-sub killing! Real frightener.

Ship number two, from 1978-80, was HMS Broadsword, the first of the Type 22 A/S frigates.

All metric, 131.2m (430 ft) 4,400 tons, crew of 220, all mod cons and computers. Total contrast, you could walk two abreast along the Burma Road.

The most excitement was leaving Devonport with a very distinct list (for listing trials) to head up the rescue force for the Fastnet race which bad weather had hammered.

However, one other commonality in these two very dissimilar vessels was that both were fitted with two WW2 40mm Bofors anti-aircraft guns.

We certainly knew how to recycle everything!

- Stan Smith, ex CRS

Barrington mystery

FURTHER to the letter about HMS Barrington (March), does anyone have any information on a submarine we lifted off the coast of Scotland in 1950?

I was a stoker onboard at the time, but everything was hush-hush, a sentry was posted and we were not allowed past the wheelhouse.

The other boat, I think, was the Barford, but I can't be certain. Several boffins came and went during the week, but for what purpose I never found out.

There must be some old shipmates left who were on board at the time?

- Doug Goodall, Two Dales, Matlock

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.



A sublime supplement

I ALWAYS enjoy reading Richard Hargreaves' centrefolds and *Slaughter in the Fjords - Narvik 1940*, was no exception.

Having just done some research on Captain Warburton-Lee and the First Battle of Narvik for a talk in my local village (Capt W-L lived in Soberton Mill), I know how much work goes into these pieces and Mr Hargreaves has managed to cover every aspect in a historically accurate yet exciting *Boys' Own* style.

One small error I spotted, HMS Cossack did not survive the war. The Tribal-class HMS Cossack was torpedoed in 1941 and subsequently sank whilst under tow.

The 'C' Class HMS Cossack was launched in 1944 and finally scrapped in 1961.

But not to detract from a

MTBs in action

The story *Spitfires of the Sea* (March) is of particular interest as it makes mention of the First Flotilla's MTBs.

When the flotilla was recalled to England in 1939 three boats were lost on the journey.

Of the remaining nine boats four were converted to become MASBs, thus leaving only five operational MTBs, nos. 14-18.

After refurbishing at Gun Boat Yard (later to become HMS Hornet) nos. 15-18 were based at Felixstowe (later to become HMS Beehive) whereas MTB 14, which had suffered considerable damage due to a following sea, was repaired at a private yard. She then joined the other boats at

thoroughly good read - he deserves a pay rise!

- Cdr Rob Scott (Retd) Soberton, Hants

...In the supplement on Narvik there were some omissions.

For example on the ship location map HMS Punjabi is omitted, also the oiler British Lady, whose brave crew made the action and return home of the destroyers possible, so I have supplied more detail in the form of an extract from the report of the captain of HMS Punjabi, Cdr J T Lean, to the Admiral commanding the battleship HMS Warspite.

- Walter Jones, ex-Boy Seaman, HMS Punjabi, Prestatyn, Denbighshire

Walter Jones's very interesting extract can be found on the Navy News website under the section Have your Say: Dittybox - Man Ed.

Felixstowe in early 1940.

I joined the flotilla at Gun Boat Yard, then became a crew member of MTB 14, joining her on her arrival at Felixstowe.

One by one all five boats were destroyed, my boat was the last to go. MTB 14 was destroyed as a result of a dive bomb attack in May 1942.

For the whole of the period 1939 to May 1942 MGB 81 did not join the First Flotilla MTBs.

If MGB 81 did become based at HMS Beehive she may possibly have been linked with the 6th Gun Boat Flotilla under the leadership of Lt Cdr R Hitchens.

- Lt Cdr B J Collings, (E) RNVR, Kidderminster, Worcs

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Scott's binnacle is back

THE binnacle once used by Capt Robert Falcon Scott during the Terra Nova expedition has returned to Cardiff to go on permanent display.

Now housed in the refurbished Pierhead building in Butetown, overlooking the bay from which Scott's ship Terra Nova sailed in July 1910, the binnacle symbolises Welsh maritime tradition.

The binnacle is the secure, all-weather structure which houses a ship's compass, including a light which allows the gimbal-mounted compass to be read through a small window.

This particular binnacle was presented to the Royal Navy School of Navigation by the senior officers who brought Terra Nova back to the UK in 1913 after the death of Scott and his party following his unsuccessful bid to be first to the South Pole.

The Pierhead, part of the National Assembly for Wales estate, has been converted as a visitor attraction and to "inform, involve and inspire" the people of Wales.

It includes a three-room suite celebrating milestones in Welsh history.

LGBT meeting

THE 2010 Quad Service LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender) Conference will be staged in MOD Main Building, London, on Friday July 2.

Further details will be available from www.proud2serve.net

The following day sees the London Pride gathering and march, and Service and Civil Service LGBT personnel are permitted to march in the parade, the Service members in uniform.

The DIN covering attendance at London Pride is also available on the proud2serve website.

All eyes on Cardiff as big day approaches

CITIES, towns and villages across the UK are gearing up for this year's Armed Forces Day, with Cardiff leading the way.

The capital of Wales was chosen to host the 2010 national event, following in the footsteps of Chatham.

Pivotal to the Cardiff programme on Saturday June 26 is a parade from the city's castle to Cardiff Bay, allowing thousands of people to line the route and support serving personnel, veterans and youth organisations.

Veterans and standard bearers who wish to take part in the parade need to complete a booking and log form and return it no later than May 24.

Details of how to apply, and copies of the form, are available to download at the Cardiff Armed Forces Day website www.armedforcesdaycardiff.co.uk

Static displays and exhibitions – including the Type 23 frigate HMS Kent at Roath Basin (operational requirements permitting) will be open from around 10.00 to 18.00.

The parade will set off from the castle at 11.15 and should take around 45 minutes, though veterans who cannot manage the whole route can join in part of the way through.

Following the parade a drumhead service will take place at Roald Dahl Plass, Cardiff Bay at midday, lasting for around 30 minutes.

Other displays at Roald Dahl Plass will include a Royal Marines band performance, a display by a

Royal Marines Commando team and a silent drill display by the Queens Colour Squadron of the RAF.

Dynamic displays should include the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight, a flight of Harrier aircraft, a fly-past by the Red Arrows, historical RN aircraft and a modern Lynx, a search and rescue display and the Red Devils parachute team.

The evening will see entertainment on the stage at Roald Dahl Plass.

Timings and participation by all units and teams is subject to operational requirements.

An Armed Forces reunion area will be situated in between the rear of the Pierhead building and the Wales Millennium Centre, in which there will be a marquee from which packed lunches will be served and adjacent to this a seating area.

Access to this area will be by ticket only – again, see the website for details.

And although the main focus will be on Cardiff there are plenty of other events before, on and after June 26 to keep supporters of the Armed Forces occupied.

These include a competition for cadet standard bearers in Luton; an Armed Forces Day theme at a cricket match in Brighton between Sussex and Bangladesh in July; an Armed Forces and Veterans week in Blackpool; a Thank The Forces Charity Dog Show and Family Fair at Eastbourne; a candlelit vigil of prayer and music at Eye in Suffolk;



the proceeds going to Armed Forces Day.

The first Armed Forces Day in 2009 proved a huge success with more than 180 community-based events taking place across the UK.

The national event at Chatham Historic Dockyard in Kent attracted a capacity crowd of 30,000.

Armed Forces Day is the successor to National Veterans Day, which made its debut in 2006.

For more details of events in your part of the world, or to flag up an event you are organising, see the website www.armedforcesday.org.uk or go onto Facebook.

The AFD website also includes case studies highlighting the Servicemen and women in different parts of the country.

Armed Forces Days in Bolton and Stow-on-the-Wold; an Armed Forces Day at the National Motor Museum in Beaulieu; and the World Slug Racing Championship at the Horseshoe in Shipston on Stour on June 27, with part of

Happy birthday, Ma'am

BRITISH Ambassador Jamie Bowden and Cdre Tim Lowe, UK Maritime Component Commander (UKMCC), took the salute during a reception at the British Embassy in Bahrain to mark the Queen's birthday.

The Royal Navy provided a Colour Party from locally-based personnel including sailors from HMS Chiddingfold, currently deployed in the Gulf.

Lt Cdr Simon Brierley, from the UKMCC HQ, led the ceremonial display that culminated in the traditional ceremony of Evening Colours.

The Ambassador hosted the annual reception and invited local dignitaries, businessmen and British residents to the event in the grounds of his residence.

The close ties between the embassy and UKMCC present an ideal opportunity for the Royal Navy to demonstrate a ceremonial tradition that dates back centuries, but is still performed on a daily basis on ships and shore establishments across the globe.



● LREG Andy Wallace (left) and AB Jack Hawkins bring down the Union Jack during Evening Colours

Cost of fleet in spotlight

AFFORDABILITY is the theme of the tenth International Naval Engineering Conference and Exhibition (INEC), to be held in Portsmouth on May 11-13.

Pressure on defence budgets is both universal and a constant factor since time immemorial, and experts will explore various aspects of the situation under the banner of 'The Affordable Future Fleet'.

There will be sessions on design, affordability, maintenance and support, submarines, environment, electric propulsion and auxiliaries and innovation before the conference ends with a plenary session on manning and training.

There will also be a presentation of the Sir Donald Gosling Awards to three authors under 40.

Among the papers at the conference will be two on the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers, a look at aluminium construction of ships from two American experts and the Dutch perspective on watch-keeping from ashore.

The conference, sponsored by BAE Systems, will be held in the Rope Store in Portsmouth Naval Base.

For further details see www.imarest.org/inec

148 Battery to host reunion


BECAUSE of operational commitments next year, 148 Battery will hold an Amphibious Bombardment Association reunion this summer at Poole on Saturday June 26.

Doors open at 1200, and after drinks and curry lunch the afternoon programme will follow the familiar pattern, including short act of remembrance at the Battery Memorial Stone.

An evening social function will follow, starting at 1900.

Would those attending please check in, if possible, 14 days before the event with either Brum Richards on mdrhome@ntlworld.com or 01202 468720, or BSM WO2 Richard Bociek on 3CD0X-29CDO-148BTYBSM@mod.uk or 01202 202273.


They will need your vehicle registration number and you will need photo ID to get in.



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Little ships return

AS the Little Ships are prepared for another sally to Dunkirk, a Royal Navy veteran who took part in the operation has been recounting his experience for a TV documentary.

James 'Lofty' Christmas was a young rating when he took a Little Ship across the Channel as part of Operation Dynamo – the mission which saw 330,000 Allied troops snatched away from the advancing Germans on the beaches of northern France in 1940.

Lofty spent a day on the River Thames onboard the Little Ship MV Fermain V, where he was interviewed by Dan Snow for a forthcoming BBC2 documentary, due to be broadcast on June 5.

Fermain V, an open launch built in 1926, was brought from her base in Shepperton by Dennis Cox to HMS President, where Lofty was embarked.

The interview took place against a backdrop of the Houses of Parliament and HMS Belfast.

The Association of Dunkirk Little Ships (ADLS) is formed by the current owners of the various craft involved, which in most cases ferried soldiers from the beaches to larger ships offshore.

Nowadays, the ADLS are seen at events in the UK and Europe, showing the flag and displaying the 'Dunkirk Spirit'.

Part of their commemorative events programmes are the returns to Dunkirk, which have taken place, with only one cancellation in 1970 due to bad weather, every five years since 1965.

The ADLS was formed in 1966, the brainchild of Raymond Baxter, who owned L'Orage at the time.



● James 'Lofty' Christmas with Dan Snow in London

Ian Gilbert, one of the ADLS co-ordinators for the return, said "This year's event is the last that we expect veterans to be able to attend."

"Operation Dynamo is a most important historical event and an extraordinary feat that emboldened the British people to fight on, and should never be forgotten."

"We feel extremely privileged to be owners of these historic Little Ships and to be a part of these commemorations."

"We are very grateful to the Royal Navy for their support and are looking forward to embarking ratings from HMS Collingwood for this year's event."

The ADLS are returning this year to mark the 70th Anniversary of Operation Dynamo, leaving Ramsgate at 0700 on Thursday May 27 to berth at the Basin du Commerce in Dunkirk, returning

to Ramsgate at 1530 on Monday May 31, and members of the public are invited to wave them off or welcome them back.

Upwards of 50 Little Ships are taking part, escorted by frigate HMS Monmouth and patrol boat HMS Raider, barring unforeseen operational commitments.

The ADLS will have 25 ratings from HMS Collingwood embarked in their Little Ships, continuing their links with the Fareham base which provides assistance at the annual Veterans' Cruise, held on the Thames each September.

Further details can be obtained from the ADLS website www.adls.org.uk or RN website www.royal-navy.mod.uk, or from email webadmin@adls.org.uk

WO1 Mick Gentry RN can provide information covering the RN involvement, email nr-ee-arm2@mcareers.mod.uk



Flower of Canada

HMCS SACKVILLE, the last remaining Flower-class corvette and Canada's Naval Memorial, is a floating museum as well as a memorial, write Jacqui Good and Hugh Macpherson.

A total of 269 Flower-class corvettes were built during World War 2, almost all in the UK and Canada.

Sackville was built in St John, New Brunswick, and spent most of her active life based in St John's, Newfoundland, as a member of the famed Fifth Escort Group, the Barber Pole Brigade.

She is now located in Halifax, home of Canada's East Coast Navy, and she has been restored to reflect life at sea in 1944 during the Battle of the Atlantic.

There are uniformed mannequins in the mess, lifting cups of coffee to their lips.

Others are taking a nap in hammocks slung above the table.

Sometimes there are live actors offering tours of the corvette and singing *Roll along, Wavy Navy*.

Visitors are invited to take a turn at the wheel, clamber up and down ladders, check out the engine room and take aim with the guns.

Restoration of the original equipment is an ongoing project.

And now, everyone who visits Sackville can learn about the Type 271 radar – "the set that won the war at sea", according to James Lamb in his classic tale *On the Triangle Run*.

At the outbreak of the war no Canadian ships were equipped with radar, and when Canadian-designed radar sets were installed in ships like Sackville, they were found to be unsuitable for the rigours of the North Atlantic winter.

They used a longer wavelength, and it was difficult to tell if the returned signal was a trawler, an iceberg or an enemy submarine.

The problem was amplified by the fog banks and rough seas of the Western North Atlantic.

After a series of frustrating encounters with U-boats, Canadian captains demanded to get their hands on a new British development which used shorter wavelengths than the Canadian equipment.

The 271 radar was the best of its kind in 1942 and significantly

improved the odds of a corvette finding and sinking an enemy submarine.

An early model was installed in Sackville in Londonderry late in 1942.

That original equipment is long gone, but a similar set was discovered in a warehouse some 25 years ago.

A member of the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, which has custody and care of the ship, made it a cause to bring the radar back to life.

The Royal Navy Museum of Radar and Communications, located in HMS Collingwood in Fareham, provided valuable research, and even a long-forgotten copy of the technical and operator's manuals.

When the restored radar was unveiled in June 2008, Lt Cdr Bill Legg RN (Rtd) was beaming – he is curator of the Radar Museum, and was on hand in Halifax for the event.

For the actual restoration work, the Trust approached Cobham Surveillance, based in Dartmouth, Nova Scotia, and a subsidiary of Cobham plc, in the UK.

To their delight the company, which develops and designs electronic tracking and locating equipment, signed on immediately.

Cobham engineers cleaned up the old radar, replacing, refurbishing and polishing, until the set looked like it had just arrived from the manufacturer.

Then they tackled the complicated task of creating a display that explains how radar works and how this set would have looked under wartime

conditions.

An audio narrative was synchronized to the display – and, the icing on the cake, two World War 2 veteran radar operators, Guy Oulette, (ex-RCN) and Sid Gould (ex-RN), both members of the Trust, reprised their roles as radar operators.

Both Cobham and the RN Radar Museum are being recognised with puffer and shiny new plaques aboard Sackville.

Their collaboration is exactly the type of involvement that Canada's National Naval Memorial needs to encourage as it works toward creating a museum full of interactive, educational, adventures.

The ship's triple expansion engines have been rigged with hydraulics so that they can be slowly turned over, the bridge is being rebuilt, as close as possible to the original and the radio room is in operation.

And another link with a commercial organisation has also yielded results – Lockheed Martin, once again with the help of the RN Radar Museum, have undertaken the formidable job of restoring a long neglected ASDIC, the 144/147, to as close to working condition as possible.

The goal is to have all this equipment and other restorations ready for the Queen's visit to Halifax in late June.

The visit will be a highlight of the 100th anniversary celebrations of the Canadian Navy.

But this Sackville is more than a floating and live museum; she is the Canadian National Memorial to more than 2,000

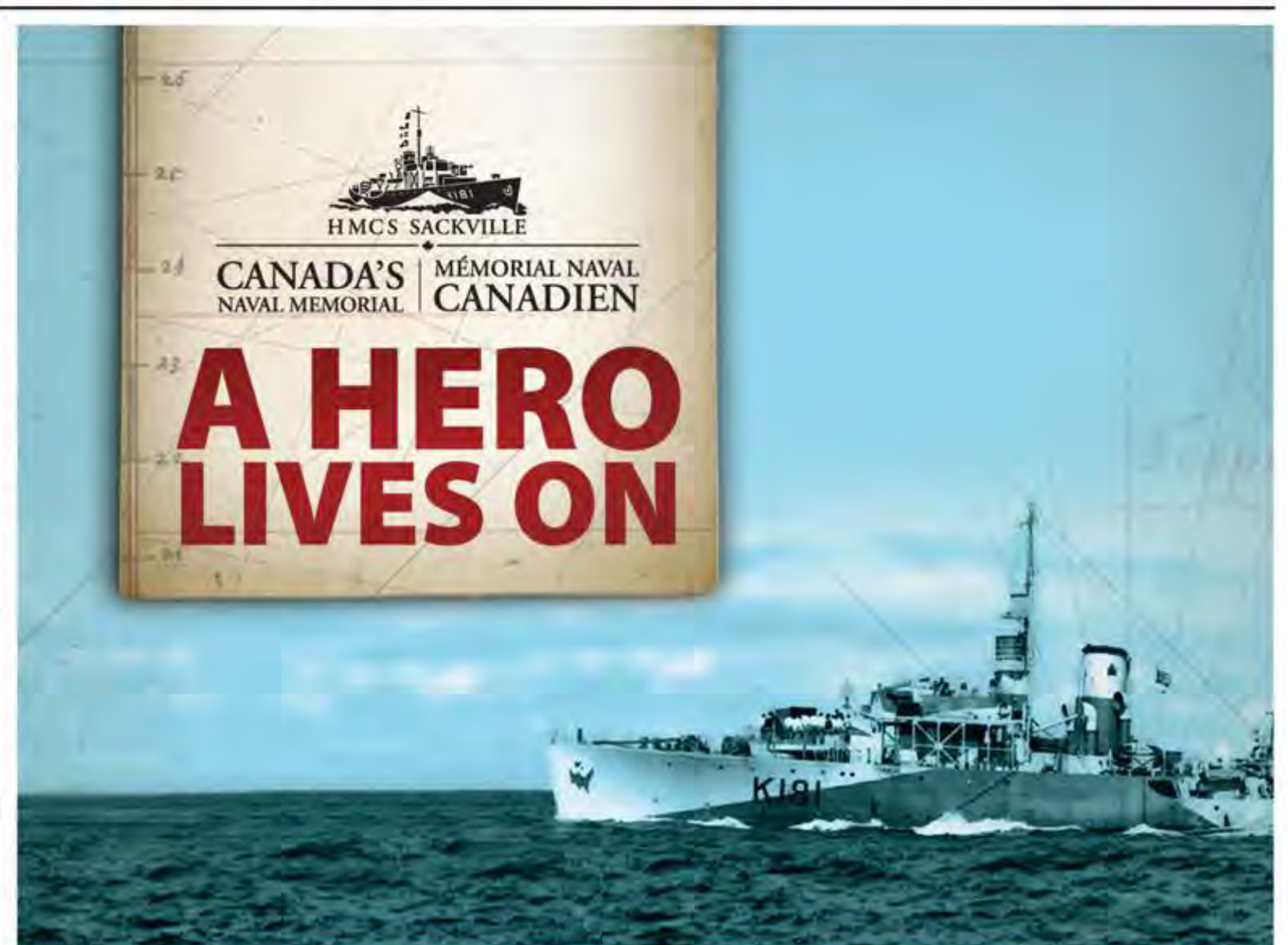
young men, many from inland cities and the prairies who had never seen salt water, who gave their lives in the Battle of the Atlantic.

The gallant old ship is a

tribute to all those who served and are serving Canada at sea, to all those who served in Flower-class corvettes, and she is the special care and love of the hundreds of Trustees who

rescued, restored and maintain "the last corvette".

For more information on becoming a Trustee or assisting in the care of the ship see www.hmcssackville.com



● HMCS Sackville pictured during the war with her original short fo'c'sle configuration

COME ON BOARD HMCS SACKVILLE, Canada's Naval Memorial, in Halifax, Nova Scotia. SACKVILLE distinguished herself in a number of engagements with enemy U-boats and is the last of the wartime Flower Class corvettes that served so valiantly in World War II, especially in the Battle of the Atlantic. Celebrate the 100th Anniversary of the Canadian Navy and experience firsthand what it was like to serve at sea in these rugged little warships.

Visit history at www.hmcssackville.ca

'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

Pension changes: action needed?

THE UK state pension changed on April 6 this year, and if you are over 55, have recently retired, or if there is an adult who depends on you financially, you may need to take action now to make sure you don't miss out on money for your future.

For further information on how the state pension is changing, visit www.direct.gov.uk/en/Pensionsandretirementplanning/StatePension/DG_069498

You can claim your state pension if you live outside the UK.

However, you'll only receive the index-linked increases if you live in the European Economic Area (EEA) or Switzerland or in a country with which the UK has a social security agreement that includes increasing state pensions.

For more information on the UK state pension for Britons living abroad, visit www.direct.gov.uk/en/Pensionsandretirementplanning/StatePension/Basicstatepension/DG_10026714

If there is an adult who depends on you financially from April 6 this year it will no longer be possible to claim an increase of your state pension for another adult.

This is called an 'adult dependency increase'.

It is an increase in your state pension for a wife, husband or someone who is looking after your children, if he or she is considered to be financially dependent on you.

If you were already entitled to this increase on April 5 this year, you will be able to keep it until you no longer meet the conditions for the increase or until April 5 2020, whichever is first.

If you claim your state pension on or after April 6 2010, you will not be able to claim an increase for an adult who depends on you financially when you finally claim your state pension, even if you have reached state pension age before April 6 2010.

For more information on how to claim your state pension, contact the International Pensions Centre.

You can find a range of contact details via this page on Directgov: www.direct.gov.uk/pensionsabroad and click on the 'Contact the International Pension Centre' link.

Captains gather

THE Captain Class Frigate Association has held its annual reunion at the Hilton Hotel in Warwick, and there was unanimous approval for another reunion next year.

Guest speaker at the dinner was Vice Admiral Richard Ibbotson, Deputy CINCFLEET, who congratulated the veterans on their determination to continue their association – the youngest member is 84.

Association chairman S/M Don Hitchcock, formerly of HMS Narborough, responded.

Despite the fact that the class of ship was enormous – no fewer than 78 were lend-leased from the

Theatre visit takes deeps back



VETERANS from the nuclear attack submarine HMS Valiant met for a reunion in London – and found themselves in very familiar surroundings.

The deeps met at the Union Jack Club, and after lunch strolled the short distance to the Young Vic theatre to watch a performance of *Kursk* – set in a British nuclear attack submarine as she shadows the doomed Russian submarine.

The set and script would ring particularly true to the Valiant crew, as one of the actors who had input to the play, written by Bryony Lavery, was Ian Ashpitel,

● *Ex-deeps at the HMS Valiant reunion on the set of Kursk at the Young Vic*

who served on board Valiant for two years at the end of the 1970s.

The chain of events which brought the former shipmates together is a tale in itself, involving a chance visit to a Chatham graveyard and a stunning coincidence which revealed the last resting place of a sailor killed in a car accident decades ago.

For the full story of how the reunion – which could feature in a TV documentary – came about, see next month's *Navy News*.

Kursk is now on tour, and the play, which garnered critical acclaim during its run in London, can be seen at Warwick Arts (May 4-8), Liverpool Everyman (May 12-15) and Glasgow Tramway (May 19-23).

Electrical veterans back ohm

MEMBERS of the Royal Navy Electrical Branch Association spent a day reminiscing during a visit to HMS Collingwood, the Fareham establishment where they all served at some stage in the past 50 years or more.

With one member of the group having first joined Collingwood in 1947, and the most recent dating back to the 1970s, they were expecting a very different place to the one they remembered.

And although they saw training, had a demonstration of the Phalanx weapon system and went on the bridge simulator, they were delighted to find some things hadn't changed.

Association founder S/M Mike Crowe said that they were pleased that basic theory is still taught – instead of a 'throw-away Navy' simply replacing failed circuit boards, today's sailors can fix a fault, despite the far more complicated nature of modern electronic equipment.

The group also enjoyed lunch in the wardroom and watched training divisions.

Standard date

THE Orkney branch standard will be dedicated over the weekend of May 22-23, and shipmates are welcome to attend.

Details of travel and accommodation can be obtained from S/M David Young at david@kilgower50.plus.com or see www.rnaorkney.moonfruit.com for more on the event, plus a trip to the Lyness Naval Museum, cemetery and Arctic Convoy Memorial on May 21.

Final reunion?

THE HMS Orion Association annual reunion this summer could be the last as time takes its toll on members.

The event will be in Plymouth on August 21-22, with dinner on the Saturday evening at the Royal Fleet Hotel.

HMS Kenya members are also invited to the weekend.

Whatever the final decision at the AGM over future reunion weekends, the association itself remains in rude health.

Civic honour for chronicler Fred

A HOUSING association in South Wales plans to name one of its developments after a local Royal Navy veteran whose research created a memorial to merchant sailors.

Fred Hortop was a depth charge specialist during World War 2, serving in destroyer HMS Hesperus, the scourge of the U-boats (Fred had a hand in the sinking of U93 in early 1942 and U357 at Christmas the same year) and the equally aggressive Flower-class corvette HMS Stonecrop, which accounted for U124 in April 1943 and U634 almost five months later.

But it was the Merchant Navy that attracted Fred's attention in civilian life – Fred's brothers all served at sea in World War 2.

His eldest brother Robert was killed in action on board the tramp steamer SS Baron

Dechmont in January 1943 when she was sunk by U-boat, while another brother, Dan, was sunk three times in less than a year (SS Clune Park, January 1941, SS Jedmoor, September 1941 and SS Maclaren, December 1941 – Dan was severely injured in the latter sinking).

According to Fred's brother George, the Navy veteran set himself the task of recording the names of merchant ships and sailors from Barry and the Vale of Glamorgan who were lost during the war.

In five years he had come up with 268 names from the World War 1 and 637 from World War 2.

The latter research was chronicled in a leather-bound book which was not only displayed as a book of remembrance in the Barry area, but has also been officially recognised as a memorial in its own right by the Imperial

War Museum.

Now the Newydd Housing Association plans to name a new 20-rental unit of affordable homes in Cadoxton 'Cwrt Hortop', following a suggestion by local historian Tom Clemett.

An official from the association said it was important to maintain links with the past, and although old shops and homes on Main Street will disappear as part of the development, the efforts of Fred to place the names of lost seamen in the town's annals made him a worthy candidate for having his own name honoured.



● Fred Hortop

History comes alive

MEMBERS of the HMS Calliope Association are planning to pay their own tribute to 'local hero' Vice Admiral Cuthbert Collingwood.

The man who completed the job at Trafalgar – he assumed command of the British fleet on the death of Nelson – Newcastle-born Collingwood led the Mediterranean Fleet for the rest of that decade.

He died off Menorca, one of his Mediterranean strongholds, in March 1810, and his home on the island is now the Hotel del Almirante, run by a Collingwood enthusiast.

The visitors, who all served at the RNR base on the Tyne at Gateshead, plan to fly out to Menorca this month and stay at the Admiral's former home.

Association chairman S/M Bob Harrison, a former submariner, said they were excited at the prospect of staying under the

same roof as Collingwood, and that the trip would really bring history to life.

During their visit the group plans to hold a silver service dinner in the admiral's honour, which will be attended by members of the Menorcan Britannia Club, which promotes links between the UK and the island.

Convoy medals presented

ARCTIC Convoy veterans gathered on HMS Belfast in London for a presentation of commemorative medals by the Russians.

Described by Churchill as "the worst journey in the world", the

convoys saw Belfast and warships of the RN and other allies escort merchantmen to and from the ports of Archangel and Murmansk in north Russia in temperatures as low as minus 30°C.

Such convoys carried more than four million tons of vital supplies, including more than 5,000 tanks and 7,000 aircraft, for use by Soviet forces fighting the German Army on the Eastern Front.

The 14 veterans were presented with their medals on the old cruiser by the Kremlin's Chief of the Presidential State Decorations Directorate, Vladimir Borisovitch Osipov.

New man in hot seat

THE RNA National Council has announced that they have recruited Capt Paul Quinn as the new General Secretary of the Association.

Capt Quinn, a former Supply and Secretariat officer, has a strong record in naval administration and, since leaving the active list, has been engaged in restoring the fortunes of the Apostleship of the Sea, in which task he has been most successful.

He will join the headquarters staff on May 4 to enable him to participate in planning the Annual Conference, and will assume the reins of power at the end of the conference in Normandy, on June 7.



● Capt Peter Voute presents Marj Dodsworth with her certificate

Band liaison officer is rewarded for efforts

A FORMER Wren who worked with codebreakers in World War 2 has been recognised for her work as association liaison officer working with Royal Marines bands.

S/M Marj Dodsworth, of the Guernsey Association of Royal Navy and Royal Marines, has been instrumental (sorry – Ed) in making arrangements (sorry again, too many musical puns – Ed) for visits by bands for the Charybdis and Limbourne weekend over the past 30 years.

S/M Marj, who worked on Enigma decryption during the war,

was presented with a certificate, signed by the Lieutenant Governor Vice Admiral Sir Fabian Malbon, by association president Capt Peter Voute.

She also received a travel voucher and flowers.

At the last RM band concert at St James' last October S/M Marj was presented with a bouquet and a statue of a Royal Marines bandsman by Bandmaster WO2 Ashley Williams – the concert was the last weekend that she would be responsible for the band's visit.

Naval Quirks

IN NOVEMBER 1918, THE GERMAN FLEET PUT TO SEA – NOT, AS THE RN HOPED, TO DO BATTLE – BUT TO SURRENDER...





Founder member mourned

A FOUNDER member of the LST and Landing Craft Association has died at the age of 89.

Syd Hook was born into a fishing family in Teignmouth, Devon, but at his father's insistence he became a shipyard apprentice, eventually becoming a skilled shipwright.

On the outbreak of war the 19-year-old joined the Navy, taking part in the Dunkirk evacuation and bomb disposal work.

In 1942 he sailed to the United States in the Queen Mary to join LST 403, under construction in the Baltimore Shipyards.

Syd sailed it to the UK (despite its size – it could carry 30 Sherman tanks on the main deck – he said “it rolled like a pig”) then took part in the landings at North Africa, Sicily, Salerno and Anzio, where he won the DSM.

He was at Normandy on D Day, and made 22 crossings to take troops, tanks and supplies to Normandy, returning with wounded men.

He spent 24 years as a harbour pilot after the war, and with his friend Jim Brend set up the LST and Landing Craft Association.

Garden tribute

A NAVAL monument to honour Canadians lost in the Battle of the Atlantic is to be dedicated on Sunday May 2 at HMCS Prevost in London, Ontario.

The memorial garden, built into the grass hillside at Prevost, will feature a carpet of creeping phlox, which will bloom a brilliant blue from early spring to midsummer.

In this sea of flowers is placed a ‘convoy’ of 25 blue granite stones, running east to west, each engraved with the name of a Royal Canadian Navy ship lost in the battle, starting with HMCS Fraser (lost in June 1940) and ending with HMCS Esquimalt (lost in April 1945).

A further stone honours the sacrifice of the Merchant Navy.

Plenty to discuss at la Conférence

THIS year's National Conference, to be held in Normandy next month, looks like being the busiest for some years with a total of 14 branch motions to consider.

When two proposed amendments to the Supplemental Charter and any motions of urgency are added to the list, there should be plenty of scope for debate at the Stade Kieffer in Ouistreham on Friday June 4.

The two proposed amendments, both put forward by Watford branch and seconded by Hemel Hempstead, deal with the level of support needed to revoke, alter or amend rules or provisions at conference; in both cases the proposed change would see the threshold lowered to more than half the votes cast; the current levels stand at two-thirds majority (Article 16(2)) and three-quarters (Article 19).

The same thinking informs the first branch motion, proposed and seconded as above, which would see future conferences, Council, area or branch meetings carry any motion, proposal or recommendation with a simple majority of more than half the votes, rather than the two-thirds currently required.

Chatham, seconded by Margate, seeks acknowledgement that area National Council members are elected to act, *inter alia*, as representatives of their areas, with a duty “to report freely and faithfully to their respective areas” on all council business other than that subject to limitations under a council resolution.

Chatham also propose motion number 3, backed by Woking, that a common process is established

for the election of area national council members and their deputies, giving area committees the responsibility for carrying out elections of those members.

Isle of Sheppey, seconded by Maidstone, seeks to amend Association Rule 14(c), which deals with the election of members to the Standing Orders Committee.

Helston branch, seconded by Sherborne, seek the appointment of a study group to look into options for the location and funding of future Annual Conferences, with a remit to submit a report to the National Council for consideration.

On the same subject, motion number 6, proposed by Watford and seconded by Hemel Hempstead, tackles Rule 12(a) by seeking to take the final decision for the location of subsequent conferences out of the hands of the National Conference and instead decide by means of a postal referendum of all branches.

And Helston, with the backing of Sherborne, request that conferences be programmed for September each year; the current practice is to hold the event in June.

The focus remains on National Conference in motion number 8, proposed by Plymouth and seconded by Frome, which asks the National Council to enhance the memorandum of understanding with the Royal Navy to allow ships' and establishments' RNA liaison officers – namely executive warrant officers or designated deputies – to attend and vote at National Conferences.

The award for the briefest and most succinct branch motion

goes to Tyne, seconded by Spennymoor and Ferryhill, who at number 9 propose “that Tyne Branch host the 2012 National Conference.”

Watford return to the limelight, again supported by Hemel Hempstead, suggesting that an addition to Bye-law 4 would allow branches to “seek clarification of matters contained in the Annual Report and Annual Accounts through the General Secretary.”

Another bye-law under scrutiny is A8, with Frome, seconded by Helston, looking to change the number of meetings held by each area to a minimum of three annually, instead of the current four.

Motion number 12 sees Crosby, with support from Llandudno, propose that 2011 be designated ‘RNA Year of National Recruitment’, with the hope that an association-wide initiative might result in a significant increase in membership.

The ‘local’ branches enter the fray at motion number 13, when Aquitaine, seconded by France

Nord, propose “that the Guide to Ceremonial be amended to require Standard Bearers to wear the Standard Carrying Strap over the right shoulder.”

And finally, Gosport, with support from Waterlooville, aim to change Model Club Rule 12 to increase the amount payable by an appellant towards the appeal procedure from 50p to £5.

Conference is due to open at 1030 and finish at 1700, but the timings, and indeed the agenda and motions, may be subject to change as all material was still in draft format as *Navy News* went to press.

There will be a notable departure from convention at the start of proceedings, when the National Standard is marched on with the standard of FAMMAC, the *Fédération d'Associations de Marins et de Marins Anciens Combattants* – the Gallic equivalent of the RNA.

The conference will be officially opened by the Mayor of Ouistreham, and First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope will address shipmates.



● S/M Ian Gould

Cyprus loses a friend

MEMBERS of Cyprus branch are mourning the loss of vice chairman and founder S/M Ian Gould, who died just before Easter after a short illness.

Tributes have been paid by shipmates in the branch and beyond, including current chairman S/M Andrew Noyes and his predecessor S/M Nobby Hall, who said: “The world will be a lonelier place without the presence of the old club swinger.”

S/M Nobby had the chance to meet up with his successor when S/M Andrew and his wife Jackie put into Grand Turk during a Caribbean cruise – Nobby is now the top policeman in the Turks and Caicos Islands, which explains why the British visitors were seen in the back of a marked police car.

Plea over admiral's headstone

BURIED within two cemeteries in Folkestone are six Victoria Cross holders – three in Shorncliffe Military Cemetery and three in Cheriton Road Cemetery.

A recent meeting of the Cheriton and Morehall branch of the Royal British Legion mulled over the state of some of the graves of the VC holders.

Former REME Sgt Armourer Ian Loftus somehow found himself as project leader, and hopes to get the graves and headstones refurbished.

One of the graves which requires attention is that of Admiral of the Fleet Sir John Edmund Commerell VC, who won his medal on a raid during the Crimean War, narrowly avoiding capture as he and his party destroyed enemy supplies.

Although Ian has written to the VC and GC Association in London seeking advice and help, he is prepared to cast his net wider to try to get the headstone renovated – he would also like to know if any of Admiral Commerell's family are still around.

If anyone can help, they should contact Ian on 01303 851340 or 07810 864311.

Service for lost boat E18

A MEMORIAL service is to be held for a British submarine lost in the Baltic during World War 1, and families of crew members are invited to get involved.

E18 was sunk with all hands off Estonia in 1916, and Robert Davenport's interest in the boat derives from a family link – E18's CO, Lt Cdr Robert Halahan, was the first husband of Robert's grandmother.

A service, and the dedication of

a plaque in memory of E18 and the 33 men lost with her, will be held at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Tallinn on Sunday May 31, and a group of relatives will be spending the weekend in the Estonian capital.

If anyone connected to the crew would like to be represented at the event – or travel out themselves – they should contact Robert at robertdavenport@btinternet.com or call 07834 606607

Down Memory Lane to The Gut

MORE than 30 members of Chatham branch travelled to Malta for a trip down memory lane.

The week-long visit allowed the former RN sailors in the group the chance to reminisce about the lengthy periods they had spent on

the Mediterranean island during their careers, either living ashore or visiting in ships.

The programme included a social evening with Malta branch and a visit to Malta Sea Cadets HQ, from which affiliations with these units may yet be constructed.

Members were also invited to the homes of former Maltese RN personnel, but the visit of an RN warship to coincide with the Chatham trip failed to materialise due to bad weather in the Bay of Biscay delaying its arrival.

Stepping from the aircraft on arrival into the warm Malta sunshine was just what the visitors had looked forward to after the dreadful UK winter, and the weather remained kind until it rained on the final day, by which time most visitors were

happy to relax in the hotel after a hectic week of sightseeing and socialising.

The social evening with the local branch in Valletta brought back memories of nights out down ‘The Gut’, the bar-lined back street in Valletta, and other escapades such as ignoring advice when deciding to swim back to the ship in Grand Harbour, only to be hauled into a following dhaisa.

There were formalities, too, in an exchange of plaques between branch presidents to record the visit.

The visit cost each member just over £209 for flights, transfers and half-board hotel accommodation for the week, and all those attending felt that the week proved good value, while the hospitality the members experienced certainly added to the success of the visit.

Plans to refurbish old mast

HOPES are high that the famous HMS Ganges mast at Shotley will soon be back in mint condition.

The 143ft mast at the former East Anglian training establishment has suffered the ravages of time and weather, with rot and rust taking their toll over the decades.

But current site owners Haylink won approval from Babergh District Council for plans to dismantle the iconic structure and have it repaired and refurbished by specialists off site before returning it to Shotley.

Haylink also plans to develop the site with housing, including retirement homes.

The mast was originally built in 1907 just inside the establishment's main gate, and is a local landmark.

Said to have been originally built from sections of the masts of two 19th century ships, HMS Cordelia and HMS Agincourt, it is now thought most of the structure dates from after 1955; there have been four further major repairs since then.

The mast was last used in a mast-manning ceremony on June 6 1976, when HMS Ganges was formally closed, having seen 150,000 recruits through its gates over the course of 71 years.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our March edition (right) was HMS Trafalgar, and the sister ship which rammed her was HMS Solebay.

M Turner, of West Lothian, wins £50 for providing the correct answer.

This month's ship (above), was the third of a quartet launched in Lowestoft in the late 1960s.

She quickly adopted a famous TV character as her official mascot, a party of 11 visiting BBC TV Centre before commissioning to meet the mascot and his sidekick Mr Rodney.

What was the ship's name, and who was her famous mascot – still a popular figure on the small screen today?

We have removed her pennant



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

Closing date for entries is June 14. 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 July edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 183

Name

Address

My answers

Eddie picks up the thread



OLD and bold seafarers thought nothing of getting stuck into sewing and mending when required – and S/M Eddie Clamp has now taken those skills a stage further.

S/M Eddie, of Selsey, has taken up quilting, under the tutelage of his wife Sue.

He began with a Red Sea scuba diving quilt, a reflection of his love of diving in the Red Sea over 20 years.

he then moved onto another love, the Andrew, and has produced a quilt of HMS Daring, which elicited a letter from the destroyer's CO after he saw a picture in the *Chichester Observer*.

Next was a nuclear submarine (see picture left), which will be in this year's Selsey Quilters show.

And next up is HMS Queen Elizabeth, which is still on Eddie's drawing board, but is scheduled to make an appearance around 2012.

Deep-sea sportsman is lauded

SUBMARINES and sport do not always sit well together – it's difficult to practise a golf swing or cover drive hundreds of feet below the Atlantic, for example.

But CPOET Stuart Adams managed to combine the two over two decades.

Stuart, who leaves the Navy later this year, earned his Dolphins in HMS Resolution in 1990, going on to serve in T-boats Trenchant, Tireless and finally Talent.

He represented the Navy and Combined Services at cricket and football, competed at a high level at table tennis and was Submarine Service champion golfer, while as a younger sailor he was a member of the RN vaulting display team.

A special cake to mark his 25 years in the Navy, baked by the chefs – or logisticians (catering services (preparation)) – on board Talent reflected his sporting prowess, having been decorated with icing-sugar cricket stumps, bat and ball and featuring the words 'It's Over'.

The sport theme continues in Civvy Street – Stuart will spend more time helping his son Taylor pursue his karting ambitions.

CPO Coxn Patrick Hill has been awarded a commendation for his contribution to the Silent Service.

CPO Hill (54) has spent 28 years of his 39-year career beneath the waves, serving in five nuclear-deterrent boats including two of the four Vanguard-class bombers.

He has served in 18 submarines, starting with the diesel-powered HMS Opossum and finishing with attack submarine HMS Superb.

CPO Hill, who retires at the end of the year, was presented with his commendation by Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson, Deputy Chief of Defence Staff (Personnel).

Officer's flying visit

THE head of the Fleet Air Arm, Cdre Martin Westwood, met some of the next generation of air engineering technicians at HMS Raleigh.

The Commodore FAA joined 11 Drake Division trainees – who were in the second of nine weeks' initial training – for lunch, and was briefed on how the Cornish base trains young sailors.



● Rear Admiral Chris Snow is briefed on Sultan's training initiatives
Picture: LA(Phot) Darby Allen

Thumbs up for Sultan

TRAINING at one of the Royal Navy's engineering schools has been given the thumbs up by one of the Service's top training chiefs.

Rear Admiral Chris Snow, Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST), was taken on a tour of HMS Sultan in Gosport and updated on their Defence Training Rationalisation.

Shown around the Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School and the Royal Naval School of Marine Engineering and Nuclear Department, Rear Admiral Snow said he was impressed with the training initiatives.

"It has been a pleasure to return to HMS Sultan since my last visit six months ago, to see the very

Award for lifesaver

A ROYAL Navy engineer who was swept overboard by a freak wave has received a top honour for saving his colleague from drowning.

PO Alan Murphy (27) has been awarded the Queen's Commendation for Bravery for keeping his unconscious comrade alive in freezing and stormy seas.

The pair were on board Type 23 frigate HMS Somerset off Plymouth in January last year

when they were swept off the flight deck by a freak 40ft wave.

Alan's colleague, a leading hand, hit his head on the side of the ship and his lifejacket failed to inflate automatically.

"I swam over to him and tried to manually inflate his jacket but this was impossible because of the size of the waves – it had suddenly become stormy and they were huge," said Alan.

"So I did all I could to keep his head above water which was not

easy because I was swallowing a lot of water too.

"After about five minutes he became unconscious.

"The ship was moving at speed and we lost sight of it at one point.

"When I saw it coming back towards us it was a huge relief, but it was still a massive struggle keeping hold of my colleague and trying not to swallow water myself.

"I tried to remain calm and confident that someone would see us very soon."

The pair spent about 15 minutes in the water before the ship's sea boat arrived on the scene.

"It seemed to come out of nowhere – I could not see it approach because of the size of the waves," said Alan.

After being treated on board HMS Somerset by medics they were taken by helicopter to hospital in Plymouth.

Alan was discharged later the same day; his colleague spent two days in intensive care but has since made a full recovery.

Alan said he only found out about the award a few days ago and was shocked at first.



● PO Alan Murphy

"I had not thought about the incident for months as it was over a year ago, and never expected anything like this.

"But it has sunk in now and I feel proud and honoured."

His citation reads: "If it were not for PO Murphy's tenacity in holding on to his drowning colleague while endangering his own life in extremely inhospitable conditions, there is no doubt his colleague would have lost his life."

Currently studying for a degree in electronic engineering at Portsmouth University, he transfers to Dartmouth in September to train as an air engineer officer.



● It is unusual for two officers married to each other to serve in the same ship, and pretty much unprecedented for their daughter to also be on board at the same time. But the Storey family have managed it – although the ship in question, HMS Playpark, is landlocked and unlikely to fly a White Ensign. Pictured are Lt Cdrs Naomi and Andrew Storey with daughter Sophie at the helm; Sophie can count on a good Naval heritage as her great grandfather, Charlie Howard, is a retired Chief



● Trainees Beyonce Morgan and Alex Ritchie (background) prepare breakfast at Antony School
Picture: Dave Sherfield

Breakfast training session

TRAINEE Navy chefs went back to school to practise their skills while promoting the concept of a hearty breakfast to start the day – and the benefits of using local produce.

The chefs – all right, logisticians (catering services (preparation)) – produced cooked breakfasts for 120 children, staff and other guests at Antony Church of England School, close to their base at HMS Raleigh, Torpoint, in Cornwall.

Most opted for the full English – sausage, bacon, hash browns and egg – while others preferred scrambled eggs on toast or yoghurt.

All the produce was donated by local companies or supplied at a special rate.

LLogs Stuart 'Yoz' Yeomans, an instructor at the Defence Maritime Logistics School at Raleigh, was in charge of the Navy team of three trainees in the 19th week of their 26-week Defence Chefs course.

LLogs Yeomans said: "The Royal Navy fully recognises the benefits of healthy eating and a good breakfast to start the day.

"Chefs on board ship can be required to cater for over 1,000 people, depending on the type of ship and tasking.

"Cooking for the school was an excellent opportunity for the junior chefs to put their training into practice."

The visit was part of Farmhouse Breakfast Week, now in its 11th year.



● Admiral Massey joins in a squad run at Dartmouth

Picture: Craig Keating (VT Flagship)

Admiral on the run

NO sooner had Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey arrived on a visit to Britannia Royal Naval College than he changed into sports kit and joined the squad run to Dartmouth Castle and back.

The run, at just over four miles, is now being developed as a challenge to be run each term by all uniformed members of the College.

Vice Admiral Massey spent some time chatting to staff and

officer cadets during his two-day visit, as well as giving an after dinner speech at the New Entry Naval Mess Dinner and making himself available for frank exchanges of views and comments.

Core Stream Commander Training Cdr Jeff Short said: "The Second Sea Lord was hugely impressed by the drive and enthusiasm of everyone at the college and it was a most successful visit."

Raleigh provides a challenge

MORE than 50 unemployed young people from south-east Cornwall tackled an obstacle course at HMS Raleigh in a bid to increase their confidence and motivation.

The challenge was organised by Liskeard Job Centre Plus in conjunction with the Royal Navy, though the group was split into four teams, each

coached by a representative of one of the Armed Forces and the police.

Local employers, who fill vacancies funded through the Young Person Guarantee, were also invited to join in with the challenge to allow them to meet those taking part in an informal situation while the participants, aged 18-24, get information about jobs.

Training squadron displaced during renovations

A TRAINING squadron at Culdrose has moved into temporary accommodation as part of an upgrade in kit and facilities.

750 NAS will be retiring the Jetstream T2 next year, replacing them with King Air 350 ERs.

To pave the way for much of the new support equipment, the squadron buildings and hangars needed to be renovated and brought up to date.

So 750 is sharing a temporary facility with the Hawk jet squadron at the Cornish air station.

"The hardest part of the move was trying to find a suitable location for us to move to," said Lt Cdr Nick Armstrong, CO of 750 Squadron.

"We had to keep training students throughout the process, and much of the real estate at Culdrose is already being used by other squadrons or earmarked for future long-term development.

"We were mindful that ours was a temporary move, and therefore erecting large permanent structures wasn't an option.

"However, by separating the squadron into three distinct groups – aviators, engineering support and simulation – we were able, with the addition of a couple of temporary buildings, to achieve a more-than-



● Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Chief of Staff Aviation, with Lt Cdr Nick Armstrong, Commanding Officer of 750 NAS
Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge

satisfactory solution that allowed training to continue."

The squadron took the opportunity to mark the official opening of their temporary facility during the visit to Culdrose by Rear Admiral Simon Charlier, Chief of Staff Aviation.

Lt Cdr Armstrong added: "In

order to stay flying throughout the move we treated the evolution as if we were detaching to a completely new air station rather than a site only 1,000 metres closer to our own air traffic control tower.

"I was very pleased, therefore, to be able to mark the end of the so-called detachment phase and

return to our normal operating routines by asking the Admiral to unveil a small plaque to mark the occasion.

"We can now operate from this site for another 40 years, although we rather expect the new facility to be completed somewhat sooner than that."

Needles investment on Daring

HMS DARING can hit an object the size of a cricket ball travelling at Mach 3 from miles away – and can produce a mean line in embroidery.

The latest addition to the Fleet picked up on the buzz about corporate appearance and has her own sewing machine which, using a laptop and appropriate software, can turn out professional results.

The ball was set rolling by Lt Rob Cogan in HMS Kent back in 2001, when the officer approached Hampshire Sewing Machines for advice on a machine compact and robust enough for a life at sea, embroidering name badges and other designs.

The frigate's CO at the time, Cdr John Clink, did not forget, and when he took command of aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal as Capt Clink he decided to follow suit, having two machines installed while the ship was in refit last year.

Now one of the most advanced warships in the world is similarly equipped with a piece of kit invented more than 200 years ago.

Ashes scattered

THE ashes of a retired communications officer have been scattered from his former ship, HMS Belfast, in London.

Lt Cdr Len Borley, who died at the age of 91, was instrumental in the design of magnetic loop aerials for direction finding.

He was a member of the RNR and served in the Royal Navy during World War 2 – including tours of duty as communications officer in HMS Belfast.

Len was a member of the RN Amateur Radio Society, regularly going on air from his home in Gosport using call sign G4LIK.

He was also a naval historian, amassing a large library of material over the years.



● Brig Mark Noble listens as Morgan explains his plan for Ilchester School
Picture: LA(Phot) David Bunting

Pupils plan for a military takeover

PLANS have been prepared at a Somerset school for a military takeover.

The chairman of governors at Ilchester School, Lt Cdr Paul D'Arcy, is an instructor with 702 Naval Air Squadron at nearby Yeovilton air station.

And Paul helped orchestrate a discussion on the school "being taken over by the military" to provide a base for up to 400 Service personnel – but only in theory, as part of the school's World War 2 studies.

WISE decision

SIXTEEN girls from schools across the south-east of England visited the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood as part of the WISE (Women In Science and Engineering) initiative.

The Navy works alongside the WISE project to run residential weeks allowing schoolgirls to experience hands-on engineering.



● A Sea King from 848 Naval Air Squadron, working with Royal Marines from CTCRM Lympstone, carries gorse bales on to a remote part of the East Devon lowland heaths to help protect them from erosion
Picture: Guy Newman (KOR Communications)

Gorse for good

ROYAL Marines from Lympstone and a helicopter from 848 Naval Air Squadron have teamed up to help protect a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in the West Country.

The East Devon Pebblebed Heaths contain important areas of bogland which suffered serious erosion over the prolonged icy, wet winter.

These bogs are home to rare flora and fauna, including insectivorous plants like butterwort and sundew,

which support equally rare wildlife and can only be found on the few remaining lowland heaths in Britain.

The heaths take their name from thick layers of rounded quartzite pebbles embedded in sand, deposited during the Triassic Age, more than 200 million years ago, when a large river flowed through what was then a desert.

Among the wildlife found are the Dartford warbler – classified by the International Union for Conservation of Nature as 'near threatened' – nightjars and the damselfly.

Commons warden Bungy Williams said: "The bogs hold hundreds of thousands of gallons of water and this weather has caused the peat to become badly eroded.

"This means that the bogs turn

into rivers and the plants simply get washed away.

"Without the plants the wildlife cannot survive."

The Pebblebed Heath Conservation Trust needed to distribute 100 bales of gorse to three locations on the heath – which is where the Senior Service came in.

A Sea King helicopter, supported by Royals from the Commando Training Centre RM, was brought in to carry the bales as underslung loads.

Bungy said: "We have harvested the gorse from the heaths and put it into bales, and the Royal Marines helped us to move it to some of these hard-to-reach areas.

"We have used gorse in the past to help repair the bogs and it has worked successfully, but this is the

first time we have ever done an operation of this scale."

The unique characteristics of the heaths, owned by Clinton Devon Estates, have to be continually managed to stop trees from re-establishing themselves and preventing gorses and bracken from taking over.

Equally important is keeping the wetland areas open.

Traditional activities such as turf cutting, grazing of animals and cutting bracken for bedding and trees for fuel all helped shape the heaths as they are today.

But Royal Marines also form part of the overall picture – military training exercises were run on the heathlands during World War 2, and the land is currently used by the MOD to teach commando skills to trainee Royal Marines.

First from academy

IN 2008 the Royal Navy launched a new academy allowing students to learn how to fly while achieving a Military Aviation Studies foundation degree.

The first officers to achieve the qualification were presented with their degrees by Maj Gen Porter, Chief of Staff Joint Warfare, during a wings parade at RN Air Station Culdrose, home of the Fleet Air Arm Military Aviation Academy.

The three officers were Lts Jonathan Maumy, Martin Young and George Ridley.

The academy is designed for students with A-levels, giving them the chance to learn the

fundamental skills needed to fly combat aircraft, and the degree – validated by the Open University – gives students the option of 'topping up' to gain a BSc qualification while serving with a front-line squadron at sea.

Budding pilots and observers gain the skills and knowledge needed to become fully-trained Aviation Warfare Officers, using simulation and computer-based training before flying real aircraft.

Potential officers begin their training at Dartmouth, and after three terms of flying grading and training they enter the academy at Culdrose or Yeovilton.

Merlin milestone

ONE of the Navy's most experienced pilots has passed another milestone in his career.

Lt Cdr Mike Pamphilon, of 824 Naval Air Squadron, is the first military pilot to achieve a total of 2,000 flying hours on the Merlin Mk1 helicopter.

Mike joined the Senior Service in 1974, and on completion of training at Dartmouth he served in HMS Tenacity and RFA Black Rover before starting flying training in 1979.

He learned the basics of flying with 705 NAS at Culdrose, then moved on to Sea Kings with 814 and 820 NAS, seeing active service in the Falklands Conflict.

After qualifying as a flying instructor on 706 NAS, Lt Cdr Pamphilon served at sea as a principal warfare officer in HMS Cardiff before returning to aviation, flying the Lynx helicopter as flight commander in HM ships Argonaut, Brilliant

and Sirius.

Mike converted to Merlin in 2000, since when he has occupied a pivotal role with the helicopter, advising the US on Merlin operations in the Iraq war, and last year leading the 30-strong Culdrose 'Balbo' aircraft formation at various UK air displays.

Angie retires

ONE of the longest-serving civilian employees at Culdrose has retired to become a full-time grandparent.

Angie Williams, who first started at the Cornish air station in 1984, recently won Sodexo Defence employee of the month awards for the air station and the South of England region.

She worked on the Merlin simulator, and hinted that she would be happy to return to lend a hand should the need arise.

Garden provides inspiration

FROM little acorns...

Service family accommodation comes in a range of different shapes and sizes, as do the gardens that come with them.

Most inhabitants do not do a great deal to the garden because a) they will not be in the house for long, and b) Defence Estates may well request it is returned to its original state when they leave.

But one resident on the Gatcombe Park patch in Portsmouth was not deterred, and has now based a business around the garden.

In December 2007 Mary Kells' husband joined the RN as a chaplain, and the two of them moved into Gatcombe Park with their young son.

The garden was just uneven ground covered in rough grass.

Mary had been working on a course in garden design at Capel Manor College in Enfield before moving to Portsmouth.

She put her newly-learned skills into practice by designing and building a show garden at the married quarters, creating a woodland area, gravel garden, adventure play area, two eating areas, a hull-shaped sandpit and herb and vegetable beds.

With the permission of the Captain of the Base, Mary now runs her own business there.

But what will happen to the garden when Mary's husband moves to a new posting?

"We have to put it all back, just as it was before," said Mary.

"Unless, of course, someone – quickly enough and loudly enough – says: 'Hey, don't do that; we like it just the way it is...'"

Torbay school link

PUPILS from a Torbay school have paid a visit to the submarine of the same name.

The youngsters from Mayfield School were shown around HMS Torbay, meeting the crew as well as CO Cdr Edward Ahlgren.

There is already a strong link between school and boat, with pupils learning about the RN and sailors raising funds for Mayfield.



● From left: CPO John Simmons with wife Anita and Evie Grace; Graeme Stevenson with Sheona and Ruairidh Alexander; and Cdr Paul Haycock with Helen and Sofie Josephine

Singapore offspring

THE UK military staff team in Singapore might be small, but it is expanding fast.

The team counts just seven UK personnel, four of them in Naval Party 1022 under the command of Cdr Paul Haycock and three from their civilian counterparts at Defence Fuel Groups (DFG).

Together they are responsible for the Navy's commitment to the Five Powers Defence Arrangement in South East Asia, as well as managing the day-to-day operation of the Sembawang Naval Wharves and the Senoko Oil Fuelling Depot.

This year has been the busiest for some time, with more than 120 ship visits and a wharf occupancy

of 70 per cent.

But things have been getting a lot busier on the domestic front as well, with three of the seven welcoming new additions to their families within a four-week spell.

CPO John Simmons and his wife Anita had a daughter, Evie Grace, Graeme Stevenson (DFG) and his wife Sheona had a son, Ruairidh Alexander, and Cdr Paul Haycock and his wife Helen had daughter, Sofie Josephine.

And despite the fact that the three dads have had to get used to clutching a baby's bottle rather than a Tiger beer or Singapore Sling when off duty, all are said to be delighted with the new members of their select group.

For exercise, for exercise

THE Augmentation and Crisis Manpower Planning (ACMP) Cell is a pan-Naval Personnel Team (NPT) department within NCHQ, which, under DNPers, coordinates the delivery of personnel for two broad areas – operational augmentees and manpower for exercises and events.

Additionally, the ACMP cell has responsibility for the RN Pre-Deployment and Mounting Centre that is based in HMS Nelson.

Furthermore, the ACMP team are occasionally called upon to coordinate manpower in support of Military Aid to Civil Authorities.

Hierarchically, ACMP sits above, and reaches into, all other NPTs and Career Managers to deliver personnel resources in support of NCHQ output.

To achieve this, ACMP spans the personnel spectrum, and through working closely with career managers, ACMP provide the essential link between operational manpower requirements and the personnel area in Navy Command.

Operational Augmentees

The ACMP cell is the initial MoD/PJHQ focus for all requests for RN/RM personnel provision.

ACMP is the primary NCHQ point of contact and the authority for the RN's contribution for augmentee support for current operations, most notably, but not exclusively, Op Herrick and Op Telic.

This requires continual HQ engagement and liaison throughout the force generation cycle to ensure the timely delivery of suitably trained augmentees.

In addition to force generation, ACMP contribute to the implementation and coordination of NCHQ Battle Casualty Replacements and In-Theatre Replacements, in addition to providing resources to support Cyprus-based decompression series.

Whilst the total RN/RM commitment to operations fluctuates as operational demands rise and fall, there is a consistent NCHQ Individual Augmentation (IA) contribution to operations that is approximately 375 operational posts – this element is dealt with by ACMP.

Operation Telic – Under a UK/Iraqi Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and via the RN Mounting Centre, the RN's Telic contribution consists of 69 ranks for ITAM-N in Umm Qasr, which delivers a training team, force protection and J4/J6 support tasks.

Additionally, the RN provides a small team of 12 to supplement the NATO staff in Baghdad, and a further 79 personnel to UKMCC Bahrain and CTF-IM (based both in Bahrain and on the Iraqi oil platforms).

Operation Herrick – Currently the UK commitment to Afghanistan amounts to 9,500 personnel, which includes approximately 120 enduring RN augmentee positions.

For Herrick 12, 40 Cdo completed pre-deployment training (PDT) for 670 personnel, including 43 RMR ranks, who deployed to Afghanistan from mid-March.

To support this, the RM Naval Personnel Team have force-generated a significant Battle Casualty Reserve (BCR)/In-Theatre Replacement (ITR) pool, many of whom conducted parallel PDT training with the unit.

ACMP retain oversight of these activities to ensure that the augmentation bill is satisfied when required. Once trained these personnel will be retained in UK at high readiness.

Looking further ahead to 2011 and Herrick 14, the RM contribution is anticipated to increase significantly to a Brigade level commitment – this again will call for significant numbers of both RN and RMR augmentees and consequently, up to approximately



**Drafty's
Corner PAGE!**

100 RMR ranks may be mobilised, in addition to an increased level of RN augmentation support.

Pre-deployment training for this will commence in earnest from September.

In addition to these familiar land-based campaigns, ACMP coordinate the augmentation for other discrete operations, including activity across the Middle East, the Balkans and the South Atlantic.

Such activity often calls for individuals with specialist skills and a desire to operate in demanding environments – if you feel that you fulfil these roles, contact your career manager, who will be keen to assist you.

Exercise and events

ACMP also coordinate and deliver NCHQ personnel support to high profile exercises and events.

RM support is continually in high demand and, like RN personnel, is prioritised in accordance with MOD guidelines.

Inevitably, exercises and events normally attract a lower priority than operations.

Consequently, there is always a tension that exists between the demand for, and supply of, the limited manpower available.

The ACMP team go to great lengths to ensure that the most suitable augmentee candidates are selected, which includes careful consideration of individual circumstances as well as the needs of the Service.

The exercise and events that take place each year are broadly predictable and often take place roughly around the same time each year.

Consequently, ACMP build an exercise and events calendar each year giving a 'heads-up' of the forthcoming attractions, which assists in planning manpower augmentation.

This exercise and event calendar is provided to the WMOs or specific unit manpower coordinators and identifies the manpower requirement as requested by the sponsor of the activity.

Demands for major Fleet and NATO exercises are a significant part of the augmentation business.

However, when compared with Operational Augmentation, it is generally delivered over a shorter term – normally two to three weeks at a time – although there are opportunities for longer spells of duty.

The notice for exercises is normally greater than for a normal assignment – determined partly by when ACMP get the directive to provide manpower for a particular activity.

Another major part of the ACMP augmentation business is to support national and Navy Board events.

The events that the RN support are diverse (as often reported in *Navy News*) and range from high-profile recurring and enduring national celebrations to local unique events.

Events differ in that they range from one day to a maximum of three weeks.

The ACMP team act as the



● Operational training at Longmoor Training Camp
Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Cave

coordinators of manpower to provide support to these.

To achieve this, ACMP are extremely reliant on (and grateful to) the WMOs and manpower providers to advertise these popular events.

The larger and most recognisable of these events are occasions such as the November Ceremonies, which take place each year in London after a period of training in Portsmouth.

There are also a number of local remembrance ceremonies that are coordinated by local establishments, in which RN/RM personnel also participate.

There are also great opportunities to take part in major state ceremonial events in London (eg the State Opening of Parliament) and formal state visits by dignitaries – again ACMP coordinate the personnel for such events.

In addition, there are opportunities for RN personnel to support some less well-known events such as the Mountbatten Festival of Music and anniversary events (Trafalgar 200 and Fly Navy 100).

Other smaller events include RN support to the cricket test matches.

Opportunities exist to act as seating stewards at Wimbledon each year, which gives an opportunity for two weeks in the summer at the tennis championships – however, for this privilege, individuals are required to give up two weeks of annual leave.

Further afield there are international exercises, including support to the Five Powers Defence Agreement exercises in the Far East.

Furthermore, ACMP coordinate opportunities for RN personnel to participate in Exercise Long Look, which is an annual exchange programme managed by the Land Warfare Centre at Warminster.

The RN is allocated 30 places, of which 20 are in Australia and 10 in New Zealand.

Long Look is open to ranks ranging from LH to WO1 and junior officers (up to Lt RN).

Posts are primarily reciprocal (by both branch and rate); however, exceptionally there are some opportunities for personnel to exchange on a non-reciprocal

basis if clearance can be sought.

The exchange process occurs during the period March-July during the year and is generated by an RNTM released post-summer leave for the exchange the following year.

The exercise commitment that ACMP satisfies each year could give you the chance to exercise your branch skills in a different sphere, in a different HQ or a RFA – with the added bonus on occasions of visiting somewhere outside the UK.

Again, if you are interested in supporting any of the exercises, you should contact your employer and/or career manager for further details and to identify yourself as a volunteer.

Other ACMP opportunities

RMART – Royal Marine

Additional Resource Table.

The RMART provides sailors with an opportunity to be involved with Royal Marine training.

Frequently, the ACMP team are asked to provide suitable sailors to act as exercise role players (range sentries, civilian population, enemy forces, hostages etc) or provide specific skill sets.

These opportunities are varied in location and type (both in UK and overseas) and you may wish to contact your WMO or manpower provider to establish what is currently on offer.

In order to deliver suitably trained personnel, all operational augmentees undergo pre-deployment training, which is coordinated by ACMP via the RN Pre-Deployment Training and Mounting Centre (RN

PDTMC).

The RN PDTMC is responsible for training Naval Service personnel as mandated by PJHQ in support of Land Operations as Individual Augmentees.

Further details regarding the course can be found at the link http://cwg-r-web-001.cwd.dii.rmil.uk/IPDT_Centre/default.html

In summary, you will have deduced that the ACMP team are involved in the coordination of a wide range of support to current operations and exercises.

Many RN/RM personnel can benefit personally and/or professionally from experiences outside their routine employment – volunteers are encouraged to participate to exploit all that the Service has to offer.

Manning balance or balancing act?

WE ARE all aware of gapping, both at sea and ashore which is caused by a variety of reasons; lack of people in the operational pinch points (OPPs) communities, new operational requirements eg manning the newly-formed P Squadron, the current major demands of augmentation and medical downgrades to name a few.

So despite the Royal Navy being in manning balance (ie the correct overall number of personnel) this does not mean we have the required number of officers or ratings available in the correct branches at the correct rate.

Most gaps within the ships, air squadrons and establishments are critical to the affected units so that unit raises a manpower OpDef.

The appropriate WMO then takes the lead to provide a solution irrespective of rank or rate.

This is done through manpower trawls and liaison with Flotilla staff and dialogue with the career managers.

If an OpDef cannot be resolved, by the WMO, it is one of the tasks for the six person RN team within DNPers ManOps to act as the arbitrator.

It should be noted that a decision to fill a gap, or not as the case may be, is based on the effect to the unit's operational capability (OC) and its position within operational manning priorities grid.

The team also undertakes manpower assurance visits to ships (MCMVs and larger) in the form of unit manpower checks (UMCs) and provides advice on manning policy and future manning requirements.

Having recently taken on the lead role for the Separated Service Planning Tool (SSPT), the team will shortly issue direction and guidance for its use and issue an updated RNTM regarding the reporting of Personnel PerReqs and OpDefs.

A plea from the ManOps team – do not hide your manning shortfalls, forewarned is definitely forearmed and an early heads-up will allow a much better chance of achieving a resolution whilst ensuring the balance between maintaining OC and acknowledging the needs of the individual.

The ManOps HQ team cover general service, aviation and the submarine service and have strong links into the Royal Marine personnel team.

Please feel free to contact ManOps direct with your concerns, once you have engaged with WMOs in trying to resolve the issue in question.

Cdr Andrew Stewart: **FLEET-DNPERs MANOPS**
SO1 93832 5716

Lt Cdr Steve Spiller: **FLEET-DNPERs MANGS**
SO2 93832 5814

Lt Cdr Paul Durham: **FLEET-DNPERs MANAV**
SO2 93832 5248

Lt Cdr Trevor Gladwell: **FLEET-DNPERs MANSM**
SO2 93832 5715

WO1: **FLEET-DNPERs MANOPS WO** 93832 5727

FLEET-DNPERs MANOPS ADMIN 93832 5828
Major Simon Orr RM: **FLEET-DNPERs NPT(RM)**

RCMRM1 93832 8691

WO Stewart Bratherton: **FLEET-DNPERs MANRM**
SO2 93832 8704

where to look

Defence Internal Briefs

28/10: Guidance on conduct during the General Election

26/10: Afghanistan: Task Force Helmand (TFH) operations updates as at March 30 2010

25/10: Delivering vital capability for the Armed Forces – Decisions on procurement of defence equipment

24/10: Electoral registration and Service personnel: Exercising your right to vote in a General Election

23/10: National Insurance credits for spouses and civil partners accompanying Service personnel on overseas assignments

22/10: Maritime defence: ongoing commitment to deliver and maintain world class equipment for Royal Navy. The Type 26 combat ship is in the Assessment Phase to consider the ship's design.

21/10: Important changes to the traditional medical certificate or 'sick note' as of April 6 2010

20/10: Delivering vital capability for the Armed Forces: Decisions on procurement of defence equipment

19/10: Tickets for Troops – The charity Tickets for Troops offers members and veterans of the Forces free tickets to major sporting and cultural events across the UK through a dedicated website.

18/10: Publication of the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2009 headline report

Defence Instructions and Notices (DINs)

DIN 2010 DIN07-041: Harassment Investigating Officers training 2010-2011 at the Joint Equality and Diversity Training Centre (Service personnel)

DIN 2010 DIN07-036: CDS' Strategic Thinking initiative – the reading list (all)

DIN 2010 DIN07-032: Volunteering for operational linguist duties (Service Personnel)

DIN 2010 DIN05-020: Defence in-house publications policy (SROs and editors of MOD in-house publications)

DIN 2010 DIN01-065: Formation of the Defence Cultural Specialist Unit and Cultural Specialist courses

DIN 2010 DIN01-064: London Pride Event – Saturday July 3 2010

DIN 2010 DIN01-052: Exemption from the use of Defence travel (all)

DIN 2010 DIN01-080: National Express coach travel discounts for 2010

DIN 2010 DIN01-076: National Insurance credits for spouses and civil partners accompanying Service personnel on overseas

Note: This is not a complete list and people need to check the RN Defence Intranet for a communications briefings.

The Internal Comms hub on the Defence Intranet is a one stop shop for all IC briefings and a link can be found under RN Information on the left-hand side of the front page of the RN Intranet.

assignments

DIN 2010 DIN01-073: Revised maternity arrangements for Servicewomen in the Reserve forces

DIN 2010 DIN01-071: Statement of fitness for work – changes to the current sick note issued by General Practitioners (GPs)

DIN 2010 DIN01-069: Travel by spouses/civil partners at public expense in connection with official visits

DIN 2010 DIN04-077: Stores clothing retail prices for RN and RM all ranks/rates and associated Cadet forces

DIN 2010 DIN05-014: Defence Instructions and Notices (DINs) – A Guide for Readers and Writers

DIN 2010 DIN10-011: The Combined Services Chess Championships (CSCC) 2010

DIN 2010 DIN08-005: FI 05/10: Claims for loss of, or damage to, personal property (regulation claims)

DIN 2010 DIN08-004: FI 04/10: Activities that are not covered by the MOD's self-insurance arrangements – non-core MOD business activities

DIN 2010 DIN08-006: FI 06/10: Non-entitled charges for messing and accommodation

DIN 2010 DIN09-003: Armed Forces Day June 26 2010

Galaxy Messages

Galaxy 2010-06: The Royal Navy's Message House. Now available on the CNS/1SL website – Coherent and clear strategic messages about the Naval Service.

RNTMs

Issue 05/10 Nos 081/10: Babcock Inter-Services Rugby Union championship 2010

Issue 05/10 Nos 082/10: Nationality – Notification of UK Border Agency advice on changes to recording of exempt UK immigration control status

Issue 05/10 Nos 085/10: Memorials

Issue 04/10 Nos 063/10: Driver training courses for RN personnel, April 2010 to March 2011

Issue 04/10 Nos 066/10: Machinery Space firefighting arrangements in high-voltage ships

Issue 04/10 Nos 067/10: White Ensign Association summer term visit programme 2010

Issue 04/10 Nos 071/10: The Worshipful Company of Engineers, RN operational engineering award, 2010

Issue 04/10 Nos 074/10: Introduction of the Royal Navy Deterrent Patrol pin

Issue 04/10 Nos 079/10: Recruiting for the Family Services branch and Royal Marines Welfare

Issue 03/10 Nos 045/10: RN Photographic competition 2010

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Spring blossoms

TO ENSURE that you are kept up to date with changes to regulations and recent developments, here is a roundup of breaking news that will be of interest to serving personnel and their families, writes Emma Prince of the Naval Families Federation.

Changes to National Insurance credits for overseas assignments

As of April 6 Service spouses and civil partners are able to claim National Insurance credits, in order to maintain their National Insurance record for time spent accompanying their spouse or civil partner on an overseas assignment.

Spouses and civil partners accompanying personnel on overseas assignments may be unable to work and will therefore not pay UK National Insurance contributions.

This is likely to create a gap in their National Insurance record, which could jeopardise entitlement to the basic state pension and contribution based Social Security benefits such as Jobseeker's Allowance, and Employment and Support Allowance.

National Insurance credits will not, on their own, entitle a person to benefits, but they will maintain the position that the individual held on departure from the UK.

All spouses and civil partners are encouraged to apply for these credits at the end of an overseas assignment.

Nationality or citizenship does not affect entitlement but applicants must have a UK National Insurance Number.

The Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) has agreed a fast-track process for assessing the eligibility to, and issue of, a National Insurance number to Service spouses or civil partners without a UK National Insurance number applying for National Insurance credits.

National Insurance Credit applications must be validated against information held on JPA by your Unit Personnel Office before submission to HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC).

For further information on this topic, and details of the application process, please visit the DirectGov website (www.direct.gov.uk/en/Pensionsandretirementplanning/StatePension/DG_183760).

This initiative falls in line with the pledge of *The Nation's Commitment: Cross Government Support to our Armed Forces, their Families and Veterans* – also known as the Service Personnel Command Paper.

This document was published in July 2008 and seeks to ensure that our Armed Forces community are not disadvantaged as citizens by the unique demands imposed by Service life.

Reduced response times for maintenance issues

Since April, Modern Housing Solutions (MHS) have reduced its routine response time from 20 days to 15 days.

This reduction aims to provide a better service to customers and has been brought about through a streamlined administrative process.

If you have any contributions about the level of service you have received please get in touch with the NFF.

Moving house? Forward your mail

A reminder that Defence Estates do not and cannot forward any personal mail delivered to your old address.

Whether you are moving from Service Families Accommodation or a private address, it is vital to update your contact details so that you do not miss out on important post.

Royal Mail offers a redirection service on their website (www.royalmail.com) although a cost is attached.



● Childcare vouchers might be available to help Naval families – here two Marines from 42 Commando, based at Bickleigh Camp, joined youngsters last summer at the new Little Tugs Radford creche at Plymstock where many of the family of the children are serving military personnel



Alternatively you should approach all important contacts, such as banks and doctors etc to inform them of your move.

If you are receiving mail addressed to your home, but for the attention of someone else, please write 'not at this address' on the envelope and put in a post box.

Save money with the childcare voucher scheme

Childcare vouchers are designed to help working parents pay for childcare.

You can convert part of your salary into vouchers – up to £243 per month – saving the tax and National Insurance you would normally pay on that amount.

The amount you save depends on your individual circumstances, including the value of the vouchers you choose to take, your tax rate and your National Insurance contributions.

You could save over £1,000 on your childcare costs each year.

There are now over 4,400 Service personnel benefiting from this scheme and between them they save around £330,000 a month.

You can join the scheme if:

- You are a parent or legal guardian responsible for and paying towards the upkeep of a child under the age of 16 who is attending any form of approved or registered childcare.

- Your salary remains above the national minimum wage and the lower earnings limit after you have taken childcare vouchers.

Most childcare providers are happy to accept childcare vouchers as long as you adhere to their own payment terms.

Vouchers are valid for 18 months (renewable if necessary) and can be spent whenever you want, so it doesn't matter if your childcare costs vary – you can

still take vouchers each month and keep them for when you need them.

Please note that vouchers cannot be used for school fees.

The scheme offers real benefits but there are some circumstances that need to be considered.

HMRC govern all childcare voucher schemes and offer a Childcare Indicator for you to assess your personal family circumstances prior to applying for the vouchers.

Please visit www.hmrc.gov.uk/calcs/ccin.htm to access this information.

Sodexo run the Armed Forces Childcare Voucher Scheme; please see their website (www.modchildcare.co.uk) for further information for parents and carers, full eligibility details and joining instructions.

Alternatively you can telephone their Customer Services team on free phone 0800 066 5075.

For those already aware of the voucher scheme it is worth noting that some changes have been implemented to make it even easier to cut the cost of your childcare; for example you may now join and leave the scheme at any time as long as you remain in for at least one month at a time.

Visit the website for more information on these changes.

Are you using the scheme successfully? If so we would like to hear from you.

We don't believe enough people are aware of the difference this scheme can make and would like to do an item on a family for whom the scheme has worked.

Latest Personnel support brief

The Spring 2010 brief has now been released. Visit the NFF website (www.nff.org.uk) to read the full document.

There is an abundance of useful information for personnel and their families which is updated hour by hour, including useful summaries on the Pay Award 2010, the Armed Forces Home Ownership Scheme and the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme.

Affordable Homes

There are numerous housing schemes available to help Service personnel to buy their own homes.

A helpful leaflet has been put together by the Service Personnel Command Paper team, which outlines the schemes available and

the additional measures that have been put in place to benefit Service personnel and their families.

As Armed Forces personnel you have 'priority status' to access the schemes whilst you are serving, and for a further 12 months after you leave.

The leaflet can be viewed on the NFF website.

Changes to child maintenance payments

As of April 12 child maintenance is to be completely disregarded for all parents with care receiving income-related benefits.

This means that those people entitled to benefits and child maintenance can for the first time receive all of their maintenance without it affecting their benefit payments.

Previously, parents with care in receipt of benefit have been allowed to keep the first £20 of child maintenance per week, 'the disregard', before their benefits are reduced.

Since April 12 a full child maintenance disregard is applied, which means they can keep all the maintenance which is paid without it affecting their benefits.

Visit the CSA website (www.csa.gov.uk) for full details on these changes.

National Express offer half-price coach travel for Service personnel

The coach firm National Express is offering half-price fares for all serving personnel.

The scheme is backed by the MOD and allows Reserve Forces and cadets to benefit from the discount.

Service personnel can register for the discount through the National Express website (www.nationalexpress.com).

There is no requirement to purchase a card; simply show your Military ID to validate the booking.

National Express operates services to more than 1,000 destinations nationwide, including Portsmouth and Plymouth.

Contact the NFF

If you have any comments on the issues discussed in this article, or would like to raise a matter of concern, please e-mail the NFF on admin@nff.org.uk or telephone 023 9265 4374.

Postal correspondence can be sent to: Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

Bolstering Britannia

BRITANNIA Royal Naval College is the alma mater of all serving RN officers.

The Britannia Association (BA), which was formed nearly ten years ago, is the alumni association for the college.

In April, the BA launched its new website (*see below*) which provides comprehensive information about the association and events open to its members.

Since its foundation the

It's your 2-6

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the Royal Navy?

To feature in the Navy News 2-6 pages contact Lt Cdr Heather Lane or WO1 Baz Cooke (Fleet Media Ops) on 93832 8809 or 93832 8821, email FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC SO2 or FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC WO.

membership has grown to 5,000 serving and retired officers.

The BA helps members to stay in touch with the Naval Service, fosters *esprit de corps* and provides funding for a large range of projects at BRNC.

Over the last ten years the BA has donated more than £200,000 towards facilities and activities at the college which fall outside Crown responsibility.

The BA has organised several social events around the UK over the next year, starting in the Bristol area on Thursday June 10.

The new website will carry up-to-date information on both events which are open to both current and prospective members of the Association.

If you want to find out more about the Britannia Association, visit the new website online at www.britanniaassociation.org.uk.



Forge he's a jolly good fellow

THE remarkable story of one of the most extraordinary characters to serve in the Corps comes under the spotlight this summer at the Royal Marines Museum.

Maj Guy 'Griff' Griffiths was a Royal Marine pilot who bombed U-boats, forged documents for 'The Great Escape' (the real thing, not the film...), provided information to British Intelligence, edited the Corps journal *Globe and Laurel* and produced breathtaking artwork as well as endearing comical illustrations (such as the self portrait above).

Until October, the Eastney museum is staging an exhibition of his artwork, plus film footage from his life as a PoW and interactive displays to tell his colourful story.

■ We'll have a feature on Griff and his work next month.

Image © Trustees of the Royal Marines Museum



Duke returns to Dartmouth

MORE than 70 years after he first attended – and had a fateful encounter with his future wife – the Duke of Edinburgh returned to his *alma mater* for the highlight of his year.

Lord High Admiral's Divisions at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth are regarded as the most important of the passing out parades held at the spiritual home of the Senior Service's officer corps.

As such the guest of honour is either the Lord High Admiral – the Queen – or a senior figure deputising for her, in the case of 2010's divisions her 88-year-old consort.

Seven decades ago, the then Prince Philip was the best cadet in his entry at Dartmouth. In 2010, he presented the Queen's Sword to the latest cadet to impress college staff most both in the naval and academic fields: S/Lt Assaad El-Turk of the Lebanese Navy (he also received the Admiralty Binoculars for exceptional performance by an international officer during training).

S/Lt El-Turk was one of more than 150 young officers who passed out following seven intensive months of training.

"Technology has taken huge strides in recent years," the Duke told the junior officers. "But people are still people and the sea is still very much the sea."

"No doubt you know all you need to know about technology. You will only know about people and the sea from bitter experience. I wish you all successful fulfilling careers and, above all, I hope you all thoroughly enjoy yourselves."

After the parade was completed and the passing out officers had made the traditional slow march up the steps through BRNC's main door, there was an official reception on the quarterdeck and lunch in the Senior Gun Room.

Once everyone was suitably satiated, college staff and cadets formed up to cheer ship for Prince Philip's departure.

Three ranks deep, they followed the orders of the ceremonial training officer, WO Scott Stephenson, raised their caps in salute and cheered.



Snow de Cologne

IT'S not just Blighty which had a ferocious winter – as 43 members of the Royal Navy Volunteer Band service found making their annual pilgrimage to Cologne.

Under the musical direction of Band C/Sgt Johnny Morrish, band instructor at HMS Heron, performers from all nine volunteer bands, plus volunteer band instructors from HM Ships Neptune, Nelson, Collingwood and Illustrious made for the Rhine.

The first trick was to get across the Channel – the heavy snow disrupted crossings; the precipitation stayed with the musicians for the rest of the week in Germany.

Although the highlight of the trip is the *Rosenmontag* (Rose Monday) carnival – like *Mardi Gras* in New Orleans or Rio, except on a Monday... and in Germany... in the cold – there were performances up and down the Rhine.

The first gig on Friday morning was at Deutsche Welle radio in Bonn where the debut performance of Dance Fever went down very well with a medley of 70s tunes featuring a lilting saxophone solo of *Reunited* played by Sarah Watson from HMS Seahawk.

A little free time in Cologne followed and several members visited the imposing cathedral. The twin-towered cathedral which dominates the city skyline forms the centre point of celebrations of the carnival period, which runs from November until February each year.

That evening four 'dinner gigs' followed with a set that included a rocked-up version of Bach's *Tocatta in D Minor* and *Lord of the Dance* with a beautiful piccolo solo played effortlessly by Anne Wyatt from HMS Drake band.

The weekend was to prove exceptionally busy: a gig on a boat on the Rhine early on Saturday afternoon before five more evening engagements.

Sunday saw performances all day long following an early start at a multi-lingual church service in the Cologne's Minoritenkirche, ending with a concert attended by nearly 1,000 people in the suburb of Mülheim am Rhein on the right bank of Germany's great artery.

There was another early start on Monday for the big parade. Almost two million people lined the streets of Cologne to see a procession comprising 10,000 people, in excess of 300 bands and hundreds of floats.

The cheers and singing that could be heard as the band slow marched, at the head of the parade, made it evident how important the carnival is to the people here.

The burning of the Nubel (an effigy) at midnight signifies that the carnival is well and truly over. Traditionally it's a solemn affair, typically accompanied by the funeral march, but this year it was more upbeat.

Just before heading back on the long coach journey home, the volunteers performed a particularly slippery black-ice rendition of the *Hokey Cokey*.

Congratulations must go to WO1 Tim Adlington from HMS Heron Band who won this year's Cologne Trophy for sterling services on the tuba and bass drum.

Back in the warm(er) climes of Faslane, the



● The RN Volunteer Band marches through Kolpingplatz on the edge of Cologne's old town
Pictures: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow, HMS Illustrious

musicians of HMS Neptune Volunteer Band staged a two-hour extravaganza.

The two-hour performance in the Neptune Building Supermess' Conference Suite was the first official function staged at the venue.

The band covered a variety of styles on the night, from wind band, marches and big band numbers, to the popular tunes of ABBA, Robbie Williams and even Van Halen.

"It was a great opportunity for the band to demonstrate their talents and also showcase the four pieces of music I have picked for this year's annual Volunteer Band Festival in Portsmouth," said Band C/Sgt Mark Flintoft who led the performance.

"What is unique to Neptune is that we have a fantastic big band – no other RN volunteer band has one."

■ THERE are two evenings of the very finest musical entertainment this summer on Whale Island in Portsmouth.

The grounds of HMS Excellent will be opened to the public on Friday June 25 and Saturday June 26 for the 'South Coast Proms' performed by the Band of HM Royal Marines.

Around 100 musicians from the massed Royal Marines band will perform a mix of classical and contemporary music before closing proceedings each evening with the RN's traditional sunset ceremony. A fireworks display will bring the curtain down on both nights' entertainment.

Before the main performances, the RM dance band and RN pipers, will provide the warm-up, while marines jazz musicians will provide the music as guests depart.

The proms, hosted by BBC South Today presenter Sally Taylor, are the finale of the annual Portsmouth Festivities.

A free park and ride service will operate between Lakeside at North Harbour – there is no car parking for the public on Whale Island, except Blue Badge holders – and a free shuttle bus will run to and from Portsmouth Harbour station.

Tickets are priced £16 for adults, £11 for children and £50 for a family ticket with proceeds going to Service charities.

Details at www.southcoastproms.com while tickets are available from Portsmouth Guildhall box office on 02392 824355.

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Absolutely cabulous

RED, White and Blue is the new black.

Or camouflage if you prefer the Royal Marines. Rolling around the streets of the nation's capital for the next 12 months are two specially-liveried black cabs.

One features the White Ensign and Royal Navy logo, the other has two commandos stalking their foe... and the Royal Navy logo.

And just in case the livery doesn't immerse you in the world of the Senior Service, there's more about the role of the modern RN/RM inside.

So the big question: why?

Well, for a start they're not static - unlike a billboard poster at one of London's major railway stations.

Indeed, each of these cabs - unveiled, fittingly in the shadow of Admiralty Arch - will be seen 75 million times and carry 12,000 passengers apiece before they're re-sprayed.

The RN isn't alone in using London's famous taxis as an advertising tool: Gordon Ramsay, British Airways, the Football Association, supermarket chain Waitrose and computer firm Dell have all paid for special taxis.

"The drivers were really impressed and rated the design as one of the best they'd seen - with over 100 years' experience between them, that was quite an endorsement," said Cdr Steve Pearson of the RN's PR team in Whitehall.

"Advertising is a challenge, trying to place your message for maximum effect. Using the taxi where the passenger is arguably a captive is a proven success.

"Next time you're in London, try hailing a cab with an 'ahoy there!' It may be bit cheesy, but will certainly catch the attention."

You can see more pictures of the RN-liveried cabs on the capital's streets at taxiadvertisinguk.blogspot.com

Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill DPR(N)



NOTICEBOARD

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...



● Submarine HMS Otus pictured in 1970

May 1970

CROWDS of Londoners queued at Surrey Docks to visit five submarines on a visit to the capital. The five - Olympus, Otus, Andrew, Acheron and the Australian boat HMAS Onslow - were in London for six days. More than 24,000 visitors toured the boats and at one stage the queues were so long that the gates to Surrey Docks had to be shut early.

Sea Cadets were given special tours of the boats and the Commander of the First Submarine Squadron paid visits to the Governor of the Tower of London and the Lord Mayor.

As a change from welcoming male reporters and defence correspondents from newspapers, it was decided that women journalists too should have the opportunity to visit the conventionally-powered submarines.

May 1980

HMS Peterel nearly broke the Channel Islands' fishing record when MEM1 Stephen Rendell hooked a 5ft 7in conger eel during a visit to Guernsey.

HMS Peterel, a navigational training ship at the Britannia Royal Naval College, was storm-bound in St Peter Port when MEM Rendell made the catch that almost broke the record for conger.

He landed the 30lb eel after a 20-minute battle in darkness from the jetty where the ships were berthed. It was just 8lbs short of the record and won him a fishing reel from the *Angling Times*.

As for the conger, it ended up on a fishmonger's slab, priced at 50p/lb.

May 1990

DEBATE was still raging in the letters pages of Navy News about the policy of sending Wrens to sea. A story on the back page entitled 'The gentle touch of the Dutch' reassured sceptics that HMS Cornwall had shown the way ahead when a woman naval officer stood watch on the bridge and also conned the ship during a replenishment-at-sea operation.

Lt Maja Trommelen, one of two women officers of the watch in the Dutch ship HNLMS Callenburgh, was seconded to Cornwall when the ship was part of STANAVFORLANT. During her time onboard she took part in the close manoeuvring for the RAS.

The ship reported: "For many on board the idea of Wrens at sea is viewed even more favourably because of this successful trial."

May 2000

HMS Invincible was in the vanguard of home comforts as she opened her £150,000 new walk-round canteen, billed by the NAAFI as 'the biggest development in convenience service for sailors since the Second World War.'

The new canteen offered vending machines serving hot and cold food, including soup and pot noodles, chilled drinks and ice-cream.

A Food to Go counter served fresh hot dogs and popcorn and there was a counter and barstool area where sailors could relax and pit their wits against each other on an array of touch-screen video quiz games.

There was also an electronic bulletin board, keeping them up-to-date with the latest news and information.

Reunions

HMS Raleigh: Having joined HMS Raleigh on November 1, 1960, this is the 50th anniversary of our joining. Is anyone else who joined at that time interested in some sort of gathering? I am in touch with 'Cowboy' Hunt and also knew Bob Bonas and Mike Baggot. There are others too. If you remember us and would like a reunion contact me, Peter Louch, at pandmlouch@btinternet.com or tel: 01604 831350.

MAY 2010

HMS Illustrious Association, Southern Branch Reunion takes place from May 14 to 17 at the Bay View Court Hotel in Bournemouth. Contact Mrs Frances Garton at frances346@btinternet.com or tel: 01392 879582.

HMS Hermione Association: Annual reunion from May 21 to 23 at the Cathedral Lodge Hotel, Litchfield. All commissions welcome. More details from the Secretary on 01925 824504 or see the website at www.hmshermione.com.

HMS Coventry (Type 42 Destroyer): There will be a reunion in Portsmouth at the Maritime Club for all the ship's company of the Type 42 destroyer HMS Coventry from May 21 to 23. The reunion will follow the format of previous years - friendly informal gatherings with family and friends welcome over the weekend. Sunday at 1100 at the Falklands Memorial in Old Portsmouth we lay a wreath and hold a two-minute silence for our shipmates still on patrol. If you served in the ship, and would like to attend, please do come and join us. For more information, please contact Jim 'Rocky' Hudson at jimhudson@sky.com or tel: 0191 5126420.

JUNE 2010

HMS Bronington: Calling all ex crew members of HMS Bronington in 1976. We are hoping to have a reunion of the crew members serving on board at the time of Prince Charles, in the summer of 2010, this is yet to have a proper date or venue at the moment. However is likely to be either London or Gloucester. Anyone interested that would like to get in touch with me Mike Sinker (ex Leading Cook) at either m.sinker@hotmail.co.uk or telephone me on 01395 516997.

HMS Ships Glorious, Ardent & Acasta: A memorial service to commemorate the 70th anniversary of their sinking will be held on June 6 at St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, Devonport, Plymouth. All former crew, aircrew, relatives and friends are warmly invited to attend. Anyone wishing to attend must inform George Lowdon at george.databug@btinternet.com or tel: 0191 262 7878 to ensure security clearance. Further details from Vincent Marcroft at clarionst@yahoo.co.uk or tel: 0161 654 7638.

HMS Kale 1943-46: The 11th reunion will take place at South Dene Hotel, Bridlington, on June 22-24. Enquiries to: E Drummond, 5 Green Way, Scarcroft, Leeds LS14 3BJ, tel: 0113 289 2222.

JULY 2010

HMS Londonderry 1981-84 Stokehold Association: The Annual reunion will be held on July 3 in Emsworth. Details from Peter Hill on 07971 498607 or Peter Ritchie on 01647 24271.

AUGUST 2010

Royal Naval Photographer's Association: 90th anniversary reunion party and AGM is to be held in Bournemouth from August 27 to 29 (30). After the last very successful weekend reunion package a few years ago, very favourable rates have been negotiated at the impressive three-star Wessex Hotel on Bournemouth's West Cliff. The itinerary to celebrate 90 years since the Branch was formed, includes Meet and Greet after dinner on Friday evening, Saturday AGM late morning followed by 'up spirits' and drinks reception and gala dinner in the evening with live entertainment. All details of prices can be found on the RNPA website at <http://www.rnpa.info> or in the spring 2010 newsletter, which most would have just received. Please send your cheque for £25 per person deposit, made out to the RNPA, asap to: Ray Whitehouse, RNPA Social Secretary, Chilton Cottage, Ham Manor Way, Angmering, West Sussex, BN16 4JQ, tel: 01903 770906 or email: ray@chilton.com. There will be a five per cent discount to all fully paid up members. For membership and other enquiries please contact Danny

du Feu at danny@ddf-photography.co.uk or tel: mob: 07966 258103 or 0116 2898725.

SEPTEMBER 2010

HMS Ocean Association: 23rd annual reunion is to be held at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry from September 24 to 27. Enquiries to W Entwistle, Chairman at bineldrak@talktalk.net or tel: 01282 433910.

OCTOBER 2010

HMS Cardigan Bay Association: Annual reunion will be held at the Coventry Hill Hotel, Coventry from October 1 to 4. Contact Tony Palmer on 01889 575172.

HMS Vanguard (Battleship) Reunion takes place at the White House Hotel, Worcester from October 1 to 3. Please do your best to attend. Twin bedded room with dinner b&b is £110 per night. More details from D R Scrivener on 01253 873807.

HMS Daring, first commission 1952-54: Reunion to be held at Nidd Hall, Harrogate from October 1 to 4. Details from Owen Simpson at owen553@btinternet.com or tel: 01453 860564.

RNH Stonehouse Reunion takes place on October 1 and 2 at the Holiday Inn, Plymouth. Contact Sinbad Edwards at badsin17@edwar@aol.com or tel: 01752 790296.

HMS St Brides Bay 1944-61: Reunion October 8 and 9 at the Best Western Leyland Hotel, Preston, Lancs. £45pppn for BBEM. This is the 50th anniversary of the last commission. All commissions, friends and families are welcome. For details contact Jeff and Margaret Vardy, 13 Meadow Grove, Alfreton, Derbyshire, DE55 5TW or tel: 01773 875950.

HMS Llandaff Reunion takes place in Eastbourne from October 8 to 11. All ex-Llandaffs are welcome. Please contact 'Slinger' Wood at kevin.wood@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 07961 124459 or visit the website at <http://www.hmsllandaff.co.uk>

The Ton Class Association (coastal minesweepers) hold their 2010 annual reunion and AGM at the Torak Hotel, Torquay from October 8 to 11. Want to attend? Contact our reunions secretary: Peter Harrison, Foxhollow, Shevick, Torpoint, PL11 3EL, tel: (01503) 230216 or email: peterharrison@eclipse.co.uk Not a member? Contact our membership secretary: Dennis Cook, 5 Manvers Street, Worksop, Notts, S80 1SD, tel: (01909) 481745 or email: denniscook@fsmail.net. Welcome aboard.

Catering Service Reunion Dinner (formerly Caterers Reunion Dinner & Pembroke 84 Club) taking place on October 8 at the WO & SR Mess, HMS Collingwood. Open to all retired and serving catering officers and warrant officers and senior rating caterers, cooks and stewards. Applications to attend should be sent to WO1 Paul Dungey at pauldungey876@mood.uk or tel: 023 9262 5234 or write to Third Sector, Deputy Command Secretary, Mail Point 1-3, Leach Building, Whale Island, Portsmouth, PO2 8BY.

HMS St Vincent Association: The 14th AGM will be held on October 9 at St Vincent College, Gosport, starting at 1100. Followed by a fish and chip lunch. Members will be able to visit the St Vincent Museum before and after the AGM. For membership enquiries, contact Joe Cornish at joecornish@gmail.com.

com or tel: 01408 414152 or visit our website at www.hmsstvincentsoc.org.

Type 21 Club Reunion: The first official Type 21 Club reunion will take place in Devonport from October 8 to 10. Meet on October 8 at 1900 in St Levan's Inn, Inaugural T21 Association meeting at 1100 on October 9 with main reunion starting at 1930 at the Royal Fleet Club. The weekend is open to anyone who served on a Type 21 at anytime in their illustrious careers. Contact Mark Brocklehurst at mark@sharplesgroup.com or see the website at <http://type21club.ning.com> or tel: weekdays on 01925 839592.

HMS Ajax and RPVA: Annual reunion will be held at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent from October 13 to 14. Members who served in the Leander frigate will be most welcome to meet up with old shipmates. For further details please contact Malcolm Collis, 11 Edmonds Close, Buckingham, Bucks, MK18 1YR or email Malcolm.collis@googlemail.com or tel: 07917 888039.

HMS Dainty Association Reunion 2010: Will be held from October 15 to 17 at the Menzies Carlton Hotel, Bournemouth. Contact Chris Bolton at chrsbol@aol.com with further details on the website: <http://www.hmsdainty.co.uk/> or tel: 0161 773 1304.

NOVEMBER 2010

HMS Mohawk Association: Annual reunion will be held at the Weston Hotel, Scarborough from November 5 to 8. For further details please contact: Neville Saunders at neville Saunders@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 01582 619379.

SEPTEMBER 2011

847 NAS (1969-71) Reunion: This will take place at the Bosworth Hall Hotel, Market Bosworth from September 23 to 25, 2011. For more details contact Cliff Jones at cliff.jones48@googlemail.com or tel: 01772 723944.

Competition

Winners receive a copy of *Air Forces Monthly*. The engineering firm that produces the Harrier's Pegasus engine is: Rolls-Royce.

Dave Kirby, Gosport, Hampshire; J Dewhurst, Blackpool; Kyle Bateson, Kirkby Lonsdale, Camforth; R Weatherall, Huish Episcopi, Nr Langport, Somerset and Lt Cdr David Scopes, NCHQ.

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NOTICEBOARD

Trophy lives



TROPHY P21504 is a replica of the figurehead from the fifth HMS Centurion, an 80-gun third rate ship built in 1844, converted to screw propulsion in 1855 and finally scrapped in 1870.

The figurehead was sculpted by Mrs M Green of Gosport, mounted on a piece of oak from HMS Victory and presented to HMS Centurion in 1979.

On May 3 1747 the third HMS Centurion had been in Vice Admiral George Anson's force of 17 ships which defeated a French convoy of seven warships and 30 merchant vessels at the First Battle of Finisterre, during the War of the Austrian Succession.

The French, under the command of Commodore La Jonquiere, needed to keep shipping lanes open in order to maintain her overseas empire.

Anson in HMS Prince George and Rear Admiral Sir Peter Warren in HMS Devonshire sailed from Plymouth on April 9 to intercept French shipping.

When the large French convoy was sighted Anson made the signal to form line of battle; Warren suspected the enemy was manoeuvring to favour the escape of the convoy, bore down on them and communicated his opinion to Anson - who then sent a signal ordering a general chase.

The 50-gun Centurion, under a press of sail, was the first to come up with the rearmost French ship, which she attacked heavily and two other ships dropped astern to her support. With three more British ships coming up, including the Devonshire, the action became general.

Although the French were inferior in numbers they fought for five hours but, by seven o'clock that evening, had lost six warships and had seven merchantmen captured.

The battle had cost them 700 men killed and wounded while the British suffered 520 casualties; after the battle over £300,000 was found on board the captured ships, which were eventually put back into use by the British.

Following his victory, Anson was raised to the peerage.

The French subsequently assembled another larger convoy which set sail in October 1747; Hawke's defeat of this fleet in the Second Battle of Cape Finisterre put an end to French naval operations for the rest of the war.

Sports lottery

March 20: £5,000 - CISSM D A Shaw; £1,500 - AB D A Appleby; £500 - WO1 S R Lewis.
March 27: £5,000 - Mne D J Kent; £1,500 - LH L D Monnington; £500 - Lt B J Swire.
April 3: VW Polo - ET P W Smith; £1,500 - Logs L W Tapsell; £500 - Mne D J Boere.
April 10: £5,000 - LPT R M H Cronin; £1,500 - AB O R Brookes; £500 - LLogs K J Parish.

Diary dates

JUNE
Sultan Show: Saturday and Sunday June 19-20: www.sultan.org.uk
Armed Forces Day: Saturday June 26: www.armedforcesday.org.uk

JULY
Yeovilton Air Day: Saturday July 10: www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/establishments/naval-bases-and-air-stations/rnas-yeovilton/rnas-yeovilton-air-day-2009
Culdrose Air Day: Wednesday July 28: www.royalnavy.mod.uk/operations-and-support/establishments/naval-bases-and-air-stations/rnas-culdrose/rnas-culdrose-air-day-2009

Portsmouth Navy Days: Friday and Saturday July 30-31: www.navydaysuk.co.uk

AUGUST
Portsmouth Navy Days: Sunday August 1: www.navydaysuk.co.uk

Talking Navy News

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.

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, navysearhpgcr@tnt.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

Ask Jack

HMS Undaunted: Seeking information as to the whereabouts of the ship's bell of HMS Undaunted. I served in Undaunted in 1974 when three of my children were christened by the Padre, Roger Devonshire. When the ship was scrapped I put in a bid for the bell but was unsuccessful. If it can be found and is available for sale, I would be very interested. Contact Dan Wood at den.wood@talktalk.net or tel: 01524 736908.

RN Boxers: Seeking information regarding my father, Roy Allan 'Jimmy' James and his brother, Leslie Gordon James. Roy served in HMS Bulwark as a steward and was also involved with the Suez crisis in 1956. Leslie, an AB, also served in the indomitable as well as other ships. Both brothers boxed for the Royal Navy and if anyone has any information regarding the boxing, we would like to hear from you. For those with internet access there are some pictures at <http://www.navynews.co.uk/letters/335-royal-navy-boxing.aspx> Contact Allan James on 0121 476 0621.

Assignments

Cdre Stephen J Chick to become Commodore Devonport Flotilla on July 1.
Cdre Steven R Dearden to become Naval Base Commander Devonport on August 31.
Cdr Paul Russell to HMS Edinburgh as CO on May 4.
Cdr Paul A Stroude to HMS Argyl as CO on May 25.

Cdre Thomas A Cunningham promoted Rear Admiral on March 29 and appointed Chief of Staff (Aviation) on April 20.

Cdre Nicholas R Lambert to be promoted Rear Admiral and to be National Hydrographer and Deputy Chief Executive (Hydrography) on August 31.

Capt Phillip J A Buckley to 1st Submarine Squadron as Captain Faslane Flotilla on June 15.

Deaths

Lt Cdr Des Evans. Served 1969-2003 in HMS Hermes, Aurora, Southampton, RFA Argus, Invincible, Ocean also RNAS Lossiemouth, Cudrose, Portland and Yeovilton, March 22. Aged 53.

Maurice Matthews, AB. Served in Cheviot (1952) and a member of the association, March 16.

Clifford McAree, L/Sea. Served in Cheviot 1950 and a member of the association, February 18.

Peter Daines-Sadler, Ldg/SM. Served 1940-46 in Verulam, 26th Destroyer Flotilla, Russian Convoys, D-Day and Eastern Fleet, March 5. Aged 85.

Fred Smith, AB. HMS Sparrow Association wreath-layer for Wednesday Armistice Day, February 26. Aged 80.

Lt Cdr Peter Plumb. Served 1960-94 at St Vincent then served in Roebuck, Orion and Diana, on front drag ropes at Sir Winston Churchill's funeral, London, BRNC, Glamorgan, Jupiter, Ariadne, HMS Torrens (1978-80), Cambridge and Liverpool. Part of Guard of Honour at the wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Diana. Staff of FOST Portland, Staff Officer Eaglet RNR Unit and Deputy Area Officer North West Area Sea Cadets, March 31. Aged 65.

Alan Hill. Served in Welcome. Royal Naval Engineering Association, March 19. Aged 78.

Barry Stone, L/Sea. Served in Diana, Dunkirk and Implacable. Royal Naval Engineering Association, April 6. Aged 78.

Lt Harry Jones. Served in Aurora as a Boy in 1941 operating in the Mediterranean as part of Force K from Malta. Founder of HMS Aurora Association, April 11. Aged 88.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Capt W Burn. Served for 31 years in HMS Victorious, Trespasser, Affray, Penn, Tantalus, Ambush, Montclare and Adamant. Retired 1975. President of Windsor RNA, March 10. Aged 87.

Lt Donald Hodgson. Served 1943-46. At D-Day landings and in command of LCT(A) during World War 2. Windsor branch, March 8. Aged 84.

Anne Coull Stevenson, WRNS (W). Served 1943-47 at Dundee, Helensburgh and Chatham, West Lothian RNA, February 20. Aged 84.

Margaret Mills, WRNS. Served for three years mostly at Mercury. Founder member of Sudbury, Halstead and Hedingham branch, March 13. Aged 81.

Wally George Norman. Served in Berwick for D-Day landings. Member of West Ham branch for 40 years. December 21. Aged 86.

Brian J Parker, CY (POSY in RAN). Served 1961-73 at Ganges, Mercury, Wizard, London, Centurion, St Angelo and Undaunted. Served in the RAN 1973-79 in Cerberus, Stalwart, Stuart and Harman. Canberra RNA and its chairman for four years; also HMS Ganges Association, March 26. Aged 63.

Ken Caley, PO Gunnery branch. Served 1938-53 joining as a boy sailor at Ganges where he later became an instructor; also one of the first to be trained on Radar. Served in Cornwall (China Station), Liverpool (Russian and Malta Convoys), Melbreak (D-Day) and Belfast (Korea). Rushden RNA, March 24. Aged 88.

Eric Stretton. Served in Maidstone, Montclare and Officer's Steward Fort Blockhouse, Dolphin. Wigston & District branch for 30 years, 12 years on the branch committee, March 24.

Brian Holden, CERA. Served in Leander, Cambrian, Rapid, Blake, Ulster, Ark Royal, Endurance, Royal Marines Poole and Protector. Soham & District RNA and SAMAS2, February 13. Aged 68.

John Matthew 'Jackie' Turpin. Seaman. Served 1943-45 at Collingwood, Whale Island and in Myngs, Russian Convoys and Singapore. Known as one of the boxing Turpin brothers and author of the book *Battling Jack*. Leamington RNA and Russian Conoy Club, April 8. Aged 84.

Roy Peace, AB. Served in Belfast and a member of HMS Belfast Association also Wetherby RNA, Aged 84.

Stanley Clark, RM Diver. Served in Burma, North Africa, Egypt and Normandy landings. Lydd and Dungeness RNA, March 22. Aged 87.

Barry Stone, LME. Served in Protector, Zephyr, Flying Fox, Implacable, Diana, Alania and Dunkirk. Diana Association, Stokers Association and South Gloucestershire RNA, April 6. Aged 78.

Henry 'Harry' Butler, AB. Served 1941-46 joining Glendower (former Butlin's holiday camp) and served with DEMS in five merchant and troop ships; present at D-Day, Harworth branch, March. Aged 86.

LST & LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION
V R Lock. Served on board LST 366, February 16.

Sydney Charles Hook DSM. Enlisted 1939 and spent six years in the service taking part in Dunkirk evacuations and bomb disposal. In 1942 he sailed to America on the Queen Mary to await the building of LST 403 in Baltimore shipyard. Upon his return he took part in the landings in North Africa, Sicily, Salerno and Anzio where he was awarded the DSM for bravery. A founder member of the LST and Landing Craft Association, March 3. Aged 89.

Alan Mellor. Served on board LST 238, March 14.

J A Tate. Served on board LCH 101, LSI(L) Glenroy, Naval Party 2422 and Thane, March 21.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION
Percy Kent, AB. Served in Serene.

Richard Charlton, AB. Served in Rattlesnake, January 29.

Sub Lt Stanley Nunn. Served in Hound and Orestes, March 14. Aged 92.

Allen Hill, SM. Served in Welcome, March 25. Aged 78.

Bob Scott, PO. Served in Mutine and Espiegle, March 27. Aged 86.

Len Taylor, L/Sea. Served in Ready, April 2. Aged 86.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION
Thomas Merryweather, LSA(Air). Served 1945-48 at Condor, Fieldfare, Fulmar, Daedalus and Hornbill. Essex branch, February 12.

Michael Armitage, AM(E1). Served 1945-47 at Gosling, RAF Hednesford, Daedalus and Sanderling, Yorkshire branch, February 27.

Fred Burgess, LAM(A). Served 1943-46 in Implacable with 801 Naval Air Squadron. Hitchin branch, February 20.

Frank Warrington, CAF(A). Served 1939-51 at Vulture, Sparrowhawk, Raven, Daedalus, Landrail, Activity, Blackcap, Battler, Gannett, Merlin, Argus, Chaser, Kestrel, Waxwing and Saker, Watford branch, January 22.

William Woodall, AF1. Served 1941-46. Birmingham branch, January 20.

Douglas Lewis, CEL(A) Served 1936-50. Yeovil branch, January 8.

William Boys, AM(L). Served 1945-47. Great Yarmouth branch, 2010.

HMS UNICORN ASSOCIATION
Edgar 'Boz' Bosworthick, Chief Air Artificer A/E. In 1935 at aged 16 he became a Halton Apprentice (RAF), 31st entry and after three years was sent to 1(F) Squadron at Tangmere. When the Fleet Air Arm was formed in 1938 he transferred and served in Ark Royal IV, Furious, Nigeria, Unicorn (as Chief Air Artificer A/E 1942-46) and Terrible (later became HMS Sydney); also air stations Daedalus, Heron, Landrail, Owl, Kestrel, Curlew, Goldcrest and HMS Albatross in Bowra, Australia. Volunteered to assist in training for HMS Sydney for three years and retired after 22 years service. Secretary for Halton Apprentices Naval Wing Association (HANWA) and also RNA branch Secretary. Founded HMS Unicorn Association in 1987. March 19. Aged 91.

Frederick L Wood, CPO Writer in Unicorn 1949 when she was in the Reserve Fleet; also served in Howe, Orion, Eagle, Furious, Adventurous, Forth, Western Isle, Burghhead Bay and Drake, Lanka and Scotia. December 21. Aged 90.

David 'Taff' Williams, AB. Served 1948-55 in Unicorn (1949-51), Anson, Dryad, Gambia and Drake, February 17. Aged 79.

Joseph Ainley, Leading AF/E. Trained at RAF Hednesford Technical Training School then RNAS Dekhela, Alex, based in the Ponam Islands where Unicorn took repaired aircraft. March 9. Aged 88.

Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in June's Noticeboard must be received by **May 13**



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Scottish units are at the CUTTING edge

Another date for Callum

AC CALLUM Malone featured in our last edition when the Southwark unit cadet was judged the outstanding cadet at TS Cossack.

This time Callum, aged 14, was one of four London Area cadets chosen to attend a Services dinner in honour of the Royal Navy at Armourers Hall in the City of London.

The dinner, hosted by the Honourable Company of Knights of the Round Table, gave cadets the chance to meet distinguished guests, including Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Alan Massey, his successor Rear Admiral Charles Montgomery and former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Alan West.

Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor escorted the four cadets who spent the evening trying to part senior officers from their money and any spare ships they may have – all for the Corps.

Callum took the formal occasion in his stride, as he did a waterborne challenge just days before – the teenager finished first in the London Area trials for the Honda Rib Youth Challenge, bringing with it a place in the next round of the event and a power boating planing course for Callum.

Rare medal

A SEA Cadets senior rate has been presented with a rare medal for his 25 years' service with the Red Cross.

CPO (SCC) Paul Webster has served with the Red Cross and Sea cadets since he was ten, and trains cadets at his Bromley unit in first aid skills.

The Red Cross Voluntary Medical Services Medal is issued after 15 years' service, so Paul was presented his with two clasps, each showing a further five years.

The medal bears the famous red Cross on one side and Crimean War nurse Florence Nightingale on the other



● Leadership training at RAF Wittering

CCF can now host training

LEADERSHIP training, team work and self-confidence have long been seen as three of the major benefits that young people gain from being a cadet.

Two courses long enjoyed by senior cadets and aspiring junior leaders alike have been the Leadership courses.

And the standing of the CCF RN's week-long leadership course's recognition for the ILM Team Leading award level 2 underlines its value in the outside world too.

But before cadets can attend the course at HMS Raleigh they now need to have attended a weekend course.

Until now that meant them travelling to Portsmouth for one of the five courses based aboard HMS Bristol and using the facilities of the Navy's Leadership Academy (East) site in HMS Collingwood.

This year, for the first time, cadets will be able to attend weekend courses in their own CCF areas around the country.

The first of these was run at RAF Wittering using the Air Cadet facility on the airfield.

For a full report on proceedings, see next month's *Navy News*.

ALMOST 50 Sea Cadets and Royal Marine Cadets from Queensferry and District unit (TS Lochinvar) and Paisley unit (TS Grenville) made the 14-hour bus trip south to HMS Raleigh for an all-action training week.

The programme included Continuation Unit Team Training (CUTT) and general cadet training courses, while staff undertook advanced seamanship and RYA level 3 safety boat courses at the Jupiter Point boat station.

The cadets spent four days and five nights at the Navy's recruit training base in Cornwall, training, working and eating alongside Navy trainees, though they were accommodated separately within the Sea Cadet Training Centre's Vigilant Block.

Training facilities open to them included Triumph Squadron, where cadets learned to extinguish several types of fires with a variety of equipment, and the Havoc damage control unit, where they worked against the clock to stop the inflow of very cold water into a life-size mock-up of a section of a warship.

Cadets also trained on the assault course, with a team from Queensferry setting a new record.

In addition cadets were given drill instruction using the drill sheds and parade ground.

Formal training was completed with a forenoon of sea survival training using life jackets, high diving boards and real 25-man life rafts moored in the pool.

There was time for recreation and sport, with cadets taking a tour of frigate HMS Monmouth as well as a boat trip around Devonport and Plymouth Sound.

Visits were laid on to the village of Looe and Mount Edgcumbe



Country Park, for orienteering, and the cadets used sports and swimming facilities within the base for dog watch sports.

Special thanks should go to Lt Cdr Lee Sanderson and his staff for all their expertise which helped the whole week to go smoothly.

Any unit wishing to take advantage of the facilities at Raleigh should contact the SCTC directly and talk to Lt Shone on 01752 815139 where full information will be given.

Reward for Defiance

AN OFFICER at Newhaven and Seaford has received an award on behalf of the unit for its achievements with young people in the area.

S/Lt (SCC) Steve Townsend RNR, the Officer in Charge at TS Defiance, was presented with the

inaugural Youth Group of the Year award, sponsored by Newhaven Town Council.

The awards were the brainchild of the Young Mayor of Newhaven, Daly Tucknott, who wanted to recognise and celebrate the positive things that children and young people in the town achieve.

TS Defiance was nominated for the award by the unit's PRO, Amanda Wilkins, and had to beat off competition from nine other contenders.

The judges selected the cadet unit for their excellent community work and the fact that they are great ambassadors for the county.

Menin Gate ceremony was poignant reminder

MEMBERS of Bromley unit took a thought-provoking trip to lay a wreath and present the unit colours at the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate, Ypres, in Belgium.

Of the 28 cadets and staff who went, two cadets were selected by the unit's CO, Lt (SCC) Chris Hartwell RNR, to lay a wreath and present the colours.

AC Tom Kennard represented the Sea Cadets and Marine Cadet Joe Peagam represented the Bromley Marine Cadet detachment by laying a wreath.

The cadets were joined by Steve Susans, representing the Bromley branch of the RNA, who presented the branch's colours.

The daily tribute to soldiers of the British Empire who died in World War 1 has been held at the gate every night at 8pm since 1928, except during World War 2.

Performed by a team of local buglers, the poignant ceremony

Mum (and CO) is so proud

A SPELL in the Sea Cadets does not necessarily lead to a career in the Senior Service – unless you happen to be a member of the Buckett family, that is.

Proud mum Viv Buckett saw her third and youngest son, Matthew, pass out of HMS Raleigh in the middle of March.

Matthew aims to become a marine engineer, just like his oldest brother Adam, who is serving in HMS Richmond. Middle brother Christopher took a slightly different view, opting to join up as a Royal Marine.

Mrs Buckett had hoped the day at Raleigh would be a special occasion with all three of her boys in the same place at the same time.

That didn't quite happen; Christopher was unable to travel down from Faslane, but the fact that Matthew won two prizes (best recruit in his intake and best academic award) went some way towards

making up for his brother's absence.

All three of the Buckett boys were Sea Cadets at Rochdale unit, reaching the rank of petty officer cadet before stepping up to the Royal Navy.

And they had plenty of encouragement from their parents – did we mention that proud mum Viv is also S/Lt (SCC) Viv Buckett RNR, CO of the Rochdale unit? And that dad John is Jimmy the One?

"The cadets became an involvement for all the family," said Viv.

"As parents assisting the boys we called in for a coffee at the unit and ended up being Commanding Officer and First Lieutenant respectively."

Another former Rochdale cadet, who recently qualified as a logistician (catering services (preparation)) – or chef – also travelled to Raleigh to see his good friend finish initial training.



● Cadets and the Seaman's Mission with Naval engineering staff WO1 Geoff Moss, CPO Mark Gains and CPO Rachel Virdee, all members of the Joint Maritime Support Squadron, commanded by STO(N)FI Paul McVey

Tug firm tonic

THE most southerly Sea Cadet unit has been given a financial fillip by the company which runs a tug-boat charter for the MOD.

TS Endurance and the Lighthouse Seaman's Mission, both based in Stanley, Falkland Islands, visited the Mount Pleasant Complex to receive donations from Wim Van Wijngaarden, the owner of the Netherlands' MoD charter support Tugs, MT Giessenstroom and MT Dintelstroom, based at nearby Mare Harbour.

Vessel masters Michel Helsma and Pieter Van Wijngaarden presented CPO (SCC) Ken Newton and Mr and Mrs Lake

from the Seaman's Mission with cheques for £1,250, which will help towards future projects and support to both units.

On completion of the ceremony, all personnel involved sailed round Mare Harbour on board the tugs, giving the cadets the chance to not only drive the vessels but gain an insight into life on board.

The Lighthouse Seaman's Mission provides support to all seafarers located in the Falkland Islands and is affiliated to the Royal National Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen in the UK, established in 1881.



● Cadets line up ready for inspection Picture: Dave Sherfield

Hydrographic hosts

A TOUR of survey ship HMS Echo was one of the highlights of a weekend with the RN for members of the CCF sections of Wellington, Reading Blue Coat, Taunton and Newcastle-under-Lyme Schools.

The 102 cadets were taking part in the annual Warfare Branch affiliation weekend, which this year celebrated its 25th anniversary, and was hosted by the Hydrographic

and Meteorological Squadron at the National Sea Cadet Training Centre at HMS Raleigh.

The affiliation was initiated by Capt Geoff Hope, Captain of the Hydrographic Survey Squadron, in 1985.

The cadets got the chance to test the assault course – Wellington School took the honours – and they also toured Devonport Naval Base.

Beverley still in the running for prize

A MEMBER of Huyton with Roby unit has won through to the final stage of a prestigious national competition – and booked herself a place on an exciting expedition.

POC Beverley Marriette is one of five finalists still in the running for the Duke of Westminster Award 2010.

And as one of the final five she is also guaranteed a three-week trip to South Africa in July.

Four Sea Cadets made it through to the penultimate stage of the competition, organised by CVQO.

Alongside Beverley were LC Jessica Bereznyckyj (Nottingham), LC Jessica Gregson (Clapton and Hackney) and POC Oliver Mollart (Preston), who faced the challenge of a 36-hour assessment and selection event in the Quantock Hills in Somerset.

"The judging panel were extremely impressed by all 21 cadets who made it through to final selection," said Edward Woods, chief executive of CVQO and head of the selection panel.

"It was a tough job choosing just nine, but we are confident that the nine winners will make an excellent team on their expedition to South Africa in July."

The eventual winner, along with four runners up, will receive the award and other prizes at a luncheon hosted by the Duke of Westminster in London on June 23 and will also visit Downing Street.

The following month they will be joined by the four remaining finalists to travel to South Africa on the expedition, where they will undertake an environmental awareness course in Kwa Zulu Natal and a project working with and teaching orphaned children.

In addition they will visit Rorkes Drift, Isandlwana and take part in a walking safari.

The nine finalists emerged from the 350 submissions from more than 20,000 eligible BTEC registered cadets nationwide.

Unarmed, unbeaten

NOT content with winning the Best Squad award in the South West Area drill competition, Avon District – represented by Bristol Adventure unit – carried off all the trophies in the Unarmed section.

The team, who were crowned District winners in January, had been training since November under the tutelage of unit drill instructor APO Samantha Silverthorne.

Having done their best, the team came away with the awards for best-dressed squad member (POC A Cottrell), runner-up for best-dressed squad member (OC Z Thomas), best-dressed squad, best squad commander (POC Silverthorne) and, finally, best squad.

A special mention must go to Cdt W Brobin, who missed the competition with a broken arm, and to CI Lesley Wood and UA Teresa Silverthorne for their skill with the needle and cotton, ensuring that all badges were spot on.

Ceremony staged in equatorial Bristol



ANOTHER unit has crossed the line.

In our March edition we reported on Llanelli's land-based version of the traditional Naval equatorial ceremony.

Now Bristol (Avonmouth) have held their own ceremony to bid farewell to a much-loved member of staff.

Lt Cdr Ian McNamara retired last year after nearly 20 years in submarines, since when he has been a civilian instructor at TS Enterprise.

CO Lt (SCC) Barbara Hillier RNR, said: "His new job sees him leave us for Carrickfergus. Our loss

● Cadet Ellie Clarke (12) takes to the water

Picture: PO(SCC) Jake London

really is their gain."

All the elements of the ceremony were there, King Neptune and his retinue, barbers, a surgeon, Davy Jones *et al*.

And a good job they did, too – technically speaking, Lt Cdr McNamara is no novice, having experienced the ceremony on board ship.

"TS Enterprise is a brilliant bunch of young people and volunteer staff. They worked really hard.

"I have actually crossed the line, and this was as close as you could get without doing it for real.

"I was really touched by the effort made by all for my send-off and I look forward to inviting Avonmouth unit to my new one in Carrickfergus near Belfast."



● S/Lt (SCC) Marcel Bodenham RNR

Sterling work by Marcel

A FORMER Navy man has won a Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for his sterling work with the Corps.

After his career in the Senior Service, Marcel Bodenham became involved with the Sea Cadets as a civilian instructor at Sheffield unit in 1999.

Shortly after he went into uniform and became a petty officer; he transferred to Doncaster unit TS Lightning in 2004, and was promoted to chief petty officer in 2005.

Keen to be further involved, he assumed command of the newly-built premises of TS Lightning and, having been recognised with potential, and after a selection board, was promoted to sub lieutenant (SCC) Royal Naval Reserve in 2007.

With a background in engineering he was appointed the Area Staff Officer Marine and Electrical Engineering and additionally the Assistant District Officer for South Yorks and Humber District, managing to combine these roles with energy and enthusiasm.

Peterhead's leader relinquishes control

PETERHEAD unit's longest serving CO has retired after 17 years at the helm of TS Caledonia.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Ian Wilson RNR retired from the position in January, handing over duties to S/Lt (SCC) John Bowman RNR.

Lt Cdr Wilson, who first took up the position of CO in 1992, said of his years of service: "It has been a tremendous experience which has left me with many happy memories, and achievements which will stay with me forever.

"I wish John and his staff every success, and I know the unit is in good hands."

One of the highlights of his reign was the winning of the Canada Trophy, awarded to the top unit in the country, in 2008.

However, Lt Cdr Wilson won't be disappearing over the horizon as he will remain fully active within the unit as an instructor and the unit's RYA Principal, as well as continuing his district, area and national roles.

S/Lt Bowman joined TS Caledonia 17 years ago as one of the unit's first Junior Sea Cadets.

As a canoeing coach and unit instructor he has a wide-ranging knowledge of the Corps and is looking forward to the challenge.

Of his appointment, S/Lt Bowman said: "When we heard the news that Ian was standing down as our CO the staff team were shocked, although deep down we always knew this day would come.

"I joined the unit in the same year that Ian was appointed CO,

and have always looked up to him as a leader, colleague and friend.

"It is daunting stepping into the shoes of someone who everyone looks up to, although, I'm sure Ian would agree that although the successes over the last 17 years have come under Ian's dedicated leadership, the successes would equally not have been achievable without a fantastic professional staff team, Unit Management Committee, support from the community and, of course, Peterhead's youngsters.

"I am going to have to call upon everyone who has helped us throughout the years to continue

Special day for Daisy

A SERVING sailor has had his daughter christened in a ship's bell at the York unit headquarters.

Charles Gomersall is a marine engineer in HMS Daring, but his links with the Corps go back almost 20 years, to February 1991 when he joined TS York as a ten-year-old.

He remained a cadet until he was 18 and became a civilian instructor, but by that stage his mind was made up as to his future career.

He joined the Royal Navy at HMS Raleigh in February 2000, and has served in Type 42 destroyers as well as a memorable three years with HMS Endeavour.

During all this time he kept in touch with his old unit, and they were happy to oblige when he and his partner Michelle Hetherington asked if they could have their daughter, Daisy May Coleen Gomersall, christened in the unit's bell, believed to be that of the wartime cruiser.

More than 50 people attended the service which was conducted by the unit's padre, Rev Andrew Stoker – an appropriate touch bearing in mind Charles' job.

to keep up that support to help us remain one of the best units in the Sea Cadet Corps."

The unit held a special presentation to honour Lt Cdr Wilson during the unit's annual prizegiving.

On a poignant evening, Lt Cdr Wilson was recognised for his achievements and thanked for the leadership, commitment and dedication he has shown.

He received a presentation from the ship's company, the staff and committee, and the cadets also arranged a presentation of a photograph of the ship's company as a memento of the evening.



● Falmouth and Penryn cadets with the CO of 849 NAS, Lt Cdr Martin Barlow (far left), Air Engineering Officer Lt Cdr Patrick Fraser (second from right), and Assistant Air Engineering Officer Lt Craig Jordan (right) in front of a Sea King at Culdrose

Group gets airborne

CADETS from Falmouth and Penryn unit enjoyed a guided tour of their affiliated squadron at RN Air Station Culdrose.

The 14 cadets were hosted by 849 Naval Air Squadron, and chatted to squadron personnel about their roles within the Navy.

The highlight of the day was the chance for the cadets to experience a short flight in the squadron's Sea King Mk 7 helicopter to give them an understanding of what the aircraft is capable of, as well as enjoying the outstanding views of

the Lizard and surrounding area.

Lt Craig Jordan, the Assistant Air Engineering Officer for 849 NAS, said: "Having the opportunity to show our affiliated Sea Cadet unit how we work from day to day was brilliant."

The cadets also visited the flight deck simulator at the RN School of Flight Deck Operations, and had hands-on experience directing and marshalling an aircraft landing on the deck of a Naval ship.

The day finished off with a tour around a Hawk aircraft.



● S/Lt Adey, of TS Venomous, gets to drive a ship

Two days is not enough...

FOUR lucky members of Loughborough unit managed to get to sea with HMS Albion, whose CO Capt John Kingwell has links with the town through his days at the local university.

Cdts Becky Richardson and Lewis Riley, PO Vann and S/Lt Adey joined the assault ship at Liverpool for a two-day passage to Devonport, along with staff and cadets from Sandwell unit – TS Albion.

The group joined in as much

as they could, standing bridge watches and even driving the ship when the seas ahead were clear.

They also toured the ship from bridge to laundry, and had a good look at the landing craft.

There were even helicopter fly-pasts and a man overboard exercise to keep them on their toes.

The visitors were thrilled to live as part of the ship's company, and found it hard to disembark; all hope to get the chance to 'run away to sea' again soon.

Trailer cash helps Abingdon

ABINGDON unit was given a grant of almost £1,140 by the Vale of White Horse District Council at the end of last year.

Along with a further £500 given by Abingdon Town Council, this enabled the unit to buy a new twin-axle boat trailer for the transport and storage of their large Viking power boat.

And further grant money from Oxfordshire County Council enabled the unit to buy a new minibus.

The cadets held a publicity/recruiting/fundraising event in the Market Place, Abingdon to mark the official

presentation of the boat trailer.

It also marked the official handover to the unit of a Pico dinghy named *Kris P*, bought with funds raised in memory of Cdt PO Preece, who died in 2007.

Steve Reader represented CareUK, whose support had enabled the purchase of a road trailer for *Kris P*.

The cadets, the band, the Viking boat trailer and new dinghy and trailer were met by Cllr Alison Rooke, chairwoman of Vale of White Horse District Council, Cllr Pat Hobby, the Mayor of Abingdon, and members of the Preece family (see picture left).

The rest of the day was spent publicising the activities of the Corps in Abingdon in the hope of attracting new cadets and adult volunteers.

Abingdon CO Lt (SCC) Philip Pether said: "The unit has been very lucky to have had such generous support over the past year.

"It is a pleasure to acknowledge this in a public event such as this.

"Sailing and boating is an important part of our activities, and without the funds for the purchase of such equipment we would have difficulty in delivering our training programme."



Award for improving detachment

YEOVIL unit's Marine Cadet Detachment has proved they have what it takes by winning the South West Area's most improved detachment award.

Having only formed as a detachment in 2008 the Marine Cadets are led by a former RM Sergeant, Keith 'Brum' Caddick.

He and his staff of three cadet instructors, along with the cadets themselves, have worked hard to establish themselves as a successful detachment.

The award is given based on the detachment's overall performance during the year.

This includes taking part in an annual field assessment, where a team of cadets is assessed on a range of skills including weapons training, camouflage and concealment, map-reading and field training.

The detachment is also scored for individual advancement, courses attended by cadets and other qualifications gained such as seamanship.

L/Cpl Luke Buttle, who was chosen as part of the field assessment team, said: "Leading up to our annual field assessment, we spent many weeks preparing, picking the team, and practising formations."

"The team was not chosen straight away. Cadets had to show commitment and attendance, determination and the right attitude."

Yeovil's CO, Lt (SCC) Simon Vokes RNR, said: "I am very proud of the achievements which the Marines Cadets have had in its first two years. This is thanks to the hard work of the Marine Cadet Staff and the dedication of the Cadets. This award means they have really made their mark on the Sea Cadet Corp map and I look forward to seeing them bringing more silverware back to the unit over the next year."

Scotland celebrates Cadet 150

CLIMBING, flying, sailing, piping and running youngsters took over the Glasgow Science Centre as Scotland celebrated the 150th anniversary of the cadet movement.

Sea, Army and Air Cadets were joined by the Combined Cadet Force to celebrate the anniversary by climbing towers, crossing assault courses, handling fast jet simulators and steering dinghies.

And, as with all birthday parties, it wasn't complete without a bouncy castle – in this case, the Royal Marine inflatable assault course version.

Camping out on the grass, the Army Cadets were cooking up a storm with MOD ration packs, while the Air Cadet Band made sure everyone knew when the curry was ready by frequent use of their bugle call.

Excellent boat-landing skills ensured the Sea Cadets got more than their share of the sausages, while the Army Cadets' ambush tactics meant all the chocolate miraculously disappeared.

Inside, cadets showed off their first aid skills and entertained the VIPs with music from their band, while senior cadets talked about foreign trips that would put the Discovery Channel to shame.

Former Scottish international rugby player Gavin Hastings, recently appointed Honorary Colonel of his local Army Cadet Force battalion, was at the event.

He said: "I firmly believe that the cadet organisations are excellent for young people who wish to develop the life skills that they need to make the most of their lives."

"Watching the cadets today assures me that the future of Scotland will be great in their hands."



● Yes, this is the right ship... the first Commanding Officer of TS Jack Petchey, Lt Chris L'Amie, with Jack Petchey on the deck of the Marine Society & Sea Cadets' new power training boat on commissioning day

RN officer at helm of new training vessel

THE much-valued link between the Royal Navy and the Sea Cadet Corps gained extra lustre when a new power training vessel was commissioned in the heart of London.

Two men at the ceremony at HMS President took particular pride in proceedings.

Entrepreneur and philanthropist Jack Petchey was a driving force behind the £2.6 million project, and the £1 million provided by his foundation – on condition matching funding was found within a year, or the deal was off – meant the vessel was built in short order.

And Lt Chris L'Amie, an experienced regular officer in the Royal Navy, will be driving the new ship for the next year.

Lt L'Amie has navigated minihunter HMS Quorn, Type 23 frigate HMS Northumberland and served as First Lieutenant of fishery patrol ship HMS Severn, but the fact that TS Jack Petchey is blue and white rather than pusser's grey does not bother him.

"The appointment came totally out of the blue," he told *Navy News* from the pontoon beside his new command.

"My appointer asked me if I wanted a drive, and I said 'yes', obviously."

"He said it was for the Marine Society & Sea Cadets, and I said 'great!'"

"It is a chance to get around the UK to support the message of the Sea Cadets and the Royal Navy as well."

"We will be going to many harbours where people see more of the Sea Cadets than they do of the Royal Navy."

Lt L'Amie intends to run the vessel along the lines of a Royal Navy ship, and his crew will certainly help in that respect – he can call on the experience of a former RN chief stoker, a former RN submarine cox'n and a former Serco tug skipper.

Jack Petchey, an East Ender, watched as appeal committee chairman Robert Woods welcomed guests to the ceremony, and the Bishop of London, the Rt Rev Richard Chartres, led a short service.

Cadets from TS Illustrious (Walton-on-the-Naze unit) had various roles on the day, including escorting guests around the vessel.

Mr Petchey told those gathered "on a lovely day for a lovely occasion" that, being

a former sailor he felt a little edgy with all the top brass about, but reiterated that his time in the Navy gave him an education "second to none" and helped build his character.

He said he could only recommend that cadets should go on to try a career in the Navy – and he wondered whether he would then qualify for a recruitment fee...

Naval Secretary Rear Admiral Charles Montgomery said: "This is a fantastic facility which provides a superb opportunity for cadets to get themselves off to sea."

"It will help to build teamwork, individual strength of character and independence, as well as leadership, and will provide good service for many years to come."

Also at the pontoon was TS Jack Petchey's near-sister ship, TS John Jerwood – the fact that she is so oversubscribed led to the appeal for a second vessel.

And TS Royalist was also there, allowing a quick plug for funds to anyone with deep pockets willing to help fund a replacement for the 39-year-old sailing ship.



Picture: Trish Smith (MSSC)
● Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor, Naval Secretary (and next Second Sea Lord) Rear Admiral Charles Montgomery and LC Linda Richards, of TS Illustrious, on TS Jack Petchey (also pictured below)



Syd – the Silver Wolf of Keighley

SYD Smith has clocked up more than 30 years as an adult volunteer with Keighley unit.

But that pales beside the 50 years or so which Syd, man and boy, has put into the Scouting movement.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Smith RNR has been awarded the Silver Wolf by the Chief Scout in recognition of his exemplary service to

scouting over five decades.

The highest award in the Scout Association, the Silver Wolf is not frequently awarded, and is in the gift of the Chief Scout.

Syd has been associated with Keighley unit, TS Dolphin – part of the West Yorkshire District – for 35 years, first as a staff member, then twice as commanding officer and latterly

as a vice president.

While wearing his scouting hat, Syd was a uniformed Scout Leader and Venture Leader and Commissioner, and was responsible for Sea Scouting being introduced into the Keighley district.

He is currently a vice president of the Keighley District Scout Council.

London's local hero rewarded

A LONDON unit officer has picked up an award after he was identified as a local hero.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Allan Phillips was invited to the Bank of America Merrill Lynch headquarters in the heart of the City of London to collect the award.

Ken D Lewis, the newly-retired chief executive and president of the bank, said: "At Bank of America, we understand that the success of our business depends on the health of the communities we serve."

"Our Neighbourhood Excellence Initiative is a core part of our strategy to strengthen the communities where we live and work."

"By recognising and supporting local leaders, we are helping to meet long-term needs in our communities during challenging times and beyond."

Allan received recognition for his long-standing service to the Corps – a commitment totalling more than 50 years.

He helped set up the Tower Hamlets unit, commanding it for 20 years, and since then he has served with the Greenwich, City of London and Southwark units.

Allan was accompanied at the ceremony by Southwark cadets Benjamin Wood and Kerry Szmidt, who are no strangers to the City – cadets from TS Cossack frequently attend ceremonial functions in support of charitable organisations.

With the award came a donation of £3,000 – the money will come in very handy as Southwark tackles the long-overdue refurbishment of its galley.

Pair dive in to test the water

PO (SCC) Stewart McLaughlin, London Area dive team and cadets from Tooting and Balham unit spent a full day at the London International Dive Show, at the ExCeL Conference Centre.

Two cadets, AC Matthew Crozier and Cdt Diligen Valubarantham, took the opportunity to try a free dive in the demonstration pool.

As they were amongst the first in, they enjoyed around 20 minutes in the pool using scuba diving kit, breathing under water and retrieving objects.

Later in the day BBC's Paul Rose (*Oceans*) gave a presentation about his future plans with the Corporation to go around the UK visiting dive sites and meeting local divers.

Paul is very supportive of Sea Cadet scuba diving and hopes to formally open the new diving training centre in Liverpool.

Also spotted was Monty Hall, of TV's *Great Escape* fame – a former RM officer who came over for a chat as soon as he saw the cadets.

Support your Sea Cadets

Volunteer, donate or even leave a legacy.

We need you: get inspired at www.sea-cadets.org or call us on 020 7654 7000.

A charity registered in England & Wales 313013 and in Scotland SCD37808



Pieces for our time

A DECADE ago, the Navy decided to rid itself of 34 tons of oak and ten tons of copper, detritus from HMS Victory during 70 years of restoring Nelson's flagship in her Portsmouth dry dock.

It was snapped up by businessman Jonathan Bowman with a couple of caveats: that it was turned into something befitting Britain's most famous warship – and that royalties from products helped (a little) towards the upkeep of the man o'war.

It was he admits "a gamble". So what became of all that wood and copper (enough, if you were wondering, to fill a four-bedroomed house)?

Well, some of it was turned into 118 different products, 2,275 pieces in all, worth over £1m.

The unusual story is told by the businessman in *Victory at any Price* (Chandler, £24.95 ISBN 978-0-9563823-0-6).

What's impressive is the skill of the various craftsmen and women – and their inventiveness in turning old wood and copper into as broad a collection of *objets d'art* as you could imagine.

Sundials, bookends, barometers, chess tables, cabinets, bellows, bells, chairs, rum tubs, a wonderful 'turning a blind eye' toy (when moved, Nelson raises his telescope to his 'wrong' eye) and a miniature coffin.

Five hundred scale replicas of Nelson's casket were produced by artist Lucy Askew. Inside it were not the admiral's remains but a commemorative booklet containing contemporary accounts of the funeral in 1806.

Prices ranged from £22.50 (a pendant) up to a dining table and eight chairs (£20,000).

Not everything worked (or sold). A playing cards box was "nicely made but just too expensive" (£215), while there were too few undamaged lengths of wood to produce more than half a dozen full-size rum tubs (smaller ones proved rather more successful).

And all 150 admiral's chairs crafted by Stewart Linford sold... at £2,995 each.

■ *Navy News* readers in the UK can pick up a copy for £19.95 including postage via mail@victoryatanyprice.co.uk or writing to the author at Hollands Hill, Barnham Broom, Norfolk, NR9 4BT.

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Snake 'n' Jack

WHAT'S the connection linking Patrick Moore, Simple Minds lead singer Jim Kerr, exploding toilets, Charles and Di, Princess Anne, two well-fed penguins, a brass band, Hissing Sid and long sneakies?

The answer, obviously, is submarine HMS *Courageous* – aka *The Mean Machine* – whose two-decade career is charted meticulously – and lovingly – by two of her former crew.

Indeed, **Submarine Courageous: Cold War Warrior – The Life and Times of a Nuclear Submarine** (HMS *Courageous* Society, £30 ISBN 978-09563-47206) is one of the finest ship biographies

to cross our desk, beautifully produced, copiously illustrated, and jam-packed with dits.

It's been compiled by WO(TSSM) Michael Pitkeathly – "a submariner nutcase" in the words of his mum, he joined *Courageous* in build in Barrow and today serves as a guide on the boat – and former marine engineer Capt David Wixon.

The duo have collected scores of first-hand accounts of life aboard the 'Mean Machine', as the men called her, at work and play, plus newspaper clippings, official and unofficial photographs, and excerpts from the ship's newsletter, all connected by an excellent narrative.

Courageous was the last of the first generation of nuclear boats built for the RN and her career is arguably overshadowed by her sister *Conqueror* and her actions in the South Atlantic one Sunday afternoon in May 1982.

HMS *Courageous* was in the Falklands as well – she conducted a 93-day patrol... on the back of a ten-month deployment to the USA – but by the time she arrived, the Argentinian Navy was largely confined to harbour.

She earned a battle honour for her duties but, as her then CO Rupert Best acknowledges, much of the time was "pretty tedious".

Aside from the usual shipboard entertainment, there was one thing many submariners asked for: the football scores. The *American* football scores, that is. *Courageous*' long spell in the States had converted some of her crew to gridiron fans.

Courageous spent a lot of time in the South Atlantic in the first couple of years after the Falklands war, and a lot of time

monitoring the activities of the Argentine Air Force.

She also 'adopted' two penguins in San Carlos Water; the birds steadfastly refused to leave the casing when the boat surfaced for re-supplying. The fact that the crew fed them on jam and scones possibly didn't help...

Such vignettes can be found on every page (there's also a good selection of cartoons and pictures of Jack being, er, Jack).

The wedding of Prince Charles and Lady Di in 1981 prompted the traditional signal of 'splice the mainbrace' throughout the Fleet.

It arrived aboard *Courageous* in San Diego, where she was conducting Sub Harpoon missile trials, at 9am (5pm back in Blighty...). Well, you can't disobey an order, can you? So treble tots all round for the ship's company.

"The only rum we had onboard was called Ronrico 151 and it was like rocket fuel," recalls POMEM Rip Kirkby. More than one deep headed straight for the heads, others retired to a hotel where the Yanks were glued to a telly watching royal proceedings in London. "We just carried on celebrating," says Kirkby.

When not enjoying tots, Disneyland, Sea World and the zoo, the submariners were working hard on their missile trials. After 14 trial Harpoons, number 15 was fully operational. It made rather a mess of a WW2 vintage US destroyer.

Courageous spent a lot of her early days on surveillance patrols – aka 'long sneakies' – in the Red Navy's playground off the Kola and Kanin peninsulas.

Four decades later, much of this work remains classified evidently, but the boat did snoop on the Soviet counterpart of FOST, watching and listening (and possibly joining in, unofficially...).

"Trailing other submarines was *Courageous*' bread and butter," explains her former CO Capt Andy Buchanan.

"Training and vigilance were everything."

British boats would typically trail their quarry at ranges of between 6,000 and 10,000 yards – a safe(ish) distance... unless the Soviets decided to reverse course.

The men of the Mean Machine evidently

enjoyed sneakies, for they penned a little song (to the tune of *Colonel Bogey*) to celebrate their escapades:

Courageous is long and black and sleek

Courageous, we don't claim we're unique

Our cloak and dagger

Would make you stagger

For we found out and hide and we seek.

Sneakies are, we presume, largely a thing of the past these days, but

As for life aboard, not much has changed. The chintz wardroom upholstery lives on 40 years later in HMS *Daring* (and most of the rest of the Fleet...). Hot bunking is slowly being phased out, but living in the bomb shop continues. Every mess showed a film – on a projector until the advent of videos – twice a day (anything with Clint Eastwood or *Dracula* was a winner), while the ship's brass band (!) practised in the wardroom (there's a photograph as proof).

There were plenty of practical jokes (quite often involving sewage/heads), the slightest *faux pas* would be mercilessly lampooned in the *Grumpy Corner Dit Book*:

Have you got any one-inch padlocks?

Yes.

What size is it then?

And some things do change. Rapidly. Hair styles and fashions. *Faslane*. And kit. The control room consoles with their dials and buttons look horrendously outdated (they were, of course, cutting-edge in their day).

The result of all these personal testimonies, photographs, cartoons, cuttings is one of the best books you'll find on the *Silent Service* – and an invaluable insight into the life and work of submarines during the Cold War, of interest beyond the immediate band of *Courageous* veterans.

So what of Jim Kerr, Patrick Moore and Princess Anne? Well, they were among *Courageous*' many VIP visitors. As for Hissing Sid, he was the boat's unofficial mascot based on the snake on the ship's badge.

■ Copies are available from www.hmscourageous.co.uk or *Courageous* Volunteer Development Manager, Flotilla House, S059, HM Naval Base Devonport, PL2 2BG. Proceeds help the upkeep of the boat which is a floating museum in Devonport.



The art of war(ships)

HISTORIAN Sam Willis' quest to chart the career of the warship in graphic form now spans two millennia with the arrival of his latest volume.

Fighting Ships: From the Ancient World to 1750 (*Quercus*, £25 ISBN 978-1347248-800) is the third tome (an apt word) showing how naval battles and warships have been depicted by art through the centuries.

Two previous volumes cover the periods 1750-1850 and 1850 to 1950.

And as with those excellent works, this is a *huge* book (17in tall x 14in wide) beautifully illustrated with artwork from around the globe.

Although much of the book is devoted to the Western World from the 15th/16th Centuries onwards, neither fine art nor naval warfare were the preserve of the 'known world'.

Indeed, the Japanese produced their own Bayeux Tapestry which is a far more realistic-looking piece of art than the more famous Norman embroidery: the *Moko Shorai Ekotoba* (illustrated account of the Mongol invasion) are 13th-Century Japanese scrolls which depict Samurai grappling with Kublai Khan's invaders.

There are new technologies here: the Byzantines invented Greek fire – a form of flame thrower which spewed a fiery liquid over the ocean and attacking boats. This as William the Conqueror was living up to his name...

And there's the demise of means of naval warfare, such as a stunning panorama of Lepanto, the last major clash of galleys in 1571.

But enough of the navies of Johnny Foreigners.

What of ye olde Englische Navye?

Well, there's the loss of the *Mary Rose* in the Solent, Sir Walter Raleigh's map of El Dorado (he was convinced it lay on an inland lake somewhere beyond the Orinoco Delta), and a wonderful collection of playing cards produced to celebrate the defeat of the Armada (complete with 16th Century typographical errors).

By far the most magnificent painting reproduced here comes from the year of *Mary Rose*'s loss, 1545, and a wonderfully vivid portrayal of Henry VIII joining his fleet at Dover.

As well as traditional portraits, landscapes and tapestries, there are fascinating early maps: Francesco Rosselli's 1508 chart of the globe which is fairly accurate when it comes to Europe, Africa and the Mediterranean but rather guesses at South America and Australasia.

As well as an illuminating sweep through naval history, this is an illuminating sweep through maritime art and changing styles. By the 17th and 18th Centuries, there's a growing realism in the paintings.

None more so than the final image in the book, Greenwich Hospital and the Thames c.1750 as depicted by Giovanni Antonio Canal – Canaletto – which in places almost looks like a colour photograph.

The Italian artist spent a decade in England but sadly, in this volume, there's just one Canaletto...



● An award-winning image of HMS *Courageous* leaving Clyde Naval Base circa 1989

Picture: LA(Phot) Craig Leask



● Holt Cup winners NA(Met) Natalie Roach and Logs(Pers) Juliet Long in FAA 1 hold off the Portsmouth team of S/Lt Alice Moore and PO(MEM) Phil Bolton
Picture: Lt Cdr Gavin Marshall

Air triumph on water

"STARBOARD!"

That was the instruction carried over the calm waters of the River Dart as teams from Portsmouth, Plymouth and the Fleet Air Arm fought at the RN Dinghy Team Racing Championships for the coveted Holt Cup.

Team boat racing is very different from fleet racing – the entire team's result matters; even a team which has someone cross the line in first place can still lose.

Teams comprise two boats, both with a helm and crew, racing against another team of two boats. The teams race in a league with races typically lasting ten to 15 minutes.

The Navy Championships use the simple two-boat team racing format: whichever team has a boat in fourth place loses.

This "last boat loses it for the team" often means that whoever is in front usually has to slow down or trap the opposition to allow their team-mate through. A one-two or two-three combination is a win but a one-four or three-four is a defeat.

Many of the techniques used in team racing would be viewed as aggressive in normal fleet racing: stopping your boat at a mark; forcing other competitors to sail outside you; forcing the upwind boat head to wind; sandwiching the opposition between your two boats, thereby stealing their wind and preventing them from tacking; or simply covering the opposition and sailing them well beyond the lay line for the mark or the finish.

The Holt Cup this year was hosted by BRNC Dartmouth by kind permission of Cdre Jake Moores and supported by his river staff led by WO2(Sea) Neil Terry.

Eight teams from across the Royal Navy and Royal Marines were fielded, with an impressive 16 sailors making up four teams from the Fleet

Air Arm alone.

Sailing over two days on the River Dart, the race organisers were presented with very light and changeable winds on the Saturday, with significant challenges for all the teams caused by the steep valley sides.

A complete first series of races was run on the Saturday and the fleet then split into two, with the top teams – FAA 1, Portsmouth 1 and Plymouth 1 and 2 – forming the Gold Fleet and the Silver Fleet consisting of Portsmouth 2 with FAA 2, 3 and 4. This was the set up for the quarter finals on the Sunday.

Sunday provided better winds, but blowing from the east and beneath an overcast sky, it meant there was a much colder day's racing in store.

The main concern of the competitors waiting on a pontoon in the middle of the river, was keeping their fingertips warm. The Silver Fleet was the first to run in a series of three races for each team.

From these results, the lead team would be selected and promoted to sail in the Semi-Finals with the top three teams from the Gold League.

At the end of the sail-offs, all four teams had two wins and one defeat. FAA 3 with the fewest points managed to sneak into the semi-finals.

With the wind freshening, the comedy moment of the weekend was provided by Lt Cdr Peter Gardiner falling backwards into the river with one foot still attached to the kicking strap. His novice crewman AET Simon Philips desperately tried to pull him back on-board without capsizing.

Back in the boat, both helm and crew were greeted with rapturous applause and cheers from the other teams on the pontoon.

The final of the Holt Cup saw FAA 1 against

Portsmouth 1 in a best-of-three sail-off.

Once again, the event went right down to the wire.

After the first two races of the final the scores were level.

Unfortunately the decider did not live up to expectations: a substantial windshift early in the race and a poor tactical decision by Portsmouth's Lt Cdr Sam Mettam handed FAA1 a relatively easy one-two, which they held to the finish, to be crowned Royal Navy champions.

At the awards presentation, the Chris Goulding Tankard was awarded to CPO Mark Flannigan for his performance as the best novice helm.

This year's championships were contested by a wide diversity of rank, rate and experience levels, with national and Inter-Services champions sailing alongside complete novices.

The Plymouth team was almost entirely made up of the ship's company of HMS Campbelltown with stokers, CTs and medical assistants brought along by their CO Cdr Keri Harris.

The cream from this event will go on to race at Inter-Service level and also on to the British team racing circuit, taking on other organisations including British universities.

Despite the excellent turn-out at this year's event, RN dinghy sailing still needs new competitors – experienced sailors or novices looking to improve their skills or wanting to learn more about racing.

There are several events coming up in 2010, including the new flagship fleet racing event, the RN Dinghy Sailing Championships at Whale Island on July 14.

More details at www.rnsa.net/Dinghies/events.aspx

Welsh camp reaps rewards

TWENTY-six members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Cycling Association (RNRMCA) descended on the RAF Mountain Training Centre in the Brecon Beacons for their 2010 training camp.

The RNRMCA has used the centre three times before for an intense pre-season training package. The success the club has enjoyed over recent years has been attributed to the unique surroundings, training facilities and team-building opportunities the Beacons have to offer.

The 2010 camp was organised by CPO Andy Phipps (MASU Portsmouth). An accomplished cyclist, he ensured the accommodation, transport arrangements, educational briefs in the evenings and all funding requirements were met.

The RNRMCA promotes all cycling disciplines for members of the Service and the main aim of the 2010 camp was to prepare riders who would represent the Senior Service this season from club to national-level events.

The squad was split into two groups according to ability. Team captain CPO(PT) Sean Childs (HMS Raleigh) and Mark Gorman (former CPO, associate member and British Cycling Federation coach) led the groups over the week.

CPO Childs' group rode on average 110 miles a day, Mr Gorman's group 70 miles. As to be expected the terrain and weather conditions were extremely challenging and it was soon apparent the week was going to be anything but easy.

To complement the arduous

training rides Mr Gorman and Capt Leon Marshall RM (HMS Albion) delivered evening briefs to improve the squad's overall understanding.

Mr Gorman covered event profiling – a simple way for a rider, regardless of ability, to analyse their knowledge and skill and improve their performance – and performance monitoring, which looked at benefits, costs, advantages and usage of the numerous cycling gadgets currently on the market.

Capt Marshall, a post-graduate in Sports Science and Physics from Loughborough University, briefed on the subject of ergogenics: what can I take (and is legal) to make me go faster? His second brief covered hydration and fuelling strategies: specifically what to drink and eat during racing and training and how not all carbohydrates are

created equally.

Most worthy of mention was Sally Dean (associate member) who once again catered for the team and provided support on the road. Sally really was the unsung hero who worked long hours in the galley to ensure the nutritional requirements of the 26 hungry athletes were met. When not shopping for and preparing the daily banquet or providing massages, she could be seen out on the road ferrying food and dry clothing – and rescuing those who suffered mechanical problems.

In short, the 2010 camp was an enjoyable and demanding week with riders averaging between 300 and 500 miles. The isolated environment ensured there were no distractions for the team who enjoyed maximum benefits and development.



Boarders relish their Swiss role

ROYAL Navy snowboarders formed the backbone of the team representing the Combined Services at The Brits Snowboard and Ski competition, writes Maj Kenny Craig RM.

The event is the highpoint of the British Snowboard Freestyle and Freeski calendar and is the breeding and selection ground for GB's top athletes, many of whom go on to represent their country in the Olympics, X-Games and on the World Cup circuit.

The event took place in Laax, Switzerland, where competitors aged from six to 56 battled it out in boarder and skier-x, half pipe, big air and slopestyle disciplines.

The RN team members consisted of HMS Montrose's Lt Mick Hawkes (pictured above), PO Suzie Cook (HMS Scott) and AB(AET) Ross Taylor (RNAS Culdrose), and their performances against stiff, international-standard competition were impressive.

PO Suzie Cook had the greatest success, winning a British gold in the boarder-x ladies masters category with a number of outstanding rides down a particularly gnarly course.

Her achievement deservedly justified the long journey she had made back to compete from her ship in the Falklands.

Mick Hawkes and reigning Inter-Service slopestyle champion Ross Taylor both gave good accounts of their talent with Mick narrowly missing a podium in the slopestyle masters.

Both Ross and Mick had laboured particularly hard on their kicker work in preparation for the slopestyle competition, but sadly high winds and a resultant injury on the day closed the kicker section of the course turning the contest into purely a 'rail jam' (a discipline where youth tends to shine through).

The event was further supported by the RN in the form of Maj Kenny Craig, the competition technical delegate, and PO(D) Peter 'Shiner' Wright also on the hill team.

The military contingent are always warmly welcomed at the event which never fails to test and develop our athletes to the full.

For more information on RN snowboarding visit www.snowboardnavy.com or become a fan of the Snowboardnavy page on Facebook.

Friendly fencers

The RN fencing team hosted a friendly team competition in the Portsmouth area at HMS Temeraire, aimed at providing an opportunity for various inexperienced fencers to enjoy a team competition in a friendly atmosphere.

Five local teams fenced including the Royal Navy, Portsmouth University, Seacourt, Academie d'Esclime and Sway Fencing Club took part using all three weapons (foil, épée and sabre).

The competition was one of the first events attended by Academie d'Esclime and the first time they had been able to partake in a team competition.

They form part of the Respect programme, one of the government's 'positive futures' scheme which aims to reduce problems in inner city areas.

True to the spirit of the day, no results or places were given out, but the local teams can be proud of the outstanding performance from all fencers and Ibuprofen can enjoy extra sales from fencers making a recovery from all the hard work.

"This was a great opportunity for young people who do not normally get the chance to compete," said Joanne Savage, one of the Respect leaders.

"The young people from the programme have never been given a chance to compete in a fencing competition that's free.

"It was great for them to experience and put their training into action."

The next event for all Royal Navy fencers is the RN championships at Temeraire on the weekend of May 8-9.

Sailors ref Army clash

FOUR Royal Navy rugby referees officiated at the Army Premiership Final in Aldershot, the culmination of the Army's structured rugby season.

Appointed under the auspices of the Combined Services Rugby Referees' (CSRR) Federation, the four sailors were privileged to participate in one of the most thrilling and hotly-contested finals for years as 2nd Battalion Royal Welsh narrowly overcame 1st Battalion Welsh Guards 31-26.

One of the four officials, Cdr Stew Kilby, said: "We are very fortunate to have been invited by the Army Rugby Union to officiate at such an important fixture."

"The opportunity to referee the game, played with such high skill and commitment, at such a high pace in front of over one thousand passionate rugby aficionados was a highlight of my refereeing career."

"The excellent work of all of our Naval referees epitomises the jointery of today's modern defence force and our members can be seen officiating all over the globe wherever units are playing organised rugby."



● AB 'Norms' Wisdom wins his bout against ET Libralon from HMS Sutherland as Cumberland clinches the Fleet trophy

Fight knights

BOXERS from Scotland and Naval Air Command clashed at HMS Neptune's charity boxing dinner.

The black tie event was held in the base's Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates' Mess, with spectators paying £50 per head for an evening of food, drink and fighting.

The proceeds from the night – roughly £1,000 – were split equally between Help for Heroes, and Royal Navy and Royal Marines' charities.

There were seven bouts on the night, beginning with light heavyweights PO Illingworth and the Fleet Air Arm's AET Day. In a bad start for the home team, AET Day was given the judges' verdict on a split decision.

The heavyweight clash followed, with big hitters Cpl Maughan and AET Howard going toe-to-toe.

It was RN Scotland team captain Maughan's final contest and the Royal Marine made it count, securing a victory against his airman opponent after forcing him to take two standing counts.

The third bout between Mne Cottle and Logs Molyneux at middleweight witnessed three frantic rounds; it was the commando who came out ahead, taking the split decision verdict in his very first bout.

Scotland's AB Whitnall followed at welterweight, felling AET Penny and winning a unanimous decision from the judges.

With the home team three points ahead of their rivals, Mne Metcalfe was determined to widen the lead as he stepped into the ring at light heavyweight.

His opponent, LAET Rose, was no pushover though, and it was an aggressive three rounds in which each fighter thought they'd done enough to win and earned a standing ovation from the crowd. Mne Metcalfe earned the judges' decision after landing the cleaner punches overall.

The penultimate fight at welterweight saw AB Stewart and AET Thomas step into the ring for Scotland and FAA respectively.

Both boxers had only one previous contest under their belts, but it did not show during the bout with each fighter pulling off a good demonstration of technical boxing.

AET Thomas pushed the pace somewhat towards the end and took the victory on a split decision.

Two light heavyweights, AB Green and AET Viqtrna, stepped into the ring for the final bout of the night.

In what was probably the most physical fight of the evening, both pugilists showed a high level of courage as they exchanged combinations of power blows for the whole three rounds.

It was a close decision, but in the end the judges declared Green the winner, clinching a 5-2 victory for Scotland on the night.

Meanwhile down in HMS Collingwood...

In a nail-biting competition, HMS Cumberland's boxers fought their way to being declared Fleet champions of 2010.

The Type 22 frigate, which returned in December from a demanding operational deployment east of Suez, fielded six boxers – LS(EW) Abbi Wilson, AB(CIS) 'Errol' Flynn, ET(WE) 'Nag' Nagle, ET(ME) 'Gail' Porter, AB(WS) 'Robbo' Robinson and AB(Sea) 'Norms' Wisdom – ably coached by the Mighty Sausage's EWO and PTI, WO1 Kent Tanner and LPT 'Blood' Reid respectively.

Only the squad captain, AB Wisdom, had any boxing experience. Cumberland's win was the result of hours of dedicated training whilst deployed, followed by a training camp at a rainy HMS Raleigh once the frigate returned to Devonport.

The Mighty Sausage's boxers also bagged some individual gongs: LS Wilson won her category while AB Wisdom was declared the boxer of the night.

● Action from the Scotland-Fleet Air Arm encounter at HMS Neptune
Picture: LA(Phot) Brian Douglas, FRPU North



● The 'golden stick' of the tournament, PO(AET) Mark Stanton (Naval Strike Wing) lines up another strike at the RAF net
Picture: Lt Col Charles Jackman

Best. Game. Ever.

AFTER a dank and dismal winter, the sun at last came out to greet more than 350 hockey players and officials in 16 squads: 15 of players, one of umpires and officials at the Inter-Services Outdoor Hockey Championships at Aldershot.

Technically in the hosting chair, the Royal Air Force (who last hosted the event over three days in 2005 on one pitch) were accorded the dubious privilege of watching the Army and Navy play each other on the first afternoon at all five levels (men's masters, women's masters, U23 men, women and men) before having to play twice on day two: in the morning versus the losers from day one, and then in the afternoon versus the winners.

As always, the devil is in the detail and on the Army patch, the efforts of secretary Lt Col Alan Flavell and his assistants made for the most splendid tournament – perhaps the best yet, writes Lt Cdr Alan Walker, RNHA.

Overall, the honours were shared: three competition wins for the RAF, two wins for the Army with the Navy left to console themselves with a solitary but magnificent win 4-1 over the Army in the blue riband Army-Navy senior men's match... and then participating in arguably the most exciting Inter-Services match ever against the RAF and a fitting climax to a wonderful occasion.

After the Navy's 4-1 well deserved win over the Army (in which Cpl Tom Nicoll (CTCRM) had opened the scoring and an on-fire PO(AET) Mark Stanton (JHF RAF Cottesmore) had buried two from open play, plus a penalty stroke for his hat-trick) the RAF and Army had fought out a dour 2-2 draw in the morning.

Olympian Guy Fordham scored twice for the Army with replies from Flg Off Chris Burden

(RAF Benson) and SAC Paul Dowers (RAF Wittering). This meant that in the concluding match the RAF needed to win; the RN could either draw or win to take the Indian Air Force Trophy.

Quicker into their stride than the Navy, the RAF put away a well-worked short corner with SAC Dowers getting on the end of a five-man switch in the fifth minute.

A 25-minute struggle for supremacy ensued when SAC Richie Corbett (RAF Scampton) for the RAF and Moore for the Navy received warnings for near-the-mark tackles.

The first RN striker again was Cpl Nicoll to level at 1-1 late on to conclude the first half.

There then followed a pulsating seven-goal second half that had to be seen to be believed.

First Dowers again converted a penalty corner in the 43rd minute for 2-1. The RAF's Cpl Danny Wallis was sent off in the 43rd minute and the Navy then went close: a great save by RAF keeper Sgt Suneil Raval kept the RN out.

The ten men of the RAF were matched by the ten-man Navy as Scottish international Mne Al Gouick (45 Cdo) 'converted' his 44th-minute green card into a sin-binned yellow. This time Fg Off Burden converted the penalty corner for 3-1.

The Navy had cause from the Indoor Inter Services to remember SAC Corbett who now, with an open-play goal in the 48th minute, cracked the Navy right down the middle for a seemingly unassailable 4-1 RAF lead.

Senior RN Officers were seen to frown and admirals to search for explanations; senior Royal Air Force officers were seen to be looking gleeful and air marshals to be pleased...

Navy hearts were in Navy mouths for a couple of minutes but by sheer unadulterated grit, Lt Adam Duke positively buried a 51st-minute penalty corner.

His shot, drag-flicked, devastatingly-hard,

fizzed and snarled its way around the roof of RAF net for a few seconds; the 4-2 scoreline lifted Navy hearts a little. Dare one hope for a comeback?

The ensuing six or seven minutes' play were end-to-end stuff with first the RAF then Navy morale lifted as adrenaline fuelled some of the most technically-perfect passages of play ever seen in an Inter Services match.

It was the Navy's star man Mark Stanton who put away another ferocious short corner on 57 minutes, making it now only 4-3 to the RAF.

Unbelievably one minute later the same player took on the keeper and forced the ball into the net for 4-4 and his fifth goal of the tournament.

Senior RAF officers were now seen to purse lips and air marshals to bristle. Senior RN officers were again seen to smile; the Navy went wild, the RAF went quiet.

With 12 minutes to go, the Navy needed to continue to attack, to play the game in the RAF half. Surely in this second match of the day, these RAF chaps must soon run out of legs.

The RAF Coach Ian Jennings, former star of Army and England wasn't worried – he'd been there before.

The vastly experienced RN coach Steve Lemon had also been there before.

The vast, bi-partisan crowd was confident that each coach would get the best from his team. As the seconds ticked away and Navy hearts were praying for the final whistle.

Ten minutes to go 4-4, an Inter Service win for the Navy. Two minutes to go, 4-4. Thirty seconds to go 4-4. Ten seconds to go, an over-hit cross from an RAF player unexpectedly came off the RN post directly into the path of Sgt Jon Pell-Reynolds (RAF Boulmer) who put it away for a 5-4 RAF victory.

There was barely time for a re-start. Was there ever such a match?

Goldsbury's golden goal sinks Heron

THE Navy Cup final took place at Victory Stadium, Portsmouth with HMS Heron and 45 Cdo RM facing each other after beating HMS Illustrious and CTC RM in their respective semi-finals.

Conditions were perfect at Burnaby Road, with the sun shining. Despite rain earlier in the week, the pitch was in magnificent shape.

The game started brightly with both teams favouring a traditional 4-4-2 formation.

45 Cdo's pace threatened early on in the contest with both Mne Husbands and Courtney looking to test the opposition back four when they received the ball to feet.

Heron looked to get the ball forward early to AET Musumeci and then support from midfield.

Both 45 Cdo central defenders, Sgts Nicholson and Lockhart, appeared comfortable with the ball, although the aerial presence of AET Ardley caused the Royals some problems during set pieces.

Mid-way through the first period, 45 Cdo looked to be edging



Onside with Lt Cdr Neil Horwood, RNFA

ahead in terms of possession and pressure, but against the run of play Heron took the lead through a goal from AET Paterson.

The opposition were quick to respond with a leveller from Husbands, who then went on to provide the assist for Courtney; he slotted home from 12 yards as the airmen struggled to deal with the pace of Husbands down the right-hand channel. 45 Cdo went into the break 2-1 up.

The second half saw an early change for 45 Cdo with Mne Goldsbury replacing Husbands who retired with a hamstring strain. Heron took full advantage of the change of personnel and went on to enjoy their best period of the game.

Sustained pressure forced the Royals to sit deeper than they would have liked; they rarely

tested AET Emmerson in the Heron goal.

The hard work paid off eventually when Lt Sharrot, who had recently come off the bench for Heron adding a new dimension to the attack, headed in from close range to even the scores late in the game and force extra time.

With fresh legs being introduced by both teams, the game became stretched in extra time, although neither side could take advantage.

The first period ended with the scores remaining even. Heron continued to push further up the field of play in their search for a winner but eventually were caught outnumbered in their own defensive third, allowing Mne Goldsbury to bundle the ball home to give 45 Cdo the lead again.

Heron refused to lie down and concede defeat and continued to

press the opposition with AET Musumeci charging down field in the final minute of the match, outpacing the 45 Cdo defender only for Cpl Murphy, the 45 keeper, to block the shot and wrap up the victory.

There were some strong individual performances on both sides, with both AET Paterson and Mne Petch, his opposite number in the middle of the field having good games.

Both team captains had strong games and led by example, but the man of the match award went to Mne Courtney for an accomplished performance throughout the entire 120 minutes.

Meanwhile in Faslane, the football teams of HMS Sutherland and HMS Cornwall took the opportunity whilst alongside ahead of Joint Warrior to compete in a friendly fixture.

In unusually fine conditions, both sides played some good football and were keen to win. In the end, a strong Sutherland team dominated the match running out deserving 10-3 winners.

Royals go south for squash

SOUTH Africa was the stunning (and distant) destination for the Royal Marines' 2010 squash tour.

The tone was set as soon as we landed in South Africa, writes Lt Mark Felton (HMS Nelson).

Flying in to Johannesburg, the team had a generous three hours to recover from the flight, check into a hotel, acclimatise and be ready to play a match at 1100.

Upon arrival at the courts at J-Berg Country Club the Royals conducted a quick recce to discover that the courts were not to regulation size (1.5m too wide), the 5,751ft altitude caused the ball to travel through the air in a strange way and there was stifling humidity at 28°C – all factors that led to an 'interesting' first match.

Nonetheless the team rose to the challenge and decided that the wider court was best overcome by playing doubles.

The opposition, J-Berg Jesters, were a doubles specialist team and certainly competed well to take a hard-fought victory over the RM.

The following day the Jesters provided another ten new players; what they lacked in youth they more than made up for in knowhow and guile around the court.

Once again doubles were the flavour of the day and by now the RMs were showing some 'court awareness' of their own having picked up the tactics of doubles.

The next fixture was in Durban, so the team travelled via the Zulu battlefields – an enlightening experience.

On arrival in very humid Durban, the team immediately set off to play Durban Jesters at Kloof Country Club.

The singles started off the evening which saw a top-ranked SA player testing our RM bandsman No.1.

Doubles were on the agenda again but this time a much closer match was fought.

Not the type of team to shy from travel and adventure the marines team braved White Rhino and Buffalo to make it to the next challenge all the way down by the Garden Route at St Francis Bay.

The local Jesters were keen to play doubles and the Royals enjoyed the cooler, less-humid courts and took the benefit of a morning match by playing well to win the majority of the matches.

Cape Town beckoned for the final three matches of the tour, after the Royals tried their hand at the well-known sport of ostrich racing.

As Cape Town had been experiencing a heat wave, the courts were back up to a fierce temperature. Fortunately the marines could revert to playing regular singles games.

The first match at Western Province Squash Club proved that surviving long rallies and games were crucial to gaining wins and the RM narrowly missed out on victory.

Changing location to Camps Bay, the next match against Cape Town Jesters raised the standard again. The RM No.2, Mne Marti Sadler, delivered some exhibition squash against the ladies' SA No.3.

The last match of the tour was probably on the hottest courts against Camps Bay Club, the final result was a draw.

Over the two weeks the RM squash team played a high standard of squash against high-quality opposition scattered widely across South Africa. The tour involved significant travel which enabled the RM to appreciate the diverse culture and topography of SA.

Thanks must be given to all the clubs who generously hosted the RM during the tour. Financial assistance from non-public funds such as the RN/RM Sports Lottery and Corps funds proved invaluable. Thanks also to tour manager WO2 Stan Bloomer RM whose efforts ensured such a representative tour happened.



● L/Cpl Carl Edwards (SFSG F Coy) closes the door against the Army in the RN's 6-2 triumph

Picture: www.robertswannphotography.com

Celebrations on ice

FOUR hundred enthusiastic fans at the John Nike Leisure Centre in Bracknell witnessed the fiercest rivalry in Forces sport – Army-Navy – clash for ice hockey bragging rights.

Although service ice hockey has not yet achieved the pedigree of rugby, this fast-paced and quickly-growing sport has many things in common with more popular counterpart, writes Lt Cdr Al Bernard, RNIHA.

But one of the biggest differences between rugby and ice hockey for the RN is that the Senior Service have not lost to the Army in their six meetings since 2006.

Occasionally referred to as 'rugby on ice', the hard-hitting Army-Navy game did not disappoint the fans with some big checks being dished out right from the initial face-off.

Like most sports, the Army have numbers on their side and on paper were the better team.

However, the Navy's ice hockey history has been impressive since the Senior Service returned to the sport in 2006: back-to-back Inter-Services titles in 2007 and 2008 and a tri-Service Command title in 2009.

Navy Command teams have not finished any lower than third since 2006 in the tri-Services Command Championships and the RN squad was the best finishing British team at the 2009 European Services Championships, finishing a very respectable 14th and ahead of both the Army and RAF squads.

RN captain Cpl John 'Moose' Underwood was keen to highlight the team's successes in the dressing room before the game: "The Navy have not lost a game to the Army in competition since 2006. They are going to want this win, but we will show that we want it more. Let's go prove it to them!"

With that mindset, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines players took to the ice determined to upset the Army and their followers who made up the vast majority of the crowd.

The Army came out hard in the first period, throwing some big hits to try to intimidate the Senior Service.

But while the Army concentrated on crowd-pleasing hits, the Navy concentrated on moving the puck forward and were first to score. Mne Karl Sullivan (UKLF CSG Air Defence Troop) pounced on the puck to score his first of the night.

The RN would score two more goals before the end of the period courtesy of Mne Adam Hankins (FPGRM FSRT) and a second from Mne Sullivan.

Army attempts to get on the scoreboard were met by a brick wall in the form of Navy goalie L/Cpl Carl Edwards (SFSG F Coy). Edwards would be the main reason the teams retired to the dressing room after 20 minutes of play with the Navy 3-0 up.

The Army commanded the ice for the entire second period and if it hadn't been for Edwards' exceptional performance in goal, the score would have been very different from the 3-1 tally in favour of the Navy after 40 minutes of play.

The RN managed to regroup in the third and final period and returned to the form which brought them success in the first period. Unluckily, it would be the Army who would score first to reduce their deficit to one goal with 10 minutes left to play.

The Army attempts to get the tying goal in the latter stages of the game opened up the ice for the Navy forwards and saw some excellent end-to-end action.

The Navy kept up the pressure and took advantage of the Army pushing forward to score three more times in the final ten minutes, including two more goals for Hankins to earn his hat-trick and put the match out of reach, sealing a 6-2 win. Hankins was named the RN's man of the match for his three-goal performance.

The evening ended in true Service sport tradition, with the entire squad of both teams enjoying a social drink in the bar, discussing the

overall winner of the night – Forces ice hockey. In addition to the great hockey, the event raised just short of £1,000 for charity.

One week later, it was the turn of the Navy's developmental players to take to the ice in back-to-back games against the Gosport Spartans.

The Spartans are the local development team and the games provided a great opportunity for both teams to get their less-experienced players on the ice.

The first game saw the Spartans play their better players and the result was an evenly-matched competition between the two sides. The Navy got on the score board first with a couple of quick goals but the Spartans fought back and after two periods the Navy were down 7-4.

After regrouping during the intermission, the RN dominated the third period, scoring five unanswered goals to secure a 9-7 win. Strong positional play and effective pressure at the offensive end of the ice was the key to the turn-around. Man of the match was awarded to LET Michael Fyans.

In the second game, the Spartans dressed a slightly-weaker side against a reduced RN team. The competition was once again very close and after 60 minutes of hockey the Navy edged the locals 4-1. Player of the match was awarded to Lt Nadia Robertson (HMS Sultan), a first-year player with the RN.

These developmental games allow novice players to practise the skills they have been working on in training and, since many of the development players have only recently taken up the sport, it is essential that they get these opportunities to play against similarly skilled competition. The RNIHA is committed to a sustained developmental team fixture schedule to ensure the sport is promoted from the bottom up in the RN.

More details about the sport can be found at www.rniha.org.uk. The next major Service event will be the annual combined Inter-Services and tri-Service Command Championships at Ice Sheffield June 8-11.

It's goodnight from me... and from him

IT'S farewell from two stalwarts of RN sport behind the scenes this year.

For a quarter of a century, Lt (SCC) Tommy Wallace has been heavily involved in the alpine ski championships.

He started off by racing with the HMS Cochrane team and RN(S).

For the past 17 or so years, Lt Wallace has been an instructor at what has grown to be the biggest event in the Navy sport calendar.

The instruction grew arms and legs and quickly became a massive part of the event, especially when snowboarding was introduced about 12 years

ago by CPO Pete Bone.

Now the RN takes out 15 ski, ten snowboard and one Telemark instructor, plus a race trainer.

2010 was Lt Wallace's final year as chief instructor.

"What a great way to finish at the fantastic resort of Tignes," he says. "I have thoroughly enjoyed each and every minute of being involved and have had some superb men and women instructors working with me over the years. Cheers! I may be back!"

Meanwhile in warmer surroundings... Lt Cdr Alan Walker will shortly be stepping down as the RN's 'Mr Hockey'

after half a century with the Senior Service.

For some 35 of those 50 years, he's been a mainstay of the sport. He's widely-respected as a coach to thousands of sportsmen and women who, under his guidance and care, fulfilled their true potential and in numerous cases went on to represent their country.

That dedication earned him the inaugural Lifetime Achievement Award from the Combined Services Sport Board, presented at the annual CS Sports Awards.

Lt Cdr Walker wasn't the only Senior Serviceman to receive a gong from the Duke of Kent.

While the Sportsman/Woman of the Year titles both went to the Army, the Team of the Year award was collected by the RN Swimming Team, rewarded for 15 years' dominance of Inter-Service sport.

"We've done really well in the civilian suite as well as in all the masters competitions from national to European to the World Masters Games and World Masters Championships," said team captain WO2 Nick Vaughan.

"We got the fastest time in the Combined Services cross-Channel swim last year – not just out of the Services, but the civilians as well."

Red prevails over green

Continued from page 48

The wind and the soft pitch conditions were taking their toll of both sides and gaps started to appear. Only some last-gasp tackles from the Paras stopped the Royals going into the lead.

In the final minutes it was the airborne soldiers who closed out the game with two tries, making the final score 14-25.

After the match Leeds Rhinos' chief executive Gary Hetherington expressed his thanks to both Services for putting on such a great spectacle despite the disappointment of not being able to play at Headingley.

In light of the late change of venue, he generously announced that all the ticket money would be donated to the three nominated charities, £862 in total.

Beach, barbie, and rugby

WHAT'S not to like?

A Forces beach rugby tournament is being staged on Lusty Glaze Beach in Newquay on Sunday July 18 for the Children's Hospice South West.

The charity is the chosen good cause of HMS Turbulent, whose deeps are hoping to take part (although there's a possibility the boat will be BOSTing).

Six-man (or woman) teams from the Services are invited to take part, although each squad must raise £500 to attend.

A barbecue will bring the curtain down on the day's sport.

Money will help the charity build its new hospice near St Austell.

More details from Emma Lloyd on 01872 261 166 or emma.lloyd@chsw.org.uk.

The trip of the kite fantastic

A TEAM of five riders from the RN/RM Kitesurfing Association will compete in the first Forces cross-Channel race next month.

The three Forces team aim to race in relays across one of the world's busiest shipping lanes, leaving Guernsey and making for land 70 miles away in Poole Harbour. Depending on weather conditions, the race will be staged between June 1-4, 10-18, or 24-30.

Aside from Service pride, there's a more important issue at stake: money.

The race is being staged in support of Help For Heroes – hence the event's name, Kite 4 Heroes – with the hope of raising in excess of £20K.

More details about the event and making a donation can be found at www.kite4heroes.co.uk

Cornish greens for engineers

The 17th RN Engineers Open Golf Championships will be staged at Trethorne Golf Club, Launceston, on Monday September 6.

All serving members of the WE, ME, AE and MT branches, plus RFA engineers, former RN engineers and previous champions are invited.

The format for the day is medal in the morning (full handicap, white tees), followed by a stableford in the afternoon (¾ handicap, yellow tees).

The cost of the day's golf is £50 for non-Trethorne members, £35 for members, including 36 holes of golf, coffee and bacon butties on arrival, cooked lunch and a three-course evening meal plus coffee and prizes.

The maximum handicap for the event is 24 (players with higher handicaps can enter, but must play off a maximum of 24).

The closing date for entries is July 23. Details in RNTM 05/10, www.engineersopen.co.uk or WO1 Taff Reha on 02392 726113.

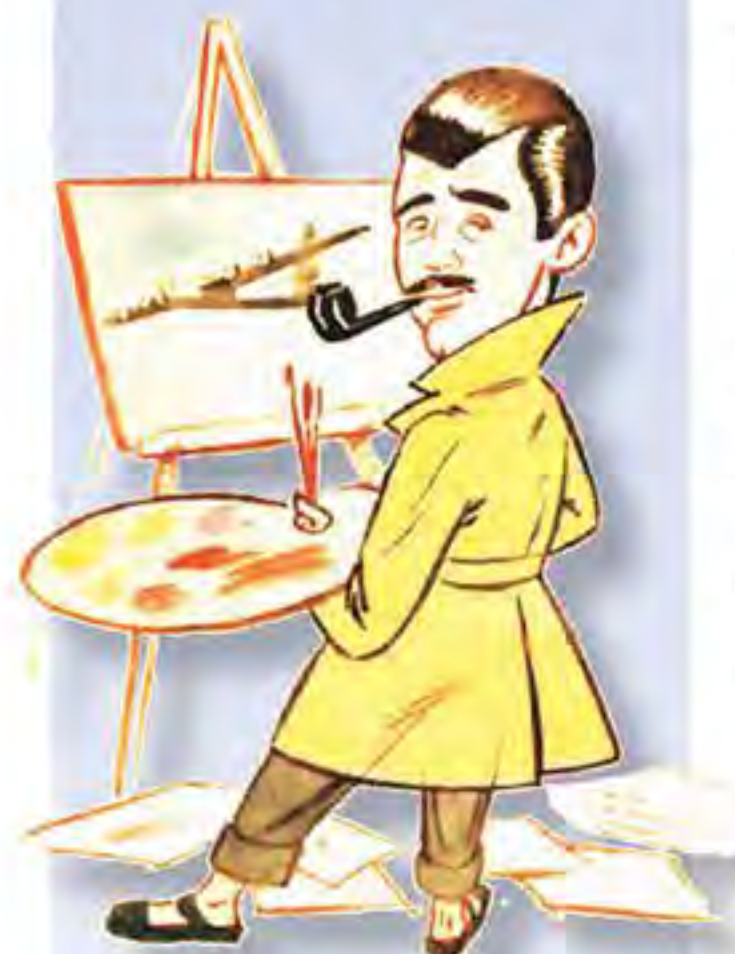
Next month



'Give me the wretched refuse of your teeming shore' - Dunkirk 70th anniversary supplement



Where Super Eagles dare - commandos return to Nigeria



Cartoon character - the life and work of Maj 'Griff' Griffiths RM

Plus

All the action from the Army-Navy clash at Twickenham



Pictures: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan, FRPU East

RAF shot down by RN

THE Royal Navy notched up a resounding victory against a young and spirited Royal Air Force team in Portsmouth in the opening match of the Babcock Inter-Services rugby union contest.

Earlier in the day, the RN Veterans narrowly missed out after a second-half comeback, losing by 16 points to 19, writes Lt Cdr Paula Rowe, RNRU.

This was followed by a well-deserved win for the RN Women, 14-11. It had been lean time of late for the Navy women in this competition, since achieving back-to-back wins against the RAF in the 2004-05 and 2005-06 seasons.

With the honours even between the two Services, the scene was set for a thrilling clash that would see the Royal Navy Senior XV aiming for their 50th win over the men in light blue since 1920 (the Air Force have 31 wins).

Fielding four new caps in the starting line-up, and four more on the bench, the RN were to show from the kick-off that they were all fit, strong and determined to play a high-tempo and physical game.

After only five minutes, a break by full back Rob Lloyd (42 Cdo RM), good continuity and recycling, resulted in standoff Wayne John (HMS Liverpool) crossing the line for the first points of the evening, converted by skipper PO Dave Pascoe (RNAS Culdrose).

Pascoe was winning his 21st RN cap - elevating him to the top echelon of Navy players. He then converted a penalty to put the Navy into a ten-point lead after 14 minutes.

Just minutes later centre Dale Sleeman (HMS Cumberland) marked his debut in fine style by adding the Navy's second try (unconverted).

Four more tries followed for the Navy courtesy of two from Lloyd and one apiece from back rows Les Dennis (HMS Nelson) and Greg Barden (RM Poole). The RAF points from a penalty kick put the half-time score at 39-3 to the RN.



● A look of fierce determination is etched on the faces as the RN ladies chase down the ball during their 14-11 victory over the RAF

In the second half, the Navy added a further tally of tries from Josh Drauniniu (HMNB Portsmouth), Lloyd, Barden, second row and new cap Dennis Scotthorne (42 Cdo RM), centre Calum Macrae (CTCRM) and back row and new cap Kieran Morton (UKLFCSG).

When the final whistle blew, the score was Royal Navy 73 RAF 3.

The large crowd was treated to a game of open, running rugby that saw the Navy play at a high tempo and intensity.

Every RN break was met by resounding cheers from the home supporters, who watched an expansive and flowing game unfold.

In the face of this dark blue onslaught, the RAF remained resolute and kept working hard for each other until the end.

Led by their uncompromising and experienced second row Howard Parr, there were individual performances of note that augur well for the future of

RAF rugby; 19-year-old back row Sam Attwooll in particular showed huge promise.

The score in the Navy's favour did not really reflect the level of commitment and teamwork of the RAF side.

The Navy team played as a cohesive unit throughout, clearly reaping the benefits of their training camp at HMS Nelson.

Several players stood out, deserving mention for their performances.

Cpl Damien Chambers (UKLFCSG), who has missed out for the last two years due to injury, made a huge impact from the No.8 position, creating gaps for the back row of Dennis and Barden to exploit.

Cpl Gaz Evans (539 ASRM) in the open field was as devastating as ever and his unselfish pass of the ball in sight of the line allowed Drauniniu to score.

Drauniniu has clearly made the most of his time spent with the England 7s squad and showed this

in his jinking running style that has now been enhanced by his ability to off-load in the tackle.

Young Sleeman at centre has shown throughout the season that he is a talented player, working alongside Calum and Scott to produce a 'steel wall' in defence and a fast explosive reaction to any ball that is turned over.

Finally, man of the match LAET Marsh Cormack (RNAS Culdrose) had what has to be one of his best performances in a Navy shirt. His open field play, either as a ball carrier or in support, was outstanding.

Whilst pleased with the result, RN Director of Rugby Geraint Ashton Jones sounded a note of caution: "This was a very encouraging performance from the Navy squad and I was particularly pleased with the way the new players delivered on the park."

"But there are still three weeks of hard work before we face our sternest test against the Army at Twickenham."



Lucy joins 2012 team

THE RN's top female boxer will represent her country at the 2012 Olympics.

For the first time, female and male boxers will be competing in the ring at the London games (not at the same time obviously...).

Lt Lucy O'Connor is ranked fifth in the world in her category - 51kg flyweight - and holds a string of medals and titles, including gold at the 2008 European Championships and four ABA titles. She was named Combined Services Sportswoman of the Year in March.

The 31-year-old junior officer is the most senior of the six female boxers in the RN and joins a seven-strong women's squad preparing for the 2012 games.

She divides her time between training with the RN boxing squad at HMS Nelson and the English Institute of Sport in Sheffield.

"It is a dream come true to be selected for the squad but it is now when the hard work really starts," she said.

"This will be the only chance I get to compete at the Olympic Games so I am going to train hard, learn from the coaches and do everything I can to be part of the team for 2012."

Red prevails over green

THE eighth staging of rugby league's Trafalgar Cup clash saw the Parachute Regiment claim only their second victory with a hard-fought 25-14 win over the Corps side in Leeds.

The game was played at West Park Leeds' ground after the pitch at the original venue - Leeds Rhinos' Headingley stadium - was deemed unsuitable, writes WO1 Keith Humpleby, RNRL spokesman.

The new setting and facilities were excellent, but weather conditions meant the game was littered with mistakes from both sides.

The Paras got the better of these early mistakes to score and convert after 15 minutes.

From the restart the Paras continued to pressure the Royals with some strong running from their No.10 which led to the red berets' second, unconverted try.

It took the commandos another 12 minutes before they replied with their own try from 'Taff' Rossiter to make the score 4-10 after half an hour.

The Paras replied with a drop goal to close the first half at 11-4 up.

As the second period opened, the green berets' passes started to stick and with some quick ball play they hit back with two rapid tries which brought the score to 14-17.

As the game entered the final quarter there was everything to play for.

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