



NAVY NEWS

AUGUST 2014



OVER TO YOU

● HMS Illustrious peels away after handing over the carrier 'baton' to HMS Ocean during a changing of the guard in the Solent. Lusty then headed into Portsmouth for the final time to be met by thousands of people wanting to witness the end of an era. See pages 3 and 7.

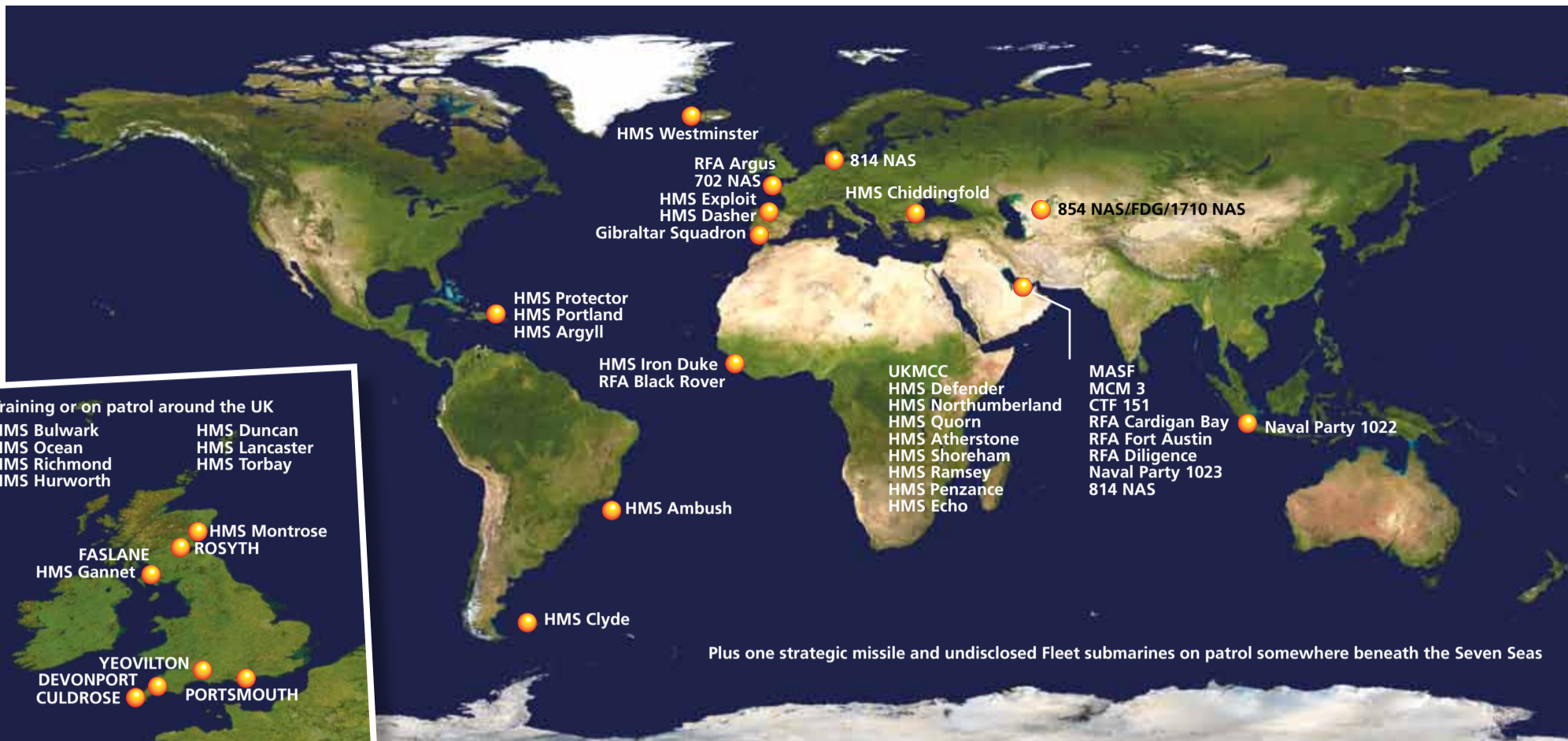
Picture: LA(Phot) Iggy Roberts



A QUEEN IS BORN

NEW ERA AS
CARRIER NAMED





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

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

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

THE future of the Royal Navy dominates this month, topped off by the naming of **HMS Queen Elizabeth** in Rosyth. More than 4,000 people gathered on the dockside as the Queen pressed a button to signal the smashing of a bottle of whisky against the hull (See pages 20-21).

Thirteen days after her naming Britain's biggest warship emerged from her dry dock for the first time. A two-day operation to flood the dock was completed as eight tugs inched the ship to a neighbouring jetty (see page 7).

All eyes then turned to another mighty ship as **HMS Ocean** returned to service at almost breakneck speed following a 20-month £65m revamp. The completely-refurbished vessel is now the nation's on-call helicopter carrier (see page 7).

Ocean took over from **HMS Illustrious** as she returned to Portsmouth for the final time after 32 years of Royal Navy service (see facing page).

Several Royal Navy ships returned to their home ports last month, with much of the focus on **HMS Diamond** as the Type 45 completed a demanding mission helping to rid Syria of chemical weapons' ingredients (see pages 4-5).

Diamond took over from **HMS Montrose**, which went on to make a high-profile visit to the Scottish town whose name she carries (see page 14). As well as parades and receptions, many of the crew went out and about meeting local charities and communities.

Working with communities was the order of the day for personnel from **HMS Iron Duke** during a visit to Guinea in West Africa. Sailors helped repair a school during a stopover in Conakry (see page 10).

Also home was **HMS Somerset**, which spent the past six months patrolling the Gulf and Indian Ocean (see right).

Heading east was **HMS Defender** as she joined forces with a Republic of Korea warship to patrol 'pirate alley' between the Arabian Peninsula and Horn of Africa (see page 8).

Enjoying the sun of the Caribbean was the crew of **HMS Argyll**, which called in at the island of Grand Turk (see page 10).

Also in the Caribbean was the Ice Patrol Ship **HMS Protector**, which has been ready to offer humanitarian assistance during the hurricane season (see page 9).

In cooler climes was **HMS Chiddingfold** which took part in Exercise Breeze with the Bulgarian Navy off Burgas (see page 6). Aircrew from **814 NAS** headed off to Germany for the Tiger Meet – the annual gathering of units with tigers on their crests (see page 6).

Back at sea and Type 23 frigates **HMS Richmond** and **HMS Westminster** joined Exercise Deep Blue – an anti-submarine exercise – along with one of their French counterparts FS La Motte-Piquet.

The exercise also saw a French sailor join five RN students aboard **HMS Torbay** for the tough Submarine Command Course, or Perisher (see page 15).

Also being tested was the Royal Navy's newest helicopter, the **Wildcat**, which cleared a milestone with the firing of its M3M Heavy Machine Gun (see page 18).

In the Middle East commanders praised the debut performance of **ScanEagle** – small remote-controlled aircraft which act as eyes in the skies (see page 18).

Finally, proving that if you are fit enough then age doesn't matter, is Church of England vicar Martin Gainsborough, who has won the coveted **Royal Marines'** green beret at the age of 47 (see page 23).

Romantic return for Somerset's sailors

JULY 4. A day for celebration.

In the land of stars and stripes. In Rosyth, where **HMS Queen Elizabeth** was named to much acclaim. In Devonport, despite the lashings of rain, where **HMS Somerset** could be found for the first time since January. And in the Barker and Richards households.

LET Chris Barker unveiled a large banner as the frigate came alongside, asking his partner Donna Richards for her hand in marriage.

And then, with the gangway across, he asked again, formally, on one knee with a ring ready. Donna, you'll be pleased to know, said yes.

That was one of 200 emotional reunions as Somerset's sailors and Royal Marines were reunited with their families after patrolling the Gulf and Indian Ocean for the past six months.

The bulk of the frigate's time was spent in the Gulf, but she scored her biggest success when venturing beyond the Strait of Hormuz, bagging 55kg of drugs hidden aboard a dhow.

The six-month tour of duty also tested – and proved – the usefulness of ScanEagle, the RN's new 'robot eyes in the skies' (see page 18).

Commodore Keith Blount, Commander of the UK Maritime Component Command (UKMCC), based in Bahrain said: "Since her arrival in the Gulf, **HMS Somerset** has made a significant contribution to Operation Kipion, in both a counter-narcotics and counter-piracy capacity.

"The Type 23 frigate is perfect for the nature of the operations we conduct here, and this was proven by Somerset and her crew seizing one of the Royal Navy's largest drug hauls in the region during her tour."

HMS Somerset had a Lynx Mk8 helicopter embarked throughout the deployment. LAET Daniel Cook said: "This busy yet challenging deployment has lived up to everything I had hoped."

While his boss CPO James Gunn added: "Of all the Operation Kipion deployments I have completed, this has been by far the most worthwhile."

The warm welcome from 600 friends and family was "the icing on the cake" to a successful deployment for the ship's CO Cdr Mike Smith.



Shipmates help LET Chris Barker pop the question

Pictures: LA(Phot) Ben Shread



RPO Lee Whittaker is reunited with twins Holly and Page in rain-soaked Devonport

like going on the beach with them."

The ship steamed almost 27,000 miles during her 176-day deployment. The ship's chefs used 7,300kg of potatoes, 16,080 sausages, 34,140 eggs, 4,603 chickens and the crew ate 2,894kg of beef (the equivalent of 4½ cows).

And another important statistic: the ship celebrated her 20th birthday on the long road home from the Middle East.

Marking the occasion, her two sea boats Phantom and Spitfire carved the number '2' in the ocean, while the ship herself formed a '0' with her wake during a high speed turn, or 'doughnut'.

Lt Scott Sabin, 25, from Banbury, the ship's intelligence officer, got engaged to fiancée Paula Sullivan, 24, in Dubai. He popped the question on the spur of the moment.

AB Caleb Eisenberg (25) from Wallasey, also proposed in Dubai, on the Burj Al Arab private beach.

Caleb purchased an engagement ring in the UAE after deciding to propose to Jessica Kewley, 22, after sailing from Devonport in January.

A number of Somerset's crew became proud new parents while deployed, including Lt Chris Fox, 28, whose wife Daisy gave birth to Lili Nicole in Southampton on April 11.



Now she belongs to the ages

THIS is how you go out.

With a bang, not a whimper. Fifteen bangs, in fact. Two blasts of the horn. A burst of *Heart of Oak*. A spontaneous round of applause. Three cheers. Another spontaneous round of applause. One more burst of *Heart of Oak*. Two Apaches overhead. A Jungle Merlin. A Lynx. A grey Merlin. Chinook. Hawk. Sea Fury, making several wonderfully-graceful passes, banking and looping in an otherwise empty sky.

The last act of what one historian has called 'the age of Invincible' was one befitting a class of ship which has symbolised the Royal Navy for the past 35 years.

Invincible's end was a rather low-key affair, Ark Royal's demise was premature at the hands of the economic crisis.

So it was left to HMS Illustrious, Britain's last Harrier carrier, to carry the torch for four more years until she had run her course.

And what a course. Thirty-two years. 898,893 miles. Conflict in Sierra Leone, the Balkans, Afghanistan. Crises in the Middle East. Natural disaster in the Philippines. In between, plenty of flag-flying, training, yet more training, and a good few exercises.

The final of those 898,893 miles was played out on a peerless summer's day.

After weighing anchor at Outer Spit Buoy, *Lusty* made her final entry into Portsmouth – home of the RN's carrier fleet since the late 1970s, and home again come 2017 when Queen Elizabeth arrives.

Tugs showered the clutch of ribs and launches buzzing around the grand old lady with water as *Illustrious* slowly, interminably, made her way into harbour. Perhaps she didn't want to go.

Thousands of people lined Portsmouth's historic waterfront to witness the end of an era.

Round Tower. Rammed. Spice Island. Chocker. Hot Walls and Victoria Pier. Full. Sea wall as far as the Clarence Pier funfair. Sea of people.

For all the military hardware and people present, this was an almost silent farewell.

Only when the carrier drew close to Round Tower could you hear the whine of the ship's Olympus engines and the RN's signature tune fading in and out from her loudspeakers. Only then, too, could you see the long thin decommissioning pennant (its extent determined by the length of the ship and her time in service) trailing from her main mast, down her superstructure and along the flight deck.

As the carrier glided into harbour, aircraft droned in from the east to bid their goodbye – only the Hawk had never flown from her deck and only the sadly-retired Harrier was absent.

Earlier in the day within sight of the limestone cliffs of the southern shores of the Isle of Wight, *Illustrious* had met up with HMS *Ocean* for a symbolic transfer of the carrier 'baton' – until Queen Elizabeth enters service at the end of this decade she is the nation's on-call helicopter carrier for responding to crises made by the hand of man or God.

Ocean is going through a very rapid regeneration to take over from *Lusty* following her £65m revamp (see page 7) – but it's something *Illustrious* herself knows all about.

At the beginning of her life, *Illustrious* was rushed into service (the trials team completed in nine days what normally took nine months), commissioned on her way down from Tyneside and dispatched to the Falklands to relieve *Invincible* in the South Atlantic in the aftermath of the brief, but bitter, war with Argentina.

Aboard for those few dramatic weeks was a young stoker, Steve Barr. He was aboard, too, on her final day at sea 32 years later as a WO1(MEM).

"I've got mixed emotions, it's sad but tinged with the fact that she's retiring and I'm retiring next year so I'm happy to spend more time with my family," he said.

"Also, this is the old technology and the new ships are coming in."

Chief among the latter, HMS Queen Elizabeth, for whose naming ceremony *Illustrious* was present (see the centre pages), the old carrier's final public duty before offloading ammunition and stores in Crombie, three miles upstream of Rosyth, ahead of her ceremonial final entry.

"Bringing the ship into her home port for the last time was a poignant moment but the welcome we received was tremendous," said Capt Mike Utley, the ship's 18th and final Commanding Officer.

"I'm extremely proud of what the ship has achieved and about what my team has achieved."

"I have mixed feelings but all with a complete optimism for the future given what the Navy has got coming, *Ocean* is back out after an extensive refit and we were at HMS Queen Elizabeth's naming."

For some *Lusty's* farewell was a chance both to say goodbye and get together after too long apart (possibly with the odd drink afterwards).

Chrissie Jones, Samantha Harber, Lorraine Page and Jennie Shearer – 6T2

mess – and shipmate Terriysa Bulman of neighbouring 6TF mess – all served aboard the carrier on her *Ocean Wave* deployment to the Far East in 1997 for the handover of Hong Kong.

All said the carrier's final entry was a bittersweet moment of "sadness and pride" – words you heard repeatedly among Old *Illustriuses*.

"We're proud of being on her, but it's sad that she's not going out to sea again," said Terriysa. "Hopefully the Navy will keep her as a museum."

Samantha added: "You remember the ship and the people. We love *Illustrious*, love her. You got bad times, but together in the mess you had a lot of good times – and that's what you remember."

And Jennie – who brought along the deployment book from *Ocean Wave* – said her time on *Lusty* left the 'class of '97' with "loads and loads of memories which will live with us forever."

Former AEM James Gordon brought his son Daniel – a budding logistics officer in the RN – to Round Tower.

He only served on *Illustrious* once, as a weapons electrical mechanic looking after the Sea Harriers of 800 NAS in 1988. What brought him back?

"If I'd been at home and not come, knowing that this was happening, I'd have been kicking myself. You're not going to see something like this again."

"The good thing about *Lusty* was she wasn't the flagship at the time – so you didn't have to spend all your time cleaning her. That was a real bonus!

"There are good times and bad on any ship, but the friendships you make and the fun places you visit stick with you."

These personal goodbyes will be followed by a more formal Naval farewell to the ship on August 28 when she is decommissioned in her home port and the White Ensign is lowered for the last time. Thereafter her ship's company will begin to disperse to the four corners of the Senior Service.

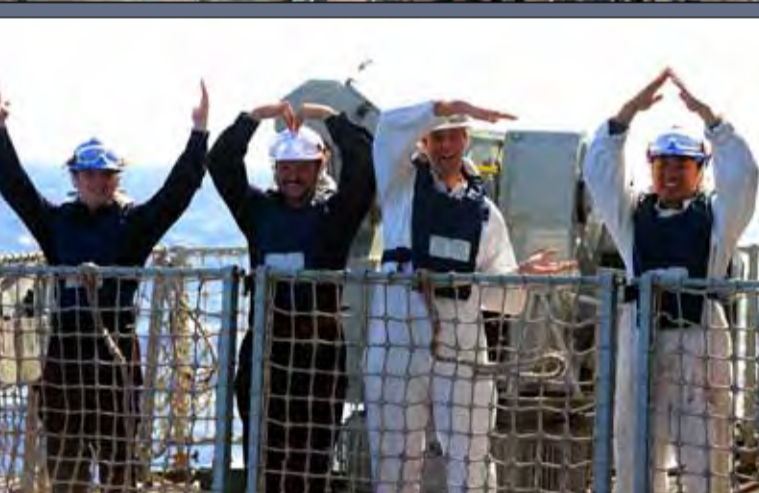
They'll be gone by late November, by which time the fate of the ship herself should be known.

The government and the Royal Navy are minded to preserve her, unlike 'Vince' and Ark, both of which were broken up, so the nation is reminded of the legacy of the *Invincible* class.





JEWEL CARRIERS



IN DIAMOND formation, Britain's fabled Red Arrows make a low pass off the east coast of Cyprus – a tribute to the sailors' largely unsung and unacknowledged efforts to rid Syria of the spectre of chemical warfare.

But now the Type 45's delicate and demanding mission is complete, we can shout it from the top and foremasts.

Syria is now free of the ingredients for chemical weapons, the agents which could be turned into lethal substances to be used in anger.

Since the late winter, a series of shipments have moved chemical agents across the Mediterranean to be rendered harmless.

Each one of those shipments – and the ships and sailors carrying them out – has been safeguarded by the men and women of the Royal Navy, initially HMS Montrose, more recently Diamond.

It's rarely hit the headlines – unlike the fighting in Syria, now well into its fourth year. It's rarely been exciting. It's rarely been relaxing. It's never been predictable. It's always been demanding. And it's always accomplished something.

There were more than a dozen shipments of chemical agents from Latakia, then one final transfer of it all to Gioia Tauro in Calabria in the toe of Italy, where the chemicals were moved to the processing ship USNS Cape Ray to render them useless.

But if that makes it sound like a regular operation, it wasn't.

"Most of the time you couldn't really look ahead beyond a 48-hour period," said Lt Cdr Ceri Marsh, Diamond's logistics officer.

Chemicals were delivered to Latakia depending on the internal situation – and the port lies just 75 miles from Homs and 90 miles from Aleppo, two of the flashpoints of Syria's civil war.

Like Montrose's ship's company before them, the Diamonds on the bridge watched and those in the operations room followed the ongoing fighting visually and courtesy of computer screens respectively.

"At night on the upper deck you could see the missiles and artillery fire," said Lt Cdr Marsh. "You realised you were watching a civil war."

The waxing and waning of the fighting and shifting of the front line meant that the chemical arrivals turned up in

Latakia in fits and starts – the final pick-up by the Ark Futura on June 23 came after a hiatus of several weeks.

And if you think Diamond made regular shuttles between the shores of the Levant and southern Italy, well, there wasn't that sort of variety.

For most of the deployment, the ship was operating in 4,000 square miles of the eastern Mediterranean between Cyprus and Syria, monitoring what was going on in the sky and sea.

That mission – known as 'backstop' in military parlance – allowed the Danish and Norwegian warships which completed Task Group 420 to concentrate on the immediate task of escorting ferries Ark Futura and Taiko into Latakia.

The nature of the operation – Diamond's ship's company always had to be ready to respond to a chemical incident or accident aboard the ferries – not only meant extended periods in defence watches, but also ruled out all the usual entertainment which alleviates the monotony of long periods at sea: no flight deck barbecues, horse-racing nights and the like.

Instead, those activities were also transposed to Limassol in Cyprus, which became something of a second home

for the ship's company.

The reason why the flight deck was off limits to fun? The Lynx helicopter (208 Flight, 815 Naval Air Squadron) was heavily in demand – indeed for 107 days of RECSYR (Removal of Chemical weapons from SYRIA), it was the only aircraft the task group could call upon.

As a result for 73 days, it was at 15 minutes' notice to scramble – putting a strain on air and maintenance crew alike.

"We worked exceptionally hard to ensure that the helicopter was always available. In addition we flew all manner of VIPs – and even a specially-trained Finnish dog team," said recently-promoted LAET Daniel Walker.

On July 2, just under six months after Diamond left home, and a little over four months after taking over from Montrose, Diamond's mission was completed when the Ark Futura entered Italian territorial waters to offload the last batch of chemicals.

Freed from her Operation RECSYR duties, the Type 45 destroyer received a note of gratitude from Denmark's Cdre Engelbrecht Pedersen, Task Group 420's Commander:

"You have spent many hours forward deployed, providing vital contributions to the



pictures: la(photos) pepe hogan and gaz weatherston, and cpl steve buckley, red arrows



MAGLEWAY

situational awareness of the Task Group.

"Fulfilling the tasks has not always been easy, but you have been tirelessly committed to our common goal. You have played a significant part in the removal of lethal chemical agents from Syria.

"HMS Diamond can be proud of its footprint in this historic naval operation. It truly has been a pleasure working with HMS Diamond and the Royal Navy."

Diamond turned for home in Portsmouth not just with plaudits from the operation's commander, but with a feeling of having accomplished something both tangible and worthwhile.

She'd originally left Portsmouth back in January for a rather more routine stint in the Gulf – as she did on her maiden deployment in 2012.

But with the destruction of the chemical stockpile in Syria taking much longer than originally anticipated by the international community, the destroyer was ordered to relieve HMS Montrose instead.

"I have been a part of a ship's company that directly contributed to the removal of chemical weapons from Syria – this is what makes

me most proud of what we have done on board," said LS Leigh Branston, an air picture supervisor in the operations room.

LWtr Laura Brown chipped in: "It was exciting as it was something new to the RN – other than Montrose, no other ship in the Fleet has had an insight.

"I'm glad we've achieved our mission. It's been a busy, intense operational period with prolonged spells in defence watches."

Lt Cdr Marsh added: "There were so many things which made this operation unique and gave us a real sense of achievement. "Everyone has done Operation Kipion in the Gulf. But only Diamond and Montrose have done this."

And from LAET Walker: "Now that we have directly helped all of the declared chemical weapons to be transported away from Syria I am particularly proud that we have contributed to making the world a significantly safer place."

And so it was that on Friday July 11 2014 – a muggy and increasingly overcast summer's day on the Solent – Diamond came home.

Tugs blasted water, a Chinook wocca-wocca-ed overhead, banners were unfurled, bouquets presented and, above all, there were tears and cheers all round from a good 600 friends and family eager to be reunited with those they love.

Diamond's Commanding Officer, Cdr Andy Ingham, who's drawing to the end of his time in charge of Type 45 No.3, said the deployment had been "the crowning jewel" of his time on the ship, and had offered an ever greater insight into what this still-relatively-new class of warship can do.

He continued: "Our extended period of readiness has also increased the understanding of the Type 45's capability, engineering and sustainability in this unique operational environment and reaffirmed to our international partners the capability of the Royal Navy.

"To say I am proud of what my team has achieved is an understatement; I have been privileged to command such a professional ship's company throughout a deployment of this nature and be here for the homecoming, which is such a special day for us all."



Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald

Blyth's double-rescue drama

A BEAUTIFUL day on the Clyde (yes, you read that correctly...) and HMS Blyth returns to join her Sandown-class sisters after a deployment bookended by maritime rescues.

She left Faslane in April to join a NATO group in the Med, almost immediately plucking a couple of yachtsmen out of the Firth of Clyde and, after several minehunting exercises around the Middle Sea with allied warships, found herself involved in an even more dramatic rescue on her way home.

The Italian Rescue Centre in Rome called upon her help to locate a stricken boat with 400 migrants on board.

"We stopped three merchant ships in the area and secured their assistance in searching different areas," explained Blyth's CO Lt Cdr Mark Redmayne.

"After a number of hours the boat was spotted and the migrants rescued by the Italian Coastguard.

"We were very glad that we were there to help. The Italian authorities initially contacted the Maritime Rescue Service in Falmouth and they got in touch with Navy Command who knew we were in the area and tasked us. It was a real international effort."

There was rather less drama in the various ports Blyth visited along the way, stopping off in Portugal, Gibraltar, Malta, Italy, Greece, and Tunisia.

And there was the chance for the crew to engage in some fun activities for a good cause, notably a 'lift the squadron' challenge where crew members were sponsored to weightlift the equivalent of all seven Sandowns in MCM1 – a hefty target of 4,000 tonnes. A 'beard tax' of £5 was levied on sailors who wanted to grow a 'full set' (beard and 'tache). Almost half the crew, around 20 sailors, were taxed.

Other activities included a 48-hour cardio vascular challenge on a rowing machine and exercise bike, covering 645 miles; charity darts; and a golf night which saw crew members use a makeshift driving range, hitting balls from the deck into the sea.

Such efforts and others helped to raise £3,500 for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) and the Tiny Lives neonatal unit in Newcastle.

Midnight is tee time

A ROUND of golf in the land of the midnight sun? Don't mind if I do.

Some of HMS Westminster's sailors took advantage of the long summer evenings in Iceland during a short stopover in Reykjavik.

"Midnight golf is not something that I'd ever expected to do other than at a floodlit course," said Lt Cdr Chris 'Paddy' Grey.

"That was until we arrived in Iceland where the sun remains up long after the noise from the evening's revelry has abated.

"I only wish the quality of my play matched that of the outstanding scenery, tranquillity and great-natured hospitality of the club members."

Shipmates visited the Blue Lagoon – a man-made spa fed from the silica and sulphur-rich waters of a nearby geothermal power plant.

Writer Chrissie Faulkner said it was "an amazing therapeutic oasis, especially with the dramatic and contrasting landscape of white on black lava formations against the milky blue waters – it was like being on the moon."

And others went on a Golden Circle cycle ride.

"Walking under the Gullfoss Waterfalls was an up-close and wet experience, with some great views from the cliff tops," said CPO Richard 'Gunter' Batten. "The cakes in the tea shop were also very good."

During her two-day visit to the Icelandic capital, the ship was visited by the UK's Ambassador to Iceland, Stuart Gill.

A reciprocal call was made by Westminster's officers on the Ambassador's residence.



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EW and whose army?

WELL, those of the UK, US, Australia, New Zealand and Canada if you're asking.

They answered the (radio) call from 30 Commando IX Group Royal Marines to take part in the largest electronic warfare (EW) exercise staged in recent years by Allied forces, Listening Lion.

Dartmoor was the setting as military forces from the participating nations – collectively known as the '5-Eyes' – converged for two weeks of preliminary training, followed by the main event, a full EW-targeting operation.

Due to its nature, it's not a world we look at very often: we don't shout out about knowing our enemies because we don't want them to know what we know.

The Royal Marines possess a specialist unit dedicated to intercepting and exploiting enemy communications – Y Squadron, who pitch up on the battlefield with tents and a forest of radio antennae.

The chance to 'play' with like-minded troops from other nations was one not to be missed.

"It was interesting – yet challenging – working with the other nations," said Y's Sgt Mark McBride.

"We've aimed to increase effectiveness and operational teamwork between the 5-Eyes which has been very successful. The training has come on leaps and bounds."

Another bust bites the dust

THE Royal Navy-Royal Australian Navy double act scored yet another success in the war on drugs in the Indian Ocean.

More than six tonnes of cannabis – 315 sacks worth £18m on the streets of the UK – were discovered aboard a dhow during a 12-hour operation by the crew of HMAS Darwin.

The capture was overseen by Combined Task Force 150, headed by a Royal Navy staff under Cdre Jeremy Blunden.

Between them the RN-led task force and Darwin have accounted for at least £107m of illegal narcotics intercepted and destroyed in the past three months – the bulk of it (eight busts) by the Australian frigate, but HMS Somerset also contributed with a £8.5m heroin seizure during her brief period on patrol between Gulf duties.

The haul demolishes the previous hash seizure record in the region – set by Darwin back in April, a 'mere' 1,032kg.

Lancaster meets Kola bear



FLANKED by HMS Lancaster (foreground) and the Dutch frigate HMNLS Evertsen while a merchantman ploughs the North Sea in the opposite direction, the Russian destroyer Admiral Levchenko heads for home.

The Levchenko was returning from the Mediterranean to rejoin Russia's Northern Fleet in its home base of Severomorsk, near Murmansk, on the Kola Peninsula.

As FREs have done on several occasions during the past few months with Russian vessels sailing around the UK, Lancaster was requested to follow the destroyer through the busy waterway and, once past Dover, was joined by the Dutch frigate HMNLS Evertsen and patrol ship HMNLS Friesland, with the vessels sailing in formation for several hours.

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One more naval cut

BUT a positive one – the first steel of RFA Tidespring, the lead ship in the new Tide class of replacement tankers for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

Workers at the DSME yard in Okpo, South Korea, performed the honours on June 27.

And by the end of the year they'll begin piecing together the huge sections of the 37,000-tonne ship ready for her sea trials in 2015.

The ships – Tiderace, Tidesurge and Tideforce complete the quartet – are being built to a British design by BMT, constructed in South Korea, then sailed back to the UK by the RFA to be customised to meet our military requirements.

Tidespring is due in service in 2016 with the last of the four tankers handed over to the MOD in the spring of 2017.

Chid's Black Sea Breeze

STRIKING out into calm waters (below) are minehunters of NATO and Black Sea navies – as seen from the bridge of HMS Chiddingfold as she takes part in Exercise Breeze.

Each year the alliance's ships slip through the narrows of the Bosphorus and into the Black Sea – just over half the size of the North Sea if you're looking for a sense of scale – to work with the countries on its shores.

This year, it fell to Standing Counter-measures Group 2, with the Bulgarian Navy as their hosts in the port of Burgas, 50 miles along the coast from the country's principal naval base at Varna.

Aside from the Cheery Chid, Italian ships *Aviere* and *Rimini* and Turkey's *TCG*



Akçay are currently attached to the NATO group.

In addition to the host nation's warships, they were joined for Breeze 2014 by air and naval units from Greece, Romania, and the USA – with the joint aim of keeping the minehunting force on its toes and the wider aim of promoting

interaction and understanding between the participating military forces.

This year's exercise was played out against the backdrop of unrest in the Ukraine, making Breeze all the more relevant, said Capt Giovanni Piegaja, the Italian officer commanding the minehunting group from his

frigate *Aviere*.

"This visit has been on the calendar for more than a year, and in light of current events it has become all the more significant," he said.

"We are delighted to come and train together, eager to enhance our mutual understanding, and eager to bring a strong message to Bulgarian people – and to all Allied nations – regarding NATO's resolve and commitment to collective defence."

Cheery Chid took over from Blyth as the RN's representative in the NATO group; the latter ship has come home, while Chid has briefly attached to the NATO force before resuming her passage east to Bahrain to take over from HMS *Quorn* on long-term Gulf duties.

So Breeze 2014 was a

welcome change from the routine of a succession of port visits from Portsmouth to the Gulf on a 6,000-mile passage.

"Exercises of this nature allow sailors from an assortment of navies to come together and engage in realistic and challenging maritime training," said Chid's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Richard Rees. "They foster a common understanding and allow for greater participation and learning while strengthening regional partnerships."

After a brief port of call in the Romanian naval base of Constanta, Chid sailed back through the Bosphorus and Dardanelles to the NATO base at Souda Bay in Crete to prepare for the voyage east of Suez.



814 NAS fly straight into ambush



WHICH is, as we all know, the collective noun for tigers...

A Merlin Mk1 of 814 Naval Air Squadron – aka the Flying Tigers – flies in company with a Czech Mi-24 Hind of the 221st Helicopter Squadron – aka the Flying Tigers.

Tigers is a very popular nickname for squadrons flying with the world's armed forces – so popular that for more than 50 years, those units with a tiger on their crest have gathered for an annual get together – the Tiger Meet.

This year it fell to the Luftwaffe to host the meet at *Aufklärungsgeschwader 51's* Schleswig Airbase in northern Germany.

Seventeen squadrons and units accepted the invite from the German reconnaissance unit of Tornados – nine types of fast jet, four different models of helicopter, plus an E3 Sentry surveillance aircraft to watch over all of them.

As well as being an interesting concept, the annual meet gives aircrew from varied backgrounds the opportunity to work alongside aircraft and nations they

wouldn't necessarily fly with. The result is one of the largest air exercises in the NATO calendar in Europe.

The twice-daily missions covered a wide range of profiles from dogfighting to ground attack and close air support, the movement of troops, anti-ship warfare and combat search and rescue.

The Merlins of 814 NAS – official motto '*in hoc signo vinces*' (In this sign you will conquer), unofficial motto 'Paw me, claw me, 814 me!' – stripped out their sonar kit and replaced them with rows of seats for troops.

They quickly adapted from their traditional role of submarine hunting to become the workhorses of the Tiger helicopter force, moving troops in and out of landing sites. The opportunity to show off their maritime environment skills saw the Merlin tasked with locating a German frigate in the North Sea which was then 'engaged' by fighters.

"Tiger Meet has been an incredible opportunity for us to operate in a different role and to demonstrate the

considerable versatility of the Merlin to our NATO allies," said Lieutenant Will Legge, an 814 squadron pilot.

"For me the highlight has been flying alongside the Mi-24 Hinds of the Czech Air Force and the interaction with the fast jets."

The main aim of the Tiger Meet is to promote interaction among the NATO allies, to share tactics and ideas and to ensure that when the time comes to work together on operations there are already strong relationships between the nations.

"The two-week exercise, operating with so many different aircraft and on such a scale, has been of huge benefit to my aircrew and engineers in terms of growing their experience and we have forged many close friendships with our NATO allies, bonded together with the ever-pervasive Tiger Spirit," said 814's CO Cdr Stu Finn.

Next year's Tiger Meet is lined up for May in Turkey.

Picture: Ulrich Metternich, NATO
 ■ Merlins on Deep Blue, page 15



In her natural element

7.30AM (0630 Zulu) on a sultry July day on the Forth and the world gets its first opportunity to see the might of HMS Queen Elizabeth – the largest vessel ever to fly the White Ensign – as she emerges from dry dock for the first time.

With just two metres to spare at either side of the 65,000-tonne aircraft carrier, a flotilla of eight tugs inched the ship from the dock where she was constructed at Rosyth to a neighbouring jetty, where she'll be completed over the next two years.

After a two-day operation to flood the cavernous dry dock, tugs began the delicate task of moving the leviathan in her entirety for the first time at dawn.

It took just three hours to complete the 'float out' – an operation which took place 13 days after Her Majesty the Queen officially named the vessel in a spectacular ceremony (see the centre pages).

With HMS Queen Elizabeth safely moved, the following signal was sent to First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas to mark the milestone:

DIRECTOR SHIP ACQUISITION IS PLEASED TO INFORM YOU THAT HMS QUEEN ELIZABETH IS AFLOAT AND WEF 170630Z JUL 14 CLEAR OF ONE DOCK.

Members of the carrier's 100-strong crew say watching the move truly brought home the size of their ship.

"It's great to see the future flagship of the Navy afloat for the first time – and one step closer to her natural habitat," said LET(WE) Tom Handley.

"For a brief period all the connections needed to build her have been removed and so you can get a real feel for the character and look of the ship for probably the first time."

Teams will now continue to outfit the ship and bring her systems to life in preparation

for sea trials in 2016.

The dock she vacates will be used for final assembly of her sister ship, HMS Prince of Wales, which will begin next month.

To that end, another giant section of the second carrier was due to be transported to Rosyth as *Navy News* went to press.

The 8,000-tonne segment was loaded on to a barge at BAE's Govan yard in Glasgow, ready to be transported around the top of Scotland from the Clyde to the Forth.

The segment – Lower Block 03 – is roughly the size of a Type 45 destroyer and contains 160 cabins, engine spaces, bakery and part of the carrier's cavernous hangar (which is wide enough to accommodate two Type 23 frigates side by side).

Several sections of Prince of Wales – including her bulbous bow – are already in Rosyth where they've been waiting for the Queen Elizabeth to vacate the enormous, enlarged dry dock.

Picture: Aircraft Carrier Alliance



● Tugs gently nudge Queen Elizabeth into her fitting-out berth at Rosyth

Picture: Lt Phil Gamble, HMS Gannet

All systems go on the Mighty O

Picture: LA(Phot) Ben Shread, FRPU West



AS ONE great carrier bows out of active service, so another has come back to life at almost breakneck speed.

In the space of little more than a fortnight, HMS Ocean went from giant hull alongside in her native Devonport to toolled-up warship and the nation's on-call helicopter carrier.

Not bad for a ship which hadn't been to sea in 20 months thanks to a £65m revamp.

And not bad considering one in every five of the 350 sailors and Royal Marines aboard hadn't been to sea before.

Ocean hasn't been used on active duties since supporting the Olympic security effort back in the summer of 2012 when she was parked in the Thames for a couple of months.

In the intervening period sailors, shipwrights, technicians and engineers have carried out the biggest refit in Devonport in more than 20 years – described as the equivalent of overhauling three Type 23 frigates simultaneously.

They refurbished, replaced and added kit from bow to stern and top mast to keel: flight deck, hangar, mess decks, galley and sick bay, installed more than a kilometre of new piping and applied 100,000 litres of paint to the hull.

The ship's company began moving back on board earlier this year as the refit drew to its conclusion.

But it wasn't until the same weekend as Queen Elizabeth was named that Britain's biggest operational warship – the 'largest ship' title is now owned by the vessel at the top of this page – put to sea once more.

With the Naval media gaze fixed firmly on the Forth, it allowed Ocean to begin her trials away from the pressure of the news spotlight.

There was just a plethora of other

deadlines to meet and milestones to pass instead.

First and foremost for any warship is the ability to sail, testing engines, steering gear and stabilisers to the limit.

Ocean's never been a greyhound of the seas; she wasn't fitted with Concorde engines like the Harrier carriers – which means she's travelled the oceans at a more sedate pace (16kts top speed according to the RN website, 18 according to Wikipedia and, as we all know, 110 per cent of facts on the internet are true).

Time to re-write those *Top Trumps* cards and fact files. Top speed now: 20kts.

"There is a formidable amount to do when you bring a warship out of refit," said Cdr Shane Doran, the ship's senior marine engineer.

"That we have achieved so much in record time is down to the commitment and skill of the ship's engineering technicians."

So she sails. But can this helicopter carrier carry helicopters?

Yes she can. Next up as part of her Sea Acceptance Trials was the SAT(Air) test off the South Coast, with Fleet Air Arm Lynx and Sea Kings touching down on and lifting off from the 667ft flight deck.

Thanks to that deck and hangar facilities, the Devonport-based warship is able to launch an airborne assault of Royal Marine Commandos using a mix of medium and heavy lift helicopters.

There are six 'operating spots' on the deck – where helicopters land and take off – with hangar space for a further 12 large helicopters below.

During an assault – such as the attack on the Al Faw peninsula in 2003 – Ocean is able to launch two waves of troop-carrying Sea King, Merlin or Chinook helicopters, as well as operating smaller Lynx, Wildcat or Apache attack helicopters.

The regeneration of Ocean's flying

facilities has given members of the ship's company involved in aviation – especially the 70-strong air department – their first opportunity to see a helicopter land on her deck since she started her refit nearly two years ago.

"It is fantastic that we are finally at sea, and it was great to get stuck in," said aircraft handler NA Tom Scott.

"When that first helicopter landed, we were all excited about why we joined the Royal Navy, to be a part of the elite aviation institution, the Fleet Air Arm, all over again."

Capt Tim Henry, Ocean's Commanding Officer, added: "Aviation is the heartbeat of HMS Ocean."

"Completion of a successful SAT(Air) sees the tempo of aviation operations increase – and Ocean is one step further towards operations anywhere in the world."

So with ticks in the manoeuvring and aviation boxes, next up is putting the war in warship.

So up Southampton Water to Marchwood Military Port to take on board ammunition for the next stage of her trials: testing sensors and weapons systems (the latter include Phalanx and 30mm automatic guns, plus miniguns, machine-guns and small arms).

"There is a real sense that Ocean is coming back to life and, having embarked our ammunition, is a major step closer to resuming her place as the very high readiness helicopter assault ship," said Lt Mark Jones, deputy weapon engineer officer.

And that is the stage the Mighty O had reached when she received the symbolic on-call helicopter carrier baton from *Lusty* in the Solent on the latter's final day at sea.

And doing so much in such a short space of time hasn't been easy.

"The unique nature of Ocean made it more challenging to prepare for these trials, given that we have no other ship on which to train," said Capt Henry.

DON'T MIND US, WE'RE Just dropping in ...



LEAPING out of a Lynx Mk8 helicopter (in no particular order) are three of a five-strong team of jumpers (Lt Cdr Tom Canty, Lt Sean Peters, Sgt Matt Peerless, Sgt Harvey Ward and PO 'Fish' Fisher) from the RN Raiders Parachute Display Team.

This stunning shot – captured by photographer Phil Standfield – was taken at Merryfield air station in Somerset as the jumpers prepare for the 2014 summer display season.

The team, based at Netheravon on Salisbury Plain, have been running since 1983. Thanks to sponsorship – currently Northrop-Grumman Mission Systems (Europe) – the team are able

to appear at several shows across the land, bringing the White Ensign to places which are often not typical RN hotspots, for a close-to-zero cost to the taxpayer.

There are 11 parachutists on the Raiders' books – drawn from across the Royal Navy and Royal Marines with pretty much every rank from able seaman up to lieutenant commander represented.

After being introduced to the sport normally through a five-day adventurous training course, all have completed at least 200 jumps before they head to the Raiders' selection camp each April.

For displays, four or five jumpers squeeze into the back of a Fleet Air Arm Lynx before leaping out and landing on solid ground – or, for added excitement, into the water, such as at Dartmouth Regatta or Southampton Boat Show.

Weather permitting, you can see the Raiders at:

- Eastbourne Air Show (Aug 16, 2pm, and Aug 17, 2.30pm)
- Dawlish Air Show (Aug 23, 12 noon)
- Dartmouth Royal Regatta (Aug 30, 1pm)
- Southampton Boat Show (Sept 12, 13, and 20, 2pm)

Army unit takes title

AN Army unit took the honours at HMS Collingwood's annual Field Gun competition.

Part of the Fareham training establishment's open day, the RNRMC competition saw 22 teams from across the UK – plus one from Gibraltar – vie for the Brickwoods Trophy.

And in a thrilling finale reigning champions HMS Heron were deposed by 7 Air Assault Battalion REME, their first win since 2005.

Collingwood's A crew came second, ahead of Heron's arch-rivals, HMS Seahawk (Culdrose).

The crew from HMS Illustrious took the Fleet Trophy for the fastest ship team.

Addressing the crews, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel said: "To all staff, sponsors and everyone involved in bringing this together, my profound thanks."

He also thanked "everyone who has provided a magnificent field gun competition."

Field gun is a tough test of physical fitness, discipline, technique and teamwork which sees each crew move a 900lb gun carriage and 120lb limber down an 85-yard track, assembling and re-assembling the equipment at speed, firing off shells and running the equipment home.

It was designed to recreate Naval participation in the relief of Ladysmith (1899) in the Second Boer War, when heavy guns from HMS Terrible were moved by rail, dragged by oxen and manhandled over difficult territory by sailors.

The CO of HMS Collingwood, Capt Steve Dainton, said: "This is probably the biggest open day we have done here, and the fact we have had great weather has helped and brought a lot of the community here."

In addition to the Field Gun competition the establishment opened many of the training areas used by ratings and officers to train them and prepare them for their roles in the Fleet.



Dawn of the Defender

SUNRISE over Suez and HMS Defender becomes the fourth of the Royal Navy's six Type 45 to pass beneath the 1,325ft span of the Friendship Bridge – the link between Africa and the Middle East.

Only Dauntless (she deployed to the South Atlantic) and Duncan (yet to deploy) have yet to make their debut on the famous man-made waterway which, for Defender, served as the gateway to her operational theatre.

The Portsmouth-based destroyer has now taken her place with the international force determined to stamp out the scourge of modern-day piracy.

Defender, which sailed at the beginning of June, joined forces with South Korean destroyer ROKS Munmu the Great, as part of Combined Task Force 151.

The group is one of three international

naval forces committed to security and ensuring free passage of two and a half million square miles of ocean from the Suez Canal to the Seychelles, and into the Gulf, tackling piracy, terrorism and smuggling, and working with allied nations and navies in the region.

Thanks to these concerted efforts, piracy has been limited to a handful of attacks in the Indian Ocean this year – and none of them successful. But if navies and merchant sailors let up their guard...

So in the Omani port of Salalah, Defender met up with the Republic of Korea warship before heading out into 'pirate alley' between the Arabian Peninsula and Horn of Africa, where warships patrol and merchant ships are guided down an invisible, protected highway.

In accordance with Royal Naval tradition, Commander Phil Nash, Defender's Commanding Officer, invited his Korean counterpart, Capt Kim Jeong-Hyun, aboard to demonstrate what a Type 45 destroyer can do with its many sensors and weapons, and to discuss the challenges of safeguarding one of the busiest shipping lanes in the world – there are typically 3,000 vessels at sea in the area on any one day.

In preparation for the mission east of Suez, Defender's Lynx helicopter and Royal Marines and Royal Navy boarding teams have been honing their skills, practising rapid roping, searches and winching, while the gunnery teams have been ensuring their marksmanship is top grade courtesy of regular target practice.

Picture: LA(Phot) Dan Rosenbaum, HMS Defender

Attack on French fleet remembered

BRITISH and French sailors past and present stood side-by-side in Brest to remember the darkest hour in Anglo-French relations in the past 100 years.

Taking a break from training air and ground crew from 702 NAS, sailors from RFA Argus attended a memorial for the dead of Mers-el-Kébir, 74 years to the day of the attack on France's warships in the North African port.

With the spectre of invasion of the British Isles looming, the Royal Navy was ordered to eliminate the French fleet as a threat – barely a week after the two navies had been allies in the struggle against Nazism.

Nearly 1,300 Frenchmen were killed – most when the aged battleship Bretagne exploded – and the kernel of the French Navy was put out of action for several months.

The attack at Mers-el-Kébir was an open sore in Anglo-French naval relations for many years; efforts by veterans of the battle, plus today's navies, have sought to heal the wound.

So Argus' sailors joined members of the Mers-el-Kébir Association, led by its president Hervé Grall, and Cdr Marc Rollet, French Navy Liaison Officer, for a wreath-laying and short service of thanksgiving, where the Brits met families of those killed in the battle.

"Churchill described the engagement as 'one of the most disagreeable and difficult tasks that a British admiral has ever been faced with', so to meet the families and hear of the reconciliation that has since taken place, particularly the very close relationship that has been forged between the Mers-el-Kébir and HMS Hood Associations was particularly humbling," said Capt David Eagles RFA, Argus' CO.



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Totally tropical treat for crew

SMILE please, you're in the sun... personnel aboard HMS Protector don their tropical rig for a photograph aboard the ice patrol ship.

The photo was taken to mark a first by the ship – a patrol of the Caribbean.

Usually on patrol in Antarctica, even there it becomes too extreme during the winter, so the ship headed for the Caribbean to be on standby to offer assistance during the hurricane season.

The journey north wasn't straightforward, involving a 7,000 nautical-mile journey through the South Pacific, Panama Canal, the Gulf of Mexico and the Atlantic Ocean.

After a period of maintenance in Charleston, USA, a 30-strong Humanitarian Assistance and Disaster Relief (HADR) team of Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Engineers embarked the ship.

First stop was the British Virgin Islands where the HADR teams were set to work at St Georges School on Tortola, helping with an extensive re-painting project.

A separate group made up of mainly Royal Engineers assisted the National Parks Trust by replacing steps leading to the top of Sage Mountain, reopening one section of the path through the national park and making access much safer.

Other tasks undertaken included assisting the Rotary Club with the rebuilding of a retirement home on Jost van Dyke Island and providing more assistance to the National Parks Trust in the Botanical Gardens in Road Town.

While this was going on the ship completed a hydrographic survey of the islands to provide data to other government departments for seabed habitation mapping and fisheries protection.

Charge Surveyor Lt Cdr Jason Varty said: "Some poorly-charted areas of the British Virgin Islands will now have the same level of accuracy as Plymouth or Portsmouth Dockyard."

Protector's CO Capt Rhett Hatcher said "While it may seem a little unusual for an ice breaker to be operating in the Caribbean, it demonstrates the true versatility of Protector."

As well as the specialist team – made up of medics, mechanics, electricians, plumbers, carpenters and joiners from across the UK Armed Forces – the



● Stores are taken ashore Pictures: L(Phot) Jay Allen

ship carries stores and equipment it can use as an immediate emergency response to a humanitarian incident.

These include generators, emergency lighting, chainsaws, shelters, first aid and rescue equipment. HMS Protector is also carrying additional bottled drinking water and could make and provide more fresh water as the need arises.

The Executive Officer of HMS Protector, Cdr Richard Bird, said: "Having a specialist ice patrol ship in the Caribbean may appear slightly strange but we are a very capable and versatile ship and are conducting survey operations in the region while also ensuring we are fully equipped for any situations we may encounter."

"We are well prepared to assist with any aid effort that may be required in the lead-up to hurricane season both with a well-trained and focused ship's company and the embarkation of a specialist Humanitarian Aid and Disaster Relief team."

Protector will resume her main role in Antarctica in October. She provides a sovereign presence in the British Antarctic Territory and delivers the UK's commitments under the Antarctic Treaty, supporting science programmes and ensuring expeditions and vessels are meeting their international environmental obligations.

She deployed from Portsmouth in October 2013 and will return to Devonport in June 2015.



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● RFA Black Rover undertakes a RAS with Commandant Blaison, right, with HMS Iron Duke, left, during exercises with both the Guinean and French navies

Picture: Cadet Jon Loughton, RFA Black Rover

Dancing in the street

SAILORS from HMS Iron Duke tried their hands (or should that be feet?) at tribal dancing during a visit to Guinea in West Africa – thought to be the first visit to the country by a Royal Navy ship in 15 years.

Mixing with locals in Conakry, 20 members of the ship's company got involved in a community project at the port's Sabu School, painting the walls while POET(ME) Tug Wilson and AB Buggy Malone knocked up some new bookshelves.

LS John Haslam, who is usually to be found in the Type 23's operations room, said: "As well as renovating the school we fed the kids, gave them water and played, danced and sang with them. The experience was life changing."

LA(Phot) Ian 'Simmo' Simpson said: "Although there was a sense of goodness achieved through renovating the school, the highlight was seeing the smiles of all the children as we danced, sang and played football with them."

"To see how little these kids have yet to see how happy they can be through such small things as sweets, games and fresh water is something I will never forget."

During the visit, other members of the ship's company worked with their opposite numbers in the Guinean Navy to develop their navigational skills, fire-fighting techniques and seamanship. The ship also hosted a maritime security conference with the head of the Guinean Navy to discuss tactics



● LS John Haslam dances with students at Sabu School, where personnel left good luck messages on a door



Pictures: LA(Phot) Simmo Simpson

● Mandingo warriors perform in Cape Verde

for dealing with illegal activity such as drug smuggling, armed robbery and fishery violations.

The frigate, along with RFA Black Rover, spent four days in Conakry, during which she played host to an official reception, including demonstrations of boarding operations, fire-fighting and war-fighting.

Cdr Tom Tredray, the Commanding Officer of HMS Iron Duke said: "It was a great privilege for us to be in Guinea to represent the UK and host distinguished guests. We were given the opportunity to work with the Guinean and French navies to improve security and stability in the waters off West Africa."

Other members of the ship's

company had the opportunity to sample life on one of the islands just off the coast of Conakry, Iles de Los.

Twenty personnel boarded a traditional Guinean boat serenaded by some of the island's traditional musicians for the trip.

LCpl 'Mac' McEndoo of the RM detachment, from 40 Cdo based in Taunton, said: "It was quite eye-opening to see how differently the people of Guinea lived. They were, however, really friendly and we helped some of the villagers push one of their boats out to sea which they seemed to appreciate."

Cadet Kimberley Knights from RFA Black Rover added: "The day ended with a football match on the beach that did not

end well for us."

Teams from Iron Duke and Black Rover also visited the Soumba waterfalls outside Debreka in Guinea, described as an experience of a lifetime.

Chief 'Chats' Harris said: "Being surrounded by beauty and nature was absolutely incredible."

HMS Iron Duke sailed from Conakry straight into exercises with both the Guinean Navy and the French Navy, conducting traditional Officer of the Watch manoeuvres as well as combined air and sea formation manoeuvres with a Guinean fisheries protection aircraft.

HMS Iron Duke sent some of her personnel over to the Guinean Patrol vessels; a double

exchange effort was achieved by sending across LS Louis Vine-Scratched, the French-speaking, German exchange officer currently serving as an officer of the watch. The object of the exercise was to put into practice lessons learned, at sea during combined patrols with Iron Duke, Black Rover and Commandant Blaison.

Prior to the visit to Guinea, Iron Duke wowed the crowds at Cape Verde's Independence Day celebrations with a demonstration of boarding and helicopter operations.

During the visit to Mindelo, Sao Vicente, a group of sailors attended celebrations at the National Stadium, where they witnessed a cultural

demonstration by the Mandingo warriors from West Africa.

The first port visit on Iron Duke's six-month deployment was Santa Cruz in Tenerife.

The 190-strong ship's company enjoyed a few days rest and relaxation, including scuba diving and a cycle ride up Mount Teide, 2,100 metres above sea level.

The volcano climb provides the longest continuous ascent from sea level to summit in Europe and it is the destination of choice for Team Sky training.

LET(ME) Kier Bagwell said: "The day was fantastic. We transited through so many landscapes, from pine forests to the moon-like crater at the top. It's been a ride to remember."

Size doesn't matter for Argyll

YOU might be bigger than us (24.44 times the displacement) and more than twice as long, but we've got bags more guns and missiles.

Dwarfed by the cruise ship Carnival Liberty, HMS Argyll berths at a jetty at the Margaritaville resort on Grand Turk during the latest stage of her Caribbean deployment.

The jetty, a couple of miles south of Grand Turk's capital Cockburn Town (population 3,700), allows 110,000-tonne-plus cruise liners, and 4,500-tonne Type 23 frigates, to get within 300ft of the shore.

While the Carnival Liberty's passengers streamed ashore for fun, Argyll's sailors had two days of community engagement and

disaster relief planning to keep them occupied.

The Devonport-based warship is in the early stages of a six-month deployment to the Caribbean, focussing on drug-busting duties as part of the international crime-fighting effort (Operation Martillo) and providing support to communities should they be ravaged by storms (we are now

in hurricane season).

With an eye on the latter, the frigate hosted local disaster management leaders – Grand Turk is the administrative centre of a chain of 40 islands which make up the Turks and Caicos – to discuss what the ship and her company could provide in the aftermath of a hurricane.

Many of Argyll's sailors volunteered to help restore a community centre which was particularly popular with school children before it was damaged by Hurricane Ike in 2008.

"It was really good to get off the ship and do something that really helps the locals. We all worked together on this project and the residents were really welcoming as well as a good laugh," said LET(ME) Steven 'Chips' Davy.

On her previous patrol in the region, Argyll seized nearly £75m of drugs in the Pacific then captured three traffickers in the Caribbean – the latter were recently sentenced to four decades behind bars collectively.

Operations in the Caribbean are overseen from Key West at the southernmost tip of the USA, home to the Joint Inter-Agency Task Force (South).

It was there that Argyll received briefings and updates on the latest developments in the ongoing efforts to strangle the illegal drugs trade.



● HMS Argyll alongside the Carnival Liberty in Grand Turk
● Below, sailors help repair a community centre

Pictures: LA(Phot) Stephen Johncock



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The first casualty of war

IF YOU are an internet user, try searching for Private John Parr.

Lots of hits (admittedly John Parr is a reasonably common name).

More often than not Parr, aged no more than 16, is referred to as the first British casualty of the Great War, killed in Belgium on August 21.

He is not. In historiography obsessed with the Western Front, the ill-starred soldier was the first member of the British Expeditionary Force to die in action on the Continent.

But by then the European War – it had yet to earn the name ‘Great War’ – was at least three weeks old, and Britain’s roll of honour was already more than six score long.

Indeed in the first month of the war, not one day passed without a member of the Naval Service dying – often of illness, a good few men drowned, and most lost their lives in action.

The distinction, if you could call it that, of the Empire’s first casualty of the war could fall to HMS Amphion’s 19-year-old Herbert Street, Stoker 1st Class, from Lyme Regis, killed when the war had been raging barely 30 hours in an action which brought the Royal Navy its first triumph – and tragedy.

The Amphion name had a long – this was the fifth ship to carry the name – but not hugely distinguished history (no ship had ever earned a battle honour).

The latest Amphion, the second of three Active-class ‘scout’ cruisers – small, lightly-armed and armoured, but relatively fast and agile, serving as the eyes of the Fleet – had only been in service 18 months, assigned to the Harwich Force as one of the guardians of the southern North Sea, Thames Estuary and approaches to the Strait of Dover.

On Wednesday August 5, Amphion left Harwich to sweep the North Sea with a destroyer flotilla.

Already at sea by the time the British force headed out was a former North Sea ferry, Königin Luise, determined to drop mines to block the shipping lanes to Britain’s capital.

Late in the morning of the fifth – and having already laid a considerable number of ‘eggs’ – the German ferry was spotted and intercepted by destroyers Landrail and Lance, whose 4in guns fired the

first British shots of the conflict.

When Amphion entered the fray, more than 15 4in guns were pummeling the German steamer, which rolled over after a couple of hours.

Amphion moved in to pick up survivors – true to Nelson’s maxim of “humanity after victory” – and rescued 56 of the 130 men aboard, before the force continued its patrol.

The ships soon found fresh pickings. Another steamer, very similar to the makeshift minelayer, flying the *Reichskriegsflagge* – the German naval ensign. The destroyers closed in to attack, unaware they were about to send the German Ambassador and his staff to the bottom of the North Sea.

Amphion’s captain, Cecil Fox, realised the mistake and ordered the destroyers

to break off. They did not. Fox then steamed in with Amphion, putting himself between his destroyers and the steamer, the St Petersburg, in another act of chivalry.

The action over, Fox decided to return to Harwich. In doing so, he sailed across the line of mines laid by the Königin Luise. Shortly before 7am on August 6, the Amphion ran over one. The results were horrific.

The blast tore apart Amphion’s forward section – every man save one on the fo’c’sle guns was killed, and most of the German prisoners being held in the bow.

Just before the explosion, Herbert Street had been enjoying a break with his fellow stokers, among them a fellow Lyme Regis native, Thomas Gollop. The latter took rather longer to finish his mug of cocoa than his shipmate. It saved his life. Herbert Street was killed in the blast, Thomas Gollop survived.

As for Amphion, she was going down by the bow. Cecil Fox ordered his men to abandon ship and his destroyer to close in to pick up survivors.

They did so remarkably calmly and remarkably quickly. Within 18 minutes of hitting the mine, every survivor had been taken off.

The lifeless ship continued to float – and to move. She drifted back into the minefield and struck a second mine, triggering her forward magazine and an explosion far more fearful than the first. Debris was flung around the North Sea, hitting some of the rescue boats. A 4in shell crashed on to the deck of HMS Lark, killing two men just plucked from the Amphion, plus a German PoW.

More than 130 Britons died in the loss of the three-year-old cruiser, while more than two dozen of the 56 German sailors rescued also perished. Her wreck, on the bed of the North Sea some 30 miles east of Orford Ness, is a protected war grave.

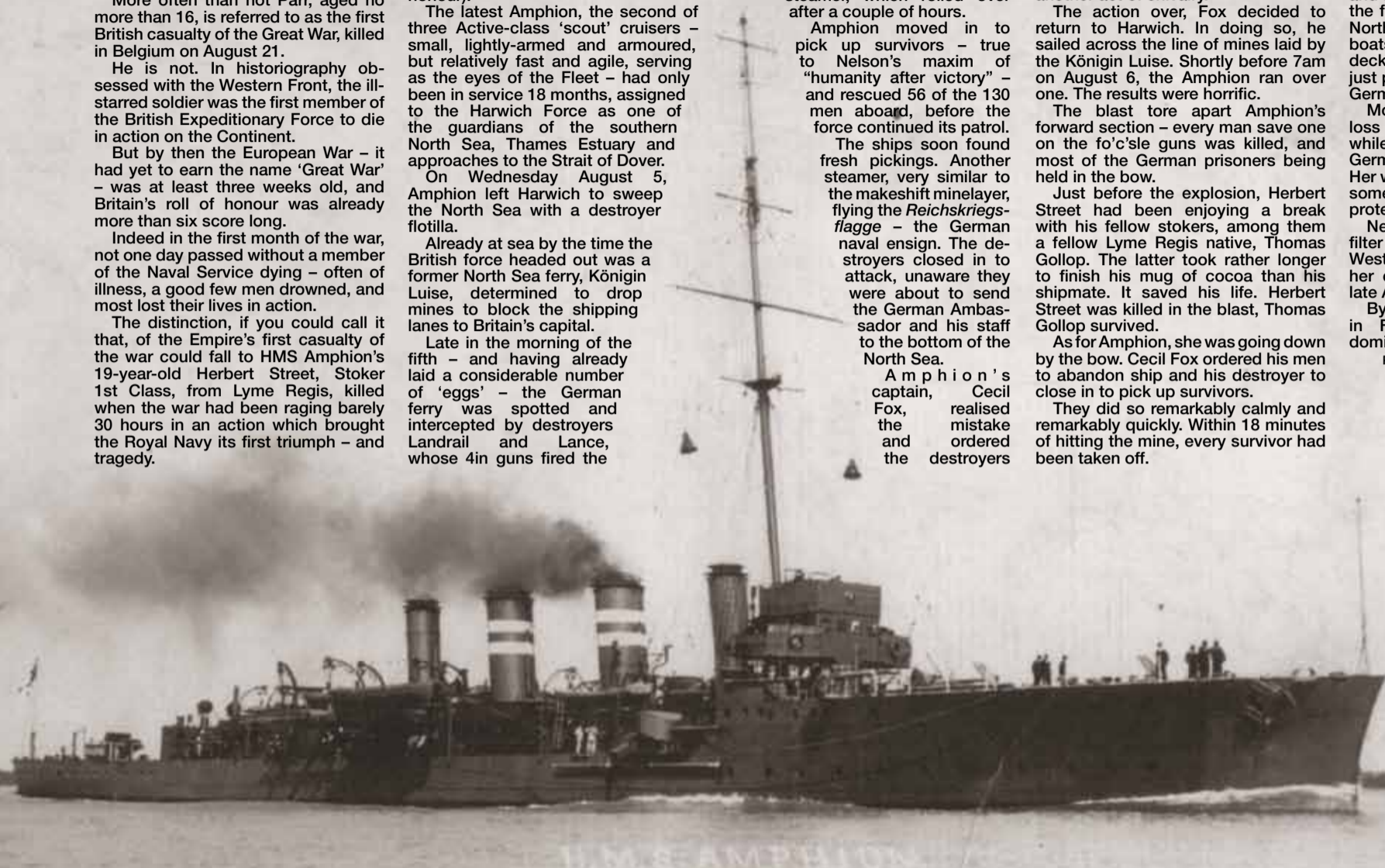
News of Amphion’s sinking would filter through to communities in the West Country – the vast majority of her crew were Devonport men – by late August.

By then the BEF was engaged in France, and its battles were dominating the news columns.

Picture courtesy of Robin Williams of Govilon

Motto: Fear none
 Class: Active-class scout cruiser
 Builder: Pembroke
 Dockyard
 Laid down: March 15 1911
 Launched: December 4 1911
 Commissioned: March 1913
 Displacement: 4,000 tons
 Length: 406ft
 Beam: 41ft 6in
 Draught: 15ft 7in
 Speed: 25kts
 Complement: up to 325
 Propulsion: 12 x Yarrow boilers powering 4 x Parsons turbines
 Armament: 1 x BL 4in Mk VII gun, 4 x 3pdr guns, 2 x 18in torpedo tubes
 Armour: 1in (deck), 4in (conning tower)

Facts and figures



IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES



GERMAN *Matrosen* (matelots) begin repairing the damage to the light cruiser SMS Frauenlob in Wilhelmshaven in the late summer of 1914 – victim of the first substantial clash between the two navies contesting command of the North Sea.

In three weeks of war there had been what might be described as tentative sparring, leading to minor victories and tragedies on both sides – the fates of the Königin Luise and Amphion among them – but the ‘second Trafalgar’ for which the British public and press clamoured had failed to materialise.

By and large the High Seas Fleet had not offered battle – allowing the Royal Navy to safely escort the British Expeditionary Force to France, where it was now engaged in the fight for its very existence as the German Army bore down on Paris.

Shipping the BEF across the Channel, unmolested and unharmed, was a great success. But it was not a glorious one. And the RN of 1914 yearned for glory as much as its public.

Whilst the man in charge of the Grand Fleet, Admiral John Jellicoe, embodied caution – his forces were superior to the Germans, and he was not prepared to risk that superiority – not so the young turks further down the ranks.

Over those first three weeks of war one young Turk, Capt Roger Keyes, had built up a pretty accurate picture of German goings-on on the other side of the North Sea.

Each day the Kaiser’s light naval forces carried out a sweep of the southern North Sea. And each morning stronger forces sortied from the fortress at Heligoland to shepherd them back into base.

Roger Keyes knew this because his submarines had patrolled these same waters since the war’s outbreak. A man of action – he’d famously raised the Union Flag in Peking as European forces lifted the Boxer siege – Keyes spied an opportunity to maul the German destroyers.

Keyes’ submarines would act as bait before a superior force of British destroyers and cruisers emerged from the night, cut the returning Germans off from their base and annihilate them.

The Admiralty didn’t think much of sending some 40 warships into the jaws of the German Bight. Keyes bypassed them and went to the top, First Lord Winston Churchill. Unlike the admirals, Churchill pounced on a plan he described as “simple and daring” (an epithet which could also apply to Roger Keyes).

This was on August 23 1914. Five days later, the battle was in full swing.

Such was the hurried nature of the operation – this was

in the days before codenames and grandiose titles – that Keyes had no idea the destroyers, cruisers and submarines of the striking force mustered from Harwich would be joined by the steel and speed of Beatty’s battle-cruisers from Rosyth (insurance insisted upon by Jellicoe should the light forces encounter the big guns of the High Seas Fleet).

As things turned out, it wasn’t British submarines the Germans saw first at dawn on August 28, but the cruiser HMS Arethusa. They took the bait.

German and British destroyers locked horns while German light cruisers raised steam and prepared to enter the fray on a rather murky morning – a sea fog hampered efforts by shore batteries on Heligoland to engage the Brits.

When the German cruisers arrived on the scene, their destroyers began to beat a hasty retreat towards the safety of Heligoland, leaving the light forces to slug it out.

It is here where the Frauenlob story begins. A mixture of excellent gunnery on the side of the Germans and an ill-tested ship on the side of the British turned HMS Arethusa largely into a crippled wreck.

She did, however, have one 6in still working and now British gunnery matched their foes. Ten times Arethusa hit the Frauenlob, one destroying her bridge and most of those on it. She veered out of the line and left the battle.

The Battle of Heligoland Bight continued until the early afternoon – long enough for Beatty’s castles of steel to join battle, although their part was small; they finished off the crippled cruiser Köln and turned the cruiser Ariadne into a blazing hulk, but little else.

The German battle fleet – trapped in the Jade estuary all morning – arrived on the scene in time to see the Ariadne go down. By then, however, the Royal Navy was heading for home, having singed the Kaiser’s moustache.

For the cost of 35 dead and Arethusa badly damaged, the Royal Navy had sunk three cruisers, a destroyer and a couple of torpedo boats – right in the High Seas Fleet’s back yard.

Keyes – and Beatty especially – were hailed as heroes by the British media, but the former felt Heligoland Bight was a missed opportunity and should have bagged twice as many German ships.

The Frauenlob was repaired and returned to the line of battle. She was sunk – with most of her crew – when torpedoed by cruiser HMS Southampton (also present at Heligoland Bight) at Jutland in May 1916.

■ This picture (Q 48411) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at www.iwmcollections.org.uk, by emailing photos@iwm.org.uk, or by phoning 0207 416 5333.

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Cannon challenge proves hard work

HMMM, the rate of fire can't match our 30mm...

Sailors from HMS Hurworth grapple with an 18 pounder as they accept the challenge of trying to fire one of the principal weapons of the Royal Navy two centuries ago in under 90 seconds.

The crew of the minehunter left Portsmouth and their ship behind for a weekend on Teesside to support Armed Forces Day events and to re-affirm their ties with the Hurworth community.

HMS Trincomalee, a frigate built just after the Napoleonic Wars, was the focal point for Armed Forces Day events involving Hurworth's crew, plus local cadets, soldiers and RAF personnel, including a parade at which the minehunter's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Eleanor Stack took the salute.

Trincomalee was used for demonstrations old and new, from heaving a line to a present-day diving display, but the highlight was the challenge of firing ye olde cannons.

"It was hard work moving it into position – especially in the heat," said AB(Sea) Thomas Spetch. "It gave us all a real experience of what conditions must have been like in combat and it was great to demonstrate it to the public – they seemed to be really enjoying it."

On a more solemn note, a service of thanksgiving for the sailors of HMS Hurworth past and present was held in the village church. Elsewhere on Teesside, youngsters at Hurworth primary school enjoyed a 'meet the sailor' morning, sitting in on classes and joining in a game of rounders with children.

The local cricket team, Hurworth Gentlemen, proved tougher opposition and defeated the sailors, who'd put in two months' training ahead of the contest, with one over to spare. Victory and defeat were soon forgotten, however, courtesy of a barbecue.

A small group of sailors were invited to visit the hounds of Hurworth Hunt – at feeding time for 100 dogs.

"As a keen animal lover and a subscriber to *Horse and Hound*, it was amazing to see how they work the dogs and train them to hunt – such an eye-opener," said AB(CIS) Daniel Barton.

Sailors also got stuck in renovating garden furniture, including the HMS Hurworth bench, at Rockcliffe Court care home for the physically disabled.

Picture: Chris Armstrong

That's some cake for Bulwark's birthday

IF THE Queen can have two birthdays a year, then so too her flagship.

Five months ahead of her true birthday, HMS Bulwark marked her tenth anniversary with a big cake and friends and family.

The assault ship is likely to be away on the Cougar amphibious deployment on her actual tenth anniversary in December – and with the last month of the year not especially suited to fun outdoor activities – so Bulwark brought her big day forward.

The crew were joined by more than 300 family members while alongside in HM Naval Base Devonport to celebrate the milestone.

You cannot have a birthday party without a cake – and what a cake, weighing 50kg and measuring 50cm wide.

It was baked by 28-year-old LCH Andrew Durham from Plymouth to a secretly-guarded, tried-and-tested Naval recipe.

He used 10kg flour, 15kg of mixed fruit, 2kg of almonds, 4kg of butter, 4kg of sugar, 48 eggs and three bottles of rum.

"This is the first time I've made anything like this," said LCH Durham, who described the painstaking process involved in moulding and decorating the edible HMS Bulwark crest which forms the centrepiece of the cake.

"This has been six weeks' of hard work but I'm pleased with



● Fleur Bassett and ET Eldon Myers cut the cake

what I've done."

In time-honoured RN tradition, the captain's wife, Fleur Bassett, and the youngest member of the crew, 19-year-old ET Eldon Myers from Hartlepool cut into it so pieces could be handed out to sailors and families.

"The support of our families is so important whilst we are deployed on operations and it is a pleasure to be able to give something back," said CO Capt Dean Bassett.

Tribute to bone idol

THE captain of HMS Montrose led members of his ship's company – and a St Bernard called Benson – in an act of remembrance to a heroic WW2 canine during a visit to the ship's namesake port.

Bamse was owned by Capt Hafto of the Norwegian Navy and accompanied him at sea on the minesweeper Thorodd during the war. He has legendary status in Montrose, where the Thorodd was stationed.

Personnel from the ship went to visit a large statue of Bamse at Wharf Street in the town, where the CO Cdr James Parkin laid a wreath of remembrance, which said: "In memory of a truly remarkable dog, and all who served alongside British and Norwegian forces in Angus in WW2."

Cdr Parkin said: "Everyone on board has come to learn about Sea Dog Bamse, especially as there is a miniature statue of him on display in my cabin. I am delighted we have had this opportunity to pay our respects to this extraordinary animal."

It was the ship's first visit to the town in six years and a whirlwind of activities took place, beginning with a capability reception from the 'most Scottish ship in the fleet.'

A rare visit from the Duke and Duchess of Montrose was followed by the ship's company exercising their Freedom of Angus by parading in Montrose town centre, where hundreds of residents packed the streets to see the Provost of Angus Helen Oswald take the salute.

An open day saw more than 1,500 members of the public flock to the ship and the Worshipful Company of Distillers went on board to present a commemorative 'quaich' (a Scottish drinking cup) and the first of a limited edition single cask bottling of single malt whisky, complete with bespoke HMS Montrose labels, to celebrate the ship's two decades of service in the Royal Navy.

During the ship's seven-month deployment to the Gulf and Eastern Mediterranean earlier this year the personnel raised more than £15,000 from a series of events and decided to hand over some of the cash to two local charities.



● Benson the St Bernard joins members of the ship's company at the memorial to Bamse in Montrose



● AB Tim Bryson charms the residents at Dorward House

The Angus branch of Riding for the Disabled (RDA) received £1,000 during a visit to their base, where Cdr Parkin took to the saddle for a ride.

Lt George Lewis, one of the officers under training in the ship, said: "I never imagined when I joined the Royal Navy I would get involved in a good cause like this. It was really rewarding to see the riders get so much out of the experience, and although I'm a little too tall to ride the ponies, it

looked brilliant fun."

On the same day, another team from Montrose visited Dorward House, a care home in the town, which this year is celebrating its 175th anniversary.

After a tour of the facilities, and meeting many of the long-term residents, the sailors were invited to stay for afternoon tea, and shared tea and cake with many more of the Montrose pensioners.

Before they left, the CO



● Cdr James Parkin on horseback at Angus RDA

presented a cheque for £1,000 to Dorward House deputy manager Lavine McMaster.

LET Sean Starkie said: "It was wonderful to meet the residents of Dorward House, they were all in such high spirits and made us feel very welcome in their home."

As well as showing off the ship and visiting local groups, some of the crew found some time for recreation, including adventurous training expeditions to experience the local mountain-biking facilities and a hill-walking party who headed up to the Cairngorms to climb the Lochnagar Munro.

Sporting fixtures were also arranged and, thanks to an invitation from the Royal Montrose Golf Club, the ship's golf society made excellent use of the famous links course.

AB Ryan Leckie, from Grangemouth, a sailor from HMS Sutherland who has temporarily joined HMS Montrose for two months, said: "This is my first trip away with the Royal Navy and the visit to the ship's home town of Montrose has been really good. Everyone has been really welcoming here and it was fantastic for me to come to a port so close to home."

Cdr Parkin said: "Our time in Montrose could not have gone any better – it is the best port visit I have had in my two years in command, and a fitting finale to our intensive period of operations in the last year. Devonport may be our base, but Montrose is definitely our home."

HMS Montrose is the UK's 'on-call' warship over the summer. She will be dry docked in September for a period of maintenance.

Sailors restore WW1 gravestones



ON ST George's Day 1915, an ecstatic James Curnow had important news to tell his family.

Granted shore leave from the mighty battleship HMS Orion in Devonport, the sailor was dashing through Plymouth determined to get home to Cornwall to tell his relatives of his promotion to petty officer.

In his haste to catch one tram, he tripped up and was struck by another, dying of his injuries.

The senior rating was laid to rest at Ludgvan, just outside Penzance, one of five Servicemen – three of them Royal Navy – buried in the grounds of the small parish church.

A century on, 35 personnel from nearby RNAS Culdrose made the short trip to the cemetery to restore those gravestones – as well as the rest of the churchyard and the house of worship itself – in the lead-up to the 100th anniversary of the start of the Great War.

For good measure, the sailors, drawn from the Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF) and trainees from 824 and 849 Naval Air Squadrons, also smartened the village war memorial, listing the names of 51 fallen – 40 of them from 1914-1918 – who made the ultimate sacrifice for their nation, and this from a population of just 2,200 souls.

The clean up, organised by MASF's CO Lt Cdr Steve Griffin, is part of Culdrose's contribution to the WW1 centenary. His team cleared the grounds, improved the walls, repaired

parts of the church tower and cleaned the windows.

"I am a bit of war geek so I have loved getting involved in this project," said AET Leacam Baxter (pictured left by PO(Phot) Paul A'Barrow re-painting the lettering on PO Curnow's grave).

"We are all part of the community and I feel happy to be helping out. It's good to be putting something back in and helping out fallen comrades."

AET James Cain added: "I am glad to be helping out and tidying up. Cornwall has a lovely countryside and it's good to keep on top of it and help it to stay looking nice."

Said Lt Cdr Griffin: "It was really important for us to tidy up the wartime graves of Servicemen and women because this year is of course the 100 year anniversary of the start of WW1."

"It has been great how all the community has come together in this project, from businesses providing equipment for free and the community giving their time."

The church's rector Rev Nigel Barnes said the tidy-up had sparked considerable interest and support in the parish.

"Since Lt Cdr Griffin offered to get his unit involved, many more members of the local community have got involved too," he said.

"Steve initially noticed that the graves needed attention and that the wording on the war memorial was getting damaged, so the team from Culdrose also helped to improve that too."



Sous warriors



pictures: po(phot) ray jones, hms illustrious, and hms torbay's crew



THERE'S a Briton, a Frenchman and a Dutchman.

What a cracking example of international naval co-operation.

Sorry, if you were expecting a 1970s-style punchline, you're not going to get one (for once...).

Actually, there were quite a few hundred Britons, French and Dutch. And their men o'war. And a good dozen helicopters.

And they were all playing the eternal game of naval cat and mouse between ships and submarines.

We touched on the opening moves of Exercise Deep Blue – the largest anti-submarine exercise staged in waters off the shores of the UK in two decades – last month.

It was billed as the biggest test yet for the new, improved Merlin Mk2 (looks like a Mk1 on the outside, looks like the Starship Enterprise on the inside).

But Deep Blue was so much more than a workout for submarine-hunting helicopters.

It was a workout for Type 23 frigates (Richmond and Westminster) and one of their French counterparts FS La Motte-Piquet.

It was a workout for Dutch diesel and British and French nuclear-powered submarines.

It was a workout for French maritime patrol aircraft.

And it was a workout for the submarine commanders of tomorrow.

In the control room of HMS Torbay, six men hopeful of one day being in charge of an attack boat endured the rigours of the Submarine Command Course – the Perisher in common Royal Naval parlance.

Over the 97 years of its existence, silent Servicemen from the navies of Australia, Brazil, Canada, the Netherlands, USA, South Korea and Denmark have all tried their hand at what is generally regarded as the toughest test of any submariner.

But not the Royal Navy's closest neighbour, the Marine Nationale. Until now.

Step forward *pionnier* (trailblazer...) *Capitaine de Corvette* Thomas Legrand, who joined five Royal Navy students in the cramped confines of Torbay – reputedly the first Frenchman to tackle the course.

Perisher normally runs alongside the Joint Warrior war games off north-west Scotland because the massing of lots of shipping ('targets' to any submariner) offers the perfect test.

But with Deep Blue looming a couple of months later, the 'at sea' phase of Perisher aboard Torbay – recently nicknamed 'the Blue One' courtesy of a dark blue overcoat in her recent maintenance period – was timed to coincide with the large-scale exercise instead.

Before *Capitaine* Legrand and his fellow students could dream of taking on Lusty in the deep expanses of the North Atlantic, however, there was the small matter of inshore training in shallow waters just off the coast of Cornwall.

The craggy Cornish coast is hazardous enough in itself (as the myriad shipwrecks peppering the seabed testify), but for added pressure frigate HMS Lancaster and patrol ships Tyne and Severn colluded to test the students' mental arithmetic and ability to keep their submarine safe while operating in very close proximity to charging warships.

Observing this – aside from the man in charge of Perisher, Cdr John Livesey (aka 'Teacher') – was *Capitaine de Vaisseau* Stephan Meunier, who commands the French Navy's nuclear submarine attack squadron in Toulon.

"It is fantastic to see the famous Perisher and compare the difference between the French and British courses," *Capitaine* Meunier said.

"As submariners, there are actually a lot of similarities in how we conduct our business and the professional attitude and passion of the crew is the same for both nations.

"I hope that this is just one more step in the growing partnership between our navies."

When it came to Deep Blue, there was the added frisson of the chance to play with a French hunter-killer FS Améthyste, which is roughly similar to a Trafalgar-class boat.

"It was strange to pit myself against a French submarine

but rewarding to be a member of Torbay's crew during the exercise and I just hope my shipmates back home can forgive me!" said Thomas.

"There is obviously a lot of pressure being the first French student to undertake Perisher but the crew have welcomed me and treated me as just another member of the team, which has been fantastic.

"It is really pleasing to see that the co-operation between our nations is not just at the level of high-ranking officers but at all levels as we build friendships and get to know each other much more closely."

Of the six hopefuls who put their heads on the proverbial Perisher block, four passed – including the Frenchman.

"Thomas was evidently very well prepared for the rigours of this hugely demanding course from day one and he has fully immersed himself in every aspect, be that in a social environment or in the throes of tactical engagements in the simulators and at sea," said Cdr Livesey.

"A very positive precedent has been set and I would gladly welcome further French students to the fold based on the progress of their trailblazer."

RIGHT that's enough of life below the waves. What was going on 'up top'?

Well, HMS Richmond was very much on her toes actively ('pinging') and passively (listening) with her towed array Sonar 2087 in the rolling swell of the North Atlantic.

"It's been an excellent experience to be part of this exercise – the team have risen to the challenge, and gained a greater deal of confidence in our own abilities ahead of our upcoming deployment," said Lt Cdr Rob Lamb, the frigate's underwater warfare officer.

Unlike her sister HMS Westminster, she didn't have a Merlin on the back (the combination of the frigate and helicopter has been described as a submarine's ultimate foe). Instead, Richmond had another new whirlybird working with her, Wildcat – successor to the Lynx – embarked for its first sustained spell of sub hunting.

With several vessels engaged in the exercise – and Lusty especially particularly thirsty – tanker RFA Wave Knight was on hand to keep fuel tanks topped up, including simultaneous replenishments of British and French ships.

So Deep Blue had something for everyone. Wafus. Deeps. Skimmers. Britons. Frenchmen. Carriers. Boats. Hunters. Hunted.

"Deep Blue has been a great opportunity for Richmond to operate as part of a large-scale task group, conducting advanced anti-submarine warfare in the challenging North Atlantic," said Richmond's CO Cdr Mark Anderson.

"As one of the world's most advanced anti-submarine frigates, my ship's company relished this training to prove themselves against a very capable threat."

They went straight from Deep Blue into Operational Sea Training – the Royal Navy's equivalent to pre-season training – as part of Richmond's development cycle ahead of a deployment next year.

They may – or may not – take a Merlin Mk2 with them. But the new, improved helicopter is now ready for front-line duties after its £800m upgrade and a year or so in the hands of fliers at Culdrose.

The Merlins collectively clocked up 480 flying hours – just shy of three weeks – during Deep Blue.

More importantly they proved their ability to defend a naval task group against a concerted submarine attack (the exercise had one eye firmly fixed on the helicopters operating as part of an air group on the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers at the decade's end).

And, above all, Deep Blue was the final tick in the box for the Mk2, which was promptly proclaimed fully operational four months earlier than anticipated – as defence technology minister Philip Dunne announced a few days after Deep Blue's end at Farnborough Air Show.

Three of the RN's four Merlin squadrons (820, 824 and 829) have now upgraded to the improved model with just the Flying Tigers of 814 NAS to make the switch once the bulk of the unit completes its maritime security duties east of Suez.



Artist draws inspir

LAST month we featured a painting showing artist Tim O'Brien's vision of how the new HMS Queen Elizabeth will look in service.

And although Tim has primarily worked within the aviation sphere in the past, that has also taken him into the maritime world.

One such example was a stint on board aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious, when Tim was given free range to observe and sketch the activities on board the ship during exercises.

Examples on this page include

character studies and black-and-white pencil sketches, from Flyco (below) and the flight deck to the engine room (opposite page, bottom left).

Tim has also recreated historic events on canvas, including a key moment from the Yangtze Incident when an RAF Sunderland flying boat attempted to aid the stranded frigate HMS Amethyst (opposite page).

As a child Tim always enjoyed drawing and painting, but a more serious interest was sparked when he began copying images from an old *Batler Britton* comic book about a World War 2 flying ace.

With the support of his father – a freelance commercial artist for whom Tim spent six years working as an 'apprentice' – he eventually embarked

on a career as a freelance illustrator.

A stint in the Air Cadets had given Tim a particular interest in aviation and military subject matter – one of his largest commissions was the British Air Service Memorial at St Omer in France.

"But the icing on the cake for me through my military art is the opportunity to join the Armed Forces, as an invited guest, often in relation to a specific work project, gaining inspiration for my art through experience," said Tim.

With no particular direct Naval links, aviation tended to be uppermost in the artist's mind, though he admitted to a fascination with the sea.

Then, in October 2011, Tim was invited to spend a couple of days with

820 Naval Air Squadron at Culdrose by Cdr Jason Phillips, who had seen some of Tim's Fleet Air Arm paintings.

Almost a year later Capt Martin Connell, CO of HMS Illustrious, invited Tim to make a 'sketching sortie' at sea and witness the helicopter carrier world.

An early-morning departure by Sea King into a "magnificent dawn sky" set the tone as the helicopter hugged the Cornish coast then struck out into the golden light towards the warship, which was taking part in a multi-national 'Thursday War' training exercise.

"Having grown-up watching films like *Hornblower*, *Sink the Bismarck* and *The Cruel Sea*, I thoroughly enjoyed the experience of observing the Senior Service in action and listening to the associated terminology being shouted across the bridge," said Tim.

"I made the most of every offer of an escorted tour that I could, resulting in me seeing most aspects of the ship, including the historic bell from the wartime Illustrious that resides in the Captain's dining room."

That evening he watched night-flying serials, and the following morning, after a hearty breakfast, he flew back to Culdrose.

"Sketching sorties don't get any better than this!" he added.

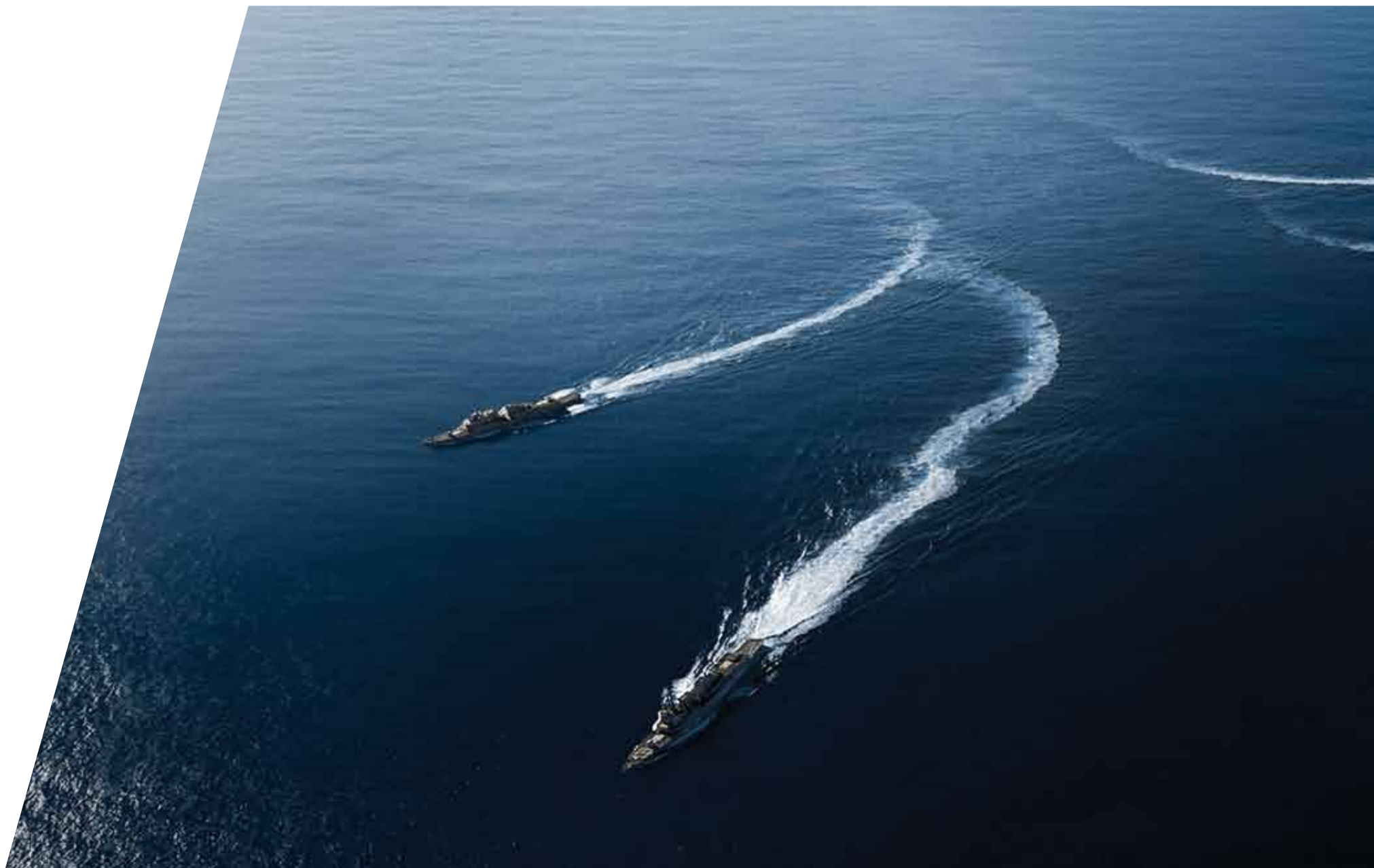
"As an artist, by getting close to my topic, I felt my experience was like the story of the master, J M W Turner, who allegedly tied himself to the mast of a steam-ship in a tempestuous storm, absorbing the experience to let it flow through him into his painting."

"A little extreme maybe, but the basic principle works for me as it adds that extra energy to my work that I cannot obtain from photographic references."

www.timobrienart.co.uk



● Lt Kev Pope of 820 NAS



ation from ship visit



● (Above) An RAF Sunderland attempts to help HMS Amethyst on the Yangtze
● (Left) Merlins over the Cornish coast



● (Right) The Air Traffic Control tower at RAF Cottesmore



● Lt Andy Mitchell of 820 NAS

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THE EAGLE HAS SCANNED IT

THE Royal Navy's commanders in the Middle East have praised their first robot 'eyes in the skies' after the debut deployment of the tiny ScanEagle on front-line operations.

The small remote-controlled aircraft – launched from the flight decks of HMS Somerset and RFA Cardigan Bay – clocked up three and half weeks in the skies of the Gulf and Indian Ocean in the first half of 2014.

The unarmed aircraft carries only two cameras, beaming back a live colour video feed by day – or infra red or electro-optic images – to the operations room or bridge of a ship allowing sailors to identify suspicious vessels far beyond the horizon.

It is also being used to provide a constant watch for Royal Marines and Royal Navy boarding teams inspecting shipping east of Suez as part of their maritime security mission. So clear is the image, even from hundreds of feet above, you can not just see the commandos moving about a vessel, but the rifles they are carrying.

As part of a £30m deal with defence firm Boeing InSitu, ScanEagle is being tested for the next couple of years to provide what the team call "a 40-mile pair of binoculars" for Britain's four minehunters based in the Gulf (Cardigan Bay acts as their mother ship) as well as Royal Navy frigates and destroyers patrolling east of Suez for criminal activity (drug trafficking and terrorism).

Weighing 22kg – the equivalent of 22 regular bags of sugar – ScanEagle is powered around the sky by a two-stroke model aircraft engine and stays airborne for up to 12 hours, flying at ranges from the mother ship of up to 40 miles.

The footage it sends back can be recorded and analysed, or it can be used to make decisions in real time.

"ScanEagle is something we've not had before. Quite simply, it's given HMS Somerset another pair of eyes,"



● HMS Somerset is flanked by T-boat HMS Tireless and RFA Fort Austin during an anti-submarine exercise in the Gulf – as seen from the frigate's ScanEagle

says Cdr Mike Smith, the frigate's Commanding Officer. "You can monitor a contact safely without it knowing you're there – you cannot hear it, you cannot see it and it's very difficult to pick up on radar – or you can watch a boarding operation as it is taking place, see what is happening and if anything untoward is going on."

"It's given us a level of awareness we've not had in the past. It's been one of the highlights of the deployment. The Navy should continue to explore unmanned aerial systems – I'm convinced they have a big part to play in our future."

The Royal Navy's senior officer east of Suez, Cdre Keith Blount, UK Maritime Component Commander, on a day-to-day basis responsible for a dozen ships, submarines and other Senior Service units in the region, agrees wholeheartedly.

"ScanEagle is a huge opening for us. We've nothing else like it, nothing that can sit in the air for that long. It's

something we've come to value greatly."

A team from Boeing InSitu are operating ScanEagle aboard Somerset, under the direction of Lt Rudi Lorenz, an experienced Lynx helicopter pilot.

In the time they have been operating the aircraft, they've learned that it complements the frigate's helicopter. It doesn't replace it – ScanEagle has no radar or weaponry.

"ScanEagle does the dull, the dirty, the dangerous. You keep Lynx out of harm's way and it's very much still needed. It's been as busy on this deployment as ever, it's just been used differently," said Lt Lorenz.

"We have made a really good start. ScanEagle is proving to be really valuable. It's a pair of binoculars which can see 40 miles."

ScanEagle is sent into the sky courtesy of a large catapult – it's travelling at 55kts by the time it reaches the end of the 14ft launch ramp. It 'lands' by literally flying into a pole which catches on a hook on the wings and the aircraft is trapped in a net.

ScanEagle uses just one third of a litre of fuel for every hour it spends in the sky, massively cheaper than a Lynx or Merlin – and without the strain on crew or machine to boot. By the end of June it had amassed 600 flying hours.

"The US has a lot of experience operating ScanEagle in Afghanistan – what we didn't have, of course, when we launched and recovered it was the pitch and roll motion. We've got used to it now," said Boeing InSitu engineer Lyle Heckman. "Once airborne, it's operated in the same way."

A special unit has been formed at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall, 831 Flight, to provide ScanEagles and teams for Cardigan Bay, Somerset, HMS Northumberland which has relieved the latter, and HMS Kent.

"It is really easy to maintain – it's plug and play engineering," said senior maintenance rating PO(AET) Taff Jowett. "It takes five minutes to change an engine. That's an eight-hour job on the Lynx followed by a day of safety and flying checks."

Wildcat sharpens its claws

THE Royal Navy's newest helicopter passed an important milestone with the fitting of its M3M Heavy Machine Gun.

Lt Frank Suter had the honour of being the first aircrewman at 700W to fire the gun from a Wildcat during a shoot at Lillstock Range in the Bristol Channel.

The M3M is used by the Lynx helicopter but is the first weapon to be cleared for use on Wildcat.

Lt Suter said: "It was a privilege to conduct the first in-service firings of M3M from the Wildcat and pass another milestone on the path to achieving initial operational capability."

"It will enable us to progress the training for the first Wildcat deployment in 2015 and further develop the tactical use of the Wildcat."

Following the successful first firing, a further trial took place at the MOD range at Aberporth in west Wales – this time with a laser sight, which improves the accuracy of the weapon particularly at night.

While at Aberporth a trial of the Wildcat's Laser Target Designator was also conducted culminating in the lasering of a small speed boat which a Tornado GR4 was then able to acquire using its targeting pod.

This was the first time that a moving maritime target has been laser designated by the Royal Navy and proves the Wildcat's capability to designate targets for attack by laser-guided munitions.

The trial's sponsor, Lt Cdr Alex Sims from the Maritime Warfare Centre, said: "This trial has been a complete success and proves that Wildcat does have claws."

The next step is a trial of the Laser Target Designator using



● Above: A small speed boat was lasered by Wildcat's Laser Target Designator

live weapons to attack a target.

Torpedoes and depth charges are then the next weapons to be cleared followed by both light and heavy variants of the Future Anti Surface Guided Weapon (FASGW).

One of the first frontline squadrons to operate Wildcat will be 847 NAS, where aircrew have been refreshing their firing skills.

Eight pilots from 847 honed their 'call for fire' procedures during Exercise Cypher Resolve on Salisbury Plain.

The crews then turned their attention to the art of controlling Naval Gunfire Support with the help of the Type 45 destroyers HMS Dauntless and Dragon.

The second squadron to operate Wildcat will be 825,

which came into being on August 1 as 700W and 702 NAS passed into history.

As Wildcat replaces the Lynx, the Lynx-Wildcat Maritime Force had a shake up.

All things Lynx – training and frontline duties – will come under 815 NAS, while all things Wildcat – training and frontline duties – come under 825.

Although the new helicopter won't deploy for the first time until next year, when it does it will operate in extremes of climate, day and night.

It is equipped with sensors and lasers that have been integrated into a modern tactical processor which will allow it to find, identify and designate multiple targets.



Ready for green Merlins

THERE are 16 new aviators to fly the Royal Marines' latest battlewagon into action as the commandos' wings embrace the Merlin helicopter.

Next month the Commando Helicopter Force will take over the battlefield Merlin from the RAF as it begins to replace the Sea King, the veteran helicopter which is being retired from frontline service in 2016.

Pilots and aircrewmen have undergone extensive training during the past six months to learn how the new aircraft works. The Merlin training has been carried out by 28 Squadron RAF at RAF Benson and graduation day proved a day of firsts:

- The first day four students would wear the coveted wings;
- The first time such a ceremony had taken place at RAF Benson;
- The first time wings had been earned on the Merlin Mk3.

Individual prizes were also awarded, including the Westland Trophy to Lt Josh Albon for the best overall student and the 'Doc' Love Trophy to LACMN Patrick Whitcomb, who was the best overall aircrewman student. The trophy is named in honour of a Commando aircrewman killed during the Falklands Conflict in 1982.

LACMN Whitcomb, from Roehampton, said: "This award is a fantastic way to end my training." The Royal Navy's first two pilots to complete the

Merlin course were also awarded their wings. Lt Ollie Trowman and Lt Albon have been training on the Merlin Mk3 helicopter since November 2013.

The two pilots were the first of a new breed for CHF, having previously been trained on the Griffin twin-engine helicopter at RAF Shawbury.

Lt Albon said: "The previous flying and training conducted on the Griffin was really useful and a good lead-in to flying the Merlin here at Benson."

The final week of the course saw the Merlins deploy for a tactical exercise on Salisbury Plain.

Lt Trowman said: "The operational tasking we were exposed to in our final exercise was a really good insight to what we will be doing on the front line in the future."

Lt Albon added: "We are both looking forward to gaining more experience on the aircraft and taking the aircraft on future deployments supporting operations around the globe."

"The transition from RAF to Royal Navy command of the aircraft is something we will closely be involved with, including the move back to RNAS Yeovilton from RAF Benson."

Both officers are due to start at 78 Squadron, RAF Benson on completion of their graduation ceremony, prior to moving to 846 NAS.

Lt Col Del Stafford was awarded his completion certificate and is to be the Commanding Officer of 846 NAS when it stands up on September 30.

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New shoes, please

(How a Royal Navy steward helped Djokovic win Wimbledon)

Royal Navy steward CPO Andy Ellaway passes a spare pair of tennis shoes belonging to Novak Djokovic to a ball boy at this year's Wimbledon's men's final.

The Serb went on to win the five-set thriller against Roger Federer at the All England Lawn Tennis Club.

As the TV cameras focussed on the players, you would have seen members of the Armed Forces in the background.

This year 104 members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines – including CPO Ellaway, of the Northumbrian URNU, were on duty for the two-week Grand Slam event, each of them having taken leave in order to act as stewards.

Naval personnel have been on duty at SW19 every year for the last 68 – yet some members of the public still react with surprise when they see them.

“We are part of the fabric of Wimbledon. It's the only tennis tournament that does this,” said WO1 David Halliday of 43 Cdo.

The military's association with Wimbledon goes back to 1946, when tournament organisers asked members of the Armed Forces who were being demobilised after WW2 to act as attendants.

Since then, the club has welcomed 324 stewards from the RN, the Army and RAF, every year to watch over the show courts – Centre Court, Court 1 and Court 2. The remaining outside courts are manned by 275 members of the London Fire Brigade.

The successful applicants – this year 160 RN personnel applied for the job – spend two weeks of their leave manning the walkways, stairs and seating areas.

The military operation is run from a compact office under the stairs at the northern end of Centre Court (the Royal Box is at the southern end), where you can find the only officer at the championships (only ratings and senior ratings can apply to be stewards).

Royal Marine Maj Alan McTaggart is three years into his five-year stint as the officer in charge.

“We had more than 500 applications this year,” said Maj McTaggart.

“The trick is getting a good mix. We're here to provide that extra bit of polish. It's the best Grand Slam in the world. It's very British but with more than one billion TV viewers globally.

“It's just an amazing experience. What makes it so special is its tri-Service. Wimbledon is like one big family. The public come here and realise we are real soldiers, sailors and marines – it's important we get it right.

“Considering the huge effort, it's a very small team but it works well.”

WO1 Halliday, 51, who served at his tenth Wimbledon this year, said: “It's an education piece for the public. They don't realise we do this. The interaction is great – for some people it may be the only day they get to meet someone in a military uniform.”

He added: “In my first year my overwhelming impression was the surreal feeling you get on Centre Court. You get to rub shoulders with the rich and famous, the great and the good and realise the enormity of the world-wide event. The organisation of this is such that nothing, absolutely nothing, is left to chance.”

The days can be very long. The stewards arrive for 10am, with the public starting to come in from 10.30am. They work in teams of three – one from each Service – to enable them to work two hours on, one hour off until play ends, which on Centre Court can be as late as 11pm.

This year they had the middle Sunday off as the good weather put paid to



● CPO Ian 'Lucky' Luck on duty on Centre Court Picture: (c) AELTC / Jon Buckle



● CPO Andy Ellaway hands a pair of Novak Djokovic's tennis shoes to a ball boy during the Wimbledon men's final

Picture: (c) AELTC / Jon Buckle



● AB Leon Collins was on duty at Wimbledon for his second year

a requirement for Sunday play, but the day off has a downside, as WO1 Paul Buckley, 48, based at DNS, Abbey Wood, Bristol, explained: “The second Monday is traditionally the hardest day. They will have had Sunday off, so 24 hours relaxing their feet only to put your Service footwear back on Monday morning. It hurts.”

AB Hannah Leslie, 21, a careers manager from HMS Nelson, was at Wimbledon for the first time this year. She and colleague AB Emma Graham divided their time between admin work in the office and working as stewards on one of the Centre Court gangways (which are surprisingly very narrow).

“I like tennis a lot more than I did before I came here,” she said. “The last game of the day on Centre Court is the best one. The public are really polite.

“Katherine Jenkins asked how long there was between games. No-one recognised her except me!”

Mne Tony Baxter, 26, from 43 Cdo at Faslane, who was also at Wimbledon for the first time, said: “It's been good.

“I am into tennis and put in for it last year but missed out.

“The public are great, and I have seen Amanda Holden, One Direction and Trevor McDonald.

“My wee brother (Gerry) is a tennis fanatic and I've been winding him up.

“My feet ache a bit but where better a place to be?”

Writer AB Stacey Liggett, 28, who only finished her Phase 2 training in April, said: “Someone in the office told me about Wimbledon and I thought I would have a go.”

The former clerical officer, from Northern Ireland, who is based at Northwood, said she wasn't a huge tennis fan before the tournament but having been on duty during Novak Djokovic's match against Czech Radek Stepanek, she is now hooked and backed the Serb to take the title.

“It's been brilliant. I've loved the celeb-spotting and the atmosphere has been a really good buzz.

“My granny has square eyes looking out for me on the TV. It's great to meet the other Services and I'll definitely apply to do this again. The opportunities in the Royal Navy are fantastic.”

Mne Josh Bowles, 19, from Lima Company, 42 Cdo, Plymouth, said: “The main reason I am here is we came off a ship in April and our Sergeant Major was looking for opportunities for us. Four of us from Lima Company are here.



● A rating chats with members of the public in the corridor at Centre Court

Picture: (c) AELTC / Chris Raphael

“I'm a sports fan anyway. It's a very British event. I've been asked a couple of silly questions, such as ‘Am I a cadet?’ and ‘Do I have to give the uniform back?’

Mne Bowles, from Bridlington in Yorkshire, said being on duty in the debenture holders' section brought its own challenges.

“They can arrive late and be noisy in the corridor. I have to ask them to keep quiet and some try to insist on getting to their seats while the matches are on so we have to say no.”

Reservist WO1 Elaine Grist, 48, from HMS King Alfred, Portsmouth, served her second term at Wimbledon.

“It's an awesome place to be interacting with the public. It's unique and we have the history of the military being here. Not everyone gets to do this,” said the specialist nurse recruiter.

AB Leon Collins, from HMS Flying Fox in Bristol, was also at the Championships for his second year; this time he was on duty on Court 1.

“It's an incredible experience. I wouldn't get this opportunity unless I was in the RNR. I'm not saying it's easy but my friends are envious of me.”

AB Claire Walsh, 27, a communications information specialist

at COMUKTG, Stonehouse Barracks in Plymouth, said: “I love tennis but the best part is talking to the public. By the end of the second week I will have really sore feet. I already have blisters and wish I'd brought my flipflops.

“The public are great, even walking round the public are asking why we are here. We are lucky people and I would do this again if I get the chance.”

Last year her two-year-old daughter Neave received a Wimbledon babygro, this year she got a tennis dress.

AB Walsh's partner Hayley has managed to keep Neave quiet during the championships by getting her to try to spot Claire on TV.

Cpl Craig Southard, 28, from Lympstone, was at his third Wimbledon, this time on duty high above the Royal Box.

“It's long days but very enjoyable and you get great feedback. You sometimes need to be firm but fair with the crowd in the corridor,” said Cpl Southard, who is based with CHF at RNAS Yeovilton.

WO1 Mark Hannibal, based at HMS Nelson, has organised the recruitment process of RN stewards for years. This was his tenth year working at the tournament. He leaves the RN next year but he will be back at Wimbledon in a new role as deputy head of security for the All England Club.

“It's definitely not a case of first come first served. We wait until all the applications are in before processing them. The aim is to get as many different cap tallies as possible. Someone from every unit would be ideal.”

Stewards arrive the weekend before the championship for a briefing on Centre Court and find out where their duty will be.

WO1 Hannibal said: “The guys give an outstanding performance. It helps generate pride in the uniform. They come back feeling valued.”

The middle Saturday of the championships, which this year coincided with Armed Forces Day, is a day traditionally dedicated to paying tribute to the military.

“We get a 40-second standing ovation and it really makes the hairs on the back of your neck stand up,” said WO1 Hannibal.

It's not all work though – on the final weekend they all gather for a brunch treat of strawberries and cream.

Great expect



THE time was precisely 12 noon on the fourth day of July, 2014.

The red, white and blue smoke trailed across the Forth estuary by the Red Arrows had long dispersed in the strong breeze, writes *Richard Hargreaves*.

The wind caught the Royal Standard, raised on the bridge wing, and the Union Jack, on the flagstaff next to the ski ramp. Both billowed furiously.

A very firm, clear voice came over the public address system.

HMS Queen Elizabeth. Man ship.

Until this point, the star of the show had been a silent, inanimate titan, looming large (literally) over proceedings, the nose of a mock-up F35 peeking over the tip of her ski ramp.

The last time *Navy News* visited her in the spring, HMS Queen Elizabeth was surrounded by a forest of scaffolding, her 920ft hull a mish-mash of colours.

It had been hard to envisage her as a ship. She'd been more building site. Less still a place where men and women live and work.

Fast forward to dusk on Thursday, July 3, 2014.

A couple of workers in red boiler suits and hard hats walked around the expansive flight deck, cleared of the clutter of containers and generators.

A cherry picker moved up and down the jetty, while a couple of figures tested seating in the VIP grandstand – not least ensuring the Queen would be able to see the Royal Guard from her vantage point (and thanks to a couple of rehearsals to move their position, she could...).

The mish-mash of colours had given way – with the exception of the flight deck's special heat resistant coating – to a battleship grey. The forest of scaffolding was gone. The bulbous bow magnificent in red, with white lines extending from it, rather like a spider's web.

And now, at mid-day on Friday July 4, she came to life at last.

Sailors in No.1 uniforms stepped forward, side-by-side with some of the engineers who built her.

There was a spontaneous round of applause from more than 4,000 people – shipwrights, sailors, families, VIPs including Prime Minister David Cameron, former premier Gordon

Brown, then Defence Secretary Philip Hammond, Scotland's First Minister Alex Salmond and a good smattering of First Sea Lords past – rippling around a makeshift viewing area built around the bow of the leviathan.

A forest of hands with smart phones and tablets raised above a sea of see-through blue ponchos – shields against the intermittent drizzle – clicked away wildly.

With the smashing of a bottle of whisky a few minutes later, this was one of the iconic moments of the day.

Denied a traditional launch by the nature of her jigsaw construction – sections built in six yards around the UK, assembled in a cavernous dry dock in Rosyth – there was no clank and clatter of chains, no leviathan gathering pace down a slipway before plunging into the water for the first time to cheers, horns or fanfares.

It was all rather devoid of motion. But that does not mean it was not memorable.

Instead of clank and clatter, guests were treated to an hour-long audiovisual treat – a mix of the traditional and modern.

The traditional was provided by Scottish pipe bands and the musicians of the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland (based a stone's throw away from the dockyard at MOD Caledonia) with Highland tunes and nautical favourites respectively.

And there was, of course, the age-old religious blessing for the new ship and all who will serve in her.

The modern came courtesy of two giant video displays on which both television footage of the ceremony was displayed – the event was covered by 80 journalists, photographers and cameramen – and swish computer graphics giving an idea of what the Queen Elizabeth, her sister Prince of Wales and the F35B Lightning II jets will bring to the nation.

Indeed, if there was a word to describe the new carrier – aside from simply 'big' – it was 'national'. National asset. National security. National effort.

Aside from the six shipyards who've built the main sections of the ship, some 900 companies – nine out of ten of them British – have provided parts

and equipment, accounting for £2.8bn of the £6.2bn project.

This national effort, which traces its history back to the 1990s, with construction beginning in July 2009, has supported 10,000 jobs.

In sum, said Ian Booth, managing director of the Aircraft Carrier Alliance – the unique fusion of defence industry, Royal Navy and MOD – building HMS Queen Elizabeth had been “a true national endeavour,” “an engineering challenge of unprecedented scale and complexity.”

It was a challenge met, said Mr Booth, by “the very best of British design and ingenuity.”

There are some 17 million parts or items which have gone into the 65,000-tonne leviathan.

And on this day, one part had to work more than any other. The release mechanism for the bottle of Scottish whisky – it's tradition north of the border, rather than champagne – to christen the ship.

Nine times it had been tested during the rehearsals for the naming ceremony.

But still there was a brief moment of anticipation as the Queen stepped up to a large button on the dais and spoke the immortal words which give birth to all great vessels: *I name this ship Queen Elizabeth, may God bless her and all who sail in her.*

(The bottle, for the record, shattered, and the wind briefly carried the smell of a Scottish malt across the dockyard.)

THOSE same words had been uttered on October 16 1913.

For a century before the nation put its faith in another Queen Elizabeth as ultimate safeguard.

When she was commissioned at the end of 1914, the first warship to bear the name was the most powerful and advanced battleship built for the Royal Navy – and something of a gamble (she was oil, not steam powered).

The gamble paid off. The super-dreadnought served with distinction in two world wars.

Seventy years after her final battles, there are a few men still with us who served in her.

Unlike the sailors arrayed on the carrier's flight deck, the previous generation of ratings were not allowed

to wear cap tallies – there limited to sin

Today's a original battl silver Tudor after Elizabe *semper eade*

The new s to live up to Mediterranean over 30 years

“The Que history of be Lt Cdr David when he serv

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her first deployment, they
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some time in the future.
Elizabeth won't be going to
16 and won't be deploying
duties until the end of the

e does so, she will be
flagship – "a source of
and pride for us all." Her
guests as she gave the
blessing, the first time she
a warship since HMS Ocean
decades ago.

en continued: "Wherever
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her, let all those who serve
that on this day she was
the prayers of us all for her
for her safe return to calm

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an carrier, dressed overall
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provided a gunmetal
o proceedings, and a
one were needed, of the

scale of her usurper.

Compared with most of today's
Fleet, Lusty is big. Set against Queen
Elizabeth she doesn't appear quite
as small as the three-times-smaller
displacement suggests.

But stand on the bridge of Illustrious
(which is a long trek up by anyone's
standards) and you're about level with
the (vastly larger) flight deck of the QE.

For as Britain's ranking sailor Admiral
Sir George Zambellas was at pains
to point out, the Queen Elizabeth and
Prince of Wales "are not like-for-like
successors" to the Harrier carriers.

Nor is the F35 a like-for-like successor
to the Harrier. It's two generations
newer – and hence more advanced.

The combination of cutting-edge ship
and cutting-edge strike fighter should,
says the First Sea Lord, inspire both the
Royal Navy and Royal Air Force.

"This is the beginning of a new
partnership with the RAF," Admiral
Zambellas said. "The RAF need us to
make the most of their jets – and we
need the RAF and their jets to make the
most out of these ships."

Sadly, the Lightning II didn't make its
much-heralded debut in UK skies last
month due to snags in the USA, while
Scottish weather put paid to a fly past
by vintage aircraft of the Fleet Air Arm.

But it did not deter Merlins, Lynx,
Wildcat, Baggies, and an RAF Chinook
passing low over the new ship, nor three
Hawk jets of 736 Naval Air Squadron
bringing up the rear – pretty much the
last act of proceedings on the Forth.

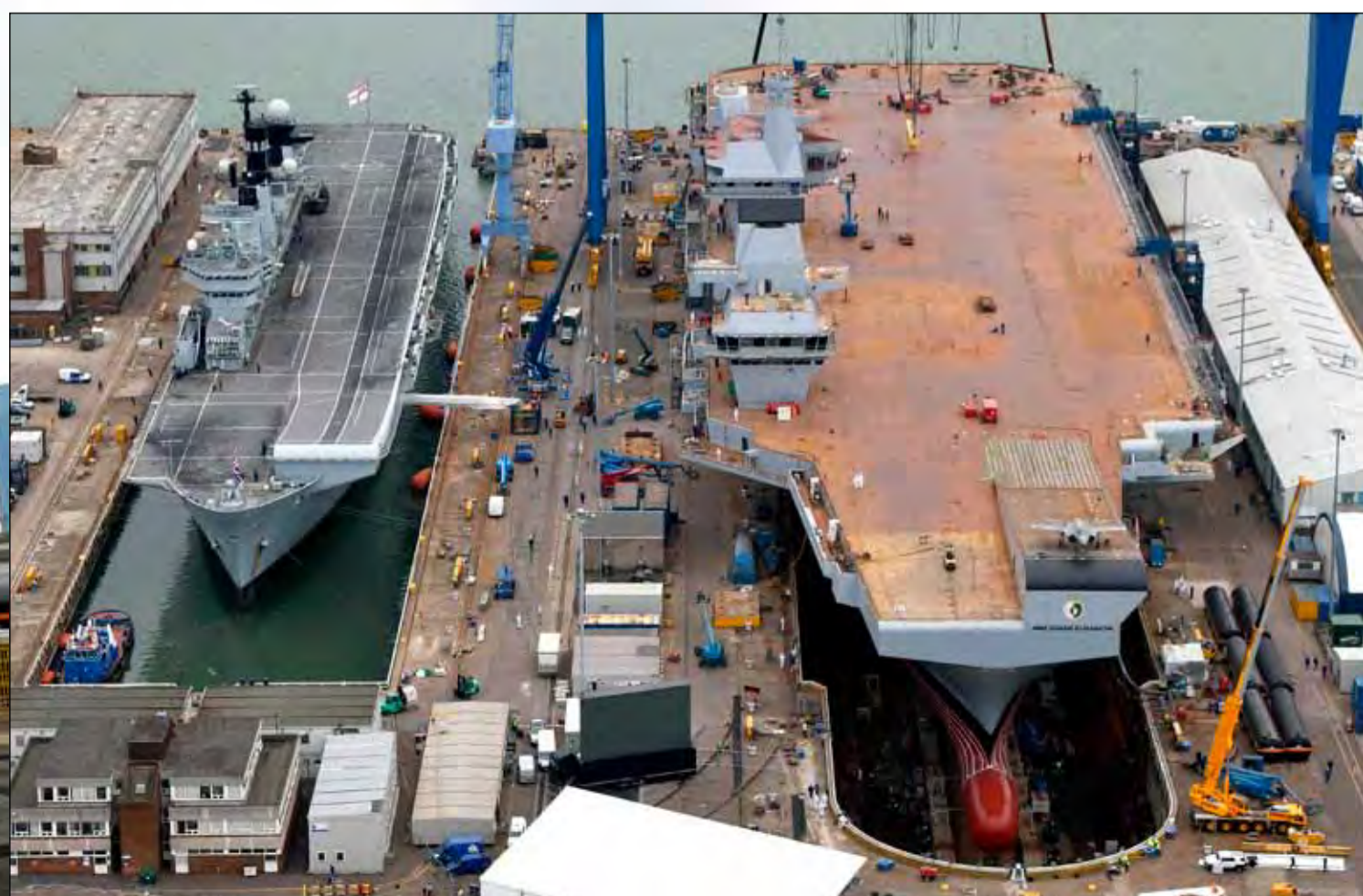
Thus ended a day which the First Sea
Lord welcomed as the beginning of a
"national awakening".

Admiral Zambellas hailed the new
warship as "a steel-clad phoenix" and
"the jewel in the crown of UK defence".

He continued: "Queen Elizabeth
heralds a new dawn for the Royal Navy
and our nation's security. She is the
expression of our national ambition.
Expect to see her ready, with her White
Ensign flying around the world.

"She is a mighty ship – she has
presence, she dwarfs, and she is most
certainly fit for a Queen.

"This is the beginning of a national
icon, keeping the 'great' in Great Britain
and 'royal' in Royal Navy."



Stirling Services

THE focal point of Armed Forces Day moved north of the border again this year – though communities around the UK and abroad played their part in a week of celebrations.

The sixth 'national event' – the cornerstone of an initiative which pays tribute to veterans, serving personnel and cadets – was held in the city of Stirling, three years after the Scottish capital staged their own showpiece.

More than 400 serving men and women marched past the esplanade of Stirling Castle and through the streets of the city, joined by around 1,000 veterans and 200 cadets, including Sea Cadets.

The parade was followed by a drumhead service.

One of the highlights of the Stirling programme was a demonstration by the Yeovilton-based Commando Helicopter Force, represented by two Sea Kings of 845 Naval Air Squadron and a group of Royal Marines Commandos.

In a scenario representing post-conflict peacekeeping duties, a high-profile criminal was identified using the intelligence and surveillance capabilities of a Royal Navy Lynx.

Commandos descended from the hovering Sea Kings, and as they battled with enemy militia, an Army Apache attack helicopter was called in to help the Royals complete their mission successfully.

Later in the afternoon one of the Sea Kings took part in another demonstration, this time evacuating a casualty after a vehicle struck a mine.

Proceedings were brought to a close by a flypast of military aircraft past and present, including the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight.

Detachment Commander Lt Jon Evered said: "It was a huge pleasure to represent Commando Helicopter Force and showcase our capabilities in a role demonstration in front of the people of Stirling."

The Princess Royal, who represented the Queen, said: "It is a pleasure to attend the Armed Forces Day national event in Stirling today."

"This event celebrates and expresses appreciation for the outstanding contribution that the Armed Forces make to the country, and recognises the serving personnel, reservists, cadets and veterans from all three services, and their families."

Around the country cities, towns and villages put on demonstrations of support to the Forces, whether small-scale ceremonies and parties or major events mirroring Stirling – 180 such events were registered with



● Royal Marines Commandos rapid-rope from Sea King helicopters of 845 Naval Air Squadron during an all-action display at the Armed Forces Day arena in Stirling

Picture: PO(Phot) Mez Merrill

national organisers.

Last year's national event host, Nottingham, staged an AFD weekend at Wollaton Hall, including an 'air raid shelter experience' and 1940s-style canteen.

London's tribute to the Forces was staged at Battersea Park, while Carrickfergus in Northern Ireland featured a tri-Service parade.

On Centre Court at Wimbledon, spectators stood for 40 seconds to applaud the Service stewards who have been a permanent fixture at the Championships since 1946, as

the Armed Forces Day flag was raised at the start of the day's play (see p19).

All parts of the military family marked AFD in some way.

The Military Defence Hospital Unit (MDHU) at Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth, for example, manned various stalls in the main reception, and drew attention to the event by placing the fuselage of a military Gazelle helicopter outside.

Another previous national event host city, Cardiff (2010), also held a major celebration, attended by First Sea Lord

Admiral Sir George Zambellas, who was delighted to chat to some younger members of the wider Naval family (see below right).

During the run-up to Armed Forces Day the Maritime Reserve community took the chance to show their true colours on Uniform to Work Day.

Reservists from all three Services, working in a wide range of jobs from the finance sector through Whitehall to small businesses, donned their military uniforms to publicise their 'double life' and acknowledge the support they receive from their employers.

Other initiatives were also tailored to fit the national mood of celebration, such as National Express announcing that veterans and Service leavers applying to work for them will be guaranteed a job interview, building on the company's existing commitment to offer interviews for driving jobs.

● (Left) Representatives of the three Armed Forces at Stirling

Picture: LA(Phot) JJ Massey

● (Above right) Sailors from minehunter HMS Hurworth fly the flag for Armed Forces Day during a visit to HMS Trincomalee in Hartlepool

Picture: Chris Armstrong

● (Right) First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas discusses naval matters with Junior Cadet Tyrell Patterson, of Cardiff Sea Cadet unit, at the Armed Forces Day event in the Welsh capital. The Royal Navy's top officer was later introduced by Tyrell to the rest of his unit



NAVAL Service ships, squadrons, units and establishments played a full part in the national celebration of the Forces community.

Sailors from HMS Hurworth were visiting their adopted community of Hurworth-on-Tees near Darlington, and joined other Service representatives for Armed Forces Day festivities in nearby Hartlepool.

A platoon of sailors from HMS Raleigh put on a marching display for residents at Bickleigh Down Nursing Home by way of a rehearsal for the AFD display on Plymouth Hoe.

Cardiff's AFD event was supported by survey ship HMS Enterprise, which spent two days alongside Britannia Quay while her sailors engaged in a busy programme.

Another ship based in Devonport, Type 23 frigate HMS Portland, flew the flag for Armed Forces Day while on deployment in the South Atlantic, welcoming British Ambassador Lindsay Croisdale-Appleby on board in the Colombian port of Cartagena.

Back home, personnel from RN air station Yeovilton joined the fun in Middle Street, Yeovil, which was crammed with stalls and attractions for AFD, a large Naval contingent led the parade at celebrations in Portsmouth, and a contingent of ten sailors from minehunter HMS Grimsby joined other Service personnel, veterans and cadets at the Cleethorpes and Grimsby parade.

Action-man vicar earns green beret

A CHURCH of England vicar has been awarded the coveted Royal Marines green beret – at the age of 47.

Martin Gainsborough, who is also a professor of politics at Bristol University, spent 13 months training with the Royal Marines Reserves and will now include RMR Bristol as part of his parish.

“The attraction of the Marines is I’m 47 and I wanted to see if I could do it with one of the most elite units in the world,” he said.

“I fancied it as a challenge. The biggest sacrifice over the past year is that I’ve had to miss some family events because of the training.”

Rev Gainsborough, who is priest-in-charge of St Luke’s Church at Barton Hill in Bristol, said: “As a vicar reading about Iraq and Afghanistan over the last few years, I developed a real affinity with what people were going through. I felt I could offer something to people in the Services.”

His RMR training took one evening a week plus one weekend a month and two two-week courses.

“As a chaplain, you are expected to complete exactly the same training as the Marines with the only exception being you do not carry a weapon. Everything else, including all the test standards, are the same – and there is no concession to the fact that I am in my forties,” said the father-of-three.

“Overall, it has been an outstanding experience. It has been brilliant to get fit and to be pushed so hard physically and mentally. As an ex-marathon runner, I enjoy that kind of thing.

“The camaraderie has been fantastic. It has also been very satisfying being able to keep up with the 18-20 somethings.

“The other side of the coin



● Rev Gainsborough takes a breather with his fellow Marines

is that at times the training has been horrendous – being out in all weathers, going without sleep, marching with extremely heavy loads sometimes all night, training on the assault course until you want to drop.

“You learn a huge amount about yourself by doing these things. But also as a priest there is no better way of winning the trust and respect of people than going through the hell of training with them.”

Rev Gainsborough, who was born in Lewisham, south London, said banter with fellow Marines was one of the highlights of his training.

“There are lots of jokes or gentle digs at the padre’s expense. If there is good weather, it is ‘You’ve obviously had a word with the top man, Bish.’

“If there’s bad weather, it is ‘Can’t you do something about this, padre?’ Or, my favourite one when we are doing anything involving getting wet: ‘You’ll be all right, you can walk on water, can’t you Bish?’

Rev Gainsborough, who has been in Bristol for the past ten years, added: “In the time that

I was going through training, I developed a real affection for the people I was training with. Great lads, some are naturally very young – not much older than my own son.

“As a chaplain, you do not have a badge of rank. Rather, you are the rank of whomever you are talking to. As a result, you can stand a little bit apart from the military machine: looking out for people who are vulnerable.

“I would rather the Church be present in the Armed Forces, and especially at times of armed conflict, to minister to the pastoral and spiritual needs of our Servicemen and women.”

Rev Gainsborough, whose wife Mary is a paediatrician, is not the only member of his family in the military – the couple’s 16-year-old son Francis is a Royal Marines Cadet and is considering joining the Corps. The couple also have daughters Annie, 19, and Rosa, eight.

Rev Gainsborough, who has some additional training to complete, added: “I also want to keep fit. I don’t want to let that go, having worked so hard to get where I have.”



● Rev Martin Gainsborough marches over Dartmoor



Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse

● The Royal Marines Band attended the changing of the guard at Windsor Castle

Marines centre of attention

CROWDS of people gathered at Windsor Castle to see the Royal Marines take over the historic duty of guarding the Royal Family.

To mark their 350th anniversary, the Royal Navy’s elite amphibious infantry were on full public duty in London, providing sentries at Buckingham Palace, St James Palace – home to the Prince of Wales, the Duchess of Cornwall and Prince Harry – Windsor Castle and the Tower of London.

The latter witnessed Plymouth-based 1 Assault Group Royal Marines (IAGRM) take part in the historic Ceremony of the Constable’s Dues.

Normally when the Royal Navy berths one of its ships in London, the captain of that vessel delivers a barrel of port to the Constable as a symbol of these ancient rights. The port was delivered by landing craft.

Col Garth Manger, the Commanding Officer of IAGRM, led the ancient ritual as 98 Royal Marines and Royal Naval personnel marched to Tower Green.



● The Ceremony of the Dues

Picture: PO Phot Des Wade





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Royal Marines 350
1664 - 2014
Timeless Distinction

40 Cdo trek to mark RM350

HUNDREDS of Royal Marines and attached ranks from 40 Cdo in Taunton descended onto Dartmoor to complete the iconic 30-mile Commando test.

It is the first time since the World War 2 era an entire Commando unit has finished one of the Commando tests as a complete unit.

More than 500 of the Taunton-based Marines, and sailors, chose to take part in order to celebrate the Royal Marines' 350th anniversary this year, and to collectively complete the test as a formed unit; a reminder of the reason they wear the green beret and Commando flashes on their shoulders.

The legendary 30 miler is the final Commando test, prior to being awarded the coveted green beret and is completed carrying weights and rifle within a set time.

Whilst already Royal Marine Commandos, having earned the green beret through training, this particular challenge was called Exercise Achnacarry Spirt, named after the original Commando training establishment at Achnacarry House, in the highlands of Scotland, which was set up in 1942.

Lt Col Alex Janzen, Commanding Officer of 40 Cdo, said: "It was an enormous privilege to mark the 350th year of the Royal Marines by conducting the first full unit level Commando Test since 1942."

WO2 Doug Hickin, who completed this 30 miler 33 years to the week of completing his original one, said: "It felt just as good finishing today as it did 33 years ago in training."

"It was extra special to be just another Marine out there completing it as a collective member of 40 Commando."

40 Cdo are currently part of the UK's Lead Commando Group.

Battle on for brigade trophy



ALL Royal Marines brigade units took part in the first Brigade Regimental Sergeant Major's Challenge on Dartmoor. Teams of 12 undertook a 45km patrol competition to test their combat fitness, navigation, military skills, live firing and vertical assault techniques.

Sgt Geoff Howie, 28, of the Surveillance and Reconnaissance Regiment (30 Cdo), said: "This has been a great challenge – hard on the feet, but this is exactly what we do as Marines."

The challenge started at 7am with the last man crossing the finishing line at

9pm. The trophy was presented by the Brigade Commander, Brigadier S Birrell, to Cdo Logs Reg.

Second were 40 Cdo, with 45 Cdo finishing third.

The Brigade RSM Challenge will be run every two years.



● Men from 3 Cdo took part in the first Brigade Regimental Sergeant Major's Challenge on Dartmoor, which included abseiling and shooting

Pictures: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse

Driving 3,000 miles to help charities

A GROUP of serving and former Royal Navy personnel are preparing for a 3,000-mile car rally to raise funds for two charities.

The seven-day adventure, which begins at Dover Castle and ends in Spain, kicks off on September 1 and the 24-strong team hopes to raise at least £10,000 for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Children's Fund.

The endurance drive is the brainchild of L/Cpl Paul Newland, from Commando Logistics Regiment, and former PO (Wren) Fiona Laing, herself a seasoned rally driver.

Fourteen cars will be driven by a number of serving and formers of the RN and RM who will be waved off by members of Deal RMA and the Green Beret Association.

The team will split the driving into eight-hour shifts through France and on to the Pyrenees and Andorra.

The group will have to deal with some of the toughest rally challenges available including the Gorges de Galamus – which



● Some of the personnel taking part in the rally challenge

is listed as one of the world's most dangerous roads – as well as the Col du Tourmalet in the Pyrenees and other mountain passes.

The culmination of the event will be a wreath-laying ceremony at the Cockleshell Heroes memorial at Bordeaux, which will be performed by L/Cpl Newland Cdo Log Reg, and C/Sgt Mark Thompson from 40 Cdo and former Marine Yorkie

Malone as well as wreaths from various RMA and RN units.

"After only one month of fundraising the funds already stand at over £8,000 so the team hope to smash that figure with support from friends and colleagues," said Fiona.

"We just can't believe how supportive and generous people have been, it's good to be reminded that the RN/RM community is simply amazing."

All expenses are met by the drivers with 100 per cent of the money raised going to the RMCTF and RNRMCF.

"The event has pulled in massive interest and already a rally for next year has also been organised and we would love to have teams from other branches of the Armed Forces," said Fiona.

For more information visit the team website, www.raceforfreedom.co.uk or follow them on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Race-for-Freedom/199125986941566>.

If you would like to help the team raise funds or attend a fund-raising event please contact Fiona Laing either via the *Race for Freedom* Facebook page or text 07528144933

The entry cost for the rally is £30 and each car must raise a minimum of £500. All monies raised go directly to the charities via a Virgin Just Giving Page <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserPage.action?userId=199125986941566&fald=393960&isTeam=true>

Rock Run highlight of visit

A GROUP of UK personnel from Strike and Support Forces, NATO, Lisbon, headed to Gibraltar to mark the Royal Marines' 350th anniversary.

LS Mo Morris, who organised the trip, said: "Here in Lisbon we are a small but tight unit and all our UK personnel are from either the Royal Navy or Royal Marines, so when it comes to anniversaries or events we like to celebrate together whether that be Trafalgar night or the Royal Marines birthday."

"It was very important for us to support such a significant anniversary for our RM colleagues and where better to do this than Gibraltar."

As well as managing to fit in a visit to the Governor Lt Gen Sir Jim Dutton, a former Royal Marines officer they also undertook a tour of the Lower St Michael Caves to learn about some of the history of the Rock.

The sailors and marines all participated in the obligatory Rock Run, which was won by Lt Col Martin Collin.

WTR Ben Godby, the youngest member of the trip, said: "Gibraltar was my first-ever foreign run ashore when I was deployed on HMS Argyll in 2011-12. I didn't have a lot of time to see the country so this was a great opportunity to see the history and strategic importance of the territory."

Capital ending to RM 1664 Challenge



● The 1664 baton is carried down the Clyde

THE epic 1664 Challenge to mark the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines culminated in a speed march around London at the end of last month.

The 1664 Challenge Baton travelled around the UK mirroring the Queen's Baton Relay which heralded the Commonwealth Games. The baton was carried by six marines, who have completed the 1664 Challenge, which involved skiing, sailing, cycling and then running 1664 kilometres around Europe (with a kayak across the English Channel thrown in) to raise money for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund.

One of the super six is Faslane-based L/Cpl Matt Robb of 43 Commando.

The 27-year-old joined the Royal Marines in 2009, after completing 32 weeks of arduous training to pass-out as a Royal Marines Commando. He said: "When I first heard about the Challenge

I thought it sounded amazing: not only because of the ambitious scale and physical nature of the event, but also because it's main aim is to help raise awareness and money for injured Marines. The Corps is a brotherhood: we look after each other, and this is something that I can do to help others."

Around 70 hardy Marines from 43 Cdo helped the original six carry the baton to the top of Scotland's three highest peaks – Braeriach, Ben Macdui and Ben Nevis and then speed marched from Nevis up the A82 to Spean Bridge.

There, the Scottish involvement ended at the iconic Spean Bridge Commando Memorial – the spiritual home of Royal Marines Commandos.

The baton was handed over to Reservists from RMR London for the trip south. It's hoped that the Challenge will amass over £500,000 for the RMCTF.



● The 1664 team at the Spean Bridge Commando Memorial

Follow the Royal Marines during their anniversary year at www.Royalnavy.mod.uk/RM350

Rescuing crew from Swift



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

I READ the D-Day stories in *Navy News*, particularly the account of the sinking of the Norwegian destroyer Svanen and how HMS Swift went to the rescue and picked up survivors.

Less than three weeks later, HMS Swift hit a mine. I was a Royal Marine gunner on Landing Craft Gun (Large) 424 on our way from the Trout Line, the Support Squadron Eastern Flank.

I had just come off watch and went below. On hearing a loud explosion I got on deck to see the Swift with her back broken and going down.

The skipper of our craft gave the order to release all floats

and come alongside the Swift – a very courageous and brave bit of seamanship. We took off many survivors from the deck and the sea.

I distinctly remember throwing a line to a seaman and he got hold and I got him aboard. To this day I don't know how he held on to that line as his hands were badly burned. I often wonder what happened to him or if he survived.

I think our skipper was Lt Offield RNRVR but I know our gunnery officer was a Royal Marine, Lt EA Clark, from Cheadle Hume.

J A McGhee
(Ex-RM, landed Sword beach)
Cowdenbeath



● A young J A McGhee

Memories of kit overboard

THE letter in June's *Navy News* from Ed Baker about his kit muster reminded me of a funny incident when I was serving in HMS Diamond in the Far East in the later 1960s.

We had Admiral's Divisions in Singapore, followed by the inevitable kit muster and mess inspection.

I was Killick of the Mess at the time and reported the S&S squad to the admiral at divisions before proceeding to the mess deck.

One of our squad was asked to lay his kit out on X gun deck. Once the admiral had gone past our division my shipmate and I went forward to the mess, me to do the final tidying up and my shipmate to get his kit out of his locker. I won't name him but he will know who he is.

As he was packing his kit into his kitbag, he was cursing as he

seemed to be the S&S rating who was picked to lay his kit out.

He was over 6ft and unfortunately for him, much of his kit never fitted very well, making him a strong candidate for inspection.

He returned to the mess five minutes later. When I asked what he was doing he said he had just ditched his kit over the side into the harbour.

All the rest of the ship's company, who by this time were on the quarterdeck having a cigarette, saw all these neatly-folded pieces of kit floating down the water.

The supply officer was not very happy and neither was my shipmate after getting 'five days of nines' (extra duties) from the skipper for his efforts.

David Nairne
Portsmouth

Frogmen played key role for D-Day

I OPENED the otherwise splendid D-Day 70 supplements in *Navy News* expecting at least one of them to state: "The first men ashore on D-Day were the frogmen of the RN & RM Landing Craft Obstruction Clearance Units (LCOCUs)."

Disappointingly, there was no mention of these vital units at all.

The following excerpt is taken from pages *The Frogmen - The Story of the Wartime Underwater Operators* by T J Waldron and James Gleeson (Evans Brothers Ltd, London, November 1950).

"The first men ashore on D-Day were frogmen; this time they were called Landing Craft Obstruction Clearance Units [LCOCUs pronounced Lock-yews]."

"There were a 120 of them and their object was to clear away the underwater obstructions and mines so that the assault craft could get on to the beach.

"A long time before the invasion of Normandy it had

become apparent to us that the much vaunted Western Wall of the enemy extended not only to the shores of Europe but beyond them, and into the sea.

"This extension of the wall consisted of formidable obstacles laid right down to the low-water line in such a manner that they would soon be covered by a rising tide.

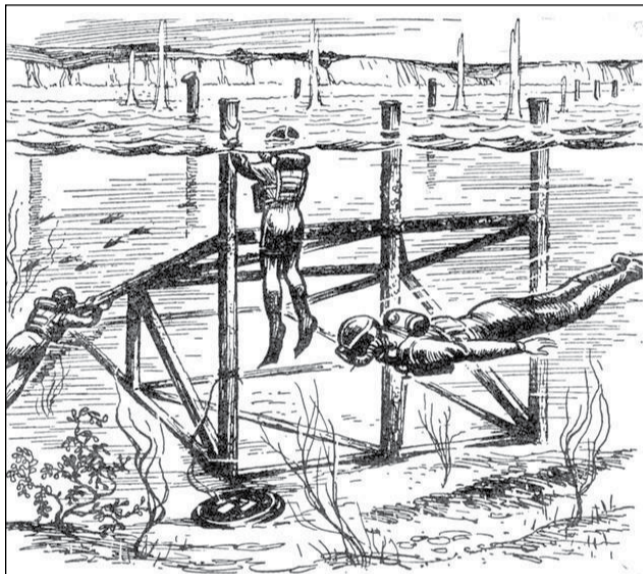
"The most formidable of these obstacles was known as Element C.

"It was a two-and-a-half-ton mass of steel, constructed like a picket fence.

"Thirty-six small charges were placed at different positions on the obstruction and when they were all exploded it fell to pieces, and no part of it was more than 18 inches above the sea bottom."

Rob Hoole
Lt Cdr RN (Rtd)

Editor's footnote: Sadly, space prevented us from mentioning every unit involved in the Normandy Landings.



● Frogmen working on Element C. Image from 'The Frogmen - The Story of the Wartime Underwater Operators'

Soap ransom on scam-bag day

IN reply to Ed Baker's letter about his kit. On seeing the picture of his muster I thought it was 'scram-bag' day.

Any articles or kit found skulking about on the mess decks by the Buffer was banished to the scam-bag.

This was a secure area which was kept locked until the Buffer decided to ransom the contents. These were brought up to the upper deck and scattered around for inspection. Anyone recognizing their kit had to pay the Buffer in Pusser's lard (soap).

Anything not claimed was ditched over the side.

I have enclosed a copy of a kit muster in 1937 at HMS St Vincent. I see the wooden ditty box has disappeared, also a prayer book. Woe betide anyone whose kit wasn't immaculate.

I am 91 and joined St Vincent in 1937, probably the last class before the war started on September 3 1939.

CA 'Tom' Day
Dorset



● Tom Day's kit laid out at HMS St Vincent

Time on Girdle Ness

SEEING your photographic memories in the June edition of *Navy News* reminds me of my last commission before leaving the Royal Navy.

I did two commissions of two-and-a-half years in the Med and Far East. In fact I was in Malta every year from 1951 to 1958.

My last ship was HMS Girdle Ness, the guided weapons trials ship, mounting a triple launcher for Sea Slug missiles.

I joined her on April 9 1958

as a telegraphist. The crew were messed in the after hold, all the crew were together. We had a separate mess table for each branch.

We sailed to Malta for test firings of Sea Slug, returning to Devonport on the old Ark Royal for demob in December 1958.

We carried some boffins on board who were messed forward with the officers and chiefs.

A Wright
Nottinghamshire

Rocket over watch

I WAS among a group of about 100 who joined HMS Fisgard in January 1966 and after a couple of months we were sent to a Plymouth-based Ton-class minesweeper for a week.

Halfway through our week we arrived in Falmouth and I was detailed to be the corporal of the gangway for the first watch.

After an hour he said: 'I'm going below for a bit, you'll be OK.' What he had failed to say was, firstly we were on spring

tides and secondly it was the gangway staff's duty to slacken the mooring wires.

An officer came screaming out of the wardroom. I turned to look back and the ship was straining at the wires, canted over at an angle of about 20 degrees. All hell broke loose as the ship's company slackened the moorings. I didn't get a rocket, but I believe he did.

David 'Nobby' Clark
St Albans, Herts

Laundry in the nude

ED Baker's letter was interesting. Things certainly change in a few years.

I was a St Vincent boy during 1949. The point I am writing about is the Pusser's dirk. During my time no boy was permitted to be in possession of a knife.

The Pusser's dirk was issued to us on the day we marched out of the gate for the last time.

All items of kit were stamped with white or black paint. Blue clothing names to be sewn in with red silk. We also wore duck suits until they were replaced by No8s in the middle of the year.

Duck suits were rather an off-white colour until they had been dhobyed a few times, they

gradually became white.

They were rather a course material and when wet were very stiff. We had to put them on the deck and give them a good scrub. This we did in the nude. Boys who joined before us were issued with woolly-type white fronts.

I am sure the carrier Albion didn't see action in the Korean war as it ended in 1953. She was commissioned in 1954.

Finally I must mention that myself and another boy were Midshipman's hammock boys. Cdre Michael Clapp was one of them at that time. We were paid a penny per day for this job.

AJ Weth
Alton, Hampshire

Plea for pictures

I AM researching my father's time in the Navy as a telegraphist from 1939-46.

I am appealing for information or photographs, either of telegraphists generally or the shore stations on which he served.

They are: HMS St George, Mercury, Scotia, Collingwood, Kipanga, Korongo, Tana, Bherunda, Ratamalana, Rajaliya, Braganza and Mayina. I have researched these stations and have a few photos from the web, of Mercury, and the Puttalam elephants.

Melanie Price
Wales
Melanieprice@care2.com

Eskimo's last days

REGARDING your Mystery Ship competition for June:

I carried out some research on the world cruise of HMS Caprice in 1968 and found that she was relieved on the Beira Patrol by HMS Eskimo, the mystery ship.

Further delving revealed that there were several conclusions to the ultimate fate of the Tribal-

class frigate. My research showed that after being laid up and used for spare parts for her two sisters sold to Indonesia, she was used as a target in Wales.

Although badly damaged, she was not sunk but ended her days in a scrapyard in Spain, arriving in Bilbao under tow on May 19 1992.

Ian Richardson
Durham

Albion answer

WITH reference to your statement on Page 38 of June's *Navy News*, that HMS Albion served in the Korean War, I fear that you have been misled.

I served in that conflict from 1950-1953 on board HMS Glory but at no time did I meet the Albion (at least in that conflict).

Maybe the fact that she wasn't commissioned until May 1954 had something to do with it.

BR Hudson
Middlesex



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.

Hefty job for crew

THE crew of Faslane-based HMS Blyth have a huge weight on their collective minds as their deployment to the Mediterranean continues... about 4,000 tonnes to be exact.

In keeping with what has become a naval tradition, the ship's company of the mine countermeasures vessel are supporting charities during their current NATO deployment.

Their mission: to weight-lift the equivalent of the seven Sandown-Class mine hunters that form the First Mine Countermeasures Squadron based on the Gareloch. A target just shy of 4,000 tonnes.

A makeshift gym on the ship's deck is festooned with weight-lifting apparatus, with Operations Officer Lt Ian McClelland setting the pace, having moved a little over 36 tonnes on his own.

"Many people in the Navy use deployments as an opportunity to get fit," said AB Richard Cook, a civilian physical training instructor before joining the Navy and now an enthusiastic participant in the challenge onboard.

"This makes it fun for everyone and motivates people to push hard to achieve their goals whilst supporting some worthwhile causes."

The crew's chosen charities are the RNRMC and Tiny Lives, a neonatal unit based in the north east of England.

Mission accomplished

AFTER months of training, a serving Royal Marine from Winchester and his team of cyclists took on an epic charity cycling challenge in aid of the organisations that helped save his life.

Last summer Major Paul Spanner RM suffered a near-fatal bicycle accident which left him with severe spinal injuries and in need of months of rehabilitation.

This summer, Maj Spanner and a peloton of riders from the Armed Forces embarked on The Towers Challenge – a cycling event – that saw the group ride from London's Tower Bridge to the Eiffel Tower in Paris in just 42 hours.

The team are still actively fundraising. To support them visit www.thetowerschallenge.com



● From left, C/Sgt Williams, Stephanie Kayirangwa, Daniel Jagger, WO1 Hayman, Bob Mullen, C/Sgt Crofts, Nathaniel Boarer and CPO Guest with the new range of chilli chutney sauces

Pictures: LA(PHOT) Keith Morgan

Setting palates on fire

A GROUP of Royal Navy sailors and Royal Marines have designed a range of chilli chutney sauces in an attempt to set palates and supermarket shelves on fire, raising cash for charity in the process.

While the chutneys will predominantly be stocked in local retailers, the team behind the range has already scored a major internal partnership with the Royal Navy Museum in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Acceptance of the fiery condiment has already been beyond the team's wildest dreams with £1,000 worth of orders taken over the first weekend of production following a teaser announcement on social media sites.

The bulk of profit from the collection of six sauces – which range from extremely hot, to mild heat in taste – will go to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Daniel Jagger, Operations

Manager for the RNRMC, said: "This chilli chutney range represents an inspired way for our serving force to raise money for their charity and we hope that others will continue to be just as inventive."

Currently on sale through the website www.thousandhills.co.uk, a Portsmouth-based company, it is hoped the £2.50 jars will soon be lining the shelves of major supermarket chains. Buyers from some of the country's biggest names have been in touch and the masterminds behind the range are awaiting follow-up calls.

WO1 Simon Hayman, the Base Warrant Officer of HMS Excellent on Whale Island in Portsmouth, and WO1 Miles Hall RM, are the brains behind the project.

"There is already a Commando chilli chutney range that was being used in the dining halls on the island and I saw a chance to create a Royal Navy product that

could also be sold externally to raise money for charity."

The team – which is made up of Simon, Miles, C/Sgt Andy Crofts, CPO Stu Guest, C/Sgt Taff Williams and Bob Mullen, an ex-Chief in the Royal Navy – also conducted their own market research.

The final six products are all based on Royal Navy 'Jackspeak' – vocabulary that is individual to the Service – to give it a unique place on supermarket shelves.

These are 'Harry Redders', an extremely hot chilli chutney; 'Redders', a hot chilli chutney; 'Beach Banyan', a tomato chilli chutney; 'Nozzer', a mild garlic and chilli variety; 'Flight Deck', a barbecue flavoured chilli chutney; and 'Sundodger', an apple, cinnamon and chilli compot. There is also a 'Scran Rescue Kit' which is made up of four miniature bottles of chutneys that are all tied together.

For more details go to www.facebook.com/rnchillisauces.

EVENTS

AUG
2-3

Commemorations

See a variety of exhibits from WW1 to the present day, including a Field of Remembrance, at Gateshead Metrocentre to mark the 100th anniversary of WW1. The exhibits will also include a full-scale Spitfire, an RAF Hawk jet, Army jeeps, a field hospital and a Marine climbing wall.

AUG
1-23

Military Tattoo

Taking place on the esplanade of Edinburgh's iconic castle, expect a series of unforgettable evenings of music, ceremony, theatre and dance. Visit edintattoo.co.uk for details.

OCT
26

Great South Run

This ten-mile course in Portsmouth takes in the Naval dockyard, the city and the waterfront. Runners with their own place can still fundraise for the RNRMC. Contact Hilary on 023 9254 8416.

Top chefs

CHEFS from 30 Cdo won the RNRMC field cookery competition at CTCRM.

The team of LH Ashall, AB Garlick and AB McCabe beat teams from Cdo Logistic Regiment in the RNRMC-sponsored contest.

AB McCabe also won best overall chef title. Eight teams took part in the contest and had to produce two courses for ten people.

FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH

HMS VANGUARD STBD CREW

WHEN they're not spending their time underwater, the canny crew of HMS Vanguard STBD can mostly be found raising incredible sums of cash for charity.

A Land's End to John O'Groats cycle challenge; Mess auction; darts night and BBQ raffle have netted nearly £3,000 – with more cash to come.

For tickets and more information visit
wiggle.co.uk/portsmouth-triathlon

31ST AUGUST 2014 - CASTLE FIELD.
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Swim in the open water of the Solent. Cycle and run on closed roads past Portsmouth's visitor attractions including a section of the historic Naval Base

In partnership with:

Historic first for charity and ship

THE naming ceremony of HMS Queen Elizabeth – the Royal Navy's newest aircraft carrier – heralds a historic occasion for the Royal Navy and its charity.

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity – the principal strategic charity of the Royal Navy – is also the inaugural charity affiliated to HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Vice Admiral Sir Richard Ibbotson, chairman of the charity said: "This is an extraordinary day. On behalf of the trustees and the charity's beneficiaries I send my best wishes to the ship's company of HMS Queen Elizabeth, the Aircraft Carrier Alliance and everyone involved in her construction."

Party marks 150th anniversary of flag

TO celebrate the 150th anniversary of the White Ensign assuming its primary status, two naval charities – the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and the White Ensign Association – united in celebration at HMS President.

The charity, which improves the lives of all who serve – past and present – and their families, is proud of its affiliation to the carrier.

The chairman continued: "The charity's special relationship with HMS Queen Elizabeth enabled it to reach out and help the Naval Service personnel based in Rosyth from the very start of the project.

"We recognised some time ago that, for sailors living on the base, the domestic and recreational facilities were in desperate need of an overhaul so we stepped in and awarded a grant for over £135,000 to make those much-needed improvements. Now the Warrant Officers' and Senior Rates' Mess, and the Junior Rates bar, provide the ideal setting for sailors to unwind."

Admiral Sir Jonathon Band, president of the charity and chairman of the White Ensign Association, said: "The White Ensign is the globally recognised symbol of the Royal Navy. Nelson led his fleet in HMS Victory at Trafalgar under this flag, and

An influx of personnel will be assigned to HMS Queen Elizabeth as her fit-out and sea trials get under way.

As personnel numbers increase so will the numbers of grant applications and requests for support made to the charity.

The charity already awards grants to every ship, submarine, air crew and Marine unit on international deployments in addition to funding initiatives that boost morale, encourage efficiencies and support local families.

Capt Jerry Kyd, Commanding Officer Designate, said: "I am in no doubt that all of HMS Queen Elizabeth's personnel will benefit from the special relationship with the charity."

In the week after Her Majesty named the Navy's newest aircraft carrier and national defence asset, HMS Queen Elizabeth, it is fitting that we mark this historic day."

In 2013 alone, the charity distributed £7.2m to the Naval family.

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Victory all round in cake contest

VICTORY Squadron held a third successful Great Cake Bake at HMS Collingwood in support of the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust.

Naval personnel and civilians across the base were invited to take part in the Cake Bake in a bid to win one of the three prizes up for grabs.

Judging the offerings were Commanding Officer of HMS Collingwood Capt Steve Dainton, Corinne Day, Events and Publicity Officer from the RNBT and Cdrs Perry Stowell and Heather Rimmer.

Participants were competing in three categories; best looking, best tasting and best shop bought.

Capt Dainton said: "I think we've had a wonderful morning and it's great to see everyone getting involved. It is a difficult job tasting all these lovely cakes."

After consideration of the 20 entries, the winners were Interserve employee Alison Couchman, Staff Executive Assistant (best looking cake), Corinne Day (Best shop bought) and LH Tracy Wilson (best tasting).

The winners each received a small statue representing a chef. Speaking about her consecutive success for winning the best-looking cake award for the third time, Alison said "I am speechless, just pleased as always to have raised more money for the RNBT."

In addition, the Cake Bake provided Victory Squadron (VS) with an excellent platform to launch the Name-a-Rhino game.

Following on from a successful year supporting the Marwell Zoo's Go! Rhino Campaign, the zoo donated a rhino to VS.

Stokes Gallery in Gosport painted the rhino in sailor attire and VS invited everyone to name the Rhino. Lt Cdr Gill's suggestion was selected and so 'Roughers' will now be mounted outside VS.

In total £430 was raised for the RNBT.

Cash for projects

TWO Helensburgh community initiatives have benefited to the tune of tens of thousands of pounds thanks to funding from the Armed Forces Grant Scheme.

Gareloch Riding for the Disabled and a community play park in Colgrain have both been given a cash injection by the Grant Scheme's Panel.

The Scheme was launched by the MOD as part of the Armed Forces Community Covenant with money provided by the Treasury from the LIBOR bank fines.

Gareloch Riding for the Disabled was awarded £10,000 of funding towards purchasing equipment for both riders and horses.

Kate Bennet, who runs the riding school activities from Colgrain Equestrian Centre, said: "The funds will be put towards the costly maintenance of the group's ponies, essential safety equipment together with the provision of publicity material to advertise our work, both for potential participants and just as important volunteers."

The community play park in Redgauntlet Road, Colgrain, was awarded £26,000 of funding, which will pay for an upgrade to include new swings, climbing frames and a zip slide.

Flying the flag for good causes

ROYAL Navy Chaplain Andrew Hiller and Lt Cdr Gordon Jones fly the White Ensign on Mount Everest.

The two, currently on exchange in Norfolk, Virginia, flew to Nepal to trek to Mount Everest Base Camp, to raise

money for the Royal British Legion and the Wounded Warrior Project.

Andrew said: "I've dreamed of seeing Mount Everest for 25 years, so to finally do so was absolutely fantastic.

"Being able to raise money for two

such worthy causes in the process has just made the experience even better."

Gordon added: "This was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. Actually hoisting the Ensign at Base Camp made carrying it all the way up there well worthwhile."



Holiday treat offers respite for Louise

THINGS are looking rosy for a Portsmouth teenager who suffers from a rare disease.

As *Navy News* went to press, Louise Dalgeish was looking forward to the holiday of a lifetime – and a charity donation by the Royal Navy will be used for research into the disease, Fanconi anaemia.

No one would argue that the 13-year-old deserves a bit of a break.

Louise was diagnosed with the genetic disease at the age of six – a condition that brings a high probability of bone marrow failure and other life-limiting medical issues, including a predisposition to head, neck and other cancers.

Her treatment involved a bone marrow transplant, which was carried out a couple of years ago at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington, involving a stay of more than six months.

Having suffered numerous complications, Louise left St Mary's to return home with her mother – only to be involved in a road crash the same day which saw her go straight back into hospital.

It is thought she fractured her sternum – but doctors could not be sure, as her state of health precluded the use of X-rays. She is still having physiotherapy as a result of the accident.

Currently, though, Louise is feeling well enough, and was



● Louise Dalgeish is looking forward to a holiday of a lifetime

Picture: LA(Phot) Gary Weatherston

looking forward to a three-week family holiday to the United States, taking in Chicago, the West Coast, Las Vegas and the Grand Canyon.

The family opted for the States as this is the first time in seven years that Louise has been well enough to travel in an aircraft.

When Louise was diagnosed, her mother and father, Jeannie and Bob, struggled to find information on the disease as it is so rare – only one in 350,000

people in the UK suffer from it.

So, prompted by Louise's consultant, Dr Mary Morgan, they helped to set up the charity Fanconi Hope, which promotes understanding and research into the condition. The charity came to the attention of the sailors of HMS Excellent, who adopted it.

Louise and her parents visited the establishment with Dr Morgan to pick up a cheque for £3,512.88.

"If it wasn't for the people doing this, and the Royal Navy raising money, there would be no meaningful research because the condition is so rare," said Jeannie.

Dr Morgan added: "It is a very rare condition and the general public doesn't know about it, so it doesn't attract a lot of money – and what money is raised is usually through people who have a family member who is affected.

"This is not a large sum of money, but this sort of funding can make such a difference."

Such research has made a difference in a relatively short space of time, with life expectancy increasing by 50 per cent in the past decade. Improved understanding of how treatments such as bone marrow transplants work means more appropriate care and fewer complications.

Fanconi anaemia sufferers can live reasonably normal lives, though there are certain restrictions such as avoiding smoking and alcohol. Not a problem in Louise's case...

At the same informal ceremony in the Rose Garden on Whale Island, the Commanding Officer of HMS Excellent, Cdr Martin Evans, also handed a cheque to the RNRMC for £619.92 – the money for both charities was raised by a number of social and fundraising events involving personnel and civilians who work at HMS Excellent.

For more details about Fanconi visit www.fanconi.org.uk



LIFE really was a beach for a group of young Submarine Qualifier trainees from HM Naval Base Clyde when they enlisted to help out at the Loch Lomond and Trossachs National Park.

The group of trainees, from all around the UK, are currently being put through their paces at Faslane in order to qualify for the Submarine Service, instruction which encompasses classroom sessions – the so-called 'dry phase' – and more specialist training in submarines on deployment.

But in a break in formal training, instructors took the young men on a two-day team-building exercise.

The lads split into two groups: the first stayed at the Park's Balloch headquarters to break up and shift a large pile of cobbles while the other group travelled to Loch Venacher to assist the park rangers in removing debris from campsites.

The next day, all 23 students and three instructors travelled to Balmaha and got the ferry onto Inchcailloch island where they assisted the rangers in beach reclamation, (pictured) moving the sand to recreate a beach front.

Charity Snippets

■ The Jolly Sailor Public House in Southsea was host to a variety of events to help raise funds and awareness for the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust.

The driving force behind the venture was Sandie Dixon, who has held similar events at the Barley Mow.

Live music was played by the M27's and Sea Shanties from The Deck and Fo'c'sle Men, a raffle, guess the weight of the cake contest and an appearance by Pirate Mike in his dinghy. The events raised more than £250 for the RNBT.

■ Yeovil MP David Laws met with team members and participants of this summer's eight-day rally adventure at RNAS Yeovilton.

The epic driving event aims to raise more than £100,000 for the UK's oldest military charity, SSAFA.

Heading up the visit was rally team member and Royal Navy WO Baz Firth, who said: "It was a great opportunity for us all to be able to show David how proud we are in our efforts towards raising £100,000 for SSAFA."

■ A leading military charity has thanked the Freemasons' Grand Charity for its donation of £50,000 towards a major refurbishment of its rehabilitation and training centre for blind veterans in Brighton.

Blind Veterans UK was presented with a cheque for £50,000. The donation will go towards a refurbishment of the centre's first-floor facilities, which are used by the charity's blind veterans as permanent residential care. The majority of the centre is used by blind veterans visiting on a temporary basis for training and holidays.

■ Members of Castaway House, the home of Naval charities based in Portsmouth, supported a fellow charity with its Get Stripey Day.

Seafarers UK each year hold the 'get stripey' event to support seafarers throughout the nation and their families in times of need.

Prizes were awarded for the best outfit, which was won by RNBT's Events and Publicity Officer Corinne Day.

■ FAA Engineer Officer Lt Cdr Rob Evans, 44, DE&S Airworthiness Team (DAT) at MOD Abbey Wood, and Submariner PO(CA) Alastair Fergie, 37, HMS Drake, cycled from Brussels to London via places synonymous with World War 1, including Mons, Arras, Amiens, Compiègne.

The two cyclists were joined by other sailors past and present to support Help for Heroes to raise funds towards a target of £1m. They were part of a team of 300 individuals from the Armed Forces, retired Service personnel and civilians from around the country.

Rob and Alastair have so far raised in excess of £5,000.

■ Five employees from a property and construction business have had a taste of Royal Navy training after their company successfully bid for a VIP experience day at a charity auction.

The group, who work for GB Group, spent a day at Britannia Royal Naval College.

The prize was donated by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir George Zambellas, to raise money for the RNRMC and Guide Dogs for the Blind Association.

■ BLESMA, the military charity which supports limbless veterans, is joining forces with the Mad Dog Casting agency to offer injured members of the Armed Forces the opportunity to be a TV or movie star.

Those BLESMA members who are interested should go to <http://home.maddogcasting.com/register/artistform>.

Faraday

THE latest SIP/Faraday Rapid Improvement Event (RIE) was held in Devonport, primarily aimed at the ESM community.

The RIE was focused on engineering support on the waterfront and how things can be improved.

Key personnel from Faslane were in attendance to highlight any best practice and experiences learned during a similar event held in Faslane earlier in the year.

Many valuable points were noted and analysis of how best to resolve the issues is being conducted by the SIP Team.

The Royal Navy Reserves Engineering Branch was launched on June 30, under the leadership of Cdr Stephen Murphy RNR.

This cadre will give opportunities for uniformed engineers to transfer across to the engineering reserves branch. This will allow ex-engineers to continue to use and maintain their valuable competences and skills and to stay in contact with the RN.

There have been more than 100 expressions of interest so far. Are you leaving the RN soon or know someone who has left and maybe interested?

More details regarding the Engineering Reserves can be found in RNTM 157-14.

Our JIVE community continues to grow with most units now having Faraday Ambassadors acting as focal points for JIVE in their areas.

JIVE is the social media platform accessed via the Defence Gateway and acts as a one-stop shop for information, an area to ask questions, start topical debate and view the latest Faraday/SIP RNTMs and progress.

The Faraday team will let you know what has been happening during August in next month's article. If you have any questions or comments on Programme Faraday or JIVE then please contact WO1 Sharky Ward on 93832 7441 or via e-mail navypers-faraday WO1a.

The Programme Faraday Intranet site can be found via the A-Z. If you have any questions or comments on SIP, then contact Mark Lawther on 93832 7260 or via e-mail navyssm-industry member1.

■ RNR engineers, see page 32



● Royal Navy personnel took part in London Pride

Picture: SAC Ash Reynolds, RAF



● Keri-anne Payne and Michael Jamieson in Portsmouth

LGBT highlights

MORE than 120 personnel from across the three Armed Forces and the MOD Civil Service have taken part in this year's Quad LGBT conference.

The annual event took on a different guise this year as a leadership summit and was primarily workshop-based. Employees from across the four Services were asked to evaluate their employer's performance in looking after their LGBT staff and the ideal overall picture of defence and LGBT employees.

It was attended by Diversity Champions from across the Services, including Brigadier Peter Cameron, the Naval Service's LGBT Advocate and Warrant Officer Vic Parsons, the Naval Service's LGBT Associate Advocate.

"The Naval Service recruits

from a diverse population and we advertise ourselves as an inclusive employer," said Brig Cameron.

The following day more than 130 LGBT Service personnel and their straight allies attended the London Pride march.

Representatives from the Civil Service, RFA and SSAFA also joined in, with this year's Naval turnout as the highest ever seen.

Led by Lt Cdr Hannah MacKenzie from HMS Wildfire, the Naval Service marched through the rain amid cheering crowds.

The MOD LGBT Forum will be running a Role Models course at the Defence Academy, Shrivenham on September 17.

For more details visit defenceintranet.diif.r.mil.uk/News/Announcements/Pages/LGBTRoleModelsCourse.aspx

Navy's new pool partners

THE Royal Navy has announced a partnership with British Swimming that will see the two organisations showcase the multiple opportunities available to recruits and the possibilities of a career in the Service.

The parallels between the two organisations of elite performance make for a natural relationship. Both require dedication and hard work but in return deliver a unique way of life within a team of passionate people who are proud to represent their country.

Kick off to the collaboration saw British Swimming Coach David McNulty and Olympic medalists Michael Jamieson and Keri-anne Payne visit HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth, home to the Director of Naval Physical Development, to take part in the Royal Navy swimming test.

Keri-anne and Michael took part in the test themselves and then helped two potential Royal Navy recruits through the

process, giving tips and advice from their own British Swimming background.

Having seen what the training recruits go through and seeing the world-class physical development facilities available, both Keri-anne and Michael felt a career in the Royal Navy could have been an option for them.

Michael said: "Being able to represent your country at any level is a real privilege and something I've been lucky enough to do for several years now.

"That sense of pride and identity is something I think I share with the people I've met today in the Royal Navy."

Keri-anne added: "I've loved every second of today. Teamwork has been the focus and the camaraderie between everyone we've met has been incredible.

"It also brought out my competitive side and I want to try the test again because the Royal Navy ratings were so much

quicker than me."

Capt Mark Cameron, Captain Naval Recruiting for the Royal Navy, said: "By developing a relationship with British Swimming the Royal Navy is able to demonstrate that there are many more parallels than people might realise.

"The Royal Navy might offer one career but there are many opportunities within that and if recruits are particularly passionate about a sport, like swimming, then we can support that.

"I can clearly see in Michael and Keri-anne the qualities we look for in personnel: leadership, camaraderie, courage and passion."

The partnership will evolve over the coming months with the two parties exploring further ways to share knowledge and training skills with a view to forging a longer-term relationship to promote careers within the Royal Navy.

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Where to look

GALAXIES

18-2014: Personal, Family, Community Support and Physical Development.
17-2014: China Fleet Country Club - revised beneficiaries list
15-2014: Review into women in ground combat roles

RNTMs

RNTM 150/14: Rebalancing Lives Fund Grant Applications
RNTM 157/14: Launch of Royal Naval Reserve Engineering Branch

RNTM 168/14: Maritime Warfare School Bridge Simulator Booking Procedure and Guide

RNTM 163/14: Faraday - streaming of Weapon Engineering Submarine Service Personnel

DIBS:

43/14: Future Reserves 2020 External Security Team report 2014.

DINS

DIN 2014DIN03-016: Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF) - Operational Support Request Process (this supersedes DIN 2010DIN03-004)

DIN 2014DIN04-127: Physical Training Equipment Procurement Process (PTEPP).
DIN 2014DIN07-109: Support to staff studying for a finance qualification (supersedes DIN 2012DIN07-035)

DIN 2014DIN01-140: Universal infant free school meals
DIN 2014DIN01-139: Service Family Accommodation - four tier grading boards of officers.
DIN 2014DIN01-130: Entry into the Maritime Reserves for all Tri-Service serving personnel (supersedes DIN 2013DIN01-164)

DIN 2014DIN01-136: Chain of Command guide regarding full time Reserve Service personnel affected by restructuring (supersedes DIN 2014DIN01-018)

NEED to get your message across?

To feature in the Navy News Two-Six pages contact Naval Command Media - Internal Comms Staff Officer:

Lt Cdr Emma McCormick,
93832 8809, email
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Child's play as Navy parks get a facelift

THE Second Sea Lord has officially opened the first of 15 refurbished playparks across the Royal Navy's Service accommodation estates that have been given a £800,000 makeover. Vice Admiral David Steel cut the ribbon to Southwick playpark in Portsmouth which was the first to be completed - with a host of new top-of-the-range equipment and also a newly-refurbished community centre.

He said: "It is fantastic to see such an improvement in family areas where children can play safely and to see this difference is something that is very close to my heart."

"This is not just for the benefit of the children but also gives families a sense of security, knowing their children are playing in a safe environment. This brings a community together - and not just the Service families but villages as a whole."

A total of 15 playparks across the Royal Navy's Service accommodation estates are being refurbished with £800,000 granted from the Libor fund - a £35m allocation to the MoD from the fines levied on banks.

While some are completely out of use and in a state of disrepair, others have become tired and unattractive for children along with out-of-date equipment.

"Naval Service personnel deploy the most out of the three Services and there is significant benefit to those deployed in knowing there is a community



● Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel with families at Southwick playpark

support network for their family," explained Lt Cdr Rachel Smallwood, the Chief of Staff of the Naval Education and Training Service who applied for the grant.

"A safe and attractive playpark in the heart of the community is an effective way of meeting other families within the Naval estate and forging a support network.

"It is important that people feel happy in the area that they live in, and a playpark with decent facilities can help make a Service family feel valued. Crumbling playparks do little to boost the appeal of an area."

The full list of playparks to be refurbished are:

■ Trafalgar Road, Albany Close and Lamplough Road in

Lympstone

■ Burnhill Drive, Taunton
■ Fowey Road and Tamar Road, Chivenor
■ Hibernia Road, Culdrose
■ Rowner, Norton Road and Woodville Drive in Portsmouth
■ Ferry Toll Place, Rosyth
■ Jellicoe Place, Mackenzie and Hardy Hill in Helensburgh
■ Camperdown Drive, Arbroath

Are you up for sail test?

ROYAL Navy personnel who have never sailed a yacht before are being urged to take part in a major sail training exercise.

Exercise Transglobe will see two 67ft yachts from Gosport set off on a year-long circumnavigation of the world.

The tri-Service exercise, which starts in July 2015, aims to develop personal qualities and promote the ethos essential for members of the Armed Forces.

The trip will be run over 13 stages and the crews will include reservists and cadets.

One of the sail training ships will be allocated to the Army and the other will be shared by the Navy and RAF.

Full details can be found on 2014DIN07-079 and at www.pdevportal.co.uk/adventure_training/sailing

Discount from firm

CLOTHING company Cotswold Outdoor is introducing a new 15 per cent discount for the Royal Navy, British Army, and Royal Air Force personnel.

The company said it wished to allow military personnel to buy essential and specialist kit, so they can carry on enjoying the outdoors for work and pleasure.

The firm's CEO Hans Falkenburg said: "It's important to us that we support the UK's Armed Forces, who carry out their crucial roles with pride and enthusiasm."

The discount will be available in store and online.

Visit www.cotswoldoutdoor.com for details.

Revamped community centre re-opens

BRILLIANT sunshine saw the relaunch of the Talltrees Community Centre, in Ilchester, Somerset, following a £69,000 renovation paid for by the Armed Forces Community Covenant.

Deputy Lieutenant of Somerset, Councillor Christopher Le Hardy and Cdre Jock Alexander, Commanding Officer of RNAS Yeovilton, re-launched the centre, which is open to both civilian

and military communities.

The refurbishment includes new doors and windows, improved disabled access, a new kitchen and significant improvements to the playroom and children's play area. The project aims to increase community usage and broaden the range of services available.

Jeremy Greenop, the Community Relations Officer at RNAS Yeovilton, who

is a member of the Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership, said: "Of the five aims that underpin the Community Covenant this project meets two of the aims by encouraging activities which help to integrate the Armed Forces Community into local life, and by encouraging the Armed Forces Community to help and support the wider community."

"It is rare that such a project meets two of the key criteria but that is the nature of the Talltrees Community Centre. It is a Service facility situated in the local community that actively encourages participation by that local community."

The award is another success for the Somerset Armed Forces Community Covenant Partnership, which has so far secured over £285,000 of funding.

NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION

Travel, home and business among latest queries

TO give a flavour of recent NFF activity, here is a selection of questions raised and the answers we sourced:

QI am a Reservist and want to find out whether there are any discounts to help with my travel costs?

AThe HM Forces Railcard has now been extended to include all volunteer Reserves, their spouses/civil partners and dependent children. Personnel and their families can save a third on adult fares and 60 per cent on children's fares throughout the UK. The railcard can also be obtained by war widows/widowers and their dependants through the Royal British Legion. Applicants will need to be in receipt of a Forces Family Pension.

See www.hmforces-railcard.co.uk for details. Personnel should see Defence Internal Brief DIN2014DIN01-133 on the Defence Intranet for full eligibility details and the application process.

QI watched the naming ceremony for the new Queen Elizabeth carrier, when is the ship known as HMS Queen Elizabeth?

AThe ship is commissioned into the Royal Navy when it is formally handed over to the Royal Navy from

the contractor, and the Red Ensign is lowered and the White Ensign is raised.

This would in most circumstances be prior to undertaking Basic Operational Sea Training (BOST).

QWith the Prime Minister's Cabinet re-shuffle on July 15, who will the NFF be briefing at their ministerial meetings now?

AThe NFF is due to meet Anna Soubry MP in the autumn. She has the uplifted portfolio as Minister of State in the Ministry of Defence.

Your feedback and questions are always keenly sought to inform the discussions: admin@nff.org.uk / 023 9265 4374.

QI am keen to buy a house but am not clear about the options. Should I look at using Service-provided accommodation, buy my own property, or talk to my local authority about what they can offer?

ACan you please offer me some advice?



AThe MOD has a dedicated team called the Joint Service Housing Advice Office (JSHAO) in place to provide information about all these options. They hold briefs at Royal Navy and Royal Marines establishments and have information that can be sent out to you.

All the contact details for JSHAO and briefing dates can be found on: www.nff.org.uk under the 'Civilian Housing' section.

QAm I allowed to run a business from my Service Families Accommodation?

AThe JSP464 (tri-Service Accommodation regulations) is available on the internet and provides all the information you require. The regulations state that you will need written consent from your local Service Commander and the Defence Infrastructure Organisation. You should contact the Housing Advice Centre (HASC) on 0800 169 6322 and

they will process permission through their administration system.

QI am currently serving and have recently accepted my retention bonus. However, it attracts 40 per cent tax. Can I claim the tax back at the end of the tax year? The bonus may affect my earnings and also my tax next year as it will increase my annual earnings this year.

AWe spoke to the Pay and Allowances team within Navy Command. They confirmed that every individual who is offered a Financial Retention Incentive (FRI) is made fully aware of the tax implications prior to acceptance. You will probably not be able to claim back the tax but you will need to discuss this with the Inland Revenue. They can be contacted at: www.hmrc.gov.uk.

QI have been told that Service Families Accommodation charges for Grade 1 properties will be increased next year; is this true?

AWe do not know about the proposed charges yet, but we are watching this area carefully. Charges have always been set by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body (AFPRB) and are reviewed annually. The NFF gives formal evidence to the AFPRB in the autumn; what would you like us to say on your behalf?

The work on the New Employment Model (NEM) has an accommodation strand; for more information on the NEM visit our website: www.nff.org.uk.

The RNRM Welfare Portal rang the NFF to ask for support for a lady whose husband passed away two weeks ago.

We sent an email to the Royal Navy, Royal Marines Widows' Association (RNRMWA). They will make contact with the widow to offer their support services.

The NFF acts as a contact point for the association; they can be reached via our e-mail and telephone number stated below. For more information on the RNRMWA visit: www.rnmwidows.org.

The NFF represents Royal Naval and Royal Marines families to the chain of command, government ministers and service providers.

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions. To contact the NFF tel: 023 9265 4374, e-mail: admin@nff.org.uk, or write to: Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

Visit our website: www.nff.org.uk for news and information and to sign up for our free, quarterly *Homeport* magazine and monthly e-update.



Grand tour on visit to minehunter

FOOD is obviously the key to the hearts of the members of the Ferndown branch.

More than a dozen shipmates visited Hunt-class minehunter HMS Chiddingfold to understand the life of a modern sailor.

The visit included the galley, mess decks, operations room, sweep deck and bridge.

However, it was evident that the food really was the cherry on the cake – Chef Christopher Hooper-Callcut provided an exceptional lunch over which the shipmates made it clear how impressed they were with the ship.

The members were delighted to see that the Royal Navy was in good hands for the future as Chiddingfold prepared to deploy.

Branch chairman S/M Mick Arnold received a ship's crest from Lt Liam Andrews on behalf of the group.

Weekend coaching

IT WAS a particularly busy Conference weekend for staff of the UK Holiday Group, ferrying more than 500 shipmates between hotels, stations and the National Memorial Arboretum in a fleet of 13 coaches.

The firm sealed a deal earlier this year to provide bespoke travel and holiday services to members of CONA, the Confederation of Naval Associations.

Harold Burke, sales director at the UK Holiday Group, said: "This was a major national event and the transport logistics involved months of forward planning to cover the RNA conference, taking place in Coventry over the weekend, along with the memorial event."

Members of Naval associations can find more information on various offers by calling 0844 2642120 or emailing conatravelservices@theukholidaygroup.com, or visiting www.cona.org.uk

For a visual record of the RNA's big day at the national Arboretum see www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/news/333/dedication-of-the-naval-service-memorial/

Derby move

DERBY branch president Cdr Jerry Hall, who had to stand down due to work relocation, has been succeeded by Cdre Steven Dearden.

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

Loughton officially closes

SHIPMATES from Loughton have laid up their standard at St John's Church with the closure of the Essex branch after 26 years – though that is not quite the end of the story.

At one time a thriving branch with a membership of 120, Loughton was finally forced to close through lack of volunteers to take up the administrative duties.

Shipmates also point to the advancing years of the membership, a lack of Naval personnel

and lack of interest in the association's objectives by younger inhabitants of the county as being contributory factors – which, they add, is by no means unique to Essex.

The church service attracted a congregation of 50, and was officiated by the Rev Geoffrey Smith, assisted by branch chaplain Canon John Sutton, who spoke of the various officials who had taken office over the years.

The standards of Area 5, Basildon,

Chelmsford, Cheshunt, Dagenham, Harlow, Romford and Harlow NVA attended, and RBL Chingford bugler Brian Hawkins played the Last Post and Reveille.

Loughton shipmates will still meet, but as an 'informal group', saving the problems of having the paperwork and officials to organise.

This duty will fall to S/M Jim Smith who, as the last remaining founder member, volunteered to be the lead contact with HQ.

French honour for Normandy veteran

D-DAY veteran Eric Drube, along with three comrades, has been awarded France's highest decoration for his bravery in World War 2.

Eric, 90, from Bletchley, was presented with the *Légion d'honneur* in London by French Ambassador Bernard Emie.

He was appointed to the rank of *Chevalier* (Knight) in the *Ordre national de la Légion d'honneur* by the President of France.

The ceremony took place in Carlton Gardens, St James's, by the statue of General de Gaulle opposite the wartime HQ of the

Free French Forces on June 18 – the 74th anniversary of his appeal to France to keep fighting.

Former French Prime Minister Francois Fillon told a large audience: "To the veterans, their families, the British people, France offers her eternal gratitude."

At the age of 20 Eric served aboard Algerine-class fleet minesweeper HMS Cockatrice as part of the 18th Minesweeping Flotilla.

He recalled: "We sailed from Portsmouth on June 5 1944 on the evening before the D-Day landings and our flotilla swept

and cleared mines for Channel 6 to Gold beach ahead of Assault Force G, the British 50th Infantry Division.

"The Germans didn't even know we were there.

"Ten channels for the five landing beaches had to be swept by minesweeping flotillas.

"Without the channels being cleared of mines for the assault beaches, no landings could have taken place.

"I'll never forget the morning of D-Day on June 6. First thing all of our bombarding ships – battleships, cruisers, and destroyers and rocket ships began

to fire on German positions.

"We then laid a smokescreen with other vessels to assist with the landing craft going ashore with our troops.

"We then used our own 4in gun to target German positions.

"Despite suffering from seasickness I stayed at my post. The sea conditions were still poor."

The days and weeks after D-Day were spent providing close support and defending against German E-boats and manned torpedoes.

"One of these torpedoes hit a fellow minesweeper and I assisted with picking up survivors.

"It was a very special day in London and a great honour to receive such a high award from France."

Illustrated talk

BRENTWOOD shipmates enjoyed an illustrated talk on the Naval artefacts held by the National Trust.

Cdr Chris Edwards, who retired from the Royal Navy in 1980, is now a volunteer lecturer for the National Trust East of England.

Among the artefacts mentioned were the seventeenth century 'burial ship' at Sutton Hoo, a memorial tablet to Capt Cook at Stowe Gardens and a monument to Nelson's friend Capt Hardy in Dorset.

Larger tangible items include the South Foreland lighthouse and Orford Ness, acquired by the Trust in 1993.

Chefs special

ALMOST 200 Cooks and Caterers descended on the Nautical Club in Birmingham for their third reunion.

A raffle and memorabilia auction raised £480 for charities.

The next reunion will be held at the club on the weekend of May 8-10 2015; all Cooks and Caterers past and present welcome.

For details contact Colin Joy at colinjoy@hotmail.com

D-Day veterans join Bridlington service

FIVE D-Day veterans attended a commemorative service staged by Bridlington branch.

Those who gathered at the town's war memorial were pleased when the rain stopped just before the service.

The five veterans – some of whom happened to be on holiday in the town – included two sailors who were present at D-Day, and three members of the Army.

The Royal Marines were also represented as the service also marked 350 years of the Corps, allowing Bridlington shipmates to say thank you to their heroes.

Branch standard bearer S/M Martin Barmby noted that it was a "fantastic turnout for such a small town."

Also at the service were the Mayor of Bridlington, Cllr Shelagh Finlay, and representatives from RAF Bridlington, the town branch of the Royal British Legion.

Scarborough RNA branch and the Bridlington detachment of the Army Cadet Force were thanked, with a special mention for Cpl Karl Middleton ACF, who played *Flowers in the Forest* on the pipes.



● Louis Pengelly-Phillips

Care home mourns ex-Marine

A CARE home in Surbiton is mourning the death of a D-Day veteran who passed away shortly after the 70th anniversary of the Normandy landings.

The Royal Star and Garter Homes charity provides nursing and therapeutic care to the ex-Service community, and every year commemorates Armed Forces Day by remembering their residents' contribution towards the nation's freedom.

One such resident was Louis Pengelly-Phillips, who died on June 24, four days before this year's Armed Forces Day.

Louis' war service record was extraordinary, including guarding Churchill in Canada, taking part in the D-Day landings, and fighting for the liberation of Burma.

He joined the Royal Marines in 1943, and in the same year was selected to join a unit protecting Winston Churchill and the D-Day plans during the Quebec Conference in Canada.

Louis was assigned to guard Churchill, for whom he had to present arms or "I would have been in trouble!" even when Churchill was in his pyjamas.

Later, he was part of the guard who protected Stalin and Roosevelt, and both shook hands with Mne Pengelly-Phillips.

Back in England, Churchill personally thanked Louis for looking after him and gave him a medal: "There are only 35 of us who have got the Italy Medal and have never been to Italy!" he said.

Louis then trained with 48 Cdo RM and was in the first wave of men ashore on Gold beach – his best friend was killed, but Louis was lucky, as a bullet ricocheted off his tin hat.

When his unit reached Germany, Louis was shot in the leg and sent home to recuperate, but on rejoining his comrades the commando was sent to Burma to fight the Japanese.

Louis was involved in the liberation of Rangoon.

www.starandgarter.org



● Headteacher Mrs Lynn Evans with staff and pupils from Abbey Park Middle School, together with the Mayor of Pershore (Cllr Tony Rowley) and local veterans

School pays tribute to the fallen

PUPILS and staff of Abbey Park Middle School were joined by the Mayor of Pershore and RNA and RBL veterans for a special service of remembrance to mark the beginning of the centenary of World War 1.

After listening to Great War poems as a prelude to the poetry competition, the whole school took part in reading out the 101 names on Pershore's Roll of Honour of the men from the town who fell during 1914-1918.

The Head Girl from Pershore High School, Alice Bull, then played the *Last Post* and *Reveille* as the children stood solemnly for a minute's silence.

This service marked the start of a special day of activities for the children on the theme of WW1.

Pershore & District branch secretary S/M Trudy

Burge helped with preparations and was a special guest of the school for the morning, allowing her to spend time with pupils and see the activities, which included planting poppy seeds in the school grounds, making paper poppies, studying the Pershore of 1914 and digging a 'trench' in the school field.

S/M Trudy said: "I knew from the school's Armistice Day last November just how seriously these lovely children take remembrance, and today's service was just as poignant with all the children showing the utmost respect and interest.

"To hear the names of the fallen memorised and read aloud by the youngsters of the town was very special and I know that all the veterans felt very privileged to be a part of their special day."



Warspite record breakers

SHIPMATES from the Cold War warrior HMS Warspite enjoyed a reunion at the RN Submarine Museum in Gosport – and some of them came away with a little bit of history.

The reunion, organised by S/M Mike King, attracted around 100 people, many from the early 1980s – and some 15 to 20 from a particular patrol which began a few months after the Argentine surrender in the Falklands.

That 113-day patrol, under the command of Cdr Jonathan Cooke, set a record which is officially recognised by Guinness World Records as “the longest submerged and unsupported patrol made public” – 111 days, covering 30,804 nautical miles in the South Atlantic from November 25 1982 to March 15 1983.

And those who were on the patrol who attended the reunion left with their own personal certificate attesting to the record-breaking length of that mission.

“We were there on picket duty off the Falklands and Argentina,” said Mick.

“At the end of our patrol we were due to be relieved, but a couple of submarines hit problems so Warspite had to stay on – and stayed on for another three weeks.”

Legend has it that the boat returned with just five rollmop herrings and a couple of lemons in the fresh food lockers, although those on board say it was not quite like that...

But there were other repercussions – the Commanding Officer missed his wedding by a week, for example.

Warspite, one of a pair of successful early British nuclear hunter-killers (she was the third of the breed) decommissioned in 1991, 24 years after she first commissioned.



● RNA National President Vice Admiral John McAnally does the honours behind the bar at Nottingham branch's club

Guest barman at new club

THE Nottingham Royal Naval Association Club was officially opened by RNA National President Vice Admiral John McAnally early last month.

Vice Admiral McAnally – pictured left alongside branch secretary S/M Tom Rotherham – pulled the first pint and handed it to 91-year-old S/M George Briers, the Midlands branch's president.

The opening was attended by visitors from RNA branches throughout the Eastern area.

S/M McAnally also presented the Area Silver Plate for Recruiting to S/M Sue Gallagher, Chairperson of the Nottingham Branch.

The branch was recently awarded the Briggs Dirk – for the large branch which recruited the greatest number of new members as a percentage of existing membership during 2013 – at the national conference in Coventry.

The Club is situated at 22 Church St, Lenton, Nottingham.



Good day despite the rain

WOKING branch held their annual St George's Day parade at the Norman church of St Peters in Old Woking.

The wet morning failed to dampen the number of shipmates and standards from local and national associations attending.

There were three national standards – from the Fleet Air Arm, Merchant Navy Association and the Merchant Navy College Greenwich.

A guard of honour was formed by all 15 standards and Woking Sea Cadets to greet the mayor, Cllr Anne Roberts (above).

The service was led by Canon Robert Bennett. After the service the mayor remarked on the fine turnout.

The following Thursday the branch held a St George's Dinner which was well supported by the shipmates and their guests.

Clyde strengthens cruiser group link

MEMBERS of the Neptune Association visited Clyde Naval Base to renew links to the modern-day HMS Neptune.

The 26 members were given a tour of Sandown-class minehunter HMS Penzance and were hosted on board a Vanguard-class submarine alongside.

Formed in 2002, the Neptune Association was founded by relatives of the crew of the wartime HMS Neptune.

On December 19 1941 the light cruiser struck two Italian mines in the Mediterranean off Tripoli, and in trying to reverse

out of the minefield a third mine destroyed her propellers.

Two destroyers, HM Ships Kandahar and Lively, attempted a rescue but Kandahar also struck a mine so Neptune signalled Lively to stay clear.

A fourth mine strike caused Neptune to rapidly capsize, and just 30 out of a ship's company of more than 760 – many from New Zealand – survived her sinking.

All but one – 20-year-old Norman Walton, who was eventually picked up by an Italian torpedo boat – died over the next five days, drifting at sea without food or fresh water.

The Association aims to bring together those interested in HMS Neptune to commemorate those who died and promote historical research.

While at the Naval Base the Association members also had the opportunity to meet Royal Marines from 43 Commando and enjoy a barbecue and field gun demonstration.

On the Sunday, members joined Naval personnel outside St John's Church, within the naval base, where there is a memorial to those who lost their lives on board HMS Neptune.

A service followed, including a rededication ceremony for the church's new altar being

performed by the naval base chaplaincy.

Capt Alistair Willis, Captain of HMS Neptune, said: “The modern-day HMS Neptune enjoys close links with the Neptune Association and we were delighted to host the members and strengthen those ties.”

“The rededication of the altar within St John's Church was a particularly poignant occasion as we came together to remember those Neptune crewmen who

paid the ultimate sacrifice for their country.”

Today's HMS Neptune is the shore-based establishment which provides welfare, accommodation and services to around 3,500 Service personnel at Clyde Naval Base.

Sailors from HMS Neptune last joined association members in November last year when they travelled to the National Memorial in Staffordshire for a remembrance service.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our June edition (right) was HMS Eskimo, correctly identified by John Makinson of Morecambe.

This month's ship (above) was completed on a Dutch River shipyard in the summer of 1954 and served in home waters for almost ten years before moving to the Gulf in 1965.

In 1971 she headed further east and swapped the M for a P in her pennant number, paying off in early 1985.

(1) What was her name, and (2) what type of helicopter is pictured with her?

We have removed the pennant number from the image.

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2



8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. The closing date for entries is September 12.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our October edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 234

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

West Country branch shuts

A WEST Country branch of the RNA has closed after nearly 30 years of service.

Founder member S/M Alick Lavers said: “It is with deep regret that we announce the closure of Norton Fitzwarren branch, which commissioned in Norton Manor Royal Marines camp in January 1985.

“The branch standard was laid up at Norton Fitzwarren parish church during a sensitive and moving service by the Rev Stephen Kivett on Sunday June 29, in the presence of the remaining members.

“The branch standard will be on permanent display on the North Wall in the church.”

Belfast party

BELFAST shipmates turned out in force to celebrate their branch's 60th anniversary with a dinner at the Holiday Inn.

The branch received a letter of congratulations from the Queen.

Festivities continued the following day at the club's headquarters.



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Please visit www.ukho.gov.uk for an information sheet and an application form. Alternatively, you can contact the Recruitment Team at the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office, Admiralty Way, Taunton, Somerset, TA1 2DN. Tel: +44 (0)1823 723353. Email: recruitment@ukho.gov.uk

The closing date for applications is 22nd August 2014.



The MoD is an Equal Opportunities employer and seeks to reflect the diverse community it serves. Applications are welcome from anyone who meets the stated requirements.



A NEW BAND OF BROTHERS



WE HAPPY few, we band of brothers.

And these **Royal Marines Reservists** were rather happier at the end of this yomp across Dartmoor, for they have now earned the treasured green beret to become fully-fledged commandos.

Thirty-eight recruits from each of the four Royal Marines Reserves (RMR) units – Scotland, Merseyside, Bristol and London – converged on the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone for the intensive two-week package to complete their Commando tests.

Would-be commando reservists train near their home unit, but then come together to do concentrations where key assessments are carried out.

The first day was spent revising the Tarzan and endurance courses before moving on to a final exercise, kicking off with a Mountain Leader-led cliff assault before a tactical night-time forced march on Dartmoor.

“The march lasted all night and was the hardest part of the whole exercise,” said the Rev Dr Martin Gainsborough, one of two RN reservists to earn their green berets (see page 23).

The other RN green-lidder, Surg Sub Lt Andrew Loftus, added: “On the insertion yomp our Bergens weighed upwards of 80lbs.

“We had to march with three days rations, all the water, ammunition and radio batteries we needed.”

During this final exercise trainees also carry out advance-to-contact drills, moving tactically on a compass bearing until they encounter enemy forces – then they attack the enemy positions.

The exercise includes the course being shifted by helicopter across the moor and, on the final night, they are inserted into Cornwall by raiding craft and carry out an attack on a fort.

“Final Ex was great as a reservist because we had an extended period in the field and it was good to consolidate your skills,” said 20-year-old Recruit Finlay Shaw, who is two years into a degree in International Relations and Arabic at St Andrews University.

“A lot of my friends are very interested in the RMR because it aligns with their interests in outdoor activities. They’re always asking me about it,” said Finlay, who had taken a university exam on the Tuesday before driving from RMR Scotland’s Dundee detachment to Lympstone on the Friday.

By its nature, reservist training has to cram a lot of activities into a short period so that after a brief pause following the final

exercise, the students began their Commando tests.

These have remained unchanged for decades and are all done carrying 32lbs of equipment.

They include: an endurance course through tunnels on Woodbury Common; a nine-mile speed march through the local area; the Tarzan assault course which includes some high-wire obstacles and needs to be done in 13 minutes; and finally the 30-mile speed march over Dartmoor in eight hours.

“It’s all hard work,” says Surg Sub Lt Loftus.

“It’s not just getting around the nine-mile speed march or the Tarzan course – you have to do it after the injuries you might have picked up on the final exercise.”

Recruit Alex Rigg (RMR London) added: “I started training two and a half years ago but came off the Commando course in May 2013 after I injured myself on the Tarzan course. So I was a bit nervous redoing the Tarzan, but it went fine.”

Having passed all this, the trainees become commandos – but they have still not completed their RMR training.

Left to complete is phase two of their course, which features a week of live firing on Dartmoor, and close-quarters battle training, usually carried out with trainees attached to regular RM recruit troops. They also have to complete survival training and a short amphibious exercise.

With all this in the bag, they are ready to deploy with regular commando units on one-year or longer contracts.

“The RMR is something different to anything you can do in civilian life,” says Alex, who has a degree in archaeology. “The physicality of the training is what appeals to me. The dedication required to pass it is enormous.

“It takes a lot out of your life in terms of free time, especially in the initial periods of training but it’s worth it. I don’t think some of my friends have any concept of the training involved – they just think I go camping at the weekend!”

Surg Sub Lt Loftus added: “The training has been absolutely fantastic – being taken away from normal civilian life and given a whole skill set. The commando spirit and ethos is a great way to live your normal life as well as your military life.

“It really is a state of mind. It’s the thing that is written everywhere. If you think you can do something just keep going. It’s been tough but it’s been worth it.”

Pictures: LA(Phot) Dean Nixon and WO Richard White, CTCRM



Engineers, sign up here

AFTER an absence of 21 years, the RNR’s engineering branch is making a welcome return.

Headed by Cdr Stephen Murphy RNR, the reincarnated branch – embracing both the marine and weapon engineer arms – is looking for engineering experts who are able to provide their skills and training in a reservist capacity.

To get the branch up and running, recruitment will initially be open to ex-regular sailors who are leaving the Service and then steadily develop to handle civilians from the defence and engineering sectors.

Cdr Murphy left the Royal Navy last year after 23 years as a marine engineer, and then joined the RNR while working as the principal consultant for a defence engineering company in Bath.

“My first priority is to establish a branch identity, supported by a robust organisational structure and, most importantly, a recruitment and employment model,” he said.

“It will be the volunteers who will provide the capability we need. I am grateful to my employers for their support as I take on this new and exciting role with the reserves.”

The RN’s Chief Naval Engineer Officer, Vice Admiral Simon Lister, said: “I hope that, like Stephen, many others will now be attracted back in to the fold, or at least consider the engineering reserves as an addition to their existing jobs.”

The Maritime Reserves Engineering Branch will initially be run from Naval Command Headquarters in Portsmouth.

Serving personnel interested can look at RNTM 157/14.

Alternatively contact Cdr Murphy NAVYSSM-MRSO1ENG@mod.uk or Lt Cdr Richard McHugh NAVYPERS-FARADAYS02@mod.uk / 023 9254 7436.



Northern units on the WW1 trail

SAILORS from **HMS Calliope** (Gateshead), **Ceres** (Leeds) and **Scotia** (Rosyth) line up outside Ypres’ famous Cloth Hall as they prepare to pay their respects to the fallen of the Great War.

In the anniversary year of the start of World War 1, reservists from Northern England and Scotland headed to Belgium with military personnel from around Europe on the 100km Ypres march.

The annual event is a three-day walk around Flanders, centred on the historic town which for many has become a symbol of the Western Front.

As well as a reminder of how badly Belgians suffered in the four-year conflict – the Cloth Hall, for example, was reduced to ruins but subsequently rebuilt – the walk intends to promote international reconciliation, peace and friendship.

And for Northern RNR units, the trek around the former battlefields also serves as a useful command, leadership and management exercise – this year bolstered by the participation of Officer Cadets from URNUs.

Walking 100km (62 miles) in three days proved a difficult challenge, but one easily surmountable given the strong team spirit and determination displayed by the Reservists and URNU cadets.

The march was punctuated with points of historical significance, which meant that thoughts of the brave Service personnel who gave their lives in the Great War never drifted far from the minds of the team members.

The team also took immense pride in being given the opportunity to parade shoulder to shoulder with other Reservists from the Army, and international community at the Menin Gate Memorial, formally laying a wreath to the memory of all who fell.

RM welcome PM

YOU can run the country, but can you scurry upside down along a rope to cross a river?

A green beret demonstrates his nimble skills and stamina for Prime Minister David Cameron as the premier opened the new training facility for the Royal Marines Reserves’ **Edinburgh detachment.**

Fresh from watching HMS Queen Elizabeth being named by the monarch, Mr Cameron hot-footed it across the Forth to Colinton Road in south-west Edinburgh to see the marines’ revamped facilities.

The visit also gave the men of Edinburgh detachment – one of six under the banner of RMR Scotland (including one in Belfast and another on the Tyne) based at Caledonia in Rosyth – an opportunity to show off their vastly-improved surroundings.

Until recently they were located in a portable cabin, but the new facility – costing £290,000 – means the building has expanded with the addition of commando-specific training frames.



“We are looking to expand the contribution made by reserves,” the PM said.

“We have a lot of work to do in this area and the Royal Marines Reserve is a crucial part of that expansion. It is a real pleasure to be here and open this splendid new building.”

Mr Cameron was hosted by the Commandant General Royal Marines, Maj Gen Martin Smith, the Commander Maritime Reserve, Cdre Andrew Jameson, and RMR Scotland’s CO Lt Col Richard Parvin.

“It was very important to us that the Prime Minister took the time to come here and open the new Edinburgh detachment of the Royal Marines Reserve Scotland in recognition of the step change in the role of the reserves and their commitment to operations over the past ten years,” said Lt Col Parvin.

Those commitments have included operations in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as the London Olympics and the Commonwealth Games which end in Glasgow at the beginning of this month.

Pictures: Sgt Paul Shaw



Library is dedicated to Chris

A NEW historic communications library opened at HMS Collingwood has been dedicated to the memory of the man who brought its concept to life – Chris Rickard.

Friends, family, colleagues and Service personnel who knew Chris gathered in Mercury Building to witness the opening of the Chris Rickard Communications Library by the CO of the base, Capt Steve Dainton.

A memorial service was held before attendees were invited to view the historical items.

The idea for a communications library arose in the 1980s but it was the efforts of Chris, a former Chief Yeoman and Communications Instructor at Collingwood, in the early 1990s which set the project onto a firmer footing, with support from fellow instructor Mark Gentry.

The library was moved from pillar to post over time, then Chris fell seriously ill, and Mark ultimately took responsibility.

Chris died last May, but Mark decided the new library should serve as a memorial in honour of his friend.

The library's aim is to preserve as many artefacts and documents as possible from the field of communications in the Royal Navy, and to highlight the role that HMS Mercury played in training communicators in the past.

Archery challenge

A GROUP from Blind Veterans UK took on a tri-Service team during an archery challenge at HMS Collingwood.

In the day-long challenge the archers took aim at targets ranging from 30 to 40 yards, the visitors using a handicap system, similar to golf, which was adjusted depending on their skill and ability.

To assist the archers they were able to use bars to guide their hands, foot rests to help position them correctly and a support person standing behind them.

One of the group was David Poyner, Chairman of Blind Veterans UK Bowmen and a former Marine Engineer Artificer who once served at HMS Collingwood.

David said: "I lost my sight in 1988 after being in a coma for 30 days due to a rare neurodegenerative disorder called MELA syndrome.

"I had always been a sporty man and when I lost my sight I thought 'what do I do now?'"

"The charity got me into archery and I enjoy it."

He shot for Britain in 2003 and 2004 and was instrumental in getting blind archery recognised as a Paralympics sport.

Event organiser Linda Dickinson, from RN South Coast Archers, who practises at HMS Collingwood, said: "It's one of the biggest shoots of the year, and a great location."

SAs gather

A GROUP of 110 serving and ex-serving members of the former Stores Accountants branch gathered at the Old Barn Club in Yeovil to reminisce of their time served during drafts to RNAS Yeovilton and outstations.

The get-together included a group of former WOSAs who had served time on the staff and in the rate at the air station & former Flag Officer Naval Aviation (FONA).

Carrier inspires female engineers

SIXTEEN of the country's best and brightest young female engineers were 'wowed' and filled with inspiration after visiting Britain's biggest warship, HMS Queen Elizabeth.

The undergraduates from the Brunel University branch of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) were given a personal tour of the

65,000-tonne carrier – unveiled to the world last month as the Queen officially named the ship in Rosyth.

The London-based students were invited to tour the state-of-the-art warship as part of an initiative to promote the role of women in engineering in general and provide the visitors with an insight into the role of female engineers in building the carrier

with the Aircraft Carrier Alliance and running the ship as a Royal Navy engineer officer.

Babcock engineers Jen McGinley and Laura Porter did the former, while from the ship's company PO(WE) Steph Simpson and CPO(ME) Lyndsay Oldridge shared their experiences.

Weapon engineer PO Simpson offered an insight into the Queen Elizabeth's innovative automated weapons-handling system and communications network and CPO Oldridge provided her expertise on the marine engineering side – the power and distribution system and other vital services, from chilled and fresh water to sewage treatment plants and fuel management.

The highlight was a comprehensive tour of the carrier.

They were shown one of the smaller diesel engines, which was larger than any of them had ever experienced before. When coupled with the Queen Elizabeth's other power plants, the ship generates approximately 110MW of power – enough for a town roughly the size of Swindon.

All the visitors – studying

across the engineering spectrum: mechanical, social, civil, biomedical and aerospace – were struck by the scale of the project (each of the two ships comprises in excess of 17 million parts).

"The sheer size and precision of the operation gave me a sense of the incredible scale of enterprise involved. As a young designer, I have been left inspired by this unforgettable experience," said industrial design student Cara O'Sullivan.

An inspired Olivia Gutierrez added: "A stunningly inspiring opportunity that reminds me why engineering is the career to follow.

"A truly breath-taking engineering feat that has got me wanting to be part of an engineering project as colossal and exciting as HMS Queen Elizabeth."

And from communications technology student Lilian Kasem: "The trip was great; it was a new and exciting experience.

"I learnt a lot about the engineering behind a warship and how the Royal Navy deals with the design, build and maintenance of such a large project."



● WO1 James Whitwham with his daughter Lacey, who was training at Culdrose

Family pride

WO1 JAMES 'Wiggy' Whitwham bowed out in style after 34 years with the Royal Marines Band Service – and his big moment was made even more special because his family was able to be there.

Wiggy's last engagement was on Horse Guards Parade in London, and the next generation of military Whitwhams was represented by his youngest daughter Lacey.

NA(AH) Whitwham was in Phase 2 training at RN air station Culdrose, and was given permission to attend the occasion (pictured above).

WO Whitwham said he was not sure who was the proudest on the day...

Royal portrait

A PORTRAIT of the Queen by retired Naval chaplain the Rev Mike Brotherton has been presented to the Sutherland Trust for display in Pembroke Dock's new Heritage Centre.

The painting was viewed by the Queen on a visit in April to mark the town's bicentenary.



● Eleanor Brewer with her grandfather and father, both named John

Third generation

A 21-YEAR-OLD trainee sailor from Helston is aiming to become the third generation of her family to take on a role looking after the Royal Navy's helicopters.

Eleanor Brewer recently completed training at HMS Raleigh – the first step on the path to achieving her goal of becoming an air engineering technician.

She is following in the footsteps of her father and grandfather – both called John – who between them have accumulated nearly 60 years service, and who both attended her passing-out parade.

Eleanor said: "I never knew what I wanted to do and it was my dad who suggested the Royal Navy – and here I am today. Training has made me appreciate what and who I have at home."

CPO John Brewer is serving at RN air station Culdrose, having joined the Senior Service in 1984

as his own father was coming towards the end of a career which began in 1955.

John junior, a veteran of the second Gulf War and who also served in Afghanistan, has served at RNAS Culdrose since 1989.

He said: "Hopefully she will embrace the opportunity and enjoy her time in the Service as much as I have."

John senior, who also reached the rank of CPO, said: "I hope my granddaughter will enjoy the friendships and traditions of the Senior Service, formed when serving, as much as I still continue to do through the associations I belong to."

Eleanor is now heading to HMS Sultan in Gosport, where she will learn how to carry out maintenance as well as pre- and post-flight servicing and inspections for RN helicopters.



● AN oil painting of the newly-named HMS Queen Elizabeth will take up temporary residence at the Fleet Air Arm Museum for a couple of years before taking pride of place in the carrier's wardroom. The painting, by Ross Watton, was commissioned for the ship shortly after the artist completed his cutaway diagram for Navy News. A print of the painting (above) has been presented to Susan Ford Bales, ship's sponsor of USS Gerald R Ford – named after her father – and will eventually make its way to the 100,000-ton carrier, due to join the US Fleet in 2016

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Chiddingfold delivers for Malta unit

BACK in February, minehunter HMS Chiddingfold was asked if she might be able to support a Sea Cadet unit.

Naturally, the Royal Navy is willing to support the youth organisation where it can, so the Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Richard Rees, enquired as to exactly how his ship and its company could offer their services.

Back came the response – the unit had ordered a rowing boat and wondered if Chiddingfold might be able to help with its delivery.

Because this unit isn't based in the UK – the request for help came from Malta.

At that time Chiddingfold was gearing up to deploy to the Gulf to take over MCM duties from HMS Quorn, and it was June before she made her passage through the Mediterranean.

And when she left her home port of Portsmouth, on board was a 200kg rowing boat filling a space 5m long by 2m wide by 2m deep, which was transported on the sweep deck.

She deployed on a sunny afternoon in early June, and the weather as far as Gibraltar was relatively benign – though there was a deep residual swell in the Bay of Biscay, which can make life on board a Hunt-class vessel somewhat less than comfortable. As the minehunter approached Gibraltar the weather took a sudden turn for the worse, and Chiddingfold found herself sailing into 50kt winds and the resulting swell.

However, arriving safely in Gibraltar, the rowing boat was still firmly secured and safe on board, and ship and ship's company enjoyed some respite alongside before sailing for their next scheduled port-of-call – Malta.

The passage was largely uneventful and Lt (SCC) Ray Demanuele RNR, OIC of Malta unit, arrived onboard along with the pilot for the ship's entry into the historical and picturesque Grand Harbour.

The rowing boat was offloaded and transported to the unit on a trailer, arriving safely after a journey of some 2,000 miles.

Lt Cdr Rees and two colleagues were invited to the unit that evening by the Senior Officer, Lt Cdr (SCC) Camilleri, for a tour and an opportunity to meet some of the cadets.

The trio were presented with a plaque as a token of appreciation.

Delighted to have helped, Chiddingfold continued her business alongside in Malta before sailing on to Souda Bay and final preparations for tasking East of Suez and in the Black Sea in support of NATO operations.

Scenic trip follows race win

A BUSY weekend saw cadets from St Albans unit take to the water in a race-ready dragon boat and their new Trinity 500 boat.

Saturday saw staff and cadets take part in the first Hertfordshire Dragon Boat Race, at Fairlands Sailing Club in Stevenage, to raise funds for the RNLI.

The Sea Cadet team won all their races, improving their times on each occasion despite being a crew member down.

In the final, the Sea Cadet team saw off a strong team from Stevenage FC in a record 1m 18s.

PO (SCC) Steve Heard, Officer in Charge at the unit, said: "Paddling a dragon boat was a new experience for us all."

"We were not the strongest or the physically-biggest but we excelled, drawing on our secret

weapon – teamwork and timing. "It's what we do best, and it was working together that ensured we won."

"It was great fun, and we look forward to defending our title in 2015."

The winning team (right) consisted of Sub Lt (SCC) Ted Hill RNR, PO (SCC) Heard, PO (SCC) Julie Norton, PO (SCC) Ilse Sharp, Sgt (SCC) Hanna Oxley, Cdt Cpl James Norton, Cdt L/Cpl Emily Bently, Cdt L/Cpl Amy Reid, MC2 Kelly Cawley and Junior Cadet Amy Cawley as drummer.

The following day the cadets officially launched their new boat on Verulamium Park lake, when a cadet crew took the Mayor of St Albans for a brief cruise.

The launch, attended by



cadets, staff, family and friends, was conducted by the Mayor of St Albans, Cllr Annie Brewster, and former Olympic rower Ian Lawson.

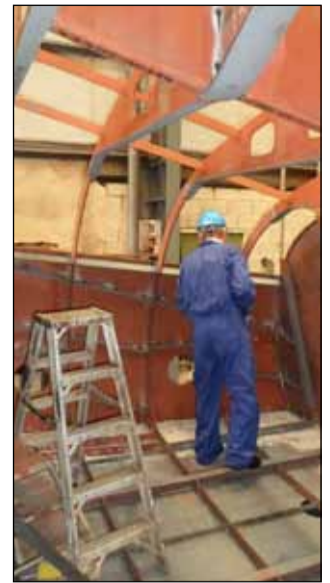
Launching the boat, Cllr Brewster said: "This is an historical moment."

"The lake is beautiful with its wildlife, but the lake is also for

people – and who better than St Albans Sea Cadets?"

PO Heard added: "It's been 40 years since we were able to use the lake but the new lightweight Trinity makes this possible again."

"We are particularly grateful for the support we have received from the Mayor in making this a reality for us."



● A member of staff at the shipyard in Spain works on the (inverted) wardroom section of the new ship

Teenagers selected for exchange visits

THREE teenagers from Evesham unit will set sail for adventure after securing places on an International Exchange Programme.

L/Cpl Louise Karlinski, AC

Abbi Attwood and POC Paige Woodward secured their places after beating hundreds of cadets, from around the country, and now bring the tally to 16 Evesham cadets, who have participated in international visits in the past

three years. L/Cpl Karlinski, 17, was selected to travel to Sweden at the end of June, flying into Copenhagen, and spending two weeks in the southern naval port of Karlskrona.

Louise's programme included participation in both practical and theoretical education with the Swedish Cadet Corps, and cultural visits to both civil and military units.

AC Abbi Attwood was due to fly to Bulgaria as *Navy News* went to press to participate in an intensive two-week sailing course.

"I'm a bit nervous, however, after being in the Sea Cadets for five years now, and being given many opportunities, I'm looking forward to meeting international cadets," said Abbi, 15, from Evesham.

POC Paige Woodward, 17, from Bengeworth, was picked to join a trip to Nova Scotia, Canada, for six weeks at the beginning of last month, with a programme that included military training and cultural visits, whilst being based at HMCS Cornwallis, once the home of the largest naval training establishment outside the United Kingdom.

Evesham unit Commanding Officer CPO (SCC) Keith Field, said: "This demonstrates why Evesham is one of the top units in the country."

"These places are awarded on merit, and I know that for all three, this will be a life-changing experience."

Evesham Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets meet on a Monday and Thursday evening at their headquarters in Shinehill Lane, South Littleton; for details see www.sea-cadets.org/evesham/home.aspx



Warsash helps out at arboretum

SEA Cadets from Warsash unit had a leading role to play at a high-profile Naval Service ceremony.

The youngsters from TS Tormentor, in Hampshire, were asked by the Royal Naval Association to take part in the dedication of the Naval Service memorial at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire.

Cadets lined the route as guests arrived, handed out programmes, formed up as a squad for the unveiling ceremony – and four cadets acted as wreath bearers for the VIP guests.

After the ceremony Prince Michael of Kent, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel took

time to speak to the youngsters, and are pictured (above) with unit Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Tony Thurgood RNR and unit chairman Cdr Matt Bolton.

Lt Thurgood said: "It was an absolute privilege to be asked by the RNA to attend this momentous occasion – the cadets thoroughly appreciated the experience and the opportunity to meet His Royal Highness and the First and Second Sea Lords."

"They will look back on this day with a real sense of pride."

Once the formalities had been completed the cadets and staff posed for a photograph in front of the magnificent new memorial.

In the footsteps of wartime commandos

SEA Cadets from across the Highlands gathered to commemorate the supreme efforts of the wartime commandos of Castle Commando at Achnacarry by holding their own version of the famed speed march.

Units from Inverness, Oban and Lochaber raced between Spean Bridge and Achnacarry using the same route while carrying 16lb packs.

The World War 2 commandos had to carry 36lb packs and complete the speed march in one hour – or be returned to their units.

"We wanted to commemorate the endeavour and courage of the original commandos while also having fun and raising money for our own units," said Lt (SCC) Derrick Warner RNR, Highland District ADO.

"We were delighted when Donald Cameron of Locheil, Clan Chief of Clan Cameron and Lord Lieutenant, said we could use the grounds of Achnacarry as the end point of the run.

"The Fort William branch of the Royal British Legion Scotland (RBLs) has also been great in supporting us and presenting the prizes to the unit winners."

Cdt Connor Aitken from Lochaber unit, said: "My great uncle did the original run here during the war and so I'm really happy to have been able to follow in his footsteps."

For the record, the unit winners were Josh Marlow (Oban, 1h 15m), Lewis Hall (Inverness, 1h 18m) and Hannah Calder (Lochaber, 1h 42m). The overall prize went to the Oban unit.

Mark McCann, president of Fort William RBLs, said: "It fills me with pride to see these young people so filled with determination and fit to complete the march. Their instructors can be proud to see them reach this level of fitness."

"They all deserve a prize. As president of the RBLs Fort William, I am proud to have been involved."



● Cadets at Spean Bridge station

Work 'well under way' on flagship

CONSTRUCTION of the Sea Cadet Corps' new flagship is well under way in northern Spain.

The steel stern section and elements of the glass reinforced polyester superstructure have been worked on – the stern, from engine room forward bulkhead to transom, is the second element to be built after the keel was laid in April.

A flagship voyage is the pinnacle of the Sea Cadet experience, and one which the charity wants to ensure future generations of Sea Cadets can benefit from.

The current flagship, TS Royalist, is more than 40 years old and increasingly expensive to run.

The Corps' parent charity, the Marine Society-Sea Cadets (MSSC), spent two years raising £4.8m to build the new ship, and they have so far got as far as £4.604m.

The new ship – as yet unnamed – will be ready for the 2015 sailing season.

TS Royalist was originally named in honour of the Princess Royal – Princess Anne – who named the ship in 1971.

The square-rigged tall ship has since taken more than 30,000 young people to sea.

The new ship, like Royalist a brig, will be in service for the next 40 years, ensuring that young people can continue to enjoy sailing opportunities through which they can learn valuable life skills as they pull together to explore Britain's coastal waters, as well as learning practical sailing and navigational skills.

The innovative new ship design, created by Spanish yard Astilleros Gondan, offers greater use of space, with better all-round sailing ability and performance.

Faster and easier to handle than Royalist, the new ship is also more economical to run.

Capital parade

HUNDREDS of Royal Marines Cadets paraded through London and were inspected by the Duke of Edinburgh as part of the celebrations for the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines.

This was the first time that the Royal Marines Cadets have been inspected by Prince Philip, who holds the title of Captain General Royal Marines.

Prior to their arrival at Buckingham Palace the Cadets had the privilege of marching down the Mall, led by Royal Marines Bands.

See next month's *Navy News* for a full report

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Southwark members help to raise flag

SOUTHWARK cadets were out in force representing the Sea Cadet Corps at the annual Armed Forces Day flag-raising ceremony – now in its sixth year – which was attended by Chelsea Pensioners, Yeoman Warders and other veterans.

The Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, said: “This year, the nation commemorates the centenary of World War 1, and we remember the men and women who served in, lived through, or lost their lives during that terrible conflict.

“One hundred years on, the UK Armed Forces continue to defend the UK and its interests, not only by promoting peace in countries such as Afghanistan, but also by providing security, delivering aid, tackling drug smugglers and fighting terrorism across the world.

“And so, today, our thoughts embrace all those in active service in areas of unrest, those who lead them, guide them and care for them abroad and at home and, of course, we remember those we have lost.”

Southwark unit went on to support a Ceremony of Remembrance and Recognition held at Glaziers Hall, situated alongside London Bridge within the London Borough of Southwark.

During the evening the ‘Honorary Freedom of the Borough of Southwark’ was awarded to the Princess of Wales Royal Regiment.

Various presentations were made during the evening, including a well-deserved Deputy Lieutenant’s Certificate to POC Joshua McBride, which was introduced by the Representative Deputy Lieutenant, Mrs Jenny Bianco, and presented by former Chief of the General Staff – the head of the Army – General The Lord Dannatt.

Armed Forces Day – page 22

Rushden wins mayoral support

COUNCILLOR David Jenney, Rushden Mayor of 2013-14, presented a cheque for £3,867.18 to Capt Jonathan Holloway, Captain Sea Cadets, who accepted it on behalf of the Rushden unit.

The Mayor chose the town’s Sea Cadets as one of his charities during his term of office, and the unit thanked Cllr Jenney and all those who supported him throughout his time as the First Citizen of Rushden.

Also on the night Brian Hunt, Chairman of the Rushden branch of the Royal British Legion, presented the unit with a trophy.

The Legion Shield will be presented each year to a worthy cadet for outstanding performances in first aid – and once again the unit gave a big vote of thanks, this time to all members of Rushden RBL for their generous gesture.

Members of the unit made their mark at the Eastern Area sailing regatta.

Cdt Jess Fargher was the winner in the Pico class, LC Connor Hodgeson took second place in the Open class and LC McGrady and AC Deery were placed second in the Bosun class.

All cadets will be going through to the National Sailing Regatta, which takes place in September.

Safety in mind

IT WAS safety first for a group of 19 cadets from Reigate Grammar School Combined Cadet Force (CCF) when they visited HMS Sultan in Gosport.

During the visit to the RN Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School (RNAESS), the students, aged 14-17 years old, got to climb aboard a 25 man life raft, test their skills on putting on survival suits and learn about helicopter safety and evacuation procedures, including how to use equipment such as parachutes and life jackets.

The activities at HMS Sultan were part of a wider field trip to the Portsmouth area, which also involved learning leadership skills on the low-ropes course within the Royal Navy Leadership Academy (RNLA) at nearby HMS Collingwood and a visit to the RN Submarine Museum.

The group was accommodated on board training ship HMS Bristol, which is permanently moored at Whale Island, the home of HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

● Maddie Withers, 15, joins fellow cadets from Reigate CCF in a 25-man life raft at the RNAESS, HMS Sultan



Picture: LA(Phot) Dave Jenkins

Collingwood insight for CCF contingent

A GROUP of Combined Cadet Force cadets from St John’s School, Leatherhead, experienced a day in the life of Service personnel of the Royal Navy when they visited HMS Collingwood in Fareham, for the day.

The 20 cadets, accompanied by two members of staff, arrived at the Hampshire training establishment for an activity-filled day that was designed to showcase a range of careers within the RN.

The first half of the day saw the cadets conduct team-building and communications exercises at the Royal Navy Leadership Academy, which they all thoroughly enjoyed.

After lunch the cadets visited the Warship Simulator and witnessed the training undertaken by RN navigators.

They were then given the opportunity to test their aim and accuracy as they handled the General Purpose Machine Gun (GPMG) through different scenarios in a simulator.

Cadet Guy Broad, 14, said of



● Cdt Guy Broad is instructed on the GPMG by Babcock employee Dean Deakins

the visit: “It’s been really good – I really enjoyed the guns.”

When asked if he was considering a career in the Royal Navy, Guy said: “Maybe – I’m not sure, but I have enjoyed

everything that we’ve done here today.”

HMS Collingwood is the home of the Maritime Warfare School, which contributes to the operational capability of

the Fleet by providing training to all officers and ratings of the Royal Navy in their professional specialisations which include weapon engineering, communications, and warfare.

Leadership for all



ANOTHER school cadet force making good use of the training facilities at HMS Collingwood was that of Tonbridge School.

A slightly larger group than the one from St John’s School at Leatherhead (see above), accompanied by Sub Lt Waight and Sub Lt Moss in conjunction with Contingent Commander for Tonbridge CCF, Cdr Ian Lucas, made the journey from Kent to the Phase 2 training establishment.

The trip took the form of a field day for 25 cadets to undertake activities designed to challenge their leadership and teamwork skills – two core values that are highly-valued in Naval ethos.

The cadets, mostly new CCF recruits, spent the morning at the Royal Naval Leadership Academy (RNLA) undertaking trust and teamwork challenges – including the low ropes (left) – and an afternoon at the Weapon Engineering Section observing the weapons the Navy uses.

Commenting on the day, Cdr Lucas said: “It’s a great opportunity for the pupils to experience life on a military base – for most this is their first time.

“Usually we focus on the leaders themselves, but here

they’re all equal.

“They’ve been encouraged to focus on cooperation and team cohesion in order to complete their challenges.

“We operate on a much smaller scale and don’t have the same facilities that the RNLA [RN Leadership Academy] possesses – these are some of the best in the country.

“Collingwood has provided well-thought-out tasks that catered to the needs of the pupils.”

Cdt Ben Hammond, who had just finished an activity on the low ropes section at the RNLA, said: “Today has been really helpful.

“We’ve learned about working together to get through tasks and it has made me consider a career in the military.

“It has been good fun and a good experience overall.”

Collingwood is the parent establishment to the CCF contingent at Tonbridge, and groups of cadets visit the Hampshire base annually.

The visits allow for the continuous fostering and strengthening of the relationship between the establishment – regarded as just one step from the front line – and Tonbridge School.

Evesham escort veterans

CADETS from Evesham unit were at the helm of a 55-strong contingent who visited iconic D-Day sites in Normandy.

The group toured a number of locations, including Pegasus Bridge, Arromanches and Ouistreham (important sites on Gold and Sword beaches), the German battery featured in the film *The Longest Day*, museums, the war cemetery at Bayeux, and Utah and Omaha beaches.

The visit coincided with the commemorations staged for the 70th anniversary of the invasion, which took place on June 6 1944, and which turned the tide against the Nazis.

Eight cadets and two staff from Evesham escorted some of the town’s last surviving veterans of the battle, including organizer Noel Wilkes.

Mr Wilkes, then a young corporal with the Royal Army Service Corps, landed on Juno beach just days into the campaign in Normandy, playing his part in the initiative which paved the way for Allied victory in Europe.

Mr Wilkes remembers a rough crossing aboard the cramped *Empress of Canada*, where it was standing room only. The choppy waters caused many of the men to suffer bouts of seasickness and from there they climbed onto the landing barges.

He knew well enough he might never come home, writing his will before he entered the field of conflict.

The men had to provide fuel to Allied convoys as they advanced and he still recalls the shriek of the shells landing nearby.

Mr Wilkes said: “My platoon commander said ‘It’s okay when you can hear them – when you can’t hear them you’ve got to worry!’

“One shell landed about 50 yards away. They whistle and we did jump out of our skins.”

PO (SCC) Ian Bostock, Evesham’s Executive Officer, said: “It has certainly been an honour and a privilege for our young cadets to escort our veterans and to experience firsthand the scale of human tragedy, on both sides, that resulted from this conflict.”



Elvin in all her glory

LAST month we reported on Sea Cadet Angus Buchanan who, while visiting a marina, did a little historical research and discovered that his great-grandfather had played his part in the ‘Miracle of Dunkirk’ in 1940 aboard a little ship at the marina.

By way of a follow-up, pictured (above) is the said ship – the *Elvin* – motoring out to sea with AC Buchanan aboard.

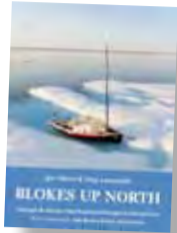
The ‘gentleman’s motor yacht’ – which saved the lives of 23 French soldiers at Dunkirk – displaces just 14.5 tons and was built in 1937.

After her wartime work she spent time in Portugal before being restored within the past decade.

One boat, two marines

DON'T judge a book by its cover.

Or by its title either. For Kev Oliver and Tony Lancashire's *Blokes Up North* (Lodestar, £12 ISBN 978-1907-206-245) isn't an homage to lovers of Holland's pies, whippets and cloth caps, but a stirring tale of two men against the elements.



And what elements: the 1,400 miles of the (in)famous North-West Passage. In a 17ft boat, Arctic Mariner.

Over two summers (2009 and 2010), the Royal Marines sought to make their way from Inuvik (cold, remote, sparsely populated) via Gjoa Haven (cold, remote, even more sparsely populated) to Resolute (colder, more remote, most sparsely populated).

Obstacles on the way were marked in single words on their charts – storm, ice, bears.

Their account is first-person, with the two men – Kev, today a colonel and deputy commander of 3 Cdo Bde, and Tony, a major at Navy HQ in Portsmouth – taking it in turns to tell the epic tale, mixed with their contemporary diary and blog entries.

Along the way they were encouraged by most messages posted on their website – and bemused by some, like Carlos who helpfully pointed out that the North-West Passage was closed that year. We can't print what Kev thought of Carlos...

As the adventure begins, the men are mesmerised by the sight of icebergs and the silent, stark beauty of the Arctic.

"I contemplated our surreal situation: our tiny boat, the vast sea with a few icebergs dotted across it," Kev wrote. "I was enjoying the calm remoteness of sailing on our own on a sea that just a couple of weeks ago was frozen. After the wind had died, the stillness was incredible."

And after the calm, the storm. A Force 6-7, which drained the men and took its toll of the boat. The authors' descriptions of a grim night of stormy weather leave the reader in no doubt about how bleak their voyage could be in the wrong weather.

Throughout you can't help be reminded of Mallory's pithy "because it's there" remark. Taking a 17ft boat through the North-West Passage doesn't seem a lot of fun.

Kev predicted the expedition would be "80 per cent boredom, 15 per cent frightening and five per cent superbly enjoyable." He described his reasoning behind the adventure: "I need to remember this because just as I haven't enjoyed every moment – far from it – of any trip I've been on, you have to go through the hard times to get to the special ones. It's a life of extremes."

There are a few hardy souls who chose this life of extremes in the Canadian Arctic. Some chose to escape from it all, others were still possessed by a pioneering spirit.

The pair were struck by the small native communities they came across and in particular how the Inuits had gone from living off the land to living off subsidies in purpose-built settlements in many cases. Living on state subsidies, Kev Oliver observed, had "sadly eroded their sense of value," while the climate meant the dead were 'buried' above ground which meant, said Tony, that "all those who had ever been a member of the community remained a part of it still."

Native or not, the men and women eking out a living in such places were invariably hospitable – a 'my house is your house' mentality lost in towns and cities, "the extreme of small-town North America." They allowed the marines the use of their vehicles, giving them the chance to tear around "like a couple of kids across what could only be described as quad-bike heaven."

Such little details and observations pepper this book. If you're expecting lots of hoofing and chad action, you will be disappointed. This is a very thoughtful tome, much deeper than simply 'two blokes in a boat against the elements'.

By the time the adventure was done, the duo had raised thousands of pounds for Toe in the Water, a charity which helps injured Servicemen and women to resume their active lives using sailing as therapy, bidding a reluctant farewell to their boat which was sold to bolster the funds.

"Together we've faced an almost endless list of challenges, ranging from broken tillers and failed electronics to charging bears, impenetrable ice floes and persistently adverse winds," Tony wrote in his final log entry.

"One way or another we've bested each difficulty in turn."

"Two years from early planning, the Arctic Mariner expedition is now complete and has more than surpassed our expectations."

Forging civilisations and acts of desperation

AT THE First Sea Lord's lecture at the Royal Naval Museum which I gave in July, I was asked by a member of the audience why no review had appeared in that month's issue of *Navy News*. I told him that my excuse was, I was reviewing an extremely large book that was taking more time than normal.

That book, writes Prof Eric Grove of Liverpool Hope University, is Lincoln Paine's *The Sea in Civilization: A Maritime History of the World*, a 744-page monster, composed of 599 pages of text plus copious notes, a full index, 17 pages of maps and plates both in black and white and colour.

The author is an American maritime historian and doctoral graduate of the University of Leiden, who, as well as producing a maritime history of the state of Maine, where he lives, has also compiled three reference books on ships which has led to considerable research across the full spectrum of maritime history from ancient times to the present day.

This has provided the basis for a very ambitious tome which sets out, as the author says in his introduction, "to change the way you see the world map by focusing your attention on the blues that shade 70 per cent of the image before you and letting the earth tones fade." His aim is to show the vital – and too easily ignored – way in which throughout human history water has acted as a key communications medium for "culture, commerce, contagion and conflict." Transformations that have been portrayed as sudden, such as the rise of the Portuguese trading empire in the Indian Ocean in the early modern period, reflected the much earlier construction of trading networks in the region. The Iberian Europeans were just the latest participants in a maritime network built up over thousands of years between East Africa through the 'monsoon seas' that linked East Africa, the Red Sea and Persian/Arabian Gulf with China and Japan and points in between in India and South East Asia.

The author begins with the Pacific islands of Oceania – "the locus of the oldest, most sustained, and perhaps most enigmatic effort of maritime exploration and migration in the history of the world." He then moves through the earliest maritime activities in the Americas to chapters on ancient Egypt and Bronze Age seafaring, both in south-west Asia – "one of the most vibrant cultural and commercial crossroads of the world" – and the eastern Mediterranean.

His next chapter covers 'Phoenicians, Greeks and the Mediterranean' in the earlier part First Millennium BC, the peoples who produced the first purpose-built warships we know about, as well as port complexes and overseas empires. He then covers the Carthaginians and their Roman enemies, who eventually converted the whole Mediterranean into 'Mare Nostrum'.

He then begins his analysis of 'The Monsoon Seas' where maritime change was "more subtle than elsewhere" but "no less durable". He covers the seafarers of ancient India, Persian trade in the Indian Ocean from the Sixth Century BC, Ptolemaic Egypt and the Indian Ocean, and maritime trade in the region in the First Millennium AD, including Persian Byzantine rivalry and conflict over Yemen. He then goes further east to examine maritime developments in ancient south-east Asia, China and Japan into the first millennium AD. He then returns to the Mediterranean for the conflicts of the retreating Christians and expanding Muslims. Some detail is provided on the way in



● The burned-out hulk of the Atlantic Conveyor, wrecked by an Exocet strike in May 1982

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which the maritime trade of the period was funded and put into a developing legal framework: collaboration mixing with competition in a multicultural trading network.

Northern Europe, hitherto "a backward and remote corner of the world", is finally covered in Chapter Nine which focuses on developments that culminated in the seafaring and river navigation of 'The Viking Age' as northmen spread, south, west and east. We are then back in an Indian Ocean affected from the Seventh Century by new Islamic caliphates and a resurgent Chinese Empire. What the author calls 'A Silk Road of the Seas' was created, "a virtuous circle in which the transmission of goods and culture, benefited local and regional rulers, whose more powerful and stable states in turn drew the attention of merchants from ever greater distances." Next we get to China itself as the Empire "looked seaward" as it was threatened inland and there were huge movements of population to coastal areas and the southern rivers.

Internal waterways, both rivers and canals had for long been key arteries of the Empire.

Two more chapters cover the 'Medieval Mediterranean and Europe', covering the rise of the Italian city states such as Venice and Genoa, the Crusades and the creation of a unified trading system from the Mediterranean to the Baltic which coincided with the Golden Age of Maritime Asia from the 11th to 15th Centuries. Its high point was the huge Chinese fleets of the first half of the 15th Century, but the Chinese Imperial ban on overseas trade did not end the system. Many Chinese settled elsewhere to continue their trading activities, hence the Chinese populations found throughout South East Asia today.

Finally on page 376 we begin the familiar story of the rise of European global activities. With chapters entitled 'The World Encompassed', 'The Birth of Global Trade', 'State and Sea in the Age of European Expansion', 'Northern Europe Ascendant', 'The Annihilation Of Space and Time' (by steam power and the telegraph), 'Naval Power in Steam and Steel' and finally 'The Maritime World in the 1950s'. The last is perhaps the finest and clearest short explanation yet written of the complete revolution in global shipping that has taken place in that recent period.

I was little worried as I got to the later sections, where my knowledge was greater, but there are not too many errors. The name of the aircraft carrier that struck Taranto was *Illustrious* not *Furius*. The Holland submarines were

not powered by steam on the surface, but internal combustion engines – indeed that was the technology that allowed the construction of practical submersibles. Someone with familiarity with the works of the late Richard Compton Hall (as the author is) should not perpetuate the legend of the non-existent Turtle submersible said to have been deployed in the War of Independence. Americans always find it hard to dismiss this totally impractical craft as the propaganda it was.

My only other criticism is the inadequacy of the maps to show all the mass of unfamiliar places mentioned in the text. Perhaps the author might now consider a companion atlas to illustrate his mass of information and analysis more clearly. All these, though, are minor quibbles with a triumph of scholarship that succeeds magnificently in its aim of putting both seas and inland waterways, and the craft that have plied them, back into the history of human civilisation, of which they have been primary – and far too often ignored – fundamental formative factors.

The hardback book (ISBN 978-178239-355-9) is a bargain at the list price of £30. There are also electronic and paperback versions mentioned on the flyleaf; these have the ISBNs 978-1-78239-357-3 and 978-1-78239-358-0. It should be on the shelves (or on the Kindle) of everyone interested in maritime history and anyone who wishes to understand the dynamics of human history as a whole.

In his final chapter Lincoln Paine argues that the most significant fleet action of the post-World War 2 period was the Anglo-Argentine war for the Falkland Islands in 1982. Despite the publication of much material on this conflict, including an excellent and revealing official history, there are still some holes in our knowledge, notably concerning the special forces Operations Plum Duff and Mikado against the Super Etendard/Exocet base at Rio Grande in Tierra Del Fuego and a submarine-launched SBS attack against Puerto Deseado, Operation Kettle drum. The last two operations did not take place; Plum Duff was executed, although it was a failure leaving a wrecked helicopter in Chile and personnel 'exfiltrated' through that country who had succeeded neither in a reconnaissance of the enemy base nor a raid against the vital Super Etendards and their missiles.

Ewen Southby-Tailyour, the distinguished Royal Marines officer who himself played a key role in the Falklands conflict, has now brought

these operations out of the shadows in an original and critical analysis that is an important contribution to the Operation Corporate literature.

He has interviewed the participants who have been remarkably frank with him. The story he tells is frankly shocking in its tale of lack of liaison, special forces hubris and sketchy planning. The special forces sent south did not even have adequate maps! The ambition of Operation Mikado – expending the RAF's only two in-flight refuelling Hercules aircraft vital for supplying Task Force 317, especially after the loss of the Atlantic Conveyor – to land SAS Land Rovers on a crowded airfield to take out two to three aircraft and their weapons, was never going to work. It would also have led to considerable political embarrassment. That so much effort and time was expended on it is frankly pathetic.

The final operation is even harder to understand as the airfield at Puerto Deseado was of no strategic significance. Happily, that too was cancelled, but not before effort had been needlessly expended. The submarine that had attempted Kettle drum, the conventionally-powered boat HMS Onyx, was later damaged by an unknown pinnacle on a later operation.

Southby-Tailyour makes the point that Plum Duff and Mikado reflected the real fear that existed in British circles about Exocet. He argues that the Argentines made the most of their limited stockpile of air-launched weapons, scoring three hits out of five. The conversion of ship-launched Exocets to land-based launchers, was also something of an achievement, scoring a hit on HMS Glamorgan in the last days of the war and seriously complicating seaborne movements by 5 Brigade along the southern coast of the islands. The author has first-hand experience of that particular problem which he uses to good effect.

He also explores a wider set of issues including SSN operations. He defends himself from criticism for

thus blurring the focus by saying this has been done "to add flavour, depth and context to the main theme, so that a feeling for the overall atmosphere might be gained through the use of what a highland piper would call the 'grace notes'." On the whole this works well, but I have to express some disappointment about his treatment of Conqueror's sinking of the cruiser General Belgrano. There is still more to be written about this, notably the availability of intelligence about the calling off of the Argentine naval attack that was rightly treated by Admiral Woodward as a major threat.

Contrary to popular belief, GCHQ do not necessarily pick everything up and the submarine's Report of Proceedings demonstrates that the cruiser's turn back took Conqueror by surprise. The story of Woodward's successful attempt to pressurise London into a Rules of Engagement change, is a good deal more complicated than a mere short and misleading sentence: "Permission to attack was sought and given." Sought by whom? Certainly not Conqueror, which is the implication of the book. This is a special pity, as the rest of the book is otherwise so enlightening and original. I shall probably have to write this up myself.

This book should be read by everyone with an interest in what still remains a most fascinating conflict, where I and many readers have the privilege to know the participants. *Exocet Falklands: The Untold Story of Special Forces Operations* (ISBN 978-1 78346-387-9) is published by Pen and Sword Military. With its clear maps and interesting illustrations, it is excellent value in every respect at £25.



Deaths

Rear Admiral Alexander F R Weir CB, HMS *Rothesea*, *Eagle*, *Andromeda*, *Centurion*, *Saker*, and *Bristol*, also *Victory* RNB DNOR, June 23.

Capt William Hedley Kett DSC* RD* RNR, Began his Service life with a ten-year career in the Merchant Navy and when war was declared he was 2/0 in RFA *Arndale* returning from New Zealand when it was diverted to Colombo to have guns mounted. Joined RNR as Sub Lt 1938 and served in submarines. As Navigator in *Oberon* and *Clyde* (later as 1st Lt) made five trips from Gibraltar to Malta with aviation spirit, ammunition and food stores – *Clyde* was forced to lie on the bottom by day and unload cargo by night. Awarded his first DSC for these missions. Short period in command of *P555*, then of *Ultimatum* from January 1943, completing 12 patrols from Gib, Malta, Algiers, Beirut and Maddalena. Received a bar to his DSC for last patrol when she plotted minefields along the south of France in preparation for the Operation *Dragoon* landings. 1945 he was CO of submarines *Otway*, *Taku* and *Tactician* and *Flotilla Leader* of the Sixth Submarine Flotilla. Upon demobilisation in 1946 he continued as a Reservist, joined *Trinity House*, spent 32 years as a London and North Sea Pilot, latterly as *Choice Pilot* for the British India Company and the *Ellerman City Line*. 1950 he was appointed CO of submarine *Springer* (his last submarine command). Promoted to Captain RNR in 1963 and served on RNR Advisory Council until placed on the Retired List. Appointed ADC to the Queen 1967. Honorary Representative to the Officers' Association for *Harwich*, *Frinton* and *Clacton* 1971-89, Younger Brother of *Trinity House* 1971 and President of Colchester branch of the *Submariners Old Comrades' Association* 1989-2001. June 28. Aged 100.

Capt David J N Porter, HMS *Fisgard*, *Nelson*, *RNC Greenwich*, *DGNM*, *DGS*, *DGNPS* and *AEL West Drayton*, June 5. Aged 91.

Cdr Chris Gobey, Entered BRNC 1961 and after 18 months in HMS *Rothesea* in the Far East he joined the Hydrographic Service and was Assistant Hydrographer in *Vidal*, surveying the Atlantic 1964-67. Lent to the RNZN for three years where he commanded inshore survey vessel *Tarapunga*, and later served as navigator and diving officer for survey ship *Lachlan*; *Gobey Bank* off North Island New Zealand was named after him. 1971 as 1st Lt of HMS *Beagle* in the Indian Ocean off the Seychelles, a distress signal was heard from Taiwanese fishing vessel *Chung Yu*, grounded on a reef. Two inflatable life rafts were drifted down to the survivors, as the seas were too rough to approach by boat; one raft broke loose so, without pausing to inflate his lifejacket, he dived into shark-infested surf to retrieve it. All the crew were saved and he was awarded the Queen's Commendation for Brave Conduct. Selected as deputy leader of a joint Services expedition to Chilean Patagonia, then commanded *Egeria*. As Ops Officer for the 13 ships of the Hydrographic fleet he was employed on surveys from the Greenland Sea to the coast of Brazil while commanding *Bulldog* 1977-78 and *Hecate* 1978-82. He had given up command of *Hecate* when he was hurriedly recalled for the Falklands Conflict to replace *Endurance*. Though arriving after the ceasefire, *Hecate* undertook patrols and surveys in South Atlantic. Project officer for HMS *Roebuck* and, after leaving the Navy in 1986, took up a similar job as a civilian at the NATO Undersea Research Centre in La Spezia, Italy, May 7. Aged 71.

Cdr William 'Bill' R Hart AFC, Entered Dartmouth 1941 and, as a midshipman on board HMS *Glory*, witnessed the surrender of Japanese forces in New Guinea. Later served in *Phasant*, *Implacable* and *Roebuck* as a seaman officer. 1949 he

volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm, flying *Sea Furies* (804 NAS) and *Sea Hornets* (809 NAS) from the carrier *Eagle*. 1951 during the Korean War he flew 70 sorties from the carrier *Glory*. Whilst on a reconnaissance mission over the west coast of North Korea he strafed a troop concentration and was hit by small arms fire; his aircraft lost fuel and power but he opted to fly out to sea where he made a safe landing and was quickly picked up by a South Korean patrol ship and returned to *Glory*. Over the next three days he flew four sorties. Graduated from the Empire Test Pilots School Course 1954 and was a test pilot at *Boscombe Down* for three years, developing RAF fighter aircraft. Awarded Queen's Commendation for Valuable Services in the Air 1956 and the Air Force Cross in 1957. He flew *Sea Hawk* and *Sea Vixen* fighters from HMS *Albion* before commanding 890 NAS from HMS *Hermes*. 1962 he graduated from Staff College *Greenwich* and commanded *Loch Fada* in the Far East. 1964, based in Norfolk, Virginia, he was aviation specialist on the staff of the Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic 1967-69. 1974-76 he commanded the Inter Service Hovercraft Unit at *Lee-on-the-Solent*; 1978 joined the Civil Aviation Authority. April 11. Aged 86.

Lt Cdr Johnny Morton, Volunteered for the Fleet Air Arm aged 17 and learned to fly at Pensacola, Florida. At the end of the war he flew Corsairs of 1835 NAS from HMS *Colossus* in the Far East. Involved in testing modified Seafires after a series of engine failures. Embarked in *Theseus* flying *Seafires* of 794 NAS on deployment to Asia, Australia and New Zealand in 1947, later flew *Sea Furies* and *Sea Hawks* from *Centaur* in the Med. Responsible for the evaluation of helicopters for use at sea and for basic flying training of RN helicopter pilots in 1949; attended the Central Flying School at *Boscombe Down* 1952. Lent by the Navy to *Faireys* in 1955, he later joined the company as a test pilot. When *Westland Helicopters* took over *Fairey Aviation* he became lead test pilot for the *Wasp* at *Yeovil* and was project officer for the *Naval Westland Lynx*, making the first test flight on May 25 1972. Performed the first-ever helicopter roll in the *Lynx* and flew inverted. Appointed OBE 1965, awarded the Alan Marsh Medal of the Royal Aeronautical Society and received the QCVS in the Air 1969. May 4. Aged 88.

Vernon 'Ginger' Coles Chief Engine Room Artificer, Served 1938-52. First ship was HMS *Faulknor* (first ship to sink a German U-boat); he took part in the Norwegian Campaign 1940, served with Force H on Malta convoys and escorted Atlantic and Arctic convoys. Volunteered for the Submarine Service 1942 and took part in X-craft (midjet submarine) raids. Coles was engineer and steersman of X9 for Operation *Source*, the attack on *Tirpitz*, *Scharnhorst* and *Lützow*, in the Norwegian fjords. In 1944 he was towed in X24 to Norway for a solo attack on shipping in Bergen harbour; charges were laid under German merchantman *Barenfels*; he steered X24 continuously for 19 hours to rendezvous with HMS *Sceptre* to be towed home. Awarded the DSM. After D-Day the X-craft were deployed to the Far East for Op *Sabre* where he received orders to cut two underwater telegraph cables off Japanese-occupied *Saigon*, for which he manufactured special grenades. Mentioned in despatches. Post-war he served in submarines in *Sydney*, *Singapore* and *Malta*. May 2. Aged 94.

Lt Cdr Vic Sherratt Shipwright, Served 1962-2005 at *Fisgard*, *Caledonia* and in *HMV Britannia*, *Fearless*, *Intrepid*, *London* and *Invincible* also *Rooke* (Gibraltar), *Vernon*, *Sultan*, *Phoenix*, *Dolphin*, *Bath* and *DHE London*. June 9. Aged 69.

Lt Cdr John F Kennett MBE, 804, 700, 766, 764, 898, 800, 736 and 781 NAS. May 29.

Lt Cdr (AV) John Coombs, HMS *Victorious*, *Dolphin*, *Fulmar*, *Heron*, *Excellent* and *Saker*. June 7. Aged 81.

Lt Cdr (PT) George D Crawford, HMS *Dainty*, *Rooke*, *Caledonia*, *Cochrane* and *Drake*. June 26. Aged 89.

Lt Cdr (P) John R Hone, HMS *Blackcap*, *Merlin*, *Gannet*, *Curlew*, *Seahawk* and *Goldcrest* also 811 and 812 NAS. July 8.

Lt Cdr (A) John G P Morton, HMS *Gannet*, *Siskin*, *Daedalus*, *President* and *Centaur* also 1835 and 804 NAS. April 5. Aged 88.

Lt Cdr (D) Thomas Potts, HMS *Brinton*, *Hermes*, *Eagle*, *Tiger* and *NS Simba*, (Kenya). June 21. Aged 81.

Lt (E) Joseph R Schofield, HMS *Norfolk*, *Dolphin*, *Olympus*, *Juno* and *Sultan*. June 8.

Lt (A) Gordon V Pickard RNRV, 842 and 776 NAS. June 15.

Lt (A) Laurence I Parkin RNRV, 753, 741 and 836 NAS. May 2. Aged 92.

Chaplain Geoffrey P Thornley, RNEC *Manadon*, *HMS Drake*, *RM Deal* and *RNH Plymouth*. June 14. Aged 91.

Lt Vic Simmons, Joined from the Royal Hospital School and served in HMS *Belfast*, *Nelson*, *Orestes*, *Formidable*, *Fierce*, *Concord*, *Virago*, *Adamant*, *Daring*, *Plover*, *Liverpool* and *Manchester*. Took part in Operation *Pedestal*. Member of HMS *Concord* Association and 8th Destroyer Squadron Association. July 7. Aged 92.

James Dickson 'Jim' Turnbull BEM MSM Master at Arms. Served 1960-92

at *Raleigh* and *HMS Cambridge*, *Pellew*, *Kemerton*, *Cochrane*, *Lewiston*, *Osprey*, *St Angelo*, *Condor*, *Kellington* (RPO Cox'n) and *Lochinvar*. As Master at Arms in *Zulu*, *Newcastle*, *Caledonia* and *C-in-C Naval Home Command*, working with the Northern Area Sea Cadets. Awarded BEM (military) and MSM. July 1. Aged 70.

Kenneth George Dence CRS, Served 1932-61 at *HMS St Vincent*, *Victory*, *Pembroke*, *Euphrates*, *Mercury* and *Ricasoli* also *HMS Resolution*, *Curacoa*, *Courageous*, *Syringa*, *Berwick*, *Southdown*, *Buxton*, *Dauntless*, *Danae*, *Birmingham*, *Vanguard*, *Indefatigable*, *Agincourt* and *Troubridge*. W/2 service Denmark Straits, Iceland and *Narvik*, *Atlantic* and *North Sea* convoys; *Comoros* and *Madagascar* operations; D-Day landings at *Sword Beach* and relief of *Copenhagen*; also involved with the boarding and seizure of escaped French warships at *Portsmouth* 1940. Awarded BEM 1960 while serving in *HMS Troubridge*. Upon leaving the Service he worked in the Port Wireless Service and CB Office, *Portsmouth*. June 4. Aged 97.

John Dunford CRS, Served 1961-94 at *Ganges*, *HMS Loch Fyne*, *Kent*, *Osprey*, *Intrepid* (in build and first commission), *Charybdis*, *Herald*, *RNR Forth*, *Fearless* (Falklands Conflict) and *RNR Severn*. Instructed at *Mercury* and *Collingwood*. June 27. Aged 68.

Reginald Joseph 'Knocker' White CPO, Served 1945-69 in *HMS Vanguard*, *Newfoundland*, *Puma*, *Exeter*, *Alacrity*, *Brocklesby*, *Torquay* and *Sheffield*, also *HMNB Portsmouth Hal Far*. Involved with the *Portsmouth Field Gun* crew, he also boxed for the Navy. Member of the Maritime Club, *Portsmouth*. June 13. Aged 84.

John Pitman Curtis CMT (X), Joined as a Seaman and trained at *HMS St Vincent* 1947-48 then served *HMS Wakeful*. Branch transfer and trained at *RNH Haslar* 1950 then served *HMS Terror*, *Daedalus* (MMRU), *RNH Mauritius* and *Nelson*. RN Medical Branch Ratings & Sick Berth Staff Association. July 2. Aged 82.

Hazel Heaton-Armstrong WRNS, Served 1941-45 and posted initially to *Rosyth* before being sent to *Orkney* then *Malta*. May 17 in *Portugal*. Aged 89.

Derek Hooper PO MEM, Submariner. Served 1953-75 *HMS Raleigh*, *Warrior*, *Dolphin*, *Faslane*, *Explorer*, *Excaltiber*, *Thorough*, *Telemachus*, *Porpoise*, *Aurochs*, *Auriga* and *Alliance*. May 10. Aged 78.

Peter Earl RO1, Served 1956-66, *Victoria Barracks*, *HMS Drake*, *HMS Pellew*, *Zest*, *Lagos* and *HMS Terror*, *Singapore* 1961-63. July 5. Aged 74.

ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

John Martin Lloyd Hughes ME1, Trained at *Raleigh* then served *HMS Victory*, *Maidstone*, *Vernon*, *Comus* (Korea 8th Destroyer Flotilla), *Tamar*, *Bellerophon*, *Orion*, *Protector*, *Whirlwind*, *Troubridge* and *Drake*. Post-RN saw service in the Merchant Navy. Life member and former secretary *Letchworth* & *Hitchin* RNA. June 12. Aged 82.

Edward 'Ted' Gosden CPO(GI), Served 1940-69 at *St George*, *Indomitable* (41-44), *Excellent* (44-45), *Birmingham* at *Copenhagen* after the German surrender, *Cavalier* (57-59) and *Berwick* (63-65). Awarded the BEM at an investiture on board *HMS Victory* 1968. April 14. Aged 89.

Grosvenor 'Grove' Dove Telegraphist, Joined 1943 and served *HMS Queen*, taking part in the last Arctic Convoys (JW 67), and *Tourmaline*. *Huntingdon* and *District* branch. June 30. Aged 89.

Geoff Morgan PO RP, Served 1953-75 *HMS Newcastle*, *Mohawk*, *Chichester*, *Greenville*, *Trafalgar*, *Dryad* and *Mercury*. *Aquitaine* (France) branch. June 26 in *Languedoc-Roussillon*. Aged 79.

Ronald Andrews, *Beccles* branch. July 9. Aged 88.

ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS

Capt C W C 'Bill' Swinley OBE, HMS *Raleigh*, *Norfolk*, *Saker*, *Argonaut*, *DG Ships* and *VCONS*. June 4. Aged 82.

Capt Ian A Wright, HMS *Falmouth*, *Excellent*, *President*, *Centurion* and *JSSC*. June 28. Aged 87.

Capt Andrew E Thomson CBE, HMS *Sea Eagle*, *Alaric*, *Tyne*, *London*, *Saker*, *Neptune*, *Resolution* and *SA Paris*. June 13.

Lt Col Martin Pound RM, HMS *Arethusa*, *Sussex*, *Lanka*, *Appledore* and *Duke of York*, also *MNBDO1*, *RM Deal*, 40 and 45 Cdo. June 29. Aged 98.

Cdr Michael S Burnett AFC, 705, 706,

Sports Lottery

June 14: £5,000 – WO2 M Newey; £1,800 – LH M Smith; £800 – Mne S Scott; £600 – AB1 A Beckett; £500 – AB1 R Patton; £400 – Lt E Fraser.

June 21: £5,000 – AB T S Lacey; £1,800 – Mne V Brown; £800 – AB N A Pate; £600 – AB B A Jones; £500 – CPO A Pickersgill; £400 – LH L Worsfold.

June 28: £5,000 – AB2 G Gagen; £1,800 – Cdr N Walker; £800 – Surg Lt Cdr C Cole; £600 – Mne A Avery; £500 – CPO M Davies; £400 – PO A Causer.

July 5: £5,000 – LH S Usher; £1,800 – PO K MacLeod; £800 – Surg Lt Cdr S Middleton; £600 – Cdr R Harcourt; £500 – Mne M Davis; £400 – AB1 M Jones.

737, 820, 824, 826 and 810 NAS. May 29. Aged 69.

Surg Lt Cdr Frank R St C Assinder VRD RNRV, HMS *Wizard*, List II. June. Aged 94.

Lt Cdr Allen H P Crosbie, HMS *President*, *Daedalus*, *Lochinvar*, *Cochrane* and *Neptune*. June 11. Aged 86.

Lt Cdr Philip F Cookson, HMS *Dolphin*, *Oberon*, *Forth* and *NATO Portugal*. June 28. Aged 82.

Lt Cdr Edward F B Sprague, HMS *Nigeria*, *Loch Craggie*, *Chevron*, *Gossamer*, *Carysfort*, *President* and *HMZNS Tamaki*. June 22. Aged 84.

Lt Cdr (S)(W) Alan Hogarth, HMS *Warrior*, *Victory*, *Rooke*, *Fisgard*, *Pembroke* and *Drake*. June 18. Aged 77.

Lt Cdr Ailister Hunter-Blair, HMS *Eagle* and *Phoenix* also *RNR London*. June.

Lt Cdr (S) John U Nichol, HMS *Fearless*, *Ariel*, *Cassandra*, *Sultan*, *Excellent* and *Cochrane*. May 13. Aged 84.

Lt John H Beattie, RNAS *Gosport*, *Eglington*, *Portland* and *Hal Far*. June 26. Aged 86.

Lt (E) Dennis W Edwards, HMS *Formidable* and *Hornet*. June. Aged 90.

Lt (E) Bill W A Riseborough, HMS *Raleigh*, *Euryalus* and *Drake*. March 14. Aged 92.

Supt NO Rita B L Wikner (nee Phillips), In South Africa. Aged 98.

SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

P R 'Pete' Burgess L/Sea RP2, Submarine Service 1954-66 in *Turpin*, *Telemachus*, *Seascout*, *Anchorite*, *Andrew* and *Otus*. *Gosport* branch. Aged 78.

A J 'Andrew' Mahood CT1, Submarine Service 1968-78 in *Finwhale* (69-70), *Cachalot* (70-71), *Onslaught* (72-75) and *Osiris* (75-78). *Hull* branch. Aged 64.

R Admiral P R 'Philip' Marrack CB, Submarine Service 1948-50 in *Templar* (48-49) and *Token* (49-50). *Dolphin* branch. Aged 91.

Lt A 'Tony' Platt, Submarine Service 1941-44 in *P32*, *Upright*, *Unbeaten*, *Upholder*, *Seawolf* and *L23*. *Australia* branch. Aged 94.

Lt J R 'Joseph' Schofield, Submarine Service 1972-76 in *Olympus* (73-75), and *Grampus* & *Walrus* for short periods. *Blackpool* branch. Aged 75.

Lt Cdr J 'John' Walmstey, Submarine

Service 1972-86 in *Revenge* (2) and *S/M4*. *Dorset* branch. Aged 68.

Lt Cdr (P) John G P Morton, HMS *Blackcap*, *Merlin*, *Gannet*, *Curlew*, *Seahawk* and *Goldcrest*, also 811 and 812 NAS. July 8.

FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

Leabert 'Lea' Francis NA AH3, Served 1967-70 *HMS Fulmar* (RNAS *Lossiemouth*) and *HMS Eagle*. Medically discharged after serious accident aboard *Eagle*. Member of *Watford FAAA* for 23 years. Chairman of *Luton* and *Dunstable* and *Aldenhams* RNA for over 25 years. June 14. Aged 63.

Joseph Bernard Griffin PO TAG, Member of TA prior to serving RN 1939-51, HMS *Victory*, *HMT Ben Dearg*, *HMS St Vincent*, *Kestrel*, *Jackdaw*, *Tern*, *Urley* and *Daedalus*. Survived three *Swordfish* crashes. Last chairman of TAGA (Telegraphist Air Gunners Association – disbanded 2010). April 15. Aged 92.

George Meaden POAM(E), Served 1941-48 at *Lee-on-Solent* (781 NAS), *Worthy Down* (755 NAS), *HMS Bermuda* (700 NAS), *HMS Fencer* (842 NAS), *RAF Inverness* (782 NAS), *Lossiemouth* and *Theseus* (766 NAS). Five years Reserve Fleet Service discharged in 1953. *Kent* branch. June 5. Aged 92.

Stanley 'Stan' Wadge EA1(A), Served 1942-66. *NE Hants FAAA*. June 16. Aged 87.

George Robert Mead LAM(A), Served 1950-58. *Essex* branch *FAAA* and *Southend* branch *RNA*. Early June. Aged 82.

ALGERINES ASSOCIATION

William Chivers Std, Served in *Pluto*. June 24. Aged 86.

John Thompson Sto/PO, Served in *Rifleman* and *Jewel*. June 25. Aged 87.

Lt John Beattie, Served in *Rattlesnake*. June 26. Aged 86.

HMS NEWFOUNDLAND ASSOCIATION

Horace Edwards L/Seaman, Served on board *HMS Newfoundland* 1944-47, also *HMS Ocean*, *Implacable*, *Consort* and *Ark Royal*. *Australia* in December. Aged 86.

Kenneth Pollitt SBA, Served on board 1947-48, also *HMS Unicorn* and *Tartar*. April 15. Aged 77.

Ronald Tucker AB, Served on board 1956-58, also *HMS Indefatigable* and *Bulwark*. April 22. Aged 77.

Promotions & Assignments

Cdre J P Pentreath to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from September 15.

Brig S M Birrell DSO RM to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from September 15.

Capt I A McGhie to be promoted Commodore and to be Commander British Forces Gibraltar from August 5.

Capt N W Hine promoted Commodore and Director General Finance within HM Treasury from March 17.

Capt R A Morrison to be NATO Response Force Permanent Team Leader and Operational Liaison and Reconnaissance Team Leader from September.

Capt T J Peacock to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Training Capability within *Navy Command* HQ from October.

Col E A Murchison DSO RM to be Director A Division of the Advance Command and Staff Course within the Joint Services and Staff College from August 26.

Capt N T Blackman to be *Merlin* Operations Manager from July 22.

Capt P R Casson to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from September 15.

Col G S C Manger RM to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from September 15.

Capt P N Olive to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from September 15.

Capt M J Williams to be a Member of the Royal College of Defence Studies from September 15.

A/Capt D J M Doull to be promoted Captain and to continue in the assignment of UK Submarine Technical Liaison Officer USA from July 1.

A/Surg Capt C J A Edwards to be promoted Surgeon Captain and to continue in the assignment of Military Clinical Director within the Royal College of Defence Medicine from July 1.

Cdr P S Green to be promoted Captain and to be Deputy Head Differentiated Services Information Systems and Services from August 26.

Cdr J Le S Perks to be promoted Captain and to be Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff Commitments within *Navy Command* HQ from July 1.

Cdr P E Dunn to be promoted Captain and to be Captain *Faslane Flotilla* from July 15.

Cdr K J O'Brien to be promoted Captain

and to be Sea King Implementation Team Leader within *Defence Equipment* and *Support* from July 14.

Cdr J H T Nisbet to be promoted Captain and to be *Defence Media Communications Operations* from August.

Lt Col N Sutherland RM to be promoted Colonel and to be Director T Division of the Intermediate Command and Staff Course (Land) within the Joint Services Command and Staff College from August 5.

Lt C Chew as CO of *HMS Pursuer* from July 14.

Honours

The Queen has given orders for the following honorary appointment:

Admiral the Lord Boyce KG, GCB, OBE, DL as *Admiral of the Fleet*.

The appointment to honorary 5-star rank is a promotion that can be given by the sovereign alone and is made sparingly.

Faces from the past

MEMORIES and thoughts inspired by the build-up to World War 1 in Portsmouth formed the inspiration for a new work at the Portsmouth

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If First can do it, so can you

WHEN a last-minute change to his programme meant that the First Sea Lord had an unexpectedly clear diary, he knew what he would rather be doing.

Admiral Sir George Zambellas, President of the Royal Navy Lawn Tennis Association, joined fellow players in the annual Navy Tennis Championships at Burnaby Road, Portsmouth.

For the first time ever, there was a novice draw attracting 17 newcomers to competitive tennis – the Admiral among them.

While the tournament was held over four days the novices played on two days and, leading from the front, the Navy's chief played six novice singles matches in one day, winning three of them.

Winner of the men's novice was ET(WE) Richard Trelease, while winner of the women's novice was Lt Liz Benmayor.

In the main draw, the women's final saw Musn Alice Hudson prevail over AB Lauren Parker. In the men's singles, Cpl Nathan Jackson won the thrilling final against Surg Lt Paul Jones. The women's doubles was won by AB Parker and Lt Katie Steele, the men's doubles by Lt Hamish Coles Hendry and Cpl Jackson, the veteran's singles by Lt Col (Rtd) Stewart Barnes and the veteran's doubles by Lt Col Barnes and Cdr (Rtd) Joe Collicutt. The mixed doubles was won by AB Parker and Lt Coles Hendry.

The floodlit astro turf courts on Burnaby Road are free for use by all personnel and can be booked through the Naval Base central booking service 9380 20120 (02392 720120).

There is also free coaching for Navy personnel on Mondays from 6pm. If it's wet, then try the Portsmouth Indoor Tennis Centre – serving personnel get a 50 per cent discount for court hire.



● First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas played six matches in one day

Meanest of marathons

A ROYAL Navy officer has completed Scotland's toughest ever footrace – the 110-mile Double Cateran Ultra in Glenshee.

Lt Cdr Keith Mabbott (pictured) (COMUKMARFOR), based at HMS Excellent, Portsmouth, finished second with a time of 25h 6m, two-and-a-half hours behind the winner, Mike Raffan.

The mine clearance diving officer said: "It is without doubt the hardest physical challenge of my life so far."

"As well as the obvious pain involved in running a long way, there are the mental games going on in your head, especially overnight. It's hurting and you need to avoid telling yourself that you still have 80 miles to run."

"At halfway I was vomiting and struggling to take on solids. Your body doesn't want food but you know that without it you simply won't finish. In some ways it's an eating competition with a bit of running thrown in."

The Ultra began from the Spittal of Glenshee, taking in an anti-clockwise loop of the Cateran Trail overnight, before reversing the course for a second loop.



Three weeks prior to the Ultra, Lt Cdr Mabbott, 40, from Cheshire, took part in the ninth Hoka Highland Fling, a 53-mile race taking in the West Highland Way from Glasgow to Tyndrum, via the shores of Loch Lomond.

He completed the route, which includes 2,200 metres of climbing in 9h 53m, finishing in 92nd place out of 614 starters, an improvement of two hours 15 minutes from last year.

He is now looking forward to a period of rest before plotting an attempt on the 95-mile West Highland Way Race next year.

Racquet battle

THE CHANCE to be coached by top badminton player Vernon Smeed attracted a dozen Royal Marines to join a tour of Cardiff.

The Royal Marines Badminton Association also got the chance to watch the Welsh national team train.

A league competition saw Musn Natalie Wade and Mne Henry Taylor battle for two new

racquets donated by Smeed, who was selected for St Helena at the Commonwealth Games in Glasgow.

Mne Taylor won but Musn Wade then beat him in a return match.

The Royal Marines are always on the lookout for new players so if you are interested contact C/Sgt Steve Forrest on 01392 414452.

Navy miss out on top polo trophy

ROYAL Navy polo players put up a tough fight against an Army side containing Prince Harry for the Rundle Cup, the highlight of the Services' Polo season.

The one-goal senior RN team of Cdre Adrian Aplin, Cdr Al Wilson, Lt Cdr Steve Spiller and Lt Hiro Suzuki faced a three-goal Army side of Maj Rupert Lewis, Capt Harry Wales, 2nd Lt Rishi Ahluwalia and OC Paddy Self.

After a combined Services team, which included L/Cpl Max Kamper of the Royal Marines, was defeated by a visiting South Africa squad for the Indian Cavalry Officers' Association Trophy the main event of the afternoon got under way in front of a crowd of 6,000 spectators at Tidworth, home to the Combined Services Polo Association.

The Army, odds-on favourites, faced a disciplined and well-structured Navy team keen to avenge last year's defeat.

From the outset the crowd was treated to a fabulous display of polo with individual flair and



● Prince Harry's Army team emerged victorious against the Royal Navy at Tidworth

Picture: CPOA(Phot) Rob Harding

outstanding teamwork featuring strongly from both sides.

Both sides were neck and neck up to the last chukka, when the Navy conceded a penalty, allowing the Army to increase their lead by two goals.

The Army went on to finish victors 7-4½. The prestigious trophy was awarded to the Army captain by Vice Admiral Sir Phillip Jones, president of Navy polo, and Jeremy Hackett, sponsor of the Rundle Cup.

Best playing pony was presented by Tristan Young of Gore, sponsor of the RN Polo Team.

Cdr Wilson, Navy polo club secretary, said: "It was a hard-fought game but the Army proved they were the stronger team today."

Navy polo goes from strength to strength with officers, ratings and other ranks taking up and enjoying what is a hugely-addictive sport.

The annual Navy and Army Cup was first played in Malta in 1909, instituted by the island's Governor, Sir Leslie Rundle, and supported by the then Prince George of Wales, later to become King George VI.

The Royal Navy won the first cup and the Army won the last time the match was played in Malta back in 1966, after which it moved to the UK.

The Navy won the first recorded match in the UK in 1976 – a team including the Prince of Wales. Outstanding scores include a hat-trick by the Navy in 1994-96, but the honours are now about even.

Royal support

MORE THAN 100 competitors took part in the second Royal Marines Rehabilitation Triathlon at Commando Training Centre Royal Marines.

The event, which was organised by physical training instructors at CTCRM near Exmouth in Devon, was for serving injured military personnel and veterans.

Numerous high-profile visitors attended the event to show their support, including Prince Harry, outgoing Commandant General Royal Marines Maj Gen Ed Davies and the Naval Secretary Rear Admiral Jonathon Woodcock.

Every Royal Marines unit was represented, and there were also contingents from the US Marine Corps and from the Royal Netherlands Marines Corps.



Navy sweep the board

PO(PT) KARL Thorpe helps HMS Collingwood win the men's category at the Forces Throwdown 2014 contest at Aldershot (above).

He was joined by CPO(PT) Baz Sloan and Mne Michael Fleckney.

A team from NCHQ finished second and 42 Cdo's team took third as the Royal Navy swept the board.

RNAS Culdrose took the women's title while the Fleet Diving Squadron won the masters.

CO puts new pitch to test

THE Commanding Officer of Britannia Royal Naval College, Capt Henry Duffy, has become the first to complete his Royal Naval Fitness Test on the establishment's newly opened AstroTurf pitch.

The pitch has been refurbished to FIFA standard with a new state-of-the-art third generation synthetic surface.

With a longer pile carpet, filled with a combination of sand and rubber granules, the surface is as close as possible to natural grass and provides a safe playing surface, which won't freeze in cold conditions.

Cadets at the college will undergo strength and conditioning circuits on the pitch as part of their physical training syllabus.

Marines take back Trafalgar Cup

THE ROYAL Marines celebrated their birthday year by regaining the rugby league Trafalgar Cup.

Victory over the Parachute Regiment meant the Commandos took back the cup after winning their seventh game in the series.

With the match ball and cup delivered in true Commando style by Royal Navy helicopter, it wasn't just the silverware they were playing for.

Pride and bragging rights were at stake, with the cup having spent the past two years in the hands of the maroon berets.

There was certainly no love lost between the two sides, with the Paras doing their utmost to spoil the Royal Marines' party.

Just minutes into the match the Paras put

the first points on the board with a try from Pte Stef Pieteron. The Paras were off to a flying start with the second try coming from Bdr Vunivesilivu before the Royal Marines closed the gap with a converted try.

Pte Pieteron stormed in with a second try, converted by Cpl Bill Humphries, increasing the Paras' lead to 14-6 by half time.

After losing to their rivals for the past two years, the pressure was on for the Royal Marines to produce a telling comeback.

And that they did, just minutes in with team captain Cpl Carl Gilson scoring the first try of the second half, converted by Mne Richard Cadywoud. Further tries from Mne Gilmour, Mne Kamikamica and Cpl Fairbrother sealed a 31-14 victory.



● The Royal Marines storm to victory

Maiden relay win for Navy at Inter Services

ROYAL Navy relay runners scored an unprecedented victory at this year's Inter Services Athletics Championships.

The men's 4x100 team, of AB Olusoji 'Flash' Fasuba (HMS Bulwark), LET(ME) Daryn Jackson, L/Cpl Cameron Hamilton (30 Cdo) and NA Jonny Beaumont (HMS Bulwark), provided the highlight of the day with victory over the Army.

Hamilton ran the first leg, handing over in first place to Fasuba, the current African 100m record holder. He passed the baton to Beaumont and Jackson was left with a comfortable lead.

Both Fasuba and Jackson warmed up with silver and bronze medals respectively in the 100m and 200m.

They were among ten medal-winning performances at the championships, hosted at Victory Stadium, HMS Nelson.

NA Dale Willis (RNAS Culdrose) retained his 400m title, running hard from the gun to win in 49.3s, just one tenth short of a personal best.

L/Logs Anna Waldron (HMS Scott) also retained her title in winning the shot putt with a throw of 11.38m.

Current World Master Games champion Lt Neal Edwards (30Cdo HQ 2IC) once again saved his best performance for the Inter Services as he finished second in the men's 400m hurdles in 58.4s.

Silver medals were won by women's team members Cdr Julie Robin (RCDM Birmingham) in the discus (27.92m) and AB Melissa Landman (HMS Illustrious) in the javelin (36.92m), with the latter also taking third in the high jump (1.35m).

PO Rhian Hanson (HMS Nelson) finished second in the hammer, with Sub Lt Ami Burns (HMS Sultan) close behind in third place.

POPT Julie Stroud (RNAS Culdrose) added to her previous collection of Inter Services medals with a bronze in the 800m (2m 29s).

Completing the medal winners was debutant AET Matt Worrall (RNAS Culdrose), whose 12.05m triple jump took third place.

Unluckiest amongst the fourth-place finishers were CPO Steve Wilsmore (MCTA) and AB Daniella Chapman (HMS Neptune).

Wilsmore's legs almost took him to a 1500m medal as he chased hard in the final straight.

Chapman made her debut over 400m hurdles with a very fast finish, but was denied in a blanket finish on the line.

Team spirit, grit, determination and pride were evident as all events were covered and tough competition was met head on. The potential for improvement in 2015 will be well served by such attributes allied to commitment to structured training regimes.



Picture: xxxxx

● Above: AB Daniella Chapman made her debut in the 400m hurdles at Victory Stadium, HMS Nelson

● Right: WO2 Dean Fernee competing in the 400m hurdles for the Royal Navy

Pictures: LA(Phot) Rhys O'Leary



Marine equals record

ROYAL MARINE athlete Maj Charlie Pennington romped to his fifth successive Inter Services Triathlon title.

Maj Pennington (pictured), based at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth, finished nearly four minutes ahead of his nearest rival, equalling fellow Royal Marine Cpl Gary Gerrard's record – although he achieved it over eight years.

Hosted by the RAF at Cotswold Water Park, the Royal Navy also broke 20 years of Army dominance to take the men's team title.

The margin of victory was small but the effort and commitment needed to secure the result was significant, with five Navy men finishing in the top ten.

The Army took the veterans' title with the Navy second.

Cdr Kris Nicholson was runner up in the individual category.

Teams from each of the Armed Forces took part, along with police, fire service and prison service athletes.



The triathlon included a 1.5km lake swim, a 40km cycle on open roads and a 10km run.

The Royal Navy are back in action at the Inter Services Middle Distance Triathlon Championships on August 30. Anyone interested in joining the triathlon team should visit www.pdevportal.co.uk/sports/triathlon or find out more via the Royal Navy's Triathlon Facebook page.

Few shocks at triathlon

TWENTY-ONE women from the Royal Navy were among 1,000 competitors who met for a festival of women's triathlon at Eton Dorney Rowing Lake for the Shock Absorber WomenOnly Triathlon.

The triathlon, organised by the UK's largest organiser of cycling, triathlon, running and swimming events, was geared towards celebrating women's participation in triathlon with distances ranging from novice (200m swim, 5.3km bike, 2.5km run) to supersprint (400m swim, 21.2km bike, 5km run) and challenge (800m swim, 31.8km bike, 7.5km run), as well as a relay over the latter distance.

The event is a significant fundraiser for Official Charity Breast Cancer Care.

Taking on a unique relay over the SuperSprint distance were two teams led by cycling legend Victoria Pendleton and pop star Melanie C.

A #selfie competition was initiated by the RN team organiser, with runner-up going to Hannah McMorran and Tracy Bale winning hands down with a selfie with both Victoria Pendleton and Mel C.

Also taking place was the first-ever elite race to be staged at the event.

The elite women completed a sprint triathlon comprising of a 750m swim, 21.2km bike and 5km run, which eventually resulted in victory for Team Dillon athlete Emma Pallant.

Also competing over this distance were RN athletes entered into a sub one hour 25 minute wave.

Sam Truelove, Steph Buttery and Gemma Radcliffe all pushed the other competitors over a windy flat course with a mixture of overcast weather and sunny spells.

Organiser Sam Truelove said: "What a fantastic turn out for the RN Ladies novices. "There was a great mix of experience to help all the newbies and the team spirit and atmosphere was truly fantastic."

A novice distance with a 200m swim, 5.3km bike, 2.5km run offered something for first timers to try their hand at with Hannah McMorran winning the race in 28m 55s, beating Natalie Brierley (30m 3s) into third.

More than 150 women competed in this category and all top 20 places were taken by Royal Navy personnel.

More than 430 women took part in the supersprint race at the picturesque Berkshire site.

The Royal Navy's Abbie Boyle, Lizzie Crofts and Kara Chadwick were the first three women to cross the line.

Trophy haul for target team

CULDROSE Operational Shooting Team returned victorious with a pensionable hoard of silverware from the annual Naval Air Command Operational Shooting Competition (NAC OSC).

The competition held at Bisley ranges, Pirbright Barracks in Surrey, is arranged between the Naval Air Command (NAC) teams with representatives from RNAS Culdrose and Yeovilton, the Defence Equipment & Support (DE&S) and the Royal Naval Reserve Air Branch.

The nine shooters from Culdrose came from the Operational Shooting Team (CU OST) who remarkably beat their rivals to 15 of the 18 trophies available, including Overall Individual Rifle, Overall Team Pistol, Overall Team and Top Tyro's Trophies – a tyro is a competitor who has not shot in competition before.

Lt Kevin Lawrence, the Combat Marksmanship Team captain, secured both the Individual Pistol and Champion at Arms trophies for the second year running.

He said "It's important to train a cadre of people who can shoot across the Fleet Air Arm in advanced combat marksmanship techniques so that commanding officers have an embedded shooting expertise."

Seahawk take top golf cup

A TEAM made up entirely of logistics staff from RNAS Culdrose triumphed at the Navy Golf Cup Final.

The competition, at the China Fleet Country Club, saw a full handicap Stableford format over 36 holes, with the best three scores counting towards the overall team score.

The morning rounds saw the three solid scores in excess of 30 points which stood the HMS Seahawk A team in good position heading into the afternoon rounds, where further solid scores were recorded.

The best individual performance from the team during both rounds was delivered by Cdr Andy Fogell, who also took overall third in the morning and first in the afternoon, receiving well-deserved individual prizes from the RNGA representative WO Bob Mitchell.

The collective team scores saw HMS Seahawk A cross the line as 2014 Navy Cup Champions ahead of the Royal Marines and HMS Drake.

Army far too strong

ROYAL Navy cricketers suffered double despair at the Inter Services Under-25 cricket festival at Aldershot.

Day one saw an understrength Navy team take on the Army, who took the first three RN wickets for just 26 runs. The RN finished on 135, a score easily surpassed by the Army with five wickets to spare.

Current champions the RAF took on the RN on day two with the Senior Service losing by 141 runs.

The final saw the Army beat the RAF to take the crown for 2014.