



NAVY NEWS

SEPTEMBER 2012

OLYMPIAN HEIGHTS

HAIL OUR HEROES

DAUNTLESS VENTURES SOUTH

CAPE TOWN STOPOVER



STOP THE TRAFFIC

ROYAL Marines from HMS Sutherland's boarding team practise fast-roping from a Merlin helicopter on to the frigate's flight deck. Ship, helicopter, marines and sailors are honing their skills for the demanding theatre of counter-terror/smuggling/piracy operations in the Indian Ocean. See page 10 for details.
Picture: LA(Phot) Ben Sutton, HMS Sutherland



Off-sale date: October 1, 2012

£2.50

A Games of two



● With an 814 NAS Merlin overhead, Royal Marines of 539 Assault Squadron in Offshore Raiding Craft and Royal Navy personnel in RIBs make an impressive sight sweeping across Weymouth Bay



● With the Shard dominating the capital's skyline in the distance, a Mk8 Lynx lifts off from HMS Ocean to begin a security patrol and (below) HMS Bulwark's chefs pose with silver-medal-winning sailor Saskia Clark (and hopefully returned her gong...)



WHERE were you when Mo Farah crossed the line?

Or Jessica Ennis? Or Peter Reed? Probably glued to a screen. The men and women of 814 Naval Air Squadron were. Except that it was probably a digital navigation map. Or a surface plot.

So too the operations room team in HMS Bulwark, fed live images back from the squadron's Merlins over Weymouth Bay.

The crew of HMS Blazer, Express and Puncher were probably bobbing up and down in the Thames Estuary.

And the crew of HMS Ocean were feeding hundreds of fellow Servicemen and women using their ship as a floating billet – or readying 815 NAS Lynx for another mission through the capital's airspace.

To name but a few. While the biggest sporting party in British history was in full swing, so too the largest security operation ever mounted in the UK in peacetime.

Over the first four weeks of Operation Olympics (it only draws to a close with the end of the Paralympics in the middle of this month), the Flying Tigers of 814 NAS were airborne for 315 hours – that's 13 whole days, or more than twice the amount of time the squadron typically spends in Cornish skies in a month.

For 12 hours a day every day they were charged with patrolling the 50 square miles of the Olympic sailing area – a domain the ten-ton helicopter could zip across in just three minutes.

The helicopter's Blue Kestrel radar scanned the surface of the Channel, allowing the observer to plot all vessels in and around Weymouth Bay.

Those plots were visually confirmed by the two pilots using the Mark 1 Eyeball, or by the Merlin's aircrewman sat next to the observer operating the hi-tech WESCAM.

The infra-red electro optic camera provided live imagery

irrespective of the weather, day or night – fed directly into Bulwark's operations room for the police and ship's warfare team to build up a real-time tactical picture of all goings on.

In the back of the cab poised by the open cargo door with M3M machine-gun and rifle at the ready were the Maritime Sniper Team to disable hostile boats if required.

Alternatively, the myriad of Royal Marines, Royal Navy and police launches, raiding craft and landing craft marshalled off Weymouth could move in to investigate – the helicopter's observer was in constant contact with those on the water, a sort of running commentary (if you'll forgive the sporting analogy) of happenings.

The mission was much the same as the Merlin performs in the Indian Ocean from the back of a Royal Navy frigate, searching for pirates/smugglers/terrorists – indeed that wealth of experience proved invaluable.

Even so, there was an intensive period of training for the Flying Tigers this spring, culminating in a fortnight working with Bulwark on the cusp of the Olympics.

To give an idea of the intensity of the work-up, 814 fired more rounds of M3M ammunition in four months than all four Royal Navy Merlin squadrons in the past four years.

The bulk of 814 – six helicopters – and attendant air and ground crew decamped to RNAS Yeovilton, which served as the Flying Tigers' hub, using Bulwark (just ten minutes' flying time away) as a 'forward airfield/base'.

The hardest part of the Olympic mission, said senior maintainer CPO Daniel Laity, was to provide the right aircraft, with the right kit and right amount of fuel at the right time so that at least two Tigers were ready to fly at all times, with one in the air.

It meant a lot of work, a lot of co-ordination and some last-minute changes to meet the demands. Luckily there was

a "small, elite and handsome team" – the senior rating's words – to deal with any issues which might be thrown up: it could take eight hours to move the specialist Olympic 'fit' of camera system and M3M gun from one Merlin to another if the helicopter was unserviceable.

"Through blood, sweat and the odd tear, we managed to keep these aircraft in the true Flying Tigers fashion," said Daniel, part of the 814 detachment on Bulwark.

"The guys on board Bulwark welcomed our squadron personnel at all levels – we got involved in all the ship's activities and events and had great support."

The nation's flagship provided accommodation, food (including outside the usual hours for the aircrew), fuel, supplies, handlers on deck, while 814 provided aircraft controllers for the sprawling ops room to help co-ordinate the huge operation and advise the civilian-military team of what the Merlin can do – and how best to use it.

As far as the Flying Tigers' Commanding Officer Cdr Chris Stock was concerned, his Merlins were "the perfect choice for the mission – their versatility made them the helicopter of choice" and the live video stream beamed by the WESCAM into Bulwark gave the ops room team a "gold standard" picture of everything happening on the waters around Weymouth.

Good as the kit is, however, "it's the men and women of the squadron that made it so effective – their professionalism and dedication has been key to 814 making a telling contribution to a safe and secure Olympic Games.

"I'm proud of the contribution made by the 'Eyes of the Tigers'."

Observer Sub Lt Hannah Best added: "Being able to support the Olympics has been incredibly rewarding – we've used all our training to ensure the safety of competitors and spectators.

"It's been both challenging

and exciting – I'm thrilled to have taken part."

WHILE the Flying Tigers were in the air 12 hours a day, the myriad of patrol craft – police launches, Navy RIBs, Royal Marines ORC gunboats, P2000 patrol boats – were doing likewise on the water.

Each of the latter – Her Majesty's Ships Tracker, Raider and Exploit – embarked police officers for the duration of Operation Olympics so that arrests could be made.

It's testament to the efforts of the combined team choreographing the effort off Weymouth – and the understanding of the British public – that no-one was.

For the P2000s, more used to taking university students to sea over the summer (see pages 16-17), the days off Dorset were long.

The boats set out on patrol at 8am (which meant a 6 or 6.30am rise for crews).

They returned alongside in Portland harbour around 7pm and while the ship's company oversaw refuelling (typically taking about an hour), the skipper attended a general security briefing, followed by a confab for the three P2000 commanding officers, while shipmates went ashore to buy provisions courtesy of the daily food allowance of £6.11.

By the time everything was done, it was gone 10pm. Maybe an hour to relax, bed, then do it all over again...

A typical daily patrol would involve advising pleasure cruisers, kayakers, fishermen and yachtsmen of the exclusion zone around the Games area, directing civilian security boats to investigate a cluster of approaching yachts, and a friendly wave or two to passing tourist boats.

During lulls in the action there was time to check in the office in the respective university cities and plan for the boats' autumn refits and overhauls.

Chances to actually watch the Olympics – apart from on the

halves



telly – were pretty rare. Exploit did “catch sight of” Ben Ainslie during one of his races.

Any important lessons from the first Operation Olympics stint? “Apply some sun cream,” Lt Simon Shaw, Exploit’s CO advises. Why? “The P2000 has an open bridge and 12 hours in the wind and sun results in a red and tight face.”

Despite the sunburn and long days, it’s been a memorable mission so far.

“Meeting Prince Edward, protecting the Olympic Sailing Regatta and hosting the defence editor from *The Times* – amongst others – life at the Olympic sailing venue was certainly never dull,” said Lt Shaw.

AH YES, visitors. A lot of visitors. VIPs no less. For RFA Mounts Bay: the Earl and Countess of Wessex and Princess Anne – Britain’s representative on the International Olympic Committee; for Bulwark: Defence Secretary Philip Hammond and security minister Gerald Howarth; for HMS Ocean, Mr Hammond and Princess Anne and a slew of Team GB athletes.

The latter – including Royal Marine judoka Chris Sherrington (see page 42) received a heroes’ welcome from the Mighty O’s ship’s company in a special meet-and-greet session in the helicopter carrier’s junior rates dining hall.

The athletes engaged in a ‘question and answer’ session, handing out Olympic t-shirts and signed autographs as well as posing for photographs taken with the sailors, Royal Marines, soldiers and air men present.

Ocean’s Commanding Officer Capt Andrew Betton said that his ship’s “small role in these Olympic Games was put into perspective by the success and the inspiration of these wonderful athletes.”

For the athletes, however, it was the Servicemen and women who were the inspiration.

“It has been a fantastic experience for me to be an athlete and represent my country at these games, but

it has been a great comfort knowing that you guys are out there looking after us,” said GB water polo captain Craig Figes.

“You should be proud of what you are doing. Thank you all.”

Which has been a recurring message in the first ‘half’ of the Royal Navy’s Olympic mission.

There have been a lot of thank-yous.

From cycling gold medalist Jason Kenny.

“Every time I went through the security gates they came across as professional, efficient and courteous. They really made me feel confident things were being handled competently. A big vote of thanks to them.”

From the legend that is Jason’s fellow cyclist Sir Chris Hoy:

“To the volunteers, the Armed Forces, the police, the GB public, the organisers, the media, the weather, THANK YOU!! What a show!”

From former England striker turned TV anchorman Gary Lineker:

“Special word for the great work done by our troops. Always a smile, a friendly word and a camera. Thanks all.”

And from Mr Howarth:

“The presence of the military, pleasant, polite and smiling, has been fantastically well received by the public and has added hugely to the reputation of the Armed Forces.”

“On behalf of the Secretary of State for Defence, and all the government, thank you very, very much indeed. You’ve done yourselves proud, you’ve done us proud, you’ve done the nation proud. It is a magnificent achievement.”

As for the British people...

“The public have been very appreciative of our work and many people said that our presence made them feel safe and secure,” said AB Edward Warrington from East Midlands reservist unit HMS Sherwood.

His shipmate Sub Lt Phil Lewin added: “We even received some ‘thank-you’ cards.”

Throughout the Games, Britain’s biggest warship has been ‘parked’ on the Thames at Greenwich serving as a floating helicopter pad and accommodation for some of the military personnel assigned to venue security.

Further down the Thames, an outer shield of maritime security was provided by three P2000s.

HMS Blazer, Express and Puncher were acting as sentries to the Port of London, helping to compile the ‘maritime picture’ of movements.

The capital is in the nation’s top three busiest commercial ports – there are more than 12,000 shipping movements to its 70 or so terminals, quays and jetties every year.

“We monitored every inbound vessel from the largest all the way down to the little kayaks – and everything in between – checking them, verifying them, understanding them, making sure they were routine, expected and safe,” explained Lt James Beedle, Blazer’s CO.

OF COURSE, it’s not all been about security; 120 sailors and marines were assigned flag-raising duties from the opening to the closing ceremony – and every medal presentation in between.

Lt Jamie Weller, one of the five Senior Service flag-raisers at the spectacular opening ceremony, said: “We had people shake our hands all over London, saying ‘thank you’ for helping out with the Games.”

A member of the executive committee of the British Schools Gymnastics Association, he was present in the North Greenwich Arena (aka the O2 or, for older readers, the Millennium Dome) as GB won its first team medal

in 100 years.

“The noise in the arena was deafening. For me and the other flag-bearers to be there when the medals are presented, that is something very special.”

Among the last events of this first phase of the Olympiad was a ‘somewhat unusual’ (good Naval euphemisms No.21) affair in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets which wanted to thank the Forces for their efforts.

The Olympic Park was in Newham. So too the ExCel Centre (venue for boxing and judo among others). And equestrian events were across the water in Greenwich.

But many of the military were billeted at Tobacco Dock, a former shopping centre in Tower Hamlets, while Ocean was moored half in the borough... and half in Greenwich.

So a platoon of sailors was invited to attend the thank-you ceremony, while the Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth provided the appropriate musical soundtrack.

So far, so normal. But then local resident Helen Mirren saw what was going on and came over to watch.

That would be Dame Helen Mirren. Oscar-winning actress. *The Queen*. *Long Good Friday*. *Prime Suspect*...

She laughed, joked and had her photograph taken with members of Ocean ship’s company.

So that would obviously be the most memorable part of the event, then?

“It was a great day, and the curry was enjoyed by all!” said Ocean’s 1st Lieutenant Lt Cdr Dave Mann.

A navy sails on its stomach... Joking aside, the Mighty Os found the ceremony at Tower Hamlets a rather moving affair.

“We’re just here doing our job, so to be recognised like this means a lot to all of us,” Lt Cdr Mann added.

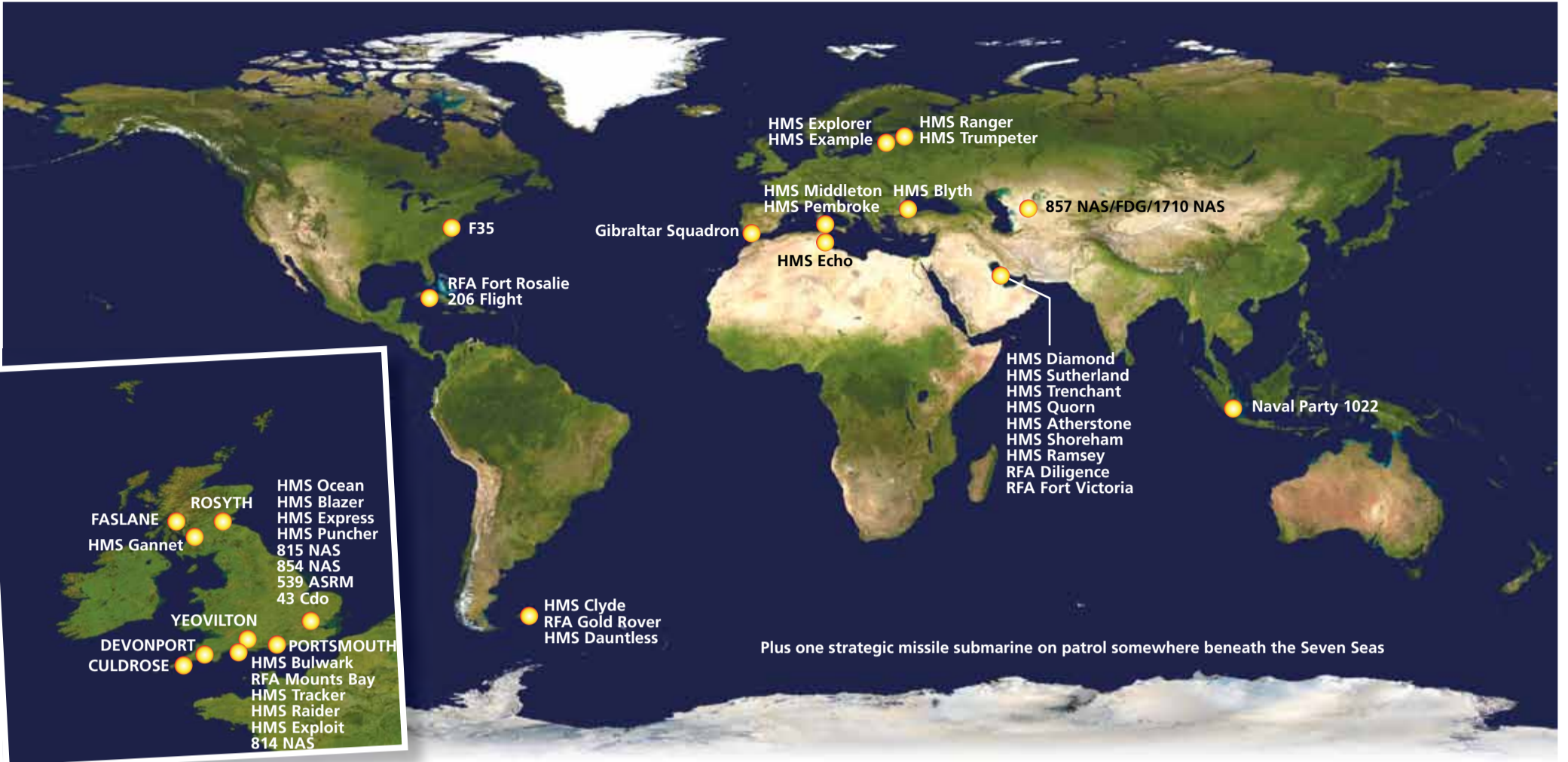
Right, that’s the first half done. The second period – the Paralympics – should be in full swing by now...

● A tug pushes the Olympic Rings down the Thames past HMS Ocean, their job complete – unlike the Mighty O’s which goes on



● A Navy flag party marches on for a medal ceremony in the North Greenwich arena





FLEET FOCUS
Protecting our nation's interests

MUCH achieved but still plenty to do... That could be the watchword of the Royal Navy in general, but it happens to refer to the Senior Service's input in Operation Olympics as *Navy News* went to press.

The Olympic Games are done and dusted, with sailors and Royal Marines performing with distinction both as competitors (see pages 42 and 44) and as part of the protective shield around Olympic venues, based in **HMS Ocean** on the Thames and **HMS Bulwark** in Weymouth Bay (see pages 2-3).

But the job is not yet done, as the ring of steel remains firmly in place until the conclusion of the Paralympic Games later this month.

And that opening sentence holds true beyond London and Dorset, because while the nation has been enthralled by the achievements of Trott, Ainslie, Bolt *et al*, the Royal Navy has been quietly getting on with business as usual.

The Type 45 destroyers, for example, have been clocking up achievements of their own, laying the foundations for decades of service.

First-of-class **HMS Daring** returned home to an enthusiastic welcome after her maiden deployment (see right) while **HMS Dauntless** has been testing her mettle in the South Atlantic (see pages 22-23).

HMS Diamond has been working with (and earning plaudits from) the iconic American aircraft carrier USS Enterprise (see page 15) while the fifth ship in the class of six, **HMS Defender**, made her first appearance in the Solent on a glorious summer's day (see page 6).

Enough of the cutting edge Type 45s – what about the largest class of ship in the Fleet? That will be the P2000s or Archer-class patrol boats, and they have been particularly active in recent weeks.

Returning briefly to the Olympic theme, HM ships **Tracker**, **Raider** and **Exploit** have been putting in long shifts off Weymouth to patrol the exclusion zone around the Games area, while HM ships **Blazer**, **Express** and **Puncher** have been undertaking a similar role in the Thames Estuary (see pages 2-3).

Casting our eyes further east, we find four more of the patrol boats – HM ships **Ranger**, **Trumpeter**, **Example** and **Explorer** – making their way around the shores of the Baltic on a University RN Unit deployment that stretched as far as St Petersburg (see pages 16-17).

Example and Explorer are also our Ships of the Month (see page 12).

HMS Westminster's return from her deployment east of Suez was marked by an empty place during Procedure Alpha – a place where missing sailor Timmy MacColl should have been standing to enjoy the ship's entry to Portsmouth Harbour (see opposite).

The responsibility for keeping the high seas safe was passed from Westminster to sister frigate **HMS Sutherland** (see page 10), while another Type 23, **HMS Montrose**, was on ceremonial duty, escorting the Queen and Duke of Edinburgh at Cowes (see page 15).

The Royal Marines of **40 Commando** have been training in the rain on Salisbury Plain as the green berets prepare to deploy to Afghanistan this month (see page 9).

One of the longest-deployed ships in the Fleet, **HMS Echo**, returned to Devonport after almost 20 months away (see page 7), although the minehunters of the Gulf are also away from home waters for long periods – HM ships **Middleton** and **Pembroke** were on their way home after more than three years as *Navy News* went to press, replaced by HM ships **Atherstone** and **Shoreham** (see page 15).

And Middleton and Pembroke had an important visit to make on their way home, representing the RN at commemorations for the safe arrival in Malta of the pivotal **Pedestal convoy** 70 years ago (see page 14).

Submarine **HMS Triumph** rang down the curtain on a hectic 18 months (see page 6) while sister T-boat **HMS Trenchant** has taken her place east of Suez – and her crew enjoyed a 'hands to bathe' with the boat's rubber duck after a 29-day passage (see page 15).

There is still plenty to cover, but so little space left – just enough to mention the derring-do activities of the **RN Raiders** parachute display team (see page 8) and to take a glimpse into the future at the strike capability of the Fleet Air Arm's fifth-generation **Lightning II** jet (page 6) and the sleek lines of the replacement for the Type 23 frigate, the **Type 26 Global Combat Ship** (see page 13).



'Doing much to raise the profile...'

NOT a snapshot of crowds lining a Jubilee route or the cycling road races at the Olympics.

No, this is the ecstatic welcome which awaited HMS Daring at the end of a deployment of firsts.

Over six and a half months, Britain's first Type 45 destroyer has blazed a trail through the Middle East for all five of her sisters who will one day follow her (Diamond's already there – see page 15).

And as she's been billed by the UK media as 'state-of-the-art' and 'world's most-advanced warship', nations and navies in the region were queuing up to see what all the fuss was about.

So there were exercises or operations alongside warships from Australia, France, India, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia and the United States.

And there were first visits to Bahrain (hub of the RN's effort east of Suez), India, Jordan, Kuwait, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates.

In all, the Portsmouth-based destroyer covered 34,642 nautical miles, spending 139 days at sea and visiting 12 different countries.

The string of foreign visits evidently went down well with some of the 200 souls aboard.

"Visiting so many different countries has been amazing. The Gulf is such a varied place and the stops have all been completely different," said AB(WS) Elliot Parsons.

"I think Mumbai was my favourite – such a crazy, brilliant place.

"The opportunity to visit so many different countries is great – that is why I joined the Royal Navy."

Daring is, of course, not a cruise ship, but a £1bn investment in the security of the Fleet from air attack and a wider mission as a general purpose warship.

So did she deliver? Her Commanding Officer Capt Guy Robinson believes so.

"It was a most rewarding deployment where we have been able to explore Daring's capability in the challenging conditions of the Gulf," he said.

"Unsurprisingly, there has been a lot of interest in the ship, particularly from the other navies we have worked with.

"We have hosted a large number of visitors throughout the last six months and we have done much to raise the profile of Type 45 and the Royal Navy."

Falklands veteran Lt Cdr Joe Harper, Flight Commander of Daring's 815 NAS Lynx, added: "It was a long deployment and the squadron guys worked pretty hard. We had some really good port visits and saw some charming places along the way."

Working with the US Navy has seen Daring and her ship's company integrate with US Carrier Strike Groups One, Nine and Twelve centred on USS Carl Vinson, Abraham Lincoln and Enterprise respectively – amongst the most powerful warships afloat.

The culmination of this effort was Daring fully integrating with the USS Abraham Lincoln, her associated Strike Group and her Air Wing of fast jets whilst they conducted missions supporting troops on the ground in Afghanistan.

Justin jumps in to save yachtsman

A ROYAL Marine rescuer was lowered into the Bristol Channel in 40ft waves to save the life of an injured French yachtsman.

Cpl Justin Morgan from 771 NAS was winched into the sea some 65 miles north of the Scillies as he tried to rescue the stricken sailor as darkness set in on a mid-August night.

In the deepening gloom, it took the Sea King crew of captain and pilot Lt Cdr Adam Jones, observer Lt Cdr Florry Ford, flying pilot Lt Cdr Andy Knight and aircrewman Cpl Morgan an hour to locate the 20ft yacht.

They succeeded when the yachtsman, who'd fallen over while trying to fix his masts and rigging and injured his ankle, lit a flare.

A hi-line – a long length of guide rope for the winchman to follow – was lowered to the yacht to begin the rescue, but the yachtsman, in his desperation to be rescued, leaped into the water.

"The sailor was so desperate to get off the yacht that he tied the hi-line around his waist and jumped into the water," Justin explained.

"We then had to act very quickly to ensure his safety."

The Royal Marine was lowered into the water by Lt Cdr Ford and had to try to pull the sailor on the line by hand towards him.

He said: "I knew that I couldn't let go of the 200ft rope, even though it was very heavy, or we would lose the sailor."

"It was really difficult to pull him towards me because of the extremely high waves."

"Eventually I had to inflate my own lifejacket to make things easier and I managed to get the strop around him so the crew could winch him to safety."

"But the 200ft rope was still tangled around us, so I had to cut parts of it from us first."

"When we were eventually winched back safely to the helicopter we lay on the floor, thinking about what we had been through. It was an epic job."

The casualty was taken to the Royal Cornwall Hospital.

Right now, Justin should be coming to the end of a 17-day 3,100-mile cycle ride across the USA to raise money for the Children's Hospice South West and the Royal Marines Benevolent Fund. For more information, see www.3100miles.co.uk



Picture: LA(Phot) Kyle Heller, FRPU East

Success and sadness

THIS is the poignant – and very obvious – gap left by the men and women of HMS Westminster to show that one of their family was missing as the frigate returned to Portsmouth.

The spot on the warship's upper deck where Leading Seaman Timmy MacColl should have been standing alongside shipmates for Procedure Alpha was left empty.

LS MacColl's disappearance cast a shadow over an otherwise hugely successful deployment – and a homecoming charged with the usual high spirits of a flurry of flags and banners and 800-plus family members and friends waiting anxiously to see loved ones after seven months away.

While they waited for the frigate to reach its berth in the naval base, they were treated to a flypast from the ship's Merlin helicopter, before it made for its base at Culdrose in Cornwall, home to its parent 829 Naval Air Squadron.

The Merlin played a key role – as, of course, did the rest of the ship's company and Royal Marines detachment aboard – in the four main triumphs of Westminster's deployment.

The Type 23 frigate seized more than 70 bales containing pure heroin – which would have

provided terrorists with £14m of funding – from a dhow in the Indian Ocean.

And in a patrol which clocked up more than 44,000 miles, the warship stopped three groups of suspected pirates who were targeting merchant shipping.

Westminster also paid goodwill visits across the region from Aqaba in Jordan to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, and took part in numerous exercises with coalition and allied forces.

"I am tremendously proud of all that we have achieved. My fantastic ship's company has risen to every challenge that has been laid before them and we have had a tangible effect in making the UK's interests more secure as a result," said Capt Nick Hine, CO of the 'capital ship'.

Capt Hine added that everyone aboard his ship was "desperately disappointed" to have returned home without LS MacColl.

"Our thoughts and prayers remain with his family at this particularly difficult time."

The leading hand's family released 77 yellow balloons from Portsmouth's Round Tower – one for each of the days the 27-year-old father of two had been missing – as the frigate sailed in.

There has been no trace of him since he climbed into a taxi in Dubai early on May 27 following a night out with shipmates.

LS MacColl's disappearance prompted an international response – not just from his shipmates, the wider RN, MOD, Foreign and Commonwealth Office, British Embassy in Dubai, and local police agencies – but also a Facebook campaign in an effort to 'Bring Timmy Home'.

At Culdrose there was a smaller, but no less warm, reception awaiting the ship's Merlin, callsign Red Bull.

The helicopter – with two pilots, an observer, an aircrewman, backed up by a team of nine maintainers/mechanics and a flight controller – clocked up 150 sorties and 270 flying hours, mostly

carrying out security patrols in the Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean monitoring shipping movements.

The Merlin also reverted to its original role: submarine hunting, joining friendly navies on Exercise Arabian Shark.

"I am really proud of all that the Flight has accomplished during this deployment," said pilot Lt Chris Suckling.

"Seven months is a long time to be away from home and we've faced numerous challenges along the way."

"To know that we have had a tangible effect in making the UK's interests more secure in our areas of operation is a fantastic feeling."

UHAF new ammo jetty

LOADING up Portsmouth's warships with missiles and shells for the first time this month is an £18m ammunition jetty which has been completed to accommodate the new breed of vessels.

The Upper Harbour Ammunitioning Facility replaces the existing jetty dating back to the late 1920s which is not large enough for the Navy's new Type 45 destroyers.

Ten months' work by VolkerStevin Marine was completed last month, with the new jetty formally handed over to the MOD.

Unlike the previous ammo jetty, the replacement does not adjoin the land but sits in the harbour, with lighters ferrying out the ammunition from its secure storage in Gosport to the new facility, from where it can be loaded on to waiting RN warships.

The facility – which also includes two hydraulic cranes and mooring pontoons – is 85m (278ft) long and 15m (49ft) wide and can accommodate ships up to 10,000 tonnes.

It can be used to load or offload ammunition such as SeaWolf and Sea Viper missiles and 4.5in shells in winds of up to Force Six (50kph/30mph).

The facility will be in use for at least 50 years, serving all Portsmouth-based frigates, destroyers and smaller craft.

The UHAF has been used to test berthing a Type 45 – HMS Dragon – but the first ammunition will not be loaded on to a vessel until this month, when the old facility will be demolished.

The jetty has been completed on time and on budget.

A rare Black Sea appearance

NO LESLIE Nielsen. No Gene Hackman. No capsized liner.

There was, however, HMS Blyth among others in a very different Poseidon adventure. (© Navy News laboured puns, 1972.)

Exercise Poseidon to be precise – a two-week test for the British minehunter alongside Italian, Turkish and German counterparts in the infrequently-visited waters of the Black Sea.

The exercise, with host nations Romania and Bulgaria, was very much minehunting with a twist for Blyth, which had just arrived in the region to take her place alongside NATO allies after a 4,000-mile passage from her home in Faslane.

Blyth has taken over from Portsmouth's HMS Ledbury as Britain's contributor to NATO's Mine Clearance Group 2 – which currently comprises the Italian ITS Milazzo, the Turkish TCG Edremit and Germany's FGS Sulzbach-Rosenberg.

Although Poseidon was primarily focused on mine hunting, it also involved the task group coming under simulated attack from Romanian MiG-21 fighters.

The ships successfully saw off the mock attack from the supersonic jets before moving on to a joint search and rescue operation involving a human dummy being dropped from 100 feet by a Romanian Puma helicopter.



● A Romanian Puma approaches the Bulgarian minehunter BUNS Tsibar during a man overboard exercise

After conducting a careful search pattern it was HMS Blyth that spotted the dummy and successfully rescued it.

Throughout the exercise the ships swapped crew members, allowing each of the navies to share knowledge and culture, building on international relations, and the force visited the homes of the Bulgarian and Romanian navies, Varna and Constanta respectively.

Blyth was given command of the NATO force – a real chance for her Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Tim Davey and his team to show what they could bring to the minehunting 'party'.

"Now that Blyth is the command platform of the group, my team are under a lot more pressure to perform, but they

have risen to the challenge and are doing an exceptional job," said Lt Cdr Davey.

"It is a huge privilege to assume tactical command of such a capable force. We are looking forward to maximising the training opportunities with our NATO colleagues."

Next up for HMS Blyth and the group: a transit into Mediterranean waters to Izmir in Turkey. Here the task group bid farewell to one another, before Blyth negotiated the Corinth Canal on her way (eventually) to the south of France.

Blyth still has a lot of work ahead readying herself to receive three new NATO ships from the German, Italian and Turkish navies early this month.

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Picture: Layne Laughter, Lockheed Martin



Lightning strikes

TOP bombing.

This is the very first time the Fleet Air Arm's next-generation jet has released a weapon in flight.

Flying at 400kts (460mph) some 4,200ft over the Atlantic, an F35 Joint Strike Fighter releases a 1,000lb practice bomb from its internal bomb bay and drops it into the ocean off an American test range.

It's the first time any of the three different variants of the F35 – there's a traditional land-based version, a 'cats and traps' carrier version for the US Navy and, for the Fleet Air Arm, RAF, US Marine Corps and Italy, a jump jet – have done so.

It fell to the jump jet version, the F35B, to carry out the crucial test of the first weapons release – a milestone in the enormous Anglo-American programme as testing increasingly moves on to 'fighting' the aircraft, rather than flying it.

Where the FAA's much-loved (and now lamented) jump jet carried bombs externally, that's not the case on its successor.

"Using an internal weapons bay speaks to how much capability the Joint Strike Fighter is going to bring to the troops," said Lockheed test pilot Dan Levin.

"Stealth, fifth generation avionics, and precision weapons, coupled with the flexible mission capability of the short take-off and

vertical landing F35B is going to be huge for our warfighters."

It was Mr Levin's honour to drop the first weapon – for the record it was a GBU-32 Joint Direct Attack Munition (or JDAM – in simple parlance, a guided bomb).

An aerial weapons separation test checks the proper release of the weapon from its carriage system and the trajectory away from the aircraft.

It was the culmination of a significant number of prerequisite tests, including ground fit checks, ground pit drops and environment flights to ensure the system was working properly before the live drop.

The data gathered by the first bomb release is now being analysed by experts at Pax River, the US Navy's test pilot school southeast of Washington.

After this test further work begins with the F35's precision weapons, allowing pilots to engage the enemy on the ground and in the air.

The UK has bought three prototype F35s with the possibility of a fourth being ordered. Around one seventh of the work on the jets is carried out by firms in the UK – some 130 companies are involved in the state-of-the-art aircraft.

Lightning II will be operational from land-based airfields in the UK from 2018 – probably RAF Marham – when it will also begin flight trials off carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.



Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney, FRPU West

Answering the call of duty

AND well the CO and XO of HMS Triumph might wave, for this is the moment the curtain comes down on a demanding year and a half for the hunter-killer.

Cdr Rob Dunn and his second-in-command, Lt Cdr David 'Bing' Crosby, acknowledge the support from the 200 family members lining the jetty at Devonport as the T-boat returns in triumph (sorry) from a ten-and-a-half month deployment.

If you want proof of the punishing tempo of life in the T-boat world right now, Triumph's past 18 months should suffice. Libya (twice). Perisher. And then the latest tour of duty in the Middle East.

As with Tireless and Turbulent who went before her on marathon east-of-Suez deployments (and Trenchant is currently doing likewise) most of what Triumph did is lost to the realm of secrecy and mystery (submariners like it that way).

The submarine spent 323 days on operations, 257 days at sea, 93 of them on 'silent patrol' – which curbs the already limited communications between the boat's crew and the outside world.

"It has been a long call of duty," said Cdr Dunn. "We were excellently served by all those concerned while we were out deployed and that includes my ship's company who were nothing less than marvellous.

"Life on board a nuclear-powered submarine is naturally a tough life and that includes being at sea for 90 per cent of the time we were away."

His deputy, who joined Triumph fresh from successfully passing the globally-respected Perisher (aka Submarine Command Course), added: "The amount of sea time this boat has done over the last 18 months is quite remarkable and I am proud to have

been part of it."

And yet despite the amount of sea time Triumph has put in since the late winter of 2011, there has still been at least some time for family life.

Five fiancées were waiting anxiously on Plymouth shores for Triumph's return. They'd all said 'yes' to proposals while the boat had been away.

Among those who popped the question was Lt Jon Bailey who proposed at Christmas to Lt Megan Keeling, currently serving in HMS Iron Duke.

"Triumph is certainly a loved-up boat and the diamond merchant in Dubai has been doing a roaring trade off us," he said. "I am so happy she said yes."

For those already married there were unforgettable family reunions. Joe Bullock was met by his nurse wife Vanessa and their children Joe, two, and ten-year-old Anna. Anna said she had been looking forward to seeing her dad and that her brother wanted to give him a hug.

"It's been great to see my family again," said dad. "It's been a relatively quiet trip for me as I stepped into replace a guy on board who was sick. I am now about to serve on board one of the new Astute class submarines Astute in Scotland which is exciting."

The crew of Triumph also managed to find the time to raise nearly £6,000 for their charity Brian House Children's Hospice in Blackpool, by various means with £1,104 being raised by PO 'Mussy' Musgrove. He rowed a marathon in just under three hours (in the heat and cramped conditions of an electrical compartment) while ET's Reggie Hill and Liam Pound raised £500 with a charity cycle ride on the exercise bike in the forward escape compartment.

"It's such a worthy cause at Brian House with the work that they do there," said Reggie. "Plus I think a few of us are looking forward to the trip up to Blackpool to present the cheque."



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Defender's debut

ON A glorious morning on the Solent, the fifth of the six Type 45 destroyers built for the 21st Century Fleet made her debut in Portsmouth.

It was the only time Portsmouthians would see HMS Defender flying the Blue Ensign in her home base of the next three decades.

Within a few hours of her inaugural entry to Portsmouth Naval Base, the destroyer hauled down that flag and hoisted the Royal Navy's standard for the first time as she was formally handed over by builder BAE Systems to the Senior Service.

As with all her predecessors there was a turn-out to welcome her – a good four dozen enthusiasts and families on Round Tower. Unlike some of her predecessors, it was a blazing hot day with not a cloud scarring the sky.

"Sailing into Portsmouth for the first time was a very proud moment for me and my ship's company," said her CO Cdr Phil Nash.

Defender now faces months of training before she's ready to take her place in the line as one of the most advanced air defence destroyers in the world. The £1bn warship is due to be declared operational next year.

The final vessel in the Type 45 programme, HMS Duncan, was due to begin her first set of sea trials as *Navy News* went to press.

Picture: LA(Phot) Claire Myers, FRPU East



After 19 months away from home...

A big hello from

THE longest deployment by any Royal Navy vessel in recent years came to an end on the 16th day of August 2012 with HMS Echo gliding up the Hamoaze for the first time since a wintry departure in January 2011.

Regular rotation of the crew – some 72 men and women are assigned to Echo, but only four dozen are aboard at any one time – means they have seen Blighty on a regular basis while deployed.

“Nineteen months is far too long to serve at sea,” explained Echo’s CO Cdr Matt Syrett.

“So the rotation means the crew are in good spirits and have therefore, delivered success – much to their credit. This also works to keep families happy.”

It did. But did the fairly regular reunions make the survey ship’s homecoming any less emotional? Not likely.

Three of the crew got married and seven babies were born while Echo has been away, among them Jemima Lane (now aged one).

Her dad, PO (Surveyor) Andrew Lane, swept her up in his arms, plus bigger sister Matilda (pictured, right, kissing dad), as they greeted him on the jetty.

“It’s fantastic to be back and see my family. The girls have changed. I missed a large chunk of Jemima’s life especially. They are excited to see me and so am I to see them,” said the senior rate.

“It was a long and hard deployment, but a brilliant thing to do and we achieved a lot.”

There was a sizeable welcoming party from Yorkshire for AB(H) Jake Smith at the end of his first deployment, including his new fiancée Jeanette; she was surprised when he proposed during Echo’s recent visit to Malta, but said ‘yes’.

“Jake was very romantic proposing like he did as a surprise

in Malta,” said his mum Julie.

“He’s loved his first deployment. We have been in touch by email and calls, but it is great to have him back home at last after six months away.”

Echo deployed to help improve our understanding of the waters of the Middle East, updating charts (not least one of the Red Sea, where the ship located an underwater mountain roughly the size of the Rock of Gibraltar), before shifting to the Mediterranean for the final couple of months, which proved to be particularly enlightening.

Last month we touched upon her groundbreaking visit to Tripoli – the first Royal Navy warship, we believe, to visit the Libyan capital in decades.

This month, allow us to elaborate: Echo spent five days in Tripoli as part of initial steps to rebuild the republic’s Navy after the 2011 civil war – most of Colonel Gaddafi’s fleet was knocked out in the conflict.

As part of efforts to forge a new navy, senior and junior sailors joined the Plymouth-based Echo both alongside in Tripoli harbour and at sea.

Fire-fighting and damage control demonstrations, ship’s tours, and an extensive look at Echo’s impressive hydrographic and oceanographic survey equipment were provided.

The tours culminated in a day at sea as that survey equipment was fired up and the approaches to Tripoli searched.

Using her multi-beam echo



sounder the ship discovered an uncharted wreck and put her side scan sonar in the water to fully investigate the discovery. The result: one suspected sunken WW2 liberty ship discovered.

Guests were also treated to watching man overboard drills and headed out into the Med on the ship’s Pacific 22 seaboot.

Back in Tripoli, marine engineering students from the city’s university filed aboard and were given an extensive tour of the ship’s propulsion plant and the unique ‘Azipod’ thrusters which give Echo her incredible manoeuvrability.

In addition the Libyan Navy’s head, Cdre Hassan Ali Bushnak, visited the ship for an appreciation for the Royal Navy’s survey capability before flying to Britain to see the Senior Service’s two principal training establishments for would-be sailors at HMS Raleigh (for ratings) and Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth (for officers).

“We really enjoyed the privilege of representing the Royal Navy on such an important visit,” said Cdr Syrett.

“The senior Libyan officers were enthusiastic about their country, their expectations for the future and their hope that the Royal Navy might assist them to regenerate Libya’s naval force.”



Pictures: LA(Phot) Rob Gillies, FRPU West

Visits east and west

WHILE Echo was enjoying her first time in Plymouth’s waters since the beginning of last year, her sister Enterprise was a short distance along the south-west coast.

She and fishery protection ship HMS Mersey headed up the River Fal to support Falmouth Week regatta.

The two ships provided boats to assist race managers and safety officers overseeing competition in Falmouth Bay and Carrick Roads.

Mersey also hosted a small capability demonstration for invited guests and both ships carried out pre-arranged tours for a number of groups, including local Sea Cadet units.

With the racing done, Mersey departed to resume her duty preserving the nation’s fishing stocks, but Enterprise remained in port to make use of the dock facilities for a spot of maintenance.

Meanwhile, exactly 300 miles away, icebreaker HMS Protector paid her first visit to her affiliated city.

Ipswich was as close to Cambridge as the 5,000-tonne survey ship could get – but that allowed the good folk of Suffolk to get a close look at Protector, freshly returned from her first visit to Antarctica.

The general public was treated to tours of the bright red ship; VIPs enjoyed a demonstration of what Protector can do.

Sailors visited their chosen charity, East Anglian Children’s Hospices, in both Ipswich and Cambridge to hand over fund-raising proceeds from their maiden deployment, and the ship’s company were invited to look around the British Antarctic Survey headquarters in the famous university city.



Sandy Elliott

Sandy’s son, Kevin, was killed in an explosion whilst on foot patrol in Helmand, Afghanistan in August 2009.

The SSAFA Bereaved Families Group supported him through his loss.

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Raiders parachute team fall in to raise RN profile

Mucky weather and dirt diving

YOU'VE almost certainly heard of the Red Devils, the parachute display team of the British Army.

But most people won't be aware that the Naval Service also has a display team, writes Lt Dave Lee, Officer Commanding and Team Leader of the Royal Navy Raiders parachute display team.

And believe it or not next year it will celebrate its 30th anniversary – the Royal Navy Raiders have been displaying at events across the UK since 1983.

When the full-time Royal Marines Freefall Team were disbanded, the Raiders became the only remaining parachute display team of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Today's team comprises currently serving, full-time and reservist personnel, who volunteer with the team as an additional duty to their normal assignment in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines.

Flag Officer Regional Forces (part of the role of FOSNNI – Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland) formally owns the team, which is a great partnership as he also owns 'RN in the public eye' and Naval recruitment.

I superseded Lt Cdr Tom Canty as current OC and Team Leader in October 2011 and hold the responsibility for running all aspects of the team, including live conduct of parachuting operations where I am required to physically lead the team on all displays, as the first jumper to exit the aircraft, then subsequently fly the White Ensign accurately into the landing area right in front of the crowd.

As with anything, there is significant administrative paperwork to make the displays legal, such as liaising with the National Air Traffic Service, and training the team to ensure they are fit for public display.

But the thrill of displaying and rewards of public engagement more than make up for it.

A typical display consists of between five and eight parachutists jumping from a mix of civilian and Navy helicopters.

After around 15 seconds of freefall, the team initiate the opening of their main parachute or 'canopy' and deploy flags and

smoke for visual appeal.

Once all team members have completed their aerial manoeuvres and steered their canopies to land in the arena, the team will talk to the public while packing their parachutes to promote the team and wider Naval Service.

Typically, team members have completed up to 1,500 skydives, so all are highly experienced parachutists when they start displaying as part of the Raiders, but our membership also consists of less-experienced jumpers who volunteer to act as dropzone controller and commentator, roles without which the team could not function.

Team members also span most branches of the Service, both officers and Other Ranks, and include engineers, submariners, Fleet Air Arm, warfare and Royal Marines personnel.

Annual pre-season and currency training is conducted at the Joint Services Parachute Centre, Netheravon, where any Service person can attend an Adventurous Training course to give parachuting a try – see your PT staff or read JSP 419.

Team members must make 200 sport skydives before team selection, and pass the display accuracy training camp before being permitted to display to the public.

So where do the Raiders display?

Over the years the Raiders have jumped into some incredible places on land, into water, at weddings, into air shows, national sports events and capital cities.

Displays span local fetes to global TV coverage, and we have met some famous people – we even had Hon Lt Cdr Bear Grylls display as part of the team.

We also cover Navy events such as Yeovilton and Culdrose Air Days and naval base open days.

Perhaps the most memorable jump was when the team was asked to display as part of a 'Best of British' feature for the BBC's *Top Gear* in the 2011 opening episode to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Jaguar E-Type.

The shoot lasted all day, and it took two jumps to achieve the correct footage, landing accurately on to Beachy Head.



● Out of the blue – the Royal Navy Raiders team leader not only has to land with pinpoint precision, but also has to contend with a not-inconsiderable White Ensign below his feet



● (Above) Members of the 2012 Royal Navy Raiders parachute display team line up in front of their Islander aircraft at Shoreham Airport; (above right) the Raiders' team leader brings the White Ensign down into the stadium before a cricket match; (right) a Raider's-eye view of their launch helicopter, a Royal Navy Lynx, as they make a jump

Raiders could drop in on you...

FOR display bookings, contact the Officer Commanding, Lt Dave Lee, on Fleet-RN-Raiders-PDT-OC@mod.uk to discuss your event and the team may just drop in...

The team is always looking for new members.

If you have what it takes and are a BPA B or C Licence skydiver then send Lt Lee an email.



ANOTHER year and another Armed Forces Parachute Competition held at JSPC Netheravon, the home of bad weather which didn't fail to disappoint, writes Lt Sean Peters.

With various disciplines being judged, such as accuracy and formation skydiving, the Royal Navy/Royal Marine teams arrived on Wednesday, the week before the competition, for some training jumps and a trip to Bedford to hone our skills in Europe's largest wind tunnel.

With bad weather looming and preventing us from completing our training jumps, we instead turned our attention to wine, women and song, although not so much wine (and the women element was debatable).

The competition started on the Saturday – well, that was the idea, but the dependable bad weather was still with us, so instead we resorted to training on the ground in what are known as "dirt dives".

There is only so much dirt diving one can do over a whole weekend though, and so the rest of our time was taken up with some fun PT, instigated as always by the RN/RM, with the Army and RAF tagging along later after realising that they too can partake in fun activities.

The weather finally cleared early in the week, which permitted the competition to finally begin.

As the cloud was still relatively low, the first discipline was accuracy, as this only required us to exit the aircraft at 3,000ft.

Although a new discipline for many of the newcomers to the sport, including myself, we fared fairly well against some decent adversaries.

When the cloud lifted a little, allowing us to climb to 13,000ft, the bulk of the competition got under way, with the main focus on formation skydiving (FS).

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines also submitted teams into the free-flying disciplines, which saw competitors 'fly' their bodies in various upright positions, whereas FS involves a team of four people flying on their 'bellies' creating formations in the sky.

After a good week of competition, the awards ceremony was held on the Friday, with the RN/RM gaining medals across all categories, with the lucky few who collected medals also getting a cheeky kiss from Miss England, Charlotte Holmes, who was presenting the prizes.

With a long week over, it was then time for the end of course party...

Although this was the end of the annual Armed Forces competition, there was still plenty of demo jumping in store for the Raiders display team – see main story.

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Rain. Plain.

BUT no Spain. Just Wiltshire.

The first week of the final work-out for the Afghanistan-bound green berets of 40 Commando was 'blessed' by persistent rain which turned the undulating terrain of Salisbury Plain into a quagmire.

The men from Norton Manor arrived in Wiltshire in driving rain... which didn't stop as they joined the other units assigned to 4 Mechanised Brigade for Exercise Pashtun Dawn.

"The weather is no problem – if it ain't raining, it ain't training," said Mne Rob Kelly of Command Company stoically as he and his comrades hastily prepared rain channels to stop their tents from being inundated.

Pashtun Dawn was the last chapter of a long and rigorous training 'book' which began a year ago in the sands of California.

The goal has been to prepare for Operation Herrick 17, the latest six-month mission by UK forces in Helmand.

That mission begins this month as the complex 'roulement in place' gets under way, swapping units in theatre with new arrivals from Britain.

It will be the beginning of October before all 650 men and women of 40 Commando are in theatre... by which time conditions around Nar-e Saraj in central Helmand will be not entirely unlike those on Salisbury Plain in August (although it did dry out as the mission rehearsal exercise – known as an 'MRX'

in military parlance – progressed).

The exercise aimed at building on all the training carried out by the individual units earmarked for Herrick 17 – there are 14 regiments or battalions committed to the six-month mission – and mesh them seamlessly together under the brigade.

"Pashtun Dawn's been an excellent opportunity for all of the force elements forming the 40 Commando Battlegroup to train together in a realistic environment," explained Maj Karl Gray, 40's second in command.

"The exercise has been well resourced and has served to fine tune our skills and processes at all levels."

As well as training alongside the US Marine Corps at Twentynine Palms – which allowed for some heavy firepower on the live ranges in a dusty environment – 40 Commando have been training on ranges in the UK, notably Lydd and Hythe in Kent and Stanford in Norfolk – the latter features mock Forward Operating Bases akin to Afghanistan.

The Nar-e Saraj district 40 Commando are heading to, is like a lot of Helmand, a district which is enjoying gradually-improving security and an economy reviving after years of civil war and corruption.

40 Commando will be working with the Afghan National Security Forces to ensure they are a capable and professional force when the UK completes its combat operations in 2014.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Rhys O'Leary, 40 Cdo



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Clan-do attitude

SO THERE'S a new bobby on the Indian Ocean 'beat'.

Four weeks after departing her native Plymouth, HMS Sutherland arrived in her operational theatre to pick up the gauntlet in the ongoing struggle against pirates, smugglers, people traffickers, terrorists – anyone who might try to use the Indian Ocean and surrounding waters for illegal purposes.

The Fighting Clan – a nickname honouring her Scottish heritage – relieved her sister Westminster (see page 5) after a whistle-stop tour of the Med.

The last stop in the Middle Sea was Souda Bay in Crete, home to NATO's weapons and sensors test range and a board-and-search training complex whose *pièce de résistance* is a former Hellenic Navy training ship, the Aris, now used for realistic practice missions.

Sutherland's RN and Royal Marines boarding team took their training to the next level courtesy of 'simunition' – simulated ammunition, which possesses most of the characteristics of the real thing, minus the blood – with vessel clearance drills and practising approaching pirate vessels.

The simunition guns – characterised by their distinctive blue colour – might look like toys, but the intensive three-day course the boarders were put through, says Lt Sam Perrins, Sutherland's lead boarding officer, left them "confident that they can deal with whatever lies ahead".

And just to keep the team on their toes...once through Suez and the Bab-al-Mandeb and into theatre, more board and search training of the rapid rope variety.

Despite the sweltering temperatures – at least mid-30s Celsius – Sutherland's Royal Marines donned full combat gear to jump out of the side of Warlock,

callsign for the ship's Merlin (yes, we know Merlin's a wizard, not a warlock...).

They landed first on the (comparatively) spacious flight deck...

...and then, for greater realism, the green berets swooped down on to the small amount of deck between Sutherland's main 4.5in gun and her Seawolf missile silo – a matter of a few square feet.

The reason? Well, pirate and smuggler dhows aren't renowned for sweeping expanses of unobstructed deck, let alone a flight deck to set down a ten-ton naval helicopter.

The waters east of Suez are not unknown to the Fighting Clan. She was here barely 12 months ago.

That was largely tied to HMS Albion during the then-flagship's task force deployment.

This time round Sutherland's getting to know the Indian Ocean a lot better, patrolling 'Pirate Alley' and the 'Hashish Highway'.

And the first thing you learn is: it's a big ocean. The domain of the maritime security mission – involving 20 or so warships and support vessels in three task forces – is spread across two and a half million square miles of ocean, more than eight times the size of the North Sea.

So a rendezvous with RFA Wave Ruler was most welcome. No fuel = no patrol.

In addition to providing fuel for the Coalition's warships (and their helicopters), the 31,000-ton tanker also carries food and general supplies, duly collected by Merlin via a vertical replenishment.

Sutherland, Warlock and the 200 men and women responsible for them will be strangling criminal activity in the Middle East until the year's end.



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● (Clockwise from top left) Royal Marines make use of the board and search school on Crete; Sutherland after passing beneath the Friendship Bridge spanning Suez; rapid roping from Warlock on to the forecastle; Wave Ruler as seen through the frigate's bull ring; CO Cdr Al Wilson directs the replenishment with the tanker; and the Fighting Clan prepares to break away from the RFA having completed the RAS



pictures: la(phot) ben sutton, hms sutherland

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Exploring by Example

LEADING her sister Example up the Daugava River, HMS Explorer makes her way towards the heart of the Latvian capital Riga – a very rare destination for any Royal Navy warship, let alone some of the smallest craft on the Senior Service's books.

The duo spent five days hopping from port to port in the Baltic state – Ventspils and Liepaja on the Baltic shore, the tiny fishing harbour of Roja and Riga itself in the namesake gulf.

The Latvian tour was the latest leg on the ultimate voyage for the University Royal Naval Units (commonly shortened to URNU) who very rarely (if ever) venture this far east (and you can find out more about their odyssey on pages 16 and 17).

Indeed, the Gulf of Riga is most definitely a lot further than the sisters were intended to sail when they originally entered service back in the mid-1980s.

Both boats began life serving with the RN Auxiliary Service (RNXS) which had been formed in the early 1960s to help evacuate ports, disperse shipping and assist with the formation of convoys in the event of an attack on the UK.

The end of the Cold War meant the end of the RNXS, so its craft – among them Loyal Explorer and Loyal Example – were transferred to mainstream RN, which dropped the word Loyal and replaced the XSV prefix with HMS.

Example was assigned to the Northumbria University Royal Naval Unit – serving the universities of Durham, Newcastle, Northumbria, Teesside and Sunderland.

When not in St Petersburg – or less distant destinations – with her students, Example can be found at HMS Calliope, the Royal Naval Reserve establishment in Gateshead, berthed in the shadow of the Tyne Bridge.

And if you want to find Explorer, her home is 100 miles further



Picture: British Embassy, Riga

south. Humber Dock Street in Hull Marina to be precise – less than half a mile from the city centre.

Here she serves the universities of Yorkshire – namely the county town, plus Leeds, Sheffield and Hull. Although Explorer herself calls Hull her home, the URNU's headquarters are actually in Leeds (being both the largest city and university).

Both units give around 100 students a year an insight into life in the Senior Service. Some go on to join the RN full-time, others take their experiences with them into civvy street and, hopefully, spread the maritime message for the rest of their lives – the key aim of the URNUs.

Given that the names

themselves are good, solid English words you might expect Explorer and Example to have long and proud lineages.

But no. Example is the first Royal Navy ship to bear the title. Explorer is only the second – and the first is one the Senior Service would rather forget about.

At the end of WW2, German technology fell into Allied hands, including revolutionary U-boats capable of previously-impossible underwater speeds.

The secret to dived speeds of 25kts (RN boats of the day could manage 8 or 10kts) was an engine powered by high test peroxide, or HTP.

Having experimented with one former U-boat pressed into RN

service as HMS Meteorite, the Admiralty invested £2m – over a quarter of a billion pounds today – in two prototype boats: Explorer and Excalibur.

Ordered in 1947 it was 1954 before Explorer was launched and another two years before she was commissioned.

Which gives a clue that she was a problem child. The problem was the HTP which powered her. Volatile was an understatement.

The slightest impurity in Explorer's fuel tank – even a speck of paint – could cause the HTP to spontaneously combust. If the fuel ever spilled on a crewman, it would burn through his uniform, flesh, even bone.

As a result, submariners hated her, more commonly calling the

boat Exploder (Excalibur, no more popular with her crew, was dubbed Excruciator).

"I think the best thing we can do with peroxide is to try to get it adopted by our enemies," one crewman acidly observed.

But when she worked, Explorer was probably the fastest submarine in the world – although she was purely experimental (she carried no weapons).

Her temperamental fuel, its eye-watering cost (80 times more expensive than diesel) and the advent of atomic power (HMS Dreadnought, Britain's first nuclear-powered boat was laid down in June 1959) rendered the HTP boats obsolete.

Paid off in 1961, Explorer was broken up in 1965.



Class: Archer-class patrol boats
Pennant number: P164 (Explorer), P165 (Example)
Builder: Watercraft, Shoreham
Commissioned: August 1985 (Example), January 1986 (Explorer)
Displacement: 49 tonnes
Length: 20 metres (68ft)
Beam: 5.8 metres (19ft)
Draught: 2 metres (6ft)
Speed: 20 kts
Range: 550 nautical miles at 15kts
Complement: Up to 18
Propulsion: 2 x MTU V12 diesels
Armament: can be fitted with 1 x 20mm Oerlikon



Facts and figures

IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

AND you thought it was only in the age of digital cameras that anyone could click and shoot...

Marine Stupid The Monkey – the moniker evidently distinguished her from other Marine Stupids aboard – mascot of carrier HMS Indefatigable inspects a Rolleflex camera during the carrier's post-war Australasian tour.

This month marks the 35th anniversary of the official demise of pets at sea in RN ships, thus bringing to an end centuries of tradition.

Which seemed the perfect subject matter for our monthly dip into the photographic archives of the Imperial War Museum.

Marine Stupid left the Royal Navy long before Whitehall instructed the entire Fleet to "land your warm-blooded mammals forthwith".

The 'monkey' – actually a bonnet macaque – was 'acquired' by Indefatigable while the carrier served with the British Pacific Fleet in 1944.

Apparently the creature served with several Royal Navy flat-tops (according to official papers) before joining the 'Indie', where the ship's company provided her with a tailor-made marine's jacket and gave her pretty much free run of the carrier.

That did, however, lead to a spot of bother. After coming through the kamikaze scourge off Iwo Jima and witnessing the Japanese surrender in Tokyo Bay, Marine Stupid took a few too many liberties, stealing the captain's pipe, smoking it on the admiral's bridge, and created a disturbance on the compass platform... which earned the mascot a spell in the brig.

In the months following the war, Indefatigable was used to repatriate PoWs and conducted a tour of Australasia. Wherever the carrier went there were crowds, reporters, and plenty of attention for the macaque.

The mascot fell ill when the carrier visited Melbourne, was discharged from the RN and sent to the city's zoo to recuperate. Three years later when

she gave birth, it was front-page news in Australia...

Fast forward to the mid-70s and mascots were still carried on RN vessels – but only in UK waters. Come September 1977, that stopped too and the Admiralty ordered all pets ashore, providing a handy list of animals affected, among them otters, hyenas, lions, armadillos, elephants, apes, not to mention cats and dogs.

The reason: rabies – or rather the fear thereof.

Some choice posters at ports and airports in the Seventies and public information films such as the cheery *Rabies means death or Rabies kills* convinced most Brits there was a pack of rabid animals eagerly waiting at Calais to jump on a ferry and bring the disease to our islands.

The end to a long history of animals at sea (Amethyst's legendary Simon the Cat, submarine Trident and her reindeer, a beer-drinking bear which drowned when it fell overboard) was welcomed by some, but not all.

HMS Gavington was forced to give up her mascot Junior Rabbit Grobblington and did so reluctantly. The pet was given a new home ashore with one of the ship's company where he (a) turned out to be a hare and (b) ate his way through everything: shed doors, neighbours' vegetable plots.

As for the rabies scare, a bit like the millennium bug, it never really came to pass – perhaps because of the precautions, perhaps because the threat was over-hyped.

But to this day, strict rules remain in place when it comes to animals leaving or arriving in the UK, while – with the exception of HMS Lancaster's parrots a few years ago – pets remain a no-no at sea.

■ THIS photograph (HU 96582) – 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.



THIS is the latest look at the Navy's next-generation warship – the fruits of two years of design on the Type 26.

From 2020 onwards, this vessel will begin to replace Britain's existing frigate fleet as the backbone of the Royal Navy's worldwide mission.

It will be armed with air defence missiles – the Sea Ceptor system currently being designed – a medium calibre main gun, the latest radar and sonar sensors, a Merlin or Wildcat helicopter, plus what designers call a 'flexible mission space' with equipment for its specific mission: sea boats or, more tantalisingly, unmanned air, surface and underwater craft – drones in other words.

With the basic design of the future ships now agreed by Whitehall, the 350-strong RN/MOD/BAE Systems team working on the Type 26 will move on to the detailed specifications.

As things stand, the Type 26 – known as a Global Combat Ship – will be slightly longer than the Type 23 frigates it's intended to replace (148m to 133m) and slightly heavier (5,400 tonnes to 4,900).

It incorporates many of the features of the similarly futuristic-looking Type 45 destroyers – chiefly angled sides and an enclosed upper deck for increased stealth.

In addition to the weaponry listed above, the vertical missile silos will be able to house 'a range of different weapons'.

The Type 26 is expected to do what its predecessors have been doing since the early 90s: everything from front-line combat (such as Iraq) and anti-submarine warfare (the *raison d'être* of the Type 23, although they proved to be highly-adaptable as general purpose warships), to hunting down pirates and smugglers, and offering relief in the wake of disasters and delivering humanitarian aid.

"The Type 26 will be the backbone of the Royal Navy for decades to come. It is designed to be adaptable and easily upgraded, reacting to threats as they change," said Peter Luff, the MOD's minister for equipment.

At present Whitehall intends to order 13 Type 26s – a like-for-like replacement of the remaining Type 23 frigates in service under the White Ensign – but the number will not be confirmed until the main decision is taken to invest in the project.

That is likely to be mid-decade when the detailed design work is completed; the first T26 is due to enter service "after 2020".

The oldest Type 23, HMS Argyll, is expected to serve until around 2023, while the youngest, St Albans, will be on duty until around 2036.

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



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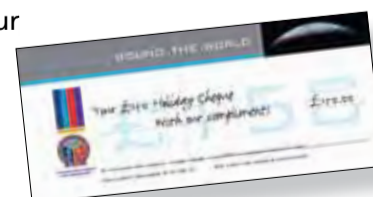
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Bid to raise Hood's bell as memorial

THE bell of Britain's greatest warship lost in World War 2 could be back above the waves by now if an ambitious recovery expedition has succeeded.

A mission to raise the bell of HMS Hood from the Atlantic was due to take place, weather permitting, at the end of August.

Some 1,415 men were lost when the mighty Hood was sunk in action against the Bismarck in May 1941.

The battle-cruiser was the pride of the inter-war Navy – and nation – but blew up in minutes.

Her wreck, broken in two parts, was discovered in 2001 between Iceland and Greenland, lying more than 9,000ft down.

The bell was thrown clear of the hull as the Hood sank; it lies some distance from the wreck, amid other debris – as shown in the video still above.

The raised bell would be donated to the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth – Hood's home port – as a permanent memorial to her crew. It's a goal fully supported by the battle-cruiser's association, including veterans who served in her before the disaster.

"There is no headstone among the flowers for those who perish at sea," explained Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, president of the Hood association and nephew of one of the men killed in 1941.

"For those who lost their lives in HMS Hood, the recovery of her bell and its subsequent place of honour in the museum will mean that, well after the remains of Hood have gone, future generations will be able to gaze upon her bell and remember with gratitude and thanks the heroism, courage and personal sacrifice of Hood's ship's company who died in the service of their country."

The recovery mission is being funded by American philanthropist Paul Allen using his yacht Octopus, a robot submarine, and a team from Blue Water Recoveries, who found the Hood's wreck 11 years ago.

If they succeed, the bell will form a major feature of a new exhibition hall dedicated to the 20th and 21st-Century RN due to open in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard in 2014.

Blue Water's David Mearns said deep sea technology had moved on tremendously since he found the wreck and returning to the Hood would hopefully finally answer the question why she blew up so quickly and catastrophically.



● Veterans and Maltese cast wreaths into Grand Harbour in memory of those lost and (right) First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope and the Commanding Officers of HMS Pembroke (centre) and Middleton (right), Lt Cdrs Chris Allan and Steve Higham respectively, salute the heroes of Operation Pedestal as night falls on Grand Harbour...



'A tough couple of days...'

ONCE there were 23,000 of them. Today they number barely 100. And just eight were able to return to Malta.

But 70 years on the sacrifices made by the Royal Navy and merchant sailors to keep the Mediterranean island alive in the maelstrom of war are burned into the soul of every Maltese.

Islanders – famously awarded the George Cross by the King in 1942 for their steadfastness – dedicated their tribute to the men of the Malta convoys, seven decades after the most brutal struggle surrounding one such convoy reached its climax.

In the presence of Britain's ranking sailor, crews from minehunters HMS Middleton and Pembroke (returning from the Gulf) and that small band of veterans, Malta's Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi unveiled a large black anchor as a symbol of the courage shown by islanders and the decimated convoy which came to symbolise the struggle for the Middle Sea.

More than 23,000 Royal Navy and merchant sailors set out for Malta in mid-August 1942 on Operation Pedestal, a mission which has gone down in history.

For five days they ran the gauntlet of Axis attack – more than 540 bombers and fighters, two dozen fast motor torpedo boats and 21 German and Italian submarines – to deliver vital supplies to the island.

Malta was the hinge of the Empire's operations in the

Mediterranean, roughly half way between Gibraltar and Alexandria, and a launchpad from which to strike at Axis shipping bound for North Africa.

Pedestal – known by Maltese as the Santa Marija Convoy – was the high water mark of both the British effort to support the island and the enemy's efforts to stop them. The operation cost the lives of some 350 Allied servicemen and merchant sailors – but the remnants of the convoy got through; the battered ships were cheered into harbour by ecstatic islanders.

Only five merchant ships made it to Valletta – the most famous of which was the tanker SS Ohio, bombed and torpedoed so many times that her back was broken and she was in danger of sinking.

It took HMS Ledbury and HMS Penn on either side with HMS Rye acting as a rudder at the stern to make her reach her destination.

In total some 30,000 tonnes of cargo reached Malta, including aviation fuel for Spitfires based on the island. It sustained Malta for ten weeks – by which time Montgomery had launched his counter-stroke at El Alamein and the tide of war changed irrevocably in the Allies' direction.

John Suddaby from Warrington was a 19-year-old Petty Officer on the cruiser HMS Kenya, which was damaged when the engine room was bombed and caught fire.

The 89-year-old said: "Seeing the memorial means a lot in terms of what we went through, although it is very little in comparison to



● Pedestal veterans, including former PO John Suddaby (on the left) listen to an account of the desperate convoy

what the Maltese people here had to endure.

"At the time it was just something I was told to do – I didn't really realise the significance of it until afterwards but it was a tough couple of days.

"I am extremely proud of what we did and it is important that it is remembered in this way."

Mr Gonzi told the small band of brothers who returned for the 70th anniversary commemorations: "On my behalf and on behalf of the Maltese people, I would like to thank the veterans here for their bravery which protected our island fortress in its darkest hours during the war."

Today's generation of Royal Navy servicemen and women joined in the chorus of praise for their forebears.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope led the tributes from today's Senior Service.

Admiral Stanhope said: "We lost four warships, five more were damaged and out of 14 merchant

ships only five got through – but they were a critical five and key to the survival of Malta.

"The Navy was at sea, in the air and under the sea, because it was vital we got these supplies through."

Middleton's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Steve Higham, echoed his words.

"It's been a huge honour to be here on the 70th anniversary of Operation Pedestal," he said.

"The courage, resilience and fortitude shown by the people of Malta and the dedication, sacrifice and commitment of the members of the Royal Navy who contributed to that success are keen reminders of the bond between the Service and Malta.

"We've enjoyed sharing the experiences of those veterans, and discussing with them the roles and commitments of today's Royal Navy."

Admiral Stanhope made the most of his time on the small Mediterranean island to thank

the Maltese for their support to the Royal Navy and allied NATO vessels during last year's efforts enforcing UN resolutions against the Gaddafi regime in Libya.

"This visit was about making sure Malta feels valued for what it provided last year in support of operations off Libya," he stressed. "Their support was completely invaluable in that they provided berthing facilities and access to stores."

The following day the First Sea Lord visited the minehunters alongside in Grand Harbour, and thanked them for their efforts in the Gulf.

The ships themselves have spent three-plus years in the punishing environment of the Middle East, while the crews have been replaced *in toto* every six to seven months.

Addressing both ship's companies, he said: "I wanted to thank you and give you just recognition for what you have done and what you do every day.

"You are returning home after an extended deployment after doing something that is absolutely critical for defence by exercising your minehunting skills regularly in the Gulf. Your work is part of ensuring free and safe passage of the seas and that is commendable."

Aboard Middleton he presented her Marine Engineer Officer, WO Steve Hickman with his Meritorious Service Medal which recognises 22 years of continuous exceptional service.

He also gave the Logistics Department an admiral's commendation for their hard work and commitment in providing top class catering for a series of high profile events.

Along with these presentations eleven sailors were awarded Herbert Lott citations, recognising their contribution above and beyond the call of duty in the Gulf.

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● Maltese Sea Cadets stand next to the new convoy memorial overlooking Grand Harbour
Pictures: PO(Phot) Gaz Armes, FRPU East

All change for Gulf mine force

AFTER a six-week journey from the UK, Her Majesty's Ships Atherstone and Shoreham have reached the waters which will be their home for the next two to four years: the Gulf.

Britain maintains a constant minehunter presence in Bahrain – four warships, plus a Royal Fleet Auxiliary support ship. Crews are changed every six or seven months, while the ships themselves typically spend three years in the region.

Homeward bound on a 7,000-mile odyssey are Pembroke (making for the Clyde) and Middleton (heading for the Solent) – they'd got as far as Malta by the time we went to press, see opposite – with the Crazy A and Shoreham taking their place.

The passage for the outbound ships – all the while monitoring passing shipping as part of the Royal Navy's commitment to global maritime security – was relatively calm.

But upon entering the Gulf of Oman, the pair ran into the full force of the south-west monsoon – winds of 40kts and a five-metre sea swell, conditions known with usual Royal Navy understatement as 'lumpy'.

In the calmer waters of the UAE, the incomers met the outgoers to formally hand over duties in the region before Atherstone and Shoreham joined up with new destroyer HMS Diamond to enter the southern Gulf together.

Once inside, the minehunters parted company – Shoreham made for the Gulf's most well-known metropolis, Dubai, the Crazy A sailed for Bahrain.

Both are now getting used to the challenges of training in the sandy waters and searing temperatures (around 40°C/104°F in August)...

...as are the crews of HM Ships Quorn and Ramsey, who've just taken charge of the Hunt and Sandown-class vessels respectively in the latest roulement of mine warfare sailors.

Aboard Quorn, MCM2 Crew 3 – custodians of Quorn's sister HMS Brocklesby for the past two years – while MCM1 Crew 5 have relieved Crew 6 in HMS Ramsey.

For the new incumbents on Ramsey, the Gulf is not a new experience – many served with HMS Grimsby which returned from this part of the world not 12 months ago.

For the ex-Brocklesby crew, however, the heat might be a bit of a shock; Brock has spent the past two years around the UK and Med (although it did grow quite 'hot' for them off Libya where they famously dealt with a mine laid by Gaddafi forces).

Despite the Gulf heat, the tempo in the summer does not let up for the mine warfare quartet which carry out a mix of routine survey work, training and international exercises, as well as continue to build on the UK's – and RN's – long-standing bond with Gulf states.

"The deployment's a great opportunity to show our strengths – and to put into practice all the hard work and training that's taken place over the past six months," said Quorn's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Jim Buck.

"I'm confident we've come into this with the strongest team possible – and are looking forward to the challenges that lie ahead."

And Ramsey? "She remains ready for any task that may come her way," says her Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Giles Palin emphatically.

"In between our busy operational programme, the crew will try to find time to enjoy the cultural experiences of the region and, where they can, get ashore to visit the splendid cities and countries of the Middle East."

57, 58, 59, 60...

NOW that's planespotting.

On the bridge wing of HMS Diamond, officers watch flight deck operations on (arguably) the world's most famous aircraft carrier, USS Enterprise.

And at the same time in the state-of-the-art destroyer's operations room, warfare specialists were doing exactly the same, helping to choreograph the sorties of F18 Super Hornets and other aircraft which provide the punch of Carrier Strike Group 12.

As her sister Daring did just a few months ago, Diamond joined forces with the Big E to show how a Type 45 destroyer can shield a task group from air attack – exactly what she was built for.

The £1bn warship can track multiple targets courtesy of her Sampson radar (the spiky spinning egg on the top of the distinctive main mast) and take them out, if necessary, at ranges up to 70 miles away courtesy of the Sea Viper missiles in the silo on her forecabin.

And she can also direct strike missions by guiding aircraft on to targets as well as generally co-ordinating friendly air activity.

Diamond took her place alongside Enterprise's more usual escorts, the cruiser Vicksburg and the destroyer Nitze, and as well as providing more distant protection, D34 also closed in to just 500 yards from the Enterprise – which is the longest warship in the world, longest serving carrier in the world and the world's first nuclear-powered carrier – giving the ship's company a 'ringside seat' to flat-top operations.

The Big E's air wing really is impressive: four Hornet squadrons of fighters and fighter-bombers (43 jets), four Prowler electronic warfare aircraft, four E2 Hawkeye AWACs early-warning planes, seven Seahawk helicopters capable of hunting submarines as well as general duties, and two propeller-driven transport planes. Sixty aircraft in all.

Diamond's crew observed as the Hornets were catapulted off the deck of Enterprise and, when their missions were complete, touched down safely, brought to a

Picture: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston, HMS Diamond



halt by arrestor wires.

Being in close proximity to the Enterprise group allowed for an exchange of US and UK sailors – known in international naval circles as cross-pollination – sharing knowledge and experience among the ships.

"Working with the Enterprise Carrier Strike Group has been a fantastic opportunity to build on Royal and US Navy understanding. The knowledge gleaned will help the Royal Navy maximise the exciting opportunities offered by the Type 45 destroyers," said Lt Cdr Mark Headley, Diamond's air warfare officer who hosted the American visitors on the British ship.

Chief among those visitors was Rear Admiral Walter Carter, the man in charge of Carrier Strike Group 12. He liked what he saw aboard Diamond during a comprehensive tour of the 8,500-ton warship, and what her

ship's company did during the destroyer's time in company with the Big E.

He sent a signal to Diamond's Commanding Officer Cdr Ian Clarke: *Bravo Zulu to HMS Diamond on an outstanding performance. You have integrated brilliantly and I am looking forward to working with you again in Carrier Strike Group 12.*

The Enterprise is in the final months of her active life – her first major mission was the Cuban Missile Crisis (!) – and is due to decommission in December.

As for Diamond, she's resumed her maiden deployment duties providing security and stability in the Gulf region.

For that wider maritime security mission the Portsmouth-based warship carries a Royal Marines team from 43 Commando and members of the Diamond's own company who specialise in boarding operations – a task which can put them in harm's way.

To prepare them for every eventuality, the combined boarding team undergoes weekly first aid training courtesy of the medical team and the impressive sickbay facilities.

Every week a different topic is covered – anything from minor accidents while undertaking normal duties to injuries that could be sustained during boarding operations. The team are coached through scenarios and then offered the chance to critique one another's performance.



A 'rose for the Queen

THE seemingly never-ending summer of celebration continued when HMS Montrose joined in on the final day of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee tour.

The Devonport-based frigate had the honour of escorting Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh aboard the yacht Leander as the Queen inspected the Parade of Sail during the Cowes leg of the Superyacht Cup.

And while the rain dogged many jubilee events earlier in the summer – and put paid to a Fleet Air Arm fly past – not so here, for proceedings were blessed by a brilliant sky.

And they were blessed by a warship in brilliant condition. Spick and span from a recent period of maintenance, Montrose joined the Leander west of Cowes ready to accompany the 250ft vessel – which is owned by one of the RN's greatest benefactors, Sir Donald Gosling, honorary Rear Admiral and Vice Admiral to the United Kingdom.

Montrose sailed in company with the superyacht and after the sail past, the frigate's company paid their respects to the Queen in time-honoured tradition.

Dressed in their finest No.1 uniforms and lining the upper deck, the men and women of Montrose 'manned and cheered ship' as the frigate conducted a sail past of Leander, while a 12-strong Guard of Honour paraded on the upper deck.

As the Royal Party prepared to sail into Cowes, the warship steamed past Leander and three cheers rang across the harbour.

"The opportunity to show off the ship and her crew at such a high-profile event is rare – we all feel now as if we've been an active part of the Diamond Jubilee celebrations," said CO Cdr James Parkin.

"My sailors were extremely proud to be able to honour their Commander-in-Chief in such a unique manner."



Let slip the ducks of war

YOU'RE never too old to take to the water with rubber ducky.

Not even if you're a grizzled submariner in the middle of the ocean. Crew from Her Majesty's Submarine Trenchant enjoy a traditional 'hands to bathe' with the hunter-killer boat's mascot (that's the yellow plastic thing in the middle...), a rare chance to relax for the men after a 29-day passage from Devonport to the Middle East.

The third of the Royal Navy's five Trafalgar-class submarines has reached the waters she will furtively sail for the next few months, taking over as Britain's on-call boat east of Suez from her sister HMS Triumph (now enjoying a thoroughly-deserved break at home – see page 5).

Like Triumph before her, Trenchant is blessed with a mascot. Triumph was donated a teddy by Triumph motorcycles and, as befitting his pedigree, 'Rocky' had a leather jacket, enjoyed sport and the odd drink...

...whereas Trenchant's lucky symbol is content to just bob along on the rare occasions the submarine surfaces.

The duck was donated to the nuclear-powered boat by the affiliated Sea Cadet unit, TS Echo, who visited the submarine shortly before its departure.

The rare appearance on the surface also afforded a barbecue on the casing and, for those who prefer tales of war and derring do, plenty of gunnery practice for the general purpose machine-gun (and gunners).

The journey east featured trials and calibrations to ready the submarine for maritime security operations, with Trenchant conducting an extensive training package including weapons integration with US forces.

It also allowed seven members of the crew to receive the coveted dolphins – a submariner's badge of honour which sets him aside from general service sailors, earned for completing the Submarine Qualification (or SMQ) which demonstrates that he understands not merely his own trade (such as chef or sonar operator) but the fundamentals of every compartment and piece of kit aboard Trenchant.

After a short break in Fujairah including equipment maintenance as well as some well-deserved rest for the crew, Trenchant has resumed her patrol.

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Hugging the shore



THE great cities of North-East Europe welcomed students from British universities during the annual URNU summer deployment.

More than 30 ports on the North Sea and in the Baltic were on the itinerary over a 12-week trip which saw four P2000 patrol boats of the University Royal Naval Units hugging the shores of the Baltic Sea to St Petersburg and back.

Each vessel, which can serve a number of universities in an area, is commanded by a Royal Navy lieutenant and has a permanent crew of five, but also carries up to 12 students.

These students, who start as Officer Cadets and rise to the rank of midshipman, man the ship for a fortnight at a time, so each ship could handle up to six different temporary crews during the trip to Russia.

The four ships – HMS Ranger (Sussex University, including Brighton), HMS Trumpeter (Bristol University, including Bath and the West of England), HMS Example (Northumbrian Universities – Newcastle, Durham, Northumbria and Sunderland) and HMS Explorer (Universities of Yorkshire – Leeds, Sheffield and Hull) left the UK at the beginning of June.

They visited Belgium, the Netherlands and Germany before transiting the Kiel Canal in mid-June and attending Europe's largest maritime festival – *Kieler Woche* or Kiel Week, alongside Type 23 frigate HMS St Albans.

The URNU flotilla spent nine days at the event, which attracts more than three million visitors.

The festival began with the four Archer-class boats taking part in the Entering Port ceremony alongside, *inter alia*, ships from Germany, Poland, the United States, Russia, Norway, Holland and Denmark.

The four Commanding Officers called on local dignitaries and ship's companies and students took part in commemorative and wreath-laying ceremonies at both the Naval Memorial at Laboe and at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery at Nordfriedhof.

But the week also afforded sailors and students the chance to visit Kiel during an event which

started as a sailing regatta but now includes entertainment and amusements in a massive *Völkfest*, or festival of nations.

As well as their official commitments, *Kieler Woche* also enabled plenty of opportunities for the ship's company and students to visit Kiel and enjoy the festivities, both ashore and within the Naval base.

With Kiel Week behind them, there was an official visit to the Mürwik Naval Academy in Flensburg before the quartet continued the deployment in the Baltic, pairing off on occasions to undertake separate visits and thereby maximise the impact of their tour. They sailed up the Swedish coast visiting a number of small towns on their way to Stockholm, then struck out for Finland and Helsinki.

The furthest leg of the deployment came when the boats visited the Russian town of Vyborg followed by St Petersburg.

Lt Hugh Harris, Commanding Officer of HMS Ranger, said: "This deployment has been a very special opportunity for the students and ship's companies of Ranger, Trumpeter, Example and Explorer.

"Due to the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron's heavy commitment to the Olympics, deploying these four ships for an extended period of time has allowed us to maintain the delivery of sea training to not only our own URNU students but also those from other units whose ships have been deployed for Olympic security.

"Over the 12 weeks we are away the four P2000s will have steamed almost 4,300 nautical miles, visited 33 different ports in 11 countries and delivered 2,680

● This page (top): HMS Ranger alongside at Naissaar; (far left) HMS Example in St Petersburg; (left, top) Lt Hugh Harris, Commanding Officer of HMS Ranger, watches the British Ambassador to Estonia, Chris Holtby, and Defence Attaché Lt Col Ian Watts; (left, bottom): Members of the Cambridge and Sussex URNUs join sailors from HMS Ranger at the memorial to ten British victims of the Crimean War on Naissaar Island; (bottom left): HMS Ranger follows the Naissaar ferry Monica in the Old City Harbour of Tallinn. To the right is the 48,300-ton cruise ferry MV Baltic Princess, which carries up to 2,800 passengers at a time between Tallinn and Helsinki; (below) HMS Trumpeter (P294) and HMS Ranger on the River Neva in St Petersburg, sailing past the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, opposite the English Embankment



es of the Baltic

training days to the 200 students who have embarked."

Midshipman Eilish Wells, of Sussex University, having just completed the first year of a biomedical science degree, said: "This deployment has been the experience of a lifetime."

"Without the URNU I would never have had the opportunity to travel and visit places like Russia, Estonia and Finland."

"I have had my first flight on a plane, and have loved every second."

"Seeing so much of the world and tying this in with learning new and valuable skills was something I never expected – it is an experience I will always treasure."

While in St Petersburg, the ship's companies were hosted at the Consul General's house to meet local dignitaries and to explain the purpose of the URNUs, while the COs also met the deputy head of the Russian Naval Base on board the pre-Dreadnought protected cruiser Aurora, which played a pivotal role in the 1917 Bolshevik October Revolution.

From St Petersburg the ships headed for Tallinn, with HMS Ranger calling in to Naissaar Island where ten Royal Navy sailors were buried following its use by the British during the Crimean War from 1854-55.

Sussex and Cambridge URNUs conducted a service of remembrance and laid a wreath alongside the British Ambassador to Estonia, Chris Holtby, Defence Attaché Lt Col Ian Watts and a group from the embassy.

It has become a tradition for the British Embassy to attend the service at St Mary's church on Naissaar, a subsidiary church of Tallinn's St Michael's, and afterwards pay their respects at the Royal Navy memorial in the cemetery.

The 15-strong Naval party was welcomed by the congregation – Embassy staff noted that their presence on the island, and that of their boat in the harbour amongst the dingies and yachts, had created some excitement.

The wooden church was originally built in the 1850s by the local Estonian-Swedish fishing community.

After the church service, conducted in Swedish, Estonian and partly in English, the congregation moved on to the old Swedish cemetery in the forest close to the coast where a short remembrance service was held

for the ten Royal Navy officers and ratings remembered on the memorial there.

Wreaths were laid by the Ambassador and Lt Harris.

The Ambassador also read the Act of Remembrance and thanked the community and the church for the invitation extended to the British to accompany them to Naissaar each year.

The Ambassador, for whom this was the first visit to the island, also gave an interview to Tallinn-based Christian Family Radio.

The names on the Royal Navy memorial date from the Crimean War when Naissaar was briefly occupied by British and French forces, and was used as a base for British and French warships which bombarded and raided Russian coastal fortifications in the Baltic and blockaded St Petersburg.

The original stone memorial was erected in 1927, but this was destroyed during the Soviet occupation.

It was replaced in the 1990s, and stands in a plot surrounded by a nautical chain and decorated with an old anchor.

The inscription on the memorial stone reads: "This memorial was erected by the British Admiralty in memory of

Commander A Anderson – HMS Cressy
Lieutenant T M F Bond – HMS Royal George
Mr J Stephens Boatswain – HMS Caesar
F Toomy and T Longbottom – HMS Monarch
J Barker – HMS Arrogant
J James and C Harris – HMS Cornwallis

G Harris – HMS Hope
W Boyle – HMS Ajax
who died in the years 1854 and 1855 and are buried in this Cemetery".

Naissaar, or Women's Island in Estonian, is located in the Gulf of Finland, 10km to the north of Tallinn, and has a population of ten though they are joined by many more holidaymakers in the summer as the island is a popular nature reserve.

During the Soviet occupation the whole island was a restricted military zone containing a large mine depot.

"It was a wonderful experience to be able to attend the service of remembrance," said Lt Harris.

"The local people were exceptionally welcoming and it was a great honour to be able to lay the wreath for the ten

Royal Naval personnel involved in the Crimean War buried in this remote cemetery."

The next country on the itinerary was Latvia, where Example and Explorer are believed to have made history by becoming the first British warships to visit the tiny fishing harbour of Roja, on the Gulf of Riga.

Arriving under grey skies, the ships were welcomed to the town by Nils Ušakovs, the Mayor of the municipality – which has a population of around 6,000 – and the local press.

Despite the weather, some 150 visitors were keen to take a look around a P2000 and talk to the embarked students.

HMS Example, commanded by Lt Chantal Strawbridge and HMS Explorer (Lt Dafydd Bryden) also visited the capital, Riga, and the ports of Ventspils and Liepaja in

under a week.

Calls were made on Capt Rimants Štrimitis, Commander of the Latvian Navy, the Mayor of Riga, Eva Karklina, and Uldis Sesks, Mayor of Liepaja.

Sporting and social events were hosted by the Latvian Navy and Andrew Soper, British Ambassador to Latvia, met the crews and cadets from both vessels whilst in Riga.

From Estonia the ships travelled to the island of Heligoland off the mouth of the Elbe, the Netherlands and Belgium again before returning to the UK last month.

As well as vacation deployments, URNU vessels give students the chance to deploy for weekends to gain seamanship skills and practise leadership and teamwork, as well as providing opportunities for personal development.



● (Top right): A Royal Navy P2000 patrol boat berthed on the English Embankment in St Petersburg, with the Church of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary visible across the River Neva; (above right): HMS Explorer (P164) and HMS Example sail from the Latvian fishing port of Roja; (below right): Explorer and Example alongside in Roja; (right): HMS Ranger (left) and HMS Trumpeter in Tallinn Old City Harbour, surrounded by towering Baltic cruise ferries

Estonia and Latvia pictures courtesy the respective British Embassies



Uniforms make a difference

NINE members of Liverpool reservist unit HMS Eaglet turned up for work in uniform as part of Armed Forces Week.

Many of those who took part – including a surgeon, paramedic, IT specialist, laboratory staff, mechanic and office staff – have deployed on at least one tour of duty to places such as Afghanistan.

Two of them are both shipmates and sisters – ABS Becky Lewington and Catherine Reilly, who work at the Stanlow oil refinery at Ellesmere Port, owned by Essar Energy.

Another reservist was also proudly wearing his 'dark blue suit' as he went about his day job on the West Coast of Scotland.

Lt Phil Dovey, who works as a marine surveyor for Lloyd's Register, has been in the Maritime Reserves for five years and serves at HMS Dalriada, in Greenock.

An amphibious warfare specialist, Phil has served in a variety of warships including helicopter carrier HMS Ocean, assault ship HMS Bulwark and auxiliary landing ship (dock) RFA Mounts Bay, and has taken part in exercises from the Arctic Circle to Albania.

Lloyd's Register are supportive of his RNR career and benefit from the training and experience that Phil gains: "Lloyd's Register has a long association with the Royal Navy with their work on warships and as a result are proud to support the people who serve on them."

"Experience at sea is highly valued in Lloyd's Register's work on vessels and we are happy to encourage sea time as part of a surveyor's development."

Calliope inculcates leadership skills

MORE than 60 trainees stretched their minds during a major training exercise designed to test the leadership skills of Royal Naval Reserve junior rates in the North-East.

The event took place at Gateshead Quays when HMS Calliope reservists, alongside colleagues from Leeds and Liverpool, spent a busy weekend undergoing practical challenges which encouraged them to plan, take control of situations and manage teammates.

Theoretical discussions on leadership and management were complemented by practical exercises combining fun and learning.

Exercises included a blindfolded team erecting a tent, under instruction from a sighted leader, and laying out 'minefields' using mathematical problem-solving methods, and remembering and communicating complex patterns to their teams.

Calliope's CO, Cdr Andy Collier, said: "This was a command and leadership programme designed to help junior rates get the skills and personal development needed for a career in the RNR."

"Importantly, these skills are also very much transferable into the reservists' civilian work life, making them a valued asset to the businesses they work for."

The training of junior rates is part of the Navy's future plans

● Reservists training on the parade ground of HMS Calliope, close to the iconic Gateshead Millennium Bridge (aka the Winking Eye Bridge)



for the Service, as by 2020 it is expected that the RNR will be significantly larger, playing an even more important role in defence.

"We are now training the people who will train our future recruits," said Cdr Collier.

"These are our future leaders and we will give them the best possible training and skills to carry out their role as naval reservists."

Visitors join in tea party

RESERVISTS on duty in the Gulf helped host visiting Parliamentarians – and combined the visit with a fund-raising cake sale and tea party.

The reservists are part of the small UK Maritime Trade Organisation, which acts as a round-the-clock single point of contact for all UK and international shipping crossing the 2.2 million square miles of high risk waters in the north west Indian Ocean.

They organised the sale and party at the British Embassy's on-site community centre in Dubai, inviting embassy staff, relatives and visitors to join them for tea, coffee and a variety of cakes, baked and donated by diplomatic staff and RN personnel.

The event raised almost £300 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC). Amongst those attending were British MPs Henry Bellingham, Minister for Africa at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office, and Mike Penning, Minister for Shipping at the Department of Transport.

Both were in the United Arab Emirates for an international conference on Somali piracy, and took the chance to call in at the UKMTO.

Vessels in the region are encouraged to send daily reports of their position to the UKMTO, and to call in if they are subject to or witness a pirate attack in the area.

The team, assisted by a Merchant Navy Liaison Officer, also visits vessels in UAE ports to provide updates to masters on recent pirate activity, to discuss self-protection measures and to let them know how best to avoid pirate attacks.

Cdr Mark Stuttard, RN Liaison Officer (Gulf), said: "Congratulations to all my team for their hard work in ensuring Armed Forces Day 2012 didn't go unrecognised and for raising such a valuable contribution to charity. Outstanding."



● Cdr Andy Collier (left), CO of HMS Calliope, and Lt Cdr Steve Fry of HMS Cambria check on the progress of a blindfolded team erecting a tent under instruction from a sighted leader



● Lt Cdr Heather Lane on one of the London 2012 Police RIBs in Weymouth Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse

Back by Popular Demand

12 AMAZING SHIPS OF THE FLEET The 2013 Royal Navy/Navy News Calendar

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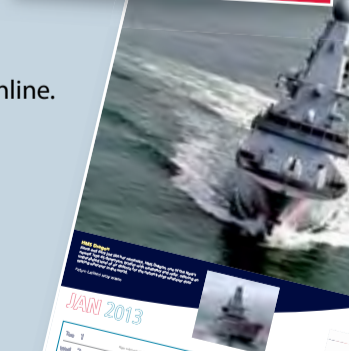
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Telling the Navy's story

A SMALL office next to the Admiral's day cabin on the Royal Navy's flagship, HMS Bulwark, has been turned into a veritable news hub for the duration of the Olympics and Paralympics.

Media Operations Officer Lt Cdr Heather Lane is coordinating the release of stills photography, video and news to help the public understand the role of the Senior Service in supporting the multi-agency security organisation, led by Dorset Police HQ, aiming to provide a safe and enjoyable Games in Weymouth.

Lt Cdr Lane, from Christchurch, has been mobilised for two months this summer by the RNR in her specialist role of conducting media operations for military involvement in the games.

Along with a team of two Naval photographers, she has been able to draw on the considerable support of the ship's company of Bulwark and the wider Maritime Force assets in getting the Navy's newsworthy stories out through mainstream media outlets, coordinating with Police press officers in Dorset and MOD news teams in Portsmouth and London.

"The best way to tell the Royal Navy's story is for us to provide the channel for the voices of our own sailors and Royal Marines to be heard and for them

to be seen doing their jobs," said Lt Cdr Lane.

"Our people, although often modest and somewhat reticent to appear on camera, are quite simply the best advocates for the Forces."

"So whenever possible we try to arrange for news media and defence correspondents to come on board the ships to witness for themselves the activities of the ship and to meet our sailors, who are a source of endless inspiration."

"Sometimes for security or operational reasons, since we operate so far from the coast, the news media don't have the time to visit ships at sea."

"So I have been lucky enough to have the most exciting reporter's task, to write about our incredibly motivated and single-minded people, bearing witness to our successes and demonstrating what challenges the Royal Navy can achieve when set a task."

Heather, a former full-time RN staff officer, is a member of the Media Ops Branch of the RNR.

With eight years in the WRNS and a further 16 with the RNR, Heather has deployed twice on active military operations, working in the Combined Military HQ in Baghdad in 2006 and in Bahrain working for the UK Maritime Component earlier this year.

The RNRMC is there for you, your family and your oppos during and after your time in uniform



Autumn is the season of events for RNRMC

SEPTEMBER is a busy old month for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity's fundraising team.

We kick off at the fantastic Bournemouth Air Festival (August 30 to September 2) where we are one of the three main charities being supported and have a merchandise and information stand in the naval village on the seafloor.

Then on September 8 we are at Fort Nelson Tattoo at the Royal Armouries in Portsmouth where, along with bands, guns and military re-enactments, the matinee performances feature a fly past and the evening performance a fireworks display.

September 23 sees the Devil Run, a tough 15km Cross Country run at the Devil's Punch Bowl in Surrey... have you got what it takes to enter?

Finally on September 28 we have a Big Band Extravaganza at the King's Theatre, Southsea where the Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth will get toes tapping to both classic and modern swing music and we say a fond farewell to Major Tony Smallwood, who conducts the band for the final time before his retirement from the Band Service.

Talking of HM Royal Marines Band - congratulations and thanks to the Royal Marines School of Music who held a wonderful concert and Beat Retreat at Portsmouth Guildhall. Not only did the pupils showcase their considerable musical talents but they raised lots of money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

We'd love it if you could come along to support some of the events we are involved in. Further details are on our website or see the panel on the right of this page.

Over the summer many supporters, too numerous to mention individually, have fundraised for us by doing sporting challenges.

From climbing mountains to Iron Man triathlons they have helped the charity immensely.

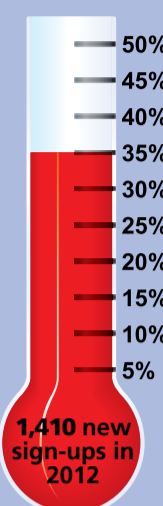
However we appreciate that in these times it is tough to raise sponsorship money. Don't forget you can fundraise in other ways.

How about organising a supermarket bag pack, a cake sale or a fundraising party?

We are grateful for all the fantastic support you give... and the more you raise the more we can give out in grants. Thank you.

Hilary Jukes
Fundraising coordinator,
Royal Navy and
Royal Marines Charity
023 9254 8155
fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk

Understanding giving through pay



How do I know if I am paying in to the RNRMC via pay roll giving?
If I had £1 for every time I was asked that question the

RNRMC would be a lot richer, so to help you understand those strange words you see on your pay statement, via the online version or hard copy, here is a short explanation:

Pay and Allowances	Value	Charges and Deductions	Value
Basic Pay	2896.09	PAYE	875.86
		NI D	212.12
		Service Charity Monthly (RN Charities)	5.00
		Paying into Payroll Giving	
		Service Charity Monthly (RN Charities)	4.33
		Paying the old SABS (Sports Amenities and Benevolence Scheme), renamed in 2010 to Payroll Giving	
		Service Charity Monthly (RN Charities)	1.00
		Paying into the Voluntary Sports Subscription Scheme	
		Service Days per giving (RN Charities)	(Varied amount)
		Paying into the older VDP (Voluntary Donations from Pay) scheme	

Help us to help you, and stop the confusion. Convert your old schemes to the new payroll giving scheme which now includes sport insurance. Payroll giving form is

available at www.rnrmc.org.uk. For further guidance contact Dean Rogers on 93832 8417, dean.rogers@rnrmc.org.uk.

Help us raise more to give more

RUNNING a practice galley ashore in HMS Raleigh, the chefs and caterers of the Maritime Logistics School raised an impressive total of £2,677 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

The RNRMC was the focus of all this culinary effort as a result of the support the charity gave to the catering team who battled it out in last year's Exercise Joint Caterer.

Exercise Joint Caterer is the annual competition where chefs and stewards from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines compete against the Army and RAF to prove who is the

top of the culinary ladder.

The £3,500 given by the Naval charity was used to kit out all of the RN and RM competitors in appropriate clothing.

Each competitor in the cookery class had an embroidered jacket, in the field events a similarly embellished apron, and not forgetting the front of house team who each had an embroidered cummerbund - which they got to keep in recognition of their hard work.

This year's competition will see the chefs from all three Services prepare food including elaborate three-course meals for fine dining and food suitable for an Afghan shura.

The RNRMC will once again be supporting the Naval Service Culinary Arts Team (NSCAT) to purchase new equipment for the competition and ensuring the smartest of team uniforms.

It's great to report that every member of the NSCAT team continues to support the RNRMC through payroll giving.

This year's culinary competition will be held at Sandown Park Race Course, Esher, Surrey and will run for three days from Tuesday to Thursday October 23-25 2012.

THE presentation from the Maritime Logistics School chefs was part of a bigger event which took place at HMS Raleigh.



● The RNRMC President, former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, receives a donation from the Defence Maritime Logistics School at HMS Raleigh

An annual presentation was given by the RNRMC chief executive Robert Robson about the activities and development of the charity over the previous 12 months.

In total, £5,291 was donated by the dedicated fundraisers in the South-West.

This included:
■ HMS Raleigh's Submarine School: fundraising barbecue - £300;
■ HMS Talent: cake sale for the StandEasy event - £984;

■ 824 Naval Air Squadron: fundraising Truro bike ride and bacon butties for the StandEasy event - £1,352.

The former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, President of the RNRMC, accepted the cheques on behalf of the charity.

Robert Robson thanked all involved for their hard work and efforts, saying: "Without this we cannot do what we are here to do and all we say is 'Please keep it up!'"



● A chef wearing his embroidered jacket takes part in the 2011 culinary competition



Thanks to our volunteers

We would like to say thank you to everyone who has put time and effort into helping us.

However we do need more people to join our team of volunteers who get involved in organising fundraising activities, co-ordinating our collection pots or helping out on our merchandise stands at events. Whether you become a regular volunteer or help out on a more ad hoc basis you can be guaranteed lots of fun and friendship whilst really making a difference.

Interested? Contact fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk to find out more.



Unique spectacular at Earls Court

THE British Military Tournament is a unique event celebrating the best our Armed Forces have to offer.

Participants from all three Services make up this incredible show that raises much-needed funds to support the RNRMC, ABF - The Soldiers Charity, and the RAF Benevolent Fund.

In this Diamond Jubilee year

it is the perfect time to tell the story of the life and times of Her Majesty The Queen: the 2012 British Military Tournament will celebrate her unique place in British history.

Starting with the events of 1926, the year of the Queen's birth, the Tournament will follow the events of the ensuing years through re-enactments, performances of military precision, words, music

and state-of-the-art audiovisual in one of the most spectacular theatrical productions of its kind.

Taking place at Earls Court, London, on December 8 and 9, the British Military Tournament will build on the phenomenal success of its last two years.

Ten per cent discount for serving personnel at: <http://www.ticketmaster.co.uk/promo/tb8c8h>



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WIN UP TO
£1,000
FOR YOUR UNIT'S WELFARE FUND

Look out for the RNTM in September

UPCOMING EVENTS



ROYAL MARINES BIG BAND SPECTACULAR

Under the direction of Major Tony Smallwood RM, and featuring Emer McParland, at the King's Theatre Southsea on September 28. Tickets cost £16-£19. Call the Box Office on 023 9282 8282.



FORT NELSON TATTOO

The Fort Nelson Tattoo on Saturday September 8 will feature a unique mix of military and civilian bands and display teams set within the historic setting of the Fort as well as exciting firings of 'big guns' and a historic fly-past. Buy tickets online at: <http://www.royalarmouries.org/events/events-at-fort-nelson/fort-nelson-tattoo>



15km THE DEVIL RUN

The Devil Run takes place at the Devil's Punchbowl at Hindhead in Surrey on September 23 to raise money for the RNRMC.

The Devil Run is a cross-country run over rough terrain across some of the UK's beautiful scenery.

The run demands fitness and stamina, and total concentration.

Find out more at www.3counties10k.co.uk/



RED, WHITE AND BLUE DAY The RNRMC is one of the charities that benefits from Red, White and Blue Day.

This year's event takes place on Friday October 12 and is on offer to every school in the UK. Pupils can simply donate £1 and dress up in red, white and blue.

Find out more about the national event at www.redwhiteblueday.co.uk

CONTACT US

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Hampshire PO2 8ER
fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk

Join us on Facebook:
search for 'Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity'

www.rnrmc.org.uk



Knitters of the Navy unite!

WE'VE heard of the wartime slogan Dig for Victory – now it's Knit for Victory in the Royal Navy.

Sailors, being domesticated as well as seamanlike, can turn their hands to anything from mending sails to sewing, cooking and knitting.

In the 1800s many sailors made wool pictures, embroidered slippers and toys for their children during months and even years away from home.

Now the National Museum of the Royal Navy wants to celebrate the Navy's long-standing association with crafts and artwork by encouraging sailors – and the rest of us – to get knitting.

The museum has launched an art project with the ultimate aim to creating a huge seaside-themed 'knitscape' which will eventually go on display in the Family Area of the Portsmouth museum in January 2013.

The project was created after museum staff discovered 1940s patterns from the wonderfully named 'Department for Knitted Garments', which urged the wartime population to save money

(and keep warm) by knitting.

To start off the project, an enthusiastic team set to with their needles in HMS Victory, including Chief Petty Officers Andy Dorricott, Sid Street and Ian Macdonald (pictured above).

CPO Macdonald, a Chief Logistician and HMS Victory Officer of the Day, said: "This is a fabulous project, knitting is the most calming and relaxing new venture I've had in years."

Anyone who fancies making a little seahorse, or a fish, or even some imaginary sea creature for the knitscape can visit the museum's website: royalnavalmuseum.org or contact Jo Valentine, Community Engagement Officer, at jo.valentine@nmrn.org.uk who will help with ideas or supply a pattern.

Jo said: "I can't wait to see all the amazing crafted creatures and flowers arrive in my pigeonhole at work!"

"The involvement of all of these people will create a truly unique piece of community artwork which will hang in pride of place in a National Museum. "It's incredibly exciting."



● BRNC Officer Cadets help out at the Sharpham Estate

Dartmouth cadets dig deep

BRITANNIA Royal Naval College, in Dartmouth, has opened its charity chest and made donations of £1,100 to three organisations which help the local community in South Devon.

Representatives from Dartmouth Food Bank, Youth4Us and the Multiple Sclerosis Society South Devon were invited to the college to receive their cheques from Commodore Simon Williams, the Commanding Officer.

Cdre Williams said: "The cadets and staff at BRNC are very committed young people, both in their professional lives and in their attitude to society."

"They regularly raise charitable funds and are delighted to assist those local people who give so much to others in the Dartmouth area."

Smiting the Corryvreckan

PETER Minshall, head of the charity Houses for Heroes Scotland, braved the notorious Gulf of Corryvreckan whirlpool in Argyll to help house disabled veterans who have returned with severe wounds from Afghanistan.

An ex-Royal Marine himself, Peter was accompanied by fellow ex-Royal Jonathan Reah from the South of France.

Other friends and supporters included William Minshall, 17, the youngest known swimmer to have swum across the Corryvreckan.

The swimmers were accompanied by the Royal Navy's patrol boat HMS Smiter.

Peter said: "The conditions were just at the limit to allow a crossing but it was done and everyone can be very proud of taking part in this unusual challenge."

He added: "We were united in our aim to raise awareness of Houses for Heroes Scotland, so this important charity can

The officer cadets from the college have also been helping the charity, the Sharpham Trust, which provides educational opportunities.

The group of Cunningham and St Vincent Squadron Cadets, which included a number of international students from overseas navies, spent the day working on the Sharpham Estate, near Dartmouth.

They carried out general habitat management, improving fields and wetlands by removing weeds and thistles and clearing paths.

Officer Cadet Phillip Griffiths said: "The work certainly improved our organisational skills and the results of our efforts were extremely impressive."

He added: "It's inspiring to give something back to the local community and we were very pleased to be able to help."

continue to acquire more houses for these wounded veterans."

In the last 18 months, the charity has housed 53 disabled ex-Service personnel who have come through the Personnel Recovery Unit at Craigiehall in Edinburgh, which is attached to Headley Court.

Gavin shapes up

AS PARALYMPIC fever sweeps the nation, one adventurous sailor is slipping into his Lycra to train for the ride of his life. Gavin Pickin, a leading hand communications specialist who works at SHAPE (Supreme HQ Allied Powers Europe) in Belgium, will set off this month with 40 other cyclists, including three severely injured military colleagues, to cycle from Edinburgh to London in five days.

On top of the physical challenge, Gavin has pledged to raise more than £1,000 for SSAFA Forces Help.



Torbay tackles the MS Challenge

SUBMARINERS from HMS Torbay dove into the gruelling MS Challenge to raise money for the South West Multiple Sclerosis Therapy Centre.

The submariners plunged into waist-deep water and through dense undergrowth of the Brecon Beacons National Park, carrying on their shoulders Christine Westlake (pictured above).

Surprisingly Christine was a willing volunteer – nominated by the MS Therapy Centre to enjoy an outdoor adventure not usually available to her.

So that would be ten miles across hills, streams, and muddy tracks, orienteering by compass and map reading.

Christine said: "The course was very challenging and wet, but the team were empathetic which helped my nerves during the muddy trail."

The Torbay submariners were sponsored by Silicone Engineering Ltd, which meant that the team raised up to £1,500 for the MS Therapy Centre.

To find out more, visit www.southwestmscentre.co.uk.



● The Earl of Wessex on the new terrace at Pembroke House

Royal opening for new Pembroke House wing

THE DAY had finally arrived and after much planning and preparation, the new extension wing of Pembroke House was formally opened by Royal Appointment.

It was always hoped that the new wing, which was safely completed to time, quality and cost in December 2011, would be 'opened' by a VVIP and when it was announced that during the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the Earl and Countess of Wessex would visit Pembroke House, the staff and residents were delighted.

The new wing boasts six additional rooms, a salon where the residents, staff and volunteers can all benefit from hair and holistic treatments and a shop

with a wide range of everyday goods plus a state-of-the-art coffee machine.

These new facilities are located within a light and spacious atrium area aptly named the Quarterdeck where residents can sit and enjoy hot drinks and gather for a chat.

In addition, the roof of the new build incorporates a terrace accessible from the first floor where nursing residents can now enjoy easy access to the fresh air.

The day brought bright sunshine as the Royal couple met and chatted to staff and residents.

Prince Edward then completed the visit by unveiling a plaque to commemorate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee and opening the new wing to the Home.

Sultan celebrates boxing triumphs

FOLLOWING the success of HMS Sultan's latest boxing dinner show, a percentage of the profits was given to local boxing clubs in Hampshire to promote the sport.

The Sultan boxing show is a popular event held every year against HMS Collingwood. It also attracts boxers from Portsmouth University and Brighton Amateur Boxing Club.

This year, Sultan celebrated taking the trophy with a 4-1 win on the night, their first since 2006.

Out of the money raised, the RNRMC received £2,000, with a further £100 each given to local amateur boxing clubs in Titchfield and Gosport.

At the beginning of the season

the boxing squad received a very generous contribution from the RNRMC and Sports Lottery, which helped purchase a new training ring and training equipment at Sultan.

Daz Hoare, Sultan's Petty Officer Physical Training, said: "Having these fantastic facilities means we can build on our relationships with both military teams and the local boxing community."

He added: "Being able to help and support local boxing clubs is essential in exposing young people to both the sport and life in the Royal Navy."

"We are all in it together to promote amateur boxing, from sparring at our local clubs to attending each other's shows."

1972 1982 1992 2002 THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

We flick back through the pages of Navy News to see which stories were drawing attention in past decades...

September 1972

THE 'university fleet' was growing with the opening of the latest Royal Naval Unit at Southampton.

It followed the success of the first unit, which opened in Aberdeen in 1966, followed by Liverpool and Glasgow. Each unit was staffed by a Lieutenant Commander and a Chief Petty Officer.

The undergraduates (presumably only men at the time) joined for three years and had the chance of a two-week cruise around the UK and Western Europe in the summer vacation.

September 1982

A MEMORIAL to HM ships Ardent and Antelope was erected at St Carlos by men of their sister ship, HMS Avenger.

The 30ft high wood and stone structure was built on a 1,000ft hilltop overlooking San Carlos Water, where the Type 21 frigates were sunk by Argentine bombs.

The men from HMS Avenger climbed through thick snow to attend the dedication ceremony, accompanied by Scots Guards who helped them build the memorial.

September 1992

IT WAS announced that the Royal Marines were to move their headquarters to Portsmouth in April 1993.

The new headquarters were to include the office of the Commandant General which was then in London; HQ Commando Forces which were then in Plymouth, and HQ Training and Reserve, which were in Poole.

New purpose-built offices were to be created on Whale Island, with interim accommodation in HMS Nelson's Gunwharf site while they were completed.

September 2002

ROYAL NAVY clearance divers recovered the bell from the battleship HMS Prince of Wales, sunk together with HMS Repulse by Japanese torpedo bombers off Malaysia in 1941.

The ships were designated maritime graves but concern had been growing for some time about the number of trophy divers who had been plundering the wrecks, which lay in relatively shallow waters.

This led the MOD to agree to a team of RN divers joining forces with a team of British sports divers, who finally recovered the bell on August 6 2002 and brought it back to the UK.

A long way to paddle for a cake

WHEN the Welsh universities' training ship, HMS Express, was summoned to London to support the 2012 Olympics on the River Thames, a bold idea began to form in the minds of some of the students.

Why not deliver her ship's company a supply of their favourite Welsh cakes to help them with their tasking?

But rather than entrust them to Royal Mail, or a courier, it seemed a wizard wheeze to deliver them by water.

And thus it was that a team of students and training officers from Wales University Royal Naval Unit pushed off from Penarth to paddle from Cardiff to London in kayaks.

Over the ten day journey, the students and staff paddled over 200 miles of canal and river and through locks almost too numerous to count, facing the challenges of weirs, torrents and angry swans.

The team (pictured right) wrote a blog about their journey and we hope to run the highlights in October's edition of *Navy News* – meanwhile, if you wish to donate, visit: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/CanoeX>.

All contributions will go to the RNRMC.



● Sonny Ward takes great delight in soaking AB Yates LA(Phot) Arron Hoare

Soak a 1710 NAS sailor

AT 50p a shot, you just can't resist whacking a sailor in the face with a sponge.

Naval air engineers from 1710 Naval Air Squadron in Portsmouth proved they were game for a laugh... and had a spare set of clothes at the ready when they supported local charity the Beneficial Foundation recently at a fundraiser held at Portsmouth College.

1710 NAS has been affiliated to the Beneficial Foundation since the squadron moved into Portsmouth Naval Base from Fleetlands in Gosport back in 2010.

The sailors helped set up the event, ran a stall and willingly took part in the 'soak a sailor' game to raise much-needed funds for the charity.

For more than 30 years, the foundation has provided education, training and rehabilitation to adults of all ages who are in need, helping the

disadvantaged – particularly those with learning difficulties and other disabilities.

Aside from the fun day, 1710 NAS has also worked on other projects including re-painting the front of the foundation's building and renovating an overgrown and unusable allotment in the city.

When they are not doing good deeds in the community, the team from 1710 NAS are part of the Ministry of Defence's centre of expertise for helicopter structural repair, service modifications and scientific support to military aviation.

LAET Craig May said: "1710 NAS are really proud to assist the beneficial foundation with their fundraising. It's a worthwhile charity that not only helps people with learning disabilities but also brings a community together."

More information about the charity can be found at www.beneficial.org.uk.

Serpent Rise supports Combat Stress

EXERCISE Serpent Rise brought together the RNR Medical Branch and RAF Reserves Medical Branch, hosted by the Army at Queen Elizabeth Barracks near York.

The two weeks of medical and military training was broken up with a night of charity fundraising on a Jubilee theme.

Games and events throughout the evening garnered a total of £234 for Combat Stress.

Organiser Leading Naval Nurse Sean Carruthers of HMS Scotia said: "Special thanks go to everyone for making this a successful night, and in particular to the civilian staff at the Hub in Queen Elizabeth Barracks for assisting greatly in arranging the evening."

Paul's triathlon for the Not Forgotten

THE MCTA's CPO Paul Swaby set himself the challenge of a 26-mile triathlon to raise funds for the Not Forgotten Association.

The association provides leisure and recreation services for wounded serving and ex-service personnel with disabilities.

Paul, on behalf of Nelson's senior rates' mess, swam, cycled and ran to raise money for the charity.

He started his trails at HMS Temeraire with a one-mile swim, completing 48 lengths under the watchful eyes of CPO Baz Woodley and Terry Grimwood.

From the pool, Paul took to the cardiovascular suite where he ran for five miles, notching up the total in 31 minutes.

Last was 20 miles on the bike – the section the senior rate was least looking forward to...

But despite feeling the strain at the two-hour mark, Paul kept going to complete his ride in two hours 18 minutes and 39.8 seconds.

Paul expressed his gratitude to all who had supported him in his efforts, and said that the funds would go a long way to ensuring some quality of life to those who the Not Forgotten help.

Marines thank support workers

ROYAL NAVAL community workers who supported military families while their relatives were away on combat duty have been thanked with a top award by the Royal Marines.

The Naval Personal and Family Service and Royal Marines Welfare have been awarded a commendation from the Commandant General Royal Marines for the support they gave to families back at home whose relatives were deployed to Afghanistan.

The outreach team identified service families living throughout the UK and provided 34 support groups in three large areas to bring them together.

After experience of previous deployments to Afghanistan, welfare staff started to work with 3 Commando Brigade much earlier than in previous deployments, so that they could plan events for the families.

They made sure families were able to meet each other and share experiences and information about the progress of operations in Afghanistan.

This meant long hours and many weekend engagements for the community workers, who organised meetings and support groups for the families to help keep them informed.

One family commented: "Thank you for supporting the family in this journey, I cannot explain how much you have helped to ease our fears."

Dan Richmond, Naval Area Community Manager (West) said: "All of the outreach team performed their duties to an exceptionally high standard, possessing excellent organisational skills, natural empathy, and an awareness and confidence when delivering this programme of support."

"They worked increased hours including weekends in order to make this project a success."

Excellent help for children's charity

A PORTSMOUTH-based children's charity got a much-needed boost to its funds when the Commanding Officer of HMS Excellent handed over a cheque for £2,345 to Cystic Fibrosis Kids of Portsmouth.

Run by parents who have children with the condition and other volunteers, the charity provides practical support, equipment and counselling for around 35 families in the city.

Naval shore establishments have a long tradition of


supporting local charities and raising money through events such as Families' Days.

Lesley Plaiter, who has worked at HMS Excellent for 16 years and is the fundraising co-ordinator for the island, said: "We're lucky to have a supportive naval population who understand the importance of our relationship with the local community and can always be relied upon to help raise funds at Families' Days and Fireworks Nights."

Field Gun

THE Devonport Field Gun Association has become a limited company and a registered charity. It has opened a new Heritage Centre at Crownhill Fort and has already hosted several school and club visits as well as raising £18,000 for service charities. The Association also sponsors and advises schools, Sea Cadet units and Cub Scouts who run Field Gun competitions.

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Pictures: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson, HMS Dauntless

Sail of the



WELL now, that's something you don't see every day in the Falklands.

Clear skies. Especially in winter. Oh and a Type 45 destroyer. HMS Dauntless became the first of her class to visit the barren South Atlantic archipelago.

On the left of the picture (above) you can just make out the rather bleak anchorage that is East Cove Military Port – home, when alongside, to Britain's permanent naval presence in the islands, HMS Clyde, the duty RFA tanker (currently Gold Rover), and whichever Royal Navy warship is conducting the regular Atlantic Patrol, which just happened to be Dauntless.

Clyde sallied to meet Dauntless for her virgin visit, escorting her in to Mare Harbour, the natural outer anchorage of East Cove.

And once alongside there was a procession of visitors keen to see the Portsmouth-based warship, followed, a few days later, off Stanley, for her inaugural appearance of the Falklands' capital.

As one Falkland Islander tweeted: "Nothing is better than seeing HMS Dauntless parked in your back yard."

Which wasn't for long because the destroyer's visit – much heralded in the world's media – was rather brief, for D33 had a busy schedule to keep visiting UK territories south of the Equator.

In fact, the destroyer had already called at one speck (relatively speaking) of British soil in the Southern Hemisphere on passage from Cape Town to the Falklands.

Lying some 1,800 miles west of the Cape, Tristan da Cunha is often described as one of the world's most remote communities.

There's no airfield. No port to speak of save for a tiny harbour and few ships pass its way.

So it was good fortune for the 270 souls who live on the volcanic outcrop that Dauntless was sailing their way.

The destroyer had just left South Africa when she was called upon to help the tiny dependency: the island's sole doctor had fallen ill – and it was more than they could deal with in their own one-man medical facility.

It can take as long as seven days for a medical evacuation from Tristan. It took Dauntless under five days to get there.

When she did, her Lynx flew in a replacement physician to look after islanders, while the ship's doctor Surg Lt Laura Speirs assessed her counterpart before arranging his evacuation back to the warship in the helicopter for treatment in Dauntless' impressive sickbay and onward transport to the Falklands.

Though serious, the evacuation was no longer urgent and once the patient was safely aboard Dauntless, the destroyer remained

at the islanders' call, helping them to transport a radio rebroadcast station to the top of the mountainous cliffs overlooking the tiny settlement of Edinburgh of the Seven Seas.

Tristonians (we looked it up...) had spent a year trying to set up the relay station to give complete radio coverage for all 38 square miles of the island – something they can now do.

"It has always been in the nature of mariners to help one another in times of difficulty and an island like Tristan da Cunha is almost like another ship in that it is isolated and thousands of miles from anywhere," said Dauntless' Commanding Officer Capt Will Warrender.

"Unlike the islanders we are fortunate enough to be able to move as we wish and I have to hand the skilled personnel and right equipment to provide me the ability to help in situations like this.

"This is exactly the type of task that we are down here in the South Atlantic to do: to serve and protect all the UK's South Atlantic Ocean Territories."

Tristan's administrator Sean Burns thanked the warship for her intervention: it meant the islanders received a replacement doctor a month earlier than otherwise possible – and, for the casualty, the comprehensive treatment he needed two months sooner.

NOW if there's what you might call a barren or bleak beauty to East Falkland or Tristan da Cunha, then there's a lushness to the backdrop for the port which has enjoyed Dauntless' presence for the longest on her Auriga 12 deployment: Cape Town.

The ship spent three weeks on the Cape, allowing the ship's company to "let off steam" with their first extended break since sailing back in April.

It also allowed the ship's 815 NAS Lynx Flight to decamp to Ysterplaat (pronounced *ace-ter-plart*) airbase to allow it to work with the South Africans, who also fly the agile helicopter.

And it allowed engineers to overhaul and tweak Dauntless' machinery after the exertions of the 8,000-mile journey to the foot of Africa – and ready the Type 45 for the lumpy weather she could face in the South Atlantic, where it's late winter.

"We arrived in Cape Town with great anticipation – it was a glorious morning with the awesome sight of the iconic Table Mountain emerging from the morning haze," said Lt Tom Rowley, Dauntless' air warfare officer.

Once alongside, Dauntless did what she has done throughout her deployment: fly the flag for the best of British courtesy of an official reception – which took place in a torrential downpour.



● Mist shrouds the upper reaches Lynx heads ashore to pick up the re





Centurion

Such receptions are a key part of spreading the RN's global 'force for good' message, as is the willingness to get stuck in with charity projects wherever a British warship visits.

It's been a key feature of Dauntless' African odyssey and Cape Town was no different as sailors carried out painting and decorating at the Nazareth House children's home; some of the youngsters were terminally ill but had been abandoned by their families and left homeless.

"It was lovely to see how the staff showed compassion and love to these children who had absolutely nothing left," said AB(CIS) Hannah Widders, who was deeply moved by the time she spent at the home.

Some of the children were invited back to Dauntless and particularly enjoyed tripping numerous alarms as well, of course, as donning Capt Will Warrender's cap.

Around 30 members of the warfare department headed off paintballing on a team-building exercise – and fired off more than 27,000 pellet rounds (mostly at each other...).

And if that wasn't a sufficient adrenaline rush, other Dauntless sailors went in search of Jaws – for the waters off the Cape are (in)famous for the great white shark population.

LS(Sea) Scotty Gratton braved the waters in a shark cage to get up close (but not too personal) with

the leviathans. "It's something I've wanted to do since I was a little boy and it didn't disappoint.

"You can't really realise the scale until you see them from that perspective – it's an experience I'll never forget."

A more popular destination was the top of Table Mountain, some by cable car, some by bike, while

the ship's 'unbeaten in Africa' boast when it came to rugby was silenced on the playing fields of Cape Town. On the plus side, the destroyer's stay coincided with the Super 15s rugby tournament and a good few sailors left the port as converted Cape Town Stormers fans.

The Combined Services Entertainment team flew out

dancers and comic Jarred Christmas – Kiwi, sideburns, appears in Pot Noodle adverts – for a night to remember, laying on quite a show for the sailors and Royal Marines.

And not to be outdone, the ship's own band – Blackout Recovery – put on a concert for Cape Towners in the Quay 4 pub in the V&A dock area.

● Dauntless follows the Falklands' constant naval guardian, HMS Clyde, towards East Cove and above right, D33 approaches Mare Harbour



of Tristan da Cunha as Dauntless' remote island's doctor



Archives don't back criticism of Shackleton

I WAS disappointed to read the letter by E C Coleman titled *Shackleton was 'no hero'* in the May issue of *Navy News*.

Mr Coleman's contribution is certainly a less than generous interpretation of the Antarctic achievement of Sir Ernest Shackleton.

What concerned me, more particularly, was the number of factual errors and poorly supported assertions that the letter contained.

The Scott Polar Research Institute in Cambridge University, which I direct, holds Shackleton's own expedition diaries, together with those of many expedition members.

The idea that "Shackleton routinely abandoned his men" is both a very sweeping statement and one that is very difficult to justify from the available evidence.

It is also clear from the historical record that Shackleton's march to within 97 miles of the South Pole on his Nimrod expedition was a very considerable accomplishment, opening the way for Scott's ascent of the Beardmore Glacier and the achievement of the South Pole in January 1912.

Shackleton was, of course, supported by several renowned polar explorers on his Antarctic expeditions; Frank Wild, Frank Worsley and Tom Crean, among

others, spring to mind.

I fear that these men would have shared my own disappointment in seeing their leader's reputation denigrated.

— Professor Julian Dowdeswell,

Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge

...I WONDER if I might comment on the *'Royal Navy prejudice against the Merchant Navy'* suggestion by Admiral Sir James Perowne (Letters, June)?

This followed the letter from E C Coleman in May in respect of the recreation of the 1916 expedition.

I should perhaps note from the outset that what little I know about Ernest Shackleton can be accommodated on the back of a postage stamp, and I am in no way qualified to offer any opinion on aspects of polar exploration.

It is rather the perceived bias that I would like to query.

As a former deep sea Merchant Navy officer I must say that I saw no such prejudice in Mr Coleman's letter, and am puzzled at the Admiral's observation.

I rather think that any comment was directed at more detailed issues, and clearly not a slight directed towards others wearing dark blue.

— Michael Ingham, Lincoln

Civilians had a vital role in Falklands

I DO feel that your coverage of the Falklands operation 'down south' 30 years ago, and the excellent *Grove Review* (May) has ignored one important part of the Royal Navy and its personnel that had a crucial role in the success of the operation.

Although successor organisations are now mostly in the tri-service DE&S (Defence Equipment and Support), at the time of the Falklands the civilian-manned Royal Naval Supply and Transport Service (RNSTS) was very much a part of what QRN then defined as 'the Naval Service'.

MOD industrial and non-industrial civil servants of the RNSTS served in Royal Fleet Auxiliary and requisitioned merchant ships (ships taken up from trade - STUFT) managing supplies - naval stores, ammunition and food - without which the Task Force could not have sustained operations.

The large RFA replenishment ships each had a stores party of about 45 drawn from MOD stores depots, naval bases and headquarters.

For the conflict many volunteered to serve in RFAs and

the smaller parties in STUFT ships.

They shared the same risks as others in the Task Force, including Argentine air attack, particularly while unloading in San Carlos Water.

Indeed, a bomb narrowly missed three RFAs carrying bulk ammunition on May 24; a hit on any one would have had disastrous consequences.

Fortunately all of the RNSTS staff returned safely, although the two embarked in Atlantic Conveyor ended up in the water with other survivors when the ship was hit by an Exocet missile.

About 250 served in the war zone and were awarded the South Atlantic Medal.

Incidentally, unlike the RFA and other Merchant service personnel, RNSTS staff serving in the war zone did not receive any 'war bonus' pay enhancement!

The RNSTS itself was disbanded without ceremony in the early 1990s, but civilian stores staff continue to serve in today's RFA stores replenishment ships.

— Bernard Mennell, Corsham, Wilts, STO(N) i/c Stores Party RFA Stromness, April-July 1982

A speedy doctor and a useful flame

I READ the article *Linked to the Rings* (August) and Henry Carver's contribution to it with much interest, as I was First Lieutenant of Whitesand Bay at the time.

To ensure that the flame never extinguished, our Engineer Officer Leonard Clark shut down one boiler then flashed up again using the Olympic flame.

The specially designed upper deck torch did not extinguish and, when I took over as Officer of the Watch for the morning watch, I was told that the middlewatchmen had used this 'special' to cook bangers and other dainties to sustain them through their watch!

As for the Wardroom souvenir torch, much as we pleaded they would not relinquish one for us to keep.

All the spare ones were actually placed in the custody of a British Olympic official who was aboard a beautiful Rolls Royce which followed the torch relay all the way back to London.

He even had a specially adapted flame in the passenger section of the Rolls.

It was a great honour and wonderful experience to have participated in the London Olympics 1948.

— Robert Read, Liverpool, NY, USA

I READ the article with great interest, but I was more than a little surprised at one glaring omission from your list of Olympic-related events and personnel.

In 1959-61 I served in HMS *Hermes*, based in

Pompey. At some stage into the commission a certain Surgeon Lieutenant John Wrighton joined the ship.

I have a photograph of him taking part in the flight deck sports organised by the clubswingers, this would be 1960.

John Derek Wrighton, born March 10 1933 in Ilford, Essex, is a retired track and field athlete, who represented Great Britain at the 1960 Summer Olympics in Rome.

He won two gold medals at the 1958 European Championships in Stockholm, in the men's individual 400 metres and in the 4 x 400 metres relay.

Known for both his pronounced lean when running and his erratic pacing, he along with others marked the beginning of the renaissance of British quarter-miling post World War 2.

From 1958, Wrighton served on a short-service commission with the Royal Navy, achieving the rank of Surgeon Lieutenant, after which he was placed on the emergency list and retired in May 1961.

He then completed his medical training, becoming a Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons in 1967 and made his home in Dorset where he worked for many years as a family doctor.

A fellow ex-matelot living next to me tells me one of his skippers was an Olympic sailing medallist.

— Jim Stroud, ex-Fleet Air Arm, St David's, Pembrokeshire, Wales



Each month Pussers Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tiple to the writer of our top letter.

This month's winner is: Robert Read for an unusual use of the Olympic flame...

Name those new ships

WHAT might be their names, the 13 new Type 26 Global Combat ships?

I'd like to see the use of those E-class names not stolen by patrol boats and survey ships, and all nine of the F-class. This would follow precedent of recent ties, given the Cs of Type 22 and Ds for Type 45.

Any bets? — Lt Cdr Lester May



Beware of Jack armed with a peashooter

It was great to read of a few of the local entertainers (*Letters*, August) and the names of some of the pubs in Pompey.

I seem to remember the Albany pub by the Portsmouth and Southsea station which isn't mentioned (maybe demolished now) and the most prominent lady at the time was called Pompey Lil.

My time in Portsmouth was doing my radar training at Dryad in 1953, coupled with navigators yeoman, before I went into submarines.

At the same time, there used to be a theatre at the top end of Queen Street, opposite the Trafagar Club, which used to rotate great weekly shows, including nudes on stage who were not allowed to move, until some matelot in the balcony - by chance - just happened to have a peashooter in his pocket together with a few small green missiles.

Needless to say the fair maidens did a few flinches when targeted until the offenders were thrown out.

I saw the famous (at the time) Phyllis Dixey

perform there, starkers actually on stage but with very clever lighting which enabled her to perform her routine without embarrassment.

Also the drummer in the pit used to go mad at blokes dopping coins on his drums during a performance from up above in the boxes. I think his name was Fred. Those were the days!

— Trevor Andrew, Welfare Officer, International Submariners' Association

...AS a young 17-year-old chef in 1959 on loan to HMS Highburton, I had my first run ashore in Pompey.

My new mates introduced me to Big Sylv in the Albany (Pompey Lil was there as well).

"Nice and young - how I like 'em." She picked me up, gave me a big hug and a kiss, and scared the life out of me.

But my new mates thought it was great. I have never forgotten that day.

— Arthur Parkes, St David's, Pembrokeshire

Memorial service for Cressy sisters

IN LATE September last year it was reported that the wrecks of *Aboukir*, *Hogue*, and *Cressy* were being plundered for scrap metal, and Admiral McAnally, on behalf of the RNA, with colleagues from the International Maritime Confederation, wrote to *The Times* to protest about this desecration of war graves.

At the same time you published an article about a Dutch author who was planning a book on the ships' loss, and who wanted to make contact with anyone who had a relation on board any of them.

It so happens that I do - a very distant cousin called Midshipman Duncan Stubbs, who died that day - but I have been in contact with another distant cousin, Mrs Barrigan, who as Stubbs' great-niece is rather closer than me, and she approached the author.

You may like to know that Mr van der Linden has written his book, and that an English edition should come out this year.

Not only was he contacted by Mrs Barrigan but also by the family of Lt Shrubbsall, who survived, and who turned out to be a great friend of Stubbs'.

It appears possible that a pair of Dutch divers will make a film about the wreck sites, which they have been diving on for some years to clear nets etc.

Finally, Mr van der Linden is hoping to arrange for a memorial service to be held above the site on September 22 2014.

— Capt Richard Channon RN

A lively party across the bar

I HAD just finished reading a book written by my old captain of HMS *Delight*, Capt Peter Dickens, which is his story about MTB Flotilla at war, when my copy of *Navy News* came through the door and, as usual, I checked the obituary columns to see if any of my old shipmates had passed over the bar.

One name jumped out right away, not because we had served together, but because I had been reading about him and also seen his photograph.

His name? Tom Neill. Tom served in the same MTB Flotilla with Peter Dickens.

Peter passed over the bar in 1987, and probably others in the picture will have gone as well, but can you imagine the 'reunion of small boat skippers' there would be when Tom arrived?

Still Waters and Safe Harbour to them all.

— Allen Gittens, Trench, Wellington, Shropshire

...SAD to see my old skipper on HMS *Chichester*, Capt Burne, has passed away.

He was a smashing skipper and a first-class ship handler.

My greatest memory of him, when I served on her was that he visited every department of the ship every week and knew the first name of every crew member.

The *Chi* was a happy ship in the good hands of a good man.

— Ivan Johnston, Brampton, Cumbria

Opinion

BY THE time this edition of *Navy News* is published, the ship's bell from HMS *Hood* might (weather permitting) have been brought up to daylight for the first time since she sank with terrible loss of life more than 70 years ago.

Since the bell was spotted among the debris of the ship lying to the west of Iceland, the HMS *Hood* Association has believed it would be a fitting tribute to the 1,415 sailors who died in her to recover her bell as a permanent memorial and put it on display in the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

Given the Association's strong support, the Secretary of State for Defence approved the project and licensed the recovery of the bell from a protected site.

Such an operation would not be possible without the very generous help of the American philanthropist Paul Allen, who is

offering his yacht *Octopus* and its remotely operated vehicle to help Blue Water Recoveries locate and retrieve the bell.

The very sophisticated underwater lighting and cameras now available may also shed some light on why the battlecruiser suffered such catastrophic damage on May 24 1941.

It's interesting to reflect that such sophisticated modern technology is increasingly being used to shed light on our history. Above all, raising the bell will be a fitting tribute to the largest RN ship ever lost to action, to all the men who died in her, and the three who survived.

As the current President of the Association, Rear Admiral Philip Wilcocks, said: "There is no headstone among the flowers for those who perish at sea."

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

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JACK

BY TUGS



Whirlpool of debate around Charybdis

IN *THE Maelstrom of War, Classic Ships of the Royal Navy, HMS Charybdis*, (page 12, August) may I point out an error?

The article includes a portrait photograph of a Royal Navy Dido-class cruiser taken in World War 2 – but it is not of HMS Charybdis.

HMS Charybdis carried an improvised main armament of eight 4.5in DP guns in four twin mountings, two forward and two aft.

The photograph shows a Dido-class cruiser fitted with the designed main armament of ten 5.25 DP guns in five twin mountings arranged three forward and two aft.

From the camouflage scheme carried, the photograph appears to be of HMS Cleopatra.

Dido-class cruisers HM Ships Charybdis, Euryalus and Cleopatra carried similar camouflage schemes (when seen in black and white photographs).

I believe the photograph is of HMS Cleopatra and definitely not Charybdis. Surfing the net, I found a link <http://www.world-war.co.uk/sirte.php3> which shows a sequence of four photos taken from HMS Euryalus on March 22 1942 showing HMS Cleopatra ahead laying a smoke screen.

Comparing the camouflage in the photo with the scheme carried by the ship shown on page 12, you may conclude with me that both photos are of HMS Cleopatra taken circa early 1941 before a change of camouflage scheme and before the two single pom-poms were removed and five single 20mm guns added whilst refitting in Malta in mid-1942.

I am sure I will not be the only person to point out the error!

– Roger Winsor, Swansea

...The armament quoted is correct (there was a shortage of 5.25 turrets) but the picture is not Charybdis, as the ship clearly has five twin 5.25 turrets.

I still think you should run these articles past an old blighter (like me) to eliminate these howlers!

Good issue otherwise,

– Cdr Julian Loring, Downton, Wiltshire

...THE photograph is not of HMS Charybdis.

As the text rightly states, she was completed with eight 4.5in guns in four double turrets rather than the designed ten 5.25in guns

in five double turrets in A,B,C,X and Y positions.

HMS Scylla was similarly completed and both were known as the 'toothless terrors' because of their light main armament.

Scylla was badly damaged during the war and laid up without being repaired, listed for disposal in 1948 and scrapped in 1950, still carrying her 4.5in guns.

I cannot be certain but I believe the photograph is of HMS Euryalus which survived the war, placed in reserve in 1954 and scrapped in 1959.

Just to assist, on page 116 on *Cruisers of World War Two (An International Encyclopaedia)* there is a photograph of HMS Cleopatra.

The camouflage scheme shown does not correspond to the picture shown in *Navy News*, which appears to confirm that the cruiser is HMS Euryalus.

However I am open to further suggestions.

– Ian Richardson, High Shincliffe, County Durham

...THE ship is not HMS Charybdis as the cruiser shown has five turrets of 5.25in guns (total ten) but Charybdis carried only eight 4.5in guns in four turrets.

I think that it is HMS Sirius (which I served on) as she was in this convoy and was damaged, and had the full complement of ten 5.25 turrets as shown in the photograph.

– Gerry Gerhard, Armadale, Western Australia

...THE designed main armament of the Dido-class cruisers consisted of five turrets, each mounting two 5.25in dual purpose guns, three forward of the bridge (A, B and Q) and two aft (X and Y).

Argonaut, Cleopatra, Euryalus, Hermione, Naiad and Sirius were all completed with their designed five turrets, but the supply of these guns became critical, and Dido and Phoebe lacked Q turret and Bonaventure X turrets.

The missing turret was eventually fitted to Dido, not in Phoebe or Bonaventure.

The supply of 5.25in turrets became even worse later, and none were available at all for Charybdis and Scylla.

Both these ships were completed with extemporised armament of eight 4.5in DP guns twin-mounted in four mounts in open-backed shields, with B mounting carried high on a double-storied forward shelter deck.

A prominent blast shield was fitted forward of B mount to shield the gun crew of A mount.

The photograph published is clearly a five-turreted Dido, and cannot be Charybdis.

– A J Smythe, Rayleigh, Essex

...THE Dido-class in the picture is I believe, Euryalus, although I'm not 100 per cent.

– Sean Smith, Eastleigh, Hampshire

...ONLY two Dido-class AA cruisers were equipped with eight 4.5in guns, Charybdis and Scylla, instead of the planned 5.25in guns. There was a shortage of them.

All the other Dido class had eight or ten 5.25in.

The first two were close-chummy ships and looked quite different because of the turret shapes.

I am really disappointed you have the wrong ship photograph of Charybdis, as my father happened to be killed on her.

She had eight 4.5in guns, not the ten 5.25in shown.

– Gordon Smith,

Penarth, Vale of Glamorgan

...IT'S EASY to say the ship is not Charybdis, more difficult to work out which cruiser she is.

The only reference I can find is in *Ensign no.2* by Alan Raven and Trevor Lenton which states: "in 1941 large numbers of light cruisers were to be seen wearing the striking Admiralty first disruptive type of camouflage with three of the four ships completed in 1941 painted with this scheme. "They were Cleopatra, Euryalus and Charybdis."

As Charybdis differs from the other two named cruisers in superstructure and number of turrets, my guess is your photograph is either HMS Cleopatra or HMS Euryalus.

I may be wrong!

– Bob Cavill, North Anston, Sheffield

How to stir up a maelstrom with one picture... The offending image came out of the Charybdis file in the (otherwise generally reliable) Navy News archive (with 'Charybdis' scribbled on the back of the print in pen).

Sadly, not being as keen a ship buff as our eagle-eyed correspondents, we didn't pay too close attention to the armament.

All of which merely goes to confirm the first rule of journalism: never trust another journalist...

– News Ed

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,

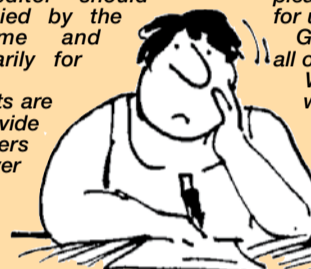
please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.

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.



Loggies celebrate excellence

THE efforts of students and instructors at the Defence Maritime Logistics School have been celebrated at the school's annual awards ceremony.

A total of 26 awards were presented to the top students for 2011, ranging from recruits who completed their specialist training to sailors undergoing career advancement training.

Among the winners was PO Duncan Knibbs, recognised for his efforts on his six-week catering conversion course.

His eagerness to embrace new knowledge was demonstrated by his dedication and enthusiasm for the training, which earned the galley manager on board HMS Edinburgh the Keith Collick Memorial Trophy.

Log (SC) Jason Charles won the Terry Bloomer Prize after overcoming initial challenges during training to reach his goal.

There were also prizes for instructors at DMLS, which is based at HMS Raleigh.

CPO 'Dixie' Dean, the Deputy Logistics Training Officer within the Cookery Squadron, was awarded the Commandant Defence College of Logistics Personnel Administration Award as the instructor who has demonstrated training excellence.

PO Marc Williams RFA, of the Supply Chain Squadron, was presented with the Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport Prize, awarded to the DMLS instructor who has consistently demonstrated outstanding leadership, ethos and instructional performance.

The Chief Naval Logistics Officer prize, for the Logistics Officer or Rating who made a significant contribution to delivering or promoting high-quality training and coaching in the Fleet, went to PO(SC) Isla Mooney.

Cdr Heber Ackland, the Commandant of the DMLS, said: "This year's awards have demonstrated once again the quality of Maritime Logisticians across the Service."

"In addition to the core naval values of commitment, courage and discipline, the personnel being recognised have also displayed personal endeavour and a willingness to strive for excellence, often in the face of adversity."

"This is extremely encouraging for the future and I congratulate all award winners and hope that they will continue to strive for success in the future."

Bishop visits Coastwatch

DURING a visit to his family home at Weymouth in Olympic fortnight, Stephen Venner, the Bishop to the Armed Forces, accepted an invitation to visit the National Coastwatch Institution (NCI) lookout at Portland Bill.

Bishop Stephen, accompanied by his wife Judy, were met by station manager Geoff Peters and his deputy, Mike Burgoyne, and were given a tour of the lookout and a new training facility.

As a boy, Bishop Stephen sailed at Weymouth, and later took up windsurfing.

He said that he was inspired by the professionalism and knowledge displayed by the Portland watchkeepers.

Model manoeuvres

GLASGOW Richmond Model Boat Club took on the task of hosting the National Warship Weekend for the first time – and an officer from a full-sized warship had a role to play.

The weekend featured the crowd-pleasing harbour scene and static displays.

Sunday saw three teams compete in a formation sailing event, and a single steering event.

The judging for best in show was done by guest of honour

Young Americans at BRNC

A GROUP of US Navy midshipmen were given an insight into the training provided to their Royal Naval counterparts during a week-long visit to Britannia Royal Naval College.

During the week the Americans – on a four-year course at the US Naval Academy at Annapolis – toured the college and were able to meet RN Officer Cadets undergoing their 30-week initial naval training course.

The visitors took part in a range of activities, including boat-handling on the River Dart, fitness sessions and navigation training.

They also visited the Commando Training Centre, Lymington, where they tackled the endurance course.

Mid Tyler Ledoux said: "It's been great coming to BRNC."

"A group from the Royal Naval College came to us last year. It's been good being out in the picket boats on the river and to take part in the endurance course at Lymington."

"There was not as much water as normal, but a lot of mud, so it was great fun."

"Our training is very similar to the Royal Navy, but there is a slight difference in the methods we use for navigation and that type of thing, so that's been a bit tricky."

The visit was hosted by Dartmouth's US Navy Liaison Officer, Lt Matt Kenfield, who said: "Visits like this one are great for

strengthening relationships between BRNC and the US Naval Academy."

"Not only does it keep communication going between the two institutions, it allows us to exchange ideas in the way we train future naval officers."

"The BRNC cadets and USNA midshipmen will take the lessons and experiences of this week into the Fleet with them and our navies will be better for it."

"I hope that we can make this exchange an ongoing arrangement and even lengthen the stay for the USNA midshipmen during subsequent visits."

"The benefit is really invaluable"



● AET George Bowhill with his award

Army accolade for WAFU

A NAVAL rating has been presented with an Army award for his work in Afghanistan.

AET George Bowhill won his award for outstanding achievement during a six-month tour of duty as a detainee handler at Camp Bastion.

George, who is on detachment from 702 Naval Air Squadron at Yeovilton, volunteered to deploy to Afghanistan in support of the Military Provost Staff to experience joint operations in Helmand Province as part of Operation Herrick.

"After my pre-deployment training in Colchester, I and my colleagues from the Army, Royal Navy and RAF deployed to Afghanistan," said George.

"The tour has been very interesting and hard work, both physically and mentally, but it has been very rewarding at the same time."

"Overall it has been a great experience and I'd recommend this role to anyone."

Brig Forster Knight, the Provost Marshall (Army), said: "AB Bowhill is a man of boundless energy and a bottomless pit of enthusiasm and laughter."

"Having RN and RAF personnel on the Detention Team adds so much to the dynamic of the group."

"We are richer for it and AB Bowhill epitomises the professionalism of the Senior Service."

Freedoms for officer

THE former Commanding Officer of HMS St Albans has been awarded the Freedom of the City of London and been made a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Haberdashers.

Cdr Tom Sharpe, who commanded the Type 23 frigate from September 2010 until moving on in July, said: "I feel incredibly privileged to receive the Freedom of the City of London, an award which is the highest honour bestowed by the City of London."

"Previous recipients have included Admiral Lord Nelson and The Right Honourable Sir Winston Churchill."

"I am also very grateful to be awarded Freeman of the Haberdashers for recognition of our close liaison over the past two years."

Besides her formal affiliation with the Haberdashers, HMS St Albans enjoys a close relationship with her affiliate namesake city and with many other organisations, including the Worshipful Company of Marketers.

During HMS St Albans' five-day visit to London in March, the ship hosted a number of official receptions, capability demonstrations, tours and briefings, as well as supporting community projects in St Albans.

Culdrose choir

A NEW all-female choir has been set up at RN Air Station Culdrose consisting of wives and partners of serving or ex-serving personnel and any other females with links to the establishment.

The Culdroses have been helped by the station's Bandmaster, who has been offering professional musical advice on different parts and harmonies.

Association exists for Navy Humanists

THE long association between the Royal Navy and the established church can be traced back to 'chaplains in the King's Ships' as long ago as the late 13th century, writes Cdr John Craig.

And almost 400 years ago, in 1626, King Charles I gave orders for a chaplain to be in every one of his ships at sea.

The increasing diversity of the Armed Forces saw uniformed rabbis catering to the needs of Jewish servicemen during World War 2, while clerics from the Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh faiths were appointed, albeit as civil servants working with the Service chaplaincy, in 2005.

Given that such a diverse range of religious views are well-represented, it would seem odd if the 51 per cent of people who answered 'No' to the question 'Do you regard yourself as belonging to any particular religion?' in last year's *British Social Attitudes Survey* were not similarly represented in the Royal Navy.

Well, not surprisingly for such

an inclusive Service, they are.

Anyone who has seen the 'Happy Human' logo displayed proudly as a bumper sticker might be forgiven for assuming that the owner of the vehicle is a rugby enthusiast who enjoys nothing more than seeing their team "slot the ball right between the uprights."

They might be shocked to learn that the symbol is in fact the logo used by Humanists, and that Humanists are well represented in the Royal Navy thanks to the work of the UK Armed Forces Humanist Association (UKAFHA) [in which Cdr Craig is the Royal Navy representative].

While many labels are used to describe those who choose to live their lives without belief in a god – such as atheists, agnostics, secularists and rationalists – the term 'humanism' describes the secular ideology that advocates reason, ethics, and justice, while rejecting religious and supernatural ideas as a basis for morality or decision-making.

The UKAFHA has four main aims:

- To advance the provision of secular and Humanist services in support of members of the UK Armed Forces and their families;
- To defeat discrimination and intolerance on the basis of religion or belief in the Armed Forces;
- To advance the education of current and former members of the UK Armed Forces and Ministry of Defence and their families in the philosophy of Humanism;
- To provide a means for like-minded individuals to discuss Humanist values, principles and

relevant subjects, with particular focus on the needs of the Armed Forces' community.

Membership of the UKAFHA is open to all UK Service personnel, their families, veterans and civilian MOD staff, who seek to represent the interests of all those who subscribe to non-religious beliefs.

Best of all, membership of the UKAFHA is currently free.

Anyone who is interested in learning more about UKAFHA is encouraged to visit the association's website at www.armedforceshumanists.org.uk

Students join in

TEN students from Dartmouth Academy, Brixham Community College and Oswestry School in Shropshire were given an insight into officer training at Britannia Royal Naval College.

The students spent a week at Dartmouth, during which time they commanded a Type 45 destroyer – courtesy of the state-of-the-art bridge simulator, took part in boating activities on the River Dart and were involved in fitness training.

Lt Cdr Andy Harrison, BRNC's First Lieutenant, said:

"Work experience gives us an excellent opportunity to show the students the challenging career opportunities the Royal Navy can provide."

"Our programme has been designed to give the students an insight into the training carried out at Britannia Royal Naval College, the Naval ethos of courage, commitment, discipline, respect, integrity and loyalty that we inculcate into our officers and the breadth of skills required by those serving in the Royal Navy today."

Family reunion in Red Sea

WHEN two Royal Navy frigates anchored in the Red Sea there was a brief opportunity for a family reunion.

CPO Sean Pinniger, an Air Engineer in HMS Westminster, met up with his son Nick Pinniger, a serving Royal Marine, as the 'Capital Ship' handed over security duties to HMS Sutherland (pictured right, by LA(Phot) Ben Sutton).

Whilst Sean, normally based at RN Air Station Culdrose, was looking forward to his homecoming after being part of Westminster's gruelling seven-month deployment in the Middle East and Indian Ocean, Nick is part of the Fleet Protection Group based in Faslane and is assigned to Sutherland, based at Devonport, which is just entering the operational theatre.

Sean joined the Royal Navy in 1989, whilst Nick is a relative newcomer, having completed Royal Marines basic training

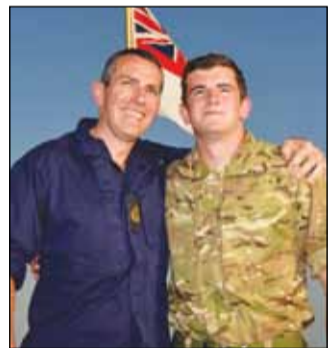
in September 2010, and is now embarking on his first operational deployment.

Despite more than two decades in the Senior Service, Sean still managed to chalk up a personal first on the deployment, as he finally got to take part in a traditional Crossing the Line ceremony when the frigate sailed over the Equator.

Westminster's time in the Joint Operating Area has seen the ship disrupt three groups of suspected pirates, seize £14m worth of

heroin from smugglers in the Indian Ocean, conduct security patrols in the Arabian Gulf and Indian Ocean, pay goodwill visits across the region from Aqaba in Jordan to Dar-es-Salaam in Tanzania, and conduct numerous exercises with coalition and allied forces in the region.

The Pinniger family are no strangers to serving our nation's interests – Sean's two brothers have served in the Royal Air Force and the Army, and his nephew is also a Royal Naval rating.



Grand way to reach milestone



REACHING your 1,000th flying hour is an achievement for any Naval aviator, but to do it whilst deployed on operations, having successfully disrupted three pirate action groups and seized millions of pounds worth of illegal narcotics, makes this particular milestone all the more memorable for PO Leigh Williams.

PO Williams is a Merlin Aircrewman with Culdrose-based 829 Naval Air Squadron who was recently embarked in HMS Westminster.

Along with the rest of Westminster's 200-plus ship's company, he left the UK in January for operations east of the Suez Canal to protect Britain's interests in this strategically-vital part of the world.

Much of the deployment has seen the nation's 'Capital Ship'

conducting maritime security operations; especially in the counter-piracy and counter-narcotics fields.

PO Williams said: "To reach 1,000 hours is a great feeling."

"This has certainly been one of the busiest deployments I have undertaken in my time, and I have enjoyed every second of it."

The senior rate returned to the UK with the frigate last month after seven months away, and he is now due to leave 02 Flight and embark on a career in instruction, passing on his expertise and knowledge to the next generation of aviators to join the Royal Navy.

His achievement was marked with the traditional presentation of a cake and a bottle of champagne by Capt Nick Hine, the Commanding Officer of Westminster.

Resourceful chef is recognised

A ROYAL Navy Chef has been commended for his role in managing food supplies on board minehunter HMS Brocklesby to ensure the ship could complete her tasking off Libya last year.

LCH Gavin Brown was the senior member of the catering team on board the Hunt-class ship which was diverted to Libya from a routine NATO deployment in the Mediterranean.

The ship undertook live mine clearance operations to keep the besieged port of Misrata open.

Without the opportunity to re-supply LCH Brown managed the ship's catering stores to provide a varied and nutritious menu to sustain the crew during an extended period at sea operating within the range of enemy artillery.

In recognition of his efforts he was awarded a commendation for distinguished service by the Chief of Joint Operations.

Receiving his commendation at HMS Raleigh, where he is undergoing a personal development course, LCH Brown said: "I wasn't expecting this commendation as I was just doing my job."

"I had a good team to back me up and I feel this recognition is as much for them as it is for me."

The commendation also recognises his contribution to the ship's morale by organising a ship's raffle and a BBQ for the crew and their families to celebrate Brocklesby's return to Portsmouth on completion of her deployment.

LCH Brown is due to take up an appointment on board frigate HMS Montrose in the rank of Petty Officer later this year.

The junior rate has served in five Royal Navy ships since he joined up in 2000, and has been awarded medals for his contribution to operations off Iraq and in Afghanistan.

Bomb-disposal skills tested in Afghanistan

A ROYAL Navy bomb disposal expert who has recently returned from Afghanistan has been awarded a Commendation for his work with the Afghan National Army (ANA).

LS (Diver) Martin Platts (right), aged 34, was given the award for outstanding achievement during Operation Herrick.

Only 50 of the accolades were handed out across Task Force Helmand.

A Royal Navy diver by trade, Martin spent the first half of his six-month tour of duty teaching an ANA bomb disposal operator how to neutralise IEDs – who later went on to clear more than 100 devices in just a few months.

Martin also cleared bombs for patrolling ISAF forces in Khar Nikah during a particularly busy spell of insurgent activity.

The junior rate said: "I am glad to have been involved in the training and mentoring programme and really proud to have been picked for this award."

"During the last operation I was involved in I bumped into the ANA operator we had been training earlier in the deployment and he told me he had cleared 130 IEDs without any incident since I last saw him, and thanked me for the training."

"That was a really good feeling." Martin joined the Royal Navy as a clearance diver in 2001.

Following deployments at sea and travelling around the world with Fleet Diving Unit 2, Martin was promoted in 2009 and began working for Southern Diving Unit 2, who work as on-call bomb



disposal for a large area of the UK.

During this time Martin became the first member of the Royal Navy to pass the Army's High Threat Advanced IEDD course in 2011 before he then began six months of training for deployment to Afghanistan.

"The desert isn't the most natural environment for divers so there was intensive training provided by the Royal Marines to enable us to deploy with professional soldiers," he said.

"It really kicked in the day after my birthday when we were working in a hostile area and we were in an explosion."

"Fortunately no one was badly hurt but we didn't go into as much shock as we would have done had we not done the training beforehand."

As part of his mentoring duties, Martin spent much of his time working alongside the ANA, teaching them to take the lead once the coalition forces leave.

"Mentoring was interesting," he added.

"I worked with members of the ANA much more closely than

some of my peers and learnt a lot about the Afghan people and what they would like to see in the longer term.

"They wanted to learn from us in order to not be reliant on ISAF and they were extremely enthusiastic and capable."

Yet it was once Martin left his mentoring duties to support coalition patrols in Khar Nikah that the soldiering skills learnt prior to deployment started to kick in.

On round-the-clock notice to provide bomb disposal services,

Promotion, promotion, promotion

GOOD things come in threes, as far as staff at HMS Raleigh are concerned.

Because three instructors at the Supply Chain (SC) Squadron of the Defence Maritime Logistics School within the training base were promoted on the same day.

LLogs (SC) Emma Roberts became PO Roberts, PO Paul Curry was promoted to CPO and CPO Ian Scholes was elevated to the rank of WO1.

WO1 Mac MacDomald (right of picture), in charge of the Squadron, said: "It's a pleasure to have people of this quality at the SC Squadron and they all collectively make my job easy."

"The future Logistician is in good hands and I'm confident that

they were in constant demand as insurgent activity appeared to be on the increase.

"We were busier in the last five weeks than in the whole of the first five months," he said.

"During one op there was an explosion that killed the bomb-layer about a hundred yards from our front gate."

"Then shortly afterwards we cleared six IEDs in four days and were then deployed in support of an ANA-led operation."

"Being versatile is essential in this type of theatre."



Picture: Dave Sherfield

the training being developed and delivered at such an important time will endure and the Fleet will be better serviced for their efforts.

"I'm very proud of them."

The three instructors have accrued almost 50 years of service – WO1 Scholes (left) joined up in 1989, CPO Curry (second left) in 1986 and PO Roberts in 2005.



● AB(CIS) Roderick McKenzie, of HMS Illustrious, with a fellow participant in the World Pride parade in London

World (Pride) Service

TENS of thousands of people gathered on the streets of London for the biggest day in the gay calendar – World Pride, writes AB(CIS) Roderick McKenzie, of HMS Illustrious.

This year was the 40th anniversary since the first march through London and the eighth consecutive year for the Royal Navy to march in uniform.

The number has continued to grow – this time round 35 RN men and women took part.

There were no floats, but the festivities were as energetic as ever, and the support from those who lined the streets was incredible.

Veterans who took part in the first Gay Pride march in 1972 led the parade, followed by Servicemen and women.

Before the procession we attended a VIP reception at the

Churchill Hyatt Regency Hotel, where Home Secretary Theresa May met us.

Cdre Ross Albon, the RN VIP this year, gave a heartwarming speech, and the VIP reception gave personnel a chance to meet colleagues from the other Services.

There was an extensive range of ranks – but as I was told, with Pride and LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender) there are no ranks, just equals.

The 3.5 mile march started at Portland Place, proceeding down Regent Street, across Pall Mall and on to Whitehall, where the rest of the parade carried on as the Forces conducted a march-past at the Cenotaph, finishing at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.

Although this wasn't the first time I had been to a Pride event, it was the first time I had been

involved in a march and in uniform.

There was an immense feeling of pride throughout the ranks as we marched through London.

We could tell the feeling was mutual through the crowds, hearing them shouting to give us cheers and applause.

This year's World Pride also brought nations together, including France, Italy, Turkey, Germany and the United States.

Pride events are about celebrating who we are but also remembering the difficulty people went through when it was socially unacceptable in the eyes of the law.

As a 25-year-old from Guildford, serving in HMS Illustrious, I feel that regardless of sexual orientation, everyone in the Royal Navy is treated as an equal, which is what we were celebrating this year at World Pride.



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Bristol standard dedicated

SHIPMATES from a unique warship gathered in Portsmouth to dedicate their association standard.

Members of the HMS Bristol Association converged on St Barbara's Church, Whale Island, for a weekend reunion and a service at which the flag was blessed.

The church stands very close to the berth of HMS Bristol, the only Type 82 destroyer built for the Royal Navy, which is today used as a training ship.

First on the agenda was a Friday night RN-style horse racing session at HMS Sultan.

The dedication of the association standard took place on Saturday morning, followed by a reception on board their old ship.

A Bristol/Falklands reunion took place at Sultan on the Saturday night before members joined a parade in Gosport on the Sunday.

Bristol was designed to escort the Royal Navy's proposed CVA-01 aircraft carriers, a programme which was cancelled in the 1960s, thus making the Type 82 redundant.

Bristol, however, proved a useful test-bed for new weapons and command systems – and she also played her part in the Falklands Conflict, taking on picket duties and escorting merchant ships as well as protecting HMS Invincible.

Cossack date set

THE HMS Cossack Association's annual reunion in 2013 will again take place at the Royal Beach Hotel in Southsea.

The dates will be Friday, Saturday and Sunday April 12-14.

At the 2012 annual general meeting a decision was made to poll members about alternate venues such as Stafford or Bournemouth, but voting returns came out marginally in favour of remaining at Southsea.

Anyone who has served in Cossacks are encouraged to become members, as are any of their relatives (as Associate Members).

For further information contact the secretary on 01252 613052 or the membership secretary on 01420 83521.

Diesel do

THE Diesel Boat Reunion was attended by well over 200 old and bold submariners – many of them collecting their pensions and proud owners of bus passes – who came from across the country to converge on the Weston Mill Oak Villa Social Club in Plymouth.

The event started at 11.30am as usual with the very successful 'Dinner Time Session'.

A £2 door fee was charged for entry and this, combined with the two buckets that went round (courtesy S/Ms Dobby Dobson and Nobby Hall), helped raise £1,007, which was donated to the Alliance Appeal.

Next year's reunion will be held at the same venue on the first Saturday of August.

Pershore celebrates tenth anniversary

PERSHORE and District branch celebrated their tenth anniversary with a Sea Sunday service, a pig roast and a wartime sing-a-long.

The service was led by branch chaplain Canon Richard Etheridge, and guests included National Chairman S/M Chris Dovey, officers of RNA Area 8, members of Pershore Royal British Legion and district councillors.

At the end of the service, Chris Dovey made a special presentation to Ted Annis, who not only started the branch but has chaired it for

the past ten years.

Ted was awarded a Life time Membership of the Royal Naval Association in recognition for all the hard work that he has done, particularly considering his failing health.

His wife Margaret received a Certificate of Appreciation.

Ted and Margaret were also given gifts from the branch as another token of appreciation.

Ted said afterwards "I had absolutely no idea what was coming – I can't believe that you've

had secret meetings without the Chairman and nobody has let it slip!"

He also reflected on the success of the branch, which has maintained a membership of around 100 since its early days.

More than 150 people turned out through the day to enjoy the pig-roast lunch and the singalong, the latter led by local chanteuse Lynsey Leigh Davis, while there was also dancing, flag-waving and general fun to mark the anniversary.

Empire medal for Ernie

CHESHUNT shipmate Ernie Havis has been awarded the British Empire Medal for more than 50 years of charity work.

Ernie has featured in the pages of *Navy News* before, as he was the driving force behind a memorial to an American bomber crew whose plane crashed shortly after take-off during the war.

The fully-laden B-52 went out of control over Waltham Cross, but the pilot, Lt Ellis, managed to nurse the stricken plane away from the town before it crashed on farmland, killing all on board.

Ernie was a young fireman at the time, and the aftermath of the crash made a lasting impression on him.

In February 2011, through private funding, Ernie had a memorial erected, and the dedication ceremony was attended by the pilot's daughter and other relatives of the crew.

Ernie is also a tireless president of the local Sea Cadet unit, working hard to get permission for the HQ to be rebuilt, and is a long-serving poppy collector, despite suffering serious illness.

Ernie's branch colleague Harold Cornish has been awarded the Shipmate of the Year Award for Area 2.

The immaculately turned-out branch standard bearer is also a longstanding instructor at the local Young Mariners base.

Maidstone service

MAIDSTONE branch has held its 24th annual Sea Service at St Peter and St Paul's Church in Aylesford.

Blessed with glorious weather, the event was attended by a number of local branches with their standards, including the Area and National standards, making a total of 17 in all.

The Guest of Honour was National President Vice Admiral John McAnally, who took the salute at the march-past through the village.

The parade was headed by the combined bands of Folkestone and New Romney Sea Cadets, who later gave a magnificent performance of their repertoire.

The guard was provided by members of the Maidstone Sea Cadet unit.

Music and dancing at a reception rounded off the day nicely.

Brentwood parties in torrential rain

THE second event in the Brentwood branch 30th anniversary celebrations was the 'Summer' Garden Party.

In view of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee it was decided to make this a joint event.

While the branch first commissioned in October 1981, October 2011 – with its established Trafalgar celebrations – would have left little time for anything else, so July 2012 was chosen being not only the 30th anniversary of the branch standard being dedicated but also as it offered time for other events.

The chosen day did not exactly dawn – it went from pitch black to dark grey with incessant rain.

Even in the large marquee, erected some days earlier, the going was officially soft.

The hostess who had kindly allowed the shipmates to use her gardens provided them with tarpaulins to spread across the floor of the marquee on which tables and chairs were placed.

This was to save many a guest from suddenly finding themselves sitting much lower down than they expected to be, or being tipped out of their seat as the back or front legs sank into the ground.

That morning in the continuing rain the brave souls setting up the marquee could be heard asking aloud if anyone else but them would actually bother to turn up.

They need not have worried – with typical British *sang froid* both guests and members hoped for the best and turned up very promptly.

These included a party of eight instructors and Sea Cadets, most of them in full blues.



● A 30th anniversary/Queen's Diamond Jubilee cake is cut at the Brentwood branch garden party

As usual the branch's lady members had done everyone proud with the food and cakes, and the bar was well stocked.

Soon everyone was mingling or eating, drinking, and eyeing up the raffle prizes, in a happy and relaxed mood.

In view of the weather, dress of the day had been relaxed to casual – or practical, which proved a sound decision, as the best was yet to come.

Festivities over, lower deck was

cleared to assist a car stuck on the grass.

Shipmates sprang into action like a well-drilled field gun team.

Advice was freely given (and equally freely ignored) and, other than some new interesting furrows in their hostess's grass, no real progress was made.

Then came a wise man bearing a long coil of rope.

A tow was passed to a car on firm ground and the end was in sight.

By now some shipmates looked like the losing entrants in a very poorly-organised mud-wrestling contest.

The car owner, a true gent, phoned later to thank each shipmate personally and offer free wets, which was much appreciated.

And finally to their hostess, a kind lady, who after seeing her muddied lawns, still remained their friend. The branch said a big thank you from them all.

War hero's medals sold

THE medals of a former RN Air Service pilot have been sold at auction for more than £11,000.

Flt Lt George Hancock Reid, who later transferred to the newly-formed RAF, was involved in an abortive raid on Zeppelin sheds in Germany in March 1916.

On his return flight in a severe snowstorm, he spotted a stranded British seaplane in the North Sea, so landed close by to see if he could help.

The other aircraft could not be repaired, so the pilot strapped himself to the wing of Reid's aircraft.

They took off, but engine problems forced the plane back down; undeterred, Reid taxied through rough seas in the hope of rescue, but they were captured by German forces.

He was gazetted for the Distinguished Flying Cross in 1919, after returning to the UK.

The DFC, British War Medal, Victory Medal and the 1914-15 Star (known as 'Pip, Squeak and Wilfred'), were sold by Spinks in London.

Vindictive ceremony

THE renovated bow of HMS Vindictive is due to be unveiled at a ceremony in Belgium on September 14.

Vindictive was at the heart of the bloody Zeebrugge Raid on St George's Day in 1918 then she was sunk as a blockship in the Ostend Raid just weeks later.

Her bow became a memorial at Ostend Harbour.

Relatives of RN personnel involved in the raids are invited to the ceremony, at the Ostend Cemetery and the new memorial site on the eastern bank of the Bruges-Ostend Canal.

Book brings back memories of war

ONE veteran who read an account of the war in the Mediterranean with particular interest was Edward Wicks – he was centre stage in some of the key actions at sea.

Mr Wicks, now in his 90s, wrote to the publishers of Vincent O'Hara's book *The Struggle for the Middle Sea*, which first appeared in 2009.

"It is unquestionably one of the best-researched books on the subject I have read and well deserves the praise recorded in the front of the book," wrote Mr Wicks.

"My qualification for making this judgement is very simple – it is that I served in HMS Ajax, Communications Div, from January 1938 to June 1941 and in HMS Cleopatra Communications Div, from end October 1941 to July 1942.

"Since I was in Visual Signals my action station on these two ships was always either on the flag deck or the bridge above.

"Thus I was eye witness to all the actions these two ships were engaged in while I was serving in them, which includes some of the major actions dealt with in Mr

O'Hara's book referred to above."

The actions Mr Wicks took part in included the River Plate, the evacuation of Dunkirk (beach parties), the night action off Cape Passero, the Taranto Diversion, Cape Matapan, the evacuation of Greece, the sea battle and evacuation of Crete, Sirte II and the Malta Convoys – and it was at Sirte that Mr Wicks was badly wounded, requiring much plastic surgery to his face at East Grinstead over the course of two years.

Mr Wicks has written a draft of a book about his experiences entitled *Nobody Will Care* – a reference to a quote by Winston Churchill at a secret session in Parliament at which he said: "If we win, nobody will care. If we lose, there will be nobody to care."

The book interweaves Mr Wicks' story with that of the armoured war in the desert in which his second wife's brother, a tank commander, is recommended for the VC and then killed in action.

Mr Wicks believes his book complements that of Mr O'Hara – and it also tells of the wartime pen-friendship between Mr Wicks and his "girl from Rio".





Black day is recalled by Plymouth

MEMBERS of Plymouth branch gathered once again for this year's commemoration (commiseration?) of Royal Navy Black Day – July 30 1970, writes S/M Bob Shaw.

That was when the daily rum issue to all sailors over the age of 20 years was abruptly abolished, in the interests (we are told) of an enhancement in health and general well-being, increased alertness and attention to duty – and nothing remotely connected with cuts in Government funding.

Memories of rum bosuns with heavily-bandaged fingers and scuppers scrubbed unusually clean were revived and re-lived, as were favourite stories and arguments regarding the Fleet's champion drinkers of Nelson's Blood.

The Sixth Frigate Squadron probably won that one...

Our thanks to Annette and her staff for the provision of a superb buffet, the President and members of the WOs & SRs Mess for the use of their facilities in Devonport Naval Base, and the branch Social Committee for another enjoyable event.

The evening continued with dancing to music by Tony Greko.

For more information call Chairman S/M Bob Palmer on 01752 509931 or Social Secretary Sue Gutteridge on 01752 849176.

Stokers meet up

THREE former shipmates from 6G1 Stokers Mess in HMS Ark Royal have met up after 46 years.

Brian 'Tom' Dooley, Phil 'Scouse' Markey and Joe 'Spud' Murphy were messmates from 1959 to 1964 – and if any other shipmates would like to make contact they should email joseph.murphy16@btinternet.com or call 0151 608 7939.

Relatives honour the sailors of Boadicea

ON JUNE 13 1944 the B-class destroyer HMS Boadicea (H65), which was affiliated to the town of Accrington, was sunk in the English Channel.

The warship was struck by a German weapon – most probably a torpedo dropped by a Junkers 88 torpedo bomber – off Portland Bill in Dorset.

She had been escorting the follow-up armoured divisions to the D-Day Landings and went down in under three minutes, with 170 sailors dying in the incident and only 12 survivors.

A group of professional divers chartered by Scimitar Diving in Portland were moved by the story of Boadicea and the sacrifices made by her ship's company.

The divers felt that by filming their dives – a legal act, as wrecks such as Boadicea are in fact war graves and licences are required – then the memory of those who died with her could be preserved.

One such dive took place in 2011, during which divers attached a White Ensign to the wreck in such a way that when the tide is running it looks very much as if the flag is flying still.

This came to the attention of the son of Lt Cdr Hawkins and the family of AB Thomas Heron, both victims of the sinking.

Following contact with the diving club a return visit and wreath-laying ceremony was arranged and took place earlier in the summer.

The divers attached a replacement White Ensign and a plaque – which was kindly



● John Hawkins (centre) with members of the Heron family before a ceremony to place a commemorative plaque near the wreck of HMS Boadicea off the Dorset coast

donated by Braf Engineering of Woodbridge, Suffolk – near the wreck in memory of all those who served in the ship.

Following the dive a ceremony was held by the families and divers alike, when wreaths were cast

overboard and tributes were paid to all those who died with the ship.

John Hawkins the son of the ship's Commanding Officer and three generations of AB Heron's family were present – Thomas Heron (his son), grandson Graeme

Heron and granddaughter Jane Ware, and his great grandson Chris Heron.

All present spoke of their sense of pride and togetherness in honouring the ultimate sacrifice of those who died.

Falmouth parade flourishes

THAT rarest of commodities in the early summer this year – sunshine – greeted marchers and participants in the annual Sea Sunday parade and church service in Falmouth, coordinated for the 29th successive year by the local branch of the RNA on behalf of the town council and the Church of King Charles the Martyr (KCM).

Over the years the event has grown in stature, to an extent that it has become one of the major events in the civic and social calendar, attracting participants from all over the South West, and from as far afield as London.

It was particularly pleasing to see so many youth organisations taking part this year, including Falmouth and Penryn Sea Cadets (augmented by SCC units from all over Cornwall), Royal Marines Cadets from Truro; 6th Falmouth Sea Scouts and Falmouth Police Cadets, together with civic guests from all over Cornwall.

Led by the Volunteer Band of HMS Seahawk from Cudrose, the parade marched from The Moor, via Market Street and Church Street for the service.

The National Standards of the RN Medical Branch and Sick Berth Staff Association and the Merchant Navy Association, together with the RNA Area 4 Standard and that of Falmouth branch, were laid on the altar, and standards of other RNA branches, veterans' associations, the RBL and youth organisations were in attendance.

The service was led by the Revd Stephen Tudgey of KCM Church, who is also Chaplain to Falmouth RNA, and the address was given by Simon Sherrard, a trustee of the Missions to Seafarers, who gave an insight into their work.

Lessons were read by the Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall, Cole Edward Bolitho, and Capt Willie Entwisle, CO of RNAS Cudrose, and RNA branch president Cdre Tony Hogg read Nelson's Prayer.

The service always includes a short Act of Remembrance, and bugler Bill Bishop sounded the *Last Post* and *Reveille*.

Following the service, the parade re-formed and marched to Events Square. The salute was taken *en route* by the Lord Lieutenant and the Mayor of Falmouth, Cllr Geoffrey Evans.

Following *Sunset* the parade was dismissed, and participants and guests enjoyed a buffet reception at the National Maritime Museum.

Sea Sunday is essentially a Missions to Seafarers' occasion, and is celebrated nationally on the second Sunday in July each year.

However, several towns, cities and churches hold their Sea Sundays on differing dates.

In Falmouth, in the early 1980s, the then Vicar of the Church of KCM felt that it might be good if churches in the Falmouth area were to hold their own services on the second Sunday in July, then join for a combined service at KCM on the following Sunday.

In 1982, he asked the then newly re-formed branch of the RNA to organise a parade.

The branch, which will celebrate its 30th anniversary later this year, has done so ever since.

Farewell to Tich

CROMER branch shipmate Henry 'Tich' Bussey has died at the age of 87.

Tich was popular and well-known in the North Norfolk area, where he was born and spent most of his life.

After a tough childhood – some of it spent in a workhouse – Tich joined the Royal Navy in 1942 at the age of 17, training as a stoker and attending HMS Duke in Great Malvern before seeing service with HMS Tormentor, a combined operations base on the Hamble River in Hampshire.

After demobbing, Tich undertook a number of jobs, including crop-spraying, before spending more than two decades as a dustcart driver.

He was renowned for his sense of humour and his zest for life.

Trainees lend their support

SAILORS from HMS Collingwood helped out with a variety of DIY tasks at Gosport branch.

A team of Leading Hands on the Above Water Warfare course and AB(Divers), also on course – all of whom are on breaks from their training – were enjoying the sun whilst refreshing the paintwork on the outside of the building off the A32.

Branch chairman S/M Nobby Clarke said: "It's nice to have the RN come to help us at the RNA, merging current sailors with ex-Servicemen – they are doing a tremendous job."

The provision of the working party will enable Collingwood personnel, trainees and staff, to strengthen ties with the local populace and reinforce the strong links already held with the local RNA.



● The Collingwood sailors with Nobby Clarke (front left), Fred Gleave, Club Secretary and licensee (front centre) and WO Derek Rea, who organised the working party

Picture: Keith Woodland (VT Flagship)



Flying visit to Fylingdales

MEMBERS of Harrogate branch visited the Ballistic Missile Early Warning System facility at RAF Fylingdales near Pickering in North Yorkshire.

An informative and interesting presentation was given by the Media and Communications Officer, Flt Lt Richie Weeks, which was followed by a visit to the Main Control Room where teams of five personnel spend each 12-hour shift monitoring missiles and satellites orbiting the planet around the clock.

Although much of the more technical information

went over the visitors' heads (not that they would admit that to the junior Service), branch secretary S/M Doug Pointon presented an RNA branch crest to Flt Lt Weeks by way of a thank-you for hosting the visit.

The pleasant and educational afternoon culminated in a fish and chip tea in Pickering.

Although cameras and mobile phones were not permitted inside the establishment, members were caught on camera outside the station (above).

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our July edition (right) was HMS Laleston, which was built at Harland and Wolff.

Ronald Daniels, of Chester, was picked from all the correct answers and wins our £50 prize.

This month's mystery ship, above, was laid down during World War 2 but launched a year after the war ended.

The destroyer was given three names in quick succession.

The first reflected her place in the C class, but she was redesigned and her second name identified her as part of the Weapon class – though it changed again before she was launched.

We need three answers this month – what were her names in chronological order, finishing with the name under which she served for more than two decades?

We have removed her pennant number from the image.



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 16 2012. 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 211

Name

Address

My answers (1)

(2)

(3)



● A member of 123 Troop on the bottom-field assault course as part of their Commando Test week – similar levels of fitness are expected in 148 Meiktila

Picture: PO(Phot) Emz Nolan

Get in shape for 148 Meiktila

IN JULY we had an article about signing up for a role with 148 Meiktila Commando Forward Observation Battery. This month AB1(WS) 'Tug' Wilson tells us what it takes to make the grade:

The Royal Navy has so many different branches you can choose from, however – for me – I needed something more physically and mentally challenging than my current job in the RN (Warfare Specialist).

Therefore in order to achieve my goal I undertook a lot of physical training, not just 'flight deck circuits' but training of my own as well.

Other RN personnel who enjoyed fitness or were looking to apply for physical jobs such as PTI sometimes joined in with me which made it easier to train.

Alongside training I applied for 148 Battery via telephone and email in order to load myself onto the 148 RN Aptitude Course.

Following my emails and conversations with the CPO of 148 and help from my Divisional Officer I proceeded to RM Poole on September 26 2011 for a period of one week undertaking arduous physical training to test myself alongside others who attended for suitability to serve with Commando Forces.

We started the course with seven members. By day one only four members including myself remained due to others not being physically ready, couldn't swim or turned up without correct paperwork.

The week began with an RMBFT (Royal Marines Basic

Fitness Test), followed by the RM Swim test, then a short history lesson on 148 and the opportunities that were open to successful personnel.

This was then followed by more physical training. The rest of the week consisted of a 30km navigational exercise through the New Forest carrying 70lbs; at the finish point we set up a small harbour area where we slept and had an introduction to the dreaded Wet and Dry Routines!

From that we conducted an eight mile CFT (Combat Fitness Test) carrying 55lbs and an SA80 rifle, hard swim circuits and an end-of-course interview to see how we got on and whether we were successful.

Overall I personally thoroughly enjoyed the week, as did the other successful candidates. I think the worst part of that week was the night before the first day as I am pretty sure nobody slept properly due to nerves!

After my end-of-course interview I returned to sea onboard HMS Montrose to await my assignment to 148 Commando Battery.

On my successful posting to 148 Battery, I set off to Okehampton to start Commando Foundation Course which is seven weeks of 'yomping', speed marches, rope climbing (up to 30ft), navigation exercises and learning basic soldiering.

The course is first run by 29 Commando Training Wing (Army Commandos); they teach from the beginning, going back to basics for those who have no experience of soldiering like

myself having come straight from sea.

I was nervous to begin with because I was not sure what to expect on the course.

However after the first day I really felt I had settled in to the course and was ready for the challenges ahead.

I originally thought I'd take a few weeks to get used to the new environment but thankfully this was not the case.

Following the Foundation course was the PCC (Pre Commando Course) which was five weeks in total, four weeks in Okehampton and one week at Royal Marines Lympstone, which involved a confirmation exercise to test if personnel were ready to proceed onto the AACC (All Arms Commando Course).

The five weeks as a whole included a week on exercise in the surrounding areas of Okehampton and a week on camp conducting arduous physical training.

Personally I found most of PCC a refresher of the skills learnt on the foundation course and a lot more criteria tests.

Unfortunately for my first attempt to earn the coveted green beret I only reached the end of the Pre Commando Course as I failed one of the assault course tests, which was to complete the assault course in under *five minutes*.

I found the assault course my weakness as I'm not that quick on obstacles, however one of my strengths were ropes which I did enjoy and also learning new

soldiering skills.

You find on this course everybody has different strengths and weaknesses, however that's when you find you all pull together as a course to attack the physical and mental challenges.

Referring back to my unfortunate first attempt, I have returned to 148 Battery in Poole to await my next Commando Course; personnel at 148 were pleased with my effort at giving it another go.

My next course is October 14 2012; following successful completion (of which I am confident), I will then proceed onto the parachute course to earn my wings and begin to enjoy the benefits of this one-off opportunity.

Anyone thinking of joining 148 Commando Forward Observation Battery but who is not sure about it should apply for the RN Aptitude Course run at Royal Marines Poole.

This will give you a better understanding of 148 Commando's roles and give you a heads-up on what you should expect on Commando Course.

I think it's the best job to do in the Royal Navy – completely different to anything else.

■ If you are interested in finding out more about 148 (Meiktila) Commando Forward Operating Battery RA, then contact CPO(CIS) Gary Glenister on 93884 2276 (01202 202276) or dii email 3COX-29 CDO-148 BTY CPO CIS.

The next aptitude test is at RM Poole on October 15 to 26.

nff NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION

Out and about with the NFF

IT HAS been a busy summer for the team; queries, concerns and issues continue to come into the office at a rapid rate, and we have been up and down the country meeting Naval Service families, writes Emma Prince of the Naval Families Federation.

We have attended HMS Collingwood's Open Day (families only), HMS Atherstone's day of deployment, 40 Commando's Pre-deployment Families Brief, and RM Poole's Information Day.

We undertook a visit to Hasler Company and BRNC Dartmouth, and attended Families Days for HMS Diamond, HMS Sutherland, HMS Illustrious, HMS Bangor, CTCRM Lympstone, HMS Cattistock, Commando Helicopter Force – RNAS Yeovilton, HMS York, Hasler Company, HMS St Albans and HMS Northumberland.

These events provided a great opportunity to introduce the NFF to families and to address any concerns they may have.

We were also invited to HMS Bulwark's Families Day, but were unable to attend, so Ang from the HIVE stepped into the breach and helped us out by representing us on the day.

We were also geared up to attend 45 Commando's Families Day up in Arbroath, but it was unfortunately cancelled due to Op Olympics.

Your Concerns

Communication and housing issues remain the biggest causes of concern for families contacting the NFF.

The changeover from Housing Information Centres (HICs) to the Housing Allocations Service Centre (HASC) continues to cause problems for those in Service Families Accommodation (SFA).

Although the new self-preference system for housing

applications has bedded in well since June, families are struggling to make contact with the HASC due to a significant reduction in staff and the slow clearance of new staff through security vetting.

This has had a direct impact on the NFF office as housing enquiries have almost doubled in the last few months when compared to the previous year.

As well as resolving entitlement queries and guiding individuals through the allocation, maintenance, and move in/out of their SFA, the NFF is in regular communication with the Defence Infrastructure Organisation and Navy Command about the situation; highlighting problematic areas and working towards improvements.

NFF scores well

The results of the 2012 Royal Navy and Royal Marines Families Survey (FAMCAS) have been published.

We are pleased to say that 81 per cent of families' rated their experience with the NFF as very satisfying or fairly satisfying (we prefer very good or good but it's not our survey); an increase on last year!

Thank you for this feedback; we work hard to offer a valued and efficient service. Visit our website for the full results.

The FAMCAS result chimes with the responses from the NFF Feedback Survey we e-mailed to families we have assisted.

Between April to June this year: 100 per cent were content with the speed of the response from the NFF, 88 per cent felt that we answered their question/resolved their issue/provided the information required, 87 per cent did not think there was anything we could do to improve the service, and 94 per cent felt comfortable contacting the NFF again, and would recommend us to friends and family.

Whilst we are talking statistics, we are happy to announce that

our website visits and media subscriptions continue to grow steadily.

The number of people visiting our website has increased by 26 per cent this April to June when compared to last year, standing at 48,150 visits.

Subscriptions to our e-update have gone up by 28 per cent to 1,020 recipients, and our social media presence is thriving. Facebook Likes have increased from 357 to 502 since last June (+41 per cent), and Twitter Followers have jumped up from 117 to 316 (+170 per cent) in the same period.

We set up a LinkedIn page in May this year, and it already had 49 members by June.

Individual subscriptions to our *Homeport* magazine have also increased: all good news.

Armed Forces Covenant Myth Buster

Not quite sure what the Armed Forces Covenant is all about or how it is benefiting the Service community?

Read on for a useful summary of the Covenant and the progress it is making.

■ It's not just a piece of paper

The Armed Forces Covenant was published in May 2011 along with a document called 'Today and Tomorrow' that lists the nearly 100 real, tangible commitments the Government has made to the Armed Forces Community.

■ It is a Government priority

A Cabinet committee has had four meetings to check Ministers are delivering what they said they would, and the Prime Minister has been to two of these meetings.

■ It is about fair treatment

The Covenant exists to make sure Service people, veterans and their families are on an equal footing with ordinary citizens when it comes to accessing public and commercial services.

For example, if you and your



family are posted somewhere new, you shouldn't have to go to the back of the queue for any healthcare treatment you might be waiting for.

The Covenant has made sure that doesn't happen by allowing you to keep your place on NHS waiting lists.

■ It's not about extra-special treatment for all the Forces

For most of the Armed Forces Community, the Covenant is about removing disadvantage so that you get the same outcome as the civilian community.

It's not about getting special treatment that ordinary citizens wouldn't receive, or getting a better result.

■ It is about special consideration in some cases

For those who have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved, the Covenant does make an exception. For example, Service people with genital injuries are guaranteed three cycles of IVF on the NHS, and a scholarship fund for bereaved Service children has been established.

■ It's not a legal document

The Armed Forces Covenant itself is not a legal document, but it is referenced in the Armed Forces Act 2011 and the Secretary of State for Defence is legally required to report to Parliament on its progress once a year.

■ It is having an impact on

the lives of the Armed Forces Community

A huge number of positive changes have been made since May 2011, but sometimes you might not recognise them as Covenant commitments.

The Covenant has twice doubled council tax relief to nearly £600 for a six-month deployment, introduced BFPO postcodes to make it easier to access commercial products, and given priority access to social housing for veterans, bereaved families and Service people who need adapted homes.

■ It is about local communities too

The Covenant is not just about the Government delivering commitments on a national level.

More than 100 local communities have signed a Community Covenant.

It is a voluntary statement of mutual support between civilians and the Armed Forces in their area to encourage mutual understanding and to bring the two communities together.

Alongside it runs the Community Covenant Grant Scheme, set up to fund projects that support its aims.

■ It is an obligation on the whole of society

The Covenant is an obligation on the whole of society. It includes voluntary and charitable bodies, private organisations and individuals, all of whom are asked to recognise our Armed Forces and offer respect, support and fair treatment.

For more information visit: www.mod.uk/covenant.

What's coming up?

We have a formal evidence session with the Armed Forces Pay Review Body on October 10.

Your views on the pay freeze, allowances, operational tempo and anything you feel strongly about would be welcome.

E-mail: kim.richardson@nff.org.uk.

Please remember that we are always open to feedback on whatever topic is concerning you; you don't need to wait for us to raise a subject to approach us with your views.

Olympic and Paralympic Success

The NFF would like to say a huge *well done* to the Olympians and Paralympians from the UK Armed Forces who have represented Team GB in the games – you did your country proud!

Thank you also to all the serving personnel who made the security and ceremony of the games run smoothly, and to the families of personnel called in to support the Olympics – this will have been a long summer for some of you. Simply put, they couldn't have done it without you.

Keep in touch

There are numerous ways to stay in touch with the NFF for breaking news and information of interest to you and your family.

Why not visit our website: www.nff.org.uk – it is updated as and when announcements are made.

You can find us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter, or join us on LinkedIn.

Alternatively e-mail: editor@nff.org.uk to subscribe to our quarterly *Homeport* magazine, or e-mail: info@nff.org.uk for our e-update (sent every other month).

Contact us



Major changes are happening to pensions in the public sector
Picture: LA(Phot) Shaun Barlow

Pension changes explained

AS MOST people are aware there is currently a major change occurring in the pension provision to the public sector. This includes the Armed Forces and work has been ongoing for the past year to develop a Future Armed Forces Pension Scheme (FAFPS).

There have been two significant milestones in the project to date, confirmation of the accrued rights for those already serving and the Outline Scheme Design (OSD) of the new scheme.

In February agreement was reached over how rights accrued to AFPS 75 and AFPS 05, prior to enrolment into FAFPS, are to be treated.

Service personnel will have the value of their pension benefits earned up to the introduction of the new scheme protected until they leave the Service.

Those regular personnel over 45 (on April 1 2012) have additional protection and will remain on their current scheme.

Individuals enrolled into FAFPS will have a final pension pot made up from their service under AFPS 75 or AFPS 05 and their time under FAFPS.

The proportion of pension somebody accumulates from their current pension scheme will be paid under the rules for that scheme.

The majority will still receive a lump sum and pension at Immediate Pension Point (AFPS 75) or Early Departure Payment (AFPS 05).

This portion of pension will be linked to final pensionable salary at the point of leaving the Service, not, at the time of transition to FAFPS.

Further detail on accrued rights, including illustrations that cover most service personnel, can be found in 2012DIN01-063 and on the MOD's internet website.

Following the accrued rights agreement a consultation exercise was conducted to gain feedback on proposals for the FAFPS scheme design.

A number of naval units were involved and this was complemented by an online survey.

The discussion helped shape the Out Line Scheme Design (OSD), which was published at the end of July along with an associated DIB (DIB 2012/41). Again a summary of the detail can be found on the MOD's internet website.

There are changes from the existing schemes in the FAFPS design but there are two significant items retained from the AFPS 05 scheme.

These are the fact that there will be no personal contributions and the retention of an Early Departure Payment Scheme.

The Armed Forces currently pay no personal contribution towards pension.

The Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) does use pension as one of the comparators between

civilian and military pay, however, this is one of several factors in a complex calculation and there is no direct 'abatement' of pay for pension.

The Armed Forces will remain as the only public sector workforce that does not pay personal contributions for their pension.

Both the main current schemes have either a pension or Early Departure Payment (EDP) payable after you have served for a set amount of time.

For AFPS 05 EDP is payable after 18 years service or age 40 whichever is the later. The EDP retained under FAFPS will be payable after 20 years service or age 40 whichever is the latter.

This is a change of only two years from the AFPS 05 scheme.

Work looking into the possibility of extending individuals in service to meet this EDP has commenced.

The default EDP payment position of the new scheme, for those who complete at least 20 years service, will be the same as AFPS 05 ie a lump sum and monthly income stream from leaving the Service until the Deferred Pension is paid at State Pension Age.

The majority of people who responded to the consultation exercise indicated that choice in how the EDP will be paid was important.

Further work is being undertaken to investigate the potential for greater flexibility in how EDP benefits can be taken.

The final design for the new Armed Forces scheme will be announced in September, including the detail of how individuals will receive their Early Departure Payment.

Once this is published, work will commence on transitional arrangements for those transferring to FAFPS in April 2015.

This will be undertaken through the autumn and into next year.

SPVA are heavily involved in this process and they intend to update the pension calculator, which should be available early next year.

A series of information booklets, similar to the current suite of pension ones, will be published the following year.

In his summary about the FAFPS OSD the Chief of the Defence Staff said: "I will be perfectly honest with you.

"Whilst there are elements of the design of the new pension which are better than before, the new scheme is not going to be as valuable overall as your existing pension schemes.

"However, I believe it will still be the best pension available in the public or private sectors.

"One that I and the Service Chiefs believe will continue to ensure we recruit and retain the quality people needed to deliver the highly professional Armed Forces our nation requires."

Your path to promotion

WELCOME to this month's article, sponsored by the RN Ratings Promotions Office. This article is intended to update and inform all RN ratings of promotion policy and procedures as well as providing an overview of other related information and issues.

To start with, it is important to understand the purpose of promotion, this is best described by the policy statement from BR3 (Naval Personnel Management):

The aim of both promotion and advancement is to keep the Royal Navy and Royal Marines manned at the right levels to meet its commitments within the overall numbers authorised by Parliament.

Promotion is not a right. Promotion on merit is a system employed throughout the Naval Service to sustain a robust and effective regime for the command, leadership, discipline, inspiration, motivation, management and administration of a diverse structure of officers, warrant officers, ratings and other ranks, augmented by MOD civil servants and contractors.

It also supports the requirement to maintain a hierarchy of appropriate status and authority to exercise responsibility for war-fighting and decision making, or procurement, development, custody or operation of a wide range of complex equipment, materiel and procedures.

To ensure that the right people are selected to meet this requirement, promotion selection boards are convened at various times throughout each year to identify those individuals that merit such promotion.

Commodore Naval Personnel (CNPers), on behalf of Chief of Naval Personnel and Training/Second Sea Lord, delegates the responsibility for the arrangement and administration of these boards to the Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (Promotions) (DACOS Prom) via the Ratings Promotion Section (RPS), an organisation currently located in Victory Building, HM Naval Base Portsmouth.

Promotion Boards

WO(Promotions) promulgates a viable programme for the various boards required across the wide spectrum of branches and specialisations and identifies appropriate board members and observers, ensuring that all personnel identified for this duty have the right level of experience, authority and standing.

Promotion Selection Boards (PSB) are conducted in strict accordance with current rules and regulations ensuring that all board members are conversant and constantly mindful with the provision for Equality and Diversity and that all eligible candidates are considered in line with these requirements.

The RPS is currently responsible for managing approximately 20,000 ratings' promotion dossiers, ensuring that eligible candidates are presented to the relevant PSBs throughout the reporting year.

This is a formidable task for a relatively small team who rely on individuals, reporting officers and units to ensure that the appraisal process is managed efficiently, ensuring that all candidates are given the very best chance to be afforded the opportunity to be considered for selection.

Appraisal

Appraisal is one of the most important leadership functions; the proper selection of the most suitable ratings and other



Drafty's corner

ranks on merit to fill the range of assignments in the service depends largely on the quality and accuracy of appraisal reports.

Therefore, an active interchange of views on a frequent basis between the subject of the report and their Reporting Officers and Line Managers is essential for individual development, efficient use of valuable manpower and resources and good management practice.

This requires a pro-active approach from all concerned in the process, with the individual understanding, accepting and taking responsibility for their own SJAR.

This includes ensuring that all of their personal and professional details, Competencies, Roles and Responsibilities, Personal Objectives, Career Preferences and Aspirations are up to date and correct on JPA as well as tracking the progress of their SJAR to ensure that it is finalised by promulgated deadlines.

With these statements and factors in mind, it should be noted that although the appraisal process is steadily improving, there are still a number of disturbing issues across the Fleet that can have a severe impact on individuals who may be disadvantaged in the promotion process.

These include:
■ Mid-Period Appraisal Review (MPAR) not conducted/recorded.

■ Competencies not recorded on JPA (RNFT/OPS/SEA TIME) – particularly waivers where appropriate.

■ Incorrect/out of date Roles and Responsibilities/Objectives/Preferences/Aspirations

■ SJAR narratives and recommendations not justified.

■ Spelling and grammar incorrect

■ Well worn clichés or inappropriate remarks

■ Late finalisation of SJAR – 30 per cent are not received by promulgated deadlines.

Focus by all interacting personnel in the appraisal process can guard against such issues and therefore ensure the selection process is complemented by a high standard of available candidates.

Of course, up-to-date information only provides the basis for an eligible candidate, the most important factor will always be potential and associated merit for the next higher rate.

Merit needs to be understood by both individuals and Reporting Officers and is defined as:
■ Suitability and capacity and having sufficient experience to be employed in at least the next higher rank.

Promotion is not always awarded for current and previous good performance. Factors such as consistency of success especially in the face of particular challenges, leadership and management acumen, accomplishment with

people, ability to think on a level above peer group, potential flair for command and future employability in both specialist and broader assignments all constitute merit.

In summary, assessment of potential is critical for the selection of future leaders, as well as ensuring the Service gains the best from its people and that all personnel, regardless of rank, are given every opportunity to have a satisfying and rewarding career.

Information

Information regarding all aspects of promotion is available through various media:

- BR3 Naval Personnel Regulations
- JSP 757 JPA Appraisal
- Promotions area of CNPers website on RNWeb.

Individuals are highly encouraged to familiarise themselves with this information.

Common Reporting dates/deadlines

RN rank	CRD	Latest date
WO1	Jul 31	Aug 15
WO2	Sep 30	Oct 15
CPO (non-tech)	Sep 30	Oct 15
CPO (tech)	Apr 30	May 15
PO	Mar 31	Apr 14
LR	Jan 31	Feb 15
AB	Nov 30	Dec 15

Free thought via whiteboards

HEADQUARTERS staff members in Portsmouth have begun to adapt their practices as part of Defence Transformation, using white boards and smarter briefings to improve their work.

Employees have been using the 'Ten Small Steps to Better Working' framework created by the Naval Command Review team and NCHQ's continuous improvement cell.

The ten steps are a framework to stimulate motivation and help staff develop skills, to review processes and procedures to make them streamlined and effective. They are small behavioural suggestions which should help staff contribute to wider defence reform.

Shortly after its early summer launch departments have already adapted ideas to transform their working methods.

Firstly staff were asked to suggest better practices while they learned about the requirement for change.

After deciding which behavioural changes were to be made a list of them were sent throughout the department so staff could see a direction of travel.

Captain Richard Spalding is DACOS Personnel, Planning and Coherence. His department is responsible for the Navy's strategic management plan and is therefore at the forefront of naval manpower issues.

He said: "In any programme the first step is to do something, and look for ways to improve. Doing nothing is not an option.

"One initiative that is already seeing progress is a suggestion of purchasing a whiteboard.

Bounty for Reserve recruits

FUTURE Reserves 2020 (FR20) requires the Maritime Reserves to achieve a strength of 3,100 by 2018 – and one of the methods of achieving that is a Maritime Reserves Recruit Bounty (MRRB).

The MRRB is a gross payment of £250 to eligible personnel who sponsor an applicant to become a member of the Maritime Reserves.

Payment will be made to the sponsor when their nominee has been successfully enlisted and completed 12 days' training in the appropriate Phase 1 training stream.

The MRRB is effective from the first of this month until August 31 2014, however is capped at acceptance of 400 successful applicants.

Only serving Naval Service personnel are eligible to act as sponsors. Specifically excluded are Naval Careers Service personnel, MR unit permanent staff and any member of the MR primarily involved in recruiting.

■ See 2012 DIN01-185

Watch out for TwoSix

THE latest edition of *TwoSix.tv* features the Fleet Commander's annual message, Cdr Barrand updating on divisional matters, interviews with members of the Naval community, and an Olympic update on board HMS Ocean.

The DVD has been aligned with the Personnel Support Brief to provide an enhanced package for sharing information. If you want to get your message out through these pages or the *TwoSix.tv* DVD, please contact:
■ Pauline Aquilina: 9621 85984

■ WO1 Russ Billings: 93832 5081

Pauline Aquilina is also the first point of contact for the RN Facebook site.



Training the Marine way

THE Teach, Coach and Mentor (TCM) approach to training has seen the number of successful recruits passing out of the Commando Training Centre RM at Lympstone almost double in a decade, written by WO2 Wombwell.

The effective training of Royal Marines has a long history dating back to our formation in 1664.

Although weaponry, tactics, dress, transportation, communication systems and not forgetting the rations have undergone significant changes, it has been the training of recruits and instructors which has seen a quantum leap in a relatively short space of time.

Since the Institute of Naval Medicine (INM) were tasked to look at training wastage in recruit training at Commando Training Centre Royal Marines (CTCRM) back in 2000, it has taken ten years to piece together how instructors should be trained and consequently how instructors should conduct recruit training from a psychological perspective.

The investment in the training of instructors at CTCRM is significant.

From training Royal Marine Corporals on their Junior Command Course to role specific courses such as weapons, physical training, mountain leaders, drill leaders, signals, chefs, drivers and signallers, it can take several months to get on the first rung of the instructional ladder.

The training to become an instructor in any specialisation follows a well-trodden path with regard to teaching the knowledge and skills required to perform specific tasks, and one which the training pipeline has addressed well.

What has been lacking until



Picture: PO(Phot) Emz Nolan

recently has been the teaching of psychological aspects to training.

The mind has always been tested but it has only been those fortunate few who have either arrived at Commando Training Wing (CTW) with the mental strategies to overcome mental adversity or found them on the way, who have achieved the coveted green beret.

As our current promotional campaign *State of Mind* suggests - 'Your mind is a weapon' and we are in the business of training your mind now rather than just testing it.

For CTCRM, the Teach, Coach and Mentor (TCM) approach to

training is simply viewed as a set of instructional tools in an instructional tool bag.

The flexibility of use of all three disciplines within Teach, Coach and Mentor has been key to improving instructors and Royal Marine students alike.

Teaching has been the instructional tool of choice since the dawn of time.

It is effective in the fact it gets information from instructor to student quickly.

Ideal for the military who require well-trained personnel on the battlefield with the minimum of fuss.

The downside is that it tends to

create an environment where there is a 'one-way' send of information from instructor to student, where the instructor is responsible for teaching, training, testing and giving feedback.

The restrictions created by a highly intensive 32-week training programme for recruits and a 12-month programme for Young Officers means a majority of the time, instructors have to use this tool.

However times exist when another tool is more appropriate.

Military coaching deals with performance by creating a two-way flow of information from instructor to student and back again.

In order for performance related issues to be resolved you have to ask questions and avoid the trap created by assumptions.

Military coaching also deals with performance psychology and equips instructors with practical psychological strategies to help train recruits that do not possess them.

To the military in general this has been viewed in the past as almost 'cheating' where many old school instructors believed that recruits should turn up to training with all the prerequisite mental robustness required.

That mentality has largely disappeared in recent years and all new instructors now are more open minded to the fact that the mind can be trained as well as tested.

Mentoring is the final discipline. The military definition of mentoring is a 'two-way' relationship where someone older and wiser, who is usually outside the line management system, develops a student.

Reciprocally the mentor often gains from the relationship as well.

Mentoring schemes for recruits and Young Officers have proved highly effective where former Royal Marines act as a sounding board from an emotional perspective by reinforcing the fact that thousands have gone before and have undergone the same trials and tribulations under the same conditions, all be it in different kit and a slightly different food supply.

The first time a Royal Marine instructs is in an operational unit.

The ten-minute lecture a young candidate will give to his friends in a rifle section will be based on the way he has been instructed at CTCRM.

In years gone by, this would generally be given using the teaching 'one-way' style.

Recently it is not uncommon to see instruction delivered in a facilitative format where instead of a 'one-way' send of information, discussion is promoted by careful questioning of the class to promote learning for student and instructor alike.

At CTCRM all recruit and Young Officer instructors are mandated to attend the eight-day 'train the trainer' or Coaching

and Mentoring Level 2 (CML2) course.

The course teaches elements of performance coaching and introduces coaching and facilitative (questioning) styles of lessons.

Although certain areas of recruit and YO training including weapon drills adhere to recognised teaching methods, some areas lend themselves to asking questions in order to create a two-way learning process.

Tactical scenarios are a prime example; where instead of the instructor going on a 'one-way send' to the student on all the points that went wrong during a debrief, careful questioning often elicits the answers from the student ensuring they maintain responsibility of action.

The Coaching and Mentoring Level 3 (CML3) is the highest performance psychology course run at CTCRM. It is delivered over five days and is classed as a self awareness course.

It is principally designed to unravel how the mind works and looks at how instructors have developed their practice and equips them with more instructional tools based on psychological areas including attitude, confidence, motivation, self concept, beliefs, expectations and how thoughts affect emotions and how emotions drive behaviour.

The course gives specific teaching in diagnosing and rectifying common performance related issues and helps them to understand how the military mind is created.

By exploring the flexibility of applying Teaching, Coaching and Mentoring, the benefits to CTCRM have been impressive.

Primary focus of the TCM approach remains with Commando Training Wing and Young Officer training in Command Wing.

The life blood of the Royal Marines is generated from these two Wings.

After a rigorous selection process both recruits and young officers undertake the longest and most arduous basic military training in the world, and it is here where many instructors cut their teeth.

Pass rates for Royal Marine Recruits have remained between 50 and 60 per cent in recent history.

More interesting is the fact that in 2000 the average number of originals passing out with their original troop stood at nine out of an intake of 55.

That figure over the past ten years has increased to 17 out of 55.

With 22 recruit troops passing through CTCRM each year that is a saving of 176 recruits passing out first time.

In these austere times, that is a significant human resource and financial saving.

Some of this has been attributed to identifying pinch points in the

training system.

Dealing with time management, memory and stress (which are all psychology related) are taught by instructors in the first phase of training.

Having psychological tools has meant instructors are managing to work with struggling recruits who only three years ago would have been re-trooped unnecessarily.

It was not uncommon that eight to ten recruits every troop would be re-trooped after Hunters Moon, a five-day physical and navigational exercise, due to an inability to mentally time-manage field administration.

The stress and sleep deprivation caused by this created subsidiary issues with performance including unnecessary degradation, lack of physical performance and a reduced ability to learn.

This is now a thing of the past as this issue is addressed by instructors in week one of training.

The issues of recalling vast quantities of information are addressed using memory techniques and dealing with mental and physical stress is given a practical strategy based approach also being taught in weeks two, three and six.

The TCM approach goes beyond recruit and Young Officer training.

The ability to utilise the TCM approach and understand the psychological aspects of training is now part of the Mountain Leaders course.

The first ML2s course exposed to the approach three years ago achieved a 100 per cent pass rate during the climbing phase which historically had a 50 per cent failure rate.

Teaching, Coaching and Mentoring the ML2s course remains one of the ideal set ups to incorporate all three disciplines fully.

The Royal Marines School of Music (RMSOM) have extensively trained many of their instructors in the TCM approach.

Three years of music training followed by a high-profile career which demands perfection needs the ability to deal with the mental pressures of high performance.

The wider Navy send representatives on the CML3 Courses as do members of the Army and Air Force as part of CTCRM's support to the wider market.

The TCM approach to training has paved the way for instructors to evolve.

We had done nothing wrong in the past, after all our long decorated history stands testament to the fact that we get it right.

In these lean times, all organisations seek to make the most of what precious resources are available to them.

For the Royal Marines, our most precious resource remains our personnel and as our training becomes more efficient, we make our business more efficient.

ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS



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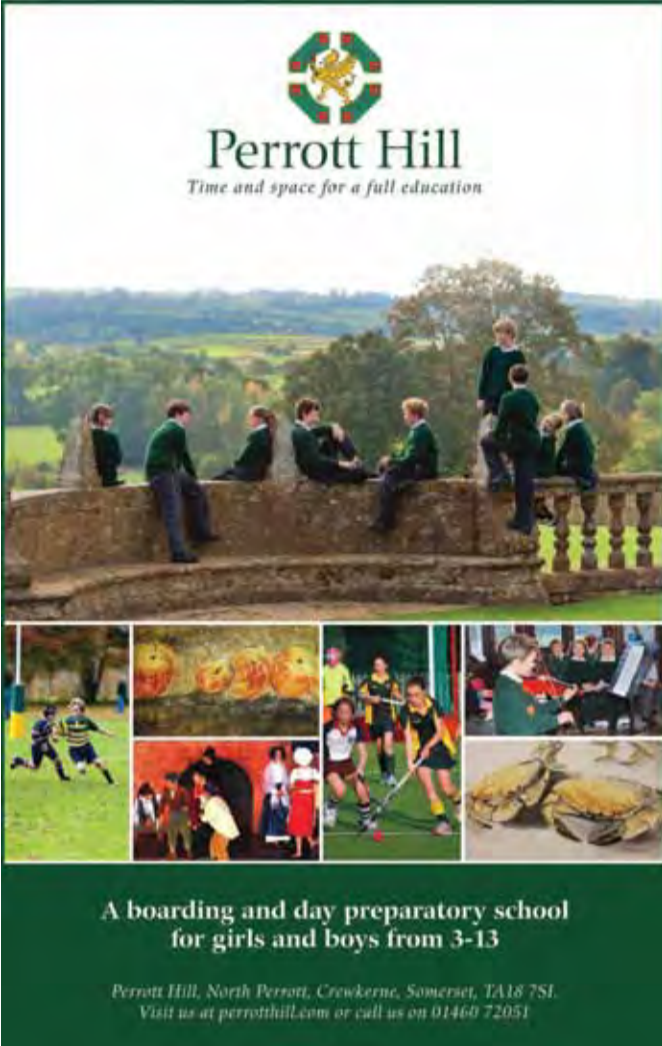
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SET IN 200 acres of stunning Suffolk countryside overlooking the River Stour, the Royal Hospital School is a thriving day and boarding school for 11 to 18 year old girls and boys providing an excellent values-driven education.

During their time at the school, pupils are encouraged to enjoy the adventure of learning and to develop a lifelong appetite for knowledge.

The curriculum is broad and balanced combining the best of academic traditions with the latest technologies and most importantly, every pupil is supported and guided along the way by his or her personal tutor so that they may reach their true potential.

There is the opportunity to pursue a huge range of interests and activities at the school. Creativity and imagination are fostered through the performing arts; supported by the belief that all of us have the potential to be creative.

Everyone is encouraged to try something different, discover new passions and develop new skills.

Fitness and well-being are promoted by the enjoyment of a wide range of team and individual sports played at all levels, helping young people to grow in self-esteem and confidence.

There are over 96 acres of playing fields, an all-weather pitch, extensive courts, unrivalled sailing facilities and a golf course.

The indoor facilities include a large swimming pool, squash



● Pupils from Royal Hospital School coasteering at Summer Central Camp

courts, gymnasium and fitness suite.

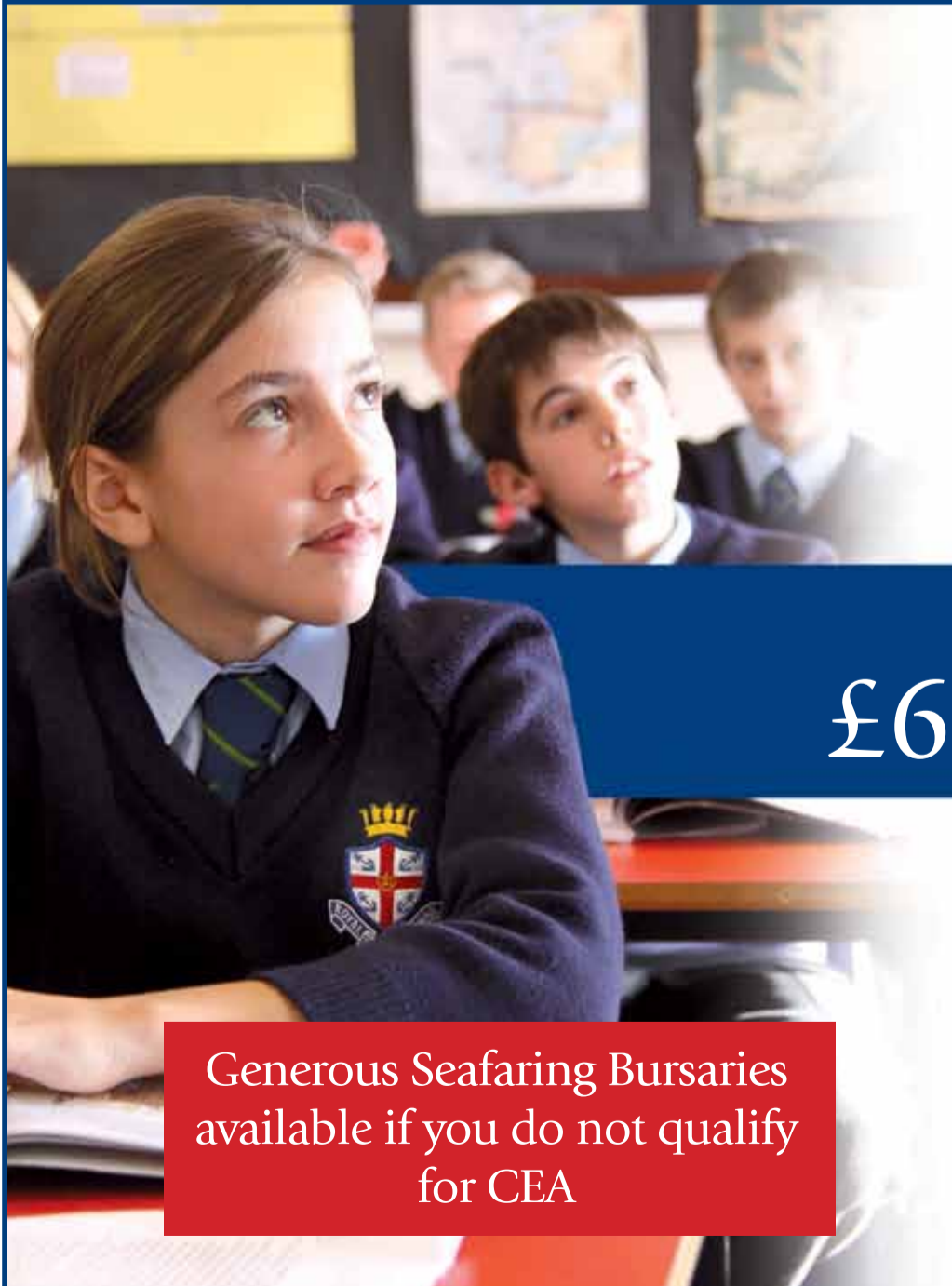
All pupils take part in traditional team sports such as rugby, cricket, netball and hockey but there is also the opportunity to try a diverse range of activities such as sailing, mountain biking,

climbing, canoeing, horse riding, shooting and bowls.

A comprehensive programme of adventure training, leadership and self-discovery is central to an education at the Royal Hospital School and it is through this that pupils learn to challenge themselves

and learn the importance of values such as self-discipline, commitment,

responsibility, integrity and loyalty. For more information visit www.royalhospitalschool.org or contact admissions on 01473 326210 or admissions@royalhospitalschool.org.



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Preserving ceremony and tradition at QVS

QUEEN Victoria School (QVS) is a co-educational boarding school which provides stable, uninterrupted and high-quality education for the children of Scottish Service personnel, or those who are serving or have served in Scotland.

The children are aged between 10½ and 11 and 18 (P7 to S6), the main intake being at Primary 7.

The school offers its pupils a wide and balanced curriculum following the Scottish educational system and includes courses at Standard, Intermediate 2 and Higher Grades of the Scottish Certification of Education.

Pupils also have the opportunity to study in a number of subjects for the Advanced Higher examinations. Increasingly, pupils move on to Higher and Further Education but career links with

the Services remain strong.

Pastoral care is given a very high priority along with careers guidance and personal and social education. Queen Victoria School aims to promote the welfare and happiness of each individual child and develop their self-esteem.

In addition, there is a very full programme of sporting, cultural and spiritual development.

Queen Victoria School is a unique boarding school which seeks to achieve the best that is possible for its pupils.

The school prides itself on developing its pupils in the widest possible sense and aims to achieve success academically, in sport, music, drama and many other extra-curricular areas.

A very special and unique dimension of Queen Victoria School is the ceremonial side which preserves the very best of

the school's traditions.

Dunblane is on a main rail line to Glasgow and Edinburgh, and within easy driving distance of the majority of Forces bases in Scotland. Set in 45 acres of beautiful Perthshire countryside, Queen Victoria School is easily accessible by road, rail or air.

Queen Victoria School is holding an Open Morning on Saturday, September 15 2012, and all eligible families are welcome.

There is no substitute for visiting a school, meeting its pupils and staff and picking up the atmosphere.

If you would like to know more before travelling to Dunblane to visit the school, please request a DVD and further information from the Admissions Secretary, Queen Victoria School, Dunblane FK15 0JY, or via our website www.qvs.org.uk.

An academy with a military ethos

THE Duke of York's Royal Military School is the only non-selective, fully boarding state Academy in the country for children aged 11 to 18.

Set in 150 acres of Kent countryside near Dover, your child will feel safe and secure in a close-knit community where their friends and teachers will understand military life.

Having adopted a military ethos in their approach to education for over 200 years, the school recognises that children in all walks of life thrive in schools where traditional values such as self-discipline, self-reliance, spirituality, leadership and respect for others are present.

The Duke of York specialises in science, sport, outdoor education and music and the pupils enjoy Combined Cadet Force activities from Year 9 to 13. Pupils participate in the Duke of Edinburgh Awards Scheme and have the opportunity to attend CCF camps and exchange trips abroad.

Sponsored by the Secretary of State for Defence, military parades and ceremonies remain at the heart of the school.

The whole school 'Troops the Colour' for the Grand Day each year while the acclaimed Military Band gets invited to many outside events.

The school is non-selective, but all pupils are invited to a 'suitability for boarding' interview with the Executive Principal.

The school considers applications at any time of the year and 'Taster Weekends' are



● School's Military Band at the Submariners' Beating Retreat and Ceremonial Sunset in May 2012

offered if your child would like to experience boarding life.

The school is currently busy planning how to best spend a government grant of £24.9m to enhance the lives of present and future pupils in the school.

The best way to experience this unique school is to visit.

The school is confident that you will like what you see, like many other military families whose children board at Duke of York's Royal Military School.

Raising to Distinction



Queen Victoria School



Open Morning
Sat 15 Sep 2012

Admissions Deadline
Tue 15 Jan 2013

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.

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FK15 0JY


www.qvs.org.uk



www.doyrms.com

Telephone: 01304 245023

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- an ethos where traditional values such as self-discipline, self-reliance, spirituality, leadership and respect for others is present; and
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* Our fees are reviewed annually

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Ofsted Outstanding 2010/2011

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11 – 18 Day and Boarding (full, weekly, flexi)
3 – 11 Day Preparatory School



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Blundell's
Pro Patria Populoque

www.blundells.org

Diversity of choice is paramount at Blundell's

BLUNDELL'S School and Blundell's Preparatory School occupy two adjoining sites covering some 90 acres in Mid Devon, within easy reach of the M5 and Tiverton Parkway station on the mainline from Paddington.

Both schools are co-educational throughout and have been recognised as providing outstanding education by the Independent Schools Council (the Prep School) and OFSTED (the Senior School).

The boarding ethos at Blundell's School underpins all aspects of school life.

Day and boarding pupils are assigned to a House, a system which promotes pastoral welfare and happiness and fosters a strong spirit of achievement.

Years 7 and 8 have their own House which is at the heart of the school but separate from the more senior pupils and where the focus is on making that huge step from primary to secondary school as stress-free as possible.

Blundell's strength lies in the diversity of choice which gives every pupil a chance to shine.

Academic standards are high, the school has a richly deserved reputation in sport and the arts are well catered for.

The wide range of extra activities on offer, including CCF and the Duke of Edinburgh award scheme, allows pupils to expand their talents.


The strong, supportive friendships formed at Blundell's, together with the intellectual, physical and cultural interests they develop at the school, provides pupils with skills for life.

Blundell's Preparatory School is a day school and builds the essential foundations of a child's learning.

Children are supported in a vibrant and nurturing environment which enables them to grow in knowledge, skills and confidence to reach their full potential.

The school is justifiably proud of its effective communication and partnership with parents.

For more information about the happy and fulfilling all-round education which pupils at Blundell's enjoy please see the website www.blundells.org

If you would like your school to appear in the next education feature in Navy News, please contact our Advertising Department...
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Why a country school like Perrott Hill?

WHY a country prep school?

All too often one finds that the drive for academic rigour results in less time for games, the arts and break times.

It is Perrott Hill's view, however, that it is these activities that provide a balanced education.

If people are to instil a love of learning and to equip children with healthy bodies and enquiring minds, it is necessary to provide them with the opportunity to experience the outdoors, the arts and regular games.

These help to build individuals who are excited about school, who jump out of bed in the morning and look forward to the day ahead.

The school has dedicated staff who challenge the children in the classroom and throughout the many different facets of school life; there is much truth in the old adage that one 'wins one's battles outside of the classroom' and whilst the school is lucky in that it has few battles to fight, it always pays to be well prepared.

The school strives to find something that each and every child can excel in, be it academic, sporting or artistic and, when they achieve success, the children feel good about themselves, they walk tall and, as a result, they perform well in all aspects of school life.

Perrott Hill encourages the children to use the woods and grounds.

Academic subjects are, of course, paramount as it is how senior schools and universities measure success.

However, the school strives to develop children who have the desire to learn throughout their lives rather than being infatuated with examination results alone.

This may all sound like pining for the halcyon days of the past and, whilst that is not exactly accurate, there is a degree of truth in this statement.

There was more time and space and children were allowed to be children, rather than pressuring them into being young adults; an ideal that country prep schools still aspire to.

And how does this affect the children?

They appreciate how lucky they are, they want to come to school and they want to learn.

They are rounded, kind and well-mannered and enjoy an ideal start to life.



● Boarders at Perrott Hill School having fun

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Adam runs with torch

NOTTINGHAM unit's CO, SLT (SCC) Adam Crump RNR, ran with the Olympic flame in the torch relay accompanied by some of his dedicated cadets and staff.

Adam was nominated through his workplace for the effort he puts into his role at the unit.

He originally received an award through work which saw a donation of £200 for the cadets.

On the day, Adam was due to run in Glapwell, but was asked to run additional legs – one around Newstead Abbey (above) and an extra 300m at the end of his original leg.

Five cadets attended the relay to watch their CO, and they ran the entire way alongside him.

Adam was also interviewed by the BBC and appeared live on *East Midlands Today* at the end of the day's relay in Derby.

Lorna named Mayor's cadet

THE Lord Mayor of Bradford, Cllr Dale Smith, has appointed LC Lorna Zurek of Bradford unit as his Sea Cadet for the coming year.

Lorna joined the Sea Cadets in 2009 and has since obtained a range of qualifications including kayaking, rowing, cook/stewarding, first aid, and communications.

She also abseiled for the Lord Mayor's Appeal and helped at the Cancer Research Race for Life.

After Lorna was presented with her badge of office more than 30 sailing awards were presented to cadets who had spent the previous week working towards qualifications in sailing, power boating and wind surfing.

Cllr Smith also presented the Diamond Jubilee Volunteering Award to the unit's CO, Lt (SCC) Lynn Bullock RNR, SLT (SCC) Joanne Goodchild RNR, CPO (SCC) Matthew Hall and CPO (SCC) Jayne Rolls.

Barnsley bell

SIX Barnsley unit cadets joined in the three-minute chorus of bells at 8.12am on Friday July 27 signalling the start of the London Olympics by ringing the ship's bell of RFA Fort Victoria, kept on permanent display at the Town Hall since the ship was adopted by the town ten years ago.



Victims of Lancastria are remembered

THE single greatest loss of life in a maritime history, the bombing and sinking of HMT Lancastria off St Nazaire in France on June 17 1940, resulted in the death of at least 4,000 people and probably thousands more.

Now, 72 years since the disaster, the families of victims gathered for the second time at the dedicated memorial in the grounds of the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Glasgow, close to the

Clyde yard where Lancastria was built.

Sea Cadets from Methil, Clydebank and Rosyth units, along with other cadets and Service personnel from across Fife stood with the families to remember the victims (above).

"It is wonderful to see young people involving themselves in such an event," said Fiona Symon, Vice Chair Lancastria Association of Scotland, whose father died in the ship.

"They are a credit to their organisations, staff and officers. They have made such an effort and to stand in the rain again. I feel very proud to be in their company."

Cadet Sgt Cameron Sekkat was presented with a special engraved watch by Mrs Symon for his efforts and commitment in playing a major part in the organisation of the trip to Glasgow and his continued support.

Swell times during cruise to Gloucester

Earlier this year, three cadets from Tewkesbury unit joined eight other cadets on offshore power training vessel TS Jack Petchey at Falmouth.

Last year eight cadets from the unit joined the ship in Brighton for a transit to Ramsgate, but heavy winds and seas put paid to that, confining them to the Marina.

This year, the aim was to successfully negotiate the South West coast to Gloucester Docks – come what may.

This year five cadets opted for

yachts TS Vigilant and Liveryman and the other three – Charlotte Harkins-Wills, Samantha Bailey and OC William Fish – teamed up with PO Marianne Cottee on the Jack Petchey.

With an early start at 1.30am, they arrived late evening outside Padstow, dropping anchor in Port Quin Bay – a successful first day at sea.

However, cadets faced their first real challenge when confronted with a heavy swell hitting the starboard side, causing unpleasant rocking and resulting in waves

of seasickness in those on watch, particularly the cadets taking readings on the bridge.

Only four cadets didn't suffer. Weighing anchor at 3.30am the next day, the cadets docked in Padstow Marina five hours later.

Peace, calm waters, showers and good food all helped to maintain morale.

Everyone got on well, with older cadets taking on a protective role for their two younger colleagues.

When a younger cadet went for an unexpected 'swim' as a result of slipping on weed-strewn rocks,

he was quickly fished out by a leading cadet.

Leaving Padstow at 2.30am, the cadets arrived in Portishead mid-afternoon, greeted by beautiful weather.

Time was marching swiftly on; the cadets had to reach Gloucester in time for a VIPs and visitors evening and the Captain wanted the ship alongside by midday.

Cadets continued to keep watch despite tiredness kicking in; watch officers PO Cottee and PO Kinnealy often took on two-hour watches to ensure the cadets regained their strength, although most on board were beginning to feel the effects of early mornings and seasickness.

The ship docked at Sharpness a few hours after departing from Portishead, where there was a concentrated cleaning spree to finish off – and the ship duly passed the Captain's inspection.

Crew members put the relevant ticks in the boxes and the cadets, with much relief, had gained their OH1 and OH2 qualifications.

They arrived at Gloucester Docks in plenty of time, with eight hours to get the ship gleaming before VIPs and visitors at 5pm.

Originally 20 guests were expected, but in the end the ship received twice that number, including the Sheriff of Gloucester, the Deputy Mayor (plus entourage), approximately 14 Marine Cadets and staff, plus cadets and staff from Gloucester and Tewkesbury units.

The evening was a huge success and won warm compliments from visitors, with the cadets taking it upon themselves to explain the various parts of the ship for touring groups.

The cadets paired off and covered 'Man Overboard' and the flares on the upper deck, describing the distress signals used at sea.

The Captain personally handed out certificates to the cadets.

Two birthdays

NOT content with helping celebrate the Sea Cadet Corps' 156th birthday earlier in the summer, Barnsley unit is also gearing up for a special anniversary.

The South Yorkshire unit marks its 70th anniversary this month.



Members of Lochaber unit on the steps of the Highland Hotel – the wartime HQ of HMS St Christopher

Double celebration for Lochaber

THE Palace was not the only place throwing a birthday bash this summer.

Because members of Lochaber unit are also celebrating a Diamond Jubilee this year.

The unit included the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations with their own in a joint party, where guests included Lochaber Provost Allan Henderson.

And as a ship full of cadets and adults from all over the UK was passing Fort William at the time,

they were invited too.

Unit chairman Tina Calder said: "Over the past 60 years, many young people have learned skills and developed attributes based on life afloat which have enabled them to have successful lives both here in the Highlands and around the world."

"Island communities up and down the West Coast have relied on our ex-cadets, some of whom have become captains of Caledonian MacBrayne ships."

Cllr Henderson said: "I never fail to be impressed by the enthusiasm and discipline of the Sea Cadets and their officers."

"As we in Lochaber have continued to acknowledge celebrations of Diamond weddings it is appropriate that I did the same for the Sea Cadets."

Next on the agenda is a project to raise £19,000 for a Cheverton Champ motor boat to help cadets learn about teamwork, engineering, seamanship and boat handling.

Teign Valley help with sea picnic

TEIGN Valley unit joined forces with the Trinity Sailing Trust in Brixham to provide tall ship sailing experiences to disadvantaged children and young people of Teignbridge.

Following a period of negotiation and a successful fund-raising day organised by Trinity's Development Manager, Toby Russell, a number of future sail training dates for up to six days at sea are being arranged.

The fund-raising day took the form of a 'sea picnic' at Anstey's Cove near Torquay (pictured right) at which cadets provided logistical support including fully-crewed safety and liberty boats, piping ashore VIP guests and generally assisting with the picnic.

The proposed training voyages will start and finish

at Teignmouth – and the prospect of Brixham heritage trawlers visiting the port will evoke memories of Teignmouth's 19th century deep-sea fishing history in which wind-powered trawlers left Devon to range as far as Newfoundland and Nova Scotia.

The venture provide offshore sea experiences and Royal Yachting Association accreditation which will supplement the Sea Cadets' own national training syllabus, enhancing the unit's teamwork programme, helping develop personal responsibility and deliver citizenship training for the cadets.

Following a trial period of development it is planned to expand the opportunities provided by the partnership to TS Canonteign's affiliated schools and other youth education providers in the area.



Big day for Hove padre

CADETS and staff from Hove and Adur unit went to Chichester Cathedral to see their unit chaplain, the Revd Talisker MacLeod, ordained as a priest.

The visitors were keen to support their padre on her special day and to show their thanks for all the effort she puts into the unit.

Revd MacLeod regularly attends parade night, teaching New Entries as well as getting involved wherever needed.

She also ran an enrolment ceremony for the ship's company, presenting them with Bibles as they received their certificates.

Revd MacLeod also joined them afloat after which she cooked on a barbecue for all present.

Flame in Norfolk

A ROYAL Marines Cadet from Red Lodge unit had the honour of carrying the Olympic torch on one leg of its journey round the UK.

MC2 Aaron Bettoney took the torch through the town of Aylsham in Norfolk.

The unit also welcomed a party of 30 US Air Force personnel over the summer.

The airmen demonstrated some of the work and equipment that they are involved with in a session organised by Taylor D Mogford, SrA, USAF, 100th Logistics Readiness Squadron.

Promotion lauded

CPO (SCC) David Jarrett of Liverpool (West Derby) unit has been promoted to Warrant Officer Second Class – the first WO2 in Liverpool District.

David is the unit training officer, and is now also District Warrant Officer which includes the role of Liverpool District Training Centre Superintendent.

He was presented with his badges of rank by the Senior Staff Officer North West Area, Cdr (SCC) Janet Evans RNR.

Also present were the Liverpool District Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) Paul Rycroft RNR and Liverpool District Staff Development Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) Norman Wood RNR.



CLYDEBANK unit cadets had an important role to play in the marriage of their padre, Lt David Eynon to Miss Jannette MacCallum. The service was carried out on the quarterdeck of TS Queen Elizabeth, then cadets formed a guard of honour with oars (pictured) and gave the happy couple a rousing cheer

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Taking to the water for charity

SEA Cadets from across Northern Ireland took to the water to raise funds for the ABF – The Soldiers' Charity.

And if you are puzzled why the Sea Cadets were raising money for the Army, event organiser PO (SCC) Angi Darragh has the answer – and it's all down to the help the Army has given the Sea Cadets in winning top aquatic awards.

"Lisburn Sea Cadets started training for the initial Bronze Medallion, the flagship award of the RLSS, back in September 2011," said PO Darragh.

"The first group to complete the Bronze Medallion contained two Air Cadets from the Lisburn Squadron 817 along with the Sea cadets from the Lisburn unit, and we're about to commence with our third group in the coming weeks.

"We wanted to find a way to thank Lisburn Station, the staff for the use of the facilities and the pool at Menin Gate Leisure Centre in Lisburn, and also to find a way to recognise and thank Pauline Crockard and her team for giving up their Sunday mornings freely to help us gain this worthy qualification."

Pauline, the Instructional Officer Swimming at Menin Gate, said: "I am delighted to host this event for the Northern Ireland Sea Cadets.

"This will be one of many events in the future. We have worked in tandem with the local cadet forces for many years and enjoy helping out where we can."

Worthy duo see Olympic show

TWO cadets from Southwark unit were successfully nominated for two of only 50 pairs of Olympic tickets from the local council.

Groups were asked to describe how their nominee demonstrated at least one of the seven Olympic and Paralympic values of friendship, respect, excellence, equality, determination, inspiration and courage.

Joshua McBride and Sian Cummins, both prominent members of the unit band, were assessed by an independent panel, and the result was tickets for the opening ceremony.

AC Cummins was also one of four cadets who benefited from a £150 grant by the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (RFCA) towards the land-based RYA Essential Navigation and Seamanship course – a precursor for many waterborne activities.

The other cadets were LC Benjamin Wood, POC Callum Malone and AC Karol Andino.

Boating at Dundee

CADETS from across Fife and Tayside came together for a weekend of boating at Dundee unit.

Participants spent most of the weekend learning pulling, sailing, kayaking and canoeing, and after a lot of hard work they were assessed on their ability.

"The training is hard and great fun too," said OC Jack Percival, of Rosyth unit.

"We have been completing our assessments on pulling. It's great when we all pull together – the boat moves fast through the water. "It's a fantastic feeling and sailing is just brilliant."

Surprise party

THE cadets of New Romney and District unit arranged a surprise 65th birthday celebration for their Acting CPO Alan Bell at their HQ in Littlestone.

During the evening ACPO Bell was presented with a Naval large miniature sword by LC James Reid.

Guests and cadets enjoyed a finger buffet and slice of celebration cake decorated with a Naval theme.



● Members of Dover unit on board HMS Bulwark meet Luke Patience, who with Stuart Bithell won the silver medal in the men's 470 sailing class

Cadets spend time in Olympic hub ship

IT WOULD appear that there were two ways to get to see the Olympics close-up.

You could be one of the lucky ones in the ticket lottery.

Or you could be a Sea Cadet.

Because 650 youngsters from 722 units were given the opportunity to spend time on board HMS Bulwark or RFA Mounts Bay in the Weymouth area over the Olympics – and not only did many of them enjoy a great vantage point for the sailing events, but they also met some of the sailing stars as well as visiting VIPs.

The Royal Navy is at the heart of the security operation off the Dorset coast for both the Olympics and Paralympics, with assault ship HMS Bulwark acting as headquarters for both military and civilian agencies.

But the big ship, and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, both have plenty of accommodation on board, so the Sea Cadet Corps was offered a number of places over the course of the Games, allowing units to shuttle through.

Combined Cadet Force (CCF) cadets and Sea Scouts were also invited on board.

The visits were not just to watch Olympic competition, though – cadets were able to experience life at sea in an operational ship, and to put into practice various seamanship skills which they learnt and honed at their home units.

One such cadet was LC Emily O'Donovan, of Twickenham unit, who has been in the Corps for five years.

Emily – who would like to be a Warfare Officer in the Royal Navy, joined Bulwark for a week in late July, spent the first day or so familiarising herself with the ship

and joining tours of the various departments, including the Sick Bay.

There was also a church service on the flight deck, a sports competition for the ship's company which Emily and her fellow cadets watched, and even a sighting of dolphins playing around Bulwark's hull.

Other activities included Morse code signalling, inspecting vehicles and kit on the assault deck and trying on firefighting gear.

On one day Emily was helping the chefs make apple and almond strudel for the ship's company, on another she was boating inshore at Wyke Regis and rock climbing at the Sea Cadet Training Centre

in Weymouth.

Emily volunteered to help with breakfasts, which meant reporting to the galley at 5.30 am each morning, but she also had a chance to watch Merlin flying sorties, including a boarding ops exercise.

Other areas of the flagship Emily visited included the dental department, the bridge – where she took bearings of a lighthouse, a radio station balloon and a beach hut – and the ship control centre.

Being at the centre of an Olympic venue, there was plenty of interest in the Games as a whole, so many personnel and cadets gathered on the flight deck to watch the transmission of the Opening Ceremony from the

Olympic Stadium in London.

Emily's final day was a bittersweet affair – she had the chance to shadow the ship's Commanding Officer, Capt Alex Burton – although there were several occasions when he had to break off for discussions and briefings – but it also meant bidding farewell to all who had taken her under their wing during her time on the assault ship.

"I wish I could have the chance to relive this amazing week – I wouldn't change a thing about it," said Emily.

"Now that I've had a true taste of the life that the Navy has to offer, I am definitely sticking to that career path."

Ceremonial honours for City of London

THERE have been plenty of highs – and the occasional low – for the members of City of London unit over the past few months.

One of the lows was the collapse of the gangway to HMS Belfast late last year, which meant the cadets could not get to their unit HQ.

The unit's CO, CPO (SCC) Paul Townsend, managed to organise an alternative venue, with cadets being taken to Islington as an interim measure – meaning the forging of new friendships between the units.

This change gave a great opportunity for all involved to share in a wealth of knowledge from both units.

While City of London staff conducted classes in seamanship, first aid, and various BTEC subjects, Islington staff contributed band and communications to the mix.

2012 has been generally a more



positive time, with cadets enjoying some unique experiences.

In the spring City cadets went to the Norfolk Broads on a week-long trip that saw the use of three boats and the honing of numerous skills.

Cadets did wide-ranging activities from cooking to physical training, all in all the order of the day was fun.

Next year the Cadets will be heading for foreign waters as they ready themselves for a trip to France in the summer of 2013.

With the gangway repaired, cadets returned 'home' to HMS Belfast – and although they were excited at the prospect, there was also sadness at parting company with the Islington unit.

There was no time to waste

Burgee for Hastings Final effort

CADETS and volunteers from Hastings unit have won a Burgee for 2012 – and the prized flag was presented at their first Sea Sunday parade (pictured right) with unit President Cdre John Kingwell, Head of Navy Resources and Plans.

With more than 60 children from Hastings, St Leonards, Bexhill and Battle, the unit's Sea and Royal Marines Cadets are striving to become one of the South's flagship units – and the Royal Marines Cadet Detachment is now open to female cadets.



METHIL and District cadet Charles Simpson was placed fourth in the Scottish National Standard Bearers Competition for the Cadet Forces, organised by the Royal British Legion of Scotland.

LC Simpson won through preliminary heats to get to the final at the Salutation Hotel in Perth.

The event began with an inspection of uniform, then cadets were put through their paces with each element of drill, movement and timing assessed and marked.

The top prize was won by an Army cadet from Angus and Perthshire.

Trophies and awards

The following trophies and awards have been announced for 2011-12: Canada Trophy (best unit):

Walton-on-the-Naze;

Thomas Gray Memorial Trophy (runner up unit): Huyton with Roby;

Captain's Cup: Northampton and Wellingborough;

Stephenson's Trophy (best area units): Northampton and Wellingborough

(East), Walton-on-the-Naze (London), Greenock (North), Huyton with Roby (North West), Eastbourne (South), Bridgwater (South West);

MacBeath Trophy: Maldon;

Colditz Award (unit which has done most for local community):

Chester-le-Street;

SRMO's Trophy (most improved Royal Marines Cadet detachment): Ruislip;

Commander Brown Award: POC L Jolley (Northampton and Wellingborough);

Leadership Trophy: POC S O'Brien (City of Liverpool);

Captain Roddie Casement Sword (best CO or OIC): Lt (SCC) L Leckie RNR (Helensburgh);

McCarroll Trophy (best RMCD Instructor): Maj (SCC) I Machin RMR (X Ray Coy);

Indefatigable 1906 Shield (RMC with most boatwork points):

MC2 C Young (Huyton with Roby MCD);

Cornwell Medal (best POC at national training centre): POC R Willis (Newhaven and Seaford);

Pollock Memorial Prize (best LC on national cadet leadership course):

LC C Griffin (Glastonbury and Street);

Vernon Award (unit which made most progress in Marine Engineering):

City of Salford;

Cleverley Award (unit with best Junior section):

Bridgwater;

Navy League District Trophy: Northants and Leicester;

OSB Trophy (SC officer with highest marks on national officer selection board):

SLT (SCC) H Truscott RNR (Padstow), SLT (SCC) P Nicol-Gent RNR (Guernsey);

Halliday Trophy (top cadet in RMC Cpl-Sgt exam):

Cdt Sgt A Howell (Bristol Filton).

however, because within a few short weeks the whole ship's company had to be spit-and-polished to within an inch of their lives for the highlight of the year.

Although much attention was paid to Sea Cadets from around the UK on the river, City cadets had the honour of saluting the Queen as she and the Duke of Edinburgh passed by on the Royal Barge.

Standing alongside Belfast's veterans and representatives from the Imperial War Museum, City's Cadets beamed with pride as they "off caps, and three cheers" to the Queen (pictured).

In the lead-up to this auspicious event the excitement was palpable as cadets rubbed shoulders with flag officers and celebrities.

And although by the end of the day most cadets were soaked to the skin, the rain could not wash away the smiles of pride and joy.

But that was not yet it for the summer – next up was the run-up to the 2012 Olympic Games with a bell-ringing ceremony aboard the wartime cruiser.

As Navy News went to press the youngsters were forging ahead with plans for a busy summer, including a camp, a trip to Bavaria, and two cadets skydiving to raise money for the French trip.

RHS at Collingwood

HMS COLLINGWOOD hosted the Royal Navy section of Holbrook CCF from the Royal Hospital School.

The 12 students and three members of staff visited the gunnery and bridge simulators and tried out the Low Ropes course.

Injuries centre opened

THE Royal Navy has opened its first dedicated centre of excellence for treating Royal Marines recruits injured in training.

Fleet Commander Admiral Sir George Zambellas unveiled a plaque at the newly-built rehabilitation centre Parker Hall at the Commando Training Centre, RM Lympstone.

Royal Marines recruits go through one of the toughest training regimes in the world before they are allowed to wear the coveted Green Beret and join the elite ranks of the Commandos.

During that tough training injuries do occur, and those affected temporarily join Hunter Company to undergo a programme of rehabilitation before re-joining training and being prepared for front-line combat duties.

The £3m Parker Hall is the only purpose-built unit for rehabilitating injured recruits and is used by Hunter Company – this is distinct from the care of trained Marines who are injured on operations and rehabilitated through Hasler Company in Plymouth (including those with complex long-term injuries and illnesses) and in their parent unit's own smaller-scale recovery troops (Kangaw Troop at 42 Commando in Plymouth; Termoli, 40 Cdo, Taunton and Harden, 45 Cdo, Scotland).

Up to now about 180 recruits daily have been rehabilitated through the Stone Gymnasium, a general-use multi-purpose gym which was not designed for rehabilitation and was shared with fully-fit users.

Parker Hall has in-situ physiotherapy, an important function of the recovery process, and consultation bays with remedial instructors on hand.

Other indoor services for Hunter Coy recruits include a matted exercise area, bespoke cardiovascular and weights equipment area and a reduced-impact surface running-track – all under one roof.

Admiral Zambellas toured the facilities and watched the men of Hunter Coy being put through their paces on £121,000 of specialist exercise kit.

"Compared with the old gym and rehabilitation services there, this is a bespoke professional facility with the most dedicated and expert staff who are working with the recruits under training to return them as efficiently as possible to mainstream training," the admiral said.

"I know from talking to the guys today that what they want most is to return to their core activity as quickly as possible, to train again with their mates they made through training. That matches up with what the Navy wants - to get them fixed and return them to the brotherhood of the naval service."

The outlay in the new centre should be offset by the ability to retain more recruits and reduce the drop-out rate and medical discharge due to injury.

Admiral Zambellas added: "The Parker Hall rehabilitation centre reflects the Naval Service's commitment – alongside our partners in the Public Services Apprenticeship Scheme - to getting our high quality people into the front line as effectively as possible. The Commando training which Royal Marines undertake at Lympstone is the best in the world, but it is also incredibly tough and makes strenuous demands on our recruits.

"At Parker Hall, those who have been injured in the course of their training have the specialist facilities they deserve to get them back on track in achieving the goal to which they all aspire – the award of the coveted Green Beret. I want to thank everyone who has worked so hard to make Parker Hall a reality."

The facility is named after VC winner L/Cpl W R Parker (RM Light Infantry) who displayed conspicuous bravery in rescuing wounded in daylight under heavy fire at Gallipoli on April 30 1915.

A Whaley good time out on the water



ALMOST 200 excited children and parents enjoyed an action-packed day on and off the water in Portsmouth Harbour as the Royal Navy highlighted the wide array of activities available at the RN Sailing Centre.

The HMS Excellent Families Day Regatta at Whale Island turned out to be a day of sun, sea and sailing as the centre showcased its facilities and provided an opportunity for MOD personnel on the base to kick-start the school summer break with a fun family event.

Staff and helpers provided dinghy sailing, kayaking and RIB ride experiences in the Solent, while larger boats did harbour tours.

Shoreside activities included a paddling area, bouncy castle, face painting, a disco and bbq.

Ken Bichard, OIC of the RN Sailing Centre, said: "This year has seen an increase in the use of this fantastic facility by the local Service population and I would encourage commanding officers of ships and establishments to explore the Adventurous Training or opportunities to improve 'sea sense' that we can provide almost year round."

HMS Excellent CO Cdr Paul Jones said: "It has been an incredibly demanding year for our Service and MOD personnel working behind the scenes in the Naval HQ supporting naval activity at home and overseas.

"The chance to break out of the office and enjoy an afternoon with the family during the school holidays while making the most of the unique facilities Whale Island provides was not one to miss."



Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen

Sultan says thanks to supportive families

THE Royal Navy's largest training establishment opened its doors to the friends and families of some of the 4,000 personnel working on site.

This annual event is the finale of a very busy term for everyone in HMS Sultan and a great opportunity for all of the staff and trainees to say a big thank you to their families for their support.

Highlights of the day included vintage children's rides, static display aircraft, a plethora of bouncy and inflatable activities supplied by Chardanelle inflatables and a whole host of

sporting activities.

For the adults, there was the final event in the HMS Sultan Medley Cup series – the hotly-contested volleyball competition.

The eventual winners were a team from the RN Air Engineering and Survival School.

Throughout the day, children enjoyed a series of traditional races as well as a magic show and face-painting.

Event organiser Lt Ian King said: "This has been a fantastic event – the families have turned up in their hundreds, the activities have been well-supported and even the Great British Weather has smiled on us."

He added: "Of course, there is a huge amount of work that goes into organising an event like this and, indeed, into clearing up afterwards.

"I've been very fortunate to be able to call on the services of LPT David Heming and the rest of the PTIs, along with John Purdy and the Buffer's party, without whom none of this would have been possible.

"Thanks also go to the event sponsors, VT Flagship, who contributed towards our costs and Sodexo, who provided our barbeque at a very reasonable rate."

● (Right) Seven-year-old Jamie Palmer rides the bucking bronco, while four-year-old Lola-Rose Holden-Shaw thought the day was a roaring success (left)

Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen



Bands battle it out at Collingwood

HMS HERON bagged two more trophies against strong competition at the Royal Naval Volunteer Bands Festival 2012, staged by HMS Collingwood.

Ten bands from bases across the country – and one from HMS Illustrious – converged on the Maritime Warfare School in Fareham for a festival of 'friendly competition', providing an enjoyable musical event as well as helping to improve standards.

There were ten trophies up for grabs, and the first was fought over on the parade square, where the Heron Band produced a stunning performance that saw Kerry Edwards take the Kenneth Alford Trophy for the smartest and most competent Drum Major.

Kerry said, "I am over the moon winning this year's prize after so many years of trying.

"It's been fantastic and I owe a lot to the rest of the Heron Band."

Despite the Festival this year being held at HMS Collingwood rather than the traditional venue



● The HMS Heron Volunteer Band perform on the parade square at HMS Collingwood

of Portsmouth Guildhall, the lack of a public spectacle did not detract from the high level of musical ability on show.

A packed auditorium enjoyed a busy concert programme as part of the contest, with competing bands playing to an audience who knew their music.

Heron's performances on

the day were the culmination of many weeks hard work, with members balancing existing band commitments and preparation for the Festival display.

They were placed third out of the ten, with the judges seeming to appreciate the variety their concert programme included, from Delibes' *Flower Duet* to rip-

roaring Dixieland trad jazz.

"The Royal Naval Volunteer Band Festival has become a real focus for the year, putting the band's performances under the microscope, but it is enjoyable and the rewards are great," said Heron's Bandmaster CSgt Tom Crane.

"All the volunteers must be congratulated on their performances and thanked for their continued commitment to the Royal Naval Volunteer Band Association.

"These competitions are a reminder of how high the standards are in the Royal Navy".

Heron also has the Fleet Air Arm bragging rights, by securing the Bambara Trophy, awarded to the best FAA band, over the HMS Seahawk Band from RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

Hidden submarine heritage on display

FOR one special weekend, the heritage of the Submarine Service will be on show to the public.

On Saturday September 8, Fort Blockhouse and the SETT Tower are opening their doors, while on Sunday September 9, a special British Signed Language tour of HMS Alliance will take place as part of the Gosport Heritage Open Days event.

The Fort Blockhouse Submariner's Tour will include a visit to the Submariner's Memorial Chapel, the Officers' Mess to see the Wyllic paintings and new for this year a visit into the SETT tower where

submariners are trained to escape.

Bill Sainsbury, Event Manager at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum said, "We are really delighted to have the support of Fort Blockhouse for the behind the scenes tours and be able to hold a special BSL tour of our own historic HMS Alliance"

Heritage Open Days tickets are free but must be booked in advance at www.eventbrite.com or by calling the RN Submarine Museum on 023 9254 5036.

For more information see www.submarine-museum.co.uk

Mainbrace spliced for the Jubilee

AS part of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee celebrations, the order was given to Splice the Mainbrace.

The age-old ceremony is sparked by a command that can only be given by the monarch, members of the Royal Family or a member of the Admiralty Board, granting the issue of a tot of 62.5ml of rum or other spirit to all serving members of the Royal Navy over the age of 18, in recognition of the performance of an arduous duty, or in celebration of a great event.

The order was to be carried out when convenient, to recognise the Senior Service's support to the Queen this year and for ongoing work at home and around the globe.

In the case of HMS Sultan that meant August 9.

The first tot was taken by CO Cdre Mark Slawson and one of the youngest initial trainees, AET2 McHale (pictured above).

During the following hour, the men and women of Sultan were checked against the muster list and issued with their choice of the full tot, a reduced measure or a soft drink in lieu, before coming smartly to attention and toasting Her Majesty the Queen.

There were some unexpected sights amongst those assembled in the Gym for the ceremony, including a class of Royal New Zealand Army trainees and their course staff, assigned to Sultan to undergo career training in Mechanical Engineering – as Service personnel in a Naval unit, they too were entitled by tradition to draw the tot.

In the days of sail, splicing the mainbrace was one of the most difficult emergency repair jobs on board a ship, often carried out in the heat of battle.

The mainbrace was the largest and heaviest part of the rigging – a prime target for enemy gunners – and if parted or damaged it required immediate repair or the ship would be unable to manoeuvre.

The strenuous task of joining the two ends of such a large piece of rope, several inches thick, was generally carried out by the best sailors, who would be rewarded by an extra issue of rum or grog.

The term gradually became used to cover such an issue of rum for celebratory purposes to the entire crew.

RN Air Station Yeovilton observed the signal a couple of weeks earlier, when Base Warrant Officer Steve Uzzell and his band of helpers exchanged their 21st century uniforms for traditional Victorian period costume to issue the tot.

The first went to another AET, Sam Lyndon, who joined the RN ten months ago and comes from a long line of sailors – his father saw action in the Falklands and his grandfather served during World War 2; both would have had a daily tot of rum, part of Navy life until it was abolished in the 1970s.

RN Air Station Culdrose spliced the mainbrace even earlier than Yeovilton, and personnel at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth, HMS Raleigh in Cornwall and BRNC at Dartmouth in Devon also took part in the ceremony.

At HMS Excellent on Whale Island in Portsmouth Harbour, officers, ratings and Royal Marines queued up for their tot from a traditional rum barrel, served up by members of the Gunners Association dressed in traditional 17th Century sailors' uniforms.

Ships also took part – in the case of HMS Westminster, under the fierce sun while the frigate was on patrol in the Gulf.

We're all in this together...

AS THE Prime Minister might say...

But if you want an era when such a phrase truly counted, then you have to rewind to 1939-45, for Britain was fighting for its very existence.

And ordinary Britons were all in it together, irrespective of class or creed, education, career, as the story of two families – the Husseys and the Stoates – shows.

The marriage of Betty Hussey and Jack Stoate brought the two together: five Stoates and two Husseys would serve their nation at home and abroad during the terrible conflagration.

Jack joined the Home Guard before being commissioned as a Royal Marines officer.

His wife served in the Women's Land Army, while her brother Roy distinguished himself as an RAF fighter pilot.

As for Jack's brothers, Tom became an air force doctor, Norman (pictured) served with HMS Eagle before switching to the world of fast patrol boats.

David Stoate was a gunnery officer captured by the Japanese, while the final family member in arms, Geoffrey, served in the Royal Observer Corps.

As such the Husseys and the Stoates act as a microcosm for thousands of British families.

And while memoirs of those who came through WW2 abound, what is less common is a broader family story to emerge – as it does in *Called to Arms: One Family's War from the Battle of Britain to Burma* (History Press, £14.99 ISBN 978-0752-458885), written by Betty and Jack's son Edward Lambah-Stoate.

Of the seven men and women in the Hussey-Stoates, we here are, of course, most interested in the Royal Marine and the sailor (although the experiences of David in the fall of Singapore and the brutality of Japanese camps subsequently are particularly vivid, while Roy fought with distinction over North Africa and Sicily only to die in a flying accident shortly



before the war's end).

Jack's war with the marines was extremely brief: he arrived on the Continent on April 9 1945 and served with 30 Battalion RM in Belgium, Holland and finally north-west Germany.

In those few weeks, however, he was introduced to the brutality of the Nazis – and the wave of violence in the aftermath of liberation as the oppressed sought retribution against their oppressors.

There was a Gestapo prison in Belgium where inmates were electrocuted and even 'boiled alive' in a steam chamber.

In Holland a Dutch policeman shot dead all the former Nazi collaborators in his charge, leaving their bodies in a ditch.

Given the state of the German

Army in the West at the time, Jack did not see much fighting and as many of the marines had not yet seen action, they were trigger happy (they did shoot a cow in the darkness, convinced it was a German unit...).

At the German-Dutch border stood a freshly-erected sign: Civilisation ends here.

The historic Rhineland town of Cleves had been flattened, its populace staring at the advancing marines "very glassily"; Emmerich on the opposite bank of the Rhine "was a city of the dead"; Hamburg was "a shambles".

Unfortunately, Jack evidently did not leave behind papers or memoirs – these are memories recounted second-hand through his son, which is a minor shame.

Not so his brother in the General Service. Norman left a diary of his early days in the Mediterranean and memories of his time in coastal forces – not to mention an impressive photograph album.

Indeed his journal from his time as a rating in HMS Eagle provides an outstanding snapshot of life with a capital ship – and also shows how much in harm's way the Mediterranean Fleet was before the Germans entered the

fray at the beginning of 1941.

The tempo of operations over the summer and autumn of 1940 was punishing. Operation. In harbour. Air raid. Repeat almost *ad infinitum*.

It's almost as if the young sailor brushed aside the danger – bombing and submarine attacks were so routine.

He watched as cruiser Liverpool lost her entire bow forward of her gun turrets and the Italian destroyer Artigliero blow up – "one mass of smoke hovered in the air".

As the Luftwaffe joined the war in the Med, so Norman Stoate left it to take up a commission in the RNVR. When he passed out of HMS King Alfred: "I got what I wanted: Coastal Forces."

After 18 months as 1st Lieutenant of various motor launches in Gib, he received his own command.

Brought back to the UK in the lead up to D-Day, Norman was put in charge of HM Motor Launch 909 which escorted some of the invasion fleet off Juno beach.

It was not a pleasant task. The boat passed a shot-up wooden landing craft full of dead and seriously-wounded, came across corpses floating in the sea "too

decomposed" to even recover from the water and, impressively, shot down a V1 flying bomb bound for Tilbury.

As the Allies moved through France and the Low Countries, so the boats followed them. Come early 1945, ML909 was based in Ostend along with a sizeable force of MTBs (many Canadian), LSTs and small craft, mostly moored tightly.

On Valentine's Day, vapour from the boats' fuel tanks ignited. Fires and explosions ripped through the harbour, destroying a dozen boats outright – three moored opposite Norman's craft – killing over 60 men and wounding as many.

ML909 plucked five men out of the harbour, but the disaster left its mark on Norman Stoate's crew: they saw shrapnel whirling around the harbour, an MP on the dock gates decapitated, the windows of the port's cathedral shattered. For days afterwards, the crews of all the remaining boats in Ostend were "very jumpy".

ML909 ended the war in Kiel and finally paid off in February 1946.

Norman left the boat with her bell (although the Admiralty did make him pay for it...) and we, courtesy of his diary and memoirs, and the diligence of his nephew, are left with an excellent record of his service – and that of this impressive family.

The tale of the Tirpitzbusters

THE obvious question. What's the RAF's greatest raid doing in these pages?

Well, apart from being a stirring deed by the Algies and Gingers, rattlingly well told by James Holland in *Dam Busters: The Race to Smash the Dams 1943* (Bantam, £20 ISBN 978-0-593-06676-8) there's a tantalising glimpse of an even greater feat: a simultaneous double-blow against the Third Reich.

For the raid on the Ruhr dams (Operation Chastise) was one half of a bouncing bomb onslaught; the other, pressed by the Admiralty, was a strike at Hitler's flagship Tirpitz in the Norwegian fjords (Operation Servant).

Developed side-by-side with the larger bombs used against the dams by specially-modified Lancaster bombers was the smaller 'Highball', to be dropped by more nimble Mosquitoes.

The principles were the same. Approach low. Drop a spinning bomb from a specific height at a specific distance – and it would skip across the water, smash into the side of a ship, roll down and detonate against the hull under the water.

While the Admiralty was keen on the idea, Highball faced indifference from the head of Bomber Command Arthur Harris "maddest proposition of a weapon that we have yet come across" (he wasn't especially keen on Chastise either).

But what really scuppered the plan were unsuccessful trials of the bomb against the aged French dreadnought Courbet in a Scottish loch and the Germans' decision to transfer Tirpitz and their other heavy surface forces to the Tromsø area placed them out of range of the adapted Mosquitoes in May 1943.

Convinced the Germans would take precautions to protect vulnerable targets after a bouncing bomb attack, the double strike idea was dropped and only the dams were raided.

Work on Highball nevertheless persisted – first there were plans to attack the Italian Fleet, later the Japanese, but problems and, ultimately, the enemy throwing in the towel, meant it was never used in anger.

Mutiny under scrutiny

THE Naval Mutinies of 1797 has been a long time in coming.

Back in 1997 Ann Coats and James MacDougall organised centenary conferences to mark the great mutinies of 1797 at Spithead and the Nore, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

Although the papers did at the time inform the wider naval historical community, notably the work of Nicholas Rodger, they were in danger of being lost.

Happily thanks to Professor Mike Duffy's preservation of the manuscripts at Exeter and the encouragement of Peter Sowden of Boydell, the book based around this material has finally appeared as *The Naval Mutinies of 1797: Unity and Perseverance* (Boydell Press, £60 ISBN 978 1 84383 669 8).

It has been worth waiting for. The editors, plus seven other authors, including Roger Morris and Brian Lavery, provide a series of complementary chapters that as well as covering the events of the mutinies themselves put them in the wider context of naval life and British society at the end of the 18th Century.

The authors firmly knock on the head many traditional interpretations of the events of 1797; that the mutinies were the result of the importation into the Navy of 'quota men', non-seamen imbued with radical ideas. These, it used to be argued, fed the simple seaman with radical ideas and led revolutionary conspiracies that caused the mass indiscipline of 1797.

A complementary view spiced the revolutionary mix with the Irish republicanism that would lead to the United Irishmen rebellion of the following year.

The main motivation of the mutinies was the simple problem of pay. There had been no rise since 1653, "the longest pay pause in history" as it has been called, and naval rates had fallen massively behind those of seamen in merchant ships.

The large numbers of pressed seamen by 1797 recognised this discrepancy only too clearly and they had a well-established tradition of organising and striking to obtain their demands.

This wider seaman culture included mutiny as a form of redress. Seamen were not easily led simpletons, as they have been

portrayed by some. They were quite literally able men who knew when they were being exploited by a government which had raised the pay of the army keeping order ashore and which allowed considerable arrears even in what pay was allowed. The Admiralty's ignoring of their lawful petitions was the last straw.

The sheer scale of the Spithead strike was impressive and the key to its success. As Anne Coats points out, the Channel Fleet at Spithead contained a quarter of the total manpower of the Royal Navy and a sixth of the total British fleet.

The Government had little alternative but to give in to its demands on pay, and even to the removal of unpopular officers. Only one or two demands were not granted, those on more equitable distribution of prize money and an increase in pensions. The mutiny ended with public rejoicing in Portsmouth.

Less happy was the story at the Nore, the anchorage off Sheerness. Here a much smaller group of ships, only three of the line, came out in support of Spithead.

Joined by much of Admiral Duncan's North Sea squadron (the hapless Scottish flag officer was forced to bluff the Dutch Republicans that he still was indeed blockading them), the men held out for more even when the Channel Fleet had returned to work.

The mutineers tried to blockade London and, in return, the Government cut them off from contact with the shore. Thus isolated, the ships saw confrontations between loyal seamen and those who wished to continue.

The leading Nore ships do seem to have had more than their share of militants, the leadership in HMS Inflexible fled to France after the mutiny collapsed, but the basic dynamics seem to have been the same as at Spithead. The Nore leadership, however, overplayed its hand and the strike collapsed.

The Admiralty's response to the mutiny was arbitrary, the ten 'most guilty' men from each ship,

however militant it had been, being court martialled. There were executions, notably that of the elected leader Matthew Parker, but most arrested were pardoned and soon released. In the circumstances, the official response seems quite moderate.

One of the most telling chapters is that by Brian Lavery who points out that the events of 1797 must be put into the context of the overall development of the 18th Century Navy.

The growth in numbers of large ships put strains on traditional forms of ship management. He deploys impressive figures. In 1730 there were only 60 ships with crews of more than 400 in the fleet, by 1762 there were 134 and by 1803

177. The figures for the largest units are "even more dramatic": seven, 65 and 132.

Captains had to issue standing orders and the system was introduced of a ship being divided into divisions, with officers entrusted with the welfare of a proportion of the ship's company, something we take for granted today.

This could, however, create its own problems as seamen resented the new order doing away with some of their traditional freedoms. These structural tensions surfaced in 1797.

The overall tendency of the chapters is to sympathise with the seamen, which may be fair enough, but it must always be remembered that 1797 is not 2012.

Conditions ashore were not at all comfortable by modern standards and discipline in the new factories was kept much as it was on board ship, with a level of casual violence that we would today find shocking.

The mutinies were part of a process of progressive social change that would soon, for example, lead to attempts before the end of the Napoleonic War to ban the worst elements of informal physical punishments at sea.

Some commanding officers were indeed cruel, like Captain



A model view of U-boats

THERE'S another title to add to seemingly never-ending literature about Germany's U-boat arm, this time courtesy of Polish author Marek Krzyształowicz.


And *Type VII – Germany's Most Successful U-boats* (Seaforth, £40 ISBN 978-184832-1410) is an impressive addition to that library – part photoalbum, part coffee-table book, part modeller's dream.

The author has tapped the archives of his native land – allowing for photographs some U-boat buffs might not have seen before – as well as other more well-known museums and libraries.


The bulk of the book is dedicated to a detailed technical description of the boat, its equipment and capabilities, plus life and achievements on operations – assisted by copious photographs.

That fact alone would probably make this a worthwhile investment, but the real gem contained within are the colour plate sections: 40-or-so pages of outstanding 3D computer graphics showing the conning tower, deck gun, machine-gun and so on in stunning detail.

As well as being a modeller's dream, the graphics bring the boats back to life such as they've rarely appeared before.

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The best of British

IT DOESN'T get much better than this. Lt Peter Reed yells with joy after his team powered to gold in the coxless fours on a stunning day of triumph for Team GB at the Olympics.

The 30-year-old junior officer (*second right*) and teammates Andy Triggs Hodge, Alex Gregory and Tom James made history by taking the fourth gold medal in consecutive Games.

The quartet have firmly placed themselves in the record books following a nail-biting final which saw them pip the favourites Australia by little more than a second after six minutes of thrilling action at Eton Dorney.

The four athletes have ensured the Olympic gold medal for the coxless fours stays with the British after Steve Redgrave took it in Sydney, Matthew Pinsent in Athens in 2004 and Andy Triggs Hodge and Peter picked up the baton in 2008 with a win in Beijing.

A breathless Peter said after the race: "The hours we do, the pain, but it's all been worth it. Thank you to the Royal Navy for giving me the chance."

"I am absolutely delighted. It was a phenomenal effort - we really gave it our all and we are so pleased that all our hard work and training has paid off. It is a privilege and an honour to have won the gold medal for Britain."

Andy said the four oarsmen put in a performance of "impeccable rowing, a masterpiece, it was without question our finest race."

Pete joined the Royal Navy following officer training in 1999 as a marine engineer officer and is now an engineering training manager.

After developing a passion for rowing, soon after, he represented Great Britain at the Under-23 Championships in the coxless four in 2003 before working his way up to Olympic standard in just a few years.

"Who could have ever imagined that we would be right at the peak of our sport, at the right age, the right level of experience in a sport that traditionally does very well, racing a home Olympics? It's just

the sort of thing that sportsmen's fantasies are made of," Peter said.

THERE was no gold for Royal Marine judoka Chris Sherrington, but the green beret relished - and seized - his opportunity to fly the flag for the Corps and the nation at London's ExCeL centre.

After defeating Australia's Andrewartha in the opening round, the 28-year-old serving with 45 Commando faced three-time world and current European champion Alexander Mikhaylin in the over-100kg category.

The Russian narrowly defeated the Briton (Mikhaylin went on to take silver).

Chris was the first heavyweight in 20 years to represent GB at the Olympiad.

He's been in the Corps since the age of 17 and a judoka for the past eight years, taking up the sport after a tour of duty in Iraq.

He qualified for the British Trials that year and by the end of the competition was ranked third in Britain, resulting in the Royal Marines offering him a full-time sports draft.

His decision to accept that draft rather than follow his commando calling to become a mountain leader has meant tremendous sacrifices for him and his wife Zoe (such as the couple's honeymoon which coincided with a judo contest in the Baltic).

"It's been hard," he said. "I've undergone four major operations which could have ended either my judo or Royal Marines careers."

"I've had one holiday in eight years and Christmas Day off."

Now a three-time GB and two-time British open winner, Chris took the gold medal at the World Cup in Samoa in November last year, qualifying him for Olympic selection.

Preparing for the Games - especially finding training partners - proved tricky.

"I had to go to Georgia for the final training camp before the Olympics," he explained. "There aren't many 6ft 5in 20st judokas in the UK, so the camp was exactly what the doctor ordered."

And so to London 2012. The opening ceremony

was "mind-blowing - a once-in-a-lifetime experience, a huge burst of colour with confetti coming down. And all in front of a home crowd."

The experience of the Olympic Village wasn't entirely different from life at the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone - "except that we were wearing Team GB tracksuits".

Being a green beret, he took the chance to "talk to everyone and anyone" in the village's impressive dining hall ("massive - four times the size of Ocean's hangar"), be they gold-medal-winning super heavyweight boxer Anthony Joshua or premier David Cameron (who left with a 'Cash for Commandos' wristband...).

As for the looming contest, Chris was in no doubt about the mountain to climb.

"My opponents had 20-plus years of judo experience - they've done nothing but judo, judo, judo, judo," he says. "I joined the Royal Marines to be a Royal Marine."

For inspiration before his first contest: *Cockleshell Heroes* on DVD - "for this Royal Marine, when it comes to mission impossible, there's only one film" - plus a video message from his comrades at 45 Cdo.

And those who didn't appear on video came down in person to watch Chris in action.

"The RM family was there, right behind me," says Chris proudly.

He went into the Games with the goal of winning one fight, which he did.

His opponent? Australian Jake Andrewartha - ranked 31st in the world to the green beret's 55th.

But after Chris manoeuvred him into a stranglehold, Andrewartha was forced to tap out.

And the crowd went wild - although it was only now that he realised the level of support from the home crowd.

"When I'm ready to fight, I get tunnel vision - your focus becomes very narrow. I knew the crowd would be big but I didn't really see them - my first bout only lasted 24 seconds," the Royal Marine explains.

"It was only afterwards that I realised how many people were screaming and shouting."

Next up: the formidable Mikhaylin.

Saluting the wildly cheering crowds, Chris didn't hold back during the opening exchange with the Russian judoka with both men getting warnings from officials.

Fired up by the home support Chris took the contest to three minutes of golden score, but Mikhaylin managed a leg sweep yuko which sent the Royal Marine out.

Since the defeat, the 28-year-old has been replaying the fight in his mind. If only...

"In the end, it was my inexperience which killed my chances. I should have stuck to what I was doing - it was working, but I changed my tactics and he took advantage."

"I know I could have beaten the guy in the next round - and could have been an Olympic medalist or champion. I was a finger tip from a medal."

Such thoughts are fostered by Chris' RM ethos - "to want to be the best".

He adds: "I believe I'll be in my prime at the age of 32 or 33 - ie, in Rio."

"I feel I have to compete in Rio - it's my duty having come so close. I'm hungry for a medal."

But Chris saw his appearance at the Games as a chance not just for a medal but above all to promote the Senior Service.

"I wanted to promote the Corps, to 'big up' the Royal Marines and Royal Navy - and take every opportunity to do so."

"I feel I've done that: everyone's talking about judo and about the Navy and Marines. There are people who want to join the Corps and follow me."

As for his wife Zoe, who kept the world updated of Chris' progress in and out of the arena via social media, her husband has proved himself on a global stage.

"It was amazing to see him there at the Olympics looking so focused, it brought tears to my eyes seeing him come on to the mat, I was ever so proud."

"For a debut Olympics and having only been doing judo for eight years he did an amazing job and should be very proud of himself."

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum, FRPU East

● Roar power... Chris Sherrington yells with delight after defeating Australia's Jake Andrewartha in the opening round and (right) the marine salutes the support of the ExCeL centre crowd



● Lt Peter Reed pauses to reflect on his double-gold-winning accomplishment



● Not that sinking feeling... Despite the improbable angle, Mid Nathan Ling is actually preparing for a forward somersault

Freestyle in style

THE Inter-Services Freestyle Kayak championship was held on the River Tryweryn in North Wales – and saw the RN return with a raft (well, kayak) of trophies.

Competitive freestyle paddlers use white water waves and holes to perform surf and gymnastic-style manoeuvres, tricks and stunts, writes Lt Cdr 'Charlie' Jones (PJHQ).

The sport uses short kayaks (playboats) designed to surf and spin across the water surface and to release into the air.

In competition, freestyle kayakers are awarded points for technique and variety and for each combination of different tricks that they perform within a prescribed time limit over a set number of competitive runs.

Winner of the individual Inter-Services Freestyle event for 2012 was Mid Nathan Ling (Loughborough University) with Sub Lt Stuart Alderson (Sultan) coming a close second.

Despite an unfortunate pre-competition injury to team captain, POAET Leigh Chapman (829 NAS), the Naval Service team of Mid Nathan Ling, Sub Lt Lieutenant Stuart Alderson, CPO(MEA) Jamie Steel (Sultan), Sub Lt Charlie Rowland (York University) and Capt Phil Burrell (HQ Defence Academy) won the Inter-Service team competition.

More details of kayaking in the RN can be found at www.RNKA.co.uk.

Four-year IS hurt ends

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Boswell took three wickets to add to her impressive batting performance and between them the RN bowlers, backed up by some excellent out fielding, dismissed the Army for 133, giving the Navy a win by 55 runs and the trophy.

After the match, Air Cdre Paul Atherton (President RAFCA) presented the player of the match and tournament to Lt Boswell and a special award for an impressive contribution to the tournament to Lt Garton.

The Ladies Inter-Service Twenty20 tournament, due to be held on the eve of the 40-over event, was abandoned without a ball bowled; it's been re-scheduled for September 13 at Aldershot.

As for the men's IS event, hosted by the Army in Aldershot, it opened with the RN against the home team, with skipper ETWE(SM) M Thompson (Ambush) choosing to bat.

A varied Army bowling attack stuck to their guns and steadily took Navy wickets with only Thompson, ETWE I Buss (Daring) and Lt M Toogood (Excellent) reaching double figures and a final score of only 134 all out in 32 overs looked very light indeed.

Sure enough, the Army openers' response was cruel and although Thompson rang the changes with his bowlers, no-one made any impression and their opponents reached their target in only 25 overs without losing a wicket – a disappointing start to the campaign and the prospect of playing the RAF – current champions – the following day was not what the team wanted.

After Thompson won the toss, he invited the Air Force to bat. What a difference a day makes!

Opening bowler Sgt A Pollard (RM Poole) claimed a most-valuable wicket in his first over and then the prize wicket of the RAF captain Compton, in his second, thus reducing the opponents to 1-2 off 2.3 overs.

The dangerous RAF all-rounder Cessford was also removed cheaply, but resistance from two middle-order batsmen enabled the light blue team to post a score of 186-9 in their 50 overs.

Pick of the Navy bowlers were Pollard (2-32), Thompson (3-43), Lt J Parker (MOD) (2 - 25) and AB M Green (MCM 2) (2-29).

In response the Navy batsmen

accumulated runs without losing too many wickets: Thompson scored a very good 44, Green 38 but it was Pollard (25 NO) who brought the Navy home with some thunderous hits, including a colossal six into the pavilion together with Parker (17 NO).

At 187-5 the RN had beaten a very good RAF side by five wickets and with eight overs to spare. Thompson was named man of the match.

So, one win apiece for the RN and the Army meant a three-way tie was a possibility should the RAF play as well as they had been doing over the past two years.

As it was, the Army hit 209 in their 50 overs and then dismissed the RAF for 178, 32 runs short, ensuring the soldiers lifted the Inter-Services trophy.

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Jamie reckons he has always thrown further than the 41.39m which was enough for silver this year.

ET(ME) Gerald 'TK' Joseph (43 Cdo FPGRM) was third in the javelin with a throw of 45.10m – not bad for someone who first threw one at the RN championships three weeks earlier.

POET(ME) Liz Edwards (Collingwood) was the only Royal Navy winner of an event, taking the hammer with a throw of 38.19m. Liz has a long background in the event and was coached through her school years by her father, thus demonstrating the value of proper coaching and structured training regimes. Multi sports talented NA(SE) Francesca 'Chess' Morton (Culdrose) was third in the hammer with 25.28m, demonstrating what can be achieved by adapting natural sporting skills to make the most of strength and power in her debut at the event. Chess also finished third in the women's shot with a throw of 10.22m.

LPT Regaina 'Reg' Cawley (Neptune) made an explosive debut in 2011 winning the 400m and finishing third in the 100m; this year she matched the latter with a time of 13.06s and just missed out on a medal in the long jump.

Wall of fame

DON'T look down...

MA Matt Rust grapples with one of the demanding 'faces' at the Quay Climbing Centre in Exeter – host venue for the 2012 Royal Navy and Royal Marines Climbing Championships.

The event saw 42 sailors, Royal Marines and six guests converge on Devon – the biggest turnout for the championships in at least three years, with a variety of experience from total novices who took part in the top rope competition through to elite climbers who flew up the routes with apparent ease, writes Lt Gavin Edwards of 1710 NAS.

The morning kicked off with the novice comp and ten entrants taking part having to complete three top roped routes of increasing difficulty. All climbed well with the majority topping out on the first and second route before the third provided a greater challenge and split the group evenly.

At the same time the qualifying routes for the men's, women's and U25 categories were under way with three routes of increasing difficulty for all competitors.

The first route proved easy with almost everyone gaining full points. The second was slightly more technical, but seemed easily achieved, while the third route separated the elite from the rest.

With stalactites, overhangs and awkward pull-ups, it was the biggest of the qualifier routes and required some careful route reading to ensure success.

Only six out of the 38 competing in the leading categories achieved full points with some interesting stalactite hugging, chalk bag snagging and desperate lunges as competitors tried to achieve the highest scores possible.

The bouldering comp provided some alternative entertainment with five routes set, of which no-one managed the final two – a combination of qualifier route fatigue and extreme body tension moves proving the undoing of many on route three.

The finals proved to be a spectacular finish to the competition, with the top six from each category competing on the same route.

The women kicked things off, and although there were only two competitors, they set the standard for the men's and U25s – while the crowd realised that perhaps



the route wasn't as easy as first thought.

The U25s attacked the route with a ferocity reserved for those who have an abundance of arm strength and endurance, coupled with the associated lack of weight that youth affords!

All managed to get to a certain tricky hold, at which point those who had the knack passed it and carried on to higher, smaller crimps and laybacks although none were able to compete the route.

The men's final proved an engrossing spectacle, with best guest Steve Chadwick deciding to cut short the viewing to enable a quick smoke prior to competing.

The same tricky hold stumped a few competitors, but those who

passed it found the small sloping crimp to be their undoing.

None of the men managed to complete the route, with the final roof reached by only one competitor – Steve Glennie – but unfortunately it proved too much a few holds from the top.

Results were:

Novice: 1 – Recruit Daniel Jones, 2 Cpl Christ Abrams, 3 – Mne Connor Gawthorpe (all CTCRM)

Bouldering: 1 – Surg Lt Steve Glennie (42 Cdo), 2 – Mne Jordan Beer (40 Cdo) 3 – MA Matt Rust (MDHU Derriford)

Women: 1 – Surg Lt (D) Lucy Matthews (45 Cdo), AB Hayley Francis (HMS Vivid)

U25s: 1 – MA Matt Rust, 2 – Mne Jordan Beer, 3 LET Tom Hincliffe (HMS Ocean)

Men: 1 – Surg Lt Steve Glennie, 2 – Sgt Billy Davies (42 Cdo), 3 – Mne Ross Bingham (45 Cdo)

Best guest: L/Bdr Steve Chadwick (19 Regt RA)

Best veteran: Sgt Billy Davies.

Rhian and Dan impress

Continued from back page

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Rhian Phillips is the Royal Navy Sportswoman of the Year. A multi-venturer with a tremendous positive attitude she has committed to a wide range of events at the Inter-Services over the past four years and invariably competes in a range of events similar to those demanded by a heptathlon.

Finishing second in the triple jump (9.83m) she also took part in the 100m hurdles, 400m hurdles, shot putt, javelin, high and long jumps before ending her competitive day with a leg of the women's 4x100m relay. She is obviously well-suited to the heptathlon, but the opportunity to better last year's third place was denied when the 2012 event was cancelled.

Not to be outdone by his female multi event teammate, decathlete Dan Tarrant spent most of the day competing too. No medals for Dan this year (he won bronze in the 2011 javelin), he overcame both mental and physical barriers in the 110m hurdles, 400m hurdles and 3,000m steeplechase, interspersed with the pole vault, high jump and javelin, just missing out on medals in the latter two events.

The loudest noise of the competition was the sound of Dan's pole snapping as he was mid-air in the vault. He reckons his peak heart rate of the day was just after his pole broke and

not in any of the running events. Thankfully he did not suffer any injury, but did reflect that "poles are expensive".

Lt Emma Bakewell (Defence Diving School) was a double medallist over 800m and 1,500m in 2011. Suffering with an achilles tendon injury leading up to the 2012 championships, she almost held on to third in the 800m (2m 24.32s), running faster than the previous year, but was then prevented by the injury from running in the 1,500m.

Inter-Services debutant LPT Vicky Jarvis (Somerset) ran both the 800m and 1,500m and was joined by LS(CT) Emma Hebborn (Collingwood) in the 1,500m. Emma joined the team just before the event just to run in the 5,000m and keen to see if her mountain biking skills at national level would transfer to the running track! She proved that strength, endurance and character are mutually-beneficial for both types of event!

Musn Amy Drinkwater (RMSM) made her Inter-Services debut in the 100m and 200m, NA(SE) Nicole Lindo (Culdrose) ran well in the 100m hurdles and Cpl Charlotte Stuss (RM Band Plymouth) ran her usual solid race in the 400m, but still seeks that elusive medal.

Mne Jim Galvin (42 Cdo)

just missed out on third place in the 110m hurdles, recording the same time (16.9s) as the bronze medallist. Musn Matt Dixon (RMSM) recorded 12.28m in the triple jump for a fourth-place finish.

CPOET(ME) Steve Wilsmore (MCTA) reported that he enjoyed the 1,500m and 3,000m steeplechase as he finished fifth in both events. In the former he was joined by AET Gary Whittaker (Yeovilton).

The men's 5,000m saw Mne Andy Stay (CLR) stepping down from his recent marathon experiences and he was joined by a beaming and enthusiastic AET Jonathan Davies (Sultan), making the most of his Inter-Service debut at the age of 36.

AET Matt Wild (Culdrose) is another multi-venturer, always ready with a smile to step in to any event, where his sense of humour livens up the competition as it surely did in the pole vault, discus, hammer and shot.

Former 400m bronze medallist CPOET(ME) Gary Petersen (Sultan) couldn't match that this year, but has a full winter to prepare for next season after returning from sea service. AB(CIS) Tom King (Somerset) ran his fastest 800m (2m 6.5s) of the season to finish 5th.

ET(WE) Dan Adamson



● Lt Cdr Jim Thompson, who averaged 99.5 per cent, feels the pain
Picture: Anne Yates

Jim's half a per cent from perfection

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and world championships.

If Adrian's 2,000m C2 UK Challenge performance (6m 21.9s) at the British championships (BIRC) in March had matched his world championship performance in February (6m 13s), he would have won the challenge.

However, it's all about the preparation and Adrian's build-up to BIRC was constrained by events outside his control.

Adrian and Jim each won three of the nine challenges, with PO Buster Brown (Collingwood) victorious in another three; injury prevented Buster completing all nine rounds.

Jim Thomson should feel particularly proud of his 10k completed in 35m 06.5 secs. The challenge is open to Service and support personnel, consequently the top two women were Lisa Taylor (Temeaire) and Melanie Young (Sultan) from a total of 12 entered.

The Navy will enter teams in regional and national championships over the next seven months; the RN championships over 2,000m are expected to take place at Sultan and there are plans to send a team to the world championships in Boston (USA) in February.

The C2 UK Challenge Series for 2012/13 begins on September 1; registration can be made via www.concept2.co.uk/challengeseries. More details from Paul Winton 9380 23644 or DES.MCTA-MS-MVAU1.

(Dragon) was prevented from competing in the javelin by an elbow injury, where his previous best of the season would have pushed Gerald Joseph out of the medals; however he was able to compete in the shot where he took fifth place with a throw of 11.72m.

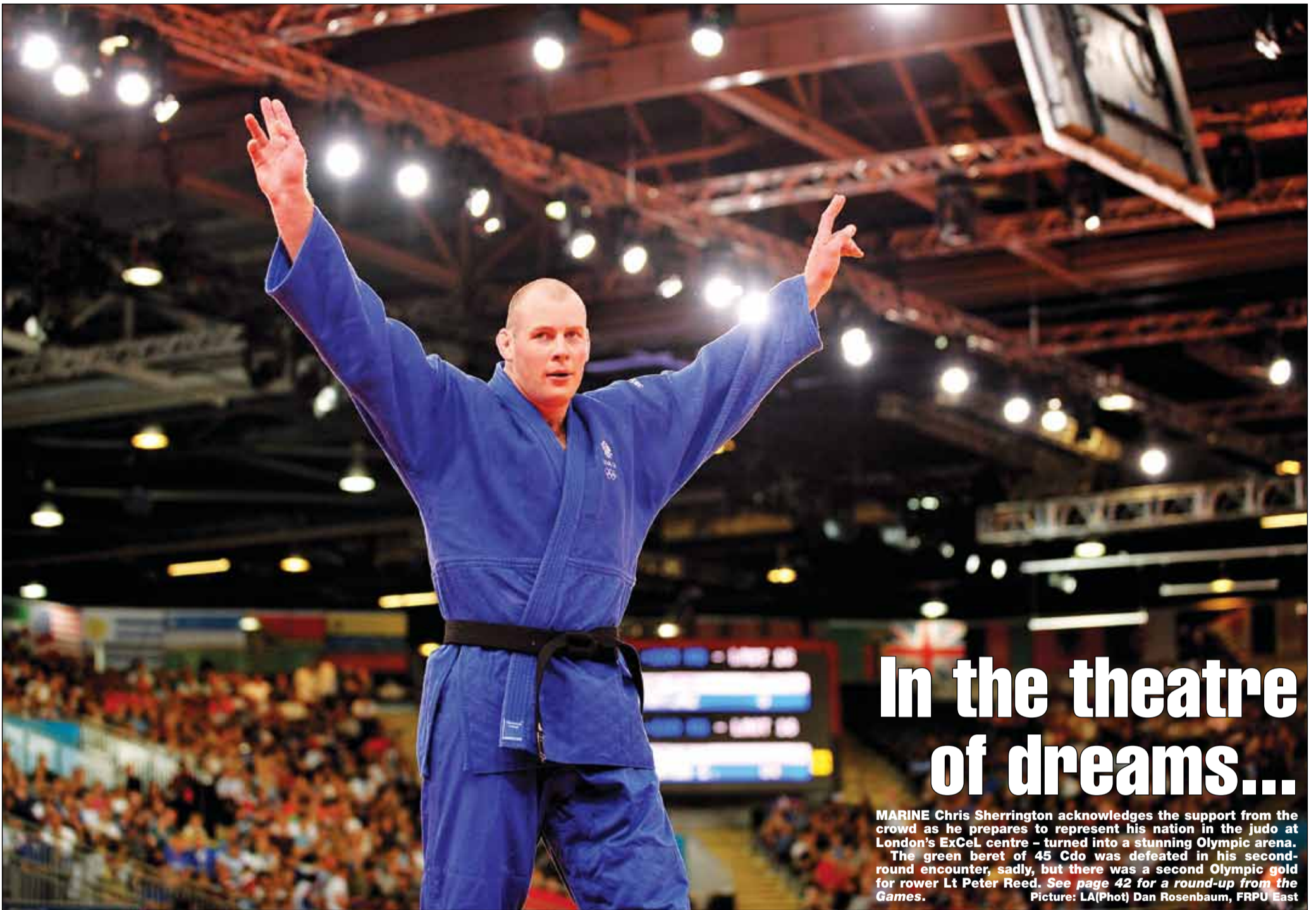
Astute readers will have noted that the Navy had two sprinters, Flash Fasuba and Daryn Jackson, well to the fore in both men's sprints.

Adding the marginally slower Mne Jim Galvin, who had also previously won an Inter-Services medal over 100m, and the long-standing sprint pedigree of LET(ME) Nigel Francois (Illutrious) to the 4x100m squad augured well.

The relay squad, including Chef Bertie Barker (WMO Portsmouth) as back-up, were well drilled by Neal Edwards over the days leading up to the event, with both rival Service teams conscious of the threat posed.

During the race the RN had a fierce battle with the Army over the whole lap and crossed the line first, but as with many other high-performance and international teams, were disqualified for an overtaking zone transgression.

Anyone interested in joining RN track and field should contact Paul on 9380 23644 or DES.MCTA-MS-MVAU1.



In the theatre of dreams...

MARINE Chris Sherrington acknowledges the support from the crowd as he prepares to represent his nation in the judo at London's ExCeL centre - turned into a stunning Olympic arena. The green beret of 45 Cdo was defeated in his second-round encounter, sadly, but there was a second Olympic gold for rower Lt Peter Reed. See page 42 for a round-up from the Games. Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum, FRPU East

Four-year IS hurt ends

FOUR barren years for the RN women's cricket team ended at RAF Vine Lane in Middlesex as they took the ladies' Inter-Service title.

On the opening day, the RN were invited to bat by the hosts and, after a confident start of 31 by Lt Hazelle Garton RN (702 NAS) - boosted by an unbeaten 54 from skipper Lt Emma Boswell (Neptune) - scored 147-6 in their 40 overs.

Garton got amongst the RAF wickets very early claiming five in her first four overs and with the score at 19-6 it looked like plain sailing for the Navy.

However the pick of the RAF batters had other ideas and a seventh-wicket partnership of over 100 put a different complexion on the game.

Boswell managed to hold a very difficult catch at mid-off to dismiss the high scorer and the remaining three wickets fell very quickly after that for a five-run victory to the Navy.

Play on day two between the RAF and Army was abandoned after 17 overs and the no result; both teams were awarded one point each.

On the final day, the RN lost the toss again and were invited to bat on a less-than-perfect wicket.

Garton once again got the innings off to a sound start with a solid 30, before Boswell came to the crease and dominated proceedings.

Supported at first by Logs Fiesha Greene and then Lt Ursula Frost (both Nelson), she plundered the Army attack to score 93 NO in a total of 188-2.

The Army then lost a wicket in their first over, again to Garton, but once their skipper was removed by Boswell, the threat

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Rhian and Dan impress

THE RN Track and Field teams just about matched expectations in the 2012 Inter-Services Athletics Championships, hosted by the Army at Aldershot.

Both the men's and women's team strength and numbers were adversely affected by a lack of availability of athletes, for a variety of reasons, including operational deployments and, inevitably, some injuries, writes Paul Winton, RN athletics team manager.

The previous month's RN championships had been the strongest in performance terms for a number of years, but of those initially selected to compete at the IS, 15 men and eight women were not part of the team on the day.

Opportunities thus arose for others to demonstrate their Olympic spirit, moral courage and commitment to the team as they sought their best performances of the season in a highly-competitive environment.

The majority of the Royal Navy teams competed in at least two or three events, but for the second year running NA(AH) Rhian Phillips (Yeovilton) and NA(SE) Dan Tarrant (Culdrose) demonstrated strong grit and determination as they competed in seven and six events respectively.

The total of 12 placings in top 3 positions was down on the previous year, but just about matched expectations in the circumstances.

The Royal Navy has never previously been able to field a sprinter with racing and performance credentials such as those held by Logs(SC) Olusoji 'Flash' Fasuba (Drake). The current African record holder for 100m (9.85s) and World Indoor Champion over 60m in 2008, won silver medals in the

men's long jump (6.84m), 100m (10.80s) and 200m (22.19s), just being pipped on the line in both sprints. Grateful for the fact that he was able to perform to those standards with minimal training, he relishes future complementary opportunities for racing over 60m indoors and honing his bobsleigh push-start abilities.

Flash's infectious enthusiasm and good humour proved beneficial to the team through the season. ET(ME) Daryn Jackson (Illustrious) has been the Navy's most consistent sprinter over the past four years and he won a sprint medal for the third year running as he finished third in the 200m in the same time (22.19s) as Flash. Daryn just missed out on bronze in the 100m as he clocked the same time as third place (10.9s), proving just what can be achieved even whilst serving at sea.

Lt Neal Edwards (Culdrose) again finished second in the men's 400m hurdles, rapidly closing down the winner in the final few metres with his fastest time of the season (57.15s). If it was 420m hurdles he may have been the winner. Neal has won Inter-Service 400m hurdles medals of all colours over the past 14 years; he later went on to win the British Masters 40-plus 400m hurdles title in an even faster time of 56.7s, setting himself up well for the European Masters Championships.

Maj Jamie Summers (PJHQ) had also experienced many Inter-Services and won an assortment of medals in the men's hammer.

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NA(AH) Rhian Phillips takes aim in the javelin - just one of the seven events she took part in. Picture: LA(Phot) Jenny Lodge

Jim's half a per cent from perfection

OVER a nine-month period beginning in September 2011, 234 indoor rowers with allegiance to the Navy recorded performances in Concept2 UK's On-Line Rowing Challenge.

This was the fourth year of monthly challenges to compete on Concept2 rowing machines, which are widely available ashore and afloat throughout the Service.

The monthly challenges vary in length and intensity, ranging from a 500m sprint, lasting upwards of 1m 20s, to a 10k, lasting over 35 minutes - or considerably longer.

Performances are automatically rated in percentage terms within C2's website when results are entered within the gender and age categories to which they apply.

Surprisingly, most individual performances fall within a relatively narrow percentage band considering the wide range of the challenges.

Individuals can also review rankings within their units and within Royal Navy and Royal Marine Super Leagues. RN numbers committed to the C2 UK Challenge dwarf those of other clubs and organisations.

Forty rowers completed all nine monthly challenges, becoming eligible for a celebratory T-shirt, with another 25 completing at least six of the challenges.

Lt Cdr Jim Thomson (FOST Devonport), averaging 99.5 per cent for the nine challenges, narrowly won a close competition with Sub Lt Adrian Long (Sultan) (99.2 percent) to finish top of the pile.

Both are keen and committed 'ergers' who regularly compete at the highest level on the indoor rowing circuit including national

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