



NAVY NEWS

MARCH 2018

Hail the boss

■ HMS Duncan glows as the sun rises over the Bosphorus Bridge and the NATO flagship departs Istanbul and makes her way towards the Black Sea (see centre pages)

Picture: LPhot Paul Hall, HMS Duncan



Solid as a Rock

Gibraltar visit for HMS Queen Elizabeth during her latest trials

Eagle has landed

Commando Helicopter Force put through paces in Norway



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SCHOOL OF ROCK

QUEEN. Rock. There's got to be a song title there somewhere...

Flanked by a patrol boat from the Gibraltar Squadron and a police launch (and with HMS Somerset out of shot following in the carrier's wake), HMS Queen Elizabeth makes her debut in the azure waters of the Strait of Gibraltar.

Yes, a little over six months since she first put to sea, Britain's biggest warship was able to break the chains which tied her to the mother country during sea trials and truly stretch her legs heading down to the Med – completing a (very enjoyable) rite of passage everyone in the Royal Navy must go through: a visit to Gib.

Before you get to the Rock, there's the small matter of 1,000 miles of Atlantic Ocean, including the unforgiving Bay of Biscay, to cross.

And the Navy's ultimate assessors wouldn't allow such a passage until they were satisfied the crew could cope with emergencies at sea.

Fifty Flag Officer Sea Training staff spent several days putting the ship's company to the test, all the

way up to F4 level.

For those of you who don't speak FOST, an F1 is a minor incident, such as fog lookouts on duty, all the way through to an F7 with the ship in danger of sinking from a collision or grounding.

And an F4? A fire in a confined major machinery space.

With 3,300 compartments throughout HMS Queen Elizabeth, there is a significant amount of 'real estate' for the training to cover.

"The size of the ship is one of the biggest challenges," explained Lt Cdr Jon Goulder, one of the FOSTies delivering the 'Preliminary Safety Training'.

"It's incredible really, that it is much bigger than our previous carriers, but with a comparable number of personnel.

"However, we train people, not compartments, so the damage control and fire-fighting skills every sailor in the Royal Navy is taught from day one work throughout the ship. There is an awful lot of experience in this ship, and everyone responded brilliantly to training."

With the FOSTies gone, time for business.

The reason for the carrier's maiden appearance in the Med was to find some nice winter weather for her helicopter trials.

Half a dozen whirlybirds – two Chinooks and two Merlins from the Aircraft Test and Evaluation facility at MOD Boscombe Down, plus two Merlin Mk2s from 820 NAS in Culdrose – are embarked to help define the Ship-Helicopter Operating Limits.

The Boscombe Down aircraft are crammed with sensors and special equipment, while other sensors are fitted to the ship, measuring a raft of information, such as how the unique two-island superstructure affects the flow of air over the deck, pitch and roll.

Once done, the experts at Boscombe Down will spend the spring and summer analysing the results before laying down the parameters in which not just Merlin Mk2/3s and Chinooks can operate, but also Apache gunships, plus Army and Fleet Air Arm Wildcats.



Certainly the Chinook fliers appreciated the expanse of deck on which to set the legendary helicopter down. Chinook co-pilot Cdr Matt Grindon, who'd landed on the RN's previous generation of carriers, described his first touch-down on Queen Elizabeth as "an easy landing!" Then, courtesy of the weather, something never achieved before on a British aircraft carrier at sea: stowing the Chinooks in the hangar. With the nose protruding over the edge of one of two mighty aircraft lifts, the 99ft-long helicopters were transported from the flight to the hangar deck. The lifts were designed to carry two F-35B Lightning II jets, but are just large enough to accommodate a Chinook, whose rotor blades don't fold... unlike those on Fleet Air Arm helicopters. One Chinook was quickly followed by the second... then the four Merlins as Queen Elizabeth ploughed through a Sea State 7 in Biscay, cutting through waves of six to nine metres (20ft-30ft). "These conditions are useful for us to see how the ship

handles, and to see if there are any structural issues," explained Scott Maclaren, Senior Sea Trials Manager. "We look at whether things still work as they did before, also, how does it affect the crew? Bad weather can cause seasickness and fatigue, so we're looking at how the human factor might be impacted. "She's a big ship though and doesn't actually move too much – and her stability will only increase as more personnel and equipment are embarked." Among the biggest tests of the carrier's stability in heavier seas was faced by her table tennis club. No, it's not a (very early) April fool. Two ping-pong tables have been installed in one compartment and so smooth is the ride that you can play the game at sea. The future flagship is equipped with two main gyms with facilities at least on a par with many land-based sports centres. There are spinning and cardio-vascular suites, weights, a boxing ring, not to mention the table tennis, er,

tables (which have their own compartments), while the hangar and flight deck can be used for circuits and running (when the latter isn't being used by aircraft...). A three-strong team of physical training instructors – one chief, two leading hands – keep the 700 sailors on their toes, although simply walking around the carrier on a daily basis means most ship's company are getting in 20,000 steps (the recommended is at least 10,000). And 28-year-old LPT Elise Broughton from Hull doesn't have a hard time in motivating her shipmates. "Coming back on board has actually been better than I expected. The crew want to be here, they want to use the sporting facilities. They get up early to train and are mega keen to get involved in sport," she says. "I love it on board. If the Navy is this good, I don't want to leave." Before you ask, no, there's no swimming pool aboard... but the crew haven't ruled out installing a pool table... Sport was a key element of the weekend in Gib – a string

of fixtures against local sides plus the traditional Rock race (see page 25). There were formalities for Capt Kyd – lunch with Governor Lt Gen Ed Davis RM, the Deputy Chief Minister Dr Joseph Garcia and other local dignitaries, and Gibraltar's Chief Minister Fabian Picardo presented the ship with a polished cross-section of a stalactite from inside the Rock. All of which is regular fare for any warship visiting a foreign port, flagship or otherwise. But for perhaps half the ship's company Gibraltar was a novelty – their first overseas visit in the RN. Capt Kyd, a seasoned hand when it comes to Rock runs ashore, promised his men and women they were "in for a real treat". He continued: "As sailors, we love going to Gibraltar – it's a fantastic place, one of those special places, a rite of passage. "This gives our young sailors the experience of what being in the Royal Navy is all about – working hard at sea, then enjoying some downtime ashore."

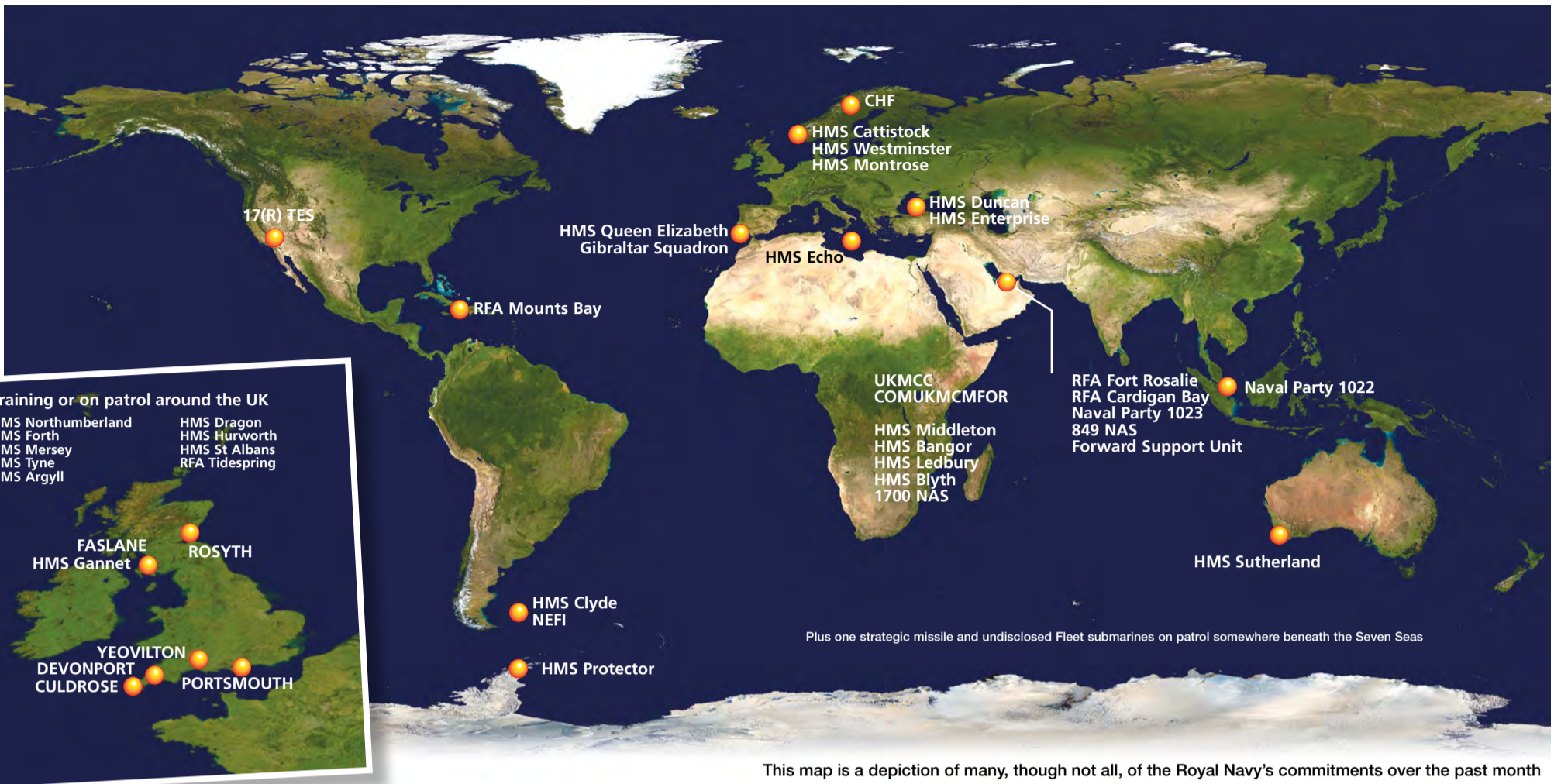
Eighteen-year-old chef Sean Wadsworth was among those who have never visited an overseas port before. Gib was a very welcome break from work in the aft galley, where a team of three chefs produce meals for 400 crew three times a day. "It's challenging – and certainly keeps me busy," said the teenager from Bolton (pictured below). Take Friday lunch. Battered fish (200 portions). Battered sausages (150 portions). Fifty pies. And if that all sounds a bit lardy, there's a well-stocked salad bar for the healthy options. "I'm still trying to find my way around the ship – in fact, everyone aboard is still learning about the ship. The size of Queen Elizabeth is still something you struggle to get your head around. "I love coming into work. It's a good ship and I'm working with food every day – just what I trained for." So things have gone well with the ship's handling, the helicopter trials are making progress. Why not just add aircraft, as the social media hashtag popular among

armchair admirals and keyboard killicks goes? Well... "It would be lovely to wave a magic wand and have all the aircraft, all the Royal Marines on board right from the get-go," says Capt Kyd. "Real life doesn't work like that..." For a start the stealth fighters are 3,000 miles away in the USA and they are diared to conduct trials with the ship in the autumn. But above all, the helicopters have to come first; they have a crucial search-and-rescue duty to perform when the jets start operating from the deck. "To do all the training at the same time would be dangerous," Capt Kyd adds. "Besides, we're still learning about the ship. She's a prototype. "This is stepping-stone progress, or crawl, walk, run as we call it. "For everyone on board, whether you're a young chef or an engineer, we are starting to feel the marriage of ship and aircraft coming together." With thanks to Lt Cdr Lindsey Waudby



pictures: po(phot) dave jenkins and lphot dan rosenbaum, hms queen elizabeth





Plus one strategic missile and undisclosed Fleet submarines on patrol somewhere beneath the Seven Seas

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

Training or on patrol around the UK

- HMS Northumberland
- HMS Dragon
- HMS Forth
- HMS Hurworth
- HMS Mersey
- HMS St Albans
- HMS Tyne
- RFA Tidespring
- HMS Argyll



ROYAL NAVY FLEET FOCUS Protecting our nation's interests

OUR focus this month is on Royal Navy ships deployed around the world, kicking off with **HMS Duncan** and her role as flagship of a NATO task group operating in the Black Sea (see centre pages). The Type 45 met up with survey vessel **HMS Enterprise**, who is leading another NATO task group.

HMS Albion sailed from Devonport (see page 5) to the Mediterranean on her first operational deployment since her £90m refit.

In the Med and future flagship **HMS Queen Elizabeth**, accompanied by **HMS Somerset**, made her debut visit to Gibraltar (see pages 2-3) during her latest sea trials.

Heading much further south and **HMS Clyde** carried out a mass casualty exercise on remote South Georgia (see page 9).

The ship's company of **HMS Sutherland** paused to pay tribute to the fallen of HMAS Sydney (see page 7) as the Type 23 made her way to Perth as part of her Pacific deployment.

In the Caribbean and **RFA Mounts Bay** continues to provide much-needed assistance to communities devastated by last year's Hurricane Irma (see page 11).

In the much colder climate of the North Sea, **HMS Montrose** is carrying out extensive trials and training (see page 9) following a major overhaul in Plymouth.

RFA Fort Rosalie is currently assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group in the Middle East (see page 11), while **RFA Cardigan Bay** is acting as the mother ship for British and US minehunters operating in the Gulf (see page 14). The RFA vessel hosted a week-long exercise to show medics can save lives in alien surroundings.

Survival is also the name of the game for **Commando Helicopter Force's** detachment to the harsh Arctic climate for Exercise Nordic Eagle (see pages 12-13).

NATO forces at **Northwood** played out a World War 3 scenario (see pages 14-15) to see how the alliance could respond in the event of a 21st-Century conventional war.

THE newest ship in the Royal Navy has the 'monopoly' on the city of Stirling after civic leaders sealed their bond with **HMS Forth** (see page 6). The patrol ship is undergoing her final checks.

Also being put through her paces was **HMS Hurworth** as the minehunter prepares to sail to the Gulf later this year. The confined and busy waters of the Solent saw Hurworth come under 'attack' by P2000s **Puncher** and **Ranger**, using the same tactics as speedboats might use in the Middle East (see page 5).

It was the third such workout for both the fast patrol craft and Hunt-class ships in a month. The P2000s will shortly be heading off on their Easter deployment with **Puncher** crossing the Channel to visit France and north-west Europe. Later in the spring six of the craft are due to take part in 2018's Baltops exercise before dispersing around the Baltic.

Royal Navy bomb disposal experts from **Southern Diving Unit 2** blew up a 500kg WW2 bomb after its discovery grounded hundreds of flights at London City Airport (see page 6).

Finally, the Royal Navy is preparing to bid farewell to its largest operational warship **HMS Ocean** and its smallest vessel **Gleaner** as both made their final journeys to Devonport (see page 6). A 21-gun salute heralded the end of the **Might O's** 20 years of service as she returned home flying a 203-metre decommissioning pennant. **Gleaner**, who served faithfully for 35 years, bore a 16-metre pennant as the survey launch returned to her homeport and a decommissioning ceremony. **Ocean** will be decommissioned later this month in a ceremony being attended by her sponsor, the Queen.

Year of expanding maritime horizons

VIEW BRIDGE from the BRIDGE

LAST year may have been referred to as the 'Year of the Navy', but 2018 promises to be an even more exciting year for the RN.

There is no doubt last year ended on a high with a flurry of activity, particularly for our aircraft carrier programme.

There will be no let-up in equipment delivery throughout 2018 either, as we look forward to welcoming new ships, submarines and aircraft to the Fleet.

Yet while 2017 was marked by frequent and exciting equipment milestones, this year our focus will see a subtle shift.

The modernisation of the Fleet will continue at pace, but operational activity is going to dominate our agenda throughout 2018 as we expand our maritime horizons.

The Fleet is already making its presence felt far and wide in 2018 and the **White Ensign** will soon be flying in the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, the Gulf and the Pacific; from the Arctic to the Antarctic. Whilst the Royal Marines and Commando

Helicopter Force hone their niche cold weather warfare skills, Royal Navy Medical Services personnel are running a UN Field Hospital in South Sudan.

As our submarines maintain the country's nuclear deterrent, **RFA Mounts Bay** has continued her relief efforts in the Caribbean. And as we look forward to our F-35B Joint Strike Fighters flying from **HMS Queen Elizabeth** in the US,

we are preparing for amphibious exercises in the Middle East.

Our ability to defeat would-be adversaries above and below the waves, and to project military muscle ashore, will always be a defining characteristic of the Royal Navy, but these global deployments are far more than an opportunity to demonstrate the extent of our military capability on the world stage.

The vital importance of maritime trade is common ground that our country shares with nations across the globe; it follows that we also share an interest in the means to protect it.

The Navy's engagement with international partners, whether participating in military exercises or contributing to maritime security in their part of the world, has proved successful time and again as a mechanism to foster closer relations as we carry our country's message of partnership with us.

So as the government seeks to forge new ties for Global Britain, the Royal Navy is uniquely placed to help secure the country's future prosperity – and through our presence in every part of the world, we'll do just that.



● HMS Sutherland has left Devonport for the Pacific



Punch and duty

HMS Puncher demonstrates a turn of speed as she churns up the Solent – and helps prepare HMS Hurworth (pictured right by LPhot Joe Cater) for a 6,000-mile journey to the Gulf, followed by another six months in theatre.

The minehunter is due to head to the Middle East later this year, replacing one of her two sisters (Ledbury and Middleton) – pretty routine for the long-standing Kipion minehunting force whose vessels trade places roughly every three years.

Except that Hurworth's crew spent most of 2017 running HMS Tyne to help their Fishery Protection Squadron colleagues introduce new patrol ships (see pages 26-27)... earning the 'best ship in the squadron' title for their efforts.

The sailors returned to the world of minehunting in December, but the crew has changed substantially since last being aboard a Hunt – so much so that half have never served in one before, making training for the Middle East a bit trickier.

Before heading for the Gulf, Hurworth will undergo operational training off the Scottish West Coast. To get her crew in the mood for that instruction, enter HM Ships Puncher and Ranger.

In the relatively confined – and busy – waters off the eastern shore of the Isle of Wight, and in full view of Portsmouth's iconic Spinnaker Tower, the P2000s began 'attacking' HMS



Hurworth, using the same tactics as speedboats might use in the restricted waters of the Gulf.

As training vessels, regularly used by students from London universities (Puncher) and Brighton/Sussex (Ranger), neither P2000 is equipped with weaponry on a daily basis; they can be fitted with machine-guns, such as HMS Raider and Tracker in Faslane which help protect the nuclear deterrent.

Lack of weaponry does not mean, however, that the boats cannot practise attack profiles and runs – which is exactly what they did.

Smaller, faster – top speed (upwards of 24kts/27mph, compared with the Hunts' 17kt/20mph) – and highly manoeuvrable, the P2000s should be able to run rings around Hurworth.

But... "I used to be the navigator on both HMS Cattistock and Middleton and I know how they

operate," explained Lt Oliver Brown, Puncher's CO.

"They offer all-round defence – there's no safe place for me to head as there's always a gun pointing at me.

"It's extremely good fun – and really worthwhile training. Regardless of the choppy conditions and the fact it was freezing cold, you're driving your craft at speed in the Solent, around other shipping. You've got to make the most of it."

This was the third such workout for both the fast patrol craft and Hunt-class ships in a month.

The P2000s will shortly be heading off on their Easter deployment with Puncher crossing the Channel to visit France and north-west Europe.

Later in the spring six of the craft, including Puncher, are due to take part in 2018's Baltops exercise before dispersing around the Baltic to give students and sample of life in the RN.

Back on the front line at last

FOR the first time in seven years, HMS Albion is on operations – bringing the curtain down on a £90m refit and two-year regeneration, and raising another on a new lease of life.

The assault ship – which takes over from HMS Ocean as the UK's flagship at the end of March – has been dispatched to the Mediterranean for the next few months.

Albion received the final 'tick in the box' of her lengthy road back to full fighting fitness after more than four years in extended readiness just before Christmas, passing the litmus test for all RN vessels about to deploy on front-line duties: Operational Sea Training.

Capt Tim Neild, Albion's CO, thanked families and the Devonport and wider community for the huge task of getting his ship through her major upgrade and training and final preparations.

"Albion is the ideal ship for having at the ready poised in the Mediterranean for any tasking required and morale is extremely high," Capt Neild said.

"In the meantime the ship will be deploying her full versatility during exercises – much like the Swiss army knife of UK defence – capable of a wide range of operations from humanitarian to 'whites-of-the-eyes' combat."



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Boom with a view

MORE than 16,000 air passengers were grounded as 260 flights were cancelled when a WW2 bomb was discovered near London City Airport.

Three days after the discovery of the 500kg device, Royal Navy bomb disposal experts blew it up – some two miles off the MOD's Shoeburyness range.

The historic ordnance was found in the George V Dock during pre-planned construction work.

Royal Navy divers from the Portsmouth-based Southern Diving Unit 2, who are trained bomb disposal experts, were called to the scene to make the device safe and take it to be destroyed.

After examination, the device was confirmed as a 500kg tapered end shell measuring 1.5m in length.

Lt Cdr Jonny Campbell, the officer in charge of Southern Diving Unit 2, said: "My team worked incredibly hard to ensure public safety remained the priority at all times."

"Royal Navy bomb disposal experts are called out roughly every 18 hours to incidents such as this and we are well trained and well placed to deal with them. We are pleased that London City Airport was able to reopen while we safely detonated the device well away from any public areas out at sea."

The safeguarding and ultimate detonation of the historic device was handled by a joint operation between the Royal Navy, British Army bomb disposal teams, and the Metropolitan Police.

Robert Sinclair, the CEO of London City Airport, said: "I would like to offer my sincere thanks to the Royal Navy and in particular, the team of expert divers for their professionalism and tireless efforts over a prolonged period to bring this operation to a safe conclusion."

Royal treat for sailors

ROYAL Navy personnel based in Norfolk were treated to a visit from the Queen.

The Honorary Air Commodore of RAF Marham visited the station's new Lightning Operations Centre.

The building, the first to have been completed as part of a multi-million-pound project, will be HQ for the F-35B jets.

The aircraft will provide the aerial punch for HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

Royal Navy personnel, including a weather forecasting team, are already calling the base home and will soon be joined by around 100 Senior Service colleagues from the USA.

There are currently some 200 British personnel based in South Carolina testing the aircraft and getting them ready to arrive in the UK later this year.

Farewell little and large

A 21-GUN salute for 20 years of untiring service announced the last act of HMS Ocean's active career when she sailed into Plymouth for the final time.

The weather was kind to the Mighty O – Britain's biggest operational warship and the nation's flagship – as she trailed a 203-metre decommissioning pennant for the ceremonial return to her home port and was welcomed by well-wishers and flanked by landing craft and tugs firing jets of water high into the air.

A few days later the Royal Navy bade farewell to the smallest commissioned vessel.

After 35 years' loyal service – often in places the RN never normally visits... like Switzerland (yes, really) – Her Majesty's Survey Launch Gleaner (officially, she's too small to warrant the usual HMS prefix) paid off, returning to Devonport for the last time.

In mist and rain, and with a 16-metre decommissioning pennant tied to the stern rail to prevent it flapping around uncontrollably, three of the nine crew lined up for Procedure Alpha as Lt Cdr William Alexander guided the boat for her final entry.

"Despite the wet weather, it was fantastic to be part of such an important tradition, and I'm really pleased to have had the opportunity," said AB Joel Bradley, Gleaner's signaller.

In her 20 years of service, HMS Ocean has been involved in operations off Sierra Leone (2000), off Iraq (2003), off Libya (2011) and, most recently, humanitarian operations in the Caribbean.

Since completing her last deployment just before Christmas,



● Gleaner flies her pennant as she makes her last journey after 35 years' service

the helicopter assault ship played out the final weeks of her operational life conducting trials and training. She has been sold to Brazil for around £84m.

Six of the 400 crew who participated in the final entry had been present two decades ago when she joined the Fleet.

The highest ranking senior rating on board, Executive Warrant Officer Carl Steedman, said: "I joined her while she was in-build and took her into service – I saw her hull from red undercoat to battleship grey. But the highlight of my career was the lead-up to the Caribbean hurricane-relief effort last year when the ship turned around from the NATO deployment and we stored at Gibraltar."

"The whole ship pulled together in an amazing way, whether it was carrying planks of wood on board or operating heavy vehicles to prepare for emergency relief – all in 36 high-octane hours."

"I have always felt privileged to be part of HMS Ocean and I must admit I'm a bit sad now she won't be in action again for the Royal Navy and the UK."

At the other end of the scale, Ocean is 28-year-old ET Jessica King's first ship. She described

the welcome afforded the carrier as "fantastic".

She continued: "My family are very proud of me and it's great to see them and others on Plymouth Hoe welcoming us in for the last time. It's disappointing it is the end of the ship's career."

"I've made lots of new bonds on board – it's like having another family, but in the Navy."

Cdr Nick Wood, second-in-command of HMS Ocean, described the Mighty O as "a unique and awesome ship. We have looked after her for 20 years and she has looked after the country."

"Plymouth has given us a warm welcome as ever, the people of Plymouth will miss her large presence on the horizon. I am a bit sad, but this is the right way to celebrate her career."

"This is a bitter-sweet moment, but we should not let emotion cloud our view of the future. New ships such as HMS Prince of Wales are much larger and can carry out a similar role on a larger scale."

Ocean's last Commanding Officer, Capt Rob Pedre, said: "Our final entry into Devonport is, understandably, tinged with sadness, as we reflect on a truly remarkable operational period for HMS Ocean and the many significant achievements we have

accomplished together on this great warship.

"HMS Ocean's decommissioning pennant pays testament to her extraordinary operational record spanning two decades of Royal Navy service, proudly serving as a safeguard for our nation."

Over the coming weeks, the ship's company will remove key UK-only equipment and prepare the ship both for the Brazilian Navy and for her decommissioning ceremony on March 27, which is due to be attended by Ocean's sponsor, the Queen.

At the other end of the scale, Gleaner was built to survey waters other craft could not reach; despite her size she's crammed with the latest sonar equipment to measure the seabed around key ports.

She was used to survey the Mary Rose wreck site ahead of dredging work to make sure nothing of Henry VIII's flagship was left on the Solent seabed before the diggers moved in.

More than a decade later, she scoured every inch of Portsmouth Harbour and its approaches to clear the way for dredging to allow the safe entry and exit of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

And she did the very same in Rosyth ahead of the 65,000-tonne carrier's departure to ensure charts of the Forth estuary were 100 per cent accurate.

The ship's size has allowed her to appear at Earl's Court for a boat show and navigate the Rhine as far as the Swiss city of Basel back in 1988 (a seven-day, 680-mile journey).

Her demise means the end of an affiliation with one of the smallest communities in the UK: the hamlet of Buckler's Hard in Hampshire.

Gleaner's successor will be a slightly larger catamaran, HMS Magpie – sharing her name with the destroyer commanded by the Duke of Edinburgh. The new vessel is one of a number of new workboats being built for the RN under a £48m deal.

Main image: CPO Phot Matt Ellison



Home reminders for HMS Forth's crew

THE newest ship in the Royal Navy has the 'monopoly' on the city of Stirling after civic leaders sealed their bond with HMS Forth.

City leaders made the 28-mile journey from the historic city to BAE's Scotstoun yard, where the £116m patrol ship is undergoing final tweaks and maintenance, for their first chance to look around the 90-metre-long warship.

In doing so, the visitors – including Stirling City Council's Provost, Cllr Christine Simpson and Lord Lieutenant for Sterling and Falkirk Alan Simpson – gave the 35-strong ship's company permanent reminders of their hometown to carry around the Seven Seas on patrols.

Cllr Simpson presented the sailors with road signs from her city which carry significant or historical meaning. In keeping with long-standing naval tradition, these will be placed around Forth's key passageways, helping to shape the ship's identity and forever linking the ship to her affiliated city of Stirling.

And just in case sailors get bored of



● Alan Simpson, Christine Simpson and Cdr Bob Laverty, CO of HMS Forth

uckers, Xbox, DVDs and the like, the visitors handed over a special Stirling-themed edition of board game Monopoly featuring the city's castle, the Wallace Monument, Robert the Bruce statue and Andy Murray's golden postbox from neighbouring Dunblane.

"HMS Forth is the product of Scotland – the proud shipbuilding heritage of Glasgow specifically," said the new ship's first CO Cdr Bob Laverty.



"The visit is another event which cements the already-strong relationship between the city of Stirling and HMS Forth, and the inclusion of road signs of the same design as those found in the city will spread the name and story of Scotland and Stirling as the ship conducts her tasking around the world."

Since arriving on the Clyde last spring, the ship's company have been forging relations with Stirling, attending events in

the city such as the annual remembrance parade.

The VIPs have rather further to travel for Forth's commissioning next month; the ship was due to transfer to Portsmouth just after this edition went to press – the first British warship to emerge from Glasgow shipyards since HMS Duncan in 2013.

Forth was officially accepted by the MOD at the end of January after undergoing four months of extensive sea trials around Scotland in the final quarter of last year.

Once in Portsmouth, the ship's company will formally move on board and begin many of the first-of-class trials required to write the Batch 2 handbook – such as helicopter operating limits, for example.

Unlike the first-generation ships where only Clyde can operate helicopters, all five vessels have flight decks capable of hosting Wildcats and Merlins.

The ships also carry three high-speed jet boats, up to 50 embarked troops if necessary, but with a crew of just 35 (ten fewer than Batch 1 vessels).

Turtle recall in paradise

SAILORS and Royal Marines have been helping scientists better understand the habits of endangered turtles on an Indian Ocean island paradise.

The remote island of Diego Garcia – 800 miles south of the Maldives and 1,200 east of the Seychelles – is home to a small Senior Service detachment who help run a US military base.

The otherwise idyllic British Indian Ocean Territory is also a popular nesting ground for female green turtles; each year upwards of 800 creatures dig holes in the sands on the edge of the beaches to lay their eggs before returning to the water.

Scientists committed to the conservation of the green turtle flew out to Diego Garcia and enlisted the help of Brits and civilians working on the base for a major research project.

At dawn and dusk each day at the height of the turtle mating season, a 20-strong team of volunteers patrolled a 15-kilometre stretch of beach on the lookout for the creatures.

Some patrols drew a blank, but when nesting turtles were found, the 500lb amphibians were briefly ‘impounded’ in a wooden box while a satellite tag was fitted to them. Once tagged, the turtles were released back into the ocean, transmitting data of their movements for Dr Nicole Esteban from Swansea University and Prof Graeme Hays from Deakin University, near Melbourne in Australia, to analyse.

“Tagging turtles has been a definite highlight of my time on Diego Garcia – a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity,” said Sgt Matt Hinton, one of two soldiers who joined in the effort.

Nearly two dozen turtles were marked.

WITH the sun rising over the eastern Indian Ocean, sailors from HMS Sutherland prepare to pay tribute to those lost in the greatest tragedy in Australian Naval history.

Beneath this spot, 100 miles off the west coast of Australia and 500 miles northwest of Perth, lies the wreck of the wartime cruiser HMAS Sydney – lost with all 645 men aboard, one of only a handful of Allied warships in six years of war sunk with all hands.

Sutherland is the first British warship to visit Australia in five years – and the first Royal Navy vessel to pass over the wreck of the Sydney since it was discovered a decade ago.

So the Plymouth-based frigate paused on her journey to Fremantle to pay her respects with a dawn service of commemoration for the crew of the Sydney and the 82 men of the German merchant raider Kormoran killed in the same cataclysmic encounter.

The Kormoran sank more than ten vessels in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans in an 11-month deployment which ended when she encountered HMAS Sydney on November 19 1941.

Disguised as a Dutch merchantman, the Germans largely caught the Australians unawares in a ferocious 30-minute encounter, wrecking the cruiser’s guns, bow and bridge. The Sydney’s response caused fires in the Kormoran which threatened to spread to the magazine.

While the Germans abandoned ship – more than 300 were subsequently rescued by the Australians – the Sydney disappeared over the horizon in flames and was never seen again.

“The battle between HMAS Sydney and the Kormoran is

a tragic story in the history of the Royal Australian Navy – and for us all as fellow mariners,” said Sutherland’s CO Commander Andrew Canale, pictured with a wreath.

“As we were passing the site of these historic wrecks – and as the tenth anniversary of their find approaches – it felt right to pay our respects.”

“HMS Sutherland is about to embark on three weeks of exercises with the Royal Australian Navy, so it is also a timely reminder of the deep bonds that exist between our two navies.”

Lt Rory Hill, one of Sutherland’s Officers of the Watch who led the service of commemoration, added: “This engagement truly shows the global nature of World War 2 and being able to pay our respects at this site, ten years after the wrecks were discovered and 77 years after the battle itself, was an honour for the ship’s company.”

Sutherland is on a lengthy deployment to Australia and the Pacific Rim.

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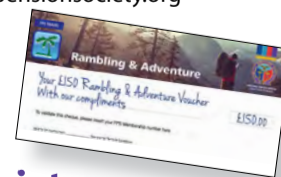
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Fjord edge

FEELING on top of the world – well, 1,982ft up – are the crew of HMS Montrose, enjoying the sights of the Norwegian fjords as they take a break from training.

A handful of crew from the Plymouth-based warship climbed the imposing Preikestolen (Preacher's Pulpit or Pulpit Rock) near Stavanger while the frigate was visiting the port.

Montrose is undergoing extensive trials and training after a major overhaul in her home base.

Among the various tests is assessing the accuracy of the frigate's sensors – sonars, electronic warfare, electro-optical – navigation and weapon systems using NATO's specialist ranges at Stavanger, FORACS – the FORces Accuracy Check Site.

So precise are the NATO instruments that they can measure the position of ships in the range to within one metre of their actual position. RN ships couldn't give a FORACS for any other test range...

Montrose spent three days on the ranges before switching to various warfare drills – anti-ship missile attack, submarine threats and enemy warships.

A specialist team from the Navy's home of sport, HMS Temeraire, flew out from Portsmouth to run various adventurous training activities.

The weather kiboshed some of the skiing – although novices and veterans still got time in on the slopes – but did not stop curling, ice skating, rock climbing and, not least, a trek to Preacher's Pulpit.

The rock rises 604 metres above Lysefjorden, about 15 miles east of Stavanger, and posed a tricky climb for trekkers before they reached the flat summit and posed for the obligatory photographs.

"The hike up to Pulpit Rock – it's rated by TripAdvisor as one of the best views in the country – over snow and ice was a challenging walk, but well worth it, leading to spectacular sights at the top," said Montrose's Commanding Officer Cdr Conor O'Neill.

His crew appreciated the chance to tackle different sports and activities in unusual surroundings.

"I hugely enjoyed my session of curling," said trainee officer Sub Lt Jack Nottley. "It means I can now watch the 2018 Winter Olympics like a true armchair sportsman!"

LMA George Turnbull added: "It was great to be able to do some adventurous training as well as experience the culture in and around Stavanger."

For the frigate's warfare team, the thrill of the slopes was matched by the thrill of manoeuvring a 4,500-tonne warship in narrow waters.

"It's great to take the ship out of UK waters and enjoy the challenge of navigating through the beautiful Norwegian fjords," said navigator Lt Byron Linn.

Warfare officer Lt Kevin Cabra Netherton added: "It was a busy week but I enjoyed pushing the ship to its limits to see how she copes with a full spectrum of war fighting. A run ashore in Norway was, of course, a bonus."

In the liner duty

WHAT would happen if one of the remotest islands on the planet was struck by disaster?

That was the scenario faced by the crew of HMS Clyde when they arrived in South Georgia for a mass casualty exercise.

Only around 30 people live on the South Atlantic island, which lies over 800 miles east of the Falklands, but during the Austral summer it is regularly visited by cruise ships carrying tourists keen to soak up Antarctic history, pay homage at Shackleton's grave and wander around the abandoned whaling station.

There's no hospital on South Georgia, no airfield and it's beyond the range of helicopters, so apart from the doctor who tends to the needs of the British Antarctic Survey team on the island – 22 scientists in the summer, a dozen in the winter – medical care is limited.

And it falls on the doctor and the scientists to provide emergency care should there be an accident.

To keep their skills up to speed, Falklands patrol ship HMS Clyde rocked up as a stricken cruise liner with 20 'casualties' after a fire.

Leading Medical Assistant Will Randall transformed his shipmates into bloodied, broken and traumatised 'passengers'... who then delivered performances that would not be out of place in the West End.

The casualties suffered from injuries ranging from severe shock to open-leg fractures which the team quickly identified.

As the situation progressed the team assessed every individual and moved them across the bay to the main research station at King Edward Point in South Georgia's 'capital' Grytviken, which served as the control hub for the exercise which was observed by the British Commander in the Falklands, Brig Baz Bennett.

The speed and effectiveness of the close-knit Antarctic Survey team demonstrated their ability to deliver prolonged care to those in need.

South Georgia's government is determined to preserve the island's unique environment, and all the visiting sailors received firm briefings on not upsetting Nature's balance by introducing foreign organisms or contaminating Grytviken with rubbish.

Unfortunately, as with shorelines around the world, South Georgia suffers from plastics being washed ashore, notably in Moraine Fjord, opposite Grytviken.

Much of the detritus comes from two fishing vessels, the



Moresco and the Lyn, which sank here 15 years ago.

Two teams of volunteers went ashore to fill bags with various plastics washed up since Clyde's sailors last conducted a beach clean.

"All of us in Clyde were extremely pleased to be able to assist South Georgia's government and the BAS personnel in not only continuing the maritime pollution clean-up project in Cumberland Bay, but also giving them an opportunity to fully test their emergency procedures if such a mass casualty incident was ever to occur," said Clyde's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Peter Barfoot.

"With many sailors trained for such occurrences, we were able to advise on a number of lessons which they will incorporate into their reaction plans for the future."

As the southernmost inhabited place in what was once the British Empire, South Georgia is home to Britain's most southerly football team, who challenged the sailors to a game on Grytviken's only pitch.

The boundaries of the playing area are marked by a stream while the pitch itself is part bog, strewn with bumps, pot holes, rocks and prickly plants. Well used to such conditions, the local XI used long-ball tactics to outfox the visitors and their passing game to triumph 4-0, aided by some stellar goalkeeping which kept Clyde at bay in the closing stages.

Other activities ashore were rather less tiring: visits to Shackleton's grave, the museum, wandering around

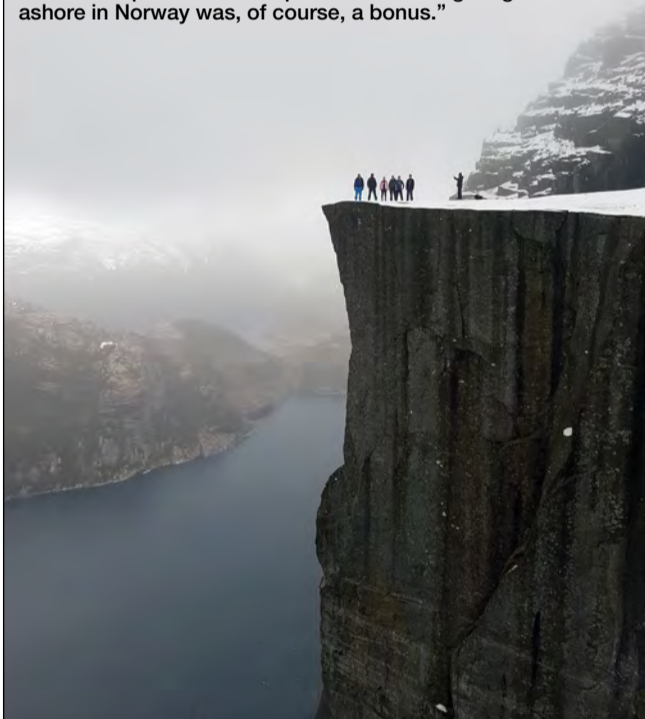
● A seal rests on a rock while Clyde berths at King Edward Point while (below) two crew put on Oscar-winning performances during the casualty exercise and (bottom) pitch imperfect... the sailors take on a local XI on the world's lumpiest football pitch



the abandoned whaling stations and treks around the bay area, keeping their wits about them as some of the wildlife tried to get a bit too close for comfort. Sailors had their passports stamped and the post office did a roaring trade in postcards. And a traditional 'penguin-racing night' with the BAS scientists raised more than

£300 for charity.

As well as Grytviken, the ten-day patrol away from the Falklands took in St Andrew's Bay, Gold Harbour, Prion Island and Drygalski Fjord, allowing everyone on board the chance to sample the full range of South Georgia's stunning scenery and its abundant and varied wildlife.



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SGT Frank Cooper of 190th Machine Gun Company, Royal Marines Light Infantry, is closest to the camera as the weary men of the 63rd (Royal Naval) Division pass through the village of Aveluy, just north of Albert.

It is March 25 1918 and the sailor-soldiers have been falling back across Picardy for three whole days as the war on the Western Front approaches its nadir for the Allied cause.

Our trip back in time to the 100th anniversary of the Great War in conjunction with the Imperial War Museum takes us to a period when the outcome of the titanic conflagration hung in the balance.

Four days before this photograph was taken the Germans unleashed a terrible onslaught – Berlin's last card in a bid to win the war before the full weight of the United States could be brought to bear on the Allied side.

At the beginning of the month, the Eastern Front had ceased to exist; in the White Palace in the fortress of Brest-Litovsk in eastern Poland (today Belarus), Germany struck a deal with Russia's new Bolshevik rulers. The fledgling USSR gained little but peace after 3½ years of war. The Germans, on the other hand, seized swathes of the Ukraine (including its capital Kiev). More importantly, it freed hundreds of thousands of German fighting troops.

But what to do with this sudden abundance of men? Long before pen was put to paper in Brest-Litovsk, Germany's generals had determined to win the war by taking the offensive for the first time in two years – “before the Americans can bring their weight to bear.”

Led by the prickly Erich Ludendorff – a tactical genius but a man who failed to see the big picture and who constantly lived on his nerves – the Germans decided to deal their decisive blow against the ‘English’ (a term which embraced all the troops of the Empire). The French would defend their native soil to the last man. Not so the British Expeditionary Force.

The grand plan – codenamed Operation Michael after Germany's patron saint, although more commonly dubbed *Kaiserschlacht* (the Kaiser's Battle) – was to smash the Fifth Army



and drive a wedge between the British and French.

But that was as far as the grand plan went. Ludendorff, so meticulous with the minutiae of preparing the battle, didn't actually set his troops a specific objective. “We'll smash a hole and see what happens,” he told his staff.

The smashing began at 4.40am on the first day of spring – a barrage so ferocious (over one million shells fired at an area the size of Bristol in just five hours) that it could be felt in London.

When the barrage lifted, the German infantry attacked exploiting the fog

and new tactics, finding weak spots in the British lines and punching through them. Any strongpoints were simply left behind to wither and die as the fighting moved on far to the west.

The Royal Naval Division held positions outside the village of Marcoing, near Cambrai. It was British troops the sailors and marines saw first, streaming back from the front protesting that the enemy had broken through.

They were soon followed by the spearheads of the German *Stosstruppen* – literally ‘thrust’ or

‘push troops’ but normally translated as stormtroopers.

Sgt Frank Cooper's unit offered resistance briefly before joining the torrent of retreating British troops. By the day's end his division had been driven back a couple of miles but was still an intact combat-worthy unit.

At his headquarters in the Belgian town of Spa (today home of that country's grand prix), Wilhelm II crowed that the ‘English’ had been “utterly defeated” and waited for a delegation to kneel before him.

It never came. For although the

Germans made massive gains and did indeed smash a hole in the English front, they exhausted themselves in doing so. With each mile they advanced, their supply lines grew a little longer and their supporting artillery had to shuffle forward. It was too much to ask after a static war.

The *Stosstruppen* found riches in Allied depots not seen in Germany since before the Royal Navy's blockade cut the country off from the world: milk, bacon, sugar, butter, biscuits. Farms were plundered, wine cellars emptied. Discipline broke down. The advance faltered.

Michael ran out of steam after a fortnight having cost the BEF 280,000 dead, wounded and prisoners – but at a cost of a quarter of a million German casualties.

By then, the RN Division had long been pulled out of the line. It fought its last action of the great retreat outside Aveluy on March 27 after a surprise counter-attack which momentarily unnerved the Germans.

Tired, unshaven, unwashed after nearly a week constantly on the move, fighting rearguard actions, their morale was surprisingly high. It had been a retreat, not a rout; it did not end with a wholesale evacuation of the BEF as happened at Dunkirk a generation later.

“The enemy had exhausted his offensive and we had held him,” one Royal Marine officer noted.

In time, the RN Division's chroniclers would refer to the March battles as a ‘victorious defeat’. The unbeaten sailors-marines lost one in every three men killed, wounded or captured during the week they were in the line. Battalions were reduced to just 250 men.

It would be five months before the men of the 63rd were ready to be thrown back into the charnal house of the Western Front. By then the pendulum of war had swung decisively in the Allies' favour.

■ This photograph (Q 8614) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/photographs, or by calling 0207 416 5309.

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● Sgt Oliver Devlin REME, Apprentice Chef Jade Girling, 2/O(C) Gary Barrowcliffe and Cpl Apenisa Kini, of 17 Port Maritime Regiment, clear debris from the care home on Anguilla

TLC from the RFA

Caribbean communities grateful for much-needed help

NAVAL Service personnel have been providing much-needed support to communities in the Caribbean.

Volunteers from RFA Mounts Bay cleared debris and carried out repairs to a hurricane-damaged care home in Anguilla.

The home, which normally houses 14 residents, was damaged by Hurricane Irma late last year.

Personnel emptied all the rooms of rubble, mud and debris, cleared glass from smashed windows and salvaged useable kit, such as Zimmer frames and bookshelves.

Once residents are able to move back in, administrator Brenda Hodge intends to ensure that the RFA Ensign will be hung inside the recreation room alongside photographs of volunteers at work.

"We are extremely grateful to the crew of RFA Mounts Bay – their sheer hard work over the past two days has ensured that when re-construction begins in a few months' time, the debris removal they have achieved will have created a suitable access for the builders," said Mrs Hodge.

Personnel also provided a search-and-rescue and first-aid training package to fishermen and search-and-rescue responders.

A total of 24 delegates were transferred by speedboat to the ship, which was anchored in Sandy Bay. Two training sessions were provided, with RFA Cadet (X) Michael Williams delivering a SAR presentation alongside the ship's doctor, Surg Lt Chris Hooper, who followed with a package of first aid advice.

Surg Lt Hooper said: "I gave them some basic medical advice for looking after someone who they would rescue from the water. It was a pleasure to teach them and they were enthusiastic and seemed to enjoy the training. While I hope they never need to use the skills, it is great that we were able to help them prepare for their emergency role."

Leading Medical Technician Amy Howells, who is on her first deployment, said: "Arriving in Anguilla, the destruction is visible everywhere, you can see smashed cars and broken buildings, but to actually go and meet the people involved and hear their stories gave us more of an emotional account and reason to give our all with helping those that needed us most."

Mounts Bay sailed to Anguilla from Antigua, via Curacao and, during a visit to



● Personnel paid their respects to the fallen at the Commonwealth War Grave enclosure on the island of Curacao

the former spruced up a home for vulnerable girls. Personnel used their two-day visit to carry out a raft of improvements and repairs to the Good Shepherd Home for Girls, which provides residential care for up to a dozen girls aged between four and 18.

More than a dozen crew from all departments of the ship, plus retired sailor Mike Rose of the Royal Naval Tot Club of Antigua and Barbuda, which supports the home, picked up tools for a day's toil.

They tackled fixing cabinets and doors, repaired windows and some electrical fittings and provided computer assistance, allowing residents to get online.

"It was a pleasant change to volunteer and assist at the care home – we left it in a better state than we found it," said Communications Officer 3/O Liz Nelson-Taylor.

"I particularly enjoyed fixing the residents' computers and the highlight of the day for me was the home's resident puppy – a new addition that received a lot of attention and took great interest in the activity going on around him."

On the way to Antigua, Mounts Bay called in on Curacao to allow personnel to pay their respects to Servicemen buried in a Commonwealth War Graves cemetery.

Naval Service personnel, along with embarked Army personnel, visited the six graves, which are in an enclosure of a large

civilian cemetery.

Eight of the ship's company made up the team who tended the graves and laid a wreath on behalf of the ship, which was alongside at Willemstad for a maintenance period.

Engineering Apprentice Mark Brady said: "I am pleased we had the opportunity to visit the Servicemen buried here to pay our respects and make sure their surroundings are well cared for. It's nice to know that although they are buried on the other side of the Atlantic they are still remembered."

One of those buried at the cemetery is Merchant Seaman Lench of MV Elusa, a tanker which was sunk by a German U-boat on April 21 1941.

His headstone stands alongside that of Lt (E) Wright RNR who died while serving in HMS Black Bear, an armed yacht employed as an anti-submarine vessel operating out of Trinidad.

Army Marine Engineer L/Cpl Thomas Macfadyen, who normally finds himself maintaining the Mexefloat and Combat Support Boat, said: "I was very happy to take the time to make the visit, and it was interesting to find that there were soldiers buried here, especially when it is so far away from places we normally associate with the Second World War."

Mounts Bay is on a three-year deployment to the Caribbean.

Rosalie's key role with the Big Stick

A US Navy MH-60S Sea Hawk helicopter leaves RFA Fort Rosalie with an underslung cargo destined for the USS Bunker Hill to sustain the ongoing fight against ISIS in the Middle East.

Fort Rosalie is currently assigned to the USS Theodore Roosevelt Carrier Strike Group in the Middle East.

The group – apart from the nuclear-powered carrier herself, known as the Big Stick – takes fuel from the American support vessel USNS Guadalupe, and food, spare parts, mail and other supplies from the British auxiliary.

While helicopters shifted supplies by air, a heavy jackstay, pictured right, transferred stores from Fort Rosalie to the Guadalupe.

"It was a very satisfying day for us as Fort Rosalie successfully completed simultaneous high-tempo transfers from both the replenishment at sea point and the flight deck," said Fort Rosalie's Commanding Officer Capt Karl Woodfield RFA.

"There was a real buzz around the ship after we finished and a great start to our period of support to US Carrier Strike Group."

The vertical replenishment saw Fort Rosalie's crew put into practice training received from the USNS Matthew Perry last month, with the slick transfer of 48 loads by Bunker Hill's MH-60 Seahawk helicopter.

The British ship sent seven sailors to the Perry, a military sealift and dry cargo ship, to improve the RFA's knowledge of US vertical replenishment operations, regularly carried out by US units.

"This was one of the most beneficial exercises I have participated in during my numerous deployments to the Middle East," said Petty Officer (Supply Chain) David Hinde, one of the seven Brits who joined the Perry.

"We assisted in preparing 500 pallets of stores for despatch to the Roosevelt and Bunker Hill with personnel from Fort Rosalie also involved in flight deck operations."

The Fort Rosalie team integrated with the US crew and were involved in a range of training from load building and movement, to a steering gear breakdown drill.

For Seaman Grade 1 Cooney, one of the highlights was training on hooking the equipment loads to the helicopters independently. Having mastered the US technique – and by gaining total proficiency – he was able to work at the required rate of one load every minute for several hours.

"The two crews integrated well and a high level of mutual respect was created between the Fort Rosalie and the Matthew Perry crews," said 3/O (Warfare) Christopher Lowe. "Having come together as allies, we parted as friends."

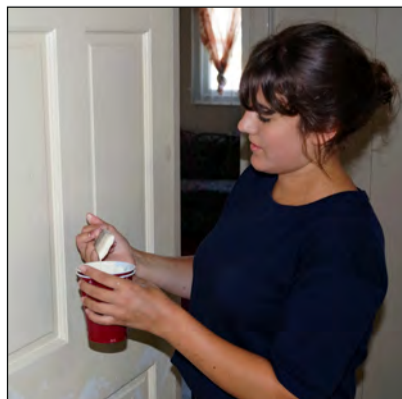
A team from the Perry, led by their cargo mate, headed in the opposite direction to spend time aboard Fort Rosalie, and delivered some of US kit which is key to operating with an American carrier group.

Fort Rosalie's solid support team trained in US vertical replenishment procedures, working closely with their US crews by making up equipment loads and attaching them to the helicopters.

Capt Woodfield added: "This opportunity for Fort Rosalie to see at first hand and then conduct high-tempo carrier support operations is a major plus as ships of the RFA prepare to support the UK's new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth."

"The RFA has a longstanding close relationship with the Military Sealift Command and I spent three very enjoyable years as the RFA exchange officer working in MSC Command in Washington DC. It was therefore great to see at first hand again the professional service and renew my links with the MSC."

● Below, RFA Fort Rosalie carries out a RAS with the USNS Matthew Perry



● 2/O Paul Hearne at work in Antigua; Personnel with volunteers at the Good Shepherd Home for Girls; Ch Georgia Wallace gets painting

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Whirlybirds' w

FJORDS. Mountains. Snow. Ice. Merlins. Sub-zero temperatures. Depths of winter.

Regular as clockwork. But not this year. No, this year the Commando Helicopter Force's detachment to the Arctic isn't Exercise Clockwork (the name it's gone under for years).

No, it's Nordic Eagle. Clockwork was about teaching the men and women of CHF how to first survive, then live and finally fight in Arctic conditions...

...whereas Nordic Eagle has been about teaching the men and women of CHF how to first survive, then live and finally fight in Arctic conditions... as well as flying Royal, Dutch and US Marines around and conducting some combined training with the RAF and Norwegian Air Force interaction thrown in.

Two troop-carrying Merlin Mk3s spent three days leapfrogging their way from Somerset, across the North Sea through the Netherlands, Germany and Denmark, then almost the entire length of Norway to reach the Norwegian air base in Bardufoss.

The 65 men and women from 845 Naval Air Squadron endured temperatures rarely warmer than -9°C, frequently down to -19°C, and at times as low as -30°C, while daylight was limited to just four hours

when Nordic Eagle began in late January and only lasts for six and a half hours in mid-February.

The commando fliers headed north with four objectives: to train personnel for operating in the Arctic; maintain their skills ahead of the next-generation troop carrying Merlin, the Mk4, entering service this year; give them a taster of a much larger international winter exercise in two years' time (Cold Response 2020); and teach small specialist teams the art of setting up 'tactical refuelling areas' - 'filling stations' for helicopters in the middle of area.

Before any flying could begin, all CHF personnel had to complete the cold weather survival course under Royal Marine Mountain Leaders - the Corps' experts in living and fighting in the harshest of environments.

The course involves two days of instruction at Bardufoss learning the skills needed to survive, followed by three days in the field putting those newly-acquired skills to the test in sub zero conditions - culminating in the dreaded 'ice breaking drill'.

The syllabus is extensive and comes thick and fast. The camp-based phase includes the use of personal clothing and equipment from state-of-the-art Carinthia Gore-Tex to sleeping bags, snowshoes to avalanche transceivers, as well as the fundamentals of putting up tents, using lamps and

cookers and living on Arctic rations.

Then it's time to live in the field. A BV tracked vehicle drops the trainees from their bivouac for the night.

They have to ski a couple of kilometres uphill, laden with webbing, Bergen backpacks, rifles and one pulk (a sledge loaded with survival kit) per ten-person team.

At the destination, tent pits are dug and the home for the night erected.

After food and topping up flasks, students conduct a snow pack analysis, determining snow conditions before hands-on practice with the Arva avalanche transceivers.

There's further instruction on camouflage and concealment, how to use the Arctic loo (including a practical demonstration...). The evening finishes with lessons on sound and light in the Arctic and astro-navigation, before cramming back into ten-man tents and settling in for the night.

The next morning instructors lead a snowshoe walk through the countryside around Bardufoss - a small town roughly half-way between Narvik and Tromsø which is home to a major air base - to get the blood pumping before switching to tactical training, living in four-man tents and creating a 'tactical harbour' hidden in the woods... which comes under attack during the



pictures: po(phot) si ethell, rnpoty

winter wonderland

night.

Survival is a key part of the training – from the basics of lighting fires and building snow shelters/holes (known as quizees) in an emergency, to learning how to safely and effectively butcher a chicken or gut a fish.

The instruction ends with the dreaded 'ice breaking' drill – learning how to safely clamber out of a frozen lake should the ice shatter beneath you.

The instructors carve a suitably-sized hole in the ice (using chain saws), the 'victims' plunge in, use their ski poles to help themselves out and are rewarded with a tot of rum to help them recover from the shock and cold... and to toast the Queen.

"The course was really well run and challenging. I particularly enjoyed digging the snow shelters and the ice-breaking drills, although I was apprehensive beforehand!" said new pilot Lt Tom 'Baby Pritch' Pritchard.

Once everyone was cold-weather trained, the focus shifted to the fliers earning their environmental qualifications – allowing them to fly a hi-tech 11-tonne helicopter around the fjords, carrying not just Royal Marines, but also loads slung beneath the aircraft, learning how to land and take off when

there are no visual references because of the flurries of snow thrown up by the rotor blades (aka 'whiteouts'), and navigating by day and night.

"These are some of the most difficult conditions we fly in, but I was relishing the opportunity to push myself and gain my qualifications," said Lt Steve 'Doffty' Doughty.

The aircrews – two pilots plus two aircrewmen – found time to help out their hosts, carrying logs to remote mountain cabins. And there was some down time which allowed personnel to ski on the slopes around Bardufoss or try dog sledding, ice fishing, and cultural trips to Tromsø and Andselv.

On the ground, for the first time in years, a small group of specialists were assigned to set up 'tactical refuelling areas' – filling stations for helicopters located in the middle of nowhere which are largely hidden from the enemy.

The tri-Service team practised at length in the field back in Blighty.

But even in a pretty snowy winter by UK standards, conditions fell far short of the Arctic Circle where, during the period when the sailors, soldiers and airmen were working on their temporary fuelling site, temperatures

dropped below -25°C on occasions.

The location chosen must have a reasonable-sized clearing for the helicopters/tanker yet not be immediately obvious to the prying eyes of the enemy. It must be easily camouflaged – so a cluster of trees nearby is ideal for the 'accommodation area' (new lightweight Hilleberg ten-man tents being tested for the first time) – and also close to key resources, notably water (or snow for a chef in the form of PO(Caterer) Gavin Parfitt to boil, ensuring the rest of the team were properly hydrated).

Equally, given the weather, temperature and remote nature of the refuelling outpost, there has to be a medic on hand: LMA Amy McFarling stepped forward and not merely provided medical advice but also proved adept at directing the Royal Marines BV tracked vehicles.

In an Arctic environment, simple tasks such as sitting in a tent become significantly more laborious; digging out the base site and having to continue down through one metre of hard, consolidated snow is both time consuming and tiring.

Once the manual labour was complete, erecting the tents

and setting up the infrastructure was carried out apace: establishing radio links with HQ at Bardufoss and the various helicopters hoping to use the makeshift helipad, clearing space for rescue vehicles and, not least the rather large green Oshkosh road tanker (holding 3,960 gallons (18,000 litres) or enough fuel to fill up more than 300 family cars).

With everything set up, time for the whirlybirds to come in: two Chinooks – fitted with 'ski shoes' (skids) for operating in the snow – from 7 Squadron RAF in Odiham as well as a pair of Norwegian Bell helicopters.

They performed a series of re-fills, from a standard top-up of the tanks with the machines powered down all the way through to a Formula-One style pit-stop (only a lot slower) with rotors running.

After a lengthy gap, the exercise proved that the skills and experience to set up a tactical refuelling site still exist, some of the kit needs a little bit of a tweak, but above all it highlighted the high level of training personnel receive.

And 845? They'll be back in the Arctic next winter – this time with the new Merlin Mk4. Regular as...



Thirty years after Cold War's end, a combative Russia has given NATO a renewed sense

Don't you forg



THE Chinese philosophy of yin and yang argues that opposite forces need each other to exist.

For every superhero, there's a supervillain. Tom needed Jerry. Mr Darcy, Mr Wickham. Sherlock Holmes, Moriarty. It could be argued that the end of the Cold War between 1989 and 1991 largely took away the raison d'être of the North Atlantic



With the global geo-political situation as tense as it has been for decades, NATO forces played out a World War 3 scenario – minus nuclear weaponry – to see how the alliance could respond in the event of an all-out 21st Century conventional war. **RICHARD HARGREAVES** watched Exercise Trident Javelin unfold.

Treaty Organisation – there no longer was a Warsaw Pact or USSR to counter.

It stayed that way for two decades. NATO's forces were deployed in Kosovo, Iraq, Afghanistan, were sent to strangle piracy off Somalia, but there was no persistent, principal antagonist.

That changed in 2014 when Russia exploited unrest in the Ukraine to annex the Crimea.

Moscow's resurgence has not stopped there; admirals of various navies have observed that the former Red Fleet's activity is approaching Cold War levels of intensity.

You do not need to tell NATO's naval headquarters, Marcom – Maritime Command – located alongside the UK's numerous commands at Northwood HQ in the heart of suburban Hertfordshire.

Like the rest of NATO, the naval HQ continued to operate in the post-Cold War era, choreographing the activities of its four task groups (including the Maritime Group 2 and Mine-Countermeasures Group 2, both in the Med and both presently led by the RN

– HM Ships Duncan and Enterprise respectively), but Russia's rebirth has given it, and member navies, a renewed sense of purpose.

It's an RN-led HQ – Brits (just) constitute the largest national contingent (37) of the 300 souls who work in an organisation which traces its history back to Commander-in-Chief Eastern Atlantic Area (CINCEASTLANT) in the early 50s.

When NATO's naval headquarters in Naples shut in 2013, Marcom became the sole centre for directing maritime operations, plus the incessant round of annual exercises: Dynamic Mongoose (large-scale sub-hunting exercise in the Atlantic), Dynamic Manta (ditto, but in the Med), Dynamic Monarch (practising rescuing stricken submariners).

And then there are the 'three-dimensional' exercises to slip into alongside NATO's air and ground forces. Some are played out in the real world, such as Trident Juncture, others on the table top (or rather computer display), like Trident Javelin.

Superimposed on real world events in NATO's Maritime Operations Centre – a James Bond-esque control room, where military personnel sit behind grandly-titled desks such as 'space warfare' and 'cyber' and stare at five gigantic display screens – Trident Javelin 2017 was billed as NATO's biggest

test in a quarter of a century: a World War 3-esque war game by land, sea and air involving 2,000 personnel across several headquarters.

At the time of our visit the exercise was reaching its bloody climax. Already:

- the naval base at Faslane has been reduced to fire and rubble by cruise missile attack;
- the Kiel Canal has been blocked by a sunken merchantman;
- the Skagerrak is impassable, sown with mines;
- enemy forces have swept down through Arctic Norway. Harstad, Narvik, Tromsø have all fallen. Now Bodø has been captured. Trondheim is threatened.

The enemy – superpower Skolkan, a fictional coalition with the landmass of Sweden and Finland (with an island off the Norwegian coast which bears a remarkable similarity to New Zealand's North Island) – has paid heavily for its aggression: one third of its surface fleet sunk, half its submarines lost, two out of five escorts.

But in trying to stop Skolkan swallowing up the Scandinavian peninsula, NATO has suffered grievous casualties: entire divisions wiped out on land, carrier battle groups knocked out or sunk in northern waters.

It sounds horrific – but this is what all-out conventional war in the 21st Century could be like against a determined enemy equipped with state-of-the-art weaponry.

A running log of the latest events tersely reports: Federation of Skolkan submarine sunk by HMS Trenchant. Patrol boat operating inside Estonian territorial waters.

Portsmouth shows UK's best tats

YOU'VE probably served with a few matelots with 'gash tats' (and maybe even have one or two yourself).

But if you want to see some quality tattoo art, head down to the National Museum of the RN in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard this summer and autumn.

Between June 25 and December 12 it's hosting the exhibition 'British Tattoo Art Revealed' which tells the story of the art form, its links with the Navy and how it has expanded beyond seafaring; one in five Brits has a tattoo in 2017.

The exhibition is also intended to challenge myths and taboos, and features designs by some of the leading tattoo artists in the land such as George Burchett, Alex Binnie and Lal Hardy.

Compiled with the guidance of academics, it will be the largest gathering of real objects and original tattoo artwork ever assembled in the UK – more than 400 original artworks, photographs and historic artefacts will be on show.

The exhibition features items from three of the most important private collections of tattoo material in Britain belonging to Willie Robinson, Jimmy Skuse, and Paul 'Rambo' Ramsbottom.

The exhibition will be housed in the main NMRN building, taking over from the Women in the Navy display.



US and British medics converge on RFA Cardigan Bay's sick bay

Masters and se

THEY'VE fought side-by-side in every major conflict spanning the past quarter of a century.

But can American medics using American equipment save British lives aboard a British ship?

The answer is 'yes' obviously – but it's not as cut and dried as you might think, as a week-long exercise aboard RFA Cardigan Bay in the Gulf demonstrated.

Each year medics based in the Middle East test their ability to provide life-saving medical care in alien surroundings.

In 2017 Azraq Serpent made use of Britain's flagship HMS Ocean. For the 2018 run-out of the exercise, the Americans used Cardigan Bay, which acts as a mother ship for British and US minehunters operating in the Gulf.

The medics of Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System 19 normally provide care for the US Marine Corps' 5th Expeditionary Brigade.

They joined US Coast Guard and Air Force comrades, British military medics and Royal Marines of 42 Commando – some of whom 'volunteered' to be casualties – aboard the 16,000-tonne support ship for the week-long workout.

Although she doesn't possess the comprehensive 'hospital suite' fitted aboard RFA Argus,

Cardigan Bay still has a sizeable medical facility – including an operating table, resuscitation bays, and several critical care beds.

In emergencies and conflict, a fully-operational sick bay could provide 'Role 2' treatment – performing emergency surgery sufficient to stabilise a casualty so they can be transported to a permanent hospital ashore.

The two nations' medical teams practised casualty handling, combat casualty care and airway management, including intubation training – putting a pipe down the throat to aid a patient's breathing.

"From a medical and clinical basis we've had quite a lot of experience in the past working with US medical teams in Afghanistan, but we haven't really had that much experience in a maritime environment," said Surg Cdr Jon Matthews, clinical director of Cardigan Bay's medical complex.

"I am fascinated with the operating theatre equipment available on board and would be happy to operate in this facility any day."

"I think we all work very similarly from a medical point of view, but it's establishing processes and the infrastructure of how we integrate."

Among the chief differences is power. The Americans' medical equipment runs on just 110



volts... whereas the UK system runs on 240 volts... so electrical transformers are required.

"The American team comes as a package with their own equipment, and if they were to deploy onboard here, they would bring their own equipment," Surg Cdr Matthews explained.

"It allows the Americans an opportunity to see that we've got an in-built operating table, for instance, in-operating lights and critical care beds, so they know what's actually on this ship and what they can expect to be able to use when they come onboard."

Lt Cdr David Morley, medical staff officer with the RN's permanent staff in Bahrain, UKMCC, said the team aboard

of purpose... and its RN-led Naval commander a chance to remind the rest of the Navy:

Get about us...

And this all played out alongside what was really happening on the Seven Seas: HMS Ocean and her task group were involved in a major exercise with the Turks, HMS Echo, Enterprise and other NATO/EU ships dealing with the migrant crisis across the Mediterranean.

"This exercise is the biggest of its kind since the Cold War and the 'casualties' involved are on the World War 2 scale," explained Cdr David Ellis.

"It's being treated like a real-world crisis – in time of war, this headquarters would be operating around the clock."

Former HMS Turbulent skipper Capt Nick Wheeler oversaw the submarine side of Trident Javelin.

"By running exercises like this, we can stretch what we are able to do, but also discover our limitations. It's fun, it's exciting and it's dynamic," he explains.

Discounting American submarines, there are 69 boats across NATO, although only five or six are typically placed at the Northwood HQ's disposal.

Their operations are overseen by a hugely-experienced team of deeps who've either all commanded boats, or passed their nation's equivalent of the RN's dreaded Perisher course.

"If anyone thinks NATO is some sleepy backwater, it most definitely is not," says Capt Wheeler. "This is an interesting time – all the NATO navies are working very hard, often close to capacity, at present."

Much of that activity is planned down to each 24 hours up to two years in advance.

It takes six months to get a task group's programme approved – "29 nations have to not disagree," says Lt Cdr James Schnadhorst, the Brit in charge of future ops.

The programme he and his team drew up for the groups for 2018 was signed off by NATO

members in late November – the climax of 15 to 18 months of planning and hard work.

"It's a lot busier now – take Maritime Group 1. There's one ten-day and two fortnight-long exercises from Joint Warrior to Baltops," Lt Cdr Schnadhorst explains.

"And there's a big difference between being in charge of a group and being a participant.

"Some nations want to conduct a lot of exercises, others want to focus on particular operations, and others still want to concentrate their efforts in a geographical area.

"So the activity of the ships is discussed at a very high level."

It's that high level diplomacy "which genuinely makes Northwood a fun place to work," says Capt Wheeler, who embraces the international dimension and lifestyle a NATO appointment offers.

"You rather leave the UK when you step into this building, even though we're in the middle of England," he says.

"It's impressive – but also somewhat embarrassing – how good everybody's English is.

"The whole team celebrates UK holidays... plus other international holidays: Bastille Day, July 4, Thanksgiving, Canada Day..."

Beyond festive days and fun, the multi-national dimension broadens horizons and is good for career prospects.

"As a job, it's absolutely worthwhile. It's the absolute opposite of the knacker's yard – it's something different, it expands your portfolio and career prospects and offers roles abroad," says WO1 Ian Anderson, who spent 30 years at Culdrose mostly maintaining Sea King and Merlin helicopters before serving as the base warrant officer.

With a resurgent Russia, the

situation in Syria unresolved and the ongoing migrant crisis in the Mediterranean, "NATO is not going away," the senior rating believes, "it's going to grow more and more important."

Walking around the HQ it's clear that the Brits in particular lean towards the 'more experienced' end of the age spectrum. It shouldn't be, says Ian.

"It would be great to get younger sailors in here – junior ratings, young officers.

"They'd earn experience which will be useful for years to come."

Another former Culdrose-based sailor at Northwood is Fregattenkapitän Thies Hofmann (good Cornish name...), a German Navy Sea King pilot who flew with 810 NAS.

He's delighted that the RN is showing strong interest in the alliance.

"There's quite a lot of fluff in NATO," he says. "The Royal Navy cuts all that away – it brings common sense to things. I enjoy working with the Brits."

Much as he appreciates the UK input, Thies believes that NATO's strength is the sum of its many and varied parts.

"NATO educates – working in an international environment gives you so much more. You move forward better than any nation could do on its own," he stresses.

Indeed, while there may be a dozen to 20 RN ships at sea on an average day, not all will be fully operational and probably half will be working in home waters.

The British sailor in charge of NATO Marcom usually has between 28 and 30 ships under wing, all worked up and ready for action from Iceland to the Black Sea.

"No-one does what we do collectively here on their own – not Britain, not France, nor Germany," Vice Admiral Clive Johnstone stresses.

My last sustained exposure to NATO was a decade ago – a week in the Mediterranean with a Type 23.

There was a lot of glad-handing and flag flying for the alliance, countless port visits and cocktail parties – the crew complained there were too many runs ashore – and the exercises in between were rather formulaic and seemed to me to focus on seamanship.

At the beginning of last year Type 23 frigate HMS Iron Duke spent six months with Maritime Group 1, keeping a close eye on Russian activity in the Baltic especially.

So a lot has changed during that decade, says the admiral.

"You may join a task group, but I guarantee you will be doing something very different from what you may have been used to in the past – you'll be monitoring the Russians or operating off Libya and Syria.

"You'll get unparalleled experience and training.

"You'll also be surprised by how good other navies have become over the past decade.

"A lot of countries are investing heavily in their navies again."

He believes it is a good thing that the Royal Navy is committed to NATO duties.

"We have great sailors, great officers, world-class ships – we shouldn't forget that," he says.

"And other nations like us playing a leading role in NATO.

"I am Royal Navy to the core, but I want to sell NATO – there are opportunities here.

"You'll forge international friendships and contacts for life.

"And in a Navy like ours, which is very career-focused, a tour with NATO will give you unrivalled experience of complex situations, diplomacy.

"Working for NATO opens doors."



● NATO's Maritime Commander – the RN's Vice Admiral Clive Johnstone – is interviewed by a TV crew to explain the 'loss' of Italy's aircraft carrier

Pictures: CPO Christian Valverde, NATO



Preparation for annual exercise Serpent

Cardigan Bay were "really, really happy" with the results of Azraq Serpent 18. "Both our surgical teams – US and UK – have really seen a benefit."

Surg Cdr Matthews added: "This exercise provided a great opportunity to train some of our Royal Marines with some tactical combat casualty care.

"In addition, with the casualty simulation models we had a combination of direct clinical teaching and also a chance of testing the process of getting patients in to the facility, command, control and call up of the evacuation helicopters."

It's thanks to Flight Deck Officer Paddy O'Donnell and his team of handler and coordinators that those evacuation helicopters – and others – have been safely landing and taking off from the Bay-class ship.

With no ship's flight attached to Cardigan Bay at present – she's sometimes home to a Wildcat from 815 or 825 Naval Air Squadrons – the most common visitor to the support ship is the US Navy's Seahawk, the naval version of the famous Blackhawk.

"I've been in the RFA for 25 years – a mere boy to some old salts – but I still enjoy the thrill of the job. Having the responsibility of taking charge of the deck at night, with a foreign aircraft and keeping everyone safe, is still a hugely rewarding experience," said Paddy.



● (Clockwise from above left) Medics assess a 'casualty'; Capt Robert Jacoby from Expeditionary Resuscitative Surgical System 19 deals with a leg 'injury' in RFA Cardigan Bay's operating theatre; Hospital Corpsman 2nd Class Miraziz Mirkamilov readies surgical instruments ahead of a simulated surgery; and Cdr Robert Roadfuss conducts final checks before the same simulated surgery
Pictures: MCS2 Kevin J Steinberg, US Navy



Band treat for royal couple

PRINCE Harry and fiancée Meghan Markle were greeted by music from the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland on their first visit to Edinburgh as a couple.

It was also the first time the RM band has performed for the prince since he was officially appointed as the new Captain General Royal Marines before Christmas.

The band entertained the crowds who had gathered at the castle to watch the couple's arrival, as they walked up the esplanade to meet members of the public during their tour of Edinburgh.

"We've played Edinburgh Castle many times before, but this was a truly unique experience to play for Prince Harry in his first official capacity as the new Captain General Royal Marines," said Capt Matt Weites, Director of Music for the RM Band Scotland.

"We hope we contributed to a warm Edinburgh welcome to the couple, despite the cold weather."

Songs performed for the royal pair – and crowd – included (fittingly) *The Captain General*, *Clash of the Dreadnoughts*, *Dragon Music*, *Warship* and *Invincible*.

Picture: LPhoto Joe Cater, FRPU East

Deeps turn to R2T2 for sonar skills

A STATE-of-the-art sonar suite has been opened for submariners to ensure they keep one step ahead of our adversaries' underwater technology.

The Rapidly Reconfigurable Training Technology – officially RRTT or 'Venturer', but nicknamed R2T2 – allows the Silent Service's expert sonar operators to hone their skills with the passive Sonar 2076 system which is fitted across the submarine fleet.

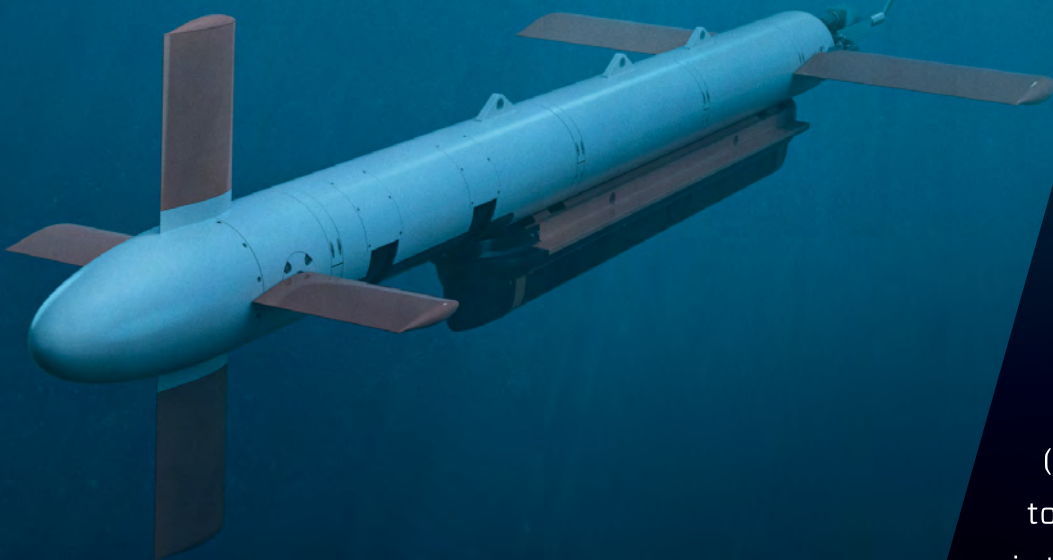
The new training complex at Faslane mirrors a similar facility opened three years ago at HMS Raleigh, current home of the RN Submarine School until it moves to the Clyde.

"No matter what part of the world our submarine is operating in, the sound room is always a hive of activity," explained sonar operator AB Griffith.

"At times it can be intense, as your screen quickly fills up with contacts. Quite often you find yourself on the edge of your seat tracking a warship.

"The job is really rewarding though. I know that my contribution is vital to the submarine's tactical advantage as well as keeping my shipmates safe."

He continued: "The equipment in the RRTT mimics being at sea in multiple different operational environments and this enables us to practise for all possible outcomes and scenarios."



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From the 'kalamitous' Ks to the unfortunate E14, submariners honoured the Great War's

Silent heroes

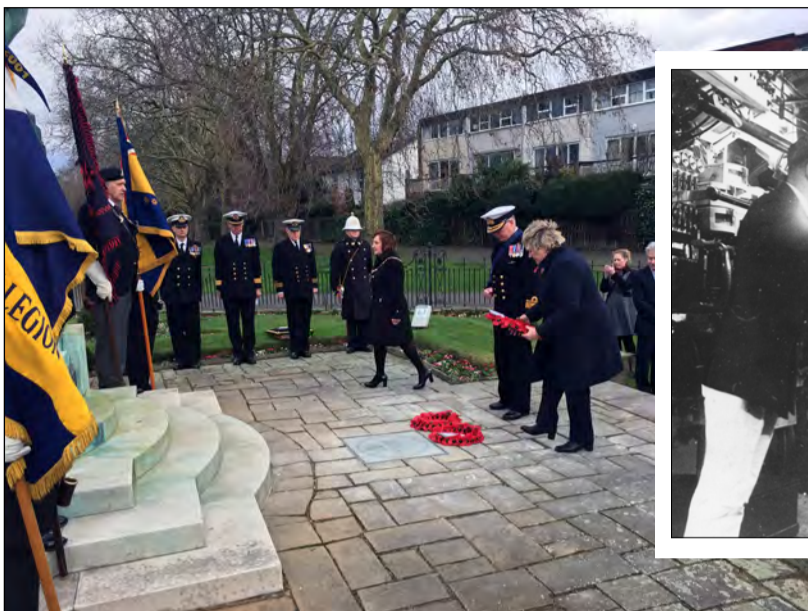
ON A rather bleak winter's day, veterans and serving sailors look on as Lyn Shore places a wreath on the newly-laid memorial stone for her grandfather, the latest Great War hero to be honoured in his home town.

A century ago Lt Cdr Geoffrey Saxton White (pictured inset at the periscope of his boat – courtesy of the National Museum of the RN) led a daring raid to sink a Turkish capital ship which wasn't there, negotiating the treacherous waters and formidable defences of the Dardanelles only to find his target gone.

Disappointed, he began to retrace his 16-mile route up the narrows in his veteran submarine HMS E14. When a Turkish steamer appeared in his periscope sights, White chose to attack, but his second torpedo exploded prematurely, forcing his boat to the surface right under the guns of Turkish batteries.

Standing on the bow, White tried to guide his boat to safety through the maelstrom. He almost succeeded, reaching Cape Helles – the southern gateway to the Dardanelles – only for the enemy's guns to first kill him, then his boat. Just nine men from a 38-strong crew were able to escape E14 before she disappeared for good.

A century later and the naval officer's descendants led tributes as a commemorative stone was unveiled in the grounds of Bromley war memorial in Kent – one of 628 such slabs dedicated to Great War VC holders.



Mrs Shore was among those placing a wreath beside the freshly-laid stone while the naval officer's grandson Richard Campbell thanked the people of Bromley for their "wonderful honour".

He continued: "As a family, we are very proud of his actions. It's something I have lived with all my life."

"My mother never knew her father and my grandmother never remarried so she had to bring up three children on a Naval pension."

Rear Admiral Tim Hodgson, representing today's Submarine Service, said present-day deeps shared the pride of the people of Kent felt for their forebear.

"Courage is the fuel which drove the Submarine Service then and which still drives us today," he told those present.

"It is key to our ethos of absolute professionalism. The kind of selfless courage shown by Lt Cdr Saxton White, where he put his duty to the welfare of others before his own is what we all



aspire to."

E14 had been dispatched to attack the battle-cruiser Goeben which had run aground off Nagara Point in January 1918.

The ship – a gift from the Kaiser in 1914 which helped to bring Turkey into the war on Berlin's side – was refloated just a couple of days before White sailed on his sortie.

News of his deeds only reached the UK in the summer of 1918 courtesy of a letter from one of the nine survivors taken prisoner. When other accounts from survivors were collected at the war's end, the decision was taken to posthumously award Britain's highest military decoration to Lt Cdr White in May 1919.

Pictures: Pete Wooldridge



Small change makes a big difference

HAVE you got a few spare pennies to help save one of the icons of D-Day?

A crowdfunding campaign – lots of small donations by scores of benefactors – is under way to get the final £25,000 needed for the restoration and display of the only surviving landing craft tank from the 1944 invasion, LCT 7074.

She will be displayed alongside the museum's affiliate, the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth, to mark the 75th anniversary of the Normandy landings in 2019.

The scheme has received a first round grant of £4.7m from the National Lottery, however matched funding is required to unlock the funds and secure enough money to carry out the full restoration of the 200ft craft (pictured above on June 7 1944 with German PoWs aboard awaiting transportation to the UK – courtesy of the IWM).

Head of Exhibitions and Collections at the National Museum of the Royal Navy, Nick Hewitt said: "At dawn, on the morning of D-Day, June 6 1944, 800 landing craft approached the Normandy landing beaches. What ensued was the largest seaborne invasion in history and it was landing craft, including LCT 7074, which delivered tanks, troops and essential equipment to the beaches.

"LCT 7074 is the last of these vital workhorses known to have actually participated in the D-Day landings.

"This makes her totally unique and a key piece in history. She will add considerably to the story of D-Day."

After a chequered post-war career involving conversion into a floating clubhouse and nightclub, the ship was lying in private hands, semi-derelict and sunk at her moorings at East Float Dock, Birkenhead, until in 2014 she was successfully salvaged and moved to Portsmouth by the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

Previous successful crowdfunding campaigns run by the National Museum include raising over £9,000 to help preserve First World War ship HMS M33, the only remaining Royal Navy survivor of the Gallipoli Campaign; over £10,000 for Falkland veteran Landing Craft F7 and over £6,000 to save CMB 331, the last surviving WW2 coastal motor boat.

To donate, visit www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lct-7074

Calamities commemorated

SUBMARINERS, sailors, Sea Cadets and descendants muster in a Fife harbour to pay tribute to 104 men killed in one of the worst accidents in Royal Navy history.

No enemy was encountered by the Fleet on the night of January 31 1918, yet by dawn the next day, two submarines were sunk, four more were damaged and cruiser HMS Fearless needed repairs.

The tragedy occurred off May Island in the Firth of Forth – which gave the disaster its popular name: the Battle of May Island.

The cause? The attempt to operate fast, but big and cumbersome, steam-powered K-class submarines alongside the rest of the Fleet.

Capable of 24 knots on the surface, it was when they came to dive that the flaws of the Ks became evident: it could take up to 30 minutes to close all the inlets, outlets and valves, while the 338ft length – 138ft more than their maximum depth – made them difficult to control.

On the last day of January 1918 40 ships and boats sailed to put the theory of fast submarines working hand-in-hand with fast warships into practice.

It was an unmitigated disaster, cementing the grim reputation of the new submarines as 'K for Kalamity': HMS K17 was rammed by Fearless and sank. The boats astern of her manoeuvred to avoid collision, only for K6 to all-but slice K4 in half... only for HMS K7 to finish her off.

All 55 men on K4 were killed, 47 were lost on K17 and two men were killed on HMS K14 when she too was rammed (but did not sink).

For the centenary of the Submarine Service in 2001, residents of the small town of



Anstruther – about five miles from May Island – dedicated a small memorial to 'the memory of those members of the submarines K4 and K17 who gave their lives in the service of their country'.

And it was to Anstruther that people headed to mark the centenary of the tragedy, first for a service of remembrance in St Ayle Church in Cellardyke, then down to the harbour and the memorial for a wreath laying.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Jonathan Woodcock led tributes; his great uncle was one of the 104 submariners lost during the exercise, which was hushed up for decades.

Crew from nuclear deterrent boat HMS Victorious and veterans provided the military backdrop to proceedings, with the *Last Post* performed by Royal Marine Buglers.

Just a few days before on the opposite coast, and the first K-class tragedy, the 101st anniversary of the loss of HMS K13, was remembered at Faslane.

She sank to the bottom of

Gareloch while on trials.

Although the alarm was raised, by the time an air line reached the stricken boat and her bow brought to the surface, more than 30 men were dead – not just crew, but also employees from Govan shipbuilder Fairfield and Admiralty officials.

Only 43 of them escaped from K13 alive – thanks to the bravery of the two skippers who volunteered to raise the alarm by swimming to the freezing surface.

The memorial bell at Faslane's Church of St John the Evangelist was rung 32 times during the service of commemoration attended by serving submariners and veteran deeps, led by president of the Submariners Association Rear Admiral Niall Kilgour, travelled from as far away as Barrow, Manchester and Nottingham.

K13 was raised in March 1917, repaired and renamed HMS K22. She was one of the boats badly damaged off May Island, though without casualties.

Picture: LPhoto Pepe Hogan



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● Rear Admiral John Weale and Lt Cdr Dave Pindar with interactive robot 'Jack'

Picture: LPhot Pepe Hogan

£100K? That'll be all right Jack

BETWEEN £40k and £100k is being offered to the cream of Scottish industry if they can design the Navy's robot technology of tomorrow.

Senior officers set the best and the brightest attending the Maritime Enterprise Innovation Scotland Conference the challenge of coming up with unmanned underwater vehicles.

Two specific challenges were set: the provision of low power and high accuracy underwater navigation systems, and underwater vehicle energy management and energy scavenging systems.

The firm behind any technology which is taken on will receive funding and technical support as part of the Defence and Security Accelerator initiative (DASA), and they'll keep the intellectual property rights behind their brainwaves.

The conference, held in the University of Strathclyde's Technology and Innovation Centre, aims to create an open forum for Navy, industry and academia to collaborate and drive innovation through research.

Following the 2017 event, 16 PhD

research projects received more than £1.5m investment from the university and industry partners.

Among the backed projects are the development of quantum radar to detect low-reflectivity targets and radio-frequency atomic magnetometry to monitor submarine movements.

Rear Admiral John Weale, head of the Submarine Service and the RN's senior officer north of the border, told the 2018 conference: "The Royal Navy is interested in any new ideas or technologies that can enhance the UK's defence and security capabilities.

"To maintain its world-class capabilities in the years ahead the Royal Navy will require even greater industrial partnership and innovation throughout the supply chain.

"We work with more than 300 industry partners throughout the UK in developing new technologies and innovations and events like this are important for building those relationships."

Details on the technical and business maturity levels of any proposals can be found on the Accelerator website: <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/defence-and-security-accelerator>



2018. YEAR OF ENGINEERING



Pupils race for the line

MODEL cars are put to the test in a contest for would-be engineers.

Newton Abbot College's Year 7 students (11-12) were the first in the South West region to use the BBC micro: bit mini-computer to complete the 'Race For The Line' challenge.

The racing car project comes under the government-backed STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) initiative in conjunction with the Royal Navy.

Race overseer Lt Paul Youngman said: "It is great to see all of the students getting involved; this is the right age to capture an interest in STEM subjects and projects like the 'Race For The Line' event positively promote these important curriculum subjects. The Newton Abbot students were excellent and we really did ignite their enthusiasm."

Students used their lessons investigating aerodynamics, speed and acceleration to create foam cars that were raced in inter-class competitions with the help of the Royal Navy.

The rocket-powered vehicles were raced through a series of time gates, providing data for further science and maths lessons.

Newton Abbot College is one of over 400 schools nationwide to have signed up to the initiative, which will see winners of the heats compete at over 40 regional finals held at Armed Forces bases nationwide in April, with Devonport hosting the south west event.

The Royal Navy is overseeing, judging and managing the races in region to ensure all is conducted fairly.

Student Daizie-Mae Blyth said: "Creating the racing cars in lessons was really fun. It took about four lessons to finish them and get them ready for racing.

"The practical learning made the ideas of aerodynamics easier to understand and it was great to take our learning out of the classroom. Having the Royal Navy here was very exciting and it has all been so much fun."

Themes for each month

THE Royal Navy is playing a key role in the government's Year of Engineering 2018 campaign, a national drive seeking to raise the profile of engineering in society by highlighting the way engineers are involved across our everyday lives and encouraging young people to take a closer look.

For the Naval Service, ships, submarines and aircraft are continuously receiving the full attention of highly-trained engineers and technicians, all of whom provide the 'beating heart' of operational capability and demonstrate how engineering is fundamental to the design, build, generation and sustainment of complex equipment on operations, worldwide.

To underpin the Royal Navy's involvement in the campaign an extensive calendar of events has been developed.

Across the country STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) events have engaged hundreds of students in the many different aspects of engineering.

Many more events are planned for the rest of the year - the Race for the Line heats will continue to national finals and there's also the 'Big Bang Fair',

as well as several regional open days.

The Royal Navy is also involved in the European Human Powered Submarine Races in July and a students' ship design competition, organised in conjunction with a partner organisation, UKNEST, is set to launch this month.

Each month the campaign has an engineering-related theme; this month it is Routes into Engineering. The themes for the remainder of the year are:

April - Engineering: Improving Lives; May - Engineering in Sport; June - Diversity in Engineering; July and August - The Summer of Engineering; September - Back to School; October - Engineering: Shaping the Future; November - Tomorrow's Engineers; December - Year of Engineering Legacy and Next Steps. Leaving a legacy will be key to the campaign's success.

To find out more visit the government's website at www.yearofengineering.gov.uk, or if you wish to contribute to the RN's Year of Engineering 2018 campaign see RNTM 07-064/17, or tweet your experiences using #yoe, #yoe.gov.uk, #inspireanengineer and #takeacloserlook.

Engineering birthday surprise



IT'S not every sailor who can say he celebrated his 25th birthday at sea, with his dad, onboard the UK's new aircraft carrier. But that's just what happened for LET (ME) James Ball from Okehampton.

James has been serving in HMS Queen Elizabeth since August and is currently onboard conducting sea trials and training.

One of the trainers onboard from Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) is James's own dad, Lt Cdr John Ball, who previously spent three years bringing the carrier through its build.

Surprising his son, with a 'Colin the Caterpillar' birthday cake, John said it was a real privilege to have been able to share the moment.

"It's not every day you get to share your son's birthday onboard, and it's particularly special being as the ship is HMS Queen Elizabeth. I'm proud that I got the cake here in intact."

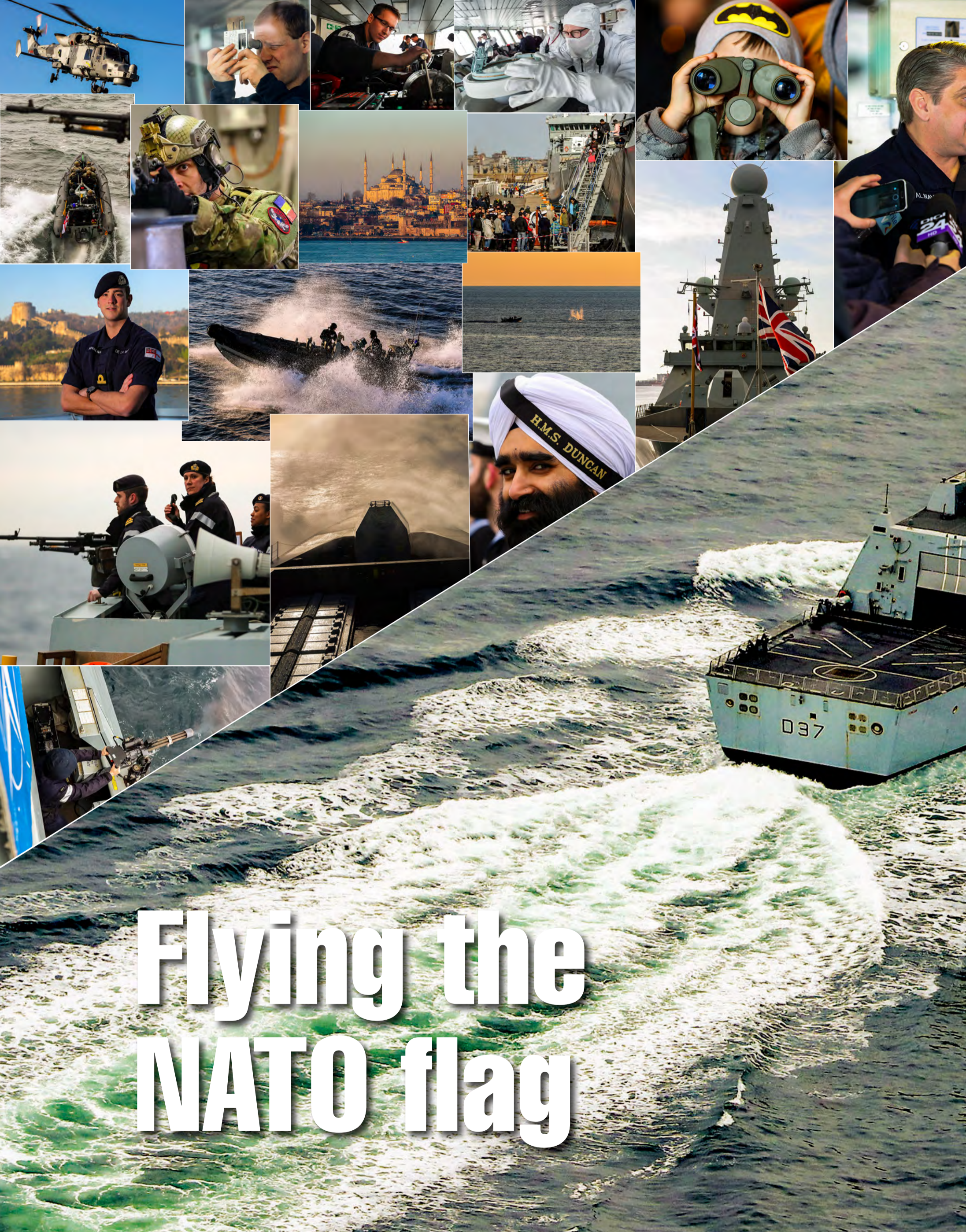
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Flying the NATO flag



TWO TIMES two equals ... six. At least it did when HMS Duncan's task group met up with HMS Enterprise and her task group.

The two British ships, along with two Romanian and two Turkish vessels, went alongside in Constanta, Romania, for a high-profile visit.

Both Enterprise and Duncan – the latter is known as a 'distrugator' in Romania – were opened to the public during their visit to the country's largest port.

"I told them a warship was coming and they really wanted to come to see her. She's beautiful, she's new," said one enthusiastic Constanta resident, a father of two, as he and his family queued to go aboard the destroyer.

HMS Duncan, which left her home in Portsmouth in January this year, is Flagship to NATO's Standing Maritime Group 2 in the Mediterranean – a task the Type 45 undertook for three months last year.

The destroyer is leading Romanian frigate ROS Regele Ferdinand and the Turkish frigate TCG Gaziantep.

Enterprise, which left her West Country home last summer, is flagship for NATO's Standing Mine Counter Measures Group 2, along with the Turkish minehunter TCG Akçay and Romanian minesweeper ROS Lt Lupu Dinescu.

Both groups conducted a routine port visit to Constanta as part of NATO's increased presence in the Black Sea region.

As well as courtesy calls with local civilian and naval authorities, the ships hosted an open day to welcome locals aboard and demonstrate some of the maritime aspects of NATO. Cdre Mike Utley, Commander of SNMG2, faced a battery of cameras and microphones as Duncan hosted local media.

SNMG2's first port visit of 2018 was Malaga in Spain, where the task group spent a week berthed at Levante quay, hosting a reception for local authorities and meetings with civilian and military representatives.

"I am delighted to be able to bring the SNMG2 Flagship to Malaga. Maintaining a close relationship between all NATO nations is key to ensuring stability and security in the Mediterranean," said Cdre Utley.

Duncan's CO Cdr Eleanor Stack added: "My ship's company is proud to have resumed the role of NATO Flagship. HMS Duncan is an incredibly capable multi-role platform, representing a significant UK contribution to NATO's efforts to maintain security in the Mediterranean region."

Duncan's deployment is the first for Sub Lt William De La Mare as he sailed with the destroyer for the first time as a newly-qualified Warfare Officer.

The 23-year-old, from Guernsey, joined the RN to follow in his father Richard's footsteps.

"The Navy has been in my life for many years," said William. "I recall as a young boy visiting my father's ships and also going sailing with him around the island; this is where my want to be at sea first developed. To now be on my own ship, so soon after graduating from Dartmouth, fills me with immense pride."

William will serve around four months aboard HMS Duncan before heading to the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood for further training on how to navigate warships.

He added: "The experience so far has been amazing. I'm currently undertaking Common Fleet Time, which involves spending time with most of the departments on board."

"So far I have worked with Weapon Engineers, have spent time with the Executive Branch who enforce discipline on board, and have had the chance to assist in driving the ship by working with the Navigator and Watch Officers on the bridge. It's a fantastic opportunity to really get to grips with the inner workings of a warship."

The visit to Constanta concluded with both task groups working

with the Romanian Navy in the Black Sea.

"It is essential that NATO and its allied nations work collectively, to ensure a strong maritime presence in the international waters of the Black Sea," said Cdre Utley. "Exercising and operating in the region ensures freedom of navigation and reinforces collective defence."

Both task groups worked with the Romanian Navy, practising a range of skills, including air defence, navigation, communications and mine disposal.

During routine mine countermeasure training in the Black Sea for SNMCMG2, the Akçay, commanded by Lt Cdr Abdulla Yildiz, discovered a sea mine while using her sonar to scan the sea bed.

The minehunter used her Remote Controlled Mine Discovery Vehicle (RCMDV) to investigate the possible mine further. The RCMDV is remotely controlled from the minehunter and used to identify mine-like objects using an onboard camera. If necessary, the RCMDV can also lay a 100kg explosive charge to destroy the mine.

SNMCMG2 was conducting mine countermeasure training with the Romanian Navy just off the Romanian coast near Constanta when the historic ordnance was discovered.

The area in question is shown on maritime charts as a former mined area and this means that the find was likely to be an historic mine. The mine was on the sea bed approximately 40 metres down. Images showed that the mine was still attached to the 'sinker' or weight, which means that it likely didn't deploy correctly when it was laid. Normally these mines were suspended mid water, attached to the weight on the seabed.

"Finding this historic mine demonstrates NATO's capability to find uncharted mines in the Black Sea," said Royal Navy Commander Justin Hains, Commander of SNMCMG2. "We work hard to practise our skills to ensure safe sea lanes. Identification and disposal of historic ordnance is just part of the mission."

NATO liaised with the Romanian authorities with regards to the neutralisation or disposal of the mine.

Prior to visiting Romania, SNMCMG2 called in at the Bulgarian port of Varna, where working with the Bulgarian Navy was among the items discussed during a series of meetings.

"I consider it a privilege to visit Varna and to have the opportunity to work alongside the Bulgarian Navy," said Cdre Utley.

Following the visit to Romania, Enterprise and her ships were sailing to Burgas in Bulgaria, where the survey ship hosted a tour for local children, met with local media and held a reception for local and military contacts.

Duncan and her group headed back to Istanbul. Once there, the destroyer was handing over flagship duties before heading off to the Gulf.

Enterprise also visited the stunning city, arriving as dawn rose over the Bosphorus. The task group then entered the Black Sea and met up with Romanian ship Lupu Dinescu before travelling to Sinop on the isthmus of Inceburun, near Cape Sinope on the most northern edge of the Turkish side of the Black Sea coast.

As well as a number of courtesy calls to the city's deputy mayor and governor, Enterprise hosted a lunch for VIPs, including the British Ambassador to Turkey Sir Dominick Chilcott and the Naval and Air Defence Attaché Wing Cdr Bryan Hunt RAF.

SNMCMG2 and SNMCMG2 are two of four groups of ships which make up the maritime component of the NATO Reaction Force and are crucial in keeping sea lanes and ports open during times of crisis.

The groups take part in a wide range of multinational exercises and train with NATO Allies and partners.





Toby really knows his stuff

PETTY Officer Toby Casstles, who is employed in the Maritime Intelligence Fusion Centre (MIFC), was awarded the Maritime Information Exploitation Group (MIXG), Efficiency Prize Award 2017.

Toby received his award from Capt Barry Doig during a ceremony at HMS Collingwood.

The award was made in recognition of his devotion, enthusiasm and for consistently outstanding intelligence and managerial performance.

Toby worked tirelessly to deliver success in every task that lay before him, his hallmark is one of quiet professionalism and total dedication.

He was also instrumental in establishing the MIFC IA4 team, which focuses on Far East and Pacific activity, critical within the programme to reinvigorate the RN's carrier strike capability.

As the MIFC Office Manager, Toby has ensured that all activity has run smoothly and in a timely manner, also delivering faultlessly as the Motor Transport Officer, Security Officer and Divisional Senior Rating.

To seal what was an outstanding year for Toby, he also passed the Naval Intelligence Aptitude Board and the Admiralty Interview Board.

His subsequent selection for training at BRNC this year will fulfil his ambition of becoming an Intelligence Officer.

"This has been my first experience working out of source branch and not in an operational role at sea," said Toby.

"I have enjoyed the change in environment, different challenges and opportunities. It is very much a team effort here and working to support operational units worldwide as part of a small team has been great. I'm glad I've been able to play my part within the unit and I'm looking forward to my remaining time here, building on the experience and skills I've learned so far."

Final flyers pass grading

THE final group of budding aviators of 2017 returned to Britannia Royal Naval College after passing an arduous assessment to prove they have what it takes to conduct flying training.

More than 50 students passed their flying grading last year either at RNAS Yeovilton or Culdrose.

Sub Lt Joel Finch, 26, who hopes to become an F-35 Lightning II fast-jet pilot, said: "Grading was an excellent experience, but it was also very challenging.

"The instructors were fantastic and the experience you get from just being next to them in a cockpit, which is just over a metre and a half wide, is inspirational."

BRNC's Flight Training Officer, Lt Tim Curnock, said: "Grading is the highlight and hardest part of the IWO (AV) package. It is rightly a tough assessment designed to see if these Young Officers have what it takes to join the Fleet Air Arm."

Ex-Royal Marines find new challenges at sea

Dan delivers for charity



● Dan Fielding now works as a sailing instructor for the charity Turn to Starboard

FORMER Royal Marine Dan Fielding gets to grips with his new role with a sailing charity.

Dan, who was medically discharged from Service in 2008, owes much of his recovery from depression and PTSD to Turn to Starboard.

He admits that he was in despair after leaving the Corps, with the resulting stress impacting on his family.

"I would walk around the house during the night making sure everyone was safe," he said.

"Taking the kids to school was not just a normal thing, I would check under the car and along the street and give the signal before the kids ran out of the house to the car as if it were a military drill – point of safety to point of safety. I had lost general control, so with the tiny bits I could control, I went overboard."

Eventually Dan's marriage failed and he was diagnosed with PTSD, becoming one of the first participants on the Combat Stress programme.

Challenged by his friends to push his boundaries, Dan, 37, contacted Turn to Starboard, a sailing charity based at Falmouth in Cornwall.

The organisation was created from the personal experience of its founder, Sqn Ldr (rtd) Shaun Pascoe.

Dan started on the charity's Zero to Hero programme, a flexible free course designed to teach veterans how to sail. The course culminates in a Royal Yachting Association Yachtmaster qualification which can help start new careers in the marine industry.

"I found that sailing is similar to the ethos of Armed Forces life in that it needs everyone to work as a team, so I kind of felt at home," said Dan.

"Also, when I left the Corps I didn't feel useful any more, I felt I was half decent as a Royal Marine but being discharged was like I was not good at anything. Yet after progressing through the programme it was if I was back in the Corps and had just been awarded my commando flashes. I couldn't believe it."

Within a year Dan was awarded his Yachtmaster qualification and went on to pass the coveted Cruising Instructor exam.

He was also offered a permanent job with the charity as a sailing

instructor, helping to pass on his skills to veterans in similar situations.

In 2016 Dan was second in command on the charity's Round Britain Challenge – a successful 2,000-mile circumnavigation of the British Isles on board a 92ft long tall ship. The following year he was promoted to expedition leader of a second voyage, this time sailing a team of 17 veterans – many with little or no sailing experience – in the opposite direction.

"Those epic voyages showed me that I had become a professional sailor and people had depended on my leadership skills. I now know that I can achieve results outside of the military and now have a new career to focus on. Although I still have plenty to learn I'm in a good place and looking forward to what the future holds."

Dan sailed to victory on the world-renowned Rolex Sydney to Hobart Yacht Race. He joined eight injured UK veterans to take on the Australians in the 630-nautical mile race and crossed the finish line almost 11 hours ahead of their friendly rivals. Sir Robin Knox-Johnston, the first man to sail solo, non-stop around the world in 1969, joined Dan and the crew as their on-board navigator.

The charity is looking to raise £100,000 this year for a training boat.

As well as taking part in key fundraising events, supporters are invited to make a donation by text message or create their own fundraising event for the Float-A-Boat campaign.

Supporters can get involved by texting TURN25 £10 to 70007 to make a £10 donation to the campaign. Other donation amounts are £1, £2, £5 or £10 and a standard message rate will also apply (e.g. TURN25 £5).

Donors are invited to share boat-related selfies on Twitter using the hashtag #FAB to help the charity create a gallery.

For more information about the charity and how to get involved with the campaign, call Events Co-ordinator Neil Triggs on 01326 314262 or email neil@turntostarboard.co.uk, visit www.turntostarboard.co.uk for training opportunities.

Falklands veteran bids to row Pacific

FORMER Royal Marine and Falklands veteran Steve Sparkes will take on the challenge of a lifetime as he attempts to become the first blind person ever to row the Pacific ocean as he competes in the Great Pacific Race.

Steve, 57 from South Devon, will be partnered with experienced ocean rower and fellow former Royal Marine and Falklands veteran Mick Dawson, from Brighton, on the epic 2,400-mile adventure which will see them row from Monterey, California, to Hawaii, competing against other teams from around the world.

While the direct route is 2,400 miles, weather conditions and changing currents could see the duo row closer to 3,000 miles and take them between 50 and 90 days to complete.

Throughout the challenge, which starts on June 2, Steve and Mick will take it in turns to row the boat in a pattern of two hours rowing, two hours resting.

Before the pair can complete the challenge they need to raise money to cover their race entry fee, travel to California, training and equipment.

They are calling on any businesses or individuals who would like to sponsor the team to get in touch or visit their website – www.ckleshell-pacific.com, or visit their crowdfunding page www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/ckleshell-pacific

The row will be completely unaided so the pair will need to carry their food, supplies and equipment for turning seawater into fresh drinking water with them on their 21.5ft carbon fibre ocean



● Steve Sparkes with fellow rower Mick Dawson

rowing boat, nicknamed 'Bojangles'.

The vessel has already crossed the Pacific once as it was the boat used by Mick when he entered the record books in 2009, alongside Chris Martin, as they became the first people to complete a 7,000-mile row across the North Pacific from Japan to San Francisco.

They remain the only people to have ever successfully rowed this route.

Steve's blindness is due to a rare form of macular degeneration known as

Stargardt's.

It was caused when, in 1984 while taking part in a selection for the Royal Marines Special Boat Service, he had a diving accident that would ultimately cause the loss of his eyesight. Steve has lost his sight completely apart from some peripheral vision of shapes and colours.

He was medically discharged from the Royal Marines at a time when there was little in the way of support in place for injured veterans.

Ten years after his discharge Blind Veterans UK, then known as St Dunstons, tracked down Steve who was by then living in Malta. They flew him back to the UK and provided the first training and support to help Steve deal with his condition.

Steve has worked consistently with and for Blind Veterans UK in the years since helping other veterans come to terms with their loss of sight.

It is because of this support that Steve and Mick are competing in the Great Pacific Race to raise money for Blind Veterans UK, and also the Royal Marines Charity.

"I'm excited to be the first blind person to ever take on this epic adventure," said Steve.

"I am determined to show that disability of any sort doesn't need to hold you back, and I am confident that with my determination and Mick's vast experience of ocean rowing will result in a very successful crossing of the Pacific."

Mick added: "I am really excited to be competing in the Great Pacific Race alongside Steve and helping achieve a global first; becoming the first blind person to row the Pacific."

"It's good to be reunited with 'Bo' too, the boat that I used to first row the Pacific in 2009. I have no doubt that we will overcome all the challenges that lay ahead and will achieve our aim of rowing unaided across the Pacific."

You can follow the pair's preparations for the event at www.ckleshell-pacific.com/meet-the-team



Let me tell you the Story at the Tower

FROM dark blue to deep red ... former Royal Navy Warrant Officer Terry Briggs shows off his new uniform at the Tower of London.

Terry has become the 408th Yeoman Warder, to give the Beefeaters their proper name, to guard the Tower since records began in the 19th Century.

The former WO, who served in the Royal Navy for more than 32 years, joins 36 other Yeoman Warders, who are descended from the ancient band of warders who guarded the gates and Royal prisoners.

Terry said: "To be the 408th Yeoman Warder since records began fills me with an enormous amount of pride.

"Living at the Tower of London is unreal, the size and scale of the place is just awe-inspiring, you really feel as if you are living and breathing history. It was my birthday recently and what better present than waking up in a Royal Palace."

One of his first challenges will be to learn word-for-word the 'Story' – the

script of the famous Yeoman Warder Tour of the Tower.

Once he has perfected the Story, he will be allowed to lead a tour himself.

He will also become familiar with each of the 21 separate duties that the Yeoman Warders conduct each and every day, including the Ceremony of the Keys, a closing ceremony that has taken place every night at the Tower of London without fail for at least 700 years.

Born and raised in London, YW Briggs was a Warrant Officer based at Northwood NATO HQ.

He also served with the Royal Navy in the Gulf specialising in mine warfare. Outside work, he is a keen motorbike enthusiast.

Modern Yeoman Warders are still Extraordinary Members of the Queen's Bodyguard.

Today they combine their traditional ceremonial role with a love of history to make the past come to life for visitors.

Trip down memory lane for ex-Wren

THE Royal Navy Historic Flight at RNAS Yeovilton hosted a 92-year-old Wren for a trip down memory lane.

Brenda Marsland joined the Royal Navy 74 years ago in December 1943 as a Wren in the Women's Royal Naval Service.

She did her air mechanic training at HMS Fledgling, at Eccleshall in Staffordshire, and then went to HMS Tern on the Orkney Islands from April 1944 to September 1945.

At HMS Tern Brenda worked on the maintenance of Miles Martinet aircraft, which were target tugs used for gunnery training. Her duties included repairing bullet holes in the fabric covering of the aircraft.

Brenda was promoted to Leading Wren in December 1944 and when the war was over she was sent to HMS Kestrel near Winchester before being demobbed in February 1946.

The Commanding Officer of RNAS Yeovilton, Cdre Nick Tindal, presented Brenda with her WW2 medal in the station's wardroom.

Brenda said of her time in Service: "It was such a wonderful time in my life, the girls and making a difference, you felt like you were helping the effort."

Brenda, who was accompanied by her daughter Dilys, now lives



in Sherborne in Dorset, having moved from Kent last year where she was involved with a local group of the Association of Wrens in Tunbridge Wells.

During their visit to Yeovilton, Brenda and Dilys also viewed the Swordfish and Sea Fury aircraft of the Royal Navy Historic Flight.



● Left, Brenda Marsland and her daughter Dilys in front of the Fairey Swordfish aircraft; Above, Brenda during her WRNS career



Film star's surprise visit to WW1 vessel

ONE of Britain's greatest actors dropped in on WW1 museum piece HMS Caroline – and surprised Belfast's civic leaders hosting a screening of his film *Dunkirk*.

Sir Kenneth Branagh, who was born in the great Northern Ireland city, dropped in on the Jutland-veteran cruiser which was the impressive setting for a unique showing of the big-screen epic which has so far taken over £370m at the box office.

The 57-year-old actor plays the fictional Cdr Bolton in Christopher Nolan's blockbuster; his character was inspired by the real piermaster Cdr James Campbell Clouston, a Canadian who died on the penultimate day of the evacuation when his launch was sunk.

Sir Kenneth was in his hometown to receive the freedom of the city, but found time for a quick tour of Caroline – a floating tribute to the men of Jutland in Alexandra Dock – before welcoming attendees to the



screening of the 2017 war film, including Belfast Lord Mayor Nuala McAllister and Paul Mullan, Head of the Heritage Lottery Fund in Northern Ireland.

Jamie Wilson, general manager for HMS Caroline, said: "The next few months are very exciting for us as we open the new visitor centre in the Pump House, as well as the bespoke bridge. It has been a pleasure welcoming Mr Branagh to see this piece of living history."

HMS Caroline opens to the public seven days a week until 5pm. For more information, visit www.hmscaroline.co.uk

Just William's job well done



A PETTY Officer has been thanked for 37 years of Service to the Royal Navy.

PO William Garner was thanked by the CO of RNAS Yeovilton, Cdre Nick Tindal.

PO Garner joined in July 1977 as a Junior Engineering Mechanic (Air) 2nd class at HMS Raleigh.

He went on to serve in five aircraft carriers HMS Hermes, Bulwark, Illustrious, Invincible and Ark Royal.

PO Garner also served on 845, 846 and 848 NAS as part of Commando Helicopter Force.

He also embarked in HMS Fearless and Intrepid and was a pivotal member during extended

periods detached in Norway supporting Arctic training.

"It has been an amazing life in the Royal Navy and I am particularly proud of my contribution to the 1982 Falklands conflict as a member of Falklands Naval Party 1222 tasked with rebuilding, flying and despatching aircraft," said PO Garner.

"I have enjoyed travelling the globe promoting the Royal Navy, it's made me very proud."

As well as campaign medals for Northern Ireland and the Falklands, he also earned two bars for Long Service and Good Conduct.

The only charity dedicated to supporting children whose parents serve, or have served, in the Naval Service.

Originally set up as an orphanage, we now assist children with a wide range of needs and at times of family crisis. Applications can be made at any time and those seeking assistance can contact the office directly for an application form, or download it from our website.

311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 8RN • t 023 9263 9534 e caseworkers@rnmchildrensfund.org.uk
www.rnmchildrensfund.org.uk

RNRMCF Registered charity number: 1160182 • Patron: HRH The Duke of York, KG, GCVO, CD

THE Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) is seeking five new trustees from April this year.

The charity, which helps those who are serving or have served as WOs and below in the Royal Navy or Royal Marines, helps thousands of people each year.

A founding principle of the trust is that it is predominantly run by those who are serving or have served as non-commissioned sailors and Royal Marines. Accordingly 11 of the 16 trustees that form the RNBT's governing body (including the Trust's Vice President) are drawn from serving and retired personnel who have been or are RN ratings and RM other ranks.

The closing date for applications is March 12.

If you are interested please contact Rob Bosshardt (Chief Executive) at the RNBT's Portsmouth-based head office (02392 690112). You can also email a request for an application pack via: rnbtrnbt.org.uk

For more details about the charity visit www.rnbt.org.uk.
SAILORS who crew the only Type 82 destroyer ever built provided some post-Christmas cheer to patients young and old at Portsmouth's Queen Alexandra Hospital.

Personnel from HMS Bristol – now an accommodation/training ship berthed at HMS Excellent – held a charity darts night, charging loose change and a selection box to enter.

With dosh and choccies collected, the time came to make the short trip first to the wing housing elderly patients, handing over money to pay for some activity trolleys to help their rehabilitation, while five Bristolians – POs Darren Garnett (also winner of the darts contest), Robert Oliver and Scott Gratton and ABs Robins and Parkinson – distributed selection boxes to youngsters.

MILITARY charities Blesma, Blind Veterans UK and Combat Stress are uniting to relaunch the D-Day 44 Challenge.

June 5 to 7 this year will see participants either take on the full 44-mile run or a 22-mile walk along the Normandy coastline.

For an initial registration fee of £150, the three-day package includes return transport from London, two nights' accommodation, all meals, and full medical and event support. A fundraising pledge of £1,000 will mean no further costs – a fundraising pledge of £500 will incur a further £340 fee to cover running costs of the event.

For more information and to register, visit: <http://classicchallenge.co.uk/challenge-finder/D-Day+44+Challenge+2018/>, email info@classicchallenge.co.uk or call 0207 619 0066.

HMS Sultan Theatre Group present their Spring production *Made in Dagenham the Musical*.

The show is directed by Jenni Coupe with performances on Wednesday March 21 to Saturday March 24 at 9.30pm.

Tickets are adults £6.50 OAPs £5. (The show contains adult language). Performances will be held in Dreadnought Theatre, Brunel Building, HMS Sultan, Military Road, Gosport, Hants, PO12 3BY.

Book online at www.sultantheatre.org.uk or call 07747 898245. Group discounts apply.

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity Field Gun Competition will be the highlight of HMS Collingwood's open day on June 2.

The competition will feature crews from across the UK and as far afield as Gibraltar competing for the Brickwoods Trophy.

Parts of the base will be open to visitors. The gates open at 9.30am.

Trip to Maryland no barrier for BRNC delegates



A DELEGATION from Britannia Royal Naval College line up with their American colleagues at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland.

Six representatives made up of three students and three permanent staff took part in the annual US Naval Academy Leadership Conference entitled "Breaking barriers: obstacles are opportunities."

The event was aimed at inspiring and promoting leadership and showing how the obstacles faced by cadets in training and throughout their military careers can be used as opportunities to learn and develop as leaders.

More than 300 aspiring leaders from 45 military and civilian colleges attended the conference.

The conference was run by the USNA Cadets and attracted an impressive line-up of guest speakers that included author Simon Sinek, the former Vice-President of the USA, Dick Cheney and Madeline Albright, a former US Ambassador to the United Nations and the first woman to be the United States Secretary of State.

A quick trip to Washington DC topped off an educational and inspirational trip to the US, where everyone involved took away some valuable lessons to develop them both personally and professionally as leaders within the Royal Navy.

Prince praises top engineer students

FUTURE engineers from Plymouth scooped top awards at a ceremony attended by the Prince of Wales.

Ministry of Defence engineering apprentices based at Devonport Naval Base were presented with their awards at a ceremony in London.

The apprentices, employed by Defence Equipment and Support (DE&S), attended the MoD Apprentice of the Year Award Ceremony in MOD Main Building in London.

The awards were presented by His Royal Highness, Prince of Wales, with a Devonport apprentice winning top awards, including the Gold Apprentice of the Year Award.

Despite having one of the smallest entries, Devonport apprentices not only brought home the gold accolade, but had two nominees in the top ten.

They also won the Phase One Hand Skills competition with the Devonport team awarded the Defence Infrastructure Organisation top prize for the Sustainability Recycling Challenge for innovative thinking.

Devonport also had a finalist in the new Prince of Wales's Award for Services to Defence Engineering.

Lorna Stubbs, the Devonport Apprentice Development Manager, said: "His Royal



The Prince of Wales with apprentice award winners Matt Schofield and Sarah Hughes



2018. YEAR OF ENGINEERING

Highness took time to talk to the apprentices and their families, which meant a great deal to them and reinforced the national importance of what they are doing.

"Whilst there were clear individual winners, collectively, Devonport apprentices continue to impress with their enthusiasm and passion for engineering as well as embracing wider aspects of their apprenticeship."

She said the Prince of Wales was extremely interested in the local project Devonport apprentices undertook when they revamped Mount Wise Primary School's playground, and in particular the engagement with local STEM activities.

Matt Schofield, Apprentice of the Year winner, visited schools to promote STEM subjects as part of his role.

He said: "It was incredible

to win, as I was aware of the outstanding quality of work of all of those selected for the final ten.

"Engineering is an incredible career and I am just lucky to be doing something at DE&S that I enjoy so much."

Phase One Hand Skills Award winner Sarah Hughes also picked up a second award as part of the DE&S Devonport's Sustainability Recycling Challenge, alongside Declan Heard, Lawrence Parker and Chris Nowell-Smith.

Sarah said: "It was wonderful that my family and partner were able to come and support me – it's been a very special day. I have spent a lot of time going into schools and exposing children to the opportunities available in engineering at DE&S."

Quartet join great Naval club



From left, Lts Michael Vivian, James Burrows, Shaun Bending and Thomas Horne

Picture: LPhoto Guy Pool

THREE pilots and one observer from 825 NAS earned their Wings at a ceremony at RNAS Yeovilton.

The four, who completed operational training on the Wildcat HMA2 helicopter, received their Wings from Rear Admiral Paul Bennett, Commander UK Maritime Force.

"It's a huge privilege as an aviator myself to be here today," said the Admiral. "Not only is it a momentous occasion for these four individuals but their families too. For 104 years Naval aviators have led the way and now you are a lifelong member of a great club."

Lt James Burrows, who joined the RN in 2007 as a Warfare Officer, said: "I have always loved aviation and dreamed of becoming a pilot from a very young age."

The other pilots were Lt Shaun Bending and Lt Thomas Horne, along with observer Lt Michael Vivian.

During the ceremony, AET Harry Sheeran was presented with the Live Your Life Award for the significant contribution he made as an engineer embarked in RFA Argus.

CPO James Bottomley was awarded the Long Service and Good Conduct Medal (LSGC), after 15 years in the Royal Navy.



Royals duo in driving seats

A SERVING Royal Marine is a member of the first all-disabled team aiming to race at Le Mans this year.

Jimmy Hill, pictured top, has a paralysed leg following an injury in Afghanistan. He is joined by a team of drivers, including former Royal Marine Jamie Falvey, pictured below, who suffers from hearing difficulties.

Team BRIT will use the world's most advanced hand-control technology to allow the drivers to compete on equal terms.

In 2017 the team competed in the UK Fun Cup and will continue to compete in the single-make championship with rookies this year. More experienced drivers will move up to GT racing, using the same controls which have also been installed in the team's Aston Martin.

Team Founder Dave Player said: "I am delighted to be able to share the news of our Aston Martin with the world. This cements our position as serious competitors in motorsport and shows what can be achieved by disabled drivers."

The team plans to race the Aston Martin not only in the UK but also throughout Europe and across the globe.

The team's two Fun Cup cars begin racing when the championship kicks off on April 7 at Oulton Park.

For more information visit www.TeamBRIT.co.uk

Pictures: David Archer, Kingsize Photography





Perfect answer to the school bullies

A SAILOR from HMS Queen Elizabeth who was bullied at school because of his lack of fitness has come first in the traditional Gibraltar Rock Race.

Marine engineer ET(ME) Sam Prisk 22, from Southampton ran the Rock in just 22 minutes, 44 seconds, almost twice as fast as the last participant over the line.

Around a hundred members of the ship's company, embarked aircrew and Royal Marines took part as the aircraft carrier made her debut visit to Gib.

After crossing the line, ET(ME) Prisk, *pictured above*, explained his motivation: "This is such a surreal feeling, because ten years ago I was the fat boy at school and I was bullied by everyone."

"I thought then, if I started pushing myself a bit more I could maybe be someone that I thought I could never be."

"Now here I am, first over the line on the top of the Rock for HMS Queen Elizabeth, so it's a massive achievement for me."

The Rock Race is traditionally run by every Royal Navy ship that visits Gibraltar. The route is 2.7 miles long and involves a 1,300ft climb, on gradients as steep as one-in-four.

The current Rock Race record was set in 1986 by Sub Lt Chris Robison, who ran the Rock in 17 mins and 29 seconds.

Pictures: PO Phot Dave Jenkins



Ton up for Twickenham

THE gauntlet has been thrown down for this year's fundraising challenge ahead of the Navy v Army rugby match at Twickenham in May.

The RNRMC is challenging people to do anything related to the number 100 to raise funds for the charity.

Will you see who can do the most burpees in 100 seconds? Complete 100 passes with a rugby ball with your team, friends or family?

Will you bake and sell 100 cakes? Organise a quiz with 100 questions? Or take on a 100-mile sponsored cycle?

If it involves 100, we challenge you to do it.

Whatever you decide to do, share your challenge using hashtag #Twickenham100 on social media.

To register your interest and receive a fundraising pack, submit an online Twickenham100 form by visiting www.rnrmc.org.uk

For more information on how to get involved with Twickenham100, call 023 9387 4630.



I've only got 5,000 miles left to go...

ROYAL Naval Reservist Cdr Jane Allen is marking the first year of her retirement on a gruelling 5,500-mile charity walk around mainland Britain's coastline to raise funds for the RNRMC and the Women's Royal Naval Service Benevolent Trust.

Jane, who spent 37 years in the Service, reflects on the first 'Proclaimer' 500 miles.

LOOKING back on the Portsmouth to Hullbridge, Essex, stretch of the Victory Walk, the main difficulty is remembering where I've been!

Being on the move almost every day means that the walk becomes a blizzard of place names, each to be reached, passed and left behind.

Perhaps the two most difficult things to leave behind were Navy Command HQ with the ongoing WRNS100 demands, and Portsmouth's Spinnaker Tower.

It took 60 miles and Selsey Bill before the Tower eventually disappeared behind me.

WRNS100 did not conclude until mid-December, with a superb reception for 100 serving and veteran naval women in the Speaker's House, Palace of Westminster.

Shortly afterwards I broke for a Christmas break in a cosy rented cottage in Kent.

Already I've walked on almost every type of terrain, ranging from tarmac, shingle, chalk, sand, pavements, clay, pebbles, shells and grass, to glutinous mud.

This has been accompanied by a cocktail of British weather – ice, snow, strong winds, sleet, rain, freezing winds and a little sunshine. We should not be surprised – after all it's still winter.

Encountering my first hill after 100 miles of flat walking was a shock to



● Cdr Allen pictured alongside a statue of Nelson at the Trafalgar Pub at Greenwich, London

the system, as were the 'Seven Sisters' series of clifftops leading finally to the amazing 531ft vista from Beachy Head.

Not all views have been so invigorating. Miles of pebbled beaches and groynes proved monotonous, as have the never-ending grassy curved protective seawalls, accompanied by acres of mud at low tides in the Essex estuaries.

To write that the walk has been wholly enjoyable would be misleading. It's been depressing to encounter so many closed and derelict industrial sites, vandalised buildings, rubbish-strewn paths and countless mounds of



● Cdr Allen beside the Thames. Main image shows Cdr Allen at Greenwich

fly-tipped debris. Poor, non-existent or tampered waymarking, overgrown paths and sudden unmarked dead-ends have certainly caused walker's frustration!

These occasional dips in morale have easily been countered by meeting so many kind people along the way, including enthusiastic assistance from Sea Cadet Units. Highlights include seeing busy ferry ports and container terminals in action; visiting Hastings' 'Pier of the Year 2017'; walking the length of the World's Longest Leisure Pier at Southend; chancing upon countless monuments and memorials commemorating everything from wars to wrinkles; crossing the Thames on Westminster Bridge; and the first major change in walking direction: from east to north.

I'm sure there will be numerous good and bad things to come, just as there are many, many more miles to walk. All I ask in return is that donations to the Victory Walk continue to roll in.

To support Cdr Allen on her challenge, visit <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/victorywalk17-18>

You can follow her on Facebook at [VictoryWalk17-18](https://www.facebook.com/VictoryWalk17-18)



Presenters have a Lott to celebrate

MUSICIAN Ashley Gibbs films the presenter part of the RN's regular social media newsbrief – the 60 Second Update.

The Royal Marines Bandsman is one of six ratings/ranks who volunteered to be the faces – and voices – of the short video, which keeps the RN and broader RN family up-to-date with Senior Service headlines.

All six volunteers – AET Aaron Moment, Musn Kat Beard, Logs(SC) Siobhan Deakin, Sgt Rob O'Brien and Wtr Tamica Mignott complete the sextet – were rewarded with Herbert Lott awards by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Jonathan Woodcock for their efforts.

None of the six have previous presenter experience, but came forward when the call went out for personalities to stand in front of the camera last July.

Now into its 12th episode, the updates – published across all RN social media channels – have reached more than three million people, while the presenters

have been praised by viewers who often refuse to believe they're not full-time TV types.

"To receive this award is a huge honour," said Kat, who presented the first episode. "By presenting the 60 Second Update, we are making sure that everybody across the Naval Service has the opportunity to keep up to date with operational news as well as things such as the recent ski championships and other success stories."

Fellow presenter AET Aaron Moment added: "All my family love the clips and it helps let them know what other areas of the Navy are up to."

The update was introduced as part of a revamp of the Two-Six internal communications brand, with the aim of producing a new video every fortnight.

In recognising the team's efforts, Vice Admiral Woodcock said: "I'm thrilled to present the Herbert Lott Award to our team of 60 Second news presenters. They do an excellent job getting the message out to our people to say just how much we value their efforts across the globe."



Comms shack

ACOS (IW) and his team have continued to engage with units and establishments through visits to Dragon, Diamond, Northwood, MoD Corsham, MCSU and Faslane, listening to your views and concerns, and discussing his vision for the future of CIS.

The feedback received has helped inform, develop and shape that vision.

Roadshows continue this month in Portsmouth (March 6) and Devonport Naval Bases (March 15).

Following these visits, ACOS (IW), as the Chief Naval Signal Officer, will finalise and publish his vision on how best to deliver CIS support through people and give you the information you need to make long term career decisions.

A considerable amount of work has been conducted by CPO Matthews at HRTSG to update the Role Performance Statements for CIS (General Service and Submariner) specialists.

Many units and individual personnel have supported him in that task, which has enabled an up-to-date capture of the roles, responsibilities, knowledge and skills required in our cadre to be articulated.

In addition, an independent job evaluation of CIS Specialists is now under way, and some of you will be interviewed as part of that process. Be open, be honest, be comprehensive if you are selected.

Latest Relevant Information: RNTM 01-005/18: Division of employment and responsibilities between a CIS Specialist and CIS Technician

For all information regarding the CIS evolution, e-mail the project lead tim.lawrenson513@mod.gov.uk.



Toast of the City

TWENTY-ONE Reservists from all three Services are now Freeman of the City of London thanks to volunteering for the world-famous Lord Mayor's Show.

The Lord Mayor himself – Charles Bowman – and the Pageantmaster of the November event, Dominic Reid, nominated 21 men and women who had served as marshals at the show for ten years or more.

Their reward? An invitation to Mansion House to receive the city's highest civic honour in a ceremony dating back eight centuries.

Each of the 21 nominees – sailors, soldiers, Royal Marines and airmen – had to make the 'Declaration of a Freeman', then sign the Freeman's Declaration Book.

The Clerk of the Chamberlain's Court, Murray Craig, then presented the Reservists with a hand-written parchment copy of the Freedom certificate, together with the 18th-Century book *Rules for the Conduct of Life* written by Sir John Barnard.

The title of Freeman is believed to date back to 1237, when it allowed members of a guild or livery company to carry out their trade or craft within the square mile and also made them exempt from being press-ganged.

Nearly 800 years later and the Lord Mayor said he was proud

to honour 21 "remarkable" individuals who had made an "absolutely extraordinary contribution" to the November parade.

"Fifty years ago, my father took me as a seven year old to the Lord Mayor's Show, where I saw history, pageantry, commitment, celebration and culture," he said.

"It was a catalyst for me which led to my career of 35 years in the City and enabled me the privilege to become the 690th Lord Mayor of London. It is a great privilege and honour to recognise an absolutely extraordinary contribution over so many years, it is remarkable. I am thrilled to have everyone here today."

Lt Cdr Elizabeth Church from HMS President was among those honoured. "It has been a privilege and such a nice way of recognising what we have done with the Lord Mayor's Show," she said.

Fellow Freeman Lt Col Fraser Smith RMR added: "It's an honour to receive recognition of the years of service to the city and I am very pleased to have been asked."

The title allows the holder to join the Guild of Freeman which brings together Freeman of the City for charitable, educational, social and benevolent activities to promote the interests of the City of London.

Picture: Kevin Poolman

If you can find

DID you hear the one about the fishery protection ship which merged with a minehunter?

No, we've not created a new class of ship – a 'fishhunter', or perhaps 'fish countermeasures vessel' if you like – just a new way of working to bring the curtain down on 15 years of fishery protection work by the first generation River-class ships...

...and help usher in the second era.

In March last year the crew of HMS Tyne joined the first of the new generation of patrol ships, HMS Forth, to bring her out of build and through her sea trials.

And HMS Atherstone's crew took over Tyne to run her through to the end of her active RN life (next month).

The minehunter crew had just a day's handover before receiving the keys to Tyne, little experience of fish and no third watch to swap places with half the ship's company every few weeks to sustain near round-the-clock fishery patrols.

So when it came time to crew a second River-class ship – HMS Mersey – with minewarfare experts to allow Mersey's crew to take charge of HMS Trent, the third in the five-ship programme of replacement vessels, Project Jicara (no, we've no idea who

picks these names) has been tweaked quite a bit.

Jicara 2 puts some of the crew of HMS Ledbury – just back from a six-month tour of duty in the Gulf – aboard Mersey, living and working alongside the Cod Squad experts.

Mersey has to run until November, carrying out fishery protection patrols on behalf of the Marine Management Organisation, training young officers, navigators and conducting escort duties in home waters.

This time the mine crew have been given three months to get used to a ship which is 25 years newer than the veteran Hunt, more than twice the size and considerably faster.

And when the three months are up, mine and fish crews will share the running of Mersey – 22 sailors from each vessel, with the same number in reserve for those regular crew changes which help to keep the River class at sea.

Why? As well as knowledge of some of the systems aboard Mersey, some of the existing crew know their fish inside out and Mersey's seaman specialists possess experience of cranes, davits and daily Pacific 24 RIB operations which the mine hunter sailors do not.

And Ledbury's former crew bring bags of front-line operational experience in the Gulf to Mersey... as well as enthusiasm and desire to tackle something new.

"I look at it like this: if you can drive a Mk1 Golf, you will probably be able to drive a 2003 model as well, although it may take some getting used to," said Lt Cdr George Storton, Mersey's CO.

"And although the Hunts are older ships, inside they are not. They possess a lot of technology and equipment which is identical or more advanced than Mersey."

Something deputy marine engineer officer WO1 Michael Parrott is currently getting his head around.

"Hunts are actually closer to the Rivers technologically than you might think, especially with the new engines rather than the old Deltics," he says.

"Otherwise, we are up for learning about new kit – after all, we're engineers. Yes, it's a different world from what we know, but I'm sure we'll get used to fish. And for the young lads, the accommodation is a world apart."

LS(MW) Callum Murray from Weston-Super-Mare nods. He's gone from the very spartan junior rates' bunk spaces to two-berth cabins with en suite facilities.



Congratulations and accelerations

THE first 'accelerated' weapon and air engineers for the front-line Navy have been converted from civilians into sailors.

The group (pictured above two days before their ceremony 'enjoying' the assault course) passed out of HMS Raleigh in front of family, friends and Guest of Honour Brig Richard Bennett, Commandant of the Defence College for Technical Training.

They are now learning the technical side of their trades – at Collingwood for the WE branch, Sultan for the air engineers – as they undergo the first phase of their condensed training.

The 'accelerated apprentices' scheme was introduced to 'grow' marine engineers with leadership abilities in half the time of regular ETs.

It typically takes four and a half years to progress to leading hand, but under the new initiative, the accelerated apprentices should reach the same rank just two years into their careers, as they are sped through training, but while still achieving many of the same milestones.

Just for good measure, they'll also have to prepare for the Leading Hands Qualifying Course and Leading Rates Leadership Course.

The apprentices comprised just under half the rookie sailors passing out from Cunningham Squadron; they stood out on the parade ground thanks to white flashes above their leading hand hooks.

The first successful marine engineers passed out of HMS Sultan last summer and the decision was taken to broaden the scheme to embrace the air and weapon branches of engineering.

The target is to provide the Fleet with 104 accelerated apprenticeships across the three arms of engineering every year, with the emphasis on recruiting young people with maths and physics A-Levels or a Level 3 BTEC Engineering Diploma. Another batch of accelerated MEs was due to pass out of Raleigh before the end of February.

In the autumn, the scheme will be extended again when the first accelerated submariners arrive at Raleigh.

Questions of learning answered

THERE'S a new online forum to allow Naval Service personnel to find information and ask questions about their educational, learning, developmental and resettlement opportunities – ashore or at sea.

You can learn what you might get out of an apprenticeship scheme, how to authorise Standard Learning Credits, register for Enhanced Learning Credits, plan a degree, register for mandated career training courses (JOLC, Prize Essay etc) and much more.

This forum is accessible from any DII computer or personal device with internet connectivity; log into Defence Gateway, then click on the Defence Connect 'app' under 'Applications'. This should take you to the Defence Connect landing page, where you can find the Naval Service Learning and Development Hub by searching for it by name.

You are then free to ask questions of the L&D centre staff and view the content on the page, which includes up-to-date references and training material that you can access from the comfort of your own home.

A cunning play

THE Admiral's Players take to the stage over three nights this month (Tuesday 20-Thursday 22), bringing classic sitcom *Blackadder Goes Forth* to life at Fisher Hall in HMS Excellent. The adaptation of the WW1-era comedy is being performed to mark the 100th anniversary of the Great War's end.

Tickets for the 7.30pm performances cost £8 and £6 and are available only for pass holders and their guests from www.admiralplayers.co.uk.

a mine...

"The biggest difference is the space – and not just the living accommodation. There's a proper gym onboard," the 26-year-old says.

"It's a completely new world, but in a good way. Mine warfare is quite a small community and we don't actually spend time with the rest of the Navy, so this is a good way of extending our knowledge."

He's found the Mersey sailors "really helpful". "The transition has been really smooth, relaxed, and everyone chips in. There's still that small-ship mentality of a close-knit community. "Watch rotation is a new concept for us – and a good one. You can now plan your life. It really does help knowing where you are going to be and when."

The combination of the arrival of the Ledbury crew and watch rotation will allow Mersey to maintain her busy patrol schedule until she pays off, bridging the gap before Forth et al start their fishery duties.

"Fishery protection is the backbone of what we do – and allows us to do so much more: navigational training, young officer training, acting as the Royal Navy's eyes and ears around the UK," says Lt Cdr Storton.

"No one understands shipping movements better than the fishery squadron. We

know the ferry routes, the main shipping lanes, we know when there are regattas, so we know what is not normal."

Which brings us on to 21st Century policing of fishery grounds. The squadron does not conduct as many boardings as when the Rivers were introduced 15 years ago.

It's not because the crews have suddenly become lazy, or because there are fewer trawlers out there, rather down to much more targeted operations.

Intelligence is increasingly driving fishery protection patrols.

Trawlers carry electronic logs which they must update regularly with details of their catches, the equipment they are using and the areas in which they are operating.

These logs can be interrogated by Mersey's crew without the need for a formal visit – a boarding typically lasts three or four hours, is cold, wet, smelly and costs the fishermen money.

It means, based on a mixture of experience and intelligence, that the fish ships can choose the vessels they inspect – vessels most likely to have broken the rules.

Picture: LPhoto Louise George



Nominate a trailblazer RN museum looks for volunteers

DO YOU know a female sailor who is blazing a trail for her shipmates – and all who follow?

If so, the organisers of a national awards scheme want to hear about them for the 2018 incarnation of the We Are The City event, which singles out the best and the brightest female talent across a raft of professions.

Organisers are expecting well over 1,000 nominees spread across 22 categories as varied as banking and consulting, through academia, healthcare, sport and the media.

The RN is sponsoring the defence category, open to female nominees from all three Services, plus MOD employees; nominations run until March 23 at risingstars.wearethecity.com.

A team of judges – drawn from business, military, media and science – will announce their 100-strong shortlist on May 14. There will be three weeks of deliberation, as well as a public vote, before winners are announced on June 18.

In 2016, Junglie Merlin pilot Lt Natalie Grainger and RFA 3/O Sarah Stevens became the first women in the Naval Service to collect Rising Star awards, while last year 3/O Emily Fowles and air engineer officer Lt Laura Dietz continued that winning streak.



Where to look

DINs

- 01 Personnel
 - DIN 2018DIN01-011 Tax-Free Childcare (TFC) Scheme for eligible working parents (Service Personnel)
 - DIN 2018DIN01-013 The Firmin Sword Of Peace Awards Competition 2017
 - DIN 2018DIN01-015 Management of Marine Engineering Senior Upper Yardmen and Upper Yardmen Candidates
 - DIN 2018DIN01-016 Changes to common reporting dates for Royal Marines Other Ranks
 - DIN 2018DIN01-017 Universal Infant Free School Meals
 - DIN 2018DIN01-018 Wimbledon 2018
 - DIN 2018DIN01-019 Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2005 (AFPS 05) Medical Officer and Dental Officer bonus payments
 - DIN 2018DIN01-020 Armed Forces Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) – 6th Form Reapplication
 - DIN 2018DIN01-021 67th International Military Protestant Convention (RIMP) June 21-24 in Méjannes-Le Clap Gard
 - DIN 2018DIN01-023 60th International Military Pilgrimage to Lourdes (IMP)
 - DIN 2018DIN01-024 Increase in Lifetime Allowance – Budget 2017
- 04 Equipment, Support and Estate
 - DIN 2018DIN04-013 Self-help infrastructure work
 - DIN 2018DIN04-022 Procedures for requesting a visit to Queen Elizabeth-class

- aircraft carriers
 - DIN 2018DIN04-023 Sea Skua Disposal Phase
 - DIN 2018DIN04-025 Standardisation of Unit Operational Medical Holdings - 300 Module
- 05 Management, Organisation and Business Practice
 - DIN 2018DIN05-005 Rebrand of the ACDS (Log Ops) directorate to Defence Logistics (Def Log)
- 06 Safety, Health, Environment & Fire
 - DIN 2018DIN06-008 Defence Infrastructure Fire Standards – asset and property protection
 - DIN 2018DIN06-009 Defence Annual Road Safety Award
 - DIN 2018DIN06-011 The Defence Accident Investigation Branch (DAIB)
 - DIN 2018DIN06-013 Firemark Fire Extinguishers to replace current Chubb Fire Extinguishers
- 07 Training and Education
 - DIN 2018DIN07-017 Exercise Arctic Express 2018
 - DIN 2018DIN07-018 Number 49 Aerosystems Course Applications
 - DIN 2018DIN07-019 Applications for Evaluator Aircrew Courses at the Empire Test Pilots' School
 - DIN 2018DIN07-020 Defence Foreign Language Training Courses for Training Year 2018/2019

- DIN 2018DIN07-021 Visits to BRNC Dartmouth for SUY/UY and CW Candidates
- DIN 2018DIN07-022 2018 Inter-Services Cyber Network Defence Challenge
- DIN 2018DIN07-025 Exercise Cambrian Patrol 2018, October 12-21
- DIN 2018DIN07-026 The Operational Shooting Policy (formerly Army Operational Shooting Policy, Volume 4 - AFV Live Firing), 2012
- DIN 2018DIN07-028 Defence Centre of Training Support (DCTS) Courses April 2018 to March 2019
- DIN 2018DIN07-029 RN Warfare Training Group Air Defence, ASW, EW, IW and Sky Siren courses open to a Joint Audience 2018-19
- DIN 2018DIN07-030 The RN Centre of Maritime SERE and Underwater Escape Training (RNCSUET)
- 08 Finance, Accounting and Budgeting
 - DIN 2018DIN08-002 Insurance arrangements for Unit-organised community events, open days, families days and other Functions
- 10 Sports and Social Events
 - DIN 2018DIN10-003 Wimbledon Tickets 2018
 - DIN 2018DIN10-004 Inter Service Paragliding Championships 2018
 - DIN 2018DIN10-005 RN Sports Training Courses – Proficiency, Coaching and Officiating

ASK YOURSELF:

- Were you made in the Royal Navy?
- Do you want to give others the opportunity to make it in the Royal Navy?
- Are you seeking a rewarding Second Career?

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E-mail- Jane.anneda513@mod.gov.uk



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Merlin was just magic for cadets

TWELVE Officer Cadets from Yorkshire URNU and HMS Explorer's CO Lt Simon Ricketts spent the day at RAF Linton-on-Ouse with 820 NAS.

Yorkshire URNU is affiliated to 820 NAS and it was an opportunity to meet pilots, observers, aircrew, engineers and fly in the Merlin Mk2. For some it was the first time they had ever flown in a helicopter.

The aim of the day was to learn about the work of the Fleet Air Arm and more specifically the role of 820 NAS, and the anti-submarine and mine warfare role they play within the Royal Navy;

"It was a great experience. I was unsure about what role I would like to do within the Royal Navy, but this has definitely opened my eyes to the roles in the Fleet Air Arm and something I will certainly consider," said OC Zoe Corton.

After the safety briefs, the group were given a 40-minute flight in the Merlin Mk2, flying over York, Harrogate, Tadcaster and on to Hull to see Yorkshire



URNU's P2000 patrol boat, HMS Explorer, which is berthed in the marina.

OC Beth Probert said: "I am currently going through the application process and to have the opportunity to ask questions and gain a greater understanding and insight was invaluable."

The OCs were taught some

basic air marshalling signals; then OC Emma Gough and OC Ben Farrar, accompanied by the squadron marshals, went to marshal in the Merlin as it arrived back at the airfield following refuelling.

OC Gough added: "I started the day with no clear understanding of the role of

the Fleet Air Arm and the roles available in the branch.

"To learn air marshalling signals and marshalling in the Merlin helicopter, it was certainly an incredible experience."

OCs Ben Farrar and Sheona Swales sat in the cockpit as the propellers were folded away.

Report: OC Ben Farrar

Czech us out at top contest

AFTER completing our firearms training in the UK, our two-week adventure began with a week's training in a German army base, writes Surg Sub Lt Elysia Gregory, of Bristol URNU.

For the first few days OC Olivia Mannall and myself began to wonder if we'd picked a challenge too hard to complete and if we'd ever be ready for the competition in Prague.

Having never shot a pistol and having very little experience in both rifle shooting and orienteering, we started to feel a little out of our comfort zones.

However, both the UK and German teams were able to coach us in the skills required for all aspects of the competition and also put on a couple of socials.

Throughout the week, we were able to practise in the 50m outside swimming pool (I'm sure we were close to hyperthermia on several occasions); orienteer through the German countryside – somehow managing to navigate through 'impassable' woodlands; practise both rapid and precision shooting, as well as going through the NATO obstacle course.

The competition started off in Prague with an opening ceremony and meet and greet next to one of the world's biggest equine statues.

It was a great feeling to be stood as part of the UK's MILCOMP team.

The next day was kicked off by the obstacle course and grenade throwing in 38°C heat, making the competition even more challenging.

The obstacle course involved jumping over and under various shapes and sizes of equipment, but most importantly teamwork and determination to get to the finish line.

The next day was the swimming, which was changed slightly in this year's competition, and involved diving in, swimming half a length, untying a float,



swimming the rest of the length and retying it, getting out and diving back into the pool to retrieve a rubber rifle and swimming back to the start with it.

Day three was both rifle and pistol shooting as well as distance estimation and map reading.

This was probably one of the more challenging days as many of the skills were very new to us, but we still tried our hardest and learnt a lot from the experience.

The penultimate day was the ten-mile orienteering run through various terrains in Prague.

After getting lost for almost an hour, drained of energy and on the brink of giving up, we managed to find our way to the finish, only to find an obstacle course we had to complete while carrying a sandbag.

It took every bit of energy, we weren't even sure we had to complete it.

The final day comprised of an exam on the law of armed conflict and a gala ball.

All in all, it was an amazing experience which we hope to partake in next year, and we can safely say we put in all the effort we could, and it was a very rewarding experience.

Budding engineer in at the deep end

Midshipman Nick Chrumka, Deputy Senior Midshipman of the Oxford URNU, undertook a week-long engineering acquaint with the Royal Navy's Maritime Capability Trials and Assessment organisation.

He was integrated into Team 2, headed up by Lt Cdr David Joyce, who looks after the Type 45 destroyers, HMS Queen Elizabeth, as well as other large capital ships to ensure their readiness for sea.

The week gave Mid Chrumka an insight into how the team conduct engineering assessments, with day one being a crash course on the power generation on board the new aircraft carrier.

This included the large Rolls Royce gas turbines through to the large diesel backup generator and the 13 high voltage transformers on board delivering 440V to the ship's vast array of dependant equipment.

The second day started with a look at the ship's propulsion system and the four large electric motors that drive the two huge propellers capable of driving the ship at up to 25 knots.

Later that day HMS Dauntless, a Type 45 destroyer, "docked down" preparing for refit.

Mid Chrumka was given an in-depth tour of the hull while tagging along with the current, post-Dartmouth, Marine Engineer young officers from HMS Sultan. The tour looked at the steering and propulsion systems of the Type 45, along with the salt water pump intakes and outtake.

Midweek he was given a tour of the Maritime Autonomous Systems Trials Team (MASTT) by Lt Cdr Honeybell.



● Mid Nick Chrumka aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth; Right, the carrier's RIBs



This department is responsible for trialling autonomous underwater vehicles.

The tour looked at the various trial autonomous vehicles along with the arsenal of vehicles and equipment used for deployment of the vehicles.

In the afternoon he went to sea in HMS Exploit with Lt Cdr Houghton of the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron and conducted foul weather clothing trials.

An afternoon of bouncing around on the Solent in a P2000 is always a welcome outing for an URNU student so this was an enjoyable end to the day.

The following day was more weapon engineering based and involved looking into the weapon and control systems on board HMS Dauntless, along with a breakdown of

the aviation protocols on board.

This was followed by a tour of the ops room, SCC, flight deck and the bridge. That afternoon details of the planned refit was briefed to Mid Chrumka, along with a tour of the work being conducted internally on board the destroyer.

Mid Chrumka said: "The week saw a packed programme of acquaints fit for a budding engineer which was far outside the usual remit of the URNU training programme."

Lt Will Jones, CO of Oxford URNU, said "The acquaint week was a fantastic insight into RN engineering for a potential RN engineer officer and was particularly fitting with 2018 being the Year of Engineering."

Celebration of Naval women

THE history of the Women's Royal Naval Service was celebrated at a Parliamentary Reception at Westminster.

Midshipman Georgi Morton, pictured right, attended the event, the culmination of a year of celebration to mark the centenary of the WRNS.

It was a wonderful event with women from all branches of the Royal Navy, from AB to Commodore, both retired and currently serving, writes Georgi.

In the stunning setting of the Speaker's Apartments in the Palace of Westminster, James Gray MP, Chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Armed Forces, gave a speech thanking women for their Service to the WRNS, RN and RNR, with a response by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones.

My grandmother served in the WRNS from 1955 to 1960, only leaving to get married, and I know that it was one of the most enjoyable periods of her life.

I am very proud to have her story in my family and I feel honoured to have met so many brave and inspirational women with different stories of their time in the Royal Navy.

As members of the URNU, we are very fortunate to be able to represent a small section of the wider Navy family at such events.

I would like to thank Cdr Jane Allen for all her hard work in organising the reception and other WRNS 100 events during the year, and the CO of Bristol URNU Lt Lorna Wilson for putting my name forward to attend.



Weathering the storm

HMS Smiter hosted New Entry Officer Cadets from Oxford URNU for their first sea weekend.

With call the hands at 06.30, each member was able to take part in the Colours ceremony before HMS Smiter departed.

OC Nikhil Daas' Carry On pipe attempt was certainly something to remember.

The unit enjoyed some fair weather for the first day, learning how to navigate effectively while at sea, taking bearings from landmarks and plotting fixes on charts.

They took part in some of the daily operations performed by the ship's company, including learning to tie knots and secure the ropes on board the ship.

Each member also had a turn at being the helmsman with help from the Officer of the Watch.

After a busy day at sea, the group ventured into the HMS Nelson Wardroom for their evening scan and a chance to reflect on the training received throughout the day.

The weather on the final day was not as kind as the first and, despite early determination to proceed with the plan of the day, the ship had to head back early due to the turbulent weather.

OC Billy Ward said: "It was an amazing experience; it was great seeing how the ship is run and has left me eagerly awaiting the next deployment."

Lt Will Jones, Commanding Officer of the Oxford URNU, said: "The weekend was a fantastic opportunity for the newest Officer Cadets in the unit to get first-hand experience of life at sea."

Report: OC Billy Ward, Oxford URNU and potential WE Officer



● S/Ms Grant Fox (left) and Paul Spray are presented with their certificates by Capt Ellie Ablett, the CO of HMS Raleigh. Their colleague S/M Steve Palmer was out of the country

Mentors receive accolade

THREE RNA mentors who work with new recruits at HMS Raleigh have been rewarded with Captain's New Year Commendations by the Commanding Officer of the Torpoint establishment.

A scheme to provide mentors for new recruits at Raleigh was introduced in the summer of 2008 and has proved very successful, with shipmates from Plymouth, Liskeard, Torpoint, Saltash and Bodmin branches involved.

Plymouth branch provides the greatest number – 14 mentors in all – and it was three of that cohort who mentor Hanson Division who were awarded the commendation by Capt Ellie Ablett.

The trio are all ex-WO1s and the commendation highlights the inherent qualities and determination of all the RNA mentors in establishing recruits' confidence, extolling the virtues of Service life, personal experiences and maintaining a good rapport with the Initial Training Staff.

S/M Steve Palmer left the Service in 2009 and immediately joined Plymouth branch; however, he missed the presentation as he was visiting New Zealand with his wife "to avoid the cold weather..."

S/M Paul Spray joined the branch in 2010 after finally walking down the gangway in 2006.

And S/M Grant Fox, after serving 27 years in the Submarine Service, decided he wanted to see the real world and spent his last ten years as a 'Skimmer', leaving the Service in December 2012 and joining the branch in May 2014.

Wood and Steel...

A FORMER Second Sea Lord features in a new video from the Woodland Trust that promotes the Jutland Wood.

Vice Admiral Sir David Steel – a great friend to the RNA – is an ambassador for the Trust, and provides the voice-over (and a couple of on-screen appearances) for the short film, which can be viewed at <https://thewoodlandtrust.sharefile.eu/d/52c49cb640e24428>

The film is destined to appear on the RNA website and Facebook feeds, as well as other channels.

Central Office staff can provide the film on a data stick for branch meetings, Armed Forces Day events and the like.

The wood, which commemorates the sailors of the Grand Fleet who died at the battle in 1916, and the ships that were lost, will be planted this winter, and shipmates are encouraged to get colleagues, family and friends to dedicate a tree to a family member.

Details at <http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/blog/2016/04/battle-of-jutland-memorial-wood/>

An outstanding doctor, an outstanding person

THE FUNERAL service for the late Surg Capt Rick Jolly OBE, who ran the Field Hospital during the Falklands conflict, took place at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall on Saturday February 10.

Around 550 mourners attended the service, conducted by the Rev Ralph Barber, Royal Navy Chaplain, and the Rev David Cooper, who was the Chaplain to Second Battalion, Parachute Regiment (2 PARA) during the Falklands Conflict and is the Chaplain to the South Atlantic Medal Association.

Mourners included Surg Capt Jolly's wife Susie, members of his family, neighbours and friends, together with friends and former colleagues that he served with throughout his Service career and during the Falklands Conflict.

The eulogy was given by Surg Capt Jolly's longstanding friend Dr Richard Page, who trained with him at Barts in London.

Maj Gen Julian Thompson, who commanded 3 Cdo Bde in 1982 and who was representing the Duke of Edinburgh at the funeral, said: "Surg Capt Rick Jolly was in charge of the field hospital at Ajax Bay during the Falklands War of 1982.

"Here, in the 'Red and Green Life Machine', Rick Jolly and his staff treated more than 650 British and Argentine casualties, and carried out some 210 operations.

"Awarded the OBE by Britain, he was the only person to be decorated by Argentina as well for his care of many wounded Argentines.

"Rick, an outstanding commando doctor, was a large, compassionate, ebullient man, a gifted mimic and raconteur. We will miss him very much."

Admiral Sir James Perowne represented the Prince of Wales, while Surg Vice Admiral Alasdair Walker represented the Duke of York and the First Sea Lord.

Surg Vice Admiral Walker said: "I first met Rick when I was the Medical Officer in HMS Plymouth during the Falklands Conflict.

"The ship was damaged by several bombs and our wounded were evacuated to the field hospital at Ajax Bay.

"They, like many others, benefited from Rick's acute intervention.

"Our paths crossed several times in subsequent years as we were both based in the South West.

"Rick continued to encourage and support young Servicemen and women after leaving the Royal Navy, and was also an advocate for veterans of the Falklands Conflict.

"Regular visits to the Islands were established and continue,



● (Above) Former colleagues of Surg Capt Rick Jolly act as pallbearers at the officer's funeral; (right) a Royal Marines bugler at the funeral

Pictures: LPhoto Ken Gaunt

thanks to his involvement.

"Those who knew him within the Royal Naval Medical Service will miss his support. More importantly, his patients will miss him terribly.

"On behalf of the Royal Navy I would like to pass on our condolences to Susie and the rest of Rick's family."

The mourners also included former members of the Medical Squadron of the Cdo Logistic Regiment RM, the squadron that Surg Capt Jolly headed up during the Falklands Conflict. Nine of these men acted as pallbearers.

John Thurlow, a former Royal Marine, said: "We worked under Rick's direction at Ajax Bay. He was a fabulous boss.

"It was a very difficult time for him, as he had a lot of responsibility, but he knew all our names.

"He came round to see us after particularly difficult days for a debrief and to give us a tot.

"I believe he was the right man in the right place at the right time.

"We'll miss him as a friend as well as a former boss.

"He referred to us as his steady men and it's an honour to carry the Boss on his last journey."

The squadron provided the vast majority of the medical support to UK land-based Royal Marines and Army battalions as well as ships in Falkland Sound and San Carlos Water, from a disused refrigeration plant at Ajax Bay.

Erich Bootland, a former Royal Navy captain, said: "I was one of Rick's troop commanders.

"I was responsible for the provision of a 50-bedded dressing station, of which there were

two. Both dressing stations had surgical teams attached to them.

"The majority of my relationship with Rick was centred on work through shared operational experiences in the Falklands, but on a personal level, particularly as friends and because of our proximity as neighbours and our children growing up together, my wife and I very much appreciated Rick's thoughtfulness, kindness and all-round support.

"I knew that should we ever have had a crisis, he would have stepped in to help regardless of the circumstances.

"Rick had an engaging personality, was larger than life, generous and good-spirited, and was well-known for those particular aspects of his character.

"It is clear from the many hundreds of messages Susie has had how far that was extended to others."

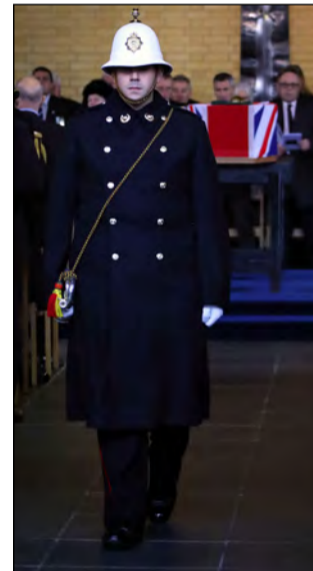
Ken Enticknap was one of two men plucked from Falkland Sound by Surg Capt Jolly after the sinking of HMS Ardent.

He and John Dillon had struggled their way through the smoke, fire and razor-sharp twisted metal after the air-raid on the ship and were drifting in the freezing water.

Ken, who was then a chief petty officer, said: "It was early evening of May 21 1982 and little did I know that this was the day I was to come into contact with an amazing man, someone who would save my life and become a really good friend.

"Rick has had a significant impact on my life ever since the moment we met going up on a wire dangling from a helicopter.

"He was always engaging,



jovial and full of bonhomie – an all-round good egg.

"He will be remembered, indeed, for all the things he did, from surgery on the streets of Northern Island, to the Ajax Bay field hospital and for bringing Jackspeak to the bookshops – I have a signed copy, of course.

"He will always be in the forefront of my memory as the man who, having very little regard for his own safety did something amazing to allow me to live. He will be sadly missed."

Other attendees included Senator Renato Carlos Sersale di Cerisamo, the Argentine Ambassador, Gp Capt Fernando Luis Mengo, the Argentine Defence Attaché, Mrs Sukey Pullen, representing the Falklands Islands government and Cdre Inga Kennedy, the Head of the Royal Navy Medical Service.

Ajax seeks visitors' names

THE HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association is to hold its 2018 reunion at the New Continental Hotel in Plymouth from October 5-8.

A Memorial Service will be held on Plymouth Hoe on October 6, with a gala dinner that evening.

The formal business of the weekend – the AGM – will be held on Sunday October 7.

Application forms are available from Isle of Wight Tours Ltd, email enquiries@iowtours.com or telephone 01983 405116.

The association has received notification from the town of Ajax in Ontario, Canada, which maintains close links with veterans from the battle and with associated ships.

To mark the visit of the Leander-class frigate HMS Ajax to Ajax in August 1976, the town is producing a memorial wall containing the names of the ship's company at the time of the visit.

Brenda Kriz who is the Records and FOI Co-ordinator in the town of Ajax, is keen to ensure all the names are recorded.

If you were on this trip please could you contact Brenda – email Brenda.kriz@ajax.ca as soon as possible.

The settlement now known as Ajax first appeared on the rural land almost 20 miles north-east of Toronto in 1941 when a shell plant was built for the Allied war effort.

It was named Ajax after the Royal Navy cruiser which took part in the first significant British naval success of the war, the destruction of the powerful German raider Admiral Graf Spee at the Battle of the River Plate in December 1939.

Since the war the town, which now has a population of around 120,000, has marked its links to the battle through a policy of naming most streets after officers and ratings who served on board the cruiser.

Other streets – Exeter Road and Achilles Road – mark the contribution of other Royal Navy ships to the battle, and Harwood Avenue is named after Admiral Henry Harwood, who commanded the flotilla.

The policy was later expanded to include the names of those who served in Exeter and Achilles during the battle.

When members of the ship's company of HMS Ajax or their families visit the town to see the streets named after them a tree-planting is organised, with a plaque placed at the foot of the tree to mark the occasion.

The visitor is also presented with a street sign bearing his name.

The town has further links with the Royal Navy, including the bell of the frigate Ajax which hangs in the Council Chamber and is rung to open meetings.

When this ship visited in August 1976 her ship's company celebrated bestowal of the Freedom of the Town – the highest honour that can be bestowed on a visiting military unit – with a parade down Harwood Avenue.

The street-naming policy was changed in 2014 to include the officers and men who served in the frigate at the time of her visit.

Charity cheque

BLOXWICH branch chairman S/M Christine Mawhinney and members of the branch presented a cheque for £740 to their 2017 charity, the Watermill (Dementia Care), a specialist care facility providing 30 residential places and ten respite places as well as day care facilities for people aged 55 and over.

Replenishment – 1966-style

A RECENT edition of *Navy News* carried an article on the new Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels which will replenish the aircraft carriers HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

The story caught the eye of former LRO(T) Peter Nash, who was struck by the advances made in the past 50 years or so.

Mr Nash sent us a photograph of survey vessel HMS Vidal being replenished alongside in British Guiana in 1966, shortly before the country gained independence and became Guyana in May that year.

Though Mr Nash added, on reflection, that horsepower is still vital today for the task...



Soapy awarded honour

A ROYAL Naval Association stalwart featured in the 2018 New Year's Honours list.

Area 3 Chairman S/M Paul 'Soapy' Watson was awarded the BEM for services to the RNA and other charities.

S/M Soapy has been an active member of the RNA for 30 years using his talents in event management, branch organisation and fundraising for the benefit of his shipmates and wider Naval charities.

He is also Vice Chairman at Lee-on-the-Solent and Stubbington branch, where he has raised over £2,000 in the past two years organising very successful charity concerts at Holy Rood Church, Stubbington, with the HMS Collingwood Volunteer Band.

He was particularly involved in the set-up and growing success of the branch over the past four years.

Soapy also volunteers to assist RNA Central Office at national events, including the National Conference, and works two days a week as a guide in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard on board HMS Warrior.

Data advice from Nigel

PROTECTION of personal data is a serious issue, and as the RNA does not have centralized control of membership, it is up to branch secretaries and officials to protect data in accordance with the law.

Assistant General Secretary S/M Nigel Huxtable has been appointed the RNA's Data Protection Act (DPA) expert, and he has written an outline article in the February Circular – officials are encouraged to read it and contact Nigel at Central Office on 02392 723747 or e-mail nigel@royalnavalassoc.com if you have any queries.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the January Navy News (right) was Type 14 frigate HMS Blackwood.

The correct answers were provided by J Smith, of Portsmouth, who wins £50.

This month's mystery ship (above) was laid down in Belfast before the end of World War 2 but not commissioned until late 1954.

As a light carrier her first operation was the Suez Crisis, but by the end of the 1950s she was undergoing conversion to a commando carrier.

She was later to be converted to an 'anti-submarine warfare carrier' and act as a test bed for the Sea Harrier before the introduction of the Invincible-class ships.

1) What was her name, and 2) what class of ship was she?

Complete the coupon and send

All welcome at welfare seminar

THE RNA Welfare Seminar will be held on Saturday April 21 at the North Stafford Hotel in Stoke on Trent.

The seminar is open to all, so if your wife/partner/oppo wishes to come along then the more the merrier, from any branch.

The hotel is a 30-minute drive from the National Memorial Arboretum, home to Naval Service Memorial.

The seminar opens with guest speakers at 9.30am, and among the organisations scheduled to take part are SAIL (Seafarers' Advice and Information Line), the RNBT, Veterans with Dogs (yes, hopefully with dog!), Blind Veterans and Veterans in Prison.

Capt Paul Quinn and Sarah Clewes will provide an update on the RNA's Project Semaphore, which provides iPads and training to digitally-isolated Naval veterans.

The afternoon session is due to include items on the Arboretum and the Not Forgotten Association, though the programme is still subject to change.

Shipmates attending the seminar must complete a booking form, which can be found at the end of the February Circular, even if it is just for lunch on the day.

North Area Support Officer S/M Alan Magrath will be driving the North Libor Bus down from Blackburn – any Area 10 shipmates needing a lift should contact S/M Alan at belfastblues_812@icloud.com or 07964 721849.

Further details are available from National Welfare Advisor S/M Rita Lock at ritalock@sky.com or 023 9272 3747.

Explosion could have ended op

TWO articles on Operation Frankton in our February edition piqued the interest of Navy News subscriber Rodney Burton, who has a family link to the daring wartime raid.

"My father, Charles Alfred Burton, played a small but perhaps significant role in Operation Frankton," said Mr Burton.

"He joined the Royal Navy as an ERA in May 1939.

"He first served in HMS Edinburgh when he was strafed by Junkers 88s while repairing the ship's siren up the forward funnel during the first German air raid of the war, and then in HMS Rodney when the Bismarck was sunk.

"In the period June 1942 to December 1943 he was based at Holy Loch in the submarine escort vessel HMS White Bear.

"This was a private steam yacht which had been taken over by the admiralty when the war started.

"My father described it as having a very impressive interior but its engines and boilers needed a great deal of care and maintenance.

"Any unescorted submarine sailing within British waters was in danger of being mistakenly attacked by the RAF, so when the submarine HMS Tuna left Holy Loch with the 'Cockleshell Heroes' on board, HMS White Bear escorted the submarine through the Irish Sea and Bristol Channel to Wolf Rock, some eight nautical miles from Land's End.

"My father recalled that when they parted from HMS Tuna they went to Falmouth for a few nights and then returned to Holy Loch with two submarines.

"Less than a week after arriving back at Holy Loch, one of the boilers on HMS White Bear exploded early in the morning of December 13, killing five of the crew – an ERA, a Seaman, two Stokers and a Cook.

"One of the stokers who died had woken my father only a few minutes before the explosion to ask him to come and help with a 'boiler problem'.

"My father was getting dressed when he heard a loud bang and all the lights went out.

"It was perhaps fortunate that the boiler had not exploded only ten days previously, when White Bear was escorting Tuna and its team of Royal Marines on a rather important operation.

"If it had exploded, Operation Frankton may never have taken place.

"I am sad to say that my father did not read your articles in Navy News – he died two weeks ago, aged 98."

Platinum celebration for Lewis and Vera

A ROYAL Navy veteran who is supported by Blind Veterans UK, celebrated his platinum wedding anniversary on Valentine's Day.

Lewis Trinder, 93, who married Vera, 90, in 1948, said: "We met when we were both quite young, but I always knew I wanted to marry her.

"Our relationship survived the war and our marriage has survived 70 years, so we must be doing something right!"

The couple met at a Valentine's Day dance when they were teenagers living in Haywards Heath and later began courting.

But on Lewis's 18th birthday, in 1942, he volunteered for the Royal Navy and was soon deployed overseas.

Lewis qualified as a Seaman in HMS Collingwood and then served in Grimsby-class sloop HMS Fleetwood, deployed on convoys to Sierra Leone.

Lewis also served in HMS Magpie during the D-Day Landings, as well as Arctic and Atlantic convoys, before joining sloop HMS Opossum in the Far East in 1945.

Lewis said: "We wrote to each

other almost every day while I was deployed overseas. Vera kept every single letter and we still have them now.

"During the war you never knew if you'd be coming back. "Some men left sealed letters for their sweethearts, but I gave Vera a signet ring engraved with my name so that she'd always remember me."

Lewis did come back from the Far East and was discharged from the Navy in 1946.

He and Vera married in St Wilfrid's Church, Haywards Heath, and spent their honeymoon in London at the Cumberland Hotel.

Lewis moved into the pub industry and the pair settled in Aldershot, going on to have three sons and seven grandchildren.

It was decades later that Lewis began to lose his sight due to age-related macular degeneration (AMD) and now he only has very limited peripheral vision.

Fortunately, Lewis found out about the support of Blind Veterans UK and joined the charity in 2012.

Lewis said: "I have a quality of life that I'd have never achieved without Blind Veterans UK.

"The charity has been so generous, providing me with equipment like a talking watch and an electronic magnifier which helps me read my newspapers and letters."

Blind Veterans UK is the national charity for blind and vision-impaired ex-Servicemen and women, providing vital practical and emotional support to help veterans discover life beyond sight loss.

If you, or someone you know, served in the Armed Forces or did National Service and is now battling severe sight loss, find out how Blind Veterans UK could help by calling 0800 389 7979 or visiting www.blindveterans.org.uk

Top job advertised

THE RNA are currently inviting applications for the job of General Secretary.

The closing date is March 6, and shortlisted candidates will be interviewed at Semaphore Tower in Portsmouth on March 28. Details are on the RNA website.

It is hoped that the successful candidate will attend the National Conference in Dublin, and take over from Capt Paul Quinn after the September National Council meeting.

RNA Central Office,
Room 209, Semaphore
Tower (PP70), HM Naval
Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
admin@royalnavalassoc.com
023 9272 3747
www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



● Lewis and Vera Trinder pictured earlier this year (above) and on their wedding day in February 1948 (below)



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MYSTERY PICTURE 277

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)



Nick takes a run in the jungle

A SEA Cadet volunteer was due to raise funds by undertaking a "run in the jungle" as *Navy News* went to press.

Retired Royal Navy Warfare Officer Nick Ingham (pictured above) is chairman of Filey unit and chairman of Eastern Area.

Nick, who left the Senior Service in 2007 after serving on the FOSNNI staff in Faslane, hopes to complete a 17km jungle course in Taiwan and is seeking sponsorship as well as publicising the 'Run in the Jungle III'.

Now working as a project manager in the offshore wind industry, Nick said: "I'll be running a total distance of 17km alongside several of my colleagues."

"The arduous run takes you through the wildest and thickest of the Taiwanese jungle and over several small mountains."

"Whilst I've done a few things like this before under duress in the military, this will be the first time I've tackled anything like this for fun."

"Hence why I'm not going to let the opportunity of raising money for charity go to waste."

Since leaving the Royal Navy Nick has served in a voluntary position as chairman of Filey unit in North Yorkshire.

More recently, his appointment as Eastern Area Chairman – one of six such roles across the country – means he also sits on the National Sea Cadet Advisory Council.

"I'm extremely passionate about the Sea Cadets," said Nick.

"As an ex-Sea Cadet myself I attribute my successes in adult life solely to the opportunities that the Sea Cadets presented me in my youth."

"My son is now a Junior Cadet and is reaping the same benefits."

"I genuinely love seeing the impact that the Sea Cadets has on young people not only locally in my home town but on a national platform."

Nick has set a sponsorship target of £2,000 that will be split between his unit and the Sea Cadets nationally.

He is appealing through the Navy's newspaper because "*Navy News* is far reaching across messdecks and wardrooms around the world."

"I've served with so many people in the Navy, many of whom I've lost touch with."

"I'd love them to see the good work that I'm now doing and for them to be able to sponsor me for this event."

"There are a few matelots out there that owe me a beer or two and I will gladly exchange those for some sponsorship."

As Nick works regularly in Taiwan the trip is already funded, with every penny raised going to the Sea Cadets.

If you would like to sponsor Nick then you can do so on his just giving page by searching 'Nicholas Ingham' at www.justgiving.com

Southwark search for new premises

SOUTHWARK unit is appealing for the public's help in finding new premises amid fears it could be homeless come the autumn.

In September, the lease on the unit's long-term base at All Saints Hall in Surrey Square, Walworth, is due to expire and is unlikely to be renewed.

It means Southwark Sea Cadets, a youth charity that offers water-based and land-based adventure to 10- to 18-year-olds, boosting their confidence and self-belief, is actively searching for new premises.

Over the past five years, the unit has spent money renovating its base, from new facilities and equipment, to a full rewire of the whole building – benefits that will now be lost.

The unit's Commanding Officer, Sub Lt (SCC) James Thompson RNR, said: "Quite honestly, it is a devastating blow."

"We have worked with the local community in Walworth and Southwark, South-East London, for over 75 years."

"I can't put into words how much our charity means to the young people that we serve."

"It is a safe place they can count on to be themselves, and we don't discriminate against any young person who wants to join."

"Our cadets go on to do remarkable things with their lives."

"We are calling on our local community for help."

"There must be a community



● Southwark unit cadets enjoy some time on the water

building out there that we are able to use."

Southwark Sea Cadets was founded in 1942 and has worked with thousands of young people, amongst them many individuals who now run their own local and national businesses, travel to the other side of the world to teach

water sports, or go on to have a career in the Navy or elsewhere.

The unit has launched a Crowdfunding campaign to help to pay for new premises, as well as any adaptations or modifications, the costs of moving, storage, and any other costs along the way.

You can donate through the

fundraising website <https://www.gofundme.com/savesouthwarksc>

If you know of a community building or commercial premises that is currently empty and in need of new tenants, please contact the unit at southwarkseacadets@gmail.com

Chocolate oranges bring cheer

THREE Sea Cadet units came together to spread a little cheer among the emergency services at the end of 2017.

Blackpool, Blackburn and Preston units joined Chris Lamb's annual Christmas campaign – Team Chocolate Orange – which distributes treats to hospital staff, police and paramedics working over the festive break.

Former cadet Chris launched it in memory of his son, Elliott, to say thank you to the incredible people who looked after him during his time in hospital.

Elliott, who suffered from congenital cytomegalovirus, died at the age of four just before Christmas 2010.

The units donated and delivered 350 chocolate oranges, and Sgt (SCC) Sarah Richardson, Detachment Commander at Blackpool, said: "Chris was very pleased with the achievements and involvement of Sea Cadets."

Success for Fishguard

FISHGUARD unit was awarded the 2017 District Officer's Cup for the highest points total achieved in all competitions throughout the year.

The unit entered more competitions in 2017 than in any previous years.

The trophy was presented at the West Wales District Drill competition – at which Fishguard cadets continued to shine.

The unit took first place in the Unarmed Drill section, were runners-up in team piping and the Junior Sea cadet competition team took third place.

Coldchester...

COLCHESTER'S cadets have been hard at work training for the district Adventure Training completion in May.

Braving the cold weather, 15 cadets and five staff took to the local Ministry of Defence training area to practise team building and navigation skills.

Despite the mud and cold the cadets worked hard to build survival shelters, put up tents and brush up their land navigation skills.

Colchester is a thriving unit that has nearly doubled its

complement of cadets over the past 12 months or so – ten new members all attended their first training session on the same evening in early February.

Planned activities in the near future include a visit to Archer-class patrol boat HMS Trumpeter, the training vessel for Cambridge University Royal Naval Unit (Cambridge URNU) which is based a few miles up the road at Ipswich, a trial dive with the local Colchester Garrison diving club, and more adventurous training.



● Thumbs up from South Tyne on the news the district has made it a hat-trick of National Award wins

Hat-trick for Tyne South

THE National Awards for 2017 have been announced – and Tyne South District made it a hat-trick by being declared the Sea Cadets top-performing district for the third year in a row.

Sub Lt (SCC) Leanne Tonks RNR, the District Training Officer, said: "What sets us apart and makes us what we are is the sense of teamwork and family that being part of Tyne South brings."

"Our units, cadets and adults are all there for each other, and support comes from all quarters to deliver the Sea Cadet experience."



● Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets from Birmingham (Stirling) unit feature in the Corps' latest recruitment film as part of the #NeverOrdinary campaign

Sea Cadets in 60 seconds

SEA Cadets has launched the official film for their #NeverOrdinary campaign, and Birmingham (Stirling) unit has a starring role.

The campaign shows young people how Sea Cadets can help them become resilient and confident, through 400 units across the UK.

In the one-minute video, Stirling cadets demonstrate the diversity of membership by giving their names, ages, personalities and describing what Sea Cadets means to them in a word or short phrase.

The video can be seen at www.sea-cadets.org/news

Units deliver adventure on the water and a much-needed support network, which, in the short-term, can improve confidence, motivation and skills.

In the longer term, it can impact on young people's life chances through the qualifications they gain and experiences they have, helping them to develop into teenagers who can cope with today's

complex and often overwhelming world.

At Sea Cadets, young people aged between ten and 17 can enjoy land-based and water-based adventure such as sailing, rowing, kayaking, first-aid training, rock-climbing and drill, as well as earn nationally-recognised qualifications, sail offshore, and travel abroad on an international exchange programme.

In a recent survey, 94 per cent of parents said they felt their child's self-confidence, motivation and team-working had "greatly improved" at Sea Cadets.

Volunteers, meanwhile, can earn qualifications while helping young people to develop and flourish, with roles from managing a budget and organising events to teaching powerboating or coaching footballers.

All volunteers will receive an induction and will be given training and support.



1SL's cadets gather

THE new cadre of First Sea Lord Cadets came together in Portsmouth in January for their first official appointment.

The super six (pictured above), who represent cadets' voices in their respective geographical areas to the Royal Navy, attended an event hosted by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones on board flagship HMS Victory, where they were awarded certificates and badges.

They later enjoyed a tour of Portsmouth Harbour, viewing new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth as well as a range of other warships.

First Sea Lord cadets play a crucial role in shaping the future of the Corps.

It is a chance to have their voices heard, and to inspire others to follow in their footsteps.

This year's First Sea Lord Cadets are:

- Eastern Area: Cdt Sgt Harry;
- London Area: Cdt Sgt Harry;
- Northern Area: Cpl Jonny;
- North West Area: Leading Cdt Logan;
- Southern Area: PO Cdt Adam;
- South West Area: Leading Cdt Alexander.

Big support

SOUTHEND-on-Sea unit has had its biennial Royal Naval Parade – and there was plenty of support to encourage cadets to demonstrate their skills on the day.

Apart from family members and friends, the unit welcomed guests from the RNA, Essex Submariners Association, Southend Air Cadets, Maldon and District Sea Cadets and guest of honour Cllr Fay Evans, Mayor of Southend, who helped to make a memorable evening.

Navy visitors see D-Day White Ensign

THE Royal Navy Outreach Team recently gave a presentation to Sea Cadets at the Shirley unit in the West Midlands.

This was followed by a missile design activity where the cadets designed and built the next Royal Navy missile.

Whilst at the unit the visiting team had the honour to examine the White Ensign that flew on Sword Beach on D-Day.

The Outreach Team – WO John Thacker and LS Stuart Bennett – visited Shirley to give a presentation on the role of the Royal Navy, part of which was to encourage the cadets to think about the practical challenges facing the Royal Navy today, including the requirement for missile systems.

LS Bennett said that the opportunity to actually hold a piece of kit from the Normandy Landings was amazing.

The ensign was bought at auction in London in November 2016 by Trevor Beattie.

It was the first Allied flag to be raised on Sword Beach, Normandy, at the start of the D-Day invasion on June 6 1944, and the flag became the central rallying point for troops landing throughout the day.

It is not known exactly which ship the flag sailed with, but it is likely to have been brought ashore at Sword Beach on a landing craft.

The inset photograph (right) is believed to show the ensign flying at the beachhead in the first 48 hours of the landings.

This photograph in itself is of historical significance, as it was taken by aeronautical engineer Lt Nevil Shute Norway, who later rose to fame as the novelist Nevil Shute.

The ensign was restored and preserved by a team of experts from the British Museum and travelled back to Normandy in June last year – the first time it had been in France for 73 years.

At Sword Beach, it was raised once more by the very men who landed there on D-Day 1944 (see main picture, above right).

It is currently under the management and protection of Len Page, who introduced it to the cadets of Shirley unit.

Len plans to display the ensign for the benefit of other Sea Cadet



branches in the coming weeks.

The ensign will make one final return to the Normandy beaches in June next year for the 75th and final official commemorations of the D-Day Landings.

The Officer-in-Charge of Shirley unit, CPO (SCC) Neil Merchant, said: "It was fantastic to get John and Stuart along to do their presentation.

"Our unit has a great history of cadets joining the Royal Navy and I am sure the presentation will help that history continue".

Shirley's football teams did their unit proud at the District competition in Coventry.

The teams won two competitions, came joint first overall and the 25 players all came back with medals.

Shirley thus had two teams going forward to represent Warwickshire District at area as Navy News went to press.

The results from the district competition were: Junior Boys – 1st; Senior Boys – 1st; Junior Girls – 3rd; Senior Girls – 3rd; Juniors – 3rd. Overall competition result – joint 1st.

To add to the weekend's success, the unit also had two cadets at SCTC Weymouth on an Advanced Stewarding course, and both passed.

● WO John Thacker and LS Stuart Bennett of the Royal Navy Outreach Team with the D-Day White Ensign at Shirley unit, with Len Page behind them



Poppy and Poppy help others

TWO cadets from Bournemouth unit went above and beyond to raise money for charity over the festive period.

Junior Cadet Poppy ran 5km for each of the 12 days of Christmas with the aim of raising £500 to help an African school struck by lightning.

The 11-year-old heard from one of her teachers at St James' Academy in Pokesdown that several pupils at the school in Malawi, had been injured and buildings damaged.

Meanwhile, her namesake, Able Cadet Poppy, shaved off her long hair to donate to the Princess Trust, providing real hair wigs for children who have suffered hair loss.

Poppy also used the event to raise funds to pay for her travel to the 24th World Scout Jamboree in West Virginia, having been selected as one of nine Guides from Dorset to participate.

Poppy has a fundraising page at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/elizabeth-norman-3>

Laura Rosenfeld, Bournemouth unit fundraising trustee, said: "It's so amazing – we are very proud of them."

Katy set for half marathon

COLLEAGUES are rooting for Leading Cdt Katy, of Newark unit, who is set to compete in the Newton's Fraction Half Marathon this month.

Katy has swapped weekends on the water for weekends of gruelling runs in order to give herself a fighting chance in the race, staged by Grantham Athletic Club on March 4.

The annual 'road' race has been run over a variety of distances in the past, finally settling as a half marathon in 2006.

It starts and finishes at the South Kesteven Sports Stadium, and takes in some scenic parts of the Lincolnshire countryside, including a three-mile stretch of the Grantham to Nottingham Canal towpath and a couple of testing hills along the way.

The 17-year-old is raising money for Newark unit to go towards a new safety boat.

Katy said: "I would love for other people to gain the same experience I have had with Newark Sea Cadets."

You can sponsor Katy via her Justgiving page at <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/katy-walker>

Corps welcomes TS Sir Stelios to the fleet



THE latest addition to the Sea Cadet Corps' fleet has been lowered into the water for the first time (pictured left).

The Rustler 42 yacht TS Sir Stelios was afloat in good time for the start of the offshore season this month.

The yacht is named after EasyJet founder Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou, whose charitable group the Stelios Philanthropic Foundation provided a donation of £200,000 towards the fundraising campaign.

TS Sir Stelios is the second of two yachts bought through the campaign – the first, TS City of London, was launched last year.

As Navy News went to press TS Sir Stelios, which can accommodate six cadets, was being prepared before she is ready to sail from her home base in Gosport.

Marine Society & Sea Cadets Chief Executive Martin Coles was there on handover day – and saw for himself how the boat handled by taking the helm later the same day (pictured right).

The 42ft classic cruising boat is built by Falmouth-based Rustler Yachts and is designed for longer blue-water voyages – in this case, for Sea Cadet offshore adventures.

Its builders say the design makes the vessel particularly kind in the worst prevailing seas, and able to cope well with heavy weather, allowing cadets the chance to gain confidence at handling a big yacht



Ask Jack

Warship World. 'Cordex'-bound volumes 1/1 to 15/6 available to a good home - space required. Will require to be picked up from the Winchester area. Please telephone 07751 603190 for further information on the collection.

HMS Ajax. Memorial Wall, Town of Ajax, Ontario. To mark the visit of HMS Ajax to the town of Ajax in August 1976, the town is producing a memorial wall containing the names of the ship's company at the time of the visit. Brenda Kriz, who is the records and FOI co-ordinator in the town of Ajax, is very keen to ensure all the names are recorded. If you were on this trip please could you contact Brenda as soon as possible on Brenda.kriz@ajax.ca

HMS Newcastle Far East Christmas Day 1957. My husband was on board the Town-class light cruiser at that time and I have photographs and a menu which may be of interest to some. Contact rita.bliss@tesco.net

Rescued by HMS Venus. In (late?) 1957 L/Tel Fritz Fry was serving aboard S-class submarine HMS Subtle in the Atlantic when he was taken sick. He was taken off by sea boat (with oars) and transferred to HMS Venus, the duty destroyer from Gibraltar. He remembers "a lot of cameras clicking on board Venus" during this event and wonders if anybody has any photos tucked away in an old ditty box that he could obtain. Contact Fritz at 21 Redstock Road, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 5DJ.

Lt Cdr Graham White WEO HMS Edinburg 1985-87. The Rt Rev James B Magness, a retired captain in the US Navy, is trying to locate an ex-Serviceman with whom he met up whilst on a US Navy/Royal Navy exchange at HMS Dolphin from 1985-87. During this time he lived in Alverstoke and Lt Cdr White, who was serving aboard the Type 42 destroyer HMS Edinburg as the Weapon Engineer Officer, was his friend and neighbour. Please contact the Rt Rev James Magness of Virginia Beach on (national code) 747-513-3805 or email him at jmagness46@gmail.com

Reunions

May
HMS Fiscard Series 33. 60th anniversary reunion for the young TIFFs who joined up at Torpoint May 1958 is to be held at the Queens Hotel, Southsea, on Sat May 5. For details contact Bill Rayner on 01375 642057 or emailbilysl@sky.com

Field Gun, all commands. Reunion to be held Fri May 11 at Tiffany's Hotel, Blackpool. Further information from Colin Burley on 07525 179629 or email barbaraburley@hotmail.co.uk

HMS Hermione Association. Reunion to be held May 17-20 at the Riviera Hotel, Bowleaze Cove, Weymouth DT3 6PR (01305 836600). Bookings can be made under the name of Hermione as rooms have been reserved and assurances have been given that the renovations started last year will be completed by Easter. A visit to the Tank Museum is currently being investigated. Further details can be obtained from stevebrotherton@yahoo.co.uk

RN & RM ex-Boxer's Association will be holding a charity dinner boxing show at South Parade Pier, Southsea, Fri May

Deaths

Capt R H Peter Elvin. Joined as an engineering cadet at RN Engineering College Keyham in 1937 and served as Damage Control Officer in HMS Renown during WW2, playing a key role in developing damage control procedures. Post-war he served as 1st Naval Assistant to the Chief Engineer at RN Dockyard Gibraltar then aboard HMS Forth and Tyne in Malta before being promoted Commander and serving as MEO in HMS Superb. 1956 as XO of HMS Sultan, he was promoted Captain in 1960 and took command of HMS Caledonia. He also served on the Ship Maintenance Authority in Portsmouth and as a Naval contracts overseer based in Sheffield, retiring in 1970. A West Sussex County Councillor early 2000s and president of the Old Portsmouthians for some years. Jan 27. Aged 99.

Capt Michael A Oliver LVO. HMV Britannia, HMS Terror, Osprey, Warrior, Plymouth, President, Jamaica, Vanguard, Ceres, Ricasoli, Sheffield. NATO Rome. NAAFI HQ, RNH Haslar, RNC Greenwich and MOD DGNPS. Jan 10. Aged 89.

Cdr Nicholas J Mills-Hicks. HMS Collingwood, Relentless, Fife, Osprey, Dido, Leander, Battleaxe, Centurion, Crane, OD Bath, RN Eng College and Gibraltar. Jan 13.

Cdr John Pictou RNR. Joined at Tay Division RNR, Dundee, while at St Andrews University in 1951. Following National Service 1954, rejoined Tay Division, taking part in exercises on HMS Montrose. On board Tay Division's minesweeper at the Spithead Coronation Review 1953 and as CO of Tay's minesweeper HMS Keddleston at the Queen's Silver Jubilee Review 1977. As Commander he served as CO of HMS Camperdown in Dundee and retired 1979. A trustee of the Friends of Camperdown House. Dec 30. Aged 83.

Maj RM Philip M Reed. HMS Simbang, RM Eastney, 40, 42 and 43 Cdo, HQ 3 Cdo, CTCRM and HQ Cdo Forces RM. Jan 12. Aged 88.

Lt Cdr Philip Allen RNR. RNAS Worthy Down, RNAS Drem (HMS Nighthawk), HMS Glory and Heron. Nov 29. Aged 101.

Lt Cdr Alexander L Brown. HMS Jackdaw, Seahawk, Daedalus, Perseus, Hornbill, Heron, Wrangler and 811 NAS. Jan 24.

Lt Cdr Derek E Prior. HMS Victorious, Ark Royal, Osprey, Ceylon, Fleetwood, 849 NAS and FOST. Jan 2. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr Bruce C Robertson. HMS Verulam, St Vincent, Yarnton, Cochrane, Maidstone, Ambush, Sea Scout, Amphion and RN College Greenwich. Jan 22.

Lt Cdr James S Thomson. HMS Fiscard, Caledonia, Lochinvar, RAF Farningley and RN College Greenwich. Dec 29. Aged 76.

Lt Cdr Richard Q H Jaggar VRD RNR. Served 1942-45 during WW2 in HMS Wensleydale and HMS Royalist on Arctic Convoys and in the Med and the Far East. Also served as a Reservist for many years. Oct 29. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr William B 'Chippy' Norton OIC RN Saturation Diving Team (mine clearance division). Served 1951-78. Joined as Boy 2nd Class aged 15 at HMS Ganges then HMS Chatham, Victorious, Wakeful, Bulwark, Diamond, Albion, Terror, Excellent, Reclaim, Vernon, Experimental Diving Unit (US Navy), Owen, Crossbow and Pembroke. Minewarfare and Clearance Divers Officers Association and HMS Ganges Association. Jan 5. Aged 82.

Lt Cdr John D Fisher. Served HMS Sheffield, Mediator, Triumph, Albion, Diamond, Duncan and Plymouth. January. Aged 81.

Lt Gordon C McCall. Served 1952-90 in HMS Illustrious, Centaur, Ark Royal, Hermes, Kent and all Naval air stations. Chairman of several RN clubs and NAAFI Fleet Rep for over three years, also on the original Tot Fund Committee. Entered Careers Service 1975 and served in the Glasgow, Edinburgh and Hartlepool offices. Nov 2. Aged 82.

Sub Lt David G I Malaperum. 892 NAS, HMS Heron and Centaur. Jan 17.

Sub Lt Colin F Badcock RNR. Dec 2. Aged 92.

Lady Biggs-Davison L/Wren. Served at Bletchley Park, Gayhurst Manor, one of the Park's outstations, housing some of the bombs used to decode Enigma messages. Dec 11. Aged 93.

John B Lloyd RM. Served 1954-63. Ship's gun crew aboard HMS Gambia and Eagle before joining 41 Cdo; also 40 Cdo during the Indonesian insurrection in Borneo. Invalided out of the Service following a road traffic accident in Singapore. Dec 25. Aged 81.

Charles 'Alf' Burton CERA. Joining as an ERA he served from 1939 for 22 years in HMS Edinburgh, HMS Rodney 1941 when Bismarck was sunk and HMS White Bear, which escorted HMS Tuna (Op Frankton) that carried the 'Cockleshell Heroes' to France in 1942. Took part in Russia and Malta convoys. 1944 he was on board Octavia clearing a channel of mines near Cap Benat where Octavia came under fire but returned 187 shells. Awarded the rank of Chevalier in the French National Order of Legion d'Honneur. 1950-53 he served aboard HMS Illustrious. Expert ship model maker, many of which are held in museums. HMS Illustrious Association. Jan 25. Aged 98.

Royal Naval Association
Arthur 'Happy' Harrison ERM4. Served 1942-46 at HMS Ganges, Pembroke, Shrapnel (Pembroke), Copra (Largs) and Braganza (Bombay). Over six decades he filled several roles within Lincoln RNA and was a Life Member. Dec 7. Aged 93.

John Crabb. Served 1942-48 in minesweepers and was mentioned in despatches Jan 1948. Post service he became a gamekeeper at Lochinch Castle, later moving south to the Gledstone Estate, West Marton, until retirement. Skipton & District branch. December. Aged 94.

Terrence 'Terry' Dickinson Signalman. Served 1944-46. Trained at HMS Collingwood and HMS Pasco. Combined Ops HMS Westcliff-LCF 21 for Op Overlord and subsequent duties. Oulton Broads then LCT 2310 for service in Burma. Returned to UK on cessation of hostilities in Far East, then Rosneath and HMS Cochrane (training as electrician). Awarded the Legion d'Honneur Feb 2016. Ashford, Kent RNA. Jan 26. Aged 91.

Frederick 'Fred' Westwood POME. Served at HMS Sultan and in HMS Swiftsure, Jamaica, Daring and Albacore, also as a Reservist (REME). Member of Ashford RNA, also vice chairman of 2 Area and a member of Ashford Active Retired Association. Jan 26. Aged 83.

John Jones RM. 40 Cdo. Long-standing member of Southend RNA and parade marshal for local parades. Feb 7.

Association of RN Officers/RNOC
Rear Admiral Wilfred J Graham CB. HMS Excellent, Jamaica, Teazer, President, Scarborough, Ark Royal, Dryad, Nelson, FO Portsmouth, NATO, Dir Naval Recruiting and BRNC Dartmouth. Feb 2. Aged 92.

Supt WRNS Lois G Crosskey (nee Francis). HMS Goldcrest, President, Drake, Dauntless, Raleigh, Director WRNS, Nav Sec, Admiral Commanding Reserves

and HQ Ottawa. Jan 16. Aged 87.

Cdr Ian R Dumbreck. HMS Devonshire, Chichester, President, Cheviot, Sheffield, Maidstone, Bermuda, Chatham Dockyard and Dockyards and Mce Dept. Jan 27. Aged 90.

Cdr Robert J Fidler. HMS Eagle, Jufair, Collingwood, Excellent, Gurkha, Drake, Dryad, Warrior, Admiral Comm Reserves and NATO. Jan 20. Aged 87.

Cdr Derek E Prior. HMS Victorious, Osprey, Ark Royal, Ceylon, Fleetwood, Seahawk, President, Warrior, Saker, C-in-C Nav Home Cmd (Reserves) and Admiral Commanding Reserves. Jan. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr John M Gawley. Communications. Served 42 years HMS Duke of York, Pluto, Theseus, Glendhu, Boxer, Siskin, Seahawk, Peregrine, Ark Royal, Daedalus, Mercury, Maidstone, Delight, Armada, Phoenicia, Urchin, Bulwark, Warrior COMCEN, Tiger, Centurion, Heron, Procurement Executive, Flag Officer Naval Air Cdo and MOD Portdown. Member of the following associations: RN Communications Chiefs; UK Armed Forces Hockey; Combined Services Hockey; Combined Services Hockey Umpires; RN Hockey and Royal (Malta) Hockey Umpires; also Tullett Islanders Hockey Club. Jan 18. Aged 86.

Lt Nigel A Burnet. HMS Boxer, Brocklesby, Unseen, Superb, Norfolk, Capt SM2 and Capt SM10. Dec 17. Aged 51.

2/O M M Williams. Jan 25. Aged 95.

Submarines Association
Lt Jeff Orchard. Served 1963-87 in HM Submarines Otus, Opossum, Ambush and Tiptoe. Dolphin branch. Dec 1. Aged 80.

Ron Mellor AB. Served 1948-51 in HM Submarines Sentinel, Selene, Tireless, Thorough, Alderney and Amphion. North Staffs branch. Dec 4. Aged 92.

Alan 'Ben' Beene Sto Mech. Served 1953-57 in HM Submarines Trump, Untiring, Shrimp, Sprat and Minnow. Dolphin branch. Dec 19. Aged 85.

Bas Middleton CPO Mech. Served 1964-56 in HM Submarines Artful, Acheron, Rorqual, Grampus and Opossum. Gosport branch. Dec 20. Aged 81.

Stan Powley LMEM. Served 1962-68 in HM Submarines Walrus and Warspite, Medway Town branch. Dec 28. Aged 74.

David Maltby M(E1). Served 1956-60 in HM Submarines Trespasser (56-57) and Tireless (57-59). Lincoln branch. Dec 31.

Sports Lottery

Jan 20: £5,000 - CPO L Isaacs; £1,800 - C/Sgt A Carrier - Sub Lt R Stanley; £800 - Mne M Taylor; £500 - LH K Scott; £400 - L/Cpl O Flagg.

Jan 27: £5,000 - AB N Leith; £1,800 - C/Sgt E Hislop - PO S McLachlan; £800 - Lt R Brown; £500 - AB D Goodenough; £400 - AB B Gowland.

Feb 3: £5,000 - Cdr J Terry; £1,800 - AB A Whittingham - Lt Cdr M Jones-Thompson; £600 - PO D Goldsworthy; £500 - AB M Locke; £400 - AB L Latham-King.

18. The RN will be taking on a team from the Southern Counties and it is hoped that some of the boxing team from HMS Queen Elizabeth will feature in supporting bouts. Ex-world champions have been invited and expected to attend, also guest cabaret artist will be Paul McCoy from *Stars In Their Eyes*. Tickets £50pp with tables of ten. Further details from Alan Dolman on 023 9248 3388.

June
HMS Opossum Association. Reunion at the Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford ST16 1JJ (01785 253531) over the weekend June 1-3. All ex-Opossums welcome. Details from Secretary Eddie Summerford on 0161 7648778 or email robopovan@btinternet.com

HMS Wizard, Cadiz & St Vincent WCOB. Joint reunion to be held at the Country Hotel and Spa over the weekend of Fri 1-4 June, enquiries@iowtours.com Membership is open to all Type 15 frigates, W and Battle-class destroyers. Contact Secretary Jim Watkins on 01872 274419 or email jimandleah@hotmail.co.uk

FAA Buccaneer Association & Carrier

Air Groups. Reunion to be held from Fri 8 - Sun June 10 at the Royal Court Hotel near Coventry. All Ark Royal and other Carrier Air Groups (any commission) as well as the 892 and SHAR Associations welcome. Entertainment by the RMA Dance Band and Singers. Three, two and one night bookings available, to be made directly with the hotel three months prior to the event. Further details at www.faaaba.co.uk or from secretary Robin Harper on 01458 270273.

September
Artificer Apprentices Green & White Weekend will take place at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Sept 7-8: www.royalbeachhotel.co.uk with gala dinner in the Invincible suite Sat 8. Details, costs and booking forms for Association members visit www.thefisgardassociation.org members page or Fisgardian Newsletter, issue 45 (Feb 2018). Non-association members contact malcolmhowardexrn@yahoo.co.uk

HMS Tiger Association. Reunion to be held Sept 21-24 at Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford. Further information from D Andrew on 01262 670860.

October
Plymwick Association 4th reunion at the Hallmark Leyland Hotel, Preston, Oct 5-7. Those who served with Cdr Hames in HMS Plymouth and HMS Berwick Mar 74-Nov 75. Apply IOW Tours tel 01983 405116.

HMS Ajax & River Plate Veterans Association. Annual reunion at the New Continental Hotel, Plymouth, from Oct 5-8. Memorial Service on the Hoe Oct 6, gala dinner in the evening and AGM Sun 7. Application forms from Isle of Wight Tours Ltd on 01983 405116 or email enquiries@iowtours.com

HMS Tartar Association. 15th reunion is to be held Oct 5-8 at the King Charles Hotel, Chatham. Reservations to be made via Isle of Wight Tours enquiries@iowtours.com Further information can be obtained from the Social Secretary Andy Eason at roseandandy12@gmail.com

Bay Class Frigates. Reunion to be held Oct 8-10 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Portsmouth. All ex-Bay class most welcome including wives etc. Contact Doug Turk on 01252 378629 or email doug.turk@ntlworld.com for further details.

November
Friends of HMS Eagle. Reunion weekend to be held at the Doubletree by Hilton Hotel, North Queensferry, Fife, Fri to Mon Nov 2-5. All commissions, wives/partners and guests welcome. Meet and greet Fri pm; tour of Rosyth Dockyard & sightseeing in Edinburgh/Leith Sat. Gala dinner with 'Up Spirits' enactment and TS Lochinvar nautical displays followed by dancing and entertainment pm. Details and special rates contact main organiser Danny du Feu on 07711 083465 or email ddf.photography@gmail.com

Talking Navy News

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 07770 088388 and leave a message, or email studio@patn.org.uk A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Swap Draft columns in April's Noticeboard must be received by March 13

ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS

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The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust
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TRUSTEE VACANCIES 2018

Would you like to be involved in helping to run the charity which helps serving and former serving naval and RM ratings and their dependants in times of need and distress?

RNBT has vacancies for 'Ordinary Member' Trustees.

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) helps those who are serving or have served as Warrant Officers and below in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines, and their dependants, who find themselves in need or distress. Thousands of applicants, both serving and retired, are assisted every year. We also run a Care Home and an Almshouse. Find out more from our website: www.rnbt.org.uk.

A founding principle of the Trust is that it is predominantly run by those who are serving or have served as non-commissioned Sailors and Royal Marines. Accordingly 11 of the 16 trustees that form the RNBT's governing body (including the Trust's Vice President) are drawn from serving and retired personnel who have been or are RN ratings and RM other ranks.

Vacancies will occur for 5 such Trustee positions with effect from 1 April 2018 as part of the RNBT's routine planned turnover of trustees. The election of volunteers to fill these positions, including those who are standing down but may wish to stand for re-election, will happen in the last week of March.

If you are interested please contact Rob Bosshardt (Chief Executive) at the RNBT's Portsmouth-based Head Office (02392 690112). You can also email a request for an application pack via: rnbt@rnbt.org.uk

The closing date for applications is
12th March 2018

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, Castlaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth PO2 8RN
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Flawed lords of war(ships)

THE two most dominant personalities at the Admiralty in the early years of the 20th Century were Lord Fisher of Kilverstone – First Sea Lord from 1904 to 1910 and again in 1914-15 – and Winston Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty from 1911 to 1915.

Both fell from office as a result of the ill-fated Dardanelles campaign, writes Prof Eric Grove.

Prof Barry Gough has produced a major new study of these two men whose careers were, as the book's dust jacket puts it, "locked together in perilous destiny": **Churchill and Fisher: Titans at the Admiralty** (Seaforth, £35 ISBN 978 1 5267 0356 9). The book is titanic in scale, running to 600 pages; some readers may prefer the Kindle version (ISBN 978 1 0357 6).

It is based on major new research in the Fisher and Beatty papers held at Churchill College Cambridge where the author, as archives fellow, had complete access – something denied to previous historians. As the author puts it: "This book represents the

THE GROVE REVIEW

first full use of these marvellous collections."

It is well written and holds the readers attention during the long progress through it pages that could have been shortened a little by more editing and deletion of repetitions. Its author succeeds in his primary aim of "being guided by the goal of providing a perspective unencumbered by any ill-founded preference to tell Winston's or Jacky's story." The book adds usefully to naval historiography by going "deeper into the various personal relationships that directed (and misdirected) the course of the naval war."

Yet, like its subjects, the book has serious flaws. It is positively riddled with errors which cannot but cast doubt – probably unjustly – over the reliability of the whole book. Right at the start a 'note on the Board of Admiralty' says that the First Sea Lord was Chief of Naval Staff. He was not in the period 1904-15 in which either there was no designated 'Naval Staff' or its Chief was another officer. The problems created

by this situation are made clear enough later in the book so the error is hard to explain.

The author tends to read history backwards. The pre-1914 period is seen as an inevitable crisis slide towards war with Germany – something more recent historians have cast doubts upon. Without mentioning names, Prof Gough rails rather intemperately against what he calls their "lurid and irresponsible tendency to embrace the counter-factual."

Yet the book's prejudice against Germany is perhaps the greater distortion. How far Fisher saw Germany as the sole potential enemy before the foundation of the Home Fleet in 1906-07 is a very moot point. And perhaps not even then; the book strangely ignores the Fisherite idea of battle-cruiser-based 'Fleet Units' spread around the world maintaining British global sea power against all comers. This was discussed in an important article by Nicholas Lambert that does not appear in the bibliography.

The book also ignores the even more important work by Lambert, *Planning Armageddon*, which pointed out Britain's highly-developed strategy for maritime economic warfare to break Germany rapidly in a future war. It was not implemented, but it is just not true to say – as the book does – that there were no solid plans for economic warfare against Germany in 1914.

Gunnery has become a key element in recent writing on this period but the book's grasp of the subject is tenuous and garbled. There is serious confusion between fire control tables and director firing. Good German gunnery at Jutland is accounted for by supposed director firing.

In fact, the Germans did not have an equivalent of the British director; guns were still laid and fired from the turrets. Another gap in the bibliography is the work of Dr John Brooks which would have cleared things up for the author.

The book also falls into the trap of blaming battle-cruiser

losses at Jutland on poor design and Fisher's addiction to high speed at a price in protection.

In fact, it is now generally accepted that the three battle-cruisers that blew up at Jutland did so because of suicidally dangerous ammunition-

handling arrangements, something that had to be covered up as much as possible at the expense of the ship designers and Fisher.

In this context, the book repeats the old mantra that Fisher thought 'speed was armour', but I am not convinced he ever did so. Speed was the equivalent of the weather gauge of old to dictate the dynamics of battle, as indeed the book accurately points out elsewhere.

There is much good in this work; Prof Gough's negative assessment of Jellicoe is especially sound. It is hard to see why someone like Fisher could see him as another Nelson.

The book is worth reading – and good value physically at £35 – but it must be used with great care and checked against other sources.



The men who crewed Hitler's Navy

AT FIRST glance, April 1934 was not a pivotal month in 20th Century history.

Infamous lawbreaker John Dillinger was still evading the FBI in the central USA.

The *Daily Mail* published what would become the most famous picture ever taken of the Loch Ness Monster (it was 60 years before it was revealed to be a fake).

At Wembley, Manchester City beat Portsmouth 2-1 to lift the FA Cup.

And in Germany, Hitler promised his military leaders that he would rein in his unruly brownshirts and their troublesome commander Ernst Röhm – a precursor to the Night of the Long Knives.

Also in the fledgling Third Reich, 318 men arrived on the tiny Baltic island of Dänholm to begin their training as naval officers; they would go on to form the core of the German Navy in WW2.

The story of those men is told by Eric Rust in *Naval Officers Under Hitler: The Crew of 34* (Naval Institute Press, circa £12 ISBN 978-1-68247-231-6)

Rust is the son of an officer from the

class of 1935 who died on his first patrol in command of U-90 in 1942.

He picked the class of 1934 because it catches the German Navy at the beginning of its pre-war expansion – records are readily available and the sample group of 318 officers is manageable.

Drawn from middle-class nationalist, but not Nazi, backgrounds, the class of 1934 would prove to be the backbone of the German submarine arm in particular: warfare officers were often second in command of U-boats at the beginning of the war and their commanders by 1941 or 1942.

More than one in three would die in the line of duty, most of those in U-boats.

Nearly 40 of them earned the Nazi equivalent of the VC, the Knight's Cross. One, Erich Topp, dispatched nearly 200,000 tonnes of shipping to the seabed making him the third most successful U-boat commander of the war. He earned the Knight's Cross with Oak Leaves and

Swords for his efforts, the Third Reich's third highest decoration.

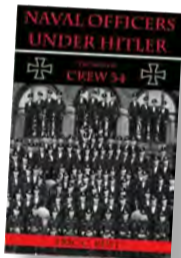
There are villains too, notably Heinz Eck, in charge of U-852, who inexplicably and uncharacteristically ordered his crew to machine-gun survivors of the Greek merchantman *Peleus* – apparently in revenge for the bombing of German cities by the Allies. Eck faced a post-war firing squad for his crime.

And then there is the strange case of Heinz Hirsacker, commander of U-572.

In six patrols totalling more than eight months at sea, Hirsacker sank just three ships, was rebuked by his superiors for failing to press through the formidable defences at the Strait of Gibraltar and finally court-martialled for cowardice.

Sentenced to death, he took his own life. His fellow 1934 classmates regarded his fate as "just but harsh."

Rust's study is not for the casual reader, rather the serious student of the cultural



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Recognition for valuable service

A WARFARE officer who ensured 650,000 tonnes of British shipping safely passed through the gauntlet of 'missile alley' in the Middle East is one of several sailors to receive the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service.

Lt Cdr Ben Martin was HMS Daring's Principal Warfare Officer during her 2016-17 deployment to the Gulf.

The destroyer was called upon to safeguard shipping passing through the Bab el Mandeb Strait in the Red Sea following an attack on the MV Swift.

Operations lasted 50 days, throughout which the ship operated under the threat of attack by Houthi rebel-controlled coastal-defence cruise missiles and explosive boats.

Each transit of the chokepoint was conducted at the highest degree of personnel and material readiness and Lt Cdr Martin oversaw the preparations and conduct of every one.

Also commended is POET(MESM) Aaron Smith who assumed the responsibilities of chief stoker on an operational V-boat for 15 months, filling a role normally carried out by an experienced chief petty officer with considerable operational and engineering experience.

While at sea, a fault developed in the sanitary system. Using the limited documentation and workshop facilities aboard, Aaron used sound engineering judgment and considerable intuition to identify a 'similar' replacement component from a completely unrelated system and then single-handedly refurbished the defective valve.

Without his ingenuity, the loss of toilets and washing facilities could have had a major impact on the health, well-being and morale of the entire ship's company.

And LLogs Andrew Gill was the RN's sole Royal Navy supply chain rating at an airbase in the Gulf – a key hub of RN operations in the region.

Acutely aware of the operational impact should the correct equipment fail to arrive on time, the leading hand worked tirelessly to ensure delivery dates were achieved, often working long days and late into the night.

On several occasions, it was Gill's foresight that prevented breaches of procedure that may have disrupted important tasks, had he not interceded.

Lt Isha Harvey receives a Fleet Commander's Commendation for her work as executive assistant to the CO of Commando Helicopter Force.

She oversaw improvements to CHF's medical and personnel record administration, organised two hugely-successful CHF 'experience' days which raised significant sums for charities, and delivered the high-profile annual 'Jungle' dinner.

Her greatest contribution, however, has been her support of the RN's Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic organisation, acting "to great effect" as a 'reverse' mentor to senior officers, providing 'council' on the direction and focus of the Navy's BAME organisation as well as feedback on the effectiveness of its activities.

Also receiving a Fleet Commander's Commendation is PO Richard Wilmot, who played a key role in replacing an unserviceable Lynx aboard RFA Wave Knight in the Caribbean – a replacement desperately needed as a hurricane neared.

PO Wilmot volunteered to lead all engineering aspects of preparing the helicopter, including the road-move to Brize Norton and escorting the aircraft during the flights to and from Martinique.



● Runners taking part in the Western Region Cross Country Championships; LPT Izzy Molyneaux-O'Callaghan and PO 'Ken' Barlow

Clean sweep for female runners at championships

Waltzing with Tilda

ACCOMPLISHED triathlete Lt Cdr Tilda Woodard led the female contingent to victory at the Royal Navy Cross Country Championships.

The Reservist was followed home by Surg Lt Rachel Aldridge and PO Julie Stround as the trio took the first three places in the women's race for the Western Region.

The championships, held at BRNC, saw the Royal Marines win both the junior and senior men's categories, while the Royal Navy Western Region also took the top prize in the veterans' event.

A total of 68 participants took part in the competition. The junior men and women completed two laps of the course, which equated to 3.4 miles. The senior and veteran men ran an extra lap, equating to 5.1 miles.

In the individual events it was four in the top five in the junior's race for the Royal Marines with Mne Jacob Lewis taking the overall honours from AB Josh Clarkson of the Eastern Region.

PO Adam Barlow for the Eastern Region won the senior men's race in a tight competition, from Cpl Adam Stokes of the Royal Marines in second, and PO Ian Dixon of the Northern Region in third.

Royal Navy stalwart Lt Cdr Tony Dunn, representing the Fleet Air Arm, won the veteran men's category, narrowly beating WO1 Sean Childs, representing the Western region, with Lt Col Simon O'Herlihy hard on his heels.

WO1 Childs, who is currently serving as the Physical Development Officer at BRNC, said: "The cross country course was redesigned to make it spectator-friendly, challenging, yet inclusive to all abilities."

"Despite being on the end of some heavy rainfall leading right up to the event, the undulating muddy grass course prompted

some positive feedback from the participating tired competitors.

Prior to the championships, BRNC hosted the Western Region Cross Country Championships on the same course to select the team for the Royal Navy event, which also included competitors who were hoping to be chosen for the Fleet Air Arm team.

A total of 123 competitors completed the exact course, laying out the foundations of the route for the week which was to follow.

Navy runners made a debut appearance in the 2017/18 Hampshire Cross Country League.

Competing in some of the wettest and muddiest parks you could find in the South, the Navy entered the senior and veterans competitions. With the women competing over 6km, Sub Lt Chelsea Baker, LPT Izzy Molyneaux-O'Callaghan and AB Emily Newton led the charge to finish 20th out of 27 teams.

In the men's team, the distance was 10km, with captain PO 'Ken' Barlow always keeping the lead runners in sight, helped by PO Colin Chalmers, Lt Cdr 'Mabs' Mabbot and Cdr Ben Stait, to secure fifth place in their league.

The team also competed in the Hampshire Cross Country Championship, in the worst conditions winter could offer.

The Fairthorne Manor course even claimed PO Colin Chalmers' shoe for prosperity. Not that it stopped him storming around the hilly course in a credible 52 minutes, but without a woman's team the Navy failed to place.

If you can run a Park Run now, then fix your sights on running in Navy colours. The league starts in October 2018 and takes place on a Saturday afternoon.

Contact either PO(D) Ken Barlow NAVY_NAVYFDS-CDU2POD2@mod.uk or Sub Lt Chelsea Baker Chelsea.Baker121@mod.gov.uk to find out more.



● Lt Cdr Tilda Woodard, the overall women's champion, running in the Western Region race
Picture: Craig Keating

Women start year in winning form

UKAF Ladies Volleyball Squad got together at MOD Stafford ahead of their first game of the year against Newcastle Staffs.

Karen Tait was made captain on her first full match since returning from a shoulder operation.

The first six women took to the court and there was some nervous energy circulating which unfortunately translated into the serving ability.

The ball received some extra juice, which meant that with the addition of the cold hall allowing the ball to travel further, the whole team were serving out the back of the court for most of the first two sets.

Some excellent play from the middle hitters, in particular Ch Tech Kerrie Stevens, who pulled off some outstanding blocks winning points outright, was not enough for the UKAF ladies to win the first two sets, which ended 19-25 and 21-25.

Capt Kim Smith, having covered the setters position for the past few matches in Karen's absence, was now back in the opposite, and she was effective.

The serves improved from all. The cover from not just the defensive specialist, the Libero, Cpl Hannah Haves, was all heart.

Somehow it was now two sets all with the tension rising so much that the referee had to call both captains in and warn them about the 'enthusiasm' of the teams.

Tactics changed from hitting the ball as hard as they could to Pte Annie McIntyre's main effort in the middle of the court to tip and make them move. She didn't miss one and perfectly executed her role.

SAC Alex Stallworthy demonstrated why she is a first six player with her performance; another younger player but with some serious skill, Alex was able to play some excellent volleyball and again score points outright or put enough pressure on so the ball could not be retrieved.

Pte Tee Matiyavi and Maj Ori Moxon-Wiggins also featured on the outside positions, covering and scoring points to ensure the UKAF won those two sets 25-21 and 25-23.

The first four sets are based on the team who is the first to score 25 points (two clear of the opposition) first with the final set being the team to score 15 first and by two clear points.

Newcastle Staffs took the advantage by winning the serve and UKAF decided to stay on the side they had finished.

The first team to reach eight in the final set means you swap ends and carry on with no break; this, it always seems, is the first mental barrier to overcome.

The set started point for point until the UKAF were the first to eight and they swapped ends at 8-7.

UKAF then lost the serve to make it 9-8 to UKAF. Newcastle Staffs then brought on their more experienced server who took them in to the lead to 9-12. The UKAF ladies played an exceptional point to win back the serve taking the score to 10-12.

UKAF went on to take the set 15-13 and progress to the next round of the Volleyball England National Shield, where the team took on Coventry and Warwick Riga.

UKAF served first, with SAC Stallworthy serving an easy ace.

The UKAF team fought hard throughout the first set with strong attacks and excellent block defence, UKAF won the first set 25-21, however the Coventry and Warwick Riga team were not going to be easily beaten.

Picking up their defensive play, the National Volleyball Division 2 team battled for every point but still was unable to conquer the force and team work of the UKAF Team, losing the second set 22-25.

Coming into the third set 2-0 down the Coventry and Warwick Riga team displayed huge determination and passion finding their form through their middle attack.

With the points creeping away from the UKAF team at 11-18 a change had to be made.

L/Cpl Dreganivula was substituted to reinvigorate the UKAF block defence. Immediately her impact on court was recognisable but unfortunately the UKAF Team was unable to gain the eight points required to take the lead and UKAF lost the third set 19-25.

A confidence-building team talk from the UKAF coach before the start of the fourth set was all that was needed to see the UKAF team come back on fighting. Excellent service receiving, outstanding block defence, accurate setting and powerful attacks from all players saw the UKAF team perform to their true potential, overpowering the Coventry and Warwick Riga team to win the fourth set 25-12.

The UKAF Ladies Volleyball team played Darkstar Derbyshire in the Shield Quarter Final as *Navy News* went to press.

Sean game for showcase

A ROYAL Navy Petty Officer has been chosen by Team Wales to compete in the Heavyweight Para Powerlifting contest at the Commonwealth Games in Australia in April.

PO Sean Gaffney, 46, has a below-the-knee left-leg amputation from an injury in Service in 1999.

After undergoing more than 20 operations, he won an Invictus Games heavyweight powerlifting gold at the 2016 Orlando Games.

He brought home a further three medals from those games, including a gold in the one-minute indoor rowing competition.

Based at RNAS Yeovilton, Sean made his international weightlifting debut at the eighth Fazza Dubai 2017 World Para Powerlifting World Cup.

Since then he has competed in Hungary, the UK, and in Malta at the inaugural Military, Police and Fire Powerlifting World Championships – where competing against able-bodied



athletes, Sean secured a bronze medal.

Sean is also the current Welsh, British and World Indoor Rowing Champion.

He recently set the World Record for PR3 2km at the British Indoor Rowing Championships, and was looking to retain his title at the World Indoor Rowing Championship in Alexandria, Virginia, United States, as *Navy News* went to press.

Sailors go to dogs in Norway

MUSH, mush...the crew of HMS Westminster swapped their frigate for a more appropriate mode of transport in Norway.

Personnel made the most of their time alongside in Tromsø by taking to the slopes with huskies.

The use of huskies as a mode of transport in Norway is a tradition that dates back hundreds of years and in modern times has developed into a demanding endurance sport.

Wrapped up warm, the team headed out into the wilderness to meet the huskies who were eager to get out into the snow.

The activity centre provided thick layers for the ship's company

who had spent the previous month adjusting to the harsh conditions of the Arctic as HMS Westminster learned how to operate in the extreme cold.

After an introduction to the huskies and a quick tutorial of how to 'mush', it was time to head off into the starlit mountains.

A 2km trail with plenty of uphill and downhill meant there was a decent work-out for dogs and sailors alike.

The terrain was sometimes too steep for even the strongest of dogs requiring the sailors to jump out and push the sled up the inclines, running as part of the pack.

Picture: Sub Lt J Osuch





● LS Ryan Mathews scores a drop goal
Pictures: Richard Beattie (SBS Photography)

Extra-time agony for the Brothers

THE Ladbrokes Challenge Cup Campaign ended for the Royal Navy Rugby League team in dramatic fashion courtesy of the golden point rule in the eighth minute of extra time.

After taking the lead against old foes the Normanton Knights with a well-taken try by winger AET Luke Cooper, the Brothers were reduced to 12 men following a sending off for dissent.

Despite the sending off and appalling weather conditions the RN side took the game to the opposition and were rewarded with a try for Cpl Sean Houghton, which was converted brilliantly from the touchline by LS Ryan Mathews, increasing their lead to 10-0, which remained so until half time.

The expected response by the Knights, promoted to the top tier of Amateur Rugby League last season, came five minutes into the second half as an unconverted try closed the gap to six points.

The Knights' deficit was reduced further barely five minutes later with another unconverted try, so it was now game on as the match moved into the last quarter.

After being repulsed by the 12-man Royal Navy side for several minutes, the visitors took two points from a penalty to even the scores at ten all.

This provided the platform for a thrilling finale to the game as the Royal Navy nudged ahead with a well-taken surprise drop

goal from Mathews, only to have the score cancelled out by a similar effort from the Knights.

So with the game tied at 11 all it was into extra time and the dreaded golden point rule.

After eight minutes of play Tom Carroll took his chance and put over the one pointer to end the match with victory for the Knights and devastation for the RNRL side.

On a positive note the RN fielded four new caps to Challenge Cup action, WS Johnny Griffiths, LAET John Clay, Mne Danny Heaton and Mne Louis McKenna, who all played their part in a memorable but ultimately disappointing game for RNRL.

The week prior to the Challenge Cup fixture RNRL celebrated the achievements with the annual player's awards dinner at HMS Excellent.

In front of guests from the association, sponsors and families, the awards marked individual and team performances by RNRL during the 2017 season.

The blue ribbon Man Of Steel award went to Mne Jamie Birdsall, who made a major impact in his first full season, picking up several man-of-the-match awards as well as being selected for the UK Armed Forces Rugby League World Cup Squad in Australia during July.

Full details of all the awards can be found at the RNRL website at www.RoyalNavyRugbyLeague.com



● Challenge Cup debutants WS Johnny Griffiths and Mne Louis McKenna halt a Normanton attack

French flies

James helps teams to success in snow



THE Royal Navy Telemark team successfully defended their title as Inter-Service Telemark Champions at the 2018 Inter-Services Ski and Snowsport Championships held in Meribel.

For the second consecutive year the Telemark team won all four events – Giant Slalom, Sprint, Classic and Parallel Sprint – to convincingly win the Telemark Team Combined Title.

Telemark was the only discipline at the Inter-Service Championships in which the Royal Navy were victorious.

Despite a significant number of experienced skiers being unavailable for

the championships, the Telemark team fought off strong competition from the Army and RAF.

Sub Lt James French and Lt Col Huan Davies consistently gained podium positions and the remainder of the team proved their strength in depth by finishing with the top four team competitors in the top eight in each race.

Despite a close competition this proved too much for the Army and RAF teams who finished second and third respectively.

In the individual competition the Navy were also successful with Lt Col Davies and Capt Gordon McCrae finishing second and third respectively.

The Navy Telemark team consisted of Capt McCrae (Team Captain), Lt Col Davies, Sub Lt French, Lt Col Chris Haw, Lt Col Tony Hulse, Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw and Capt Russell Squires.

The team were selected from the Navy Telemark Championships held at Pralognan-la-Vanoise, where the final results were:

First: Lt Col Huan Davies; Second: Capt Gordon McCrae; Third: Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw; Fourth: SSgt Steve Farrant; Fifth: Lt Col Chris Haw

Capt Squires was the best newcomer, having only started telemarking this season, making his selection for the Inter-Service team particularly significant.

● Below, from left, the triumphant Telemark team; Skier Mne Ben Hollis from 45 Cdo; Royal Navy skiers watch the action;



Anniversary match will be popular

THE China Fleet Country Club will host the 25th anniversary of the Royal Navy Engineers Open Golf Championships on Monday September 10.

The event is open to all serving members of the WE (including CIS)/ME (including TM)/Med Tech, AE (including SE) branches; all RFA Engineers (including CIS) and RM Vehicle Mechanics. RN and RFA veteran engineers are also welcome.

Players may play a practice round at CFCC on Sunday September 9.

The Overall Champion will be decided by the AM & PM combined Stableford points. The maximum handicap for the competition is 28 (men) and 36 (women); players are reminded that a valid handicap may be requested.

The cost of entry to the event is £70 (£45 for China Fleet Golf Members). The cost includes tea/coffee and a bacon roll on arrival (served from 6.30am), lunch, green fees (two rounds), a two-course Championship presentation dinner and prizes.

Payment by cheque or BACS is acceptable but electronic payment is preferred.

If paying by cheque please make payable to ENGINEERS GOLF and forward with your completed application form (one form per person) to the treasurer.

A non-Service email address is required on each application.

If payment by BACS is preferred please submit application by post (or email mark.engineersopen@virginmedia.com), you will then be contacted by email requesting payment and providing payment details.

Closing date for entries is midday on Friday August 31 2018.

It is requested that entries are submitted well before this date so that the tee draw can be made and final championship preparations completed in good time.

Successful applicants will be notified via email on receipt of application and payment.

Places will be allocated on a first-come first-served basis; however, a small number of places will be reserved for sea-going personnel.

Should the competition be oversubscribed, individuals will be informed and placed on a reserve list.

For additional information go to: www.engineersopen.net

Boxing back at the pier

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Ex-Boxers Association will be holding a charity dinner boxing show at South Parade Pier, Southsea on Friday May 18 2018.

The boxing will consist of the RN taking on a team from Southern Counties.

It is hoped that some of the boxing team from HMS Queen Elizabeth will feature on the bill in supporting bouts.

Invitations have gone out to Ex-World Champions John Conteh, Richie Woodall and former RM Terry Marsh and all are expected to attend.

Event organiser Alan Dolman said: "It is really great to be back at South Parade Pier for our show. It is looking really great after undergoing a four-year refurbishment."

Tickets are priced at £50 per person with tables of ten.

For more information contact Alan Dolman on 02392 483388.

● Sub Lt James French was in superb form for both the RN Ski Championships and the Telemark Inter-Service contest

Pictures: PO Phot Arron Hoare; SAC Nicholas Egan and Cpl Rebecca Brown



He was awarded his Royal Navy Telemark Colours with Lt Col Hulse, who both were attending the Inter-Service Championships for the first time.

Telemark racing is a form of downhill racing on Telemark bindings with a 'free heel' over a race course that includes a jump and a skating section.

The Navy Telemark skiers aim to maintain their expertise through a summer training camp and pre-season novice and team training in December prior to next year's Navy Telemark and Inter-Service Championships.

A number of Telemark festivals

will also be held over the summer in the Indoor Ski Centres at Glasgow, Manchester and London.

A growing number of women are becoming involved and the aspiration is to enter a women's team into the 2019 Inter-Service Championships.

Although the majority of the Navy Telemark skiers are Royal Marines all events are open to all of the full-time and Reserve Services, with a novice training camp to be held in Stubai, Austria, on November 24 to December 8 2018 being the ideal opportunity to try Telemark skiing.

Anyone interested in trying Telemark or attending any of the

events can find more information by contacting Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw on ramsay.shaw771@mod.gov.uk or 9621 81532 / 020721 81532.

Sub Lt French was also in top form for the Royal Navy Alpine ski team at both the RN Championships in Tignes and the Inter-Service contest in Meribel.

The man from 703 NAS won all three events, the Slalom, Giant Slalom and Super G.

Runner-up was Lt Chris Sharrott, of 202 Sqn (R), RAF Shawbury.

Sub Lt French was again outstanding at the Inter-Service contest, winning the blue riband Downhill event.

He also claimed silver in both the Slalom and Giant Slalom but crashed out of the Super G.

That meant that 'old hand' Lt Sharrott claimed overall bronze at the end of the final week of competition, a fitting way to end a successful 13-year association with Military Winter Sports as Royal Navy and UK Armed Forces ski team captain.

In snow-laden Tignes, the overall women's title went to Lt Cdr Barbara Mair, of 40 Cdo, who claimed her maiden title.

She was closely followed by Sub Lt Jessie Swift, from PORFLOT.

Lt Cdr Ramsay Shaw in the Telemark contest; Lt Cdr Chris Sharrott in action on the ski slopes; Sub Lt Jessie Swift at the starting gate



Hero of Telemark

LT Col Huan Davies eases ahead of his Army competitor in the Parallel Sprint section of the Inter-Service Telemark Championships in Meribel, France. The Royal Navy team won all four disciplines to retain their title.

Full story, pages 38-39

Picture: SAC Nicholas Egan

