



# NAVY NEWS

JUNE 2014

● Royal Marines of 4 Assault Squadron stalk on Browdown Beach during rehearsals by HMS Bulwark for her key role in 70th anniversary commemorations of the Normandy landings. See pages 16 and 23-34.

Picture: LA(Phot) Rhys O'Leary, FRPU East

## DAGGER DRAWN

## GULF NAVIES JOIN FORCES

## HOSTILE SHORES

## SPECIAL D-DAY 70 PULL-OUT

# CALL OF DUTY





# This is a Dagger I see



**ATTACK.** Attack. Attack. Fast jets inbound.

That's an announcement on the loudspeaker to wake you up.

Sailors in anti-flash hoods and gloves scan the horizon and point when they see a jet banking a few hundred yards away, its wings glinting in the unforgiving Middle East sun.

The main gun on the forecastle swivels around furiously, its barrel moving up and down as it tracks the fighter.

Despite announcements in English and almost identical procedures and uniforms, this isn't a Royal Navy warship.

Each broadcast is followed by a second in Arabic. The Royal Navy doesn't have a 76mm gun. Its working shirt is dark, not light, blue, and there are no crossed swords on the epaulettes.

This is the flagship of the Omani Navy, Al Shamikh, and this is what happens when they invite three of the world's leading navies to play with them.

In the darkened operations room of HMS Somerset, gunnery officer Lt Cdr Conor O'Neill has already calmly announced: *Air raid threat warning: Red. These are not friends, these are suspects.*

Sitting at his desk, he's surrounded by seven computers, consoles or screens – you could call him the Jean Michel-Jarre or Rick Wakeman of the ops room.

A few feet away, the operators of the 30mm cannon – it's now automatic and controlled from the bowels of the Devonport-based frigate – look at their colour video displays while

**FIVE** Royal Navy vessels formed the largest single contingent of a 14-strong force of warships from four nations who converged off the coast of Oman for four days last month in the host nation's annual multi-national exercise, Khunjar Hadd (Sharp Dagger). **Richard Hargreaves** joined them.

below two colourful consoles with red and green buttons flashing away merrily rather like a slot machine.

*Two Exocets, 12 miles, 60 seconds.*

At this point the electro-optic camera on the Seawolf missile tracker comes to life and begins following what at first is nothing more than a small white pixel on a black-and-white TV screen.

*Approve take.*

At two miles out the white pixel begins to morph into the recognisable outline of a jet.

*Splash by Seawolf.* Lt Cdr O'Neill gives an impish grin. "You can't beat a bit of whoosh-bang and some weaving about."

"Here we go again," sighs Mne Fin McKiernan as he pulls up his anti-flash hood, dons his helmet and mans the Minigun on HMS Quorn's port side.

It's only 8.30am, but the Royal Marine from 45 Commando is on his fourth litre of water. His uniform is sticking to him, sweat running down his face in torrents.

Is he hot?

"It's a bit rouge... but good for a bit of bronzing."

That comes later. For now there's another wave of jets racing in. Fin and his five RM comrades are Quorn's last line of defence if the 'outer doughnut' protecting the 14 ships in this task group is penetrated.

A few feet away on the bridge, Lt Cdr Stuart Yates orders his helmsman to make evasive manoeuvres, and the minehunter carves a meandering wake in the Arabian Sea.

"Realistically, we'll probably not shoot down a missile," he explains. "We might hit an aircraft with a 30mm. My biggest self defence is the fact that I'm small and made of plastic."

*Ba-ba-ba-ba-bang. Ba-ba-ba-ba-bang. Ba-ba-ba-ba-bang. Ba-ba-ba-ba-bang.*

HMS Shoreham's 30mm gunner makes sure his shipmates know that he's having a pop at the F16 which has just raced low over the ship's head.

With its proximity shells – they explode when they're close to a target rather than scoring a direct hit – the 30mm can take out an enemy aircraft. But it relies on the hunter's eye. No guided missile technology here.

Like all Royal Navy minehunters, Shoreham has no air radar. She's entirely reliant on her shields – American destroyer USS Truxton and HMS Somerset – to track and, if necessary, destroy incoming aerial threats.

And maybe they are. But comms are down. There's nothing over the radio but static. The ship is completely reliant on the Mk1 eyeball.

**BRACE. BRACE. BRACE.**

Diving out of the sun, an F16 has caught the Sandown-class ship unawares.

**BANG. BANG. BANG.**

**FIRE. FIRE. FIRE.** Fire in the winch room.

That's Shoreham's mine-hunting ability knocked out. The winch lowers and raises the detachable sonar which the ship uses to locate explosive devices in the ocean.

*Air raid threat: White.*

Lt Cdr Stuart Yates orders: Relax helmets, relax anti-flash. In this heat, he only wants his sailors to wear that extra clothing for as long as is necessary "otherwise the heat will get you before the enemy." The jets are gone and so is the threat.

On the bridge of the Al Shamikh, officers observe the silhouette of HMS Shoreham, her battle ensign flying in the light Gulf breeze which only just takes the edge off the searing heat, pulling out of the line to deal with her blazing winch room.

The loudspeaker comes to life again. The air attack is over, the Omanis can relax their posture for now.

The command priority is: Fight, move, float.

Fight the enemy first, keep the ship moving second, and if you can't do that, keep her afloat.

It's simple. And it's classic Royal Navy doctrine.

The wave of F16 attacks was one of about 60 'serials' or incidents in Khunjar Hadd – Arabic for sharp dagger – over three hot days and barely-cooler nights about two dozen miles off the coast of Oman north of Muscat.

Now in its 19th incarnation, it's the largest multi-national exercise run by the Middle Eastern nation.

This year the navies of Britain, America and France accepted the invite to show how the four nations might deal collectively with air and missile attacks, negotiate minefields, take down suspicious vessels courtesy of specialist boarding parties, blast potential foes out of the water with gunfire and above all work together in the challenging waters of the Arabian Sea.

The exercise gave Oman – most of whose naval officer corps have been trained at Dartmouth – the chance to show off the latest addition to their navy, the new flagship Al Shamikh, a corvette which was built in Portsmouth and handed over to the Sultanate last year.

And for the RN, aside from current 'Gulf guardian' HMS Somerset, it was a chance to demonstrate its 'expeditionary minehunting force' with Quorn, Shoreham, Atherstone and their mother/command ship RFA Cardigan Bay leaving Bahrain and venturing through the Strait of Hormuz and into the wider waters of the Gulf of Oman.

For the minehunters, who spend the bulk of their time training to do just that in the Gulf, different seas, different 'playmates' (14 ships in total, plus a similar number of aircraft) and a different location made for a welcome change.

"Most of Khunjar Hadd is doing something different from what we normally do – air attacks, gunnery, working with 13 other ships and that's great," says Lt Cdr Yates.

"And then in the evenings



Pictures: LA(Phot) Ben Shread, HMS Somerset, and Lt Cdr Sally Armstrong, UKMCC



# ee before me...

we knuckled down to our minehunting role, but in much deeper waters than we're used to in the Gulf. That poses us different challenges – and it's great also."

One challenge he and his colleagues in Shoreham and Atherstone have already overcome is accommodating six Royal Marines Commandos aboard.

With the disbandment of P Squadron last year, the Corps has once again taken over the duty of force protection on some RN and RFA ships.

Typically there's bags of space in an RFA. And not in a minehunter – "claustrophobia city" as Mne McKiernan puts it succinctly.

"The minehunter lads are brave doing this for six months," he says. "No personal space."

And in the conditions east of Suez, the weapons need a lot of cleaning.

There's a but coming.

But... "The guys on board have been brilliant. Really friendly. There's no matelot-bootneck divide.

"For us, this job is a bit different. It's going back to what the Royal Marines do: sea soldiers.

"I've enjoyed it. It's a bit of an adventure."

And a bit *rouge*.

Ah yes, the heat. By the time of Khunjar Hadd, temperatures were really ramping up in the Gulf region. High 30s. Low 40s. There are still 10°C to go until they reach their summer peak. On Somerset's upper deck they've already recorded temperatures of 65°C on the upper deck and 70°C in some compartments – this on ships designed for the North Atlantic and Baltic.

RN air conditioning plants rely on sea water as their source of coolness. By May, water temperatures in the Arabian Sea are around 30°C. Not cool.

"We try to keep it to 20°C inside the ship, but the warmer the water, the harder the plants have to work," says PO(ETME) Neil Robertson, Somerset's 'Mr Cool'.

"The hotter it is, the more interesting my job is. If someone on board complains they're too cold, that means I'm happy because my plants are working."

He actually prefers it when things go wrong. "I love fixing refrigerators," he says (probably the first and only time this sentence will appear in these pages...)

"and I'm good at it too."

Even when the air conditioning plants are working (which is most of the time), they only keep temperatures down in the core of the ship. There are many compartments – such as engine spaces and the hangar – beyond their domain.

And working there, or on the upper deck, is less than fun.

"It's at least 40°C in the main machinery spaces," explains Sub Lt Alex Chenery, the frigate's deputy marine engineer officer. "Tools slip out of your hand because of the sweat – you're sweating in seconds."

"But if the work has to be done, then it has to be done – you just take lots of water."

The heavens even provided some of the latter as Khunjar Hadd began – a short, but quite spectacular, lightning storm.

"People assume that the weather is always scorchio here. It's not, especially during the winter with the shamals. If it was scorchio, my job would be much easier," says Lt Mike Jacks, hydrographic and meteorological officer – but known by shipmates simply as 'the weather warrior'.

Any frigate or destroyer east of Suez deploys with a 'weather warrior' and junior rating as to support the helicopter.

"Hot weather impacts on the crews and the helicopters – it dictates how long you can fly for, how much fuel you will use, how many people you can take," Lt Jacks explains.

With that in mind, and with a heavy flying programme for the frigate's 815 NAS helicopter, what's the weather tomorrow?

The weather tomorrow? *Scorchio...*

40°C is a fairly typical temperature in Somerset's galley with all the various ovens, ranges and plates on.

Still CPO Chris Phelps' chefs

and caterers produce four meals a day (the ship has been in defence watches for most of her deployment) for every man and woman aboard for the princely sum of £3.05 each.

That's 880 meals in all – a burden not just on those in the galley, but for the fridges, freezers and pantries.

More people on board eating more meals means supplies run out more quickly.

"Perishables go first, and with people in watches, they want their fresh fruit and veg," says the senior rating.

He has a trick up his sleeve...

"Ice cream is a real morale booster. Everyone loves Chris coming down 2 Deck [the ship's main thoroughfare] with a box of Magnums," says CPO(ETWE) Andy Hunt.

They also love the usual "home comforts" says CPO Phelps because "food is morale". The roast on a Sunday, steak on a Saturday. Sometimes his team is able to pull a rabbit out of the hat: steak and lobster, thanks to some careful budgeting. And with religious sensitivities in the Gulf region, sailors do get authentic pork sausages – but via Kenya.

If bangers won't raise spirits, what about a bit of religious intervention? In the safe hands of Lt Tug Wilson, Somerset's deputy logistics officer, is the 'God pod' – an iPod crammed with religious music for church services (2,500 hymns in all). Sit on it by accident... *All things bright and beautiful...*

"It's 15 minutes every week of complete peace, no work, no talking about work, but a lot of competition," Tug says.

*Competition?*

Having baked some cakes for one service, it prompted the messes aboard to vie with each other to produce the



best confectionary for each subsequent Sunday.

The cake-fest is perhaps one reason numbers at services have risen through the deployment.

But then numbers across the board on Somerset have risen since leaving Devonport back in January.

On top of the ship's company, there's the Lynx Flight, Royal Marines boarding team, two met experts, translators, and half a dozen people testing the new ScanEagle 'flying eyes' – the small robot plane.

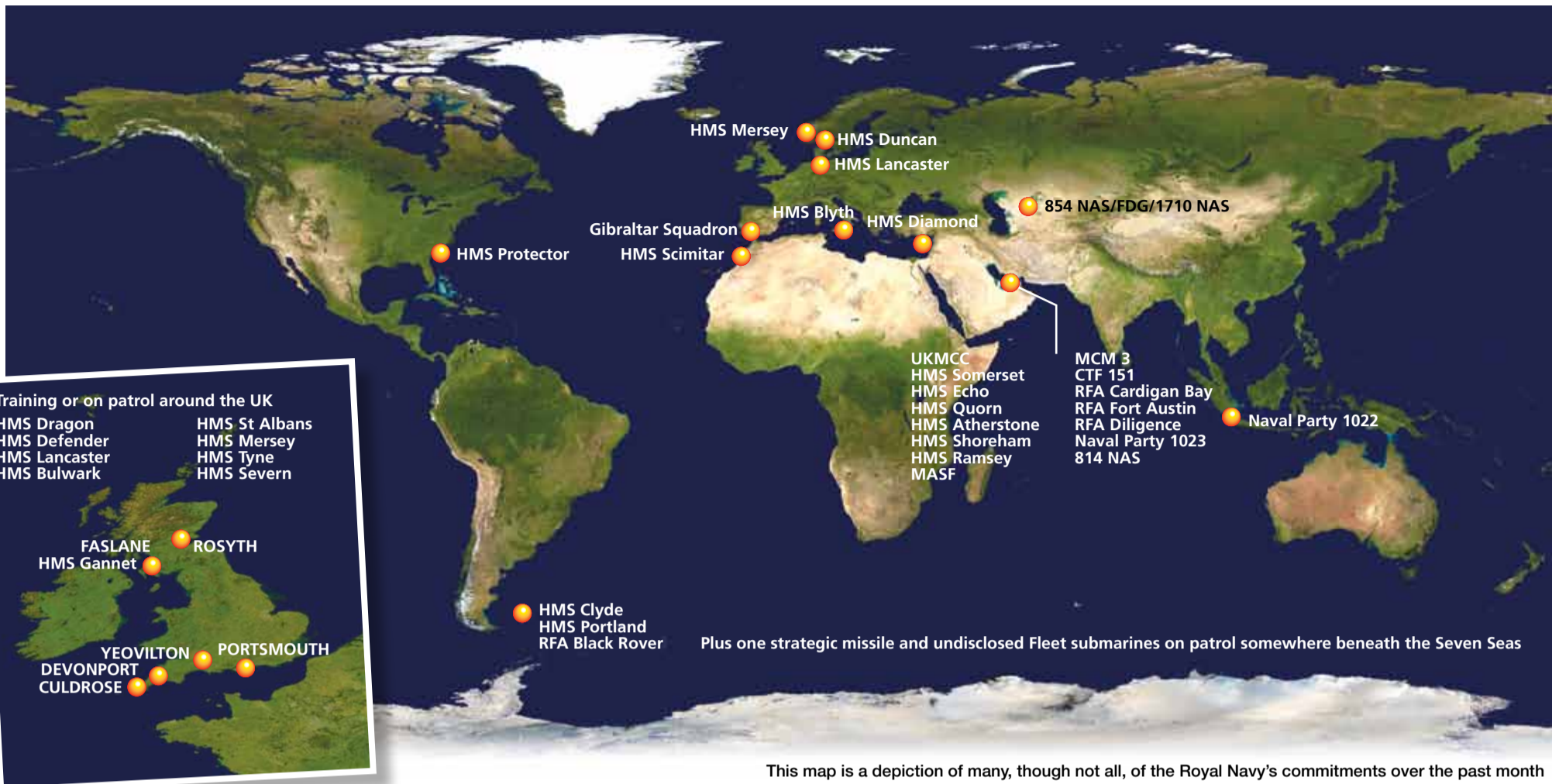
Four of its operators are Americans from the aircraft's builders Boeing InSitu. None of them has ever been to sea in a warship... even the one who used to serve in the US Navy.

They've got used to life aboard (most were confined to their beds through Biscay...) and to the RN way of life.

"There's a lot more openness, a lot more interaction and a lot more camaraderie than in the US forces, particularly between the officers and ranks," says Lyle Heckman, who spent 24 years in the

Continued overleaf





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

THERE'S no consistent theme per se in the world of the RN as we reach the half-way point of 2014 – except perhaps one: busy.

Busy in home waters (the *FRE inter alia*). Busy beyond our shores, from flag-flying visits to the business end.

Heavily involved in the latter were **HM Ships Somerset, Quorn, Atherstone and Shoreham**, plus minehunting mother ship **RFA Cardigan Bay**, all invited by the Omanis to join them for their annual **Khunjar Hadd** exercise (see pages 2-4).

**HMS Dragon** was activated twice in a couple of weeks as Fleet Ready Escort to keep tabs on Russian ships passing the UK (see opposite) before heading to Cardiff to receive the freedom of the Welsh capital (see the centre pages).

**HMS Artful**, the third of seven Astute-class submarines, is now in the water after being rolled out of her shed and lowered into the basin at BAE's Barrow yard (see opposite).

Almost certainly she'll go on patrol with female crew members in due course after the first trailblazing trio earned their Dolphins aboard V-boat **HMS Vigilant** (see page 7).

**HMS Defender** is ready to live up to her name after successfully firing her main weapon – Sea Viper – for the first time. The ship downed a target drone on the ranges off the Scottish coast, bringing two years of trials and training to a climax (see page 6).

**HMS Queen Elizabeth's** big day (July 4) is looming large. The carrier has now reached her maximum height (73m, 39ft) with the installation of the pole mast (see page 8).

The combined efforts of the Royal Navy-led **Combined Task Force 150** and **HMAS Darwin** led to four heroin seizures in five weeks in the Indian Ocean, including a record £140m haul (see page 6).

CTF150, Somerset, Quorn, Shoreham, plus other RN, RM and FAA units make up the RN's substantial commitment east of Suez – a commitment set in stone for the foreseeable future with the construction of a £6m new base for the **UK Maritime Component Command**, the senior Royal Navy HQ outside Britain (see page 6).

**HMS Protector** is in unfamiliar warm climes for the next few months. She left the Antarctic, passed through the Panama Canal and arrived in Charleston, South Carolina (see page 8).

**HMS St Albans** is back on the scene after a lengthy refit in Portsmouth (see page 9), while her sister **HMS Sutherland** is preparing to 'flood up' as her revamp reaches a milestone in Devonport (see page 6).

As they do every year the fliers of the **Commando Helicopter Force** helped out youngsters taking on the Ten Tors challenge. And as it does every year, the British weather obliged with 'lovely' conditions (see page 10).

A fair smattering of Her Majesty's Ships have been visiting the sights of Europe (and a little beyond): **HMS Lancaster** sailed to Hamburg to celebrate the port's 825th birthday; **HMS Duncan** was in Oslo for the bicentennial of the Norwegian Navy... while **HMS Mersey** was doing the very same in Bergen; Gibraltar patrol boat **HMS Scimitar** made a 450-mile round trip to Casablanca; and closer to home **HMS Severn, Ranger** and **Puncher** hopped over the Channel to the Jersey Boat Show (see the centre pages).

**Lancaster** also had the honour of hosting her sponsor for the first time in nearly a decade, the Duke of Lancaster – better known as Her Majesty the Queen (see page 16).

And finally... We are not quite as old as the Norwegian Navy, but **Navy News** is celebrating a milestone anniversary this month – our 60th birthday. Take a look at how things have changed (or stayed the same) since 1954 – see pages 38-9.

Continued from page 3

US Air Force.

"Everyone has a nickname, the terminology and customs are completely different. But the Brits have been really welcoming, it's been a good time."

Lyle found a home in the petty officers' mess. Some of the Royals have been living in the operations room annex where the temperature is rarely below 37°C because of the equipment running down there. You can fit one person in the Harpoon missile control room which is much cooler, but the computers hum and whistle right through your thickly-padded ear defenders (I speak from experience).

In short, HMS Somerset is toppers.

"You just get on with it," says PO(ET) 'Smudge' Smith, one of Somerset's characters and possessor of a beard straight out of an American Civil War portrait.

PO(CIS) Amber Sweeney adds: "It's been a busy deployment because we're the only big ship out here, but on the plus side, being busy, the time passes more quickly."

Her CO Cdr Mike Smith has nothing but praise for the forbearance of Amber and her shipmates.

"We put in 12 incredibly hard months last year to get out here. We got out here and, every single day east of Suez we're doing something real, and something that is making a difference," he says.

"I have 220 fantastic members of the Naval Service on board."

Although those 220 fantastic sailors and Royal Marines all have mobile phones, laptops, tablets and access to the RN's email and computer system, there are still a good 200 signals a day arriving or being sent out by the frigate's comms office.

At least these days, the person sending a signal can at least sit down at a console and type it out. All the comms team have to do is check that the sender is following



HMS Somerset's Lynx flies over the Khunjar Hadd force

Picture: LA(Phot) Ben Shread

the correct procedures.

What the comms department does have to do, however, is maintain the official computers on board – upwards of 200 machines, looked after by four souls.

"People telling us: 'turn it off and on again' is the bane of our lives," sighs CPO Hunt. "Some systems can take 90 minutes to reboot."

Also available in 2014 are live video conferences. For senior officers to confer, right?

Wrong. For engineers to show broken bits of kit to their colleagues back in Devonport for advice on how to effect a repair – or to send out a replacement.

In a few weeks, you won't have to send out a replacement – the Type 23 will be nestling safely alongside in her home port.

If it hasn't been the deployment the crew were expecting (more time in the Gulf, less in the Indian Ocean), have the Somersets enjoyed it?

Well... "Dubai – great place. Great place," PO Smith emphasises. The Middle East metropolis was

where the ship enjoyed her two-week mid-deployment break – a chance for the ship to receive some TLC and the 220 souls aboard to enjoy some quality time. Dubai is, says Smudge, "a great place to bring your family."

Others prefer the more authentic Middle East charms of Muscat... which brings us neatly back to Khunjar Hadd (for many of the exercise's participants, excepting Somerset, made for the Omani capital upon its conclusion).

"After four months away from home, Khunjar Hadd gave us the chance to sharpen our claws for whatever might happen – we are the Navy's 'on call' ship east of Suez right now. If anything were to take place in this part of the world, Somerset would be involved," says Cdr Smith.

"Every nation involved in this exercise is an important player in the region and we have to be able to work together."

Cdre Keith Blount, the Royal Navy's senior officer in the region as UK Maritime Component Commander, says that over its 19-year history, Khunjar Hadd had demonstrated the

determination of friendly nations to work together to "counter everything that is bad".

He continues: "When you see the number of ships involved, then you realise that this is one of the most important exercises in the region. It's been very well organised indeed by the Omanis, who are an extremely professional navy and are very keen to showcase that professionalism, as well as their new flagship."

"The fact that the US, French and ourselves are here gives Khunjar Hadd status and clout. We are working together to keep the arteries of the sea open, because they are vital."

Khunjar Hadd is over. It'll be back next year. In the intervening 11 or so months, the RN's east of Suez presence will continue working on those arteries.

It might not be understood by most of the general public. But it's understood by HMS Somerset.

Says Cdr Smith: "If the seas are not safe, then quite simply our entire way of life suffers."

Next month: focus on the RN's minehunting forces in the Gulf

## Two Dukes ready to trade places

GULF-bound right now is HMS Northumberland, which will take over from her sister HMS Somerset upon arrival east of Suez.

The former left her home on the Hamoaze in mid-May ready to take over duties east of Suez, which is where HMS Somerset has been on patrol since February keeping the sea lanes open and working with Allied nations (see pages 2-4).

Like Somerset before her, Northumberland will be using ScanEagle to monitor the waters of the Indian Ocean and Gulf for criminal activity after a successful trial of the small remote-controlled aircraft over the past five months.

"My ship's company is keen to get going on this demanding mission," said CO Cdr Tristram Kirkwood.

"It takes a tremendous amount of personal and professional commitment to regenerate a warship ready for operations and I am extremely proud of my ship's company for the work they have done in getting us to this point. The ship's company is rightly excited about the deployment and we are all committed to it being a success."

## Longer live the King...

THE final few Royal Navy Sea Kings are to fly on until 2018 – just shy of the legendary helicopter's 50th anniversary.

The 'eyes in the sky' variant of the Sea King – the Mk7 Airborne Surveillance and Control, known simply as the 'baggers' – will continue flying for two-and-a-half years longer than the rest of the fleet.

The entire Fleet Air Arm and RAF force of Sea Kings – Mk4 Junglies used by the Commando Helicopter Force, Mk5 used by Search and Rescue units plus the baggers – was due to retire by the end of March 2016.

With no other aircraft in the FAA able to perform the baggers' role – airborne early warning and the ability to monitor traffic on the ground, courtesy of the Searchwater radar contained in the large sack which gives the helicopters their nickname – some Mk7s will now fly on until late summer 2018.

By then its successor – Crownsnest, a version of the Merlin fitted with a radar similar to those on the baggers – will be on the cusp of front-line duties. It's due to enter service in 2019.

## Airliner hunt called off

BOTH HMS Echo and submarine HMS Tireless have returned to regular duties after spending several weeks looking for missing Malaysian Airlines flight MH370.

The two vessels were dispatched from the waters of the Middle East to a swathe of the Indian Ocean off the west coast of Australia to try to locate the airliner's black box.

With other ships from around the world, they faced a race against time to pick up the signal transmitted from the flight data recorder – which only lasted about a month before the battery died.

When the Australians running the huge search operation decided there was no prospect of a signal being detected, the survey ship and T-boat were stood down.



# Dragon meets bears

JUST a few hundred yards off her port beam, HMS Dragon follows the progress of 'battle-cruiser' Pyotr Velikiy (Peter the Great) – the second time in little over a fortnight that the destroyer met up with Russian ships passing the UK.

As the Fleet Ready Escort – the Royal Navy's on-call warship to respond to events and activity in and around the mother island

– the Portsmouth-based Type 45 first monitored the movements of the Vice Admiral Kulakov – a large Udaloy-class destroyer.

And come early May, D35 was out and about again, this time tracking the progress of the Admiral Kuznetsov carrier group.

She met up with the Russian force off the coast of Brest as it entered the English Channel to head north.

Once the ships spotted each other they briefly sailed close by as a standard 'meet and greet'.

As well as the Kuznetsov, the group included the nuclear-powered Pyotr Velikiy, flagship of Russia's Northern Fleet; three tankers, Segey Osipov, Kama and Dubna; one ocean-going tug, the Altay; and the landing support ship Minsk.

"This is very much routine

business both for HMS Dragon and for the Royal Navy," said Capt Rex Cox, who took charge of Dragon between the first and second encounters (Capt Iain Lower was in command for the meet-up with the Kulakov).

"What is different here is that a Russian task group of this size has not passed by our shores in some time."

**Dragon in Cardiff, page 22**

## Duke downs tot for Alliance

SAILORS from HMS Sultan made the short trip from their base to the Royal Navy Submarine Museum to join formal celebrations marking the re-dedication of HMS Alliance.

The Duke of Cambridge, who's Commodore-in-Chief Submarines and Royal Patron of

the HMS Alliance Conservation Appeal – was guest of honour at the ceremony.

He met veteran submariners and toured Alliance, which has been given a £7m facelift, before being offered his 'Dolphins' – washed down with a traditional tot of rum.



## Artfully does it

WATERS lap around the 97m-long hull of Britain's newest submarine as HMS Artful sits in a huge basin in Barrow for the first time.

The third Astute-class nuclear submarine was formally named last September in a ceremony inside BAE's cavernous Devonshire Dock Hall which dominates the Barrow skyline.

Eight months later and the hunter-killer was ready to be rolled out of the building and into the neighbouring basin for the next stage of her fitting out and tests.

Engineers began edging the 7,400-tonne attack submarine out of the hall on May 16, before lowering her into the water on the sixteenth.

"Moving a submarine of this size from its build hall to the water is very challenging. It's testament to the experience and careful planning of the team involved that Artful is now ready for the next phase in her programme," said BAE's Astute programme director Stuart Godden.

"Witnessing a submarine move out of the hall and be readied for launch is truly inspiring and a source of great pride to the thousands who have played a part in getting Artful to this stage."

Thanks to the experience of building Astute and Ambush, Artful entered the Cumbrian waters in a more finished state than her older sisters, allowing the crew and BAE team to concentrate on test and commissioning work before she heads out on sea trials next year.

Of the seven boats in the Astute programme, the lead boat is on her maiden deployment, and HMS Ambush will soon be on patrol too. After Artful, the remaining four boats – Audacious, Anson, Agamemnon and an unnamed final submarine – are in various stages of construction at Barrow.

Pictures: BAE Systems



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## All hail the Floating Clan

BECAUSE by the time you read this, HMS Sutherland will be back in the water after six months high and dry.

The frigate has been out of action since October – and out of the water since the following month – while undergoing an 11-month revamp in her home base of Devonport.

That revamp will effectively double the working life of the Fighting Clan – which is celebrating her 18th birthday this year.

With work on her outer hull complete as Navy News went to press, engineers from Babcock were preparing to flood the dock in the giant 'frigate shed' which dominates the Hamoaze waterfront near the Torpoint ferry crossing.

"It's an amazing transformation since I joined the ship in January," said 33-year-old Lt Cdr Jon Boughton, Sutherland's weapon engineer officer – responsible for ensuring all the ship's sensors and weaponry are combat-ready.

"Back then she was stripped to bare steel and covered in pipes and cables. Now you can see the amazing job the company has done on her hull."

The paint job Sutherland has received is not merely a cosmetic touch – the new coating is more resistant to marine organisms attaching themselves to the hull and slowing Sutherland's progress.

"Although the glossy finish you can see is impressive, it's the work underneath the topcoat which deserves the most credit. That is where the real engineering lies and what will keep her at sea," Jon added.

A new sonar dome on the bow has been fitted, and the new Artisan radar system – which has been successfully tested by Sutherland's sister HMS Iron Duke – gives her operations room team a far more detailed view of the surrounding area.

Also putting the command team in a better position to make key decisions on front-line operations is the DNA(2) computer system, which processes a wealth of information from radars, sonars and weapon systems better than Sutherland's existing 'fighting brain'.

The work is being carried out jointly by defence firm Babcock International and a kernel of the ship's company who've stayed with or joined the frigate for the refit.

The revamp is due to be completed this autumn, after which Sutherland will undergo thorough trials and her ship's company thorough training to prepare both for front-line duties again.

## Viper space

ACCELERATING away from its launcher on the forecandle of HMS Defender, the firing of a Sea Viper announces the moment the fifth Type 45 destroyer is ready to take her place in the line of battle.

Seconds after bursting free from its silo, the 310kg (683lb) missile was hurtling through the Atlantic skies at nearly four times the speed of sound.

Its prey was a Mirach drone – a 13ft remote-controlled jet which flies at speeds of up to 530kts (more than 600mph) from altitudes as low as 10ft to as high as 40,000ft.

It was smashed clean out of the sky by Sea Viper, proving the Portsmouth-based warship's ability to live up to her name and defend the Fleet.

"This is the highlight of my Naval career and the culmination of months of hard work for my section. It has been really pleasing to put years of training into action," said a delighted Chief Petty Officer Engineering Technician (Weapon Engineer) 'Nobby' Hall, Defender's Sea Viper maintainer.

The successful missile firing is the final act in two years of intensive training by the 190-strong ship's company and means Defender is now ready to deploy on operations around the world, like HMS Daring, Dauntless, Diamond and Dragon before her.

"HMS Defender has today proven her worth as the Royal Navy's ultimate air defender," said her Commanding Officer Commander Phil Nash.

"I am extremely proud of my ship's company, who have worked tirelessly to make this firing a success.

"We now look forward to our first operational deployment, defending the UK's interests wherever tasked around the world."

The Sea Viper system is a massive leap forward from the Sea Dart missile on the now-decommissioned class of Type 42 destroyers Defender and her sisters have replaced.

The Sampson radar system on top of the ship's main mast can track hundreds of contacts in the skies up to 250 miles away.

And the Sea Viper itself can intercept incoming targets at ranges up to 20 and 75 miles depending on which version is used, manoeuvring for the kill at G forces no human could endure.

The combination of the radar and missile means Defender can engage a large number of targets simultaneously – and defend aircraft carriers or task groups against current and future threats from the air.

HMS Defender is now returning to Portsmouth to undertake a short period of maintenance and some well-earned leave for her sailors before departing the UK on her first operational deployment.

Picture: Courtesy of MBDA



## Blow upon blow...

A ROYAL Navy-Australian Navy combination has delivered £230m worth of sucker punches to drug runners on the Hashish Highway in just five weeks.

The collaboration between the frigate HMAS Darwin and a Royal Navy-led staff directing the fight against terrorism and trafficking dealt a succession of blows to the illegal narcotics trade in the Indian Ocean – a trade which is known to fund groups such as Al Qaeda and the Taliban.

Four times the Australians were directed towards suspicious vessels by the Royal Navy's two-dozen-strong Maritime Battle Staff – normally based in Portsmouth but currently in charge of Combined Task Force 150 in Bahrain.

And four times Darwin's boarding teams found heroin stashed aboard those craft – from just 5kg in one seizure to 1,032kg, the largest heroin bust ever made by naval forces.

In all, the teams seized 1,675kg – more than one and a half tons – of heroin worth an estimated £230m to dealers in the UK.

The biggest bust, off the east coast of Africa, accounted for £140m of heroin – more than double the largest seizure to date.

Task force commander Cdre Jeremy Blunden said with eight busts since January, the international naval effort in the Indian Ocean had "dealt a significant blow to the drug smugglers" – especially as "pinpointing a dhow in 2.4 million square miles of ocean" posed "a real challenge".

He continued: "I am delighted that the team has already achieved so much – we know that heroin trafficked through East Africa reaches the shores of the UK, which makes this early success very satisfying for the Royal Navy officers and sailors serving here."

His staff took charge of the task force – one of three operating in



● HMAS Darwin's boarding team prepare to search a dhow where 449kg of heroin was found – worth £60m

Picture: LSA Stephen McGreal, RAN

the Middle East under the banner of the 30-nation Combined Maritime Forces – in mid-April and scored its first success within three days.

"It has been great to watch the drug seizures unfold," said LS Daniel Smith, one of the battle watch assistants.

"The team planned where to place the ships so they could intercept where we thought the smugglers would be operating. It is a great feeling when one of our ships finds a suspicious boat and the call comes through to say they have found the drugs."

Although all the seizures have fallen into the Australians' hands so far, at various times the task force comprises ships from Canada, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, USA and UK.

WO1 Alan Davison, staff coxswain, said: "I was curious to know how operating with so many different nationalities – some for whom English is not their first language – would work.

"It has been pleasing to see the staff building close and effective working relationships with their international colleagues in a very short time."

The searches "tested the steel" of the Australian boarding parties, said Darwin's CO Cdr Terry Morrison.

In one seizure, his sailors recovered 449kg of narcotics in 20 bags, each weighing between 20 and 25kg, while in the largest bust, the Australian team rummaged around in the dark to uncover heroin hidden amongst a cargo of cement.

## Here for the long term

THE Royal Navy will maintain "an enduring presence" in the Middle East according to its senior commander in the region.

With work on a new £6m headquarters in Bahrain under way, Commodore Keith Blount says the investment is part of a long-term commitment to keep Royal Navy units in the region – building on a constant presence going back more than 30 years.

"As long as our national interests are out here, then there will be a Royal Navy presence here," said the commodore, commander of the UK Maritime Component Command.

"Our national interests cut across this region in so many ways – large numbers of British nationals live here, it is a source of much of our energy, we have friendly relations with many nations."

It is the task of his 80-strong team – who are currently split between the US Navy's Fifth Fleet headquarters and buildings in the grounds of the American base – to choreograph Royal Navy operations across a vast area embracing the Eastern Mediterranean, Red Sea, Gulf and Indian Ocean almost as far south as Madagascar, more than 2.5 million square miles of open waters (more than eight times the size of the North Sea).

On any given day, there are usually upwards of a dozen ships and units deployed in the region – over 1,300 men and women.

Typically, two frigates or destroyers are on patrol – one in the Gulf itself, the second in the Indian Ocean – plus four minehunters, permanently based in Bahrain, and their mother ship. There are also Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Fleet Air Arm personnel spread around the Arabian Peninsula.

Nowhere else outside UK home waters is there such a concentration of the Royal Navy's ships, submarines, aircraft and personnel, 24/7.

And on any one day there are around 3,000 merchant ships moving through UKMCC's domain.

"One trillion dollars of trade passes through this region every year," Cdre Blount stresses.

"What would happen if anything affected that is unimaginable. Keeping open these arteries is vital. This is a joint theatre, but with a heavy maritime flavour – and by dint of geography will always be one."

As part of the 'end of Empire' the RN withdrew its forces from the Gulf in 1971. It returned in 1980 during the Iran-Iraq War when British shipping in the region was under threat. Since then, it has never left – first under the banner of the Armilla Patrol, later enforcing UN sanctions against Saddam Hussein's regime, more recently protecting Iraq's oil platforms in a post-Saddam world, and today, as Operation Kipion, responsible for 'maritime security operations' – clamping down on piracy, terrorism and trafficking.

When UKMCC was formed in the aftermath of the September 11 atrocities in 2001, the staff numbered just eight. It's ten times larger now and has outgrown its existing facilities.

Armed Forces Minister Mark Francois joined British and Bahraini leaders in breaking ground – with ceremonial golden shovels – for the new headquarters and support facilities at Mina Salman Port, a short distance from the current headquarters, where Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels berth.

The complex will feature improved communication, more modern facilities, better logistic support, a headquarters on the waterfront next to the jetty used by RN vessels (rather than a 15-minute drive), and a new home for the Forward Support Unit, which provides engineering support principally for the quartet of minehunters.

"This new UK Maritime Component Command headquarters and support facility underscores the UK's continuing and enduring commitment to Bahrain and the wider region," says Cdre Blount.

"I am very excited by this development and this purpose-built site means we will be better equipped to deliver the operational support required to our ships at sea. It will be better for the Royal Navy and better for our people."



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# Silent Service welcomes first women

THREE women have made history by becoming the first female submariners to serve in the Royal Navy.

After 110 years of an all-male Silent Service, pioneering Lts Maxine Stiles, Alex Olsson and Penny Thackray have become the first women to serve onboard a Royal Navy submarine.

Following months of specialised training, all three women have earned their Dolphins, the coveted clasp which is a hard won and much-prized symbol of a submariner.

Although women began serving at sea 20 years ago, the ban on serving in submarines wasn't lifted until 2011.

During the rigorous training the three female officers conducted operations on Vanguard-class boat HMS Vigilant, learning how to run the complex systems onboard.

The final hurdle was a robust examination programme, culminating in an intensive board with the CO – which they all passed with flying colours.

All three women will now embark on careers in the Submarine Service.

Lt Stiles said: "I am immensely proud to wear the Dolphins and

say that I am now a part of the Submarine Service, with its great tradition and ethos.

"My first deployment at sea on a nuclear submarine is one I'll never forget. It was a challenging but hugely rewarding experience."

Lt Olsson said: "The crew of HMS Vigilant have been very receptive and I've really enjoyed my deployment. Of course it's been challenging, but women are absolutely capable of doing this job. I think that change can always be a bit of a shock, but I look forward to seeing more and more women getting onboard."

Lt Thackray said: "Being awarded my Dolphins was a very proud moment and a real highlight in my career. More widely, this is a very exciting moment for women in the Navy, as the Submarine Service opens up whole new career opportunities for them. I hope that my positive experiences will encourage more women to volunteer."

The CO of HMS Vigilant, Cdr Matt Dennis, oversaw the officers' training onboard the submarine and said: "I was impressed with how seamlessly the three women integrated on board.

"They qualified without any

difficulty and two of them even completed additional training whilst at sea. As I would expect, they were accepted as integral members of the ship's company by the rest of the crew and have really paved the way for women on submarines to be business as usual from now on."

The three officers will now all take up their new positions – Lt Stiles will continue her Logistics Officer post onboard, Lt Olsson is undertaking Deputy Weapons Engineering Officer training and Lt Thackray will become an Education Officer.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel said: "I am absolutely delighted to congratulate the first three women to qualify as submariners.

"This significant milestone demonstrates the Royal Navy's determination to embrace every opportunity to employ the immense range of talents and skills of all our people."

Female ratings will start training later this year with a view to serving on Vanguard submarines in 2015.

Female personnel will also be able to serve on the Astute-class submarines from about 2016.

● Lts Maxine Stiles, Alex Olsson and Penny Thackray have become the first women to serve onboard Royal Navy submarines  
Picture: CPOA(Phot) Tam McDonald

## Whatever you think of your Armed Forces pension, we'll help you get the most from it.



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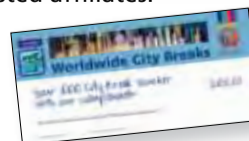


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## The leaning tower of QE

BRITAIN'S *biggest* warship is now Britain's *tallest* warship as HMS Queen Elizabeth reached her maximum height with the addition of her final mast.

From the tip of the newly-installed pole mast to the keel, the gigantic carrier now stands 73 metres (239ft) tall – eclipsing Tower Bridge, Nelson's Column and, if it were possible, a Hunt or Sandown-class minehunter standing on its end.

With a draught of nearly ten metres (33ft) the aircraft carrier – due to be officially named by the Queen at Rosyth on July 4 – will tower 63 metres (206ft) above the waterline.

But at that height, she's too tall to sail beneath either of the two iconic Forth crossings – so engineers have come up with an ingenious solution.

To allow HMS Queen Elizabeth to pass safely beneath the road and rail bridges, the pole mast is lowered until it's almost horizontal – before being raised again once safely through.

"The mast is home to antennae for communications systems which are a pivotal part of navigation and flight safety, so a solution had to be engineered to raise the mast once the ship has transited safely underneath," explained POET(WE) 'Johno' Johnson.

"What makes the Queen Elizabeth's pole mast different is the engineering solution to lowering the mast – it's what lies beneath where things get really interesting."

On its own, the pole mast is 19 metres (62ft) tall. The lower half is home to navigational lighting, while the upper part houses numerous radio and communications antennae.

The mast sits on a steel cartridge housing two hydraulic cylinders and a hydraulic system which lower the structure to an angle of 77°, before raising it back in place once through.



Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen, HMS Protector

# One night, two oceans

NIGHT over Panama and an impressive view of the Miraflores locks, gateway to the canal which links the Pacific and Atlantic, from the spacious – and space-age – bridge of HMS Protector.

From the beginning of the man-made path between the oceans on the Pacific side, close to Panama City, it took the ice patrol ship seven hours and 38 minutes to cover the 77.1km (48-mile) passage.

The 18-metre-wide survey and research ship travelled at an average speed of 7kts through the canal, which this year marks its centenary and is just 30 metres across at its narrowest point.

Courtesy of the locks at Miraflores and Pedro Miguel, the 5,000-tonne icebreaker was raised to 26 metres (85ft) above sea level to the man-made Lake Gatun, whose

namesake locks at the other end of the canal returned Protector back down to 0 metres (0ft...).

HMS Protector's S/Lt David Campbell was on the bridge for the transit and said: "As my first time going through the Panama Canal it was amazing to see a fantastic piece of engineering while cutting through the heart of the jungle."

"It was a tiring night's work but I can tick it off my experiences-to-do list."

Before her passage, Protector spent a few days in Balboa hosting an event for a data-sharing agreement between the UK Hydrographic Office and the Panamanian Maritime Authorities.

The ship left Portsmouth last October for a 'double deployment' to the South Atlantic. After her first austral summer

amid the ice underpinning the UK's commitment to the Antarctic Treaty and providing logistic support to sites across the Peninsula, South Sandwich Islands and South Georgia, she's headed for warmer climes.

Right now, she's in Charleston, South Carolina, for a spot of maintenance after her exertions (and batterings by the seas) around the frozen continent.

In addition, she's been readied for a summer around the Caribbean where she'll carry out a mix of humanitarian aid and disaster relief duties (if required) and survey work.

She's due to return to Antarctica for further work periods in September before sailing back to her new home port of Devonport in spring 2015.



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

## Heroes come in all sizes and ages...

YOU don't have to serve in the Royal Navy to be a hero.

No, now you can be the son or daughter of a serving sailor or Royal Marine to enjoy the distinction.

Six-year-old Kenzie Scott and his sister Lydia, aged three, proudly show off their 'My Little Hero' badges with mum Annika and dad Lt Cdr Neil Scott – whose brainchild the tiny decorations were.

The specially-crafted miniature medals have been introduced by HMS Illustrious to highlight how well the youngsters coped while their fathers or mothers were deployed for five months last year.

The Portsmouth-based helicopter carrier left home last August for the Cougar 13 amphibious deployment – but was diverted to the Philippines in November to provide aid in the aftermath of Typhoon Haiyan.

That decision meant that thousands of Filipinos received crucial help from Lusty, which was loaded to the gunwales with food, shelters and other life-sustaining aid.

It also meant the ship missed Christmas with loved ones – she got back to Portsmouth in early January.

Lt Cdr Scott, the ship's hydrographic and meteorology operations officer, designed and commissioned the medals with

help from Illustrious' chaplain Father David Conroy and colleagues on HMS Bulwark.

More than 400 have been sold to Illustrious' crew – raising more than £1,000 for the ship's chosen cause, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

"The idea is to present them to children as an award for being their father's or mother's little hero while they were away on operations."

"Having served for almost 22 years in the Royal Navy and as a father of two young children I am acutely aware of the effects that separation can have on families at home while their loved ones are deployed on operations."

"On return from our extended operational tasking in the Philippines, which meant we were away for Christmas, the medals took on even more meaning to the sailors on board."

The medals were a big hit with Neil's children, as well as mum.

"They often put them on and play with them – they are something tangible that says 'thank you' and that can be kept forever," Annika said.

Kenzie added: "I like the medal because it makes me feel special. I keep it in a special place."



## A taste of the Premiership on a premier ship

A PENSIVE moment for one of England's stars as he learns about the work of true stars: the crew of HMS Daring.

Southampton and England winger Adam Lallana – he's in Roy Hodgson's squad for this month's World Cup – dropped in on the destroyer in her home base of Portsmouth.

The visit was organised by the British Forces Foundation, which provides morale-boosting events across the world for Servicemen and women, working closely with the England Footballers' Foundation – the charitable arm of the England team.

"It was also good to meet the sailors on board and learn about their lifestyle. It seems tough when they are away at sea but there was great camaraderie on board and I have a lot of respect for what they do," said the 26-year-old Premiership star.

"This was my first time on board a warship and I was very impressed. I was told about the weapons having their own brains and how they can work out which targets are best to attack at a certain time."

PO Ryan Sqaunce, 24, who organised the event, said: "It was an exciting visit to arrange – it is not every day that we get England footballers on a UK warship, so this one will stick in the memory for some time."

"It was also pleasing to see what a lift it gave to the sailors on board – they were all keen to have a quick chat to Adam about life as an international footballer."



## Smart use of RN website

THE Royal Navy's huge internet presence has received a major revamp to tap into the boom in smartphone and tablet use.

Users of these and other mobile devices should be able to catch up with the latest news, imagery and video from across the Naval Service more easily (*the iPad view is pictured*).

Digital agency e3 – who work with car manufacturers Kia, mobile phone giant Orange and the National Trust – have spent the past 18 months working with the RN media team (including *Navy News*) on the latest metamorphosis of the official site ([www.royalnavy.mod.uk](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk)) which has been running for 15 years.

More than half a million people go on to the site every month, chiefly looking for a career in the RN, RM or RFA – there are nearly 90 case study-style interview videos with Naval personnel in jobs ranging from Royal Marines Commando to Service Band Musician – but also looking for the latest news and facts on our equipment, people and operations.

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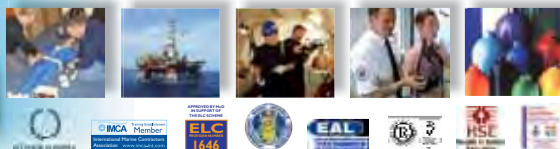
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Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald, FRPU North



## Guarding the ultimate weapon

HOW to protect the most important weapon in a nation's naval arsenal?

That was the question posed – and answered – by Royal Navy sailors, Royal Marines, police and their US Coast Guard counterparts on the normally-tranquil waters of Loch Long.

The Americans came from Kings Bay in Georgia – home of the US Navy's ballistic missile boats.

And the Brits – Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron, 43 Commando Royal Marines, Clyde Marine Unit – came from Gareloch the home of the UK's ballistic

missile boats (and in a few years home of the entire Silent Service), plus half a dozen minehunters.

In January, the Faslane team visited Kings Bay, where they used a giant computer-based simulator described by one participant as “the world's biggest video game”; it recreates the challenges of protecting shipping while still on dry land.

The USCG were treated to less grandiose table-top exercises, before hitting Loch Long with HMS Tracker, one of 43 Cdo's Archer-class gunboats, ORC raiders and an MOD Police launch.

## Return of The Saint

A LYNX Mk8 makes low-level turn just ahead of the glistening form of frigate HMS St Albans, which returned to sea as a £25m revamp drew to a close.

The Portsmouth-based warship has completed the first week of intensive trials off the South Coast – her first time at sea for a good 12 months.

The bulk of that first week was devoted to machinery trials such as basic manoeuvring, running the engines at full speed – backwards (or astern if you prefer Naval terminology) – and testing the stabilisers.

The latter help to offset the impact of the sea on the motion of the ship for her weapons systems to work more effectively, make the launching and landing of helicopters easier and safer, and make things more comfortable for the 150-strong ship's company so they can do their job. Part of the trial was to initiate a forced roll – a great test to ensure that all equipment is strapped down for rough weather (aka securing for sea).

There was also the chance to meet up with the Lynx helicopters of 815 Naval Air Squadron from RNAS Yeovilton, who were training over the Channel.

“After more than a year out of action, it's fantastic to get back to where we belong – at sea,” said Chief Petty Officer Phil Jackson, 42, from Hull.

“The ship's company was reduced to 35 during refit, but now that we have a full crew again the atmosphere is brilliant – the successful week of trials shows that the hard work that everyone has put in was worth it.”

For many of the crew it was their first time at sea, and for some it brought a different

perspective on life in the military.

“My first experience of life at sea was great, especially the camaraderie in the mess. Getting used to the motion took a little time, especially with the machinery trials, but I really enjoyed it,” said 30-year-old AB(CIS) Sam Barnard, who served with the RAF Reserves in Afghanistan before joining the Royal Navy.

Chef Georgina Towler, aged 22, from Wickford in Essex, was also enjoying her first experience of life at sea.

She said: “The first week at sea was great. The hardest thing for me as a chef was trying to cook whilst still trying to find my sea legs. I did get used to it but we really had to hold on to the food especially during the forced roll trial.”

The initial week of trials is the curtain-raiser to ten weeks of even more intensive trials, again off the South Coast, with the emphasis on the fighting elements of the ship.

Those have been considerably bolstered during the overhaul by BAE in St Albans' home base of Portsmouth.

On the forecastle there's a new main gun – The Saint was the very last ship in the Royal Navy to use the Mod 0 4.5in gun, which served the RN well for four decades. She now carries the angular Mod 1 – better known as the Kryten (after the Red Dwarf character with similarly rigid features).

The latest version of Seawolf, the ship's shield against air attack, has been fitted, while the old command system – which meshes all the data from St Albans' many sensors so the operations room team can make sense of it – has been taken out and a new one, DNA(2), installed.



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## Net gain for squadron

THE oldest squadron in the Royal Navy has a new badge.

For years the Fishery Protection Squadron used a badge comprising the fisheries inspection pennant against a black net – but earlier this year discovered the badge did not have official status.

The Ship's Name and Badge Committee concluded the existing badge was too close in appearance to a flag command badge, so work began on a new design.

The new badge is described by the College of Arms as: "Quarterly blue and gold two Tridents crossed in saltire heads upwards counterchanged surmounted at the intersection by a Cod naiant to the dexter proper and over all a Net fretty black."

Naiant means swimming, to the dexter means facing left and fretty means that the netting crosses diagonally.

FPS Inspector Lt Cdr Bryony Carpenter said: "The squadron was keen to keep its blue and yellow colours as these are internationally-recognised as alluding to the role of fisheries inspection."

River-class vessels HMS Severn, Tyne and Mersey make up today's squadron, which can trace its roots back to an Admiralty patrol ship of 1586; historians can point to even further back, when armed protection vessels were sent out by the port of Yarmouth in 1379.

Admiral Lord Nelson served in the squadron early in his career.

The River-class sisters are at sea for up to 320 days a year, safeguarding fishing stocks and acting as the eyes and ears of the Royal Navy in home waters.

## Naval summit

AS *Navy News* went to press First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas was preparing to welcome the heads of 25 European navies to Portsmouth for a two-day meeting to foster mutual understanding and co-operation.

A kind of non-political maritime version of the G20, the CHENS (Chiefs of European Navies) event is hosted by a different nation each year – the last time the Royal Navy hosted it was in 1994.

# Tors de force

TWO Royal Navy Sea Kings provided vital transport – and even a casualty evacuation – during an event which can rapidly turn into one of the most challenging youth activities in the UK.

The Commando Helicopter Force aircraft supported the Ten Tors expedition, a weekend hike across Dartmoor which tests endurance, navigation and survival skills.

With memories of 2013 fresh in the mind – one of the wettest, most miserable Ten Tors since it began in 1960, with heavy rain, swollen rivers and fog – the ability to rapidly take youngsters off the moor was high in the minds of planners.

But in the end only one teenager, with a relatively minor injury, had to be airlifted out by a Navy aircraft – though the process itself was a test for the aircrew.

The helicopters, from 845 Naval Air Squadron, based at RNAS Yeovilton, teamed up with onboard medical staff, provided by 43 (Wessex) Brigade, for the event.

For the Navy aviators, Ten Tors provides a perfect opportunity to practise life-saving civil contingency techniques alongside the emergency services, the Red Cross and the Dartmoor Search and Rescue Group.

Sea King support included trooping, standby for casualty evacuation (casevac), winching and carrying more than 300 passengers on reces for the medical teams, VIP, media and cadet familiarisation flights.

The aircrew were supported by a team of 18 engineers and



● A Junglie helicopter of 845 Naval Air Squadron at the starting point of the Ten Tors event

Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill

the Commando Mobile Air Operations Team (MAOT), who provided communications, helicopter and passenger-handling support.

Lt Cdr 'Scouse' Leach RNR, Aviation Tasker in the Brigade Ops Room, said: "The versatility and flexibility of the Junglie aircrew helped provide immediate response casevac cover and routine tasking throughout the whole expedition, ably assisted by a dedicated aircraft engineering team who helped provide excellent serviceability throughout."

The two helicopter crews provided some 34 hours of 'readiness state'; the Sea King is ideal as it can operate in most conditions, day and night, as well as having a relatively small 'footprint' – and Royal Navy

crews are familiar with the area. One Sea King was called to help a team at the bottom of a steep-sided valley.

The crew identified a suitable landing site in the valley floor and despatched medics and a crewman to attend to the young casualty.

The crewman waded across the river with a medic to the casualty, who was assessed as having a minor injury, and the decision was made to extract the whole team due to the weather conditions and the approaching deadline for the expedition finish.

Noting that the river was too deep and the current too strong for the casualty to be brought across safely, he got back on board and the crew set up for a winch extraction.

The whole team were winched

to safety and returned to Okehampton.

Lt Adam Dean, the 845 NAS Detachment Commander, said: "Providing the aviation support to the Ten Tors Challenge 2014 has been a privilege and an absolute pleasure."

"Seeing the thousands of youngsters take on the challenges of Dartmoor, and succeed, has been amazing."

"The moor exercised its worst weather this weekend in an attempt to crush the morale of the young contestants, so it was humbling to still see so many smiling faces cross the finish line."

The Army also uses the annual Ten Tors expedition – one of the biggest multi-agency, tri-Service, civil contingency exercises in Britain – as invaluable training in operational logistics.



## Stirling leads the way

THE city of Stirling leads the way with a packed programme for this year's Armed Forces Day on Saturday June 28.

A tri-Service parade of personnel will march from the historic castle to the events field, accompanied by military bands.

Also in the parade will be veterans and representatives of ex-Service associations and cadet forces from across the UK.

A drumhead service will be one of the highlights of the day, around which will be a wide range of military demonstrations and static displays, including a fast-roping exercise by Royal Marines from a Sea King helicopter.

Visitors will also be able to see a model of the Royal Navy's next-generation aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, which will be officially named at a ceremony just six days later and 20 miles away in Rosyth.

Although Stirling is the focus, there are many other events happening around the country during June and July – [www.armedforcesday.org.uk](http://www.armedforcesday.org.uk) lists over 100, from Inverness to Redruth.

## Duties at the Games

ROYAL Navy personnel will be among those who will help to keep the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow safe and secure.

More than 2,000 military personnel from all three Services have been given tasks including venue security and ceremonial roles – 72 flag-bearers are required for medal ceremonies, for example.

Of those, some 300 are from the Naval Service, though more will be held in reserve should they be needed.

Several hundred Reservists are also expected to take part.

The Armed Forces will provide specialist niche capabilities such as Explosive Ordnance Disposal support and air security measures similar to those seen during the London 2012 Olympics.

The support is being provided at the request of Police Scotland and has been approved by the Home Office.

The Games run from July 23 until August 3.

# Nelson's grin-keepers



BIG, cheesy grins are in plentiful supply at HMS Nelson for the next couple of weeks.

Because staff at the Portsmouth establishment's dental department are backing national Smile Month, which runs until June 19.

Like their colleagues at military bases around the country, the Nelson team (pictured left) are reinforcing three key messages from the British Dental Health Foundation:

- 1. Brush your teeth for two minutes twice a day with fluoride toothpaste;
- 2. Cut down on how often you have sugary foods and drinks;
- 3. Visit your dentist regularly, as often as they recommend.

In the military you are required to be dentally fit to be operational and it is your responsibility to remain in date for your annual dental inspection – check on JPA under the Dental Details section of Extra Information Types.

Dental specialists will be promoting the event and can answer any questions anyone has regarding oral hygiene and tooth brushing, or see [www.nationalsmilemonth.org](http://www.nationalsmilemonth.org)


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# Dasher, verve and, er, students

AS ANY submariner will tell you, anything which floats is a target.

Through the cross-hairs of a T-boat's periscope, little HMS Dasher ploughs through the South Coast Exercise Areas – performing one of her numerous roles.

For although the P2000 patrol boat principally serves Bristol University Royal Naval Unit, she's frequently called on to help the larger units in the Fleet – joining in Flag Officer Sea Training work-outs off Plymouth (like the one pictured) and acting as a realistic 'plaything' for sailors and Royal Marines from RN's Board and Search School at HMS Raleigh.

And as she's based in the West Country, she's also called upon to support any events by the RN's regional commander (such as Armed Forces Day at the end of this month when she'll be in Exeter).

Day-to-day, of course, she serves the students of universities fringing the English shore of the Severn Estuary – Bristol, Bath and the University of Western England.

There are 71 undergraduates currently on the unit's books, meeting for drill night at Bristol's RNR unit HMS Flying Fox.

They are looked after by half a dozen people ashore, and a five-strong ship's company when they take Dasher – based in Devonport – to sea: Commanding Officer Lt Roger Skelley, coxswain CPO(UWW) George Langton, marine engineer officer CPO(ET) Brogan, weapon engineer officer LET(ME) Shane Robinson and navs/yeoman AB(Sea) Neil Hague.

With ten students embarked at a time, they took Dasher around South-West England and across the Channel to France over Easter.

And it gave Lt Skelley the chance to show fellow Caulkheads his pride and joy by taking Dasher across the Solent and into Cowes.

The boat also visited her affiliated town of Padstow in Cornwall and, to give her students a bit of a challenge, they were put ashore with empty pockets and the challenge of getting back to Bristol penniless while raising cash for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Children's Hospice Southwest.

After taking part in D-Day 70 commemorations, the boat will head around France and Spain in company with her sisters Express, Exploit and Ranger on a six-week summer deployment.

Then it's back to the UK for a revamp from August to November. When she emerges from the overhaul – complete with new engines – she'll be zipping along at 26kts.

This is Dasher's second stint as the 'floating classroom' for Bristol URNU in her 26-year-career.

Student duties bookend spells acting as one of the guardians of British bases in Cyprus and protecting Britain's most important weapon.

In the build-up to the 2003 campaign in Iraq, Cyprus became a key staging post. To bolster defences, two P2000s – Dasher and Pursuer – were promptly dispatched.

They remained there for seven years until the duo were deemed to be required in home waters, whereupon they were



brought back for duties in the rather cooler waters of Western Scotland.

There the sisters formed the kernel of the Faslane Patrol Boat Squadron, created to provide protection for vessels sailing into and out of Clyde Naval Base – especially the V-boats.

Dasher's time on the Clyde ended in late 2012 with the arrival of the second-generation P2000s Tracker and Raider (up to 10kts faster thanks to more powerful engines – although the new-look Dasher should be able to overtake them come January).

The Dasher story begins in

1797 with an 18-gun sloop built in Bermuda which ended her days as a floating prison hulk.

The second Dasher was a Victorian paddle-wheeled vessel which acted as guardship to the Channel Islands, while the third bearer of the name was a torpedo boat destroyer which straddled the Victorian, Edwardian and Georgian eras.

Which brings us on to Dasher No.4, an escort carrier built in the USA as the merchantman Rio de Janeiro, but converted into a 'pint-sized' flat-top to meet the demands of the Battle of the Atlantic and the U-boat threat,

particularly in stretches of ocean which land-based aircraft could not reach.

In her brief career (from commission to loss not nine months), she escorted a couple of Atlantic and Arctic Convoys and provided air cover for the landings in North Africa in November 1942.

Getting ready to resume convoy duties in March 1943, she blew up in the Firth of Clyde in circumstances never fully established, sinking in three minutes and taking two in every three souls aboard with her.

Her sudden and mysterious

Java.....	1811
Atlantic.....	1942
North Africa.....	1942
Arctic.....	1943

Facts and figures

Class: Archer-class P2000 patrol boat  
 Pennant number: P280  
 Builder: Watercraft/Vosper Thornycroft  
 Commissioned: June 8, 1988  
 Displacement: 49 tonnes  
 Length: 20.8m (68ft 3in)  
 Beam: 5.8m (19ft)  
 Draught: 1.8m (5ft 11in)  
 Speed: in excess of 16kts  
 Complement: 5 crew, up to 12 students  
 Propulsion: 2 x Caterpillar C18 engines each generating 873BHP  
 Armament: Can take 3 x GPMGs

demise prompted numerous conspiracy theories, not least that the bodies of one of her dead crew became 'the man who never was' (recent research, however, has shown the corpse at the centre of the masterful spy operation belonged to a homeless Welshman).

## IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

DEMONSTRATING an impressive burst of speed on her trials in May 1962 is destroyer HMS Devonshire – herald of a new era in Royal Navy warfare.

Our dip into the seemingly-inexhaustible photographic archives of the Imperial War Museum this month takes us back to a ship as revolutionary in her day as the Type 45s were four decades later.

Devonshire was the Daring of her day – as evidenced by the glitterati of the Naval establishment attending her launch at the Cammell Laird yard in Birkenhead 54 years ago this month. She was a technological marvel and, perhaps, a bit of a gamble by the Admiralty as it moved into the missile era.

The ship – the first of eight in the County class – was designed as Britain's first guided-missile destroyer, built around one long-range missile (Sea Slug) and a much smaller one (Sea Cat) as its last line of defence against incoming air attack.

Although both missiles pre-date Harold Wilson's famous 'white heat of technology' tag which characterises the days of computers, transistors, satellites and rockets, their arrival

epitomise the desire for modernism across all aspects of British society as the 1950s turned into the 1960s.

For although the Counties were equipped with the trusty 4.5in in twin mountings, one journal confidently predicted that fitting them with Sea Slug would "sound the death knell of the gun as the principal weapon in the Navy's armament".

In fact Sea Slug (the origins of its less-than-inspiring name are apparently lost in the corridors of the Admiralty) wasn't all that new by the time it was fitted to Devonshire.

The weapon could trace its roots back to the final days of WW2 and the need for a guided weapon which could shield ships from air attack – the bitter conflict had shown repeatedly that relying on the human eye/hand and a Bofors alone to take out enemy bombers was not enough.

What designers came up with to meet this requirement was a two-ton missile 19ft 6in long, 16in in diameter and propelled skywards initially from its launcher by four booster rockets. Guided on to its target by a directing beam sent by the 901 radar aboard the Counties, it could reach speeds of just under 700mph, knocking out targets flying at up to 55,000ft (ten miles)

and at ranges of around 17 miles. In short, it was a beast of a missile – the booster quartet made launches seem like a mini-Vostok rocket lifting off.

As Devonshire entered service in November 1962, so too did Sea Slug – but advances in jet technology made the missile obsolescent, if not obsolete, almost immediately.

By the mid-1960s, an enhanced Sea Slug was in service, capable of engaging at similar ranges and altitudes, but better able to cope with low-flying threats, and with a top speed nearer Mach 2 than Mach 1.

With all the optimism which surrounded Sea Slug and the dawn of the RN's missile age, the weapon proved a bit of a disappointment. It was only ever fired once in anger at an enemy aircraft (by HMS Antrim in the Falklands) and missed.

Whereas Sea Cat (think Seawolf to Sea Slug's Sea Viper) also fitted to the Counties turned out to be a British success story.

Small yet surprisingly rugged and reliable, the weapon was fitted widely throughout the Fleet – and sold to a good dozen Armed Forces around the world (there was a land version, too, Tigercat) whereas Sea Slug was only installed

on the Counties.

And, unlike Sea Slug and despite being similarly outdated in 1982, it definitely scored one kill, a Skyhawk, downed by HMS Yarmouth on May 25 – the day when the Argentine made an all-out attack on the Falklands task force.

As for the bold prediction that missiles would end the day of the gun in the Fleet well yes – and no.

Missiles remain the first line of defence against attacking aircraft and missiles, the first line of offence for surface ships attacking enemy vessels (Harpoon, mainstay of the Type 23s and now also being fitted to four Type 45 destroyers).

But the gun persists. The RN dabbled with the 'all missile' frigate, the Type 22. The Falklands conflict showed how valuable naval gunfire support can be.

By the time the third batch of 22s were being laid down in the mid-1980s, the 4.5in gun was back. It persists to this day.

■ This picture (A 34639) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk), by emailing [photos@iwm.org.uk](mailto:photos@iwm.org.uk), or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



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# Snap dec

FOR millions of people, the only glimpse they get of the Royal Navy in action is through the lens of one of the Senior Service's photographers.

For that reason alone they are worth their weight in gold – Navy photographers are used to seeing their images used in national and international newspapers and media, which equals priceless coverage for the (otherwise hidden) work of the Royal Navy.

And it is not just the front-line material that catches the eye – a striking image will always please a picture editor, whatever the context.

So the annual showcase of the

photographers' skills has them (and us) scratching our heads as to how best illustrate the diversity and depth of talent available in this small specialisation – the branch, which was formed in 1919 for reconnaissance and intelligence purposes, currently numbers 42 men and women.

So perhaps the best way to pick from a strong field for this year's Peregrine Trophy awards is to turn to the Royal Navy itself.

What makes the Senior Service unique?

The men (and women) and machines are always cited as being crucial in giving the Navy a winning edge, and both are well-represented in the Peregrine field and our selection on these pages.

Then there are the exotic locations – even with low-cost global travel, the White Ensign still flutters in places that paying tourists might only dream of.

There is tradition and heritage, building on the stirring deeds of sailors from past decades and centuries.

And there is the unfailing cheerfulness, sense of humour and humanity that defines a sailor, whether helping clear up after a typhoon, mopping up in floods or just scooping up their child on a jetty at the end of a long deployment.

The images on these pages are a mix of winners and unsuccessful entries – but they are all unmistakably Navy.



Picture: PO(Phot) Ray Jones



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins



Picture: PO(Phot) Owen Cooban



Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow



Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott RNPOTY



Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill



Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott RNPOTY

● Clockwise from top left: A Royal Navy Merlin is framed by a US Marine Corps Osprey which visited HMS Illustrious; Mne Sandy Sanderson in the slopestyle final at the Combined Services Winter Championships in Meribel, France; all smiles on the bridge of HMS Diamond during Joint Warrior exercises off the coast of Scotland; the HMS Heron squad trains at Yeovilton for the Brickwoods Field Gun competition; HMS Montrose sails into a Mediterranean sunset; HMS Montrose's Lynx returns to the mothership – seen through the aircraft's windscreen; HMS Dragon's Pacific 24 sea boats conduct assurance visits to fishermen in the Gulf

# isions

Picture: LA(Phot) Vicki Benwell



Picture: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow



Picture: PO(Phot) Sean Clew RNPTYx3



Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott



## The winners are...

THERE were more than 300 entries for this year's competition. The judging panel, featuring top professionals from organisations such as Getty Images and the BBC, was impressed by the standard and value of the work of the Photographic Branch.

On occasions the media was entirely reliant on Royal Navy imagery to tell their stories – such as last year's disaster relief operation in the Philippines, as Matthew Fearn of the *Daily Telegraph* explains: "It should not be underestimated how relieved and thankful the world's media were when they started receiving imagery."

"The Royal Navy photographers were initially the only resource for quality images from the area and provided global headline stories with much needed pictures and video."

The winners this year were:

- 🏆 **Peregrine Trophy:** Commando Helicopter Force;
- 🏆 **RN Photographer of the Year:** LA(Phot) Alex Knott, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **Maritime Air Prize:** LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **CGRM Portfolio Prize:** FRPU(N);
- 🏆 **Best Maritime Image Award:** LA(Phot) Alex Knott, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **RN Life Without Limits Award:** LA(Phot) Paul Halliwell, 45 Cdo;
- 🏆 **Media Operations:** LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **RNRMC Family and Friends Award:** LA(Phot) Maxine Davies, JFC-JIAG DMOC;
- 🏆 **IDE Award:** LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **RN Short Form Digital Storytelling Video Award:** LA(Phot) Alex Knott, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **RN Video Award:** PO(Phot) Ray Jones, FRPU(E);
- 🏆 **RN Amateur Photographer of the Year:** Sgt Rich Harley, CHF;
- 🏆 **RN Amateur Maritime Image Award:** CPO Michael Weir, 829 NAS;
- 🏆 **RN Amateur Open Category:** WO2 Richard White, CTCRM;
- 🏆 **Sea Cadet Award:** Kira Robbins, TS Sheffield;
- 🏆 **Navy News Award:** LA(Phot) Will Haigh.

● Clockwise from top: HMS Protector at Brabant Island in Antarctica; HMS Montrose's 'killer tomato' strikes back; AB(CIS) Hannah Hodgson on an assault course at CTCRM; the River-class ships approach Portsmouth; Junglies over Norway during Clockwork exercises; supplies are carried ashore in the Philippines from HMS Daring; a hug for HMS Lancaster's LET Che Golding at the frigate's homecoming; 40 Cdo RM on exercise in California



Picture: LA(Phot) Keith Morgan

Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill



Picture: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies



Picture: LA(Phot) Ben Shread

# Harrier display for air show

A ROYAL Navy Sea Harrier was this month appearing at the RAF Cosford Air Show for the first time.

The Sea Harrier FA2 arrived by road after being transported across the country and was delivered safely to RAF Cosford engineers who worked hard to piece it back together in time for the Air Show.

On loan from RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall, the aircraft – a Sea Harrier ZH796 – was built in 1996 and has flown approximately 1,300 flying hours.

It was retired from service in 2006 and was the last of its type to fly from HMS Illustrious before it was decommissioned.

It is now housed at the School of Flight Deck Operations at RNAS Culdrose where it is used in support of Naval groundcrew training.

The aircraft was joining three other Harriers on display at this year's Air Show, a GR3 and two GR9's each with a unique configuration.

The exhibit is part of a special display to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the first flight of the Kestrel, the prototype for the Harrier.

The original Kestrel is part of the RAF Museum collection.

Amanda Butcher, spokesperson for the Cosford Air Show, said: "The addition of this Sea Harrier will enable us to represent the history of Harrier aircraft of the Royal Air Force and the Royal Navy across the years."

"This will be a unique opportunity to witness the evolution of the Harrier family from the Kestrel right through to the Harrier GR9."

# Officers' parade

THE cradle of the Royal Navy's Officer Corps has staged its annual Lord High Admiral's Divisions.

The parade at Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth was the culmination of 30 intensive weeks training for the officers on parade. Among them were two officers from the Republic of Singapore Navy, as well as 16 Royal Navy officers who had been promoted from the ranks and nine new recruits to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Guest of honour was General Sir Richard Barrons, Head of Joint Forces Command, who was representing the Lord High Admiral the Duke of Edinburgh.

Gen Barrons inspected the parade and took the salute during the march past. He also presented prizes, awarded annually, to six officers recognising significant achievements during training.

BRNC's Commanding Officer Capt Henry Duffy, said: "The course is intensely physically and mentally challenging"

"These officers have met the very high standards, which I would argue are the highest standards of any Navy in the world, so they should be very proud of their achievements."



# A day to treasure

AS SHIP'S photographs go, this has got to be one of the best.

All 170 souls aboard HMS Lancaster mustered on the forecastle, Seawolf silo and bridge wing – and at the very front, the Duke of Lancaster, better known as Her Majesty the Queen.

For the first time in nearly a decade the monarch had the chance to visit her ship in Portsmouth Naval Base.

After inspecting a guard of honour comprising 34 members of the frigate's ship's company, the Queen attended a reception on the jetty next to the ship with sailors and their families.

The Queen then had a private lunch on board in the ship's hangar and spoke to crew members about Lancaster's deployment to the North Atlantic and Caribbean Sea last year.

The Red Rose frigate scored a string of successes in the war against drug running, seizing illegal substances with a total street value of £160m, helping with the arrest of nearly two dozen people.

Among those recounting such stories over lunch with Her Majesty was ET(WE) Will 'Richie' Richardson.

"This has been such a unique opportunity for all of us on board as not everyone can say they sat at the same table as the Queen for lunch," he said. "It has been an amazing experience and one I will never forget."

Nineteen-year-old AB Andrew Warry from Portsmouth added: "I feel really privileged, it's nice to see it's getting noticed, that it's not just a job, it's a career and you feel a part of something."

AB David Yates, 26, of Falkirk, Scotland, said everyone aboard felt buoyed by the interest the Queen showed in Lancaster's deeds.

"It's good to see the sponsor of the ship, it keeps morale high, it's good publicity for the Royal Navy," he added.

Lancaster's CO Cdr Peter Laughton said the visit had been "a true honour" for his entire ship's company.

He added: "Since launching HMS Lancaster in 1990 I know Her Majesty has taken a keen interest in what we are doing, and today gave me the perfect opportunity to update her on the ship's recent activities."

Picture: LA(Phot) Steve Johncock, FRPU East

# Bulwark back to the beaches

THE nation's flagship will lead the Royal Navy's participation in this month's major commemorations of the Normandy landings – 70 years after the Allies began the liberation of Western Europe from the Nazi yoke.

Assault ship HMS Bulwark will lead the Royal Navy's contingent of five ships heading to Normandy, where a number of high-profile events, ceremonies and services will be held.

As they did in 1944, proceedings begin in Britain, where Bulwark will lay on an all-action amphibious demonstration for crowds in Southsea – giving an idea of how the Royal Navy and Royal Marines come ashore from the sea in the 21st Century.

Around 35,000 people are expected to watch these preliminary events in Portsmouth, which conclude with a display by the Red Arrows.

Thereafter, an international flotilla heads across the Channel for commemorations on French soil. As well as Bulwark, frigate HMS Richmond, minehunter Ledbury and patrol boats Ranger and Express, plus 1 Assault Group Royal Marines, will sail for Normandy.

Members of the Royal Family, the chiefs of all three Armed Services, Prime Minister David Cameron, Defence Secretary Philip Hammond as well as 15 Heads of State are expected to attend commemorations in France which include:

- a Royal British Legion service of remembrance at Bayeux Cathedral;
- a ceremony at the Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery on the edge of Bayeux;
- an international ceremony organised by the French Government, details still to be confirmed;
- a march past and service of commemoration held by the Normandy Veterans Association at Arromanches.

For a full run-down of events visit: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/d-day-70-events/d-day-70-events-across-the-uk-and-france>

# Navy's got talent

SERVING and former Royal Navy personnel will take to the stage at the King's Theatre, Southsea, for the third time.

They will present *Sailors On Stage* in aid of Naval charities.

Shep Woolley, George Saunders and Jimmy Quinn will be performing and presenting.

The show will also feature pop group RockSaltz, The HMS Ganges and St Vincent Association Choir, Tom Coleman, The Pompey Poseurs, Ollie Butler, The Bevvie Sisters, The Victory Brass Band of the RBL and many more.

Tickets for the Sunday July 27 show are £12, (£10 for veterans) and are available from the Kings Theatre by phoning 023 9282 8282.

# Engineers step up to the challenge

THE first batch of Royal Navy engineers are benefitting from changes aimed at making the career even more rewarding.

Younger weapon and marine engineers will now be given the chance to take on more responsibility at an earlier stage in their careers.

HMS Sutherland is pioneering the changes and the frigate's CO Cdr Stephen Anderson said: "This is another example of HMS Sutherland leading the way. The new structure of my engineering departments will allow my young, talented engineers to step forward and take charge of some extremely sophisticated and technologically advanced equipment."

"I have complete confidence that my frontline engineers will ensure this new technology operates at the highest standards to allow HMS Sutherland to complete any tasking that can be expected of her."

This happened by creating new structures in engineering departments, previously trialled on sister frigates HMS Lancaster and HMS Portland.

HMS Sutherland is the first ship to change both weapon and marine departments at the same time and cements unity within the engineering onboard.

LETs are taking on the most additional responsibility and the move aims to reward the high calibre of personnel coming into the Royal Navy who are keen to do more 'hands-on' engineering and have equipment of their own to look after.

The changes are the key to future recruitment and retention, giving the LETs better job satisfaction and giving them the realistic ambition of becoming deputy section heads.

Other improvements include streaming engineering



● LET (ME) Alan Wormald works on a fuse box onboard HMS Sutherland

departments into specialisations with the marine engineering department having personnel dedicated to either mechanical or electrical engineering.

LET Alan Wormald, 29, from Keighley, West Yorkshire said: "I'm looking forward to more responsibility and helping to improve personal career development."

"I'm hoping to steam towards the propulsion section and become a propulsion petty officer in the future."

LET Gordon Stewart, 40, from Elgin, Scotland said: "I have been lucky enough to be given extra responsibility in the diesels section before we came into refit, so I will be continuing with this responsibility in a more formal way under the new structure."



● LET(ME) Gordon Stewart works on a diesel generator

# NAVY NEWS

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## Book of boy's letters to help fund

AN ebook based on the letters of a World War 1 sailor is to benefit the RNRMC, which will receive a donation from the profits.

*War Letters 1914-1918, Vol. 2: Philip Malet de Carteret* was penned by Mark Tanner as part of a three-book series exploring the lives of military personnel who died in the conflict.

Volume two in the series is based on the letters of 16-year-old Philip Malet de Carteret, a midshipman with the Royal Navy who sailed with pre-Dreadnought battleship HMS Canopus.

Philip's letters describe his experience of the Battles of Coronel and the Falklands and his time at the Dardanelles/Gallipoli before his death at the Battle of Jutland aboard HMS Queen Mary.

"Despite his young age, his letters demonstrate a remarkable maturity, and give a fascinating insight into what life was like for the young men who played such an important part in the major Naval encounters of the First World War," said the author.

At the request of Philip's family, profits from this book are being donated to the RNRMC.

The book is available for download at [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk) for £2.99.

# Play your part in honouring heroes

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity has been chosen as Portsmouth City Council's partner charity for a series of events commemorating the 70th anniversary of D-Day and the centenary of the outbreak of World War 1.

The appointment of the charity as the local council's partner is more than fitting, as Portsmouth was one of the key strategic locations on the South Coast where thousands of Allied troops left for the beaches of Normandy 70 years ago.

A series of high-profile events, held between June 3-8 and focussed around Portsmouth's seafront, will commemorate the sacrifices of our Armed Forces.

Speaking of the five-day long series of events, Cllr Lee Hunt, Portsmouth City Council's Cabinet Member for Culture, said: "Portsmouth and surrounding areas were transformed leading up to D-Day, the seafront was declared a restricted zone and thousands of international and British troops came into the city.



● AB Sarah George from HMS Richmond with D-Day veteran Frank Rosier

"We want to honour the actions of all men and women involved, and it's important surviving veterans and those who played vital roles in the operation take centre stage."

A veterans' village will be set up on Southsea Common to welcome Normandy survivors from all around the world to

take part and enjoy a range of activities for all the family, which include an appearance by the Red Arrows on June 5 and a 1940s-style concert on June 7.

Frigate HMS Richmond will form part of a flotilla of ships sailing to Normandy for the commemorations and he Royal Marines Band Service will also

have a presence, taking part in a Drumhead Ceremony on June 5.

Further musical entertainment will be provided at a 'sunset concert for heroes' by Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra later that evening.

Fundraising Co-ordinator for the RNRMC Hilary Jukes said: "The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is honoured to have been selected as the partner charity of Portsmouth City Council for the Portsmouth 2014 commemorations.

"As the principal charity of the Royal Navy, with our head office here in Portsmouth, we are proud to support the men and women of today's Naval service and, most importantly, the veteran community.

"This time of year is always special as it allows us to reflect and pay our respects to all those who have fought and died for our country."

If you would like to get involved in volunteering for the RNRMC during the D-Day week please contact Hilary on 023 9254 8416 or email [hilary.jukes@rnrmc.org.uk](mailto:hilary.jukes@rnrmc.org.uk).

## Your own time so precious

THE RNRMC is indebted to its hard-working volunteer community, who consistently give up their own time to help serve the work we do for the Naval family.

From processing payroll giving forms to manning stands at events and bucket-collecting, we'd like to thank those who enable us to do more for your charity.

People like Anne Richards, who volunteers at RNAS Yeovilton, enable us to keep in contact and support our fundraisers and to share information on the grant application process.

Already Anne has supported events such as our Road to Twickenham campaign and the Bournemouth Air Show.

She can be found at her volunteer desk from 10am-midday.

"Being one of nearly four generations that's served in the military, I've grown up around the Armed Forces," Anne said.

"I have always appreciated what others have done in my name and now I'm in a position where I am able to give something back."

Without people like Sue Concannon, who worked as a claims consultant at Zurich Insurance before retiring, it would take us more time to plough through the day-to-day administrative tasks linked to our Payroll Giving Scheme.

Sue volunteers in our office for one day each week to assist our marketing and communications team.

The charity is always on the lookout for volunteers, especially during the summer when we're attending events. If you – or someone else you know – are interested in volunteering, please contact [fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk) or call 02392 548128.

Whether it's just for a few hours, a one-off event, or even a whole week, we are grateful for your support.

## Marine grateful for health care

A SERVING Royal Marines officer from Winchester is about to embark on one of the greatest charity cycle rides of his life following a near-fatal accident last summer.

Maj Paul Spanner will attempt to raise up to £100,000 to thank the charities that helped him overcome spinal injuries, sustained on a routine ride out last July, by cycling from London's Tower Bridge to the Eiffel Tower in Paris via the Spinnaker Tower in Portsmouth in just 42 hours.

The RNRMC is among those being supported in the Towers Challenge, in addition to Love Your Hospital Charity (Western Sussex Hospitals), Southampton Hospital Charity, and the British Heart Foundation.

Paul, who launched his

fundraising bid near the scene of his accident at Goodwood House, Chichester, said: "My accident came as such a shock and it made me realise that it doesn't matter who you are, fate can turn your world upside-down so quickly.

"I am so thankful for the organisations who rebuilt me and put me back together.

"Almost a year after my accident, I will shortly be returning to work. I can't thank the medical teams enough."

Paul will be accompanied by a peloton of 20 riders, made up of both Armed Forces and civilian cyclists.

The team of riders will undertake the Towers Challenge on June 29. For more information, visit [www.thetowerschallenge.com](http://www.thetowerschallenge.com)



● Maj Paul Spanner joins Lady March and fellow riders for the launch of the Towers Challenge

### FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH

#### HMS RICHMOND

THROUGHOUT her 2,881 hours at sea (and some 33,316 nautical miles later), the crew of HMS Richmond have shown incredible determination to support their charity – and keep themselves entertained.

From holding raffles onboard, collecting foreign currency, holding penguin and polar bear races, to cycling 10,000 miles, the crew manage to raise an incredible £2,245.90 upon their arrival home.



● From left, CPOs Savage, Cox and Barnes aboard HMS Richmond

## Great result off the pitch

WHILE the Navy vs Army rugby result might not have gone the way we wanted, the RNRMC is delighted to report that personnel from all over the Fleet have made a massive contribution to our Road to Twickenham campaign.

You've been running, rowing, cycling, swimming – and even rope climbing – to raise funds for your charity.

This includes a team from Commando Helicopter Force, who travelled the equivalent distance from Yeovilton to Twickenham by tackling a one mile swim, 26 mile run, 24 mile row and 60 mile cycle – all within 14 hours.

A team from HMS Raleigh captured the imagination of many a casual bystander as they embarked on their 'Escape to Twickenham'.

Armed with just mobile phones and sleeping bags, they reached Twickers via 10 Downing Street



● HMS Raleigh's Escape to Twickenham team

and the Royal Marines Corps of Drums world record attempt, raising more than £5,000 on the way.

The efforts of HMS Sultan, HMS Sutherland, HMS

Collingwood, HMS Calliope, BRNC, HMS Dauntless, HMS Dragon, HMS Echo and the Run Row Ride team in Bahrain – and everyone else who took part – are absolutely amazing. Thank you.

### EVENTS

JUNE 7

#### D-DAY 70 concert

A family-friendly 1940s concert with live singers and bands, ending with a fireworks finale to mark D-Day 70 at Southsea Common, Portsmouth. Don't forget your dancing shoes for the early-evening event.

JUNE 14-15

#### HMS Sultan show

Monster trucks, a live circus, fun fairs, air displays, music and entertainment will be on offer at the HMS Sultan Summer Show, at the Gosport base (PO12 3BY) on June 14-15. Gates open at 10am each day.

JUNE 28

#### Armed Forces Day

Events across the country will celebrate the Armed Forces family, with the celebrations kicking off first in this year's host city, Stirling.

[www.armedforcesday.org.uk](http://www.armedforcesday.org.uk)

**FUNDRAISE | DONATE | SIGN-UP TO PAYROLL GIVING**

CONTACT US: [FUNDRAISING@RNRMC.ORG.UK](mailto:fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk) / 023 9254 8289 | FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT: [RNRMC.ORG.UK](http://RNRMC.ORG.UK) | FIND US ON FACEBOOK AND TWITTER

## Calling on his energy reserves

With his patriotic initials GB, you'd be forgiven for thinking that Royal Naval Reserve officer Geoff Bewley was representing his country in the 2014 Help For Heroes Big Battlefield Bike Ride.

Instead Cdr Bewley takes on international status since he is now serving at NATO's UK-based HQ near London as Head of Personnel.

Riding with both the able-bodied and wounded forces from recent conflicts, Cdr Bewley is taking on the gruelling 350 miles 2014 Hero Ride between Brussels and Paris over five days this month.

This year the ride marks the centenary of the start of WWI, with the route following much of the Western Front.

As they ride alongside the wounded, the riders will remember those who gave the ultimate sacrifice then and still do today.

Geoff, 55, from Chichester, is already a keen cyclist and has been in serious training now for months, using his lunch break to burn up calories on the hills around North London and at weekends on the South Downs in West Sussex.

He said: "The weather earlier this year made it a real challenge to get out on the wet and slippery roads in the dark, but I am absolutely determined to give this fundraising challenge my full effort."

"It's a cause I feel very strongly about – supporting our wounded personnel from recent conflicts – Help For Heroes has worked a miracle in providing the means to provide through-life care and support for our injured forces."

"But the charity needs to continue raising funds for many decades into the future to fund the Recovery Centres, re-training programmes and provide additional resources to those in need."

Although Geoff is a reservist, he has been in full-time contractual employment with the RN in the NATO HQ for the last five-and-a-half years, having previously spent 20 years serving as a Warfare Officer at HMS King Alfred, Portsmouth where he rose to become the youngest Commanding Officer in 2005.

You can donate through Geoff's fundraising page at [www.bmycharity.com/CommanderGeoffBewleysBigBattlefieldRide2014](http://www.bmycharity.com/CommanderGeoffBewleysBigBattlefieldRide2014)

## Batman on a bike

PERSONNEL based at HMS Raleigh turned out to complete their Sport Relief mile.

Batman on his bike, an 'ironman' and an American footballer were among those who took part in the charity mile around the perimeter of the training base in Cornwall, after completing a warm-up on the parade ground conducted by the physical training instructors.

## Raising the bar to boost funds

A GROUP of sailors from HMS Collingwood hoped to strike big when they held a Crossbar Challenge at the base on behalf of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT).

The four members from the Above Water Tactical (AWT) Team invited civilian and naval personnel to attempt the Crossbar Challenge similar to that of the Saturday morning TV programme *Soccer AM*.

The challenge proposed to personnel was to kick footballs from the half way line of a football pitch to hit the cross bar in order to win a prize.

Watched by members of the AWT and RNBT Chief Executive, Cdr Stephen Farrington, Executive Officer for HMS Collingwood Cdr Andy Phenna took the first kick of the day.

The event organisers nicknamed the 'Spartan Sailors' include POs Matthew Sommerville, Kevin Bentley, Roger Shepherd and civilian instructor Frankie Pugliano all from the AWT Section at Collingwood.

PO Sommerville said: "I wanted to do something really



● Penalty shoot out, from left, PO Kevin Bentley, PO Matthew Sommerville, PO Roger Shepherd, Natalie Sommerville, Corinne Day and Cdr Andy Phenna

challenging. When I suggested it to my colleagues they were ever so keen to get involved."

PO Shepherd, a Phase 2 training instructor, said: "It's been our biggest charity

fundraiser, we've raised over £200 so far."

The AWT also held a cake and raffle sale organised by Matthew's wife Natalie Sommerville.

Corinne Day, Events and

Publicity Officer from the RNBT, said: "The boys have been brilliant. We've had great weather, great support and a great turn out. We're so thankful for all they've done for us."

# Princess's praise for people network

THE importance of personal contact should not be forgotten in this social media age, the Princess Royal told the Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust.

Patron of the Trust, the Princess was speaking at its annual general meeting at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth.

The Princess admitted that technology has made a huge difference in helping Servicewomen keep in touch.

But she also warned: "There will always be some who fall out of that net and that is where the people network is so important."

The Trust received £301,964 in legacies in 2013, including one for £55,990.

Last year 275 people received financial support in the form of a grant.

One of the recipients was a 21-year-old woman caring for her mum, 59, a former Wren suffering from early onset of Alzheimer's.

The Trust helped pay for driving lessons for the daughter as well as a donation to help with general household needs.

"I'll now be able to help my mum get around and hopefully do all of the things she wants to do," wrote the young woman, who hopes to qualify as an occupational therapist.

Other grateful recipients included:

■ A 54-year-old former Wren with MS who received £3,000 towards the cost of an electric-powered standing wheelchair;

■ A 45-year-old former Wren



● The Princess Royal addresses the meeting, watched by Trust chairwoman Cdr Andrea Crook

Picture: Nicola Harper

who was given a grant towards clearing her late mother's funeral bill.

■ A 92-year-old former Wren who received money to buy an

adjustable bed.

Princess Anne said: "It is really nice when you get letters like that, to show you are making a real difference."

"This organisation is very much about the people network. Thank you for continuing to make an impact to those who served as Wrens."

## Charity Snippets

■ A GROUP of intrepid Royal Navy divers from HMNB Clyde smashed a world record for underwater cycling.

The divers, all members of the Northern Diving Group, broke the previous record of 162km with ease to raise around £5,000 for Sport Relief.

■ The manager of a maritime care home in Surrey took gold at a prestigious ceremony which recognises outstanding commitment to excellent resident care.

Anne Kasey, manager at The Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society home, received the care home registered manager award at the Nursing and Residential awards.

■ The Military Wives Choirs and Hampshire jeweller Claudia Bradby have launched their Stronger Together bracelet. £5 from the sale of each bracelet will be donated to the choir's foundation, a subsidiary charity of SSAFA. Bracelets cost £36 and are available from [www.claudibradby.com](http://www.claudibradby.com)

■ The crew of HMS Atherstone achieved the seemingly impossible when they successfully cycled the length of the United Kingdom without ever leaving the ship, to raise money for Sport Relief 2014.

Each member of the ship's company had to complete 20km on the ship's exercise bike in the quickest possible time. The total distance cycled was 970km – the equivalent distance from Land's End to John O'Groats. In total, the ship raised £350 for Sport Relief.

■ Sailors from 815 Naval Air Squadron (NAS) beat the distance one of their own Lynx helicopters can cover in four hours to raise more than £1,000 for Sport Relief.

Twenty members from 815 NAS, based at Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton completed 1,060 miles in four hours – twice the distance the Lynx could cover.

■ Creative amateur cooks working for the Royal Navy staged a bake-off in aid of Help For Heroes at Plymouth Naval Base and raised more than £400.

The Logistics Support Unit staff who work for the Commodore in charge of the Devonport Flotilla (ships and submarines in Plymouth) staged the cookery competition which was open to anyone in the naval base.

More than 40 personnel from the logistics department baked cakes which were judged and then sold.

■ Fisher Division of HMS Raleigh collected £84.40 for Combat Stress. The money was collected by the new entry classes during their ten-week initial training.

■ Kind-hearted workers with HMNB Clyde's Flag Officer Sea Training (North) organisation held a successful charity coffee morning to raise cash for two good causes.

A wide selection of cakes, biscuits and baked goodies was available to staff for a small donation, with the sweet treats raising £200.

The money will be split between the KiltWalk charity and CRY – Cardiac Risk in the Young.

## Delay in quest to set solo kayaking distance record

A ROYAL Navy veteran amputee has been delayed in his quest to set a new record.

Richard Hunt is attempting to beat the solo kayaking distance record in aid of limbless charity BLESMA.

Richard, from Fareham, plans to kayak around the entire coast of the UK in an attempt to break the solo

kayaking distance record. He set off from Portsmouth but only got as far as Beer in Dorset before his support team had to leave for other duties.

He was delayed for more than a week before being able to continue his challenge.

His attempt, in aid of BLESMA – The Limbless Veterans (formerly known as

the British Limbless Ex-Servicemen's Association) and aptly named The Great Paddle Round is expected to take around four months.

He hopes to travel a distance of approximately 2,300 miles using a sit-on-top kayak, which will break the current record for the longest solo kayak journey held by Helen Skelton on the

Amazon Rivre for Comic Relief. He has been training for 13 months.

Richard joined the Royal Navy at 17 but sustained a knee injury playing rugby. Surgery on the knee caused nerve damage and Richard was left in constant pain and discomfort. Following 20 further unsuccessful operations he made the difficult decision to have his

leg amputated above the knee.

Richard struggled to come to terms with the loss of his limb and sought help from BLESMA, the national charity for all limbless serving and ex-Servicemen and women, their widows and dependants.

Follow his progress at [www.thegreatpaddleround.co.uk](http://www.thegreatpaddleround.co.uk)

# Memories of fallen spur on Marines in epic trip



Royal Marines 350  
1664 - 2014  
Timeless Distinction

BY SEA, By Land – every day the Royal Marines come closer to home.

They are proudly carrying 350 years of history on their broad shoulders – and the memories of their fallen, and injured, colleagues keep them going on their epic adventure.

These are the men taking part in the Royal Marines 1664 Challenge – a 4,136 mile (6,656 km) journey of a lifetime that aims to raise thousands of pounds for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF) and also marks the 350th anniversary of the Corps' formation.

Divided into five phases – ski, sail, cycle, kayak and run – the RM1664 Challenge has transitioned from sail to cycle to kayaking.

Last month the men landed in Cadiz, Spain, where they swapped wind for leg power.

They travelled at a rate in excess of 80 miles a day in temperatures above 30°C to reach the historically significant harbour town of Port-en-Bessin.

For this is the French town that their predecessors, the men of 47 Commando, stormed and captured from the Germans on June 6 1944.

But the modern day Royal Marines are currently fighting muscle fatigue, the constant threat of dehydration, and the monotony of pedalling day in, day out for two weeks.

Six of the men are doing the whole challenge from start to finish. One of them is Cpl Anthony Fairclough, who is representing Commando Logistics Regiment in North Devon.

The 25-year-old said: "For me the Royal Marines 1664 Challenge represents all that is great in the Corps.

"We need to have high standards of fitness, plenty of determination, but most of all cheerfulness in the face of adversity.

"I believe that a combination of all these elements can help a body of men through anything."

By the time the RM 1664 Challenge reaches its conclusion with a marathon around London more than 4,500 men will have taken part in one of the five sectors.

WO Ross Gunning, 47, from 43 Cdo, in Faslane, was one of the oldest challengers on the cycle phase.

He said: "As this is my final year in the Corps I wanted to do

something that would push me to the limit, and the 1664 Challenge is all about testing ourselves both physically and mentally.

"This is going to be the icing on my cake – my final effort as a Royal Marine."

But it is not only Royal Marines Commandos who are taking part; the Challenge was also made available to members of the Royal Marines Band Service.

Sgt Mark Hill was the only musician in the 30-man cycle team, and since last June, when he found out he would be participating, he has been training five days a week without fail.

The 41-year-old, from Portsmouth, said: "In the 1664 Charter, King Charles stated that each unit was to have a drummer, so the buglers are the oldest branch in the Royal Marines – and that makes this Challenge all the more important to me."

The Challenge is also raising money for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

The last phase of the RM1664 Challenge got under way from Portsmouth at the end of the last month and ends in London on July 25.

During those two months thousands of Royal Marines will participate in running events up and down the country promoted by Royal Marines and Royal Marines Reserve units.

More information about the challenge can be found at [www.1664challenge.co.uk](http://www.1664challenge.co.uk) with updates being posted at [www.facebook.com/rm1664challenge](http://www.facebook.com/rm1664challenge) as well as their Twitter feed @RM1664challenge.



● Sgt Mark Hill is the only musician to take part in the cycle stage

Pictures: PO(Phot) Si Ethell

## Peak of fitness needed

A TEAM of Royal Marines are taking part in the gruelling 3 Peaks Yacht Race Challenge of 2014.

The race is run annually, and involves competitors sailing up the west coast of Britain, stopping to send a pair from each team to run and cycle up the highest peaks of England, Wales and Scotland.

In total the team must sail 389 miles, run 73 miles, cycle 30 miles, and in the event of no wind – row their boat.

It is hoped the money raised will also help serving and retired Service personnel suffering from PTSD.

The team have named themselves after their Corps' motto: *Per Mare Per Terram*; Latin for 'By Sea By Land'.

The name bears much relevance to the challenges of the race.

According to team leader Maj Gill Duncan, of the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone: "The motto of the Corps perfectly encapsulates the idea behind the challenge."

Maj Duncan, who already has three transatlantic crossings to his name, was joined by Cpl 'Buckers' Buckley, 'Whisky' Walker, Matt Carter, and Capt Matt Webster.

"The demands of this event are ideally met by the skills of the team of Royal Marines" explained Maj Duncan.

"We undergo one of the longest and most arduous training regimes in the world, culminating in the award of the coveted commando Green Beret."

Those wishing to learn more about the race, which takes place this month, or donate can call Maj Duncan on 01392 414143, or email Sharky Ward at [sharky.ward@thecgroup.org](mailto:sharky.ward@thecgroup.org)

## Plea for 350 men

A CHARITY is appealing for 350 Royal Marines to each raise £350 to mark the anniversary of the Corps.

The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund is urging serving and former Marines to show their courage, determination and humour in the face of adversity and do something for a good cause.

The At Least 350 challenge allows Marines to choose how they want to raise the cash – with the provisos they raise at least £350 by mid-November this year.

The charity hopes the challenge will raise more than £120,000.

A welcome pack full of ideas, along with a sports shirt, is available by signing up at [www.atleast350.org/signUpForm.html](http://www.atleast350.org/signUpForm.html)

## Brothers reunited at sea

THEY were born and raised side by side, even following the same career path, and now an anniversary challenge has brought two Bootle brothers back together again.

Anthony and Christopher Fairclough have taken part in the second leg of the Royal Marines 1664 Challenge.

They met up in Stavanger, Norway, where the brothers set sail on a 1,664 nautical mile journey down to Cadiz, in Spain – the first time the two marines have ever worked alongside one another since joining the Corps.

Anthony joined up in 2009 and is now a Corporal at the Commando Logistics Regiment, in Devon, while his 25-year-old twin Chris joined in 2012 and is currently a rifleman with

42 Cdo, in Plymouth.

Anthony is one of six Royal Marines who are taking part in the whole 1664 Challenge.

Chris joined his brother onboard HMSTC Endeavour and they worked together to sail the yacht on her journey south.

Chris said: "This has been the first time I've joined my brother in a working environment since we both joined the Corps. I'm just really glad we had the opportunity to do this on such a remarkable event."

Anthony said: "I joined the Corps to broaden my horizons, and to one day become a PT instructor. During my time in the Corps I have come to realise that the friends you make here are more like brothers."



● Marines on the cycle stage through Spain

## Drum record broken

THE Royal Marines Corps of Drums have smashed the existing Guinness World Record for the longest group drum roll.

The record attempt started with Hollywood superstars Tom Hardy and Harrison Ford launching the event and finished three days later.

The existing record stood at 28 hours, 19 minutes and 3 seconds, and has now been extended to 64 hours.

Taking inspiration from their founding on October 28 1664, the Corps of Drums refer to the event as 1 record, 6 teams, 64 hours.

Forty Royal Marines Buglers took part in the record-breaking attempt, from the Royal Marines School of Music and all five bands – Portsmouth, Collingwood, Plymouth, Commando Training Centre Royal Marines and Scotland.

Each drummer played for 15 minutes at a time during the record attempt, drumming for a minimum of 1.5 hrs.

The record attempt was based at the Tower of London throughout and the drummers put on regular demonstrations, even offering a few lucky members of the public a chance to have a go for themselves.

Lt Col Nick Grace, the Royal Marines Band Service Principal Director of Music, said: "It is a great honour to accept this record on behalf of the Corps of Drums; I am extremely proud of all of them."

Richard Kenworthy, head of fundraising at the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund, said: "I would like to say a huge thank you to the Corps of Drums and all the public for their generous donations.

"The money raised will help us make a huge difference to those in need."

Jamie Clarke, from Guinness World Records Limited, said: "We are really thrilled that we can officially present the Royal Marines Corps of Drums with their record certificate."



● The Royal Marines Corps of Drums at the Tower of London

Picture: PO (Phot) Derek Wade

Follow the Royal Marines during their anniversary year at [www.Royalnavy.mod.uk/RM350](http://www.Royalnavy.mod.uk/RM350)

# RN thanked for helping in fight against flooding

THE Royal Navy has been thanked for their vital help in Hampshire's flood-relief efforts earlier this year.

Five hundred sailors worked for several days in February at Winchester and Romsey in Operation Pitchpole – the fight against the floods which caused misery for thousands of residents.

Personnel from Portsmouth Naval Base, HMS Collingwood at Fareham, HMS Sultan at Gosport, helicopter carrier HMS Illustrious, frigate HMS Lancaster and the Royal Marines Band, Portsmouth, filled sandbags and built flood defences.

Forty Navy personnel from the Portsmouth area attended a reception at Winchester's Great Hall, along with colleagues from the Army, RAF and emergency services.

Hampshire Council leader Roy Perry said: "The extreme weather this winter posed some tough challenges in Hampshire.

"It is a year we will not forget; not just for the flooding but for the lessons learned and accomplishments made during such a challenging time.

"Importantly, this year demonstrated the importance of partnerships, and on behalf of the County Council, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who played a part.

"We received tremendous support from the emergency services and district councils, and from the Armed Forces, who played an integral role in averting further flooding from rivers in Winchester and Romsey.



● Above: Personnel from HMS Illustrious help residents battling floodwater in Romsey

Picture: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson

● Right: CPO Paul O' Shaughnessy, second left, with Dame Mary Fagan, the Deputy Mayor of Gosport Wayne Ronayne and fellow Royal Navy personnel at the reception in Winchester

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum

"We are indebted to the tremendous work undertaken by all those involved, and the co-operation demonstrated during these past months will, I am sure, put us in good stead for challenges we may face in the future."

CPO Paul O' Shaughnessy, of Portsmouth Naval Base, who attended the event, said: "It was a privilege to represent the Royal Navy at the reception and for us

to be recognised and thanked in this way.

"We saw first-hand how the floods had affected communities, and were pleased to help residents when they were in desperate need."

Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire Dame Mary Fagan also thanked all involved and presented donations of £5,000 to each of the Armed Forces' benevolent funds.



## Tidy effort ahead of town pageant



● Above: AET Paul Stevenson gets stuck in with the tidy up

● Below: The contingent from Culdrose with Brian Curtiss of Helston Town Tidy Group



SAILORS from Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose added some Naval muscle to Helston's Town Tidy week in preparation for the annual Flora Day pageant.

Armed with spades, racks, rubble sacks and determination the team of Phase 2 trainee Air Engineering Technicians soon cleared away years of overgrowth along a stretch of the major route which brings thousands of people to the Town.

Visitors flock to Helston along The Furry, named after the traditional dance, and which is close to the Culdrose trainees' air base.

Brian Curtiss, from the Helston Town Tidy Group, said: "It's about taking ownership of the town and fostering a sense of pride in where we live. The guys from Culdrose are always welcome – they are a big part of our community."

Organising the sailors was CPO Jon Walsh, from Porthleven, who said: "With Culdrose's location and many Naval personnel living and settling in the Helston area, it is especially important we maintain strong links with the local community – it is a real privilege to get involved."

Flora Day is a centuries-old tradition that has seen generations of Helstonians dance through the busy market town, banishing winter and welcoming spring, and is one of the great annually-anticipated traditional events in the Cornish calendar.

Phase 2 Trainee AET Paul Stevenson said: "This will be my first time attending Flora Day dances. I've heard some really good things about the day – we are all extremely excited already."

## Museum links are restored

A PLAQUE has been unveiled at the RN Submarine Museum in Gosport to recognise ongoing relations between submariners past and present.

Since the middle of February personnel from HMS Sultan have been helping to improve facilities at the museum, firstly in preparation for the public re-opening and then in preparation for the rededication of HMS Alliance, which was attended by the Duke Of Cambridge.

Volunteers from Sultan have taken on a variety of tasks, including landscaping.

In addition trainees have been involved with preparing new decking where visitors can sit and rest – and where the plaque, complete with the submariners' Dolphins badge, will be displayed.

Sultan's CO Capt Trevor Gulley said: "When the submariners heard that HMS Alliance was due to reopen they were keen to recognise their own heritage and support the museum.

"The experience has been a great opportunity for many of our younger trainees to mix with former submariners and to recognise the sacrifices of the past and the timeless qualities of the branch that will carry on indefinitely in the future."

Royal Navy Submarine Museum Director Cdre Chris Munns said: "It's been an absolute pleasure to be associated with HMS Sultan, and we have thoroughly appreciated the support that Capt Gulley and his team have given us.

"We hope that our relationship will continue to grow for many years to come."



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A very wet Bergen!



# Around Europe

## THE Grand Tour.

Conjures up images of coiffured aristocrats and ruling classes soaking up Europe's *ancien régime*. Paris, then up the Rhine, perhaps as far as Switzerland before crossing the Alps. Florence, Rome, Venice – all 'must-see' cities. You could venture further south, Naples, Pompeii. The truly adventurous might even cross the Messina Strait to Sicily, or head for the Peloponnese and the ruins of ancient Greece.

Then north once more. Perhaps through Austria. Vienna. Perhaps Dresden and Potsdam before back across the Channel to the mother country, thoroughly enlightened.

We can't offer you any of those.

We can, however, give you Cardiff. And Hamburg. Oslo. Bergen. Casablanca. St Helier. (We're not sure about enlightenment either, but we'll try to entertain and inform at the very least.)

If you are going to embark on a modern-day grand tour, we suggest alighting at one of the great ports of Europe.

Might we suggest Hamburg? Gateway to Germany, an historic centre of maritime trade and, on the 825th anniversary of the port's founding, home to a bit of a party.

Each year Hamburgers mark the occasion with a river festival on the River Elbe – and in recent years in particular Royal Navy vessels have attended the *Hafengeburtstag* ('harbour birthday') event.

This year it was **HMS Lancaster's** honour to fly the flag for the UK, heading up an 80-mile stretch of the Elbe from the North Sea to Hamburg where a procession of more than 100 vessels was watched by a good 50,000 people.

At the head was the German frigate FGS Hamburg, leading several smaller naval patrol boats, tall ships, cruise ships, every imaginable small craft.

Once in the heart of the port, Lancaster was berthed next to the Hamburg and together they were very much the centrepiece of the *Hafengeburtstag* with over 11,000 people visiting the Queen's frigate (Her Majesty is the Duke of Lancaster) to get a closer look.

Lancaster also used her time alongside in Germany to promote British trade to local businesses by holding a UK Trade and Industry dinner for Jaguar-Land Rover.

The frigate's Commanding Officer Cdr Peter Laughton called on the Chief Inspector of the German Navy – the equivalent of the Royal Navy's First Sea Lord – as well as the commanding officers of other foreign naval warships in attendance.

With both Britain and Germany passionate footballing nations, the visit to Hamburg would not have been complete without a 'kick about'.

Lancaster's team did not disappoint, winning the international football tournament arranged as part of the festival (her team were not so successful at rugby, although they put in a strong performance).

"It was a tremendous honour and privilege for me to bring HMS Lancaster into Hamburg and to participate in the 825th *Hafengeburtstag*," said Cdr Laughton.

"Both our nations have a rich maritime history and this was a terrific opportunity

to engage with people across such a wide spectrum of maritime activity throughout a quite magnificent harbour festival."

Some 450 miles to the north, across the Skagerrak, Britain's newest warship enjoyed a prime berth in the shadow of Oslo's famous Akershus Fortress as ships from across Europe converged on Norway for the 200th birthday of the country's navy.

**HMS Duncan** was joined by the **Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines** who performed both in the streets of Oslo and at Norway's military tattoo during four days of celebrations for *Sjøforsvaret 200* ('Navy 200'). Eleven ships, four of them from the host nation, attended proceedings with Portsmouth-based Duncan the largest participant.

And as the largest and most advanced ship attending celebrations, Duncan drew big crowds. In the five hours her gangway was opened to the public, 2,165 Norwegians came aboard.

Even more Osloers caught sight of the destroyer's ship's company on the streets of the capital as they took part in an international march past and parade with sailors from Germany, Sweden, Finland, Poland and the Netherlands.

"I was very proud to be representing my country and the Royal Navy as we marched through Oslo. It was fantastic to see so many people out to watch the parade," said AB(WS) Jack Keeling.

Other activities included hosting Anglo-Norwegian talks between Rear Admiral Matt Parr (the RN's Commander Operations) and Rear Admiral Lars Saunes (Head of the Royal Norwegian Navy); sailors also attended the tattoo at which the Royal Marines musicians performed and a dinner at which the King of Norway was guest of honour.

The various ships taking part in festivities all provided teams for an international tug-of-war competition, but the Brits were defeated by a strong Polish team from the landing ship ORP Gniezno.

"The people of Oslo were wonderful hosts and Oslo is a very beautiful city," said Cdr James Stride, Duncan's Commanding Officer.

"It is only the second foreign port visit for HMS Duncan but one that will be fondly remembered by all involved for a long time to come."

Oslo was one of several cities around the rugged Norwegian coast celebrating two centuries of the country's naval history.

The bicentennial kicked off in the country's principal port – and home of the *Sjøforsvaret* – Bergen.

It's not an infrequent port of call for Her Majesty's Ships, but it was uncharted territory for **HMS Mersey**, who's typically limited to home waters on her fishery protection duties.

She struck across the North Sea and negotiated the maze of narrows and fjords before arriving at a plum location in Bryggen – with its distinctive, colourful waterfront – right in the heart of Bergen.

She was quickly joined by new French frigate FS Aquitaine, American destroyer USS James E Williams, and the German frigate FGS Lübeck. Alongside these larger ships were numerous smaller vessels, including the Dutch sail training ship HNMMS Urania and Norwegian fast patrol boats HNoMS Skjold and HNoMS Storm, each capable of reaching speeds in excess of 60kts.

With all the participants in place, birthday celebrations started with a parade which took in many of the historic sights of Bergen, including the imposing Bergenhus Fortress at the harbour entrance. The parade was well supported by locals, who lined the route, while local organisations and bands also joined in the march.

Over dogged a high further p visitors and ship

Celebr at the fa from M the No accom Navy's s by the defence a good taking p

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The capital, by the A largest before haggle a souveni

Fab in Jersey!



and fab in Cardiff too!!



Still raining in Bergen...



# ope\* in eight ships

\* And a bit of Africa...

the anniversary weekend – which was by a lot of rain – Mersey maintained tempo of engagements, ranging from parades and services to hosting groups of and foreign military staff for discussions o's tours.

parades concluded with a gala concert famous Grieghallen hall where volunteers Mersey were treated to a celebration of Norwegian Navy's history with musical paniment from the Royal Norwegian Navy symphony orchestra. The event, attended Norwegian Prime Minister and senior staff, was enjoyed by all and provided opportunity to mix with the other nations part in birthday celebrations.

Ship's central berth also gave Mersey's a prime opportunity to explore the 'y to the fjords', one of the highlights being w from the top nearby Fløyen mountain, i from the city centre by funicular railway. parades and official engagements te, HMS Mersey left Bergen with the other ships, sailing south through the stunning ian fjords to resume her regular mission . a gruelling schedule, it isn't often that s of the Fishery Protection Squadron get nce to visit foreign ports," said Mersey's dr David Gillett.

As been a real privilege to attend the tions for the Royal Norwegian Navy's anniversary and my ship's company left proud of our successful contribution."

ey doesn't get beyond UK waters that n spare a thought for the crew of HMS r.

domain is tiny – 1½ miles west into the Gibraltar, three miles into the Med in the th the 'cap' of the tooth three miles south uropa Point. It's the Naval equivalent of a goldfish bowl.

very now and then, they're allowed out owl. At least once a year, the boats of Gibraltar Squadron must demonstrate ility to range further afield and show their onal skill.

Scims plumped for Morocco's greatest d main port, Casablanca, for their outing (as navigational tests go, finding anca shouldn't be too hard: leave Gib, ht, then left, then hug the African coast miles. Bingo...).

what the 450-mile round trip does test rance. Scimitar isn't built for the open And Casablanca is at the very limit of the range.

nothing ventured...

O Lt Rob Garner rounded up the usual ts (sorry) – his ten-strong ship's company rs and Royal Marines – and headed for o, leaving Gib's waters in the safe hands itar's sister HMS Sabre.

visit allowed for a mix of official ments with the host nation's armed – building on close relations already between the Moroccan military and Royal r Regiment and Gibraltar Squadron on visits to the African country – and a spot ling the sights.

Moroccan Navy officers were surprised oot of Scimitar's size – at just 24 tonnes metres long she's among the smallest in the Royal Navy's inventory – could e fairly lengthy journey in open seas.

Brits visited the Moroccan Rabat, and were impressed I Hassan II Mosque – the third in the world – in Casablanca heading to the medina to and barter for suitable African rs.

"We see Morocco every day from Gibraltar's territorial waters, so it was great to get a chance to visit the country's biggest city. Visiting Casablanca was an enjoyable change of scenery," said AB 'Taff' Rogers, Scimitar's navs yeoman.

Mne Euan Clark added: "Sailing 200 miles into the Atlantic and down the coast to Casablanca in a patrol boat was a novel experience.

"As a Royal Marine I wouldn't normally do this sort of thing – I'm no longer a Strait of Gibraltar virgin!"

Lt Garner said the short visit to Casablanca had been very worthwhile on many levels.

"It gave us a great opportunity to build on our close friendship with our Moroccan allies, really test ourselves as professional mariners by taking Scimitar all the way there and back and gave everyone aboard a chance to sample a different culture," he added.

"Flying the flag, working with our allies and seeing the world – it's why we joined the Royal Navy."

Continuing the 'small boats in unusual locations' theme, to Jersey next, Albert Pier, St Helier, Jersey, to be precise, and a mini-RN flotilla.

**Five Offshore Raiding Craft** (one in special RM350 livery to celebrate the Corps' impending birthday), Her Majesty's Ships **Ranger** and **Puncher** and **Severn**, plus a **Lynx** from **815 NAS** and the **Royal Marines Band** from Lymington, all crossed the Channel for the Jersey Boat Show.

Although a relative newcomer on the boat show scene, Jersey is becoming a firm fixture – 30,000 visitors this year over its three days – with a regular RN presence.

Indeed, in addition to the aforementioned ships and their companies, sizeable contingents from submarine **HMS Talent** and frigate **HMS Iron Duke** (which is affiliated with the island) were also in Jersey to drum up interest in the Senior Service – bringing RN numbers at the maritime festival to 165.

"We had a huge amount of praise from islanders and the heads of Jersey – a rich reward for all the hard work put in by the grey and the green," said Cdre Jamie Miller, RN Regional Commander Wales and Western England.

"There was a really good mix of Royal Navy personnel – regulars and reservists, Royal Marines, Fleet Air Arm, Surface Fleet, Submarine Service – all branches of the Service drawn together and there was a great moral component because some of them had never met before."

All the RN kit on show was available for public inspection – the ORCs and Lynx at Weighbridge Place, opposite the showground, the ships in the port, while the bandies were out and about playing everything from Beat Retreat to jazz.

The musicians were also called on to provide music at Jersey's Sea Sunday service, remembering all that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters.

Conducting more business than most in great waters these past 12 months were the men and women of HMS Severn, who came away from the Channel Islands plus one cup.

Lieutenant Governor General Sir John McColl presented Lt Cdr Tim Berry and his team with the Jersey Cup, awarded annually to the fishery protection ship which has done the most to, er, protect the UK's fishery stocks.

Which almost brings us to the end of our grand tour.

And where should we end it? Cardiff, naturally.

Fresh from following the Russians around our island (see page 5), **HMS Dragon** made her second visit to the Welsh capital and the chance to sail into history.

Only nine military units in the past 130 years have been granted the Freedom of the City of Cardiff (not to be confused with freemen, of which there have been more than 60 from Churchill, Princess Di, Nelson Mandela and Pope John Paul II to Shirley Bassey) and only one of those was Royal Navy, the Type 42 destroyer which carried the name around the world.

Make that ten now with HMS Dragon joining the illustrious list – and an occasion which was the highlight of five days on Cardiff's rejuvenated waterfront.

The destroyer was paying her second visit to her twin city – sandwiched in between was her maiden deployment to the Gulf – and having not been for over two years, crammed a lot into her five days.

Hundreds of young people from schools and colleges across South Wales were invited aboard for three days of guided tours, followed by civic dignitaries and other guests went on board for a capability demonstration.

After the guided tours came the general public (more than 3,000 of them) who filed aboard to see what £1bn buys you on the warship front.

As for the bestowal of freedom on the ship, well that permitted the 190-strong formation of sailors and Royal Marines Musicians from Lymington to parade slap bang through the middle of the city centre...

...which they did...past lots of shoppers.

"This was a career highlight for me – it is not very often you get to visit your hometown's port, and it is even rarer to be granted the freedom of it," said 23-year-old LET(WE) Anthony Lewis from Bridgend.

His words were echoed by the Type 45 destroyer's CO, Capt Rex Cox, who told Cardiff council leader, Cllr Phil Bale:

"Moments like these are very important in the life of a ship. Our friendships and affiliations give a ship an unbreakable link to our society and as sailors come and go, these links will outlast us all and become a part of HMS Dragon's history.

"The ship's excellent relationship with Cardiff is made stronger by this great honour and I have no doubt it will endure for years to come."

And that concludes our tour (which is obviously not an attempt at a dubious segue linking lots of unconnected stories together). We hope you enjoyed the experience.

Pictures: LA(Phots) Alex Knott, RNPOTY, Dan Rosenbaum and Nicky Wilson, plus ship's companies

A cloudy Hamburg



Play it again, Scim!



Still fab in Jersey!



Bit overcast in Oslo

CLASSIC JACK



# Business can learn from Navy officers

BOTH the new *Troubleshooter* series on BBC2 and the *Troubleshooter* of the early 1990s have much in common besides charisma.

The business subjects of the new series might avoid being all at sea by steering the course recommended by Lord Jones.

Both the late Sir John Harvey-Jones and Digby Jones began their working life as Naval officers, thus sharing a certain sea sense, manifestly seeing and speaking sense and conducting their business above board, the latter an abiding trait of seafarers.

Today's business leaders would do well to learn from

the winning ways of these two troubleshooting captains of industry.

Whether at sea or ashore, honesty and fairness in the conduct of business, and good management of both staff and customers, help to avoid deep water and mutiny and help deliver success.

Indeed, perhaps a happy ship too, as well as the habit of victory that is our maritime tradition.

British business today needs something of a sea change if it is to compete internationally and win.

Lester May (Lt Cdr Rtd)  
Camden Town, London

## Thanks to caring Sam

MY husband is currently serving in the Army and we are stationed in Germany.

Our daughter is at Chichester College and was travelling back from Oxford on Sunday March 24 on a train from Basingstoke to Fareham.

On the train she had trouble with some men who were under the influence and were becoming very hands-on and making her feel very uncomfortable.

A young man was sitting behind her and just before her stop he got up and went to the doors when she approached the doors.

He introduced himself as Sam and that he was based at Portsmouth and was going to get off with her and make sure she got her next train safely.

He then waited with her and saw her safely on to her train, making sure the other men did not follow her before he then carried on with his own journey.

I am hoping that you may be able to print my letter to say thank you to Sam for helping our daughter in a very uncomfortable situation and showing the utmost consideration to someone that you did not know.

Louise Hunter  
Germany

# Few extras in the Service kit list

IN REPLY to D Taylor's kit list in April's edition of *Navy News*, it would appear he has left a couple of items out:

- Belt – for the holding up of trousers
- Name tape – for the printing of name on kit
- Pusser's dirk – jackknife for general use
- Approx 2ft sisal rope.

I joined HMS Vincent at Gosport as a junior boy entry from the Royal Hospital School in November 1956.

All items of clothing had to have your name sewn on in red silk during the first five weeks.

The Pusser's Dirk was worn on a lanyard round the waist with the knife in a rear pocket at all times.

After the first six months of training the piece of rope's end had to have been altered slightly. One had to have a back splice in it and the other end had to be pointed.

Then after 12 months teaching me to be a seaman I went to HMS Collingwood to train as an electrician whereby I picked up a toolbox to add to my kit.

I enclose a picture of my kit laid out for Flag Officer's inspection while on HMS Whitby in the Med in 1960.

PS: Great paper.



Ed Baker Bristol ● Ed Baker's kit laid out for inspection on HMS Whitby in 1960

## Square Rig

RE 'Leave uniform alone' in April's *Navy News*.

Although I agree entirely with the sentiments expressed by Mr Edward Dickens, from the Isle of Wight, I must point out that the Class II uniform, worn by Junior Ratings, is indeed 'Square Rig' and not 'Fore and Aft Rig' as stated in his letter.

The latter term is used to describe Class I uniform, worn by Senior Ratings and the old Class III rig that used to be worn by Writers, SBAs and Stores Assistants etc.

John de C Douglas  
Victoria, Australia



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tipple to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Ed Baker

## We had to buy own shoes

WITH reference to the article on Page 33 of April's *Navy News* "1957 kit list sparks memories".

It brought back memories of my time of joining up at HMS Raleigh in September 1954 as a Junior Stoker, 2nd Class.

At that time we were issued great coats and oilskins and it is believed that the Burberry was introduced some while after my training was finished, ie sometime in 1955.

Also in 1954 we were not issued shoes and, if memory serves well, these had to be bought out of your own pocket, usually from Naval tailors.

The question that has come to my mind a couple of times is how much it cost to kit out each new entry. Because, as Mr Taylor's list shows, the kit list

was very comprehensive.

One thing which I do remember was the No. 8 shirts made by Faulat of Belfast. The sleeves were so long that the Raleigh tailor was kept fairly well occupied in stitching a tuck in the arms of the shirts so that the hands were outside the sleeve.

How does the kit issue of today's new entries compare with those of yesteryear?

From glimpses seen of 'Navy persons' it seems that No. 8s are the standard wear for everything, even to going ashore in some cases.

It would be good to have some comments from members of the RN today.

JW (George) Sexton  
Preston

## In a whirl...

I LEFT the RN in 1963 having spent four years as an aircrewman.

We spent our time flying in very unreliable Westland Whirlwinds. The Ark Royal went to sea with two squadrons of MK7 Whirlwinds and came back with only one.

A number of the so called hotpotch crew died whilst carrying out this dangerous task.

Thanks for keeping me and a lot of ex-fishheads in touch.

Anthony 'Bagsy' Baker  
London

## Father haunted by experience in Dardanelles

MY FATHER ENR Fletcher was a Clerk (or whatever they called Paymaster Midshipmen then) and Secretary to the Captain (Algernon Heneage – later Admiral A Walker Heneage Vivian) aboard HMS Albion.

The ship had just taken German gold from Walvis Bay when she saw action in the

Dardanelles. I understand that my father saw the sinking of FS Bouvet.

Later, I understand that the Albion was off W Beach when lighters brought off the dead and wounded Lancashires.

My father, aged about 17, was at the foot of the gangway and had to decide whether the

soldiers were dead or could be saved.

He knew some of them personally and the memory gave him much distress for many years.

Tony Fletcher  
Beech Hill,  
Berkshire



LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one. We do, however, publish many on our website, [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk), accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

# ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS

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# My dad survived sinking of Quorn

I READ with interest the article in April's *Navy News* by Ken Tipper from Ocala, Florida, relating to the Hunt-class destroyer HMS Quorn.

Ken talks of his time as a telegraphist on the Quorn during World War 2.

I knew she had been sunk as my father was on the Quorn on the fateful night that she took a direct hit and sank very quickly.

My father, Edward Connolly, was a torpedo man and was off duty when she was hit.

Being an excellent swimmer he was quickly over the side and made his way to a life raft which contained the officers of the ship, the men were three-deep clinging to the raft webbing as the ship sank.

By morning many had succumbed to the cold and lost their lives in the cold water of the Channel and my father had managed to get closer into the raft webbing where he clung on before being picked up 12 hours later by another British ship.

Although Ken was not on the ship at the time of the sinking I was wondering if he knew my father?

Sadly my dad died of a heart attack aged just 63 in 1986.

He had a fairly short life but for his ability to swim however it may have been even shorter.

This picture may be of interest to any surviving crew members.

My father is in the middle. I do not know the identity of the other two men in the picture – maybe some of your readers may recognise them.

Edward J Connolly  
Essex



● Smoke engulfs HMS Maidstone in Fremantle Harbour

## Really hot in Oz

I THOUGHT you may be interested in the above picture of HMS Maidstone, which I served in during WWII.

We were in Fremantle Harbour, fully loaded with exploding torpedos and the like, when the ship in front of us caught fire.

There was great panic, if we had caught, Fremantle would

have been a bonfire, but the Yanks pulled us out of harm's way.

We were burned and scorched from bow to stern.

It took us two days scrubbing and painting before Capt Shadwell let us sail. We took part in the capture of Hong Kong.

Sid F Tiffin  
Surrey

## Tribute to Merchants

I AM writing about the efforts of one man whose response to the shipwreck of HMS Sturdy was crucial in assuring the safe recovery of the majority of the ship's company.

Capt D Sinclair, Merchant Navy, was on leave at the time and signalled the destroyer not to abandon ship and to await dawn, by which time the tide would have gone out. This advice was followed and all the remaining crew were able to reach safety.

Last year the Battle of the Atlantic was marked and this brought to our attention the

dreadful cost suffered by the Merchant Navy.

Capt Sinclair was master of the SS Empire Eland, which was torpedoed in an Atlantic Convoy. There were no survivors.

I have produced a document which is a memorial to his loss and records the part he took in the rescue of the Sturdy ship's company.

I am trying to locate relatives of the ship's company. I was 14 when the ship ran aground and am now 88.

Michael Gibson (Lt Cdr Rtd)  
Plymouth

# Fond memories of life on Doris

I HAVE read the article in March's edition of *Navy News* regarding the Gallipoli Campaign and I thought that the following might be of interest as it does record a movement by one of the ships involved in that campaign.

My father served as a volunteer in the County of London Yeomanry during the First World War.

In 1915 they were serving in Egypt but in July they were embarked in SS Caledonia and sailed to the Dardenelles.

They arrived in Lemnos on August 16 and were then disembarked to HMS Doris (an Eclipse-class cruiser) on July 17 and were landed at Kangaroo beach on July 18 1915.

He then fought on the Gallipoli Peninsula until November 2 and his diary relates dreadful times.

They were evacuated in SS Ermine to Mudros, where he saw the Mauretania as a hospital ship.

Father always spoke very fondly of his overnight trip in HMS Doris.

He estimated there were in excess of 2,000 troops embarked, and he often recalled to me the hospitality of the sailors, how they gave all the troops cups of tea from their own rations.

He told me that I had made the right decision in joining the Royal Navy as in a ship you were

always in your home whereas soldiers had to live in trenches and were always on the move.

Further to this and on another subject:

In 1954 I was serving in HMS Cheerful (pennant number M88, Algerine-class minesweeper) part of the 4th Minesweeping Squadron.

On May 15 1954 we, the 4th M/S Squadron, anchored off the Nore and welcomed Queen Elizabeth on her return from her Commonwealth tour by lining ship and giving three cheers – the only time in my career that I did this.

The first edition of the *London Evening News* of that day had an aerial shot of HMS Cheerful, dressed overall, with the Royal Yacht sailing by and the 104th Minesweeping Squadron (Ton class) in the background with the headline on the front page, *A cheerful return for HM Majesty*.

We, the ship's company were all given a copy of this newspaper and a copy of the photograph.

Alas the paper has gone the way of many things but I still have the photograph with an *Evening News* stamp on the reverse just to prove the truth of this tale. It doesn't seem like 60 years ago.

C D Linington  
Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

# Confusion over WOs

I AM replying to ex-Fleet Chief Thorne's letter in April's *Navy News* about the reintroduction of Warrant Officers to the RN.

I too was an early promotion. No real thought was given to the employment of these new Fleet Chiefs/WOs. Several CPOs carried on doing exactly the same job but in the new rate.

In my opinion too many were promoted then and in subsequent tranches.

The new badges of rank were not very distinguishable from the CPO.

Mr Thorne is correct in saying that we should have been called WOs from the start. On my warrant, the secretary of state promoted me to WO, no mention of Fleet Chief.

This of course created all sorts of problems, particularly in dockyards. When you answered the phone as Mr, the caller had no idea and most thought they were talking to a civilian.

Eventually all of the above were sorted out but the question of WO/Fleet Chief took a while longer. WOs were part of the wardroom in the old days

but when they were reintroduced, the WO was put on the lower deck and the word Chief was retained in their title – more confusion.

The RN did not base this new rank on the American system, their WO is part of the officer structure.

One of my last jobs was Deputy Royal Naval Liaison Officer, Andros Island, Bahamas. There were about 800 people on the island, of which 650 were US civilians.

All the junior rates saluted me as they would their own WOs. Eventually I told them I was an enlisted man and did not rate a salute.

Anyway the rank of WO took a while to sort out but eventually it was done. And then the WO2 was brought in for no reason whatsoever and confused everything again.

My warrant was signed by the defence secretary at the time Fred Mulley. He was once photographed fast asleep, sat next to the Queen at an RAF flypast.

P Fitzgerald  
Devon

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# By the Navy

A BRAND-new aircraft carrier, featuring the latest word in accommodation and equipment, is very much in the forefront of our thoughts in June 2014.

Just as it was for our predecessors when they put together the very first edition of *Navy News* for June 1954 – 60 years ago.

In our case it is HMS Queen Elizabeth, a ship of remarkable dimensions and capabilities – the largest yet built for the Senior Service.

Six decades ago it was HMS Albion, a Centaur-class light carrier, which had been long in the build – laid down in 1944, work was slowed on her after the war ended, and it was only the outbreak of the Korean War that prompted the government to complete her.

She was commissioned in May 1954 and spent a good deal of time in the Far East, including



● A (very civilised) Portsmouth Navy News meeting in late 1954; editor Revd Tregenna-Piggott is third from the right

action in the Korean War, before she was decommissioned in 1972, having served as both an aircraft and commando carrier.

She was the front-page lead in the first edition of *Portsmouth Navy News*, a title which lasted just 18 months.

It began in modest fashion as a result of typical Naval can-do attitude – and was the result of two converging trains of thought.

The initial impetus came from Vice Admiral Sir Ian McGeoch, then Commander of the RN Barracks (now HMS Nelson).

He felt that Portsmouth should have a publication in the same vein as the *Guzz Gazette* in Devonport and Chatham's *Chats*, and sent out a paper to that effect.

There was general support for the idea, including (crucially) from the finance side – senior Supply Officer Capt A T Phillips and his assistant, Lt Harry Berridge, were both on board.

As the idea gathered shape, it was pointed out that a Free Church padre in the barracks, the Rev W J E Tregenna-Piggott, was a former editor of *Chats*, and he said he would be happy to edit a newspaper, though not a magazine.

Money for the project would be found in a rather unexpected source – the barracks' Sullage Fund, which had built up to the princely sum of £113 (about £7,000 in today's terms) raised by allowing contractors to take waste from the kitchens.

In the event, no one is certain as to whether *Navy News* owes its birth to pigswill or not, because at the same time John Mason, of printers Gale and Polden, approached the Royal Navy in

mainly by former Naval personnel, the paper enjoyed a degree of independence which quickly formed its distinctive voice.

A message from Admiral Edelsten, then Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth Command, observed that "the newspaper sets out with the avowed object not to make record sales, not to make capital or to put over propaganda, but with the simple approach which recognises that we all in the Navy depend upon each other, and in that spirit to give the best value and benefit to the largest number of readers."

An accompanying editorial by the editor noted that they could have filled the edition twice over – and that is just as true today; we are rarely searching for stories as the Naval Service and the wider Naval community continue to make their presence felt in so many ways at home and overseas.

Edition number 1 had a drafting column, news from various ships and establishments, and book reviews – all of which continue to feature 60 years on – as well as a 'woman's page' which offered recipes and advice on relaxation.

The second edition, a Fleet Air Arm special, introduced a Royal Naval Association page – and our relationship with the shipmates of the RNA, formalised in October 1955 when the paper became their official journal, is as

## Rationing ends – and England face Uruguay in World Cup...

GREAT Britain in 1954 was still feeling the effects of six years of war, but was a nation looking ahead to a brighter future.

Queen Elizabeth II had reigned for just over two years in June 1954, and Sir Winston Churchill was Prime Minister.

When the first edition of *Portsmouth Navy News* rolled off the presses, the country had just over a month to wait before the last vestiges of wartime rationing were lifted.

Food rationing began in January 1940, with limits imposed on bacon, butter and sugar.

All meat was rationed from March 1940, and other items, including clothing, followed rapidly.

Rationing was gradually eased three years after the war ended, starting with flour in July 1948, followed by clothing in March 1949.

Just over a year later, in May 1950, rationing ended for non-essential items such as chocolate biscuits, treacle and mincemeat, while petrol rationing, imposed in 1939, ended in May 1950.

Sugar went off-ration in 1953, and by July 1954 all food was unrestricted – though some items (especially cheese) took longer to recover from the wartime squeeze than others.

The average weekly salary in 1954 was £9 9s 2d for men (over £5 for women...) and the maximum wage for a professional footballer was £15, having been set the previous year.

1954 saw the first appearance of a Wimpy Bar, as part of a Lyons Corner House in London – fast-food giant McDonald's did not appear in its modern guise until 1955, when Ray Croc

opened his first franchised restaurant in Illinois.

The average cost of a gallon of petrol was just under 4s 6d in 1954 (around 22p) and a four-door Morris Minor saloon (top speed 62 mph, 0-50mph in 28.6 seconds, according to *The Motor* magazine) would cost some £630.

The average cost of a house in the UK in 1954 was £1,860, according to the Nationwide Building Society.

Doris Day's *Secret Love* was at the top of the hit parade in 1954 – the UK charts had only existed for a couple of years, and were based on a small sample of shops around the country.

Television was, by today's standards, limited in choice (though some prefer quality over quantity...), with the BBC Television Service channel enjoying a monopoly until Independent Television began broadcasting in 1955.

By 1954 there were almost 1.5 million sets in the UK, and the viewer might enjoy such shows as *Come Dancing* (first broadcast in 1949), *Andy Pandy* (started 1950), *Flower Pot Men* (started in 1952), *The Good Old Days* (which made its debut in 1953) and *Panorama* (also a year old in 1954).

The West Midlands was the hotbed of football, with Wolverhampton Wanderers taking the First Division title and West Bromwich Albion the FA Cup, having finished runners-up to Wolves, just nine miles distant, in the league.

England were knocked out of the 1954 World Cup in Switzerland by Uruguay, a team they face again in the group stage on the 19th of this month in São Paulo.

Portsmouth with a proposal for a Command newspaper.

His firm agreed to print the paper on their Aldershot presses, and the *Navy News* Management Committee was in business.

The Rev Tregenna-Piggott was in charge as 1,200 or so copies rolled off the presses in late May 1954, the 12-page monochrome paper costing 3d.

It covered not only Naval matters ('By the Navy – For the Navy') but also subjects of wider interest to sailors, veterans, their families and friends.

Although created within a Naval environment and run



● Cartoons have always featured prominently in *Navy News*, from early examples such as John Canham's take on midget submarines from June 1955 (above) through the golden era of Tugg (right) and Smiles to the whimsical take on Royal Navy history in Micah's *Naval Quirks* (see page 40)

## The changing face of the Royal Navy



IT ALL began with a 12-page monochrome edition, with just over a thousand or so copies rolling off the presses of Gale and Polden in Aldershot.

And over the years *Navy News* has embraced technological advances in order to ensure that news and features are gathered from ships and units at home and abroad in short order.

The paper was at first produced with a staff consisting mainly of retired officers and willing volunteers, with just a handful overseeing the production process.

It very quickly gained a faithful following in the Senior Service, and despite disparaging comments about the 'Dockyard Dandy' matelots were always quick to grab a copy and scan it for words or pictures about their ships or their oppos.

The impact of changing technology in the early days was relatively slow. A new typewriter ribbon would be just the ticket to aid the production process in the 1950s.

# for the Navy

ROYAL NAVY **NAVY NEWS**

JUNE 2014



● The December 1954 edition of *Navy News* hits the streets – here the paper is loaded into Royal Navy vans at the Aldershot printing works of Gale and Polden

important to *Navy News* today as it ever was.

Edition 2 also introduced a sports section at the back – another enduring feature.

The fourth edition contained an article on Royal Navy aviators training alongside their US Navy equivalents on fast jets in Florida, another theme that persists today (as we will find out in next month's edition).

January 1955 saw the first news story, rather than feature, on the front page – a picture story of a problematic tow through the Bay of Biscay.

The March 1955 edition – the first of 16 pages – carried a detailed report on the 1955-56 Navy Estimates and the role of the Royal Navy in the thermo-nuclear age.

Points raised by the article are by no means unfamiliar to the reader in the 21st century – the vital role of the Royal Navy in protecting sea lanes and thereby UK's trade and security, the need to keep at the cutting edge of technology and the age-old challenge of recruiting and retaining sailors.

Indeed, in 1955, the lure of steady and well-paid work ashore in a burgeoning economy meant the Royal Navy was facing difficulties in recruitment and retention.

The tone was also being set in Letters to the Editor – a typical example being in November 1955, with a correspondent taking the paper to task over Nelson's injuries, the editor cheerfully putting up a strong

defence over the details and semantics of the phrase "lost an eye".

The letters page grew into an integral part of the lines of communication within the Royal Navy, with correspondents regularly questioning a policy, situation or decision and receiving a definitive reply from an expert – an essential means of dialogue in any listening organisation, however sensitive the subject.

The letters page also became, over the years, a platform for reminiscences and the chance for old sea dogs to josh the next generation (while still being fiercely proud of the Andrew).

And in our early days, of course, some of those old salts were recalling their service in Queen Victoria's Navy...

In January 1956 we dropped 'Portsmouth' from the title and became *Navy News*, reflecting the official link that was forged that month with the Naval Air Command.

The Rev Tregenna-Piggott retired in the summer of 1957, to be succeeded by his assistant and former *Navy News* treasurer Lt Berridge (ret'd), who continued until the mid-1960s.

By that time *Guzz Gazette* and *Chatham Chats* had fallen by the wayside, and when the Admiralty sought a direct line to their people in the Fleet, *Navy News* proved to be a far more cost-effective option than a proposed glossy magazine, which finally positioned the paper as the Senior Service's premier publication.

On that basis, the Navy Department agreed to cover the cost of a professional journalist to take over as editor, and the die was cast for the following half-century – as indeed was a strong link with journalists from the *Portsmouth Evening News* (later *The News*).

In the late 1960s the production and printing of the paper was transferred to Portsmouth and Sunderland Newspapers (P&SN), owners of the local paper in Portsmouth, who were just opening up a state-of-the-art headquarters at Hilsea.

The use of sophisticated new presses allowed more creative use of colour – and in the days before emails and data, the move meant easy access to a local production plant to put pages together and sign them off.

The Navy's newspaper was a blue-riband contract for P&SN, and stayed with the Portsmouth outfit until just under ten years ago, when a change in strategy at Hilsea – by now part of the Johnston Press regime – meant we had to move to another printer.

That opened up more possibilities to make full use of digital imagery and high-speed communications, which means that we can now change words and pictures just minutes from deadline (we are much obliged, Wyndeham Roche!)

A move from Barham Block in HMS Nelson to Leviathan Block allowed an expansion in the commercial activities of the title, and at one stage in the late 1990s *Navy News* supported 25 staff, including a website team, marketing department and a small local sales team.

The application of technology



● Editor Bill Wilkinson, the first professional journalist in the role, who ran the paper from 1966-77

and changing commercial priorities meant that team has been gradually reduced to the present ten (see below), and the latest move of office has been our greatest in terms of distance and impact.

The editorial team now works from the Navy Media and Communications department in Navy Command Headquarters on Whale Island, reflecting our position as part of the wider

communications group.

The editorial team – editor Mike Gray, news editor Richard Hargreaves and production editor Lorraine Proudlock – all cut their teeth with *The News* in Portsmouth, as did many of their professional predecessors.

At the time of writing, our business department was expected to follow us to Whale Island within a matter of weeks.

*Navy News* still aims to inform, educate and entertain its diverse, enthusiastic and knowledgeable readership.

We are proud to count several members of the Royal Family, including Her Majesty the Queen, amongst our audience – perhaps hardly surprising when you consider the Naval pedigree of the House of Windsor.

For serving personnel *Navy News* is not only one of the Royal Navy's main internal communications channels, but also a chance to keep in touch with 'oppos' in other ships or branches.

Former Naval Service personnel, from wartime ABs to recently-retired admirals, go through our pages with a fine-tooth comb, always willing to challenge a dubious claim or correct a detail (though usually, thankfully, with an exhortation to 'carry on the good work!').

But that's enough about us – on with the July edition...



# Royal Navy's official newspaper

But the 1960s saw improvements in communications as well as printing processes, and by 1969, when the paper was printed at Hilsea in Portsmouth, spot colour had arrived (simple coloured blocks), followed the same year by full colour reproduction of photographs.

There followed a couple of decades of classic newspaper production processes.

The team at HMS Nelson would write stories and sketch out the shape of pages (including the size and position of headlines, pictures, captions and the like), which would be sent to the production department at Hilsea.

There the words would be run out as phototypeset lengths of paper (hot metal printing generally fell out of use in the 1960s and 70s) which would have hot wax applied to the back, be cut to size and fitted onto a paper grid.

An image of the finished page would be transferred to a photosensitive plate, which

would then be prepared and attached to the presses for the print run.

The most far-reaching changes to the way the paper was produced – and the way the editorial team gathered information – came with the development of digital technology (and, to a certain extent the demise of the old print unions).

As computers became intrinsic to everyday life, so *Navy News* staff moved on to Apple computers in the mid-1990s, taking the whole process of writing and designing the pages in-house.

Communications with ships and establishments similarly shifted from military signals to telephones and later emails, and at around the same time the use of hard-copy photographic prints started to decline, replaced by digital images.

In 2014 the *Navy News* editorial team can expect to contact a ship on the far side of the world by email, and receive

words and images back within minutes, which can be placed straight onto an electronic page and transmitted as a data package to our printing plant in Cornwall in equally short order.

In many respects *Navy News* operates as a newspaper in miniature.

The three-strong team of journalists writes, rewrites and sub-edits the entire paper, designing pages and deciding on priorities for each edition.

Imagery is a crucial element of the paper, and the vast majority of our photographs come from members of the Royal Navy's Photographic Branch – we are indeed lucky to be working so closely with such a talented group of sailors.

Some of the best examples of their work can be seen on pages 14 and 15 of this edition.

Graphics officer Andy Brady adds illustrations – typical examples of his work can be seen in our D-Day supplement this month – and tidies up images and pages ready for printing.

Stories for the paper also come from other members of the Royal Navy's Media and Communications team, while all three *Navy News* journalists contribute to the wider Navy output – including the new version of the Royal Navy website (see [www.royalnavy.mod.uk](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk)), launched just last month under RN Head of Digital Helen Craven – former production editor of *Navy News*, and who was responsible for the innovation of a full-page picture on the front cover in March 2007 which we have continued ever since.

The editorial team also checks and proof-reads all the pages before they are sent for printing, aided by editorial office manager Sue Sullivan and archivist-cum-image manager Trevor Muston – one of several roles the two *Navy News* veterans undertake.

Business manager Lisa Taw, another long-serving member of the team (a quarter of a century on the books), oversees support functions such as marketing and

distribution, while Anne Young (who joined *Navy News* in 1994) looks after our thousands of subscribers.

Sheila Thompson is our one-person advertising department, while finance officer Melanie Gibb ensures that *Navy News* remains a cost-effective messenger for the Navy, whether keeping the Naval community abreast of developments as one of the key internal communications channels or telling the wider world of the Royal Navy's capabilities through over-the-counter sales and subscriptions.

There are plenty of other people who have contributed to the ongoing development of the Senior Service's official newspaper – too numerous to mention by name here.

But our 'reporters' in the field – the Public Relations Officers in ships and squadrons and establishments around the UK and across the world – are vital to our output, ensuring we are up-to-date with deployments by

sending us reports of the vital work they carry out in keeping the oceans and trade routes open to shipping – a massive responsibility for the Royal Navy, as 95 per cent of Britain's economic activity depends on the oceans, and every year Britain imports goods worth £524 billion.

They also report on their patrols against those who seek to use the sea for illegal purposes or for terrorism, and the exercises and joint operations with allied nations who value the input of a trusted and professional organisation.

And they report on the humanitarian work carried out at home and abroad, with recent months providing typical examples in the efforts of sailors and marines during the winter flooding across England and the much-appreciated efforts of the sailors of HM ships *Daring* and *Illustrious* in the Philippines following the devastation of Typhoon Haiyan.

To all of you go our thanks.



# Memorial honours Birkenhead victims

A MEMORIAL has been unveiled in Birkenhead dedicated to the victims of one of the worst maritime disasters of the 19th century.

HMS Birkenhead, a steam frigate built by John Laird's shipbuilders in Birkenhead, sank off the coast of Gansbaai, South Africa, on February 26 1852.

Out of 638 people on board, only 193 survived. Many victims were taken by sharks.

The tragedy was the first occasion when troops were ordered to 'stand fast' and the protocol of 'women and children first' was used.

As a result, all women and children aboard the vessel survived.

The action became famous as the 'Birkenhead Drill' throughout the British Empire, capturing a spirit of Britishness, and was used when RMS Titanic sank in 1912.

The phrase was also used by Rudyard Kipling in his poem *A Soldier An' Sailor Too*, which was read at the memorial service.

The memorial was unveiled on Woodside Promenade by the Mayor of Wirral, Cllr Dave Mitchell, and the Lord Lieutenant of Merseyside, Dame Lorna Muirhead.

They laid wreaths, as did representatives of the Armed Forces. Pebbles from Gansbaai beach, where the survivors swam ashore, surround the memorial, which consists of three steel



● The memorial to HMS Birkenhead was unveiled on Woodside Promenade

panels. The memorial was designed through a competition organised and judged by Cammell Laird shipyard, Andy Liston of New Brighton Lifeboat Station and Wirral Council.

The winning design was submitted by Jemma Twigg, of Birkenhead Sixth Form College.

The memorial was then created by Cammell Laird's apprentices,

with materials donated and costs met by Cammell Laird.

Cammell Laird chief executive John Syvret said: "This is a very powerful initiative that the company immediately wanted to support given our connection to HMS Birkenhead.

"It is very fitting that the tragic story of the ship, and the origins of 'women and children

first', should be remembered in the form of such a striking memorial on Merseyside for future generations.

"It is important that our apprentices understand the long history of Cammell Laird. This memorial helps ensure, even after more than 160 years, that the heroism and courage of the men that day is not forgotten."

## New cross for cemetery

THE first phase of work to site a Cross of Sacrifice at Glasnevin Cemetery in Dublin has been completed.

This phase of the project was marked with the laying of a foundation stone by the Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, Theresa Villiers, and the Minister for Arts Heritage and the Gaeltacht, Jimmy Deenihan, TD.

The Cross of Sacrifice at Glasnevin is the first to be erected in the Republic of Ireland.

The cemetery's memorial walls honour Servicemen who died in the first and second world wars. There are more than 200 war graves within the cemetery.

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# Train honours boat

A SUBMARINE is now trundling around the flat countryside of eastern England.

Yes, you read that correctly, for a train has been named after Britain's last surviving midget submarine from World War 2.

Veteran and serving submariners and train chiefs from East Midlands Trains gathered at Lincoln station to name X24 Expeditious.

Why Lincoln? Well, the X-craft of the same name was built by Marshall & Sons in nearby Gainsborough.

One of the team of engineers who built the small boat was the father of David Norton, a senior conductor with the railway operator, who was instrumental in getting a train named to honour the X-craft men – and those who built the ingenious little submarine. The real X24 is on display at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport. It took part in two operations to knock out a floating dock in Bergen, in Nazi-occupied Norway, in 1944.

Her namesake train received its new title 70 years to the day



● Tim Sayer, Engineering Director for East Midlands Trains and Lt Cdr Frank Powell, Chairman of the Lincoln branch of the Submariners Association, unveil X24 Expeditious at Lincoln station

of that first attack.

"We would never have imagined that from writing an article in the *Lincolnshire Echo* two years ago, advertising for relatives of the engineers that built the X-craft submarines at Marshall & Sons to come forward, we would get to witness this historic event," said Lt Cdr Frank Powell, chairman of the Lincolnshire branch of the Submariners' Association.

"Today's event has come

about by one man's enthusiasm and initiative, to see X24 Expeditious, the submarine that his father helped to build. That person is David Norton and we have him to thank for today."

"It is humbling to have been invited to this ceremony representing not only today's Royal Navy submariners, but honouring the memory of the incredibly brave men," said CPO David Bathgate, serving at nearby RAF Waddington.



● A trademark pose from Admiral of the Fleet Sir David Beatty – cap at a rakish angle, hands partly in pockets – on the quarterdeck of his flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth, the barrels of her 15in main guns plugged by ornate tampions

Picture: Imperial War Museum Q 68662

# Just tampion

SITTING resolutely on her throne, this is England's Virgin Queen recreated in brass.

Once this figure, 29cm (12in) tall and 20cm (7½in) wide, helped to protect the most powerful weapon in the Royal Navy's arsenal: the mighty Mk1 15in gun, mainstay of the 'big gun' Fleet for three decades in the turbulent 20th century.

The ornate design could be found on the tampions of HMS Queen Elizabeth, the most advanced and potent battleship in the world when she entered service at the end of 1914.

Tampions were – and remain – 'plugs' inserted in the end of a gun barrel which was exposed to the elements to prevent water damaging the innards. In the case of the super-dreadnought principal armament, the barrel was 16.5m (54ft) long.

And when the tampion was removed for action, an 879kg (1,938lb) shell hurtled out of the barrel at more than twice the speed of sound (2,695kmh/1,675mph) and was capable of hitting a target nearly 30 kilometres (19 miles) away.

This particular tampion came into the possession of Fleet Air Arm veteran Kevin Rixon's father, who served in HMS Queen Elizabeth as an able seaman.

"My father served on the battleship in World War 1, and

on being drafted the tampion must have somehow fallen into his kitbag!" says Kevin, who spent 23 years in the Royal Navy, leaving as a chief petty officer air engineer mechanic.

"For as long as I can remember it served as a doorstep in all the houses we lived in.

"It was without mounting so I mounted it on a bell-shaped backing to give more effect. I hold this plaque as a precious memory of my father as I only have his medals from both wars and his Service records."

The battleship fought at Gallipoli but missed the titanic clash of dreadnoughts at Jutland.

At the war's end, she was flagship of Admiral Beatty and hosted negotiations with German commanders ahead of the surrender of the entire German Fleet in November 1918.

She remained in service until the late 1940s, seeing extensive action in the Mediterranean in particular before being broken up.

Her name has been resurrected with the new carrier, to be named on July 4 by the Queen.

The new ship's company are keen to stoke memories of their forebear on the 65,000-tonne warship, collecting mementos from the battleship, and hopefully hosting a visit from some veterans of the old dreadnought in the near future.



# Tribute to D-Day's forgotten planner

ADMIRAL Sir Bertram Ramsay – the forgotten architect of the Dunkirk evacuation and D-Day landings – was remembered at Cambridge University's Churchill Archives Centre.

Highlights from Ramsay's personal archive – which includes his D-Day diary, maps and photographs, eyewitness accounts from Dunkirk, and correspondence with Field Marshal Montgomery – went on display as a distinguished army of speakers paid tribute to the man who masterminded the British landings at Normandy. Ramsay's role required detailed planning as well as inter-Service and international diplomacy of the highest order.

When Churchill suggested that he and King George VI should be allowed to witness the June 6 landings, Ramsay, according to his diary, managed to persuade both that the risk was unacceptable.

The keynote speaker was Dr Andrew Gordon, a British naval historian currently putting the

finishing touches to an eagerly-anticipated biography of Ramsay.

The biography, a preview of which will be given at Churchill, is a timely reminder and fitting memorial to Ramsay, who was killed in 1945 when his plane crashed in France, en-route to meet Montgomery in Brussels.

Joining Dr Gordon was Cdre Michael Clapp, commander of the Falklands Amphibious Task Group during the 1982 conflict, and Mrs Fanny Huggill, a 'Ramsay Wren' during WWII, who gave a first-hand account of working with Ramsay – including her recollection of being on duty as Operation Neptune (the amphibious assault element of Operation Overlord) unfolded.

Allen Packwood, Director of the Churchill Archives Centre, said: "Sadly, because of Admiral Ramsay's untimely death, his undoubted contribution to the Second World War has been somewhat overshadowed by those who lived and were able to write their memoirs and receive their honours."





● George Williams receives his medals at long last

# Veterans reveal River Plate tribute

## Medals lost in the post

A WORLD War 2 sailor was finally awarded his medals – 64 years after they were lost in the post.

Former CPO George Williams, 91, from Rayleigh, was presented with six wartime medals for bravery in a surprise ceremony arranged by his son.

Stephen Williams, a solicitor from East Bergholt, heard many wartime naval stories from his father over the years, including his service in a minesweeper at the D-Day landings.

After some digging, Stephen found his father's bravery should have resulted in some distinguished medals. His research confirmed that six medals were issued on July 12 1950 and sent to an address in East Ham, London – but they never arrived.

The blunder has now been resolved and Mr Williams' medals – the 1939-1945 Star, the Atlantic Star, the Pacific Star, the France and Germany Clasp, the War Medal 1939-45 and the Defence Medal – were presented to him by Capt Warren, Naval Adviser to the Australian High Commission at the Royal Hospital School.

George Williams said: "It felt beautiful. I've been waiting for these medals for more than 60 years but I'm finally satisfied."

Stephen Williams said: "He is a tiny man, just 5ft 2in, but what he did – along with many others – makes him a giant amongst men."

SURVIVORS of the first major naval battle of World War 2 gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum to unveil a memorial commemorating the event.

The Battle of the River Plate took place 75 years ago, and fewer than a dozen veterans are still alive from this, the only episode of the war to take place in South America.

Four River Plate veterans who served in HMS Ajax and Exeter unveiled the Battle of the River Plate Memorial – the 300th at the Arboretum.

More than 250 people attended the unveiling. The service of dedication was conducted by Revd Paul Kerr, and after Basil Trott, one of the survivors, had read the Exhortation, the Last Post was played by a retired Royal Marines Bugler, followed by two minutes silence and then Reveille.

Then veterans John Garrard and Ted Wicks (Ajax) and Basil Trott and Jim London (Exeter) stepped forward to unveil the polished granite memorial, which had been covered by the Commodore's Broad Pennant from HMS Ajax.

Cdre Paul Hammond relayed a message from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, in which he said that the battle was a fine example of fighting spirit.

He was followed by High Commissioner for New Zealand Sir Lockwood Smith, whose address reflected the part HMS Achilles – crewed by New Zealand sailors – played in the battle, and also events which have taken place in Auckland to mark past anniversaries.

Representatives from Canada and Uruguay joined relatives of the ships' companies of Ajax



● Front row from left, River Plate veterans John Garrard and Ted Wicks and on the other side of the memorial, Basil Trott and Jim London

and Exeter. Also attending were relatives – including his sons Henry and Stephen – of Cdre Henry Harwood, who commanded Hunting Group G at the battle.

The ceremony was also attended by Sea Scouts from the 1st Hampton Hill Achilles Sea Scouts and the 4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts.

Standards were paraded by the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association, the City of Lichfield Royal British Legion and HMS Exeter Associations.

Capt Stephen and Cdr Henry Harwood noted "how appropriate it was that, in addition to memorials in Uruguay, Canada and New Zealand, there was now one in the UK."

Capt Tom Tulloch read a letter of greetings from Mayor Steve Parish, mayor of the town of Ajax in Canada, which was named after the cruiser.

After the service Sebastian Harwood buried a time capsule containing a record of those who served at the battle and sacrificed their lives during the war, together with records of those who supported the commissioning and dedication of the memorial.

The Battle of the River Plate

took place on December 13 1939, when ships from the Royal Navy's South American Division took on the might of Germany's Graf Spee, which had been attacking British merchant ships in the South Atlantic.

Cdre Henry Harwood ordered the cruisers HMS Ajax, Achilles and Exeter to an area east of the River Plate – an estuary between Argentina and Uruguay.

On the morning of December 13 Exeter investigated smoke and signalled, "I think it is a pocket battleship."

The Graf Spee initially fired on Exeter while Ajax and Achilles closed in, causing significant damage to the German vessel. Exeter had to retire from the battle after suffering damage while Ajax and Achilles shadowed Graf Spee into Montevideo, Uruguay.

Graf Spee's commanding officer, Capt Hans Langsdorff, requested 14 days to repair her damage but Uruguay only allowed 72 hours.

Knowing that escape was no longer an option Graf Spee was scuttled in the River Plate on December 17.

The battle brought the first Royal Navy victory of World War 2 and gave a much-needed lift to

the country's morale.

In June members of the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association will travel to Ajax, near Toronto in Ontario, to share in their celebrations.

Ben and Jonathan Harwood will present their grandfather's day uniform to the town.

On December 13 a lunch will be held in Portsmouth to mark the actual anniversary.

The National Memorial Arboretum, the UK's centre of remembrance, honours those who have served, and continue to serve, the UK.

The dedication of the Battle of the River Plate memorial marks a milestone for the site.

Sarah Montgomery, managing director of the National Memorial Arboretum, said: "Reaching the 300th memorial milestone is very exciting for us and illustrates the ever growing significance of the National Memorial Arboretum as the place where our nation remembers."

"We are delighted to be marking this landmark along with the HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association, whose memorial is a very welcome addition to the Arboretum."

## Conference focus is on memorial dedication

THE focus of the RNA Conference is normally on business undertaken during the Saturday.

And while important matters will still be discussed at the Royal Court Hotel, on the outskirts of Coventry, thoughts will be on a site 20 miles to the north-west.

For it is here, in the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas in Staffordshire, that the much-anticipated Naval Service Memorial will be dedicated on Sunday June 15 – a memorial in honour of all those who have been, and continue to be, part of the Naval Service.

The idea was conceived to mark the 60th anniversary of the RNA Charter, and is the Association's gift to the Service.

Coaches have been laid on for shipmates to attend the event, with the first ones leaving the Royal Court Hotel at 8.30am.

Coaches also stop at the Britannia Coventry Hotel – priority on early coaches will be given to those who have roles at the ceremony, including Area stewards and standard bearers.

The last coach is due to leave for the arboretum at 9.45am; after that it will be down to shipmates to make their own way.

Standard bearers will rehearse at the memorial site at 10.30am, where a final parade brief will be held at 10.50 for personnel involved.

All shipmates intending to march must be ready at the Armed Forces Memorial by 11.20am at the latest, with the parade stepping off 20 minutes later.

The parade includes the Royal Marines Band, the Queen's Colour of the RNR, a Guard from HMS Forward, a Royal Naval contingent, National Standards and branch standards of the RNA, naval associations and members of the International Maritime Confederation, and the Irish Naval Association.

Just before midday the royal guests – Prince and Princess Michael of Kent – will arrive at the memorial, and the service will start after a flypast.

Other VIPs include First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Armed Forces Minister Mark Francois.

The service should finish by 12.45pm, at which point invited guests will join a royal reception.

Coaches will return to the hotels between 1.30pm and 4pm, departing as they fill up.

## £50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our April edition (right) was defence boat HMS Droxford, which between 1955 and 1965 was known as HMS Dee. The winning entry was submitted by Mr N Pardoe, of Much Wenlock, Shropshire.

The subject of this month's puzzle (above) was a frigate launched on the Isle of Wight in March 1960. She ended her days as a target ship off the coast of Scotland in June 1987.

What was her name? We have removed her pennant number in this image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2



8BY. Coupons giving the correct answer will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. The closing date for entries is July 13.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our August edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

### MYSTERY PICTURE 232

Name .....

Address .....

My answer: .....

## Centenarian entertains at own party

A ROYAL NAVY veteran has marked his centenary with 20 relations who travelled from far and wide to join the party in Australia.

Lt Cdr Brian Lowe RNVR was born in Cheshire but moved to Cobham, Surrey, in 1923.

Before World War 2 he travelled extensively and learnt to fly. However, after serving in the OTC at Charterhouse and learning to fly in the University Air Squadron he decided to join the Royal Naval Volunteer (Supplementary) Reserve in 1938.

He was called up within two weeks of war being declared, just after his 26th birthday, and, after only 12 days of training at HMS King Alfred, was sent to sea, his first ship being HMS California, an Armed Merchant Cruiser on the Northern Patrol.

He spent most of the next six years at sea, finishing up in command of HMLST 363, which he was ordered to take back across the Atlantic to return to the USA.

Prior to that he had served in two Captain-class destroyers, HMS Calder and Cubitt, of which he was First Lieutenant, and which had been built in the USA for the Navy.

After the war he started a new life in Vancouver, Canada, where he worked as a



● Lt Cdr Brian Lowe on his 100th birthday

solicitor until retiring in 1975, when he went to live in Australia where his late wife Liz, a former Wren, had spent many happy years.

After Liz's death, Brian moved into the Village Glen complex in Rosebud on the Mornington Peninsula south of Melbourne, Victoria, where he lives today, very independently – and still drives. He is an

honorary member of the wardroom of the nearby HMAS Cerberus.

Brian received congratulatory messages from the Queen and the Governor-Generals, Messrs Rudd and Abbott, the former and newly-elected Prime Ministers of Australia, the Premier of Victoria as well as his local Members of Parliament.

Brian gave a witty speech during which he reminisced that out of his 100 birthdays, only four stuck in his memory – his 21st in 1934; his 28th in 1941, which he celebrated on board his brother's Flower-class corvette HMS Myosotis with his two brothers, Peter and Joe; the third being the family celebration of his 92nd in Cobham, when he last visited the UK in 2005, and the fourth was, of course, his 100th.

Brian was too modest to recall his 90th birthday in 2003 when he climbed Sydney Harbour Bridge and emailed photographs of himself doing it to family members.

Brian recently, in his late 90s, wrote his memoirs, scanned photos into them and got them published and sent to all his relations by a subsidiary of Amazon. After his wife died, he taught himself to touch type and is fully computer-literate and communicates with relatives by Skype.



● Jo Jenkins

## Schools' stalwart praised

THE organiser of the Royal Navy pre-schools in Plymouth has received an award from the UK's most senior military officer.

Jo Jenkins represented one of four organisations receiving commendations from the Chief of the Defence Staff (CDS) for their support to the Armed Forces.

General Sir Nicholas Houghton presented the commendation to Jo at a ceremony in London, thanking her and her colleagues for their support and commitment to the Armed Forces community.

The commendations recipients were the bomb disposal charity Felix Fund, tourist attraction Pennywell Farm in Devon, the Royal Navy Pre-School Learning Organisation (RNPSLO) in Plympton, Plymouth, and a charity for injured personnel – Troop Aid.

The commendations recognise outstanding support and commitment of a rare and exceptionally high standard given by non-military individuals or organisations to members of the Forces.

It is also an example of the Armed Forces Covenant in action. The covenant is about ensuring that the Forces community does not face disadvantage due to their military links.

Gen Houghton said: "It is an absolute delight to invite you here to thank you for the work you have done in support of the Armed Forces family."

The RNPSLO is the largest provider of childcare in Plymouth and provides affordable flexible quality childcare to military families.

Organisation co-ordinator Jo said: "It feels amazing to get this commendation. I am part of a larger team who work not only with the children but with the Service families as well, and we're all so proud."

The award citation praised Jo for an impressive performance over an extended period of time.

Jo has, despite dwindling resources, developed the RNPSLO to cater for 200 children, all under Ofsted rules.

Chairman of the RNPSLO, Lt Cdr Paul Evans, of Plymouth Naval Base, said: "The RNPSLO covers the 'Jack & Jill's' chain of pre-schools that stretches from Torpoint to Plymstock.

"While every member has contributed to the RNPSLO's good reputation, Jo is undoubtedly the glue that holds the team together."



## Trainees make short work of beach task

SMALL pieces of plastic, lighters and a broken bumper from a 4x4 vehicle were among the items of debris removed from Tregantle beach by a team from HMS Raleigh.

The task force of more than 60 sailors, together with a group of civilian staff who

work for Interserve, scoured the beach to collect around 30 bags of debris, washed up by the recent storms, in support of the Keep Britain Tidy – Beachcare Project.

Trainee submariner JJ O'Neill, 28, from Edinburgh, said: "I don't live by the water back at home, so it was good to be out

walking across the beach. There was a lot more rubbish there than I thought there would be."

Beachcare is a project supported by South West Water with the aim to reduce beach litter by involving local communities in the South West.



## Officers collect OBEs

TWO Royal Navy officers have been presented with OBEs at Buckingham Palace after being recognised for their efforts to improve facilities in Afghanistan and the Middle East.

Consultant Radiologist Surg Cdr Jo Leason (*above*) was made an OBE in the Operational Honours and Awards List for her "inspired leadership and dogmatic resolve" during her time in Afghanistan.

Before she arrived Afghan National Security Force (ANSF) doctors had only performed one simple surgical procedure at Camp Shorabak, in the south west of the country.

Now they have performed several hundred, largely on battle injuries, and are better placed to assess and treat their own wounded.

The 39-year-old former St Dunstan's Abbey head girl, who now lives in Plymouth, said: "I feel immensely proud to receive this award, in particular to follow in my father David Keogh's footsteps as he was awarded a CBE in 2000. Luckily my sister is also able to attend as she is visiting from South Africa, which has really been the icing on the cake."

Cdr Iain Cull (*below*), who developed a training package that reflects the requirements of operations in the Middle East, was made an OBE for his performance as Commander Sea Training Mine Warfare and Patrol Vessels in Faslane, Scotland.

The new training package has seen an increase in partnership working which has improved effectiveness and professionalism.

Cdr Cull, 48, from Tavistock, said: "To be recognised in this way is incredibly humbling and, without the drive and enthusiasm of the 48 professional people who I commanded at Flag Officer Sea Training, Minor Patrol Vessels, I would not have achieved the results and changes I implemented."

# Generation game for Naval family

A BROTHER and sister are continuing their family's tradition of service in the Royal Navy.

Natasha Jermy has become an Officer Cadet at Southampton URNU, while her brother Joseph has done the same at Edinburgh URNU.

Both are studying medicine – another tradition in the Jermy family.

Originally a Norfolk family, the first recorded naval Jermy was Capt Seth Jermy, who in 1707, as captain of the frigate HMS Nightingale, fought a famous single-ship action against a French squadron off Harwich and thereby saved the merchant convoy he was escorting.

There have been a succession of naval captains since and one Commodore – Steven Jermy, who retired from the Royal Navy in 2010.

Louisa Jermy is the last survivor of three from the family who served in the Navy during World War 2.

Joining in 1943 as a Nursing Sister in the QARNNS, she served in RNH Haslar, RNAS Abbotsinch and HMS Lochinvar, Port Edgar, specialising in caring for TB patients, which was very prevalent in the Submarine Service.

Her son Cdr Richard Jermy joined in 1982 and is currently the Chief of Staff to the Naval Regional Commander North of England and Isle of Man.



● Clockwise from back left, OC Joseph Jermy, Cdr Richard Jermy, OC Natasha Jermy and Nursing Sister Louisa Jermy. Pictured left is Capt Seth Jermy



## Young sailors present findings to Parliament

FORTY young sailors and their instructors from RNAS Culdrose were welcomed to the House of Commons by the Cornish Member of Parliament for St Ives, Andrew George.

The group, made up of Phase 2 trainee Air Engineering Technicians and Aircraft Handlers and their mentors, travelled to Westminster as part of their training, and gave presentations to other MPs.

Mr George explained to his guests how Parliament keeps abreast of defence issues, related his experiences whilst visiting Naval and other personnel in Afghanistan on two previous occasions and shadowing the work of the Royal Navy for a period in 2009-10. He also took questions from the group on defence and the working of Parliament.

Former Armed Forces Minister Nick Harvey MP talked to the group about

the relationship between government and the Navy before several of the ratings gave their presentations on their areas of study, including one on the Penlee lifeboat disaster.

Following tradition, the youngest rating in the group presented Mr George with a plaque inscribed with the official crest of their Cornish base, HMS Seahawk.

"The Naval General Training

Organisation at Culdrose is committed to highlighting the importance of Naval heritage during the Phase 2 training package. Knowledge of our heritage is viewed as a key ingredient in the production of all qualified Fleet Air Arm ratings," said CPOAET Jon Walsh, who leads the trainees.

"To be offered an opportunity to deliver heritage presentations with Nick Harvey in attendance and to be hosted

by Andrew George has been a fantastic experience."

Mr George said: "It was a privilege to host the next generation of air engineering technicians and aircraft handlers in Parliament.

"They are an impressive, highly professional and competent group. The future of the Navy looks encouraging with these young people. The plaque has pride of place in my office."



# Magnificent Marine is a flying machine

## Lessons on US ship for QE crew

ACTING Maj Alan 'Barney' Barnwell has notched up 5,000 flying hours – not bad for someone who didn't join the Royal Marines to fly.

Maj Barnwell's achievement comes after more than 35 years in the Corps – meaning he has served more than ten per cent of the Royal Marines' existence.

He joined the Corps as a recruit in 1978 and served first as a rifleman aged 18, then, as an Assault Engineer in 40 Cdo and 45 Cdo, he deployed to operations in Northern Ireland, the Falklands and in Cyprus.

On completion of his Army Pilots course he joined 3 Cdo Bde Air Squadron as the first Cpl pilot in the Royal Marines in February 1987.

He reached the rank of WO1 in 2001 and was then selected for a Commission.

His first appointment as a Commissioned Officer was as 847 NAS A Flight Cdr, in charge of 23 pilots and eight aircraft.

He was Mentioned in Despatches during Operation Telic in 2003.

After attending the Royal Navy Initial Command and Staff Course he was appointed to Commander Amphibious Task Group (COMATG).

Thereafter he returned to flying duties with 845 NAS as a Sea King Flight Commander. He added three tours of Iraq and one to Afghanistan and in 2008 achieved 4,000 flying hours.

A further ground tour followed at CHF headquarters.

He rejoined 845 NAS as Flight Commander in 2011 to undertake three further tours of Afghanistan. He has flown 1,600 hours in Sea Kings, and 1,000 of those hours were on operations in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Maj Barnwell, 54, who retires next year but plans to become a Reservist, said "I feel very privileged and proud to have been part of such a fascinating era in Commando aviation. I consider myself very lucky.

"My favourite moments have been those times when I have been able to directly support my fellow Royal Marines, whether that was in my Gazelle leading aviation patrols on the Al Faw peninsula, or in my Sea King lifting out men of 42 Cdo to get them home for R and R during the particularly difficult time that was Operation Herrick.

"The changes in military aviation since I started on Gazelles have been considerable but the big constant has been the quality of the people I have had the honour to work with, some of whom are directly responsible for me still being alive to accomplish 5,000 hours."



● Acting Maj Barney Barnwell, who has notched up 5,000 flying hours

## Milestones for SAR airmen

A PAIR of aviators serving with 771 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Culdrose are celebrating after chalking up two significant high points in their flying careers.

Lt Cdr Paul Robertson, who serves as an Observer with the Fleet Air Arm Search and Rescue unit has clocked up 4,000 flying hours, which equates to over 166 days airborne over a 30-year career in the Royal Navy.

Born in Scotland, Lt Cdr Robertson joined the Royal Navy in 1985, and lives in Helston near the Cornish air station with his wife Lynsey and three sons.

"I am delighted to have achieved this significant flying achievement," he said.

"Even though I will be soon bringing down the curtain on my career, I am finishing it by doing what I thoroughly enjoy – flying".

The other Culdrose aviator to reach a significant achievement was Flt Lt Jon Owen, on exchange from the RAF with 771 NAS, who has now attended more than 400 search and rescue 'shouts' in his flying career.

He has been with the squadron since 2011 and has a wide range of SAR experience across the RAF around the UK and while serving in the Falkland Islands, as part of the United Kingdom's operational commitment to the South Atlantic.

Born in Denmark into a Service family, Flt Lt Owen followed in his father's footsteps and enlisted with the RAF as a pilot.

One of his most interesting and unique SAR shouts took place at Culdrose last October, when he was called out to a pregnancy on the Isles of Scilly.

"On that particular shout, we ending up with a very special passenger," he said.



● Lt Cdr Paul Robertson marks his achievement with the CO of RNAS Culdrose Capt Mark Garratt

"The weather was not good and we had to concentrate on identifying landmarks on the low-level route approaching the Malpas relief landing site to meet the ambulance. It was when the cries from the rear of the cabin stopped, there was a period of quiet and then the rear crew said we had an extra passenger; that I realised a baby (Marcus) had been



● Flt Lt Jon Owen

safely delivered."

Both men are expected to remain with 771 NAS until after the handover of the United Kingdom's SAR responsibility to the Department for Trade-appointed contractor, currently scheduled for December 31 2015 and the retirement of the Sea King HU Mk 5 SAR scheduled for March 2016.



● The MoD Marine Police officers with their commendations  
Picture: CPO(Phot) Penny Bradbury

## Saviours tell of rescuing OAP

DARING Ministry of Defence Marine Police officers were rewarded for rescuing an 80-year-old man who fell down a steep cliff.

The victim was prevented from landing onto rocks further below thanks to brambles and the sterling efforts of three boat crews from MOD Marine Police, who went to the rescue from Plymouth Naval Base.

The seven officers were presented with Ministry of Defence Police Awards at a ceremony in Devonport Naval Base, Plymouth.

The Australian holidaymaker slipped off the cliff path in Mount Edgcombe Country Park in Cornwall and fell about 100ft down a steeply sloping cliff near Fort Picklecombe

in September.

He narrowly avoided plummeting down the last vertical drop onto rocks when his clothing caught on thick brambles.

Passing yachtsmen heard his cries for help and raised the alarm. Brixham Coastguard requested the assistance of the MOD Police Marine Unit and two rigid inflatable boats and a larger launch attended.

First on the scene were PCs Chris Gibbs and Darren Lawton, who saw the casualty 25ft above the rocks half-submerged in brambles. Chris and Darren went ashore, scrambling over slippery rocks to reach the man.

Darren said: "As I moved closer to him,

he kept telling me he was slipping, and the more he slipped, the further the thorns from the brambles were being driven into his skin. I slowly and carefully managed to get alongside him, where I was able to support him physically and stabilise his position to prevent any further movement down the cliff face."

He had also cut his head, resulting in a considerable amount of blood covering his face, clothing and hands.

Because of the casualty's precarious position he was lowered down the cliff.

He was taken to Derriford Hospital's major trauma unit, where he was found to have suffered only cuts and bruises.



● Lt Richard Adair and AOs Alice Moore and Dave Benyon monitor the latest piracy reports in the UKMTO HQ in Dubai  
Picture: Lt Cdr Sally Armstrong, UKMCC

## The UAE is the place to be

RESERVISTS are being sought to work in one of the Royal Navy's smallest – but most important – front-line operations, safeguarding the sea lanes east of Suez.

The UK Maritime Trade Operation in Dubai is calling on members of the 140-strong specialist branch to volunteer for six-month stints working side-by-side with merchant navies to help them avoid piracy and other criminal activity – and to come to their aid if required.

Run from the grounds of the British Embassy in the emirate, the six-strong organisation – one Full-Time Reserve Service lieutenant commander, a Merchant Navy liaison officer and four reservists (a lieutenant, chief and two able seamen) – monitors the activities of around 3,000 merchant ships every day moving through the Red Sea, Gulf and Indian Ocean almost as far south as Madagascar.

The team also call on the masters of around 40 merchantmen every week – bulk transporters, gas and oil tankers, car carriers, container ships – to inform them of the latest developments at sea, in particular the scourge of 21st-Century piracy.

Thanks to a concerted effort by the world's navies and shipping companies, no vessel has been seized by pirates operating off the notorious Horn of Africa since May 2012.

That said, there remains an ongoing job to do, as Lt Richard Adair (HMS Wildfire), UKMTO's second-in-command, says: "Piracy is significantly down. But it's not gone. Complacency could be a big issue."

He works in the insurance industry but volunteered for the draft for "something different from the day job".

He continues: "I am having a great time – this is a great job. You feel you have a real impact – and you are always appreciated by the merchant sailors. When you leave the office, you can say: I've done something good today. I've had an effect."

The MTO specialists in the RNR are the link between the military and civilian shipping worlds, tracing their roots back to WW2 and convoy duties – a role and skill maintained throughout the Cold War and which is part of the 18-24-month training package today.

That latter fact is why full-time regulars from other branches of the RN cannot fill the posts in Dubai – which is the only enduring front-line operational role in the MTO world. Everything else they do (with the exception of war) is purely exercise.

Accommodation is provided in the embassy grounds, next to Dubai's creek and a half an hour by Metro from the Burj al Khalifa, the world's tallest buildings, and other attractions and malls in downtown Dubai.

"It's a good place to work, but it's not a jolly," says HMS King Alfred's CPO Gary Willis, a former full-time matelot who joined the RNR when his 24 years' service came to an end.

"This is a seven-day-a-week operation. You get calls at all hours." Cdr Richard Morris, formerly CO of HMS Southampton and today Royal Navy Liaison Officer and Commanding Officer of Naval Party 1023 – the RN contingent in Dubai (himself, his deputy and UKMTO) – says it's vital the Senior Service maintains a presence in the emirate and that reservists are a key part of that presence.

"This job is bread and butter to the Maritime Trade Operation specialists. It's their only front-line job," he adds.

"What happens here is about the prosperity of the UK. The vast majority of our goods and energy is passing through this region. Anything which stops that trade, even it's not bound for Britain, directly affects the UK.

"It's also the future. Dubai is the hub of shipping in the region – but then it's the hub for everything. Trade, finance, transport – the airport is now busier than Heathrow."

■ See next month's *Navy News* for a feature on the work of the unit.

## Four for good in the Gulf

FOUR reservists from the same West Country RNR unit met up on deployment in Bahrain.

The four, all from HMS Flying Fox in Bristol, are on various deployments in the Middle East.

Lt Cdr Rod Drake and Lt Richard Burdett were supporting Exercise Lucky Mariner, which aims to strengthen the working relationship between the military and the merchant shipping community.

Lts Tony Gilbert and Ian Woodward were already deployed to the kingdom in support of the international Combined Maritime Forces (CMF) when their comrades arrived.

Lt Gilbert is mobilised to CMF headquarters, while Lt Woodward is contributing to Combined Task Force 150's maritime security and counter-terrorism operations.

# Sherwood's new forest home

RESERVISTS from across the Midlands and Northern England converged on Nottingham to help the East Midlands' RNR unit celebrate the opening of its new home.

Prince Michael of Kent – Honorary Rear Admiral and Commodore-in-Chief Maritime Reserves – and Anna Soubry, Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, were guests of honour at the ceremony which marked the completion of a £1m investment in maritime reservists in the region.

Their new base – Foresters House – will be home to both HMS Sherwood and the Royal Marines Reserve, replacing Sherwood's old HQ in Aspley.

As part of a reorganisation of reserve forces, the unit has moved six miles to the suburb of Beeston and the Army Reserve base at Foresters House in Swiney Way, home of 350 Field Squadron Royal Engineers for the past 15 years.

To accommodate the sailors and Royal Marines, a new two-storey building has been built, while existing facilities on the site have been brought up to date.

The two-hour long re-dedication parade included music from the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth and marching platoons from the RNR, RMR and local Sea Cadet units.

Prince Michael inspected the parade, joined by Rear Admiral Chris Hockley, Flag Officer Reserves, and Cdre Andrew Jameson, Commander Maritime Reserves, while Chaplain of the Fleet the Venerable Scott Brown led the formal service of rededication.



● Reservists on parade at the official opening of HMS Sherwood's new home

Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott, RNPOTY

"The new HMS Sherwood has already received the full approval of my ship's company," said Sherwood's CO Cdr Martin Clegg.

"I believe the site's location and its excellent facilities will significantly improve our ability to attract new recruits and provide them with the high standard and quality of training that will fully prepare them to serve with their full-time colleagues in the Royal Navy of the 21st Century."

Maj Alastair Edgar, Detachment Commander of the

RMR in Nottingham, said the custom-built facilities were "a vast improvement on what we had" with an outdoor training area provided and climbing rope scaffold.

Both commanding officers believe the new facilities will help their respective units to grow – Sherwood is looking to sign-up nearly 70 new recruits from the East Midlands region over the next three years.

In recent years, men and women from Sherwood have been mobilised for operations in

Afghanistan, Iraq and the Gulf, as well as supporting the 2012 Olympics on home turf.

As part of his visit to the East Midlands, Prince Michael also hosted a reception for employers from across Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Rutland to show what reservists can bring to the civilian workplace.

The event, at Nottinghamshire County Council's Headquarters, was attended by firms and organisations who currently or have previously employed members of the RNR, Army and RAF Reserves.

# Marines mark Zeebrugge raid

ROYAL Marines from RMR Merseyside – plus commandos past and future – marched through the Borough of Wirral in full ceremonial order for the first time in more than 15 years.

The occasion? The 96th anniversary of what could be called the 'first commando raid' – the attack on Zeebrugge in occupied Belgium on St George's Day, 1918.

The raid sought to block German submarines in their Flanders bases by sinking old vessels – blockships – in their outlet to the North Sea.

The raid was only a partial success – but was a huge propaganda boost to morale at a time when the German offensives on the Western Front were threatening the Allies with defeat.

Vital to the execution of the raid was the commissioning of two Mersey ferries, used to carry Royal Marines ashore. Both ferries survived ferocious German fire, returned to Liverpool and served for many years.

So it was that more than 100 Royal Marines, veterans and cadets celebrated the Freedom of the Borough, a privilege not exercised since the honour was bestowed on them in 1998.

They paraded in full dress uniform for the Lord Lieutenant, Dame Lorna Muirhead, who was accompanied by the Commandant General Royal Marines, Maj Gen Ed Davis.

Once the Mayor of Wirral, Cllr Dave Mitchell, had taken the Royal salute, the green berets



● Royal Marines march in Wirral to mark the Zeebrugge raid of 1918

fixed bayonets and marched through the borough to the town hall.

"This event was long in the planning and it was great to see it turn out so well," said Maj Finn Farthing of RMR Merseyside.

"Thank you to the people of the Wirral for welcoming all Marines, past and present."

■ Royal Marine Reservists from 2 Raiding Troop delivered the trophy for the London Boat Race.

The unit's programme was hindered when rubbish in the Thames got caught up in an engine, causing it to blow.

The affected boat was towed back to Barn Elms while the two boats that were doing the trophy presentation went to recce Broomhouse Pier.

However, due to the delay with the blown boat engine, the two boats were caught out by the closure of the river for practice sessions by the university crews and were forced to tie up for an hour.

Once the river was opened it was back to Barn Elms before heading back to RMB Wandsworth.

The race was a late start, due

to tides, so the troop moved down to Barn Elms around midday and began prepping kit, with the presentation team moving off to Broomhouse Pier to collect the £29,000 trophy.

The troop then made their way to Putney Hard, where Mne Yoxall was given the honour of presenting the trophy.

The boat group moved back to Barn Elms and all six boats shortly after moved off to their security positions along the course of the race.

The race was won by Oxford.



# Diving instructors jump in for trophy challenge

## Back to school as role models

DIVING instructors from the Royal Navy went head-to-head with their Army counterparts in an end-of-term challenge.

Instructors joined students at the Defence Diving School in an endurance and fitness competition for the CO's Trophy.

"I think that was the toughest one we've done so far," said Lt Col Paul Young Royal Engineers, Commanding Officer of the Portsmouth-based school.

"We hold these competitions at the end of each term as a reminder to our instructors of the physical challenges we put our pupils through.

"They are a great way to round off the term and encourage good healthy competition and rivalry between the Army and Navy instructional teams."

This term's contest began with a jump from a high board before a variety of running and finning tasks, including a slalom – climbing in and out of four liferafts on Horsea Lake – and two lengths of the 1km lake.

The first diver to complete the challenge was AB(D) Will Davis, in 40 minutes and four seconds.

CPO(D) Andrew Seabrook and WO(D) Martin Slade made it back in third and seventh respectively (ahead of all their students), showing that age and

experience were no excuse for a lack of fitness.

More than 60 staff and students took part in the event and, despite the Royal Navy having the fastest six people completing the event, the Army won with an average time of 49 minutes 18 seconds, less than 30 seconds ahead of the Navy.

The Defence Diving School is the centre for all military diving training in Britain's Armed Forces.

It is a Joint Service training establishment, providing military diving training to both Royal Navy and Army personnel.

All Navy clearance divers and Army divers carry out their basic training at the school's headquarters, on the north shore of Portsmouth Harbour.

The facilities include a 5m diving tank, recompression chambers, surface and underwater engineering facilities, classrooms, conference rooms and a specialist diving clothing store.

In addition, the School possesses four diving tenders (boats) based at Whale Island for work in the harbour and the Solent.

Advanced diver training is conducted at Weymouth, Falmouth, Plymouth and the west coast of Scotland.



● Competitors jump into Horsea Lake for the end-of-term challenge

Picture: Keith Woodland

SAILORS from the Above Water Tactical Training Element at HMS Collingwood spent time reading and writing with pupils during a visit to Rowner Infant School, Gosport.

The team of four was led by PO Chris Potter, who said: "The reason that I arranged the visit was that I am on the board of governors of the school.

"They were advertising for a governor and I thought why not, I'd like to give something back to the community."

During the day sailors from the Fareham base separated into different classrooms and spent time reading and writing with the children.

PO Potter added: "They were very excited to have us there. The school wanted positive role models for the children so that they could see adults reading and writing other than their own parents, so I volunteered the services of the instructors at Collingwood."

Headteacher Mrs Deborah Redpath said: "Thirty per cent of our children are from Service families – it's important to have Navy governors as they really understand the issues the children have.

"It's inspirational for the children to have these sailors here. We have a totally female staff and it's great for them to see male staff. This has been wonderful for our children."

## Marathon efforts to boost charity fund



● Above: The Phalanx team aboard RFA Fort Austin  
● Below: From left, LET Steve Burgess, ET Croft and CPO Reynolds in the ship's gym during the challenge



A CONTINGENT of sailors from RNAS Culdrose has contributed to a ship's charity event while sailing to the Gulf.

The Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF), which provides the Royal Navy presence on board RFA Fort Austin, ran, cycled and rowed as part of a whole ship challenge for a Scottish-based charity.

The idea was to travel the same distance from Helensburgh near Glasgow to Dubai in the Gulf where the ship was heading, raising money for the Helensburgh branch of ENABLE, an organisation that works to improve the lives of children and adults with learning difficulties.

The Scottish west coast town has many affiliations with Fort Austin, and has provided some fond memories for those in the embarked RN contingent.

The 54 RFA and Naval personnel involved came up with a distance of 6,468 nautical miles (or 11,978 kilometres).

The MASF contingent gave a good account of itself. This consisted of the ship's Medical Officer Surg Lt Alan McArdle and three members of the Phalanx close-in defensive weapon team of CPO Colin Reynolds, LET Steve 'Budgie' Burgess and ET Glenn 'Lara' Croft.

The four sailors between them covered over 1,000km in the four weeks of the challenge.

'Doc' McArdle completed an entire marathon in one hit on the ship's only treadmill, whilst one evening Colin managed to cover 18 miles running around the ship's clearway.

"I knew this was going to be tough," said Glenn. "But I never realised the level of effort we would have to sustain for such a long period. Towards the end of the challenge the temperature in the gym was reaching 40°C, which really made things difficult."

Steve added: "It was good to have a goal to keep aiming for; this was a mammoth effort."

So far, more than £1,600 has been raised in support of ENABLE. ■ MASF profile, see page 50

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# Deaths

Rear Admiral Roger C Dimmock CB. Entered RN in 1953 and specialised in Naval aviation as Warfare (Pilot). Joined 895 Sqn at RNAS Brawdy 1956, subsequently flying Seahawks in 800 and 738 NAS. Qualified as a Flying Instructor 1959 he flew Scimitars with 803 and 800B NAS and Buccaneers with 801 NAS. Promoted Commander 1969 he commanded HMS Berwick 1970-71. Promoted Captain 1976 he commanded HMS Naiad 1977-78 and was appointed Chief Staff Officer to the Flag Officer Carriers and Amphibious Ships 1978, then given command of HMS Seahawk 1980-82 and HMS Hermes 1982-83. Director of Naval Air Warfare (DNAW) at the MOD 1983, ADC to the Queen 1985 then promoted Rear Admiral. Naval Secretary 1985-87 and Flag Officer Naval Air Command (FONA) 1987-88. Appointed CB and retired October 1988. Vice president RNHA, former Chair USHC Portsmouth, Chair RNHA, President CSHA and Chair National Umpiring Committee. May 6. Aged 78.

Sir Owen Woodhouse DSC. New Zealander. 1944 he commanded MTB 85 based in Ancona, Italy, carrying out clandestine operations on the Istrian peninsula. On his first operation he attempted to bring off a patrol of special forces but was detected by a newly-deployed German radar station. He came under heavy artillery fire but by setting off flares he distracted the enemy and crept back to make a textbook pickup. His last mission was with MTB 97 from Bari, but in heavy seas with a gale blowing his engines failed; his tow line with another boat broke six times before the attempt was abandoned. He refused to give up his boat and made a rudimentary sail from canvas that enabled him to edge away from the Albanian coast; at daybreak he sighted corvette HMS Saxifrage, which took him under tow to Brindisi. 1945 he was in command of MTB 410, in which he took part in 11 attacks. Awarded a DSC for gallantry, skill and determination in the Adriatic. After the war he was briefly Assistant Naval Attaché at the British Embassy in Belgrade. On his return to New Zealand he began legal practice and was a partner 1946-61. Appointed a judge of the Supreme Court 1961-73, then appointed to the Court of Appeal; he was President of the Court of Appeal 1982-86. Knighted in 1974 and advanced to KBE 1981, in 2007 he was appointed a member of the Order of New Zealand. April 15. Aged 97.

Cdr Thomas A Allen. HMS Otus, Tabard, Trump, Triumph, Endurance, Tartar, Dolphin, Phoenix and Centurion. April 18. Aged 72.

Cdr George E G Brown. 814, 829, 826 and 820 Naval Air Squadrons. April.

Cdr William R Hart AFC. HMS Glory, Phaeasant, Implacable, Roebuck, Loch Fada, RAF Boscombe Down and SACLANT USA. April 11. Aged 86.

Cdr James K Lessey DSC. HMS Cockade, Vanguard, Excellent, Mermaid, Appleton, Phoenicia and Whirlwind. May 4.

Lt Cdr Kenneth Douglas 'Ken' Kempself GM. Joining HMS Ganges as a 15-year-old, he served in HMS Black Swan (Malayan Campaign 1948, Yangtze Incident 1949); he also saw service as a sonar operator during Korean War. After two years on the America and West Indies station in HMS Sparrow and a spell as a petty officer in the Training Squadron at Portland he was commissioned in 1956; he qualified as a mine warfarer and clearance diving officer 1961. While on the staff of Flag Officer Scotland he boarded an Aberdeen trawler where a fisherman had been trapped by a wartime mine which the

nets had brought in and he struggled for three hours in heavy seas to make it safe. First lieutenant of RN's first operational minehunter HMS Kirkliston. Received the George Medal in 1963 after an explosion in a torpedo store at RAF Kinloss; two men were killed and the roof having collapsed onto the weapons. With the torpedo batteries "hissing and bubbling" he crawled into a narrow space to place 16 demolition charges against the battery compartments, the leaking acid eating into his asbestos suit. Staff Officer at BRNC Dartmouth (67), HMS Abdell (68), CO of HMS Nurton (69-70), HMS Cochrane (70-71), exchange with the RAN (72-73), Staff Officer Tay Division RNR (74-75), CO of HMS Reclaim (76-78), Staff Officer Clyde Division RNR, CO HMS Peterel (79) and CO HMS Hodgston (80). Last Resident Naval Officer Invergordon and Queen's Harbour Master, Cromarty. Royal Naval Minewarfare & Clearance Diving Officers' Association (MCDQA). April 19. Aged 83.

Lt Cdr R H C 'Bob' Ellis. Midshipman in HMAS Waterhen (bombed and sunk off Tobruk), HMS Ajax, Battle of Matapan, and evacuation of Greece (MID for rescuing soldiers from the beaches), also served in HMS Suttlej in the Far East. First Lt of HMS Jaseur and Gambia and in command of HMS Coniston. May 5. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Sir Jocelyn C R Buxton Bt VRD RNR. Solent RNR. April 25.

Lt Cdr Kenneth Whitaker. Served 804 NAS, HMS Glory, Nuthatch, Daedalus, Goldcrest, Fulmar, Heron, Centaur and Seahawk. April 10. Aged 89.

Lt Cdr David Howlett. Served on board HMS Tiger late 1950s and early 60s as a L/Steward.

Lt Charles 'Soz' Hosegood. Joined No. 9 Pilots' Course 1939, gaining his wings, and later in 1940 flew Walrus amphibians of 765 NAS from RNAS Sandbanks at Poole on search-and-rescue missions in the Channel. At age 21 he was appointed to the Armed Merchant Cruiser Alcantara and given command of a flight of two Seafox floatplanes. 1943 he returned home from Sierra Leone in the merchantman Empire Whale, which was torpedoed off Cape Finisterre; he was one of only ten survivors. 1944 he travelled to America to learn to fly the primitive Sikorsky helicopter. Most of 1944 he spent at the RN-led Helicopter Unit at Hanworth and then to the Airborne Forces Experimental Establishment at Beaulieu. Post-war he joined the Trinidad Petroleum Development Co, then the Bristol Aeroplane Company, which was taken over by Westland Aircraft. He took part in every Farnborough Air Show from 1949-61, was awarded the Guild of Air Pilots and Navigators Master Pilot Certificate 1960 and the Alan Ram Medal of the Royal Aeronautical Society in 1963. February 17. Aged 93.

Lt Richard A Fleischman-Allen DSC RNRV. Lt P J Elwood. HMS Godwit and Seahawk. April 15. Aged 92.

Lt John Blade RNRV. HMS Illustrious and Formidable. April 19.

Lt Albert M Spong. Served 781, 796, 705, 848 and 845 NAS, also HMS Protector. March 24.

Maurice Baird CPO Writer. Served 1952-75 HMS Sea Eagle, Meon, Protector, SHAPE (Paris), Faslane and Andromeda. HMS Andromeda Association. April 6. Aged 85.

Kenneth 'Ken' Rogers CPO Cook(O). Served 1951-74 HMS Drake, Gannet, Carisbrooke Castle, Rooke, Seahawk, Tyne, HMV Britannia, CinC Plymouth and Northwood, Devonshire, BDS Washington,

Juno and Pembroke (67-69 and 73-74). Association of Royal Yachtsmen and past member of Castle Class Corvettes Association and the RNA. May 3. Aged 79.

John M Graham CPO(ERA). S13 Entry Exmouth Division. Served 1951-65 in HMS Ocean, Ark Royal, Christmas Island (Operation Grapple), Takoradi (Ghana), Lochinvar and Caledonia (instructing staff). May 3 in Mississauga, Ontario, Canada. Aged 78.

Thomas George Cochrane CPO MEM. Served 1948-70 HMS Ganges, Newfoundland, Victorious, Devonshire, Royal Arthur, Tyne, Ocean, Forth, Alania, Daring, Defiance, Orion, Centaur, Ark Royal, Tiger, Bulwark, Raleigh and Drake. May 9. Aged 82.

Edward J 'Ted' Stone PO. Served 1947-68 HMS Newcastle, Ceres, Vanguard, Orion, Centaur, Illustrious, Camperdown and Duchess. HMS Bruce Association. April 21. Aged 84.

Arthur Campbell LSBA. Chatham trained. Served 1951-63 RNH Chatham and Plymouth, HMS Sea Eagle (1952), RNH Hong Kong (1955), HMS Sea Hawk (1957) and HMS Rhyll (1959). RN Medical Branch Ratings & Sick Berth Staff Association. January 15. Aged 81.

Tony Gates AB. Served in HMS Chevot 1951 and a member of the association. April 5.

Allen Gittens Stoker Mech. Served in HMS Howe, Protector, Fleetwood, Bulwark, Undine, Albion, Mull of Kintyre and Delight, also HMS Liverpool (Jan-Oct 1952) and a member of HMS Liverpool Association. March 26.

Anthony 'Tony' Harris ME1 (Stoker/Mech). Served 1947-57 HMS Eagle, Indefatigable and Opossum F33. HMS Opossum Association. April 15. Aged 81.

Edward 'Ted' James Bruford. Served 1946-72, HMS St George, Ganges, Nelson, Sluys, Cadiz, Wager, Niger, Bermuda, Cumberland, Termagent, Comet, Daring, Nubian, Relentless and Tyne. HMS Opossum Association. April 21. Aged 85.

Royal Naval Association  
Edward 'Eddie' Hardy CPO ERA. Served HMS Ambuscade, Ripley, Matchless, Grey Shark and Grey Seal. Normandy Landings Veteran. Founding member Glasgow branch. April 7. Aged 94.

Peter Ford FAA. Served 1951-63. Nuneaton branch. February. Aged 80.

Irene Anderson (nee West). WRNS Supply. Served 1943-46 at HMS Sultan. Brentwood RNA and Association of Wrens. February 24. Aged 89.

Hazel Charman (nee Hyam) WRNS. Teleprinter Operator. Served the latter part of World War 2 at HMS Drake. Brentwood branches of RNA and Association of Wrens. May 1. Aged 88.

Geoff Hill Cpl in the REME. Served in Egypt as National Serviceman. Associate member Southend RNA. April 14. Aged 84.

George Alfred Carrington LRO. Served 1968-80 HMS Ganges, Mercury, Triumph, President (Whitehall COMCEN), Norfolk, Rooke and Blake. Aquitaine, France branch. April 21. Aged 61.

Reginald Moore NA SE2. Served 1944-48. Member of the FAAA Great Yarmouth branch from March 1985, when the branch was formed, continuing membership despite a move to Michigan USA. April 10. Aged 'late 80s'.

Association of RN Officers  
Cdr Neil S H Buckland. HMS Theseus, Implacable, Eagle, Victorious, Falcon and Ark Royal. April 6. Aged 87.

Lt Cdr Philip C Crampton. HMS Meon, Duncan, Royal Arthur, Sea Eagle, Loch

Killisport and RNEC. April 15.  
Commandant WRNS Daphne P Nichol (nee Swallow) CBE DWRNS. HMS President, Rooke, Heron, Dauntless and Nelson. April 7.

Cdr R A Paterson. HMS Sea Eagle, Dolphin, Dainty, Superb, Tabard and Euryalus. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr David G Heath. HMS Daring, Raleigh, Loch Fada, Manxman, Forth and BRNC Staff. Aged 91.

Lt Cdr Leslie H Sims DSC. HMS Daedalus, Falcon, Albatross, Ariel, Vulture and HMAS Sydney. Aged 100.

Capt Malcolm H Syms RM. RM Deal, HMS Heron, Vulture, HQ RMFVR. April 14. Aged 89.

Lt Col Charles J Verdon RM. RM Deal, HMS St Angelo, PRORM, 40 Cdo, RMO, 3 Cdo and 41 Cdo. April 14. Aged 93.

Temp Sub Lt P A Young RNRV. HMS Siskin. Aged 89.

Submariners Association  
P W 'Peter' Copper RO2. Submarine Service 1964-71 in Rorqual (65-68), Alaric (68-69) and Oberon (69-71). Dolphin branch. Aged 69.

W 'Walter' Davies A/L/Sea RP2. Submarine Service 1953-57 in Ambush (53) and Aeneas (54-57). Lincoln branch. Aged 82.

Algerians Association  
Andrew Napier AB. Served in Rinaldo. January 21. Aged 90.

Ken Noton Tel. Served in Chameleon. April 8. Aged 88.

Jack Edwards AB. Served in Shapinsay. April 16. Aged 90.

Tony Powell ERA. Served in Rifleman.

# Promotions and Assignments

Major General E G M Davis to be promoted Lt General and to be Deputy Commander Land Command Izmir in June.

Surg Cdre A S Hughes to be Commander Defence Medical Group from August.

Brig R A W Spencer RM to be Assistant Chief of Staff (Land Littoral Manoeuvre) from November.

Col C R Stickland RM to be promoted Brigadier and to be Commander 3 Cdo Brigade RM from July.

Capt M S Harrison promoted Commodore and Head of Ship Support (Alliance) from May.

Capt M J D Walliker to be promoted Commodore and to be Commodore Faslane Flotilla from June.

Capt M P Robinson promoted Acting Commodore and Defence Nuclear Safety Regulator from March.

Capt S M Grantham Nuclear Propulsion Technical Director from April.

Capt A M Adams Deputy Head in Service Submarines from April.

Capt J D Morley to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff, Maritime Capability from June.

Col P M James RM Assistant Director Strategy, Naval Staff from April.

Capt R J A Bellfield to be CO HMS Raleigh from September.

Capt R Fancy to be Captain Submarines, Devonport from November.

Col G Jenkins RM to be Deputy Brigade Commander, 3 Cdo Brigade from October.

Capt A P Orchard to be CO RNAS Culdrose from December.

A/Capt K P Fleming promoted Captain and Deputy Head Strategy, Centre for Defence Leadership and Management from May.

Lt Col S J Hussey RM promoted Colonel and Chief of Staff, Commander Amphibious Force from April.

Lt Col E J Moorhouse to be CO RMR London from December.

Cdr B A Martin promoted Captain and to be Director Safety Assurance from April.

Cdr L R Jarvis promoted Captain and Amphibious Ships Team Leader from March.

Capt M P Briers promoted Cdre and Assistant Chief of Staff Aviation from April 22.

Capt P Methven promoted Cdre and Type 26 OPV Head from February 25.

Capt A T Apin promoted Acting Cdre and Assistant Chief of Staff Logistics and Infrastructure from April 22.

Capt I S Lower to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff J5 from June 9.

Capt P J Sparkes to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Career Manager from June 24.

Capt D N Bone to be Chief of Staff Commander UK Maritime Forces from August.

A/Surg Capt R F Rickard to be Defence Professor Military Surgery from August.

Cdr C B Cook to be promoted Captain and to be Chief of Staff to Commodore Naval Personnel Strategy from June.

Cdr G K Smith to be promoted Captain

# Ask Jack

HMS Collingwood Apprentices Magazine: John Vincent served most of his apprenticeship at HMS Collingwood, 1961-63, and did some sub-editing for CAM. Over the years his copies have been lost and he is hoping that someone might have copies that he could copy. He was originally in Series 39 at HMS Figgard 1960 and would be pleased if anyone who remembers him were to get in touch. Contact John at [stoneagestudio@yahoo.com](mailto:stoneagestudio@yahoo.com) or tel: 01752 262133.

HMS Collingwood July 1958. 18 recruits, including Richard Richmond, joined for a nine-year engagement and after seven weeks basic training, nine either volunteered or were drafted into the FAA as EMs or REMs(Air). He understands that within nine years all FAA recruits had died in Service. Richard can't remember their names but assumes their official numbers were adjacent to his and they all signed on July 22, 1958. If anyone knows how he can verify this story contact him at [rick.richmond@btopenworld.com](mailto:rick.richmond@btopenworld.com) or tel 01438 714936.

Michael Cannon (also known as Michael Cooper or Cowper Smith). Does anyone know of his whereabouts? We completed Artificer Apprenticeship at Figgard together 1952 and both joined Unicorn in Singapore, then Consort in Hong Kong October 1953. I returned from Hong Kong and was invalided out and we lost touch. Contact Derek Buck at [crofters@ntlworld.com](mailto:crofters@ntlworld.com) or tel 01480 454857.

Battle of the River Plate. Does anyone recall serving with PO Albert Bowers on board HMS Achilles during WW2 or do any relatives have photographs showing crew members? Albert's nephew, who is 94, particularly recalls seeing newsreel footage of his uncle during the war whilst loading or embarking Achilles. A friend of his nephew is trying to collate this information for him. Contact MA Tim Sparks on 023 9272 4023 or email [timothy.sparks676@mod.uk](mailto:timothy.sparks676@mod.uk)

# Swap draft

AB Wtr Jones: At SHAPE, Belgium, till Dec 2015, would like to swap for any shore or sea draft. Contact [SHAPE\\_UKNMR-REG@cljones.garethable.com](mailto:SHAPE_UKNMR-REG@cljones.garethable.com)

Kong October 1953. I returned from Hong Kong and was invalided out and we lost touch. Contact Derek Buck at [crofters@ntlworld.com](mailto:crofters@ntlworld.com) or tel 01480 454857.

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# Sports lottery

April 12: £5,000 - CPO J Clark; £1,800 - LH L Wright; £800 - Lt A MacDonald; £600 - Mne C Manester; £500 - LH A Tobin; £400 - AB P Johnson.

April 19: £5,000 - AB C Allwood; £1,800 - LH P Williams; £800 - AB P Hamilton; £600 - AB S Fisher; £500 - PO D Holyoake; £400 - PO Boyce.

April 26: £5,000 - Sgt N Bonds; £1,800 - Mne T Caton; £800 - WO1 K Connolly; £600 - LH J Langley; £500 - AB1 N Wilkinson; £400 - PO K Starkey.

May 3: £5,000 - AB C Burn; £1,800 - LH M Clayton; £800 - LH A Bennett; £600 - Lt M Young; £500 - AB C Hindley-Cooke; £400 - PO L Yeardeley.

May 10: £5,000 - Lt C Patrick; £1,800 - Lt Cdr S Walton; £800 - Cdr R Bryan; £600 - LH I Molyneux-Jacob; £500 - Lt Cdr J Clague; £400 - CPO G Cowley.

H Thomas; Lt Cdr I C Tidball; Lt Cdr T C Watkins; Lt Cdr K E K Woolsey; Lt Cdr R S Wyness.

Engineering:  
Lt M C Alder; A/Cdr D M Barrows; Lt Cdr M C Beer; A/Cdr P Carter; Lt Cdr K Clare; Lt Cdr J Coackley; A/Cdr S R Davis; A/Cdr K A Dyke; Lt Cdr M J Flegg; A/Cdr M J Hewitt; A/Cdr M J Hocking; Lt Cdr M Jones; Lt Cdr A C Kirk; A/Cdr P A Lee; A/Cdr P J Le Gassic; A/Cdr R J Love; Lt Cdr T McCann; Lt Cdr N McCallum; Lt Cdr D L McClement; Lt Cdr J McCombe; Lt Cdr A W McDonald; A/Cdr C S Meek MBE; A/Cdr J Milson; A/Cdr P Nimmons MBE; Lt Cdr P O'Neill; Lt Cdr P O'Shaughnessy; Lt Cdr J Apanic; Lt Cdr D M Peskett; Lt Cdr J M M Proffitt; Lt Cdr G R Risley; Lt Cdr J R E Saward; Lt Cdr J M Sayer; Lt Cdr B R Stallard; Lt Cdr M P Stratton; A/Cdr M Sullivan; Lt Cdr K M Taylor; Lt Cdr D Vincent; A/Cdr P M Williams.

Logistics:  
Lt Cdr J E Curwood; Lt Cdr M J Hardwick; Lt Cdr D R Johnston; A/Cdr C M Kenyon; A/Cdr G P Knox; Lt Cdr P J Miles; Lt Cdr A A New; A/Cdr B C Park; A/Cdr S W Quantrell; Lt Cdr S T Robertson; A/Cdr A J Stockbridge; Lt Cdr N J J Stone; A/Cdr D J Ward.

# Reunions

**June 2014**  
HMS Bulwark 1914. A beautiful stained glass window donated by the family in memory of Lt Edward Finch, who was killed when Bulwark blew up in 1914, can be seen at the forthcoming Patronal Festival to be held at St John the Baptist, Church Road, Little Marlow, Buckinghamshire SL7 3RX from June 21-22 - the theme is to be 'Lest we forget'. Further information can be obtained at [www.marlowanglican.org](http://www.marlowanglican.org). A viewing of the church/window outside of these dates can be arranged by ringing Marguerite Fergusson on 01628 482103.

**July 2014**  
RN Air Command Rifle Association Bislew Veterans and the Royal Navy Fleet Air Arm Shooting Team: The Queen's Final is to be held at 1100 on July 19, in front of the NRA Office, Bislew. Former members who represented the Naval Air Command are cordially invited to an informal get-together to witness the event. Lunch at the Army Club is possible provided the names and numbers attending are first given to John Mackay at [jpmackay@ntlworld.com](mailto:jpmackay@ntlworld.com). Further information can be obtained from Terence Watson at [watsonterence383@gmail.com](mailto:watsonterence383@gmail.com) or tel 01329 314803.

**August 2014**  
Association of Wrens. National reunion to be held at Warwick University August 8-10. Friday evening informal fundraising fun; optional day coach trips to the National Memorial Arboretum and Warwick Castle Saturday with traditional

Gala Dinner in the evening. Sales and displays with good socialising spaces in the reunion building. Campus centre has an indoor pool, mini-market, coffee shop, pub, ATM and bus stop to and from Coventry railway station. All ex-Wrens, female Reservists, female serving and veteran RNW personnel welcome, including non-AOW members. For further information contact HQ at [office@wrens.org.uk](mailto:office@wrens.org.uk) or tel 023 9272 5141.

**September 2014**  
HMS Figgard Series 52 Apprentices (September 1964). 50th anniversary reunion to be held at the Hilton, Warwick, Stratford-upon-Avon September 5-6. If you were amongst the 'Boise' that went on to Collingwood or admit to identifying with S52 - Stagers, Dipbacks and Clanckies included - then contact Pete Stubbles at [petestubbles@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:petestubbles@hotmail.co.uk) or tel 07525 027632.

HMS Kenya Association: Reunion to take place at the Hallmark Hotel, Derby, from September 5 to 8. All ex-Kenyan's most welcome. Official presentation of 'Honours Board' to be accepted by the Mayor of Derby at City of Derby Civic Buildings, Council House, at 1630 on the 5th on behalf of Derby citizens, who adopted HMS Kenya in Warship Week 1942. Contact the secretary, John Rickwood, on 01384 393235. All bookings with Isle of Wight Tours on 01983 405116 or 3 New Road, Lake, IOW PO36 9JN.  
HMS Orion Association: 30th and

final reunion to be held at the Holiday Inn, Plymouth, September 5-7. The weekend will include the dedication of a new Standard in St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, Devonport. For further information contact Kay West, Secretary at [kay.west28@btinternet.com](mailto:kay.west28@btinternet.com) or tel 0116 259 2171.

British Pacific & East Indies Fleets: Reunion from September 12 to 14 at the Britannia Hotel, Coventry. The usual amenities and no cost increase. Further information available from John Grossett on 01943 600588 or Alf Lonsdale on 01293 432049.

HMS Figgard, Series 7 Artificer Apprentices, Sep 1949, 65th anniversary of The Magnificent Seven joining as Artificer Apprentices. To celebrate there will be a long weekend from September 12 to 14 at the RNLI College, Poole, Dorset. For further details contact Jim Tonge at [james.tonge@talktalk.net](mailto:james.tonge@talktalk.net) or tel 01782 533984, or Keith Reedman at [k@reedman.org.uk](mailto:k@reedman.org.uk), tel 01159 732150, or Michael Herbert at [michael.herbert@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:michael.herbert@hotmail.co.uk), tel 01954 250014.

**October 2014**  
HMS Troubridge Association: Reunion at the Copthorne Hotel, Plymouth, from October 10 to 12. For further information contact Bryan Pace at [romft1@gmail.com](mailto:romft1@gmail.com) or see the association website [www.HMSTroubridge.com](http://www.HMSTroubridge.com) or write to 665 West Mar Road, Howell, MI 48855, USA, or call (UK) 01524 863416.



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## Faraday ETICC in the box

THE first Faraday ETICC has started at HMS Sultan. The revised course has been extended from 19 to 30 weeks, with a 72 per cent increase in mechanical and electrical training. 'Hands on' training includes stripping down and rebuilding diesel engines and pumps. The first stage of 'streaming' EGS personnel takes place on July 1, when your preferences will be extracted from JPA.

RNTM 110/14 gives guidance on how and where to input your information. This is your chance to influence what equipment you will be trained on, and responsible for, in the future. The SIP Team have focussed on engineering improvement ideas at the waterfront. Ideas such as reviewing GSP employment, Augmentation Teams, Deep Technical Specialists, Maintainer Technical Refresh and Ships' Engineering Support Teams are all being pursued. SIP Team are also liaising with DE&S at ABW to deliver against a number of Inventory Management improvements, all combining to help improve conditions for the Engineering Front Line.

The scene setting ICF RNTM (109/14) was the first instalment, explaining how and why the ICF is being introduced. The subject can appear dry and complicated, but the ICF underpins much Faraday work, so it is important. There will be further information published during the year. Training redesign work is still on track. The design team is looking at the media that could be used, from computer-based simulation to equipment as fitted to ships and submarines. The trick is to get the balance right. The team recognises that social media is the 'weapon of choice' for many people, and is working on how best to use this type of communication to help get messages out and provide another route for feedback. Questions or comments on Programme FARADAY to WO1 Sharky Ward, on 93832 7441 or at [navy.pers-faraday@wo1a](mailto:navy.pers-faraday@wo1a). The Programme Faraday Intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

# Helping you forge a career

## Drafty's corner



THE primary role of the Career Management Cell (CMC) is the career management of junior rates apportioned to them. Career Management is defined in Personnel Functional Standards as "The assignment of individuals in accordance with endorsed current and future Service requirements, exploiting skills, career development needs and, whenever possible, personnel preferences, whilst providing advice on future career paths."

A key point to note is that CMCs are responsible for the assigning of personnel to JPA-authorized positions and authorised augmentation requirements (whether for OPTOURS or exercises and events). CMCs are not responsible for the employment of personnel - this is the responsibility of the assigned unit. CMCs are responsible for the career management of most Engineering, Logistics and Warfare junior rates assigned to ships and submarines of the Devonport, Portsmouth and Faslane flotillas, plus many personnel assigned to Culdrose, Yeovilton or to regional shore units and organisations, as well as Loan Foreign Service positions. CMCs provide a fundamental waterfront manning function and are readily accessible to EWOs, DEPCOs, HoDs, DOs and all others involved in manning issues. Individual junior rates are also welcome to visit or contact

their Career Managers in the CMCs to discuss current and next assignments. A crucial secondary role undertaken by the CMCs is leading on action in response to manpower OPDEFs, PERREQs and other urgent operational requirements for all branches and all ranks/rates (not just the JRs for which CMCs have routine career management responsibility). As such CMCs initiate manpower trawls and nominate, on behalf of and with the authority of CNPERS, temporary

or permanent reliefs to meet key manning deficiencies that impact on Operational Capability - be it gapping, training or competency shortfalls. Roadshows: CMs and CMCs will be conducting road shows to outstations on a rolling basis

throughout the year. Contact your CM to find out when there will be one near you. CMC Devonport will be conducting CM road shows to Raleigh Phase 1/2 trainees on a termly basis (fitting in with the training programme). CMCs are manned 0800-1600 Monday to Friday (except Bank Holidays) and are always willing to deal with the many questions you may have. We would prefer to see you via an appointment but, of course, we are available for 'drop ins' during working hours. Before doing so individuals are requested to consider whether their question or query is correctly targeted - is the divisional chain or unit HR more appropriate, or is the answer in BR3? However, in doubt, the CMC will help. The CMCs are currently developing their own Career Management Guide specific to their area so please contact your CMC to receive the link. ■ CMC Devonport (CMC(D)) is located on the second floor of Tyne Building (N259) within HMNB Devonport. ■ CMC Portsmouth (CMC(P)) is located in Lancelot Building within HMNB Portsmouth. ■ CMC Faslane (CMC(F)) is located in Argyle Building within HMNB Clyde. ■ CMC Culdrose (CMC(C)) is located in the Admin Building (L4) within RNAS Culdrose. ■ CMC Yeovilton (CMC(Y)) is located on the ground floor of Palembang Building directly opposite the main guard house. Extensions of Service: The main route to an extended contract is via Extended Career (EC), which is offered annually. The number of places available is calculated by the branch managers and personnel plans. Extensions of Service (EoS), however, are awarded tactically on a case-by-case basis, for periods generally not more than two years, to cover gaps where promotion or EC hasn't provided a suitable person. If you are nearing the end of your contract and are interested in staying, contact your CM.

## Who to contact for advice

**West Battery**  
Cdr David Wilkinson WO1 Common Appointments (CAPPs) x8868  
Lt Cdr Sam Hutton WO1 AWW, AWT, CIS, SEA, PTI x8875  
Lt Cdr Karl Wall WO1 SSM, TSM, CISSM, COXN(SM), Divers, UW, MW x8892

WO1 Marty Pilbeam WO1 NA(AH), NA(AC), NA(PHOT), ACMN, RMAC, MET, SR, RNP x8874  
WO1 Nathan Lawton WO1 AB - CT WO1/GPO/PO - EW x8824  
WO2 Michael Ellerington WO2-AB - CTCPO/PO - EW x8852  
CPO Rob McDonald CPO-NA - NA(AH), CPO-LH - PTI x8841  
CPO Susan Jefferies CPO-PO - AWW, AWT x8873  
PO Matthew Bowen CPO-PO - MW CPO-AB - Divers x8879  
PO Nick Nicholson CPO-PO - SM, TSM, SSM, CISSM, COXSM, UW x8941  
PO Dave Bolton CPO-LH - PHOT, CPO-PO - SEA x8882  
PO Simon Nelson CPO-PO - CIS x8872  
PO Leanne Ainscough CPO-LH ACMN/NA(AC) CSGT-CPL -RMAC CPO-LH - RNP x8878

Miss Lorraine Conway RCM ADMIN x8893  
Phone No (external): 02392 62 + xtn/mil 93832 + xtn

**CMC(D)**  
Lt Cdr Dunn IC x7744  
WO1 Simpson 2IC x5431  
CPO Mead Supervisor for GS JRs x7973  
CPO Doyle HM SRs and JRs x7973  
CPO Hughes Supervisor for SM JRs x7977  
CPO Holden Augmentation CPO x5848  
LH Radford LH AWT/EW/UW/AWW x5072  
AB Latham-King AB AWT/EW/UW/AWW x7920  
LH Larmour LH and AB SEA x5240  
AB Charlton Logistics and Warfare JR SM x6134  
AB McLane LH & AB CIS x5723  
AB Gardiner Augmentation AB x5723  
Phone No (external): 01752 55 + xtn/mil 93756 + xtn

**CMC(P)**  
Lt Cdr Hearn IC x22060  
WO1 Hannibal 2IC x20609  
CPO Owens Office Manager x25587  
LH Cooke LH Warfare x20947  
AB Graham Warfare T23/Margins x20947  
AB Webster Warfare T45/CVS/Shore x20947  
LH Cooley LH CIS, SEA, MW x24658  
AB Radford CIS x26935  
AB Leslie SEA x26935  
Phone No (external): 02392 7 + xtn/mil 9380 + xtn

**CMC(F)**  
WO1 Care IC x6133  
CPO McCrannor Career Advisor and Fleet Augmentation x8365  
CPO Robinson Supervisor for GS JRs x6627  
COXN Thomas Supervisor for Exec SM JRs x5997  
LWTR Brennan WAR SM JRs x7559  
LWTR Randall GS JRs x5580  
Phone No (external): 01436 674321 + xtn/mil 93255 + xtn

**CMC(C)**  
WO1 Boucher IC and RCA x2357  
CPO McMahon SE SR & JR CM x2067  
Phone No (external): 01326 55 + xtn/mil 93781 + xtn

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## Where to look

### GALAXIES

15-2014: Review into women in ground combat roles.  
14-2014: Introduction of the Naval Service Personnel Board.  
13-2014: Making history, the first women to qualify as Royal Navy Submariners.  
12-2014: Revised branch transfer policy – progress report.

### RNTMs

RNTM 114/14: Re-Introduction of the Gosport and Hayling Island Ferries' Concession  
RNTM 115/14: WE-CIS Branch Integration – RN General Service WE(CIS) Sub Specialisation Symposium 2014  
RNTM 116/14: Faraday: Removal of the Qualification Point (QP) Pay Bar – Achievement of Ops for Engineering General Service (EGS) and Engineering Submarine Service (ESM) Technicians  
RNTM 117/14: Schedule of Engineering Roadshows 2014 – EGS Branch Management Update and Faraday / Support Improvement Programme Update  
RNTM 118/14: Introduction of Leading Hands as Officers of the Quarter in Surface Ships  
RNTM 120/14: Recruiting for the Family Service Specialisation (FSS) and Royal Marines Welfare (RMW)

### DINS

2014DIN01-079: BRd 8374 (RN and RM Officer Training Regulations) - Issue of Change 11  
2014DIN01-081: Service Accommodation – 4 Tier Grading (4TG) Boards of Officers  
2014DIN01-086: Revised Mess and Single Accommodation Charges for MOD Civilians Temporarily Residing in Service Messes in the UK [Superseded 2013DIN01-085]  
2014DIN01-090: Guidance to Commanding Officers when dealing with an allegation of a sexual offence  
2014DIN01-099: Status of Sports in the Services – [Supersedes 2013DIN01-083]  
2014DIN01-100: Naval Service Redundancy Programme – Appeals Procedure – [Supersedes 2012DIN01-110]  
2014DIN04-027: Procedures for requesting a visit to Queen Elizabeth (QE) Class Aircraft Carriers project at Rosyth Dockyard



Picture: Dave Sherfield, HMS Raleigh

## Get busy with the phys-y

STAFF at HMS Raleigh are following in trainees' footsteps.

Yes, you read that correctly. Not the other way around.

For instructors at the Torpoint establishment are taking a leaf out of their students' books and knuckling down to regular physical training.

The emphasis at Raleigh is on making sure new entry trainees being turned from civilians into sailors and those undergoing specialist training are in peak physical shape.

Sport, workouts and gym sessions are all a fundamental part of their training.

Now the hundreds of RN instructors at the base are being encouraged to do the same, setting time aside for some bespoke 'phys' (pronounced 'fizz') under the guidance of Raleigh's PTI team.

The mantra is simple: *lead by example*. Leading the way are the staff from the RM Band Plymouth (based at Raleigh) and the Submarine School.

The 58 RN instructors at the latter train around 160 'deeps' every week in the arts of various forms of underwater

warfare.

"We're very good at looking after the students with their personal development, but we decided to do this together, as a unit," said Cdr Kevin Gomm, RN Submarine School CO.

"It's not just a good way of keeping fit, it's a good way of building teamwork. We have engineers, warfare specialists and so on getting together, all working out."

He and his team shuffled the curriculum around slightly to accommodate two fitness sessions a week, led by LPT Danny Card.

"People should be setting aside at least three hours a week for physical exercise – and not just the gym, but adventurous training, mountain biking, swimming," said Danny.

"There's such a through-put of people here, the emphasis is always on the trainees, not the staff."

"Because they've been 'out of action' for physical training for a while, we start with basic workouts and gradually improve. We're not out to beast them. We want it to be fun."

# Women are inspired to sign up for network

MORE THAN 100 female Naval personnel have signed up to the Naval Servicewomen's Network since its launch last year.

The network was set up in a bid to stop as many women leaving the organisation before they get to the senior ranks and will offer a mentoring scheme.

NSN held its second conference at HMS Collingwood, where 160 delegates heard from a range of speakers, including the most senior ranking female officer in the Armed Forces Air Vice-Marshal Elaine West, Kathryn Nawrockyi, from Opportunity Now, the campaign on gender diversity from Business in the Community, and Charlotte Sweeney, a diversity expert.

The conference was opened by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel and closed by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, who also attended the afternoon session.

Founder of the network Cdr Ellie Ablett cited the changes for women in the Royal Navy since the NSN's conception, including the first female submariners.

"On the face of it equality and opportunity for all is alive and well," she said. "The dichotomy is that women remain a small minority in the Service."

Only nine per cent of the Royal Navy's personnel are female; the Royal Navy Reserve has a higher figure at 16 per cent, while for the RFA it is only 6.7 per cent. Overall female recruitment has fallen to less than nine per cent in 2013.

Currently the Royal Navy doesn't have any females ranked higher than captains.

"Women need to see a path upwards," said Cdr Ablett. "One of our main successes is that the NSN is changing attitudes. We have persuaded some women to remain in the Royal Navy. Women are achieving amazing things but are too quiet about it."

Ms Nawrockyi cited statistics from an Opportunity Now survey in which the uniform and Armed Services ranked among the worst career categories for bullying and

harassment.

"We don't think women need to change, we think the workplace needs to change," she said.

Sub Lt Helen Williamson said: "I wanted to see what was involved, what it's all about."

"The ON statistics show exactly why we need a women's network."

"I have a very good role model in Cdr Ablett and I will now encourage junior ratings to sign up."

As well as current personnel, the conference attracted former female officers and ratings.

Mrs Carol Allen served 22 years in the Wrens, leaving in 1993. "I had to make a choice about children," she said "It's much better now, but it's not easy for the women in the Navy today."

Capt Alison Towler, a Managing Prosecutor on the Tri-Service Prosecuting Authority, is a Network founder and one of the first women who volunteered to go to sea after the ban was lifted in 1990.

"The Royal Navy is a trailblazer in terms of diversity issues generally," she said. "Submarines were the last bastion to women in the Service and now they will be allowed to serve on board."

"Women have so many more opportunities now, there is something for everyone in this organisation – when I first went to sea it was in singleton billets so you were the only female on board."

"The idea behind the network was that it should be a platform for raising ideas and raising the profile generally of women's issues, so having a conference with external speakers is extremely important. There is a lot of very good work going on in industry that is very relevant."

One of the network's aims for the forthcoming year is to encourage more ratings to join.

For more information email [Navy-NSWomenNetwork-Mailbox@mod.uk](mailto:Navy-NSWomenNetwork-Mailbox@mod.uk) or access the webpage on the Defence Intranet.

## NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION

# New contract for Service accommodation

THE MOD has announced that CarillionAmey (Housing Prime) Ltd has been awarded the National Housing Prime (NHP) contract for the support of UK Service Families Accommodation (SFA) and related services.

The NHP is a new UK-wide contract that will replace the existing separate arrangements to support SFA in England/Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Due to the size and complexity of the MOD SFA estate, the new contract will be introduced in a phased way, by region, taking over from the existing arrangements. Families will be informed in advance of the changes so that you can continue to access services and understand any differences; detailed information will follow throughout the transition period. Broadly, when the NHP contract is introduced there will be some changes such as:

- The NHP has a greater scope than the previous maintenance contracts, as they include additional services and requirements. These include; managing move appointments, managing the allocation of properties and the provision of furniture.
- The new contract is set up differently

and will also operate differently, with both MOD and contract staff expected to embrace new ways of working

■ New IT systems will be required and customers will eventually be able to access services in different ways, such as reporting maintenance issues online.

The Defence Infrastructure Organisation (DIO) will continue to monitor and scrutinise the performance of the contract.

Please keep a check on [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk) for updates.

■ The award-winning online mental wellbeing service, Big White Wall (BWW), has launched a new mobile app that extends its services to smartphone and tablet users.

The BWW offers free, safe, anonymous support, 24/7 to the UK Armed Forces community (aged 16+). This includes all serving personnel, ex-Forces, and their families. The BWW provides a supportive online community and has trained counsellors available at all times. It offers practical ways to move forward and free online courses to tackle anything from anxiety to quitting smoking.

The app is funded by the Forces in

Mind Trust and Department of Health.

Since it was established in 2007, the BWW has built up a community of 18,000 members.

Visit [www.bigwhitewall.com](http://www.bigwhitewall.com) for further details.

■ Since December 2013, the MOD is encouraging all tenderers bidding for MOD contracts to support the employment of the spouses and partners of Service personnel.

This is a good news story; it means that MOD Invitations to Tender will include a section that encourages supporting the employment of partners of serving personnel. This addition is outside of the tender evaluation itself, it is non-contractual, but it encourages those bidding for MOD contracts to consider how they can support spouse employment. Other personnel objectives the MOD are encouraging bidders to consider include:

- Employment of Service leavers
  - Employment of wounded, injured or sick veterans
  - Helping local Cadet units
  - Supporting Reservist employees
  - Encouraging Reserve Service
- The NFF will be monitoring the

progress of this initiative.

■ The one per cent pay increase has been in place since April – how it is affecting you?

Is your grocery basket a little heavier these days or are you struggling to fill it? We are seeing the Armed Forces Pay Review Body in October and would like your feedback. E-mail: [admin@nff.org.uk](mailto:admin@nff.org.uk)

■ NHS England has published national commissioning policies for services aimed at serving Armed Forces personnel and their families. These policies are interim and will be subject to full public consultation next year. Visit [www.england.nhs.uk](http://www.england.nhs.uk) and click on 'Service specific policies' to go through to the policies applicable to the Armed Forces.

The services include assisted conception and removal of wisdom teeth. The information can also be found on [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk) – navigate to the health section.

■ Liverpool Football Club is the first football club to show its support for the UK Armed Forces by signing the Corporate Covenant.

In a show of commitment to our

Armed Forces, the club has promised to:

- Offer exclusive football coaching with Liverpool FC Foundation coaches for over 100 veterans in the community.
- Give a number of free tickets to Armed Forces and their families for Liverpool home matches.
- Organise networking opportunities with employers and health experts for veterans in the community.

Liverpool FC is the 130th organisation to sign up to the Corporate Covenant.

Visit [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) for more information.

■ *Summer Homeport* magazine hits the streets in June.

Highlights include information on what happens during the Flag Officer Sea Training Weekly War; further details on the Forces Help To Buy scheme; information on the Sustainable Submarine Manpower Programme, and Inheritance Tax exemption for the Forces.

E-mail: [editor@nff.org.uk](mailto:editor@nff.org.uk) to join the mailing list for a free copy.

To contact the NFF tel: 023 9265 4374, e-mail: [admin@nff.org.uk](mailto:admin@nff.org.uk), or write to: Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.



● PO Paul 'Knocker' White visited the US Naval Air Station Pax River in Maryland to get to grips with the new aircraft handling kit which will be used to move the F35s around on the Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers



# Small force, MASF influence

"WE'RE probably the biggest unit no-one has heard of," sighs weapon engineer Lt Tony Rowe.

"People say: 'Who the hell are MASF?' They don't know what we do – or that we even exist."

Lt Rowe is a member of the Maritime Aviation Support Force formed in 2007 out of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary Naval Support Unit, which was principally charged with ensuring RFA ships could operate helicopters.

It's evolved to become a unit – fully commissioned in 2010 – which provides ships and exercises with specialist teams to meet a specific requirement – from engineers maintaining Phalanx guns on RFAs to supply experts supporting Naval helicopters in the Gulf.

"There is no other unit like us in the Navy," says MASF's XO Lt Patrick McClelland.

"We're out there every day, day after day, all year round. We're involved in everything."

"We don't have shiny bits of kit but we support shiny bits of kit."

"We've medics, weapon engineers, stewards, handlers and aviation specialists – basically we're a Type 23 frigate minus the stokers."

Based at RNAS Culdrose, around one third of the 220 men and women assigned to the unit are typically deployed at any one time.

PO(AH) Paul 'Knocker' White last year spent time at Pax River in Maryland, USA, learning how to use the new Electric Shipboard Handler (Aircraft) kit which will be used to move the F35B Lightning II strike fighter safely around the hangars of carriers HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

"They've built something that is usable, the kit is brilliant," he said. "I'd like to think I will work on the QE Class."

His primary role is flight deck upgrades and admits MASF personnel can be tasked at very short notice.

"At the end of last year I travelled from Culdrose to Scotland, joined a ship and drove back three days later."

"I flew out to HMS Kent in



● PO Paul 'Knocker' White guides a Merlin during a flight deck upgrade aboard HMS Defender

Crete last year and ended up spending six weeks with them."

Many MASFs are assigned to RFA Argus to support both flying operations and the ship's impressive medical facilities.

MASF personnel also support RFAs Fort Victoria, Fort Rosalie, Fort Austin, Cardigan Bay, Lyme Bay, Mounts Bay, Wave Knight and Wave Ruler.

Support to front-line Fleet Air Arm helicopter operations doesn't stop with helping the RFAs.

It's down to the MASF team to put together the 'deployable spares pack' – everything required to meet the demands of 28 days' flying by a Merlin or Sea King.

"The pack is built by us and then we've got to get it to the right place – and make sure it comes back in one piece too," explains LH Adam Lawson.

'Pack' suggests something relatively small and easy to move around. It's not. The one to support a 'Bagger' eye-in-the-sky Sea King weighed in at 3,820kg and was delivered to the front line by a giant Antonov transport plane.

"A lot of people think we're a manpower cell. We're not. But MASF is part of pretty much everything that happens," said CPO Peter Whittaker.

"We get a lot of 'thank you's

for our efforts, but we do need to raise our profile."

MASF – motto *auxilio ad alta* – reaching the heights with help – has personnel deployed all over the world but some worked a little closer to home earlier this year.

Personnel from MASF provided support to HMS Illustrious during this year's first Exercise Joint Warrior.

A 15-strong team of aircraft controllers, aircraft handlers, a chef and a steward, as well as air engineers, were led by CPOAEM Andrew 'Topsy' Turner as they supported Culdrose's Merlins from 820 NAS.

"In this job you have to be versatile," said CPO Turner.

"Last year when the carrier was sent to the Philippines, during the UK's humanitarian relief effort the MASF team helped out ashore with working parties."

"We were sent as part of a larger group to help a fishing village get back on its feet. It was hard work but very rewarding."

LAC Alex Walker spent Joint Warrior in Lusty's Operations Room.

"It's been a busy but very rewarding time," he said.

"Working with the ship's Air Traffic Officers and many different embarked aircraft, keeping aircrew deck current and

providing radar services.

"It's important that everything runs smoothly and safely when anti-submarine and amphibious operations are taking place in such a dynamic environment."

A majority of the MASF team spent their time on Lusty's flight deck. LA(AH) Marc Grice was one of eight deployed supporting aircraft movements on deck and in the hangar.

He has seen service on several RFA ships and most of the larger platforms in the RN.

"This mixture of aircraft on the exercise has been exciting and challenging."

"Our team have been supporting the hangar and the flight deck operations throughout and the younger guys are certainly learning a lot."

CPO Turner's team were returning to Illustrious this month for Deep Blue – a large antisubmarine exercise. Later in the year they are back on the carrier for a longer deployment abroad before she pays off in November.

MASF provides tailored teams, from two to more than 50 personnel, of flight deck crews, fire-fighters, meteorologists, survival equipment specialists, aircraft controllers, logisticians, engineers, medics and many other specialists to allow the continued operation of Naval aircraft worldwide.

For example, WO Steve Wallace is responsible for quality assurance.

"I ensure people are competently trained so I visit ships such as RFAs to do audits as well as mentoring," said WO Wallace, who only joined MASF a year ago.

"It's a new challenge being here. Our air engineering contingent is small but we are part of a bigger overall unit with MASF."

Lt McClelland said: "As the Navy has shrunk, MASF has grown."

"But our headline is we haven't got a headline – we enable operational capability but under the radar."

His CO, Lt Cdr Steve Griffin summed up the force: "We are unique."



● Some of the MASF team at Pax River, Maryland, during testing of the Electric Shipboard Handler (Aircraft) for the F35s



● MASF handlers move a Merlin Mk 2 on HMS Illustrious for Joint Warrior



● CPO Topsy Turner onboard HMS Illustrious



● A MASF team aboard RFA Mounts Bay during a flight deck upgrade



● PO White took this photo from HMS Kent during a RAS with a US carrier in 2013

# Wars on distant shores

## THE GROVE REVIEW

TOWARDS the end of World War 2, Britain decided to reassert its presence in the Antarctic.

The story of this mission is the subject of a new book by Stephen Haddelsey and Alan Carroll, *Operation Tabarin: Britain's Secret Expedition to Antarctica 1944-46* (History Press, £18.99 ISBN 978 0 7524 9356 5).

The former is an established historian of Antarctic exploration and the latter an Antarctic base leader in the 1950s and adviser to the UK Antarctic Heritage trust, writes Prof Eric Grove of Liverpool Hope University.

The origins of the expedition lay in worries about the security of the Falkland Islands and its Antarctic dependencies in and around the Graham Land Peninsula which sticks out of Antarctica itself below the Antarctic Circle.

German raiders did operate in far southern latitudes preying on whaling ships. In March 1941, the armed merchant cruiser HMS Queen of Bermuda visited Deception Island in the South Shetlands to the east of Graham Land to destroy what derelict facilities were there to deny them to any German ship.

After Pearl Harbor, there were fears about possible Japanese activities round Cape Horn and to the south. It was hard to obtain American support for British imperial interests and Churchill proposed basing a battalion in the Falklands, as "it would be a very serious thing to lose the Falkland Islands to the Japanese... the islands are very well known and their loss would be a shock to the whole Empire. They would certainly have to be retaken." This eventually led to the dispatch in 1942 of a garrison of 1,500 men to secure the Falkland Islands.

The main threat to the British position in this region came less from far away, rather from Argentina, who had claimed sovereignty in the dependencies as well as the Falklands proper since 1927. The attitude of London was politely to ignore the claims so as not to antagonise an important British area of interest and investment in mainland Argentina. Although it is not mentioned in the book, I found out in my own research in 1982, that real doubts about British claims in the region existed in London at the time of the Argentine claims. As a lecturer at Dartmouth, I kept suitably quiet about that!

At the beginning of 1942, with the British Empire under serious attack, the Argentines sent a naval transport to Deception Island

and other places in the region. Flags were raised and notes were left claiming possession. This led to a legal adviser in the Foreign Office to argue that "if we want to make sure of our title to these islands, we must establish something permanently there ourselves, difficult and tiresome as it may be." It was decided to use the threat of enemy raiders as a cover for an expedition to look for traces of German facilities. The real reason was to assert title against Argentina, which had sent her ship back for another visit in early 1943.

Another armed merchant cruiser, HMS Carnarvon Castle, was dispatched to Deception Island where she began what developed into a mutual destruction of marks of sovereignty. Something more was deemed to be required and a cross-departmental expedition committee formed which led to Operation Tabarin mounted under the command of Lt James Marr RNVR, an officer experienced in Antarctic exploration and based in the Colonial Office; he put together a suitably experienced group. The expedition was allocated an old Norwegian sealer built in 1918 to be commissioned as HMS Bransfield. Sadly the old ship had difficulties even getting to Falmouth and the party had to transfer to the troopship Highland Monarch, preparing to sail from Avonmouth, with a relief for the original Falklands garrison.

There the party embarked in two local ships, the 370-ton former research ship HMS William Scoresby, which had been armed and commissioned into the Royal Navy since 1940, and the larger Falkland Islands Company ship Fitzroy. They set sail from Port William on January 29 1944.

The book provides a most comprehensive account of the subsequent activities of the expedition. Despite Fitzroy's weaknesses in ice (she was eventually replaced by the sealer Eagle) the expedition established bases at Port Lockroy, Deception Island and, eventually, Hope Bay. Journeys were made wider afield by dog sled. Marr, who may never have been entirely well and who felt deeply about the original failure to get to Hope Bay, resigned and was replaced by Captain Andrew Taylor of the Royal Canadian Engineers.

The expedition was continued

in 1946 by the newly established Falklands Islands Dependencies Survey. That later became the British Antarctic Survey. As well as much useful scientific and survey work, it had indeed restored a British presence in the region.

Hope Bay was, however, evacuated and when the British returned in a research ship in 1952, the interlopers who had shot over the heads of the landing party had to be ejected under the threat of the frigate HMS Burghhead Bay. (The book says this was the last such armed incident on the Antarctic continent, but in my book *Vanguard to Trident* (pp170-171) I mention another incident in early 1953 concerning Deception Island and Hope Bay involving the frigate HMS Snipe covered by the cruiser Superb. Although there was no shooting the threat of force was real. The situation only de-escalated with agreement not to attack each other's bases. Eventually the Antarctic Treaty that came into force in 1961, demilitarised the whole area south of the Antarctic circle.)

There are other areas where the author's lack of Naval historical knowledge shows through, notably the somewhat preposterous assertion that the expedition was somehow undertaken to protect Ultra – Bletchley Park has to get everywhere! Nevertheless, it is an important, solid and well-researched contribution to both the history of Antarctic exploration and the maritime strategic history of that distant region.

■ It is the nightmare of every research student or author that his or her thesis – which reflects a large amount of effort – can suddenly be outdated by a ground-breaking new analysis that overturns existing views and approaches.

Sadly, this fate has overcome Dr Phillip Pattee whose *At War In Distant Waters; British Colonial Defence in the First World War* was published by Naval Institute Press last year (ISBN 978-161251-195 hardback and 978-1-61251-195-54 E book). It will not go down as one of that distinguished house's better publications.

The author is a former USN submarine officer who is now an Associate Professor of Strategy at the US Army Command and General Staff College. As a result of this, he has taken the approach of a modern strategic planner.

"Typically," he argues in his introduction, "a strategic planner develops an understanding of



● Oil tanks at Madras burn after being bombed by the German raider SMS Emden in September 1914 – the only attack on India during WW1

the situation, determines his or her organisation's goals, and then proposes various policies or courses of action that the organisation could pursue to achieve its goals. Once policy makers decide on a policy to follow, military planners execute the policies with modifications along the way in response to enemy activity." The first six chapters therefore attempt to define the strategic situation as British decision makers understood it and then the strategic deliberations of the pre war era. Only then does he discuss the overseas expeditions themselves.

The first six chapters take 131 pages; the campaigns and associated diplomacy a mere 49, followed by conclusions of 14 pages. Footnotes bring the book to 274 pages in total of which less than twenty percent covers the actual subject the reader might have expected to take centre stage.

This might not have mattered quite so much if the author's contextual analysis took account of recent work on the subjects he covers, both of which are highly-contested minefields, only to be navigated by the best and bravest historians.

Both Britain's entry into the war and the strategic debates on pre-war strategy are highly contested, something the rather simplistic arguments of this work pay far too little regard to.

The author accepts the British Empire's alignment with France and Russia as a given, as he does the adoption of a continental strategy. As we now know, the alignment with the other Entente powers was more equivocal (except perhaps in the confused minds of Sir Edward Grey and his Foreign Office officials) than it has often seemed to those, who as far too many still do, read

history backwards.

The main problem of the book, however, is the mistaken story it tells about British strategy in 1914. Although Dr Pattee published his book in 2013, he clearly has not read Nicholas Lambert's very important *Planning Armageddon* published in 2012, which clearly demonstrates that the continental strategy proposed by elements in the War Office, was far from a 'done deal' and was opposed not just by the Admiralty but Army officers too, including the future first commander of the British Expeditionary Force, Sir John French.

As far as the key cabinet decision makers were concerned, the British Empire was going to use its Naval and financial dominance to wage total economic warfare on Germany, which would act rapidly and forego the requirement for major British land operations on the Continent of Europe.

Britain was so far from having the decided strategy that Dr Pattee imagines, that there remained considerable confusion in London. Although, as Lambert argues on p181 of his *magnum opus* "economic warfare had become the cornerstone of British Grand Strategy in the event of war with Germany," the Asquith Cabinet did not have a plan "worked out in every respect."

In the event, opposition from the Americans and other neutrals transmitted by the Foreign Office, and from the Treasury, Board of Trade and the City prevented the drastic and potentially-decisive measures being put into effect.

The strategy adopted was thus done so by default rather than reflecting much in the way of coherent planning. One wonders how the Cabinet as a whole might

have reacted at the beginning of August had they known what they were getting themselves into.

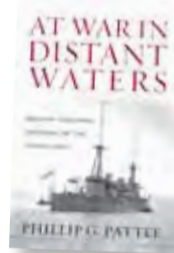
It seems that the author was too transfixed by his old fashioned views that he failed to spot what was really happening, despite copious research. I knew there would be problems when on the first page of his introduction he completely misconstrued what Grey was meaning in his speech in the House of Commons on August 3. In that speech, Grey argued that with a powerful Navy Britain would "suffer but little more than we should suffer" if the British Empire remained neutral. There would be, the Foreign Minister went on, a terrible meltdown in financial trade. What he did not say was that any suffering thus incurred would be short and most hardship would be directed at Germany that would soon collapse. He was not committing the Empire to a continental strategy, as the author asserts.

He sets up something of a straw man in the assertions of other historians that the occupation of parts of the German Empire was a mere exercise in imperial aggrandisement. The author is absolutely right to put these campaigns into a global strategy to retain command of the sea and global communications.

It is such a pity that he did not make more of the detail of this essentially maritime strategy. He even misses that the first shots of the Great War by a soldier in the service of King George V was fired at retreating German *Polizeitruppen* in Togo by a Muslim NCO of the West African Frontier Force. He could also have given more detail about the German raiders, whose capabilities he seriously exaggerates. Some were not just 'steamers', but great ocean liners.

There are some insights in the book. The author's analysis of the difficulties of putting the amorphous mass of the tramping trade into convoy is well made. Nevertheless, there are a few mistakes that make one doubt the authenticity of the text. I was surprised to hear that Wilhelm II had become Kaiser three months after his father's 'ascension'; Friedrich III may have been a good man, but perhaps not that holy! Also the Tsar of 1914 would have been surprised to learn that his capital was Moscow.

Overall, it must be said that there are better ways of spending £30 (or £23.99 for the electronic version). One can get the hardback for just over half the full price of that edition, but even so the money is better invested in *Planning Armageddon*, which should be on everyone's reading list.



# When the Welsh built ships for the RN

PORTSMOUTH. Devonport. Chatham. Pembroke Dock. Bastions of the Royal Navy past and present.

Pembroke Dock? Not, perhaps, a name that instantly springs to mind when talking of Naval dockyards, but the establishment in South Wales had a major role to play in the development of the Royal Navy in the 19th and 20th Centuries.

The South Wales town's status has long been overlooked, according to author and local man Lt Cdr Lawrie Phillips, who has righted that wrong with a comprehensive and very readable account of the development and decline of the dockyard, and what must be the definitive review of all ships produced at the site.

Pembroke Dock's origins lie in a private yard, supported by the Admiralty, which was developed on the north side of the estuary at Milford Haven in the 18th Century, but which went bankrupt within a few years; the lease was taken over by the Navy.

A bid by the Navy Board to buy the site in 1809 failed, so they looked at another site on the south shore of the estuary.

Literally a green-field site – the most technologically-advanced machinery in the area would have been the ploughs used to work the farmland – Paterchurch was the site that caught the eye of the Navy's masters.

And here, in 1814, work began on a site which would eventually become a specialist building facility that would launch more than 250 ships of wood, then iron, then steel, including five royal yachts.

**Pembroke Dockyard and the Old Navy: A Bicentennial History** (The History Press, £19.99, 978 0 7509 5214 9) looks at the early struggles of the yard to flourish despite lack of space (it had just one dry dock) and distance from the decision-makers in London.

From a standing start, with no ocean-going shipbuilding experience, within 20 years the yard was sending out first-class warships of all shapes and sizes, and continued to do so for more than a century.

The first hulls built by the yard were sixth-rate frigates HM Ships Ariadne and Valorous,

constructed stern-to-stern on the same open slip and launched on the same tide on February 10 1816.

The last surface warship produced was light cruiser HMS Curacoa (4,190 tons), launched on May 5 1917 (and lost in 1942 when struck by the troopship RMS Queen Mary); the last warship was submarine H52 (launched March 31 1919) and the very last vessel down the slipway was 13,350-ton fleet oiler RFA Oleander, launched April 26 1922 and lost in June 1940 after being bombed during the Norwegian campaign.

By the time Oleander was launched the yard was a pale shadow of its former self, and the site was redundant when finally offered up for lease in 1926.

Naval historian Lt Cdr Phillips – born and raised in Pembroke Dock, and a former Head of Publicity at the MOD – provides a brief but detailed history of the yard, but the bulk of the book is taken up by detailed accounts of 260 ships built at Pembroke Dock, many accompanied by images.

He finishes his laudable book with a section looking at 'Dockyard People', from the all-powerful Commissioners or Captain Superintendents to a long-serving storekeeper.



● Pembroke-built paddle sloop HMS Vixen, here on anti-piracy duties off Brunei in August 1845

## Seafarer awarded medal

THE founder of Swindon unit Cyril Bartlett has been awarded an Arctic Star medal in recognition of his service to his country.

The 93-year-old war veteran, who was born and raised in Swindon and now lives in Old Walcot, volunteered to join the Royal Navy when he was only 20 to help fight the Nazis during World War 2.

He spent some time aboard HMS Vervain, a Flower-class corvette, which travelled deep into the Arctic Circle where the freezing temperatures were an additional danger.

Cyril was presented with the medal at a special ceremony at Swindon's headquarters – TS Resolution in Upham Road – by Rear Admiral Wilkinson.

Cyril's son David said: "It was an exceptional evening.

"All the Sea Cadets and their officers were there and Rear Admiral Wilkinson presented father with the medal and gave a short speech as well."

Even before Cyril joined the war in 1940 he had already established the first Swindon unit of the Sea Cadets in the town centre.

David said: "He wanted to do something to help out the young people.

"He had seen other units in other places and just thought it was a great thing for young people to have.

"He later established, and was Commanding Officer of, the first Sea Cadet training centre at Wroughton in the early 1970s."



## Short cut to helping

PO (SCC) Donna Norton had her hair shaved off in support of Barnsley Sea Cadets.

Cadet Cpl Joe Myers volunteered to shave Donna's head, and did an excellent job (above).

There is still time to sponsor her. Visit [www.justgiving.com/Donna-Norton1](http://www.justgiving.com/Donna-Norton1) or text PODN99 £5 to 70070.

# Young warriors take top trophy

FIFTY-SIX cadets and instructors from 5 Troop Bravo Company Royal Marines Cadets deployed to Swynnerton Army Camp for their first fieldcraft tactical exercise of the year, codenamed 'Young Warrior'.

Cadets and CFAVs from all six of the 5 Troop Detachments took part in the exercise – Holyhead, Rhyl, Connahs Quay, Chester, Stoke, and Stafford and Rugeley.

5 Troop is a newly-formed troop, being an amalgamation of two other troops which were brought together in Bravo Company's restructure in late 2013.

Many of the cadets taking part in the exercise were very junior, and with little practical fieldcraft experience. Some had only been in the cadets a couple of weeks.

The cadets were put into three groups and during the first full day they received eight structured fieldcraft lessons, covering everything from section formations to camouflage and patrol orders delivery training.

During the day all ranks were fed by ration pack, which again came as a surprise for many, having never used them before.

A night exercise was followed by training in basic close-quarters battle skills.

Hammer 4 Troop were awarded the Young Warrior Trophy for 2014 for their impressive work during the night exercise.



● Hammer 4 Troop with their winning trophy. Back row, from left, MCT Francis (Chester), MC2 M Taylor (Stafford), MC2 J Gizzie (Rhyl), L/Cpl B Ives and MC1 J Baron-Richardson (both Stafford). Front row, from left, MC2 T Hankin and MC S Smith (both Stafford), MC2 S Molyneux and MCR K Hew (both Holyhead)

# Going Dutch proves a real eye-opener

**BEDFORDSHIRE** Sea Cadets got a taste of life on the ocean wave courtesy of P&O Ferries while attending a Merchant Navy familiarisation course.

The cadets boarded the Pride of Hull, a 215m long, 59,925-tonne displacement RoRo ship for a two-day adventure consisting of a return crossing to Europoort in Holland and a day trip to Amsterdam.

The nearest ship in the Royal Navy to this size would be one of the new aircraft carriers, so this was a tremendous opportunity to get some big-ship experience.

The cadets were offered the run of the ship by Capt Eugene Favier, and were asked what they would like to see.

The ship was described as "like a small town", with all amenities and entertainments at your fingertips.

True to the Captain's word, and after a gruelling ship's tour consisting of hundreds of stairs and kilometres of walking between the bridge and the engine room, the cadets were shown the bridge and its controls, the ship's on-board operations, its police cells (called meditation rooms) and all the main engineering spaces.

The cadets then settled down to a well-deserved dinner in the ship's restaurant.

Because they were dining in their uniforms, many passengers wondered who this young crew were, and when asked, the cadets explained what they were doing and repeated much of what they had learnt to the public.

The public onboard the Pride of Hull were from the UK, France, Germany and the Netherlands, and all were interested in what the cadets were doing.

As the cadets and staff were all in uniform they quickly became adept in helping lost and confused passengers – and doing so in several languages.

Reporting back to the bridge at 2000 hours the cadets saw the ship's departure.

AC Oliver Hobbs (Dunstable) mentioned "how similar the ferries' routine for leaving the side was compared to the day-to-day power boating in the cadets – only it's bigger".

Very much bigger when you compare a typical cadet boat that is 4-5m in length, and the average Royal Navy destroyer of 8,000 tonnes.

Up for breakfast next day the

cadets tucked into a full English, with L/Cpl Harry Williams (Bedford) saying this was the "best food ever" as he devoured his hash browns.

The cadets joined a bus for the journey to Amsterdam. At first glance Amsterdam is like any other major city, but on a closer look the city's liberal attitude was an eye-opener.

However the cadets visited the city's Maritime Museum and learnt about the Dutch Navy, the country's trade and commerce operations with other nations and they visited the Amsterdam Galleon for a view of life on board a 19th Century sailing ship.

Back on board the ferry and after dinner the cadets were shown the ship's safety equipment, including the 150-person lifeboats, the fast-response boats, the inflatable chutes and boats that would be used by some passengers and the ship's firefighting equipment and breathing apparatus.

Those who were exhausted retired while a brave few witnessed the skilful departure of the ship from Europoort.

Following the rules of the road the ship followed the seaway equivalent of the M25 where the

cadets monitored the navigation aids, lights and other ships' lights; this was one of their only opportunities to practice night-time navigation skills.

Back on the bridge at 0615 the cadets witnessed the final docking of the behemoth vessel in Hull, where the ship's Chief Officer and Captain put the ship alongside after completing a 180-degree turn using the engines, tides and bow thrusters.

One of the cadets likened the manoeuvre to a handbrake skid in a car – but with far less fuss.

After the ship was made fast the Captain thanked the cadets by saying they were "a well-disciplined group".

The cadets had a memorable and valuable experience in seeing how contemporary their training was when compared to the commercial and professional operation of a large ship in the real world.

You know when you've had a good trip with the Sea Cadets because of the buzz in the minibus on the way home.

There was lots of "I want to go back and do more", "I am thinking now of the merchant navy as a career path", and "I didn't know I could do this"...

## New link to recall Exmouth

WICK unit TS Campbell is to forge a permanent link with HMS Exmouth 1940 Association.

It is hoped the link will enable the cadets to learn about the World War 2 destroyer.

The link will be formally launched in the town over the weekend of June 21-22.

The weekend includes a ceremony of Colours followed by a presentation on the history of HMS Exmouth.

Sea Cadets will give a demonstration of a field gun exercise and the agreement will be formally signed by representatives of the unit and the HMS Exmouth Association.

The following day a short service of dedication will take place at the Remembrance cherry tree before a brass plaque is unveiled by the Lord Lieutenant of Caithness, Miss Anne Dunnett.

A church service will follow at Wick St Fergus, which will include a brief talk on the history of HMS Exmouth.

In the afternoon a 'Come and Meet the Cadets' event takes place with maritime activities at Wick Harbour Pontoons.

HMS Exmouth was an E-class destroyer built at Portsmouth in 1934 and one of the first maritime casualties of the war.

She was sunk by submarine U-22 in the Moray Firth, off Wick, on January 21 1940, with the loss of the entire crew of 189 men.

It is believed the ship's magazine exploded when hit by a torpedo. A few bodies were washed up in the bay of Wick shortly afterwards, but most were lost within the ship. The wreck of HMS Exmouth was not located until 2001.

Anyone who hasn't already supplied a copy of a photograph of their relative for the album in the church (by the memorial plaque), please forward one to David Richard-Jones at [drjwick@btopenworld.com](mailto:drjwick@btopenworld.com) along with brief details on the relative's background.

Visit [www.hmsexmouth1840.co.uk](http://www.hmsexmouth1840.co.uk) for further details.

## Collecting vital cash

CADET Jacob Hill was presented with a cheque by the Very Reverend John Morley, Chairman of Market Harborough branch of the Royal British Legion, with Lt (SCC) Shane Daley, Commanding Officer of TS Fernie (Market Harborough) and Marcus Middleton, chairman of the Unit Management Team.

## Workers help out

A HOST of Vauxhall employees from Ellesmere Port car plant spent a day painting Chester unit as part of their new Corporate Social Responsibility Volunteering Programme (right).

The programme allows employees to take one paid day per year to join in a CSR activity.

Vauxhall employees spent the day repairing and repainting the unit's deck walls and staircase, building stud walling to create two extra classrooms, fitting the skirting board to the lavatories as well as removing old unit furniture and weeds from the boat park.



## Look sharp for contest

WESTON-SUPER-MARE will be representing the South West Area at the National Drill and Piping Competition with their standard party.

They were winners in the standard party competition and finished second in the best-dressed category.

They were also placed in the best-dressed continuity squad, unarmed squad and piping team categories.

Best-dressed continuity squad member was LC Fulcher, best dressed unarmed squad member was Cdt PO Harper, and LC Hayman got second for squad commander.

The unit team were runners up for unarmed squad, continuity squad and piping team.

The standard party is now training for the national competition, where the team will be attending as current national champions.

This is the first time in many years that the unit has represented Avon District.



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A charity registered in England and Wales 313013 and in Scotland SC037808



## Cash to fund cruises

BARROW unit will be sending 18 cadets on offshore cruises during 2014 after a £500 boost from Dalby Offshore.

The unit used the money towards subsidising those cadets who are in most need.

Each of the 18 Sea Cadets will take part in a six-night offshore cruise on either TS John Jerwood, which is a 24m power vessel, or the 30m long offshore sailing brig TS Royalist.

All offshore cruises offered on Marine Society and Sea Cadet vessels have already been significantly subsidised to £260 per cadet, so overall this is a great opportunity that many youngsters will experience.

Barrow unit CO Ted Creighton said: "The experience of an offshore cruise is unique; when you talk to many ex-cadets decades later, the one significant memory that stays with them is how much they learned and enjoyed their offshore cruise."

Dalby Offshore has extensive history and knowledge across the offshore shipping industry and the expanding offshore renewable energy sector in crew-supply and support vessels.

The company provides support for many marine applications, including wreckage and salvage support, with an extensive work barge and combined accommodation for up to 80 people.

Head of Operations Steve Bartram visited the unit and took a full tour of both the headquarters building and the Sir John Fisher Sailing Centre, where he witnessed all the cadets under training in a number of subjects from ropework to engineering.

Mr Bartram said: "It's very rewarding to be able to help deserving charities such as Barrow Sea Cadets."

"We are pleased to be able to offer this donation to support cadets taking offshore cruises this year."

## Covenant is signed

SUB LT Lucy Seex of Staines and Egham unit was one of a number of signatories from across the community to sign the Armed Forces Community Covenant in the council chamber at Knowle Green.

The Covenant, similar to the national covenant, places on record at local level the commitment of the borough to recognise and support the contribution of those from the Armed Services in the local area.

After the signing ceremony a buffet reception was held where council members met and chatted to the many signatories to the Spelthorne Armed Forces Covenant.

## Royal treat for cadets

SEA Cadets from Blackburn unit had the honour of being part of the Cadet tri-Service guard of honour who lined the way for the visit of the Queen and Prince Philip, who recently visited Blackburn Cathedral.

A/Sgt Jacob Knowles and Cadet Connor Doherty were on hand as the Royal party stepped from the train and MC2 Ashley Howarth operated the lift.

Standards from the three Cadet services were on display to mark the importance of the visit.

The Sea Cadet standard was carried by Cdt Junaid Mulla.



● Lt Cdr Michelle Welsh receives the Second Sea Lord's Commendation aboard HMS Victory

## Top honour for a life spent helping people

THE Area Training Officer for Eastern Area Sea Cadets has been rewarded for her work.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Michelle Welsh RNR, 44, received the Second Sea Lord's Commendation from Vice Admiral David Steele aboard HMS Victory.

Her citation read: "Michelle has had a lifelong commitment and selfless devotion to helping others who are less fortunate; this encompasses support to both the broader charitable community as well as being a senior officer within the Sea Cadets."

"She has excelled in many varied roles both at unit, and more latterly, district, area and national levels, readily accepting responsibility and setting exceptional standards for others to follow, all accomplished with an inclusive natural style and confidence that elicits maximum support from those around her."

Michelle, who works as a full-

time PA at Boots UK plc in Nottingham, has many instructor qualifications, including first aid, offshore sailing, expedition leader and rowing coach.

She was the top candidate on both her promotion and command courses while gaining her Licentiate, Graduateship and Membership in Strategic Youth management.

An acknowledged expert in the field of Duke of Edinburgh Awards, Michelle is also Area Staff Officer for the Cadet Vocational Qualification Organisation and for the past two years has been Area Training Officer responsible for the annual training programme of more than 3,500 cadets and 1,500 adults.

Michelle is also an active fundraiser for Seafarers UK, Macmillan Cancer, Children in Need, Help for Heroes and Carlton Male Voice Choir, and has sold Poppies for the past 29 years.

# Lessons about Navy really are great fun

TWENTY-SEVEN Sea Cadets plus adult volunteers from across West Kent gathered for training and fun on board HMS Cavalier at the Historic Dockyard Chatham.

Some of the older cadets were on board for a Seamanship course, learning about rope work, knots and bends, safety on the water and other things nautical.

The Junior Cadets spent the weekend learning about life on board a Royal Navy destroyer and submarine as they toured HMS Cavalier and HMS Ocelot as well as visiting the ropery, museum and Walls of Oak, learning about our Naval heritage the reasons for some of the traditions we hold dear and how much the country depends on the maritime industry with around 90 per cent of our imports and exports travelling by sea.

The officer in charge of the weekend's events, Lt Cdr Mark Gambell, said: "These activity and training weekends on board HMS Cavalier are a unique opportunity for young people to live on board and experience some of the challenges faced by those who served at sea."

"We are very grateful to the Historic Dockyard, the Royal Engineers School at Brompton and the Cavalier Association for their support in helping us to



● Sea Cadets tour HMS Cavalier at Chatham in Kent

provide these experiences."

The cadets actually get to stay on board HMS Cavalier in specially-adapted accommodation for up to 36 young people, including wheelchair access, on the aft mess decks.

It is clearly a popular venue for activities as most of the cadets who try it once want to come back again and again.

Cadet Myka Gardener, from Sittingbourne unit, said "I love doing this stuff, and even though

we didn't get much sleep last night I am learning loads and love being in Sea Cadets."

"Two weeks ago I was offshore on TS John Jerwood for six nights. It's great."

Cadets and adults use HMS Cavalier as a training resource and it gives life to the ship, which is the last remaining destroyer of its type built in World War 2 to survive, and is now a registered memorial to all those who served and lost their lives in destroyers of the Royal Navy.



## Long service honoured

LT CDR (SCC) John Horner RNR (right of picture) was presented with a Captain's Certificate of Appreciation for good service by Cdr Derek Login, Senior Staff Officer for Southern Area SCC at Crowborough Training Camp.

Lt Cdr Horner has been a member of the Sea Cadets for more than 48 years – since the age of 12 – serving as an adult volunteer for 42 of those years.

John is retiring after a long and distinguished career with the Corps, formerly at Reigate unit as a cadet moving through the ranks to CO.

During John's time as CO, Reigate was in the upper echelon of units in the area and country, winning the

Stephenson Trophy (best unit in the area) on a number of occasions and the coveted Canada Trophy for the best unit in Great Britain in 1995.

When his tenure as CO was complete, John became District Staff Officer Training for Surrey District; following that he was Area Staff Officer Expedition Training and latterly Area Staff Officer Leadership.

Whilst carrying out all of his District and Area roles he remained as a Band Instructor at Reigate – his son is a serving Royal Marines Bandsman.

John is retiring from the Sea Cadet Corps to spend more time with his family and grandchildren.



## TV show reward

A TEN-YEAR-OLD member of Tooting and Balham unit has been awarded a Blue Peter Badge.

Ellie-Mae Wynne (above) wrote to the programme to tell presenters of her work in the unit.

In her letter she said: "The Sea Cadets is about the Navy. I made a few friends on the first night."

"I marched in the Remembrance Sunday parade and went to the church that I sing at for Christmas carols at school."

"We went bag packing at Sainsburys for three days to raise money for a new minibus for the Sea Cadets."

Ellie-Mae went on to talk about success in a piping competition and how she is learning to tie knots and save people from drowning.

"I love the Sea Cadets so much, more people my age should get involved," she added.

Ellie-Mae received a response from the Editor of Blue Peter Ewan Vinnicombe, who said: "Thank you for your letter all about your hard work in the Tooting and Balham Sea Cadets. We thought it was so good we're awarding you a Blue Peter Badge."

## Dedicated members

FOUR members of Waltham Forest Sea Cadets – MC2 Watts, MC2 Lusely, OC Meakin and Cdt Johns – attended Kensington Town Hall to collect their Jack Petchey Awards.

The Jack Petchey Foundation supports Sea Cadet units across London with vital funds.

The cadets were nominated for their achievement and dedication.

Each cadet received £100 to go toward new band equipment, days out and organising boating courses.

Sgt Cormack was also nominated for the Leader Award.

## Ice and easy for the Marines

THE Royal Marines emerged victorious at the annual Royal Navy Inter-Command Ice Hockey Championship – despite having the smallest squad.

Four teams took part in the competition at Gosport Ice Rink – General Service, who were defending champions, Royal Marines, Fleet Air Arm and Southampton Spitfires, who took the place of the submariners, who were unable to gather enough players.

Over the course of the day all four teams played three games of 30 minutes in the group stage and then the third and fourth-placed teams game played three 15-minute periods (45 minutes) of hockey.

The final consisted of three 20-minute periods (60 minutes) of hockey.

The Fleet Air Arm team were the least experienced team on the day, with most of their players being new to the RNIHA.

The Royal Marines arrived with only seven players, with others away on deployment.

By the end of the group stage, the Fleet Air Arm were hovering at the foot of the table, the General Service were bobbing along in third, the Spitfires were soaring in second with the Royal Marines yomping to the top.

This meant that the airmen would face the sailors to see who would finish with the wooden stick, and the students would face the bootbecks for the title.

By the time the hooter had sounded to signal the end of the final game of the day, the sailors had grounded the airmen 11-1 and the bootbecks had shot down the Spitfires 9-2 to take the Navy Cup and be crowned 2014 Inter-Command Champions.

Special thanks must go to PO Martin Gibson, who refereed every game of the tournament, and to PO Paul Shannon, who put together the schedule for the day.

For those members of the Naval Service who would like to get involved in the sport, training takes place on the first and third Tuesdays of the month in Gosport with regular fixtures throughout the year. Players are also aiming to represent the Royal Navy at the Inter-Service Championships.

For more information on Royal Navy ice hockey, contact general secretary Lt Adam Lappin on [gensec@rniha.org.uk](mailto:gensec@rniha.org.uk) or team manager Jennie Fitzpatrick on [manager@rniha.org.uk](mailto:manager@rniha.org.uk).

More can be found on the website via [www.rniha.org.uk](http://www.rniha.org.uk) or follow us on Facebook and Twitter.

## One for the girls

A TRIATHLON for women only takes place at Dorney Lake, Eton, on Sunday July 13.

The event, designed for women of all abilities, comprises a swim, cycle and run.

There are three categories:

■ Novices can swim 200m, cycle 5km and run 2.5km;

■ The sprint category comprises a 400m swim, 20km cycle and 5km run;

■ The challenge category will see entrants swim 800m, cycle 30km and run 7.5km.

There will be a training day this month for anyone interested.

For more information visit [www.humanrace.co.uk/events/women-only/women-only-triathlon](http://www.humanrace.co.uk/events/women-only/women-only-triathlon) or [www.pdevportal.co.uk/sports/triathlon](http://www.pdevportal.co.uk/sports/triathlon)

## England women tackle Navy course

THE England Women's Rugby squad tackled military-style training at HMS Collingwood.

The 30-strong squad visited the training establishment for a week-long camp in preparation for the World Cup in France this summer.

One element of their stay saw the team spend a day at the Royal Navy Leadership Academy (RNLA), where they undertook a series of challenges and activities used to train Royal Navy officers and sailors in the Fleet.

Lt Cdr Neil Caswell, Officer in Charge of the RNLA who oversaw the day, said: "They came to us asking if we could help, give advice, and that was our aim."

"We looked at where their talents are, where their strengths are and weaknesses lie."

England Women's Head Coach Gary Street said: "The Royal Navy are world experts in performing under pressure, thinking through problems, communication tasks and decision-making, so we thought it would be really good to tap into the expertise they've got here."

England vice-captain Sarah Hunter said: "It's been absolutely fantastic; our team had a great day with some of the command challenges."



● Captain Katy Mclean carries 'Fred' the dummy with the rest of the team in pursuit

# RN players serve up victory for fifth year

THE Royal Navy Men's Tennis team have once again secured victory at the Inter-Service B Tennis Championships.

The competition, at RAF Halton was won with two matches to spare as the Senior Service won seven of the eight matches contested, bringing home the trophy for the fifth successive year.

In the first match, seasoned Inter-Service player Lt Cdr Ollie Craven recovered well from a tense start, in which he lost the first set in a nail-biting tie-break, eventually overcoming his Army opponent 6-7, 6-3, 6-2.

Newcomer OC Dev Chowdhury was next to compete, this time against the RAF, and showed no outward sign of any pressure as he despatched his opponent with ease 6-1, 6-2.

Following that, OC Chowdhury celebrated another victory, overcoming his Army opponent 6-0, 6-0.

Lt Cdr Craven rounded off an excellent day for the RN with a well-polished performance against the RAF, his strong attacking



● The victorious Royal Navy Men's Tennis Team

game seeing him through in fine style as his adversary struggled to cope with his slick approach play and coverage at the net, succumbing 6-1, 6-2.

The perfect start on day one meant that a strong showing in doubles would see the RN take home the trophy once again.

However, the team had been in exactly the same great position in 2013, and had to wait until the final match of the tournament to claim victory over the Army.

As a veteran of that match, Lt Cdr Phil Richardson was never going to be complacent.

He and his partner Surg Lt

Neil Riley swept their Army rivals aside 6-2, 6-1.

This terrific victory boosted Chowdhury and Craven as they paired up to crush first of all the RAF (6-2, 6-2) and then the Army (6-0, 6-2), thus securing both the trophy for the Royal Navy and three wins out of three for Lt Cdr Craven in his final year of Inter-Service tennis before he leaves in August.

With victory assured, the RN were able to blood the reserve doubles pair, but unfortunately Cdr Nigel Bowen (team captain) and Lt Adrian Driscoll never fully found their best form and went down fighting to the strong-serving RAF pair in a 6-2, 6-2 defeat.

However, the pain of the team's lone defeat quickly subsided as the team collected the Inter-Service B Trophy.

Not resting on their laurels, Cdr Bowen and coach Kevin Baker are craving yet more success as they plot a course for the RN team to match this success at the Inter-Service A Tennis Championships at the All England Club, Wimbledon, on August 4-5.

## Bird's eye view of British win

RFA Fort Austin was alongside in Bahrain for the weekend of the 2014 Bahrain Formula One Grand Prix race – the track's ten-year anniversary and first night race.

A change in the ship's programme meant that she would be alongside for the entirety of the race weekend, so a decision was quickly made that the ship's company should take advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime event.

Traditionally one of the quieter days of the race weekend, Friday was well-attended, with those who went having the first glimpse of the F1 cars.

Saturday started with an enthralling GP2 race, followed by a spectacular spin from Sebastian Vettel in the final practice session right below the newly-renamed 'RFA stand'.

For the main event on the Sunday the grandstand was decorated with a large blue ensign (right).

Deck Cadet Jed Bower said: "The

Formula One race was the pinnacle of the weekend, with plenty of overtaking moves, including challenges for the lead between Hamilton and Rosberg. We were sitting on the edge of our seats."

Those attending from the ship had a great view of Turn One and witnessed the serious accident between the Lotus driven by Pastor Maldonado and Esteban Gutierrez, driving for Sauber, which resulted in the latter's car being flipped over.

Following recovery of the car below the RFA grandstand the race continued for the final ten laps.

After some nervous moments through the first turns, where the two lead Mercedes cars challenged each other, the race was won by Britain's Lewis Hamilton.

Deck Cadet George Eastwood said: "Being able to attend the races was an unexpected treat. That the races were so exciting was an added bonus."



## Valiant effort by cricket players

HMS Somerset's cricket team dusted off their whites during a recent visit to Dubai, playing two matches against the local Darjeeling Cricket Club at the International Cricket Council Global Cricket Academy.

The first match saw HMS Somerset's players put up a valiant effort in their first competitive match in two years.

The local team, made up of expatriates from England, South Africa, Australia, New Zealand and Ireland, won by a comprehensive margin of 80 runs, showing the benefit of playing 70 games annually as well as having regular practice.

By the end of the first match, HMS Somerset's team started to hit their stride and the second match result was closer.

Despite a noteworthy 66 not out by ET Adam Cox with the bat, and some tight bowling figures, including 3-35 by LS Dan Thurgood, the Royal Navy team lost by 42 runs.

On completion of the matches, HMS Somerset's Cricket Club presented Darjeeling Cricket Club Captain, Gary Turner, with a memento of the matches.

LS Thurgood, Somerset's cricket captain, said: "HMS Somerset Cricket Club would like to express our thanks to Darjeeling for being exceptional hosts. A thoroughly enjoyable time was had by all."

Somerset's LPT Jess Yates gratefully acknowledged the support they had received.

"We would like to thank the Royal Navy/Royal Marines Sports Lottery who made the games possible," she said.

"The funds provided for the hire of the cricket grounds was much appreciated as it allowed some keen sportsmen the rare chance to play the sport they love while on deployment."

HMS Somerset is a Type 23 frigate currently operating as part of the Royal Navy's continuing presence in support of Coalition Forces contributing to maritime security across the Gulf region.

## Helping injured to ski

RESERVIST CPO Mark Howkins took to the slopes in Bavaria to help on Exercise Snow Warrior, part of the Battle Back scheme which helps Armed Forces personnel with a varying range of injuries and impairments to ski.

The Army runs the two-week skiing exercise on behalf of the three Services and Mark, who became a Military Alpine Ski Instructor in 2006, joined the team in 2010.

The freelance photographer said: "I have been fully involved in the Battle Back Adaptive Ski Scheme. The feedback and reward from delivering adaptive training is overwhelming."

Becoming an adaptive ski instructor has added to Mark's portfolio of ski qualifications.

"Over the past four years on ESW(A) I have been involved in the training and rehabilitation of several injured Servicemen," said Mark.

Battle Back are always on the lookout for new instructors and assistants, who only need to be competent skiers. Contact Col Nick Richardson on 01264 381532 or 07717 424133.

# The only way is up for mountaineering club

## Yacht proves hard to handle

A TOTAL of 43 competitors took part in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Mountaineering Club's competition.

The qualifier routes were top roped, with gradings from five to seven, at the Quay Climbing Centre in Exeter.

Everyone had to attempt one from each grade grouping, and the top five places from each category went through to the final.

While the qualifiers were being attempted, the speed-climbing was in full flow with a unique setup – climbers competing against each other on routes which were on either side of a Perspex sheet.

This meant those attempting didn't now just have the route to contend with but also their opponent heckling them face-to-face from a mere foot away.

Once rigged, the slack line proved popular with many people doing a sideways dance as they tried to gain their balance.

The bouldering comprised 15 routes which tested even the most experienced boulderer.

The afternoon saw the finals start with novices kicking off first on a testing top rope which required a touch of elegance and balance to reach the top.

The Under 25s were next to test their mettle on a route which seemed fine at the beginning but ended up with tortoise shell-like holds that were just impossible to navigate.

The women then took their turn, with all competitors going through to the finals.

The veterans' and men's open came next, both on the same route, and with the top RN climber, Steve Glennie, not present it left the field open for others to vie for the top spot.

The score range only had six points between all the men's open finalists and proved to split the field nicely, but all competitors were within the same few holds.

Winners were:  
**Best guest:** Kenneth Brewster;  
**Best male boulderer:** Jonny Logan;  
**Best female boulderer:** Lucy Matthews; **Best slack liner:** tied between Jonny Logan, Lee Renshaw and Chris Clayton Jones. On a random selection, Chris took the prize.

**Speed climbing:** 1 – Earl Richards, 2 – Tom Somerville, 3 – Tim Howell.

**Novice:** 1 – Sam Logan, 2 – Stuart Farden, 3 – Ben Atton.

**Under 25s:** 1 – Tim Howell, 2 – Lee Renshaw, 3 – Ed Murray.

**Women:** 1 – Lucy Matthews, 2 – Suzi Crawford, 3 – Lee Jones.

**Veterans:** 1 – William Davies, 2 – Chris Clayton Jones, 3 – Lee Jones.

**Men's Open:** 1 – Jonny Logan, 2 – Matt Rust, 3 – Duncan Turner.



● RNRMMC club chairman Ade Mellor leads the way at The Quay Climbing Centre

Pictures: LA(PHOT) Dean Nixon



● Lucy Matthews powers up to take gold in the women's category



● William Davies takes gold in the veterans category

THE ROYAL Navy Offshore Sailing team had to settle for fifth place in the 2014 Antigua Classic Yacht Regatta.

Many of the 11-strong squad had never sailed a classic so the 30-year-old Blue Peter, a 65ft yacht chartered for the event, offered a steep learning experience.

After two days of training, the team opted for a non-kite sail rig, which they felt was the better option based on the weather forecast and the Caribbean Sailing Association's rating system.

The Navy got off to a flying start on day one with Matt Barker skipping Blue Peter to first place in the single-handed race for yachts 45ft and over.

Later that day Barker, supported by Adrian Wheal, won the Concours D'Elegance Vintage Class race for privately-maintained yachts.

The start on the second day was slightly late but the yacht was soon going well on the Old Road course, with a middle of the fleet finish looking likely.

Unfortunately the largest foresail carried blew out at the start of the upwind leg. With no replacement available, the boat was very slow upwind and consequently finished last in its class.

Weather for the next race, a butterfly course, produced gusts up to 27 knots and a heavy swell.

The crew were confident and got off to a good start, but the swell and strong breeze did not suit Blue Peter's comparative light weight and large sail area.

The next race, the Cannon, was a simple beam-reach to beam-reach course, which suited the gaff-rigged boats. It was a great sleigh ride with the leeward rail almost always in the water and the yacht achieving a steady ten knots plus.

The final race of the regatta was a Windward course in the heaviest winds of the regatta.

Constant waves crashed over the deck and the main sail had to be well-trimmed to avoid broaching. After a change of staysail, with little time lost, the race ended well.

While the team did not get the result they hoped for, the crew enjoyed the entire experience, fostering team spirit and the ability to work together through demanding situations.

The Navy team consisted of: Adrian Wheal, Clare Hilditch, Robbie Walker, Alex Watts, Dave Cummings, Ian Rutherford, Tom Reed, Laura Blagden, Tony Lancashire, Catherine Doran and James Shrives.

# Marathon effort hailed

A TEAM of 26 Royal Navy and Royal Marines took part in this year's London Marathon – the largest team ever fielded by the Senior Service.

More than half of the runners were new to the race, which also forms part of the Inter-Services Championship.

Stepping into the unknown by completing his first marathon was Maj Charlie Pennington, who completed the course in 2h 39m 31s.

Whereas Surg Lt Cdr Jennifer Jenks (3h 30m) was completing her 30th Marathon and 11th consecutive London Marathon. Heidi Winn (4h 12m 26s) was returning from a long spell of injury.

A relative newcomer to Marathon running, Lt Oli Nokes (3h 15m 7s), displayed promising early season form but suffered an injury that prevented him bettering his personal best.

Triathletes C/Sgt Andy Lavelle ran 3h 8m 17s and Capt Adrian Foster 3h 8m 16s; both performing brilliantly in their debut London Marathon.

After a good spell of training and a split time at

halfway of 1h 28m, CPO Trev MacArthur faded in the second half and finished in 3h 5m 49s. Having performed superbly in last year's Marine Corps Marathon, Lt Alex Lockett had his chances of improving scuppered by illness a week before the race, but still finished in the rapid time of 2h 51m 36s.

In the end, the Royal Navy's male podium was formed by three Marines: Maj Charlie Pennington, Maj Ryan Kestle RM (2h 41m 10s) and Mne Adam Stokes (2h 44m 37s).

The female team performed equally well, with Natalie Wright (3h 15m 42s), Katherine Rackman (3h 20m) and Penny Armand-Smith (3h 27m 30s) making the top three spots.

Both teams took the IS Silver Medal. Contact WO1 Andy Marshall RN with your best racing performances in the last 12 months, at any distance, if you wish to be considered for selection for the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington DC in October 2014.



● Four of the Royal Navy team who competed in this year's London Marathon

# Navy's stars shine in Twickenham showdown

THREE rugby players from RNAS Culdrose were the stars for the Navy as the Senior Service lost out to the Army at Twickenham.

In front of a spectacular crowd of 80,000 cheering spectators the sailors from Culdrose scored all the Navy's points, in the 97th staging of the Inter-Services Rugby competition.

Captaining the Navy side was CPO Dave Pascoe of 771 NAS, LA Ben Priddey of Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF), who scored the Navy's three tries, and from Culdrose Fire Station, NA Kyle Mason.

The match started at its traditional breakneck speed and the Navy side were thankful for some early Culdrose success when Priddey squeezed over for a try and Dave Pascoe converted, giving the Navy a 7-0 lead.

The Army drew level, but Priddey was on form once again and scored his second try.

The Navy nearly extended their lead further with seconds to go before the break after a promising attack by the West Cornwall pair of Priddey and Mason, but at half-time the Navy led 12-7.

The start of the second half was always going to be critical, and it was the Army who scored first through a penalty in front of the posts, following pressure at the breakdown.

They then took the lead with more expansive play by the men in red as they got behind the Navy's left flank.

The Senior Service held their ground well but were unable to get hands on the ball and had to defend as wave after wave of Army attacks were launched their way.

Losing a player didn't help and they soon fell behind 30-12 to a rampant Army side.

To their credit the Navy still fought to take every opportunity that was presented, and it was from a break that they managed to force another attacking lineout where Priddey scored his third try.

It was the least the Royal Navy deserved, but overall the Army were worthy winners 30-17 and retained the Babcock Trophy for another year.

"I was really happy with my performance, but gutted we lost," said Priddey.

"We managed to close them down and play our structured game in the first half, but they opened us up in the second half."

The Navy-Army game brings to a close the Royal Navy's rugby season, and they now have the Commonwealth Navies Cup to look forward to in New Zealand in September.

"We'll spring back from this



● LA Ben Priddey scored the Navy's three tries at the annual Navy v Army match at Twickenham

Picture: Geraint Ashton Jones



● Captain Dave Pascoe ready to place the ball for a Navy scrum

Picture: L(Phot) Dave Jenkins



● NA Kyle Mason in action for the Navy

Picture: Geraint Ashton Jones

match and we have built a strong squad to work with during the tour to New Zealand and next season," said Pascoe. "We'll be back fighting."

■ Another small chapter in the long and distinguished history of the Royal Navy Rugby Union was written when, for the first time, the Union awarded caps to the Mariners XV.

Wilf Rees holds the distinction of being the first capped Mariner, a second first for him as he was

also the inaugural recipient of the Mike Connolly Trophy.

Paul Clark, the Mariners playing Head Coach, also notched up a first, being the first player to be capped by the Union in two different categories, having been capped at Senior level in 2003.

To qualify for a cap the Mariners must have played in six Inter Service matches since 2011.

This criterion meant that the first match where caps could be won was the annual match

against the Army Masters at Kneller Hall.

Though none of the starting XV were in the running there were four possible caps to be won from players on the replacement bench.

First to be called on, and therefore making history, was replacement backrow Rees.

He was followed by Ian Jenkins, Aidan Riley and Paul Clark.

Rear-Adm Ben Key also

presented three members of the RN Women with their first cap.

The recipients were Amy Risker, who started at hooker, and two forward replacements, Helen Stevenson and Sarah Mitchell.

The three bring the total number of capped women players to 22.

Mariners player Sam Halofaki was awarded the Mike Connolly Trophy for making the most impact throughout the season.



● Paula Bennett-Smith receives her trophy from Rear Admiral Ben Key

## Trophy joy for Paula

FOLLOWING in the footsteps of blindside flanker Sophie Roseamon and last season's winner, openside Charlie Fredrickson, Paula Bennett-Smith completes the back row by becoming the first Number 8 and the sixth winner of the Roger Sherratt Memorial Trophy.

The trophy is the most prestigious award in RN Women's rugby and is presented annually to the most valuable player in the squad.

Bennett-Smith was captain of the side when Roger Sherratt's support and investment began to accelerate the growth and professionalism of the RN Women's representative side.

Throughout this period Paula has been a mainstay of the team both on and off the field.

Last year she returned from a couple of years away from the team, due to professional commitments, to win her cap against the RAF.

This year she started as a replacement but forced her way into the starting XV against the Army Women through the continued quality of her play.

The trophy was presented by RNRU Vice President Rear Admiral Ben Key after the match.

## Super end to season

A SEA Trainer at FOST(N) in Faslane who is also a top rugby referee in the Combined Services ended his season in style at Twickenham.

Lt Cdr Dunx McClement was in charge of the Combined Services Under 23 vs Oxbridge fixture as a curtain raiser to the Navy vs Army match. Oxbridge narrowly edged the contest 33-31.

Lt Cdr McClement, 37, now ends his season having achieved his Combined Services Colours, been selected for a number of Scottish RBS Premiership fixtures, refereed in a FIRA-AER U18/19 competition in Portugal, an exchange fixture to Genoa and running touch in his first full international (Russia v Spain in a World Cup Qualifier) in Madrid.

He said: "What a fantastic way to finish what had already been a super season for me. It was a tremendous thrill to run out in front of a full house."

# Marines emerge victors over Vikings

THE Royal Marines Rugby League squad formed up at CTCRM for a short pre-season camp prior to an opening fixture against the Somerset Vikings.

Directed by WO1 Jake Robb, the coaching team led by former Navy and CS player C/Sgt Lee Rossiter, were put through their paces, concentrating on perfecting the basics.

The squad contains a large spread of talented attacking players in all positions, so the emphasis was on the crucial defensive skills of tackle management and completion.

The opening fixture was an

opportunity for the coaches to see the players in action against a competitive Vikings side who, despite losing 76-6, left the RM team in no doubt that they'd been in a game.

The squad then moved north to Lancashire to play the annual memorial fixture at Wigan St Patricks.

The game was played originally in memory of Liam 'Elmsy' Elms and Steven 'Darbs' Darbyshire, two RMRL and St Pats players who were tragically killed in Afghanistan.

Sadly, Lt Cdr Ian Molyneux and Cpl Steve Curley have also been added to

the roll of honour since the inception of the fixture. The families of all four men were present, with Callum, Darbs' youngest son, acting as the RM mascot and Ian's two sons accompanying the RMA standard bearers.

The day was fantastically supported by the host club and the RMA, and the RMRLA would like to extend a huge thank you to both organisations for the reception provided, and they look forward to next year's fixture.

Particular thanks go to Jodie Whittle from St Pats.

The RMRLA would also like to thank

the members of the local ACF and the Wigan Warriors staff who were present.

St Pats are having a solid season to date, and named a strong side.

The Marines started strongly against a very well-drilled team, holding the hosts to one try apiece in the first 20 minutes (courtesy of L/Cpl Tom Loxam), before mistakes and some inexperience led to St Pats going in 34-4 at half time.

Sgt John Coe crossed the whitewash in the second half, but a combination of fatigue and St Pats experience and sound completion led to the Corps conceding three tries in quick succession

in the last 15 minutes.

The match finished 54-10 in favour of the National Conference side, but the Corps can be proud of its performance.

Steve Curley's family presented RMRL stalwart Cpl Carl Gilson with the man-of-the-match award, and another long-serving player, Sgt Si Wright-Hider, was presented with the Heart of Courage award by Ian Molyneux's family.

The squad already has a keen eye on the Trafalgar Cup fixture against the Parachute Regiment at Taunton RFC on July 7.

# TURN OF THE TIDE

‘Sharp left, and head for France...’



● The White Ensign of a Naval beach party flies on the Normandy coast as British troops move inland from their beached landing craft on D-Day  
Picture: © IWM (A 24012)

# Deliverance by sea and air

THE central plank of Operation Neptune – the “creation of lodgement on the Continent from which further offensive operations can be developed” – was to land five divisions on five beaches (supported by ‘special service units’ – Commandos or Rangers), three in the Eastern (British) sector and two in the Western (American) sector, kick-starting Operation Overlord, the Allied liberation of western Europe.

The five beaches were:

■ **Sword:** between Ouistreham and Lion-sur-Mer, assaulted by 28,845 men of the 1 (British) Corps, including 41 and 45 Commandos RM;

■ **Juno:** between St Aubin and Ver-sur-Mer, assaulted by 21,400 men of 3rd (Canadian) Division plus 48 Cdo (RM);

■ **Gold:** between Ver-sur-Mer and Port-en-Bessin, attacked by 24,970 men of XXX (British) Corps, including 47 Cdo RM;

■ **Omaha beach:** between Port-en-Bessin and Isigny, assaulted by 34,350 men of VII (US) Corps;

■ **Utah beach:** between Quinelle and Isigny, attacked by 23,250 men of the American V Corps.

Each beach was subdivided into sections using a phonetic alphabet, such as Dog, Mike, Nan and Uncle, with some of these sections being further divided into white, green and red segments.

The beaches were not attacked along their entire length – spearhead formations took on the German defences, with follow-up forces filling in the gaps.

The flanks of the assault area were sealed off in pre-dawn landings by the 6th (British) and 82nd and 101st (US) Airborne Divisions – perhaps the most spectacular being the early strike on the east, near the Orne, which took Pegasus Bridge.

The armada that carried those 132,815 men and their equipment for D-Day gathered in an area around ten miles south of the Isle of Wight, officially designated Area Z but unofficially known as Piccadilly Circus.

They then headed south through the Spout, a broad channel swept through the German mine barrier in the Bay of the Seine, where the Neptune minesweeper force led the way in, clearing designated routes to the beach and areas where bombardment ships could operate using signals from miniature submarines and special craft that had been in position for many hours before the assault.



● General Dwight D. Eisenhower (centre) and Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay (right) survey the Normandy coast at Les Moulins from a ship. Picture: © IWM (A 23954)

Neptune called on a total of 1,212 Allied warships, 4,125 amphibious craft, 735 ancillary craft and 864 merchant ships, as well as 200 Naval aircraft.

Most of the warships operated under the Allied Naval Commander Expeditionary Force (Admiral Ramsay), and were divided between the Eastern and Western task forces.

Further out, on either side of the Spout, were layers of defences, provided by ships and aircraft, which blocked much E-boat activity and almost completely nullified the U-boat threat.

And although most of the major warships came from the UK (609), the United States (106) and Canada (72), it was an international effort, with ships from France, Poland, Norway, the Netherlands and Greece, and sailors from Belgium, also taking part.

The Allies enjoyed total air superiority. The best figures available suggest that Allied aircraft available to support Neptune were 2,190 heavy bombers (870 of which were RAF), 720 American escort fighters, 744 tactical bombers (216 RAF), 1,932 tactical and air superiority fighters (924 RAF) and 294 night fighters (264 RAF).

There were also 443 maritime aircraft, including eight squadrons of Royal Naval patrol aeroplanes.

The events of the day were roughly as follows.

The leading minesweepers of Force U were within sight of the Normandy coastline by 2am, but the Germans failed to spot them until after 5am, opening fire at around 5.30am.

The Allied bombardment began at 5.50am, ten minutes before sunrise.

The first troops went ashore on Utah beach at 6.30am but were swept off target by an 18 knot wind and 4ft waves in their final run in over 11 miles. The ‘swimming’ tanks – DD (Duplex Drive) Shermans, waterproofed and fitted with inflatable skirts, were supposed to be launched 5,000 yards (almost three miles) offshore, but were brought to within 3,000 yards (less than two miles).

Of 32 DD tanks, 28 made it ashore.

Defences at the beach were light, and the assault and follow-up support landings went well. By nightfall the men of the 4th Division had pushed four miles inland and met up with forces from the 101st Airborne Division.

Off neighbouring Omaha beach minesweepers began their

work at shortly after midnight, and transfer of troops from larger ships to landing craft was done 11 miles offshore.

Seasick soldiers found the conditions tough, and some landing craft were swamped – as were many of the DD tanks. The first battalion ashore only landed two of its 29 Shermans, though later waves fared better.

Strong tides pushed landing craft off target and many grounded 1,000 yards offshore, under intense enemy fire, which resulted in troops jumping into deep water and drowning under the weight of their equipment.

The rising tide, which also drowned wounded men near the shoreline, caused the beach to become clogged with troops, preventing artillery and vehicles from follow-up waves getting ashore. With only a handful of breaches being made, with few cleared channels to the beach, and very little in the way of armoured support, the assault was in danger of faltering, but supporting fire from destroyers, which closed to within half a mile of the beach to take out defensive gun emplacements, helped ease the situation, and by the end of the day V Corps had ventured a

mile inland.

H-Hour at Gold Beach was 7.25am because of the state of the tide, which meant a bombardment of more than 90 minutes.

The landing again was affected by the weather – the assembly areas were brought to seven miles offshore, rather than 11, because of strong currents and a Force 5 wind, giving the assault craft a better chance of surviving the final run-in.

DD tanks were brought directly to the beach in a second wave behind the infantry, but many were bogged down or destroyed by enemy fire. However, the 50th Division had managed to occupy around five square miles by sunset, putting them close to Bayeux.

The Canadians at Juno beach also assembled seven miles offshore, and two brigades landed side-by-side at 7.45am and 7.55am, though the delay in H-Hour to allow the tide to cover rocks also meant beach obstacles were obscured – it is estimated that a third of landing craft at Juno were damaged or destroyed.

Strong tides swept craft off target, but heavy armoured support – DD tanks and Hobart’s ‘Funnies’ (see p30) – meant the



● A Horsa glider in a Normandy field

Picture: The Navy magazine

## Resistance varied from beach to beach

THE cost in human lives and suffering is difficult to estimate in the confusion of the landings, but the British took somewhere in the order of 3,000 casualties in the amphibious assault.

That equates to around four per cent of the men landed, compared with more than 16 per cent casualties suffered by 7,900 British troops who attacked by air.

American forces recorded some 6,600 casualties in total – 2,400 men were lost on Omaha alone, with 220 more on Utah, the remainder being airborne troops.

Resistance to the invading forces varied greatly from beach to beach.

On Utah beach the landing force, although swept far from their designated landing sites, faced little opposition.

This is thought to be in part because paratroopers and glider-borne troops had engaged the Germans hours before, diverting the attention of the defenders – who had been battered by pre-invasion bombing raids.

At Omaha beach the lack of tank support immediately put troops at a disadvantage.

Also swept off course by strong currents, the first wave of troops came under intense fire from defensive positions that were stronger than expected, manned by capable soldiers, and the shoreline was festooned with traps, wire and mines.

Combat engineers failed to clear all the exits, which caused men and vehicles to bunch at bottlenecks, making them easy targets.

Analysts subsequently questioned whether

the preliminary bombardment and bombing of the beach had been sufficient; so many troops and so much equipment was lost in the initial phase that relatively weak German defences inland – in some places just lines of machine gun posts – still managed to hold up the American advance over subsequent days.

Although the defenders at Gold beach put up fierce resistance, the presence of armour (including Hobart’s Funnies) meant the British managed to stick close to their plans and broke out of the beach area just about on schedule – German strongpoints along the beach had proved vulnerable to Naval bombardment.

Strong defences proved an obstacle to Canadian troops at Juno beach, but strength in depth allowed the troops of J Force to gain the most territory of all five invading forces.

Sword beach proved a tougher nut to crack, in part because of the covering fire from German coastal heavy batteries.

Although troops filtered off the beach, in reasonably good order, and as at Utah there was an airborne landing distracting defenders on the flank, there was heavy resistance inland – and the beach was abandoned on July 1 after German artillery destroyed several merchant ships; this source of danger (and that of midget submarines) was only nullified when the Germans withdrew from the coast after the Falaise Pocket action in mid-August, when the bulk of the German army west of the Seine was surrounded by the Allies, with many captured or killed.

In terms of ships involved in Operation



● ‘Britain comes ashore’ – the frontispiece of the July 1944 edition of *The Navy magazine*

Canadians eventually made good progress against stiff opposition, joining up with the British from Gold beach and reaching the Bayeux-Caen road by night.

Sword beach was only wide enough to land one brigade at a time, but here the landing went like clockwork.

Hemmed in by the port of Ouistreham to the east (which was attacked by Free French troops), the assault troops came ashore under the cover of the 15in guns of battleships HMS Warspite and Ramillies and the monitor Roberts, and although the rising tide reduced the beach to a ten-yard strip at one point, exits were cleared and Allied forces poured ashore.

By nightfall the 185th Brigade was just a couple of miles short of Caen – but about to face heavy opposition from the 21st Panzer Division.

At the close of D-Day the Allies had established a bridgehead some five miles deep on average – half of what had been planned, and not yet completely joined up, but considering the marginal weather conditions it was still a remarkable success.

Two mysteries persist – that of a sixth D-Day beach and the ‘original’ name of Juno beach.

A section of coast to the east of Sword beach was designated ‘Band beach’ on some wartime

maps, suggesting to some that a landing had originally been planned there.

But its location, relatively close to the German military stronghold of Le Havre and separated from the rest of the Lodgement Area by the River Orne and Caen Canal, made it an unattractive proposition.

The likeliest explanations are that the beach was designated as part of the bombardment pattern (as it was the location of dangerous German gun batteries) or for precision commando raids, rather than a full-scale amphibious assault – or even a reserve beach if Sword proved a problem.

The second mystery is probably an urban myth.

Although some believe that the British and Commonwealth beaches were named after fish – Gold(fish), Sword(fish) and, if there had been a sixth beach, Band(fish) – there is a belief that the Canadians were originally due to go ashore at Jelly beach.

Such a name was deemed undignified by Churchill, so the story goes, and was changed to Juno.

But there is precious little evidence for the Jelly(fish) theory, and a senior Army staff officer is believed to have chosen the names from a standard Army codebook of the day.

Neptune, the greatest danger lay in mines and shoreline boobytraps, which accounted for more than a quarter of vessels sunk or damaged beyond repair.

Because of the strength of Allied air cover the danger from aerial attack was relatively small – though German bombs and air-launched torpedoes accounted for eight ships.

The first attack by German surface craft came in the form of torpedo-boats or light destroyers based at Le Havre, which sank the Norwegian destroyer Svenner before H-Hour.

The S-class destroyer was struck by two torpedoes off Sword beach, sinking within minutes and killing 33 of her crew of 219.

But that raid was an exception.

Another attempted sortie by larger destroyers based on the Atlantic coast was repelled by Royal Navy and Royal Canadian Navy destroyers, which sank two enemy ships.

E-boats proved a more durable enemy, and sank ten ships and landing craft over the course of five nights.

That threat was eliminated when the E-boat bases at Le Havre and Boulogne were destroyed by RAF bombers.

The menace of the U-boat had always been uppermost in the minds of the Operation Neptune planners, and their solution – a fearsome barrier of warships and relentless aerial patrols – proved highly-successful.

It was three weeks after D-Day that a U-boat first struck at a Channel convoy ship, and of 11 ships sunk or damaged beyond repair by submarines, seven were warships.



# Life and death on the

FOR part of the armada gathered in Channel ports D-Day started early – almost 18 hours before H-Hour.

By midday on June 5, just under 200 small, lightly armed and slow-moving vessels had weighed anchor and set off into rough Channel seas, heading towards the beaches of Normandy, right under the noses of the Germans.

AB Roberts, of minesweeper HMS Orestes, remarked: “We are under way now. Just received a signal from depot ship HMS Tyne – Good Luck, drive ahead. (We’ll need it I think.)”

“Hundreds of small landing [craft] are under way with us and getting into formation as we leave ‘The Solent’.

“This is definitely the day we have long awaited. I don’t think that anyone is sorry.

“We will be able to see the end of this war in sight once we get this over.”

On their way the minesweepers were to sweep and clearly mark safe navigation channels, to be used by the thousands of vessels of the Operation Neptune force which followed in their wake.

Fortified by a two-day supply of Horlicks tablets and issued with field dressing and a length of rope – ostensibly to facilitate rescue from the sea, although the pessimists observed it made it easier to fish out a body – the men of the minesweeper flotillas were expected to bear a heavy burden.

Minesweepers assumed the toughest task, picking their way through the extensive minefields which littered their route.

Close behind them were the danlayers, marking the margins of the safe corridors with temporary buoys which carried flags and lights for night navigation.

The Channel crossing for sailors in this ‘lamplighter flotilla’ was unpleasant and dangerous, with each dan buoy and sinker (weighing a quarter of a ton) having to be manhandled over the side as the ships rolled heavily in the swell – HMS St Barbe, tucked in behind the 7th Minesweeping Flotilla bound for Juno Beach, reported a roll of up to 33 degrees during this period.

The minesweepers in the van were quickly into their stride on the night of D-1.

By 8pm AB Roberts had heard his Captain’s address to the ship’s company of Orestes, and noted how his shipmates hid their feelings as best they could: “Some make a few wisecracks and cause a laugh. I think we would laugh at anything for the sake of laughing.

“The wireless is blaring away now and it is one consolation to know that our loved ones at home do not know.”

Orestes, part of the 18th Minesweeper Flotilla, heading for Gold Beach, put her sweeps out at 10pm on June 5, tucked behind HMS Ready, with Hound, Hydra, Onyx, Rattlesnake and Cockatrice following on.

Around 11pm AB Roberts reported: “There goes the first mine swept by HMS Ready; after this they are coming up regularly, some exploding near.

“Unexploded mines are floating uncomfortably near.”

Ready lost both her sweeps to exploding mines, and as she fell out of formation to repair them, Orestes took the lead – though not for long as she suffered the same fate.

They were soon repaired and the ship resumed her vital work.

By 2.30am on D-Day, Orestes was within a few miles of the enemy coast, with just an anchorage to clear, and by 4am the guns of the big ships opened up.

The men of the minesweeping force could justifiably feel proud

of their night’s work: “No ships have been sunk by mines, so far this speaks for the success of our sweeps.”

The sailors then watched the battle rage around them. At 2pm AB Roberts reported: “The ship shakes with the heavy explosions.

“I think the ship’s company would welcome a wash and a shave.”

Landing craft and amphibious vehicles drifted past, some taken in tow by launches or sister craft.

Darkness brought no respite: “All night long we have been kept at action stations. We could all do with a good sleep – necks and backs are sore through constantly wearing lifebelts, and all essential gear, still no one will take them off.”

The flotillas’ vital work continued on D+1.

Orestes was on task by 8.30am, and at 10am AB Roberts noted: “In the last half hour we have swept 12 mines. Two by HMS Ready, who has lost her secondary sweeps, and has fallen out.

“We have bagged four of the 21, bringing our total to approximately 15, the flotilla having swept 51 all told.”

Later that day Orestes fouled her screws on drifting dan buoys, making her a sitting duck for a tense half-hour – though their only contact with the Luftwaffe was the sight of an airman’s body drifting past the ship.

Just before midnight Orestes took up position in a “gigantic defence ring round the beachhead to guard against submarines,” said AB Roberts.

“Air-raid in progress – terrific barrage going up ashore. Wreckage and bodies float by the ship.”

Enemy air raids ensured that sleep was minimal for sailors on the nights of June 6 and 7, while a petrol ship on fire, lighting up the surrounding area, disturbed them on the night of June 8.

At 8am on June 9 the strain was telling – “Half the lads are almost sleeping on their feet,” said AB Roberts – but an hour later they learned they were designated stand-by flotilla for the day,



● The Gooseberry breakwater off Sword beach, which included the old cruiser HMS Durban (pictured) as well as French battleship Courbet (Picture: © IWM (A 24054))

## Sunken headquarters

ERIC Rathmell had an unusual job during Operation Neptune: “My Naval Party was probably the only Naval unit to see the invasion through on a sunken ship – those of us who were not on beach parties that is.

“We were the staff of Senior Officer Ferry Command Force S, and sailed in the gunboat Locust from Victory Steps.

“To protect Sword beach from bad weather a line of old ships were sunk as a breakwater, codenamed Gooseberry – naval humour that.

“They included HMS Durban, but the biggest was an obsolete French battleship, the Courbet.

“Due to overcrowding on the command ships we transferred our signal office and ourselves to this relic to find her upper decks just clear of the water. She was quite deserted of course.

“Up on the mast above us flew the Cross of Lorraine and the French tricolour, and below the companionways led straight into black, swirling water, rather like the film *The Poseidon Adventure*.

“The water level rose and fell with the tides of course, and it was rather uncomfortable during the big storm on June 19 to have to take to the open



● King George VI, accompanied by Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay and the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham, touring the beaches of Normandy in a DUKW amphibious vehicle on June 16 1944 (Picture: © IWM (A 24173))

allowing them a chance to tidy the ship and grab some sleep.

The crew had no idea of the extent of losses at sea or on land, but had little time to contemplate such matters as they were at action stations again by 3pm for an hour, then again at 6.30pm – by the time the ship secured, supper was cold.

There was some recompense in the stream of wreckage passing by – “We have just salvaged a barrage balloon – this is fine stuff for toilet bags.”

Saturday June 10 brought early air raids and more sweeping, but there was a buzz that they will return home for stores the following day.

It turned out to be their quietest day, and they heard news that the Allies held some 50 miles of beach to a depth of 11 miles inland.

Orestes’ trip home happened a day later than expected, on Monday June 12, but it was not what they had hoped: “1800 Hrs: Arrived in Portsmouth for stores etc. Just a short stay, no leave, and then back again to France...”

Another veteran with memories of bodies in the water was Will Davies, a gunlayer in the American-built HM BYMS 2188, a 270-ton wooden-hulled auxiliary inshore motor minesweeper.

“One surprise we had on arriving off Cherbourg was being shelled by one of the forts on the mole – everyone thought that it had been cleared along with the others,” said Will, a former CPO RNR.

“However, when we returned the next day it was a pile of rubble, thanks to the skills of the RAF Tempest pilots.

“After each day’s sweeping the Germans would fly over and drop mines in the Channel, and then the following day out the flotilla would go and clear them up – monotonous, really.

“A poignant memory is of an American soldier’s body floating in and out on the tide and of an ironic voice calling out “Hi, Joe!” – not uncaring, but just a case of nerves; we were all scared.

“It was eventually recovered and I trust it was laid in peace somewhere on the Cherbourg Peninsula.”

Gerry Cooke, a young AB on board destroyer HMS Jervis, recalled the church parade on the mess decks on June 4, indicating that the invasion was imminent – “and the singing of *Eternal Father* made us feel more fearful as to what might happen...”

W Payne, on board Norwegian Hunt-class destroyer HNoMS Glaisdale, also recalled that sense of uncertainty: “As we sailed towards the French coast I remember standing on deck for a while, up against the funnel to keep warm, and wondering if I would ever see my home and family again.

“Everyone was very quiet and immersed in their own thoughts and fears, and no doubt many of us were silently praying.”

There were lighter moments. W Goodacre was the ship’s navigator’s yeoman in HMS Oribi, of the 17th Destroyer Flotilla, which sailed with the first wave of the Operation Neptune flotilla, having been at anchor off Cowes in the Solent.

“With the arrival of nightfall we weighed anchor and made our way round the Isle of Wight to the swept channel down which we were to proceed and eventually take up our station as part of the huge Naval bombardment force off the French coast,” said Mr Goodacre.

“It was on entering the Channel that we espied the heart-warming sight of one of the many trawlers marking the two sides of this ‘one-way’, with its anti-aircraft barrage balloon fluttering aloft and sporting a large white sheet across the side of its bridge, which bore the message we were just able to read in the ship’s dim marking light – ‘Get your cigarettes, nutty and programmes here’.

“We were all of one mind, that with this sense of humour on such an occasion, the opposition had no chance.”

Sub Lt Preston RNRV was making the same journey “on a somewhat broken-down MTB” which had been patrolling the Channel in the weeks before D-Day where “we had often seen a most extraordinary collection of incomprehensible things being towed out of Portsmouth; later (as we discovered) to become PLUTO and parts of the two Mulberry Harbours.”

The MTB was to escort a flotilla of LCIs loaded with Canadian troops to Juno beach.

“We eventually sailed, down the Solent, on the evening of June 5 as part of Force J, to rendezvous at Area Z, south of the Isle of Wight, with Forces G and S – turn sharp left and head for France,” said Mr Preston.

“The weather was, by then, even worse. I had never seen so

many ships gathered together. “I recall spending all night on the bridge trying to avoid collisions with our LCIs, both to port and starboard, wallowing around like drunken whales.

“I learned afterwards that most of the Canadian troops were so seasick that they were only too glad to get ashore – sooner to face German firepower than the sea.”

Another group of small craft – possibly the smallest to make the crossing under their own power, according to Colin Kitching – were the dozen boats of the 702 LCP(L) Flotilla (smoke layers).

They started at Juno beach, each armed only with a World War I Lewis gun and a tripod carrying the chloro-sulphonic acid nozzle for making smoke.

The 37ft long unarmoured plywood boats provided cover for the landing of DD tanks and for bombarding warships, then spent the next five weeks off Sword beach, shielding the anchorage from shelling and bombing.

The Channel crossing proved a major ordeal for some seamen, with those on landing barges suffering more than most.

As reported by Peter Birch in *The Kedge Hook* (number 73), the 1st Flotilla LBV, based at Hayling Island, had trained in unladen barges, based on Thames lighters – dumb (unpowered) barges.

But their freeboard of 3ft 6in reduced to barely 18in when they were fully laden with stores, equipment, ammunition or food.

Shortly after leaving ‘Piccadilly Circus’ Mr Birch reported that the barges were “shipping it green” and had to fall out of flotilla formation and make best speed on their own.

Most did, and made a valuable contribution to the movement of supplies from ship to shore – but some foundered, and crewmen were lost.

Death before the landings happened in bigger ships as well – R Ball, serving in LSI(L) HMS Glenearn, carrying around 10,000 troops and 24 landing craft, recalled that a stern gun fell from its mounting on the Channel crossing, killing one soldier and injuring two more.

The ship later received wounded men from Sword beach. “One soldier had stepped on a mine and had lost one foot and the doctors amputated the other,” said Mr Ball.

“When we slung him onboard he smiled and said: ‘Well, lads, I shall get my ticket now!’”

LS E Simpson was serving with the Royal Naval Commandos – “more commonly misnamed as ‘beach parties’, and had previously been on two D-Days, ie North Africa and Sicily, so our group were quite veterans by 1944,” he said.



# the beaches

"I still vividly recall, as I landed and headed for the back of the beach, where there was a slight embankment, that there was a Canadian soldier who appeared to be resting against it.

"His legs were out in front on the beach and his arms alongside him and his eyes wide open.

"As I ran past him I shouted 'This is no time or place to stop and rest now, mate!', words which I wish I could have swallowed at once, because I then saw the whole right-hand side of his torso had been ripped apart, probably by one of the many anti-personnel mines."

Royal Marine Harry Wright was on board LCF 20 on D-Day. "As flak was not required due to the RAF umbrella, all our firepower was directed to the beaches prior to the troops landing and beyond the beaches while they were landing," he said. "There was so much noise, smoke and activity that I don't think anyone noticed if we were being fired on.

"We did have a few close shaves from rocket failures fired from LCRs firing over us."

C F Penberthy was a Royal Marines stoker driver of a landing craft (like that pictured below) attached to 540 LAC Flotilla parent ship SS Empire Lance, anxiously awaiting orders to man the craft as the ship approached the Normandy coast.

"Orders came and, hearing the noise of bombardment butterflies in the stomach came to the fore," said Mr Penberthy.

"Once preparing the craft for the troops to embark helped to steady ourselves – I had to make sure the engines were functioning properly.

"Troops were loaded. The sea was pretty rough and the troops began to get seasick.

"We formed up, ready to hit the beaches [Empire Lance was at Gold Beach]. The order came.

"We advanced and came under heavy fire from the Germans. All I could feel was the concussion of the shells and bullets hitting the sides of the craft.

"Being enclosed in the space of an engine room is a thing I would not like to do often..."

The landing craft disgorged its human cargo on the beach then lay up near an LST.

"For a breath of fresh air I went to the coxswain's position, but was only there a few seconds before being ordered back to the engine room," Mr Penberthy continued.

"A shell had hit our craft and it began to fill with water. As the engine room was intact we tried to make it back to our parent ship, but it became impossible.

"We had to abandon ship, leaving our craft.

"We swam towards the beach – it was very bad for everyone, being

under enemy fire.

"Luckily, not one of us was hit. "Things become very sketchy after the trauma of a small space, being blown up, swimming under fire. Things become hazy, but everyone survived."

One of the most vivid memories of F Webb, an ordinary seaman on board LCT 1071, was of the craft beaching, seeing shells and bullets flying both ways – and in the midst of all that mayhem he spotted what he believed was a woman wheeling a bicycle along the promenade.

Retired Lt W Taylor was serving in cruiser HMS Diadem, part of the bombardment force. Receiving reports of an enemy formation and Canadian force converging, unaware of each other's presence, Diadem prepared to fire at extreme range.

"In order to obtain this range, it became necessary to tilt the ship. This was done by moving fuel and water from one side of the ship to the other," said Mr Taylor.

"One day a wounded soldier was brought on board to have a leg amputated. This happened during one of the odd air raids to which we were subjected.

"In spite of the clattering of bottles being thrown off the sick bay shelves the surgeon carried on without batting an eyelid.

"I donated one-and-a-half pints of blood, the soldier survived, and after engaging various targets our guns were worn out, so we returned to Portsmouth"

Teenager AB William Chidley was on his first ship, former Bristol Channel paddleship HMS Glenavon, which acted as a guide ship and shallow-water minesweeper during Operation Neptune.

Having survived the attention of the enemy, the 678-ton pleasure steamer foundered in a storm on September 2, with the loss of 15 men.

William, a non-swimmer, was rescued by a passing tug and taken ashore to an aid station ten miles behind the front line.

He awoke to the sounds of thuds all around – not, as he feared, an attack, but the sound of fruit hitting the canvas roof of his tent and the ground of the orchard where the station had been set up.

Another passenger ship turned warship was HMS Prince Charles, a former Belgian cross-Channel ferry that acted as a mothership LSI for American Rangers assaulting Omaha beach.

Hilaire Benbow was a young Combined

Operations sub lieutenant on board LCA 458, one of the ferry's landing craft.

The LCA grounded on a sandbar on the run-in, causing the engines to fail. Rather than be sitting ducks for German guns, Hilaire and his crew jumped into the sea and stood neck-deep in water, where they felt slightly less exposed.

An hour or so later they managed to struggle ashore and, alongside the Rangers, were pinned down by German fire.

Having lost his boots, Hilaire crawled back across the beach to the water's edge, where bodies had piled up in the surf. He removed a pair of boots from one of the bodies and returned to shelter – then repeated retraced his steps as a young shipmate had also lost his boots but could not face crossing the beach.

The group – having increased to 16 ratings who had lost their own craft – eventually followed Hilaire under cover back to the water, where they hitched a lift on an American LCT and a transport ship back to England.

Geoff Ensor was a young sub lieutenant on board depot ship Cap Tourane, a converted French passenger ship, off Sword beach.

On the morning of June 24 Geoff and three colleagues – two fellow subbies and a Royal Marines lieutenant – were writing letters home. Two of them finished early and went on ahead to the upper deck.

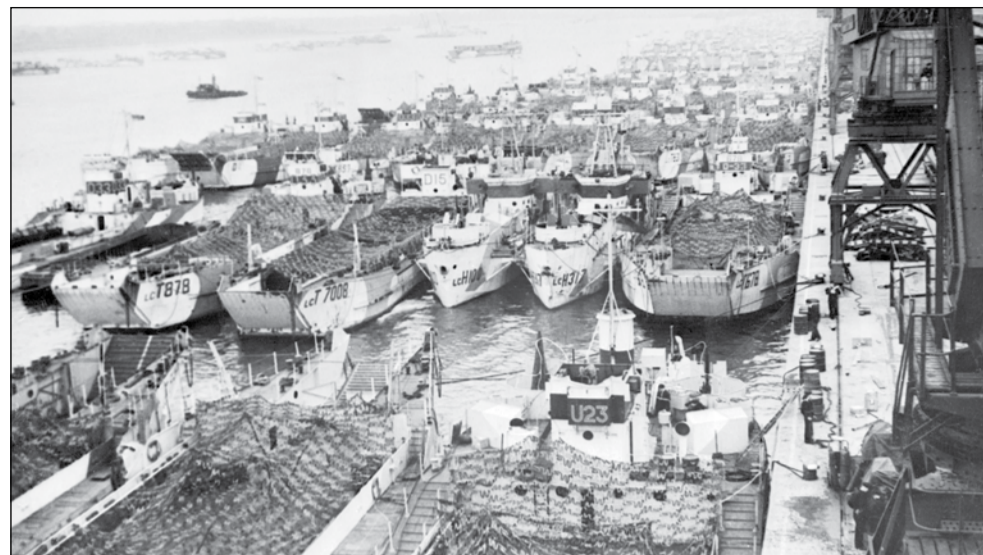
At that point the ship was hit by a shell. Geoff and his colleague made their way up top, to be greeted by the RN commander in charge, who asked them to take care of two bodies on deck.

"They were both Royal Marines," said Geoff. "On identification, one was our cabin mate.

"Having accomplished our regrettable task, we asked after the other sub lieutenant, only to be told that he had had an arm shot off, and having given himself a shot of morphine, he had walked on to the hospital ship [alongside us].

"We learnt later that the sub lieutenant had died on the way home."

C Williams was on board the Algerine-class minesweeper H M S



● A large group of LCTs (Landing Craft Tank) along the quayside at Southampton, 1944

Picture: © IWM (A 23731)

Hound, which was clearing an anchorage for HMS Warspite off Juno Beach at 5.20 on the morning of D-Day.

"We were told by our captain that two planes would come down and lay a smokescreen about us as we were sweeping a mile square area for HMS Warspite to start bombarding," he said.

"As we came out of the smokescreen she came towards us and opened up with her main armament, shells flying overhead, with caps going everywhere, canvas covers coming off reels – what a sight.

"One could almost see the shells in flight."

As Hound passed landing craft troops cheered them for their efforts.

"To see the ships coming over one felt you could walk back to Pompey on them – an unforgettable sight."

Hound was to be relieved by a newer sister ship as she was long overdue a boiler clean, but the other ship quickly 'pulled' a mine, damaging her steering.

"Gaining some control, and on our order to return to Pompey, she steamed by us offering her regrets and pumping out over her SRE [loudspeaker system] on-deck Deanna Durbin singing *I Can See the Lights of Home*.

"You can imagine our

crew's reaction..."

L/Tel Alan Winstanley, part of No 1 Heavy Mobile Bombardment Control Unit, went ashore on Gold beach on D-Day.

"First sight ashore was sand littered with all sorts of debris, damaged lorries, tanks etc, people lying about – I say people as I don't know whether they were dead or wounded," he said.

The first shots they fired were "not in anger, but in sympathy" – Alan's team did a recce 50 yards from their transmitter on June 7 and found five or six cows in a field, all dead except one.

"This one was standing on three legs – one of its front ones had been severed at the knee by shrapnel," he said. "We felt sorry for it so we shot it."

Able Seaman Ronald Rumsey was in the Juno beach HQ ship HMS Hilary, and had already been through two invasions – Sicily and Salerno.

"We arrived off the beachhead before 5am on D-Day. I recall we included five battleships, 26 cruisers, 76 destroyers, frigates, corvettes etc," said Ronald.

"The air was full of bombers, fighter bombers, fighters.

"At 5am the 'thunder of assault' started. For some two hours the beachhead was bombed and shelled unmercifully until 7am.

"Shortly after, we were picking some of the first casualties out of the water – American GIs whose transports had been bombed.

"As we laid the dead on the deck our thoughts were of the many who would not be going home.

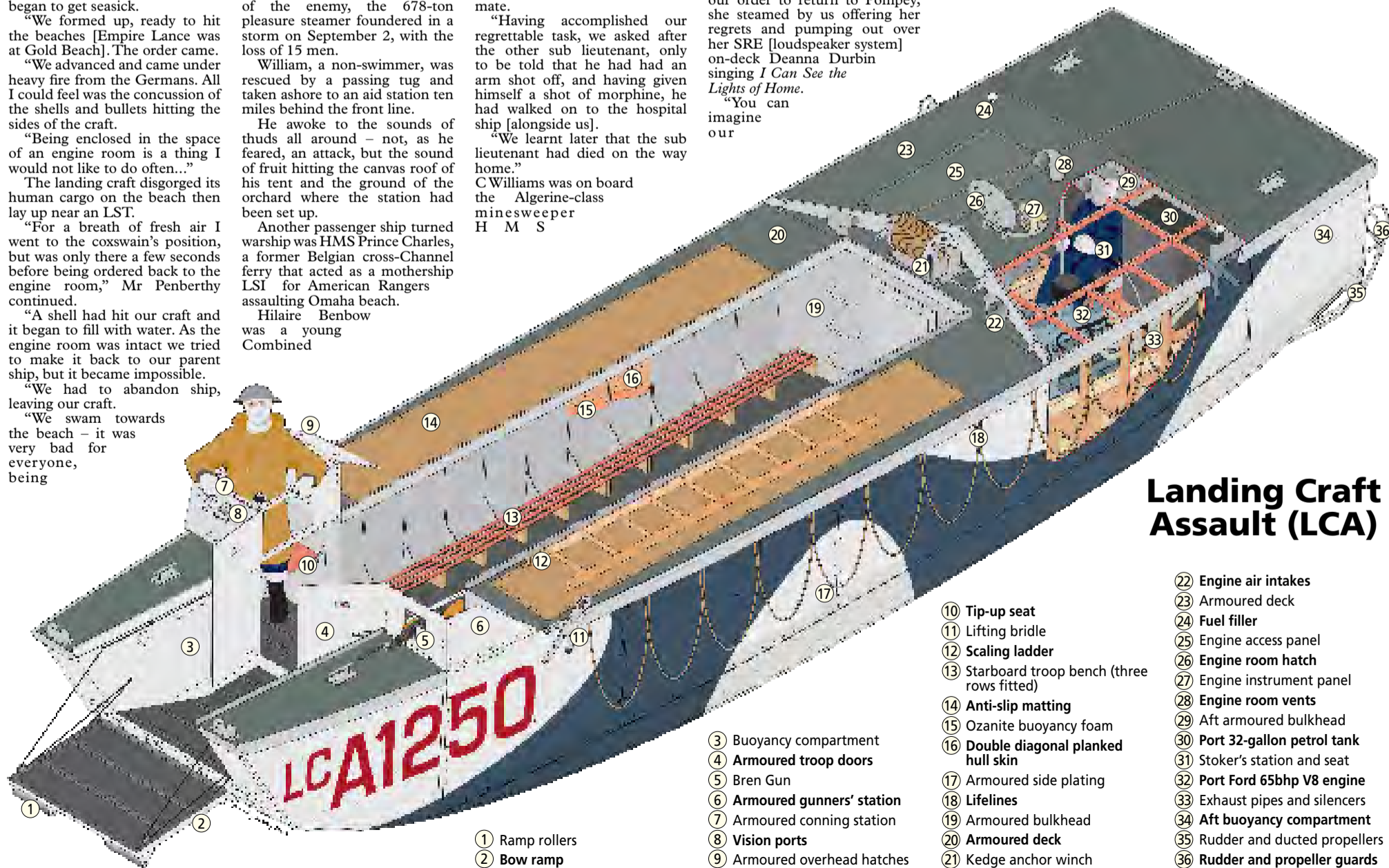
"Our own landing craft began returning from the beachhead with casualties among the crews.

"I carried one lad, younger than myself, from his sinking craft and took him down to the sickbay.

"His craft had hit a mine going into the beach. Sadly he was beyond help and died some hours later.

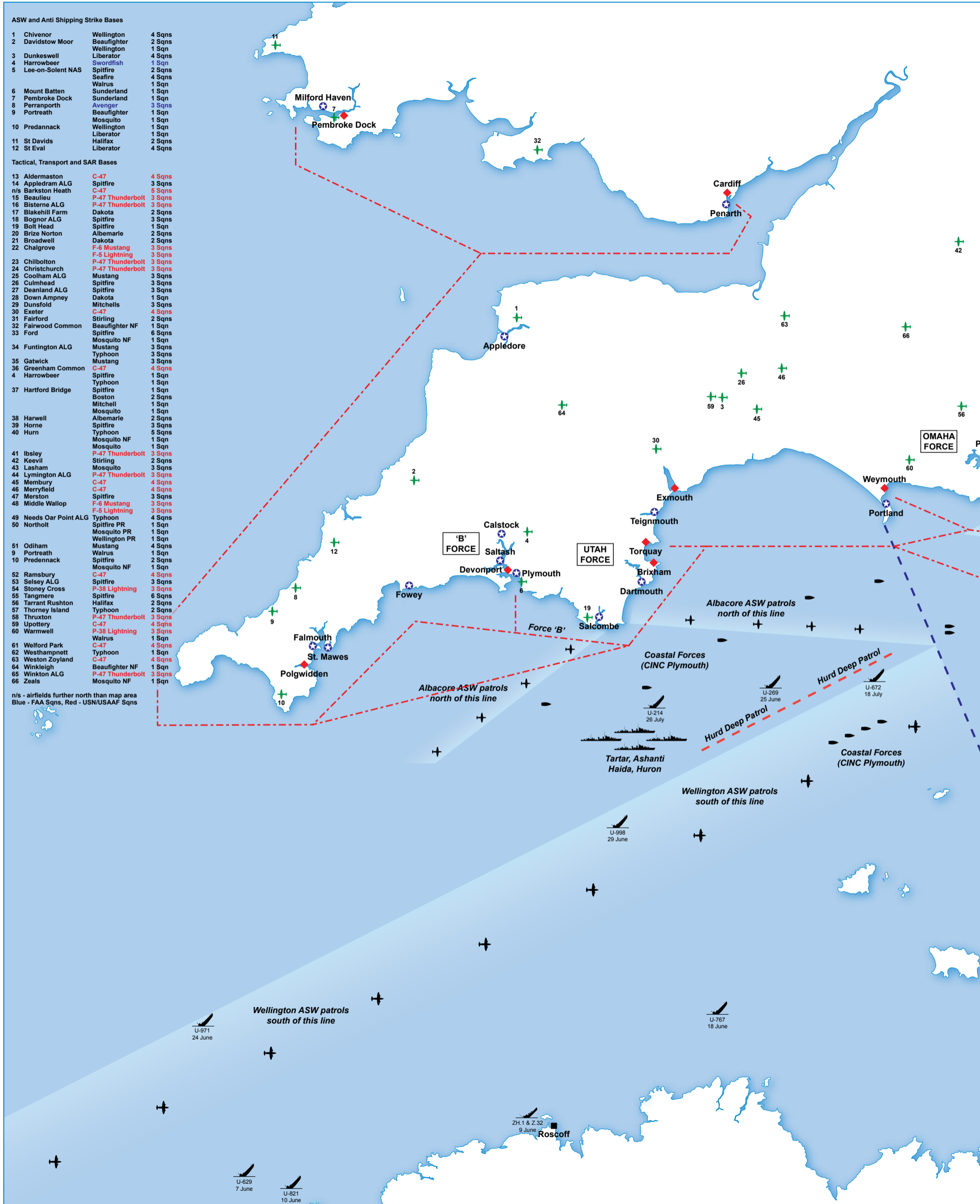
"I remember the dead, the dying and the wounded. I remember the bravery shown by all the Services.

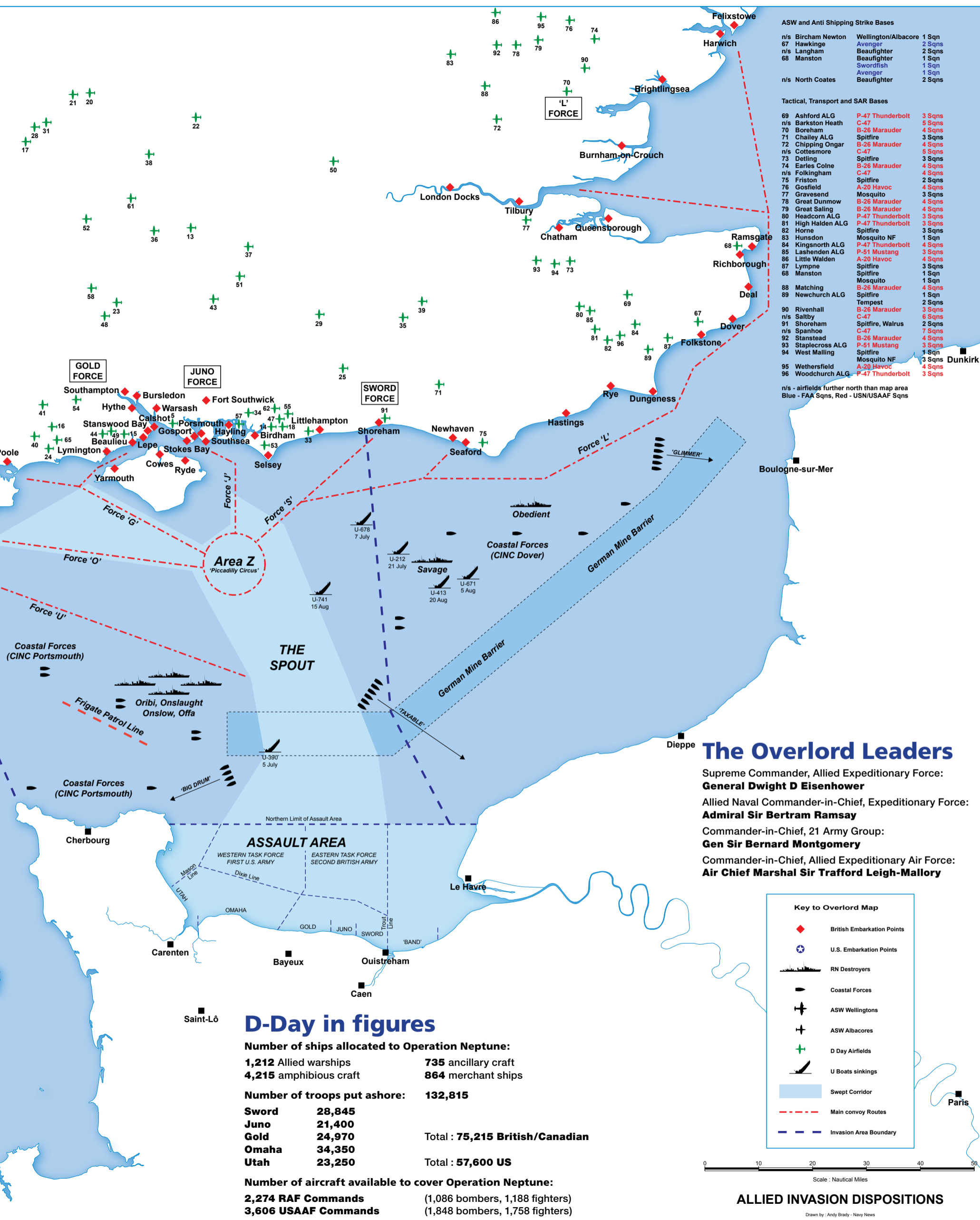
"I remember the complete lack of anyone letting the side down, albeit there were times when you felt like running."



## Landing Craft Assault (LCA)

- ① Ramp rollers
- ② Bow ramp
- ③ Buoyancy compartment
- ④ Armoured troop doors
- ⑤ Bren Gun
- ⑥ Armoured gunners' station
- ⑦ Armoured conning station
- ⑧ Vision ports
- ⑨ Armoured overhead hatches
- ⑩ Tip-up seat
- ⑪ Lifting bridle
- ⑫ Scaling ladder
- ⑬ Starboard troop bench (three rows fitted)
- ⑭ Anti-slip matting
- ⑮ Ozanite buoyancy foam
- ⑯ Double diagonal planked hull skin
- ⑰ Armoured side plating
- ⑱ Lifelines
- ⑲ Armoured bulkhead
- ⑳ Armoured deck
- ㉑ Kedge anchor winch
- ㉒ Engine air intakes
- ㉓ Armoured deck
- ㉔ Fuel filler
- ㉕ Engine access panel
- ㉖ Engine room hatch
- ㉗ Engine instrument panel
- ㉘ Engine room vents
- ㉙ Aft armoured bulkhead
- ㉚ Port 32-gallon petrol tank
- ㉛ Stoker's station and seat
- ㉜ Port Ford 65bhp V8 engine
- ㉝ Exhaust pipes and silencers
- ㉞ Aft buoyancy compartment
- ㉟ Rudder and ducted propellers
- ㊱ Rudder and propeller guards





ASW and Anti Shipping Strike Bases		
n/s Bircham Newton	Wellington/Albacore	1 Sqn
67 Hawkinge	Avenger	2 Sqn
n/s Langham	Beaufighter	2 Sqn
68 Manston	Beaufighter	1 Sqn
	Swordfish	1 Sqn
	Avenger	1 Sqn
n/s North Coates	Beaufighter	2 Sqn
Tactical, Transport and SAR Bases		
69 Ashford ALG	P-47 Thunderbolt	3 Sqn
n/s Barkston Heath	C-47	5 Sqn
70 Boreham	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
71 Chailey ALG	Spitfire	3 Sqn
72 Chipping Ongar	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
n/s Cottesmore	C-47	5 Sqn
73 Detling	Spitfire	3 Sqn
74 Earles Colne	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
n/s Folkington	C-47	4 Sqn
75 Friston	Spitfire	2 Sqn
76 Gosfield	A-20 Havoc	4 Sqn
77 Gravesend	Mosquito	3 Sqn
78 Great Dunmow	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
79 Great Saling	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
80 Headcorn ALG	P-47 Thunderbolt	3 Sqn
81 High Halden ALG	P-47 Thunderbolt	3 Sqn
82 Horne	Spitfire	3 Sqn
83 Hunsdon	Mosquito NF	1 Sqn
84 Kingsnorth ALG	P-47 Thunderbolt	4 Sqn
85 Lashenden ALG	P-51 Mustang	3 Sqn
86 Little Walden	A-20 Havoc	4 Sqn
87 Lympe	Spitfire	3 Sqn
88 Manston	Spitfire	1 Sqn
	Mosquito	1 Sqn
88 Matching	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
89 Newchurch ALG	Spitfire	1 Sqn
	Tempest	2 Sqn
90 Rivenhall	B-26 Marauder	3 Sqn
n/s Salby	C-47	6 Sqn
91 Shoreham	Spitfire, Walrus	2 Sqn
n/s Spanhoe	C-47	7 Sqn
92 Stanstead	B-26 Marauder	4 Sqn
93 Staplecross ALG	P-51 Mustang	3 Sqn
94 West Malling	Spitfire	1 Sqn
	Mosquito NF	3 Sqn
95 Wethersfield	A-20 Havoc	4 Sqn
96 Woodchurch ALG	P-47 Thunderbolt	3 Sqn

n/s - airfields further north than map area  
Blue - FAA Sqns, Red - USN/USAAF Sqns

## The Overlord Leaders

- Supreme Commander, Allied Expeditionary Force:  
**General Dwight D Eisenhower**
- Allied Naval Commander-in-Chief, Expeditionary Force:  
**Admiral Sir Bertram Ramsay**
- Commander-in-Chief, 21 Army Group:  
**Gen Sir Bernard Montgomery**
- Commander-in-Chief, Allied Expeditionary Air Force:  
**Air Chief Marshal Sir Trafford Leigh-Mallory**

## D-Day in figures

**Number of ships allocated to Operation Neptune:**  
**1,212** Allied warships      **735** ancillary craft  
**4,215** amphibious craft      **864** merchant ships

**Number of troops put ashore: 132,815**

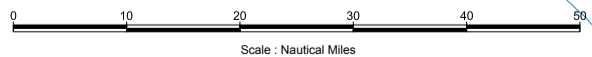
<b>Sword</b>	<b>28,845</b>	<b>Total : 75,215 British/Canadian</b>
<b>Juno</b>	<b>21,400</b>	
<b>Gold</b>	<b>24,970</b>	
<b>Omaha</b>	<b>34,350</b>	
<b>Utah</b>	<b>23,250</b>	

**Total : 57,600 US**

**Number of aircraft available to cover Operation Neptune:**  
**2,274 RAF Commands**      (1,086 bombers, 1,188 fighters)  
**3,606 USAAF Commands**      (1,848 bombers, 1,758 fighters)

**Key to Overlord Map**

- British Embarkation Points
- U.S. Embarkation Points
- RN Destroyers
- Coastal Forces
- ASW Wellingtons
- ASW Albacores
- D Day Airfields
- U Boats sinkings
- Swept Corridor
- Main convoy Routes
- Invasion Area Boundary



## ALLIED INVASION DISPOSITIONS

Drawn by: Andy Brady - Navy News

# Leaky and fragile – but LCT did its job

FOR a young RNVR officer Operation Neptune was a very wet baptism of fire.

Brian Carter, at that point a sub lieutenant, was appointed First Lieutenant of an American Mk V Landing Craft Tank (LCT) less than a year after he joined the Royal Navy.

So, with no taste of action other than the occasional skirmish with E-boats in the Channel, Brian found himself in the van of the assault on Northern France.

Or, at least, he would have done had he not been assigned to one of the more unreliable craft in the Neptune armada.

In his book *D-Day Landings: A British crew landing American forces on Normandy Beach Heads*, Brian recalled how his LCT had been sunk and abandoned on the Clyde before being refloated and made ready for Neptune.

Having reached Dartmouth, and with D-Day approaching, Brian's LCT was detailed to load tanks to support American Rangers at Utah Beach.

"We proceeded to a loading ramp where tanks were quickly loaded, only to find our small officers' cabin had water slopping about the deck," said Brian.

"The officer in charge of loading told us to leave the ramp, and we had to insist that our load was lightened, for we would not have been able to stay afloat, even in the harbour."

On June 4 the LCTs set out on their long sea crossing, but were quickly recalled as D-Day was postponed for 24 hours.

"By the time this decision had been made we had already sailed, and after a few miles we realised that the sea was too much for us, the problem added to by the ship leaking badly," said Brian.

"An escorting vessel signalled our convoy to return: by this time we were suffering from engine failures, the rough seas stirring up water that must have been in our fuel tanks.

"With two of our three engines broken down, we received a tow from an escort vessel, who proceeded to tow us at great speed, causing the large door at the bow of the craft to dip under the waves, sending a cascade of water into the tank deck."

Despite self-draining scuppers, Brian realised another dunking would send the ship down, so he stood at the bow with an axe ready to cut the tow-rope while the escort was signalled to slow down.

"I think this was the most frightening experience of my life, and by the time we were towed into Torquay we were all completely physically and mentally exhausted," he said.

Portable pumps were supplied in Torquay, but the bronze couplings were damaged in delivery and the pumps later proved all but useless.

Although the D-Day crossing was a little calmer it was far from easy.

"The journey was a nightmare, the engines frequently breaking down and the ship leaking," said Brian.

"With the portable pumps not working we had to resort to bailing with buckets, hauled out through the engine room hatch and tipped over the side.

"It was not possible to stand in the engine room, the conditions being so cramped.

"It was touch and go whether we were going to sink or not, and we tied a rope around the



● One of the American beaches after the storm destroyed Mulberry A and drove hundreds of ships ashore



● Sub Lt Carter's tank-laden LCT wallows through the rough waters of the Channel on its way to Normandy. The round-topped devices are waterproof exhaust systems for the Duplex Drive Sherman 'swimming' tanks

engineer, telling him that if we gave it a tug he was to come out quickly."

The false start on June 4 meant that fatigue was becoming a problem.

"At this point we had been about 36 hours without sleep, and were completely exhausted, which dulled any forebodings we might have had over the landings that were to take place shortly," said Brian.

Indeed, so tired were the sailors that it was only later, after several runs to the beach, that Brian spotted a hole in the armour plating of the bridge – and the shell which made it, rolling around on the floor, its arrival unheard in the din of battle and the crew's state of exhaustion.

With the initial assault over, Brian's craft ferried material ashore from larger ships as the Mulberry harbour was under construction, largely untroubled by the enemy except in the form of mines – although one bomber did attack, and Brian remembers clearly seeing the pilot's face as it flew over.

The danger may have receded, but the privations continued.

"The loading and unloading went on night and day, and large quantities of troops had to be ferried to the shore," said Brian.

"These ships were very heavily loaded, and on one ship they had fitted urinals on the deck, which discharged straight over the side. "Unfortunately, we had to moor under these places, and were completely soaked from head to foot."

On occasions the LCT would get beached on an ebb tide, giving the crew a chance to set foot on dry land.

The receding tide also brought its own horrors.

"It was with sadness that when the tide went down, we saw the submerged tanks which had been designed to float; they had either been overwhelmed by the sea, or sunk by gunfire, the crews being trapped in them and drowned," said Brian.

He recalled how German night bombers were met with a storm of gunfire from ships and even soldiers ashore firing their revolvers – "the danger was not so much from the bombs but the spent ammunition and shrapnel coming down."

Finding time to rest was a real problem as the task of unloading went on night and day.

So weary were the crews that, after seven days without proper sleep, they were ordered to anchor and take a break.

"I had reached the stage of



● German prisoners are marched to a landing craft off Utah beach

tiredness where it was impossible to sleep, but I must have slept for I remember the coxswain dragging me into the cabin for I had walked in my sleep and was bawling out orders to an empty deck," said Brian.

He recalled wondering if he was going mad, and also remembered that one senior American officer committed suicide while "one of my fellow officers [was] sitting on the beach digging sandcastles like a child, having had a complete mental breakdown."

Brian's LCT met its end on an ammunition run, when a heavy lorry driving on board broke the craft's back.

They intended to keep going, but the vicious storm that broke the next day – D+13 – and raged for three days damaged the LCT beyond usefulness and they eventually abandoned her.

The storm also wrecked Mulberry A and drove dozens

of military and merchant ships ashore.

Brian and his crew gathered bits of canvas and other scraps and set up camp on the beach – complete, of course, with White Ensign.

"Food was no problem as the beaches were littered with tins of food," he said.

After a few days, Brian returned to Portland via an American survival camp, having marvelled at the organisation of the Americans.

"It seemed extraordinary that the Americans had their mail and parcels from home from D+2, when we, whose homes were only just across the water, never had any mail the whole time we were in France," said Brian.

"Even on D+2 the Americans were printing the *Stars and Stripes* to distribute amongst their troops, and the dentist had set up his tent to attend to anyone with tooth problems."



● Sub Lt Carter (left) and his skipper camped at the back of the landing beach after their ship broke its back in the storm two weeks after D-Day



● Sub Lt Carter (left) and his skipper camped at the back of the landing beach after their ship broke its back in the storm two weeks after D-Day

Pictures: Lt Brian Carter RNVR

## Ingenuity plays its part

IN A campaign that relied on dozens, if not hundreds, of codenames to identify its various elements, the last thing you would need would be a plethora of TLAs – three-letter acronyms.

So here is an instant guide to the world of LCAs, LCTs and LVTs – and a glance at the serious business of Hobart's Funnies.

Common to most acronyms for vessels at the cutting edge of D-Day are LC – Landing Craft.

Tagged on to this are various designators which specify a particular role.

Amongst the most common were the LCA, or Landing Craft Assault, and LCT – Landing Craft Tank.

These vessels had larger siblings which were designated 'ship' instead of 'craft' – thus LSI (Landing Ship Infantry) and LST (Landing Ship Tank).

Variations on the smaller vessels included: LCB – Landing Craft Barge; LCF – Flak; LCG(L)(M) – Gun (Large) or (Medium); LCH – Headquarters; LCM – Mechanised; LCP – Personnel; LCP(L)FOO – Personnel (Large) Forward Observation Officer; LCP(L)NAV – Personnel (Large) Navigation; LCS – Support; LCS(M) – Support (Medium); LCS(R) – Support (Rocket); LCT(AVRE) Tank (Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineers); LCT(R) – Tank (Rocket); LCT(Sp) – Tank (Support); LSD – Landing Ship Dock; LVT – Landing Vehicle Tracked; LBK – Landing

Barge Kitchen.

Hobart's Funnies were a family of armoured vehicles adapted to overcome specific obstacles and risks during an opposed amphibious landing – many of which were identified during the unsuccessful Dieppe raid of August 1942.

They were named after Maj Gen Percy Hobart, a leading exponent of tank warfare whose capabilities saw Churchill overrule Hobart's detractors to ensure he had a major influence on the Normandy landings.

Hobart – the brother-in-law of Gen Bernard Montgomery, who led the ground forces during Operation Overlord – was in charge of the 79th Armoured Division, which had been reformed as an experimental unit to produce specialised machinery for the assault on France.

The most widely-used Funny to come from the 79th was the DD tank – a waterproofed Duplex Drive Sherman which, using an inflatable skirt, was designed to 'swim' to the beach from several miles offshore.

When used as planned in relatively benign sea conditions, the tanks proved invaluable in providing rapid support to the first waves of troops.

However, when launched into rough seas, as at Omaha beach, they were liable to sink with their crew.

Another modified Sherman was the Crab, which was fitted with a large rotating drum on two projecting arms.

Fixed to the drum were heavy chains, which flailed against the ground when the drum was activated, detonating mines.

The Crocodile was a fearsome machine – a converted Churchill tank which spewed a jet of fire over 100 yards, fuelled by a reservoir in a towed trailer.

The Crocodile not only proved efficient at clearing German pillboxes and bunkers, but also had a powerful psychological effect on defenders.

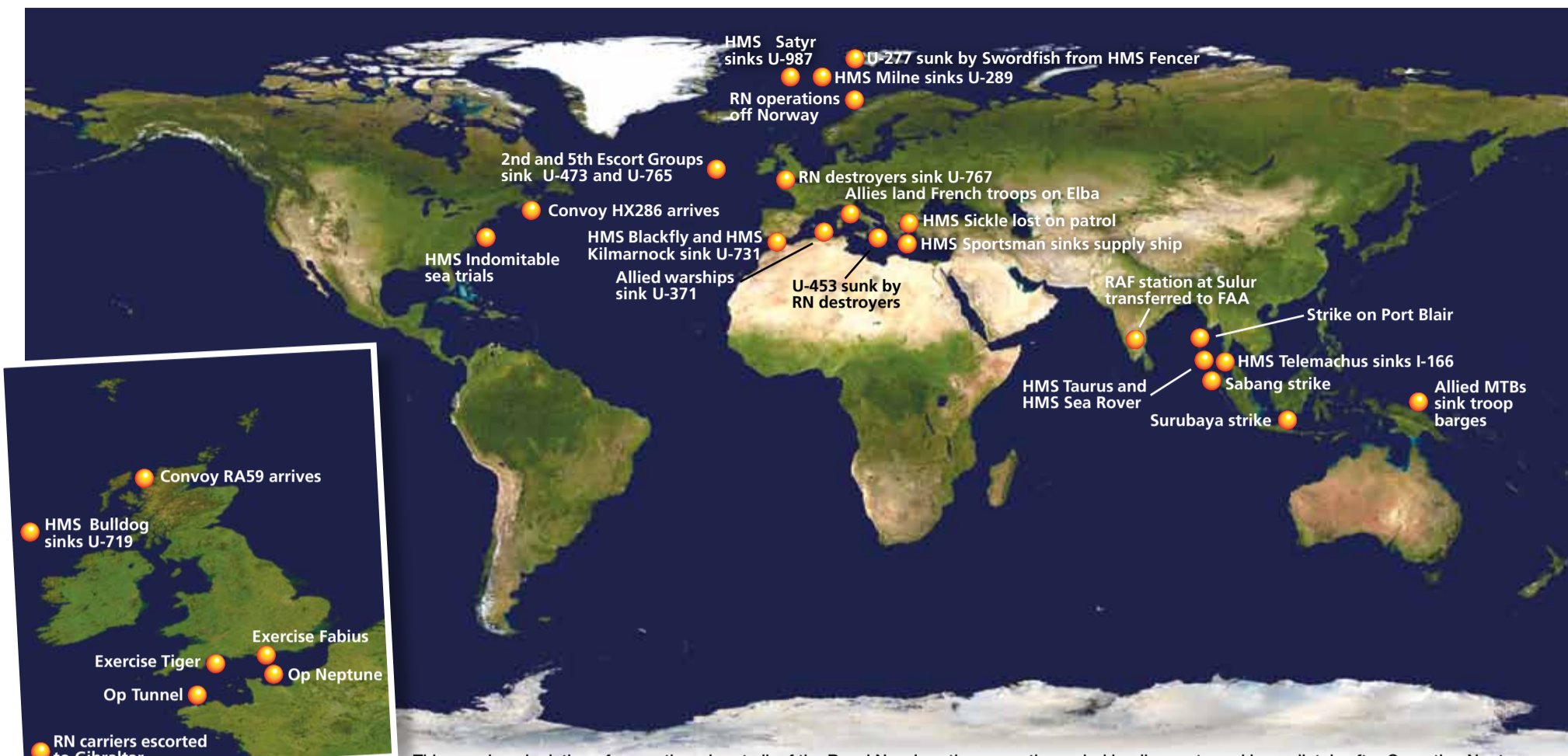
The AVRE – Armoured Vehicle Royal Engineers – proved a versatile piece of kit.

Based on a Churchill tank, the basic AVRE had a mortar instead of a main gun, and hurled a high-explosive charge of nearly 40lb up to 150 yards. These 'flying dustbins' easily shattered concrete obstructions or strongpoints.

Variations on the AVRE included the 'Bobbin' (which unrolled a metal and canvas track in front of it, allowing it and following vehicles to travel over soft ground) and the 'Fascine' (which dropped a lashed bundle of wooden poles or branches into ditches or tank traps to bridge the gap).

The Beach Armoured Recovery Vehicle (BARV) was another converted Sherman, used to drag stranded armour ashore or help refloat beached landing craft.

The BARV concept lives on today in the Royal Marines' purpose-built vehicle the Hippo – dubbed 'the Beast' by the bootnecks.



This map is a depiction of many, though not all, of the Royal Navy's actions over the period leading up to and immediately after Operation Neptune



## FLEET FOCUS 1944

RN activity at the time of Operation Neptune

ALTHOUGH a massive effort was directed towards the execution of Operation Neptune, the Royal Navy – in 1944 as 70 years later – had a global presence. The weeks before and after D-Day saw RN ships, submarines and aircraft patrolling and striking locations from the Atlantic to the Far East.

Convoy activity continued on many routes, with **Atlantic convoy HX286** reaching the safety of Halifax, Nova Scotia, on April 29 and **Arctic convoy RA59** from the Kola Inlet reaching Loch Ewe in Scotland on May 6.

Swordfish of **842 Naval Air Squadron**, embarked in carrier **HMS Fencer** as part of RA59, sank three U-boats in two days en-route – U-277 on May 1, U-674 and U-959 the following day.

Destroyer **HMS Milne** also killed a U-boat in icy waters north of Norway; U-289 went down with all hands on May 31 off Bear Island.

The coast of Norway was also the focus of attention for a number of Royal Navy anti-shipping operations in the month of May, including **Op Croquet** (May 3-7), **Op Hoops** (May 7-8), **Op Brawn** (May 12-16) – originally meant to attack the Tirpitz but re-tasked because of poor weather – and **Op Potluck** (May 14-16).

Completing the picture in the Arctic theatre, submarine **HMS Satyr** sank U-987 off Narvik on June 5.

The grim cull of the U-boat *matrosen* continued unabated in other seas during the invasion period.

On May 4 four Allied warships, including Hunt-class destroyer **HMS Blankney**, sank U-371 off the coast of Algeria.

Two days later two U-boats were caught in the North Atlantic by ruthless Escort Groups.

U-473 had the misfortune of coming to the attention of Capt Johnnie Walker, and was destroyed by **HM ships Starling, Wild Goose and Wren**, with 30 survivors of its 53-man crew, while just 11 of 48 survived the sinking of U-765 by Swordfish of **825 NAS** embarked in **HMS Vindex** and attacks by frigates **HM ships Bickerton, Bligh and Aylmer**.

All 54 hands were lost when U-731 succumbed to an attack by patrol vessel **HMS Kilmarnock** and armed trawler **HMS Blackfly** close to Gibraltar on May 15.

Less than a week later, on May 21, all but one of the German crew survived when U-453 was caught by destroyers **HM Ships Termagent, Tenacious and Liddesdale** in the Ionian Sea.

On June 18 there was one survivor from 50 when U-767 was sunk in the vicinity of Guernsey by destroyers **HM ships Fame, Inconstant and Havelock**, while all 52 men died when destroyer **HMS Bulldog** sank U-719 north of Ireland eight days later.

Axis shipping was not spared either. On April 28 submarine **HMS Sportsman** sank the German-controlled SS *Constantinos Louloudis*, carrying munitions from Piraeus to Crete.

Further afield, Royal Navy ships, including the carrier **HMS Illustrious** and battleship **HMS Queen Elizabeth** carried out strikes against Japanese targets at Surubaya in Java on May 17, and the same group hit Sabang in Sumatra on April 19 and July 25.

Four escort warships were withdrawn from Op Neptune duties on June 11 to escort carriers **HM ships Victorious and Indomitable** to Gibraltar – the latter having been on sea trials off the east coast of the USA just weeks earlier – while submarine **HMS Sickle**, failed to return to Malta from an Aegean patrol on June 14, and was presumed lost with all hands.

On June 17 RN and US warships landed French troops on Elba, while a month later submarine **HMS Telemachus**, part of the Ceylon-based force strangling the Japanese supply line to Burma, sank Japanese submarine I-166 in the Malacca Strait.

**Exercises Tiger and Fabius**, dress rehearsals for D-Day, took place weeks before D-Day, between which an Allied flotilla that included cruiser **HMS Black Prince** and destroyer **HMS Ashanti**, engaged on a standing Operation Tunnel security sweep, attacked German torpedo boats off the north coast of Brittany, sinking one and damaging the others, on April 26.

THE value of a heavy, accurate barrage of artillery was a lesson learned by both sides in the Great War.

And both sides appreciated that if an invasion of Normandy was to succeed, there would need to be a first-rate performance by Naval gunners until land-based artillery could be established.

Fortunately for the Allies a force of more than 100 warships from seven nations (Britain, USA, Canada, France, the Netherlands, Poland and Norway), ranging from veteran battleships to destroyers and gunboats, proved more than capable.

The bombarding ships gathered at pre-arranged locations off the assault area, newly swept free of mines, in the early hours of D-Day.

The first phase saw ships pound German defences and gun batteries, only lifting their sights inland at H-5 (five minutes before the landings) to avoid their own troops.

Further fortifications inland, and access routes, were then targeted by guns more powerful than anything the armies could field.

Spotters in the upper sections of the warships, ashore with troops and aloft with the Air Spotting Pool (*see p25*) assessed where the shells were falling and relayed the information back to the ships, which adjusted their sights accordingly.

Many German strongholds and gun batteries had survived pre-invasion bombing raids – partly because the raids had to be spread along the entire Channel coast of Europe so as to avoid giving defenders clues as to the invasion site.

Battleships and cruisers, some of which had already supported Allied landings in the Mediterranean, were assigned specific targets at each beach, moving on to targets over the horizon as the beachhead was established.

Groups of destroyers and smaller warships supported the troops on the beaches themselves, while others either attacked targets on the flanks of the invasion area or were held in reserve for specific requests



● **HMS Warspite pounds German defences on the Normandy coast**

Picture: © IWM (A 23916)

for gunfire support – a skill still practiced by Royal Navy ships in the 21st Century.

Ernie Penny was an AB in battleship HMS Ramillies when she sailed for the French coast on June 5 1944.

The sailor recalls how a destroyer laid a smokescreen in front of Ramillies, battleship HMS Warspite and monitor HMS Roberts as the trio prepared to let rip with their 15in guns, first in support of the landings, then to target specific German shore batteries, including those at Houlgate and Benerville.

“At about 5.30am the landings started with the landing craft going past us,” said Ernie.

“I have never seen so many small boats, carrying the troops on to the shore, and by this time we saw the planes towing the gliders overhead.”

“I was on look-out duty on top of the bridge on the first day so I had a good view of it all – all hell seemed to have been let loose,” recalled Ernie.

E-boats fired torpedoes at the battleship – but a lucky charm picked up on a visit to New Zealand early in the war paid off. The ship was already manoeuvring, and was head-on when the tinfish reached her, passing down either side.

The luck came courtesy of a Maori grass skirt which had been presented to the ship, guaranteeing no harm would come to her or her ship's company.

The CO was seen to be wearing it over his uniform as the

bombardment proceeded, much to the relief of his ship's company.

“The crew had lots of faith in this grass skirt,” said Ernie.

Not so lucky was Norwegian destroyer Svenner, which was struck and quickly sank, her screws still turning, as Ernie watched in horror.

A/PO Jack Hall, on board HMS Warspite, felt a wrong was being righted as the veteran battleship hurled shells at the German defences.

“I had been at Dunkirk four years previously. These scenes of ‘putting them back’ were and remain of great satisfaction and pride,” he said.

A spectacular element of the bombardment was that provided by landing craft adapted to carry racks of rocket launchers.

These could saturate the beaches with over 1,000 60lb rockets in one fiery salvo, plastering the shoreline with explosives and alarming defending Germans.

Tanks coming ashore in landing craft could also be called upon to provide covering fire before they had even hit the beach, adding to the general onslaught and confusion amongst the defending troops.

Ernest Routh was a radio operator on the Isles-class minesweeping trawler HMS Texada, one of a flotilla of six ships patrolling the fringes of the beachhead to detect and destroy enemy frogmen, human torpedoes and parachute mines, deployed against the bombardment force.

“I was well aware of the potential [of the bombardment force] when we lay within half a mile of Warspite, when to get a closer look at the activity I poked my head out of the wireless cabin port as she let loose a salvo,” said Ernest.

“For whatever reason, on D-Day +6, the skipper allowed us ashore on the understanding that we kept strictly out of the way of the whole gambit of modern warfare being pushed swiftly ashore from Mulberry.”

“This we did successfully, and made our way inland to the first village down the road – Bernières-sur-Mer.”

“There was a straggle of cottages forming the main street, and these were mainly intact.”

“The local church dominated the skyline, made much more dramatic when we could see that a well-aimed shell had blown a perfectly round hole through what had been a very handsome steeple.”

“We had been told to seek any fresh food we could muster, and toward this end we had continually practised our two words of French – *pain* and *œufs*. “In the village shops we were able to convince the patron of our needs, and whilst fresh bread was not possible we did manage four fresh eggs.”

Allied chiefs commended the accuracy of the bombardment, with Admiral Ramsay noting that the shooting was “uniformly good” and that the advance of ground forces was “helped in no small measure” by the onslaught.

# The fruit of much

WITH the first waves of the assault forces and their support formations having set off for Normandy, it was time for the various parts of the Mulberry 'synthetic harbours' to follow in their wake.

The passage across the Channel for Phoenix caissons, Spud pontoons, Bombardons, flexible roadways and so on was a slow process.

It was also an uncomfortable – and potentially dangerous – one for the 'crews' of the cumbersome, odd-shaped craft that would combine to create a working port.

The Phoenix caissons – up to 6,000 tons of concrete which drew nearly 20ft of water when afloat – that formed the solid breakwater were honeycombed with empty compartments.

But none of those compartments were habitable, and though a rudimentary concrete 'cabin' was provided, those manning them for the crossing usually improvised, often sheltering below anti-aircraft gun emplacements.

This was in part through distrust of the stability of the caissons, especially if they were hit by a torpedo or struck a mine.

One man on board a Phoenix for the invasion was Mick Crossley of the Royal Artillery.

Recounting his experiences in *We Remember D-Day*, a compilation of accounts by Frank and Joan Shaw which raised money for Normandy veterans, Mick and his comrades joined his caisson at Folkestone Harbour.

With a 'crew' of 16 – larger than usual – he remembers the long, very slow journey, and at first the Phoenix rolled very little.

"The weather was deteriorating though and at night we huddled in blankets under the gun tower with hardly any sleep," said Mick.

Next morning one of the two steel towing hawsers snapped, and as the caisson was now at an angle to the direction of the tow it started to ship water.

"We signalled by Morse lamp to the American tug's crew and we had the reply that 'she looked ok'," said Mick.

"After a worrying day, darkness fell and we were taking in more water. The caisson now had a list to starboard and I remember that we moved anything of weight to the port side and even bedded down on that side, though it made no difference."

They reached Normandy, listing badly, but could not be taken off because of the sea state.

Tempers frayed as no one



● A Phoenix caisson, with gun tower on top, under tow, possibly at Dungeness or Pagham

Picture: © IWM (H 39300)

seemed to care for their plight, and Mick said the caisson crew had been in lifejackets for 48 hours.

"Two of the lads were too scared to speak even and just sat huddled up in blankets.

"I was scared myself and most of us realised the strong possibility of the caisson going down during the night.

"A feeling of helplessness. Some of us took it in turns, in pairs, to walk the catwalk to the far end and check the water level by torch. It was always reported higher."

By 3am the crew decided the end was near. Some clambered down the 27ft rungged 'ladder' to the lower level, though some were too frightened to get down.

At 3.30am it sank, and Mick, having jumped as it rolled, grabbed a floating wooden beam.

Around 6am Mick and two colleagues was plucked from the heavy swell by a Naval smokelaying trawler, which returned them to England.

And it was in Weymouth Bay that Mick and his colleagues went on deck to see the bodies of four former 'shipmates' from the caisson laid out under covers.

One other crewman had been picked up but a further five died in the accident.

There were similar misgivings amongst crewmen of the Bombardons, as recalled by AB C Abbott.

"We were stationed at HMS Shrapnel in Southampton while parts of the harbour were being built," said Mr Abbott.

"When it was finished we took it down to Weymouth. We were aboard a Yankee ship – and the Yanks called it a 'floating coffin'..."

It wasn't just components that were needed on the far shore. It was estimated that some 10,000 men would be needed for the construction, protection and operation of just Mulberry B at Arromanches, including crews of

the small boats ferrying material ashore from larger vessels.

Motor towing launches – wooden boats with large petrol tanks (a source of consternation for crews when tracer fire and incendiary mortars were fired from escort ships at night) were towed over behind Whale roadways.

The American crews quickly became adept at linking up the flexible roadways, and found the intermittent delivery of new shipments frustrating as they could position and moor a whole day's supply in an hour, according to Royal Engineers officer Allan Beckett, the man behind the Whale concept.

There was also felt to be a need for a smokescreen defence, which would involve some 60 'smoke trawlers' – which would need prodigious amounts of oil to feed their generators.

The Gooseberry blockships were the first part of the Mulberries needed on the Normandy coast, and they assembled in May.

According to the War Office's 1947 account *The Story of the Mulberries*: "Since many were old crocks, a number of tugs were sent to accompany them."

"On about D-14, the squadron which had been prepared at Rosyth sailed and made its way round the north of Scotland, via the Pentland Firth, to Oban where it joined up with the other two squadrons.

"Then, on D-8, the whole 60 ships set off in an imposing convoy – some were assisted by tugs, some were towing another – and thus they streaked through the Irish Sea and round Land's End at about 3 and a half knots.

"The last ship reached Poole, the assembly point, on D-1 and the whole convoy set off again on the afternoon of D-Day to the dispersal point off the Normandy coast, from where they dispersed to the five beaches."

Dragging these Mulberry components around the British coast and across the Channel were 132 tugs – 72 British and 60 American – of which 35 were identified as small tugs and the remaining 97 were deemed suitable to make the Channel crossing, proudly displaying the letter M on their funnels.

A motley collection of 200 or so tugs, the result of a sweep of all Naval and commercial dockyards and ports around the UK, had been gathered for Operation Neptune.

The deployment of tugs was a masterpiece of naval planning in its own right – tows had to be achieved as economically as possible, so that the largest tugs were paired up with the biggest caissons.

The situation was made easier when predictions that two tugs would be needed for each 6,000-ton Phoenix proved groundless as the concrete blocks took to the crossing reasonably well.

Every care was taken to keep the tugmasters and their crews happy as their task was relentless and somewhat monotonous – they were well-supplied with food and drink, their mail was promptly delivered and repairs were done swiftly and efficiently.

As reported in the War Office account: "The men responded magnificently."

"On the afternoon of D-1, just as one of the British assault forces was leaving the Solent to make the crossing, an LCT carrying essential assault vehicles broke down.

"A US tug happened to be in the vicinity and the Admiral commanding the force made a signal to the tug to tow the LCT over to the beaches.

"This he did and all expected the tugmaster to slip his tow when he got a mile or so off the beaches; but not a bit of it; he had been ordered by a British admiral to take his tow to the beach and, despite all signals and shouts, he kept steadily on right up to the beach where he grounded completely with tow, almost in the van of the assault.

"He managed to get off with the next tide and arrived back safely, full of his exploit of having taken part in the assault."

● (Left) A Whale roadway being towed to Arromanches in June 1944

Picture: © IWM (B 5689)

The tow of the Mulberry components was dependent on sea conditions, with the Whales being particularly susceptible to bad weather.

It was assumed by planners that a speed of three knots was to be expected, but in the event around 4.5 knots was the norm, and the attrition rate of ten per cent of tugs proved wildly pessimistic – in the end it is thought only three (two British and one Dutch) were lost.

The Bombardon crossing began on the night of D-Day when two converted netlayers, 12 bar vessels, four trawlers and two large merchant ships carrying the heavy moorings, along with survey craft, left the UK, arriving on the morning of D+1.

Tugs towing the first Bombardons left Portland at 5pm on D-Day, arriving at the two Mulberry beaches – Gold and Omaha – 36–40 hours later.

Thereafter groups of four tugs, each towing a pair of Bombardons, sailed from Portland every afternoon at around 4pm until D+5 – and such was the seakeeping of the steel floats that none was lost in passage.

Phoenixes began to leave Sussex at 2am on D+1 and the first units were planted at Mulberry B on D+2.

By the time a violent storm hit Normandy on D+13, 35 units had been planted at Mulberry A and 24 at B.

Although planners estimated 20 per cent losses, by D+12 only three had succumbed – one by mine, one by torpedo and the third which simply capsized off Arromanches, as described earlier.

The Spuds towed reasonably well – which is more than can be said for the flexible roadways.

The first Whale roadway tugs left England at 3.30am on D+2, arriving off the enemy shore early on D+3, at which point construction of the central pier of Mulberry B began, though



● (Above) Royal Engineers – Sappers – operating the valves of a Phoenix caisson to submerge it after it has been placed in position

Picture: © IWM (A 24358)



● (Left) An aerial oblique photograph of the Mulberry harbour – Mulberry B, nicknamed 'Port Winston' – off Arromanches

Picture: © IWM (BU 1024)

# h labour

So the next Corncob became the 'key ship' from which the rest of the Gooseberry sprouted in both directions, and she and those that followed were sunk in the right spots.

With experience of local tides and weather, the Planter and his maritime gardeners became expert in sinking Phoenixes using a system of valves operated by sappers; these units were rarely more than a few inches out of line. With practice, the time taken to sink a Phoenix fell to between ten and 20 minutes, depending on the type.

Progress on Mulberry A was considerably slower than B, and under pressure from commanders a Phoenix was poorly planted near the entrance in fading light on an adverse tide. Such mishaps could help explain the different fates of A and B in the subsequent storm.

More than half the provision for sheltered water was in place at Mulberry B by D+10, though construction of the piers took longer than planned.

The first supplies for the Battle of Normandy itself – material other than that needed for the building of the Mulberry – trundled through Arromanches on D+7, and within three days had topped 2,000 tons a day. Activity there did not cease until the port was closed to traffic on December 1, or D+178.

However, the Mulberries suffered a hammer blow on D+13 when a fierce storm appeared literally from out of the blue.

The Mulberry despatch officer in Britain, a man who constantly scanned the latest weather forecasts, had been assured on the morning of D+12 (June 18) that the outlook was very good.

Met men assured the despatcher that the forecast was almost perfect – they were confident that there would be a 48-hour spell of fine, settled weather, with not a hint of an Atlantic low on the horizon.

"So arrangements were put actively in hand; all possible tugs were mobilised and set out with a record number of units, including 22 tows of roadway each 480ft long, making a total of nearly two miles," according to the War Office account.

"But not one yard of roadway reached the far shore, because at 0300 hours on the Monday morning (D+13) it commenced to blow and it blew a full gale for three days, such as had not been known in the Channel in a summer for 80 years.

"It has been described as second only in portent to the gale which scattered the Spanish Armada in 1588; and it would have scattered and smashed the Allied Armada of small craft, with disastrous results to the forces already ashore in Normandy, had it not been for the Gooseberries provided by the 60 blockships.

"They had already rendered

yeoman service during the rough weather in the days immediately following D-Day but during the storm they, as the Eastern Naval Task Force Commander signalled, literally saved the day."

It is thought only some 20 per cent of available smaller craft were lost in the storm – tribute indeed to the Gooseberries and the partially-finished Mulberry B – but the sight on the beaches on D+16, when the storm abated and calm weather returned, was a grim one for the Allies, with hundreds of vessels driven ashore and smashed, or lying two or three deep above the high water mark.

Everyone available piled in to help, and within four days of the storm ending daily overall discharge of cargo to the beaches had risen to 40,000 tons and the backlog of waiting ships had been sorted – although the Mulberries played only a minor part in this phase of the operation.

Mulberry A "took the gale square on the chin," according to the 1946 report.

It had been all but demolished – only a quarter of its Beetles were moored, compared with 100 per cent at the British port, and more than half of the Phoenixes disintegrated, damaged by untheathered Bombardons and being burst by water entering the tops of the hollow compartments, putting pressure on the structure.

Nearly all the Corncobs either settled more than three feet, diminishing their effectiveness, shifted position or broke their backs.

Inside the breakwater every pier and roadway was damaged, most of them beyond repair. Just one Spud pontoon survived, as the operator (against instructions) winched the concrete platform well clear of the water, ignoring overload warnings.

By contrast, Mulberry B, which took "a glancing blow," was battered and bruised, and its breakwater breached, but it survived – just. It had also afforded some measure of protection to an estimated 500 small craft and other vessels.

Having said that, even on the worst day of the storm Mulberry B managed to land 800 vital tons of ammunition.

An assessment was carried out, and just over a week later Mulberry A was abandoned, with elements salvaged for use repairing Mulberry B, though the Gooseberry at St Laurent was reinstated using Phoenixes double-banked alongside the Corncobs.

With all effort now on Mulberry B, at least half of the material landed went direct to the beach for almost two weeks while the port was repaired, and a further week was spent expanding the installation.

That proved a wise move – when the port returned to full working order around D+28 the tonnage landed almost trebled from the week before, and the increased throughput of 50 per cent above planned capacity continued unabated for two months, with the record for a single day being 11,000 tons.

The port also handled increased numbers of vehicles, troops, casualties and prisoners.

Liberty ships would go alongside berths along the outer harbour walls and discharge cargo over the side to DUKW amphibious craft and lighters, the latter often transferring goods on to lorries at a Whale pierhead. In good weather, Liberty ships could also be handled just outside the breakwater.

Coasters – often between 16 and 22 at a time – would be handled by the Mulberry; some could be beached, some unloaded via the Whale piers and the rest used DUKW's and lighters in the same fashion as the Liberty ships.

The defence of the harbour was mainly handled by the craft of the Coastal Forces, which sheltered inside the western arm,



● Lorries are loaded at a pierhead in Mulberry B at Arromanches during June 1944

Picture: © IWM (A 24371)

heading out nightly to ward off German raids, and some 500 anti-aircraft guns, some mounted on the Phoenixes, which were supplemented by the guns of the warships and blockships.

Smokescreens from 30 smoke trawlers and a barrage of balloons was also deployed.

Because of the need to douse all lights during night-time air raids, and the consequent difficulty recognising and locating ships in the dark, most of the work of the port was done during daylight hours, unless there was a special urgent cargo to process. That also gave the men time to rest and eat.

Enemy attacks were troublesome for the first six weeks or so, the bombing proving more nuisance value than destructive, but after that they became sporadic.

The millionth man stepped ashore in Normandy on July 4 or

5 – records on the exact date vary.

Mulberry B was 'winterised' to protect it against autumn storms by pouring sand into hollow Phoenix compartments and providing each caisson with a rough metal roof.

With the luxury of hindsight, the Chiefs of Staff decided that the presence of Mulberries had not been the crucial factor in the success of Operation Overlord.

In a report by Sir Walter Monckton published in January 1946, the Chiefs of Staff Committee decided that Bombardons had contributed little or nothing to the overall success of Operation Overlord, while the value of the Whale roadways was open to question.

While the equipment itself proved effective in all weathers, the various piers within Mulberry were subject to changing uses – the LST and Barge piers were said to be worth their weight in gold, though the LST (heavy-duty) pier was late in appearing.

The Gooseberry and Phoenix breakwater combination was a success – so much so that the report concluded that "something simpler than Mulberry will probably do [in other similar operations]; a Gooseberry of Corncobs plus an LST pier and perhaps a short barge pier."

It added: "A still further development of the use of amphibious craft is likely to

contribute substantially to the efficient use of such a harbour."

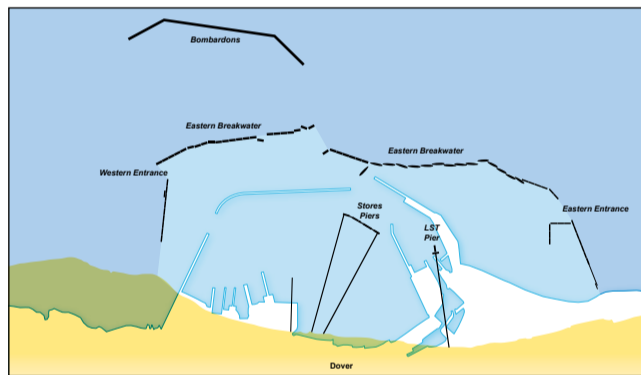
Clearly, part of the problem of operating the Mulberries was that planners had only factored in a half-gale as the upper tolerance, as the likelihood of anything worse was so remote.

In fact, the storm of D+13 proved to be just such a rare event, but within another week or so the Allies had taken Cherbourg and could start to use the port's sheltered waters while rebuilding damaged infrastructure – although as it was principally a passenger liner port in peacetime, it was never going to have the capacity to sustain the full might of the Allied forces in France.

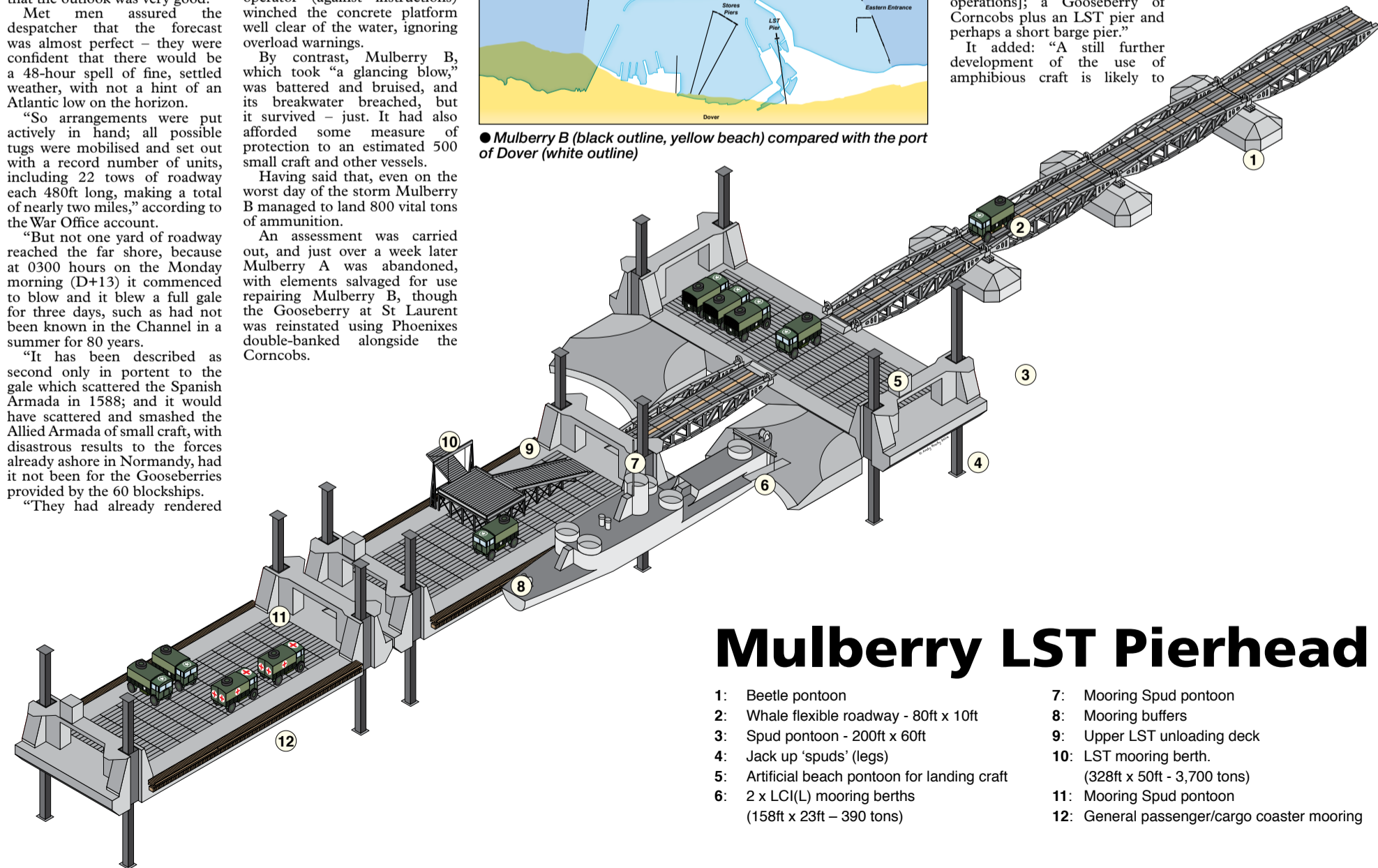
Much more traffic was landed over the beaches than had been expected, which again meant the role of the Mulberry piers was more marginal than expected.

But the fact remains that none of the above could be guaranteed.

Had Cherbourg not been wrested from the Germans, or the break-out from the beachheads been slower, or the general weather worse than predicted, then the Mulberry option would have been the Allied force's sole insurance policy.



● Mulberry B (black outline, yellow beach) compared with the port of Dover (white outline)



## Mulberry LST Pierhead

- 1: Beetle pontoon
- 2: Whale flexible roadway - 80ft x 10ft
- 3: Spud pontoon - 200ft x 60ft
- 4: Jack up 'spuds' (legs)
- 5: Artificial beach pontoon for landing craft
- 6: 2 x LCI(L) mooring berths (158ft x 23ft – 390 tons)
- 7: Mooring Spud pontoon
- 8: Mooring buffers
- 9: Upper LST unloading deck
- 10: LST mooring berth (328ft x 50ft - 3,700 tons)
- 11: Mooring Spud pontoon
- 12: General passenger/cargo coaster mooring

# The bones of Neptune are still clearly visible

SEVEN decades have passed since the first men went ashore in Normandy, but there are still plenty of reminders of the 'Great Crusade', as Eisenhower described Operation Overlord.

Some are tangible – relics of the desperate battles on the beaches or the hinterland.

Others are concepts, ideas or trains of thought, but remain just as powerful, including lessons learned from the operation which have informed naval warfare doctrine ever since.

The physical remnants of Overlord, and Op Neptune in particular, spread not only along the coast of northern France but much further afield.

Perhaps the most obvious are the remains of Mulberry B (also dubbed Port Winston), which can be best seen at low tide off Arromanches – Phoenix caissons, concrete Beetles and a pontoon are all clearly visible, the latter high and dry at low tide.

Many of the kite anchors designed to keep floating elements of Mulberry B in place also survive in the sea bed – so effective were they that they could not be removed, and ended

up staying put when the mooring lines were parted and the port dismantled.

Other remnants of the Mulberry project abound – one derelict smaller Phoenix Type C still sits in Langstone Harbour at Portsmouth while others quietly moulder a mile off Shoeburyness in Essex (not quite covered by high tide) and Pagham in Sussex – the latter only visible to divers.

Ferro-concrete barges for use with the synthetic harbours can be seen abandoned on the Thames foreshore at Rainham.

A number were used to defend London against North Sea flooding in 1953, and several of the bigger Phoenix caissons were also called into action to plug breaches in dykes in the Netherlands after the waters receded.

Four have since been converted to exhibition space as part of the Watersnoodmuseum.

A couple of Phoenixes remain in use as a windbreak for Q Pier in Portland Harbour.

For museum ships large and small look no further than HMS Belfast, involved in the D-Day bombardment and now part of the Imperial War Museum, berthed on the Thames near Tower Bridge, and HMS Medusa

– also a museum ship, and keeping the flag flying for smaller vessels involved in Op Neptune.

As ML 1387, part of the Channel Identification Group of the 149th ML Flotilla, Medusa helped guide invasion forces in Approach Channels 3 and 4 off Omaha beach on D-Day.

As to the intangible, one of the main Royal Navy capabilities in the 21st century is still that of amphibious operations – the ability to put an effective force ashore (nowadays seeking an unopposed landing) using purpose-built vessels, and under cover of powerful and accurate naval gunfire support (NGS).

Although today's Royal Marines commando could go ashore by air rather than by sea, basic principles established on the beaches of Normandy still shape UK military doctrine.

Central to that is leadership (as demonstrated on countless occasions onshore and off Normandy, with RN personnel organising and co-ordinating activities on the assault beaches – examples which are still studied by junior officers today) and the need for Naval control of the seas, to transport and support the force ashore and to ensure supplies get through.



● Parts of Mulberry B remain a feature of the seafront at Arromanches decades after British troops went ashore on Gold Beach  
Picture: Carol Gray

## Planning for Operation Neptune appeared in the May edition of Navy News



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## Useful books and websites

Supplement compiled by Mike Gray. Graphics and maps by Andy Brady.

It is not our intention in these supplements to repeat the material from the anniversary edition carried in *Navy News* in 1994 and 2004 – both are available online, so for comprehensive Order of Battle lists and a narrative history see [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk)

We have used some material submitted by veterans for previous anniversaries for which space could not be found; more of these will be on the *Navy News* website in due course.

Staff at the Naval Historical Branch have also provided invaluable advice and information.

The following books and websites were consulted during the writing of this supplement:

UK Hydrographic Office ([www.ukho.gov.uk](http://www.ukho.gov.uk)) – including detailed information on the Mulberry Harbour project in *The Story of the Mulberries* (Rear Admiral H Hickling and Brig I Mackillop, War Office, 1947)

*The Navy* magazine, Official Organ of the Navy League, 1944 editions

*Assault Landing Craft: Design, Construction and Operations*, by Brian Lavery

Imperial War Museum ([www.iwm.org.uk](http://www.iwm.org.uk)) – Closed until next month but resources online

*D-Day Landings* by Sub Lt Brian Carter RNVR, available from Carter Publications, The Stilts, Meadow Lane, Hemingford Abbots PE28 9AR (ISBN 9 781851 830558)

*The Germans in Normandy* by Richard Hargreaves

*D-Day: The Battle for Normandy* by Antony Beevor

[www.becketrankine.com/content/mulberry-harbour-archive-material](http://www.becketrankine.com/content/mulberry-harbour-archive-material)

*New Civil Engineer* supplement *Mulberry Harbour 1944-1994*

*The D-Day Encyclopaedia* edited by David G Chandler and James Lawton Collins Jnr

*The Squadrons of the Fleet Air Arm*, by Ray Sturtivant and Theo Ballance

[www.watersnoodmuseum.nl/UK/](http://www.watersnoodmuseum.nl/UK/)

*We Remember D-Day*, compiled by Frank and Joan Shaw (proceeds supported Normandy veterans)

[www.naval-history.net](http://www.naval-history.net) – always a mine of useful information

[www.hmsmedusa.org.uk](http://www.hmsmedusa.org.uk)

## Invasion museums

THERE are, unsurprisingly, numerous museums dedicated to various aspects of Ops Neptune and Overlord in Normandy.

Among the larger museums, Caen and Arromanches have comprehensive collections, while a museum dedicated to the Canadian force at Juno beach stands at Courseulles-sur-Mer.

The American forces have their own museums at St Laurent-sur-Mer (Omaha) and St Marie du Mont (Utah).

For details of the main French museums, see:

[normandy.memorial-caen.com](http://normandy.memorial-caen.com)

[www.musee-arromanches.fr/accueil/index.php?lang=uk](http://www.musee-arromanches.fr/accueil/index.php?lang=uk)

Thanks to the Hydrographic Office for pointing out that we were misinformed on the gun emplacement in last month's supplement – the Longues-sur-Mer battery is a smaller version of the one pictured, which was likely to be a Batterie Todt cross-Channel gun in the Pas de Calais.