



NAVY NEWS

Off-sale date: October 1, 2010

SEPTEMBER 2010
£2.00

FISH 'N' SHIPS

TWO WEEKS IN THE LIFE OF HMS SEVERN

FIRE FOR EFFECT

WHY RIFLE SKILLS MATTER

HAPPY CAMPUS

AT SEA WITH THE UNIVERSITY SQUADRON



COLD CALLING

HMS Portland glides past the stunning blue-white mass of the Nordenskjöld Glacier during a visit to South Georgia in the depths of the austral winter. See pages 22-23 for more stunning images.

Picture: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson, FRPU East





Fleet Focus

WELL, that's summer over for another year (cheer up, in 2011 it falls on a Saturday...).

And right about now the men and women of the Royal Navy should be returning to duty after August leave.

If they had it, of course: several thousand Senior Service personnel remained deployed over the summer.

There was no let-up (nor, sadly, end to sacrifice) for **40 Commando** in Afghanistan (see opposite).

There was no let-up in the war against pirates (waged by **HMS Northumberland** – see right – soon to be joined by **HMS Montrose** – see page 4) or in maritime security operations in the Gulf (carried out by **HMS Somerset** – see page 6).

There was no let-up in work around the Falklands, where **HMS Clyde** and **HMS Portland** took part in an exercise with air and ground forces, before the latter ship made for South Georgia (see pages 22-23 for some stunning imagery); Portland will soon be returning home as **HMS Gloucester's** South Atlantic-bound to replace her (see page 4).

There was no let-up for **HMS Chiddingfold** which changed an engine despite 50°C heat (see page 7).

And there was no let-up for the Silent Service; aside from the constant bomber on patrol, **HMS Talent** remains east of Suez, while **HMS Tireless** deployed to join her (see page 5).

And finally, summer is the busiest time of year for the boats of the **University Royal Naval Units** who use the educational recess to immerse their students in the full Senior Service experience (see pages 18-19).

That said, there was a flurry of ships returning to the UK for summer leave: **HMS Chatham's** anti-piracy patrol is done, as is **HMS St Albans'** work in the Gulf, while the bulk of vessels committed to Exercise Auriga – **Ark Royal**, **Liverpool**, **Sutherland** and **Albion** – are all back in Blighty. Only **HMS Ocean** is not among them; she's staying across the Atlantic for the next month or so (see pages 4-5).

Also in home waters **HMS Echo** visited Dublin (see page 6), **HMS Atherstone** made for Manchester (see page 8) and **HMS Turbulent** enjoyed some fine dining... for a good cause (see page 8).

HMS Severn offers us an insight into the generally-unappreciated (and always smelly) work of the Fishery Protection Squadron (see pages 24-25).

All three of the Navy's major public events this summer have been blessed with good/excellent weather. After Yeovilton Air Day last month, this time it's the turn of **Culdrose Air Day** and **Portsmouth Navy Days** which between them pulled in nearly 50,000 visitors (see page 10).

Ten times that figure apparently saw **HMS Westminster**, which headed to Sunderland to take part in an air-sea display at the town's waterfront (see right).

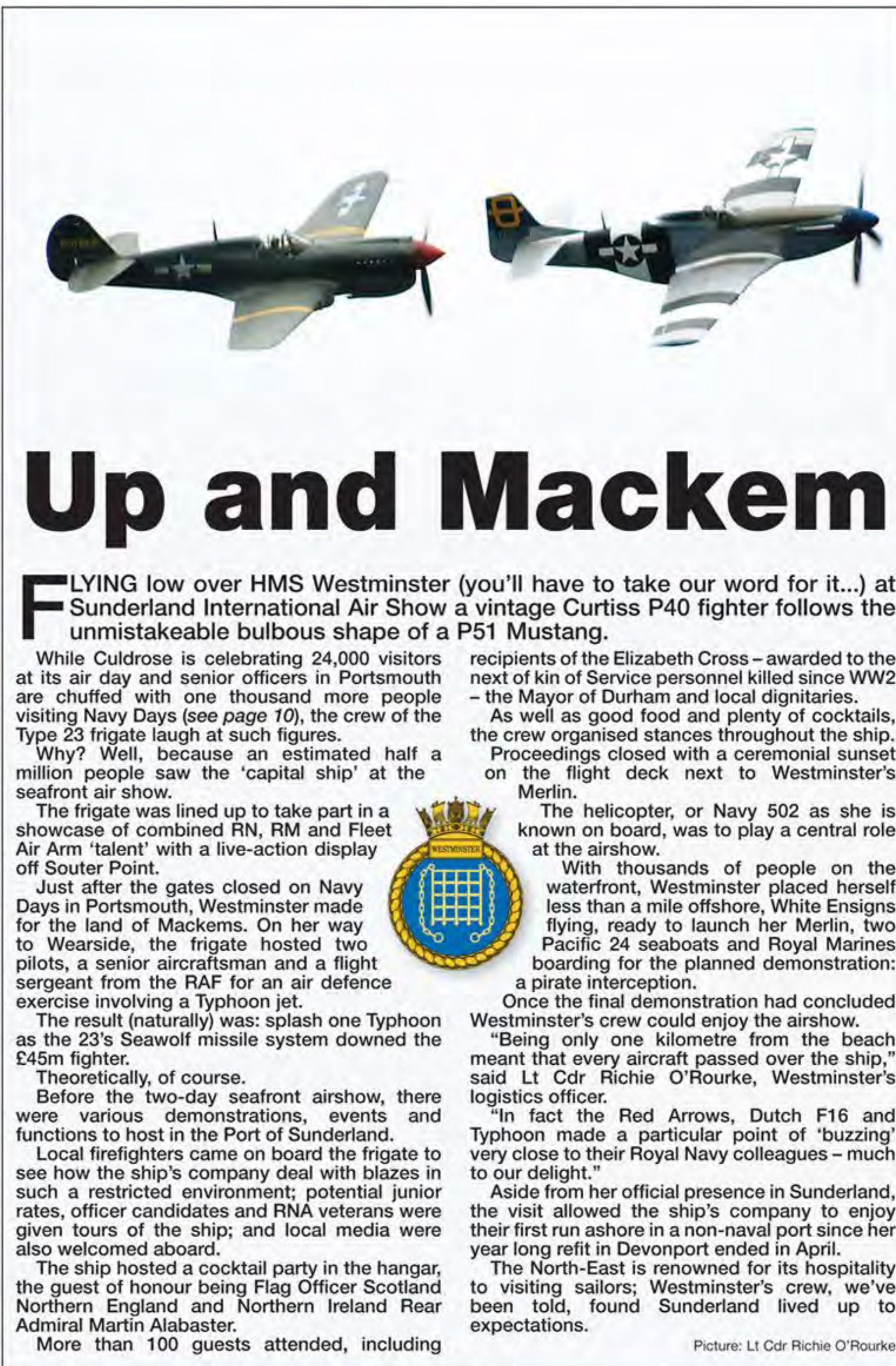
While the 'capital ship' was showing off for the public, **HMS Richmond** was entertaining new Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox ahead of the looming shake-up of the military (see page 5).

Talking of demonstrations, sailors from **HMS Diamond** visited RAF Coningsby to join in dogfights with their affiliated Air Force squadron (see page 13).

Diamond's main armament will be the **Sea Viper** missile which is all-but operational after a successful salvo launch against a drone target in the Med (see page 7).

Also on the technological front, submariners can now learn the lay-out of a T-boat using a 3D computer simulation, **SubSafe2** (see page 9).

This technology lark's all well and good, but it's nothing without Jack. And you don't get more Jack than **Britain's best sea dog**, WO1 Nigel Jones (see page 8).



Up and Mackem

FLYING low over HMS Westminster (you'll have to take our word for it...) at Sunderland International Air Show a vintage Curtiss P40 fighter follows the unmistakable bulbous shape of a P51 Mustang.

While Culdrose is celebrating 24,000 visitors at its air day and senior officers in Portsmouth are chuffed with one thousand more people visiting Navy Days (see page 10), the crew of the Type 23 frigate laugh at such figures.

Why? Well, because an estimated half a million people saw the 'capital ship' at the seafront air show.

The frigate was lined up to take part in a showcase of combined RN, RM and Fleet Air Arm 'talent' with a live-action display off Souter Point.

Just after the gates closed on Navy Days in Portsmouth, Westminster made for the land of Mackems. On her way to Wearside, the frigate hosted two pilots, a senior aircraftsman and a flight sergeant from the RAF for an air defence exercise involving a Typhoon jet.

The result (naturally) was: splash one Typhoon as the 23's Seawolf missile system downed the £45m fighter.

Theoretically, of course.

Before the two-day seafront airshow, there were various demonstrations, events and functions to host in the Port of Sunderland.

Local firefighters came on board the frigate to see how the ship's company deal with blazes in such a restricted environment; potential junior rates, officer candidates and RNA veterans were given tours of the ship; and local media were also welcomed aboard.

The ship hosted a cocktail party in the hangar, the guest of honour being Flag Officer Scotland Northern England and Northern Ireland Rear Admiral Martin Alabaster.

More than 100 guests attended, including

recipients of the Elizabeth Cross – awarded to the next of kin of Service personnel killed since WW2 – the Mayor of Durham and local dignitaries.

As well as good food and plenty of cocktails, the crew organised stances throughout the ship.

Proceedings closed with a ceremonial sunset on the flight deck next to Westminster's Merlin.

The helicopter, or Navy 502 as she is known on board, was to play a central role at the airshow.

With thousands of people on the waterfront, Westminster placed herself less than a mile offshore, White Ensigns flying, ready to launch her Merlin, two Pacific 24 seaboats and Royal Marines boarding for the planned demonstration: a pirate interception.

Once the final demonstration had concluded Westminster's crew could enjoy the airshow.

"Being only one kilometre from the beach meant that every aircraft passed over the ship," said Lt Cdr Richie O'Rourke, Westminster's logistics officer.

"In fact the Red Arrows, Dutch F16 and Typhoon made a particular point of 'buzzing' very close to their Royal Navy colleagues – much to our delight."

Aside from her official presence in Sunderland, the visit allowed the ship's company to enjoy their first run ashore in a non-naval port since her year long refit in Devonport ended in April.

The North-East is renowned for its hospitality to visiting sailors; Westminster's crew, we've been told, found Sunderland lived up to expectations.

Picture: Lt Cdr Richie O'Rourke



Hot piping where it's piping hot

TOOTING stars... AB 'JJ' McHale and LS Colman (with beard) sound the bosun's call with aplomb (you'll have to take our word for it as we can't bring you sound...) as a piping contest aboard HMS Northumberland reaches its climax.

The reason? Well CPO(AWW) 'Danny' Toms reckoned the ceremonial standards of piping the bosun's call aboard the Type 23 – currently in the middle of a seven-month anti-piracy patrol east of Suez – needed reinvigorating.

It's a tradition that is no longer taught to exam standard in basic training... so the senior rating decided to put the skills of Northumberland's junior sailors piping *Call the Hands*, the *Still* and *Carry On* and other standard fare to the test.

The result: a piping contest for all the ship's warfare branch junior rates. After some expert training from CPO Toms, the sailors piped away.

They were eventually whittled down until AB McHale was deemed the best (after a 'pipe off'). For his efforts he received a solid brass bosun's call from Northumberland's CO Cdr Paddy Allen.

Normal service (and improved pipes) has now resumed aboard the Devonport-based frigate.

Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies



● 40 Commando's Sgt Lee Pegg leads a nighttime patrol from Forward Operating Base Jackson in Sangin

Picture: LA(Phot) Si Ethell, 40 Cdo



Testing soldiering to the extreme

WITH Kajaki now in American hands, the bitterly-contested town of Sangin is the last crucible of effort in Helmand Province for the Royal Marines of 40 Commando.

The town of 16,000 or so inhabitants, 22 miles downstream the Helmand River from Kajaki and the dam British forces helped to protect, will be handed over to US forces later this year.

It has been the scene of regular – and ferocious – clashes between Taliban and British forces since the summer of 2005, including a ten-month siege over the winter of 2006-07.

The 'district centre' – a very rough equivalent of a market town – was an insurgent stronghold and remains a focal point of their activity, hence why it accounts for one third of all British deaths in Afghanistan.

But away from the stark casualty figures and bleak reports in the mainstream media, the Sangin of 2010 is not the Sangin of 2005. Ask Capt Marty Adams RM.

Five years ago he was a sergeant with the Mobile Air Operations Team. The hub of British operations then, the Fire Support Group (FSG) building – an imposing brick building with a tower and surrounded by sandbags – was a magnet for enemy attacks, its rooftop constantly under fire.

Half a decade later, the FSG remains an imposing structure, surrounded by sandbags, armoured vehicles parked up in the compound.

But the rooftop is no longer subjected to regular enemy fire and the vista from it has changed considerably says the now captain, back in town with 40 Commando.

He said: "In 2005 the security outside of the forward operating base was practically non-existent.

As soldiers, we couldn't go outside the FOB for being attacked – and occasionally we were attacked inside the FOB.

"Since then, due to the progress that we've made, we've managed to push the bubble of security out from this location and beyond the centre of Sangin itself."

Buildings have sprung up

in Sangin – be they security structures and military bases, or properties for the civilian populace – while a rarely-used crossing on the Helmand River (it was dominated by insurgents) is much busier now it's safeguarded by Afghan police, who provide a security check on people moving in and out of Sangin.

"Now the local community have the freedom to have what is a normal life – which is what everyone wants anyway.

"They can go shopping, move around free from intimidation from the Taliban because of the security provided by the Afghan and international forces," said Capt Adams.

Troops, says the Royal Marines officer, can only achieve so much.

"The stabilisation force is the main effort really. They're the people who are going to bring governance to this area," he adds.

At the heart of 'new Sangin' is a series of zones: 'governance', home to a school and government and non-

government agencies; beyond that is the economic zone, the bazaar and surroundings; and beyond that four suburbs based around Afghan National Army patrol bases. The whole area now covers around three square miles.

Grants were offered to traders to encourage them to open shops and stalls in the bazaar. There are now upwards of 800 traders in Sangin selling everything from daily necessities to mobile phones, satellite dishes and cars.

Some four dozen schools have sprung up and five free government-run clinics have been opened.

"Economically and socially the lives of Afghans here are changing for the better on a monthly basis," explained Phil Weatherill, a civil engineer serving as an adviser in Sangin.

"It has taken a long time to get to this state and there have been, and will continue to be, challenges along the way but I honestly believe that slowly the people of Sangin are beginning to be won over."

And then you're reminded

that however much progress there's been, this is not a safe land. There is no such thing as a routine patrol.

Lt Jack Anrude of 40 Cdo was on patrol with Afghan troops around Sangin, chatting with locals as he went.

"As we approached the local mosque, the usual pattern of life was missing and there was already a sense that something suspicious was happening from within the compound walls," he said.

"We were trying to speak to one of the village elders when an insurgent suddenly appeared behind a gate and fired about 30 rounds at us with an AK47 rifle."

Those rounds wounded the RM officer – he was shot in the right arm, with shrapnel striking his legs while his helmet spared him head injuries – and two comrades; an Afghan soldier received five bullet wounds, a soldier searching for home-made bombs was shot in the ankle.

Over the next four and a half hours, the commando ensured his patrol reached safety – and the injured Afghan soldier was evacuated to hospital.

"I was too busy concentrating

on the incident and getting my lads out alive to give my injury much thought. It was only afterwards, on reflection, that I realised how dangerous the situation was and that I was actually quite scared.

"Without trying to sound too clichéd I didn't feel scared at the time, I didn't have time for that, as things were happening so quickly – the training just kicked in."

Which only tells part of the story, for the officer carried his shot Afghan colleague up a hill at one point, shrugging off his own injuries.

It was, says 40's CO Lt Col Paul James, "an extraordinary act of courage and he did all that while he was wounded."

It is not untypical.

"What the guys are going through here, it's quite humbling to see how the young lads are taking it on," Lt Col James added.

"It's very frustrating at times but the guys are excelling and it's testing their soldiering to the extreme."

Thankfully, that test of soldiering only has weeks to go; 40's tour-of-duty in Helmand draws to a close next month.

'To call you a friend was an absolute privilege...'



DRAWDOWN in Sangin or not, the conflict there continues to take a bitter toll of the men of 40 Commando.

The latest fatal casualty was acting Cpl Adam 'Ads' Brown of Alpha Company who died instantly following a blast while on patrol near Sangin.

The 25-year-old newlywed – he only tied the knot with his childhood sweetheart Amy in December – hailed from Burtle in Somerset and had served all over the globe during his six years in the Corps.

Since 2007 he had specialised as a signaller and it was in that

capacity that he headed out to Helmand in April for his second tour-of-duty in Afghanistan.

"Always a hero in my eyes and I am so proud of you," his widow paid tribute.

"I will treasure the perfect memories I have of our life together, always.

"You are a true inspiration to all who knew you and you made me the proudest woman in the world when I became your wife. I love you now, always and forever."

Maj Sean Brady, Officer Commanding Alpha Coy, said the acting NCO was "the man to whom you would turn" in tricky

situations in Sangin – which meant he was "loved and respected by all of us."

He added: "It was evident from the moment that I met him that he had a glittering career ahead of him.

"He was a true leader who possessed that vital ability to be able to remain calm whatever challenge he was presented with.

"It was this aura that he projected which gave strength to those around him, his courage allowed others to find theirs."

He continued: "The job we do is hard and at times unforgiving, however the struggles are made

worth it by having had the privilege to serve alongside Adam and it is clear that we are better men for having done so."

Cpl Andrew Lock, section commander, 3 Troop, said Ads was "without a shadow of a doubt the best marine we have had at Patrol Base Almas.

"Ads always found it amusing that I was a size 7 boot, and he was a size 12; his boots can never be filled."

He continued "He was very calm and someone I could rely on in a sticky situation.

"You could see from his personality that he was a content

man and very much at peace with his life."

And from Mne Andy Hall of Alpha Coy's Fire Support Group, this very personal tribute to a departed comrade:

"You had time for anyone and brought morale to everyone you met.

I always saw you as a credit to the Corps, an inspiration to me and all who met you.

"I always looked up to you and to call you a friend was an absolute privilege."



It's goodbye from us...

A WAVE for loved ones aboard HMS Montrose as she departs Devonport bound for pirate-packed seas east of Suez.

While most of the Fleet was gathering in home waters for summer leave, not so the Type 23 frigate – or, for that matter, veteran destroyer HMS Gloucester; both vessels deployed for foreign shores last month.

Montrose is making for the Horn of Africa and Somali Basin to join a NATO-led task group on maritime security and anti-piracy operations.

It's the frigate's first tour of duty since a nine-month refit in Rosyth and nearly a year of working up (which ended with a rather jolly families' day shortly before deployment to thank loved ones for their support during the demanding training period – and for the support they'll give during the six or so months that Montrose is away).

As for the Fighting G, well it's as if 2009 is being repeated. The destroyer left Portsmouth last summer for a stint in the Falklands... and left Pompey this summer bound for the same destination.

After a winter of maintenance following her 2009 South Atlantic exertions, the destroyer spent the spring preparing for the repeat mission, including a test firing of her Sea Dart missiles and a spot of Operational Sea Training off Plymouth for which the ship – celebrating her 25th birthday this month – won a 'very satisfactory' endorsement from FOST (who don't hand out such grades willy-nilly).

Aside from relieving HMS Portland and safeguarding the Falklands and South Georgia, Gloucester will pop across to Brazil and Chile and take part in naval exercises with South American navies.

The Fighting G will also be flying the flag for the RN and the British defence industry at Expo Navale in Valparaiso, Chile, at the end of November; it's a gathering of warships, leading defence firms, senior officers, analysts and maritime experts.

Gloucester won't be back in the Solent till March, so numerous members of the ship's company celebrated Christmas before the destroyer sailed.

"Once we leave our focus has to be on operations but the support that we get from our families is so important to helping us carry on," said CO Cdr David George.

"We all made the most of precious time with them in the last few weeks. As much as they are thinking of us, we'll be hoping that they keep safe and sound too, and we'll continue to stay in touch through letters, phone calls and emails."

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Hooper, FRPU West



● Whatever happened to the Likely Lads?... All smiles from two of HMS Sutherland's junior rates as the frigate returns to Devonport

Pictures: LA(Photos) Steve Johncock, Dan Hooper and Martin Carney, FRPU West

...but it's hello

YOU wait for months on end for a warship to come home...

... and then six arrive in a matter of days.

As befits the Navy's traditional summer leave period, a sizeable proportion of the deployed returned home to cheers, tears, smiles, waves and, if they were lucky, even a glimpse of sunshine.

The bulk of the Exercise Auriga task force completed their exertions in the United States and Canada, HMS St Albans brought the curtain down on six months in the Gulf and HMS Chatham's seven-month pirate-busting stint off the Horn of Africa ended.

Hundreds of families and friends and a Royal Marines band were waiting for the latter in Devonport.

The Type 22 served as flagship for Cdre Steve Chick and his NATO Standing Maritime Group staff and led Operation Ocean Shield (as the name suggests the task is to safeguard shipping and grapple pirates).

"Up and At 'Em' disarmed one pirate group in the Gulf of Aden, destroyed two skiffs after intercepting a bunch of suspected pirates off Tanzania and – in company with USS Cole – destroyed a 'flotilla' of three pirate craft in the Indian Ocean.

The ship's Lynx flight from 815 NAS saved the lives of all 23 souls aboard the stricken MV Dubai Moon after a cyclone hit her.

And Medical Officer Surg Lt Sarah Droog provided urgent medical treatment to a seriously-ill crew member of a Liberian-registered tanker off Oman; he was subsequently 'medi-vaced' (medically evacuated) using Chatham's Lynx.

"This was exactly the kind of challenge that I joined the Royal Navy to experience," said ex-deep ET(WE) Daniel John, enjoying his first taste of life as a skimmer.

"Chatham's my first surface unit after five years as a submariner, and though I enjoyed the fresh air and sunshine, as ever, I am looking forward to getting home and spending time with my family and friends."

Such sentiments, understandably, were echoed by his 250+ shipmates.

"This was an especially hard deployment for me because, for the first time when away on a ship I had a girlfriend to come back to, so I missed her a lot," said ET Alan Wormald, who spied his other half Kerrie Wright and her son Aidan waiting for him as Chatham returned.



● Return of the Saints... Waves and smiles as HMS St Albans arrives back in Portsmouth

"There were some highlights and achievements when we engaged and saw off the pirates. Kerrie and I are now going on holiday – it will be the best ever."

For his Commanding Officer, Cdr Simon Huntington, quality family time also beckons... with an extended family.

Waiting for him on the jetty was ten-week-old William Huntington (plus his mum Angela, brother James and sisters Eleanor and Elizabeth) – the first time father and son had met.

"My wife has been amazing, looking after the household and all our young children while pregnant with William," said Cdr Huntington. "So she deserves a rest and we will all go on holiday to the Cotswolds and to see family in North Wales and Cumbria where I grew up."

Chatham's CO wasn't the only captain afforded the opportunity of holding his newborn son for the first time.

JAMES Payne was a mere fortnight old when HMS Sutherland, commanded by his dad Cdr John Payne, sailed up the Hamoaze after four months on the other side of the Atlantic.

Slightly older than young Master Payne is ET(ME) Chris Wojcik, one of the most junior members

of Sutherland's ship's company; he celebrated his 17th birthday while the Type 23 was away with the Auriga task group.

"I've loved being part of Sutherland's ship's company – I've seen places in the world I have only dreamed of and learned a great deal from my fellow shipmates," said the teenager.

His family was among a 300-strong contingent who gathered under overcast skies to welcome HMS Sutherland home.

THE weather was no better (in fact it was probably worse) 180 miles away as the Auriga task group flagship, HMS Ark Royal, and her trusty escort, HMS Liverpool, returned to Portsmouth.

Their arrival marked the formal end of Auriga 2010 – four months of top bombing involving British and US Marine Corps jump jets which used Ark as their launch pad.

The final stages of the exercises saw the carrier group – Ark, Liverpool, RFA Fort George and USS Barry – link up with the UK Amphibious Task Group – Albion, Ocean and RFA Largs Bay plus 3 Commando Brigade – and the USS Kearsarge Amphibious Ready Group (over 8,000 US sailors and marines) for a full-scale assault exercise involving land, sea and air.

For the RN, the aim of Auriga was to work out in the US Navy's 'carrier gymnasium' (Eastern Seaboard and ranges).

So has the force pumped iron? Yes, says the commander, Cdre Simon Ancona. "The East Coast of the United States is literally tailor-made to support our needs."

Yes, says Ark's CO Capt John Clink: "Flying from the sea is complex, exciting – and takes a great deal of teamwork and effort. I think we can be justifiably proud of a job well done."

"Ark's had a successful deployment – it's thanks to the hard work of the ship's company that we've achieved so much. It's all very fitting for a ship which is celebrating her silver jubilee this year."

Slightly older than Ark (indeed the oldest surface ship in the Fleet) is HMS Liverpool, charged with the age-old duty of escorting the flagship.

It can, at times, mean being tied to an invisible leash but, says the Crazy Red Chicken's CO Cdr Ollie Hutchinson, the veteran Type 42's made the most of it.

"People who join the Royal Navy do so for the promise of going to sea, seeing the world and experiencing a varied and unique career. Liverpool's delivered on that promise."

"The last four months have been extremely challenging, but they've also been rewarding and



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● Just in case you'd forgotten the name of the ship you're waiting for, here's a helping hand from some lads on the Mighty At 'Em

from these

enjoyable for everybody on board. That said, there's no substitute for coming home."

Amen to that. In Devonport, amphibious flagship HMS Albion sailed back from 'invading' the Eastern Seaboard plus one bell.

That rather weighty cargo came from one of the great names in 20th Century naval history, dreadnought HMS Valiant.

The battleship pounded the German High Seas Fleet at Jutland, helped maul the Italians at Matapan, was bombed off Crete, supported convoys to Malta, aided the invasions of Sicily and mainland Italy and finally fought in the Far East before being broken up in 1948.

Her bell was presented to Rear Admiral Brian Egerton, a Valiant veteran from Jutland and Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth in the later stages of WW2.

He in turn handed the bell to his nephew, Cdr David Dumas, an Atlantic convoy veteran and the man who helped liberate the Channel Islands in 1945 as CO of destroyer HMS Bulldog.

The Dumas family emigrated to the USA in 1957... which is why one battleship's bell could be found in the possession of Vietnam veteran and former US Marine Corps Cobra gunship pilot Patrick Dumas, Cdr Dumas' son.

Mr Dumas decided the family heirloom should return to the UK... and one of Her Majesty's Warships transporting the weighty bell back is somewhat cheaper than sending it by air mail.

Once back in the UK, the bell will be installed at the Valiant floating jetty in Faslane, which serves the new breed of Astute-class submarines.

The historic bell was presented to the ship when Albion spent a week in New York.

After a ceremonial entry to the great metropolis, the assault ship berthed at Pier 88 on the Hudson River – the legendary jetty used by liners and more, recently, cruise ships, for more than 70 years.

Once alongside, Albion hosted an Olympic-themed reception.

With just two years to go to the London games, the ship welcomed American Olympians and British hopefuls on board, plus sponsors, business leaders, and members of veterans organisations, plus Britain's Consul General in New York, Sir Alan Collins.

As for Albion's American workout, Auriga was thoroughly

worthwhile says the assault ship's CO Capt John Kingwell.

"The training opportunities in the USA were absolutely superb – there's nothing on the same scale here in the UK," he added.

"Both the landing force from 3 Commando Brigade and the ships have been able to hone their operational skills.

"Auriga has proved the ship and her crew are ready for anything."

To the Med now and the final ports of call for HMS St Albans on her way home from the Gulf.

She spent six months safeguarding shipping and Iraq's two oil platforms, and worked very closely with regional navies, especially those of Kuwait.

Runs ashore east of Suez were few and far between but the journey home allowed the Saints to let their (fairly short) hair down: two top Mediterranean destinations: in under a week: Malta and Barcelona.

To Malta first and a spell in magnificent Grand Harbour. The ship hosted visitors for tours while the cricket team played their first (and last) competitive contest of the tour.

Despite being stuck in a tin can for six months, the cricketers' skills hadn't deserted them.

It took four runs off the last ball of the game – "a stunning hook over mid-wicket clearing the boundary" – from AB(WS) Wales to clinch a one-wicket victory over Malta CC in the club's wonderful, historic ground.

The less sporting minded headed for the beach/shops/museums/pubs (delete as applicable) before it was time to head west once more.

The crossing of the western Med saw the Saint return to the role she was built for a decade ago: submarine hunting.

With the Gulf deployment focusing to a large degree on boarding operations (St Albans had a dedicated Royal Marines team embarked as well as her own boarding party), it's important that other warfare skills don't fade.

So a team of specialists in anti-submarine warfare was flown out from the UK to join the ship for the passage to Barcelona to help the ops room with the art of detecting and tracking submarines once more.

And so to the Catalan capital and the final stop before home.

"On entering the harbour the ship was met with an astonishing sight as the sun hit the hills surrounding Barcelona – simply beautiful," enthused Lt Beth Griffiths, the ship's deputy marine engineer officer.

An evening reception brought members of the local military, industry and commerce together, to mingle with other guests from the British Embassy in Madrid and the local diplomatic community.

And with formalities done, a bit of relaxation. Foody fans made a bee-line for the Camp Nou, home of FC Barcelona, one of the world's greatest teams.

Sailors who fancied a bit of culture made for Gaudi's incomplete cathedral (128 years in the making and at least 16 years still to go...) and the odd one or two wandered down Las Ramblas to the shops and bars.

And so to home. Lola, the ship's Merlin, departed as St Albans closed the Cornish coast and there was a lightning visit to Devonport to embark families for the last night at sea as the frigate hugged the south coast before passing the Round Tower.

"This has been an, at times, testing, but ultimately satisfying and successful six months, during which we've experienced – and risen to – a whole range of challenges," said St Albans' CO Cdr Adrian Pierce.

"I've been consistently impressed by the resilience, determination and sheer professionalism of my sailors."

With all these joyous homecomings, spare a thought for the ship's company of Britain's biggest warship, HMS Ocean.

While the rest of the Auriga task force broke for home after those amphibious exercises, not so the Mighty O.

The helicopter assault ship has just left Mayport in Florida following a four-week period of maintenance and reconfiguration (and ten days' leave for her ship's company in the US of A).

She's due to make a very rare foray into the South Atlantic (we think it's the first time she's crossed the equator, although we may be wrong...).

The emphasis of her deployment shifts to maritime security operations and some amphibious work with the Brazilian Navy around Rio, due to take place in the middle of this month.

First for Tireless

THIS may seem hard to believe – especially for a 26-year-old warship – but Her Majesty's Submarine Tireless has never passed through the fabled man-made waterway that is the Suez Canal.

Until now. Then again, if you're on an eight-month 'east of Suez' deployment, it's pretty hard to avoid.

The T-boat slipped away from Devonport at the end of July and won't see home shores again until March 2011.

The final few weeks before deploying saw an intensive 14-day training period in the Channel under the watchful eyes of the exacting team from the Flag Officer Sea Training and Captain Submarines, Devonport Flotilla, Capt John Edgell.

As they were satisfied with the shape of men and materiel, Tireless could deploy – but not before she'd hosted some old friends.

Or rather young friends: the sea cadets of TS Tireless from Rugby (the boat's affiliated town).

The cadets headed down to Devonport on the day of Tireless' sailing (see page 45), but despite that impending departure, the deeps found time to give the youngsters a comprehensive tour of the boat.

Next stop for the hunter-killer – Crete.

Between equipment trials and exercises, the weather in the Med was hot enough for many of the ship's company to take advantage of a hands to bathe.

Souda Bay afforded a brief 'pit stop' for some engineering work, a barbecue on the jetty and a five-a-side tournament (won by the logistics department).

And then it was that inaugural passage through Suez to begin her deployment in earnest: a mixture of intelligence gathering and exercising with Allied naval forces in the region.



● Hearty waves from the cadets of TS Tireless as tugs and a police launch shepherd HMS Tireless out of Plymouth

Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford, FRPU West



SoS calls on Richmond

WITH tough decisions ahead, new Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox joined HMS Richmond off the Isle of Wight to witness a day in the life in the RN.

After a top-level briefing at the Fleet HQ in Portsmouth on the Navy's current overseas commitments, the minister was flown out to the T23 by Merlin.

Once on board, more briefings, this time from the ship's company who decided to give Dr Fox some hands-on experience.

That meant rat-a-tat-tatting into the Solent with a Minigun and GPMG; donning a fearnought suit for a fire-fighting demonstration; and riding in a RIB as Richmond showed how she would fend off a fast attack craft using flares, (blank) rounds and manoeuvring.

Whitehall is due to announce its Strategic Defence and Security Review next month – a root and branch overhaul of all three Services and the MOD.

"Every option is on the table at the moment and we are looking at all the options with all of the Armed Forces involved," said Dr Fox.

"We are a maritime nation with 92 per cent of our trade going by sea so this is no time for Britain to become sea-blind.

"The review is to ensure that our maritime issues are in keeping with what we expect from our Navy."

Not surprisingly the ship's company weren't shy in coming forward when it came to stressing the need for the Senior Service.

"I think I probably speak for everyone on board when I say that the Royal Navy needs to be a big part of the defence commitments in the future," said CPO 'Dickie' Emery.

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Echo feels the pull of Gravity

REWARD for completing Operational Sea Training and a sustained period of survey work in Cardigan Bay for HMS Echo came with a trip to the Emerald Isle.

The survey ship enjoyed her mid-leg stand down of a lengthy work-up and regeneration period in Dublin, a city famed for its hospitality.

And it lived up to expectations for many of the ship's company who were paying their first visit to Eire.

Organised tours to Trinity College and Kilmainham Gaol (where leaders of Irish rebellions, including later premier Eamon de Valera, were incarcerated) were arranged for the Echoes.

They were well attended but not as much (oddly) as a look around the Guinness Storehouse where the tour ended with a free pint of the 'black stuff' overlooking Dublin in the famous Gravity Bar, which offers 360° views of the Irish capital from a vantage point 120 metres above street level.

"Dublin's always been a vibrant and welcoming place – that was obvious once again to all my ship's company," said CO Mike O'Sullivan, who has numerous personal ties with the city.

"With our regeneration package now nearing completion, the visit was a well-deserved break for us all before continuing to prepare materially and mentally for our forthcoming deployment."

His ship's now resumed survey duties around the British Isles.

Drama – but no crisis

WE KNOW Wafus can be a bit theatrical, but 771 NAS took it that extra mile with two 'dramatic' rescues on the same night.

Sea King Rescue 193 was scrambled from Culdrose to pick up a 47-year-old woman who collapsed at the Minack open-air theatre near Land's End.

The casualty was airlifted to Royal Cornwall Hospital while, in the finest traditions of theatre, the show – Shakespeare's *Love's Labour's Lost* – went on.

Barely was that rescue complete than the controllers at Culdrose received an SOS from Oscar Wilde. MS Oscar Wilde, that is, an Irish Ferries vessel passing between Land's End and the Scillies.

Aircrewman CPO Dave Rigg was winched on to the 31,000-tonne ferry to assess the condition of a casualty; he quickly determined the gentleman needed airlifting to hospital at Treliske, which Rescue 193 duly did.



Pictures: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge, FRPU East



Qatar lessons

STALKING the upperdeck, carbines at the ready, the boarding team of HMS Somerset shows how the RN and RM conducts their business in the Gulf and Indian Ocean.

The demonstration by the party was just one laid on by the men and women of the Type 23 frigate for senior and junior officers from Qatar (the latter are rather more accustomed to daytime temperatures of 45°C than the Brits...).

Somerset's the latest in a series

of RN vessels to work with the Qataris this year; her sister HMS St Albans and minehunters Atherstone and Chiddingfold have all worked with Qatar units in 2010 as part of wider efforts to engage with the military of friendly Gulf states.

Somerset left her 'home from home' – Bahrain, hub of RN operations east of Suez – and made the short journey (c.120 miles) to Qatar's capital.

The warship hosted a lunch for senior members of the Qatar Emirati Navy and Coastguard, headed by Col Abdullah M Al Baker, the acting director of

operations and training.

He was one of a number in the group of visitors who had enjoyed initial officer training at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth.

"They were visibly proud of their association with BRNC and enjoyed recalling fond memories of their time there," said Somerset's Commanding Officer Cdr Andrew Burns.

And so down to the nitty gritty.

On sailing from Doha, nine junior Qatari officers joined Somerset as part of their sea training programme to widen their knowledge of maritime security operations and the work of the Royal Navy in the region.

Lt Cdr Keith Mabbott, Somerset's operations officer, guided the visitors through a series of demonstrations as they toured (almost) every inch of the frigate.

The bridge team explained modern navigational techniques (aided by the ship's WECDIS computerised chart and information system); the ops room team laid on a simulated air defence exercise; and the mixed Navy-commando boarding team climbed into sea boats, zipped around the Gulf, scrambled up a rope ladder and searched Somerset for ne'er-do-wells (they may, or may not, have found several...).

"The Qatari officers' experience at sea with Somerset was very well received," said Lt Cdr Mabbott.

"The importance in strengthening our ties with regional partners and demonstrating our enduring commitment to their security cannot be underestimated."

The visit by the Qataris is not the only one Somerset's hosted, nor are they the only forces for whom the ship's company have laid on demonstrations.

CINC Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar joined the ship by sea boat to discuss a range of

naval issues with a cross-section of the ship's company on patrol. His flying visit to the region also saw the admiral drop in on minehunters Chiddingfold and Pembroke in Bahrain, plus the British and US headquarters in the kingdom – UK Maritime Component Command and Fifth Fleet respectively.

It is from Bahrain that the day-to-day operations of Somerset are directed as part of the international Combined Task Force 152.


Under that task force, the Gulf mission for RN frigates has expanded from the close protection of Iraq's two oil terminals – the focal point of British naval operations in the second half of the Noughties – to wider maritime security throughout the Arabian Gulf (97,000 square miles, or slightly larger than Great Britain).

But that doesn't mean that the Khawr al Amaya and Al Basra terminals, upon which Iraq's economy relies, have become strangers to Somerset.

The latter platform – in everyday RN acronym speak known as ABOT – is the more modern and larger of the two platforms (it stretches for more than a mile and can pump oil into four waiting tankers simultaneously).

Iraqi sailors and marines provide the bulk of the security for both platforms, but as a nascent force, they're eager to pick up tips from old hands.

So enter Somerset's firefighting team who jumped on to ABOT for a FIREX – fire exercise – to show how the RN deals with a blaze in a challenging or restricted environment.



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A change for the better on Chiddingfold

IT'S out with the old and in with the new aboard HMS Chiddingfold in the Gulf.

We're talking about a port engine, which was changed by the ship's ten clankies and the Forward Support Unit in Bahrain in temperatures which punched through the 50°C (122°F) barrier.

And with the old engine hauled out and the replacement yet to be installed, PO Darren Podmore spied an opportunity to change a valve under the engine.

It was, he determined, "much easier - no need to have to crawl around in the bilge with a head torch on."

Predictably, once finished he and his two assistants, LET Daniel 'Jude' Law and ET Patrick 'Taff' O'Connell, looked suspiciously like they'd been crawling around in the bilge...

Valve changed, the new engine was lifted in early in the morning (before the Gulf heat really kicks in).

By lunchtime the 'soft-patch' - the removable deck above the engine room - was back in place the air-conditioning was running again to the relief of all the Cheery Chids.

Although it's the responsibility of the marine engineering department, an engine change demands the attention of a sizeable proportion of the minehunter's ship's company.

Chiddingfold's divers covered the sea-water intakes, chefs and steward brought cold drinks to the workers and the FSU team craned off all of the equipment, including the dive recompression chamber, two seaboats and a half deck that were in the way of the soft-patch before their team lowered, then secured, the new engine.

Future present

THIS is the moment a Sea Viper missile accelerates away from its silo during final successful test firings in the Mediterranean.

After years of trials and tests, the weapon, which will be the Fleet's ultimate safeguard against air attack for the next quarter of a century, is almost operational.

A salvo of Sea Vipers - which can reach speeds in excess of Mach 3 - was fired from the trials barge Longbow at a target, skimming low over the surface of the Med at hundreds of miles an hour.

The highly-maneuvrable drone tried to avoid the incoming missiles...

...and failed.

The next step is to fire Sea Viper from its intended launchpad, a Type 45 destroyer.

That honour is due to fall not to HMS Daring, the first of class (she's off to the States to work with the US Navy this autumn), but to her younger sister HMS Dauntless, who is lined up for missile trials off north-west Scotland at the end of this month.

Once declared operational, it will be the 45s' task to take over from veteran Type 42s, and protect either a task group or an individual capital ship.

Which brings us nicely on to an individual capital ship: next-generation aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth to be precise.

Two more pieces of that 65,000-tonne jigsaw have slotted into place this past month.

A 200-ton crane in the BAE Systems shed in Portsmouth lowered the first set of diesel generators into one of the huge

blocks which will form part of the future carrier's hull.

The segment - Lower Block 2 - will eventually be the warship's forward machinery space.

Each of the carriers - HMS Prince of Wales completes the two-strong class - will be powered by two Rolls Royce MT30 gas turbines and four Converteam diesel generators (like the two installed in Pompey).

The total power output of this sextet of engineering will be 109 megawatts - that's enough for 300,000 kettles or 5,500 family-sized homes at any one time.

Work on Lower Block 2 began in the Portsmouth facility - one of six yards around the UK providing sections of the two carriers - back in February and, by mid-August, was about 16 per cent complete.

When finished the block will contain stores, switchboards, machinery spaces and some accommodation.

It'll measure 70m (229ft) long, 40m (131ft) across and 18m (59ft) high and weigh in at over 6,000 tonnes (more than a Type 23 frigate).

It's due to be shipped by barge from Portsmouth to Rosyth next year, when it will join the rest of the giant carrier jigsaw puzzle in a specially-expanded dry dock.

Meanwhile the final yard to be involved in the carrier project - Birkenhead's legendary Cammell Laird - has started work on sections of Queen Elizabeth's hull.

A 1,200-strong team will toil away for the next two months on two segments of the carrier's flight deck which will weigh 7,500 tonnes when complete.

Picture: MBDA



Victory over Japan marked

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope led Senior Service tributes to British victims of the war with Japan at 65th anniversary commemorations of VJ Day at the Cenotaph.

He joined the Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall, Prime Minister David Cameron, representatives of all three Services, plus hundreds of Far East veterans, and members of WW2 associations in Whitehall as the nation showed its gratitude for those who fought against the Rising Sun between 1941 and 1945.

Britain suffered 90,332 casualties in the war against Japan, of whom 29,968 died - 12,433 of those as prisoners of war.

The Royal Navy was in the thick of the fight against the Japanese Empire at the beginning and end of the bitter four-year struggle for supremacy in the Pacific.

It suffered the terrible blow of losing the Prince of Wales and Repulse just three days into the war and witnessed ultimate triumph four years later as HMS Duke of York attended the formal Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay in September 1945.

That came nearly three weeks after Tokyo agreed to capitulate: announced by Emperor Hirohito at mid-day on August 15, which has since become known in the UK as Victory over Japan Day.

At the same time as commemorations in London, a service was held at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire, where veterans from the Malayan Volunteers Group, the Far East Prisoners of War Association, and members of the Children and Families of Far East Prisoners of War Association remembered the dead.

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Not all quiet on the Heston front

THEY obviously like fine living aboard HMS Turbulent because the submarine's hosted not one but two of the country's top chefs.

Admittedly the fare served to Heston Blumenthal (pictured above by LA(Phot) James Cratford in Turbulent's control room) was not the typical sort of meal that the 'culinary alchemist' dines on.

Normally he indulges in rather unusual dishes – snail porridge or parsnip cereal anyone?

Not burgers, bangers and beans. Unless he's attending a submariners' barbecue. Which he was.

Heston, whose restaurant is ranked in the top five in the world, was the guest of HMS Turbulent's CO Cdr Ryan Ramsey, as the Devonport deeps staged a family BBQ to thank loved ones for their support during the many months the boat has been undergoing an overhaul.

That lengthy overhaul is almost done. The T-boat is now materially ready for sea with only final preparations and checks to be completed.

And that's worth celebrating. Hence the vast quantities of flame-licked burgers and mustard-smothered sausages.

The TV chef enjoyed his patty of ground steak nestling between two crisp oval-shaped half-rolls of bread (ie burger in a bap), chatted with ship's company, families, and friends, and was given a tour of the boat.

Meanwhile, the boat's AB Drake formally joined the submarine fraternity as he was awarded his dolphins.

All in all it was, says Cdr Ramsey, "a great day all around."

"Plymouth seems to have had more than its fair share of rain so far this summer. Turbulent leapt like a spring hare at the opportunity to don shorts, open some cans of cool beer, and become pocket experts at the art of the BBQ."

Barely had stomachs settled than there was another culinary master in town. Peter Gorton – a master chef of Great Britain – was invited to prepare a meal at a charity dinner hosted by the submariners for their favoured good cause.

The National Aquarium in Plymouth was the venue for the evening (fish, obviously, was on the menu) as Peter prepared and ship's company served the dishes to guests, who then offered substantial sums at a subsequent charity auction (lots included a tour of the nuclear boat).

Having dined and dipped into their pockets in the stunning surroundings of the aquarium, guests enjoyed an unrivalled view of the British Fireworks Championships, held in Plymouth that same night.

The submariners had already raised more than £2,600 for CHSW – which runs two children's hospices in the South-West and is building a third in St Austell – but that figure's now smashed the £10K barrier courtesy of the dinner and auction.

And last but not least, the Lady Mayoress of Plymouth, Kate Aspinall, was invited onboard the boat in Devonport for a guided tour from the CO; her father's an ex-deep who served in O-boats.

Crazy A's away days

PASSING beneath one of the landmarks on the Manchester Ship Canal (the Irlam Viaduct for those who don't hail from God's own county), HMS Atherstone makes her way towards the heart of the northern metropolis.

There are still six miles, two swing bridges and three locks to negotiate at this point before the minehunter reaches her destination at Salford Quays.

Before making for the man-made waterway, the Portsmouth-based warship anchored off Llandudno to conduct a casualty exercise with the local offshore and inshore RNLI boats; their crews traded places with the RN sailors so both could experience life in their respective craft (albeit briefly).

The short visit was arranged by Atherstone's coxswain, PO Nick 'Jack' Frost who hails from the Welsh resort – and used to volunteer for its lifeboats; members of his family are still heavily involved with the vital rescue service.

The next stage in the trip was to make the transit of the Mersey to the mouth of the Manchester Ship Canal.

Enjoying the transit were various affiliates and VIPs including (deep breath) Naval Regional Commander, Cdre Dickie Baum, the Lord Mayors of Manchester, Liverpool and Chester, Lord Lieutenants of Greater Manchester



● Irlam globetrotters... Atherstone makes her way up the Manchester Ship Canal
Picture: Chris Berry, Rossendale Aviation Society

and Merseyside, High Sheriffs of Merseyside and Greater Manchester and the Mayors of Salford, The Wirral and Sefton, plus the Mayor of the ship's affiliated Borough of North Warwickshire, the Mayor of Atherstone and members of the Atherstone Ball Game Committee, who organise the 800-year-old Shrove Tuesday sport in the small town. (And breathe again.)

"It's not often we are able to sail up the Manchester Ship Canal and it was a pleasure to do so in the company of guests – being able to bring the ship into the heart of

the city is special," said CO Lt Cdr Gordon Ruddock.

"It has also been really good to get to know our affiliates again after two and a half years in the Gulf."

Hunt-class mine hunters are the largest warships which can safely transit the 34-mile canal (Manchester's own ship, the namesake destroyer, can't make it up the waterway thanks to her mast), but it's far from an easy passage.

"It still poses a significant navigational challenge with sloping banks, low-bridges, locks and the shallow tidal channel approaching the opening to the canal from the Mersey," explains navigator S/Lt Tom Wyatt.

Upon arrival in Salford the Crazy A had a packed and varied programme, beginning with a formal reception that evening for more dignitaries and affiliates.

After the VIPs came Joe Public. Upwards of 1,000 people filed up the gangway to see the minehunter during 'ship open to visitors', while some groups and affiliates were granted private tours.

"I know many members of my ship's company – most of whom were involved in hosting visitors – enjoyed being able to tell visitors about the ship and our recent Gulf deployment, and chatting about the Royal Navy," Lt Cdr Ruddock added.

The visit to the North West is pretty much the last you'll hear of the Crazy A for some time as she's about to start an extended refit – well-deserved TLC and upgrades for the warship after her two-year-plus stint in the Gulf which ended earlier this summer.



It's the way he tells 'em

IF, FROM this photograph, WO1 Nigel Jones looks like a good old sea dog, it's because he is.

Britain's Best Sea Dog, in fact.

The senior rating, currently Executive Warrant Officer of HMS Somerset out in the Gulf, responded to a call from Wood's 100 Rum in our July edition to unearth the best seafaring dit.

The competition produced an excellent response and saw a huge range of stories – from the incredibly sad, to the hysterically funny, to the inspirational – and they made for some great reading.

"Choosing a winner turned out to be a very difficult task as we were taken aback by both the number of entries, and their quality," said Sarah Pace, assistant brand manager for Wood's 100 Rum.

"We chose Nigel because his composure in what was inevitably an extremely scary situation is inspirational – he even managed to crack a joke when the drama was over!"

Nigel's served in the RN for 35 years, took part in the Cod Wars, Cold War and 1990-91 Iraq conflict, and has enjoyed five seagoing posts as a WO1, including two EWO assignments (first Albion, now Somerset). He finally leaves the RN next spring, when he plans to travel with his wife Lizzie, and further his career as a yacht skipper.

Nigel's service in the Royal Navy, lasting 35 years, has taken him all over the world and he has also worked with NATO. He is currently serving in the Arabian Gulf and when on dry land his home is on the south Cornwall coast. His dream is for him and his wife to sail around the world one day.

His ditting earns him £500 off the price of a battlefield tour with Leger Holidays.

Runners-up – nonagenarian Bernard Hallas, Ken Harman and Doug Lohead – receive a bottle of Wood's 100 Old Navy rum each; you can read their tales in the Ditty Box section of the Navy News website.

Now for the winning dit:

"I will always remember one incident that took place during a bitter November storm about 150 miles south-west of Ireland.

I was coxswain of a seaboard that was called away as part of a man overboard drill.



● The (sea) dog's bollard... WO1 Nigel Jones relaxes on Somerset's forecastle
Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge

Having collected the weighted dummy we headed back through a heavy swell and by the time we returned alongside our boat was awash with water.

On being hoisted one of the lines parted, the boat broached, and we were left being trawled along upside down.

I grabbed my bowman with one arm and clung to my life line with the other arm.

We were hoisted and lowered three times and eventually my friend was washed away.

At this point I decided I would be safer in the water and I went after my bowman.

On seeing my head surface, panicking, he pushed me under several times until I managed to grab his hands and calm him down.

Our ship HMS Lowestoft – unable to stop as it was trailing a long sonar – took over 30 minutes to return to us.

I remember the grey mast heading away each time we floated over the crest of a 20ft Atlantic wave, before sliding into the next deep trough.

Just as we were slipping into a state of semi-consciousness the ship came along side and a brave young diver jumped in to pull us to the ship's side.

Upon being hoisted to deck level my first words to the ship's Executive Officer, as I hung limply in a recovery strop, were "Where's my tot, sir?"

CTP for Ark 25

BRITAIN'S flagship will be celebrating her 25th birthday year with a cocktail party for officers and warrant officers who've served in her since the 1980s.

HMS Ark Royal formally joined the Royal Navy when she was commissioned on November 1 1985 (she arrived in Portsmouth several months earlier).

A Silver Jubilee cocktail party aboard on Thursday November 4 between 6.30 and 8.30pm will mark the occasion.

Serving and retired officers/warrant officers who have been part of the carrier's complement are eligible to attend.

Tickets, price £10 each, are limited to six per applicant and each attendee may be accompanied by one guest. Dress is 1C (negative medals) for serving personnel and suit and tie for civilians.

Numbers are limited to 600 and the deadline for applications is October 1.

Cheques (no cash) should be made payable to Central Fund HMS Ark Royal and sent to Lt Pete Davis, Silver Jubilee Ball Officer, HMS Ark Royal, BFPO 212.

More details for serving personnel can be found in RNTM 154/10.

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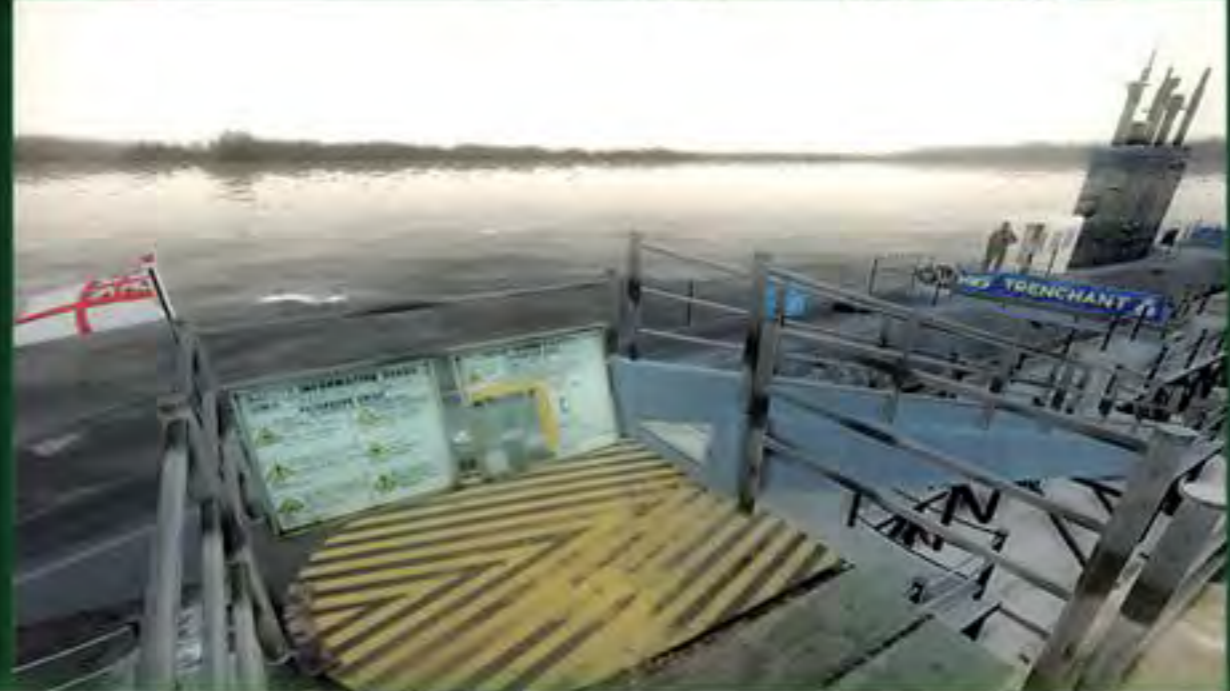
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C:_Sub Routines



OLDER readers may remember *Tomorrow's World*, the Beeb's flagship technology show which ran for four decades.

It gave us our first glimpse of the cash machine, the pocket calculator, the CD player.

And it gave us a lot of things which never materialised: the singing washing line (!) and the glow-in-the-dark fishing rod.

A fair few futuristic developments which have featured in these pages down the years have never come to fruition: the Harrier 'grab' system (the official term was Skyhook) and quite a few ships (Type 24 and 25 frigates, 43 and 44 destroyers, CVA01 and 02).

And some bits of futuristic nautical technology do become reality. Or even virtual reality.

Two years ago we featured the work of the Serious Games team at the University of Birmingham and hailed an upcoming simulation for the Silent Service, SubSafe.

And two years down the line – after being trialed among the deep community at the Submarine School in HMS Raleigh – the enhanced version of the boat simulator is about to be rolled out (cunningly called SubSafe 2), a recreation of the forward end of HMS Trenchant.

The trial version allowed trainees to 'walk' around the 'business end' (with apologies to the marine engineers...) of a nuclear submarine, get used to the layout and learn where important safety features – valves, fire extinguishers, oxygen canisters and the like – could be found.

The software developers spent four half days taking photographs of a T-boat's forward compartments... and seven days uploading all those images on to their computer system to begin creating their virtual world.

Add 18 months or so of experimental evaluation with, and feedback from the Silent Service and... SubSafe 2 is developed.

Like its predecessor, the simulator uses the software engine from gaming but instead of blasting aliens and the like, it's adapted for more worthwhile, serious uses... hence the Serious Games name.

So what does SubSafe 2 do that the original doesn't?

Well, there's wind for a start.

"When we first showed it, the chief petty officers complained that the flags on the casing didn't move in the wind and the river wasn't moving," explains Professor Bob Stone of the University of Birmingham and Research Director for the UK's Human Factors Integration Defence Technology Centre.

This may seem a tad indulgent but if you want trainee deeps to be drawn into the virtual world, that virtual world has to be believable.

"It's all about how realistic the simulation needs to be in order to get the users' buy-in," Prof Stone adds. "If you don't engage them right from the moment the simulation fires up, then it's really difficult to get them to benefit from what the technology is trying to deliver."

It's not just about the wind and the waves. SubSafe 2 also simulates safety-critical events, like hydraulic valve and high-pressure air bursts, fire, smoke and compartment flooding.

The submarine school has been testing – and impressed by – the first version of SubSafe, but it's version 2.0 which has the school's CO Cdr Nick Meredith fired up. "It brilliantly demonstrates the advances in training technology – we're just tapping its potential at the moment."

"Synthetic training aids such as SubSafe bridge the gap between what we can do in the classroom and what we can do in a boat."

"The aim is to get sailors to the same standard of knowledge – or better – as before, but quicker."

But why do we need a boat simulator? Given the demands that the Silent Service faces operationally, there's no guarantee of a boat being available across the Hamoaze in Devonport for trainees to get their bearings.

A mock-up boat at Raleigh would be, well, a tad pricey. Creating a simulated submarine, however, is a far more (virtual) realistic proposition.

As well as in the classroom under the guidance of instructors, the aim is for budding deeps to learn their way around a boat via SubSafe on their laptops and PCs (the classified bits of Trenchant can't be seen on the simulation) and ultimately on iPod, iPads and other hand-held devices.

Simulation is not a training panacea rather a training aid.

"We're not saying that it should replace going on a submarine," Cdr Meredith stresses. "But if you think about it, pilots do most of their training in a simulator before qualifying."

"In the past, you joined a boat and you learned your way around it at the same time as you learned how to do your job."

"Now, with simulation, we can send submariners to sea in a far better state of preparation than they have been before."

To that end, SubSafe 2 takes training to the next level: fire, smoke and flooding – submariners' worst nightmares – now feature.

"There's massive potential for all forms of synthetic training," says Cdr Meredith. "In the future we're looking at things such as damage-control training."

Hence the fire, smoke and water.

The idea eventually is to hook several computers up, so that trainees can tackle a problem such as a galley fire or compartment flood as a team – as they would do on a boat.

It is also an aim to use the forward escape compartment of the virtual boat to support submarine escape training. Not recreating the actual experience of exiting the escape tower into the murky waters outside, but the procedures necessary to flood and drain the tower safely, especially for the "last man out".

And how true to the environment onboard a real submarine is SubSafe? "Creating the ambience of a submarine, such as the junior rates' bunk space is probably a little too advanced at the moment," Prof Stone explains. "We have experimented with a smell delivery system – in the next three to five years the technology might just make it possible." Ambience. That's a new word for it...

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Contraceptive thrills



● Have giant red condom, will perform... The Red Marrows pose after their performance at Culdrose Air Day



● Crowds mill around the static displays at Culdrose...



● ... and at Portsmouth Navy Days



● The Black Cats Lynx display team 'dance' over Portsmouth Harbour

NOW we could talk about the majesty and might of a veteran Vulcan sweeping through Cornish skies.

Or we could tell you about the pinpoint accuracy of the RN Raiders parachute display team.

We could marvel at the daredevilry of the Aerosuperbatcs Breitling Wing Walkers.

We could wax lyrical about the home-grown talent on display at Culdrose Air Day: the Hawks of FRADU, the Jetstreams, the Merlins, the Bagger Sea Kings.

Or we could tell you about a bunch of landlubbers dressed in white overalls and blue helmets strutting around an arena carrying inflated condoms covered in red papier mâché to the *William Tell Overture*.

And you know the way our minds work...

The 24,000 visitors to the Cornish air station's annual air day may have been forgiven for thinking there was an error in the show's programme: 1600 Red Marrows.

Obviously, that must be the Red Arrows, the RAF's world-renowned display team.

Er no, it would be a mix of matelots, ex-matelots and civvies performing Red Arrow-esque manoeuvres in the main arena with those giant red condoms (balloons weren't big enough...) standing in for the Hawks.

The Red Marrows are the brainchild of ex-charge chief Brian Toney, who decided to spice up an event in his village of Gweek a couple of years ago "because the Red Arrows probably wouldn't come..."

Word eventually reached senior officers at Culdrose and before you can say 'Bob's your uncle', the Red Marrows were performing before a 1,500-strong crowd.

"We really hyped it up," says Brian who provided the commentary (he normally works on the Merlin Mk3 team at Culdrose).

"The public had no idea what they were in for - most thought it was a misprint."

Now the Red Arrows are famed for their 'Diamond Nine' formation and the red, white and blue they trail across the skies.

Clearly, nine British eccentrics in white suits can't do that...

"We had red, white and blue ribbons taped to the back of the helmets," Brian explains.

Obviously... After nine minutes and 27 seconds, the Marrows mayhem was over (that was as long as the musical accompaniment lasted).

Next up in the arena, more normal fare: a field gun run...

Elsewhere, the air base's 3,000-plus personnel explained their work at home and abroad (the Sea King squadrons are deployed in Afghanistan, the Merlins are in the Middle East, on the back of Type 23 frigates, and with HMS Ark Royal in the USA), and the Search and Rescue teams demonstrated the art of winching.

Sea Cadets showed off their drill skills, field gunners ran the

legendary competition, and the Band of HM Royal Marines brought everything to a close with a ceremonial sunset.

In short, a fun time was had by all and, after months of planning, air display organiser Lt Cdr David Lambourne was relieved that this year the weather gods were kind (the 2009 show in particular was a bit of a wash-out).

"I'm very happy with the way air day went - we were blessed with ideal weather and saw some excellent flying," he said.

"It was a memorable day for everyone concerned. I'm now looking to next year's event."

Now the *Navy News* team didn't see any teams performing with giant red condoms at Portsmouth Navy Days.

We did, however, see Royal Marines walking around carrying huge inflatable bananas and enormous stuffed toys (they won them at the various stalls apparently...).

We also saw some 25,000 people milling around the Fleet's flagship public event of the year.

Navy Days - this year spread over three days in Portsmouth Naval Base - saw people travelling from the West Midlands, Surrey and Bedfordshire among other places to see the Royal Navy and Royal Marines of the past, present and future.

The £1bn warships HMS Dauntless and Daring proved the biggest draws, but despite the substantial size of Britain's two newest destroyers, they were dwarfed by aviation training and casualty treatment ship RFA Argus.

The latter, fresh from refit, opened up her hospital to give the public a rare glimpse of the military's state-of-the-art floating medical facilities.

Also on show were frigates Westminster, Cumberland, and Richmond, fishery protection ship HMS Tyne, minehunter HMS Cattistock and landing craft Aachen.

The Royal Marines' Fleet Protection Group demonstrated how they could take down pirates by rapid roping from a Lynx, a vintage Hawker Sea Hawk jet demonstrated its graceful lines over Portsmouth Harbour, the Black Cats Lynx display demonstrated they could pirouette and dance through the sky, and the Royal Artillery Black Knights parachute display team demonstrated that they could leap into the water... but not walk on it (that's reserved for Royal...).

The whole event was brought to a close on Sunday evening by the Band of HM Royal Marines Beating the Retreat through the dockyard to Victory Gate.

"We were lucky with the weather but we were also pleased that the scale and variety of the whole event proved so popular," said Robert Bruce, managing director of Portsmouth Historic Dockyard which jointly staged the event with the Naval Base.

"We have had many more visitors than is normal, even on a busy summer's weekend and we are delighted with the result."

Naval Base Commander Cdre Rob Thompson added: "Navy Days was a huge success. The mainly dry and warm weather played a part but a big draw was seeing the Royal Navy's ships and personnel at close hand."



● The Aerosuperbatcs Breitling Wing Walkers demonstrate their acrobatic skills (and fearlessness) over Culdrose

pictures: la(photos) martin carney and dean nixon

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TRUDGING up the forbidding slopes of the Hallingskarvet – roughly half-way between Oslo and Bergen – a team of Royal Marines aim to cover 1,000 kilometres on skis in 20 days.

A 13-strong team, drawn from across the Corps, responded to a rallying cry from Lt Col Gary Green, CO of RM Stonehouse: to hike, ski and climb across central Norway, and some of the most rugged, demanding terrain anywhere in Europe.

As well as the incentive of team building and AT, Exercise Tusen Takk (Norwegian for 'a thousand thanks') sought to raise thousands of pounds for two cancer charities (Macmillan and CLIC Sargent), plus the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

Maj Jon Clare was given the task of planning the 1,000km (620-mile) route with only one instruction: finish at Rjukan (allowing the Royals to ski in the tracks of the heroes of Telemark).

The route devised began in the Olympic resort of Lillehammer, skiing north through the Rondane, crossing

the mountains of the Dovrefjell then ski through the high peaks in the Joutenheimen, finishing with a ski across the Hardangervidda mountain plateau, one of Europe's most inhospitable regions.

There was a weekend in Wales for the team to bond and for elite conditioning coach, ex-RM corporal Bernie Shrosbree, to assess the men and draw up regimes which would help the commandos cover the required 50km every day.

And so to Norway with hopes of two weeks of good weather – hopes quickly dashed, says Lt Col Green.

"The weather and ski conditions were, put simply, awful," he adds.

"The first few days through the Rondane which, in terms of terrain is comparable with Snowdonia, weren't too bad – the weather held, the wax worked and we were able to crank out the miles.

"That all changed when we hit the Dovrefjell.

This bleak area of wilderness in central-southern Norway where very few Norwegians tend to go was a considerable hurdle.

"We found out why very early on when a couple of elderly Norwegian

locals came racing down the mountain warning us that our route through a high mountain pass had been blocked by avalanche."

And so it proved. At the top of said mountain the team found the debris from the avalanche – and no safe passage, a phenomenon repeated a few days later.

The skiers turned south into the high mountains of the Joutenheimen National Park where it proved impossible to maintain the daily kilometre quota, despite the exhortations of the group's mountain leader who proclaimed: "Another quality mountain day chaps!"

In the midst of the trek, a moment to reflect. After a 20km ski across a trance-inducing Lake Tyin, there was a service of remembrance for all the Royal Marines that have lost their lives in Norway and for friends and family of team members.

After Col Jim Hutton (CTCRM) read out the names of the fallen, each team member placed a cross in the snow which was followed by a minute's silence.

"This was a poignant moment for all of us, not least myself, Jim and Maj Willie Hannah who had all suffered

losses or cancer to close family members," said Lt Col Green.

"It really brought home the significance of what we were trying to achieve."

Next to the Hallingskarvet, an awesome monolith barring the skiers' path culminating in a massive wall of snow rising 600 feet.

Once conquered, the skiers could make for the vast and daunting Hardangervidda plateau

It lived up to expectations.

"The clouds lifted to reveal a vast barren featureless landscape – a whiteness in every direction," said Lt Col Green.

"It became clear to all of us why Amundsen chose to train here for his race to the South Pole against Scott."

That was in the depths of winter; rain and temperatures of 3°C dogged the Royals' progress – and scuppered those plans to retrace the route of the Telemark heroes (officially Operation Gunnerside).

The team did, however, ski to the parachute drop zone at Skrykken and pay homage to their predecessors. They also dropped in on an elderly Norwegian woman who described her encounter with the saboteurs of the

heavy water plant at Vermork 70 years ago.

On the final day, the sun shone in all its glory and the Royals made good speed to the foot of the Gausta near the town Rjukan – an area known well to many Royal Marines military ski instructors.

And that all but brought the curtain down on Tusen Takk.

"We had hoped for 20 days of brilliant sunshine. We got two," said Lt Col Green. "Blizzards, cloud, hail, sleet, rain and fierce winds, coupled with avalanches and awful snow conditions all conspired against us.

The officer continued: "We never made the 1,000km, but we all benefited immensely from the experience.

"It was a splendid journey, marked by the cheerfulness shown by all in the face of awful snow and weather conditions, the sheer dogged determination to crack on and overcome the odds, the distinctive bootneck sense of humour; and the inspiration the veterans took from the youngsters."

And then there was the fundraising: in excess of £19K collected so far.

You can read fuller accounts of the trek and see more images at www.tusentakk.co.uk.

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From September 1st, the IET will be launching new technician pricing for Armed Forces applicants:

TMIET Membership fee will be £80.

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Same procedure as every year

NOW if you were to try to find tanker RFA Bayleaf, the Arabian Gulf would be a good place to start looking.

A very good place to start. In eight out of the past nine years, the fleet tanker has been in or around the Gulf region supporting Allied naval operations.

She broke off to return to her birthplace in Birkenhead for a refit in 2008...

... and then it was back out to the Middle East once more to top up those thirsty battleship-grey messengers of death.

Luckily, she carries nearly five million gallons of diesel – that's enough to fill 400,000 Ford Focus (or is it Foci?)... or one Ford Focus 400,000 times...

In the seven-year stint from 2001-08, vessels from 16 nations made use of the floating fuel depot during 767 replenishments at sea (over two every week).

Not that the ship's company spend all day RASing. They spend quite a lot of time shooting.

So much so that they've just been awarded the Jordan Trophy, connected neither with the country nor the ubiquitous glamour model, but presented every six months to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary which has contributed the most to above water warfare.

A specialist gunnery team from Flag Officer Sea Training tours the Fleet and assesses the ability of ship's company to deal with a range of tests from weapon handling and marksmanship to 'quick draw' exercises (dealing with a fast attack craft).

Thanks to the skill of an oddly-named bunch – Hayes Heroes under 2/O(X) Nathan 'No Shoes' Hayes – a makeshift Jordan Trophy



Falkland Islands.....1982
Kuwait.....1991

Class: Leaf-class support tanker
Pennant number: A109
Builder: Cammell Laird, Birkenhead
Launched: October 27, 1981
Commissioned: March 26, 1982
Displacement: 37,747 tons
Length: 170.7m (560ft)
Beam: 25.9m (85ft)
Draught: 5.8m (36.1ft)
Speed: 16kts
Complement: 56
Propulsion: 2 Pielstick PC2.V 400 diesels generating 14,000 HP
Cargo: 22,000 cubic metres (4.8m gallons) diesel; 3,800 cubic metres (835,000 gallons) Avcat
Armament: 2 x Oerlikon 20mm; 4 x 7.62 machine-guns

Facts and figures

(the original's back in Blighty) sits in the cabinet of CO Capt Steve Donkersley RFA.

His ship is one of just two surviving Leaf-class tankers (the other, Orangeleaf, is currently undergoing a refit on Merseyside) which trace their lineage back to the mid-1970s.

Bayleaf joined the Fleet less than a week before Argentina

invaded the Falklands. She was promptly sent south with the Operation Corporate task force (the QE2 was among the vessels to take advantage of the new tanker's refuelling facilities), earning her first battle honour.

Within a decade a second honour had been added to the board courtesy of her support of Allied forces liberating Kuwait.

The Bayleaf story begins back in 1893 and the cattle ship Cevic, built by the legendary Harland and Wolff in Belfast. She plied the North Atlantic route for two decades until the outbreak of the Great War.

The Admiralty took her over and turned her into a dummy battle-cruiser to mimic HMS Queen Mary for 12 months until

the Navy scrapped its dummy squadron.

She was then turned into an oiler first as RFA Bayol then, from 1917, as RFA Bayleaf, before being restored to commercial use in 1920. She was broken up in Italy in the early 1930s.

Bayleaf No.2 also began life in the private sector: the London Integrity, as she was originally

called, was launched on Teeside in 1954.

Five years later she joined the RFA as Bayleaf and served for 14 years before being returned to her original owners, London & Overseas Freighters, who promptly restored her first name.

She sailed for three more years before being broken up in Spain in 1977.

HEROES OF THE ROYAL NAVY No.77 – Boatswain's Mate Henry Curtis VC



THE white, whiskery mutton chops in this rather stern portrait mean only one thing: this is the face of a Victorian hero.

The face of one Boatswain's Mate Henry Curtis to be precise, only the 11th man in the Senior Service to be awarded Britain's highest military honour at an investiture in Hyde Park. It was almost two years to the day of the deed which earned him that medal.

The 40th anniversary of Waterloo saw British and French troops fighting side-by-side to capture the most heavily-fortified city in the world: Sevastopol.

For ten months the Allied forces had invested Russia's great Crimean port. Their artillery had subjected it to frequent bombardments, but every attempt to carry the fortress had failed.

Monday, June 18 1855, was no different. In the small hours, the French had launched their latest assault on Sevastopol and the infamous Redan fort.

The Russians knew they were coming. They scythed down the advancing Frenchmen.

The attack miscarried, yet the British felt duty-bound to support the assault.

The 66-year-old British commander, Lord Raglan, had fought under Wellington at Waterloo four decades earlier, but possessed little, if any, of the great general's flair for battle.

He dithered on the field of battle, gave belated or garbled instructions. Procrastination was compounded by failing health – the exertions of 12 months of war in the Crimea had taken their toll – and growing despondency.

Under such circumstances – and considerable pressure from the French – Raglan ordered British forces to assault the Redan.

Despite the French failure, the prospects were encouraging: the men – a mixture of red and blue jackets – were up for a fight. The assault had been thoroughly planned: infantrymen and engineers would lead the way, crossing 400 yards of open ground to reach the ditch in front of the fortification.

There 50 men carrying sacks would help to fill the gap so 120 soldiers and sailors could bring up scaling ladders for a 400-strong assault force to finally storm the Redan, whose guns had been silenced by a ferocious barrage from the British guns the preceding day.

Except that the Russian guns hadn't been silenced. They opened fire as soon as the first infantry left the trenches.

They sought cover in craters and gullies which littered the landscape.

In one such foxhole a soldier of the 57th (Middlesex)

Regiment, shot in both legs, looked forlornly towards British lines, calling for help.

Four sailors scrambled out of their trench: Lt Henry James Raby, Lt Henry D'Aeth, Captain of the Forecastle (roughly the equivalent of a petty officer) John Taylor, and Boatswain's Mate Henry Curtis.

They stumbled over a corpse-strewn terrain for some 70 yards, constantly under fire, while soldiers fell back for British lines.

The four sailors finally reached the stricken soldier, picked him up and carried him back towards their trench. The Russian guns showed no mercy and continued to fire – bullets reportedly passed between Curtis' legs at one point.

Somehow, none of the four were hit and the injured soldier safely reached the British lines.

The sailors were mentioned in dispatches – an honour subsequently elevated to the Victoria Cross. The men had, in the terse words of the citation, "succeeded in conveying the wounded soldier to a place of safety, at the imminent risk of their own lives."

There was no VC for Henry D'Aeth, however; he died of cholera a few weeks later – posthumous awards were not made for another half a century.

Dead much sooner was Lord Raglan; contemporary accounts say the failure of the June 18 attack broke his health. Dysentery finished him off.

Not so Henry Curtis, who lived for another 40 years. He remained in Her Majesty's service well into the 1860s, serving as an instructor and as the quartermaster on a cross-Channel ferry.

He died aged 73 in Portsmouth in 1896 and is buried in the city's Kingston Cemetery.

A century later, his Victoria Cross appeared at a London Auction House, where it was bought for £35,000 by a private bidder...

... that 'private bidder' turned out to be Lord Ashcroft who, a decade on, is loaning Henry Curtis' medal to the Imperial War Museum in London for its new medals' gallery.

The philanthropist owns 162 VCs, all of which will feature alongside the 46 VC and 30 George Crosses from the IWM's collection in the new Lord Ashcroft Gallery, due to open in November.

■ THIS image (VC 292) – 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.

With thanks to Ian Proctor

photographic **memories**

Air miles and milestones

YOU only get an 'oo' with Typhoon.

Not that you'd actually hear the sighs and gasps because Britain's no.1 jet is *quite* loud, as sailors from HMS Diamond discovered.

A six-strong team from the Type 45 destroyer – due to make her maiden appearance in Portsmouth on September 22 – decamped from the Clyde, where Diamond's in the very final stages of fitting out, to RAF Coningsby for a visit to 3(F) Squadron, their affiliated Royal Air Force unit.

In a few months' time, the Diamonds and the Typhoons will be working hand-in-hand as Britain's first line of defence against aerial attack.

So time to find out how the Crabs do it.

After initial briefings about the Typhoon, members of the ship's company were able to witness several jets begin their practice dogfights in the skies of Lincolnshire – just as their forebears did 70 years earlier against the Luftwaffe, a memory reinforced by the sight of the historic aircraft of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight stationed at Coningsby.

While the destroyer's CO Cdr Ian Clarke was treated to an aerial view of a task group protection exercise courtesy of a two-seat Typhoon (described as "being thrown around for three hours and pulling 7G"), his shipmates enjoyed a rather less exerting experience on the ground.

The sailors were given the chance to take on their 3(F) Sqn affiliates in Coningsby's hi-tech simulators – they're exact replicas of the cockpit and controls in a Typhoon.

And this flying state-of-the-art jets lark must be a piece of cake because LLogs(SC) Craig Dixon downed one of the RAF's 'top guns'.

The visit ended with an exchange of crests between the respective commanding officers and, although the day was fun, Cdr Clarke said the experience of working with the RAF had underlined the fact that the Type 45s and Typhoons "must work closely alongside each other to exploit the awesome and complementary air defence capabilities that we each possess".

Meanwhile, in Portsmouth, you may have noticed quite a few extra Diamonds around.

One hundred to be precise – all junior rates and all inducted to their new ship on the same day – as the destroyer was brought up to a full complement of ship's company.

The sailors received their replacement (or new for those joining their first ship) tallies personally from Cdr Clarke.

"Today is a milestone in Diamond's life – the first day with a complete ship's company," he told the assembled sailors before outlining the challenges they would face in the coming 18 months "to prepare Diamond to undertake a full range of operations, anywhere in the world, at short notice".

With the warship herself on the Clyde, the new arrivals' initial training and induction will take place in the first two Type 45s, Daring and Dauntless, already in Portsmouth.

And what of HMS Diamond herself?

Well, we're glad you asked.

The initial ship's company have been getting into the swing of breathing life into Diamond – and we're not just talking



● Still smiling after being thrown around for three hours... Diamond's CO Cdr Ian Clarke (right) with Flt Lt 'Rosie' Lee, who took him up in a Typhoon

about getting all the kit working.

A warship's more than the sum of its parts. It's given a soul by the men and women aboard, through their actions and deeds.

So the Diamonds took an active role in Armed Forces Day celebrations; AB(Sea)s Alicia Goodrun and Ben Campbell took Scottish TV presenter Lorraine Kelly for a whizz down the Clyde in Diamond's sea boat to launch events north of the border.

Other journeys have been rather longer, like a 300-mile round trip to Aberdeen (one of the ship's two affiliated cities, the other being Coventry).

The ship's company marched through the Granite City during its Armed Forces Day parade with Cdr Clarke taking the salute, standing outside Town House next to Lord Provost Peter Stephen and Scottish First Minister Alex Salmond.

The CO then presented a cheque for £1,600 to one of the ship's chosen good causes, the Friends of Anchor which supports cancer research and cancer sufferers in north-east Scotland.

That came courtesy of a sponsored relay event which saw sailors, led by the Executive Officer Lt Cdr 'Pincher' Martin, and clubz LPT Danny Fallon, complete a run from the ship in Glasgow to Aberdeen then straight on to bicycles to Coventry...

... which is where the rest of the ship's company could be found on Armed Forces Day, taking part in the Midlands' cities events.

And it was there that the remaining £1,600 raised by those sporting exertions were presented to the neo-natal unit at the city's hospital by Cdr Paddy Munns, Diamond's marine engineer officer.



● AB(WS) Charlotte Pape, ET(WE) Gemma Hall, ET(ME) Andrew Taylor, AB(CIS) Michael Sandbrook and LogS(SC) David Scotland show off their Diamond cap tallies (in front of HMS Dauntless)

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

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Forging Navy gun

BISLEY and Tipner may be only 40 miles apart as the crow flies, but it would be easy to assume that the world-famous home of competition shooting and the Navy's more modest training range on the margins of Portsea Island are poles apart.

That misconception could be fuelled by the skill of the sailors and Royal Marines competing for the top military marksmanship honour when compared with the lack of confidence displayed by those picking up a rifle for the first

time in years.

But the shooting carried out at the two locations is one and the same thing – weapon training which is shaped by the demands of Afghanistan.

They just happen to be at opposite ends of the same scale... We will start at the top, because in skill-at-arms the Navy's fervent wish is that those skills will trickle down to the benefit of all.

And that trickle-down effect was clearly evident at this year's RN and RM Combat Shooting Competition, which saw a new name inscribed on the Queen's

Medal roll of honour.

The Queen's Medal is the highest accolade a military marksman can aim for – the only medal presented for a Service skill, and can be worn on the uniform alongside other medals.

Each Service has its own annual eight-day competition, alongside a host of other competitions for individuals and teams of up to 15, including a proportion of novices or tyros.

Operational requirements, as ever, meant teams were below full complement – the Royal Marines mustered seven, Portsmouth six and Plymouth four.

It was Naval Air Command which fielded the largest team – and carried off many of the prizes, thanks to a team captain who led by example.

Lt Dave Anderson is an observer with 771 NAS, the search and rescue squadron based at Culdrose.

In addition to finding time to hone his own skills, he managed to find enough spare time outside duty hours to persuade sailors to attend regional skill-at-arms meets, select and train a team and gather them on the Surrey heath.

And while he oversaw his team to a string of successes, Dave improved on last year by displacing Queen's Medallist WO1 Paddy Newell RN, who led the

Portsmouth Command challenge.

Lt Anderson spent two decades in the Royal Marines, and used skills he had learned in the Corps to improve his team's chances.

The officer is convinced that what they have learnt could one day prove vital.

"These are skills which could make all the difference, especially amongst the people on operational squadrons at Culdrose," he said.

"The Baggers of 849 are in Afghanistan at the moment, and they would definitely benefit from competition combat shooting, because they are serving on the front line.

"If they did get into a situation where they needed to shoot at an enemy this would really benefit them.

"OPTAG gives you basic training, but they do not get the pressure which is there during a competition, that adrenalin rush – that's the closest we get to combat shooting.

"The only difference here is the target doesn't fire back..."

Victory over his old comrades was not easy.

"I am proud of this team, but it hurts me that we hammered the Royal Marines – they are my team, it's where I came from.

"But I have passed on whatever I learned from them, and the

result is probably just a lack of experience at the moment."

One aspect of his personal victory caused Lt Anderson a fleeting moment of trepidation: "The winner in each Service gets carried off shoulder-high in a chair – and I'm scared of heights, even though I am aircrew," he said.

The chairman of the RN and RM Rifle Association (RNRMRA), Cdr Mike Magan, had nothing but praise for the aviator – and echoed his words in terms of the competition's military value.

"For a guy normally flying in a SAR helicopter, Dave has really gripped and run his team," said Cdr Magan.

"He's been shooting well, but he's also invested huge amounts of personal time in bringing on his team."

The Bisley event ends with an Inter-Service challenge and an international match, but again the sporting terms can be deceptive.

"We have moved away from the hybrid of sport and military," said Cdr Magan.

"Although this is a competition it is not a jolly. It's part of their advanced small arms combat training, and it gives them skills they can take back.

"Competition is the spur – it adds that element of pressure which would be present in a combat situation.

"A lot of what we do here is not just lying prone firing a rifle – it's fire-and-move from a range of positions, standing, kneeling or squatting.

"Here we give a range of situations which they may find themselves in.

"They shoot from up to 500 metres, so if you need to shoot an enemy at long range, you know you can hit them.

"Then perhaps you move in and come into contact; you repulse an attack, then you counter attack.

"Though you are on a static range you are reproducing those scenarios.

"There are gallery targets, but also electronic pop-up targets, and a range of close-quarter targets, right forward to a few metres with a pistol – testing the kind of skills you would want when you are training for boarding parties."

The Navy works with its Army and RAF counterparts to develop combat shooting skills to make them more relevant to the front line, in part using input from individuals who are just back from the front.

"Which is why it is so frustrating that there are only 27 here when we have space for 60," added Cdr Magan.

WO Newell, the Queen's Medal

runner-up, said the training was also relevant for the ship-borne fraternity, giving upper deck sentries the confidence to use a rifle safely and effectively under pressure.

"It could have been the case in the past that if they got fired at they might have just gone to seek cover," said WO Newell.

"Now they would probably be more confident to take them on – it makes them more capable with that weapon."

With shooting over for the day, it was time for the Queen's Medallists to be chaired from the ranges, with the Naval contingent withdrawing to the quaint Artists Rifle clubhouse for lunch and presentations (see below left).

Amongst those joining the shooters and officials was Robert Pooley, of Pooley Sword Ltd, which took over as leading sword supplier to the Armed Forces when Wilkinson Sword moved out of the business in 2005.

Also attending was Mike Elms, father of the late Cpl Liam Elms.

Liam Elms died on New Year's Eve in 2008 while on patrol with Zulu Coy, 45 Cdo, in Helmand, and a new prize dedicated to his memory – the Fallen Comrades Trophy – was won, perhaps as it should have been, by the Royals.

The competition, sponsored by Infonic, is a timed event representing the evacuation of a casualty, a resupply of ammunition and a final target shoot.

"Shooting was a big part of Liam's life," said his father.

"He last competed at Bisley in 2006, and he loved shooting – he was in the RM team.

"I feel very proud today."

Deputy CINC Fleet Vice Admiral Richard Ibbotson spoke to competitors about the upcoming role of the Royal Navy in Herrick 14 in Afghanistan.

The admiral noted that it involved far more than just a brigade of fighting men – there were numerous support roles, such as medical and logistics, which would see sailors going through OPTAG ('Operational Training and Advisory Group', now an outdated title – its correct name is Individual Pre-Deployment Training or IPDT, but the old user-friendly moniker lives on).

RNRMRA president Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks picked up a point made by Vice Admiral Ibbotson, saying: "The key thing is that the Navy must benefit from your presence here.

"Actively go out and help other people improve their marksmanship."

Which brings us neatly to Portsmouth and a two-week



● A trainee shoots under supervision at Tipner



● A competitor checks his rifle sight on the Century Range at Bisley



● (Above and below) Weapons instruction and practice at Tipner



Bisley results

Stewart Cup: Naval Air Command (NAC); Herbert-Smith Challenge Cup: RN; Generals Cup: Plymouth; Gravesend Cup: NAC; Trotter Cup: NAC; RAOC Challenge Cup: NAC; Air Arm Cup: RN; Chatham Cup: Plymouth; Devonport Cup: NAC; Portsmouth Cup: NAC; Inter-Command Rifle Cup: NAC; Pete Bloom Trophy: RN; Generals Prize: NAC; Inter-Command Revolver Cup: RM; Bounton Cup: RN; Hutton Trophy: RM; Queen's Medal: Lt Anderson; Ramsay Trophy and Silver Salver: Lt Anderson; Hutton Tankard (Service Rifle): Lt Anderson; Simbang Cup and Silver Salver: Lt Anderson; Keymer Cup and Silver Salver: CPO Kendall; Kendall Shield and Silver Salver: Lt Anderson; RMRA 75th Anniversary Trophy: Lt Anderson; Bounton Revolver and Silver Salver: Cpl Inglis; Queen's Medal Tyro 'Runner Up' Silver Salver: LAET Brown; ETR Champion

Silver Salver: Lt Anderson; Pistol Tyro Champion Silver Salver: Cpl Dolecki; Pistol Tyro 'Runner Up' Silver Salver: Gy Sgt Schuster; RNRA 50th Anniversary Cup: Lt Anderson; Tyro FIBUA Champions Salver: WO2 Pritchard RM; Tyro FIBUA 'Runner Up' Salver: C/Sgt Mitchell; Tyro Gallery Champions Salver: LAET Brown; Tyro Gallery 'Runner Up' Salver: Cpl Inglis; Tyro ETR Champions Salver: 2/Lt Thomas RM; Tyro ETR 'Runner Up' Salver: Cpl Inglis; Top Tyro Rifle – RN: LAET Brown; Top Tyro Rifle – RM: Cpl Inglis; GB Bars 2009: CPO Kendall (capt), WO1 Wharton (adj), Lt Anderson, WO1 Newell; Aldershot Cup: RN; Georges Trophy: CPO Kempster; Fallen Comrades Trophy: RM; Herbert Lott: PARA – PO Robinson, PASARA – CPO Heywood, NACRA – Lt Anderson, RMRA – WO2 Pritchard RM, Chairman's – WO1 Wharton; Bisley Cup: Lt Anderson.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Chris Mumby (Bisley) and LA(Phot) Arron Hoare (Tipner)



● Queen's Medal rivals on the Century Range at Bisley

mettle



weapon handling course.

It's a motley crew, in terms of marksmanship – though through no fault of their own.

Take Lt Cdr Johanna Christian, for example: a logistics officer, she has had a fairly predictable career path to date, most recently with the Joint Supply Chain at Abbey Wood.

Not much call for a rifle in those parts, nor on previous ships such as HMS Endurance.

But come November, Lt Cdr Christian joins 104 Logistic Support Brigade at Camp Bastion in Afghanistan, where competence with a rifle is all together a more useful skill.

"Camp Bastion and 104 Logs will be out of my comfort zone," Lt Cdr Christian admitted.

"The last time I shot a rifle was in 1992, and the last time I handled one was in 2001, on Officer of the Day duties.

"You had to learn how to do the weapon handovers, but not to shoot it.

"I have been at sea at the pointy end, but not been required to shoot while at sea – I had other things to do, like damage control."

The officer said as an armed service it was entirely understandable that skill-at-arms should be taught in the Navy – but if you are never likely to have to use a rifle in anger there is little point wasting time and money training with it.

Not all has faded in the mist of time, however.

"It has been good training so far, and the weapon handling drill came back quicker than I thought it would," said Lt Cdr Christian.

"The course is excellent, very well-paced – it assumes you need to start with the basics, which is great."

She admitted that she was not, by the fourth day, comfortable with the body armour, but expected that to ease through the subsequent days.

"I am joining a logistics support headquarters, and I am making the assumption I will not be at the really sharp end, on patrols and convoys, so the real combat techniques I would hope I will not get to use," she said.

"But even wearing the kit makes you appreciate what we are getting into.

"Shooting is not something I am very good at – I am not sub-optimal, but I am not going to win any awards.

"But if nothing else I will feel more comfortable joining my Army colleagues because I have worn the kit and fired the weapon."

Another sailor breaking new ground is NA(SE) Brett Townsley, who is going to Camp Bastion as a prison handler.

"For me this is way out of my comfort zone – I haven't touched a rifle for five years, since basic training," said the survival equipment specialist.

NA Townsley is currently at RAF Cottesmore with the Naval Harriers, but he deploys to Afghanistan later this month.

"This course has been really good for me," he said.

"I wasn't overly confident with the weapon at all when I found I was going out.

"After the first shoot I am far more confident, and after two weeks here I should be able to handle it with no problem at all.

"My family expect me to know what to do with a rifle because I'm military, but depending on your branch you may never get to look at a rifle – my branch certainly don't."

"This is as far away from

survival equipment as you could get – it is exactly the opposite, really."

PO Kev Moran, part of the training team, said the course caters for "all shapes, sizes and standards"; in recent weeks they have had ABs fresh out of Raleigh to a senior captain.

Some even have a number of Herricks under their belts.

"We have had the old-timers saying 'why have I got to do this? I have already been to Herrick'," said PO Moran.

"But 99 per cent of them we have here have a relaxed attitude – all rates and ranks.

"They are very receptive to the training."

The test is the Annual Combat Marksmanship Test (BCC – basic close combat), the theatre entry-level benchmark, though the standard is now being applied across the Navy.

In the past RN shooters were trained over 100 metres, but now they go out to 300 metres – a more practical skill as any shooting from a modern warship is just as likely to be over longer distances across water as short range shore-side.

The two-week course starts with basics of breaking down and reassembling the SA80 rifle, re-learning its characteristics and becoming confident with the equipment.

Trainees wear helmets, body armour and webbing at all times, preparing them for long shifts in the kit in theatre.

They also learn to zero the sight, and to accommodate different shooting positions.

By the end, shooters will have proved their capability over different ranges using different techniques – they must pass each stage before progressing.

The course also includes some night-firing.

WO1 Bob Bainbridge, in charge of the course, said: "I am a WO drill specialist.

"I do not like using them in their secondary role – I prefer to see them presented on a parade ground.

"What we have here is a perishable skill.

"They may not have touched a weapon for years – particularly officers with their pistols.

"Ratings all have some experience with a rifle, but the officers may never have trained

with rifles.

"You get your surgeon commander, green-lidded but who hasn't used the skills for a long time.

"Now he is getting deployed as a consultant, he is dusting off the green lid, but the techniques have changed."

One such example is firing a rifle while wearing body armour.

The traditional firing position was side-on, but the main armour plates are across the chest, so a head-on stance is safer.

"You will end up firing about 600 rounds, if you pass first time," said WO Bainbridge.

"We get very few failures. When people struggle we have the staff and capability to do one-to-one," he said.

"We have a six-strong staff, a mix of green and blue, and some of the Royal Marines have had recent operational tours."

Rifle training is carried out on a number of ranges – apart from Tipner, they can also use Moody's Down and Chilcomb at Winchester, or Longmoor, depending on availability.

Most trainees go straight from weapon training to the Mounting Cell at HMS Nelson to tackle the tactical side and particular in-theatre requirements.

Such training might finally ring down the curtain on the old quips about sailors with guns...



● (Above) Queen's Medal winner Lt Dave Anderson is carried aloft; (below) Queen's Medal shooting on the Century Range at Bisley; (main picture) Trainees on the Tipner range in Portsmouth



● HMS Somerset on patrol in the Gulf...

Somerset pictures: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge



Thinking tactically

THE frigate sits on the surface of the water, outwardly calm.

Within the ops room a screen comes alive, a torpedo on impact course.

Time to move, no time to think. Three-hundred and sixty degrees of options, and moments to decide. Analysis is not an option, reaction is.

But that reaction is guided by the men and women of the Maritime Warfare Centre, based at HMS Collingwood – who provide the analysis long before the event can happen.

Analysis that is powered by carefully-constructed scenarios, running thousands of models of different reactions, looking back on an exhaustive legacy of knowledge.

The MWC is an alliance of Servicemen, scientists, and analysts, whose sole driving purpose is to create battle-winning tactics for the Royal Navy, based on the tactics that have won, the tactics that analysis proves will win, the tactics that first-hand experience says will win.

The mix of civilian and military pulls together front-line experience and scientific rigour – the sterile world of the computer meets the vivid world of the front-line.

So although the MWC is based in Fareham, its outlook is global.

Capt Philip Warwick, the man who heads up the MWC, said: "What we're providing to the Fleet is battle-winning tactics."

"So when they are sat there on their ship in the Gulf, whatever the threat might be, the tactics they are using are from the MWC."

And why are those tactics so important? His response is blunt: "The difference between living and dying is getting the tactic right."

He added: "It isn't just us sitting here thinking 'I wonder what would happen if...'"

"There's a significant amount of rigour to what we do – both scientific and military expertise."

The unit is made up of some 120 people, split roughly equally between civilian and military, although at any given time a hefty chunk of these people will be out at sea, on board ships, running trials and experiments; and most importantly asking questions.

Dr Martin Fowler, chief scientific adviser to CinCFleet, praises the combination of civilian scientists working alongside Service personnel: "We keep ourselves up to date, our legacy knowledge is refreshed with the two-year military rotation."

"My operational analysis team comprises an eclectic mix of scientists, engineers, mathematicians, software engineers and retired Service personnel who are all recognised specialists in their particular fields."

The feedback from the Fleet is an essential part of what they do; because it allows the MWC to take



"The difference between living and dying is getting the tactic right," says Capt Philip Warwick of the Maritime Warfare Centre. And that is why the Maritime Warfare Centre exists – a think tank staffed by scientists, analysts and the military; its role is to make sure that the tactics are right to win any and every battle.

advantage of direct experience on the front line.

Capt Warwick said: "If you've got a good idea, or seen something that is good or bad, you should be looking to raise a Fleet Lesson."

"Everyone serving at sea has the ability to submit Lessons to the MWC."

"If you're out in the Fleet, see something good, bad or indifferent, tell them they can submit a Lesson and it will be noted."

The Fleet Lessons cell is one of the smaller parts of the MWC organisation – just three people – but they can have a loud voice.

Cdr Mark Allibon explained: "The Lessons feedback from the Gulf is having a real effect. There's a high level of visibility."

A visibility that means that CinCFleet himself sits down to go through the Fleet Lessons feedback every six months.

Cdr Allibon gave an example: "You'll find our ships with upper deck weapons – GPMGs – are being fitted with gunshields for gunners."

"There was a body of evidence that came out of the Lessons process. CinC himself said that it was fundamental to the safety of our sailors."

He explained that every deploying unit is given reams of relevant information based on lessons learned during previous operations.

Another example he offers is humanitarian aid – previous experience was sent out to people on board RFA Largs Bay for the Haiti relief effort.

"And for Op Cunningham – bringing people back who were stranded by volcanic ash – we have good knowledge to share. Some strategic, some more practical."

"So whatever anyone tells you, there'll be a thousand more people on the jetty."

"And don't throw people's bags all together into the corner of the hanger when they come on board, you can guarantee that the diabetic's essential medication will be buried at the bottom."

Expertise at the MWC is focused in key divisions; Lt Cdr Bob Mannion of the underwater warfare section analyses surface ship and submarine exercises, trials and operations.

He cheerfully describes the challenges as "a cat-and-mouse, game of chess, whatever intellectual level you want to work at, it's all about action and reaction to what's happening out there."

He's justifiably proud that his team can turn around information

streamed back to the UK in just hours before sending straight back their analysis of the situation.

Lt Cdr Paul Bell in Anti-Air Warfare and his team are similarly crunching through data at speed to feed back information to units out in theatre.

He said: "The Gulf is the big focus; the situation can develop very quickly. We have to react accordingly."

"Clearly we don't just do it on the back of an envelope. We've got to bring it back to people who know what they're doing."

"Out there they don't have time to do this; or have the in-depth knowledge available. You simply don't have scientists at sea, people with time to do the analysis."

It's a similar story from Steve Phillips in the Sea King ASaC (Airborne Surveillance and Control) section: "We offer deep analysis of the data that the aircraft has been gathering in theatre."

So on a typical day the two Herrick operational analysts will run through four sorties of data each (the equivalent of 24 hours of flying) to feedback to Afghanistan an analysis that can help to plan future operations, inform troop deployments, understand the pattern of life, and offer force protection.

The Sea Kings in Afghanistan are gathering a detailed picture of what is happening on the ground, that feeds into the decision-making process; and MWC have been honing their analysis methods to provide swifter and in-depth response for theatre.

This is, by necessity, a brief canter through a few of the areas of MWC expertise – carrier strike, aviation, C4ISTAR and influence, logistics and amphibious warfare all come under the organisation's watchful eye.

In addition to support to operations and exercises – counter-piracy, drugs interdiction, or any of the countless other areas that demand the Navy's attention – the MWC also has a remit for education and battlestaff training.

There's no point in keeping all that expertise bottled up in Collingwood, but every point in making sure that people out in the Fleet are trained to best use and recognise those all-important battle-winning tactics.

Sadly gone (see tactical floor picture left) are the days of Wrens pushing models around the tactical floor in the historic buildings of Southwick (apparently best done with the shaft of a golf-club adorned with a piece of Blu-Tack).

Instead the tactical floor now has a new home in Collingwood and is in regular use to bring scenarios and training to life for the men and women attending the MWC.

Of course, the here and now is not the only focus of MWC attention. Capt Warwick said: "New and highly-capable ships are entering service and clearly we are not only doing battle-winning tactics, but also preparing for the future."

The analysis work of the men and women, both civilian and military, of the MWC is being fed on a daily basis into the operational decisions being made by CinCFleet's staff at Navy Command HQ.

Capt Warwick said: "My job is to ensure that MWC's work is at the heart of generating a Royal Navy that can fight and win."



● ...and decisions in her Ops Room are aided by the tactics of the MWC



● Training on the Tactical floor of the MWC

Picture: Keith Woodland

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● One of the analysis tools in use at the MWC to model tactics in theatre for ships such as HMS Somerset



Over the summer, the 14 vessels of the University Royal Naval Units bomb-burst around the UK and north-west Europe, immersing upwards of 700 students in Senior Service life.

They get to some exotic (ish) places. Lisbon. Gibraltar. Antwerp. The Baltic ports. And, er, Portsmouth. **Richard Hargreaves** hopped aboard **HMS Archer** in the Solent.

● HMS Smiter (Glasgow) follows HMS Archer out of Portsmouth



WE'VE all seen the *Young Ones* or *Withnail and I*.

Students. They attend two hours of lectures a week, deliver their essays late, get up at mid-day after a heavy night in the bar of the student union's Mandela Building, do the washing up on Saturdays and the vacuuming even less frequently.

Right? Well, possibly. But not this lot. They're up at 7am. They're on their feet ten, 12, 16 hours a day. They wash up after every meal (they still need a bit of help with the cleanliness, admittedly).

Mind you, they do have Jack on their case. Crammed aboard HMS Archer (all 68ft and 49 tons of her) are 12 undergraduates from Aberdeen's seats of higher learning.

Plus five ship's company. And some naval reservists or junior officers undergoing seamanship training.

And that's typical of all the P2000 patrol boats which serve the 14 University Royal Naval Units – more commonly, simply URNU – peppered around the UK.

They're *almost* the smallest vessels in the RN armoury (survey motor launch Gleaner at 28 tons takes that title) and it's probably fair to say a lot of the Fleet doesn't appreciate (a) what they do and (b) how busy they are.

So allow us to cast light where there is darkness.

There are in excess of two million students in higher education in the UK.

Seven hundred of those sign up to serve with the 14 URNUs – a maximum of 51 undergraduates per unit – after being interviewed by sailors to test their suitability.

The successful applicants are required to attend one 'sea weekend' per year, plus spend ten days with their unit at either the Easter or summer breaks – when the boats leave normal waters behind and head off on deployment.

For that they receive payment – typically around £1,000 a year. The students are also entitled to the benefits that regular sailors enjoy such as discounts, access to sports and medical facilities.

That will gnaw away at the cost of going to university these days (circa £20K over three years...) but it's not why the students are here.

"The money's nice, but it's not the reason why I'm here," says Officer Cadet Leigh

Moreton. A couple of generations of Moretons have already served under the White Ensign. The engineering student from Aberdeen University might be the third.

"I joined to see if this was something I'd want to do. It's an experience that you cannot put a value on. Some of my university friends think I'm crazy working all week, then going to sea at the weekend."

OC Scott Mackie adds: "The money's an incentive but you could earn more doing a normal Saturday job."

He too is seriously contemplating a full-time career in the RN. His time with Archer's taught him one thing – perhaps the most important for anyone pondering a life on the ocean waves.

"I decided: yep, I can live in a tiny box," Scott says.

Archer's not a tiny box, the Scotsman corrects himself: "She's a small grey caravan of death and destruction."

Not sure about the death and destruction bit, but a small grey caravan is a fairly apt description of life below decks, because the cramped spaces, small galley, narrow bunks do rather remind you of Jeremy Clarkson's *bête noire* (mercifully, though, there's no chemical loo...).

As for death and destruction, well, Archer's firepower's limited to catapults.

Catapults? "When the P2000s meet up, we catapult water bombs at each other," Scott explains. "How many people can say they throw water bombs at a British warship?"

My guess is about 700 every year... Anyway, when not soaking each other the students are being immersed (sorry) in all aspects of naval life: navigation, seamanship, husbandry, discipline, safety, and getting on with one another in a very restricted environment.

"Living in a small box, it's about being a family, about working as a team," says OC Louise Critchin, who's mastered much of life on Archer... bar tying her hair in a bun.

P2000s are basic. Comms between the open bridge and the wheelhouse (which is never used to drive the ship because the bridge offers far better visibility) normally involve a blow on the voice pipe (yes they still exist) or a holler down the ladder. Turn the wheel and you turn the rudder. There are no hydraulics, no power steering.



All the small things

That's not to say there's no technology aboard – there's the computerised chart system, WECDIS, for example... although the students are encouraged to navigate the traditional way: paper chart and fixes.

The boats have a pretty limited range (550 nautical miles; a Type 23 for example can sail for 9,000 miles).

But it's not just the small fuel tank which curbs the boats' range: because they're not full-time sailors, the students can't really be expected to spend more than ten to 12 hours at sea in one go.

And that's not the only hindrance. Food has to be acquired on an almost daily basis (the galley is compact, if not bijou), and laundry taken ashore to a washeteria at every opportunity. If there isn't one, there's always Plan B: a bucket.

As for the ship's company, well it's a job unlike any other in the RN. You're a sailor, a teacher, a guardian. On deployment, they spend the night ashore in a hotel or B&B because there's simply not space for everyone (there's always one full-time matelot on board to keep an eye on the students for safety reasons).

While the students might be the 'best and the brightest', they know little, if anything, of seafaring.

"You have to let the students go so far, let them make some mistakes – you don't want to keep saying: 'That's wrong,'" explains Archer's CO Lt Michael Hutchinson.

"At the same time you have to always ensure the ship is safe. It is a balancing act."

Nor are students necessarily the tidiest of people. They quickly learn that what they think is 'clean' isn't clean by RN standards.

"I've been at sea since I was 16," explains LET Simon 'Screwy' Driver, Archer's weapon engineer officer.

"These kids are academically minded. In no part of their lives have they been woken up at 3.30am to go on watch on the bridge.

"The first word out of their mouths is usually: 'why?'. I just growl at them."

He's joking. Probably.

The leading hand is as salty as any veteran sea dog in the RN – a Service life where, he explains, "every meal is a feast, every day is an adventure, every pay cheque is a bounty."

And on that last point... some of the most experienced senior rates can earn more than their CO (that doesn't happen very often in the military and, oddly, they wanted us to underline the point...).

Now the rest of skimmerland might be reading this and thinking: *easy life*.

"It's difficult to explain to the rest of the Royal Navy what we do – our BOST, for example, only lasts a couple of days, they take six, eight weeks and they go off on deployments of six or seven months," says LET Driver.

"Our job's not harder – or easier – it's just different."

There is a lot of time at sea. Archer may be the Aberdeen boat, but since the ice cleared from the harbour (you might remember the very wintry picture in our April edition) she's been away from home almost constantly.

By the time she returns to Scotland in mid-October following a spot of maintenance, she'll have been in her home port for just one and a half weeks over a seven-month period.

There is, says Lt Hutchinson, "not a lot of harmony time for the guys".

When the P2000s are in their home ports, Mondays and Tuesdays are days off, Wednesday through Friday are the maintenance days and it's off to sea at the weekend.

"You don't realise until you do this job how

busy it is," says Lt Hutchinson. "Every weekend is busy. On the plus side, it's fantastically rewarding and there's a great deal of responsibility."

With many of the URNU boats being based away from naval establishments, limited comms at sea, the boats are probably the most autonomous command in the Senior Service (they do have to tell the Fleet Controller what they're up to daily, but otherwise there's a fairly free rein).

"It's a great set-up. Being up in Aberdeen is probably the most autonomous command in the Navy," Lt Hutchinson adds.

"We're also a very visible presence in the UK – when the Royal Navy's so hard pressed, URNU boats are always around."

"Everywhere we go, we're able to get right into the heart of a town or city and that generally attracts a crowd. And you have the students spreading the word around."

All this activity comes under the wings of the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron and its Commanding Officer Cdr David Wilson (you might remember him as the flute-playing CO of HMS Bangor back in the mid-Noughties).

Command of 1PBS (it also includes the Gibraltar and Faslane squadrons) is the equivalent of driving a Type 22/23/42 – although the job is very different.

"I take great delight in telling my destroyer and frigate colleagues that I have 18 ships at my disposal – that's about one third of the Navy in the UK," says Cdr Wilson.

With his flotilla being scattered around the four corners of the UK, he makes sure he gets around the units.

But what are they for?

Well, what they're not is a recruitment tool. "The message we are trying to get across is to instill the Royal Navy ethos. Whether or not

they join us, they'll take that ethos with them," explains Cdr Wilson.

"There's a good cross section of student life in the units – politics students, historians, lawyers, doctors."

"If you have the capacity to do this and a degree at the same time, then you're probably going to be a mover and shaker in society."

In true Whiskas style, nine out of ten URNU students say the experience of serving with their unit surpasses expectations. Two out of three express an interest in joining the RN as a full-time experience. One in three passes through the gates of Dartmouth.

"I think the university boats provide a fantastic service – and for some students, a life-changing experience," Cdr Wilson adds.

But the boats are not just here to keep students busy; HMS Raider (Cambridge) took part in 70th anniversary commemorations of the Dunkirk evacuation then, in company with Tracker (Oxford) made the mammoth trip to Gib (mammoth for a P2000, that is) for the summer deployment.

Cambridge's boat will soon be trading places with Bristol's HMS Trumpeter. As one of the last P2000's built, Raider's supercharged, capable of 22kts instead of the more leisurely 14kts of most of the class.

By moving Raider to Devonport, she can be used not just by Bristol students but also by HMS Raleigh, Dartmouth and FOST for fast-attack craft and navigation training.

Sounds like fun...



pictures: la photo | keith morgan, rn photographer of the year

Seadogs scale the peaks

THE Salty Old Seadogs took on the challenge of 24 peaks, each over 2,400ft, in 24 hours to raise money for Seafarers UK. The Seadogs who have a combined age of 304 years and 167 years of service in the RN and RM relished the challenge of the demanding event.

The Salty Old Seadogs – Tony Quirk, Steve Sugden, Martin Mackey, Richard Pethybridge, Si Parsons, David Fearon and David Grindel – were undaunted by the atrocious weather that plagued nearly every step of their way, and finished the challenge in 23 hours and 42 minutes.

The team were delighted to cross the finish line in seventh place; and were one of only two teams to finish with a full complement. Just goes to show the dogged determination of these old salty types...

Team captain Tony said: "The challenge itself was pure team work from start to finish. The

comradeship and trust built up over six months of planning and training paid dividends on the hill, with the whole team, both walkers and support crew, working as one to achieve the goal.

"We had trained hard to maintain a pace that would get us to the finish with a few minutes in hand. To cross the line ahead of schedule was fantastic and testament to the determination of the team to keep going as injuries surfaced, bodies started to hurt and the conditions worsened."

Another team tackling the challenge with Naval connections were 'For Ian', walking in memory of the late Surg Vice Adm Ian Jenkins who was a former chairman of Seafarers UK.

Cdre Barry Bryant, Director General of Seafarers UK said: "This support will help us throw a lifeline to the many seafarers that desperately need our help in these hard times."

Running for Lilly

DANIEL Astley, a CPO serving in HMS Nelson, believes in miracles, for it was a miracle that saved his daughter Lilly's sight, and possibly her life.

When Lilly was six months old last January, her aunt was looking through some Christmas photos on Facebook and noticed that one of her eyes was showing white, instead of the usual red-eye.

She had seen a documentary about retinoblastoma, a rare form of childhood eye cancer, and advised Daniel and Lilly's mother, Brooke, to get her checked.

Their family doctor immediately referred her to hospital in Portsmouth where it was confirmed that she had a severe problem.

Lilly was sent for treatment to the Royal London Hospital, which specialises in retinoblastoma.

Since then Lilly has finished a course of chemotherapy and is responding very well.

Medical staff are hopeful that the sight has been saved in both her eyes and the prognosis is good.

Daniel said: "In these times of stories of the failings of the NHS I have nothing but praise for their professionalism, compassion, and most of all speed of action that they provided for Lilly."

Daniel and Brooke are getting married in October and have asked their wedding guests to make donations to the cancer charity The Childhood Eye Cancer Trust instead of presents.

Daniel is taking part in the Great South Run this month to raise money for the trust – to donate, go to www.justgiving.com/runforlilly

Afghan runners

C/SGT 'Mel' Melville is currently based in Afghanistan where his son, Will, is also serving with 40 Commando Royal Marines.

This month Mel and two colleagues plan to run a marathon within the perimeter of the camp to raise money for the RM Welfare Fund.

Julie Davis, the mother of Joseph Davis who is also serving in Sangin Province with the Melvilles, said: "The support the Melvilles give to many young men is incredible and totally selfless."

"Despite having both her husband and son serving in Afghanistan, Linda Melville has continued in a very quiet manner to support many wives and families of men who have been and are serving in Afghanistan, including me."

She added: "40 Commando have had the most awful tour with 14 being killed in a very short time."

"The Welfare Service is working to capacity, supporting families of those killed and the many horrifically wounded marines."

"Their work is invaluable at this time and they take a huge amount of needless strain off families by providing consistent support."

"They do all they can to financially support those families in most need – they help with accommodation and transport costs to enable families to support their injured marine on his recovery."

She added: "They also provide fantastic days out for the young families while their daddies are on active service. They visit country parks and arrange picnics and barbecues enabling the families to have some much-needed time off."

To donate to Mel's marathon, please send a cheque payable to Central Bank, 40 Commando, to Mel's Marathon, RM Welfare Team, 40 Commando, Norton Manor Camp, Taunton, Somerset, TA2 6PF or go to <https://www.bmycharity.com/V2/MelsMarathonMarathonMen>

■ L/Cpl Matthew Ash and the Padre of 40 Commando Royal Marines, Andrew Rawding, are running the first half-marathon in Afghanistan in September, to raise money for the Royal Marines' Association in honour of their fallen comrades. They plan to run around their Forward Operating Base in the Sangin Valley: <https://www.bmycharity.com/V2/Sanginhalfmarathon>

Trophy Fund seeks trustee

THE Royal Navy Trophy Fund, a registered charity, is seeking applications from any serving warrant or chief petty officer who wishes to apply to be a volunteer trustee.

The Trophy Fund exists to maintain, issue and account for all registered Naval trophies.

Its aims and objectives are achieved through a Board of Trustees, comprising three standing members – the Naval Base Commander Portsmouth, the Head of the Naval Historical Branch and the Base Logistics Commander (Portsmouth) – and two volunteer serving warrant officers or chief petty officers of any branch.

The trustee is expected to attend two formal meetings each year, and to accept the legal responsibilities that come with the role.

Two specific publications available on the Charity Commission website (www.charity-commission.gov.uk) may give useful background – CC3 and CC3(a).

If you would be interested in discussing the role with the outgoing incumbent WO D Goldie call 93832 8709.

Applications should be submitted by letter to:

Lt Cdr D A Costigan
Secretary to the Trustees
RN Trophy Centre
Hardy Block
HMS Nelson
Portsmouth PO1 3HH.

The closing date for applications is September 30 2010.

Medics in motion

NAVAL Surg Cdr Ashvin Pimpalnerkar (Retd) and Surg Cdr Raj Shah raised more than £2,000 for Arthritis Research in a 8½ mile fun run in Sutton Coldfield, Birmingham.

The Navy men were running in a group along with medical staff and patients from Good Hope Hospital.

■ SIX RN doctors and medics are carrying a stretcher for their base at the Institute of Naval Medicine, in Alverstoke, Gosport, to the National Memorial Arboretum in Lichfield, Staffordshire, a distance of 185 miles.

The team will set off on September 4, aiming to reach their destination in seven days to raise money for the RBL to help its work caring for service veterans.

The event is called The Royal Navy Medical Service's Carry On Remembering. In tribute to Sir Lancelot Spratt, perhaps?

Andy's lazy Sunday

SAILORS usually look forward to a 'Lazy Sunday' routine as an opportunity to chill out and catch up.

Not so Lt Andy Haywood, who found a Sunday routine on HMS Ark Royal gave him his only chance to run the marathon-plus he'd been promising himself for nearly a year.

Andy originally had the idea of running 30 miles from Portsmouth Naval Base to Naomi House Hospice, near Winchester, while the ship was in a maintenance period.

However, he was always too busy to run on dry land, so he decided to run it at sea instead – despite scorching temperatures off the east coast of the USA, where the Ark was flagship for the Auriga deployment.

Starting at 10am, with the sun already high in the sky, and with a little help from his friends who joined him for stages, Andy racked up the 486 shuttles along the length of the carrier's flight deck to reach his 38-mile target in a little more than eight hours.

Andy said: "I was overwhelmed by the support received from the ship's company, with many people choosing to run shuttles with me – it really spurred me on."

"The continuous applause I received during the last mile-and-a-half was incredible."

As it wasn't enough for Andy to run 36½ miles in the 30° heat for eight hours, he decided that he would make it



● Lt Andy Haywood runs on the flightdeck of HMS Ark Royal
Picture: LA(Phot) Gregg Macready

competitive for the ship's company, and raise more money for Naomi House, by running a competition to guess how fast he could run the last mile-and-a-half – his RN Fitness Test.

Running a mile-and-a-half is one of fitness tests for all personnel and Andy's age group – under 30s – must complete the distance in under 11 minutes 38 seconds.

The last time he attempted the RNFT (from fresh) he scored eight minutes 15 seconds.

So what after 36½ miles? A phenomenal ten minutes 35 seconds. Std Glynn guessed his

time correctly and won £50.

Andy commented: "The main challenge was the heat, and at one point I couldn't drink enough water to combat how much I was sweating."

"The captain kindly lent me his bath on completion which, once the lads had filled it with ice, helped to cool things down a bit."

Andy managed to raise £1,000 for Naomi House – not to mention reinforcing the Ark's reputation as the Navy's fittest ship.



● Colin Davies organised a swimming fundraiser at Devonport
Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney

Swimming for a trek

STAFF at Devonport Naval Base took part in a sponsored swim in the pool at HMS Drake to raise money for disabled people to trek up Mount Kilimanjaro.

The swim was to support the charity Limb Power, which is organising the trek to give amputees the opportunity to climb the mountain.

The charity also holds amputee games, giving athletes the chance to take part in volleyball, basketball, tennis, badminton, rowing, fencing and many other sports.

Colin Davies (ex-RN) arranged the swim to help raise awareness of the charity and to boost funds to take eight adventurous people on the climb, in October.

Laura's breakthrough

PETTY Officer Laura Washer, from Torpoint, has used her own experience of cancer as the driving force to raise more than £10,000 for charity.

Laura, who works at HMS Raleigh, was first diagnosed with breast cancer six years ago, when she was only 26.

Despite undergoing treatment she had setbacks when secondary tumours were discovered, and began her mammoth charity effort to raise money as a Breakthrough Breast Cancer £1,000 Challenger in 2009.

Since then Laura has organised raffles, coffee mornings and other

social events and to date she has outstripped her original £1,000 target ten times over.

Laura, who joined the RN in 1998 as a Warfare Specialist, said: "We're planning to hold another charity ball in Raleigh's Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates' Mess, and we're also looking at organising a barn dance and a sale of photographs of the local area, donated by Raleigh's photographer, Dave Sherfield."

She added: "I didn't intend to raise so much money, but it has been like an addiction. As the money started coming in, it's been 'right, what can we do next?'"

To Paris by bicycle

SEA CADET instructor Eon Matthews has completed at least 20 'Pedal to Paris' charity rides from London to the French capital as a safety motorcycle outrider.

But as a member of the RN Cycling Association he always felt a twinge of envy as he watched over the cyclists speeding through 300 miles of beautiful countryside in Kent and Northern France.

So this month he is swapping his motorbike for leg-power to try the route himself.

Eon, an instructor with Newhaven and Seaford Sea Cadets and also a shipmate in the RNA, said: "I've been escorting the 'Pedal to Paris' ride for eight years, so last year I asked with a few others from the National Escort Group if we could enter a team ourselves."

"Our group consists of eight riders from military and police backgrounds, all hoping to raise money for the Royal British Legion's flagship charity bike ride."

Eon added: "People sometimes tease me about 'going on another holiday' when I take part as a safety outrider."

"But although it's physically easier doing the route on a motorbike, mentally it's much more stressful, because you're responsible for the cyclists all the time, and it can be quite draining."

"This time I hope all I have to do is pedal!"

Eon's hoping to raise about £1,000 for the Royal British Legion – to sponsor him, go to www.bmycharity.com/v2/eon

Ian tackles the Marines

CAREERS advisor Ian Hardcastle has helped many young men through the recruiting process to join the Royal Marines, and then kept up with their careers.

When he wanted to support them by raising money for forces' charities, Ian had a brainwave – why not try taking the tests himself?

Ian, a CPO Careers Advisor in the Preston Armed Forces Careers' Office, explained: "My job is to recruit and select suitable men to join the Marines, and part of this involves advising candidates about what is involved in the Potential Royal Marines Course (PRMC) and how to prepare for it."

"How do I really know what it's like? For this reason I decided I had to give it a go."

So it was that at the tender age of 45, conspicuously older than most of the 50 other potential recruits, Ian spent three days at

Lymstone doing three-mile timed runs, 60 press-ups in two minutes, 80 sit-ups in two minutes, assault courses, endurance courses and all the extras thrown in to determine his grit and suitability.

At the end of the three days, Ian had not only raised £5,000 for the RM Charitable Trust and Help for Heroes, but passed the course – with a superior A grade.

He said: "I was driven by three reasons – the first was to raise money for the charities, the second was to know more from a recruiting perspective, and the third was a personal one, to prove to myself that at 45 I'm still as fit and capable as I was when I was 25."

He added: "I know I'm not, but I do believe age is not an excuse to let your physical well-being go down the pan."

To donate, go to www.justgiving.com/ian-hardcastle

Trusty steed's good deeds

HORSEWOMAN Lt Sharon Brown has been riding since she was a child, so when the opportunity came up to support Help for Heroes with one of her trusty horses, she jumped at the chance.

However, Sharon found herself in intensive care with a rare, life-threatening illness only a few weeks before the ride was to take place.

It was touch and go whether she would be fit enough to participate.

After a nail-biting couple of weeks for her family and friends, Sharon pulled through, and was able to take part in the event – an organised ride starting from Ascot racecourse, going to the Jubilee Statue in Windsor Great Park, and culminating in a ride around the track and past the famous Ascot finishing post.

Sharon said: "I've been riding for the Royal Navy in show jumping and eventing for over 15 years and I'm fortunate to have two wonderful horses, Timba and Gromit."

"It was a difficult choice which of my trusty steeds to choose, but I decided to ride Timba."

"The event kicked off at 7.30am with a group of riders from the racecourse including Chief Executive Charles Barnett and Lt Guy Disney who lost a leg in Helmand."

"I proudly rode in number one uniform and as my group were the last to start it was around midday and was very hot especially in a black jacket."



● Lt Sharon Brown and her horse Timba take part in Horses for Heroes

"But I thought that riding in the heat for a couple of hours in my number one jacket has no comparison to the conditions that Service men and women in operational theatres have to endure day-to-day, wearing protective equipment and operating in intense heat."

Sharon, who works for the Royal Naval Acquist Centre in HMS Collingwood, helping potential ratings prepare for HMS Raleigh, said: "The ride was beautiful and I met some wonderful people."

"There was a great mix of riders from novice to the professional, from young to old and they all had stories to tell."

"The highlight was finishing the ride in front of the gathered

racegoers at full gallop down the course across the finish line."

About 600 riders took part in the eight-mile ride and organisers believe the total raised for Help for Heroes will reach in the region of £300,000.

Sharon, who has served in the RN for 21 years, was unable to push for sponsorship as much as she would have liked because of her serious illness.

She said: "I set my goal to raise £1,000 earlier in the year and I am still aiming to get closer to that even after the event."

"Currently I have collected £610 from only close family and friends."

To donate, go to <http://www.justgiving.com/Sharon-Brown>.



● The Navy's March for Honour team: CPO 'Jan' Matthews, LPT Leon Taylor, PO Suzie Parker, PO Kev Green (once known as the Baby-faced Assassin in his Naval boxing career but difficult to know why with the expression he's pulling in this photo) and PO Jason 'Taff' Gadd
Picture: LA(Phot) Chris Mumby

Ram runners

FOUR Forces teams are getting ready for the March for Honour, the event sparked by Royal Marine L/Cpl Ram Patten to raise £1 million for the Royal British Legion.

At HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth, the five members of the Royal Navy team – CPO Simon 'Jan' Matthews, PO Jason 'Taff' Gadd, PO Suzie Parker, PO Kev Green, LPT Leon Taylor – are beginning preparations for the challenge taking place this November.

Teams from each of the Services will speed-march an average of 30 miles a day from different bases in the country, carrying 40lbs, to meet in Wootton Bassett, then walk together into London to deliver the Book of Remembrance to the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance at the November ceremonies.

The Royal Marines will start in Plymouth, the Royal Navy in Portsmouth, the Army in Cardiff and the RAF in Wittering; the Royal British Legion Riders will meet and escort the teams along

parts of their routes.

When asked why they had chosen to take up this challenge, CPO 'Jan' Matthews said: "Partly because it's a worthwhile cause, the casualties in Afghanistan are going up on a daily basis. You can only but feel for the families."

"It's the least we can do to support the guys that are frontline. It's another way of giving something back."

"Also it's a real challenge – not just another 5km run, but almost 300 miles of graft."

It's a sentiment echoed by all those taking part. PO 'Taff' Gadd has recently returned from Afghanistan, he said: "It's to show support for those boys who have died in the line of duty."

"It's something that all of us in the military can come together and do as a complete unit."

To pledge your support, text 'MARCH' to 70222 (you will be charged £3 plus standard one message network rate) or visit www.march4honour.com/donate.

The whirring Forties

WO Dermot Roberts had a heart attack five years ago and a full hip replacement last January, but it didn't stop him from leading HMS Albion's cycling team on a 3,600-mile ride.

WO Roberts pedalled the equivalent distance from Devonport to Norfolk, Virginia, in 20 days, along with eight colleagues from the ship's WO and CPOs' mess.

All eight were carefully selected to the most stringent standards. Dermot explained: "We discussed it in our mess and being the elder mess on board, a few members decided they wanted to show that they were not past it."

"So to get on the team we demanded two standards, you had to be over 40 years of age and you had to be overweight."

He added: "Funnily enough, we had no problems raising a team. We even called it the 'Fat Forties'."

Riding with Dermot, the other Fat Forties were WO Mick Ellison; WO 'Pincher' Martin; and CPOs Chris Ferrier, Paul Innes, Mick Hewer, 'Ben' Benwall, 'Tex' Marshall and Willie McBeth.

Dermot explained: "There were two main reasons I wanted to take this on – one was obviously to continue getting fitter, and the other was to say thanks to the surgical team under Dr Mark Williams at Derriford Hospital and the great work that HMS Drake Physiotherapy Department do."

"They were the reason I recovered so quickly and their advice to me to carry on cycling gave me the idea."

"Without them I am sure I would still be limping about."

He added: "The day we sailed from Devonport we started the ride and despite temperatures of 110 degrees F on some days we all completed the challenge with a day to spare."



● WO Dermot Roberts (who obviously enjoys having his photo taken)


"The temperature made the challenge that much harder and longer."

"For most of us it meant getting up at five in the morning

to complete it on time."

"Fortunately we managed it just before we arrived in Norfolk, Virginia, and raised more than £1400 for RN and RM charities."

His war's been over for decades, but he's still fighting battles today.



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... and the spirit of upon the



God moved face of the waters...'

HOW puny and insignificant we are in the face of God's creation.

The small(ish) lump of black and grey on the left of this stunning image is Her Majesty's Ship Portland, 5,000 tons of cutting-edge naval hardware and firepower.

And the blue-white mass dominating the top of the picture is the 'tongue' of the Nordenskjöld Glacier – two miles wide and at least four long at the south-eastern end of East Cumberland Bay in South Georgia.

Not too long after this photograph was taken by LA(Phot) 'Simmo' Simpson, the men and women aboard Portland were reminded of the sheer force of the elements.

It is the depths of the austral winter right now in South Georgia where, if you're lucky, the daytime temperature might make it above freezing... and the nighttime one won't fall below -5°C.

After a couple of months at East Cove Military Port in the Falklands (where it's bleak and cold in the winter), the Type 23 frigate made the three-day passage to the distant British dependency (where it's not so bleak but cold).

Six members of the island's Roulement Infantry Company (RIC) and a couple of Crabs (one flight lieutenant, one warrant officer) joined the ship's company for the crossing, a passage requiring an iceberg watch posted on the bridge as soon as a ship enters the Antarctic Convergence Zone – where the warmer waters of the Atlantic meet those of the frozen continent.

The first berg drew a sizeable number of goofers to the starboard bridge wing...

...although come the following morning with South Georgia in sight, there were rather fewer sightseers; a 35kt Antarctic wind whistled past the frigate as she entered Drygalski Fjord at the south-eastern tip of the island.

"Only the hardy managed to stay on the upper deck," says logistics officer Lt Cdr Kara

Chadwick. "The scenery was an impressive reward for those who did."

"Huge mountains rose straight out of the deep blue, narrow fjord. At one point a small piece of iceberg floated past with penguins sat on top."

There are some things that money can't buy...

Having sailed up the fjord as far as she could before ice thwarted her progress, Portland turned about and made for Cumberland Bay – the huge natural harbour which served as the shelter for whaling fleets until the 1960s.

The great bay is split into west and east. West, where there's not much, save for a huge glacier spilling into the ocean. And east, where there's slightly more... and a huge glacier spilling into the ocean.

The waters around the imposing Nordenskjöld Glacier haven't been charted for two decades, so it was with some caution that Portland approached the phenomenon of nature, lookouts keeping a close, er, lookout, for 'berg bits' (chunks of iceberg) and growlers (smaller chunks of iceberg, barely visible above the surface).

The approach to the glacier afforded all aboard a stunning photo opportunity – especially so for the frigate's Lynx which was airborne to witness a sight "that will never be forgotten".

And so to King Edward's Point for the 'meat' of the visit: three days at anchor off Grytviken.

Enough ship's company got ashore to visit the few sights of the settlement: the abandoned whaling stations, the church (where deputy weapon engineer officer Lt Paul Greason acted as 'bish' and officer of the watch Lt Cdr Judith Zeug provided the music on the foot-pump-operated organ), the grave of legendary explorer Ernest Shackleton, and the beaches

inhabited by all manner of wildlife – fur seals, elephant seals, albatrosses.

And if that wasn't enough, there was always sledging. Or yomping. Navigator and keen runner Lt Rob Garner and chief gunner CPO Burton determined to yomp with the RIC soldiers across the peaks around Grytviken to Maiviken Cove at the tip the peninsula separating the two sides of Cumberland Bay.

The ship's 42-man mess (the clue's in the title...) were determined to keep spirits up if temperatures were down by staging a barbecue. On the flight deck. Under the stars.

Having frozen their proverbiales off collecting their burgers and sausages, the ship's company shuffled into the hangar for a spot of penguin racing (horse racing but with pingus) organised by the WO and CPOs' mess (again the clue's in the title...).

Things were all fine and dandy until a spot of wind (not caused by the BBQ). Portland was suddenly gripped by an icy katabatic blast.

For the uninitiated, a katabatic wind is air cooled by a glacier and funnelled down a glacial valley or fjord – reaching quite a speed (God bless Wikipedia...).

It reached such a speed in the narrow confines of Cumberland Bay that Portland began to drag her anchor.

So, up anchor and skedaddle. The ship spent the night patrolling open waters before returning to King Edward Point for the final day of her visit.

"On a long deployment, some port visits tend to blur into one another and be forgotten, some will be remembered for all the right reasons for a long time to come," says Commanding Officer Cdr Mike Knott. "South Georgia was one of these."

"It's certainly been the highlight of the

deployment so far and will remain etched in everyone's memory."

And now back to East Cove and some war fighting.

Every few weeks, units in the Falklands converge for a major exercise – Purple Strike – to test the ability of land, sea and air to work together to defend the islands.

The last act of Purple Strike witnessed Portland arriving in a 'hostile' port (which bore a striking resemblance to East Cove...) with RFA Black Rover to deliver fuel and other supplies.

And as it was a hostile port, hostiles tried to infiltrate their way aboard the warship during a 'Quickdraw' exercise (the ship's company have to be quick on the draw to deal with the threat); in this instance, two attackers bore down on the quartermaster's position.

The week-long exercise opened with Portland and HMS Clyde, the Falklands' constant guardship, embarking troops from the Roulement Infantry Company (provided by the Welsh Guards and elements of the Light Dragoons).

Ships and soldiers crossed Falkland Sound bound for West Falkland, which is more sparsely populated than the eastern island, after reports of enemy troops.

As the week wore on Portland flexed her anti-submarine warfare skills by hunting for an enemy boat which had been 'sighted' around the Falklands.

The ship's Lynx helicopter also provided support to the troops ashore, conducting reconnaissance missions. She came under fire from the foe and had to conduct an emergency landing on Portland's flight deck.

And then back to East Cove Military Port where a shore patrol was sent ahead to set up a security cordon and vehicle check point on the edge of the port so Portland and Black Rover could come alongside and the latter could deliver her supplies.



Severn seas...

Severn



pictures: la(phot) jay allen, frpu east



SO what does a two-week patrol with Fishery Protection Squadron involve? Well, we're glad you ask because navigator of HMS Severn – one of the Service's three fishery protection vessels – just provided us with this insight into 'cod squad'.

SEVERN'S 14-day patrol started in the city of Newport, South Wales, her affiliated town.

A formal visit to the city, tied in with an Operational Stand-off Period (OSP) between patrols, gave the perfect opportunity to strengthen ties with the ship's affiliations and the region.

After a demanding OST at FOST (Minor War Vessels) in Faslane and a patrol of the Irish Sea, Celtic Sea and 'Trouser Leg' detaining one Spanish fishing vessel to Falmouth, it was perfect timing for the ship's company to sail up the river with which she shares her name into Newport.

The ship hosted an official reception; guests included the Mayor and Mayoress of Newport, local dignitaries and the organisers of the Ryder Cup tournament, being held at Celtic Manor in Newport later in the year.

We were also lucky enough to be in the presence of Royal Naval veterans from the local British Legion 'spinning dits' from their time in the Service.

The ship's 'elite' soccer stars had the chance to play their part in a challenging match against a local side, Hartridge Academy (some of whom play for the Welsh U18 national team...).

With the scores tied at 1-1 at half time, the decision was made to mix the teams for the second half (much to the shock and disappointment of travelling supporters, as now it will never be known what the final outcome could have been).

On the final evening, members of the ship's company swapped hosting for being hosted, by the Mayor of Newport, at Tredegar House. The grand halls and surrounding gardens as well as the fine hospitality made it a special evening and a memorable way to end the visit.

AS SEVERN sailed from Newport, a few extra guests had made their way onboard for a first experience of life at sea. Seven cadets from TS Resolute in Newport spent the day shooting, fire-fighting and practising 'big arms' during a man overboard drill.

Also aboard was video journalist Paddy Collins, filming for the second series of *Sea Patrol UK*.

HMS Severn has already featured in the 2009 series of the documentary, so the ship's company were unfazed by video cameras appearing where they were least expected, but it gave an edge to the cycle of hailing and boarding.

Every two hours, the Officer of the Watch downloads positions of fishing vessels from a vessel monitoring system and looks for a viable contact – or group of fishing boats.

His search is aided by *Watchdog 74*, a surveillance aircraft contracted by the Marine Management Organisation to monitor and radio hail fishing vessels inside British Fishery Limits.

Co-operation between the ship and the aircraft is always appreciated as the aircraft can search a greater area faster than Severn and assist the ship in targeting particular vessels or types of vessel.

The aircraft operator liaises by radio with the Officer of the Watch and the surface picture is built. Severn and the aircraft will then 'de-conflict' which vessels they will each deal with making the operation more efficient and more effective for the Marine Management Organisation.

It's possible to check the history of the fishing vessels, and look for contacts of interest – those with a history of breaking the rules set down by the European Union, or who have not been boarded in some years.

Once a target group is selected, the ship closes to just 1,000 yards from the fishing vessel – to identify its registration numbers and then hail the vessel on VHF.

One thousand yards may not look close to the untrained eye, but with a large group of fishing vessels (any one of which may alter course at any time, in any direction) it can be a tense time on the bridge, even before considering that the fishing vessels may be in the wrong lane of the Dover Straits – the M6 of British waters.

This type of ship driving comes with practice – and there is plenty of practice to be had! The ship is often at boarding stations at all hours of the day.

S/Lt Andy Martin, one of four young officers onboard completing his Specialist Fleet Training (SFT), stands watches as the second

Officer of the Watch.

"We're given a responsibility on particularly during boardings as the Officer of the Watch is liaising with the boarders, the teams and we essentially run the bridge," he says.

"The ship is the perfect platform for navigation training and provides excellent preparation for examinations at the end of SFT.

"I'm thoroughly enjoying my time onboard, especially the 'small-ship mentality' where everyone digs out for each other."

Once the fishing vessel has been hailed, the Executive Officer – Severn's watch system means the Commanding Officer and XO take command of the vessel depending on who's on board – decides if it is viable for a boarding.

Several factors are considered, namely what the fishing vessel is currently doing and fish species and amounts onboard, well as when it was boarded and the current weather conditions.

Then follows the infamously named 'Hands to fish boat stations,' and the ship into action.

For the boarding time for dry suits, equipment that has been at the start of their final checks and a brief about to be boarded together with the relevant information.

With a small ship's complement of 30 onboard at any time in some way in getting

The team are quick route to the fishing vessel Pacific 22 seaboats.

Driving the 'taxi' is a "As a seaboat cox'n when embarking the never know what to you are aware of a lot that you know what you Not to mention the elements around the AB(Sea) Gary Mosely.

Weather is always the ship's seaboat captain from Severn embarking a taxi on a 16-metre speed with fish has to be assessed too dangerous

When Severn's out boarding the fishing vessel ship can still provide a affect by her presence closed seasonally for to protect spawning continuing to radio hail which fish they are targeting and ensure it is going

FISHING regulation is numerous complex boardings are ever quick

It's tempting to lump together, but there methods, equipment –

HMS Severn's last teams on board British Belgian and German vessels

Each nation has a slight in the way that they fish for, using many different capacity of net.

There are different fish are sorted and sent countless different languages officer to grasp!

During her patrol, S

14 days

fish seizures

the Royal Navy's

Lt Olly Nokes, of the Senior Vessels - has life in the

lot of watch, readings Watch rdng tially vs. the ny g, at r

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team, it's collecting en checked duty period, f on the vessel from the XO, ant legislation. company - around - most are involved e the team away. ly dispatched and en sel by one of the ship's

a major job. it's an exciting feeling boarding team as you expect - it's not until boat's boarding ladder ou've come up against. dded challenge of the British coast!" says

a factor and while an be safely launched in higher sea-states, wo-man boarding team fishing vessel at slow ing warps in the water, essed and may prove

of limits for essels, the eterrence e in areas or fishing stocks, and also by l the vessels to monitor geting, the size of hauls in their logbooks.

s a European affair with ities and so no two te the same. ump fishing vessels are different fishing and nationalities. patrol took boarding Spanish, Irish, French, essels.

ghtly different approach fish and what they fish ent shapes, sizes and t ways in which the stored, not to mention guages for the boarding Severn was tasked by



the Marine Management Organisation to look for a contact of interest, a fishing vessel known for previous infringements operating in the area close to Land's End.

The ship makes good speed towards the area, and comes across a fishing vessel in the last known position.

Not wanting to appear suspicious, Severn navigates the Land's End Traffic Separation Scheme as if on transit through the night, awaiting first light in order to make her move.

At first light we close the fishing vessel, visually identify it as the contact of interest and send a boarding team onboard. It's not special ops off the Horn of Africa, or boardings in the Gulf, but it's the Fishery Protection Squadron's own way of surprising fishermen potentially breaking EU fishery legislation.

The role of the boarding officer and his assistant is to provide an independent and accurate assessment of the quantity and type of fish caught to ensure that only the mature species are caught and that the juveniles escape to be caught by fishermen of future generations.

They also check licenses, paperwork, nets and fishing gear. It's something out of the ordinary for the Royal Navy as a whole - as Lt Rob Couzens, Severn's Lead Fisheries Officer points out: "I never thought that when I joined the Royal Navy I would be counting

and weighing fish at sea, but it's good to know that in my role as marine enforcement officer I can make a difference."

Conditions aboard each fishing vessel vary, with most vessels clean and organised, but sometimes vessels are in poor state, and in this way the boarding officer and his team can expect the unexpected.

Some 'fish rooms' (where the fish are stored in boxes

of ice) are large and organised, while others will be cramped and untidy, making the job of the boarding team more dangerous, particularly in heavy seas. On top of this there are the fishermen themselves; most are co-operative with the boarding team during inspections, others will appear unwelcoming.

As the patrol moves on, the Marine Management Organisation seeks permission for Severn to enter the waters south of the Republic of Ireland to look for British vessels operating in this area, in conjunction with the Royal Navy and Irish Navy.

This international co-operation between

navies is quite common in the Fishery Protection Squadron, enabling us to investigate fishing contacts that think they may have 'got away' by moving into Irish waters. We have jurisdiction to board British fishing vessels operating in Irish waters, but not Irish vessels.

LIFE onboard, however, is not all about boardings, with the sailors enjoying 'whole ship' activities. A particular 'favourite' is quarterdeck circuits organised by the 'small ship PTI' AB(Sea) Fielding and supported by AB(Sea) Mosely.

Monday Night Quiz Night (the clue's in the title) is popular, as well as the opportunity to watch football matches on the big screen in the junior rates' dining hall. The gym onboard is well equipped for the size of ship, and is frequently used by all onboard.

At the half-way point of the patrol, we enter the breakwater at Plymouth to conduct a crew changeover, and embark the Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Catherine Jordan, who has enjoyed a week of watch leave.

Severn operates a three-watch manning

system: essentially four weeks on, two weeks off.

Crew changes usually take place whilst alongside, but it is not uncommon to change personnel by boat transfer mid-way through the patrol in any port around the United Kingdom.

It also gives the ship's company the welcome opportunity to get a phone signal and call their families and friends at home; not possible when patrolling hundred of miles from land at the extremities of British Fishery Limits.

This particular boat transfer in Plymouth gave Severn the opportunity to see one of the Royal Navy's newest warships up close, with HMS Daring entering the breakwater shortly afterwards whilst conducting BOST.

The embarked journalist used the opportunity to get some footage of the Type 45 in action.

Once the CO had received her handover from the Executive Officer and he had disembarked, the ship was back on patrol and heading towards the nearest contact at speed.

A busy two weeks at sea is concluded when the ship comes alongside in the base port, Portsmouth - something that does not happen very often.

'Out all gash' and 'store ship' are essential whole-ship activities which need completing prior to leave being piped, while the stokers get to work refuelling Severn ready for her next patrol in 48 hours' time.

■ YOU can see HMS Severn at work when Sea Patrol UK airs on Channel 5 this autumn.

The programme follows Britain's coastal services in their day to day jobs reporting on the valuable work done by organisations such as the RNLI and the Coastguard as well as covering HMS Severn's fishery protection duties and Royal Navy bomb disposal teams.

20 boardings

10 verbal rebriefs

1 official written warning

1,100 photographs



A truly silent service

I READ with interest the article *So what do you think?* (*Two Six*, July, page 36).

While serving in the previous 'Victorians,' Albion, Corunna, Zulu and Loch Lomond, we were not allowed to comment on anything to anybody.

We always were told to obey the last order, no matter who or what, and then complain afterwards, first to a senior rate, PO or CPO, who then took the grievance to the Divisional Officer.

If he thought it was justified, the first lieutenant was informed and then, depending on what he thought, the Commanding Officer heard, or not, about it.

The final decision was his and the written request was signed to the affirmative or negative.

Writing to newspapers was taboo and could get the person concerned into a lot of trouble. I knew a rating who did it.

I am glad that the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey is now listening to all ranks.

I wish the Second Sea Lord every success with his evidence to argue his men's attitudes on the Navy and Royal Marines.

I finish by saying, yes, I enjoyed my 18 years' service, which sent me all over the globe.

— Eric Pearce, Singleton, Kent

Memories of Inskip

WITH reference to the closing of Inskip (*Letters*, August) HMS Nightjar, a Naval Air Station, commissioned at Inskip in 1943. It was Operational Training Unit No1 and the home of 766 Squadron, operating Fairey Swordfish, training aircrews in anti-submarine warfare.

As an AM/L I served there from February 1944 until November 1944 working in the MU, when I was drafted to Australia to join the British Pacific Fleet. Four Wren AM/Ls were also working in the MU.

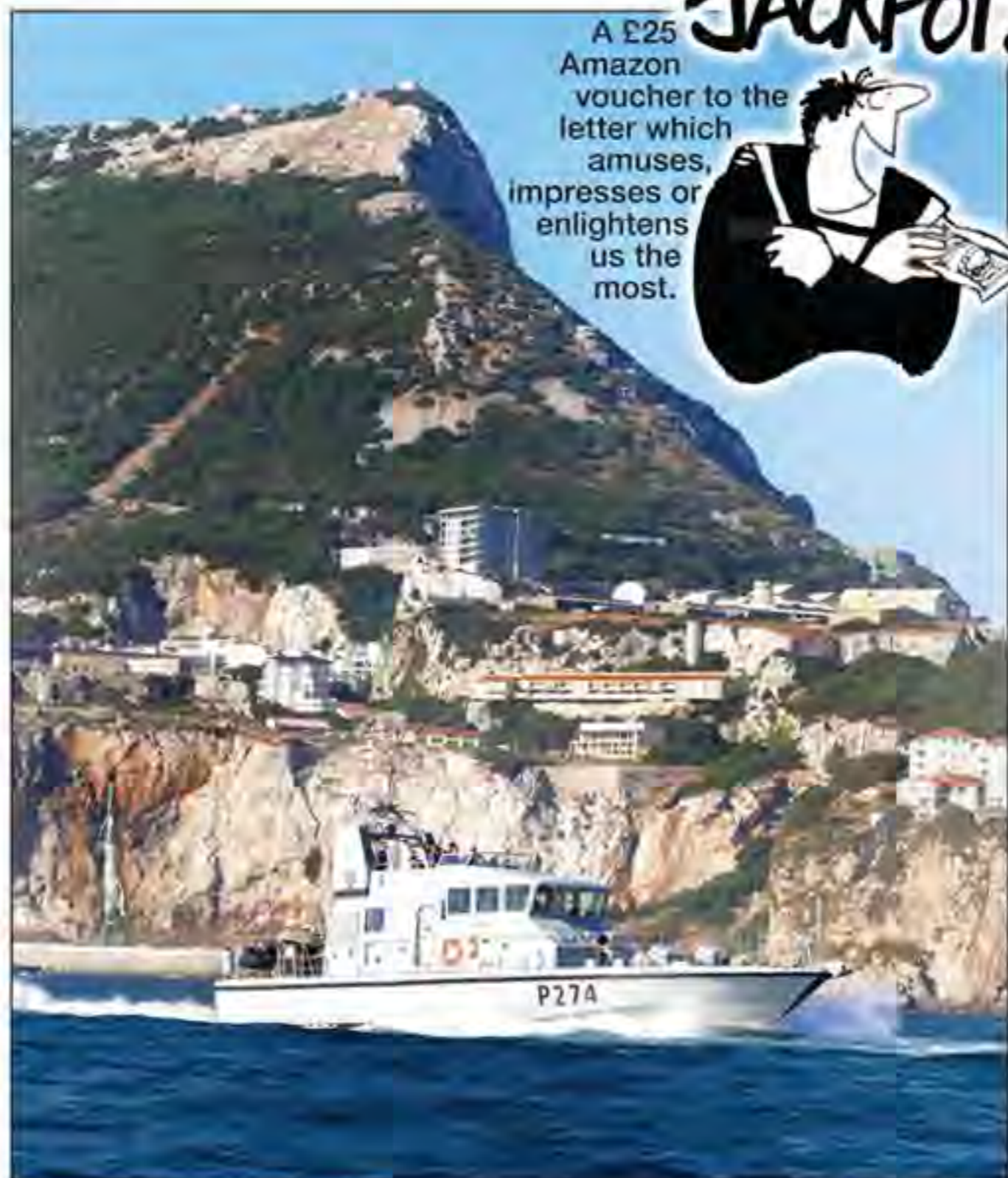
Besides the camp at Inskip all the mechanics and aircrew were housed at Wharles Camp at the other side of the airfield. There was plenty of social life and Blackpool and Preston were nearby.

On three occasions when staying in St Annes I visited the control tower and an archive to HMS Nightjar had been set up. I would be interested to know what has happened to all this historical information.

On May 10 1945 I joined the escort aircraft carrier HMS Arbiter in Sydney, pennant no. R303. She was one of five carriers in the 30th Aircraft Carrier Sqn.

When the Arbiter arrived in Sydney her Corsair Sqn 1843 left her for Nowra. I was a member of Maintenance and Repair Unit no 5 (MSR 5) which served onboard her until September 1945 when she went up to Hong Kong.

— A W Hodgins, ex LAM/L, Leeds



Picture: Sgt Steve Lancaster RAF

Veterans should club together

Like many of your readers no doubt, I received a letter from the Head of Veterans Services at the Service Personnel and Veterans' Agency about a new 'service' called *Club Together*, which included a survey with prizes.

I may have got this government deficit thing wrong, but what is the SPVA doing, wasting public money, sending such a letter about a commercial scheme that may take business away from existing service charities and associations? Indeed, why is SPVA's Alison Sansome, a one-star MOD civil servant, allowed to write such a disingenuous letter to tens of thousands of service pensioners?

One might wonder what it is about the many armed forces organisations for veterans that SPVA does not like or understand, in presuming that yet another organisation is needed, when streamlining, merging and cost-saving should be the order of the day.

There is already a plethora of tri-service, single-service and unit charities, clubs and organisations and many do a good job, helping with the "sense of community..." that SPVA so arrogantly claims *Club Together* will do.

SPVA's relationship with *Club Together*, a commercial organisation that is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Xafinity Paymaster, the armed forces' pension administrator, is seriously flawed but that relationship is not

explicit in the letter.

Put simply, *Club Together* is a private business and wants to make more money out of being the government's contract pension provider under the pretence of providing veterans with new services.

The services they offer are available elsewhere, through organisations your readers know and trust.

Is there a need, for example, for yet another way to "trace your former comrades"?

SPVA offers, for completing the *Club Together* survey, prizes that are "double your next month's pension", helpfully adding that the "cash prize [is] equivalent to 2 x your monthly pension".

This is, frankly, disgraceful. The SPVA should treat all its pensioners as being of "one company".

It certainly should not contrive to offer a double whack of pension to a superannuated air marshal, or even to a major, when the same prize on offer to a leading hand or sergeant pensioner is so much less in prize value.

So much for equality and fairness, but it does show how little understanding SPVA, and its new mates at *Club Together*, of the armed forces family have.

Five hundred free pens are also on offer – wow!

I hope five deserving veterans, on small pensions and in real need of some luck, do win these prizes (the deadline was July 30).

The best thing after that, however, free pen or not, is to ignore this ridiculous scheme

Rock-hoppers

AN INTERESTING article (August) about the recent voyages of RN small craft Tracker (pictured left) and Raider from Portsmouth to Gibraltar.

I assume they are diesel-powered, but amazed they needed so many refuelling stops en route.

May I make a plug for the wartime Coastal Forces? Flash back to November 1944, and the 14th and 34th Fairmile B Flotillas left Pembroke Dock, Milford Haven, bound for the Far East.

These dear boats were mass-produced by small boat-yards all over the country to a prefabricated design, consisting of two skins of mahogany with calico infill, and powered by twin Hall Scott 600hp petrol engines.

For the journey to Mumbai (Trombay) they carried 2,000 gallons of 98 octane fuel in deck tanks, plus their normal 2,500 gallons in internal tanks.

A very dodgy cargo in 1944.

The B Fairmiles were originally designed to have 14 crew plus two officers, but with ever-increasing armaments the for'd

crew increased considerably.

They were 112ft x 18ft, with one pumped heads and washbasin for crew, and a coal-fired galley for cooking and hot water for the boat, providing the crew remembered to pump the small tank over the stove!

Coal-fired on a petrol-driven craft... but we all survived!

The 14th Flotilla of eight boats went on to Burma and Arakan, and 34th of eight to Penang and Japanese surrender at Singapore.

Which brings me back to the article, all boats made UK to Gibraltar in one hop!

What has happened to small craft development since the 1940s?

To all my 85-year-old plus CFVA buddies, they were wonderful boats, and friendships have continued over the years.

— Don Tucker, Coastal Forces Veterans' Association member, ex-ML194, East Anglia Branch

See pages 18-19 for All the small things, a feature on the 14 ships of the URNUs on their summer deployment — Ed

Charity kept us going

WE WOULD be so grateful if you could publish our thanks to the Naval Personal Families' Service for all their support and help with my husband and family.

My husband Shaun, a Steward on HMS Campbelltown, came down with cancer last August.

The NPFS helped fund my trip to Scotland to be with him. He had two operations and another when he had an infection.

To date he has had six months of chemotherapy and we are waiting for news of a CT scan.

We don't think without the help of NPFS we would have made it through as a family.

— Sarah and Shaun Cowell, Ernesettle, Plymouth

Sticking to my Polaris pin

I fully empathise with Bill 'Fred' Purves (letters, July) about a bomber pin for ex-Polaris sailors.

Forty years ago I was in Cape Kennedy doing our DASO on HMS Revenge (Port).

One night in a bar on Cocoa Beach an American sailor gave me his Polaris pin (it probably cost me a drink – I don't remember).

It is two-and-a-quarter inches long and has the A3 missile in the centre, worn just above medal ribbons.

The only difference the insignia has with our boats is that the tiny hydroplanes are on the 'sail' or 'fin' and not in the bows.

I keep it polished and will never part with it.

In 1970 the 'sausage on a stick' worn on the wrist had long gone.

I cannot remember when we were issued with our brass dolphins.

— Trevor 'Topsy' Turton, Arnold, Nottingham

Canada calling

IN MAY 2003 15 Canadian ex-Service personnel were despatched to Liverpool to participate in the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.

That will probably be the last one to be celebrated by us veterans.

It would have been a high honour for the 15 of us to have received the Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal.

On behalf of the survivors of that group, I am asking if anyone in a position to make this a reality could please step up to the plate on behalf of the surviving members?

Don Hensler, ex RCNVR RCN, Gibsons, BC Canada, VON 1VR, email odat@dccnet.com

opinion

THERE is a fellowship among those who serve, or have served, in small ships, as our correspondent Don Tucker points out on this page.

Mr Tucker's wartime experiences might seem a world away from those of the officer cadets in the University Royal Naval Units (URNU) on their summer deployment (see pages 18-19).

For one thing, overnight accommodation in hotels was not generally a feature of life in the wartime Coastal Forces.

But he would recognise many of the challenges – the cramped conditions, the narrow bunks, the potential for seasickness and above all the compelling necessity of getting along with everyone else in a small metal box where

there's no prospect of brooding in private.

On the plus side are the friendships which are forged in these surroundings and often continue for years, as many of these students will no doubt discover in later life.

Whether or not they decide to join the Navy, the officer cadets in the 14 URNU ships will carry a unique experience of naval life through to their future careers.

The skills they learn of endurance and teamwork will stand them in good stead in whatever job they subsequently do.

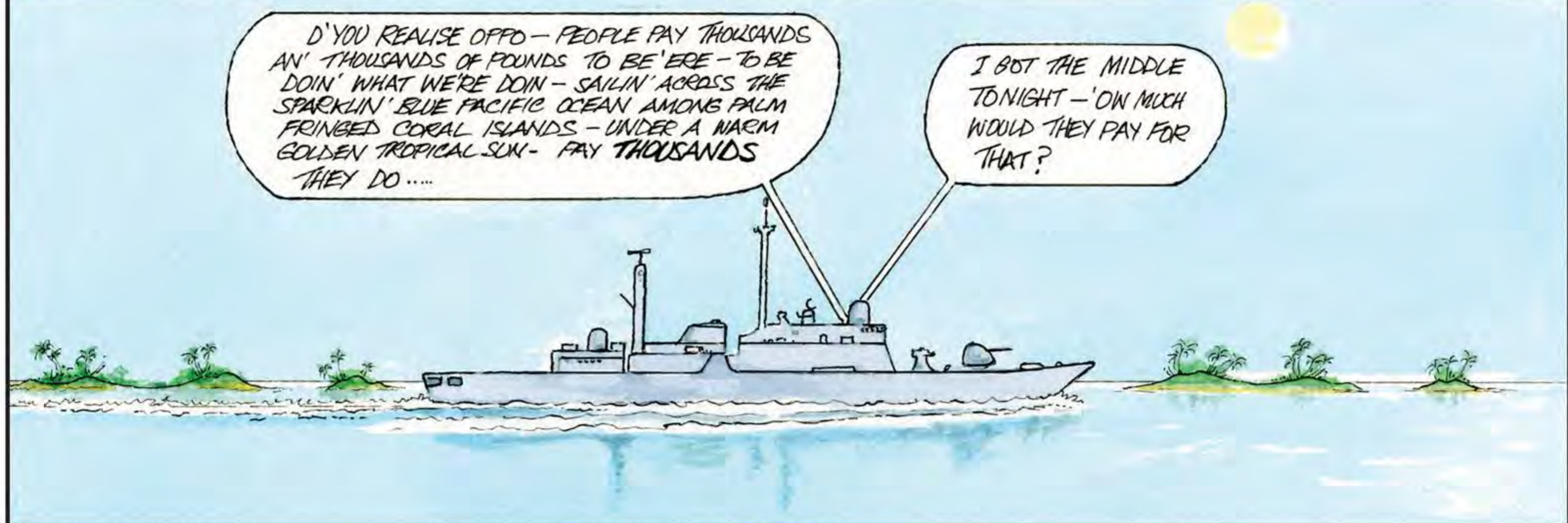
Their time in the Navy will also have given them a much better understanding of just how the Armed Forces work in these days when so many people in civilian life sadly have no contact with the Services at all.

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD



CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGS



● SA Andrew Stevenson casts over the stern of HMS Albion the last of the gash as the farewell to the tot in July 1970

Who drew the last tot?

THE 40th anniversary, on July 31 1970, of the abolition of the Tot - Black Tot Day - gave rise to national publicity for the last of the original rum now on sale at £600 a bottle - and a few lucky old sea dogs even got to try some!

While most entitled ratings would have been served their tot at 'Up Spirits' at around 1100 to 1200 BST on that fateful day, they were certainly not the last to draw their grog or neatens.

Mismusters were served in HM ships at around 1600 and were common in training establishments, where the tot was not thought conducive to instruction and learning.

While the date chosen by their Lordships was a Friday, and a day when many would be on summer leave, I suspect there might even have been those who chose to ensure they were on second leave so that they could enjoy their tot for one last time and stake their place in naval history.

Many ships would have been in home ports that last day of July, but a few would be at sea and some well to the west of

the UK, in the west Atlantic, the West Indies and, perhaps, in the Pacific east of the Date Line.

I'm not sure if the few naval ratings serving on the staff of SNOWI [Senior Naval Officer West Indies], or in the shore establishments HMS Malabar, in Bermuda, and HMS Saker, in Washington, were allowed to draw their ration.

So the question is who was the last man to draw his tot on July 31 1970, perhaps at mismusters, thousands of miles west of home waters?

I'd guess that it might have been the senior SA(V), the victualling Jack Dusty himself responsible for the accounting and issuing of the precious liquid, if on board a ship, or a Chief Writer or CRS at the two shore bases then in the Americas.

Now at least well into his sixties, and more likely in his late seventies or even early eighties, we should attempt to tot up his name for posterity!

- Cdr Mike Evans
(never entitled to the tot!)
Guildford

See page 8 for the winners of the Woods' Rum Best Sea Dog Competition - Ed

What does a name cost?

IN THE July issue you carried a report about the Logisticians reverting to their previous (and better known) job titles after six years of an unpopular name change.

As a taxpayer and aware that defence spending is regrettably going to be cut back, the original idea must have cost a lot of money to introduce and now more money will be spent to make the reversal.

The article said that "after extensive consultation..." - was there no one whose voice carried weight at the time of the original change to say it shouldn't have been done?

While having a 'gripe', you carried a report a few months ago about one of HM ships having its water-making facilities changed out.

The 'new' process (reverse osmosis) will be more efficient than evaporation.

When the ship was first built reverse osmosis was standard practice for the new North Sea oilfields being developed.

Again, the taxpayer is having to pay twice.

What will be the next double whammy?

- Keith Adlam, Cowes, Isle of Wight

...I HAVE long enjoyed your campaign for sense in calling a chef a chef.

I wrote to *The Economist* in June, after they had done a column attacking companies who gave people pompous names for simple jobs.

Afterwards I got a letter from Cdre (as he was then) David Steele, top Loggy, telling me that the titles had been reviewed.

So well done - a successful campaign, more or less!

- Ken Napier, Chairman,
Aquitaine Branch RNA,
Beaugas, France

(Sorry - Ed)

I HAVE been an avid reader of *Navy News* since I discovered its existence about 25 years ago, many, many years after I'd left the Navy.

However, I am extremely irritated by a stupid little quirk that has recently crept into your publication. I refer to silly little comments in parentheses by the editor - childish, fatuous and unnecessary.

I refer to the July edition page 17 and page 20 to name a few.

- Glyn Thomas, ex Ganges
boy, Wimborne, Dorset

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.



● Trainee ET Graeme McKenzie

Trainee liked what he saw

A TRAINEE sailor who swapped his job as a civilian at HMS Raleigh to join the Royal Navy has celebrated his 37th birthday on parade as he completed his basic training.

Trainee ET Graeme McKenzie embarked on his Naval career in May, inspired to join the Service after working alongside the Navy as a carpenter at Raleigh, where he was employed by VT Flagship.

Over the past nine weeks he has learned the fundamental skills that he will rely upon throughout his time in the Royal Navy.

Graeme, from Plymouth, was one of four over-30s in his entry – recruits can join the Service up to the day before their 37th birthday.

He was appointed mess manager during the first week of training, with responsibilities to ensure that the recruits' living areas were kept up to standard.

But he wasn't just a dab hand at administration – Graeme also achieved the second-fastest time of his entry during the mile-and-a-half run.

He said: "Basic training has taught me to persevere in the face of adversity and to be confident in my own abilities."

"I'm looking forward to an exciting career, learning a new trade and being able to travel."

"I also hope that being in the Royal Navy will provide a better quality of life for me and my fiancée, Natalie, and our children Summer and Callan."

Graeme has volunteered for the Submarine Service, so the next stage of his training will take place at HMS Sultan in Gosport, where he will learn the skills required to keep the submarines of the Royal Navy running at the peak of operational effectiveness.

He will then return to HMS Raleigh to learn how to operate beneath the waves at the Royal Navy Submarine School.

Heroes talk about jobs

TWO 'local heroes' from the Royal Navy took part in Diversity Week at Deerbolt Young Offenders Institute, a prison for men aged 18-21 in Co Durham.

The theme for the week was 'Heroes', producing some eye-catching work by prisoners in the education department, which was on display for visitors.

A buffet was provided by the prison's training kitchen, prepared by prisoners working towards NVQ catering qualifications.

Speakers were invited to talk to groups of prisoners on various subjects, two of them being Cpl John Jackson of the Royal Marines and AB James Waddington, who talked about his training and job in the Gulf with HMS Grimsby.

Students were particularly interested in hearing about life at sea, and about Cpl Jackson's time as a member of the British Winter Olympics bobsleigh team.

Frigate rolls out red carpet for Imogen

BACK in June we told you about a young lady who spent a day on board HMS St Albans in the Gulf to further her dream of being a Navy chef.

Now we can bring you Imogen Tate's own account of how she fared.

Ten-year-old Imogen's dream day on board the Type 23 frigate originated in a chance remark on English-language Radio 2, a Gulf News Broadcasting station which covers the United Arab Emirates.

Imogen was asked by breakfast show presenter Rob Duckworth what she wanted to be when she grew up, and Imogen replied that she wanted to be a chef in the senior Service.

Rob asked anyone listening from the British Embassy if they could help, and then it was a question of waiting...

And while Imogen waited, the RN, through liaison officer Cdr Mark Stuttard, got in touch with her parents and organised a visit to the Saint when she called in at Dubai.

"Several weeks later Radio 2 phoned my parents and told them everything was arranged and they would invite me to cook lunch on board HMS St Albans," said Imogen.

Imogen herself found out about the trip at the same time as Radio 2's listeners.

"On my way to school Radio 2 phoned me up in the car," she said.

"I wondered why they were phoning me, but I always rang them to report any traffic news, so I was very curious by this time."

"Cdr Mark was on the other line, and that was when they



● Chef Andrea Denoon discusses the lunch menu with Imogen Tate

Picture: LA(Phot) Steve Johncock

invited me on to HMS St Albans to cook lunch.

"It was one of the happiest moments of my whole life."

"My mum was expecting me to shriek with happiness and excitement, but I was so gobsmacked I couldn't speak."

Her schoolmates were amongst those listening in as teacher Mrs Todorova had been tipped off in advance.

Around a month later Imogen travelled to Port Rashid in Dubai, where she was met by the Visits Officer and other members of the ship's company, as well as her oppo for the day, chef Andrea Denoon.

"I was greeted by Billy, the head chef, who gave me a chef's hat and showed me round the galley," said Imogen.

"I buttoned up my chef's coat and got to work."

"The galley is very small and very hot."

"First Andrea took me to her minuscule office and showed me the dessert we were going to make – it was summer fruits with a sabayon gratin."

The recipe had to be amended slightly (the new chef is allergic to walnuts) but with the sabayon sauce made and desserts prepared, it was time to try the captain's chair for size and then join a VIP

lunch in the wardroom – a simple affair, crab lasagne with asparagus and mushroom sauce, loin of lamb with dauphinoise potatoes and a red wine jus and last, but not least, Imogen's dessert.

"I left St Albans very tired and very hot but also very proud of myself," she said.

But that wasn't quite the finish of Imogen's big weekend – the following day she was back on Radio 2 to talk about her day with the Navy (and say hello to her friends).

"It was an amazing weekend. Everyone was so kind and helpful and I felt really special"

Trainees remember their divisional roots

TRAINEE sailors from Walker Division at HMS Raleigh marched out on parade to celebrate the successful completion of their basic training on the 66th anniversary of the death of Capt Frederick John Walker, in whose honour the division is named.

The 55 trainees joined the Navy in May and have now undergone nine weeks of intensive training.

The course culminated in their passing-out parade (see picture right), attended by families and friends, when Rear Admiral Mark Anderson, Commander Operations, took the salute.

Lt Jon Parker, Walker Division Training Officer, said: "Learning about the Royal Navy's rich heritage and the bravery of those who have gone before is key to understanding the Navy's ethos."

"It helps to build the qualities of courage, selfless commitment, loyalty and integrity that we aim to instil in our recruits during basic training."



"Capt 'Johnny' Walker, as he was known, is credited with turning the Battle of Atlantic in Britain's favour during the Second World War."

"He is a fine example to the trainees of someone who displayed all of these qualities and much more."

Based in Liverpool, Capt Walker's 2nd support group, hunted U-boats out in the

Atlantic, where submarine attacks on convoys were crippling Britain.

He is recognised as being instrumental in freeing the Atlantic of the U-boat menace, sinking more boats than any other Allied commander, once sinking five in just ten days.

Capt Walker died on July 9 1944, aged 48, his death being attributed to exhaustion.

Walker Division is currently one of five new entry training divisions at Raleigh which, in the main, are named in honour of inspirational figures from the past.

However, a re-structuring of the Royal Navy Rating Initial Training School will see the number of Divisions decrease to four, and will mean the closure of Walker Division.

Lt Parker said: "This will be the penultimate group of recruits to complete their training within Walker Division."

"Therefore it seems fitting that they completed the course and were on parade on the anniversary of Capt Walker's death."

Devonport police unit seeking new leads...



A GROUP of the newest recruits to the MOD family are just a few inches long, can only crawl and their eyes remain closed.

Fortunately they are not signing up to become sailors – the 12 Belgian Shepherd Dog puppies are the first MOD police dog service 'recruits' to be born to the unit at Devonport.

Proud mother Willow has produced only the second such litter for the service as part of the new programme to breed its own dogs.

Previously the service bought in new dogs. All the puppies (pictured left) are healthy and predicted to survive the precarious early days.

Their progress will be monitored anxiously, especially by Sgt Matt Robertson, of the MOD police dog service in Devonport.

Sgt Robertson said: "There have only been two such litters bred especially by and for the MoD Police."

"The first was a success, and was at police headquarters – this is the second, and a coup for Devonport."

"Willow produced a large litter and luckily they all look healthy so far."

"Their mother is a little protective, as you might expect, and so am I – they are a precious new arrival."

"This represents the future of the dog service and we are very keen for them to be in service and training to work for their living after 14 to 18 weeks."

He said the dog service usually bought in German Shepherds as new recruits, but they have increasingly become susceptible to health problems which shortened their working life. The best way forward both to guarantee good quality healthy dogs and economically, was to remain in-house and switch breed to Belgian Shepherds of the Malinois variety.

"The breeding programme guarantees us a high standard of dog, we know the origins of the dogs and their genetic history and their temperament," said Sgt Robertson.

"This breed is already known for its sociable character and they are easy to train with a high level of fitness."

"We are confident we can carry on this programme and Devonport will become a centre of excellence."

Top prize for French officer

THE OUTGOING French Hydrographer has won the Alexander Dalrymple Award for his outstanding contribution to the science.

Awarded by the UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), the award is named after the founding father of the Hydrographic Office – established in 1795 – and is a prestigious recognition of dedication to the cause.

According to the UKHO, *L'Ingenieur General de l'Armement de lère Classe Gilles Bessero* has worked tirelessly and successfully over many years in the *Service Hydrographique et Océanographique de la Marine* to deliver improvements for mariners' navigational safety at sea.

Gilles Bessero said: "I am deeply honoured to be invited to join the very distinguished company of the Alexander Dalrymple Award's recipients."

Work done so John joins RAF

AFTER a fruitful 34-year career in the Royal Navy, WO1 John Bradbury could be excused for looking for a chance to relax.

So he joined the RAF...

John – now Flt Lt Bradbury – is a flying instructor at the Central Gliding School RAF Syerton, near Newark in Nottingham.

He left the Senior Service in 2005 and took up a full-time RAF appointment to train instructors in gliding and motor-gliding for the Air Training Corps.

As well as training, he also visits the 27 Volunteer Gliding Schools to carry out standardisation checks.

And, when required, he also flies the Robin DR400 aero tug.

John is still a member of the Portsmouth Naval Gliding Centre, where he regularly helps out on gliding courses.

Always keen to promote aviation, John strongly recommends anyone interested in flying to contact any of the three Naval gliding clubs at Portsmouth, Yeovilton and Culdrose to arrange a trial flight.

It could even lead to a second career with the RAF...

Service for Shiner

A FORMER Royal Marine who served almost two decades aboard the Royal Yacht was remembered at a service in his adopted homeland of Spain.

John Zopara Leo Wright – known to most as Shiner – spent 40 years in the Corps, but on retirement he moved to Campello, near Alicante, where he died earlier this year from cancer.

Maj Glad, of the Salvation Army in Exeter, flew over to conduct the service, as did Lt Col Nicholas Grace, Principal Director of Music for the Royal Marines, along with a Royal Marines bugler who played the *Last Post*.

Learning and growing

CHILDREN from the Helitots day nursery at Culdrose have enjoyed a trip to the Seal Sanctuary at Gweek as part of their under-the-sea project.

The youngsters took the chance to explore rock pools, talk about the seals and watch them feeding.

They even met the sanctuary's newest attraction, a colony of Humboldt penguins, a breed which hails from South America.

After a quick snack and a look round the other animals it was time to head home, courtesy of a bus provided by First Rate Taxis of Porthleven.

Nursery manager Janice Thirlaway-Price said: "We really appreciate the support we receive from local businesses, as without their help we wouldn't be able to offer our children as many of these learning adventures as we would like."

Meanwhile, a group of children in Scotland have been taken a big step along their educational path.

14 'Busy Bees' at the Clyde Nursery at Faslane have celebrated their 'graduation'.

Dressed in gowns and mortar boards, the children were joined by their carers, relatives and friends to mark their big day, along with the Captain of HMS Neptune, Capt Michael Tarr.

The class of 2010 entertained their parents - many of whom work at the nearby Naval Base - with a selection of songs as they bid the nursery a fond farewell in anticipation of their move to primary school in the autumn.

Team tidies Trust land

A TEAM of 18 personnel from Culdrose air station have helped spruce up an area of National Trust land in Cornwall.

The Penrose Estate and surrounding land, including paths and woods around Looe Pool, were given to the National Trust in 1975.

Now the Culdrose team has helped clear undergrowth at the popular beauty spot, a close neighbour of the Naval air station.

Tangled embankments were thinned out along paths around the pool and Degibna areas.

Project organiser CPO Lee Glover said: "As a local Helston resident I walk the areas of Degibna and Penrose on a regular basis with my children, and we are so fortunate to have such areas of natural beauty here on our doorstep."

"I am sure I speak for everyone involved in tackling this work that we have had an enjoyable and productive couple of days."

Theatre visit

THE CAPTAIN and members of the ship's company of USS Winston S Churchill took up an invitation to an evening at the theatre in Portsmouth.

The sailors from the American destroyer, led by Cdr Juan Orozco USN, attended a Help for Heroes concert at the Kings Theatre, Southsea, where they were presented with a framed poem by theatre PR director Mike Williams.

The Kings has a copy of the 1946 Sir Oswald Birley picture of Churchill, which hangs in the Dress Circle bar to commemorate a visit by the politician to watch his daughter Sarah perform.

Safety first at Bull Point

AROUND 2,000 youngsters from Plymouth took part in a fun-filled programme of events which could save lives and reduce accidents.

The third Plymouth Junior Life Skills event was hosted by the Navy at the Bull Point sports training facilities, with agencies such as the fire and rescue



● Two officer cadets stand on the Mistress Stone to take in the view on St Kilda

Pictures: Lt Colin Darkins and Bill Thomson

Turf times working on isolated project

OFFICERS at Britannia Royal Navy College are encouraged to undertake outreach projects within the local community.

And occasionally that outreach has a very long reach indeed, way beyond the local community - way beyond most communities, in fact.

So it was that a group of staff

and cadets from Dartmouth used part of their leave to head for St Kilda to lend a hand to the National Trust of Scotland.

St Kilda is an isolated archipelago some 40 miles west of the Outer Hebrides which was inhabited for more than two millennia until the last handful of inhabitants were voluntarily evacuated in 1930.

The island group is now a World Heritage Site, managed by the National Trust for Scotland, which preserves the buildings and guides visitors who brave the wild sea crossing from Harris.

Many people have left their imprint on the island, from Bronze Age travellers and Norsemen to 18th century villagers.

But the main focus of the visit by the cadets was to help with conservation work on ancient buildings and to prepare for the tourist season.

Much of their effort was expended on repairing the turf roofs of cleits, rough-built stone storehouses, and the 'black houses' of the village.

Undertaking such work is seen as an invaluable way of encouraging teamwork amongst cadets and helping them to recognise the value of positive relations with the wider community.

This particular trip was organised by Lt Colin Darkins, who said: "The conservation we undertook lent much to the perpetual maintenance and gave us all a real sense of contribution - the feeling of doing an honest day's 'graft' on the land was something

that was far removed from all our daily routines."

Throughout their stay the team worked hard but also enjoyed the opportunity to explore the area and soak up an appreciation of the history and life of its previous inhabitants - including how islanders lived by taking seabirds - including puffins, fulmars and gannets - and their eggs from the high cliffs of the islands.

Traditionally, young men of the islands would demonstrate their 'cragmanship' and balance by standing on one foot on the edge of the Mistress Stone, precariously perched about 400ft above the sea.

The young ladies of St Kilda were supposed to be impressed...

While the team were on the island it was mentioned that the school bell, used to summon pupils to the (somewhat intermittent) schooling provided before the evacuation, needed a rope.

Bill Thomson, a lecturer at the college and assisting the team, made up a couple which have been sent to the island.

Bill made two of the natural hemp pulls to cover contingencies like weather and hungry or inquisitive visitors.



● Lts Jason Steele and Rachel Lees encourage 11-year-old Jade and Ryan (ten) along the assault course

Child challenge

TACKLING a mini assault course was among the challenges set for the children of a Torpoint school by a group of 15 trainee Logistics Officers at HMS Raleigh.

The afternoon of Navy-style activities was designed to give Year 6 pupils at Carbeile Junior School a taste of RN training.

Other highlights included the chance for children to take part in exercises to develop communication and team-work skills, and they also had the chance to talk to the trainee officers about their careers and the role of the Navy.

Head teacher Penny Geach said: "The children thoroughly enjoyed the activities and put a lot of effort into the challenges, which supported our ethos of respect and responsibility."

"They were also interested to learn more about the Royal Navy."

"It was a great afternoon."

Each class on the eight-month Initial Logistics Officer course is required to organise a charity of community event in their final week.

Senior rates thwart assault



TWO senior rates from HMS Ambush have been commended by a judge in Barrow-in-Furness for saving a pub doorman from a vicious attack.

CPO Steven Bell and Coxswain Steve Thorpe (pictured left, picture courtesy North West Evening Mail) were on a night out when they saw three men assaulting a bouncer. The pair put themselves between the attackers and the victim.

Judge Paul Batty awarded the men a Certificate of Commendation, saying: "They could have just stood back and watched the assault take place. But they didn't."

"In the highest tradition of the Services they intervened, so much so they prevented further assault on the bouncer and they waited at the scene and they were able to assist the police in pointing out the attackers."

The modest heroes were given a cheque for £250 each.

Coxswain Thorpe said: "It is our duty as citizens to stop an assault, not just as military men. It is very kind of the judge to give us this award."

Actors and crews win accolades

GIBALTARIAN thespians took the main honours at the annual RN Drama Festival awards, hosted by the WO & SR Mess at HMS Collingwood.

The Trafalgar Theatre Group caught the eye of adjudicator Doug Craig, a retired naval officer and member of the Guild of Dramatic Adjudicators.

Along with best show and overall winner for their performance of *Breath of Spring* by Peter Coke, the team from the Rock also won best actress (Isabelle Valenzuela as Alice Lady Miller).

Competing against the Trafalgar group were the Admiral's Players (HMS Excellent) with *Write About What You Know* by Paul Gisby, HMS Collingwood with *Amphibious Spangulatus* by Paul Doust and HMS Sultan with *Habeus Corpus* by Alan Bennett.

The best actor award went to Richard Sanderson (Admiral's Players) as did best director - Roger Mitchell.

Rear Admiral Charles Montgomery, president of the RN Theatre Association, presented the annual President's Award to Chris Blatch-Gainey for his outstanding support for both the Collingwood group and the RNTA as a whole as a director and workshop coordinator.

Other awards presented included: best supporting actor: John Webb as Stanley Ferris (Admiral's Players); best supporting actress: Eleri Surrey as Nanette Parry (Trafalgar); best male newcomer: Ed Owen-Jones as Rex Cunningham (Collingwood); best female newcomer: Noelle Hothe as Elizabeth Hatfield (Trafalgar); the Doug Craig award for best cameo performance: John Morgan as PC Carpenter (Collingwood); best technical achievement: Sultan; best stage set: Steve Frewer, Gareth Rees, Ralph Dinnick, Colin Salt and Janice Steedman (Sultan); best lighting: Gareth Rees (Sultan); best sound: Ian Goble (Admiral's Players); best costume: Eileen Thornton, Jean Penney, Margaret Seed and Sharon Cunningham (Trafalgar); best make up, hair and wigs: Rosanna Wills and Moira Bissett (Trafalgar).

If you would like to tread the boards or join a stage crew, contact David Grindel on 93832 5324, david.grindel578@mod.uk

Top air cadet opts to fly Navy

A LONDON cadet has picked up a top award for his contribution to the Air Training Corps.

Now Cadet WO Gilberto Algar-Faria is looking forward to a flying career - with the Fleet Air Arm.

Gilberto, a member of 48 Flight (Hampstead) Squadron ATC, was presented with the Duke of Westminster Award Edexcel Prize for his "infectious enthusiasm, his maturity and leadership."

Currently studying for a degree in International Relations at the University of Leeds, he aims to be commissioned to begin officer training at Dartmouth before taking on flying duties in the RN.

'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'



● **Founder shipmates of Bude RNA.** Left to right: Mick Philp, Peter Phillips, Godfrey Harrison, Brian Braund, Alan Litchfield, Bob Stewart, 'Tanky' Williams and Mick Luxton

Bude-iful memories

BUDE branch threw a lavish 21st birthday party to celebrate the anniversary of its commissioning in August 1989.

Fifty shipmates and guests held a social evening at Bude RFC, with refreshments generously supplied by the Bude Rugby Club. The room was decorated with Cornish and naval decorations courtesy of steward Stu Bell.

Musical entertainment was provided by 'Friggin' Riggin', Bude's own lifeboat music group, who led the guests in a number of well-known shanties and folk songs.

To mark this milestone in the branch's history, its Chairman, Shipmate Brian Braund, gave the signal Splice the Mainbrace and

the potency of Pusser's Rum was enjoyed by all present.

Brian and President Shipmate Alan Litchfield cut an anniversary cake, obtained and suitably decorated with an RNA motif by Shipmate Peter Phillips.

An auction conducted by Shipmate Mick Philp raised more than £120, due in no small part to his unusual rules, which meant that anyone in the room who was unwise enough to speak, or on occasion move their head, was deemed to have made a bid.

Tanky Williams, the branch Standard Bearer, has to his surprise been the successful bidder on scores of occasions. All money raised is donated to designated charities annually.

A colourful tribute to a black day

PLYMOUTH branch celebrated Black Tot Day – or at least marked its passing in an appropriate way to dull the pain.

Shipmates dressed up in period costume (of various periods, judging by the photo right) and gathered around the Rum Tub in the Warrant Officer and Senior Rates' Mess HMS Drake to mark the tot's demise.

It was on July 31 1970 (better known as Black Tot Day) that the final tots were issued around the globe. Before that sad date, all serving personnel over the age of 20 were entitled to one eighth of a pint of rum every day.



Green berets thank RMA

THE Commando Training Centre, in Lympstone, hosted members of the **Royal Marines' Association Repatriation Network** to a King's Squad passing-out parade.

The invitation was to thank the group for all the work it does in organising tributes to those killed in operations.

The network was set up to promote attendance along 'Repatriation Road,' the 47-mile route along which military funeral corteges travel when they make their way from RAF Lyneham to the John Radcliffe Hospital, in Oxford.

Poole branch RMA, along with Guildford branch, and helped by many other organisations and individuals, has been a leading light in organising the vigils which line the route every time a military funeral cortege passes through.

The tradition of paying tribute to the casualties started when residents of Wootton Bassett began spontaneously lining the streets as the processions drove through their Wiltshire town.

It has now grown, albeit in a discreet and dignified way, to encompass the whole of 'Repatriation Road.'

Now when a cortege sets out, the entire route of 47 miles is lined to make sure that no Service person makes the last journey alone.

There are many markers along the route where people come to pay their respects, ranging from private houses to pubs and police and fire stations.

Officers at the Defence Academy at Shrivenham turn out, as do staff at the John Radcliffe Hospital, the final destination on the route.

Getting everyone in the right place at the right time is a feat of organisation and the Poole branch of the RMA, being at the midway point along the route, has the honour, along with the Guildford branch, of

running the communications network.

Within 24 hours of a repatriation being confirmed by the RAF, a bulk text message is sent out to about 80 individuals and groups giving them basic information.

Then, two or three days later, once the police have confirmed their arrangements, a bulk email goes out to nearly 300 people giving fuller details and the timings of various vigil points along the way.

On the day of the repatriation, the groups and individuals are kept informed of the progress of the cortege.

Afterwards a Royal Marine veteran, the 'duty scribe,' gathers information from the various vigil points and writes a post-repatriation report, which is sent to the bereaved families and to units in theatre.

Before the RMA network was established, information for those parading at locations other than Wootton Bassett was very hit and miss. Now the network system continues to grow and is truly tri-service.

The guests at CTC Lympstone represented people from many walks of life who support the network in different ways, including two ladies who supply the vigil points with tea and practical help.

A spokesman from the Poole branch of the RMA said: "We are truly humbled to have the task of doing a job that we wish we didn't have to do, but do it willingly to show respect for the fallen and support to the bereaved families."

"We want to make sure that no Royal Marine or his brothers-in-arms are on their own on that long last, mournful journey and as they approach silence falls, Standards are lowered and salutes given."

"Afterwards as people disperse silence still reigns and tears are wiped away with each in their own deep thoughts of the young who have given their all."

Sheppey's blue day

ISLE of Sheppey branch celebrated 300 years of maritime history this summer with a parade through Blue Town. Fourteen Standards from 2 Area paraded, including Merchant Navy, Sheppey Sea Cadets and Association Standards from Phoebe, Cavalier, Bulwark, Albion and Centaur.

One of the aims was to get young people and residents new to the island to know more about their maritime history, and the closure of the Royal Dockyard.

After morning colours and prayers the RNA, led by a guard of Sheppey Sea Cadets and the band of Sittingbourne Sea Cadets, marched down the High Street passing the dais where Cdr Mankerty took the salute, accompanied by Cdr William Barker of the South Africa Navy.

On completion of the parade the rest of the day was their own to spend as they wished until sunset, which was held at 4pm with RNA Standards and Sea Cadets and other branch members parading before shore leave was granted.

The branch had another celebration this summer – the 90th birthday of shipmate Jack Cornwall, affectionately known as 'Our Jack,' or 'Sailor Jack.'

Jack is a founder member of the branch and had a long and varied career in the Navy, surviving two sinkings, one being HMS Welshman. He finished his service career as a CPO Coxswain.

At one point in his career Jack was an instructor in HMS Ganges and many years later some of the boys he had instructed decided to trace him. Every year since then a handful of his old pupils have made the trip to Sheppey to see him, but this year being a special year, they came in numbers.

One of his old boys, Chris 'Dinger' Bell, organised a special birthday trip with the help of Jack's daughter and his former pupils wine and dined him for a 90th birthday bash.

York says farewell

MEMBERS of the York branch of the RNRMA assembled as a guard of honour to say a last farewell to Commando David Hart, who died in Afghanistan in July.

Hundreds of the city's residents turned out to line the streets when his funeral service was held at York Minster.

The branch has also been mourning the death of Chief Lionel Crossley, for many years a stalwart of York Sea Cadets.

On a brighter note, the branch held a very successful collection day on behalf of the Alexander Rose Charity, a day out to support the Bradford branch.

Dublin remembers

MEMBERS of the **Dublin** branch joined colleagues from the Royal British Legion Republic of Ireland for their annual commemoration service in the magnificent setting of the Irish National War Memorial Park in Islandbridge, Dublin.

The service was hosted by Major General David Nial Creagh, The O'Morchoe, President of the RBL in the Republic and attended by the Lord Mayors of Dublin and Belfast as well as representatives from countries around the world.

The service was led by The Right Reverend Monsignor Eoin Thynne, Head Chaplain to the Defence Forces, assisted by The Venerable Christopher Long and the lesson was read by Lt General Sir John Kiszely, National President of the RBL.

This was the first public parade for the new officers of the Dublin

branch who were well-supported by their branch members. In addition there were others who by their attire appeared to be shipmates.

On further enquiry and calls of 'Who goes there?' it turned out that the strangers were five eligible full members from the County of Wexford – there was much jubilation followed by invitations and promises to attend the next meeting of the Dublin branch.

Unfortunately the excitement was so overwhelming that no-one thought to get their names and addresses – so if any of the mystery Wexford shipmates read this, please send your contact details to RNA HQ for forwarding to the Dublin Branch Secretary, Shipmate Alan Easter, or to Alan direct, as he handed over his address.

Atherton makes the day

ARMED FORCES DAY saw a big turn-out in Atherton where shipmates took part in the celebrations at the Leigh Sports Village, new home of Leigh RLFC.

More than 5,000 spectators watched a march-past of veterans and standards from all sections of the Armed Forces and admired a display of restored military vehicles, including a Spitfire.

Inside one of the indoor arenas, an area was set aside for branches from many volunteer organisations and the RNA Atherton Branch handed out numerous membership forms for the Wigan, Leigh and Atherton areas.

Branch chairman Peter Wilkie said: "The day was a great success, and we have certainly raised the awareness of the RNA within the area."

Ketton's crucifix

KETTON and District branch has a new badge – a crucifix hung with a lifebuoy which will be used to identify branch members during collections and events.

The crucifix was made by branch member Chalky White

and was formally handed over to the branch President, Chairman and Standard Bearer.

It will be the centre-piece of meetings for the branch and has already proved useful at a tombola stall as part of Armed Forces Week in Stamford.

Drawn to D-boats? Cadet standard

CAPTAIN Paddy McAlpine, CO of HMS Daring, took the day off from running the Navy's newest warship to take the salute for the D Boats' annual reunion in HMS Nelson.

After lunch Capt McAlpine gave a talk on how the modern Navy works, and the highly technical skills which the modern sailor needs.

Capt McAlpine and his wife, Janette, were joined for lunch by the D Boats' patron, Vice Admiral Sir John Lea, President Brian Wines, John Richardson from BVT Shipbuilders, and the D Boats' chaplain, the Rev Martin Poll.

For more information about joining the D Boats Association, contact Mike Smith, D Boats Secretary, at 206, Main Road, Clenchwarton, King's Lynn, Norfolk PE34 4AA, tel: 01553 765530 or visit the website: www.d-boats.co.uk

THE Sea Cadet unit in Colchester now has its own standard, thanks to Colchester branch who made the presentation at the cadets' training ship, the TS Colne Light.

Shipmates joined the cadets and staff with their padre, Father Richard Tillbrook, for the presentation evening.

Later Father Tillbrook dedicated the standard at his church, St Barnabas, Old Heath, during a morning service at which AB Cadet Laura Kemp carried the standard, escorted by the Colchester and Clacton-on-Sea RNA Standard Bearers.

T23 welcome
WETHERBY shipmates enjoyed a great day out when they were entertained in HMS Westminster whilst the ship was visiting Sunderland.

Naval Quirks



.. A FANTASTIC SCHEME TO CONSTRUCT A FLOATING ISLAND AIRCRAFT CARRIER, MADE OF ICE, IN THE MID-ATLANTIC..

My one fear is enemy paratroops – with flame-throwers!

..FROM WHICH AIRCRAFT WOULD PROVIDE AIR COVER TO CONVOYS IN THE PREVIOUSLY UNPROTECTED "AIR GAP."

MICAH

BUT FOR WHATEVER REASON, THE ICE CARRIER IDEA NEVER – AH-EM – "TOOK OFF"!

PERHAPS EVERYONE GOT "COLD FEET"!

21s come of age

THE AMAZON-class frigates were a special bunch to those who served in them – fast, flexible, sleek and very popular. They distinguished themselves in the Falklands campaign where two of their number, HMS Ardent and HMS Antelope, were lost under heavy air attack. Some 40 years after they were built, the Type 21 class are to have an association of their own and as word spreads places are filling up fast for the inaugural meeting next month.

“Already 650 people have signed up and the excitement and enthusiasm are clearly aflame,” said Mark Brocklehurst, acting chairman of the association.

The Type 21 Club, as they became known, were HMS Amazon, Antelope, Active, Ambuscade, Arrow, Alacrity, Ardent and Avenger.

By 1978 all eight were in commission and the Type 21s served faithfully until 1993 when the surviving six were sold to the Pakistan Navy, where they have continued to distinguish themselves ever since.

As multi-purpose frigates, they were equipped variously with guns, anti-submarine torpedoes, Seacat AA missiles, with a top speed of more than 30 knots. Their 3,000 tons could accelerate from 0 to 28 knots in a minute.

By 1981 they were formed into their own squadron, the Fourth Frigate Squadron, and in the following year all but one took part in Operation Corporate to retake the Falklands.

Here they distinguished themselves in supporting landings, protecting convoys, covert work with special forces, and shore bombardment in support of the Army.

Rechristened The Fighting Fourth, together they served the Fleet well for many years; and while their hulls were reincarnated under new names like PNS Tippu Sultan (Avenger) and PNS Tariq (Ambuscade) their memory lives on.

The new Association will be formally established on October 8-9 in Plymouth.

To find out more details, visit the website on <http://type21club.ning.com>

To buy a ticket for the reunion, send your name, address and ship details with a cheque for £20 made payable to HMS Ambuscade Association to Mark Brocklehurst, Sharples Group, Tatton Court, Kingsland Grange, Warrington, WA1 4RR, or ring 01925 839592 or email Mark.Brocklehurst@sharplesgroup.com

Sea Sunday success for Falmouth

FOR the 27th successive year, Falmouth branch organised the annual Sea Sunday Parade with Falmouth Town Council and the Church of King Charles the Martyr.

Led by the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines, Plymouth, and 17 standards, the parade marched from The Moor to the church for the service, where lessons were read by the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, Lady Mary Holborow, and the RNA President, Vice Admiral John McAnally.

The sermon was given by the Rev Peter Scott, Chaplain of RNAS Cudmore, and Falmouth Branch President Cdre Tony Hogg read Nelson's Prayer.

Following the service, the parade re-formed for the march past, and the salute was taken by Lady Mary, supported by Vice Admiral McAnally.

After the parade was dismissed in Events Square, the Royal Marine Band entertained spectators before a reception was held in the nearby National Maritime Museum.

What's next for the Navy in the SDSR?

RNA NATIONAL PRESIDENT Vice Admiral John McAnally gives his personal point of view about the current Strategic Defence and Security Review in the light of recent media coverage:

Shipmates will know that a Strategic Defence and Security Review is in progress.

You will probably have seen some recent articles in the press: *Royal Marines to be transferred to Army operational control; RAF and Navy in dogfight over whether Harrier or Tornado should be scrapped; A Naval base to be closed.*

We are all concerned that this very significant Review should leave our Defence and Security safe and particularly that part of it assured by the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Firstly the SDSR is being overseen by the newly-formed National Security Council which is chaired by the Prime Minister and the MOD is a prime contributor with both the Defence Secretary and Chief of the Defence Staff in attendance.

As the name suggests, the SDSR is intended to be foreign policy led, ie what sort of role does the UK want to play on the world stage?

What sort of Armed Forces must we maintain to protect and promote our national interests?

But it is also resource informed and the resource bit may, perhaps by necessity, be steaming ahead of the policy.

We all know what a fiscal mess our country is in. We have been borrowing around a quarter of what the Government has been spending.

All parties agree this has to stop sometime – the current Coalition thinks soon and their argument won most votes in the election.

So while the National Security Council debates the policy the Treasury has instructed all Government Departments to state how they would manage with very much less money.

The MOD's targets are not in fact as demanding as most others.

Perhaps this is because so much of the Defence budget is already contractually committed. Little money could be saved in the near term by cancellations.

It is clearly in Defence's best interest as well as its duty to address the Treasury's remits fully.

Otherwise members of the Cabinet might feel justified in accusing MOD of getting off too lightly.

Consequently more than 40 'Work Strands' were instructed to work up radical proposals for detailed costing.

These reports were recently submitted and before any policy baseline.

Perhaps inevitably some of them have leaked or ideas which did not make it into the reports have been floated to the press by those who favoured them.

Our serving Shipmates value our commitment to the Naval Service and our national presence.

We can fulfil our Royal Charter duty to support them by taking any opportunity to explain, not emotionally but rationally, the Navy's contributions to national defence.

The time where such help might be most useful is during the decision-making process when the policy and resource angles have to be reconciled.

This must be over the next few months since the SDSR is working to an extremely demanding timescale for such hugely significant questions.

I believe the aim is for announcement along with the whole Government Comprehensive Spending Review close to Trafalgar Day.

The following are some of the areas of debate I judge most crucial to the Naval Service.

I don't argue with any of them being raised but I would hope that the following points get a fair airing and that Shipmates will find them helpful:

Royal Marines

■ The UK has frequently needed to launch troops ashore from the sea (amphibious operations) eg in the Falklands, Sierra Leone and Gulf War 2.

■ Two things are a must for success. A landing force organised, trained and equipped for amphibious operations and specialist ships able to transport, land, sustain ashore, withdraw and redeploy the landing force without any external aid in a hostile environment.

■ The minimum effective size for a worthwhile landing force able to exert strategic effect is Brigade level – what we have.

■ The UK has also recapitalised its specialist amphibious ships (Ocean, Bulwark, Albion and the four Bay-class RFA's). These will be with us beyond 2030.

■ Army harmony allows more time in UK than does that for the RN which the RM follows. If they were under Army operational control time for amphibious training would wither and with it the capability.

■ Amphibious operations are among the most demanding of all military endeavours.

The landing force and their naval comrades must be aware from long mutual familiarisation and sympathy of each others' requirements.

With it you get Quebec, the Falklands and the 2003 Iraq capture of the Al Faw peninsula.

Without it Gallipoli.

Our history is full of such practical examples of success and failure. This is the prime reason for the Royal Marines' existence and their place in the Naval Service.

■ The Royal Marines provide the Royal Navy with many other capabilities which need to be managed along with the primary amphibious role such as: maritime special forces, boarding parties, shore guarding of the nuclear deterrent, military training and our beloved bands.

■ In the context of Special Forces from three per cent of Defence manpower the RM contribute across the board such that more than third of the SBS, SAS, SF Support Group and the Recce Regiment are Royal Marines.

Where else would we find such people if the ethos, training and calibre of recruit were diluted?

Carriers

■ They will be national Defence assets not purely Naval ones.

■ They are the only way the UK can be sure of deploying air power (whether flown by RN,

RAF or Army) anywhere without need to overfly or base in foreign countries.

■ Nearly half the airpower in Afghanistan has come from carriers.

■ Wider utility was demonstrated in the Haiti earthquake relief.

■ Cancelling them would save about £200 million over the next five years – we'd still have to pay about £5 billion.

■ At a recent Conference on Air Power the Chief of the Air Staff stated that the RAF unequivocally supported the Carrier Strike concept and its delivery.

Harrier and Tornado

■ Big potential savings in basing, training and support may dictate the necessity for the UK to remove one of our three fast-jet aircraft types.

Typhoon must stay so the choice may lie between Harrier and Tornado.

■ While Tornado is currently deployed in Afghanistan, the Harrier GR9 does the job rather better – it is what it was designed for.

The more advanced reconnaissance pod of the Tornado will soon be replaced by UAVs (Unmanned Aerial Vehicles) which are cheaper, have greater endurance and are more expendable.

■ If the Harrier is scrapped before the new Joint Combat Aircraft has replaced it then the UK will lose its current ability to deploy fast jet aircraft from our carriers.

Interventions like Sierra Leone and air support like that deployed in Bosnia will not be possible.

■ The UK will lose the art of flying fast jets from carriers. It will be very expensive, difficult and time consuming to recover it.

■ The Navy will have no fixed-wing, fast-jet pilots where the UK's maritime expertise lies. There will be no instinctive knowledge of fast jet operations at sea within the Navy.

■ Finally dispensing with Tornado would save seven times as much money as scrapping Harrier.

Naval Bases

■ I do not know if closing any of our present Naval Bases (Devonport, Faslane and Portsmouth) has been raised in MOD but it has in the media.

■ Each provides some unique capability eg Devonport is the only place where the UK can defuel out of service nuclear submarines – a facility which will be needed for at least the next 30 years.

■ The Naval Bases have been subject to significant rationalisation and cost reduction under the Maritime Change Programme which is still being implemented.

■ All three are needed to support current Defence Policy. The Fleet would have to be significantly reduced in size before we could manage with two.

■ In the 16 years since I first heard it debated in front of a Defence Minister I have yet to meet a politician who believed it feasible to close one of our three Naval Bases.

■ The results of the SDSR are expected to be announced later this year.



Shiver me timbers, it's our new president

SHIPMATES at the Spalding branch find their new president cuts a very distinctive figure since they invited Terry Carter, their longest-serving member and also their PR officer, to take the job. Terry accepted willingly – but as a former stoker he felt that his background of multi-skilled training in the RN should not go to waste, so he acquired a job as a Water Taxi Captain on the River Welland.

Day One was excellent, so he gave himself a Bravo Zulu and a tot.

On Day Two he decided he could do the skipper's job and

also the buoy jumper's job but disaster struck and he ended up in the sick bay.

Shipmate Frank White in true naval tradition came to his rescue and, using skills of hand and lathe, soon had the new President back on his feet, or foot, to be more accurate, so that he could continue with his duties at branch meetings.

Thanks to Frank the Spalding President (pictured above) now has a wooden leg, a hook and an eye patch.

Rumour has it that proceeds from the next meeting's raffle will be going towards a parrot.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our July edition (right) was HMS Pollington, also known at various times as HMS Mersey.

Mr J Hider of Torquay wins our £50 prize.

This month's submarine (above) was launched shortly after the war, but was still providing sterling service to the Royal Navy alongside at the home of the Submarine Service in the 1970s.

The only vessel to bear the name, she was built by Scotts at Greenock, completed in June 1946 and spent some time Down Under (geographically, not just Down Under the surface...).

What was her name – and what was the name of the boat which replaced her as 'display ship' at HMS Dolphin in the 1970s, which featured in our pages again last month?



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

MYSTERY PICTURE 187

Name

Address

.....

.....

My answers

.....

Thai fighters recognised

MUAY Thai has just received full approved status after being a grass roots sport for the past four years.

The sport – also known as Thai boxing – has established a firm following with training sessions at HMS Nelson and RNAS Yeovilton under the guidance of Assistant Master Khru Yai Gary Gregory.

This month the RN Muay Thai Association moves from its current home in Nelson gym to a newly-acquired gym in the dockyard, training each Tuesday and Thursday from 6pm-8pm.

The RNMTA offers grass roots training to establishments and is open to everybody from the pure novice to experienced fighters.

Future activities include inter-unit fight nights in November and March and a trip to Thailand to train between March 12 and 27.

For further information on all aspects of training and future events, contact the association chairman Lt Cdr Dave Goldsmith on 07757 184925 or Gary Gregory on 07979 276902.

Wight riders

A 58-mile slog around the Isle of Wight (one day between September 13 and 19 or October 11 and 17, depending on the weather) beckons for competitors in the Forces Windsurfing Challenge, a race between the three Services – with the added incentive of raising money for Help for Heroes and, in the Navy's case, the RNRMC.

The race is expected to last ten hours and will see the windsurfers actually cover 100 miles as they have to beat upwind and sail off the wind, plus cope with strong tides.

More details at www.forceswindsurfing.org.uk.

CTCRM reign in the rain

DUE to operational commitments only seven units were able to compete at this year's Tunney Cup, the Royal Marines' annual football tournament, writes *Jacky McNamara*.

The contest kicked off in glorious sunshine with 42 Cdo outplaying CHF, winning 4-2 with a sound display from all officials, especially WO2 Robbie Buglass who was making his debut as a referee at the 2010 Tunney Cup.

On Monday morning – before the 42 Cdo-CTCRM game – all the referees were treated to a 'ceremonial free kick' master class by FA referee instructor and retired RN ref George McCaffery.

George very kindly gave up his time to assess and mentor our newly-qualified referees throughout the week and we are extremely grateful to him.

Tuesday kicked off in romping style with a 'ding dong' game between 42 Cdo and RM Poole – the winners going through to the semi-final, the losers settling for a place in the plate final.

After a cracking end-to-end game – superbly controlled by ex-Bootneck and RN referees' secretary Barney Barnett – RM Poole emerged victorious 4-3.

The afternoon saw CTCRM ease into the semis with a huge 9-1 win over CHF, while FPGRM played out a tense 1-1 draw with fierce rivals 45 Cdo that rarely dipped below 100 mph.

Wednesday morning brought difficult windy conditions for the plate decider which saw CLR convincingly beat CHF 9-1.

Both semis were well-contested with 45 Cdo and CTCRM eventually winning.



● Eventual winners CTCRM (in red) defend a 45 Cdo corner in the rain-soaked final of the Tunney Cup
Picture: PO(Phot) Christine Wood, CTCRM

The plate final saw 42 Cdo play CLR in an evenly-contested match which nearly boiled over in the second half.

CPO Mark Scarisbrick and his team did a fine job keeping a lid on proceedings, as tempers flared with the game ebbing and flowing. CLR eventually came out on top by 4 goals to 3.

In the annual veterans' game The Laurels, led by Shaun 'Fozzy' Foster, edged out the Globes by

5-4 in an entertaining game with players travelling great distances to play in this fixture.

The much-anticipated final saw the 2010 Navy Cup winners 45 Cdo play the defending Tunney Cup holders CTCRM.

The game was particularly special as it was to be C/Sgt Ian 'Nobby' Clark's last as head coach of 45 Cdo; Nobby has been a stalwart of Corps football and will be sadly missed by all who had the pleasure of his company.

The final was a Tunney Cup classic: a great game played in very wet conditions – just a shame that one team had to lose.

RN Level 4 referee Raymond 'Pogo' Paterson described it as the best game that he'd had the pleasure of taking part in for a long time – his legs were still sore on Sunday.

CTCRM finally emerged victorious winning 5-4 after extra time with Mark Petch of 45 Cdo RM selected as the man of the match.

An outstanding week was had by all and a big 'thank you' must go out to all those involved in the smooth running of this year's tournament including, 'Fozzy' Foster, C/Sgt Ian 'Dutchy' Mulholland, Johnno, BJ Farrimond, Tigs Lenton and the rest.

■ Taunton Town FC saw a record crowd at an 'Armed Forces Charity Day' in support of the RN and RM Charity, Army Benevolent Fund, RAF Benevolent Fund, Help for Heroes, and the Royal

British Legion.

There were two great matches – after the match ball had been delivered in style, courtesy of a Lynx from 702 NAS, which departed trailing a White Ensign over the stadium.

And so to the sporting action: the first match saw the families of Cpls Jonathan Horne and Tom Gaden of the Rifles – killed in action in Afghanistan last year – take to the field.

The match was a 3-3 draw and decided on penalties, with the winning kick struck by Jonathan's father.

The second match saw the Royal Marines clash with Taunton Town (who play in the Southern Football League Division One South & West – four levels below the Football League).

The commandos edged home winners 2-1 after some terrific attacking football in a hard-fought match.

The event – which raised in excess of £20,000 for the above-named charities – was organised by CPO Jim Kent (JSU Cheltenham), PO Andy Cload (Raleigh), and PO Mathew Steele (702 NAS).

They received terrific support from the local cadet forces with battlefield and field gun displays, and music by the Devon and Somerset Air Cadets Volunteer Band. Players were joined by junior cadets as mascots and local Royal British Legion Standard Bearers.

Powerlifters raise the bar

NINE competitors from the RN and entitled civilians battled it out for the title of Scotland's RN powerlifting bench press champion.

The clear overall winner with a lift of 140 kg in the 90kg weight class was CPO(ET) Andy Laing, equalling the record set earlier in the year by Mid Nick Rikowski and setting a new Masters record.

The 67.5kg class was won by ET(ME) Andy Burn with a lift of 100kg on his second attempt, missing out narrowly on 110kg on his third and final attempt.

The 82.5kg class was won by Lewis Bysouth with a lift of 110kg. He was closely followed by LMA Nolan Tonks with 60kg, a gutsy effort from a man who only took up weight training two months ago.

In the 90kg class CPO Laing won the title and the overall best lifter title.

He was followed by ET(ME) James who unfortunately could not complete a 140kg lift on his second and third attempt.

The 100kg class was won by Babcock's Mick Rybarczyk with a lift of 140 kg.

Next came Calvin Szeles (also of Babcock) with a lift of 125kg. In third place CPO Lee Shaw hoisted a respectable 100kg.

In the final weight class (110kg) Eric Turner opened strongly with 150kg (matching Adam Cooper's record in that class) his second attempt at 160kg was disallowed for changing the elected lifting position during the lift. His third attempt was a repeat at 160kg but luck was not with him and he missed at that weight.

CTCRM hosted the South West regional bench press competition.

When the scores were tallied, only one point separated placings from sixth to third and an incredible three tenths of a point separated first and second positions.

The competition was won by Mne Mike Hemmingway (CLR) with an RN record-equalling lift of 150kg in the 110kg class to give him 82.40 points.

In second place Cpl Rob Conde from CTCRM in the 100kg class lifted just 5kg fewer than the bigger man to achieve 82.03 points.

Of important note is that both these lifters were competing in their first powerlifting competition and were lifting against several experienced and nationally qualified lifters.

Cpl Rob Cooper placed third with a personal best of 135kg in the 100 kg class.

Having progressed into the 125 kg class this year, Lt Adam Cooper set a new RN record by lifting 150kg, equalling the competition winner.

However as powerlifting is scored proportionally based on a competitor's body weight, this impressive lift was only good enough for fourth place.

In fifth place was Cpl Jim Cox with a lift of 130kg in the 100kg class. Later this year Jim will be competing for Great Britain in the single-lift Deadlift event at the World Drug-Free Powerlifting Association's European Championships in Malta.

In his first powerlifting competition Cpl Malcolm Bell took sixth place with a 100kg lift in the 67.5kg class, followed by his training partner Mne Mike Whittle, also in the 67.5kg class with a 92.5kg lift.

Finally in eighth place was AB Nial Duncan (HMS Raleigh) who was also taking part in first powerlifting competition. He lifted an impressive 102.5kg in the 90kg class and was unlucky not to complete a lift of 107.5 kg on his third attempt.

The action now shifts to HMS Temeraire and the RN Bench Press Championships on September 22. There will also be an Inter-Service full power and single lift Championships, in which each competitor may enter the bench press, deadlift, squat or all three disciplines.

More details from RN Powerlifting Association secretary Adam Cooper on 07904 160039.

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Blazing saddles

CYCLISTS from HMS Raleigh took the UK National 24-hour time trial title for the second year running with a combined distance of 1,341 miles.

WO1 Garry 'Scooby' Drew, C/Sgt Stuart 'Natty' Edwards and former CPO Bob Richards took on some of the best endurance cyclists in the UK to defend the title at Farndon, Cheshire.

Each competitor was required to cycle as far as possible on pre-marked dual carriageways and A and B roads in a day. WO1 Drew took third place – and his first national individual medal – by clocking up 467.64 miles (equivalent of Raleigh to Alnwick).

He would have covered an even greater distance but for a couple of problems with his bike.

WO1 Drew was followed over the line by C/Sgt Edwards who took fourth place overall with 458.33 miles (that's Raleigh to Jedburgh).

He had been leading the race at the half-way point, but a couple of bad patches and the saddle coming off, hindered his progress. Bob Richards stepped into the breach as a member of the team filling a gap left by the RN's main contender, CPO Sean Childs, who is currently taking time away from competitive cycling.

Having been stuck on 399 miles, the VT Flagship employee was determined to break through the 400-mile barrier in 2010. He did – by some 16.36 miles in his 24 hours in the saddle, covering a distance equivalent of Raleigh to Chester-le-Street.

The three riders' tally ensured they held on to the title – although it took a little time for the realisation to sink in.

"I had no idea what position I had finished in so I was absolutely delighted when I realised that we had retained the team title and that I had won my first national medal," said WO1 Drew.

"Will I do it again? Definitely, with the aim of getting a little further."

Deaths

Marine Adam Brown RM. Signaller with 3 Troop, Alpha Company 40 Commando serving as part of Combined Force Sangin killed in Afghanistan August 1. Aged 25.

Vice Admiral Sir Lancelot Bell Davies KBE. Joined the RN College at Dartmouth two days before the outbreak of World War 2 and cruiser Norfolk on Boxing Day 1943 where at the age of 17 his action station was in the gunnery director tower when he was involved in the battle that ended with the sinking of Scharnhorst. His statutory 'small ship time' was spent in the auxiliary trawler Ben Torc, fitted as a minesweeper. After a spell in HMS Devonshire and Opportune he joined the submarine service and by 1945 was en route to the Pacific for two years in Tally Ho; then the Anchorite. Promoted to 2IC of Tireless and later a 'teacher' of the submarine captains' qualifying course. In 1962 appointed captain of the new frigate Leander, developing her helicopter operations; then as naval assistant to the Controller of the Navy, command of the submarine depot ship Forth (in Mombasa to support the evacuation from Aden) and the 7th Submarine Squadron at Singapore. He commanded Bulwark and learnt to fly a helicopter. Promoted to rear admiral in 1973 he went to Washington in charge of the British Naval Staff to further Anglo-American relations then promoted vice admiral and appointed KBE in 1977. Due to retire in 1978 he was selected to lead the NATO Defence College in Rome as its commandant for three years. After finally retiring he spent nine years as chairman of the Sea Cadet Council and was vice-president of the Trincomalee Trust. July 3. Aged 84.

Cdr Mike Crossley DSC*. FAA Pilot. Volunteered 1940, flew in many operations: in a Sea Hurricane off Eagle during the relief of Malta in 1942 (Operation Harpoon), and he survived her sinking. He then joined 800 NAS flying from Biter during the allied landings in North Africa (Operation Torch) and received his first DSC for shooting down two Vichy French fighters over La Senia, near Oran. Appointed as senior pilot of 804 NAS in Dasher he then taught new fighter pilots at Dippier, near Yevilton, where he flew the Seaforce. By D-Day he had joined 886 NAS, flying several sorties a day before taking command of 880 NAS based in Orkney, embarked in Implacable and carried out a series of attacks on German shipping in the fjords of Norway; then in the Pacific striking at the Japanese mainland. Mentioned in despatches and in August 1945 received a Bar to his DSC. Post-war he left the Navy to test Short's flying boats in Belfast but on the outbreak of the Korean War he rejoined the Navy helping to train new pilots and flew 75 missions over Korea from the carrier Ocean. He wrote pilots' notes for aircraft that he flew to their limits and was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Services in the Air. In 1954-55 he was CO of 813 NAS flying the Wyvern from the new Eagle and in 1958 he was promoted and returned to test-flying at Boscombe Down, making the first deck landings of the Buccaneer low-level bomber. He retired in 1970 aged 50. He logged 2,818 flying hours in 147 different types of aircraft and made 415 deck landings. Throughout the war he kept extensive diaries, on which he based two books: *They Gave Me a Seaforce* (1986) and *In Harm's Way* (1995). Member of the former Isle of Wight branch FAA Association. June 20. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr David Foster DSO, DSC*. Joining the RNVR when war broke out he volunteered for FAA but was not called as a naval aviator 2nd class until 1940 then appointed to 821 NAS in 1942 flying Fairey Albacore torpedo-bombers in North Africa, carrying out night sorties to mark German tanks and supply vehicles for attack by Wellington bombers of the Desert Air Force. At Malta he was appointed flight commander for torpedo attacks on Axis convoys where he developed a new tactic: one aircraft of three would illuminate an enemy ship with flares while the others would attack with torpedoes; if the ship was not sunk then the first aircraft would dive-bomb the target; he was mentioned in despatches July 1942 and awarded his first DSC in November. He spent five months in 841 NAS flying Albacores against German E-boats in the English Channel then CO of 849 NAS when it embarked in Rajah for the

Far East in 1944. In 1945 from Victorious he attacked oil refineries in Indonesia, and was awarded the DSO. Subsequently as leader of 849 and 820 Squadrons from Indefatigable he was involved in air strikes on the Sakashima Gunto islands and Formosa (Operation Iceberg) for which he was awarded a Bar to his DSC. He was the author of *100 Heroes of Golf* (1988) and *Wings Over the Sea* (1990). June 4. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr Michael 'Jim' Wastie. Joined at 16 and served 1950-87 in Vanguard, St Vincent, Concord, Carysfort and Urca before training as a PTI; he played rugby for several years. Commissioned 1970 and appointed to RNAS Culdrose, Nelson, Drake, Temeraire and Cochrane. July 19. Aged 75.

Frank David Dillon-Boylan. Boy Seaman. Joined Ganges 1946 and transferred to HMS Bruce 1947 then served HMS Vanguard leaving the Service 1948 on medical grounds. HMS Bruce Association. June 26. Aged 80.

J A G 'Jack' Cranley. LTO (LRO/T). Joined Ganges 1955. Served in Mounts Bay, Drake, Lynx, President, Acute, Mercury, Bulwark, Sea Eagle, Messina and Victory. May 12. Aged 71.

Carole Butler. HMS Sparrow Association. July 25.

Fred Parnell. CH M(E). Served 1939-71 in Renown, LSTs 12 and 19, St Angelo, Wilton, Drake, Holmsdale, Vanguard, Ocean, Messina, Raleigh, Narvik, Anzio, Royal Arthur, Magicienne, Consort, Tiger, Dampier and Figsard. Received a commendation from the Commander, Task Force Grapple 1958 (British nuclear tests at Christmas Island) and awarded the BEM 1970 for exemplary service to the RN. HMS Consort Association and the Tavistock branch Royal British Legion. July 18. Aged 89.

James Cameron. AB. Served Rowena. Algerines Association. April 4. Aged 82.

Bob Palmer. Stc. Served Clinton. Algerines Association. August 8.

John 'Spegal' Spicer. CPO(GI). Served 1935-60 in Penn, Paladin, Lightning, Delight and as an instructor at Ganges. July 26. Aged 89.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Leonard 'Len' John Stanton. Entered Ganges 1949 and served 10 years in Vanguard, Loch Tralaig, Victory, Comus, Bellerophon and Concord. Past chairman and vice chairman Colchester RNA. April 14. Aged 75.

Les Hossack RM. Beccles branch. July 15. Aged 86.

Ronald Leighton. AM(AI). Served 1945-47 in Theseus and Glory. Redcar & District RNA. July 19. Aged 80.

John Dinnewell. AB Seaman Gunner (FCA/2). Joined St Vincent 1954 as Boy Seaman and served in Defender, Redpole, Cavalier and Excellent. Received the Pingat Jasa Malaysia Medal for services to the Malaysian Government 1957-66. Wetherby RNA, HMS Cavalier Association and 8th Destroyer Association (China Station). July 25. Aged 72.

John Isherwood. Served 1956-80 in Roebuck, Lagos, Shalford, Scorpion, Aurora, Aisne, Bacchante, Flintham, Grenville, Blake and Newcastle. Aquitaine branch. July 20. Perigueux, France. Aged 69.

John William 'Tug' Wilson. CPO M(E) Chief Stoker and submariner. Served 1947-69 at Dolphin, Tiptoe, Tradewind, Sanguine, Aunga, Solent, Achéron, Telemachus, Teredo, Adamant, Andrew, Opossum, Maidstone, Pembroke and Royal Arthur. Treasurer of Portsmouth RNA and recent life member of Portsmouth Submariners' Association. July 16. Aged 81.

Stanley F Lawrence. RN and RCN. Served in Warspite, Cumberland and Resolution also HMCS Micmac, St Laurent and Hudson. Life member Beccles branch. July 19. Aged 93.

Joseph Kelly. FAA. Served 1944-46 in 888 Naval Air Squadron. Wolverhampton branch. July 13. Aged 85.

Stan Foulsham. PO REM. Served 1948-55. Joined from the Sea Cadets to Royal Arthur then Collingwood, Whitesand Bay (Korean War and Malayan Campaign), Bramble (Baltic) and Flowerdown receiving station (RN transmitters). Vice president and life member Hanworth branch. June 19. Aged 79.

Lionel Crossley. AM(A). Served 1945-47 in Venerable. Instructor and CPO with

York Sea Cadets 43 years. York RNA, FAA Association and HMS Venerable Association. June 5. Aged 84.

Carl Crawford. Cook. Served 1945-48 at Royal Arthur and Indefatigable. Committee member North Manchester branch for many years. Aged 81.

Charles Le Clerc. LWriter. Served 1954-66 in Seahawk, Blackcap, Tiger and RNAS Eglinton. Committee member North Manchester branch and chairman of social committee for many years. Aged 73.

Marine William Taylor RM. Served 1939-53 in Penelope, Neptune, Hannibal and Collingwood. Affectionately known as a 'Sea-going Pongo'. Dartford branch. July 16. Aged 89.

Alfred Dane. LWM. Served 1943-46 on LCTs 1090, 2222 and MMU24 (an LC). Dartford branch. July 14. Aged 85.

Philip Wardley. Served RN and also 1st Mate in the Merchant Navy. Dartford branch. May 24. Aged 79.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION
C 'Chris' Breeze. CPO SA. Submarine Service 1972-87 in Repulse, Churchill, Cachalot, Spartan and Renown. Barrow branch. Aged 63.

Capt J E 'John' Moore. Submarine service 1944-72 in Trident, Rover, Vigorous, U994, Trenchant, Tradewind, Totem (CO), Alaric (CO) and Tactician (CO). Sussex branch. Aged 88.

P R 'Phil' Poole. AB RP3. Submarine service 1942-45 in Stoic. Brierley Hill branch. Aged 85.

B L 'Ben' Skeates. PO Tel. Submarine service 1940-47 in Ursula, Upright, Utmost, P311, Stratagem, Stygian, Tally-Ho and Regent. Barrow branch. Aged 91.

HMS DUKE OF YORK ASSOCIATION
David Campbell Jeffrey RM. Served on board 1944-46. Aged 84.

Leonard Walkeden. Seaman. Served on board 1944-46. Aged 85.

Gordon Hill. Chief. Served on board 1945-47. Aged 83.

LST & LANDING CRAFT ASSOCIATION
M E Plowman. Served LCT(E) 119 and Base Mobile Unit 35036. Doncaster May.

R R Radford. Served LST 358 and Rutherford. Farnham May 9.

E J Sharp. Served LCT 858. Worthing May 23.

C R Ingham. Served LCT 7087 and Moray Firth. Telford June.

Alan Rolis. Served LSTs 325 and 3514. Torquay June 23.

H M Cowen. Served LCT 558. Sandown, IOW July 20.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION
Alan 'Doc' Halliday. CEL(Air). Served 1950-72 in Collingwood, Ariel, Seahawk, Theseus, Daedalus, Gamecock, Heron, Albion, Ariel II, Boscombe Down, Royal Arthur, Condor, Fulmar, Hermes and Goldcrest where he received his chief's buttons 1970; Squadrons 809 Sea Venom, 803 Scimitar and 893 Sea Vixen. Membership secretary of the Nautical Club Birmingham for 15 years and in 2005 became its Secretary. Birmingham branch of the FAA Association and in 1981 became one of the founder members of the National Fleet Air Arm Association; and was National Secretary for many years. May 3. Aged 88.

Ernest Coulthard. AM1. Served 1943-46 RAF Hednesford, Kestrel, Pintail, Heron and Peregrine. Daedalus branch. May 26.

Stanley Filmer. POAF(E). Served 1939-46 Essex branch. January 21.

Arthur Hawker. LWireman. Served 1944-46. Birmingham branch. July 7.

Lt Sidney Hayes. Served 1937-46. Former member of Hanworth branch. July.

Ronald Hibbs. POA (TAG). Served 1943-49. Bournemouth & District. April 2.

Maurice Kemp. Served 1943-67. Figsard RNATE, Daedalus II. Solent branch. February 19.

Kenneth Lowe. LAF(O). Served 1943-46. Bournemouth & District branch.

Victor Miller. POAF(A). Served 1940-46. Bristol & District branch. February.

Peter Smith. CAF(AE). Served 1946-68 in Excalibur, Kestrel, Fulmar, Gannet (15 CAG), Vengeance (15 CAG), Gamecock, Simbang, Daedalus, Ariel, (800 Scimitar Squadron). Daedalus branch. February 23. Aged 81.

John Sheersmith. AMN1(AE). Served 1961-83. Solent branch. July 14.

Reunions

SEPTEMBER 2010
The Cutters Association: Reunion is on September 15 at The Bull Hotel, Westgate, Peterborough, PE1 1RB. This is the annual reunion lunch which runs from 1200 until the stories run out. New guests are always welcome. Details from Ethna Cooke at ethna.cooke@btinternet.com or tel: 01322 660369.

HMS Sparrow Reunion takes place at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth from September 21 to 23. Contact Geoff Middleton on 01562 700689.

OCTOBER 2010
Mauritius Veterans: Reunion for all those who served at HMS Mauritius (shore base) in the 1960s and 1970s. This will be held on October 9 in the WO & SR Mess, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. If you are interested in attending, please contact Tina Lowe at tina.lowe3@ntlworld.com or tel: 01329 843347.

HMS Grafton Reunion (1997-2006): October 16 at the Courtyard Bar, Darby. Contacts for the event are Lynne Davidson at davidsonlyne@hotmail.com or tel: 07807 889129 and Stan Matthews at boredsailor19@gmail.com or tel: 07545 265145.

NOVEMBER 2010
Ark Royal 25th birthday: Cocktail party for officers and warrant officers on Thursday November 4, 6:30-8:30pm. Serving and retired officers and warrant officers who have been part of the carrier's complement are eligible to attend. Tickets cost £10 each, and are limited to six per applicant. Each attendee may be accompanied by one guest. Dress is 1C (negative medals) for serving personnel and suit and tie for civilians. Deadline for applications is October 1 and numbers are limited to 600. Cheques payable to Central

Ask Jack

Live Wire - The magazine of the Electrical Department: This magazine was produced back in the 1950s and 1960s and embraced stories, articles, reports and other interesting snippets about the Electrical Branch throughout the Royal Navy. Reports and photographs of the department on various ships at the time such as Newcastle, Gambia, Eagle, just a few from the copies we have. The Royal Naval Electrical Branch Association is looking for more copies for their collection and extracts for future newsletters. Do you have any stowed away you are prepared to donate to the association? Sippers, Gulpers, no dammit another tot at the next reunion to anyone who sends copies to Mike Crowe, RNEBA, 7 Heath Road, Lake, Sandown, Isle of Wight, PO36 8PG. We like our Tot, check out the welcome to new members at the HMS Collingwood Open Day at <http://www.rneba.org.uk>. Membership form there as well.

HMS Dreadnought Association: We are seeking information regarding the whereabouts of ERA Bob Killingley and any other crew members we have lost contact with over the years. Please contact the secretary Peter 'Florie' Ford, 7 Van Diemens Pass, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 7QD or tel: 01268 696625.

HMS Lamerton L88: My father Frederick Martin served on this ship, a Hunt-class destroyer 1941-46. I would like to hear from any person who may remember my father, also any relatives of people who served on the ship at the same time. Contact Tony Martin on 01273 493924.

Gordon Bennett: Looking for my cousin, Gordon, who was in the Royal Navy for several years during WW2 and after. The last time I saw him, he was living in East Molesey. If anyone knows where he is contact Mrs Florence Chant (née Bennett) at gary.chant1@virgin.net or tel: 01843 228223.

Black Cap (Ratings Lid): When you next open your old sea-chest for a spring-clean and wonder 'do I really want that old Black Cap anymore?' - well, don't throw it over the side, give it a good home where it will be well cared for. I have searched for said object for some time now, but due to ill-health can no longer do so. If someone somewhere would like to make an ex-mateloit happy, contact Keith Sowerby, 17 Gramplan Way, Chilton, Co. Durham, DL17 0QF or tel: 01388 722063.

Fleet Air Arm 1949-57: Seeking Navy pals from the FAA, and have placed a photograph of all of us in 1955 at HMS Simbang, Singapore on the Navy News website at <http://www.navynews.co.uk/WhereAreYouNow.aspx> second page. I am Bernard Morrison and can also remember Fred Martin (Scouse) who lived with his

Assignments

Lt Col Michael P Roddy to 539 Assault Squadron RM as CO from November 15.

Capt M P Wareham to be promoted Commodore to be Naval Base Commander Clyde from December.

Hon Cdre the Right Hon the Lord Sterling of Plaistow RNR to be promoted Honorary Rear Admiral Royal Naval Reserve on August 1.

The Reverend S J Brown OHC to be promoted Chaplain of the Fleet and to be Director General Naval Chaplaincy from November 1.

The Reverend M G Poll to be appointed Honorary Chaplain to Her Majesty The Queen on November 1 and to be Principal Anglican Chaplain and Archdeacon for the Royal Navy from November 1.

Talking Navy News goes digital
Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Fund, HMS Ark Royal and sent to Lt Pete Davis, Silver Jubilee Ball Officer, HMS Ark Royal, BFPO 212. Serving personnel should see RNTM 154/10.

Ton Class Association: Pre Christmas Lunch party, in the High Wycombe area on November 27 at 1200 for 1300 lunch. All members and their ladies are welcome. Grand Raffle in aid of the welfare fund. Places are limited, so please book early to avoid disappointment. Contact Edward Freathy at edwardfreathy@btinternet.com or tel: 01628 523711.

DURING 2011
Portsmouth Command Field Gunners and Staff 1981: It is intended to hold a 30 Year Reunion Dinner in 2011 for all Field Gunners and Staff of 1981. For more details contact Rob 'Brum' Wyatt at robddn.wyatt@ntlworld.com or tel: 023 9235 8668.

APRIL 2011
HMS Hermes Association: Annual reunion to be held at the Bosworth Hall Hotel, Market Bosworth from April 7 to 11. All ranks, ratings, all commissions welcome. Contact Richard Tipping at richard.tipping@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 01752 787697 for details.

HMS Duke of York Association: Mini reunion will be held at the Stretton Hotel, Blackpool from April 15 to 18. Details from the Secretary, Rose Cottage, 103 Orchard Park, Elton, Chester. CH2 4NQ or tel: 01928 725175.

MAY 2011
HMS Glasgow (C21/D88): 31st reunion will take place at the Queens Hotel, Paignton from May 6 to 9. All ex-crew are welcome. Details from Gary Eaton, 10 Elderwood Avenue, Thornton-Cleveleys, Lancs. FY5 5EQ.

brother in Kingston-on-Thames when we first met in 1949. I know the faces of the others but have forgotten their names. If you were at Simbang during this time and remember me, contact me at Apt 7, The Point, Pinesong, 66 Avonleigh Road, Green Bay, Waitakere, 0604, New Zealand.

LCL(L209): My father, Charles Bernhard Cyril Cooper, known to his friends as Bern, joined the Royal Navy halfway through WW2, transferring from the Met, in London and ended up training in Dartmouth College. He was the Jimmy on LCL(L209) and went to India and returned. He also participated in the Dunkirk evacuations. Does anyone know of this vessel or serve with my father during this period. Contact Roger Cooper at roger@brightstardesign.com.au or write to 21 Fleet Street, Holbrook, NSW 2644, Australia.

Gordon Richards Smith: Born 1940 Edinburgh died Chislehurst Kent 2001. Lived in Nazareth House Aberdeen as a child. Served RN during the 1960s. Anyone who served with Gordon or remembers him kindly contact: Kay Morgan at kay.morgan@angliaresearch.co.uk or tel: 01704 518963.

RNAS Culdrose: Seeking a Naval Officer, Michael Ian Burnett, who in the 1960s was a lieutenant, stationed at Culdrose and living at Hillside, Mullion with his wife June (née Wesson) and children Alison, Suzanne and Olivia. At that time my father, Frederick Blakeley, worked at the base and as he was a cabinet maker, sometimes repaired furniture for the officers. When my mother's house was cleared recently, I found a large packet of personal memorabilia (photographs, letters, cards and certificates) and I can only think that they were removed from a piece of furniture which my father was repairing and were accidentally not replaced. I would love to return them to the family and would be most grateful if anyone can help me find them. Contact Mrs Jean Merrick on 01395 578123.

PO David Mercer: Seeking my stepbrother David Mercer, originally from Liverpool. He has two children, Emma Kate and Ian Anderson. Dave served on the Ark Royal during the Falklands War. His birthday is approx March 15 and he will be about 63 years of age now. His dad died many years ago and his name was Harry Mercer. My mum, his stepmum, is 85 and has moved house several times since she last saw him. She would love to make contact with him, considering her age and not brilliant health it would be good if this could be sooner rather than later. Please contact Bev Williams (née Clare) at williams-r31@sky.com or tel: 01773 605247.

HMS Nubian 1964-66: I have lost touch with ex-communicator Graham 'Nolly' Rowlands, last heard of residing in Llanfechell, Anglesey. I am also still looking for Pete 'Taff' Price, and Paul 'Brumny' Williams, also ex comms. If anyone can help would they please contact me, Dave Millward at davem.sparks131@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 01622 729692.

HMS Hood: I would like to find the Terry family from the Portsmouth area. I was only 11 when the Hood went down in 1941 and can remember my mother and uncle being so sad at the tragic loss of life. The sailor that we lost was Gordon Terry, his father was Victor Terry. I am now 80 years old and my son takes me to Boldre Church, which is always full, every year for the Hood Remembrance Service. If anyone knows of the Terry family could they contact me, Mrs L Connor, 5 Arundel Road, Totton, Southampton, Hants, SO40 3BJ.

Sports lottery

July 24: £5,000 - OC P D Clouting; £1,500 - ETWE D P Chidlow; £500 - AB2 G P J Smith.
August 1: VW Polo - AET A D Richmond; £1,500 - Cdr J M Worthington; £500 - CPO R J G Knaggs.
August 7: £5,000 - Mne R A Fleming; £1,500 - OM F A Foster; £500 - Cdr C J Saxby.

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, navysearhprc@ntl.co.uk
Royal Naval Association: 023 9272 3823, www.royal-naval-association.co.uk
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity: 023 9254 8076, www.rmcc.org.uk
RNIB: 023 9269 0112 (general), 023 9266 0296 (grants), www.rnib.org.uk
British Legion: 08457 725725, www.britishlegion.org.uk
Naval Families Federation: 023 9265 4374, www.nff.org.uk
Seafarers UK: 020 7932 0000, www.seafarers-uk.org
SSAFA Forces Help: 0845 1300 975, www.ssaifa.org.uk
RN Community: www.rncommunity.mod.uk
Medals enquiries: 0800 085 3600
Royal Naval Museum: 023 9272 7562, www.royalnavalmuseum.org
Fleet Air Arm Museum: 01935 840565, www.fleetairarm.com
Naval Marines Museum: 023 9281 9385, www.royalmarinesmuseum.co.uk
RN Submarine Museum: 023 9252 9217, www.rnsubmus.co.uk
National Maritime Museum: 020 8312 6565, www.nmm.ac.uk
Imperial War Museum: 020 7416 5320, www.iwm.org.uk

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.
There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.
Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

Entries for the Deaths' column and Swap Drafts in October's Noticeboard must be received by **September 13**

BRITANNIA SHIPPING FOR BURIAL AT SEA Specialist FUNERAL DIRECTORS
Speak to John Lister
01395 568028
www.burialatsea.co.uk
email@burialatsea.co.uk

Trophy lives

Trophy 23,533, a gold wire cap ribbon from the former Seabed Operations Vessel HMS Challenger, is unique in that, in the entire history of the Royal Navy, it is the only one to have been into outer space.

It was carried into space by the American space shuttle Challenger on its maiden flight in April 1983; sadly the shuttle was destroyed on 28 January 1986 when it exploded 73 seconds after lift-off killing all seven of its crew.

A previous HMS Challenger - a second class cruiser - was one of several ships used in the early years of World War 1 to blockade Dar-es-Salaam, the capital of German East Africa.

The Germans had built a dockyard and wireless station there with the intention that, in the event of war, it could be used by their own cruisers as a base and coaling point in between their raids against merchant ships.

In the summer of 1914 the German cruiser Königsberg arrived at Dar-es-Salaam; when



war was declared she was a thousand miles away in the Indian Ocean, having evaded the British Cape Squadron's three cruisers.

After a successful raiding cruise Königsberg sank the cruiser HMS Pegasus off Zanzibar on September 20 1914 and subsequently sought refuge in the delta of the Rufiji River - 100 miles from Dar-es-Salaam - with the intention of overhauling her machinery.

Informed of her whereabouts, the British were able to fire on her and sank a blockship in the river mouth; with escape impossible Königsberg moved further up stream - she was finally destroyed on July 11 1915 although her guns were later salvaged and used ashore.

Although Challenger was not actively involved in the sinking of the Königsberg she remained on the East Africa station for the remainder of the war, and was involved in both the bombardment of Dar-es-Salaam on June 13 1916 and its capture on September 4 1916.

Ace's high for single living

LAST year the Royal Naval Estates Organisation (RNEO) wrote about an expected programme of work that was to be completed in year 2009/2010 on Single Living Accommodation (SLA) through the Advanced Capital Expenditure (ACE) funding, writes Jackie Moir.

The Royal Navy was set to receive a £6 million share of the £50 million Advanced Capital Expenditure to be spent in year to improve Service accommodation.

This was a Government-announced budget measure to help stimulate the UK economy.

Although this money had to be repaid later it did allow immediate improvements to be made to Service accommodation and additional funding of £1.7 million was also provided to the RN, under the Service Personnel First Initiative.

Whilst a new-build SLA programme will continue, financial constraints make it more likely that we will need to consider refurbishment more often and target our improvements at those aspects of the SLA that can make the biggest difference to occupants.

After consultation and an assessment of individual site requirements, a programme was developed that covered the majority of Royal Marine and Royal Naval Air Stations sites including: 40 Cdo, Norton Manor Camp, 42 Cdo Bickleigh, 45 Cdo Condor, CTCRM Lympstone, RM Chivenor, RMB Stonehouse, Royal Citadel, RNAS Culdrose and RNAS Yeovilton.

The programme included Officers', Senior Rates' and Junior Rates' living accommodation.

A recent refurbishment at the RM Citadel became the template for the refurbishment of ablations, redecoration, new furniture and carpets.

Working through Defence Estates (DE) and Regional Prime Contract (RPC) teams, all the planned work was finished on time with the exception of one establishment where building structural problems proved insurmountable.

The key lesson was that co-operation works.

The teams needed to work fast and very hard to scope, cost, plan and implement in-year.

That the projects progressed so well was down to the good working relationships and excellent liaison between DE, RPC and the establishment staff.

The result: a high standard of finish on projects that has been particularly well received by our military personnel.

The programme had to accommodate different site requirements.

Interestingly, because SLAM has concentrated primarily in the first ten years on ORs, a number of establishments wanted work on their Officer accommodation.

RM Condor wanted their Junior Officers' accommodation improved and brought up to date.

The Project ACE works at RM Condor were designed by Turner Estate Solutions (TES), following comprehensive stakeholder consultation, and managed on site by Bell Group UK, a part of the TES Supply Chain.

Capt Farthing RM, 2iC Base Company, 45 Commando Royal Marines, RM Condor acknowledged that the enhancements to RM Condor accommodation had been well received, particularly the increased storage arrangements that included purpose-built storage for the Royal Marines' kit.



● A bedroom at RM Condor after refurbishment

Although nothing could be done to make the corridors wider the improved lighting provisions have made them look much better.

Shower facilities were also upgraded.

CTCRM at Lympstone wanted the ablations improved as far as possible across the site as they were very old and in poor condition.

Chris Rawden, the Infrastructure Support Manager at CTCRM Lympstone, advised that despite the difficulties of the funding arriving quite late in the financial year and CTCRM accommodation being 110 per cent occupied, the SLA ablation refurbishment was successfully completed.

He put the successful refurbishment down to detailed planning and programming of the accommodation plot, on a daily basis, to ensure the minimum of discomfort to occupants, maintain accommodation availability and protect CTCRM outputs.

Again a professional ethos and "can-do attitude" permeated the approach of Estate Manager / Base Security Office Department staff, Training Wings, Contractor and Debut teams and close day-to-day liaison with contractors ensured that the hard work paid off.

The refurbishment has achieved a higher standard and condition of ablations for CTCRM trainees.

Norton Manor Camp improved the ventilation in the SLA with new windows.

They also improved the utility rooms and gave all floor coverings a deep clean.

Chivenor also wanted to improve their Officers' Mess and with their allocation were able to redecorate all rooms, provide new carpets, some new furniture and an additional electrical double socket.

To accommodate the extra electrical load distribution boards were renewed to create additional capacity.

The central ablations on each floor were renovated to provide additional showers in place of under-utilised baths. Eight rooms were made en-suite.

The Royal Naval Air Station at Culdrose also wanted work to improve Officer accommodation.

They adapted communal ablation areas to create self contained individual shower or bathrooms with each containing a shower, WC, washbasin etc.

One bath with a shower over was also created on each floor.

Also provided were more electrical sockets and a redecoration of cabins.

Corridors and entrances were also redecorated.

All in all, the hard work by all the teams has been worthwhile and has gone down well with the occupants of the SLA.

This financial year the work continues but, inevitably, with a reduced £1 million allocation from the Service Personnel First Initiative.

● LH Michael Monnington, CPO Ross Perrin and LH Paul Weedon in Sydney



G'day from down under

HAVING recently returned from 'Down Under' the participants of Exchange Programme Long Look 2010 (EXPLL10) are keen to pass on the experience of taking part, writes WO1 Andy Whale.

Now running for over 30 years the exchange takes place on an annual tri-service basis between Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom for a four-month period.

This year's participants from the RN contingent numbered some 25-strong ranging from divers, submariners, engineers, logisticians, warfare and a musician.

With the team being predominantly based in Sydney and Auckland many took the opportunity to explore the sights that these two cities had to offer.

LH Kirstine Lowen, HMS Bulwark, who was based in Sydney for the exchange, said: "What an opportunity, Sydney is a fantastic city with so much to do."

"As expected I had a great time and thoroughly recommend the exchange programme."

Some of the team in Australia were based outside Sydney.

Royal Navy divers ABs Simon Lund and Damien Sanders deployed to Cairns with their dive teams for the majority of EXPLL10.

They spent much of their time honing their skills on the Great Barrier Reef.

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

LA(Phot) Alasdair Macleod, Faslane, deployed to Indonesia with HMAS Pirie during the exchange.

The quality of the images he captured were good enough to adorn the cover of the Australian Navy News, which was a great achievement.

CPO Pete Cassar, Yeovilton, had the opportunity to assist his Australian hosts with the development of a new aviation support branch of the RAN.

"This was a great experience for me to be able to have so much influence because of my RN skills and background which was professionally very rewarding," said CPO Cassar.

The NZ exchange team were exposed to the Maori culture early in their time with the RNZN and found it to be a real insight.

"The Marae Maori welcoming service was one memory I will never forget during my Long Look experience," explained LH Becky Mudie, HMS Edinburgh.

"The Marae explained the significance of the carvings, their beliefs and how they affect every day life."

Lt Jane Ruddock, HMS Sultan, added: "I have found my time in NZ to be very enjoyable and all aspects whether working, meeting people or travelling have been brilliant."

LPT Jonathan Platt, HMS Raleigh, worked in the Fleet Gymnasium and took the opportunity to learn different training methods from those in the UK.



● Australian Longlookers photographed by one of the participants LA(Phot) AJ Macleod

He also used his time to do some preparatory work for the RN Rugby League tour to NZ and organise some AT for the Long Look personnel.

"I've had a great time out here in NZ, can't recommend the exchange enough to those in a position to apply", enthused LPT Platt.

Some of the exchange positions involved an element of sea time.

LHs Paul Weedon, Darren Smalley, Michael Monnington and Curtis Morris were all assigned to different RAN vessels and participated in exercises in coastal waters and around Indonesia and the South China Sea.

This was in addition to numerous Australian port visits to such places as Hobart, Newcastle, Brisbane and Cairns, which was one way of getting around the vast expanse of Australia.

Many of the participants embraced the work-hard play-hard ethos of the exchange.

CPOs Luke Malone and Ross Perrin took the opportunity to share professional experiences with their host units and demonstrate different working practices.

Many of the Long Lookers took the opportunity to take in an 'Aussie Rules' or Rugby League match whilst on exchange.

CPO Malone, however, went one better than his colleagues and along with CPO Perrin visited the TV shrine of Neighbours Ramsay Street – "an experience never to be forgotten," said CPO Malone.

CPO Lauren Cobby, SFM Portsmouth, toured the North and South Islands of NZ during her leave which was a "truly memorable" highlight of the exchange.

All of the EXPLL10 participants had a chance to take leave; some

toured their countries of exchange whilst others took the opportunity to take a holiday with relatives or family that had flown from the UK to join them.

Another poignant part of the exchange was the opportunity for the participants to take part in the ANZAC Day ceremonies both in Australia and New Zealand as representatives of the Royal Navy.

All of the EXPLL10 participants felt they were privileged to participate in the ANZAC Day commemorations.

WO2 Barry Johnston, HMS Sultan, explained: "We were involved in a march through Sydney with huge crowds lining the route."

"The RAN led the march followed by the war veterans totalling nearly 10,000 personnel; the reception we all got was fantastic."

"All in all it was a truly memorable day."

CPO Jan Hamlyn, HMS Drake, laid two wreaths on behalf of the RN on ANZAC day at HMNZS Philomel and Devonport and commented that the participation of the Long Lookers on the day was greatly appreciated by their New Zealand hosts.

If you're interested in being involved in the Long Look Exchange in 2011 then here's what to do...

Exchange Programme Long Look takes place on an annual basis and is available to all RN and RM personnel of Rank/Rate Junior Officer to Leading Hand.

Applications to participate in the 2011 exchange are being accepted now.

Exchange Programme Long Look application forms can now be found in RNTM 181/10.

Submissions should be made by November 27 2010.

Time called on R&R

THE policy on rest and recuperation (R&R) for Service personnel deployed on operations has changed.

People deployed for six months will continue to be eligible for one period of 14 days R&R; and from July 22 2010, anyone who loses out on R&R because of operations or disruptions to the airbridge, will be granted Post Operational Leave to compensate.

However from January 1 2011, personnel deploying for short tours will be posted for less than four months – hence they will no longer qualify for R&R.

This change will reduce passenger traffic over the airbridge by 11 per cent, and thereby increase its resilience for people who are entitled to R&R under the changes.

Despite best efforts, the airbridge is prone to delays due to its distance and hazardous environment, which is why the compensatory boost to Post Operational Leave has been introduced for anyone affected.

Anyone who is currently deployed, or who has received Final Assignment Orders to deploy, will not be affected by this change.

It is expected that the majority of Service people affected by this change will be RAF, who have a typical tour length of four months.

For people who deploy for periods of between four to six months, the seven-day R&R package remains in place.

Check if you're eligible

IT is now possible to qualify for the Afghanistan Operational Service Medal and the Iraq Medal without 30 days of continuous service in theatre.

People – both in the military and civil service – who deploy for short stretches can build up accrued days to a total qualifying period of 45 days service.

In addition, these changes will be backdated to the start of operations in Afghanistan and Iraq – that's September 11 2001 and January 20 2003 respectively.

People with 30 days continuous service qualifying period are unaffected by the changes.

Eligibility is restricted to personnel who have served under the command of the UK Joint Task Force Commander on a designated operation within the qualifying area appropriate to each medal (see JSP 671 for more detail).

Visitors to operational theatres will not qualify.

In order to get a medal, people must apply through their unit admin staff (military), through the PPPA (civil service) or through the MOD Medal Office (for those no longer under the MOD).

For Naval personnel this is a change to the previous provision for 45 days cumulative seagoing service in the Northern Arabian Gulf as it is no longer restricted to a single operational deployment.

To date, over 126,000 Iraq Medals and 98,000 Afghanistan Operational Service Medals have been issued.

For those people outside the military or civil service who wish to apply, please contact:

MOD Medal Office
Building 250
Imjin Barracks
Gloucester
GL3 1HW.

NFF takes your views to the top

I THINK it's fair to repeat the famous lyrics, "The times they are a changin'," so to assist in keeping *Navy News* readers in step with the flow of business from the NFF it seems appropriate to start this month's contribution by including a slightly shortened version of the brief that was given to the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, Andrew Robathan MP, by me a few weeks ago, writes Kim Richardson, Chair of the Naval Families Federation.

I began by congratulating him on securing the most sought after post in Defence – the one that engages most regularly with the special group of people who when feeling valued and content contribute to and enhance operational capability; the family. I explained that our meetings were an opportunity for the Minister to gain an undiluted 'as it is' view of where our families are finding Service life more than a little challenging.

And most importantly it provides an independent perspective that he would not find inside the Service. I then painted a picture of 'the Naval Service family' who are, in my view, extraordinary.

I explained that the Naval Service is at sea, whether at peace or war!

Our separated service is much higher than the other two Services.

Having a serving person away from home is a reality for our families.

Simply put, we are used to it! Of those families who are eligible for Service Families Accommodation, only 30 per cent take it up.

The majority of eligible families put their roots down and integrate into local communities' miles away from traditional Naval areas.

For example the number of Royal Navy personnel domiciled in Wales is 1,468, and this figure does not include personnel stationed there.

Naval Service families are fiercely independent and tend to ask for little.

Our serving person may be a weekender, which brings its own challenges (or light relief depending on how you look at it).

Service Families Accommodation in the RN tends to be taken up by those for whom house ownership is unaffordable or for those who are determined to live together as a family whenever an opportunity presents itself.

I asked the Minister where we are with a JPA compliant method of communicating directly with families.

I explained that what we were seeking is a replacement for what the RN already had pre JPA.

We gained permission from families to contact them directly that satisfied data protection and did not rely on the serving person.

JPA swept that ability aside and it has never been recovered.

We need to ensure that we are capturing the views of parents and partners and the wider family in order to gain feedback that is modern and inclusive and real.

We can't hope to make progress with families unless we establish a way of communicating with them that works.

My next item has me drawing on my nursing experience and being the wife of a husband who served in the Falklands War, was bombed and lost his ship. He was lucky, 19 of his colleagues and friends on board died.

I have intimate understanding and knowledge of the impact war can have on a family.

I recently visited Selly Oak, not to talk to the patients, but the staff.

This professional group of people works alongside Naval Personal Family Service and Royal Marines Welfare in going the extra mile to care for our injured and support their families.

I gave the Minister some observations on where I believe we could and should be doing better when caring for the carers.

I couldn't have met the Minister without touching on housing.

Our Naval estates have in the past been recognized as being in pretty good condition.

Things have changed. The Naval Service patch is looking tired and run down and the kerb appeal that led to pride in where we lived is not evident in many areas.

I asked the Minister to take the time to visit the patch when out and about on his travels and suggested he adopt the practice of the AFPRB and look at the best and worst accommodation on each site, perhaps starting with Faslane which has particular significance to the RN.

The modern definition of a family and how we support those who balance childcare and Service life is an area I could talk about for hours, but I didn't.

I simply registered my concern that we have people doing an exceptional job in the Armed Forces who also happen to be parents.

They have often been serving for some time and have waited to start a family.

These personnel, men and women, may at some point in their later career require some flexibility in their work practice outside of the norm, often because childcare that dovetails with Service life has become a challenge.

I asked the Minister to look at how we can help families maintain a balance that allows them to continue doing the job they love and are well trained for, without feeling they are an inadequate parent.

I finished with a question for the Minister – "Where can we help you?"

The Strategic Defence and Security Review is under way.

Difficult decisions that will ultimately impact on families will have to be made. We know that.

Please engage with us and use us where you think we will add value and perhaps provide you with an independent perspective that you may find useful.

We have been given an indication that our families' views will be sought.

We will keep you posted on developments on our website: NFF.org.uk.

Rowner plans

The site ear-marked for demolition and rebuild is still firmly on the radar.

The Strategic Defence and Security Review announcements due in October will shape the next step, but a public meeting is planned for the autumn to confirm both timescales and plans, so please look out for meeting date flyers and posters.

In the meantime if there are any security issues Hampshire Police ask that these are reported directly to them using telephone number: 101

Council tax

Council Tax can be a confusing subject but with an added dimension for Serving personnel and their families.

There are circumstances in which the standard rules do not apply to the Armed Forces community.

The Serving person can be exempt from paying, or have to pay Contributions in Lieu of Council Tax (CILICT).

For a clear guide explaining when personnel can and cannot claim various council tax discounts such as the 50 per cent second home discount, or single occupancy discount if the Service person is serving away from home, please go to nff.org.uk and follow the prompts through the Money Section; please note a portion of the page relates to council tax discounts in Wales.

Forces Discount
Whenever you are out and about don't forget to ask about discounts...

To keep up to date with offers check the website: <http://www.forcesdiscount.com/>

Relocating to HMNB Clyde?
Royal Navy and Royal Marines families who are relocating to HMNB Clyde can claim a free two-night stay at Braeholm in Helensburgh, Scotland.

Braeholm is an accommodation and families centre for Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel, and their families, serving at HMNB Clyde.

The house is run by the Royal Navy charity Royal Sailors Rest (RSR). It is a beautiful old building, set in gardens overlooking the River Clyde.

RSR have made this gesture to assist families relocating. The offer includes free bed and breakfast for two nights, to Naval Service personnel and their immediate family, and includes free use of the property's fitness room and sauna.

Guests can extend their stay at preferential rates. The offer is open to all families relocating to HMNB Clyde and is subject to availability.

For further information please contact Braeholm, tel: 01436 671880, e-mail: braeholm@rsr.org, or visit: www.braeholm.org.uk.

Tri Service Fiji Support Network Launched
The Tri Service Fiji Support Network (FSN) was launched in July 2010. The Network acts as a channel for communication between the MOD and serving Fijians.

It is the signpost for the Fijian community on policies, information and regulations that affect them as Foreign and Commonwealth (F&C) Servicemen.

It is a social network for Fijian Servicemen and their families, providing a platform for communication within the community and offering advice on the way forward.

The FSN will not replicate the functions of the existing Welfare Organisations and the Chain of Command, but will work hand in hand, offering advice on Fijian cultural and protocol issues.

A website will be established in due course to act as the main medium of communication, spreading the word to the Fijian Community.

President of the FSN, Maj Mike Nawaqaliva RLC said: "The

Trumpet the Senior Service for the Millies

THE time has come for nominations for the third year of *The Sun* Military Award – or Millies as they are affectionately known.

At the end of last year, MA Kate Nesbitt (pictured right with her MC) won the title of 'most outstanding sailor or marine'.

Other Senior Service honours went to: Mne Ben McBean who was singled out for the 'overcoming adversity' title; CPO Dave Rigg of 771 NAS who won the 'true grit' award for a daring rescue; and 'best reservist' AB Edmond Grandison.

You have until September 30 to put forward your nominations for exceptional people.

The period covers September 1 2009 to August 31 2010, and categories are: overcoming adversity; most outstanding sailor or marine; most outstanding soldier; most outstanding airman; best reservist; support to the Armed Forces (open to civilians

It's your 2-6, on page and TV

NEED to get your message across to the rest of the RN?

The 2-6 TV DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief providing an enhanced package for use in sharing information.

Feedback received regarding the new-look 2-6 TV DVD is encouraging. Your thoughts and opinions are invaluable.

Please forward any



only); life saver award; true grit – home; true grit – overseas; best unit; and a final category which isn't open to public nomination – the Judges' award for special recognition.

Nominations can be done online through *The Sun's* website at <http://www.thesun.co.uk/millies>.

constructive ideas about what should be covered to WO1 Baz Cooke or Pauline Aquilina.

To feature in the *Navy News* 2-6 pages contact Lt Cdr Heather Lane or WO1 Cooke.

■ Lt Cdr Heather Lane, 93832 8809, FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC SO2

■ WO1 Baz Cooke, 93832 8821, FLEET-DCS-INFO-IC WO

■ Pauline Aquilina, 9621 85984



THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

(Charity Number: 266982)

Once Navy Always Navy

What the Association does:

Supports the Royal Navy

Maintains Naval traditions

Enjoys social activities

Re-unites Shipmates

Remembers the fallen

Helps the disabled

Looks after the needy

Cheers up the distressed

Stands together in Unity



Full Members

Consist of Serving and Ex-Serving members of the The Naval Service, WRNS, RFA, RNXS and RMAS, regardless of Rank. Any person who served in the Naval Forces of a nation which is or was a member of the British Commonwealth.

Associate Members

Those in sympathy with our Objects, especially families.

Contact Nigel Huxtable at RNA HQ

Rm 209 Semaphore Tower, PP70, HM Naval Base, PORTSMOUTH PO1 3LT

Phone - 023 9272 3747 E-Mail - Nigel@royalnavalassoc.com

Website - www.royal-naval-association.com

Unity, Loyalty, Patriotism and Comradeship

Foulie news flash

MAKE time to nip down to the Uniform Stores to pick up your new Royal Navy chest flash for your Mk.IV Foul Weather Jacket.

The new flash (NSN 8455-99-598 6703) features the Royal Navy logo as well as the wording.

Personnel are asked to swap old flashes for new when they can find time.

The intention is for the majority of personnel to be wearing the new flash by the end of this year.

More details in RNTM 177/10.

Pension review under way

THE Independent Public Service Pensions Commission is expected to produce an interim report by the end of this month.

The Commission is considering the affordability, fairness and impact of current public service pension schemes – whether Armed Forces, civil service, NHS, teachers, UKAEA, local government, police, firefighters or judicial.

The Commission will outline the objectives that should guide public sector pensions in the future, and argue if there is a case for more immediate action within the spending review period.

Following on from the interim report, the Commission will conduct a further round of evidence gathering on forms of alternate pension provision.

The terms of reference of the Commission state that existing accrued pension rights will be protected, but the Chancellor has said that options for reform must be considered that are fair to the taxpayer and to public sector employees, so there is no guarantee about what will happen to pension arrangements in the future.

Further information can be found in DIB 54/10.

Iraq Inquiry seeks veterans

SIR John Chilcot, chairman of the Iraq Inquiry Committee, has written to UK military personnel who served in Iraq between 2003 and 2009 inviting them to attend an event at Tidworth Garrison, near Andover, on September 14 to hear the views of military personnel, serving or retired, regular or reserve.

The chairman's letter said: "The Inquiry is primarily about learning lessons so these meetings are crucial to our work."

"We need to understand what went well and what could have been done better."

"I hope that the lessons that the Inquiry identifies will help us, as a nation, to continue to improve in many areas, including the way in which we approach expeditionary campaigns and nation building, and the impact on military personnel."

If you as a Serviceman or veteran would be interested in attending this event, please contact the Inquiry by email to secretariat@iraqinquiry.org.uk before midday on Friday September 10.

If you are unable to attend, but would wish to submit your views and thoughts of the campaign as a written submission, please use the email address above or write to:

The Iraq Inquiry
35 Great Smith Street
London
SW1P 3BQ

Peaks and troughs for Drafty in Air manning

THIS month's Drafty is brought to you by FAA (AE&SE) Career Management.

The DNPERS AE & SE Career Management team is based at Whale Island along with their WMO (Air) colleagues at RNAS' Yeovilton, Culdrose and RAF Wittering, managing 3,500 FAA Squadron, Flight, SE and Technical Support personnel.

The 'Hub' team at Whale Island consists of Lt Cdr Steve Saywell-Hall (RCMSO2AE), WO2AET Paul Clarke (RCMWO2AE), POLogs (Pers) Jo Fraser (RCMAE2) and POLogs (Pers) 'Mac' McFarlane (RCMAE3).

In line with current RN priorities, the team's primary focus is the provision of trained personnel to support CHF and SKASaC operations in Afghanistan.

Both communities have received significant manpower uplifts above their designated establishments enabling them to fulfil their enduring commitment to operations in theatre.

Air Engineering Branch Development (AEBD) is a far reaching project which aims to restructure the AE Branch and meet the demands of 21st century Naval aviation.

Its main aim is to replace mechanics and artificers with a single technician stream as well as merging radio and electrical sub specialisations into a single avionics trade.

The finalised, post-AEBD branch structure is not expected to be in place until 2018 and the changes necessary to complete such an ambitious project provide a continuous manning challenge for DNPERS.

The transition towards the AEBD model finds the branch with an LAET shortage of 281 although this is offset slightly with extra numbers at CPO level.

An improved focus on training and increased selections for promotion are tools which should ease the LAET deficit by 2013.

Running in parallel with AEBD, aircraft and equipment upgrades are likely to provide the most significant challenge in the medium term.

The introduction to service of Merlin Mk2 and Merlin Mk3 for service in the RN, the acquisition of the Lynx replacement aircraft (Wildcat) and the arrival of the Joint Combat Aircraft in 2015 mean that, within a five-year period, each and every AE rating will undertake a re-training programme on a new mark or different type of aircraft.

ME Branch Update

As stated in BR1066, ETs have a max of 48 months from ET2 to achieve OPS.

If they do not achieve this, they will mark time at increment level (IL) 4 and should be considered for warning.

LETs have 36 months from CPD to achieve OPS that includes MEOOW2 and a SOC, otherwise they should also be considered for warning.

BR 2000(2)(3) and (3)(3) are just about to be released.

The AB population is healthy

and the promotion prospects remain very good indeed.

All promotion eligibility sifts are conducted in JPA so details must be up-to-date and accurate.

There are more spaces available for promotion to LET than eligible candidates.

LH positions must be filled first so that, in turn, the PO plot can be filled, moving the specialisation towards sustainability.

The next board for ET to LET is November 2010.

The LH population remains under borne.

However, 63 ETs were selected at the last board and following 43 weeks training, that includes LRLC, they'll return to the Fleet.

As above, branch sustainability starts with developing and promoting the ABs and promotion requirements for LET are now clearly detailed in RNTM 121/09.

The POET population remains fragile.

Sea billets are being filled by CPOs and this will remain the case during the transition phase.

As with LHs, there are more positions to fill than eligible candidates.

The PO to CPO selection boards will take place in September 2010.

Although overborne with Chiefs, they are conducting a vital role by filling in Section Head Positions that would otherwise be gapped.

Be assured that promotion board members recognise the CPOs employed as Section Heads that merit promotion to WO2 in the mix with Group Heads.

WO1s remain slightly overborne and the WO2 population is currently ten per cent underborne.

The WO2 promotion board will sit in Oct to address this.

As the time based advancement of Artificers becomes a thing of the past, promotion of suitable calibre personnel to the next rate within the ME specialisation will increasingly be determined solely by the number of positions called for in each rate.

As the requirement and the strength fluctuate, so the demand for promotees at each rate rises and falls regardless of the number of highly-capable personnel eligible for promotion.

Whilst this presents a challenge to the promotion board when selecting a small number of personnel from large bodies of worthy contenders, the current boarding process using the SJAR is coherent and equitable.

However, this does place a huge emphasis on the reporting system to demonstrate an individual's merit for selection, underpinning the need for the individual to take a great interest in the content and presentation of their report.

WE Branch Update

ET recruitment is healthy at 125 per annum but LH shortages are being felt throughout the Fleet.

Great emphasis is being placed on ensuring that selection to LET is increased and over the last year, 88 ETs have been selected for LET course.



Drafty's corner

This trend will continue to improve providing SJARS reflect suitable merit for selection to LET.

Promotion prospects remain excellent.

Shortages at the PO level continue to be covered by the surplus of CPOs, however work is in progress to better match the number of POs to the number of jobs.

Notwithstanding these efforts, sustainability will continue to be a challenge given the shortage of LETs from which all POs will be generated having advanced the last of the Artificers (circa 2011).

The first CPOET Group Head's course has now taken place, with all students providing positive feedback.

Completion of the five-week (three weeks if already qualified as a DO) Group Head course will be considered by the promotion board as positive evidence that WO2 skill-sets are being actively developed, however it should be stressed that all eligible CPOs, who demonstrate they possess the appropriate Group Head skills, will be considered for selection.

The Group Head role is not to be underestimated – it is not just another CPO billet, it carries the extra responsibility of mentoring and day to day running of the whole Group.

The number of CPOET shore positions will reduce as shore UELs are updated to reflect the ET competence profile, but this will not impact on Separated Service/Harmony requirements.

In the future all CPO ETs will be employed in HoG level type roles and will only back-fill POET positions in extremis.

The WO2 shortfall has increased although once again the overbearing of CPOs is being used to mitigate this where appropriate.

Work is ongoing to look at options to address pressure on the WO2 plot, and it is recognised that this rank in particular has suffered as a result of the deletion of posts in DE&S which in turn has constrained promotion numbers.

Warrant Officer 1 numbers remain broadly in balance.

THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...



● RFA Fort George won a Fleet Commendation in 2000

September 1970

MORE than 50 former sailors from the first HMS Sheffield attended a reunion in the city's Shiny Sheff hotel, hosted by Whitbread's Brewery.

Many memories were shared among the old shipmates of the old Town-class light cruiser, which in 1941 had helped to sink the Bismarck.

The pub sported several stainless steel fittings from the ship, which had been broken up in 1967, including her deck plate. In tribute to her namesake city (or perhaps to spare her sailors hours of polishing?) HMS Sheffield was fitted with stainless steel instead of the traditional brass.

At the time members of the branch were hoping to be represented at the launch of the new HMS Sheffield, in build at Barrow-in-Furness

This was the Type 42 destroyer which was launched in 1971 and sunk in the Falklands in 1982.

September 1980

WITH the official opening of the Mountbatten Memorial and Concorde Halls, the Fleet Air Arm Museum in Yeovilton could boast the largest collection of historic aircraft under one roof in the whole of Europe.

Countess Mountbatten of Burma officially opened the hall, named in memory of her father. Sir George Edwards, joint-chairman of the Anglo-French Concorde project, opened the Concorde Exhibition Hall which housed the British prototype, which was part of the National Science Museum's aeronautical collection.

The museum was constructed and financed entirely by public support, and was expected to attract a quarter of a million visitors in the course of the year.

September 1990

THE Russian destroyer Bezuprechny (Irreproachable) paid a goodwill visit to Portsmouth – the first by a Soviet warship for 14 years.

The 6,000 tonne Sovremenny-class ship was welcomed by her host, HMS Invincible, and the spirit of *glasnost* was much in evidence during her five-day stay.

A series of events was organised to entertain the Soviet sailors, including visits to HMS Victory and the RN museum, sightseeing in London, a trip to the Royal Tournament, and a sporting day and barbecue at HMS Sultan.

Veterans of the wartime convoys were among the visitors. One of them, Bill Weeks, of the North Russia Club, was presented with a plaque featuring a polished shell from a Bofors gun filled with earth from one of the graves at Murmansk, where British sailors from the Royal and Merchant navies were buried.

September 2000

RFA FORT George was awarded a commendation from the Commander-in-Chief Fleet for her exploits on the east and west coasts of Africa.

The ship was operating with a task group led by HMS Illustrious in the Gulf when she was ordered south. Two weeks of hectic activity off Mozambique followed as she helped the international flood relief operations.

Aircraft of 820 NAS and the ship's boats delivered more than 530 tonnes of food, fuel and other essential supplies to isolated villages as Fort George worked in treacherous and often uncharted waters around the Beira peninsula.

She then accompanied Illustrious south to Sierra Leone where they were joined by an amphibious ready group led by HMS Ocean.

Fort George kept the RN ships supplied, undergoing regular 500-mile trips to Dakar in Senegal to replenish fresh water and food.

The Commander-in-Chief's commendation stated: "The ship never failed to meet any demand placed upon her, reflecting great credit on the skills and professionalism of everyone involved."

EDUCATION

The Best Start In Life



A Navy News advertorial feature



Truro High School is flying high

Stability for Service families at QVS

QUEEN Victoria School (QVS) is a non-academically selective, fully boarding, co-educational school for the children of Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish or who have served in Scotland (pictured above).

A small parental contribution (currently around £1,100 a year) is levied, but there are no fees.

In cases of need, the parental contribution can sometimes be paid by one of the Services' Benevolent Funds or similar.

Entry to QVS is decided on the basis of need.

The reason for existing is to provide continuity and stability of education for children who would otherwise be moved around the country, and perhaps the world, several times in the course of their school careers, as a result of their serving parent's postings.

The school is also tasked by the Ministry of Defence with providing for those families who could not otherwise afford boarding education.

Children can come to QVS from Primary 7, around the age of

ten and a half, and this is the main point of entry: this is where most places are available.

A very happy and impressive Grand Day Parade recently brought to a conclusion another academic year of hard work and success – in the classroom, on the games fields and in the CCF, Pipe Band and Dancing Team, not to mention the many extra-curricular activities enjoyed by QVS pupils.

Because all QVS entrants are the children of serving personnel, there is a very special kind of support provided by them for one another.

Nowadays, when many parents are on unaccompanied tours, it is particularly reassuring to the children and to their families to know that they are not unusual here.

Everyone knows what it is like to be part of a Service family.

Several staff have Service experience too, and all are committed to the unique requirement of looking after Services children in a fully boarding environment.

THE year 2010 has been another important year for Truro High School for Girls with the celebration of its 130th anniversary and a string of further successes.

In February, an Ofsted inspection report confirmed the outstanding level of boarding facilities at the school.

Boarders, it said, enjoy an "excellent system of pastoral care", "high quality, well appointed, safe and secure boarding accommodation" and "excellent sporting, study and recreational features."

Thanks to first-class teaching and small class sizes, Truro High is frequently top of the Cornwall league tables and is in the top 200 of all schools nationally for GCSE results.

"We create an environment tailored to girls, one that encourages their desire to learn and which fosters an increasing confidence in their own judgement and risk taking," said headmistress Caroline Pascoe.

"We have a very strong work ethic and a committed, dedicated staff who have the experience and expertise needed to bring out the very best in everyone."

With work comes play and this year has seen a multitude of fun activities and trips.

Anniversary celebrations included hosting some special guests – including the crew of an 849 Naval Air Squadron helicopter who landed on the

school's sports field.

Other highlights have been the school's participation in the 50th Ten Tors event and a month-long expedition to the foothills of the Himalayas, led by the headmistress, which resulted in the 20 girls who went all achieving their Duke of Edinburgh Gold Awards.

"We spent almost a week in a village school in Burma helping to decorate it and then set off on a 12-day trek through the Spiti Valley on the Tibetan border," said Mrs Pascoe, a former British Olympic rower.

"It was a wonderful way of learning about different cultures and lifestyles."

For more information about Truro High School, visit www.trurohigh.co.uk, call 01872 272830 or email admin@trurohigh.co.uk to organise a taster day or tour.

The school is running an Open Morning on Saturday October 16 at 9.30am to 11am, and 10.30am to midday.



● A Sea King and its crew from 849 Naval Air Squadron visit Truro High School



The Royal Hospital School

The Royal Hospital School provides exceptional academic and extra-curricular education for boys and girls aged 11 to 18 years.

Open Morning

Saturday 2nd October 2010 at 9am

Academic, Music, Art, Sailing and Sports Scholarships.
Generous discounts for Service Families.
Means-tested Seafaring Bursaries.

For more information visit www.royalhospitalschool.org
or contact Susan Lewis on 01473 326210
or email admissions@royalhospitalschool.org





Raising to Distinction



Queen Victoria School

Open Morning
Sat 18 September 2010

QVS is a co-educational boarding school for children of Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or are part of a Scottish regiment.

Families are welcome to find out more at our Open Morning, or by contacting Admissions on +44 (0) 131 310 2927 to arrange a visit.

Queen Victoria School
Dunblane Perthshire
FK15 0JY
www.qvs.org.uk








● Royal Marine Col Jim Hutton and Queen's College's Ms Carter chat after the recent seminar Boarding Schools in the Front Line

Queen's College adapts to life in the front line

OVER the past nine years Queen's College, in common with many other UK boarding schools, has needed to adapt to the fact of having Forces pupils with a parent on active service in Iraq or Afghanistan.

At the very least it means long separations, at the worst it can mean dealing with family

bereavement.

"As a parent I need the school to have its skills and drills in place for a scenario of injured Dad, or even dead Dad.

"It's awful but these things happen," Col Jim Hutton, Royal Marines, told the audience at a recent seminar, *Boarding Schools in the Front Line*, organised by Queen's.

Fortunately such drastic events are few and far between in any school but the daily realities of life for a child with a parent in the front line can be tough.

"We've currently got four dads on operational deployment in Afghanistan and I know that even when nothing goes wrong, a phone call from me or a houseparent to a mum on her own is appreciated," added headmaster Chris Alcock.

Sometimes the child – and the school – can get used to regular text or email messages from a

parent, then a sudden silence.

"You get to a FOB [forward operating base] and there's almost nothing there, and what is there doesn't work.

"In an operational theatre there's nothing to think about but the job and you have to know that back home caring, competent people are supporting your family," said Col Hutton.

Senior Queen's houseparent Andrew Free added his own day-to-day perspective: "Just last week I had an email from a dad in Afghanistan asking me for two things; get the boy to ring his mum and help him get to the rugby club for training.

"I try always to behave as a parent would in the same circumstances.

"I'll go with them to hospital, for instance, after a sports injury because that's what I'd want for my own son."

Ceaseless activity at CEAS

CEAS provides a high-quality service in response to any questions or concerns Service families may have about the education of their children.

CEAS is made up of a small team of nine dedicated civil servants and five educational professionals.

They are mostly based in Upavon in Wiltshire, with Parent Support Officers working from home in the UK and a Parent Partnership Officer based in Rheindahlen.

The Upavon office is open from 08.30 to 17.00 Monday to Friday (although the helpdesk closes at 15.30 to allow the chance to deal with queries on the day of receipt).

CEAS will respond to enquiries from Service families, and will also provide information to other organisations and support services that may be working with a Service family.

They have specific expertise in UK school admissions, boarding school advice, overseas education and special educational needs.

In the past year CEAS have taken over 26,500 calls on the helpline and received over 6,000 e-mails requesting information or help.

CEAS has sent out over 45,000 pieces of correspondence including 2,770 CEA Eligibility Certificate renewals and 2,567 Boarding School Certificates.

They have written to support 545 families in retaining their quarter for educational reasons and have supported 228 families with School Admission Appeals.

As you can see, the people of CEAS are all very busy, so please bear with them if it takes you a while to get through on the help line.

If your call is put through to the answer machine during the working day, it is because both helpines are busy.

Please leave a clear message including your phone number and CEAS will get back to you as soon as they can.

Contact CEAS for any other advice relating to your children's education:

■ tel: 01980 618244 (Mil: 94344 8244)

■ fax: 01980 618245 (Mil: 94344 8245).

■ website: www.mod.uk/ceas

■ email: enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk

The helpline is staffed 08.30 to 15.30 Monday to Friday. An answer-phone is available at all other times and when the lines are engaged.

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enquiries@ceas.detsa.co.uk



Open Morning

Saturday 16th October 2010

9.30 - 11.00 and 10.30 - 12.00

Providing outstanding education for girls aged 3-18
Ranked in the top 200 of all UK schools for GCSE results
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TRURO HIGH SCHOOL

Truro High School for Girls
Falmouth Road
Truro
Cornwall
TR1 2HU

Tel: 01872 272830
Email: admin@trurohigh.co.uk
www.trurohigh.co.uk



● You're hired: Year Six Pupils at St John's College embrace Enterprise Week with an Apprentice Style Challenge

St John's College: You're hired

YEAR Six pupils were challenged to make a new drink, market it, prepare an advertisement for television and deliver a professional pitch in an *Apprentice*-style contest.

The pupils had just a week to work in small teams, and the budding entrepreneurs attacked the task with great enthusiasm.

A first round of pitches included some searching questions from Head of the Lower School Mr Tony Shrubbsall and a taste test, and from this the four finalists were selected for the final round.

The eventual winners were team SAS – Smart and Successful – for their juice and sparkling water product Pure and team members Chinenye Ezeuko, Matthew McGlinchey, Louis McCubbin, Keelan O'Connell and Georgia Palmer-Goddard were all 'hired' at the end of the contest.

Mr Martin Field is Head of Business Studies at the Upper School and listened to the pitches of the final four.

Speaking about the winning team, he said: "Team SAS presented a clear business plan based on good market research and put together a fine advertising campaign aimed at their target market."

"They kept their cool through the questioning process and showed an impressive grasp of concepts such as profit and loss."

"They deserved to be hired!" Mr Shrubbsall added: "All the pupils worked really hard on

this challenge, and we were very impressed with how well the teams worked together and took on the tasks.

"We think Lord Sugar would have been impressed with all of them."

St John's College is an independent, co-educational day and boarding school for children aged two to eighteen situated in the heart of Southsea.

Founded as a boy's school in 1908, the college now attracts over 700 pupils and students to its nursery, lower and upper school and sixth form.

The college's ethos is inspired by the teachings of St John Baptist De La Salle, the patron saint of teachers. It provides an academic education within a Christian environment, but welcomes boys and girls of all faiths and beliefs.

St John's aim is to assist the transition from childhood to independent and socially responsible adulthood, within a caring Christian context in keeping with the ideals of their Lasallian foundation.

High standards are set by the college through its programme of investing in pupils, staff and facilities.

An exciting variety of extra-curricular activities are on offer, along with academic and emotional support to ensure students feel secure and stable at the college.

Visit their website for further details: www.stjohnscollege.co.uk



● Old Swinford Hospital school

There's something about Old Swinford

FOUNDED in 1667, Old Swinford Hospital is now entering a new and exciting chapter in its long history with a new teaching block, performing arts centre and boarding house all now completed.

School numbers will rise from 600 to 750 by 2012.

Recent improvements to the sports centre and the creation of a multi-purpose, all-weather pitch will further boost the school's success in the sporting arena.

Almost two-thirds of pupils are full or weekly boarders, drawn from the local area, throughout the United Kingdom and further afield.

Old Swinford Hospital is situated in the heart of England, with easy access to the motorway network and Birmingham International Airport.

As a state boarding school it welcomes applications from UK and EU nationals for whom the education is free.

Parents pay for boarding which from September 2010 will be £3,300 per term.

Girls are admitted as day students into the Sixth Form.

Old Swinford Hospital is a High Performing School with specialist status in business and enterprise and science.

A broad curriculum embraces both traditional and modern subjects and includes many subject-based enrichment opportunities unique to the school.

While academic results are clearly important, they are only one element of life at Old Swinford Hospital.

The school has become synonymous with an outstanding range of extra-curricular opportunities that enrich school life, develop potential and play a significant part in creating happy, fulfilled and well-adjusted young people.

There is always something to

look forward to at the weekend. The popular cadet force now numbers over 150 recruits.

A wide variety of sports is available, including minority sports such as golf, archery and trampolining.

Forces families can feel secure in the knowledge that students are supported by a strong pastoral care system.

For further details contact the registrar on 01384 817325 or email admissions@oshsch.com

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For further details contact The Registrar on

01384 817325

or email admissions@oshsch.com

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HEATH LANE, STOURBRIDGE, DY8 1QX
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St John's College, Grove Road South, Southsea, Hampshire PO5 3QW

Fees for families claiming the service boarding allowance are set so that for the current year parental contribution is only £1,935.

Open Dates: 23 September 6.00pm-8.00pm & 5 October 9.30am-11.00am

Ofsted Outstanding 2007-2008

EDUCATION

Savings for Service families at RHS

THE Royal Hospital School is a coeducational full boarding school for 11- to 18-year-olds set in 200 acres of Suffolk countryside overlooking the River Stour.

Eighty-five per cent of the 700 pupils board full time and the experience and provision for pastoral care is unsurpassed.

As a result of its seafaring heritage and the generous support of its parent charity, Greenwich Hospital, the school is able to offer generous discounts for those currently in any of the Armed Services and eligible for the MOD Continuity of Education Allowance.

This special fee is set so that the total parental contribution is the minimum ten per cent which equates to approximately £1,875 per annum.

Alternatively, the children or grandchildren of serving or retired Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Auxiliary Fleet or UK Merchant Navy personnel and certain other seafaring families can apply for a means-tested bursary or discount off the full boarding fee.

These fee remissions make a boarding school education all the more affordable for services families.

With excellent resources and

dedicated staff, pupils at the Royal Hospital School are encouraged to aim high, achieve their personal best and most importantly to enjoy doing it.

The curriculum is broad and balanced, combining the finest of academic traditions with the latest technologies and with small class sizes, every pupil receives close individual guidance.

The school has a proud reputation for musical excellence and creativity and imagination are fostered through the performing arts. Fitness and well-being are promoted through the enjoyment of a wide range of sports, from traditional team games to more specialist pursuits.

Uniquely, all new pupils in Year 7 receive RYA sailing tuition as part of the curriculum and, as a result of the school's seafaring heritage water sports play an important part in the sporting programme.

Consequently, every pupil has opportunity to pursue a huge range of interests, to discover new passions and develop important values and commitment that will last a lifetime.

For more information call 01473 326210 or go to www.royalhospitalschool.org

West Hill Park fosters independence

A RECENT Ofsted Inspection of Boarding at West Hill Park School has judged the provision to be 'outstanding.' Particular note was made of the excellent pastoral and medical care the children received.

The extent and variety of after school and weekend activities were highly praised and reflected in the fact that many children chose to board at the weekends.

The inspector remarked that the catering was of a very high standard and was impressed that the Boarders had significant input into the selection of menus as well as other developments within the Boarding House.

Mention was made of the newly refurbished and decorated dormitories and the range and quality of recreational areas available to the children.

Safety was noted as a priority for the staff team but the children have the space and opportunity to learn by experience whether it is managing pocket money or their own free time.

West Hill Park School offers a safe and happy environment in which pupils can be prepared for life in a senior boarding school and learn all the skills required to live confidently away from home or just simply to feel part of a happy community when the need arises.

Bromsgrove adds pizzazz

AS one of Britain's oldest and largest independent boarding and day schools, Bromsgrove is utterly dedicated to the individual pupil.

Bromsgrove looks to produce creative citizens with a strong moral compass and a dash of pizzazz to boot.

Ofsted, who were focusing exclusively on the experience of boarders at the school, are bound by the vocabulary of apparatchik convention, and this year, 2010, they once again gave the school their highest accolade: "outstanding".

Boarders can be full time or weekly, and a healthy minority are from forces' families and duly entitled to appropriate allowances.

The *Good Schools Guide*, less prosaically, says Bromsgrove "inhabits the academic stratosphere" and lauds the titanic

extra-curricular programme as one of the finest it has seen.

But accolades are worthless unless the pupils are happy, focused and keen to make a difference for the better.

They are. One thousand five hundred of them from two to eighteen years old.

Five hundred years old but as contemporary as the moment, Bromsgrove's scope is staggering: from A-level to the International Baccalaureate, day to boarding, the arts to sport (soon to be enhanced by a further multi million pound build), pupils can soar.

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The why of Wellington

WHY do so many Forces families choose to send their children to Wellington School?

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Or maybe it is the realistic fees that make independent education a very real possibility?

Or is it, as so many prospective parents say, the welcoming atmosphere they feel on first entering the School and the evident enthusiasm for learning seen in every classroom from the youngest in the Junior Form right through to the Sixth Form?

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School is simple; that each and every pupil should be helped and encouraged to develop his or her own particular talents to the full.

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If you can spare an hour or so on Saturday 25 September, why not pop along with your family to the open morning?

The school will be open between 9.30am and 12noon so why not come and see what makes Wellington so special?

For directions, please go to the website www.wellington-school.org.uk



Skipper success for Kelly College

KELLY College CCF Navy Cadets have been doing well as Day Skippers. Chris Barbour (17 years old) achieved his Day Skipper last year through Kelly College and is now working towards his Coastal Skipper.

George Harold (16 years old) successfully completed his Day Skipper in June this year through the CCF at Kelly. And pictured above Will Jones (16 years old) also successfully completed his Day Skipper alongside George in June this year.

Kelly College, founded by Admiral Kelly in 1877, is proud of its 130 years of service to the Royal Navy.

Kelly is situated in the beautiful south-west of England and offers a co-educational full and weekly boarding, and day education for pupils aged 11-18. It is a school of 360 pupils of whom half are boarders.

Kelly offers all the facilities of a larger school, while retaining the advantages in the individual care and class size of a smaller school.

The Preparatory School is co-educational and has a further 190 pupils aged 2½-11 years. The Prep School shares many of the facilities of the senior school including boarding from Year 5.

Kelly provides a high-quality, well-balanced education with a strong commitment to a whole range of extracurricular activities.

The staff are fully involved seven days a week, 24 hours a day.

Kelly enjoys an established reputation for excellent academic results (98.5 per cent pass rate at A-level, with 59 per cent at Grades A and B in 2009) and for its cultural and sporting achievements.

The sporting record of the school is very strong; Kelly has a national reputation in swimming, rugby and athletics, while hockey and netball teams have achieved county and regional success.

At the same time, Kelly is

particularly proud of its music and drama and delighted to be taking advantage of the Performing Arts Centre.

One of Kelly's strengths is the range and diversity of its societies and activities - from squash to shooting, debating to drawing, sailing to surfing, public speaking to pottery - with dozens to choose from there is something for everyone to enjoy.

The school aims to nurture the academic potential of all pupils.

In recent years, every leaver who has wished to proceed to Higher Education has done so.

Small class sizes ensure individual attention and a committed staff seek to work with parents to achieve the personal goals of each pupil, whether that be a place at a top university, international sporting representation, or a chosen career.

Entry to the Senior School is by examination and/or interview at 11+, 13+ and at Sixth Form level.

Scholarships are available at all age groups and full details are available from the registrar.

Kelly welcomes visits from prospective families and would be delighted to arrange a tour of the school so that you can experience the happy and friendly atmosphere of Kelly, meet some of the pupils and discuss your child's education with the headmaster, Dr Graham Hawley.

For further information about bursaries for Service Families or to arrange a visit, please contact the registrar, Candace Greensted, on 01822 813100, 01822 612050 (fax) or admissions@kellycollege.com or visit the website at www.kellycollege.com.

Kelly College invites all prospective families to its annual Open Morning on Saturday October 2 2010 between 10am and 12 noon. If you would like any further information please do not hesitate to contact the registrar.

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Work started in the summer on a new build on to the existing

Junior School with the addition of an assembly hall, and classrooms.

The kindergarten has recently been redeveloped and now boasts one of the best facilities in the south-west.

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Kia Ora

I came over to New Zealand last June in search of some new adventures in a part of the world you do not get to see much of in the Royal Navy. The whole process of coming over was relatively painless, despite some of the hurdles to jump over, thank you to lateral recruiting team.

Now I am here I am living that adventure to the full. Within 7 weeks of being in New Zealand I had a temporary posting to HMNZS Canterbury (by choice) for a 7 week deployment to Samoa, Darwin Australia, East Timor and Bitang Indonesia. I am now on the Protector Project and delivery crew for the two new OPV's HMNZS Otago and Wellington. I have been over in Melbourne on and off since October and have been exploring the Victoria countryside and wines on the weekends. Once HMNZS Wellington is back in NZ, I will become the POET for HMNZS Otago.

Its hard work, but the professionalism and business like attitude of the RNZN helps a lot. When I have been back in New Zealand, it has been all sailing, camping and scuba diving on the weekends. Running around the country side in my RAV4 exploring and being stunned by the scenery on every corner turned.

I am currently boarding with a family to save extra money, to buy a yacht to live on in the near by marina. So if you want a taste of the New Zealand adventure too, contact the lateral recruiting team.

Fiona Atkinson
POET HMNZS Otago



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Still the benchmark

THE best ideas, so the aphorism goes, are written on the back of fag packets.

This one was written on the back of an envelope.

From 15 programme suggestions made by the Imperial War Museum's then director, the great Noble Frankland, four decades ago grew the greatest history documentary ever produced.

In a multimedia age, it's almost always being screened on some channel, while TV historians voted it into the top 20 British programmes of all time.

Nearly 40 years on from its first airing and the 26-episode *The World at War* (11-disc DVD, £79.99, nine-disc Blu-Ray, £99.99, available from September 20) has been 'reinvented' for a 21st-Century audience.

Every frame of footage, every second of audio has been restored, enhanced and cleaned up – more than 3.6 million changes across the entire series – for what FremantleMedia call the 'ultimate restored edition' released this month.

These days we're lucky if we get a documentary series lasting more than four or five episodes. Back in the early 70s, ITV (remember when they made quality documentaries?) committed themselves to 26 hour-long episodes at a total cost of nearly £1m (the figure today would be 12 times that).

They did so at just the right time. Today's WW2 documentaries rely either on diaries and letters to tell their stories, or the accounts of increasingly-frail veterans who invariably held very junior ranks 70 years ago.

The team behind *The World at War* had access to 'ordinary' men and women, but also many of the wartime commanders: a wonderfully-entertaining General Brian Horrocks, an urbane Anthony Eden, an unrepentant Otto Remer (he helped to crush the July 20 plot against Hitler) and a wizened Karl Dönitz whose testimony, in halting English, is



● Steppe change... original and restored colour cine-film footage of Axis troops advancing in Russia

juxtaposed with his former foe in 'Wolfpack' – the episode dealing with Battle of the Atlantic (and the one most *Navy News* readers will perhaps turn to first...).

For all the excellent restored footage and the even-crisper-sounding tones of Sir Laurence Olivier's narration, it's the ordinary human testimony which still has the power to move.

Imagine a documentary in 2010 giving three minutes of continuous airtime to an elderly sailor. There are no dramatic reconstructions, no fancy graphics.

Yet the testimony of Capt William Eyton-Jones remains as compelling now as it was in the early 1970s.

The Liverpoolian skipper of the steamer SS Benrackle, Eyton-Jones watched his ship sink in four minutes when she was torpedoed

by U105 in May 1941, some 500 miles off Freetown, Sierra Leone.

For 13 days he guided 58 sailors in an open boat made for 48 men, guarding the meagre rations – a

dipper of water and a biscuit per day.

Some of his Chinese crew panicked. In true Benny Hill fashion, Eyton-Jones tried to assuage their fears: "What's all the bother, lot of talky-talky."

One man jumped over the side. On the first occasion he was recovered, but not on the second.

The lifeboat was eventually spotted by a hospital ship; 58 lives were saved. The skipper earned the OBE for his skill in sailing the boat towards shipping lanes.

His account is a timely reminder of the perils of the sea – naval warfare may change, but the ocean remains as unforgiving to shipwrecked mariners now as it

ever was.

Indeed the whole episode is a timely reminder of our nation's reliance on its maritime supply lines.

It's one hour of viewing which should be compulsory for any sailor joining Raleigh or BRNC Dartmouth.

The remaining 25 hours (plus a myriad of extras) are eminently watchable too...

■ We have two copies of the DVD box set to give away – and for runners up two copies of the accompanying book by Prof Richard Holmes.

To win, tell us for which 1944 colour film did Laurence Olivier receive an honorary Oscar.

Send your answer, plus your full name and address, either in the post to World At War Competition, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH, or via e-mail to worldatwar@navynews.co.uk.

We must receive your entries by mid-day on October 15 2010. Normal *Navy News* rules apply.

Loch, Jocks and a few smoking bunkers

SEVEN decades after they were forcibly tamed, Hitler's U-boats continue to fascinate historians.

Enter two books on the subject, one from a local historian, the other from one of the German submarine service's leading authorities.

David Hird's *The Grey Wolves of Eriboll* (Whittles, £16.99 ISBN 978-1-904445-326) is an excellently-researched and extremely accessible account of the U-boats' demise.

When the war ended in May 1945, there were more than a good three dozen German submarines at sea, 20 or so of them on patrol in and around the UK, and scores more in foreign ports.

More than 30 surrendered U-boats were directed to Loch Eriboll, a bleak natural harbour, 15 miles east of Cape Wrath, and, before 1945, a regular haunt of the Royal Navy.

Their stay at this remote spot was brief – within a few days many had been escorted to Loch Aish and, subsequently, Lisahally in Northern Ireland.

A couple were eventually transferred to the Soviet Navy, one was handed to the Americans for evaluation, the rest were sunk as targets under Operation Deadlight.

So Eriboll's place in the sun was extremely short-lived – but it's an important moment in the RN's 20th-Century history.

And those ten or so days are charted with some wonderful testimony gathered by the author

from Allied and Axis veterans.

The victors were curious about their foe – and their kit – and were shown around. The crew of HMCS Nene were most disappointed when they toured U295, however.

"We got practically nothing," their furious CO complained. "The RN boarding parties looted our U-boats like a bunch of thugs, even taking some personal gear. Two of us got helmet and badges but no blondes. Hope for better luck in Derry."

As the boats surfaced preparing to surrender, messages from headquarters in Germany were broadcast *en clair*.

"Comrades nearing England, we have to carry out a mission and obey the law of their people," one intercepted message read. "We must obey the orders of our Führer and take a bite of the sour apple."

Official naval correspondent Eric Williams interviewed the surrendering German *Matrosen* (matelots). They were a remorseless bunch.

"Nowhere did I find any admission of guilt or regret," he wrote. "Discipline came first. Unquestioning obedience. When I asked an officer whether he would obey an order he knew to be wrong, he smiled deprecatingly. 'We do not get wrong orders.'"

■ Few people know more about the U-Boatwaffe than the prodigious Jak Mallmann-Showell, the son of a submarine engineer who was killed in the Battle of the Atlantic; he's devoted his life to the research of the German silent service.

Hitler's U-Boat Bunkers (History Press, £14.99 ISBN 978-



07509-45554) charts the birth, life and slow death of the concrete and steel carbuncles which pepper the French Atlantic coastline.

The fall of France in June 1940 presented the German Navy with the opportunity of striking at Britain's lifelines from bases on the Atlantic.

To safeguard the influx of U-boats, 4.4 million tons of concrete were used to build bombproof shelters – pens or bunkers – in several French ports (the complex at La Pallice, famously, can be seen in the final scenes of *Das Boot*).

For three years, the RAF tried to get at the boats in their bunkers – but with little success until the

final 12 months of the war.

Enter Tallboy (12,000lb) and Grand Slam (22,000lb) bombs which would ruin most people's day.

The first Tallboys were dropped on the pens at Brest. Nine landed on the huge structure, five penetrated the previously-impenetrable roof (pictured left) but did little damage to the boats themselves.

The morale effect, says the author, was considerable.

Until that moment, the bunker had been a refuge – now it had become "a deadly liability", the effect of a Tallboy exploding "as if the men's chest were being hit with sledgehammers".

There were more than a dozen raids using these 'bunker buster' bombs in the closing months of World War 2 – yet the raids proved surprisingly ineffective.

There's only one documented case of a U-boat being sunk by an attack on a pen – the brand-new U4708, sunk inside its protective shell in April 1945. Such was the air pressure caused by the blast, the instruments of a neighbouring submarine (which didn't sink) were convinced the boat was 40 metres down.

Nothing remains of the Kiel complex, the Kilian bunker, but most of Hitler's U-boat pens survive and some, such as those at Brest, are still in use (under new ownership, of course).

Mallmann-Showell's book is part history, part photo chronicle, part battlefield guide – which makes it indispensable either for those interested in the U-boat arm, or in a spot of military tourism.

Snide and prejudice

THE second volume of Ned Willmott's *magnum opus* on the supposed Last Century of Sea Power, Volume 2: From Washington to Tokyo, 1922-1945 (Indiana University Press, £29.99 ISBN 978-0-253-35214-9) covers the period from the eponymous treaty of 1922 to the end of WW2.

It does not disappoint; if anything, the gratuitous insults are even more obvious than in the first volume (Review, April 2010), writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

This time it is British Naval officers rather than naval historians who are on the receiving end of the abuse.

After asserting that the 'Royal Oak Affair' was "the intellectual high water mark of the British Navy (sic) in the inter-war period" he goes on to write that "this invokes the imagery of the (apocryphal) story of the incident in which a British naval officer was almost trampled to death by a horse while two other British naval officers who tried to come to his assistance were also badly injured: in the event, all were saved when the manager of the store came out of the store and unplugged the horse."

Clearly RN officers do not qualify for the tolerance to which, along with dissent and uncertainty, he has dedicated his book!

The offence is compounded by a footnote that reads: "Alternatively, the point might be made by the assertion that the surest means of making the eyes of a British naval officer light up is to shine a beam of light into one of his ears."

That a university press in the USA allowed this crude abuse to appear in one of its publications, is a sad comment on both its editorial standards and perhaps an anti-British impulse in parts of the USA that has not gone beyond the hostility of the Washington Treaty period.

The author can make such demeaning and unhistorical remarks because, as usual, he cannot bring himself to read the serious historical works on the inter-war period, that have, generally speaking, cast the actors in naval policy of that time in a relatively good light.

In particular, Willmott's wrong-headed assertions about neglect of anti-submarine warfare, could not have been sustained if he had bothered to read the works of Franklin and Llewellyn-Jones. Presumably "the finest naval historian ... writing today", as the cover blurb repeats, is unwilling to have his prejudices affected by serious historical analysis.

Even Americans might be slightly concerned with Willmott's argument that the maritime war against Germany was largely peripheral and the only front that mattered was the Eastern.

He does admit – but understates the importance of – direct Western aid to the Soviets but, more importantly, he completely ignores the effect of the invasion of Sicily on the decision to call off *Zitadelle*, the last German offensive in the East.

Never again were the Germans able to mass their whole forces against the Soviet Union and if one compares the German force-to-space ratios of mid-1943 and mid-1944, one can see the effect of Allied sea power in drawing forces away and enabling Soviet offensives. There is more to war than the crude butcher's bills upon which Willmott bases his rather old-fashioned views.

The author delights in figures and much of the book is taken up with tables, that makes reading it more rapid than one might think for a 680-page tome. These are both comprehensive and useful and make the book a convenient reference tool and a most useful

The Grove Review

addition to a naval library.

The author also allows himself to make good use of his figures to provide sound analyses of merchant shipping losses and the importance of international shipping to the Allied cause. He also has excellent coverage of the unfortunate story of the French Navy in World War 2.

For old times' sake, I was pleased to find myself in full agreement with his critical assessment of Mers-el-Kebir. His brief account of the battle between the French and the Thais in January 1941 will also come as news to many.

Willmott is strongest in his discussion of the Pacific War, where he provides a well-supported analysis of the reasons for Japan's defeat by the overwhelming industrial strength of the USA.

He correctly emphasises, based on figures in more tables, the importance of Japanese supply shortages and shipping losses. These were indeed, as the author argues, more important than the usual accounts of battles and the conduct of admirals – although he cannot resist taking a swipe at Admirals Halsey and Yamamoto.

He also demolishes Fuchida's account of the supposed demand for a follow-up raid on Pearl Harbor.

The latter's memory has already been heavily criticised by Parshall and Tully in their ground-breaking reassessment of Midway, which appears in Willmott's bibliography, but not in a footnote to his brief account of the battle.


As I said in my previous review, Dr Willmott is his own worst enemy. He cannot resist gratuitous insults which he, and his publisher, confuse with witty criticism. More seriously, he resorts to these instead of addressing the literature. He seems not to want his prejudices to be challenged. He hides behind tables of fact, which he sometimes uses to great effect.

However, it is such a pity that the author's sheer self-indulgence is not kept more under control by his editor and publisher.

They do their author no favours by puffing him in their advertising and allowing him to produce commentary like this.

One hopes it is not too late to expurgate volume three which, based on the final comments of its predecessor, might be a very odd book indeed.



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Awards in North West

CADETS and adult volunteers in the North-West of England have been rewarded for their efforts in a series of presentations around the area.

POC Hannah Burton, of Barrow unit, was awarded the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit, presented by the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria, Col James Cropper, at a ceremony in Carlisle.

Hannah, officially the best Sea Cadet in the county thanks to this award, is presently studying for a Diploma in Hospitality at Furness College and has ambitions of a career with the Royal Navy.

Lt (SCC) Ann Lewis RNR, the Commanding Officer of Runcorn unit, stepped into the spotlight at a ceremony in Chester.

Lt Lewis was presented with the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Exceptional Service by the Lord Lieutenant of Cheshire, David Briggs.

The citation for her award – one of three for the county – praised Lt Lewis's "inspirational leadership and motivational skills that have built a strong team of adult volunteers for Runcorn's Sea Cadet Corps – enabling the youngsters not only to be trained in all subjects for their personal development as Sea Cadets but also as responsible citizens within society."

At the same event POC Annabel Broad of Crewe unit received the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit – her reward for being selected as the best Sea Cadet in Cheshire.

Among her achievements with the unit was the negotiation of a special discount from the local canoe club, enabling many cadets to gain British Canoe Union qualifications.

Meanwhile the Lord Lieutenant of Greater Manchester, Col Warren Smith, made awards to three members of the Corps.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Alan Williams RNR, North West Area Training Officer, received the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate for Exceptional Service, with his management and charity work being cited; Lt Cdr (SCC) Graham Broadbent RNR, CO of Tameside unit, won the same award for his modernisation of the unit; and POC Daniel Edmondson, of Bolton unit, won the Lord Lieutenant's Certificate of Merit for being the top Sea cadet in Greater Manchester.

Speaker is host

SOUTHWARK cadets took part in a prestigious Cadet 150 event hosted by the Speaker of the House of Commons, John Bercow, in his apartment in the Palace of Westminster.

POCs Kerry Szmidt and George Whitfield mustered in Horseferry Road before marching with other cadets to the Palace.

The youngsters and adult volunteers then spent two hours chatting to politicians, including Defence Secretary Dr Liam Fox, Home Secretary Theresa May, Defence Minister Andrew Robathan and former Defence Minister Bob Ainsworth.

Rope trick

MEMBERS of Waltham Forest, City of London, Clapton and Edmonton units took part in the Armed Forces Day event organised by Chingford Royal British Legion.

Also there were sailors from the HMS Sultan engineering school and other cadet organisations.

TS Acorn, the Waltham Forest unit, provided the guard for the unit's Colours, carried by POC Earle.

And Acorn also supplied the tug o' war team which took on their RAF and Army counterparts – and took the victory laurels.

They finished off with a display of club swinging and a hornpipe.



● Maj (SCC) Steve Crawley RMR at the trench he dug at Ajax Bay during the Falklands Conflict in 1982 – complete with green tarpaulin, the remains of which can be seen on the left

Falklands veterans travel south again

A VISIT to the most southerly Sea Cadet unit was also a chance for two members of staff to take a brief stroll down Memory Lane.

And for one of the two, Southern Area Troop Commander Maj (SCC) Steve Crawley RMR, the

lane was exactly how he left it almost 30 years ago.

Maj Crawley and Cdr Andy Giles, Area Officer South, travelled to Stanley to see how cadets in the Falklands were getting along.

The pair conducted the annual Authority to Train inspections and a Royal Naval Parade, witnessed

cadet activities and provided the Marine Cadet detachment with specialist guidance and advice.

Highlights of the visit were the parade, where the cadets produced an impressive showcase of their talents, and getting afloat in Stanley Harbour alongside the youngsters.

Both visitors are Falklands veterans, and were invited to take part in commemoration ceremonies at the British cemetery overlooking San Carlos Water – otherwise known as Bomb Alley.

On completion of the service a trip was arranged on a landing craft across the water to Ajax Bay, the site of the field hospital and logistics base in 1982, and the exact spot where Maj Crawley came ashore 28 years ago.

This part of the visit was particularly poignant for Maj Crawley, as he accurately located the trench he had dug by hand and lived in for seven weeks almost three decades ago – and the remnants of his green tarpaulin were still clearly in place over the trench and intact.



● The Duchess of Cornwall meets cadets during her visit to Wallasey unit TS Astute

Royal visitor for Wallasey

WALLASEY cadets welcomed the Duchess of Cornwall to their unit – then put on a series of displays to show what they have learned in the Corps.

The guard for the royal visitor, who is patron of TS Astute, was provided by the unit's Royal Marine Cadet detachment.

The Duchess enjoyed a rigging display and cutlass-swinging by the Sea Cadets and a drill display by the Royal Marine Cadets.

She then took a tour of the unit with the chairman John Mason and First Lieutenant PO Chris Hughes,

posing for photographs with the unit's adult volunteers, committee members and cadets.

She also drew the raffle ticket for a six-piece tea set provided by Clarence House.

The Duchess was presented with flowers by Cdr Chloe Caldwell and a Corps crest by AC Dean.

Astute's VIP guest praised the unit and its members, who were very excited by her presence – among the comments were: "She actually spoke to me!", "When is she coming again?" and "Does she live in a palace?"

Pulling power

HARD work paid off when the Oxford unit open boys crew won the Southern Area pulling title.

Their reward? More hard work in advance of the national regatta this month...

The performance of the crew (pictured right) thrilled team manager PO (SCC) Sue Sherlock.

"I am absolutely delighted with the way my team won through to the national competition," said

PO Sherlock.

"It is something we have worked on for a long time now, and is something I have wanted to achieve for many years. I am extremely proud of the team.

"We will now have to spend many more hours on the river down by Donnington Bridge trying to improve yet further and hopefully pick up the national trophy."



Engineering workshop refurbished

BUDDING engineers in Barrow now have a state-of-the-art workshop and classroom to master their skills, thanks to Centrica Energy Upstream.

The East Irish Sea operation donated £6,500 to the Barrow-in-Furness unit to refurbish its engineering workshop centre at cadet headquarters.

It was officially re-opened after cash was donated from Morecambe's community budget and the Morecambe Helicopter Memorial Fund, set up in memory of the seven people killed in a helicopter crash in 2006.

Ted Creighton, the cadets' commanding officer, said the assistance and investment had transformed the facility.

"We moved into the building five years ago to teach the cadets mechanical and electrical engineering," he explained.

"The area we were teaching in was an old working men's club in a garage.

"It was very cold in the winter, with a concrete floor and a garage door so it wasn't the best teaching environment.

"Between September and April the room was unusable because if you were in there for more than five minutes you were too cold.

"We had to use other rooms that weren't kitted out for the purpose.

"Now we have an excellent teaching environment to do the training."

The donation paid for building materials and labour to insulate the workshop, install heating and modernise the electrics and plumbing.

Centrica Energy also provided new tools, workbenches and a projector, as well as redundant valves, pumps and motors for the cadets to take apart and work on.

Cadet Alex Sales thanked the business, saying: "I hope it will help me get a good job at sea."

Cadet Steven Eaton agreed, saying: "I'm looking forward to learning about electrical and mechanical instruction in the new classroom."

Boat station celebrates

THE North West Area boating station TS Palatine celebrated 50 years of training adults and cadets with an open day.

With Sea Cadets from Whitehaven, Buxton, Rochdale and Wigan, plus members of the Air Training Corps who use the centre on a regular basis joining in, the open day's success was guaranteed.

On hand to support the day's activities and celebrations was the North West Deputy Area Officer Lt Colin Jones RN (Rtd) and his wife Barbara.

Laser Performance UK, who brought some of their sailing boats, had a representative on hand to offer help and advice.

Another of the guests was Albert Light, from the Portsmouth branch of the Masonic Lodge – the lodge donated six new Laser Bugs and he was delighted to see the cadets enjoying the new boats.

With sailing boats, power boats, canoes and windsurfing boards all on the water at the same time the order of the day was serious fun.

Once the day's activities were over the centre held a party for the staff that had helped over the years to make the centre a success.

Speeches by the centre Chief Instructor PO (SCC) Ian Bowman and the centre Superintendent Lt Cdr (SCC) Tom Bowman RNR, praised all the adults who have helped to bring about the changes that have improved the centre and made it so successful.

They also thanked the Area office for all their support.

The centre welcomed many visitors throughout the day and the open day gave the public an opportunity to see the facilities available.



● From left: Bruce Clark, Ian Clark and John Simm

Steamer crew form SCC link

IT IS not just sleek grey Pusser's ships which have strong links with the Sea Cadet Corps.

The same goes for the last sea-going paddle steamer in the world, the Waverley.

One of her captains, chief officers and second officers are all serving Sea Cadet staff.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Ian Clark RNR is the Master of the Waverley and he and his son, Chief Officer Bruce Clark, are both staff members at Ashford unit, while Second Officer John Simm is a Petty Officer at Paisley unit.

All three are professional Merchant Navy officers who have had wide experience at sea.

Ian and John are permanent members of the crew, whilst Bruce is a relief and works full-time elsewhere.

They all came to their careers by being Sea Cadets and have continued their involvement with the Corps into adulthood.

The paddle steamer Waverley was built on the Clyde in 1947 to replace her predecessor, sunk by enemy action during the evacuation of Dunkirk 70 years ago.

The ship is operated by Waverley Excursions Ltd, carrying out day excursion trips from ports all round the country during the summer, but she is owned by a charity, the Paddle Steamer Preservation Society.

"It is a tremendous honour to command such a fine ship as the Waverley," said Lt Cdr Clark.

"It is also a great responsibility to be the custodian of a vessel of such historic importance."

Waverley was restored in 2004 to a high standard but retains all her period features, including her original steam engine.

Buxton thanks supporters

STAFF were able to report another successful year at the Buxton unit annual general meeting.

Recently, several cadets have been on courses – two on Tradewinds yachts, five at HMS Raleigh and two on instructors' training.

A new team of three cadets, who had won the District small bore rifle shooting competition came second in the North West Area competition.

And at the time of the meeting the unit was also preparing for a busy programme of sailing competitions.

Staff and cadets at the unit would like to thank the people of Buxton for their financial support in June, at the Rotary Bazaar, the Street Collection, which raised £325.42, and the stall on the Market Place.

There was also a particular mention for the Buxton and District Lions Club, for their donation of an overhead projector which will be used in cadet training.

RIB-roaring win

SOUTHWARK cadet AC Callum Malone has won a place in the national finals of the 2010 RYA Honda Youth RIB Challenge, due to be staged in Southampton this month.

Callum had to beat off competition from 46 units in the local heat at London's Royal Victoria Dock, then repeat the performance at a regional event in Abingdon, taking on teenagers from a number of youth organisations.

Minister meets leading contenders

DEFENCE Minister Andrew Robathan visited the Frimley Park National Cadet Training Centre during one of its most prestigious events – the annual Cadet Leadership Course (CLC).

The Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans watched cadets and instructors in the grounds of the centre as they took part in some of the most challenging activities of the week-long course, which has been staged for more than 50 years.

He spoke to some of the 114 top cadets from across the UK engaged in command tasks, leading teams tackling the formidable obstacle course, or simply learning about communicating effectively with their teams.

Of his visit, the politician said: "I have very much enjoyed my visit to the Cadet Training Centre.

"I've seen some fantastic enthusiasm from good young people who are being given real

challenges and opportunities in a safe and well-organised environment.

"There is some great work going on here for young people."

The leadership course, open to Sea Cadets, their air and army equivalents and CCF cadets, see youngsters involved in a range of sporting and military activities, from volleyball and boat races to a final exercise involving an escape through enemy territory.

Jump-start for minibus initiative

CHESTER-le-Street's minibus appeal got off to a roaring start thanks to a donation by the Alexandra Rose charity.

TS Clark cadets undertake a number of activities throughout the country and have started to raise money for a minibus to allow them to do even more.

Alexandra Rose is an umbrella organisation which assists smaller charities through collections and the Rose Raffle.

Spennymoor and Ferryhill RNA have been holding Alexandra Rose Days for the past seven years raising money for local and Naval charities.

And it was S/M Christopher Lewarne, chairman of the RNA branch, who presented a cheque for £1,000 to the unit CO, PO (SCC) Steven Grainger during an evening parade.

PO Grainger said: "We would like to thank everyone at the Alexander Rose Charity and Spennymoor and Ferryhill RNA.

"This is a fantastic start to our minibus fund.

"The support that we have received from the RNA over the years has been unbelievable and we are truly grateful for all of the help that they have given us."

The unit also had cause to celebrate the award of an efficiency pennant from Sea Cadet HQ – continuing an unbroken sequence which stretches back to 1977.

Enfield team wins through

SIX cadets from Enfield unit beat off competition from other London units to win the top prize in an expedition competition.

The event, which involves assessment on various outdoor skills such as bushcraft and navigation, was held over a weekend on an Army training area in Kent.

Despite only having two weeks of intensive training, they pulled through to win against stiff competition.

CO PO (SCC) Allan Holloway said: "To win only after two weeks training speaks volumes about the dedication and commitment of these young cadets – absolutely remarkable – and they have done me and themselves proud."

The team now progresses to another competition involving other cadets from all over London and the South East.

Prize presented

HUYTON with Roby unit cadet POC Beverley Marriette has received a prestigious award for her outstanding achievements.

At a ceremony in London, Beverley was presented with the CVQO Directors' Prize for her efforts in both the Corps and the wider community.

Beverley and four other Duke of Westminster Award winners then went to Downing Street, and later undertook a three-week expedition to South Africa.

Tireless cadets tour namesake submarine

EIGHT cadets from TS Tireless waved off their namesake submarine as she sailed on deployment from Devonport.

The youngsters from Rugby unit were privileged to be given a guided tour of the nuclear boat only hours before she sailed on a nine-month deployment outside UK waters.

Witnessing the final preparations for sea first-hand, the cadets had the opportunity to meet the crew and discuss life and work on board a Trafalgar-class submarine.

Exploring many areas of the boat, they tried breathing through the submarine's emergency breathing system in the forward escape compartment, and came face-to-face with the torpedoes and missiles stowed in the 'Bomb Shop'.

Following the visit, the Cadets were whisked away to nearby Devil's Point which enabled them to wave Tireless off and wish the crew a fond farewell.

Tireless' deployment will see her supporting British interests in the Middle East and, somewhat remarkably for a 26-year-old front-line unit, this will be the first time that she has transited the Suez Canal.

Her CO, Cdr Jason Clay, said:



● Cadets from TS Tireless on board HMS Tireless in Devonport

Picture: LA(Phot) James Crawford

"This is an extremely exciting time for the ship's company of HMS Tireless, not least because it represents the culmination of months of hard work.

"Deploying on operations is

core business and, as such, we are all ready to face the potential challenges that might lay ahead."

The men of the hunter-killer submarine have promised to keep the cadets of TS Tireless up to

date throughout the deployment.

And they hope that they can all meet up again when the boat returns to Devonport which, all being well, should be in the spring of 2011.

A window on the Corps

AS part of the celebrations for Armed Forces Day, units across the North West attended the Preston Military Show.

Arena displays included the Warrington Field Gun crew, Tameside's window ladder (see left), Fleetwood's hornpipe and club swinging and the Ellesmere Port band.

Static displays for recruiting and dry land rigging also proved to be popular.

Throughout the day an inter-Service orienteering competition was held in the arena, with teams of eight being

given a route to follow from a selection of 24 tagging points, in relays.

The results were calculated against the number of points visited in the correct sequence and the time taken to complete the course.

A team of Royal Marine Cadets from Blackburn and Preston eventually emerged as winners, beating teams from the ACF, ATC and CCF from across Lancashire and the Isle of Man.

Comments received from the organisers were most complimentary about the quality and professionalism of Sea Cadet displays.



Flotilla says thanks with a donation

THE Exeter Flotilla has presented a cheque for £300 to Exmouth unit to enable a cadet to go sail training this year.

The cheque was presented by flotilla chairman Capt Ian Brannam RN to unit chairman Teresa Goodair and Officer-in-Charge CPO (SCC) Neil Gregory, at a ceremony in the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines, Lympstone.

Capt Brannam said that the Exeter Flotilla was an organisation of retired Naval officers which met regularly at Lympstone, often calling upon the Exmouth unit to provide a colour party at their functions.

CPO Neil Gregory said a cadet would be chosen through a competition, reporting back to the flotilla on what they had done and where they had been in TS Royalist.

Cabins are replaced

PARENTS and staff have been busy at Loughborough unit removing modular buildings which were damaged by weather earlier this year.

Support from Premier Tool Hire, Travis Perkins and TBD Morris means the cabins could be removed to make way for newer ones, purchased with the help of grants from Lufbra Rag, Loughborough Welfare Trust and the RNA, plus generous donations from former Sea Cadets.

The new cabins should be in place this month.

NATO HQ affiliation

THE Commanding Officer of Chiltern, CPO (SCC) Keith Jones, has set up a formal affiliation between his unit and the NATO Maritime Command Headquarters at Northwood in Middlesex.

The current Commander of the NATO HQ is Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, who is also Commander-in-Chief Fleet.

A small ceremony was organised at Northwood with staff from the Headquarters and members of the unit meeting up to celebrate the occasion, with Admiral Soar presenting an affiliation certificate to CPO Jones.

As part of the affiliation, Capt

Ian Turner, UK Senior National Officer on the staff, ran the 10th Broloppet Half Marathon, crossing the Øresund Bridge from Copenhagen in Denmark to Malmo in Sweden, thereby raising £120 towards an offshore bursary for a cadet.

The cheque was handed over by Capt Turner at the same ceremony.

● Admiral Sir Trevor Soar hands the affiliation certificate to CPO (SCC) Keith Jones, attended by (from left) Cdt Scott Kilbey, LC Emily Jones, POC Zoe Jones and CPO (SCC) Mark Stephenson, First Lieutenant of the unit





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A trio of mint performances

Continued from page 48

RN were unlucky to give away a penalty two metres off their goal line, which put the Cavalry into the lead with 30 seconds remaining on the clock.

Refusing to give up, the Navy immediately attacked and won a foul for a spot hit deep in their own half.

Suzuki set off at full pace for the Army goal and, helped by excellent marking by the rest of the Navy team and an unfortunate misunderstanding in the Army camp, calmly put the ball through the posts with just five seconds left on the clock for a 5½-5 victory.

The final tournament of the Inter-Services programme took place two weeks later when the Navy met the RAF to contest the Duke of York Cup, where the RN team of Aplin, Suzuki and Wilson were joined by Mne Mike Ball.

Starting with 1½ goals on handicap, the RAF were first to score following the very first throw-in.

The Senior Service were slow to respond but eventually started to find their form and Aplin scored a good goal to open the Navy tally.

Almost immediately afterwards the RAF added to their tally but, just before the end of the chukka, Suzuki converted a penalty to leave the Navy trailing 3½-2.

The second chukka was fast and furious but although both sides had an equal share of attacking runs, neither team scored.

In the second half the Navy moved up a gear. They dominated the third chukka.

A really excellent goal by Ball was followed by a good attacking run by Suzuki which resulted in another Navy score and then a further penalty by Suzuki increased the Navy's lead.

In the final chukka Ball scored once again to give the RN a convincing win 6-3½ at the final bell.

Twenty20 visionaries

Continued from page 48

in reply and lost three of their first four batsmen for 0, so at 15-3 the situation was not good.

Skipper Burt steadied the ship with a fine 48 and had support from Pollard (21) and Hill (38 NO), but when Lt J Parker (Raleigh) was run out for 24, the writing was on the wall and the RN finished their innings 31 runs short of their target.

With the RAF defeating the Army in a rain-affected clash to take the IS title, it was left to the soldiers and sailors to fight for second and third place on the final day of the tournament.

The RN managed to score 200, Mid K Hewitt (RAF Cranwell) (54), Pollard (36), Matt Thompson (Raleigh) (32) and a late flurry from ET(ME) S Louis (Edinburgh) 28 and for some, that looked a respectable total.

An early caught-and-bowled by Parker was cause for optimism, but a second wicket partnership of 99 dampened spirits until three Army wickets were taken in quick succession, raising Navy hopes again.

At 144 - 5, it was anybody's game, but the experienced Army heads of Heyns and Houghton saw off the challenge and they reached the target without further loss for a five-wicket victory.

**More sport
on page 32**

Ice for RecFest

FOR the first time in its history, the RN Ice Hockey Association was invited to the UK RecFest tournament at Ice Sheffield.

The contest brings together 15 of the best recreational ice hockey teams in the country for a weekend of short but very intense games - each side would play eight matches over the weekend.

As usual, the RNIHA had an abundance of volunteers on the back of the recent tri-Service and Inter-Service tournaments.

But as the week of the RecFest drew ever closer, the number of available personnel dwindled dramatically (due to operational needs of parent units) leaving fewer than ten players available.

The team stepped on to the ice with seven skaters and two goalkeepers for the first game of the day against Bradford Cannibals.

The game ended in a 3-1 defeat for the RN, but it did shift a few cobwebs and set the pace for the rest of what would be a tiring day for the sailors and marines.

This was followed by three victories (1-0 over Medway Madness, 2-0 over Cleveland Comets and by the same score over Sheffield Blaze) which put the Navy in fourth place overall after the first day. That placed them in the top group to battle for the cup on day two.

After a surprisingly sedate Saturday night in Sheffield (probably due to the average age of the team being over 30 and the absence of a physio!), the team mustered at Ice Sheffield for the second and what would turn out to be the most physically-demanding day of the tournament.

The team lost the services of PO(ET) K Wilson (MASP), who went to sea on the Sunday afternoon and was one of the more influential RN players on the first day, and AB J Armstrong (RNAS Cudrose) who had a family emergency on the Sunday morning. This left the Navy with only five skaters (minimum required) with no changes on the bench.

After some quick thinking by manager Kevin Cave and the outgoing and incoming general secretaries, Lt Cdr Al Bernard (UKHO) and Lt Adam Lappin (DMLS HQ Raleigh), player kit was borrowed so that one of our goalkeepers, Mne C Chaplen (42 Cdo), could play as a defenceman and AB D Patterson was contacted to play at short notice on his day off from PJT's to help ease the team's manning issue.

The RN started day two as they



● Lt Adam Lappin charges down the Sheffield ice with the puck

Picture: Grant Woolway

had ended day one: with some impressive defence and the ability to quickly convert an opposition's mistake into a scoring chance for the Navy.

The first game against Blackburn Falcons was a tightly-contested game which ended in a no-score draw.

Then came a chance to settle a score from day one with another game against Bradford, which unfortunately ended with some tired Navy skaters and a 3-0 defeat.

With only two games to go (joint favourites Invicta Knights and Whitley Bay Islanders), the Navy team had to face the fact that the day would not be able to etch the letters RNIHA on the cup this year but spirits were lifted by a motivational speech from a veteran of the sport in Canada, Lt Cdr Bernard.

The Navy went out to face Invicta with renewed vigour and outplayed the team from Kent for most of the game.

The score was 0-0 with only a minute to go and RN legs were beginning to feel the strain of having a short bench (Invicta had 17 skaters).

The RN goalkeeper, Mne T Chamberlain (45 Cdo), was doing a sterling job in holding the Invicta attack at bay but with only 12 seconds left in the game he was beaten by a fortunate deflection which sealed an Invicta victory of 1-0.

With only one game to go, the Navy stepped on to the ice against Whitley Bay with all the pressure

on the Geordies.

The game started with all the action around the Whitley Bay goal and a good period of play by the now-fatigued Navy skaters, but the pace of the fastest team sport in the world was too much for the RN as their defence was once again breached by a late goal to give Whitley Bay a 1-0 victory.

At the tournament's conclusion, the RNIHA team finished fifth out of the 15 - a good achievement for a lightly-manned team at their first civilian national tournament.

A special mention for their all-round efforts during the tournament must go to goalkeeper Chamberlain and defenceman J Rutter (845 NAS).

"The team has shown exceptional character to play the tournament in good spirits with a drastically-reduced number of players," said Lt Lappin.

"They have shown and upheld the grit and determination - values that the RN is famous for.

"Our teamwork and team spirit were rewarded at the prizegiving with the 'Team of the Tournament' award, as voted for by the managers of the participating teams."

The team are looking for new players of all standards. Training is currently at Gosport Ice Rink on Tuesdays at 2230 for players in Portsmouth; players in Plymouth and the West Country are invited to train at Bristol Ice Rink and players north of the Border can join the RAF training in Dundee during the week.

Further details at www.rniha.org.uk.



Swing of Sultans ... and deeps

LT OWEN Smith hits his way out of a bunker at the Marriott Meon Valley (pictured by LA/Photo Darby Allen) during a highly-competitive 11th HMS Sultan golf open.

A field of 81 golfers took part in the 36-hole competition on the extremely challenging but beautifully-presented championship course, writes CPO Dave Elliott, this year's open secretary.

The favourable weather contributed to a challenging day's golf and competition throughout the day was fierce with a high standard played throughout.

Coming out on top in 2010 was CPO Mike Nickson with an overall medal nett minus ¾ Stableford score of 31 points.

Runner-up Nathan Geddis narrowly finished ahead of WO2 Marty Wallace on count-back with a score of 36.

The aim of the contest - open to all Sultan Service personnel as well as her affiliates - is to provide a unique opportunity for Service players to compete with retired personnel, civil servants, civilian support staff as well as a host of sponsors on the day.

Ex-aircraft engineer Jon Temple, who left the RN more than 12 years ago and one of this year's sponsors, commented: "It was terrific to be invited to play in such a fantastic competition and meet some of my old colleagues. The healthy banter of the day reminded me of the great times I had whilst I was serving."

Sultan enjoys one of the largest society groups in the region with over 70 members - details at www.sultangolfsociety.co.uk.

Meanwhile in Scotland, the Westerwood Hotel, Cumbernauld, was the venue for the 2010 RN Submarine Command championships, a contest with more than 30 years' history.

This year, the competition took place on the Seve Ballesteros-designed course set in the beautiful surroundings of the Campsie Hills, 20 miles outside Glasgow, and was attended by more than 80 representatives of the Submarine Service past and present.

The promise "to challenge you to every shot imaginable in the game of golf" was an understatement on this recently-modified course.

Despite the challenging conditions imposed by horrendous weather, there were plenty of outstanding demonstrations of course management.

Lt Steve Trotman (SCU HMS Collingwood) was crowned champion with an impressive gross score of 155, with LS Connor Macleod (HMS Vengeance(Starboard)) a close runner-up (161). The best nett score was CPO Al Mulholland (153) with CPO Fred McEvoy (HMNB Clyde) winning the Stableford competition (64 points); Buck Rogers (ex POMEM) retained the ex-submariner trophy with a nett score of 155; the submarine team prize went to HMS Ambush.

A full list of results can be found on the competition website, www.submarinegolf.com.

Organiser Lt Titch Evans thanks all participants and those who supported the event which raised over £600 for Help for Heroes.

A course near Bristol will be the venue for the 2011 event hosted by WO1ET(MESM) Richard Thompson, MOD Abbey Wood.

And at Elfordleigh near Plymouth, three submariners from HMS Tireless went to 'hell and back' (their words not ours) for the Macmillan 2010 Longest Day Golf Challenge.

The trio - Tony Burgess, Ken Donohoe and Adam Grimley - completed four rounds of the course in a little over 14 hours, walking 22 miles in the process.

The club waived all fees for the day and ensured the first tee was always clear for rounds two, three and four (oddy, there weren't many people on the fairways for round one which teed off at 4.45am...).

Family members of all three deeps have suffered from cancer, hence the day's golf which raised £1,200 for Macmillan.



Oar-inspiring journey

LT SARA Collen leads members of the RN Kayaking Association past warships on North West Wall in the opening minutes of a circumnavigation of Portsea Island.

The 13-mile trip began at the sailing centre on Whale Island and ended there some four hours later.

The aim was to introduce novices to sea paddling in calm conditions - and to acquaint them with the change from daytime to night

kayaking (the trip ended at 10pm).

The other aim of the paddle was to highlight the shortage of qualified instructors, desperately needed to oversee pool sessions on Tuesday evenings at HMS Collingwood.

So four hours of sea paddling under Lt Cdr Joe Wood (Collingwood) allowed the kayakers to build up the necessary experience in preparation for instructor assessment.

More details on the sport at www.rnka.co.uk.

Racketeers triumph

A DOUBLE triumph for the men and women at the Inter-Service Lawn Tennis Championships crowned a cracking summer for RN sport.

Both tennis teams successfully swept away the opposition over the two-day championships and particular praise must be paid to the RN Ladies who unceremoniously dumped the Army and RAF out of the competition by winning 11 of their 12 rubbers to secure the win and break the Army's dominance since 2007, writes Lt Richie Moss.

After the first day's play the ladies had won all six rubbers. On the second day and after only two matches the competition was over and the title was in the bag by 11am.

Men's tennis is also very much in the ascendency and the team built on last year's Inter-Services 'A' win at Wimbledon and this year's Inter-Services 'B' win in Aldershot, by successfully retaining the Inter-Services title, a feat never achieved. Indeed, the last time that both men and ladies won at this level was back in 1992.

Last year saw the emergence of a great talent - ET(WESM) Scott Nicholls, so there was huge pressure on him as he faced his first match ever as the RN No.1 but he ably demonstrated his talent.

In his first match against RAF No.1 (Flt Lt Chris Evans), Scott won easily in two sets despite the fact that Chris was hitting hard on both wings from the baseline.

Meanwhile, RN No.3, CPO(PT) Steve Losh (back from sea and short of match practice) drew upon his wealth of experience to find a way past the Army No.3, Cpl Taff Williams.

In Round 2, promoted to the 'A' team after his exceptional display at this year's Inter-Services 'B' competition, ET(ME) Richard Drew faced a considerable challenge in his first A match: Flt Sgt Mark Lane, a stalwart of RAF tennis who has played this tournament for many years.

Despite being 23 years older than Richard, the RAF veteran had vast experience to draw upon and repeatedly found the corners of the court with his forehand and backhand slice.



● A winning forehand from Lt Oliver Craven in a three-set thriller against the RAF in the men's doubles
Picture: Lt Richie Moss

Richard's nerve held - his superior agility provided him the means of winning a very close match that had the potential to go either way.

Meanwhile, Scott Nicholls played a superb match against the Army No.1 L/Cpl Lawrence Tere to thoroughly vindicate his position as Singles No.1.

Steve Losh faced Flt Lt Jon Bond in his second match. On the big points at the end of the set, it was Steve's experience (again) that proved to be the deciding factor.

Richard Drew faced the Army No.2, Pte Jonny Abosi (with several years' experience of Inter Service tennis behind him). To his credit, Richard found a way to mix up the play during the final few games but by this stage Pte Abosi had already got the vital break in the second set and was able win a very close match.

At the end of day one, the RN led the Army by 5 rubbers to 4 with everything to play for.

The first two doubles matches of the second day were vital - the RN team needed to maintain their winning momentum.

Steve Losh and Scott Nicholls proved their pedigree with a straightforward win over their RAF opponents. However, the

crucial rubber in this first round was taking place on the adjacent court.

Richard Drew and Mne Nathan Jackson were able to draw upon their success at the 'B' tournament in April (where they had won both doubles matches) and beat the Army in straight sets. This crucial win opened the lead over the Army to 7-5.

In round 2 Steve and Scott faced the No.1 Army pair. Their big-serving opponents presented a considerable challenge but yet again the RN duo won the pressure points.

With three matches remaining, an overall RN victory was not certain until the RAF No.3 pair defeated their Army opponents - thereby denying the Army the chance of equalling the RN tally at that point.

The RN No.2 pairing - Capt Simon Brand and Lt Oliver Craven - confirmed the result by prevailing over their RAF opponents in three sets. Although the final two RN matches were lost, the team had done enough to win the championships and retain the trophy.

Some of the players competing at the Inter-Services had already scored successes in the RN

championships at the United Services Sports Ground, Portsmouth.

Scott Nicholls (Neptune) capitalised on his No.1 ranking winning the men's singles against Richard Drew (Diamond).

In her last RN Championships as a serving member of the RN, Surg Lt Lara Herbert (INM Alverstoke) went out in style by winning the ladies singles against Lt Cdr Katharine Rackham (JSCSC).

There were also wins for: men's doubles - Capt Brand (JSCSC) and Lt Craven (MOD) who beat Drew and Mne Jackson; ladies doubles - Lt Cdr Rackham and Surg Lt Cdr Southorn (Sultan) beat Surg Lt Herbert and Musn Hudson (RM School of Music); men's veterans singles - Capt Brand (JSCSC) beat R Reynolds; men's veterans doubles - A Mills and M Pepperday beat R Reynolds and T Reynolds; and finally in the mixed doubles - Lt Cdr Rackham and Mne Jackson beat S/Lt Driscoill (MWS) and Musn Hudson.

More details at www.navytennis.co.uk and free coaching at Portsmouth Indoor Tennis Dome, (opposite HMS Temeraire), Mondays 7-8pm.



● Picture of concentration... LLogs Vernon Ralph (815 NAS) propels himself upwards in the pole vault
Picture: SAC Kearney, RAF Cosford

Track to the future

THE Royal Navy Track and Field team exceeded expectations in the 2010 Inter-Service championships at RAF Cosford.

The haul of 15 medals was a slight improvement on recent years, with a mix of medallists from perennial achievers and emerging talent, writes Paul Winton.

A strong wind benefitted jumpers and throwers, but prevented good sprint times and posed a severe challenge for endurance athletes in the final third of each lap.

LS(MW) Andy Dawkins (SRMH Crew 7, currently HMS Ramsey) and CPOPT Neal Edwards (BRNC) have been the top performing Royal Navy athletes at Inter-Service level over the past ten years.

Both now qualify as veterans (over 35) where they are top-three-ranked in UK.

Dawkins won the shot putt in a keenly-contested tussle with his regular Army opposition, after warming up with a third place in the hammer, later just missing out on another medal in the discus.

Edwards finished a close second in the 400m hurdles where the RAF victor accepted he was the fortunate recipient of the starter's discretion to avoid disqualification.

As ever, these two athletes set the tone and example for the remainder of the RN team with medal-winning performances in the opening track and field events.

The women's 800m was arguably the most exciting track event of the day.

LPT Julie Stroud (Raleigh) and Lt Emma Bakewell (Sultan) both approached the race with a sequences of excellent results and performances, including personal bests. The entire field were closely matched in a fast-run race; Stroud's strength and determination carried her to a deserved silver medal.

Bakewell engineered fourth place as both women again set PBs and pondered sub-2m 20s timings next year.

ET(ME) Daryn Jackson (Sultan) burst on to the scene this season, setting the best sprint times by a Royal Navy athlete for many years.

Making the most of his natural ability, he gradually refined his raw talent over the season, culminating in bronze medals over both 100m and 200m, thereby upsetting the traditional balance with the other two Services as he won the first Royal Navy men's sprinting medals for over 20 years.

Future sea service presents career and sporting challenges, but he has ready capacity to further develop strength, power and technique to realise improved performances in 2011.

LReg Shelly Prescott (Drake) matched Jackson's achievement in the women's sprints as she finished 3rd in both, equalling previous placings, albeit not in the same year. AB Kenisha Asquith (Diamond) was close behind in both races.

Surg Lt Gordon Irvine (Sultan) made his debut at this level in his final few weeks of service.

Competing in the 3,000m steeplechase, he ran a brave race to finish second with a storming sprint finish. His long duel battling for third-fourth place reaped dividends as the long-standing, but fast-fading, second-place runner

was caught and passed. Std Sol Marong (FPS) returned to the Royal Navy team after a two-year absence, finishing third in the men's 400m - exactly the same placing and fractionally faster than his last outing at this level.

Mne Jim Galvin (42 Cdo) has a strong multi-events background reaching back to his schooldays.

While long-term injuries prevent him undertaking some specialist events within a decathlon, he has committed to a wide range of events over the 2010 season.

Just missing out on sprint medals, he won silver and bronze in the high and long jumps respectively with his best performances of the season and was ecstatic with a long jump approaching seven metres.

Another double medallist was Lt Irish Sirmons (Navy Command). A regularly strong performer at British League-level, predominantly in the hammer for which there was no Inter-Service event, she won silver at both women's discus and shot putt, just missing out on a medal in the javelin.

Ably backed by LLogs Rhian Hanson (SFM Portsmouth), herself a previous Inter-Services multi medallist, the combined performance of these two throwers was the best by RN women for many years.

Team spirit was abundant amongst the 15 men and 9 women comprising the Royal Navy team as many covered a number of events. ET(ME) Marcelle John (NBC SFM Portsmouth) exemplified this as she scored points in five individual events and both relays; NA(SE) Nicole Lindo (RNAS Yeovilton) was not far behind - the joyous smile on her face as she registered a legitimate distance in the women's triple jump was a noted highlight.

LMA Glen Long (CTRM) wore his lucky 'black Pusser's socks' in the long jump, triple jump and pole vault, aided by the ever-willing LLogs Vernon Ralph (815 NAS) in the triple jump and pole vault.

Distance athletes Lt Ellie Berry (Dauntless), Lt Jon Wright (Triumph), CPO(PT) Wayne Hodgkinson (Excellent) and AET Dave Scott (RNAS Yeovilton) confronted strong opposition, their efforts were matched by POAEM Si Parry (RNAS Culdrose) and LAET Phil Palmer (4 Sqn, RAF Wittering) who did so twice each in 800m and 1,500m.

The RN will host the 2011 Inter-Services Track and Field Championships, with real potential for further success if individual and team performances continue to develop.

The RN men finished mid-table in the Southern Men's League Division 3 West (SML 3W) after five matches over the summer.

The standard in SML 3W is lower than Inter-Services level so competition at this level provides an excellent opportunity for a wide range of athletes and age groups to establish and develop athletic performance.

Interested/emerging athletes should make contact with local PT staff or Paul Winton on 9380 23644.



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● Cpl Alvin Pollard (CLR) thumps a six for the winning runs against the Army at Lord's to clinch the Twenty20 title

Picture: Matt Bright, MCC

Twenty20 visionaries

LORD'S. A beautiful summer's day. Victory over the Army and RAF in cricket's Twenty20 Inter-Services tournament. It doesn't get much better than this.

After an opening RAF-Army clash at the home of cricket which the soldiers won by 55 runs and a lunchtime display of Kwik cricket from colts of US Portsmouth CC and Shrivernham along with Service cricket coaches, the Royal Navy joined the fray against the Air Force.

The RAF were initially held back but picked up the pace in the second half of their innings to build a competitive score of 141, writes Lt Cdr David Cooke, RNCC.

The RN's response was led by a spirited innings of 71 from Lt Jon Batley (PJHQ), playing his last day's cricket in the RN.

As is the way of T20, wickets fell, nerves jangled and the RAF fought back to produce the perfect climax with the Airmen requiring the wicket of the last man and the Navy needing one run off the final delivery, Cpl Jon Grasham's (CTCRM) only ball.

Grasham took guard, swung the bat and top edged the ball over the wicketkeeper's head for four runs in front of the pavilion. The crowd of nearly 3,000 went wild; the RN had won by one wicket.

With one win apiece, the final game between the RN and the Army would produce the victors of the tournament.

The soldiers batted first and thanks to some exceptionally

tight bowling from ETWE(SM) Matt Thompson (Raleigh) 3-15 off four overs, AB Mike Green (Daring) 2-19 (4) and ETWE Joe Hill (Ark Royal) 2-19 (4) and very impressive fielding, were restricted to 116.

In reply the RN got into their stride slowly with the Army showing that they too could excel in the bowling and fielding departments; the required run rate mounted and the Naval batsmen started to succumb to the pressure as wickets began to fall.

With five overs to go and 50 runs still required the ship appeared to be sinking. The one stalwart of the RN innings however was opening batsman Thompson, who displayed great technique and enormous maturity to reach 50 off 52 balls.

With vital assistance from Cpl Cullum Smith (R Sigs Blanford) (24) and ultimately Cpl Alvin Pollard (Cdo Logs Regt) (14), the Navy closed in on the target requiring just 17 off the last two overs.

In the event, it was Pollard who hit the winning runs in style – a six over the bowler's head with just two balls to spare to snatch victory from a shell-shocked Army team; the RN won by four wickets.

The crowd went wild once more, MCC President John Barclay congratulated all three teams for a tremendous day's cricket and judged Matt Thompson player of the tournament for his fine all-round performance.

The ladies were sadly unable to match their male counterparts in the female Inter-Services T20 contest in Portsmouth.

They came a most creditable second, well in front of the RAF, but not even close to a very strong Army side.

Elsewhere, the Inter-Services U25 competition was held at RAF Uxbridge where a relatively-inexperienced RN side, which included five new caps, took on the might of the Army on the first day... and fell 153 runs short of the target of 292 set by the soldiers.

An unchanged RN side which was still recovering from this mauling then faced the RAF.

All five Navy bowlers took wickets – ET S Louis 2-8, Hill 2-22, Thompson 2-28, Green 2-29 and Logs (CS) ETempo (Albion) 2-51 – to bowl the airmen out for 151.

The RN lost two quick wickets in reply, but Hill and Thompson restored order with good knocks and finally Hewitt and ET(ME) J Richards (Argyll) finished the job off in 42 overs – a resounding victory.

In Portsmouth, five Command teams (Royal Marines, Portsmouth, Scotland, Plymouth and Naval Air) took part in the Inter-Command Twenty20 cricket competition, a round-robin tournament over two days with the two top teams competing in the final on the grass wicket at Burnaby Road.

Two teams stood out as likely finalists: last year's winners the Royal Marines and Portsmouth, who had dug deep to unearth a number of Navy players from the woodwork.

There were some very fine performances throughout the tournament – perhaps the most staggering from PO S Sheakey (Collingwood) who scored 101 not-out in just 22 balls when batting for Portsmouth against Scotland.

He was named player of the contest – and it was his team

which triumphed, beating the commandos by 17 runs in the final.

The Ladies Inter-Services were held at Aldershot where the RN played the strong favourites the Army on day one.

The RN opening bowlers restricted their opponents to a manageable run rate, but later loose bowling and an impressive 64 from an Army middle order batswoman restored some credibility to their score.

In reply to a target of 232, the RN started steadily, with S/Lt H Garton (Sultan) opening with 25, Lt U Frost (Fleet) (35) and useful contributions from lower order batswomen, but the RN fell short by 48 runs.

The following day, the ladies were out for revenge and were prepared to put the RAF to the sword. Batting first, the RAF scored 70 before the loss of their first wicket but then wickets fell very quickly and they only managed to scramble to 115-8 after their 40 overs.

In reply, despite a couple of rain stoppages, Garton and Boswell were in a hurry to get a victory under their belt and duly did so in just 18 overs: Garton made 55 not out and Boswell 22 from 19 balls to claim a nine-wicket victory for the Navy.

After the euphoria of the RN victory at Lord's, the senior Inter-Services in Portsmouth seemed to have a feeling of anti-climax.

First up were the RAF who lost six wickets for 101 runs. Things were looking good for the Navy, but the foot was taken off the pedal and the late/middle order batsmen were allowed to amass a score of 207-9 in 50 overs.

The RN never really got going

Continued on page 46



A trio of mint performances

NAVY riders made a clean sweep of the three principal Service polo tournaments – the Rundle Cup, the Inter-Regimental Tournament and the Duke of York Cup – for the first time in 14 years.

Starting on a gloriously sunny afternoon at Tidworth, the Army and Navy met for the Rundle Cup, the highlight of the Services' polo season (pictured above by CPO(Phot) Rob Harding, FRPU East).

This year the senior RN team of Cdre Richard Mason, Capt Adrian Aplin, Lt Cdr Al Wilson and S/Lt Hiro Suzuki faced a three-goal Army side.

As the slightly weaker team on handicap, the Navy started with ½ goal lead and immediately made themselves felt.

Attacking from the start, a very fast run by Suzuki culminated in a beautiful pass towards the Tedworth House goal where Wilson was perfectly positioned to elegantly run the ball between the posts and open the scoring.

The Army were quick to respond but excellent defensive play by Mason and Aplin prevented them from finding the posts, leaving the RN in the lead 1½-0 at the end of the chukka.

In the second chukka the Army stepped up the pressure and scored an extremely good goal, but the RN were not to be bullied. Suzuki quickly replied with a scorching goal from the 40-yard line. However, shortly before the whistle for half time, the Army won a penalty which they successfully converted to leave them just trailing 2½-2.

In the second half both sides played hard, aggressive polo but the Senior Service's cohesion and discipline gave them the edge against a very talented but occasionally-muddled Army side.

The Army were not short of attacks but the RN defence was up to the mark and three good attempts at goal were pushed wide.

In response the Navy pressured the Army's goal and scored twice; a well co-ordinated attack had Mason neatly running the ball home before the end of the third chukka and, half-way through the fourth, Aplin overcame very robust defence by Cowley to score a clean nearside goal, thus putting the Navy in the lead 4½-2 at the final bell.

The following day the Navy team met at Guards Polo Club at Windsor for the final of the Inter-Regimental tournament where they faced a very strong three-goal Household Cavalry Mounted Regiment (HCMR) side.

Although starting as the underdogs, the Navy knew that if they played as they did on the previous day they could upset the cavalry's plans to carry away the silver.

Starting with a half-goal lead, the Navy began well but it was the Cavalry that opened the scoring. Refusing to be daunted, the RN immediately counter-attacked and Suzuki successfully converted a penalty. The first half continued with excellent, closely-fought end-to-end play with two further goals from the Army and another 30 yard penalty by Suzuki leaving the half time score at 3-2½ to the HCMR.

In the third chukka the play remained evenly-matched; an aggressive Navy attack culminated in an excellent backhand by Aplin keeping the ball in play; it was then neatly tapped round by Wilson to score a fine goal, putting the RN ahead 3½-3.

The Army also scored before the end of the chukka. Neither the umpires or goal judge saw the ball cross the line but the RN gallantly insisted that it had and a goal should be awarded.

The fourth chukka started 4-3½ to the Cavalry and was undoubtedly the most exciting of the match.

Both teams came out hard, however the Army conceded a 40 yard penalty which Suzuki converted allowing the RN to take the lead.

The HCMR were determined to go down fighting. Two minutes from the end, Mann picked up the ball from the halfway line to run towards goal. In the defensive mêlée that followed the

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