



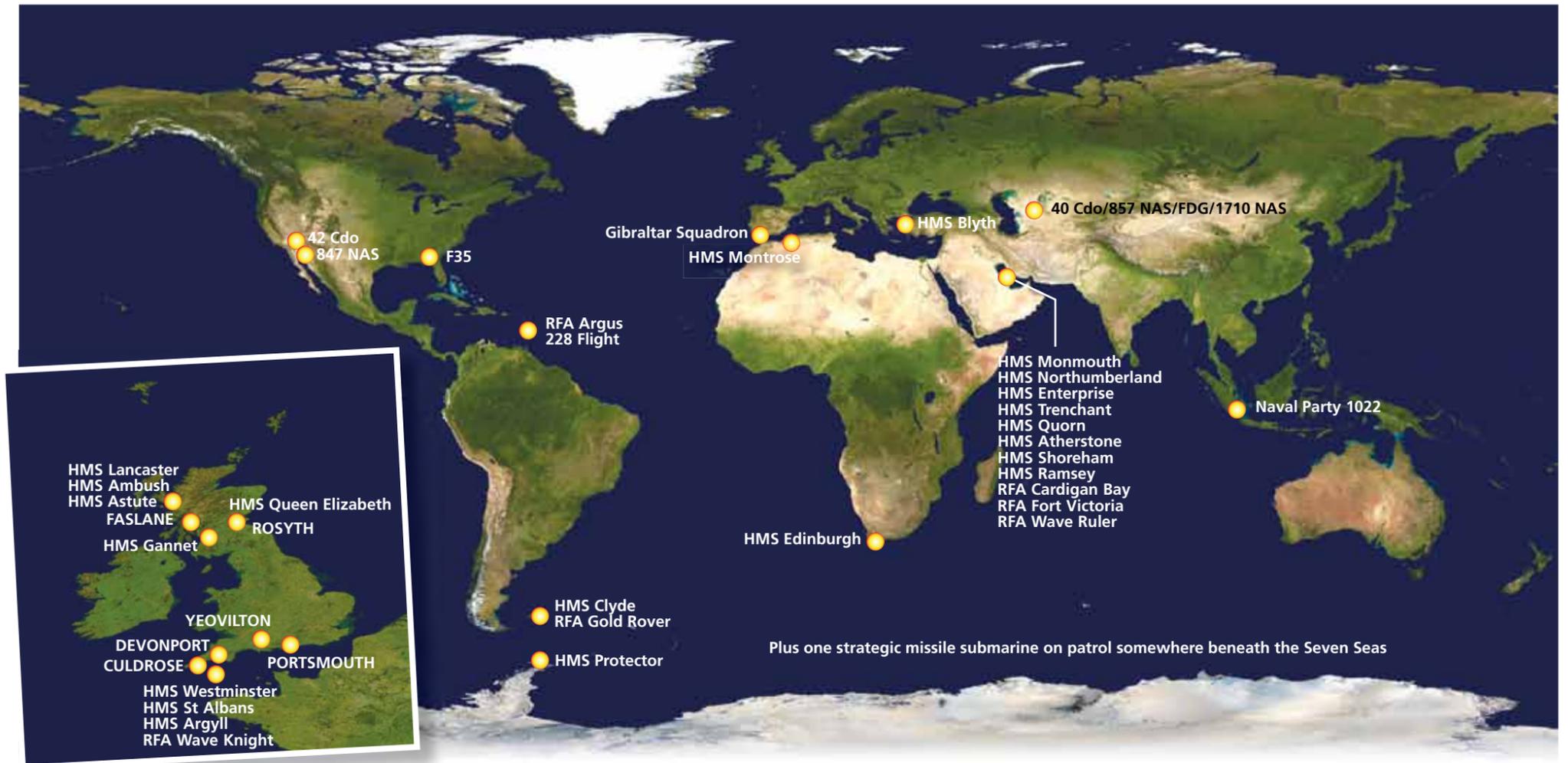
NAVY NEWS

JANUARY 2013

AMERICAN EYE

A Royal Marine from Mike Company 42 Commando arrives by Merlin helicopter in the Mojave Desert. The troops were plunged into the thick of the desert landscape in the initial stages of the week-long final phase of Exercise Black Alligator. See pages 21-23.
Picture: LA(Phot) Jason Ballard, 42 Cdo





PLUS ça change, plus c'est la même chose...

2012 opened with HMS Protector in the Antarctic; two 23s east of Suez; four minehunters in the Gulf; Baggers over Helmand; an RFA on North Atlantic Patrol; HMS Clyde patrolling the Falklands; a duty T-boat in the Indian Ocean; the rescuers of 771 NAS and HMS Gannet on call 24/7.

And although some of the names have changed (Trenchant for Turbulent, Argus for Wave Ruler, Northumberland and Monmouth for Argyll and Sutherland, Enterprise for Echo, 854 for 857 NAS) the missions, by and large, have not.

HMS Diamond has begun to lower the curtain on her inaugural deployment east of Suez, handing on the Gulf baton to **HMS Monmouth** (see opposite).

And at almost the same time and place, **HMS Sutherland** completed her counter-piracy sweep with **HMS Northumberland** taking her place (see page 9).

There have been not one but two visitors to North Africa. Gib Squadron patrol boat **HMS Scimitar** headed across the Strait to Tangier while further east **HMS Montrose** called on Algeria after completing her part in the Cougar 12 deployment (see page 8).

The two lead ships of Cougar – flagship **HMS Bulwark** and **Illustrious** – returned home early in December with the senior officer in charge of the deployment delighted with the results of the two months of training in the Med (see page 5).

The Royal Marines of **40 Commando** are now approaching the half-way point of their final tour of duty in Helmand (see page 20), while their brethren of **42 Commando** have completed six weeks of desert training at Twentynine Palms, the US Marine Corps vast live-firing ranges (see the centre pages).

Also done with California are **847 NAS** who prepared for their deployment to Afghanistan this month by acclimatising in southern California (see the centre pages).

And more than 30 would-be Royal Marines officers from the **Commando Training Centre** completed 15 months of training with a demanding final exercise which ranged from Devon to Scotland (see page 21).

Also north of the border, for the first time submarines **Astute** and **Ambush** sailed in company as they continued their respective trials off the Scottish west coast (see page 7), while new destroyer **HMS Duncan** concluded her second, and final, set of sea trials (see right).

HMS Blyth was due home in Faslane for Christmas after leaving the NATO minehunting force she led in the second half of 2012 (see page 6).

And **HMS Gannet** carried out an unusual rescue north of Glasgow, winching motorists to safety with the Sea King on the ground, not in the air because of ice (see page 6).

Continuing the ice theme... **HMS Protector** has started her first work period in Antarctica with an inspection mission, carrying international observers to polar bases (see page 13).

HMS Westminster turned 'rainbow warrior' whilst anti-submarine training in the Western Approaches (see page 4), while survey ship **HMS Enterprise** produced a rainbow-coloured chart of the seabed in Port Rashid, Dubai, finding two sunken dhows in the process (also on page 4).

HMS Lancaster completed her post-refit training to help train future navigators off Scotland, while survey ship **HMS Echo** did likewise around the Channel Islands (see page 7).

Two Royal Marines were singled out at the Sun's Military Awards. **Capt Si Maxwell** took the 'overcoming adversity' title for his determination after losing a leg to a Taleban bomb; aircrewman **Cpl Justin Morgan** of 771 NAS was the 'marine/sailor of the year' for a particularly difficult rescue of a French yachtsman (see page 10).

And finally... ever wondered what might happen should disaster befall **HMS Victory**? Her ship's company do – so too local fire-fighters, who carried out their annual fire exercise aboard Nelson's flagship and saved ye olde Frede from the bowels of the man o' war (see page 18).

Ian blazes F35 trail

Duncan done for now

SITTING in the cockpit of the world's most advanced fighter aircraft is the first Fleet Air Arm pilot who will fly it.

This is one of the Royal Navy's most experienced fast jet aviators, Lt Cdr Ian Tidball, getting to grips with the F35 Joint Strike Fighter – the future punch of Britain's Queen Elizabeth-class carriers.

Lt Cdr Tidball is the first of two serving British pilots to be trained to fly the F35B, the jump jet version of the world's only 'fifth generation' fighter.

Alongside the RAF's Sqn Ldr Frankie Buchler he's undergoing six weeks of training at Eglin Air Force Base in Florida to learn to fly the F35 so they can pass on their knowledge and expertise to a new generation of fighter pilots.

In doing so they join elite ranks as only 30 pilots in the world have been, or are in the process of, learning to fly F35 – also known as the Lightning II – which is undergoing extensive testing and evaluation in the USA.

In terms of technology, the F35 is regarded as two generations ahead of the Harrier, the last front-line fast jet flown by Royal Navy pilots – among them Lt Cdr Tidball.

After initial training as a Commando Sea King pilot, he switched to Sea Harriers, clocking up over 1,300 hours in the fabled jump jet with all three Fleet Air Arm squadrons (800, 801 and 899) from all three 'Harrier carriers' (Invincible, Illustrious and Ark Royal).

As one of the Fleet Air Arm's most seasoned pilots, he took part in the very last Sea Harrier flypast when 801 Naval Air Squadron paid off in March 2006.

Six and a half years on and after completing F35 conversion with the US Marines Fighter Attack Training Squadron (VMFAT-501), the lieutenant commander will become one its instructor pilots, training future USMC pilots to fly the aircraft.

After gaining valuable experience on the aircraft Lt Cdr Tidball and Sqn Ldr Buchler will move to Edwards AFB, California where they will form part of a UK Test and Evaluation Squadron tasked with conducting



operational tests on the new stealth fighter.

"It is a great privilege to be one of the first pilots to fly this jet," said Lt Cdr Tidball.

"It far exceeds the capabilities of the Harrier. The F-35 will outperform anything we have been able to put in the field before – this really is cutting-edge technology and I am proud to be a part of this joint team working with the US Marine Corps."

He continued: "Undergoing this training is a great opportunity and the US Marines here at Eglin have welcomed us with open arms, making us truly feel like a part of

the team."

Although the F35 is assembled in the USA by Lockheed Martin, the fighter is an Anglo-American venture with around one-seventh of it designed and built in Blyth. Around 130 British firms are providing parts and equipment for it, worth around £1bn per year.

The Fleet Air Arm and Royal Air Force will start receiving front-line F35s in 2016, probably operating out of RAF Marham, near King's Lynn, where land-based testing and training flights will continue through 2017. The first test flights from HMS Queen Elizabeth are planned for 2018.

ON A grey winter's day, HMS Duncan made her way up the Clyde after completing her second – and final – period of sea trials off Scotland's west coast.

The sixth and last Type 45 destroyer has returned to Scotstoun for final fitting out and tests, having spent the best part of the last three weeks flashing up her combat systems and communications equipment.

A major part of the trials involved rigorous testing of the Ship's Long Range Radar (the big black rotating slab on top of the hangar) and her Sampson Multi Function Radar (the spinning spiky egg atop the main mast), which are the electronic 'eyes' of the powerful computer systems behind the Sea Viper missiles in their silo in Duncan's forecabin.

The latter – the ship's main armament and the *raison d'être* of the entire Type 45 programme – wasn't tested; live firings of the anti-aircraft missile against a drone target typically come with a deployment imminent, and that's not going to be for a couple of years yet.

But assisted by surprisingly-fine late autumn weather, Duncan demonstrated her wide range of capabilities as she breezed through the vast number of trials thrown at her.

This second period follows a successful initial set of sea trials in September, which focused on the fine-tuning of her engines and propulsion system.

"Duncan has again demonstrated her outstanding capability, this time from a combat systems perspective," said Cdr Phil Game, Duncan's weapon engineer officer – and the senior Royal Navy member of her ship's company.

"Whilst we remain conscious of the work ahead before the ship is finally accepted by the Royal Navy, I am extremely confident that Duncan will be delivered to the highest possible specification for which we, and the shipbuilder, can be very proud."

Duncan will remain alongside at BAE Systems' Scotstoun yard until the spring, when she'll sail for the last time under the Blue Ensign and join her five sisters in Portsmouth; there she'll be officially handed over to the RN and raise its famous standard.

Black is the new shiny

THIS is a Black Diamond.

The Black is the Lynx of HMS Monmouth – the Black Duke.

The Diamond is Her Majesty's Ship Diamond, steaming (or, perhaps more accurately, 'electricing' given the propulsion system powering the Type 45 destroyer) behind the helicopter and her mother ship.

The two ships traded places as the Royal Navy's Gulf guardian, Monmouth relieved Diamond, which was homeward-bound for Portsmouth in time for Christmas after six months in the region on her inaugural deployment.

The vessels met up in the warm waters of the Gulf of Aden to conduct a formal handover of duties – and also to engage in good-natured rivalry as the ships' companies trained fire-hoses on each other during a traditional 'close sail past'.

Like Diamond (and Daring and many others who have gone before her), Devonport-based Monmouth will be ensuring the safety and security of merchant shipping in a region vital to the UK economy – more than three million barrels of oil pass through the Bab al-Mandeb Strait alone each day, making it a vital waterway for supplies of energy to the British economy.

"It is just over a year since Monmouth was East of Suez, and after all the training and exercises we have conducted this year we are fully prepared to take over operational duties from Diamond," said the Black Duke's executive officer Lt Cdr Trish Kohn.

"We have a serious job to do over the coming

months, however we will of course be thinking of all our families and friends at home, particularly over the Christmas period."

It was a balmy 30°C in the Red Sea as the two ships exchanged pleasantries, only slightly warmer than when Monmouth passed through Suez a couple of days earlier.

It took the frigate a little over 12 hours to sail through the world's most famous canal.

It took her ship's company a little over ten hours to cover the same distance (162km/100 miles), beating their own speed through Suez on rowing machines... with a little help from Batman.



Eighty-one members of the ship's company and Royal Marines detachment volunteered to row the length of the canal on the flight deck, each athlete covering 2,000 metres.

Some donned fancy dress, such as Batman (aka AB(UW) Perkin when not being the caped crusader), some in full action rig (eg AB(CIS) Jones) and some stripped off, baring rippling torsos (eg Capt William Hall RM).

The latter achieved the fastest time of the day over 2,000 metres – six minutes and 43 seconds. As if that were not a tough enough challenge, he and his fellow Royal Marines decided to do the entire distance – meaning each one tackled 18 kilometres, not two.

As it was, the race between ship and rowers was won by human rather than mechanical power, with the Black Dukes covering the distance in ten

hours, 21 minutes and 20 seconds; each rower averaged their 2km segment in seven minutes and 40 seconds...

...which would be enough time for an American aircraft carrier to launch nearly two-dozen fast jets as HMS Diamond discovered working with three US Navy flat-tops east of Suez (apologies for the very dubious segue...).

Beyond her broad 'policing the seas' duty, the third of Britain's six Type 45 destroyers spent a sizeable proportion of her time east of Suez working with US carrier battle groups.

Diamond and her sisters were built with the aim of defending a task group from air attack using her Sea Viper missiles, which nestle in a large silo on the forecastle.

It was in her air defence role that she was asked to work with the carriers – the unique USS Enterprise and Nimitz-class carriers USS Dwight D. Eisenhower and USS John C Stennis.

Each operate with up to 80 aircraft aboard – 50 F18A/B Hornets and F-18E/F Super Hornets as

well as E-6B Prowlers and a range of helicopters, airborne early warning and transport aircraft.

Diamond's interaction with Carrier Strike Group 12, led by the Enterprise, held a special significance. While the Type 45 was on her first deployment, it was to be the last for the 'The Big E' after almost 50 years of service in the United States Navy.

Despite her age, she was still an impressive sight and able to conduct a full range of missions with her embarked air wing of almost 90 aircraft.

The work with the three carriers was not confined to manoeuvres at sea. There were also exchanges of personnel and members of Diamond's ship's company enjoyed some US hospitality as well as understanding how they conduct their air operations at sea.

By appreciating how their carriers, aircraft and escort ships operate together, Diamond's personnel have been able to apply these various roles to the ones that the Type 45 will be required to undertake when HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales join the fleet in the next decade.

"Operating with the Carrier Strike Groups was amongst the most professionally satisfying work I have ever had in the Royal Navy," said Lt Cdr Mark Headley, Diamond's air warfare officer.

"The interaction we have experienced has been of immense value not just for future operations alongside our partner nations but also in preparation for our own carriers coming into service."



Pictures: LA(Phot) Ben Shread, HMS Monmouth





Divers judge dredge job as a toughie

THIS is one big plume... caused by one big bomb... safely blown up off the Kent coast by RN divers after a particularly delicate operation to remove it from a dredger.

The air-dropped 'GC' mine, containing 1,500lb of high explosives, was brought to the surface by the dredger six miles north of Sheerness.

Before carrying out a controlled explosion a four-man Navy team from Southern Diving Unit 2 in Portsmouth had to carefully remove the device from the vessel's dredge head.

CPO Ian 'Scouse' Fleming, who led the team, worked for seven hours through the night in atrocious conditions to safely extract the mine and hoist it onto the dredger's upper deck.

He said: "I had to crawl along a pipe to reach the mine to attach chains. It was a confined space and waves were splashing all around me. The fuses had been bashed about a bit and were quite dangerous and the explosives were exposed. It was a tiring operation - one of the most testing I have been involved in - but everything went to plan."

Yesterday the WW2 device - which measured two metres long by 50cm diameter - was towed two miles further out to sea and dropped to a depth of about ten metres.

The controlled explosion caused a 76-metre-high (250ft) plume, which was clearly visible from the shore.

Accompanying CPO Fleming on the task were Leading Diver Lewis Watson and AB(Divers) Peter Birse and Josh Spibey.

Mounts Bay hosts enjoys Malta visit

AMPHIBIOUS support ship Mounts Bay hosted the honorary head of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary in Malta.

The Duke of Wessex - Commodore-in-Chief RFA - and his wife joined the Bay-class ship in Valletta as she completed her duties on the Cougar 12 deployment with other vessels in the Response Force Task Group (see opposite).

The four-day visit to Grand Harbour coincided with the gifting of two ambulances from East Midlands Ambulance Service to Malta St John's Organisation.

As well as military kit in her impressive loading dock, the auxiliary carried the two vehicles from the UK throughout her deployment in the Mediterranean, ready to offload once they arrived in the island.

It was the second time in a matter of months the royal couple had visited Mounts Bay; they dropped in on her in Portland during the summer, when the auxiliary was supporting the Olympic security mission surrounding yachting events off Weymouth.

The ship also hosted members of the Malta RFA Association, who took the opportunity to reminisce with the ship's company about deeds and ships past and present.

BAM busters tackle Red Sea narrows

TWO dozen Royal Navy personnel oversaw a concerted effort to tackle terrorism and piracy in the seas on either side of the crucial Bab al-Mandeb strait separating the Arabian Peninsula and Africa.

Under the banner of Combined Task Force 150, directed by a British staff from their HQ in Bahrain, five warships carried out Operation Wenlock: to detect and disrupt terrorist-related use of the seas on both sides of the Bab al-Mandeb at the foot of the Red Sea.

Just 11 miles wide at its narrowest point, the strait - known in military jargon simply by its acronym BAM - is one of the world's great 'choke points'; if blocked by terrorist action, it would have serious ramifications for much of the world's shipping.

Canada's HMCS Regina operated in the southern Red Sea with Yemeni personnel

embarked, while Australia's HMAS Anzac was in the Gulf of Aden with Djiboutian Navy and Coast Guard personnel onboard. Also in support of the operation in the Gulf of Aden were Djiboutian patrol craft, Pakistan's PNS Shamsheer and France's FS Duplex, plus the American tanker USNS Patuxent.

The operation also gave the Djiboutian Navy and Coast Guard the chance to participate in joint planning as well as play their part as a fully-integrated partner in a combined naval force.

Such a concerted effort by the task force is unusual - the ships typically operate individually, spread across hundreds of miles of ocean (the domain of CTF150 covers 2½ million square miles of sea), working towards a common aim.

The chance to focus efforts in one particular

area took several months of planning by Cdre Bob Tarrant and his staff - and it paid off.

"Only through working together in the future will we be able to detect and disrupt those who wish to use the sea for illicit purposes and I was delighted with what we have achieved in this operation," he said.

"Wenlock provided a unique opportunity for Combined Maritime Force members and our regional partners, such as Djibouti and Yemen, to work together to build on our understanding of the patterns of life and to reassure the legitimate maritime traffic that transits through the area. It has been a privilege to lead these maritime forces from different nations."

Command of the task force passes around the two-dozen-plus nations committed to the Combined Maritime Forces, with the RN's most recent tenure ending last month.

Boat of many colours

SO THERE really is gold at the end of a rainbow.

Black gold that is.

A little bit of *trompe l'œil* suggests that you'll find the nozzle of a fuel hose at the end of this magical meteorological phenomenon (sorry - struggling to find a synonym for rainbow...) as Portsmouth-based frigate HMS Westminster prepares to refuel from fleet tanker RFA Wave Knight in the Western Approaches.

For the second time in a week, the 'capital ship' took on fuel from the FOST tanker, supporting training involving RN and friendly warships going through Operational Sea Training off Plymouth.

Seven days previously, the ship's company of the Type 23 got quite excited by what they called 'a triple whammy': conducting simultaneous flight deck and anti-submarine operations (one Merlin helicopter from HMS St Albans flying stores, one towed array streaming) whilst conducting a replenishment at sea with the auxiliary.

A week on and with anti-submarine training in a very rough Channel still going on (the frigate was hammered by the same Force 9 December gale which battered much of the South West... and left an unpleasant odour drifting down 2 Deck - Westminster's main thoroughfare), it was time to top up again.

This time there was no simultaneous streaming array... but there were two simultaneous flight deck operations - Westminster's own Lynx, plus St Albans' Merlin again, which was also exercising nearby.

Which, we believe, makes it a sextuple whammy (or is it a double-triple whammy?) with a multi-coloured cherry on top as the rainbow spanned the two ships for a good 45 minutes while Wave Knight delivered fuel to the Type 23 frigate.

All of which might not have happened because just hours before sailing out into the lumpy



Channel, F237 was surrounded by scaffolding as she completed a lightning-fast overhaul in her home port.

Having endured blistering heat and scorching sandstorms in the Gulf and Red Sea during a seven-month deployment in the first half of 2012, Westminster was in need of a little TLC, plus a main engine change, modifications to her Seawolf air defence missile system, new communications equipment, acres of painting, new flooring and so the list goes on.

The key challenge was changing one of the two gas turbines which propel the ship through the oceans - a rare and complicated task, normally reserved for much longer refit periods which occur roughly once every five years.

Having to remove an engine

from deep inside the ship required three large sections of the structure to be removed - effectively cutting the ship in half.

"Removing and replacing a gas turbine is like brain surgery, only with a 1.76-tonne lump that has to be manoeuvred out and then a new one brought back in again, which is subsequently reconnected and wired," explains Lt Cdr 'Mickey' Rooney, Westminster's weapon engineer officer.

The bulk of the agreed 378 tasks (with a further 153 emerging during the maintenance process) were managed by BAE Systems.

The firm spread the load by using local companies and expertise from further afield to undertake the tasks concurrently - meaning 20 other companies employing some 115 people in

addition to the 100 or so from BAE swarmed over the frigate.

To add to the already difficult task, it had to be implemented with many of the 190 ship's company still living on board, a large amount of diving on the hull in open water conditions and the possibility of short-notice activation to meet the demands of the Fleet.

Working around the clock the sailors and civvies completed all the jobs and only 17 hours after the last sections of scaffolding had been removed, Westminster sailed to resume her duties.

Which led to her new Commanding Officer (and Captain Anti-Submarine Warfare) Capt Hugh Beard conducting the RAS with Wave Knight while running out her towed array and launching her Lynx... simultaneously. Not bad for a submariner (the ship's words, not ours...).



...and a multi-coloured multi-beam

IN STUNNING colour, this is clearly the wreck of a dhow. It is - and it was found by HMS Enterprise in the waters around one of the world's busiest harbours using her new hi-tech motor launch.

This is one of two sunken vessels discovered by the Devonport-based survey ship as she worked in Port Rashid - one of the main ports serving Dubai - as her nine-month deployment to the Middle East began in earnest.

Before leaving the UK in September, Enterprise received Spitfire, her new Survey Motor Boat, which can be sent off independently to gather data at the same time as the mother ship - effectively doubling the ship's capacity to chart the Seven Seas.

After trials in the UK and around Souda Bay in Crete, the first real test of Spitfire came off Dubai with two days of surveying work in tandem with Enterprise herself.

The net result from the duo's scanning via their multi-beam sonars were two previously-undiscovered wrecks - each

about 20 metres (65ft) long rising about five metres (16ft) from the seabed of the harbour - produced in impressive 3D graphic representations (as well as very colourful two-dimensional images) courtesy of the powerful computer systems and software aboard Enterprise.

With the wrecks now surveyed, the data has been passed on to Dubai's port authority and other mariners alerted to the dhows' presence - for both are large enough to pose a danger to shipping.

"The level of detail visible on the wrecks shows the impressive capability of the new Survey Motor Boat and the opportunity afforded to us by the local authorities in Dubai to conduct this survey training has been invaluable," said Cdr Derek Rae, Enterprise's Commanding Officer.

"The outcome of the training has been mutually beneficial and we are delighted to have been assistance to other mariners."

His ship will be carrying out survey work in the Middle East until May, building on the successes of her sister HMS Echo which discovered numerous wrecks and obstacles during a mammoth 19-month deployment to the same region.

As well as helping to update some of the 3,300-plus Admiralty Charts which are used by many of the world's seafarers (including the Royal Navy), Enterprise will also support the wider international naval effort to prevent piracy and other criminal activities in the Indian Ocean and environs.

Help from Argus after superstorm

MORE than six dozen schools will be rebuilt or repaired in Jamaica thanks to the efforts of RFA Argus, which delivered aid to the Caribbean island in the wake of Superstorm Sandy.

Whilst the Jamaican authorities dealt with the immediate aftermath of the storm, which barreled through the Caribbean and up the Eastern Seaboard of the USA in October, causing catastrophic devastation in places, Argus was asked to help with the longer-term repair and rebuilding process.

Although on drug-busting duties in the region, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship - which provides helicopter training for the Navy and has a state-of-the-art casualty treatment centre aboard - also carries a specialist disaster relief team and extensive stores to deal with damage caused by a hurricane.

It was these stores that were requested by Jamaican authorities via the British High Commission on the island and the Department for International Development.

Argus broke off from her counter-narcotics work and made best speed for the capital Kingston, where her crew offloaded 200 emergency shelter kits, consisting of tarpaulin and securing mechanisms. The kits will allow buildings to be made weather-proof - which means pupils can return to the affected schools and also that more permanent repairs can be carried out.

The offload was completed quickly and efficiently, utilising a team of sailors from both the RFA and the RN. Both teams of individuals have been training and working hard together throughout the season to ensure they remain at a high state of readiness to assist in any situation.

The kits are now being distributed by Jamaica's emergency department, OPDEM, among the nine parishes and to the 73 schools affected.

Once all stores were put ashore, Argus once again sailed to continue her patrol through the Caribbean.

Her last port of call was Bridgetown, Barbados - and the visit coincided perfectly with the country's 46th Independence Day.

A small platoon of Royal Navy personnel from the ship's hybrid of Royal Fleet Auxiliary and RN sailors marched in an impressive parade, featuring divisions from the Barbados Defence Force, Coastguard and Police Force, not to mention mounted sections.

The contingent from Argus, led by Lt Cdr Hugh Saltonstall, from the ship's Lynx helicopter flight, received a very warm welcome from the local community and were cheered and applauded as they marched in the 30°C heat.

Afterwards, the contingent proceeded to march in formation through the capital Bridgetown to Independence Square, completing the impressive display.

"The Bajan populace gave us a very warm welcome when we marched through Bridgetown and the RN marching platoon was very pleased to play a part in Barbados' Independence Day Parade," said Lt Cdr Saltonstall, who's the senior pilot and Flight Commander aboard Argus.

In addition to the parade, the ship's company also hosted a capability demonstration on the flight deck, with many members of the local community attending to toast the nation and enjoy sunset aboard the Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship.

After a speech from Captain Gerry Patterson and the British High Consul, proceedings were brought to a close with a ceremonial lowering of the colours.

Argus completed her North Atlantic Patrol duties just before Christmas; tanker RFA Wave Knight will represent the UK in the region for the next six months.



'What we have today is very good'

THIS is the officer now holding the second-highest post in the Royal Navy.

Vice Admiral Phil Jones has taken up the role from outgoing Fleet Commander, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, who's continuing his NATO role from the Northwood headquarters.

Addressing Royal Navy personnel in Leach Building on Whale Island, Vice Admiral Jones said it was an immense privilege to be invited to take up the role and that it was a proud moment for himself, his wife and three children.

"I'm lucky to find myself taking over the Fleet Commander role at a time when there are so very many professional, energetic, and above all, committed people on the Navy Command team.

"A team committed to generating and supporting maritime forces operating on a front line that stretches from the South Atlantic to the Northern Gulf, from the Strait of Hormuz, to the Caribbean, from the coastline of Somalia, to the vehicle check points of Nad-e-Ali in Helmand."

The admiral hails from Merseyside – in an era when the region's most famous yard was still building ships for the RN.

The admiral said: "I admit, when I look back on my life growing up close to the Cammell Laird shipyard on the Mersey where my father helped to build the last Type 42 destroyer, and my near 35 years in the Navy, I am struck by how much change there has been in our Service. But I think most of it has been for the better.

"There are fewer ships and people, it is true – but what we have today is very, very good, – whether it's equipment, training or people."

Vice Admiral Jones said he would continue to make the strongest possible case for future investment in the Royal Navy in order to ensure the nation's security and prosperity.

He added that the Royal Navy was held in high regard by other navies and that few other nations were able to match the range of activities it carried out.

"We are in that place because we – more than anyone else in Defence – understand our business and we understand our environment, where the land, sea and air all meet," he said.

"And while we understand the need to seek continuous improvement, we are smart enough to try to do it in manageable steps. That is key to our success."

Border deal

THE Home Office's Border Force cutters will become a regular sight on both sides of Portsmouth Harbour after signing an agreement with the city's naval base.

The deal means any five of the force's patrol vessels can use berths in the naval base or across the water at Fort Blockhouse in Gosport.

The new berths offer increased security – particularly when towing in and searching suspect vessels – and the ability to refuel 24 hours a day.

They replace the former berth at Gosport's Haslar Marina.



Picture: LA(Phot) Martin Carney, FRPU West

Passing a milestone

A JUNGLE Sea King banks over HMS Bulwark as tugs help the nation's flagship up the Hamoaze – and the Navy's key autumn deployment comes to an end.

It did so pretty much simultaneously for Bulwark and HMS Illustrious, which arrived in Portsmouth as L15 was berthing in Devonport – and with the man in charge of the deployment delighted that it had laid firm foundations for future task groups – and especially Anglo-French co-operation.

The capital ships were just two elements of a 16-piece 'amphibious orchestra' of warships and auxiliaries, Fleet Air Arm, RAF and Army Air Corps squadrons, Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade and 45 Commando and their supporting Army commando units, more than 320 vehicles ranging from Land Rovers to armour, plus nearly 30 amphibious landing craft.

The deployment, which involved nearly 3,000 sailors, Royal Marines, soldiers and airmen spread across six ships and five squadrons, was split into two distinct phases with two fortnight-long major amphibious exercises in each: firstly working with the French, before moving to the Adriatic to work with the Albanians.

In particular, all eyes were on the outcome of Corsican Lion – the first attempt at testing the concept of a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force which will be formed by the two nations and navies come 2016, as desired by London and Paris.

Corsican Lion, says Cdre Paddy McAlpine, Commander UK Task Group, was "an important milestone" on the road to creating that combined expeditionary force; when ready, that force will be at 30 days' notice to sail and be expected to deploy to short-term international crises – anything from humanitarian aid in the wake of a disaster to a total breakdown of peace and order.

"The French carrier strike group and our amphibious task group combined to provide a potent task force and the lessons we identified bode well for the future," said Cdre McAlpine.

"French ships were welcomed into the amphibious group while HMS Northumberland worked closely with the French aircraft carrier.

"Our ability to work together is on a good footing and further opportunities to work with the *Marine Nationale* will only strengthen our combined and joint output."

After the two-week work-out

with the French, the Cougar force shifted to the Adriatic for the second major exercise with the Albanians.

The 13 days of training in Albania, which is the latest member of NATO, saw HMS Montrose and RFA Mounts Bay carry out recce missions around the southern port of Vlorë putting 30 Commando IX Group ashore to scout positions, before the bulk of 45 Commando went in.

Vital to moving large numbers of marines and their kit ashore and around the mountainous terrain of southern Albania were the Sea Kings of the Commando Helicopter Force, who relished the chance to get back to amphibious operations after most of the past decade in the skies of Afghanistan and Iraq.

"Operating from the sea and adapting to the changing scenarios which both exercises have thrown up is what we are trained to do – this versatility underscores the Commando Helicopter Force's reputation as the maritime helicopter force of choice," said Lt Col Del Stafford RM.

"The Sea Kings were key to enabling the insertion and extraction of Royal Marines and their equipment in inaccessible areas."

For added spice during the exercise, simulated small boat attacks were conducted against the task group ships by the Albanian Navy, playing the role of smugglers and insurgents.

It's the second time in 18 months the Royal Navy and Royal Marines have worked with the Albanians.

"We were warmly welcomed by the Albanian Armed Forces, well supported by the Naval Base and well tested by their new patrol boats who 'attacked' our defences. We look forward to returning and working alongside the Albanian Navy during future Cougar deployments," said Cdre McAlpine.

After downtime in Malta for much of the force – although HMS Northumberland broke off to sail east of Suez on counter-piracy operations and Montrose visited Algiers – the bulk of the task group headed for home. Among its tangible achievements were:

- 600 Royal Marines fired 400,000 rounds of ammunition (an average of over 660 rounds apiece);
- The Jungle Sea Kings of the Commando Helicopter Force notched up 300 hours as the airborne steeds of 45 Commando;
- The Apache gunships flew 160 hours from the deck of HMS Illustrious, carrying out 225 deck landings;

- The Merlins of the Flying Tigers – 814 Naval Air Squadron – were in the skies for 225 hours carrying out submarine-hunting exercises and ferrying troops and equipment around (including 105mm guns);
- Seven Apache Hellfire missiles were loosed at (and hit) targets in the Med (*see overleaf*).

As far as the commodore is concerned, "Cougar 12 has been

the headline event for the task group during a busy 2012."

He continues: "The exercises undertaken in Corsica and Albania were excellent opportunities for us to develop partnerships with key allies, and to prove our ability to work together as part of coalitions of the willing.

"Our visits to Gibraltar, Toulon, Corfu, Algiers and Malta allowed the task group to engage as 'uniformed diplomats'."

■ Montrose in Algiers, page 8

Grimsby completes revamp

HMS Grimsby is back where she belongs – at sea – carrying out trials after completing a £3.9m revamp on the Forth.

The minehunter left the Babcock yard in Rosyth – where super-carriers HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales are being assembled – to start sea trials last month.

Whilst in the dockyard's impressive ship shed, the entire fire detection system was ripped out... and a new one installed, while the old personal computers were replaced by the DII machines becoming standard across the RN at sea and in bases, and the galley has enjoyed an overhaul, as has the communications system.

These enhancements were in addition to a substantial maintenance package focused on Grimsby's ability to operate in extreme climates – particularly apt given the UK's long-term minehunting presence in Bahrain.

The Sandown-class ship received protective coatings on the hull and weather decks; extensive work was carried out on the air conditioning system – which faced huge challenges during the three years the ship spent in the Gulf – and her bow thrusters were removed and overhauled.

Babcock Managing Director Warships Mike Whalley said Grimsby returned to sea "in the best possible materiel state".

The experience his team spent working on Grimsby will be used when it comes to revamping her Faslane-based sisters HMS Penzance, Pembroke and Bangor.

As for Grimsby, she'll take her place in the RN's order of battle once more later this year.

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THE world's best tank-busting missile accelerates away from the world's best tank-busting helicopter as HMS Illustrious' Apaches let rip on the range in the western Mediterranean.

For the second time this year the Army Air Corps gunships were launched from the deck of the Portsmouth-based aircraft carrier to fire live missiles.

Two Apaches from 656 Squadron AAC were sent aloft from Lusty's flight deck as the sun rose over the western Med near Gibraltar.

With the ranges clear of all other shipping and aircraft, the

two gunships sent five Hellfires into specialist targets up to 2.5km (1.5 miles) away, sending debris and shrapnel spinning across the sea as they impacted, obliterating their targets.

The Hellfire has proven itself repeatedly in Afghanistan and was used extensively in last year's Libyan campaign, when Apaches flew from the deck of HMS Ocean against Colonel Gaddafi's forces – the first time the gunships had been used in anger at sea.

Back in the spring, Illustrious carried out the first live Hellfire firings in UK waters and now has repeated that exercise in the Med.

As well as training for the Apache crews, the firings allowed Lusty's specialist air engineer weapons supply team to practise safely moving the missiles (each carries a 9kg/20lb warhead) from the carrier's magazine to the flight deck, where the squadron's armourers loaded them on to the helicopters.

Apaches can carry up to 16 Hellfires, mounted in sets of four on pylons beneath the helicopter's stubby wings.

The missile leaves its launch rail and accelerates to a speed of Mach 1.3 – that's 425 metres every second or 950mph, which means it takes fewer than 20 seconds to reach a target at its maximum range of eight kilometres (five miles).

In this instance the missiles were launched at special radar-designated targets – basically lots of aluminium sheeting with radar reflectors attached – which could be picked up by the fire control system on the Apaches and by the Hellfires themselves.

“Just as we successfully proved earlier this year, the latest Hellfire firings conducted from Illustrious have once again demonstrated the combination of Army Apache helicopters launched from the deck of HMS Illustrious are a potent mix, capable of combat against targets on land and at sea anywhere in the world,” said Capt Martin Connell, Illustrious' Commanding Officer.

Ending 2012 with a bang...

Caution: ice on road (and everywhere else)

FLIERS from HMS Gannet carried out one of the more unusual missions by the busiest military search and rescue unit in the UK when ice blanketed Scotland last month.

A couple in a car became stranded by ice on a treacherous stretch of road winding into the hills above Aberfoyle, two dozen miles north of Glasgow.

They were unable to drive or walk to safety, so one of Gannet's duty Sea Kings was scrambled.

The team quickly located the stranded car on the Duke's Pass close to Loch Achray – it was the only vehicle on the isolated road (pictured right).

“The surface of the road was almost completely covered in ice,” explained duty observer – and HMS Gannet Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Andy Drodge.

“We managed to get in quite close and land on the road to drop off our aircrewman, CPO Dave Rigg, but we had to take off again to find a more level landing area.

“Dave, along with two police officers who were already on scene, walked down the road to get to the two people from their car – and in that short distance he slipped over three times.”

The Sea King set down on relatively flat ground nearby – but it was still so icy under the



helicopter that it had to keep the rotors running to prevent it sliding down the hill.

Once the motorists had reached the helicopter, however, another problem surfaced – they had to step off the grass verge on to the road to approach the cargo door to embark.

Leading the way, Dave stepped onto the road and immediately slipped once more.

“It was like an ice rink under foot,” continued Andy.

“It was so dangerous that we

made the decision to actually winch the two motorists into the helicopter while we were still on the ground.

“I have never in all my 18 years' aviation experience winched someone into the helicopter while we were actually fully landed on the ground – that's how bad it was.”

The helicopter took the two motorists to Loch Achray Hotel, where they were handed into the care of the police, uninjured, but a little shaken by their chilly ordeal.



● Cracking tow, Grömitz... Blyth prepares to 'rescue' the German minesweeper during a breakdown exercise

Levantine time is up

HOME just in time for Christmas was HMS Blyth, completing her six-month spell leading an international minehunting force.

The ship left Aksaz in Turkey and was due back in her home port of Faslane in time for the big day after taking leave of NATO's Mine Countermeasures Group 2.

Blyth sailed from the Clyde back in June to act as the 'command ship' for the group, comprising similar vessels from the Turkish, German and Italian navies.

She met up with the rest of the force in Romania and Bulgaria in July, having slipped through the Bosphorus.

Embarked on board the British ship were NATO staff officers from Greece and Turkey, ensuring maximum co-operation was achieved throughout the diverse group.

The ships were soon involved in Exercise Poseidon, where they carried out mine-hunting while coming under simulated attack from fast-attack craft, helicopters and Romanian MiG 21 jets at the same time. The ships successfully saw off the mock attack before moving on to a joint search and rescue exercise.

“Working in the Black Sea was a fantastic chance to experience a new region whilst serving as the command platform in a major exercise for the first time,” said Lt Nick Court, Blyth's executive officer.

“The period went very well in terms of our tasking, and it was also great to experience a new culture in Romania and Bulgaria.”

From there it was off to Italy, visiting Augusta and Sardinia, conducting maritime security operations on the way.

The next challenge for the multi-national task group was Exercise Noble Mariner which saw Blyth and her colleagues

successfully identify drill mines in waters chock-a-block with yachts and shipping.

Port visits to Sicily, Albania and Greece followed, after which HMS Blyth once again took charge, this time for a major mine-hunting exercise in Turkey's Bay of Izmir. Here, the group once again found themselves under simulated attack on the water and in the air, this time from F16 jets.

Whilst alongside in Izmir, ten members of the ship's company made an overnight trip to the Gallipoli peninsula, where a guided tour allowed them to understand and appreciate the sacrifices made by the Royal Navy and British and Commonwealth forces during the failed 1915 campaign to drive Turkey out of the Great War.

“Visiting the Gallipoli battlefield was a hugely interesting and sobering experience,” said Sub Lt Glyn Duffell, an officer under training on Blyth.

“It was important to take the opportunity to visit the battlefield and to remember the lives lost on both sides.”

Blyth also conducted various in-group exercises with the other NATO ships designed to test co-operation within the force.

These included a towing exercise with the German minehunter Grömitz, as well as simulated damage control which involved receiving assistance from the other ships of the group.

“Blyth has acted as the command ship for the NATO group for almost five months. It is a testament to my team's efforts that we have taken the challenges in our stride and performed well throughout the deployment,” said Blyth's CO Lt Cdr Tim Davey.

“It has been a long journey since our Operational Sea Training in February.”

'Real trouper' Wave Ruler heads home

UNGLAMOROUS but essential, tanker RFA Wave Ruler has completed her six-month mission fueling the international effort east of Suez.

She left the Gulf region just before Christmas – much to the disappointment of the many Coalition warships who suckled her fuel hoses in 2012, for they described her as “a real trouper” for whom “nothing is too much trouble”.

The 31,000-tonne tanker repeatedly covered the entire Gulf operating area – from Bahrain in the north to Aden in the west and Mogadishu in the south.

In doing so, she steamed 18,000 miles and, more importantly, transferred 14,000 tonnes of fuel to allied ships – the equivalent of six Olympic-size swimming pools. She also delivered stores and other supplies when required.

Although she sails under the ensign of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, her mission east of Suez has been ‘driven’ by the US' Military Sealift Command Central, responsible for naval support operations in this part of the world. During a recent visit its head Commodore Robert Gonzales told the Rulers:

“It was a pleasure to be onboard to thank personally the ship's company for their outstanding service, flexibility and proactive approach.”

The tanker's captain, Capt Robert Allan RFA, added: “We've operated with ships of 14 different nations, illustrating the strategic importance of this region and the vital part played by Wave Ruler.”

“None of this would be possible without the support of our HQ teams ashore in the UK and Bahrain, plus of course the understanding of our families and friends, which is particularly poignant this year as we expect to be at sea for both Christmas and New Year.”

Facebook family

THE RN family and community support arm has joined the Senior Service's substantial social media presence courtesy of a Facebook page – www.facebook.com/RN.Community.

It will provide information about official family-orientated news such as deployment newsletters, unit updates and the ever-popular Royal Marines Roving Rev reports. Changes have also been made to improve the registration process to access the forums on the community side of the main Royal Navy website.

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Echo tests would-be navigators

EIGHT would-be navigators and four seasoned instructors joined HMS Echo for a rare chance to try their hand at guiding one of the nimblest vessels in the Fleet.

Budding navigating officers usually conduct the key at-sea training aboard a frigate or destroyer (*see right...*).

But for one recent assessment week the students, from the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood, had the unique experience of manoeuvring Echo – which is driven through the water by Azipod thrusters rather than traditional propellers.

For the students, the assessment week consisted of four practice and three assessed visual pilotage runs conducted by day and night to test their ability to navigate under pressure and produce a sound pilotage plan within a short time frame.

Echo spent the first two days around Rame Head and the Plymouth Green Shoals pilotage track, sailing into and out of Devonport to allow students to get used to how Echo handled before their assessed runs began.

The team then had to undertake some more testing runs around the notoriously difficult waters of Jersey and Guernsey – the Channel Islands are a favourite for navigational training – where their assessed runs took place.

Strong tidal streams, gale force winds, and conditions of up to sea state seven presented tough challenges for the student navigators.

The final assessments took place around the Solent and the Isle of Wight whereupon the students were debriefed and given their final results (for the record, all eight passed).



Speed bonnie boat...

HMS Lancaster squeezes under Skye Bridge during her transformation from ship in training to training ship, with specialist navigation students put to the test on board.

Having emerged from a 14-month £22m refit in her home base of Portsmouth early in 2012, the Red Rose warship has spent the year undergoing tests, trials and finally two months of Operational Sea Training (OST) off Plymouth.

The latter tested her mettle in every aspect of an operational warship, from ship-handling and emergency exercises to damage control and all-out conflict.

One of the highlights of OST is disaster relief training – particularly pertinent as there's a possible Caribbean deployment in 2013 for the Type 23.

Staff from the Flag Officer Sea Training organisation turn disused buildings at Bull Point in Plymouth into the most ill-fated village on earth, struck weekly by natural disasters, causing fires, floods, buildings to collapse, cars to crash, electricity to fail and order to break down. And they expect a visiting ship's company to sort it all out.

"The realism of the disaster exercise was remarkable," said LMA Ryan Summerfield. "It allowed us to fully test our medical capabilities in extreme conditions, but gave us confidence that we will be ready and able to assist any situation during the deployment."

Having come through her own training, Lancaster went straight into helping to instruct future navigators by heading for Scotland.

In doing so, she passed through the famous wartime anchorage of Scapa Flow, taking time to honour the loss of the battleship HMS Royal Oak, torpedoed by a German U-boat in October 1939; more than 800 souls went down with the ship, many of them boy sailors.

"The loss of the Royal Oak remains a poignant reminder of the dangers of the sea and that a seemingly safe place like Scapa Flow can be breached by the enemy," said ET (ME) Greg Conway.

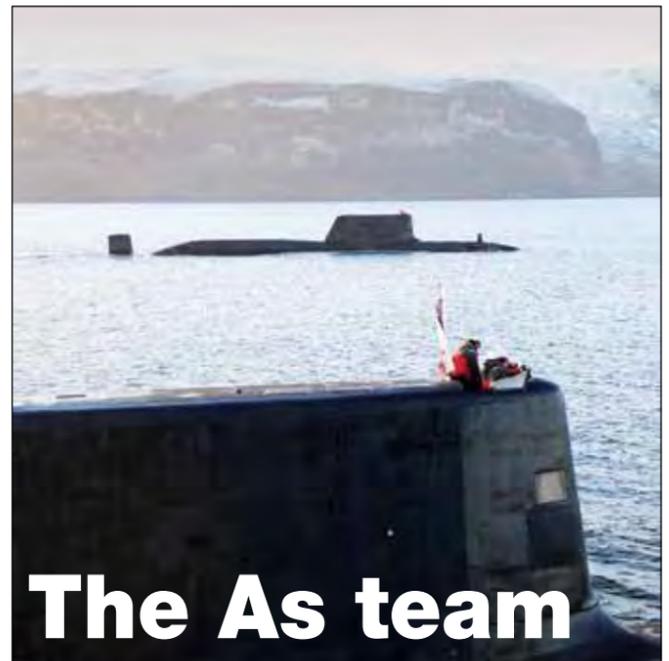
"May our predecessors rest in peace."

From the Orkneys, the frigate continued westwards, rounding Cape Wrath and heading for the Inner Hebrides – where her ship's company were treated to some of the most spectacular scenery in the UK.

"As a keen photographer, this is some of the most stunning natural landscape that I have ever seen and with the weather as kind as it is, we are extremely blessed to see Scotland in her full glory," said Lancaster's chaplain Sean Carter.

The Red Rose frigate's CO Cdr Steve Moorhouse concluded: "This busy 'autumn term' capped a demanding year of considerable endeavour and huge progress. Since sailing in January following a 14-month refit, the ship's company have worked tirelessly regenerating the ship ready for front-line operations.

"The new and improved Lancaster is fantastic but, as ever, it is the people that make the difference and I am hugely proud of each and every one of my sailors. The ship's motto, *nec aspera terrent* – difficulties be damned – has never been more apt."



The As team

THIS is what £2bn of cutting-edge underwater naval firepower looks like. Together. For the first time.

In the foreground, Her Majesty's Submarine Astute. A few hundred yards to port, her sister Ambush, set against the snow-capped cliffs of the Clyde shore.

The first two of the seven A-boats left Faslane to carry out their respective trials and training – for Ambush her first dive (followed, more importantly, by her first surface); for her older sister, which has been there, done that, the first-of-class survival exercises.

As the two boats met up, Whitehall announced it was pumping more money into the later stages of the Astute programme.

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond has committed nearly £1.5bn so work can progress on boats five (HMS Anson – assigned £646m), six (HMS Agamemnon – £498m) and seven (HMS Ajax – £328m).

The keel of Anson has already been laid (October 2011), while 'long lead procurement' – acquiring materials and making preparations for building – is under way on Agamemnon.

As well as providing the Silent Service with the most advanced boats in its 111-year history (the Astutes have been compared to the Space Shuttle programme in terms of their complexity), the money pumped into BAE System's Barrow yard, where the entire A-class are being built, will support and secure around 3,000 jobs.

Picture: LA(Phot) Will Haigh, FRPU North



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Montrose boosts links in Algiers

HMS MONTROSE broke away from the main Cougar 12 task group to help strengthen ties between the UK and Algeria.

The two-day visit to Algiers, the country's capital and major port, allowed the Type 23 frigate to host a number of events including a VIP lunch attended by the UK's Ambassador to Algeria, Martyn Roper, and senior Algerian military personnel, and an official reception for 200 diplomats and Algerian guests, including foreign ambassadors and British expats.

Montrose also forged closer military links by operating at sea with the Algerian Coastguard and joining a search and rescue exercise.

The frigate's Lynx worked with one of Algeria's new Merlin helicopters to winch off a simulated casualty from a vessel in distress – actually an Algerian Coastguard cutter – and then transfer him to the Algerian helicopter for final transit to shore.

A crucial element of the ship's visit to Algiers was the hosting of a Defence and Security Industry Day, at which ten prominent, defence-oriented British companies used her as a military backdrop for explaining their products and services to the Algerian Armed Forces.

Algeria has already bought British in recent times, including AgustaWestland Super Lynx and Merlin helicopters for the Algerian Navy.

Montrose's footballers took on the Algerian Navy team, and with the National Stadium unplayable because of a waterlogged pitch, the match was played at the Military Arena.

But the Brits' hopes of maintaining their unbeaten record on Cougar soon evaporated as the skilful and well-drilled Algerian team beat them 7-2.

On the final evening 64 of the ship's company were invited to an authentic feast night of Algerian music and traditional food.

CO Cdr James Parkin said: "Everyone in Montrose has been proud to represent the UK, and the Cougar Task Group, during our short visit to this exciting and vibrant nation.

"As well as further cementing the strong ties between our two countries, our professional and social interaction with the Algerian Armed Forces has created a real buzz which will hopefully allow UK interests to flourish in one of our key Allies in the region."

The UK already has strong ties with the country – Algeria is a major natural gas supplier to the UK, and British business is the biggest EU investor, contributing hundreds of millions of pounds per year to develop the Algerian oil and gas industry and national infrastructure.

The UK also trains Algerian officers in both Royal Navy and RAF training establishments, and many senior Algerian military personnel have attended Dartmouth and courses at the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood in Fareham.

Argyll copes with fire, flood and FOST

HERE at *Navy News* we love to feature all-action shots of Royal Marines storming ashore or blowing things up.

So here (below) is something a bit different – Royal Marines taking advantage of some down-time.

Actually, they are budding Royal Marines Commandos, in the hangar of Type 23 frigate HMS Argyll during three days of training for the ship and the would-be green berets off Plymouth.

The frigate was charged with getting the 53 trainees (plus their instructors) from Lymington on board, providing them with food, laundry and the like, and putting them ashore on a mission, before safely recovering them.

And while this is bread and butter stuff for an assault ship, it is virgin territory for Argyll, more used to hunting submarines and pirates than serving as a springboard for commando operations.

What the frigate learned – and her galley team especially – is that rookie Royals are every bit as hungry as their fully-trained counterparts.

"The booties ate us out of house and home but they definitely need

it," said PO(CS) David Allsopp.

"They love their pasta, and sausages and bacon went down really well – the 53 of them ate more bacon than the rest of the 180 ship's company onboard, and we're down to our last three days supply of sausages."

It was therefore fortunate for Argyll that the embarkation of the trainees came in the final phase of eight weeks of rigorous exercises off Devon and Cornwall – Operational Sea Training, the 'pre-season training' which every RN vessel must pass before deploying.

OST begins alongside in Devonport with the assessors of Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) descending *en masse*.

After a day of stringent checks in which every member of the ship's company and every department was tested to the limit, Argyll received a 'strong satisfactory' assessment (satisfactory in the FOST world = pass).

The prospect of such a rigorous inspection was, says Argyll's marine engineer officer Lt Cdr Gary McCormack, "quite daunting."

"It's testament to all the members of the department who

put in a great deal of work in preparation, and their utterly professional approach which saw us start OST in good shape, establishing a sound baseline from which we could continue with our training."

The first week of inspections take place in harbour, ending with the infamous harbour main machinery space fire exercise, a hurdle that many a ship has tripped up over... but not F231.

"The ship's company were really nervous about the main machinery space fire because the last time we did it, it took us three attempts to pass and the repeats were planned at times when nobody really wanted them – on a Friday afternoon," said LStd John Wicking.

"This time around though, thanks to the determined efforts of the team, I breathed a sigh of relief when we were told we had passed first time."

The first sea week was invaluable in providing the ship with the first taste of war fighting, with FOST staff opening the 'armoury doors' and letting out some of their array of simulated aircraft, missiles,

warships and submarines.

It was clear that a steep learning curve lay ahead, particularly when battle damage was overlaid upon the various training serials.

Sailors found themselves dealing with ever-more-challenging mock disasters and accidents, from a fire or flood to a missile taking out two decks of the frigate and the bulk of her midships section.

"Although you spend many hours in a simulated operations room environment, FOST warfare serials in a real-life warship ops room provide a quantum leap in terms of realism," said underwater warfare specialist Lt Jeannine Cooley.

"The serials push you to the limit and you have to show your true mettle."

ET Martin Woods added: "This has been my first ever taste of OST and it has been a difficult, but at the same time an invaluable, learning experience."

"I've never had to repair damaged cables in the dark with breathing apparatus on and smoke all around me before."

The bridge team, under the guidance of navigating officer Lt Roger Skelley, performed strongly throughout despite the long hours.

In total the team completed 23 anchorages and 76 boat transfers to embark and disembark the 'seariders' – FOST instructors and assessors.

With the marines gone and the training completed, the ship's company gathered in the hangar to hear the verdict.

A cheer which could have been



● 'Walking the dog' – Argyll conducts an astern RAS from RFA Wave Knight

heard in the namesake Scottish county signalled that they'd passed – not every ship does.

"My ship's company have been fantastic. They responded really well to the training and ensuring that we met all of the challenges head-on and won through," said CO Cdr Tim Neild.

"The diversity and complexity of the scenarios and multitude of issues the ship is faced with during sea training is hugely relevant and very realistic, and Argyll has completed them with her customary enthusiasm and professional attitude."

"After such an intensive training programme it is now vital that the ship receives some much-needed maintenance and, most importantly, my ship's company have the time to take some well-deserved leave and recharge their batteries."

Before the frigate returns to front-line duties this year she has to complete a firing of her main Seawolf air defence missile system against a drone target, and there'll be an intensive period of pre-deployment maintenance.



● Night flying from Argyll directed by PO Thommo Thomson

● (Left) Rookie Royal Marines, or 'Nods', catch some much-needed shut-eye in Argyll's hangar as a sentry keeps watch

Scimitar works with Moroccans

PATROL boat HMS Scimitar left Gibraltar behind and made the short trip to North Africa to work with the Moroccan Navy and honour wartime personnel buried in the country.

The boat, one half of the two main vessels in the Royal Navy's Gibraltar Squadron, headed 35 miles across the Strait to Tangier, carrying representatives from the

RAF, the Royal Gibraltar Police and a bugler from the Royal Gibraltar Regiment.

Following a surprisingly smooth passage, Scimitar was met by the UK's Defence Attaché in Morocco, Lt Col Simon Barnett, as well as representatives of the Royal Moroccan Navy.

Scimitar's CO Lt Tom Knott then called on the Commandant Naval Operations in Tangier, *Capitaine de frégate* Abdul Majid Zerbane, where they took the opportunity to strengthen relations and plan a passage exercise with Royal Moroccan Patrol Boat 113 en route back to the Rock.

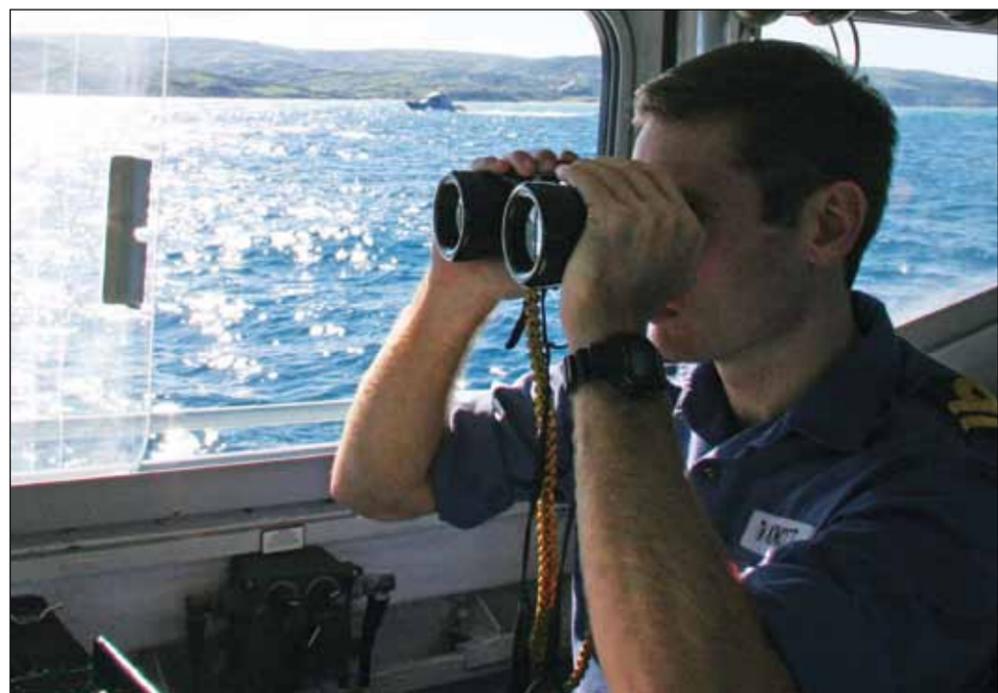
The focal point of the ship's weekend in North Africa was a service of remembrance at the Church of St Andrew in Tangier.

It is the last resting place of 12 RAF personnel and a Gibraltar Service policeman killed during service in the country in World War 2.

Following a poignant service inside the 107-year-old Anglican church, the congregation moved outside to the adjacent cemetery where wreaths were laid.

"I took great pride in laying a wreath and paying my respects to those that fell in Tangier, and was moved by the level of attendance from the local community," said Lt Knott.

Scimitar left Morocco the following day, and during the transit back to Gibraltar she carried out



two hours of communications and manoeuvring exercises with PB113 (above) as far east as Tanger-Med, a new purpose-built commercial port 25 miles from Tangier.

"This rare opportunity to operate with the Royal Moroccan Navy was a change from routine

operations for the crew and an interesting experience for Scimitar's embarked guests," said Lt Knott.

"I was particularly impressed by the professional ship handling of Patrol Boat 113 and the ability of our navies to co-operate seamlessly

in a common operating area. "Our visit exceeded all expectations."

"It was a privilege to be part of the remembrance service and conduct a valuable training exercise with a highly-professional navy."

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The North-South divide



pictures: la(phot) maxine davies, hms northumberland

WHICH is not a typo, before you start complaining about the standards of proofreading at Navy News...

North(umberland) headed south and South(erland) headed north after the two exchanged formalities and the two Devonport-based frigates changed places on pirate-busting duties.

The sisters met up briefly in the Red Sea (above) allowing a meeting of minds – the command team from Sutherland visited Northumberland via Merlin helicopter to pass on their experiences – followed by a little fun.

The Fighting Clan's crew let their hair down in time-honoured Royal Navy fashion (blasts from fire hoses, jumping up and down excitedly, waving arms, hurling projectiles and other tomfoolery – see top right) as they turned for home in time for Christmas.

They worked tirelessly in the second half of 2012 as part of the Combined Maritime Forces ensuring the sea lanes and waters of the Middle East and Indian Ocean are safe for seafarers to conduct their daily business.

During her time on patrol Sutherland has conducted boarding operations on suspect vessels and also reassurance visits to build relationships with mariners and obtain information on pattern of life in the area.

In addition the ship carried out various security patrols and has also participated in numerous exercises with coalition and allied forces in the region to strengthen ties and improve the RN's ability to work side-by-side with them.

"The huge variety and diversity of tasks that Sutherland has fulfilled whilst on operations illustrates the inherent flexibility of the Royal Navy, whether it is preventing piracy or terrorism at sea or strengthening bonds with regional allies," said the Fighting Clan's CO Cdr Al Wilson.

"I could not have achieved this without an efficient, capable and highly motivated ship's company and, as always, I am highly proud of what my team has achieved over the past six months whilst remaining cheerful and utterly professional throughout."

Which is exactly what is expected for the next four or so months from the 200 souls aboard Northumberland.

So far, relatively routine during her patrol:

- night gunnery exercises including letting rip with the Minigun (basically a Phalanx gun directed by human hand rather than computer, spitting out up to 6,000 rounds a minute at targets up to about half a mile away) because a foe isn't necessarily going to attack in broad daylight;

- a link-up with the Canadian frigate HMCS Regina – which is roughly the same age and size as the Type 23 – which saw Northumberland's CO and his officers and ratings pay an informal visit to our Commonwealth allies;

- lots of boat drills to keep the boarding team – comprising F238's ship's company plus her specialist Royal Marines from 43 Commando – at the top of their game; stopping and searching suspicious vessels,

using Northumberland's two 40kt sea boats and her Merlin to deploy the boarders, will be the frigate's main task while she is deployed;

- lots of machinery drills to train rookie stokers and refresh the skills of their more experienced shipmates.

And slightly out of the ordinary, three dozen sailors donned the strips of the clubs they support (from Premiership giants such as Chelsea, Liverpool and Newcastle United to less-glamorous minnows such as Hereford and Boston)... while the marines didn't, but did bring along a rather large Globe and Laurel.

They gathered in front of Northumberland's main 'Kryten' 4.5in gun for a snapshot (right – we could call it 'We are the champions, but we won't...').

Courtesy of the miracles of modern technology, that image was beamed back through the ether to the headquarters of Sky Sports in south-west London...

...from where it was beamed to the world courtesy of the channel's hugely-popular *Soccer AM* show, championing supporters of British football teams wherever they are on the planet.

And that for Northumberland in early December was Port Sultan Qaboos, Muscat, Oman, after the frigate carried out some training with the Royal Omani Air Force.

During her three days alongside in Oman, Northumberland hosted a number of guests and her sports teams took to the pitch against ex-pats sides, including Muscat RFC (who put the visiting sailors to the sword 48-12).



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● Actors Eddie Redmayne and Amanda Seyfried flank Royal Marine Cpl Justin Morgan and the French yachtsman he rescued

Sun shines on RM duo at Millies

ROYAL Marines Capt Si Maxwell and Cpl Justin Morgan were singled out for their bravery and determination at the glittering Sun's Military Awards – better known as The Millies.

The Royal Marines officer earned the 'overcoming adversity' award – presented by Ricky Gervais whose legendary wit was matched by Capt Maxwell's quick response.

The 24-year-old commando lost a leg to a Taleban bomb, four months into a tour of duty with 42 Commando in Afghanistan last year.

Not 12 months later he was taking part in a gruelling ironman endurance race and has represented the UK at the Warrior Games in the USA – an Olympics-style contest for Servicemen and women wounded in the line of duty. Si helped to open proceedings by lighting the flame with First Lady Michelle Obama.

Eight months on and he was in his native South London, joking with Ricky that he was still taller than the comedian... despite losing a leg.

Capt Maxwell said: "It is amazing to win it. Just a pleasure to be here."

And there was a surprise for the Royal Marine when his grandfather David Maxwell, a former Royal Marine who served in World War 2, was also there to celebrate his award.

He told *The Sun*: "To have my grandad walk out as well was just incredible. I don't know how he kept the secret, but he did."

The other Royal Marine honoured on the night was rescuer Cpl Justin Morgan of 771 Naval Air Squadron in Culdrose.

The aircrewman – who's since cycled across the entire breadth of the USA in a highly-publicised 3,100-mile charity ride – saved the life of a French yachtsman caught



● Comedian Ricky Gervais shares a joke with Royal Marines Capt Si Maxwell and his granddad David Maxwell at the Sun's Military Awards

Millies pictures: Arthur Edwards, The Sun, and News Group Newspapers

in a storm off the Cornish coast in August, who was present at the award ceremony.

Justin's bravery that night – described in his citation as "cool-headed and fearless" – earned him the title of 'Outstanding Sailor/Marine of the Year'.

He says the award is more for his squadron than for him personally: "I am so very pleased to receive this award as recognition of the work that we at 771 Naval Air Squadron provide day in, day out and to my fellow aircrew, engineers and all the support staff."

"It was truly a team effort and we couldn't have done without them. It has been fantastic to actually meet the yachtsman we rescued, catch up on what happened and provide some closure to the event."

Film star Amanda Seyfried paid tribute to the Royal Marine, saying at the event: "What you do is incredible; you risked your life to save this man, and not many people could – or would – do that."

Capt Maxwell and Cpl Morgan were the only two individuals from the Naval Service recognised at the event, but all 17,500 members of the Armed Forces – including 2,600 sailors and Royal Marines – who assisted during Operation Olympics over the summer were acknowledged for their contribution to ensuring a safe and successful London 2012.

Among those judging this year's nominees were cyclist Mark Cavendish, England footballer Frank Lampard, TV motormouth Jeremy Clarkson, retired senior officers and former Royal Marine Ben McBean who received the 'overcoming adversity' title back in 2009; he lost an arm and leg as a result of triggering a Taleban bomb and has gone on to become an inspirational figure to fellow victims of the conflict, completing the London Marathon and raising thousands of pounds for Help for Heroes.

The Prince of Wales and Duchess of Cornwall were guests of honour at the Millies, where they were joined by the Prime Minister, defence ministers and military chiefs, and stars from the worlds of entertainment and sport.

"Over the past five years, the Sun Military Awards have shone the spotlight on the courage, tenacity and professionalism of our Armed Forces," said First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope.

"This year has been no exception, showcasing these outstanding men and women, serving the nation's interests both across the world on operations, and in the UK."

The ceremony, including unique footage of shortlisted individuals and teams at work, plus reconstructions of the acts of heroism which were nominated, was televised on ITV1 in mid-December.

Full circle for Lisbon

THE Iberian Peninsula is a Maritime Command once more, writes by Lt Cdr Peter Harriman.

In a picturesque location on the outskirts of Lisbon sits HQ Allied Joint Force Command Lisbon (HQ AJFC Lisbon) one of NATO's three Joint Force Commands.

Established as IBERLANT in 1967 and later known as COM/CINCIBERLANT and CINC/RHQ SOUTHLANT, the HQ has continued to play a crucial role in maintaining security and stability throughout its areas of interests.

A SACLANT announcement at the time noted that: "it is appropriate that this new NATO sea command is being established in Portugal, whose maritime knowledge and historic achievements at sea mark that country as one of the leading maritime nations of the Alliance."

Originally a maritime command formed to protect and defend Allied shipping in the Western approaches to the Mediterranean; the HQ was later enhanced with a modern NATO communications facility charged with providing a range of regional ship, air and satellite communications services.

Over the years the HQ's name and status has changed.

In 2004 it transitioned to an Allied Joint Command and then in 2010 to an Allied Joint Force Command designed to be deployable, flexible and with the ability to respond quickly in a crisis.

Contributions in recent years have included: Pakistan earthquake and hurricane Katrina disaster relief operations in 2005, command of the Alliance's landmark African Mission in Sudan and later Somalia (AMISOM) in 2006 and lead HQ in 2009 for Operation Ocean Shield – NATO's contribution to the international counter-piracy efforts off the Horn of Africa.

On several occasions between 2005 and 2011 HQ AJFC Lisbon prepared for and served as the standby NATO Response Force HQ.

During May 2012 the entire HQ deployed to Stavanger, Norway for Exercise Steadfast Joist to validate elements of a new deployable HQ concept developed for the Alliance as part of the NATO Command Structure (NCS) reform programme.

Portugal's role as host nation to one of NATO's major operational commands will however come to an end on the first of this month when HQ AJFC Lisbon, currently under the command of Spanish Air Force Lt Gen Manuel Mestre, de-activates.

This decision was reached at the 2010 Lisbon Summit where reforms to the NCS were agreed resulting not only in the demise of HQ AJFC Lisbon, but also closure or relocation of other military establishments throughout the Alliance.

Under the NCS reform programme HQ Striking Force NATO (HQ STRIKFORNATO)



● Then and now: (top) the Lisbon HQ at inauguration and in 2012



has already relocated from its former home in Naples to the HQ AJFC Lisbon compound, COM STRIKFORNATO having raised his flag on August 1 2011.

That started out as a maritime command in 1967 has now come full circle with STRIKFORNATO once again ready "to provide a rapidly deployable joint but predominantly maritime HQ to plan, command and control maritime operations across the full spectrum of Alliance Fundamental Security Tasks."

Deputy Commander STRIKFORNATO (SFN), Rear Admiral Tim Lowe, sees STRIKFORNATO's role and presence in Portugal as a tremendous opportunity, both for the Command and also for Portugal.

"Militarily and geographically, SFN is now strategically placed in south western Europe in a nation with a rich maritime heritage, indeed it could be argued that the maritime has once again come home to Portugal."

"Standing alone for the first time in SFN's history will no doubt bring some challenges but also the ability to play to our proven operational strengths and demonstrate our value and capabilities for our MOU nations and NATO as a whole."

"The location here in Portugal gives us eyes into the Atlantic and the Mediterranean and will be ideal to help us maintain close ties

with the rest of NATO in Europe.

"For Portugal and in particular the local area around Lisbon, the arrival of SFN ensures the continued presence of the Alliance in Portugal hopefully for years to come, and in true Portuguese style our host nation could not have made us feel more welcome."

The Royal Navy's presence in Lisbon has been long-standing and plentiful and can be traced back to the origins of IBERLANT's first HQ.

Closure will no doubt be greeted with sadness and fond memories by *Navy News* readers lucky enough to have served in Portugal.

Although the draw-down of Alliance personnel from the HQ has already begun, the UK's presence will not disappear completely.

A number of RN/RM positions remain within SFN and NATO will continue to be represented in the region by the following entities: Joint Analysis and Lessons Learnt Centre (JALLC), Operational Preparation Directorate (OPD), Combined Air Operations Centre 10 (CAOC 10), Allied Command Counter Intelligence (ACCI) and the NATO Communications and Information Agency (NCIA).

The Communications and Information Systems School currently in Latina, Italy, is also programmed to move to the HQ AJFC Lisbon compound in 2016.

Defender debuts for Exeter City

SAILORS from HMS Defender celebrated their affiliation with Exeter City FC when they were given VIP treatment by the club.

Nearly 4,000 fans applauded them on to the pitch at St James' Park as the Devon side hosted Rotherham.

The fifth of six new air defence ships, Defender is bound with the cities of Glasgow and Exeter. As part of her many ties with the latter (local Sea Cadets, the Air Training Corps, and the civic authority among others), the ship's football team is affiliated with the professional side – such that the sailors don the club's colours when representing Defender, the Navy and the RN wherever they go.

Those shirts came courtesy of Exeter City's chairman, Edward Chorlton, who also invited the sailors to enjoy the hospitality of his club when their busy training programme allowed – which came with that home tie against the Millers.

The Defenders were given a tour of the stadium and mementoes were exchanged on the pitch at half-time between the club's chairman and Cdr Phil Nash, Defender's CO, and members of the ship's team were presented to a very appreciative crowd.

"It is a great privilege to be here on matchday in our affiliated city's home of football," said Cdr Nash.

"The Royal Navy places great emphasis on teamwork and training to ensure that warships can be operated successfully in war and peacetime – I see those same skills being displayed here on the pitch and so it is great to be able to enjoy this occasion today."

"I have been following the team ever since I took command of HMS Defender – at last we have finally made it to St James' Park."

Despite the presence of this £1bn Defender, it couldn't stop Rotherham scoring; the visitors left St James' Park with a 1-0 away win.



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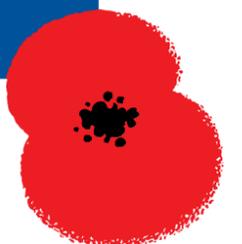
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Riding the storm of war

THIS is the magnificent sight of a Town-class cruiser crashing through rough seas, the three 6in barrels of her B turret at a high angle.

This is Her – previously His – Majesty's Ship Sheffield pushing through the Atlantic, probably in the Iceland Gap in September 1957 during the largest NATO exercise staged in the then eight-year existence of the alliance.

These days we get excited about half a dozen ships deploying to the Med; for Operation Strikeback more than 200 warships (including three RN carrier groups), 650 aircraft and some 75,000 personnel were assembled to deal with an all-out Soviet attack on all fronts.

At sea that meant hunting down Soviet submarines and keeping the transatlantic sea lanes open; more than 200 merchant marine vessels, including the great liners Queen Mary and Ile de France, were made available for the exercise.

All of which had a very familiar ring about it, for neither the mission, nor the waters were unknown to the veteran cruiser.

Sheffield took part in some of the signature battles of WW2: Spartivento, the Bismarck chase (when the guns of Hitler's flagship briefly opened fire on her, killing two crew), clashes in the polar night in the Barents Sea and North Cape.

But she was also a veteran of the constant battle to keep the supply lines open. Sheffield provided cover for two dozen convoys from New World to the Old, the Arctic to the Mediterranean during six years of war.

As part of Battle of the Atlantic 70th anniversary commemorations, events this year will focus on the terrible losses of March 1943 – followed by the triumph just weeks later in 'Black May' when the U-boats were forced to break off the battle.

U-boats, the Luftwaffe, raiders, Bismarck came and went. The ever-present was the Atlantic. And



Battle Honours

Norway.....	1940
Spartivento.....	1940
Atlantic.....	1941-43
Bismarck.....	1941
Mediterranean.....	1941
Malta Convoys.....	1941
Arctic.....	1941-43
North Africa.....	1942
Barents Sea.....	1942
Biscay.....	1943
Salerno.....	1943
North Cape.....	1943

Facts and figures

Motto: *Deo adiuvante proficio* – With God's help I advance
 Class: Town-class light cruiser
 Pennant number: C24
 Builder: Vickers Armstrong, High Walker
 Laid down: January 31, 1935
 Launched: July 23, 1936
 Commissioned: August 25 1937
 Broken up: September 1967
 Displacement: 11,350 tons
 Length: 558ft (170m)
 Beam: 61ft 8in (18.8m)
 Draught: 21ft 6in (6.5m)
 Speed: 32 knots
 Complement: 748
 Propulsion: 4 x Parsons geared turbines generating 75,000shp
 Armament: 12 x 6in Mk XXIII in four triple turrets; 8 x 4in in double mounts; 2 x four-barrelled pom-poms; 8 x .5in machine-guns; 2 x triple 21in torpedo tubes
 Aircraft: up to three Supermarine Walrus seaplanes

(nearly 80ft above the waterline), gusts of at least 70mph (some say they reached twice that speed) and one rogue wave which simply tore the roof of A Turret – 1½in thick, weighing three tons and held in place by well over 100 bolts – clean off.

When the storm subsided, two whalers were gone, so too the sonar dome; convoy duties were abandoned and Sheffield returned to Iceland for temporary fixing before more permanent repairs were effected on the Clyde.

Generally, for all her exertions, Old Shiny lived a rather charmed life – her roll of honour for 1939-45 was 'only' ten dead.

The ship spent the final year of the conflict in refit in the USA to prepare her for the Far East campaign (the war ended before the revamp did).

It would have been a fitting theatre of war for Sheffield; the Town class (also, and less commonly, known as Southampton-class cruisers) were built with one eye very much on the growing threat posed by Imperial Japan.

Sheffield was also the first ship to bear the name of the city of steel – an association celebrated from the moment she was laid down.

Fittings made of brass in other RN vessels were Sheffield stainless steel in her – even down to the ship's bell. (As well as helping to forge tremendous links between ship and city, it was also an experiment by the Admiralty to see whether steel demanded less cleaning than brass which occupied so many sailors in the rest of the Fleet.)

The steel would give the ship the nickname Old Shiny (Shiny Sheff applies more to her successors) and, when the ship was finally broken up in 1967 – despite attempts by the city to save her (instead, it would be HMS Belfast preserved for the nation), around 1,000 tons of metal was returned to Sheffield's foundries to be melted down and re-used.



IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

A LITTLE after mid-day on Monday August 12 1940 and Portsmouth Harbour smoulders after a sustained effort to pound the city – and its dockyard especially – into the ground.

This was neither the beginning – nor end – of the city's ordeal, an ordeal, it should be pointed out, which it shared with every other major naval city.

The Portsmouth Blitz began on July 11 1940 in the very opening stages of the Battle of Britain. Back then the raiders came by day – and the word Blitz wasn't in common usage.

And in that prelude to the Nazis' attempt to pummel Britain into submission, the raids were directed exclusively at military targets; it was September 1940 before they sought to undermine morale by targeting the civilian populace.

The first raid on Portsmouth was aimed at the dockyard, so too the August 12 raid.

According to official RAF records, the city was given just ten minutes warning that the Hun was coming; RDF – as radar was then known – picked up in excess of 150 aircraft 30 miles north of Cherbourg shortly before mid-day. As they closed in on the British coast, the raiders split.

By 12.01pm the first bombers were over Portsmouth. The harbour station was badly damaged, the pier was demolished, a pontoon dock holed and fires raged across the city.

Despite the swirl of smoke in this photograph (MH 000155), courtesy of the Imperial War Museum's vast archives, the naval base itself suffered relatively little damage, although a

dozen RAF personnel were killed across the harbour in an attack on the airbase and Gosport town.

Not so the next major raid on August 24 which killed 25 men when an air raid shelter in the dockyard took a direct hit, while the stern of destroyer HMS Acheron was blown off.

And yet, 271 ships were put in dry dock in the yard that year – the figure remained fairly constant throughout the war. Indeed, the dockyard also continued to build ships and submarines despite the Blitz; work on cruiser HMS Sirius went on apace, such that she was launched in September 1940 and was adopted by city folk as their own warship.

This month marks the 72nd anniversary of the terrible raid etched into every Portsmouthian's memory:

the January 10th night attack by the Luftwaffe on the city.

It was, wrote the Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth, Admiral Sir William James, "a first-class Blitz", which left many of the city's landmarks (Guildhall, Garrison Church, The Hard, Queen Street, the Naval barracks) aflame or in ruins.

The raid, which lasted for more than six hours, might also have claimed the city's cathedral but for the actions of sailors who turned fire-fighters to save the building. That terrible night cost the lives of over 170 souls and injured more than twice that number.

In all Portsmouth would suffer nearly 70 raids (the last concerted attack was in May 1944), while the sirens howled on just shy of 1,600 occasions.

When the Germans were done

they had damaged more than 75,000 properties in Portsmouth, destroyed over 6,600 buildings, and left 930 dead (although there are no comparative figures for military and civilian personnel killed in the dockyard).

The Navy, naval base and Portsmouth came through – the latter became known as the 'smitten city'. It would have suffered far more had the Germans returned more frequently – and had many of their bombs not landed in the sea (although an estimated 40,000 did hit the yard and city).

■ THIS photograph – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing PhotoAdmin@IWM.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5309.



Chilling out again

HMS Protector has arrived in Antarctica for the first time this season after her long sail south from Portsmouth.

The icebreaker will spend this, the first of her four work periods in the ice this austral summer, supporting an international team conducting formal Antarctic Treaty inspections of sites across the peninsula.

Led by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office and with the support of the British Antarctic Survey and observers from the ship, the international team – including personnel from co-signatories the Netherlands and Spain – will inspect a number of scientific stations, historic sites, cruise vessels and yachts.

Protector's designated Antarctic Treaty observers, who

provide specialist advice and support to the inspection team, include the Executive Officer, Medical Officer, photographer and a small team of engineers.

Their first call was to the Brazilian research station Comandante Ferraz in Admiralty Bay, King George Island – a poignant moment for sailors from Protector, as the ship helped tackle a fire which broke out and killed two Brazilians last February.

Next on the list was Henryk Arctowski, the Polish station, with more visits being undertaken as Navy News went to press.

Protector's Executive Officer Cdr Don Mackinnon said: "HMS Protector is in the Antarctic representing both the UK and the Royal Navy in order to promote peace and security in region, and to help the

international inspection team determine whether parties to the Antarctic Treaty are meeting their obligations.

"The unique, signature capability of the Royal Navy's ice patrol ship, and the significant and very positive contribution it makes to regional co-operation and engagement, has never been more important.

"We look forward to a long and productive season in Antarctica."

The ship was due to conduct surveys in the South Atlantic over Christmas and the New Year before returning to Antarctic waters until April.

● A lone penguin watches as an inspection is conducted at the Polish Henryk Arctowski research station

Picture: LA(Phot)
Arron Hoare



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The moustachioed men of Movember

THOSE moustachioed men in their flying machines. Not to mention their ships. Their bases. And the moustachioed women.

Yes, it seems the hirsuteness of Movember has been taken to the Navy's collective hearts.

Where to begin? Let us turn first to the moustachioed mavericks of the Lynx force. Or should that be the moustachioed Lynx?

HMS Westminster's Flight and their shipmates (right) decided that they should not be the only ones adorned for the Movember season, which raises money and awareness for men's health issues.

So poor Rosie, their Lynx helicopter, also donned a 'tache for men's month. And we suspect she might have preferred some false eyelashes rather than those rather bushy eyebrows...

The FOSTies of Faslane took up the spirit – if not the letter – of Movember.

RN personnel are usually barred from sporting moustaches with only full sets – beard and moustache together – allowed, and of course the men of Flag Officer Sea Training had to follow the letter of the law!

However WO2 Shaun Boulton, WO2 Justin Beattie, WO2 Al McLean, WO2 Tony Swift and PO Jay Rodgers (left) were given special dispensation from their boss to stagger shaving off their full sets.



So for one afternoon at the end of November the five members of FOST Marine Engineering staff were allowed to be moustachioed matelots for charity, rattling their collecting tins and garnering some £400 for prostate and testicular cancer research.

Shaun said: "We all know someone who has suffered with testicular or prostate cancer, whether it is a colleague or family member, but it remains something that isn't talked about or researched in the same way as other ailments – maybe because we're blokes and it is a bit embarrassing."

"As well as raising research funds, we are helping to raise awareness and encouraging FOST staff and everyone else to put their hands in their pockets, not only to donate but to check for unusual lumps!"

A similar exemption was granted to the Naval personnel of RNAS Culdrose, who spent the month cultivating a full set before being liberated for one day of moustache-bearing life.

The day culminated with the big 'Tache off' competition, and the 'Man of Movember' title went to LPT Mark Yates (posing top right with fellow contestants).

Surg Cdr Alan Bowie, whose chin and upper lip both bore bristles for Movember, said: "I was keen that RNAS Culdrose got involved in Movember, as it's an excellent way of raising awareness of the health problems that men can get."

"We have carried out a great deal of health promotion across the whole air station, and have even placed a pair of plastic testicles in the medical centre's reception area so that individuals can feel and see what a lump may feel like."

The Army suffer no such restrictions to their facial hair, so the Military Provost Guard Service at HMS Raleigh (right middle) took pleasure in parading their moustaches throughout the month of November.

Sgt Mark Worrall, Cpl Tim Maszlalerz, LCpls Kevin Bradbury, David Reece, David Lloyd and Pte Chris Woodfield put up with strange looks, discomfort and the displeasure of their wives throughout Movember to raise almost £250 for the charity pot.

Now on to Somerset where the sailors of RNAS Yeovilton also laboured under the need to grow a full set of whiskers.

The airmen of 702 NAS each paid £5 for the privilege to grow a beard, boosting the fundraising total by £260, and competing for the title of best (and worst) beard.

Not to be seen off, the women also sought a place in the competition, as can be seen in the efforts (bottom right) of LAET Charlie Cole, AET Angie Fairbairn, and LAET Emma Janowski.

However at least their artificial efforts reflected only on their



artistic merits, for the men folk it reflected their genetic heritage.

PO Charlie Chesters said: "The competition is a good morale boost, not only because we're helping a worthwhile charity, but also because there are so many poor beards around that you can't help but laugh at the state of some of our entries!"

AET Daniel Jones added (perhaps ruefully): "To be honest,

I was really keen to get involved, especially considering we're helping the charity."

"But now I realise I've easily got the worst beard on the squadron. I'm not looking forward to the judging!"

The annals remain tactfully silent as to who claimed the titles of best and worst, as judged by the unit's CO Cdr Anthony Rimmington.

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Rally rush for Somerset

THE PAST autumn has seen four intrepid engineers from HMS Somerset hop into a car with character to traverse Europe.

The four Leading Engineering Technicians covered 1,500 miles in a £200 banger, under the restrictions of the Random Rallies organisation.

With a keen motivation to travel, a love of driving and a passion to raise money for charity, LET(WE) Daniel Morris brought the idea to his teammates of LETs Donnachie, Lee and Parkes.

One charity was specifically chosen, Cancer Research UK for a family member who is currently in remission; it was an ideal chance to increase awareness and raise funds.

The challenge was to complete the road journey over four days – and the Naval team were one of only ten to finish.

Somerset's Weapon Engineer Officer Lt Cdr Paul Evans said: "When approached by four mischievous looking LETs I was half-expecting a mutiny."

"The well-considered proposal was delivered with such enthusiasm and the attention to detail was highly compelling."

"All my leading hands have successfully assumed greater responsibility during upkeep, stepping up to the mark in the absence of key senior ratings."

"The spirit and camaraderie of this event epitomised the Naval ethos and – at the considered risk of granting them simultaneous leave – was approved."



With leave granted, the first step was to choose the perfect car: a 1995 1.6 Honda Civic in the classic grey colour was found after an extensive search.

Themed around a Royal Naval ship, the car was christened HMS Carnage (named after the rally), flying a White Ensign on the make-shift foremast.

Starting at Devonport, where HMS Somerset had emerged from the Babcock Frigate Refit Complex days earlier, the team drove overnight from Plymouth to Dover and caught an early morning ferry.

They arrived in Calais hours prior to a rendezvous with the organisers and other participating

teams to begin the challenge.

Day one consisted of an arduous drive of over 500 miles south through France, to the first stop in the beautiful city of Annecy.

The following day, the team set off for the Alps. Heading towards Chamonix, Mont Blanc, the team spied the answer to first of two photo challenges and stopped to capture the picturesque background.

Following a cold night's sleep in a pop-up tent in southern Germany, the team set off from Freiburg and headed north to Nürburg and the famous Nürburgring.

By day four the intrepid explorers were fifth in the team standings, so a big effort was required to recover their position.

Winding their way to the finish line, Dam Square in Amsterdam, the team and their car had given it their all. Finally, the awards were announced: third place overall went to the RN Contingent. In total, the team raised £530.

LET Morris said "It was a very proud moment. I am very privileged to have been able to represent HMS Somerset and raise some money for charity."

Quart Club put Archie first

NAVAL engineers in the Devonport Chapter of the Royal Naval Engineers' Quart Club (RNEQC) have rallied to the aid of a little boy who lost his legs through meningitis.

Archie Barton, aged six, was struck by meningitis B as a toddler. The severe septicaemia which followed attacked Archie's body, and caused him to lose both legs, some fingers, part of an ear and the tip of his nose.

As Archie grows, new sets of prosthetic legs are needed, and each set costs £12,500.

The Quartists arranged a dinner at HMS Drake Wardroom in Devonport, which was attended by 60 members from all over the UK, including an Army captain who joined the club while serving at HMS Sultan.

The evening of dining, sea shanties and speeches at Drake raised £1,100 for Archie and his family, which was presented to the whole family at a function at the Artillery Arms in Stonehouse.

Archie's mother Nicky said: "We were so grateful for the support and very kind donation. We all had a wonderful evening at the Artillery Arms, Stonehouse, Plymouth."

"Archie enjoyed playing games during the event, especially with the giant 'Jenga' blocks. When we left he said 'they were kind men'."

"Thank you so much for thinking of Archie and raising awareness of meningitis. The donation will go towards Archie's future to help make him be more independent and have a limitless life."

Lt Steve Jones said: "Having heard Archie's story at a previous monthly meeting, the club decided to support Archie it was great to meet up with him and his parents. "He is such a strong little guy,

a real character who is full of determination and life. With the club's donation I know it will help with him living life to the full."

It's oh so quiet

A SAILOR at HMS Raleigh, who is known for his exuberant personality, is preparing to take a vow of silence to raise money for the Children's ward at Derriford Hospital, in Plymouth.

LPT George 'Shiner' Wright set himself the challenge of a 24 hour sponsored silence as *Navy News* went to press in mid-December.

He aims to raise £2,000 for the hospital and intends to deliver the proceeds from his trial to the ward before Christmas, along with chocolate selection boxes for the children.

As the secretary of HMS Raleigh's Golf Cartel, LPT Wright has already raised £600 by organising raffles throughout the year.

The 36-year-old said: "Everyone who knows my character associates me with being a loud mouth."

"When I mentioned the idea of doing a sponsored silence all my mates laughed. I must admit I may have bitten off a bit more than I can chew, but there's a lot of money riding on this now, so I may need to take extreme measures."

"But I am determined that not one word will pass my lips on the day. There will be no barking orders at recruits, no inspirational words of encouragement and I won't be offering to make anyone a cup of tea."

"However after the 24 hours everyone better stand-by."

LPT Wright has personal experience of the care provided



at Derriford Hospital Children's ward.

He said: "My daughter Megan was rushed to hospital on boxing day in 2010 with bronchitis. My fiancée Laura and I were really frightened to see our small baby suffering in this way, but the care Megan received was amazing and certainly put her on the road to recovery."

"While I was sitting by her bedside I realised just how many children have to spend Christmas in hospital and I was determined to do something to make it as special as I could."

Anyone wishing to sponsor Shiner can do so online at www.justgiving.com/George-Shiner-Wright.



On yer bike, Bulwark

CYCLISTS from HMS Bulwark have taken up an epic challenge, waving goodbye to their shipmates at Gibraltar, and setting out to pedal from the northernmost Pillar of Hercules back to their base port as *Navy News* went to press.

The team of five (pictured above) aimed to cover 150 miles each

day, climbing some 10,000m in total, over the course of nine days.

Cdr Kris Nicholson said: "We are aiming to put the 'c' back in challenge. The team will work together as a peloton to cover the miles as efficiently as possible."

"This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity which will raise money for a great cause."

The cyclists raising money for the RNRMC are: Cdr Kris Nicholson, Capt Triggs Triggall RM, CPO Dickie Alliman, Sgt Daz Hinton, and Logs Samantha Kelly. Support driver: Lt Mark Taylor.

Pledge your support online at: uk.virginmoneygiving.com/bulwarkcycleteam2012

Zoo halloo for Vanguard eight

EIGHT submariners from HMS Vanguard (right) hopped on their bikes and headed north, pedalling from Land's End to John O'Groats for two charities close to their hearts.

En route from Clyde Naval Base to their starting point, the team of eight plus their support crew had an unusual overnight amid the wildlife of a zoo at Minehead in Somerset.

But no, this was not an unexpected dire event, but a planned outing to the home of Able Seaman Jay Bassett, whose parents own the zoo.

Fortunately the submariners were not bedded down amid gorillas, skunks, reptiles, ostriches and their ilk, but in the zoo's recreation area – or rather within a children's pirate ship climbing frame. (How appropriate for a submariner...)

However once safely arrived in the far reaches of Cornwall, the eight unpacked their bikes, cleaned their cleats and set off on their long journey northwards over 13 days.

Sub Lt Ian Coe said: "The first three days of the journey were the worst because we had a 52-miler, 65-miler and 85 miles to cover."

"The south of the country was particularly hilly, and this added to the challenge – it was all quite



emotional!

"The leg of the journey around Inverness was also a challenge. According to weather reports, the head winds were over 60 miles per hour, so at times you felt as though you were standing still even though pedalling furiously."

In total the team raised some £2,000 for the RNRMC and the Islay Disabled Endeavours and Action Resource Centre.

Ian added: "We are delighted that we raised so much money for

these good causes; in particular for the Islay Disabled Endeavours and Action Resource Centre.

"HMS Vanguard is affiliated with Islay and the charity is one which is very close to our hearts."

The riders were: Lt Dan Hart, Lt Graeme Maclean, Sub Lt Ian Coe, PO Nick Mulholland, PO Gary Macdiarmid, AB Jay Bassett, ET Jason Copley and an unnamed other. The support crew were: Lt Spencer Allen-Scholey, ET Chris Britnell and CPO Robert Bruce.

Going nowhere at HMS Sultan

HMS SULTAN'S boxing team swapped the ring for the saddle and cycled for 48 hours non-stop for charity. The sportsmen clocked up 1,100 miles – and raised over £1,200 for the RNRMC and Kids Charity in Fareham.

LAET Dan Graham got the Gosport base's cycling challenge under way. Over the next 48 hours Dan and fellow members of Sultan's boxing team pedalled

furiously for charity – non-stop.

Using two cycling machines, they were determined to at least cover the straight-line distance from Land's End to John O'Groats (603 miles) or, even better, the actual road distance between the two points (814 miles).

After 47½ hours on the bikes, it fell to ET(ME) Sean Dumbriel to complete the final leg – with an extra incentive. Daz's dad pledged

to give £1 for every squat thrust Sean could manage in 60 seconds. The answer was 60. As for the total mileage the team managed: 1,100.7 miles.

"The guys all embraced each other after an amazing 48 hours work. I almost shed a tear at the end – I was so privileged and honoured to have achieved what we had with a great bunch of lads," said Daz.

Seasonal cheer for RNRMC boost

OVER 20,000 people braved the frosty temperatures in early December to attend the Victorian Festival of Christmas at Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard. The theme was 'Dickens' to commemorate the 200th anniversary of his birth in Portsmouth.

RNRMC was the chosen charity for 2012 and the bucket collection on the three days raised almost £1,000. A further £800 of RNRMC branded merchandise was sold at the event. Thanks to everyone

who attended and especially the people who volunteered to help. If you would like to volunteer some time to RNRMC contact Hilary on 02392 548155.

■ HMS COLLINGWOOD'S Bonfire Night drew a large crowd despite the cold in early November. Although Guy Fawkes was absent from the beacon, attendees of all ages gathered in their hundreds, with refreshment stalls and funfair rides for the children. A charity collection at the event raised money for the RNRMC.

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The Mary Rose resurrected

WHEN the Mary Rose was first lifted from the sea, there were dreams of building a museum that could display the ship and the artefacts found on board in the best possible way. Thirty years on, this dream is about to come true, writes *Florence Parrack*.

The Mary Rose was the first true warship of our nation and thought to be the most complex ship in the world at the time she was made.

She first sailed in 1511 and sank in the Solent in 1545, where she remained until she was finally raised from the water in 1982 and placed in a dry dock in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

The plastic tent in which she was housed was always intended as a temporary measure until the time would come to build a fully functional museum around her.

John Lippiett, Chief Executive of the Mary Rose Trust, says: "The dream has always been there. We are looking after the dreams of our predecessors."

Now, after a lengthy, complex and immensely challenging

project, the brand new museum is finally due to open to the public this year.

The BBC estimated that 62 million worldwide watched the televised excavation of the Mary Rose; she is a household name and a fond memory to many, as well as being an extremely important discovery that has changed our understanding of Tudor history.

The vast number of everyday objects found in the ship – over 19,000 in total – makes it an incredible time capsule of Tudor life.

John Lippiett explains, "What is extraordinary about it is this is the afternoon of July 19 1545, and as such it's everyday life – and death – of that time."

"It's the rich and the poor, the admiral down to the cabin boy. And this is the professional and personal belongings of each of these individuals, and it's unparalleled anywhere else in the world."

This view is shared by Tudor historian David Starkey, who described it as "the English Pompeii, preserved by water, not fire. All Tudor life is there; it is like stepping inside a Holbein painting."



● An artist's impression of how the new museum will look when it opens; the iconic curved building is designed to resemble the hull of a ship

Bringing history alive

THIS is more than just the museum of a ship; it is a detailed snapshot of everyday Tudor life.

The new museum will feature a full-scale mirror image of the remaining half of the hull which will contain a large number of artefacts in the exact places they were discovered, so that visitors can walk down the centre of the ship and get a feel for what life was like onboard.

For the first time, it will be possible to walk down the gun deck of the Mary Rose and see the original guns that were used on the ship, with their original gun carriages and cannonballs.

To continue this theme of bringing history alive, there is a showcase picking out eight individuals who were on the ship when it sank, displaying everything that is known about them, their roles as crew members, the possessions they kept and even what they looked like.

The size of the new museum means that up to 60 percent of the discovered artefacts can now be displayed, making it a huge increase from the six per cent that were shown in the old museum.

Items such as the gun carriages used on board can be viewed by the public for the first time,

having been too large for the old museum.

A great deal of time and effort has been spent on setting up exciting and informative displays of these artefacts.

Visitors will be able to find out the stories behind all the items on display – what they meant to their owners, and what they now mean to historians.

The new museum will also contain a large number of educational facilities.

The heart of what the Trust does is in working with schools, and the new museum is regarded as one of the best in the country

for working with those with special needs.

And they don't just stop at history; a surprisingly large proportion of their work is in teaching science, and the new museum has a full-time science teacher and a laboratory for providing hands-on science lessons to young visitors.

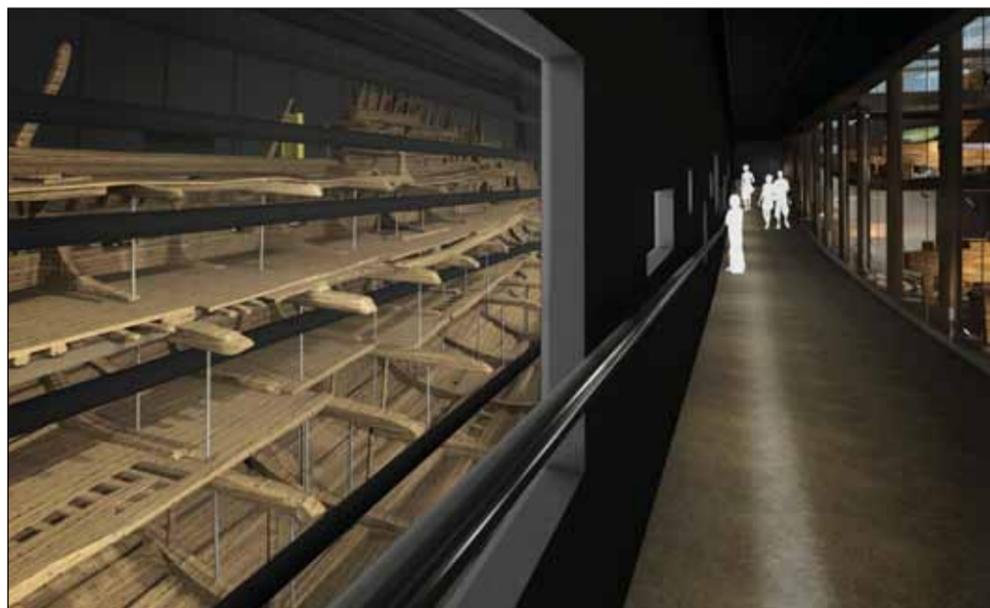
The Mary Rose museum is set to be one of the most exciting museums in the world, and will increase the number of visitors into Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, which is key to the financial survival of these wonderful historic attractions.



● A selection of everyday objects found on board, including a comb, a rosary and a leather shoe. Pictured below are the tools of the barber surgeon. These discoveries have given us a greater understanding of life in Tudor times.



If you would like to see more images and find out more about the items, design and all the latest news about the new museum, please visit www.maryrose.org



● The new museum will allow visitors to walk along the full length of the Mary Rose as she undergoes the extensive drying process. In five years the glass can be taken away and the ship will be viewed through thin air for the first time since she was excavated.

Bleeding edge of science

THOSE who have visited the Mary Rose in her temporary home will recall looking at the remains of the hull behind glass and through a thick mist of chemical spray.

Not the most attractive display, but this was an essential treatment to ensure that the wood would not rot after spending over 400 years underwater.

This stage of conservation has now ended, and the next stage will involve extensively drying the ship which has absorbed hundreds of tons of water, a process that will continue for the next five years while the Mary Rose is on display in the new museum, inside the largest environmentally-controlled exhibition case in the world.

Extreme care must be taken during this drying process to ensure that the wood dries evenly without changing shape. After this, the glass and pipes can be taken away and for the first time ever, we will be able to look at the ship through thin air.

Every step of the excavation and conservation process has held immense risks due to the delicate state of the ship and its contents and the fact that this is the only surviving 16th-century ship in the world.

One of the biggest challenges was to build the new museum around the ship without compromising the chemical preservation process.

When trustees asked experts if they were at the cutting edge of science, they said no, they were at the "bleeding edge".

But the finish line is in sight, and provided the final stages of the project go to plan then the Mary Rose will remain a preserved piece of Portsmouth's history for many years to come.

Your chance to join the crew

THE CONSTRUCTION of the new museum, alongside the ongoing conservation of the Mary Rose, has been one of the most complex building projects in Europe.

The scheme has cost a total of £35 million, and the Mary Rose Trust is now just £250,000 away from the total funds they set out to raise. Their key funders are the Heritage Lottery Fund, which the Trust credits fully: "There would be no Mary Rose without the Heritage Lottery Fund."

There are over one million commemorative Mary Rose £2 coins in circulation. The Trust urges anybody who finds the Mary Rose in their pocket to put her back where she belongs by donating it and helping them to reach their target.

The Mary Rose Trust also runs a patron scheme, and by becoming a patron you will receive some fantastic benefits such as free year-round entry to the museum, access to the private reserve collection, invitations to special events and much more.

If you'd prefer to take a more hands-on approach and become a part of the crew, the Mary Rose Trust is still recruiting volunteers to help out at the museum.

John Lippiett says: "We have students from the university and all sorts of people who come just on weekends, those who are retired and come in during the week get really involved; they love it because of the excitement of the visitors and all the interesting questions they ask of the volunteers."

"This is a very exciting time to join the Mary Rose Trust as a volunteer."

"Most volunteers give us one day a week, and adore it, some like it so much they give two days because they just can't get enough of it."

"We have retired school teachers, who interface with the children and the educational elements, we have those who love history, archaeology, just fascinated by the story and would love to be part of it."

"I would love any of your *Navy News* readers to get in touch with us on our website, by phone or by email. Either helping with upcoming events or actually being a part of the team to make this exciting museum come alive."

To find out more about becoming a patron or a volunteer, please visit www.maryrose.org or call 023 9275 0521.



● Artists' impression showing how large artefacts such as cannons will be displayed in the new museum.

More to scran than cheesy-hammy-eggy

SIX Best of Class and three gold medals were amongst the haul of prizes garnered by the Naval Service team at the latest inter-Service test of culinary skills.

Just over 60 personnel from the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary combined in the colours of the Naval Service Culinary Arts Team (NSCAT) at Exercise Joint Caterer 12, held once again at Sandown Racecourse in Surrey.

The three-day event provided chefs and stewards from the three Services with a unique opportunity to develop their culinary skills, nurture pride in professional achievement and build team spirit for the ultimate benefit of the Armed Forces as a whole.

With the opportunity to compete, and showcase their skills in a range of competition classes ranging from an Operational Field Kitchen, food cooked and served in front of seated guests, and a fine cuisine three-course meal, the team created dishes ranging from ethnic chicken to cream tea and food suitable for an Afghan *shura* or consultation meeting.

These competition classes allowed chefs and stewards to develop their culinary skills in terms of ability, imagination, innovation, adaptability and flair.

It also demonstrated that a Naval Service chef has a lot more up his or her sleeve than a cheesy-hammy-eggy...

The 62 team members took home 42 awards, including 17 silver medals, ten bronze and ten Certificates of Merit.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel said: "I simply could not have been more impressed by the enthusiasm and dedication on display throughout the Naval Service Culinary Arts Team.

"It was an absolute delight to be among so many talented and motivated logisticians, a sentiment that was echoed

to me by the Fleet Commander."

The NSCAT is made up of volunteers who wish to advance their skill set and showcase their talents.

After a couple of weeks of practice at the Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS) at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall they travelled up to Surrey to step into the heat of the kitchen.

Joint Caterer is open to all and the NSCAT, who were sponsored by the

RNRM and DMLS, were particularly pleased to welcome a large contingent of supporters at this year's competition, including the Tanner Brothers from Tanners Restaurant in Plymouth, the Fleet Commander and Second Sea Lord.

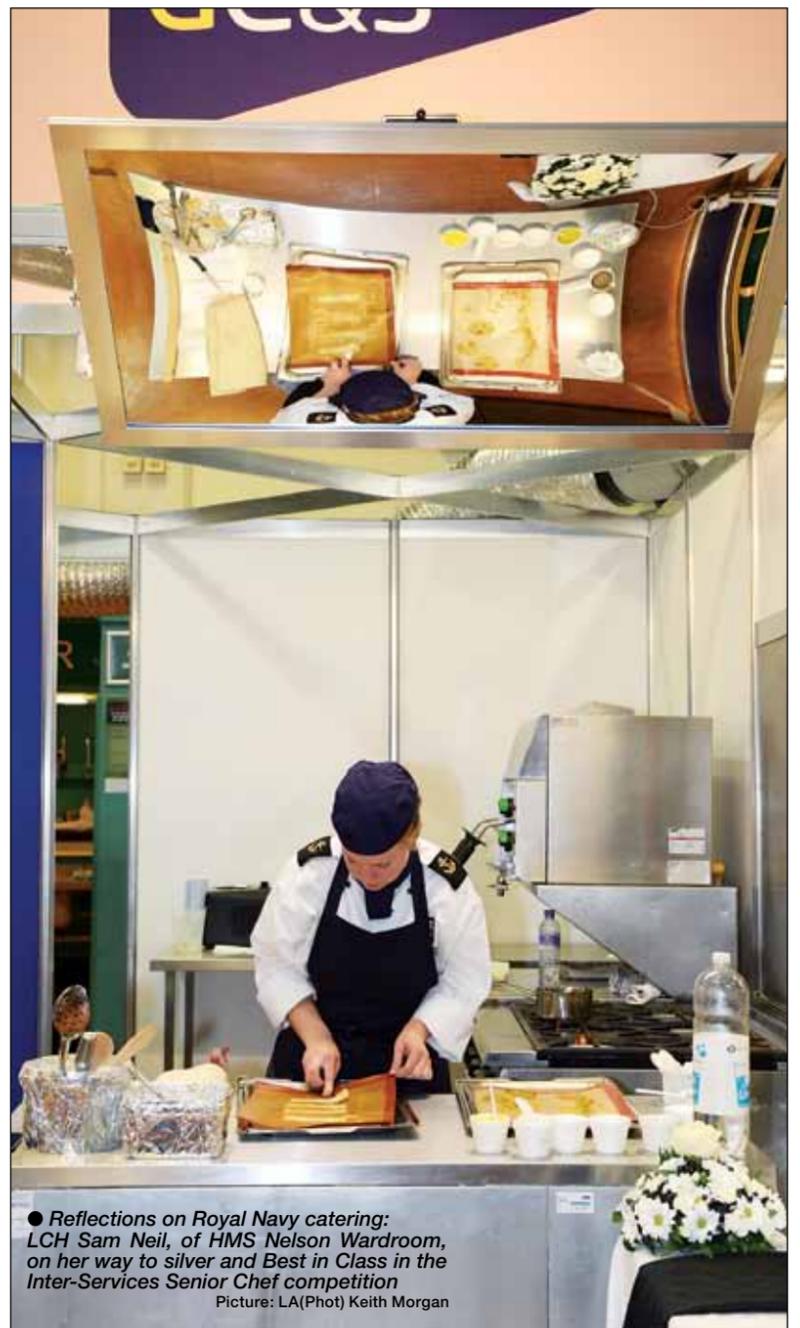
Chaplain of the Fleet, the Rev Scott Brown, said: "The food and service were excellent and the young men and women should be justifiably proud of their achievements."

Recipe for success

AWARD winners at Exercise Joint Caterer 12 were:

Junior Lamb: Chef Hodgson (CTCRM) – Certificate; **Senior Lamb:** LCH Ewen (RSP Nelson) – Silver and Best in Class; **Junior Fish:** Chef Grant (CTCRM) – Bronze; Chef Clarke (HMS Talent) – Certificate; **Senior Fish:** Chef Fewtrell (HMS Seahawk) – Silver; **Senior Chicken:** Chef Head (HMS Somerset) – Certificate; **Open Duck:** Chef Fewtrell (HMS Seahawk) – Bronze; **Open Pasta:** Chef Clarke (HMS Talent) – Certificate; **Open Ethnic:** Chef Hitchcock (CHF) – Certificate; **Open Hot Sweet:** Chef Grant (CTCRM) – Silver; **Open Pastry:** CH Dooley (HMS Ocean) – Silver and Best in Class; Cpl Hooper (DMLS) – Bronze; **Inter-Services Junior Chef:** Chef Andrews (HMS Talent) – Bronze; Chef Fraser (HMS Somerset) – Certificate; **Inter-Services Senior Chef:** LCH Neil (Nelson Wardroom) – Silver and Best in Class; Cpl Merrick (HMS Raleigh) – Bronze; LCH Lightfoot (RSP Nelson) – Certificate; **Inter-Services Cook and Serve:** CH Alex Coatup (HMS Ocean) – Silver; LCH Andy Durham (HMS Ocean) – Silver; LSTD Hicks (HMS Drake) – Silver; **Parade de Chefs:** POCS Craig McCullum (DMLS) – Silver; LCH Mark Raynor (DMLS) – Silver; Cpl Tristan Merrick (DMLS) – Silver; LCH Del Trotter (CHF) – Silver; **Inter-Services**

Open Steward: LSTD Hicks (HMS Drake) – Silver; LSTD Sutherland (RFA) – Silver; STD Pompey (HMS Somerset) – Silver; STD Stewart (HMS Illustrious) – Silver; STD Phillips (HMS Somerset) – Silver; **Inter-Services Open Field:** Cpl McCormick, Cpl Hooper, CPL Sutton (42 Cdo) – Gold; Cpl Wilcockson, Mne Gills, Mne Bulze (30 Cdo) – Gold; LCH Drugmore, CH Grant, Mne Dew (CTCRM) – Silver; Mne Gills, Mne Anthony, Mne Lloyd (RMB Chivenor) – Certificate; **Operational Catering Challenge:** Cpl Wilcockson, Mne Kaptur, Mne Lourens (CTCRM) – Silver; **Open Centre Piece:** CPO Hockenhull (RM Poole) – Silver; Mrs Conn (CTCRM Sodexo) – Bronze; **Senior Celebration Cake:** Miss Broadbent (DMLS) – Silver and Best in Class; Cpl Merrick (DMLS) – Bronze; CPOCK Martin (DMLS) – Bronze; Mr Roberts (DMLS) – Bronze; **Cocktail Canapés:** CH Derbyshire (CTCRM) – Bronze and Best in Class; **Team Buffet:** CPO Rowberry (RFA), LCH Wooton (RFA), Asst Cook Rixon (RFA), Asst Cook Wood (RFA), Asst Cook White (RFA), LCH Downs – Bronze; **Junior Dessert Plates:** CH Hodgson (CTCRM) – Certificate and Best in Class; **Membership of the Craft Guild of Chefs in recognition of skill, potential and ability to mentor and develop the NSCAT:** LCH Laura Willison (DMLS).



● Reflections on Royal Navy catering: LCH Sam Neil, of HMS Nelson Wardroom, on her way to silver and Best in Class in the Inter-Services Senior Chef competition
Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan



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Clyde honours men who smote the Hun

HMS Clyde joined islanders in the Falklands to pay their respects to those who fought in the first naval battle waged off the South Atlantic islands.

Ninety-eight years ago an overwhelming force of battle-cruisers and cruisers was dispatched to the southern ocean to hunt down and destroy a marauding German squadron.

The ships of Admiral Graf Maximilian von Spee's German East Asia Squadron routed the ill-starred South Atlantic Squadron off the Chilean coast at Coronel on November 1 1914.

The defeat stirred the Admiralty into action; it dispatched battle-cruisers HMS Invincible and Inflexible to avenge Coronel and wipe out Spee's roving force.

They did so on December 8 the same year, southeast of the Falklands. In the ensuing battle, more than 1,800 Germans, including Spee and his two sons, were killed, for just ten dead on the British side – and no RN ships lost.

Each year since, Falklanders have marked 'battle day' with a parade and ceremonial wreath-laying in the capital Stanley.

The day of the parade started with a service at the cathedral with music provided by the Band of the Royal Marines School of Music, and there were readings and prayers from both military personnel and local civilians, as well as Nigel Haywood, the islands' governor.

Afterwards, the parade formed up to march to the Battle of the Falklands memorial for a wreath-laying.

Clyde's crew comprised the guard and White Ensign ceremonial party, and were supported by members of the Falklands Islands Defence Force and Stanley Sea Cadets.



● Fire crews carry ye olde Frede to safety through one of Victory's gun decks and (left) 'Got any hose?'... The fire-fighters file off Nelson's flagship at the end of the exercise

Pictures: LA(Phot) Claire Myers, FRPU East

No axes beyond this point

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BATTLE-HARDENED HMS Victory has seen a few fires in her time.

She was bombed in World War 2. Thirty years later one of her oak beams caught fire following an accident with some welding kit.

And then there was the incident of October 21st, 1805...

But nobody wants the world's most celebrated warship to go up in flames, which is why every year she is closed to visitors while firefighters swarm all over her and smoke pours out of her gun ports.

It's an exercise of course, but it gives those involved vital practice – just in case the worst should happen.

And although it's an exercise, it makes an exciting spectacle. When it took place last November, many of the members of the public whose tours had been delayed stood and watched the action from the Victory arena.

It was a dramatic sight as four fire engines, an aerial ladder, a specialist equipment unit and 25 firefighters and senior officers dashed into the arena.

Lt Helen Wright, Victory's First Lieutenant, explained: "We tend to run the exercise in autumn, when there are fewer visitors, and we aim to make the action as realistic as possible, within the limits of what we can do in the ship."

"The annual exercise involves all sorts of elements as well as the ship and Hampshire Fire Service – it practises all the emergency responses from Portsmouth Naval Base, including MOD police, the Naval Base fire safety officer, the BAE emergency response team, and of course all the ship's company, including the guides."

The guides who show visitors around the ship used to be part of the ship's company, but they now work for the National Museum of the Royal Navy. They are trained to help visitors out of the ship, should an emergency happen during opening hours.

Lt Wright explained: "Every year we invent a different scenario. We plan it in advance with the fire service, and invite them in to do a recce."

"This year's scenario was a fire in the Grand Magazine, down in the hold at the front end, with two contractors working there who became 'casualties' and had to be taken off the ship."

"The idea with these exercises is that they are as real as we can make them, bar the actual fire, so this time we used a smoke machine, which set off the alarm in the quartermaster's post."

"The quartermaster, chief and able seaman are part of Victory's permanent team, so they are required to deal with any incident that arises, and they're trained to follow procedures."

"For this exercise, the bosun's mate went to investigate. All the fire appliances and an aerial ladder were waiting at Trafalgar Gate, so we let the exercise run and waited for the alarms to go off as though it was real time, before they came in with their sirens sounding and lights flashing."

She added: "We got extra people in from the Naval Base to play 'visitors' and our guides had the opportunity to practise their evacuation techniques to

clear the ship."

Every year a different watch from Hampshire Fire Service takes part, so that as many of the county's firefighters as possible become familiar with the ship.

This year, it was the turn of Green Watch from Southsea Fire Station, with the exercise being co-ordinated by Group Manager Dave Smith.

Dave said: "The Navy is understandably keen to keep HMS Victory as close to how she was in 1805 as possible, which is why she doesn't have fire curtains and a sprinkler system. And we aren't allowed to use our hoses and axes in the ship!"

"All this makes working on her a real challenge, and something we all enjoy."

He explained: "It's very good to get all the different agencies working together and coming up with the 'what if?' scenarios."

"If you think of the fire on Cutty Sark, it was catastrophic. It reminds people of what a heritage we have in this country of old ships and buildings, and the importance of looking after them."

"HMS Victory is iconic. Nobody wants anything to happen to her, and certainly not on their watch!"

Victory is full of valuable historical items, some genuine, some reproduction, so the firefighters have to practise what they would save first, advised by the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

Dave explained: "The ship is full of artefacts – uniforms, paintings, medals – so we have a priority list of what we would try to salvage. Practising this would save valuable minutes if the worst were to happen."

"Take the famous portrait of the death of Nelson. It's on the orlop deck and it has a large frame, so it would be impossible to bring it up off the ship."

"If it had to be saved from a fire, we would have to cut off the frame and roll up the canvas – it sounds drastic, but better to do that and possibly damage it than to lose it altogether."

The most famous historic ship in the world is never unattended. Every single day of the year there are always three watchkeepers on board (many more if you count the ghosts, although that's another story for another day...)

So did Captain Hardy's sailors practise fire exercises in HMS Victory?

"There are fire buckets which I think were probably used for exercises, although their main use was to dampen the sponges for the guns," said Lt Wright.

She added: "Sailors weren't allowed to smoke in the ship, except for one or two designated places on the open deck – much like our ships today, and they chewed tobacco rather than smoked it."

"There were no open fires except for the galley and, of course, ships were heavily manned, so there were plenty of people around to put a fire out in its early stages."

"But I'm sure fire was as much a worry and preoccupation for the Georgian Navy as it is for ours."

Historic carrier document presented

DURING the carrier's visit to Malta on the return leg of the Cougar deployment (see p5), personnel from HMS Illustrious presented a copy of her predecessor's World War 2 damage report to local historians.

Sailors from the helicopter carrier called in at the Malta Maritime Museum where they donated a copy of the damage assessment report to Heritage Malta for them to maintain for future generations.

The now-declassified document offers an insight on the damage sustained by the former HMS Illustrious (R87) and the ingenious way that Maltese dockworkers and British Naval personnel patched her up before she slipped out of Grand Harbour under cover of darkness on January 23 1941.

Ship's personnel enjoyed a guided tour of the museum where they saw artefacts including a model of Bighi's Royal Naval Hospital.

It was Nelson's desire to have a Naval Hospital in Malta, and he personally chose the 17th Century Villa Bichi to house this hospital.

Also viewed was a life-size bronze bust of Admiral Lord Nelson which was sculpted and donated to the Maltese National Collection in 2010 by Anglo-Maltese sculptor Robert Hornyold-Strickland.

Following the guided tour, the damage report documents were presented to Heritage Malta's Chairman Joseph Said.

Torpedo boat by the foot

THE people behind a project to build an operational replica of a Fairmile D motor torpedo boat are offering the chance to fund it by the foot.

The boat, based on the 1944 MTB 718, requires some 36,000 linear feet of planking, and Project 718 has launched its Buy a Plank Fund, through which supporters can 'buy' a foot at a cost of £1, or an entire plank for £17.

Builders will avoid imported mahogany for the 'greener' option of native hardwood – both the hull and deck will be made of larch from Scottish Woods, the trading arm of a charity that promotes the sustainable development of woodland.

Money raised through the plank fund will also count towards the £2 million total needed by the project for 'comparative funding' – releasing money from other sources including European grant funding.

Cheques and postal orders should be made payable to Project 718 and sent to Mr Malcolm Tattersall, Member Project 718, 39 Fairfield, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 6JB.

The original MTB 718 took part in clandestine operations in the Channel during World War 2, and was also part of the Shetland Bus link that transported agents and material between Scotland and occupied Norway.

Belfast launch date celebrated

IF YOU needed another excuse to celebrate St Patrick's Day, March 17 will see the 75th anniversary of the launch of HMS Belfast.

Belfast was the penultimate Town-class light cruiser, built as a pair of improved ('second Town class') ships with sister HMS Edinburgh.

She was launched by the Prime Minister's wife, Anne Chamberlain, at Harland and Wolff in Belfast in 1938 and is now preserved as a museum ship on the Thames near Tower Bridge.

During the weekend of March 16-17 her owners, the Imperial War Museum, will be staging a series of special events and activities to mark the anniversary.

More details will be posted in due course – see www.iwm.org.uk/events/hms-belfast



● On the water in Portsmouth Harbour – from left, AB2 Charlotte 'Charlie' Baxter (HMS Flying Fox), PO MTO Debbie Penman (Vivid), Lt Hannah McKenzie (Wildfire) and LS Anne Marie McCaldon (Scotia)

Weekend workout for MTO

THE Maritime Trade Operations (MTO) branch of the RNR conducted their annual National Training Weekend in Hampshire.

More than 90 Reservists from all over the UK initially deployed to HMS Collingwood in Fareham, where they were put into groups to carry out mission-specific training – the MTO is the interface between the Royal Navy and Merchant Marine which ensures that civil shipping can conduct its trade safely and routinely both close to home in territorial waters and also globally.

The MTO's current main operational output is centred on the UK MTO based in Dubai.

There was a very wide range of activities staged over the weekend, centred on support from offshore patrol vessel HMS Mersey, where traditional seagoing skills and drills were revised and honed ranging from anchoring, man overboard, bridge drills and boat work.

It is essential that all RNR staff, from the most junior to the oldest and boldest, ensure they remain familiar with seagoing routines, and work such as this remains vital to ensure operational capability.

One of the key tasks that took place within Portsmouth Harbour was a Rapid Port Assessment; where a small team undertake a broad assessment of the approaches to a port and the



● HMS Mersey's RIB conducts an exercise with the mother ship

berths, verifying the position of navigational marks.

This demanding task illustrates the immediate effect that the MTO can bring to maritime operations across the globe – gaining access to ports that have unknown approaches can be vital both in normal trade and military operations.

Other activities included a visit by ten personnel to the 154,000-tonne MS Independence of the Seas in Southampton, which was an opportunity for junior officers and commission candidates to go

onboard one of the largest cruise liners in the world.

Other personnel visited a car carrier in the Port of Southampton, with the Ship's Master providing a brief on counter-piracy measures onboard, and there was a visit to Southampton Vessel Traffic Services to understand safe movement of ships within the harbour limits.

The weekend was an essential revision and rehearsal of key tasks that the Royal Navy and civil maritime trade heavily rely on both at home and overseas.

Old boat has Antarctic pedigree

AN OLD boat abandoned in the corner of a yard barely attracted a second glance from people walking by.

But a little bit of prodding – literally as well as figuratively – started to reveal the story hidden beneath its peeling paintwork.

The boat yard proprietor had suggested a revamp of the old work launch, so off came the covers to reveal a 28ft mahogany double-diagonal RN ship's boat.

After the initial shipwright talk, scratching of heads and pushing of screwdrivers into soft timbers, the conversation turned to her history.

Brian Edmonds, the owner, had bought her from Pembroke Port Authority some years previously to help with the laying of moorings at Lawrenny Yacht Station, near Milford Haven in Pembrokeshire.

It came to light that the old launch had been one of three ship's boats on the Antarctic Patrol Ship HMS Protector.

Quite often the service history



of the less-glamorous workhorses of the Navy are all the more surprising, with Protector being a good case in point.

She was laid down on the Clyde in the 1930s with sister ship, HMS Guardian, for fast anti-submarine net-laying in open waters.

But the use of nets to detect submarines was already being

superseded early in the war by electronic surveillance measures such as asdic and hydrophones, which freed these relatively-fast and spacious ships for other roles.

Protector was involved in the Norwegian campaign carrying troops, and went on to patrol with ships of the Australian Navy searching for Vichy French

transports bound for Beirut.

As the tide of war turned with Allied victories in North Africa, Protector transported over 1,000 Italian prisoners of war from Bardia to Alexandria.

Whilst in Suez she was badly-damaged by an air-launched torpedo, and was towed to Bombay where she languished, awaiting new turbines, until the end of hostilities.

After a brief spell as a training ship she went into refit at Devonport, emerging as an Antarctic survey vessel and guardship to the Falkland Dependencies.

She made more than a dozen trips to the Southern Ocean, but by the end of the 1960s she was no longer needed, and was scrapped in 1970.

Much of her equipment was removed, along with her ships boats, which were put to work on the waterways of Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock.

Ice ship's bell loaned to Chatham

THE ship's bell from a former ice patrol ship has been loaned to Chatham Historic Dockyard.

The bell is mounted adjacent to a model of the former HMS Endurance, though the name on it is 'Anita Dan 1956' – because Anita Dan was the Danish general cargo vessel bought by the Navy in the 1960s and converted to fly the White Ensign in the South Atlantic and around Antarctica, where she supported scientific studies.

The icebreaker spent the first decade or so of her life with the Lauritzen Line, which saw her ply her trade into and out of London.

And the shipping line had a favoured river pilot.

"My late uncle, John Allen, was the first-choice dock pilot for the J Lauritzen ships arriving and departing on the River Thames," said David Walter.

When the ship was sold to the Royal Navy in 1967 he was presented with the ship's bell for his service to J Lauritzen.

"John Allen died in 1985 and the bell passed to his nephew, my cousin George Allen, for safekeeping.

"George Allen now feels that the bell should be on show for all to see.

"Considering that the ship became the Chatham-based HMS Endurance, we are honoured to be able to present it to the Historic Dockyard Chatham for long-term loan."

George and his aunt Jean Allen – John's widow – were also at Chatham for the presentation.

The Red Plum was based in Kent until Chatham closed in 1984, when she moved to Portsmouth until decommissioning in 1991.



● Admiral Sir Ian Garnett and Jean Allen with the bell of the Anita Dan at Chatham Historic Dockyard

Sherwood reservists go green

NOTTINGHAM Reservists were amongst those who took part in the Crowborough Challenge (as reported in last month's *Navy News*).

The men and women of HMS Sherwood swapped their usual blue uniforms for green combat fatigues when they took part in a national Command, Leadership and Management competition in Sussex.

During the weekend the sailors lived in field conditions – surviving on personal ration packs, sleeping outdoors in makeshift shelters and wearing camouflage fatigues, combat boots and berets.

"Wearing this uniform and carrying bergens, most people would probably mistake us for British Army soldiers," said AB Locke, an engineer at Rolls Royce in Derby.

"Life in a blue suit often also involves wearing green, and this is the proper Royal Navy uniform for operating in this environment."

The ten Nottingham reservists, spread across three teams, quickly forged good working relationships with other reservists from across the country, and all three teams that included Sherwood's 'sailors in green' put in strong performances.

All finished in the first eight, with one team taking third place.

AB Richard Cooke, a primary school teacher, was in the third-placed team.

"The days were long, but we worked as a team to keep each other going and the weekend was very rewarding," he said.

"For me the highlight was having to build a seven-man raft in only ten minutes – and then use it on a lake as part of the leadership task."

Another Sherwood reservist was recognised for her performance during the weekend.

AB Sarah Newby was presented with an award for her all-round consistent performance in both leadership and followership throughout the weekend.

"This award was a complete surprise," said AB Newby.

"I was enjoying using the command, leadership and management skills I've learnt as a member of the Royal Naval Reserve and was not expecting a prize."

Command, leadership and management training is an important part of the professional development of all RNR officers and ratings, from which civilian employers benefit hugely.

Research endorsed by the Chartered Management Institute has found that if civilian employers were to pay for training to deliver equivalent employee development to that gained by Reservists during their initial training it would cost them in the order of £1,650 for ratings and £20,500 for officers.

Lynx attracts attention at exhibition

A FLEET Air Arm Lynx helicopter ventured deep into the heart of England to represent the Royal Navy at a model exhibition.

The Yeovilton-based Lynx Mk8 flew to Telford in Shropshire for the International Scale Model World Exhibition as part of an ongoing arrangement with Airfix over the launch of their new model of the Mk8.

But the trip was not only aimed at the model-buying public who frequent the exhibition – more than 300 children up to the age of 17 also enjoyed the opportunity to take a close look at an operational Navy aircraft.

815 Naval Air Squadron's Operations Officer Lt Cdr Toby Clay said: "It was an excellent opportunity to showcase the Lynx and give a small flavour of what maritime aviation is all about to a part of the country seldom exposed to the role of the Royal Navy."

The 815 NAS team also managed to raise £260 for the Fly Navy Heritage Trust from sales at the show.

Shadows and dust

THE head of the Navy paid a flying visit to the front line to see the progress the Royal Marines of 40 Commando are making after two months in Afghanistan.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope flew into Main Operating Base Price – renamed HMS Price by the green berets – in Nahr-e-Saraj in central Helmand, the hub of 40 Commando's mission during their six-month tour of duty on Operation Herrick 17.

The admiral was in Afghanistan to gauge the Royal Navy's footprint in the country as well as to receive a first-hand update on operations and the transition process.

While at HMS Price he took lunch with commandos of all ranks before receiving an update from 40's Commanding Officer, Lt Col Matt Jackson.

"I was delighted to have visited 40 Commando at HMS Price where it was clear they were conducting tasks with zeal and working with a calm sense of purpose," said Admiral Stanhope.

"Their assured professionalism was palpable and I left extremely confident of the team's ability to deliver their mission and overcome future challenges.

"The contribution that the Royal Marines are making to the security of Helmand Province is essential to coalition plans and they have made an impressive start to their deployment. The Afghans could have no better mentors in imbuing the confidence they require to take responsibility for their own security."

This is the seventh time the Navy's elite amphibious infantry have deployed to Afghanistan on Herrick duties going back to 2006 – either as the lead British force in the theatre, or, as in 40 Commando's case, working under an Army brigade.

HMS Price, and surrounding locations in central Helmand, are home to some 650 men and women of 40 Commando who began their tour of duty in September.

The marines' mission is to increasingly become a supporting unit for Afghan National Security Forces as part of the drawdown of International Security Assistance Force in the country.

"40 Commando were delighted to see

the First Sea Lord at HMS Price in Central Helmand; that he was able to take time out of his busy schedule to visit was a real statement of intent that was not lost on us," said Lt Col Jackson.

"It was great to be able to tell him about the significant progress that has been made in Central Helmand and to detail the involvement by UK servicemen and women, and specifically the Royal Marines, deployed on Operations Herrick five, seven, nine, 12, 14 and now 17. A UK presence has helped the Afghan National Security Forces take a lead in the country's security."

Lt Col Jackson's battlegroup comprises six Royal Marines companies – Alpha, Bravo, Charlie, Delta, Command and Logistics – plus one 1st Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles (Delhi Company) and an armoured infantry company, including a troop of Leopard 2 tanks from the Danish Jutland Dragoon Regiment (Viking Company). All are supported by various British Army personnel and units.

Of these seven companies, only three are actively involved in operations: Bravo in the south of the district, Alpha and Viking working out of Price.

The remaining three companies form what are known as Advisor Team Enabling Companies, which work alongside Afghan security forces, helping them to build up their expertise ahead of the formal transfer of all authority in 2014.

To that end the ranges at HMS Price are heavily in use by the ever-growing Afghan Local Police, whose three-week training course ends with seven days tutelage with the commandos, who share their expertise in marksmanship and weapon handling.

The latest batch of newly-qualified police officers – the second in a month – passed out at District Police Headquarters in Gereshk in mid-December.

The course comprises two weeks' instruction in the classroom, delivered by the Afghan Uniform Police who teach policing, military and counter-improvised

explosive device skills.

The Afghan Uniform Police – easily recognisable by their gunmetal-blue uniforms – are the national law enforcement agency.

Afghan Local Police, or ALP, wear a khaki uniform and are a local police force drawn from the local area – much like community support officers in the UK.

Capt Lee Piper RM, the ALP Liaison Officer with 40 Commando, explained the role of the newly-qualified officers:

"These 12 Afghan Local Policemen completing training improves security because it will basically provide security for the local villagers. They have intimate knowledge of the local area for the Afghan National Police."

This was the second graduation ceremony in the past month. "It shows that training of the local police has come a long way," said Capt Kristian Hansen, the Afghan National Security Forces Development Officer with the Danish Army based at HMS Price.

"It's now organised and taking place on a regular basis thus making the ALP a better and more coherent security force."

The newly-graduated officers will now man check points in southern Nahr-e-Saraj... which in many cases are designed and built by locals.

Another prominent sign of the impending handover of security responsibility is the construction of Orthodox Builds Earthworks (OBEs) across central Helmand.

"These OBEs are made of mud and bricks," explains Maj Fabrice Landragin, Officer Commanding the Military Stabilisation Support Team, based at MOB Price.

"Because these are the traditional material for building in Afghanistan and have proven to be resistant to the weather and any kind of weapon – the Afghans have been building mud walls for thousands of years – they are the experts."

"They also fit better into the landscape than the check points which we use."

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





There is a fifth dimension, beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension where 'hoofin' and 'chad' replace perfectly acceptable words for 'good' and 'bad', a dimension where middle-aged men with dubious moustaches are not Freddie Mercury impersonators, but senior NCOs, a dimension where you don't need a naturist beach to strip off, no, the ship's mess is perfectly fine after a few tinnies. It is the middle ground between men and Gods, between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his bravery. This is the dimension of unbreakable brotherhood. It is an area which we call

the green beret zone



BUT before you enter, you have to earn it – and they don't give that beret away lightly...

No. It takes 32 weeks to produce a Royal Marines Commando. Fifteen months if you're an officer.

There is no tougher 'basic' training – turning a civilian into a soldier, sailor or airman – in any armed force in the world.

Only then you pass can you call yourself a Royal Marines Commando.

Only then you can put on that coveted beret – and wear it with pride.

Once Royal, always Royal.

The latest batch of men who would lead the Navy's elite amphibious infantry were awarded that badge of honour only last month – and only after a rigorous final exercise played out from the shores of north Devon to the woods of Argyll: Exercise Final Nail.

The goal: to determine whether these men could be junior commando leaders – ready to direct the actions of a troop of Royal Marines in any

situation at sea or on land.

Some 30 would-be officers, under the direction of the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines in Lympstone, Devon, had reached this stage of their instruction.

The exercise was spread over four different training areas, each demanding different tactical considerations. The exercise began with a troop amphibious beach assault at Braunton Burrows in north Devon.

The trainees then shifted to the west coast of Scotland to conduct a company attack on an airfield, before carrying out riverine operations in Galloway Forest.

Final Nail moved even further north for the climax of the exercise: amphibious raids around Ardgartan at the tip of Loch Long and the surrounding woods of Argyll Forest Park, followed by a final attack: a simultaneous company-led assault on hill-top enemy positions, set against the spectacular backdrop of Gare Loch.

Throughout the exercise, the young officers had fully-trained

green berets to work with – and their kit: offshore and inflatable raiding craft from 10 Training Squadron RM, experienced mountain leaders advising on vertical assaults, and marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group to form a company for the larger-scale manoeuvres in the forest.

"Exercise Final Nail was not only designed to test the military skills gained by our young Royal Marines officers, but also to reaffirm their interpersonal, communication and management skills required to become efficient and effective leaders of men – in particular to command Royal Marine Commandos," said senior training officer Maj Tony Hulse.

SO WHERE are you likely to end up as a newly-commissioned Royal Marines officer?

Not California. Not this batch anyway.

No Final Nail came too late for these men to join 42 Commando in the Mojave for six weeks of intensive all-action, fires of Hell.

We left 42 last month in the

early stages of Exercise Black Alligator at Twentynine Palms in southern California (where there are no alligators, black or otherwise, but there are poisonous snakes and spiders) basically blasting the bejesus out of the ranges...

...and this past month has found 42 blasting even more of the bejesus out of the US Marine Corps' Air-Ground Combat Center at Twentynine Palms, 932 square miles of desert/mountainous terrain (that's nearly twice the size of Greater Manchester) a couple of hours' drive outside Los Angeles.

The size and remoteness of the Twentynine Palms ranges means the Royals were able to unleash firepower on a much greater scale than back in the UK.

After getting used to the desert climate – even in late October when they arrived, temperatures were above 30°C by day, although by early December they'd dropped to the low to mid 20s – the commandos moved up from small-scale

Continued on page 22





Continued from page 21

manoeuvres and attacks, through urban combat in a replica Middle Eastern town and the final all-out assault.

In preparation for their final exercise, Mike Company worked with the same Merlin helicopter that would drop them deep into the training area to kick off their final assaults.

"I hadn't done this level of attack before so it was interesting to see the size of it - we'd been working from pairs upwards, building it up gradually," said Mne Felix Melligan.

"To be on such a huge range is something that's really welcomed by the lads. We were all pretty excited about coming out here and it has been really good.

"We really mixed it up - live modern urban combat, then going back to section and troop level attacks.

"It definitely kept us on top of our skills, that's for sure."

And so, with the moon still high over the Mojave and the sun struggling to bring light and warmth to the desert, the men of 42 Commando, charged across the sand - and six weeks of training reached their climax.

After a night raid on enemy

positions in the hills at Twentynine Palms - when star shells from the Bickleigh-based marines' mortar troop bathed the rugged terrain in an ethereal light - the commandos stormed Objective Ruby, a heavily fortified mock-up town.

The training in California is a big step down the path to the 42 lads taking over from their Scottish comrades in 45 Commando as the nation's Lead Commando Group.

Each of the three commando infantry units which comprise 3 Commando Brigade - 40, 42 and 45 Commandos - take it in turns to be the formation which is on-call to respond to global events should the government require the Royal Navy's elite amphibious troops.

The Bickleigh boys are due to relieve 45 in May.

MEANWHILE, 100 miles to the south...

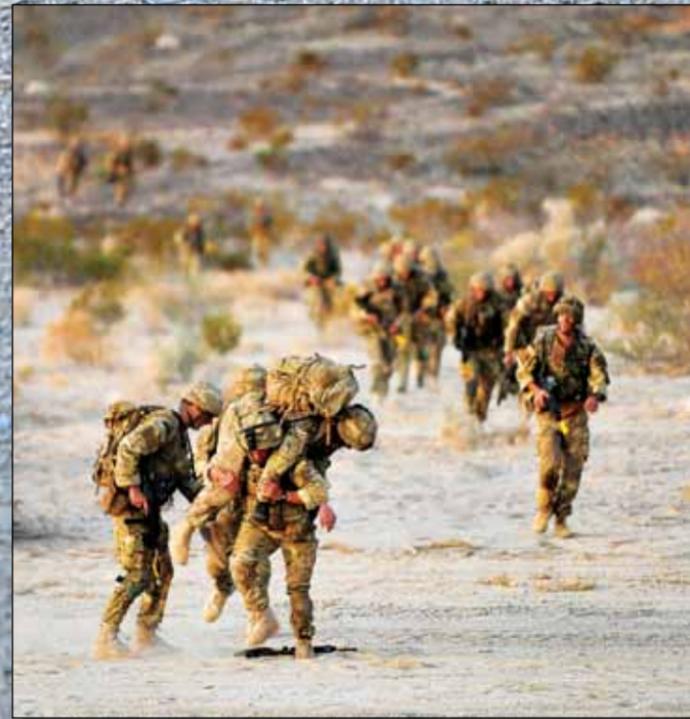
The Commando fliers of 847 Naval Air Squadron completed their desert training, ready to deploy to Afghanistan this month in support of their green beret comrades on the ground.

Any day now, the Lynx Mk9A will be back in the skies of Helmand, aiding the mission of 40 Commando among others.

To prepare for the 'hot and high' experience of Helmand in summer - and 'cold and high' in winter - four Lynx Mk9As, plus air and crew, were flown 6,000 miles from home at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset to El Centro in southern California.

Although El Centro itself is actually below sea level, the environment of the Colorado Desert (named after the eponymous river which flows 50 or so miles to the east) and the close proximity of the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains means conditions are similar to those 847 will experience in Helmand: hot and dusty on the plains, cold and snowy among the mountains.

The other benefit of using Naval Air Station El Centro, like Twentynine Palms, is its vast ranges - where crews can blast away with live ordnance. There's





nothing comparable in the UK.

It gave 847's door gunners the chance to hone their airborne marksmanship with the 0.5 inch M3M Browning, a weapon that has a longer range, greater accuracy and can fire multi-role ammunition, making it a marked improvement on the 7.62mm General Purpose Machine Gun it replaces.

The squadron also managed to squeeze in some mutual training with 42 Commando.

"The training in the USA provided the squadron with the essential fighting skills required when they deploy to Afghanistan in January," said 847's senior pilot Lt Cdr Graeme Spence.

"We've all appreciated the quality of the training that El Centro provided. The challenging conditions at the base tested many of the Junglies' skills and,

from an aircrew perspective, were able to understand how they and their aircraft performed in the intense hot and dusty environment."

The month-long spell in southern California wasn't all about work. Squadron personnel got involved in a community project handing out food packages to struggling local families. And there was a chance for some down time in San Diego, just 90 miles away, which proved to be an excellent run ashore and allowed every man to recharge some very weary batteries.

Which was needed because returning the aircraft and support equipment to the UK proved to be a challenge for the 847 engineers.

were flown to and from California in specially-chartered Antonov transporters - the third largest cargo planes in the world.

The Russian-built jets can carry up to 150 tons of cargo - which in theory means over 40 Lynx in weight, but given their size and delicate nature, it was enough of a task fitting all four helicopters in the gigantic Antonov's hold.

With considerable precision and skill, the technicians managed to gently manoeuvre their treasured aircraft into the available space ready for the return flight.





My mind's eye view of Malta

WHAT a truly splendid front page to your December issue – the perfect association: Malta and the Royal Navy. And what memories it recalls!

I first arrived in Malta in January 1944 in the Algerine Class fleet minesweeper HMS Spanker.

On entering Grand Harbour we moored alongside the grounded hulk of the famous tanker Ohio and later proceeded to French Creek which was packed with other British warships.

During the following two-and-a-half years we were often in and out of Malta and always pleased

to reach its warm and friendly security.

More recently, my wife and I have holidayed in Malta for many years, but only very rarely have had the pleasure of seeing a British warship.

Malta has seen many changes but its historical atmosphere is still very much in evidence.

Each time I gaze across its many creeks it is, in my mind's eye, filled with HM ships.

Thanks for the memory!

– Mike Alston, Hon Sec, HMS Middleton (L74) Association, Maidenhead, Berks

Farlow family feature

I WONDER if any of your readers can solve a 40-year-old mystery?

In about 1972, on duty overnight in 'the tunnel' at Northwood, I came across a magazine which dealt with Naval and tri-Service matters.

As my mother's maiden name was Farlow, my eye was caught by an article entitled *The Naval Farlows*.

It told the remarkable story of three brothers who all joined the Navy as they reached the age of 14 in the 1870s and 1880s.

All three then rose 'the hard way' via senior rate, warrant and commissioned ranks, and all three retired as lieutenant commanders – an astonishing achievement in Victorian/Edwardian times.

In the centre of the page was a photograph of these three naval

brothers and a non-naval one, flanking their elderly mother.

The lady was my great-grandmother, and the three naval brothers were my great-uncles William, Frederick and Harry; I knew them all well.

The fourth brother, medically unfit for the Navy, was my grandfather Sidney; he worked in the Armament Depot at Bull Point.

Editors of *The Naval Review* and members of the Historical Branch in Portsmouth have tried to trace this article, but without success. What a pity photocopyers weren't freely available in the early 1970s!

Please can any of your readers help?

– Cdr D W Besley (Ret'd), Penn, Bucks



A Broader naval training

I REALISE we have not got enough ships to do the tasks, but thought your readers may like to see this picture taken on the Norfolk Broads last September,

which illustrates the lengths they have to go to to get command training and sea time.

– Mike Waddleton, Locks Heath, Hants

Opinion

EACH of the Armed Forces has chosen key actions from World War 2 to commemorate as a marquee 70th anniversary.

For the Royal Navy, that action is the Battle of the Atlantic – a protracted, grim struggle in cold grey waters with the survival of the nation at stake.

The Battle of the Atlantic was the longest campaign of the conflict, beginning on the evening war was declared in Europe when the liner *Athena* was sunk and ending with the destruction of the Norwegian freighter *Sneland* and the British ship *Avondale Park* on the day the Germans signed the act of surrender in May 1945.

It claimed the lives of some 36,000 merchant seamen, and in the first half of the war U-boats threatened to strangle the British war effort – Churchill said the battle was "the dominant factor all through the war. Never for one moment could we forget that everything happening elsewhere, on land, at sea, or in the air, depended ultimately on its outcome."



● Perhaps the defining image of a kamikaze attack... Sailors in HMS Formidable deal with the aftermath of a suicide raid on May 4 1945

Formidable memories

I FELT I had to write to you regarding the 90th birthday visit to HMS Victory for my dad, Tom Day (*Letters*, November).

After our journey, as a special treat we were very kindly taken to the staff's private bar, where we met the captain.

Settled at the bar, Dad and his friend were reintroduced to a glass of Pusser's Rum and the topic of conversation soon quickly turned to World War 2.

The captain asked Dad which ships he had served on and whether he saw any action.

Dad mentioned that he was aboard the aircraft carrier HMS Formidable when she was hit by a kamikaze for the second time in five days on May 4 and 9 1945.

Hoping to elaborate on this, the Captain went off to fetch the Navy's 'Bible' *The Royal Navy Day by Day*.

He looked up the date and both were amazed that there was no mention of the kamikaze attacks. Needless to say Dad was embarrassed by this, especially in front of the captain!

He went home and dug out from his books etc all the information he could find and sent it to the captain – an education from a WW2 disabled veteran!

No mention was made in the 'Bible' after VE day. This is a grave injustice to the many men killed and wounded during this time, it's almost as though after VE Day nothing more happened!

How will coming generations remember and respect the brave men killed and wounded in conflicts during World War 2 after VE day?

The British Pacific Fleet was the biggest ever assembled and was in action right up to the Japanese surrender on September 2, 1945.

Interestingly, shortly after our visit the captain met a fellow officer whose father was present on May 9 1945 and remembers the actions.

Dad would be very interested to know if any of the sailors on board HMS Formidable at that time may also have an opinion on this and contribute to *Navy News* or perhaps contact him, you never know!

– P J Geary, Poole, Dorset

...I WAS interested to read Tom Day's letter (November) about the rescue of survivors by HMS Birmingham (which incidentally is my home town) and the subsequent misuse, as a toilet, of the rum tub by those who were picked up.

Tom's story about the water being poured into the tub prior to the addition of the neat stuff does not coincide with my recollection of the procedure, since, when I was on destroyers in the war, to my recollection, we were served neat rum while at sea, and only when we got ashore, in barracks, was the rum issue watered down, three parts water to one part rum.

I seem to recall that we had the choice of taking the tot of rum, or being paid threepence in lieu.

And Tom had it right – I too cannot recall anyone refusing the tot, which I understand was eliminated in the early 1970s, no doubt to the disgust of all who treasured their daily dose of Jamaican nectar, which was so strong that it made one's eyes water when sipping it from the usual thick mug.

And if you had the afternoon watch, especially with earphones on, it was very difficult to stay awake.

My very best wishes to Tom. I am jealous of his invitation to HMS Victory, and would have dearly loved to have been with him.

We are few in numbers now, Tom, but we have proud memories of a time when we were young and serving our country.

– Ken Tipper, Ocala, Florida

...HAVING served as First Lieutenant of HMS Victory for six years between 1981 and 1986, I felt that the public were asking an enormous number of questions about the Great Guns which were not covered by any single authoritative document.

The first booklet was published in 1985 and having retired with not a lot to do, I decided to re-examine the booklet and make some corrections before issuing it again.

The booklet is on sale in Waterlooville Library, Hampshire, One Tree bookshop in Petersfield, and New to You bookshop in Cosham High Street at £3.99 and can be obtained by post from 'Books' at 136, Hazleton Way, Horndean, Hants, PO8 9DP at £4.20 each.

– Michael Prior

We checked our copies of *The Navy Day by Day* and indeed in the earlier editions, there is no mention of the Kamikaze attacks on Formidable. However, in the later versions, including the most recent one, published in 2011 and edited by Lt Cdr Lawrie Phillips, there is an entry for May 4 1945 with the photo (above) which shows the flight deck of HMS Formidable after being hit by the aircraft – Man Ed.

Drafty's a gem

IT IS now 40 years since I left the Navy and I have only recently read a couple of copies of *Navy News*.

In my day there was always half a page of 'swap drafts,' Pompey ratings wanting Guzz, and vice versa.

And there was the other type, matelots who on no account wanted to go to sea, which always seemed strange to me.

In the December edition, I noticed three 'swap drafts,' all from HMS Diamond.

She wouldn't by any chance be leaving harbour, would she?

– G Rutherford, Chellaston, Derby

Swallow flies west

I READ the letter (November) about bringing back names from the past, ie Black Swan Class.

I was the Senior Naval Overseer based in Hall Russell Ltd Shipyard, Aberdeen, in the 1980s where the following patrol ships were built for the Royal Navy in Hong Kong: HMS Peacock, Plover, Starling, Swallow and Swift.

I left this area in 1983 on completion of Peacock. The last two ships were sold to Ireland at about the time Hong Kong was handed back to China.

In 2011 at the Tall Ships race in Greenock, I saw an Irish ship, name unknown, but formerly Swallow or Swift.

The whereabouts of the other ships of the Peacock Class would need some research in *Jane's Fighting Ships*.

– Jim Jarvie, Dunfermline, Fife

Reunited by numbers

FURTHER to the letters (November) from C H Saunders and Gerry Gerhard regarding official numbers, the change to SS on transfer to a seven and five engagement was peculiar to those with J as the second letter and I should have included this in my letter.

However, I can't remember why this was so, but then there are lots of things I can't remember these days.

Nevertheless, some good has come out of writing the letter, as two former shipmates have been in touch as a result, one that I served with in HMS Liverpool and I've not seen since 1952, and the second was in HMS Dolphin in 1969 when I was the Pay Office Chief Writer.

– Joe Dolman, Eagle, Lincs

E-type frigate

IF the Type 26 ships are an E-class, may I propose Egeria as a candidate?

HMS Egeria was a sister ship of the Inshore Survey Vessels Echo and Enterprise and I was her first CO.

The name has an honourable history within the Royal Navy and a predecessor was particularly active in the Indian and Pacific Oceans.

– Lt Cdr Tony Fletcher, Beech Hill, Berks

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CLASSIC JACK

BY TUGG



My pride in Pedestal

I WAS a midshipman in HMS Kenya during the Pedestal Malta Convoy in August 1942.

My action station was on the bridge, where I spent the best part of four days and four nights without a break.

I thus refer to my former shipmate PO John Suddaby's comments (*A tough couple of days*, page 14, September). He does not mention a far more important problem than the bombs.

This was that just after 2100hrs the yeoman on the bridge reported a periscope in sight on the port side, at which the Captain immediately ordered: "Port 30."

No sooner had he done this than we saw torpedo tracks coming straight towards us – although the course alteration was probably sufficient to have saved our bacon.

The first torpedo blew our bows off, but the second and third happily passed underneath our ship, their tracks clearly visible to us, and the fourth passed harmlessly astern.

Our speed temporarily was reduced to 10 knots, but the damage control parties soon made a splendid job of shoring up the first bulkhead behind the damage.

We then resumed station, the Convoy Commodore asking our captain what his intentions were. The reply was: "The convoy proceeds to Malta."

Kenya was asked, because when HMS Nigeria was torpedoed the night before, the Admiral transferred himself and a few of his staff to the destroyer Ashanti.

He then initially occupied himself rounding up any stragglers and sending them back to their proper places in the convoy.

He then took Ashanti back into Nigeria's original position and signalled all that he had retaken command of the convoy.

Of the other cruisers in the close escort, both Manchester (torpedoed and then scuttled) and Cairo had been sunk the day before.

Having transferred the surviving three ships of the convoy to the local Malta forces on reaching the entrance to the searched channel to Malta, we turned back for Gibraltar with the remnants of the original escort.

Speed was increased gradually to test our temporary repairs to the bow – Kenya now being the main target for the Axis Air and Coastal Forces (E-boats at night in the narrow channel we had to pass back through) and any U-boats.

In fact, Malta actually received five of the original 14 merchant ships, as Brisbane Star turned up there under her own steam, and the famous and vital tanker Ohio was towed in by two destroyers with the third secured astern to steer her.

Despite our damage, we managed to get up to 25 knots and once touched 27 during yet another air raid – as the only surviving cruiser we were now the main target.

This speed sent a continuous wave over the bridge, soaking us through!

We were very relieved when we got through the narrow channel and met up with the covering force comprising the big ships of Force H and their escorts.

Even here there was only one aircraft carrier left, and she was badly damaged.

However, on August 15 1942, we safely reached Gibraltar and had temporary repairs done in dry dock there for two days before sailing back with the main force for the UK.

Those repairs lasted until we hit the first big Atlantic wave, but our own temporary repairs stood the test of time and we returned safely to Scapa Flow.

Here, as we entered harbour, every ship in the Home Fleet we passed at anchor cleared lower deck and cheered Kenya as she went past.

That was probably the proudest moment of my naval career.

– Lt Cdr C F T Poynder, Castel, Guernsey

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

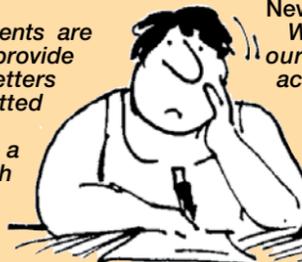
have the permission for us to publish it.

Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in Navy News, nor can we reply to every one.

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.



Fungi job no fun for chef

IN SUPPORT of M R Golding's letter about mushrooms (December), I first encountered this phenomenon when I was a junior stoker serving in HMS Reggio on the Malta Station in 1956.

Whenever we had any dish which included mushrooms in the recipe, there were never whole mushrooms, just the stalks.

At one time I mentioned it to one of the chefs and the answer given was that "that was the way they came packed, 'Mushroom Tops' (officers) or 'Mushroom Stalks' (ratings)."

How true this was I don't know, but could anyone see a chef picking his way through a box of frozen mushrooms and separating the tops from the stalks?

This demarcation was evident for a long while, probably along with others which we did not spot because we did not know any better.

Anyway, at that time we had to be satisfied with our lot.

John W Sexton,
ex FCMEMN(P)
Walton-le-Dale, Preston, Lancs



Twice-blessed Dragon

I WONDER if any of your readers has spotted the somewhat novel situation appertaining to HMS Dragon?

Her motto, quoted in *Navy News* (November) is "We yield but to St George" – presumably to the patron saint of England.

However, in the same article her affiliated city is quoted as Cardiff which is the capital of Wales and whose patron saint is St David.

Surely with two patron saints to watch over her HMS Dragon will have many a long and happy commission!

– J Gordon Jones,
Wenvoe, Cardiff



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● Mid Miles Amery, holding his great-grandfather's sword, with father CPO Bill Amery
Picture: LA(Phot) Rob Gillies

Father's pride at parade

ALL eyes were on Prime Minister David Cameron when he took the salute at Britannia Royal Naval College as almost 70 cadets completed the newly-enhanced Initial Naval Training Course for Officers at the end of last year.

But one instructor was also keeping a close watch on one of the fledgling officers – his son.

Because amongst those on parade was Mid Miles Amery, whose father CPO Bill Amery has been passing on his experience to Officer Cadets for six years.

Mid Amery said: "Completing the maritime leadership exercise on the River Dart was one of the most enthralling weeks of the course."

"It was challenging, hard work, we were sleep-deprived, but overall it was great fun."

"Passing the exercise and being assessed as strong was a huge highlight of training."

CPO Amery, who has served in the RN for nearly 36 years, said: "To be able to stand alongside my son at his passing out parade is the proudest day of my life."

"Our family's union with the Royal Navy goes back many generations."

"To be able to present my grandfather's naval sword to him was a unique moment."

"Miles has an exciting, challenging and rewarding career ahead of him. Needless to say, I shall be following his every move with envy."

"My only hope is that I don't have to bump into him every day and have to salute and call him sir!"

40 years flying, 333 days aloft

WO1 JOHN Sheldon has just notched up 40 years of military aviation – and he is not finished yet.

Capt Matt Briers, the Commanding Officer Commando Helicopter Force (CHF), greeted WO Sheldon, a Royal Navy Aircrewman, as he arrived in his tiger-striped Sea King helicopter to celebrate his 40th anniversary.

A member of the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch, John is an aircrewman instructor on 848 Naval Air Squadron, based at RNAS Yeovilton, and is responsible for ensuring his student aircrewmen are ready for the rigours of life on a front-line Jungle squadron.

John was just 15 years of age when he joined the Royal Navy in 1968 as an aircraft technician, but after four years on the 'shop floor' he decided life as a Rating Aircrew, as they were known at the time, would be more exciting.

After completing his flying training in 1972 he joined his first Jungle squadron, flying the Wessex helicopter.

Within 18 months he was deployed on his first operational mission in the clear blue skies of Cyprus as his squadron played a vital role in the evacuation of UK citizens from the island following the invasion by Turkish troops.

Before John celebrated with



a bottle of bubbly (above), Capt Briers thanked him for his dedication throughout his distinguished career and commented on the variety of John's operational deployments.

He also presented John with a letter of congratulations from Rear Admiral Russ Harding, Rear Admiral Fleet Air Arm, and with a framed sketch picture of all the aircraft John has flown in his career.

John's wife Cathy was also able to attend the celebrations

along with their sons Kieran and Simon.

Kieran, a Major in the Royal Artillery, is due to follow in his father's footsteps when he deploys to Afghanistan next year, whilst Simon is a teacher at a school near Crewkerne.

Cathy and John have lived in Yeovilton village for a number of years and have an excellent view through their kitchen window as the aircraft operate from the Somerset airfield.

John, who has recently logged

his 8,000th flying hour – that is over 333 days in the air – is a veteran of numerous conflicts, from the Falklands to Afghanistan.

He has also flown every type of UK military helicopter, has spent time with the RAF, and has evaluated new and experimental aircraft at Boscombe Down.

John was pleased to be recognised, saying: "I really enjoy my job and it's great to be surrounded by a bunch of professional people who look forward to coming to work."

Training bases put their heads together



THE new Commanding Officers of the three main sites responsible for the initial training of recruits to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines have begun a series of get-togethers to understand the complexities of each task.

Capt Bob Fancy, the CO of HMS Raleigh, Capt Jerry Kyd, who commands Britannia Royal Naval College, and Col Dave Kassapian, the Commandant of the Commando Training Centre Royal Marines, were appointed to head up their respective establishments between September

● From left, Capt Jerry Kyd, Col Dave Kassapian and Capt Bob Fancy on the bridge of HMS Brecon at HMS Raleigh

and October 2012.

The series of meetings began with a visit to Raleigh, where Capt Fancy showed his fellow COs the range of training provided both to new rating recruits and specialists.

At BRNC, Capt Kyd briefed the COs on the changes made to the initial naval training course for officers, while the visit to CTCRM took place as *Navy News* went to press.

Due to changes in the Flag Officer Sea Training organisation, the heads of all three establishments now report to Brig Ged Salzano, Commander Initial Naval and RM Training.

The meetings are designed to share ideas and work together to plan a coherent future for training.

Herrons at Heron

THINGS are getting a little complicated at RN Air Station Yeovilton in recent times.

Because there are now two Herrons serving at HMS Heron, and they are the third generation of Herrons to serve in dark blue.

LA(Phot) Abbie Herron (right of picture) has been joined at the Somerset airfield by little sister LWtr Becky Herron – the first time the pair have served at the same establishment or unit.

Abbie joined in 2004 aged 20 as a dental surgery assistant, but is now Yeovilton's photographer, having transferred to the branch in 2008.

Becky joined the Senior Service in 2006 aged 18 as a writer, and is responsible for dealing with personnel matters on the base.

Past drafts included HMS Illustrious, Chicksands and Afghanistan, while Abbie has had recent deployments off Libya, in the Middle East and in Iceland.

"I absolutely love working here with Abbie," said Becky. "It's so



nice being close to each other as we are very close as sisters."

Abbie said: "I would never have thought that I would have done so much already since joining as a dental assistant."

"I thought it would be teeth all the way, but changing to the photographic branch has quite literally opened up a whole new world."

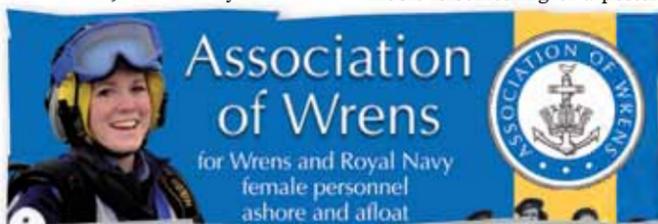
Abbie is something of a poster

girl – she features on forms and flyers for the Association of Wrens, of which she and Becky are members (below left).

The Herron heritage began with granddad Norman serving in both the Merchant and Royal Navies, followed by his son Mick, who was a Royal Marine for 28 years, serving in HMS Glamorgan, Eskimo, and the Royal Yacht.

The family's Naval connection extended to others including their Uncle Glyn, who served on HMS Ark Royal IV – almost three decades later his niece Abbie was aboard Ark Royal V as she decommissioned in 2010.

The sisters' older brother Jon is an engineering officer in the Merchant Navy, and mum Gill runs the officers' bar at RM Poole.



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People InBrief

AN old tourist information office outside Portsmouth Historic Dockyard has been turned into a naval bookshop and maritime art gallery.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel cut the ribbon to open the shop, a joint venture between publisher Mike Critchley and Julia Pankhurst, who pursued her art while running a hair salon in the naval base.

Former Naval officer Mike Critchley is the owner of Cornish-based Maritime Books.

THE head of the American Military Sealift Command – the equivalent of the UK's Royal Fleet Auxiliary – visited the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood as part of a country-wide tour to see how the RFA links with the Royal Navy.

Rear Admiral Mark H Buzby also visited HMS Raleigh, HMS Sultan and Navy Command HQ in Portsmouth.

THE University of Hertfordshire has awarded Cdr Sarah West an honorary degree in recognition of her achievement in becoming the first woman to command a major Royal Navy warship – HMS Portland.

Cdr West adds the honorary Doctor of Science degree to the first class mathematics degree she gained from Hertfordshire before she joined the Royal Navy in 1995.

ONE of the most experienced pilots serving in UK waters has retired after 41 years.

One of the highlights in the career of Chief Admiralty Pilot Joe Lovelady was overseeing the planning, training and execution of the movement of the Trident missile submarines into Plymouth for their refits – a challenging manoeuvre with only a metre clearance at some points.

Joe also supervised the sinking of the former HMS Scylla as an artificial reef in Whitsand Bay.

WORKERS at Tall Trees Community Centre in Ilchester have received the prestigious Queen's Award for Voluntary Service for their work supporting Naval families associated with Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton.

The Naval Area Community Organisation (NACO) Volunteer Project for the South West, which has 91 volunteers on the books, is part of the Naval Personal and Family Service and Royal Marines Welfare, and is funded by the Royal British Legion.

CHILDREN at a Havant school were excited when a Royal Navy Lynx flew over their playground – then couldn't believe their luck when it landed and the crew got out to say hello.

Staff at St Alban's Primary School had been working with the Royal Navy to arrange the visit, during which pupils had a close look at the aircraft, were given a virtual tour of Type 45 destroyer HMS Daring and had a Royal Navy-style PE lesson.

A CIVIL Servant who swapped his normal job at Portsmouth Naval Base for six months as the only civvy in a military HQ in Afghanistan has been presented with his Afghanistan Campaign Medal.

Jerry Gawthorpe worked as finance manager at the Kandahar-based Operational Mentoring and Liaison Team, supporting and advising 45 military personnel in areas such as financial forecasting, commercial and contracting policy, governance and audits.

A WARRANT Officer whose efforts kept a training facility in operation despite the closure of the base around it has been presented with his MBE.

WO1 Simon Hayman ensured the Cook Building warfare training simulators could still be used despite the decommissioning of HMS Dryad.

The facility was needed until the updated Maritime Composite Training System could be fully introduced at the Maritime Warfare School in HMS Collingwood, Fareham.



Trailblazer clocks up 3,000 hours

THE Royal Navy's first female Senior Observer has achieved another aviation milestone.

Lt Cdr Kay Burbidge (above) has reached 3,000 flying hours – once again, the first female in the Fleet Air Arm to hit this target.

Kay's achievement comes on the back of recent successful counter-piracy and counter-narcotics operations in the Middle East and the Indian Ocean, where her squadron's Merlin was based on board frigate HMS Westminster.

Her flying rate of over 1,000 hours in just over three years is testament to the success that the Merlin helicopter is having on the front line, contributing to various RN deployments across the globe in a variety of environments.

Kay, who is currently the Senior Observer of 829 Naval Air Squadron, joined the Royal Navy in 1988 as a Wren Air Engineering Mechanic and was selected for commission in 1995.

Since gaining her Wings in 1997, she has spent the majority of her career working on squadrons based at RNAS Culdrose.

Flying Sea Kings, Kay worked on 820 NAS and 771 NAS, where she was a member of the search and rescue crews.

Her Merlin helicopter experience comes from deployments with squadrons including 814 and 824 NAS. More recently, she has been based at 829 NAS where she was the HMS Monmouth Flight Commander during their 2009 Op Telic deployment.

Police support

THE generosity of West Midlands police officers – and the wider community in Walsall – has resulted in 77 boxes of gifts being delivered to 857 Naval Air Squadron in Afghanistan.

A 'bin relay' – where collection bins, covered in Royal Navy posters, were moved around police stations in the Walsall area – was organised by PC Emma Smith, whose son is an air engineering technician with 857.

She was so impressed with the Navy's welfare support when her son deployed that she decided to do something in return.

The result was box after box of home comforts, such as shower gel, toiletries, sweets, biscuits, T-shirts and flip-flops, thanks to the police, businesses and individuals.



Fleet Commander rewards notable efforts

OUTSTANDING efforts by 19 personnel from the Royal Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and civilian staff have been rewarded with Fleet Commander commendations.

First Officer Antony Day, of the RFA, received his award for organising the replenishment of Royal Navy ships blockading the Libyan port of Benghazi in April 2011.

I/O Day said: "I was very proud to have received this commendation – the role of a task

force under way replenishment co-ordinator is unique and always challenging."

Other recipients included PO Katy Wells, who was awarded a commendation for her work maintaining the operational picture for ships engaged in the Libya campaign, and CPO Neil Copeland for his support to Commando Helicopter Force on operations in Afghanistan and in the Libya campaign.

Outgoing Fleet Commander Admiral Sir

George Zambellas said: "Fleet Commander Commendations are my opportunity to recognise the particular contribution that our sailors, marines, RFA and civilian personnel make to the success of their units.

"I was delighted to be able to present my Commendations to so many exceptional men and women, in front of their families and friends, and to thank them personally for their hard work and dedication."

Alun dips out after 36 years

A VETERAN diver has left the Royal Navy after 36 years of service.

WO1 (Diver) Alun Bray's last job in the Navy was as the Officer in Charge of the Training Standards Team at the Defence Diving School, Portsmouth, where the occasion was marked by him having just one last dive in Navy diving kit.

Alun, 53, joined the Royal Navy in June 1976, since when he served across the globe, including the Far East, Middle East and the Falkland Islands.

He has served through three jubilees and has many awards in recognition of his outstanding service, including the General Service Medal, Meritorious Service Medal, and two Commendations for Bravery, in 1995 and 2002.

He cites the highlights of his career as being six-week shipborne exercise through France, Crete and Spain, and the appointment in Hong Kong when he was accompanied by his wife.

Married to Maxine, they have two sons, Alexander (25) and Morgan (20), and live in North Boarhunt, near Fareham.

Alun said: "School boy to old boy – it's been a blast!"

Navy meets academia for memorial lecture

HISTORIAN and TV presenter Dan Snow put the 18th Century Royal Navy under the spotlight at a memorial lecture in Oxford.

Co-hosted by the Oxford University RN Unit and the Guy Hudson Trust's Board of Management in historic Pembroke College, the honorary lieutenant commander spoke to a mixed audience of Royal Navy personnel and university academics about 'The Rise of the Royal Navy in the 18th Century' at the trust's annual memorial dinner.

Dan's lecture covered the efforts of the Royal Navy in the 18th Century, from inauspicious beginnings to becoming a global power, and changing every aspect of British life.

He covered all areas of influence, from finance to industry and from politics to leisure, charting the main wars and battles but also the underlying changes that helped it achieve victory.

Dan also looked at current global problems and put them into the context of the rise of the Navy during the 18th Century.

He also took a number of questions and encouraged a lively debate.

Following this, a toast was proposed to the late Lt Guy Hudson, and three prizes awarded to students who belong to the URNU for their dedication to the Service – Charlotte Hennahane (Coxswain's Prize), David Griffith-Jones (Green Trophy) and Michael Juniper (Hudson Memorial Trophy).

Lt Brian Drewett, CO of Oxford URNU, said: "It was a fantastic evening that brought together the academic community and Royal Navy, strengthening and enhancing the enduring academic principle held in high regard by the naval service, in



● Royal Navy personnel and academics in the newly-refurbished Dining Hall at Pembroke College, Oxford, during the annual Guy Hudson Trust memorial dinner

Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

the wonderful surroundings of Pembroke College, Oxford.

"Set in the context of a highly relevant and insightful lecture from Dan Snow, it was a real pleasure to be able to host such a prestigious event."

Brig Richard Spencer, a current Hudson Fellow, added: "The Hon Lt Cdr Dan Snow had the privilege of being the first speaker to use the new lecture theatre being built by Pembroke College.

"He provided a remarkable overview of the long war against France in the 18th Century, during which he captured the tension between the Royal Navy's traditional wartime role

of providing the 'wooden walls' that defended the British Isles and its overseas territories, alongside its peacetime task of safeguarding the vital maritime trade that made Great Britain so prosperous."

Among the guests attending was Vice Admiral Philip Jones, just days before taking up the position of Fleet Commander.

The Hudson Trust is now in its 15th year, following its establishment from the bequest of the late Lt Hudson, who studied jurisprudence at St John's College.

Its formal aims are to "benefit, directly or indirectly the further education of officers of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines at the

University".

It principally supports a series of Hudson Fellows in Oxford, but increasingly funds conferences, roundtables and other events of benefit to the service, such as a forthcoming naval history conference at Reading University.

The Trust's annual dinner has become an important date in the programme of interaction with the academic community. It is preceded by the Hudson lecture, which alternates between a military and academic speaker.

Lt Guy Hudson RNVR, who died in 1995 at the age of 74, was a coastal forces veteran who saw service in Motor Torpedo Boats throughout World War 2, including a spell in Alexandria in the dark days of 1942.

His leadership and pioneering work with radar won Lt Hudson the Distinguished Service Cross.

■ Dan Snow was also hosted by HMS Collingwood, where he paid a visit to gain an understanding of the role of the Maritime Warfare School.

Cdre Mike Mansergh, Dan's mentor, escorted the historian around the school, during which Dan tried his hand on a machine gun simulator and met Victory Squadron trainees.

Pavilion honour

RNAS Culdrose Football Club has marked almost 40 years of loyal service by a stalwart supporter by renaming the club pavilion after him.

Bill Pearce first became involved with the club as a linesman, and within a month he was first team manager – going on to steer the club to Navy Cup glory the same year and in 1977 (still the only civilian manager to do so).

Now club president, Bill has only missed 20 games in almost four decades.

The CO of Culdrose, Capt Willie Entwisle, unveiled a plaque and congratulated Bill on his achievements (pictured right).



Picture: Daniel Lilley

Maritime media stars pick up awards

THE brains behind the Thames Diamond Jubilee Pageant and the News Editor of *Navy News* were amongst the recipients of prizes at the 2012 Maritime Media Awards.

Adrian Evans received a Maritime Foundation Fellowship Award from the Princess Royal for masterminding the summer's river pageant (pictured left, by LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins).

Millions of television viewers worldwide watched as over 1,000 boats took part in the hugely-successful event marking the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in June.

Speaking at the dinner, held annually at the Institute of Directors in London, Adrian said:

"I'm delighted and honoured to receive the fellowship.

"The pageant was an extraordinary opportunity for the river and maritime industries to show themselves in the international spotlight, and so much credit for its success goes to the organisations who stood shoulder-to-shoulder to allow it to happen."

A second Maritime Fellowship Award was made to Richard Doughty, director of the Cutty Sark Trust, for leading the project to restore the historic clipper after she was almost destroyed by fire in 2007.

Richard Hargreaves, News Editor of this paper, won the

Desmond Wettern Media Award for best journalistic contribution (pictured right); the Desmond Wettern Fleet Award went to Type 23 frigate HMS Somerset; the Donald Gosling Award for best TV and film contribution went to Andy Attenburrow for his film *Arctic Convoys* (Testimony Films for Yesterday Channel); and the Mountbatten Maritime Award for best literary contribution went to Prof Callum Roberts for *Ocean of Life – How our seas are changing* (Penguin Books).

More than 200 journalists, business figures and senior naval officers – including First Sea Lord Sir Mark Stanhope – attended the dinner.





Mercury helps solve medal mystery

A MEDAL unearthed in the garden of a house in Deal has been returned to the family of its original owner, thanks to the *East Kent Mercury*.

But there still remain a couple of unanswered questions...

The mystery began in 1999 when a retired RAF officer, John Featherstone, was digging in his garden and unearthed a 1914-15 Star – the first of an issue of three medals known at the time as Pip, Squeak and Wilfred after cartoon characters which appeared in the *Daily Mirror* from 1919 until the mid-1950s.

The medal had the name of Leading Stoker Alfred Green inscribed on it, and Mr Featherstone put it in his toolbox intending to try to find details of the recipient.

But the medal slipped his mind, and he inadvertently took it with him when he moved to Cyprus in 2006.

It was only when he returned four years later that he found it again, and he wrote to the *Mercury* to see if the name rang any bells.

Several months later he received an email from Dr David Case, of Walmer, who had seen the story and trawled Royal Navy archives to identify Alfred Green, then used parish records and other genealogical resources to trace the sailor's granddaughter, Julie Sallis, who lives in Newtown, Powys.

After some discussions, Deal and Walmer branch of the RNA agreed to fund replacement of Leading Stoker Green's War and Victory medals – the Squeak and Wilfred to the original Pip.

And the trio was presented to Julie by branch chairman S/M John May at the branch's Trafalgar Night dinner, watched by another principal guest, Mr Featherstone, who said: "It was the culmination and happy ending of a lovely tale of lost and found made possible by the *Mercury*."

Which leaves just the question of how the medal came to be in Mr Featherstone's garden – he lived in the building which had formerly been the Deal Castle Inn, and was presumably frequented by sailors.

But there are no known links between Alfred, who became a petty officer, and Deal; he came from Bristol, retired from the RN in 1922 and died at the age of 64 in 1957.

Also, where are his original Squeak and Wilfred?

The sky's the limit

A VETERAN shipmate from Dartmouth branch has raised £700 for charity – and in the process became one of the country's oldest skydivers.

S/M Syd Thompson, 93, who saw service on the Arctic Convoys, made a tandem jump from 15,000ft over Dunkeswell Airfield north of Honiton in Devon, as reported by the *Dartmouth Chronicle*.

The money has been presented to the Dartmouth Hospital League of Friends, which cared for his wife Eunice in her final days almost a decade ago.

Different uniforms but a shared past

THE odd eyebrow was raised when two Norwegian Armed Forces officers joined Falklands veterans in the Remembrance Day parade in London in November.

But despite the unusual turn in their careers, Kevan Watton and Jake Husker both served as WAFUs in the South Atlantic in 1982.

They were joined in Whitehall by a former colleague, Tony 'Chas' Chambers.

Three decades back all three men had roles to play in the retaking of the Falklands.

Kevan, who joined up in October 1978, served in HMS Plymouth as an AEM with 829 NAS, maintaining the frigate's Wasp helicopter.

Having also served in the Gulf War in 1991 with Commando Helicopter Operational Support Cell (CHOSC), Kevan left the Navy in 1994 and moved to Norway to work for the company that makes BV vehicles for the Royal Marines.

He joined the Norwegian Army in 2002 and now holds the position of Major in Brigade North logistic section based in Bardufoss, Northern Norway.

Jake, who joined the RN in November 1977, was with 846 NAS in 1982, operating Sea Kings from HMS Hermes, though once



● Kevan Watton, Antony 'Chas' Chambers and Jake Husker at the Remembrance Day Parade in London

in the south he moved over to HMS Intrepid before going ashore ready for the land battle.

Jake spent most of his career within the Jungle family, including time in CHOSC during 'Desert Storm'.

He also spent time working on Exercise Clockwork in support of the Commando Helicopter Force and Royal Marines in Norway.

After 22 years regular service and three years as a reservist, he left the RNR in 2003 as a Leading Hand to join the Norwegian

Armed Forces.

He is now a Captain in the Royal Norwegian Air Force, working as a Survival Equipment Officer at Bardufoss – and still does some work with the Clockwork team, having been in military uniform for 35 years.

Antony, who joined in October 1979, was with 848 NAS in the Falklands.

Having sailed south in MV Norland, they never had the chance to fulfil their planned role as their Wessex helicopters went down with the Atlantic Conveyor, so squadron personnel were used to bolster other ships' manpower and help out with the Wessex helicopters of 847 NAS.

Antony, a keen supporter of the South Atlantic Medal Association (SAMA 82), served mainly with the Jungle squadrons at Yeovilton, and did some work with Lynx at Portland, but left the service in 2003 as a Leading Hand and after spells with the Military Provost Guard Service and at Serco, he joined AgustaWestland as a civilian aircraft fitter in 2011.

Although Tony has paraded before, he said 2012 was all the more memorable for being able to meet up with his two former colleagues, for whom this was the first such parade.

Amongst the 80-plus members of the Association of Wrens who gathered at Horse Guards Parade were representatives from almost every era of the WRNS and RN

– and even more impressive was the distances travelled and the regularity of attendance.

Daphne Jones, for example, has been to every Cenotaph parade for the past 30 years, and for 13 of those she has travelled from Australia, with friends from Perth branch.

Daphne was a wartime Wren Writer who served at Lowestoft, Dumbarton and Helensburgh.

Eileen Feeney, Wendy van der Veen and Pamela Senior have kept in touch since their serving days – Eileen and Pamela were at HMS Dauntless in 1956, when their Division was kept back for the Queen Mother's visit.

This year's wreath carrier was Carol Assam, who travelled from the United States to be at the Cenotaph for the last ten years.

Carol served as a Leading Wren Communicator at the Admiralty, and Gibraltar, and upon leaving the WRNS joined the Diplomatic Wireless Service as a Cypher Officer at the Foreign Office in London, which included trips abroad with the Foreign Secretary.

In 1970 she was appointed to the British Embassy in Washington DC.

Falmouth chairman S/M Mick Stevens took his 11-year-old son Joshua along to a poppy-laying ceremony at the military section of the local cemetery.

S/M Stevens and secretary S/M Ron Burdekin had already attended the first poppy-laying at the recently-redesigned Garden of Remembrance.

The military element saw crosses laid on the graves of a soldier, an airman, a merchant sailor, and that of AB Bill Savage, posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross for the St Nazaire raid in March 1942.

Joshua's presence was evidence of his father's wish to liaise with youth groups.

And during the visit crosses were also placed on each of the five graves of 26 victims of the sinking of HMS *Registan* in 1941.

This gesture came about after a promise made at a chance meeting between S/M Ron and a Scottish couple seeking information on the crew – the woman's father, one of the 26 victims in the graves, had died when she was just a year old.



Great War platoon flag found

BACK in 2007 Don Ligertwood wrote to *Navy News* about his uncle, Capt Peter Ligertwood RMLI, who used battalion flags linked by yarn to help his platoon advance at Passchendaele in 1917.

By doing so he helped ensure his was the only battalion to reach the ridge without a man slipping into the water-filled shell holes where soldiers drowned in mud.

Don (above, at *Plymouth Hoe*) has now found one of his uncle's old platoon flags at the former RM Barracks at Eastney in Portsmouth, where he also found memos by Winston Churchill referring to Peter's idea and gallant leadership at Passchendaele.

Don has been promised a full-sized framed picture of the fragile flag, which he will present to the Library of the Officers Mess at Stonehouse Barracks in Plymouth, where it will be displayed with other items and pictures pertaining to Capt Ligertwood.

The officer had a son who joined the Royal Marines – Duggie Ligertwood, who was in charge of clothing stores at Eastney, and whom Don met during recruit gunnery training.

Don put in 22 years with the Corps, part of four generations of the family to pass through between 1906 and 1976.



● Daphne Jones (left) and Association of Wrens Chair Mary Hawthornthwaite

Selsey signing off

SELSEY Golf Club hosted the final Selsey Comms Technician/Special Comms Unit reunion.

Organiser Eddie Clamp felt it was time to move on to venues nearer serving CTs to keep the event viable – though there are plans for a reunion this year in Gibraltar.

Bench pays tribute to Win

MEMBERS of Pershore branch helped dedicate a memorial bench for a prominent citizen in the town.

Branch chaplain Canon Richard Etheridge led the small service for the late Win Summerton, who had been one of the group behind an initiative for a swimming pool in Pershore following the death of a youngster in the River Avon in the 1960s.

Win, also helped set up the town's heritage centre.

Memorial thefts fall

AN INITIATIVE launched to protect war memorials from thieves appears to be paying off.

'In Memoriam 2014', a partnership between the War Memorial Trust and the SmartWater Foundation, was

unveiled in October 2011, at a time when reports to the Trust of thefts from and of memorials were running at an average of three per week.

In total some 60 cases of theft and vandalism were identified in 2011 – but so far this year that figure has barely topped 20.

The initiative sought to protect every war memorial in the UK from the threat of metal theft by encouraging custodians to register all such sites and take up the offer to mark each one for free with SmartWater's forensic chemical-code marking kits.

Standard retired

THE old standard of the City of Glasgow unit has been handed to a Sea Cadet unit for safekeeping.

Life vice president S/M Frank Halliday, secretary S/M Brian MacKenzie, treasurer S/M David Carlin and chairman S/M Kenn McKinnon visited the Clydebank unit's HQ to formally pass on the standard.

Unit padre Lt David Eynon led a short service and accepted

the standard on the cadets' behalf before passing it on to president Lt Cdr Troupe.

Whilst at TS Queen Elizabeth, the shipmates presented LC Ciaran McElhinney with his trophy as Cadet of the Year.

And with the unit having won a Jubilee pennant, S/M Halliday presented all cadets with Jubilee pins to celebrate 60 years of the Queen's reign.

Dinner presentation

WOLVERHAMPTON branch held their Trafalgar Dinner at the Lindens – and for one shipmate the evening had a special significance.

After the Loyal Toast, president S/M Reg Keane presented secretary S/M Charlie Chadwick with life membership – which had been kept quiet as a surprise.

The dinner was attended by 41 shipmates and guests, including members of the RMA and the Royal Engineers.

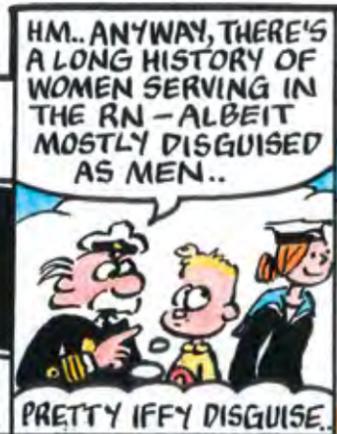
Rockingham held their dinner at the Australian Navy Club at the entrance to HMAS Stirling naval base at Garden Island, Rockingham in Western Australia.

Their event featured Nelson's famous signal, a colourful display of flags above the top table.

And two previous Commanding Officers of HMAS Stirling – former Royal Navy man Phil Orchard, an ex-British consul to Western Australia, and Bill Ritchie, the base's first CO – also attended.

↓ RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com
↓ 023 9272 3747
↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

Naval Quirks





Tribute book to RN Boys for Liverpool

DURING World War 2 many Royal Navy convoy ships did their replenishment and turn-around in Liverpool's Gladstone Dock.

It is therefore fitting that Liverpool is commemorating the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic with a service in Liverpool Cathedral on Sunday May 26.

A Book of Remembrance to the RN Boy Sailors who died in World War 2 is due to be presented by Jim Reed to Liverpool Cathedral at this service, and the organisers of this element of the ceremonies are keen to see veterans participate, especially from the North of England or with the Atlantic Star.

The Merseyside Master Mariners Club have kindly underwritten the costs of the display case in the Cathedral, but donations to help the MMMC cover funding for the display may be sent to MMMC Memorial Fund, a/c no 53809323, sort code 20-80-33, or post cheques to Capt M P Bestwick, 7 Turrocks Croft, Little Neston, Neston CH64 0UB.

Angus group support RBL

SHIPMATES from Angus branch gathered at RM Condor on Trafalgar Day to acknowledge the closure of Arbroath branch of the Royal British Legion by the laying up of the standard.

The organisation has been a platform for former Servicemen and women to socialise regularly for more than 30 years.

But a number of deaths and departures has caused membership numbers to dwindle, resulting in the closure of the group.

The service at St Christopher's Church, Condor, gave former RBL members the chance to come together one last time under their old banner.

Founder member Ken Smith said most members were in their seventies and eighties, and many had died.

The standard was carried by Diana Dargie and escorted by Granville Cooper, while the Chaplain at RM Condor, the Rev Scott Shackleton, accepted the standard on behalf of the church.

Headstone plea over 'unknown stoker'

THE move to renovate and relocate the Vindictive memorial in Belgium has prompted one man to renew his campaign over a Naval tombstone.

As reported in last month's *Navy News*, the bow of the old cruiser HMS Vindictive, sunk as a blockship during the Ostend Raid of May 1918 and salvaged to act as a memorial, will be formally inaugurated in a new position in May.

The news has led to David Slade redoubling his effort to get what he believes is official

recognition that the grave of the "Unknown Stoker RN" in Ostend Cemetery is that of SPO Charles McDonald.

Mr Slade said that all the other casualties in the raid were accounted for in known marked graves, meaning that the 'unknown' grave had to be that of SPO McDonald.

That being the case, Mr Slade said the issue of the 'Unknown Stoker' should be resolved once and for all.

He stated that would be best done by

ensuring a new, marked headstone is in place on SPO McDonald's grave in time for the Vindictive rededication ceremony – Mr Slade understands that a ceremony will also be held at the graves as part of the day's programme.

He has now contacted the Service Personnel and Veterans Agency, saying: "May I earnestly request that the position of the SVPA on this matter be urgently reviewed in the hope that this one last, fatal participant in this raid be properly and adequately recognised?"

Newfoundland beat off torpedo boats

A VETERAN of the Suez campaign has recorded his memories of a clash in the Red Sea which saw one of the final attacks by motor torpedo boats.

Alan Goddard's memoirs highlight the career of a "Black Country lad" who saw service in three wars, including time in Colony-class cruiser HMS Newfoundland.

Alan joined the Royal Navy in May 1954, at the age of 16, and on his 18th birthday he was ordered to learn the art of Naval gunnery at HMS Excellent – four months later he left Whaley with "a passport to see the world".

His first draft as a seaman/gunner was to Newfoundland, where he was a twin 4in mounting.

Although based in Singapore, Newfoundland headed west to Aden in the autumn of 1956 as the repercussions of Egyptian premier Nasser's decision to nationalise the Suez Canal began to materialise.

In early November Anglo-French air strikes on Egypt began, followed by paratroop landings and an amphibious assault by Royal Marines.

By this stage HMS Newfoundland had steamed 1,000 miles in two days and reached the southern tip of the Sinai peninsula, ready for action.



● Egyptian survivors from the sinking of the Domiat are transferred by jackstay to the destroyer HMS Diana in November 1956

At this point, with Nasser having sunk merchantmen to block the canal, numerous steamers under the Red Ensign were stuck in the narrow Gulf of Suez and the northern section of the Red Sea.

"During daylight hours of that day Newfoundland began the task of moving south as many Red Ensign ships as possible from the northern part of [the Red Sea]," said Alan in his memoirs.

"Once darkness was complete the warship headed north-west into the narrow waterway to carry out the same task.

"Every radar contact was approached and ordered south out of harm's way until dawn, when the warship moved out into the wider sea.

"The reason for that – the gulf was in Egyptian air-strike range, and out of HMS Bulwark's Sea Hawk aircraft range being launched from the Mediterranean."

As she repeated the task the second day, signals reached her that a more suitable 'task group' of destroyer HMS Diana and frigates HM Ships Crane and Modeste were closing from the south.

But the cruiser continued to shepherd ships until just after midnight when, as Alan reports, "the lookouts notified the bridge a ship had placed itself on the tail of the convoy."

Its lights suggested it was not a merchantman, so as Newfoundland went to investigate her ship's company was closed up at action stations and her guns were trained on the mystery contact.

"The ship's searchlight beam darted across the gap to reveal the Egyptian warship Domiat, its upper deck loaded with mines," said Alan.

"The same light signalled 'Stop engines and surrender.'

"Domiat revealed her intentions by training all of her guns onto Newfoundland. Both ships opened fire together and Newfie's battle ensigns began streaming in the breeze."

The British ship took some damage but at less than a mile her well-aimed salvos were taking their toll, and when the 40mm ack-ack guns joined in, raking Domiat with tracer, her weapons faltered.

Her captain turned the battered ship as if to ram Newfoundland but she was hammered to a halt barely 100 metres from her target, riven by explosions.

Within minutes she began to capsize, and sank shortly after.

Boats were launched and some 50 Egyptians – around a quarter of Domiat's crew – were recovered.

The anticipated response came the following night in the Gulf of

Suez, during another sweep for merchant ships.

"Two echoes appeared on the northern edge of the radar at 23 miles, side by side," recalls Alan.

"Two more appeared behind the first two and a square formation took shape.

"The four echoes were travelling at twice Newfoundland's maximum speed of 30 knots and they were headed straight for her."

Newfoundland swung round 180 degrees and increased to full speed to reach the wider Red Sea, giving her more room to manoeuvre.

As the pack of MTBs closed and split into two groups, Alan ordered his loaders to use high explosive direct action (radio activated) shells and the cruiser zig-zagged, laying a smokescreen.

"My gun had opened fire at maximum range on a level gundeck. Now the loaders were punching their shells into breeches stood on ever-increasingly angled decks," Alan recalled.

"Shells were leaving Newfoundland's guns at over 200 per minute; with the explosions and blast that entails, this mixed with the acrid stench of burnt cordite and the greasy smoke of the screen to make life hell on earth during the battle."

With the cruiser running low on ammunition and fuel it began to look tricky – but at that point the MTBs threw in the towel, exhausted and beaten, and sped back north to their base.

Newfoundland sailed south at her most economical speed, replenishing from RFA Wave Sovereign 30 hours later.

She was later tasked to destroy a shore battery of 15in guns, but as she prepared for a deadly duel the enemy muzzles remained silent – they had been captured by Israeli forces just hours earlier.

Alan later saw action in Brunei and Borneo. For more of his memoirs, see <http://tinyurl.com/cwyljpf>



● S/M Nick Munro delivers a humorous monologue, dressed as a high priest

High priest presides over dinner

THE inauguration of Wansbeck and District took place at the Hirst Industrial Club, Ashington, Northumberland in July 1982.

Sea Cadets from Ashington unit sounded the *Still* for a minute of silence, followed by *Carry On*.

And 15 local members were joined by 43 visiting members to hear National Council Member S/M Ray Berry outline the objectives of the Association, after which a motion was proposed and carried that accepted the Royal Charter, rules and bylaws of the RNA.

Three decades on and 70 members, families and guests met at Stakeford and Bomarsund Memorial Hall for an anniversary celebration, held at the branch's Trafalgar Night dinner dance.

Branch president Cdr Craddock and his wife Patricia attended, as did Ann Lawson, widow of the late chairman S/M Brian Lawson, who had been instrumental in organising the evening but who died unexpectedly in late July.

After the meal and toasts, Cdr Craddock gave a speech then presented engraved brandy glasses to the only two remaining founder members, S/Ms James Johnstone and Joan Venables.

Entertainment was provided by S/M Nick Munro, of Tyne branch, who, dressed as a high priest, delivered a humorous monologue.

Two raffles raised £294.

Veterans join in

NINE residents from the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home (QAHH) in Worthing – including one Naval veteran – took part in the National Service of Remembrance in London.

The Worthing centre is one of three in the country which nurse and rehabilitate disabled ex-Servicemen and women, part of a charity which started in 1919 to care for the war wounded.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our November edition (right) was HMS Opportune. K Hindmarsh, of Stockton-on-Tees, supplied the correct answer and wins £50.

This month's mystery ship, above, was an inshore minesweeper named after a village in north Somerset.

She was completed at a yard in Lowestoft in early February 1956, and was sold 30 years later. What was her name?

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 answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is February 13. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winners will be announced in our March edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 215

Name

Address

My answer

IN the spring of 2008 Liskeard branch had a visit from Lt Cdr (now Cdr) Marriott, of HMS Raleigh, who had recently been attached to the Royal Marines and had observed the mentoring of their new entries by ex-bootnecks, reports S/M John Bartlett.

The officer believed this mentoring helped produce good Royals and wished to see it operating in the Royal Navy – hence his visit to talk on the aims and vision of the scheme.

Soon after, a meeting of interested branches was convened at Raleigh, resulting in a system whereby shipmates were attached to various divisions of HMS Raleigh.

Being an ex-tiff I naturally opted for Fisgard Division – now sadly no more – and by the summer I had been cleared for a pass to enter Raleigh and attend the various evolutions.

These included a self-introduction with the New Entries, Pier Cellars, Dartmoor, Distex and of course the assault and obstacle courses and finally the Passing In (Out) Parade.

Hopefully we do some good – it definitely does me good.

It's helped restore my faith in today's youth and the Royal Navy. When you read that very few 16-year-olds are joining it is not because they don't want to, it is because the waiting list is so long.

Is it easier now? I don't know.

It's different, but so are times. They live in better conditions than I did, the uniform is better – no oilskins – and, of course, no tot.

But then most of us live in centrally-heated homes these days and expect our employers to take reasonable care of us.

It's today's Navy, as mine was different compared with the pre-war Navy.

My two favourite evolutions are the mid-course appraisal afternoons and the Passing Out day.

The mid-course appraisals are when the New Entries get their horoscopes read on a one-to-one basis with Divisional staff.

During that time we try to give them an understanding of the RNA and then have a 'free for all' of questions about our time in the Mob.

We take along photos and mementoes of our time and spin dits; in return we get tea and biccies.

Passing Out day is made very special, far more so than in my day.

In the forenoon families are given a presentation of the previous ten weeks, Divisional staff are introduced, along with us, and various awards are made to the New Entries.

Finally they are all presented with their Royal Navy epaulettes to exchange for the orange ones that have been their badge of New

Entry for the past ten weeks.

They then march off to get ready for divisions in the afternoon.

The afternoon starts with a class photograph in the old Raleigh drill shed – the only bit left from my days.

By this time they are all fully buckled and spurred, as are the Divisional staff.

As the passing-out class they are also the Guard, with their DO and Deputy DO leading and their Divisional POs as markers.

Divisions proceed as of old, then the Guard advances in review order.

This is followed by an arms drill exhibition without orders and finally a march-past.

When the rest of the Divisions have cleared the Parade Ground the class returns without arms and on the orders of the Chief of the Parade march off to *Auld Lang Syne*.

Having now officially entered the Royal Navy the families and class meet in the bar for a few drinks, where the Captain and Inspecting Officer also meet the families. The most striking feature of all this is the pride the lads and lasses have in their achievement and in the Royal Navy.

Completing the ten weeks is not easy, and they have earned the right to be proud of themselves – and so have the Divisional staff who have got them through it.

The warfare world goes further

WELCOME to part two of Drafty's Corner sponsored by NPT(X) and in particular focusing on the Officers Career Managers (OCM). Based in West Battery, Whale Island, OCM(X) provides career management for all Warfare Officers regardless of specialisation/sub-specialisation.



Drafty's corner

Talent Management

There is work under way to create a framework for Talent Management of our junior officers, outlining ways in which the Warfare Branch can mitigate the effects of "Career Compression" for those who joined the RN slightly later, and better identify and manage those officers showing strong potential at an early stage.

Current methods of 'fast-tracking' an individual range from short touring them in an assignment to skipping an assignment altogether (ie FNO vice OOW1 as a second tour).

This work will formalise each organisation's role (AIB, BRNC, MWS, Flotillas, Unit COs, CMs etc) and outline the quickest route to both SASB1 and PWO course success for each Warfare sub-specialisation, and will be promulgated in the New Year.

Common Assignments (CAPPs)

Want something challenging, new and a little different? Your CM has a considerable number of CAPPs that need capable people to fill them.

These will take you out of your core trained role, in some cases into the joint environment, and often to some very interesting Loan Foreign Service (LFS) assignments (for those who also want to escape the country).

These assignments are all of a broadening nature and an excellent opportunity to display scope for wider employment, especially when competing for promotion and transfer.

Call your CM to discuss the range of opportunities that exist for an individual with your talent.

IMPORTANT ISSUES ON THE HORIZON

Command Qualifications and the road to SASB selection

Achieving Command should be the aspiration of every Warfare Officer, regardless of sub-specialisation.

The Command Qualification process has been the focus of much debate in recent years.

One of the common observations is that we must ensure that the SASB1 board has sufficient choice from a field of suitable candidates, and that the

best way to achieve this is to better prepare officers for the Command Qualification Boards.

For a variety of reasons, the numbers presenting to CQ1 and CQ2 has reduced and, as a result, a number of changes have been made to the process.

The Command Competency Framework (CCF) DIN and both CQ DINS will shortly be re-issued, to coincide with a number of initiatives that aim to improve the efficiency of the 'Route to Command' process, providing Warfare Officers with the opportunities to succeed.

The headlines include removal of the 'three strikes and out' rule, and that achievement of CQ1 will now attract an automatic FTC transfer on completion of a successful CQ1 assignment.

The Flotillas have assumed a mentoring initiative for those looking to achieve CQs and MWS will support this with Simulator familiarisation.

For those officers not employed in a Flotilla, the relevant Squadron Executive Officers stand by to offer advice on how to take advantage of the mentoring process.

There has also been an uplift in the number of CQ Board places, which will allow MWS to plan Boards more frequently.

NCHQ will shortly issue a *Route to Command* booklet to IWOs on achieving their Navigational Watchkeeping Certificate, and this explains the roadmap to Command and the qualities required for success.

The Revised Officer Entry Scheme

The Revised Officer Entry Scheme (ROES) is a review of new entry rates of pay for Officers.

It will come into effect from September 2013 for all Officers joining BRNC and CTCRM.

It is being introduced after the Armed Forces Pay Review Body determined that all Officers Under Training should be given equal conditions of service, regardless of method of entry into the RN/RM.

In addition, for RN personnel,

Midshipman (Mid) and Sub Lieutenant (S/Lt) Ranks will indicate officers in the training pipeline, with the rank of Lieutenant an indication that an officer has joined the trained strength.

It will affect those already serving by opening up promotion zones, with lieutenants of four years seniority now being considered for promotion, allowing those showing strong potential to be promoted early.

This change will take effect from the promotion board in March 2014 (for promotions from October 1 2014).

Further information is available in RNTM 196/12.

CONTACTING YOUR CAREER MANAGER (CM)

How to get in touch

A lot of time is spent conducting 'one on one' Career Interviews (CI), attending meetings and visiting establishments, and consequently you may have difficulty in reaching your CM by telephone.

An email is always preferable as it allows the CM time to examine the plot and investigate options before replying.

If the matter is urgent or affects ship's OC, a phone call may be more appropriate and you will always be able to leave a message.

When to get in touch

Ideally, you should make contact with your CM with around 12 months left in post.

Any earlier than this and the CM will not be able to gauge performance in your current post.

This initial discussion will allow both you and your CM to agree a realistic future availability date (to maximise reporting and ensure the service need is met) and gives enough time for the CM to identify your follow-on assignment and a suitable relief for you in that time frame.

Why you should get in touch

We are interested in changes in: your preferences; your address; your personal circumstances; and any other information that you think may have a bearing on your career plans.

Career Interviews

If you are content with your next assignment and do not require a more in-depth look at your promotion or transfer prospects, then you probably do not require a formal CI.

If you do, then a proforma will be sent out prior to the interview - please complete this honestly with as much information as possible including preferences, priorities and aspirations.

This is an opportunity for a professional and frank two-way discussion about your career and

both the proforma and the meeting allow your CM to consider all options, delivering a credible plan and honest feedback.

JPA AND ADMINISTRATION

JPA contact details

Please ensure your contact details are registered on JPA and are up to date. In some cases, this is the only information CMs have to contact you.

Work addresses/email addresses are essential, but your civilian email and an up-to-date mobile and home number are also very useful to your CM.

JPA Preferences

Make sure that JPA reflects your true and realistic preferences. The needs of the Service will take priority in all CM assignment decisions, but the CM will endeavour to match this against personal preferences wherever possible.

Future Availability Date (FAD)

FADs are used by the CM as an administrative tool to plan your move-on date and can be amended to suit unit programmes.

If you are aware that you are due to leave your ship shortly after a work-up period, or half way through a deployment, flag this fact up with your chain of command and ensure that your CM is aware.

Prior planning allows your CM to help you.

Developed Vetting (DV)

A number of posts require DV clearance. The process is conducted electronically initially and requires a Civilian email address and access to the internet to fill in the e-form.

Incorrect or incomplete forms will delay the DV process. DVs can take up to six months to complete, so if you know that your DV is about to expire or that your next assignment requires a DV, then bring this to the attention of your CM.

Extensions to DVs are considerably easier to arrange when you currently hold one, as opposed to after it has expired.

Voluntary Outflow (VO)

Please discuss your intentions with your CM before submitting a Voluntary Outflow request on JPA.

Your CM will attempt to accommodate your leaving aspirations, which may include a request to leave the Service within a reduced notice period.

It should be noted that the norm is to complete the full 12-months statutory notice.

For further information you should consult the regulations in BR3 Ch 54.

RN Fitness Test

If you wish to be considered for

Role	Name	Internal email	Email	Room	Tel
NPT(X)TL	Capt S P Porter (Paul)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X) TL	paul.porter489@mod.uk	208	8838
NPT(X)OCM SO1	Cdr S P Huntington (Simon)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCM SO1	simon.huntington441@mod.uk	244	8887
NPT(X)OCMAIR SO1	Cdr A Jones (Alun)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMAIR SO1	alun.jones102@mod.uk	244	8972
NPT(X)OCMSM SO2	Lt Cdr D Fittness (David)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMSM SO2	david.fitness424@mod.uk	212	8845
NPT(X)OCMCD SO2	Lt Cdr S Brown (Steve)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMCD SO2	steve.brown471@mod.uk	212	8846
NPT(X)UT SO3	Lt I Giffin (Ian)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)UT SO3	ian.giffin515@mod.uk	212	8843
NPT(X)OCMUO SO2	Lt Cdr A J Meyer (Alex)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMUO SO2	alexander.meyer157@mod.uk	230	8866
NPT(X)OCMU SO2	Lt Cdr A Woolhead (Andy)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMU SO2	andy.woolhead862@mod.uk	230	8978
NPT(X)OCMA SO2	Lt Cdr J Howe (Jools)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMA SO2	jools.howe217@mod.uk	230	8864
NPT(X)OCMINT SO2	Lt Cdr K Rackham (Katharine)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMINT SO2	katharine.rackham397@mod.uk	224	8976
NPT(X)OCMHM SO2	Lt Cdr T Fox (Trefor)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMHM SO2	trefor.fox806@mod.uk	210	8973
NPT(X)OCMP1 SO2	Lt Cdr M Scott (Mark)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMP1 SO2	mark.scott453@mod.uk	210	8979
NPT(X)OCMP2 SO2	Lt Cdr S Armstrong (Scott)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMP2 SO2	scott.armstrong910@mod.uk	210	8840
NPT(X)OCMO SO2	Lt Cdr J Bird (Jonathan)	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMO SO2	jonathan.bird198@mod.uk	210	8842
NPT(X)COORD E1	Miss Debbie Urry	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)COORD E1	debbie.urry150@mod.uk	230	8867
NPT(X)OCMA1 E1	Mrs Liz Simcox	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMA1 E1	liz.simcox492@mod.uk	212	8847
NPT(X)OCMA3 E1	Miss Pauline Strange	FLEET-DNTERS NPT(X)OCMA3 E1	pauline.strange162@mod.uk	210	8839

promotion then JPA must reflect, on the Common Reporting Date (CRD), that you are either; in date for RNFT, or that you are in possession of a valid extension or waiver.

Once selected for promotion, you must be in date on the substantive promotion date if you are to be promoted. In short, you should either be in date for RNFT or in possession of a valid extension or waiver at all times.

2010 DIN01-024 refers. Temporary extensions for overseas assignments should be sought from HMS Temeraire in accordance with RNTM 25/12.

Leave

Excessive leave balances hamper assignments and may prevent you being considered for a particular job.

Make sure that you take your leave entitlement and that it is correctly recorded in JPA.

Up and coming Sources of Information

A new Warfare Officers Career Management Guide is due for publication by the end of the year, additionally the Warfare NPT website will soon be up and running, now that the transition to MOSS is complete in West Battery.

Directorate of Naval Personnel, Mail Point 2.2, West Battery, Whale Island, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO2 8DX
Civilian: 02392 625492
Military: 93832 5492
Fax: 93832 5930
West Battery Reception: 8888
Leach Building Reception: 5000
JPA Helpdesk: 94560 3600
SPOC: 188

Where to look

- DIN 2012 DIN01-229: Royal Navy Fitness Test (RNFT)
- DIN 2012 DIN01-232: TV Licensing - Commanding Officer responsibilities, requirement for Service Personnel, Visiting Forces and MOD establishments
- DIN 2012 DIN01-233: Revision to Naval Air Squadron Command Examinations and Qualification Process
- DIN 2012 DIN01-234: Naval Service officers - sending Non-Standard Appraisal Reports (NSARs) to JPA
- DIN 2012 DIN01-235: Officers' New Entrants' Rates of Pay
- DIN 2012 DIN01-238: Weapon Engineer Submarines, Strategic Weapon System, Senior Rates - Financial Retention Incentive (FRI)
- DIN 2012 DIN01-242: Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) - Change in Policy to allow claimants to withdraw from CEA without financial penalty
- DIN 2012 DIN01-249: Pension rights accrued for various groups in Armed Forces Pension Scheme 1975 (AFPS 75), Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2005 (AFPS 05) and Reserve Forces Pension Scheme 2005 (RFFPS 05)
- DIB 64/12: Relaunch of GEMS, the Defence Ideas Scheme
- DIB 65/12: PUS writes to staff about MOD Your Say initial results
- DIB 66/12: New Employment Model: update on progress
- DIB 67/12: Status of Resettlement Grants
- DIB 68/12: Publication of the Armed Forces Covenant Annual Report
- Galaxy 39-2012: New Employment Model - update on progress
- Galaxy 40-2012: Fleet Commander's Command Intent
- Galaxy 41-2012: Christmas Leave Policy

Hindu support for Armed Forces

THE Armed Forces now has a newly formed Hindu Support Network.

The organisation is open to all Service, civil service, reserve and retired Hindus, including Gurkhas both serving or retired.

The Network stood up on November 15 at Ampport House with the committee elected from the personnel attending.

The Network offers individual and group support, promoting dialogue with senior personnel to give minority groups a voice, and assisting personnel with spiritual and practical problems while serving in the military.

The current RN contact is CPO Chris Eade, of the Navy's Diversity Recruitment team in London, who can be reached on 020 7414 3876.

A permanent suitable RN representative is being sought; the candidate can be any rank or rate, but must be enthusiastic.

Good progress on the Covenant

A REPORT released in early December on the Armed Forces Covenant has described good progress across the UK.

The report considers the two main principles of the Covenant:

1) that no member of the Armed Forces community should face disadvantage compared to other citizens in the provision of public and commercial services; and

2) that special consideration is appropriate in some cases, especially for those who have given the most, such as the injured and the bereaved.

More than 230 local authorities have signed Community Covenants to reduce disadvantage and in some cases offer special provision across the UK.

However the annual report does identify areas where there is more work to be done, including housing, spousal employment and Reserves mental health.

Over the previous 12 months, the Armed Forces Covenant has seen changes such as:

- doubled Council Tax Relief for those serving on operations overseas;
- altered the Schools Admission Code to allow all schools in England to allocate a place in advance of a Service family arriving in the area;
- opened the £17 million Jubilee Rehabilitation Complex at Headley Court Defence Rehabilitation Centre;
- launched a new Defence Discount Service offering a range of discounts on goods and services;
- transferred £35 million from fines levied on the banks to the MOD for use in supporting the Armed Forces Community, mainly through Service charities.

This is the first annual report on the effects of the Armed Forces Covenant, an ongoing process which will be developed and reviewed year by year.

Portsmouth City Council guards your scrum

EXTENDING across the country from the Clyde in Scotland to Devonport in Plymouth, Portsmouth City Council has taken on responsibility for the food safety matters of the Royal Navy.

This is a new partnership agreement called Primary Authority, an initiative lead by the government's Better Regulation Delivery Office (BRDO) to enable local authorities to offer support to their business community and provide robust and reliable advice with regard to regulation.

This means that local authorities across the country will follow the Portsmouth Council's regulatory advice wherever the Navy is based.

Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson, leader of the Portsmouth City Council, said: "It's an honour for the council to play such an important role in the life of the Royal Navy. The responsibility that we now hold is an asset to Portsmouth."

"We are proud to have become the Primary Authority for the Royal Navy and assure them that

our dedicated team is the key to successful local regulation."

Lt Cdr Alister Witt, head of environmental health for the Royal Navy, said: "The Royal Navy have had a long and established relationship with Portsmouth City Council in the field of environmental health."

"Originally they acted as our Home Authority for Food Safety and will now be our Primary Authority under the new BRDO scheme."

"This ensures that the Royal Navy has the best systems in place for the production of safe food, ensuring our sailors and marines are fit and healthy to do their jobs, wherever they may be in the world."

The agreement was signed by Portsmouth's Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson and the head of the Royal Navy Medical Service Surg Cdre Andrew Hughes on board HMS Victory in early December.

Find out more online at www.bis.gov.uk/brdo/primary-authority.

Start the year with the NFF

WITH CHRISTMAS over for another year, and the last turkey sandwich eaten, attention turns to 2013. It promises to be another busy year for the Naval Service and for the NFF; Naval Service personnel continue to be deployed all around the world protecting our nation's interests, writes *Emma Prince of the NFF*.

As always, NFF offers help, support and representation to Royal Navy and Royal Marines families. We understand that being part of a Service family can bring about unique challenges.

We can provide help and guidance with individual issues, and highlight areas of concern to the Chain of Command and Government for consideration when policies are reviewed.

If you have an issue or concern you would like to raise, please get in touch.

Families Forum

In November 2012, NFF Chair Kim Richardson, met with the Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, the Rt Hon Mark Francois MP at the Families Forum.

Each Families Federation had the opportunity to explain the key issues affecting their personnel and families to him.

Detailed discussion then followed between the Minister and Federations on a number of significant tri-Service issues.

The Minister was very interested and engaged; we look forward to seeing how he takes forward the topics discussed.

The NFF raised the following points:

- Revisiting the work on how we support and acknowledge the modern family; divorced parents in particular. This centres around expanding the provision of Service Families Accommodation.

Whilst we understand there is a huge cost attached to doing so it is still an area where we feel the Services need to modernise and do better.

It will be considered under the on-going work of the New Employment Model.

- The role of the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB). There is a perception that since the pay freeze has been imposed the AFPRB has had their wings clipped by the Government.

The request the NFF made was to liberate the AFPRB to determine what *they* felt was appropriate in terms of future pay and allowances, and for the Government to accept or reject their findings.

Putting caveats in place before the process starts inhibits the important work of this very well respected and independent Body.

- A query regarding the future role of the

Independent Medical Experts Group – who advise on medical aspects of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme. Their work is highly valued and what we were seeking was reassurance that the Group was formalised and would be in place for the future.

- As always, housing was discussed in detail...

The points raised at these meetings are based on the issues and concerns that families bring to us for resolution and guidance. If you think there are other matters that need to be acknowledged, please get in touch.

TwoSix DVD

Look out for the NFF in the new TwoSix DVD. The DVD is one of the internal communication tools produced by the Royal Navy and it contains lots of useful information for serving personnel.

The NFF was delighted to contribute to the publication – which is due out this month.

MoneyForce

MoneyForce is a new information website that aims to raise financial awareness and improve financial behaviour amongst the Armed Forces community.

The site is due for launch in late January. It is an extensive site offering information on a wide range of financial matters, with quizzes to test your knowledge on money matters, and links to support and advice organisations.

This MOD approved site is a joint project between Standard Life Charitable Trust and the Royal British Legion.

The site can be found at: www.moneyforce.org.uk from the end of January.

Status of Resettlement Grants

In the light of a number of queries, the MOD has produced a notification to clarify that the introduction of the new Armed Forces Pension Scheme in April 2015 will not impact upon the Resettlement Grant.

Resettlement Grants are *not* being reviewed as part of the changes to the new pension scheme; there will be *no* changes to the current Resettlement Grant system as a result of the transition to the new pension scheme.

Some may be under the impression that the Resettlement Grant is a 'Half Pension'. This is not the case and the two are not linked. Regular Service personnel do not have to be a member of an Armed Forces pension scheme to be eligible for the Grant.

Regular Service personnel who are transferred to the new pension scheme in 2015 will still be entitled to the same Resettlement Grant, at exactly the same time that they would have expected had there been no new pension scheme.

Resettlement Grants assist those leaving the Regular Armed Forces to resettle into civilian life after completing a substantial period of Service.

It is not a pension, but a tax-free lump sum paid to Regular Service personnel, who, at the time they leave the Services, are not eligible for Early Departure Payment benefits or an Immediate Pension (or any other immediate pension benefits), and who meet Resettlement Grant qualification criteria.

Current Resettlement Grant rules will continue to apply after April 2015. This means that any Regular Service person in receipt of a full, or partial, Early Departure Payment or Immediate Pension (or any other immediate pension benefits) will not receive a Resettlement Grant.

The Pensions Calculator (www.mod-pc.co.uk) will be updated in 2013 and more details will be published in due course.

The Calculator will also include details of Resettlement Grants for those who leave Regular Service before the Immediate Pension or Early Departure Payment points.

All Regular Service personnel are eligible for some form of resettlement provision, even if they do not qualify for a Resettlement Grant.

Further information is available in JSP 534 on the Defence Intranet. Service Personnel should see 2012DIB/67 on the Defence Intranet for full details, including a summary of Resettlement Grant qualification criteria.

New Employment Model: Progress Update

The New Employment Model (NEM) signifies the Government's commitment to deliver modernised terms and conditions of service that better suit 21st-century lifestyles.

The NEM will implement changes that aim to deliver an offer to regular Service personnel to support domestic stability and partners' employment, and provide a degree of choice that supports an active and rewarding career in the Armed Forces.

NEM will be a long-term, gradual change programme. It will be designed to meet the expectations of a generation that has yet to join the Services, but will be delivered in a way that supports and motivates existing Service personnel.

We want to know what it is proposing to do, as much as you do. Visit our website for further details.

Enhanced Access to Jobcentre Plus Services for the Armed Forces Community

As part of the Armed Forces Covenant there are

certain Department for Work and Pensions initiatives to assist current and former members of the Armed Forces and their families accessing Jobcentre Plus services.

Visit our website (under the Families – Employment section) for details on the initiatives, that includes enhanced access to support services and revised policies that make it easier for Service spouses/civil partners to accrue National Insurance contributions when accompanying a serving person on an overseas posting.

National Insurance credits count towards eligibility to a basic state pension and contribution-based working-age benefits such as Jobseeker's Allowance.

Another initiative is in place for spouses accompanying a Service partner overseas who are unable to claim maternity allowance from the UK.

Defence Ideas

GEMS, the Defence Ideas Scheme, has re-launched with a new online system that makes submitting suggestions easier.

The scheme encourages MOD civilians and Service personnel, including ex-employees, to make suggestions for improving efficiency and organisation anywhere within the MOD.

Those who submit suggestions that are implemented may receive a financial reward. Currently about 40 per cent of suggestions are implemented. GEMS is a key part of Transforming Defence.

For further details, personnel should see DIB 2012/DIB/64 on the Defence Intranet.

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

If you have any comments on the issues discussed in this article, or would like to raise a matter of concern, please e-mail the NFF on:

admin@nff.org.uk

or telephone: 023 9265 4374.

Postal correspondence can be sent to:

NFF, Castaway House,

311 Twyford Avenue,

Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.



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Whether you left the Naval Service a long time ago, or only yesterday, you'll always remember the great things about it. The mates, the feeling of being in it together, the loyalty and doing what you did for Queen and country. By joining one of the 370 branches of the Royal Naval Association, you won't just rekindle old friendships, you'll make new ones, and in doing so you can support the Royal Navy, maintain its traditions, support those in need and all the while have a great time. **The RNA – Once Navy, Always Navy.**



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How to pass the board

THE Royal Navy has been at the forefront of boarding operations around the world for a very long time.

This however, does not mean the delivery of boarding training has not changed over the years. Rumours round the fleet seem to suggest that volunteers for the Ship's Boarding Team are pretty hard to come by. So, we thought that it would be pertinent to find out why this is the case. After all, shouldn't the excitement of fast roping off a helo or zipping around in seaboats, amongst other things, appeal to the average matelot?

The training team at the Board and Search School were seeing up to half a dozen students drop out of every course – typically at the beginning and invariably for failing to pass the Royal Navy fitness test...even though they are all in date for the RNFT when joining the course.

A bit of intelligence gathering appears to suggest that such failures could be deliberate rather than a lack of physical well-being... and a bit more intelligence gathering suggested the reason why was because Board and Search training was perceived to be akin to rocking up at Lympstone followed by three weeks of hell.

"People expect to be beasted from day one – to be bawled and shouted at as you run around carrying a metal bar above your head," explains Lt Chris Carter, Officer Commanding Board and Search School.

That misperception possibly stems from the fact that the training at HMS Raleigh comes under 1 Assault Group Royal Marines (and, it should be pointed out, has done so for a good three years...).

Royal Marines are involved in



all aspects of board and search training – any warship heading east of Suez is bolstered by the presence of Royal Marines from 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group. But, says Chris, the course isn't about turning dark blue into lovat green. It's about preparing men and women for the rigours of the operation – "and it's a real benefit to have the Royal Marines involved because of their wealth of experience and the equipment they have".

Every frigate and destroyer (plus capital ships – as evidenced by HMS Illustrious practising in the Med, pictured by PO(Phot) Ray Jones above) possesses a

15-strong boarding team for maritime security operations (the cover-all term for counter-piracy/smuggling/terrorism/drug-busting) which is a staple diet of pretty much all the RN does once its ships leave the jetty.

"It's important to sell board and search," says Chris – who's Royal Navy not Royal Marines and who has two decades' experience in all manner and forms of board and search – drug-busting in the Caribbean, embargo operations in the Gulf, the UN mission in the Adriatic among others.

"There's a bit of kudos about being in a boarding team – you are going into the unknown. I joined

for the adrenaline rush, jumping out of helicopters, that sort of thing. I've thoroughly enjoyed it – and would do it all over again."

If there are Chinese whispers about the difficulty of the three-week course at Raleigh's specialist facilities circulating the Surface Fleet, they weren't confirmed by the trainees passing through when we visited.

"I'm over 30. I'm a mother of two. If I can do this, anyone can. You don't have to be a Royal Marine to do this," stresses Lt Zoe Place, who'll soon be boarding officer on an RN frigate heading to the Middle East.

"It's actually been one of the

most enjoyable courses I've done. Very worthwhile. Possibly the best three weeks in 11 years, and there are certainly elements which will prove very useful for the rest of the ship's company."

But that's not to say that board and search is easy. It's not. Anyone who's climbed a rope ladder at sea can tell you it's dangerous. Throw body armour, radio, helmet, kit, weapons into the mix, plus the heat, especially East of Suez, and the 'unknown' of how a merchant crew might react, and you get the picture.

"The boardings themselves are challenging – climbing ladders with all that equipment, as is wearing the kit all day," Lt Place explains. "But it's also mentally challenging, particularly if you're the boarding officer."

"But if you prepare yourself, if you know it's going to be a challenge, and you know that the staff are here to help, you'll get through."

Royal Navy boarders do not do hostile/opposed boardings. That's down to the Commandos, if necessary. Sailors, however, do have to work alongside the Marines to conduct compliant boardings – namely the merchant crew are happy for the team to come onboard.

LH Nathan Bull, by day a comms expert in HMS Illustrious, went through board and search training with HMS Liverpool eight years ago. He returned to Raleigh ahead of the carrier's Cougar deployment.

"The course now is different – and better – than it was in 2004 or 2005. There's been a real change in culture, particularly in conducting the live boardings. Back then we searched a ship alongside. Doing it under way, securing the vessel,

that's very demanding – and much more realistic," says Nathan.

"Most of the people on Lusty who've done boarding ops say they've enjoyed it and I think that's filtered through the ship. It makes you more physically fit, more astute, more aware and observant of your surroundings."

"There's good camaraderie on the course – it's actually a good laugh."

ET(WE) Rachel 'Julie' Walters of HMS Tyne volunteered to be part of the fish ship's boarding party after seeing the team in her previous ship, HMS Somerset, in action.

"On Somerset being in the board and search team was considered to be a good thing," she says. "I watched them – they were always off doing something. I thought: 'I want to be a part of that.'"

"You start knowing nothing, things grow more interesting, the pace quickens and you come away really enjoying it. It's definitely different from the day job. And it is a good buzz."

"I have really enjoyed it. Some of it's been harder than expected – it's certainly physically demanding. But I'm tiny – so if I can do this, I reckon anyone can."

What might encourage more volunteers to step forward for board and search is recognition, some acknowledgement that what they do is different – and more dangerous – than some other duties.

"What people would perhaps like to see is a bit of recognition, maybe a badge or insignia to show that they've passed the course," says Lt Carter.

Nathan nods. "Insignia would not be a bad idea... and maybe £5 per boarding."

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THE TIME OF YOUR LIVES

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

January 1973

YOUNG apprentices in HMS Fisgard, the training establishment for artificers in Torpoint, were much encouraged by a visit from one of the top brass whom they could claim as their own.

Rear Admiral Charles Shepherd had started his career as an artificer apprentice in 1933, rising rapidly to become Rear Admiral. A division at Fisgard was named in his honour.

The 'Tiffany Admiral' (pictured right) spent most of his post-war career in research and development establishments and as a captain became head of the UK Polaris project, returning to his Fisgard roots to visit the young tiffies and present prizes.



January 1983

THE island of Malta observed a custom during World War 2 of presenting a bottle of gin to British ships and units which sank enemy ships.

The popular custom was revived and adapted in honour of the Falklands campaign by the makers of Plymouth Gin.

But instead of the single bottle, which was all that wartime austerity allowed, the distillers were much more generous.

To allow for the inflation of the intervening years, they presented a new case each of 100 per cent proof gin to the submarine HMS Conqueror and to HM ships Antrim, Alacrity, Brilliant and Endurance for their successful actions in the South Atlantic.

January 1993

ONE of the Royal Navy's most famous patches of gravel, the parade ground at Whale Island in Portsmouth, was soon to be no more as it was covered in tons of tarmac.

Used for cutlass drill in the 1890s and the focus for Divisions, Company and Battalion drill and State Ceremonial practice for the Gunnery School, the much-feared square had echoed to the roar of Parade Training Officers down the generations.

Many sailors recalled receiving the 'go round again' chits for failing to keep in step, or being sent round at the double, rifle above head, for the smallest misdemeanour.

We are sure that the very mention of its demise some 20 years later will provoke a similar flood of memories.

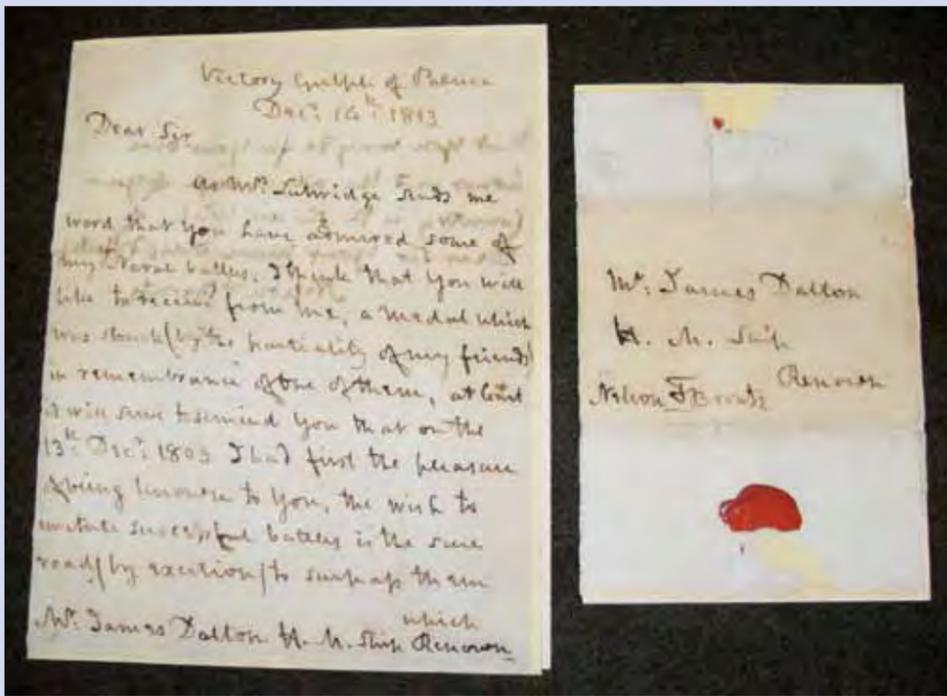
January 2003

AFTER more than 40 years in the same building at RNAS Cudrose, the RN Hydrographic, Meteorological and Oceanographic School (understandably shortened to 'the Met School') left its West Cornwall base to move to Devonport.

Merging with its sister school, the Met School was to become the Maritime Warfare School, Hydrographic, Meteorological and Oceanographic Training Group.

Events were planned to mark the end of 40 years' of training in the Cudrose school with a ceremonial met balloon release, reunion for former staff and a closing ceremony.

Trophy lives



ON JANUARY 15 1815, Lady Emma Hamilton died at Calais. Lady Hamilton is best remembered as the long-term mistress and great love of Admiral Horatio Lord Nelson, but was also a keen letter writer which has allowed many historians to gain key insights into her personal relationships.

Letter-writing was an important part of late 18th Century communication and can unlock some fascinating social conventions of the period.

We are very fortunate that much is known about this period of Naval history and letters have been a key resource available for this research.

Whilst a number of those serving on ships in the late 18th Century would not have been able to write, those that could are likely to have written many hundreds of letters throughout their lifetime.

Much like today, letters (particularly from senior Naval personnel) would have taken the form of business matters, formal instructions and general correspondence.

However, it shouldn't be forgotten that letters to loved ones were also popular and in some instances were the cause of newspaper gossip.

For Lady Hamilton and Admiral Lord Nelson, a pact was made to destroy their letters to one

another to save their daughter Horatia from society scandal.

It turned out that Nelson kept his promise, but Emma did not so the record of their affair is largely told from her side.

In acknowledgement of the importance of letter-writing within the Royal Navy during this period, this month's featured Trophy - **No 20842** - is a signed letter by Nelson and Bronte to Midshipman James Dalton of HMS Renown in 1803. It reads:

"As Mr Lutwidge sends me word that you have admired some of my Naval Battles, I think that you will like to receive from me a Medal which was struck (by the partiality of my friends) in remembrance of one of them; at least it will serve to remind you that on the 13th December 1803, I had first the pleasure of being known to you.

"The wish to imitate successful battles is the sure road (by exertion) to surpass them, which that you may do for your own honour and the advantage of your Country is the sincere Wish of, Dear Sir, your much obliged and faithful Nelson & Bronte."

The Nile Medal and letter were presented to Royal Naval College Britannia by Mr H E Young in 1932.

Deaths

Rear Admiral Linley 'Lyn' Middleton CB DSO. An Aviator. Commander and Captain of Whitley 1970 and escorted the Royal Yacht to Australia for the bicentenary celebrations of Captain Cook. Chief of Staff to FOCAS 1975-76, commanded Hermes during the Falklands war; ACNS(O) 1983-84 and FONAC 1984-87. December. Aged 84.

Lord Fisher DSC was called up 1941 as a naval rating and after training went to sea in a minesweeper operating off the Faroe Islands. Selected for officer training he volunteered for Coastal Forces and was appointed as the junior of three officers in Motor Torpedo Boat 624; based at Yarmouth MTB 624 was repainted in camouflage and in 1943 was protecting a coastal convoy off the Texel River on the Dutch coast. In May he was appointed First Lieutenant and was second-in-command of MTB 687, a Fairmile D class being built at Appledore. After work-up she went to Lerwick and Scapa Flow and was the 58th Flotilla leader's boat taking part in clandestine trips to Norway; on one occasion picking up 12 refugees from the attentions of the Gestapo and on another making a bold entry up the Skagerrak to land agents. After D-Day MTB 687 and her flotilla took part in numerous night actions against German light forces including their E-Boats; he was awarded the DSC for action off the Dutch coast on June 9. At the end of the war in Europe he was sent to Australia but soon returned, watchkeeping in the carrier Victorious and was demobbed as a Temporary Lieutenant RNVR in June 1945. October 21. Aged 91.

Cdr Tony Shaw. Volunteered for the FAA and following basic training conducted a basic flying course with the US Navy in Florida then returning to the UK he continued with training in the Hurricane with deck-landings. Whilst serving on board Attacker with his first operational squadron flying Seafires the ship was torpedoed by German aircraft in Gibraltar harbour. Later he was shot down supporting the Allied landings in the South of France, narrowly escaping death when he was trapped in his cockpit until he finally got clear but was captured by a German unit. His war ended in the Far East and he demobbed at aged 22, however, when the RN started recruiting once again he re-joined to fly. Whilst flying a Firebrand during his 152nd deck landing he became tangled in a web of cables. He completed the Empire Test Pilots Course at Boscombe Down and amongst many aircraft he test flew the Meteor, Sea Hawk and prototype helicopters including the Wasp. He commanded 700 NAS with the task of evaluating and developing helicopter operations on the back of small ships and was Lt Cdr Flying onboard Hermes.

David Whitaker. CPO MEA(L). Served 1958-85 at Figgard (58-60), Collingwood (60-64), Albion (64-66), Valiant (68-69), Salisbury (69-70), Albion (70-71), RMN KD Malaya (71-74), Hermes (79-82) and Bristol (83-84); also Collingwood, Dolphin and Sultan. October 24. Aged 70.

William 'Mac' Macnamara. PO(AEA) FAA. Served 1971-93 in Ambuscade, Daedalus and MASU. November 10. Aged 59.

Charles W 'Tug' Wilson. Leading Signaller. Joined St George 1945 then upon its closure to Ganges. Served Indomitable, Illustrious, St James, Rooke and Battleaxe. HMS Ganges Association. November 21. Aged 82.

'Nick' Cox. Stoker Mechanic. Served in Korean War. HMS Morecambe Bay Association. November 2012.

Richard C Cronin. S/A(A). Served 1943-46 Port Division Portsmouth. FAA Association Birmingham branch (1986-2012). November 3. Aged 86.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Brian Edward Lewis. Stoker First Class. Bandmaster of the Redcliffe Scout and Guide Band for many years and a proficient bugle player. Standard Bearer for South

Gloucestershire RNA until illness prevented him continuing. November 15. Aged 76.

Robert 'Darby' Allen. CERA. Served 1939-52 in Caledonia, Dido, Croome, Superb, Marlborough, Pembroke, Mars and Minerva. Eastbourne branch. November 16. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr R W Lonsdale. On board Cheviot 1953-55 and a member of the association. November 1.

Clarence 'Roy' Emmington. PO Torpedo Anti-submarine Instructor. Served 1938-53 in Emerald, Warspite, Resolution, Anson, Vindictive, Phoebe, Kenya, Gabbard, Vernon and Diamond. Chatham RNA and member of most of the above ships' associations. October 12. Aged 89.

Gordon Dorrington. Writer. Served 1945-48 in Phoenicia and C-in-C Med (Liverpool). Norwich branch. November 20. Aged 85.

Kenneth 'Ken' Sheppard. Served during WW2 aboard Ruler in the Far East. Life member of the recently decommissioned Dursley & District branch having served as both chairman and vice chairman. Transferred to the HQ roll after the decommissioning. November 27.

Forbes 'Bill' Kerr. Associate member of Chesham and Amersham branch. Committee member for many years. Former Bucks County Chairman of the Royal British Legion. October 31. Aged 83.

Roger Brunskill. AB during National Service 1953-55 onboard Pincher (minesweeper) on fishery protection duty off Iceland during the first Cod War and acted as ship's writer whilst onboard. Served at one time as a Boy Seaman at President. Part of the skeleton crew taking the carrier Indefatigable to Gare Loch. Algerines Association and Welfare officer for Harworth RNA. November 2. Aged 77.

George Graby. PO Engine Room Artificer. Served in Constance and Mariner. 8th Destroyer Association and Heacham RNA. November 9. Aged 86.

Thomas 'Tom' Weaver. Served 1942-46 in President V, Wagtail and Waxwing. Basildon branch. November 24.

Barney Barnjum. CPO Air Armourer. Served in Albion, Daedalus, Hermes, Lossiemouth, Victorious, Condor, Ark Royal and Whale Island. Bisley every year. Navy Champion shot mid 1960s. Chichester RNA and Armourers Association. November 12. Aged 82.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION
R 'Bob' Anker. AB UC3. Submarine service 1960-63 in Tiptoe, Token and Totem. Taunton branch. Aged 75.

Cdr N 'Norman' Barkaway. Served in submarines Tiptoe, Totem and Truncheon. Taunton branch. Aged 86.

J R 'Jack' Casemore MID. CPO Coxn. Submarine service 1941-46 in Unbeaten, Sealion, Surf, P556, H34, Unruly and Vigorous. South Kent branch. Aged 91.

D 'Dave' Findlay. Stoker 1. Submarine service 1943-46 in Vagabond and Taku. Merseyside branch. Aged 87.

T 'Tom' Garrod. CPO. Submarine service 1964-75 in Alaric, Alliance, Artemis, Aeneas, Finwhale, Oberon, Olympus and Otter. Poole and District branch. Aged 70.

J R 'John' Huntley. L/Sea LR3. Submarine service 1949-54 in Auriga and Andrew. Welsh branch. Aged 83.

A 'Alexander' Hustwayte. L/Ck. Submarine service 1954-57 in Springer and Solent. Barrow branch. Aged 80.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION
Joseph Oxley. Sig. Served aboard Antares. Aged 86.

Lt Owen Jenkins DSC. Served aboard Albacore, Fantome, Acute and Fly. Aged 94.
Eric Sibthorp. Sig. Served aboard Fantome. June 18.

Derek Barke. Ldg/Sto. Served aboard Michael. October 30. Aged 83.

Michael Garbutt. AB. Served aboard Truelove. November 10. Aged 77.

Assignments

Lt Cdr M J C Hember to be CO of HMS Clyde from February 20.

Sports lottery

November 17: £5,000 - PO M Barratt; £1,500 - AB L Hull; £500 - Lt J Allen.

November 24: £5,000 - AB R Ure; £1,500 - Col A McInerney; £500 - PO S Slater.

December 1: £5,000 - Sgt M Phillips; £1,500 - Lt Cdr D Rostrom; £500 - PO L Allen.

December 8: £5,000 - AB1 B Elder; £1,500 - CPO T Merkushev; £500 - CPO S Hathaway.

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

■ Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth. PO1 3HH or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice in via email, please include your full address and telephone number.

■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.

■ Please send in Reunions at least three months (preferably four) before the month of the event.

■ There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

■ Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

■ The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

■ Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

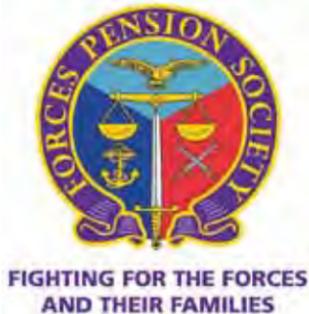
Why did the FPS not fight for the ten-year amnesty?

WHY did the Forces Pension Society not make strong representation to the MOD and Government to reduce the age requirement to allow those serving on AFPS75 and AFPS05 to remain on those schemes after April 2015 as has been the case with the Police and Fire Brigade?

The ten year 'amnesty' was not initially asked for by any of the public sector departments, but a free benefit given to each by the Government - something it was not legally obliged to do.

In order to treat each scheme on an equal footing it was deemed appropriate to set the point ten years from a pension scheme's 'Normal Retirement Age' (NRA), and any individual who was within that ten-year period would be exempt from compulsorily moving on to the new scheme.

The AFPS75 and AFPS05 schemes have a NRA of 55 - hence the age of 45 was set. The Reserve Pension Scheme has a NRA of 60, therefore individuals on that scheme had to be aged 50 or over on April 1 2012 in order to qualify. Individuals who are members of public sector schemes with a NRA of 65 had to be aged 55 or over on April 1 2012; and so on.



The Treasury has allowed the public sector pension schemes the opportunity of 'tapering' the age requirement, but with the express condition that the cost of providing that additional benefit would be removed from the overall value of the new pension scheme.

To our knowledge only two departments have opted to do this - the Police and the Fire Brigade. It is interesting that, like the Armed Forces, the public sectors with huge Union representation

and clout have declined this offer.

They have determined that since the new scheme is going to be less valuable than the current final salary schemes that it would be very short-sighted to reduce the value of that scheme even further (a scheme that has to be attractive enough as a retention incentive for the next 25 years) in order to allow a few current employees the opportunity of remaining on their current schemes.

Furthermore, it does not matter how far back the tapering goes, there will always be somebody who just misses the cut-off point and feels hard done by.

Therefore, in this case the FPS takes the view that the MOD acted quite properly in better looking after the future benefits of members of the Armed Forces than might otherwise have been the case, and supports it in that decision.

All Armed Forces personnel, serving or retired, are eligible to join the Forces Pension Society and enjoy the benefits such membership offers. If you are not already a member, and would like to join, visit the website at www.forcespensionsociety.org or call 020 7820 9988.

ADVERTORIAL

Entries for the Deaths column and Swap Drafts in February's Noticeboard must be received by **January 14**

Talking Navy News goes digital

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Ask Jack

Battle of the Atlantic 70: During this year many RN and Merchant Navy associations and societies will be involved in the commemorations of the Battle of the Atlantic being held throughout the UK and overseas. If you would like your association or society represented on the RN website for the event, please email: royalnavyatlantic@gmail.com.

HMT St Abbs: I am compiling a biography of my grandfather AB William Cornford. Looking for family members of the men who went down with or survived the sinking of the St Abbs off Dunkirk on June 1 1940. Please contact David Cornford, grandson of AB William Cornford (1899-1940) who lost his life on St Abbs at davidcornford@hotmail.com or 1b Rockingham Street, Kew, VIC 3101, Australia or phone +61 3 435 799 721.

Reunions

APRIL 2013

HMS Hermes Association: Reunion at Bosworth Hall, Market Bosworth from April 4 to 8. For further information contact Jim Loveday at jwloveday@hotmail.com or tel: 020 8646 1441.

HMS Dunkirk Association: Annual reunion April 20 at the Russell Hotel, Weymouth. For more information contact John Carroll at jcarroll@jandecarroll.plus.com or tel: 01692 678721.

MAY 2013

RNA Area 2: Delegates and Observers' meeting dates for 2013 to be held at the Union Jack Club are May 4, August 24 and November 23. Committee Meetings at Minster Working Men's Club, Isle of Sheppey on January 12, April 13, July 13 and October 12. Provisional date for the biennial Standard bearer's competition is May 11 at Sheerness East Working Men's Club. For more information contact Area 2 Secretary, Mick Worthington at mickRNA0603@aol.com or tel: 01795 875084.

HMS Dreadnought Association: The reunion is being held from May 18 to 19. All ex-serving members of the boat including their families and friends are invited to join us for this weekend, being held at the Bosworth Hotel and spa <http://www.britanniahotels.com/hotels/bosworth/>. If you wish to attend contact us by email as some hackers are trying to break into the website through the form, which has now been removed, and send your deposit of £25 per head by cheque to Peter 'Florie' Ford at 7 Van Diemens Pass, Canvey Island, Essex SS8 7QD or email: info@hmsdreadnought.co.uk. Please do not book direct with the hotel as the prices quoted are based on a block booking of 80+ people persons.

HMS Opportune Association: Reunion to be held at the Elgin Hotel, Blackpool from June 17 to 21. All former shipmates and friends are welcome. For further details contact Anthony Joyner at anthonyjoyner@talktalk.net or tel: 01442 245281.

SEPTEMBER 2013

Lascaris (Malta) Association: Reunion at the Mercure Hotel, Swansea SA7 9EG from September 23 to 27. Contact Jim Goode at lascaris@bt.com or write to Four Winds, Rock Lane, Ludlow, SY8 1SF for more details.

OCTOBER 2013

HMS Tartar Association: 10th Annual Reunion at the Three Queens Hotel, Burton on Trent from October 4 to 7. Old and new members and spouses are most welcome for the reunion, which is always a great occasion to relive our time on board, so make the effort to come and join us. During the weekend a trip has been organised to the National Arboretum to dedicate a plaque in memory of all who served in HMS Tartar. For further details please contact Des & Linda Powell at linpove@btopenworld.com or tel: 07866 928496.

HMS Ulster All Commissions 1943-80: Reunion will take place from October 11 to 14 at the Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford. Details of cost and the weekend package can be obtained from Norrie Millen at norrie@candoo.com or visit the website at <http://www.candoo.com/ulsternorrie/> or ulster50.html or tel: 01626 779409 or write to 46 Gloucester Road, Teignmouth, Devon TQ14 9HN.

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Duke of York – looking back with pride

REFLECTING on the eventful Autumn term, the Duke of York school can look back with pride.

HMS Kent visited Dover during September and CCF Naval cadets were lucky to be invited on board to have a tour (pictured right).

The school was also invited to provide a small guard of honour as part of a parade with the crew, unveiling a new memorial for the Channel Dash Airmen. The Channel Dash was an attempt to stop German ships breaking through into the North Sea in 1942.

The school choir was delighted to perform with the greatly acclaimed group The Soldiers on their new CD *The Soldiers* which was released in October.

The Soldiers visited the school for the half term inter-house singing competition and much media interest followed with BBC South East Today and ITV Meridian showing news reports and The Soldiers and choir being invited on ITV's *The Lorraine Show*.

In December, the choir then went on to sing at the ITV's *Night of Heroes 2012 – The Sun Military Awards* singing with



Britain's got Talent stars Charlotte and Jonathan.

Autumn is a time to welcome new pupils and having diligently practised their parade skills and being presented with their blue berets, they have now experienced their first full parade on Remembrance Sunday where they marched proudly alongside

many returning 'Old Boys' of the school.

It has been a very successful and exciting term for the whole of the school community, truly reflecting the busy and inclusive nature of the school.

Please visit the website www.doyrms.com for more information.



Trinity CCF remembers

THE Cadets from the Trinity Combined Cadet Force were proud to be a strong part of two services of Remembrance recently, firstly in the Great Hall of Exeter University, where they were the only Combined Cadet Force represented at the Devon Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance.

They were then very well represented by both the Army and Navy Sections who proudly paraded at the Teignmouth town Remembrance service at the War Memorial on Sunday November 11 where Lance Corporal Kharis Hill, proudly wearing her Grandfather's military medals, laid a wreath with Cadet Cox'n Sandy James.

Queen's College tops the Taunton exam tables

QUEEN'S College is the top academic school in Taunton based on the 2012 A-level and GCSE results. With nearly 80 per cent of A-level papers gaining the sought after A*, A and B grades needed for places at top universities and all five successful Oxbridge students being able to confirm their places, the school really is flying high.

"We are a warm and caring school community, committed to fulfilling the potential of each individual. We aim for excellence and high standards in all our activities," said Headmaster Chris Alcock.

"It's very important to me that I still do some classroom teaching and I make it my business to know and support each and every pupil in the school."

The school is also well known for excellent results in the creative and performing arts with three art students this year going onto the Oxbridge of the art world, Central St Martin's.

Other students have gone on to drama schools

such as the Bristol Old Vic and the facilities for drama and dance are exceptional. There is a wide variety of musical groups on offer in school and talented musicians are, in addition, encouraged to become members of external groups such as the National Youth Orchestra of Great Britain and to take part in international music tours.

Surrounded by the beautiful Exmoor and Dartmoor national parks it is not surprising that Queen's is a centre of excellence for outdoor pursuits with opportunities for students to ride, canoe, dive, sail and mountain bike.

Sport is strong too with national success in hockey, horse riding, athletics and swimming and a new Hockey Academy led by Olympic athlete, Ian Haley, was launched in September last year.

To come and visit contact admissions@queenscollege.org.uk or telephone 01823 272559 – you would be most welcome.

www.queenscollege.org.uk

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Opportunity for Naval families at RHS

EVERY parent wants to give their child the very best start possible, but in these shifting times, choices are difficult, unpredictable and sometimes limited.

However for children of Navy families – whether their parents are currently serving, or they have maritime connections that date back to their grandparents – there is a unique opportunity open to them to attend one of the country's leading independent boarding schools.

As serving members of the armed services parents may be eligible for MOD Continuity of Education Allowance where the fees are set at the minimum parental contribution of around £1,900 per annum.

In addition, through its parent charity Greenwich Hospital, the Royal Hospital School is able to offer generous means-tested bursaries to the children of families with backgrounds in the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Merchant Navy, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and some other maritime professions.

Set in 200 acres of beautiful Suffolk countryside, the Royal Hospital School is a unique place to live and learn. Close pastoral care ensures that the School is a happy place where every child feels nurtured, supported and secure.

Small class sizes allow close individual attention and every child has life-changing opportunities to achieve their full potential in the classroom, on the sports field and, perhaps most importantly,

in their personal growth.

The accommodation and facilities are quite outstanding. Boarding houses are thoughtfully planned to provide a 'home-from-home' where children can stamp their own individuality with posters, photographs and toys and enjoy their free time playing games, table tennis or snooker, watching DVDs or simply listening to music or chatting with friends.

Music is part of the fabric of school life and the impressive new Music School is home to orchestras, bands, choirs and even rock groups.

In addition, the school has a superb library, ICT suite, Art, Design and Technology Centre and the level of state-of-the-art resources you would expect to find in a leading independent school, all offering an amazing opportunity to children, many of whom might never have dreamed of having so much at their fingertips.

Beyond the classroom, 96 acres of playing fields, an all-weather pitch, extensive indoor and outdoor courts, a heated swimming pool, superb gymnasium and a nine-hole golf course offer plenty of scope to burn off youthful energy.

The next Open Morning is Saturday May 11 2013 or for more information contact the Admissions Office on 01473 326210 or admissions@royalhospitalschool.org or visit www.royalhospitalschool.org

Scholarship day planned for February at Perrott Hill

PERROTT Hill aims to help each individual pupil achieve their full potential. Against a background of traditional values, Perrott Hill has the time and space to ensure that your child succeeds.

Class sizes are small and all children will be given the individual attention necessary to ensure that they flourish.

Academic success is cultivated at Perrott Hill and the pupils gain a breadth and depth of knowledge that far exceeds the National Curriculum.

Sport plays a large part in school life with coaching in rugby, hockey/football and cricket for the boys and netball, hockey and

rounders for the girls taking place five days per week; all children will also have the opportunity to represent the school.

Music, Drama and Art are at the fore and all children will perform on stage every year and the majority will also play one or more musical instrument.

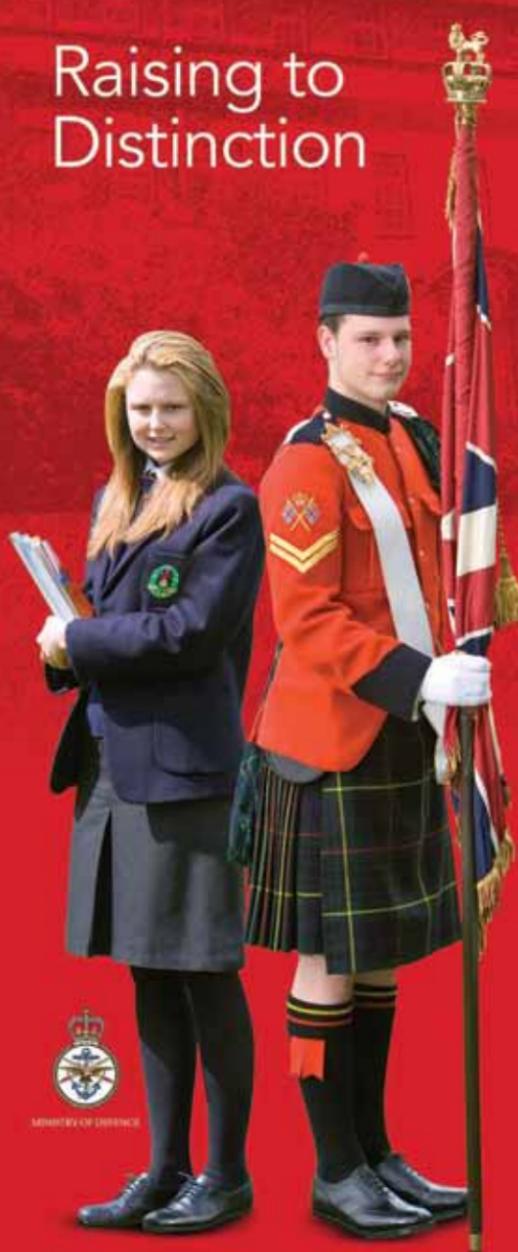
Perrott Hill also endeavours to give children the opportunity to experience as many different activities as possible and we will continue to allow snow ball fights, playing conkers, building dens in the woods, having camp fires and going on excursions be it to Paris, Cornwall or Brownsea Island.

Perrott Hill Scholarship Day will be held on Friday February 1 2013.

If you have a budding young academic, thespian, a talented musician, a sportsman, artist or indeed someone who shines in many areas please apply now for an application form. The scholarships are available to pupils currently in Years 3 to 7:

Please call Susan Cleary at Perrott Hill School on 01460 72051 or email admissions@perrotthill.com for an application form.

Scholarships awarded are for the academic year commencing September 2013.



Raising to Distinction



Queen Victoria School

**Admissions Deadline
Tues 15 Jan 2013**

Queen Victoria School in Dunblane 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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Families are welcome to find out more by contacting Admissions on +44 (0) 131 310 2927 to arrange a visit.

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Severn wonders for Exploit

CONJURE up an image of a warship visiting her affiliated town and you might imagine a frigate alongside a major UK port such as Liverpool, London or Newcastle.

Now think smaller – P2000 rather than Type 23, and Sharpness Docks, 35 miles up the Severn, instead of the Mersey – and you have HMS Exploit's visit to her affiliated town of Berkeley.

The visit was overlaid on a typical sea weekend for the University RN Unit, which serves Birmingham's centres of higher learning; a dozen students embarked for the trip from Exploit's home at Penarth Marina, near Cardiff.

Once in Sharpness, a couple of miles north of Exploit's affiliated town, the boat and crew enjoyed a full programme – ship open to visitors and tours for uniformed organisations

such as the Guides and Cubs, whilst an official reception was held for VIPs.

Various civic dignitaries were presented with Exploit brass coins to remind them of the visit.

"The town challenged us to a game of skittles on Saturday night but sadly we lost. Their team included the mayor and skittles veterans, whilst we were all novices – but we put up a strong fight," said Amy Barnes, senior midshipman for the weekend.

Mid Holly Griffiths, supply officer and head chef for the visit, added: "It was a logistical challenge buying, preparing and cooking the food for the 40 people invited to our official reception. We also forgot to order extra glasses, so the boss's wife

had to do an emergency glasses shop!"

Exploit welcomed 200 members of the public aboard on a bitterly-cold December day.

"The passage back down the River Severn on a crisp December day with blue skies overhead was particularly spectacular as we passed underneath both Severn Bridges," said LET(WE) Ned Kelly, P167's weapon engineer officer.

"The students were able to practise their coastal navigation skills in the Severn whilst the CO navigated down the narrow channel."

For Exploit's ship's company this was the sixth and final sea weekend of the pre-Christmas term; they're now going on leave after a busy term and high-tempo Olympic operations off Weymouth.

"The weekend showcased the best of Exploit and Birmingham URNU," said CO Lt Si Shaw.

"From my Naval nurses to engineering bursars – and not forgetting my stalwart standing ship's company of five – they all supported my command aim, but more importantly had fun.

"We've reinforced our links with our affiliated town and enjoyed the final sea weekend of term."

"It's extremely important to spread the Naval message in areas around the UK not normally visited by the larger Fleet units.

"Exploit and her 20 ship's company did just that on behalf of Cdre Miller – our Naval Regional Commander in the West of England – when we visited Berkeley."

● HMS Exploit sails downriver under the Second Severn Crossing

RECRUITMENT



COMBINED CADET FORCE AREA INSTRUCTOR (ROYAL NAVY)



Job Title: COMBINED CADET FORCE AREA INSTRUCTOR (ROYAL NAVY) (CCF) AI (RN)
Rank: CPO (FTRS)
Location: Scotland and Northern Ireland, South East, London North East, South West, London South East, North West, North East, East Midlands, West
Salary: £30,600.24 - £39,837.12 per annum
Type: Full time, 40 hours per week

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The appointees should have excellent interpersonal, organisational and time management skills with a high degree of self motivation and personal integrity, have the ability to critically analyse complex information, all complemented by good written and verbal communication skills.

Supporting the specific training elements of the CCF RN proficiency syllabus you will be responsible for:

- Assisting and advising CCF (RN) officers on content, planning and execution of CCF (RN) cadet training whilst promoting understanding of RN values and ethos within CCF (RN) sections.
- Attending training days / evenings / field days / for CCF RN Sections within the allocated area as regularly as possible and/or as designated by CCF RN HQ and/or where specific skills and qualifications are required to ensure safe training system is in place.
- Promoting CCF (RN) camps, courses and Service facilities afloat and ashore.
- Providing input to the compilation of Performance Management reporting on CCF (RN) Sections.
- Assisting with the planning and execution of CCF (RN) HQ administered camps and courses.
- Supporting the RN Section in preparation for, and attendance at, CCF Biennial Inspections and other functions as directed by CCF (RN) HQ.
- Promoting understanding of RN values and ethos within CCF (RN) sections.
- Liaising with the NRC HQ to identify opportunities for cadet involvement in their area.

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● AC Sian Cummins
Picture: Iain Sharpe Photography

Sian is best cadet in Southwark

AC SIAN Cummins has been awarded the accolade of Southwark unit's outstanding cadet in 2012 by the Worshipful Company of Scientific Instrument Makers.

Sian's certificate and medallion were presented to her by the new Deputy Master of the Company, former Master Keith Etherington, at the Company's Admission Court Dinner at Glaziers Hall, overlooking the Thames.

The cadet also had the honour of proposing The Immortal Memory. In addition, cadets from TS Cossack mounted a carpet guard for the dinner, which was attended by a number of distinguished guests including the Ambassador of Switzerland, Anton Thalmann, and the journalist and former politician Daniel Finkelstein.

New training

THE Sea Cadet Corps has launched its new training programme, which has been issued in hard copy to all units.

Staff throughout the organisation have put much hard work into the initiative in a bid to create a programme that will help cadets and units get the most out of the Corps.

The programme was designed in partnership with volunteers and cadets, and the result is a modern, professional and engaging learning resource, offering a varied and enjoyable experience that will remain at the heart of Sea Cadet activities for many years to come.

We will look more closely at the new programme in future editions of *Navy News*.

Volunteers praised

THE MSSC's Annual Court saw five volunteers awarded the Captain's Medal for 50 years of service, bringing to 36 the total of dedicated volunteers who have been awarded the medal in the past year.

Other volunteers were awarded the Sea Cadet Medal for Meritorious Service – Lt Cdr (SCC) Paul Perry RNR, CPO (SCC) Ian Richards, Syd Reeve, Lt Cdr (SCC) David Collins RNR, Lt Cdr (SCC) Norman Wood RNR, Lt (SCC) Ron Perchard RNR and Lt Cdr (SCC) Derek Payne RNR, former Director of Music.

Westerham plea

WESTERHAM unit needs some help.

The small but active unit in Kent only formed in 2005, and the unit management committee, staff and cadets – including a junior section – needs some assistance.

The unit needs both a secretary and treasurer, as well as other people who could assist with organising fundraising ideas and work with the remaining committee to ensure the continued progress of the unit.

Anyone interested in helping the youth of the community who has a few hours a month to give to their local Sea Cadets should contact the current unit chair Ana Hughes, on 01959 701820, to discuss the openings available.

Ana said this is a great opportunity to help give the youth of today better skills, a sense of team work and be involved in the great work that the Sea Cadets do.

Barnsley group check out Navy lifestyle

CADETS and instructors from Barnsley unit travelled to HMS Raleigh in Cornwall for an insight into life in the Royal Navy.

The group, which was hosted by the Royal Navy's New Entry training school, took part in activities such as the assault course and had an opportunity to talk about basic training in the Senior Service.

There were also visits to the Royal Navy Heritage Centre to learn about the history of the Royal Navy.

During the week cadets toured the Torpoint establishment and visited various departments,

including the three churches, the Seamanship School, the Submarine School and stores.

Cadets had a full morning on the SD Newhaven conducting harbour training, which included a chance to drive the boat, a tour of Devonport Naval Base and the harbour and the opportunity to visit the engine room.

A particular treat was the opportunity to take part in training on the Replenishment At Sea (RAS) rig, used to train members of the Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) in the transfer of stores whilst at sea.

This was of particular interest because of

the town's affiliations with supply ship RFA Fort Victoria.

Whilst on the RAS Rig cadets also learnt about anchoring and worked together as an anchor party.

Cadets also took part in sea survival training – thankfully in the swimming pool – learning the correct way to use lifejackets and liferafts as well as how to rescue a man overboard.

The week was rounded off with a trip to Plymouth Pavilions for an ice-skating session.

Congratulations are due to AC Nathan Pitcher, adjudged the Cadet of the Week.



This looks familiar...

SEA cadet instructor APO (SCC) Campbell Douglas was sorting through MOD surplus uniforms at Irvine unit when something caught his eye.

His attention was drawn to some familiar handwriting – and on closer inspection the name, number and the Cold War-era windproof working jacket which bore them were all familiar (above).

"I was totally amazed to see my own handwriting on the label," said Campbell.

"The last time I saw the coat was in 1989 when I handed it in after promotion to officer in the RNR.

"I got it when that pattern first came out around the mid-1980s.

"It made a great change from the crackly plastic macs and long raincoats we had.

"Thousands upon thousands of these must have gone through the system since then, so for this one to survive and come my way is unreal.

"It's just a shame it doesn't fit me any more..."

It was not the first time Campbell's military past has turned up in his present – in the 1990s he found a jersey in an Edinburgh clothes shop that he wore as a 14-year-old cadet in the CCF Royal Navy section.

The former Leading Medical Assistant and sub lieutenant at HMS Claverhouse, the old training centre of the Forth Division RNR, added: "I think I should start playing the Lottery."

CCF honour

A TEACHER who has overseen the training of cadets for 30 years has been honoured for his dedication.

Nick Carter has been Commander of the Combined Cadet Force at Newcastle-under-Lyme School since 2003, but began his association with the force 21 years before when he joined the school as a biology teacher in 1982.

Mr Carter was presented with the Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire's Award by Ian Dudson at the school's Founders' Day service.

Highlights of Mr Carter's career include planning more than 50 cadet camps, taking cadets to sea in HMS Scott in 2003, and running a national CCF warfare weekend at HMS Raleigh since 1999.

Surprise ending to Bavarian adventure

ONE of Barnsley's cadets travelled a little further south than HMS Raleigh (see above) to take part in some training.

LC Rosie Clark, 15, was one of a dozen or so cadets chosen to travel to the Naval Outdoor Centre Germany – formerly known as Bavarian Surprise.

Here are Rosie's thoughts on her training:

"I was thrilled to be accepted to attend Bavarian Surprise, and had no idea what to expect," she said.

"This once-in-a-lifetime experience started at the Dover ferry terminal with a bubble of nerves and excitement, ready to

set off to Calais.

"When at the terminal I met the others who were going with me to Bavaria in the south of Germany.

"There was a mixed group of people from Somerset to Chatham, Yorkshire to Eastbourne, and we were all ready to go.

"When we got to Calais we boarded the coach for a 13-hour ride, which was full of laughs and we would never forget.

"Finally we reached our destination to find the mountains were full of knee-deep snow and the streets covered in white and it was so picturesque and breathtaking.

"A snowball fight started as

soon as we got off the coach – this was where the fun really started.

"On the first day we visited one of the world's largest indoor climbing centres, with one of the walls over 30ft high and one of the biggest bouldering walls in Europe.

"That day we tried most of the climbs and pushed ourselves by doing solo climbing, which means you have to clip yourself on whilst climbing on the move.

"My adrenaline that day was pumping.

"The aim for the week was to scare yourself more than three times a day, and believe me, I did.

"Day two was the cultural visit day, when we went to one of the

infamous concentration camps – Dachau.

"I found this extremely interesting, learning more about the conditions and lives of the prisoners.

"I think we all found the experience distressing and interesting, and would recommend it to others.

"Later that day we did also do speed running through snow which made everyone happier.

"Many scares happened for me on the third day, when we did abseiling over a 15ft drop.

"To get the day going we had to climb up some deep gorges and walked past some beautiful scenery. "At one point I stopped on the walk for a break and noticed a massive cliff in front of me, which was already seriously high up.

"My friends informed me that this cliff was the one I had to go down. Many scares later I summoned up the courage to do the drop.

"We then moved on to our team events, which was where we had to trust each other to move on.

"On one of the trust exercises we were blindfolded and were led around a maze.

"Day four was a test of my strength and thinking matter.

"I was going up a cliff face in Austria attached to wire with a harness – a method called *klettersteig*, which means 'climbing path' in German – and honestly I have never had to think of my life so much.

"When at the top the pride you have for yourself and your team mates is amazing – I would love to do this again someday just for the heart racing feeling I got.

"The fifth day was our last in Germany and the hotel had planned a great surprise – they took us to the German version of 'Go Ape', which was high in the mountains. We had to get a ski lift to get to it!

"It was so much fun testing how high we could go and how much we tested each other with fear.

"At the top of the mountain was a traditional German restaurant which served apple strudel and curried chips and Bavarian sausage.

"One last surprise was the trip down the mountain, which was on the world's longest single-seated rollercoaster, which was wicked."

Travelling near and far

THREE cadets from City of Liverpool unit have travelled over 20,000 miles thanks to the opportunities given to them on the 2012 Sea Cadet International Exchange programme.

LC Gabrielle Rock started the journey by travelling nearly 11,000 miles in April to Sydney.

During the 17-day exchange Gabrielle, along with Sea Cadets from units across the world, undertook activities which included firefighting and obstacle courses, and she even tried her hand at surfing on Bondi Beach.

Gabrielle took part in the Anzac Day Parade, saying it was the best experience she had ever had.

Newport Naval Base, Rhode Island, welcomed POC Peter Bowen in June.

Peter spent the 4th of July on board the USS Massachusetts watching fireworks, and before he headed back across the Atlantic there was the chance for some sightseeing in New York and to catch a Broadway show.

After arriving back in the UK Peter spent just three nights in his own bed before heading off to SCTC Caledonia, where he completed the six-week Trainee Instructor course – part of what he said was "the best summer ever."

LC Lois Rowlands travelled more than 5,500 miles to Seoul in South Korea, where she had the opportunity with other Sea Cadets to try local delicacies such as *kimchi* – South Korea's national dish, consisting of numerous variations of fermented vegetables.

Lois said she never imagined that she would have had an experience like that when she first joined the Sea Cadets.

Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Jake Orr RNR said: "It's a fantastic opportunity to have one cadet going on an international exchange, but to have three cadets selected to represent the United Kingdom in one year is unbelievable and a once-in-a-lifetime experience for them all.

"All three cadets completed personal diaries and will have happy memories of their travels for years to come."

Rather closer to home, a detachment of Royal Marines Cadets were presented with an



● From left – POC Peter Bowen, LC Lois Rowlands and LC Gabrielle Rock with reminders of their respective visits

intriguing challenge.

"When PO (SCC) Colin James asked us if City of Liverpool Royal Marine Cadets wanted to participate in the Cheshire Ring Race we didn't know what we were in for," said MC2 Megan O'Hare.

"The Cheshire Ring Race is a 97.1-mile race along five canals, with 92 locks to navigate through and three tunnels in just 24 hours, testing our stamina and paddling efficiency.

"We trained for the race at Naval Regional HQ Northern England, and myself and three other cadets were selected to represent the detachment.

"Three months of hard paddling later and we were ready.

"The race started on Saturday morning on the Macclesfield Canal.

"Our support team consisted of our Detachment Commander, chairman and other staff members from the unit, as well as the essential parents cheering us on!

"24 hours, 59 minutes and 13 seconds later we finished back where we started.

"We had paddled in darkness, rain, dealt with rises and falls in locks and navigated an intricate system of canals in quick time.

"We finished first in our class and are the first Sea Cadet unit in the country to compete in this marathon.

"We were happy, tired and relieved to have all finished in one piece.

"Next year we hope to better our time and beat 24 hours. Also, City of Liverpool Sea Cadets have promised to race us..."



● TORBAY unit cadets pipe guest of honour Capt Jerry Kyd, of Britannia Royal Naval College, aboard at the Torbay Yacht Club for the unit's Trafalgar Night dinner – from left, LC Veasey, AC Dicken and AC Sheehan. To the left is Lt (SCC) Stephan Skingle RNR. LC Veasey has also been appointed the Lord Lieutenant of Devon's Cadet

Stevenage party visits battlefields

A PARTY of cadets and staff from Stevenage unit paid their respects to the victims of World War 1 when they toured the battlefields of France and Belgium shortly before Remembrance Day.

And the highlight for the group of 34 from TS Andromeda was their participation in the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate at Ypres, a city which was virtually destroyed as a succession of battles raged over possession of the Ypres Salient.

The ceremony has taken place every evening since 1928 in memory of the fallen in the Great War.

Under their bandmaster George Bollen, the Stevenage contingent marched through the Menin Gate, which records the names of almost 55,000 Allied warriors who died but have no known grave, and the band played bugles, drums and glockenspiels in front of a crowd of some 300 people.

A wreath was laid by Lt Cdr (SCC) Margaret Coates RNR, a former Commanding Officer of the unit.

The tour was organised by PO (SCC) Lynn Jones, the present Officer-in-Charge of the unit.

They were presented with a hand drawn print of Jack Cornwall by a local artist.

John 'Jack' Travers Cornwall – often known as Boy Cornwall – is remembered for his gallantry at the Battle of Jutland when, at the age of 16, he remained at his post at one of cruiser HMS Chester's 5.5in gun mountings, despite the fact the rest of the gun crew had been killed by shells and shrapnel, and Cornwall himself was mortally wounded.

The ship retired from the Jutland and took her wounded back to Immingham, but Cornwall died in hospital in Grimsby just hours later.

He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross – the third-youngest recipient.

Cash raised for children

WALTHAM Forest Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets raised more than £100 for Children in Need.

The 35 cadets held a pyjama parade night, displaying a wide range of night attire, and the relaxed evening included some PT.

AC Rampere said: "I had a brilliant night with my friends taking part in this event."

Unit Commanding Officer, CPO Burns (SCC) said he was very proud of the cadets and staff who took part.

Community award for Beccles

BECCLES unit has won a community award from their county council for their contribution to the local community.

The unit won an "Improve and Prove" award from Suffolk Foundation and Suffolk County Council – and represented a £2,500 boost to the unit's coffers.

The presentation was made by Cllr Colin Spence, the county council's cabinet member for Public Protection, on a visit to the unit with trustees of the Foundation.

Unit management committee vice chair Loraine Loffstadt, accepted the cheque on behalf of Beccles.

The award has come after the hard work by the committee, staff and cadets in helping to run not only the Beccles Duck Race and the Beccles Christmas late-night shop, but during this year also the two-day Beccles Jubilee celebrations.

Continuing the theme of community events the unit, along with Norwich and Ipswich Co-op

Leader ship training



● Cadets move towards the bow of Leader as she heads towards their unit's home town of Teignmouth in Devon

A DOZEN cadets from Teign Valley unit spent a week aboard a historic sailing ship during the unit's autumn sea camp.

But it was not the familiar lines of the Sea Cadet Corps' flagship, the brig TS Royalist, that greeted the youngsters and the two adult instructors who accompanied them.

Instead the cadet party, which ranged in age from 11 to 17, spent five nights on board the Trinity Sailing Foundation's heritage Brixham trawler Leader.

Despite rough sea conditions along the coast at the beginning of the week, the voyage was deemed a great success, with four cadets obtaining RYA Certification in Competent Crew while eight earned certification in Start Yachting (sail cruising).

Whilst on board the 120-year-old ketch-rigged trawler the cadets had to undertake all duties associated with sailing a 110ft



● Royal Navy WO1 Ian Hurst shares a joke with cadets undergoing seamanship tests on board Leader for their RYA certification and advancement to Senior Cadet under the Corps training syllabus

ship, including working as a team to sail and steer Leader, the preparation of and cooking all meals for the entire crew, cleaning the communal areas – including the heads – scrubbing the decks

and making safe all ropes.

The training voyage took in the South Devon coast from Torbay to Rame Head in Cornwall, with visits and overnight stops to Cawsand Bay, Devonport Naval

Base, the River Tamar, the Yealm Estuary, the River Dart and Britannia Royal Naval College.

The voyage finished back at Brixham on the first Friday in November, with the ship going alongside around 9am and the cadets setting about tidying up before they trooped ashore at midday.

The cadets travelled with WO1 Ian Hurst, the unit's Officer-in-Charge who works at the RN Submarine School at HMS Raleigh, and Civilian Instructor Eric Gamble, a retired RFA 3rd Officer.

Leader was one of the largest of her type ever built but she spent most of her working life – from 1907 until 1985 – in Scandinavian waters, first as a fishing boat and latterly as a sail training vessel.

In 1985 she was used for sailing charter holidays in Scotland, but in 1996 returned to South Devon, first from Dartmouth then Brixham since 1999.

First for Channel Islands cadets

THE Remembrance weekend was a special one for a group of two dozen Jersey and Guernsey Sea Cadets and Royal Marine Cadets.

The 24 youngsters – 14 of them from Guernsey – took part in the National Remembrance Parade at the Cenotaph in London.

Some of them also attended the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall.

"This was the first time that the Channel Islands have represented the Sea Cadet Corps at the Remembrance Parade," said Lt Cdr (SCC) Rob Davison RNR,

the Commanding Officer of HMS Jersey.

"It was an absolute honour and a privilege to have been asked.

"The parade is even more poignant with the Channel Islands having been occupied during World War 2.

"The experience the cadets will gain from this weekend will certainly remain with them for the rest of their lives."

At the Festival of Remembrance, televised live on BBC 1, LC Morgan Johnson, from Guernsey, carried the Corps standard into the arena.

Four of his colleagues also had prominent roles – AC Angela Truffitt and OCs Joseph Bourgaize, Marcus Rees and Tiegann Carre represented the Corps in the Muster, with Joseph also forming part of the carpet guard to welcome the arrival of

the Chelsea Pensioners.

On Remembrance Sunday all the cadets participated in the ceremony and parade at the Cenotaph, where they laid a wreath.

The march-past continued into Horse Guards Parade where Prince Edward took the salute.

LCpl Ross Whitelaw, of Jersey unit, said: "It was an honour to be there and to represent the Sea and Royal Marines cadets in London."

As well as the main events, the cadets enjoyed educational visits.

Trips were arranged by Sea Cadet Headquarters to the RNLI Thames Lifeboat Station, the Imperial War Museum, the Field of Remembrance outside Westminster Abbey and private tours of the Houses of Parliament.

For those not involved at the Royal Albert Hall, there was a chance to watch the Lord Mayor's Show.

Portrush win CVQO honours

CADETS from Portrush unit have received certificates proclaiming their achievements through the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation (CVQO).

The internationally-respected qualification mixes theory and practical elements with an emphasis on leadership, teamwork, communications, problem-solving and fitness.

The syllabus includes professional CV preparation, interviewing techniques, communication, first aid, adventure training, health and nutrition.

Membership of Portrush unit helped the ten youngsters acquire a diverse range of practical skills, giving them opportunities to develop self-discipline, and taught them how to work independently, as part of a team or to lead others.

CVQO offer cadets the chance to earn independently recognised qualifications which will be of real value to them as they enter college or university or step into the world of work.

Achieving BTEC and CVQO standard in Public Services is no mean feat, particularly when the work is juggled with school, family and social commitments – although the Portrush cadets welcomed the challenge and worked hard to achieve this valuable award.

Congratulations also go to the adult volunteer instructors who work tirelessly to ensure the success of such schemes.

Portrush cadets said goodbye to a man who has devoted almost 50 years to TS Duke of York.

Graham McLaughlin has stepped aside after joining the unit as a cadet then moving up to adult volunteer.

Graham was given a farewell nautical token from the unit, a specially-commissioned, handcrafted woven willow sculpture of a fouled anchor, and a nautically-themed card.

Buckets at short notice

FOR the past three years the MK Dons football club have held an Armed Forces parade at their stadium as a tribute to the Forces, with a different charity benefiting every year.

This year was the turn of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust.

The parade is attended by the local Territorial Army unit (the Rifles), cadet forces and various veterans groups including the RNA and Royal British Legion, with each group parading a Colour or standard as a squad of six marches around the outside of the pitch at half time.

Milton Keynes unit chairman Michael Allen received a phone call via a cadet around an hour before the collection was due to start – requesting the use of the Sea Cadets' collection buckets.

After a frantic search of the HQ and a couple more calls the buckets were found, and with three other committee members and a parent on hand, plus five non-participating cadets, labels were applied and the collection went ahead.

The cadets and volunteers raised some £250 for the RNBT in the hour before kick-off at stadiummk.

Bands compete for honours

FOURTEEN bands in several classes made for an exciting day of music at the Nautical Training Corps band competition.

Cadets from as young as eight competed in displays that included everything from military marches to film scores, and techniques included intricate drum and stick work.

Pagham-based TS Montrose were new entrants this time, and went away with the honours in the Novice class after wowing the judges.

Corps patron Rear Admiral John Lippiett said: "This year has seen yet more brilliant performances and a tremendous turnout.

"What has impressed me the most, however, is that ships have been helping each other."

Competition in the classes was fierce, and judge Steve Hars said: "Standards have definitely improved, after last year's great performances."

The event, sponsored by CPJ Field and filmed by ITV Meridian News, also saw Cdr Brian Mitchell rewarded for his 55 years serving as a member of the NTC.

It was the last competition for Second Officer Steve Mayburry, who is retiring after many years of ensuring the day ran smoothly.

The Open class was won by TS Superb (Crawley), the Contest class by TS Ambuscade (Merstham), the Championship class by TS Swiftsure (Cophthorne), the Colour class by TS Implacable (Littlehampton), who also won the Fanfare accolade.

Huyton boats take titles at all levels

HUYTON unit members showed the value of preparation by scooping a clutch of titles in a range of watersports.

Members of the unit have prepared hard for competitions at district, area and national level – and their instructors believe that the hard work and dedication have paid off.

In a recent competition in the North West, the power boat handling team showed off their skills in a first for the unit, while Cdt Sgt Kellaher led the kayaking teams to victory when taking the winning trophy for senior boys kayaking.

AC Cogley went on to win the Topper-class sailing and was the first Huyton cadet to compete at the national sailing regatta, which was held at Southport.

In team sport the junior girls and junior boys teams also competed in the national finals.

At the Nationals the junior boys rowing team became the first juniors from Liverpool district to win the national title, while the junior girls team became the first of their class to win from the whole of the North West area.

CO Lt (SCC) Mike Farrell RNR said: "To compete at that level is a fantastic achievement and to have two teams bringing home the trophies is tremendous as it demonstrates the fantastic dedication, teamwork, commitment and hard work that these Huyton cadets have given – they have made me and our unit very proud indeed."

Guernsey in special show

GUERNSEY unit members were involved in the island's youth spectacular in front of the Prince of Wales on his visit to the Bailiwick.

Members of the unit gave a demonstration of the field gun run, and some of the cadets had the chance to speak to the Royal visitor on completion.

The youth spectacular gave children on the island the chance to see what youth organisations were available for them to join.

CO Lt (SCC) Paul Mooney RNR, taking a day off from cadets, drove the Prince of Wales during his visit to Guernsey in his capacity as chauffeur to the Lieutenant Governor.

Clubs seen

ONE element of the Sea Cadet Corps national Trafalgar Day ceremony (featured in last month's edition) was subject to its own special training regime.

The clubs and skip jump routine was performed by members of the Sea Cadets Physical Training branch, and it required two days of intensive training at HMS Sultan in Gosport under the tutelage of Lt Cdr (SCC) Vicki Marson RNR, HQ Staff Officer Physical Training.

The squad featured cadets from all over the country – five of the six Areas were represented, with South West being the exception.

Cadets and staff from Northern Area took part in the display for the first time, which saw youngsters aged between 13 and 24 perform in the heart of London for Navy top brass as well as supporters and onlookers.

Paddle plaudits

BRIGHTON and Hove unit volunteer Karl O'Keefe celebrated a double win with Canoe England, claiming both the regional and national Paddlepower Volunteer Recognition Award for 2012.

Karl was presented with the award by paracanoe champions Jeanette Chippington and Patrick Mahoney at an awards ceremony in Eastwood Hall, Nottingham.

This provided an opportunity to recognise the hard work by paddlesport volunteers who have made it possible for so many to participate in the sport.



THE Sea Cadets' digital magazine *Current* was adjudged to be one of the best around when it was entered for a national communications competition.

Current was an award finalist

in the International Content Marketing Awards, run by the CMA (Content Marketing Association), the industry body for agencies who produce effective content for client brands.

The Corps' microsite was shortlisted in the 'best digital

Civic service

TO COMMEMORATE Trafalgar Day the Mayor of New Romney arranged a celebratory fund-raising dinner which was hosted by the cadets of New Romney and District unit aboard TS Veteran.

Clr Roger Joynes' guests included the High Sheriff of Kent and the Mayors of Ashford, Hythe, Lydd, and Winchelsea.

The meal was prepared and served by the cadets (left), some of whom had risen very early that morning and travelled to Portsmouth to

attend the National Seafarers Sea Sunday Parade, presided over by the Second Sea Lord.

However, they were still able to carry off the evening in a very dignified and satisfactory manner, during which the Mayor proposed the traditional toast to Nelson.

The evening concluded with a raffle which, together with the proceeds of the evening, will go to the Mayor's nominated charities – the unit, the New Romney Day Centre and the Samaritans.



Samuel mucks in

PICTURED above are CPOWTR Bernie Dath with his son Cdt Samuel Dath, of Birkenhead unit.

CPO Dath, of Northwood Headquarters, said: "The picture was taken after we had marched in the Remembrance Parade in Birkenhead."

"Samuel, 13, has cerebral palsy and can walk short distances but needed his wheelchair for the parade."

"The staff at TS Blackcap welcome Sam as any other cadet and he mucks in with his shipmates and really enjoys his time there."

Joint effort

SEA Cadets from Tewkesbury unit's Corps of Drums helped keep the beat for one of the biggest Remembrance Day parades in the town in recent years.

The Corps of Drums frequently team up with the Air Cadets of the Sqdn 985 Band to play at public shows and parades, and each year they play to an audience of more than 100 at the unit's Trafalgar Dinner.

They also played at the Tewkesbury High School and Marina Court Remembrance and Armistice Day ceremonies.

Digital magazine is highly commended

content solution of the year (not-for-profit/charities/public sector)', up against *The Guardian* and Prostate Cancer UK.

And although it did not win the top prize at the awards night, held at Old Billingsgate in London, it did win a highly commended rating – a commendation which is apparently rarely given.

The MSSC was reported to be "thrilled" to receive this accolade.

"It's a huge achievement for a magazine still in its first year and we are very proud," said Sea Cadet Corps Head of Communications and Media Samantha Shaw.

Current was launched in autumn 2011 as an electronic magazine for cadets to help create a sense of community and a platform to share information and ideas with 14,000 Sea Cadets.

From learning the ropes – literally, as it features tutorials

in tying knots, a Sea Cadet specialisation – to competitions such as the chance to win tickets to see the latest adventures of Royal Navy hero Cdr James Bond, *Current* aims to give cadets as much as possible in a digital format.

The magazine, designed by Immediate Media Branded Content, was launched via Facebook and the Corps website, and coincided with the release of *Fleet*, the magazine for volunteers.

The magazine formats and content reflected feedback from focus groups which were organised to sound out the feelings of supporters, volunteers and cadets.

It was created at no extra cost to the charity, as it capitalised on efficiencies made by revamping the *Seafarer* magazine and the Annual Review.



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

Royal duties for London

CITY of London cadets were on duty at the Maritime Media Awards at the Institute of Directors on Pall Mall.

Cadets provided a carpet guard for the guest of honour, the Princess Royal (pictured above) and the OC Yasmin Leblebici was given the task of presenting flowers to Princess Anne.

City of London cadets have been helping to welcome guests to the ceremony for several years,

meeting Naval and maritime representatives and getting a chance to catch the attention of the First Sea Lord.

This year AC Kamil Boriel, 17, from Clapton and Hackney unit came along as a guest because he featured in the short film produced for the ceremony.

Kamil was interviewed at his unit and also wrote a feature about his involvement with Sea Cadets for the official programme.

Invitation to visit Bulwark

A GROUP of Scouts based in Malta were invited on board the Fleet flagship when HMS Bulwark called in at Grand Harbour on her way back home.

The youngsters were from the St Aloysius College Scout Group, which is affiliated to Bulwark – the latest of a series of links which goes back 60 years.

More than 30 members of the group went on board the assault ship for a tour from the bridge to the well dock, and they were told of the ship's achievements during the Cougar 12 deployment which ended last month.

The ship was in Malta for an operational stand-down – a chance for ship and sailors to take a break from the relentless exercises and

training of the preceding weeks.

It was also a chance to renew the strong historical links between the Royal Navy and Malta – not least those enjoyed by the Scouts, whose group has been affiliated with eight RN ships and Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth over the past six decades.

At the end of their visit the Scouts met Bulwark's Commanding Officer, Capt Andrew Burns, who presented the Bulwark Shield, a hotly-contested annual award for the best troop – this year's winner was Buffalo Troop (right).

The Scouts were presented with a poster illustrating many of the activities that Bulwark has been involved in during Cougar 12.

Special tour of Victory

IF you are going to have a behind-the-scenes tour of HMS Victory, who better to guide you than a sailor by the name of Nelson?

A group of cadets and instructors from Bridport unit, led by their CO Lt (SCC) Andy Gordon RNR, were accompanied to Portsmouth by S/M Vaughan Nelson, the Bridport Royal Naval Association and TS Keppel Liaison Officer.

At the Historic Dockyard they were met by S/M Vaughan's son, CPO Phil Nelson.

The cadets and volunteers were given a bespoke tour of the Trafalgar flagship, seeing parts of the man o'war which are not normally open to the general public.

This included a good look at the Great Cabin, and certain parts of the upper deck which again do not feature on standard tours.

Following their look around the historic warship the group retired to the Senior Rates Mess for a sandwich lunch before they returned to their transport for the trip back to Dorset.



● Captain Sea Cadets Capt Mark Windsor met Dewsbury cadets during a routine visit to the Yorkshire unit. The Captain saw cadets practising first aid and learning about Remembrance Day as well as learning how to safely use an iron. The visit was part of Capt Windsor's commitment to visit all units who have not had a Captain's visit in recent – or not-so-recent – years.

Grant will boost shower block

NOTTINGHAM Sea Cadets were the winners of £5,000 from the Lloyds Banking Group Community Fund, which provides much-needed funding to organisations working locally to

inspire and support young people.

Four organisations in each community were shortlisted from over 1,400 organisations nationally, with online, text and personal voting.

A total of £660,000 of funding was awarded, with £5,000 going to Nottingham towards the building of a new shower block.

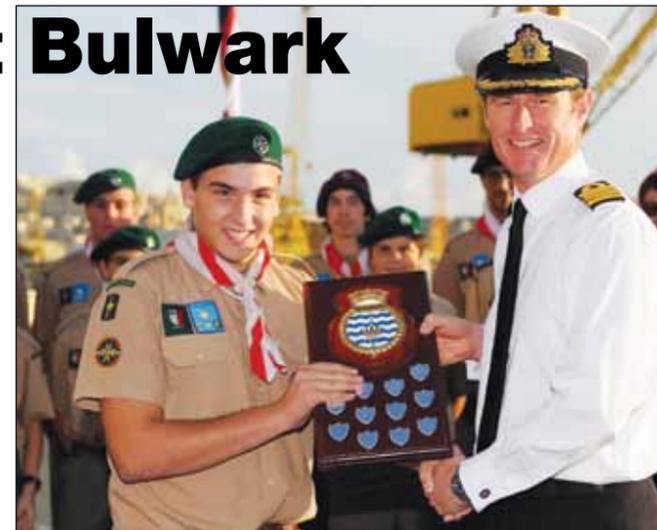
Commanding Officer SLT (SCC) Adam Crump RNR said: "It's a great honour that the local community have supported us and voted for us – the new shower block will enable us to do so much more on the water."

Nottingham unit now proudly boasts three Petty Officer Cadets.

The final addition to the team was Edward Pooler, who achieved a credit pass and came top of his board at HMS Raleigh.

POC Pooler was also selected to be the Lord Lieutenant's Cadet for Nottinghamshire, while fellow cadet POC Jack Palmer is the current Lord Mayor's Cadet for Nottingham.

POC Gregor Hendry is the third of the Nottingham unit's illustrious trio.



Masterful and commmanders

Lead with humour and humility

HUGH Boscawen was a very able and affable Colonel Defence Studies for the Army.

I first met him in the then commodore's house at Dartmouth and in conversation it turned out that he was indeed a direct descendant of the Hon Edward Boscawen, the distinguished 18th-Century admiral, whose name I had first encountered on a Jubilee-class steam locomotive in the 1950s, writes Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford.

My first remark was to request definitive guidance on how to pronounce this Cornish name and, after settling this, I soon acquired a considerable respect for this intellectual guardsman, something confirmed by his major new study of the taking of Louisbourg on Cape Breton Island in 1758.

This opened the gateway to the St Lawrence and the more famous victory at Quebec the following year.

In *The Capture of Louisbourg 1758* (University of Oklahoma Press, £35.95 ISBN 970-0-8061-4155-8), Col Boscawen clearly understands both the land and sea aspects of this maritime joint operation and he shows how effectively the Navy and the Army worked to besiege and then capture the settlement. One might say it is a model analysis of a model operation.

The author is well able to comprehend the larger strategic picture and includes related operations at some distance from North America in a truly comprehensive approach.

Rarely has the overall strategic effect of complementary maritime operations been better or more clearly analysed. The superiority of the British Royal Navy over its French counterpart is clearly shown, not least in cleanliness and hygiene, and its consequently better health.

Perhaps the French Navy's greatest weakness was its failure to keep its ships' companies healthy. This could have a broader negative influence. Tellingly the typhus fleet brought to Brest in 1757 had disastrous long term strategic effects on that important base and its hinterland.

The book makes authoritative and considered judgments of the quality of the commanders both ashore and afloat. The land commander General Amherst made his mistakes, but he succeeded in the end. He handled the difficult James Wolfe with skill, giving the impatient and sometimes arrogant brigadier the independence which good relations demanded.

Colonel Boscawen considers the hero of Quebec's conduct at this battle as rather better than those in the circumstances that led to his death.

The colonel's distinguished ancestor comes out well from the account, but this is more than fair. Admiral Boscawen distinguished himself in all aspects of command, giving ample support for the troops ashore and producing capable joint command structures; he also got on well both with Amherst and Wolfe.

In contrast to his enemies, he was particularly concerned about the need to maintain high standards of health both afloat and ashore. In his seminal study of the Seven Years War, Corbett criticised the Admiral for not sending his ships into harbour to attack the French ships there.

Boscawen had experience of the results of unnecessary aggression against fortifications and it is hard not to agree that discretion was

the best option here. There could be no doubt about the Admiral's personal courage; he was not called 'Old Dreadnought' for nothing.

The book is a long one, 466 pages including copious and useful appendices, but it reads well and never tires the reader. The account is complemented by some excellent maps and

the author brilliantly cross-references the text with them and the other illustrations, so that the complexities of the siege become clear. Particularly noteworthy was the use of heavy naval artillery in batteries ashore along with other guns, mortars and howitzers. Their locations are clearly shown, using an original coding system.

The author is also good at assessing the dynamics of the French *Ancien Regime* armed forces and lovingly giving participants' full names. This helps make a point about the pomposity of contemporary French society often not found elsewhere. A good example is Admiral Emmanuel-August de Cahideuc, Comte du Bois de la Motte.

The Louisbourg campaign was a disaster for the French. Hugh Boscawen assesses that their navy, which had been doing "reasonably well", lost a quarter of its strength trying to hold Louisbourg, losses it could not replace and which led to the further defeats of 1759.

The economic effects were multi-dimensional, negatively affecting interest rates and France's attempts to raise capital for replacement ships, both mercantile and naval. The only possible option was to threaten an invasion of Britain, which took on the Royal Navy where it was strongest.

Boscawen's further victory at Lagos and Hawke's classic success at Quiberon Bay took out as many ships as had been lost by the French in 1758. This was a disaster from which France's global power projection capabilities could not recover.

Boscawen argues convincingly that the financial problems would persist and create an economic slippery slope that ended in 1789 and revolution.

At home, the political position of William Pitt (the Elder) which had been shaky a year or two before, was confirmed with more friends being established both in the press and in the City. He now had a clear grasp of the possibilities of the joint maritime strategy with which his name is always associated.

The US provenance of the publisher encourages Colonel Boscawen to emphasise the 'American' dimension of this campaign in what to them is the 'French and Indian War'.

Those who would later rebel were important parts of the British Imperial forces, as were native Americans and Canadian settlers of the French.

The author's conclusion is that, just as having negative effects on the long term French position, the successful siege had an influence on the British side, also paving the way to the crisis of American independence fewer than 20 years later.

The Capture of Louisbourg 1758 makes all these points and more. It is a masterly account and analysis and will remain the standard work on a campaign that needed more attention. It is beautifully-produced and worth the list English price of £35.95.

THE GROVE REVIEWS

It must be said however, that its transatlantic price is much less and shopping there via the internet may be the best bet.

William Pitt was a 'lord of war' in the terms Correlli Barnett means in his new book *The Lords of War: Supreme Leadership From Lincoln to Churchill* (Praetorian, £25 ISBN 978-17815-90935).

It is a study of the strengths and weaknesses of 20 leaders in the 19th and 20th Centuries, not just political war leaders but senior officers in all three environments: land, sea and air.

The author sets out to demonstrate the "decisive effect on history exerted by individual human leadership, all in a context of massive technological change."

The book begins with an excellent little essay on 'The Nature of Leadership', defined as "the communication of moral energy to a human herd that needs it." This, the author argues, is different from mere 'generalship', 'the art of command' or 'management'.

Leadership, Barnett argues, requires willpower, character and personality; the confidence and certainty obtained by self-belief; technical mastery in whatever environment the leader finds himself; the vision and judgement to relate to the wider context; and the ability to communicate.

'Successful leaders', he concludes, spend more time with their subordinates than at their desks (or computers) and "more time listening than talking. Above all, they will understand that the secret of leadership lies not in managing 'human resources', but in cherishing human relationships." These words of wisdom alone make the book worth acquiring.

Its title is slightly misleading, as the first of its chapters is about Napoleon. This – in a way a second introduction – is based on 'how not to do it'. Barnett is at his brilliantly acerbic best in comprehensively demolishing the Napoleonic myth. Bonaparte he convincingly argues, "was neither a great statesman nor a military genius, but a colossal failure."

His charisma was strong enough to lead masses of his deluded followers to death and eventual defeat – even though he had repeatedly been offered terms that would have left France a great power of enlarged borders and status. "That this all-round failure as a leader should have been so long revered as a genius of statecraft and war says much about human credulity and the power of myth."

The assessment of Lincoln, 'Crusader with a Blunt Sword' is much more favourable with a study of his problem finding effective generals. This is complemented by an interesting contrasting comparison of Grant and Lee from which the former emerges as the stronger, the originator of the new era of continuous grinding attritional contact.

The studies return to Europe with an excellent study of the elder Moltke and his key role in the wars of German unification, of which the chapter forms an excellent short guide. The elder Moltke's success was not shared by his nephew who led the German Army in 1914. I had hoped that Correlli Barnett would have engaged at least a little with the recent debate on the existence or not of 'The Schlieffen Plan'. Zuber's key revisionist work does

not appear in the bibliography, but there is an inkling of the debate in a reference to using the plan "as a convenient shorthand". Barnett certainly makes clear how far actual German plans had shifted by 1914 and how the stolidity of Joffre saved the day for the Allies, keeping his nerve when Moltke lost his.

There then follows an excellent and convincing defence of the much-maligned Haig and an equally powerful attack on Lloyd George. This is complemented by analyses of the strengths of Petain and the failings of Ludendorff before returning to Haig as 'The Victor of 1918', a point worth shouting from the rooftops, as we approach the centenary of the Great War. As the author clearly points out, Haig's Imperial army that year inflicted the worst defeat on the German Army so far in its history.

The WW2 leaders addressed are Rommel, Yamamoto, Slim, Harris, Ramsay, Eisenhower, and Zhukov, before concluding with Hitler and Churchill. Most maintain the standard of the earlier studies. The study of Hitler has very perceptive social and psychological insights, and the chapters on both Slim and Eisenhower are quite brilliant.

The defence of Harris, perhaps the Haig of WW2 is also strong and convincing. It would have been strengthened by recent research on the Third Reich's economy, which has changed in a more positive direction, perceptions of the British bombers' effects on German production in 1943.

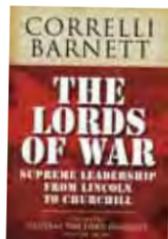
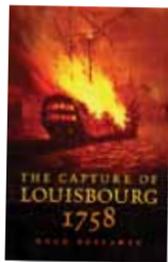
The only real disappointments in the book are the chapters on Yamamoto and Zhukov. The assessment of the Japanese admiral is very old fashioned. A more critical approach of his qualities is gathering strength and should have been given some reflection in the book. It would appear that, far from the classic view of Yamamoto's respect for the resilience of the USA, he thought that the loss of but a single battleship would scare the Americans off.

Perhaps more significantly the eulogy to Zhukov has no mention of his greatest defeat, the smashing by Army Group Centre of Operation Mars, the intended main offensive of the winter of 1942-43. Stalingrad was built up in Soviet propaganda to divert attention from this major disaster and this affected the sources used by the older generation of historians. The degree of German success at Kursk is also underestimated, as is the effect of the Mediterranean campaign in diverting key formations from the East.

It is perhaps up to us (slightly) younger historians to make these points and, overall, Correlli Barnett's new book is a most readable – and overdue – product of one of the most important and significant British military historians of his generation.

The pressures of modern academic research are having as deleterious an effect on younger military historians as contemporary management techniques are on leadership in the armed forces. History should entertain as well as educate and this book is quite simply a good and stimulating read.

Despite blemishes of editing and proof reading, eg failure to complete the references to the useful maps, and the odd factual error (eg convoys were not defended by ASDIC in World War 1) the book is a handsome volume and good value at a list price of £25.



campaign, the crew of Ark Royal cheered not the barrage of guns and missiles which hammered Saddam's defences, but news that Iraqi troops were surrendering en masse on the Al Faw peninsula.

Another side of humility/moral courage – and among the defining attributes of any good leader – is the ability to take a step back, to listen, to admit mistakes, to let subordinates take responsibility.

"Talk to people – it's fundamental," says WO1 Russ Billings, executive warrant officer of HMS Illustrious when interviewed by the author. "Just sitting down and allowing someone to talk, giving someone two minutes of your time is key. I can take so much away from the little things they've said."

Such sessions can turn into a 'mank fest' (lots of whingeing...). WO Billings again: "Don't listen to negatives, promote positives. You've got to remain positive and focused. Promote the organisation and don't deviate, or you lose your grasp on how to manage your people."

Perhaps what's clear above all is that leadership is a skill which is hard, if not impossible, to impart.

"Leadership is something you learn and develop. Some people never get it," says Capt Stephen Hart RM. "Most people can develop an understanding – it can be learned, but it can't be taught."

The book is not entirely without shortcomings, however. Although the author states that RN leadership is "the most accessible and amenable of military styles", being Navy-centric the study rather sidelines the 'joint' impact of present-day operations.

And, given the nature of the military's hierarchical structure, there are still occasions when something happens because Captain/Commodore/Admiral Bloggs says: "Make it so", perhaps overruling the wise(r) counsel of subordinates.

But that, as they say, is life in a blue suit...



A BEAUTIFULLY-illustrated new book celebrates 300 years of the Royal Hospital School.

The school was established by Royal Charter in 1712 to educate the sons of seafarers and became known as the 'cradle of the navy'. The book tells the story of its early days in Greenwich, the move to a purpose-built site in Suffolk, its role today and its plans for the future.

It provides a compelling and colourful narrative of the school, using a range of archive material and vivid modern photographs, illustrating all aspects of school life both past and present.

It is available in soft and hardback, with prices ranging between £24 and £40, including P&P, and is available from www.royalhospitalschool.org

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Sea kayakers loved Aphrodite

"SOMEBODY has had to drop out of the sea kayaking exped, do you want to come to Cyprus?"

I didn't need asking twice to set off on Exercise Paddle Aphrodite III, writes Lt Charley Tysler.

Ideal for novice and experienced paddlers alike, the exped group was made up of a range of skill, experience, rank and dare I say it, age.

As well as those taking part in the actual paddling there was a support team who assisted us and catered to kayakers' every whim and fancy throughout.

For those who hadn't done much paddling before, the exped started at a relatively gentle pace with skills sessions close to Dehekalia Garrison, where paddlers were accommodated for the majority of the trip.

By day three, however, the bedding in was over and the exped was sent on its first navigational journey – Protaras to Cape Greco and back again.

The coastline was perforated with caves and peppered with cliffs and with such inviting water it would have been rude not to take part in a cliff jump or two along the way, as well as working on kayaking skills, of course.

To deliver the BCU 2* award to novice paddlers, the group spent a day learning how to paddle open canoes, which included a short journey to Cessac Beach; the return journey was to be made by turning the canoes into sailing vessels.

While one group used an emergency shelter in the fashion of a traditional sail, the other opted for the less-aesthetically-pleasing option of a canoe upturned on top of another – simple but effective!

They also used the canoes to practise balancing skills, bouncing up and down on the gunnels and doing headstands as well as trust games in pairs, which usually ended up with both parties 'cooling off' in the water.

After a couple more days refining skills and working on stamina, the kayakers were deemed ready for the main event: a two-day journey from Coral Bay to Lachi, via Ayios Yeoryios harbour.

The expedition set off from Coral Bay after lunch at Paphos and made its way into wind towards Ayios Yeoryios harbour.

Again, the paddlers were split into smaller groups which allowed the more experienced paddlers, who were looking to gain their 3* award on return to the UK, the opportunity to practise their leadership and instructional techniques on some willing volunteers.

With very little opportunity to get out of the boats, day one of the journey was spent largely on the water with leg stretches only taken when practising the perfect way to capsize and rescue yourself.

Needless to say, those capable of executing an eskimo roll had increased in number by the end of the day!

Day two started with an early rise and some breakfast on the beach before the kayakers made their way by car to Lachi, which would be the day's start and end point.

From Lachi beach, they paddled along the coast towards Mazaki island before returning via the Baths of Aphrodite for a night-time commando raid on Lachi beach, which was to be the climax of not only the two-day trip and night paddle but also the end of the exped.

For me, reaching Mazaki island had to be one of the highlights of the exped; our leader had never been able to make it to the island on the previous two expeditions due to bad weather and a lack of time.

The fact that we could get there demonstrated how much we had come on as a group thanks to the instructors and our fellow more experienced paddlers.

Spanning nine days, Paddle Aphrodite III delivered a wide range of skills in a relatively short period of time, and yes, the warm weather did help. More details at www.rnka.co.uk.



● LAET Colin Wilson thunders around the Mallory Park track. Despite his efforts over two days' racing in Leicestershire, he lost out on the RN road-racing title to C/Sgt Bill Callister by the narrowest of margins

Bill steals a March on his biking rivals

THE RN road-racing team ended their 2012 season on the tarmac at Mallory Park in Leicestershire, taking on the might of Team Army and RAF in the Motodex Performance First Combined Military Services Championship.

Representing the RN were C/Sgt Bill Callister (42 Cdo), Mnes Danny Marston (42 Cdo), and Frank Gallagher (45 Cdo), LAET's Karl Dyer (Culdrose) and Colin Wilson (Yeovilton), and LET Graham Humm (Chicksands), writes PO 'Dutchy' Holland, HMS Collingwood.

The championship results were pretty much settled beforehand, with the RAF taking the honours. But with Stevie Elliot away it was down to Colin and Bill to battle for bragging rights as the first RN road-racing champion.

HMT Pre-National 600 Race 1

With the track still wet and refusing to dry with any urgency Team Navy took to the starting grid on wets.

As the starting lights went off there was a hectic surge of 30 riders gunning towards the first corner, Gerard's. Getting a good drive out of the corner on to Stebbe Straight, Karl lined up two riders and out-braked the pair of them going into Edwina's chicane.

He then set about chasing Charley Oakland, a rider he's been trying to beat all season. With his head down and focused on putting in consistent laps, it was on lap four that he put his bike up the inside going into Edwina's, taking him up to 21st: a position he maintained until the end of the race.

Colin was on a charge going from 21st to 17th in the first lap but mechanical issues saw him pull into the pits in the fourth. Graham had a consistent race, finishing in 17th and posting a fastest lap of 1m 3.58s making him the highest-finishing RN rider.

Despite having a poor start, Frank and Danny had a cracking dice throughout the race with hardly anything separating the pair; Danny's bike had power issues, however, which allowed Frank to take the honours with only 0.436 seconds separating them at the end. They finished in 18th and 19th respectively.

HMT Pre-National 600 Race 2

By the second race a dry line had appeared so it was back on to the dry tyres, with everyone looking at making significant improvements on their lap times.

Once again 30 'lunatics' all went for the same line into the first corner. After a horrendous start, Karl settled into a good rhythm and diced with Ben Dovey. He eventually finished in 26th place with a best lap of 1m 04.442s.

Colin was struggling with mechanical problems again but that didn't stop him from driving through the field, taking him up to 16th place and posting a cracking 1m 0.438s before retiring into the pits on lap seven.

Starting from 18th on the grid, Danny Marston was still having power issues with his Triumph 675. The fact that Frank Gallagher's 16-year-old steed was gaining on him down Kirkby Straight showed that something was clearly wrong. He eventually settled for 23rd place.

Danny and Graham battled for ten laps, all the way to the finishing line, which saw Graham take the honours by half a bike's length.

RLR Motorsports 600 Sportsman Elite Race 1

Bill rolled out for his 600 Elite qualifying with Colin on a dry track. The Royal Marine put in a 58.659s, placing him on Row 6 in 21st place; Colin posted 1m 0.790s for 23rd.

Bill had a pretty steady race, pushing hard against an extremely-competitive grid. He eventually gained a couple of places to take him up to 18th, which he held to the end. Colin's run of bad luck continued and he had to pull out in the seventh.

Morello Services GP1 Race 1

In a class primarily for 1,000cc bikes, Bill, still on his CBR 600, was keen to prove that power wasn't everything. After a storming start, Bill was up to 14th place by lap 3. Pushing hard for the remainder of the race, he was eventually able to secure 12th place.

HMT Pre-National 600 Race 3

Sunday's first race was very eventful: numerous crashes in the first couple of laps meant flags of all colours were waving frantically.

Graham took to the grass after being 'contacted' by another rider as he drove around Gerard's. Karl was pushing hard; out-braking both Murray Hambro and Luke Harrison into Edwina's. He had a cracking race battling with Team Army's Ricky Allen and eventually finished in 19th.

Danny was up to 15th place by lap five, just behind Dean Young, who defended his 14th spot to the flag. Frank Gallagher had another top race, taking his Kawasaki ZX6 F2 to 16th place, whilst putting in consistent one-minute laps but not quite getting in to the 59s.

Colin had a change in fortune – possibly as a result of the new clutch he'd borrowed – and finished just ahead of Karl in 18th. For him every point counted – and put him within touching distance of the title.

HMT Pre-National 600 Race 4

All eyes were on Colin and his battle with Graham. The pair matched each other's consistency lap for lap, and eventually finished 19th and 20th respectively. The question was: would that give Colin the points he needed?

Frank just couldn't quite dip under the one-minute mark, putting in a 1m 1.035s, maintaining consistent laps finishing in 22nd place. Karl maintained his form which, putting in a 1:02.681, finishing in 23rd place.

RLR Motorsports 600 Sportsman Elite Race 2

With Bill and Colin still chasing points to take the RN championship title the scene was set for a cracking race. On lap two Jamie Morris showed everyone how not to go through the Dunlop Esses by high-siding mid-turn. The crash damaged the engine case of his GSXR 600 and left a line of oil on the circuit.

The race continued, however, but Colin didn't; he was forced to retire with engine problems. This turned out to be more of a strategic retirement, saving his energy for the impending Pre-National 600 Race 2, when he really needed the points to use against Bill.

Bill, meanwhile, finished in 15th, after his best lap time of the weekend: 57.344s.

RLR Motorsports 600 Sportsman Elite Race 3

Bill's second 600 elite race saw a reduced field of just 16 riders taking to the grid. Having started in 15th, he maintained consistent 57-second laps, crossing the line in 14th after another rider crashed out. The finish earned the green beret just three points.

Morello Services GP1 Race 2

Bill's best time of 58.447s from Saturday's racing saw him placed in 20th. After driving through Gerard's, Bill managed to keep ahead of Joshua Boyd on his Kawasaki 1000 – a lead he held until lap seven, when he lost out to the Kawasaki's straight-line speed. Bill crossed the line in 19th.

Morello Services GP1 Race 3

In the last race of the championship Bill held 19th position until the very end. Having gained valuable points towards the championship, it was out with the calculators to top up both Bill's and Collin's final points standing.

"A tie? It can't be!" were the cries. Both riders had 109 points in their highest-scoring classes. Out with the rulebook and calculator to determine the winner – the title went to Bill thanks to his stronger first round, way back in March.

No taming of the screws

RN Ladies v Prison Service Ladies

The RN Ladies took on their prison service counterparts (together with a number of Portsmouth locals) in their annual fixture at Burnaby Road.

The squad were in a confident mood as they were on an unbeaten run of two games, but the goalers came out the blocks at a fast pace and immediately put the RN back four under pressure – a baptism of fire for both centre backs playing together for the first time this season.

The RN soaked up the pressure with NA(AC) Jen Cass putting in some great challenges, including one headed clearance off the line, while AB(WS) Nat Collier got her head to every cross and produced some thundering headers.

The RN started to settle and play the ball more, utilising the width at every opportunity and putting crosses into the box, but they still weren't fully testing the keeper.

A couple of great chances came on the half-hour mark with LPT Nat Bavister striking a fierce shot at the keeper.

A free kick was then awarded to the Navy on the left. A great ball was delivered into the box. It skimmed off AET Hannah Canning's head into the keeper's arms.

The Prison Service continued to press the RN, whose keeper, LReg Kelly Riddell, was called into action on a couple of occasions.

Two changes were made at half time: AB Lou Worsfold replaced Riddell in goal and Surg Lt Steph Ingram came on for Canning up front.

It was a lively start to the second period, with the RN chasing down every ball.

Bavister linked up well with Ingram and created a couple of chances, but it was the Prison Service who made the breakthrough on 56 minutes when the ball was crossed into the RN penalty area and chipped over the keeper into the back of the net.

The Senior Service responded immediately; MA Susan Badger's shot from 25 yards went just wide of the post. An enforced change was made in the 68th minute with RPO Garrett replacing Cass who, at the tender age of 27, limped off with cramp.

It wasn't long until the RN were on level terms with Bavister picking up the ball and, after a weaving run, she hit a shot so fierce that the keeper could only parry it into the path of the advancing Ingram, who smashed the ball into the top of the net from the tightest angle.

Another enforced change was made on 77 minutes with AB(WS) Amy Millar replacing Collier. Unfortunately she only lasted three minutes before twisting her knee.



● Plymouth Argyle ladies deprive the RN of the ball in their 3-0 victory over the sailors at Devonport

Picture: LA(Phot) Rob Gillies, FRPU West



ON-SIDE with Lt Cdr Neil Horwood, RNFA

LReg Carol Morton-Harrowsmith came to the rescue after a four-second warm up and slotted into defence.

The Prison Service used this disruption to their advantage and on the 84th minute took the lead with a well-worked goal.

The sailors searched for an equaliser, but were caught on the break and a cross-field ball found a Prison Service player who took the ball down on her chest and slotted it into the back of the net.

This was the toughest test the Navy ladies had faced this season and it was disappointing to see the unbeaten run come to an end, however, they can take a lot of positives from the match, particularly the way the team defended for long periods.

RN Ladies v Plymouth Argyle Ladies

Devonport hosted this rare clash between the RN's representative side and the female team of Plymouth's professional Football League side.

The sailors used the friendly clash as one of numerous warm-up matches to prepare them for the Inter-Services tournament in

March.

It's the first time in a few years the RN have taken on Argyle – and the prospect was slightly daunting.

Argyle play every week in the South West Combination League, where they were sitting in fourth place on the eve of the game against the sailors.

The Navy squad by contrast gets together as a team roughly every three weeks.

The match proved to be a good challenge for the sailors, who went down 3-0 – watched by Rear Admiral Clive Johnstone, by day Flag Officer Sea Training and, in his spare time, president of the Royal Navy Football Association.

RN U23 v London University

The U23 welcomed the Uni to Burnaby Road for the annual fixture in the run-up to the Inter-Services.

The weather was doing everything in its power to prevent the fixture but it didn't seem to affect the university side, who came out of the blocks first and made their intentions clear: they were not here to make up the numbers.

The U23s took their time to

stamp their imprint on the game.

They were second best to everything, delayed their passes and gave away two quick free-kicks in dangerous positions very early on.

The students set themselves up in 3-5-2 formation which allowed both full backs to push forward and drag the RN's wingers with them.

The RN defence was marshalled superbly by AB 'Scouse' Harding, who had the honour of wearing the captain's armband, and Mne Sam Wood who was filling in alongside him.

Behind them – making his debut in goal for the U23s – was AB Adam Bee; his talking and domination of his 18-yard box was very reassuring and kept his defence intact.

The RN finally broke through the Uni defence with a long ball straight from Bee.

His kick was misjudged by the Uni centre-half, who jumped into fresh air, allowing AB Jackson to use his unbelievable pace to get in behind, only for the bounce of the ball to beat him and fall straight into the arms of the Uni keeper.

Under the conditions, the RN were finding it very difficult to sustain a decent period of pressure and had to settle for the odd breakthrough.

Once they had settled and the adverse weather had calmed down, the sailors started playing football.

This led to the chance of the half, falling to Jackson: he chased a delicate chip over the top and cut in from the left, on to his right foot and drilled a rising shot which moved in the air straight down the Uni keeper's throat.

The Uni keeper did well to get both hands behind it, palming it wide for a corner.

Neither team posed any further threats for the rest of the half and they went in at half time drenched and level.

Mne Sam Wood stood out for the RN, putting in a very notable performance.

The second period opened very brightly for the young RN side. Jackson and his strike partner Mne Mike Scott were using their pace to greater effect and started pushing the Uni defence further back. ET Batiszovsky was revitalised and took control in the centre of midfield.

Ten minutes into the half, the RN suffered a setback: Wood landed awkwardly on his left ankle and had to be replaced.

With a vast array of experience on the bench in LPTs Ollie Perkins and Ross McEvoy, it was Perkins who stepped up and took responsibility as centre-half.

It was an inspired substitution. Perkins won everything in the air, from headers to plucking the ball out of the air on his chest. His distribution was pinpoint perfect and gave the RN a spring in their step.

The best chance of the second period once again fell to Jackson. Tremendous work down the left-hand side by Mne Ollie Kennedy created the opening.

He whipped a low ball through the defenders, Scott let it run and it fell to Jackson five yards out.

The usually-prolific striker went with his left boot to side foot the ball home and completely misjudged the pace of the ball, slicing it out for a goal kick.

Bee was a virtual spectator in the second 45, but towards the latter stages of the half he was called upon on several occasions.

The RN started to flag and mistakes began to creep in.

The Londoners were finding space and created their best chance from their left side. The cross found its way to the feet of a Uni striker; at point-blank range, he steered the ball goalwards. Already moving one way, Bee managed to re-adjust his body and get a strong firm hand to the ball, forcing the corner.

The game, like the weather, chopped and changed; it was bright in places, wet in others.

The young Navy side can take major positives from this encounter and with the Inter-Services rapidly approaching they can be very happy with their progression so far this season: undefeated in three fixtures.

Russian halts Chris' gold medal bid

ROYAL Marine and UK Olympic judoka Chris Sherrington ended 2012 with silver at the Judo World Cup in Apia, Samoa – but the green beret reckons he could have gone all the way.

Ranked at number 41 in the world, the 28-year-old once again triumphed over Australia's Jake Andrewartha, whom he defeated in a mere 24 seconds in his debut fight at the London Olympics.

Chris lost out in the final to Russian Renat Saidov – the man he'd expected to face at the last hurdle from the outset.

"Upon seeing the draw the day before the competition, I knew it would be me and the Russian in the final," the commando said.

"Renat and I have trained together in many different countries and have always produced a good fight.

"Unfortunately he caught me straight off the line and this is how judo sometimes goes. I'm not really happy with the silver but this will serve as a reminder to make sure I beat him next time.

"As a Royal Marine I always strive for perfection, but in a sport like judo where anything can happen, it's hard to control any outcome. Next time we meet the result will be different."

Chris, who was the first heavyweight judoka in 20 years to represent Great Britain at any Olympic games in the men's over 100kg category, added: "Competing on home ground at the Olympics was an amazing experience, but I'm sure competing in the 2014 Commonwealth Games on Scottish soil will be as much, if not more, memorable.

"Thankfully the Russians won't be in the Commonwealth so fingers crossed we should be aiming for the top of the podium for 2014."

No defeats – but no IS trophy either

Continued from page 44

play for 17-12 on 61 minutes. ET Villiame Talemasimaiveya (Ocean) replaced ET (ME) Dylan Woods (Torbay) and a quick reshuffle of the pack didn't seem to lessen the Navy's dominance in this area.

A good passage of play from the Senior Servicemen led to new cap ET (ME) Josh Jones (Sultan) provide an excellent cross-kick to right wing Conroy-Smith; only an illegal action by the Army stopped his progress towards the line and resulted in the Army being down to 13 men for a few minutes.

The Navy attacked the Army line from a good scrum with ET (WE) John Henty (Collingwood), well supported by the hard-working Mne Scotty Puleston (30 Cdo IX Gp), only stopped by a last-ditch tackle by the Army wing and fullback.

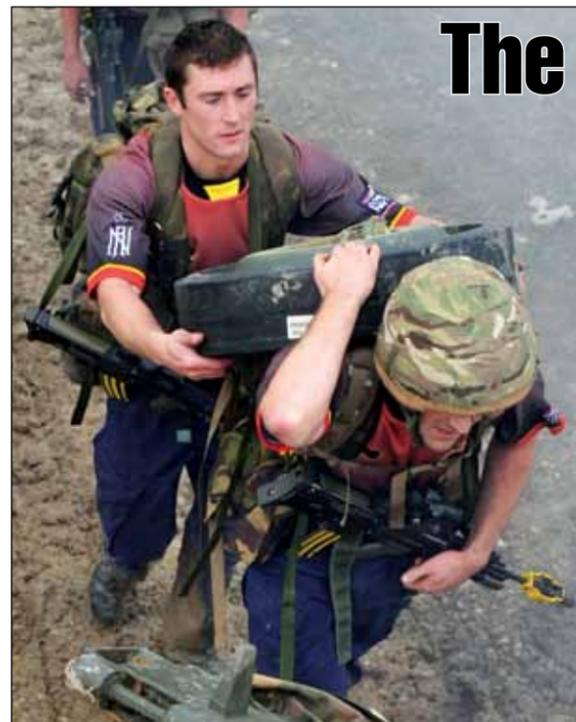
ET (ME) Peter Fowler (Somerset) replaced shipmate Davies in the front row and Sultan's ET (ME) Sam Tyrer took the place of starting scrum-half ET (ME) Samuel (Raleigh) who had been outstanding in every facet of play this evening.

It was Tyrer who drew the Senior Service level from a lineout which was actually stolen by the Army; good Navy pressure turned the ball over and Tyrer dived in for an unconverted try to level scores at 17 apiece.

Despite both teams having chances in the final few minutes neither could take the points and so the game trophy was shared.

The overall IS title now rested on the outcome of the RAF-Army clash.

The soldiers put the airmen to the sword, 25-9 – and hence were crowned U23 champions.



The only way is Wessex for Daring

I'M A matelot, I never signed up for this...

HMS Daring's fighter controller Lt Tom Gell feels the strain as shipmate ET (WE) Alastair McLeod loads a tyre on his back in the German mud – all for the honour of the Service.

Sailors from the Navy's leading Type 45 destroyer lined up alongside soldiers from 5th Battalion The Rifles and airmen from RAF Wittering at the Goldgrund training area near Paderborn in western Germany to compete for the Countess of Wessex Cup.

The countess is sponsor of all three units, who take it in turns to host an annual military skills competition – in 2012 that was the Army.

The first challenge for the teams was a forced march across the clay tracks of the Goldgrund training area, carrying various assorted weights.

During this physical challenge the teams came under simulated enemy fire. The first leg was to carry ammunition to Warrior armoured vehicles, the second was a casualty extraction using a stretcher, the

third was to supply tank parts to the Warriors and the fourth and final leg was a straight foot race back to the finish.

The RN and RAF teams found it an eye-opening experience; as well as the stated additional weights, each team member was carrying 35lb of gear, water and a rifle.

The soldiers demonstrated their clear fitness prowess with an easy win, the Daring team completed the challenge ten minutes behind the Army, but beat the airmen by two minutes – all witnessed by the Countess and the respective commanding officers.

"The start of this year's cup was particularly gruelling," said Lt Gell. "Getting the tank parts up the clay hill at the end was particularly emotional, some choice motivational language got everybody to the top.

"The Army team was very impressive and they deserved the win. It was a matter of particular pride for us that we didn't come last and I know that everybody had to dig in deep to stave off a strong last-

minute challenge from the Wittering team."

ET McLeod added: "None of our training comes close to this. We do some weapons training but nothing with that much weight across that much distance. I have done all three Service challenges now and this one has been cruel, really cruel!"

Other challenges were less sports-related, including erecting a 9ft x 9ft tent blindfolded and a Ready Steady Cook-style kitchen contest, with the Countess judging the results of the latter during a blind tasting.

"This competition was a great way for Her Royal Highness to be able to meet all of her affiliate units at the same time, in the same place, particularly when each unit has a busy operational programme which makes it difficult to visit each unit individually," said Lt Cdr Tim O'Neill, leader of the Daring team.

The next cup will be hosted by RAF Wittering, but not for at least two years due to operations – like 2012, Daring will be deployed for much of next year.



Fantastic ambassadors and fantastic athletes

IN A year of Olympian effort, it was actually two Royal Navy athletes making their mark away from the Games who triumphed at the Service's annual sports awards.

Fending off tough competition, Royal Marines triathlete Maj Charlie Pennington took the title of RN Sportsman of the Year.

The 34-year-old father of two from Nottingham, currently serving with the Combined Arms Tactics Division at Land Warfare in Warminster, is one of the UK's most experienced endurance athletes at home and abroad.

In 2011, Maj Pennington – pictured above by LA(Phot) Claire Myers receiving his trophy from Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel – raced the Ironman 70.3 in Texas – a 1,900-metre swim, 90km cycle and 21km run.

Not only did the Royal Marine win his age group, but was also the first non-professional athlete over the finish line – five minutes ahead of his nearest competitor.

"It was a complete surprise when my name was called out," he said, "When I race, it is fantastic to know that I have beaten professional athletes who do this day in day out, but when I compete my only goal is to win – no one takes up sport to come second."

"I have a lot coming up in the UK and Europe next year that I will be training hard for – but one of the main events I'll be aiming towards is the 2014 Iron Man competition in Hawaii which will be a very tough race."

The sportswoman of the year is also 34 and shines repeatedly on the cricket pitch.

Medical Service Officer Lt Emma Boswell Oxford – pictured below with the Second Sea Lord – has been a regular in the RN's representative side for several years.

"When I look at who I was up against in my category I was surprised that I won as the other ladies made a huge contribution to their sports," she said.

"I am in a lucky position in that the Royal Navy supports me in my sporting endeavours, they offer the perfect work/life balance and that makes them a great employer."

Vice Admiral Steel also handed awards to the best sports official – WO Dale Randle (HMS Raleigh) for nurturing boxing talent; young sportsman of the year – triathlete Mne Ramsey Kechacha; double Olympic gold medallist rower Lt Pete Reed was singled out for a special award; and the RN snowboarders were declared team of the year.

Vice Admiral Steel praised both winners and runners-up: "The Royal Navy is one of the most complex organisations in the world and maintaining a sense of purpose isn't always to be found through a day's work, it can also come from social activities such as sport."

"What our sportsmen and women do is a representation of how we would all like to be and I thank them for promoting our Service both at home and abroad; they are fantastic ambassadors for our country."

RESULTS
Sportsman of the Year: Maj Charlie Pennington (triathlon); runners-up: Mne Chris Sherrington (judo) and AET Ross Taylor (snowboarding);
Sportswoman of the Year: Lt Emma Boswell (cricket); runners-up: POPT Wendy Briggs (golf) and LWtr Lauren Morton (rugby league)
Young Sportsman of the Year: Mne Ramsey Kechacha (triathlon); AETs Danny Brookwell (football) and Ben Taylor (rugby league)
Outstanding Achievement Award: Lt Peter Reed (rowing)
Team of the Year: RN Snowboarding
Sports Official of the Year: WO(PT) Dale Randle (boxing); runners-up: Cdrs Henry Merewether (kitesurfing) and Nigel Bowen (tennis)



● Sultan's CPO John 'Jellyboy' Eales – fastest man in the men's 30-plus lightweight event – encourages shipmate LPT Stu Mantle
Picture: LA(Phot) Claire Myers, FPRU East

Loft ambitions

THE Sail Loft Gym in Portsmouth provided the ideal venue for the RN's 2012 indoor rowing championships.

Concept2 UK helped with the race set-up, including screen-projected displays of the race progress, writes Paul Winton, RN indoor rowing team manager.

Individual races were conducted in categories covering gender, age (ten-year age groups) and weight (heavy or light) over 2,000 metres. The standard of performances throughout was relatively high, benefitting from increasing involvement of Service personnel in races and C2 UK's monthly challenge.

Fastest of the day was LPT Ollie Osborne (BRNC) with a time of 6m 15.1s in the men's heavyweight 30-plus race. Ollie is aiming for future medal success at national, international and world championships. Admitting that he found the race harder than expected, the attendant medical staff successfully supervised the flushing of lactic acid by-products from his muscle groups.

Next fastest was Cpl Shaun Hickson (RMR London) with a time of 6m 23.2s, to take the men's heavyweight 40-plus. Shaun has a long and strong pedigree in the indoor rowing scene and taking age into account this was arguably the best performance of the day.

Lt Stu Moss (HMS Victorious) reaped the

benefit of recent opportunities to commit to regular training as he posted the third-fastest time of 6m 27.5s in the men's heavyweight 40-plus, just in front of his arch rival CPO Shaun Gibbs (Sultan) whose 6m 28.0s gained runner-up in the men's heavyweight 30-plus. Stu and Shaun are now in their second competitive season after tasting high-class competition in last year's world championships.

The next three fastest times were all in the men's heavyweight 20-plus category where ET(ME) Ian Allen (Sultan) and Lt Chris Matthews (Culdrose) battled each other all the way to the finish line; the former won by two tenths of a second in 6m 28.9s. Matthews had given his all – as indicated by his post-race affinity with the gym floor next to his machine.

And so six rowers bagged times under the magical 6m 30s barrier – an excellent achievement. Lt Hugo Mitchell-Heggs (Sultan) just missed out in his debut race with a third place men's heavyweight 20-plus finish in 6m 34.5s.

Close behind were a trio of men's heavyweight 40-plus experience, led by former 'Mr Plymouth 1992' CPO Collin Leiba (Drake) with a time of 6m 34.5s as third place finisher in that category. Collin considers a 2,000m race as something akin to a 'marathon' – he much prefers shorter distances where he is currently the UK men's heavyweight 40-plus record holder for 500m and 1,000m.

Collin (aged 49½) has the potential to achieve significant age group medal and performance success when he passes his 50th birthday.

Lt Cdr Jules Stevenson (Temeraire) was just outside the medals with a time of 6m 37.8s, but remains the man to beat for post-race recovery drama. Lt Cdr Rory West (NCHQ) was fifth in 6m 40.4s.

AB(CIS) Sophia Burns (Collingwood) won the women's heavyweight 20-plus in her debut race in 8m 11.8s as the fastest woman of the day. Helen Ross (Sultan) won the women's lightweight 40-plus race in a time of 8m 23.6s, followed by Lt Maxine Ashby (BRNC), converting pre-debut race apprehension into a good performance of 8m 45.6s.

Top men's lightweight was CPO John 'Jellyboy' Eales (Sultan) who won the men's 30-plus in a time of 6m 46.1s. John is 18kg lighter and is now faster as a lightweight than he was as a heavyweight, since committing to a structured training regime. WO2 Adrian Walker (Neptune) won the men's lightweight 40-plus in a time of 7m 10.9s.

A blood-and-guts team race over 4,000m proved the value of teamwork and training as Sultan A took victory over their B team by just 15 seconds.

More details on the sport from local PT staff or Paul Winton on 9380 23644 / DES MCTA-MS-MVAU1 or desmcta-ms-mvau1@mod.uk.

No defeats – but no IS trophy either

DESPITE not losing a match, the Navy U23s were not crowned Inter-Service rugby union champions for 2012 – losing out on points difference to the Army.

The two Forces served up a 17-all thriller on the Army's home turf in Aldershot, writes Maj Steve Melbourne, RNRU Director of Communications.

Having narrowly seen-off the RAF 17-13 in a gripping encounter in Portsmouth, the RN looked in good form from the kick-off and soon took the lead with a penalty from skipper ET(WE) Tom Davies (Illustrious).

The Army always looked dangerous on the attack and only some good defensive play kept them at bay. However, it didn't take long for the soldiers to take the lead as they scored a try wide out to the right of the posts for 5-3.

They were then let down by their discipline and Davies returned the lead to the Navy, 5-6.

What became apparent early on was the domination of the scrum by the Navy front row Mne Josh Terry (RM Poole), ET(WE) Lee



● Winger Mne Mo Andrews makes a charge for the RAF lines in the 17-13 victory over the airmen at Burnaby Road
Picture: Paul McCabe

Mellor (Nelson) and AB Chris Davies (Somerset), who set about destroying the Army front row.

The soldiers however, did counter with some good 'catch and drive' from the lineout, which the Navy struggled to contain on occasions.

The RN continued to press the Army and kept them in their own

half for long periods, but they were caught out several times by quick Army counter-attacks which were only stopped by either good Navy defence from wingers Mne Mo Andrews (43 Cdo) and AET Rob Conroy-Smith (RNAS Yeovilton) and fullback AET Matt Horton (Culdrose), or the slippery ball being knocked-on.

The Army found themselves in front of the kicker at a 22m drop-out, which gave the RN another three points and extended their lead to 5-9 by half-time.

The coaching team made two changes at the break to bring on Mne Josh Blackburn (DST Leconsfield) for ET(ME) Sam Davies (Sultan) and MacDonald on for L/Cpl John Barnett (45 Cdo).

On 48 minutes, the Army secured a line-out ball close to the RN line and a good, well-managed 'catch and drive' gave them a second unconverted try for a 10-9 lead.

However, from the restart the soldiers gave the Senior Service an opportunity to regain the lead with another penalty, this time from full-back Horton for 10-12.

The penalties started to go against the Army and the ref eventually had had enough, reducing them to 14 men for ten minutes.

Unfortunately, the RN didn't make the extra-man advantage count; against the run of play, the Army scored close to the posts following some good inter-passing

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