



NAVY NEWS

OCTOBER 2014

MIND THE GAP

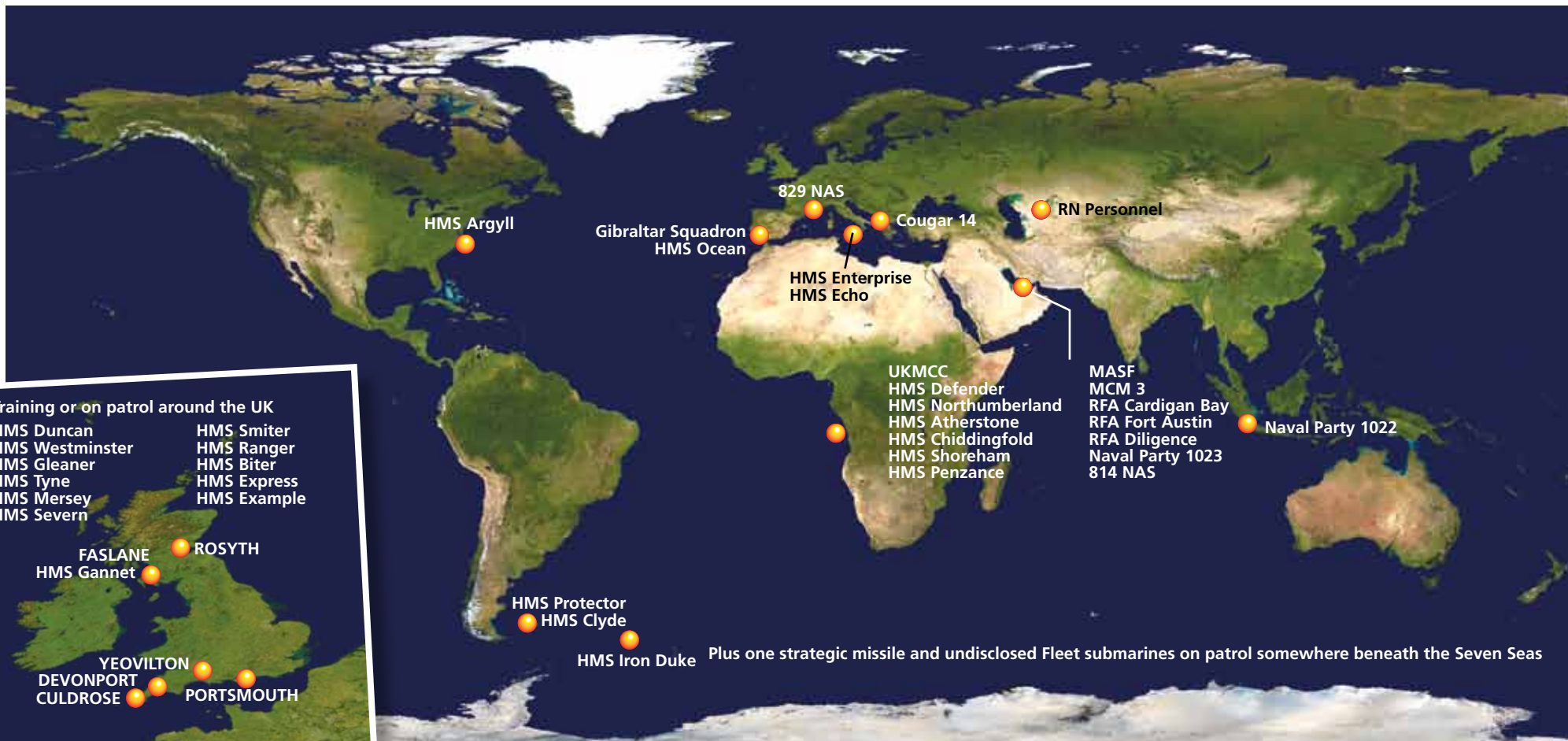
CARRIERS' FAREWELL

INVINCIBLE-CLASS SPECIAL PULL-OUT

● HMS Duncan squeezes through an incredibly narrow lock – with just 70cm to spare either side – as she arrives in Cardiff. The Royal Navy's newest Type 45 destroyer visited the Welsh capital for the NATO summit. See pages 8 and 9.

Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott, rnpoty

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

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

IT'S now autumn – and that means the RN's key autumn amphibious deployment, **Cougar**, is well under way. It opened with 600 Royal Marines storming ashore in the Adriatic for **Albanian Lion** (see pages 20 and 29), assisted by **HMS Bulwark**, **HMS Ocean**, **RFA Lyme Bay** and **RFA Wave Knight**.

Continuing the international theme – but in home waters – **HMS Duncan** joined the French ship *La Motte-Picquet* for the NATO summit in Newport and Cardiff (see pages 8-9). **Duncan** – by far the biggest ship present – hosted a dinner for 28 defence secretaries, then took part in a Meet the Forces event as part of Cardiff Bay was transformed into a military showcase.

Britain's newest and most hi-tech underwater warrior, **HMS Astute**, marked the centenary of the Jolly Roger while on her maiden patrol (see page 4).

The world's No.1 submarine-hunting helicopter returned to its main duty as a Merlin Mk2 from **814 NAS** released a Sting Ray torpedo into Falmouth Bay (see page 6).

The crews of minehunters **HMS Quorn** and **HMS Ramsay** enjoyed a rare welcome home in their respective bases of Portsmouth and Faslane. Minehunter crews normally fly back to the UK but on this occasion brought their vessels home after three years in the Gulf (see page 5).

Royal Navy ships continue to pay tribute to the fallen of World War 1. **HMS Defender's** crew honoured the men on her predecessor, who found themselves in the first major naval battle of the war, Heligoland Bight (see page 18).

Sailors from **HMS Bristol** put in a shift at the Tower of London, planting some of the 888,246 ceramic poppies for the *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* installation; each bloom represents the life of a Commonwealth Serviceman lost (see page 19).

Following the decommissioning of **HMS Illustrious**, *Navy News* pays tribute to all three Invincible-class carriers with an eight-page supplement (see pages 21-28).

HMS Iron Duke continued her deployment with a visit to Cape Town, carrying the Rugby World Cup trophy as she arrived. The UK will host the competition next year. Cape Town was the ship's seventh stop on her six-month deployment (see pages 16-17).

HMS Argyle linked up with the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* for an air defence exercise, as well as a stint guarding the carrier, (see right). The exercise came after Argyle took part in the Star-Spangled Spectacular in Baltimore to mark the 200th birthday of the US National Anthem (see facing page).

P2000 **HMS Smiler** and her sister **HMS Ranger** had the honour of taking the Navy Board from Portsmouth to Cowes for a conference at the Royal Yacht Squadron just minutes after their squadron received the Firmin Sword of Peace for its ambassadorial role throughout Europe (see page 7).

Medical assistants prepared for their next drafts with a series of 'gruesome' exercises aboard **HMS Bristol** (see page 10).

Four Royal Marines bagged gold medals on the first day of the **Invictus Games** in London. More than 400 medals were presented to injured Servicemen and women from 13 nations who lined up for events in nine sports at the military's equivalent of the Paralympics (see page 14).

Continuing the sporting theme, a Naval officer is this month hoping to help set a new world record for women's formation skydiving (see back page).

And finally, if that pastime sounds too demanding, the **Royal Marines** have launched an official, limited-edition *Corps Monopoly* version of the world-famous board game to mark their 350th anniversary (see page 42).

Ready, Teddy, go...

HER battle ensign flying proudly in the stiff Atlantic breeze, **HMS Argyle** leads one of the most awesome sights on the Seven Seas: a nuclear-powered US Navy super-carrier – here the USS *Theodore Roosevelt* – with an F18 Hornet lined up on the catapult.

Fresh from taking part in 200th birthday celebrations of the US National Anthem in Baltimore (see opposite), Argyle sailed down Chesapeake Bay to link up with the flagship of Carrier Strike Group 12, emerging from its home at Norfolk, Virginia – the world's largest naval base.

The 100,000-tonne 'Big Stick' (currently 5,000 sailors, 40-plus jets) is working up in the Atlantic and invited the British warship (4,500 tonnes, 190 crew, one helicopter) to join in its exercises with destroyer USS *Farragut*, cruiser USS *Normandy* and tanker USNS *Kanawha*.

Argyle was put through her paces by an air defence exercise as well as a stint guarding the carrier and carrying out in-company manoeuvres.

Some of the Brits were given a chance to look around the leviathan, while US sailors headed in the opposite direction to experience life aboard a Royal Navy frigate.

"The scale of the Roosevelt compared to our ship is staggering," said Lt Ben Eglinton, Argyle's deputy marine engineer officer.

"I think it must be difficult even if you are a crew member to know where everything is.

"The jet repair facility was fantastic and certainly something we would like onboard if we had the space!"

The exercises concluded with HMS Argyle replenishing at sea to take on fuel from the *Kanawha*. The units then parted ways, with HMS Argyle returning to her duties in the Caribbean.

"It is always important to exercise with our partner nations to practice our skills and prove our ability to work with each other," said Argyle's Commanding Officer Cdr Paul Hammond.

"We have worked with several US ships over the last few days and I am extremely proud of my crew as they quickly adapted to operations with a large US aircraft carrier."

Picture: LA(Phot) Steve Johncock, HMS Argyle



PoW wow factor

WITH her older sister Queen Elizabeth being fitted out a few metres away in Rosyth's huge basin, the two largest sections of Britain's second new aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales are slotted into place.

Just two months after the first of the UK's new super-carriers vacated the cavernous dry dock – and five days after Premier David Cameron announced that both leviathans will be in service, not just one – 14,000 tonnes of the lower hull were carefully joined by expert engineers and technicians from the Aircraft Carrier Alliance.

Connected are Lower Block 02 (6,000 tonnes, built by BAE in Portsmouth) and ferried to Rosyth on a barge and Lower Block 03 (8,000 tonnes built by BAE on the Clyde) and also ferried to the Forth by barge.

Both contain a mix of engine compartments, store rooms, mess decks and accommodation and hangar space, plus hundreds of miles of cabling and several miles of pipes.

Nearly one third of Prince of Wales has been delivered to Rosyth ready for assembly – around 20,000 tonnes in all, nearly the displacement of HMS *Illustrious* whom the new carrier supersedes.

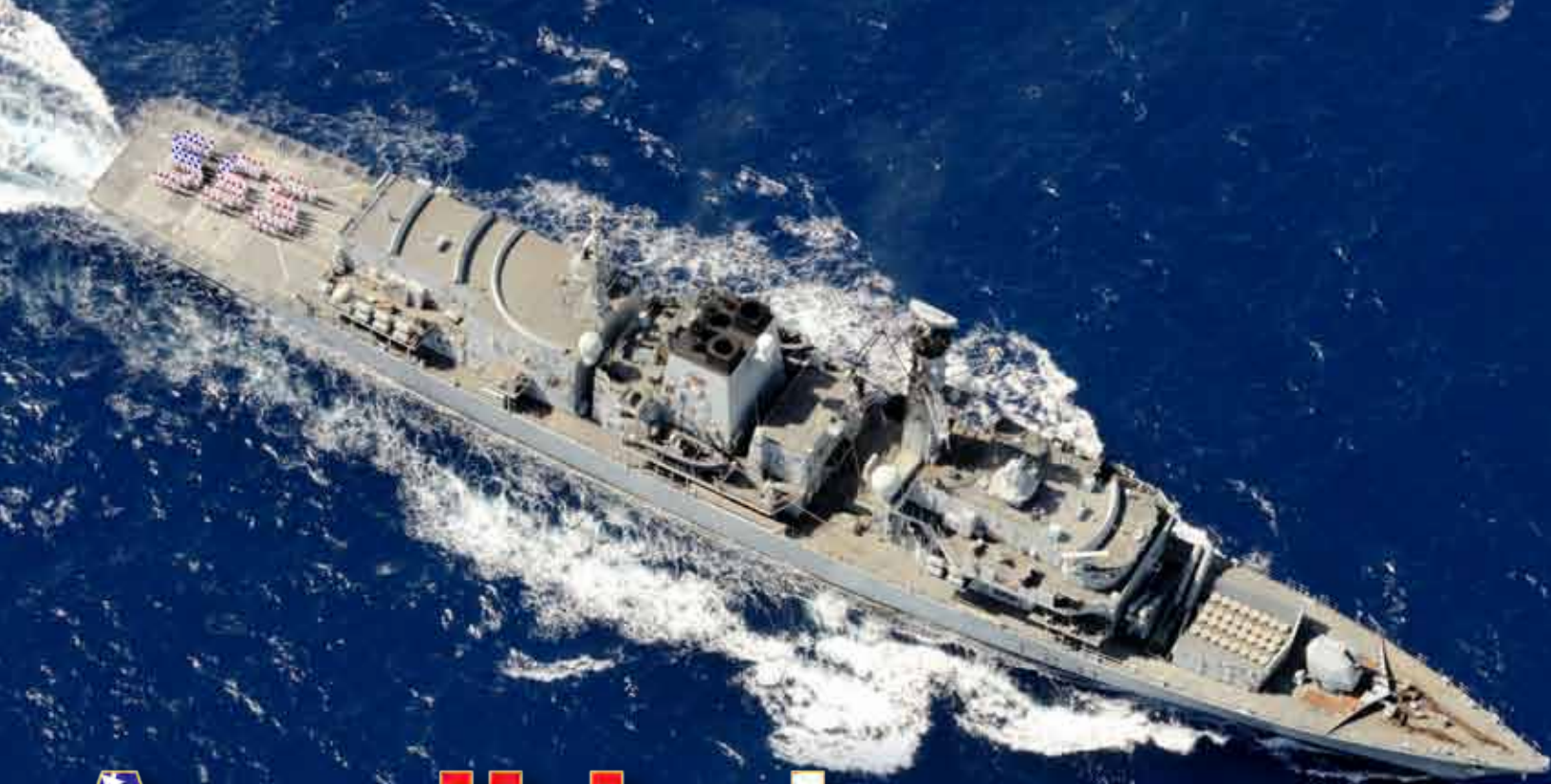
Those segments couldn't be joined, however, until Queen Elizabeth was moved out of the specially-enlarged dock at the Babcock yard for fitting out in the neighbouring basin.

HMS Prince of Wales is due to be launched in 2017 – the same year as her older sister arrives in Portsmouth.

Queen Elizabeth is due to begin flying trials with F35 Joint Strike Fighters in 2018 and will be available for front-line carrier strike missions from 2020.

Mr Cameron used last week's NATO summit to pledge that both carriers would be in service – one will not be mothballed or sold, rather both ships will be run so that "we always have one available, 100 per cent of the time, from 2023", which is when Prince of Wales is due to be fully operational.

Picture: Aircraft Carrier Alliance



Argyll helps raise the standard

IN RED, white and blue sailors of HMS Argyll spell out 'SSS' on the frigate's flight deck off the Eastern Seaboard of the USA.

Not, you'll be pleased to know, code for 'attacked by submarine' but the acronym of a week-long party celebrating the birth of the US National Anthem – its lyrics inspired by the last time Britain and America fought each other.

The Star-Spangled Spectacular in Baltimore was the latest in a series of bicentennial events held across the Pond to mark the War of 1812 (which, despite its title, ran on until 1815).

As the world's greatest naval power at the time, the Royal Navy was heavily engaged in the conflict – from famous single-ship actions such as HMS Shannon defeating the USS Chesapeake, to clashes on the Great Lakes, and the sacking of Washington (involving Royal Marines) which saw the White House torched.

A fortnight after the sacking of the capital and the port of Baltimore was under siege – with a fort at the end of a peninsula was proving to be a particular thorn in the Royal Navy's side.

At 6am on September 13 1814, the guns of 19 ships in the British Fleet opened fire – and did not stop for 25 hours, by which time they had exhausted their ammunition (a good 1,500 cannonballs).

They had not, however, inflicted too much damage on the fort, or its garrison, but they had rather tattered its flag.

To show their defiance, and to the sound of *Yankee Doodle*, the defenders raised an over-sized flag (when there were 15 stars and 13 stripes – there are now 50 and 13 respectively) to replace their battle-scarred banner.

Watching it all from afar, lawyer Francis Scott Key who was so moved by the sight that he penned a poem,

The Defence of Fort McHenry. It was subsequently set to music – although as the *Star-Spangled Banner* it only became the National Anthem officially in 1931.

All of which provided the setting for the Spectacular.

Americans being Americans, they made quite a fuss of the anniversary.

Fireworks. Air displays. Concerts. Tall Ships. Warships (three dozen in all). Sporting contests. Memorial services. And an enormous Stars and Stripes.

Having sailed the 160 miles up Chesapeake Bay, Argyll's sailors were at all of these events – and more – during their six days in Baltimore.

The high-point of emotion was reached during the Dawn's Early Light ceremony (the name taken from the opening line of the poem).

Exactly 200 years to the minute that the original flag was hoisted at the fort, today an immaculately-preserved national monument, sailors from Britain, USA and Canada gathered to see a replica of the 30ft x 42ft banner raised over the fortification – this time with the strains of the US National Anthem echoing around the bastion.

Wreaths were also laid on behalf of Britons and Americans killed in the clash.

It's only the second time since 1814 that a giant duplicate flag has been raised at the fort – making the occasion particularly memorable for the Argylls.

"The guard performed exceptionally well in the warm conditions, and I was extremely proud to represent the Royal Navy at such an auspicious occasion," said Lt Craig Clark, the guard's commander.

His sailors were heavily in demand at a string of ceremonies during the Spectacular, played out before everyday Americans and VIPs,

including General Colin Powell, US Secretary of State a decade ago.

Just for good measure, the frigate threw its gangway open to visitors – several thousand of them – and laid on demonstrations for the US Navy's second most senior officer, Vice Chief of Naval Operations Admiral Michelle Howard, and Patrick Davies, Deputy Head of Mission in the British Embassy, just 30 miles away in Washington.

The ceremonial sunset at which Admiral Howard took the salute wasn't the only bit of British pomp and ceremony amid all the US razzamatazz.

Entering harbour there was an exchange of fire with the fort – this time a friendly 21-gun salute – while the skirl of a lone piper from the Scots Guards performed on the bridge roof.

On the jetty his comrades from the 1st Battalion Scots Guards Pipes and Drums – the oldest infantry battalion in the British Army – serenaded the frigate alongside, and provided an unusual spectacle for Baltimoreans.

The latter proved to be outstanding hosts.

"The city of Baltimore has opened its arms to the various Navies – thank you for having us," enthused LA(Phot) Steve Johncock – responsible for the stunning imagery on this page.

For ET Owain Jones – who turned 18 on this deployment – the Star-Spangled Spectacular had the wow factor.

"I only joined the Royal Navy a little over a year ago and have already travelled to 11 different countries," he said. "Coming to Baltimore and experiencing such an event has been an experience I will never forget."

The visit to Baltimore came hot on the heels of a few days in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, where Argyll hosted the UK's new Consul General

in Miami, David Prodger, and Gen John F Kelly, USMC Commander, US Southern Command.

Among numerous sporting activities during her mid-deployment break, 24 of the ship's company visited the Sun Life Stadium – home of the Miami Dolphins – to watch a gridiron game. The Dolphins' hospitality was reciprocated when 12 of the team's cheerleaders were hosted aboard.

AB(WS) 'Popey' Pope said: "Fort Lauderdale was great – the locals are very friendly and we had a few days off to enjoy the beach and see the sights."

"Meeting the Miami Dolphin Cheerleaders was extremely exciting and is the sort of experience you only get in the Royal Navy."

And just in case all this makes Argyll sound like a bit of a cruise ship – well she can walk the walk as well.

Like bagging £21m of cocaine on the high seas – the first bust on her Caribbean patrol.

Nearly 600kg of the drug were seized at the end of a 12-hour chase involving both the Devonport-based frigate and the US Coast Guard.

A Coast Guard patrol aircraft spotted a suspicious-looking 'go-fast' boat south of Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, prompting both Argyll and the cutter USCG Sapelo to give chase.

Once within range, Argyll put her Lynx in the air which found the craft streaking across the Caribbean – and confirmed it was acting in a way typical of drug smugglers.

That in turn led to the frigate putting her sea boats in the water – carrying both a US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment and Royal Navy sailors – to board the fast boat. They found five crew and, more importantly, bales of cocaine wrapped in bin bags.

The drugs were confiscated, the crew were arrested and handed over to US authorities for prosecution.



Clyde glows in Falklands

NOT a post-apocalyptic still from the Gregory Peck classic *On the Beach*, but crimson skies over HMS Clyde at dusk in the Southern Hemisphere.

This is a rare, albeit rather eerie, serene moment for the latest crew of the patrol ship who've been rushed off their proverbial feet during their first few weeks around the Falklands.

The crew of the ship rotates with their counterparts in the Fishery Protection Squadron back in Blighty every six months with the latest incumbents the 15th to take charge.

Clyde is a souped-up version of the squadron's fishery ships – bigger gun, flight deck – so to make sure Crew No.15 were up for the task of safeguarding British interests in the region, the Navy's ultimate assessors clambered aboard to give the sailors a six-day workout.

A team from Flag Officer Sea Training flew the 7,700 miles from their base in Plymouth to assess Clyde.

With the FOST team satisfied with the ship's response to the six days of trials, Clyde has now knuckled down to patrolling the Falklands.



Picture: Lt Alex Davies, HMS Clyde



Reward for work in Syria

NAVAL fliers who helped with the effort to rid war-torn Syria of chemical weapons have been recognised by their peers.

For the first three months of 2014, 214 Flight of 815 Naval Air Squadron were the wings on the shoulder of HMS Montrose as she joined the international task force helping to remove toxic materials from the Levant under the banner of Operation RECSYR.

It was a very different mission from that performed before the turn of the year as the frigate patrolled the waters east of Suez looking for suspicious activity.

For the Syria mission the air and ground crew were expected to have their Mk8 Lynx ready for operations 24/7 – carrying out casualty evacuation, transport duties and patrols whenever necessary.

And if that wasn't enough to keep them on their toes, barely was Montrose back in Blighty than she was dispatched to the Baltic for a major Naval exercise.

Hence they were very worthy winners of the Osprey Trophy – the most coveted award in the Lynx world, presented each year in memory of HMS Portland's flight killed when their helicopter crashed off the Lizard a decade ago.

Commander Operations Rear Admiral Matt Parr presented the trophy – which is in the shape of the eponymous bird – to 214 Flight at Yeovilton.

"The Syrian crisis was a world crisis and the Royal Navy and Fleet Air Arm contribution has not gone unnoticed," he said.

"It was a fantastic advert for what the Royal Navy does and has achieved. This is a chance for me to meet the people at the front line that lift your spirits."

Royal call for Gannet

FORMER Sea King pilot – and fifth in line to the throne – the Duke of York dropped in on today's team still flying the venerable helicopter when he spent an afternoon at HMS Gannet.

In his capacity as Commodore-in-Chief of the Fleet Air Arm, Prince Andrew was shown around the Prestwick unit – traditionally the busiest Search-and-Rescue fliers in the land – chatting with both air and ground personnel.

Gannet's CO Lt Cdr Charlie Fuller said: "It is a team effort to ensure that our helicopters are ready to respond to emergency calls around the clock, 365 days a year, and it was important to highlight the role of everyone at the unit – engineers, administrators, Met Office, aircrew and more – in making sure that happens."

The Duke, who flew both Sea Kings and Lynx in a Naval career spanning 1979 to 2001, presented a Certificate of Competency to pilot Lt Mark Rose – which marks the end of his flight training and allows him to operate as an aircraft commander.



Honour board for new RFA

READY to take pride of place on the Navy's first new tanker in nearly 15 years is the battle honours board of RFA Tidespring as the ship is infused with a soul.

At the same time, the 37,000-tonne vessel – under construction since the beginning of June – has a champion and supporter throughout her career.

Lady Boyce, the wife of former First Sea Lord and Chief of Defence Staff Admiral Lord Boyce, has accepted the invitation to be the ship's sponsor.

Lady Boyce is due to see her ship for the first time next autumn when the shipbuilders hold a formal naming ceremony at the DSME yard in Okpo-dong near the south-eastern tip of South Korea.

The first steel was cut on Tidespring at the beginning of June with the tanker being built in blocks, which will be joined together over the winter.

After trials off Korea, the tanker – which is being built to a British design as part of a £450m investment in the RFA's oiler fleet – will be brought back to the UK to receive specific military equipment ahead of entering service in 2016.

By the end of the decade, Tidespring and her three sisters – Tiderace, Tidesurge and Tideforce – will be the mainstay of operations by Royal Navy ships and task groups around the globe, in particular the carrier battle groups formed around HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

The previous tanker to bear the Tidespring name served the RFA for just short of 30 years, her work refuelling the ships of the Royal Navy mostly unsung.

In 1982, however, she found herself supporting the task force sent to liberate the Falklands. In addition to providing fuel for Royal Navy vessels, the tanker was home to a company of Royal Marines commandos during the recapture of South Georgia.

Those actions helped the ship earn the Tidespring name its first battle honour. The board carrying it, plus the ship's badge, was kept when the tanker was paid off in the early 1990s and has been taken to South Korea.

Jolly good effort by crew of Astute

IN THE cramped confines of Britain's newest and most hi-tech underwater warrior, today's submariners celebrate the Silent Service's proudest tradition – 100 years to the day it was born.

The Jolly Roger – unofficial battle ensign of the Royal Navy's submarine force – 'flies' in the mess of hunter-killer HMS Astute on her maiden patrol.

A century ago – and at the cutting edge of the Naval technology of the day – HMS E9 claimed the first kill by a British submarine, German cruiser SMS Hela.

On her return to port, the boat's crew raised the Jolly Roger – a slap in the face for the fudduddies in the Admiralty who thought submariners little better than pirates.

Since then the banner has been flown frequently by successful British submarines returning from patrols – by VC winners such as Cdr David Wanklyn and his record-breaking HMS Upholder in WW2, to HMS Triumph which launched Tomahawk missiles at Col Gaddafi's military machine in Libya in 2011.

There's been no such action for Astute, on her first operational patrol since February, but her 98 crew were determined to mark the 100th birthday of the flag, not just making one in cloth, but baking one as well (and a White



● Some of the crew of HMS Astute with their Jolly Roger and White Ensign cakes

Ensign just for good measure).

"The Jolly Roger sets the Submarine Service apart from our surface brethren. It is a symbol of the camaraderie and fighting spirit that characterise us. Though we have made huge technological advances in the Service, embodied by Astute herself, we will never forget the history of the submarines that have served before us," said Cdr Gareth Jenkins, CO of the Faslane-based boat.

AB Ben Coy said he and his shipmates took great pride in

making Astute's flag.

"The Jolly Roger is created onboard and it is unique to every submarine," he said.

"Our Jolly Roger was the result of a lot of hard work from all of the crew with every member of the ship's company putting a stitch into the flag."

Astute's coxswain – the most senior rating aboard – Alan Wakefield added: "The Service is necessarily covert and by its nature not a lot is known about what submarines do during their operational periods.

Navy airman returns to Harriers

IF YOU never expected to see a Fleet Air Arm aviator in the cockpit of a Harrier again, take another look.

In the rear – instructor's – cockpit of a two-seat jump jet is Lt Chris Roy, passing on his expertise to a student US Marine Corps pilot.

And at the same time, the FAA aviator is keeping his hand in at fast-jet flying as part of an exchange programme with the US to help both countries prepare for the arrival of Harrier's successor, the F35 Lightning II.

Although the Harrier was retired in the UK following 2010's defence review, the AV8B variant continues to fly with the Spanish, Italians and especially the US Marine Corps (who intend to operate the jump jet until the end of next decade).

Chris – a veteran of both the RN

and RAF variants of the Harrier – is six months into a three-and-a-half year draft with Marine Attack Training Squadron 203 (VMAT-203), which feeds the US Marine Corps' front-line squadrons with freshly-qualified pilots.

"For me, it's a great opportunity. It's a great plan that our two militaries have put together, and it's fantastic to be right in the middle of it," Chris enthuses.

The first Fleet Air Arm and RAF F35 pilots are training with their US counterparts at Beaufort in North Carolina. Ground crews are learning how to maintain a strike fighter which is two generations ahead of the Harrier, while other RN aviators are flying Hornets with the US military, and handlers are gaining vital experience on the American flat-tops.



Picture: Cpl Brendan King, USMC

Dad nose best

(Fun as minehunters make rare return to home ports)

DARREN Lewis gets a welcome-home pinch from his son Elliott as minehunter HMS Quorn returned to Portsmouth after three years in the Gulf.

PO Lewis and the rest of the 44-strong crew had been away for eight months, with the ship being based in Bahrain since May 2011.

HMS Quorn's Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Stuart Yates, who was reunited with his seven-year-old twins, said: "It has been an honour bringing Quorn home for two reasons; first because she has been away for three years, and the second reason is that for many of the men on-board this is their first homecoming."

He continued: "Crews usually fly in and out of the Gulf so rarely get to experience a homecoming."

"The ship has been planning its homecoming for the past two years and the seven weeks it took us to get back from the Gulf did feel long, but everyone is delighted to be back in the UK with their families."

HMS Quorn has been a key part of Britain's contribution to Operation Kipion, responsible for keeping sea lanes open and combating illegal maritime activity in the region.

She has been involved in numerous high-tempo operations and exercises, building lasting relationships with regional allies and flying the flag for the UK in the region.

Quorn usually rotates her crew every six months but her current ship's company has been on board since January.

They have encountered everything from soaring temperatures

in excess of 50 degrees centigrade in the height of the Bahrain summer to 15-foot seas in the Indian Ocean.

AB Greg 'Leroy' Learoyd, 28, from Southsea, was on his first ship having joined the Royal Navy 18 months ago.

He said: "The brotherhood on-board was amazing, especially in such a small ship where you get to know everyone really well and strong bonds develop."

HMS Quorn has been one part of the quartet of Royal Navy minehunters permanently based in the region providing expert capabilities to find, identify and destroy sea mines.

Beyond minehunting she has carried out engagement across the region attending high-profile events such as the 2014 Dimdex defence industry exhibition in Qatar and the Omani-led multinational exercise Khunjar Hadd.

Quorn and her crew have also worked closely with American allies, with the ship being 'twinned' with the American minehunter USS Devastator.

The ship, which celebrated its 25th birthday whilst in the Gulf, visited Muscat, Salalah, Djibouti, Malta, Toulon and Gibraltar on her journey home.

Quorn's partner for most of the 7,300-mile journey home from the Gulf was HMS Ramsay, which received a wet welcome as she arrived at Faslane on the Clyde.

It was 39 months since the minehunter experienced wet weather – and three years and three months since she last was within sight of Gare Loch and its cloud-shrouded slopes.

In between, she has experienced heat, sunshine, more heat, the occasional shamal, and a bit more heat as part of the RN's long-standing mine warfare force stationed in Bahrain.

Every few months her crew has rotated with comrades back home on the Clyde as 1st Mine Counter Measures Squadron has traded sailors in its Sandown-class ships in home waters for those aboard Ramsey and Shoreham out in the Gulf.

The final 'owners' of Ramsey on her lengthy deployment spent eight months aboard (HMS Penzance and Chiddingfold have taken over in Bahrain).

Family members and friends gathered at the dockside for an emotional welcome home while a lone piper and a Sea King helicopter from HMS Gannet added a touch of pageantry to the occasion.

Guiding Ramsey safely alongside from the bridge wing was her Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Ashley Spencer.

"There is always a lump in your throat as you are about to come alongside and spot family and friends waiting for you. The crew have certainly deserved this moment," he said.

One member of HMS Ramsey's ship's company who was particularly looking forward to returning home was PO Robert Malcolm.

The 36-year-old from Dundee was met by wife Tracy and four-month-old son Bradley, born while dad was on deployment.

Although he briefly returned home for the birth, before long Robert was back with Ramsey in the Gulf.

"While it was great to be able to get home for Bradley's birth, I'm looking forward to spending some proper time with my son," said the senior rating.

"It's my fifth Gulf deployment and the separation is never easy but we are used to it now."

And for 22-year-old AB Rhys Mount, the deployment was his first.

"It has been a long time to be away from my family and friends, especially my girlfriend, Emily. But the deployment has been filled with new experiences and our stops in Dubai were excellent."

On the way home the ship took part in 70th anniversary celebrations of the liberation in southern France, parading in front of the French flagship Charles de Gaulle off Toulon.



● Above, PO Darren Lewis was met by his playful 22-months-old son Elliott as HMS Quorn returned to Portsmouth

Picture: PO(Phot) JJ Massey

● Left and far left: Loved ones and the crew received a soaking as the heavens opened when HMS Ramsay arrived in Faslane

Picture: CPOA(Phot) Thomas McDonald



Navy ship found at last

THESE scattered timbers and cannon, covered by nearly 170 years of marine growth, are the answer to one of the greatest mysteries in Royal Navy history.

This is one of the wrecks of Admiral Franklin's ill-fated expedition to find a way through the legendary North-west Passage – the route between the Atlantic and Pacific sought by mariners for centuries.

No-one has seen any of Franklin's 130 men or his ships HMS Erebus and Terror since the summer of 1845 – despite extensive searches neither ship was found.

The Canadian Government has made a concerted effort to locate the ships – six expeditions in the past decade – and announced it had found one of the vessels in the Victoria Strait, a good 200 miles inside the Arctic Circle and nearly 2,000 miles from Toronto.

Canadian Premier Stephen Harper said the initial survey of the wreck site, off King William Island, had confirmed that the vessel found – largely intact – was one of Franklin's, although it's not been determined yet whether it's Erebus or Terror.

Both were almost identical in size – just over 100ft long – and became trapped in the ice for good in September 1846.

After two winters on remote King William Island, the remaining crew – Franklin not among them, for he died in the summer of 1847 – set out to reach civilisation. None of them made it.



Some equipment and notes left by the sailors were subsequently recovered.

The exact location of the wreck is not being disclosed, but it lies just 35ft down, and has been designated a National Historic Site of Canada.

"This is truly a historic moment for Canada. Franklin's ships are an important part of Canadian history," Mr Harper said.

"Finding the first vessel will no doubt provide the momentum – or wind in our sails – necessary to locate its sister ship and find out even more about what happened to the Franklin Expedition's crew."



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Sucker joins HMS Mersey

PEEK a boo, we can see you. Meet Sam the sucker fish (a type of loach) enjoying life aboard HMS Mersey – proving that the fishery protection squadron is kind to marine life above the waves as well as below.

A few years ago it was customary in the Royal Navy's oldest squadron – affectionately dubbed 'the Cod Squad' – to have a 'hilarious' Billy Bass animatronic singing fish in the wardroom belting out tunes such as *Don't Worry, Be Happy*.

But the Mersey team went one better, installing a fish tank and populating it with Sam, Graham – a giant goldfish (yes, a real Mersey goldfish...) – and half a dozen zebra fish.

(We thought this might be the only aquarium in a Royal Navy warship but apparently there's also one in Ocean's stokers' mess.)

"Sam used to be a lot smaller but since Graham died, he's now the top dog (as it were) and is about as long as your finger," says Lt Helen Taylor, Mersey's Executive Officer – who also proudly points out that there's no Billy Bass aboard her ship.

So what have Sam and his 40 or so shipmates been up to recently?

Well, Mersey has strayed just about as far from the shores of the UK as any of the three fish ships – Tyne and Severn complete the trio – in their decade or so in front-line service with the Royal Navy: La Coruña in northwest Spain, 600 miles from home in Portsmouth.

The ship spent four days in the Galician port – a rare foreign visit after a crossing of a surprisingly benign Bay of Biscay.

Sailors played football with a local side and golf at the Hercules Golf Club.

The club takes its name from the Tower of Hercules – the oldest working lighthouse in the world, and dates back to the Roman era when its light came from large fires rather than the modern electric light which warns seafarers of danger.

TORPEDO AWAY



TOP bombing.

Well, torpedoing actually. A Merlin Mk2 of the Flying Tigers releases a Sting Ray torpedo into Falmouth Bay as the world's No.1 submarine hunting helicopter gets back to its core duty which is, er, hunting submarines.

With the new version of the Merlin entering front-line service – after nearly 15 years, the Culdrose-based helicopter has upgraded from the Mk1 to Mk2 – there's been an escalation in anti-submarine warfare training.

And after the hunt, you need to close for the kill. So 814 Naval Air Squadron made use of the deep waters of Falmouth Bay to drop the Surface Fleet and Fleet Air Arm's principal weapon in the war against the submarine: the Sting Ray torpedo.

A Merlin can carry up to four Sting Rays – each packed with a 100lb explosive charge (though not in Falmouth Bay, practice torpedoes were dropped) – which race through the water at more than 50mph as they close for the kill.

"Part of the development programme for Merlin Mk 2 is its ability to deliver a fatal blow to any aggressor", explained Lt Sean Carnew, the Merlin Helicopter Force's aviation warfare officer.

"The Sting Ray is the standard torpedo used throughout the Fleet Air Arm and is more than capable of making an enemy submarine commander think twice before attacking our ships."

It is planned to conduct up to 20 torpedo releases a year in the Falmouth Bay area, the first time it's been used for drops in 18 years. The weapons are loaded aboard the helicopters at nearby Culdrose and recovered by Serco boats working out of Falmouth port once the torpedo run has ended.



As for the hunt, well after a summer lull, as autumn began battle was re-joined between Merlin and submarine – but this time in the azure waters of the Med.

829 Naval Air Squadron swapped the Lizard for Toulon as they and their Gallic counterparts went a-hunting for a British nuclear submarine lurking somewhere in the western Mediterranean.

Fresh from pinging in the Atlantic on the biggest anti-submarine exercise run by the Royal Navy in a couple of decades – Deep Blue, co-ordinated from HMS Illustrious in June – the Kingfishers were joined in the fortnight-long hunt off the Côte d'Azur by a French frigate and a squadron of Caïman (alligators) – NH90 helicopters.

Having sought boats in both the Atlantic and North Sea (the latter as part of Exercise Dynamic Mongoose at the beginning of 2014), this was the first time the upgraded Merlins had tested their submarine-hunting prowess in warmer waters (the Med along the Côte d'Azur is at least 21°C in September – 5°C up on the Channel off the Lizard, and temperatures play a key role in the hunt for hidden foes).

"We always relish the chance to take part in a testing anti-submarine exercise and wanted to show our French colleagues just what the Merlin is capable of doing," said Lt Cdr Philip Beacham, overseeing the 40 aircrew and engineers involved in the Anglo-French exercise.

The exercise was also a test for the submarine – we can't disclose which one for operational reasons – which was putting potential boat commanders of tomorrow under the microscope as part of the feared Perisher course, determining whether they had the mettle to command a nuclear boat, making the two-week workout a win-win.

"The students onboard the submarine were trying to escape the mighty Merlin," Lt Cdr Beacham added, "and the helicopter crews could practise their anti-submarine warfare skills whilst working closely with another nation, in a different air space and in a completely different operating environment."

Pictures: PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow, RNAS Culdrose



Pirate threat not over yet

WE MUST not let up our guard against pirates, says the senior Royal Navy commander who's standing down after 18 months keeping them in check.



Despite just five attacks by the modern-day buccaneers all year, Rear Admiral Bob Tarrant says if the world's navies and merchant shipping companies take their eye off the ball the scourge will return.

Handing over command of Operation Atalanta, the European Union's long-standing counter-piracy mission, to the head of the Royal Marines, Maj Gen Martin Smith, the admiral said Somali pirates had been checked by concerted international efforts – but they had not gone away.

During his time at the helm of EU NAVFOR, the number of attacks on ships by pirates from the troubled African nation has dropped dramatically.

Since the beginning of 2013, only nine attacks have been made – compared with 176 in 2011 and 35 in 2012. Just one ship – and 37 hostages – are being held by pirates.

"Pirates are criminals, and when you consider that between 2005 and 2012 their leaders received over 250 million Euros in ransom payments, I have no doubt that they will – if given the opportunity – try again to get out to sea to launch attacks.

"It is therefore essential that the international community remains vigilant to the potential threat."

Run by the UK's military operational headquarters in Northwood on the northwest edge of London, the European Union's operation has been run by the British since Atalanta began back in December 2008.

Its mission is two-pronged: to stop piracy and to protect shipping of the African Union Mission and vessels working for the World Food Programme delivering food aid to Somalia.

"It has been a privilege to command the European Union's counter-piracy operation," Admiral Tarrant said.

"I am proud of my team in the operational headquarters and in EU Naval Force warships at sea, who have worked tirelessly to help keep World Food Programme ships and seafarers safe."

Taking over the reins of the force – comprising ships from Italy, Germany, Spain and the Netherlands at the end of August, but there can be as many as ten vessels under the EU NAVFOR banner – Maj Gen Smith's domain covers a vast expanse of ocean from the Bab al Mandab strait down to the Seychelles and Tanzania.

Survey ships meet near lava's lane

THE Union Flag flutters in the Mediterranean breeze with the imperious outline of Europe's most active volcano in the background.

In the shadow of Mount Etna, two of the Royal Navy's survey ships trade places as the 18-month scientific mission of HMS Echo draws to a close and Enterprise's begins in earnest.

The two sisters spent five days in Catania in Sicily for an official handover of duties allowing Enterprise to boldly go (sorry) east of Suez and pick up where Echo left off.

The latter has spent the last 12 or so months in the Middle East gathering data and helping to update Admiralty Charts – used not just by the Royal Navy, but most of the world's mariners.

Which is exactly what the star ship (sorry again) of the RN's hydrographic and survey ship squadron will soon be doing after an eventful opening few weeks to her lengthy tour of duty.

Enterprise hit the international headlines over the summer when she twice evacuated British citizens from Tripoli as the security situation in Libya became increasingly unstable.

Enterprise's sailors shared those experiences with their counterparts on Echo who, in turn, shared



their knowledge on surveying waters of the Gulf and Indian Ocean.

Although her duties east of Suez are done, she's not returning to Devonport just yet, but continuing her scientific and survey work in the Med.

The five-day break from operations also allowed the crews of both ships to get out and see Sicily – many took the chance to climb Etna – and enjoy the Italian food on offer.

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Tall orders for Severn

HMS Severn joined a magnificent collection of masted schooners as the fishery protection ship acted as the starting platform for the start of the Falmouth to Greenwich Tall Ships Regatta. She hosted the race committee and local VIPs, while more than 100,000 people gathered along the Cornish coast to watch the nautical spectacular which saw 43 tall ships from around the world crossing the start line, including 11 large square-rigged vessels followed by other smaller schooners and sloops.

"My whole team really enjoyed the day and witnessing the spectacle from such a prime location," said Lt Cdr Steve Banfield, Severn's Commanding Officer.

"Personally I was particularly thrilled to be able to take part in this event having spent many years competing in tall ship races prior to joining the Royal Navy."

It was the fifth time that Falmouth has hosted the tall ships since they first visited in 1966 and HMS Severn blasted her horn to officially begin proceedings, affording her ship's company a grandstand view as the vessels began to sail past on their way to Greenwich.

As the ships left the port they were also treated to the rare sight of tanker RFA Gold Rover (only slightly less stylish than the sailing vessels...) which was making her way back into port at Falmouth following a short visit to Dublin.

It's not size that matters...

IT'S what you do with it that counts.

Just ask the smallest warships on the Royal Navy's books – represented here by HMS Smiter, passing HMS Dauntless.

A pretty normal sight in Portsmouth Naval Base.

Except that aboard the small patrol boat are some of the most senior Naval officers in the land.

Smiter and her sister Ranger had the honour of taking the Navy Board – the senior officers and civil servants responsible for running the RN – to Cowes for a conference at the Royal Yacht Squadron.

Normally Smiter carries undergraduates from Oxford's universities (and Ranger students from Sussex) – something for which the boats and their 12 sisters have been recognised with one of the military's most coveted awards.

At home and abroad, the vessels of the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron are unsung ambassadors for the Navy and the nation,

visiting a myriad of ports out of reach of larger warships.

Those efforts – and more – during the Olympic and Diamond Jubilee year in particular led to the presentation of the Firmin Sword of Peace.

The boats, which are peppered around the country from the Forth to the Hamoaze and Severn, each take more than 40 undergraduates under their wing and give them a three-year insight into the work of the Senior Service.

Beyond weekend running in local waters, the boats range further afield during the Easter and summer breaks – reaching as far as southern Spain and the Gulf of Finland on occasions.

It was the squadron's work during a demanding 2012 which sealed the latest award – introduced in 1966 as the Wilkinson Sword of Peace and renamed when Firmin took over a decade ago.

Example, Explorer, Ranger and Trumpeter excelled during a summer

deployment to the Baltic – the longest operation to date by the P2000s (33 ports visited in 11 countries with 4,300 nautical miles sailed in 42 days) – which "reawakened historic ties with Baltic ports, in some cases not visited by the RN since World War 2, and provided a diplomatic presence in Germany, Poland, Russia and the Baltic states."

HMS Ranger and Trumpeter also provided an Honour Guard for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Pageant on the Thames.

And just for good measure Puncher, Blazer, Express, Tracker, Raider and Exploit played a full role in security duties surrounding the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics in London and Weymouth.

According to the citation which led to the award of the sword: "The smallest ships in the Fleet have reached a global audience and by initiating, developing and fostering links with communities the length and breadth of the UK and

northern Europe, they have raised the profile and demonstrated the standards and values of the RN and UK wherever they have gone."

Receiving the sword of honour from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas on behalf of the P2000 community was Lt Si Shaw, until recently CO of HMS Exploit (Birmingham URNU) and who led a two-P2000 deployment to the Baltic in the summer of 2013.

Sword safely put on display in the squadron's offices it was time to host the Navy Board.

Eight Admirals – led by the First Sea Lord – plus a Royal Marine Major General and two Commodores – squeezed on to Ranger (Sussex universities) and Smiter (Oxford).

The Navy Board meets seven times a year – usually in London, but on occasions heads out of the capital – to discuss the state of the Navy and future strategy and plans.

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JOIN US AND GET THE MOST FROM YOUR PENSION

Visit is summit sp



Picture: Mike Gray

TWO dozen sailors from HMS Duncan squeezed into a telephone box and ended up in Casualty when their ship visited Cardiff.

But as they were on a visit to the BBC's Roath Lock studios it was all above board – the telephone box (aka the Tardis) and the medical reception were part of the sets for *Doctor Who* and *Casualty*, both produced in South Wales, writes Mike Gray.

And while we are talking about drama, there were nailbiting moments when the Royal Navy's latest ship made her way into Roath Basin.

As you can see on our front page, there was little room for manoeuvre – there was some talk of just 70cm to spare either side – and the delicate operation was carried out with the considerable help of two Portsmouth-based tugs, Indulgent and Independent, which have plenty of experience in handling warships.

French ship La Motte-Picquet also benefited from the attentions

of the tugs, although the rest of the flotilla which gathered to support the NATO summit in Newport and Cardiff were more modest in size.

Duncan – by far the biggest ship – had a significant role, as she hosted a dinner for 28 Defence Secretaries in her hangar.

As the dinner – organised by a civilian company but staged in Senior Service style – drew to a close the hangar door was

opened to reveal the spectacle of the RM Band Lympstone on the flight deck, ready for a Sunset ceremony.

The summit – the first in the UK since 1990 – saw leaders and senior ministers from more than 60 countries, including President Barack Obama, Chancellor Angela Merkel and President François Hollande, gather in South Wales to address issues which threaten NATO countries' national security, including fragile states, piracy and terrorism.

With the closure of the summit, attention turned to a Meet the Forces event, for part of Cardiff Bay was transformed into a showcase for the military.

The day dawned sunny and warm, and with crowds already gathering the gates and queues were opened half an hour before the event was declared open by the First Minister of Wales, Carwyn Jones, on board Norwegian corvette HNoMS Skudd.

"What a week it's been for Wales!" said Mr Jones, adding that the country had shown it could stage "one of the largest diplomatic events in the world" before going on to pay tribute to members of the Forces who put themselves at risk so that the rest of us can enjoy our freedom.

The event was tri-Service – the RAF brought along a Red Arrow Hawk and a Tornado, the Army fielded khaki hardware and displays, while all three Services supplied musical bands.

But there was little doubt that the ships were the stars of the show, with local authorities and police temporarily closing the queue for Duncan in the afternoon as the waiting time stretched past two hours.

Queues also built up for those hoping to go on board the

French, Norwegian, Latvian, Lithuanian and Dutch ships across the basin, or take a (brief) tour of Archer-class patrol boats HMS Express and Biter at the end of the jetty.

Those who got on board Duncan in the morning were able to get a close look at one of the most deadly weapons platforms in the universe – not the 4.5in gun (good though it is) but a dalek 'borrowed' from the BBC studios.

The dalek proved popular with VIP visitors as well, trundling over to greet Mr Jones and the RN's Regional Commander, Wales and Western England, Cdre Jamie Miller (who delivered a confident salute), as they stepped on to the warship.

All good public engagement stuff for a midshipman from the Birmingham University RN Unit, Michael Hooper, one of a group from the Midlands there to help out, who ended up inside the dalek, meandering across Duncan's flight deck threatening mayhem to all who wandered by.

Mid Hooper and LS Keith Johnson, of HMS Duncan, who later briefly took the place of the midshipman, were agreed that it was "absolutely awesome – a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

After being threatened with extermination, visitors were serenaded by a jazz ensemble from the Lympstone band before moving into the hangar and the first of a series of displays on aspects of Duncan's work.

As people strolled along 1 Deck, through the wardroom, into the Ops Room and off the ship past the Sea Viper silos and the 4.5in gun, they learned about the medical, warfare, logistics, mechanical and weapons engineering branches, amongst others, talking to ratings and officers about roles and equipment.

A collection for the ship's charities was also held at the point of departure for visitors. The high level of interest – and the enthusiasm – of the visitors was gratifying for the man behind the Ship Open To Visitors (SOTV) programme, Lt Simon 'Scampie' Scamp, whose role on the ship is Fighter Controller.

The ship has had a bit of practice in welcoming people

on board – in the 11 months or so since she commissioned she has held SOTVs in Amsterdam, Dundee, Oslo, Belfast and Glasgow – though Cardiff saw her double her previous best, with more than 4,000 people getting on board.

That, according to Lt Scamp, required a special effort: "Sometimes we can get down to perhaps 50 people at any one time to man a SOTV, but today we have had to call on the whole ship's company to help out – many of them to go along the queue to talk to people, to explain what is happening and what we do."

"It means people along the jetty get to meet sailors, which is what they are here for."

"In terms of atmosphere, this is the best SOTV we have done so far. It's got a real summer party atmosphere, which is fantastic – the dalek, the band, people smiling in the sunshine."

"It is nice for the sailors too, because when we are at sea and doing a hard slog it's easy for the job to become almost mundane."

"Here, the public walk into a compartment and say 'Wow!' – it reminds us how special our jobs are."

The wow factor was particularly evident in the Ops Room, where displays and equipment were 'sanitised' and pre-loaded to allow members of the public to press screens and buttons to their heart's content.

Lt Cdr Grassy Meadows, Media Ops Officer for the NATO summit, said: "It was fantastic to be involved in such an historic event, which was rounded off perfectly by the 'Meet the Forces' public military event, where the Maritime Service was undoubtedly the star attraction."

At the far end of the basin Express and Biter were also busy – it does not take too many people to swamp a 54-tonne vessel.

Lt James Smith, CO of Biter, said his boat – which serves the students of Manchester and Salford – had been involved in welcoming and escorting visiting warships to Cardiff in the run-up to the NATO summit as part of its Fleet tasking, on occasions taking consuls to sea with them.

He and Lt Gemma Britton, CO of Express, said that by early afternoon they had already had more than 200 visitors.



● Clockwise from top right: The Red Arrows pass over Cardiff Bay on their way to the NATO summit flypast in Newport; patrol boats HMS Express (left) and Biter welcome visitors on board during the Meet the Forces Day in Cardiff; HMS Duncan's sea boat keeps the crowds on their toes around Roath Basin; sailors from HMS Duncan chat to members of the public who are queuing to go on board the Type 45 destroyer; a temporary addition to HMS Duncan's security team; Carwyn Jones (First Minister of Wales, centre) officially opens the Meet the Forces Day on board HNoMS Skudd, flanked by the Lord Mayor of Cardiff Cllr Margaret Jones and the Welsh Secretary Stephen Crabb; Midshipman Michael Hooper, of Birmingham URNU, gets his hands on the most potent piece of hardware in time and space...

Pictures: LA(Phot) Alex Knott (except where stated)

Special

Lt Britton, whose ship is based in Penarth, said it was "fantastic" to be involved in the day.

"We have not been in Cardiff much since the ship came out of refit in Holyhead at the end of April, so it is nice to be involved in such a significant event," she said.

Ashore, Maritime Reserves staff were looking for potential recruits, a Royal Marines Band brass quintet played for families taking a picnic on the grass, and Sea Cadets were making themselves useful around the site.

Members of the Cardiff branch of the Royal Naval Association were busy spreading the word – and had "a tot with Cdre Miller's name on it."

Tot duly addressed, Cdre Miller – Joint Military Commander for the day and Maritime Commander for the summit security operation – declared himself delighted that the hard work and planning by the NRC team, in which Cdr Tom Herman was prominent, had paid off.

In between lending his cap to children and posing with groups for snapshots, Cdre Miller said: "I am hugely pleased and this event has exceeded expectations."

Cdr Rich Atkinson, who took over as CO of Duncan just a couple of weeks before the summit, agreed with the commodore: "It has been a fantastic visit, although it has been really hard work."

Looking after visitors – including the Prince of Wales, politicians, civilian organisations and members of the public – meant little respite for sailors.

"I am very proud of the ship and very proud of the ship's company – it has been wonderful being in Wales and we will be sorry to leave."



Picture: Craig Mowat

Seaside rendezvous

THE 'Meet the Forces' event in Cardiff took a great deal of planning and preparation – and was all the more remarkable as some of those planners had also been heavily involved in shaping the Bournemouth Air Show the previous month.

It is estimated that more than a million people saw something of the four-day show in the Dorset town, which was supported by the Royal Navy, Army and RAF.

Senior Service involvement saw members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Royal Fleet Auxiliary and Maritime Reserves playing their parts, while five RN and RFA vessels – HM Ships Westminster (above), Mersey, Smiler and Puncher and RFA Argus – all anchored in Bournemouth Bay providing a naval backdrop as well as taking part in sea displays.

Back on shore the Royal Marines kept the crowds entertained with amphibious landings and static displays of equipment and vehicles.

And in the air audiences were treated to displays

by the RN's Black Cats Helicopter Display Team as well as watching displays or flypasts by the Red Arrows, B-17 Sally-B Flying Fortress (pictured above), Canberra PR9, an RAF Typhoon, the iconic Avro Vulcan and many more.

Naval planning for the show was carried out by Naval Regional Commander, Wales and Western England Cdre Jamie Miller and his team.

Cdre Miller said: "We are delighted to come back to Bournemouth year after year – and every time we do we give a bit more of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines."

Jon Weaver, Bournemouth Air Festival Director, said: "It really shows how far we have come over the last seven years to have such superb military support."

"The Royal Navy has played an integral part in making the Air Festival the success it is today and we're extremely grateful."

"Year-on-year the event continues to grow with more ships, people and assets."

Picture: Mike Gray



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Fundraiser to repeat 30-miler

DAVID Birt is the embodiment of the Commando Spirit.

Which is why his charity event is named Cheerfulness in the Face of Adversity.

For David, who as a Royal Navy doctor qualified to wear the prized commando green beret almost 25 years ago, was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer late last year.

The Derriford-based medic was going through some old paperwork when he came across some notes from his All-Arms Commando Course, including details of the final, punishing 30-mile yomp across Dartmoor.

Picking up on the other three tenets of the Commando Spirit – courage, determination and unselfishness – David decided he would like to raise money for the Pancreatic Cancer Research Fund (PCRF).

So, at just about twice the age he was when he first successfully completed the test, and while undergoing an intensive chemotherapy course, David was due to tackle the 30-miler again on September 29, as *Navy News* went to press.

The target time for young would-be Royal Marines is eight hours, but David said he hopes to complete it in one day.

He will be accompanied by his son Harry and three other veterans – Andy Burgess, Tony Cramp and Martin Allison.

David set himself a fundraising target of £5,000, but the total stood at £12,000 with more than a fortnight to go before the event.

If you would like to contribute, see details on David's JustGiving page: www.justgiving.com/Birtie

For more on the charity for which David is raising money see www.pcrf.org.uk

Maritime slant on medical training

AN EXPLOSION in the ship control centre has fatally injured one sailor and all but severed the arm of another.

Elsewhere a second explosion, just outside the hull, has injured a man in the bathroom, while another man has fallen down a ladder, fracturing his spine and possibly puncturing a lung.

On the upper deck a sailor on guard duties has been shot in the face.

Some ships have all the luck... Fortunately, in this case the injuries are simulated for the benefit of RN Medical Assistants preparing for their next drafts.

And in order to make sure the vital, lifesaving training is as authentic as possible, members of the course have transferred from the classrooms at the Institute of Naval Medicine (INM) to harbour training ship HMS Bristol for two-and-a-half days.

CPOMA Steve Pickering, from the Training Division at INM, co-ordinates and delivers the six-week Medical Branch Pre-Joining Training (MedPJT), which runs four times a year.

The Bristol exercise and the Battlefield Advanced Trauma Life Support (BATLS) Course is a vital element.

"The BATLS course is tri-Service and delivered in the UK and overseas by a dedicated team based at the Defence Medical Services at Whittington Barracks in Lichfield," said CPOMA Pickering.

"The idea of this element is that it doesn't matter at what level their medical training is,



● RN medics deal with a sailor who has fallen down a ladder during training on HMS Bristol
Pictures: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston

as long as they have done the pre-course study they should understand their role.

"We have had everyone from junior MAs to surgeon captains on the BATLS course.

"It is designed to give the medic the skills to deal with a casualty from the initial point of wounding for the first five to ten minutes, which is 'Role 1 Care', and can be delivered using medical kit that can be carried in a backpack."

For this particular course two of the four scenarios or stances featured members of acting agency Amputees in Action, including CEO John Pickup, who played the role of the rating whose arm was shattered in the control room explosion.

John lost his arm in a road

accident as a teenager, and his gruesome 'make up' – a shredded arm – was prepared by Amputees in Action special effects make-up artist Karla Maple, who started her career with Dior and now makes up zombies as well as battle casualties...

The four teams of five Naval medics – a mix of ranks and skills, including individuals who will be joining submarines and RFA ships on completion of the course – were presented with a brief scene-setter before going to the help of the injured.

They were monitored closely by the instructors, one of whom – junior instructor MA Potts – was an attendee on the course last year.

The BATLS team are always looking for those students with the potential to be instructors and share their knowledge and experience.

Instructors and advisors on this late-summer course included Surg Cdr Daniel Henning, an

Emergency Medicine consultant from Derriford Hospital in Plymouth, and Surg Cdr Jason Smith, a plastic surgeon from Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth, while course director Maj Scotty Smith QARANC is a nurse specialist.

Rapid decisions have to be made – is it worth trying to revive the badly-injured sailor in the control centre (represented by a dummy) or should medical resources be focussed on the man groaning in the corner?

HMS Bristol, the only Type 82 destroyer built and now a versatile training facility permanently berthed at Whale Island in Portsmouth, is an ideal venue for the BATLS course.

"The BATLS course has developed significantly as a result of experiences on Operation Herrick in Afghanistan, and has saved a lot of lives over the years," said CPOMA Pickering.

"We used to deliver this training to medics on land, and then they would go straight to a ship.

"We now use Bristol to train as we fight at sea.

"Bristol is a hugely-valued asset – if medics didn't do the course here they would be doing it in a field at Browdown..."

The CO of Bristol, Lt Cdr David Price, agreed: "If you want to do a practice casualty evacuation from the bottom of a ship's ladder or bring a casualty out from a confined space, you could build a simulator – or use a real ship.

"You can also use it to run leadership courses, or to allow people to learn how to live in close confines on a mess deck."

The Combined Services Plastic Surgical Society will also be using HMS Bristol as a base for their conference this year, focussing on research and developments within their field.



● A 'casualty' – John Pickup of Amputees in Action – is worked on during a medical training exercise on board HMS Bristol



Royal Marines star in new campaign

THE Royal Marines are involved in a new high-profile campaign – although this one involves a make-believe enemy and was all captured on film for the benefit of the Corps.

For the campaign is the latest drive to recruit new green berets.

Delivered by Captain Naval Recruiting (CNR), the campaign is integrated across television, cinema, print and digital, and uses innovative creative processes unlike any other Royal Navy advertising.

The TV advertisement shows a drugs cartel guard asleep at his post.

Tossing and turning, his dreams are haunted by sudden glimpses of unnerving figures hidden in the shadows.

His nightmares are fuelled by the tales he has heard about the extraordinary stealth, strength of character and skill of the Royal Marines Commandos.

He wakes, shakes himself off and thinks he is safe – until the elite amphibious force appears from the woods behind and arrests him from his post.

Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) commissioned

an accompanying set of short films which bring to life the six values that contribute to the State of Mind of a Royal Marine – Brotherhood, Courage, Determination, Physicality, Stealth and Amphibiousness.

These can be found on the refreshed website, together with the recruitment brochure and further information on joining.

Paul Colley, the Head of Marketing at CNR, said that the aim of the campaign was to "develop the State of Mind proposition by highlighting the amazing skills and training that makes the modern Royal Marines.

"This new piece of work represents a step forward in FOST's approach to recruitment, depicting the Royal Marines spirit using channels and themes that resonate vividly with our target audience."

So far the campaign has been deemed a great success, driving more than 100,000 visits to the Royal Marines website and increasing applications to their highest point since 2012.



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Small but perfectly formatted

DEMONSTRATING a quick burst of speed, set against HMS Ganges' iconic main mast in the background, is the very smallest of Her Majesty's commissioned ships.

This is HMS – or, more correctly, HMSML (Her Majesty's Survey Motor Launch) – Gleaner at work in the Stour Estuary.

And while it is always nice to see one of the most famous sites in RN 20th-Century history, a visit to the former boys' training establishment wasn't the reason for Gleaner's appearance in Essex.

For just a mile east of this seemingly tranquil spot across the county border in Suffolk is the nation's busiest port.

Two in every five containers importing or exporting goods to/from the UK passes through Felixstowe.

So the huge merchantmen plying their trade in these waters need the most accurate charts available.

Which is where the small survey vessel comes in.

Her size means she can reach places other RN survey vessels cannot get (such as, for example, Switzerland back in 1988 – the only vessel under the White Ensign to visit the landlocked country apparently).

And her suite of wizardry provides cartographers with unparalleled information about what lies beneath.

Gleaner is in the autumn of her life – plans are in hand for a replacement in the second half of this decade.

But unlike other RN vessels in service for more than three decades, outwardly she's changed little since joining the Fleet at the end of 1983.

Inside, however, what was hi-



Picture: PO(HM) Danny Glover

tech in the early 80s would be very old school in 2014, so the computers and sonar kit have regularly been ripped out and updated.

The latest version installed: the Kongsberg EM 2040 Multibeam Echosounder.

It operates at frequencies between 200kHz and 400kHz – and for those of you who don't speak kilohertz, here's a short explanation.

At the lowest end of the scale, the sonar is used for deeper waters, while switched to 400kHz provides the most detailed scan

at the highest resolution. Most of the time the sounder is running at 300 for the best of both worlds, balancing depth and resolution.

Harwich is the first run out for the new sonar, which was fitted this spring; it's soon to be used covering every inch of Dover harbour as the Channel port gets the Gleaner treatment.

Gleaner is one of half a dozen survey motor vessels operating under the RN Hydrographic and Survey Squadron.

She is not, however, to be confused with the boats carried by Protector, Echo and

Enterprise; as a launch, Gleaner is considerably larger and able to operate independently; the smaller craft (a mere ten tonnes to Gleaner's mighty 26) need their mother ships nearby.

As a result, Gleaner can accommodate her four crew for short periods for more sustained periods of survey work – especially when it's a little off the beaten track.


Given her scientific mission, the latest Gleaner has not added to the tally of battle honours earned by previous bearers of the name.

But being a survey ship does not preclude being in the line of fire, as Gleaner No.6 (the line goes all the way back to a survey ketch from 1808) demonstrated.

With the clouds of war gathering over Europe, the survey vessel was turned into a minesweeper in Devonport.

Initially she was used not to clear the sea lanes of mines, but to shepherd convoys through the U-boat gauntlet.

It was on one such anti-submarine patrol in the Firth of Clyde in February 1940 that she encountered U-33 (laying mines



Baltic 1855
Atlantic 1940-41
North Sea 1941-42
Arctic 1942-44
Normandy 1944

Class: Gleaner-class inshore survey vessel
Builder: Emsworth Shipyard
Launched: October 18, 1983
Commissioned: December 5, 1983
Displacement: 26 tonnes
Length: 15.6m (51ft)
Beam: 4.7m (15½ft)
Draught: 1.6m (5ft)
Speed: 20kts
Complement: up to 8
Propulsion: 2 x Volvo Penta engines generating 524shp
Sensors: include Kongsberg EM 2040 Multibeam Echosounder

Facts and figures

as it happened) and subjected it to a sustained depth-charge attack, forcing the submarine to the surface where the surviving crew abandoned ship.

It was Gleaner's sole kill of the war. She spent the middle years of WW2 on the bitter Arctic runs before being brought back south as part of the minesweeping force mustered for the invasion of Normandy.

Deemed no longer of use in the summer of 1946, she was put into reserve and never reactivated. Bought by British Steel, she was broken up in 1950.

IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

OCTOBER 7 1914 and the trenches of a 19th-Century fortress on the southern outskirts of Belgium's greatest port.

Our dip into the photograph archives of the Imperial War Museum takes us to the third month of the Great War and a rather chaotic episode in the annals of the Royal Navy.

We can date this picture precisely for the sailor-soldiers spent just two days in the line at Vieux Dieu, about four miles south-east of Antwerp's centre – and the second of those days was under intense German bombardment.

Armed with rifles, two million rounds of ammunition, food for five days – and not much else – the men of the fledgling Royal Naval Division faced their baptism of fire.

Not two months before, these men knew nothing of soldiering. Mobilised on the outbreak of war, they found the Navy had no ships for them.

Rather than have thousands of men of fighting age kicking their heels, Winston Churchill ordered the sailors re-trained as soldiers and formed into naval brigades.

Training was rudimentary at best, inadequate at worst – many of the fundamentals of soldiering were lacking such as rifles, proper boots and khaki boots.

Meanwhile on the Western Front... having driven the German Army back outside Paris, the Allied armies sought to outflank their foe between the French capital and the Channel coast – a series of battles known as the 'race to the sea'.

Among the linchpins on the Allied line, Antwerp – one of the most heavily defended cities in Europe, ringed by a series of forts and network of trenches and strongpoints stretching for 60 miles.

What Antwerp did not possess was an abundance of soldiers, so with the



Germans bearing down on the city, Churchill ordered his Naval Brigades to join Royal Marines already engaged around the port.

The sailors were cheered heartily by the good folk of Dover as they marched to waiting Channel ferries on October 4 for the crossing.

And when they reached Antwerp via Dunkirk and a train ride in the small hours of October 6, they were not just cheered by locals but given coffee and even beer by appreciative Belgians, while young ladies kissed these oddly-dressed men in their greatcoats and sailor's caps.

The 6,000 or so sailors were ordered to occupy trenches between forts in the south of the city and moved in long before dawn on October 7.

And then came the German onslaught – 'just' artillery initially.

"All day and all night the shells screamed and burst overhead, but without damaging us very much," 20-year-old AB Jim Begent from Worthing wrote home. "By Heavens, it was an experience that first night under fire."

On October 8, the artillery barrage was accompanied in places by infantry attacks which were largely thwarted.

The German guns – 17in howitzers – took a terrible toll of both defenders and Antwerp.

"We could hear the low drone made by the great shells as they passed high overhead," Begent told his family. "They did terrible damage in the city, causing it to break into flames and killing many poor refugees, helpless men, women and children."

The shelling wrecked Antwerp's water mains and, most importantly, the resolve of the Belgian troops holding the forts, who began to abandon their positions.

Just after nightfall, the decision was

taken to haul the British sailors out of the line. It was a disorderly withdrawal – as the division's magazine later recounted:

"Many of the bridges had been destroyed; the roads were crowded with thousands of refugees with their cattle and with the few possessions which they were able to rescue piled on carts and hand-barrows, straggling in a frightened mob, making it nearly impossible for troops to maintain their formation; the men of the division had been constantly on the move for nearly a week and were worn out with fatigue and thirst."

The decision to pull out came too late for many of the sailors. Well over 900 fell into German hands, while nearly 1,500 crossed the border into the neutral Netherlands where they were interned for the rest of the war.

The men who made it back to Ostend to be shipped back to England were, one Army observer noted, "broken in spirit" and "a pitiable sight."

Churchill never doubted his decision to dispatch his division was correct. His only regret was that the sailors never had a chance to grapple properly with the Hun.

The British press were rather less forgiving regarding the loss of a good portion of one of the brigades and chastised the First Lord of the Admiralty for wasting good men on a senseless adventure.

Returned to Britain, the battered brigades were sent to Blandford camp in Dorset to regroup, retrain and receive fresh blood over the winter. In the spring of 1915 they would be thrust into the maelstrom again – but not on the Western Front.

■ This picture (Q 14774) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

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● XV648 is guided on to the deck of RFA Engadine in early 1970

Old, bold and definitely gold

FLIERS at Culdrose have toasted the deeds of the oldest aircraft in front-line service with the Fleet Air Arm – 45 years after they first took to the skies.

Combined, the three Sea Kings have flown for more than five and a half years (just shy of 50,000 hours airborne) and, just as they were in 1969, are still at the forefront of operations.

The trio – XV647, XV648 and XV649 – were among the first batch of the now-legendary helicopters to arrive at the Cornish airbase in August 1969, when they joined 700 Naval Air Squadron.

All three were built to hunt submarines but over the years have gone through modifications to meet the changing demands of front-line duties.

The first two now fly search-and-rescue missions, while XV649 was converted to an ‘eyes in the sky’ role in airborne surveillance and control.

“These aircraft were built using 1950s’ technology – which could these days be considered simple technology, however if it ain’t broke don’t fix it. The hydraulic systems are as reliable today as they were in 1969,” said veteran 771 NAS engineer WO Ian Mitchell, who’s worked on Sea Kings for most of his Naval career.

“XV647 and XV648 have stood the test of time well – they’ve transformed from Mk1s to Mk5s having all sorts of modifications fitted and removed. Even to this day we are still fitting new equipment.”

They’ll keep on flying rescue missions until that version of the Sea King is retired in 2016 as the UK Search and Rescue helicopter force is reorganised and civilianised, while the Baggers will continue in front-line service until 2018. The latter will be replaced by a new variant of the Merlin, ‘Crowsnest’.

“As the Sea King comes to the end of its service with the Fleet Air Arm, these three helicopters typify the excellence of the original concept and design,” says Cdr Vee Dale-Smith, Maritime Sea King Commander and a veteran of helicopter operations in the Middle East.

“Over the past 45 years these three in particular have served all over the world on operations and embarked on all the Royal Navy’s capital ships.

“Without doubt, everyone who has had the privilege to work with the Sea King over the years has developed a unique bond and loyalty to this fabulous helicopter and will have many an interesting tale to tell of their experiences.”

The three helicopters are part of a batch of six Sea King HAS 1s delivered to 700(S) NAS for trials and development.

Each aircraft flew 400 hours in their primary anti-submarine role in addition to load lifting, search and rescue, deck landings, troop carrying and the use of the general purpose machine gun.

In early 1970, XV649 demonstrated the Sea King’s long-range capability, flying non-stop from Lands End to John O’Groats (nearly 700 miles) in 4 hours and 19 minutes.



Invincible class

GO, JOE.

And go Joe Townsend did as the green beret powers to victory in the men’s 1,500m wheelchair IT4 – one of four golds bagged by the former Royal Marine on the opening day of the Invictus Games in London.

And just for good measure Joe, who lost both his legs after stepping on an anti-tank mine in Afghanistan six years ago, added a silver and bronze to his tally on day two, making him the event’s stand-out competitor.

Indeed, the 26-year-old from Eastbourne was so honoured at the star-studded closing ceremony of the four-day games when he received the Jaguar Award for Exceptional Performance.

The six medals he won were among more than 400 presented to injured Servicemen and women from 13 nations, who lined up for events in nine adaptive sports at the military’s counterpart to the Paralympics.

Joe beat all-comers on the track in the 100m, 200m, 1,500m and 400m IT4 wheel categories – although in the latter he was pushed all the way by Dutchman Sebastiaan Van Nieuwenhuizen; the Royal rolled over the line one tenth of a second ahead of his rival to take the title.

“Winning four gold medals on the first day of competition was incredible,” said Joe.

“Sport has played a huge role in my recovery and the Invictus Games will hopefully continue to provide a platform for people like me to achieve their goals.

“The first ever Invictus Games has been an incredible event and the exceptional performance award caps a week I will remember for the rest of my life.”

Joe is a former member (he only left in August) of Hasler Company – the specialist rehabilitation unit at Devonport Naval Base.

Hasler personnel accounted for 21 of

the RN contingent in Team GB.

Maj Scotty Mills, Hasler’s Officer Commanding, said the games had electrified not just the competitors all 87 men and women under his wing – vindicating the decision to form the company five years ago.

“The Invictus Games were amazing – the best week ever in the history of the Hasler Company staff and assigned ranks that participated and attended,” he said.

“The atmosphere was truly electric throughout and it was an honour to be present. The quality of our people never ceases to amaze me – they are simply the best.

“If there was to be a medal table for individual units then Hasler Company and the Naval Service Recovery Pathway would have been comfortably on top: 26 golds, eight silvers and seven bronzes.”

Marine Andy Grant (pictured top right) took golds in the 400m and 1,500m men’s ambulant IT1. The 22-year-old took the decision to have his leg amputated after suffering 27 injuries from the force of two IEDs.

After treatment at Headley Court and support from Help for Heroes, Andy rebuilt his life and was introduced to adaptive sports.

“I knew straight away how important sport was just through my rehab,” he said. “But seeing the guys now, I don’t think there is anything more inspiring than seeing a guy who two years ago was lying in a ditch in Afghanistan bleeding to death, and now he is able to run 100 metres in Paralympic time.”

Twenty-six-year-old Mickaela Richards from Twickenham was the top scoring woman of the first day with two golds in the 100m and 400m open IT6. Mickaela suffered a hip, pelvis and shoulder dislocation while serving with the RN.

She joined the rest of the competitors on stage at London’s Queen Elizabeth

Olympic Park for a five-hour-long closing ceremony/concert, all before a sell-out crowd of 26,000.

Competitors and audience alike were treated to military pomp and ceremony from the pipes and drums of the 2nd Battalion The Royal Gurkha Rifles followed by the drummers from the Band of Her Majesty’s Royal Marines HMS Collingwood, before stars of pop and rock took centre stage, including the Kaiser Chiefs, Ellie Goulding, Bryan Adams, and James Blunt.

And after the party, a time for reflection on achievements.

“Results speak for themselves,” said C/Sgt Marty Wilkin, co-ordinator of the Naval Service contingent.

“Team GB far exceeded expectations, and won many individual medals and all the major team events.

“But behind the recent success has often been years of difficult and challenging recovery which takes a lot of personal determination and courage.”

“I have now watched men and women with profound injuries and illnesses compete in the Invictus sporting arena, and it is impossible not to get emotional when seeing athletes who were not even expected to live due to their injuries, let alone walk, run or swim again.

To see this endeavour and success every day of the Invictus Games made even this seasoned warrior’s eyes leak uncontrollably.

“Naval personnel never gave up, beat the odds and found they could still achieve success and self-confidence in themselves through the power of sport and competition.

“And well done, Prince Harry. His concept and commitment made the Invictus Games the success it was.”

Pictures: PO(Phot) Owen Cooban and Sgt Pete Mobbs, DDC



Inspired. Entertained. Humbled.

“THE Invictus Games was the best week of my life. I have never been so inspired, entertained and humbled, writes L/Cpl ‘JJ’ Chalmers.

Having been heavily involved in the promotion of the games over the past three months, I knew better than most how huge and incredible they were going to be – but every aspect surpassed my expectations.

I was outclassed in my individual athletics events, finishing fifth, but they prepared me for the last event of the day, the 4x100m relay. Our team had three Royals – me, Andy Grant and Sam Stock.

I was nervous at the thought of my injuries getting the better of me and my hands letting me down, resulting in me dropping the baton. However my exchange was good and the



team went on to secure bronze, narrowly missing out on silver by 0.5s.

With a day to recover and enjoy the competition, a highlight was the British victory at the Copper Box in

wheelchair rugby.

Day three, and time for the cycling. I race in the recumbent trike – an event which has allowed me to rediscover exercise after three years following my injury.

The morning was a one-mile time trial, where I narrowly secured bronze by 0.19s over Cpl Paul ‘Vicey’ Vice MC. With Brits in first, third and fourth places – separated by 2.6s – we were confident for the afternoon’s 40-minute race.

I, Vicey and Rob Cromer-Hawke went out strongly, working as a team to build a dominating gap over the other racers.

As we entered the second half of the race we realised it was ours to lose and brought ourselves to a comfortable but quick pace.

At this stage Vicey suggested we cross the line as a team. I know we all knew in our hearts and minds that we had worked as hard as each other to get here, so that is what we did.

As we crossed in joint first place we linked hands (pictured

left). The thousands-strong crowd went wild and the BBC commentators were stunned.

We would have happily taken any medal – or none for that matter – but in the spirit of the games they awarded three golds!

These are only some of the incredible moments I experienced – and my experience is just one of hundreds of competitors and thousands of spectators.

A massive ‘thank you’ to Prince Harry for having the vision and to his team for making it a reality.

Finally the biggest thank you has to go to the Great British public, who came in their thousands and treated us like rock stars making the Invictus Games the most incredible experience.”



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GREY clouds gave way to blue skies as HMS Iron Duke arrived in Cape Town – with a golden prize on her deck.

The Type 23 sailed from Namibia to South Africa with the Rugby World Cup trophy displayed on her forecastle.

The Webb Ellis Cup, which will be battled for in the UK next autumn, is currently on a world tour to promote the contest.

Many of the crew took the chance to take a selfie with the trophy. Members of the ship's rugby team also visited the Newlands Rugby Stadium to take part in the DHL challenge, which involved a series of mini competitions with Rugby World Cup winner Martin Corry and South African cricketer Jacques Kallis.

Sub Lt Oliver Gwinnutt said: "The opportunity to throw a rugby ball around with two big sporting personalities at a fantastic stadium was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and not something I am going to forget anytime soon."

"It was surreal to think that morning I had been on the bridge bringing the ship in and by the afternoon I was playing rugby in Cape Town with a World Cup winner."

The day continued with a team from Iron Duke marching through the V&A Waterfront providing an escort to the Webb Ellis Trophy carried by Corry.

There was consternation in Cape Town the previous day as the midday cannon went off repeatedly, without any prior announcement. Social

media went into overdrive, with the firings trending on Twitter. It was later discovered the 21-gun salute, which sounded five times, was a dress rehearsal for Iron Duke's arrival.

A lone piper also serenaded the frigate as she came alongside.

Cape Town was Iron Duke's seventh stop during her six-month deployment and she played host to more than 3,000 members of the public eager to see what life was like on an RN warship.

The ship's football team enjoyed a competitive outing against De Beers AFC, the game ending 5-5.

Lt Cdr Lyndsey Netherwood, the ship's Executive Officer, said: "The visit has been an all-round success and enjoyable for all."

"It's been a good opportunity to showcase the Royal Navy and for members of the ship's company to enjoy some well-deserved time ashore."

Earlier the Portsmouth-based warship spent four days alongside in Walvis Bay, Namibia, hosting a capability demonstration and paying official calls on dignitaries, including a Namibian Admiral.

The ship's company took advantage of some quad biking and dune boarding in the desert and dunes near the port.

Two officers took part in dune sledging, using improvised metal trays while the ship's cycling team braved winds and dusty roads for a 35km cycle to Swakopmund.

HMS Iron Duke's football team took on the Namibian Navy in their third game of the deployment, hungry for a win having lost both previous

● Clockwise from top left: HMS Iron Duke during a RAS with RFA Black Rover; Some of the crew had a go at quad biking over the dunes; Iron Duke's football team line up with the Namibian Navy side; AB Matthew Parsons prepares to grapple the refuelling hose from the sea during the RAS; S/Lt Daniel Robbins navigates Pictures: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson



Side Webb row Duke

games. The final score favoured the ship's team with a 3-2 win.

The ship's rugby team also got an outing in Namibia. The hosts drafted in some serious players from Swakopmund, including some who had played for Premiership rugby Academy teams in the UK. Not surprisingly, Iron Duke's team lost.

During the stopover the crew visited local towns and some partook of the famous Bushman's Platter – a dish featuring crocodile and kudu (antelope) – which defeated all of the participants.

During the journey from Walvis Bay to Cape Town, RFA Black Rover carried out a dry run of a stern replenishment at sea with Iron Duke (making all the connections without actually pumping black gold from its tanks into the warship's).

At a regular cruising speed of about 11 knots, a Type 23's engines will guzzle 600 tonnes of diesel every 30 days – and those 600 tonnes of fuel will carry it more than 9,000 miles (almost enough to take a ship from Portsmouth to Singapore).

So her tanks shouldn't need re-filling too often – but in reality the tanks of RN vessels are kept relatively full all the time to ensure they're ready to respond to the unexpected.

In addition to fuel, Black Rover can provide warships with a limited amount of other stores – ammunition and food. And the stores for the latter need restocking regularly because so far the 200 souls aboard the Iron Duke have munched their way through one tonne of baked beans, a similar quantity of tinned tomatoes, 21,600 eggs and half a tonne of bacon.

And that's just for breakfast...

At least some supplies Iron Duke can self-generate, notably water.

Her fresh water tanks hold 60 tonnes – and around 45 tonnes is used every day, as sailors shower, flush the heads, cook, have a brew, launder and wash the decks down. Luckily her reverse osmosis plants turn sea water into fresh water at the rate of three tonnes per hour to replenish the tanks.

And just in case this all sounds a bit too logistics focused... in a typical 24-hour period on the bridge – and allowing for visibility of ten nautical miles – the team on watch scanned an area about twice the size of Northern Ireland with binoculars and the Mark 1 eyeball looking for anything unusual or potential dangers.

Which is impressive. But not as impressive as what the sensors on the 'Duck of Death' (so called because of the frigate's impressive array of weaponry) can do in the same period.

According to statistics compiled by the frigate's warfare department, her surface radar scanned an area twice the size of Algeria ... and her air picture radar an area four times the size of China.

So after all that searching, a bit of relaxation was the order of the day.

The flight deck was turned into a drive-in – or rather sail-on – cinema with an assortment of chairs laid out and a huge screen on the hangar door for a movie night under the stars.

The choice of film? A modern-day swords and sandals epic: *300: Rise of an Empire*.



● Clockwise from top left: PO Martin Hill and Sub Lt Oliver Gwinnutt in RN rugby shirts with the Webb Ellis Trophy; Iron Duke tied up in Cape Town; Members of the public flocked on board for a tour; Sailors march on the waterfront; AB Michael Nelson is reunited with his family; Former England rugby star Martin Corry with the Webb Ellis Trophy



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Heroes on land, heroes at sea

ABOARD Britain's newest front-line warship safeguarding waters east of Suez, HMS Defender's Executive Officer Lt Cdr Benjamin Keith pauses for a moment to reflect on deeds 100 years ago.

In his hands, the portrait of Battery Sgt Maj George Dorrell, veteran of the retreat to the Marne, Victoria Cross winner – and the naval officer's great grandfather.

At Néry, three dozen miles northeast of the French capital, the field guns of L Battery Royal Horse Artillery were knocked out one after another by a bombardment from heavier German cannon in September 1914.

As the British guns were silenced, the last remaining 13 pounder continued firing under the command of Battery Sgt Maj George Dorrell until it ran out of ammunition, before British cavalry mounted a charge and repelled the Germans.

Three VCs were awarded for the crew of that last gun, including to the sergeant major, who was subsequently awarded a field commission and went on to become a company commander in the Home Guard a generation later.

"My family travelled to Néry for the anniversary of the battle to honour the

brave people who fell. Unfortunately I couldn't attend, as I am deployed on operations until the end of the year," said Lt Cdr Keith, whose ship has passed the half-way point of her maiden deployment.

"I am immensely humbled by my great grandfather's achievements and feel it is only fitting that we have paused to remember all those who made the ultimate sacrifice during WW1."

That pause for reflection saw the Portsmouth-based destroyer honour the men on her predecessor, who found themselves in the maelstrom of the first major naval battle of WW1, Heligoland Bight, on August 28 1914.

"In paying tribute to those who fell during World War I, it is important always to look to the future with hope," said Defender's chaplain Michael Meachin who led a service of commemoration in the hangar.

"We paused to remember the huge human sacrifice of the Great War. We give thanks to our forefathers who gave their lives so that we could live ours in freedom today."

The ship's CO Cdr Phil Nash added: "It is with great pride that we serve today on HMS Defender while contributing to the UK's security and pause to think of those serving on the ship bearing the same name 100 years ago and the sacrifices they made for us."

The battle honours board outside his cabin contains three names from the 1914-1918 conflict – impressive considering she was a mere 770 tons (ten times smaller than the current Type 45 destroyer).

The first of those three honours was earned at the Heligoland Bight, just a couple of dozen miles from the German mainland.

On August 28 1914, superior Royal Navy forces attempted to wipe out enemy cruisers and destroyer's in the German Navy's 'back yard'.

For the cost of 35 dead, the British force sank three German cruisers, two torpedo boats and the destroyer V187.

The latter found herself trapped by eight Royal Navy destroyers, including HMS Defender, which stopped to pick up survivors when the German ship sank, echoing the words of Nelson 109 years earlier: humanity after victory.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum, HMS Defender

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A red sea of love

SAILORS from HMS Bristol have played their part in 'planting' a stunning tribute to the fallen of World War 1.

Volunteers from the veteran training ship put in a shift at the Tower of London, creating some of the 888,246 ceramic poppies for the *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* installation – each bloom representing the life of a British, dominion or colonial military combatant.

The group – eight ratings from Bristol, one from HMS St Albans and two volunteers from the Royal British Legion – formed a work party led by PO Jess Owen, buffer on the Type 82 which acts as a training/accommodation ship in Portsmouth Harbour.

"I have done some volunteering for the RBL in the past, and it is just something that is close to my heart – remembering those who served," said PO Owen.

"The biggest thing for me was that I did not realise how many people lost their lives at sea in the conflict."

The RN participation was prompted by an RBL worker, and the team was accommodated overnight by the Army at the Regent's Park Barracks.

Their volunteering day saw the sailors creating the poppies – the blooms were produced in the Staffordshire Potteries – by placing wire stalks in carefully-planned patterns and attaching the blood-red flowers at the required height.

"We felt very humble at the time while we were working, and it does hit home – it is a strange feeling, but I think you just do not realise how many people died," said PO Owen.

"880,000 is just a number, but here you could see that each one represents a person."

"The team loved doing this – we had T-shirts made up, paid for by the ship, with HMS Bristol and poppy motifs on the chest, with the RBL logo on one arm and the Royal Navy one on the other."

The team were among the earlier volunteers to work on the project, so some intend to return to see the final version; planners hope that it will

be complete by Remembrance Day, although they are still hoping more volunteers can help with the work.

When finished, a red tide of poppies will appear to flow into the moat and surround the London landmark.

The ceramic flowers were designed by Paul Cummins and created in his workshops by staff using techniques familiar to potters 100 years ago. The setting of the poppies was the work of stage designer Tom Piper.

Every poppy is available to buy at a cost of £25 during the creation of the installation, and Historic Royal Palaces hope the sale will raise millions of pounds for six Service charities – Cobseo, Combat Stress, Coming Home, Help for Heroes, the RBL and SSAFA.

After November 11 the poppies will be 'picked' and sent to a distribution centre to be posted on to purchasers.

For more details of how to buy a poppy or to volunteer to help with the installation click on the 'Tower of London Remembers' link on www.hrp.org.uk

Picture: AB Chris Oldland

Moving movie tribute

CINEMAGOERS will hear the Band of the Royal Marines honour their Great War forebears this autumn as a classic Naval film receives a new lease of life.

The Navy's premier musicians will perform at the gala premier for a restored 87-year-old documentary which has been painstakingly restored by film historians to mark the centenary of the battles celebrated on celluloid.

The Battles of the Coronel and the Falklands depicts Royal Navy tragedy then triumph as one British squadron of ships was mauled by the Germans in November 1914 – at Coronel in the Pacific – before a much more powerful force was dispatched to avenge the defeat, catching up with the enemy off the Falklands and annihilating it.

Two dozen bandsmen went down at Coronel – making the request to perform the new soundtrack to the restored film a particularly emotional experience.

"This is a huge undertaking for the Royal Marines Band Service as never before has a military band performed the music score for a whole feature length film, let alone performed it live at the premiere," said Lt Col Nick Grace, the Royal Marines' Principal Director of Music, who'll conduct the Portsmouth band at this month's gala performance.

"It is really quite an emotional event where 24 Royal Marine musicians will be performing music for a film depicting the World War 1 sea battle of 100 years ago where 24 Royal Marine musicians perished on HMS Monmouth at Coronel."

"I feel extremely passionate that the modern day Royal Marines Band Service can deliver a musical performance of this magnitude. This is unique in military music. It is an absolute privilege to be associated with such an historic project such as this."

Young composer Simon Dobson, who produced a critically-acclaimed musical commemoration of the Penlee lifeboat disaster, has written the soundtrack, with the Plymouth Band of the Royal Marines recording it for the version of the film which goes on general release.

The soundtrack to the silent movie is only part of the restoration process carried out by the British Film Institute, guardians of the nation's movie heritage, who've overhauled 8,300 feet (2,500m) of film, some of which had degraded badly.

When first released back in 1927, the 117-minute film was hailed by critics – drawing comparisons with the ground-



Still courtesy of the BFI

breaking *Battleship Potemkin* and the science fiction epic *Metropolis*.

It also proved a box-office hit, bringing in nearly £4m in today's money – for an outlay of under £1m.

With no original film footage of either battle available, director Walter Summers made use of the inter-war RN, filming off Malta and the Isles of Scilly (which doubled as the Falklands in the film).

Apart from recreating some interiors in a studio, no models, trick photography or special effects were used – making *The Battles of the Coronel and the Falklands* a remarkably authentic documentary.

The gala screening takes place on October 16 at the Queen Elizabeth Hall on London's South Bank before the film goes on general release; it will be available on DVD early in 2015.

Meanwhile, a commemorative service for the men of Coronel will be held 100 years to the day of the battle.

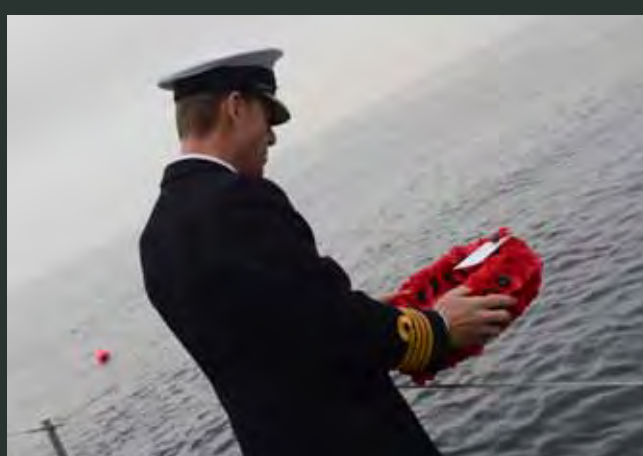
Various monuments were erected to the men lost at Coronel and their commander, including a cross to Rear Admiral Sir Christopher 'Kit' Cradock, who led a sorely outmatched force into battle against the Germans.

That cross, in the grounds of All Saints Church in Catherington, near Waterlooville, will be the focal point for the centennial service at 10.30am on November 1.

The ceremony is being organised by the Britannia Naval Research Association which was formed 14 years ago to tackle the public's lack of understanding of the country's rich naval heritage.

In addition to events at the church, the association is compiling a commemorative book – *Cradock and Coronel* – and is keen for contributions from families of those who were there, including histories and photographs.

Details of both the service and the book are available from Dr V Michell, v.a.michell@henley.ac.uk, or John Wain on 07790928825.



Remembering by Example



DRIFTING in the Firth of Forth, a wreath of poppies rests on the surface 200ft above the entombed men it honours.

Beneath this spot lies the wreck of HMS Pathfinder, the first Royal Navy warship sunk by U-boat.

Exactly one century after the scout cruiser fell victim to U-21 (as we recounted in our September edition), patrol boat HMS Example came to a stop over the wreck site to pay a centennial tribute.

The university boat, which gives students from Northumbria's centres of higher learning a taste of life in the Senior Service, left her native Tyneside behind to head for the Forth and events marking the 50th birthday of the road crossing linking Fife with Lothian.

Before those festivities, however, there was the solemn act of remembering Pathfinder about 15 miles northeast of St

Abb's Head.

Joining the small patrol craft for the ceremony were Capt Chris Smith, the Naval Regional Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland and a Royal Marines bugler.

And accompanying Example, two dive boats for members of the British Sub Aqua Club, who headed down to the wreck – with the permission of Whitehall, for the site is an official war grave – to lay a wreath and a Union flag as a mark of respect.

Capt Smith conducted the service over VHF radio so that the divers could take part in the commemoration.

Standing on the gently-rolling foredeck of the P2000, he read the Order of Service, accompanied by the ship's Commanding Officer, Lt Chris Chew, before casting this wreath over the side as the lone bugler sounded the *Last Post*.

"The commemoration period for World War 1 has only just begun, and we must ensure that we remember those sailors who gave their lives 100 years ago," said Capt Smith.

"There will of course be remembrance services at cenotaphs, memorials and cemeteries across the country, but it's equally important that we conduct services such as this at sea where possible and acknowledge their sacrifice."

Earlier in the day 85-year-old Malcolm Stern, nephew of 22-year-old stoker William Stern, killed in the sinking, visited the site on a chartered boat with members of his family and cast a commemorative plaque into the sea in memory of his uncle.

"It's heart-warming to see this kind of selfless effort," said Capt Smith. "For the Royal Navy it's only right and proper that we conduct this kind of activity to acknowledge our forefathers who made such a sacrifice, but to witness the same level of commitment from others, whether they be relatives such as Malcolm Stern – or indeed the British Sub Aqua Club divers who turned up out of respect – is particularly gratifying and I think the men who perished aboard HMS Pathfinder would be suitably humbled."

Pictures: Jim Gibson/www.shadowcatfilms.com



BACK On t

THIS is more like it.

None of that battleship grey stuff. Leaden ships against equally-leaden skies, blimbling along at a dozen knots.

YAWWWWWNNNNNN.

What you want is MTP-wearing, knife-between-gnashers-bearing, walking, stalking, wading, hoofing, rapid-roping, 'Vikinging', SA80-wielding, rufy, tufty, rootin' tootin' shootin' commando action.

So here it is.

In Albania. Obviously.

For the fourth year running the former Communist country – and especially its Cold War legacy – proved to be the ultimate playground for the Royal Marines.

And commandos will never turn down a go in a playground...

But first you've got to get there.

If you're from Norton Manor – as 40 Commando are – you can't take a gentle stroll to Albania.

There are about 1,300 miles of land, sea, mountains and borders in the way.

Enter the nation's flagship, HMS Bulwark, helicopter carrier HMS Ocean, amphibious support ship RFA Lyme Bay and tanker RFA Wave Knight, to get you to the Adriatic.

And then Landing Craft Utility (big ones), Landing Craft Vehicle and Personnel (not quite so big), ORCs (fast raiding craft), Jungle Sea Kings, Merlins and RAF Chinooks to get you from the ship to the shore – basically the full panoply of the RN's amphibious armory (plus a little help from the Crabs).

And there you have the core of the UK Response Force Task Group, the RN's on-call 'hit squad' ready to respond to crises natural (typhoons in the Philippines) or man-made (civil war in Libya) should Whitehall decide Britain should intervene.

And you can't intervene unless you're at the top of your game.

Which is why each autumn the group disappears to the Med (and often beyond) for its Cougar deployment, taking advantage of warmer climes, unusual terrain and different nations' armed forces.

The Adriatic element – Albanian Lion – has become a firm fixture on the Cougar calendar.

The weather's generally good (mid 20s Celsius well into late September), there's a lot of coast, plenty of airfields, some challenging terrain, loads of Cold War relics and the local military eager to work with their British counterparts.

So time to disgorge 600 green berets then...

Albanian Lion 2014 was played out in two locations, Kepi i Palit – a peninsula about 20 miles northwest of the capital Tirana – and Porto Palermo, 100 miles

down the coast.

The former location public set pieces – such as the one attended by Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama and Nishani – and some good training opportunities for the Viking armoured company.

And the latter? Well, it's a warren of tunnels and bunkers carved out of the hillsides south of the town of Himara. I remember it from an episode of *Top Gear* a couple of years back.

Now abandoned, the complex – and the derelict buildings above ground – is a rather spooky, slightly authentic location for FIS (Foreign Intelligence Service) operations (in someone's house).

Which is exactly what 40 Commando did when they landed ashore by landing craft from HMS Bulwark and RFA Lyme Bay.

And while they were there, the man-made caverns of the Porto Palermo ghost town night fell on the Adriatic, with a Chinook from HMS Ocean and a Chinook from RAF Chinook.

Albanian commandos are the green berets for the first part of the exercise – fighting through a network of tunnels (which gave their colleagues the enemy) – plenty of hide.

You can hide from the enemy. But you can't run. They'll find you. And they did, although not as Delta's Mne Dillon would have it.

"It was tough – due to the terrain. As marines we are used to being able to operate in any climate and this was no exception."

"The attack went really well. We had lots of new marines joining the group so it was good to have them become an integral part of the team."

Mne James Conn from 40 Commando added: "It was a long deployment, sometimes slow going due to the terrain, but this is what we thrive on. It's hard, we do not give up. It's time to think about the adrenaline is pumping, you're in it and just crack on."

Surveying it all, 40 Commando Officer Lt Col Alex Jantzen said: "It's keen to see how his men are doing. They're the lead commando element."

"These tasks are the backbone of a Royal Marines Company," he said. "This type of training is essential to sharpening our skills and making the most of the options."





the front Lion

afforded some... as a VIP day... President Bujar... boggy ground... vehicles to get... stuck in... that's straight... Bloc paranoia... and underground... the hillside just... maré (you might... of *Top Gear*... subterranean... derelict barracks... ground - are a... surreal, but... fighting in... Alpha and Bravo... do, did, coming... from HMS... moving through... their Delta... through... town as... having... can by... s joined... final part... their way... ch systems... gues (acting as... opportunity to... Royal Marines... get you in the... h it wasn't easy... de, 21, said... the mountainous... are expected to... y condition and... eception... y well. We have... in straight from... that they have... of the troop... om Manchester... g hard attack... ue to the terrain... on. When it gets... o. I didn't have... heat, when the... ou forget about... s Commanding... zen, particularly... n performed as... ndo group until... read and butter... mmando," he... ing is essential... as we sit at the... eference's military

Cougar is not, of course, just about green berets.

They might be the spear of the task group, but behind them stand 1,500 sailors and airmen.

Because, despite what we wrote earlier, we do quite like Pusser's Grey Funnel Line.

Taking her place in that line, just a matter of weeks after going to sea for the first time in over a year as a £65m refit ended, was HMS Ocean, Britain's biggest active warship (we have to add 'active' now that Queen Elizabeth is in the water...).

Only assigned to Cougar for the opening exercise, the Mighty O made use of that time to practise what she was built for: Ship to Objective Manoeuvre (STOM). Or in non-military jargon: delivering Royal Marines to the heart of the action.

You can deliver them by sea (landing craft - courtesy of Ocean's very own commando assault squadron, 9 ASRM), and by air (typically Sea Kings of the Commando Helicopter Force, but also in Merlin Mk2s of 820 Naval Air Squadron).

Having worked up with the Merlins on the way from Devonport to Gibraltar, the Mighty O rendezvoused with the rest of the Cougar 14 Task Group in the Rock and decided it was time for 9 Assault Squadron to show what they could do.

And, naturally, the warm, calm, flat seas which the helicopter carrier had experienced to that point deteriorated, creating challenging conditions for the young marines carrying out their operations from Ocean's davits (unlike Bulwark and Lyme Bay she doesn't possess a loading dock), as well as beach reces and general landing craft skills and drills.

Assault operations don't just need a delivery service. They also require a well-honed 'assault stations' organisation ensuring that marines + kit + caboodle are in the right place at the right time.

Choreographing this complex manoeuvre, Ocean's amphibious operations officer Lt Col Chris Gosney and veteran reservist watchkeepers Lt Cdr Clive Langmead and Lt Andy Linton (mobilised from HM Ships Forward and Eagle respectively).

"All the crews benefitted hugely from their time on the water, with the coxswains in particular relishing the challenge of the heavier seas," said Lt Col Gosney.

"It was terrific too that we had the invaluable support of the RNR's STOM team - the reserves have a real part to play in generating operational capability across the Fleet."

Sometimes, though, there was more

storm than STOM.

On the eve of Albanian Lion, the task group was swallowed up by - in the words of Merlin observer Lt Alex Day - "a complete and utter day of thunderstorms."

That accounted for one day's flying lost... and a second as the helicopters first dried out and then went through thorough safety checks before being cleared for resumed duties.

Thunderbolts and lightning (very, very frightening) aside, Albanian Lion "was a great success," says Alex. "As a task group we were able to deliver the desired effect, despite various setbacks and problems from all directions."

"That's just par for the course in any exercise, and you can pretty much guarantee it'll never be smooth in a real situation - the real credit goes to quick thinking and reacting to an ever-evolving environment using the training and skills everyone has learned."

He and his fellow Dolphins found themselves not hunting submarines - their normal role (see page 6) - but slinging loads beneath their 15-tonne frames as the aerial workhorses of the marines (a function their green Merlin comrades in the Commando Helicopter Force will be doing shortly when the battlefield version of the whirlybird is transferred from the RAF to the RN).

In addition to the shipborne air power, three Hawks from 736 NAS decamped from Culdrose to Tirana Air Base - the first time the squadron has strayed beyond UK shores to take part in Albanian Lion.

They played roles both good and bad - trying to knock out the task force (that's bad), trying to knock out enemy ground forces (that's good).

"Everyone was excited about this, particularly the Albanians who retired their fast jets after the Cold War," explained Lt Cdr Tim Flatman, Commanding Officer of 736 which prides itself as the Fleet Air Arm's 'aggressor squadron'.

Assessing it all from afar aboard Bulwark's impressive combined operations room, the two senior officers directing both Albanian Lion and Cougar 14 were pleased with the opening moves of the deployment.

Albania, said 3 Commando Brigade's CO Brig Charlie Stickland, had "once again proved to be an excellent training ground" for his green berets.

And from task force commander Cdre Jerry Kyd: "It has been wonderful to be able to return to Albania to work with old friends and the support and the welcome is as warm as ever."

"Being able to start our deployment in this way really sets us up well for our training in the coming months."

Onwards. East of Suez next.



pictures: po(phot) sean clee, rnpoty3, la(phot) ben shread, hms ocean, and la(phot) will haigh, 40 cdo

CLASSIC JACK

BY TUE



I have Ushakov Medal

I WAS awarded the Ushakov Medal of Russia at the Russian Embassy, along with a few other veterans, in July this year.

We protected the convoys up in that freezing area.

The medal is named after Admiral Ushakov (1745-1817), the illustrious Russian naval commander, whose military operations are still carefully studied in naval academies.

In the course of 43 naval battles under his command he did not lose a single ship nor lost a battle.

A medal was named in his honour by the Supreme Committee of the USSR in 1944.

He was canonised as a saint by the Russian Orthodox Church in 2001.

Following a presidential decree, signed by Vladimir Putin in March this year, listing nearly 3,000 British veterans, the first group received their medals in May.

S F Tiffin
Kingston Upon Thames

Barracuda memories

THERE is a restoration scheme under way in Newcastle to rebuild two Barracuda wrecks into one displayable aircraft.

The work is being carried out by the team which rebuilt Donald Campbell's Bluebird.

Some 675 Barracudas were built by Faireys at Heaton Chapel, Stockport.

In due course there will be a book detailing the engineering and technical work involved in the reconstruction, but before then I am putting together a record of personal memories of the people involved with the aircraft; those who built them, the operations they flew and the men who maintained them.

We are also keen on stories from pilots who were based at HMS Ringtail, Nightjar or Blackcap.

As a former bootneck, I'm interested to know if any Royal Marines flew the aircraft.

If it ever turns from goose to swan, all proceeds will go towards the restoration work.

Ken Brotherhood
Stockport

Please help solve Russian mystery

I AM frequently asked questions about the Royal Navy and can help out but this one has me stumped.

A friend had an uncle, now deceased, who wasn't very talkative about his sea service, so I don't know if he was Royal Navy or Merchant Navy or which ships.

He went to Leningrad, now St Petersburg, with two Russian ships (Luga, Luger or Luge and the Petrovsk) and on arrival with a cargo of mainly railway lines, it was unloaded by Russian women - it does not seem feasible.

I believe they asked for an Arctic Star, though I have said they would not have been in the Arctic Circle.

Can any of your readers help?

I received my Arctic Star last year, much admired but the Russian Embassy is a long time forthcoming with the Ushakov Medal which they said I would have to be personally presented with - as I have some paper to sign when it was available.

Thank you for an excellent *Navy News*.

S J Speke
Shropshire



● The tribute to those who took part in the Arctic Convoys above Murmansk and Kola Inlet



Good and bad with Sir Aubrey

I WAS a stoker mechanic on HMS Belfast during the Korean War.

We were in the Far East when the war broke out, our captain was Sir Aubrey Sinclair-Ford.

Reading some history on him lately it stated what a good ship-handler he was and how in WW2, when under air attack, would lean with his back to the front of the bridge and scan the air with his binoculars and expected instant obedience to his calls down the voice pipe to the steering compartment and engine room. Normally most captains would rely on lookouts.

During the evacuation of Crete, Sir Aubrey was commanding HMS Kipling when HMS Kelly, Earl Mountbatten's ship, was bombed, rolled over and started sinking.

HMS Kipling arrived and

started pulling survivors aboard. One of them was Kelly's First Lt, the son of a famous Naval family, who immediately reported to Kipling's First Lt (from another famous Naval family) and was requested to help him rescue other survivors.

Suddenly Sir Aubrey spotted a German dive bomber attacking. He ordered full speed ahead. As the ship moved forward, a snagged cable caught and dragged both First Lts over the side and they drowned.

Kipling returned and rescued more sailors but couldn't find either of the two men.

The reason I have written is that HMS Belfast was waiting to enter the harbour at Okinawa. Alongside was an American stores ship also waiting.

At that moment an ERA requested an engineer officer

if he could obtain a welding gas bottle that was needed. The captain's permission was sought and agreed and the Belfast started moving alongside.

Because of the choppy sea it was decided to rig a planked gangway between the two ships as the likely motion might damage the metal work if they met side to side.

Guard rails were struck on both ships, planks pushed across and lashed, and the regulating chief stoker was told to detail two stokers to cross and return with a gas bottle.

Stoker Simpson and I started gingerly crossing the wildly gyrating planking to the American ship.

Saluting the officer on board, he told us to wait for the cylinders. Our hearts sunk when we saw this giant torpedo-shaped

Finally have my dad's Arctic Star

AT LONG last, after 24 years' of waiting, writing several letters to the Russian and English governments, I hold my dad's Arctic Convoy medal in my hands.

After writing for so long it is a bit of an anti-climax as he was a hero among thousands alive and dead heroes who should have been recognised years ago.

Over the years I have met many Arctic veterans, one in particular is Mr Fred Udell, who has over the last two years kept me believing one day I would get a medal. He even offered me one of his own Russian medals. Thank you Fred.

Through him I have received a lovely book, *Russian Convoys* by Ivan Mazour.

My dad served on HMS Faulknor. He was the butcher and also served the rum ration so he was very popular. He was nicknamed Tanky.

Last year I was invited to the National Arboretum to attend the anniversary of the Aegean Campaign. In 1943 HMS Faulknor was there. Five destroyers were sunk, hundreds of sailors and soldiers were drowned or captured. They too deserve a medal.

John Parkinson
West Midlands

Friday parades

IT is correct that the Royal Navy moves on and in the right direction but I find it difficult to understand why passing out parades at Raleigh have moved from a Sunday to a Friday.

It means that siblings at school cannot attend, or parents face a fine; Mothers/fathers and other close family members are not able to secure time off work; the knock-on effect is the local economy suffers.

I served 42 years in the RN, from 1947 to 1989 so do know a little of training programmes.

John R Allen
West Sussex

A spokeswoman for HMS Raleigh replies: "The passing-out parades have been on Fridays since the 1970s.

"The initial naval training course is an intense ten-week period. During that time the recruits are given 11 hours of free time when they can go ashore, in their uniform, one Saturday and Sunday afternoon.

"As they complete the course on a Friday, the majority will be required to report to their specialist training establishments the following Monday.

"Having the parade on a Friday gives them a weekend to spend with their loved ones, who they may not have seen for the previous ten weeks."



LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and full address, not necessarily for publication.

E-mail correspondents are also requested to provide this information. Letters cannot be submitted over the telephone.

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it. Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

We do, however, publish many on our website, www.navynews.co.uk, accompanied by images.

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues. The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.

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Did you bring Singapore back to UK on Skua?

Redpole named in error

WHILE reading again my back numbers of *Navy News* I came across a short article on the subject of using again the names of the Black Swan-class of frigates.

The names of 12 such vessels were quoted and, in an instant, I was back in my teens and recalling a short but memorable period of 14 days' training I spent on board one of them.

As a 17-year-old, I had joined London Division RNVF. My first period of training was on board HMS Redpole in Portsmouth in 1952.

The point of this letter however, is to draw attention to the fact that the writer of the November 2012 article referred to this ship as HMS Redpoll.

He was absolutely correct in his spelling, in that the member of the finch family after which the vessel was named is a redpoll, but their lordships got it wrong, and she spent her entire career – so I was told in 1952 – named after a breed of cattle.

So if this batch of names should ever come back, will the slight error be corrected, or be repeated? Until a few years ago, I thought that my Redpole was unique, in that there had never been an earlier one, but I was mistaken, as my interest in 18th and 19th Century Royal Naval history subsequently proved.

There had indeed been another Redpole, a brig sloop which served under the overall command of Admiral Thomas Cochrane at the Battle of the Basque Roads in April 1809.

Douglas Andrews
Ware, Herts

I HAVE been doing some research into the history of a locomotive named Singapore.

I served as a civilian with the Admiralty Naval Store Department and was based in Singapore from 1966-69 and have returned on several occasions, including last year when I was able to revisit Stores Basin and other facilities.

The locomotive was originally allocated to Singapore and was delivered new to Singapore Dockyard in 1936 where it was given Yard No 10.

During the Japanese invasion of Singapore in 1942, the locomotive suffered some damage before being taken into captivity along with many Servicemen. The bullet holes can still be seen on the loco today.

The locomotive, returned to the UK in 1953 and was taken to Chatham Naval Dockyard, where it worked until it was sold in 1972.

The locomotive was maintained until 2009 as a working memorial to former Far East Prisoners of War. It can be seen at the Rutland Railway Museum – a voluntary-run organisation – at Cottesmore, Oakham, Rutland.

I am particularly interested to obtain any first-hand information on its voyage to the UK in 1953.

It was the major cargo on HMS Skua, formerly HMS Walrus, an aircraft transporter. The journey home was tortuous, taking almost six months due to engine problems.

By coincidence, while undertaking my National Service based on HMS Vanguard, I worked for some weeks on HMS Skua which was used as a storing



Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tippie to the writer of our top letter. This month's winner is Mike Robbins

facility in Portsmouth. While on board I remember rummaging through some of the old cabins and found paperwork, including a copy of a report on the journey home.

I wonder if there would be any chance of any of your older readers having been part of the crew on the homeward voyage? If so I would be very interested to hear of their recollections. I remember reading something along the lines that some of the crew thought the voyage was jinxed and were not sure if they would ever get to the UK.

Singapore is a registered war memorial and now needs extensive work to return it to its original condition. The work is expected to cost £50,000 and anyone interested in making a regular donation should contact secretary@rocks-by-rail.org

Mike Robbins
Grimsby



● The nameplate of the loco at the Rutland Railway Museum



● The loco still has the bullet holes from 1942



● Singapore on display in Regents Park, London, in 2005

Great memories of sharing with Steve

WHILE I was in HMS Collingwood in 1962-63 I shared a cabin with 'Steve' Stevens.

Steve was a bit of a car fanatic and he had a Sunbeam Talbot which he lovingly maintained.

There was always some piece of car in the cabin and items like an exhaust system and other pieces had to be stowed away when rounds were due.

One time after rounds had been carried out Steve got a message to report to the main gate, where the Master at Arms then had his office.

Steve came back from the main gate with a slight smile on his face. Apparently, during the rounds Steve's wardrobe was opened and a bottle of amber liquid had been spotted on a shelf.

This was seen to be rum being bottled. It was a good job that nobody had tasted it as it was brake fluid.

Steve got away with a warning not to stow flammable liquids in the building.

Steve being the kind person that he was, agreed

for a shipmate, in an adjacent cabin, to borrow his car for a run ashore.

The following morning there was a knock on the door and the aforesaid shipmate came into the cabin and said: "Steve I'm sorry but I have rolled your car."

Steve was always difficult to wake and get him up for the day. That morning however he shot out of bed, the fastest I ever saw him move.

Steve, now wide awake and a bit stunned, literally shrugged off the accident and didn't fall out with the shipmate.

The road to Collingwood in those days did not have kerbstones all along the road, only where there was a drain, and these had an inclined stone before and after the drain.

Apparently the nearside front wheel went up the inclined stone and rolled the car over.

John (Nobby) Clarke
Derby



● HMS Ajax was paid off at Chatham in February 1948

Ajax bell gift to association

A COLLEAGUE of mine mentioned that she had a ship's bell.

She told me this because I'm a retired PO.

She said it was from the cruiser HMS Ajax.

It had been given to her by the breakers, where Ajax met her end.

She asked if I had heard of the Ajax, so I told her about the Battle of the River Plate.

I did a bit of research on Google, and run off

some information for her.

I came across the website for the HMS Ajax – River Plate Association. So I passed that to her as well.

She is sending the bell to them. They'll have it for the 75th anniversary.

Isn't it a strange old world?

Terry Roberts
Birmingham



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Medal criteria reviewed

THE qualifying period for the South Atlantic Medal, without rosette, has been extended following the latest stage of the review carried out by Sir John Holmes into the award of medals.

Two years ago the government asked Sir John to review the rules, principles and processes for medallic recognition of military campaigns, prompted by a number of long-running campaigns by veterans groups and individuals seeking redress for perceived injustices.

The award of the Arctic Star was a result of the first stage of the review – now comes an adjustment to the criteria for the medal covering the Falklands Campaign of 1982.

Campaigners, with Nigel Morris, Ian McVitie and Mark Willoughby leading the way, argued that the original cut-off date – July 12 1982 – for the medal without rosette was too early, and that the risk of hostilities restarting, and the requirement to remain at action stations in difficult conditions, persisted until the autumn.

On July 29 the government confirmed that the second stage of Sir John Holmes' review was now complete. As a result, the qualifying period for the South Atlantic Medal, without rosette, will be extended to October 21 1982, when the airfield at Port Stanley was completed.

The qualifying criteria for the South Atlantic Medal with rosette are not affected by the review.

It is thought that up to 10,000 people will now be entitled to this medal.

The medal application process begins on October 1 of this year; awards will begin to be despatched towards the end of the month and applications will be dealt with in date order.

The change in criteria also allows membership in the South Atlantic Medal Association.

www.gov.uk/the-ministry-of-defence-medal-office

Arctic veterans at memorial unveiling

A DELEGATION of ten British Arctic Convoy veterans visited Russia for a ceremony to honour all those who undertook, in Churchill's words, 'the worst journey in the world'.

The veterans, accompanied by family members, the Mayor of Southwark Sunil Chopra, Lord Simon Reading, Chairman of the Arctic Convoys Museum in Loch Ewe, George Milne, Vice President of the HMS Belfast Association, and a team from ITV, travelled to St Petersburg for the unveiling of a memorial to Arctic Convoy sailors.

They were invited to take part by the regional Arctic Convoys Association, represented by its president Cdr Yuri Alexandrov, a Russian war veteran.

The programme started with British and Russian veterans visiting Piskaryovsky cemetery, where they paid their respects to the 1.5 million victims of the Siege of Leningrad.

They also visited the Peter and Paul Fortress for the midday cannon salute, and later attended a reception hosted by Cdr Alexandrov and the Russian veterans in the Atrium of the Fortress, founded in 1703.

The ceremony to unveil the memorial took place on Sunday August 31, and was attended by the Governor of St Petersburg Georgy Poltavchenko, the Russian Transport Minister Maksim Sokolov, Legislative Assembly Chairman Vyacheslav Makarov and British Consul General Keith Allan, amongst others.

Ambassadors and consuls from other European nations, including Iceland, Poland, Norway, the Netherlands, Denmark and

Picture: Alexander Zubkov



● British Arctic Convoy veterans pay their respects at the new memorial in St Petersburg

Belarus also attended, and Lord Reading delivered a personal message from Prince Michael of Kent.

The memorial depicts Russian, British and American sailors standing on the stem of a warship, symbolising the Allied coalition in the struggle against fascism.

The date, August 31, marked the 73rd anniversary of the arrival of the first Arctic convoy, codenamed Dervish, in Arkhangelsk in 1941.

On board, amongst many provisions, were the 24 Hawker Hurricane fighters which defended the skies of Moscow.

Later that day, the veterans visited the Museum of the Krasin icebreaker, built by Armstrong Whitworth in Newcastle in 1917, which also took part in

many of the Arctic Convoys.

The Governor of St Petersburg, Georgy Poltavchenko, held a special reception in honour of the veterans later that day.

On the first day of the new school year, September 1, the British veterans visited schools to meet the youth of St Petersburg.

Visit organiser and head of the British delegation Eugene Kasevin said: "For decades, the heroic pages of the Arctic Convoys history were veiled with ideological interpretations and innuendo. It is only now that they start to get a well-deserved recognition internationally."

"The memorial in St Petersburg, initiated by the Russian veterans, is a bold example of human devotion to the memories of joint victory and the lives lost in the name of victory over fascism."

The visit was supported by a number of British and Russian organisations, including the Russia House Ltd, Lewin of Greenwich Organisation Ltd, Illuminating Life Foundation, the Heroes Return British National Lottery Fund, JSC Lenenergo (Russia), SETonline (Russia) and VisaToHome (Russia).

LCT service

A SERVICE to mark the 70th anniversary of the wrecking of LCT(A) 2454 will be held at the Chesil Beach Centre, Portland, at midday on October 13.

During the service the Mayor of Weymouth and Portland, Cllr Kate Wheller, will unveil a commemorative stone plaque to the ship, driven ashore by fierce gales.

Nine of the 13-man RN crew died in the wreck, as did two heroic Coastguard rescuers.

Final reunion for Orion

MEMBERS of the HMS Orion Association have gathered for their last formal reunion in Plymouth.

Staged at the Holiday Inn, the event attracted 38 members and guests, including three veterans who served in the Leander-class cruiser during World War 2.

Another individual did his National Service in the Orion shore base unit in HMS Drake.

On the Friday afternoon, members took a ride in an LCU from RM Tamar, HMS Drake, thanks to Col Garth Manger RM – the visitors were taken up the River Tamar to see the spot where Orion was launched in 1932.

Saturday morning saw a short service and wreath-laying at the Naval Memorial on the Hoe.

Being the last reunion, a standard was made which was carried by honorary member Lt Cdr David Scott RN (rtd).

There was also a contingent of standards from Plymouth, along with parade marshal Jerry Josee.

At dinner that evening the new standard was in evidence, as was a 6ft model of Orion, donated by a veteran to HMS Drake to be alongside the ship's bell and other memorabilia situated near the Main Gate.

On Sunday morning members travelled by coach to St Nicholas Church, HMS Drake, for a service where the standard was dedicated by Naval Chaplain Peter Scott.

The association's 18-page quarterly newsletter will continue.

Busy day for Cardiff

CARDIFF branch manned a stall at the 'Meet the Forces' Day in Cardiff Bay which rounded off the NATO summit in South Wales (see pages 8-9).

The day was a great success with the Navy's newest destroyer HMS Duncan barely a stone's throw from the RNA stand.

Shipmates reported a great deal of interest in the Association – it is estimated that more than 80,000 people passed through the site over the course of the day.

One of the most popular 'gizzets' by far was the RNA hat, and the branch managed to sign up new members including PO Ian Hammond from the RN recruitment team.

Homage to Dundee submariners

Picture: Wallace Ferrier



● Respects are paid at the Submarine Memorial in Dundee Docks, situated between two docks used by Allied boats during World War 2

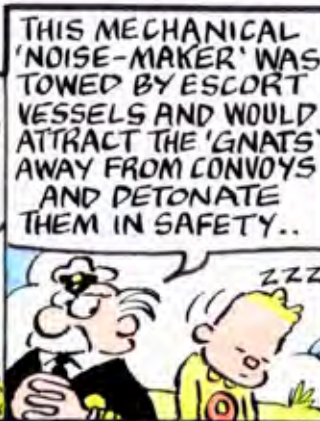
MEMBERS of the Submariners Association held a service of remembrance at a memorial to men of all nations who sailed from the River Tay on war service.

The service, commemorating those 'still on patrol' and acknowledging the courage of all who served below the waves, was held at the Submarine Memorial in Dundee, a base for Allied boats.

Serving and ex-submariners attended from the UK and Europe – several countries were represented in the 9th Submarine Flotilla which operated from Dundee during World War 2 (as did the 2nd Flotilla in 1939).

The Rev Pat Lang and the Lord Provost of Dundee Bob Duncan led the service, which was also attended by 45 Commando Veterans and local Sea Cadets, who provided the music.

Naval Quirks



● Chaplain Rev Christopher Woods with members of Harwich and District branch and the RAF Association at the family grave of Sqn Cdr Edwin Harris Dunning

Tribute to wartime pilot

HARWICH and District branch shipmates took part in a service to commemorate the memory of Sqn Cdr Edwin Harris Dunning DSC of the RN Air Service.

Dunning successfully landed his Sopwith Pup aircraft on HMS Furious in Scapa Flow, Orkney, on August 2 1917.

But five days later he died during his second landing attempt of the day, when an

updraught caught his port wing, tipping his plane overboard and drowning him.

He is buried in a family plot at St Lawrence Church Bradfield, where the service was held.

Rev Christopher Woods, chaplain to the Harwich branch, led the service, which was also attended by members of the Squadron Harwich & District Branch RAF Association.

Cheshunt shipmates visit Ypres

CHESHUNT branch associate members S/Ms Stephen Duke, welfare officer, and Carole Parks, treasurer, visited Ypres and Tyne Cot war cemetery in Belgium.

By prior arrangement, S/M Stephen was able to take part in the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate Memorial – an act of remembrance which has taken place every evening since July 1928, except during World War 2 when it was continued in the UK.

The ceremony was reinstated in Ypres on the day Allied forces relieved the town.

During the ceremony – the day after the centenary of Austria-Hungary declaring war on Serbia, sparking the war – S/M Stephen laid a wreath on behalf of the branch in remembrance of those lost in action.

Additional wreaths were laid to honour the 1,578 who lost their lives serving on board HMS Good Hope and HMS Monmouth, sunk in the Battle of Coronel on November 1 1914.

Individual crosses were also laid in respect of individual relatives of two branch members.

Lea is mourned

MEMBERS of the Fleet Air Arm Association and RNA are mourning the death of S/M Leabert Francis, who served as a Naval Airman from 1967-70 at RNAS Lossiemouth and in HMS Eagle.

S/M Lea, a member of Watford FAA and for at least 25 years the chairman of Luton and Dunstable and Aldenham branches of the RNA, died on June 1 at the age of 63.

He had been medically discharged after a serious accident aboard the carrier.

Plaque honours hero

“ROOM for improvement” was the gist of young Norman Holbrook’s reports at his *alma mater*, Portsmouth Grammar School, in the first years of the 20th Century.

And improvement there was – the lad who appeared to excel on the sports field (winning the school 100-yard dash against a stiff breeze in 1902) rather than in the classroom went on to claim the first Royal Navy Victoria Cross of World War 1 in a daring mission in command of an obsolete submarine.

His connection with the school has been recognised by the unveiling of a plaque – part of an initiative by the Submariners Association to highlight the courage and fortitude of heroic deeds throughout more than a century of the Silent Service.

On December 13 1914 Holbrook – then a 26-year-old lieutenant – took B11 into the Dardanelles, which was heavily defended by minefields, gun batteries and regular patrols.

At the end of this dangerous run Holbrook attacked the old 10,000-ton Turkish battleship *Messudiyeh*, causing the ship to sink in ten minutes.

B11’s return journey was even more hazardous – having stirred up a hornet’s nest, Holbrook and his crew had to cope with the mines, the gunfire, treacherous currents and shallow water (the boat grounded with her fin exposed at one point) before they reached the safety of the Aegean.

By that time the submarine had been submerged for nine hours – an exceptional feat for only the third class of RN submarine.

The air on board was virtually unbreathable and the batteries almost exhausted.

Although Holbrook’s actions were not the first to attract a



● Serving and veteran submariners gather at Portsmouth Grammar School for the unveiling of a plaque to honour Lt Norman Holbrook VC

Royal Naval VC nomination – that honour went to Capt Henry Ritchie for his service in November 1914 in Africa – it was the first to be gazetted. His First Lieutenant, Sidney Winn, was awarded a DSO and the remaining crew of 15 were given DSMs.

Holbrook was born in Southsea in 1888 and attended PGS from 1900 to 1903, when he moved on to Dartmouth.

Headmaster James Priory said young Norman’s reports showed “some room for improvement” in the classroom but a win in the 100-yard sprint and third place in an obstacle race were an early indication of skills which stood him in good stead in the war.

“It is incredibly poignant for us to be able to commemorate Norman Holbrook in a year when the whole nation has been reflecting on the Great War and the heroism of so many in service of their country,” said Mr Priory.

“We were honoured to be asked by the Submariners Association to be the home to a plaque commemorating his

daring exploit, and hope that for years to come pupils and passers-by will be able to remember his bravery and learn his story when they see the plaque.”

Norman was one of six brothers at PGS and his father, an Army officer, helped the cash-strapped school by providing a flagpole (cost £5) to fly a flag in honour of British exploits in South Africa at the time.

Several members of the Holbrook family were there to see the ceremony, and great-niece Mrs Anne Harrison recalled meeting Holbrook when she was very young – “he was a very jolly chap, always very happy,” she said.

“From what I can gather from other members of the family he was quite taken aback by the award of the VC – very proud and honoured, but taken aback.”

A group of trainee submariners from HMS Sultan, serving submariners, members of the Portsmouth Grammar School Combined Cadet Force and veterans of the Submariners

Picture: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston

Association also gathered at the Upper Junior School site on Cambridge Junction, the building in which Holbrook was educated.

The plaque was unveiled by Mr Priory and the president of the Submariners Association, Admiral Sir James Perowne.

Holbrook’s fame spread rapidly throughout the British Empire after his attack in the Dardanelles, and a small town in Australia decided to change its name from Germanton to Holbrook in his honour – a not uncommon action at a time of anti-German feeling.

The officer visited his namesake community several times before his death at the age of 87 in 1976, and his wife donated his medals to the town.

The submariner also featured in such memorabilia as cigarette cards, and a framed set of cards – Wills’s Victoria Cross Heroes – was presented to the school by the submariners, along with an Association plaque.

Holbrook is buried at St James Old Churchyard in Stedham, West Sussex.

Planting celebrates anniversary

WARWICK shipmates have planted a tree at the National Arboretum to celebrate the branch’s 60th birthday.

The ceremony was conducted by branch padre Rev Linda Duckers, and was attended by several branch members.

An open day at the Court House, Warwick, to celebrate the anniversary was also planned as *Navy News* went to press.

The first branch meeting was held at the Old Fourpenny Shop Pub on September 29 1954.

Chairman S/M Derek Fletcher, who joined the Navy at the age of fifteen and a half as a regular and served in Malaya and Korea amongst others, said that the planting of this tree will be a permanent reminder for the branch and all the members past and present who have moulded it into what it is today – a family.

New benches are dedicated

MEMBERS of Brentwood branch, along with their standard, attended the dedication of two new stone benches at the Brentwood War memorial.

The provision of the benches, to enable the less able to rest at the memorial, and the service of dedication were organised by the Brentwood branch of the Royal British Legion.

Among those attending the service were the Lord Lieutenant of Essex, the Mayor of Brentwood, the Commanding Officer of the Army Reserve centre and Army and Air Cadets.

Other standards on parade were the RBL, Brentwood and Essex County; RNA Area 5, a branch of the Royal Anglian Regiment Association and 1483 Squadron ATC.

Veterans on parade also paid tribute to the high standard of drill and turnout of all the cadets, and in particular Cpl Nathan Hirsch, the ATC standard bearer.

Club closes for last time

THE Royal Naval Old Comrades Club, at 16 Beach Road, Eastbourne was due to close its doors for the last time on September 30, 63 years after it signed up its first members.

Back in 1937 a few ex-sailors found themselves missing the warmth and friendship of life in the ‘Grey Funnel Line’ when they got back to civvy street, according to club president S/M Brian Allchorn.

They began to meet up for a beer and a yarn on a regular basis, moving from pub to pub as numbers grew, rekindling, in part, that spirit that was once so much a part of life aboard ship.

When a suitable building came onto the market in 1951 it was bought and converted into the club which became familiar to ship associations, RNA branches and clubs in the South East.

But as the majority of original members have crossed the bar, and with no younger members stepping up to support the club closure became the only option.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our August edition (right) was HMS Beachampton, with a Westland Wessex flying past, and the winning answers were provided by Mr P Nash, of Ellesmere Port.

Launched in September 1974, this month’s ship (above) was one of a small class of patrol ships which were built by Dunston on the River Humber.

She is pictured above on the Caledonian Canal in the late 1980s – within a decade she had been sold to private owners

(1) What was her name, and (2) to what class of ship did she belong?

We have removed the pennant number from the 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



answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. The closing date for entries is November 12.

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 December edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.



Service highlights links

HUNDREDS of serving personnel and veteran civilian mariners paid their respects to colleagues from World War 1 during the Merchant Navy Day Commemorative Service.

The sun shone on Trinity Gardens in Tower Hill in London as RFA and RN personnel attended the service along with serving mariners, veterans, Sea Scouts and Sea Cadets.

HMS President provided the ceremonial guard while speeches were given by the Commodore RFA, Cdre Rob Dorey, and First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, with messages also read out from the Prime Minister and the Duke of Edinburgh.

“The weather was on our side,” said Cdre Dorey. “This year’s event focused on the Merchant

Navy contribution to the war effort during World War 1 and brought together the full breadth of the maritime community.

“It was great to see young and old stand side-by-side to reflect on the past but it also gave an opportunity to look to the future and our young people who will continue our proud maritime heritage.”

The commodore said that the “vast array” of standards around the Gardens reflected the breadth of the Merchant Navy and the maritime industry as a whole, while Admiral Zambellas, in his speech, also highlighted the strong links between the various elements of the maritime community, including the Royal Navy.

↓ RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com
↓ 023 9272 3747
↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



● Jim Rowley with family members Danielle, Alfie and Jackie during their visit to HMS Tyne

Picture: LA(Phot) Gary Weatherston

Family thank crew for scattering ashes

THE family of a young man whose ashes were scattered at sea by HMS Tyne joined the ship to thank sailors for their efforts.

Back in 2005, the fishery protection ship committed the ashes of Nicholas Rowley to the deep – as his family wished after the 22-year-old died of a brain haemorrhage the previous year.

Mr Rowley, from Scarborough, was a fisheries officer for the Marine Management Organisation, working closely with Tyne and her sisters Severn and Mersey, all of which patrol home waters monitoring stocks and making sure fishing vessels abide by the rules.

On the day of the committal of his ashes in August 2005 the weather was so poor that his family were unable to board Tyne

or witness the ceremony.

A recent visit by Tyne to Newcastle allowed his parents to join the patrol vessel and take a tour of the ship.

They were hosted by Lt John-Paul Fitzgibbon, the officer in temporary command, who said: "It was a great pleasure to maintain our links with the Rowley family, and we are very proud to be able to maintain the memory of Nicholas."

Nicholas' family presented the ship with a photograph of Scarborough Harbour which now hangs in the officers' wardroom.

"We can never thank all the ship's company enough for their hospitality during our visit," said Nicholas' father Jim. "It was a good day and the memories of our visit will last a long time."

Denver takes the lead at Devonport



● PC Hannah Kinchenton with Denver and Evar

Picture: PO(Phot) Ray Jones

A SPRINGER spaniel is the newest recruit to security at Devonport Naval Base.

Denver is the first sniffer dog for the Ministry of Defence police at Devonport.

Denver's handler PC Hannah Kinchenton said: "My training was very enjoyable. Denver worked really well throughout the course – we carried out training at a number of different venues incorporating vehicles, buildings and areas."

"There was a lot to learn with regards to systems of search, explosive compounds and their uses and reading the dog and his indications."

The working pair were tested on theoretical elements and underwent practical assessments, including scenarios designed to ensure Hannah and Denver worked safely as a team and could find any explosives hidden by the trainer.

Hannah said: "Denver worked really well and made the course thoroughly enjoyable for me. He is a great asset for the naval base and the dog section and I very much look forward to working him operationally. As for now, I am back on shift working with both Denver and my other dog Evar in their respective roles – Denver in his search capacity and Evar in his normal police dog role."

Denver has hit the ground running on his new career and is a common sight at Devonport Naval Base taking part in high-profile searches in specific buildings and in vehicles at various access gates on a random basis.

He has a busy schedule which includes taking part in ad hoc searches to ensure security and safety for events such as the annual families day, and ship homecomings among other events.

Hannah, who in common with colleagues takes her dogs home, said: "In terms of me and my job, it has meant that my days get a lot busier as I am working both dogs. I do enjoy having a full schedule and it is very rewarding watching the dogs working. At the end of the day I go home with the dogs and they are both as tired as I am!"

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● Ria Coles wrote a poem

Pride of place for poem

A SCHOOLGIRL from Dulwich had a very special day when she visited HMS Collingwood to witness the new home of the poem she wrote about Simon the cat, who was awarded the Dickin medal, the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross.

The school, Dulwich Hamlet, sent the poem on to the PDSA who in turn forwarded it to Lt Cdr Stewart Hett, who served on HMS Amethyst, Simon's ship.

As a member of the Amethyst Association Stewart knew that HMS Collingwood has a foyer dedicated to the 1949 Yangtze Incident, of which Simon was part, and sent the poem to the Commanding Officer, Capt Steve Dainton.

Visiting Collingwood with her parents, Ria Coles was very happy to see the poem taking pride of place beside 'Simon'.

She said: "I wrote the poem as part of a school project, I enjoyed researching Simon and writing it. I can't believe it's here on the wall."

Simon was badly injured when HMS Amethyst came under fire from the Chinese Communist forces as she made her way up the Yangtze River in April 1949.

Trapped for 101 days, the ship's rations soon became overrun with rats and Simon's prowess as a rat catcher helped protect the food.

It was for this and his devoted companionship that the PDSA awarded Simon the Dickin Medal in November 1949, but the cat died before receiving the medal.

Reunited on carrier

THE Royal Navy's helicopter carrier HMS Ocean has helped bring a father and son together to work on returning the ship to sea.

A family reunion took place when a sailor from HMS Ocean, Lee Agar, and his father Phil worked side by side to return the ship to the Royal Navy's operational fleet after the amphibious vessel had a major refit in dry dock in Plymouth.

Lee, an LET, and his father, a contractor employee, shared the finishing touches to the work package during Ocean's marine engineering sea acceptance trials.

Phil said: "It's been a good experience; Lee has always been hardworking, always cheerful and it's been brilliant to see what he does onboard, and have a hand in HMS Ocean taking over as the in-service landing platform helicopter."

It is not the first time they have worked together, but it is the first time they have been to sea together.

Lee originally left the Royal Navy in 2003 and went to work in the same factory as his father, where he decided that what he really wanted to do after all was be a Marine Engineer in a Royal Navy warship.

He rejoined in September 2004 and has never looked back.

Fun for families on Ocean

HMS OCEAN celebrated a successful period at sea with a rare chance for families to see round the largest warship in the Royal Navy during a families' day in Plymouth.

More than 1,200 people enjoyed a day of ship tours and activities as the crew showed off the results of their efforts to their families and friends at Devonport Naval Base.

Children and parents alike enjoyed seeing where their loved ones work, sleep and rest and give their special visitors an insight into their jobs.

The summer has been particularly successful for the crew of Ocean – her sea trials, including propulsion, steering, sensors and weapons tests, were reported to have gone well and the crew were thoroughly exercised in all their roles.

This programme was all-absorbing, coming as it did at the end of a very demanding



year converting the ship from an industrial site, after a refit, to a running warship.

For many of the crew, with their loved ones living across the UK, it was the first chance for them to show their families how they have been filling their days.

The event was also a way of thanking families for their support before the ship embarked on further training and operations, including the current Cougar 14 deployment.

● Clockwise from above: LS Ian Holmes with Grace Ing, seven, and her five-year-old brother George; Isabelle Crawford, eight, tries on a flying helmet and life jacket; children play at the Frozen party on the ship; families on HMS Ocean's flight deck

Pictures: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse



Tyne gift for Navy fanatic

THE name Jan Lyon will be known by many sailors across the Fleet for the enduring support that she has provided to ships deployed on operations around the world for the last 22 years.

Often this takes the form of correspondence with the ship's company containing news from back home but many will no doubt also be familiar with the sight of Miss Lyon waving vigorously from Round Tower as ships come and go.

This support was recognised with a visit to Miss Lyon's Southsea home by the Operations Officer of HMS Tyne, Lt Matt Winwood, where he presented a framed picture of the ship to Miss Lyon.

Lt Winwood said: "Being constantly deployed on a fishery protection vessel around the UK means that we don't get the homecomings that ships on

longer deployments do, however, Jan Lyon is always at Round Tower to welcome us home come rain or shine."

Miss Lyon presented a ship's crest from HMS Newcastle to Lt Winwood for HMS Tyne in honour of the visit. The crest had originally been presented to Miss Lyon by the crew of the Type 42 destroyer and now takes pride of place amongst other crests on board Tyne, honouring the ship's relationship with Miss Lyon but also the affiliation with the River Tyne and North Shields.

Lt Charles Stevenson, an SFT Young Officer with Tyne, added: "It was very special to meet someone who has devoted so much time to the support of the Royal Navy, her ships and her people and I will certainly keep a vigilant eye on Round Tower in future to ensure Jan gets the wave she deserves."



● Lt Matt Winwood presents a picture of HMS Tyne to Jan Lyon



● POPT Ian Robinson

Trophy award for PTI

A PTI from HMS Collingwood has received the Tony Tyrwhitt-Bettridge Trophy for his efforts while on board HMS Lancaster.

POPT Ian 'Robbo' Robinson, 31, received the trophy which is presented annually to an individual within the Physical Training department who has made the most significant contribution to the furtherance of sport, recreation, physical and adventurous training within their unit.

Ian's nomination came from the 19 months he spent onboard HMS Lancaster.

During his time on board Ian organised many charity events for the RNRMC, including a 24-hour row, cycle rides from Portsmouth to Lancaster and also walks from Portsmouth to London. His events and efforts saw more than £8,000 raised for the charity.

Ian's primary task as a PTI was to ensure the ship's company were fit to fight at all times. His hard work and efforts in keeping everyone active led to a 100 per cent pass rate for the crew when undertaking their Royal Naval Fitness Test.

Ian said: "I feel very privileged to be awarded the PTI of the year and to have my name amongst many legends that have won it previously."

Ian, who has been in the Navy for ten years, lives in Gosport with wife Samantha and son Harry.

Step back in time

TWO sailors who went along to take part in a public service course almost found themselves in the middle of a WW2 re-enactment.

CPO(CA2) Louise Isaccs and PO(CA3) Jane Williams turned up at RAF East Kirkby in Lincolnshire to find the original 1940s control tower and hangar – complete with wartime NAAFI – and a receptionist inquiring if they were there for the re-enactment.

During the course the couple saw an Avro Lancaster bomber, called Just Jane, as the site is home to the Lincolnshire Aviation Heritage Centre – a living memorial to the 55,500 men of Bomber Command who lost their lives during WW2.

The average age of aircrew, each man a volunteer, was 22 and barely one in four completed their first tour of 30 operations.

The Royal Navy duo also saw the Lancaster taxi throughout the day. During their visit, which was organised by Isle College, Wisbech, they also visited the museum and air traffic control centre.

News in brief

■ Did you know? The latest Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity Impact Report, detailing all the amazing things you've helped us accomplish last year, is available now. Download your copy today at www.bit.ly/RNRMCimpact

■ Skiing enthusiasts at HMS Neptune will be delighted to hear that pommel lift works are set to take place this month, thanks to an RNRMC grant, bringing the dry slopes back to their former glory. See www.neptuneskiandboardcentre.com for more details.

■ RNA Monmouth remembers World War 1 with The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines CTC, Lympstone on October 10. This is a musical experience not to be missed. Tickets £15. Visit www.theblaketheatre.org



We improve the lives of all who serve – past and present – and their families. Contact us at Fundraising@RNRMC.org.uk or call 023 9254 8289. For more information visit RNRMC.org.uk and you can also find us on Facebook and Twitter.



● The crew of HMS Artful enjoyed a catch-up (and ketchup) at the submarine's family day

BBQ and bouncy castle for fun day No need to shout

IT'S always good to ketchup with your shipmates.

Leaving the world's most advanced hunter-killer submarine behind for the day, the crew of HMS Artful invited family to soak up the summer sun with a spot of team building... and burger munching.

Some 100 submariners and the extended Artful family gathered in the Cumbrian sunshine (not a phrase we use often given the propensity for rain in this part of England) for an afternoon of bouncy castles and barbecued grub (though not necessarily at the same time).

Artful is the third of the Royal Navy's seven Astute-class submarines – the first two boats are on their maiden patrols right now – with her crew working flat out alongside engineers and technicians from BAE to prepare the £1bn attack boat for being handed over to the RN next year.

Since being rolled out of the gigantic Devonshire Dock Hall in Barrow-in-Furness earlier this year, fitting out work and systems tests have been continuing apace on the 7,500-tonne submarine – she's due to make her first test dive in the cavernous basin at the BAE yard in September.

So with all that hard work in mind, and aided by a donation from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the crew decided a fun day was the ideal opportunity to remove uniforms, forget about work for a few hours, have a bit of fun and help forge the crew's spirit and ethos.

"The next couple of months are going to be busy as we ramp up the training in preparation for sailing," explained PO Stephen Walton, who helped organise the event.

"I'm really glad the ship's company could get together and enjoy the sunshine for one afternoon."

Having enjoyed their barbecue, the crew will now embark on the difficult road of simulator training, assessments and inspections, before putting Artful through her paces during sea trials. She's due to leave Barrow in early 2015.

"It is a delight to be able to invite families down to events like this, support from our families is very important," said Artful's Commanding Officer Cdr Nigel Bower.

"I'm delighted that we have reached a key milestone in Artful's build programme."

IF YOU shout while submerged hundreds of metres underwater, will anyone hear you?

Well, thanks to a grant of nearly £25,000 from The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, being heard aboard the ballistic missile submarine HMS Vengeance will no longer be a problem.

Taking advantage of improving the sub's capabilities during a long overhaul period, the ship's company placed a bid with the charity to install a Joint Command Briefing and Mess Entertainment System.

Cdr P Nimmons, former CO of HMS Vengeance, explained: "The system will have a variety of uses; as a command briefing system, the system will be used to deliver training, during FOST sea training and liaison visits, leaving/entering harbour briefs, post-patrol VIP brides and for informing the crew."

The £25,000 grant also provides for off-duty crew with all messes benefitting from the audio-visual installation. Xbox One and PlayStation 4 consoles, large smart screen TVs, PCs, mountings for speakers and dozens of feet-worth of digital cabling are all being provided.

FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH

BAE SYSTEMS AND SEA

A 'FOOLHARDY' team of nine engineers and four support staff from BAE Systems and SEA (Systems Engineering & Assessment Ltd) overcame a towering climbing challenge by conquering all three of the British mainland's highest peaks in fewer than 24 hours. To date, their efforts have collectively raised £7,215.



Cheers! More cash for RNRMC

IN KEEPING with traditional and historical links, Pusser's Rum made a considerable donation to The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) at the charity's home of HMS Excellent, Portsmouth.

A cheque was presented by Gary Rogalski, President and CEO of Pusser's Rum, and accepted on behalf of the charity by its Chief Executive Robert Robson.

The long-standing partnership between Pusser's Rum and the charity has seen the brand make sizeable donations to the charity, which over the past five years is in excess of £110K.

Explaining the relationship ahead of the presentation, Mr Rogalski said: "We have made annual donations to the RNRMC since 1998, and are delighted to once again be handing over a

generous cheque to support the charity and indeed our friends within the Royal Navy. We know the funds will be put to very good use."

Due to Pusser's close historical connection with the sailors of the Royal Navy (more specifically the issuing of the 'tot' of rum on board ships); the donation will be used to fund activity that enhances wellbeing and boosts the morale of personnel across the naval Service – be they sailors, submariners or Royal Marines.

Receiving the cheque, Mr Robson said: "We are most grateful to Pusser's Rum for their continued support."

"This generous donation will enable the charity to improve the quality of life for Naval Service personnel, especially those who are undertaking operational duties away from home."

Pusser's is an authentic navy rum, not just a dark rum. The definition of a real Navy rum is that it has to be distilled in a wooden still.

First introduced to the Royal Navy in 1655 as a substitute for beer, Pusser's Rum is one of the most historic and traditional rums still available today. The name is a corruption of Purser, the person who issued the rum each day.

Production of Pusser's rum today is in exact accordance with the original blend and it is the only rum approved by the Admiralty.

Pusser's is 100 per cent natural and Gunpowder Proof is still produced at Navy strength, which is 54.5 per cent.

Sailors in the British Navy had a daily tot of rum for more than 300 years until the practice ended on July 31 1970 – Black Tot Day.

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Backing forces for 75 years

THE Nuffield Trust for the Forces of the Crown marks its 75th anniversary this month.

The fund was originally endowed by British industrialist and car manufacturer, William Morris, the founder of Morris Motors Limited.

Morris, who was born in 1877 and later known as Lord Nuffield, devoted his energies to philanthropic endeavours. His passion for supporting members of the Armed Forces (in particular) are his lasting legacy.

Since 1939 the Trust has given grants worth some £239m at today's prices and it routinely allocates more than £1m annually to the Regular and Reserve Armed Services.

Often in collaboration with other charities, such as the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the Trust is able to distribute around 300

grants per year.

Examples of recent grants given include:

■ Providing two replacement caravans for Royal Marines personnel and their families at Commando Training Centre Royal Marines in Lympstone. Almonising with The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, and additionally The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund, the Trust provided £7,500 toward the caravans.

■ A joint funding programme, between the Trust, the RNRMC and The Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund, saw the refurbishment of the Ocean Wave of Albany yacht, a mainstay of the Royal Marines Sailing Club.

If you would like to apply for a grant email mygrant@rnrmc.org.uk for an application form, briefly detailing the cost and scope of your project.

Keeping it in the family

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity has joined forces with Relate, the UK's largest provider of relationship support, to offer counselling for Naval personnel and their families in Portsmouth.

The partnership will help personnel in many ways by providing relationship support; family and young people counselling; and sex therapy, through a series of counselling sessions which are fully-funded by the charity.

At this stage, the pilot programme is limited to 12 beneficiaries in Portsmouth and south-east Hampshire (Gosport, Fareham and Havant), however it will expand to other areas if successful.

Anne Carr, Head of Grants at the RNRMC, said: "We see this pilot as a key part of enhancing the well-being and morale of

the Service, in addition to supporting families.

"We are very keen on extending the programme to other areas so hopefully this is the first step in a longer-term partnership."

Rachel Aslet-Clark, Centre Manager at Relate Portsmouth and District, said: "We find people tend to be quite nervous about their first session but our counsellors quickly put people at ease.

"Our counsellors are pretty unshockable and understand the realities of service life.

"Relationship support is not unusual or anything to be embarrassed about."

Interested Naval personnel have to self-refer into the service by calling 023 9282 7026 and quoting 'RNRMC' or by visiting the website: www.relateportsmouth.org.uk

Great Korea move

THE Combined Services Disabled Ski Team has set itself a £20,000 challenge to take two more team members to the 2018 Winter Paralympics in South Korea.

Employees at a UK company took part in a 'Ride of Thrones' to help boost the fund.

Staff at Selex ES, which provides protective equipment to the Armed Forces, are cycling from Edinburgh Castle to the Tower of London.

Ex-Serviceman Mick Brennan, who competed for Team GB at the 2014 Sochi Winter Paralympics, is full of praise for the fundraisers.

"Skiing is a very expensive sport and having the support and sponsorship is a weight off my mind. I am really grateful to those who raise funds for CSDST," said the 34-year-old from Doncaster.

"Skiing is fun to do. I do the easy bit, skiing down a hill. Raising funds is the real hard work. It takes £20,000 just to keep me on the road for a year.

"Most people in the military are competitively-minded and want to challenge themselves. The CSDST allows you to do that as you can take it easy or go really fast and feel the G-force.

"When I'm in a mono-ski I am at no disadvantage to anyone else."

The ski season starts this month and Mick is aiming to take part in the World Championships in Canada in February.

To support the Ride of Thrones visit <https://www.justgiving.com/RideofThrones/> or you can text "HERO26" followed by the amount you wish to donate (max £10) to 70070.

Ride for family

FUNDRAISER Mark Warren is planning to cycle from John O'Groats to Land's End next year.

Mark's trek, which starts on June 1 2015, is to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund, Cancer Research UK and the British Heart Foundation.

In 2013 he raised just under £1,000 for the RNRMC after cycling from Manchester to Portsmouth in memory of his cousin John Warren.

"Since that ride our family has lost other members and this ride will be in honour of them – Roy Clarke, Gaynor Clarke, Paul Warren and Charles Warren," he said.

He will ride solo for most of the 12-day trip before his girlfriend Becky joins him for the last couple of days.

Anyone wishing to donate can do so at <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/jogglebikeride>

Feeling on top of the world



LSC Naomi Doyle relaxes with a cuppa and a copy of *Navy News* – at the summit of Mount Kilimanjaro

Naomi, who is currently deployed in the ice patrol ship HMS Protector, decided to climb the peak during her leave period.

Naomi said: "While at sea, I had prepared intensively for a climb up Kilimanjaro, which is South Africa's tallest free-standing mountain at 5,895m (19,341ft) above sea level.

"My mission was to accomplish the strenuous climb in just six days averaging 12km a day.

"Along the way I met some interesting characters from all over the world, all of whom I am now staying in touch with."

Naomi, who rejoined the ship in Ghana after her leave period was over, also raised funds for East Anglia Children's Hospice, the ship's fund.

She added: "Overall, the Navy enabled me to complete this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity and it will live in my memory forever.

"Anybody thinking about doing the climb should not fear it. It's a great experience and is open to all ages."

HMS Protector is heading back to the South Atlantic and is due to return to the UK in the spring of next year.

Charity Snippets

■ VETERANS' charity Alabaré opened a new Gosport home as part of their Hampshire Homes for Veterans initiative.

The new home will provide accommodation for four residents with low support needs, and is the fourth home in the Hampshire initiative which supports 16 veterans in total.

Alabaré's Hampshire Homes for Veterans opened their first house in 2011, and since then have supported 43 veterans from the area.

The opening of the new home was made possible thanks to a grant of £33,998 from the Hampshire Armed Forces Community Covenant.

■ NAVAL personnel and civilians from across HMS Collingwood got on their bikes in support of the Cardiomyopathy Association (CMA).

Babcock employee Sue Haigh, a facilitator from the Integrated Training Support Centre (ITSC), decided to hold the cycle challenge at the base in support of her partner and CMA. The event raised £331 for CMA.

■ NAVY wives' baking skills have helped raise £1,000 for the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Air Ambulance.

HMS Sultan Wives Club, a small group of retired Service wives, raise funds throughout the year.

■ PERSONNEL from RNAS Culdrose took part in Helstonbury, the Cornish town's take on Glastonbury.

The festival, which raises funds for good causes, this year included a Sunday Communion service.

■ THE SSAFA Big Brew Up takes place from October 6-12.

The campaign, which will see cuppas quaffed at bases from Afghanistan to Akrotiri and Brunei to Birmingham, will raise vital funds to support Servicemen and women past and present and their families.

■ GLEAMING cars replaced shiny boots on the Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) parade ground as staff queued up to have their cars washed for charity.

With chamois, brushes and buckets in hand BRNC's Ceremonial Training Team raised nearly £300 for the RNRMC.

WO Daz Honeychurch said: "The RNRMC was one of a number of organisations who provided money to help us refurbish the Warrant Officer and Senior Rates' Mess; the first major refurbishment the mess has had since the 1970s. The car wash was our way of thanking the charity and putting some money back in the pot."

■ CHAMPIONSHIP side Bolton Wanderers have chosen BLESMA – the Limbless Veterans – as their national charity of choice for the 2014/2015 season.

As 2014 is the centenary year of the First World War, the club has chosen charities that support members of the Armed Forces community. BLESMA will be the national partner, while Winston's Wish is a leading local charity helping child bereavement, including providing a service supporting bereaved children of military families.

■ SHOPPERS have donated more than £9,000 for Service charities following a weekend of tributes at Newcastle's Metrocentre marking the centenary of WW1.

This will be distributed between a range of charities, including the Royal British Legion, the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity, the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund, SSAFA and the ABF Soldiers' Charity.

Navy veteran says thanks for support

A NAVY veteran who tackled sight loss to become the UK's first blind chartered tax consultant has thanked a national charity for helping him follow his dreams.

Jamie Weller, 43, from Nottingham, suffers from cone rod dystrophy and lost his sight when he was in his twenties.

Now supported by Blind Veterans UK, the national charity for vision impaired ex-Servicemen and women, Jamie says that he refuses to let his blindness hold him back.

As a lifelong military enthusiast, Jamie joined the Navy and trained at HMS Daedalus and HMS Raleigh, before transferring to 899 NAS, where he worked as a Sea Harrier engineer.

Jamie said: "It seemed like the perfect combination – travelling and seeing the world, while being in the military. I'd had such a great start to my career and working on the Sea Harriers was a dream job for me."

Three years into his service, Jamie's vision started to deteriorate leaving him with a large central blind spot in both eyes. Due to the severity of his condition, Jamie was discharged



● Jamie was an Olympic torch-bearer in 2012

and registered as blind.

He says: "Losing my sight felt like my world had just been turned upside down; I was in a dark place and felt like my dream career had been snatched away from me. I had to figure out how to get back on my feet and move my life forwards again – I didn't want to let this horrible disability beat me."

Jamie has now regained his

independence and has become the UK's first chartered tax consultant after receiving free support from Blind Veterans UK.

Jamie said: "When I realised that Blind Veterans UK would not only be there for me for the rest of my life, but also that their support was open to all vision impaired veterans, I knew then that I wasn't going to let my blindness manage me – I was

going to manage my blindness."

Through Blind Veterans UK, Jamie received vital emotional support to help him come to terms with his sight loss, and training which enabled him to achieve a degree in mathematics.

He then joined Deloitte and worked in their tax department and became the first registered blind qualified member of the Chartered Institute of Taxation. In 2012, he represented Deloitte as a London Olympic torch-bearer.

Jamie says: "Being a torch-bearer was absolutely amazing. It was a very proud moment for me and I was so lucky to be given the opportunity. It is a memory I will never forget.

"My blindness is an inconvenience that I've managed to work around with help from Blind Veterans UK."

Blind Veterans UK's No One Alone campaign estimates that there are more than 68,000 blind veterans who, like Jamie, are eligible for the charity's services but are not aware of this.

If you know a veteran who is now battling sight problems call freephone 0800 389 7979 or go to www.noonealone.org.uk

Canine helpers rewarded

CANINE Partners, a charity that provides highly trained assistance dogs to people with disabilities, has become an Associate Member of the Confederation of Service Charities in recognition of the work it does in supporting members of the Armed Forces community.

Steve Brooks, who was left paralysed after a motorcycle accident in 2008, which put a stop to his career in the Royal Navy, has been partnered with Kizzie since 2011.

Steve said: "I always felt a little self-conscious about being in a wheelchair, but now I know they are looking at Kizzie and not me! Independence wise she has given me a new lease of life."



● Steve Brooks with Kizzie

Equine expert calls in

THE Queen's horse whisperer Monty Roberts and a team from Intelligent Horsemanship visited the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Riding Stables at Bickleigh.

Monty and his instructors demonstrated methods of working with horses by using body language and engendering trust.

All the participants got the opportunity to work one-on-one with the horses under the personal supervision of Monty and his team.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Riding Stables based at Bickleigh Barracks is a charity dedicated to providing affordable equestrian activities for service personnel and their families. For details go to www.bickleighridingstables.com



● Monty Roberts at Bickleigh

Deaths

Capt North Dalrymple-Hamilton DSC. Joined the RN 1940 and witnessed the sinking of Bismarck from HMS King George V - his father was in command of HMS Rodney at the same action. 1942 joined the HMS Faulknor for her first convoy PQ18; she sank U-88 shortly after. Faulknor led the 4th Escort Group at the height of the Battle of the Atlantic, and took part in Op Husky (Sicily landings), Op Baytown (Allied support landings in Italy) and Op Avalanche (the main Salerno landings). In 1943 she escorted the surrendered Italian fleet to Malta before conducting operations in the Aegean; he was awarded a DSC. Joined HMS Cotswold and father and son were reunited on D-Day off the French coast. After VE Day he became Flag Lt to CinC East Indies. Appointed MBE whilst serving in HMS Birmingham during the Korean War and was cipher officer in the liner Gothic when she was chartered as a royal yacht during the Queen's Commonwealth tour 1953-54; he returned to Royal duties as XO of Britannia 1958-60, appointed CVO 1961. That year he was in a helicopter crash and spent four months in hospital. He returned to sea as Captain 17th Frigate Sqn and later filled two staff appointments, as Director of Naval Signals then of a weapons trials establishment. He retired in 1970 to become custodian of the family estate in Ayrshire; he continued to serve the Royal family as a member of the Queen's Bodyguard for Scotland; appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Ayrshire in 1973. July 8. Aged 92.

Capt Brian H G M Baynham. As a midshipman he served in HMS Nigeria on Arctic convoys and in Keppel. Began submarine training 1942 and became fourth hand on board H44 then moved to Sceptre, one of the parent submarines for Operation Source 1943, the midjet submarine attack on German battleship Tirpitz. He was later mentioned in despatches for his part in the sinking of four freighters. Early 1944 he moved to Uther as First Lt and late 1944 to Spearhead. In 1949 he took command of Sea Scout and 1959-60 he commanded the frigate Torquay. 1965 he was Captain 3rd Submarine Squadron, based in depot ship Maidstone at Gareloch, and 1969-71 he commanded the destroyer Norfolk. Retired 1971. Emigrated to New South Wales with his family in 1994. Member of Submariners Association (Australia Eastern States Branch). August 2. Aged 92.

David Roy 'Mitch' Mitchell CPO (Mech) Eng. Served 1960-89 HMS Leopard for the evacuation of Tristan da Cunha and Rhyll. Became a Submariner and served in submarines Grampus, Swiftsure and Spartan. Died at his home in Spain March 18. Aged 69.

Alan W Percival CEM. Served 1955-76 HMS Opossum (frigate), Salisbury, Tiger, Scarborough and Brighton (twice). Treasurer of HMS Opossum Association. August 11. Aged 77.

Ronald 'Ron' Blundy AB. Served

1945-59 HMS St George, Ganges, Eagle, Bonavista, Glory, Opossum (F33), Ark Royal, Illustrious and St Austell Bay. HMS Opossum Association. July 2. Aged 84.

Peter Crayford CPO RS. Served 1962-87 HMS Ashanti, Murray, Rooke, Soberton, Opossum, Falmouth, St Angelo (Lascaris Comcen), Mercury, Lowestoft, Warrior and Glamorgan. Collingwood branch of the RNCCA (RN Communication Chiefs Association). August 12. Aged 66.

Les 'Chalky' White Sto Mech. Served HMS Bermuda. The Royal Naval Engineer's Association. August 14. Aged 86.

David 'George' Formby ex-CPO (Missile). Served in HMS Sirius, Blake, Eskimo, Jaguar, Ardent, Andromeda and at HMS Cambridge. Retired from RN in 1990 and went on to manage Lacock Abbey for the National Trust. August 31. Aged 64.

Mrs Florence Clarke (nee Bell) ex-WRNS SBA. Served 1948-51. Trained at Chatham and served at RNH Chatham, RNH Haslar and HMS Vulture. Member of the Royal Naval Medical Branch Ratings & Sick Berth Staff Association. August 16. Aged 84.

Capt Thomas N Catlow CBE. HMS Ocean, Cochrane, President, Loch Insh, Royal Arthur. NATO SACLANT. CSCBS. DNSY. Aug 23. Aged 99.

Capt North E F Dalrymple-Hamilton CVO DSC MBE. HMS Birmingham, President, Terror, RY Britannia, Bellerophon, Mercury. MOD Weapons Dept. Dir Naval Sigs. Aug 25.

Capt Michael F Forrest. HMS Albion, 804, 814, 829, 737 NAS. CO Hampshire and Britannia Flts. FONAC staff. Aug 7. Aged 81.

Surg Capt Michael Hatfield. HMS Defiance, Drake, Cochrane. RNH Haslar. MOD London. C-in-C Fleet, MDG(N), DGS, Aug 8.

Capt Noel H C James. 829, 845, 848 NAS. HMS Bulwark, Capt RNAS Culdrose. Aug 12. Aged 74.

Cdr John D Graham. HMS St Angelo, Forth, Yarmouth, Lochinvar, Vernon, Royal Arthur. ACR Staff. 14 Aug.

Lt Cdr Donald B Currie. 831 NAS. HMS Eagle. RNAS Yeovilton, Simbang. Aug 5. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr Douglas E Fairweather. RNAS Culdrose, Eglington, Anthon. HMS Osprey, Vengeance, Hermes, Dryad. Aug 19. Aged 89.

Lt Cdr Leonard A Thomas. HMS Hermes, Victorious. RNAS Culdrose, Portland, Lossiemouth, Eglington. 815, 751 NAS. FONAC Staff. July 18. Aged 91.

Lt Joseph H Cross OBE. HMS Osprey, Victorious, Daedalus. July 27. Aged 79.

Lt(A) RNVR Charles F Gough. 811, 835, 836, 758 NAS. Aug 13.

Lt(A) RNVR John C Harrison MBE. 826, 784 & 1790 NAS. Aug 6. Aged 93.

Lt(A) RNVR Gordon V Pickard. RNAS Burscough. June 25. Aged 93.

Lt(A) RNVR James D Sinclair. 812, 828, 790 NAS. HMS Furious, Ark Royal,

Argus. Aug 3. Aged 93.

Sub Lt(A) RNVR Royston T J Clarke. RNAS Donisbristle. Aug 22.

Sub Lt RNVR Peter R Davis DSC. Aug 21.

Sub Lt(A) RNVR James T Lyon QC MA LLB FRAES.

Joseph 'Joe' H Clements CPO EL. Served from 1940 to 1979 in St George, IoM Boys Training, Victory, Queen Elizabeth, Jervis, Vernon, Eaglet-Havelock, Perseus, Golden Hind, Tamar - Hart, Theseus, Sea Eagle - Crispin, Collingwood, Bella Hoflam - Adamant, Vanguard, Duchess, Diligence, Eagle, Undine, Rocket and RN Careers Office, Shrewsbury. August 26. Aged 90.

Bob Macey FCOEL. Joined HMS Collingwood 1953. Served on many ships including HMS Glory, Surprise, Diligence, Cossack, Burnaston, Repton, Bastion, Decoy, Bulwark, and at 2SJUSTU, left RN 1979. Undertook a charity row in a bath from Isle of Wight to Gosport. Post-service he canoed the River Trent before emigrating to Australia, which he circumnavigated by car. He kept sheep and owned opal mines. On return to the UK he settled in Staffordshire. 4 September. Aged 77.

Tom Harvey Air Mech. (A) 1945-50. Joined HMS Victory and Royal Arthur. Trained and served HMS Gosling, Blackcap, Daedalus, Gannet with 800 Sqn (Seafires), HMS Triumph. August 22. Aged 86.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

William John Chivers MBE. Served HMS Suffolk and Pluto. Awarded MBE for Services to the Sea Cadets. Algerines Association. Chairman and Life Member of Kingsbury & Kenton RNA. June 24. Aged 86.

Edwin 'Eddie' James Weaver LAM(E). Served 1948-56 HMS Royal Arthur, Illustrious, Albion and Centaur; also Hornbill, Gamecock, Vulture and Daedalus, RNAS Culdrose (Seahawk), RNAS Yeovilton (Heron), RNAS Abbotsinch (Sanderling) and RNAS Hal Far (Falcon). Gloucester RNA and Founder Member of FAAA Cotswold branch (disbanded 2013). August 10. Aged 83.

George Smith. Ganges Boy. Uxbridge RNA. August 11. Aged 87

Reginald Samways CPO Cook. Served HMS Kingcup, Glasgow and Eagle. Saltash branch. July 21. Aged 94.

Edward 'Eddie' Smurthwaite. Joined Ganges as a Boy Seaman and served on board HMS Unicorn (Korean War). Secretary of Stockton-on-Tees branch RNA. July 28. Aged 81.

Stanley T Henty RM. Served 1939-42 on board HMS Glasgow engaged in the evacuation of King Haakon and Crown Prince Olav from Molde 1940. Runcorn RNA. Aged 95.

Elsa Perry (nee Stone) L/Wren. Served 1944-46 HMS Pembroke III, Mill Hill London, Admiralty Citadel (Teleprint operator) and HMS President. Past chairman Norwich

branch. August 22. Aged 88.

Harry Ingleby L/Elec Mech. Served 1955-64 (RFR 1964-72) HMS Collingwood, Pembroke, Adamant, Duchess, Eaglet, Chailey, Duncansby Head, Scarborough and Lochinvar. Harrogate & District branch. August 30. Aged 77.

Sue Reeves. Associate member of Henlow branch. August 22.

John James 'Jack' Reay. President Sunderland branch. January 21. Aged 94.

Albert Ronald 'Ron' McGill. LA, served 1948-1955. HMS Royal Arthur, HMS Unicorn (Korean War), HMS Indomitable, HMS Glory. Member of Aylesbury RNA since 1997. August 3. Aged 84.

Ronald 'Ron' Vowles, Stoker. Served HMS Worcester (mined 1943), posted 1944 to HMS Wolverine. Brentwood Branch and RBL. July 2014. Aged 90.

David Paton PO(AH1). Served in FAA March 1957 to September 1968. Member of Nuneaton RNA. July 28. Aged 85.

James Power LAM(AE). Served in FAA from May 1945 to May 1955. Member of Nuneaton RNA. July 29. Aged 72.

Brian Thwaites LAM(O). Served in FAA from May 1956 to May 1965. Member of Nuneaton RNA. August 26. Aged 76.

ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS

Lt Cdr Alistair Hunter Blair. Born in New Zealand, served in HMS Mauritius, Trulove, Unicorn, Opossum (F33), LCT 162, Tyne, Belfast, Eagle, Centaur, Zest, Ausonia, Phoenix, RNR London Badminton & Santon. Member of HMS Opossum Association. June. Aged 83.

Capt Melville R Hocken. HMS Glamorgan. MOD Weapons Dept, Procurement Exec, DNOR, DNTW. Def Attache Wellington. Aug 6. Aged 86.

Capt John C Judge. HMS Juno, Osprey, Portsmouth & Devonport. DGNMT. AIB. Ghana Navy. Aug 16. Aged 85.

Cdr Robin A C Owen OBE. Naval Base Chatham & Devonport. HMS Solebay, Rocket, Lochinvar, Collingwood, Mercury, Warrior. Aug 14. Aged 92.

Cdr Harry G S Thompson. RNEC, HMS Victorious, Excellent, Collingwood. MOD DNW, DGW & Weapons Dept (N). Def Intel Staff. Aug 19.

Lt Cdr Adrian S Martin MBE RD* RNR. ML493. Comms Tg Centre RNR. Aug 7. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Arthur H Smith MBE. HMS Daedalus. DGA(N). Aug 21. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Brian L C Wakeley. HMS Galatea, Eagle, Kent, StVincent, Osprey, Dryad. July 29.

Maj E D Stroud DSC. RM Division Sigs. HMS Lanka. July 24.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

Lt Cdr Douglas 'Stormy' Fairweather. Served 1941-69. 719, 738, 812, 814 and 815 Sgns. Flying training in Ontario. Served in many RN air stations including Fearn, East Haven, Hal Far, Lossiemouth, Culdrose, Yeovilton, Daedalus. Flew

Barracuda, Firefly, Seafire and Swordfish from HMS Ocean, Vengeance, Hermes. FAA Officers Association. August 19. Aged 89.

Vernon Stansfield. Served 1943-46 at HMS Raleigh, Drake, Gosling, Daedalus (twice), Blackcap, Turnstone, Fieldfare, Gosling and Paragon. Founder member of Yorkshire branch. July 9.

Alec Hodgins. From the Blackburn Swordfish aircraft factory in Leeds he joined the RN 1943 and trained as an electrician. Served in HMS Nightjar (Inskip) then in 1944 as a L/Elec he went to Australia and joined HMS Arbitrator (Pacific Fleet), Yorkshire FAAA branch secretary and a member of the Swordfish Trust. July 30. Aged 91.

Michael 'Mickey' Quinn AB. FAA. Served February 1944 to April 1947 in Aircraft Handling parties on HMS Activity and Indefatigable. August 8. Aged 88.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

A 'Arthur' Brady Tel. Submarine service 1943-46. Served in H44, Subtle. Essex Branch. Age 89.

D A 'David' Kemp Lt(E). Submarine service 1968-76. Served in Auriga, Grampus, Ocelot. Gosport Branch. Age 78.

C 'Colin' Pemberton B LTO. Submarine service 1942-45. Served in Severn Trenchant. Merseyside Branch.

Age: 95.

J F 'John' Taylor ERA.1. Submarine service 1959-75. Served in Thule, Teredo, Andrew, Osiris (Chilian Subs). Dolphin Branch. Age: 79.

A H 'Archie' Watt CC.Mech.(L). Submarine service 1964-78. Served in Osiris, Churchill, Resolution. Midway Towns Branch. Age: 76.

Sports Lottery

August 2: £5,000 - Mne J Park; £1,800 - AB2 J Draper; £800 - Lt Cdr C Inslay; £600 - AB1 L Mather; £500 - LH J Best; £400 - AB1 J Knowles.

August 9: £5,000 - CPO R Burns; £1,800 - WO1 P Mills; £800 - MID D Shutt; £600 - LCPL L Jordan; £500 - WO1 A Stevenson; £400 - CPO C Mullan.

August 16: £5,000 - Cpl M McCaffrey; £1,800 - Mne S Lever; £800 - PO J Battersby-Wilcox; £600 - LH D Thomas; £500 - AB1 K Porteous; £400 - LH K Johnson.

August 23: £5,000 - Lt Cdr S Goodrum; £1,800 - AB1 C Young; £800 - LH D Owen; £600 - Mne P Dolby; £500 - PO C Jones; £400 - AB1 G Burrows.

Ask Jack

825 Squadron 1953-57: Seeking Leading Airmen Pilots Mates of 825 Squadron who served between 1953 to 1957 and on HMS Albion 1956. John Underwood (in Canada) and another member who lives in the UK would like to contact anyone still around from that period. Contact John Underwood at lpandjh67@gmail.com or write to 96 Young Crescent, SS4, Niagara on the Lake, Ontario, L0S 1J0, Canada.

Berlin Airlift: This year is the 65th anniversary of the Berlin Airlift. Everyone thinks it was a RAF operation. It was not. There was a very large Army involvement and, to a lesser extent, Royal Naval involvement as well. The RN provided Air Traffic Controllers at Gatow (the main airfield for incoming goods delivered by the British). A contingent of Naval officers (mostly captains and lieutenant commanders, I have staff lists) worked in Berlin, being blockaded in at Lancaster House in Charlottenburg. They worked with the Army and Air Cdre Rex Wait, the 'father of the airlift' who devised the operation. Naval divers and frogmen worked at Finkenwerder on the River Elbe near Hamburg removing mines, underwater obstacles and keeping the area free from debris so that it was safe for RAF Sunderlands to take off carrying salt for Berlin. They landed on the Havel until it became iced up in mid-December 1948. Wrens were present at Finkenwerder. My

main problem is, that there appears to be a total lack of records for the period May/June 1948 to October 1949 for Berlin and Gatow. June to mid December 1948 for Finkenwerder and the Havel. I have tried everywhere in Portsmouth and Kew, I am still awaiting some replies. I am hoping to find someone who remembers these times, or there might be relatives who might remember. This unfairness regarding an Airlift medal has precipitated things rather; it seems it will be restricted to RAF and civilian aircrew only (my husband was a member of the Black Watch Regiment and flew with RAF aircrews, riding shotgun with valuable cargoes into Berlin on a regular basis). I have run the brigadier to earth who chaired the said committee but I must have information to actually prove the Royal Navy were on the Airlift and carried out work similar to the RAF. Please contact Sue Campbell at buckholtbill@talktalk.net or tel 01600 715173.

Sir Winston Churchill's State Funeral: January 30 2015 is the 50th anniversary of the great man's funeral. I was dragged off the Killicks' course at Sultan and placed in the guard. I am writing an article for the HMS Ganges Gazette and request any of you who were there to get in touch to share your memories of the day. Colin Brett, aka Pancho. Contact Colin Brett at pancho.brett@talktalk.net or tel: 01302 883331.

Reunions - see opposite page

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Calliope's Calliosers

WE'RE not quite sure what these reservists from HMS Calliope are up to – but we quite like it and, besides, they're all winners.

Sub Lt Jim Farquhar, PO(Logs) Jim Hudson, AB2(Logs) Diane Mallaburn, AB1(Logs) Dipty Patel, LS(Sea) Elle Forrest and AB2(Sea) Andy Winkworth let their hair down after being singled out during the Gateshead unit's annual awards evening.

The Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Sir Nigel Sherlock, joined friends and family of the ship's company who basked in glorious Tyneside sunshine for a pre-event reception before moving on to the drill deck for the formal awards.

As well as the presentation of 'ceremonial' silverware – some

of which is nearly a century old – each prizewinner received a certificate celebrating their achievement and a specially-minted HMS Calliope Challenge Coin.

In addition, the winner of the 'Best Calliope' title, LS Forrest, received a cheque for £150 from the Herbert Lott Naval Efficiency Award Fund.

Elle, an information management consultant from Chester-le-Street, has been a key figure in the unit's fund raising

activity, helping to raise more than £2,000 for various charities, including the RNRMC.

"Recognising the contribution made by our reservists is vital and we were delighted to celebrate their achievements in the company of family, friends and some of our retired shipmates," said Calliope's Commanding Officer Cdr Ian White.

"Everyone had a fantastic time and we were extremely grateful that Sir Nigel kindly agreed to present the awards."



● UK Regular and Reserve Forces pose with fellow staff on the forecandle of the command ship USS Mount Whitney

The water in Menorca...

IS PROBABLY jolly nice at this time of year...

Seven Maritime Reservists – six RNR, one RMR – joined two part-time RAF personnel to test the ability of two of NATO's striking forces to respond to global events.

Exercise Trident Jaguar put the pressure on both NATO's Rapid Deployable Corps Spain and – of greater interest for the nautically-minded – the naval STRIKFORNATO.

The actions of the latter were largely directed from the American command and control ship USS Mount Whitney, operating around Menorca in the Med.

Strike Force NATO comprises a US-led core staff of 126 personnel from 11 nations, but grew for this exercise to nearly 300. UK participation was doubled in size by the reservist augmentees.

Although the core exercise played out in the Mediterranean over around a fortnight, planning began last year and demanded six months of support before it ran, plus time afterwards for lesson learning.

Maritime Reserve contributions involved personnel from the Royal Marines, Submarine Operations and Information Operations specialisations and took place not just about the Mount Whitney, but also in Huntingdon, Lisbon and Menorca.

"This exercise was a great opportunity for the reserves to hone their own skills as well as demonstrating the variety and quality of support that we are able to bring to bear when supplementing a command headquarters," said Lt Cdr David Cooper from HMS King Alfred, who was supporting the operations planning and co-ordination team.

"In addition it was very satisfying to receive individual and collective recognition for the contribution of the Reserve cadre towards a successful exercise achievement. These are not just exercise games for us, but professional certification milestones for the commands we support."



Foresters in the mountains

JUST a few days after completing her GCSEs, 16-year-old recruit Amy Smethurst tries her hand at abseiling, one of numerous outdoor activities organised by HMS Sherwood during five days of adventurous training in Snowdonia.

The reservists swapped Nottingham for North Wales as they tackled various pursuits including hill walking, sea kayaking and climbing.

"The coastal region is fantastic and includes a number of mountain ranges as well as Snowdon itself," said organiser Lt 'Hattie' Jacques.

"Visits such as this are designed to develop an individual's skills in a challenging outdoor environment by concentrating on physical fitness and pushing ourselves outside our regular comfort zone."

The week-long expedition went down well with teenager Amy:

"The trip to Snowdonia proved to me something I have known for a long time: people, including me, can achieve most things if they are placed in a supportive environment as I was."

Bourne to be reservists

MORE than four dozen Reservists joined RFA Argus at Bournemouth Air Festival for their first taste of life at sea.

The 48 new-entry recruits climbed aboard the casualty treatment/aviation training ship as part of the regional forces weekend, which tied in with the waterfront air show.

The recruits also had an opportunity to take part in familiarisation training with the RNR's War-Sea branch (for warfare and seamen specialists) and Air Branch, with exercises ranging from room clearance to damage control.

Hannah Crowson, a care worker from Spalding who's joined HMS Sherwood, said the hands-on experience aboard Argus was invaluable.

"It put into perspective all the training you're working towards. It was daunting seeing everything come together and how it works, but I quickly felt comfortable, and that's a compliment to those instructing and supporting us."

Fellow recruit HMS King Alfred's Mike George, a builder from Southampton, said: "It was brilliant, exciting, it really got the adrenaline going. I'm really enjoying my time in the Royal Naval Reserve – it's something very different to my civilian job."

Warrant Officer Roy Moore, unit WO at HMS Flying Fox, said: "In the RNR you get people from all walks of life which is great. Providing new entry training on RFA Argus is a welcome opportunity for our instructors – it keeps their skills up, and it sets recruits up well for HMS Raleigh, or Dartmouth."

"The exercise in Argus provided valuable sea time where the recruits can understand and appreciate a moving ship and integrate with other elements of the Naval Service."

James is the top trainee

PROFESSIONAL yacht skipper James Richman completed his RNR training at Raleigh with the Captain's Prize for best reservist.

Lt Cdr Henry Watts, divisional officer to the 25-year-old from Hamble in Hampshire, said the HMS King Alfred sailor had impressed throughout his time at the Torpoint establishment.

"AB Richman really stood out as a natural leader from the start and went from strength to strength, never dropping the ball – he was also a supportive team member on Exercise Bright Diamond – he is a well-deserved recipient of the Captain's Prize."

Award under his belt, James is looking to build on his basic training by specialising in the warfare/sea branch.

Reunions

Date to be arranged

HMS Heron, past & present Writers: Calling all past and present Writers who have served at HMS Heron. A small group of former VI Writers are considering organising a reunion. If you would be interested in attending (or even just getting in contact with some of your former Writer colleagues) please contact Kevin Penhallurick at kevin.penhallurick@hotmail.co.uk or tel 01509 730087.

October 2014

HMS Glory Reunion takes place at the Chesterfield Hotel, Chesterfield, from October 10-13. All old Glory shipmates are welcome. Details from Tom Stallard at margaretstallard@yahoo.co.uk or tel 01303 256457.

HMS Mercury Blue Plaque Scheme: HMS Mercury, the Royal Navy's Communications and Navigation School, occupied the 120-acre Peel Family Leydene estate, two miles north-west of Clanfield, Hampshire, from 1941 to 1993. Over half a million personnel served or trained at Mercury during the 52 years of its existence, and amongst its distinguished visitors were the Queen, Prince Philip, Lord Mountbatten, Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer. The aim of the scheme is to commemorate its existence and the impact it had on the local community by placing blue plaques on selected buildings which had a special association with Mercury and which are fondly remembered by those who served at Leydene. The scheme will be launched by the unveiling of the first blue plaques, by Cdre Peter Swan RN Rtd, on the Rising Sun public house, the 'Mercury local' in Clanfield, at 1130 on October 26 2014. This is a public event and anyone is welcome to attend.

November 2014

The 2014 Devon County Festival of Remembrance: Taking place at the Great Hall, Exeter University, on November 6 at 1900. Tickets Royal British Legion Members £10. This year's theme: the start of the Great War. Featuring: Band of HM Royal Marines Commando Training Centre Lympstone, Men of Morchard. Guest Speaker: Dr Todd Gray, honorary Research Fellow, History Department, University of Exeter. Tickets can be obtained from the Northcott Theatre Box Office, Stocker Road, Exeter EX4 4QB at £10 each. There is a £2 transaction fee with each booking. Apart from the transaction fee, all proceeds will go to the RBL. You can also go online at www.exeternorthcott.co.uk/festival-of-remembrance or tel 01392 493493.

February 2015

CEMN 79 QC – HMS Collingwood 73-75: Were you a member of this course between Feb 73 and Feb 75? Charlie Davis and Bob McIntyre are trying to arrange a reunion in February 2015. Please contact at shirdav980@aol.com or tel 01423 324192.

April 2015

Captain Class Frigate Association: To mark the 70th anniversary of the

end of WW2, the Captain Class Frigate Association will hold a Final Reunion at the Warwick Hilton Hotel, Stratford Road, Warwick from April 10-12. The guest speaker will be a distinguished Naval personality. This will be our members' last chance to meet with former shipmates. Book direct on 01926 499555. For more information contact Don Hitchcock on 01676 534719.

Loch Class Frigates Association: Annual reunion takes place from April 17-20 at the Hallmark Hotel (formerly Midland Hotel), Midland Road, Derby DE1 2SQ, tel: 01332 345894 or email Derby.reservations@hallmarkhotels.co.uk, quote reference LOC170415 for booking. All members welcome. Membership is open to all who served on any of the Loch-class ships or their variants (Bay-class, Admirals' Yachts, survey ships and repair ships). Some of these types of ships have their own associations but you can always join both. For details please contact Andrew Nunn at andrew.nunn@blueyonder.co.uk or tel 0117 9505835 or see the website www.lochclassfrigates.com.

RNAS Brawdy/849 NAS Veterans: Why not take this opportunity to meet up with all your old shipmates next spring? There will be a reunion at the Mariners Hotel in Haverfordwest from April 17-19. The launch of this venture has already resulted in old comrades getting in touch with each other. We have negotiated favourable rates for either a two- or three-night stay. Included is a coach trip on the Saturday to visit our old watering holes along the St David's Road. So if you fancy a trip down memory lane, a few dits and 'refreshments' with your old mates, please contact me at jsrawl@aol.com or text me on 07789 480196.

May 2015

Federation of Naval Associations: AGM and reunion at Grand Burstin Hotel, Folkestone, from May 8-11. All Associations and former RN/RM/WRNS/QARNNS/RFA/MN etc, are welcome. Details and booking forms available from Robbie Robson at robbie.fna@virgin.net or write to 12 Rainton Street, Old Penschaw, DH4 7HQ, tel 0191 584 7058.

July 2015

HMS Alliance: A reunion to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the launch of HMS Alliance is to be held at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Gosport, on July 31 2015 at 15.00. All former crew members welcome, and partners if difficulty travelling. Contact Terry Fearnley at grumpyandmonkey@icloud.com or telephone 023 9260 2040.

October 2015

HMS Fife, Reunion 2 takes place at HMS Nelson Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess on October 17 2015, 1900-2359. For information about this reunion or to register your interest in attending please contact WO1 Darren Emmerton at darren.emmerton459@mod.uk or tel 023 9262 3501.

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

■ Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: edit@navynews.co.uk. If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.

■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.

■ Please send in Reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event.

■ There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

■ Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

■ The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

■ Space does not allow us to accept more than one free insert. Any subsequent notice will have to be paid for at advertising rates.

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in November's Noticeboard must be received by **October 12**

PASS IT ON! WE NEED YOUR EXPERIENCE IN RECRUITING

CAREERS ADVISERS

Flag Officer Regional Forces is currently seeking RN and RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCO Service leavers and ex-regulars, (those that left service under 2 years), to work in Armed Forces Career Offices around the UK.

- Enlist on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) Limited Commitment employment in a specific location.
- Salary from £29K with promotion opportunities to rise to £41K (rates effective from 1st April 2014).
- FTRS rates of pay apply (reviewed annually and pensionable).

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND ADVICE ON CURRENT CAREER ADVISER VACANCIES PLEASE CALL

Pstn: 01929 403172 Mil: 94374 3172 e-mail: navycnr-rnrcrlc@mod.uk



Dental ratings finding it tough to bridge the gap

Where to look

THE recent boards for promotion to LDN and PODN had a high standard of individuals presented at the board.

Unfortunately, due to the size of our branch, the numbers of selections available are small in comparison to that of larger branches.

Individuals should continue to demonstrate their commitment, determination and drive for next year's selection board.

A key point for all personnel is it is your own responsibility to ensure you meet all pre-selection criteria before the Common Reporting Date (CRD) and if selected remain eligible for promotion by your Common Promotion Date (CPD) in accordance with BR 3, Chapter 88. Promotion Authorisation requests are to be raised by individual's establishments to Promotions Cell to ensure personnel who meet criteria on their CPD are made the substantive rate accordingly.

Personnel currently in the higher rank on a local acting basis are also reminded that they must continue to meet the requirements as laid down in BR 3 Chapter, Chapter 8, Section 5.

Short deployments

As you are all aware short deployments for dental teams to

Drafty's corner



embark on ships is now a regular occurrence.

Since July 2013 we have deployed 14 teams to various platforms in local waters and beyond, with one team taking an extended trip onboard HMS Daring to assist in OP PATWIN.

We also have a team planned to work in the Falklands next month.

Now that a dental team includes a hygienist it enables us to provide patients in operational environments with additional oral health provisions.

These fantastic opportunities allow us to perform in the operational role we are employed to do.

Trawls are no longer being sent to Regional Headquarters



● Dental personnel will regularly be deployed on ships

for selecting teams. Personnel will be nominated by the Career Managers.

Although the dental nurse role changes to an administration position when promoted to LH, you are reminded that we remain as registered dental nurses and therefore still have an operational role as a dental nurse.

Our aim is to get all personnel

in date for the Embarked Forces Sea Survival course in order to allow more personnel to be deployable.

Personnel are reminded that they are to ensure their passport remains in date at all times.

It is also requested that you add your passport details onto JPA under Miscellaneous Personal Details.

Opportunities

We have recently had three dental staff employed in various support roles at the Commonwealth Games.

Three others have moved to Gibraltar working as watch keepers for three months as part of an augmentation request.

Although these opportunities do not happen on a regular basis they do happen and provide personal development in a different working environment and promote the Royal Navy Dental Services as having capable and adaptable individuals.

Preferences

As JPA is unable to send notification to career managers when preferences are updated, it is requested that dental personnel send updated preferences including any specific preference positions as an e-mail to NAVY_PERS-CM_OR_MED_DENTCPO.

Reminder – planning for the filling of positions on board Queen Elizabeth, a LDN will be required to join in January 2016.

Volunteers for this position are requested to e-mail their Career Manager stating your preferences.

Contact CPODN Jenny Thornhill on 93822 8703 or email: NAVY_PERS-CM_OR_MED_DENTCPO

Galaxies:
25-2014: Introduction of new Naval Service Engagement Structure
24-2014: Health survey of UK Armed Forces Personnel – PH3
22-2014: New Employment Model (NEM) Forces Help to Buy (FHTB) Additional Information
21-2014: Navy Command Future Organisation
20-2014: Women in Ground Close Combat Review – Internal Opinion Poll

RNTMS
203/14: Exchange Programme Long Look 2014 – Annual Reciprocal Exchange Of Personnel Between RN, Ran And RNZN
214/14: Testing of GSR Using Advanced Respirator Test System (ARTS)

DIBs
46/14: New Employment Model – Results of Consultation with Service personnel and families
DINs
2014DIN01-141: Re-alignment of Retirement Age for Naval Service Officers with Service prior to Apr 1 1999 (RA55 Scheme) – Update
2014DIN01-143: Pension rights accrued for Medical Officers and Dental Officers (MODOs) in the Armed Forces Pension Scheme 05 (AFPS 05) with entitlement to the MODO Bonus Scheme
2014DIN01-162: Pensions Tax Relief – Annual Allowance – Lifetime Allowance - this DIN supersedes DIN 2013DIN01-116 and DIN 2014DIN01-036
DIN 2014DIN01-168: Pensions Tax – Annual Allowance Notification Tax Year 2013/14 - This DIN supersedes DIN 2013DIN01-203
DIN 2014DIN07-140: Adventure Training Expeditions to Morocco in 2015 - supersedes DIN 2013DIN07-069

The Ultimate Royal Navy Calendar

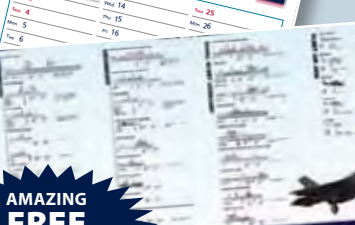
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Programme Faraday

SEPTEMBER was a productive month for the FaradayWE & CIS integration team and a dedicated series of road shows have been planned and announced in RNTM 209-14.

The principal speakers at these road shows will be Capt Annett and Capt Washer, the CIS Branch Champions. The theme will be 'The road to full integration', aimed at bringing you up to date with the WE/CIS integration.

On September 1 the provisional lists for streaming were published. If you wish to be considered for an alternative stream then you will need to complete Annex C in RNTM 110-14 and submit your application by November 7 2014.

There has been some feedback submitted regarding your views on what changes you feel would benefit the revised CPOET and WOETQC. If you have any ideas on what would make the course better or more relevant then the closing date for your submissions is October 3. Further details are contained in RNTM 204-14.

The aspiration to have Service personnel embedded within

industry has taken a big step forward with the first CPOET commencing a 15-month period working with Thales on the 2087 sonar. Similar opportunities are being pursued in both the ME and WE environments.

The Faraday policy and doctrine team have started work on an engineering officer study; this has targeted the SO2/SO3 ME & WE cadres and details are contained in RNTM 208-14. The results of this study will define the scope of any further work.

The trial of a concession process for UMMS was undertaken in early September and revealed a number of minor issues. The team at ABW are actively working to resolve these problems to improve the functionality of UMMS and reduce the administration burden felt by our engineering staff during maintenance periods.

The SM Rapid Improvement Event held at HMNB Devonport in July has already generated short-term benefits:

■ A Submarine Waterfront Support Manager will improve co-ordination of facilities at

Devonport and ease the "harbour hassle" felt by SM crews during maintenance periods.

■ Improved availability and priority coordination of flushing /test rigs to meet submarine demand has been established.

■ Walk-in Workshop access has been established in Defiance for RN personnel for all small jobs (under four hours).

■ Better out-of-hours 'lifting service' coordination has been established.

■ Babcock Supply Chain Steering Group has conducted a review of consumables supply, and over the next six months the supply situation will be actively managed, to deliver improvements.

The Faraday team will let you know what has been happening during October in next month's article, so please look out for this regular feature.

If you have any questions or comments on Programme Faraday then please contact me, WO1 Sharky Ward on 93832 7441 or via e-mail navy_pers-faraday WO1a. The Programme Faraday Intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

Support for Clyde families

THE Neptune Special Needs Support Group has now been running for five months and enables peer support for, at present, 26 Armed Forces families in the HMNB Clyde catchment area.

The group members' families require a wide variety of additional needs and extra support.

The group has helped a number of families deal with a number of issues from negotiating the challenges of a new diagnosis to helping with the challenge of being drafted to a new base port area.

Armed Forces families also have the added issue of being away from their extended families, so this extra support often proves vital even if it's just having someone else to talk to in a similar situation.

This summer the group held its first family event, funded by Braeholm Aggie Weston's Jan and Gary Alpin, and was attended by more than 40 people. Children were entertained thanks to Wendy



● Some of the families who attended the event

Quinn, who ran around on the day to buy a few games and cake-decorating materials.

This event proved extremely useful to get families together, especially for some families who feel they can't attend regular local events due to their additional needs.



New start for Naval centre

A NEW location, better facilities and improved infrastructure – and all of this for the same cost of absolutely nothing!

The Naval Outdoor Centre Germany (NOCG) has moved just 800m from its previous location of Haus Schwaben and the new centre in Alpenlandhotel Hirsch offers some impressive facilities.

The hotel has a high-quality finish, en-suite rooms, each with their own TVs and offers considerably more space and stunning views of the mountains.

The landlord Manfred Wehn is a very interesting and welcoming character. After taking ownership 18 years ago from his father, he has restored the hotel to what is today, a traditional and beautiful four-star Bavarian hotel.

There is little difficulty understanding why the building is held in such high regard by the local community with its history covering more than 370 years.

Alpenlandhotel Hirsch, Bad Oberdorf, had its foundations built in 1640. From a hotel used by the salt traders in the 1800s, through to the NOCG briefing room built by Jewish prisoners of war and formerly used as the ordinance room for WW2 Nazi leader Rudolf Hess.

Manfred, his wife Doris and their five staff are very much looking forward to welcoming their guests from the Naval Service and continuing this historical journey with members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

With years in the planning and months of removals, building and fitting by the NOCG staff, the centre has a fantastic all-in-one internal AT store, CV/weights rooms, wellness and spa area as



well as Wi-Fi and TV area.

The seasonal conditions provide endless possibilities. RN/RM Sports Associations are encouraged to utilise NOCG for training camps or sports tours. Local football teams, ice hockey clubs, ski races, road cycling and paragliding are but a few possibilities, building close ties with the Bavarian communities.

LPT Steve Young, an ATI working in NOCG, is the manager of the Sonthofen cycling club. When asked what he was doing for the weekend he replied: "A 160km race into Austria with 6,000m of ascent."

Fantastic endurance training opportunities then, perhaps for the RN cycling association.

There are endless possibilities for training camps and team

competitions with travel and accommodation in situ.

All association secretaries are encouraged to investigate what this inspirational area of Germany can offer your sport. Outreach programmes are being considered to see where the NOCG can further build good relations with the local community.

Talented individuals are currently being sought to become PTIs and then Adventurous Training Instructors.

If you believe you have the qualities to operate and lead in the outdoor environment contact your Divisional Officer and PT staff now to find out how.

NOCG is also looking to utilise current instructors within the RN/RM. If you have instructor

qualifications, in particular skiing, we actively encourage you to come and use them at the NOCG.

The alpine environment provides the perfect conditions for the centre to host a multitude of activities, including climbing, kayaking, canoeing, *klettersteig*, (ascending on wires traditionally used by mountain troops) mountaineering and mountain biking, to name but a few activities that are on offer.

Whilst the winter is perhaps the most popular, with metres of crisp snow and an impressive variety of ski venues catering for the novice to the seasoned ski touring specialist, all is possible.

During a recent visit by Cdre Michael Farrage (CNPERS) he said: "AT opportunities in the

Naval Service are not replicated in the civilian sector and that is why frontline people are to be given the first opportunity to benefit from the highly desirable activities NOCG has to offer."

NOCG is an easy way for individuals or groups to participate in AT. It requires very little organisation and at no cost to the individual.

Both NOCG instructors and hotel staff want all visitors to have a fabulous AT/sporting experience, in a challenging yet safe environment.

The new centre and hotel offers high standards of service whilst maintaining the friendly relationship with the hotel staff and local community.

The new OC Lt Cdr Joe Wood said: "We are guests in

the local community and will be sensitive to their culture by maintaining the hard-won and highly-respected reputation of the Naval Service.

"I am keen to maximise numbers to allow as many RN/RM personal to benefit from this fantastic facility as possible. We appreciate the significant investment by the Naval Service and continued support from the RN&RM charities and Sports Lottery."

The NOCG, a jewel in the Naval crown, offers a great experience for all its visitors within a fantastic facility, pushing boundaries at no cost.

For more information or to book places visit the NOCG website www.nocg.co.uk or contact your local PT staff.

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION



More of your burning questions answered

TO give a flavour of recent NFF activity, here is a selection of questions raised and the answers we sourced:

Q My partner is being medically discharged from the Service; is he entitled to a Resettlement Grant?

A Any Service person who is Medically Discharged has no entitlement to the Resettlement Grant, no matter how long they have served. However, your partner will receive an ill-health pension and a one-off payment of three times this pension.

Q I have applied for a mortgage with Santander and was hoping to use the new Forces Home to Buy (FHTB) scheme, however Santander have said they do not accept this scheme, is this correct?

A Commercial companies are not obliged to sign up to the FHTB scheme and unfortunately Santander is one of the lenders that have not signed up.

Q I have to move out of my Service Families Accommodation (SFA) due to separation and divorce from a serving person. I am moving my family into private accommodation; is there

any entitlement to removal costs?

A Yes, you are entitled to removals for moving out of your SFA, however it needs to be arranged through MOD contractors; you cannot organise it yourself and claim the money back. The serving person needs to apply for the removals through their Unit Pay Office.

Q My parents have asked how they find out more about what my great-grandfather did in the Navy. Is there a format for requesting information; they only have basic details about his Service history?

A The Royal Navy has access to information from approximately 1926 up to the present day; anything previous is housed at the National Archives. More information can be found at: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk. Third party requests can be made to the MOD via: [https://www.gov.uk/requests-for-personal-data-and-](https://www.gov.uk/requests-for-personal-data-and)



service-records.

Q How many guests can recruits have at their passing out parade at HMS Raleigh?

A There are no stipulated limits on the number of guests an individual recruit can invite; the venue has a limit of 530 people, including staff and recruits. Divisional Staff are briefed and inform their classes of any restrictions that

may be put in place.

Q Is there any financial assistance available to help pay towards flights to visit a loved one whilst they have some R&R during their deployment?

A The Naval Service Assisted Passage Scheme (NSAPS) for Service personnel

unmarried couples and families who do not qualify for Families Assisted Visits Abroad allowance. (Families Assistance for Visits Abroad – FAVA – allowance can provide financial assistance with food and accommodation costs incurred when the immediate family – generally spouse/civil partner and/or dependent children – of eligible Service personnel visit the Service person during a deployment overseas.)

NSAPS loans are normally given to help with the cost of flights to and from ports where deployed ships are on standoff, but not to support living costs throughout the visit (although hotel costs may be included if they are part of a package holiday).

There is no limit to the amount of the loan or to the number of people it is requested for, but you must have a significant link to the applicant, such as a blood or marital relationship, or long-term partnership.

Unlike FAVA, the NSAPS does not require a minimum length of deployment.

The scheme is funded by the Naval Service Amenity Fund which is

administered by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC). For more details, contact the RNRMC on 023 9254 8191.

Important footnote: Naval Service families are reminded that when booking holidays or travel plans to use an insurance company that understands Service life and will cover any change in ship's programmes.

The Services and Insurance Investment Advisory Panel (SIIP) has a list of insurance companies that provide specialist insurance and financial assistance to members of the Armed Forces, visit: www.siiap.org.

The NFF represents Royal Naval and Royal Marines families to the Chain of Command, government and service providers.

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions.

Contact the NFF: 023 9265 4374/admin@nff.org.uk/Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN. Visit our website: www.nff.org.uk for news and information, and to sign up for our free, quarterly *Homeport* magazine and monthly e-update.



Drum roll record broken

A ROYAL Marines drummer has smashed the world record for the longest individual drum roll.

Sgt Bugler Graham 'Stevo' Stephenson broke the previous record of 12 hours and three seconds by drumming out a continuous beat lasting more than 18 hours onboard the Royal Yacht Britannia, in the Port of Leith, Scotland.

The 40-year-old is now a double record holder as he was also one of the Royal Marines' Corps of Drums which broke the group drum roll record in May this year.

The two bids were made as part of the celebrations of the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines – established in 1664.

Sgt Stephenson said: "My wrists held up okay and a lot of the lads were keeping me awake as the biggest problems were fatigue and the need to rest. But now that it's over it's lovely to be the new record holder."

During the drum roll Sgt Stephenson was permitted a five-minute break every hour which was strictly monitored by invigilators who ensured the Guinness World Record rules were not infringed. As a member of the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland, Stevo is used to disciplined training and focus and continued playing well into the record books ensuring that anyone who tries to beat his record has a long way to go.

But the attempt has also helped raise money for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

The Corps of Drums will continue to raise money for the RMCTF until the end of this month through their Justgiving page www.justgiving.com/RMCOD1664

Life really is a beach

ROYAL Marines from Plymouth helped feed the top lifeguards in the country.

Chefs from Plymouth-based 30 Commando provided outdoors catering for hungry lifeguards at Exmouth.

The willing chefs volunteered to support Exmouth Beach Rescue Club as it hosted the National Beach Life Guarding Competition (NLC) for the first time.

The Navy's amphibious troops set up a full field galley, similar to that created on operations such as Afghanistan. Breakfast, lunch and evening meals were provided for up to 300 people, including the host rescue club, Surf Life Saving Great Britain and members of the public.

Marines monopoly? You'll really love it

MR MONOPOLY is something of an iconic figure, with his bushy white moustache, his cane and his green beret.

Green beret? Thanks to an enterprising group of Royal Marines the cartoon character that has represented Monopoly since the mid-1930s has donned a green lid in place of his top hat for a hoofing new limited edition of the trading board game to mark the 350th anniversary of the Corps.

The driving force behind the scheme, WO2 Mark Stevens RM, said the idea grew out of the fact that Royal Marines around the world have for decades 'adjusted' standard Monopoly boards to give them a Royal spin.

A conversation in the Sergeants' Mess at the Commando Training Centre RM at Lympstone in early 2012

resulted in a rough prototype for an official Corps Monopoly game – and sparked a vigorous debate over what should (and should not) feature on the board.

Mark rang manufacturers Hasbro, who put him in touch with Winning Moves, designers and manufacturers of bespoke Monopoly boards under licence from Hasbro.

The prospect of being the first UK military group to have their own version of the game spurred Mark and his RM team – Corps RSM WO1 (RSM) Ally McGill, WO1 Lee Carr, WO1 Jon McWilliams, WO1 Mac McMaster, WO1 Miles Hall and C/Sgt Dave Lewis – over the various hurdles, and the germ of an idea developed into a workable plan.

The production run would be limited to 5,000, it would reflect the whole Corps history, not just the modern era, and when they canvassed opinion through social



● Royal Marines Monopoly to mark the 350th anniversary of the Corps costs £29.95 and is available online at <http://royalmarinesshop.com/games-and-toys/royal-marines-350th-anniversary-edition-monopoly.html>

media and the Corps' own magazine, *Globe and Laurel*, more than 600 people got in touch with suggestions and observations.

"The next step was to pull someone into the group who lived and breathed Corps history," said Mark.

"Step forward WO1 Bob Henderson RM, the former First Drill, who looked as if all his Christmases had come at once!"

It was decided that the board would be a chronological yomp through 350 years of Corps history, with the Royal Marines Band Service represented with their own square and playing piece – a side drum.

The other pieces are a combat boot, ammo liner, rigid raider, WP helmet and a four-tonne truck. The green beret was discounted as it would not sit level, and a

commando dagger and Sea King were "too flimsy and prone to breaking with the sausage fingers inherent in bootnecks," said Mark.

After a year of seeking funding, getting necessary clearances and attracting pre-sales of a 'virtual board' to achieve a minimum guaranteed sales figure, the project was up and running – and now the team are looking forward to the arrival of the first games.

"I am chuffed to bits," said Mark. "It has taken three years, and a lot of hours, but it has been worth it."

More than 3,500 sets have been pre-sold, and the love



Royal backing for sport

MORE THAN 100 competitors took part in the second Royal Marines Rehabilitation Triathlon at Commando Training Centre in Lympstone.

The event was organised by Physical Training Instructors at CTCRM for serving, injured military personnel and veterans and attended by Prince Harry as some of the competitors took part in the Invictus Games last month.

Every Royal Marines unit was represented, with competitors also coming from the Army and Royal Navy. There were also contingents from the United States Marine Corps and the Royal Netherlands Marines Corps.

The event was funded and supported by Help for Heroes and the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

The triathlon acknowledged the physical restrictions of each competitor and comprised of an indoor swim at the CTCRM pool, an outdoor cycle around Lympstone and Woodbury Common and an indoor rowing competition.

The competition was split into different categories due to the injuries varying all the way up to triple amputee, with adapted equipment used.

CTCRM Commandant Dave Kassapian said: "As we celebrate our 350th anniversary as a Corps, there is no better way for the Royal Marines to commemorate all those who have paid the ultimate sacrifice, than to have our wounded warriors competing against each other."

Cpl John Richardson of Plymouth-based 42 Cdo rehabilitation troop completed the triathlon despite having severe osteoarthritis in his knee.

He said: "This is a great event for all those people like me."

Up for a challenge

ONCE a Royal Marine, always a Royal Marine...

A green beret PTI and recruits help former bootneck Derek 'Blondie' Boorn out of the infamous 'sheep dip' – one of the many grim obstacles overcome by 2,000 people who rose to Commando Challenge to help charity.

They converged on Woodbury Common to tackle part of the gruelling endurance course which Royal Marines recruits going through the nearby Commando Training Centre at Lympstone must get through to become a member of the nation's elite amphibious infantry.

For the past 24 years, the Commando Challenge has sought to give the general public a crack at that course – and raise hundreds of thousands of pounds for good causes.

Competitors can choose which



challenge to rise to: a four-kilometre run, ten or 17km for the hardcore. All routes make use of part of the endurance course – a series of tunnels, muddy pits and ponds.

The tunnels are manned by volunteers from the RMA, although the 'sheep dip' – a short underwater tunnel – is controlled by a Royal Marines Physical

Training Instructor with recruits of 190 Troop to help participants through. Among those running the gauntlet, 76-year-old 'Blondie' Boorn from the Royal Marines Association's Swanage branch, joined by his 55-year-old son Peter (also ex-Royal Marine) and 19-year-old grand-daughter Lauren who wants to join the Royal Navy.

Thanks a million

WITH the North East hosting one of its busiest weekends of the year, the Naval Service was on hand to help with celebrations.

This year the one millionth runner crossed the Great North Run finish line in South Shields and to mark the occasion this year's half marathon was bigger and better than ever with four days of festivities.

Using the Royal Naval Reserves North East headquarters, HMS Calliope, as a backdrop, the Great North Run Million ceremony kicked off with a sound and light spectacular along the banks of the River Tyne where both sailors and Marines took part in the show, which featured local artists including Sting and Mark Knopfler.

Royal Marines commandos provided unarmed combat displays, let youngsters try out their kit, and abseiled six storeys down the side of the

Baltic Centre. More than 55,000 runners lined up at the start line ready for the big race with many hoping to be the lucky one millionth finisher.

But leading the way were the Royal Marines 1664 Challengers – charged with carrying the Millionth Finisher Flag around the course.

It was the RM1664 runners' job to finish the half marathon in 2 hrs 20 mins, arriving just in time for the millionth finisher – a task they did with military precision before Marine Tom Barker raised the flag at the finish line.

He said: "Once we finished the 1664 Challenge we were all going to do the Great North Run to promote the Royal Marines and the fact that this is our 350th birthday."

"The run itself was fantastic and the crowd was really supportive."

The Great War revisited

THE centenary of the Great War has, understandably, prompted an explosion (no pun intended) in the publishing houses of the land with a flurry of commemorative tomes.

Many focus on the land campaign – it would grow into the British Empire's main effort during four years of bloody conflict.

But the 100th anniversary has also sparked renewed interest in the RN's role during the war – from sweeping histories, to battles in microcosm and memoirs and diaries of participants.

A History of the Royal Navy: World War I (J B Tauris, £20 ISBN 978-1780768380) is the latest volume in an impressive 11-book series produced under the auspices of the National Museum (we reviewed three in the series in our July edition).

Mike Farquharson-Roberts' work follows in the same vein – drawing on the latest research and providing a very readable and, at the same time, erudite and fascinating overview of the Senior Service's global mission between 1914-1918.

What's particularly impressive is the naval panorama Farquharson-Roberts offers – the vista extends far beyond the North Sea and the Grand Fleet (whose dreadnoughts are pictured above, courtesy of the Imperial War Museum/Q22092).

Hence, the author includes the actions of the Royal Naval Air Service and the Royal Naval Division – typically excluded from most general histories of the RN in WW1.

The latter formation proved not only fiercely loyal to its Senior Service roots, but remarkably enlightened for the age – its officers "seemed to be much more self-reliant than their army brethren" one general observed, perhaps jealously, after the horrors of Passchendaele.

This wasn't the only time the RN led the Army. The RNAS helped to revolutionise land warfare first with armoured cars (shipbuilders provided the plate which was fitted to ordinary vehicles), then with forerunners of the tank: a truck chassis with an armoured body and a 3lb gun in a turret.

And while the Royal Flying Corps was mauled during 'Bloody April' in 1917, naval aviators fared much better thanks to the Sopwith Triplane (an aircraft flown only by the RNAS).

The story of naval aviation on the Western Front is something of an anomaly. In the first decade of its life, the RN's air wing was focused on observation and attacking submarines and ships – as it has been for the century since.

The SS and SSZ airships introduced later in the war scoured the North Sea for U-boats – just as Swordfish did in the Atlantic a generation later, and Sea Kings and Merlins have done more recently.

And having given birth to many of the mainstays not just of naval aviation but all facets of aerial combat (it was the RN which 'invented' strategic bombing, for example), the Admiralty promptly threw away their advantage by handing over control of all air power to the new RAF thanks largely, says the author, to Admiral Beatty's ignorance of flying. As First Sea Lord, he spent most of the 1920s trying to wrest control back...

Beneath the waves, unsuccessful experimental designs such as the K and M-class boats have sometimes obscured the success of the Silent Service. Almost entirely forgotten – though not by Farquharson-Roberts – is the R-class. Hunter-killers, faster below the water than above, designed to hunt down U-boats. There wouldn't be anything like them again under the White Ensign for another half century.

As for the big ships, well thanks to their performance at Jutland, the myth persists that German capital vessels were superior to British. They were not. German gunnery tactics were better. And their shells especially.

But ton for ton, the finest German battleship of WW1, SMS Baden, was no match for its British counterparts, embodied by HMS Revenge. "By any measure," says the author, "Revenge was the better ship."

This is a recurring theme when studying the RN's performance in WW1 – the traditional view is that it failed to live up to its – and the public's – expectations.

Farquharson-Roberts shows there is much to be proud of, especially in the realms of technological innovation.

Above all, though the Senior Service got a lot wrong in the Great War, it got a lot right, above all the strategy of starving Germany. There may have been no "maritime Armageddon," but despite perceptions, the author argues that the Royal Navy "was largely responsible for Germany's defeat – and that defeat was due to British seapower."

Also out are the first two volumes of Amberley Books' **The First World War at Sea in Photographs** compiled by Phil Carradice, 1914 (ISBN 978-1-4456-2233-0) and 1915 (ISBN 978-1-4456-2237-8).

Each priced £14.99 and consisting of around 130 pages, they're packed with not just images, but newspaper clippings, recruitment posters, private photographs postcards and other contemporary ephemera.

1914 is probably the more interesting of the two – the opening moves of the war at sea were every bit as dramatic as those on land – and the author has done well in not repeating the same old images one sees time and again in books on the Great War.

However the 1915 book is dogged by production problems which means many of the images have been blown up far beyond their true resolution which has rather ruined their impact.

Of Germany's overseas naval forces in 1914, most of the attention has been directed at Admiral Graf Spee's squadron.

Detached from the German East Asia Squadron shortly after the outbreak of war was the cruiser Emden, whose lone wolf actions caused the Allies no end of trouble for a couple of months.

Among the attacks carried out by the raider, an attack on merchant and warships in Penang, Malaysia, at the end of October.

The raid is recounted excellently by former RN medical officer John Robertson in **The Battle of Penang** (*Editions Intervales*, £17 ISBN 978-2916-355979).

The author has carried out some impressive research – French, Dutch, Russian, German, British and Malay sources have all been consulted, as have contemporary newspapers (an oft-overlooked resource) – and illustrated his work excellently.

Robertson was drawn to the story when he found the graves of two Russian sailors from the Zhemtchug.

She was caught by the Emden in the strait between the island of Penang and the Malay peninsula when the German raider slipped through the Allied defences before dawn on October 28 – her captain had added a false funnel to make her resemble the cruiser HMS Yarmouth.

Minutes later, the aged Russian cruiser Zhemtchug was first raked with fire at point-blank range, then torpedoed – tearing the ship in two. When the resulting cloud of acrid yellow smoke dispersed all that was left, one German sailor observed, was what looked like "a mountain spouting fire, with green and yellowish flames darting out from it, followed by detonations. It was a wonderful and awful spectacle."

Despite being vastly inferior to the Emden, the French destroyer Mousquet gave chase and paid the ultimate price for her bravery. The Germans' gunnery proved devastating. Men were sliced in two by shells or shrapnel and flayed by steam from smashed boilers before the French vessel sank after about 40 minutes of battle.

Emden's exploits made headlines around the world – while her chivalrous behaviour (she rescued many of the Mousquet's survivors, for example) rather flew in the face of propaganda denouncing a murderous Hun.

She was hunted down and destroyed within a fortnight, but recriminations among the Allies over the Penang raid rumbled on for months afterwards. Found guilty for his negligent actions, Zhemtchug's captain was dismissed from the Russian Navy – only to rejoin it as a common sailor and distinguish himself later in the war, washing "away with my blood the disgrace that now lies within me."

Very nicely produced, Robertson's book is an excellent addition to WW1 naval literature.

And finally, for Kindle owners, the latest volume of the **War Letters 1914-1918** series features the correspondence of Midshipman Philip Malet de Carteret – 16 at war's outbreak, although the

portrait on the cover makes him look a mere 11.

A bargain at £3 (and 50 per cent of profits go to the RNRMC), Carteret's letters cover the period from the autumn of 1914 until late spring of 1916. The junior officer was initially assigned to aged battleship HMS Canopus, part of the force trying to hunt down the East Asia Squadron. She played no part in the battle of Coronel, but followed the action via intermittent signals. "We were all frightfully sick at missing the action," Philip wrote home.

A month later, Canopus was beached in the Falklands so her guns could defend the islands in case the Germans came hunting. They came – and the 12in guns of de Carteret's pre-dreadnought fired the first rounds of the Battle of the Falklands.

Stuck in the mudflats, that was the only part she played – and once again followed the action through signals and then through accounts from the other ships present. Yet again the teenager was frustrated that he could not play a greater part in the battle.

Indeed, this impatience for action – and then excitement when he finally did, as a re-floated Canopus bombardment Turkish positions during the Dardanelles campaign – pervades many of the youngster's letters home.

It's actually refreshing to read WW1 literature which is tainted by the cynicism of many accounts – contemporary or memoirs. It might seem naïve – a bit jolly hockey sticks and all that – but it is an authentic voice.

There's little hint of fear in de Carteret's missives home – even when he was hit by shrapnel off Gallipoli – "after being bandaged up I was quite all right."

As other ships were lost in the Gallipoli campaign – de Carteret witnessed the demise of HMS Triumph, sunk by U-boat – the midshipman came to regard Canopus as a lucky ship.

And indeed she was, surviving the Great War. But not Philip de Carteret. He joined battle-cruiser HMS Queen Mary on May 14 1916. She blew up a fortnight later at Jutland. The last letter home is as light hearted and hopeful as his first from the Canopus 18 months earlier, asking about gramophones, tennis and gooseberries in the family home in Jersey.



The RN and an overblown crisis

THE mid-19th Century is usually seen as the pinnacle of British naval power. The British Empire was a global entity sustained by the Royal Navy's unchallenged command of the sea.

Moreover, that command gave the British the ability to project power from the sea in order to achieve political objectives, be it opening up China to western trade, coercing Russia to end a limited war it had already lost in the Crimea, deterring further Russian expansion in the Balkans and South Asia and deterring French activities by a threat to French naval bases, notably Cherbourg.

This, writes Prof Eric Grove of Liverpool Hope University, was a period of littoral warfare, dictated by the limitations of rapidly-evolving technology. The latter eventually allowed – indeed forced – naval warfare to move back to sea in the late 1880s, but the British were able to maintain their lead and kept a two power standard in the latest capital ships right up to 1914.

There were, of course various alarms from biased, partially or ill-informed politicians, journalists and engineers. If one

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takes these at face value, one can come up with a rather distorted view.

This is a trap into which falls Howard J Fuller's **Empire, Technology and Seapower: Royal Navy Crisis in the Age of Palmerston** (ISBN 978-0-415-37004-2) published by Routledge in the well-established Cass Series: Naval Policy and Strategy.

This has included some important works in the past, but sadly this new book is not one of them. It is in fact a rather odd work, made up of thirty short chapters, plus a conclusion, in 252 pages. The remaining 45 pages are made up of bibliography and index. Several of the short chapters are polemics which take head-on the established modern view of the period as most importantly explained by Professors Andrew Lambert and John Beeler. Oddly, these now classic analyses are dismissed as 'revisionism'.



The author prefers older accounts and is himself the revisionist, apparently trying to make the point that there was indeed a 'crisis' in British naval policy in the 1850s and 1860s which resulted from slow British adoption of decisive new technologies, notably armour.

The American author did a doctoral thesis at King's, London (sadly not under Professor Lambert's supervision) which he converted into a published book on the interplay of armoured warships and British naval power during the American Civil War.

He is an enthusiast for the Union's monitors, whose virtues he lauds and whose weaknesses he glosses over. Despite admitting – briefly – to their failure at Charleston, he argues that their threat effectively neutralised British maritime intervention in the war. His arguments are unconvincing, however, as are his polemics against the Lambert

orthodoxy on the importance of the British threat to Cherbourg and Kronstadt and the impact of the display of the land attack 'Great Armament' at Portsmouth in 1856. It is true that an attack on Kronstadt that year would have been a challenge, but it was not as impractical as the book argues. Moreover, the threat of further action in the Baltic played a key role in containing Russian expansion in the Balkans during the 1870s and South Asia in the 1880s. No wonder the Communists moved their capital from vulnerable St Petersburg to Moscow.

The book is clearly based on a certain transatlantic prejudice (although the author works at the University of Wolverhampton). It quotes popular histories and even television programmes, which may have overstated British naval supremacy – although in this period that is hard to do. He has a particular dislike for HMS Warrior, stressing its weaknesses, although one suspects it would have made short work of an American monitor. There are some really odd passages too, as when the American national anthem is quoted to demonstrate the inadequacies of British capabilities against forts. Is it that

difficult to concede a supremacy that has since (sadly) disappeared, especially considering we had just burned Washington?

Perhaps the weirdest section, however, is the use of the failure of the amphibious attack on Cartagena in the first half of the 18th Century to demonstrate the fundamental weakness of such maritime attacks. This event sheds no light at all on the nature of such operations over a century later. Indeed, it is probably most misleading because of the very technological development which is stressed in the book.

There can be no doubt that British naval supremacy was challenged by technological progress in the 19th Century, but there is nothing in this work that demonstrates that these challenges ever came to the point of 'crisis'.

The author is right to argue that the Navy operated in a diplomatic and political context, but this was hardly wholly negative. The British Empire acted with moderation, not because it was deterred by the Americans, French or Russians, but because its interests were insufficiently threatened to take action. If push came to shove, limited pressure could be applied

at and from the sea to make offenders see sense.

Given British industrial strength technical challenges could always be dealt with in time. Alarmists might emphasise problems but were Britain's enemies really that strong?

It would have been more convincing if the book had contained more on the real capabilities of the French Navy, rather than the perceptions of anxious potential enemies. The remarks about the British gunboat fleet are also misleading. Yes, the wartime vessels were badly built and short lived (as were the pioneer French ironclads), but many more were built to replace them and these gave years of service.

The book is, as usual for a member of its series, priced at an eye-watering £90. It can be obtained more cheaply on the internet and slightly more cheaply still as an electronic book. (978-0-203-02967-1). I cannot however recommend that kind of outlay. The book might form the basis for an academic argument on the period, but it is little help to the more general naval readership. It is, in fact, actively misleading. Stick with the established literature.

Southern success at regatta

SOUTHERN Area took the overall honours at this year's National Combined Regatta in London's Docklands.

Some 500 Sea Cadets aged between 12 and 18 from across the UK competed on the waters of the Royal Victoria Docks, adjacent to ExCeL, all having battled through district and area competitions.

Cadets from Abingdon, Bournemouth, Brighton, Gosport, Henley, Maidenhead, Milton Keynes, Oxford, Reading, Salisbury, Sheppey, Southampton, Staines and Windsor units took 12 out of a possible 19 class trophies as well as the overall regatta trophy and numerous gold, silver and bronze medals.

The winners were:
Overall Regatta Winner (Navy League Cup): Southern Area;
Overall Paddlesports Winner (Antrim & Down Cup): Southern;
Boat Handling:
 Rowing Boat Handling (Mitchell Trophy): **Salisbury – Southern;** Sailing Boat Handling (P&O Trophy): **Carlisle – North West;** Power Boat Handling (Stirling Wheel): **Nottingham – Eastern;** Overall Boat Handling (Stena Sealink Trophy): Joint winners: **Southern and Eastern.**
Rowing Regatta

Boys Junior (Ridgewell Cup): **Salisbury – Southern Area;** Girls Junior (Wain 1999 Cup): **Henley – Southern;** Boys Open (Hornblower Cup): **Salisbury – Southern;** Girls Open (Burton Cup): **Henley – Southern;** Overall Trinity Class Trophy (Dawson Trophy): **Southern;** Yole Junior (Junior Mixed Cup): **Stonehaven and Peterhead – Northern Area;** Yole Open (Open Mixed Cup): **Salisbury – Southern;** Yole Open Single Boys: **Wakefield – Eastern;** Yole Open Single Girls: **Edinburgh – Northern;** Overall Yole Class Rowing Trophy (Badger Cup): **Northern.**

Paddlesport
 Paddlesport Cross Stream (Admiral Bell Davies Cup): **Southern Area;** Paddlesport Flat Water – Open Girls (Ulster Cup): **Southern;** Paddlesport Flat Water – Open Boys (Mike Pool/Bosun Trophy): Joint winners: **Northern Ireland and South West;** Paddlesport Flat Water – Junior Girls (Barbara Simpson Cup) – **Southern;** Paddlesport Flat Water – Junior Boys (Nottingham Cup): **Eastern.**

Marking cards

SEA Cadet Corps Christmas cards are now on sale.

Sold in packs of ten (single design) for £3.95, all profits go back into the charity.

See the seven designs and order your cards at www.seacadetshop.org



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SEA CADETS

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Musical opportunities in South West

MORE than 1,600 Sea Cadets in South West England are set to benefit from new musical instruments and equipment, thanks to a generous donation from the WPA Benevolent Foundation.

And those cadets and volunteers in Bristol, Wiltshire, Somerset, Gloucestershire, Dorset, Devon and Cornwall who would like

to develop their musical talent further can apply for a scholarship and gain accredited qualifications.

Sea Cadets were present to welcome and thank their supporters from the WPA Benevolent Foundation – trustee Rupert Phillips and Director of Good Causes Charlie MacEwan – at RNR Reservist centre HMS

Flying Fox in Bristol.

The Foundation is already helping to deliver a new boat training centre for cadets at Stithians Lake, a stretch of inland water west of Falmouth in Cornwall that is popular with sailors and windsurfers, and supporting new minibuses and trailers for units in the South West.

Warsash team take steamship to sea

YOU might think that completing a navigation theory course was enough for some, but not so the cadets and staff of Warsash unit.

They like to think bigger – about 2,000 tonnes bigger...

A mixed group of cadets and staff signed up for the joint SCC Intermediate Navigation/RYA Essentials of Seamanship and Navigation course which covers subjects as diverse as tides, rule of the road, safety, comms, charts and passage planning.

To make the classroom theory more relevant, their navigation instructor – a serving RN Warfare Officer – booked a classroom at the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre in Gosport – and a practical challenge for them on completion.

They had to safely navigate the 2,000-tonne, 268ft long historic steam passenger ship SS Shieldhall from her home port of Southampton to Poole ready for the Bournemouth Air Show.

Shieldhall entered service in 1954 for the City of Glasgow Corporation as a sludge carrier, originally with the ability to carry up to 80 passengers for day excursions.

After 21 years of service to Glasgow she moved south to operate out of Southampton until rising fuel costs forced her retirement.

In 1988 a preservation society was formed to keep the ship sea-going.

Now manned entirely by unpaid volunteers, she is a regular sight in the Solent and at maritime festivals.

She is said to be the largest steamship of her type still operating in the UK, and possibly Europe – see www.ss-shieldhall.co.uk

The intrepid band of students, armed with their newly-gained knowledge and prepared charts and passage plan, joined the ship on an unseasonably miserable summer morning.

They met the Captain and Chief Mate, then familiarised themselves with the bridge ready for sailing.

Once the ship left her berth, the team settled into the sea routine, rotating around the various bridge roles under supervision of Shieldhall's crew.

The students soon appreciated the challenges of keeping a large vessel safe at sea; including the physical effort needed to keep Shieldhall on course with her steam-driven steering gear.

They all took turns to be the Second Officer of the Watch and briefing the Captain on various Rule Of the Road situations, especially through the busy waters of the Solent.

Even the weather provided a challenge, as rain reduced visibility to three nautical miles, depriving them of visual fixing points, so the students had to resort to other navigating techniques to ensure the safety of the ship and the 152 passengers embarked.

Safely alongside Poole Town Quay, the Captain, Chief Officer and the chairman of the Shieldhall Trust all made a point of thanking the Warsash team for their efforts, and presented them with their RYA certificates.

Capt Roberts said later: "It was a delight to have the Warsash Sea Cadets onboard – their enthusiasm was infectious and contribution to another successful and safe voyage should not be underestimated."

Chairman Mr Doug Brodie said: "It is important that Britain's dependence on the sea is firmly cemented into the DNA of future generations, which is why the trust exists.

"Therefore I am thrilled to see the Warsash youngsters engaging with their collective heritage so eagerly."

Warsash unit's CO Lt Tony Thurgood said: "The main ethos of the Sea Cadet Corps is to provide youth development using the customs and traditions of the sea and the maritime services, so I am very grateful to the Shieldhall trust for providing us such a unique opportunity."

Awards night at Stonehaven

STONEHAVEN unit was delighted to receive a Parade Night visit from Grampian District Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) Brian Mair RNR for a special presentation.

After an inspection of the ship's company, he presented the Cadet Forces Medal to PO (SCC) Chris Kelly in recognition of having given 12 years continuous uniformed service to the Corps.

At the same time, a CFM clasp was awarded to CPO (SCC) Stuart Campbell for his 18 years service as a uniformed adult volunteer.

It was not only adults who were presented with achievement awards though. In addition, LC Markus Coolahan was awarded his rating badges in recognition of his promotion to POC, the highest cadet rating in the Sea Cadets.



● Cdt Dominic Roberts learns the art of keeping Shieldhall on course using the steam-driven steering gear



Juniors in action

JUNIOR Sea Cadets descended on Kingswood Activity Centre in Doncaster for a packed week of fencing, raft-building and climbing (above).

Around 150 juniors, aged 10–11 took part in a wide range of activities, including archery, abseiling and climbing Jacob's Ladder, all the while developing their skills in team working, leadership and communication.

The juniors were supported by 16 senior Sea Cadets who acted as their mentors to guide them through the activities.

Clocking up miles

SEA Cadets from Shirley unit have clocked up more than 10,000 nautical miles sailing the open sea over the past three years – the equivalent of one-and-a-half times around the UK.

Some 45 cadets have spent a total of 71 weeks over the past three years experiencing life at sea during six-day offshore voyages.

Sea Cadets can choose from three types of vessels, including soon-to-be-replaced Corps flagship TS Royalist, two 34ft yachts and two power vessels.

Cadets gain experience and qualifications including deck work, navigation, bridge watchkeeping, catering and marine engineering.

One cadet, Bethan Harrison, said: "I have been on two offshore voyages so far, visiting the Isles of Scilly, Channel Isles and France along the way.

"We have sailed in good and bad weather, laughed and been seasick.

"I have done things I did not know I could do, had some great experiences and met cadets from other parts of the country, and all this whilst being challenged to achieve more.

"I can't wait for next year's voyage."

Lorries take on names of warships Helping at the Games

THE Staffordshire Potteries? Freight warehousing and distribution? Not much of a Naval connection there, you might think.

But you would be wrong, as members of Stoke-on-Trent unit discovered.

For Stoke-based supply-chain company Diamond Freight Ltd has a dark-blue pedigree.

It was named after the ship that the founder's father served in during the early 1960s – HMS Diamond – and its lorries bear the names of Royal Navy ships.

The Stoke cadets attended a naming ceremony at their HQ (right) which saw six lorries formally named – and one of them was named HMS Talent, which also happens to be the name of the Stoke unit's training ship.



MORE than 400 competitors from 13 nations took part in the inaugural Invictus Games, a tournament for wounded, injured and sick Servicemen and women.

And helping out were 36 Sea Cadets, who joined Air, Army and CCF Cadets to help with ceremonial duties, including carrying national flags in the opening ceremony in the Olympic Stadium, London.

Teams represented the armed forces of nations that have served alongside each other, and the games used the power of sport to inspire recovery, support rehabilitation, and generate a wider understanding and respect of those who serve their countries.

South Korea opportunities

FIVE UK Sea Cadets, along with escort officer Lt (SCC) Paul Mooney RMR of Guernsey unit, attended a two-week international exchange in South Korea.

The visitors experienced local cuisine and culture, including living in traditional houses, and visited the South Korean Navy second fleet.

Waterborne activities included powerboat rides and kayaking, giving the group an opportunity to see how the same Sea Cadet experience can be delivered in different ways.

Lt Mooney said this was an experience that the five cadets would remember forever.



● CPO (SCC) Derek Brown, Officer-in-Charge of Hebburn unit, and Ruth Thompson, High Sheriff of Tyne and Wear, chat to a cadet at the unit

Farewell Royalist, and hello... Royalist

Advanced award for Samantha

HUDDERSFIELD Sea Cadet Samantha Weavill has attained the challenging Advanced Seamanship qualification, which only 12 cadets out of 14,000 have accomplished this year.

Samantha's achievement is part of a new national partnership with Carnival and Sea Cadets.

Carnival Corporation & plc, parent company of P&O Cruises and Cunard, is supporting the Sea Cadets seamanship qualification, which tests youngsters on their knowledge of ropework, rigging, splicing, canvas work and decorative ropework.

Practical tests include working in a team to rig equipment such as sheer legs, gysns and derricks.

Able Cadet Samantha, who joined Sea Cadets for a new challenge, said: "I enjoyed completing the Advanced Seamanship qualification as it tested my knowledge about ropework and rigging."

"I recommend any young cadet to take part in this qualification as it gives you vital skills that can be used later on in life."

"During my time at Sea Cadets, I have enjoyed lots of activities such as rowing, power boating, kayaking, sailing, offshore power, cook steward and first aid – even using my first-aid skills in a real-life situation."

"I will also soon be completing my silver Duke of Edinburgh Award and looking forward to doing my gold next year."

"Sea Cadets is a great way of gaining confidence, learning teamwork, self-discipline and meeting new people from all over the UK."

Across the country young people gain a seamanship qualification with Sea Cadets, learning a range of skills essential to operating in the maritime environment. This qualification is the foundation of a career at sea and any water-based activity.

CONTINUITY was the watchword as the name of the Sea Cadet Corps' new sail training ship was revealed at a ceremony in London.

As the great and the good gathered at Canary Wharf to bid farewell to the Corps' retiring flagship TS Royalist, Richard Sadler, CEO of Lloyds Register Group Services Limited, announced the new name as... TS Royalist.

"Keeping the legacy of the old flagship alive for future generations and building on the amazing life-enhancing opportunity the ship has offered is crucial to both the charity and UK PLC," said Mr Sadler.

"With the work of the Sea Cadets there is a real opportunity for us all to invest in the next generation for the maritime sector and elsewhere."

The new ship will be formally named and commissioned for service at a ceremony early next summer.

She is currently in build at the Astilleros Gondan yard in northern Spain (right) as a result of a three-year initiative to raise £4.8m.

The new Royalist will take up to 900 cadets a year on offshore voyages – her predecessor took some 30,000 young people to sea in her 43-year career.

Detailed design work on the new flagship is now coming to a conclusion with the finalisation of the interior fit-out.

She is due to be launched on the 25th of next month – main hull fabrication is complete, with sandblasting and painting well



under way.

Next on the schedule is work on the engine room, and the fit-out of the ship's interior.

GRP fabrication of the deck houses is complete, and the masts, spars and rigging contracts have been awarded, with delivery of the masts required before launch.

Captain Nigel Palmer, Chairman of MSSC, said: "The spirit of adventure that our current flagship represents is hard to match; but after 43 years

it's time to move on.

"The new ship is an exciting development, both technically and in the journey Sea Cadets as a charity is making – it's crucial as a youth-focussed organisation that we continue to resonate with young people by staying as relevant and vital to the next generations of young people as we were to those that have already connected with us."

With the fundraising appeal for the new ship now closed, having

reached its total, the charity is now focussing on launching a Flagship Bursary Appeal aimed at helping more young people get on board.

The Sea Cadet Corps aims to raise £500,000 for this over the next five years, and have already received generous support from the Michael Uren Foundation, a generous supporter of good causes including medical research, education, the Armed Forces and wildlife conservation.

Burgee win adds to celebration

HEBBURN unit was presented with a Burgee in recognition of the high standards that the unit has attained.

TS Kelly is named after destroyer HMS Kelly, famously commanded by Lord Louis Mountbatten during World War 2. After surviving many attacks she was eventually sunk during the Battle of Crete in 1941.

The story of the Kelly was later immortalised in the film *In Which We Serve*, starring Noel Coward.

It is 16 years since Hebburn last secured the highest rating handed out to Sea Cadet units, and it comes after the unit was forced to weather some hard times.

In the past two years the unit has suffered a major flood and the condemning of its two main deck heaters, resulting in an appeal to raise over £9,000, achieved in four months through the help of the people of South Tyneside.

The cadets remained loyal to the unit and battled through all the turmoil, and in the unit's 80th year, all concerned feel that the accolade could not have come at a better time.

Royal date at Tower

SEA Cadet POC James, from London Western District, met the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and Prince Harry at the Tower of London during preparations to commemorate the 100th anniversary of Britain's involvement in World War 1.

The Royal Family planted a ceramic poppy in an art installation symbolising the thousands of lives lost during the war.

The exhibition – *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* – features almost 900,000 ceramic poppies pouring out of the tower and into the dry moat, each poppy representing a British military death during World War 1.

POC James said: "It was a true honour, an experience I will never forget."

Great War commemorations – pages 18-19.

Summit duties

SEA Cadets won praise for the way they carried out their duties during the NATO summit in Wales last month.

Alongside colleagues from the Army and Air Cadets and the CCF, Sea Cadets from South Wales District were prominent at ceremonies and events around Newport and Cardiff – including acting as a Guard of Honour for 60 world leaders before their working dinner at Cardiff Castle.

Pedal power

THE parent of a Sea Cadet is taking part in a charity cycle ride across Britain to help support St Albans unit.

Andrew Hunt, 42, a member of the Verulam Cycle Club, recently returned to the St Albans area from Australia after a six-year stint abroad, and has been in training for the event since November last year.

Andrew said: "My passion for cycling has coincided with my son joining the local Sea Cadets."

"I wanted to support this charity because of the opportunities they give to local children, and I have seen first-hand the extra confidence gained and the camaraderie that my son has experienced since being a Cadet."

"We have seen a change in him since joining – he has learnt a lot and made some good friends, something not easy to do when moving to a new area."

"What has particularly impressed us has been the welcoming, inclusive nature of the unit."

Clare Jones, Chair of the St Albans Sea Cadets, said: "We are delighted that Andrew is able to assist us in this way."

"As a charity we need to raise funds in any way we can, and this will certainly help us in our work."

The Ride Across Britain will see more than 400 cyclists attempt to cover 969 miles from Land's End to John o'Groats over nine days, including 56,000ft of climbing.



Last tour for brig

NORTHERN Ireland Sea Cadets bid farewell to the Corps' flagship TS Royalist when the square-rigger made her final visit to the port of Belfast (above).

Queens Quay was the setting for the ceremony as around 100 cadets and staff paraded in front of Royalist and a group of guests.

The brig has been on a tour of UK before she is decommissioned later in the year to make way for the new vessel ahead of the 2015 offshore season.

Roy Taylor, Royalist's Sailing Master and Relief CO, said: "It has been a pleasure to visit the port of Belfast in what will be the very last time on TS Royalist."

"Voyages on TS Royalist are open to all 14,000 Sea Cadets but sailing is only part of it, because our emphasis is also on team work, communication, navigation and fun."

"When Sea Cadets join us on TS Royalist, they do so on a level playing field and have the same opportunity to make the most of the adventure."

"Some cadets also secure valuable qualifications on board which give them a head start in life – we see this as a sound investment in our young people."

Royalist continued her series of port visits by sailing with the Tall Ships Regatta fleet



● TS Royalist acted as the backdrop as the Countess of Wessex joined Association of Sail Training Organisations (ASTO) crews at the finish of the Falmouth to Royal Greenwich Tall Ships Regatta, with James Stevens, Chairman ASTO (right, pale blue shirt)

from Falmouth in Cornwall to Greenwich in London.

"I was delighted that our Patron the Countess of Wessex met many of the trainees who sailed on our ASTO Sail Training vessels in the Falmouth to Royal Greenwich Regatta and also attended the ASTO reception on

board the Jubilee Sailing Trust's accessible tall ship Tenacious to congratulate the ASTO skippers – not only for achieving great results in the race but also for the vital work they do providing challenge and adventure for young people," said James Stevens, Chairman of ASTO.

Pusser's Own, Navy Rum Truffles' handmade by Chocablock Limited £10 a tin.



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Seven weighty records broken

SEVEN new records were set as powerlifters from across the Royal Navy and Royal Marines gathered at RNAS Culdrose for the annual Push-Pull competition.

Mne Kenny Cardwell (under 90kg), from Plymouth, AET Jack Lowe (U100kg Jnr), AB Ben Williams (U125kg Jnr) CPO 'Marty' Parry, MA Terina Thomas (U80kg) and Reece Meakin (U90kg Jnr) from RNAS Culdrose, all achieved personal bests.

"The standard of lifting was terrific, across all weight classes, including the junior lifters, those under 23 as well as two older masters category lifters who should probably know better," said Maj Steve Congreve, Chairman of the Royal Navy Powerlifting Association.

Also setting a new RN 90kg junior and open-class bench-press record was AET Meakin, who is proving to be a star amongst the powerlifting fraternity.

This year's push-pull event saw both male and their female counterparts compete in the tough day-long session. It is hoped that through getting the competitions out to the regional bases across the Naval Service that the best powerlifters will be enticed to compete for the Navy.

The event included the bench press (push) and deadlift (pull) disciplines in a full powerlifting meet. The particular things to watch out for to those who don't know the sport is the pause at the bottom of the bench press, and the no-hitching rule in the deadlift.

Details of all events can be found on the Royal Navy Powerlifting Association Facebook page.



● CPO PTI Lee Herron from RNAS Culdrose in action during the competition

Picture: POA(Phot) Paul A'Barrow

Nash too sharp at Sabre contest

NAVY fencing star Lt Cdr Rubin Nash, from the Maritime Warfare Centre, won the Interservices Sabre Title at RAF Cosford.

The final match was won 15-5, with the semi-final match being fought against Mne Ed Hill, who subsequently shared the bronze medal.

No-one was more surprised at the victory than the winner himself, when considering the inauspicious start to his day's fencing, losing three out of his five pool matches and only being ranked 15th seed as a result.

However, the afternoon session proved something of a revelation in the knock-out phase, with the hardest match being the quarter-final meeting against the RAF, with the Naval fencer prevailing eventually 15-14, having led 8-4 at the break.

The previous day, the trio of Lt Cdr Keith Bowers, Lt Cdr Nash and Lt Tom Rudge secured the Sabre Team Gold in the annual triangular match with the Army and RAF.

This continues the trend of the Navy dominating the weapon at both the team and individual Sabre for the past three years.

The Navy women also had success with the medals, with Lt Nicky Luad winning silver at the foil and Musn Flic Graysmark winning silver in the epee.

ET(WE) Corrin Walters won the plate competition at both sabre and foil.

Navy Fencing is now looking forward to its autumn matches with team competitions in Devon, Birmingham and London before the Inter Unit three-person team competition at HMS President in London on November 29.

Plane sailing for Seahawk

HMS SEAHAWK's PO(AC) 'Fish' Fisher normally controls aircraft as his day job ... but by jumping out of them the RN won gold at the Armed Forces Parachute Championships at JSPC Netheravon.

The team, Sgt Matt Peerless RM, LA Carly Stacey-Fleming, Lt Will Major and PO Fisher, beat eight teams from the Army and RAF to win gold in A-level 4-way formation skydiving.

The Senior Service also scooped medals in freestyle B (gold for Lt Cdr Tom Canty), team accuracy (silver), AAA four-way (silver for Sgt Peerless, PO Fisher, Cpl Al Bradie RM and AET Charlie Hart) and freely (bronze for Lt Cdr Canty and Sgt Peerless).

The RN also took the trophy for Overall Champion thanks to Sgt Peerless.

Anyone interested in learning to parachute should visit www.atga.mod.uk or www.bpa.org.uk

Close contest for engineers

CHINA Fleet Golf and Country Club in Saltash, Cornwall, hosted the 21st RN Engineers Open Golf Championships.

A strong field of mixed abilities from 5 to 25 handicap fought for the vast array of prizes on offer, with the overall champion being decided by a single stroke.

Despite a valiant effort by the long-serving stalwart (and three times winner), Rod Teagle was pipped to the post by Tracey "Ticker" Hart by one stroke.

Overall third place (on count back) went to CPO Andy Sinclair with WO Andy Such fourth.

Panthers eat Sharks

THE Royal Navy Sharks were forced to make a number of changes for the Harpenden Rugby Sevens and this was clearly evident in the opening match against Pink Socks.

The Sharks were clearly the better side but will have been disappointed with much of their play as they allowed the match to become far too scrappy.

The lacklustre performance of the first match continued into the second. However in Sticky Mitt Psychos the Sharks were playing a team who understood sevens and who won 42-0.

The knock out stages of the Barrel competition saw them play the Maltese Falcons who included two Navy players, Harry Collins and Jack Basher.

Next up was Oxfam Crusaders in the Barrel quarter-final, where The Sharks won 14-12.

The Sharks were down to 'the last man' standing for their semi final against Silver Cup Panthers and ended the tournament with a 22-5 defeat.

Cricket course

THE Combined Services Cricket Coaching Association (CSCCA) will be holding a UKCC level 2 cricket coaching course at HMS Temeraire from January 31 to February 6 2015.

The Royal Navy has been allocated four places for the joint-Service course.

Accommodation has been arranged at HMS Temeraire.

Anyone interested is asked to contact Cdr Simon Morris at DES_SM_CS-PROGCAP or Simon.Morris542@mod.uk or phone 03067936199.

Navy's golden girl shows tough side

AN LAET from RNAS Culdrose scooped a golden handful of medals at the InterServices Mixed Martial Arts Championships against strong opposition from the Army team.

Samantha Irish from 857 NAS was competing for only her fourth year with the Royal Navy Martial Arts team at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth. Sam was presented with her clutch of golds by Rear Admiral Ben Key.

"Winning everything was fantastic, the Army opposition was pretty tough and in most cases much bigger than me," said Sam. "Despite this size difference I really got the best of them in the sparring and that's where the points are gained."

Returning recently from the squadron's deployment on Operation Herrick in Afghanistan, Sam wasted no time in getting back into full training before the competition and joined several Taekwondo clubs in the West Cornwall area.

"Unfortunately when training you need someone to spar with, even if you're just doing pad work you need a partner to train with."

"Just keeping up a reasonable fitness level is quite hard on deployment. It really paid off and



● Samantha with her medals

I felt pretty confident going into the InterServices," Sam added.

She opted to fight in two styles which differ slightly. ITF Taekwondo is semi-contact sparring, therefore allowing punching to the head. The WFT Taekwondo version is the official Olympic-style which focuses heavily on kicking and sparring and is full contact.

"In the Navy we competed in the ITF and WTF, we seem to throw ourselves in for everything!"

"Hopefully on the back of this success it'll be enough for me to compete with the Combined Services team made up of fighters from all three Services and more bouts in some of the national or international competitions."



● Samantha Irish (facing) in action against an Army opponent

It's a knockout for Royal Marines

PLAYERS from CTCRM took the 2014 Royal Navy Cricket Knockout Cup by 62 runs.

Twelve teams took part in this year's competition, with CTCRM meeting HMS Sultan in the final at Burnaby Road, Portsmouth.

CTCRM won the toss and elected to bat. Opening batsman Lee Evans scored an impressive 97, ably supported by Craig Buchanan (46).

Andy Rodgers (4-39) off eight overs was the pick of Sultan's bowlers. CTCRM finished their innings on 218.

Sultan got off to a reasonable start with Matt Pendle (31) and Caleb Kent (21). A fine spell of pace bowling from Pete Turnbull (4-15) off eight overs put the Corps ahead of the game. Evans took 2-39 and Pete Gibson 3-28.

Even a final cameo from Sultan's Dom Jolly (34) failed to prevent CTCRM from

bowling Sultan out for 156 in 31.4 overs. Mne Evans received the man-of-the-match award.

THE 2014 Ladies InterServices Cricket festival saw the RN out to avenge defeat by the Army.

Day one of the Portsmouth festival saw the Navy take on the RAF. RN captain Lt Hazelle Garton scored 121no, supported by Amanda Toby (32), as the Navy side reached 319-4 – a record for InterServices 40-overs cricket.

The RAF struggled in response, particularly with some excellent bowling from Garton (3-12) off eight overs, Toby and LH Louise Worsfold, each of whom took two wickets. The RAF finished on 148-9 and Garton was named player of the match.

Day two saw the RAF take on the Army, whose attack proved too strong, leaving the RAF on 83-9. The Army strolled past

the target in 12.1 overs with nine wickets to spare.

On the final day, the RN again lost the toss and were put into bat by the Army. It looked promising as openers Worsfold and Lt Cdr Charlie Yemm put the Navy on 63-0 after 15 overs.

By the second drinks break the Navy had capitulated to 90 all out. The Army's batsmen took little time to surpass the target, finishing on 91-2 after 21.3 overs for an eight-wicket win to retain the trophy.

The Navy's Garton was named player of the tournament.

Next year's festival will be held at RAF Vine Lane on dates in July yet to be decided.

EIGHT new caps were in the RN squad for the 2014 senior Inter-Service cricket festival at RAF Vine Lane, Uxbridge.

Six made their debut for the RN on the

opening game against the RAF. Opening bowlers Lt Cdr Jonathan Parker and Mscn Chris Turrell got off to a good start but the remaining Navy bowlers struggled against A Fisher (131) and A Watson (107). The RAF finished on 325-3 in the 50-over match.

In reply the Navy struggled and only skipper Lt Mark Toogood (30), Parker (18) and ETWE Louis Satish (16) reached double figures in a miserable total of 87 all out.

Day two saw the Navy win the toss and elect to bat against the Army. LReg Chris Howes was dismissed for 14 and the rot set in. Only Mid Jordan Shapland made a significant contribution, 41, as the Navy finished 97 all out.

The Army responded well and won by five wickets, meaning a final between the Army and RAF, who won by nine wickets to take the trophy.

AET helps crew break yachting record

A ROYAL Navy engineer has helped to set a record for a yacht race.

AET Meirion Stenner (pictured), who is based at RNAS Yeovilton, was the only military member of the Team Endeavour crew who sailed Artemis (pictured right) into the record books.



The crew competed in the Seven Stars Round Britain and Ireland race in five days, 14 hours and 16 seconds – breaking the previous record set by the yacht Safran in 2011 by more than 19 hours.

“I am very proud of my achievement and still can’t believe I have a world record,” said AET Stenner.

The 36-year-old, from Bridgend, South Wales, has only been sailing for about a year.

“I have boxed since I was eight and before joining the Navy was a scaffolder, so I have ridiculous strength and stamina in my shoulders, which is why I was chosen,” he added.

Artemis was skippered by Brian Thompson and the crew included Michael Ferguson, Oliver Young, Cheng Ying Kit and Pete Cumming.



Picture: Rick Tomlinson



● Lt Freddie Huntley

Skydive target in sights

A NAVAL officer is this month hoping to set a new world record for women’s formation skydiving.

Lt Freddie Huntley, 30, has been parachuting for 14 years since she received a static line course for her 16th birthday.

A qualified system instructor and formation skydiving coach, the warfare officer is travelling to California to join 129 other skydivers in a bid to break the world record.

The current Federation Aeronautique Internationale (FAI) record stands at 110 women making two formations in a single skydive.

“The standing record was set by a mixed field last year so, if successful, the event will set two new world records in both women’s and open categories,” said Freddie, from Salisbury.

Freddie has been supported by sponsorship from IFS, the Royal British Legion Women’s Section and the Sports Lottery.

All jumps will be made from formations of multiple aircraft and will be made from altitudes ranging between 15,000ft and 20,000ft using oxygen.

Freddie is a member of both the RNRM Sports Parachute Association and the Army Parachute Association and won skydiving gold two years running at the Armed Forces Parachute Championships.

She hopes her participation will have benefits for the wider Naval Service. She has already been asked to join the organisers for a potential future Military Freefall Record attempt.

Freddie hopes this event can be a platform to raise awareness of the Royal British Legion Women’s Section too – she will wear the Women’s Section colours on her legs.

Currently undertaking legal training in Bristol, Freddie joined the RN in January 2008 and has since served in HMS Ocean, HMS Grimsby, HMS Walney, HMS St Albans and RM Poole.

For more information about skydiving visit www.netheravon.com or www.bpa.org

Proud to be an ironman

CROSSING the finish of the Ironman 70.3 World Championships in Canada was the moment one Royal Marine officer has said he will never forget.

Maj Ryan Kestle flew out to Mont-Tremblant after securing tenth place in the 30-34 age category at the Exmoor qualifier race earlier this year.

Making the world championships was an “unforgettable” experience for the 32-year-old, who is based at the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone.

He completed the race in 4 hours 34 minutes, putting him in 99th place in his age group and 480th overall.

Team take top title on their first outing



● Dan Raper in action against Tom Hildreth

Historic moment

THE Royal Navy made sporting history as trainee Navy Pilot Dan Raper became the first serving Armed Forces representative to qualify for the V2 World Cup.

V2 is played in a squash court and is the singles version of VX, a sport which was introduced to PTIs at HMS Sultan a couple of years ago.

Called ‘dodgeball on steroids’ by the Americans, points are scored by throwing low-pressure balls at opponents from a VstiX, which consists of a control bar with a thrower-catcher on each end. A hit scores one point, a catch scores two points.

Dan’s first opponent was Tony Notarianni from the USA, competing in his second World Cup, however Dan took the match 65-38.

His next opponent was defending champion Tom Hildreth, who took the match 119:85.

Waiting in the wings was another tough opponent for Dan – former world champion Carl Alsop. A tough battle ensued but Carl made several catches to lead 47-39 at half time. Dan redoubled his efforts in the second half, but Carl maintained his composure to win 101-74.

Dan, 20, then beat Danish number 1 Matti Chasan Bergstein by 98-86. His final group opponent was Malingha Timothy but again Dan emerged victorious by 123-121.

The finals day saw Dan contest fifth place with Scotland’s Scott MacMichael. Dan won 70-62 to give him a world ranking of six.

THE Royal Navy Running Team took the corporate team title when they made their debut at the Cardiff 10K.

The Welsh event was used as a fitness test to prepare for this month’s Marine Corps Marathon in Washington DC.

The team also face competitions against the Army, and RAF in the coming months.

Six Servicemen and women from bases in Portsmouth, Plymouth and Lympstone went to Cardiff to take on 4,000 athletes, celebrities and corporate teams in Wales’s biggest 10K.

Lt Olly Nokes led the charge for the Royal Navy with a personal best time of 35min 27sec, followed closely by L/Cpl Andy Stay (36min 9sec) and Cpl Aled Jones (37min 10sec).

Mne James Wright showed great potential for the future running 38min 48sec on his debut with the team.

AB Eilidh Bell (42min 53sec) and Lt Emma Bakewell (43min 15sec) were among the first women home, rounding off a great performance for the Navy.

In a closely-contested race the Navy beat the team from



● The Royal Navy team champions celebrate success at the Cardiff 10K

South Wales Fire and Rescue by one point in the corporate team event, the first time they have been beaten in seven years.

Royal Navy Running competes in track events during the summer, cross country during the winter and covers distances from 5k to the marathon on the road all year round.

Major annual competitions

include the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington DC and the various Inter Service (IS) Championships.

The next event is Leeds Abbey Dash 10K which hosts the IS 10K championship in November before the Cross Country Championships in the new year.

The Fleet Half Marathon and

IS Half Marathon Championship in March are perfect preparation for the London Marathon.

There are Plymouth and Portsmouth training groups who meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at HMS Temeiraire and Brickfields.

Anyone interested should contact C/Sgt Pete Belcher on 01329 414509.



● From left, Lt Olly Nokes, the first finisher for the Royal Navy, L/Cpl Andy Stay and AB Eilidh Bell competing in the Cardiff 10K

International success for Navy swimmer

A SAILOR from RNAS Yeovilton won bronze swimming at the FINA World Championships in Canada – the largest aquatic event outside of the Olympic Games.

Lt Rhodri Humphreys, 32, took part in the 200m freestyle championships in Montreal.

Lt Humphreys represented the Royal Navy

in a team of seven and completed his 200m freestyle in 2.01.35, a new Welsh Masters record for his age group. Twelve Royal Navy records were broken during the competition.

Lt Humphreys said: “Competing against ex-professional and Olympic swimmers, I was surprised to have done so well at my

first International Masters. The standard was very high and makes all the early mornings and training with Yeovil District Swimming worthwhile.”

His next major championships will be the World Masters Games in New Zealand in 2017.

THE SHIPS WHICH DEFINED AN ERA

Sun sets
on the
Invincibles

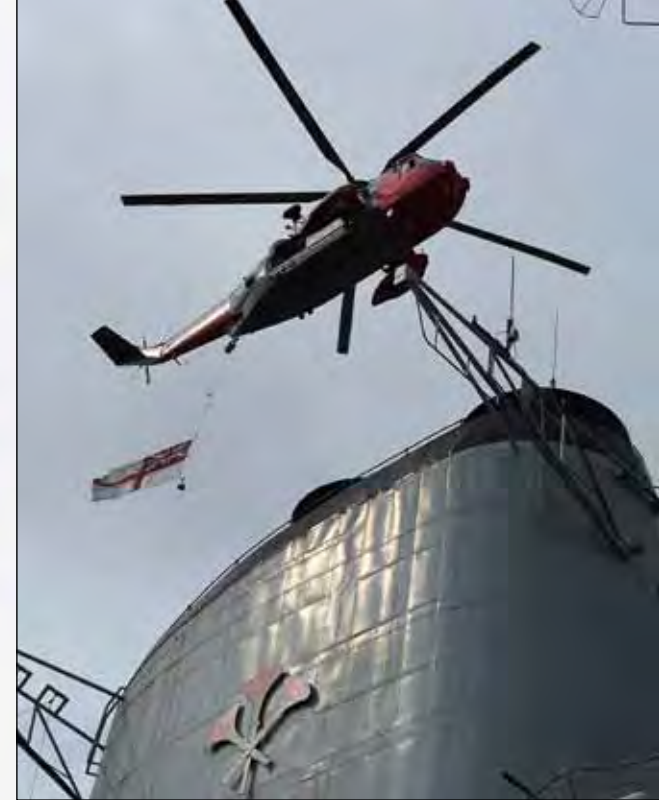


● The ship which gave birth to the name of the class, HMS Invincible, is silhouetted against the winter sun as she heads for the Gulf on her final deployment, Marstrike, at the beginning of 2005.

Picture: PO(Phot) Dave Gallagher



pictures: la(photos) alex knott, rnpoty, and nicky wilson



Farewell, faithful and trusted friend

THE drone of two Junglies 100ft overhead largely drowned out the strains of *Sunset* from the Royal Marines band.

And the sight of a succession of helicopters connected with the ship – Lynx, Wildcat, three variants of Sea King, Merlins, and a sole Apache gunship bringing up the rear – diverted the gaze of most of the friends, family, affiliates and VIP guests arrayed on two temporary stands.

An ever-growing crowd of visitors to the neighbouring historic dockyard ignored HMS *Victory* and pressed against the railings separating the public and military parts of the naval base.

Amid the tumult, almost unnoticed – certainly by the crowd, for the giant grey slab of *Illustrious* starboard side rather dominated the immediate view – Able Seamen Vicky Hennessy and Charlie Dodds hauled down the White Ensign for the last time.

The time was precisely 11.30am on Thursday August 28 2014.

The *Illustrious* era had come to an end – and with it the age of the *Invincibles*, the ‘*Harrier carriers*’ which have defined the Royal Navy for the past 35 years.

Some 300 friends and family, plus many of her former commanding officers, witnessed that final act under a rather drab sky – even duller than the RN’s trademark battleship grey.

Six divisions of junior rates, two of senior, and one of officers, plus a sizeable guard of honour marched into place to the bars of *Heart of Oak* and, when it finished, to the rhythmic tramp, tramp, tramp of boots on concrete. They formed up in the shadow of the carrier’s smart starboard side – outwardly *Lusty* belied her 32 years. “Lots of layers of paint, mate,” a senior rating quipped.

The hour-long ceremony which marked her passing – attended by local, national and international media – began with the guest of honour inspecting the guard as HM Band of the Royal Marines Collingwood provided suitable nautical accompaniment, as it did throughout proceedings.

Fittingly wearing an *Illustrious* brooch on her dogtooth-check coat, Lady Chatto – she took over as the ‘ship’s friend’ after the carrier’s sponsor, her mother Princess Margaret, died in 2002 – chatted with the massed ranks of immaculately turned-out sailors.

As she did the carrier’s former commanding officers – most of *Lusty*’s 17 previous captains – moved among the various divisions, chatting to the final *Illustrians*.

Chaplain Fr David Conroy told all present that *Illustrious* and those who served in her had given “32 years of faithful service to the nation at home and abroad. Friendships have been forged, careers built and this magnificent ship has been a faithful and trusted friend.”

And the carrier had also witnessed “new life” as members of the ship’s company chose to christen their offspring aboard, their names carved in the inner waist of the bell, among them that of young Thomas Hardcastle back in 1983.

Dad Cliff joined *Illustrious* in build on the Tyne – the first of two drafts to the ship. His son followed in his footsteps, serving ‘*Lusty Airways*’ as a survival equipment specialist on three occasions, including the final commissioning.

“For me decommissioning is obviously poignant and a sad occasion. I’ve always had *Illustrious* in my heart,” said Cliff.

“I joined her when she was brand new, which was an experience as an 18-year-old – the banks of the Tyne were lined with people to see her off, even though the fighting in the Falklands had just ended. And now my son is there on *Illustrious*’ final day in the Navy. There can’t be too many people with connections with the commissioning and decommissioning.”

As a naval airman it was his job to marshal Sea Harriers and helicopters safely around *Illustrious*’ flight deck. “It was a great job. Working outside on the flight deck was just what I wanted.

“Above all, you never forget the comradeship. You worked with guys you’d never met before and after two weeks you were the best of friends.”

His fondness for the ship is shared by his son.

“I’m sad to see her going because she’s a fantastic ship. I’ve served on her three times, my father served on her twice,” the leading hand said.

“So I have spent a lot of hours on board and have a lot of memories. That’s what you miss – the crew you’ve served with, the friends you make.

“*Illustrious* has had a good career and I’m proud to have served on her.”

Proud was an adjective regularly in use on the day. Sad and poignant cropped up repeatedly. And mighty, magnificent, impressive, wonderful.

Because, as Capt Mike Utley acknowledged: “*Illustrious* has been much more than just steel, aircraft and clever technology.

“To any sailor, a ship is a home, the centre point of their lives, a focal point for our families, our Service and our country.”

When appointed to the ship, Capt Utley knew he would be the last of her 18 commanding officers and so “always knew this day would come.” His time in charge witnessed the last great act in *Illustrious*’ life, delivering aid to the people of the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan.

The carrier broke away from keeping pirates under the knout off the Horn of Africa and, a few days later – after a rapid-fire pit-stop in Singapore to cram her hangar with relief supplies – relieved HMS *Daring*.

Over the ensuing few weeks, the sailors

and Royal Marines provided food and shelter for more than 12,000 souls.

That relief mission – Operation Patwin – is Capt Utley’s abiding memory of his time in charge, not just for what *Illustrious* did, but how she did it.

“How my sailors reacted when they were told they were not going home for Christmas, but would be thousands of miles away, leaves me immensely proud. They got an extraordinary job done.”

It’s not the only act of mercy in a 32-year career; she also helped evacuate civilians caught up in conflict in the Lebanon in 2006.

And though born in fire – she was rushed into service to be sent to the Falklands just after the 1982 conflict ended – the fifth *Illustrious* in a line going back to the days of Nelson has added no battle honours to the ten earned by her predecessors.

But that does not mean an uneventful life – and nor does it mean she has avoided harm’s way.

She has served as the springboard for both Harrier operations (in the Balkans and southern Iraq in the 90s, over Sierra Leone in 2000) and helicopter missions (supporting the campaign against the Taliban in 2001-02).

And her decommissioning is not the end of the *Illustrious* story.

There is still a dwindling number of sailors aboard – sensitive or useful kit is being stripped out (not least her four Olympus turbines) – until the middle of this month and the last member of the ship’s company will not turn out the lights until December.

The longer term fate of 21,000 tonnes of battleship grey, however, is undetermined.

But she will not end up in a Turkish breaker’s yard like *Invincible* and *Ark Royal* before her.

Whitehall wants *Lusty* preserved as a permanent memorial to her generation of carriers and the men and women who served in them.

Various bids have come in and are now being chewed over before a decision – but one of the conditions laid down by the MOD of any sale is that she must remain in the UK.

It is not for *Illustrious*’ sailors to comment on their ship’s fate, let alone determine it.

They – and their ship – have, says Capt Utley, “a reputation for success and excellence, dedication and spirit. The legacy of *Illustrious* will stand us in good stead.”

And her sisters?

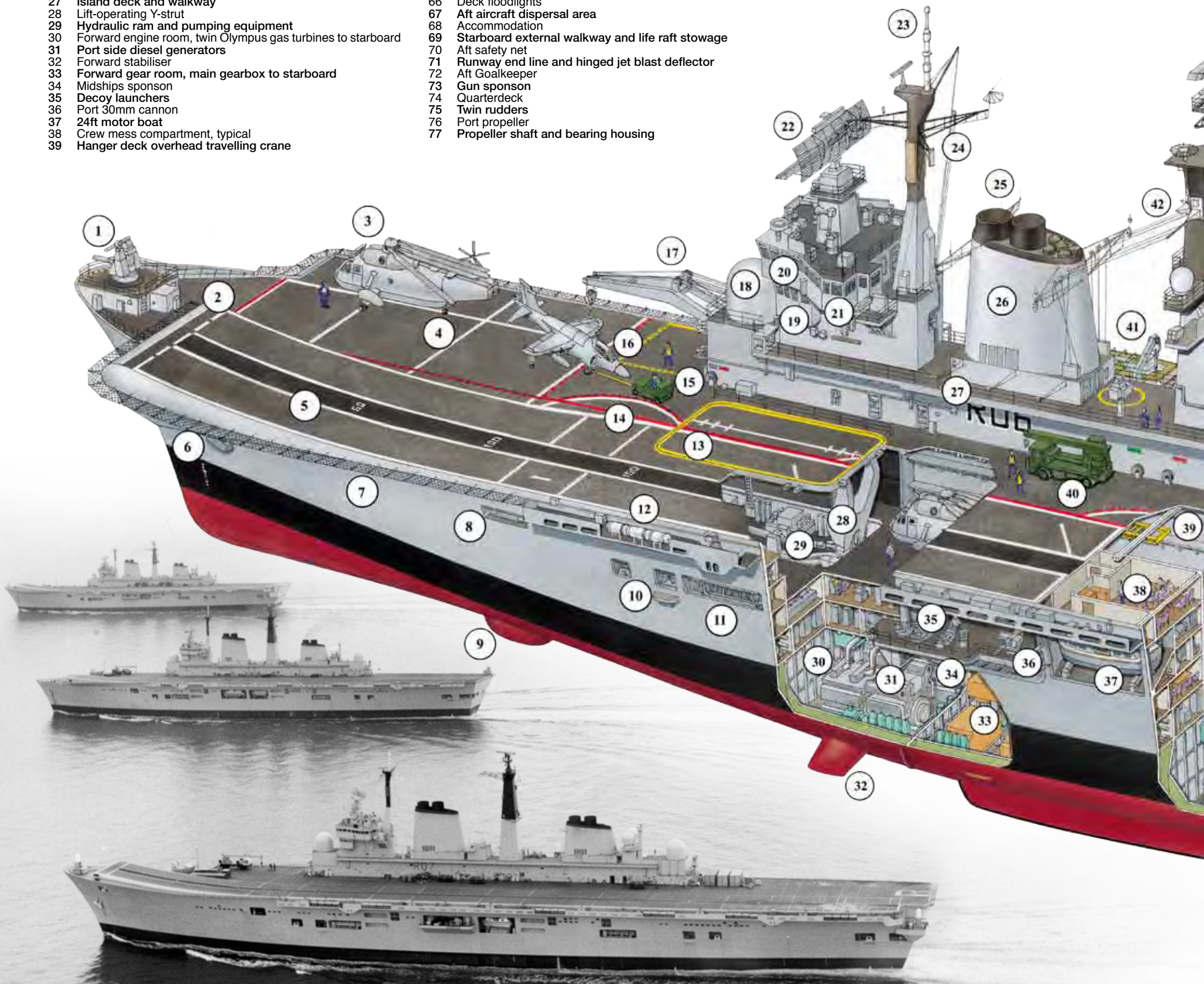
“These ships encapsulate what the Royal Navy has done these past 30 years – the Falklands, the Balkans, the Middle East. Everywhere the United Kingdom has been involved, one of these ships has been there,” *Illustrious*’ final Commanding Officer said emphatically.

“They have been extraordinary servants of the nation.”



inside the INVINCIBLE

- | | | | |
|----|---|----|--|
| 1 | Goalkeeper 30mm automatic cannon | 40 | Self-propelled deck crane |
| 2 | Flight deck forward 'knuckle' | 41 | 36ft work boat |
| 3 | Westland Sea King HAS5 helicopter | 42 | ESM antenna |
| 4 | Forward aircraft dispersal area | 43 | Search radar |
| 5 | 'Ski-jump' assisted take-off ramp | 44 | Twin SCOT satellite navigation antenna |
| 6 | Twin anchors | 45 | Communications antenna cables |
| 7 | Safety net | 46 | Aft antenna mast |
| 8 | Gemini craft stowage | 47 | Starboard decoy launchers and 30mm cannon |
| 9 | Sonar housing | 48 | Aft engine room exhausts |
| 10 | Cable fairlead and mooring bollard | 49 | Aft funnel |
| 11 | Forward reception area/accommodation ladder stowage | 50 | Hangar |
| 12 | Life raft stowage | 51 | Hangar deck |
| 13 | Forward aircraft lift | 52 | Aft engine room |
| 14 | Helicopter safety area deck markings | 53 | Starboard diesel generators |
| 15 | Aircraft towing tractor | 54 | Twin Olympus gas turbines |
| 16 | BAe Sea Harrier FA2 | 55 | Fuel tankage |
| 17 | Crane | 56 | Bilge keel |
| 18 | Forward Type 909 radar antenna | 57 | Port main gearbox |
| 19 | Admiral's bridge | 58 | Gearbox output shaft to port propeller |
| 20 | Compass platform | 59 | Aft stabiliser |
| 21 | Flight control ('Flyco') | 60 | Aft cable fairlead and mooring bollard |
| 22 | Search radar | 61 | External walkway |
| 23 | UHF communications antenna | 62 | Life raft stowage |
| 24 | Forward antenna mast | 63 | Aft aircraft lift |
| 25 | Forward engine room exhausts | 64 | Navigational radar antenna |
| 26 | Forward funnel | 65 | Aft Type 909 radar antenna |
| 27 | Island deck and walkway | 66 | Deck floodlights |
| 28 | Lift-operating Y-strut | 67 | Aft aircraft dispersal area |
| 29 | Hydraulic ram and pumping equipment | 68 | Accommodation |
| 30 | Forward engine room, twin Olympus gas turbines to starboard | 69 | Starboard external walkway and life raft stowage |
| 31 | Port side diesel generators | 70 | Aft safety net |
| 32 | Forward stabiliser | 71 | Runway end line and hinged jet blast deflector |
| 33 | Forward gear room, main gearbox to starboard | 72 | Aft Goalkeeper |
| 34 | Midships sponson | 73 | Gun sponson |
| 35 | Decoy launchers | 74 | Quarterdeck |
| 36 | Port 30mm cannon | 75 | Twin rudders |
| 37 | 24ft motor boat | 76 | Port propeller |
| 38 | Crew mess compartment, typical | 77 | Propeller shaft and bearing housing |
| 39 | Hangar deck overhead travelling crane | | |



BLE CLASS carrier

THIS is the Harrier Carrier – represented here by R06, HMS *Illustrious*, drawn by our great ‘cutaway’ artist Mike Badrocke – almost at the apotheosis of its Sea Harrier-carrying days at the end of the 20th Century.

And this is how most sailors and aviators will probably wish to remember the class of ship which has defined the Senior Service since the turn of the 1980s.

Gone is the rather ungainly Sea Dart launcher on the bow. In its place, the much smaller Goalkeeper automated gun and, crucially, extra deck space for parking and manoeuvring aircraft (the wonderfully-named ‘forward knuckle’). The original Sea Harrier FRS1 has given way to the FA2.

And there were still further incarnations to go. New Sea Kings supplanted by Merlins. Sea Harriers replaced by GR7 and then GR9s and then by helicopters as the jump jet was retired. Army Apaches and RAF Chinooks have all made use of the flight decks. And Lynx. And US Marine Corps Ospreys. And US Marine Corps Harriers.

All of which shows the remarkable flexibility of this class of ship.

Not bad for bastard children of a much more grandiose carrier project axed nearly 50 years ago.

In the early 60s, and with the existing generation of

carriers likely to reach the end of their lives by the close of the following decade at the latest, the Admiralty eyed up replacements.

The Americans were building nuclear-powered super-carriers approaching 100,000 tons, and conventional-powered ones not too much smaller at 80,000 tons. As the second most powerful carrier navy, the RN was looking at vessels on a similar scale – 65,000-ton leviathans with an airgroup of 50 fast jets and helicopters.

These two, unnamed carriers – the CVA-01 – would be the heart of the Royal Navy of the 1970s and 1980s, surrounded by escorts such as Sea Dart-carrying Type 82 destroyers and a new breed of anti-submarine cruisers.

And then the government pulled the plug. In 1966 it axed the carrier programme (new RAF bombers would plug the gap). The Type 82s went too – apart from HMS *Bristol*, already on the order books.

But the idea of an anti-submarine cruiser persisted. At the height of the Cold War, hunting Soviet submarines and keeping the Atlantic sea lanes open was the Royal Navy’s primary mission – and the new Sea King (due in 1969) was at the forefront of this struggle.

Thus was born the ‘through-deck cruiser’, upwards of 18,000 tons of warship with a ‘through deck’ – ie hangar – to accommodate nine Sea Kings.

While plans for the ‘cruiser’ progressed – the designation ‘aircraft carrier’ was avoided,

possibly to pull the wool over the Treasury’s eyes – the RAF was introducing a revolutionary aircraft into front-line service, the Harrier.

Prototype Harriers had successfully flown on and off RN carriers in the 1960s. There was no reason why the jets couldn’t operate from the new ‘cruisers’ as well – as the Navy and many MPs lobbied heavily.

In the mid-1970s, Whitehall agreed and asked for a maritime version of the aircraft. It would be known as the Sea Harrier.

By the time the order for the naval jump jet was placed, the first ‘through-deck cruiser’ was already two years into construction at the Vickers’ yard in Barrow.

Ordered in the spring of 1973 at a cost of £185m (the price in 2014 would be roughly ten times that), HMS *Invincible* would, in time) be joined by *Illustrious* and *Indomitable* (subsequently renamed *Ark Royal*), her sisters both built on the Tyne by Swan Hunter.

Looking back four decades later, the Navy’s – and government’s – attitude to the three sisters seems schizophrenic.

There was a Nelsonian blind eye to the ‘aircraft carrier’. Models of *Invincible* toured recruiting events, her pennant number C01 painted on her island – C for cruiser, not R for carrier. The first pamphlets handed out to visiting members of the public and dignitaries welcomed them aboard an ‘anti-submarine cruiser’.

The media and public were not fooled. The former dubbed the ships ‘Harrier Carriers’ – a tag which stuck, even though

the planned air group was actually just five jump jets and nine Sea Kings.

(The RN finally dropped the pretence when *Invincible* arrived in Portsmouth for the first time, conceding she was indeed an aircraft carrier, not a cruiser, while C01 had given way to R05.)

Hand-in-hand with the almost comical refusal to call the ships carriers was the Navy’s keenness to stress their scale.

Press releases and news reports emphasised the size of *Invincible* (as the first of the class, she received a lot of attention), stressing not that the vessels were smaller than the previous generation of carriers, but rather how large, spacious and modern they were.

Biggest air conditioning system, most electrical power generated, largest propellers in the Fleet. And there was no larger machine on God’s earth driven along by four Rolls-Royce Olympus gas turbines.

Forty years later, reading such hyperbole, what strikes you are the parallels between the *Invincibles* and today’s Queen Elizabeths which supersede them.

The three sisters were the largest warships built in Britain since the late 1950s. Building them required a national effort: 3,000 shipwrights and engineers in Barrow (then under Vickers, today BAE), 35,000 people around the land producing one million components.

To accommodate the revolutionary Sea Harrier, there was the equally revolutionary ski ramp – angled at 7° (later the incline was increased to 13°) – to propel the aircraft skywards after a run up of no more than 550ft.

Inside, more than 600 miles

of cable, 60 miles of piping snaked around the decks – although naval commentators observed that the new carriers possessed the “neatest and tidiest” design and layout of any ship.

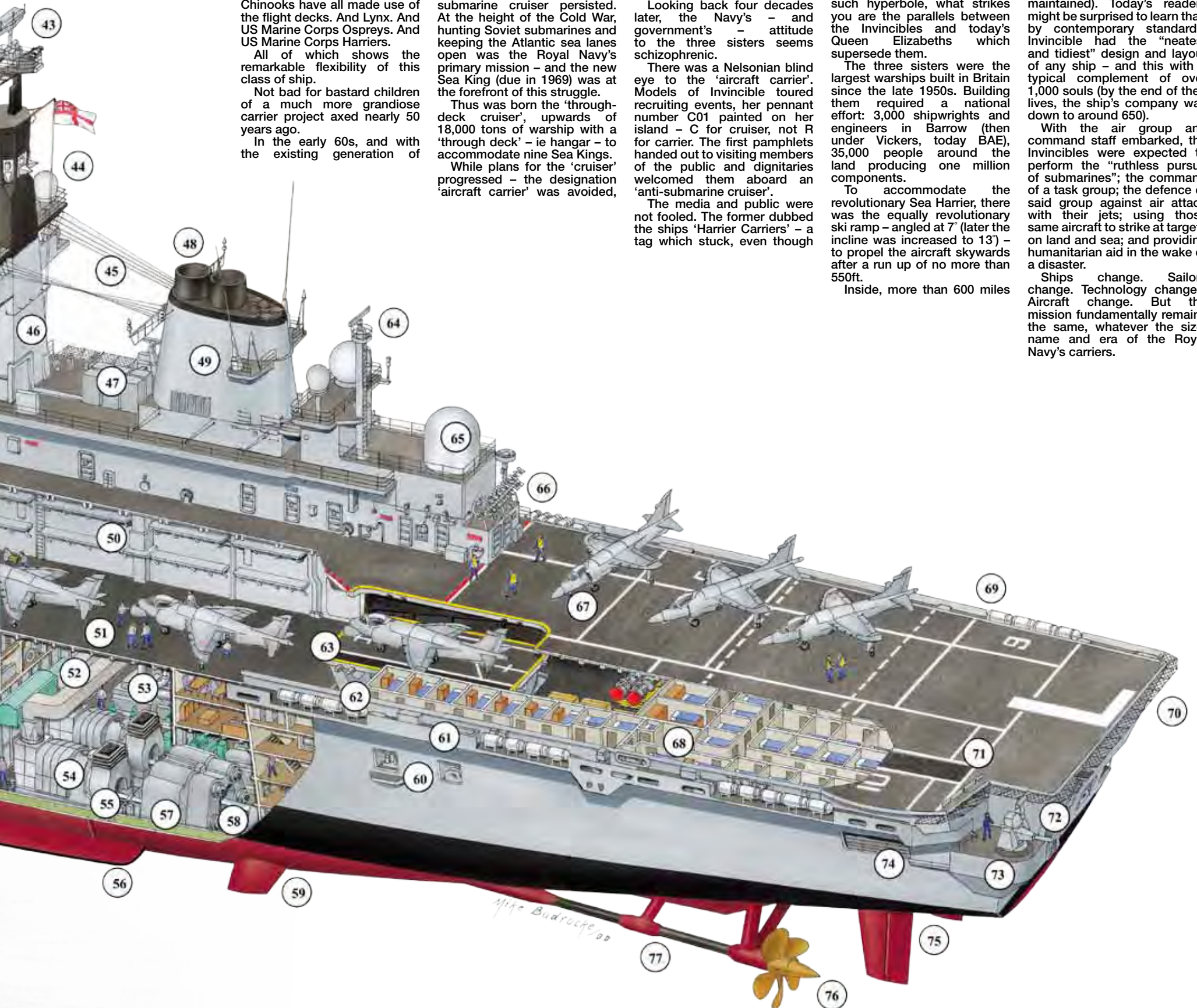
The wow factor didn’t end there.

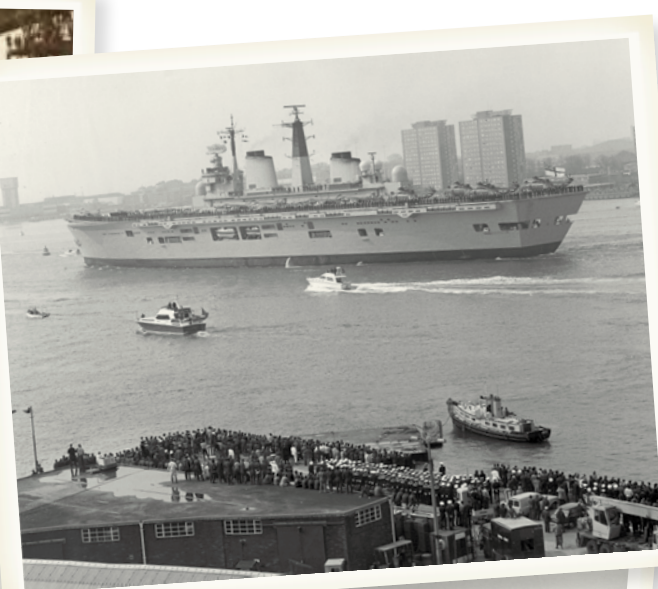
“Visitors to the operations room have likened it to a scene from *Star Trek* or *Star Wars*,” enthused the ship’s public relations officer when *Invincible* arrived in Portsmouth for the first time in 1980: banks of twin-tone round orange screens, huge consoles and a computer room where men in white suits (yes, really) flicked switches and inserted punched programme cards into machines (and no, none of it looked remotely like a scene from *Star Wars* or *Star Trek*...).

As for life on board, mess decks of 16 or 18 for junior rates were typical – and ground-breaking, as were the small relaxation areas with their colour TVs (although naval traditions such as uckers were maintained). Today’s readers might be surprised to learn that, by contemporary standards, *Invincible* had the “neatest and tidiest” design and layout of any ship – and this with a typical complement of over 1,000 souls (by the end of their lives, the ship’s company was down to around 650).

With the air group and command staff embarked, the *Invincibles* were expected to perform the “ruthless pursuit of submarines”; the command of a task group; the defence of said group against air attack with their jets; using those same aircraft to strike at targets on land and sea; and providing humanitarian aid in the wake of a disaster.

Ships change. Sailors change. Technology changes. Aircraft change. But the mission fundamentally remains the same, whatever the size, name and era of the Royal Navy’s carriers.





Immortal Invincible

HER career spanned 25 years.

It would have lasted a mere two, but for the war which saved her, probably the government, and certainly a collection of South Atlantic islands few in Britain had ever heard of.

Had the *junta* in Buenos Aires waited a few more months to invade the Falklands, rather than strike in April 1982, Invincible would have been HMAS Australia.

The new carrier was by far the highest-profile victim of the 1981 Defence Review which cut a swathe through the RN. Canberra and London shook hands on a reputed £175m deal (considerably less than Invincible had cost to build...) to transfer the ship to the RAN just six weeks before Argentina struck in the South Atlantic.

Invincible was not the flagship of the task force sent south – that was HMS Hermes.

But it's probably the ship most associated with the 1982 campaign – possibly thanks to the words of BBC reporter Brian Hanrahan who observed the first Harrier strikes against the islands: *I counted them all out and*

I counted them all back.

The six-week war in the South Atlantic was as good a vindication of the importance of the aircraft carrier as there has been in the modern era.

The sale of Invincible was quietly dropped. The Royal Navy would get all three of its new carriers – two operational, one in refit or laid up.

The drama of the Falklands would never be matched in the subsequent 23 years of Vince's active life (she was paid off in 2005 and mothballed until she was broken up in Turkey).

But the Falklands were not her only conflict. She spent the bulk of the 1990s either in the Gulf (policing the no-fly zone over southern Iraq) or supporting the UN peacekeeping effort in the Balkans as the former Yugoslavia imploded.

That aside, Invincible proved to be a global ambassador for the Navy and nation with Gibraltar, New York, Hong Kong, Singapore, Auckland, Sydney, Lisbon, Pusan, London, Athens, Penang and Bombay all blessed with visits at some stage during Vince's 25 years.

● (Clockwise from top left) An artist's impression of the 'through-deck cruiser' escorted by a couple of new Type 42 destroyers; Invincible is launched on a wet day in 1977; huge crowds see Invincible off to the Falklands in 1982; and an even greater reception for her return from the war later that same year; basking in the sunshine in Sydney Harbour just before Christmas 1983; passing through the Thames Barrier on a visit to the capital in 1990; off Gibraltar after a six-day fast dash across the Atlantic in 1997; a record-breaking take-off of seven GR7 and nine FA2 Harriers from Invincible's deck in just 13 minutes – the largest-ever single launch of Harriers from an Invincible-class carrier – in 2003; exercising with HMS Illustrious in the Channel in early 2005; a viewfinder on Liberty Island is 're-decorated' during the carrier's final visit to New York in July 2004; the Duke of Edinburgh surveys the view as HMS Endurance passes Invincible at the 2005 International Fleet Review in the Solent; and a damp flight deck as Vince makes her final entry into Portsmouth on August 1 2005.





● A Sea Dart is fired at the AUTEC range in the Bahamas in September 1991; the ship's company mark the Ark's role as flagship for two deployments to the Adriatic in 1993-4; the ship arrives at Mayport, Florida, for a six-day visit during the Auriga deployment of 2010

Mighty Ark was the last Harrier carrier

THE youngest of the through-deck cruisers, RO7 was originally given the name Indomitable, matching the initial letter of her older sisters.

But public support for the name Ark Royal – the fourth ship to bear that name, also an aircraft carrier, was scrapped in 1980 while 'Indomitable' was in build – meant that the name was brought straight back into service.

The ship, built by Swan Hunter in their Wallsend yard on the Tyne, was launched by the Queen Mother on June 2 1981, and arrived at her home port of Portsmouth on July 1 1985, having incorporated design changes as a result of lessons learned in the Falklands Conflict.

Although she was too late to see action in the Falklands, the carrier was still able to win her spurs in troublespots.

Deployed in 1993 and 1994 to the Adriatic during the Bosnian conflict, her Sea Harriers proved invaluable in support of UN peacekeeping missions – on Operation Hamden the fighters of 801 Naval Air Squadron flew 542 Deny Flight sorties between April 8 and August 18 1994 without the loss of a single mission through unserviceability.

She also won the Battle Honour Al Faw 2003 for her part in Operation Telic in the Gulf, raising

her Battle Ensign on March 21.

The following day the ship was in mourning as seven men died when two Sea Kings collided over the sea.

The Mighty Ark also flew the flag in iconic cities around the world – she led the Outback 88 deployment which celebrated the Australian bicentenary in Sydney in 1988, and visited great seaports including New York, Singapore, Hong Kong and Hamburg on her travels.

She spent the last five years and more of the 20th Century in reserve and refit, but barely served beyond the first decade of the new millennium.

On October 19 2010 it was announced that the ship would be retired early and on November 24 the last Harrier of any type flew from a British aircraft carrier – Lt Cdr Jim Blackmore took off in a GR9.

Her final Commanding Officer, Capt Jerry Kyd, had been the most junior officer when he first joined the Ark a quarter of a century before.

When he took the ship alongside at Victory Jetty in Portsmouth for the last time, on December 3 2010, the Ark had spent 50,762 hours at sea and steamed 621,551 nautical miles.

Farewell parades were held in Portsmouth and Leeds – a city whose strong links with the Ark began when the authorities adopted the third Ark in 1941.

The carrier decommissioned on March 11 2011.

With thanks to Alastair Graham and Eric Grove, editors of HMS Ark Royal: Zeal Does Not Rest 1981-2011 (Maritime Books).



● Clockwise from top: the ship arrives at Greenwich for the Falklands 25 commemorations in June 2007; Status Quo play for the ship's company in 2002; A Sea Harrier launches prior to the Ark's arrival in Singapore; the White Ensign is lowered on October 20 2010, the day after it was announced that the carrier would be retired early; the ship arrives in Hong Kong in August 1988 during the Outback 88 deployment; Ark sails from New York in July 1986; a Naval Strike Wing Harrier on the carrier during Joint Warrior in April 2010; launch day for Ark Royal – June 2, 1981 at the Swan Hunter yard on the Tyne



● From left, the ship's company on the deck after a tour of the Gulf in 2000; GR7 Harriers on the deck of Illustrious in 1997; Illustrious enters her home port of Portsmouth for the final time



● HMS Illustrious leaves the Med for the Adriatic in 1995

Illustrious career for last of the line

HMS ILLUSTRIOUS was launched by Princess Margaret at Swan Hunter, Tyneside, on December 1 1978.

The Falklands conflict of 1982, however, meant work on Illustrious needed to be speeded up so the carrier could join the operation in the South Atlantic.

Swan Hunter's workforce finished the job three months early but Illustrious wasn't formally commissioned until March 1983.

During the 1990s she helped maintain the no-fly zone over Bosnia and in 1998 operated in the Arabian Gulf carrying out similar roles over southern Iraq.

Illustrious was soon called into action again in 2000, leading a task group aimed at restoring peace and stability to Sierra Leone, *pictured left*.

The following year she played an important part in the war on terror in Afghanistan following the September 11 attacks in America, staying in the region for several months.

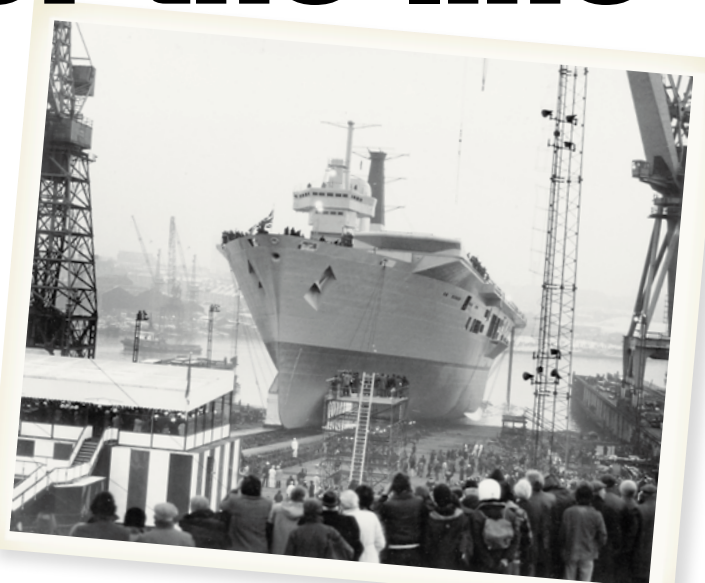
In 2006, along with Type 42

destroyer HMS Gloucester, Illustrious helped in the evacuation of British citizens from Beirut caught up in the Israel-Lebanon crisis.

She hit the television screens in 2008 as the star of Channel 5's six-part documentary *Warship* which followed her deployment to the Mediterranean, Africa, the Middle East and south-east Asia for a series of exercises and diplomatic visits to 20 ports.

And she made headlines around the world last year when she was diverted to assist with disaster-relief operations in the Philippines in the wake of Typhoon Haiyan.

Having clocked up 900,000 miles on operations across the globe, Illustrious returned to her home port of Portsmouth for the final time on July 22 after attending the naming ceremony of her successor – HMS Queen Elizabeth – at Rosyth in Scotland.



● Above: HMS Illustrious is launched at Swan Hunter Shipyard, Tyneside in December 1978;
● Below: Lusty takes over as task force leader from Invincible in the Falklands;
● Below left: Illustrious in the foreground as she meets up with HMS Invincible in Gibraltar
● Bottom: Illustrious passes Ark Royal on the Tyne



● Above: Illustrious arrives in Malta for VE-Day commemorations
● Below: Illustrious off Southsea for the 50th anniversary of D-Day in 1994



● Illustrious at the RAN 75th Anniversary Fleet review in Sydney Harbour in 1986

