



# NAVY NEWS

DECEMBER 2014

## HUNT IS ON

Gulf forces in mine exercise

## HOMAGE TO THE FALLEN

Tributes for Remembrance

# WE SHALL TRIUMPH

● The sun sets as HMS Triumph arrives at Clyde Naval Base for an eight-month refit, during which she will spend three months out of the water. See page 6.

Picture: CPOA(Phot)Tam McDonald







# Argus arrival a game-changer



**O**N THE ground. In the air. The arrival of RFA Argus in Sierra Leone has made a real impact to the country battling the deadly Ebola virus.

Within minutes of arriving in Freetown, personnel aboard the 28,000-tonne vessel were unloading Department for International Development (DfID) stores and 32 off-road vehicles which are now being used by the government of Sierra Leone and charities up and down the country.

The ship's three embarked Merlin Mk2 helicopters, from 820 Naval Air Squadron, have so far flown more than 100 hours of Operation Gritrock tasking transporting essential stores and medical personnel to remote locations.

And Royal Marines from 42 Commando and 539 Assault Squadron Royal Marines have been travelling the densely-forested coastline in their landing craft gathering information from local people and identifying potential beach landing sites.

Capt David Eagles, Commanding Officer of RFA Argus, said: "The UK has made clear its commitment to fighting and containing Ebola and the deployment of RFA Argus is just one element in this campaign.

"Our primary role is to deliver transportation and logistical support for the medical teams and experts working in Sierra Leone – a role we began upon arrival.

"Embarked in Argus are men and women drawn from across the Armed Forces, many of whom are experts in their field.

"All have undergone stringent counter-Ebola training and we are seeing the benefits of deploying such a capable vessel and crew."

The support ship will spend six months in the area, joining Army medics and other teams already on the ground in the Commonwealth republic which is the country second hardest hit by Ebola.

By mid-November the virus had infected 5,338 people and claimed 1,510 lives in the country.

Argus arrived in Freetown on October 30 carrying nearly 400 personnel – a mixture of Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

Eighty of these come from 820 NAS, based at RNAS Culdrose, in Cornwall.

Cdr Ross Spooner, Commanding Officer of 820 NAS, said: "We conducted daily flight training on the way to Sierra Leone and arrived ready for operations.

"We have so far carried out over 100 hours of flight tasking transporting stores and UK military personnel to remote locations as well as training ambulance personnel to load stretchers

into our aircraft.

"We had the privilege of flying the Sierra Leonean President Ernest Bai Koroma and in this way he was able to spread a message of reassurance to several towns across the country."

Also carrying out an important role are the Royal Marines embarked with two Landing Craft Vehicle Personnel (LCVP), two Rigid Hull Inflatable Boats and three Zodiacs.

A mixture of 539 Assault Squadron and 42 Commando they are providing additional logistical support along the country's extensive coastline and river systems.

Officer Commanding Maj Luke Davies of 539 ASRM said: "My men have been carrying out survey work and gathering local information along the coastline around Freetown, identifying suitable areas where our vessels can land should the need arise.

"Over the course of a week we have progressively moved inland along river courses to more inaccessible areas.

"The reception we've received has been incredibly warm and there has been great interest and support from the Sierra Leoneans.

"It is clear to see that UK personnel's presence and commitment to Sierra Leone is understood and greatly appreciated."

A large crowd of Sierra Leoneans came out to meet one small group of Royal Marines who stepped ashore to carry out survey work.

The Royal Marines landing party travelled from Argus in one LCVP and two Zodiacs before going ashore at Lungi Beach, near the country's main international airport.

There they met with local people, who told them more about the surrounding area, as well as carrying out an underwater survey in order to confirm beach gradients and their usability by landing craft.

Leading the small shore team was Sgt John McDonald of 539 ASRM.

He said: "The reception we received was overwhelming. I'd say that more than 150 people met us when we landed on the beach.

"We explained that we were there to carry out survey work and they really wanted to help by providing us with local knowledge.

"As a result we managed to gather more information than we had expected about the local area, while at the same time we were able to deploy a sonar on one of the Zodiacs to confirm the suitability of

the beach for landings."

Cpl Gavin Smith, who was at the helm of the LCVP, said: "The response from the local community was really positive, and despite Ebola being a major issue in West Africa, it seems that life is continuing as normal.

"All of our commandos have undergone rigorous counter-Ebola training and adhered to these measures while ashore."

Cpl Ian Roberts said: "We found a lot of places where we'll be able to land."

Like many of those on board the Argus, Roberts is not overly concerned about the risk of contracting Ebola.

"I feel fine about it. I think there's a lot more hype back home than there is out here," he said. "If you take the right precautions it's nothing to be too afraid of."

Just across the water among the palm trees and rusted corrugated shacks of Freetown's urban sprawl, Ebola is raging.

At the DfID-funded command centre that co-ordinates the emergency response in the west of the country, officials say burial teams are having to deal with as many as 50 or 60 bodies a day. Treatment centres are overwhelmed.

The British have opened a treatment unit at Kerry Town. From 5,000ft up in one of the Merlins, the place appears as a series of neat buildings in a sea of jungle and scrub. Its 92 beds will help ease the strain on existing facilities, but with dozens of new cases being reported daily, many feel the help has come too late.

When the British began building the centre more than two months ago, the western part of the country had seen 20 cases.

When it



Pictures: PO (Phot) Carl Osmond, SSgt Tom Robinson RLC and Craig Mowat







# er in Ebola battle

opened in November, the number had risen to 1,261.

At the opening of the centre, Donal Brown, who heads the UK Ebola task force in Sierra Leone, described the facility as first-class, but just a small part of a broad British response. "We'll be here as long as it takes," he said.

Not only is Argus playing a logistical role but also a medical role assisting in the care of more than 800 British Armed Forces personnel deployed in Sierra Leone, as well as entitled UK government employees.

In order to alleviate pressure on the Sierra Leone health service, should a member of the British Armed Forces sustain an in-country injury there is the ability for them to be evacuated to Argus for immediate treatment in the ship's Primary Casualty Receiving Facility (PCRF).

During the journey to Sierra Leone the PCRF primarily engaged in training serials in preparation for receiving casualties and closely liaising with medical colleagues ashore conducting joint training both afloat and on land.

Commanding Officer of the PCRF Capt Danny Follington said: "The embarked medical team has deployed to assist military and British nationals who may need medical assistance whilst in Sierra Leone, dealing with injuries

sustained in car crashes to broken bones, snake bites, and other injuries and diseases other than Ebola.

"The facilities that we offer onboard are flexible so we can deliver uniquely tailored treatment for a wide range of injury or disease."

Those personnel who have to go ashore will have their temperatures checked before leaving the ship and on their return and will continue to be monitored for a further 21 days from their last visit ashore.

If a returning person shows signs of a high temperature or fever they will be isolated by the PCRF and removed to the new 12-bed medical facility ashore that has been established specifically to provide high-quality specialist care for Armed Forces and British medical personnel.

Clinical Director Surg Capt Graham Hill said: "Everyone in Argus has undergone counter-Ebola briefings and it is highly unlikely that they will come into contact with someone suffering from Ebola.

"However, the embarked medical personnel all undergo regular training and are very well prepared to deal with an infected Ebola patient should they need to.

"The medical facilities onboard are comparable with any NHS facility in the UK."

Morale aboard Argus is high, said Chief Officer (Logistics Supply) Dave Gatenby, from Broxburn, who heads up the RFA Argus Logistics team – ensuring the ship has all the necessary provisions onboard for the lengthy deployment.

The 55-year-old said: "This is a busy deployment for the ship and we have a large number of embarked personnel, and additional stores, onboard.

"But it is also a very upbeat ship with everyone knowing that we are here to help."

Weapons Engineer CPO Adam Cowling, 41, is in charge of more than 1,000 bits of medical equipment on Argus.

The Plymouth man is six months into a two-and-a-half-year draft with Argus.

He said: "In my usual

role I look after all the weapons on a warship but in Argus it's the medical equipment that I look after so have an important role to play in saving lives.

"It's a big task as Argus is a Primary Casualty Receiving Facility with over 1,000 bits of equipment, the same that can be found in a NHS hospital from a CT scanner to anaesthetist kits."

Executive Warrant Officer (Medical) Neil Walsh, 43, is one of two senior Naval ratings on the ship. It is his role to act as the link between the ship's command structure and the embarked military forces and medics onboard.

"I took up my new role four weeks ago and shortly afterwards Argus was activated," he said.

"My role involves being at five days' notice so I was always prepared to move, but it can be emotional leaving your family behind for what could be a lengthy deployment.

"The training that we get onboard is second to none so I am confident of the success of our operation."

During the journey to Sierra Leone RFA Argus carried out a replenishment at sea (RAS) with RFA Black Rover.

It gave Argus the opportunity to top up with aviation fuel which will be vital for her role as a support ship for the Merlin helicopters.

Chief Officer Shane Wood, Argus' Executive Officer, oversaw the replenishment operation.

He said: "Before the RAS we had around half of our capacity of aviation fuel but after the RAS we were nearly full.

"By conducting a RAS we are able to stay at sea for several months without having to go ashore, and when we start to run low we will arrange for another RAS somewhere off the West African coast."

CPO (Deck) Chris Coultas is a RAS veteran with 40 years in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

He added: "Replenishing at sea is the bread and butter of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as we provide the logistical support for the Royal Navy. It all takes place while we are moving and we regularly transfer fuel, equipment, stores and mail.

"Because of the role we are playing in Sierra Leone it is likely that we may need to conduct a few more replenishments in months to come."

Further support for the personnel aboard Argus arrived in Sierra Leone courtesy of the Dutch Naval ship Karel Doorman.

The vessel picked up 40 pallets of material, including seven pallets of matting for the construction of a helicopter landing site ashore.

The supplies, which were embarked in Southampton, included a further

● Continues on page 4

## Delivering supplies deep into country

THE working day starts early onboard RFA Argus for the aircrew of 820 NAS as they fly sorties across Sierra Leone.

Overnight the ship has been tasked to take a load-lifting team up country and pick up stores in an under-slung net and bring it back to RFA Argus.

Lt Rich Beaumont is a Merlin pilot with 820 NAS and takes up his story.

"My alarm goes off at 0600, it's not long until I need to be 'turned to' so I have a quick shower and get rigged in my uniform. My first event is the ship's flying brief at 0630. This is followed by the aircraft's crew brief where we go through tasking we have for the day and plan how we are going to do this.

"Today's first sortie doesn't lift until 1030, so I have breakfast after the brief and make sure that my kit is ready for the mission. It is very important to take enough water as the cockpit gets very hot and I also check through my 'Downbird bag'. This contains all the equipment I may need if our aircraft develops a problem and we get stranded somewhere or if we have an accident. For example a change of uniform, survival knife, torch, first aid kit, some food and a fire-lighting kit.

"At 1030 we launch for the first mission, load-lifting stores. Flying with a large object hanging below the aircraft is tricky, not least because I can't see it from the cockpit. Close co-operation with the aircrewman in the cargo door is essential. He leans out to keep an eye on the load and provides precise instructions to ensure that it is placed down onto the deck in exactly the right place.

"Our next task is to take stores to an Army medical team who are based at Makeni, deep into Sierra Leone and very time-consuming to reach by road. The aircrewman and observer spend ten minutes 'lifting and shifting' the kit inside. They make sure that it is secured well so that it doesn't shift around during flight. We also pick up a recce team who are coming along for the ride so that they can conduct reconnaissance of potential casualty evacuation landing sites along the way.

"The flight takes about 30 minutes, along the way we see a landing craft manned by our Royal Marines coming along the river so we descend and give them a wave. Once at Makeni, we have a quick airborne look at our intended landing site, which is a football pitch. There are large trees around two sides, some goalposts and the surface is dusty. We plan our route in and out; considering what we will do if an engine fails during the approach. The



● Lt Rich Beaumont, centre, with his Merlin crew

dust can be a problem if it billows up around the aircraft, preventing us seeing the ground. So we decide to use a 'double-angle approach to a zero/zero landing' – this will allow us to clear the trees whilst minimizing the effects of a dust cloud.

"We drop the stores to the grateful soldiers who load it into their pickup. I notice the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) personnel have set up a cordon around us to stop excited children running up to the helicopter.

"They are all clearly quite thrilled to see us, but could get hurt or blown over if they get too close so I am relieved that the RSLAF are looking out for them.

"We lift off from the football pitch using a 'towering takeoff' – this allows us to stay over the landing site until we are high enough that we would be able to dive away safely in the event of an engine failure.

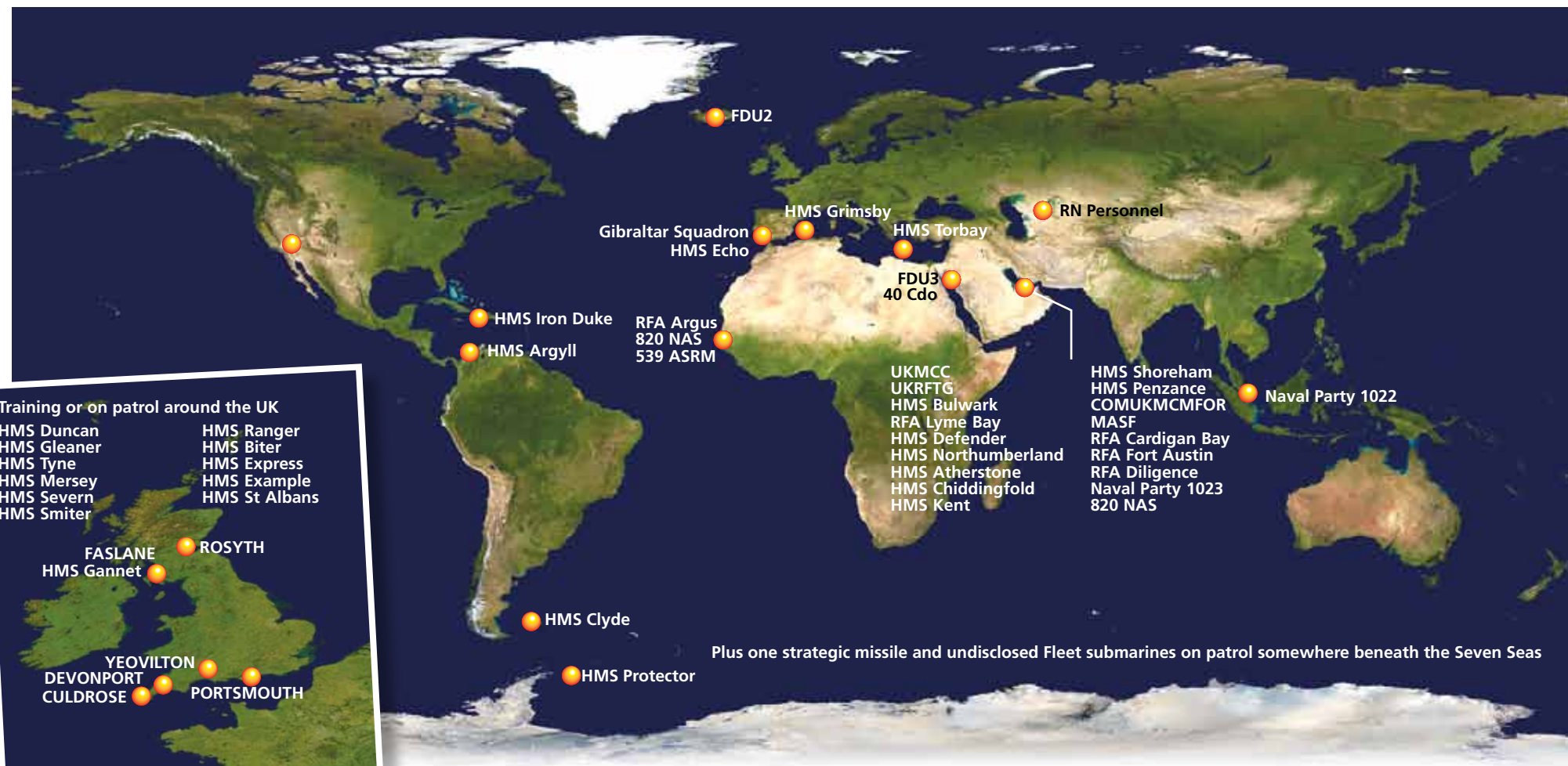
"We head for Freetown and RFA Argus. En-route we keep a lookout for potential landing sites. Spotting what looks like another sports pitch we note down its location, map co-ordinates and take some photos. It looks ideal and has good access to the main road for ambulances. The rest of the flight back is uneventful, and we land back on the Argus at 1630 and shut down the aircraft.

"After a post-flight walk round our Merlin we head back inside and debrief what we did during the sortie.

"We have spent four-and-a-half hours flying and been manned up in the aircraft for six hours. I have another shower and change out of my dirty flying kit and then head off for a very welcome hot meal."







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

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

THE Royal Navy has ended 2014 in the same way it began – at the heart of an international mercy mission. Last Christmas the crew aboard HMS *Illustrious* spent the festive season helping residents in the Philippines following the devastating Typhoon Haiyan. This Christmas sees Naval personnel aboard **RFA Argus, 539 ASRM** continue to help the international effort to contain the deadly Ebola virus in Sierra Leone (see pages 2, 3 and 4).

Elsewhere the focus is very much on the future as we take a stroll through the Royal Navy's new **Offshore Patrol Vessel**, which is quite remarkable as the first steel was cut in Scotland just weeks ago (see page 9). The tour was made on a cybership, thanks to a state-of-the-art virtual reality network being developed by BAE Systems.

Royal Navy fast-jet pilot Lt Cdr Ian Sloan tells of life aboard the French aircraft carrier **FS Charles de Gaulle**, where he has been plying his trade as part of preparations for the introduction of the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers (see pages 14 and 15).

It is very much business as usual for other elements of the Royal Navy with divers from the elite **Fleet Diving Unit 3** joining personnel from more than 40 nations in the Red Sea off the coast of Jordan for the fortnight-long International Mine Counter Measures Exercise (see pages 24 and 25).

Meanwhile divers from **Fleet Diving Unit 2** went to Iceland to work with personnel from eight other nations in a series of exercises disabling IEDs (see page 10).

The little-known Royal Marines unit the **Air Defence Troop** makes the news this month after testing the HVM anti-air system. The missiles, which travel at three times the speed of sound, were fired at Manorbier Range near Tenby (see page 18).

While the troop, part of 30 Cdo were in Wales, the men of **40 Cdo** swapped the driving rain of Albania for the scorching sun of Jordan for the six-week Exercise *Jebel Dagger* (see page 19).

In the Caribbean, **HMS Argyll** was dealing yet more blows to the drugs trade (two busts in the past month – see page 6), while **HMS Severn** is giving up fish duties to head for the same region over the winter (see page 5).

**RFA Black Rover** returned to the UK for the penultimate time (see page 5) and **HMS Grimsby** took part in a NATO exercise in the Mediterranean (see page 5).

The first-generation **Merlin** has made its final flight after 13 years on the Fleet Air Arm front line (see page 8). At the same time **Merlin Mk2s** of **829 NAS** were given their first run out in the Mediterranean (see page 8).

The P2000 **HMS Exploit** returned to her home port of Penarth having been flying the First Patrol Boat Squadron flag both around the UK and Western Europe since May (see page 7).

Peace and quiet greeted the crew of **HMS Clyde** as she paid her first visit of the Austral summer to South Georgia as part of her routine duties in the Falklands (see page 22).

Royal Navy personnel around the world joined the nation in acts of **Remembrance**, attending more than 400 services in the UK alone (see pages 28 and 29). The centenary year of the start of World War 1 also saw personnel paying tribute to the fallen with visits to battlefields in France (see page 29).

A new tribute to those who fought in the Falklands Conflict was revealed this month – a giant mural painted by art students on the wall of the WO Mess at **HMS Excellent** (see pages 28-29).

Tribute was also paid to the Royal Navy as 175 men and women from the Naval Service marched to Parliament – entering the House of Commons for the first time – as a thank-you for their commitment around the world (see page 23).

**Continued from page 3**

55 vehicles for DfID and medical supplies including more than four million rubber gloves, 1,000 rubber boots, disinfectant, thermometers, generators, mobile laboratories, protective clothing and more than 300,000 medical masks.

Ship's doctor Surg Lt Dan Hawkins looks after the health and wellbeing of roughly 150 personnel while the ship is conducting exercises or on operations.

But Dan is also Aviation Medicine qualified, meaning he will look after an additional 80 men and women from 820 NAS.

The 34-year-old said: "It has been a steep learning curve for all the ship's company to get up to speed with something they know little about, but all the Ebola training has really paid off and I'm confident of the positive contribution we will make."

"I'm not really worried about Ebola as the risk to the ship is minimal. Malaria is a bigger problem – you can stay away from Ebola but you cannot avoid the mosquitoes and that is why everyone onboard is taking anti-malarials."

Dan joined RFA Argus 16 months ago and the relief effort to Sierra Leone is his first international deployment with the Royal Navy.

"The Royal Navy has invested a lot of time in my training and now I'm going to be putting all of that into action," he said.

"My parents were concerned when I told them I was going to Sierra Leone because of what they had seen, read, and heard, in the media. But when I told them about all the screening and safety steps that are in place they felt better and are now pleased with the role I am playing."


 The five airmen from 820 NAS who received their Wings, from left, Lts Dan Gregory, Barry Barkey, Max Sloper, Rob Andrews and Joe Hole  
 Picture: PO(Phot) Donny Osmond

CPO (Meteorology and Oceanography) Paul Railton heads up the RFA Argus Met team – ensuring the ship's command structure has the most accurate and up-to-date weather forecasts as the ship heads towards the stormy equator.

The 39-year-old said: "This is a job I love. When I started it was all paper and charts and now it's mostly digital but it still serves the same function – to provide a safe forecast for the ship."

"Sierra Leone is particularly stormy and wet at this time of the year so it's going to be a busy time for my team as we are providing information that will impact on the ship, the helicopters and boats going ashore, as well as weather forecasts for the assets already shoreside."

Second Officer (Navigation) Stuart Smith, 27, whose job it is to look after all the charts and plan the ship's course, said: "My family are really proud of what we are doing and the importance

is, but having Danny along to show me the ropes is a bonus. It's especially good as I'm in a nine-man mess and he's in a cabin so I can go and visit him when I need a break."

RFA Argus also played host to a Wings ceremony as five RN pilots finished their training on active operations – the first time this has happened since the Falklands War.

The parade was held on the flight deck, attended by RFA, Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

"It was an absolute privilege to carry out this presentation on Argus," said Capt Eagles.

"I believe that this is the first time since the Falklands War that we have carried out training en route to an operation so this is a unique situation."

Cdr Spooner added: "It really was a fantastic opportunity to celebrate both the completion of five years' training and a unique transition to the front line for those graduating."

One of the Wings recipients, Lt Max Sloper, 24, said: "We have learnt a lot. Flying in the environment of Sierra Leone has been a whole new challenge for me. The working conditions in the cockpit can be incredibly hot; sometimes the sweat literally runs down your face and into your eyes. This can really make some of the finer handling points difficult, especially when hovering alongside the deck of the ship or flying an underslung load smoothly. We have got the hang of it now though."

Personnel aboard Argus also gathered for a Remembrance Service on the flightdeck.

Capt Eagles, laid a wreath for the Royal Navy and RFA while Maj Davies laid a wreath for the Royal Marines.

Reporting by Craig Mowat



# Torbay's Noble gestures

AFTER almost two months beneath the waves, the 100 crew of HMS Torbay were glad to round the Akrotiri Peninsula and sail into Crete's Souda Bay for the first operational stand-down of their patrol.

The Devonport-based boat hosted the second Perisher course of the year – and the first entirely run in the Med – as prospective boat commanders and XO's were given the ultimate work-out.

Indeed, there was the added frisson of several other submarines to play with – traditional diesel boats rather than a nuclear hunter-killer like Torbay – during NATO's Noble Justification exercise.

So demanding was Perisher and the NATO war games that the 'Blue One' – a nickname she owes to the colour of her casing – needed a five-day break at NATO's base in Souda Bay.

The visit coincided with November ceremonies and allowed crew members to take part in a service held at Souda Bay war cemetery, where more than 1,000 Commonwealth military personnel are buried.

This service was particularly poignant for the boat as in the summer of 1941, the previous Torbay

– also a T-class submarine – rescued 130 British troops from a small island off Crete's south coast; the men had evaded capture since the Germans seized the island in June and were brought safely back to Alexandria.

The service was attended by several hundred islanders – including a large expat and veteran turnout – and today's Torbay CO, Cdr Andy Johns, laid a wreath on behalf of the Royal Navy.

"It is always humbling to recall the bravery and sacrifice made by those who have fallen or been injured while serving their country. To be able to share that act of remembrance on foreign soil where British Service personnel lost their lives was particularly special," said Cdr Johns.

"The fact that HMS Torbay was able to return to the island where her predecessor saved many lives and remember those who were not so lucky was very poignant."

After a successful port visit, Torbay returned to sea to head through the Suez Canal and resume the busy operational tempo of a silent hunter beneath the waves.

# Not quite all Rover

THE second-oldest vessel in the Naval Service, veteran tanker RFA Black Rover has completed her penultimate deployment – a marathon 17 months in the Atlantic.

After 571 days away from the UK, the veteran tanker – which celebrated her 40th birthday in September – arrived at Glenmallan jetty in Loch Long, her mission refuelling ships done.

No Royal Navy vessel can carry out a patrol in the Southern Hemisphere without the support of a Royal Fleet Auxiliary tanker – a duty performed in recent years by a Rover-class vessel.

Black – the slightly younger of the Rovers still on active service – left Yonderberry Jetty in Plymouth in May last year, since when she's clocked up 75,000 miles – three times around the earth.

Sixteen times British or foreign vessels have topped up their fuel tanks to support their ongoing operations: Her Majesty's Ships Argyll, Richmond, Portland and Iron Duke, plus the RN's permanent presence in the Falklands, HMS Clyde, as well as RFA Argus and Spanish ships Tornado and Rayo.

The ship has sailed as far west as the Pacific off the coast of Peru, as far south as Cumberland Bay in South Georgia and as far east as False Bay in South Africa.

She passed through the Strait of Magellan – linking the Atlantic and Pacific at the foot of the Americas – three times, the Panama Canal once, and crossed the Equator on six occasions.

The tanker spent all last Christmas and New Year at sea moving between the South Atlantic and Pacific.

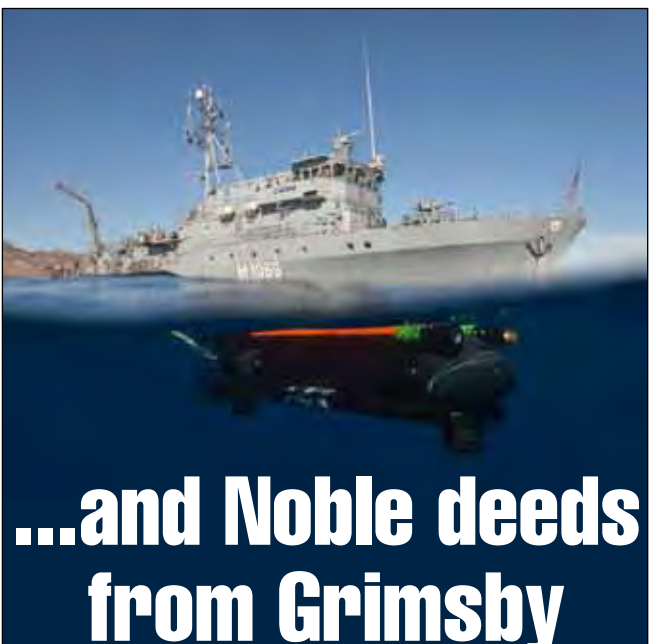
The 17-month tour of duty had, said the tanker's Commanding Officer Capt Ian Pilling RFA, been "full of the unexpected."

He continued: "That's another South Atlantic deployment completed – one filled with challenges new and old.

"We've finished a variety of operational tasks, enjoyed some great opportunities to explore countries and savour cultures you'd rarely visit.

"Throughout, the ship's company have been up for everything from refuelling in a Force 8 gale to shark diving off South Africa and raising over £1,000 for charity during our 40th birthday at sea. It has and will always be, a truly interesting, demanding tasking that is full of the unexpected!

"And we've spent a significant amount of time at sea sailing around the South Atlantic supporting both the Royal Navy and foreign warships, as well as carrying out maritime security operations ourselves."



# ...and Noble deeds from Grimsby

A SEAFOX mine disposal submersible begins its run from German mother ship FGS Homburg as she commands a multinational minehunting force – including HMS Grimsby – in the largest naval exercise NATO has run this decade.

The Faslane-based ship found herself in the RN's most hallowed waters – off Cape Trafalgar in Spain – where a deadly harvest of drill mines had been laid as part of Noble Justification.

More than two dozen warships and submarines, as well as helicopters, AV-8B Harrier jump jets, maritime patrol aircraft, B52 bombers and more than 5,000 sailors and marines from 16 nations converged on the southern coast of Spain.

Straddling both the Atlantic and Mediterranean, the two-week exercise was designed to test the abilities of different nations' forces to work together and to ensure the Spanish Navy would be ready to take the reins as the maritime 'arm' of NATO's Response Force next year.

One key strand of the exercise was the ability to clear a minefield close to shore – which is where HMS Grimsby and other ships in NATO's Standing Mine Counter-measures Group 2 came in.

Operating under a constant (simulated) threat of bombardment from shore-based artillery and at times within sight of 'Bothnian' enemy vessels, Grimsby's highly-trained minehunting teams first identified suspicious sonar contacts, then sent down her specialist divers to retrieve the drill mines.

Just for good measure, the Sandown-class warship had to thwart attacks from helicopters, fast speedboats and local patrol forces.

When the fighting was over, Grimsby took the opportunity to mark Trafalgar Day closer to the 'battlefield' than anyone else in the Royal Navy in 2014.

"The area of operations was just five miles from – but 60 metres below – where the Battle of Trafalgar occurred, allowing the crew to toast Admiral Nelson's great victory just off the Cape of Trafalgar – 209 years to the day after the Royal Navy defeated the combined French and Spanish Fleets," said Lt Henry Adams, Grimsby's navigator.

"Of course, we now train and fight side-by-side with our NATO allies, so the Task Force Commander, Italian Captain Peigaja, was able to share in a drop of Nelson's blood in Grimsby as the sun went down over the historic cape."

Once alongside in Rota, just along the coast from Trafalgar, the COs of Spanish minehunter Duero and the Homburg also joined Grimsby's officers for a Trafalgar Night dinner.

"Throughout our deployment with the NATO group we have spent plenty of time working hard at sea and learning about each others' operational techniques," said Grimsby's second-in-command Lt Tim 'Castro' Castrinoyannakis.

"Almost as important, I am extremely proud that we have been able to spend quality time sharing our culture and history with each other – it adds to the sense of our modern countries working effectively side by side."

As for the wider impact of Noble Justification, the senior RN officer directing the exercise with his staff, Vice Admiral Peter Hudson, says it reinforced the collective strength of NATO.

"It also reminds potential adversaries that we remain the world's foremost military alliance, able to deliver what is demanded by our leaders," he added.

# Severn up for it

RED sky at night, shepherd's delight.

Red sky in the morning, two fishery protection ships leaving Faslane in company...

HMS Severn follows her older sister Tyne into the Clyde estuary for some rare combined training involving ships which typically exercise and operate independently.

As well as being the home to the nation's strategic deterrent – four Vanguard-class submarines – Astute-class submarines and Sandown-class minehunters, Faslane is also the home of the northern 'branch' of the RN's premier training organisation, FOST.

Ships of frigate size and above are prepared for deployments by teams from FOST's HQ in Devonport, making use of the exercise areas off Plymouth.

And all smaller vessels are put through their paces by FOST North around the Scottish west coast.

In Severn's case she's breaking the bonds which keep her working around the UK ensuring the nation's fishing stocks are preserved and, for the first time, heading for the Caribbean for an Atlantic Patrol North mission over the winter, taking over from HMS Argyll having left her native Portsmouth in late November.

The offshore patrol vessel will be expected to pick up where Argyll left off: on stand-by for disaster relief operations and any other duties in support of the region's British Overseas Territories, as well as embarking a law enforcement detachment from the US

Coastguard in the ongoing fight against drug smuggling in the region.

The initial ten days of training in Scotland assessed Severn's ability to deal with internal problems – fires, flooding, breakdowns – and external ones, such as coming under attack.

The second phase of training is more 'free play' and specially focused on the mission the ship is expected to carry out, such as putting a reconnaissance team ashore to scout and report the devastating effects of a hurricane; Severn can produce ten tonnes of fresh water a day and carry six ISO containers of aid and equipment.

"Whilst we do not have the range of capabilities and manpower of HMS Argyll, we are trained and fully capable of putting specialist Royal Navy personnel ashore to assess damage, identify priorities and recommend where disaster relief resources are best apportioned" said Lt Ben Read, HMS Severn's Navigating Officer.

Severn's Commanding Officer Lt Cdr Steve Banfield added: "The Atlantic deployment is a new challenge for HMS Severn – although not for the Royal Navy.

"Whilst Severn normally operates in UK waters, our focus is on the Atlantic Patrol North.

"I'm confident that our training has prepared us well for all contingencies and tasking that may be required of us."



Picture: CPOA(Phot) Tam McDonald



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# Drugs, Dukes and the Dutch

**ALTHOUGH** not at the same time – just in case you had a scandal in mind.

There is a connection, however, HMS Argyll, whose past month of operations has encompassed all.

We'll begin with drugs – because it's one half of the Devonport-based frigate's Caribbean mission (the other is reassurance and assistance in the wake of natural disaster, which she's also done).

Argyll dealt a double blow to the illegal trade – and ensured £46m of cocaine will never reach the streets of the West.

The ship seized more than a tonne of the drug – £10m worth stashed aboard a British-registered yacht, some £36m on a go-fast.

The latter was seized at the end of 70-mile high-speed dash through the Caribbean night.

A US Coast Guard patrol aircraft picked up the go-fast – then directed the British warship to intercept.

That Argyll did with a mix of her Artisan long-range 3D radar and thermal-imaging cameras.

Thanks to the skilful pursuit, the frigate got to within just 500 yards of the suspect vessel before the smugglers realised a warship was bearing down on them.

The go-fast then began to try to evade capture in an hour-long chase through the darkness, as the drug-runners began to ditch their cargo overboard – and Argyll's sea boats and the frigate herself all in pursuit.

The smugglers finally gave up the ghost when they were surrounded and realised Argyll wouldn't abandon her pursuit. After they surrendered and were arrested, the warship began retracing the route of the chase to recover the bales.

The sailors hauled 850kg of cocaine out of the water.

"It was an intense couple of hours as we were trying to out-



think and out-manoeuvre a small boat which can change direction in an instant," said Officer of the Watch 3 Lt Matthew Turner, on the bridge for the duration of the chase.

"I think our training, during which we push the ship and ourselves to the limit, really helped us to make this operation such a success."

The seizure of the yacht earlier

in the month wasn't quite as dramatic.

Just a day after leaving Bermuda, where Argyll's sailors were involved in clear-up operations in the wake of Hurricane Gonzalo, the ship's Lynx helicopter spied a yacht and alerted the ship, which promptly stopped the vessel.

A search by the US Coast Guard Law Enforcement



● The Prince of Wales salutes while his wife takes shelter under her umbrella on a wet night for HMS Argyll in Cartagena and (left) the ship's Lynx patrols overhead as the LEDET team close in on the British yacht in the first of two busts

Pictures: LA(Phot) Steve Johncock, FRPU East

Detachment based on Argyll uncovered ten bales of cocaine, which was confiscated before the two crew members were taken into custody.

"Life on board is hectic at the moment, I was involved in working ashore to help the locals in Bermuda after Hurricane Gonzalo and the next day I drove one of our boats out to intercept a yacht with drugs on it," said AB(Sea) Alex 'JR' Hartley.

"This is just typical of our deployment to be honest, life is challenging but rewarding aboard HMS Argyll right now."

Indeed, The busts brought the frigate's tally to three seizures – all cocaine – this deployment with 1,600kg of illegal narcotics value at nearly £70m captured.

A rightly-proud CO, Cdr Paul Hammond, says the seizures demonstrate the flexibility of a Type 23 – fighting disaster one day, crime the next – and the skill of his crew.

"We put in a significant effort to assist the citizens of Bermuda

and to sail and immediately conduct a slick interception of a drug-smuggling vessel demonstrates dedication and the utmost professionalism," he said.

"The go-fast drugs seizure – conducted at night with no helicopter support – was our most challenging yet and, therefore, the most satisfying.

"We have removed a large quantity of drugs from circulation to the benefit of the UK and our partner nations."

The drugs busts booked more normal Atlantic Patrol North duties for the oldest Type 23 under the White Ensign.

Normal duties like, say, hosting the heir to the throne and his wife, as well as the President of Colombia, in Cartagena.

The panorama above suggests that the weather while HMS Argyll was alongside was jolly nice.

Which it was. Some of the time. Just not when the Prince of Wales, Duchess of Cornwall, President Santos and Colombia's

First Lady came aboard for a ceremonial sunset on a very wet and windy evening.

Besides hosting VIPs, the visit to Cartagena allowed some sharing of ideas and experiences in the war against drug-running in the region and, at a sailor-to-sailor level, a spot of cross-navy fraternisation as the Brits toured the frigate ARC Almirante Padilla... and the Colombians had a look around Argyll, before teams from both vessels took to the football pitch for a friendly.

The 'sharing drug-busting experiences' theme continued in Argyll's next port of call, Willemstad in Curaçao – which lies just 40 miles from the South American mainland.

Cdr Hammond called on the island's governor, Lucille Andrea George-Wout with Cdre Lodder of the Royal Netherlands Navy, who is responsible for all Dutch units operating in the Caribbean region. Their discussions centred around counter-drug operations – which is a primary task for the Dutch military in the region.

Argyll also hosted an evening reception for local dignitaries to demonstrate the ship's capabilities and to explain to a wider audience her work and her role in the region. The evening concluded with a ceremonial sunset at which Cdre Lodder took the salute as the VIP guest.

The ship's teams played football and rugby matches against local sides during the visit – tough encounters, but played in a friendly atmosphere and Argyll were victorious in both games.

"I've played in every football match of the deployment so far – this one was by far the hardest," said Std Tony Biggar.

"Not only was the team playing against us good, but the heat took its toll on all of us.

"Curaçao is a beautiful island and we are all grateful for the warm welcome we have received here."

## From Clark to HMS Kent Clyde heralds Triumph refit

ANYTHING Superman and the Royal Marines can do, so too the pirate-busters of HMS Kent.

Just a couple of days after commandos ran to the top of the Rock of Gibraltar in company with *Man of Steel* Henry Cavill to celebrate their 350th birthday (see page 42), so too sailors from the Portsmouth frigate.

They jogged the 2.7 miles from the naval base to the summit of the iconic rock, 1,250ft above sea level. And they didn't even need garish luminous yellow T-shirts to do so...

Two fifths of the ship's company – 77 men and women – set off at 6.30am with the first rays of light touching the British Overseas Territory. And several minutes later all 77 were on the peak – no-one dropped out.

Among those delighted to reach the top, WO1 Keith Weller, Kent's Executive Warrant Officer.

"After seven ships and 28 years I finally got a chance to run the Rock Race," he said.

"It was clear to see at the start of the race the community that is growing onboard, with shouts of encouragement and the selfless support shown to each other.



"Memories for me will not be the legs burning, heart pumping and lungs bursting, but the team spirit, back slapping, and those who gave their time to organise an excellent event."

As well as the community spirit, the added incentive to reach the top of the Rock was the traditional Senior Service celebration of Splicing the

Mainbrace (a very belated one for the birth of Prince George last year apparently) – a tot of rum, made all the more memorable by the efforts of Gibraltar's Barbary apes trying to grab the cups as well as any food the sailors carried.

The visit allowed the ship to take on essential stores and fuel, a patrol of territorial waters as

part of the UK's commitment to Gibraltar and its citizens, and a chance for some of the younger sailors to sample the delights of the Rock.

"This is my first deployment with the Royal Navy and getting to visit Gibraltar, where my father was based before I was born, was a great experience," said Std Hannah Watson.

Next stop for the ship was Souda Bay in Crete to allow the Royal Navy/Royal Marines board and search teams to make use of the specialist training facilities at the NATO base, allow the ship to test her sensors and kit so that they align with other allied vessels, and finally to allow the ship's company to indulge in a spot of adventurous training.

Some tried out sea kayaking – AB(WS) Paul Howe used a GoPro camera fixed to a pole to record some of the sights offshore and in the sea caves.

And others walked through the Samaria Gorge in Samaria National Park in the White Mountains; it cuts through 16 kilometres of southern Crete and is just four metres wide at its narrowest point.

HMS Triumph will be out of the line until the middle of 2015 as she undergoes an eight-month revamp – though not in her native Plymouth.

The youngest of the four Trafalgar-class boats still in service has spent the last ten months on patrol in UK waters.

She's now in the hands of Babcock in Faslane, where she's spending three months of her overhaul out of the water in the shiplift.

With their boat out of action, personnel from the boat – motto 'We shall Triumph' – took part in Remembrance services around the country, including Blackpool, Newton Abbot and London.

The deeps have various adventure training activities lined up, not least participation at the RN ski championships in Tignes, France, next month.

"Triumph – the boat and her people – has been working extremely hard for the last two years," said the boat's CO Cdr David Fitness.

"The ship's company is rightly proud of their significant operational success.

"The focus now is maintenance, providing some much-needed time with families and for professional courses, and regenerating the team for operations later in 2015.

"I expect these next few months will fly by for us all."

## Gallipoli events announced

THREE days of international commemorations in London, Turkey and Portsmouth will remember the centenary of the Gallipoli campaign.

An international service of remembrance at Cape Helles on April 24 – where British, Commonwealth and French troops came ashore – will be followed by an Anglo-Australian-New Zealand service at the

Centotaph in Whitehall on April 25, ANZAC Day.

And in Portsmouth on August 6 events will be focused on the newly-restored monitor HMS M33, the sole surviving British warship from the campaign.

More details at: [www.gov.uk/government/news/the-national-commemoration-of-the-centenary-of-the-gallipoli-and-anzac-campaigns](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/the-national-commemoration-of-the-centenary-of-the-gallipoli-and-anzac-campaigns)





## Jacks' lanterns

MEET some of the ship's company of HMS Echo – pumpkin-style...

These are some of the impressive creations produced by sailors on the survey ship during a fun day in Gibraltar as she took a break from gathering data around the Mediterranean.

With the Devonport-based vessel undergoing maintenance as she draws to the end of an 18-month deployment which has taken her around the Med, Gulf and Indian Ocean to the shores of Australia, her junior rates were charged with organising an adventurous training day as part of their leadership training.

A barbecue was organised at the Joint Physical and Adventurous Training Unit at Gibraltar's Gunwharf, with water sports laid on to work up an appetite in advance.

As the AT day fell on October 31, a bit of Hallowe'en fun was thrown into the mix courtesy of a pumpkin-carving competition.

Echo's Executive Officer Lt Cdr Cecil Ladislaus decided that an inventive Type 42 destroyer pumpkin – HMS Newcastle to be precise – carved by POET (ME) 'Rosey' Rose was the winner.

"I think it was the attention to detail that clinched it," said Rosey, whose squash plant creation featured a 4.5in gun, two 909 radar domes and twin props and won him a £20 canteen voucher. When darkness fell, candles were lit to cast a suitably eerie light on barbecue proceedings.

## RM350 cover

THE 350th anniversary of the formation of the Royal Marines has been marked by the release of a special British Forces Philatelic Bureau commemorative cover.

Using images depicting early and modern-day Marines the cover also includes the official Royal Marines 350 logo along with the crest of the Royal Marine Commandos.

The souvenir covers are available at [www.bfps.org.uk/shop](http://www.bfps.org.uk/shop), cost £6 (including UK/BFPO p&p), on a strictly first-come-first-served basis.

The covers are also available by post by sending a cheque (payable to 'BFPS CIC') to BFPS, The Old Post Office, Links Place, Elie, Fife KY9 1AX.

## A lifesaver once again

A MILLIES-nominated Royal Marines medic has shown yet again that heroes wear green berets, not capes.

On a short break from recent training with the Bahraini military forces, 2013 Millies nominee Cpl Wayne Tomlinson saved the life of a Bahraini woman following a jet-ski accident.

## Eminent RN pilot on radio

FORMER Royal Navy pilot Capt Eric 'Winkle' Brown was the guest on the 3,000th edition of BBC Radio 4's *Desert Island Discs*.

Capt Brown, 95, joined the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve as a Fleet Air Arm pilot on the outbreak of World War 2, having taken his first flight at the age of eight or ten, sitting on the knee of his father.

He went on to act as both fighter pilot and test pilot for the Royal Navy, racking up a world-record 2,407 deck landings on aircraft carriers.

He has also flown more aircraft types – 487 – than anyone else in history.

The Navy veteran chatted to presenter Kirsty Young about his life and work, and amongst the discs he chose to take to his desert island were *Sunset* by the Band of the Royal Marines, *Sailing* by Rod Stewart – and *Call Me Irresponsible* by Andy Williams.



● HMS Exploit remembers Great War armed trawler HMT Abelard at the point where she sank close to the Breakwater in Plymouth Sound. Members of the Royal British Legion were also on board to pay their respects

# Back home – at last

THOSE out for an early morning stroll at Penarth Marina may have been forgiven for turning their backs on HMS Exploit as she entered her home port on a pleasant autumn October morning.

However, this was no routine entry. The P2000 had been away from Penarth, near Cardiff, since May, having been proudly flying the First Patrol Boat Squadron flag both around the UK and Western Europe.

Since Exploit set out for Devonport in mid-May 2014, she has covered over 3,800 nautical miles and visited 27 ports, ranging from Gijon in Spain to Chatham on the Medway.

Exploit, which supports the Birmingham Universities Royal Naval Unit, started her six-month adventure with a period under the FOST microscope, and subsequently sailed to Portsmouth to prepare for her summer deployment.

The six-week programme saw her reach the northern shores of Spain, France and the Channel Islands, as both students and the ship's company enjoyed the fine weather.

Exploit welcomed more than 40 Birmingham students onboard during this period, with a wide range of universities represented including Loughborough, Aston, Warwick and the University of Birmingham.

A hard-earned period of summer leave was followed by some diverse tasking, including hosting a squadron awareness

day in the Solent, in which Exploit demonstrated her wide range of capabilities to both RN and civilian personnel.

The same day saw Exploit receive the Firmin Sword of Peace on behalf of the P2000 Squadron from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas, marking the hard work and wide-ranging capabilities of the Archer-class boats.

A visit to Chatham in late September in company with HMS Smiter saw Exploit and her students attend a poignant service to remember obsolete armoured cruisers HM Ships Cressy, Aboukir and Hogue, lost along with almost 1,500 sailors during an attack by U-9 in September 1914.

More recent tasking saw Exploit training the next generation of Warfare Officers with some challenging navigation training in the South Coast Exercise Areas.

Prior to her return to Penarth, Exploit hosted members of the Royal British Legion onboard as she conducted a remembrance service in Plymouth Sound in honour of HMT Abelard, a 190-ton side trawler requisitioned by the Admiralty as a general work boat and minesweeper during the Great War, and sunk on Christmas Eve in 1916 close to the breakwater.

As if all this wasn't enough, Exploit's ship's company regularly attended drill nights in Birmingham to teach students the art of navigation, seamanship and other facets of Naval life.

Students have supported

the URNU in recruitment of freshers, which has allowed the unit to once again fill the complement of 51 to capacity, with many fresh and eager faces being added to the ranks.

Lt Daley Snell, who assumed command of HMS Exploit towards the end of her summer deployment in late July, paid tribute to the hard work of all over the last few months:

"This has been a very busy and challenging period for both Exploit and Birmingham URNU," said Lt Snell.

"We have maintained a high intensity and have successfully demonstrated our dynamic capabilities, covering a large stretch of coastline.

"I am rightfully proud of

the ship, her company and the students for their energy and dedication during this demanding period."

On returning to Penarth, AB Rachel Miller, the Navigator's Yeoman, said: "I have enjoyed our diverse tasking over recent months, and we have demonstrated the importance of the P2000 within the current Fleet.

"That said, it is nice to be back at our home port in Cardiff as we prepare for our next tasking."

As *Navy News* went to press Exploit was preparing for the arrival of squadron staff, who will put her and the crew through their paces during a two-day training period, before the ship undergoes maintenance early next year.



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## Goodbye of the Tigers

THE first-generation Merlin has made its final flight after 13 years on the Fleet Air Arm front line.

After more than 600 sorties over 19 months in support of the RN's counter-piracy/smuggling/terrorism mission in the Middle East, the Flying Tigers of 814 NAS shut down their Merlin Mk1s for good.

The squadron is the last of the RN's four Merlin formations to convert and with its tour of duty done east of Suez it's coming back to Culdrose to move up to the Mk2... while 820 will be taking the Tigers' place where it's hot and dusty.

The Mk1 era came to an end on November 4 with a final sortie before the 50-strong detachment began packing up and preparing for home... but not before a group shot (*above, just in case you were wondering...*).

"The Flying Tigers have had an incredibly successful tour in the Middle East and its men and women can be proud of the contribution they've made, helping to ensure that those who use the sea do so for legal

purposes only," said Cdr Stuart Finn, 814's Commanding Officer.

It'll take the Tigers just three months to switch from 1 to 2 – despite the huge leap in technology between the two models. The 814 team will be getting used to an 'all-glass' cockpit (ie fully digital) and high-definition touch screen displays for the observer and aircrewman which makes the task of hunting submarines or surface targets considerably easier and more user-friendly.

"While we're closing a chapter on the hugely-successful Merlin Mk1 and bidding a sad farewell to our aircraft, we are looking forward to writing a new chapter with the Mk2," said Cdr Stuart Finn, 814's CO.

"The ability for our aviators and engineers to remain at the forefront of complex maritime patrol operations remains assured."

By the time the last Mk1 in the Middle East had shut down, the remaining models in the UK were already retired – but not by

long.

The last flight in Blighty was a 120-mile hop from St Athan back to Culdrose by a Mk1 of 829 NAS in Cornwall at the end of a training exercise.

All but one of the Kingfishers' helicopters have been upgraded by AgustaWestland at their works in Yeovil – which is where the final Mk1 will be moving shortly.

"In some ways the loss of our last Mk1 Merlin on 829 is a little sad, but what it really denotes is the start of a really exciting and rewarding era for the squadron – and the Merlin Force," said 829's CO Lt Cdr Phil Beacham.

In charge of the last Mk1 was Lt Cdr Amy Gaunt, whose 05 Flight has been attached to HMS Westminster (also about to go into an upgrade of her own with a year-long refit in Portsmouth Naval Base beginning imminently).

"From the outside Merlin Mk1 and Mk2 look pretty much the same – apart from a few aeriels and sensors – but a glimpse inside reveals a totally new world of awe!" she said.



## Med-ication for 829 NAS

IF ONLY submarine hunting were this easy all the time.

Powering through the azure waters of the Mediterranean is a French hunter-killer.

Sadly, this wasn't the one the Merlins of 829 Naval Air Squadron were looking for.

The boat they were tracking was rather more elusive as the world's most advanced submarine-hunting helicopter and Britain's most advanced boat, HMS Astute, locked horns for the first time in the Mediterranean.

The Kingfishers took two Merlin Mk2s from their base at Culdrose in Cornwall to the Base d'Aéronautique Navale (Naval Air Station) Hyères, ten miles outside Toulon for the upgraded helicopters' inaugural run out in the Mediterranean.

The waters around Toulon – the French Navy's principal base in the Med – are around 5°C warmer than those around the Lizard peninsula and temperature layers, plus the sea's salinity, affect how sonar performs, so it's crucial that the hunters practise in all possible environments.

As well as trying to avoid detection either by the hunters' dipping sonar, actively seeking the boat by sending pings through the water, or sonobuoys, passive underwater listening devices, Astute was assessing potential submarine commanders.

For the first time an A-boat was hosting the Submarine Command Course – better known throughout the Silent Service as the Perisher.

"A Royal Navy ship along with its Merlin helicopter is a proven, potent and effective

fighting force," said Lt Cdr Phil Beacham.

"But an A-class submarine has all the 'mod cons' that understandably make it a formidable opponent. And the Mediterranean offers a very different oceanographic profile to the South-West Approaches, providing very beneficial training."

Although the Côte d'Azur conjures up dreamy images of golden sands and peerless skies, during their fortnight on the French Riviera, the Merlins were hampered by a traditional Culdrose foe (widespread fog) and a less common weather phenomenon: hail the size of golf balls.

That said, the fliers got in 17 hours of hunting – Hyères operates round the clock, so there were even missions at 4am – thanks not least to the efforts of three dozen engineers, technicians and ground crew, plus 829's French hosts, the Caiman Squadron and their NH90 helicopters.

"Our liaison with the French Navy should not be undersold – they were extremely helpful in all regards," said Lt Cdr Beacham.

"This was a rare opportunity to operate a small team out of a foreign airbase and build relations with the NH90 community – their helicopter has a very similar sonar allowing us to share lessons and experiences."

His squadron – which provides Merlin flights (helicopter plus aircrew and engineers) for Royal Navy frigates – is now back at base, but hopeful of more co-operation between the Merlin and NH90 community, not least as there is a very useful instrument range off Toulon.

## Tim rises above his peers

TIRELESS efforts to pave the way for the return of fast jet carrier operations have earned Lt Cdr Tim Flatman one of the most prized awards in Naval aviation.

The CO of 736 Naval Air Squadron – the Fleet Air Arm's sole fast jet squadron – received the Cobham Trophy as the pilot who made the greatest contribution to maritime aviation over the past 12 months.

It is the task of his Culdrose-based squadron and its Hawk jets – formed from FRADU last year – to build suitable training for the small but important cadre of FAA fast jet pilots, developing tactics, helping to train fighter controllers and experts in airborne early warning, as well as carrying out 'attacks' against Royal Navy warships undergoing training in the Channel.

Lt Cdr Flatman's citation for the award – presented on Taranto Night, as hallowed to Naval aviators as Trafalgar Night is to the Surface Fleet – acknowledges that the transition from FRADU to 736 has not been easy but "Lt Cdr Flatman grasped the nettle and turned around the unit, transforming

it into a Naval Air Squadron that began to operate to the very highest standards expected of the Naval Service.

"Whilst this has undoubtedly been a 'whole ship', collective effort – civilian and military alike – it has only been possible through the leadership, diplomatic skill and enthusiasm of the CO."

In addition to the fliers at 736, the Royal Navy's fixed-wing pilots are spread across two continents, including flying in the UK, from the deck of the French flagship Charles de Gaulle (*see pages 14-15*), on and off US flat-tops, and learning to fly the Harrier's successor, the F35 Lightning II, which will be the aerial punch of the Queen Elizabeth carriers.

"Whilst this myriad of activity affords the opportunity for many Naval fast jet aviators to shine, Lt Cdr Flatman has risen above his peers through his tireless personal contribution," said Rear Admiral Russ Harding, the RN's senior aviator.

"He has delivered unprecedented change, invaluable training to the Fleet and built a home for Royal Navy fast jet operations that the Fleet Air Arm can be rightly proud of."

## From a sea of sand 111 – and not all out to sand and sea...

THE Navy's eyes in the skies are hot and dusty once again – but this time at least the sea is beneath them.

After five years above the sand, mud and Hindu Kush of Afghanistan, intelligence-gathering Sea Kings have returned to their natural environment – and *raison d'être* – protecting British ships in the Gulf.

After a brief spell back at their base in Culdrose in Cornwall, the Sea King Mk7 Airborne Surveillance and Control – in common Fleet Air Arm parlance, the Bagger, or in the world of military acronyms, the SKASaC (pronounced 'skayzac') – have redeployed to the Middle East to work from the flight decks of Royal Navy and Royal Fleet Auxiliary vessels on patrol.

The helicopters were introduced into front-line service over a decade ago, designed to provide early warning of air attack for Royal Navy task groups.

But their Searchwater 2000 radar – which sits in the distinctive sack or bag which gives the helicopters their nickname – has also proved to be equally adept at tracking movements on the ground.

They were used to that effect during the 2003 Gulf War, and especially in the skies of Afghanistan where they flew 800 missions during more than 3,000 hours of flying.

The information the Bagger crews provided helped ground forces to seize 150 insurgents, 40 tonnes of drugs, arm caches and thousands of bomb-making ingredients.

With the UK combat mission in Afghanistan over, the helicopters returned to base, and got used to working at sea with some training aboard RFA Argus off the South Coast, before 854 Naval Air Squadron – one of two front-line Bagger formations – headed east to Suez.

"The Force has proven its worth operating over the land, now it is time that we regain our sea legs and show what we can do in our traditional maritime role," said Cdr Victoria Dale-Smith, Maritime Sea King Force Commander.

"The Mk7's powerful radar is capable of detecting movement over the sea, the coast and over land. This – and the flexibility of our personnel – allows us to operate to high effect in a variety of environments."

Currently, they're working from support ship RFA Fort Austin, which is taking part in the largest mine warfare exercise staged in the Middle East. Working with Lynx and Merlin helicopters also flying from the decks of RN and RFA vessels deployed east of Suez, the presence of the Bagger allows the operations room team to build up an almost total picture of what's happening on the surface of the sea.



HALF of one of Culdrose's lesser-known units is currently deployed on front-line duties.

Of the 220 souls on the books of the Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF) in mid-November, 111 were supporting RN operations around the globe.

They could be found on RFAs Cardigan Bay, Fort Austin, Wave Knight, and Lyme Bay, plus HMS Bulwark east of Suez; supporting 854 and 814 NAS in the Middle East; aboard RFA Wave Ruler and HMS Ocean in the Channel; and HMS Clyde in the South Atlantic.

Nearly half the deployed MASF personnel – 50 men and women – were assigned to Argus.

That's not because of the current mission in Sierra Leone, but a permanent commitment – MASF must support the aviation training/casualty treatment ship all year round.

What it hasn't had to do hitherto, however, is rotate those 50 personnel in a country where there's a deadly virus.

"This is an extremely busy period for us – but it's also pretty normal. This is our usual tempo," said Lt Cdr Steve Griffin, MASF's CO.

"Where it does differ is when it comes to rotating our personnel aboard Argus because the circumstances are not usual.

"So we've focused on making sure the people going out are fully prepared, have all the relevant medical jabs and advice to deploy safely – and to make sure that those coming back are safe and well and also have time for 'decompression' after a deployment."

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# Future Perfect

I HAVE taken a stroll through the Royal Navy's new Offshore Patrol Vessel – and it was quite an eye-opener, writes Mike Gray.

I flew in through the side of the bridge to take in the view from the captain's chair, then dived down through the decks to the engine room.

That was a riot of colour – orange, pink, blue, green, red, beige, purple and black – but everything was recognisable and exactly in its place.

Which is remarkable as the first steel was cut in Scotland just weeks ago...

The tour which I and other journalists took was on a cybership, thanks to a state-of-the-art virtual reality (VR) network being developed by BAE Systems.

The system is based on five linked 'visualisation suites' which will revolutionise the design and build of warships – and much more.

The computer technology that underpins the VR suites combines off-the-shelf hardware and special software that has evolved rapidly in response to the needs of the computer games industry.

But by seamlessly linking that technology to CAD (computer-aided design) systems, engineers and designers at BAE can now go much further towards optimising the design, eradicating mistakes and making a ship more user-friendly before the first steel is cut.

The defence giant invited the media into its Portsmouth offices to see how the network – three suites in Glasgow, one in Bristol and the Portsmouth site, opened between July and the beginning of last month – can be used.

Other interested parties could be added to the network (BAE's submarine builders at Barrow have also signed up to the principle, and it should be possible to patch overseas suites in as well).

A large screen – 4.4m by 3m – in the Portsmouth suite first showed an accurate image of how the OPV would look in 2D.

With a couple of clicks of a mouse button the steel hull slid back revealing the compartments and various systems of wires and pipes.

More clicks isolated particular wiring systems or pipe networks, which demonstrated how the complex jigsaw fits together.

The ship was sliced vertically and horizontally in small increments, and the viewers 'flown' into different parts of the virtual ship to see the view from the bridge, or the compartment, or the rainbow-coloured engine room in minute detail – as we 'walked'



● From this – a drawing office in the 1970s, where designs were painstakingly drawn by hand...

along a gantry in the engine room a pair of ear defenders were clearly visible on a clip in front of us.

Impressive – and all a far cry from the days of paper, pencils and erasers, when details of arcs of fire for gun positions were partly guesswork and clashes between systems only become apparent when the ship was under construction.

But it is with the switch to 3D that the new network comes into its own.

A laser tracking system allows an operator to move through and look around the ship in a life-sized simulation, and an interactive wand means items can be moved around in the virtual world – a piece of kit nudged to one side to allow better access, perhaps, or a lever switched to avoid a pipe.

And because the suites are networked, an engineer working in Glasgow can stand alongside a designer colleague who is in Portsmouth (370 miles south) in the virtual engine room and discuss issues in real time while both looking at the same thing.

Former RN Warfare Officer Steve Kirby, now deputy head of transformation at BAE Systems, said: "Years ago relatively simple ships were designed in the collaborative atmosphere of a drawing office.

"There have been two major changes since then – ships are immensely more complicated, and the design process is now computerised.

"We had people working in a very sophisticated package but they could not have a good discussion round a 20in screen.

"We have done nothing more than take the information on a small screen and project it up to a large screen, and made it possible to get the right people together in the right place at the right time to have an informed debate, which means initiatives come forward and mistakes are

being spotted earlier.

"We get it right first time now – it is a much smarter process.

"We can take the steel hull off to see the systems. We can isolate different systems and look right through it in 3D.

"We can add other systems into the picture to build up the design. We can zoom in and out.

"The design has come to life, particularly for people who are not engineers or designers."

Cheshire-based SME Virtualis won the contract to install the VR network, and although the initial purpose was to support the design phase, the system has much wider potential.

Contractors and suppliers can be shown exactly where their equipment fits into the ship, giving them a better appreciation of the requirement, the customer can see exactly what they are getting, and sailors can be trained on board the virtual ship before its physical counterpart is launched.

Using avatars (representative figures), spaces and passageways can be checked to ensure there is enough room to work and move about, and in cases of refugee evacuation designers can come up with figures for the number of people who can be taken on board in an emergency, and where they can be placed.

Safety systems and procedures can be tested, rehearsed and improved in the cybership, while later in the ship's service life modifications and further equipment fits can be planned in and seamlessly integrated into existing virtual systems before being carried out in the real world.

BAE has also found that



● ...to this – an operator uses an interactive wand to move items of brightly-coloured kit around a virtual engine room. The garish colours come as standard in the off-the-shelf computer-aided design package and make it easier to identify different elements. The engine room of the RN OPVs will not look like this...

their design and engineering teams have embraced the visualisation suite network with enthusiasm, and that potential recruits – particularly engineering apprentices – have been more receptive to a career which embraces such cutting-edge technology, particularly as many of them are familiar and comfortable with the gaming roots of the system.

"Much more designing is now done in virtual space," said Mr Kirby.

"People will probably look back in six months' time and say 'how did we ever do our jobs effectively without this?'"

The virtual OPV allows designers to check sightlines from a proposed fuelling point on the flight deck, and from various points around the bridge – a big step forward from the old approach.

"The bridge is particularly interesting," said Mr Kirby.

"Traditionally a full-scale plywood mock-up of a bridge would be built at a cost of thousands of pounds.

"While they are quite good for scale, to make changes you have to get a hammer and saw and screws and physically change it. And when it is finished, it tends to gather dust.

"Here, for example, we can make changes to the windows in the bridge, checking sightlines for the tallest and shortest sailors, and make sure all requirements for cost, safety, and ease of build are considered.

"We can use the system to move things around – it doesn't change the actual design, but can be used to drive changes to the design.

"And the visualisation system precisely measures any changes that are to be incorporated into the finished design and captures them."

Commercial off-the-shelf hardware and software is combined thanks to Virtualis's own software, so many design systems (such as architectural CAD) can be incorporated, making it very flexible – indeed, BAE Systems expect some benefits of the new system will not be fully appreciated until further down the line.

Ultimately it will mean the VR ship is a single source of visualisation for every stage of the real ship's life, absorbing data and providing a seamless progression from design to disposal.

Mr Kirby – former CO of HM ships Stubbington, Ambuscade and Cornwall during his 36 years in the

Royal Navy – believes that BAE Systems are leading the field with their use of VR in ship design.

And shipbuilding is an industry in need of such useful technology, according to David Bolton, Technical Director Surface Ships.

"In the car or jet industries they build all sorts of test and trial models before going into production," said Mr Bolton.

"With ships, the first-of-class has to be the concept model, the trials model, the prototype, the pre-production unit and the first production unit.

"We haven't got the luxury the volume manufacturing industry has – but the power of this system is that this virtual reality ship is our prototype."

The visualisation suite also allows designers and customers to explore unexpected events, such as machinery breakdowns or emergency procedures.

Mr Kirby said that as machinery such as engines become more reliable there are fewer opportunities for engineers or technicians to work on them, but virtual ship can be used for mock exercises.

One such example saw a scenario when a sailor was injured in the sonar dome in the bow – when the scenario was played out it became apparent that a simple alteration to the access hatch would make it a great deal easier to recover an injured person.

That information was passed on to the design team to incorporate into the final blueprint.

"This is a new and exciting project for us," said Mr Kirby.

"We are starting with the OPV and Type 26, but I am sure it will be rolled out across other ships.

"It has also generated huge enthusiasm amongst people who want to be an apprentice with the company – young guys and girls understand the technology behind it.

"Even in the past two or three years the computing power has moved on leaps and bounds – four years ago, when I left the Navy, technology did not allow this to be done.

"But now we can take a fast-changing design and we can manipulate it in the virtual reality software almost instantaneously, and that capability is only getting better.

"There are endless opportunities."





● An artist's impression of the defence college at Worthy Down

## Work starts on defence school

WORK is beginning on a £250 million redevelopment to deliver world-class training facilities for key support personnel from each of the UK's Armed Forces in a single location.

The new Defence College for Logistics Policing and Administration (DCLPA) will bring together the training for key support roles from each of the Services onto one site for the first time. It will cover areas such as catering, supply, transport and human resources.

It will enable the Ministry of Defence to train personnel more efficiently and effectively so that they can provide the best possible support for military operations.

The centre is being built at Worthy Down in Hampshire, and will provide purpose-built training facilities and living accommodation for up to 2,000 students and staff.

The project will relocate training operations associated with the Princess Royal Barracks

(PRB), Surrey (Deepcut) and consolidate associated logistics school training from HMS Raleigh in Cornwall and RAF Halton in Buckinghamshire to Worthy Down.

The developed site will deliver high-quality accommodation in a series of 'villages' – one for junior ranks, one for officers and one for SNCOs.

Trainees will also enjoy sports and recreation facilities, bars, Officer and SNCO Messes, as well as other amenities. There will also be a Royal Logistics Corps (RLC) museum.

Commandant DCLPA Brig Allan McLeod said: "The college offers a fantastic opportunity to move out of aging infrastructure and into modern, fit-for-purpose facilities."

DIO awarded the contract for construction at Worthy Down to Skanska plc in June 2014.

Construction of the new college is expected to be completed by late 2018.

## Survival skills for new cadet intake

OFFICER cadets under training at Britannia Royal Naval College have been given an introduction to the rugged terrain of Dartmoor at the beginning of their transformation from civilians into military leaders.

Just four weeks into their 30-week initial Naval training course, the cadets spent three days at the Okehampton 'battle camp' learning field craft and survival skills.

The training included lessons in sentry duties, observation, concealment, giving orders and how to construct a bivvy shelter.

They witnessed and participated in fire and manoeuvre drills supervised by their Royal Marine instructors.

OC Charles Dobson-Wells, 21, from Shropshire, said: "The training gave us the opportunity to practice some basic military skills learning how to survive in the field."

"It was three days of early mornings and long days, but I think we learnt a lot and it was an enjoyable experience, in fact

I'd say quite rewarding in the end. It's useful to have some infantry-type knowledge in case we end up working with the Army or the Royal Marines in the future.

"The leadership element of the training involved getting us cold, wet and tired, to basically put us under pressure, which is relevant across the board, both on land and at sea."

Fellow cadet Natalie Green, 24 from Birmingham, who is aiming to be a medical officer, said: "Being on the moors made me realise it is possible to carry really, really heavy stuff even if you're small."

"Learning to live outside was good fun and leadership-wise it taught me that even if you've been running around in the middle of the night, you can still get up and work as a team the next day."

Lt Cdr Andy Stead said: "This is training to prepare the cadets for their assessed leadership exercise back on Dartmoor in week nine of their course."



# Turning up the heat in Iceland

IT LOOKS like a Naval version of *The Hurt Locker* as diving officer Lt Cdr Sean Heaton works on defusing an explosive device.

But the terrifyingly-realistic scenario is just that – and rather than the desert of Iraq, the RN man is working in Iceland.

Behind the bomb-suited officer, the crew of an Icelandic Coast Guard vessel look on as he carries out the task of defusing a fake IED 'planted' on the shoreline in Iceland.

The IED was one of hundreds which had been built to be defused by divers during a NATO exercise.

Ten men from Fleet Diving Unit 2, based at Horsea Island, Portsmouth, worked with personnel from eight other nations in a series of exercises disabling IEDs.

Teams of personnel took part in a range of scenarios, both on land and at sea, during the two-week Exercise Northern Challenge, hosted by the Icelandic Coast Guard at the former naval air station in Keflevik.



● LS(D) 'Pusser' Hill works on constructing a dummy IED with a diver from the Italian Navy during Exercise Northern Challenge

An annual exercise, this year's scenario was based on terrorists taking over Iceland by planting hundreds of IEDs to try to destabilise the government as well as affect the economy.

LS(D) 'Pusser' Hill worked closely with the other nations in a 'bomb-making factory' constructing realistic training devices, which were used to replicate real IEDs and test the abilities of the disposal personnel.

"Constructing dummy IEDs

to test the teams was really interesting," he said.

"I learned a lot from the other NATO divers and feel that we made a real contribution in testing the skills of all the teams."

Other team members worked side by side with their counterparts from other nations on land and conducted force protection diving exercises in harbours and waterways.

Divers were able to see other nations' military tactics,

techniques and procedures during a series of scenarios which involved hundreds of realistic but inert IED training aids, which were built months before the exercise.

The teams included five Army Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDDD) teams, 12 Navy IEDDD teams and one law enforcement advanced IEDDD team.

Commanding Officer of Southern Diving Group Lt Cdr Al Nekreus coordinated the exercise as Commander of the Multi-National EOD Cell.

Commanding Officer of the Fleet Diving Group Lt Cdr Kev Stockton said: "Exercise Northern Challenge has been an excellent opportunity to bring to bear all of the specialist disciplines that FDU2 deliver as the Royal Navy's expeditionary Maritime IEDDD capability."

As well as the UK, military personnel from Iceland, Germany, Denmark, Norway, Austria, France, Italy, The Netherlands and the USA took part in the exercise, which supports NATO's Defence Against Terrorism Programme of Work.

The exercise is viewed as a way of improving upon combined peacekeeping and humanitarian operations, and countering global or regional threats to maritime security.



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## Millions trek on Star fleet

MORE than three million people have ridden on special Royal Navy-themed buses in their first year of operating around Portsmouth.

The 26 buses in the Star fleet – all named after ships in the Royal Navy – have become a popular sight on the roads of South East Hampshire.

And three of the iconic buses – each painted with a silhouette of its key facts and figures on the exterior – rolled into Portsmouth Historic Dockyard to mark the anniversary.

Commanding Officers of the three ships – HMS Diamond, HMS Lancaster and HMS Victory – joined bus company First to celebrate the success of their first year of operation.

Cdr Peter Laughton, (HMS Lancaster), Lt Cdr Alex Meyer (HMS Diamond) and Lt Cdr



● HMS Diamond's Lt Cdr Alexander Meyer and AB Jack Collins, Victory's Lt Cdr Rod Stathern and AB Simon Bojko, and Lancaster's Cdr Peter Laughton and LS Luke Stott on their respective buses

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

Rod Stathern (HMS Victory) were on hand with ceremonial swords to cut a Star fleet cake.

Junior rates from each Portsmouth ship brought a cap tally as a gift for the drivers of the respective buses to be displayed

alongside the light-hearted Naval slang that decorates the interior. "I think it's a great way of recognising the maritime heritage of Portsmouth, and the continued relevance of the Royal Navy today," said Cdr Laughton.



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# A mighty fine boat

IS THERE a more stylish looking submarine in the navies of the world than an Astute-class boat?

Formidable-looking from the front as she bears down on you, sleek in profile on the surface – as evidenced here by HMS Ambush, cutting through Guanabara Bay... better known as Rio Harbour.

Often – and especially in our post-modern culture – style triumphs over substance.

But not in this case.

For the feedback received from the inaugural patrols of the first two Astutes – completed within 48 hours of each other in October – has senior submariners convinced that the new class of boats are at the very least living up to expectations and proving to be the most potent hunter-killers out there.

For Ambush it was an 11-year journey from being laid down at Barrow to active duties – being the second in the class, she headed out on patrol two years quicker than her older sister.

With her maiden patrol completed, there was a flurry of visitors eager to find out how the first deployment went.

Lady Soar, the boat's sponsor, joined Ambush for her homecoming – as did her husband, former Commander-in-Chief Fleet Admiral Sir Trevor Soar (himself a onetime hunter-killer commander).

The Mighty Bush reciprocated Brazilian hospitality in Rio by inviting submariners from the South American nation aboard in Faslane (where the weather wasn't quite as nice as it was in the shadow of Sugar Loaf Mountain...)

Equally keen to learn how the boat had performed was Sarah Kenny, Head of QinetiQ Maritime – the technology firm works hand-in-hand with the RN to ensure our ships and submarines are as hard to find as possible...

...Whereas wocca-woccas make a lot of noise and really aren't too hard to detect. The Chinook air and ground

crews of RAF No.7 Squadron are Ambush's affiliated Air Force unit and clambered on board to see what life is like in a £1bn submarine.

Ambush is bound with the city of Derby – home of Rolls-Royce who provide the Astutes with their powerplants.

The deeps made full use of their limited spare time while on deployment for fun and fundraising, putting £1,400 into the Kitty for the Dolphin Paediatric High Dependency Unit in the Royal Derby Hospital.

That was duly delivered by a handful of Ambushes who drove down to the East Midlands for Trafalgar Day events (and were royally hosted by the city's Submariners Association at their October 21 dinner).

Remaining in the city, Sub Lt Ben Callear, the boat's assistant weapon engineer officer led Ambush's representations at the November ceremonies.

Amid all the visits, there's a three-month post-deployment maintenance package to carry out, followed by Operational Sea Training, then ceremonial Divisions, and a second operational patrol.

Only twice has the Ambush name been used before in the Senior Service.

Firstly, and very briefly, by a gunboat in the West Indies, bought in 1815... and sold in 1815.

The second Ambush lasted rather longer – 20 years. Built to fight the Japanese, like her A-class sisters, she was built in just four months. Those four months, however, saw the empire of the Rising Sun surrender, so instead, Ambush became a Cold War warrior.

Her 20-year active service was played out almost entirely under the radar, but she did play a part in the disaster which befell her sister HMS Affray in 1951, picking up the final distress signals from the boat, and made an appearance on the surface in 1953 at the Queen's Coronation Review in the Solent.



**Class:** Astute-class Fleet submarine  
**Motto:** Hide and seek  
**Nickname:** The Mighty Bush  
**Builder:** BAE Systems, Barrow-in-Furness  
**Laid down:** October 22, 2003  
**Launched:** January 5, 2011  
**Commissioned:** March 1, 2013  
**Displacement:** 7,400 tonnes  
**Length:** 97m (318ft)  
**Beam:** 11.3m (37ft)  
**Draught:** 10m (33ft)  
**Speed:** up to 30kts submerged  
**Complement:** 98  
**Propulsion:** Rolls-Royce PWR 2 nuclear reactor  
**Range:** limited only by the storage of food and need for maintenance  
**Weaponry:** 6 x torpedo tubes for up to 38 Tomahawk cruise missiles or Spearfish torpedoes  
**Sensors:** Sonar 2076 (with a range in excess of 3,400 miles)

Facts and figures

## IWM PHOTOGRAPHIC MEMORIES



With a tangle of furniture and bricks spilled on to the pavement, these are the remains of No2 Wykeham Street, Scarborough, where four members of the Bennett family died before dawn on December 16 1914.

Before that day, the address was an otherwise unremarkable gable end of a row of sandy-coloured terraced houses. Afterwards, it was yet more of Hunnish frightfulness – and proof that in the age of modern warfare, Britons were no longer safe in their homes.

Our monthly rummage around the Imperial War Museum's photographic archives takes us back to one of the most infamous incidents in the opening weeks of the Great War.

From newspapers, the British people were used to accounts (some true, many embellished or downright invented) of German atrocities. But German atrocities hitherto happened to others – French and Belgians mostly.

In the late autumn of 1914, however, the Germans began looking at the towns of eastern England – as a means to an end.

Never throughout the war were numbers of British and German battleships in the home waters closer than now. HMS Audacious had fallen victim to a mine, while two battle-cruisers had been dispatched to the South Atlantic to deal with the troublesome squadron of Admiral Graf Spee (which they did at the Falklands).

Perhaps, the High Seas Fleet's commander Friedrich von Ingenohl reasoned, the Royal Navy's strength might be whittled away piecemeal through tip-and-run raids, drawing some of the Grand Fleet into a trap.

In the small hours of December 15, the German Fleet began leaving its North Sea harbours. The battle-cruisers would shell a few towns – Whitby, Hartlepool, Scarborough – while cruisers laid mines off Flamborough Head and the core of the High Seas Fleet hung around in the middle of the sea waiting to annihilate the British.

Except that the RN knew half of Ingenohl's plan – the bit about plastering east coast towns with five battle-cruisers – thanks to breaking the German codes. It too would set a trap, with ten dreadnoughts lying in wait for the Germans... roughly at about the same location as the Germans were waiting for them.

Beyond confused skirmishes in darkness or bad visibility with the outer scouting forces, the two Fleets never met – perhaps for the best from the RN viewpoint, for almost the entire High Seas Fleet was at sea and the British battle-cruisers giving chase would probably have been wiped out.

As it was, the bulk of the German dreadnoughts turned for home shortly after these initial encounters – leaving their battle-cruisers pounding the three towns to fend for themselves – while the British battle-cruisers made a bee-line for the Yorkshire

coast when news filtered through that it was under attack.

The attack, by and large, has gone down in history as 'the Scarborough raid' – although the heavier death toll (86) and greater damage was caused in Hartlepool.

As a port, Hartlepool was a defended town – and also a legitimate target. Beyond a Naval radio relay station, the resort of Scarborough played little part in the Empire's war effort. So the bombardment, lasting about three quarters of an hour, scarred the town mentally and physically.

Physically, dozens of houses, chapels, businesses, warehouses, hotels, restaurants, picture houses and railway buildings were damaged (and occasionally reduced to ruins). Windows shattered in street after street. The coastguard station was demolished, the lighthouse so badly hit that it had to be pulled down.

Mentally, there was the shock of the unexpected bombardment to cope with – post offices were swamped by residents sending relatives telegrams reassuring them they were safe – not to mention the deaths of 18 souls in Scarborough. When the inquests into the fatalities began, the chairman of the jury pronounced the verdict: murder – "and all the world should know."

The coroner at the inquests into the deaths in Scarborough asked 'where was the Navy?' – a just question and one largely deflected by the media of the day which preferred to direct its invective at the enemy and its 'assassin squadron'. Even Churchill – the politician in charge of the RN as First Lord of the Admiralty – could not resist condemning "the baby-killers of Scarborough."

All of which fed the Allied propaganda machine quite nicely. Britons were urged to 'remember Scarborough', while a colourised version of the ruins of the Bennett household with a doleful girl holding a baby asked: 'Men of Britain! Will you stand this?' calling on them to respond by enlisting.

The propagandists weren't the only one exploiting the raid. Souvenir booklets were produced by enterprising publishers, while shell fragments became collectors' items.

And there were traces of the almost mythical blitz or Dunkirk spirit which would characterise Britons under fire a generation later. Surveying the damage caused to his antiques store, a dealer covered up the mess with a portrait of Kitchener, then scribbled underneath it: Are we downhearted? No.

Perhaps the strangest tale of the raid, however, is the fate of a parrot in a Scarborough seaman's mission. After December 16 1914, the previously talkative bird never spoke again.

■ This picture (Q 53463) – and 9,999,999 others from a century of war and peace – can be viewed or purchased at [www.iwmcollections.org.uk](http://www.iwmcollections.org.uk), by emailing [photos@iwm.org.uk](mailto:photos@iwm.org.uk), or by phoning 0207 416 5333.



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# 'A roller coaster r



A FLEET Air Arm pilot has become the latest – and last – to successfully complete a Day Carrier Qualification in the Super Etendard Modernisé with the French Navy.

Lt Cdr Ian Sloan, previously a Sea Harrier FA2 and Harrier GR7/9 pilot, has been serving with Flotille 17F, based at Landivisiau in Brittany, since September 2013, and flying the Super Etendard Modernisé (SEM) since April this year.

Lt Cdr Sloan is serving with the French Navy as part of the RN Long Lead Specialist Skills program, which exists to ensure that the Navy maintains core aviation skills that will be required as HMS Queen Elizabeth prepares to embark aircraft over the coming years.

The Lancaster House agreement between the UK and France has also been a successful medium for the exchange of ideas and concepts – the French Navy is of similar size and global outlook to their counterparts north of the Channel.

“I arrived in France in September 2013 and was immediately immersed in the business of flying,” said Lt Cdr Sloan.

“Initial familiarization with French airspace and procedures was carried out in a Dassault Falcon 10 corporate jet operated by Flotille 57S at Landivisiau – a standard course given to all prospective fighter pilots in the French Navy.

“Ground school for the SEM was carried out by technical staff in the training cell at Landivisiau rather than on the squadron, and this was particularly challenging as I was still very much learning the language, far less worrying about the aircraft!

“Happily, through the use of diagrams and pictures, we cracked through.

“The simulator phase followed

**ROYAL Navy fast-jet pilot Lt Cdr Ian Sloan has been plying his trade in a French strike fighter on board aircraft carrier FS Charles de Gaulle – and has written his name into the record books. Here is his account of work – and life – on board a porte-avions nucléaire.**

– the SEM simulator has full motion, though the visuals are limited to a TV screen in front of the pilot.

“That said, it is a very useful procedures trainer.

“At this stage my conversion was interrupted as the squadron embarked in the aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle for the deployment Bois Belleau.

“I should add now that the SEM is to be retired in 2016, and preparations for this are well under way, including the closure of all but one squadron.

“As I arrived, the last two French Navy students had graduated from their conversion course, which had been run by a training flight attached to the squadron.

“Now that they had graduated, even that flight had been disbanded and my arrival met with some Gallic shrugs and the idea that I’d complete my conversion ‘on the job...’

“Embarking with the squadron was a great opportunity to get to know the team.

“The opportunity to view the squadron in action and see the relationships across various sections in the carrier was ideal, though leaving a family behind after less than three months in a foreign country was challenging – I think we’re over it now!

“Returning to Landivisiau for a quick ground school and simulator refresher got me ready for my first solo.

“There are no two-seat or dual control SEMs, and so all early flights are monitored closely by a second aircraft – with an instructor pilot ready to offer pearls of wisdom where required!

“The SEM is an old aircraft – in the RN we tend to remember

the aircraft for the damage the Argentinian version inflicted on our Fleet during the Falklands Conflict, but it remains a viable weapons platform, and whilst it retains its maritime strike (Exocet) capability, it can also be armed with cannon, bombs, targeting pods and reconnaissance pods, as well as missiles for self-defence.

“Indeed, the SEM operated in Afghanistan alongside our own Harrier GR9 and more recently took part in operations over Libya and remains a central part of French Navy offensive operations planning.

“The cockpit is clockwork, though with a radar screen right in front of the pilot, just below the head-up display.

“A compact space, it can get very uncomfortable very quickly, and it is important to organise maps and charts carefully before setting off.

“In flight the aircraft is smooth, particularly at low level – the engine provides enough power to easily reach the limiting speed of 620 knots.

“It is easy to see that the aircraft was designed for low level strike from the outset.

“Having converted to the jet, the goal was to achieve at least 50 hours of flight time in order for me to commence the work up to the Carrier Qualification (CQ) scheduled for October.

“The CQ is forecast to provide the right number of ‘fresh’ pilots to the front line.

“The CQ period tends to fall ahead of a large deployment and is a good opportunity for some ‘deck warming’ as air and ground crews get up to speed with operating from the carrier.

“It is normal for pilots to have graduated from type conversion, so they tend to have more hours than the minimum and be more ‘comfortable’ with the aircraft they are landing on the carrier.

“I would be qualifying with the bare minimum, and despite my experience around the Invincible-class carriers, this was very much an old dog learning a new trick.

“The first step in the CQ process is to ‘qualify’ ashore, by flying circuits to the dummy deck at Landivisiau under the watchful eyes of the *Officiers d’Appontage* (OAs) – Landing Signal Officers to you and me.

“We fly *Appontages Simulées Sur Piste* (ASSP), or what the Americans call Field Carrier Landing Practice, *ad nauseam*.

“This is where I get to learn a brand of French that wasn’t in the language course...

“There is no time for English



● Lt Cdr Ian Sloan waits for the catapult to launch his Super Etendard from the flight deck of French carrier FS Charles de Gaulle

Super Etendard pictures: CENTEX GA6, Marine Nationale



● Lt Cdr Sloan in the cockpit of his Super Etendard on the flight deck of Charles de Gaulle



● (Above) FS Charles de Gaulle picture MV Hartland Point two years ago



# ...ride money can't buy...'

on board the carrier – it is completely French. Without exception.

“This did involve some time with the OAs to discuss exactly what they were expecting me to do on giving me an instruction – it turns out that I can concentrate on speaking French, or I can fly an aircraft accurately; the two are not mutually compatible...”

“SEM pilots must complete at least 12 sessions, whilst for the Rafale the minimum is eight sessions – not because the Rafale is easier, they will tell you it is simply less difficult!”

“Once the OAs are content that you can fly the ball – the reflected lighting system used as a reference for the approach, (known as the *miroir* here in France) – they will clear us to the ship.”

“The nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle is based in Toulon, the French Navy’s principal port in the Mediterranean.”

“Unfortunately, this is as far as possible from the air wing that it hosts.”

“Embarking is always a case of flying the length of France from Brest to an airfield in the Toulon area and walking on from there.”

“As the ship sailed for the CQ period, it gave us a chance to cover various briefings from the OAs on the various differences between what we had done at Landivisiau and the real thing.”

“The main difference, of course, would be the *catapultage* to launch and the *apportage* (the landing bit).”

“The catapult launch is possibly one of the most violent things that I have experienced whilst at the controls of an aircraft.”

“Having checked the engine at full power, we salute the *Chef de piste* and his green flag touches the deck.”

“We then accelerate from 0 to 150 knots in three seconds – it is a roller coaster ride that money can’t buy...”

“During the CQ period, all flights remain in the vicinity of the ship, so there is plenty of time to contemplate your fate as you sit above the ship waiting to be called to make your approach.”

“Any ship can appear tiny in the vast ocean, and an aircraft carrier is no different!”

“Before too long the radio crackles: ‘Sloan, t’as Charlie’.”

“It’s not even possible to momentarily forget your call sign – until qualified, it’s family names only.”

“Part of the requirements for the first sortie is to conduct two touch-and-goes.”

“After that the instruction comes from the ship to lower the hook. This is it – time to see if any of the training has actually sunk in as we turn finals, pick up the lights and fly the *miroir*.”

“Don’t look at the deck... DON’T LOOK AT THE DECK...”

“Full power as the wheels hit

in case of a bolter, with shouts of ‘*pleins gaz!*’ (‘full throttle!’) from the OAs as a reminder and we’re brought to a halt, engine screaming.”

“The arrested landing is frankly as violent as the catapult launch – 130 knots to a stop in 100 metres.”

“Eyeballs back in and a quick look to pick up the marshaller, hook up and vacate the landing area to let the next man on.”

“Heart thumping – wow! I can now say with first-hand knowledge that it’s better – at least more comfortable – to stop and then land...”

“The usual back-slapping and ‘welcome to naval aviation’ banter starts as I get back to the squadron ready room, ready for the next one.”

“The old phrase, you’re only as good as your next deck landing, rings true as the OAs quickly join us to dissect each approach.”

“And so it goes – after six successful launches and recoveries we are Qualified (day) aboard the Charles De Gaulle.”

“As one would expect, the French are not shy of champagne, and that certainly goes down well as we join a special club...”

“Certificates are presented, and I have received the 173rd (and last) certificate for qualifying on the Super Etendard Modernisé.”

“I now move to an Operations job within French Navy Air Wing HQ, where I will have less opportunity to put my new-found skills into action, though the CQ has certainly given me the credibility I need to hold sway there.”

“Despite that, I’m delighted to have achieved – and to have been allowed to achieve – an amazing stat for the RN.”

“As for life on board Charles de Gaulle, it is a big ship – there is no other way of putting it.”

“When fully-loaded it is home to 2,000 people and displaces 42,000 tonnes.”

“Once she starts moving, however, it seems effortless.”

“The French Navy is very

proud of claiming that they have the only nuclear-powered aircraft carrier outside of the USA.

“The platform is very stable – this is, of course, a must for conventional ‘cat-and-trap’ operations – and lends itself to a clever system which uses a series of moving blocks to steady the ship.”

“On the whole it works well, though heavy seas will certainly move the ship around.”

“Despite its size, it is easy to find your way around – as ever there are the familiar compartment markings and everyone has their own route between work, food and bed.”

“Importantly, the ship has been well laid out for flying operations.”

“The operations room is in the heart of the ship, immediately below the squadron ready rooms.”

“Mission planning is conducted in the ready rooms or in the mission planning cell, and there is a handy Aircrew Feeder next door to this.”

“Survival equipment storage is around the corner and cabins for Air Wing personnel are close by.”

“To the flight deck, it is simply up a single ladder to the engineering section where the aircraft servicing forms are available to sign before exiting the island onto the deck.”

“The jets tend to be ranged at the back of the deck, as once the catapults begin to launch there is no way for an aircraft to move from front to back.”

“The deck area is just over half the size of a US carrier but the flexibility of that large deck is lost – there is no chance of simultaneous launch and recoveries on this ship.”

“Just as with our old carriers, the noise makes it very clear when there are flying operations.”

“The sound of jet engines straining on the catapult is nothing compared to the catapult shot itself.”

“The whole ship shakes as the force of the catapult hits the end of its run, and even if the forward catapult is used, this will be felt five decks down at the other end

of the ship.

“Further up in the island of course is the bridge, and behind that is what we know as Flyco.”

“AVIA is the domain of the Air Boss, who controls all movements on deck and in an area up to five miles around the ship.”

“During flying operations, he is the communications hub and ultimately the one who makes the decisions, particularly when problems arise, though the Captain holds the ultimate veto.”

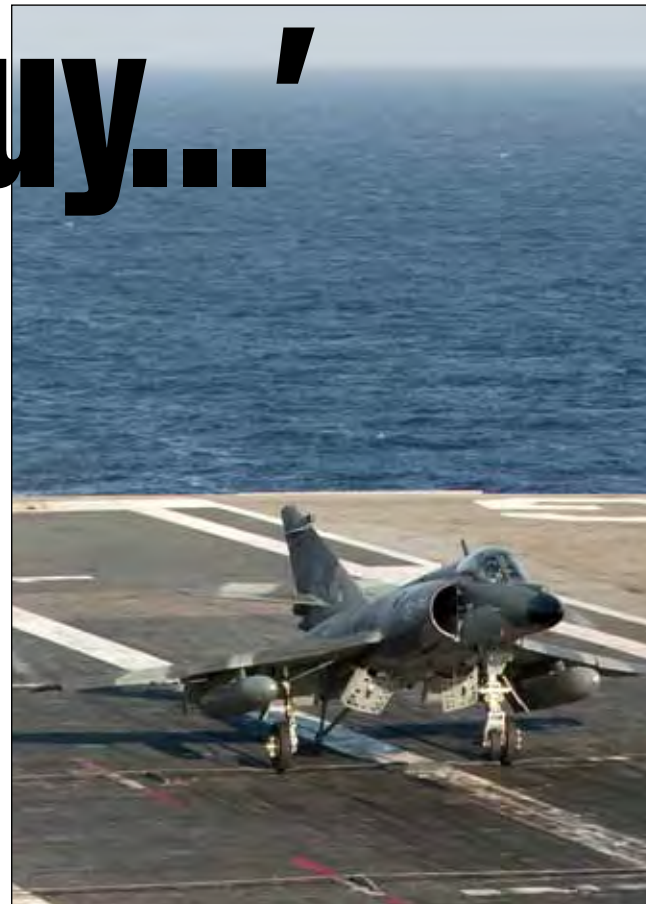
“Overall, my experience thus far in the Charles de Gaulle has been very positive.”

“Of course, there is the issue that this is very much a conventional ‘cat-and-trap’ carrier – so what use is that for an RN pilot?”

“The simple fact is that the size of air group on board is very similar to the Air Wing we are likely to embark on Queen Elizabeth.”

“Being able to organise that size of an air group is a skill in itself, even before we start discussing the carrier strike concept.”

“I am certainly confident that we will have strong ideas to carry into Queen Elizabeth as we head towards 2020.”



● (Above) Lt Cdr Sloan lands his Super Etendard on Charles de Gaulle

● (Below) The catapult loop is jettisoned at take-off



● Lt Cdr Sloan’s fighter is catapulted from the flight deck of Charles de Gaulle



ed on exercise with HMS Illustrious and  
Picture: Jacques Tonard, Marine Nationale





● Top, from left: Instructor Lt Andy Mitchell aboard the Avenger; The view towards the cockpit; The Avenger swoops on a vessel in the Atlantic

Pictures: POA(Phot Ray Jones

# Taxing lessons on board the Navy's classroom in the sky

THERE'S no 'cattle class' on board the Royal Navy's most luxurious aircraft – everyone turns left at the top of the stairs.

Passengers also get a large desk and full-sized TV screen.

But the desk isn't for eating and you won't get the latest film on the screen.

There aren't any real passengers either, everyone on board has a job to do. Welcome to the Avenger T1 – the Fleet Air Arm's classroom in the sky.

Between four and six students at a time undergo a 16-week basic flying training course, building on the navigation skills taught at RAF Barkston Heath.

750 NAS is one of the smallest squadrons in the RN, working side-by-side with UKMFTS (United Kingdom Military Flying Training System) to train around 30 observers each year for front-line duties with Merlin, Sea King, Wildcat and Lynx squadrons.

Heading out into the Western Approaches at a height of 2,400ft, QOI Lt Andy Mitchell loads Lt Rich Thorpe's lesson for the flight into his console via a memory stick.

Lt Thorpe studies the mass of 'clutter' on his screen before identifying a possible target and instructing the pilot to aim for it.

To the untrained eye, the computer screen is a mass of blue/white pixels – clutter – from which Lt Thorpe picks out

the occasional flash of red (no more than two pixels in size).

He then directs the pilot towards the target – all the while hoping it is an actual ship rather than admit an error.

His first target turns out to be a coaster and Lt Thorpe navigates as the Avenger drops to 500ft for a simulated landing.

His second target is a tanker, fighting the heavy swell as the biggest storm of the year barrels across towards Cornwall.

The simulated landing is repeated before the pilot is instructed to head for the Scilly Isles for a simulated landing on the holiday islands – unlike its predecessor, the Jetstream, the Avenger is a much heavier aircraft and unable to take off from the short runway.

Despite the array of technology, airmen still have their trusty cardboard Dalton Computer – or whizz wheel – which can be used to calculate ground speed for example. The back of the wheel is designed to calculate wind correction.

From searching for a survivor in a search-and-rescue role to controlling another aircraft to seek out and find a potential enemy 100 miles out to sea they challenge themselves on a daily basis.

They learn how to command a crew and get the most from their aircraft in a

demanding environment.

On the rare occasion when the aircraft is not being used for training missions, its long-range capability and its maritime search radar is being used to support FOST serials, Joint Warrior training or assist with maritime security.

The squadron's CO Lt Cdr Craig Whitson said: "We are beginning to understand that the capabilities of the aircraft are much greater than we anticipated and there is considerable scope for the Avenger to deliver beyond training Royal Naval Observers."

Following successful trials in September, a new course for RN anti-submarine warfare airmen and RAF weapons system operators (WSOPs) will be introduced in 2015.

The Sensor Operator Lead-in course (SOLIC) will see airmen from both Services undertake seven weeks of training in radar, electronic warfare and data-link operations in a variety of scenarios, both in the air and in the simulator, before moving on to their respective operational training units.

Lt Cdr Whitson added: "Irrespective of whether we are training RN observers, RN airmen or RAF WSOPs, the fundamental principles of aviation and sensor operations delivered here at



750 NAS will remain with them for the rest of their flying careers and will allow them to operate their aircraft and systems to the edge of its capability whilst remaining safe."

705 operates four of the blue and white Avengers, in conjunction with UKMFTS.

Training is conducted as if the aircraft were a helicopter, with the main difference being the use of a runway for take off and landing.

The RN version of the aircraft are equipped with the latest digital technology which will prepare the trainees for operational training in the Merlin and Wildcat aircraft.

As well as classroom instruction, students are taken aloft over the Western Approaches in the Avenger twin-propeller trainers.

Instructors guide students through the complex arts of navigation and target tracking using the Avenger's sensors and computer systems which not only suck in information from the real world, but also allow the tutors to 'superimpose' different scenarios observers will face on active service.

At 750 students learn the basics of being an observer – despite the historic title, an observer is really a mission and weapons specialist; the pilot flies the helicopter, but it's down to the observer to 'fight it' – navigate, track and, if

necessary, attack targets.

The hi-tech nature of the consoles and systems on board the Avengers means tutors are able to provide much more realistic training to rookie observers in Cornish skies.

750 has been conducting ab-initio 'from the start' observer training for over 60 years. In partnership with UKMFTS, the squadron started training students on the new Avenger aircraft in September 2012.

The squadron is made up of a mix of both civilian and military instructors.

The training system makes use of state-of-the-art equipment, both within the aircraft and on the ground, capable of synthetically replicating a range of modern front-line sensors, such as radars, electronic support measures and tactical data-links.

Having started their aviation training on the Grob Tutor aircraft at RAF Barkston Heath, students move to Culdrose to learn the skills that are required of a frontline 'Tactical Mission Commander', including airmanship, navigation and radar analysis.

They spend the next few months under the wing of 750.

The course has a very steep learning curve, preparing the students for specific training on a Merlin or Lynx (soon to be replaced by Wildcat) helicopter in just 16 weeks.



## NAVY NEWS

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# Travelling at Mach Three in pursuit of the Banshees

TRAVELLING faster than a rifle bullet, a High Velocity Missile makes its way out across the sea off south west Wales chasing a target aircraft.

This is the little-known Royal Marines unit the Air Defence Troop at work at Manorbier Range near Tenby.

The Plymouth-based troop are part of 30 Commando and specialise in using the HVM anti-air system made by Thales Air Defence Ltd.

HVM is one of the most complex short range anti-air missile systems in the world and can be fired off a small launcher called an LML or off the operator's shoulder.

The missiles go to three times the speed of sound within a second of launching, after which they are controlled by the operator using a small joystick on the launcher which is known as the aiming unit.

Missile firing camps are highly technical and require months of planning.

Each operator has to do hundreds of shots on a simulator and then has to prove that he is ready to fire a live missile by repeatedly tracking a target drone with a laser.

The drones are called Banshees and are operated by technicians from QinetiQ.

The Banshees are about two metres long and are designed to survive the missile engagement. They have sophisticated radar which allows the controllers to estimate if the HVM would have destroyed a full sized aircraft.

Safety for the missile firing is co-ordinated by a specialist team from the Royal Artillery Gunnery Training Team (GTT) based at Larkhill in Wiltshire.

The missiles are normally fired from land out to sea because of the large range safety template for the system.

Permanent staff at the range ensure all sea and air movement



● An air defence operator tracks a target with a laser missile



● An air defence team prepare to fire a live missile

in the area is monitored visually and by radar.

"We provide range safety cover and we look after first time firers as they fire using LML and in shoulder launch mode," says Capt Rob Deane who is the GTT Instructor Gunnery.

"Firing shoulder launch is harder because you have no stabilisation platform so we find the stronger guys are suited better to this mode."

This was the first firing for some of the Marines who finished their heavy weapons three's (air defence) course earlier in the year.

Air defence is one of three heavy weapons branches in the Royal Marines, the other two being anti-tanks and mortars.

"Air defence is one of the Royal Marines branches you rarely hear about. Not many people even know what sort of missiles we fire," says Capt Chris Nutting, Officer Commanding Air Defence Troop.

"We have made reasonable progress given the weather constraints.

"It's quite a steep learning curve using HVM as it relies heavily on the quality of the user," he added.

"Luckily we have some very capable lads who are able to perform under difficult circumstances; particularly in the shoulder launch role which requires a lot of upper body strength and general tenacity, especially when it gets windy."

The HVM missile has a first-

stage motor which throws it forward from the launcher after which the second stage known as the "bus" kicks in and boosts the missile to over 2,000mph which is faster than a rifle bullet.

The "bus" burns out after less than a second and then three small "darts" separate which are guided to the target by the operator using a laser beam.

Every missile launch is

studied in detail by technicians from the missile manufacturer who provide telemetry feedback which allows the Gunnery Training Team to evaluate the success of each engagement.

The target aircraft are so small that they need to trail smoke to help the operators' acquire them in their sights. Although they are designed to survive missile engagements they do occasionally get destroyed by a direct hit.

One operator who scored a direct hit was Mne Jamie Morgon, 23, from Reading.

"The visibility was good so I had a good length of tracking," said Mne Morgon.

"I took my time and did the engagement and it was successful. I was happy when I saw the parachute come out and the aircraft come down."

Air Defence Troop are part of Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron (SRS).

This small unit is the nucleus of the 3 Commando Brigade Reconnaissance Force. Air Defence Troop routinely

provide extra manpower to support SRS activities.

Mne Andrew Tucker, 25, from Cornwall, was firing HVM in the shoulder launch role for the first time.

He said: "This was my third missile. It was a lot harder firing shoulder launch, because it was windy it was a lot more difficult and there was a lot of buffeting about trying to get the tracking right."

"I joined the troop for the chance to travel, because you can stay Plymouth based if you want but there's also lots of chances to go away with SRS. "I've also got additional qualifications such as getting parachute and heavy machine gun trained out of being in the Troop because of the SRS connection."

Capt Deane from the Royal Artillery said: "The biggest issue here at this time of year is always the weather, the wind, the rain are all against us. Trying to fit firing in around this is tricky."

"We enjoy working with the Royal Marines though - they are, how you say, hoofing."



● A Banshee on the ground after parachuting back to earth

Pictures: WO2 Richard White







● A member of Alpha Company on exercise



● A member of CLR patrol in action in Jordan

# IT AIN'T HALF HOT MUM

FROM the sublime to the ridiculous, the men of 40 Commando have swapped the driving rain of Albania for the scorching sun of Jordan.

After completing mountain and survival training in the rugged Albanian terrain, the Royal Marines moved to the arid Jordanian desert for Exercise Jebel Dagger.

The six-week exercise involves mountain training, driver training and aviation training for pilots and aircrew operating Merlin and Puma helicopters.

The deployment culminates in live fire exercises involving artillery, mortars, aviation and ground troops.

The exercise is one of the largest Lead Commando Group exercises for years and was delivered ashore by elements of the amphibious Response Force Task Group who moved more than 80km inland to set up two main forward operating bases at Al Quweyrah.

The bases sprung up out of the desert in just three days and were able to support 1,250 troops, their vehicles, weapons and kit in the field during a six-week period.

It was the task of signallers from 40 Cdo to maintain the complex communications between Jordan and their home base in Norton Manor Camp, Somerset.

The exercise also involves elements of 3 Cdo, 24 Cdo Royal Engineers, 29 Cdo Royal Artillery, the Commando Logistic Regiment and aircraft and ground crew from Joint Helicopter Force 3.

All the units involved are completing Specialist to Arms training which includes complex live fire packages; mountain training among the hot, arid



● Members of Alpha Company Fire Support Group (FSG) on a heavy weapons live fire range in low light

peaks; driver training through wadis and desert plains for a range of vehicles as well as medical and cultural courses.

The support staff have been kept constantly on their toes, with the chefs keeping the hungry Marines fed and hydrated, mechanics running repairs and maintaining vehicles while storemen provide all the supplies and spare parts as required.

C/Sgt Ash Oates, 40 Cdo's platoon weapons instructor, said: "Our training last year in the Mojave desert provided a great foundation for the demands of both the environment and the tempo of training we are experiencing here in Jordan."

"This has allowed us to utilise multiple ranges concurrently and maximise our time training here,

which is paying dividends.

"It is also a fantastic privilege to train alongside Jordanian Armed Forces and build on the relationships we made in Jordan while on exercise last year."

Exercise Jebel Dagger aims to strengthen the bond with Jordan and provide a workout for the UK's high-readiness deployable force – able to deploy anywhere in the world at five days' notice.

The second phase of the exercise involves training with the Jordanian 77 Marine Battalion, culminating in a four-day exercise supported by the remainder of the Lead Commando Group.

This includes a combined arms live fire exercise before the Royal Marines return to HMS Bulwark, RFA Lyme Bay and MV Anvil Point.



● Mechanics from 40 Cdo perform a track change on a Viking armoured vehicle



● Personnel from Commando Logistic Regiment come under fire during an exercise

**"It is a fantastic privilege to train alongside Jordanian Armed Forces."**



Pictures: POA(Phot) Dave Gallagher and L(Phot) Will Haigh





●(Left) RAF and Royal Navy Hawks at HMS Gannet, with the search and rescue helicopter behind; (above) French frigate Latouche-Tréville in Loch Eriboll, on the north coast of Scotland; while an RAF Hawk jet of 100 Sqn pulls up to conduct a simulated 27mm strafe attack onto a target at Cape Wrath Range (right)



Picture: Sgt Andy Walker

# Wide-ranging warriors

THE MARITIME element of this autumn's Joint Warrior exercise may have been played out mainly off the coast of Scotland, but the ripples were felt further afield.

Down in the West Country, for example, where a flotilla of ships called in at Devonport after testing themselves in the intensive serials of JW 142.

Or at RN Air Station Culdrose, from where Hawk jet trainers decamped to Ayrshire to take part in the exercise.

Or at Reservist units around the country, which supplied personnel for various parts of the exercise, which was run from a centre at Clyde Naval Base.

Minehunting had an important role in the scenario – which meant a busy time for the ship's company of HMS Pembroke.

Sailors from the Sandown-class minehunter had just completed Operational Sea Training (OST) when they joined Joint Warrior as part of the preparations for their deployment to Operation Kipion this month.

The Faslane-based ship was pitched straight into OST after summer leave, together with colleagues from Hunt-class minehunter HMS Middleton, whose crew will also be deploying to Kipion.

After five weeks of FOST scrutiny, there was a quick transit north, where Pembroke's crew found themselves involved in a NATO exercise, clearing Loch Ewe of ordnance to protect Pastonian waters from the Free Dragonian Brotherhood.

AB Hall, one of the ship's Mine Warfare ratings, said: "It's been a really busy time, but it's great to put everything we learnt on OST into practice in a big exercise like Joint Warrior."

"I actually really enjoyed it, and it's been interesting to work with all the other countries."



Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald

Whilst on Joint Warrior, Pembroke worked closely with several NATO ships, including Dutch MCMVs, French frigates and American destroyers.

Particularly special was the chance to practise rafting serials with the Lithuanian command and support ship Jotvingas, with the two vessels battling 25 knots of wind to develop the ability to pass stores and supplies.

Lt Cdr Jim Blythe, CO of Pembroke, said: "The crew has absolutely relished the chance to show our NATO colleagues what Pembroke can achieve, and it has been fantastic to develop such close working relations with the units taking part in the exercise."

Pembroke went alongside at Rosyth after Joint Warrior, at which point the sailors left her to conduct pre-deployment preparations prior to their seven months in the Gulf.

Standing NATO Mine Counter-Measures Group One (SNMCMG1) provided much of the minehunting muscle for JW 142, and the group called in at Faslane before the exercise got under way.

The group – ORP Flaming (Poland), FGS Datteln

(Germany), HNoMS Karmoy (Norway), LVNS Talivaldis (Latvia), ENS Sakala (Estonia), HNLMS Zierikzee (Netherlands) and BNS Crocus (Belgium) – is the first NATO standing force to be commanded by the Lithuanian Navy, represented by group flagship Jotvingas.

And once their exertions were over, the group called in at Devonport for a scheduled weekend visit allowing some 360 sailors to unwind after a programme which featured training in force protection, replenishment at sea, air defence, boarding vessels, operating under communications and GPS jamming conditions, surface manoeuvring, mine warfare and mine recovery.

By that stage Culdrose had welcomed back the five Hawk jets of 736 Naval Air Squadron which had relocated to HMS Gannet, near Ayr, for the two weeks.

The Hawks were joined at Gannet by five Falcons from Cobham Aviation, which boosted the personnel at Gannet by 50 aircrew and more than 100 engineers.

"It has been a great pleasure to see such a busy base over the



● (Above) HMS Pembroke during Joint Warrior in the west of Scotland

● (Left) HNLMS Zierikzee (Netherlands – left of picture) and ORP Flaming (Poland) prepare to join the Joint Warrior exercise

● (Right) Reservist Lt Michael Pedley surveys Oban anchorages during Joint Warrior

● (Below) NATO minehunters alongside at Clyde Naval Base



Picture: CPO(Phot) Tam McDonald



last couple of weeks," said Lt Cdr Charlie Fuller, HMS Gannet's Commanding Officer.

"It's a long time since we have seen so much traffic through the base and, with the planes coming and going throughout each day, it has been all hands on deck."

"The improvement in the dispersal area should now enable us to use the site more regularly for visiting aircraft."

The CO of 736 NAS, Lt Cdr Tim Flatman, said: "During the exercise we were playing the enemy aggressors, 'attacking' the ships and generally causing problems for them."

"We were conducting combined air operations with Falcons from Cobham Aviation, and alongside many other aircraft from the RAF as well as a host of European Air Forces."

"It's a complex but realistic exercise, which provided good training for all the participants as well as 736 NAS."

Joint Warrior, held off the coast of Scotland twice a year, provides a complex environment in which UK, NATO and allied units can go through training together

● HMS Pembroke rafts up alongside Lithuanian command and support ship Jotvingas in a strong breeze

in tactics and skills for use in a combined joint task force.

The scenario generally features a dispute between nations which builds through political tensions to outright warfighting – all, of course, simulated in and around Scotland, including live firing and bombing at the Cape Wrath Weapons Range Area.

The 'cast' of the exercise included 21 ships and one submarine, and more than 50 fixed-wing aircraft, including fighters from Sweden, Belgium and Germany – the maritime serials provided much useful aviation training as well.

It is co-ordinated, planned and delivered by a joint team of RN and RAF personnel that form the Joint Tactical Exercise Planning Staff (JTEPS) based at Northwood HQ, London.

JTEPS staff deploy during the exercise to the Joint Warrior Operations Centre located at Faslane, augmented by approximately 150 personnel from across the three Services, many of whom are Reservists, providing specialist expertise.

As the exercise drew to a close, Exercise Director Capt Tony Watt congratulated the 58 reservists on their collective support, without which he said he simply could

not deliver the two Joint Warrior exercises each year.

Addressing the Reservist augmentees, Capt Watt said: "I have to say I've been particularly impressed at the way you have delivered your specialist knowledge; deploying initiative and imagination and adding significant extra value to this exercise."

"You should all be really pleased with yourselves – I am really grateful that you have enabled the team to deliver all our training objectives."

Rear Admiral Ben Key, Flag Officer Sea Training, told training staff: "It is quite clear to me the training product delivered from here is of immense value and it is my challenge to make sure that Joint Warrior continues to deliver this 'jewel of the crown' of the UK's Joint military training."

"My huge thanks to all of you for providing your support to this exercise – I hope you all seized opportunities to develop and spread the word amongst your colleagues as next spring we will run out one of the largest ever multi-national military Joint Warrior exercises and we will welcome your return to support this massive undertaking successfully."







## Sixties back en vogue

OLDER readers – and veteran RM musicians – may do a double-take looking at this photograph of the Corps' finest.

For the new uniform of the world-famous Royal Marines Band Service is dressed in... is the old uniform, last seen 50 years ago.

For the first time since the mid-1960s the musicians will wear full-length dark blue greatcoats for certain outdoor performances – replacing dark blue capes.

The Royal Marines' Portsmouth Band were the first to parade the new look at last month's Remembrance ceremony at the Cenotaph in London.

"The capes weren't that easy to play in as they restricted the movement of the arms – particularly for our buglers who double up as drummers," said Lt Daryl Powell, the band's director of music.

"So we are all pleased with the change – the greatcoats are more comfortable when playing, and they look very smart too."

Musn Rachel Wright, the band's solo clarinet player who has worn capes on numerous occasions during her 22 years' service, said: "The capes were cumbersome and quite heavy but the greatcoats are far more comfortable. We are all very pleased with the change."

The Band Service – including the Corps of Drums – will wear the greatcoats every year at the Cenotaph parade and other outdoor winter performances when deemed appropriate.

## Best in West

LAST month we gave readers the chance to re-fight the Eastern Front.

This month war game fans can have a crack at the West from Sicily to the Rhine crossings.

Thanks to developers Matrix, we have five copies of Gary Grigsby's *War in the West 1943-1945* to give away.

With a highly accurate map of Europe, incredibly-detailed order of battle – down to squad level – a very realistic logistics system (including rail usage, depots, trucks, ports and realistic interdiction), full modeling of the war in the air and ground wars, and authentic weather system, *War in the West* is billed as the definitive war game of the Western Front.

To buy it – or to find out more – [www.matrixgames.com/products/507/details/Gary\\_Grigsby's\\_War\\_in\\_the\\_West](http://www.matrixgames.com/products/507/details/Gary_Grigsby's_War_in_the_West)

And to win it, tell us the name of the German field marshal in charge of the defence of the West in June 1944.

Send your name, address and answer to us by January 14 at [warinthewest@navynews.co.uk](mailto:warinthewest@navynews.co.uk) or War in the West Competition, Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.



# Warmth in November

FORMED up in fine autumn sunshine on the promenade at Weymouth, the men and women of HMS Portland enjoy their first taste of the Dorset resort in over 12 months.

The Type 23 made the short hop from home in Devonport to spend five days in their affiliated namesake – allowing locals to catch up with news from the frigate's Atlantic deployment.

Although the ship's company were blessed with fine weather for marching through the streets, not so on their arrival.

Despite foul weather, 70 guests braved the elements to watch the sailors lay on a demonstration of what they are capable of, before a ceremonial sunset at which Dorset's Deputy Lord Lieutenant, James Gibson-Fleming, took the salute.

Those 70 weather-beaten guests were the first in a succession of visitors from VIPs at

a lunch hosted by CO Capt Simon Asquith. Shipmates from the Portland branch of the RNA were given a tour and hosted by the chiefs mess, followed by members of the Royal Dorset Yacht Club, Sea Cadets, Combined Cadet Forces and schoolchildren – a good 100 people in all, though not at the same time.

"It has been a great experience to have my first port visit in the Royal Navy so close to my home town, and having the opportunity to show my family around Portland after only serving onboard such a short time," said AB Bill Sayer, who hails from Swanage, just 30 miles up the road.

Portland's hometown visit coincided with remembrance weekend.

Half the ship's company – 100 souls – represented the frigate at Weymouth's annual November ceremony and marched past the

town's cenotaph to pay their respects.

And the remaining members of the crew who could be spared duties aboard – 40 men and women – attended events in Portland itself.

"Throughout this visit, HMS Portland was very warmly received by the people of Portland, Weymouth and wider Dorset," said Capt Asquith.

"The visit gave us a fantastic opportunity to renew established links and form new friendships; the warmth of the welcome we received was overwhelming.

"One hundred years on from the start of WWI, and in the same year as we have seen the end of combat operations in Afghanistan, the Remembrance parades were especially poignant; we were honoured to take part together as a ship's company."

Picture: Graham Hunt

# Meanwhile in Somerset...

PORTLAND was fortunate to be able to park herself in her affiliated town.

No chance for the county ship of Somerset. The closest she could get to Wells was the port of Avonmouth – a good 30 miles away.

The frigate – normally based in Devonport with her sister Portland – spent four days in the Bristol port, a visit which was a mix of celebration (20th birthday party) and commemoration (Remembrance ceremonies).

Indeed, with the exception of the birthday, HMS Somerset in Somerset was almost a carbon copy of HMS Portland in Portland.

Lady Layard, who launched the ship in 1994, and 100 members of the ship's many affiliate organisations and dignitaries were welcomed onboard for a reception/capability demonstration.

Sailors presented £500 to Baytree School, a school for children with severe learning difficulties.

"It was humbling to see the dedication and level of care that the staff give to the children; it is a privilege to be able to help in any way," said Lt Chris Owen, who was paying his second visit to the Weston-super-Mare school.

Plenty of other youngsters had the chance to file up the gangway for a look around "the West Country's favourite warship" (Portland might have something to say about that self-proclaimed tag...).

The ship hosted students from colleges and Combined Cadet



● Somerset's CO Cdr Mike Smith salutes at the Remembrance Sunday service at Wells Cathedral

Forces in the region and the West Midlands, including Bridgewater College and Selly Oak Trust, who were given an insight into careers and lifestyle in the RN.

"There is no better way of showing what the Navy is about than giving people the opportunity to see the world-class kit and our world-class sailors," said weapon engineer

officer Lt Cdr Trevor Bradley.

"It's a privilege to be able to inspire the next generation."

On Remembrance Sunday, Somerset's sailors represented their ship at ten church services across the county, from Wells' magnificent cathedral to parish churches in Bridgewater and Ilminster.

"To stand with the local

communities and remember the sacrifices that were made at sea, on land and in the air is a fitting way to pay our respects," said Cdr Mike Smith, F82's CO.

Before heading into Avonmouth, his ship hosted the next-generation of principal warfare officers for the high-pressure 96-hour assessment phase of their 13-month course.

Although it's the potential PWOs being tested, there's no breather for the ship's company, who work 24 hours a day to provide the weapons, sensors, engines and even the extra meals required to keep the training going, with many at work deep inside the ship and not seeing daylight for several days.

"It's an important week for developing the next generation of warfare officers – both the students and my crew gained a great deal from the time spent together in a high-pressure environment," said Cdr Smith.

"Crucially the students get to learn how people react when tired and stressed which is when, as a leader, it is crucial that you know yourself and can maintain focus."

The four-day-long assessment reached its climax with the full workout that is a Thursday War off Plymouth.

"Despite the pressure, this week has been great. This went as close as possible to recreating the real thing," said Lt Daniel Gatenby, one of the PWO students.

"We really appreciate the effort that the ship has put into looking after the six of us."



## 350 does go into 999

*I don't know but I've been told...*

*London in a T-shirt in November is mighty cold...*

Pounding the Mall are 200 past, present – and possibly future – Royal Marines taking part in the annual Commando 999 speed march, a half-marathon through the capital.

As part of the commemoration of the Corps' 350th birthday, the 2014 march included officers under training and cadets from across the London region.

Prime Minister David Cameron and the First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas met the runners before the marchers were sent on their way by a medley of WW1 songs performed by Chivenor Military Wives Choir.

The marchers later linked up with participants of the Lord Mayor's Show, where outgoing Lord Mayor Fiona Woolf joined the Commandant General of the Royal Marines, General Martin Smith, and Corps Regimental Sergeant Major Ally McGill to drink a toast to celebrate the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines.

Commando 999 was set up by former Royal Marines serving in the police and other emergency services to help fellow members of the Corps family and their loved ones. In the five years of its existence, the charity has raised more than £500,000.

## Makeover for mast

ONE of the most prominent landmarks in Plymouth Naval Base has been given a high-level makeover.

The main flag mast stands 32 metres on the ceremonial Quarterdeck of HMS Drake in Devonport Naval Base and its prominent position means it is the first thing visitors see entering Drake main gate.

The annual inspection showed significant deterioration of the wooden yards, which were therefore removed from the mast and lowered to ground level for a closer look.

Due to the length (upper yard 8.43m and lower yards 12m) and weight of the yards (¼ tonne) high-level cranes were required to remove them.

On examination it was clear that the deterioration on both upper and lower yards was more extensive than first thought, so they were replaced.

Defence contractor Interserve commissioned Survitec Services Ltd to remove and replace all the mast rigging and fixings and arrange the remake of new upper and lower yards.

To achieve the maximum strength the yards were made using six lengths of Douglas fir timber glued together, shaped, treated and coated in four coats of marine-grade paint.





# Magnificent desolation



BUZZ Aldrin had to travel 238,000 miles (give or take a few) to be inspired by bleakness.



The men and women of HMS Clyde only had to venture 850 miles from home to be struck by austere beauty.

And forbidding though the craggy shores and snow-capped peaks of South Georgia appear, the remote island might be stark, but it isn't entirely desolate.

Clyde paid her first visit of the Austral summer to the remote island chain as part of her duties as guardian of the Falklands.

Spring in the Southern Hemisphere was a month old when the patrol ship ventured from East Cove across the South Atlantic.

Although South Georgia is only as far south of the Equator as Newcastle is north of it, there's no Gulf Stream to warm things up a little.

At 54° S, the island sits in the middle of the 'Furious Fifties' – the latitude where the storms and swell run around the globe uninterrupted, apart from a few small islands like South Georgia.

So obviously it was a perfectly smooth crossing for the 2,000-tonne warship – the proverbial calm before the storm.

Because after a mostly-pleasant first day at King Edward Point and the island's principal settlement Grytviken – allowing visits to the former whaling station, its museum and a climb to the top of Mount Brown – the Furious Fifties struck with a vengeance.

By sunrise the next day, 12 inches of snow had fallen and the planned walk to Maiviken – the next cove along from Grytviken – led by a scientist from the British Antarctic Survey became a snow-shoeing expedition for those that wanted the real South Georgia experience.

A beautiful sunny day saw the team make Maiviken for lunch and they sat in the middle of a penguin colony, watching sooty albatrosses wheeling overhead in their courtship flying displays.

"It was well worth the lung-busting climb over Lewis Pass and the ominously-named Deadman's Cairn to reach this marvellously unspoilt part of the world," said Lt Alex Davies, Clyde's marine engineer officer.

With the trekkers safely back aboard Clyde, the ship put to sea to ride out an 18-hour storm with gusts of over 90 knots.

Staying within the relative shelter of Cumberland Bay, the warship had a couple of fishing vessels, a small cruise ship and the South Georgia government's fishery protection vessel, Pharos, for company as the storm raged.

When it had passed, the ship spied a window of opportunity between the spring gales for some navigational training, heading down the east coast to scenic Drygalski Fjord at the foot of the island.

It's eight miles long, one mile wide, and bordered on three sides by jagged mountains interspersed with glaciers whose progress is halted only by the waters of the South Atlantic.

Time to admire Drygalski was limited, however.

"With the weather closing in once again and camera memory cards full to bursting, Clyde set off making best speed to the north west of South Georgia to try to escape the worst of the storms and seas for her passage home," said Lt Davies.







# Parliament's praise for RN



Pictures: PO Arron Hoare

YOU don't see this very often.

Never in fact. The Prime Minister, a sizeable number of MPs, the heads of the Royal Navy's various fighting arms, all pausing to applaud 175 men and women of the Naval Service in front of the mother of parliaments.

For the first time sailors and Royal Marines were invited inside the House of Commons as a thank-you for their commitment around the world, day in, day out.

Led by the Band of HM Royal Marines Collingwood, personnel marched from Horse Guards Parade through the streets of central London to New Palace Yard outside the Houses of Parliament.

POA Chris Jordan, based at RNAS Culdrose, said: "It's really good to be here on the streets of London being greeted by the public and meeting politicians."

There they were welcomed by the Prime Minister and the chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for the Armed Forces, James Gray MP.

Welcoming all to the Parliament, the Prime Minister told them: "The Royal Navy represents the very best values in our society."

"I would like to thank you for all you do to protect the interests of the UK; your service in Afghanistan over the last 13 years, your counter-piracy work off the coast of East Africa and in all other

operations across the world."

Following the march, MPs held a reception and gave them a tour of the Palace of Westminster before holding a dinner for selected personnel from a number of operations.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas said the invite to Parliament had been "an opportunity for the Royal Navy to connect with those who govern our island nation."

"It is a great – and rare – privilege for the Royal Navy to be invited to march into Parliament, the seat of the democracy we protect. And it has been an opportunity for Parliament to recognise our sleepless watch over the seas."

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# THE ENEMY

**A** FEW metres below the surface of the sea, AB(D) Damien Sanders prepares an over-pressure charge ready to render a mine impotent.

And you know from the clarity of these azure and cobalt waters, this isn't Horsea Lake. It's 2,370 miles away.

Is it near Atyrau on the shores of the Caspian Sea?

Too clear.

The craggy waters of Newfoundland?

Too cold. And too clear.

Is it Aqaba, Red Sea gateway to Jordan?

Could be. (Well, actually it is.)

Famed as one of the signal victories in the campaigns of Lawrence of Arabia a century ago, the city – or rather its harbour – was one of the key settings for the world's largest mine warfare exercises.

More than 40 nations, three dozen warships and 6,500 military personnel – nearly a quarter of them British – accepted the invitation to the third International Mine Counter-Measures EXercise (which thankfully abbreviates to IMCMEX).

Run every 18 or so months, the exercise tests the ability of the world's navies to respond should anyone try to block free and lawful passage of the Seven Seas by sowing the waters with mines.

The RN accepted the invitation to IMCMEX14 (as it has to the previous incarnations) with relish.

Not only were all Britain's permanent minehunting presence east of Suez committed – HMS Atherstone, Chiddingfold, Penzance and Shoreham, plus their 'mother ship' RFA Cardigan Bay – but also pirate-chasing frigate HMS Northumberland, stores ship RFA Fort Austin, plus the nation's flagship HMS Bulwark and amphibious support vessel RFA Lyme Bay, exercising in the region as part of their Cougar 14 deployment.

The Royal Navy's contribution in terms of ships and personnel was second only to that of the US Navy – who brought not just cutting-edge hardware to the exercise, such as minehunting helicopters and

robot submersibles, but their 'Marine Mammals System': highly-trained sea lions and dolphins which detect, locate and tag mine-like objects using mounted-sonar and lasers.

The mammals use a series of signals to pass the information to their handlers, who then arrange for the destruction of the mines by divers.

We don't have seals or dolphins to find mines

We do, however, possess three teams of elite frogmen – in the case of IMCMEX14, Fleet Diving Unit 3, who headed to the Gulf of Aqaba.

Jordan's only coastal city is a major draw for tourists and sports divers.

And as Jordan's only major port, it's also the inlet and outlet for the country's imports and exports – at least 600,000 shipping containers worth of goods every year, and the figure is rising.

Put simply: block Aqaba and you strangle billions of pounds of trade.

Which is where FDU3 come in. The small team (16 divers, led by Lt James George) has a global mandate to carry out the underwater search and clearance of harbours and critical maritime infrastructure.

The unit – normally based on Horsea Island at the top of Portsmouth Harbour – is on call to move around the world, 24/7.

All that's needed to do so are five 20ft shipping containers, a team of clearance divers. And a big White Ensign to fly on top of one of the containers.

Joining the Brits in the warm waters (25°C even in November...) off Aqaba were the host nation's divers.

The Royal Jordanian Naval Force are relative newcomers to the world of mine clearance diving – and have very quickly adapted to the new realm.

"It's always good to train and operate with divers from other nations – it's good to see how they deal with the same challenges we face in the RN," said AB(D) Dan Box.

AB(D) Luke Williams added: "It

was a great opportunity to work with divers from another nation. I even tried learning some Arabic!"

And if the British and Jordanian divers couldn't communicate verbally, they used picture storyboards on the surface, and the universal sign language of frogmen below the waves.

Used to cold, murk and less-than-pleasant-tasting waters at Horsea, where the bed of the lake is peppered with various objects, the FDU divers found the waters around Aqaba "very unusual".

Whilst visibility there can be excellent, the topography of the seabed can catch even the most experienced frogman off guard.

To that end, the team deploys with REMUS – which looks like a miniature torpedo, but actually scans the seabed with its sonar to a depth of 100 metres.

Programmed by one of its operators like LS(D) David 'Buck' Taylor, REMUS is sent on its way following a set route with pinpoint GPS accuracy. It 'flies' at a set distance from the sea bed, maintaining its position in the water column using internal sensors, whilst generating images using a dual-frequency side-scan sonar – which the divers can analyse when it returns from its mission.

For the sake of the 2014 run-out of IMCMEX, the scenario was simple: a terrorist organisation (The Red Cell) intended to disrupt maritime trade and commerce around Aqaba harbour by dropping mines.

US Navy clearance divers played the part of the terrorists – a task they tackled with relish. "Every morning we got up before the Brits to re-seed the approaches with conventional and improvised devices," said Lt Morgan Dahl USN.

"Fortunately the scenario allowed our imaginations to run away with us to try to vex FDU3s command." And planting mines afresh meant that every day the British and Jordanian divers had to head out to search the entire area – and render it safe for shipping. Which they did. With aplomb.

During their stint in Aqaba, the team carried out 124 minehunting dives, located 14 (out of 14) mines, sent REMUS off on nine sorties, safely blew up seven live mines (and seven practice ones), lifted 2,850kg of practice mines off the sea bed (that's about the weight of a Humvee), destroyed two limpet mines, and neutralised two improvised explosive devices... not to mention training US Navy divers in RN diving equipment and sharing tactics and training with their Jordanian comrades.

"We have all learned an enormous amount about our capabilities – and our limitations – and been very lucky to have such a varied and flexible training area on Aqaba's coast," said Lt George.

The dive teams did everything humanly possible to clear the waters around Aqaba. But what if they missed a deadly egg? What if a ship heading into port ran slap bang over an underwater explosive?

We don't think a Royal Navy warship has hit a mine since the Corfu incident in the late 1940s – so could today's generation of matelots deal with the aftermath? Time to test the ship's company of HMS Penzance.

Blood and guts spilled on to the decks of the Sandown-class ship – fake, of course, but thanks to the presence of actors from Amputees in Action, the gore was very real.

Piercing screams permeated the mess decks and compartments after the ship's engine room took a hit – and drew the minehunter's senior medic – PO(D) Simon Day – to the scene.

With a crew of just 45, HMS Penzance does not have its own doctor or full-time medic, so the ship's coxswain – who heads up the mine clearance dive team – doubles up as the head medic, assisted by a team of fellow divers, plus chefs and stewards, who've received first-aid training.

"All the sailors aboard have been trained in basic first aid and we supplement that with advanced training for the ship's medics, but it was clear from the outset that the casualties needed







# BELOW...

more than putting into the recovery position or a triangular bandage!" said PO Day.

At his side was AB(D) Luke Scally, who found the presence of the amputees raised the training to a new level.

"The actors were great guys and threw themselves into the role," Luke said.

"Despite the alarms, the screaming and the 'blood' everywhere, I and the rest of the medics aboard kept cool, proving that our training really does work."

Penzance's part-time medics soon realised, however, that the casualties would need more specialist treatment - provided by RFA Cardigan Bay, five miles away.

The ship was built to support Royal Marines' amphibious operations, but more recently she's served as the command and mother ship for the Royal Navy's four minehunters permanently stationed in Bahrain.

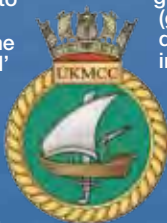
She sent her two-man 'medical in transit care' team to Penzance by RIB, tasked with preparing the casualties for the transfer from the minehunter to hospital.

The quickest and safest way was to 'raft' the warship alongside Cardigan Bay, a delicate but crucial operation requiring deft ship handling.

The casualties were first assessed by teams up to ten strong, who decided which order treatment should be given by the Royal Navy, Army and RAF surgeons, anaesthetists, nurses and medics in Cardigan Bay's hospital facilities; a patient who has lost a leg, for example, goes straight into surgery to try to save as much of the remaining limb as possible.

"The exercise provided a fantastic opportunity to test the first aid response in Penzance and the specialist team onboard Cardigan Bay," said Surg Lt Laura Morrow, the RN mine countermeasures force's medical officer.

"However, the support given by the amazing actors from Amputees in Action provided a learning experience that was absolutely second to none."



The medical exercise was just one example of how the 2014 variant of IMCMEX had extended its scope beyond the pure 'find and destroy' world of minehunting.

Planners back in Bahrain threw force protection into the mix - guiding a 'high value asset' (gas or oil tanker) through dangerous waters; they introduced safeguarding the oil and gas platforms which pepper the Gulf into the equation; and they added a spot of counter-piracy.

The biggest victim of such (maritime) highway robbery was one MV Bulwark.

Big, grey, loading dock, the ill-starred merchantman bore an uncanny resemblance to Britain's flagship.

And the pirates attempting to storm the ship and take the crew hostage bore an uncanny resemblance to the commandos of 4 Assault Group RM.

Bulwark's very own green beret unit jumped at the chance to be bad (Royal Marines + dodgy acting = there in a flash...) turning their landing craft and sea boats into a mock 'pirate action group'.

As they swarmed around the assault ship, she flashed a mayday for coalition ships to come to the rescue.

Enter the destroyers USS Sterett and Gridley who drove off the faux pirates, then sent their visit, board, search, and seizure teams - the American equivalent of our board and search - to stalk the decks and passageways of Bulwark to make sure there were no modern-day buccaneers lurking aboard.

And just for good measure, the Royal Marines had a go at Chiddingfold, Penzance, and US minehunters Dexterous and Devastator.

"The idea was for the minehunters to notice that one craft was no threat and just had inquisitive civilians onboard, who, as per real life, will often come in close and ignore warnings so they can get a good photo," explained Captain Theo Hogg Royal Marines.

"The second craft, on the other hand, arrived from a different

direction with weapons manned and approached at speed.

"The crew did incredibly well, recognising the threat posed by the pirates and taking the correct actions to protect their ship from the incoming danger."

When not being attacked by her own green berets, Bulwark was in charge of one of three task groups formed for the 'at sea' phase of IMCMEX: 521 maritime security (led by Bulwark), 522 for mine warfare - HMS Atherstone and Shoreham found themselves attached to a group commanded by the Japanese and working alongside vessels from Pakistan, the United Arab Emirates, Saudi Arabia and the USA - and 523 protecting infrastructure.

Under the charge of Bulwark and the staff of the Commander UK Task Group, Commodore Jerry Kyd were (deep breath):

- frigate HMS Northumberland;
- minehunters HMS Chiddingfold and HMS Penzance;
- amphibious support ship RFA Cardigan Bay
- support ship RFA Fort Austin;
- American destroyer USS Sterett;
- American minehunters USS Devastator and Dextrous
- and the German frigate FGS Schleswig-Holstein.

For the senior Royal Navy officer in the region - and part of the international team directing events from Bahrain - this 'mixiblob' of forces and the variety offered by the two-week work-out made the third IMCMEX easily the largest and most important to date.

"Mine countermeasures and maritime security operations are about the freedom of the seas - the arteries along which the life blood of global commerce and energy flow," said Cdre Keith Blount, UK Maritime Component Commander.

"The key for me is that the exercise demonstrates that the international community is capable and ready to work together in the spirit of co-operation and partnership."



pictures: us navy fifth fleet





HMS Torbay



Commando Training Centre



Helensburgh



London



# 100 YEARS WE REMEMBER



HMS Bulwark



Spean Bridge

● Main image: The Remembrance Sunday service at Plymouth Hoe  
Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse



MDHU, Portsmouth







HMS Dalriada, Glasgow



RNAS Culdrose



Portsmouth

# WARSHIPS CARRIED THEM

ON SHIPS and ashore, Naval personnel joined the nation in acts of Remembrance 100 years on from the start of World War 1.

Royal Navy personnel attended more than 400 events over the Remembrance weekend as well as services on Armistice Day.

More than 200 members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines were on duty as the Queen led the nation in paying tribute at the Cenotaph.

In Portsmouth the armed Naval Guard from HMS Collingwood stood side-by-side with a platoon of Reservists from HMS King Alfred and Servicemen and women from HMS Excellent and Portsmouth Naval Base at the Naval War Memorial.

An hour later, in the Guildhall Square in Portsmouth, thousands gathered to witness the city's Remembrance Service and poppy wreath-laying at Portsmouth's Cenotaph and War Memorial.

In Devon, recruits from Hanson Division marked their first week of Naval training by joining around 650 members of HMS Raleigh's ship's company for a service of Remembrance at Horson Cemetery, near to the training base in Torpoint.

One of the largest services in the South West took place on Plymouth Hoe, where personnel from Devonport Naval Base joined members of the public to pay tribute.

At RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall, personnel and their families attended a service beside the masthead near to the Garden of Remembrance.

In Scotland, residents from Helensburgh and Lomond joined Armed Forces veterans and personnel at Hermitage Park to remember those who have died in conflict.

Among those attending were senior officers and sailors from Clyde Naval Base, forming a guard of honour for the event, with a commemorative wreath laid by Cdre Mark Adams, Naval Base Commander.

For the first time in Helensburgh, the South Atlantic Medal Association was in attendance, represented by Falklands

veteran James Shearer, from Rhu, who also laid a wreath.

Glasgow-based RNR Unit HMS Dalriada marked Remembrance Sunday with parades in Glasgow and Greenock, and wreath-laying in Paisley, Govan, and at the Lyle Hill Free French Memorial in Greenock.

More than 800 military personnel were on parade for the service at Commando Training Centre RM, Lymstone, Devon.

Twenty members of HMS Ramsey attended the Remembrance Sunday commemorations in the ship's home town of Ramsey on the Isle of Man, while personnel from HMS Sutherland attended events in the town of Brora in Sutherland.

In Gibraltar the crew of HMS Echo joined personnel based on the Rock at a parade and Remembrance Service.

A Guard of Honour from the Royal Naval Air Engineering and Survival Equipment School, HMS Sultan, led the Fleet Air Arm on Remembrance Sunday in a ceremony at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial on the sea front in Lee-on-the-Solent.

Personnel aboard HMS Bulwark held their service at sea during their four-month Cougar 14 deployment east of Suez, while men and women aboard HMS Northumberland held a service on the flight deck while sailing through the Gulf of Aden.

HMS Kent held its service as it sailed through the Suez Canal.

To the crew's dismay they discovered that the ship's cross, the focal point for the Service and poppy wreath-laying, was nowhere to be found.

Step forward PO Mickey Pearce and ET(ME) Jersey Thomas, who swiftly designed and constructed a new cross, complete with ship's crest in just four hours.

Personnel from submarine HMS Torbay attended a Remembrance service in Crete during the boat's visit to Souda Bay.

Hundreds of members of the public and staff gathered in the atrium at Queen Alexandra Hospital, Portsmouth.

The service was led by the hospital chaplaincy team and the Ministry of Defence Hospital Unit.

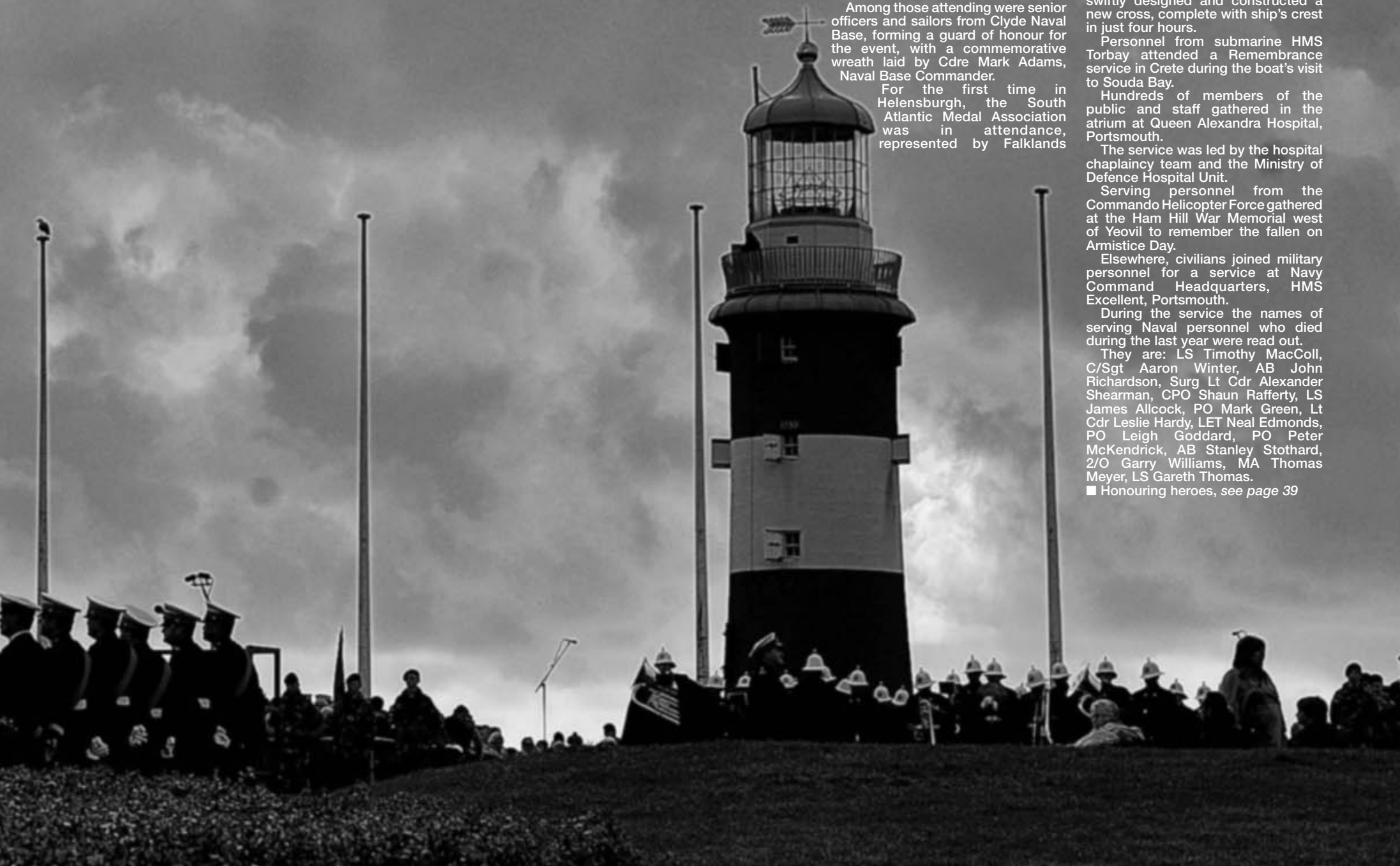
Serving personnel from the Commando Helicopter Force gathered at the Ham Hill War Memorial west of Yeovil to remember the fallen on Armistice Day.

Elsewhere, civilians joined military personnel for a service at Navy Command Headquarters, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth.

During the service the names of serving Naval personnel who died during the last year were read out.

They are: LS Timothy MacColl, C/Sgt Aaron Winter, AB John Richardson, Surg Lt Cdr Alexander Shearman, CPO Shaun Rafferty, LS James Allcock, PO Mark Green, Lt Cdr Leslie Hardy, LET Neal Edmonds, PO Leigh Goddard, PO Peter McKendrick, AB Stanley Stothard, 2/O Garry Williams, MA Thomas Meyer, LS Gareth Thomas.

■ Honouring heroes, see page 39







● The giant mural in the Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess at HMS Excellent tells the story of the Falklands Conflict from the

# Students' tribute to

THEY weren't even twinkles in their parents' eyes when the Falklands Conflict took place – but they have created a lasting memorial to the Royal Navy's role in the South Atlantic.

A group of art students, aged 16 to 18, from South Downs College have produced a 12ft square memorial on a wall in the Warrant Officers and Senior Rates Mess at HMS Excellent.

The artwork, set against a map of the Falkland Islands, consists of a timeline of events in 1982 with students given sections to produce stencils from photographs supplied by the Royal Navy. The stencils are spray-painted onto the wall, with some areas then receiving a colour wash.

"The finished product is beyond mine and my committee and mess members' wildest imagination – it is a truly inspirational piece of art," said Mess President and Base Warrant Officer WO1 Simon Hayman.

"The attention to detail and techniques they have used is beyond description.

"You have to see it to take in the detail and the enormity of the mural. I am honoured to have it in my mess."

The students from the

Waterlooville college gave up their half-term holiday to complete the artwork – spending hours on scaffolding above the reception desk.

Art lecturer Mark Kellett, who produced some of the stencils himself, said: "We've never done anything this big or for an organisation so important.

"I thought we would do it as stencils as the majority of work could take place at college. I ended up with a huge list of people wanting to take part."

The students will be able to include the project in their college portfolios.

Second-year student Rebecca Vincenzo, 18, said: "I am really enjoying it. I'm glad to be taking part. I did history at school so learned about the Falklands.

"I'll be bringing my mum and grandma to look at it once it's finished, they are both really proud and think this is a great opportunity for me."

Rebecca, who is planning to go to university and aims to be a primary school teacher, added: "I don't mind doing this over half-term, I would only be doing homework anyway."

Lizaveta Sinkevich, 17, currently in her first year at the college, spent two weeks preparing one of the most detailed and difficult stencils –

the signing of the surrender.

Emma Steel, 17, who is hoping to get an apprenticeship as a graphic designer, said: "I've been doing the badges, they are very intricate and took me a long time – more than a day's work.

"I didn't really know about the Falklands before doing this. My family are pretty impressed that I am doing this – particularly as we are climbing scaffolding to do it."

Max Ottesen, 18, added: "It's pretty cool. I have been working on the helicopters and the flags, which have taken a few hours of stenciling."

Second-year student Rubi Hussey, 17, said: "This has been a really exciting opportunity and a great experience to create this tribute.

"This experience has opened our creativity and has allowed us to explore different ideas and mediums.

"The lecturers and the Royal Navy have given us the inspiration we need to make this an amazing piece of work. We are all really proud of what we've achieved."

First-year student Hoi Hong, 16, added: "We have all put a lot of extra time into this and we have gained so much experience.

"We have all learnt great techniques through this opportunity and we will continue

to use what we have learnt in our course. I've really enjoyed helping create this memorial for HMS Excellent."

Second-year student Lisa Kerry said: "To come to HMS Excellent, it's been a real honour for all of us to be involved. I have helped with painting the smaller intricate pieces of the memorial.

"South Downs College have given us an opportunity to gain experience in painting in the real world and not just the classroom and makes us stand out against other art students.

"I have had the chance to use this as part of my coursework, which will become a part of my portfolio and an experience I won't forget.

"I've really enjoyed it and I've been more than happy to come here during half term. Everyone at HMS Excellent have been really welcoming and they have looked after us.

"I think everyone has done a really good job. We have all put in so much time and effort to make this something special."

The idea for the mural came from a Falklands commemorative dinner, as WO1 Hayman explains: "The dinner was a very inspirational and humbling experience, listening to guests of honour from all Services giving their accounts of specific





invasion to homecoming

Pictures: LA(PHOT) Nicky Wilson, LA(PHOT) Keith Morgan and Duncan Shepherd, South Downs College



# Falklands veterans

experiences during the conflict.”

WO1 Hayman then got Mr Kellett on board and a committee was formed to oversee the work.

The committee included Falklands veterans WO1 Stew Bratherton RM, WO1 Chris Harding RN, WO2 Buck Rogers RM, Bob Mullen and Mess vice-president C/Sgt Andy Crofts RM.

They, along with Mr Kellett, came up with an idea for a timeline similar to a clock face that told the story of the conflict from invasion to homecoming.

WO1 Hayman said: “The idea is that anyone can sit in the reception – military or civilian – and look at it and know it is the Falklands story.”

“There was a hell of a lot of sacrifice but we’ve been very careful as to what and who is portrayed in the work.”

“The college has really embraced this project and we are forging great links with them.”

“The students have been an absolute credit to themselves, their families and the college. All really grasped the concept and went away and did their own research for the specific areas they were responsible for.”

“I don’t think anything like this has been undertaken under these conditions before.”

“The fact they can use it for

their coursework and the media interest even from the Falkland Islands themselves as well as a connection with one of the students to the Falkland Islands has made this mural even more special.”

The Mess has a number of Falklands veterans, including WO1 John McWilliams, CPO P Simpson, Eli Ellis and J Stride.

South Downs College Principal Lyn Surgeon said: “I am delighted that our students took part in this inspirational project.”

“I am always proud of the talent and commitment of our students and staff. This is an exceptional achievement.”

An honours board will be placed under the mural.

One hundred and 21 Naval personnel died during the Falklands Conflict.

The artwork was being officially unveiled as *Navy News* went to press by Falklands veteran Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Philip Jones, whose daughter Rachel, 18, studied music technology at South Downs.

The unveiling was being attended by Falklands veterans as well as the students and their families.

The Mess foyer will also be getting new furniture, thanks to funding from the RNRMC.







# Slept in the tiller

DARE I mention the Tot again? I know its been covered quite a bit recently but now I would like to add my own experience.

I was a newly-promoted Leading Stoker (Marine Engineer) on HMS Tenby back in 1967. She was Captain F of the Dartmouth training squadron and we trained Midshipmen to be future officers.

It was my birthday on November 23 and the day I was entitled to my first tot of rum, I came off for noon watch having done my 24 hours on and was now 24 hours off, tradition had it that you also had the afternoon watch man's tot as well.

Now because it was my birthday, everyone gave me a gulp of their tot to celebrate, this was on top of the two you were having, whatever was left as spillage you could share as sippers as well.

Can you imagine the state I was in after dinner? I was legless and to top it all we were going into harbour and it was clear lower deck.

This where your mates come in, I was carried aft and placed on the canvas awnings stowed in the tiller and left there for 24 hours. Someone kept coming to keep an eye on me until I eventually surfaced next morning.

I still recall the event and look back at the lads you can call mates.

**John Pittock, ex LME**  
West Yorkshire

## Hood in Panama in 1928

I WAS wondering where the name came from for the Type 45 destroyer HMS Duncan.

The photo of the ship on the front page of October's *Navy News* brought to mind a similar photo taken of HMS Hood passing through the Panama Canal during her world cruise (I think in 1928).

Her accompanying battlecruiser was Repulse and her light cruiser squadron was HMS Delhi, Danae, Dauntless and Dragon.

An uncle was the commissioned Warrant Officer bandmaster (Henry Lodge). He had a very large album of some several thousand photos of the cruise in all its aspects. His copy was sent to the RM Museum at Eastney.

I was with 3 Cdo Brigade in Hong Kong in 1945 when the British Pacific Fleet was there and one could almost cross deck over the carriers from Victoria to Kowloon.

Lastly, as a Bootie approaching my 90th year I must take issue with you over the discrepancy mentioned in an article in October's issue. HM Forces mount Guards of Honour, not honour guards.

WA George Midhurst

**Editor's footnote:** HMS Duncan, the sixth Type 45, is named after Admiral Adam Duncan, who routed the Dutch Fleet at Camperdown in 1797.

## Sabre in Basle visit

IN OCTOBER'S edition of *Navy News*, the article about HMS Gleaner includes the words 'the only vessel under the White Ensign to visit the landlocked country (Switzerland) apparently.'

In July 1979 the fast training boats HMS Sabre and Cutlass visited Basle in Switzerland, the first RN ships to do so for ten years.

I do not know when RN vessels were there around 1969, although the FPBs HMS Brave Borderer and Brave Swordsman were still operational until spring 1970.

GM Hudson Halifax

# My kit bag went on three-year journey



**Each month Pusser's Rum are offering to courier a bottle of their finest tittle to the writer of our top letter. To celebrate Christmas, Pusser's are this month donating a one-litre ceramic decanter. This month's winner is Alfred Stonehewer**

RECENT letters in *Navy News* about kit brought back memories about my own kit.

I was a coder on HMS Grenville and HMS Jervis and in September 1944, when the Jervis went for a refit in Belfast, I was sent back to HMS Mercury near Petersfield.

Eventually I was held back from a sea draft to Australia, with a number of other ratings, to join Rear Admiral Fleet Train's Staff BPF.

We had to leave most of our kit to be forwarded on by sea. After several weeks of waiting, it was decided to send us by sea to New York where we arrived on January 12 1945.

From there we went by train by San Francisco. After eight days we flew to Honolulu where we waited five days for a plane which took us to Manus in the Admiralty Islands.

Here we were billeted with a New Zealand fighter squadron before flying to Brisbane. Our journey to Sydney was by train and we arrived at HMS Golden Hind on February 5.

The sea draft has arrived before us and, as there was no knowledge of where we were, the staff of RAFT BPF were taken from the sea draft. On our arrival we went back into 'Pool' and shortly I joined the staff of Captain Escort Forces BPF.

A signal was sent when we later returned to Sydney, saying that my kit had arrived on an aircraft carrier but when I went to collect it no-one could find it and I was issued with some new kit.

We took passage on various sloops and other ships in the Pacific with CEF and eventually were based ashore in Kowloon after VJ Day. When I had been demobbed and returned home from work in 1947, having moved following my marriage, to my surprise my kit bag had arrived intact on my doorstep.

Alfred Stonehewer Manchester



## Does our record still stand?

I ENCLOSE a photograph of a cutter's crew from 1954.

I was part of this motely crew which won the Port of Plymouth and Sutton Harbour regatta in 1954.

I wonder if this has been achieved since?

Johnny Abrams Harrogate

## Cup of dread

WHEN I was serving on HMS Belfast as a stoker/mechanic during the Korean War my position was on 'A' boiler in the forward boiler room.

The Petty Officer that day was called Robinson, actually an acting PO. He told me to brew some tea, which I did. On handing his cup, handle first, he never took it, just stood staring at it.

I told him to hurry up and take the cup as it's hot, which he did.

Later I asked him what was up and he told me this story.

During World War 2 he was a young stoker like myself. He had just put his finger through the handle of a cup when an almighty bang occurred and he found himself outside the ship in the water with his ship steaming away.

He yelled and waved for help and suddenly the ship leaned to starboard. He thought he had had it but the ship was turning to come back for him.

The ship dropped a boat which came up to him. The coxswain held out his hand to Robbie and noticed his cup finger still had the handle attached.

PH Fender Kent

## Fun with Jan

IT WAS two weeks from Dakar to Simonstown so everyone grew a beard of some sort.

Jan Barber and I went into the first pub and up to the bar, where a tall, thin beanpole looked down at Jan (all 5ft 3in in his wellies).

He said: "Did you come in on that submarine this morning - must be dark down those things."

Jan, sensing a drink on the house said: "Yes we did."

The barman said: "You could not see to shave properly this morning."

As we went to the next pub Jan said: "If I could have reached him I would have strangled him."

God bless Jan, happy days and many laughs.

VH Moorman (HMS Alliance, 1962-64) Lee-on-the-Solent

## Paying tribute to unknown sailor

I READ with interest the article in September's *Navy News* referring to the sinking of HMS Pathfinder.

In our parish church cemetery there is a grave to an unknown sailor from HMS Pathfinder. His body was washed ashore on the beach at Dunbar and buried with full military honours as at the time the town was an Army town.

Whilst I was officer in charge of the local Sea Cadet unit, TS Valiant, after the Remembrance Day parade and church service, I took the unit to lay our wreath on the grave of this unknown sailor and said prayers.

I carried out this ceremony during my time with the unit and include a photograph of one of the services (pictured above right).

He was perhaps unknown but he was not forgotten.

Ally Knox, ex-Ganges Boy Dunbar



# ROYAL NAVY NEWS

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

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

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

We do, however, publish many on our website, [www.navynews.co.uk](http://www.navynews.co.uk), accompanied by images.

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





● Sidney Nelson-Milton's record of service in the Royal Navy

## Strange events in the dark at Horsea

AFTER close to three years on HMS Centaur, I was drafted to Whale Island GL2 Gunnery course involving Queen's Colour guard, Lord Mayor's show London, Remembrance guard Cenotaph London 1963 and Queen's Colour guard for President Tito, when arriving in Southampton.

I remember one night in November 1963, part of the duty watch was sent to an uninhabited island to guard it from the IRA.

I did not know the name of the island then but on arriving we were led to a nice little cottage, with a big open fire and plenty to eat and drink.

We were told it was an ex-POW camp and then told about the crematorium being haunted, the crematorium being the place you stood guard.

On the half hour we were to walk around the island and at several points register your attendance with the time clock, a bit like clocking on for work.

We drew straws for our watches and yours truly got the middle, so I did not bother getting any shut eye, we sat talking all about the crematorium instead.

Midnight came so I relieved the first watch and he handed me his overcoat, time clock and night stick. Yes that's all we had to protect the Island – a night stick!

Of course the guy I relieved told me about all the strange things that happened to him during his watch.

So, I sat myself down, my back to the wall of the crematorium so that no-one could creep up on me from behind.

That first half hour seemed to be dragging on so I decided to have a look at the crematorium.

I didn't go in just looked through the windows; there were stainless steel slabs everywhere and it was very creepy.

At this time I decided to start my walk around the island.

It was a moonlit night and I also had a torch so I felt a lot more secure walking and came across my first check point and clocked in.

I was then much more confident and continued walking to about halfway around the island.

There was plenty of bush and trees each side of the path I was on, it was very quiet.

Suddenly I heard rustling in the bushes to my left, then heavy movement.

What the hell was that? Torch, stick, I then found my torch was not working.

Slowly I started to see the outline of something big and white coming towards me out of the bushes, fear and panic left me when I made sight of a horse!

Not one person had told me we were on Horsea Island.

Sidney Nelson-Milton  
South Australia

## Stoker not a Lyme man

I HAVE been researching the names on my local war memorial in Lyme Regis, Dorset (and also those who survived the war) and those of the adjacent villages since I retired from the RN in 2008.

Back in August you ran an article stating that Stoker Herbert Street was one of the first RN casualties of WW1 and that he was from Lyme Regis.

Herbert Street was born in Axminster and lived in Uplyme, Devon (a small village on the outskirts of Lyme Regis) so not a Lyme man. He is on the Uplyme memorial and was the first one to die from

Uplyme. I think confusion now arises from your article stating the he was from Lyme Regis and not Uplyme but at the same time he was serving with AB Frank Gollop from Lyme on the same ship when it was sunk (HMS Amphion, 6/8/1914). Frank Gollop survived the sinking.

Vernon Rattenbury  
Lyme Regis

**Editor's footnote:** The information regarding Herbert Street came from the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website which states the sailor was "the son of William and Amelia Street, of Rocombe, Uplyme, Lyme Regis."

## Keeping our traditions alive

AFTER 47 years I finally got round to visiting the site of HMS Ganges and visiting the museum at Shotley Gate – all because I was holidaying in East Anglia.

Love it or hate it, all those who joined the Royal Navy as juniors went through there. I was always of the opinion that if you survived it you would go on to have a long career in the RN.

In my case I did full time, which including boys' time, amounted to 24.5 years and I left as a CAEM(R).

The museum has done a lot to keep alive the

experiences of those thousands of young sailors who joined up there.

The museum, which correct me if I am wrong, is the only one that documents new entry training for the Royal Navy. It is run by a band of enthusiastic volunteers but due to impending development could be forced to close.

This would be a shame for all those thousands of 50-somethings who experienced the Ganges way and who have contributed so much to this Navy.

GR Palmer  
Waterlooville

# Memories of 815 Squadron



● 815 Squadron Aircrew, Eglinton in Northern Ireland (HMS Gannet) in May 1951. Back row, from left: LA(TAG) Roy Smith and telegraphists GC Langley, WG Ellis, R Forster, Simmonds, Edwards, EJ Brynner, S Store, B Snell, CJ Byway and G Jones and one name unknown. Middle row, from left, Rtg Jarvis, PO(TAG) Evans, PO Dunmore, CACMN Gibbs, WO(P) Craig, WO(P) Davidson, Name unknown, WO S Manchett, POACMN Nelson, ACMN Ted (Surname unknown), POACMN Wagstaff, CACMN Jarvis. Front row, from left: LT(P)s Daniels, Stokes, Name unknown, Waters, Phillips, Coxon, Murray, Baines, David WG Martin and Perks

REGARDING the letter Barracuda Memories by K Brotherhood in October's edition of *Navy News*.

As an aircrew member of 815 Squadron during the early 1950s, I was pleased to hear that, with a bit of luck, there will be one of these aircraft on display in the future.

They were the Fleet Air Arm's front-line

squadron at the time, carrying out anti-submarine duties. After more than 60 years, trying to recall names and ranks has taxed my 87-year-old brain, so I must apologise for any errors or omissions in my caption for the squadron, *pictured above*.

WG Ellis  
Spalding

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## Back to their roots

AQUITAINE branch celebrated 15 years of existence with a lunch back where it all started.

The first meeting was held on August 11 1999, and commissioned in February the following year.

The branch has held 179 lunches in total, with only one cancelled because of heavy snow, and there have been 15 Trafalgar/Nelson lunches.

In April 2003 the branch visited French heavy cruiser Colbert and enjoyed lunch on board, and in September the following year shipmates celebrated *Entente Cordiale* with their French counterparts from AMMAC.

A piece of original oak from HMS Victory was presented to the Carnavalet Museum in Paris, the original piece, presented by King Edward VII in 1904, having disappeared.

The branch standard was dedicated in July 2005, since when it has been paraded at numerous events, including those organised by AMMAC.

Raffles and other fundraising efforts over the years have resulted in approx 18,000 Euros being distributed to three RN charities, and SSAFA France.

The branch is affiliated to fast Fleet tanker RFA Wave Ruler and frigate FS Aquitaine, and has serving affiliated personnel in small Fleet tanker RFA Black Rover, destroyer HMS Diamond, 42 Commando RM and the US Naval War College Newport.

## S/M Ted is mourned

THE chairman of the Pershore and District branch, S/M Ted Annis, has died at the age of 77.

Ted joined the Royal Navy in June 1955, two weeks after his 18th birthday, and trained at HMS Raleigh.

As a Stoker/Marine Engineer, his ships included HMS Kenya, Theseus, MTBs and HMS Belfast on her last tour.

He saw action during the Suez Crisis in 1956, and travelled widely with the Senior Service, including tours of the Far East, Australia, Malta and Norway.

Ted left the Navy in 1962, working as an engineer and running his own glazing business.

He was heavily involved with Pinvin British Legion Club in the 1970s, and later served six years on Pershore Town Council.

S/M Annis was instrumental – along with daughter Trudy – in setting up the Pershore and District branch in September 2002, and also had a major role in the creation of the Pershore Naval Social Club, the branch HQ, which opened in March 2005.

He and his wife Margaret, along with other family members, were tireless fundraisers in the town, and he was the driving force behind the commemorative garden in Abbey Park.



● Submariners past and present pay tribute to fallen comrades at their remembrance service in London

Picture: LA(Phot) Alex Cave

# Silent tribute

SERVING and former submariners gathered in central London to honour the men of two world wars who are 'on eternal patrol'.

Some 200 members of the Silent Service, past and present, attended a service of remembrance at the National Submarine Memorial, a Grade II listed building set in the wall of

the Victoria Embankment.

The memorial depicts a submarine crew, statues of Truth and Justice, 40 anchor-shaped wreath hooks and lists the submarines lost in both world wars.

Proceedings began with a parade along the Thames from HMS President (1918), a World War-era Q-ship berthed

near Blackfriars Bridge, led by the Royal Marines Band Collingwood.

Honorary Chaplain to the Submariners Association Revd Paul Jupp conducted the service, which was followed by the laying of poppy wreaths and a salute taken by the Head of the Submarine Service, Commander Operations Rear Admiral Matt Parr.

This year there was an international presence of submariners, with representatives from a number of countries operating submarines, including Rear Admiral Kamensky representing the US Navy.

After the service, Rear Admiral Parr said: "The bond that unites the submarine community remains strong and unique."

"As we advance the technology and capability of our modern Fleet, it is important for all, both still serving and retired, to come together and remember those who went before us."

Over the weekend, submariners attended a prayer service in the cloisters at Westminster Abbey, paid respects to the submariner statue in the Abbey and dedicated the Submarine Service plot in the Poppy Field Garden of Remembrance.

Submariners Association members also attended a presentation from Imperial War Museum Education officer, Grant Rogers.

The annual service has been held since 1923 following the unveiling of the memorial and is always held on the Sunday before the national Remembrance Day commemorations.



## Bickleigh buffs up booties' booty

IN FRONT of green berets past and present today's leader of 42 Commando Royal Marines Lt Col Rich Cantrill marks the Corps' 350th birthday with a celebration of a key moment in the Bickleigh unit's history.

On the night of June 11-12 1982, the men of 42 Cdo stormed Argentine positions on Mount Harriet, about half a dozen miles west of the Falklands' capital Stanley.

Under the shells of their own 105mm guns and the 4.5in of HMS Yarmouth providing naval gunfire support, the commandos wrested control of the rocky crag from 4th Infantry Regiment.

They did so at the cost of two British lives and 30 wounded – many of the casualties caused by Argentine heavy machine-guns.

At the height of battle, at least two of those guns

were captured by the commandos, who promptly turned them on their foe.

By first light on the 12th, the Marines were masters of the hill and had taken 300 Argentinians prisoner, while nearly 70 soldiers were killed or wounded.

The heavy machine-guns became prizes of war and 32 years later, John Sheil and Lt Col Charlie Nicholls were asked to perform the honours as the refurbished weapons were unveiled at Bickleigh. As marines back in 1982 the two men had captured the guns.

The present-day 42 family fell in for the rededication ceremony attended by 13 former COs of the unit, including Lt Col Nick Vaux who led the commandos at Mount Harriet.

Picture: LA(Phot) Joel Rouse, 42 Cdo

## Rhondda is back in business

BRANCHES from across Area 7 and further afield joined the recently re-formed Rhondda branch at the rededication of their standard.

Standards and contingents of RNA branches and Sea Cadets marched through the town of Tonypany, in Rhondda Cynon Taff, to St Andrew's Church, where the Area Dean, Fr Haydn England-Simon, and parish priest Fr Philip Leyshon officiated at the dedication service.

The standard was carried by CPO(MW) Rob Crandon, escorted by branch chairman S/M Paul Gower and secretary S/M Graham Warner.

The reading was by S/M Paul Gower and the *Exhortation* and *Kohima Prayer* by National Council member S/M Gordon Williams.

Most of the congregation then paraded back through Tonypany, and the salute was taken by Lt Hawkins, Commanding Officer of the Wales University RN Unit, accompanied by the Deputy Mayor and Mayoress of Bridgend.

A reception was held at the Mid Rhondda Working Men's Club, with speeches by the chairman, Lt Hawkins and the Deputy Mayor of Bridgend.

Shipmates believe they have an unusual branch – it has re-formed with every member except the secretary still being in work.

## Auction details

IN our last issue, we reported on the extensive collection of Royal Navy memorabilia of the late Bert Dunn.

The family have now given us the details of the auction of the collection, which will take place at Charles Hanson Auctioneers, Heage Lane, Etwell, Derbyshire DE65 6LS on Friday December 12 at 2pm.

Full details of items for sale – which include ships' badges, cap tallies, vintage photographs and a host of other items – are available to view at [www.hansonsauctioneers.co.uk](http://www.hansonsauctioneers.co.uk).

## Birthday bash

BELFAST branch staged a birthday celebration to mark the 350th anniversary of the Royal Marines.

A wreath was laid at Belfast City Hall cenotaph followed by a 'hoofing' great day at the Belfast Club, where one or two bottles of Pusser's Rum were cracked into the Rum Tub.

# Teenager's medal returned to family

A MEDAL awarded to one of the youngest Scots killed during World War 1 is back home in Edinburgh after a collector who bought it in a London auction agreed to sell it back to his family.

Naval Cadet George Watson Muir was 15 when he died during a gallant but hopeless action fought by the ageing cruiser HMS Monmouth against superior German ships at the Battle of Coronel, off the coast of Chile, on November 1 1914 – all 735 men on board were lost.

The family never forgot George's untimely death, but at some stage his British War Medal passed out of their possession and was bought by a collector.

In December last year the medal was auctioned by Dix Noonan Webb, the international coins and medals specialists, in London, and was bought by collector Richard Emsley.

Three months ago the sale was mentioned to George's 77-year-

old niece, Mary Baker, who got in touch with Dix Noonan Webb and offered to buy the medal.

The auction house contacted Richard, who agreed to sell the award to the family for what he had paid for it plus a charitable donation – he nominated the Gurkha Welfare Trust.

He handed the medal over to Mary at the auctioneer's offices in London. "It was an emotional moment when I first saw the medal at Dix Noonan Webb's offices and saw his name inscribed around the edge," said Mary. "All my family are thrilled to hear about this."

Christopher Hill, Director of Client Services at Dix Noonan Webb, who oversaw the agreement, said: "This is a very happy outcome to what was a terrible family tragedy a century ago."

George's family are hoping that they can now track down his other medals.





## Memorial for those lost at sea

AN APPEAL has been launched to support an initiative by the Maritime Foundation to ensure those lost at sea are never forgotten.

The Maritime Foundation, curator of the Memorial Book for those lost at sea with no known grave, wishes to digitise the records it holds and substantially expand the operation globally to include many more memorials to individuals regardless of status, creed or nationality.

Maritime Foundation Chairman Julian Parker said: "Developing an interactive website driven by a unique searchable database of those lost at sea with no known grave will provide comfort for the bereaved and encourage a younger generation to discover how their relatives and forbears died."

"It will also highlight the perils faced by the 1.5 million seafarers who serve as professional mariners."

The appeal and new website was launched at the annual Service of Remembrance for relatives of those lost at sea at All Hallows by the Tower in London.

To contribute or find out more email [info@lostatsea.org.uk](mailto:info@lostatsea.org.uk), call 020 7232 2003, or visit [www.lostatsea.org.uk](http://www.lostatsea.org.uk)

# Mercury rising in community profile

A PLAQUE has been unveiled to mark the impact a former Royal Naval training base had on the communities that supported it.

HMS Mercury, the RN Communications and Navigation School, occupied the 120-acre Peel Family Leydene Estate near Clanfield in Hampshire from 1941 to 1993.

More than half a million personnel served or trained at Mercury during the 52 years of its existence, and amongst its distinguished visitors were the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and Lord Mountbatten.

A new scheme commemorates Mercury's existence and the impact it had on the community by placing plaques on buildings which had a special association with Mercury, and which are fondly remembered by those who served at Leydene.

The scheme was launched

on the last Sunday in October by the unveiling of the first blue plaque at the Rising Sun pub in Clanfield by Cdre Peter Swan and Cdr Keith Evans.

Cdr Evans served at Mercury during World War 2.

The event was attended by some 200 ex-Mercurians, some of who had travelled great distances to witness the unveiling.

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David Smith with Cdr Keith Evans and Cdre Peter Swan at the unveiling of the first Mercury Blue Plaque at the Rising Sun pub in Clanfield

Picture: Keith Woodland Photography

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Vice Admiral Sir John Webster, the Navigating Officer from the first commission, and Vice Admiral Sir Nicholas Hill-Norton the First Lieutenant from 1971-73, were also present.

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Address .....

My answers: (1) .....

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A total of 135 former Officer Cadets - known as Murray 64 - descended on Britannia Royal Naval College for a three-day reunion.

After joining today's cadets for church and coffee, 100 of the class of '64 took part in a parade in front of the iconic building, marching to music provided by the British Imperial Military Band, with today's CO Capt Henry Duffy taking salute.

A recording of a 1984 address by Lt Frank Trickey - parade training officer back in 1964 - stirred many memories; he was well known across the RN for his booming voice and strict discipline (sadly, he's since passed away).

The weekend's events were organised by former weapon engineer officer Greg Cumming, who retired from the Royal Navy in 1997 as a commander.

"At the end of the parade Capt Duffy gave an address and the new entry cadets, lined up around the parade ground, gave three cheers in our honour," he said.

We were delighted to respond with an equally resounding three cheers.

"The weather was fantastic for the whole weekend and it was a great opportunity to meet old friends and reminisce."

The weekend's celebrations also included a dinner for 241 of the ex-cadets and their partners, which took place in the college's Senior Gun-Room.

Lord Janvrin, former private secretary to the Queen, presided over the dinner while Capt James Luard was the main speaker.



Picture: Ian Cumming/www.icimages.com



## Memorial for those lost at sea

AN APPEAL has been launched to support an initiative by the Maritime Foundation to ensure those lost at sea are never forgotten.

The Maritime Foundation, curator of the Memorial Book for those lost at sea with no known grave, wishes to digitise the records it holds and substantially expand the operation globally to include many more memorials to individuals regardless of status, creed or nationality.

Maritime Foundation Chairman Julian Parker said: "Developing an interactive website driven by a unique searchable database of those lost at sea with no known grave will provide comfort for the bereaved and encourage a younger generation to discover how their relatives and forbears died."

"It will also highlight the perils faced by the 1.5 million seafarers who serve as professional mariners."

The appeal and new website was launched at the annual Service of Remembrance for relatives of those lost at sea at All Hallows by the Tower in London.

To contribute or find out more email [info@lostatsea.org.uk](mailto:info@lostatsea.org.uk), call 020 7232 2003, or visit [www.lostatsea.org.uk](http://www.lostatsea.org.uk)

# Mercury rising in community profile

A PLAQUE has been unveiled to mark the impact a former Royal Naval training base had on the communities that supported it.

HMS Mercury, the RN Communications and Navigation School, occupied the 120-acre Peel Family Leydene Estate near Clanfield in Hampshire from 1941 to 1993.

More than half a million personnel served or trained at Mercury during the 52 years of its existence, and amongst its distinguished visitors were the Queen, the Duke of Edinburgh and Lord Mountbatten.

A new scheme commemorates Mercury's existence and the impact it had on the community by placing plaques on buildings which had a special association with Mercury, and which are fondly remembered by those who served at Leydene.

The scheme was launched

on the last Sunday in October by the unveiling of the first blue plaque at the Rising Sun pub in Clanfield by Cdre Peter Swan and Cdr Keith Evans.

Cdr Evans served at Mercury during World War 2.

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## Forces included in prayer

CHIEF Rabbi Ephraim Mirvis has announced an historic change to the centuries-old *Prayer for the Royal Family*.

In synagogues across the UK and the Commonwealth on the Sabbath and on Festivals, the Jewish community recites a special prayer in honour of the Royal Family.

Just one year into office, and in time for services to be held on the weekend of Remembrance Sunday, Chief Rabbi Mirvis has made known his wish that the Jewish community expressly recognises and appreciates the work of the Armed Forces.

The *Prayer for the Royal Family* will now include the following wording: "May He bless and protect Her Majesty's Armed Forces."

The Chief Rabbi said of the *Prayer*: "It is a mark of deep respect and admiration as well as a sign of the Jewish community's loyalty to Her Majesty and to the United Kingdom."

Speaking of his re-formulation of the *Prayer*, the Chief Rabbi said: "I believe that it is appropriate that we continuously ask the Almighty to bless and protect the brave Servicemen and women who risk their lives in places of conflict in the name of Her Majesty and on behalf of us all."

The *Prayer for the Royal Family* is read right in the middle of synagogue services at a time when the Torah scrolls are held aloft and the congregation stands.

Whilst the Jewish community often recites prayers for the Armed Forces at special times of the year, Chief Rabbi Mirvis believes that this should be a regular feature of Jewish prayer services every week.

Padre (Rabbi) Livingstone, Jewish Chaplain to HM Forces, said: "This initiative of the Chief Rabbi is most welcome and appreciated."

"The significant contribution made by Jewish men and women in service to the Sovereign, for over three centuries, is often unrecognised."

# Tips for top brass

ONE of the world's leading bandmasters has been showing Royal Marines musicians how they can conduct the Navy's premier band.

Dr Nicholas Childs, in charge of arguably the most famous brass band in the world – the Yorkshire-based Black Dyke Band (older readers may remember them as the Black Dyke Mills Band as the eponymous mill provided the musicians) – passed on top tips to student bandmasters at the RM School of Music in Portsmouth.

Dr Childs put five trainee conductors to the test during an intensive four-hour coaching session as they directed the 39-strong Royal Marines Band Portsmouth.

The bandmaster took charge of the Black Dyke in 2001, guiding them to five wins in the National Championships and this year they claimed a rare brass band 'double', winning both the British Open and the National.

In all Black Dyke have won 23 national titles, 30 Opens and a record 12 European Championship titles.

So no pressure then for the RM musicians...



Picture: LA(Phot) Gaz Weatherston

"We were delighted to welcome such a prominent figure to our band room," said Lt Daryl Powell, the Portsmouth band's Director of Music.

"Dr Childs is known and respected throughout the

music world and our musicians thoroughly enjoyed his enthusiasm, techniques and style."

Dr Childs said he was thoroughly impressed with the response from the military musicians.

"They worked hard and were keen to learn. Conducting in front of a good band is always a benefit to any conductor, and to work with such a fine ensemble as the Royal Marines was an enjoyable experience," he said.

## Birthday adds poignancy to submariners' service

THE annual remembrance service for submariners was a particularly poignant occasion for CPO Christopher Copper.

The service was held on what would have been his father Peter's 70th birthday, but he died earlier this year.

"This year's remembrance service is especially important to me – paying my respects to the fallen but also remembering my father, who advised and supported me throughout my own naval career," said CPO Copper (left, at the service, and top right as a trainee).

"As members of the Dolphin Submarine Association we attended the ceremony in 2012 together and were amazed by the amount of submarines lost at sea.

"The name of every submarine is read out in a roll call during the service.

"It is an overwhelmingly emotional event – and even more so for me this year."

Peter Copper (bottom right) served in HMS Rorqual in the 1960s when the Porpoise-class boat suffered an explosion that killed two sailors.

Earlier this year, CPO Copper arranged for his father's ashes to be committed in a service at sea on the site where the Mary Rose sank in the Solent, a ceremony undertaken with the assistance of the Maritime Volunteer Service in Portsmouth.

CPO Copper joined 200 serving and veteran submariners at the National Submarine Memorial in London (see p32).



## New head for Surface Flotilla...

REAR Admiral Duncan Potts has handed over the mantle of Rear Admiral Surface Ships (RASS) to Cdre Tony Radakin in a brief ceremony on board Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon.

RASS acts as the Head of the Surface Flotilla Fighting Arm and is responsible for providing the Fleet Commander with independent advice on all matters pertaining to the Surface Flotilla.

Rear Admiral Potts took up the role of RASS in 2011 whilst he was Commander UK Maritime Forces (COMUKMARFOR), and during the past three years he has been active in visiting ships from all of the flotillas whilst at home and deployed abroad.

In the past year Rear Admiral Potts – now promoted to vice admiral – has visited a dozen ships, speaking to personnel about their issues and concerns.

Cdre Radakin, who took over in September, said: "I am delighted to assume the role of RASS and I look forward to getting around the Fleet and understanding the views of commanding officers and their ships' companies, particularly over the next couple of months and ahead of becoming COMUKMARFOR in December."

## ...and at Clyde Naval Base

CDRE Mark Adams has taken over as Clyde Naval Base Commander from Cdre Keith Beckett.

The supersession, on Trafalgar Day, saw Cdre Adams formally become head of establishment at Faslane and Coulport.

Cdre Beckett had only been in post for 13 months, but was delighted to be promoted Rear Admiral and appointed Chief of the Strategic Systems Executive, at Abbey Wood near Bristol.

Cdre Adams said: "Having spent many years based at HMNB Clyde during my career, it is a privilege to have been given the opportunity to return as the Naval Base Commander."

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## Birthday surprise for Bill

A FORMER Royal Navy sailor had a memorable 90th birthday when his family planned a surprise visit to his former base – HMS Collingwood in Fareham.

Bill Kibble, who volunteered for War Service and joined the Navy on December 3 1942 aged 18, was given a tour of the Phase Two training establishment, along with four generations of his family. He originally spent four months in Fareham to undertake his basic training.

During his three-and-a-half years of service, Bill trained in signalling and reached the rank of Trained Operator, and undertook deployments in merchant vessels on Arctic Convoys.

In addition to his tour of Collingwood, Bill and family met with Chaplain Bernard Clarke, who was able to share stories of RN traditions from the time of Bill's service.

Reminiscing on his brief time in the RN, Bill joked: "I think it was the uniform that attracted me..."

"Joining up was something we had to do, there was no choice at the time."

"When I volunteered I wanted to be a cook as it was the easiest possible job at the time, but I was told I was too intelligent for that!"

"I have enjoyed myself very much today – the tour has taken me back."

"I remember getting the train from Manchester to Fareham and walking to the base 72 years ago."

The tour formed part of a wider birthday weekend in Portsmouth, for which Bill's family had secretly arranged for a local band to play Naval songs for them at a Royal British Legion Club.

## Prize for Colin

A SENIOR Rate at Clyde Naval Base has won a Herbert Lott Award for Efficiency.

PO Colin Hunter, was presented with a cheque for £150 by Capt Mark Gayfer, Superintendent Fleet Maintenance, for a range of improvements he introduced in his work as a store man in the south end repair afloat workshop.

Capt Gayfer said: "PO Hunter has been rightly rewarded for his efforts."

"He is an inspirational example of leadership and initiative and he has demonstrated to the more junior members of his team what can be achieved by setting standards high and then delivering to them."



# Immortal memory, unforgettable night

**'SO ANYWAY Joel, have you ever taken my photograph?'**

Britain's most senior sailor dines on Britain's most famous warship with Leading Photographer Joel Rouse and 93 other sailors and Royal Marines of all ranks for a unique Trafalgar Night dinner aboard HMS Victory.

Outstanding men and women from across the Naval Service were invited to join First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas and Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel to mark the greatest triumph in the annals of the Royal Navy.

Trafalgar Night is typically celebrated each October 21 by the RN's Officer Corps, while warrant officers and senior ratings have their own celebration around November 4, Pickle Night, marking the arrival of HMS Pickle in Falmouth with news of the victory and of Nelson's death.

More junior personnel rarely have the chance to gain an insight into this part of the Royal Navy's heritage so, as a small start to correcting this, the mixed-rank dinner was held aboard Victory in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard.

Nominations to attend were received from commanding officers across the Service, with a final 94 being chosen for their hard work, determination and positive contribution to front-line operations.

Guests were treated to a tour of the 250-year-old man o'war, posed for a group photograph as a memento and then, after a Royal Marines bugler sounded the *Call to Dinner*, sat down on Victory's lower gun deck for a traditional beef Wellington, followed by sticky toffee pudding for desert.

"For a junior rate attending a dinner on HMS Victory was a real eye opener," said LPT Oliver Perkins, HMS Duncan's physical training instructor.

"It made me feel proud that I belong to something and made me realise that we have still the best Navy in the world and it is just as good as we had back in 1805."

The Band of the Royal Marines Portsmouth provided a jazz quintet but it was with the sea shanties, the Navy's anthem *Heart of Oak* and *Rule Britannia* that the gun deck came alive – thanks especially to traditional rivalries between submariners and Royal Marines; the latter were the loudest singers on the night, if not necessarily the most in tune.

The experience was, said logisticians LLogs(SC) Naomi Doyle, of Plymouth-based icebreaker HMS Protector, "truly overwhelming, with plenty of atmospheric emotions."

"I was honoured and privileged to have been awarded this opportunity to attend and I proudly raised my glass to one of the greatest

war heroes onboard HMS Victory."

AB(MW) Ollie Dodd, nominated by minehunter HMS Atherstone, added: "As a rating this is something that was totally alien and the privilege to not only attend such a prestigious event, but also to sit down to dinner next to the Second Sea Lord while listening to the First Sea Lord is something that I would not have envisaged happening during my Naval career."

Vice Admiral Steel said that the 94 ratings attending "had an evening that I am sure they will remember forever and I am in no doubt at all that it will be the talk of the Fleet for a very long time to come."

"But, most importantly, it was a way for the First Sea Lord and me to thank them all personally for their dedication and commitment to the Naval Service. It was an absolute delight to meet some of the incredibly talented sailors and Royal Marines that the Naval Service is so very lucky to have."

The event was made possible through grants from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and the Royal Navy's Rebalancing Lives fund and the aim is to make the all ranks dinner an annual event in the RN calendar for the most deserving junior and senior rates.

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



● Stephen (left) and Andrew Bird at HMS Raleigh

## Twins are reunited at Raleigh

TWINS Andrew and Stephen Bird stood shoulder-to-shoulder in their Royal Navy uniforms for the first time.

The 23-year-olds, from Braintree in Essex, were brought together at HMS Raleigh, where Andrew was celebrating the end of his ten-week initial naval training course and Stephen was among the guests at his brother's passing-out parade.

Stephen joined the Navy as an Air Engineering Technician in 2011, and is currently serving at RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall.

Andrew followed on this year, joining Raleigh in July for his basic training.

Stephen said: "I was initially thinking of joining the RAF, but then I watched the TV programme *Warship*."

"I wanted to travel too, and seeing the programme I realised that the Navy would be the best for me as it would take me all over the world and teach me a trade."

"As twins we'd always done virtually everything together, so it was quite difficult for me when I first joined to be doing something without Andrew."

"I'm overjoyed that he's now in the Navy too. I'm so proud and hope that one day we'll get to serve on the same ship."

Andrew, a Warfare Specialist, said: "Through Stephen I was able to see everything the Navy had to offer me."

He added that the training process was difficult, but "I've managed to do things I didn't think I was capable of and I am proud of what I've achieved."

Andrew is now heading off to HMS Collingwood for his three-month professional course.

## Ex-Wren is aiming high

FORMER Wren CPO Writer Fiona Smith has retired from HMS Collingwood after serving the Royal Navy for more than 38 years.

Joining the Navy in February 1976, Fiona served for 22 years, becoming one of the first Wrens to go to sea in HMS *Invincible* in November 1990 – something that Fiona regards as being one of her career highlights.

She also served with the Royal Marines and was the Commodore's PA in NATO in Portugal.

Upon retiring from the Navy, Fiona stayed working in support of the Service by taking charge of the Cash Office at HMS Collingwood.

Now, after 15 years as a civvy, Fiona has taken early retirement.

Fiona said: "I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the Royal Navy and I have thoroughly enjoyed my time at HMS Collingwood as a civilian."

"It has all been tremendous hard work but the 'play' time was especially good because of it."

Although she said she will miss her colleagues, Fiona said she is looking forward to doing other things – the first of which is to climb the three highest peaks in the UK next July.

# Firms praised for supporting Marines



● First Sea Lord Admiral George Zambellas with Mike Hampson, CEO of Bishopsgate Financial and Miss World Megan Young

A CHARITY that seeks to inspire businesses to support Royal Marines has thanked its supporters.

The C Group is developing a national network with the business community to meet the demands of the Corps and to help Marines make the transition to employment after military service.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir George Zambellas was among the guests at the C Group awards dinner in London and presented the Sir Donald Gosling Sword to Bishopsgate Financial for providing the most significant support to Royal Marines over the previous year.

Commandant General Maj Gen Martin Smith presented the individual achievement award to Pam Mastro, who has worked to support Service leavers and the Corps charities.

President of the C Group, Maj Gen Andy Salmon presented the lifetime achievement award to Dr Mitesh Badiani, who has created a network

across the UK to provide free dental care for life for more than 200 former Royal Marines whose careers ended prematurely because of injury.

WO1 Phil Gilby RM presented the final award for outstanding achievement to Frank and Zanele Sibindi who saved the life of C/Sgt Lee Spencer following a road accident.

This year alone The C Group has committed more than £80,000 to assist personnel suffering from injury on their journey to recovery.

If you face, or were medically discharged from the Corps and need the C Group's help, or are leaving, or have left the Corps and need advice with transition visit the website at [www.thecgroup.org](http://www.thecgroup.org) for details, or contact Wendy by phone on 01392 414639.

If you are in business and want to recruit a former Royal Marine please call Kath on 01392 414387.





● 'Capt' Joe Adams

## In the hot seat for one day

A ROYAL Navy officer cadet from Linslade, near Leighton Buzzard, celebrated the end of his basic training with a rapid one-day promotion.

Midshipman Joe Adams was the successful bidder in a charity auction held at Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC) to win the right to be 'Captain for the Day'.

The 26-year-old arrived at the college in February to undergo a 30-week training course to prepare him for a career as a Naval officer. As a result of his successful bid Joe got to wear the rank of captain and work alongside the real CO of the college Capt Henry Duffy.

Joe said: "One of the divisions in my intake organised the charity auction to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

"It was a bet by the rest of my division challenging me to bid a month's wages to be captain for the day. Obviously being captain brings a lot of responsibility, but it was quite mind-blowing to see what he has to do."

Joe spent the morning on parade taking the salute from the rest of the college and gave out awards during a prize-giving ceremony. He also sat in on some of the captain's meetings.

# Cash boost for Naval community projects

THE Christmas spirit is well and truly in the air for several key Naval family community projects thanks to a funding boost from The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

More than £1,000 has been granted to Widewell Community House in Plymouth and the Cockleshell Community and Resource Centre in Portsmouth to help fund much-needed upgrades to the buildings' interiors and recreational facilities.

While Widewell Community House will benefit from a new lick of paint – and a bevy of light furnishings which include new blinds, sofas and clocks – the Cockleshell Community and Resource Centre plans to entertain visitors with a new TV, playing sports and popular family shows.

Both community centres serve as a focal point for Service families living in nearby Naval estates.

The social spaces give parents and children an opportunity to interact with each other and discuss the ups and downs of Service life, often through regular organised activities such as coffee mornings.

Veterans are also welcome to meet socially at the weekends at the Portsmouth centre.

Anne Carr, Head of Grants at the charity, said: "These community facilities are invaluable assets to Service families – especially as some children and parents find themselves without their parents or partners for long periods of time.

"The money we give to such projects ensures that the buildings don't suffer from neglect, ultimately helping to re-invigorate a sense of community and togetherness in key Naval areas."



● Christmas boxes will be sent to deployed personnel

## Festive gifts for Armed Forces

WITH only days to go until Christmas, the uk4u Thanks! campaign has begun its mission to ensure that all Servicemen and women on operational duty – away from their families and loved ones – will receive a gift on Christmas Day.

All of the 8,500 uk4u boxes have been packed and are on their way to all members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, Army and Royal Air Force, wherever they are in the world.

Whilst the contents of the box sent by uk4u remain a secret until December 25, they have certainly been put together with World War 1 in mind in a bid to uphold the tradition of the box first sent to the troops, in 1914, as a gift from the nation.

If you would like to show your appreciation for those serving abroad this Christmas, please text BOXY13 £5 to 70070 or visit uk4u.org.

## News in brief

■ Would you get a tattoo to raise funds for the charity? Well that's exactly what Cdr James Parkin RN did. The fundraising frolics of Cdr Parkin and the crew of HMS Montrose raised an incredible £3,680.55 in 2014.

■ One of the crew of HMS Vigilant celebrated the 1920s in style with an RNRMC-funded *Great Gatsby*-themed night in Glasgow. The event was the crew's first ball and combined mess function.

■ Hole in one! A golf day fundraiser held by the staff and crew of HMS Queen Elizabeth raised an impressive £3,500. The event was such a success that organisers have decided to hold the tournament again in 2015.

■ Sitting comfortably? The Commando Forces Officers' Mess at RMB Stonehouse will receive an £8,000 makeover thanks to a Nuffield Trust grant from the charity.

## Bridges not too far

SAILORS from Britain's biggest warship ran a 40-mile relay around the banks of the River Forth to mark the launch of their predecessor a century before.

One hundred and one years after battleship HMS Queen Elizabeth – the largest, most powerful and most advanced warship ever built for the Royal Navy – ten crew of today's carrier – also the largest, most powerful and most advanced warship ever built for the Royal Navy – hit the roads of Scotland.

Running in relays, they left their ship in Rosyth Dockyard to cover the 40 miles of the 'two bridges' race – a circuit to the Kincardine Bridge, across it on to the south bank of the Forth, then downstream to the road bridge at Queensferry, back over the river and into the yard, all in an impressive seven hours.

The run, organised by WO1 Dave Smith – brought in more than £270 for the carrier's affiliated good cause, the RNRMC.

## Joint effort to raise cash

RAF and Royal Naval personnel from 28 (Army Co-operation) Squadron at RAF Benson in South Oxfordshire have raised in excess of £3,200 for key Service charities in the last year.

The funds, which were raised through a charity auction and a guest dinner evening at the Royal Air Force Club in London, were split evenly among the RAF Benevolent Fund, The RAF Charitable Trust and the RNRMC.

Sqn Ldr Morris, who led the team organising events, said: "Both the initial auction and the black-tie dinner event went better than could ever have been envisaged.

"It was amazing and humbling to see the generosity and support provided from various organisations towards the charity auction."

All of the charities presented with cheques provide welfare support and assistance to both serving and former personnel and their families from local community welfare facilities.

The RNRMC, which was represented by Keith Ridley of the Royal Naval Association, was selected as a charitable beneficiary following a busy year of Merlin Force handovers, from the RAF to the Royal Navy's Commando Helicopter Force based at RNAS Yeovilton.



● Trustees and key representatives from within the charities visited RAF Benson

## Prize for Pink Ladies

SAILORS dressed up as a number of different characters and figures from history for a Trafalgar fun run held at HMS Sultan to raise funds for the RNRMC.

Organised by LPT Ross McEvoy, the event saw around 500 personnel of all ranks and rates warm up to music including the *Hornpipe Dance*.

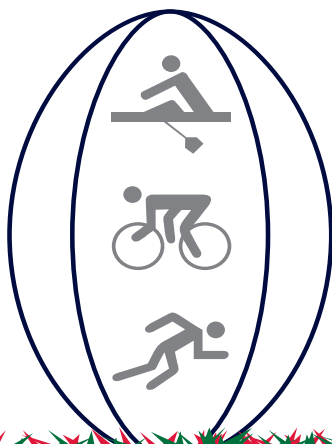
In one of his final duties in office, Cdr Mike Robertson, the establishment's Executive Officer, was on hand to set off

the starter for the runners who took on a 5km course.

On completion of the race, Capt Trevor Gulley, the CO of HMS Sultan, gave out prizes.

The winner of the best female category was awarded for a team effort by trainees currently on the Engineering Technician Initial Career Course dressed as the Pink Ladies from the musical *Grease*.

ET(ME) Naomi Fielder said: "It's great to be involved with raising money for charity."



**GO THE DISTANCE!**  
**MAKE EVERY MILE COUNT!**

You can help us wherever you are in the world by taking part in a run, row, swim or cycle.

Your challenge is to cover the number of miles you are from Twickenham before the Army v Navy rugby game. For example, if you are based in Portsmouth, you could row 80 miles. If you are based in Lympstone you could cycle 180 miles. You could do this individually or as part of a team, with your starting point being your unit, ship's current location or your affiliated town. Raising sponsorship will help your charity care for you, your family and oppos.

Register now and measure up to the challenge! Search 'Road to Twickenham' on the Virgin Money Giving website or contact: fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk T: 023 9254 8289

Registered charity in England and Wales (1117794) and Scotland (SC041898).

the road to TWICKENHAM

rnrmc.org.uk/events/roadtotwickenham



## FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH

### GREAT SOUTH RUN TEAM



CONGRATULATIONS to the RNRMC team of over 50 runners who took part in the 25th BUPA Great South Run, raising over £9,200 in sponsorship.

The GSR2014 team was made up of Service veterans, RN Police, Royal Marines musicians and RN personnel. Thank you again and see you all next year for another blustery ten miles.





● AB Chris Wallis

## Raising funds in brother's memory

A ROYAL Navy sailor from Penzance, currently deployed onboard the frigate HMS Argyll, is raising funds in memory of his late brother for the Cornwall Air Ambulance.

AB Christopher Wallis, 24, tragically lost his brother Ashley Neil Arthur after he suffered a serious injury.

Ashley was treated by Cornwall Air Ambulance paramedics as he flew to hospital. Sadly, he lost his life to the injuries he sustained but Chris still wants to raise money for those who helped his brother in his final moments.

Chris has inspired HMS Argyll's ship's company to raise money for the Cornwall Air Ambulance by travelling 15,000 miles through running, cycling and walking.

A mile is seven laps of the ship's upper deck and a large number of Chris's colleagues are running around the decks as often as they can.

Chris, from St Just in Penzance, said: "Every day the members of the Cornwall Air Ambulance team are out, risking their lives to save others. The work they do gave my brother the best chance for survival, and gave me and my family hope during our darkest hour. I want to show my support for them."

A series of special events are planned to help achieve the challenging 15,000 mile total.

Members of the ship's company have raced the ship by cycling from one side of Bermuda to another and other similar challenges are taking place over the course of the deployment.

Donations are via <http://www.justgiving.com/15000milechallenge> or by texting ASHA91 along with the amount in pounds to 70070.

## Tribute to loved ones

MEMBERS of SSAFA's Bereaved Families Support Group have released hundreds of balloons in memory of loved ones lost through military service.

The act of remembrance took place during a special memorial service at Loughborough's Carillon and War Memorial, which also saw the families lay a wreath and children lay special artwork they had created for the event.

The national meeting brought together more than 200 family members who have lost loved ones both in conflict and through accident or illness.

The group gives families the opportunity to meet others in a similar situation and support each other. It also offers more tailored support sessions for children, siblings and, for the first time, fathers, along with wellbeing sessions.



# Easy tiger! Pair set for cape crusade

A PAIR of hairy (-ish) bikers from RNAS Culdrose are gearing up for their own motorbike challenge – across the testing terrain of the eastern cape of Africa.

The two sailors who usually spend their days teaching engineering students to maintain the Royal Navy's latest Merlin helicopters, will be hanging up their overalls and putting on biking leathers in order to raise money for the Royal British Legion.

Next March, CPO Scott Barnett and PO David 'Dickie' Davis (*both pictured above in training*) will take part in the Tri-Ride Challenge, a unique concept that pits a team of riders against the beautiful but tough landscape of Africa.

Over eight days, the Tri-Ride 2015 team will endure a rigorous 1,500km off-road experience, camping rough in the evenings at the side of the trail.

The pair will be joined by 18 other Servicemen and women including two

engineers from 771 NAS, the Search and Rescue unit based at Culdrose.

CPO Barnett said: "It will be a little bit different from our day jobs instructing within the Merlin Training Facility at RNAS Culdrose, however we hope that our Naval training and teamwork will help us complete the adventure."

"The team consists of a broad range of riders, from novices learning to ride specifically to complete this challenge, to experienced riders and champions."

"We will all need to pool our expertise and work together as no one rider will be able to complete such a demanding ride, which will involve climbing mountains, traversing high rocky trails and crossing rivers."

"By embracing the military ethos of teamwork and courage under adversity, we hope that we can help each other fundraise and survive the rigors of the journey."

PO Davis, also of the Merlin Training Facility, is trying to find locations where they can practise their off-roading skills.

He said: "The trip really is 'back to basics' and the terrain is supposed to be quite gruelling."

"Unfortunately the only experience I have had of off-roading is on sand dunes in North Wales as a youngster, so I need to get some practice in! The landscape that we will be riding across sounds really challenging and very different from Cornwall – the road gets washed away a lot."

He hopes that the challenging nature of the trip will encourage people to donate to the British Legion.

"It has been really enjoyable raising money so far and we hope that people continue to donate. The Royal British Legion does outstanding work, not only for serving members of the Armed Forces but for veterans and families as well."

Since signing up to the challenge, the pair have organised three charity events to raise more than £1,000.

For details about the event visit <http://www.tri-ride.co.uk>



● From left: AET Jack Grady, AET Rees Ashford, CPO Scott Barnett, AET Harry Hastie and AET Joshua Cross-Watson paint the fence

## Engineering a day at school

A TEAM of engineers from RNAS Culdrose went back to school in Mullion.

The sailors from the Engineering Training School, who are learning how to maintain the Royal Navy's Merlin helicopters in their interactive classrooms, swapped their spanners for paintbrushes when they offered their services to Mullion Primary School.

Led by CPO Scott Barnett, whose daughter Paige attends the school on the Lizard in Cornwall, the Culdrose team helped to create a new school sign, repaint the old blue school front fence in bright colours and create a new

dog tethering area so parents can safely leave their dogs outside the school gates.

Scott said: "Culdrose is always keen that its trainees put something back into the local community, but I got a lot out of this project too and I would urge others to get involved in helping out within their local community."

"We sat with the children to have a school lunch whilst we were helping out and it was very different from the school dinners that I remember. I had a veggie burger followed by fruit and yogurt – quite different from the pink lumpy custard from my school days."

Paige Barnett, who helped the team by drawing a seagull in the wood for the new school sign, said: "It was really enjoyable because I was able to be creative and do something new and also spend some fun time with my dad."

Headteacher Miss Carleen Hannaford said: "The front entrance of Mullion Primary School has been transformed in just a few days thanks to the efforts of the team of Royal Navy Service personnel from Culdrose."

"A fantastic effort much appreciated that will be enjoyed for many years to come."

## Charity Snippets

■ Four sailors from HMS Collingwood rounded off their time in the south by helping out at The Rowans Hospice.

In the last week of their course before they joined their ships, sailors from the Leading Seaman (Communication Information Systems) course spent three days lending a hand with the local community organisation.

During their time, LH Owen Hosell, Nick Donnachie, Ben Surman and Callum Chamber assisted charity volunteers with sorting and re-bagging up the winter stock for the trading element of The Rowans Hospice for its relocation from a Horndean warehouse to its Farlington home.

■ Personnel at Commando Helicopter Force and Royal Naval Police at RNAS Yeovilton have rescued 35 bicycles from the base this year and donated them to the Hope2Cycle charity, which promotes cycling, recycling, health and wellbeing. Re-conditioned bikes for sale can be found on the Hope2Cycle website [www.hope2cycle.org.uk](http://www.hope2cycle.org.uk)

■ The staff from HMS Nelson's Education Centre in Portsmouth held an event in support of Macmillan's World's Largest Coffee Morning, raising over £300 for the cancer support charity.

The 20-strong Education Team, made up of both military and civilian personnel all rallied together to bake a vast assortment of cakes, cookies and puddings for the morning's event.

As soon as the clock struck 10, the centre was bombarded with more than 50 dockyard personnel all hungry for a Friday morning pick-me-up.

■ The Fleet Air Arm Museum hosted the SSAFA Cycle Ride. Sponsored by BAE Systems, the cyclists set off for a 48-mile route around south Somerset. Plans are already afoot with the Fleet Air Arm Museum to host this event again next year.

■ A team of 12 volunteers from Legal & General revamped the grounds of the Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society care home in Banstead, Surrey.

■ Sailors at HMS Raleigh have shown off their baking skills to raise just over £100 for Macmillan Nurses.

The Writers' School took part in the charity's World's Biggest Coffee Morning fundraiser and invited trainees and staff at the Torpoint base to pop in for coffee and cake in exchange for a donation.

■ The personnel of HMS Sultan welcomed representatives of local and Service charities to the establishment for a special charity reception held to distribute proceeds raised from the HMS Sultan Summer Show.

A total of 39 different benefactors gathered within the Junior Rates' Waves Club to receive donations which were presented by Captain Trevor Gulley, the Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan, and the Guest of Honour, Gosport MP Caroline Dinenage.

■ AB Gavin Harris of HMS Victory hosted a successful event called The Big Brew Up, in support of SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen Families Association). The event, which raised £100, was held in the port arena of HMS Victory, and sold tea, coffee and cakes.

■ The Go Commando calendar for 2015, which raises funds for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund, is now on sale.

The calendars are available in A3 or desktop size. Visit [www.gocommando.org.uk](http://www.gocommando.org.uk)



## Deaths

Vice Admiral Sir Edward Anson. Joined the Naval College at Eaton Hall in 1943. As a midshipman and sub lieutenant he served in HMS Implacable, Anson, Agincourt and Wilton and gained his wings in 1952. Flew 107 ground attack sorties and numerous fighter patrols over enemy territory in the Korean War, and many more as senior pilot in the Seahawks of 895 NAS during the Suez Crisis in 1956. After attending the Empire Test Pilot School in 1957 he flew Scimitars in 803 from Victoria, becoming senior pilot. Worked with Blackburn in 1959 on the development of the Buccaneer, carrying out many early test flights. Returned to RN 1961 as senior pilot of 700Z Naval Air Flight (RN Buccaneer trials unit at Lossiemouth). 1962-64 commanded the first Buccaneer squadron, 801 NAS embarked in Ark Royal and later deployed to the Far East in Victoria during the Indonesian Confrontation. 1964 commanded HMS Eskimo, then Commander (Air) Lossiemouth 1965-67 and Eagle (1969-70). Later commanded Inter-Service Hovercraft Unit. 1972-73 as Captain he was Naval and Air Attaché to Japan and South Korea. Commanded HMS Juno and 4th Frigate Squadron, then Ark Royal in 1976. Promoted Rear Admiral in 1980 he became Flag Officer Naval Air Command; as Vice Admiral 1982 was appointed COS to CinCfleet. Known as 'Mr Buccaneer', he became vice-president of the Buccaneer Aircrew Association. Sept 22. Aged 85.

Rear Admiral Phillip R Marrack CB. Joined RN 1940. Served in engineering aboard HMS Orion. Awarded a CB 1979 and retired 1981. Member HMS Orion Association. June.

Rear Admiral Arthur F Caswell CBE. HMS Triumph, Kenya, Eagle, Eflin, Ark Royal, HM Dockyard Portsmouth, NATO and Admiralty D&GW Navy. Oct 18. Aged 99.

Rear Admiral Geoffrey G W Marsh CBE MA. NFR90 Hamburg, Dir Contract Warship Equipment, ACNS, RNEC Manadon, HMS Victorious, Bristol, Norfolk,

Mercury and ASWE also Dir General Ships, Dir Naval Operational Requirements and Weapons Dept (Navy), Oct 24.

Cdr Vincent Evans. Admiralty Fuel Experimental Establishment Haslar, HM Dockyard Devonport, HMS Triumph, Nelson and Dir Naval Warfare. Nov 3. Aged 90.

Lt Cdr John Carrington Mail RNR. HMS Daedalus, Osprey, Orion and Eastlant. Oct 13. Aged 93.

Lt John A Pearce. HMS Eagle, Hermes, Blake, Seahawk, Fulmar, Osprey, Royal Arthur, Drake, Centurion and FOST Staff. Sept 12.

Gordon Robert Hancock CPO. Served 1933-47. After Ganges he served as Boy Telegraphist in HMS Orion 1934-36 and wartime service Atlantic and Pacific. Member of HMS Orion Association. Aug 24. Aged 96.

Raymond 'Ray' Merry Chief Shipwright Artificer. Served 1949-87. Joined as an Artificer Apprentice (Series 7) and after training at HMS Figgard and Caledonia served in Albion, Duncan, Rhyll, Blake, Hermes, Trincomalee and Mauritius. On retirement worked at NBCD (Whale Island). Member of The Magnificent Seven Artificer Apprentices. Aug 21. Aged 80.

John O W Cann CREA (Air). Joined as Artificer Apprentice (Series 7) 1949 and served HMS Figgard, Collingwood and Aerial. Member of Magnificent Seven Artificer Apprentices. Oct 6.

Michael 'Micky' Quinn AB FAA. Served 1944-47. Aircraft handling parties. HMS Activa and indefatigable. Aug. Aged 88.

Donald B Fisher SBA. Joined HMS Bruce 1947 aged 15 as a Boy Seaman and served HMS Ulster, Loch Fada and Duke of York. Changed branches to Sick Berth Attendant and served RNH Haslar and Sheffield (West Indies). HMS Bruce and HMS Sheffield Associations. Oct 9. Aged 82.

William 'Bill' Prickie' Price L/Seaman. Joined at HMS Raleigh and served HMS Anson, Sheffield, Excellent (Whale Island) and Cornus (1954-56) Far East Fleet. HMS Comus Association. Oct 22. Aged 85.

Ken 'Dolly' Gray. Served in HMS Mounts Bay and a member of HMS Morecambe Bay Association. Oct 16.

Edward 'Eddy' Webster REM1. Served 1959-68 in HMS Lion (59-62), Ajax (63-65) and Burnaston (65-66); also at Inskip and Forest Moor. Took part in the Royal Tournament 1963. Oct 14. Aged 73.

Frank Thurgood AB. Served in Minstrel. Algerines Association. October 8. Aged 87.

Arthur P White AB. Served in Michael. Algerines Association. Oct 30. Aged 88.

Edward Phillipson. Served in submarines early 70s. Nov 6. Aged 65.

### ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

John 'Jack' Dow LCK. Served 1941-46 HMS Royal Arthur, Victory, Grebe, Nile, Proserpine, Bigbury Bay, Cynthia. Founder member Dunbar RNA. Aug 29. Aged 98.

William 'Bill' Francis Stoker/Mech. Served 1940-49. Aboard HMS Exeter when she was sunk and taken POW (released 1945). Repatriated to HMS Maidstone then HMS Drake. Founder member of Newport (South Wales) branch. Oct 1. Aged 92.

Charles 'Charlie' McCullough AB. Served 1943-46. Decorated WW2 veteran. Last ship HMS Cyclops. Submariners Association and vice president of Belfast RNA. Oct 5. Aged 91.

Henry 'Bob' Warnes. Beccles RNA Aged 94.

Victor Sargent SBA. Beccles branch. Aged 88.

Fred Laws FAA. Worked on aero engines during WW2. Life member Ipswich branch. Sept 18. Aged 92.

Jack Rocket PO SBA. Served WW2 in Sicily and Trinidad. Ipswich branch. Oct 20. Aged 90.

Basil Broom HO Seaman. Joined Ganges and served in the Med and Home Fleet. Life vice president Ipswich branch. Oct 23. Aged 88.

Joseph 'Joe' Patrick Duhig AB RP3. Served 1948-55. HMS Cygnet (1950), Cadiz (1951), Loch Glendhu (52-54), Victory IV then HMS Bulwark. Full member of Basildon branch. Sept 22. Aged 83.

Raith 'Ted' Edward Annis Stoker/Marine Engineer. Served 1955-62 in HMS Kenya, Theseus, MTEs and HMS Belfast (last tour). Instrumental in the creation of Pershore Naval Social Club and chairman of Pershore & District. Nov 10. Aged 77.

### ASSOCIATION OF RN OFFICERS

Cdr John C Calderwood. HMS Bulwark, Hermes, Unicorn, Condor,

Gannet, Siskin, Daedalus and Heron. Oct 13. Aged 85.

T/Lt Norman J D Enoksen. HMS Dolphin. Nov 4. Aged 73.

T/Lt Geoffrey A Everett. HM Submarines Opossum, Olympus, Walrus, Dolphin and Centurion. Oct 13. Aged 83.

### FLEET AIR ARM ASSOCIATION

William Baker CEL(A). Served 1943-65. HMS Raleigh, RAF Henslow and RNAS Jackdaw, Condor, Siskin, Goldcrest (Dale), Falcon, Nuthatch and Goldcrest (Brawdy) also HMS Pretoria Castle and Ark Royal and on 778 and 790 NAS. Daedalus branch. Sept 25. Aged 89 (minus 40 mins).

Thomas 'Tom' C R Bowen CAF(E). Served 1939-54. RAF Halton and RNAS Condor, Kipanga, Kestrel, Urley, Blackcap, Peregrine, Gannet, Falcon, Curlew, Seahawk and Daedalus also

HMS Illustrious, Ocean and Glory and on 767, 804 and 812 NAS. Derby branch (disbanded 2013). Oct 6. Aged 90.

Tony Kilgannon CAEA(R). Served 1963-86. HMS Raleigh, Condor, Seahawk, Daedalus, Seahawk Radio Wks, Blake, NAMEB, IHU, RFA Fort Austin and NATEC and on 847, 706, 707, 820 and 824 NAS. Solent branch. Oct 18.

John Bullock AH3. Served 1951-59, then Merchant Navy. Bristol & District branch. Oct 4. Aged 79.

### SUBMARINERS ASSOCIATION

J A 'John' Anderson LS HSD (MID). Submarine Service 1941-46 in Tribune, Una, Sportsman and Sea Rover. Dolphin branch. Aged 94.

J 'John' Babington Sto.Mech. Submarine Service 1946-48 in Tantalus, Trenchant and Teredo. Hull branch. Aged 86.

J 'John' Boycott LEM. Submarine Service 1955-65 in Seascout, Sleuth, Amphion, Explorer, Artful and Thermopylae. Australia branch. Aged 79.

G A T 'George' Burgess CPO MW. Submarine Service 1956-65 in Andrew, Aurochs, Telemachus and Trespasser. Gosport branch. Aged 78.

M E 'Mo' Campion CPO Cox'n. Submarine Service 1965-84 in Talent, Alderney, Resolution, Repulse, Revenge, Osiris and Narwhal. Essex branch. Aged 71.

D J 'Dave' Gilbertson AB Radar/AS. Submarine Service 1944-46 in Unrivalled, Tireless and Tapir. Australia branch. Aged 89.

C 'Mad Mike' McCullough AB (Sonar). Submarine Service 1942-46 in H43, Otway, Trespasser and Sea Devil. Northern Ireland branch. Aged 90.

## Reunions

### January 2015

HMS Illustrious Association: Annual service of remembrance will be at St James Gallickhythe, City of London EC4V 2AF, on January 15, starting 1300 and after at the Vintners Hall. Contact Mike Brockwell at [mm.brock@hotmail.com](mailto:mm.brock@hotmail.com) or 07971 084753.

### February 2015

Rowallan Division 1980/81: The previously advertised reunion (<https://navynews.co.uk/forum/viewtopic.php?t=15&t=76045>) for the RN/RM Rowallan division in Navy News has resulted in growing confidence that enough people have contacted me to make this reunion a possibility. We now intend to meet early next year, so would all Ex-RN Rowallan Cadets who have not yet done so contact me for details on venue and dates –

David Langley at [davidlangley634@gmail.com](mailto:davidlangley634@gmail.com) or tel: 01625 824942 or 07855 468173.

### March 2015

HMS Resolution Association: Annual reunion at the Hallmark Hotel, Hull, March 20 to 22. Early booking discount available before January 31. Contact Mr R A Berridge on 07764 747624 or [events-manager@hmsresolution.org.uk](mailto:events-manager@hmsresolution.org.uk) or see [www.hmsresolution.org.uk/home.php](http://www.hmsresolution.org.uk/home.php) or [www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/our\\_hotels/hull](http://www.hallmarkhotels.co.uk/our_hotels/hull)

HMS Undine & Urchin Association: in company with Ursa, Ulster, Ulysses, Urania and Undaunted – next reunion at the Smiths Hotel, Weston-super-Mare, March 20 to 23, £120pp for three nights half board, entertainment included. Details from Secretary Chris Heslop at [chris@cheslop.plus.com](mailto:chris@cheslop.plus.com) or 20 Larch Drive, Stanwick,

Carlisle CA3 9FL, tel 01228 401378.

### April 2015

RN Medical Branch & Sick Berth Staff Association annual reunion and AGM at the Tillington Hall Hotel, Stafford, April 17 to 19. Contact Brian Todd at [bmtodd@btinternet.com](mailto:bmtodd@btinternet.com) or tel 01983 405116.

### August 2015

Defence School of Photography: The DSOP is celebrating 100 years of military photographic training in August 2015 and this landmark will be acknowledged with a series of Open Days and a Gala Dinner. This will take place at RAF Cosford August 20 to 22, with the dinner on August 22. Contact [dsop100@hotmail.com](mailto:dsop100@hotmail.com) or write to DSOP, RAF Cosford, Wolverhampton WV7 3EX.

### NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: [edit@navynews.co.uk](mailto:edit@navynews.co.uk). If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
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## Sports Lottery

Oct 11: £5,000 – AB H Bloomfield; £1,800 – PO K Rogers; £800 – AB M Penlington; £600 – Mne a Taylor; £500 – Capt G Tennant; £400 – PO C Aspin.

Oct 18: £5,000 – AB J Boles; £1,800 – CPO M Thornhill; £800 – WO1 D Cliff; £600 – Lt M Irwin; £500 – Lt M Proudman; £400 – AB S Maddocks.

Oct 25: £5,000 – Surg Lt E Maxwell; £1,800 – Sgt R Turnbull; £800 – WO1 P Summers; £600 – PO S Carr; £500 – AB2 S Watson; £400 – LH A Hughes.

Nov 1: £5,000 – AB1 M J Wood; £1,800 – Mne S F Billings; £800 – WO1 J Cole; £600 – Lt J K Griggs; £500 – Cpl M S Ford; £400 – AB1 M F Wilson.

Entries for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in January's Noticeboard must be received by **December 5**

## Ask Jack

Ten Pin Bowlers: If you are interested in bowling in a league and are available most weeknights in the Plymouth area contact AB1 Adam Wallis. He is also looking into setting up an Inter-Services competition and would like to set up a committee so all ranks and rates are welcome. Contact Adam at [HMSBULW-Logs-SupChainAB7@mod.uk](mailto:HMSBULW-Logs-SupChainAB7@mod.uk)

HMS Raleigh, Drake 19 Entry, 1980: Looking for all former entrants with a view to a possible reunion. Contact Rob Hewitson at [r12hermes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:r12hermes@yahoo.co.uk) or tel: 07568 542636 or John Reidy at [johnr9520@gmail.com](mailto:johnr9520@gmail.com) or tel: 07541 770766.

HMS Puncher Suez Crisis. I served aboard this LST (L3036) in 1956 and would be pleased to hear from any other crew members of this time – ring David Ross on 01563 528642.

Missing papers. David Gray is missing his personal effects from the time he spent in Hong Kong: 1983-85 (HMS Monkon Sqn) and 1987-90 (MOD Chinese Language School). When they were sent home to UK a box went missing containing his framed Commission Bridge Watchkeeping Certificate and Ocean Navigation Certificate (both signed off by Capt Frank Graves) and his graduation certificate from the language school. If anyone comes across these items he would like to re-acquire them and purchase them if necessary. Contact David at [dgray28@csc.com](mailto:dgray28@csc.com) or tel 0777 1977 828.

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## Monmouth honoured

FRESHLY adorned with a wreath laid by today's ship of the same name, this is a monument to one of the dead of cruiser HMS Monmouth.

Shipwright Albert Dallen, and all his shipmates were lost – as were the entire ship's company of HMS Good Hope – at Coronel off Chile when they engaged a far superior German force under Admiral Graf Spee on November 1 1914.

A century on and sailors from today's Black Duke visited events around England and Wales honouring the dead of the battle and their ill-fated commander Rear Admiral Christopher Cradock.

Services were held in Catherington, near Portsmouth, Plymouth Hoe, St John by Antony in Torpoint – where Albert Dallen is remembered – and Monmouth, each attended by sailors from today's Type 23 frigate.

"It is important to remember those that have served and lost their lives in the Services and this is especially relevant on the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Coronel," said Lt Cdr Andrew Ainsley, Monmouth's senior naval officer.

"We are honoured to be the current guardians of their ship. They paid the highest price in the name of the Black Duke." The frigate is in refit in her home base before conducting trials in the second half of 2015.

# In the footsteps of heroes (Pt 1)

SLUMPED against the collapsed sides of a trench, Canadian soldiers rest having stormed a pillbox on Vimy Ridge – an iconic feat of Canadian arms.

This brief respite amid the tumult and horror of the Western Front in the spring of 1917 was recorded by Capt William Ivor Castle.

Ninety-seven years later his great grandson returned to the scene – part of a very personal tribute for sailors from 824 Naval Air Squadron who visited the former killing fields.

William Castle spent ten months ensuring the hardships endured by his countrymen were recorded for posterity as an official war photographer – and survived the conflagration.

Not so Albert and Ernest Clements – who both made the ultimate sacrifice for King and Country and whose great great nephew LAET Nathan Astill maintains and repairs 824's Merlin.

Ernest Clements was 24 when he died in August 1916 during fighting on the Somme; his body was never recovered, but his name is recorded with more than 72,000 others on the imposing Thiepval memorial.

His younger brother Albert was only 23 when he was injured a year later in April 1917 supporting forward trenches. Shot in the stomach he died in a field hospital to the rear. Albert is buried at Duisans British Cemetery just outside Arras.

"It's a very humbling and moving experience to visit my ancestor's final resting places and I was really grateful for the chance to see for myself what it



was like," said Nathan.

Former newspaper photographer William Castle took some of the war's most enduring images, more than 800 in all, notably the battles at Courcelette and Vimy Ridge.

William was gassed as he took pictures of exploding shells on the Somme, but survived to return to London and held two major exhibitions of official war photographs attended by royalty and the public to boost morale, for which he was awarded the MBE.

"Through William's pictures you begin to understand what he and many others witnessed throughout the Great War," said his great grandson.

"The memorials and cemeteries that cover this landscape today really bring home the enormity of the fighting and the struggle he and others endured."

Using Amiens as their base, the 824 team toured the battlefields and cemeteries around Arras and

the Somme, paying respects to their Cornish connections through the huge craters left when underground explosive charges in tunnels dug by Cornish miners were detonated with devastating effect.

The final stop in the area was the Arras Flying Services Memorial where sailors and airmen of the fledgling Royal Naval Air Service – forerunner of today's Fleet Air Arm – are remembered alongside men of the Royal Flying Corps and RAF.

The 100th anniversary of the start of the conflict has led to an upsurge in tours of the battlefields – so far this autumn as well as 824, HMS Wildfire have crossed the Channel (see right) while personnel from the Commando Helicopter Force headed to Ypres to honour the fallen of Passchendaele.

● The 824 team unfurl the White Ensign at the Vimy Ridge memorial



● A Belgian re-enactor shows Wildfire's AB Wood the kit used by the Royal Naval Division defending Antwerp in 1914

# In the footsteps of heroes (Pt 2)

FRESH from unveiling a gleaming new battle honours board, sailors from North London reservist unit HMS Wildfire headed to Belgium to learn how their forebears earned that distinction.

Almost 100 years to the day since their predecessors from the armed sloop HMS Wildfire turned their guns against the German Army in Flanders, members of today's RNR unit in Northwood crossed the Channel to pay their respects – part of several days honouring the deeds of sailors in the Great War.

In October 1914 the previous HMS Wildfire was called upon to bombard German forces around Nieuwpoort to help the Belgian Army stop the enemy after the fall of Antwerp, the defence of which had involved the reservists of the Royal Naval Division. Her actions were rewarded with a belated battle honour unveiled this autumn at today's HQ: Belgian Coast 1914.

Nieuwpoort's impressive Commonwealth War Graves Commission monument is mostly dedicated to Britons who died later in the war.

But at least 20 of the names belong to men of the Royal Naval Division, whose sacrifice was remembered with a poppy wreath laid by the reservists.

Among the names on the Nieuwpoort memorial is that of Sub Lt Edwyn Ridge of the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (forerunner of today's Maritime Reserve), posted missing in October 1914, leaving behind a wife and son.

His body was only found in the mid-1980s and reinterred in Cantincrode Cemetery in Mortsel on the southeastern outskirts of Antwerp – the next port of call for the Wildfire reservists.

The hurriedly-formed and ill-trained Royal Naval Division was thrown into the line at Antwerp in a desperate bid to hold it in the face of the Germans.

Sailors of Hawke Battalion defended Fort 2 in the wonderfully-named suburb of Wommelgem, where present-day reenactors gave a guided tour for the Wildfires to bring the events of 1914 back to life.

Further evidence of the odds the RND faced 100 years ago was provided in nearby Fort Kassel, where the reservists were shown the damage caused by German heavy artillery.

The Wildfire team paid their respects at memorials in Zeebrugge, Passchendaele and Tyne Cot Cemetery, the German cemetery at Vladzlo – renowned for the The Grieving Parents by sculptress Käthe Kollwitz – and the grave of Lt Cdr Oswald Hanson at Dendermonde; the reservist officer was executed by the Germans October 10 1914 after he attempted to prevent them firing on his fleeing men.

No-one can visit the Western Front without seeing Ypres – and no-one can visit Ypres without attending the evening ceremony at the Menin Gate where the *Last Post* is sounded each night to the fallen of World War 1.

The battlefield tour concluded with a return to the coast and participation in the 'Lighting up the Front' event – 9,000 Belgians carrying torches from Nieuwpoort to Ploegsteert on the French border, 50 kilometres in land.

Then the reservists were invited by civic leaders in Nieuwpoort to the opening of the Westfront Museum. Among its displays, one on the Dover Patrol – to which the Great War HMS Wildfire belonged.

"This was the perfect ending to an emotional, educational, reflective and not-to-be-missed week of activities allowing current Reservists to better understand the military aspects of World War 1 whilst honouring the memories of their predecessors who made the ultimate sacrifice in that conflict," said Lt Michael Quinn.

# Personal memories of a public tragedy

STOPPED at 8.22, this shattered wrist watch is a solemn reminder of one of the darkest hours in the history of the Royal Marines Band Service.

For at that time on September 22 1989, an IRA bomb ripped through the Royal Marines School of Music – then based at Deal in Kent – killing 11 musicians and wounding a further 22.

The atrocity sparked national – and international – outrage, evidenced in a memorial room in the school's present-day home in Portsmouth.

Among the messages of condolence pouring into the Corps in the wake of the bombing, letters from President George H W Bush and Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher.

To mark the 25th anniversary of the bombing and the establishment of a room for reflection, the Principal Director of Music at the time, Lt Col John Ware, has donated them as a reminder of how strongly people around the world felt about the terrorist attack.

"It has been a devastating blow for everyone in the Royal Marines as well as for the people of Deal," Mrs Thatcher wrote.

"I wanted to show on my visit that the whole country is intent on sharing your sorrow, but also in admiration for the courage and fortitude of the Royal Marines and their band which gives so much pleasure to so many people year after year."

And from the then US President:

"Please accept my condolences on the tragedy that the British Royal Marines suffered. The loss of such fine people in a brutal terrorist attack is truly shocking."

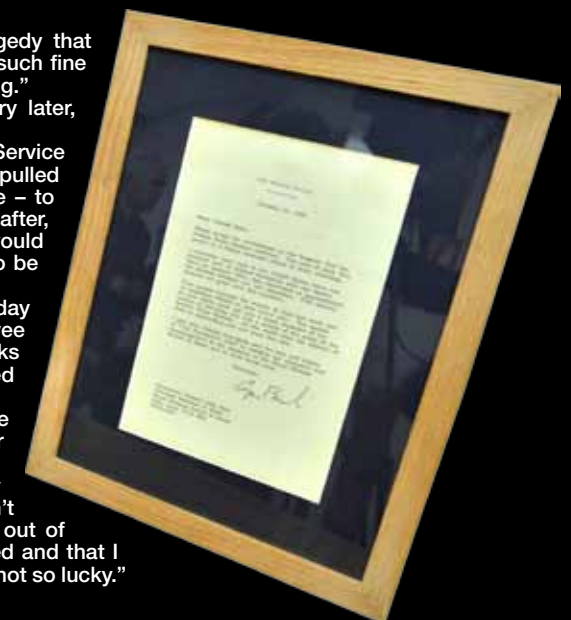
Lt Col Ware said that a quarter of a century later, reading the letters still made him tremble.

"The bombing had a huge effect on the Band Service but what was memorable was the way everyone pulled together. It was the musicians' idea – not mine – to parade through the streets of Deal a week after, with spaces left where the musicians killed would have stood. The Band Service was not going to be defeated."

Among the 22 seriously injured musicians that day in 1989 was Terry Holland, now a civilian employee working in the Band Service. He spent two weeks in intensive care after the blast and has donated his shattered watch for display with the letters.

"I remember walking into the rest room where it was customary to all gather before starting our rehearsals at 8.30am," he said.

"The bomb went off in the rest room and my watch still says 8.22am but to be honest I don't recall anything else. It was only when I came out of intensive care that I realised what had happened and that I was lucky to be alive. Eleven of my friends were not so lucky."





## Faraday Slaying myths at road shows

DURING November the review of initial streaming took place. This was for those individuals who wish to be considered for an alternative stream to that allocated in September.

Following this, the final streams will be published on the Faraday Intranet site on December 1 2014.

WE CIS integration road shows were conducted during October and concluded in HMS Collingwood.

The road shows proved very helpful in slaying a few myths and gaining valuable feedback.

The team are working through the comments and questions raised on almost 100 feedback forms.

The answers to the most commonly asked questions have been uploaded on the Faraday web site.

The WE CIS cross-training RNTM has been issued. This gives a more detailed explanation of when cross training will take place for 'source branch' personnel in the CIS and WE cadres.

For JRs the training will occur on selection for either LETQC or POETQC.

It is recognised that many SRs already have experience following their work within either the WE or CIS areas.



● HMS Northumberland

Details of opportunities for 'source branch' SRs to volunteer for cross training will be announced once the policy has been finalised.

In order for the remaining EGS PE syllabus to be created, several units are in close discussion with Faraday to develop the example questions and topics based on the ICF.

Further ships and shore employers will be contacted over the next two months as the work progresses. The PEs are planned to be issued in April 2015.

Following industry support and the Safe Systems of Work pilot trials on HMS Daring (MP3/CUP) and HMS Northumberland (FTSP) it has been agreed to roll out the process across the T23 class.

This will reduce the workload on ship's staff during maintenance periods in areas such as Shipphaz. This will remove a considerable amount of work from ship's staff during FTSPs.

An overview article on Faraday and Support Improvement has been published in the autumn edition of *The Naval Engineer*.

The Faraday Team will let you know what has been happening during December in next month's article, so please look out for this regular feature.

If you have any questions or comments on Programme Faraday then please contact me, WO1 Sharky Ward on 93832 7441 or via e-mail [navy.pers.faraday@wo1a](mailto:navy.pers.faraday@wo1a). The Programme Faraday Intranet site can be found via the A-Z.

# Hi-tech scheme to beat the thieves



● RPO Holly Aitkin and LReg James Pugh record details of valuables brought in by personnel

ROYAL Navy Police at Portsmouth Naval Base have launched a hi-tech scheme to clamp down on theft.

They have rolled out a property registering device called Hermes which is used by every police force in the UK.

Hermes is a property registration tool and data collection kit to drive mass registration of property onto a National Mobile Property Register.

It aims to make items less attractive to thieves and, if they end up being stolen, to return them to their rightful owner. Registered property is proven to be less desirable and valuable to thieves and handlers.

A Hermes handheld scanner will allow police to identify stolen and lost property immediately, whether it belongs to an individual or the base.

It will enable officers to carry out both large-scale, strategically-planned investigations and smaller-scale, instant spot checks on goods in the possession of offenders and second-hand dealers.

Lt Cdr Dean Oakey, Naval Provost Marshal for the Eastern Region, said: "The Hermes Property device is a quantum leap in property registration.

"Property registered onto the national database enables any police force in the UK to return property to its rightful owner, wherever it is discovered. Once registered it allows personnel to add belongings onto the database in the comfort of their own home or ship.

"In today's digital age we are very reliant on our valuable phones, tablets and laptops and quickly become very disabled without them if lost or stolen. This capability provides an ideal opportunity of ensuring property is recovered to its rightful owner and makes property less desirable to thieves. Our message is simple: 'Get it Logged, Get it Back'."

## NAVAL FAMILIES FEDERATION



# Minister hears of family concerns

NFF Chair Kim Richardson met with the Minister of State for Defence Personnel, Welfare and Veterans, Anna Soubry MP, at the Families Forum in October.

This bi-annual commitment provides an important opportunity for the three Service Families Federations to raise the key issues for their families and to make the Minister aware of the impact that policies and decisions are having on them.

It was a fruitful meeting and the Minister was keen to hear our evidence and observations.

A letter was sent to Kim to summarise the points raised in the Forum, and to highlight the actions being taken as a result.

On the right is the letter in full, direct from the Minister's office:



### Contact NFF

■ The NFF represents Royal Naval and Royal Marines families to the Chain of Command, Government and service providers.

Your experiences form the basis of our discussions.

Contact the NFF: 023 9265 4374/[admin@nff.org.uk](mailto:admin@nff.org.uk). Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN.

Visit our website: [www.nff.org.uk](http://www.nff.org.uk) for news and information, and to sign up for our free, quarterly Homeport magazine and monthly e-update.



NEED to get your message across?

To feature in the *Navy News Two-Six* pages contact Navy Command Media - Internal Comms Staff Officer:

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Ministry of Defence  
ANNA SOUBRY MP  
MINISTER OF STATE FOR DEFENCE PERSONNEL WELFARE AND V

2 November 2014

Dear Kim,

I wanted to give you some immediate feedback from our Forum session last Thursday. It is enormously important that you have direct access to me to represent your service families; and that you can hold me to account. I value the engagement I have with all three service families federations, and I do use the evidence and the feedback you provide in my dealings with other Ministers, and more broadly with those charged with upholding the Armed Forces Covenant.

I thought we had a very productive meeting and we very helpfully explored a range of issues. On accommodation you know I am seized by black mould and boilers, and expect further advice from DIO on boilers shortly, and I take the point that we must now address single living accommodation. Re-basing is a particular issue for the Army and this is something I will be looking into closely with the Army and DIO to better understand the risks and contingencies in place. We talked about access to financial services and I know your Covenant staff do a wonderful job in addressing cases of disadvantage, but please do let my officials know where there are issues with particular companies; we can and will feed them into the Covenant team and those conducting senior engagement. I fully understood your point that Community Covenant Conferences were necessary on a regional basis and I am pleased that officials recognise this and have committed to holding three regional conferences next year.

I have previously written to the Department of Education on the thorny issue of taking service children out of school during term time post deployment; and I very much welcome the recent guidance from the National Association of Head Teachers which explicitly recognises the circumstances facing Armed Forces families on return from deployment as within the 'exceptional circumstances' criteria. I remain concerned that understanding amongst head teachers will remain inconsistent and I will now speak to the Secretary of State for Education to reinforce this point.

I welcome you raising the issue of eligibility for SFA for divorced personnel to enable them to set up a home for their children during visits, and have asked for officials to look at this. There is also work ongoing in the Army to consider the registration fees for the children of Foreign and Commonwealth personnel born overseas, and as I know you are aware that a considerable amount of work is underway on the overseas offer.

Your input is so important in providing a voice for your communities and ensuring that I, my fellow Ministers and my officials receive ground truth. I am also committed to doing what I can to encourage Local Authorities to live up to their Covenant commitments including, where necessary, my direct engagement with Chief Executives. So if there is an area where the Covenant is not working, come straight to my office, and I will, where I can, try to help.

With all good wishes,

Anna Soubry MP



# Career opportunities for warfare officers

## Where to look

### Galaxies

31-2014: Navy Command Security Culture Improvement Plan

30-2014: Introduction of Combined Accommodation Assessment System (CAAS) for Service Family Accommodation (SFA)

29-2014: Exercise Joint Caterer 2014

### RNTMs

244/14: Guidance on the Operation of The High Voltage System in the State 1 Environment

245/14: CBRNDC Ship Team Training Allocations - 2015/16

246/14: Receipting Arrangements for Surface Ships Configuration Baseline Reports and Index of Abstracts Issued on Removable Electronic Media by the Master Records Data Centre (Ships).  
258/14: Recording of Separated Service (SS)

### DIBS

57/14: Change of pensions policy for Armed Forces widows, widowers and civil partners

56/14 New Employment Model Programme Update

55/14: New Employment Model Introduction of Combined Accommodation Assessment System

### DINS

2014DIN01-203: Action required regarding change to policy for Service personnel joining Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2015 in relation to transferring pension benefits from previous non-public sector employment into an Armed Forces Pension Scheme 2014DIN01-204: Information and Knowledge Excellence Awards 2015

2014DIN01-206: Individual Electoral Registration

2014DIN04-212: Service Family Accommodation (SFA) in the United Kingdom

WELCOME to Drafty's Corner sponsored by the CNPERS Warfare Division.

This is the first of two articles which focus on Officer Career Management.

Based in West Battery, Whale Island, CM OF WAR provides career management for all warfare officers regardless of specialisation/sub-specialisation.

### Desk Views

Deep Thinkers – The Intelligence Cadre. The fledgling GSX Int sub-specialisation has been populated over the last five years to achieve the required strength.

Gentle restructuring will continue in the coming years to deliver the right balance at OF2 – OF5.

Professionally-trained, experienced Int officers are now delivering effect and building credibility across the Naval and Joint environment and the RN is better placed to engage in intelligence-led operations than at any time since WW2.

The sub-spec remains an extremely popular career path and CNPERS' attention is now focussed on quality rather than quantity; an Intelligence Aptitude process is being developed to carefully select only the strongest candidates.

The Joint Maritime Intelligence Course (JMIC) is run from the Naval Intelligence Division in the Defence School of Intelligence. Admired by the other Services, it equips SUY and UCE/DGE GSX Int officers entering the sub-specialisation with the knowledge and skills required to pursue deep specialist careers, or broaden into mainstream warfare areas, including PWO course and second/third tour PWO positions, many of which require intelligence skillsets.

Intelligence delivery also relies upon the RNR intelligence unit HMS Ferret, which employs officers and ratings alongside their regular counterparts on operations, in support roles and to deliver specialist capabilities across the RN and Joint environment.

The Future Force 20 operating model will require even stronger support from Reserve Forces. Service leavers and civilians interested in a dynamic, flexible career as an intelligence reservist should enquire through the Armed Forces Careers Office.

### Knives and Big Watches – The Mine Warfare and Diving Cadre.

Regular readers of *Navy News* will be fully aware of just how important the permanent MCM presence in the Gulf is to the maintenance of regional and global security.

With this vitally-important task comes the need for high-quality people from all specialisations, capable of working in a small team and rising to greater levels of responsibility than their peers elsewhere in the Surface Fleet.

The personal and professional satisfaction and camaraderie associated with working in a small, mutually supportive team is not only rewarding but is increasingly being recognised for the quality of people it requires.

The Ops officer of a minehunter is fulfilling almost identical leadership and coordination functions as those in an FF/DD, only with fewer people and whilst watchkeeping.

Once in State 2 (the default setting for a KIPION MCMV at sea) they are leading a watch of 20 people, day and night, in a busy operational theatre. Thereafter,

## Drafty's corner



there is no quicker route to becoming second in command of an operational warship than minewarfare, whether as an MWO, or an MCDO.

The majority of MM XO's are only in their third complement assignment and an increasing percentage of these have built on this early responsibility to become successful at CQ1.

All that Ops room experience and Kipion awareness provides a perfect operational pedigree, which, supported by an ORC has a track record of strong performance at PWO course and subsequent PWO assignments.

You only need to look at the Bridge Card to see that over a quarter of our very front-line MCMVs are being commanded by minewarfare and clearance diving officers, with the 1st MCM Squadron presently commanded by a clearance diving officer.

Are you good enough to join this highly-professional, close-knit group? If you are then enquiries should be made to Lt Cdr Matt Moore (OCM MCD).

### PWO Power – Principal Warfare Officer training and selection

For most, attendance at PWO Course marks the transition from the bridge to the ops room and the delivery of warfare effect and remains a key career milestone for all warfare officers in the Surface Fleet – a point when all the sub-specialisations reconvene for the next stage of warfare training.

Following the course, the first tour 'generic' assignment is practice and consolidation as a defence watch PWO before pursuing a Force Warfare AdQual (AWO, ASW or CIS) or wider employment eg on an Operational or Training Staff and in NCHQ.

PWO assignments provide an opportunity to develop department and whole-ship management skills as head of department and ops officer, as well as further experience and qualifying sea service, which are considered vital when being considered for SASB1 and SASB2 thereafter.

PWO remains the optimal route to achieve the warfare officer headmark of sea command. PWO Course – the minimum eligibility requirement to START course is a completed Ops Room Certificate (ORC), Bridge Warfare Qualification (BWQ) and CO's Recommendation. In addition, other factors considered include merit as reported in OJAR reports, career progression, timing, SASB1 experience and/or potential. 'Service Need' in some shortage categories may also result in deferment.

Achievement of Command Qualifications (CQ1)/SASB1 assignments is viewed favourably and early completion of the ORC (which negates pre-PWO training requirement) may also strengthen

## Career Manager (CM) contact list

Navy Personnel Warfare Division, Mail Point 2.2, West Battery, Whale Island, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO2 8DX  
Civilian Telephone: 02392 625492; Military Telephone: 93832 5492

CM OF WAR SO1 "Cdr X" Cdr T A Price (Andy) NAVY PERS-CM OF WAR SO1; Ext 8887  
CM OF WAR AIR SO1 "Cdr Air" Cdr M Ryan (Mike) NAVY PERS-CM OF WAR AIRSO1; Ext 8972  
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a candidate's case. With fierce competition for both pre-PWO training and PWO course places, the onus is very much on the individual to become eligible and to demonstrate the potential to justify this level of training.

### Contacting your Career Manager (CM)

A lot of time is spent conducting 'one-on-one' career interviews (CI), attending meetings and visiting establishments, and consequently you may have difficulty in reaching your CM by telephone. An email is always preferable as it allows the CM time to examine the plot and investigate options before replying. If the matter is urgent or affects ship's OC, a phone call may be more appropriate and you will always be able to leave a message. Ideally, you should make contact with your CM with around 12 months left in post. Any earlier than this and the CM will not be able to gauge performance.

This initial discussion will allow both you and your CM to agree a realistic future availability date (to maximise reporting and ensure the Service need is met) and gives enough time for the CM to identify your follow-on assignment and a suitable relief for you in that time frame.

We are interested in changes in: your preferences; your address; your personal circumstances; and any other information that you think may have a bearing on your career plans.

### Career Interviews

If you are content with your next assignment and do not require a more in-depth look at your promotion or transfer prospects, then you probably do not require a formal CI. If you do, then a proforma will be sent out prior to the interview – please complete this honestly with as much information as possible including preferences, priorities and aspirations.

■ Part two of this article will appear in January's *Navy News*.




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# Rock-ing all over the world



THE atmospheric St Michaels Cave provided a stunning backdrop as the Royal Marines flocked to their spiritual home for a weekend of celebrations to mark the 350th anniversary of the Corps.

The Gibraltar cave – with stalactites hanging from the ceiling – saw the Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland captivate the audience of more than 600.

As the lights changed from green to red, it highlighted the immense scale of the cave.

A piece called *Amphibiosity* which commemorates the core function of the Royal Marines – an amphibious fighting force – was commissioned specifically for the RM 350th birthday and was accompanied by still images and video footage from exercises and operations. Many of these were taken by Royal Navy photographers deployed across the globe.

Sgt James Parkinson, who had a solo piece on the viola, said: "It was great being in Gibraltar to take part in the RM350 celebrations. The concert in the caves was a fitting end to the weekend.

"The standing ovation was fantastic to receive and made all the effort worthwhile."

The previous day Hollywood actor Henry Cavill joined more than 200 Royal Marines and Royal Navy men and women, past and present, who took part in the famous Rock Run – helping to raise vital funds and awareness for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund (RMCTF).

The *Superman* actor took up the challenge of running the 4.3km route up the Gibraltar landmark alongside his brother Lt Col Nik Cavill, a serving Royal Marine.

Henry Cavill said: "I am really proud to be a part of the event today and to support the Royal Marines – they are obviously close to my heart with my brother Nik being a Lieutenant Colonel. He let me beat him today – I think he was being kind though!"

Cavill was joined at the start of the run by former Royal Marine Mark Ormrod, who lost both legs and his right arm when he stepped on a landmine in Afghanistan in 2007.

"It's a huge honour for me to be invited out to Gibraltar and to be involved in the Rock Run," he said.

"If nothing else I hope by being there I can show the RMCTF's generous supporters where a large percentage of the money they raise is spent. I'm just one of many wounded, injured and sick Royal Marines and I hope I can say on behalf of all of us that the

support is hugely appreciated."

The RM Scotland Band led the march from Casemates through Main Street to the start line, leading the runners and walkers. The crowds were out in force and applauded all the way through Main Street as the proud men and women marched to the start line.

The Gibraltar Rock Run is renowned throughout the Royal Navy with every ship/unit visiting Gibraltar taking part in the race. The route covers 4.3km, comprising some 1,300 feet of climbing up narrow tarmac roads. The steep roads weren't the only concerns for the runners, as they also had to take care not to agitate the Barbary Macaques.

C/Sgt Lee Spencer said: "It was much harder than I thought it was going to be but am really pleased to be here for such an important cause. I want to raise as much money for the Royal Marines Charitable Trust Fund as I can, I have so far raised nearly £9,500."

The prize of first place went to Mne Davies in a time of 20 minutes 07 seconds. That evening the RMCTF hosted a charity reception and auction which was held at His Excellency the Governor of Gibraltar Lieutenant-General Sir J Dutton's residence.

An anonymous bidder paid just over

£4,000 for a Bremont watch, Henry Cavill bought a limited edition Silver RM350 Dagger and a bottle of RM350 Port. Filmmaker and keen Royal Navy supporter Chris Terrill bought the RM Band Drum, bringing the total raised for the RMCTF to more than £20,000.

The Royal Marines marched through Glasgow to celebrate being awarded the Freedom of the City.

Taking to the streets of the historic maritime city with swords drawn, bayonets fixed, drums beating, bands playing and colours flying, the parade left Holland Street, before moving onto West Regent Street, Douglas Street and George Street, passing through Nelson Mandela Place before arriving in George Square.

The parade halted before Glasgow City Chambers. The Lord Provost Cllr Sadie Docherty then made the official conferral of the Freedom, which the Commandant General Maj Gen Martin Smith accepted on behalf of the Corps.

Both inspected the assembled parade, which then moved off to exercise the Freedom of the City for the first time.

The parade consisted of members of 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group from HM Naval Base Clyde and The Band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines Scotland, along with both

veteran commandos and Royal Marines Cadets from the Glasgow area.

The Freedom recognises the long association the city has with the Marines, including the Royal Marines Reserve Scotland.

Trainees at the Royal Marines School of Music gathered to celebrate the 350th birthday of the Corps of Royal Marines in a traditional ceremony at their Portsmouth base.

In keeping with tradition the youngest student read out a citation announcing the formation of the Corps. This year the task fell to 17-year-old Musician Harry Yarnell who is studying clarinet and violin.

A birthday cake was then cut by Musician Yarnell and Col Mike Tanner, Captain of Portsmouth Naval Base.

A second cake was cut at HMS Raleigh, where a group of 20 from the South West branch of the Royal Marines Association were invited for a day of activities, culminating in a Regimental dinner.

The former commandos took a trip down memory lane as they rode in a Viking all-terrain troop carrier and tested their marksmanship skills on the shooting range. They also went out on the river in boats supplied by 1 Assault Squadron Royal Marines.



● Main image: The concert in the cave  
 ● From left: Henry Cavill with Mark Ormrod; Royal Marines march through Glasgow; Former Royal Marines on the shooting range at HMS Raleigh; The celebration cake cut at the RM School of Music  
 Gibraltar pictures: POA(Phot) Sean Clee, rnpoty3





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## Inaugural visit for Ryde CCF

RYDE School Combined Cadet Force (CCF) have visited their Naval parent establishment – HMS Collingwood, in Fareham – for the first time.

Every CCF unit across the country adopts a parent Armed Forces establishment with a view to providing cadets with a taster of the environment and careers within the military.

The Naval section within Ryde CCF selected HMS Collingwood as theirs, and for their first visit, eight cadets from Year 10, accompanied by the new Head of Section Lt Kimberley Snow and School Staff Instructor Stuart Sale and Area Instructor CPO George Scott, were treated to a full programme.

Cadets started by developing their communication and team-building skills on the low ropes course at the Royal Naval Leadership Academy, then went through various scenarios to test their aim and accuracy on the Close Range Weapon Trainers.

They were then given the chance to prove themselves as navigators during a tour of the Bridge Simulator (pictured above).

They watched an Officer of the Watch at work on the bridge and were able to 'drive' a ship out of Portsmouth Harbour and over to the Isle of Wight.

Speaking about being the navigator on the run home, Cadet Brian Fu said: "It's been really fun. I have learned a lot of stuff and thoroughly enjoyed my time at Collingwood."

Lt Snow said: "For the students this has been great – they have really enjoyed the Close Range Weapons simulators and the low ropes."

"They've had the chance to build their skills and further their knowledge."

"I have only just taken over as the head of the Navy section and visits like this allow us to expand the opportunities for the cadets."

Cadet JJ Hulford-Funnell said: "I have really enjoyed today, it has cemented my knowledge of the Navy and inspired me further to join upon completion of my A-Levels."

"I aspire to have a full naval career with hopes to reach Admiral."

# Cadets read letters from Trafalgar

WARSASH unit and the Southern Area Navy Board Cadet received a personal invitation from Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel to help him host the Trafalgar Night dinner onboard HMS Victory.

The cadets formed a Guard of Honour for guests as they arrived, and also received a private tour of Nelson's flagship.

Once the guests were seated in Nelson's Great Cabin they heard three readings by the cadets.

LC Thurgood read a letter written home by Sam after the Battle from the Royal Sovereign.

Next was LC Dickinson, with a letter written by Quartermaster Benjamin Stevenson to his sister.

Finally, Cdt Sgt Thornton-Barter from Eastbourne unit spoke about Lord Minto's private feelings conveyed in a letter to his wife about Lord Nelson.

It was the first time Sea Cadets have read letters during the dinner proceedings.

Vice Admiral Steel said: "I was absolutely delighted to have the Warsash Sea Cadets and Southern Area Navy Board Cadet on board HMS Victory for the 209th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar."

"It marks a very important



● Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral David Steel with the Sea Cadets

Picture: LA(Phot) Gary Weatherston

date in the Navy calendar and their contribution to the evening was invaluable.

"Their enthusiasm and drive is a credit to the Sea Cadet Corps."

Each of the cadets was presented with a book on HMS Victory to keep as a memento.

Sunday October 19 saw the annual national Trafalgar Day

parade in Trafalgar Square in London.

Some 500 young people from across the UK from Sea Cadets, Army Cadet Force, Air Training Corps and CCF took part.

Crowds were treated to performances including PT, glee club, pipes and drums by Air Cadets, followed by an 80-strong

Sea Cadet Massed Band.

Reviewing officer Commander UK Amphibious Forces and Commandant General Royal Marines Maj Gen Martin Smith RM inspected the parade with platoons from Northern, Eastern, London, South, South West and North West Areas and platoons of Army and Air cadets.



● Lt Cdr (SCC) Phil Coast RNR

## Fourth Bar for Phil

A SEA Cadet area training officer has been rewarded for 45 years of service to the Corps.

Lt Cdr (SCC) Phil Coast RNR was presented with the fourth Bar to his Cadet Forces Medal by Cdr (SCC) Derek Login RNR at Longmoor Camp during a very successful multi-activity cadet training weekend last month.

Phil, who is the Training Officer for Southern Area Sea Cadets, was presented with the Bar, certificate and a golden rosette to mark 45 years of adult service to the SCC.

Phil joined the cadets at the age of 12 and has been an Adult Volunteer since the age of 18.

During that time he has made a huge difference to thousands of cadets in various capacities.

Phil is a previous recipient of the Roddie Casement Sword for the best Commanding Officer in the Corps – he ran an impressive ship during his time at Ashford, moving on to become District Officer East Kent, Area Recreation Officer and now his current role of Area Training Officer.

Cdr Login, the Senior Staff Officer for Southern Area, made the presentation on behalf of Captain Sea Cadets Capt Jonathan Holloway.

## Bradford is United

STAFF and four Bradford unit Sea Cadets attended a celebration marking the 600th group set up by Youth United under their Supporting Inclusion Programme, attended by Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon.

The cadets taught the Brownies some basic drill and in return the Brownies taught the cadets how to make loom bands – the cadets were very attentive, not one showing any sign of having made them before...

Lord Mayor's Cadet POC Abbas Younis spent some time talking to Lord Ahmad and was invited to visit him in the House of Lords; he then helped Lord Ahmad to cut the celebration cake.

## Keeping dry

TWO cadets and a member of staff from Harrow and Wembley unit received a cheque for £2,350 from the Wembley National Stadium Trust.

The money donated by WNST will go towards the provision of new waterproof clothing.

Cadets have a particular interest in sailing and as the interest has grown the unit has struggled to keep up with the demand.

The staff, cadets and committee members would like to say a big thank you to the Wembley National Stadium Trust.

# Corps remembers the victims of war

THOUSANDS of Sea Cadets from across the UK took part in services and parades to commemorate Remembrance Day and Armistice Day.

Sea Cadets from South West Area attended the Royal British Legion's Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall, honouring those who lost their lives in conflicts.

They also laid a wreath the following day during the national Remembrance Sunday service at the Cenotaph in Whitehall, attended by the Royal Family and leading political and military figures.

Warsash and Chiswick units were amongst those who helped set up the iconic *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* ceramic poppy installation at the Tower of London – at least one cadet from each unit had ancestors involved in the Great War.

Warsash cadet Alfie Ford's great-grandfather went over the top at the Somme, while Chiswick cadet AC Baker's ancestor was killed at Gallipoli.

Warsash CO Lt (SCC) Tony Thurgood RNR also had a family link – his ancestor was invalided back home, but returned to the Front under an assumed name.



# Norwich helps launch poppy appeal



NORWICH unit helped the Royal British Legion to launch the 2014 poppy campaign using its floating headquarters as the launch base.

Being in a prime location near the railway station and the city centre, TS Lord Nelson was decorated overall with poppies (see left) and had a major impact on those who passed it every day going to and from work and on the many visitors and tourists who come to Norwich.

On Saturday November 1, cadets and staff assisted the Royal British Legion to launch the appeal at Morrisons' Riverside supermarket, which is situated near TS Nelson.

Several of them spent the day standing at the supermarket doors in uniform to promote the sale of the poppies.

"The people of Norwich were very generous and the first collection tin was soon filled," said unit instructor Lt (SCC) Derek Grieve RNR.

"We are very happy and proud to help the Royal British Legion sell poppies on the 100th anniversary of the First World War."

"While we remember those who gave their lives in that terrible war we must not forget those who have also been lost as well as those who have been casualties in conflicts since then."



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● *TS Royalist leaves Belfast earlier this year for the final time; the ship was due to be decommissioned as **Navy News** went to press. See next month's edition for reports on the farewell to the old Royalist*

## Enthusiasm earns cadet top honour

A CADET from Northern Area Sea Cadets has been awarded one of the top Sea Cadet prestigious awards.

LC G Hampton has been awarded the Martin Henwood Memorial Trophy for his commitment and enthusiasm while sailing offshore in the Sea Cadet flagship TS Royalist.

"I feel very privileged to have been given this award," said LC Hampton.

"I have been onboard TS Royalist several times before and have recently been awarded my watch leader's qualification.

"I have very much enjoyed my time aboard TS Royalist, especially in this her last year in service, and I would strongly recommend anyone to experience an offshore voyage with the Sea Cadets."

TS Royalist has served as the flagship for the Corps for 43 years, and is being decommissioned before being replaced by a ship which was due to be launched in northern Spain just before Christmas.

Northern Area Officer Capt P Adams RN (Rtd) said: "I congratulate Leading Cadet G Hampton on this great achievement. He's a well-deserving candidate and I'm delighted



● *LC G Hampton*

at the fact that this makes three years in a row that the Northern Area has scooped the Martin Henwood Memorial Trophy.

"As the Area Officer it makes me immensely proud to see young people being recognised for what they do best, and all while having fun."

LC Hampton beat more than 100 cadets who have sailed in TS Royalist this year.

## Four meet princess

FOUR St Albans Sea Cadets and three staff attended the 275th anniversary celebrations of the Royal Naval Officers Charity at Trinity House in the presence of the Princess Royal.

The celebration was attended by more than 120 Royal Naval officers.

Cadets from St Albans were asked to attend to assist as stewards. Cadets and staff then mingled with admirals, commodores and other officers talking about what they do and the fun they have as cadets.

The highlight of the day though was being presented to the Princess Royal.

Sub Lt (SCC) Steve Heard RNR, the Officer in Charge at St Albans, said: "It was a great honour and privilege to be asked to attend and the cadets did us proud talking freely and articulately with very senior officers.

"We had very positive feedback from those attending and it was certainly a day to remember for all."

## Firm boosts dinghy fund

The Sea Cadet Eastern Area Training Centre in the town of Thrapston near Kettering has received a cheque from local builders Chiel Construction Ltd.

Presenting the cheque for £1,000 the company managing director Martin Rush said it is a very worthwhile cause that deserved support.

Lt (SCC) Neil Hartwell RNR the commanding officer of the training centre thanked Mr Rush for his company's generous donation and informed him that the money would be put towards the purchase of a laser 2000 sailing dinghy.

## Leek march

CADETS from TS Talent (Stoke-on-Trent Sea and Royal Marines Cadets) took part in a parade in the market town of Leek in Staffordshire.

The parade was inspired by the first mile walked to war by Leek C Battery in August 1914 from their barracks in Leek, going through the town and away to war.

The parade was also attended by Army Cadets who provided a band and local school children and scouts, along with other groups, making quite a colourful event.

# Having a Raleigh great time

SEA CADETS from central Scotland spent a week on the South Coast of England undergoing training at HMS Raleigh in Cornwall.

The group of nearly 90 cadets and staff spent the week at the National Sea Cadet Training Centre at the Royal Navy training base, undergoing a range of courses from dealing with emergencies at sea to first aid, catering, power-boat courses and weapons training.

They also tackled the establishment's assault course, visited a decommissioned nuclear powered submarine at Devonport Naval Base and took part in a number of social events.

While most of the cadets, who are all aged from 12 to 18, came from the Queensferry unit, others came from units in Paisley, Ayr, Dunbar and Musselburgh.

Around 40 of the cadets took part in fire-fighting training and damage control exercises, to learn how to deal with leaks and floods at sea to ultimately stop the ship from sinking.

Among them was Caroline Cumming, aged 13, from the Paisley unit, who has been a cadet for two years.

She said: "I came here last year and enjoyed it, so I thought coming again would be another good experience and



● *The cadets from Scotland had a great week at HMS Raleigh*

give me the chance to meet more new people.

"I did the damage control and fire-fighting last year, so it was really interesting to do it again."

Jamie MacDonald, 12, who joined the Queensferry unit just over a month ago, said: "I've enjoyed the hands-on activities like the fire-fighting.

"I think I did pretty well in the assault course, crawling through tunnels and

climbing over walls.

"It was hard work but worth it, so much fun. I've made some good friends this week.

"It's been really interactive – sleeping in the same room as the new people kind of forces you together but it works."

Another newcomer in his first year as a cadet is Ben Wilson, aged 13, who joined the Queensferry unit six months ago.

He said: "I've always wanted to be part of the Navy and the Armed Forces, but

this has made me want to join more."

Some of the older cadets took part in a peer educator course to enable them to train others in their unit. They also spent two-days learning first aid.

Erin Oliver-Hamilton, aged 14, from Queensferry, said: "The peer educator course has basically run through different teaching styles and taught us how to work in a group with others."

Caitlyn Patterson, aged 17, from Ayr unit, said: "It's always good to have a first aid qualification in the cadets. I've loved it here working with other people from different units."

Christopher Kelly, from Paisley, who has aspirations for a career at sea, said: "I'm looking to be a mechanical engineer in the Royal Navy or Merchant Navy when I leave school, so being here has given me ideas of what I would need to do and what I want to be. It's helped towards my goals."

Co-ordination for the week-long camp was undertaken by Lt (SCC) Colin Butcher, CO of the Queensferry unit.

He said: "The Queensferry Cadets have been coming here for about four or five years and gradually we have been joined by the other units – it's like a Scottish invasion. For some of the youngsters this experience will be really life-changing."

## Colour for Edinburgh Ella joins the elite

Edinburgh Trinity Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets had the honour of being presented their unit Colour.

The presentation took place at Granton Parish Church in Edinburgh, led by the Reverend Norman Smith.

The Colour had been donated by the late Honorary President of the Unit Management Committee Stewart Boyd.

After the service, the Colour was paraded through the streets of Granton in Edinburgh, with cadets from all the other units from Edinburgh District and the Dundee unit band.

After the parade, the guests, families, supporters, cadets and staff were treated to a small reception and the obligatory cake-cutting ceremony by two of the youngest members of the ship's company and the Reviewing Officer Capt Christopher Hall RNR (Rtd).

Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Walter Lewis RNR said that the day will hopefully be in the memories of each cadet for the rest of their lives.

Anyone interested in joining Edinburgh Trinity, please email [info@trinityseacadets.org.uk](mailto:info@trinityseacadets.org.uk) or like us on [facebook.com/TrinitySCC](https://www.facebook.com/TrinitySCC) or follow us on Twitter @TrinitySCC



YORK Sea Cadet Ella Duke has joined an elite band who have achieved the challenging Advanced Seamanship qualification.

Only 12 cadets have managed to attain the required standard this year out of 14,000 Sea Cadets.

Ella's achievement is part of a new national partnership with Carnival and Sea Cadets.

Carnival Corporation & plc, parent company of P&O Cruises and Cunard, is supporting the Sea Cadets' seamanship qualification which will enable members to broaden their career options in the

maritime industry.

The qualification tests cadets on their knowledge of rope work, rigging, splicing and whipping, canvas work and decorative rope work.

Practical tests include working in a team to rig equipment such as sheer legs, gins and derricks.

15-year-old Ella, who is an Able Cadet, said: "Sea Cadets have taught me that the more activities you do outside your comfort zone, the larger it becomes, providing you with more opportunities as your confidence grows."

## Champions on water

SALISBURY Sea Cadets are celebrating being named national rowing champions.

Four teams from the unit reached the finals of the Sea Cadet National Combined Regatta at the Royal Victoria Dock – and every team won.

The teams were:

- Rowing boat handling – a five-man crew in a points-based skills competition. The team consisted of Anna Patterson, Charlie Mills, Tom Lush, Sarah Croager and Chris Hancock

- Mixed open yole – a two-man sliding seat rowing boat contest featuring Mia Banks and Luke Musselwhite.

- Open boys' rowing – a five-man team made up of Callum Whitehead, Jack Rainbow, Ben Murnane, James Foreman, Tom Howden and Ewan Kemish

- Junior boys' rowing – a five-man team consisting of Thomas Brewis-Watters, James Robson, Thomas Musselwhite, Jordyn Bond, Max Thomlinson and Sebastian Thorne.



## War is not black and white

A DECADE after it was first aired on British TV, the six-episode *World War 1 in Colour* is being reissued on DVD to mark the centenary of the start of the conflict.

Narrated by Sir Kenneth Branagh, this five-hour-plus series doesn't feature genuine colour – unlike some of its WW2 counterparts or the stunning *Autochrome Lumière* process used by the French in the Great War – rather colourised black and white footage.

That means it isn't, of course, as authentic, but does still give the 1914-1918 conflict a different look from the usual stark B&W and sepia.

And it isn't as comprehensive as the Beeb's landmark *Great War* documentary of the 1960s – 26 episodes, rather than six here.

But as this was made a decade ago, what *WW1 in Colour* does have is access to the last survivors of the conflict such as RN/RNAS veteran Henry Allingham and Bill Stone, who joined the Senior Service in the final weeks of the war.

In addition to the programme, which was originally broadcast on Channel 5 in 2003, the two-disc DVD (£9.99) features a 50-minute extra documentary on WW1 tactics and strategy and a 15-minute look behind the scenes at the making of the series.

Thanks to Fremantle Media, we have five copies to give away.

To win one, tell us the name of the admiral who famously remarked at Jutland: "There seems to be something wrong with our bloody ships today."

Send your answer by email or on a postcard with your full address to [WW1@navynews.co.uk](mailto:WW1@navynews.co.uk) or WW1 DVD Competition, Navy News, Mail Point 1-4, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Whale Island, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

Entries must be received by January 12 2015.



'CONTINUOUS at-sea deterrence' – both conventional and nuclear – looks set to become – along with 'continuous carrier strike' – one of the two legs that will support the Royal Navy through the next Strategic Defence and Security Review and beyond.

The nuclear side of the deterrent role has a long history going back more than half a century to the Nassau Agreement of 1962, when it was decided that Polaris missiles would take over the United Kingdom's strategic nuclear deterrent role from the 'V' bombers before the end of the decade, writes Prof Eric Grove of Liverpool Hope University.

This role was a key one in the history of British naval policy from then on, although it has tended to be ignored in discussion of the more 'classic' naval roles of amphibious and anti-submarine warfare in this period. Nuclear matters were always matters of considerable secrecy – often to keep British politicians guessing, rather than the Soviet potential enemy. In recent years, however, enough documentation has reached the public domain to allow proper academic study of this key dimension of defence policy in general and Naval policy in particular.

One of the major scholars in this field is Dr Kristan Stoddart, who became involved in writing about these matters in the late-lamented Mountbatten Centre for International Studies at Southampton University and has now moved on to the Department of International Politics at Aberystwyth University, where he is Deputy Director of the Centre for Intelligence and International Security Studies.

British nuclear history is something of a 'cottage industry' with biennial meetings at Charterhouse School. Here academics, official historians and retired Service personnel gather to share information and insights. I have had the privilege of attending several of these conferences and can say that Dr Stoddart has fully exploited all the potential sources to produce in three volumes as close to a definitive history of 'Britain, the USA, NATO and Nuclear Weapons'



● HMS Vanguard fires a test variant of a Trident missile off Florida in 2005

as is possible, using all available material.

The first, published in 2012, entitled *Losing an Empire and Finding a Role* (ISBN 978-0-230-30088-0) following Dean Acheson's controversial words in his 1962 West Point speech, covers the period from 1964 and the election of the first Wilson administration to the end of that government in 1970. This period saw Polaris enter service, despite election promises that implied something to the contrary. One submarine was cancelled (a matter of some later regret) but under the figleaf of allocation to NATO's Supreme Allied Commander Europe, a national capability to strike at Moscow – a 'criterion' first set out in 1962 – was retained in a national context if fundamental interests were threatened. There was also much discussion of 'hardware solutions' to the problem of sharing nuclear risks in the Alliance and the author provides a clear and excellent analysis of the replacement of such mad ideas as mixed manned missile armed surface ships by the 'software solution' of the Nuclear Planning Group.

One major problem which emerged at this stage and was to dominate

planning in this area, was the development of Soviet anti-ballistic missiles which might undermine the credibility of a small number of warheads deliverable by the British force. This was seen in the 1960s and work began on the upgrade programme that would eventually become 'Chevaline'. The development

of this programme is the main subject of the second volume published in May, *The Sword and the Shield* (ISBN 978-0-230-30093-4) carries the story through the period 1970 to 1976, through the Heath and second Wilson governments. Here the most remarkable thing is the way Wilson manipulated his colleagues to obtain a continuation of Chevaline despite the Labour Party's official abhorrence of a follow on system. Maintaining secrecy was a wonderful way of neutralising internal opposition and obfuscating the real radical nature of the system being developed.

The third volume, published in October, *Facing Down the Soviet Union* (ISBN 978-1137-44031-0), takes the story through the Callaghan and Thatcher years and the decision by both Prime Ministers to replace Polaris/Chevaline with Trident, first C-4 and then the much more capable D-5 which still arms our SSBNs. Again the theme is continuity and the irrelevance of party politics, although, as Dr Stoddart says, if a Foot government had been elected in the 1980s things might have been different. Of course, the Labour Party's unilateralist attitude to Britain's nuclear force made that election an unlikely event indeed.

More controversial in the early 1980s was the deployment of American long-range 'theatre nuclear' cruise missiles. In all three books the author examines policy *vis-à-vis* question of 'tactical/theatre' nuclear weapons, which later became 'sub-strategic'. The British orthodoxy on these devices as 'links'

## THE GROVE REVIEW

in what some called the 'seamless web' of deterrence, rather than weapons of actual war fighting is clearly brought out.

There is much that is new in these fascinating volumes published by Palgrave: British scientists sharing H-bomb secrets with the French to aid entry into the European Union; plans to cope with the inadequacy of Polaris in the late 1970s by putting boats into the Mediterranean and, possibly in addition, taking out southern Soviet early warning radars so that Moscow could be fulfilled from that direction – or even the temporary abandonment of that criterion altogether until Chevaline entered service; confirmation that Fearless and Intrepid, the two LPDs owed their survival to Anglo-American politics to obtain congressional approval for the sale of Trident D-5.

There are one or two blemishes here and there. Better editing ought to have dealt with spelling mistakes and the absence of a 'not' here and there that confuses the argument. The quality of the monochrome pictures also leaves much to be desired, although the illustrations of the attack paths of the 'V' bombers and workings of Chevaline are both satisfying and very informative.

The main problem is price – each volume (between 324 and 327 pages of which 232-246 are text the rest copious footnotes, bibliography and index) is priced at about £60 to £65, although marginal but significant cost savings are possible on the internet. E-versions are also available, although apparently at not much of a price reduction.

Given the importance of these volumes, it would be good to bring out paperback and perhaps sell them as a set along with my former PhD student's study of the same subject from 1958 to 1964 – *Nuclear Illusion, Nuclear Reality* by Richard Moore. One cannot understand the development of the Royal Navy over the past half century or more – or the Navy of the future – without reading them.

## SPORT

# Down but not out Submariners emerge Navy karting victors

THREE members of HMS Collingwood's boxing squad took part in a civilian boxing show in Portsmouth.

First up was AB Aaron Adam who boxed Martin Saunders from the host club Gym 01.

In the first round Adam forgot all his boxing skills and came out like a bull in a china shop only to get stopped in his tracks with straight shots.

After a bit of a talking to in the corner he came out a different boxer for the second and third rounds, putting his opponent under extreme pressure.

Adam caught Saunders with a stinging right hand but Saunders was handed a split points decision.

Next up was ET Michael Neasham boxing T Chessell, a lad 5kg heavier from the Isle of Wight.

In a very cagey first round neither boxer got going trying to find their range. During the second round Chessell started to find his range landing straight combinations with hooks, giving



● AB Aaron Adam, ET Michael Neasham and AB Ryan Kelly

Neasham a standing eight count.

Neasham stood his ground in the third and found some success but wasn't enough as Chessell won on a unanimous point's decision.

Last up was AB Ryan Kelly boxing another host club boxer Andrew Moore.

Kelly took the first round and part of the second round, but towards the end of the second Moore landed with combinations.

During the interval Kelly was not able to move his mouth so on the doctor's advice he was pulled out to fight another day.

A TEAM of submariners from Plymouth have become the first winners of the inaugural Royal Navy Karting Championship.

The group of five submariners were among teams from across the Naval Service who took part in the competition held over two rounds at the Buckmore Park and Whilton Mill race tracks.

The first round at Buckmore Park was held in warm and sunny conditions, with high grip levels testing the strength and stamina of the drivers. The second round was held in cold, wet and challenging conditions which rewarded discipline and consistency.

The winning team consisted of CPO Jason Floyd, LET Karl Walker and William Gould and ET Daniel Webster from HMS Trenchant along with WS Adam Hough from HMS Torbay.

Team Captain LET Walker said: "I enjoy all types of motor racing, but I thought the closest I'd get to the sport was racing a kart."

"The competition was hard at first because I'd never raced at that level before or gone that fast in anything, so it was a massive learning curve. We didn't expect to win at all. It was a massive shock."

Racing in two-stroke high performance karts, each driver was given an hour's practice on the circuit before taking to the



● Four of the victorious team members with their trophies

track for a 25-minute race per driver. The karts have a top speed of 70 miles per hour and can accelerate from five mph to 60 in 4.5 seconds.

After the first round the combined Trenchant and Torbay team had accrued 60 points, one point ahead of HMS Calliope. In the second round the submariners were beaten into second place with 59 points, but a total score of 119 points gave

the men from the Silent Service a victory overall, two points ahead of their nearest rivals.

HMS Heron's 825 NAS produced a strong performance, featuring on the podium in both rounds. Entering the final round only, 45 Commando's star driver, Mne Jamie Garvie, was away on an exercise.

More information can be found on [www.rnkc.co.uk](http://www.rnkc.co.uk) or find the RNKC on Facebook.

## Fighting to take the honours

NAVY boxers won four fights to emerge victors in a Tri-Service boxing competition to raise funds for a charity.

The audience, which included the Countess of Wessex, were entertained by six bouts, five of them featuring fighters from the Senior Service.

AB Callum Lynn of HMS Daring got the show off to a great start as he out-pointed his Army opponent. Next up was AB Iain 'mad dog' McCondichie of HMS Ocean, who had to dig deep to take a points victory over his Army opponent.

The first elite bout of the night saw Mne Lewis Dugan of 42 Cdo lose on points while LPT Liam Short from HMNB Clyde overcame opposition from the Army to take his bout.

Mne Anthony Graham of 42 Cdo topped the bill in the light heavyweight class and overcame his opponent to give the Navy a fifth victory.

The event raised more than £10,000 for DEBRA, a charity which supports people in the UK with the genetic skin-blistering condition Epidermolysis Bullosa.



## Long old way for chip supper

A GROUP of seven Royal Navy cyclists braved poor weather to ride 100 miles of the South Downs Way for a spot of adventure training.

The team, all based at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth, set out from Winchester and overnights at Amberley in West Sussex.

LS(D) Ross Binns said: "The climbs were relentless and the downhill sections were fast and technical, requiring a great deal of concentration."

Day two saw the weather turn, with the rain and low cloud making the going tough.

Maj Mike Campbell RMR led the way up the steepest and most technical climb but then fell off his bike on a straight and flat piece of ground.

The thought of a fish supper spurred the group on to their final destination – Eastbourne seafront.

Group leader Lt Allan Hall said: "With the South Downs on the doorstep you have to take advantage of the AT opportunity."

"All the team pulled together to overcome the challenge and it's an achievement we can be really proud of."

"The event was only made possible with the support of the Sports Lottery, who cover one third of the costs, which goes to show you can get out what you put in."

## Jumpers are second

The ROYAL Navy Showjumping team finished second in the Navy leg of the Loriners competition at the David Broome Centre near Chepstow.

The Navy team, consisting of Lt Cdr Victoria Sollitt with Prim and Proper, Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark RNR on Glorious Prospect and Rear Admiral Simon Charlier piloting George, jumped the first round clear but picked up a total of 12 faults in the second round.

The Navy also had competitors in the Championships of Great Britain classes, including newcomers MA Amy McFarling and Lt Cdr Judith Brocklehurst.

In the run up to the championships disaster struck for Lt Becca Brown as her beloved Tara suffered a fractured leg in the field and was forced into retirement. Becca brought out her young horse Rio for the first time with little more than a week to prepare Rio put in an excellent performance in every class.

## Top title

A YOUNG sailor who only joined the Service a year ago took the Under-25 title at the Combined Services Individual Squash Championships.

ET(ME) James Prendeville, from HMS Daring, recorded a resounding 3-0 victory over AET Conrad Young from RNAS Culdrose.

The victory was the sole one for the Royal Navy, who were unable to field three of their top players because of deployments.

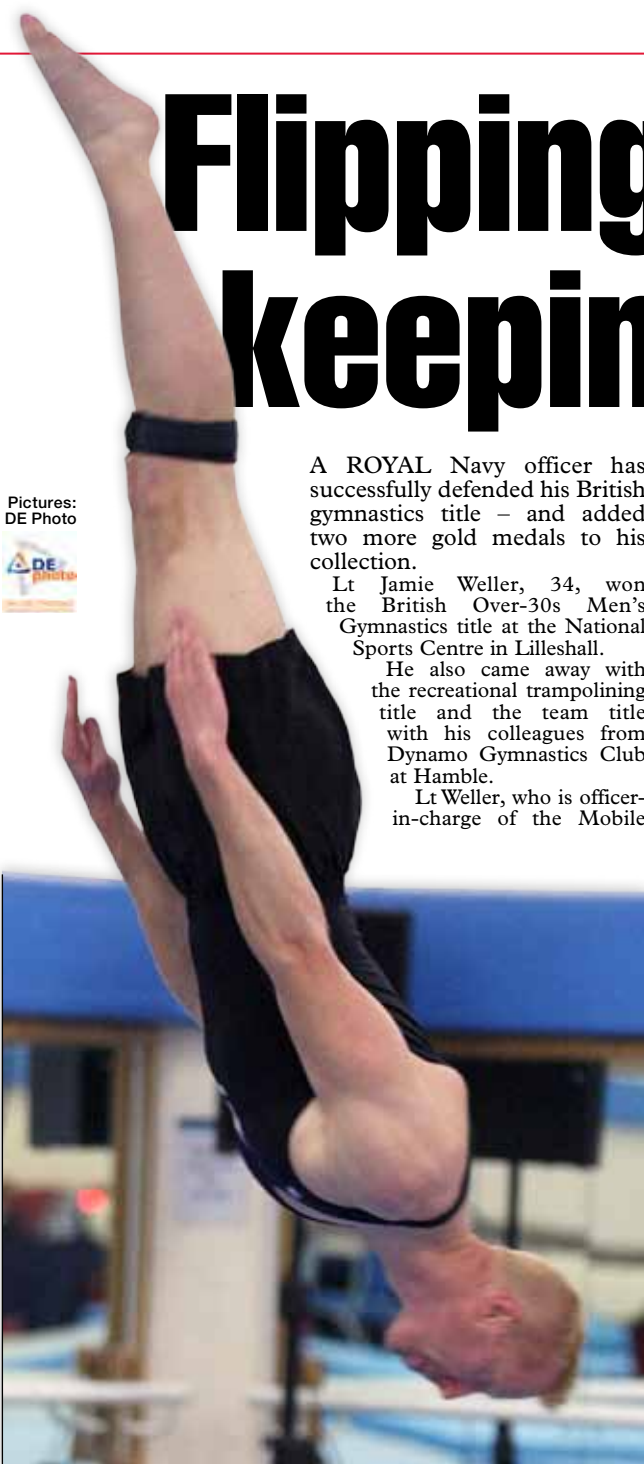
The Army dominated the competition, providing the finalists in the men's open and the ladies' competitions.

The RAF took the veterans' title in the championships held at the Army Garrison Sports Centre in Aldershot.

The next Inter-Services event takes place in the Hampshire town on February 5-6 2015.

# Flipping happy at keeping his title

Pictures: DE Photo



A ROYAL Navy officer has successfully defended his British gymnastics title – and added two more gold medals to his collection.

Lt Jamie Weller, 34, won the British Over-30s Men's Gymnastics title at the National Sports Centre in Lilleshall.

He also came away with the recreational trampolining title and the team title with his colleagues from Dynamo Gymnastics Club at Hamble.

Lt Weller, who is officer-in-charge of the Mobile

News Team at Navy Command Headquarters in Portsmouth, beat many rivals of his age at the British Veterans Gymnastic Competition.

"Gymnastics is all about strength and making it look easy no matter how hard it is," he said.

"I'm a foot taller than most gymnasts at 6ft 2in so I have to change my routines to suit me."

"I have a flair for floor and vault and achieved the highest score on the vault in the whole competition."

"I also got the highest scores on the rings, high bars and parallel bars in all of the professional age groups and the highest men's overall score by 2.5 marks."

Lt Weller, from Kent, performed in the floor, vault, rings, high bar, pommel and parallel bar sections to keep the title that he first won last year. He also competed in the recreational trampolining competition for the first time.

"I didn't really get enough practise in beforehand. Due to my job I was deployed to Bahrain a week and a bit before I was competing so could only do basic strength exercises."

Lt Weller first took part in gymnastics at the age of 11 and continued while he was at Coventry University, taking part in a number of international events.

"I also coached Birmingham University's Gymnastics Club and ended up competing against them," he said.

Lt Weller, who is vice chair of British Schools Gymnastics, retired from competitive gymnastics when he joined the Royal Navy in 2005 but the 2012 London Olympics revived his interest where he was the flag bearer at the opening ceremony, marching the Union and Olympic flags.

He was also officer in charge of ceremonial flag raising at the 02 for the duration of the Games. The centre hosted the gymnastics, trampolining and basketball competitions.

"I was watching the gymnasts and decided I can still do some moves so I started competing again," said Lt Weller, who trains twice a week (in a good week) at Dynamo.

He is now hoping to get a Royal Navy gymnastic team together to compete in a Tri-Service competition next year.

Anyone interested should email him at [Jamie.Weller218@mod.uk](mailto:Jamie.Weller218@mod.uk)



● Lt Weller in action on the rings, above, and the vault, below



● From left: Matt Cook, Jamie Makopa, Simon Duncan, Chris Mills and Jamie Weller from Dynamo Gymnastic Club



● Cdr Bob Bowman helped the RNRMKA win the Inter-Services title

## Fly Navy! Team take top honours

THE Royal Navy Kitesurfing Team took the Inter-Service title in some of the most testing conditions seen in the history of the competition.

The venue was Exmouth, where the riders had only a short period of time to impress the judges in the freestyle category.

The team started strongly in the novice category, winning the early heats to see two of the four finalists from the Royal Navy.

Dominating the final, Lt Nick Horne and Lt Cdr Alex Hampson were able to maintain the upper hand over the Army and RAF competition, taking an early lead for Royal Navy and Royal Marines Kitesurfing Association (RNRMKA) by winning gold and silver respectively.

On reaching the semi-finals, the team worked

hard and were rewarded when three of the four finalists were announced as Navy.

The open final saw Cdr Bob Bowman, Lt James Goddard and Cpl Sam Quirk maintain an incredible standard of riding to be announced victors.

C/Sgt Trev Calvert took the final honours, scooping second place in the veterans' category.

Chairman of the RNRMKA Cdr Henry Merewether said: "It has been a few years since the RN was engraved on the trophy. I know that each and every one of them has put their all into ensuring that the only option was to come away as number one."

For details about the RNRMKA visit the PDev portal or <http://kitenavy.com>

## Runners join field to help charities

ROYAL Naval personnel from across the country took part in the Great South Run in Portsmouth to raise funds for charities.

Sailors from HMS Collingwood completed the ten-mile course in aid of three charities.

Teams from the Sports and Recreational Centre (SARC) Victory Squadron and the Navigational Training Unit included Lt Cdr Adam Northover, PO Emma Grant, PO Stuart Flack, POPT Ian Robinson and LPT Anthony 'Scouse' Carley who all ran for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

Nicky Finnemore and LET(WE) Anne Marie Musslewhite ran in aid of Ataxia and Cancer Research respectively.

Systems Engineering and Management Course (SEMC) students within the Defence School of Marine Engineering at HMS Sultan ran to raise vital funds for the Rainbow Centre.

The centre, which specialises in providing conductive education to adults and children with varying levels and abilities needs to raise around £600,000 a year to operate.

Among the team running was Sub Lt Murray McMonies, who said: "The NHS has limited resources, so many people rely on independent places like the Rainbow Centre to be there to help them develop and reach their full potential."

## Feather in cap

THE Royal Navy road running team were in action again as four of its members took on the Great South Run in Portsmouth.

First home for the Navy team was Mne Adam Peacock, of 30 Cdo, finishing in a time of 58:14 followed closely by Lt Neil Riley, of HMS Nelson, in a time of 58:38 finishing in 62nd and 68th respectively.

The women's team also produced some great results with Lt Cdr Jennifer Jenks, of DCPG Southwick Park, finishing in a time of 1:11:28 with AB Eilidh Bell, of HMS Flying Fox, just behind in a time of 1:11:53 finishing 792nd and 847th.

Royal Navy Running competes in track events during the summer, cross country during the winter and covers distances from 5k to the marathon on the road all year round.

Major annual competitions include the Marine Corps Marathon in Washington DC and the various Inter-Service championships.

The Fleet Half Marathon and IS Half Marathon Championship in March is perfect preparation for the London Marathon.

There are training groups in Plymouth, Portsmouth and at CTCRM throughout the week.

If interested or you require further information contact CSgt Pete Belcher on 01329 414509.

## January submissions

PLEASE note that submissions for January's edition of *Navy News* should be sent by Thursday December 4. Email [EDIT@NAVYNEWS.CO.UK](mailto:EDIT@NAVYNEWS.CO.UK)





# Trip of a lifetime on the Arctic Express

THE crew of training ship Endeavour prepare to leave Storo in Greenland for the Arctic Circle, writes crew member Lt Cdr Robbie Way.

The once-in-a-lifetime experience aimed to test the crew who had been lucky enough to land a place on the Joint Services Adventurous Sailing Centre's Exercise Arctic Express return journey from Iceland to Greenland.

Skipped by Maj Chris Summer, the Endeavour is a 22-metre (67ft) steel-hulled sailing vessel, one of 14 identical yachts originally built to compete in the BT Global Challenge.

With only time to briefly establish that a mixture of regular Army and cadet personnel outnumbered the two RAF and three RN personnel, we were set straight to work.

A number of novice and day skipper-qualified personnel was split into three watches or shifts as the RAF and Army insisted on calling them.

After we had stowed our kit "down stairs" and grabbed a quick "brew" from the "kitchen" I realised that terminology was going to be an ill-fated three-week uphill battle.

After a day-and-a-half whirlwind of safety briefs, harbour sail training, and the storing of provisions using a fleet of shopping trolleys from a supermarket, we set sail for Greenland.

As with all sailing, the route was dictated by the weather and it had us heading out across the Denmark Strait toward southern Greenland.



● From left: Killer whales in the Denmark Strait; Battling a Force 8 gale; A fjord waterfall in Iceland

Although the first 24 hours was a disappointing motor sailing, Thor eventually smiled upon us and gave us some wind. Unfortunately he also gave us a stern sea, which made steering difficult for the inexperienced. After three days and just before we entered Prins Christian Sund a shout on deck had everyone rushing up top to see a pod of pilot whales welcoming us to Greenland.

After an overnight stop alongside a remote weather station, we properly entered the Sund – marvelling at the spectacular scenery and our first experience of picking our way through some minor ice fields spawned from the resident glaciers.

That evening we safely arrived at the town of Nanortalik (population less than 1,400) where we were welcomed into the bar by the residents.

Up early the next morning we motored through thick bitterly-cold sea fog, which tested good humour as we made our way around to the



most southerly town in Greenland, Qaqortoq (formerly Julianehab), where the friendly population is just under 3,500.

After a day alongside exploring and replenishing provisions, we set sail back east around the bottom of Greenland and headed north toward the Arctic Circle. Thor did not smile upon the good ship Endeavour for the next four days and we motored all the way to the small town of Ammassalik.

Only an overnight stop and we were on our way north and the temperature was definitely dropping.

Our final stop before we officially reached the Arctic Circle was an isolated inlet called Storo where we anchored and tested the water. Along with the rest of the crew, I can confirm that swimming in water with large ice cubes nearby is extremely cold.

The next day we headed on to the Arctic Circle, dodging around ever-larger icebergs. A quick photo shoot, a few selfies and we were on our way



back to Iceland. As if sensing our departure a pod of Orcas surfaced to bid us farewell.

Once clear of the shore the wind picked up allowing us to make a quick passage back to Reykjavik.

This memorable voyage took us to some fantastically remote places around the Greenland coast; showcased minke and pilot whales, orcas and Atlantic dolphins, with the odd seal thrown in for good measure.

I hope that other personnel are able to experience the wonders of this part of the world.

■ JSASTC are deploying two 67ft Challenge craft on the year-long Exercise Transglobe, which starts in July 2015. Anyone interested in joining one of the 13 legs can find details in 2014DIN07-079 which is available through the Defence Intranet and the JSASTC websites at [https://pdeportal.co.uk/adventure\\_training/sailing](https://pdeportal.co.uk/adventure_training/sailing) and [www.jsastc.co.uk](http://www.jsastc.co.uk)

# New vessel boost for sailors

THIS is the Navy's newest racing yacht, the 26ft Jackaroo, a J80-class sportsboat at speed during Dartmouth Week 2014.

She's been given a major overhaul and the Royal Navy Sailing Association plans to race her with young crews – providing Naval Service personnel with an opportunity to move up from dinghies towards the big offshore machines.

Based in Plymouth, Jackaroo is attracting crew from Raleigh, BRNC, CTCRM and the Devonport Flotilla.

The Dartmouth Regatta kicked off with a healthy 15 kts and a forecast of heavy winds.

The first race didn't start well with the jib wrapping itself firmly onto the furler, losing vital

seconds. However, with good upwind speed and some intelligent use of the wind shifts, the team was back in the mix by the top mark having overtaken half of the J80s, and finished fifth.

Jackaroo also finished fifth in the second race and took two first places on day two.

Light winds and some tricky shifts were the order of the final day. The team consolidated and made the most of the conditions to take two first-place finishes.

This was the first scoop of silverware for the RNSA's new addition to the fleet.

Whether you have experience or not, get in touch with Darren Roach or Adam James through the Plymouth branch page of the RNSA website.



# Royals are rocking

ROYAL Marines took the honours as around 60 climbers took part in the first Royal Navy and Royal Marines Bouldering Competition in Bristol.

Bouldering, which involves short, powerful and complex movements to 'top out' a climb, involves no other safety gear than soft matting.

The contest started with a two-and-a-half hour qualifying session to attempt 20 climbs with the top five male and female personnel and the top five guests going into the finals.

The Marines won thanks to Andy Hunter, Rob Stanfield and Duncan Turner. The female category was won by Holly Kirkham with Hannah Kirkham second and Ashley Scott third.

In the guest category Tom Brown got first, Howard Blyth second and Roman Labisch taking third.

Anyone wishing to take part in future bouldering events or for more information about the sport visit the RN and RM Mountaineering Club's website [www.rnmcc.org.uk](http://www.rnmcc.org.uk) or [www.facebook.com/rnmcc](http://www.facebook.com/rnmcc).

There is also a tri-service bouldering league taking place over the winter months; more details can be found at DIN 2014DIN10-058.

# Powerful showing

ROYAL Navy powerlifters took centre stage at the Combined Services Powerlifting Championships for 2014, held at RAF Cosford.

The Schwartz formula was used to pit all the lifters against each other and work out who was the strongest across the competition, 'pound for pound'.

ETME Ben Williams started the Navy charge with a massive personal best squat of 235kg, coming third in the category.

Two other lifters from HMS Sultan followed suit. LPTI Jason 'Thomo' Thompson gained a credible second with a bench press of 140kg bench and AET Jack Lowe achieved a third with a deadlift of 260kg.

AET Reece Meakin from RNAS Culdrose and Mne Mark Hourston from RMB Chivenor came second and third respectively in the full power discipline.

The Navy finished second to the Army.

# Sharp end for Navy fencers

THE Royal Navy hosted a Devon-wide fencing charity tournament at Plymouth Naval Base to raise funds for Devon County Fencing Union and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Around 50 fencers converged on the Wyvern Centre at HM Naval Base in Devonport to take part in the team match against the Royal Navy.

Sixteen teams of three from eight different clubs fought in both foil and epee disciplines in the first event of its kind in Devon with mixed gender teams ranging in age from 13 to those in their 70s.

The competition was closely fought, with the Royal Navy hosts facing some tough fights to get through to the finals in both weapons; coming second to Newton Abbot Fencing Club in the epee, and to Plymouth's Salle Lawrence Fencing Club in the foil.