



NAVY NEWS

AUGUST 2013

SUNKEN TREASURES

RICH HAUL
FOR ECHO
OFF LIBYA

FOCUS POINT

NAVY'S TOP
IMAGERY

BRING IT ON

Royal Marines Commandos of the Armoured Support Group roll through the live firing ranges at Lulworth in Dorset. They completed their training ahead of joining the UK Response Force Task Group on its annual deployment, Cougar, which begins this month. See pages 6 and 23 for details.

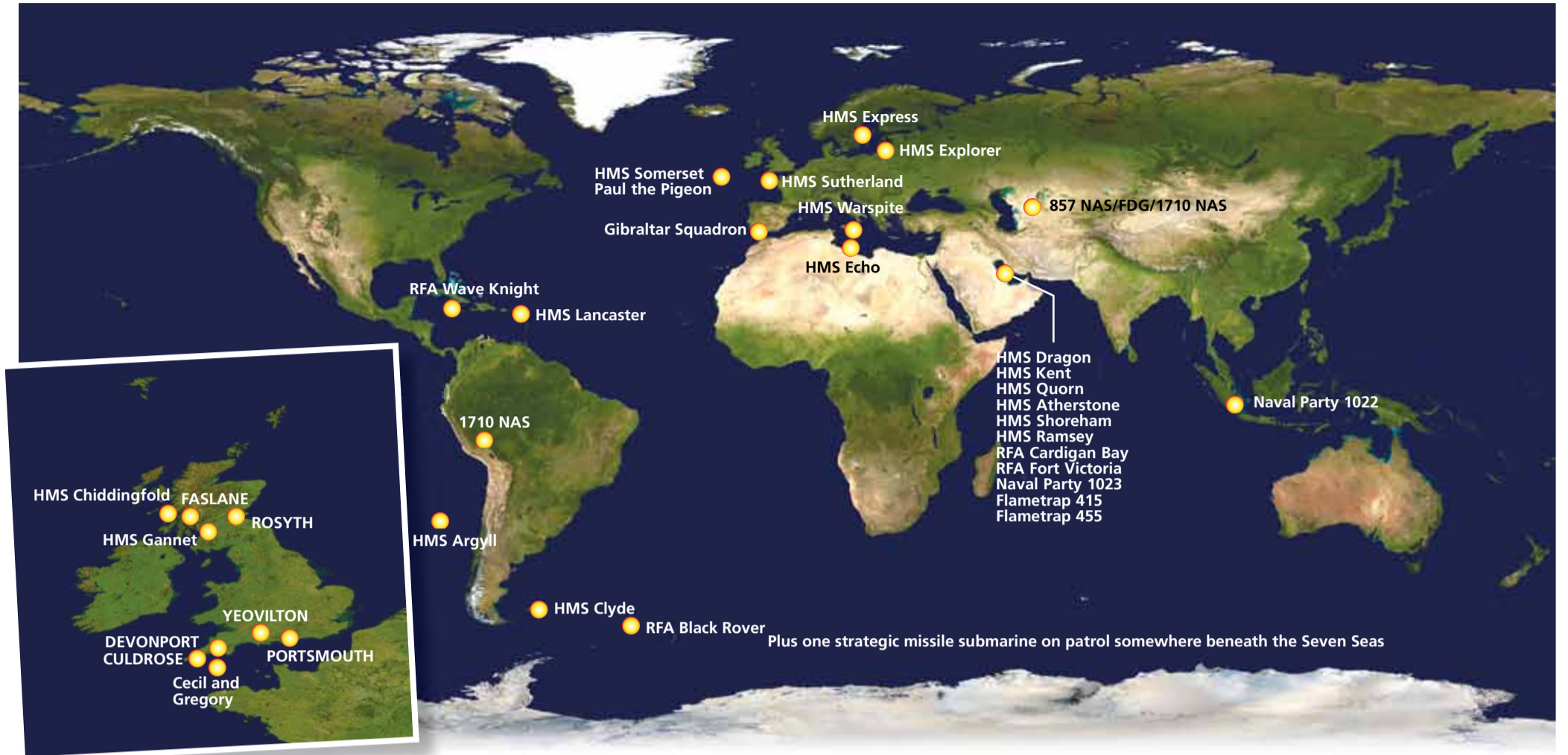
Picture: LA(Phot) Caroline Davies, RNAS Yeovilton



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'TIS the season to be jolly.

Thrashing the Aussies in the Ashes (2-0 up as we went to press). A seemingly endless heatwave. British triumph at Wimbledon. Another victory in the Tour de France. Heir to the throne born.

So can the RN tap into the *Zeitgeist*? Well, from the reception at major public occasions such as **Armed Forces Day** events around the land (see pages 14-15) or **Yeovilton Air Day** (see page 8), the answer is: hopefully.

Of course, we don't have a Royal Navy purely for show and ceremony. We have it for smiting foes. And no-one smites better than the Royal Marines, who've been ripping chunks out of the ranges at Lulworth with their Vikings from the **Armoured Support Group** (see page 23).

They did so as final preparation for the RN's key deployment of the year, **Cougar 13**, which gets under way as the **UK Response Force Task Group** (led by **HMS Bulwark** and **Illustrious**) heads for the Mediterranean and beyond (see page 6).

Already in the Med is **HMS Echo**, which found rich pickings while surveying the waters along the Libyan coast – seas last surveyed in earnest by the RN probably half a century ago. In an unparalleled ten-day sweep, the ship found 18 wrecks and obstructions – including an old amphibious ship (see pages 10-11).

And an aerial survey reaped rewards for **HMS Lancaster** as cannabis plantations were sighted from her Lynx on Anguilla... and promptly destroyed by local police. The Caribbean island was the latest port of call for the frigate on her patrol of British territories in the region (see page 5).

The sunshine enjoyed by the Red Rose has been topped by her sister **HMS Kent**, currently sweltering in the high 30s Celsius in the Indian Ocean. In such heat, the ship is finding water makes all the difference to her anti-piracy mission (see opposite).

Further north in the Gulf, the RN's Bahrain-based minehunters – **Shoreham**, **Quorn**, **Atherstone** and **Ramsey** – plus **RFA Cardigan Bay** took part in an Anglo-French-US exercise, **Artemis Trident** (see page 4). The Crazy A has recently changed ship's companies, with the returning mine crew treated to an official 'welcome home' reception aboard **HMS Victory** (see page 6).

If all the heat is getting to you, then join **HMS Argyll** and **RFA Black Rover**, both of which have enjoyed the snow-blanketed paradise of South Georgia (see pages 9 and 19 respectively). University boats **HMS Express** and **Explorer** have been ranging around the Baltic. We catch up with their summer deployment (see page 22).

HMS Sutherland made the short trip across the Channel to Brest to take part in the annual FRUKUS exercise with the French, US and Russian navies (see page 4).

The nation's next-generation carrier **HMS Queen Elizabeth** is just about complete outwardly – certainly physically at any rate; her aft island was installed early last month (see page 7).

QE is not the RN's biggest presence north of the border. That's **HM Naval Base Clyde** whose future is surveyed by one of its outgoing senior officers (see page 16).

And while Clyde may be big, no RN unit in Scotland has a bigger profile than the rescuers of **HMS Gannet**. We paid them a visit (see page 17).

This edition of *Navy News*, like every other, is blessed with tip-top Naval photography. And the tippest-toppest photographers were recognised at the branch's annual awards, aka the **Peregrines** (see the centre pages).

And finally... You wait, well at least ten years for a story about pigeons riding around on one of Her Majesty's warships and then... two in a month. **HMS Diamond** built a special coop for 'Gregory' and 'Cecil' who landed aboard off the South Coast, while **HMS Somerset** nursed 'Paul' (actually Paula...) back to full strength in the mid-Atlantic (see page 19).



Cheery Chid turns fiery

THIS spectacular firework display comes courtesy of the 30mm main gun of Britain's most advanced minehunter – **HMS Chiddingfold**, – which has spent the past few weeks getting to grips with her new kit.

The Portsmouth-based Hunt-class ship spent 572 days out of action undergoing one of the most thorough overhauls a Royal Navy minehunter has ever received.

Since emerging from that revamp earlier this year 'Cheery Chid' and her 45-strong ship's company have been undergoing trials, tests and above all demanding training.

The latter reached its climax, for now, with a month of Operational Sea Training – the benchmark for any Royal Navy warship, for it determines that a ship's company is ready for the rigours of deployment.

OST, carried out under the auspices of the internationally-renowned Flag Officer Sea Training organisation, is split between the Plymouth Exercise Areas for most of the surface fleet, and the west coast of Scotland for submarines and small ships.

With her brand new Caterpillar engines – more reliable and efficient than her old Deltics – purring away, Chid made her way from Portsmouth to Faslane for her month-long work-out.

The British weather lived up to expectations with gale force winds and rough seas battering

the minehunter on her 580-nautical-mile journey. Even with the uncomfortable conditions, she pressed on and made the Scottish lochs in good time to begin her training.

This has been the first time the crew of **HMS Chiddingfold** have been put through their paces on OST since an extensive repropulsion project commenced when the ship returned from three years in the Gulf in late 2011.

The sailors had to deal with a wide range of scenarios from dealing with fires and floods onboard to assisting other vessels in distress, through to weapon firings, dealing with attacks from a range of threats and training in her core role of mine warfare.

OST uses realistic scenarios to test the entire ship's company, not only in their individual roles but also as a team, preparing them for operational theatres around the world, provide humanitarian assistance and work in unison with allied nations.

For many of the crew it was their first time on OST, having joined Chid straight from training.

"It has been very beneficial to get up to Scotland and put training into practise on OST after the time in refit. It has been challenging but you learn a lot," said diver AB(D) Kevin Beecher.

With OST done for now – there's more training to come in the autumn and winter – **Cheery Chid** has returned to Portsmouth where her sailors are now on well-deserved summer leave.

Penzance transformed

CHALLENGING Chid for the title of Britain's most advanced warship is **HMS Penzance**, which has just emerged from six months in refit – four of those out of the water – at the Babcock yard on the Forth.

The team at Rosyth overhauled the ship's engines and glass fibre hull, enhanced her minehunting kit and fitted the RN-wide DII computer system which makes it easier for sailors to communicate and do admin wherever they are in the world.

After the 500-tonne ship had been inspected by Cdr Jim Byron, 1st Mine Counter-Measures Squadron's Commanding Officer, and given the thumbs up, it was time to take **Penzance** back to sea for initial trials and testing machinery.

"Emerging from refit is a challenging but exciting time for any ship's company. It's the opportunity for us to get back to sea, to take ownership of our ship once again, and to prepare for our operational tasking later this year," said Lt Cdr Nick Unwin, **Penzance's** CO.

"I took command of **Penzance** two months ago and in that time the transformation has been incredible – from a building site surrounded by scaffolding to a warship at sea, training and preparing for the autumn. All credit to my ship's company and the Babcock team for their hard work."

Right now, the ship's company are being tested to the limit by the FOST organisation who will determine whether they're ready to take the 172ft ship on deployment later this year.

"There are many new faces aboard, and with a very short period between sea trials, Operational Sea Training and deployment, we're using all the available time to prepare ourselves for FOST's finest and provide a worked up warship to the Fleet Commander," said Lt Cdr Unwin.

Penzance is due to take her place in the German-led NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 2, currently ranging the Mediterranean, with **HMS Ledbury** the UK's participant.



● Kent's chaplain Rev James Francis – nicknamed the 'Battle Bish' – overcomes the barriers of language, culture and creed by handing the planet's most precious commodity to a dhow crewman; (above right) Kent's RAS teams prepare for a replenishment with the French while (right) Somme like it hot... a crew member takes a breather as the French tanker tops up Kent's fuel tanks

A THIRST FOR ACTION

WHAT'S the Royal Navy's best weapon in the struggle against criminal activity in the Indian Ocean?

HMS Kent 4.5in gun? Her Merlin helicopter, crammed with technology and Royal Marines snipers on the end of a machine-gun? The fully-honed boarding team of commandos and sailors? The team in the operations room poring over displays which draw information on the waters and skies around the ship from a myriad of sensors?

Or maybe it's the personal touch? A bottle of chilled water for passing fishermen in seas where the temperature at this time of year is well into the 30's Celsius, and sometimes over 40°C.

For all the hi-tech wizardry on the Portsmouth-based frigate – nearing the half-way point in a counter-piracy and counter-terrorism patrol east of Suez – daily interaction with crews on dhows and other vessels plying their lawful trade in 'Pirate Alley' between the Horn of Africa and the Arabian Peninsula is just as useful in understanding what the Navy calls the 'patterns of life' in the region.

On a typical day, Kent carries out around a dozen 'approach and assist visits' to dhows and medium-sized ships and boats, with her boarding team chatting with crews to assure them the warship is here to help.

"Operating 4,000 miles from home, in a region with 20 different languages or dialects and a vastly different culture presents challenges that require of HMS Kent the ability to interact diplomatically and with sensitivity to local personnel," says Lt Cdr Mickey Rooney, Kent's weapon engineer officer.

"In gaining trust and empathising with the tough

existence that many of these mariners endure, there is one simple currency that secures trust, breaches all barriers and which, in terms of value, makes fossil fuels and rare metals look like small change – water."

Although the Gulf region is synonymous with oil and gas production – it's Kent's task along with other ships in the 27-nation Combined Maritime Forces to ensure nothing interrupts the flow of that oil and other goods by sea – it's far from blessed with natural resources of water, particularly on the small dhows at work in the height of summer.

You can survive for 15 days without food. You won't last five days without water – especially not with temperatures as they are in this part of the world.

"As the ship's boarding teams constantly find that for all of the water they ride on, being a mariner in the Gulf is thirsty work," says Lt Cdr Rooney.

"The power of water can be seen first hand as one of HMS Kent's high speed boats makes an approach to a dhow and offers a litre of fresh cold water, held high like a universal calling card of humanity. The reception is warm, friendly and without barriers."

Cdr Ben Ripley, HMS Kent's Commanding Officer, adds: "A simple gesture like the gift of a bottle of water – which may seem insignificant for many – goes a long way to building relationships and trust with the seafarers that HMS Kent is here to protect.

"For the Royal Navy the simple gesture of

gifting drinking water to break down all barriers is turning out to be one of the most powerful forms of currency in securing safe passage for our way of life."

Kent is currently attached to the French-led Combined Task Force 150, comprising warships from Australia, France and Canada. The force is charged with safeguarding the Internationally Recognised Transit Corridor – effectively a protected motorway of the sea for all legitimate mariners.

"The Combined Task Force is something of a counter-piracy and counter-terrorism high seas patrol – a 21st-Century CHiPs for those who remember the 1980s TV show," Lt Cdr Rooney explains.

At the beginning of last month, the 'CHiPs' were down at the foot of the Red Sea and the Bab al Mendab Strait (contracted in military parlance to BAM) for a concerted exercise.

Just 11 miles wide at its narrowest point, BAM is one of the great choke points on the Seven Seas.

A century ago the great Jackie Fisher recognised the strait's importance (as well as Suez and Hormuz, which also fall within the RN's Middle East theatre of operations). One hundred years on, BAM is no less important.

Which is why the original constituents of the task group were joined by a Saudi frigate patrol ships from the Yemeni Coast Guards, the Yemeni Navy and the Djibouti Navy – the latter two countries stand on either side of the narrows.



pictures: la(phot) joel rouse, hms kent



Reasons to be spearful

THE long road to provide the Silent Service with the sixth of its seven next-generation hunter-killer submarines has begun with the keel laid for HMS Agamemnon.

It will be 2022 before the boat takes her place alongside her sisters Astute and Ambush (completed), Artful, Audacious and Anson (in various stages of construction) – with a seventh, as yet unnamed, A-boat to follow.

The keel is the first complete section of Agamemnon and was unveiled in a ceremony in the cavernous Devonshire Dock Hall at BAE's Barrow-in-Furness yard by Defence Minister Philip Dunne.

Although the keel really isn't that exciting to look at, what will be built around it is: the most advanced submarine ever to hoist the White Ensign (when she makes rare appearances on the surface). She'll be better armed, quieter, more reliable, equipped with better sensors and communications kit, and a bunk for every crew member – all of which is a big leap forward over the Trafalgar-class the Astutes replace.

In terms of complexity the Astute-class boats are on a par with the Space Shuttle. Together with work on the next-generation ballistic missile submarines, the 'Successor' programme, around 5,000 jobs at BAE Systems and thousands more who work in over 400 suppliers across the UK submarine supply chain rely on the multi-billion-pound project.

Also taking shape in the enormous shed which dominates the Cumbrian coastal town are boats 3, 4 and 5 – Artful, Audacious and Anson respectively. Rear Admiral Simon Lister, the MOD's Director of Submarines, said he expected Agamemnon would be built "more quickly and efficiently than her predecessors, demonstrating the effectiveness of the national submarine building capability in Barrow-in-Furness."

"New techniques by skilled staff in the back office and on the shop floor will deliver this key capability for the Royal Navy."

To demonstrate the resolve to keep the costs down on the Astute programme, Mr Dunne signed a new contract which will deliver £380m of savings over the next eight years.

BAE has been working on Agamemnon since 2010, acquiring 'long lead items' to allow her to reach this stage of construction.

The submarine is the sixth bearer of the name – after the leader of the Greek forces investing Troy – going back to the 1781 ship of the line, Nelson's favourite command, which saw action at Copenhagen and Trafalgar.

Carrying the motto *multa tulerit fecit* – I have endured and achieved much – the name has not been used for more than 60 years; the last Agamemnon was requisitioned as a minelayer in WW2.

As for Agamemnon's sisters, Astute and Ambush are both commissioned with the former due to deploy operationally for the first time later this year, the latter early in 2014.

Artful is earmarked to enter service in 2015, Audacious in 2018, Anson 2020 and the seventh boat in 2024.

The last T-boat, HMS Triumph, is due to bow out of service in 2022.

Picture: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson, FRPU East



Sutherland's a No.1 hit with Brittany's peers

IN THE picture-postcard Breton resort of Morgat, civilians are helped into a Royal Navy RIB as an international evacuation operation by air and sea gets under way.

Their destination: the safety of HMS Sutherland as a nine-day exercise reached its climax.

The Devonport-based frigate was Britain's input to the annual test of the navies of France, Russia, the UK and US – FRUKUS – to work together in the event of an international crisis.

Every year one of the four participants takes the lead in hosting FRUKUS.

Last year it was the Russians. In 2013, the honour fell to the French who chose the waters

around their principal Atlantic base, Brest, and the Crozon peninsula as the setting.

The Fighting Clan made the short hop across the Channel where she was joined by the frigates FS Primauguet and USS Nicholas and the Russian corvette RFS Steregushiy ('Vigilant').

After getting to know each other in harbour, the quartet sailed from Brest Naval Base for a spot of gunnery, then fended off multiple simulated attacks before the FRUKUS focus shifted to the southern side of the Crozon peninsula and Douarnenez Bay.

There, by boat and helicopter, the four ships – directed by the Primauguet – were expected to overcome challenges posed not just by three different languages (four if you count American and

British English...), but organising and then safely transporting civilians away from the crisis zone.

FRUKUS, which straddled the end of June and beginning of July, is now in its 25th year. It began life as RUKUS *sans les Français*, who came aboard a decade ago, adding an F to the acronym and their Gallic take on naval operations.

The 2013 variant had, said Sutherland's Commanding Officer Cdr Al Wilson, "used the bond of mariners to strengthen the relationships between nations and navies."

As part of that bond, his ship hosted five American and French sailors to give them an idea of life on a Type 23, while the Fighting Clan loaned three of her crew to the Nicholas and Primauguet.

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time

on the French ship," said AET Martin Telford.

"The highlight of the visit was being able to talk to their air engineers and seeing how they work and look after their Lynx."

The exercise concluded with some exercise... of the physical variety as a Brest Naval Base side challenged Sutherland to a game of football.

In the spirit of *égalité et fraternité*, the match ended 3-3 with *buts* for the Brits from LHs David Gray and Lance Easton and AB Martin Quant.

And that was FRUKUS for another year.

"My ship's company and I really enjoyed the experience – and were very well looked after by the French Navy and city of Brest," said Cdr Wilson.

Dam good news about the F35

FOUR F35 Joint Strike Fighters fended off an air attack against the HMS Queen Elizabeth carrier battle group as destroyer HMS Dauntless and 'eye in the sky' Sea Kings helped form an aerial shield around the flagship.

For the first time aircrew, operations room teams, scientists and technicians tested how the technology of today's and tomorrow's Royal Navy will work together on the battlefield.

They used simulators to link up the Type 45 destroyer, a Sea King, the 65,000-tonne leviathan, and a quartet of the stealth fighters to see how they can share information to defend the Fleet and to direct the F35s on to incoming targets.

Fleet Air Arm, RAF and US Navy pilots 'flew' F35s from simulators at BAE's site in Samsbury in Lancashire, while two 'bagger' aircrew in Culdrose simulated a mission in an Airborne Surveillance and Control Sea King.

On the Isle of Wight, air warfare officers from HMS Duncan were at the controls of the Queen Elizabeth carrier lab, while on Portsdown Hill their counterparts, and fighter controllers, from sister ship HMS Dauntless were doing the same in the Type 45 lab.

The idea was to see whether the reams of data and information the Sea King, Type 45, carrier and four fighters could be passed from helicopter to F35 to ship in real time so decisions could be made and threats eliminated – exactly as would be expected were the Queen Elizabeth battle group on front-line operations.

"Not only does this help the UK customer get their heads around how the F-35 will integrate into operations, but it can also save

a lot of time and money," explained Tony Hall, the BAE F35 programme manager overseeing the trials. "We can identify issues early and fix things at this stage far easier than when the aircraft are built and in operation."

The simulated link-up was, said Lt Cdr Mark Humphries of the RAF Air Warfare Centre at Waddington, "something we have never been able to do before" and it proved to be "extremely valuable".

Lt Cdr Jim Blythe, air warfare officer on Dauntless, said the link-up with the other ships and aircraft had really tested the Type 45's combat system and given the destroyer's fighter controllers much better understanding of directing the jets; it's the job of fighter controllers to help guide an aircraft on to a target. "We are in a far better place for working with the F35 when it comes into service," he said.

The Type 45s can track aircraft up to 250 miles away – one parked in Portsmouth can watch aircraft landing and taking off from Charles de Gaulle, Manchester, or on final approach at Schiphol in Amsterdam. And courtesy of its Sea Viper missile it can take out incoming enemy aircraft or missiles at ranges of up to 70 miles.

And the baggers can track targets in the air or on the ground – as they've demonstrated over the past decade, first in Iraq and today over Afghanistan, where the helicopters of 857 Naval Air Squadron continue to fly daily.

As for the F35 – also known as the Lightning II – three real evaluation models are currently in UK hands and are being tested in the USA right now. The third and final prototype, BK3, was delivered to Eglin Air Force Base in Florida

just a few weeks ago.

There, as with its predecessors, it will be used to train ground crew and maintainers, plus pilots such as the first RN F35 flier, Lt Cdr Ian Tidball.

"With each passing day, our Lightning programme is maturing," said Gp Capt Harv Smith, the UK's Joint Strike Fighter National Deputy. "In less than a year, we have taken ownership of our first three aircraft and begun both pilot and engineer training."

"The Lightning truly represents a turning point for UK's combat air capability and will dramatically increase our ability to defend national sovereignty interests and ensure security around the globe."

When the F35 enters front-line service it will do so initially with arguably the world's most famous air squadron. The RAF's 617 Sqn – the Dambusters – has been officially named as the first British front-line Lightning II formation.

The squadron, currently based at Lossiemouth in Scotland, will disband on April 1 next year as part of the phasing out of the Tornados.

When the squadron re-forms as an F35 unit in 2016, it will do so as a joint RAF-RN squadron following an agreement between First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas and his Air Force counterpart Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton.

The second front-line F35 squadron will be Fleet Air Arm, although like its predecessor will also be manned by both Services.

All the UK's F35 squadrons will be based at RAF Marham in Norfolk. The jets are due to begin working with HMS Queen Elizabeth in five years' time.

Mine forces get strident with Trident

FRESH from one major international exercise in the Gulf, Britain's mine warfare forces found themselves at the heart of another ten-day workout.

Artemis Trident was on a much smaller scale than May's massive IMCMEX exercise – 40 nations, three dozen warships took part in that.

This time the UK joined forces with like-minded souls from France and the USA, with 11 warships, fast jets, helicopters, specialist dive teams and underwater vehicles all thrown into the mix.

British participants in Artemis Trident were minehunters HMS Ramsey, Shoreham, Quorn and Atherstone, plus mother ship RFA Cardigan Bay, which served not just RN vessels, but as a floating forward support base for American dive teams and two French minehunters, FS Sagittaire and Pégase.

For Atherstone's ship's company, the exercise was a baptism of fire – they'd just arrived in Bahrain to take over the ship as part of the latest rotation of crew (see page 6).

It was a chance to show that their pre-deployment training meant they were at the top of their game, as well as acclimatise to the warm waters and weather in the central Gulf (air 37°C, sea 28-33°C) in high summer.

Atherstone launched her Seafox remote-controlled submersible – used to find, identify and ultimately destroy mines – on 47 missions, while her dive teams entered the water on a dozen occasions. The Crazy A's human-robot combination 'neutralised' four drill mines over the duration of Artemis Trident.

The UK and US forces are particularly well honed at finding mines in the Gulf – the RN has maintained a permanent mine warfare presence in Bahrain for more than six years (and can draw upon 50 years of experience of work in these waters).

The French have focused most of their minehunting efforts in the Atlantic and Mediterranean, but are spreading their wings because, as *Capitaine de vaisseau* Frédéric Benon – in charge of French forces on Artemis Trident – pointed out, "our strategic interests are widely shared" and that "mine warfare operations in the Gulf – and elsewhere – can only be considered in a coalition" – which had also been the emphasis of IMCMEX.

Straight after Artemis Trident, Atherstone maintained the quick pace of life in Bahrain with one fifth of the ship's company volunteering to join the US July 4 Independence Day 3k run at the Americans' huge support base.

Although Atherstone only had eight runners in a large field, the Hunt-class ship bagged four of the top five places: Sub Lt Matt Brown (first), CPO Al Kennedy (second), Mid Dave Mayes (fourth) and PO Joe Morton (fifth).

A proud and delighted Lt Cdr Simon Rogers is very pleased by how his sailors – normally based in Portsmouth – have adjusted to life in Bahrain.

"To achieve a successful exercise with our US and French counterparts – and victory in the US Navy's Independence Day run in our first three weeks in theatre, despite the searing heat of the Gulf summer, demonstrates our 'work hard, play hard' ethos and sets the tone for our six-month deployment," he added.

"The crew's ability to hit the ground running at the very start of our deployment is testament to our pre-deployment training and the professionalism of the crew."



Still sunny in Lancaster

AND, like last month, we don't mean the northern town - despite the heatwave which had the UK in its grip as we were rolling off the presses.

But then if you're island hopping around, say, Montserrat, Anguilla, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands and Turks and Caicos in June and July, you'd expect it to be scorchio.

And it was. But there's a darker side to paradise, as HMS Lancaster found in Anguilla.

Or rather **over** Anguilla. When the Portsmouth-based frigate called in on the tiny territory - the fifth of the six British dominions in the Caribbean region she visited - the local police force asked to make use of Lancaster's Lynx.

From the air it's hard to disguise the drug plantations criminals try to hide from law enforcers.

As proven by the helicopter's sortie over the island - which is about the size of Portsmouth - with two detectives from the Royal Anguilla Police Force acting as 'scouts'.

Three potential sites were identified, photographed and recorded.

As soon as the Lynx touched down, a team of policemen raided the locations at North Hill, Cedar Village and Sandy Hill and, although they made no arrests, seized 204 cannabis plants... which subsequently went up in smoke (though not as the growers intended...).

"The island is covered in dense foliage but between the aircrew and the police officers, we were able to spot three sites which we suspected of being cannabis plantations," said

Lt Chris Easterbrook, pilot of Lancaster's 815 NAS Lynx.

"Two sites were fairly modest in size but one was the largest I have seen since we have been in the Caribbean.

"It was an absolute pleasure to work with the local police and incredibly satisfying to know that our co-operation furthered Anguilla's efforts to eradicate cannabis."

The bust on Anguilla is one of three reasons Lancaster is out here (the Atlantic Patrol North patrol) for six months: counter-narcotics.

The other two? To fly the flag for the UK; and to offer reassurance that the warship and her sailors will be there to help should a hurricane strike this part of the world which is so prone to tropical storms.

In every one of the British territories visited, the command team has sat down with local authorities to discuss the plan of action in the event of a natural disaster.

None of the six territories in the region is particularly populous: Bermuda is the biggest with 65,000 inhabitants, Montserrat numbers barely 5,000 souls.

And while some of the territories are fairly compact - three islands make up the Caymans - there are 40 islands in the Turks and Caicos, 50 in the Virgin Islands archipelago (although fewer than one third are inhabited).

So while the early stages of the Red Rose's deployment might have looked like a lot of 'fun in the sun', the emphasis has been to spread the word: we're here to help and this is what we can do - before the

hurricane season sets in earnest.

As for flying the flag, well there's been a fair bit of that.

Receptions and ceremonial sunset plus capability demonstrations were held in Grand Cayman. And Margaritaville, Grand Turk. And Tortola in the Virgin Islands.

In the latter, not only did Lancaster host locals, but locals hosted Lancaster as several members of the ships company took part in 'adopt a sailor' day. Small groups from each mess deck spent the day with local families doing a range of things from island tours to experiencing island life.

A team of ten sailors from Lancaster put their skilled labour to good use during the visit by restoring a firing range for the police service.

The range on the wonderfully-named Dead Mans Chest Island was originally built by the Royal Engineers but fell into disuse following a storm 18 years ago.

Lancaster's sailors set to work early in the morning removing a section of forest that had covered the old firing range so the police now have the ability to use the long and short distance ranges for their training.

Sport has also played a big part of the deployment with the ship's football team competing against HM Prison Northwood - the inmates, not the guards - in Georgetown, Grand Cayman.

It proved to be, says coach LPT 'Robbo' Robinson, "a real eye-opener for many of the lads, playing behind the wire of a maximum security prison."

With the scores level at 3-3 after extra time, spot

kicks settled the match in the warship's favour.

Penalties also brought the Red Roses victory over Wolves FC in the Virgin Islands, although the national rugby side defeated the Lancaster XV 20-0.

And, unsurprisingly given that the locals numbered ex-West Indies players in their side, the ship's cricket team lost out to the BVI Cricket Association - although only by 40 runs.

And there has - as the main image on this page shows - been time to enjoy the crystal clear waters of the Caribbean.

Some of the berths and locations visited have been 'totally tropical' - places you'd pay a fortune to visit on holiday... but came free to the sailors courtesy of the Queen (admittedly there was quite a bit of sweat and blood to get there).

So in Grand Turk, the frigate berthed at a jetty at the Margaritaville resort, a couple of miles south of the capital Cockburn Town.

The jetty might not look particularly impressive, but large ships can get to within 300ft of the shore - as the frigate found when the Carnival Victory, a 100,000-tonne 900ft cruise liner came alongside opposite it.

And in Grand Cayman there was the chance to visit 'stingray city', a sandbar which is renowned throughout the world for the large numbers of southern stingrays.

And in Puerto Rico there was a chance to embark US Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) - a staple diet of any counter-drugs mission carried out by RN or RFA vessels in the region, working hand-in-hand with a ship's own boarding team.

Oh, we're back to work again. Paradise can't last forever.



pictures: la(phot) jay allen, hms lancaster





'A man with a big heart'

THE great Naval family is one fewer – and all the poorer – with the loss of WW2 hero and the man at the forefront of the campaign to recognise Arctic convoy veterans, Cdr Eddie Grenfell.

The 93-year-old veteran of the Bismarck chase, Russian convoys and Corfu Channel Incident died on June 28 – just weeks after receiving the medal he had campaigned for 16 years on behalf of fellow sailors.

Cdr Grenfell spearheaded the fight to ensure sailors and airmen who undertook perilous convoys to Russia, delivering vital aid and war material for the Soviet effort against the Germans, were recognised.

The first Arctic Stars – a medal cast specifically for men who served on the runs to Russia between 1941 and 1945 – were issued this year, and Cdr Grenfell was its first recipient (pictured above).

He received that medal from Chief of Defence Staff Gen Sir David Richards at a ceremony in Portsmouth, who paid tribute to Cdr Grenfell on news of his passing.

"I was truly humbled to have been able to present Cdr Grenfell with his Arctic medal in Portsmouth in March. Eddie was a young sailor when he endured the hardships of the Arctic convoys which Winston Churchill called 'the worst journey in the world.'

"It was through his tireless efforts that the achievements and endurance of those involved in the convoys were given the recognition they deserve."

Born in Montrose in 1920, Eddie Grenfell started his service with the Royal Navy in 1940 as an ordinary seaman, progressed through all the lower-deck ranks to petty officer before being commissioned as sub-lieutenant in 1944.

He survived the sinking of the CAM ship Empire Lawrence, attacked by German Ju88 bombers during convoy PQ16 to Russia in May 1942.

At the war's end, he remained in the Royal Navy, rising to the rank of commander, serving with the Surface Fleet and Submarine Service, enjoyed a loan period with the Royal Australian Navy and finally as Assistant Naval Attaché at the British Embassy in Bonn, West Germany.

He left the RN in 1966, but remained in Germany, fostering Anglo-German relations. A keen singer, he formed the RN's largest choir at HMS Collingwood in the late 1950s, and sang with a German choir which he brought to Portsmouth on cultural exchanges.

As well as his fight for the Arctic Campaign medal, Cdr Grenfell encouraged wartime foes to become new friends by organising reunions involving veterans from both Germany and the UK.

His funeral took place at Portsmouth's Anglican Cathedral, where Canon Michael Tristram described the officer as "a man with a big heart and a yearning for justice and humanity".

Rescue stories sought for anniversary

THE Navy's rescuers are looking for 'rescuees' to help flesh out the story of 60 years of lifesaving.

Although tales of bravery from aircrew abound over six decades of Royal Navy Search and Rescue, what is in short supply are memories and testimonies of those they helped.

In this year of SAR60, organisers of events commemorating those rescues are appealing for the public – as well as former aircrew – to come forward with their stories.

Those first-hand accounts will help form the backbone of an on-going project to bring together all aspects of the service within a comprehensive archive – preserving the history for years

to come. Although the RN has officially been saving lives since 1953 – 840 souls were rescued in a single night that year during the terrible floods which struck eastern England – SAR statistics have only been compiled for the past 30 years.

In the three decades since records were kept, upwards of 10,000 people have been helped by the two remaining RN Search and Rescue units, HMS Gannet at Prestwick and 771 NAS.

Although rescues such as the 1979 Fastnet race, the Boscawle floods in 2004, the foundering of the Napoli in 2007 and the

Riverdance which ran aground at Blackpool in 2008 hit the headlines, the SAR60 team wants to hear from those helped by less dramatic rescues... less dramatic for the fliers that is.

The aircrews at Gannet, based at Prestwick, near Ayr, and 771, based at Culdrose in Cornwall, regularly carry out hospital transfers, or ferry road accident casualties to A&E and, in Gannet's case, especially, people injured or missing in the mountains.

Many such missions are 'ordinary' for the fliers, but far from ordinary for the people they help.

Nine other Royal Naval Air

Stations have been involved in Search and Rescue over the past 60 years. They were: Eglinton, near Londonderry; Ford, near Littlehampton in Sussex; Brawdy, near Haverfordwest; Gosport; Lee-on-Solent; Portland; Yeovilton; Lossiemouth; and Anthon on the Solway Coast in Cumbria.

To share your experiences, email navycu-771sar60@mod.uk including your name and contact details, as well as when you served or were rescued. Or write to RN SAR 60, 771 NAS, RNAS Culdrose, Helston, Cornwall, TR12 7RH. Please do not submit pictures.

See www.royalnavy.mod.uk/News-and-Events/Special-Events/SAR-60 for more details.



'Wes had two families – us and the Marines'

THE career of 19-year-old Royal Marine Wesley Clutterbuck was tragically curtailed after he was fatally punched on a night out.

The teenager, who earned his coveted green beret in November last year after nine months of training at CTCRM in Lymstone, was hit during a night out in Rochdale at the end of June.

He was knocked to the ground and suffered fatal head injuries. He died the following day after his life support machine was turned off.

After passing out of Lymstone he joined 43 Commando in Faslane – and quickly made his mark on his fellow green berets as he trained with them on exercises in Spain and the UK.

"Wes had two families, us and the Royal Marines," said his mother Sara Whitworth.

"Ever since he was small he wanted to be a Marine and last year he achieved his dream and was very happy to be doing a job he loved.

"We will miss his smile and his happy face.

"Wes will be missed but will be in our hearts forever."

Col Al Litster, Wesley's Commanding Officer in charge of 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group said the young marine had already made his mark on the unit, proving to be "universally popular" and "an inspiration to his peers".

Col Litster continued: "He lived his life for the things he cherished the most, his family and his friends, and my thoughts and prayers are with them all at this very difficult time.

"Mne Wes Clutterbuck was a fantastic, engaging and professional young man who will be remembered as a truly exceptional Royal Marine."

Mne Alan Laing, who served with Wesley both at Lymstone and at 43 Cdo, added:

"During training, Wesley would be there to help all the members of 142 Recruit Troop. He would always put others before himself, giving up his free time to help friends in need, never asking for anything in return.

"He was a great marine and an even better friend."

In keeping with the young marine's wishes, his organs were donated upon his death.

"Throughout his short life Wes was a caring loving son and brother who always thought of others and would help anyone at any time," his mother said.

■ Twenty-year-old Reece Kay from Rochdale pleaded guilty to Mne Clutterbuck's manslaughter. He was due to be sentenced at Manchester Crown Court as Navy News went to press.



Crazy A's big day on Victory

FORMED up on the quarterdeck of Britain's most famous warship are the 40-plus sailors who until recently guided one of the nation's smaller vessels safely around the Gulf.

The crew of HMS Atherstone were invited aboard Nelson's flagship as a thank-you for their efforts keeping the Royal Navy's mine warfare forces at the very top of their game through the winter of 2012-13 and into the spring.

Unless they bring one of the four Bahrain-based minehunters all the way home to Blighty (which happens every three or so years), crews are denied the homecomings their colleagues deploying in other RN vessels enjoy.

Instead, they step off an aircraft – none of the pomp, ceremony and emotion you get from a Pusser's Grey sailing past Round Tower or

Devil's Point with families cheering.

So to formally acknowledge the efforts of the most recent 'owners' of HMS Atherstone (2nd Mine Countermeasures Squadron Crew 1), Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel asked the crew to join him on Victory for a ceremony recognising their achievements during the six and half months aboard the Crazy A.

"I can think of no more suitable place to welcome you home, than HMS Victory," Vice Admiral Steel told the assembled sailors.

"On behalf of First Sea Lord and myself, we fully appreciate the high level of operation involved in your most impressive of deployments and we do not underestimate the significance of your role in the Royal Navy."

The deployment reached its climax with the

massive International Mine Counter-Measures Exercise in May, during which the BBC and ITV both embarked on Atherstone to record her in action.

Over the course of the deployment, Atherstone's Seafox robot submersible was launched more than 100 times as her crew honed their hunting skills in what Atherstone's CO, Lt Cdr Ben Vickery, called "often testing and demanding conditions".

In doing so, Lt Cdr Vickery said, the Crazy A had continued to enhance "the Royal Navy's reputation as a world leader in the field of mine counter-measures".

Crew 1 have now taken charge of Atherstone's Hunt-class sister HMS Hurworth, training around the UK.

Picture: LA(Phot) Arron Hoare, FRPU East

Cougar prepares to prowl

ELEVEN warships and auxiliaries, plus elements of Naval Air Squadrons, Royal Marines units, and battlefield armour leave UK shores this month.

For the next four months, the UK's Response Force Task Group – the maritime force formed under the 2010 Defence Review to react to world events as the government directs it – will hone its amphibious skills thousands of miles from home.

It's the third run-out for the task group which conducts its annual exercises – codenamed Cougar – directed from the nation's flagship HMS Bulwark.

Aboard the Devonport-based assault ship are the Commander UK Task Group – Cdre Paddy McAlpine – and his staff, choreographing the efforts of several thousand sailors, commandos and aircrew.

Joining Bulwark will be veteran helicopter carrier HMS Illustrious,

springboard for aerial operations, with frigates HMS Montrose and Westminster providing escort duties.

Montrose is also due to reprise her role from Cougar 12 as the launchpad for small Royal Marines reconnaissance parties, sent ashore to scout the lay of the land and 'enemy' forces.

As well as embarking upon Bulwark, the Royal Marines – including elements of 42 Commando, the nation's lead commando group, Commando Logistics Regiment who meet all their supply and medical needs, and 16 Vikings of the Corps' Armoured Support Group – will be carried aboard RFAs Mounts Bay and Lyme Bay. Additional heavy duty carrying will be provided by the ro-ro lift ship MV Hurst Point.

Tanker RFA Wave Knight will keep the force topped up with fuel; RFA Fort Austin will provide stores, fuel, water, and ammunition as a 'one-stop shop' floating warehouse; and floating garage RFA Diligence will attend to any of the Cougar force's engineering requirements.

The first major exercise for the force will be in the Adriatic, Albanian Lion, to work with that country's armed forces – building on a similar exercise last year with the goal being to put 42 Commando ashore and sustain it as it moves inland.

After Albania, the task group is due to shift east of Suez for a series of exercises with the UK's allies, reaching its climax with two big workouts in the small African republic of Djibouti, one to test the group's ability to work in desert/hot weather conditions, the

second putting the Royal Marines of 30 Commando IX Group ashore.

"Cougar 13 is a wonderful opportunity to remind everyone of the utility of the Royal Navy," Cdre McAlpine stressed.

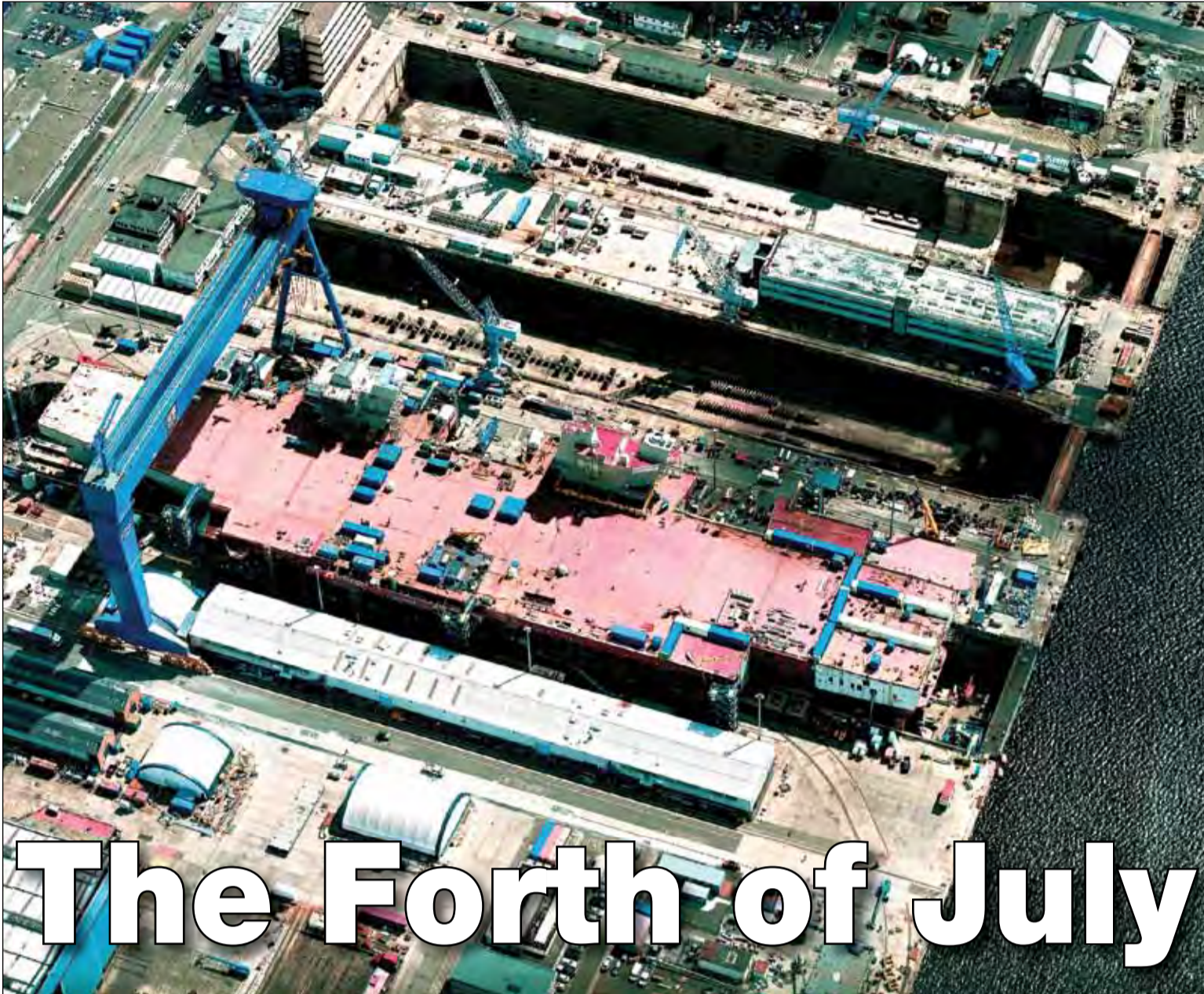
"This task group which deploys on Cougar 13 is going to take every opportunity to engage with our partner nations through a series of exercises, reinforcing our commitment and demonstrating our contribution to security in the Mediterranean and Gulf region.

"We will also be well placed to act to any contingency which may arise."

The bulk of the task group is due home in the UK in December, although Diligence, Westminster and Montrose are due to remain east of Suez in support of the Navy's long-standing mission in the region to keep the sea lanes safe and secure for lawful trade.

■ Vikings' training, page 23





THIS is a magnificent sight to behold – and we don't mean the July sunshine sparkling on the calm waters of the Forth.

This is HMS Queen Elizabeth – physically almost complete – as seen when photographers from the Aircraft Carrier Alliance went aloft to record progress on the Navy's next-generation carrier.

They took to the skies over Rosyth just days after the ship's aft island – home to the flight deck's 'aircraft control tower' – was installed to give people an idea of the scale of the project, and how close the 65,000-tonne leviathan is to completion.

The aft island was lowered into place by the enormous Goliath crane (the big blue gantry on the left of this photograph) on a rather damper, greyer day in early July.

At 10.10am precisely on July 5, to the cacophony of apprentices sounding air horns, the island settled on the flight deck, sealing a plaque featuring the insignia of the Royal Navy, Royal Air Force and British Army beneath it.

All that remains to add to the Queen now are two sponsons on her flight deck and her ski jump ramp.

The first of the five pieces of the ramp was installed in mid-July. By October, HMS Queen Elizabeth will be complete outwardly – although there's a lot of work inside to finish off. And she still needs to be painted a traditional RN grey.

To date only the window seals and frames on the carrier's two islands are painted in her final livery. Everything else requires at least one, or more, coatings of paint (there will be five layers on the finished ship – in all she requires 1,500,000 square metres of paintwork, which would turn an area the size of London's Hyde Park grey).

Those coatings – including a special paint on the flight deck which will be sufficiently resistant to take the poundings from aircraft landing and the heat from the jet engines of the F35 Lighting II strike fighters – will be applied over the coming 12 months in time for the carrier's launch next summer.

On a daily basis, around 2,000 people are working on the future carrier project in Rosyth alone. A further 8,000 are working in five more shipyards, plus factories and suppliers across the land, not just on Queen Elizabeth but also her sister Prince of Wales; the latter's bow is already on the Forth, waiting for the rest of the ship to join it.

"There are thousands of skilled men and women working on this programme and they should all feel proud of what they are accomplishing," said Ian Booth, the aircraft carrier programme director.

"These new images really clearly show how far this programme has come. We're well on the way towards delivering a world-class aircraft carrier that will represent the UK globally for the next 50 years.

"By the end of this year HMS Queen Elizabeth will be fully assembled and we are already looking forward to her launch next year."

The Forth of July

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● Even better than the real thing... Oliver Burton shows off his inflatable Vulcan for his mum Victoria and (below) Swordfish pilot Lt Cdr Mark Jameson chats with former Stringbag TAG John Jones



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The RN & RM Children's is a National Charity based in Portsmouth. We care for children of men and women who have served or are serving in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

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 or Laurene Smith
 RN & RM Children's Fund
 311 Twyford Avenue
 Portsmouth
 PO2 8RN
 Telephone: 023 9263 9534
 Fax: 023 9267 7574
 Email: rncchildren@btconnect.com

Past Present FUTURE

SHARING the same airspace the past and future of Naval aviation – the legendary Swordfish, the soon-to-prowl Wildcat – just two of the treats lined up in the Somerset skies for the 35,000 folk who baked in the July sun at Yeovilton Air Day.

Visitors who converged on the air station for its annual day of all-action displays were treated to perfection: perfect flying conditions – not a cloud in the azure blue sky; perfect performances from a myriad of vintage and present-day aircraft; and a perfect ending, with the trademark – and spectacular – commando assault.

This year's airborne line-up produced some dazzling, soaring displays, with a range of international jet fighters, such as the powerful and agile Czech SAAB Gripen wowing the crowds.

In an intense performance showing off its powerful acceleration and agility, the aircraft's brilliantly-colourful artwork blurred as it sped past the crowds. The Gripen – Swedish for 'griffin' – drew graceful curves across the Somerset skies, the wash of intense noise vibrating across the levels to inspire a whole new generation of young fighter pilots captivated and awestruck by these ear-splitting crowd pleasers.

The aerial 'arena' at Yeovilton is also one of the few locations where the public can watch the fireworks display that is a Royal Navy helicopter testing its defensive aid suite, spewing white-hot, sparkling defensive flares into the ether; the crowds responded with open-mouthed gasps of wonder and a flurry of enthusiastic camera shutters captured the glittering fireworks.

On the ground the arch rivals of HMS Heron (Yeovilton) and Seahawk (Culdrose) did battle in the field gun arena.

More sedate entertainment was provided by the Royal Marines Band, or you could chat to foreign crews standing proudly next to their visiting aircraft: a Belgian Air Force Hercules; the Czech Air Force with their CN295M transporter; The German Navy added to the

Westland Lynx variants with their well-dressed Lynx Mk 8; the Poles brought a colourful Bryza; and the Dutch completed the international line-up on the ground with two glossy Pilatus PC-7 Turbo trainers with distinctive black and yellow markings.

Back in the skies over Yeovilton, an RAF Chinook solo display seemingly defied gravity with an impressive turn for the crowd. And a Typhoon from 29(R) Squadron flown by Flt Lt Jamie Norris caught the eyes – and especially ears – of aviation spotters in a brilliant outing.

Not to be outdone, the RN's very own Lynx display team the Black Cats. Sadly, this year there's only one cat, so pilot Lt 'A J' Thompson flew with gusto. "It's a great thrill performing in front of your home crowd," he said. "We do many flying displays around the country during the season, but Yeovilton is special."

So much for the present. On Fleet Air Arm home turf nothing makes the hairs on the back of your neck bristle more than the sight of British naval aviation's greatest aircraft lumbering through the heavens.

Watching the Fairey Swordfish intently was one of the dwindling band of brothers who flew them on active service seven decades ago.

Former Petty Officer John Jones, 89, served in the Fleet Air Arm from 1941-45, including time as a telegraphist/air gunner in the Stringbag.

That came after flying the Lysander spotter plane on communications exercises with one Laurence Olivier at the controls. The great actor served with the Fleet Air Arm through the first half of WW2 and, although he never flew on front-line missions, he clocked up several hundred flying hours as Naval reservist.

"He was," says John, "very normal. I met his wife Vivien Leigh and we all got on very well."

While the future lord went on to make the stirring Henry

V, John Jones joined escort carrier HMS Biter safeguarding shipping crossing the Atlantic, up, up, and down, tiddly, down, down, with Lt Cdr Mark Jameson (who flies with 815 NAS in his day job) at the controls.

John was flying back to Biter when a snowstorm engulfed his aircraft.

"There was white-out," he recalled. "I could see nothing. The best I could do was work out a bearing for Iceland and we were forced to crash land there because we only had vapours of air fuel remaining at the most."

He managed to make radio contact with a radio station which relayed his situation to Biter and then made contact with a US military base. He was picked up by US forces' ponies used as beasts of burden.

"It was all a bit surreal being rescued by pony train. I removed as many parts of the Swordfish as I could," he remembered. "It was important not to leave them because they could have been of interest to any enemy."

"I was lucky enough to be transferred to the US base and I couldn't believe my eyes at the luxury the personnel enjoyed compared with what we were used to. There was so much food!"

Even in good weather, sorties over the Atlantic were rarely benign. "Landing was very much a hit-and-miss affair," said John.

"The ships moved up and down a lot, especially in the Atlantic swell. We were often bounced over the barrier protecting the planes parked on the flight deck when a 50-foot wave caused the ship to veer up. When this happened planes were written off and they had to be pushed over board into the sea because they couldn't be repaired at sea and were an obstruction."

No such hazards at Yeovilton

on a pristine summer's day. The Swordfish safely went up, tiddly, up, up, and down, tiddly, down, down, with Lt Cdr Mark Jameson (who flies with 815 NAS in his day job) at the controls.

Another vintage FAA crowdpleaser from the Historic Flight was the graceful Sea Fury with a superb solo performance. It then flew alongside a Douglas Skyraider – reminders of some of the Fleet Air Arm's last piston-engined machines. The two Naval aircraft were joined by Peter Teichman in his P-51D Mustang for a number of formation passes before his solo display.

And so to the grand finale. Guns. Bombs. Explosions. Royal Marines over-acting. Yeovilton Air Day wouldn't want it any other way.

Every year the Commando assault – the air station is, after all, home to the Commando Helicopter Force – brings air day to an end... and invariably brings the house down.

The emphasis of this year's air day was on teamwork. Which fitted in nicely with the closing assault: armoured vehicles, Royal Marines cammed up and armed to the teeth, Jungle Sea Kings, Apaches, Lynx and Wildcats buzzing about overhead. And lots of bangs. And fire. And smoke. Enough to excite kids (and big kids).

And that was air day 2013. Thirty-five thousand people went home hot but happy... which pleased Yeovilton's CO Cdr Jock Alexander:

"It's been an absolutely fantastic turnout. The sun came out for us this year for our spectacular International Air Day. The crowds have gone home happy and contented."

Pictures: Cdr Ian Pears, PO(Phot) Mez Merrill, LA(Phot) Caroline Davies and SAC Tim Laurence

● V is for Vulcan... The Cold War warrior roars through the Somerset skies and (right) smoke swirls around a Jungle Sea King and Lynx during the commando assault





An Ernest challenge

WITH the weak winter sun glinting on the snow-laden slopes and peaks of Berntsen Ridge, two Royal Navy sailors in camouflage are almost swallowed up by the scree slope leading down to the abandoned whaling station of Stromness.

And thus does a trek across the snow, ice and stones of South Georgia draw to a close for a dozen men from HMS Argyll as they retraced some of the route carved by Sir Ernest Shackleton 97 years ago.

A 12-strong team from the Devonport-based frigate volunteered to make the crossing of the South Atlantic island in the depths of the Austral winter – just as Shackleton himself did in May 1916.

In doing so, Sir Ernest raised the alarm that the men of his Trans-Antarctic expedition were trapped on Elephant Island, 800 miles away, ensuring they were subsequently rescued.

Shackleton struggled across 26 miles of mountainous, snow-covered South Georgia. Ninety-seven years on and Argyll's operations officer Lt Cdr Simon Cox set his shipmates the challenge of repeating the final leg of his journey – from Fortuna Bay to desolate Stromness – to test not just their physical strength but their command and leadership skills.

The expedition was opened up to the entire ship's company – 190 strong – and there was no shortage of volunteers, but numbers were limited to 12.

The chosen dozen set about preparing for the task by researching the route, weather – if you're lucky, temperatures can reach double figures, but typically it's closer to just above freezing... and if your luck's out, it can drop to -15°C – navigation, wildlife and also planning what to do in an emergency.

And then they were flown into Fortuna Bay, on the north side of the island, by Argyll's Lynx helicopter – callsign Eagle 1 – to begin the trek.

The seven-mile route to Stromness required them to work their way past fur seals, king penguins and elephant seals, scale several snow-capped peaks, avoid avalanches, hidden lakes and rivers, and descend past Shackleton's waterfall and into Stromness harbour.

"To recreate the final steps of Sir Ernest Shackleton's voyage was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, one I'll never forget," said AB(WS) 'Bungy' Williams.

Once they reached Stromness the 12 explorers had the chance to assist British Antarctic Survey scientists. Trekking another two miles over extremely rough terrain and overcoming steep mountain sides, the team had the task of moving some of the scientists' kit from one of its remote sites back to the headquarters in South Georgia's 'capital' Grytviken for safekeeping over the rest of the winter.

That work meant manhandling a generator, survey equipment and food stores from the site to the nearest beach so Eagle 1 could winch it aboard Argyll for onward passage to Grytviken just 18 miles away by sea.

"There aren't many jobs you get to do this kind of stuff. It was an exhilarating day's work in the Royal Navy with a superb group of sailors demonstrating outstanding teamwork in one of the most beautiful places on the planet. It doesn't get much better than that," said Lt Cdr Cox.

PO Chris Carte, one of Argyll's operations room team, added: "Using real-life heroes like Shackleton as an inspiration shows what can be achieved through determination and leadership. Challenging activities like this are key to developing individual leadership styles."

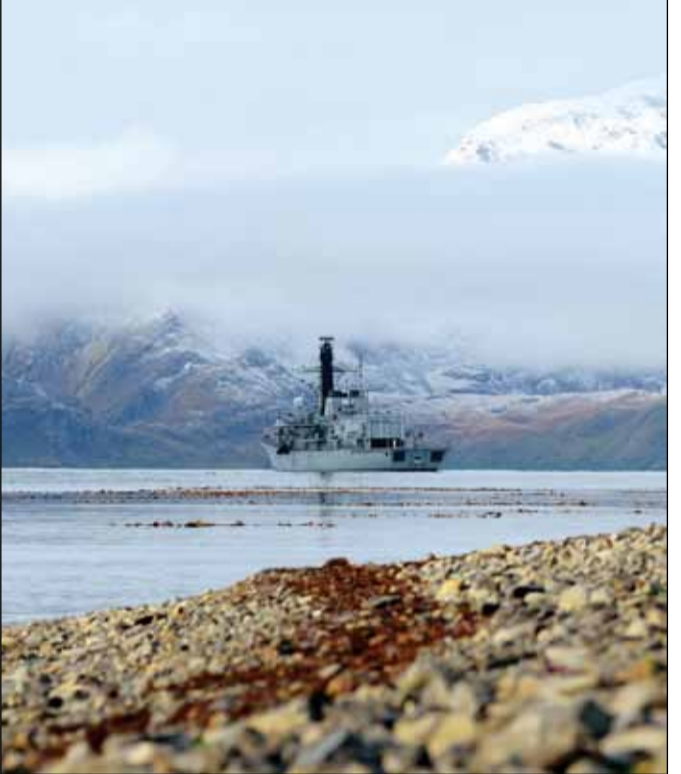
After Eagle 1 had ferried the BAS equipment it returned to the shore to pick up the 12 explorers and return them to the ship, offering them yet more stunning views of the island.

"I'm immensely proud of my 'band of brothers'," said the frigate's Commanding Officer Cdr Tim Neild. "This event epitomises the team ethos in HMS Argyll. It's one of a series of command and leadership challenges we've set throughout the deployment to enhance the ship's company's personal development to prepare them for their onward careers."

His ship is in the later stages of her wide-ranging Atlantic deployment which has taken her to much of western and southern Africa, and Britain's South Atlantic territories. She's due home in Devonport next month.



pictures: la(phot) pepe hogan and hms argyll's ship's company



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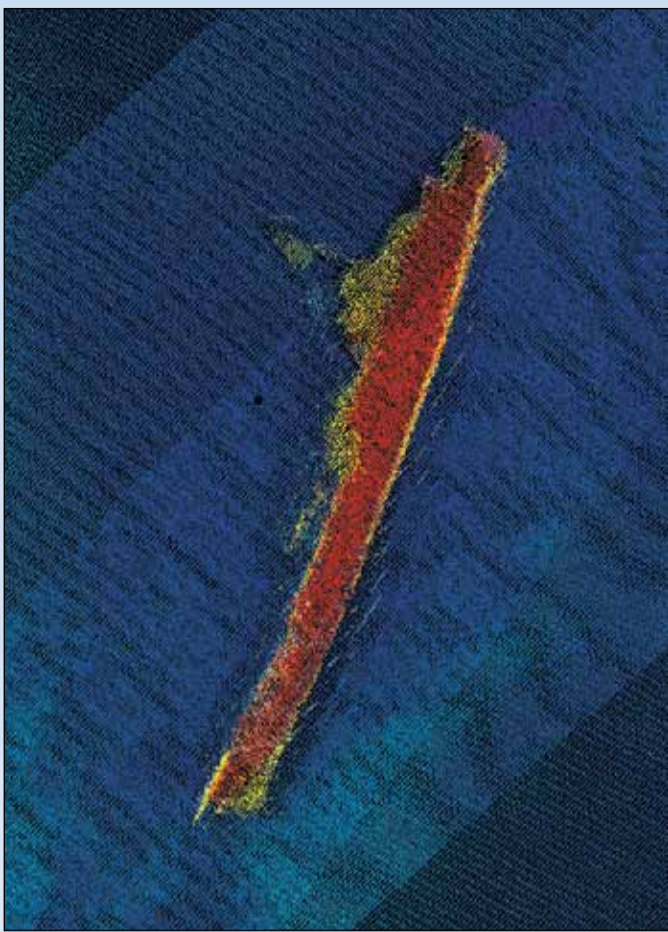
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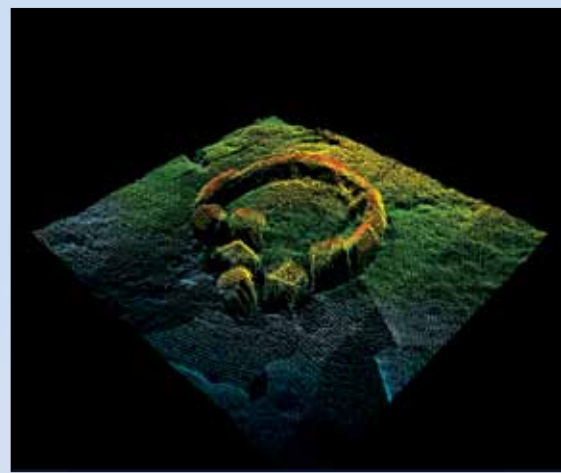
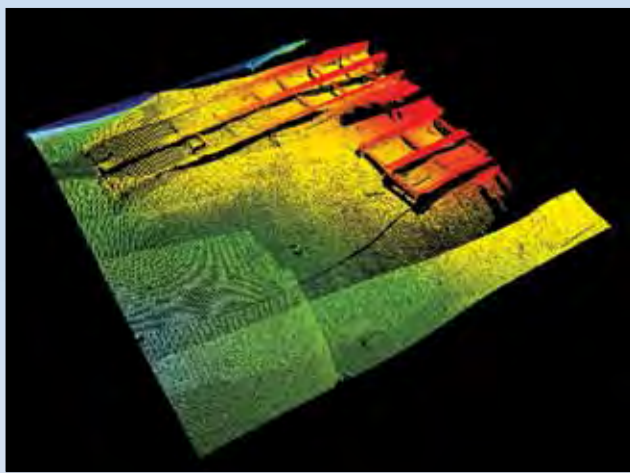
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● The wreck of a warship, possibly the amphibious landing ship *Ibn Qis* which was destroyed in the late '70s, found by Echo half a dozen miles off Al Khums and (below) the decaying remains of a merchantman



pictures: ls(hm) andrew coutanche, hms echo



● Scantastic voyage... (l-r) Sunken pontoons in Tripoli harbour; the sunken 'ring', probably a buoy mooring, again in Tripoli harbour; part of the wreck of the *Ibn Qis*

To the shores

BUT, mercifully, without the Halls of Montezuma first...

Historic wars (hot and cold), and the recent revolution in Libya scarred not just the sands of the North African republic, but her waters too as HMS Echo found during a fruitful ten-day survey off the Tripolitanian coast.

The Devonport-based ship was the first Royal Navy vessel into Libya after the 2011 civil war and downfall of Col Gaddafi.

About this time last year, CO Cdr Matt Syrett and his ship's company were enjoying a cup of coffee in Martyrs' Square – Green Square under Gaddafi, who used to address the masses from his balcony.

The ship spent some time mapping the waters off the coast (and located the wreck of a WW2 Liberty Ship).

But there was no time to carry out a concerted survey of Libya's waters – her visit came in the final days of a 19-month marathon deployment.

Twelve months on and the North African nation was, if not the first port of call, then the location for Echo's first concerted surveying effort.

Surveying always uncovers something new. A couple of dhows on the seabed in Dubai's harbour. A 'Grand Canyon'-esque, er, canyon in the Red Sea. Echo herself found a sea mount "the

size of the Rock of Gibraltar", again in the Red Sea, in the spring of 2012.

More typically, it's shifting sands and contours and, if you're lucky, perhaps an undiscovered shipwreck.

Libya's coast, however, proved to be a proverbial goldmine.

In ten days the state-of-the-art sonar suites both of mother ship Echo and her hi-tech survey boat Sapphire located one liner, two merchantmen, one warship, two fishing vessels, at least half a dozen shipping containers, two barges (one of them wooden) and four very large sunken pontoons.

Not found – despite extensive searching – were the wreck of the USS Philadelphia, burned in Tripoli harbour during the First Barbary Wars (and immortalised in the US Marine Corps' hymn...) or the Neptunia and Oceania.

The latter were Italian liners pressed into service to ferry German and Italian troops to North Africa in 1941. Both were torpedoed and sunk within minutes of each other some 60 miles off Tripoli by legendary submariner Lt Cdr David Wanklyn VC and HMS Upholder.

Echo searched 15 square miles of seabed – about the size of Portsmouth – looking for the 590ft liners at their reported last positions, but to no avail.

There was success, however, 70 miles along the coast from Tripoli off the port of Al Khums

(or Khoms).

At 32° 42' 31"N, 14° 20' 57"E – half a dozen miles from shore – the sonar scanners picked up the unmistakable outline of a warship.

"It's always exciting when we locate something on the seabed that no-one knows about," said Lt Jen Smith, who was Echo's Officer of the Watch when the wreck was discovered.

"A lot of merchant shipping waits at anchor in this area if there are no spaces in the port.

"Now we know about this wreck, we can warn them all to stay clear and avoid any danger."

And the wreck's identity? Well its length – 298ft (91m) – draft – 7-10ft (2-3m) – and outline suggest it could be a Soviet-built Polnocny-class landing ship which could disgorge armour on to a beach. Col Gaddafi had four such ships but one, the *Ibn Qis*, burned out in a training exercise in 1978.

There is at least no doubting the provenance of the Al Ghardabia. Bombed, with huge holes torn in its side, the frigate capsized alongside in Tripoli Harbour.

It is a very visible hazard in the port of the Libyan capital.

Less-well-known to mariners – until now, that is – were other obstacles and obstructions peppering the harbour bed.

Such as a buoy mooring, rising out of the seabed like some ancient monument or burial site; the striking ring structure – which has a radius of about 16 metres

(52ft) and stands 1.5m (5ft) above the seabed in water only 7.5m (24ft) deep.

Other hazards charted in glorious garish Technicolor by Echo include piles and pillars, submerged pontoons and the remnants of a ferry pier. Tripoli Harbour provides rich pickings for side-scan sonar... and a myriad of problems for mariners.

In all, Echo surveyed some 46.8 square nautical miles – that's the size of Norwich – of sea, gathering reams of data which will be shared with the Libyan Hydrographic Office so the area's charts can be updated.

With more accurate (ie safe) charts, shipping companies will be more willing to send their vessels to Libyan ports, generating trade and thus, hopefully, stimulate the country's economy.

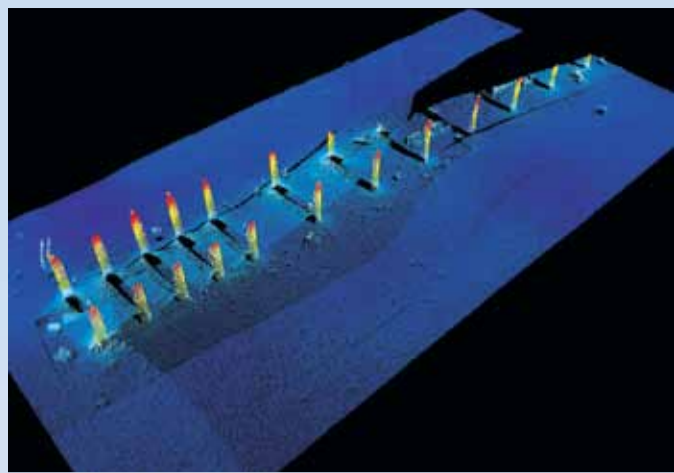
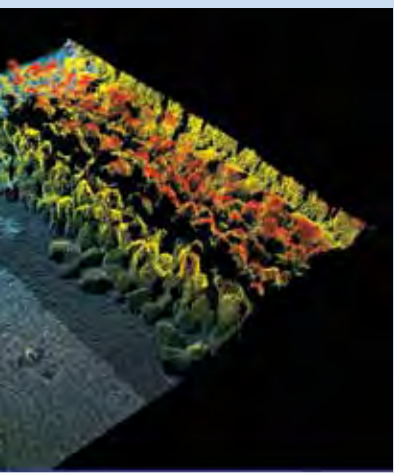
"The data we have gathered will mean that merchant vessels can enter Libyan waters with confidence," says Cdr Syrett.

"It's really important that the people of Libya have the opportunity to support their new government."

It is now nearly two years since Gaddafi and his henchmen were ousted from power. The country left in their wake is still finding its feet – and is still far from a safe and secure environment (the UK government advises against all but essential travel to Libya).

What was still operational in the Libyan Navy before the 2011





Water outside the Libyan capital; and some sunken pilings from a collapsed pier structure

of Tripoli

civil war was mostly wiped out (NATO air strikes did for the Al Ghardabia and the corvette Ain Zaara). A frigate and corvette fell into the then-rebel hands, otherwise there's not much left.

So as in Iraq, a new navy needs to be forged – and indeed is being forged, not least with the help of foreign tutelage.

HMS Kent hosted Libyan officers when she visited the country this spring.

Echo did likewise, inviting several Libyan sailors aboard as she conducted her survey work.

The guests learned about modern surveying methods including side scan sonar, satellite positioning and electronic data collection to allow the Libyan Navy to take responsibility for mapping their waters in the future.

"I am delighted that we've been able to build upon the relationship started when we visited last year," said Cdr Syrett.

"The Libyan sailors we have worked alongside have shown themselves to be professional and capable throughout and I am confident that the work we have undertaken and the training provided will make a real impact on the redevelopment of these ports for the Libyan people."

Lt Hassan Oun from the Libyan Navy said: "Our brief time on HMS Echo afforded myself and my men a useful introduction into hydrographic surveying

operations and the continued co-operation between our navies will enhance our ability to conduct our own surveys in the future."

Once alongside in Tripoli, Echo served as the venue for high-level talks between Chief of the General Staff General Sir Peter Wall and counterparts in the Libyan Armed Forces to discuss the UK's pledge to train troops as part of an international commitment to train 7,000 members of the country's military.

"Being part of the UK government's contribution towards a stable future for Libya is something that my entire team can be proud of," says Echo's CO. And talking of teams...

Among the more unusual items offloaded from the survey ship in the Libyan capital, rugby goalposts, awaiting delivery to Tripoli's Sport City complex.

Rugby was banned for much of Gaddafi's rule (it was deemed too violent...) but since the tyrant's fall, the game has flourished once more – indeed the Echo-Tripoli clash drew national media interest.

The Tripoli select XV were drawn from three local sides who play 7s regularly, but don't play the full version of the game too often.

And the Echo side was drawn from, er, HMS Echo (complement 54). Not all of the ship's company play rugby and even those who do were a little rusty. Aside from six regulars, the remainder of the

squad comprised first timers or people who'd not touched oddly-shaped balls since school.

After a brief training session the game kicked off with the match having to be broken into quarters because of the intense heat (high 30's Celsius).

The first quarter set an indicator for how the match would play out with the Libyans storming ahead to a 34-point lead.

By the end of the fourth quarter the Echo team had begun to flag due to the heat and the fitness of the Libyans with the final score 43-17 to the hosts.

"The Libyans showed that their training and fitness is paying off and they really appreciated the game, as they are starting to prepare for the North Africa League," said Cdr Syrett.

"Local interest was high with a number of journalists and a local television company filming the match for their report on the local news.

"Echo's team showed enthusiasm and pride, despite the final score. Hopefully as the deployment goes on, this early potential will see them grow into a reputable team."

His ship will be away from home for the next 15-16 months as she surveys the waters of the Med and those east of Suez. One third of her crew are changed every few weeks to keep them fresh and sustain Echo's lengthy mission.



All smiles from the Libyan Navy's Lt Hassar Oun as he takes a ride in one of Echo's sea boats and (top) the Libyan and White Ensigns fly side-by-side on Echo's survey motor boat Sapphire.

With that hair cut, it could only be a Libyan player running with the ball as a select XV host a scratch Echo side and (bottom) the battered frigate Al Ghardabia lies on her starboard side in Tripoli harbour



W...W...W...W...Wild things

LOOKS like a Lynx. Flies like a Lynx (give or take a bit).

But it's not a Lynx. The tailboom is the most obvious giveaway – if you're outside.

And if you're inside, well it's a whole new world. Out with the analogue. In with the digital. Lots of glass.

Exploring this new world, the air and ground crew of 700W Naval Air Squadron – W for Wildcat, the RN's first new aircraft in over a decade and successor to the trusty Lynx which has served the Fleet Air Arm so well since the 1970s.

700W got their hands on Wildcat back in February (you might remember our impressive March cover image...), since when the milestones have been flying by (sorry).

700 were originally given the AH Mk1 (the Army Air Corps variant) to play with. Come May 1 they got their hands on the first naval model, the HMA (Helicopter Maritime Attack) Mk2.

And what do you do with a maritime helicopter? You take it to sea.

The first deck landings were successfully carried out on RFA Mounts Bay in June off the South Coast.

And that same month, 700W began imparting their knowledge to fellow Navy fliers as they began the first conversion course to learn about the new helicopter.

The 700 team were taught how to use Wildcat by its builders, AgustaWestland, just down the road from the home of the Wildcat (RNAS Yeovilton) in Yeovil.

There are currently five fully-qualified Navy Wildcat pilots and six observers – although



River Plate	1939
Norway	1940
Spartivento	1940
Atlantic	1940-41
Matapan	1941
Mediterranean	1942
North Africa	1942-43
Normandy	1944

Motto: *experientia docet* – experience teaches
 Aircraft: AgustaWestland AW159 Wildcat HMA Mk2
 Engines: 2 x LHTEC CTS800-4N turboshaft, generating 1,015 kW (1,361 hp) each
 Rotor Diameter: 12.8m (42ft)
 Length: 15.22m (50ft)
 Height: 3.73m (12ft 3in)
 Weight: 4,700kg unladen (10,360lb)
 Speed: 157kts (180mph)
 Range: 420 nautical miles (483 miles)
 Crew: one pilot, one observer, one aircrewman
 Sensors: Seaspray 7400E radar; Wescam MX15-di EOD
 Weapons: .5in M3M gun; Sting Ray torpedo; Future Anti-Surface Guided Weapon

with the conversion courses now under way those numbers will swell.

Behind them 44 engineers and maintainers looking after the three Mk2s and two Mk1s, so the helicopters can clock up around 80 hours a month.

Learning – and teaching people – to fly Wildcat is only part of the 700W mission.

Wildcat doesn't just fly from A to B. It's an all-singing, all-dancing, submarine-sinking, pirate-busting, drug-runner-following, life-saving bit of kit.

So tactical development – how to use Wildcat on the front line – is fundamental to what 700W do.

They'll work tirelessly to that end over the next six months.

And they'll begin to show the rest of the RN what this new Gucci bit of kit can do during

this autumn's Joint Warrior war games off Scotland.

In between they've been showing off the helicopter at Culdrose and Yeovilton air days to the FAA faithful, and further afield at RIAT, Waddington, with a scheduled appearance at Dunsfold over the August Bank Holiday weekend.

In the 73 years of its eclectic and spasmodic existence (it has frequently stood up and disbanded, at different air stations around the FAA empire), 700 has probably flown more aircraft than any other naval squadron.

Past aircraft read like a Who's Who (or What's What) of 75 years of naval aviation.

Swordfish. Seafire. Sea Hurricane. Helldiver. Wildcat. Sea Vixen. Sea Vampire. Phantom. Meteor. Lynx. Scimitar.

Wildcat (not the current one but the wartime Grumman fighter). Hellcat. Fulmar. Buccaneer. Sea Fury. Sea Hawk. Wessex. Sea King.

It's been based at Worthy Down. Hatston. Twatt. Merryfield. Yeovilton. Culdrose. Eglinton. Daedalus. Portland. Cocoa Beach (Florida). Aboukir. Ford. Lossiemouth.

700 didn't begin life as an operational evaluation squadron. It started off as the headquarters unit for aircraft launched by catapults on the big ships of the day, such as Walrus flying boats.

Indeed through most of the war years, 700 was at the front much more than it was behind it. Only late in 1944, as a test pilot training squadron, did it begin to move towards its present-day role.

That transition really began in the 1950s as a trials and evaluation squadron for new aircraft being introduced into service. A suffix letter is added to designate that new aircraft: B for Buccaneer, S for Sea King, P for Phantom; it's not a hard and fast rule though – A for Sea Harrier, X for Scimitar, Z for a slew of aircraft in the early '60s.

By far its longest incarnation has been with the suffix M, M for Merlin.

From the end of 1998 until the spring of 2008, 700M squeezed every last ounce of information out of the Merlin Mk1, not just operating in and around the home of the helicopter – RNAS Culdrose – but conducting trials around the globe.

The squadron returned to the Fleet Air Arm fold on May 14 2009.

Picture: AgustaWestland

IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES

THE summer of 1943 and although the days of the battleship are on the wane, the greatest castle of steel ever to sail under the White Ensign pummels Axis positions at Catania.

From the archives of the Imperial War Museum, this photograph captures the 15in barrels of HMS Warspite spewing iron, steel and fire during Operation Husky, the invasion of Sicily, in July 1943.

Each 15in shell weighed nearly two tons. A broadside from Warspite hurled over 15 tonnes of metal and high explosive at a foe at over 1,800 miles an hour – well in excess of Mach 2. Accuracy at ranges of 20,000 yards (over 11 miles) was no problem; off Sicily she closed to within 7,000 yards (four miles) on occasions.

Sicily would be the tenth of 15 battle honours the battleship earned (more than any other single ship in Royal Navy history) to add to the ten already won by her predecessors down the centuries.

By the summer of 1943 Warspite was both battle-scarred (Jutland and Crete especially) and battle-proven (Narvik and Matapan).

At Sicily her mission was twofold: to provide what today we term Naval Gunfire Support, hammering enemy positions on land (Catania, on Sicily's east coast, was turned to rubble) and to engage the capital ships of the Regia Marina should it choose to intervene.

The Italian Fleet chose not to. After its bruising at Taranto and Matapan it had withdrawn to La Spezia on the northwest coast. And there its trio of Littorio-class battleships – on paper very serious opponents for Warspite – stayed.

Only in September did the Italian Fleet emerge from harbour – to surrender in an echo of *Der Tag* in November 1918 when the entire German High Seas Fleet had capitulated to the Royal Navy (Warspite was present at that too...). Warspite sailed to meet her former foes and escort the vanquished towards internment in Malta.

The Germans didn't take too kindly to their ally throwing in the towel. On September 9 they struck at the surrendering Italian battleships. A specialist Luftwaffe unit armed with radio-controlled bombs attacked the battleships Roma and Italia.

The Italia was damaged, but survived. Not so the Roma. Hit at least twice, one of her magazines exploded. She quickly capsized, broke in two and sank taking two thirds of her complement with her.

The Luftwaffe attack was an augur of what lay in store for Warspite. With the invasion of mainland Italy – Operation Avalanche – now under way, and faltering, Warspite and her sister Valiant were ordered in to Salerno to pound enemy positions.

And in doing so they drew the attention of the Luftwaffe – once again armed with guided bombs (known by both sides as the 'Fritz X'). Three were launched at the battleship. One passed astern. A second was a near miss. But the third struck somewhere near her funnel and passed through the heart of Warspite, ripping a hole 20ft long in her bottom.

Only nine men were killed in the attack, but Warspite's Mediterranean mission was over. Towed to Malta for patching up, then to Gibraltar and finally Rosyth for more substantial repairs, she would not enter the fray again until June 6 1944, once again giving the enemy a pummelling – this time in Normandy.

■ THIS photograph (A 18492) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.





● Royal Marines musicians at the Olympic rowing venue at Eton Dorney



● Musn Kiri Wedlock competes for the RN/RM team in a biathlon at Ruhpolding in Germany.

A band for all seasons

A ROYAL Marines Band in its pomp is one of the most instantly recognisable sights in the British military.

Geometrically-precise lines of brilliant-white pith helmets, perfect synchronisation of steps and flawless music spring to mind.

Not so familiar would be a slog through mud carrying a stretcher, or an *ad hoc* rehearsal in a cramped corner of a warship.

Which is why the Royal Marines Band Service has trawled a year's worth of pictures, both formal and informal, to illustrate a new book – *For Queen and Country: A Year in Pictures*.

And what a year. Over the course of 2012, the Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Portsmouth (the Royal Band), Plymouth, Scotland, Collingwood and Commando Training Centre undertook 1,529 engagements, including ceremonial for the Olympics and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee.

The book also covers the activities of the Royal Marines School of Music.

The book, which was supported

by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, was officially launched at a reception at Navy Command Headquarters on Whale Island attended by Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Philip Jones and Commandant General Royal Marines Maj Gen Ed Davis RM.

The Bandies' version of *Hawaii Five-O* – albeit from a DVD rather than a live performance – had heads craning over the balconies surrounding the atrium of Leach Building as members of the *Blue Band* magazine and band staff took orders for the new book, which was published by the Royal Marines Historical Society.

Lt Col Nick Grace, Principal Director of Music for the RM Band Service, said: "This book is really to demonstrate and record a



● Top cover on a battlefield ambulance during a combat logistics patrol in Afghanistan

typical year for the Royal Marines Bands, although to be more accurate, it was a special year."

Lt Col Grace said the book reflected all aspects of the

Bandies' life, from the echoes of operational commitments in Afghanistan during Herrick 14 (when members of the Band Service acted as casualty handlers) to the Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall.

He said the Bands' presence at ceremonial events meant "we are telling the story of and demonstrating the ethos of the Naval Service in a positive manner."

"It doesn't matter where we are in the world – music will cross the language barrier like nothing else."

Band Service historian John Ambler, who wrote the text, said the book was "not just white helmets and straight lines – it's about the people."

He said that although many images were by professional photographers, an essential element of the book showed the lesser-known side – bandies training in their alternative role, during a rehearsal or on the sports field, or craftsmen working on the instruments.

See p45 for a review of *For Queen and Country*, and how to obtain a copy.



● The RM Volunteer Band Instructor – who was also the ship's postman – rehearses the band in a machinery space on board HMS Illustrious



● Six Royal Marines buglers aboard the Connaught during the Diamond Jubilee River Pageant on the Thames



● A Bandie undergoes military training



● The Afghanistan Showband on tour



● Command training in Wales



● Preparing a battlefield ambulance before a patrol during Herrick 14 in Afghanistan



● Precision at the Mountbatten Festival of Music



Salute to the

MORE than 300 events, from formal parades to small village gatherings, were staged to demonstrate the nation's support for their Servicemen and women past and present.

Across the UK and abroad – including operational units and ex-pat communities – the message of support was broadcast loud and clear.

At the centre of the fifth annual celebration of the Services – and the cadets who will help fill their ranks in the future – was the city of Nottingham.

The Armed Forces Day flag was delivered to the city's Wollaton Hall by four Servicemen who parachuted into the adjacent park and presented their cargo to the Lord Mayor of Nottingham, Cllr Merlita Bryan.

The Duke and Duchess of Gloucester represented the Queen and took the salute as a parade of

● (Left) HMS Monmouth flew the Armed Forces Day flag in every possible position on the ship during her recent patrol in the Gulf – here LPT Danny Card plays the superhero



over 600 Service personnel, veterans and cadets marched through the streets from Nottingham Castle to the Old Market Square, watched by Defence Secretary Philip Hammond.

As the parade reached the dais, cheered on by a crowd estimated at 60,000, the Red Arrows flew overhead, and the aerial tribute continued after a drumhead service, with Naval Sea Fury, Swordfish and Lynx aircraft being supported by various RAF machines, including a Typhoon, Lancaster and Spitfire.

The Royal Marines adapted their dynamic display to take down the bad guys on the River Trent, visitors met the people and saw the kit on Victoria Embankment, and the big day finished with a Big Night Out, a special programme of discounted entertainment, activities and dining and drinking around the city centre.

The Royal Navy's most senior officer, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, was among a large Naval contingent taking part in the event in Cardiff, which hosted the second national celebration in 2010.

Joining him were crew members of HMS Monmouth, which is affiliated to its Welsh namesake town and county, and Royal Navy Reserves from HMS Cambria in Penarth, as well as Royal Marines Reserves, and the Corps of Drums of the Royal Marines Band from Commando Training Centre, Lympstone.

Sea Cadets from South Wales also joined the parade in the grounds of Cardiff Castle, and when the Admiral toured the Coopers Field arena to see the displays and exhibitions, he was happy to pose for pictures with the flag-waving Sea Cadets.

"I am honoured to have been invited as the senior Armed Forces representative for this spectacular Cardiff event," said Admiral Zambellas.

● Sailors in Guildhall Square following a parade through Portsmouth

Picture: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies

"Armed Forces Day is a particularly special occasion for all our Servicemen and women, full time and reserve, serving or retired, as these are events organised by communities to show support and recognition for our sailors, marines, soldiers and airmen and the work which they do on behalf of our country around the world.

"We appreciate the honour which Cardiff has bestowed on us with this special parade and service, and continue to thank the public for their unstinting and fond support."

Falmouth hosted its biggest one-day event when serving and retired military personnel descended on the town for Armed Forces Day Cornwall.

Thousands of visitors also flocked to the historic port to watch a programme that encompassed land, sea and air.

Displays, marching bands and military hardware were on show around the streets and public spaces, allowing visitors the chance to talk to sailors, soldiers and airmen about the role of the Armed Forces and opportunities in the regular Services, the various Reserves and cadets forces.

On the water, minehunter HMS Brocklesby and RFA Lyme Bay opened their gangways to visitors in Falmouth Docks.

And the distinctive red-and-grey Search and Rescue Sea King of 771 Naval Air Squadron, based nearby at RN Air Station Culdrose, provided some of the aerial spectacle, demonstrating some of the attributes needed by a round-the-clock rescue service, while a Lancaster and Spitfire from the battle of Britain Memorial Flight provided an historical perspective.

Some 120 sailors from ships and units in the Portsmouth area paraded through the city in the run-up to Armed Forces Day, while two ships – destroyer HMS Defender and frigate HMS Westminster – were open to the public over the weekend, attracting more than 12,000 visitors between them.

Establishments represented in the parade included HMS Collingwood, the city's naval base, Fleet Diving Squadron, the Defence College of Policing and Guarding and medical staff based at Queen Alexandra Hospital.

During a ceremony in the Guildhall Square a number of Arctic Convoy veterans were presented with Arctic Stars by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel.

The week leading up to Armed Forces Day has become fertile ground for communities and organisations seeking to show their support to the Services, and the start of that week saw hundreds of flags raised at prominent locations around the UK and beyond.

Amongst them were several iconic landmarks in London, including 10 Downing Street, the Mayor of London's Office, Tower Bridge, the BT Tower and the Bank of England.

Sea Cadets from Southwark unit and colleagues from around South-East London were amongst the youngsters who helped the capital's mayor, Boris Johnson, raise the flag at City Hall.

And later in the week the Southwark cadets were joined by colleagues from City of London unit for a parade that passed close to the Cadets' national headquarters in Lambeth.

Right across the country, Sea Cadet units were taking centre stage for the week of celebrations.

Plymouth, as befits a previous National Event organiser (the city was last year's host) staged a comprehensive programme based around the spectacular setting of the Hoe, with military displays, bands, cadet demonstrations and a veterans village.

Some 200 miles north of the Devon coast saw a gathering at Deeside College campus in North Wales, where cadets from across the area came together to



● (Left) A Search and Rescue Sea King Forces Day in Falmouth; (above left) sea the Indian Ocean; (above right) RNA Na Forces Day event in Nottingham; (right) in Portsmouth; (below) Sea Cadets from the event on Plymouth Hoe



military

march alongside fellow cadets and Service personnel at the college's sports stadium in Connah's Quay.

Bustling crowds headed for the town centre in Yeovil, which was lined with stalls, while sailors from RN Air Station Yeovilton represented the Senior Service as representatives of SSAFA used the occasion to raise money in support of the Services community.

Operational units are always keen to fly the flag for Armed Forces Day – and that included frigate HMS Kent, busy on counter-piracy, counter-terrorism and counter-narcotics patrols in the Indian Ocean.

And it was from the heart of those operations – the dimly-lit ops room – that the sailors sent out their message of support.

The Type 23 had intended to fly the Armed Forces Day flags from its seaboats, but weather conditions ruled that out.

"Instead, we opted for a dark and mysterious Bond-esque ops room shot," said weapon engineer officer Lt Cdr Mickey Rooney, from where CO Cdr Ben Ripley directs the campaign against pirates, smugglers, terrorists and other seaborne ne'er-do-wells.

This year's celebration of the Armed Forces was also the chance for commercial firms to pledge their backing.

Companies and charities across the UK were invited to sign up to a new Corporate Covenant, making a written commitment that they

will help improve the lives of the Armed Forces, their families and veterans who are working for or using their services.

Support could come in several forms – providing sustainable job opportunities to reservists, veterans and Service spouses, offering special discounts or supporting a local cadet unit being just three examples.

Five business organisations – the Business Services Association, the Confederation of British Industries, the Federation of Small Businesses, the Institute of Directors and the British Chambers of Commerce – acted as trailblazers for the new covenant.

The initiative complements the existing Armed Forces Covenant (which sets out society's moral obligation towards the Forces) and Community Covenant – to which more than 320 local authorities have already put their names – ensuring that no Serviceman or woman is disadvantaged, and in some cases offering special treatment, such as in the case of injury or bereavement.

● (Right) Veterans pay their respects at a memorial service on Plymouth Hoe

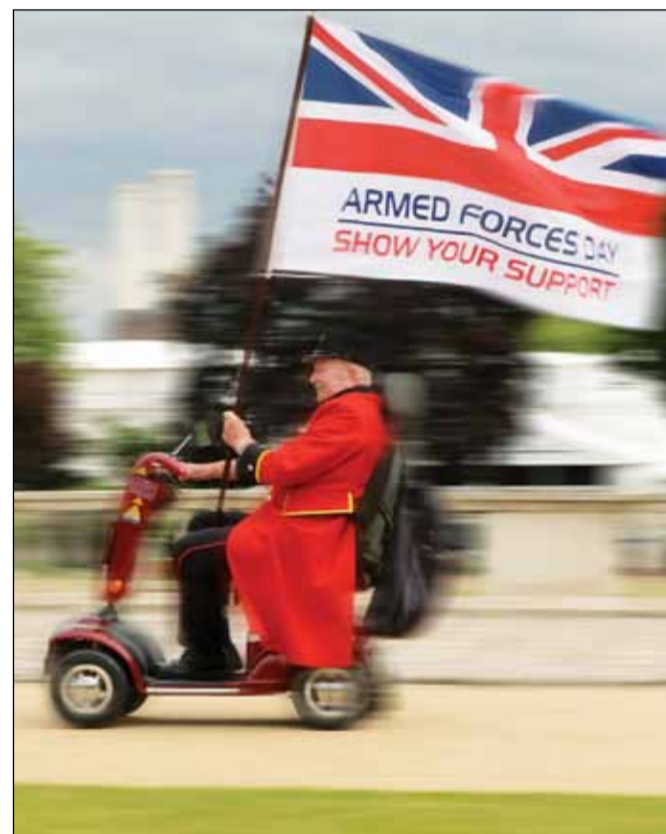
Picture: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon



Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse



Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum



● A Chelsea Pensioner helps publicise the big day

Picture: LA(Phot) Maxine Davies

helicopter from 771 Naval Air Squadron at Cudrose helps celebrate Armed Forces Day. Sailors display the Armed Forces Day flag in the ops room of HMS Kent in Plymouth. National Standard Bearer S/M Steve Susans on parade at the national Armed Forces Day. Sailors create their version of the iconic Iwo Jima image at HMS Excellent in Plymouth. Plymouth's two units, Manadon and Drake, help boost the Corps' profile at



Picture: LA(Phot) Vicki Benwell



Picture: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston

Clyde's scope



Picture: WO1(Phot) Ian Arthur

CAPT Jack Tarr handed over the reigns as Captain of HMS Neptune to Capt Alistair Willis in May.

And he did so with a mixture of satisfaction and just a little regret – satisfaction at the trajectory the establishment is following, and regret that he will no longer play a part in that story.

“Clyde Naval Base is one of the few MOD establishments on a serious growth path – there are not too many doubling their operational output in ten years,” said Capt Tarr.

“We are going from five submarines and seven mine countermeasures vessels to 11 submarines in the future.

“And in addition we have prepared the ground for the migration of a major training establishment – the Royal Naval Submarine School – up here in 2018, and this is a very serious challenge in a time of austerity.

“But it is absolutely consistent with the headlines of the integrated base and the new employment model, providing career stability not just for our Service personnel but also their families – ‘you will have the majority of your career, sea and shore-based, out of this one location, which is going to be properly fitted out to support you and your family.’

“There are lots of component parts. It is not just about classrooms and houses for families.

“It is providing Single Living Accommodation (SLAM), sports facilities, training facilities, medical and dental services and the management of our submariners’ community in and around the integrated submarine base.

FORMER Captain of HMS Neptune Capt Jack Tarr left the Royal Navy last month after a career that spanned five decades. His final job saw him helping steer Clyde Naval Base towards a bright future, as he explains to Mike Gray.

“And it’s not just jam tomorrow – we are already well in progress.

“Two Astute-class submarines are already here, with another five to come; the move of the first T-boat up from Devonport is less than two years away, and billets in support of those submarines are already being moved from Devonport complement to Clyde complement.

“It is not a pipe dream – we are already on the path.

“These are exciting times. Within the base this amount of development and renovation and change is throwing up all sorts of opportunities, and providing that clear headmark as the base is home of the Submarine Service is allowing us to identify where disconnections have emerged.

“It is a really unifying process, bringing in civilians and contractors – we are all in this together.

“I have seen in the last three years how the institutional boundaries in the base are coming down.

“We are making progress – breaking the stovepipes between organisations and the transfer of ownership in 12-15 months will be a further unifying opportunity to give prominence to what we are here for, which is delivering operational effect to Fleet – and it is a great place to be doing it.

“If there is one thing above all else I would like to highlight it is that Faslane has changed.

“You cannot afford to rely on your last impression of Faslane

from four years ago, let alone ten years ago.

“The base, and the area outside it, have changed out of all recognition.

“We are changing the nature of our business, and how we do our business, and perceptions from years back will not help.

“We have some of the best accommodation in the Fleet on this base, and we are building more.”

The ripples caused by development and activity are felt far beyond the perimeter fence at Faslane.

“The area campaign has also been quite aggressive – I worked with my colleagues in Argyll and Bute Council, and the other thing to consider is that while Clyde is going to be the home of the Submarine Service, the setting of Helensburgh as the home of the submarine community is vital as well.

“We have got ample family accommodation in the area.

“To take one example, I am gobsmacked every time I go up to the Churchill Estate.

“When I arrived three years ago it was a bit of a sink, and there was lots of unhappiness.

“It looked tired and uncared for; there were rotten wooden fences, the footpaths were covered in potholes, street lights were not working... this was not somewhere

people necessarily wanted to live.

“I take this as a bit of a personal success, because when I got here they said ‘Don’t worry about it – we are going to demolish it and rebuild it’.

“I spluttered into my coffee – at a cost of £135 million? It wasn’t going to happen. It didn’t need to happen.

“Over the next year I took every visiting senior officer to look at the Churchill Estate.

“I would stop just before we got to it and they could see the houses that used to belong to the MOD but were sold off, which are well-looked after.

“Then they saw the estate...

“Since then I have had tremendous support from Defence Housing and the local councils, and they have spent small change on giving that place a facelift of cosmic proportions.

“It is now somewhere people can live and it cost little to achieve it.

“Even just a few months after delivery of the first phase it has spread through to the community.

“Talking to the residents, it is somewhere they can feel proud of and can be comfortable in – somewhere they can invite people to, and can talk to their neighbours.

“The footpaths have been repaired, and the lights work, it



is clean and tidy and you can let your children out to play there.

“It sends an even stronger message to the community.

“From a state of neglect we have shown what we are prepared to do for our people.

“And that is also a message received by the people of Helensburgh.

“By way of another example, we have just embarked on a partnership agreement with a local sports club to provide the cricket and rugby facilities we have not done in the past, and we are building on that to provide a wraparound culture for our families – that is what the integrated approach is all about.

“Waitrose are building a supermarket in Helensburgh, and the subtext here is that Waitrose would not be investing in that if they had the slightest doubts about this place being a thriving concern.

“I think that is such a symbol of confidence in the area.”

Although changes can already be seen, Capt Tarr said the full effect would not be felt in the short term.

“In terms of the Royal Navy demographic, I am not expecting that to change overnight.

“As we are moving things up here at first we will get the entirely mobile families, and they are very welcome – we have room for them.

“Those who are for whatever reason without mobile families will not move immediately, and

they need to come up here and see what life is like on the west coast of Scotland.

“The west side of Glasgow is getting better and better every year.

“Am I expecting a rush? No – but once up here they can get a feel for the place and decide whether to move.

“Moreover, when we start submarine training here, from 2018, the youngsters will be the ones who form the roots of the Service population in that area – not overnight, but in the next ten years I expect to see the resident Service population here doubling.

“That is my challenge to local government – I will bring the people here, you need to persuade them to stay in the home of the submarine community.”

Capt Tarr’s passion for the lot of the submariners does not spring directly from his Service experience

“I was a destroyer driver, not a submariner,” said Capt Tarr.

“Perhaps I was put in here as something of a loose cannon, a maverick, to challenge and bring a new perspective and to question the way we do things, but also to aggressively shape the future within and without the base – it is important to have the confidence to take our vision outside.”

He handed over the reins of Neptune to Capt Willis in mid-May, and ended a career of 37 years and 194 days (not that he was counting...) last month.

When pressed to identify a particular highlight, Capt Tarr looked south to the training establishment of HMS Collingwood in Hampshire.

“The biggest impression I take from all that time is week in, week out seeing people passing out of Collingwood,” he said.

“Fifteen months before they had been short-order chefs or whatever.

“In that time they were turned into the confident, resilient, professionals we have in the Royal Navy – from just normal to being special, being able to stand up in front of 100 people and confidently describe what they were doing before, what they have done since and where they are going.

“The look on their faces, and the look on the faces of their families, was something that really lasts, carved into the memory.

“Every single one of our Servicemen and women has made an active decision not to be a civilian.

“They have decided to be special, and we must continue to recognise that decision, to continue to treat them as special people.

“If we treat them as special they will continue to do special things.”

● HMS Victorious steams down the Clyde earlier in the summer for a period of training

Picture: LA(Phot) Will Haigh



Deliverance from the Ayr

MOBILE phones can be a lifesaver – but they can also lull you into a false sense of security, writes Mike Gray.

They can alert rescuers when you are in a tight spot and guide them in to a precise location – but in the wildest, most dangerous areas lack of a good signal can leave you exposed.

That was the case when the team from Gannet Search and Rescue (SAR) Flight was called to a rescue in the mountains at the end of June.

Two French walkers became hopelessly lost around 2,000ft up on the Three Sisters in Glen Coe.

A weak, faltering mobile signal meant that, by the time they managed to alert the police, it was almost 10pm – though it was just two days shy of the longest day.

Rescuers were still unable to contact either walker – the only way the pair could communicate with the outside world was by using the emergency 999 number.

A duty crew at HMS Gannet was alerted at 10.36pm and was airborne within ten minutes.

The Royal Navy aircrew did not have much to go on – the walkers could only tell them that they were in Glen Coe, although they later said they thought they may be ‘somewhere south of the A82’ as they could see lights on the road.

“It wasn’t a lot to go on and it’s a big area,” said Observer Lt Cdr Andy Drodge, Commanding Officer of HMS Gannet.

“We arrived in the area at 11.30pm and it was what you might describe as dark dusk.

“Fortunately, it was a relatively clear night and the two walkers did have torches which they shone when they heard the aircraft, so we located them almost instantly.

“One of them was on a reasonably substantial ledge and the other was in a much more precarious position about 50ft above him on a small rocky outcrop.

“I put down our winchman, Lt Cdr Rob Suckling, to pick up the higher one first and we got him into the aircraft.

“A light southerly breeze caused us problems with downdrafting and we were pulling very high power to maintain our hover.”

The pair were delivered into the care of the mountain rescue team and police at the foot of the mountain just after midnight, and the Sea King touched down back at its Ayrshire base at 12.50am.

“They had assumed they could just use their phones – obviously, and very fortunately, they did eventually get through, but they lost themselves still further in the process and wasted a lot of time, by which time we were well into the depths of night,” said the CO.

“Admittedly high summer is not the worst time to be stuck out on the hills but, even at this time of year, there is a noticeable drop-off in temperature at night; combined with altitude and the fact that walkers tend to be wearing more lightweight clothing, it is not ideal.

“While it can do no harm to have your mobile with you wherever you are, the remoteness of many of Scotland’s mountains means that you cannot rely on it necessarily if you get into trouble.

“As ever, we would always recommend that walkers, regardless of how experienced they are, ensure that someone is aware of the planned movements for the day, as well as their predicted return time.”

Contrast that with a rescue late on Easter Sunday.

“We were called out to two climbers stuck on the Cuillins on the Isle of Skye,” said Lt Cdr Drodge.

“We were able to call them up on their mobiles – we have a special piece of kit on board that allows us to do that – and when we got close we told them to shine the



phone in our direction when they heard the aircraft.

“Because we had night-vision goggles, which picked up the phone screen quite clearly, it made the rescue very smooth.”

Easter period was particularly busy for the SAR Flight.

“I was on duty on Easter Sunday,” said Lt Cdr Drodge.

“It was a beautiful day – clear blue skies and light winds – and we had three jobs on that day.

“Because it was such a beautiful day lots of walkers were on the mountains – some well-prepared, some not.

“Our second job was to two individuals walking on Ben Nevis who took a short cut across the snow instead of sticking to the path.

“They were wearing jeans and trainers, and got stuck on the leeward side of the mountain.

“Because of light wind over the top of the mountain there was a downdraft, so we had to keep the aircraft light to get enough power.

“Another job was a woman, who was very well-prepared, on a mountain who had chest pains – we had to get her off, which was relatively straightforward.

“That day we were airborne for seven hours 45 minutes, and it was just one crew – two pilots, one observer and one aircrewman. We did feel a little tired after that effort...”

Although busier than normal, the day demonstrates the typical tasks which the Gannet team tackle – and they tend not to be ‘classic’ sea rescues, plucking storm-tossed mariners from a vessel in distress.

“We get the odd fishing vessel that sinks or catches fire, but in my ten months here I cannot think of any other ‘classic’ jobs which the guys at 771 [the other RN Search and Rescue unit, based at Culdrose] would go on long range.

“Our main job focus is land-based rather than maritime.

“We had one fishing vessel on fire in January, in quite a high sea state, but it was stopped in the water and they had evacuated the wheelhouse.

“Again it was one of mine – probably one of the most difficult I have had to achieve, because of the position of the crew on the boat and the wind direction.”

The unit can average not far off one mission a day over a typical year – it has been the busiest, or very close to the busiest, military SAR flight for the past few years.

“Up to late spring we were averaging close to a job a day – things like the Isle of Arran getting hit by bad weather,” said Lt Cdr Drodge.

“There was a busy three days, from Friday afternoon through to Sunday evening – we did eight jobs that weekend, mostly Arran, a couple in Northern Ireland, and the tragic avalanches in the Highlands.

“I was involved in the recovery of six bodies and two people.

“It is swings and roundabouts – you find some weeks when you are extremely busy and then it goes quiet.

“This time it was avalanches. It has been very mixed, and there has been some very challenging flying this year.

“A couple of times we have

been tasked but physically could not fly in the area we needed to – on one occasion, at night, I was tasked to take a mountain rescue team into a valley on a mountain, but because of the sheer wind turbulence we had to abort.

“Another time in a blizzard we could not get to where we wanted.

“There have been occasions when we could not see the man on the end of the wire.

“The winchman has had to use touch on the wire, stopping the winch when it went slack.”

Another important rescue role is emergency medical transfers, often from isolated communities or outlying islands, when the civilian helicopter medical flight cannot operate or is on another mission.

But there is a lot more to Gannet SAR Flight and the shore base from which it operates than just mercy dashes.

“We will plan to do at least one training sortie a day, one-and-a-half to two-and-a-half hours long depending on what training we are doing,” said the CO.

“We normally aim to do it early afternoon, and each month we need to do a certain amount of night flying, so there may be two sorties a day.

“But at other times we are a military unit, and have got military tasks to do.

“And as I am dual-hatted – I am also the CO of HMS Gannet, the air station itself – there is reporting on manpower, liaison with the local community and reporting on operations to Royal Navy Command, so there is plenty of paperwork to keep us all busy.

“There is also medical training on the ground, so that when we do get the call we are ready to respond.”

Gannet’s value as a military airfield was evident during this spring’s Joint Warrior exercises.

“We had a Canadian forward logistics site and the French Super Pumas and a Royal Navy forward logistics site, as well as numerous



ships’ flights popping in and out,” said Lt Cdr Drodge.

“A lot of VIP transfers came through here too.

“We were just cracking on but it gave a buzz of activity to the place.”

Gannet aircraft also undertake a good deal of training with the Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) North organisation, to help with winch training for the minor war vessels and submarines.

The Royal Navy approaches SAR differently from the RAF, bringing air crew into the field for one or two tours, giving them a break from other front-line flying for maybe a couple of years, and allowing them to take that experience back to the front line.

Some of the crew ‘in the back’ may serve longer, building on their paramedical skills.

“There is never a shortage of volunteers,” said Lt Cdr Drodge.

“This is a very visible sign of the Royal Navy’s output.

“The RN is here to protect the nation – most of it is overseas or over the horizon, but SAR is a measurable output, a payback to the UK population for the taxpayers’ money.

“It has a real public relations role here. We only have three helicopters and a team of 97 people – 27 of them military, the remainder civil servants and contractors – but we did 298 jobs in 2012 and helped

285 people.

“To come back at the end of a shift and say there are two or three people alive now that would not have been if it wasn’t for us is a wonderful feeling.

“Everyone who has flown the red-and-grey Sea King has an affinity for it.

“Whether they still fly it now, or fly other helicopters now having left, once you have flown the red-and-grey you have an affinity.”

Lt Cdr Drodge’s career typifies the wide range of experience found in the RN SAR world.

He trained on anti-submarine Sea Kings, deploying in carriers and RFA ships, went instructing for three years, and after two staff jobs he was Senior Observer and Executive Officer at 771 Naval Air Squadron for a couple of years.

Operational tours in Bahrain and stints on ship, including Gunnery Officer, followed before he joined HMS Gannet last year.

“I have been to every continent on earth with the Royal Navy, crossed the Equator on every ocean it is possible to cross it on, and done all the major canals – Suez, Panama, Patagonian, Corinth and Kiel,” he said.

“This year we are on almost a job a day, plus training flights – you would probably struggle to find the commanding officer of a UK squadron that flies more than me.

“Most of my aircrew will get 30 hours a month on average.

“It is a fantastic place to operate – in good weather the scenery is amazing.

“Even if it is a medical transfer, if the casualty is stable we can enjoy the views *en route*. It is a beautiful place to fly.”

But the flying – at least in red-and-grey Sea Kings – comes to an end in 2016, when the UK SAR service becomes a fully civilian organisation and the Sea King is phased out.

“Sea Kings are old,” he said.

“However, we know what breaks and how to fix them, and there is generally good serviceability.

“We have been operating the Sea King for just over 40 years now, so we know its foibles.

“It is a great aircraft to land on unprepared sites. We can get a wheel down in most places to deploy our winch – it is very capable for its age.”

But even when the Sea King has gone, there will still be a Naval presence on the edge of the international airport at Prestwick.

“We hand over to Bristol Helicopters in the first quarter of 2016,” he said.

“Gannet and 771 NAS will be the last to hand over, but we have got the lease on Gannet until 2019 so it will be a forward operating base for Fleet Air Arm aircraft.”



Pictures: CPO (Phot) Tam McDonald

Machu men tackle the Inca Trail

● The trekkers of 1710 Naval Air Squadron take a breather along the Inca Trail in Peru

ALTITUDE is not normally a problem to WAFUs.

But that was not necessarily the case for a group from 1710 Naval Air Squadron when they headed to South America to visit the fabled 'lost city of the Incas'.

The group of 14 – ten Royal Navy and four Army engineers – flew south to Lima via Miami on an adventurous training expedition which took them high into the Peruvian mountains.

Normally based in Portsmouth – the highest natural point on Portsea Island is barely six metres above sea level – the Service personnel needed a few days to acclimatise on arrival in Cusco, some 3,400 metres high.

Expedition Tapac-Yauri – taken from an Inca myth – may at first sight seem to have little in common with the workings of a Naval air squadron.

But 1710 NAS's mission is to recover, sustain and enhance aviation force elements at readiness as quickly and effectively as possible in any operating environment.

This covers three main areas – a worldwide helicopter structural repair capability, service modifications and aircraft materials integrity – and such an agile organisation can only benefit from the skills and character-building provided by a challenging AT expedition.

The Tapac-Yauri trip was based around the Inca Trail to Machu Picchu, a UNESCO World Heritage Site and more recently voted one of the 'seven new wonders of the world'.

The 15th Century Inca estate is visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists every year – though most arrive by train or bus.

The 1710 team were aiming to develop and strengthen leadership skills and foster teamwork, as well as broadening personal skills – junior rates were given a proportion of key roles to boost their leadership qualities.

For some it also added mountain days to their log books, with two of the 14 completing Summer Mountain Leader Training prior to the expedition.

Having established themselves in Cusco – including some sightseeing and guided tours – the group packed (travelling light was the order of the day) and were up at 5.30am for a 50-mile drive to Ollantaytambo, where they met their Inca Trail guides.

On their way through the Sacred Valley they saw how Incas made their fabrics from alpaca wool, using dyes made from beetles, minerals and fruits.

A climb up the steep temple steps at Pisac reminded them of the exertions to come...

The following day saw a 5am start for breakfast and a briefing before they stepped out on the Trail – in heavy rain.

So with ponchos and waterproofs on, the group passed through their first checkpoint, getting their passports endorsed



with a unique Inca Trail stamp.

At first the pace was steady, with gentle gradients punctuated by the occasional steep climb.

A sharp descent into Wilkacacay for lunch – the porters had set things up in advance – saw the first appearance of Ken, a puppy which the 1710 squadron crew named after their Commanding Officer, who could not make the trip.

It was half-an-hour before they realised Ken was actually female, but they stuck with the name anyway.

The first day ended with a steady climb to their first campsite at 3,000 metres, where the locals and porters played six-a-side football.

Another early start heralded Day 2 and the ascent to the highest point of the trail – Dead Woman's Pass, so-called because of the mountain's profile.

The official report of the expedition notes: "It started fairly steady but got increasingly steeper and challenging due to the altitude."

"All of the group suffered, but some more than others during the six-hour ascent, split into four 1.5 hour legs."

"We went at our own pace from 3,750 metres."

"Gasping for air, most found it really difficult and out of our comfort zones, with only one of our group ever experiencing higher altitude."

"All finished within around 30 minutes of each other and the views were spectacular."

A half-hour of group photos and taking in the vista was followed by a steep descent to Pacamayo at 3,600m.

The weather cleared to give them a final approach in bright sunshine, though the trail was taking its toll on some of the hikers, who suffered sore knees from the rapid descent.

After lunch some of the group explored local trails, while Ken made herself quite at home, eating the odd scrap from the group's mess tent.

Day 3 on the Trail saw three more high passes, one at 3,900m, so the hikers were up early again, enjoying the backdrop of a brilliant Milky Way and satellites streaking across the sky.

That day's trail started at 6am with a steep ascent, enabling them to watch the sunrise over the Vilcabamba ('sacred valley'), while the climbers went on to trek through high jungle, listening to the guides' explanations about flora and fauna on the way as they made their way along the trail.

As they made their way down the steep steps to Sayaqmarca, the report noted: "This leg was very scenic, the pace more comfortable and the weather favourable."

There was still one more climb, to a pass at 3,600m, where the group (still including Ken) stopped for lunch.

Their afternoon descent took them past a few llamas which help keep the Trail neat and tidy by cropping the vegetation, and on the way they caught sight of Machu Picchu mountain from the less-famous side.

That evening's campsite was at Wiñay Wayna, where their

guides showed them the temple, featuring imposing terraces and channels connecting fountains and falls down the slopes, still working perfectly 600 years on.

"We continued down and along to a waterfall where most of us jumped in for an icy-blast shower," said the report.

"Brain-freeze kicked in, but to say it was refreshing was an understatement."

Dinner that evening included, improbably, a fully-iced cake complete with message welcoming the group to the Trail.

An even earlier reveille was needed on Day 4 – 3am – to ensure the group made the short walk to the next checkpoint where they waited in line for the 5.30am opening.

"The early start was worth it to beat the rush as the line extended a fair way behind us," the report notes.

"Once through the checkpoint it was a speed-march to Sun Gat for our first glimpse of one of the seven wonders of the world."

"There wasn't a cloud in the sky and we stopped closer, overlooking the site as we watched the sun's rays descend on to the buildings – a breath-taking sight."

The Servicemen were then given a guided tour of the increasingly-busy site, after which some chose to sample the Inca Bridge, part of a mountain trail that heads west and in places comprises a stone path cut into a cliff face.

As the day wore on the party bid farewell to their unofficial mascot Ken, then boarded the bus that took them down the steep winding road to Aguas Calientes, where they had lunch watching trains go up and down the high street.

A further train journey took them on to Ollantaytambo, affording views of the mountains through panoramic windows, before they completed the trip back to Cusco by bus.

A final day in the city saw some head for the Inca Museum while others got tickets to see local football team Real Garcilaso lose 3-1 to Independiente Santa Fe from Colombia in the Estadio Inca Garcilaso de la Vega in the Copa Libertadores.

Then it was a long series of flights home, punctuated by a brief stopover and tour of Lima.

The expedition was supported by the RNRMC, a Rebalancing Lives grant, VRS Precision Engineering Ltd, Helitune and the RNRM Sports Lottery.



● (Above) Local fauna – scarlet and blue-and-yellow macaws; (left) members of the expedition cool off in a waterfall near Wiñay Wayna on the third day on the Inca Trail; (above left) the group poses for a photograph in front of the iconic Inca ruins of Machu Picchu



● (Above) More local fauna – a llama contemplates the view along the Inca Trail; (left) the bustling road-cum-railway that bisects the town of Aguas Calientes near Machu Picchu

The Navy's pigeonhold

SHE can track a cricket ball travelling at Mach 3. But what about a pair of racing pigeons at 50mph?

Well, the answer from HMS Diamond is 'yes' as the hi-tech destroyer turned makeshift aviary for ten days off the South Coast when two birds dropped in.

The two evidently-exhausted pigeons – nicknamed Gregory (as in Peck) and Cecil (as in the late horse racing trainer Sir Henry) – landed on board the Portsmouth-based destroyer while she was training off Plymouth... and refused to fly off again.

The sailors quickly took to the pair, building them a perch, a box and providing bedding and supplying them with food deemed to be suitable by LS Leigh Branson – who just happens to be a racing pigeon enthusiast.

The birds were given sanctuary for ten days in a makeshift aviary on the quarterdeck and, as it has CCTV, the sailors were treated to their own *Springwatch*-style birdcam which could be monitored from the bridge, giving them a boost of morale.

Diamond's navigator Lt Eleanor Tilley launched the initial rescue of Gregory after he refused to leave the ship as the ship was about to start gunnery and helicopter serials (neither of which is good for pigeons...).

Knowing he was probably part of someone's prized collection, she sought the permission of CO Cdr Andy Ingham before capturing him. Cecil arrived on the flight deck two days.

"A ship at sea obviously attracts the occasional bird, but these are usually transient and depart after a short period," said Eleanor. "Gregory and Cecil were clearly struggling with the journey they had been on and needed help."

"Having seen them onboard for a few days, and knowing that



● Is it Gregory or is it Cecil? Racing pigeon enthusiast LS Leigh Branson offers one of the birds some crumbs from Diamond's galley

the ship was to be at sea for some time, the bridge team felt obliged to give them a little support to aid them on their way."

Cecil and Gregory were then fitted with their very own HMS Diamond tag or ring once the ship arrived back in Portsmouth and – with a little encouragement – they flew their steely grey nest and hopefully back to their owner.

"They have been fairly unusual additions to the ship's company on board," said Cdr Ingham. "However, both of them have been popular with the team and a healthy distraction for some during our recent time at sea. I suspect they were quite sorry

to say goodbye to our transient passengers."

And if that isn't enough pigeon-related fun (and quite frankly, there can never be too much pigeon-related fun in the RN...) aboard HMS Somerset 300 miles out in the North Atlantic another exhausted traveller rested its weary wings on one of Her Majesty's battlewagons.

The frigate's crew named the addition to their company Paul... until former pigeon fancier LS William Hughes pointed out Paul was really Paula (not a problem as the frigate's a mix-manned ship...).

Paul had a race ring around one

leg and an identification number – NEHU NY 2012 1703, which suggests the bird comes from the North-east of England – on the other.

"It was a stroke of luck that Paul found Somerset. We just hope we can reunite her with her owner. She will certainly have a few sea stories to tell her fellow pigeons," said William.

Fed on a diet of cereal, and with a makeshift coop in the frigate's hangar alongside the Merlin helicopter, Paul is regaining her strength and, once Somerset is back home in Devonport, the sailors hope to reunite the pigeon with her owner.

Black and White

IN THE middle of the UK's heatwave, here's something to perhaps cool you down: tanker RFA Black Rover within sight of the snow-capped ridges and peaks of South Georgia.

Hot (or should that be cold?) on the heels of frigate HMS Argyll's visit to the remote South Atlantic island chain (see page 9), the veteran tanker anchored off the capital Grytviken as she took up her duties as Britain's 'floating petrol station' south of the Equator.

The 39-year-old auxiliary recently relieved her slightly-older sister Gold Rover, charged with providing black gold to sustain RN vessels on patrol in the South Atlantic (such as the permanent presence HMS Clyde, and whichever frigate or destroyer is assigned to the Southern Hemisphere), as well as generally flying the flag for the UK around its territories in the region...

...of which South Georgia is among the most remote and least populous (about 30 souls).

The tanker spent four days in Cumberland Bay. Her 50 or so crew were briefed on the importance of the island's wildlife and eco-systems before stepping ashore at Grytviken, where experts from the British Antarctic Survey were their hosts and guides.

Despite being out of season – it's slap bang in the middle of the Austral winter right now – the island's museum was opened for the visiting RFA sailors. Others inspected the wreck of the whaler Petrel, and no visit to South Georgia is complete without paying homage at the grave of explorer Sir Ernest Shackleton, buried in Grytviken's small cemetery alongside crew from merchant ships and some casualties of war.

To thank the island's small populace for their hospitality during the tanker's stay, Black Rover invited the locals aboard for an 'all requests considered' lunch.

Islanders listed the foods they had been unable to obtain for many months given their isolation, and Black Rover's galley strove to meet their requests.

In the end, the menu consisted of beef steak and fresh salad, plus the odd glass of red wine.



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Somerset flies new standard

FLYING proudly from HMS Somerset's yardarm is the standard of her namesake county – the very first time it has been raised aboard the warship.

Although people have been living in the area for 10,000 years and Somerset can trace its history as a county back to at least the Dark Ages, the shire never had a flag... until last month.

After a lengthy campaign by residents and a competition, a standard was chosen – a red wyvern on a yellow background – and, once turned into a flag, delivered by the County Council chairman, Cllr David Fothergill, when he visited the warship off the south coast.

The guests were given a tour of the ship and met some of the 185 men and women on board.

Cllr Fothergill said: "The crew can spend months at sea away from home and I was delighted to present them with a reminder that the county of Somerset is wholeheartedly supporting and thinking of them."

The frigate is in the midst of training after emerging from a major refit as her sailors prepare for fresh challenges on the global stage.

The Tide is nigh



Picture: BMT Defence Services

AS A Merlin hovers over its flight deck carrying a slung load, tanker RFA Tidespring pumps fuel into aviation training and casualty treatment ship RFA Argus.

This is the latest artist's impression of the Navy's next-generation tankers as the design for the quartet of new ships reaches its final stages.

In around 12 months' time the first steel will be cut on Tidespring, the first of the new 37,000-tonne vessels which will provide fuel, water, stores and supplies to sustain the Fleet – and

especially its new carriers – around the world.

Hundreds of design drawings and plans have been drawn up by BMT Defence Services, working with the Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary. Scale models have been built and tested in the gigantic water tank at Haslar in Gosport, where Tidespring 'refuelled' HMS Queen Elizabeth in various sea conditions.

With the designs for the £450m quartet – RFA Tidespring, Tiderace, Tidesurge and Tideforce – now complete, it's down to Daewoo Shipbuilding and Marine Engineering to draw up the detailed plans so they can begin construction next year.

The ships will carry 19,000 cubic metres – more than seven times the capacity of an Olympic-sized swimming pool – of fuel for a ship's engines and aircraft.

A new replenishment at sea rig has been built at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint to practise using both the new tankers and the 'reception areas' on the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers.

As well as both the tankers and the carriers being much bigger than their predecessors, the tankers should also be able to deliver their supplies up to two and a half times faster than the vessels which have gone before them.

"A Range Rover's fuel tank connected to all four 7in hoses on the starboard side of a Tide tanker would be full in 0.12 seconds," said naval architect Mark Lewis from the future tanker project.

"Unfortunately, the fuel would be passing through a standard petrol station's nozzle at around Mach 2 – and completely destroy your vehicle."

The Tides will be much more than mere floating filling stations. There's space for eight ISO containers on the forecastle, holding anything from

humanitarian aid to large stores or kit for special missions.

Typically the ships will have a crew of 63, including 17 officers and 12 senior ratings. But there is accommodation on board for another 45 souls, such as RFA sailors undergoing training, Royal Marines and the ship's helicopter; the flight deck can take a Merlin if required.

All four ships will be built at Daewoo's yard at Okpo-dong in south-east South Korea which produces 70 commercial and specialist ships – such as the South Korean Navy's destroyers – every year.

From the first steel being cut to launch will take each ship around ten months. After undergoing sea trials off the Korean peninsula, the ships will be brought to Britain where they'll undergo 'customisation' – fitting classified and UK-only systems on board to support their mission alongside the RN.

Tidespring is due to be handed over to the MOD in October 2015, with the final vessel, Tideforce, completed in April 2017. All are expected to serve at least a quarter of a century.

Dragon is embraced by York

THE good folk of Yorkshire's county town have a new friend in the form of fire-breathing HMS Dragon.

The City of York has accepted the Royal Navy's request to adopt the Portsmouth-based destroyer – currently on her maiden deployment in the Gulf – thus plugging the gap left by the demise of the historic city's namesake warship last year.

York enjoyed a proud and fruitful affiliation with veteran Type 42 destroyer HMS York until she decommissioned in September 2012 after 30 years' service.

Her sailors paid her final visit to the city last autumn, returning the Freedom Scroll to civic leaders after her ship's company paraded through the streets for the last time.

As the new Type 45 destroyers are the successors to the Town or Sheffield class, they've continued many (though not all) of their forebears' affiliates.

So Dragon has Cardiff as HMS Cardiff once did. Diamond is bound with Coventry, Daring with Birmingham, Defender with Exeter, Dauntless with Newcastle.

As there are fewer than half the number of 45s compared with their predecessors, however, all the new destroyers have two affiliated towns, cities or localities. Guernsey for Daring, Aberdeen for Diamond, Great Yarmouth for Dauntless and so on.

So once Dragon returns from her tour of duty east of Suez (she's just about at the halfway stage), she'll begin to forge relations with York's Lord Mayor Cllr Julie Gunnell.

The size of the ship – like HMS York before her – means Dragon can get no closer than Hull for a visit, however.

Not so in Cardiff, where Queen Alexandra Dock is slap bang in the heart of the regenerated waterfront (home to the National Assembly *inter alia*).

Dragon visited the Welsh capital for the first time last year and will do so again next spring when Cardiff's leaders are due to bestow the Freedom of the City upon the destroyer, thus permitting the ship's company to march through its heart "with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, bands playing and Colours flying."

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Employees of Navy News and their families are not permitted to enter this competition.

Bid farewell to 42s at Greenwich dinner

THERE'S a chance to say a last goodbye to the iconic Type 42 destroyer this autumn with a celebration in the 'finest dining hall in Europe'.

The Type 42 'End of an Era' dinner in the legendary Painted Hall in Greenwich is the final farewell to the ships which shielded the Fleet for four decades, until the last of the old breed, HMS Edinburgh, paid off last month.

Fourteen of these destroyers served under the White Ensign; two were lost in action in the Falklands: HMS Sheffield and Coventry.

Given the size of the 300-year-old hall – which was designed by Sir Christopher Wren and decorated

by James Thornhill as a celebration of the nation's maritime power – the capacity is around 400 or so.

The October 3 dinner is open to anyone who served on a 42. Tickets are priced £75 and music will be provided by the Band of HM Royal Marines.

The dress code for the evening will be mess undress or black tie / evening dress with miniatures.

To apply for a ticket, email T42Dinner@gmail.com or visit www.royalnavy.mod.uk/News-and-Events/Special-Events/Events-Calendar/General/131003-Type-42-End-of-an-Era-Dinner.

Tickets will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.

Free beer for our readers

THAT'S bound to grab your attention.

And not any old beer either. A special Fleet Air Arm brew – with a dash of rum.

Thanks to the jolly nice folk at Wadworth brewery in Wiltshire, we're offering the chance to win a mini-cask – that's 8.8 pints – of their top-rated Swordfish beer.

Swordfish was launched in 2010 to commemorate the centenary of Naval aviation – hence the 'Fly Navy' logo on the label.

It's a stronger version of the Devizes' popular 6X beer – but with the added zest of a tot of Pusser's Rum.

It was intended to be a one-off... but it proved to be so popular – it won the Specialist Ale Award at the prestigious Maltings Beer Festival – Wadworth have continued producing it.

You can buy bottles of Swordfish from the brewery's visitor centre in Devizes, from Tesco and Waitrose stores in the region where it's sold under the Wiltshire Rum Beer label, and available nationally via Ocado. And you can enjoy it on draught from some Wadworth pubs.

The mini-casks – drawn directly from

the casks in the brewery, so it's just like enjoying a pint in your local – would ordinarily set you back £31 (including P&P).

But we have three such mini-casks to give away to our readers if you can answer this question.

The Fairey Swordfish is renowned for crippling the core of the Italian Fleet in which harbour in November 1940?

Entrants must be aged 18 or over.

Send your entries to Swordfish Ale competition, Navy News, Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH, or via email to swordfish@navynews.co.uk.

Please include your full name, address and postcode with your submission. Entries must be received by mid-day on Friday September 6 2013. Normal NN competition rules apply and the editor's decision is final.

The winners will receive their casks directly from Wadworth. As long as they are kept cool, the casks will keep for 14 days unopened. Once opened, however, the beer is best consumed within 48 hours.





● An arachnoid interloper joins the Royal Navy platoon at London Pride
Picture: PO(Phot) Des Wade

Sailors parade with Pride

ROYAL Navy personnel donned their ceremonial uniforms and displayed their operational medals as they marched through the streets of the capital for London Pride.

Leading the Armed Forces contingent, the 22 sailors marched past the cheering crowds for the 42nd gay pride festivities – with Lt Cdr Douggie Ward, the Naval Service's Lesbian Gay Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) Forum Chair, at the head of the squadron, which was joined by the occasional high-spirited campaigner – including one dressed as Spiderman.

Around 15,000 people joined the march and more than 500,000 watched from the sidelines.

Cdre Rupert Wallace, the RN LGBT Diversity Champion, was one of those who cheered on the Navy from the sidelines.

“We are delighted and proud that the Royal Navy values inclusion at all levels and that our people feel free and confident to be themselves – and that the Navy fully encourages them to do so,” he said.

Those marching represented a wide cross section of units in the Naval Service, including the Royal Naval Reserve and this year there was also a ‘Straight Ally’, a heterosexual sailor who marched to show her support for LGBT military personnel.

The parade ended with the platoon paying respect to the war dead with a march past the Cenotaph in Whitehall.



● HMS Lancaster, on patrol in the Caribbean, celebrates the birth of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's child. The ship's sent their best wishes and congratulations to the royal couple
Picture: LA(Phot) Jay Allen

Forces celebrate birth of prince

THE Armed Forces at home and abroad helped celebrate the birth of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge's first child.

As is customary with the birth of a British prince, royal salutes were fired across the capital.

In Green Park, members of the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery fired a 41-gun royal salute with 13pdr quick fire guns, which were all used in action in World War 1.

At Tower Wharf, in front of the Tower of London, the Honourable Artillery Company, an Army reserve unit and the oldest in the British Army, fired 62 rounds over the River Thames to mark the occasion.

Maj Mark Edward, CO of the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, said: “The opportunity to mark the birth of the child of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge by firing a 41-gun royal salute comes as a huge honour for the King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery.”

Celebrations were not confined

to London, however, as all Royal Navy – in home or international waters – flew the White Ensign from their mainmasts to mark the birth of the Prince, whose name had not yet been formally announced as *Navy News* went to press.

Ensigns were proudly flown by HMS Kent, on operations in the Middle East, and HMS Lancaster, currently deployed on Atlantic Patrol Task (North) in the Caribbean.

The ships' companies added their own special congratulatory message to the Duke and Duchess spelling out variations on “It's A Boy!” on the deck of their ship.

Lancaster's Commanding Officer, Cdr Steve Moorhouse, said: “As ‘the Queen's Frigate’ we were particularly delighted to hear the fantastic news of the royal birth, and everybody on board HMS Lancaster sends their warmest congratulations and best wishes to the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.”

RAF Valley, the station where

Prince William serves as a Search and Rescue pilot, were among the first to offer official congratulations.

Led by the Station Commander, Gp Capt Adrian Hill, and Search and Rescue Commander Gp Capt Sara Mackmin, staff from RAF Valley sent a congratulatory message to Flt Lt Wales and the Duchess of Cambridge on the birth of their first child.

Gp Capt Hill said: “We're all delighted to learn that Flt Lt Wales, and the Duchess of

Cambridge are now proud parents of a new-born son.

“We wish them all the very best for the future. From everyone at RAF Valley, congratulations.”

Other units connected to the Duke have also been celebrating, including the Household Cavalry, the Army Regiment that Prince William commissioned into from Sandhurst, and the Irish Guards – Prince William their Colonel – who celebrated in their own unique way, toasting the Royal baby with a glass of Irish Stout.

Japanese squadron visits Portsmouth

THREE Japanese warships sailed into Portsmouth for a four-day visit to help forge closer links with the Royal Navy.

The ships of the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force Training Squadron visited as part of a five-month global deployment.

The squadron, which last visited in 2008, comprises training ship JDS Kashima and two destroyers – JDS Shirayuki and JDS Isoyuki – and includes 180 cadets.

After anchoring in the Solent overnight Kashima fired a 21-gun salute as she approached the harbour mouth the following morning. The saluting gun at Fort Blockhouse, Gosport responded in similar fashion.

The cadets' stay in Portsmouth included seeing the Navy's marine and air engineering facilities at HMS Sultan, Gosport, and operations room and bridge simulators at HMS Collingwood, Fareham.

Naval history was also on their itinerary, with visits to the Naval Historical Branch at the Naval Base and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Senior officers from the squadron called on the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, Cllr Lynne Stagg.

Cdr Jeff Short, who helped arrange the visit, said: “The Royal Navy has a lot in common with the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force.

“We have engaged as maritime nations since 1613 and exchanged students for the last 150 years.

“More recently, we have worked together on counter-piracy operations in the Indian Ocean and we share common equipment such as the Merlin helicopter.

“While we may be separated by geography, we are joined by the sea and, just as importantly, by our similar ethos and doctrine.

“This visit was eagerly anticipated by the Royal Navy and the interaction of the Japanese cadets with our Young Officers at



● The Japanese squadron arrives in Portsmouth

Sultan and Collingwood was one of many highlights.”

Rear Admiral Fumiya Kitagawa said: “Japan and Great Britain have a history going back hundreds of years.

“The Royal Navy was the model for the foundation of the Japanese Navy, so we are very

Diligence sails for long haul

IF YOU didn't catch RFA Diligence sailing out of Portsmouth on a glorious July morning, well, you've missed her for between five and eight years.

The ‘floating garage’ left to resume her mission east of Suez, supporting Royal Navy submarine operations in particular.

She's spent most of her recent career in the Gulf region as a ‘depot ship’ for the Silent Service, acting as a floating workshop for hull and machinery repairs, as well as supplying electricity, water, fuel, air, cranes and stores.

Officially a Forward Repair Ship, Diligence can provide support to either the surface fleet or submarines.

She returned to the UK after a lengthy spell away late last year, since when she's undergone some maintenance and refurbishment and carried out trials with one of the Astute-class submarines.

Discount for dinner

THE Army and Navy Club in London is hosting a Battle of the Atlantic dinner next month – and is offering a discount to group bookings of Royal Navy personnel.

The dinner, on September 25, features two guest speakers – Vice Admiral Mike Gretton and Lt George Copus RNR.

The club is offering a discount of 15 per cent on the ticket price of £70 per person if a group of ten or more guests are confirmed at one booking.

Tickets include champagne on arrival, a three-course meal, a half bottle of wine and a glass of port.

Contact Emily Moss on banqueting@therag.co.uk or 0207 827 8079 for more details.



● Hannah Balcombe, who was awarded the title best Drum Major, at the head of the successful BRNC Volunteer Band in Guildhall Square, Portsmouth

BRNC retain top band title

BRITANNIA Royal Naval College Volunteer Band hit the right note for the second year running to retain their title as the best overall band at the annual RN Volunteer Band Festival, held in Portsmouth.

Under the watchful eye of Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel, the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth and judges from the Royal Marines Band Service, the 35-strong band produced outstanding performances to entertain the crowds.

Since their formation in 2009 BRNC's band has won many prizes.

This year, under the baton of Bandmaster Graham Holman, they retained the Commander-in-Chief Challenge Trophy for best all-round band as well as winning trophies for second best concert band and best Drum Major, Hannah Balcombe, who only volunteered to take on this difficult role 15 months ago, making her achievement all the more remarkable.

Cdr Jason Phillips, BRNC's Band's Officer, said: “I am delighted that the BRNC Volunteer Band has retained the title of best all-round band, and that Hannah Balcombe shone as best Drum Major.

“The Volunteer Band is a great advert for BRNC, with every performance drawing praise, and I look forward to them raising the bar further to perhaps achieve a hat-trick next year.”

The nine bands that form the Royal Naval Volunteer Band Association came together from all over the UK to compete for prizes in various categories.

The marking is based on performances as a marching band, a concert band and the bands are also judged on their military bearing.

The other nine bands in the competition represented HM ships Nelson, Sultan, Collingwood, Heron, Neptune, Seahawk, Drake, Illustrious and Northwood HQ.



Hälsningar igen från Sverige



Sveiciens no Latvijas



Sveikinimai iš Lietuvos



Hälsningar från Sverige

What we did on our holidays by HMS Explorer and Express



Grüße auch aus Deutschland



Grüße aus Deutschland

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AT NAVY News, we're big fans of nominative determinism.

Nominative determinism? Your name has a direct impact on your character or career.

So being a stealthy hunter-killer HMS Ambush can catch her foes unawares. HMS Illustrious is as proud and magnificent as her name suggests. Daring, Dauntless and Dragon are all good steely, wary names.

And what would you expect of HMS Explorer? Striking out on her own. Boldly going and all that. Admittedly not to places unknown (the patrol boat needs her fuel tank topping up regularly and her crew need sustenance from the local supermarkets).

But if you want to visit a different place every day – and above all places the mainstream Fleet rarely, if ever, visits – then Explorer (plus her sister Express) have been the plum drafts this summer.

The two P2000s headed off together on Baltic Horizon for their two-month summer deployment, which gives university students an extended look at life in the RN.

Express (which at a typical speed of 15kts doesn't really pass the nominative determinism test...) serves Wales University Royal Naval Unit. Explorer is attached to the Yorkshire URNU, but has been taken over by the Birmingham unit (whose boat HMS Exploit is in Pompey undergoing an engine change).

Until the home of the German Navy, the two boats were in company.

They arrived in the Baltic port in time for the city's legendary sailing regatta, Kiel Week – 5,000 sailors, 2,000 vessels and upwards of three million visitors over the week (which is 12 times the population of Kiel itself...).

This year warships from the USA, Estonia, Belgium, Poland, Latvia, Norway, Denmark, Holland and Russia accepted the invite from the host nation, as well as Explorer and Express; the latter were royally hosted by frigate FGS Brandenburg.

"We found the German Navy to be very similar to our own. In fact, the German Navy are planning on creating their own version of the URNU," said Express' CO Lt Ben Power.

To reinforce that point *Vizeadmiral* Heinrich Lange, the deputy commander of the *Deutsche Marine*, visited Explorer for a briefing on what the P2000s do.

Kiel Week is a useful time for networking among the attending countries, with several diplomatic functions for personnel of all ranks to attend.

Each country hosts a cocktail party on their ship. The British Embassy in Berlin invited 300 people to the reception aboard the two P2000s – obviously for two 20-metre-long boats (max crew

about 18) this presented a little bit of a problem...

The solution was to take over the German officers' mess ashore and make it look British with lots of bunting, Union Flags and White Ensigns.

Guests were treated to a Ceremonial Beat Retreat and Sunset by the Band of the Royal Signals, with Rear Admiral Tim Lowe, Deputy Commander Striking Forces NATO, taking the salute along with both COs.

"The Royal Navy reception was commented on as being the best of Kiel Week," said Explorer's LET(ME) Paul Rossi.

"For young midshipmen and junior rates to host senior officers and civic dignitaries was pretty awesome. The boss made sure everyone knew we were representing the Royal Navy and the UK."

His CO Lt Si Shaw added: "Both ship's companies and their student midshipmen punched above their weight in attending functions ashore and hosting our own cocktail party for 200 guests – not bad when you consider the two P2000s have a combined manpower of 35."

His words were echoed by Capt Dan Howard, the UK's Naval Attaché in Germany, who praised Express and Explorer for doing "a fantastic job. They are certainly welcome back next year."

A combined team from both vessels took part in an international competition at Kiel Rugby Club – and made it as far as the quarter-final stage.

"It was really good to meet and mix with sailors from other navies – particularly the Russian Navy," said Mid Will Murray of Wales URNU. "There was quite a lot of banter between the ships and some swapping of gizzets!"

It was at this point that Explorer went off, er, exploring. And Express remained in Kiel for a spot of maintenance before making for Scandinavia.

The extra time in the port gave the Express sailors the chance to explore Schleswig-Holstein – and salute Britain's wartime dead.

Kieler Nordfriedhof Commonwealth War Graves Commission cemetery is the last resting place of 983 British personnel who were killed in WW2.

The dead were mostly on RAF bombing raids – as one of the Third Reich's principal naval bases, Kiel was subjected to ferocious attacks which levelled much of the city.

In addition to fallen airmen, however, there are numerous Senior Servicemen laid to rest here, not least many of the 127 souls lost when destroyer HMS Esk sank after hitting a mine off the Dutch coast on September 1 1940.

Lt Power, his ship's company and members of the WURNU were the first Senior Servicemen to pay their respects at the graveyard since flagship Bulwark was in the city early last year. After Kiel, on to Sweden.

For Explorer, a string of visits culminating in Visby on the island of Gotland. For her sister, the capital, the 'Venice of the North'.

The Expresses were hosted at the Swedish National Defence College which is not merely the 'brains trust' for the country's armed forces, but helps to shape tactics, strategy, foreign affairs and policy.

It's also home to the largest repository of academic works on such subjects in Scandinavia – and the only NATO depository library in any of the Nordic countries.

WHILE Express was enjoying the Swedish capital, Explorer had been honouring their forebears who strove to prevent Napoleon's dominance of Europe two centuries ago.

The barren island of Hanö, not a mile wide, a little over a mile long, and home to just a handful of people, was a major base for the Royal Navy in the wars against the Emperor.

On her way to the southern Swedish naval base of Karlskrona, Explorer passed close to Hanö – and it is a time-honoured tradition for RN ships to pay their respects.

At the height of the wars with Napoleon, the Baltic was vital to British trade, and between 1810 and 1812 Admiral Saumarez established the base of his fleet on the small island of Hanö, blockading the ports of northern Germany – under French control – and continuing to strike at Napoleon's forces wherever possible.

Fifteen British sailors are buried in a small cemetery at the north end of the island, and 40 years ago a large wooden cross was erected by their 20th Century brethren in their memory.

Explorer conducted a ceremonial sail past Hanö but sadly was unable to visit the seamen's graves due to the need to press on to Karlskrona.

"Our rich naval history must be remembered by the current generation – and that includes the URNU," said Lt Shaw. "Although Hanö is 1,000 miles away from the UK and may only be a small barren island, it holds an important place in Royal Navy and Swedish history."

After stops in east coast ports of Kalmar and Oskarshamn and Visby – during a week when Sweden's political parties decamped there for their annual conferences – it was time to cross the Baltic once more for the next of her 41 destinations this summer.

"I think there is only one ship in the Royal Navy with a better programme than us – and that's HMS Daring with her round the world trip!" said AB Nick Bolt, Explorer's Navigator's Yeoman.

"We are fortunate to be visiting several Baltic ports where the White Ensign is not normally flown."

Places like Ventspils (pronounced *vants-pills*) and Liepaja (pronounced *lear-pie*) in Latvia. Or Klaipeda (pronounced

clay-peer-der) in Lithuania.

"We were quite upset to leave Express in Kiel but we had a great programme of visits around the Baltic. And the Boss is keen to spread news of our exploits in exploring the Baltic," said Mid Lilla To.

In Klaipeda, Explorer's ship's company headed to the city's Vittener Cemetery where prisoners of war 33-year-old Pte Arthur Bunting of the Manchester Regiment and Pte J W Crocker of the Somerset Light Infantry are remembered.

Although the city is today Lithuania's most important port, and home to its Navy, 100 years ago Klaipeda was known as Memel and part of the German Empire, hence the reason why men from Somerset and Manchester came to be PoWs here in the Great War.

With a guard of honour from the Lithuanian Navy and a platoon from HMS Explorer, the boat's CO Lt Shaw and the British Defence Attaché, Lt Col Fitz Fitzgibbon, laid a wreath at the two graves, both of which are cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

"It's vitally important we take every opportunity to remember the fallen from the British Commonwealth from all wars when we visit foreign ports," said Lt Shaw.

"The midshipmen were given a full brief by the British Honorary Consul of the sacrifice made by the two soldiers buried in Klaipeda."

Away from the cemetery, Explorer's crew were invited aboard an old friend, LNS Kuršis – until 2008 Hunt-class minehunter HMS Dulverton.

"The boss was quite keen to visit the Kuršis as he'd served in a Hunt and was eager to note the differences – and spin a few of his own dits," said senior midshipman Mid Rob McLure.

"We were given a comprehensive ship's tour by the operation's officer and we presented him with a ship's crest after."

"The Lithuanians were very pleased with their new ships – they also bought HMS Cottesmore – and proudly showed them off to us."

By the time you read this Explorer and Express should be back in home waters, having hopped along the Polish, German and Dutch coasts, thus bringing the curtain down on Baltic Horizon.

"I think one comment stands out for me," says Lt Shaw.

"Alongside in Klaipeda a German tourist on the jetty was engaged in conversation about Explorer with my Senior Mid."

"He remarked quite loudly and with utter shock, pointing at Explorer and proclaiming: 'You came from England in that and crossed the Baltic?'"

"That sums up this deployment, pushing the boundaries of a single P2000 deploying, flying the flag and operating on her own 1,000 miles away from the UK."

NORSE POWER

“TARGET, target, target.”

The Scottish lilt of Cpl Simon Bleasdale is calm, but firm. Out of the corner of his eye, he's spied something popping up in the midst of the rolling Dorset terrain.

Thud. Thud. Thud. Thud.

Mne Reece Greenfield hammers away with the 7.62 machine gun in the turret.

There's the pitter patter of spent casings dribbling on to the windscreen.

A few hundred metres ahead fountains of dust are kicked up, quickly dissipating across the scrub.

“Come right a bit.”

There's a short pause, then another burst of fire from Reece and yet more 'rainfall'.

Red and orange tracer rounds arc across the range, vanishing as they strike a black marker.

“Big bursts. Big bursts,” Simon encourages.

“Target down.”

After moving along at a crawl, Simon puts his foot down and the Viking rocks and bobs along the sandy track, its body regularly scraping the road bed.

In front of us, a black object begins to move sluggishly left to right.

“Take him,” says Simon.

Thud. Thud. Thud. Thud.

“Target down.”

Mission complete. Return to base.

Over a week in early July, the fire and lead streaked across the Five Tips Range outside East Lulworth – a quintessential English picture-postcard village – as the men and Viking vehicles of the Armoured Support Group Royal Marines completed their live-fire training, the final tick in the box before they join this month's major amphibious deployment, Cougar 13.

It is five years since we last focused on Viking – officially the BvS10 All Terrain Vehicle (Protected). Back then Viking was heavily engaged in Afghanistan – it was used both by the commandos and Army in Helmand from 2006 to 2010.

Because of that lengthy stint in theatre, the Corps hasn't really had the chance to use Viking as intended: in support of amphibious operations.

But with the marines back from Afghanistan – for good – the focus is firmly on 'soldiers from the sea' once again.

“Anywhere the brigade goes now, Viking goes,” says Maj Rob Simmons, Officer Commanding Armoured Support Group RM.

“I want as many Royal Marines as possible to experience Viking during Cougar, to spread the word, to show the Corps what it can do. It gives us so much. It's fast, it's mobile, it gives 3 Commando Brigade so much more. It's a true battle winner.”

So what does Viking give? It gives a surprisingly comfy ride – much better than a Land Rover, that's for sure.

But commandos aren't here to have a pleasant ride. They're here to defeat the enemy. To surprise him. Outflank him. And for that Viking's perfect.

“It is a fantastic bit of kit,” said Capt Stu Mitchell, Officer in Charge 1 Troop, Armoured Support Group RM. “Snow, sand, gradients of 45 degrees, gaps 1.8 metres wide, ledges 80 centimetres high – Viking can deal with all

of them. It's almost impossible to get stuck in one.”

It is fully amphibious. Not a bit. Fully. It floats. It swims. The operator sits in the cab bone dry, not in a wetsuit with the seas sloshing around.

It doesn't need the seabed beneath it to get ashore. It could have two miles of Atlantic below and make its way to land: the grooves on its caterpillar tracks act rather like the wheel of a paddle steamer, pushing Viking along at speeds of up to 5kts.

Once it comes ashore, a quick hose down with fresh water, 30 minutes applying grease and it's good to go on land.

Perhaps more importantly, it means that no water is an obstacle. No need to wait for the engineers to throw a pontoon bridge across. Just plunge into the river – initially the water comes up to the top of the cab before the vehicle gains buoyancy – and ride across.

Were you to encounter no resistance, you could punch over 100 miles inland in a day from a beach landing. That's the exception. You're more likely to yomp with your company over challenging terrain to reach your objective. Or you could jump in the back of a Viking (eight men in full kit) and have them fresh and ready to engage the enemy.

It could shoot at the foe 1,800 metres away (just over a mile), but for accuracy gunners prefer to close to within 800 metres (about half a mile).

But it's also important to know what Viking can't do. It's not a Warrior. It's not a Scimitar. It's definitely not a Challenger 2.

They do not engage enemy armour. Nor do the Royal Marines want tanks. They don't suit their role as light infantry. And a tank isn't that versatile.

“What can do you with a tank?” says Major Simmons. “It's built for just one thing. Viking can carry troops, it can act as an ambulance, it can be used as a transporter, as a command vehicle. And it can do the war fighting side as well.”

Viking is versatile. Although it looks a sizeable bit of kit, you can fit five Vikings on a large Landing Craft Utility – you'd only get a single Challenger 2 aboard. You could also get five in a giant C17 Globemaster – or two in the back of a Hercules.

Right now, the group is preparing for the delights of RFA Mounts Bay with other elements of 3 Commando Brigade as the Cougar 13 deployment gets under way.

As plans for Cougar stand, there'll be plenty of amphibious exercises, desert training, live shoots and the chance to work with foreign military.

“The Corps is returning to its roots. We are more than happy to be on a ship and exercising – this year we're due to work with 11 different countries. That's phenomenal,” Capt Mitchell enthuses.

He's not a Viking expert by trade. He was a troop commander. Indeed, all the officers assigned to the Armoured Support Group can be drawn from any other part of the Corps – Maj Simmons was in the assault squadron world; the men, however, are Viking specialists, through and through.

It takes seven weeks to turn an 'ordinary'

Royal Marine (and no Royal Marine is ordinary...) into a Viking warrior. They learn the mechanics, how it works, how to keep it running, how to drive it on the roads (through the heart of Bournemouth, an experience which is “hoofing in the summer”), how to drive it ashore at Instow in north Devon, how to use its guns, and how to navigate difficult terrain at Branton Burrows (“a ninja of a training ground”).

“It is a steep learning curve. If you keep on top of it, it's easy to maintain, but if you let it slip...” says L/Cpl Mark Frost. “It's about good practice. If you work for the vehicle, it works for you.”

The commander stands in the turret, manning the machine-gun. The operator – the term driver simply doesn't cover his multitude of tasks: navigator, radio operator, observer, spotter, commentator – sits in the rudimentary but functional cab.

The two men are interchangeable. One day an operator, the next a commander. And vice versa. And they're all junior – marines or junior NCOs.

“There's a lot for a young lad – and a lot of responsibility,” says Capt Mitchell. “You have to be confident, you have to multi-task, you have to be level-headed.”

“Imagine this: it's the dead of night, you have eight marines in the back relying on you, there's no moon, you're driving the vehicle over horrible terrain, there's enemy out there, and you're carrying on three conversations on the radio. That requires a lot of skill.”

Sitting in the cab as we tear around the Dorsetshire landscape, you realise the symbiotic relation between commander and operator. They are a team. And they're fully conscious that there are eight lads in the back of the Viking relying on them.

“First and foremost we're commandos – we understand what the lads are doing on the ground, we know what they're going through because we've been their ourselves,” explains Viking operator Mne Blair Monaghan.

“It's important to tell the guys in the back what is going on. There's nothing worse than the guns going off when you're in the back and not being told about the situation. You want to know why.”

The Viking fleet is in the middle of a £37m revamp. Ninety-nine are in the hands of BAE Hägglunds in Sweden receiving additional firepower, armour and protection, including special mortar and crew-served weapon variants.

When they are returned to the group next year, they'll find it has a new purpose-built home at Bovington (currently the marines are split between Yeovilton and the Dorset base) which is much closer to the Army's traditional ranges for its armour.

For now there are just the 16 original Mk1s to play with. And it's not a bad bit of kit at all.

“From this point on, everything the Royal Marines do, Viking will be there,” says Capt Mitchell.

“So if you want to be in the thick of it, Viking is the place to be.”



pictures: la(phot) caroline davies, rnas yeovilton





peregrine trophy
po(phot) sean clee



media operations award
la(phot) guy pool



maritime air award
po(phot) mez merrill

MUCH as we wax lyrical in these pages, turn on the style, wheel out our finest prose, drop in cultural references and try every possible grammatical or rhetorical trick in the book, we know what you really flick through us for.

Award-winning imagery. Type 23s crashing through the surging seas. Royal Marines storming ashore all cammed up. Sea Kings kicking up a white-out.

So allow the Royal Navy's photographic branch to oblige once again. The images presented here are the very best of the best – winners of the 2013 RN Photographic Awards... aka the Peregrines.

This year the leading lights of the branch – in the age of austerity just 58 strong – converged on the Royal College of Art in West London as the nation's most senior sailor, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, presented 13 awards.

Two titles are more coveted than any other. Akin to best film and best director

at the Oscars are the Peregrine Trophy itself (for the best photographic section) and RN Photographer of the Year (for the best portfolio from an individual professional photographer).

The **Peregrine Trophy** was bagged by one of the RN's most experienced men behind the camera, PO(Phot) Sean Clee, charged with officially recording 3 Commando Brigade's actions.

When the Royal Marines deploy, so too their photographers. Exercise Black Alligator (with 42 Cdo in the California desert) and Cold Response (with 45 Cdo in Norway) were rich hunting grounds for such an experienced cameraman.

Thirteen years a photographer (before that he was a missile man... and before that a coal miner), Sean also took the video prize for his moving footage of the green berets' Arctic training.

A stint aboard HMS York on her final mini deployment to the Baltic in the summer of 2012 (plus a wonderful image which captured the spirit of WW2 veterans) proved particularly fruitful for LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins who earns the most prestigious individual title: the **RN Photographer of the Year**. Capturing enigmatic smiles from two of York's

crew also earned the former chef the **Life Without Limits** title ("the best photograph of a member of the Royal Navy/Royal Marines undertaking their duties, whether undergoing training, on exercises or operations", which pretty much encompasses everything the RN does).

"I've had a number of recent deployments – a few months on one ship, then a few months on another. It's helped to keep my photography fresh and varied," said 36-year-old Dave, who's been a photographer for six years.

"It's been a lot of hard work, but winning these two awards has been the reward. I'm delighted to have been recognised."

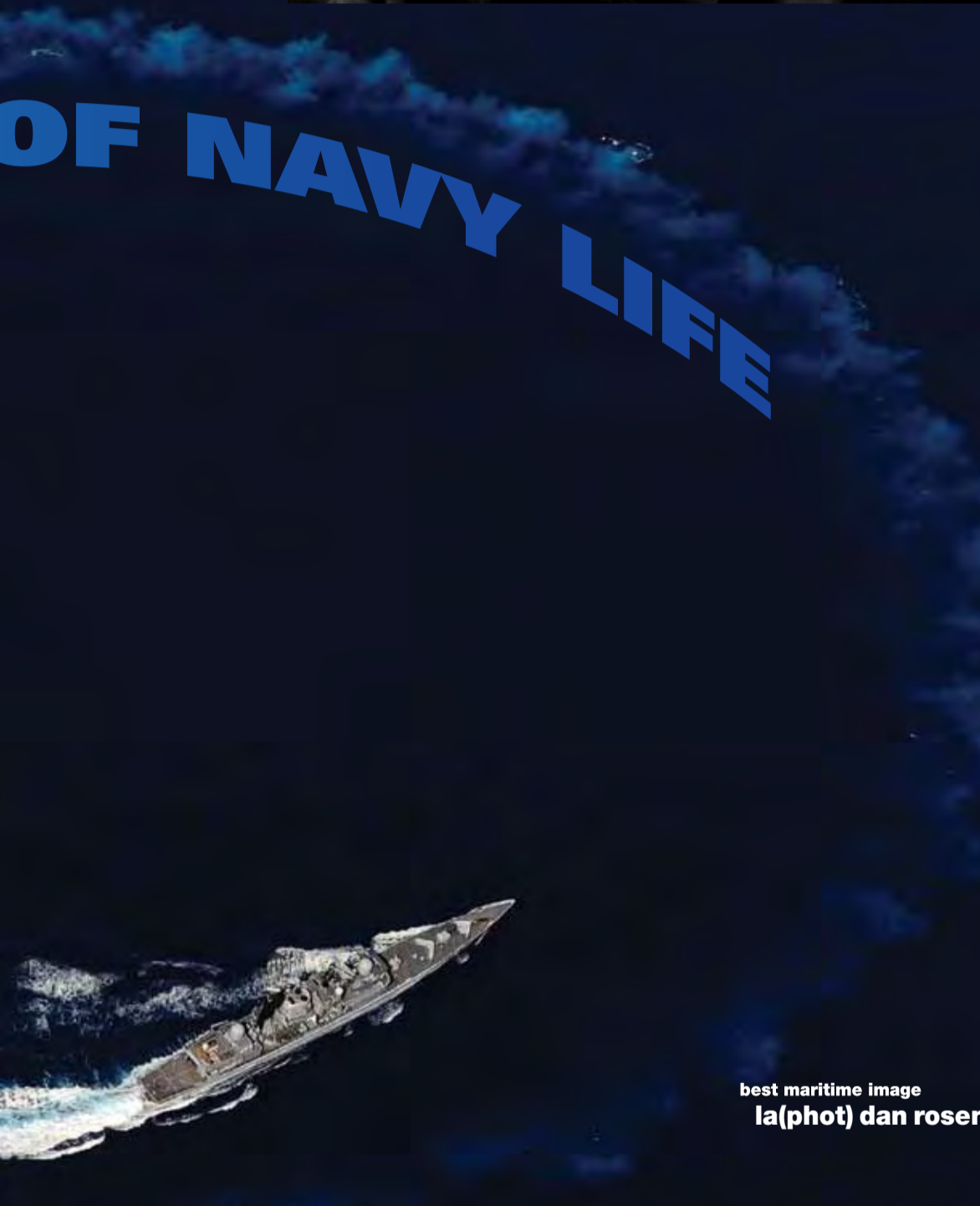
No photograph reproduced in these pages in recent times has provoked more interest (and requests for copies) than LA(Phot) Dean Nixon's shot of HMS Illustrious arriving in Malta's Grand Harbour. It's only right, therefore, that he receives the **Navy News Award** for his efforts.

The central image gracing this spread was taken by HMS Edinburgh's LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum who recorded every moment of the venerable destroyer's

THE CIRCLE



commandant general rm's prize
la(phot) emz nolan



final deployment. The old girl proved that, even after nearly 30 years' service, she can still do her party piece: the maritime doughnut. Capturing her in the act earned Dan the **Best Maritime Image Award**.

And for every award-winning maritime image, there's an award-winning shot of the Fleet Air Arm in action. Commando Helicopter Force photographer PO Mez Merrill took the **Maritime Air Prize**, braving the cold of Norway to follow a Junglie Sea King whipping up the fine snow as it came in to land.

The **Commandant General Royal Marines' Prize** goes to the section or unit which provides the best portfolio of three images... and in 2013 that unit was the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone, as personified by LA(Phot) Emz Nolan, for some truly atmospheric imagery of the nation's elite fighting force in training.

When HMS Diamond returned from her maiden deployment a few days before Christmas, 23-year-old AET George Halsall proposed to his 21-year-old girlfriend Emma Davies. She said 'yes' - and the unforgettable moment was captured for eternity by LA(Phot) Guy

Pool, who took the **Media Operations Award** for best news photograph.

In recent years, the awards have cast their net beyond the confines of the branch to recognise the talent among RN personnel who might not be professional photographers, but know a cracking image when they see the opportunity.

Like Lympstone instructor Sgt Ben Briggs who was named **RN Amateur Photographer of the Year** for his portfolio (a cliff assault and survival training in Norway). PO Michael Weir of 829 NAS won the **Amateur Maritime Image** award for one of the squadrons pumping scores of flares out as it tested its defensive aids suite. And Lt Chloe Lea took the **Amateur Open** title by snapping a Merlin conducting Helicopter In-flight Refuelling over the flight deck of a Type 23.

And finally... 17-year-old Tamsyn Faulder from Carlisle took the best photograph by any member of the **Sea Cadet Corps** (see page 42).

The awards - known affectionately as Peres - owe their name to HMS Peregrine, one-time home of the branch (today 'phot hq' is a small office building at the foot of Whale Island).

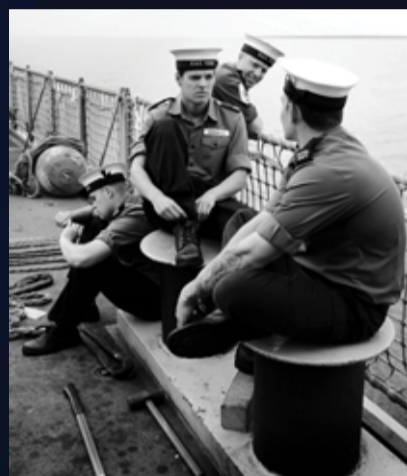
Casting their eyes over this year's entries were: ex-RN and Fleet Street lensmeister Neil Hall, who's on the MoD's picture desk in Whitehall; *Daily Telegraph* picture editor Matthew Fearn; Prof Naren Barfield from the Royal College of Art; and senior news producer Anthony Massey and producer/journalist Kathy Andrews, both from the BBC.

They pored over 270 images taken by professional RN photographers, plus 60 amateur entries from within and without the Naval Service, and not a small amount of video footage (which, obviously, we can't show you here).

And after a day of lively deliberations - individual photographers and units submitted "very strong portfolios" capturing the right mix of people, equipment and veterans, while amateur submissions were also impressive, making "judging a pleasure" - they passed their judgment.

And if you think that's a tough job... consider this little fact.

Spatial constraints mean that the *Navy News* team only publishes a fraction (five per cent at best) of the images we receive from Naval photographers. We are spoiled for choice on a daily basis.



rn photographer of the year
and
'life without limits' award
la(phot) dave jenkins



amateur photographer of the year
sgt ben briggs



navy news award
la(phot) dean nixon

Stellar correction

In *Navy News*' July edition Gerry Gerhard wrote about the US Navy's sailing warships preserved as museum ships.

Sadly, his comments on USS Constellation in Baltimore, Maryland, are in error. The Constellation there is the second ship of the name – a 22-gun sloop of war built from 1853-55 at the Gosport (now Norfolk) Navy Yard in Virginia. She is the successor to the first ship, the Baltimore-built frigate launched in 1797 and completed in 1798.

The frigate was broken up in 1853 as work on the sloop began. Eventually due to less-than-clear record-keeping over the years, much confusion resulted over the sloop's correct history.

Many people (and the US Navy too) came to feel the frigate had just been rebuilt as a sloop.

As a result, she was displayed in Baltimore for many years as the frigate. That continued until the mid-90s when further detailed research showed the ship was correctly, the sloop of 1855 and that is how she is preserved and exhibited today.

I regret any misunderstanding Mr Gerhard evidently received in his visit to the Constellation.

All of us involved with the ship, and I have been a volunteer historian and guide on her for 15 years now, are very clear to visitors in describing her history.

– John D Barnard
Maryland
USA

Leopard loss shock

I WAS serving on HMS Leopard in 1963 at the time of her collision with SAS Pietermaritzburg on July 28 1963.

As we are approaching the 50th anniversary, my thoughts were drifting back to events of that day.

I decided to get in touch with the *Ayrshire Post* as the only person killed in the collision was Tom Bolton, from Ayr in Scotland.

To my great surprise, I was contacted by his sister and his niece. I was shocked to hear that they had never been told of the circumstances of Tom's death.

What was more disturbing was that his sister had no recollection of any money being given to the family from the ship.

We had all pitched in for the sale of his kit as is traditional. I remember buying his football boots in the belief that all funds raised were for his family.

If this was not the case. What happened to the money raised for his family by the ship's company?

I have only got hearsay evidence but my time in the Navy was such an influence on the way my life has been lived and the moral code I believe in.

– Peter Scott,
Swindon, Wilts

U made an error

ON page 35 of the June edition of *Navy News* you had an article 'Photos tell of unlikely friendship', about an incident between HM Submarine E2 and UC-37, on April 29 1917; as an amateur Naval historian, I checked my database and history, but could not work it out as something did not quite fit.

I then checked in my copy of *Mediterranean Submarines*, by Michael Wilson and Paul Kemp, to find it was another U-Boat – UC-27, not UC-37 (probably just a typo)!

– John Keating
Ex-WOUWSM 60-84
Ex-RAN 84-99, RANR 00-04
President RN Submariners
Association, Rockingham,
Australia

CLASSIC JACK

BY TUBS



You're in for a Surprise...

WITH reference to the letter on page 27 of your July edition, from Tony Cash. I suggest that Tony never enters an HMS Surprise reunion.

HMS Surprise never was a launch, she started her life as a Bay-class anti-aircraft frigate but her title changed to a Flag Frigate. So, Her Majesty the Queen boarding her 'launch', not on.

I was serving in HMS Fleetwood at the time of the 1953 review and along with the Trinity house Patricia, HMS Redpole, HMS

Starling, us and HMS Helmsdale, followed HMS Surprise out of Portsmouth harbour – Patricia leading.

At that time Surprise was under the command of Vice Admiral E M C Abel Smith CB, CVO, Flag Officer Royal Yachts.

Her Majesty had dinner aboard HMS Vanguard where she also witnessed the illumination of the Fleet and the firework display and returned to Surprise for the night.

– Allen Gittens,
Trench, Shropshire

Loch's Affray role

I WAS slightly startled by D J West's claim in the June *Navy News* concerning the search for the submarine HMS Affray, that all the articles he has seen credit HMS Reclaim with finding the location of this vessel.

In his book *Subsmash: the mysterious disappearance of HM Submarine Affray*, published by Sutton in 2007, Allan Gallop asserts (p.101) that on June 12 1952 "at 191hrs the frigate HMS Loch Insh made contact with a large object on the seabed... A print out of HMS Loch Insh's Asdic reading revealed a long cigar-shaped object, estimated to be approximately 260ft long (Affray was 281ft) and 20ft at its highest point (Affray was 19ft) and sitting in approximately 300ft of water."

Subsequently an observation chamber from the Reclaim with three divers including the Chief Diving Officer aboard, was

lowered to the bottom to carry out a preliminary examination before a television camera carried out a closer look to finally confirm that the wreckage of the Affray had been located.

– R D Hyslop,
Surbiton, Surrey

Six, not five

WITH reference to Apollo and Manxman at the 1953 Review.

When the Abdiel-class were ordered, they were known as Cruiser Minelayers but this was later shortened to Fast Minelayers.

There were six ships, not five as mentioned: Abdiel, Manxman, Apollo, Ariadne, Welshman and Latona. Latona lasted five months from commissioning to scuttling: May-October 1941.

– W J Finlayson
(ex-CY Manxman), Plymouth

Ocean's jet-age first

I AM writing to correct a mistake made by Len F Simpson on page 27 of the July edition of *Navy News*.

HMS Indomitable was not the first ship to land a jet aircraft.

That honour goes to HMS Ocean, when Lt Cdr 'Winkle' Brown made the world's first pure jet aircraft landing, with a specially-modified D H Vampire on December 3 1945 in the Solent.

I have a photograph of HMS Ocean with the Modified D H Vampire above it with the name of the pilot and the date on the back of the frame.

I left HMS Ganges (which as James Anness states is in a very sad state with the mast in disrepair) in June 1951 and joined HMS Ocean at Rosyth.

We sailed for a 2½-year commission in the Med in July, I served in her as a Boy Telegraphist and an Ordinary Telegraphist from 1951 to November 1953 (including Korea) when we decommissioned in Devonport.

PS 'Winkle' Brown did a landing and a take off.
– A 'Shiner' Wright,
Hucknall, Notts



● Veteran Charles Wall meets HMS Edinburgh Sea Dart maintainer ET(WE) Chris Phelan during Battle of the Atlantic commemorations
Picture: LA(Phot) Nicky Wilson

New-found friends

I HAD the good fortune to be able to attend the Battle of the Atlantic ceremony in Liverpool; the Sunday was also my 93rd birthday.

Because of unforeseen circumstances I had the honour of being given a prestigious seat alongside the commanders of HMS Bulwark, FGS Datteln and HMCS Iroquois.

The Canadian commander noticed that I had the Canadian flag lapel badge along with the 50th commemorative badge and also the HMS Newfoundland badge.

We were able to have a short chat on my experiences with the Canadians on a number of occasions during my five and a half years in World War 2.

I would also like to put on record that he afforded me the welcome assistance in standing up and sitting down during the service.

I must point out that I am rather wobbly on my legs and

needed wheelchair assistance from my son but was so impressed with the Canadian commanding officer that I would have been proud to be one of his crew.

To put the icing on the cake, I was also given the privilege of meeting HRH Princess Anne after the service – then to top it all, along came a Navy photographer (Wren) with a young sailor for me to have a talk about his career and prospects in relation to mine.

It is this sort of occasion that makes you proud of being Royal Navy.

– Charles Wall (ex-PO Stoker)
Birmingham

50 years of top photos

THE national press has recently featured pictures from the Peregrine Trophy and I thought you may be interested in the fact that this year was the 50th running of the competition.

The first was in 1962 but it missed two years. Full details at www.users.waitrose.com/~jandor/Hist985.htm

– Jan Larcombe
Ex-Fleet Phot O

ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS

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Picture: John Clarke

● *Tha' she blows... the birth of the volcano Surtsey Island as seen from HMS Duncan*

Delightful days on the Duncan

REFERENCE John Pittock's letter in June's *Navy News*; I too joined HMS Duncan in June '63.

My first ship was also HMS Ganges, via HMS Cambridge.

I travelled through the night with all my kit arriving onboard at 0800, sailed at 0900 then towed in at 1600, when a voice down the junior rates' mess hatch called my name: "You are watch on deck - get up here!"

I never knew John, he lived down aft; the J/R mess was right up forward.

The first cox'n was a chap called Liggett. I never saw him again until 30-plus years later when I visited Dover Sea Cadets. (They do say things come back to haunt you...)

Dick carried out many excellent years of service for the young people of Dover and we got on exceedingly well. His relief in HMS Duncan was a chap called Jock Weir - a lovely man.

The CO was Capt Trowbridge; as juniors, we all looked up in awe at him. He went on to become Admiral of HMY Britannia.

The gunnery officer was Lt Smith - a real jolly character, (an SD officer) who never changed.

The ship's company had many characters: Sweaty Hoare, Blondy Graham, Brum Fleetwood, George Templeton, Andy Knox, and the Buffer, Jack Bibby.

Bless them all. It was hard in the 'Fish' squadron but our claim to fame was when we discovered a volcano that erupted from under the sea off the Faroes islands - amazing!

I was drafted in July to HMS Nubian and it was like going from a mini into Rolls Royce - bunks (no hammocks to sling) a dining hall too - no carrying the mess' meals along a rolling Burma Road and everyone moaning because the custard had gone into the gravy!

Happy days... really glad that

another Duncan will be joining the fleet.

I also served in HMS Nelson from 1986-2009 working for Southern Area Sea Cadets - a grand total of 48 years in a blue suit!

- G P Nicklin,
LT(SCC)RNR Rtd.
Fareham

...I joined the previous Duncan in Rosyth in March 1963, as an EA2, having finished systems training in HMS Collingwood. My worst results were for ASDICs (Sonar) and associated systems.

Duncan was my first ship and what a sorry state she was in. Tied alongside, leaning to starboard, with the quarterdeck in a strange shape, a skip lay nearby full of all sorts of items.

I quickly learned that a huge goffer had pooped the Duncan and as a result had jammed the steering gear. Engineers were on board recommending that the deck head in the tiller flat was shored up. Not a very inspiring welcome.

On going on board, I learnt that I was the duty 'sparks' and also duty PO the next day. Then I was informed that my part of ship was the sonar and weapons systems consisting of the two sonar sets, one of which comprised an analogue computer, mortar Mk10 and two Bofors. Oh wonderful!

To add to my initiation, my predecessor had already left the ship and had ditched all the maintenance cards. Welcome aboard.

I worked on the weapons systems with an OA named Pete Storey. (When we were in Reykjavik harbour one time he said I should become a diver, like him, but after he had been in the water, he came up with blue hands. I said: 'not for me!')

The ship was in port for

maintenance and a small refit.

This gave me time to take out new maintenance cards to understand the equipment.

After the refit period, the ship went to Portland to carry out trials, including a live firing of the mortar Mk10. This was a great success with all six mortars being launched and detonating. However, at some point the ship sailed through the water disturbance caused by the explosions, which resulted in a pump failure, subsequently no fresh water was made and so we had to go to Pompey to have a new pump fitted.

Duncan was alongside in Reykjavik when a report of a large explosion at sea in the south was reported. We put to sea and a large column of smoke and ash was seen from an eruption. This volcanic activity marked the birth of Surtsey Island on November 14 1963. The island was part of the Westman Island chain.

The captain sailed around it at a great distance and when the ship was downwind, it got covered in black hailstones, which subsequently melted, making a black mess all over the ship. The buffer nearly had a fit!

Nearing the end of my time on Duncan, I was summoned to the coxswain's office and informed that I was going on draft to HMS Dolphin. I asked why and he said "to become a submariner".

I said I hadn't volunteered and his reply was that I didn't have to volunteer. So off I went to HMS Dolphin.

How ironic to go from an anti-submarine ship to its target. I subsequently served in Ocelot and then Resolution, in build at Barrow, and then on many patrols.

- John (Nobby) Clarke
Alvaston
Derby

Band of grubbers

I LOVE the *Navy News*, it helps us old salts keep up with the modern, though sadly shrinking Navy, but, the content is always very biased towards Wafoos and Bootnecks.

There's loads of very nice pictures of helicopters whizzing about making a noise, acting all aggressive-like, and booties shinning up mountains, skiing back down and paddling through swamps getting all dirty, but never anything about those unsung heroes who provide all the services on board ship that the others enjoy, namely the ENGINEERS.

The engine room department always has been the forgotten, not-talked-about, relations on board ship, and it's time it stopped!

We too want to see our pictures in the paper! If any department

could be considered indispensable, it's the Grubbers, as I once proved, much to the Skipper's dismay (and the odd 'left hand down a bit Jimmy!').

We Grubbers did take the ship out to sea without assistance from the sailors, the skipper, the navigating officer, or for that matter any stray Wafoos or Booties who happened to be awake at that time. No other department can say that.

So come on, let's have some good positive copy on the engineers, the stokers. You know; the people who keep the lights on, the chaps who give you hot water every day and keep air conditioning going, as well as getting you home, every time. I could go on, *ad nauseam*...

- Bob Dixon,
Bicester, Oxon



Each month Pussers Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tittle to the writer of our top letter.

Pensacola tragedy

I WAS particularly interested by the article in the July edition of *Navy News* about the two young students killed whilst under training by the US Navy in Pensacola.

My memory is that the accident took place in 1953, not 1952.

If I am right in this, then I remember the incident very well as I too was training as a pilot at that time: July '52 to November '53.

As a lieutenant with six years' seniority at the time, I was the senior British student and together with the BNLO, Lt Cdr Jock Cunningham, I was involved in dealing with their effects, in

particular selling the Triumph Mayflower car belonging to one of them.

To my knowledge, they were the only two to lose their lives during this time, and even that was not a flying accident, they had come off the road and gone into a culvert, it was very sad.

I hope my memory is right and that I have got the right incident, as the date I remember was 1953 and I do not recall two others having been killed earlier in '52, but I may be wrong, in which case the event I describe was a different tragedy.

- R D O Simmons,
Petersfield

Carrier crossings

READING my copy of the 'Dockyard Dandy' dated July 2013 gave me cause to recall my days in the Fleet Air Arm (1957-67).

I read with great interest, 'Just like riding an Ike'. It may well be the first time 'Jack' has performed as an aircraft director on a super carrier, but not the first time on any carrier.

While in both Hermes and Victorious we cross-operated with the Forrestal and Saratoga (US Sixth Fleet) off Naples. The squadron spent a week on board the American carriers which were the super carriers of their day (60,000 tons).

I presume the cats and traps are what we would have known as catapults and arrester gear.

It is interesting to note the exam and qualification required for such duties, something far removed from my day. When you joined a ship you were thrown into the deep end with dummy runs, using Lansing Bagnalls and Tugmasters to simulate aircraft movements.

The first time we got involved on a live deck was when the aircraft flew on, and the experience was carried through to night flying.

All of this will no doubt appear primitive in comparison with this day and age, however it is well documented that we were the world leaders in operating the deck of a light fleet carrier.

In all my experience of cross-operating we always achieved a greater number of launches and recoveries than other navies including the Yanks, and always had a higher serviceability record.

I wonder if today an EMA would be allowed to operate the crane (jumbo) when duty crash crew?

- Jim 'Paddy' Stroud

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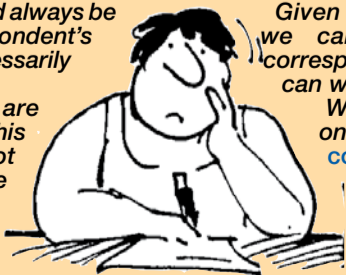
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LETTERS to the editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

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

If you submit a photograph which you did not take yourself, please make sure that you have the permission for us to publish it.



Given the volume of letters, we cannot publish all of your correspondence in *Navy News*, nor can we reply to every one.

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

We look particularly for correspondence which stimulates debate, makes us laugh or raises important issues.

The editor reserves the right to edit your submissions.



● Gen Sir David Richards

Chief of Defence Staff bids farewell

CHIEF of the Defence Staff Gen Sir David Richards, the professional head of the Armed Forces, has written to thank the Royal Navy for their service over the years:

"Over the past four decades I have had the pleasure of serving alongside the Royal Navy and Royal Marines in many different capacities.

"As a Commando Gunner I started my career with 40 Commando Group in Singapore, before moving to the Citadel in Plymouth and the 45 Commando Group in Arbroath.

"Over subsequent years I have been fortunate to deploy in Royal Navy ships on a number of occasions and indeed to have them sometimes under command. "I have never ceased to be impressed by the professionalism, dedication and humour of the sailors and marines I have served alongside.

"As I leave the Armed Forces after 42 years I wanted to take this moment to say thank you.

"Not only to those of you who have the honour to serve in uniform, but to the civilians who support you, and to the families without whom we all know you couldn't begin to achieve as much as you do.

"I am delighted to say that the Royal Navy and Royal Marines are in good hands at every level.

"You who are serving today are every bit the rightful heirs of a glorious history and I know you will contribute to an equally bright future.

"I wish you every good fortune and can only thank you for all you do and all you are."

Germans visit BRNC

FIFTEEN would-be German naval officers learned how Britain prepares its young men and women to serve with the Royal Navy.

Cadets from the Marineschule Mürwik – German Naval Academy – spent a fortnight at its UK counterpart, Britannia Royal Naval College, training side-by-side with their allies.

BRNC has a twinning agreement with the German academy, with a permanent liaison officer (currently *Korvettenkapitän* Caroline von Maltzan) on its staff, while cadets visit each year as a way of fostering mutual understanding.

As with their RN counterparts, German cadets go through a year's basic training to prepare them for the rigours of serving on the front line with their Navy.

During this exchange visit the German cadets joined Royal Navy cadets in their fourth week of training, plus budding Royal Naval Reserve and RFA officers.

The Germans were given the opportunity to develop command, leadership and management skills undertaking a series of tasks in the College grounds.

And they spent four days on Dartmoor living in the field at Okehampton Battle Camp, learning the basics of living and surviving in the field.

As well as leadership training the Germans were introduced to the college's rich heritage and enjoyed some free time in Dartmouth.



Picture: LA(Phot) Pepe Hogan

Stuart can now put his feet up

WHEN an officer who is a keen cyclist left work on his final day in the Royal Navy, there was only one way for him to travel.

A chauffeur-driven rickshaw, of course. Cdr Stuart Somerville, the Base Logistics Officer at Clyde Naval Base, and his wife Nicole were cheered off from Argyll Building by dozens of his colleagues (left).

Joining the Royal Navy in 1984, Stuart began his career as a junior cook, and from 1986-88 took part in global deployments before a period of service in Northern Ireland.

In 1989 he was appointed special cook on board the Royal Yacht Britannia, and in 1994 his culinary skill led to a gold medal at the Olympia cooking competition.

His hard work and dedication saw him gain a commission to officer in 1998 and an appointment as Supply Officer on board attack submarine HMS Sovereign soon followed.

Stuart's exemplary service in Iraq from 2005-06 led him to be awarded the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS), while a period in Afghanistan in 2010 earned him a Joint Services Commendation.



● Lt Col Nick Grace

RM Band supremo at Palace

THE head of the Royal Marines Band Service, who played a major part in the musical celebrations for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, has received his OBE from the Prince of Wales.

Lt Col Nick Grace was presented with his award at Buckingham Palace, accompanied by his family.

Last year he organised and conducted the music at the high-profile Jubilee Muster and Review of the Armed Forces at Windsor.

As Principal Director of Music for the Portsmouth-based RM Band Service, he led massed bands from the three Services – more than 450 musicians and pipers – in front of the Queen and a worldwide television audience of millions.

His 30-year career has included serving with the RM Band on the Royal Yacht Britannia for five years.

During the Gulf War of 2003 he led the band acting as casualty handlers in concerts on HMS Ocean and Ark Royal just days before the start of the conflict.

More recently he conducted the massed bands of the Royal Marines at the South Coast Proms at Whale Island last month.

Also present at the Palace ceremony was his brother Martin – a Warrant Officer and bandmaster of the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth (The Royal Band).

Ex-WRNS officer ordained at Truro



Pictures: Paul Richards

EIGHT former colleagues gathered at Truro Cathedral to watch Heather Aston ordained as a deacon – and quite possibly become the first WRNS officer to follow that path.

Heather, who was ordained by Bishop Tim Thornton, and will serve in the benefice of Meneage, was amongst the last course of 16 WRNS Officers under training to pass out at the Royal Naval College Greenwich on July 8 1976.

The former officer who joined the WRNS in 1972, was presented with a gift of a green stole embroidered with the WRNS crest from all the members of that course (left) – and was delighted when she realised she could wear it on Sunday at her first Eucharist.

Her friends had travelled from as far away as France, as well as other parts of the UK, and the two course members now living in Australia and Canada had sent their congratulations by post.

Heather had mentioned the upcoming ordination (and the fact that she may be a trailblazer – unless anyone knows otherwise) to 11 of the course who met up last July at the British Museum.

The date went straight into their diaries, which meant the nine who were in Truro Cathedral in late June could go some way to recreating their passing out



● Back row, from left: Claire Harding, Pennie Burne, Mary Beth Greenop, Pam Worsley-Tonks, Lynda Mills; front row, from left: Liz Sim, Deacon Heather Aston, Bishop Tim Thornton, Jill Gardner, Alison Barber

photograph of 37 years before – with the addition of the Bishop.

The Officer-in-Charge of this the last WRNS Officers' Training to be held at the Greenwich was First Officer Anthea Savill WRNS, now Commandant Anthea Larken, President of the Association of Wrens.

The Rev Heather Aston will

now be working in the Meneage district of the Lizard Peninsula in Cornwall.

The four parishes of her benefice joined together to welcome her shortly after her ordination, with the churchwarden of each presenting her with symbols of the deacon's ministry, such as a Gospel book and a chalice.

Brothers and allies take up gun challenge

FIELD gun may be a peculiarly Naval undertaking, but the lure stretches far beyond the wires of RN establishments.

Teams from the other Services regularly take part in competition – including that for the prestigious Brickwoods Trophy at HMS Collingwood each summer.

And this year an American

has added his muscle to the Collingwood team.

Lt Christopher Bongard, originally from Rapid City in South Dakota, is currently on a foreign exchange tour and is stationed at the Fareham training base as an air warfare instructor.

Lt Bongard, who was chosen to represent Collingwood A Crew,

said: "I joined the Field Gun crew because it was a new opportunity that not many Americans have the chance to experience.

"I heard a lot of stories and saw some YouTube videos on previous crew runs which captured my interest.

"So when I saw that I had an opportunity to participate in this unique experience I took it".

He began training in February as a member of the B team, but just two days before the competition he was drafted into the A team, going on to become joint winners of Plate 1 (the runners-up final).

"The US Navy has sporting events and teams but nothing quite like Field Gun – I feel very fortunate for being given the opportunity to be part of the Field Gun Crew," he added.

Up against him was a team which benefited from a ready-made team spirit – the HMS Seahawk squad included three brothers.

Shane (29), Luke (27) and Dean (25) Retallack, (pictured left), all air engineers on Culdrose Merlin squadron, have been training air station Culdrose's crew.

Sibling rivalry was put aside for the time being as they competed for places with other volunteers in the final crew line up.

"It's a big family effort", said Shane the eldest of the three, "we are certainly looking out for each other, coaxing and cajoling as we compete for places."

Shane and Luke are wheel carriers, who have to lift and sprint with 60kg loads on their shoulders over distances along the track.



● Lt Chris Bongard USN competes in the RNRMC Field Gun competition

Picture: Keith Woodland (HMS Collingwood)

Dean, the faster brother, has the tricky job as 'Speedy Shell', the sprinter between the limber and the gun with the blank shells.

It was not just HMS Collingwood that echoed to the pounding of feet and the rumble of wheels over the summer.

Littlehampton also boasted

the thrill of field gun (a slightly gentler version – pictured below) during the Nautical Training Corps' annual Founders Day, when around 500 members of the training organisation gathers on the Sussex coast to parade, play music and demonstrate what the organisation is all about.





● Lt Cdr Roy Casson RAN (left) and Lt Cdr Mickey Rooney make their allegiance clear

Picture: POIS Ollie Garside, RAN

Lions fans celebrate in Aussie ship

TWO British naval 'Lions' celebrated the rugby side's thrilling series win over the Aussies surrounded by hardline Wallabies fans aboard an Australian frigate.

Lt Cdrs Mickey Rooney and Roy Casson were the sole Britons aboard HMAS Newcastle in the Indian Ocean, whose 190 sailors took defeat with good grace.

Roy was in the RN until 2009 when he emigrated, joined the RAN and is now marine engineer officer of the Newcastle.

He was facing the prospect of being the sole Brit aboard watching the series decider... until his former HMS Monmouth shipmate Mickey dropped in.

Mickey was returning home after a stint as HMS Kent's weapons engineer officer – the frigate's also on counter-piracy duties.

The road to the UK from the Indian Ocean was a long one: Kent's Merlin to the Newcastle. Newcastle's Seahawk to FS Somme. Somme's Puma to Djibouti. Civilian air from Djibouti to London via Paris.

"When I landed on the Newcastle I was greeted with a bear hug and the smiles from Roy – we had also been through Dartmouth together and three years of university," said Mickey.

"I didn't know he was onboard so a pleasant surprise. He was not looking forward to being the only Pom onboard for the game.

"Needless to say we took over the wardroom and entered the smug zone once we won. Newcastle's CO, Cdr Paul O'Grady, was magnanimous in defeat. He'd served in HMS York and Gloucester, so knew how much this meant to the Brits."

The Aussies did have the last laugh, however – Mickey's transfer to FS Somme saw him winched down for added excitement.

Mickey explained it was penance – and the French understood, breaking out bottles of Pomerol for dinner to celebrate; it had been a French referee.

Mickey touched down in the UK 41 hours after leaving HMS Kent – including 16 hours flying. Which just happens to be the final score in the Lions match...

Submariners in the spotlight

TWO former deeps stepped into the limelight for their work ensuring that the profile of the Silent Service does not slip below the surface.

Michael Pittkeathly received an MBE from the Queen for his part in adapting the inside of nuclear patrol boat HMS Courageous in Devonport and subsequently conducting guided tours.

"Pitt K" served in Courageous for four years as a leading hand.

Meanwhile the RN Submarine Museum in Gosport bid farewell to their last World War 2 veteran volunteer guide, John Crossman.

John's retirement was marked by a barbecue party in the shadow of the recently-unveiled HMS Alliance, now in the final phase of restoration.



● From left: Rev Alastair Mansfield (RNAS Culdrose), Rev Ralph Barber (Portsmouth Flotilla), Rev Simon Springett (Commando Training Centre RM), Rev Martin Evans (RNAS Yeovilton), Rev Andrew Corness (Portsmouth Flotilla) and Rev Tom Pyke RNR (HMS President)

Bishes in the dunker

AND you thought they could walk on water...

Six chaplains – more commonly known throughout the Navy as 'bishes' – were 'dunked' together as they underwent training to see whether they can escape from a crashed helicopter.

To that end at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset there's the Underwater Escape Training Unit – better known as the dunker (because those on the course are dunked) – for all aircrew and

support to sailors and Royal Marines on the front line, they must fly regularly – and any regular flier with the Fleet Air Arm must be able to get out of a crashed helicopter.

For added realism, some of the exits or windows are blocked or jammed and, as the bishes may be expected to fly at night, the lights are switched off.

'frequent fliers'.

After strapping into the mock-up fuselage, the chaplains were lowered into the pool until completely submerged, then the helicopter turned over.

"To be honest, I really don't

enjoy the dunker that much," said Rev Simon Springett, a commando-trained chaplain who's served from Antarctica to Afghanistan and Scotland to Sierra Leone.

"The training is essential to ensure I can perform my role, bringing spiritual and pastoral care to the men and women of the Naval Service."

The sextet were attending the Anglican chaplains' conference at Ampert House in Wiltshire – the spiritual home of all military chaplains – and made the short trip down the A303 to Yeovilton to ensure they were 'in date' for their training.

There are 57 chaplains across the Naval Service – covering the Church of England, Roman Catholic Church, Church of Scotland and the Free Churches.

They provide spiritual and moral support to sailors and Royal Marines at establishments, air bases and on the front line – seven are deployed or are about to deploy on ships or in Afghanistan.

There are also six 'world faith chaplains' across the Armed Forces who advise on the Hindu, Muslim, Buddhist, Sikh and Jewish faiths.



● WO1 Steve Harvey (left) at Centre Court in Wimbledon with fellow stewards Sgt James Dunbar and SAC Adam Bruerton

RN WO1 at SW19

A ROYAL Navy Warrant Officer was on duty at Wimbledon's Centre Court when Andy Murray triumphed at this year's championships.

WO1 Steve Harvey volunteered and used his own leave allocation to act as a Service steward in support of the All England Tennis Championships.

He was fortunate to be allocated the prestigious position of a Centre Court gangway for the entire championships, including the men's final between Andrew Murray and Novak Djokovic.

The 38-year-old said: "I've been in the Royal Navy for 22 years and this was the first year I'd had the opportunity to attend, and it did not disappoint."

"I was very privileged to witness some lows of the championship and one very huge high."

"Centre Court lost some big personalities, such as Roger Federer and Serena Williams and the semi final match between Novak Djokovic and Juan Martin Del Potro was an absolute epic battle to watch."

"However the thing that will always stick in my mind is that I was there when Andy Murray finally broke that 77-year men's winning drought."

"This in itself was a surreal experience and you could

almost smell and taste the 77 years of anticipation and waiting with every stroke that was fought."

The Armed Forces has a long-standing relationship with Wimbledon which began in 1946 when the tournament organisers asked Service personnel who were being demobilised to act as attendants.

Since then members of the Forces have been back every year, working alongside the London Fire Brigade and commercial security guards to man walkways, stairs and seating areas.

Over 300 Service personnel are on duty at the two-week tennis championships every year.

WO1 Harvey, a divisional training officer at HMS Raleigh, said: "Overall, being at Wimbledon was a really great experience giving me the chance to work alongside personnel from the Army and RAF."

"Conducting my stewarding duties, was enjoyable, stand fast the old and weary legs feeling the strain of 13 hour days."

"It allowed a rare and fantastic opportunity to both assist the public and bring awareness of the Royal Navy to people who may never meet a Serviceman again."

Passing interest in our front page

WE FREELY admit to being suckers for a cheesy picture – even more so when it features *Navy News*.

So when James Arnold sent us this image of him on the highest tarmac road in the world we could not resist.

Particularly as said road – the Rohtang Pass in the Himachal Pradesh province, at 13,050ft – is in the Indian Himalayas, which fits in nicely with the front-page headline.

It would have to be Indian summer for the picture to be taken – the pass is only open for three months of the year because of extreme weather conditions.



● Vice Admiral d'Escadre Christophe Prazuck (left) welcomes Vice Admiral David Steel to Paris

Rendezvous in Paris

SECOND Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel travelled to Paris to pay a visit to his French counterpart, Vice Admiral d'Escadre Christophe Prazuck.

The meeting was scheduled to allow the two Chiefs of Naval Personnel to discuss methods to further enhance what are already very strong ties between the Royal Navy and the French Navy.

With endorsed proposals on an increased number of exchange opportunities, cross-training and the sharing of best practice, the relationship looks set to only grow stronger in the future.

It would appear that now is most certainly the time to be learning French...

Americans call in

A GROUP of US Navy Academy midshipmen have paid a visit to the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood.

The group of six young officers, fresh from a look round Britannia Royal Naval College, were shown the Maritime Composite Training System, Close Range Training Simulator (each having a crack on the machine gun simulator) and RN Leadership Academy.

Following lunch the tour party moved to the eastern side of Portsmouth Harbour for a tour of the naval base.



● Sailors from HMS Collingwood greet 'Stylo-Rhino' at Southampton Airport

Picture: Keith Woodland (HMS Collingwood)

Rhino (plastic) procedure

SAILORS from HMS Collingwood helped a rhino check into Southampton Airport for his summer holiday.

Personnel from the Fareham base spent two days escorting the 36 rhinos that make up the Go! Rhinos Campaign, orchestrated by Marwell Zoo, ensuring they were in place ready for a 'sculpture trail' in and around Southampton.

As 'Stylo-Rhino' appeared at the Arrivals section of the airport, the large fibreglass animal attracted much interest; as members of the public were departing for their holidays, the rhino was checking in for a ten-week stay.

The airport was just one of the many stops on the tour as the volunteers placed herd members at various locations, including the Ageas Bowl and the Guildhall.

AB Josh Wright said: "It's been

a good experience. We've been off the base and seen the local area whilst helping out a charitable cause – after all, it's not often you're going to be moving rhinos."

Andrea Mullins, Marketing and Fundraising Director at Marwell said: "Everyone who has helped out from Collingwood has been absolutely fabulous – we seriously couldn't have achieved any of this without their support."

Victory Squadron have been involved with the campaign, which showcases artistic talent as well as highlighting conservation issues, since its inception.

This event marks the end of the association with the campaign – but not with Marwell.

An enduring relationship has been established between the base and zoo, and will continue for future projects.



● (Clockwise from below) A would-be battery member tackles the assault course during the assessment; the gunners of 29 Cdo Regt let rip with their 105mm; HMS Liverpool pummels pro-Gaddafi forces in Libya with her 4.5in main gun; gunnery funnery for 29 Cdo Regt on the range at Cape Wrath; and 148 Bty observers at work on the range at Camp Lejeune in the USA during the 2010 Auriga amphibious deployment



Bang on target

THE Navy's top guns are looking for volunteers to join their force which has kept foes in check from the Balkans to the sands of Iraq, Afghanistan and most recently Libya.

Specially-trained forward observers from 148 (Meiktila) Commando Forward Observation Battery Royal Artillery direct the guns of the Fleet against targets on land – as well as co-ordinating air and artillery strikes – on operations worldwide.

The specialist unit, which is part of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery – the Plymouth-based Army gunners permanently attached to the Royal Marines to give them extra firepower – is looking for 11 sailors to join its elite ranks.

The battery provides fire support teams who direct the fire missions of the guns of the Royal Navy (such as in Libya, when HMS Liverpool repeatedly hammered pro-Gaddafi positions) as well as co-ordinating close air support, strikes by Apache gunships, artillery, mortar and multiple rocket barrages.

The teams are expected to be able to carry out those missions after being inserted by parachute, submarine, helicopter, boat, vehicle, skis or on foot.

Given the demands of the job, there's a rigorous selection process, including a ten-day aptitude test which gives would-be 'spotters' an insight into the rigours of being a forward observer – and gives assessors an insight into what candidates are made of.

After completing the Army's fitness test – press-ups, sit-ups, pull-ups, then a 2.4km run inside ten and a half minutes – battery hopefuls learn the basics of soldiering, such as map reading, packing a bergen, donning webbing, and basic medical care.

And as the battery comes under 3 Commando Brigade, there are numerous tests with a 'marines' edge: jumping off a three-metre board with webbing and (plastic) weapon, swimming in kit, treading water, rope climbing, hauling a log, yomping, wet and dry routines (changing from wet clothing to dry).

If you're going to be working with the Royal Marines then you'll also be expected to fend for yourself at times. So there's gunnery training on the ranges at Lulworth – machine-guns, pistols. There's practising section attacks, advancing on – and destroying – enemy positions, setting off grenades and trip flares, abseiling from helicopters (actually from the fire station tower at RNAS Yeovilton).

The second week of the assessment puts the would-be spotters through the Royal Marines' basic fitness test (in boots, not trainers) just to kick off various physical exertions which are focused on Okehampton camp on the edge of Dartmoor, home of 29 Commando Regiment's Commando Training Wing. They have lovely activities lined up like rope climbing, assault courses, patrols, encounters with the enemy, river crossings. All good fun.

"Section attacks are physically and mentally challenging, under pressure to make decisions quickly and correctly, carrying out personal weapon drills whilst always running or crawling through any terrain that presents itself – hard but rewarding," said ET(ME) Matthew Broxton, a marine engineer who went through the most recent aptitude test.

"There was a camouflage lesson followed by a 'stalk' where we covered ourselves in foliage – as you see snipers do in films – and attempt to sneak up on the other volunteers.

"Despite the horrendous weather everyone got on with it and made the most of the lesson in preparation for close-target reconnaissance of an enemy position. This was by far the most challenging but most enjoyable thing we had done; it allowed us to put everything we had learnt over the previous week and a half into one final exercise. Everyone agreed that this was the best part of the course in every way. The whole two weeks were challenging but enjoyable."

Four volunteers passed the most recent fortnight-long test and are now lined up to undergo more thorough commando training with 29 Commando Regiment before formally joining 148 Battery should they come through that.

"We're looking for fit, motivated sailors looking to achieve something very few are capable of – something completely different from any other job in the Naval Service," said 148 Battery's CPO Gaz Glenister.

"We're looking for those with a sense of adventure, people who motivate themselves and succeed where others give up – these are the people who'll serve with our fire support teams."

The battery regularly trains overseas – in a typical year they'll exercise in the USA, Malaysia, Singapore, Gibraltar, Norway and the Falklands.

Most recently it was seen in action at the north-west tip of Scotland for the first Joint Warrior exercise of 2013, where there was live shooting from both ships off the coast – Naval Gunfire Support in Royal Navy parlance – and the 105mm field guns of 29 Commando Regiment.

Among those supporting the exercise was AB(Sea) Joe Arney. He first came across the battery aboard HMS Liverpool when the veteran destroyer's 4.5in gun was regularly called upon to engage targets ashore.

He's now in charge of maintaining the unit's boats so they're ready to deploy around the world in an instant. But beyond simply looking after the boats, he joined the fire support teams during their night-time insertions.

"148 Battery mainly conducts its operations close to the coast, so boat insertion is perfect for operations," he explained. "Once the team are ashore they break down their medium inflatable boat, hide it by using the land and natural foliage. Then they yomp to their position ready to engage targets in the morning."

If the fire support teams encounter any enemy resistance as they come ashore, they are expected to fall back on their boat and try to land elsewhere – they are expected to direct any air or gunnery strikes from a covert position with the enemy unaware of their presence.

The battery also found itself working with US and Swedish marines and, finally, witnessed the powerful impact of a hail of steel and high explosive as the guns of the Fleet cleared their throats and sent shells into the Cape Wrath range.

"It was interesting to see how it's directed from the ship to shore and actually seeing the damage that a 4.5in shell can do!" said Joe.

If this has whetted your appetite to join the battery, see 2012DIN01-231, RNTM 072/13 or contact 3CDOX-29CDO 148BTY CPO CIS via DII. The battery is looking for ratings of all ranks from AB1 to CPO.

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Shard Corps effort bags major award

THE Duke of York helped the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF) win a fundraising award.

Along with the Outward Bound Trust, the RMCTF was awarded the Institute of Fundraising's 'best use of event' award following their combined event – The Descent of the Shard.

Only 40 places could be offered for this rare abseil held last autumn – one of which was filled by the Duke.

Twenty of the team descended from the 87th floor to the 78th of this iconic London building, while the other twenty went right down to the 20th floor, a distance of 250 metres.

As part of a series of three abseil fundraisers, the Shard descent helped raise an astonishing £412,000 for the RMCTF.

Members of the Royal Marines Mountain Leader team were at the Institute of Fundraising award ceremony to see the award presented.

Nick Barrett, CEO of the Outward Bound Trust, said: "We were delighted to be one of the beneficiary charities of the Descent of the Shard challenge."

"The Trust works with 25,000 young people each year and runs challenging and adventurous courses that increase levels of confidence, self-belief and resilience in participants, a great many of whom come from financially disadvantaged backgrounds."

Jonathan Ball, CEO of the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund, added: "We were delighted to be part of this unique event alongside OBT who were superb partners, and even more delighted to share this award with them."

"The Descent of the Shard provided an outstanding fundraising platform for the Commando Spirit Appeal to raise money on behalf of the Charity. The funds generated will go a long way towards assisting our efforts in supporting the Royal Marines Corps family."

"We would like to extend our gratitude to all participants, to the Royal Marines team who made the abseil possible and in particular the support shown by the Duke of York."

Norfolk's river record

IF you never again expected to see HMS Norfolk under her own steam in British waters again – think again.

For this is she, admittedly 48 times smaller than the real thing, struggling against the tide on the River Waveney in Norfolk in a bid to achieve a world record and raise money for various good causes in East Anglia and beyond.

The mini-me HMS Norfolk set a potential world record by sailing 101 miles in 24 hours in her namesake county.

The full-scale frigate paid off in 2005 – while the record bid was made by a 9ft scale model of the Type 23 warship.

Seventeen years ago model maker Graham Davies determined he would have a crack at the record for the longest distance travelled by a replica boat on a tidal river in 24 hours.

Graham and his 'shipmates' – Peter Dorsett, Richard Flatt, Richard Thurston, Dave Tedstone and David Houseago – chose a six-mile stretch of the River Waveney, just outside Lowestoft in Norfolk, for the attempt and picked the longest day to give it a go.

"With my home in Norfolk and with the county's links to the Royal Navy as Nelson's birthplace, a model of HMS Norfolk was my choice of boat with which to attempt the record," he explained.

The mini Norfolk took eight years to build (twice as long as the real thing). She's 9ft 3in long,



● Taking the strain in the Welsh rain over tough terrain, military and civilian teams took part in the MS Challenge by river (above) and by mountain road (below) hosted by the RN Leadership Training Centre

Pictures: David Barwick

RN's Chair Force One

TEAMS from across the UK converged on the Brecon Beacons to carry wheelchair users over 11 miles through forests, rivers and across moorland.

Every year the Royal Navy's Outdoor Leadership Training Centre at Talybont-on-Usk encourages sailors and marines to raise money for people suffering from multiple sclerosis.

The challenge involves carrying a wheelchair occupied by a person with MS over a demanding course through the heart of Wales.

Welsh Assembly member Kirsty Williams got the 2013 MS Challenge under way in not-so-unusual wet Welsh weather.

Self-confessed 'fitty' CPO 'Sherlock' Holmes, who captained HMS Collingwood's team on the day, admitted that even he found the route "a little cheeky".

"Without the organisational skills of RN Leadership Academy,



the event would not have been so successful," said David Barwick, trustee of the MS National Therapy Centres.

"In particular, our thanks go to WO Paul Willetts and LPT Garry Gibbs who were principally responsible for organising the event."

Money raised by the event will be spread around some of the 60 MS therapy centres. Each one is an independent charity which relies on donations to provide a wide range of support, including hyperbaric oxygen treatment.

The 2014 MS Challenge event will be on June 28. Ships or establishments interested in taking part should contact LPT Gibbs on 01874 676269.

Tot fund boost

PUSSER's Rum's President and CEO Gary Rogalski made a substantial donation to the RNRMC at the China Fleet Club. The cheque was accepted on behalf of the charity by Brig Simon Hill RM (Rtd).

The Tot Fund was set up to provide recompense for discontinuing the issue of daily rum tots on ships of the RN. To date Pusser's donations have well exceeded £1m.

Drummer Lee's fate inspires climbers

A GROUP of former servicemen are raising money for BLESMA by taking on the 45th Original Mountain Marathon Challenge (OMM Longscore) testing their teamwork, self-reliance, endurance, navigational and decision-making skills.

The team, made up of former Royal Marines and sailors, were inspired to come together as a former military team following the fatal attack on Drummer Lee Rigby in Woolwich in May.

Ex-RN Dan Fisher said: "It was an event that triggered us to get in touch with our former colleagues, although we'd had little contact for a number of months and each of us to a man responded that we wanted to

Blind veterans' summer camp

Up to 25 blind veterans will travel from London and Brighton to HMS Sultan in Gosport this month to enjoy the 17th Blind Veterans' UK summer camp.

The summer camp activities were traditionally hosted by the Fleet Air Arm Field Gun crew at HMS Daedalus before the move to Sultan in 1996 when Daedalus closed. The Gosport engineering base has supported the charity – formerly known as St Dunstons – ever since.

Up to 27 Service and ex-service personnel, including civilian helpers, help guide veterans on sailing, gliding, canoeing, fishing, bowling and archery opportunities throughout the week and the co-ordination of a sports day.

The tradition of the helpers acting as guides, known as the 'dogs', persists despite changes to the location and helpers come back year after year to enjoy the camaraderie and spirit of the veterans.

Gosport and Fareham Inshore Rescue Service is hosting a tour of their facility, including opportunities for boat rides.

Golf and motorbiking opportunities are also on offer plus lunch at the Conservative club in Lee-on-the-Solent.

Retired RM Major General Andrew Keeling, chairman of the St Dunstan's Trustees, and Chief Executive Robert Leader will visit the campers during their busy activity week by the sea.

To Kabul and back

CYCLISTS at Yeovilton and Culdrose helped to double a 7,500-mile target – the distance from London to Kabul – in a challenge set by catering firm Sodexo.

The cycling marathon was staged on exercise bikes at Sodexo's 75 locations in the UK, Cyprus and Falkland Islands.

With RN support the final distance achieved by the team effort totalled 14,000 miles.

Even better, £19,000 was raised, split between STOP Hunger and the Soldier's, Sailor's and Airmen's Families Association (SSAFA).

Navy pedallers took part across eight Navy sites and there was also a video link from Afghanistan where another bike was also being pedalled.



Union J for Junglie

THOSE aren't regulation Royal Marines haircuts.

No, no they're not. But then those aren't Royal Marines commandos, but X-Factor boy band Union J – who teamed up with the Commando Helicopter Force to promote a 'poppy picnic' campaign by the Royal British Legion.

The quartet – formed during last year's X-Factor TV series – appear in full-kit, roping out of the side of ZA298 (better known as the 'King of the Junglies') – to deliver grub to some unsuspecting picnickers in a viral video.

The Sea King survived enemy fire in the Falklands (a 30mm shell struck one of its blades), small arms in the Balkans in the 1990s, and was out of action for 18 months after being peppered by Taliban fire in Afghanistan.

It's now back on front-line duties with 846 NAS – one of four RNAS Yeovilton-based squadrons of the Commando Helicopter Force which are the wings of the Royal Marines.

Not among its many missions, however, was delivering a boy band to a family enjoying a summery picnic (although, obviously, it's not really the singers rapid roping out of the side, but fully-trained hard-as-nails pirate-busting drug-runner-arresting green berets...).

While filming the two-minute video – you can view it here: www.youtube.com/watch?v=YQgOekuR490 – was fun, there was a serious part for the band: for the armed forces and the Legion is a cause with special personal connections to the band – members George Shelley and Josh Cuthbert both have family serving in the military.

"My brother is currently serving in the Royal Marines, so the Royal British Legion is a cause especially close to my heart. They're there for the entire Armed Forces community, both serving and ex-Service," said 19-year-old George, Union J's youngest member.

As for the picnic campaign, the RBL wants families and friends to get together over the summer to hold fund-raising picnics for the Forces charity – it needs £1.6m every week to fund its activities.

For more information on hosting your own Poppy Picnic, visit: www.poppypicnic.org.uk.



● Mini-HMS Norfolk challenges for the tidal river record on the River Waveney in driving wind and rain

Picture: Graham Davies

weighs 110lbs and comprises 400 separate plates on the hull alone.

Inside are £1,500 of electronics and around 330ft of wiring. Two 24v 4,000rpm electric motors power her along driving five-blade propellers which push the replica through the water at speeds of up to 10mph.

"We achieved an incredible 101 miles in extreme weather – heavy rain and high winds which chopped up the river so badly that sometimes we lost sight of the model in the spray. At the end, all the team were shattered," said Graham.

Is it a world record? Well... according to Guinness, that's held by a 1:32 scale replica of destroyer HMS Gloucester built and driven by Brits which covered

195.678km (121.589 miles) in a 24-hour period at Bude Model Boat Festival back in 2002.

However, Norfolk was going for the independent record in a tidal river. So, maybe she is the title holder.

What is certain is that the attempt has raised nearly £650 for charity – shared among East Anglian Air Ambulance, the emergency medical charity Magpas, and Help for Heroes.

The team are still taking donations via uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/challengers2.co.uk.

As for the full-size Norfolk, she paid off in 2005 and was sold to Chile, where she's still going strong under the new name Almirante Cochrane.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo, August 2-24

Against the magnificent backdrop of Edinburgh Castle, the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo returns and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is delighted to be one of the chosen charities. The programme will include the spectacular music, action and colour of the Massed Pipes and Drums, Massed Military Bands, display teams and dancers. See edintattoo.co.uk/tickets

Bournemouth Air Festival, August 29-1 Sept 1

Bournemouth seaside will be transformed into a spectacular aviation event. The Royal Navy will assemble Type 23 frigates HMS Northumberland and HMS Monmouth and in the air, a Black Cat Lynx and Merlin helicopters. The Royal Marines will also storm the beach from a number of landing craft in their amphibious assault demonstration. Visit bournemouthair.co.uk for details.

British Military Tournament, December 7-8

An unforgettable show at London's Earls Court featuring the White Helmets Motorcycle Display Team, Musical Drive performed by The King's Troop Royal Horse Artillery, the legendary Command Field Gun Competition, Battlefield of the Future and British Legends Finale – a tribute to current and former Service personnel who've overcome disabilities. See tinyurl.com/BMT-RNRMC



A charity fit for a Queen

THE RNRMC's chairman Vice Admiral Sir Richard Ibbotson and the charity's trustees visited the Royal Navy's newest aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The RNRMC is the first charity to be affiliated with the future flagship and the visit allowed trustees to formalise the special relationship the charity now has with the carrier.

Capt Simon Pettit showcased the carrier's capabilities in an informative presentation before hosting lunch in the mess and leading a tour of the carrier.

The RNRMC group met members of the ships' company and found the tour valuable in gaining insight to the morale and welfare issues which may arise whilst the ship is being built and beyond when it's fully operational.

CPO Johnny Noble said: "The visit by the Trustees has highlighted the importance of the charity. You just don't know when you may require assistance financially, whilst serving or in retirement, to help you in your hour of need."

Merlin's magical ride

WITH the crowd of South Coast Proms kick-starting the well wishes on the first day, a team of 16 Royal Navy and Royal Air Force personnel from 28 (Army Cooperation) Sqn at RAF Benson in Oxfordshire started their 1,000 mile cycle from their home base to Milan.

The bi-service team of 14 riders and two support staff named their mammoth journey 'Merlin 1,000' in honour of the aircraft they fly and the distance to be cycled.

Their epic journey took in several stages, some as long as 280km in a single day, as well as Stage 13 of the Tour de France and a gruelling ascent up the Simplon Pass (2,277m) of the Swiss Alps, before finishing in Italy.

The challenge raised over £8,500 (at the time we went to press) for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, the RAF Benevolent Fund and Forces Children's Trust.

To support the Merlin 1000 team, and help them reach their fundraising target of £10,000, visit <http://bit.ly/Merlin1000>



WHILE YOU LIFT SPIRITS YOU CAN RAISE MONEY!

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

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

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



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



Picture: Nicola Harper

Spectacular proms

MORE THAN 8,000 people packed onto Portsmouth's Whale Island last month for the South Coast Proms, held in support of the RNRMC.

This year the two-day musical extravaganza in its historic surroundings under a summer sky was bigger and better than ever.

Performing centre stage with a repertoire of classical, contemporary and military music were the 120 musicians of the world-renowned Massed Bands of Her Majesty's Royal Marines.

Programme highlights included a new arrangement of the *Battle of the Atlantic Suite*, composed to mark its 70th anniversary, and a new piece of music written by Christopher Gunning to honour the Navy's new Type 45 destroyers called *D is for Daring*.

The Massed Bands were joined by a special guest appearance from the Portsmouth Military Wives Choir and the accomplished Australian saxophonist Amy Dickson, who performed selected pieces from her No.1-selling album *Dusk and Dawn*.

Added to the evenings was a thrilling aerobatic display by a Sea Fury from Royal Navy Historic Flight and a spectacular

firework finale.

Sarah Kiff, a spokeswoman for The Portsmouth Military Wives Choir, said: "We were proud and honoured to be part of the South Coast Proms 2013 supporting the RNRMC and thrilled to perform, once again, with the Band of her Majesty's Royal Marines, this time in our home city.

"The RNRMC is an organisation close to the hearts of the ladies since its support of the choir by providing us with funds to buy a piano for performances.

"A number of choir members are volunteers for this very important Armed Forces charity and the choir remain committed in their continued support of the RNRMC."

Hugh Thompson, RNRMC Head of Fundraising, said: "We are so grateful for the wonderful support of the South Coast Proms – we made over £30,000 this year which is fantastic."

Ahead of the two-night proms, eight *Battle of the Atlantic* veterans were invited into the Royal Marines School of Music in Portsmouth Naval Base to hear the *Battle of the Atlantic Suite*.

The veterans were treated to a tour of the school and listened to trainee bands in rehearsal before being treated to an excerpt from the suite.

The piece was written 20 years ago by

Dave Roylance and Bob Galvin to mark the 50th anniversary of the battle.

The Halle Orchestra recorded the original with a young Band Cpl Nicholas Grace performing with them as one of the trumpeters.

Two decades later a now Lt Col Grace is the senior Principal Director of Music for the Armed Forces and led the music for the Diamond Jubilee muster and review last year.

He oversaw a new arrangement of the suite for the 70th anniversary – the first and final movements have been re-orchestrated under WO2 Ivan Hutchinson for the wind band.

"It's a very atmospheric and memorable piece of music which really sets the scene of the North Atlantic," said Lt Col Grace.

"To celebrate this anniversary, I wanted to add some visual impact, so we have set the music to pictures – a mixture of wartime footage from 1943 and current film which shows the work the Navy does today – and our dependence, as an island nation, on the sea."

The re-arrangement received its premiere at the Mountbatten Festival of Music at the Royal Albert Hall earlier this year.

"The veterans enjoyed their visit – and they commented favourably on the special piece of music," said Capt Steve Green.

Dragon be good eggs

HMS Dragon is the first – and only Type 45 destroyer – to reach 100 per cent sign-up to payroll giving for the RNRMC – a fantastic achievement that will help the charity to support even more of the Naval family, past and present.

WO1 David 'Dai' Charles RM, HMS Dragon's Executive Warrant Officer, said: "We received around £9,000 in grants for our messes and decided that, as we get so much from the RNRMC, we would push to ensure that all who are benefiting from the charity give a little something back.

"As the £5 comes out before it's gone into your bank account, no one feels 'seen off'. As soon as word got round that this was a charity that we have all benefited from and continue to benefit from, getting a 100 per cent turn-out became a mere matter of personal pride for the Dragon."

Dean Rogers, RNRMC Regional Fundraiser (Scotland and the North), said: "This is superb news for the charity and an achievement for HMS Dragon to be very proud of.

"Payroll giving helps us to grant around £6.5m each year to improve the quality of life for our naval family."

It is easy to sign-up to the scheme either through your Payroll Giving representative, or by asking your BWO, EWO or coxswain for a form, or contact the RNRMC Team (see details below).



JOCKEYS William Buick (left), Frankie Dettori (centre) and Pat Dobbs (right) joined Service personnel to support Armed Forces Day.

For the first time in the history of Royal Ascot, a charitable collection took place in aid of the men and women of our Armed Forces and their families at the Friday meeting.

Over £19,000 was raised and donations will be divided equally between the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, ABF The Soldiers' Charity and the Royal Air Force Benevolent Fund.

JOIN OUR CELEBRATIONS & SOCIALS CAMPAIGN | FUNDRAISE | DONATE | SIGN-UP TO PAYROLL GIVING

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

Pulling in Portsmouth and Poole

TWO dozen Service men and women will haul an iconic naval field gun across Portsmouth and Poole.

Commencing on August 3 in the shadow of HMS Victory in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard and ending at the RM Museum Eastney, the field gunners hope to raise thousands of pounds for Service and children's charities.

A second pull will take place on Aug 5 along Poole Quay ending at the Lord Nelson pub. The gun comes from the Maritime Warfare School at HMS Collingwood in Fareham

– home of the annual field gun competition. With its attendant limber it weighs close to two tonnes (about the same as a Ford Focus).

The event is the brainchild of CPO(Wtr) David 'Beefy' Garner and former Royal Yachtsman LSEA Gary 'Jacko' Jackson. Both have worked tirelessly, wanting to do something to help the Royal British Legion, the Royal Marines Charity and Julia's House Children's Hospice, which cares for youngsters with life-limiting and life-threatening conditions in Dorset.

Beefy used to be the No.1 trainer for the tri-Service field gun team based at NATO headquarters in Naples, so he knows how hard the pull will be.

"I'm fully aware of the logistical difficulties involved when getting a field gun from A to B, let alone finding the individuals to pull it," he said.

"But after meeting Jacko and seeing his utter determination to raise money for these worthy charities, we decided 100 per cent that the event had to happen."

He's managed to find 25

volunteers – not just pullers, but back-up vehicle support and bucket collectors.

To prepare the volunteers fit in the gym and carrying out 'short' pulls (about three miles) to schools in the West Moors area of Poole.

Donate to the team via: www.bmycharity.com/fieldgunpull2013 for the RBL, www.bmycharity.com/gunpull2013 for the RM and <http://mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/fieldgunpull2013> for Julia's House.

Mongolia or bust

AND the three intrepid sailors in this Nissan Micra are hoping for Mongolia.

They were sent on their way to the Far East from RNAS Culdrose by the air station's CO, Capt Mark Garratt, his Commander Air, Cdr Peter Munro-Lott... and a large chequered flag.

Destination, Ulan Bator, capital of Mongolia two continents and 10,000 miles away.

In between a *Top Gear*-style road trip and 15 national borders to cross on a quest they've dubbed 'Mongke's Fist' in an eye-catching old Micra, complete with symbolic clenched fist on the roof.

Accepting that challenge are Lts Will Scown and John Ford along with CPO

Adam Marshall who describe their 1.0 litre Micra as "wholly unsuitable" for the arduous trek.

"It's been months of hard work and planning from everyone involved; it's brilliant to finally be setting off," said Will.

"We can't wait for all the challenges that lie ahead!"

The team are raising funds for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, Operation Smile (which provides free medical treatment for children with facial deformities such as cleft lips), and Heel and Toe (which helps youngsters with cerebral palsy and other physical disabilities), setting themselves the goal of £1 for every mile completed.

As *Navy News* went to press the rally team had ventured as far as the Ukraine via Croatia, Hungary (Budapest is, we're told, "intimidating" at rush hour and also "full of drop-dead-gorgeous women"), and Romania, where the drivers mastered the hairpin bends of the Transfagarasan Pass and bustling streets of the capital Bucharest (where motorists are "nut-jobs").

As for the fund-raising tally, it stood at £6,620 – so well on target to reach its goal... as is the Micra.

To donate visit www.mongkes-fist.co.uk/donate. You can also follow their progress by searching for "MongkesFist" on Facebook.

Picture: LA(Phot) Abbie Herron, RNAS Culdrose



Maritime Club looks to new roles

WINDS of change are bringing a refreshing new look at The Royal Maritime Club (RMC) in Portsmouth's Queen Street.

The RMC – formerly known as the Royal Sailors' Home Club – is looking for new roles and enhanced facilities for the community it serves, while maintaining its charitable status.

Chairman of the RMC Trust, David Nesbit, along with trustees and the management team welcomed visitors to an open day last month, offering a glimpse of the future they envision and launching their plan for investment.

The club's trustees and general manager John Alderson have looked at the real estate and the club's range of activities, examining funding against income and have come up with ambitious but firm aspirations to ensure that sailors of the future and Forces veterans will enjoy the high standards and facilities expected of modern hotel accommodation.

The meeting invited partner charities and local businesses to consider the benefits of linking up with the RMC to maximise the potential of its site – it's a very short walk from Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and the leisure and shopping attractions at Gunwharf Quays.

The club's management team has made good

progress on an ambitious upgrade programme, refurbishing a number of bedrooms to a high standard and providing a fresh contemporary look to the public dining and bar areas.

Plans to reconfigure the many bar facilities are under way, with a number of the function rooms identified for the modern sailor's requirements.

It is anticipated that several of the partner charities will support their bid to upgrade facilities, particularly for disabled and disadvantaged personnel, and the review focusses its efforts on these areas, primarily the rebuild of a lift, specially-adapted rooms and improving general access to public rooms with ramps and widened doors.

Meanwhile the club is already attracting new customers, greatly benefiting military veterans through its charitable support of the Veteran's Outreach Programme.

Dr Morgan O'Connell, a former consultant psychiatrist in the RN, Falklands veteran and consultant at Combat Stress, along with a number of experts across a wide range of disciplines, offers services at the Veterans Outreach Support Drop-in sessions hosted by the club.

The sessions provide tri-Service veterans and merchant seafarers with the chance to seek

advice, either medical or welfare-related and also just to meet and chat to other veterans. No appointment is necessary.

"Word is spreading about the help we can offer – we saw 33 veterans at July's event with eight new people joining us," said Dr O'Connell.

"Some people come from as far as Scotland and Devon to attend the sessions, tying their visit to a leisure break in the area but we welcome allcomers.

"Our newly-refurbished offices are almost complete and we are also helping many in follow-on appointments which can be booked."

The club is planning to reconfigure some rooms for various therapies such as sacrocranial therapy and purchase special equipment for water massage therapies.

To find out more about the Veteran's Outreach Programme run at the RMC or to discuss your situation call 01329 834512.

The club also assists respite breaks for families as recommended by the RN & RM Children's Charity.

Visitors have much to look forward to when they visit the spiritual home of the Navy in Portsmouth as the RMC continues to explore new roles in support of the Forces' community.



● Greenies in the stream... Collingwood ABs Rice, Woods and Ballard join Gary Connor from Groundwork Solent in the community park

Wildlife warriors

A TRIO of trainee sailors from HMS Collingwood became wildlife warriors when they renovated a community park as part of the environmental project: 'Go with the Flow', led by local charity Groundwork Solent's Gary Connor.

The sailors removed weed that had overgrown in the Hermitage Stream in Leigh Park, near Havant, and helped to create a labyrinth in the grass by installing a 'Loch Ness monster' game within the natural play area.

'Go With The Flow' is a three-year project funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund with a view to transforming the area around the stream, which runs from Cowplain to Langstone Harbour in Hampshire acting as a wildlife corridor for an array of fish, bird life and wide range of plants.

The park surrounding the stream is a picturesque spot as well as a key recreational space for the local community. Mr Connor, Green Team supervisor at Groundwork Solent, said "The project has been worth it, the feedback from the people within the local community has been positive. It's a great project to be part of and these guys have been enthusiastic about all tasks."

Sutherland's success

HMS Sutherland's team of shoreside scavengers, who raced across the country from the Highlands via Twickenham to beat the ship back to Devonport netted a grand total of £6,300 following sponsorship and outstanding collections.

With only one hour to prepare for their unexpected fundraising task, they left the ship, minus

money, credit cards and mobile phones. Using bags of initiative and a cunning plan, they completed the 833-mile route – as featured in last month's edition.

A cheque for the total amount was presented to Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, president of the RNRMC by HMS Sutherland's CO, Cdr Al Wilson, when the frigate visited Portsmouth.

THE PERFECT VENUE!

...for a Historic Dockyard Break

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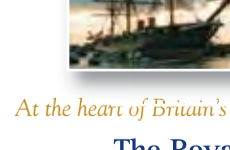
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So don't delay, call us today and book your historic break away.....

Steeped in Naval history, Portsmouth's unique naval heritage – HMS Victory, the Mary Rose and HMS Warrior are all within walking distance. The ferry link gives easy access to both sides of the harbour making a visit to the Royal Naval Submarine Museum a must.

After seeing all that the historic Dockyard has to offer, head off to Gunwharf Quays shopping complex, or admire the breathtaking views from the top of the Spinnaker Tower.



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'ONCE NAVY, ALWAYS NAVY'

Wrens on Victory

THE Solent branch of the Association of Wrens held a special evening on board HMS Victory to mark their tenth anniversary.

A mess dinner for 30 was held in the Senior Rates Mess, and honoured guests were Anthea Larken, president of the Association of Wrens, and Mary Hawthornthwaite, the organisation's chairman, who gave a general speech about the association.

Branch secretary Sue Capocci and chairman Jan Leathard gave a quirky rendition of what life would have been like onboard Victory if health and safety had been involved.

The evening was rounded off by the cutting of an anniversary cake by Sue, who created the branch mainly for ex-Wrens from the 1970s and 80s – though it has become just as popular across the decades; the age range of members is from 30 to 83.

She has remained branch secretary ever since.

The Solent branch meets quarterly in March, June, September and December on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in the RNA Gosport, which is situated on the A32.

Details from Sue on 023 9254 2385 (work), 93843 2385 (mil) or sue.capocci@ntlworld.com

Success for Dave

SEVEN entrants competed for the honours at the 2 Area biannual standard bearers competition, held at Sheerness East Working Men's Club.

The open competition was won by S/M Dave Corrigan of 6 Area (Bletchley and District branch), second was S/M Christine Sandman (Chatham) and third S/M Colin Rickard (Paddock Wood).

The Area 2 winners were S/M Sandman in first place, S/M Rickard as runner-up with S/M John Cooper (Maidstone) in third place.

The novice prizes went to S/M Steve Champion (Maidstone), with S/M John Brown (Chatham) as runner-up.

The visiting judges were overseen by deputy National Ceremonial Officer S/M Chris Durban.

Message from the past

A POSTCARD from the past has sparked the interest of Naval historians.

The card, bearing a grim black-and-white image of Dartmoor Prison on the front, was delivered by a Portsmouth Naval Base postie to the Naval Historical Branch in the hope that they could shed some light on it – because it had been almost 47 years in the post.

It entered the system at 10.45pm on August 17 1966 and the franking states 'Paignton –

RM veteran returns to Crete for ceremonies

WAR veteran S/M Bernard Hallas made the journey to the Aegean Sea to help commemorate the Battle of Crete in May 1941.

The first event was the raising of the flags of the three Commonwealth nations involved – the UK, Australia and New Zealand – as well as the host country, Greece.

95-year-old S/M Hallas, of York RNA and RMA branches, said the whole promenade stood to attention as national anthems were played and flags raised.

The following day S/M Hallas laid his wreath on behalf of the York associations at the foot of the memorial before rejoining the official party, which included British vice-consular staff and the ambassador's party from Athens.

Bernard's final day in Crete started with him being escorted to a privileged seat in the cathedral from where he watched the service.

Later came a visit to the vast German war cemetery at Maleme, a landing site for German paratroopers invading Crete 72 years ago at the

start of the Battle of Crete.

There were further ceremonies to mark the anniversary, including a farewell party on behalf of the community of Chania, and some rather good meals (including a "sumptuous" lamb on the bone).

S/M Hallas was a gun captain in the battleship HMS Warspite during the evacuation of Allied troops from Crete, and narrowly escaped death when he briefly left the turret, which was hit shortly after by a German bomb.

21 Club dedicates bench

SOME 40 members of the Type 21 Club and their families gathered at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire to dedicate a bench to the memory of all those who served in the Type 21 frigates.

Founded in 2010, the 21 Club is their association and anyone who served in the Type 21s is automatically a member.

Those present included club president Admiral Sir Ian Garnett, chairman Morgan Phillips, vice chairman Cdr David Woollard, co-founder Cdr Peter Mosse and Cdr David Childs, who founded the National Memorial Arboretum.

Sir Ian spoke of the unique spirit of the ships, their camaraderie and the pride everyone held in them, from the captain to the most junior sailor onboard.

He emphasised that the bench was a tribute to the 21 Club and a place to remember all those who had served together, those who had made the ultimate sacrifice and shipmates who were no longer with us.

The short service of dedication was conducted by Canon Clive French, who had been the squadron padre to the Type 21s during the Falklands Conflict.

The 4th Frigate Squadron – known as the Fighting Fourth – played a significant part in the Falklands; two of the type (HMS Ardent and HMS Antelope) were lost, and it is fitting that the SAMA Falklands Memorial is just a few yards away, dedicated to the 283 people who lost their lives in 1982.

He spoke about the importance of remembering, especially those who have crossed the bar in service of their country, and a simple timber bench was something tangible, where people could sit and ponder their memories.

After lunch the group was treated to a special guided tour by club member David Childs.

The club holds its fourth reunion over the weekend of October 11-13 at the Crownhill RBL Club, Plymouth for anyone who served in the Type 21s – contact David Woollard on 07812 114452 or email davidwoollard813@btinternet.com

Now recruiting

THE Submariners Association is seeking new members – and as the official association for serving and non-serving submariners, all ranks and all rates – there should be quite a few who qualify.

The association has 55 branches, see www.submarinersassociation.co.uk or contact S/M Jim McMaster at jim.mcmaster2@ntlworld.com or on 0141 571 4094.

Double date

THERE are two Double Seven reunion dates for your diaries, both at Mill Rythe on Hayling Island.

The first, from October 4-7, costs £96 per person plus £4 per person insurance, while bookings are also being taken for April 24-28 at the same price.

Book direct with Katey Lansley (booking and enquiries) on 023 9246 0044.

Glasgow honours Royal Marine Corps

IT MAY be some time off yet, but a key element of the Royal Marines' 350th anniversary celebrations looks set to put Glasgow firmly into the calendar of events.

The decision has been taken to award its highest honour, the Freedom of the City, to the Royal Marines.

The honour was confirmed after city councillors approved a

motion by Veterans Champion Cllr Malcolm Cunning, which stated: "The Council congratulates the Royal Marine Corps on its upcoming 350th anniversary in 2014.

"Since its formation, the Royal Marines has enjoyed strong links with Glasgow and continues to have a permanent presence in the city, through the Glasgow detachment of the Royal Marines Reserve Scotland, which was raised in Glasgow in 1948.

"Council wishes to demonstrate its highest respect for the proud history of the Royal Marine Corps and the dedication and sacrifices it continues to make to protect the interests of the United Kingdom.

"Therefore, Council agrees to award the Freedom of the City of Glasgow to the Royal Marines, to publicly acknowledge the regard in which the unit is held and highlight the strong relationship that continues between the Royal Marines and Glasgow."

The Corps has had a long-standing relationship with Scotland's largest city.

The Royal Marines Band has regularly led Remembrance and Armed Forces Day parades there, and the headquarters of RMR Scotland has been based



● Capt Larry Foden RM, Adjutant of RMR Scotland, at Glasgow City Chambers with Lord Provost Sadie Docherty

Picture: Ian Watson

in the city until recently (having relocated to Rosyth as part of the merger with RMR Tyne). The detachment remains at the site, now owned by HMS Dalriada.

Lt Col Graeme Fraser, CO of RMR Scotland, acknowledged the announcement by the Council.

"This is a significant honour for Royal Marines Commandos throughout the whole of the UK," he said.

Although the details of the 350th celebrations are still to be decided, the award of the Freedom is almost certain to be

the cornerstone of any Scottish event, with attendance by both 43 and 45 Commandos as well as the RMR, led by the RM Band.

Lt Col Fraser continued: "This honour is particularly unusual in that it is for the entire Royal Marine Corps in honour of our 350th anniversary in 2014, and I know that my fellow marines based throughout the UK are equally humbled by and delighted with this significant and extraordinary recognition.

No date has yet been decided for the Freedom Parade.



Delving into history

TWO dozen members of Rosyth and West Fife branch, along with two shipmates from Orkney branch and two guests, recently spent a busy weekend based at Chesterfield.

Arriving on the Friday, they travelled to Eden Camp on the Saturday, spending most of the

day at this former World War 2 prisoner-of-war camp, which is now a museum dedicated to all aspects of the war.

On the Sunday they visited the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire (above) where, after attending a service of remembrance, a wreath was laid at the Arctic

Convoy memorial by Ken Reith, a survivor of the convoys.

In beautiful sunshine the group then made personal visits to various memorials.

On the way home on Monday they visited the Leeds Armoury, a purpose-built museum dedicated to the history of 900 years of arms.



● NEW RNA gazebo... new RNA promotional material... plenty of copies of Navy News... members of Llandudno branch were fully prepared for the town's inaugural air show – and their efforts paid dividends with plenty of interest from passers-by, including donations towards the organisers' chosen charity, Blind Veterans UK



Battle commemoration

A service of commemoration for the 70th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic held in Christchurch Priory Church attracted 14 standards representing various organisations, including the Merchant Navy.

The service, organised by Christchurch branch, was conducted by Revd Chris Manning, and the congregation included the Mayor of Christchurch, Cllr John Lofts – himself a retired Merchant Navy Master.

The Chairman of Dorset Royal British Legion, Lucy Eden, was also there, as well as branch President S/M Ken Tullett. Area 3 was represented by S/M Mick Arnold.

↓ RNA HQ, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com
↓ 023 9272 3747
↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



● From left, John 'Barney' Barnett, John 'Postie' Wheatley, John 'Jas' Field, Wilf 'Ozzie' Osborne and Geoff Prentice at the HMS Surprise Association reunion – all were serving on board at the time of the Coronation Fleet Review

Special presentations of Arctic Stars

FURTHER special presentations of the Arctic Star have been made to survivors of 'the worst journey in the world'.

93-year-old former Royal Marines musician Eric Greenleaf, who completed 15 convoys, was presented with his medal by Rear Admiral Henry Parker, Director Carrier Strike and Controller of the Navy, at a passing-out parade at HMS Raleigh.

One of the oldest veterans, 96-year-old Arthur Corbidge, also received his Arctic Star at a passing-out parade at HMS Raleigh, though on this occasion it was presented by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel.

The vice president of Frome branch, S/M Ken Ring, received

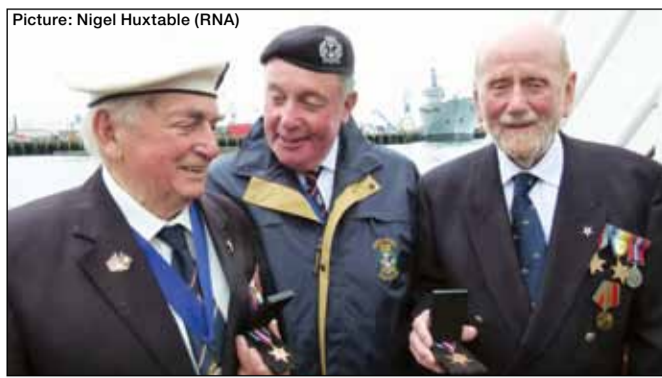
his medal from Cdre Richard Lord, RN (Rtd) following the drumhead service at the Armed Forces Weekend at Trowbridge, Wiltshire.

■ S/M Peter Brown, an associate member of Southend branch in 5 Area, is writing a book for Fonthill Media called *Voices from the Arctic Convoys*.

He would like to make contact with ex-Servicemen, or the families of ex-Servicemen, who spent time on the convoys, and who would like to relate their stories for the book.

S/M Brown can be contacted at 18 The Mulberrys, 570 Sutton Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex SS2 5PW, or email spitsortiesites@yahoo.co.uk

Picture: Nigel Huxtable (RNA)



● S/MS Don Hitchcock (left) and Reg Bywell at the most recent RNA HQ open day with their Arctic Star medals, presented to them by RNA National President Vice Admiral John McAnally (centre)

Medals received at service

THE Bishop of Knaresborough the Rt Revd James Bell officiated at the Harrogate and District branch Sea Sunday service, held at the Church of St Michael and All Angels in Harrogate.

During the service the town mayor, Cllr Michael Newby, and Bishop Bell, presented Arctic Star medals to five wartime veterans.

Two of the shipmates present – Les Mackowen and Bill Jones – served in HMS Whitehall, and had not seen each other since 1945; so had a fair bit of catching up to do.

The service was followed by a buffet in Beckwithshaw Village Hall, prepared by the church ladies.

As the Harrogate branch had just bought a new rum tub and was using it for the first time, Bishop Bell did the honours by 'blessing the rum tub and all who drink from it.'

Which prompted shipmates to ponder – is this a first? Has any other branch had their rum tub blessed by a genuine bishop rather than a bishop?

■ Members of the branch gave strong support to the Armed Forces Day event at Ripon.

The RNA gazebo happened to be most popular – even amongst Army garrison families...

S/MS Sheila Thompson and Doreen Porritt ran the stall with great humour whilst other members drew in the crowds – copies of *Navy News* and RNA hats proved popular with everyone.

West Yorkshire Brass Band, a military wives choir and cadet forces entertained the crowds, while Harrogate Sea Cadet Band, which performed the drumhead service ceremony, were a credit to the Corps and the Navy.

The finale was a fly-past by a Hurricane and Spitfire of the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Middlesex invitation

ALL former submariners living in London and the Greater London area without a Submariners Association branch are cordially invited by the Middlesex branch to immediately come aboard.

The one-time London branch went into decline due to a lack of branch officers.

Some joined the Dolphin Section, an area that caters for submariners who are not members of a main group.

A portion of these have already teamed up with Middlesex.

The matter was aired during a recent annual luncheon gathering of the Middlesex branch, which took place on board HMS President, permanently moored on the River Thames.

Some members of the Dolphin Branch, along with former London members, joined the Middlesex crew.

Join Middlesex now and you'll be in plenty of time for the outing to Gosport on September 13.

Contact the secretary and vice-chairman, S/M Chris Dawson, on tollygunge@yahoo.co.uk

Aquitaine link

AQUITAINE branch has been affiliated with the new French frigate of the same name.

FS Aquitaine formally joined the French Navy last December and 14 of the branch enjoyed a two-hour tour of the state-of-the-art warship when she made her first visit to Bordeaux Aquitaine.

The following day the branch paraded their standard at the unveiling of a new memorial to HMS Tuna, the submarine from which the Cockleshell Heroes launched their raid.

The memorial stands at Montailvet on the Atlantic Medoc coast.

The captain of Tuna, Lt Raikes, as a cadet in 1938, instructed Aquitaine branch's senior shipmate John Hudson in driving a Kitchen rudder cutter.

Shipmates recall 1953 Coronation

MEMBERS of the HMS Surprise Association celebrated the 60th anniversary of their ship's starring role in the Coronation Fleet Review as the Royal Yacht.

A total of 23 were present at the formal dinner at the Maritime Club in Portsmouth, when a personal message from the Queen was read out.

The following day a service was held at St Ann's Church in the Naval Base, when the ship's bell was on display.

The Surprise standard was escorted into the church during the first hymn and placed on the altar; it was later blessed by Revd Nigel Kelly.

S/M John 'Jas' Field, who served in the ship from 1952-54, said: "HMS Surprise was Commander-in-Chief Lord Louis Mountbatten's dispatch vessel in the Mediterranean.

"We came home to Portsmouth for an engine refit, only to read in *The News* that we were to be the Royal Yacht for the Coronation Review.

"Our Captain cleared lower deck the following day to tell us it was true.

"We returned to the Mediterranean within a week of the Review."

Jetty extension is tribute to affiliations



● Cdr Peter Green and Cllr June Ashworth at the unveiling of a plaque declaring part of the Stone Jetty in Morecambe to be Trafalgar Point

AN EXTENSION to the Stone Jetty on Morecambe promenade has been renamed Trafalgar Point in honour of the long association between HMS Trafalgar and a number of communities and groups in Lancashire.

On the 32nd anniversary of the launch of the nuclear patrol submarine, a ceremony was performed by the Mayor of Lancaster, Cllr June Ashworth, and one of Trafalgar's former Commanding Officers, Cdr Peter Green.

The city of Lancaster, the town of Morecambe, Morecambe & Heysham branch of the RNA and the Morecambe Bay branch of the Submariners Association all had strong links to the hunter-killer boat, which decommissioned at the end of 2009.

Past crew members of Trafalgar were joined by association shipmates and members of the public at the ceremony, and there was an official function afterwards at the RNA's Commodore Club in Morecambe.

Cllr Ashworth said: "I am delighted to welcome you here today to this windswept and sometimes wild part of our district..."

"Some of you may know that this place is the former location of a ship breakers yard – a rather poignant fact as we are here to commemorate the decommissioning of our affiliated submarine HMS Trafalgar."

She spoke of the friendship which flourished between the area, adding: "We are here today to rename this place in commemoration of the strong and happy

friendship that has been enjoyed during the life of Trafalgar."

Cdr Green, who lives in the area, responded by recalling that Trafalgar was "a special submarine."

He continued: "I served onboard twice in my career – it was my first submarine and I earned my Dolphins onboard in 1987, and was honoured to return later in my career to be the Captain from 2005-2007."

"Trafalgar's affiliation with Morecambe and Lancaster was very strong and I know that the crew thoroughly appreciated their numerous visits to both Morecambe and Lancaster.

"We hugely enjoyed the support you gave us, and the granting of the Freedom of the City of Lancaster in 1993 was a great honour.

"Trafalgar's affiliation followed on from HMS Dreadnought, the Royal Navy's first nuclear-powered submarine, so the association with the Royal Navy, and in particular the Submarine Service, stretches back over 50 years.

"What is also very poignant is that this jetty points out across Morecambe Bay to the place where Trafalgar was built in Barrow-in-Furness.

"Whilst HMS Trafalgar is no longer in service, this plaque and the naming of this Stone Jetty as Trafalgar Point will provide a lasting reminder and a fitting legacy of the link, not just between Trafalgar and Morecambe, but between the Royal Navy and this area."

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our June edition (right) was HMS Camperdown, which was rammed by corvette HMS Coreopsis in 1953, and T Metcalf, of Cheltenham, wins our £50 prize for naming both.

This month's mystery submarine (above) was launched in May 1963, paid off in the summer of 1993 and went for breaking just over three years later.

The boat, which was built by Cammell Laird, was named after a type of small marsupial.

What was her name? We have removed her pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving the correct



answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is September 16. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our October edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

Nostalgic tour of flagship

BRIDPORT shipmates have been celebrating their branch's 75th anniversary this year with a series of events – and one of those events was nostalgic for one member.

A group made the journey east to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard where they were given a guided tour of the Royal Navy's flagship at Trafalgar (right).

And the man giving the tour, CPO Phil 'Ricky' Nelson, doesn't just share a name with the great admiral – apart from being the son of a Bridport branch member, he also shares family links with the Navy's greatest hero.

A photo opportunity in Victory's Great Cabin brought back memories for one visitor, who said she recalled being there in 1957 when her late husband received the BEM from Admiral of the Fleet Sir George Creasy, when he was Commander-in-Chief Portsmouth.

The tour was followed by buffet lunch in the Senior Rates Mess.

Bridport branch began as the Old Comrades Association on September 1 1938 and seamlessly merged with the RNA in 1952.

Their celebrations reach a climax at their 75th Anniversary/Trafalgar Dinner on Saturday October 19, with a special service the following day at St Johns Church, West Bay.



MYSTERY PICTURE 222

Name

Address

My answer

Getting you ready to deploy

THE Royal Navy Pre-Deployment Training and Mounting Centre (RNPDT and MC), based in Jervis Block, HMS Nelson, coordinates and conducts Pre-Deployment Training (PDT) for RN and RM personnel deploying to land-based operations worldwide.

PDT provides the soldiering skills required in theatre and ensures personnel who have conducted this training are capable and confident in providing force protection for themselves and those around them.

Celebrating its tenth anniversary this year, the Mounting Centre was established in March 2003, in direct support of Operation Telic.

The centre was initially tasked to undertake the administration of deploying RN personnel, providing the correct clothing, equipment and documentation in preparation for deployment to Iraq.

However, with the cessation of operations in Iraq, the deployment of personnel refocused on Operation Herrick, Bahrain (UKMCC) and the rest of the world.

With a compliment of 15, headed up by a Lt Cdr, the Mounting Centre's main remit is to support individuals in their pre-deployment preparations, and coordinate training in common core military skills, for their subsequent tours of duty.

All RN/RM personnel nominated for duties as Individual Augmentees (IAs) in theatres under the Operational Command

Drafty's corner



(OPCOM) of Commander Joint Operations (CJO), deploy via the RNPDT and MC. Whilst the training is predominantly for operations in Afghanistan, the staff also conducts PDT for personnel deploying to various other areas around the world such as Bahrain, Oman, Kenya, Tanzania and the Seychelles.

The training process is designed to alleviate any fear or apprehension associated with deploying to land-based operations and to ensure each individual is a Force Protection (FP) asset wherever they deploy.

This process includes ensuring that all personal documentation is correct and up-to-date, weapons are zeroed, clothing and equipment fits correctly, contact drills are practised, theatre-specific lectures are delivered and onward flight bookings are completed.



● Building confidence in pre-deployment force protection training

Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Hillhouse

Op Herrick pre-deployment training courses are held monthly with nominated IAs generally attending PDT just before their deployment dates.

The competency gained on completion of the course remains valid for six months from IPDT completion date and for 12 months on returning from theatre.

PDT is both physically and mentally demanding and as well as having to pass the RNFT, students are advised to embark on a physical training programme to prepare them for the challenges they will face.

This will include a 2.4km walk wearing Osprey body armour, weighing approx 15kg, battle casualty drills (essentially the movement of casualties),

and various other physically demanding drills practised during the practical phase of PDT at Longmoor Camp where individual loads can weigh as much as 30-35kg.

The first week of the course takes place primarily in HMS Nelson and consists largely of briefs both from the RNPDT and MC Training Team and visiting lecturers.

The theory and practical aspects of dealing with battle casualties and CBRN environments are undertaken at Phoenix Training Group, HMS Excellent, during the latter part of the week.

The remainder of the time during week one is spent preparing personal kit and equipment. IAs are assisted during this period by

the RNPDT and MC Support Team, a POSC and two junior rates, who can swiftly address any kit or equipment deficiencies, ensuring that all are fully-equipped for both week two and their subsequent deployments.

Week two sees the course relocate to Longmoor Camp where the practical aspects of PDT are taught, such as zeroing weapons, breaking contact (foot and vehicle), search procedures, counter-IED procedures, patrolling (foot and vehicle) and Forward Operating Base (FOB) security.

Facilities at Longmoor Camp have been specially built to support PDT and provide a realistic setting. The use of blank rounds, pyrotechnics, the employment of interpreters and support from the civilian company Amputees in Action adds an enormous amount of realism to the training package.

The RNPDT and MC also runs IPDT for personnel deploying to Bahrain, predominantly working within the UK Maritime Component Commander's (UKMCC) organisation, and the rest of the world deployments.

There are two separate Bahrain IPDT packages, one catering for the Command Group, the other catering for IAs.

The rest of the world IPDT is designed to meet the individuals' specific force protection requirements and can vary in duration from one to two weeks.

A significant contributor to every aspect of individual augmentee training, deployment, recovery and dismount is the RNPDT and MC admin team.

Comprising six personnel, the team is headed up by a CPOWtr (Office Manager) and is responsible for administering all IAs at every stage, from the moment they are assigned to operations, to completion of dismount course.

Their tasks include: booking relevant weapons course and IPDT; bidding for, and then booking, flight(s) into theatre and

provided transport to the airhead; providing second line personnel support to all deployed IAs (including pay and allowances); providing a weekly news letter; booking dismount courses; and recording decompression on JPA.

The staff at the Mounting Centre are subject matter experts and are dedicated to providing each and every IA with the knowledge and training required to operate in the respective theatres of operation.

It is imperative that all who attend PDT give 100 per cent commitment and look at every situation they encounter during the training package as a learning opportunity.

Everyone who completes the course will leave the Mounting Centre with the competencies, equipment and knowledge to operate safely and effectively in the land environment, maintaining their own force protection and positively contributing to the force protection of those around them.

Full details, including course dates, are available in 2012 DIN 07-087 and on the RNPDT and MC website: http://cwwd-rweb-001.cwwd.dii.rmil.uk/IPDT_Centre/default.html.

RNPDT and MC Contacts

Dedicated to assisting Individual Augmentees through the PDT/Deployment process, the staff can be contacted on the numbers below: (External 02392 7 plus ext or Mil 9380 + ext):

- OIC - 24494
- WO1(RM)-WO1Ops - 23512
- CPOWtr - Office Mgr - 24452
- POWtr - Admin PO - 22673
- POWtr - UKMCC Course Mgr - 23976
- POSC - Course Mgr - 22334
- SGT RM - Chief Instr - 23987
- LWtr - Movements (Flights/Hire Cars) - 22750
- CPLRM - RM Training Team - 26314
- LWtr - Pay and Allowances (J1 Reach Back) - 22334
- Admin AB - 22388

1SL tests the GSR: have you got yours yet?

IT'S TIME to check lockers, wardrobes, attics, or even your old sea chests for those old S10 gas respirator masks - they are being replaced by the new General Service Respirator (GSR).

The programme of respirator replacement continues apace across the Naval Service with priority issue, specialist fitting and testing of the masks going to those deploying or at high readiness for operations.

Collecting his much-improved GSR this month was none other than the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, when he visited Portsmouth Naval Base's testing centre to go through the process of fitting and testing.

The ARTS (Advanced Respirator Test System) ensures that the masks fit perfectly and their filters keep any toxic fumes at bay.

Admiral Zambellas said: "These are really important tests to make sure that all Naval Service personnel are in date and ready to deploy."

"I'm delighted to have a chance to get down and meet the team working hard to get us all properly fitted with the best protective equipment and am pleased to have kept myself in-date, without any exposure to the old CS gas test."

Entering a special cubicle, with a smoke generator clouding the air, Admiral Zambellas happily spent 20 minutes going through



● First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas at the Portsmouth Naval Base Gas Respirator Testing Centre

Pictures: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston

the step-by-step moves to ensure the mask was a good fit.

After jumping up and down, jogging on the spot, chewing theatrically and giving the mandatory vigorous head shakes, the admiral emerged smiling from the smoke-filled chamber with a cheerful 'thumbs-up' to indicate that all was well.

ARTS measures minute traces of the smoke particles that may get through the seals during strenuous movement, but fortunately PO Martin 'Flakey' Elliott ensured that the First Sea Lord had secured a tight seal so

that he passed with flying colours.

The First Sea Lord often visits front-line deployed units on operations and as such is mandated, like all Service personnel, to be in date for training for any potentially hazardous environments.

The new respirator, manufactured for the MOD by Scott Health and Safety, was accepted into service for the Royal Navy back in 2011, following extensive trials all over the world in hot, cold and temperate environments.

Additional tests were conducted



● Thumbs-up from Admiral Zambellas in the smoke-filled chamber

at sea to take into account usage in harsh working environments and confined spaces.

The mask is more practical than the existing respirator - with more sizes to choose from, it has two filters, not one, which means a user doesn't have to hold their breath if it needs changing, and the filter can be rotated, making it easier to aim an SA80 rifle.

It is designed purely for use in Chemical, Biological, Radiological or Nuclear contaminated environments along with the designated protective IPE clothing.

At the testing unit, CPO Dave Howie explained: "For those deploying East of Gibraltar, it is imperative to get the new GSR."

"It's a personal responsibility to get this done, if you are not part of a ship's company or formed unit already scheduled for issue."

"We anticipate having completed GSR issue to the Naval Service by April 2014."

For more information about the GSR introduction see RNTM 162/11 and 312/11.



Airing the spiritual at Buddhist meeting

MEMBERS and guests of the Armed Forces Buddhist Society (AFBS), including the Buddhist Chaplain to the MOD, Dr Sunil Kariyakarawana, gathered at RAF College Cranwell in Lincolnshire for the Armed Forces Buddhist Conference in early June.

The conference supports serving, ex-serving and MOD personnel from the Buddhist faith and provides an opportunity for those personnel interested in exploring this unique religion.

The chairman of the AFBS, Lt Richie Moss RN, said: "The conference presented a wonderful occasion for Buddhists and non-Buddhists to meet together, compare and contrast spiritual experiences and witness some wonderful teaching from the guest speakers."

"I am very much grateful to Air Cdre David Stubbs, the Commandant of RAF College Cranwell, for allowing us to hold the conference in such auspicious

surroundings."

Delegates listened to a host of speakers, ranging from Dr Chris Nonis, (Sri Lanka High Commissioner) to venerable monks while presentations ranged from dhamma (teaching) to karma and much more.

Delegates were able to participate in yoga and meditation sessions and share personal, professional and faith experiences in warm, welcoming and secure company.

The 2014 conference will be held from June 5-7; the venue will be confirmed soon.

The next AFBS development event will occur in the autumn of this year, and will be promulgated by DIN.

For more information on the AFBS visit <http://afbs-uk.org/> or contact Lt Richie Moss on NAVYTRGHQ-TNAQA2503@mod.uk or call (mil) 93832 5876, (civ) 023 9262 5876.

NEED to get your message across? To feature in the Navy News' Two-Six pages contact Navy Command Media - Internal Comms Staff Officer: Lt Cdr Emma McCormick, 93832 8809, email (Dii) NAVYMEDIACOMMS-IC-TL@mod.uk

Get involved – consult on new employment policies

A CONSULTATION has been launched to canvass the opinions of Service personnel and their families on the modernisation of terms and conditions of service.

The consultation period on the New Employment Model (NEM) will run until the end of October 2013, with teams visiting training establishments and Naval bases to deliver both the NEM presentation and run focus groups to gather views on the proposals, interviewing targeted individuals.

Your view is vital to the detailed policy design following the numerous NEM work-streams which are focusing on supporting lifestyle choices and improving domestic stability.

Four broad areas of policy are under review: terms of service; accommodation; training and education; and value and reward.

This is an unrivalled opportunity to reshape and reinvest in personnel to help achieve the required levels of recruitment retention for the Services.

You are urged to read both the detailed DIB 38/13 and RN Galaxies 17/2013 and 39/2012 on the NEM programme. Second Sea Lord Admiral David Steel advises that the NEM programme may affect all individuals in different ways at different stages of their careers and he has called for personal involvement to ensure your views are heard and that the work-streams get these policies right.

Details of times and location of the NEM consultations will be promulgated locally on

Daily Orders and departmental webpages.

RNAS Yeovilton will already have held their forum by the time *Navy News* goes to print but Faslane can expect a visit between July 30 – Aug 1, followed by NCHQ, (Whale Island, Portsmouth) on September 2 and Portsmouth Naval Base on September 3.

HMS Sultan can expect the team on September 4. The NEM presentation will then roll into Devonport on September 24.

The same NEM presentations will be delivered across a number of Army, RAF and Joint Units and therefore Naval personnel working attached to these units are strongly encouraged to attend.

Some aspects of the current package are extremely strong and will need to be protected, such as the provision of subsidised accommodation, welfare provision and the high standards of training and education offered by all three Services.

However, to keep pace with the way in which Service people live their lives in the 21st Century, the Services need to recruit for the future and the employment package as a whole needs to be updated.

In particular, the impact of Service life on families and on the careers of spouses and civil partners are consistently the ‘top two’ causes of dissatisfaction in the Armed Forces Continuous Attitude Survey.

The NEM will bring these terms and conditions of service up to date for both regular and reserve personnel.

Reserves are an integral part of defence capability and the NEM will be designed to support a whole-force approach to manning.

Minister for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, Mark Francois, said: “Understanding what sustains Service personnel’s level of commitment to their chosen career is central to understanding the ‘moral component’ of military force – the will to fight, the determination to win, the incentive to join, and the motivation to stay.

“It’s vital we offer the right employment model to our people in return for their service. I urge all Service personnel to get involved in the consultation in whatever way they can this summer.”

An online survey can be accessed

via a link on the **Defence Internal Brief 38/13** for those unable to attend the briefs and wish to make their views known, visit: www.gov.uk/new-employment-model

Personnel can submit questions to the NEM mailbox: PersTrg-NEM-Mailbox@mod.uk

Once the consultation period concludes in October, there will be a period of detailed analysis of the information gathered.

The outcome of this analysis will then be communicated towards the end of the year.

Further consultation will take place in early 2014 on the details of some of the components of the NEM and how they will be implemented.

MOD LBGT conference

150 military and civilian personnel joined the annual quad-Service LGBT conference at MOD Main Building the day before London Pride – quad comprises the three Services and the Civil Service.

The theme was ‘LGBT Staff on Deployment and Overseas Service – Implications?’ The Navy hosted this year’s conference, which was opened by Second Sea Lord Admiral David Steel.

Speakers included Stonewall CEO Ben Summerskill and Chief of Defence Personnel, LtGen Andrew Gregory.

Commandant General RM Maj Gen Ed Davis said: “Respect for the rights, diversity and value of others lies at the heart of the Royal Marines’ personal and professional values.

“But to be able to respect, you first need to understand; and after this conference, I now understand at least some of the realities of being a member of the LGBT community.

“Thank you to the organisers for helping me to be a better inclusive leader.”

Where to look

GALAXYS

Galaxy 16/2013 – First Sea Lord’s Safety Pledge – “Can do Safely”

Galaxy 17/2013 – New Employment Model – Consultation and update on progress

Galaxy 18/2013 – 1SL Message on Spending Round Announcement

Galaxy 19/2013 – New Regulations for Commonwealth Recruits to the Naval Service
Galaxy 20/2013 – Announcement of JSF/Lightning Squadron Names

DIBs

DIB40/13 – Message to staff from the new Chief of Defence Staff

DIB39/13 – Reserves in the Future Force 2020: Valuable and Valued

DIB38/13 – The New Employment Model – Consultation Period

RNTMs

RNTM 139/13 – Mandatory Information Training – Monitoring and Reporting

RNTM 140/13 – Naval Careers Service (NCS) – Entry Criteria

RNTM 143/13 – Seamanship Training Unit (STU) C2 shift from Collingwood to Raleigh

RNTM 148/13 – RN Corporate Gifting Policy

RNTM 150/13 – Operational PPE Guide – DVD

RNTM 152/13 – Ratings Terms of Service – Changes to policy on the award of backdated promotion and advancement.

RNTM 155/13 – Extension of Service Life Insurance (SLI) contract.

RNTM 156/13 – Renewal of the PAX contract

RNTM 157/13 Free travel in London for Service Personnel in Uniform

RNTM 164/13 – Type 42 Destroyer “End of an Era” Dinner – Oct 3 2013

DINs

DIN2013DIN01-149 – Recruitment of Commonwealth Personnel into the Armed Forces

DIN2013DIN01-Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) Re-write of CEA Regulations

DIN2013DIN01-1033 – RN Fitness Test

DIN2013DIN01-126 – Introduction of the Herrick Drawdown Allowance

DIN2013DIN04-115 – Sea King Helicopter Drawdown and Disposal

DIN2013DIN09-009 – The City of London Sheriff’s Award for Bravery

Tech taste

HMS COLLINGWOOD welcomed the designer of integral software used by the Royal Navy to the Fareham base for a demonstration of his creation.

Paul Tasker, Capture Executive at Lockheed Martin and creator of WECDIS (Warship Electronic Chart Display Information System), visited the Phase 2 training establishment.

Paul was welcomed by Lt Cdr Phil Harper, the Officer in Charge of the Navigational Unit at Collingwood and after a short brief on how the system has benefited the learning of new warfare officers, he was invited to the bridge simulator to witness the equipment in use by officers currently in training.

WECDIS allows those on the bridge and on watchkeeping duties to have a more accurate picture of their location as systems such as radar feeds in and directly update the situation of a ship.

This eliminates the need for paper charting as a precise representation of the surrounding area and is formulated allowing for quicker reaction times for officers of the watch.

The hope is to roll out the system to all vessels in the Fleet by 2015 – the software is not only accurate but also saves money and space.

Paul was also the VIP at the Principal Warfare Officer (PWO) prizegiving award presentation held in the establishments Wardroom.

New ‘app’ saves cash

LOOKING for cheap cinema tickets, a bargain outfit or the latest deals for laptops or mobiles?

A new mobile phone application, or app, is set to help the Defence community save cash.

The new app is the latest feature of the Defence Discount Service, offering attractive discounts to members of the military community and the civilians who work alongside them.

The app is now available for iPhone and Android users and reveals both where to save online and allows users to locate nearby firms offering deals to Discount Service members.

MOD launched the Defence Discount Service as part of the Armed Forces Covenant and, since its launch in October 2012, more than 78,000 people have signed up to take advantage of the service.

Defence Privilege Card

In addition to the new app, the Defence Privilege Card, which is available through the Defence Discount Service website and app, offers exclusive discounts with more than 50 high street companies and participating stores across the country, including KFC, Austin Reed, Iceland and Vue Cinemas.

The card enables people to get money off items ranging from toys and clothes, to mobile phones and groceries, and the list is growing rapidly as more companies come forward to add their support.

The card is available to Defence Discount Service members for £4.99 and is valid for five years.

People can register in two ways – either just for online discounts, or to order a physical Defence Privilege Card. Visit the website at: www.defencediscountservice.co.uk or download the app at:

<https://itunes.apple.com/gb/app/defence-discount-service/id652448774>

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION

Questions for the Minister

THANKYOU for all the feedback and comments that came in to us as a result of our quick-snap poll in preparation for the meeting between the NFF and the Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans Minister, Mark Francois.

The meeting took place on July 16 and your views and points informed the meeting.

In order to give a flavour of the variety of subjects covered we thought that in part of this month’s article we should feature your questions, which, amongst others, were taken forward at the meeting.

There are additional areas such as the AFPRB (Armed Forces Pay Review Body) and the chain of command who will benefit from the views and feedback.

We also use some comments to inform the content of *Homeport*.

Keep an eye out for the next edition that has an article on TRiM for Veterans.

❑ Is there any chance of allowances such as Get You Home being withdrawn as part of the New Employment Model?

❑ When are you going to measure the effectiveness of the Armed Forces Covenant?

❑ Is Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) going to be available for veterans?

❑ VAT on food charges. Food provided under the DFC (Defence Food Contract) does not attract VAT. Food provided under PAYD attracts the full rate of VAT.

Personnel in establishments do not have much in the way of choice as to where they get fed.

I would like to see core meals being exempted from VAT in order to provide tri-Service parity and in order to be fair to all personnel.

❑ We ask our councils to sign up to the Covenant which is all well and good but is there any intention for the military to look after our veterans and issue Veterans ID Cards to allow us

to utilise facilities in such a way as the Americans look after their forces personnel?

❑ Significant improvement to the LASP package, especially for personnel in the first ten years of service.

❑ Why do ministers constantly receive above-inflation pay rises yet the military have been restricted over the past five years.

❑ Why are ‘married quarters’ for married couples? It’s unfair that you help a married couple but not a family that cannot afford to marry and have to separate their family because they cannot afford to live together either by renting (which is expensive) or buying.

❑ For people who live far away from Scotland, I feel they should be able to have a 48-hour warning phone call as the letter may not arrive before the V-boat is due back alongside thus not receiving a 48-hour notice.

❑ If relocating due to job change you should be able to transfer your NHS Dentist with you rather than having to pay private.

❑ I’d like you to say, from a devoted military wife, how would he/she feel about only seeing their other half for only 12 weeks per year, every year? Due to the defence cuts, the ships are on 12 month turn-arounds. This means my children only ever see their father in dribs and drabs, a week here, a week there.

❑ Why, despite assurances that operational tempo would drop in the light of SDSR and the reduction in manpower, ships and budgets, is the RN even more stretched with longer deployments, less time back in the UK and greater pressure to produce something with little or nothing when you are back in the UK? If you want to retain a functioning force, this is not the way to do it.

❑ There are lots of rumours about the future of married quarters and whether they will be available at all in the future, let alone at higher rates.

In view of the Armed Forces being deployed for even longer periods now than ever before (in excess of nine months in cases such as Afghanistan and SSN patrols, with rumours of longer deployments for all); do you really think this a good way to encourage our people to remain serving when there could be even less support for families, leaving them further isolated for longer periods of time?

As responses and updates draw forward we will keep you posted via our e-bulletin, *Homeport* magazine and our website; www.NFF.org.uk also please keep reading our *Navy News* articles for updates.

Continuity of Education Allowance: Re-write of Regulations

There has been a series of changes to the Continuity of Education Allowance (CEA) regulations. The revisions simplify the administration of all claims from prospective/existing claimants. The changes will be fully implemented within the JSP752 (Chapter 9) with effect from August 1 2013 for the autumn 2013 term onwards. The core principles of the allowance remain unchanged.

Main Changes to CEA Regulations

The revised regulations satisfy the objective of the CEA review in that they represent a simplification of the current arrangements while maintaining the core principles of the allowance.

The main changes to the policy (including current location within JSP752 where applicable) are as follows:

Changing school within a stage of education (09.0123a)
In cases where a parent

wishes to move their child to another school because of suspected safeguarding issues (but wishes to continue claiming CEA), the parent may now withdraw the child before seeking the advice of the Children’s Education Advisory Service (CEAS), submitting casework later. This reflects current practice and is now formalised within the regulations.

Responsibilities (Claimant) (New regulation)

The claimant accepts that the deliberate abuse of CEA regulations may lead to disciplinary action or criminal proceedings.

Eligible Service personnel (New regulation)

Where, on assignment the claimant is not classed as Involuntary Separated (INVOLSEP) and is not going to be accompanied by their immediate family within three months, they must submit casework to the CEA Governance Team (CEAGT) seeking authority for ongoing entitlement to claim CEA.

Eligible Child (New regulation)

Since the beginning of the academic year 2012/13 there has been no entitlement to CEA in respect of initial claims for children entering the A-Level stage of education (school years 12 and 13).

In order to maintain the continuity of education of children attending state schools who are within two years of taking their GCSE examinations, no initial claims for CEA will ordinarily be considered for any child who has already entered school year 10.

CEA Eligibility Certificate (CEA EC) (09.0105)

There are two additional circumstances in which a new CEA EC application is required. A new CEA EC application





● Lt Cdr Richard Greenacre's 30 years service to the Royal Naval Reserve is marked at the parade

Medal parade for proud Vivids

FAMILIES and friends watched with pride as HMS Vivid, Plymouth's Royal Naval Reserve unit, held their first ceremonial divisions in a number of years.

The parade offered an ideal opportunity to present well-deserved awards and medals to three reservists from the unit.

To the stirring accompaniment of the Plymouth Pipe and Drum band, the ship's company marched onto the parade ground, led by former Naval Cdr Charles Crichton.

Capt Angie Hancock, a former Commanding Officer of Vivid, travelled across the globe from her home in Chile to inspect the troops.

She said: "The turn out has been impeccable. I am proud to continue my association with HMS Vivid."

She awarded clasps to the Volunteer Reserve Service Medal commemorating 30 years loyal service to Lt Cdr Richard Greenacre and AB Sharon Sandel, while AB Chris Bowker received his Volunteer Reserve Service Medal marking his commitment to the Service.

The current CO of Vivid, Cdr Ian Pethick, said: "Ceremonial Divisions is an important occasion as it allows the ship's company to demonstrate their pride and core naval values of commitment, discipline and respect for others."

"It also gives us the opportunity to reinforce the significant role that Reservists play in the RN."



● Capt Angie Hancock inspects the Ceremonial Divisions Parade at Vivid

Proud to wear the rig

IN Yorkshire and the Humber, reservists were proudly wearing their Service uniforms in their civilian work place on Uniform to Work Day (UWD).

Part of the build-up to Armed Forces Day, the awareness initiative celebrates the role of Reserves and highlights that the Armed Forces are made up of people from all sections of the community, and their talents are drawn from a variety of employment.

Reservists provide valuable support to the Armed Forces and are deployed on operations regularly, including in Afghanistan.

Among those swapping suits for uniforms was Lt Cdr Clive Hewins, who serves with Ceres Division in Leeds.

IN FLANDERS FIELDS

WITH burning blistered feet, aching limbs and sore joints, 'towards their distant rest they began to trudge.' Wilfred Owen's poem *Dulce Et Decorum Est* is a bitter, poignant account of the ghastly death of soldiers during World War 1.

It describes the horrors of the battlefield endured by young men whose patriotic fervour was all-too-often extinguished by the misery of the trenches.

Nearly 100 years since the Great War, the blistered feet now belonged to Naval Reservists from HMS Calliope, King Alfred and Wildfire, who overcame their minor ailments, bonding together with colleagues from other nations as they completed the 100km, three-day march across the Belgian battlefields, scene of the fiercest fighting and heaviest losses, to honour those killed.

The Royal Navy has a proud association with the town of Ypres, which was the site of three major battles. Members of the 63rd Royal Naval Division fought in the most famous and

most bloody of these battles at Passchendaele.

The RN Division was made up of surplus naval reservists who were called up for the war but not required to serve at sea.

The Ypres march has been quietly and respectfully undertaken every year since 1972, with the first British participants joining the event in 1974.

The march provides an excellent opportunity for RNR units across the country to walk and bond together, reflecting upon the losses suffered in World War 1, visiting the Poelcapelle British Cemetery and Passchendaele New British Cemetery, where many of the Royal Naval Division were laid to rest.

PO Ian Lane, from HMS King Alfred, said: "Standing there reading the thousands of names on the walls, I was thinking of the quote, these people 'gave their tomorrow for our today'. It was an honour representing the RN at this event."

The reservists spent their first day visiting the memorial sites located in and around the city

seeking to understand the true cost of these battles.

The city's past cannot easily be forgotten; the shell-scarred landscapes reflect the destruction wrought while the city's Cloth Hall bears the marks of bullet holes in its stone, despite its restoration.

At the city parade, they paid their respects at the British Commonwealth Menin Gate, and German site, Langemark, joining their counterparts in the TA, German, Dutch and Belgian Reserve Forces.

The use of oak at Langemark marks the distinct difference between the two memorials: the peace treaty of Versailles denied the use of white stone for its construction.

Overcome with pride and emotion at the Service of Remembrance, the reservists gave thanks to the heroes who had fallen in the battles. 54,896 of these soldiers have no known grave in the battlefields of the Ypres Salient.

On the second day of marching the distance covered was greater. Trekking through the now peaceful, former fields of battle

across Ypres and to the French borders, their longest day ended with a much-deserved BBQ. The final day saw the weary walkers determined to complete the challenge. By now several team members were suffering from various ailments but with strong camaraderie they enjoyed success in completing the challenge.

Naval reservists have undertaken this commemorative march for the past five years, but with no funding allocated, the Ulysses Trust stepped forward to support the expedition.

Since its inception, now almost 20 years ago, the Trust has provided over £1.5 million funding support to over 20,000 military reservists and cadets variously participating in over 1,500 expeditions at worldwide locations.

If you are a member of the Reserve or Cadet Forces of the UK, organising an expedition or adventurous training activity, the Ulysses Trust may be able to provide financial support.

To find out more see: www.ulyssesstrust.co.uk/base.php www.toerismeieper.be/en/event/202/100km-of-ypres.html



● Lt Cdr Clive Hewins, terminal manager of Simon Storage, declares his Reserve Forces status, complete with regulation safety equipment, on Uniform to work Day in Yorkshire.

Terminal Manager of Simon Storage in Immingham, Clive has been a reservist for 33 years, during which time he has been deployed on several occasions, including Afghanistan in 2010 and the London Olympics last year.

Clive said: "It's not widely known among the public how many people volunteer for the Reserve Forces, nor how much we play a part in operations abroad, or supporting exercises at home and at sea."

"Uniform to Work Day helps keep that awareness front-of-mind."

"I've had a great deal of appreciation from my staff here for the essential work reservists provide in supporting our country's interests and military operations."

Medals for the Foxes

BRISTOL-based RNR unit HMS Flying Fox held their annual Ceremonial Divisions on a sunny Saturday at the end of June with a full military review by the Captain of the Southern Region of the Maritime Reserves, Capt Martin Quinn, who presented medals to a number of members of the unit.

Just returned from Afghanistan, Lt Cdr Martin 'Oz' Rhodes was awarded his Operational Service Medal in addition to receiving the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, a late presentation due to being deployed in 2012.

Martin Rhodes' civilian career as a defence consultant and performance improvement specialist has complemented his commitment to his RNR role

deployed as a Communication Information Systems (CIS) operator.

He said: "This ceremony is a culmination of some very hard work I have been involved with over the last year."

"I have been able to combine RNR and civilian work which has benefited both sides of the coin."

"Now I will return to the normality of my day job, but will continue to enjoy the adventures on offer in the Reserve Forces."

Martin has undertaken the management of the RNR's force protection branch, the Seaman Reserves.

Civil servant Lt Cdr Rod Drake was awarded his Operational Service Medal during the parade.

Calliope's public service

STUDENTS from Gosforth Academy had an exciting day learning about how Royal Naval Reservists work and the skill sets required to support the Royal Navy as part of the academy's Public Services course.

The reservists at HMS Calliope hosted a group of 14 to 15-year-old students by providing both practical hands-on experience and a more cerebral challenge in a discussion on the moral dilemmas and ethical issues that members of the Armed Forces may face on military operations.

The forces team laid on displays of practical first aid, weapons handling and also held a session on command, leadership and management tasks, helping students to recognise the importance of training and mentoring people to work effectively as a team and also as leaders.

Richard Whitaker, the course coordinator from Gosforth Academy, said: "The event was extremely well organised and very useful for students to learn more about the work of the Naval Service."

"Students gained valuable evidence for their coursework from the team building tasks, while the weapons handling and medical training proved very interesting."

The RNR instructors had a rewarding experience showcasing their professional roles while the students' visit also offered a useful opportunity to hone their skills as instructors and trainers.

Lt Paul Ladislaus, HMS Calliope's Training Officer, said: "Events such as these are a great way for us to further develop our links with the wider community."

"We are always pleased to help the students out in their academic and vocational training."

"The team at Calliope really enjoyed having them on board and wish them all the best for the rest of their course."

Intelligent invitation

HIGHLY motivated and intelligent individuals suitable to undertake training and work within the maritime and wider defence intelligence community are being sought amongst the RNR cadre.

The next assessment weekends will be held on January 18-19 and February 22-23 in 2014.

The assessment weekend is open to all personnel, OR1 - OF2 (OF3 in exceptional circumstances), who are on the Royal Naval Reserve trained strength or in the case of Royal Marines Reserve, have completed Commando training.

Personnel must have their parent unit CO's approval and in all RMR cases the CO's recommendation to apply to attend this weekend.

See CMR's Temporary Memorandum 23/13 for more details on how to apply.

Valued and valuable: An enhanced deal for Reserves

THE government's plans to sustain and grow the UK's Reserve Forces were published in early July and the proposals widely reported across external media outlets.

Better benefits, more security, and more support for reservists and their employers are the key pillars of the Reserves White Paper, unveiled by Defence Secretary Philip Hammond.

The new relationship set out in *Reserves in the Future Force 2020* is a significant step forward in the plans to create a new, fully-integrated Reserve Force that is well-trained, well-equipped and well-funded.

The raft of measures revealed were aimed at growing the UK's Reserves to around 35,000 across all three Services and giving crucial support and incentives to reservists, their families and employers.

At a glance for reservists, the measures unveiled include:

- 1 the introduction of paid annual leave when training as well as when on operations;
- 2 for the first time, Armed Forces pension entitlements, when training and on operations, under the Armed Forces Pension Scheme, are to be introduced in April 2015, details to follow;
- 3 access to key defence health services when training and on operations;
- 4 transferable skills and academic qualifications;
- 5 legislation to ensure access to employment tribunals in unfair dismissal cases against reservists, without a qualifying employment period.
- 6 A follow-up on this last measure includes the recent launch of a

web based portal where Reserves can report unfair treatment that has disadvantaged them in the workplace as a direct result of their military service.

Employers will also benefit; there will be:

- 7 a £500 per month, per reservist, financial award to small and medium enterprises on top of the allowances that are already available when their reservist employees are mobilised;
- 8 More notice so employers are able to plan for the absences of their reservist employees – Navy Command will seek to give at least 28 days for contingent operations and three months for enduring operations;
- 9 a closer relationship with communications between Defence and Employers at a strategic, regional and unit level.
- 10 greater recognition for leading supportive employers;
- 11 a national relationship management scheme to strengthen relationships with larger employers.

Defence Secretary Philip Hammond said: "We are revitalising our Reserve Forces, reversing the decline of the recent past, growing their trained strength and investing an additional £1.8 billion over ten years to do this."

"This marks a significant step forward as we change our relationship with reservists, their families and employers; dramatically improving what we offer them."

"Amongst the new measures, individuals will no longer feel penalised for being a reservist and small companies will get financial help if they employ and support a reservist."

"These changes are going to



● Reservists from all three Forces laid on a demonstration of medical, warfare and logistics activity in support of Defence

Picture: Cpl Obi Igbo, 16th Air Assault

help us build a new relationship with society, and with this new relationship, I am confident that we are going to be able to grow and sustain our Reserves so that we have the future Reserve Forces the nation requires."

The Territorial Army will see a name change to the Army Reserve.

For the Maritime Reserves, betterment measures are already evident in ongoing investment in infrastructure and training across the RNR and RMR estate.

HMS Dalraida has already benefited from a move into Glasgow, with new purpose-built accommodation.

The move of HMS Sherwood to co-locate with RMR Nottingham detachment and Army Reserve

unit is well advanced, with a pre-contract meeting taking place on Aug 6 to confirm the detail of the 24-week build programme to provide an ideal training facility for the 100-plus RNR and RMR personnel in the region.

Other plans are shaping up as the FR20 team progress towards achieving 3,100 trained strength target in 2018.

Considerable effort is being expended towards recruiting Maritime Reserves with Live events planned to raise awareness. There are financial incentives to reward reservists who recruit new colleagues into the Service.

There is a wealth of detail online at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/future-reserves-2020-consultation>

DEFENCE Secretary Phillip Hammond met reservists from across the three services, including the medical branches, the infantry and air support, when they laid on a demonstration of their capabilities ahead of the government's White Paper announcement on the Future Reserves 2020 (FR20).

The reservists gathered at Fingringhoe ranges in Colchester to show the politician what the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force reservists already contribute to defence now and, looking beyond, to delivering capability in the future.

Representing the RNR Air Branch was C/Sgt Pete Wooldridge from Commando Helicopter Force, based at RNAS Yeovilton, and CPO Paul Jayes, who undertakes his reserve duties at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

"We were asked to provide air support for this exercise," said Paul.

"The infantry company came from the Parachute Regiment and we were on hand to brief them on troop drills with the Chinook."

But all this activity is standard fare for the two Air Branch members, who between them have clocked up 50 years' service before joining the RNR.

Flag Officer Scotland Northern England and Northern Ireland (FOSNNI) Rear Admiral Chris Hockley is also responsible for Reserve Forces of the Royal Navy, and C/Sgt Wooldridge asked the admiral his vision for the Future Reserves.

"The admiral gave us some honest answers on how the Air Branch will grow within the Naval Reserve," he said.

"With the Joint Strike Fighter jet and the new carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth coming online in the next five years, it would seem only sensible to invest in the Royal Naval Reserve."



● Rear Admiral Chris Hockley quizzes Air Branch Reserves, C/Sgt Pete Wooldridge and CPO Paul Jayes on their duties within the Air branch of the Maritime Reserves at Fingringhoe ranges near Colchester.

Picture: Cpl Obi Igbo, 16th Air Assault



In at the deep end...

SIXTEEN members of Bristol-based HMS Flying Fox visited the Royal Naval Air Station in Yeovilton to experience the adrenaline-charged challenge of underwater escape training from a simulated downed military helicopter.

The Underwater Escape Training Unit (UETU) has a reputation for taking nervous fliers and turning them in to more confident individuals.

Famous names who have also been given the 'treatment' include Helen Skelton from *Blue Peter* and more recently Darren Gough, the former England cricketer and *Strictly Come Dancing* finalist.

Lt Henry Watts organised the event for Flying Fox and said: "This is one of those special experiences you can only get in the Armed Forces, unless you're a *Blue Peter* presenter or famous cricketer of course, and it really builds confidence for flying over water on military operations".

The UETU simulates a helicopter crash on to water to allow training for personnel in escape procedures.

After a safety brief and training presentation, the members of the ship's company divided into teams of six to undertake the practical element.

The UETU was set up to simulate an escape from

a downed aircraft and each group made four separate controlled escapes: a familiarisation run, a full run in daylight, a full run in simulated twilight, and a full run in total darkness – which also turns upside down.

The training aims to be safe but realistic and is designed to build confidence in the use of survival equipment and drill procedures.

Recruit Francesca Ind, who is undergoing basic training at Flying Fox, said: "This was not as scary as I was expecting."

A slightly more experienced officer, Sub Lt Adam Kendry, said: "This was not as simple as it sounds really."

"There was one point when the safety divers encouraged me to get out when I got snagged on some straps, but I survived to tell the tale."

The Royal Navy Reserve is actively recruiting and Flying Fox is part of this effort in the West of England and welcomes new recruits. Anyone interested in finding out more about the RNR can call 08456 075555 or visit www.royalnavy.mod.uk/Careers/Role-finder/Naval-Reserves

The recruiting evenings are usually held on the first Thursday of each month at the unit's training centre in Bristol.

Wildfire waterman Integrate and adapt

WHEN an opportunity arose for a Reservist with boathandling skills to work at the Rowing World Cup at the Olympic rowing lake at Eton Dorney, HMS Wildfire's Lt Andrew Carey jumped at the chance.

Andrew (pictured right) had missed out on working at the 2012 London Olympics because he was already mobilised to work as the Safety of Navigation Information Coordinator at EU NAVFOR on the anti-piracy operation off the coast of Somalia and Yemen.

Eton Dorney lake was hosting the second of three 2013 rowing world cups with crews coming from all over the world to compete to gain points towards the World Cup championship.

Andrew normally works full-time at Sky TV as a sound supervisor in the studios, which means he spends much of his time sitting behind a mixing desk.

But he put his powerboat and first aid skills gained with the RNR to good use when he became an 'On Water' safety marshal for the five-day international event, which also featured Navy regular Lt Peter Reed, a double Olympic rowing gold medallist, who was competing in the GB Eights team.

Andrew's job meant ensuring that all the rowers were kept safe on the rowing and training lake, patrolling in safety boats on shifts from early morning (6am starts) all the way to late evening (off the water at 9.30pm).

The changeable weather kept everyone on their toes. There was only one rescue to be made all event, but there were numerous teams training in the wrong lanes or getting in the way of faster boats which required swift action by the safety crews.

This was Andrew's first experience of rowing safety boat



work, having had a sailing rescue boat background, and the skills needed were very different.

He said: "With sailing rescue boat work, speed and the wake and wash you create is not a major factor, but for these rowing boats, any wake created by you in the safety boat could cause them to capsize, so everything is done with as little speed as possible – it certainly tested my slow-speed boat-handling skills many fold – 'Slow is Pro' was the watch-word!"

Another surprising job that Andrew got involved with was a bit of 'water gardening' – being a 2,000m freshwater lake there is a vast amount of weed in it, and this is not good for the rowers if it gets tangled in their oars, or around the fin below the waterline that keeps them going straight.

So during quieter periods, Andrew joined the safety crews going out with rakes, clearing the eight competition lanes of any floating weeds.

His work was undoubtedly appreciated and, to his delight, he saw Peter Reed's GB victorious eights team take the lead in the World Cup standings.

ACTING Sub Lt David Blagden joined HMS Monmouth for a fortnight's sea training along with 19 reservists from across the UK.

The junior officer, in civilian life a lecturer in international politics at the University of Cambridge, joined the ship in Cyprus with three other junior officers, two senior ratings and 14 junior ratings during the ship's return from a six-month deployment to the Gulf.

The RNR contingent was flown out to fill key gaps in the ship's company after a group of their regular sailors were given their advance leave.

David said of the experience: "It was simply fantastic – a comprehensive, detailed, intensive and engaging package of training, with the added bonus of escaping the cold of a late spring in Britain to sail the length of the Mediterranean on an actively deployed warship."

Personal highlights included taking part in a live small arms firing at sea using the ship's machine guns and miniguns, being a member of the fo'c'sle party on the bow on the approach to Gibraltar, an iconic sight for RN sailors across the ages.

"Every day was tough and challenging but the leadership provided throughout the RNR – both in Wildfire, my unit, and at courses around the country leave you well prepared to learn, integrate and adapt," he said.

"I'm confident that my time onboard the Black Duke has helped me to prepare for future active deployments, and I am very grateful to the CO and ship's company for making my RNR colleagues and I so welcome"

Ask Jack

Austin James Young: Seeking help in tracing my possible father, who served in the Royal Navy during World War 2. His name was Austin James Young (known as Jimmy). He came over from St Johns, Newfoundland in 1940 to join the Navy and returned to Newfoundland in 1946. His number was JX211537 and he was an Able Seaman and temporary Leading Seaman. He served in several ships, including six times in Victory, sometimes as a Clerk. I believe he died in Newfoundland in 1998. I am interested in a period of time from late 1942 to April 1943 when his pay records show that he was allocated to HMS Belfast. I should be glad if: a) anyone remembers him (his Canadian accent may help), b) whether anyone remembers him being actually on board (or not) the Belfast during the above period, and c) what happened to Belfast after the Battle of North Cape - did it at any time return to Great Britain so that Austin could have got leave? Thank you for any help you can give me. Please contact Sylvia Lutz at dawns143@live.co.uk or tel: 01279 812674.

Cheese 'Ush or Oosh: John has had letters published in *Navy News* regarding naval cuisine, e.g. croque-madame (cheesy, hammy, egg), and there has been mention of the delightful (S.O.A.R) 'devilish kidneys' (polite name), but thus far no definite answer to the question of the recipe for Cheese 'Ush or Oosh. Are there any 'old chefs' who would be prepared to disclose the secret to concocting this 'magic dish'? A 'scaled down' recipe would be fantastic. Contact John Sexton at fleetchief2@sky.com or tel: 01772 337659.

HMAS Sydney: We are trying to contact anybody who is related to any of the sailors who perished on HMAS Sydney when she was sunk in the Indian Ocean in November 1941. These could be either the relatives of any of the Australian sailors, or of those from other countries, such as the 22 Britons, who went down with the ship. Contact Timothy Akers at tashpfinder09@talktalk.net or write to 11 Gascoigne Crescent, Harrogate HG1 4AJ.

HMS Marne, HMS Martin, HMS Onslaught, HMS Punjabi and HMS KGV: I am presently researching the history of HMS Martin, HMS Marne's sister ship, and am interested in actions that both Martin and Marne were involved in. The first is the joint rescue of survivors of HMS Punjabi, which was sunk in a collision with HMS KGV on May 1 1942 during Convoy PQ15; the second is concerned with a joint action on August 25 1942 when Martin, Marne and Onslaught engaged and sank the German minelayer Ulf. Although these have been well publicised

in WW2 naval literature, I am interested in contacting seamen who were serving on Marne, Onslaught and Punjabi to obtain their memories/recollections of these actions. I am also trying to find out who launched HMS Martin (G44) and who was the presiding admiral when she was commissioned on March 25 1942? I have already had recollections from those who served on HMS Martin. Please contact Prof Andrew Strang at strangs@talktalk.net or tel: 0116 286 4641.

The Submariners Association is the official association for serving and non-serving submariners. All ranks, all rates, all welcome. We have 55 branches - see our website www.submarinersassociation.co.uk. Don't miss the boat, do it now. The Association decided to erect commemorative plaques at the birthplace of each of the 14 Submarine Service VC recipients. Each plaque costs £750, so we have set up a special account for donations to this fund. The first plaque was unveiled on July 6 in South Wales. Further details can be obtained from Jim McMaster at jim_mcmaster2@ntlworld.com or tel: 0141 571 4094.

HMS Cambrian Association: HMS Cambrian no longer exists, or, rather, her elegant steel structure no longer exists, but she does still exist in the golden memories of those who served in her. Did you serve on board HMS Cambrian at any time in her life? Do you want to know more about our thriving association? Contact our chairman on 01344 774386 or our secretary on 01782 646033 or visit www.hmscambrian.org.uk

HMS Nubian: I am seeking confirmation that it was my uncle, Lt George Simpson, who volunteered to go over the side of HMS Nubian after she was bombed leaving Crete, with the underwater cutting gear, to separate the stern from pulling the rest of the ship down. As far as I know, when he came out of the water he was very ill and was in hospital for a very long period. He married his nurse, Nancy, after he was discharged. I last saw him when very shortly after the war, they, along with my young cousin, moved to New Zealand, where he started a large citrus farm. Contact Mr L F Simpson, 5 Deneside, Seghill, Cramlington, Northumberland NE23 7ER.

HMS Matabele (F26) Tribal-class destroyer: Ruth Ward is searching for Bill Burras and Ernie Higgins, the only two survivors of the sinking of HMS Matabele after a torpedo attack on January 17 1942. Her uncle, E 'Bert' Iddens, did not survive and she, her aunt seek further information about the event and anyone who may have known her uncle. Contact ward196@btinternet.com tel 07842 088228.

Deaths

Cdr William Edward 'Eddie' Grenfell. At outbreak of war he joined as a torpedoman, trained as an electrician and went to sea first in HMS Edinburgh then in the catapult-armed merchant ship (CAM) Empire Lawrence, which carried a single Sea Hurricane fighter to be launched by catapult in the event of an aerial attack on the ship. He was operating and maintaining the ship's radio direction-finding equipment (RDF) and when her radar was damaged on May 26 he volunteered to carry out a repair whilst another air attack developed, clinging to the masthead while machine-gun bullets whistled past; he was rewarded with a tot. Attacked again later that day by German bombers the Sea Hurricane was launched but after shooting down two of the enemy it ditched into the sea; the pilot was plucked from the water by a rescue ship. The next day enemy bombers dived on Empire Lawrence causing her cargo of ammunition to go up and turning the ship into a gigantic fireball; he was thrown into the icy waters but a bubble of air from the sinking ship shot him and other survivors to the surface where they were able to find an overturned lifeboat. Eventually rescued by Royal Navy corvette HMS Hyderabad and suffering another three days of bombing they reached the bombed-out military hospital in Murransk. He was transferred to the Russian Army camp at Vaenga before being repatriated in the destroyer HMS Hussar. Post-war he was commissioned into the Navy's newly-formed electrical branch and after serving as assistant British Naval Attaché in Bonn (1961-65) he lived in Germany for 15 years. In his retirement he began a campaign of recognition for his fellow veterans of the Arctic Convoys and inspired many with his crusade for participants in these convoys to be awarded a medal; he received his Arctic Star medal three months prior to his death on June 28. Aged 93.

Cdr Philip A Balink-White. Served 32 years in the RN and survivor of the sinking of HMS Royal Oak in 1939. Last assignment as Superintendent of Diving Minewarfare and Clearance. Upon retiring he followed his wife Capt Linda Balink-White US Navy on active duty assignments till her retirement in 1992. Jobs after leaving the RN included night manager of a motel, First Officer of a modest oceanographic research ship - and appeared in 18 episodes of *Hawaii Five-O*, the pilot of *Magnum PI* and many TV and radio commercials. Florida June 5. Aged 92.

Roger A Vigar REA. Peterborough SCC prior to entering the RN 1959 at HMS Fisgard (Series 37). Served HMS Collingwood, was an Upper Yardsman at BRNC Dartmouth (mid 60s), Scarborough, Eagle, and HM Submarine Osiris. Upon leaving the Navy 1970 he rejoined Peterborough cadets as an officer eventually becoming CO of the unit before leaving 1983. June 29. Aged 70.

Michael Charles Wrather Stoker. Served 1980-85 in HMS Minerva (Falklands War) then HMS Hermes. June 17 in a road traffic accident. Aged 49.

Ben 'Andy' Anderson CPO AH1. Served 1950-67 HMS Ark Royal, Hermes and Illustrious, also at Naval Air Stations Culdrose and Arbroath. Aircraft Handlers Association. Aged 81.

Donald 'Don' Colley EM. HMS Cheviot 1951 and member of the association. June 28.

Robin 'Taffy' Cody Stoker and Diver. Served 1967-73 in HMS Ark Royal, Nubian and at HMS Raleigh. June 29. Aged 62.

Jim 'Emby' S Emberson AA1. S17 class Fisgard & Arbroath. Served 1953-65 Lee-on-Solent, Brawdy, Lossiemouth and Victorious. July 2. Aged 77.

James Alexander Moultrie PO UC1. Served 1946-74 HMS Norfolk, Tintagel Castle, Ajax, Pellew and Phoebe, also Submarine Service in Sea Devil, Sidon, Alderney, Totem, Ancharite and Tireless. July 7. Aged 82.

Rosalind Hudson Wren. Joined WRNS and after training was sent to Blechley Park where she worked during World War 2 in Hut 8 in which the German naval Enigma ciphers were broken. 1945, when Blechley was running down, she was sent to the South Coast to help with work at the naval dockyard. Famous for her perfect scale models of buildings. July 7. Aged 86.

Malcolm Burdett LS QA2. Served HMS Loch Fada 1965-66 (Far East commission). Loch Fada Association. July 4. Aged 72.

Arthur Jared Stoker. Served HMS Labuan 1943-45. HMS Loch Fada Association Associate member. May. Aged 87.

Andrew 'Ginge' Wheatley L/S MW. Served during the 70s and 80s in HMS Wilton, Kirkliston and mostly minesweepers. July 12. Aged 55.

Dennis Bagley PO Gunner. Served HMS Opportune 1942-46, completing many Russian Convoys. HMS Opportune Association. June 23. Aged 92.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION
Richard 'Dick' Knowles Sick Berth Attendant. National Service from 1949 and served on board the Algerine-class Fleet Minesweeper HMS Bramble (sole control of small sickbay) and RNH Haslar (Gosport). Treasurer of Huntingdon & District RNA for over 13 years. June 11. Aged 83.

Irene Lea Associate Member Wigston & District branch. May 6.

Marie Betty Cawdron. Associate member Letchworth & Hitchin branch. June 26. Aged 87.

Rev'd Peter James McCarthy OBE Captain RFA. Served 1941-84 in a total of 35 ships (21 in command between 1962-83) in the Pacific, Korean War and Malaya including RFA Tidespring (Silver Jubilee Review) and RFA Sir Bedivere (Falklands War). Awarded the OBE (Mil) 1982. Former branch Chaplain Harrogate & District branch. July 6. Aged 88.

Francis Robert 'Bob' Turner. Brentwood branch. Aged 74.

William 'Bill' Sterrick. Joined 1947 and served HMS Victorious, Illustrious, Implacable, Vanguard and Alacrity (Korean War). West Lothian branch. May 21. Aged 83.

Chris Baker L/Stoker. Served 1940-46 HMS Encounter and Abercrombie. Norwich branch. June 29. Aged 95.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION
R J 'Ron' Bennett L/Sea LR2. Submarine Service 1941-47 in Otway, H28, Tribune and Tudor. Shropshire branch. Aged 92.

Richard Henry 'Dick' 'Jan' Bowgen L/Sea Gun Layer. Served 1947-59 HMS St Vincent, Euryalus and Childers. Submarine Service 1951-59 in Sleuth, Telemachus, Tactician, Thorough, Thule and Springer. HMS St Vincent Association and Taunton Submariners Association. June 29. Aged 81.

R R 'Roy' Haynes AB RP3. Submarine Service 1957-59 in Anchorite, Excalibur and Porpoise (2). Scotland N.E branch. Aged 77.

F G 'Fred' Rowe CCWEA(WDO). Submarine Service 1972-85 in Revenge, Renown and Resolution. Scotland N.E branch. Aged 72.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION
Ron Evans AB. Served aboard Espiegle. March 25. Aged 80.

Joseph Bradburn Stwd. Served aboard Espiegle and Antares. June 10.

Harold Bird Sig. Served aboard Welcome and Flying Fish. June 21. Aged 86.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION
Gordon Clayton PO (TAG). Served 1941-46 HMS Raleigh, St Vincent, Kestrel, Daedalus, Jackdaw, Kipanga II, Seaborn (788 NAS). A two-time member of the Goldfish Club (1943 - Swordfish and Fulmar). Member of the TAGs and in later years Daedalus branch FAAM. 2012. Aged 91.

George Leslie Cox PO Armourer. Served 1939-45 HMS Unicorn and Stalker, Atlantic, Mediterranean and Pacific. MID. May. Aged 93.

Assignments

Lt Col R A Parvin to be CO RMR Scotland at HMS Caledonia, Dunfermline, from Sept 10.

Lt Cdr D H Thomas to be CO HMS Clyde from July 20.

Lt Col J W Dowd to be CO RMR Merseyside from September 17.

Lt Col S I O'Herilly to be CO RMR Bristol from September 30.

Lt Col D J E Cheesman to be CO 45 Cdo RM at Condor Barracks, Dundee, from January 27 2014.

Cdr M R Darlington to be Head of Training and Education with Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Personnel and Training) from August.

Col A Lister for Attaché duties from August.

Capt R P A Daws to be the UK Liaison Officer to UK Strategic Command from July 29.

Surg Capt L M Thomas to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Clinical Personnel Policy within Navy Command HQ from August.

Surg Capt P A Hughes to be Commander of the Defence Medical Rehabilitation Centre Headley Court from September 9.

Capt P Coulson to be Captain Engineering (formerly Superintendent Fleet Maintenance Devonport) within Commodore Devonport Flotilla from September.

Capt A M Lustman to be Assistant Head Plans within Defence Support Chain Operations and Movements from Sept 9.

Capt A M H Jenkin to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Personnel Planning within Navy Command HQ from November.

Capt M A Cooper to be Branch Head, Defence Plans, Policy and Analysis within NATO HQ SACT from January 2014.

Capt A M Long to be Military Assistant to Vice Chief of the Defence Staff from July 22.

Capt C Alcock to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (Carrier Strike) within Navy Command HQ from December.

Cdr T E Manson to be promoted Captain for temporary duties as Type Airworthiness Authority Hawk T1/T2 from July 2 and for permanent duty as Assistant Head Military Flying Training System from December.

Cdr D I Burns to be promoted Captain and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Naval Intelligence with Fleet Commander Operations from July.

Cdr W P L Biggs to be promoted Captain and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Maritime Capability within Navy Command HQ from August.

Cdr K W Seymour to be promoted A/Captain and Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (Carrier Strike) within Navy Command HQ from September (temp for under six months).

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Reunions

September 2013

Fleet Air Arm: Each year members of the Greater Manchester branch of the Fleet Air Arm Association travel down to Lee-on-the-Solent to hold a service of remembrance. This year it will be held at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial, Marine Parade, Lee-on-the-Solent on September 4 at 11.00. All serving and ex-Servicemen are very welcome, also standards would be appreciated. For more information contact Bernie Cohen at b.cohen2@ntlworld.com or tel: 0161 946 1209 or Mobile: 07806 782720.

8th Destroyer Squadron Association hold their 26th annual reunion from September 6-8 at the Bridlington Royal Spa. The association will be commemorating the 50th anniversary of the withdrawal of the squadron from its role of protecting British interests in the Far East. Any former crew member of any of the 18 destroyers will be welcome. Further information from Peter Lee-Hale at p.leehale@btinternet.com or tel: 01380 829652 or Cliff Longfoot at ongfoo50@hotmail.com or tel: 0151 226 3675.

Castle Class Corvette/Frigate Association annual reunion from September 27-30 at the Livermead Hotel, Torquay. As a result of falling membership, our last reunion will be in 2014. There will be only two more opportunities to meet old shipmates, so get aboard. To join the association and/or obtain further details please contact secretary Mike Biffen at wrekin160830@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 0121 429 3895.

October 2013

Regulating Branch and Royal Navy Police Association annual reunion takes

place from October 4-5. All retired Regulators and serving Naval Police are welcome. For more information see the website at <http://rbn93.com> or contact social secretary W Dick at maawgd@sky.com or tel: 023 9234 5228.

Exeter Flotilla, Trafalgar Day Service: The White Ensign will again be flying over Exeter Cathedral on October 20 to celebrate Lord Nelson's great victory at Trafalgar in 1805. The service starts at 11.30am, with Seven Bells being struck on the bell of HMS Exeter. For more information contact Christopher Seaton at christopher.seaton@virgin.net or tel: 01395 514367.

April 2014

Loch Class Frigates Association annual reunion takes place at the Royal Maritime Club, Queens Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HS (023 9283 7681, quote ref: 14093) from April 21-24. All members welcome. Membership is open to all who served on any of the Loch-class ships or their variants (Bay class, Admirals Yachts, survey ships and repair ships). Some of these types of ships have their own associations but you can always join both. For details please contact Andrew Nunn, Hon Sec LCFA, at andrew.nunn@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 0117 9505835 or see the website www.lochclassfrigates.com

May 2014

HMS Broadsword Association biannual reunion and AGM will take place on May 24 in the WO & Senior Rates mess, HMS Drake, Plymouth. The reunion is open to anyone who served on Broadsword. For more information go to www.hmsbroadswordassociation.co.uk or contact Steve Bullock at stevie.bullock@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 01752 811206.

bullock@blueyonder.co.uk or tel: 01752 811206.

FAA Safety Equipment and Survival Association reunion to be held from May 16-18 at Bosworth Hall Hotel, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire. Please contact secretary Gordon 'Pixie' Parkes at gordon.parkes7@btinternet.com or tel: 01726 825283.



Picture: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon

Pre-deployment training for Wives

A GROUP of wives of sailors and Royal Marines are celebrating the completion of a course preparing them for their partners deploying overseas.

The self-styled Band of Wives staged a presentation evening at the Royal Naval Personal Family Service (NPFS) community centre in Plympton, Plymouth.

The women have learned how to cope as individuals and a mutually-supportive network by completing a course run by NPFS, enabling them to become resilient emotionally and practically while their partners serve overseas, perhaps at sea or ashore in Afghanistan.

Part of their Building Resilience Course was to share their situations and experiences of coping with family and domestic life effectively like single parents.

Creating an artistic montage was a way of illustrating their family background to the other wives and girlfriends, using personal memorabilia such as letters, photographs, maps and songs.

These montages were presented to a gathering (pictured above) including Plymouth Lord Mayor Vivien Pengelly and Capt Gary

Pettitt, of Devonport Naval Base. Capt Pettitt said: "The NPFS organisation is doing a fantastic job supporting the partners of deployed personnel."

"My job at Devonport is to support the front line, in other words the new Royal Marine Tamar amphibious centre, the ships and submarines and the sailors and other Royal Marines who all deploy at sea and on land for long periods from the naval base."

"As part of this, NPFS and the Band Of Wives taking on the resilience courses are all making sure there is a strong network back home while Service partners are away, confident they can serve their country with their families well looked after and able to look after themselves."

"This all adds to the capability of the deployed fighting forces."

Band of Wives provides a 24-week programme delivered in blocks of six under the Building Resilience umbrella.

Each block has a theme and they link together to give a greater understanding of personal levels of resilience and form coping strategies.

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Entries for the Deaths column and Swap Drafts in September's Noticeboard must be received by **August 12**

Talking Navy News goes digital

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 023 9269 0851 and leave a message with a contact number, or email patn-rec@hotmail.com. A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

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Barrels of oil for Barrow

BARROW unit has received a donation from Emo Oil of 500 litres of diesel fuel for use on its power boats.

Emo, local distributor of heating oil and lubricants in Ulverston, chose the unit because it fulfilled its key criteria, which is to enhance the quality of experience for youths in the community.

Barrow's power boats benefit 50 young people who regularly use them for training activities.

The boats are based at Barrow Sea Cadets' Sir John Fisher Sailing Centre, where cadets undertake a variety of boatwork qualifications in Royal Yachting Association power and sail, rowing and kayaking.

CPO (SCC) Jordan Aspin said: "I would like to thank Emo Oil for its generosity in providing fuel to help our training and further our cadets' development."

"This will enable us to provide many hours of safe and quality training to young people within the Sea Cadets."

Graham Seaward, Regional Operations Manager, Emo Oil, said: "As fuel supply is our business, donating diesel to the Sea Cadets ticks all the boxes for us in terms of our commitment to helping in the local community and assisting youngsters with their future development."

Results of the Cumbria District regatta, hosted by Barrow, were: **Boathandling - Power:** Whitehaven; **Rowing:** Barrow; **Sailing:** Carlisle;

Rowing - Juniors (10-11 years): Maryport; **Juniors boys (12-15 years):** Barrow; **Junior girls:** Barrow; **Senior boys (15-18 years):** Barrow; **Senior girls:** Barrow;

Kayaking - Junior boys: Maryport; **Junior boys:** Barrow; **Junior girls:** Barrow; **Senior girls:** Barrow.

Marshal force

SEA Cadets and Marine Cadets from Rhyl unit acted as marshals and support staff at the Run for Life held in the seaside town.

The volunteers helped make the day a success for the 1,500 or more women who entered the 5km charity event, which raised money for Cancer Research UK.

845's treat

AIR cadets from 65 (Bridgwater & District) Squadron as well as cadets from Weston-super-Mare took to the skies of Bridgwater thanks to 845 Naval Air Squadron.

The surprise trip was organised by Flt Lt Chris Garrett, OC 65 Sqn, to say thank you to the cadets and staff for their efforts.

The Yeovilton-based Sea King took cadets for 20-minute trips over the Quantocks.

Flt Lt Garrett added: "This was a fantastic event for the cadets and the local community, many of whom came out and looked over the aircraft whilst it was on the field."

Visitors take to the boats in Guernsey

CHILDREN of survivors of the Chernobyl nuclear accident in the 1980s have been enjoying a visit to the Channel Islands.

And cadets from the Guernsey unit played their part in hosting the youngsters whose parents had been caught up in one of the worst peacetime nuclear accidents.

Chernobyl became a byword for disaster on April 26 1986 when an experiment was carried out on reactor four at the plant, near the city of Pripyat in Ukraine.

The ill-planned procedure was instigated to test a safety procedure, but quickly ran out of control, leading to an explosion and fire that tore the reactor apart and spread radioactive debris over huge swathes of the former Soviet Union and Western Europe.

Although only 30 or so deaths were directly attributed to the accident, it is estimated that many thousands more deaths and cases of ill-health and deformities were directly attributable to the release of dangerous material.

The city of Pripyat and surrounding areas were evacuated and remain abandoned today.

Children of survivors have for several years visited Guernsey for a month, staying with local families and taking part in youth activities, all organised by a charity.



● Children of Chernobyl survivors enjoyed a couple of hours boating thanks to Guernsey unit

The activities included some time boating off the coast with cadets from TS Sarnia.

CO Lt (SCC) Paul Moody RMR said: "I am not sure whether it was the boats or the many bags of jelly babies that were the main attraction, but this was my second year involved with this project, and during the two-hour visit, good fun was had by one and all."

The unit has had a particularly

busy spell recently.

Cadets and staff were proud to receive their first burgee in the unit's 30-year history - the prize was presented to MC2 Ogier on behalf of the unit, by the Lord Lieutenant of Guernsey, Air Marshall Peter Walker.

Then Sgt James Bichard was told that he would be one of the Governor's Cadets for the next year.

And to add the icing to the cake, a member of staff - PO (SCC) Matthew Bourgaize - has just successfully completed his application to join the Royal Marines Band and is due to start his new career next month.

"I think all of that shows what a wonderful association the Sea Cadet Corps is, where the hard work by all always pays off in the end," said Lt Mooney.

Sultan lords it at gun runs

HMS SULTAN Volunteer Cadet Corps (VCC) fought off strong competition from HMS Collingwood VCC and the Royal Marines VCC to secure a clean sweep in the final field gun competition of 2013 - the Portsmouth Area Volunteer Cadet Corps Field Gun Command Championships.

With each team gaining momentum from the experience of running in public displays at this year's Sultan summer show, the competition was always going to be quick.

Watched by HMS Sultan's CO Capt Trevor Gulley and the Executive Officer of HMS Collingwood, Cdr Andy Phenna, competitors completed four runs, which were judged on two elements - overall winners, achieving the quickest aggregate time, and fastest single timed run.

In true VCC spirit competition was very tight throughout as there was little ground between teams.

After all four runs were completed the scores were tallied by the judges with HMS Sultan VCC securing victory on their home patch, with the lowest aggregate time; the Royal Marines VCC finished second, and Collingwood third.

On completion HMS Sultan VCC also learned they had achieved the fastest single time in 1m 6s, and crew captain POC Alfie Richardson was presented with the overall winners trophy by Capt Gulley, and the Fastest Time Trophy by Cdr Phenna.

Also in the running were the Sea Cadets of Cardiff unit, who have competed since 2005 and this year - despite a freak accident which broke a wheel pin and caused injury to a key member of the team - managed its best time (1m 9s) and took joint first place in the clean drill contest.

Tamsyn bags photographic prize



A PHOTOGRAPH taken through the cockpit window of a Sea King above the Ayrshire coast in Scotland won POC Tamsyn Faulder the top prize in the Sea Cadets section of the Royal Navy's prestigious Peregrine photographic competition.

Awarded to the single best photograph of a Sea Cadet theme that combines technical excellence, creativity and impact, Tamsyn's shot - Flying High (pictured left) - was taken during a flight from HMS Gannet at Prestwick airport near Ayr, where she and her colleagues from Carlisle unit were paying a visit.

Three entries from members of Gosforth unit were also picked out, two as commended and one as highly commended.

The creative trio from the Tyneside unit were LC Chris Davies (highly commended for his photograph of reflections in the name plaque of TS Royalist), LC Kim Grey (for a Titanic-esque pose on the bow of a ship) and AC James Coates, for his image of TS Royalist alongside in Gosport.

Welbeck celebrates

THIS year marks the 60th anniversary of Welbeck College, and the occasion was marked by the largest Annual General Inspection in the college's history.

Welbeck opened in September 1953 to provide technical and engineering Army officers to Sandhurst, the establishment moved from Welbeck Abbey in Nottinghamshire in 2005 to a new purpose-built site just outside Loughborough in 2005, becoming Welbeck Defence Sixth Form College.

It also widened its remit to include potential technical and engineering officers to the Royal Navy, RAF and Civil Service.

Former First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, who was instrumental in turning the college into the 'quad-Service' organisation it is today, was the guest of honour at the inspection, and presented the first Welbeck Sword of Honour to the cadet who has contributed most across all facets of college life.

The first recipient of the sword, presented to the college by Robert Pooley of Pooley Swords, was Jnr Under Officer Jessica Barnes.

VIP service

FOUR of London's top cadets represented the Corps at the service to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the coronation of the Queen.

POC Callum Malone of Southwark unit (Cdr Brown Trophy winner), LC Hannah Subitt of Beckenham and Penge (Lord Lieutenant's Cadet), POC Jessica Burton of Tooting and Balham (Navy Board Cadet) and LC Jessica O'Sullivan of City of London (Lord Mayor's Cadet) chatted with VIPs, members of the public and fellow cadets before and after the service, held at Westminster Abbey.

More than 20 members of the Royal family were at the service.

Corps maestro awarded MBE

A SEA Cadet officer who has left 'a remarkable legacy for the Corps' was awarded an MBE in the Queen's birthday honours list.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Derek Payne RNR was recognised for his unstinting contribution to the Cadets, having recently stepped down as Director of Music.

The 65-year-old, from Seaton, Devon, joined the Corps in 1960 as a teenager, and began his adult service as an instructor in 1975.

His citation said that following a successful appointment in command of the Tunbridge Wells unit, Derek "transformed the Corps' musical ability, raising it to a standard never before imagined."

Encouraging the young musicians, he provided them with opportunities to perform at a local and national level and developed at BTEC Music Diploma from which hundreds of cadet

musicians have benefited.

Derek's efforts ensured that young Corps musicians and adult volunteers could be involved musically on many notable occasions, including the Queen's Diamond Jubilee last year.

Derek has the Cadet Forces Medal with three bars, Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal, Queen's Golden Jubilee Medal and the Sea Cadet Medal.

"I am extremely proud to have been chosen to receive an MBE," he said. "I have had a lifelong involvement with the Sea Cadets and have greatly enjoyed my career."

"Two events stand out for me - Cadet 150 in 2010, in which we celebrated 150 years of the cadet forces, and the Queen's Diamond Jubilee 'Crystal Diamond event' at the Tower of London in 2012."

"This was where a Yeoman carried a crystal diamond to



● Lt Cdr (SCC) Derek Payne in his role as Director of Music

the Constable of the Tower for safekeeping and the Sea Cadets were playing the accompanying music.

"Other memorable occasions would have been our five appearances at the Royal Tournament."

SUPPORT YOUR SEA CADETS
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SEA CADETS
A charity registered in England and Wales 313013 and in Scotland SC0057808

West Wales raises over £5,000

DISTRICT Officer Lt Cdr (SCC) W Alan Thomas RNR reported that the West Wales team and the nine units in West Wales – Aberystwyth, Fishguard, Llanelli, Milford Haven, Neath, Pembroke Dock, Port Talbot, Swansea and Tenby – together raised £5,100 towards the national appeal to replace the existing sail training ship TS Royalist.

Cadets from all West Wales units are regular crew members onboard, with the District also booking a week each year which this year is a cruise from Dublin to Milford Haven, so that cadets from the different units can sail together, learning new skills and coming away having had a fantastic experience.

All the units made their collections during a weekend where the weather was atrocious, but the hardy groups were not disheartened, knowing that their efforts would help not just their compatriots but future generations of cadets and other young people.

Open evening

WHITLEY Bay unit held an open evening at their headquarters in Fairways, Monkseaton.

The event was well-attended by staff, cadets, parents and members of the public, with demonstrations of the kind of activities staged on a regular basis by Sea Cadet units.

It is hoped to stage another open evening at TS Whitley later in the year.

Prize for Jack

EX-Nottingham Sea Cadet PPO (SCC) Jack Palmer has been awarded the Defence Maritime Award for Youth Logistics Training at HMS Raleigh.

Jack, now a uniformed member of staff at the unit, won the award for achieving and maintaining the highest standards during his first class cook steward training course.



Libyan cadets hosted

A GROUP of Libyan Sea Cadets had the rare opportunity to go on board and experience life in a Royal Navy survey ship.

The group of 24 youngsters visited HMS Echo during her recent stopover in the capital, Tripoli, while she was carrying out survey work off the coast.

The group ranged in age from three to 13 and were escorted by their teachers, many of whom had backgrounds working with the Royal Navy.

In total there are roughly 400 Sea Cadets linked to the Libyan Naval Base in Tripoli.

As the youngsters boarded Echo, the group split, with some remaining on the quarterdeck to try on body armour, learn about the different parts of the ship and talk with the ship's company about what it was like to be in the Royal Navy, whilst the second half went on a tour of the ship.

Upon completion of the second tour, the cadets gathered on the quarterdeck and sang their Libyan Sea Cadet song for the sailors.

S/Lt Louise Shepherd, a Young Officer undergoing training in Echo, said: "It's great to be able to help the adult volunteers provide activities for these smart,

New life for Scouts' old gig

NINE Sea Scouts from the 35th Bournemouth Sea Scout Group (RN 47) had the honour of taking to the River Thames at Richmond Bridge in Sea Wolf, the first of the new Home Counties gigs.

For over 50 years Sea Scouts across the UK have used the original gig for training in pulling and sailing.

The gig, which has a glass-reinforced plastic (GRP) hull and quality wood finish, has been out of production for years, with the original mould no longer usable, and many inevitably require refurbishment.

Two Sea Scout Leaders from units based on the Thames, Robin Burr and Vic Griffiths, canvassed all the UK Sea Scout groups and realised that there was a substantial interest in continuing to provide what is the

ideal boat for Sea Scout use.

Using original drawings and fitting-out requirements, a new mould was cast based on one of the original gigs.

Leander (Kingston) Sea Scouts (RN 30) provided the boat, Greater London South West Scout County and a local benefactor, Trevor Cotterall, funded the £20,000 mould, and the two-year project was delivered.

Master boatbuilder Mark Edwards, who designed and built Gloriana for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee River Pageant, fitted out the hulls, and the Bournemouth scouts have the first two orders, with more on the production line.

Anyone interested should contact Robin Burr at futureregig2@gmail.com or Vic Griffiths at vicgriffiths@sky.com



● Bournemouth Sea Scouts with the new Home Counties gig Sea Wolf at Richmond Bridge on the Thames

Bradford cadet is chosen

THE Lord Mayor of Bradford, Cllr Khadim Hussain, has appointed LC Ummar Younis as his Sea Cadet for the coming year.

Ummar, a member of Bradford unit, has been a Sea Cadet for five years, and together with his brother Abbas, was amongst the 24 cadets chosen from West Yorkshire to be part of the 48-strong guard for the national Trafalgar Day Parade held in London last year.

After the ceremony, the Lord Mayor presented 34 awards to 19 cadets – all gained over a week's boating and windsurfing at the Thrapston Sea Cadet Training Centre in Northamptonshire.

Six members of the unit plus PO (SCC) Naomi Middleton absented down the side of the Jury's Inn Hotel on a sunny but blustery day in late spring to raise funds for the Lord Mayor's 'Sprinkling Sunshine' Appeal.

And in return, and for supporting other appeal events, the unit received a cheque for £500 towards their funds.

Civic award for Alistair

BARNSTAPLE Town Council have presented the prestigious RAF Community Plate to PO(SCC) Alistair Macleod, Officer-in-Charge of Barnstaple unit.

Councillors voted to present the award to PO Macleod in recognition of his involvement with the unit – the honour goes to the individual or group deemed to have made an outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of the community in the Devon port.

The RAF Community Plate, a large silver salver, was presented to the council by RAF Chivenor in 1974, and true to its light blue roots, the trophy was presented by an officer from A Flight 22 Squadron as well as the town mayor, Cllr Lesley Brown.

Disaster recalled

METHIL and District unit were joined by shipmates from Rosyth and scouts from Glenrothes and Kennoway to play a prominent role in the Lancastria Memorial Parade.

The cadets started early at the Golden Jubilee Hospital, Clydebank, in the grounds of which stands the memorial – on the original site where the Lancastria was built.

The Lancastria, originally built in the 1920s as the transatlantic liner Tyrrhenia, was requisitioned in the spring of 1940 as a troopship and helped evacuate Norway before being sent to join Operation Ariel, the evacuation of British civilians and troops from western France in June 1940.

While in the mouth of the Loire River off St Nazaire on June 17, and with anywhere between 4,000 and 9,000 people on board, she was bombed by German aircraft and sank within 20 minutes.

This year more than 80 cadets, instructors and officers joined the



ceremony.

As guests arrived for the unveiling of a model of the Lancastria, built by Brian Dean and displayed under glass designed and installed by Babcock, they passed through ranks of the cadets to be piped aboard as they entered the hospital foyer.

Cadets and scouts carried the wreaths for the dignitaries and presented the wreaths during the lament before stepping up and laying a wreath on behalf of the Sea

Cadet Corps and Scout movement. "The parade looked amazing this year," said LC Cameron Sekkat, of the Methil unit.

"We wouldn't have managed to get everyone through if we didn't have the support of Moffat & Williamson, who help with the bus, and their driver laid a wreath on behalf of the bus company, which was great."

Cadet 1st Class Connor Methven has received a bursary for an offshore challenge from

local company NETOPA – IT connected.

Managing Director Bob Bazley visited Methil unit to award Connor his certificate.

"It is fantastic to see young people getting an opportunity to take part in an offshore challenge," said Mr Bazley.

"The effort made by the instructors and the enthusiasm of the cadets is outstanding.

"I was really pleased to be able to support such a worthy cause."

Portrush group enjoys the delights of Rathlin

CADETS and instructors from Portrush unit enjoyed a weekend of sailing activities in Rathlin Island.

Among the courses on offer were dinghy sailing, power boating, canoeing, rowing, diving and windsurfing, with many courses accredited by the leading UK bodies such as the Royal Yachting Association, the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme, the British Canoe Union, the British Sub Aqua Club and St John Ambulance.

In addition, members of the unit enjoyed a wide range of adventurous training activities – expeditions, hill walking and treks that tested navigation skills and endurance, campcraft (how to pitch a tent and cook outdoors), rock climbing, abseiling, mountain biking and kayaking – all activities led by well-qualified instructors.

Shortly after the weekend on Rathlin Island, which lies just over two miles off the coast of County Antrim, a number of cadets from Portrush headed south to France to take part in an offshore voyage.

Dinner money

A MESS dinner hosted by Sea Cadet HQ Staff Officer Ceremonial Lt Cdr (ACC) Jon Vanns RNR at the end of June raised more than £600 for the fund to replace the Corps' flagship, tall ship TS Royalist.

The dinner, held at Battle in East Sussex, contributed more than £600 towards the fund.

The dinner was attended by 80 members of the Sea Cadet Corps, Chatham Naval Officers Association and others connected with the maritime industry.



● Capt Jonathan Holloway (left) and Capt Mark Windsor

Goodbye and hello

A CHANGE of Command parade has been held to formally say goodbye to Capt Mark Windsor RN and welcome the new Captain Sea Cadets, Capt Jonathan Holloway RN.

Sea Cadets and volunteers from Kingston, Hornchurch and Upminster and Clacton lined the parade route while Herne Bay Sea Cadets band entertained guests.

Capt Windsor, who has been in post since 2010, was presented with a copy of the Thames Diamond Jubilee River Pageant print by artist James Milroy, an event in which the Naval officer played a significant and inspirational role, enabling Sea Cadets to earn the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Award.

He also received a photobook of pictures from his career as Captain Sea Cadets.

RMC first

MC2 ELIZABETH Terry has been inducted as the Lord Warden Cadet – the first female Royal Marines Detachment cadet to take the post.

Elizabeth, a member of Hastings unit who hopes to join the Royal Marines Band Service, was presented with her certificate by Admiral the Lord Boyce, Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports and a former Chief of the Defence Staff.

Pupils welcomed at Collingwood

PUPILS from Royal Hospital School Combined Cadet Force (RHS CCF), Holbrook, experienced a taste of Royal Navy life when they visited HMS Collingwood in Fareham.

Almost 50 cadets, accompanied by Lt Col Marc Godfrey and WO1 Karl Weaver from the unit, descended upon the Phase 2 training base as part of their Biennial Inspection.

Collingwood is a parent establishment to the school, which has had an association with the Royal Navy for over 300 years.

Cadets toured the Close Range Weapons section looking at the mini gun simulators and the Ships Combat System.

They also had the opportunity to

test their leadership and teamwork skills on the low ropes course at the RN Leadership Academy (right).

The visit to the base was part of a wider programme which saw the cadets visit HMS Bristol in Portsmouth Harbour and Longmoor Barracks.

Those cadets keen on a career in the RN were joined by Cdre Michael Mansergh, the Commanding Officer of Collingwood, as they embarked on fast motor launches in the Solent, and Royal Marine Cadets experienced some training on the RN field gun.

Visit Liaison Officer Lt Darren Belcher, a former RHS pupil, was happy being on hand to ensure the activities ran smoothly.





● The ship's company of HMS Euryalus taken in Subic Bay in the Philippines in August 1945. (Inset): Ken Taylor on his birthday in 1945

A long, long way from Knotty Ash

JOE Bowden decided to write down an account of his early days in the Royal Navy – and sent a copy to *Navy News* as he thought it might just spark a few memories of “days of old” in some of his contemporaries.

Joe, now in his early 80s, joined the Mob in the summer of 1947 and trained for 15 months at HMS Bruce in Crail, Scotland before setting off on a deployment that would take him to places most Britons could only dream of visiting in the late 1940s.

“I was 16 years of age. A signal boy in His Majesty’s Royal Navy.

“It was October 1948, and I stood outside the closed garden gate at my home in Knotty Ash, Liverpool, and waved goodbye to my Mum and Dad, my 13-year-old brother Bob and my oldest brother Bill, who were standing in the doorway trying their best to look cheerful.”

Joe was taking the first steps of a long journey to Portsmouth to join cruiser HMS Belfast.

“It was ten o’clock at night and Liverpool was settling down.

“It was bed-time, and I stepped aboard a No10 tramcar for the journey to Lime Street station.

“I felt very lonely indeed – travelling on the tramcar for the five-mile ride into the city centre, I could not help but notice the lights going on in bedroom windows.

“I knew, as did my family, that it would be at least two-and-a-half years before I would be returning home.

“How desolate it made me feel – that was the length of time all Naval personnel spent on an overseas commission in those days.

“Thinking about it now, that was a long time to be away from one’s loved ones.”

Arriving at Portsmouth Harbour station the following morning, Joe walked into the dockyard and past HMS Victory: “Walking past her gave me a much-needed boost to my desolate feelings.”

He boarded Belfast, saluted the quarterdeck and reported for duty – “my seagoing life had begun!”

Belfast was to retake her place in the Far East Fleet, based in Hong Kong – a six-week, 10,000-mile journey at an economical 18 knots. First port of call – Gibraltar.

“It was great to feel the change in the climate as we steamed through the Bay of Biscay – warm sunshine, a gentle breeze and bright blue skies.

“I was now beginning to settle down and really enjoy myself on board. Lots of hard work and sea training in my job as a seaman and signalman – a strict, but humane, discipline and excellent company.”

His first impression of Gibraltar was of the “interesting” main

street: “I remember buying a bag of very large Spanish oranges from a dark-eyed smiling *señorita* – those oranges were so juicy and sweet.

“I have never tasted better before, or since.”

Next stop Malta, for a seven-day visit while stores were loaded for the long journey east of Suez.

“It was November 14, and we were at anchor in Malta’s Grand Harbour when we received a signal from the Admiralty informing us that Princess Elizabeth had given birth to a son – he would be named Charles.

“We were then ordered to splice the mainbrace in celebration. All over the age of 18 were to receive an extra tot of rum, and us youngsters would receive an extra issue of lime juice...”

Steaming slowly through the Suez Canal, with temperatures soaring, Joe recalls that the banks were lined with British soldiers, who loved to barrack passing British warships, eliciting a similarly good-natured response from the matelots.

A short stop in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) left Joe with memories of “a beautiful spot with a very relaxed air of gentleness and serenity about it – the local people were so welcoming towards us.”

“Busy, exotic and exciting” Singapore was the last port-of-call before Belfast arrived in Hong Kong in the middle of December.

Now the cruiser’s Far East commission began in earnest.

“During my two-and-a-half years in the Far East I spent all my time afloat, and steamed through the following seas:

- ☑ Pacific Ocean;
- ☑ Java Sea;
- ☑ Gulf of Siam;
- ☑ Gulf of Tonkin;
- ☑ Celebes Sea;
- ☑ Andaman Sea;
- ☑ Malacca Straits;
- ☑ Sea of Japan;
- ☑ Formosa Straits;
- ☑ Bay of Bengal;
- ☑ South China Sea;
- ☑ East China Sea;
- ☑ Yellow Sea.

“There was no leave (or holidays) as such, except, of course, we could ‘go ashore’ when we were in a port or harbour.

“I must say I really enjoyed my many runs ashore.

“Looking back now, I find it sometimes impossible to believe I had so much to see and do.

“What a wonderful way to spend one’s youth.

“I was 16 years of age when I sailed away, and I was 19 when I returned home again.”

Joe’s most memorable moments were those he spent aboard the frigate HMS Mounts Bay, which he joined in Singapore in August 1949 until he left her in Hong Kong in March 1951.

“We were often in company with other ships, doing escort duties and the like but, more often than not, we were at sea alone.

“As a signalman watchkeeper I spent all of my time on the flag deck and the open bridge, therefore I could observe everything that was going on around me – a full view of the sea and sky.

“Always, when on watch – which was every day and night when at sea, no weekends off or bank holidays – I had a very powerful pair of expensive Naval binoculars slung around my neck, and a very good choice of telescopes.

“Pens and pencils in my shirt pockets and binoculars around my neck. Duties well carried out!

“Being on watch was never boring...”

Joe left the Navy in 1986 at the age of 55, a lieutenant who spent his final few years in a dark blue suit as a recruiting officer in Edinburgh and Bristol.

☑ Next month: The beauty of the natural world

Quiet passage – then kamikaze onslaught

AN article written for a magazine by a wartime Royal Marine sparked interest from another participant in the war in the Pacific.

Ken Taylor wrote in *Legion*, the magazine of the Royal British Legion, of his time in Dido-class cruiser HMS Euryalus, concentrating on the month of August 1945.

Ken recounts how he joined the ship at Scapa Flow in 1944, having volunteered to join the Corps at the age of 17.

At first the ship was operating along the coast of Norway and as far north as the Arctic Circle.

But then they were sent to Liverpool to escort the Duke of Gloucester, who was to be the new Governor of Australia.

Euryalus sailed as far as Sri Lanka – known as Ceylon in those days – but did not see any action on the way.

That would all change.

The cruiser sailed from Trincomalee to join the Allied effort in the Pacific, and was in the thick of the action off Sumatra and Palembang as carrier strikes were carried out on strategic targets such as oil refineries.



● Ken Taylor with a Japanese flag he liberated at the end of the war

Euryalus’s task, more often than not, was to use her dual-purpose guns – they could be aimed high against aircraft or low against surface shipping – to help ward off *kamikaze* attacks against British and American aircraft carriers.

Ken worked his way around the jobs in his gun turret – he started in the magazine, then on to the

empty cylinder space (removing the spent casings) and finally taking on the role of fuse-setter, getting the fuse wound round the shells before they were fired.

Ken recalled that there was not much to be seen when the ship went into action – it was, he said, like being in a tank, completely shut in in a 12ft circle with two guns and about a dozen comrades; Royal Marines always manned the after two turrets on the quarterdeck.

That limited view changed when Ken was summoned by the Gunnery Officer, who found that Ken had attended an aircraft recognition course during training back at Chatham – and had managed a score of 98 per cent.

From then on he was on the bridge, using a large pair of binoculars to identify aircraft that his shipmates spotted.

Ken said they never had the time to consider the danger they were in, as events moved so fast.

After the atomic bombs were dropped in August 1945 Euryalus sailed into Hong Kong at around the same time the Japanese surrendered – Ken still remembers seeing Japanese soldiers patrolling

the streets from the deck as she went alongside – the cruiser was one of the first ships in the harbour after the occupation.

Ken’s article prompted another Royal Marine to get in touch 67 years on.

That Royal served in HMS *Illustrious*, and he wanted to know if Ken could shed any light on a friendly-fire incident involving Lusty and Euryalus – two stray anti-aircraft shells hit the carrier, killing a dozen sailors and injuring 30 more, an incident Ken had all but forgotten.

He also recalled a time when the cruiser took on board a large number of bombs from a kamikaze-damaged carrier which had to leave the area for repairs.

“They were stowed on our quarterdeck,” said Ken.

“We had these on board for a few days before transferring them to another carrier.

“We said at the time if a kamikaze hit us with them on board we would have been blown to pieces.”

In his time on board Euryalus Ken served in the Home Fleet, the East India Fleet and the British Pacific Fleet.

Missing pay book found in Channel

IN THE spring of 1944 Charles ‘Micky’ Gardner was serving on board HMS *Ulva*, a mine-sweeping trawler.

Here Micky tells the story of the loss – and awkward rediscovery – of his paybook.

“Our flotilla entered Dartmouth harbour for some shore leave. My two shipmates and I caught a ride on the DS boat.

Once ashore, we took a bus to Torquay. To cut a long story short, we missed the last bus back so we started to walk.

After a few miles, we saw a couple of bikes outside a pub so we ‘borrowed’ them. We arrived back in Dartmouth well past midnight and headed for our ship.

After an hour, we saw a tug alongside a dock. Seeing no one around, we took the dinghy, but it came with just one oar so I had to scull it.

Our flotilla was moored midstream, and when we arrived we were challenged by a quartermaster on a destroyer, who was not happy with our reply, which was ‘hardships’.

After boarding our ship, we let the dinghy go with the tide.

Our flotilla left the harbour at dawn for another day of sweeping.

As we were a coal burner, that night our flotilla entered Portland Harbour to take on coal.

On our return to Dartmouth, we waited to moor up in midstream. A naval DS boat lay off our port side.

As soon as we were secured, a captain requested to board. After a few words with our skipper, the Third Officer summoned me to report to our captain’s cabin on the double with my paybook.

After searching my locker, I could not find the paybook.

I reported this to the captain explaining that I had lost it. The captain started to question me about the last time I had used it – I said it must have been the day when we went to Torquay.

The captain then opened his briefcase

and took out a paybook.

He asked what the contents were of my paybook. I told him there was a ten shilling note and a condom.

He flipped the paybook open and I saw it was my paybook and everything was inside.

The captain then asked me to explain how my paybook was found in an abandoned dinghy in the English Channel...

I then had to tell him how we got back to Dartmouth and had no way to contact our ship so we borrowed the dinghy.

After he gave me a lecture on my carelessness, he said he would leave my punishment to my captain. He dismissed me while the two captains conferred.

I went below to our mess deck. As a cocky teenager, I wondered why all the fuss over a dinghy.

A few weeks later, I found out why. Our flotilla hooked up barrage balloons and left the harbour at Action Stations.

Our position was near the section of



Birth of the green beret

WE MISSED James Owen's **Commando: Winning World War II Behind Enemy Lines** (*Abacus*, £9.99 ISBN 978-0-349-123622) the first time around in hardback. Not so in softback, for it's a rattling good read which brings deeds of brave pioneers to life.

The wartime commandos – both Army and Royal Marines – were not commandos as we now know them: elite light infantry. Rather they were closer to today's special forces, carrying out covert (and not so covert) 'tip and run' raids to unnerve the enemy.

Indeed, Owen argues that many of the early-war raids were costly and largely ineffective. They may have raised morale. Not the Cockleshell Heroes, however. Despite great bravery and sacrifice, the author believes Operation Frankton did little to upset the Germans. It certainly didn't fire the British public's imagination like the Dambusters raid – it was hushed up until the war's end.

The fiasco that was Jubilee (Dieppe) was the first real run out for the concept of Royal Marines Commandos and a glimpse into what we regard as the role of today's green berets: an amphibious assault force.

When the marines returned to the shores of France, the lessons of Dieppe had been learned. Through the testimonies of participants – the author has trawled the Imperial War Museum's sound and manuscript archives to great effect, as well as dug out official documents from the National Archive – he paints a vivid, and horrific, picture of the experiences of the commandos on D-Day.

Indeed, throughout Owen makes great use of first-hand accounts to bring these trailblazers to life. It's a fitting tribute to their deeds.



Music in Technicolor

WHILE the *raison d'être* of a band is its music, in the case of the Royal Marines Band Service the visual spectacle comes a close second.

And **For Queen and Country** (£10.50 ISBN 978-1-908123-07-7) captures the pomp and pageantry of a year that saw Royal Marines Bands take prominent roles in events that captured global attention, including London 2012 and the Diamond Jubilee.

But in between the splashes of colour are the lives of the musicians that we don't normally see – before or after a performance, at rehearsal, or in their other military role as casualty handlers.

The book's subtitle – **A year in pictures** – lives up to its boast, with superb formal shots by Royal Navy photographers as well as more relaxed pictures by musicians and staff.

But there is also a concise, informative text that enhances the imagery, provided by Band Service historian John Ambler.

The book is published by the RM Historical Society in association with *The Blue Band*, and can be ordered by phone at 023 9272 6173 (10am-4pm weekdays) or email sec@royalmarinesbands.co.uk – UK p&p is an extra £5.50 per book.

Mastering victual reality

THERE is a positive trend in military and naval history at the moment.

The 'old' history that concentrated on tactics, operations, personalities and technology is giving way to a broader approach that brings in administration, economics and logistics. This adds greater depth and means that the full reasons for success and failure are properly appreciated.

Two very important books just published contribute most significantly to our understanding of British naval success in the 'classical' period of the 18th and early 19th Centuries, writes *Prof Eric Grove of the University of Salford*.

The first is by a Frenchman, whose admiration for the greater administrative ability of the British to produce the victorious fleets that prevailed in the global wars of the mid-18th Century is clear. Christian Buchet is Professor of Modern History and Director of the Centre for Studies of the Sea at the Institut Catholique in Paris.

He is an historian of some repute and his original French language study of British naval victualling in the Seven Years War appeared in 1999. It made a considerable mark as a ground breaking work and, happily, Anita Haggie of the Institut Catholique and Michael Duffy of the University of Exeter have produced an English translation, published by Boydell and Brewer as **The British Navy, Economy and Society in the Seven Years War** (£65 ISBN 978-1-84383-801-2).

Professor Buchet clearly explains how the British, uniquely, managed to combine state bureaucracy and private enterprise, which produced a system that enabled fleets to operate effectively at a distance and win naval victories on a global scale against less-well-organised enemies. The heroes are the officials of the Victualling Board and their contractors, who provided food of the right kind and quantity and transported it to where it was required to be. The name of John Biggin, victualler, merchant ship owner and ship broker, emerges as a figure in British naval history of equal importance to Boscawen and Hawke. Without his ships supplying livestock, fodder and vegetables to the fleet, close blockade and the great victory of Quiberon Bay in 1759 would have been impossible.

Food and drink were the fuel and lubricants of the ships of the period whose sails were set and guns loaded and fired by human energy. Without victuals, sailing ships were as helpless as modern warships would be without oil. Victuals and their transport are therefore keys to success. Supplies interacted with cleanliness, to maintain the health of the seamen, whose breakdown often prevented otherwise powerful fleets achieving

Falklands triumphal entry on 8mm

IN THIS age of digital, HD and satellite TV, Youtube, we've become rather blasé about instantaneous video footage both of events of earth-shattering importance... and cats doing the funniest things.

Rewind just 31 years (the camcorder was introduced to the domestic market in 1983) and you either relied on professional TV cameramen, or enthusiasts with 8mm cine cameras.

One of the latter was David Pickett who filmed the Fleet sailing from Portsmouth for the Falklands in April 1982, and returning triumphant several months later (minus, sadly, some of its number).

Three decades later and around 15 minutes of that footage has been transferred to DVD in the short *Falklands Film*.

Given that the footage is amateur and shot on 8mm, it's rather grainy – don't expect crystal-clear

strategic effect. The Royal Navy's success in overcoming these difficulties was probably at least as important as its superior gunnery and seamanship skills in assuring victory – and it must be remembered that, contrary to legend, British ships' companies fed and drank very well indeed. Professor Buchet puts particular emphasis on this.

The dominance provided by superior logistics remained the case into the Napoleonic period. James Davey, now Curator of Naval History and the National Maritime Museum and Visiting Lecturer at the University of Greenwich studied the logistics of Admiral Saumarez's campaigns in the Baltic 1808-1812 for his doctoral dissertation. This was a part of the wider study Professor Roger Knight led of victualling in the period of the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars. The successful thesis is now published, again by Boydell and Brewer, as **The Transformation of British Naval Strategy: Sea Power and Supply in Northern Europe 1808-1812** (£60 ISBN 978-1843837480).

Dr Davey did not have access to Professor Buchet's major study in English and one wonders if his opinions of the earlier period of naval logistics would have been quite so negative if he had read the book in its English form. Certainly, however, all was far from perfect with the British system, despite its basic efficiency. There were still logistical failures, but the basic effectiveness of the system and its improvement allowed Saumarez's fleet to operate in the less-than-welcoming conditions of the Baltic after 1808.

One major change was the recreation of the Transport Board in 1794, that took pressure off the Victualling Board in finding shipping to transport its products. This organisation supplied merchant ships for all state purposes and by 1815 had nearly a thousand ships under hire, five per cent by number and 11 per cent by tonnage of the entire British merchant fleet.

The Baltic was the key theatre of war in Dr Davey's period. Napoleon tried to use his armies' control of the continent of Europe to exert economic pressure to coerce the Nation of Shopkeepers into accepting his dominance.

The trouble was that Baltic merchants relied on the maritime trade that Britain controlled for their own economic health and even official states of war could not interrupt these connections too much. The 'Phoney war', as Davey calls it, that broke out when Sweden, under Napoleon's former Marshal Bernadotte, was forced to declare war on the British in 1810, had little effect

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and was not followed up by 'any act of hostility'. A logistical base kept secret from the French was even built on a Swedish island! It had helped that Bernadotte had taken up his crown after being given safe passage through a huge British Baltic convoy. In the end, the economic realities of the situation forced Russia to break with France, leading to Napoleon's 1812 campaign and his nemesis. British sea power and its secure logistics were the keys to victory.

I have little to criticise. Perhaps my main gripe is the rather academic one of Dr Davis' use of 'power projection' to describe Saumarez's activities. Power projection proper is the direct application of maritime power ashore by bombardment and/or amphibious activity and, as the author makes clear, the British naval presence in the Baltic did much else in terms of sea control operations, without direct action against the shore. 'Force projection' is the more comprehensive term (see my book *Future of Sea Power*).

Both these books are vital 'must reads' if one is to understand the naval wars of this key period. They are quite expensive although considerable savings can be obtained on the internet. Nevertheless, despite the high prices, they deserve the widest readership. Unless one does read them, one will not understand the fundamental dynamics of maritime warfare in the age of sail.

Victuals meant victory. One of the byways of naval history in the early Cold War period was the recruitment of bright young National Servicemen as coders and interpreters, primarily to eavesdrop on the Soviet navy.

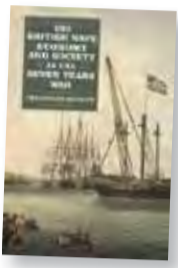
Their story has now been told **The Coder Special Archive** (Hodgson, £12.99 ISBN 978-1906164-26-6) by two of their number: Tony Cash, who made his career with the BBC, and Mike Gerrard, who later worked first as an exporter of printing equipment and then as an NHS administrator.

After basic training at Victoria Barracks in Portsmouth, the young coders were trained with counterparts in the RAF and Army at Joint Services Schools for linguists at Coulsdon and Bodmin and later at Crail in Scotland.

After another joint course at the Applied Languages School at RAF Wythall near Birmingham or later Pucklechurch, near Bristol, the coders went to sea or onto a cryptography course and then completed their service time at the listening station in Germany.

They began at HMS Royal Albert in Cuxhaven and then at HMS Royal Charlotte in Kiel. A few went to Cyprus and Northern Turkey. Some were selected to be interpreters with the rank of midshipman.

The authors have collected



the memories of about 70 coders to provide "the untold history of Naval national servicemen learning and using Russian during the Cold War". The result is a fascinating account that sheds light on both the place of the National Serviceman in the contemporary Navy and the naval Sigt of the period. It is thus a contribution to the social history of the Royal Navy and 1950s Britain in general, as well to intelligence studies.

There is also interesting material on the Royal Navy's now largely-forgotten presence in the British zone of Germany. There is a very good picture of the flagship HMS Royal Albert, although the description of her provenance and capabilities seems somewhat garbled. She is described as having a "2in gun" – actually a 40-mm Bofors and two "Lewis guns" aft that look remarkably like 20-mm Oerlikons. She was certainly an interesting ship, taken over from the German Navy and worthy of more research.

Overall, the illustrations are good and complement the text well, but it would have been much better to have found pictures of the aircraft carriers illustrated as they were at the times being discussed. Both Indefatigable and Ark Royal looked rather different at the times quoted than those illustrated.

It might indeed have been a good thing to have had someone with wider naval knowledge to have a look at the text as there are a few rather unnecessary errors and gaps in knowledge. There is a most surprising lack of understanding of the meaning of upper yardman – the status granted from 1954 to young men accepted for interpreter training before they had completed it.

In the days of sail working on the upper yards was the sign of an above average rating, suitable for promotion, and it came to be used for excellent ratings chosen for mainstream officer training. It was not, as the book says, the equivalent of an Army or Air Force Cadet; that was the first rank of those trainee officers going to Dartmouth at the time.

It is said in the book that the Castle-class corvettes, in which some coders served, were re-rated from corvette to frigate because of improved capabilities. This reclassification was merely a logical measure in 1947 to give all escorts – frigates, corvettes, sloops and escort destroyers – a single rate. Neither did the Castles mount two 4in guns, only one. ASDIC was not named after a non-existent 'detection committee' as claimed, but, as has been realised for some time, as "pertaining to the Anti-Submarine Department, ie ASDic".

The latter error is in an otherwise fascinating account by a Coder of his time in the cruiser Swiftsure when she played a Soviet cruiser trying to penetrate the Denmark Strait in the large NATO Exercise Mariner in 1953. She was caught by carrier-based aircraft and dealt with by destroyers. Sadly, later in the exercise, the cruiser was famously rammed by the destroyer

Diamond with serious damage to the larger ship and not a little to the bows of the destroyer, as illustrated in another interesting illustration in the book.

This was the end of Swiftsure's active career – although she was not scrapped quite so quickly as implied. Modernisation work was begun but finally abandoned in 1959 for a range of reasons, most unconnected with the damage she had received. This kind of problem always seems to appear in books such as this, based on relatively-distant memories by those whose own evidence is very important, but whose knowledge of wider issues was inevitably less so.

It is interesting to see how some of these intelligent and well-educated young men, perhaps naturally, responded to their lot as naval ratings. There is an interesting account of protest strikes and mutinies by coders in Germany, unhappy at their treatment – a sense as one put it "of being undervalued and poorly handled". Another admitted that many of the coders "were not properly committed, as we were in for only a short term of service."

This disservice reached a peak in 1958. The publication of an article in the Oxford University magazine *Isis*, about the ELINT operations including the covert spy missions carried out in the Baltic by British-commanded German motor torpedo boats, is a fascinating story in itself.

As many realised, however, especially after their experience of Army and RAF establishments, the National Servicemen were lucky to be doing their time in the Navy. Volunteering for their specialism was a major path for such conscripts to get into the Navy in the first place as the Service had little use for short-term personnel and only accepted conscripts with reluctance.

The book rather wanders off at the end with accounts of the later contacts of former codebreakers. These are interesting, but readers might have appreciated a postscript on the continued work of Russian interpreters in the Navy.

The FRINTON (Former Russian Interpreters in the Navy) Society created to provide a focus for these men after the RNR's annual training scheme was brought to an end, provides a link with those active later notably my former Dartmouth colleague Robert Avery.

He is quoted extensively for his commentary on the 1991 Moscow Coup. Of far greater importance, was the irreplaceable work of him and his students in helping get the Soviet-UK-US Naval Talks going at the end of the 1980s that eventually morphed into the current FRUKUS process. In this way Naval interpreters helped end the Cold War, as well as having waged it.

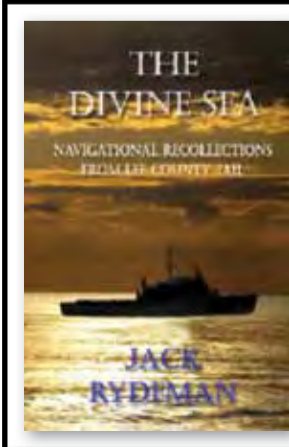
Overall however, the book works well and should be read by all those wishing to understand the post-WW2 Navy. Considering the 438 pages and quality of the production with illustrations, footnotes and an excellent index, this is value indeed.



high-definition footage. And *Heart of Oak* on continuous loop as a soundtrack might drive you a little mad...

...but the footage, especially of the task force's return, does truly capture the spirit of the moment: clusters of small craft crammed with semi-naked bodies in the Solent and harbour entrance hoping to greet the returning warships; a Sealink Isle of Wight ferry in party mood, tugs carrying people waving yellow balloons; Portsmouth's ancient ramparts festooned like never before and packed with people furiously waving Union Flags; and weather-beaten vessels, their sailors lining the decks, sailing into harbour as Fleet Air Arm helicopters stage fly pasts overhead.

Falklands Film (*Vectis Films*) is available directly from David, priced £10 (including P&P) on 01622 681889 or dspickett@talktalk.net.



The Divine Sea

By Jack Rydeman

Adventure, romance and metaphysics under the White Ensign.

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www.jackrydeman.co.uk



● Be ye men of Talent... Cdr John Aitken gives his team a pep talk during the narrow defeat to France's flagship

Talent almost beat de Gaulle

Continued from page 48
minutes pinned back in their own 22.

A valiant defence, marshalled by veteran RN centre WO2(WEA) Nick Robinson and featuring some shuddering tackling, especially from the equally experienced PO(MEM) Paddy Mardell, repulsed the best the French could throw at them, however, and slowly but surely the submariners fought their way back into the game.

Just as they did so, a good move from the French released a seriously-quick right winger who sped away from despairing tackles to score in the corner.

Stung, the submariners fought back through their forwards with a series of bullocking runs from the back row trio of ET(WESM) Danny Kay, LET(WESM) Steve Hillman and AB (CISSM) Nathan Henry.

That mounting pressure eventually led to a break which saw Kay go over the line, the try converted by fly-half AB(CISSM) Justin Cahill and Talent were in the lead 7-5. Game on.

With the makeshift midfield starting to fire and outside centre Std Matt Mead making some good runs, the French side were surprised by the stiff resistance they were meeting.

A clearing kick put them back into Talent's 22 and a steal at the

line-out led to a catch and drive, which Les Bleus drove over and kicked the conversion to restore their lead just before half time. The cheers from their sidelines matched the very obvious relief of the home team as the whistle went.

With temperatures over 30°C, it was likely that the visiting team would start to feel the pace but they showed tremendous fighting spirit to keep the match in the balance for much of the second half.

Scores were exchanged with Mead making a break that put Hillman in under the posts, Cahill converting before the French broke through again.

Cahill then released LLogs(SC) Tom Whiteside (making his debut on the rugby pitch) who showed his footballer's pace to burn off the French cover before slipping the ball inside to Kay for him to crash over again, although the angle defeated Cahill.

Despite the towering defensive efforts typified by LET (MESM) Ian Burnard and LS WS(SSM) Liam Buckley, the home side eventually ground their way through the tiring visitors, adding a converted score in the last minute.

It made the 36-19 victory look a lot more convincing on the scoresheet than it was on the pitch.

Decoy proves to be real McCoy

ROUND 3 of this year's Inter-Command angling contest was held at Decoy Lakes near Peterborough.

With conditions nigh-on perfect – slightly overcast and just a small breath of wind on the lake – everyone was expecting a classic big-weight encounter with the chance of breaking the RN match record a real possibility... if the fish played along...

Thankfully the fish showed up in numbers and it really was a red letter day for all concerned. Come the end of the match, everyone was exhausted and nobody was certain who had won, with the top three all breaking the previous match record set by current RN captain WO2 Nigel Roberts of 177lb 11oz.

It seemed that the coaching given by four-time world champion Bob Nudd the previous day was put to good effect by everyone. Just nudging ahead of the rest was CPO(MEM) John Harvey, who fished pellet shallow out long at 13 metres for most of the day, then swapped to fish the margins for the last hour and weighed in a staggering 250lb 5oz, breaking the RN record by over 70lbs.

Second was NA Paul Jackson who fished using similar tactics. Despite a very strong start, he couldn't quite keep up with the pace, but still weighed in a massive 195lb 5oz. Third was POMEM(M) Alan Jones who came in with a fantastic 189lb 4oz.

The event proved what an outstanding venue Decoy Lakes really are. Check out the RN&RM Angling Association website at <http://rmandrmaa.org.uk> for further details.

Meanwhile, near HMS Collingwood... 24 hours of hot rod action saw lots of fish, lots of money and lots of rain as Service, ex-Service and civilian fishermen converged on Fareham for a 'fishathon'.

For the past 13 years Newlands Angling Association has staged the non-stop fishing event on its lakes with the aim of bringing in lots of fish and supporting charities.

Benefitting from the 2013 round-the-clock contest were Hounds for Heroes, the Hampshire-based organisation which provides specially-trained dogs to help Service personnel and members of the emergency service who've been injured in the line of duty.

Beginning at mid-day on Saturday June 22 and dogged by some less-than-clement weather, the fishathon saw former Royal Marines corporal Mark 'Ginge' Watson take the 'biggest fish' title: a 16lb 8oz mirror carp, which was ½lb heavier than the creature reeled in by PO(Phot) Gaz Armes.

The biggest winner, however, was the charity. Mark and Gaz raised £450 between them, while their fellow rodmeisters helped to bring the total to more than £2,000.

Wayne's whirled in downhill race

LAET Wayne Mitchell (848 NAS) announced the return of the RN/RM Cycling Association's downhill squad by taking a podium at his first outing in his new downhill-specific cycling kit.

With new kit on offer and training days organised, the association has seen a return to the fold of downhill racers and planning is already under way for the 2014 Inter-Service Championships.

Back in June Wayne made the long journey to Hamsterley to take part in the Forces North Downhill Event organised by the Army Cycling Union. The course was varied with a mix of 4X track and descents that had been used in previous National Championships Rounds.

After a brief and group track walk by WO2 Peps Pepe, the uplift started and it was time for practice.

"My first race run started strongly and I held my speed well over the first three jumps and

around the long left-hand turn," said Wayne.

"As I came off the 4X and on to the fire road I was pushing too hard and my tyres, with 40psi in them, just wouldn't grip and I lost the front end, resulting in dab and the loss of all my speed.

"That happened again as I entered the switchbacks and again before the double drop. I decided this was a throw-away run and promptly flicked out a big MX whip on the final table top hoping for a stealthily-placed Army photographer."

Lining up for his second timed run, despite the loss of grip, Wayne left his bike set up as it was. "With the top section being on the 4X track I decided to leave the pressure in my tyres as rolling resistance would pay off over grip. With this in mind I remembered the advice I got from a local pro some years, 'slow down to speed up'."

"The top section went well and I hit the rock shoot a lot slower than before and got on the tight, inside line. The rest of the track was very much the same and the only place I pedalled was on the fire road.

"The switchbacks were a lot smoother, and as a result, faster with this relaxed style of riding. I crossed the finish line feeling happy with my run and glad that it was incident free."

When the dusted settled and the results were in the leading hand had finished second behind the RAF's SAC 'Ash' Ashcroft.

"This was my first race in over four years so I was very pleased with a second place behind Ash, who won with an impressive performance," said Wayne.

Wayne is now looking to race again next year with other members of the RNRMCA downhill team. Contact Rob Smith in the MTB section at Raleigh on dmlscmdcoord@nrta.mod.uk.

No paradise on ice

ELEVEN Service teams converged on Ice Sheffield for the Inter-Service ice hockey championships which saw both representative and command/unit sides take to the rink.

Two teams flew the flag for the Senior Service: RN General Service and a Royal Marines side, lining up against the Army All Stars, RE Sappers, CCS Chieftains A and B, RAF Scotland, RAF Eastern, RAF Crusade, RAF Cosford Stars and RAF Brize Norton Blue Wings.

The sailors opened their account with a defeat to RAF Crusade; the Royals triumphed over RAF Eastern.

The matches were the only fixtures during the day for both teams, allowing Inter-Service players to prepare for the first of the full contact Inter-Service games that evening: Royal Navy vs the British Army Blades.

As with all Army v Navy fixtures, once the puck dropped, play was fast-paced as the two teams fought to gain both the tactical and physical edge over their opponents.

The hits were hard but fair and there was deadlock for some time with the RN goalie (Mne Charlie Chaplen, CLR) and his Army counterpart stopping all attempts to 'light the lamp' and put the puck in the back of the net.

By the end of the first period, however, the Army had a 3-0 lead.

The second period was no less demanding on the body as the RN continued to apply the pressure to the Army defence and tried to



● Mne Charlie Chaplen attempts to halt the RAF in the air force's 6-2 win
Picture: SAC Gina Edgcombe

swing the balance of play in their favour.

The fight back looked to be on when Mne O Anderson (CTCRM) pulled one back, but the Army bagged a fourth just before the break.

The third period saw a goal change for the RN with ET A Blackshaw (Brocklesby) taking his place between the pipes.

The Army started to use their numerical advantage – they had five extra skaters – and rotate their players to keep them fresh.

A quick-fire double with 15 minutes to go made it 6-1 as they tried to wrap the game up. ET Blackshaw pulled off some fine saves but was the victim of a

dubious decision from the referee which added a seventh and final goal for the Army in their 7-1 triumph.

The second day saw the Royals and the sailors play three games each. The Royal Marines took on the Royal Engineers (win) then RAF Blue Wings (loss) and finally the CCS Chieftains B (win).

The General Service played Army All Stars (loss), CCS Chieftains A (loss) and then RAF Cosford (win).

And then the RN representative side took to the 'field' against the RAF Aces, current championship holders.

The pace of the game was dictated by the Navy and it took

the RAF by surprise. Nevertheless, by the end of the second period the airmen were 4-2 up – the two RN goals courtesy of ex-English professional league player Mne Lee Duance (43 Cdo).

By the end, the RAF had added two more to their tally – but the 6-2 final scoreline belies the fact the Air Force had to fight for the victory in a game that was far closer than the scoreboard would suggest.

The Crabs were thwarted in their bid for a fifth successive IS title, however, losing out to the Army in the final encounter.

The third day opened with the RN playing their best match so far to defeat the RAF Cosford Stars, but the Royals lost to the CCS Chieftains A to move into the Plate competition against RAF Scotland.

In the fourth day of fixtures, the commandos drew their first clash against RAF Scotland, lost in the resulting shootout, then bounced back in their second game to come from behind against RAF Bluewings to win and secure third in the plate competition – a good end to a physically-demanding week.

The sailors only had one game on the final day and were victorious against CCS Chieftains B with their best performance of the tournament to record a 5-1 win to finish top in their division.

Further information can be found at www.rniha.org.uk or via Lt Adam Lappin, RNIHA treasurer, treasurer@rniha.org.uk.

Training is at Planet Ice in Gosport on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 10.30pm.

Lord's, but not masters

Continued from page 48

skipper ET(WE) Matt Thompson (Ambush), opening the bowling attack with two medium-pace men, brought immediate success.

In the very first over of the innings, Buss claimed two wickets and Capt Chris Moore (MOD Caledonia) bagged another in his second over. Another by Buss had the Army at 35-4 and the Navy were on a roll.

The Army middle order then made a stand, and a partnership of 92 for the fifth wicket added respectability to their score, which finished at 166-5. Buss's final figures were 3-24 off his four overs.

Once again, the Navy early order batsmen failed to get going and only Buss (51) and Ainsley (24 NO) made any significant contributions. After their twenty overs the Navy were 124-6, 42 runs short.

There was slightly better news in the Ladies' IS Twenty20 tournament held at Burnaby Road in Portsmouth. The weather was fine with prolonged periods of sunshine and the ground looked in very good shape.

The first match was between the Royal Navy and the Army and after a see-saw battle, during which the RN had been in control

for much of it, the game eventually swung towards the Army who won in the penultimate over.

That meant that the RN had to play last years Champions, the Royal Air Force in the second game and after the disappointment of the result earlier, went out with all guns blazing.

In their 20 overs the RN scored a huge 182 for the loss of only one wicket, Louise Worsfold scoring 83 not out off 75 balls, a score that was surely beyond the reach of the champions.

In response, the RAF could not get going and after an improved bowling performance from the RN Ladies, the women in light blue were restricted to 89 for the loss of seven wickets, a win for the RN by 93 runs.

The third match, Army versus RAF was predictably one sided, the Army bowlers restricting the RAF to 95 for 4 wickets, whilst in return they scored 96 for 4 in 12.3 overs.

So, an overall win for the Army yet the Royal Navy came so close.

On completion, the Chairman of the Royal Navy Cricket Club, Capt Mike Beardall and Keith Harvey of QuintetiQ who sponsor Combined Services Ladies Cricket, presented the trophy and mementos to the Army team and

the 'player of the tournament' title to LH Louise Worsfold, Royal Navy.

Ten teams threw their hats into the ring for the RN cricket knockout cup competition, sponsored by Dyteca, which reached its climax on the new 3G ground at Burnaby Road in Portsmouth.

Of the original ten, BRNC Dartmouth and HMS Neptune contested the western semi final, while HMS Nelson and HMS Dauntless squared up in the eastern semi.

Nelson easily overcame their T45 opponents to book a place in the final for the second time in three years.

Neptune posted a most formidable 315-6 against a confident BRNC side – Lt Cdr Peter Deeks RN and ET Matt Pendle each scored 125 – and then dismissed the College for 131, thus earning their place in the final, the first time for a number of years.

It had been decided to hold a third and fourth play-off in the morning of the final and in that contest BRNC scored 190-6 in their 35 overs; in reply the nine-man team of Dauntless fell just eight runs short of their target. A keenly-contested match and well

done to both teams.

The final, on the main ground at Burnaby Road, was graced with sunshine and warm temperatures, far removed from the washout of 2012 and the spectators, sponsors and supporters were able to enjoy a very good match.

Neptune won the toss and elected to bat. Highest scores were CPO Mark Peachey (37), ET Pendle (36) and Mne Paul Kay (24), helping the Scottish-based side to a final score of 155 all out in 34 overs. Pick of the bowlers for Nelson were MA K Franklin (3-44), MA M Jackson (2-18) and AB J Davies (2-2 in only one over bowled).

In reply the Nelson opening batsmen, AB Carl Pritchard and Logs Kieron Evans got off to a flier and reached a 100 opening partnership in the 11th over, Pritchard being particularly destructive.

Evans went for 39, while Pritchard hit a most-entertaining and useful 62 in 43 balls, putting the Portsmouth team in a very strong position.

At the end it was skipper LReg Chris Howes (20 NO) and Jackson who saw Nelson home with a comfortable five-wicket win with ten overs to spare.

Hot on the Army's heels

No repeat of 2008 heroics

The RN's track and field teams exceeded expectations at the 2013 Inter-Services championships, hosted by the RAF at Cosford.

The most significant achievement – without precedent in living memory – was the men's team finishing just seven points off second place, when normally it is a 70-point difference, writes Paul Winton, RN athletics team manager.

The women's team showed strong commitment to cover all events with many athletes 'doubling and trebling up', noting that the women beat the RAF into second place in 2008.

Twenty medals were won to double the return from 2011. The women won four of these, all in throwing events, where three gold medal performances came from previous winners.

Surg Cdr Julie Robin (RCDM Birmingham) brought life to the team as an easy winner of the women's discus with a throw of 30.58m, POET(ME) Liz Edwards' fine technique was evident to win the hammer with 39.27m, just a few metres short of a season's best. And LStd Anna Waldron (Scott) repeated her 2011 win in the shot putt with a throw of 11.04m, just reward for overcoming an injury-hit 2012. Talented all-rounder Wtr Melissa Landman (Raleigh) was the final women's team medallist; she took second place in the javelin with 35.52m, a high-calibre event where the fifth-placed throw would have won gold in many previous years.

Six of the 16 men's medals were shared between two athletes. PO Andy Dawkins (Penzance) repeated his gold/silver/bronze success of 2011 as he threw his way to first place in the shot (15.24m), second in the hammer (40.88m) and third in the discus (38.99m). His feat was notable as he last threw in competition at the Inter-Services of 2011 and operational commitments prevented any involvement in competition in 2012.

Mne Rich Reeks (40 Cdo) arrived at his first Inter-Services with a strong performance background as a decathlete (team manager's dream). Jumping the same height (1.90m) as the winner he finished second on 'countback' in the high jump and also took second place in the pole vault with 3.70m. His other medal was earned with third place in the



● Young men with hope in their hearts and wings on their heels... Illustrious' ET(ME) Daryn Jackson gives chase to the Army's Pte Ramon Smith in the 200m. They finished second and first respectively

Picture: Anne Yates

110m hurdles (15.66s), a race not for the faint-hearted as it typically leaves many hurdles strewn across the track and a few splinters in shredded lower limbs.

NA(SE) Dan Tarrant (Culdrose) is also a decathlete and has proved to be an excellent team member over the past few years, regularly filling gaps as required. Gaps in his medal collection were filled with an excellent silver in the javelin (47.45m) and bronze in the pole vault (3.40m).

Another double medallist was Mne Ramsay Kechacha (RM Poole) who finished third in both the 800m (1m 56.9s) and 1,500m (4m 08.3s); the 800m was one of the best and most closely fought track races of the day. The final double medallist was ET(ME) Daryn Jackson (HMS Illustrious) who narrowly took third in the 100m (11.07s) and silver in the 200m (22.49s), his fourth consecutive year of winning sprint medals.

Logs(SC) Otusoji 'Flash'

Fasuba (Bulwark) remains the African Record holder for 100m (9.86 secs). For the second year running he took silver in the 100m (10.98 secs), leading the race up to 60m – his favoured distance as might be expected of the 2008 World Indoor Champion at 60m.

Lt Neal Edwards (Drake) once again saved his best 400m hurdles performance for the Inter-Services with silver in 56.79s – a world-class time in his veteran 40-plus age group. His performance set a positive tone for the team in the first track event of the day.

Maj Jamie Summers (CTCRM) has long been the Royal Navy's best hammer thrower, where technique honed in his youth has stood him in good stead, often as the smallest built man in the circle. He was content to win bronze (40.87m), losing out on second place by 1cm in the final round to the aforementioned PO Dawkins.

Arguably the best performance by an RN athlete on the day was NA(AH) Dale Willis (Culdrose)

winning the men's 400m in 50.05s. Dale's first Inter-Services did not have ideal preparation, due to other essential Service constraints over the preceding 24 hours. However he had previously demonstrated strength and commitment at Cosford as he went from third place after 200m to win easily with a storming finish.

Both men's 4x100m and 4x400m teams took comfortable second places.

Considering the medal performances described and the commitment shown by all men's and women's team members, exemplified by ET(ME) Chris Bell (Sultan) in the men's 3,000m steeplechase and MA Sue Badger (Nelson) in the women's 100m, 400m hurdles, 800m and relays, there is good potential for success at the 2014 Inter-Services Athletics Championships in Portsmouth, but much depends on the availability of the best serving athletes.

THE nation's military sadly couldn't emulate the achievements of the Lions, as the Australians won back the Armed Forces Rugby League World Cup.

The usual fierce Inter-Service rivalry was put aside for three weeks as players and staff from all three Services came together under the banner of Great Britain Armed Forces Rugby League in an attempt to retain the World Cup trophy won in Australia in 2008, writes WO Keith Humpleby RNRL spokesman.

This year for the second staging of the competition 16 Air Assault Brigade at Colchester Garrison hosted proceedings with Britain lining up against New Zealand, Australia and the wildcard entry from Serbia.

The GB squad was coached by the Navy's WO1 Wayne Okell, the current director of RN Rugby League, with team manager duties taken on by Lt Jason Steel. RNRL provided more backroom staff with POPTs Danny Johnson and Jim Barnes on hand throughout the tournament. It was a 'combined op' so the other Services supplied more back-up as well as players to the cause.

On the field RNRL provided six players: LPT Steve Lockton, ET Mike Haldenby, AET Tommy Wilkinson, WS Darren Bamford, Marine Kitione Kamikamica and LAET Lewis Taylor, whose identical twin, Ryan, a serving soldier, was also selected for the squad. Whilst the twins were in the squad together they never played at the same time – probably to the relief of the officials.

GBAF kicked off the series with a hard-fought win over New Zealand; a strong second-half performance took the game away from the Kiwis with a try apiece for Bamford and Taylor adding to the GB tally.

Three days later GBAF came up against the Serbian side who had shipped 100 points against the Aussies in their opening match. Coach Okell rotated his squad, giving Haldenby his first start of the competition – which he repaid with four tries in the 98-0 victory over the Eastern Europeans. Wilkinson also crossed for another try, coming off the bench at centre.

The final match of the pool stage was billed as the crunch match, GB v Australia, to decide the semi-final fixtures. Again RNRL was well represented in the starting line-up, five of the six squad members started with Lockton captaining the side.

The tough uncompromising Australian squad typically came out all guns blazing and racked up a 20-4 lead after just 25 minutes, but GB prevented them from scoring again in the first half and the second half was a different story. The rejuvenated British side pushed the Aussies all the way with Wilkinson scoring for GB. Despite cutting the deficit to just four points Australia held out to the whistle and take the victory.

The other match on the day saw the Serbian side have their best day of the competition, scoring a converted try. The Kiwis, however, still ran out easy winners 66-6, meaning they would be GBAF's opponents in the semis whilst Australia would have the easier route playing the Serbs again.

A last-minute try by New Zealand broke the hearts of the GB side, who had not been at their best for most of the match but who had come back from early Kiwi scores to lead as the game entered the final five minutes.

Unforced errors and strong pressure on the GB line by the Kiwis finally told and the crucial last points were scored, denying GB the opportunity to defend the title they won in 2008. A massive disappointment for everybody involved across the three Services and the civilians who'd given their time and skills to the cause but it was not to be.

The final was an exciting spectacle. Once again the Aussies took charge in the early stages and were ahead by 20 points at the break. The Kiwis came back at the Australian side and as the game came into the final ten minutes only four points separated the teams. Two late tries though sealed the match for the Aussies who were crowned champions.

All thoughts now turn to September's Inter-Services series which start at Aldershot with the Army entertaining the RAF on September 13, the following week (September 20) RNRL take on the Army at Burnaby Road and finally RNRL trek north and east to RAF Cranwell for the final series of matches.

Selway keeps his nerve in thriller

Hot shot Sam

The 2013 Royal Navy Golf Championships were played at Saunton Golf Club, North Devon.

Saunton boasts two of the very best examples of links courses – the East and West courses regularly featuring in the Top 100 in the UK; both having attracted a number of high profile amateur events over many years.

The RN Championships were contested over both courses for an entire week.

The high amounts of rain over the preceding months and significant increase in temperature just before the championships encouraged significant growth – conditions off the fairways, were assessed as "challenging", with balls straying from the preferred route to the hole prone to settling into deep rough.

Both courses were in good condition and provided the test that the RN championships require. Although weather conditions were fairly benign for much of the week, the wind did freshen on two days and tested the ability of even the more hardened and gifted golfers, to maintain a good score.

With the majority of the most talented male players available the competition to raise the trophy as the 2013 Royal Navy champion was expected to be a closely-matched affair.

After the understandable disappointment of having been edged out of winning the event last year, Cdr Mark Selway (Merlin PT) had an aura of steely determination from the outset and carded an extremely impressive 3 under par 68 in a virtually flawless performance of ball striking.

His closest contender was Mne Dan

Thompson who, despite also achieving a very good score, was four shots behind.

Although the weather remained dry for the second round, the wind speed increased significantly and the direction also shifted round to the southwest, making conditions difficult for low scores on the East Course.

Cdr Selway returned a score of 79, but marginally better scores from Wtr Alex Kippen (Vengeance), Lt Cdr Guy Norris (771 NAS) and PONN Scott Gilbert (MDHU Portsmouth), saw three of Selway's principal contenders all settle into second position on the leaderboard.

Despite Selway having a fairly healthy lead going into the third round – often referred to as "moving day", he was acutely aware that some impressive talent was looming relatively closely behind.

Accordingly, Kippen made a significant move to narrow the gap at the top with a very impressive score of 69 and there were several more players who returned scores in the low 70s, on what proved to be the best day of scoring during the entire week. Round 3 saw Selway maintain his focus and return a good score of 72.

Taking a four-shot lead into the final round – as he did the previous year – Selway knew that he was playing well and his sense of resolve to achieve his goal was clear for all to see.

Throughout much of the final round Selway played steadily and whilst his main contenders pressed on occasions, they repeatedly fell back.

It was only in the latter stages that someone made a move to mount a serious challenge. Seven shots behind at the start of the day, Scott Gilbert (a six-time champion)

played some high-calibre golf to make significant inroads into closing the gap, with just a few holes to play.

Selway, playing in the final group, with Gilbert ahead of him, was not aware that a contender was now so close.

He dropped a shot at the 15th and made a fantastic par at the tough 16th, but with Gilbert making a superb birdie at the demanding par 3 17th, Selway's lead was now cut to just two shots.

Aware that he was now likely to feature, Gilbert pressed at the final hole sensing that a birdie may be enough to clinch the title.

Just missing the green, his subsequent chip went 12 feet past the hole and unfortunately he missed the return putt.

Selway, meanwhile, had made a solid par at the 17th, and his approach to the last hole was well struck and finished just off the putting surface.

With Norris having made a birdie at the final hole last year to narrowly secure victory over Selway, it was all the more fitting to see Selway's shot from off the green gently travel towards the hole and drop into the cup at the perfect pace.

An appropriate end to a well-fought championship and a richly-deserved win for Cdr Mark Selway – in the end by a reasonably-healthy four-shot margin which masked what was actually a very close and thrilling finish.

The ladies event was played on the final two days of championship week.

With two of the RN's best players having recently left the Service, Lt Cdr Lauren Hulston (MWC) was firmly "tagged" as the favourite to lift the ladies crown – and this proved to be fully justified.

YOU don't need to be a fast jet jockey to go Top Gun. Picking up a rifle suits just fine.

Officially the title is RN High Gun in the clay pigeon shooting world, but who's quibbling? Not HMS Sultan's Lt Sam Balmont, who proved to be keenest with the eye and sharpest on the trigger at the Army-hosted 'Armed and Emergency Services Shoot' at Bramley in Surrey.

The schoolie finished as top representative from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Clay Pigeon Shooting Association (RNRMCPSA).

He only took up shooting seriously just before joining the Navy three years ago.

"Shooting is one of few sports in which individuals achieve peak performance later in life, with decades of practice under their belts," said Sam.

"Experience generally counts for more when you are judging range, distance and deflection for a host of different targets travelling at different speeds and with different flight paths. For both me and my teammates, this result came as something of a surprise!"

The RNRMCPSA is the central point of contact for clay pigeon shooting in the RN. It's developing a coaching pipeline to nurture new and experienced shooters alike to build a winning team for the Armed and Emergency Services League.

Rowers follow Reed's lead

THE ROYAL Navy's elite rowers will take to the water in a boat named after the Service's greatest modern Olympian.

Double gold-winner Lt Pete Reed performed the honours as the Peter Reed, which will be used by the elite eights team for training and competition, was named at Henley Royal Regatta.

Fresh from winning the Grand Challenge Cup – the senior event for rowing eights at the world-famous regatta – the junior officer removed his rowing kit and donned his officer's uniform to officially christen the £35,000 boat, which has been partially funded by the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and the RN Sports Lottery.

Peter took gold with his teammates in the coxless fours at the Beijing and London Games (and 2005 and 2006 World Championships), this year he's been rowing in the eights.

"We've named boats in the past – it gives them a bit of character. And we are very proud to have Pete's name on our boat – and to have him name it," said Lt Gabriel Wright, treasurer of the RN Amateur Rowing Association.

The waterborne form of rowing in the Royal Navy has about 60 regular members with clubs in Faslane, Plymouth, Portsmouth and Dartmouth.

The 'electronic' dry version of the sport, however, is proving vastly popular with most ships and submarines possessing one or more Concept 2 machines, ship's companies staging 'row the Suez' contests and the Service regularly walking away with honours at the World Indoor Rowing Championships.

The association is hoping to tap that enthusiasm for rowing by enticing those indoor rowers off the machines and on to the water.

With the help of funding from sponsors Atlas UK to subsidise training costs, the association strives to make the sport affordable to everyone who's prepared to make the commitment.

"We would love to transfer the interest for rowing on a machine to the water. While you learn some of the technique, you're not in a boat that rocks and you don't have long oars to move around. That's something you can only learn on the water," Lt Wright added.

"Rowing used to be viewed very much as an officers' sport. It's not. We're endeavouring to make it available to all, such as holding grass roots events."

More details on the sport can be found at the association's website: <http://pdevportal.co.uk/sports/rowing>.

As for the Navy's No.1 rower, aside from his triumph at Henley – where his team, the Leander Club, which is affiliated to new Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan, broke the course record by three seconds – Pete has won two World Cup events (in Sydney and at Eton Dorney) this year, and just missed out on a medal at the weekend, coming in fourth at the World Cup in Lucerne, Switzerland.

He and his teammates are spending the summer at training camp before heading to South Korea for the 2013 season finale, the World Cup.

● *Champers from a champ... Lt Peter Reed christens the boat named after him*

Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Knott, FRPU East



Talent almost beat de Gaulle

A SCRATCH rugby side from HMS Talent gave a good account of themselves when they took on the French flagship when their submarine visited Toulon.

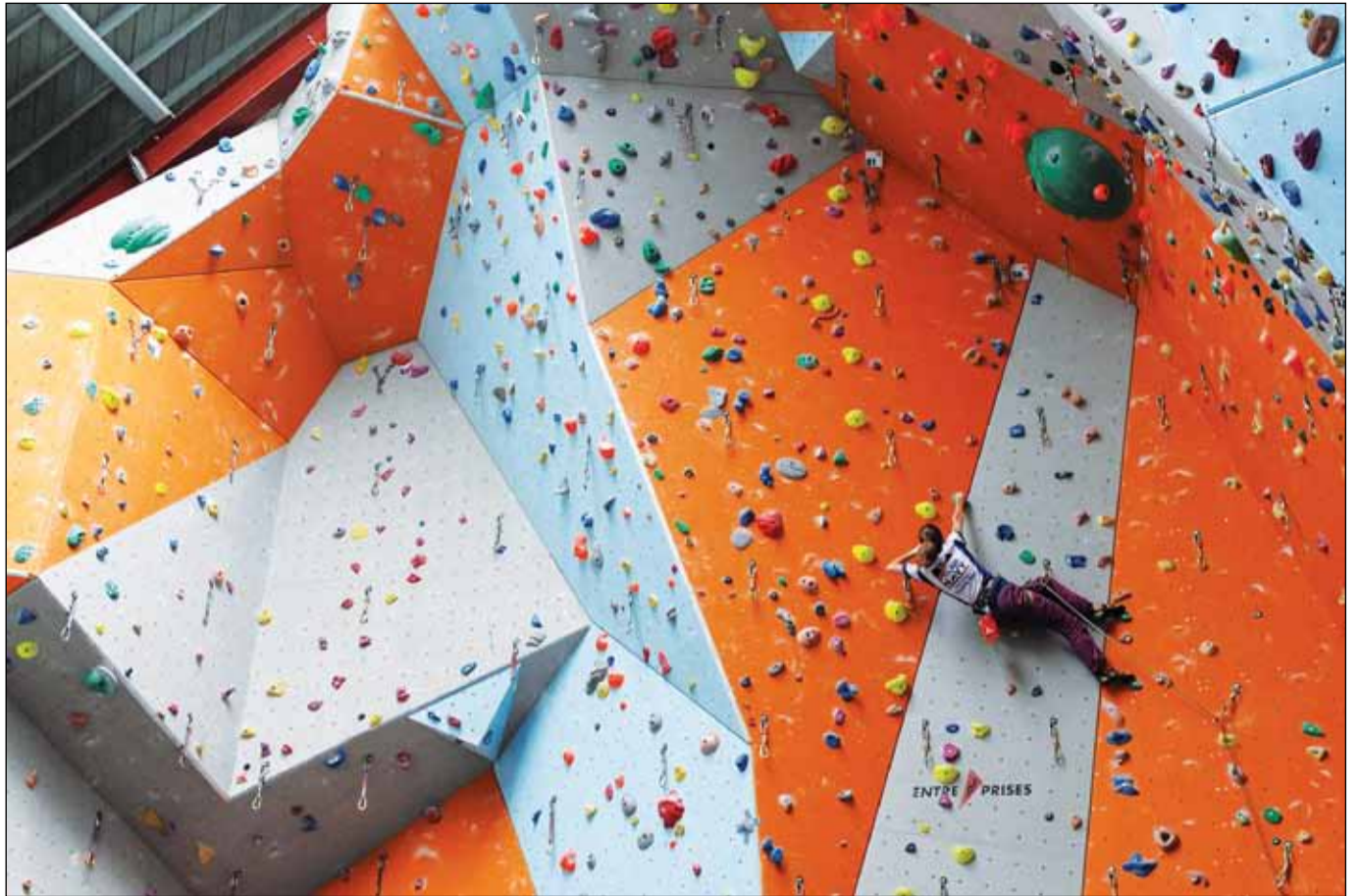
With a crew of 130 to draw from, Talent was able to field a squad of 20... and the Charles de Gaulle pooled 35 rugby players from the carrier's complement of 1,300.

A kit 'malfunction' meant Talent had to borrow HMS Ocean's strip

and, having spent much of the past 18 months at sea the RN side had only an hour to warm up and familiarise themselves with some basic calls before facing up to a team who have spent the previous four months in harbour and who featured three players from the Marine Nationale squad.

Predictably enough Talent were under the cosh from the kick-off and spent much of the first 20

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● So that's what Skittles are used for... Surg Lt Cdr (D) Lucy Matthews climbs her way to victory in the women's Inter-Services title

Picture: PO(Phot) Ray Jones, FRPU East

Lucy rises to the challenge

MORE than 50 of the military's top sportsmen and women converged on Exeter to contest this year's Inter-Services climbing championships.

The RAF took two team titles, the Army one, while the Royal Navy piped their rival services to the post in the key individual titles up for grabs at the Quay Climbing Centre, writes Lt Duncan Turner, RN sports climbing representative.

The morning qualifying session whittled down the original 52 competitors to the top six in each category – bouldering, speed climbing and slack lining – for the finals.

The women's open finalists showed some impressive technique with a super final required to decide first and second place.

After an excellent show of endurance – and with only a couple of feet separating their scores – the Navy's Surg Lt Lucy Matthews, based at 45 Commando in Arbroath, took the

title ahead of the RAF's Flt Lt Hannah Stock and Cpl Yaz Denton from the Army in third place.

The under 25s took the floor next with some high expectations of the RAF and their ex-GB team climbers.

All six finalists stormed up the route with an identical score from two of the RAF climbers – SACs Sean Hopkins and Tom Heslam.

Rather than build up the adrenaline to power up a 'super final' route, the RAF pair agreed to take joint second place to the Army's Lt Tony Musslebrook, who sailed up the route to take the top spot.

The much-anticipated men's open final saw seven, not six climbers, face each other: three from the Air Force, two each from the Army and Navy.

The route appeared blank, slick and full of small crimps on overhanging walls, however the finalists geared up and prepared to demonstrate

their best to the awed audience.

The route threw off the first four climbers half-way up at similar points on the first of a couple of crux moves, leaving the top RAF, Army and RN climbers to fight it out for the first three positions.

First of these to attempt it was the Navy's Surg Lt Steve Glennie who made the first crux seem a walk in the park. He moved onwards and upwards, finally falling at an awkward move through the roof of the climb.

Next up was the RAF's Fg Off Jimmy James, who passed the first crux then with a bit of piano leg evident, threw for a tiny hold. Alas, it was not to be and he descended to applause.

Last up was soldier Maj Tom Odling who also started powerfully, pushing through the first crux, past Jimmy's position and almost reached the roof. With shouts of encouragement from the audience, he fell short of Steve's monster climb.

Lord's, but not masters

LORD'S – the home of cricket – was again the venue for the men's Inter-Service Twenty20 competition, with 4,000 spectators enjoying a day of exciting and compelling cricket.

The RN were the 'home team' this year and as such had the privilege of not playing in the first of three matches; instead they were able to conduct net practice on the Nursery ground alongside a handful of the Australian Ashes squad, including Aussie skipper Michael Clarke, while the RAF and Army battled it out on the main ground.

The RN team's preparations had included T20 matches against Corsham, Wiltshire, British Police and a strong Havant side, but once again problems with availability of certain players was a key factor in those preparations.

The final squad of eight junior rates, two senior rates and four officers was probably as strong as the management could pick and all were confident that the team could do well. The pitch looked a good batting track and weather conditions were fine if somewhat changeable in the afternoon.

In the first game the RAF, the defending champions, were confident of success, but solid batting by the Army enabled the team in red to post a score of 178-6 in their 20 overs. In response, the RAF never looked like getting near to the target and were dismissed for 122. First strike to the Army.



● Gotcha... An RN batsman pays the price for missing the ball during the T20 defeat

Picture: Cpl Paul Morrison, RLC

That brought the RN into play against the RAF, and batting first the airmen scored 156-7 off the bat to which another 22 in extras were added, leaving a score of 178 (identical to that of the Army in the first match). Pick of the bowlers for the Navy was AB M Green (Portsmouth Flotilla) who took 4-27 in his four overs.

A tough target for the Navy was

made even worse by their early batsmen not being able to get the ball off the square, restricted by some very good bowling from the RAF opening pair.

Wickets fell cheaply and at one stage the Navy score of 15-4 was uncomfortable viewing, but Mne Lee Evans (Illustrious) (39), ET(WE) Ian Buss (Temeraire) (24) and Lt Cdr Andrew Ainsley

(PJHQ) (20) ensured that the Navy score crept past 100. The final score of 107-6 was 71 runs short of the target.

A rather disappointed Royal Navy side then had to face a buoyant Army in the final match of the day.

A change of tactics by RN

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