



NAVY NEWS

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BIG CAT PROWL

COUGAR TASK GROUP SAILS

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THE RN FLEET OF 2013



RIVER CLASS

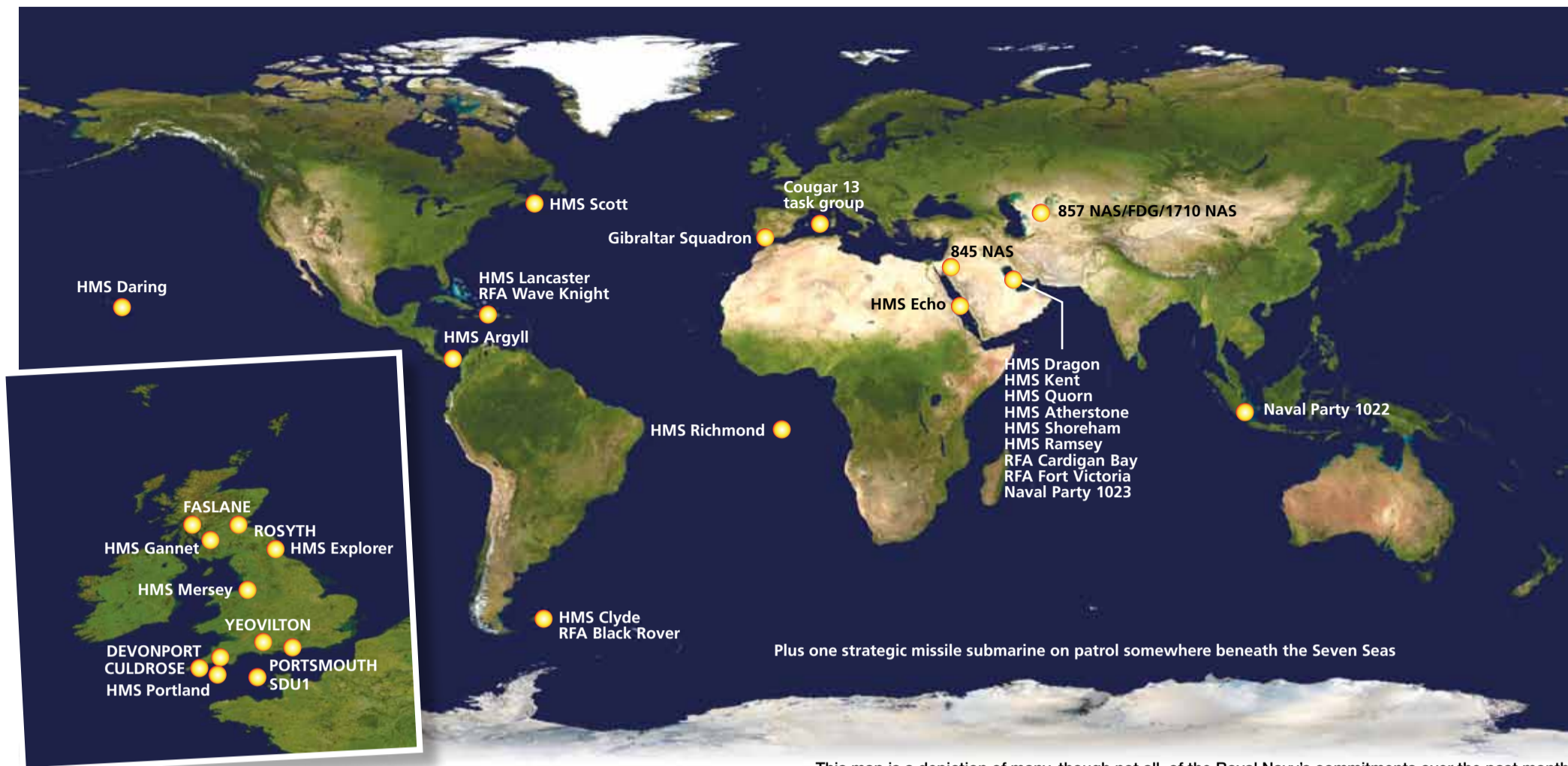
MARINES' NEW TAMAR BASE

GOLD DUST

A Sea King Mk4 of 845 NAS flies high above the dusty red mountains of southern Jordan's Wadi Rum during six weeks of desert training for the Commando Helicopter Force. Once finished, the wings of the Royal Marines will join the Cougar 13 task group which has deployed to the Mediterranean and Gulf. See the centre pages.

Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merill, CHF





This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's commitments over the past month

ROYAL NAVY **FLEET FOCUS**
Protecting our nation's interests

SUMMERTIME and the living is easy.

Unless you're a matelot or Royal Marine. Because a quick glance at the map shows that over the past four or five weeks, while many folks have been soaking up the sun, the Senior Service has been out there on the front line, wherever that front line is.

So the **Cougar 13** deployment slipped out of harbour in mid-August as the UK Reponse Task Group made its annual sortie to the Med, this year comprising (deep breath) **HMS Bulwark, Illustrious, Montrose, Westminster**, elements of **3 Cdo Bde, 42 Cdo, Armoured Support Group RM, Commando Logistics Regiment, 829 NAS, 815 NAS, 659 Sqn Army Air Corps, RFAs Mounts Bay, Lyme Bay, Wave Knight, Fort Austin** and **MV Hurst Point** (see opposite). Right about now, the force should be enjoying Albanian hospitality for the second Albanian Lion exercise.

Joining the Cougar group shortly will be the Sea Kings of the **Commando Helicopter Force** which have been in southern Jordan honing their desert skills (see the centre pages).

Further east of Suez, **HMS Dragon** slipped into the Carrier Strike Group of the USS Nimitz as the second half of the Type 45's maiden deployment got going (see page 5).

Half a world away, **HMS Argyll** is drawing to the end of her seven month South Atlantic/Pacific deployment, passing through the Panama Canal to begin the 5,000-mile journey home to Devonport (see page 7), while her sister **HMS Richmond** is sailing to the southern ocean to take her place (see page 4).

Argyll is currently passing through the Caribbean, where another Type 23, **HMS Lancaster**, scored a spectacular blow against drug runners by snaring £100m of cocaine when she intercepted a go-fast (see page 4).

And staying in the world of the 23s, **HMS Portland** completed the long road out of refit to assume duties as Fleet Ready Escort last month (see page 6).

HMS Ledbury and **Talent** both completed short deployments to the Mediterranean (see page 5), while **HMS Scott** is surveying the deep waters of the Atlantic – a slow and laborious business, so to pass the time sailors staged a 'Cruel Sea night' in homage to those who ploughed these same waters in WW2 (see page 4).

Tributes have been paid to **Admiral Sir John 'Sandy' Woodward**, whose name is synonymous with the liberation of the Falklands in 1982 and who died after a long illness (see page 4).

Among the most prolific RN vessels in these pages recently has been P2000 **HMS Explorer**, whose northern European tour ended with her acting as guardship for Sunderland Air Show – you don't need to be a big ship to have a big impact, or a plum deployment (see page 8).

The Red Arrows put in a crowd-pleasing appearance at Sunderland, but low cloud thwarted their display at an otherwise very successful **Culdrose Air Day** (see page 8).

The day before the show, the Cornish air station unveiled the newest addition to its armoury: the first Merlin Mk2s which have been delivered to **824 NAS** (see right).

Is it really ten years since **HMS Mersey** joined the Fleet? It must be, for the fishery patrol vessel celebrated her tenth birthday in Merseyside – including a party at Anfield, home of legendary Liverpool FC (see page 10).

Prince Harry drew the media in force to Devonport as he officially opened the impressive new home of **1 Assault Group Royal Marines**, RM Tamar, built at Weston Mill Jetty (see pages 14-15).

WAFUs are celebrating a string of plaudits: the engineers of **1710 NAS**, the **Lynx Wildcat Maritime Force** and **217 Flight/815 NAS** were all singled out for awards for their deeds on the front line (see page 6).

And finally... **HMS Raleigh** became the first RN establishment to receive the new Glock pistol – and we were allowed to fire one (yes, really... see page 9).

● An 824 NAS crew return to base after a training sortie in the first Merlin Mk2s to be delivered to Culdrose
Picture: Andrew Linnett, DE&S

Meet the new boss...

SAME as the old boss. Outwardly at any rate. But inside, the first five Merlin Mk2s are whole new boxes of tricks for the fliers of 824 Naval Air Squadron to play with.

The initial batch of next-generation submarine hunting helicopters has been delivered to RNAS Culdrose, where air and ground crew will spend the next 12 months learning how to get the most out of the souped-up Merlin before it deploys on operations for the first time.

Some 30 of the 38 Mk1s, which have been in service since the late '90s and deployed on front-line duties since 2001, are being converted into Mk2s in a £750m overhaul by Lockheed Martin and AgustaWestland.

From the hi-tech digital cockpit to the computer mission system in the back of the cab, the Mk1 was a revolution and a revelation, hence its billing as 'the best submarine-hunting helicopter in the world'.

But some of its equipment is now getting on for 20 years old – and nothing dates faster than technology, hence the need for an upgrade to keep pace with change.

After a decade of designing, programming and finally fitting out, the first of the successors – 'the world's most technologically advanced anti-submarine and maritime patrol helicopter' are now being rolled out.

"Outwardly Merlin Mk2 is very similar to its predecessor – only the keenest aviation enthusiast would notice the physical difference," said Cdre Andy Lison, who oversees Merlin, Lynx and Sea King teams at the MoD's Defence Equipment and Support organisation.

"It's inside where the hard work has been done." So there's a new state-of-the-art glass cockpit with night vision capability for the pilots. And for the observer and aircrewman, a combat system with touch screen display fusing the data collected by the helicopter's radar, sonobuoys and dipping sonar. That data can be shared with other ships or aircraft. Cdre Lison said the first decade or so of Merlin operations had shown that it was much more than a submarine hunter – and that its wider mission is reflected in the Mk2.

So it will be much easier to convert to carry up to a dozen stretchers in the event of casualty evacuation, there's space for up to 16 troops, and it can mount the M3M machine-gun when it's on counter-piracy and 'policing' patrols, principally over the Caribbean, Gulf or Indian Ocean.

The whole package, says the commodore, gives the Fleet Air Arm a "truly exceptional" helicopter. "With the Mark 2, the Merlin has come of age."

The £750m upgrade covers not just the helicopters themselves but spare parts, simulators and publications to support the new aircraft.

As the training squadron for all Merlin air and ground crew, it falls upon 824 NAS to prepare fully-qualified personnel for front-line duties, either with the 'carrier squadrons' 814 and 820 NAS, which typically deploy en masse on a Royal Navy carrier, or 829 NAS which provides Merlin flights for Type 23 frigates, such as HMS Kent currently deployed east of Suez.

The first Mk2 is due to deploy on operations next summer.

No man is an island...

UNLESS you're the former captain of the Royal Navy's old ice patrol ship HMS Endurance.

The newly-titled Lambert Island in Antarctica takes its name from Capt Nick Lambert. It's one of a flurry of previously-unnamed rocks and islets around the frozen continent which have been given titles to honour the work of the UK Hydrographic Office.

The Taunton-based organisation produces the globally-respected Admiralty Charts – used not merely by the Royal Navy on its missions around the world, but seven in every ten mariners on the planet.

Eighty years ago the office's work around the Antarctic was recognised with a rocky chain of islands named after it.

The Aitcho (pronounced H-O, for Hydrographic Office...) Islands lie off the South Shetland Islands – part of Britain's Antarctic Territory.

They're a barren, uninhabited and rather forbidding little cluster of isles popular with the sealing industry in the 19th Century, and today with eco-tourists.

And six of these isles finally have names after the UK Antarctic Place Names Committee sat to discuss possible titles for 17 mountains, islands and peninsulas. It's standard practice to honour scientists and others who've made their mark conducting research in the region.

In the case of the latest batch of names, as well as Lambert Island – Capt Lambert commanded Endurance from 2005-07 and later rose to Rear Admiral, serving as the UK's National Hydrographer – there's Taunton Island (home of the UKHO since 1968), Cricklewood (the UKHO's home before 1968), Bath (the UKHO's temporary home in WW2), Willett (after Andy Willett who's overseen work to improve charts around Antarctica for the past ten years), and Gorziglia (after Capt Hugo Gorziglia, who was in charge of an international Antarctic committee for a decade).

Anyway, should you be Antarctic-bound and fancy taking a look at Lambert Island, which is about 350ft long and 150ft wide at its broadest point, it lies at 62° 22' 16.0"S, 59° 45' 49.0"W – about 500 miles from Cape Horn and 700 miles from the Falklands.

Outward bound

AND so the adventure begins.

Heading south – shortly before entering the Med – this is the bulk of the UK Response Force Task Group as it sets off on its Cougar 13 deployment.

Leading the way – appropriately – is the nation's flagship. Behind her, frigates HMS Montrose and Westminster flank the ro-ro ferry MV Hurst Point.

And in the third row, amphibious support ships Mounts and Lyme Bay straddle HMS Illustrious and 'one-stop shop' Fort Austin.

Missing from the task group in our main image are 'floating garage' RFA Diligence and 'floating filling station' RFA Wave Knight.

And, of course, you can't see the 3,000 or so Royal Marines and sailors, numerous Lynx and Sea King helicopters, 16 Vikings (of the Royal Marines Armoured Support Group rather than Norse variety), trucks, landing craft, Land Rovers – basically everything you need to support an amphibious force thousands of miles from home.

Although Cougar 13 has got going it hasn't really, well, got going – not by the time we'd gone to press at any rate. The first milestone in the four-month deployment was Albanian Lion, due to straddle the end of August and beginning of September. Thereafter further exercises are planned east of Suez in Djibouti and the Gulf.

Which means this article is (apologies) rather devoid of action and excitement. No Royal Marines cammed-up leaping out of landing craft on to foreign shores, gunships letting rip with their cannon, not even any 4.5in gunnery.

So what can we tell you in this *caesura* between the force sailing and the action beginning?

Well... Lusty was feeling thirsty a few days out of Portsmouth and took on fuel. Nothing unusual in that.

Except that the fuel came courtesy of the FS Somme (which is half tanker, half command ship). So as well as the challenges of sailing two large vessels (the Somme is 18,000 tonnes, Illustrious 21,000) side by side for a few hours at a safe distance of 50 metres, there was the added *frisson* of the

language barrier.

With Britain's bespoke helicopter assault ship Ocean still in the throes of refit, it falls to Illustrious to act as the airborne launchpad for Cougar. She'll be joined shortly by Sea Kings from 845 NAS once they've completed their desert training in Jordan (see the centre pages).

For the initial stages of the deployment, her Tailored Air Group comprises Merlin and Lynx – the latter a mix of RN (815 NAS) and Army Air Corps (659 Sqn), who've brought three of their green and grey camouflaged Mk9A and 56 personnel to fly and maintain them.

Adding to the eclectic mix aboard the veteran carrier, 35 green berets from 42 Commando – logistics and mortar troops (and, as green berets will tell you, Royal Marines first, ahead of their specialist roles.)

42 Commando – and their kit – are spread around the force (mostly aboard the two Bay-class ships). As are elements 30 Commando IX Group (the intelligence gatherers and exploiters), and the Commando Logistics Regiment, who meet not merely the Royals' supply needs, but also fuel and medical requirements. And aboard flagship Bulwark there's the HQ of 3 Commando Brigade, with Brig Stuart Birrell sitting alongside Cdre Paddy McAlpine, the task group commander, marshalling the force.

For the commodore, the deployment is the chance to demonstrate – and enhance – the RN's "enduring core skill – the ability to operate and project power as a task group at range". For his green bereted counterpart, Cougar 13 offers the chance to give his lead commando group and other elements of the Corps a thorough test in numerous nations working alongside different armed forces – which is why he calls this "a demanding and ambitious deployment".

The commodore and brigadier will bring the majority of the Cougar force home to Blighty in December.

But not all of it. As the amphibious exercises end, Westminster and Montrose will break away from the task group for east of Suez maritime

security duties taking over from HMS Kent and Dragon respectively.

Westminster (as did Lusty the day before her) left Portsmouth under the full glare of the international media. Despite the long-planned nature of Cougar 13 (many of this autumn's exercises were being mooted during last year's Cougar...), diplomatic tensions between London and Madrid led to a bit of a Fleet Street frenzy.

As Plymouth is somewhat further from medialand than Portsmouth, there was less of a media scrum around the departure of Bulwark and Montrose.

Those who did line the banks of the Tamar and Hamoaze to witness the departure of the 'most Scottish ship in the fleet' (Montrose's words, not ours) might have heard Caledonian tunes carried by the breeze courtesy of a tartan-clad bagpiper who performed as the frigate left harbour.

In both cases, the two Types 23s have spent the majority of 2013 exercising and training on an almost weekly basis. Westminster's taken part in a lot of anti-submarine work in the waters of northwest Europe (as befits her role as the most senior sub-hunting vessel in the RN), while Montrose has been equally busy working around the shores of Blighty, climaxing with a 'Grand Slam': firing every weapon on board in a matter of days.

Given Montrose's awesome display of firepower (which we featured in our June edition) and the training his men and women have gone through in 2013, the frigate's CO Cdr James Parkin says she heads east in very fine form.

"Months of hard work and preparation have been put in by all of my team to get the ship ready in all respects to deploy, and I truly believe we are ready for anything," he added.

"The training that we have received has put us in the best place possible to be able to conduct operations ranging from maritime security patrols and humanitarian relief operations all the way to high intensity war fighting."

As it always is with RN vessels leaving our shores: prepared for the worst, hoping for the best.



● A fine send-off for HMS Montrose from friends and family on the shore of Devon and (below) Le plein, s'il vous plaît... HMS Illustrious tops up her fuel tanks courtesy of the FS Somme



● NA Brent Richardson shares a joke with a Royal as Bulwark leaves Devonport and (left) waves from Westminster's junior rates as she leaves Portsmouth for seven months





The debt to Sir Sandy

PREMIER David Cameron led tributes to the man who guided the Royal Navy to victory in the Falklands 31 years ago.

Admiral Sir John 'Sandy' Woodward – pictured above reunited with his wife Charlotte after the campaign – who died last month after a long illness, commanded the task force dispatched south in April 1982.

From flagship HMS Hermes the then rear admiral marshalled and directed the hastily-assembled task group through to the islands' liberation from the Argentine invaders in mid-June.

Mr Cameron said Admiral Woodward had been a "truly courageous and decisive leader" during Operation Corporate.

The PM continued: "We are indebted to him for his many years of service and the vital role he played to ensure that the people of the Falkland Islands can still today live in peace and freedom."

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas said Admiral Sir Sandy had been "highly regarded and widely respected within the military".

He added: "Undaunted by the challenge of fighting a capable enemy over 8,000 miles from the UK, in the most demanding and extreme of weather conditions, and against uncertain odds, Admiral Woodward's inspirational leadership and tactical acumen, meshing the realities of the higher political command at home with the raw and violent fight at sea, was a major factor in shaping the success of the British forces in the South Atlantic."

The Falklands War was the most dramatic point in a naval career spanning more than 40 years.

Born in Cornwall in 1932, John Forster Woodward entered BRNC in 1946.

After spending his early years with the surface fleet, he switched to submarines in the mid-1950s, commanding four boats (two conventional, two nuclear), before returning to the surface to take charge of HMS Sheffield in 1976.

He was appointed Flag Officer First Flotilla in August 1981 – a job he hated: "too much strutting about, flags flying, ice tinkling, forks flashing and idle chat". The day he made those remarks, he was given command of the Falklands task force.

His manner of command could be brusque at times – summed up by his blunt assessment he gave ship's companies heading south: "People will die, ships will be lost, that's the deal. Go to it."

But in private he worried about taking decisions to send "a friend to his death in order that eight others will survive" and feared he would never again see many of the men he chatted to doing his rounds of the force.

Post-Falklands, Sir Sandy served as the Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff and went on to be the Flag Aide de Camp to the Queen before leaving the Service in 1989.

Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, HMS Lancaster



Let it burn...

THIS is the moment a speedboat is sent to Valhalla after HMS Lancaster seized a massive haul of cocaine off the Puerto Rican coast – ensuring £100m drugs will never reach their destination.

The Portsmouth-based warship swooped after the smugglers' 'go fast' speed boat was spotted by a US Customs and Border Agency aircraft in the Caribbean Sea.

First the frigate sent her Lynx aloft to locate the 30ft vessel with three suspects aboard – which the helicopter did.

When the aircraft was spotted, the crew attempted to dispose of the evidence by throwing the drugs overboard, but these were quickly recovered.

A total of 22 bales of pure cocaine totalling 680kg were seized along with the three men on board who, ultimately, were fully compliant with the Royal Navy and US Coastguard board team.

The suspects and the drugs were then handed over to the Coast Guard Cutter Sapelo and subsequently the authorities in Puerto Rico.

As is standard practice, the empty boat was subsequently sunk by Royal Navy gunfire to prevent its use in future smuggling operations – and give Lancaster's gunbusters some target practice.

It's the fourth blow the Red Rose has struck in the war on drugs in the past six weeks.

Her helicopter helped located cannabis plantations in Anguilla and, more recently, the ship seized a shipment of marijuana with a street value of up to £700,000 and halted another craft with a significant amount of cocaine and heroin on board.

"It is an amazing feeling to get such a great bust and stop millions of pounds worth of cocaine hitting the streets," said AB James Duffy, coxswain of one of Lancaster's sea boats and who hails from the town of the same name.

"We have all trained really hard to get where we are and have a fantastic relationship with the US Coast Guard guys."

His Commanding Officer, Cdr Steve Moorhouse, added: "This is a great result not only for Lancaster but also everyone involved in the multi-national effort to stem the flow of drugs in the region."

"One kilogramme of cocaine here by the time it's cut down can be ten or 20 kilogrammes on the streets of the UK, so stopping it here is far more effective."

"This is proving the value of having a warship out here in this multi-national effort to stem the flow of drugs."

Lancaster had only just left Jamaica to begin her second patrol as part of Operation Martillo, an effort by 15 nations to clamp down on the movement of drugs in the Central America/Caribbean region.

As part of that effort, RN ships carry a team from the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment – LEDET 407, motto *hostes oppugnate* (take the fight to the enemy).

Over the past year the US Coast Guard has seized 20,500kg of

cocaine and 8,500lbs of marijuana during 22 interceptions.

That's the war bit. The peace?

Well, there can be few more tranquil places than the last resting place of hundreds of souls.

But Port Royal Old Naval Cemetery on the island of Jamaica has seen better days.

No British sailor has been laid to rest in this burial ground in well over a century and as a result, the historic site – regarded as among the top places to visit if you're in the vicinity – had become overgrown with thorn bushes, shrubbery and trees.

So when the Red Rose completed her first Caribbean counter-drugs patrol, a 40-strong work detail from the ship made the trip around Kingston Harbour to the end of the Palisades to join local coast guard and soldiers in revamping the burial ground.

The Old Naval Cemetery dates back to 1742 – the original graveyard, including the grave of pirate Henry Morgan (as in the rum...) disappeared into the sea, as did much of Port Royal, in an earthquake in 1692.

Most of those buried here were victims of yellow fever, although some of the crew of HMS Goshawk, who drowned in a storm in 1886, are also remembered at the cemetery.

"It was hugely important to be able to give something back to the island and hopefully the restoration project at Port Royal Naval cemetery will leave a lasting legacy of Lancaster," said Cdr Moorhouse.

Away from Port Royal – which was once branded the wickedest place on earth, but today is a quiet fishing town – Lancaster got stuck into what she has been doing all through her Caribbean deployment: a mix of flying the flag for the UK and reassuring British and Commonwealth citizens of the help she can provide in the event of a storm.

The warship arrived in Kingston on the 51st anniversary of the country's independence from Britain.

The frigate hosted a mess dinner for the Jamaican Chief of Defence Staff, Major-General Antony Bertram Anderson, the US Ambassador Pamela Bridgewater, and other VIPs as well as a formal reception and capability demonstration for the British High Commissioner David Fitton and more than 160 local dignitaries.

A 40-man band from the Jamaican Defence Force gave a Caribbean twist to the Royal Navy's traditional ceremonial sunset, which ended the evening.

Families of those working in the British High Commission in Kingston had the opportunity to tour Lancaster during her time alongside. Several groups of adults and children spent the afternoon exploring the ins and outs of a warship from the bridge to the ship's control centre, from where the engines are controlled.

As always Lancaster's sports teams took the opportunity to represent the ship and the RN when they took on teams from the Jamaican Defence Force at rugby and football; the Brits lost in both but, we're told, gave good accounts of themselves.

Two ships and Amsterdam

AND you thought Amsterdam was just across the North Sea.

It's actually somewhere in the mid-Atlantic, as HMS Richmond found.

The Portsmouth-based frigate met up with the Dutch replenishment ship HNLMS Amsterdam (and the Cape Verde coastguard vessel La Guardia (not in this shot by LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston) as she knuckled down to her Atlantic Patrol deployment (hovering off the stern of the Dutch ship is not a Merlin, but the similar-looking NH90).

Richmond left the Solent last month to take over from HMS Argyll and after a brief stop in Lisbon on the way south arrived off the Cape Verde Islands, with whose coastguard boarding team the frigate trained off Plymouth earlier this year.

It's the first deployment for the Type 23 since she underwent a £20m revamp in Devonport.

Since emerging from that overhaul in the summer of 2012, Richmond

has gone through not just the usual trials and training, but a whole raft of varied exercises: everything from taking trainee navigators the length and breadth of the British Isles to darting around the confined waters of Norway to give would-be submarine commanders a run for their money.

"Our deployment represents the culmination of many months of planning and preparation," says Richmond's CO Cdr Rob Pedre.

"My ship's company has worked tirelessly to ensure we are now ready for operations."

The Atlantic Patrol Task sees his ship providing reassurance to British citizens – such as those on St Helena which the frigate was due to visit at the end of August – carrying out maritime security operations, such as counter drugs and piracy patrols, and link-ups with foreign navies, like this one here.

Richmond's due back in Portsmouth in the spring.



Snorkers! Good oh!

WITH woolly pullovers on, jackets buttoned up, socks rolled over the tops of boots and pipes in mouths, sailors aboard HMS Scott got into the spirit in this 70th anniversary year of victory over the U-boat.

As the survey ship ploughed the North Atlantic like her forebears, her 52 sailors paid homage to the men who kept the nation's lifelines open by holding a 'Cruel Sea night'.

As the title suggests, it involves watching the 1953 black and white classic – based on the eponymous novel by Nicholas Monsarrat, an author turned Royal Naval Reservist during World War 2.

The film depicts the travails of the crew of HMS Compass Rose and, when she's sunk, HMS Saltash Castle safeguarding convoys in the Atlantic against U-boats from the beginning of the conflict to the end.

It proved to be a hit at the box office 60 years ago and remains one of the most famous war films featuring the Senior Service.

And in recent years it's also prompted *Cruel Sea* nights – one of numerous traditions and events upheld by today's sailors to help them identify with those who've gone before, such as Crossing the Line for sailing across the Equator, Trafalgar Night on October 21 and Taranto Night on November 11 for the Fleet Air Arm.

In Scott's case, the survey ship found it rather easier to identify with the hardships faced by the Compass Rose as she was buffeted by 60kt winds and seas up to seven metres (23ft) as she carried out survey work in the mid-Atlantic.

The night of the screening brought members from all messes into the ship's wardrobe which had been given a 1940s theme with emergency lighting, hammocks and netting for atmosphere.

Some of the ship's company wore life jackets over their No.1 uniforms, while others looked as though they had just been pulled from the icy waters after being torpedoed by a U-boat.

Cries of "Snorkers! Good-oh!" were heard when the saunges were brought in for everyone to enjoy while they watched the film.

And if the rocking of Scott itself was not enough to make the movie feel real, as the rain and seas soaked the sailors on screen, water bottles sprayed Scott's sailors watching as well.

When not watching wartime movies, the Devonport-based hydrographic vessel – the fifth largest ship in the Royal Navy – is gathering data on the North Atlantic seabed.

Her advanced sonar suite can scan an area nearly twice the size of Plymouth every hour; the information gathered is used to update Admiralty charts.

Mini Med duties done

THREE-month 'mini deployments' to the Med are over for minehunter HMS Ledbury and hunter-killer submarine HMS Talent which both returned home last month.

Ledbury's time away from

Portsmouth also took her east of Suez briefly as the 32-year-old minehunter spent the late spring and summer attached to NATO's Mine Countermeasures Group 2, alongside ships from Germany, Italy and Turkey.



The bulk of the deployment with the group, which mixes its time between dealing with historical ordnance and honing present-day minehunting skills, was spent in the Mediterranean, which is the force's traditional home.

But it also sailed through the Suez Canal and into the Gulf of Aqaba – and opportunities in the Red Sea were seized upon by the Hunt-class ship's company, both professionally and personally.

In Jordan, 30 sailors from Ledbury and the German Auxiliary Ship Mosel – flagship of the force – headed to the ancient city of Petra, which is carved out of the rock. If not one of the Seven Wonders, it is one of the places to 'see before you die'.

The ancient site is just 60 miles from Aqaba, whose waters proved particularly inviting for Ledbury's dive team.

"I particularly enjoyed the opportunity to dive in the Gulf of Aqaba," said AB(D) Ali Shaw. "Not only is it an amazing site for diving but the Israeli Navy Dive Team was very welcoming during our time working with them."

A visit to Albania was also – surprisingly – another high point for many of the 45 crew.

"I knew almost nothing about the culture there before but the three days in Vlorë gave me a great insight into life in the country," said AB(MW) Matthew Fay.

In addition to conducting 'regional engagement' by flying the flag for both the UK and NATO during various visits, Ledbury exercised with other NATO warships, testing her ability to replenish at sea, tow, perform close manoeuvring and communicate.

"My crew and I are delighted to have had the opportunity to work with so many nations at sea," said Lt Cdr Justin Hains, Ledbury's CO. "The Royal Navy remains a highly-respected fighting force and I am extremely proud of my sailors' achievements during the last three months."

After leave, his ship's company will return to Ledbury to carry out some maintenance before another NATO deployment, this time to the Baltic.

As for Talent, her stint in the Med was spent working with the French and Americans.



After a visit to Gibraltar – long before recent diplomatic tensions came to the fore – during which the T-boat crew were royally hosted by locals, who showed them inside the WW2 tunnels burrowed into the Rock, the hunter-killer sailed for a series of demanding exercises with the US Fifth and Sixth Fleets designed to test the submarine's knowledge, processes and readiness.

Job done the Devonport-based boat made for Toulon where the rugby team took on France's flagship Charles de Gaulle (with ten times more crew than the submarine) and went down fighting 36-19. Talent's footballers fared better, drawing 2-2 with a team from the FS Amethyste – an attack submarine which is roughly equivalent to the Trafalgar-class boat, but slightly smaller and with fewer crew.



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, RN Photographer of the Year

Mastering the Typhoon

A TYPHOON climbs at breakneck speed after passing over HMS Dragon as the RAF's ultimate fighter joins forces with the Navy's ultimate air defence destroyer in the Gulf.

Jets from No.6 Squadron teamed up with the Portsmouth-based warship, with US Hornets and Strike Eagles also thrown into the mix for a major test of air and sea power.

The goal was to test the ability of the combined technology and skills of the aircraft and destroyer to detect, classify and monitor contacts on the surface in the challenging conditions of the Gulf.

Although Dragon and her five Type 45 sisters are classed as air defence destroyers, designed to shield the Fleet from incoming air and missile attack, they are not merely defensive weapons.

In the destroyer's sprawling hi-tech operations room sit fighter controllers whose job it is to direct friendly aircraft on to targets – either in the air or, as Dragon's forebears in HMS Liverpool did during operations off Libya in 2011, on the ground as well.

In addition to her impressive suite of sensors and radars – the latter can track aircraft and missiles at distances over 250 miles away – HMS Dragon was aided by the presence of a US Air Force Boeing 707, a Joint Surveillance Target Attack Radar System (JSTARS) aircraft which tracks targets on the ground in the same way an AWACS aircraft keeps an eye on targets in the skies.

The American surveillance plane fed information directly into Dragon's operations room, allowing the destroyer to cue fighters – US Marine Corps F18 Hornets, US Air Force F15 Strike Eagles and the Typhoons of Dragon's affiliated RAF unit, No.6 Sqn – on to their objectives.

"The JSTARS surface radar is incredibly powerful," explained Lt Francis Heritage, one of Dragon's Fighter Controllers. "When combined with our own sensors and those of the jets under our control, we can provide force protection over a massive area."

The ability of Dragon to interact with aircraft to help detect, classify and monitor surface contacts was practised in home waters, but not that regularly – and certainly not with the abundance of different, international jets to 'play' with.

But for Fighter Controller Fg Off Dave Bowl, on exchange from the RAF, it was the chance to work with his own Service's premier interceptor that was the best part of the exercise, which was split over June and July.

"This was a great example of how the front-line units of the Royal Air Force can work hand-in-hand with the Royal Navy's most capable and advanced warship," he said.

The trio of jets aren't the only air power Dragon has been operating with recently.

The destroyer joined 'Old Salt'

– America's oldest supercarrier, USS Nimitz in the Gulf of Oman.

She did so to show how a Type 45 can provide all-round air defence to a task group, and to give the ship's company experience in traditional carrier operations – a small step towards the arrival of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The Nimitz – nearly 40 years in service and named after the great WW2 Pacific commander – is on a joint mission to support US forces in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) and the wider maritime security effort to keep the sea lanes east of Suez open.

The flat-top is flagship of Carrier Strike Group 11 – up to seven warships – and home to Carrier Air Wing 11 – nine squadrons: Hornet and Super Hornet strike fighters; Hawkeye 'eye-in-the-sky' early warning aircraft; Prowlers for electronic warfare; Greyhounds for ferrying people and stores around; and Seahawk helicopters for anti-submarine, search and rescue and general duties.

The chance to work with all of these aircraft was, says Fg Off Bowl, "a superb and unique opportunity – definitely the highlight of my Royal Navy exchange so far."

D35 also practised manoeuvres and set pieces which are only

applicable when working with a carrier operating fast jets at sea.

One such job included acting as a 'horizon reference' for incoming aircraft – standing off about 4,000 yards astern of the mighty carrier and adopting a special lighting configuration to help guide pilots on to the Nimitz's flight deck.

Once Dragon took up her station each night, a procession of up to 30 jets flashed overhead every night, cruising straight over the Type 45 with a roar of jet engines as they lined up for a high-speed landing on a narrow flight deck already crowded with other aircraft.

The bridge and operations room teams listened intently to the pilots as they flew down the glide path to touch down on deck with full afterburners applied – just in case the arrestor hook does not catch and they have to 'bolt' through to launch again.

Members of Dragon's crew also took the chance to pay a visit to the Nimitz to experience life on a ship five times larger than the Royal Navy's current carriers.

Nimitz displaces 100,000 tonnes, is just shy of 1,100ft long and is home to over 5,500 sailors and aircrew. The Queen Elizabeths are two-thirds that displacement, 932ft long but with a complement

of 1,500-1,600.

"While I've been on an American carrier before – the Truman in 2008 – this was a much better experience," said LS(CIS) Rachel Thom.

"We saw aircraft taking off and landing whilst we were on the flight deck and the air and ground crew made it look very easy."

"Memorable things for me were the size of the ship, just huge, and the noise, even with ear defenders on the sound of an aircraft taking off and landing was tremendous."

In return, Dragon was visited by a high-powered team from Combined Task Force 50 – the command element for the Nimitz's battle group – including Carrier Strike Group 11's commander Rear Admiral Michael White, and the captains of both USS Nimitz and cruiser USS Princeton.

"Air defence is a team sport, and the dedication and support provided by HMS Dragon as part of our efforts are greatly appreciated," said Capt John Clausen USN, the task force's air defence commander.

"We are fortunate to have partners with whom we can join at sea and who are ready and able to seamlessly integrate with us to protect the force and accomplish our mission."

Delicate WW2 op for bomb disposal team

NAVY divers headed across the Channel to Guernsey to deal with a WW2 mine found in the middle of a wood – after a delicate operation to get it to sea so they could safely dispose of it.

Canadian aircrew dropped the device back in 1944, part of an attempt to mine the approaches to St Peter Port to prevent the Germans using the harbour.

Six mines missed their target – this one landed in Bluebell Wood about a mile south of Guernsey's capital, and remained there for 69 years until it was found last month by Guernsey Police.

A five-strong team from Devonport-based Southern Diving Unit 1, led by PO Nick Frost, headed to Guernsey to organise the removal and safe detonation of the bomb, which still contained 375kg of high explosive.

After hauling the device from its resting place in the wood by pulleys and rope, it was rolled along a specially-created boardwalk for 120 metres before finally being loaded on to the back of a truck.

It was then driven one mile to the coast – with 300 homes along the route evacuated as a precaution.

Once on the beach the bomb was secured to a lifting bag at low tide and at high tide the bomb floated as planned, attached to the bag.

About a mile east of the shore it was lowered to the seabed and detonated, throwing up a 200-metre-high fountain of sand, water and mud.

"We don't usually get this size of bomb and it was in very good nick considering how old it was and still presented a danger – a testimony to British munitions makers," said PO Frost.

"Not only was it a live threat, but the greatest challenge was getting it from an isolated position where there was no vehicle access so we had to manhandle everything, including all the equipment needed."

"Then we were forced to use ropes and pulleys and manpower again to get the bomb to the lorry to remove it to where we are more used to disposing of ordnance safely – in the sea."

"My team did a very good job."



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Helicopter engineers rewarded

THE Royal Navy's specialist helicopter support squadron has been singled out for its engineering expertise.

Portsmouth-based 1710 NAS – the MOD's centre of excellence for structural repair, modifications and scientific support for the helicopters of all three Services – received the Rolls-Royce Efficiency Trophy from Simon Baldwin, director of the TP400 engine programme at Rolls-Royce.



"1710 is doing some sterling work in keeping military helicopters safely in the air worldwide," Mr Baldwin said. "I do not underestimate the tasks you have to do in delivering great value to the armed forces. In industry, budgets are under pressure, and we all must become more effective and efficient. We appreciate your efforts to deliver more with less and you thoroughly deserve this recognition."

1710's chief scientist Richard Raistrick said: "I was delighted to see this level of recognition for the work we do at 1710. Scientists tend to be very inwardly focussed on the work in hand so for an external organisation to reward us for efficiency was most gratifying, it was a nice surprise for the scientists to be specially mentioned during the presentation."

The award, featuring the iconic Rolls-Royce figurine the Spirit of Ecstasy mounted within a silver bowl, is presented annually to the most efficient and effective squadron in the Fleet Air Arm.

1710 was praised for completing more than 180 structural repairs on helicopters worldwide and carrying out wear-debris analysis on 19,000-plus samples. In addition, more than 30 modifications were made to improve operational capability and there were 'exemplary' contributions to military aviation safety. The squadron also produced an online system allowing real-time tracking of all unit repair tasks – saving 3,000 man hours since its introduction in April last year.

Cdre Graeme Mackay, Assistant Chief of Staff Naval Aviation, said the squadron's strength was its diverse mix of skilled personnel – civil servant scientists and Servicemen and women from all three Services.

"Each individual has made a huge contribution to this award. Having 1710 as a brand that looks after our equipment gives us a great amount of confidence," he added.



'S' stands for Portland

A TYPE 45 destroyer can produce its trademark 'figure of eight'.

The veteran Type 42 churned up the sea into a lovely maritime doughnut.

And this is the party piece of the Type 23 frigate – a giant 'S' carved by the wake of HMS Portland: S for Cdr Sarah West, the frigate's commanding officer, who's brought the ship out of refit and ready for front-line duties.

While the core of the UK-based Royal Navy headed off on summer leave, the Devonport-based frigate was at 24 hours' notice to sail – her first operational duty following a 12-month revamp and then seven months of intensive training off the South Coast.

That training reached its climax over the past six weeks as the Type 23 frigate underwent Basic Operational Sea Training, played out in the fictitious Brownian waters off the coast of Plymouth.

Among the more challenging

tests HMS Portland came through: the ability to oversee a Non-Combatant Evacuation, known in the military as an NEO – plucking civilians from danger in a war zone.

The scenario is based on the mission successfully completed by Royal Navy warships back in 2006 where 4,000 people were evacuated to safety from Lebanon.

While numbers are significantly fewer in the scenario played out during BOST, the realism and planning required to undertake such an exercise is certainly comparable.

An evacuation demands the efforts from every member of the crew: Portland has to be able to protect itself from shore-side attack; her medical organisation must be prepared to deal with casualties, or at the very least exhausted and anxious people; the galley will have perhaps as many as

200 extra mouths to feed; there's a lot of administration to perform to process the civilians; many sailors willingly give up their bunks – as happened during the evacuations from Libya two years ago; and the ship's company will also need to eat, rest and be replenished.

"Our medical teams were really tested during the NEO," said LMA Katie O'Sullivan. "We treated 19 people with a broad range of ailments ranging from gun-shot wounds to sickness and vomiting."

"The scenario was very real and we have learnt a huge amount as a ship's company as to what we would do if we were tasked to conduct such an operation."

With the BOST box firmly ticked, Portland assumed duties as the Royal Navy's Fleet Ready Escort, whose mission covers anything from counter-drugs work, embargo enforcement,

disaster relief, and search and rescue – basically anything which the Navy's leaders determine needs a naval presence in and around the UK to protect the nation's interests. It's a duty which rotates around the Fleet regularly.

"HMS Portland is well placed to undertake the duties as Fleet Ready Escort. Having successfully completed BOST, my team has proven that they are highly trained and ready to undertake any task that might be asked of them," said Portland's Cdr West.

"This is a significant milestone in HMS Portland's regeneration from refit and I am immensely proud of the commitment and effort that my ship's company has demonstrated over the past six months."

Once Portland hands over her Fleet Ready Escort duties next month, she is due to take part in the second of the twice-yearly international Joint Warrior exercises, held off the Scottish coast.



Haul of fame for Lynx world

DEEDS shielding the Olympics from terrorism at the same time as supporting Royal Navy destroyers and frigates on their missions around the globe and helping to introduce the next generation of helicopter earned the Fleet Air Arm's Lynx air and ground crews a unique award.

Typically the Australia Shield – a gift from the people of the namesake country – is presented to the naval air squadron which has contributed most to front-line duties.

But such was the effect of the Lynx Wildcat Maritime Force – 700W, 702 and 815 NAS – across the board last year that it was singled out for the award, presented by Britain's ranking sailor First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas in the force's home at RNAS Yeovilton.

Of the three maritime Lynx squadrons, 702 provides trained air and ground crew to front-line 815, which supplies ship's flights to deployed warships, while 700W is introducing the Lynx's successor, the Wildcat, into service.

On top of those day-to-day challenges – flights saw active service in the North and South Atlantic, Mediterranean, Red Seas, Gulf and Indian Ocean – there was additional burden of the Olympics security mission.

"For a nine-week period covering the Olympics, we remained ready to launch at a moment's notice 24 hours a day, seven days a week with five Lynx aircraft, 90 engineers and aircrew to support the air and maritime security plan embarked in HMS Ocean," said Lt Cdr Nigel Cunningham, Detachment

Commander for the Olympic tasking.

"This role created many unique challenges for the Force both from an engineering view point as well as developing new tactics and procedures for the aircrew."

As the most senior member (age 54) of the Lynx Wildcat Maritime Force he jointly received the shield from Admiral Zambellas with the youngest sailor, 19-year-old AET Ash Whittle.

"It is really good that our hard work is recognised through presentations like these," said the teenager. "It makes it all worthwhile and gives you the motivation to keep working hard in the future."

For the overall commander of the maritime Lynx world, Cdr Kevin Fleming, the collective award of the shield was a fitting tribute to his team's efforts: "No single unit within the Force could have achieved what we did; it really was a whole team effort."

The shield is not the only award bestowed on the Lynx world by the Navy's most senior officer. Whilst in Yeovilton, Admiral Zambellas handed over the Osprey Trophy to the aircrew and maintainers of 217 Flight for their groundbreaking efforts working with the French Navy over the turn of 2012-13.

We say 'handed over', but it was more a case of 'handed back' as the Flight picked up the award which is presented annually to the Lynx team who've been the most effective on the front line.

In 2011 that front line was Libya, when 217 were operating from HMS Liverpool. Twelve months on and it was the ongoing war against piracy as 217 joined the French frigate FS Surcouf – the first time a Royal Navy Flight has teamed up with a French ship on deployment.

That posed some linguistic, as well as technical and tactical challenges, but all were overcome. As was the scourge of piracy, for the helicopter helped Surcouf bag 12 suspected modern-day buccaneers – the highlight of the deployment.

"It's the recognition of all that the team has done and how we pulled together in very different and at times difficult circumstances," said Lt Mike Curd, the Flight Commander on the Surcouf deployment.

"It was a challenge and we couldn't have done it without the whole team, which is what makes the recognition of the Osprey Trophy so important. I really enjoyed every aspect of the deployment. Although at times demanding, it was a great experience."

The trophy was commissioned in 2007 in memory of four members of HMS Portland's Flight who lost their lives in a Lynx which crashed during a night-time search and rescue mission off Lizard Point in December 2004.

Ocean passes refit marker

BRITAIN'S biggest warship is past the half-way point in her 15-month refit – marking the milestone by leaving dry dock in her native Devonport.

HMS Ocean has been largely out of action since playing a key role safeguarding last year's Olympic Games when she parked herself in the Thames for a couple of months and acted as a helipad, floating accommodation and command centre for the massive security mission surrounding the sporting spectacular.

Since the end of 2012 she's been in the hands of Babcock for a £65m revamp.

It's a project described by the defence firm as the equivalent of overhauling three Type 23s: more than 60 upgrades, improvements and maintenance packages have to be completed, keeping upwards of 400 people extremely busy.

Whilst in dry dock, the Mighty O's hull received a fresh coat of anti-fouling paint, and her engines, propellers, shafts, rudders and stabilisers have all been given a thorough going over.

Now out of dry dock and alongside, work on the helicopter carrier has shifted to improvements to the crew's and embarked troops' living quarters and refurbishment of the main galley and laundry, plus improving fire-detection systems.

Ocean's ship's company will move on board in early November with the carrier due to begin her sea trials in early 2014.

Her role as on-call helicopter assault ship has been fulfilled by HMS Illustrious. Once Ocean is ready to rejoin the RN's line of battle, Lusty is due to decommission after more than 30 years' service.

Navy News is on the move

AFTER many happy years (well, many years) in HMS Nelson, the *Navy News* editorial team is leaving the Naval Base behind and moving the short distance to Whale Island.

From September 30, we'll be moving to join the bulk of the RN's media team at Navy Command in Leach Building.

As a result the editorial phone numbers and postal address are changing – but not our email addresses. From September 30, our phone numbers will be 02392 62 (civilian) or 93832 (military) followed by:

5257 Editor Mike Gray
5255 News Editor Richard Hargreaves
5015 Production Editor (currently vacant)
3553 Editorial Secretary Sue Sullivan/Archivist Trevor Muston
5341 Graphics Andy Brady

For editorial submissions, letters to the editor, books for review and the like, our new address is:

Navy News
Navy Command
Leach Building
HMS Excellent
Portsmouth
PO2 8BY

The business side of *Navy News* – subscriptions, advertising, business manager and accounts – will remain in our long-standing offices in Leviathan Block for the time being.

21st-Century rescue, 15th-Century setting

RESCUERS from HMS Gannet faced a first in their long and very busy annals: plucking a casualty from the roof of a mediaeval castle.

The duty crew from the Prestwick unit received the SOS call from Castle Stalker near Appin in Argyll and headed off in their Sea King to the remote Highland location.

A local doctor was already with the man, who was suffering from acute pain, when the helicopter arrived at the castle, which is situated on a rocky island in Loch Laich near Loch Linnhe.

The helicopter landed on the mainland first to assess the best airlift options, before taking off to recover the man from the roof of the 15th-Century

fortress, which featured in *Monty Python and the Holy Grail*.

Qualified paramedic and duty winchman Lt Cdr Martin 'Florry' Ford ensured the casualty was safely winched aboard and made sure he remained stable and comfortable throughout the journey to the Royal Alexandra Hospital in Paisley.

"As rescues go, this was not a particularly difficult one – certainly the weather conditions were reasonably benign," said aircraft commander and HMS Gannet's senior observer Lt Richie Lightfoot.

"But it was an extremely unusual setting for us – in my 20 years' flying experience, I have never actually winched someone from the roof of a castle."

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Picture: LA(Phot) Pepe Hogan, HMS Argyll

Two oceans in one day

IN A break in the tropical rain – much of her upper decks are still damp from a lashing – HMS Argyll prepares to enter Lake Miraflores, having been lifted 54ft above sea level.

And thus the Devonport-based frigate begins the long road home – a 5,000-mile journey from the Pacific to the Hamoaaze as her seven-month South Atlantic and Pacific deployment nears its end.

It takes about ten hours to negotiate the 50 miles (80.47km) and three locks of this man-made ‘bridge between two oceans’ – plenty of time for the ship’s company to row the same distance on the electronic machines aboard.

It’s standard practice for any RN ship using Suez to have a crack at rowing the distance. Panama passages are less frequent, but that’s no reason not to give it a crack.

Spurring his shipmates on was Argyll’s clubz, LPT Baz Chambers.

“This event was put on to inject some fun and competitive spirit into our Panama Canal transit,” he said.

Because, otherwise, let’s face it, sailing down a canal isn’t that exciting.

Anyway... 67 sailors (about one third of the ship’s company) volunteered to row 1,000 metres each (some rowed two kilometres) to see whether matelot power was faster than two Rolls-Royce Speys generating over 30,000 shp.

“The rowers beat the ship by two hours, eight minutes and 26 seconds – which shows the commitment and the levels of fitness onboard,” said clubz.

The Panama passage came after an intensive period of counter-drugs patrols in the eastern Pacific – a laborious, rather monotonous task livened only sporadically.

One highpoint: a village fayre, for which the ship’s company have to thank clubz once more as the organiser.

He and shipmates in Argyll’s 39-man mess arranged some traditional style entertainment, turning the flight deck into a village green (well, grey) for some good family fun: games such as Splat-the-Rat, a (fiercely-competitive) strongman contest and the stocks, accompanied by some standard village fayre fare: candy apples and a hearty barbecue.

Not all the apples were quite so tasty. At the ‘challenge’ stall, punters were invited to munch their way through an entire chilli apple (among other ‘delicious’ treats on offer) to win a prize.

By the day’s end, all aboard had enjoyed themselves and, equally importantly, swelled the coffers of the ship’s welfare fund by £300.

Argyll is due home in Devonport later this month, while her duties on patrol in the South Atlantic and environs have been assumed by her sister HMS Richmond (see page 4).




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WEST BY NORTH-EAST

NOW that's quite an iconic sight to welcome you back to Blighty.

On the flying bridge of HMS Explorer, CO Lt Si Shaw grabs his binoculars to watch the Red Arrows streak along the Sunderland sea front for the Wearside city's annual air show.

After a couple of months ranging around the Baltic, Explorer – based 140 miles along the east coast in Hull – returned to home waters to act as the RN's guardship at the event, the biggest free air display in Europe watched by over one million spectators...

... most of whom won't have had quite as good a view of the Red Arrows, or other performers – including the Fleet Air Arm's own Black Cats Lynx display team – as the students and sailors aboard the P2000.

But you didn't have to go all the way north to see the Red Arrows and the Black Cats.

No, you could have gone all the way west, to RNAS Culdrose. 14,500 souls did just that for this year's air day at the Cornish base.

As it was, those 14,500 visitors didn't actually see the RAF display team in action. Low cloud (a not entirely unusual weather phenomenon at Culdrose on air day... or the 364 other days of the year...) put the kibosh on their display.

So the baton was picked up by a very-entertaining Dutch Air Force Apache, which proved why it has a big following at air shows across Europe. The flare-firing attack helicopter truly was awesome to see at such close range. Twisting and rolling across the Cornish sky it left many in awe of such a powerful beast.

Fleet Air Arm warbirds from yesteryear and today's modern equivalents were also on good form. The majestic Sea Vixen stole the show moments after 'the Reds' departed for their base, bringing rousing cheers and applause from spectators. The 50-year-old carrier strike aircraft was this year's show-stopper, carving stately loops in the heavens.

Thrill-seekers were not only

entertained in the sky. A large selection of helicopters and jets old and new were on display for visitors who wanted to get 'up close and personal'.

Also on the ground in a specially-designed arena the Plymouth Band of HM Royal Marines performed to the obvious delight of the public, in addition to an exciting Field Gun competition.

An HMS Seahawk crew locked horns once again with their Fleet Air Arm rivals from Yeovilton (HMS Heron), and put on a strong show and some true grit for the day.

Culdrose took a break from the display scene in 2012 – resurfacing runways and supporting security duties during the London Olympics – so organisers worked hard to come back with a thrilling show.

"A lot of planning goes into putting on a fantastic day like this", said Cdr Peter Munro-Lott, Commander Air and flying display director. "It's a whole-station effort and our chance to let the public in and see what we do at Culdrose."

The theme for the 2013 air day was 'Culdrose on the front line', with displays from Fleet Air Arm aircraft and personnel showcasing the Royal Navy's Cornish air station with a range of family-themed attractions on the ground complemented by the airborne excitement. Visitors of all ages enjoyed a thrilling and memorable day out.

Capt Mark Garratt, Culdrose CO, said: "It was an absolutely fantastic day. Culdrose was on display to the public – and sailors are always happy to showcase their capability. I'm proud of everyone and the public went home happy."

And talking of going home happy...

After 40 port visits around the Baltic and Northern Europe, the shores of the UK were a welcome sight to Explorer's small ship's company.

The boat typically serves Yorkshire's universities, but this summer has carried students from Birmingham University Royal Naval Unit (BURNU) whose own vessel, HMS

Exploit, has been out of action undergoing an engine change.

The last leg of Operation Baltic Horizon – some of which was in company with Wales URNU HMS Express – took Explorer from Kiel to the island of Helgoland (once a major German Navy base and later half blown-up by the British), then along the Dutch coast for three days in Amsterdam, two of which were spent with Express.

"It was fantastic to see our buddy ship and for the boss to swap dits with his wingman, CO Express, in Amsterdam after five weeks solo in the Baltic. We used the time for both students and ships' companies to catch up", said CPO 'Tug' Wilson Exploit's marine engineer officer.

From Amsterdam, Express turned south and headed for Zeebrugge before a fast passage back to Cardiff. Explorer made west, bound for the north-east coast of England.

"Leaving mainland Europe we made a 300 mile overnight passage to Sunderland amongst the many oil and gas platforms of the North Sea. For the majority of us this was the first transit of the North Sea and despite its reputation we enjoyed a flat calm crossing!" said Mid Chris Rigge.

And so to Wearside, where the boat anchored 1,000 yards off the beach and took up her guardship duties for the duration of the airshow.

"After our role in Op Olympics during the summer of 2012 we were used to providing a security and safety role for the airshow in company with the RNLI and police," said CPO 'Pam' Ayres.

"As well as providing a Royal Navy backdrop, we supported the RNLI and police with hotel services during the long hot days. We were also in the perfect position to watch the airshow."

Explorer was particularly full during this latest phase of her summer deployment with students embarked from Birmingham and Manchester URNUs, plus Birmingham and Loughborough Defence Technical Undergraduate Schemes (DTUS). Each of the latter comprises engineering-sponsored students from the RN, Army and RAF. Unlike the URNU, they do not possess P2000 patrol ships so their training is limited to land, until BURNU stepped in...

"The Boss and I are quite keen to get as many URNU and DTUS students to sea as possible. There are only four DTUS units in the country and two of them lie within our catchment area," said Explorer's coxswain CPO 'Stormy' Archer.

"Regardless of what unit they are from, everyone chips in. The Senior Midshipman was from Manchester URNU, catering



● Always crowd-pleasers... The Breitling Wingwalkers perform in leaden Cornish skies



● Thumbs up from one visitor to Culdrose Air Day as he enjoys the chance to sit in a cockpit

pictures: la(photos) caroline davies and abbie herron, and hms explorer

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But after six rounds, Harry would be stuffed. He'd have to pause to reload. The Magnum 44 might be the most powerful handgun in the world, but it's not much use with an empty chamber.

Besides, you don't need to take someone's head clean out to stop a foe in his tracks.

The 13 rounds fired from the barrel of the 9mm Browning pistol will do nicely. It's served Her Majesty's Armed Forces splendidly for more than four decades.

It is, however, old, quite heavy, and becoming increasingly difficult to maintain.

Whitehall decided to invest nine mil in a new nine mil and, after comprehensive trials, chose the Glock 17 (equating to the number of rounds in the magazine) which is now being rolled out across the three Services.

The SA80 remains the principal weapon of the RN. Pistols are carried by Royal Marines for close quarters fighting, and by sailors on boarding teams, aircrew, divers, while all personnel who deploy to Afghanistan are pistol qualified.

The first RN and RM personnel to get their hands on the new pistol are at the Military Training Unit at HMS Raleigh.

They train around 1,000 Naval personnel in pistol shooting every year – more than the three other bases.



After 45 years' service, the faithful Browning pistol is being retired in favour of the lighter, more modern Glock. **Richard Hargreaves** was (amazingly) allowed to take aim with the new handgun as it's introduced at HMS Raleigh.

(Collingwood, Excellent and Clyde) where there are similar facilities.

"It's a good bit of kit," says Col Sgt Kev McBain, the unit's chief instructor. "A big improvement on the Browning."

Today, there are no Brownings on the range at Raleigh for us to compare, just the new Glock.

"The Browning's been used for decades. It's a good gun. It's never been a problem. But it's old," says LS Callum Gregor, one of the instructors.

"The Glock is new, it's got the excitement factor. People are asking about it, they want to have a go."

They come to the range a little apprehensive. Safety is banged into their heads *ad infinitum*. They don't want to mess up – and they don't want to miss.

"People come here a bit anxious," LS Gregor adds. "But if they're willing to listen and learn, anyone can be taught to shoot well. Once you've shot, you want to do it again. People walk away from here with smiles on their faces."

Well, I'm both anxious and willing to learn. I learn that not only does the Glock hold four extra rounds in its magazine, it's a better, more practical gun.

It's lighter, its safety features not only make accidental discharges all but impossible, but also means you can draw it quickly from its specially-designed plastic holster and start blasting away at your foe in a swift, single movement – "all you need to do is draw and pull the trigger," Col Sgt McBain explains – something you couldn't do with the Browning.

Blasting away? Ditch all Hollywood concepts of using pistols. No leaping through the air

firing that one-in-a-million shot.

Mention any blockbuster to the team and there's a sharp intake of breath. *Hot Fuzz. Die Hard. Bad Boys*. (The 1990s police/criminal stand-off *Heat* starring Robert De Niro and Al Pacino does get the thumbs up for accuracy, however.)

So how do you fire a pistol correctly? Well, kink your knees slightly, lean forward, holding the pistol with both hands – almost as if you're aiming downwards a little.

If, like me, you suffer from eye dominance – one is stronger than the other – close the weak eye, then line up the sights: a luminous green dot at one end of the barrel, a u-bend at the other.

The key, Col Sgt McBain, is not to focus on the target, but the sights – line them up to form what he calls 'the castle' ("it looks a bit like the turret of a castle"): "The target should be blurry, the sights in focus, otherwise the bullet won't go where you want it to."

And now press the trigger. Crack. A cloud of fine sand rapidly disperses behind the target. There's a quick, sharp recoil which forces the gun up – particularly for a novice like me.

The trick is to not to let go of the trigger immediately, but to hold it down for a couple of seconds after you've fired – believe me, it doesn't come naturally – then aim the next shot.

It makes for much more accurate aiming – and hence tighter 'grouping', which is the buzzword in pistolry.

Grouping is the bunching of shots. The instructors here at Raleigh expect after the 2½-day pistol course for some very tight grouping in the 'central mass area' ie your enemy's chest at various

ranges.

We're shooting at ten metres which is, even for a pistol virgin, relatively easy. Sailors trained to use the Glock must be able to take down an opponent at 25 metres if necessary (the weapon actually has a range of about 45 metres).

And they're taught not just to aim at the central mass but also take a head shot because – particularly on the modern battlefield – a professional foe is likely to be wearing body armour.

So two shots to the chest, one to the head. Enemy neutralised.

For me, just hitting the target – an angry generic soldier charging at you – preferably in the chest will do.

The first rounds are wayward. Arm. Shoulder. Chest. Groin. The foe's down (probably) but as much by luck than by aim and skill. I'm not kinking my legs enough and I'm snatching at my shots, instructor LS Callum Gregor advises. Keep the finger on the trigger longer.

It is sound advice. A fresh magazine is loaded. When I remember to depress the trigger for a couple of seconds rather than hurriedly releasing it, the rounds are reasonably tightly grouped.

Over the crack of pistol rounds on the range and gold casings spiralling out of the chambers, I hear the muffled words of LS Gregor. "Good. Good. Tighter."

Magazine empty. We walk up to the cardboard target, now peppered with white holes. Baddy is toast.

Yippee-kay-ay... I'm quite impressed by my marksmanship. And then Col Sgt McBain steps up in full combat rig, strides from the 20-metre line up to the 10-metre mark, draws his Glock from his holster and...

Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack. Crack.

Fifteen rounds in maybe seven or eight seconds. Almost every one is within the central target area.

Now that's marksmanship. Still, I've got a big smile on my face.

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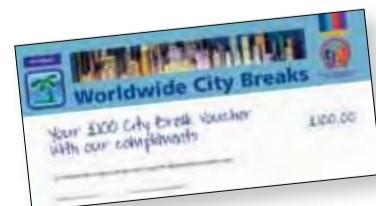
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Birthday honours

THIS is quite possibly the politest group of people ever to occupy the seats in the most famous football stand in the world.

Sitting in the fabled Kop are the ship's company of HMS Mersey – plus friends and family – invited to celebrate the patrol ship's tenth birthday.

Liverpool FC's stadium was the setting for a rather special party for the ship's company, who took over the club's glittering trophy room where there was some new silverware on display.

Not from the Premiership giants, but from the ship: a silver lion rampant – the emblem of HMS Mersey – was proudly on display; it was specially commissioned when the ship was bought outright from BAE Systems by the RN, instead of leased from them.

"What is the best way to spend your birthday?" Mersey's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Sarah Oakley asks rhetorically. "A big party surrounded by all your family and friends, doing something special at a unique venue."

Her ship's company certainly appreciated the setting for the party.

"As a massive football fan I felt exceptionally privileged to have such a personal, behind-the-scenes tour with such an amazing party provided on top," said AB(Sea) David Maund.

The visit to Anfield was one of several events ashore and aboard during a four-day visit to Merseyside to mark the milestone in the Portsmouth-based warship's life.

Mersey is the youngest of the trio of River-class ships – Tyne and Severn complete the sisterhood – which patrol UK waters monitoring fishing vessels, making sure they stick to legal

quotas, as well as generally acting as the eyes and ears of the Fleet around our shores.

Mersey was the very last warship built at Vosper Thornycroft's Woolston yard before the firm moved to Portsmouth (it's now part of BAE Systems).

Launched on June 14 2003, she was commissioned in Canada Dock, Liverpool, five and a half months later.

Since then she has spent 49,595 hours at sea on patrol and training – that's 295 weeks, or over five and a half years – adding 391,653

nautical miles to her odometer, the equivalent of circumnavigating the British Isles 268 times.

Commissioned on Merseyside, it was only right HMS Mersey returned there for her tenth birthday – and a visit to Alexandra Dock and her affiliated borough of Sefton.

Friends, family and especially affiliates joined the ship's company throughout, notably the Worshipful Company of Arbitrators, as well as the ship's sponsor, Jennie Reeve and Sea Cadets from TS Ardent from Macclesfield, who visited for an interactive tour and helped out at an official reception.

As well as the usual naval trappings – guard of honour, ceremonial sunset – the reception also saw a silent auction on behalf of the Jospice Hospice, which provides care for locals and also runs a similar facility in Honduras, the Master Arbitrator's charity, Concordis International, and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Lots included Liverpool and Everton shirts signed by the full 2012/2013 squads, a pair of designer shoes, and a 'Rooster Booster' children's scooter to name but a few of the exclusive donations which helped to bring in £1,355.

Celebrations were brought to a close when two parties of the ship's company attended separate church services in Sefton.

It was particularly poignant for the ship's XO Lt Gregg Powell, who hails from Southport; he returned to his childhood church, St Patrick's, where his mother is still an active parishioner.

"Having grown up playing on these beaches, it is a real honour to be able to sail one of Her Majesty's warships past the very places I grew up – and to be able to bring our sailors to my home town," he said.

Another group of sailors, led by Lt Cdr Sarah Oakley, visited St Nicholas Church in Crosby, along with the Fishery Protection Squadron Chaplain, Rev Ralph Barber.

There they met members of Crosby and St Helens Royal Naval Associations, who hosted them afterwards for some lunch and a few tots of Navy rum.

And with that the four-day visit was done and Mersey put out to sea once more to resume fishery duties.

"Mersey's affiliated borough holds a special place in the heart of the ship's sailors – the ship visited Liverpool 14 times during the past ten years and is already looking forward to her next visit in 2014," Lt Cdr Oakley added.

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon, FRPU West and John Travis, Liverpool FC

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Millies nominations sought

THE moment has come to put forward names of sailors and Royal Marines you think are worthy of honouring at the nation's military awards, the Millies.

Nominations are open for the sixth running of what are officially called *The Sun* Military Awards, run by the newspaper of the same name and backed by the MoD.

Prince Charles launched the appeal for nominations for the 2013 awards and urged the public once again to show their "profound thanks and admiration for the Armed Forces".

He added: "It is time once again to begin the search for extraordinary examples of bravery, fortitude, resilience and determination by our Servicemen and women.

"I cannot help but feel this is the easier part of the task, as there are simply so many remarkable examples of soldiers, sailors and airmen and women doing extraordinary things. The more difficult task is to decide between them just who should receive an award, as they all deserve recognition."

Last year Royal Marine Capt Si Maxwell collected the 'overcoming adversity' award (pictured, right, with his granddad, courtesy of *News Group Newspapers*), while the deeds of rescuer and fellow green beret Cpl Justin Morgan of 771 NAS earned him the title of 'Outstanding Sailor/Marine of the Year'

– although the lifesaver said the award was more for his squadron than him personally.

Six categories are open for RN-related nominations, which cover the period September 1 2012-August 31 2013:

- Overcoming Adversity** – the Serviceman or woman who has suffered severe injury or illness, and has overcome their difficulties with fortitude;
- Outstanding Sailor or Marine; Best Reservist; Support to the Armed Forces** – the civilian – a civil servant, contractor, charity worker or member of the public – who has given exceptional help to the military;
- Lifesaver Award; and Best Unit.**

Entries, which must be submitted by Monday September 9, can be made via *The Sun's* website: www.thesun.co.uk/sol/homepage/news/campaigns/our-boys/5067351/prince-of-wales-launch-sun-military-awards-2013.html.

A mixture of senior military figures and celebrities will determine the winners. The judges also make a special award – one the public play no part in – for outstanding service by an individual or unit not recognised elsewhere; previous winners include HMS Liverpool for her actions off Libya in 2011.



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Dying at the bitter end

HALF an hour before dawn on Saturday November 9 1918 and half a dozen miles off the Moroccan coast, the obsolete battleship HMS Britannia lumbered along with a couple of destroyers as escorts close by her side.

For a couple of weeks, the Middle Sea had been emptying as U-boats fled their base in the Adriatic and tried to make for Germany.

With Austria-Hungary disintegrating, the port of Pola – Pula in modern-day Croatia – was no longer safe. Revolution was sweeping the Istrian coast. Germany ordered its *U-Flotille Pola* – Pola U-boat Flotilla – home.

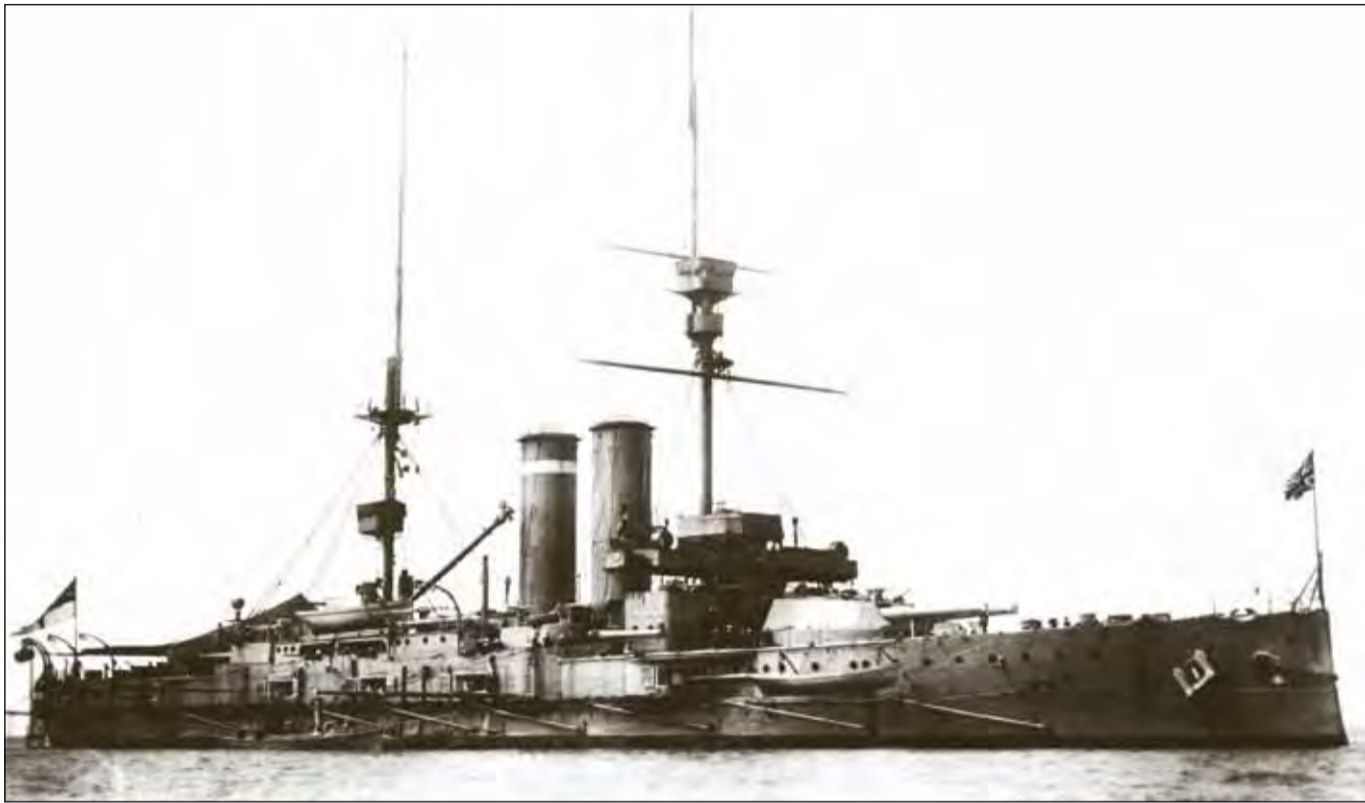
Two dozen boats either scuttled, or slipped their moorings. Among the latter UB50, a coastal rather than ocean-going submarine, commanded by the staunch nationalist Heinrich Kukat.

The world Kukat grew up in and loved was collapsing. Before the day was out, imperial Germany would become a rather chaotic republic.

Meanwhile, somewhere deep in the forest of Compiègne German, French and British officers and politicians argued in a *wagon-lit* over the terms of the armistice.

Then again negotiations had been rumbling on for a month and done nothing to stop the killing at the fronts, nor curb the actions of U-boats. Most infamously, the steamer *Leinster* had been sunk a month before in the Irish Sea with the loss of over 500 souls, prompting the normally-mild Foreign Secretary Lord Balfour to lash out. "Brutes they were, and brutes they remain."

With no orders to the contrary, Kukat took aim at the warship which presented itself in the sights of his periscope.



To this point, Britannia's 12-year career had been almost entirely underwhelming.

One of eight King Edward VII battleships – known as 'the wobbly eight' because of their less-than-wonderful seakeeping abilities – Britannia was obsolete even before she was commissioned in September 1906.

That February, HMS Dreadnought – built, like Britannia, in Portsmouth – had been launched. At a stroke, she rendered every man o'war to come before her if not impotent, then outdated.

And so Britannia – like every other contemporary battleship now branded a 'pre-dreadnought' – was assigned secondary duties, escorting cruisers, acting as picket boats for the more important dreadnoughts of the Grand Fleet.

And on the ninth day of November 1918, she was safeguarding the western approaches to the Strait of Gibraltar, part of the dragnet across the narrows and environs to prevent the Pola U-boats escaping.

By and large, it was a pretty lamentable blockade. Only U35 had failed to run the gauntlet.

The rest of the flotilla had made it through, including Kukat.

The East Prussian was known by U-boat men of the same vintage (including Karl Dönitz) as *ein ganzer Kerl* – in the language of the day "a pukka fellow". And now he proved it. He dispatched three torpedoes from the tubes of UB50. Two missed. A third did not, and immediately Britannia heeled to port.

It was not a mortal blow, however. That came shortly afterwards when a fire caused cordite to explode.

Thankfully, she did not go up

like *Invincible*, *Indefatigable* or *Queen Mary* at Jutland.

But the fumes from the burning cordite claimed many of the 50 souls lost aboard Britannia, while the explosion probably did for the old battleship.

But she was not gone yet. When Kukat dared to raise his periscope again to inspect his handiwork, the stricken ship's secondary armament opened fire.

It was a final act of defiance. After a three-hour death struggle she disappeared beneath the waves. Her prolonged final agony did at least allow 39 officers and

Barfleur	1692
Ushant.....	1747
Genoa.....	1795
St Vincent	1797
Trafalgar.....	1805
Crimea.....	1854

Class: King Edward VII-class battleship
Builder: Portsmouth Dockyard
Laid down: February 4 1902
Launched: December 10, 1904
Commissioned: September 8, 1906
Displacement: 16,350 tons
Length: 453ft 6in (138m)
Beam: 78ft (24m)
Draught: 26ft 9in (8.1m)
Speed: 18½ knots
Complement: 777
Propulsion: 15 coal-fired boilers powering two steam engines
Range: 2,000 nautical miles at full speed
Armament: 4 x Mk10 12in guns; 4 x Mk10 9.2in guns; 14 x Mk11 6in guns; 14 x 3lb guns; 5 x 18in torpedo tubes
Armour: 1-12in

Facts and figures

673 men to be saved.

Nearly half the dead are buried in Gibraltar's North Front Cemetery. All are remembered on Portsmouth's imposing naval memorial – you will find their names on Panel 30.

You will find many references proclaiming them victims of the last Royal Navy vessel lost in the Great War.

They are not. That unfortunate distinction falls to HMS *Ascot*, a minesweeper, lost the next day off the coast of Northumbria (victim, too, of a U-boat). Every one of the 63 men aboard died.

IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES



December 1961, and HMS *Leopard* – one of the four 'big cats' built as anti-aircraft frigates – dashes across the South Atlantic to one of the most remote islands in what was still (just about) the British Empire.

But it is not her efforts in the wake of the volcano which caused Tristan's evacuation we're focusing on this month in our rummage around in the photographic archives of the Imperial War Museum.

No, we're focusing on *Leopard's* homeport during her stint on the South Atlantic station for much of her first commission: the port of Simonstown.

After commissioning, training and trials in the UK, *Leopard* left the mother country at the end of May and made her way steadily south, rounding the Cape of Good Hope and into her new home in mid-August 1959.

The Navy of the 50s and 60s especially – before the days of package holidays and air travel within the budgets of the masses – truly offered the chance to visit far-flung places hitherto enjoyed only by a select, wealthy few.

The Cape offered delights – Daryl's Nightclub was a popular haunt in Cape Town, so too the Lord Nelson pub in Simonstown – but there was a dark side, too.

Apartheid – racial segregation – had been an official government policy in South Africa for over a decade. It dictated every aspect of life for the country's white and non-white populations, prompted international criticism, and a campaign by members of the African National Congress – among them a middle-aged lawyer named Nelson Mandela – for freedom and equality.

And Apartheid also brought with it a myriad of laws, including the 1957 Immorality Act.

As edicts go, Section 16 would not have been out of place in the Nazis' infamous Nuremberg Laws, outlawing extra-marital sex between a white male and a non-white female – or vice versa. The punishment? Up to seven years.

RN sailors based in Simonstown were instructed not to 'fraternise' with non-white girls (at the time 'fraternisation' or 'to frat' was a euphemism for sex...).

But on the night of September 17 1959, passion got the better of at least one junior rating aboard *Leopard*. He was "charged with contravening the Immorality Act of South Africa with a coloured woman", found guilty, and sentenced to whipping – six strokes of the cane.

The case prompted questions in Parliament – his actions were by no means criminal in the UK – but the government didn't send a formal objection to its counterpart in Pretoria.

The punishment imposed by the courts was never carried out. An outbreak of polio aboard *Leopard* (which claimed the life of at least one sailor) meant she was quarantined in a corner of Simonstown base. After ten days out of action, the frigate sailed to take part in an international exercise.

Leopard spent another 16 years in service before paying off at the end of 1975 – a decade before the South African Government repealed Section 16 of its Immorality Act.

■ THIS photograph (A 34521) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

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pictures: cpo(phot) rob harding and la(phot) dean nixon, frpu west

Absolutely

SOME seven decades ago Ernest King proclaimed an amphibious landing “the most difficult of all operations in modern warfare”.

As the American Navy's Chief of Naval Operations – equivalent to our First Sea Lord – through most of World War 2, he knew a thing or two about them, overseeing everything from Guadalcanal to Torch, Sicily, Normandy and Iwo Jima.

And although equipment and methods have changed (we no longer storm fortified coasts, for example) his prognosis remains valid.

So anything you can do to make things easier has to be applauded.

Over the past ten years the RN has taken note. New assault ships – huge planning rooms, specially widened ‘assault routes’ for Royal Marines in full kit; new ro-ro landing craft – much more practical for loading and unloading; new riverine patrol boats.

In short, the RN's amphibious jigsaw has, by and large, come together quite nicely.

There's been one dream unrealised – to bring the small amphibious craft, key to any landing, together.

Until now.

Royal Marines Tamar – the name is a nod not just to Plymouth's famous river but also to the naval base in Hong Kong for a century – brings the bulk of the Royal Marines' amphibious forces together on a single site.

What was for many years ‘Frigate Alley’ as home to the 22s and 23s is now ‘Amphib Alley’, home to both assault ships Bulwark and Albion and, when she emerges from refit, HMS Ocean.

The amphibious complex – peppered along much of the length of the north side of Weston Mill Lake – comprises a marina for the landing and raiding craft, two new buildings and one existing office block; the latter is home to 1 Assault Group RM headquarters.

As for the new structures, at one end of Amphib Alley, close to the marina, is Francis Building, home of 10 (Landing Craft) Training Squadron – which provides the Corps with its fully-skilled landing and raiding craft operators and commanders – and 539 Assault Squadron,

which delivers much of that raiding capability on the front line.

10 Sqn have been given special classrooms crammed with the kit you'd expect: life jackets, safety equipment, ropes and the like.

And on the ground floor, every man from 10 and 539 Sqn has a cage for all his personal kit: bergens, dry suits and the like. Warm air is pumped through to help the damp clothing dry out. There was nothing like it back at Poole or Turnchapel.

And a few hundred yards away, close to Bull Point and the old helicopter landing pad, is the long, green complex devoted to engineering support, Tandy Building. Not just for the boats, but also for the road vehicles – trucks, tankers, BVs, Land Rovers – required by 539 especially.

The engineering shed is on land and the craft are on water. How do you get them out?

Well, 539 can drive its four hovercraft, Landing Craft (Air Cushioned) or LCAC – pronounced el-cack – up a slipway which replaces Wilson's Beach.

As for the raiders and landing craft (both the smaller vehicle and personnel and the larger utility) mobile hoists raise them out of the water on a pontoon, then are driven by remote control to the shed.

The large hoist with wheels 6ft in diameter can cope with loads of 200 tonnes – so an LCU is no problem (although it won't fit in the shed; work is carried out on them outside on the hard standing); the smaller lift has a limit of 35 tonnes.

Perhaps the biggest surprise inside the shed – apart from the 3,000-plus square feet of pristine new workshops and gantry cranes running back and forth moving ORCs around with ease – is the amount of dark blue.

The marines carry out basic maintenance, but their job is really as the amphibious experts. They're not engineers. They rely on the RN Support Troop to keep the craft in tip-top condition.

The new buildings take their names from two legends within the Royal Marines' landing craft community: Mne George Ernest Tandy and C/Sgt Michael Francis.

Mne Tandy was coxswain of a landing craft at Gold Beach on D-Day, acting as the boat's ‘human rudder’ for four hours when the steering gear broke. He climbed over the stern of the craft

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- 1. Hard standing for hover/landing craft
- 2. Tandy Building
- 3. Ship lift
- 4. Slipway
- 5. Dock for landing craft/ship lift

- 6. HMS Bulwark
- 7. Francis Building
- 8. HMS Albion
- 9. Marina

'phibulous

and kept his boot on the rudder to guide the boat and the 32 troops aboard safely on to the shores of Normandy. He then repeated his efforts, when the landing craft returned to the mother ship, earning the Distinguished Service Medal for his efforts.

C/Sgt Francis was in charge of HMS Fearless' landing craft Foxtrot 1 in the Falklands which risked life and limb in the wake of two disasters, first helping to fight fires on HMS Antelope when she was bombed, then evacuating the wounded from RFA Sir Galahad and Sir Tristram when they were bombed on June 8 1982. Despite the danger – one bomb landed just ten feet from F1 – the craft rescued at least 100 soldiers and sailors. Like George Tandy before him, C/Sgt Francis was awarded the DSM for his deeds.

Both buildings were formally dedicated by Prince Harry – who holds the honorary RN title of Commodore-in-Chief Small Ships and Diving – when he paid a high-profile visit to Devonport to officially open the £30m Tamar facility at the beginning of last month.

Under brilliant blue skies, the prince – a battle-proven Apache gunship pilot in the Army Air Corps – spent two hours with Team Tamar, not just performing official honours but meeting personnel and their families, such as 539 ASRM's Sgt Maj Roo Bell, his wife Flo and sons Alf, ten, and Herbie, seven.

"His presence is very much appreciated by the Marines and certainly gained us a lot of public interest," said Sgt Maj Bell. "My boys certainly loved meeting him."

WO1 Andy Cray, of the RM Tamar engineering team, agreed. "It has been a brilliant day. Prince Harry asked me about the engineering in detail. He was very engaged and keenly interested – which gives us a boost."

Ceremonies over, it's time for 539 – who moved lock, stock and barrel from Turnchapel, across Plymouth Sound, earlier this summer – and 10 Training Squadron – who followed towards the end of July – to get to know their new facilities and, in the case of the latter, their new surroundings.

10 Sqn were based in Poole in facilities dating back to the 1950s. While the buildings were old, the location presented the squadron with one of the largest natural harbours in the world as a

training area. Its waters and shores were "more forgiving" than the rather rockier coast on both sides of Plymouth Sound.

But this new 'playground' also offers new 'toys'. "There's a major chunk of 3 Commando Brigade here and we're right on its doorstep," says Maj Nathan Hale, 1 AGRM staff officer. "That offers much more in the way of training opportunities."

There are teething problems to iron out at RM Tamar. The slipway is not ideal for the hovercraft. And there's a feeling that while at Turnchapel and Poole the commandos could enjoy some semi-independence, that's not possible in Devonport, in the shadow of the nation's flagship, with FOST across the water, commodores and captains watching. The Tamar guys feel very much in the spotlight. Then again, when have the Royals not enjoyed the spotlight?

Far more important is creating this amphibious hub – the first of the RN's 'centres of specialisation' (Faslane will be the submarine centre, Portsmouth the home of destroyer/carrier operations) – a brains trust for amphibious warfare.

It's not the total hub – up at Instow on the north Devon coast there's still 11 Amphibious Trials and Training Squadron who assess and advise on new craft and developments; there are no plans to relocate it.

But otherwise, Tamar is "carrying the torch as the amphibious centre of specialisation" in the words of First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas. "I am excited by the prospect of it lighting a path for the other centres."

On the practical level it means that fresh from operations – 539 are on Cougar right now – the front-line crews can pass their experiences on to their comrades on the training squadron, who in turn will introduce their students to new methods, tactics and practices.

And that's one reason why the Corps' amphibious community – about 300 strong – is excited.

Tamar has been a decade in the planning. In reality it is, enthuses 1AGRM's Commanding Officer Col Garth Manger, "a fantastic facility. Bringing everything together in one location can only pay dividends for the Royal Navy."

"This is our first centre of specialisation – and we're off to a good start."



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RMR HQ delivers on move

BRITAIN's second most senior sailor, Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Philip Jones, performed the honours as the Headquarters of the Royal Marines Reserve Scotland was dedicated in Rosyth, marking a move out of Glasgow and also taking the RMR Tyne unit in Newcastle under its wing.

RMR Scotland's CO, Lt Col Graham 'Jock' Fraser, said the move to the new HQ in the grounds of MOD Caledonia was the latest milestone in "a remarkable period in the history of the unit."

"I am immensely proud of what we've achieved over the last 18 months in so positively embracing the many significant changes resulting from the amalgamation of two headquarters and the move of that HQ – and all while continuing to deliver our main effort, which is force generating Royal Marines Commandos for service on operations."

In the past year, ten marines from the Scotland unit have mobilised and deployed on operations to Afghanistan; a further 32 ranks were mobilised to support the Olympic Games; and nine of its number have taken up full-time reserve service posts.

All are identical to their regular counterparts – they've all completed the commando course to earn the coveted green beret – but they also hold down a full-time job in civvy street.

Ten RMR Scotland recruits have recently earned green berets, while another 30 recruits have completed a training fortnight at the CTC in Lympstone, Devon.

In addition to meeting the demands of the front-line Corps, the unit's commando-trained ranks have participated in a variety of exercises in the UK, Norway, Germany, Cyprus, Gibraltar and the USA, whilst others have supported the regular RM Corps in a range of duties, from instructors to enablers.

Commander Maritime Reserves Cdre Andrew Jameson and his Deputy, Col Rory Bruce, were also in attendance – the latter being the grandson of the first Commanding Officer of the City of Glasgow Royal Marines Forces Volunteer Reserves in 1948.

RMR Scotland is also responsible for Belfast and Newcastle units, Edinburgh, plus Dundee, Glasgow and Aberdeen.

Sherwood's stone frigate on course

A £1 MILLION building project is under way which will see the Royal Naval Reserve and Royal Marines Reserve co-located at one site in Nottingham's Chetwynd Barracks, Chilwell, from 2014.

Foresters House, currently home to the Army Reserves, 350 Field Squadron (73 Engineer Regiment), is set to be refurbished and an existing building reconfigured to create the improved premises that will become Nottingham's new stone frigate, HMS Sherwood.

The Maritime Reserves are moving from their previous shared facility in Chalfont Drive to the new purpose-built training facilities more suitable for the growing Reserves Forces (see illustration below, courtesy of architect Maber Associates Ltd).

The Army Reserve unit will remain at the site but undergo a change of name and role, taking on an Explosive Ordnance Disposal and Search role under the FR20 plans for the Territorial Army.

Thanks to the hard work and negotiations of the FR20 management team, with constructive input from all stakeholders and funding support from Navy Command, the Maritime Reserves will be moving to this shared military complex in 2014, the facilities will be up-to-date, have much improved training resources, modern office space and room for expansion.

Cdr Martin Clegg, HMS Sherwood's Commanding Officer, said: "My ship's company and I are very much looking forward to moving into our new unit."

"We are actively recruiting for



● Cdr Martin Clegg, Commanding Officer of HMS Sherwood, reviews the architect's plans with the RMR, Army Reserve and RFCA Project team. Picture: East Midlands RFCA

new reservists and will be holding a number of recruiting open days over the forthcoming months.

"I believe that our new training areas and the excellent opportunities available to reservists to serve with the Royal Navy at home and abroad will encourage new recruits to join us."

"A Naval Reserve's role is varied and can include providing vital logistical support to ship crews, sending detailed signal information to merchant shipping or planning the landing of an amphibious task group."

"If this sounds like the sort of challenge you would enjoy, I would encourage you to get in touch."

The sailors are hoping to raise the White Ensign on a new

masthead and also drop an anchor from the former Type 42 destroyer HMS Nottingham in the grounds of their new abode when they re-dedicate their landlocked ship in the spring of 2014.

Capt Paul Kelly, 350 Squadron Royal Engineers, said: "This is great news for all our Reserves in Nottinghamshire, and by bringing the three Reserve units under one roof will only strengthen our existing relationships."

Simon Worsley, East Midlands Reserve Forces and Cadets Association's (RFCA) Deputy Chief Executive, said: "The RFCA are delighted to be project managing the new renovations that will see our local Naval, Marine and TA Reserves sharing a range of updated facilities in

Nottingham.

"The works will last around 26 weeks – meaning that reservists will be re-housed in their new location by March next year."

Across the Maritime Reserves estate, the Navy's FR20 Infrastructure planning team, Capt Mark Wyatt and Lt Cdr Sara Collen, have been focusing their efforts on delivering enhancements and brand new equipment to the other reserve units around the country.

They have spent the past year travelling the length of the country discussing plans and liaising with the regional RFCAs.

The FR20 programme is providing a grand total of £35m in major investment across the Tri-service Reserves Forces.



● HMS Forward's Reservists represented the Naval Service at the Bromsgrove War Memorial unveiling on Armed Forces Day

Forward help unveil memorial

RESERVISTS from HMS Forward joined civic leaders and tri-Service representatives for the official unveiling of a new war memorial for the Worcestershire town of Bromsgrove.

The campaign for a war memorial in the town to remember those who were lost in two World Wars and subsequent conflicts gathered pace following the tragic death in 2009 of Bromsgrove's teenage soldier Private Robert Laws.

The Bromsgrove Armed Forces Memorial Fund (BAFMF) subsequently raised the £50,000 needed to turn the memorial into a reality.

The four-metre-high Portland stone monument was formally unveiled on Armed Forces Day.

Bromsgrove residents joined a Guard of Honour from 2nd Battalion, Mercian Regiment, the Royal Naval Reserves from Birmingham-based HMS Forward, numerous standard bearers from ex-Service organisations and council dignitaries for a dignified service at the monument.

Phil McDermott, BAFMF Chairman, said: "We are delighted that after a lot of hard work and support from the community, Bromsgrove finally has a dedicated memorial and monument to those who have served, and are serving in, the Armed Forces."

Picture: Maber Associates Ltd



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King Alfred take crown

OVER 100 competitive reservists congregated at HMS Cambria in Wales for the inaugural Cambrian Challenge.

Leadership skills, fitness and team-working methods were tested over the sunny August weekend in a creative and demanding competition.

Teams came from HMS Ceres, King Alfred, Forward, Cambria, Eaglet and President to take part in the series of imaginative events including a sea survival challenge, archery competition, giant water slide, cargo and net challenge and a strenuous obstacle course undertaken whilst pulling a boat.

HMS King Alfred were crowned the 2013 Cambria Challenge champions, and the highest scoring archer, LH Neil Cooper from HMS Cambria, also won a prize.

Cambria's Executive Officer Lt Cdr Gary McKenzie said: "The Cambria Challenge provided an opportunity to develop team-working skills in a competitive environment. The weather was kind to us and this, coupled with Lt Cdr Grassy Meadows' boundless enthusiasm ensured a good time was had by all."

AB Ben Adams said: "It was such a great experience – the events were challenging and it really helped to cement my team-working skills."

When Eaglets dare

WHEN AB Peter Barlow met Forces veterans at a remembrance service for a Lancaster bomber that crashed on the banks of the River Irwell, he and others from HMS Eaglet learned about the special care provided by the ex-Forces care home, Broughton House.

Peter said: "I felt that HMS Eaglet could make a real impact by raising funds directly for the home

when we can see where our money goes, so we've devised a charity cycle challenge and hope to raise £5,000 to support the vital work that Broughton House carries out.

RNR members will be cycling from Newcastle to Liverpool over the weekend of September 28-29. To support the team see:

<http://www.charitychoice.co.uk/fundraiser/hmseaglet/royal-navy-cycle-challenge>



Challenge forges northern links

EIGHT reservists from HMS Dalriada have completed a three-day cycle challenge from Newcastle to Glasgow.

The event, organized by Staff Officer Lt Bill Inglis, brought together a team of young reservists to tackle the 176 miles, linking up with three of the UK's northern RNR units: HMS Calliope, their starting point at the Gateshead Millennium bridge (above, pictured by Lt Inglis), HMS Scotia in Rosyth and ultimately finishing at HMS Dalriada in Glasgow.

Lt Inglis said: "The trip was a huge success with the team gelling together from day one."

"I must thank CPO Tam Dewar

for all his support as our roadie; his can-do attitude was a real morale booster for the troops."

AB (Logs) Fiona Douglas said: "I'm a relatively inexperienced cyclist so I found the ride a huge challenge, but the team were fantastic at raising each other's spirits and the sense of achievement when we crossed the finish line was incredible."

Money is still coming in the team's fundraising site – to date they have raised over £1,000 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity. To show your support, visit the website: <http://www.virginmoneygiving.com/team/HMSDalriada>

'Best in the world'

THE head of the Senior Service has set out his vision for the "best navy in the world".

And his challenge to key personnel, both military and civilian, is to act with courage and authority to seize a rare alignment of opportunities to unlock potential which he described as impressive.

Speaking at the First Sea Lord's Conference, hosted by HMS Collingwood, Admiral Sir George Zambellas told assembled officers and civil servants that, following the recent spending round, he believed that was the right place and the right time to set the Navy's agenda and strategies for the coming years – and they were "just the people to do it – indeed, you are the only people to do it."

With support, the result would be a capable, confident and authoritative Service.

Admiral Zambellas began by acknowledging the role of his predecessor, Admiral Sir Mark Stanhope, in placing the Navy in a stronger position: "He has teed us up with a legacy of real substance on which to build our future."

He also thanked his audience, which he described as the "senior powerhouse of the Navy", for their effort and commitment.

"I hope that today, you will really see that despite the challenges, despite the strong headwinds, we really are in an increasingly promising place," he said.

"Never perfect, of course – far from it – but much improved, and we are all in a position to make it better still."

Admiral Zambellas said that he and the Navy Board sensed that the tide was with the Navy, and that he could be justifiably optimistic.

"We feel – and I believe personally – that our time is now," he told delegates.

Following two costly land wars, the Navy needed to exploit the new mood in Whitehall which recognised the Navy's place at the centre of Defence operations and planning "not triumphantly or noisily, but cleverly and quietly."

The challenge, he continued, was to find ways to deliver capability and to grow and maintain the RN's authority in a time of austerity and complex change.

"Today, we are fighting to get the right people in the right places to help meet our responsibility to deliver," said the Admiral.

"We have great new equipment appearing. Not perfect, but promising.

"It would be madness to have the kit, but not the people.

"We have the right strategic conditions – in the Gulf, the underwater mid-Atlantic, in contingency, in our carrier and jet alliance with the USA, with France – in, frankly, being an

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas sounded an optimistic note in his speech to senior Naval Service personnel – but also acknowledged the challenges facing the Fleet in times of austerity.

island nation – to help shape all that.

"Another Service would kill for those marvellous strategic causes."

He warned that some of the dots had yet to be joined and further work was needed to address certain areas, including people vulnerabilities, acquisition and support performance, concerns with industry, and in untried delegations in order to achieve real interoperability with high-end players.

The Admiral continued: "But with focus and courage we can fix those things – like I said, by having the right people in the right places to help create and sustain the chance to deliver.

"By having the quiet confidence to know we are right. By keeping our eye on the day-to-day detail – because that's the fight you're in – as well as unlocking the promise of the long term."

One particular opportunity which played to the Navy's strength was that of a contingency force, such as the Response Force Task Group, of which the Cougar 13 deployment – which began last month – is just the latest example.

Reservists brought valuable skills to the table, continued the Admiral.

"I want their military potential unlocked for our Service, of course.

"But I also want their private employment skills exploited too.

"We have very little idea what is hidden away in ABs and Killicks in the RNR. Stand by to be surprised."

Admiral Zambellas said that it was useful to consider the RN's situation from a different perspective.

"Sometimes, only when I compare notes with other Chiefs of Navies, I realise how lucky we are. Really? Okay, let me say why.

"Being the best isn't about the scale. It's about having 'enough' political will, 'enough' capability, 'enough' interoperability, 'enough' people, 'enough' joint training – enough confidence to be able to unlock our potential, and deliver what we promise.

"It's all about our attitude; not about simply holding our nerve – that's for wimps – but about really understanding our delivery battlespace, and how smart we need to be to take advantage of it, and how each of you can do that, in yourselves, and together with those around you.

"It's about trying so hard you actually get some of it wrong. "No one should ever get a bollocking – certainly from me – for trying too hard."

And the path to success lies in using the system and stamping the



● First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas is briefed on the physical training delivered at HMS Sultan during a visit to the engineering training establishment last month. The Navy's most senior officer toured the base and officially opened a new fitness suite

Picture: LA(Phot) Vicki Benwell

Navy's authority on all aspects:

"By – for example – owning Joint Expeditionary Force, the JEF; not asking if we could have a bit of it, or make a contribution towards it.

"In other words, by turning process, confidence, authority and sheer bloody bravado to work for us."

Another crucial factor in the Navy's favour, said Admiral Zambellas, was the Secretary of State, Phillip Hammond, who had taken the time to scrutinise the Navy's Command Plan in detail and was aware of the risks and challenges facing the Service.

"We have a grown-up in charge and we are getting grown-up benefits," said the First Sea Lord.

In the political field, it is performance that counts, he observed.

"Admiral Jon Greenert [Head of the US Navy] said: 'George, it doesn't matter to me exactly how big your Navy is. What matters to me is that you can be relied upon to deliver.'

"That is our authority. That is the commodity that politicians understand.

"And so I hope you can see, ladies and gentlemen, that we might not be the biggest, or the most expensive, or the noisiest – but we really are the best. We really are respected worldwide."

"Focussed action" – working together, using best ideas and collective leadership and energy – would work in the Navy's favour.

"I have never known a time that our specialist tribes have seen the common opportunity – for all," he continued.

"I see no inter-tribal strife – no aviators versus submariners. Just a collective desire to succeed. And you just can't buy that.

"Indeed, I'll go one step further. In such a diverse community – land, sea and air combined – we

are pulling together really well.

"And our combined horsepower, viewed from outside, is very definitely more than the sum of the parts – and it's impressive.

"Believe me, it's scary, even.

"Despite the huge challenges we face, the way ahead is through aligning leadership effort.

"If I had to characterise what I want to achieve in my tenure, it is to deeply empower the belief of our Navy people – military and civilian – and our industrial partners, and the families, in the great future of the Naval Service, in its lasting value and its lasting relevance.

"That way, we will be able to achieve more than our equipment

suggests, or our doctrine promises, or our numbers mean."

Returning to his main theme – and the Navy's 'headmark' – Admiral Zambellas said: "The first statement reads that we will be the best Navy in the world.

"Believe it, ladies and gentlemen! Stand back from the daily grind which I know can dominate your working lives – and my working life too – and pause for a moment.

"We have authority based on equipment – a renaissance in our equipment.

"We have authority based on our strategic responsibilities.

"And we have authority based on what our government daily

asks us to do.

"We may be smaller than the US and Chinese Navies, but in terms of our outputs against our inputs – our efficiency – we are the best in the world.

"Think of our carrier regeneration – it will make the Russians, Chinese and Indians blink.

"We were told once we'd lost it – it would take us forever to recover those skills. We'll see.

"If you are in the Submarine Service, you know that we are at the leading edge. And you know what an astonishing tribal performance we must and will pull off with Successor [the next-generation nuclear deterrent].

"If you are an aviator, you know that we continue to provide top-end naval aviation around the world, with a fifth-generation fighter inbound to boot.

"And what about all those nations that come to us for sea training? Why do they do that?

"And why, on a recent trip to Singapore, did I find all the regional players coming up to me wanting to reconnect with their roots, and the spirit and ethos of the Royal Navy?"

"For those of you who have been on op tours, why is it that you have more than matched your coalition partners at every level?

"There have been astonishing performances by the Marines, Logisticians in Joint Force Support in Helmand – and outstanding medical leadership in the field.

"In aviation. In IED work. With the Reserves, as equals. By seniors, and by juniors.

"This is part of the spirit of the Service which is irrepressibly good.

"We are actually good at what we do. We are a global brand.

"So we might not be the biggest – but we can be the best."



● Admiral Zambellas talks to air engineering technician trainees within 764 Initial Training Squadron at the RN Air Engineering and Survival School at HMS Sultan. The Admiral also had the opportunity to board a Wasp helicopter similar to those he piloted early in his career

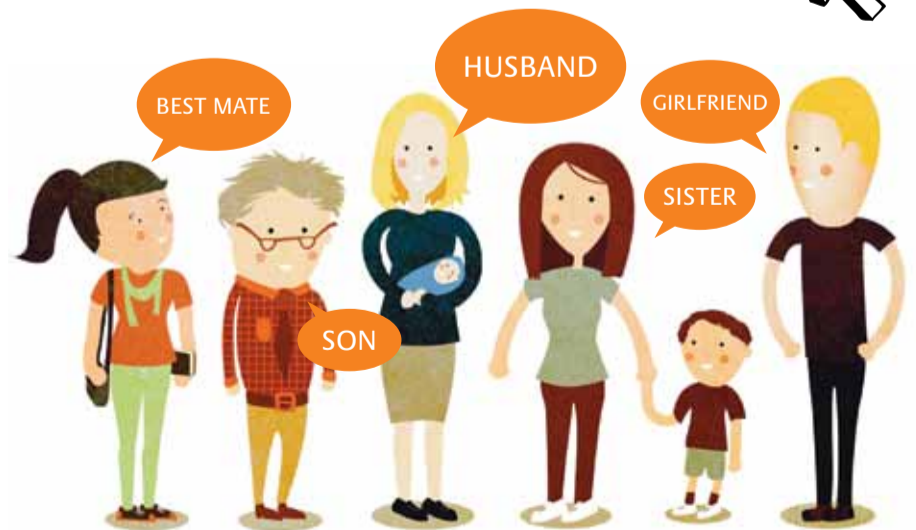
Picture: LA(Phot) Guy Pool

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HOT. High. Dusty.

Been there, done that.

But let's do it again anyway.

Nearly two years after their last experience of flying in demanding desert conditions, the wings of the Royal Marines – the Commando Helicopter Force – headed to the sand, heat and mountains once again to top up their skills.

This time, however, the destination was not Afghanistan but southern Jordan as the Sea Kings of 845 Naval Air Squadron – one of three front-line Fleet Air Arm units which serve the green berets – decamped from their base at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset for Exercise Pashtun Commando.

The squadron is spending six weeks in the southern Jordanian port of Aqaba either learning or re-learning the unique

skills required to fly in the searing heat and dust-laden environment of the desert – and rarely is an environment as ideal for crews, engineers and ground support teams alike.

Between 2007 and 2011, the Sea Kings of 845 and 846 NAS flew more than 3,800 sorties over Afghanistan in support of the Allied mission in that troubled land, safely ferried around more than 80,000 troops and delivered over 700 tonnes of ammunition, water and other supplies to various outlying bases.

As a result there's bags of desert experience in the squadron – many of the crews completed several theatre tours in Helmand, so are well accustomed to the procedures and complexities of carrying out effective landings, load lifting and night navigation in low light conditions and heavy recirculating dust (stirred up

when a Sea King comes in to land).

But in the two years since the Junglies last flew over Afghanistan, there's been a considerable influx of flesh blood – both air and ground crew, such as pilot Lt Chris Gayson.

"I was initially quite apprehensive and unsure what to expect from the hostile desert environment," he said. "Nevertheless, I couldn't wait to get started and add to the skills I had already learned in flying training.

"The prospect of losing all visual references during the final approach was a touch unsettling, but under the watchful eye of experienced instructors, I was able to apply the techniques and get to grips with desert flying. As if landing in a dust cloud wasn't a big enough challenge,

the syllabus soon progressed on to load lifting and formation landings by day and night."

So what is landing in a dust cloud like? Well, with the aircraft lined up for an approach to the flat, relatively featureless desert, the crew enters a period of heavy workload in which cooperation between the pilots and aircrewmen is vital in order to make a safe and accurate landing.

As the Sea King turns on to the approach heading, the final checks are made. Perhaps the most important thing is making sure the windows are shut in the front, and the aircrewmen have their protective goggles on in the back.

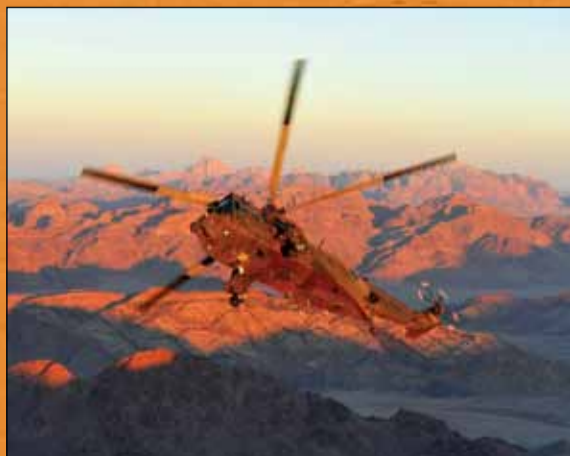
The pilot calls 'running in' and the anticipation of what is to come builds.

The 'happy' calls from the handling pilot are normally frequent, and there is one last check of the area for any obstructions that might ruin the day.

The dust cloud starts to build and advance from the tail as the aircraft slows down for the landing. As the crewmen inform the front seats of the impending 'brownout' and its position relative to the aircraft, one thing becomes blindingly obvious: no matter how many dust landings you do, the taste of dust and sand in the mouth is never pleasant, and neither is the moment when the dust cloud passes the cargo door, reducing visibility to almost zero.

If the sand whipped up by such landings isn't pleasant for the crew, it's not a lot of fun for the aircraft either.

Dust + engines = bad. "Without wishing to sound like a



KINGS OF JORDAN



British Rail spokesman talking about the 'wrong type of snow', the characteristics of the dust in Jordan have put an extra burden on the aircraft," explains pilot Lt Nick Hallatt. "The teams have worked tirelessly to keep up the pace of flying."

Earlier this year the Junglies – a nickname paying homage to the deeds of the Commando Helicopter squadrons in Borneo half a century ago – flew around the snow-capped peaks of northern Norway to test their ability to operate at the other end of the climatic spectrum. There personnel faced temperatures as low as -30°C – at which all work stops.

The mountains of southern Jordan are similar in height to those faced in the Arctic – about 5,000ft – but there's no snow on the peaks, just "enough dust to make your trusty Dyson quiver" and daytime highs are in the mid 40s Celsius

– well over 100°F.

Pashtun Commando hasn't only been about testing air and ground crews in the 'comforts' of their base in Aqaba, but also out in the field.

Accompanying 845 on the exercise are the men of the commando and parachute-trained Mobile Air Operations Team who first find, then secure and finally establish a helicopter landing site – deep in the desert.

As the engineers readied the helicopters and aircrew grabbed sufficient sweat rags and water to see them through their sorties, the MAOT were already establishing their forward sites, marking out the landing area to give aircrews the necessary ground references – and give that warm, fuzzy

feeling when undertaking load lifting.

There has been some well-earned down-time for the CHF team – notably Petra, the city carved out of the red rock just 60 miles away from the Junglies' temporary home. Protected as one of the UN's World Heritage Sites – and home to the Holy Grail if you believe Indiana Jones rather than Monty Python – the ancient city did not disappoint. "Petra provides an awe inspiring experience that can't be missed," says Lt Hallatt. But then the same goes for the experience of flying a venerable Sea King over Jordan.

"If you take some time to look out of the window, flying through the deep valleys of the Red Mountains, with Wadi Rum surrounding you in all directions,

and you realise that this is both a great training environment, and a superb place to fly," Lt Hallatt adds.

Detachment Commander Lt Cdr Edwin Adams says every facet of CHF has been tested in and above the sands of Jordan on Pashtun Commando.

"The exercise has proved hugely beneficial for all members of the detachment," he says.

"Clearly the main aim is to train and refresh aircrew in desert flying techniques – I have never experienced an environment so challenging and similar to that in Afghanistan.

Lt Adams continues: "Operating in hot and high conditions brings significant challenges to not only our aircraft engineers, but also the Mobile Air Operations Team, the Fuel Troop and aircraft handlers who man a Forward

Arming Refuelling Point in the mountains, CHF's Signals, the survival equipment section conducting survival and evasion training and the MT section, keeping the fleet of vehicles serviceable in this harsh terrain.

"Even the medical team and stores department have their challenges to overcome, with ambient conditions and difficulties in working with other nations.

"It is an amazing yet very tough environment to train in, yet as ever, the members of Commando Helicopter Force rise to the challenges and produce the goods, training hard so that we can fight easy."

Once done in Jordan, rather than return home to Yeovilton, the Sea Kings are due to join the ships of the Cougar 13 task force, which is exercising in the Med and Middle East through the autumn.





Deterrent dolphins

OH DEAR!
Has the submarine badge changed since I retired in 1994 or do I spy a divisional officer on HMS Vigilant (*Navy News* July 13) wearing an American submarine badge?

As one of the early nuclear submariners who fought long and hard for the introduction of a decent submarine badge and then had to fight even harder to banish the first attempt known very quickly as 'the sausage on a stick' which was supposed to be worn on the left cuff.

I hope he was not awarded this through a tot of rum, maybe a tot of Coke as it was American.

I hope he was given the necessary funds to buy the proper badge from slops.

— Les Taylor
APSO Renown (Port)
First Commission
Ramsey, Cambs

Editor's note: Les spotted the officer wearing the silver RN Deterrent Patrol Pin of the 'at sea deterrent force' (gold version pictured above)

A scroll beneath the submarine is inscribed with the motto 'Always Ready'.

The pin is silver or gold dependent on the number of patrols up to 19 patrols completed, gold means that the submariner has completed 20 or more patrols.

The RN Deterrent Patrol Pin must always be worn in conjunction with the submariner's Dolphins badge.

Wellington's last sailor

MY FATHER served on HMS Wellington, now moored near Temple Underground station in London and renamed HQS Wellington.

He is the last surviving member of the crew that served on her in World War 2 during the Battle of the Atlantic.

Back then, he was Able Seaman Peter Gibbs. He was back on board in the spring to meet the Duke of Edinburgh and First Sea Lord for the opening of the 70th Anniversary Battle of the Atlantic exhibition.

My father has also been interviewed by the BBC for a programme about the Battle of the Atlantic, along with his long-time friend Ken Watson, who was awarded a medal, for the Russian Convoys, I believe.

Peter is now 88 and still going strong.

— Robbie Gibbs
Bankside
London

Editor's note: HQS Wellington is hosting a free exhibition, in commemoration of the 70th Anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic, on the convoy escort role. The ship is open to the public on Sundays and Mondays from 11am to 5pm.

For further details, visit the Heritage section of the website <http://www.thewellingtontrust.com/heritage/home>



● (Above) Battle of the Atlantic veteran Peter Gibbs meets the Duke of Edinburgh and First Sea Lord Admiral George Zambellas on board HQS Wellington and (below) HMS Wellington in Milford Sound



The lucky Llandudno

I WONDER if any of the crews are still about and remember the 15th Minesweeper Flotilla made up of Bangor-class Fleet minesweepers mostly named after seaside towns around the UK?

HM Ships Fraserburgh, Lyme Regis, Llandudno (the ship I was on), Bootle, Worthing, Ardrossan, Dunbar and Tangyanika.

I served as a signalman aboard Llandudno from 1943-45, when she was paid off and handed over to the Sea Scouts in Lowestoft.

We were among the first in at Normandy on D-Day and I understand we were considered expendable, however, we were lucky and I am still here, aged 88.

We devised our own sea-ditty whilst the flotilla was stationed in Immingham, Grimsby, where we used to regularly sweep the Humber estuary to clear the mines dropped by the German aircraft at night.

Sung to to tune of Lily Marlene:
*Orders came for sailing,
past the Humber light,
440 of float wire and 15 fathoms
of kite,
Oh what a difference it will be
In all the pubs in Grimsby,
They'll ruddy nigh be empty
when the 15th go to sea.*

I hope this will be remembered by somebody.

— C W Sharples
Wolverhampton

Eagle's spectacular Spitfires

SOME time ago, the *Navy News* ran an article relating to the RN utilising HMS Eagle to transport and then, on June 3 1942, fly off some 20-odd Spitfire aircraft in the Med to participate in the siege of Malta. It is said that without those birds Malta would have fallen.

Pilot Officer Robert (Bob) Middlemiss RCAF was one of the Spitfire pilots and sadly passed away at the beginning of August at the age of 93.

Bob was shot down and wounded off Malta but was picked up by air sea rescue.

He was credited with four confirmed German fighters knocked down, was awarded a DFC and remained in the RCAF after the war, retiring as a Wing Commander.

While I served my time in the RCN during World War 2 in the Atlantic, English Channel and Bay of Biscay, I was always overawed with the war in the Med where the RN performed so spectacularly.

But then so did the RAF with a big assist by HMS Eagle.

I wonder how many of those pilots who flew that day from Eagle are still with us?

— Bill Wilson
Calgary, Alberta
Canada

Fast minelayers mix-up

IN July's *Navy News*, Lt A E Bird RN is right about your Fleet Review caption but wrong about the number of Fast Minelayers, as I am sure others have pointed out.

In fact, six were built and three survived the war. All six were actually listed in a Fast Minelayer Association reunion dit later in the same issue.

Sadly the closest I got to

enrolling in the Senior Service was trials work on surface ships and submarines with AUWE – my father, a 25-year Navy man himself, flatly refused to let me join.

As an ex-MAA, one tended not to argue with him too strenuously! *Navy News* helps me to get over it – great paper.

— John Cotterell
Portland, Dorset

Turning the Tides



Each month Pussers Rum is offering to courier a bottle of their finest tippie to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Hugh Axton. In November and December's editions, the Jackpot letter will be rewarded with a very collectible Pussers rum porcelain decanter – so get in touch!

IT WAS fascinating to see the artist's impression of the new Tidespring, first of class of the Tide-class Royal Fleet Auxiliaries.

How different she looks compared to her predecessors, which had three large derricks.

However, I was surprised and not a little sad to see the intended name of the other three ships of her class.

Surely for those of us who served between 1962 and 1988, Tidespring without her sister ship Tidepool is like gin without the tonic.

They were both commissioned in 1963, served until the end of the '80s and were distinguished from their sister ships Tidesurge, Tideflow and Tidereach

(commissioned in the '50s) by having large hangars and a flight deck back aft.

The O class – Olna, Olmeda and Olwen, commissioned in the mid to late '60s, looked very much like Tidepool and Tidespring but had four derricks instead of the three in the Tides. Certainly I noted that officers had difficulty distinguishing between an 'O' and a Tide when they were on the horizon.

It would be wonderful if the intended Tiderace and Tideforce could be named Tidepool and either Tidesurge or Tidereach. but I suppose it is too late now. Who on earth does the naming in the MOD?

— Hugh Axton
Walmer, Kent

Cheers for Cheese Oosh recipes

THANK you, all the kind gentlemen (chefs and non-chefs) who contacted me regarding the request for a recipe for 'Cheese Oosh.'

As a result of your contributions I could (if required) cater for 100 people or just for four.

Also the slight variations in the ingredients makes for either a savoury dish or slightly exotic (with the addition of red and green peppers).

Be assured, the recipes will be tried out, although with amounts scaled down to suit numbers to be fed!

My thanks to you all.
— George Sexton
Preston, Lancs

ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS

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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.
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● Jill and Simon's marriage is blessed on board the lifeboat Spirit of Northumberland
Picture: Adrian Don (RNLI)

Top Kiwi sailor beats commando challenge

WHEN PO Josh Kauika received the award of Royal New Zealand Navy Sailor of the Year he probably had no idea that it would lead him to the Royal Marines assault course at Lympstone.

Candidates for the Sailor of the Year are forwarded from individual units and whittled down before the final nominees are voted on by a committee.

The winner gets a week-long all-expenses-paid holiday for two.

"We were given the choice of a holiday to Canada, Australia, Hawaii or the UK," said Josh's fiancée Lucy Cinjee, a nurse in Auckland.

"We chose the UK because we wanted to go travelling in Europe once the UK visit was over."

Josh and Lucy visited London, and Josh was also congratulated on his achievement by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas.

The couple then travelled to Portsmouth where they visited the Southern Diving Group – a visit interrupted by the clearance divers having to rush off to deal with an unexploded World War 2 bomb found at Newquay.

Josh, an underwater engineering diver based at Devonport in Auckland, received his award in part for his work clearing



underwater mines in the Arabian Gulf at depths of up to 50 metres.

After visiting HMS Victory the couple travelled to Exeter for the last part of their visit – a guided tour of Commando Training Centre RM, including the chance to take on the notorious assault course.

The course has four elements known as Battle Physical Training, all of which must be passed by RM recruits in week 20 of their 32 week training – failure of any element means they are held back until they have completed it.

The first trial is a 30ft rope climb, which Josh tackled with

ease, though without the 14kg of equipment the recruits carry.

The assault course was finished (without extra kit) in 3m 20s – well within the 5 minutes recruits are allowed.

The next test was the fireman's carry (above), a brutal 200-metre run which recruits have to complete in 90 seconds carrying another man and 26kg of kit.

Josh managed it with two seconds to spare carrying a PTI and 14kg of kit – though he described the test as "evil".

Finally, the feared 'full regain' – a chasm over water. Recruits have to swing underneath a rope and

then get back on top of the rope, a test which Josh again passed.

"I thought the assault course was awesome. We don't normally get to do stuff like that," said PO Kauika.

"I was starting to regret all the hotel breakfasts we'd had recently about half-way round it."

WO Richard White RM said: "The PTIs Josh worked with were very impressed by his fitness levels and determination."

"However I suspect that if any of our guys were given the choice Josh had they would have probably gone for the all-expenses-paid trip to Hawaii instead of coming here..."

Marriage blessed on board lifeboat

AN RNLI lifeboat volunteer and Royal Navy submariner had their wedding blessed onboard a lifeboat.

Jill McCormick, a navigator and inshore lifeboat helm at Tynemouth lifeboat station, married CPO Simon Lee, and the wedding was blessed by Tynemouth RNLI chaplain Rev Timothy Duff on board the Spirit of Northumberland, watched by more than a hundred friends and relatives.

Jill said: "I wore my yellow lifeboat wellies under my dress, which was really funny, and I was

steady on the boat but some of the bridesmaids were clinging on as they're terrified of water."

Despite worries about the lifeboat actually being at the station for the blessing, due to a 'shout' just an hour before it was due to start, everything went perfectly to plan.

Jill, a fisheries officer with the Environment Agency, met Simon three years ago – Simon has just completed a maths degree and is due to start officer training at Dartmouth this month.

Adrian Don, spokesman for Tynemouth RNLI lifeboat station, said: "Jill's a long-serving and respected crew member, so the crew of Tynemouth RNLI lifeboat station were delighted to hold the blessing on the lifeboat."

Japanese trainees briefed

A GROUP of Young Officers from the Japanese Training Squadron, visited the Maritime Warfare School, HMS Collingwood, and the School of Marine Engineering, HMS Sultan to see the training delivered to Royal Naval personnel.

Dividing in to two groups of 45, the YOs were given comprehensive briefs and tours of the training facilities, including the Maritime Composite Training Systems, the 4.5in gun, the Close Range Training Section – where they had the chance to try the General Purpose Machine Gun simulator – the Type 23 and 45 platform management simulators, and HMS Sultan's wind tunnel.

Lt Takashi Matsunaga said: "It was a great pleasure to come here. You have more technology and we are very impressed with the gun simulator."

Lt Jim Moseley, Visit Liaison Officer for Sultan, said: "Although we speak a different language to one another, there are so many similarities between us."

"I hope that the experience will only go further to foster closer relations between us in the future."

On completion of the equipment and training tours all 90 Young Officers joined their Royal Navy counterparts from both establishments for sports activities and a social event.

The visitors were in the area as part of the three-strong training squadron that berthed in Portsmouth Harbour earlier in the summer.

Glad rags on

CHATHAM Historic Dockyard is expecting a bumper year for visitors in their vintage finery at the Salute to the 40s event on September 21-22.

A record number of re-enactors and the best in 1940s traders are promised to help recreate a Home Front atmosphere, along with two vintage fairgrounds and musicians and dancers.

This year's event has an 'Escape to the Country' theme to remember the experiences of children evacuated during the war.

www.thedockyard.co.uk/salutetothe40s

Dolphins – the American way

A ROYAL Navy submariner has received US Navy Submarine Service 'dolphins', making him just the second UK officer to qualify on an American submarine.

Lt Matt Main had already earned his RN dolphins – the unique badge which signifies a qualified submariner – but he has now been presented with the US equivalent after a gruelling 27-month training and qualification process.

Matt, a marine engineer on the US-UK Personnel Exchange Programme, was presented with his badge by Cdr George Perez, CO of USS New Mexico, at Clyde Naval Base (pictured).

Fully integrated into the crew of attack submarine New Mexico, Matt is the Damage Control Assistant and will become the Assistant Engineer in due course before returning to the RN.



● Hoop throwing was one of the many activities that were on offer during a sports day which formed part of the Blind Veterans UK summer camp at HMS Sultan
Picture: L(Phot) Guy Pool

Sports day for blind veterans

SPORT was the theme of the morning as HMS Sultan hosted a sports day as part of this year's Blind Veterans UK (formerly St Dunstan's) summer camp.

Sultan's CO Capt Trevor Gully was on hand to welcome the veterans at the sports day

event, one of many activities on offer to the members of the charity throughout the week, and to help the local branch of the Wrens Association in presenting a cheque to the charity.

Traditionally supported by the Fleet Air Arm field gun crew, the

camp has been hosted by Sultan since 1996, following the closure of HMS Daedalus.

Activities throughout the week were supported by Service and volunteer helpers, including sailing, gliding, archery, bowling, fishing and canoeing.

Visitors will also be able to go to Lee-on-the-Solent, Gosport and Portsmouth to hear the Royal Marines Band in concert at the Guildhall.

LPT Phil Mant who helped organise the day, and tried playing basketball blindfolded, said: "I am pretty naff at basketball anyway so I am probably better with the blindfold on."

"What these guys have achieved throughout the morning has been really amazing."

Beach baptisms

THREE Royal Navy recruits under training at HMS Raleigh have been baptised in the sea on a Cornish beach.

Recruits Jake Segrove and Adam Geddes, along with AB Rebecca Costin, underwent full-immersion baptism at Cawsand, supported by 35 of their fellow recruits from the Torpoint training establishment.

The baptisms were carried out by RN chaplains David Roissetter and Fr Matt Godfrey, and Sister Nikki Thornhill of the Church Army, who said: "This was a fantastic way for the chaplaincy team at HMS Raleigh to end the summer term."

"The setting was beautiful with a rainbow in the sky and three Royal Navy ships in the background."

The baptism was followed by a celebratory chip supper.



"It is a real privilege to serve on this fine submarine with such a professional, motivated crew," said Matt.

"It has been a tough process, but getting my US Navy dolphins is one of the highlights of my career and I have enjoyed every minute of it."

"The welcome I received when

I reported on board a year ago was incredibly warm and I am proud to call these men my brothers."

Cdr Perez said: "Lt Main is fully qualified to stand Officer of the Deck on USS New Mexico and will do so repeatedly over the next year as he assumes an even larger role in the day-to-day operations of the ship."



WHILE YOU LIFT SPIRITS YOU CAN RAISE MONEY!

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity makes grants to boost morale, motivation and physical and mental well-being to the serving and veteran communities and families.

With a schedule of celebrations and socials – Trafalgar Night, the Corps Birthday, fireworks night, pantos and Christmas balls to name a few – you could help raise funds at these events which will help us maintain our crucial support now and for years to come.

To join our 'celebrations and socials' campaign, contact 023 9254 8289 or fundraising@rnmcc.org.uk

ROYAL NAVY & ROYAL MARINES CHARITY



The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (no. 6047294) and is a registered charity (no.1117794) and Scotland (SC041898)

Caledonia gets the charity nod

DURING a visit to mark the RNRMC's affiliation to the Royal Navy's newest aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth, the charity took time out of the tour to inspect facilities at MOD Caledonia.

The base has received a major amenities grant of £110,000 for improvements to the WO/SRs' Mess, and the Junior Rates' bar and amenity area.

RNRMC Trustee and Chairman of the Naval Service Fund Management Committee WO1 Gary Nicolson said: "MOD Caledonia has a diverse range of personnel drawn from all sections of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Presently it provides for Naval Regional Command and HQ staff, RNR Scotia, RMR Scotland HQ, RM Band Scotland as well as for ships in upkeep in the dockyard."

He continued: "And of course, all this is set to grow during peak periods, such as when HMS Queen Elizabeth's company moves onboard and HMS Prince of Wales crews up. It's going to be a hub of activity, and these enhancements are essential to the wellbeing of personnel."

AUGUST 2013

FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH



Champion fundraiser sails the Atlantic solo

Mervyn Wheatley, a seasoned Transatlantic sailor and former Royal Marine, took just 30 days to sail single-handedly across the Atlantic while raising funds for the RNRMC. The challenge was Mervyn's fourth OSTAR (Original Single Handed Trans-Atlantic Race) – a crossing that requires mental toughness, grit, determination and sheer passion for the sea. To date, Mervyn has raised in excess of £5,000 for the RNRMC. tinyurl.com/MervynWheatley



Peak performance

FIVE Leading Seamen from the Royal Navy's Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team (MASTT), Portsmouth, successfully tackled the Three Peaks Challenge during their

adventurous training in a time of 23hrs 42m.

The team – Graham 'Whiskey' Walker (Team Leader), Dave 'Stone Cold' Steven, Michael 'Taff' Jacobs, Ian 'No Moore

than One Peak' Moore and Lewis 'Flash' Gordon – made the challenge with 18 minutes to spare, despite the pace slowing after Taff's potentially life-threatening stubbed toe!

The MASTT walkers have so far raised over £300, and are already looking forward to beating their time when they take the Challenge next year. tinyurl.com/mastt3peaks



'Jolly Jack Tar' races to success

THE RNRMC has awarded a major amenity grant of £70,000 towards the purchase of the Royal Naval Sailing Association's first racing yacht in more than 20 years.

Around 200 to 300 sailors will crew the boat each year, depending on operational deployments. Veterans will also take the boat out – reflecting the RNRMC's 'through-life' approach to supporting the Navy.

Cdr Adrian Wheel, who is in charge of offshore racing, said that the boat will allow the RNSA to compete in high-level national and international sailing events. "We've got some top-end sailors but they haven't had the equipment to compete – we now have that!"

The crew has already beaten the Army and Royal Air Force in races during the Service Offshore Regatta in June and the boat has competed in this year's Cowes Week and Rolex Fastnet.

Anne Carr, Head of Grants at the RNRMC, said: "It's paramount that the Royal Navy has its own offshore racing yacht so we can keep our crew on the water and competing at an elite level. The RNRMC is proud to provide finance to Jolly Jack Tar and we wish her, and her crew, a successful racing season."

The £122,000 second-hand 37ft J/109 class yacht also received funding from the Nuffield Trust, The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Sports Lottery and the RNSA.



Never Forgotten

IN MEMORY of Marine Paul Warren, Mark Warren completed a Manchester to Portsmouth cycle challenge covering a distance of 280 miles in three days, raising over £900 (and burning 8,095 calories in the process).

Mark explained: "Paul lost his life in 2010 in Sangin, Afghanistan, aged just 23. He, like all of the brave men and women in the Armed Forces, was dedicated to fighting for the freedom that we take for granted every day. He is truly missed by his friends and family and even though he is no longer with us, his spirit continues to live within us."

"The RNRMC really supported my uncle, auntie and cousins after the loss of Paul and I hope these donations will help to ensure that they continue the great work they do."

"There were tough times during the challenge but I just remembered the reasons for doing it."

Mark's fundraising page will remain open another month for future donations: tinyurl.com/in-memory-Mne-Paul-Warren

UPCOMING EVENTS

Type 42 'end of an era' dinner, October 3

To celebrate and commemorate almost 40 years of distinguished service, an 'end of an era' dinner will be held at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, for anyone who served (past or present) in a T42. For info and tickets contact: T42Dinner@gmail.com

Red, White and Blue Day, October 11

On the day, schools will lead activities and workshops to raise awareness on the difficulties faced by service children and families while pupils are encouraged to donate £1 to wear the patriotic colours of red, white and blue. Last year over £40,000 was raised. redwhiteblueday.co.uk

British Military Tournament, December 7-8

An unforgettable show at London's Earls Court featuring the White Helmets Motorcycle Display Team, The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, the legendary Command Field Gun Competition and a special tribute to current and former Service personnel who have overcome disabilities. tinyurl.com/BMT-RNRMC

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RNBT's daunting dozen

SITTING at his desk in Naval Headquarters, Lt Cdr Richard New needed a serious physical challenge to compensate for the amount of time he spent in the office.

Making a pledge to run 12 marathons in as many months, he chose to raise funds along the way for the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT), a charity close to his heart.

Richard explained: "I've had cause to call upon the RNBT to assist members of my department on a number of occasions and witnessed the immediate difference that this charity has made in people's lives, so I decided to help the RNBT do what they do so very well."

So Richard duly ran... and just kept on running. Cdr Stephen Farrington, Chief Executive of the RNBT, was at the start line at Castaway House to see him on his 11th run.

Some 33 miles later he was welcomed back by members of the staff, just a little warm-up for a 100-miler later in the year.

Richard has raised in excess of £500 for the RNBT, supported by members of his own staff running alongside him at various places.

Lyn Gannon, of RNBT's management team, said: "I have so much admiration for Richard – 33 miles in baking heat and he still looks fresh as a daisy. He really has earned a cold beer or two!"

For information on the RNBT please visit www.rnbt.org.uk or telephone 02392 690112.

Roy's riders

LPTI Roy Cronin led a team of eight riders around the famous Box Hill circuit in Surrey that featured in the Olympic road race to raise funds for the RNRMC.

The circuit formed part of a 100-mile route, including several notable climbs, such as the South Harting Hill, before ending at their workplace (HMS Collingwood) after a respectable seven-and-a-half hours.

Roy's cycling challenges have raised £177.26. Roy said: "It was a little emotional but a great day."

Seaman's Premiership ride

SETTING himself a long distance goal, Commando Helicopter Force engineer PO Laurence 'Loz' Seaman will attempt to cycle to every English Premiership Football stadium over an 11-day period to mark the start of this year's football season, while raising funds for a Service charity.

This feat will require the pedal power to cover the length and breadth of England, as far north as Newcastle, south to Southampton, with Swansea's Liberty Stadium to the west and Norwich City's Carrow Road to the east – not to mention the numerous stadia around London.

Loz and three other members of the Forces are undertaking the challenge for Support 4 Forces, who under the banner Operation Golden Goal are also aiming to provide a number of injured Servicemen and women with the

experience of scoring a goal at half-time at Premiership matches.

A keen sportsman, Loz is a relative newcomer to cycling, and was inspired to take up the sport by the success of Team GB in the 2012 Olympics, as well as the achievements of Sir Bradley Wiggins in the Tour de France.

Surprised and delighted to be selected for this tough challenge against stiff competition, Loz has trained hard and now describes cycling as his new passion.

Currently serving with 848 NAS, he is keen to raise as much money as possible for injured personnel and their families, having recently served on operations with the squadron in Afghanistan.

He said: "I am hugely looking forward to the event and having the opportunity to make a difference."



● PO Laurence 'Loz' Seaman prepares for the Golden Goal challenge speeding by training on the tarmac at RNAS Yeovilton

SAR 60's lasting legacy

PROCEEDS from the sale of a specially-commissioned print featuring the Royal Navy's Search and Rescue Sea King in action over a rocky coastline will be donated to the aviators' chosen charities as a lasting legacy marking the SAR Forces' 60th anniversary in 2013.

Squadron personnel from both 771 NAS and Gannet SAR Flight have set themselves an ambitious target of raising £60,000 during their diamond anniversary year of celebration in aid of CLIC Sargent (the UK's leading cancer charity for children and their families), the Children's Hospice South West and the RNRMC.

Well known in aviation circles for his finely-drawn artwork featuring both modern and historic aircraft, artist Brian Fare was commissioned by the SAR 60K organisers to produce the commemorative print.

Brian, who previously served in the RAF before becoming an artist, supports a wide range of military related charities.

He said: "I hope that sales of this print will generate income to support the SAR60K charity challenge."

To order your copy visit his website or email: brian@brianfareaviationart.co.uk or call 07885938945

Tough Mudders

THE 'Expendables' proved invaluable fundraisers for the charity Smile 4 Wessex when they took part in the physically and mentally challenging 'Tough Mudder' course.

The Navy team from HMS Collingwood raised nearly £2,000 by tackling the demanding course to fund projects for facilities and equipment at the Wessex Neurological Centre in Southampton.

Lts Tim Lawrenson and Ben Lipczynski presented their cheque to Smile 4 Wessex's Caroline Hill as they visited the children's ward at the centre and saw the specially fitted ambulance – two projects that have been substantially funded by Smile 4 Wessex.

Lt Lawrenson said: "Seeing the facility, meeting the patients, their families and staff was eye-opening and humbling.

"The dedication shown by both the staff and the charity is truly extraordinary and has made the challenges we faced on the extreme assault course seem insignificant in comparison.

"We are proud to have been able to help."

Back to school in Drake's pool of talent

WHEN the call came in for volunteer swimming instructors, RN PTIs from the Plymouth branch of the RN/RM Swimming Club dived in to help children at St Paul's RC Primary School learn to swim.

Sailors and Royal Marines volunteered to help out during a shortage of swimming teachers in the area due to specific parent-teacher ratio requirements.

The school simply could not achieve enough swimming time for the children in the one-hour-a-week session at the pool in HMS Drake.

Retired RM Corporal Chris Fairey – who founded the swimming club in 1989 – appealed for volunteers and eight kind-hearted instructors agreed to help.

The success of the volunteer instructors' efforts was marked with the presentation of certificates at an awards event at the end of term.

Chris said: "There was a certificate for every child, all of whom worked hard this term.

"When we started, 16 children could not swim, apart from two, they are now all swimming."

WOs Nick Pile, Les Duggan Sgt Daz Gould, Caitlin O'Mally, Chloe Walker and Chris Fairey presented the certificates at the ceremony.



● Making a splash with the young beginners, Chris Fairey builds confidence in the water amongst the students from St Paul's RC Primary School

Picture: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon

They also presented club trophies to Best Girl, Best Boy and two Endeavour Trophies.

In return for the voluntary commitment the headmaster at St Paul's, Francis Norman, presented the swimming club with two poolside storage cages

at a recent swimming session to express his gratitude for their help.

He said: "The Armed Forces do a wonderful job, and we are enormously thankful for all that they do."

Volunteer WO Nick Pile said: "They're a really good bunch of

kids. As a swimming instructor it has been really rewarding to witness such progress in only four weeks."

The RN/RM Swimming Club website is available at the following link: <http://www.rnrmswimming.co.uk/>

Music at the Minster Garden party for supporters

THE beautiful interior of the Minster provided outstanding acoustics when HMS Heron's Royal Navy Volunteer Band performed at a concert in Iminster, Somerset (pictured right).

Organised by the Royal British Legion (RBL), the evening helped raise funds for the Battle Back centres which provide adventurous training and sporting activities to help wounded soldiers return to normal life.

In keeping with military tradition, the band played to a packed Minster including old favourites such as *A Bridge Too Far* and *The Dambusters*, and led the audience in a sing-a-long of *Songs That Won The War*.

Royal Marines band leader C/Sgt Sam Hairsine said: "This has been a wonderful opportunity to support the RBL engaging with our local audience.

"The band played very well and I've been really pleased to meet many in the audience and hear how much they enjoyed it."



92-year-old Freddie Greenop, a former World War 2 RNVR officer, first proposed the idea of an Iminster Royal British Legion Armed Forces Day concert.

He said: "The Heron Volunteer Band was outstanding, the

entertainment was first-class, performed beautifully by highly talented musicians, with some truly exceptional solo performances.

"It was an evening I shan't forget and, fittingly, the proceeds will go to Battle Back."

GUESTS and charity helpers enjoyed the shade under the trees in the grounds of Admiralty House as the sun blazed down on Second Sea Lord's annual garden party.

On one of the hottest days of the year, Vice Admiral David Steel and his staff hosted a reception to bring together and thank personally all the military charities, organisations and representatives from local communities who have done so much to support the RN, RM, RFA and Forces families.

Sea Cadets from Poole unit entertained guests with a musical marching medley and Medway Town's Sea Cadets provided an exemplary drill routine, notable for its quiet, detailed competence despite the soft grass.

Trainee RN PTIs on their qualifying course at nearby Temeraire staged a hornpipe then performed a club-swinging fitness display, including a lively Indian tune which was a fitting choice given the sultry heat.

With the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth providing a



● Trainee PTIs perform the traditional club-swinging routine at the garden party

Picture: PO(Phot) Owen Cooban

jazz quintet to open the event and the Royal Band closing the proceedings with Ceremonial Sunset, there was plenty for the Admiral's guests to enjoy during the afternoon.

Amongst the many organisations represented were the Royal British Legion, the Seafarers Association, the WRNS Benevolent Trust and the Naval Families Federation, who mingled with local MPs and mayors over light refreshments in

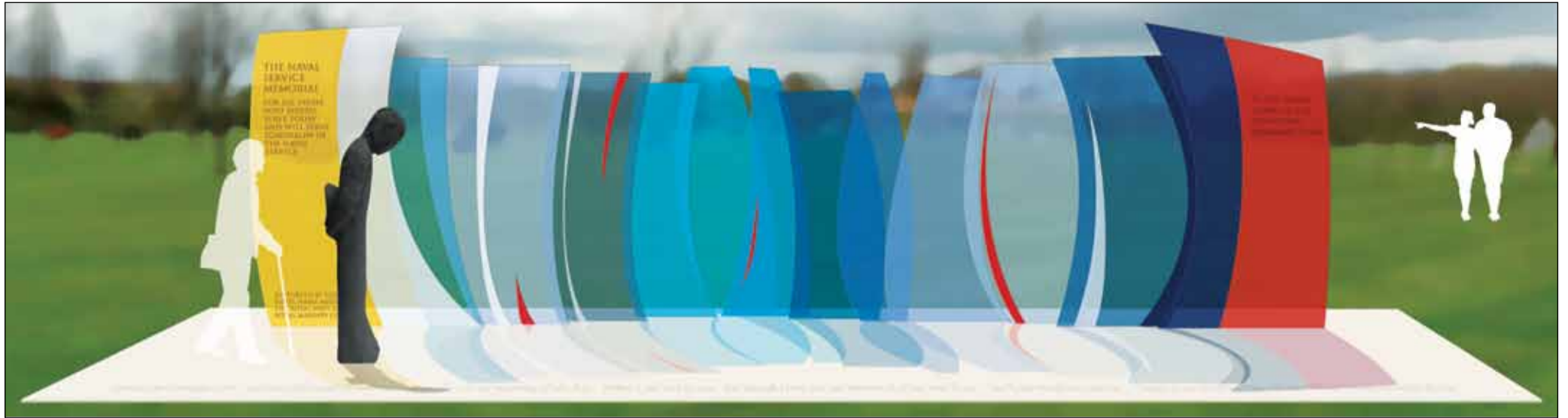
the marquee.

Admiral Steel said: "The Naval Service simply could not do what we do around the world without the exceptional support from all the many organisations and individuals who are represented here.

"We are indebted to you, and it is a privilege for me, on behalf of the Naval Service, to thank you for everything that you do now and will continue to do in the future."



'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'



'Stunning' memorial for all

THE Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity has made a major contribution to the cost of creating a new memorial – and the First Sea Lord has agreed that it should commemorate all those who have played their part in the Naval Service.

Announcing the £20,000 grant towards the cost of the project, RNRMC Chief Executive Robert Robson said the charity was “proud to announce its support of the Naval Service Memorial – the first all-inclusive memorial to commemorate those who have served, serve today and will serve tomorrow, regardless of rank, trade or fighting arm.”

Robert continued: “Graeme Mitcheson’s highly innovative design – using glass panels, sculpture and the sun’s natural rays – is a timeless piece.

“The memorial pays tribute to all of our Navy personnel, irrespective of their rank or division, in the most touching and sensitive of ways.

“It will offer visitors a visually immersive space from which to quietly remember their comrades and loved ones.

“It is truly powerful – and this is why the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is proud to offer its support.”

RNA General Secretary S/M Paul Quinn said that the design for the memorial, to be erected at the National Memorial Arboretum, had been winning plaudits from across the Association – and revealed how the final format was arrived at.

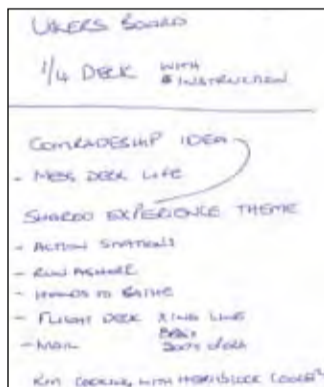
The original request for ideas went out under the Charter



● A design reflecting the global nature of Naval operations



● A concept employing signals and masts



● A minimalist entry featuring uckers and hexi block catering

Challenge banner, celebrating the 60th anniversary of the RNA's Royal Charter, which elicited 22 concepts which varied from general ideas to detailed plans.

All were scrutinised by senior Association officials, who prepared two short-lists – preferred and reserves – which were considered by the National Council.

The debate over concepts and final designs created lively debate – frank appraisals yielded comments such as “that looks like a Smurf’s hat on a tombstone” (although that was admittedly a rough sketch of a rolling wave, an idea which won some support) and “that’s just a feed of chutney...”

A ‘committee of taste’ was set up under the chairmanship of the Association’s legal adviser, Lt Cdr Helen MacKenow, and leading sculptors were approached to combine some of the concepts put forward into a final design brief.

The winning design, by Graeme Mitcheson, was unveiled at the National Conference in Liverpool in June.

And one of the key elements was initially suggested by a member of

staff at HQ – S/M Nigel Huxtable’s original concept featured figures with heads bowed, which has been developed into the single figure at one side of the final design.

Also in the mix was an unused idea which had been created by Graeme for another maritime association, which again prominently featured blue glass.

“I did that design a couple of years ago, and I basically came back to develop that idea with new brief,” said Graeme.

“The ‘going down of the sun’ is a big element, and blue colours on a white pavement is a terrific theme, creating a shimmering pool of light on the terrace. To get a chance to revisit it again was great.”

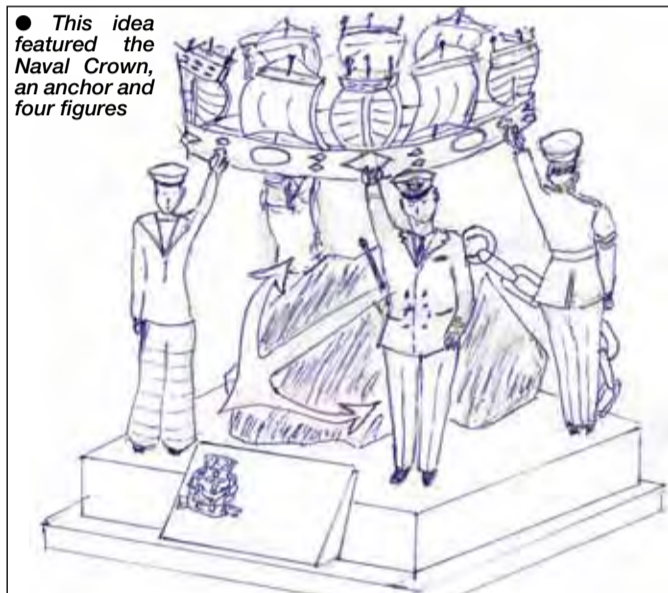
The general concept (pictured top of page) is of a white granite pavement some 24m in length, on which are a number of irregularly-shaped blue glass panels between 2.5m and 3m high.

The colours represent the waters of the five oceans, and the shadow caused by the tops of



● This memorial would have had a plan resembling a ship’s wheel

● This idea featured the Naval Crown, an anchor and four figures



the panels creates the outline of a modern warship on the pavement.

Thus there are shades of steel grey for the Atlantic, turquoise for the Indian, ultramarine for the Pacific and white inserts for the Arctic and Antarctic.

Splinters of red represent the blood spilled by sailors at sea, by aviators in the blue skies, and by Royal Marines ashore.

At the eastern end, beside a yellow panel (representing the yellow sand of a shore or a rising sun), stands a figure, with bell-bottom trousers and a round cap held in the ‘at ease’ position suggesting it is a sailor.

Its head is bowed to the west – represented by the red of the setting sun and bearing the inscription *At the going down of the sun we will remember them.*

The figure is made from battleship grey Kilkenny limestone, which turns black when wet, drying in patches showing the way water is integral to the figure.

“The colours of the five oceans were taken directly from images – they were taken almost like swatches,” said Graeme, who also created the Sir Bobby Robson memorial panels at Newcastle United’s St James’s Park ground and the Bevin Boys memorial at the arboretum in Staffordshire.

“The shadow made by the shapes is of a ship – it started very loosely as Invincible, but it distorts

through the day and the seasons.

“The good thing is that no one is there when it is at its most distorted, as the NMA will not be open.

“It is particularly nice when sun goes in and out as the colours fade and brighten like waves.”

The final touch is verses from Tennyson’s poem *Crossing the Bar* on the granite paving, although there is plenty for the imagination to work on – some have interpreted the panels as sails, while other quickly saw the colours of medal ribbons in the various colours of the glass and endpieces.

The materials and design was an unusual choice, Graeme admitted.

“Glass is a bit of a departure but it’s all about making the right thing for this space,” said the sculptor.

“There are over 250 memorials in the arboretum – people do not get time to see them all. They pick and choose.

“This is a major memorial you would not want people to miss.

“I did not want to go down the stone and bronze route – I wanted an almost interactive experience.

“There are footpaths around the periphery and you will see this and want to go and take a look – I think that’s important.”

Comments garnered at the end

of this year’s National Conference suggested the finished installation will prove popular – among the remarks were:

■ “What a stunning addition to the National Memorial Arboretum this will make. I feel every visitor will want to see it”;

■ “Very good modern idea but with tradition, for people to use their imagination”;

■ “Excellent idea – will reflect the RNA in the 21st Century and beyond”;

■ “Different in every way, but very good”;

■ “A lovely creative structure – stunning”;

■ “Can’t wait to see the finished article – stunning, very eye-catching”.

It is hoped that the memorial will be ready for unveiling and dedication at the National Memorial Arboretum during next year’s National Conference in June, which will be staged in Coventry.

S/M Quinn said: “The National Council of the RNA are deeply honoured that the First Sea Lord has approved the naming of Graeme Mitcheson’s innovative and beautiful design as the Naval Service Memorial.

“They are also very grateful to the Trustees of the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity for their wonderful support of the project.

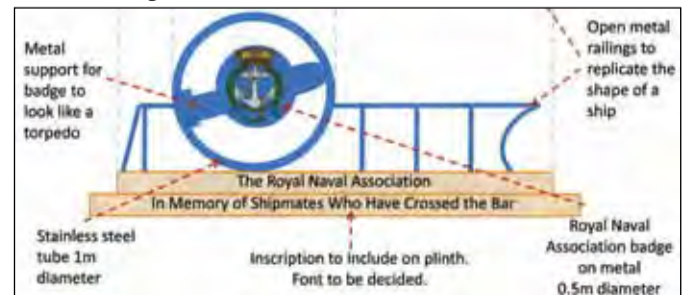
“This is a memorial for all ranks, all trades and all arms of the Naval Service – with serving personnel at the heart of the design and decision processes.

“I hope that this inspires all those who have served under the White Ensign, not only to join us at the dedication, but to contribute to the memorial fund.”

Contributions to the fund can be made to the RNA General Secretary at Room 209, Semaphore Tower, HM Naval Base Portsmouth, Hampshire PO1 3LT, or email paul@royalnavalassoc.com

Cheques should be made payable to the Royal Naval Association and noted on the back for the Naval Service Memorial Fund.

BACS transfers should be noted for the Naval Service Memorial, and the following details used: **Bank a/c Name:** Royal Naval Association; **bank a/c:** 29671663; **sort code:** 60-05-14.



● A thoughtful treatment of the design brief using tubular steel in the shape of a ship

Naval Quirks



↓ 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



Wartime submariner is honoured

THE Submariners Association has started a project to erect a blue plaque to commemorate holders of the Victoria Cross who were submariners – and the first man honoured was Cdr John Wallace ‘Tubby’ Linton VC.

The driving force behind the project is Rick Rothwell, who is on the National Management Committee of the association and a member of Merseyside branch.

The first plaque was unveiled at Linton’s birthplace, St Joseph’s Convent in Newport, South Wales, by association president Admiral Sir James Perowne.

Cdr Linton was born in the house on October 15 1905, and was posthumously awarded the VC on May 25 1943 in recognition of his achievements and the gallantry of the crew of HMS Turbulent.

Linton’s citation said he had commanded submarines throughout the war, and was responsible for the destruction of a cruiser, a destroyer, a U-boat, 20 merchant vessels, six schooners and three trains (by gunfire) – a total of at least 81,000 tons of enemy shipping sunk.

From January 1 1942 to January 1 1943 he spent 254 days at sea, including 2,970 hours dived. During this period he was hunted 13 times and had 250 depth charges dropped on him.

Linton died with his crew off the Italian coast in March 1943, though the exact circumstances and date are the subject of some confusion – an attack by motor torpedo boats is thought most likely, but it is possible the boat ran into mines.

Three standards were paraded at the ceremony in Newport – the Welsh branch of the Submariners Association, the Newport branch of the RNA and the Newport branch of the Merchant Navy Association.

Argyll invitation

MEMBERS of the Simons Town Division of the HMS Ganges Association were hosted by HMS Argyll when the frigate called in at Cape Town in South Africa.

S/M Peter Turton said members enjoyed a “truly memorable evening”, adding that they “made us ‘Old Navy’ very happy that the ‘New Navy’ is in such good hands.”

Open invitation to join London parade

OFFICIALS are gearing up for what they hope will be the most successful RNA Biennial Parade to date – and there is still time to join in.

The Association has the privilege of parading in the heart of London on the morning of Sunday September 8, and this year an invitation has been sent out to all maritime associations, both military and civilian.

General Secretary S/M Paul Quinn said that the last parade attracted up to 500 marchers, and he hoped that figure would be surpassed this month.

The serving Royal Navy is playing its part in swelling the numbers – two platoons of 20 are expected from training establishments HMS Collingwood in Fareham and HMS Sultan in Gosport.

And overseas shipmates are also expected in numbers, with a contingent of more than 40 from Ireland, around 30 from Belgium and a group from the Netherlands.

A large number of former trainees from Shotley Gate are planning to march under the HMS Ganges Association banner.

And a contingent from the Merchant Navy Association will also take part, despite a tight time-

frame – they will have to dash across the capital after the parade to take part in a ceremony at the Trinity Gardens monument in Tower Hill to those from the Merchant Navy and fishing fleets who lost their lives in the wars and who have no known grave.

The Merchant Navy Association is part of the Confederation of Naval Associations (CONA) and S/M Paul Quinn said he hoped that future biennial parades would

reflect this wider gathering of the various clans.

The day’s events will also feature the presentation of at least 12 Arctic Stars to wartime veterans by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel.

“We are happy to see anybody join in right up to the last minute,” said S/M Quinn.

“They can just join in on the day, though we would like to know if they are coming with a standard

– in that case they should contact S/Ms Nigel, Andy or myself at Headquarters.”

Participants should be at the assembly point in Whitehall Place, close to Embankment tube station, at 9.45am; the parade moves off shortly after 10.30am.

Marchers will have to cover a distance of around 500-600 yards in each direction, and there is a special area set aside for those who use wheelchairs.

Relatives follow in forebears’ footsteps

RELATIVES of crew members of HMS Caroline marked the 97th anniversary of the Battle of Jutland by visiting the historic cruiser in Belfast.

The visits, organised by Friends of HMS Caroline founder Peter Bleakley, saw 90-year-old Jose Loosemore, daughter of LS Albion Smith, and Richard Lovett, grandson of WO Frederick Fielding, tour Caroline at her berth in Alexandra Dock.

Jose, accompanied by her niece Jan Thornton, amazed onlookers by climbing up and down ladders like a cadet, and had to be physically restrained from attempting the vertical ladders into the engine rooms.

Shipkeeper Billy Hughes led a tour through the various levels of the cruiser, and former submariner Richard Lovett went down to the tiller flat to view the emergency steering gear – used for two hours as Caroline steamed towards her part in the battle in 1916.

The tours were followed by an evening reception hosted by Belfast RNA branch, including a presentation on the battle itself.

Jose said: “It has been absolutely wonderful to finally walk around HMS Caroline.”

“My father Albion was hugely proud of his role as steward to Capt Crooke, and he told us many thrilling tales about his time aboard HMS Caroline – which he viewed as a lucky ship.

“I’d like to say a massive thank you to Pete and the Friends of HMS Caroline for making a dream come true.”

Caroline was indeed a lucky ship, as both Frederick Fielder’s personal battle account and Albion Smith’s diaries reveal that she was straddled by German shells, and had near misses from three German torpedoes.



● Jan Thornton and Jose Loosemore on the deck of HMS Caroline in HMS Belfast, in the same position as Jose’s father LS Albion Smith in the 1950 picture they are holding

Picture: Peter Bleakley

“It’s been a real treat to walk in my grandfather’s footsteps,” said Richard after his tour, “and I think he’d be proud to see the

work that the National Museum of the Royal Navy is undertaking in restoring this great ship for the public to enjoy.”

Result at Ulster museum

WHILE World War 1 veteran cruiser HMS Caroline has been much in the headlines in recent months, there is another Northern Ireland ship which will also be playing its part in forthcoming commemorations.

Last autumn it was announced that Caroline, which was part of the screening force at the Battle of Jutland in 1916, was to be gifted to the National Museum of the Royal Navy to enable fundraising to begin in a bid to save the old ship.

She has spent much of her life berthed in Belfast as the headquarters of the local RNR branch, but was starting to show serious signs of wear and tear.

However, just a few miles east of Caroline’s berth stands the Ulster Folk and Transport Museum.

And one of the items on display is the steel schooner Result, built at Carrickfergus in 1893.

She served as a merchantman across eight decades, a familiar sight in coastal communities at first under sail and finally with cut-down rig and a diesel engine – she ended her career in 1967 in the West Country.

But she also had a war record, because in 1916 and 1917 she served as a Q ship or decoy vessel for the Admiralty under the command of Lt P J Mack.

Q ships were merchant vessels with concealed armament – guns or torpedo tubes – which revealed their true colours when approached or attacked by

enemy warships.

HMS President, berthed on the Thames in London, is another variant on the Q-ship theme, though she was built as a warship which looked like a merchantman.

On February 15 1917 Result came into contact with U-45 in the Irish Sea and seriously damaged the U-boat with gunfire.

Two months later she engaged another U-boat but was badly damaged by the enemy’s heavier firepower and had to break off for repairs.

She continued to ply her trade as a merchant vessel during World War 2, and was put on display at the museum’s Cultra site in 1979.

For more details of Result see the ‘collections’ section of the museum website at www.nmni.com/ufm

Brentwood at dedication

THE Brentwood branch standard was paraded alongside the Area 5 standard at the dedication of a new memorial to those who have died in service since 1946.

The parade to the memorial, in the grounds of the Brentwood war memorial, was organised by the RBL.



● Admiral Lord West with Old Boys of TS Arethusa in front of the figurehead in Rochester

Restored figurehead is unveiled

THE Arethusa Venture Centre in Rochester welcomed a gathering of Naval veterans to celebrate the restoration of a wooden figurehead from the ship after which the centre is named.

HMS Arethusa, launched in 1849 as one of the largest sailing frigates built for the Royal Navy, is thought to be the last British naval vessel to go into battle under sail alone.

Once decommissioned, the ship went to the Shaftesbury Homes charity to provide refuge and education for boys sleeping rough on the streets of London, and who went on to careers in the Royal and Merchant Navies.

The wooden figurehead had been attacked by wasps, and the Arethusa Old Boys Association raised money to restore it and put it back in position outside the venture centre, which provides indoor and outdoor activities for young people.

Association chairman Kevin Wells said: “The restored figurehead is a representation of a great history of one of the oldest charities in the UK.”

The figurehead, taken from the ship when it was broken up in 1932, was unveiled by former First Sea Lord Lord West of Spithead.

A painting of the ship was presented to Lord West and Kevin Wells by renowned maritime artist Robert Lloyd during the ceremonies.

Australians remembered

A MEMORIAL commemorating the 100th anniversary of the launch of HMAS AE1 and AE2 – the first to be built for the Royal Australian Navy – has been unveiled by Admiral the Lord Boyce, patron of the Submariners Association, and James, Lord Abinger, in Barrow-in-Furness.

The voyage to Australia took 83 days, 60 days being spent at sea – a tribute not only to the mixed British and Australian crews but also to the skill of the shipbuilders of Barrow, whose descendants are now building the Royal Navy’s Astute-class nuclear submarines.

The 1913 boats were built at the Vickers yard, now part of BAE Systems.

Lord Boyce, himself a former submariner, spoke of the close ties between the Silent Services of the two nations in peacetime and war.

A service of dedication was led by Alan Jones, lay chaplain of the Barrow-in-Furness Submariners Association.

The memorial, in Ramsden Square, was revealed by CPO Chris Middleton and LS Dave Shaw of HMS Artful, in build at the BAE yard, and POC Joshua Bell and Cdt Callum Ewing from Barrow-in-Furness Sea Cadet unit.

AE1 was lost with all 35 men on board in mysterious circumstances off Papua New Guinea in September 1914 – Australia’s first major loss of life during the war.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our July edition (right) was HMS Walkerton.

Mr Hindmarsh, of Stockton-on-Tees, wins our £50 prize for naming the Ton-class ship.

This month’s picture (above) is of a Naval aircraft of 1772 NAS, seen here returning damaged after a sortie in the summer of 1945, being pushed along the flight deck of a carrier off the Japanese coast following an emergency landing.

What type of aircraft is this, and what was the name of the aircraft carrier? We have left the markings in to give you a clue.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.



Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is October 16. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our November edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 223

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

Plans for promotion

THIS month, Drafty's Corner is sponsored by the RN Ratings Promotions Office, and looks at the promotion policy and procedures for all RN ratings as well as providing an overview of other related information and issues.

It is important to understand the purpose of promotion. This is best described by the policy statement from BR3 (Naval Personnel Management): "The aim of both promotion and advancement is to keep the RN and RM manned at the right levels to meet its commitments within the overall numbers authorised by Parliament. Promotion is not a right."

"Promotion on merit is a system employed throughout the Naval Service to sustain a robust and effective regime for the command, leadership, discipline, inspiration, motivation, management and administration of a diverse structure of officers, warrant officers, ratings and other ranks, augmented by MOD civil servants and contractors."

"It also supports the requirement to maintain a hierarchy of appropriate status and authority to exercise responsibility for war-fighting and decision-making, or procurement, development, custody or operation of a wide range of complex equipment, materiel and procedures."

To ensure the right people are selected to meet this requirement, promotion selection boards are convened throughout each year to identify those individuals that merit such promotion.

Commodore Naval Personnel (CNPers), on behalf of 2SL, delegates the responsibility for the arrangement and administration of these boards to the Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (Promotions) (DACOS Prom) through the

Drafty's corner



Ratings Promotion Section (RPS), located in Victory Building in Portsmouth Naval Base.

Promotion Boards

WO (Promotions) promulgates a viable programme for the boards required across the wide spectrum of branches and specialisations and identifies appropriate board members and observers.

The RPS is responsible for managing approximately 20,000 ratings' promotion dossiers, ensuring that eligible candidates are presented to the relevant PSBs throughout the reporting year.

This is a formidable task for a relatively small team who rely on individuals, ROs and units to ensure the appraisal process is managed efficiently, ensuring candidates are given the best chance to be afforded the opportunity to be considered for selection.

Appraisal

In accordance with JSP 757, appraisal is one of the most important leadership functions; the proper selection of the most suitable ratings and other ranks on merit to fill the range of assignments in the Service depends largely on the quality and accuracy of appraisal reports.

Therefore, an active interchange of views on a frequent basis between the subject of the report and their ROs and Line Managers is essential for individual development, efficient use of valuable manpower and resources and good management practice.

This requires a proactive approach from all concerned, with the individual understanding, accepting and taking responsibility for their own SJAR.

This includes ensuring that all of their personal and professional

Common Reporting dates/deadlines:

RN Rank	CRD	Latest date to be finalised on JPA
WO1	31 Jul	15 Aug
WO2	30 Sep	15 Oct
CPO(non-tech)	30 Sep	15 Oct
CPO(tech)	30 Apr	15 May
PO	31 Mar	15 Apr
LR	31 Jan	15 Feb
AB	30 Nov	15 Dec

details, competencies, roles and responsibilities, personal objectives, career preferences and aspirations are up to date and correct on JPA as well as tracking the progress of their SJAR to ensure that it is finalised by promulgated deadlines.

With this in mind, it should be noted that although the appraisal process is steadily improving, there are still a number of issues across the Fleet that can have a severe impact on individuals who may be disadvantaged in the process.

These include:

- Mid-Period Appraisal Review (MPAR) not conducted/recorded;
- Competencies not recorded on JPA (RNFT/OPS/SEA TIME) – particularly waivers where appropriate;
- Incorrect/out-of-date roles and responsibilities/objectives/preferences/aspirations;
- SJAR narratives and recommendations not justified;
- Copying text from previous reports;
- Too many obscure abbreviations/acronyms;
- Spelling and grammar incorrect;
- Well-worn clichés or inappropriate remarks;
- Late finalisation of SJAR – 30 per cent are not received by promulgated deadlines.

Focus by all interacting personnel in the appraisal process can guard against such issues and therefore ensure the selection

process is complemented by a high standard of available candidates.

Up-to-date information only provides the basis for an eligible candidate – the most important factor will always be *potential* and associated *merit* for the next higher rate. Merit needs to be understood by both individuals and Reporting Officers and is defined as: "Suitability and capacity and having sufficient experience to be employed in at least the next higher rank. Promotion is not always awarded for current and previous good performance. Factors such as consistency of success, especially in the face of particular challenges, leadership and management acumen, accomplishment with people, ability to think on a level above peer group, potential flair for command and future employability in both specialist and broader assignments all constitute merit."

In summary, assessment of potential is critical for the selection of future leaders, as well as ensuring the Service gains the best from its people and that all personnel, regardless of rank, are given every opportunity to have a satisfying and rewarding career.

Information regarding all aspects of promotion is available through various media: BR3 Naval Personnel Regulations; JSP 757 JPA Appraisal; promotions area of CNPers website on RN Web.

The Ratings and Other Ranks Promotion Section (RORPS) team:

9380-28125	WO1 Paul Benson	Ratings Promotions
9380-24304	Mrs Rose Fogwill	Warfare Ratings Branch Secretary
9380-22080	CPO Michael Duthie	Engineer Ratings Branch Secretary
9380-20212	CPO Craig Blakeway	Logistics/Medical/Dental Ratings Branch Secretary

Manpower on forum agenda

MUSING on the collective noun for a group of Royal Navy Warrant Officers, *Navy News* staff decided 'a broadside' would do pretty well.

The big guns converged on HMS Excellent last month for their annual Base Warrant Officer forum hosted by the Warrant Officer of the Naval Service, WO1 Terry Casey.

The role of the Base Warrant Officers has gone from strength to strength and they have become an integral part of the management of shore establishments since the position became established.

The meeting updated this cadre on the latest manpower initiatives and included a brief from the RN People Strategy Group.

WO Casey said: "Our shore establishments cover such a wide range of diverse activities, meaning that the Base Warrant Officers are often employed in different ways."

"Common ground does exist, and this is where this forum comes into its own – BWOs are encouraged to use each other as sounding boards for new initiatives to ensure that our people are treated fairly and equally."

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel joined the BWOs at the forum, welcoming the

opportunity to address the group, many of whom had travelled across the country to the RN HQ.

In a previous role as Chief Staff Officer to the Flag Officer Surface Flotilla, Vice Admiral Steel wrote a concept paper for the Warrant Officer 1 role at sea which led to the seagoing position of Executive Warrant Officer.

He said: "When I helped to establish the Executive Warrant Officer position, I never thought for one minute that the Base Warrant Officer, Command Warrant Officer and the Warrant Officer of the Naval Service would exist a few years down the line."

"In my view, it was a defining moment for the Warrant Officer cadre and one of the most successful initiatives in the last 20 years."

WO1 Stevenson, BWO at Clyde Naval Base, said: "This meeting was highly beneficial; listening to the other BWOs made me realise that although challenges exist, there is a great deal of experience around to deal with those challenges."

"Importantly, I can now put a face to a name and will undoubtedly bounce my ideas off my fellow BWOs in the future."

Experts consider lifelong learning

DELIVERING and facilitating education to our personnel, developing cognitive ability and realising the increased value of education to the Naval Service's operational capabilities were the key messages to an assembled team of over 70 education practitioners at the Education and Life Long Learning (EL3) Conference at HMS Collingwood's Apprenticeship and Education Centre.

Addressing the conference, Cdre John Weale (DFOST), who is also the Service Director of Education (SDE), emphasised that there was a need to create a culture across the Service where personnel positively engaged with learning throughout their careers.

Those present were updated on the latest policies including the new 'Education for Promotion' requirements – see BR3. They were updated on best practice to drive forward continuous improvement.

The conference seeks to develop a unified identity across the organisations that deliver education within the Service, and delegates were briefed on the 'Strategy for Education' identifying competencies required for each rank in the Naval Service, and how these skills are best developed.

A programme of education is currently being developed for officers on completion of their initial training up to their attendance on Advanced Command and Staff Course (ACSC).

Personnel who wish to undertake a GCSE or higher level of study, study a language or seek general advice on personal development should contact their local Education Centre.

NEED to get your message across?
To feature in the *Navy News*' Two-Six pages contact Navy Command Media – Internal Comms Staff Officer: Lt Cdr Emma McCormick, 93832 8809, email (Dii) NAVYMEDIACOMMS-IC-TL (External) NAVYMEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@mod.uk

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Change to visa rules

IMPORTANT changes to family migration rules will come into effect from December 1 2013 which will affect RN and RM personnel, British or Commonwealth, bringing into the country a family member whose nationality is from outside the European Economic Area.

Concessions put in place in July 2012 for the families of military personnel will expire and additional requirements will come into force for those seeking UK visas for family members.

This will, for example, be relevant to someone serving accompanied overseas with a non-European family member who does not have UK citizenship or a UK visa.

From December 1 2013 a serving member of the Services wishing to bring non-European

family members into the UK will need to meet an income threshold, depending on the number of family members, to demonstrate that the primary wage earner can support their family.

The partners will need to serve a five-year probationary period to ensure that the relationship is genuine, and they will need to achieve an English language standard and pass a test of their knowledge of life in the UK.

Not only is this highly relevant to those serving accompanied overseas, it also has implications for serving personnel who are due to leave the Service before December 1 this year and who wish to remain in the UK and bring non-European family members into the country.

In order to benefit from the current concessions they should apply for UK visas for their family members before they leave the Service.

While the changes reflect a tightening of immigration rules, the transitional arrangements also contain good news.

For non-European family members accompanying serving personnel on overseas appointments, the government will pay the cost of the visa application, and children are largely unaffected so long as one parent is either British or is seeking British citizenship.

If these changes are relevant to you, detailed guidance is available through your chain of command or directly from the following:

- Navy Command Headquarters Terms of Service Team (Mr Alan Doughty)
- 2012 DIN 01-146 and RNTM 138/12
- 2013 DIN 01-142
- The Home Office publication



Have your say

“IF YOU don’t have your say, then you can’t get your way” – that was the message from the MOD’s Chief of Defence Personnel (CDP) and his team, who recently visited Clyde Naval Base to speak with Royal Navy personnel on the New Employment Model.

Lt Gen Andrew Gregory (pictured above) was at the home of the UK Submarine Service to explain why getting this package right is so important and why it is vital that personnel get their say.

“The New Employment Model is about two things,” explained Lt Gen Gregory, “it’s about trust and the offer.”

“That’s why we are here today in the NEM consultation visits will be covered in October’s Two-Six pages. Meanwhile, detailed mythbusters 1-5 can be found on the Defence Intranet under New Employment Model.

“The first myth I would like to dispel is that NEM is all about saving money. This is not true.

“Of course we need to ensure value for money for defence and work within a budget, but crucially we want to deliver a package that fits with what Service personnel want.”

Feedback and subjects raised in the NEM consultation visits will be covered in October’s Two-Six pages. Meanwhile, detailed mythbusters 1-5 can be found on the Defence Intranet under New Employment Model.

‘Family members of HM Forces - Statement of Intent: changes to the Immigration Rules from December 2013’ (available at the following link: https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/210673/SoIFamily_members_of_HM_Forces_WEB_2_.pdf)

■ The Home Office/UK Border Agency website <http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/visas-immigration/partners-families>

■ A dedicated Home Office inbox armedforcesenquiries@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk

Enquirers should identify themselves by their name, date of birth and nationality and expect a reply within 14 days, although complex enquiries may take longer.

Tricorn tip

A NEWLY designed tricorn hat for senior female RN officers at OF4 grade and above will be issued to entitled personnel in time for the agreed go live date of September 12 2013. Future policy, procedures for demand, grant entitlement and amnesty period will be issued by RNTM.

Where to look

GALAXYS
Galaxy 21-2013 – Materiel Strategy - An Update

DIBs
DIB43/13 – The Sun Military Awards

DIB41/13 – Results of the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS) 2013 Report

RNTMs
RNTM 136/13 – RN Glock 17 Pistol Integration

RNTM 169/13 Seamanship Training Unit (STU) Name Change to RN School of Seamanship
RNTM 170/13 Revised Personal Functional Standards reporting schedule

RNTM 177/13 Recruiting for Family Service Branch

RNTM 181/13 – Naval Review Centenary Fellowship Award - RN/RM Jnr Officer’s PDev opportunity + travel to Australia

RNTM 183/13 – Introduction of financial retention incentive for Direct Graduate Entry Engineer Officers, Training Management Officers and Environmental Health Officers

DINs
2013DIN01-169 – Operational Welfare Communications - WelComE

2013DIN01-168 – Armed Forces Childcare Voucher Scheme
2013DIN01-165 – Information Excellence Awards 2014

2013DIN164 – Entry into the MR for all Tri-Service Serving Personnel and Ex-Personnel
2013DIN01-155 – BR3 - Issue of June 2013 Edition

2013DIN01-142 – Family migration changes affecting UK Armed Forces family members who are non-European Economic Area nationals

2013DIN02-004 – Withdrawal of Defence Identity Cards without expiry dates

2013DIN09-012 – The Sun Military Awards 2013

2013DIN05-027 – The Maritime Warfare Centre (MWC) - Tasking Process

2013DIN07-109 – Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Maritime) (ICSC(M))

Ministers pledge support for X-Forces

A NEW company set up to help forces veterans start up their own businesses has received the backing of ministerial committee following its launch in July.

X-Forces Ltd will bring an additional dimension to the transition programme for Service leavers and aims to provide an active support package to veterans, military spouses, reservists, veterans and cadets over the age of 18.

X-Forces Chief Executive Ren Kapur said: “We’re offering a comprehensive programme, starting with an assessment of each applicant’s capabilities in business management and then progress through the mentored production of a business plan, finance approval and implementation.

“We’ll help each new XF start-up find their first customer and we’ll support a wide-ranging and vibrant XF Online community to build sustainable businesses.”

Ms Kapur was impressed by the very positive encouragement she received in setting the company

up and for the support provided by the major Service charities.

Lord Young, the Prime Minister’s Business Enterprise advisor, was delighted with the decision following a review of the Armed Forces Covenant.

He said: “I want our ex-Service personnel – the best of the best – to be given every opportunity to move from the battlefield to the boardroom, if that’s what they want to do.

“A career in the Armed Forces provides skills and experience – this expertise brought to business is a great asset to the UK.”

Business and Enterprise Minister Michael Fallon said: “X-Forces supports the government’s drive to build a culture of enterprise.

“Service-leavers will find the mentoring, training and support invaluable as they move into the commercial world.”

For further details, including how to apply, visit the X-Forces Ltd website at www.xforces.com or call 01189-121274 for the X-Forces team.

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION

Fresh faces for new term



IT HAS been a busy few months for the NFF; we have attended Families Days across the country, participated in top-level meetings, welcomed new members of staff, and undergone an office move (within the same building), writes Emma Prince, NFF Marketing and Communications Manager.

New Additions

We are pleased to welcome our two new Armed Forces Covenant Co-ordinators, Jenny Ward and Mark Walker, to the team.

The posts are funded by money received from the LIBOR Fund. They will be covering the Midlands and the North of England. They will focus on the Armed Forces Covenant, liaising with local councils and service providers in order to improve two-way communication. Gathering examples of good practise and identifying areas that would like help, they will also encourage a better understanding of what makes a Naval Service family tick. We will update you on the progress they make over the coming months.

You may well hear a new voice on the phone. Jackie Jackson has retired after almost ten years with the NFF and we are joined by Sam Allardyce, our new Evidence and Enquiry Co-ordinator, who brings the benefit of speaking Naval Service language as he has just retired from the Royal Navy.

Taking YOUR Concerns to the Top

We had a really productive Armed Forces Covenant meeting in 10 Downing Street with the Prime Minister, Ministers from other government departments

and the other Families Federations recently.

NFF raised concerns around communicating with families, divorced families and access to the Service Pupil Premium, plus the impact on families of the Navy trying to do the same with less.

After the meeting the Department of Health requested a meeting with us to discuss families’ healthcare concerns. It was a very positive meeting; we will keep you posted on what happens as a result.

Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey (AFCAS): 2013 Report

The tri-Service AFCAS 2013 report has been published. It is used to understand a wide spectrum of personnel issues and helps to shape policies by informing decision-makers where the serving population reports satisfaction or discontent, helping to shape and improve policies.

The 2013 AFCAS was sent to 26,077 Regular Service personnel and received a 48 per cent response rate – the best to date:

■ Overall satisfaction with pay remains unchanged since 2012, although satisfaction with pensions remains low and continues to decrease (-7 per cent drop)

■ The impact of Service life on family and personal life remains the top factor for those leaving, or intending to leave the Armed Forces. Job security, as well as dental and healthcare provision, remain top factors increasing intentions to stay

■ All Services and ranks remain generally dissatisfied with the

effect of Service life on their spouse/partner’s career. The proportion dissatisfied with their ability to plan their own life long-term holidays/career training has increased, with 52 per cent dissatisfied.

Most remain satisfied with their own welfare package (55 per cent) and support (50 per cent), but less are satisfied with their families’ welfare provision (39 per cent) and support to their family when they are absent (30 per cent).

■ Satisfaction with equipment and accommodation remains largely unchanged. The majority of personnel (80 per cent) live in Service accommodation during the working week and are generally satisfied with the standard (57 per cent) and value for money (68 per cent). Personnel are less satisfied with the maintenance (41 per cent), repair (40 per cent) and fairness of allocation (45 per cent).

■ Home ownership stands at 43 per cent. Most state the inability to afford to buy something suitable as the main reason for not owning a home. A fifth say they are making financial preparations to buy in the future.

■ The vast majority of personnel remain proud to serve. The majority in the Naval Service continue to believe that the Reserve Forces are valuable and well integrated.

■ Satisfaction with how well change is managed in the Service and MOD is relatively low; the majority continuing to disagree that they feel more optimistic about the future of their Service as a result of Defence Transformation. Only 20 per cent say their immediate superior/the

Chain of Command has helped them to understand how Defence Transformation affects them (-3 per cent)

■ While the majority do not feel particularly disadvantaged when it comes to accessing public services or commercial products, nearly half reported they know nothing about the Armed Forces Covenant.

You can read the full report and key findings on our website: www.nff.org.uk.

Corporate Covenant

Businesses and charities across the UK are now able to pledge their support to the Armed Forces by signing the new Corporate Covenant.

For the first time they can sign an official commitment stating that they will help improve the lives of Armed Forces personnel, their families and veterans who are working for them or using their services.

Organisations can support our Armed Forces by providing job opportunities, offering discounts, supporting their local Cadet unit, and by getting behind Armed Forces Day.

The Corporate Covenant is part of the Armed Forces Covenant; which is working to redress the disadvantages that the Armed Forces community faces in comparison to other citizens.

Visit: www.gov.uk/the-armed-forces-covenant

Term-Time Holidays and Post Operational Tour Leave

The government is changing the regulations to strengthen the rules around term-time holidays. The changes should be made by

September 2013.

Due to the nature of Service life and regular deployments, Service families may wish to use Post-Operational Tour Leave (POTL) to take a holiday and spend time together.

Schools in England are under pressure to secure high attendance rates from pupils and, generally speaking, are discouraged from authorising pupil absence during term-time.

The current regulations states that “Headteachers can grant requests from parents to take their child on family holiday during term-time in ‘special’ circumstances.”

Headteachers have the discretion to authorise term-time absence of up to ten days in any school year, if they believe the circumstances warrant it. Headteachers are not required to authorise such absence.

Headteachers are in special circumstances grant leave of absence of up to ten days for the purpose of family holidays during term-time.

Parents must make a written request absence in advance. There is no right to the authorisation of term-time absence for any pupil, even Service children, to enable them to take advantage of POTL.

Despite all this, many schools are sensitive to the needs of the Service families.

However, in 2010, the NFF met with the Department for Education to discuss term-time holidays for Armed Forces families. Following the meeting, we received this statement: “Ofsted has confirmed that these absences should be recorded as authorised

Deaths

Admiral Sir John 'Sandy' Woodward GBE, KCB. Joined the RN 1946... Admiral Sir John 'Sandy' Woodward GBE, KCB. Joined the RN 1946, early training at Eaton Hall and Dartmouth. First ships were cruiser HMS Sheffield and destroyer Zodiac.

WRNS. Served 1980-92. After attending BRNC she served at Faslane, HMS Sultan as Commander's Assistant... John 'Taff' Blower Chief Electrician. Served 1943-76 HMS St George, Norfolk, Defiance, Unicorn, Illustrious, Bermuda, Eagle, Loch Insh, Mohawk, Owen, Danae, Collingwood and Clarboston.

Castle. Royal Naval Engineer Association. June 13. Aged 83.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION Lt Cdr Henry 'Harry' Sparks. Joined RNVR as a Writer 1940 and commissioned as Paymaster S/Lt RNVR 1941... Lt Cdr 'John' Featherstone CPO Coxn. Submarine Service 1942-61 in P555, Varangian, Upright, Sleuth, Tiptoe, Truncheon, Sturdy, Sentinel, Trump and Anchorite.

he survived a bomb attack after leaving his battery minutes earlier. He regularly attended memorial services abroad, including ceremonies in Crete last year.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION LE 'Leslie' Elvin Tel. Submarine Service 1957-62 in Tresspasser and Trenchant. Portsmouth branch. Aged 77. J 'John' Featherstone CPO Coxn. Submarine Service 1942-61 in P555, Varangian, Upright, Sleuth, Tiptoe, Truncheon, Sturdy, Sentinel, Trump and Anchorite.



● The Princess Royal and her husband Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence try out some Tudor weaponry at the Mary Rose Museum

Picture: PO(Phot) Wheelie A'barrow

Royal reception for centenary

THE Princess Royal has attended a reception at the new Mary Rose Museum to celebrate the centenary of the Naval Review journal.

maritime affairs individually approved by the Editor.

In 2008, an appeal was launched to raise funds which, amongst other achievements, allowed the publication of the book Dreadnought to Daring, in which 29 renowned authors contributed chapters which analyse and assess matters of major significance which have featured in the journal.

The reception marked the culmination of centenary celebrations for the publication, which was set up to provide a forum for experts and interested parties to hold frank discussions on Naval matters.

The success of the appeal also allowed the establishment of a Centenary Fellowship, encouraging junior officers in the Naval Service to compete for an annual prize involving six weeks of visits to defence establishments in Australia as part of his or her professional development.

Subjects policy and strategy (articles have been submitted to canvas opinion before decisions were made), operations, discipline, training and history, some attracting a humorous approach.

Guests at the event included the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Dame Mary Fagan, Lord Mayor of Portsmouth Cllr Lynne Stagg, and Naval Base Commander Cdre Jerry Rigby.

All serving officers who are members of the Naval Review can submit articles directly to the Editor, under the protection of a pseudonym should they wish, without obtaining prior official approval, leaving the responsibility for deciding what may be published to the Editor.

It also meant the Princess Royal was the first Royal visitor to the museum after its official opening, and although she was there as a guest of the Naval Review rather than the museum she was given an extensive tour of the building. www.naval-review.co.uk

This privilege is conditional on circulation of the journal being restricted to members who must be serving or retired officers and WOs of the Armed Forces of the Commonwealth and those of proven interest in naval and

Reunions

October 2013 HMS Tiger comms branch: For anyone who served on board Tiger, reunion in Birmingham from Oct 11 to 12 - a drink and a chat with old mates, non formal. On Saturday we will meet at the Nautical Club, Bishopsgate St, Birmingham. www.nauticalclub.com

from April 4 to 7 at the Coniston Hotel, Sittingbourne, Kent. Details from Alan Waite alan04@live.co.uk or tel 01162 833266.

November 2013 HMS Relentless Association: The 2013 reunion will take place from November 29 to December 1 at Judd's Folly Hotel, Faversham, Kent. Any ex-Relentless H85 destroyer or F185 Type 15 frigate who served at any time 1942-71 very welcome. Please contact the Association secretary, Steve Newton at secretary@hmsrelentless.co.uk or tel: 023 9259 9640 or visit the website at http://www.hmsrelentless.co.uk/

HMS Protector Association: Grand reunion and AGM at the Suncliff Hotel, Bournemouth from April 11 to 14. Details and booking forms: Doug Harris at dougspindrift@aol.com or see www.hmsprotector.org or tel: 01495 718870.

HMS Blake Marine Engineering Department: Reunion, Nov 1 to 3 at the Maritime Club, Portsmouth. Open to all ex-serving members of Blake ME department. Visit www.blakestokers.com and use email address info@blakestokers.com for details of accommodation, or write to 3 Selwyn Avenue, Whitley Bay, Tyne & Wear NE25 9DH or tel: 07969 127939.

May 2014 Federation of Naval Associations: AGM and reunion at Mill Rythe, Hayling Island, May 9 to 12. All associations and former RN/RM/WRNS/QARNNS/RFA/MN etc welcome. Details, booking forms from Robbie Robson at robbie.fna@virgin.net or 12 Rainton Street, Old Penshaw, DH4 7HQ, tel: 0191 584 7058.

Loch Class Frigates Association: Reunion at the Royal Maritime Club, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HS (023 9283 7681 quote ref: 14093) from March 21 to 24. All members welcome. Membership is open to all who served on any Loch-class ships or their variants (Bay Class, Admiral's Yachts, survey ships and repair ships). Some types have their own associations but you can always join both.

Ask Jack

Norman Alan Lees: A tribute film and evening are being planned to celebrate the life of Norman Lees (aka Stormin Norman). Norman joined the RN as a Commando helicopter pilot in 1978, serving in Northern Ireland with the RN and RAF as an exchange officer, returning to the Navy for the Falklands Conflict.

Promotions and Assignments

Cmdr R L Powell to attaché duties from January 2014. Surg Cmdr A J Walker to be a member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from January 2014. Act Cmdr R M Allen to be promoted Cmdr and continue with attaché training from July 1.

Sports lottery

July 20: £5,000 - Mne C Scholes; £1,500 - Cdr M Toft; £500 - AB C Hardcastle. July 27: £5,000 - AB Y Bernard; £1,500 - Marine T Laycock; £500 - AB K Morris.

Tribute to Exmouth

A BLOCK of flats in a small Scottish town has been named in honour of one of the Royal Navy's often-forgotten wartime tragedies.

As a result not one of the 189 souls aboard the destroyer survived. She was the first RN warship to go down with all hands in the war.

Exmouth House in Wick takes its title from a destroyer lost with all hands off the Caithness coast in the opening months of World War 2. HMS Exmouth had been escorting the merchantman Cyprian Prince, which was ferrying guns, vehicles and searchlights to Scapa Flow to bolster the defences of the Fleet's main wartime base, when the two vessels were sighted by U22 20 miles off Wick long before dawn on January 21 1940.

The bodies of 18 crew were washed ashore near Wick and buried in the town's cemetery.

It was another 60 years before the destroyer's wreck was found, a discovery which prompted the formation of an association among relatives of those lost.

As part of its redevelopment of homes and apartments in Wick, Cairn Housing Association decided renaming a block after the Exmouth would be a fitting tribute. "The warmth and feeling of the townspeople of Wick has really been something. They are the custodians of the memory of HMS Exmouth," said former killick stoker David Ellis, chairman of the HMS Exmouth 1940 Association, who lost his grandfather Stoker Leslie Darton on the Exmouth.

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Entries for the Deaths column and Swap Drafts in October's Noticeboard must be received by September 9

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.

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- 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.

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Outstanding education at Trinity

WITH a string of successes in national sporting events, an outstanding inspection report and an Art exhibition currently under way in a leading Berlin art gallery, Trinity School is able to celebrate as the end of another highly successful year draws near.

Trinity pupils have continued to excel at sporting competitions, winning a dozen medals in the National Independent Schools Association Championships for swimming, UK U16 runners-up in boys' hockey and rugby 7s and finishing fifth in the UK U16 girls' netball.

One of the school's prep pupils is also U9 UK Lawn Tennis Association Champion, with two other pupils at the School's Tennis Academy also being in the top tier nationally for their age-group.

Cultural activities have also put the school in the limelight. The art department have been invited to put the school's work on display for two months in the KLAÏX Gallery in Berlin. In the ISA UK art competition, the department came away with three first-place and seven second-place awards.

The prep department has been highly successful in local festivals, winning many trophies for both musical and public-speaking

performances.

The school's leadership training continues to be a real strength, with many pupils working towards Duke of Edinburgh awards and with the school's Cadet Force (pictured above visiting HMS Bulwark) being one of the most active in the country.

One of its number, Sohail Ghani, was awarded a prestigious HM Forces flying scholarship, one of only a handful awarded nationally each year, allowing him the opportunity to experience two weeks of flying training at 727

Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Yeovilton.

The school received two very positive inspection reports. The Early Years report was an exceptional one in which provision was graded as 'outstanding' in all respects.

The boarding report was an Interim Report, a type that gives no quality judgements, but which indicates whether you have moved forward since the last report. It was confirmed that the school had continued to improve since its 2010 Ofsted 'outstanding'

inspection in which Trinity was rated outstanding in five out of six areas.

Trinity is an independent school offering co-educational schooling from Nursery to 19 years. It offers day and boarding places, catering for the full ability range.

Trinity has 470 pupils, of whom about 95 are boarders. The school has good transport links from many locations: coaches from Exeter, Bovey Tracy, and Paignton/Torbay; free bus pick-up from Teignmouth station allowing easy access via train.



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ROYAL Navy children were among 440 girls and boys who took part in Trooping the Colour for Air Marshal Baz North.

The children, aged 11 to 18, are students at the historic Duke of York's Royal Military School in Dover, which became the first government-funded academy sponsored by the MoD in 2010.

Founded in 1803, it is the only school in England to have the Royal privilege of holding colours (granted in 1824 by King George IV).

The Grand Day event is a prestigious occasion when we commemorate our heritage and tradition. Students attend their prize-giving ceremony in the morning, followed by Trooping the Colour in the afternoon when the whole school is on parade, wearing full ceremonial 'blues' and the cap badge of their parents' or family member's Service, Corps or Regiments over their hearts.

We are privileged to hold Colours, and on Grand Day we honour them. The ceremony is a symbol of the unity of the school and a mark of respect to our foundation and forefathers.

Watched by over 1,000 parents and guests, all aspects of the parade and the Grand Day ceremony are conducted by the pupils themselves: they fill the parade appointments; they form the Escort to the Colour and the Guards; and they comprise the



membership of the school band.

The level of skill and commitment they display on and off the parade ground sets an outstandingly-high benchmark – one which they aspire to raise every year when the next Grand Day comes around.

Colour Sergeant Major in the Guard, 17-year-old Bryony Armstrong, whose retired Royal Marines colonel father now runs Royal Navy and Royal Marines Combined Cadet Forces in schools throughout the UK, said: "I feel that the Duke of York's has rounded me as an individual, and provided me with opportunities that no other school could have."

"The sense of community is

extremely strong, particularly as so many of us can support each other and share the experience of having a parent abroad or at sea. Our Grand Day parade embodies the uniqueness of being a Dukie, and reflects the pride we feel in the military and in our school."

Executive Principal Chris Russell said: "Students at The Duke of York's Royal Military School proudly parade on Grand Day, as they celebrate their academic successes and the traditions of the school."

"Our school includes the powerful mix of education, military and chapel, all of which helps to develop young people's character and resilience."



Success all round at Blundell's

BLUNDELL'S School in Devon has been celebrating some significant achievements recently: winning a national public speaking competition, a regional engineering award, fantastic results on the sports field with pupils playing at national, county and regional level, and a host of individual and team successes in a wide variety of subjects.

Other highlights have included the biennial CCF inspection by Brig Martin Smith of the Royal Marines (pictured above – at Blundell's CCF is compulsory for all pupils in Year 10 with many continuing to Year 13) and an ISI inspection which judged the school to be excellent (such as in pastoral care, curricular provision and outcomes for boarders) or good in every category.

Founded in 1604, Blundell's is an enduring and vital community with a rich history and great appreciation of the need to be modern and move with the times.

A co-educational independent school for boarding and day pupils from ages 11 to 18, it combines strong academic achievement and excellent facilities with the best pastoral care.

The extra-curricular programme is extensive, catering for all interests and skills. The school welcomes forces families and offers a Services package.

For more information please contact the registrars on 01884 252543, info@blundells.org or see the website www.blundells.org.

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QUEEN Victoria School (QVS) is a co-educational boarding school fully funded by the Ministry of Defence to provide stability and continuity of education for the children of UK Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or are members of a Scottish regiment.

Set in 45 acres of beautiful Perthshire countryside, Queen Victoria School is easily accessible by road, rail or air.

QVS is tri-Service and all of its pupils have at least one actively serving parent when they enter the school.

Our main intake is into the Scottish system's Primary 7 year; there is no exact equivalent with the English system, but most of our P7 intake are aged ten when they join us. That said, there is a wide age range within the year groups. Many of our pupils have come from educationally disrupted backgrounds as they have moved from school to school and education system to education system, according to their families' postings.

Pastoral care is given a very high priority along with careers guidance and personal and social education. The school aims to promote the welfare and happiness of each individual child and develop their self-esteem. In addition, there is a very full programme of sporting, cultural and spiritual development.

QVS is a unique boarding school which seeks to achieve the best that is possible for its pupils, priding itself on developing them in the widest possible sense and aiming to achieve success academically, in sport, music, drama and many other extra-curricular areas.

A unique dimension of the school is the ceremonial side which preserves the very best of the School's traditions. Marching as part of the School on one of

its six Parade Sundays a year, and on Grand Day – the final day of the academic year – is one of the proudest moments of a Victorian's life (as well as that of his or her parents)! The Pipes, Drums and Dancers of QVS are internationally renowned, having played at tattoos both at home and abroad, most recently in The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo 2012.

There is no substitute for visiting a school, meeting its pupils and staff and picking up the atmosphere.

If you would like to know more before travelling to Dunblane to visit us, however, please request a DVD and further information from the Admissions Secretary, Queen Victoria School, Dunblane FK15 0JY, or via our website www.qvs.org.uk.



Which school has an Olympian on their hockey coaching team?

A. Queen's College is ranked as the top academic school in Taunton, achieving the best exam results over the past ten years. The school excels in a wide range of sports - enjoying national success in hockey, swimming, athletics and riding.

Queen's offers boarding from age 7 and is rated as outstanding for its pastoral care. There is a busy and varied co-curricular programme and pupils are encouraged to get involved in the wide range of outdoor pursuits on offer.

Families in receipt of the CEA allowance get up to 20% remission off school fees.




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Admissions Deadline
Wed 15 Jan 2014

QVS is a co-educational boarding school for children of Armed Forces personnel who are Scottish, have served in Scotland or are part of a Scottish regiment.

All places are fully funded for tuition and boarding by the Ministry of Defence.

Families are welcome to find out more by contacting Admissions on **+44 (0) 131 310 2927** to arrange a visit.

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www.qvs.org.uk



MINISTRY OF DEFENCE



Speed march thrives

CADETS and volunteers from Highland District units, including the Fort William ATC, gathered at Spean Bridge to commemorate the exploits of World War 2 commandos who trained at Achnacarry (above).

The aspirant commandos had to run from Spean Bridge railway station to Achnacarry, a distance of seven miles, carrying a 36lb pack in less than an hour – or they were returned to their units.

The cadet speed march was started three years ago by the cadets of Lochaber unit, and the event has grown every year since.

This year it attracted entries from Oban, Lochaber and Inverness units and the Lochaber Air Training Corps.

Junior cadets and anyone else who doesn't want to race can do the journey as a sponsored walk to raise funds for their unit, but those with a competitive streak run while carrying a 16lb pack.

Until this year, the record was held by Lochaber cadet Kieran McFarlane, who notched a time of 1h 20m in 2011, but air cadet Sgt Kevin MacColl knocked eight minutes off that time.

The fastest Sea Cadets from each unit were Lewis Hall (Inverness – 1h 15m), Sarah Whyton (Lochaber – 1h 23m) and Erin Cameron and Jacob Dobson (Oban – 1h 46m).

The event, organised by Lochaber unit's instructor Paul Whyton, was supported by the Fort William branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland (RBL), who donated a special trophy to Lochaber.

Offshore bursary

A METHIL unit cadet has received a bursary from a local company to help fund an offshore challenge.

Cdt Connor Methven received the bursary from NETOPA – IT Connected, whose managing director Bob Bazley visited the unit to award the certificate.

"It is fantastic to see young people getting an opportunity to take part in an off-shore challenge," said Mr Bazley.

"The effort made by the instructors and the enthusiasm of the cadets is outstanding."

"I was really pleased to be able to support such a worthy cause."

"The benefits and life skills Connor will learn will stand him in good stead for the future – I am really looking forward to hearing all about the voyage when he gets back."

Sub Lt (SCC) Fiona Sekkat RNR, Officer Commanding the unit, said: "Receiving this level of support from a local company is a real boost to our cadets."

"Our cadets work really hard and step up whenever they are asked to help within our communities."

"Going offshore is something I would like to see all our cadets have the opportunity to do and having this kind of support makes all the difference."

More to come

PRODUCTION factors mean that this month's edition of *Navy News* has limited space for certain regular features – including the Sea Cadets.

But we will be back to normal coverage next month.



● The design for the new Sea Cadet Corps flagship, which will be built by Astilleros Gondan SA in northern Spain

Contract is placed for new flagship

A CONTRACT for the Sea Cadets Corps' new flagship has been placed, and the new vessel will be ready for the 2015 sailing season.

The £4.8 million contract has been awarded to Spanish shipyard Astilleros Gondan SA and designers Acubens – though more than half of the equipment will be sourced in the UK.

The ship – as yet unnamed – will replace TS Royalist, now over 40 years old and increasingly expensive to maintain, and there will be no break in continuity between the 2014 and 2015 seasons.

A flagship voyage is the pinnacle of the Sea Cadet experience and one which the charity wants to ensure future generations of Sea Cadets can benefit from – TS Royalist, which was launched in 1971, took well over 30,000 cadets to sea in her lifetime.

The new 32m brig is of an innovative design and offers greater use of space, with better all-round sailing ability and performance than its predecessor.

Faster and easier to handle than Royalist, the new ship is also more economical to run, which makes it ideal for offering young people

Third row in a row

THE Junior Mixed Yole team from Gosforth unit has reached the National Combined Regatta finals for the third year in a row.

Cdts Rutherford and Campbell have only been rowing as a team since April, but powered through against stiff opposition in both Northumberland District and Northern Area competitions.

Having bought their own Yole at the start of the 2012 rowing season, Gosforth are current joint holders of the Badger Cup, awarded to the overall Yole National Champions – so the team has been out on the Tyne practising hard for this month's finals at ExCeL in London.

offshore sailing, helping them to learn greater seamanship and sailing skills.

The ship is expected to be in service for 40 years.

With a pedigree drawing on large fast yachts, the new flagship will have an independent, aerodynamic-shaped keel, with separate rudder and skeg, and a canoe-shaped hull of high tensile steel – Royalist was built of mild steel.

A reticulated structure and glass-reinforced plastic deckhouse will reduce her weight and give her a lower centre of gravity.

The charity spent two years raising £4.8 million to build a new ship, so far achieving £3.85

million of that target.

Marine Society Sea Cadets (MSSC, the Sea Cadets' parent body) worked hard to keep the build in the UK, conscious of the country's maritime heritage.

Innovation and cost were of equal value to the charity having spent much time securing the funds from many donors; corporate, individuals, trusts and foundations, and Sea Cadet units across the UK.

The final design, which will be built at the Castropol yard in Asturias, in northern Spain, was deemed to offer the best balance between innovation and value for money.

Martin Coles, CEO of MSSC said: "Astilleros Gondan's proposal delivers a technically advanced proposition with a great use of space and modern facilities, providing a real step forward from TS Royalist in terms of overall design and sailing experience."

"With 55 per cent of equipment sourced from the UK, they have struck a good balance between home-grown and cost effectiveness."

"We're excited to see the new-build up and running, ensuring generations of Sea Cadets can harness their futures and steer a course that is right for them through the incredible confidence nautical adventure gives them."

Fine display by Teign Valley

AS part of the unit's support to the community, members of Teign Valley unit attended a number of events in aid of charities, including Teign Estuary Rotary Club's Help for Heroes fundraiser on the river beach at Teignmouth.

Over the past few months some 20 cadets have been taking instruction from Lt Simon Paget, a former clubswinger (Jackspeak for a PT Instructor) who is currently based at HMS Raleigh's seamanship training school at Jupiter Point.

Lt Paget had trained the cadre to work as a team, producing a ten to 15-minute display of clubswinging and signal flag movements to the soundtrack of a Royal Marines band.

The group has been pencilled in for a number of appearances over the summer.

And the value placed on the appearance by Sea Cadets at local events was highlighted by the fact that there was a reduced turnout at the river beach event because of members being on duty elsewhere,



● Teignmouth Town Mayor Cllr June Green with members of the Teign Valley unit cadet display team

including escorting the 2013 Newton Abbot Carnival Queen procession.

The TS Canonteign display team has been particularly popular

at various town carnivals across the area as part of a float display for Newton Abbot's Carnival Queen 'Mermaid' escort, using the cadets' Trinity 500 rowing boat.

MBE for Watchet stalwart

WATCHET Sea Scout Group were delighted when their Assistant Group Scout Leader Simon Bale was awarded the MBE in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours.

Simon, who also runs the group's Royal Yachting Association Sail Training Centre, was recognised in part for his leadership within the group over the past two decades.

But he also manages to combine that with other roles – a fact which did not escape one of his bosses.

Nick Gargan, Chief Constable of Avon and Somerset Constabulary, said: "Simon's efforts for the Special Constabulary, the Sea Scouts and for the Watchet Coastguard team would each individually be worthy of a high level of recognition."

"The fact that he has managed all three is an extraordinary achievement."

"His service to the community is an example to us all."

Simon, aged 41, works as a supervisor in the force's control room but spends his free time pounding the beat on a voluntary basis in the Williton and Minehead area, as he has done for the past 22 years.

As a RYA instructor Simon teaches sailing and power boating skills to scouting members, and is a regular visitor to HMS Excellent in Portsmouth as well as at national Sea Scouting events.

VIP guest at school

THE Duke of York visited the Royal Hospital School for the Tercentenary Speech Day and Divisions.

More than 2,000 pupils, parents and guests welcomed the Royal guest of honour and reviewing officer to the Suffolk school.

During his visit to the 200-acre site, the Duke gave pupils advice on life beyond school, encouraging them to challenge themselves and telling them to seize every opportunity.

The Duke also opened the school's new heritage centre, which houses a trove of historic artefacts, including the Lord Nelson relics that appeared on the BBC's *Antiques Roadshow*.

The facility will be open each Wednesday during term-time, and available to the wider community on request.

The grand finale was the Divisions, which included a flypast by a Hawker Sea Fury, an important post-war Naval fighter, and a Spitfire.

The school was established almost 300 years ago at Greenwich to educate the sons of seafarers for a career in the Royal Navy.

Having outgrown its premises, it moved to the banks of the River Stour in 1933, and while it is now a mainstream independent boarding and day school, it still retains a number of Naval traditions.



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SEA CADETS

Bringing rugby out of Gaddafi's shadows

LIBYAN rugby players are gearing up for international action thanks to the efforts of the Royal Navy to support their sport.

After years under the shadow of the Gaddafi regime, rugby union is making a comeback in the North African nation, which is emerging from the after-effects of 2011's bitter civil war.

Rugby was, if not a thriving sport in Libya, then popular among the ex-pat community working in the oil industry – and was taken up by some of the country's populace.

But rugby was never endorsed by the Gaddafi family – key to any sport's success in Libya – and so it never really took off.

One of the dictator's sons, Al Saadi, who was a professional footballer (matches were fixed in his favour...), was so incensed about the state of the pitch after a rugby training session that he locked the groundskeeper in the boot of a car and took him for a four-hour drive into the desert before giving him a beating and letting him walk home.

Rugby in Libya survived that encounter, but was finally banned in 2001 by Gaddafi's eldest son, Muhammad, who declared it a

violent sport – and outlawed it, to join boxing on the Libyan sporting scrapheap.

Two years on from the fall of the Gaddafi dictatorship, however, and rugby union is beginning to re-emerge from the shadows.

There are now seven Libyan sides – four in the capital Libya, three in the eastern port of Benghazi – mostly playing the Sevens format of the game.

They often play on ill-suited pitches. The try lines are sometimes five metres in front of the goals, while to make up for the lack of proper rugby posts, sewage pipes have been strapped to football goals.

With the Confederation of African Rugby Union Cup coming up in September, Royal Navy Rugby Union was determined to help the Libyans establish the game on a firmer footing.

The Libyans have now tried their hand at the full 15-a-side version of the game so they can take part in next month's African competition – their first run-out saw them beat a scratch team from HMS Echo 43-17 (the home side are pictured charging the Echo lines, right).

Rugby development officer Ady

Cherrington, based at the Royal Navy's home of sport, HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth, helped to source proper goal posts as well as post protectors from the annual Navy-Army game at Twickenham.

But the RN support for the sport in the North African country doesn't stop there. The next step is for its coaches to train their Libyan counterparts, while on the ground in Libya Lt Paul 'Shady' Lane is helping to nurture the sport.

The junior naval officer is on the staff of the British Embassy in Tripoli, one of the UK military team helping Libyans to rebuild their armed forces in the wake of the 2011 civil war.

"I've never played rugby in my life... but I know people who do and I've taken a keen interest in the Libyan team after reading about their plight before I came out here," said Shady.

"The Libyans are very keen and aggressive, but they are still learning the rules. They want help – and it's very gratefully received.

"What's been great is that the Royal Navy delivered. Many people have promised to help, but we're the ones doing it."



REVIEW

Giving Hitler a bloody nose

IN MARCH 1942 Britain's fortunes were at a very low ebb.

Singapore had fallen. Europe was dominated by the Third Reich. U-boats were rampant in the Atlantic – especially off the coast of North America. In North Africa Rommel had recaptured much of the territory Britain's winter offensive had seized and was gearing up for his assault on Tobruk.

But in the small hours of March 28 a motley force of destroyers and motorboats surged up the Loire to destroy the gigantic Normandie dry dock in St Nazaire – 1,150ft long, 160ft wide, easily able to accommodate the most feared battleship in Europe: the Tirpitz.

They were successful, ramming an old American destroyer – now under the White Ensign as HMS Campbeltown – into the lock gates and blowing her up, while commandos destroyed dock installations.

The St Nazaire raid ought to be up there with the Dambusters in the public consciousness. In terms of ingenuity, daring and, sadly, human cost, it's on a par with the strike against the Ruhr dams.

Except that there's no aerial photograph of the wrecked docks à la water pouring from the smashed Möhne Dam, no tubthumping march, no big screen outing featuring lots of stiff upper lips. And, of course, there's nothing to match a Lancaster in the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

But what there are, featured in Robert Lyman's *Into the Jaws of Death* (Quercus, £20 ISBN 978-1-78206-4442) are deeds aplenty

to outlive us (89 decorations were awarded for Operation Chariot as it was codenamed – one for every seven men partaking – including five VCs).

Having written probably the best account of the RN's most famous commando raid of WW2 – attacking German raiders in Bordeaux using canoes, the so-called 'Cockleshell Heroes' – Lyman has turned his attention to St Nazaire with the same thoroughness and panache.

Lyman is not the first historian to follow the road to St Nazaire – Cecil Lucas Phillips led the way 50 years ago with *The Greatest Raid of All* (a title which inspired a Jeremy Clarkson documentary a few years ago). And while Phillips had access to far more veterans and witnesses of the raid than Lyman, the present author has enjoyed access to official documents undreamed of in the late 1950s.

In doing so he tells us complete a story of that night 71 years ago as is probably possible. And he does so stirring, aided by some vivid accounts by the men who were there like Maj Bill Copland, a WW1 veteran serving with No.2 Commando.

"Close into the Mole, the shells of nearly burnt-out motor launches still glowed red on the river, whilst in the night behind them, and seemingly suspended in mid-air, blazed a sea of burning petrol through which came shells and tracer fire of all kinds, some of the shells exploding with a rather futile little 'crack' in the air just ahead of us."

And this was before the Campbeltown went up with her delayed fuses triggering her 4½ tons of explosive – which they did over eight hours later than expected.

"The world appeared to blow itself to fragments and come

hurtling down on us with the fury of a hailstorm," recalled Ordinary Seaman Ralph Batterson, who'd been taken prisoner by the Germans.

"The air was thick with clouds of dust, thickly studded with steel chunks torn from the ships and every other kind of wood and metal."

British PoWs and French workers spent days piling up human remains and bodies – anywhere between 100 and 380 Germans were killed by the blast – after fishing them out of the Loire or the dry dock.

The cost to the British raiders was equally horrendous. Of the 621 men who took part in Chariot, 382 were casualties. One in four was killed. Losses among the commandos were fearful. Nearly three quarters were killed, wounded or captured. A few hours later, the RAF pummelled the historic German city of Lübeck – signalling a turning point in the war in the air.

The bombing of Lübeck received widespread national and international publicity. As did the strike at St Nazaire.

But the British propaganda machine was slow to act in the aftermath of the raid. And, as at Jutland a generation earlier, the Germans got there first, proclaimed victory, and were much more bombastic in their tone than a rather hesitant British communiqué.

Publicly, Berlin praised the raiders' gallantry – "they fought until death or capture" as they carried out their "crazy enterprise". Privately, however, the Germans conceded the attack had succeeded in its goal of knocking out the docks.

To that end, Chariot succeeded. Tirpitz never did venture into the Atlantic or use St Nazaire as a base (it remains highly unlikely, with hindsight, that she would ever have done).

Above all, what the raid achieved, Lyman argues, is proof that Britain was unbowed and that the Western Front was far from inactive – at a time when Hitler's armies were heavily engaged in Russia.

"The Saint Nazaire raid has had a more far-reaching effect than any previous one and has created a state of nerves and disorganisation," the intelligence team at the Admiralty observed a couple of weeks after the attack.

Operation Chariot showed that the Britons were prepared to make the ultimate sacrifice in the face of tyranny and show subjugated peoples they would fight – and die – to free them from Nazi slavery.

Not a bad epitaph.



Forging the UK-US bond

MOST historical studies of the Royal Navy take the natural break in its development as the end of World War 2.

What makes Jon Robb-Webb's new book *The British Pacific Fleet: Experience and Legacy 1944-50* (Ashgate, £65 ISBN 9780754668510, ebook £43-£50 ISBN 9781409453833 / 9781409473336) so special, is that it deliberately straddles this caesura, writes Prof Eric Grove of Liverpool John Moore University.

It demonstrates how the Royal Navy's major activity in the closing months of WW2, the British Pacific Fleet (BPF) affected it in the immediate post-war years. It demonstrates how the RN's forced adoption of American techniques of fast high-endurance carrier task group operations had a highly significant modernising effect on the service, encouraging it to develop doctrine and tactics that confirmed the Royal Navy's status, both as the major protagonist of such operations outside the USN, and its senior partner in combined operations.

As a member of the Kings College Defence Studies staff, the Joint Services Command and Staff College, Dr Robb-Webb takes a suitably structured approach to his subject. He examines it at the grand strategic, military strategic, operational and tactical levels in two sections, the first covering the war years and the second the post-war legacy. This works quite well, but can lead to some repetition of points between the various chapters that might have been more elegantly dealt with by cross-referencing.

The author makes the key point that the main purpose of the BPF was political (grand strategic), to put the only-available British Forces at the spearpoint of the attack on the Japanese home islands. This pioneered a common strand in British policy post-war: the use of significant armed forces to give influence in the decision of the senior partner. The actual military contribution of the BPF has often been belittled, except for the attack on the Palembang refineries on the way east – a date now rightly celebrated in Fleet Air Arm messes.

As Dr Robb-Webb points out, this narrow view misses the point. The demonstration that the Royal Navy could operate with the US Navy at the highest level helped cement Anglo-American relations and counter significant contrary tendencies on both sides of the relationship.

Creating the BPF had to overcome opposition on both sides of the Atlantic – from Churchill who wished, rather late in the day, to recover the British South East Asian territories, which in a fit of strategic absence of mind he had lost; and from the irascible Admiral King, who had no wish to have the British raining on his private revenge for Pearl Harbor.

Both wanted the fleet assets freed up by the demise of the European Axis battle fleets to cover operations away from the main thrust on the Japanese home islands. Such a policy, which harked back to an imperial past already compromised by British policy, would have raised serious latent anti-British feelings in the American political elite and public, given the British Empire's self-inflicted degree of dependence on the USA.

The importance of 'being there' has already been raised by Dr Ned Willmott, but the present author adds significant depth to the analysis by discussing

THE GROVE REVIEW

the operational, doctrinal and tactical problems that had to be overcome to give the Royal Navy the ability to engage in what it recognised as what was, despite its pioneering carrier work, a new kind of warfare in scale, extent and effort.

Although the BPF could not completely replicate American capabilities, it could do so effectively enough to be integrated with Halsey's Third Fleet in the final operations against the Japanese home islands. This lay the real foundations of the RN-USN 'special relationship' which has been so strong ever since.

Post war, the investment perhaps looked a little dubious as both the USA and UK tried not to appear to be ganging up on the Soviet Union, but the logic of the inevitable conflict between the alternative totalitarianism of Stalin and the western world soon caused the Anglo-American alliance to be restored.

This was made much easier by the BPF's activities. Exercises between the two navies and the mutual exchange of observers maintained the cooperation pioneered under the kamikazes and allowed HMS Triumph and her escorts rapidly to form an effective carrier task group with the Americans off Korea in the early days of the Korean War.

This led to a debate that helped establish offensive fleet carrier operations and the provision of a task group to the NATO Striking Fleet as a core capability of the Royal Navy in the 1950s. This is touched on, but stopping the second part in 1950 means this final victory of BPF is only touched upon rather than thoroughly dealt with.

Extending the analysis to 1954 would have made the thesis of the book even clearer, and the better editing described above would perhaps have made space. As it is, Dr Robb-Webb makes clear the way in which enthusiasm for offensive carrier operations was mitigated by shortages of resources and the necessity to see the carrier as primarily a defender of sea communications against submarines and aircraft.

I have few quibbles with the text. There are rather more typographical errors than should appear in an expensive volume. The only complaints about content cover the 'Grand Strategic' chapter of section two. This might have made a bit more of the 1948 Cabinet Paper 'The Threat to Western Civilisation' prompted by the Prague Coup and the signature of the North Atlantic Treaty in the same excellent way he deals with the creation of the Western Union.

The first was an especially clear assessment of the contemporary Soviet threat and British Cold War grand strategy. The second presaged the second coming of British offensive carrier operations in the Atlantic. The drawing-up and military strategic implications of the 'Three Pillars' of post-war British Defence Policy in 1947 might also have been more coherently expressed.

This said, overall, the book succeeds very well in its aims. It is based on excellent research, including the fascinating and hitherto unused contemporary RN Monthly Intelligence Reports. The book deserves a wide readership. Nowhere else are the foundations of the Royal Navy's most important post-war alliance relationship better analysed.

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● Lt Andy Claxton soars over South Wales

Patience pays off for paragliders

This year's Inter Service Paragliding Championships were held at the Joint Service Hangliding and Paragliding Centre (JSHPGC) near Crickhowell in South Wales.

The competition, held over a week, is contested with cross-country flying tasks from a hill take-off to a landing site often 50km away.

The Navy only managed to field a three-strong team for the event, but were undaunted by the other Services, who each fielded 12 competitors.

Ahead of the contest, RN team captain Lt Alistair Andrews declared that "quality not quantity" counted. "We have the best pilots here, in the best form, and with the top three from each team scoring each day, it should just concentrate our minds on the task at hand".

The weather played its part, with the first couple of days rained off and winds too strong to allow slower gliders to fly safely.

Finally suitable conditions arose after a weak cold front passed, giving a cloud-base of over 4,000ft and strong thermals: a 75km race to Chepstow was set.

As it turned out, the thermals and winds were too weak and at times non-existent. The RN team launched having seen Red Kites climbing in front of the hill, but soon the weak thermal had dissipated. Stuck at the bottom of a hill, the Navy watched despondently as RAF and Army pilots, climbing in the one good thermal of the day, disappeared downwind on task!

However they didn't get very far and the task was not validated with the required five pilots flying more than 10km.

The next day dawned with similar conditions, but much stronger winds. Many pilots soared as a result. A strong thermal came through, but with a low cloud base the Navy pushed back to the hill to wait for conditions to improve. The other Services desperately went with the thermal; only to land short. They had almost certainly eliminated themselves with such a rushed mistake.

Thirty minutes later, a higher cloud base and a monstrously stronger thermal allowed the Navy and an Army pilot to get away towards Chepstow. The three then flew past the first turning point, before racing down the Milk Run towards Crickhowell. But turning at Abergavenny, the day's short-lived thermal window died away and all three ended up on the ground.

WO Simon Green from the Army won with 50km, C/Sgt Grant Oseland RM clocked up 48km and Lt Andrews completed a respectful 38km. With no other pilots having got close to these distances, the combined Royal Navy score gave them the lead; the task valid thanks to some RAF and Army 11km flops!

Prize giving at the JSHPC was a Navy affair with Oseland and Andrews taking silver and bronze and the RN taking the title for the first time in living memory. Lt Andrews also won the 'XC League' for 2012 – the combined score from the six longest cross-country flights of the year.

"We've had a pretty depleted 2013," said Lt Andrews. "We head off to Spain this month, where you can clock up distances of 200 kms and heights up to 12,000 feet on some routes. I have high hopes for the 2014 season."

Historic victory for RN gliders

FROM paragliding to gliding, and another Inter-Service triumph for RN sportsmen.

For only the second time in their history the Senior Service team lifted the title with a combined score of 259, beating the Army into second place on 232, with the RAF propping up the table on 192.

This year's competition was hosted by the RN at the Husbands Bosworth Gliding Centre in Leicestershire.

The competition took place over nine days in August, with the Army fielding an exceptionally-strong team and leading for the early part of the week. However the Senior Service – Capt Paul Jessop, Lt Rob Hines (team captain), Lt Will Ellis and WO2 Andy Farr – were able to overhaul them by the Thursday and maintain the lead to final Sunday of competition.

In fact, the contest was dominated by the RN in the two classes of gliders – club and open – both of which were won by WO2 Farr and Lt Ellis respectively.

"It is a fantastic honour to represent the Navy at Inter-Service level, while the fact that we have the two best individuals here and won the team event proves

that we are serious competitors to the traditional RAF powerhouse," said Lt Hines.

This performance is the reward for years of investment in training and equipment by Navy Gliding with the future now looking promising as the clubs of the RN Gliding and Soaring Association (RNGSA) promote interest in the sport and developing the next generation of Inter-Service champions.

The RNGSA runs annual expeditions, which over the past couple of years have included locations such as Germany, France and South Africa, open to novices and experts alike.

There are three clubs in the association: Seahawk at Culdrose, Heron at Yeovilton and Portsmouth flying at the former Daedalus site. All operate throughout the year providing fantastic and affordable AT opportunities.

Development opportunities also exist in competition with SC 'Bobby' Ball and AET Jim Scott flying as P2 to WO2 Farr, giving them the chance to experience the intensity of competitive gliding, whilst providing him with navigational advice and Haribo.



● The triumphant East (in light blue) and West pose on the Headingley pitch after the best State of Origin match ever staged
Picture: WO1 Keith Humpleby

The heroes of Headingley

ONCE again RN Rugby League were invited to stage its annual 'State of Origin' fixture at Headingley Carnegie – home to the Leeds Rhinos – as a curtain-raiser to their derby against the Wakefield Wildcats.

After last year's washout, resulting in the match being played at the Rhino's Academy ground, conditions could not have been more different, writes WO1 Keith Humpleby, RNRL spokesman.

Another 'hottest day of the year so far' greeted the squads as they arrived at the famous ground ready to do battle not only for the Hesco-Bastion Origin Trophy but for the all-important places in this month's Inter-Service squads.

Both sides had prepared well with the West's final session held in Leeds with a majority of the side overnights at the home of ex-matlot and Rhinos coach and skipper Lewis Taylor.

On the day Coach Taylor took his side to Kirkstall for a light training session before shirt presentations, while the East spent the morning at the ground of local amateur side Stanningley, where skipper Kev Botwood played his rugby before joining the service.

The match kicked off with the ground filling up as the game progressed. Initially temperatures pitch-side were in excess of 30°C and only cooled by a couple of degrees as the game went on. Despite this both sides put on a great show, impressing not only the fans, but also the RL journalists in the press box and assorted Rhinos players who were watching before their pre-match preps.

The game swung one way and the other, with neither side managing to put any distance between themselves and the opposition.

No IS cricket triumph – home or away

Continued from page 36

On the first day, the Navy had the pleasure of watching the other two Services in action; a strong Army side made short work of the Air Force, which meant the RAF would return on the second day to play the Navy.

After winning the toss, the Navy invited the Air Force to bat, a decision which was vindicated when LLogs Tee Burke struck twice in her first over and again in her second.

After her third over, she was rested by skipper Lt Emma Boswell, yet wickets fell steadily and with the score at 56-7 Burke was recalled to the attack, bowling with a lovely line and length and enjoying immediate

success. The first score came on nine minutes and went to the East. Smart approach play pressured the West line before the ball was shipped out to Simon Tulakepa, who went over for his first of the evening.

Despite making for the posts to touch down, Alex Scruton was unable to add the conversion, so it was just a 4-0 lead.

The Maroons now settled into the game and began to exert pressure. On 18 minutes a high bomb into the East red zone was missed by the defenders and Richard Houghton seized the ball to cross alongside the posts, giving Richard Cadywould an easy first shot at goal to give the West a two-point lead.

The West went further ahead shortly afterwards with another Houghton try, but this time Cadywould was unable to add the extra points, so it was 10-4 as the game moved into the final ten minutes of the half.

The heat had been taking its toll of players, but those ten minutes saw a flurry of points to send the teams in all-square at the break.

Simon Tulakepa replied with his second of the match for 8-10. Steve Riley completed a great move for the West, managing to touch down far out on the Maroons' right side for 8-14. Then on the stroke of half time, the East had the West trapped on their goal line.

Despite some strong defence Chris Reeves forced his way over under the posts, giving Scruton an easy conversion to tie the game up at the break 14-14.

For the first 12 minutes of the second period, there was deadlock until Riley again finished off a good move to bag his second try of the match to put the West 18-14 up.

Kyle Larvin completed a great move for the East to level the scores again with 15 minutes to go.

The heat was punishing by now and several cases of cramp were dealt with by Joyce Evans and Gary Mitchell.

The final score of the match went to the East: good approach play once again drew the West's defence over to their left, leaving space out wide on the right.

Good hands from the Blues got the ball out to centre Jack Basher, who touched down in some style. Despite being ahead for the first time in the match the conversion was vital and Scruton, who'd returned to the fray after an early injury, took on the touchline kick and nailed it.

A last series of attacks by the Maroons came to nothing, the East regaining the Origin trophy after what was probably the best game yet.

The Origin fixture has always had larger than normal squads with unlimited subs to give all players some game time – just as well in the stifling heat.

The teams received a fantastic ovation by the Rhinos' 'South Standers' – who do not give praise easily!

A long day for the forwards on both sides was recognised with the award of two Man of the Match trophies: Royal Marine Dave Fairbrother took his great run of form from the RM side into Origin. For the East, experienced Rugby Union forward James Parry made a massive contribution at open side prop.

The trophy presentation took place during the half-time break in the Rhinos-Wildcats match.

Not only were the two Origin sides on the pitch, but over 100 junior dancers were performing in front of the South Stand. Add to that a whole load of mini rugby players competing under the goal posts and to top it off the winner of *The Apprentice*, Leah Totton, drew a winning charity ticket in front of a 18,396-strong crowd.

Fliers win Battle of Rutland

SEVENTEEN anglers attended the annual Inter-Command fly fishing competition at Rutland Water, with weather conditions and catch reports ideal for some top sport.

Operational commitments meant only the Royal Marines and Naval Air Command fielded full teams, with Portsmouth providing two anglers.

For some, this was their first experience at Rutland, but it also gave the more experienced anglers much-needed time to prepare for the Inter-Services which are due to be held at the same water this month.

Those who practised the day before motored to the eastern edge of the lake, concentrating on Sykes Monument and the Dam area, but the slight wind shift meant that drifts from the previous day were not repeated.

LH(HM) Charlie Bowers (Illustrious, fishing for NAC) landed two fish in quick succession close to the bank, but as the morning progressed, more pleasure bank anglers appeared, limiting the distance the boats could drift near the bank.

Col Peter Taylor (RM) continued around Sykes and had bagged his eight-fish limit by 1.45pm, subsequently gaining the heaviest bag of 25lb 1oz including time bonus.

His method was a Di3 with 'blobs', using a steady retrieve likened to 'stroking the dog', a method used by the majority of anglers.

As the afternoon progressed, most boats gathered across the dam's face, drifting in from about 100 metres off the buoys.

Other notable methods were a straight floating line with a team of nymphs with a slow retrieve, as used by Tony Wilkinson (associate for NAC) landing the best fish of the day, a superb rainbow trout weighing in at 4lb 10oz.

Lt Cdr Al Mundy (fishing for RM) bagged his limit by 4.30pm with a respectable bag weight of 18lb 8oz, again using the method that succeeded for Col Taylor.

PO Les Sutherland (Culdrose, fishing for NAC) was partnered with Lt Cdr Mundy and had achieved his limit by 1.25pm – the earliest finish of the day – achieving a weight of 21lb 13oz.

Due to an odd number of anglers, one person was single boating: CPO Neil Jones (Yeovilton, fishing for NAC). He landed his first fish quite early on in the morning, but at the point of despatching, the fish wriggled and jumped back into the water to swim another day.

Not put off by this, Neil persevered. After eventually landing and despatching his first fish at 2pm, he bagged his limit of eight fish by 3.45pm – again with a respectable weight of 18lb 9oz.

At the weigh-in, the six best Naval Air Command anglers weighed in 46 out of a possible 48 fish for a winning weight of 123lbs 14oz, with the RM weighing in 25 fish for second place with 66lb 9oz and Portsmouth finishing third with six fish for 12lbs.

If you are interested in fly fishing, there are dedicated coaching days every month. See 2013DIN10-011 or email craffie2004@gmail.com.

Try tweeting

ARE you a competent tweeter and interested in Royal Navy rugby union?

The RNRU is looking for volunteer tweeters to attend matches throughout the 2013/14 season to 'tweet' the game play throughout the match.

For more details and associated benefits please contact Cdr Rachel Scandling, 01923 955510 / 9360 55110 or email rnrucoms@gmail.com.





● WO1 Garry 'Scooby' Drew – the RN's second-place rider – on his way to his 476-mile total
Picture: LA(Phot) Will Haigh, FRPU North

Record bags 24-hour title

THE top three riders of the Royal Navy's cycling team pedalled an astonishing 1,414 miles in a day to lift the National 24 Hours Championship title for the third time in five years.

With six riders committed – and past champions in 2009 and 2010 – the Navy were one of the favourites for the team title at the event on Merseyside, and were also serious contenders for an individual medal, possibly gold, writes *Stuart Somerville, RNRMCA*.

WO(PTI) Sean Childs (HMNB Clyde) was flying at the 100-mile mark and leading the second-placed rider by six minutes.

He was still leading at 200 miles, but had slowed dramatically, and it was obvious that a long night lay ahead for him.

WO1 Garry 'Scooby' Drew (ComDevFlot) was riding well and by the 12-hour mark was the highest-placed RN rider covering 255 miles, though come the early hours he was also suffering badly and calling out for 'juice' replenishment as if his life depended on it.

He was followed by C/Sgt Stuart 'Nuttie' Edwards (CTCRM). Edwards was using this little 24-hour escapade as an interval session following his epic Race Across America result.

With 20 hours completed most riders had made their way on to the finishing circuit and the little rise on each lap felt like a mountain.

With serious cramping, bruised and battered 'undercarriages', sore knees and dehydration, some slowing more than others; not Cdr Jim Scott (ComDevFlot), though, who started fast and finished fast (must have slowed or stopped in the middle of the race).

The performances of all the Navy riders impressed throughout with many setting personal bests; they were all stalwarts who left nothing on the road come the end of their 24 hours, and for them and their support crews, there was nothing but pride from a very tight-knit team.

With distances, respectively, of 480, 476 and 458 miles, Childs – who was the highest-placed RN cyclist in seventh position overall – Drew and Edwards took the national team title.

Collectively the top-three-placed RN riders covered the equivalent distance of Dover to Athens – in the process breaking the previous Combined Services record, which the same three riders set in 2009. It was also the third highest combined team national distance ever recorded.

And let's not forget Scott (441 miles), and Raleigh's Bob Richards (389) and Brian Kilgannon (341) finished runners-up as the B Team with 1,171 miles cycled, so a one-two for the Senior Service was amazing.



Five stars' performance

'FIVE stars in a boat' – better known as Vice Admiral Andy Mathews and Rear Admiral Henry Parker – won the masters doubles race at the Joint Services Regatta.

Hosted by the Royal Air Force at Peterborough Rowing Lake, the event saw the RN squad demonstrate their strength when Lt Ben Lipczynski took an early win in the intermediate single sculls.

This was soon followed by one of the highlights of the event – two admirals in a boat (pictured above). After the senior officers' triumph, Rear Admiral Parker took over from his 'shipmate' as president of the Royal Navy Royal Marines Rowing Association.

"This was my last Joint Services Regatta in the Navy," said the outgoing president. "My first was 35 years ago, so having a win is a fairy-tale ending. What a way to hand over the presidency and

I wish Admiral Henry and the RNRMARA good luck."

Rear Admiral Parker added, "We last rowed together 14 years ago but four outings leading up to the event cleared out a lot of cobwebs.

"I was struggling by the end but it is still fabulous to be in a boat again. Rowing is a very addictive sport."

Showing their continued support, this is the third year Atlas Elektronik UK have sponsored the Royal Navy rowing team and will continue to do so in the future, offering support to the team throughout the year and at the JSR event.

Rowing is an inclusive sport with everyone from multi-gold winning Olympians (Lt Pete Reed) down to novices.

More details can be found at the association's website: <http://pdevportal.co.uk/sports/rowing>.



● Lt Neal Edwards (Drake) shows his determination to finish second in the Inter-Service 400m hurdles; he went one better at the World Masters' Games in Turin
Pictures: Anne Yates

Age no hurdle

KEEN to reap the rewards of a lifetime's devotion to athletics – notably in the 400m hurdles – Lt Neal Edwards (Drake) took his talents to the World Masters' Games held in Turin during the first week of August.

A multi-medallist at the Inter-Services level over the past 20 years, his success has been built on adherence to structured training regimes year upon year, writes *Paul Winton, RN athletics team manager*.

Since becoming a men's 40-plus veteran athlete, he has been ranked No.1 in the UK – as well as regularly continuing to beat younger men in open competition.

Famed for his ability to peak for the Inter-Service championships every year, he arrived in Turin ranked No.1 (just) among the entrants, with a season's best time of 56.79 secs, recorded as runner-up at the Inter-Services.

Running his typical race with a storming finish, he overcame his Swiss rival in the final straight, to win with a time of 57.99s.

Interviewed in the 'mixed zone' after catching his breath, he was ecstatic with his win and grateful for all the support received, but still highly self-critical of his apparent less-than-perfect hurdling technique.

With the 2013 season coming to a close, his training programme is set to deliver further success in both the senior and veteran men's competition in 2014.

Meanwhile, a superb two days of competition at the Inter-Service athletics multi events championships, hosted by the RAF at Cosford, saw significant

success for the Royal Navy.

Mne Rich Reeks (40 Cdo) took silver in the men's decathlon after a close two-day duel with the Army's L/Cpl Osman Muskwe, with both athletes recording international-level scores.

Reeks was supported in the team competition by the ever-willing duo of NA(SE) Dan Tarrant (Culdrose) and Mne Mike Johnson (CLR).

While the Royal Navy has previously had individual medallists, this was the first time in living memory there'd been a second-place finish in the men's team event; the RAF's wings were well and truly clipped.

Before joining the Royal Marines, Reeks had been ranked as one of the top four decathletes in the UK in 2011.

Returning to high-level competition at the Inter-Service athletics championships, three weeks before the decathlon, he won three medals as the RN's men's team posted their best team results for many years.

During the intervening weeks he concentrated on recruiting 'fast twitch muscle fibres' to better support the explosive performance requirements of most events in the decathlon.

This obviously worked as he produced better performances in five events compared to the earlier championships: pole vault (4.20m), high jump (2.02m), discus (37.54m), 110m hurdles (15.67 sec) and javelin (47.82m). With other results in the 100 (11.70 sec), long jump (6.46m), shot putt (12.13m), 400m (51.75 s) and 1,500m (4m 48.41s) he set a score of 6813 as he reversed form and previous results over

many Army and RAF competitors.

Reeks' success was achieved with minimal training, he has obvious potential to exceed his personal best score of 7,305 and gain international selection for major events if he can meet the extensive training demands of the event.

Tarrant and Johnson have represented the Service in matches over two summers, competing in a wide range of events at each event, sometimes more than ten in an afternoon; as a result, the decathlon reaped the benefit of all those earlier development opportunities.

Both rose to the occasion to ensure the runners up position in the team event (three best scores to count), with Tarrant (4,081) leading Johnson in the scoring (3,512). It was especially pleasing to note that three of the final five in the pole vault and three of the first four finishers in the final event (1,500m) were Royal Navy.

Paradoxically, the best aggregate score in any event for the trio was all decathletes' favourite (!), the much-loved 1,500m.

Wtr Kayleigh Horrell (Drake) was the sole Royal Navy entrant in the women's heptathlon, her debut in the multi-event competition.

Finishing seventh overall, her best results were in the 200m (second) and 800m (third). She remains keen to sustain her ability in these events whilst developing more strength, power and technique to realise potential in the 100m hurdles, high jump, shot putt, long jump and javelin.

Her performance as a novice multi-eventer showed just what can be achieved through commitment and endeavour.

Sportier than Sporty Spice...

ON A very hot summer's day six women from the Royal Navy Triathlon Association took part in the 'Shock Absorber Women Only' event at Eton rowing lake, Dorney.

The ladies were up against Sporty Spice (aka Mel C) and had some soaring temperatures to deal with. For Lts Marian Taylor, Steph Buttery, Gemma Radcliffe and Sub Lt Katy Henderson this was also their very first triathlon – so much was at stake.

Lt Cdr Sam Truelove and Lt Nat Simmonds helped the 'newbies' through registration, bike racking and talking through transition.

The nerves were clearly set in – and Sam started off the day's racing by entering the challenge distance – coming 38th overall and 11th in her age group.

Next up it was the sprint distance, with the ladies competing against 450 other athletes, the results below prove that the RN ladies gave Sporty Spice a run for her money – but also, that an exceptionally great day was had by all, congratulations to all that took part.

Times posted by the Navy competitors were: Steph Buttery 1h 16m 52s (24th); Nat Simmonds

1h 17m 10s (27th); Marian Taylor 1h 17m 53s (32nd); Gemma Radcliffe 1h 18m 15s (33rd); Katy Henderson 1h 31m 34s (252nd).

As for Mel C, she posted a time of 1h 20m 3s, finishing 58th.

Meanwhile in Nottingham... Around 1,000 potential 'Outlaws' took to the warm water of the regatta lake at the National Watersports Centre for the start of the 2013 Outlaw Triathlon.

This event – now in its fourth year – saw athletes attempt a gruelling 2.4 mile swim in the lake followed by a 112 mile cycle around the roads of Nottingham, and finally a full 26.2 mile marathon run around the lake and the River Trent path.

Among the crazy outlaws was Culdrose's CPOAET Shawn Gibbert. In extremely hot conditions – which peaked at a stifling 33°C – he crossed the finish line in 12h 23m in 340th position.

Shawn, who has been competing in triathlons for six years, started training for the event on New Years Eve 2012 with support from the RNAS Culdrose Sports Centre, Station Welfare Committee, WO & SRs Mess and Royal Navy Triathlon.

No IS cricket triumph – home or away

BURNABY Road was the venue for the senior Inter-Service cricket festival – but home turf didn't favour a Navy triumph.

Preparations for the festival had gone reasonably well for the hosts with good wins against the Civil Service and Free Foresters in the preceding two weeks, writes *Lt Cdr David Cooke RNCC*.

Despite heavy rain and a thunderstorm on the day before, the ground looked very attractive yet there was still moisture in the wicket that made for an interesting choice when winning the toss.

On the first day, the RN played the RAF and skipper ETWE(SM) Matt Thompson (Ambush) won the toss, inviting the opposition to bat.

Thompson tried his usual opening bowlers without success and then rang the changes, but it was not until he came on to bowl that the first RAF wicket was taken with the score on 78.

Driver, one of the RAF openers made a very sound 56, Adcock a solid 48, but it was Worcestershire player Graham Cessford, so often the bane of Navy and Army cricket, who plundered the attack, possibly taking the game out of the Navy's reach with a quick-fire 67.

Thompson claimed 3-37 as the RAF posted a score of 264-6.

It was a tall order but Navy openers Thompson and LAET Daz Riley made a slow but substantial start putting on 47 for the first wicket.

Riley with 32 and Thompson 26 laid a solid platform, but key batsmen were unable to capitalise and wickets trickled away without the score mounting dramatically.

Lt Jonathon Parker and AB Michael Green chipped in with 27 and 26 respectively, but the Navy were finally dismissed for 157, 107 runs short.

The second day heralded similar conditions to the first for the RN-Army encounter, however Thompson lost the toss, and was invited to bat.

A similar batting order failed to produce an opening stand of significance and when Riley was dismissed for 9, Thompson was left picking up the pieces.

Again, wickets tumbled regularly, Thompson held out for a fine 43 being fifth out at 90, and a late flurry from Parker – 40 NO – helped the Navy score to 178-8 after their 50 overs. Not enough?

Marching out confident that they could do the job, the two Army opening batsmen attacked from the very first ball and continued to do so almost throughout the innings.

D Webb hammered the ball to all parts of the ground and was only removed by Green for 90 in what was to be the penultimate over. His partner S Green carried his bat for 78, giving the Army victory by 9 wickets.

On the final day against the RAF, the Army chose to bat and racked up a score of 250 all out, Webb again contributing significantly.

The target did not seem to faze the airmen, who were up with the run rate for 20 overs or so, but when a flurry of wickets fell, in addition to that of Cessford, the writing was on the wall and the boys in light blue fell 54 runs short in their 50 overs, giving the Army victory and the Senior Inter Services title for 2013.

The RN ladies fared one better than their male counterparts in the equivalent tournament at Aldershot – one win, one defeat.

The sailors had been quietly confident that they could retain the title even without their star player Lt Hazelle Garton RN, whose knee injury had prevented her playing all season.

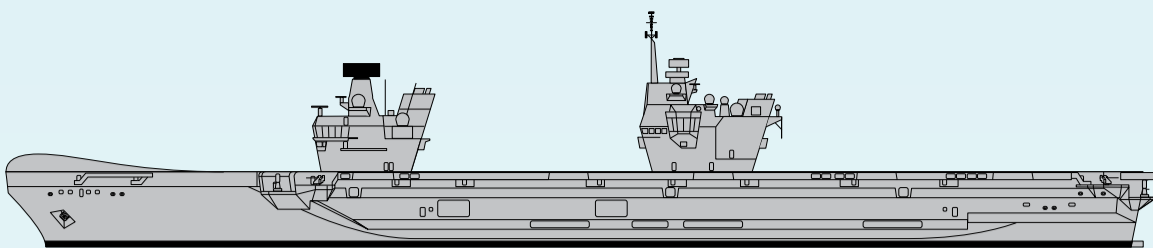
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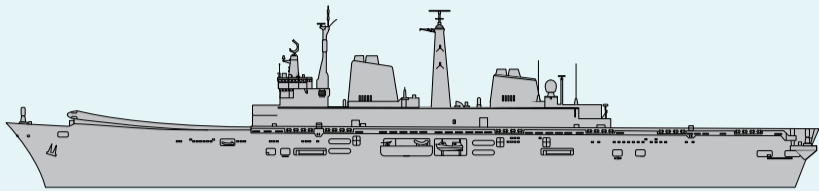


AIRCRAFT CARRIER



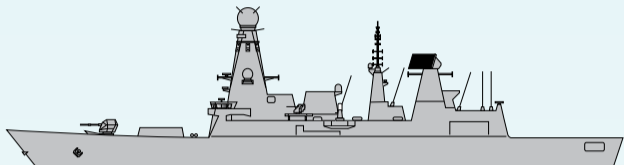
QUEEN ELIZABETH (Build)	R08	Displacement	65,000 tonnes	Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close range guns, Carrier Air Group of 40+ F-35B and helicopters.
PRINCE OF WALES (Build)	R09	Length	280m	
		Beam	70m	

HELICOPTER CARRIER



ILLUSTRIOUS	R06	Displacement	20,000 tonnes	Goalkeeper gun systems, 30mm close range guns, tailored Air Group of 20+ helicopters.
		Length	209.1m	
		Beam	36m	

TYPE 45 DESTROYER



DARING	D32	Displacement	7,350 tonnes	4.5" gun, Sea Viper missiles, Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns, torpedo defence system Lynx or Merlin helicopter.
DAUNTLESS	D33			
DIAMOND	D34			
DRAGON	D35			
DEFENDER	D36			
DUNCAN	D37			

TYPE 23 FRIGATE



KENT	F78	Displacement	4,200 tonnes	4.5" gun, Harpoon missiles, Seawolf missiles, anti submarine torpedoes, 30mm close-range guns, Lynx or Merlin helicopter.
ST ALBANS	F87			
LANCASTER	F229			
IRON DUKE	F234			
WESTMINSTER	F237			
RICHMOND	F239			

RIVER CLASS PATROL SHIP

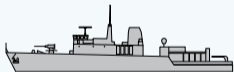


CLYDE	P257	Displacement	1,865 tonnes	30mm close-range gun.



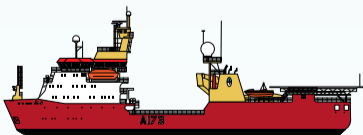
TYNE	P281	Displacement	1,700 tonnes	20mm close-range gun.
SEVERN	P282			
MERSEY	P283			

HUNT CLASS MCMV



LEDBURY	M30	Displacement	750 tonnes	30mm close-range gun, remote control mine disposal system.
CATTISTOCK	M31			
BROCKLESBY	M33			
MIDDLETON	M34			
CHIDDINGFOLD	M37			
ATHERSTONE	M38			
HURWORTH	M39			
QUORN	M41			

ANTARCTIC PATROL SHIP



PROTECTOR	A173	Displacement	5,000 tonnes

PATROL BOAT

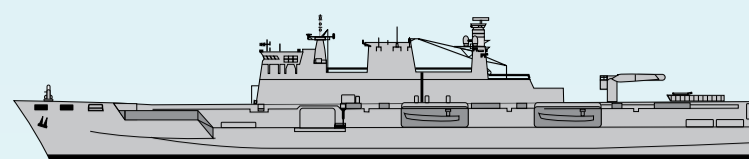


EXPRESS	P163	Displacement	54 tonnes
EXPLORER	P164		
EXAMPLE	P165		
EXPLOIT	P167		
ARCHER	P264		
BITER	P270		
SMITER	P272		
TRACKER	P274		
RAIDER	P275		
BLAZER	P279		
PUNCHER	P291		
CHARGER	P292		
RANGER	P293		
TRUMPETER	P294		



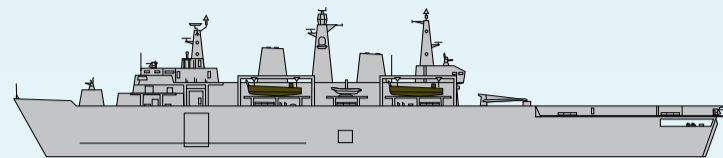
SCIMITAR	P284	Displacement	26 tonnes
SABRE	P285		

LANDING PLATFORM HELICOPTER ASSAULT SHIP



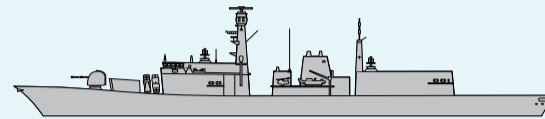
OCEAN	L12	Displacement	21,758 tonnes

LANDING PLATFORM DOCK ASSAULT SHIP



ALBION	L14	Displacement	18,500 tonnes
BULWARK	L15		

TYPE 23 FRIGATE



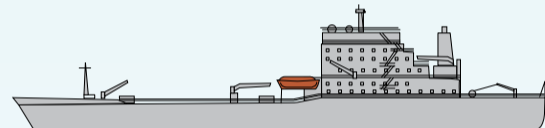
PORTLAND	F79	Displacement	4,200 tonnes
SUTHERLAND	F81		
SOMERSET	F83		
ARGYLL	F231		
MONMOUTH	F235		
MONTROSE	F236		
NORTHUMBERLAND	F238		

TRAFALGAR CLASS FLEET SUBMARINES



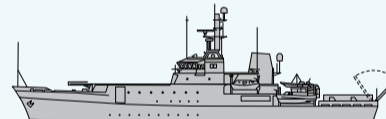
TIRELESS	S88	Displacement	5,208 tonnes
TORBAY	S90		
TRENCHANT	S91		
TALENT	S92		
TRIUMPH	S93		

OCEAN SURVEY SHIP



SCOTT	H131	Displacement	13,500 tonnes

ECHO CLASS SURVEY SHIP



ECHO	H87	Displacement	3,470 tonnes
ENTERPRISE	H88		

COASTAL SURVEY SHIP



GLEANER	H86	Displacement	26 tonnes

VANGUARD CLASS BALLISTIC MISSILE SUBMARINE



VANGUARD	S28	Displacement	15,985 tonnes
VICTORIOUS	S29		
VIGILANT	S30		
VENGEANCE	S31		

ASTUTE CLASS FLEET SUBMARINE



ASTUTE	S119	Displacement	7,800 tonnes
AMBUSH	S120		
ARTFUL (Build)	S121		
AUDACIOUS (Build)	S122		
AGAMEMNON (Build)	S123		
ANSON (Long lead)	S124		
Boat 7 (Planned)	S125		

SANDOWN CLASS MCMV



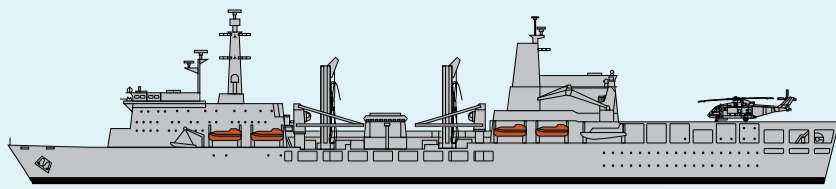
PENZANCE	M106	Displacement	484 tonnes
PEMBROKE	M107		
GRIMSBY	M108		
BANGOR	M109		
RAMSEY	M110		
BLYTH	M111		
SHOREHAM	M112		

PATROL BOAT



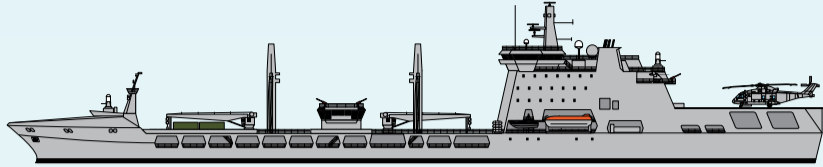
PURSUER	P273	Displacement	54 tonnes
DASHER	P280		

AUXILIARY OILER & REPLENISHMENT SHIP



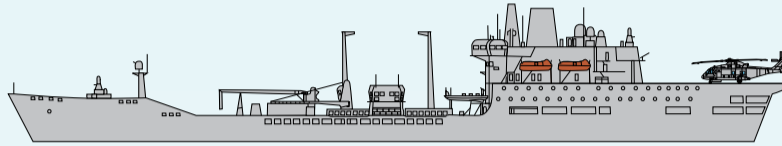
FORT VICTORIA A387 Displacement 35,500 tonnes
 Length 203.5m
 Beam 30.4m
 Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns. Merlin or Lynx helicopter.

FLEET TANKER



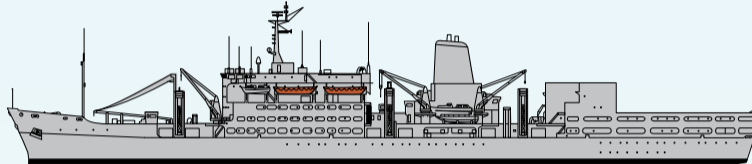
TIDESPRIING (Ordered) A136 Displacement 37,000 tonnes
TIDERACE (Ordered) A137 Length 200.9m
TIDESURGE (Ordered) A138 Beam 28.6m
TIDEFORCE (Ordered) A139
 Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns, Lynx or Merlin helicopter.

FLEET TANKER



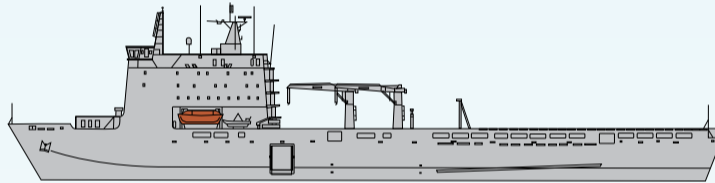
WAVE KNIGHT A389 Displacement 31,500 tonnes
WAVE RULER A390 Length 196m
 Beam 27.8m
 Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns. Merlin or Lynx helicopter.

SOLID SUPPORT SHIP



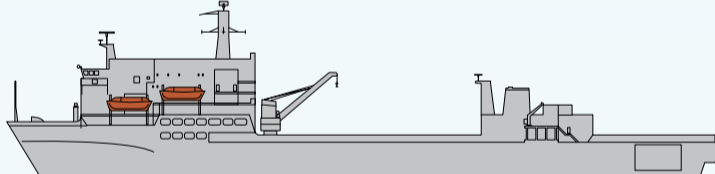
FORT ROSALIE A385 Displacement 23,384 tonnes
FORT AUSTIN A386 Length 185.1m
 Beam 24.1m
 20mm close-range guns. Merlin or Lynx helicopter.

LANDING SHIP DOCK (AUXILIARY)



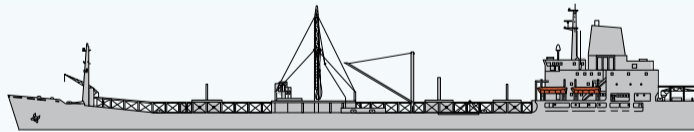
LYME BAY L3007 Displacement 16,160 tonnes
MOUNTS BAY L3008 Length 176m
CARDIGAN BAY L3009 Beam 26.4m
 Phalanx gun systems, 30mm close-range guns.

PRIMARY CASUALTY RECEIVING SHIP & AVIATION TRAINING



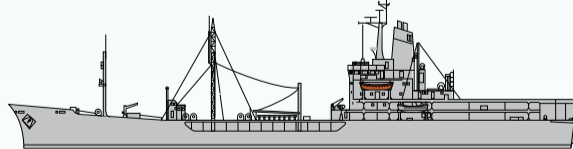
ARGUS A135 Displacement 26,421 tonnes
 Length 175.1m
 Beam 30.4m
 30mm close-range guns.

FLEET SUPPORT TANKER



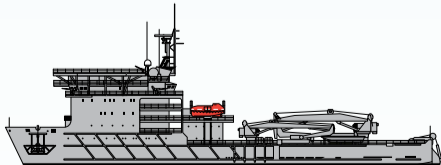
ORANGELEAF A110 Displacement 37,747 tonnes
 Length 170.7m
 Beam 25.9m
 20mm close-range guns.

SMALL FLEET SUPPORT TANKER



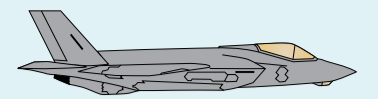
GOLD ROVER A271 Displacement 11,522 tonnes
BLACK ROVER A273 Length 140.6m
 Beam 19.2m
 20mm close-range guns.

FORWARD REPAIR SHIP



DILIGENCE A132 Displacement 10,595 tonnes
 Length 112m
 Beam 20.5m
 20mm close-range guns.

F-35B LIGHTNING II



Length 15.7m
 Speed 1,060kts
 Weapons 7,000kg of bombs, missiles, 25mm cannon pod.

MERLIN HM1/2



Length 22.8m
 Speed 167kts
 Weapons Anti submarine torpedoes, machine guns.

MERLIN HC3



Length 22.8m
 Speed 167kts
 Weapons Machine guns, 24 troops.

WILDCAT HMA2



Length 15.2m
 Speed 157kts
 Weapons Anti submarine torpedoes, anti ship missiles, machine guns.

LYNX HMA8



Length 15.2m
 Speed 180kts
 Weapons Anti submarine torpedoes, anti ship missiles, machine guns.

WILDCAT Mk1



Length 15.2m
 Speed 157kts
 Weapons Anti tank missiles, machine guns, 8 troops.

SEA KING ASaC7



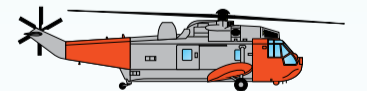
Length 17.5m
 Speed 90kts
 Weapons AEW radar.

SEA KING HC4



Length 17.5m
 Speed 125kt
 Weapons Machine guns, 27 troops.

SEA KING HAR5



Length 17.5m
 Speed 125kt

HAWK T1



Length 11.9m
 Speed 550kts
 Weapons Sidewinder missiles, 30mm cannon pod.

Phalanx gun systems, close range guns, Tailored Air Group of 18 helicopters, Landing craft, embarked military force.

Phalanx gun systems, close range guns, landing craft, embarked military force.

57mm gun, Harpoon missiles, Seawolf missiles, anti submarine torpedoes, 30mm close-range guns, Lynx or Merlin helicopter.

Torpedoes, Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles, mines.

30mm close-range gun.

6 x Trident D5 ballistic missiles, torpedoes.

Torpedoes, Tomahawk Land Attack Missiles, mines.

30mm close-range gun, remote control mine disposal system.

