



NAVY NEWS

NOVEMBER 2020

Focus on foe

ROYAL Marines from 42 Commando test Future Commando Force tactics in tunnels prior to deploying to the Mediterranean (see page 9)

PICTURE: PO (PHOT)
Si Ethell

Inside: HMS Queen Elizabeth's Carrier Strike Group assembles



CARRIER

Surrounded by her Carrier Strike Group, HMS Queen Elizabeth's latest deployment to the North Sea has set the tone for the Royal Navy for the next 50 years.

With frigates, destroyers, support ships and her largest number of embarked aircraft ever, the 65,000-tonne carrier was ready to show how future operations could look.

Prior to taking part in Joint Warrior off the coast of Scotland, HMS Queen Elizabeth was joined by NATO's most sophisticated destroyers – the Royal Navy's Type 45s HMS Diamond and HMS Defender and US Navy Arleigh Burke-class USS The Sullivans as well as frigates HMS Northumberland and HMS Kent from the UK and the Dutch Navy's HNLMS Evertsen.

Meanwhile, two Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships, RFA Tideforce and RFA Fort Victoria, also joined the deployment, supplying fuel, food, spares and ammunition.

As reported in last month's Navy News, the Carrier Strike Group had the most embarked F-35B Lightning jets yet – 15 by the time all ships had met. With 11 helicopters as well, the strike group was the largest and most powerful European-led maritime force in almost 20 years.

Commodore Steve Moorhouse, Commander UK Carrier Strike Group, said: "The new UK Carrier Strike Group is the embodiment of British maritime power, and sits at the heart of a modernised and emboldened Royal Navy."

"Protected by a ring of advanced destroyers, frigates, helicopters and submarines, and equipped with fifth-generation fighters, HMS

R STRIKE: ASSEMBLE

Queen Elizabeth is able to strike from the sea at a time and place of our choosing; and with our NATO allies at our side, we will be ready to fight and win in the most demanding circumstances.

“Carrier Strike offers Britain choice and flexibility on the global stage; it reassures our friends and allies and presents a powerful deterrent to would-be adversaries.”

Portsmouth-based frigate HMS Kent operated as the Anti-Submarine Warfare Commander during the group exercise, co-ordinating all aspects of the underwater battle space.

As part of the Carrier Strike Group, it will be frigates like HMS Kent, and the destroyers, who will protect the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers from enemy ships, submarines, aircraft and missiles.

Kent’s commanding officer, Commander Matt Sykes, said: “This deployment has provided a unique opportunity to enhance HMS Kent’s anti-submarine warfare skills, as well as consolidating our continued integration with the Carrier Strike Group.

“The utility of having two extremely capable Type 23 frigates working in concert, both fitted with a cutting-edge suite of underwater sensors, provides a formidable defence against underwater threats and we have demonstrated that to good effect during each phase of the exercise.”

For those on board RFA Fort Victoria, it was a great opportunity to show the vessel is now ready to support the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers. The support ship underwent an extensive modernisation in Birkenhead between 2018 and 2019 and, since getting back on the water, has been training with various navy ships.

Her commanding officer Captain Chris Clarke, said: “2020 marks my 39th year at sea working for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary. And yet, after all this time, it still felt like a real privilege to come alongside HMS Queen Elizabeth for the first time.

“In fact, I think it was a privilege for us all, as we start to understand and intimately interact with the scale, complexity and fire-power of this strategic asset, knowing that we are as much a key player to enabling this capability as her escorts or fighter jets alike.”

A number of milestones were met while HMS Queen Elizabeth was at sea, including the F-35 jets undergoing live weapons training.

617 Squadron, ‘The Dambusters’, and the US Marine Corps’ VMFA-211 jets, spent three days on exercise, dropping 500lb Paveway IV high explosive bombs onto a dedicated range off the coast of the UK.

Directing the bombing runs was 847 Naval Air Squadron, whose

Wildcat helicopters provide wide-ranging battlefield support for commandos on the ground.

The training proved the carrier’s ability to deliver F-35 strike mission sets from weapon prep through to execution.

Captain James Blackmore, Commander Air Group, said: “Working with British and American live weapons is a new experience for the Royal Navy, and the next step on the road toward full operational capability.

“Everyone needs to step up a gear to ensure we are ahead of the game as we move toward HMS Queen Elizabeth’s first operational deployment next year, as from that moment onwards we need to be ready to do this for real.”

Summing up the deployment, Cdre Moorhouse said the Royal Navy has achieved what many people said would be impossible.

“We have formed a sovereign UK Carrier Strike Group with the ships and aircraft necessary to protect and sustain global carrier operations,” he added.

“We’ve also gone a step further by operating and integrating a mixed UK/US air group of strike fighters and by incorporating ships from our closest allies. It represents a substantial injection of political and military capital into the NATO alliance and demonstrates the convening power of the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers.

“There is still much to be done as we continue to prepare for our first operational deployment next year. But be in no doubt: 20 years of ambition has been realised, and the UK Carrier Strike Group is now a reality.”

““““

The new UK Carrier Strike Group sits at the heart of a modernised and emboldened Royal Navy.

Commodore Steve Moorhouse,
Commander UK Carrier Strike Group



● The Royal Navy’s newest Carrier Strike Group. Back row (left to right) HMS Defender, USS The Sullivans, HNLMS Evertsen, HMS Diamond; middle row (left to right) RFA Tideforce, HMS Queen Elizabeth, RFA Fort Victoria; front row (left to right) HMS Northumberland and HMS Kent

Picture: LPhot Belinda Alker

Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Queen Elizabeth
HMS Northumberland
HMS Sutherland
HMS Severn
HMS Mersey
HMS Magpie
HMS Defender
HMS Diamond
HMS Kent
HMS Scott
HMS Tamar
HMS Spey

Project Wilton
RFA Fort Victoria
RFA Tideforce
814 NAS
815 NAS
820 NAS
824 NAS
617 Sqn
VMFA 211



17 TES SQN

RFA Argus
HMS Medway

Gibraltar Squadron

HMS Trent

HMS Dragon

HMS Albion
HMS Lyme Bay

UKMCC

NSF Bahrain

IMSC

COMUKMCMFOR

HMS Montrose

HMS Brocklesby

HMS Shoreham

HMS Chiddingfold

HMS Penzance

1700 NAS

RFA Cardigan Bay

Naval Party 1023

Forward Support Unit

Naval Party 1022

HMS Forth
NEFI

On patrol somewhere beneath the Seven Seas is one Vanguard-class submarine and an undisclosed Trafalgar or Astute-class boat

GLOBAL NAVY
Protecting our nation's interests

SETTING the tone for the Royal Navy for the next 50 years, HMS Queen Elizabeth assembled her Carrier Strike Group (see pages 2-3). With frigates, destroyers, support ships and embarked F-35Bs and Merlin helicopters, the future flagship demonstrated how future operations may look.

On current operations are RFA Argus and HMS Medway (see pages 14-15) who are in the Caribbean and where the task group seized drugs worth more than £160m.

HMS Albion leads the Littoral Response Group (Experimentation) in the Mediterranean (see centre pages), where a team of snipers from 42 Commando honed their marksmanship skills.

Ahead of deploying to the Med, commandos from Juliet Company, 42 Cdo honed their skills in underground tunnels (see page 1 and page 9).

Marines from Mike Company, 42 Cdo, refined their specialist skills to combat pirates and terrorists during the Royal Marines Boarding Course (see pages 16-17).

Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon spent a week in Odesa, Ukraine, forging closer ties with the country's navy (see page 5).

The fifth and final of Britain's next-generation patrol ships was making her debut in Portsmouth as Navy News went to press after successful trials (see page 6). HMS Spey underwent fine-tuning and final tweaks following an intense ten-day workout around the Firth of Clyde and waters of western Scotland before preparing for a long-term mission thousands of miles from the UK.

HMS Montrose completed 100 days on Operation Sentinel, an international mission providing reassurance and protection to thousands of cargo transporters, oil and gas tankers passing in and out of the Gulf region (see page 11).

Minehunters HMS Chiddingfold and Penzance knuckled down to their first test – within a week of arriving in their home for the next three years (see page 11). Barely had the two ships completed the demanding 6,000-mile journey from Portsmouth and Faslane to Bahrain than they were back at sea for a testing eight-day workout.

HMS Enterprise has returned home after her 15-month deployment to the Asia-Pacific region, (see page 7). The survey ship has sailed more than 53,000 nautical miles through two oceans and six seas and visited 15 ports in 11 countries.

Royal Navy bomb disposal experts from the newly-formed Expeditionary Diving Group (see page 31) faced down the latest threats when they joined NATO experts for ten days in Iceland.

Back in the water after extensive work is HMS Protector (see page 13) as she gears up for a return to Antarctica.

Twenty-two serving personnel received awards in this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List (see page 25), including a medic working on the NHS frontline, the RN's State Ceremonial Training Officer and the Commando Chef.

There are ten new aviators ready to carry the Royal Marines into battle after completing their demanding training with Commando Helicopter Force (see page 35).

The Royal Navy's new Type 31 frigates will carry multi-purpose gun systems following a contract award (see page 13). BAE Systems is to produce Bofors 40 Mk4 and Bofors 57 Mk3 naval guns for the general-purpose frigates.

Warfare officer Lt Cdr David Roberts made history as the top naval student in the German military's most prestigious course training the leaders of tomorrow (see page 27).

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen the Royal British Legion change the way it raises funds for this year's Poppy Appeal (see page 23).

A Royal Navy family came up with the winning design for a new memorial to the Submarine Service at the National Memorial Arboretum (see page 31).

Two Royal Navy personnel have between them notched up 108 years in service (see page 28). Aged 74, Lt Cdr Al Cronin is finally retiring as Britain's oldest and longest-serving sailor, while Chief Petty Officer Martin Etwell has marked 50 years of cooking for fellow sailors and Royal Marines.

The crew of HMS Talent are the first winners of a new award recognising those who go above and beyond the call of duty (see page 26).

Three Royal Naval Reserve units have welcomed new commanding officers (see page 29).

Finally, this year's Peregrine Trophy winners have been announced (see page 19) with the coveted title of Royal Navy photographer of the year going to Leading Photographer Kyle Heller.

Let's hear it for our cadets

THIS month, we want to celebrate the area that is often people's first taste of the Royal Navy – our cadet forces.

The Sea Cadets were founded in 1856 as the Naval Lads Brigade, by coastal communities who wanted to help orphans from the Crimean War.

Sailors passed on nautical skills and training to give these young people a future, and soon the initiative had spread across the country.

Today, there are nearly 15,000 Sea Cadets, including a thriving Royal Marines Cadet section, supported by nearly 9,000 volunteers.

You can always read about what the Sea Cadets have achieved in Navy News every month.

Our cadets take part in activities from sailing to mountaineering, as well as fundraising and supporting their local

VIEW BRIDGE

communities. And they earn qualifications while doing so – nearly 64,000 separate awards in the last year.

But the Sea Cadets also have a much wider effect. In an age where STEM subjects are increasingly important, the Sea Cadets are working in partnership with Seafarers UK to deliver a hugely successful Marine Engineering

Pathway programme, inspiring young people to pursue engineering careers through STEM workshops.

And the social impact of Sea Cadets is huge. Forty per cent of cadets receive free school meals (compared with 31 per cent nationally), and thanks to the Stelios Foundation the Sea Cadets have been able to increase their outreach to more disadvantaged young people via a new On The Water programme.

The results speak for themselves; in a recent survey, three quarters said that their risky or antisocial behaviour had decreased since they joined the cadets.

However, much of cadet activity relies on group activity, which has caused its own challenges during the current

pandemic.

How can young people carry on experiencing the benefits of the Sea Cadets during COVID? This is where the actions of one cadet in particular have made a real difference.

Petty Officer Cadet John Challenger, pictured, is the First Sea Lord's Cadet for the North West and North Wales region.

The First Sea Lord's Cadets are the senior cadets in each region and are selected for their experience and leadership.

When lockdown started, he set up a programme of online engagement including a virtual quiz night to keep the 2300 cadets in his region in touch with one another.

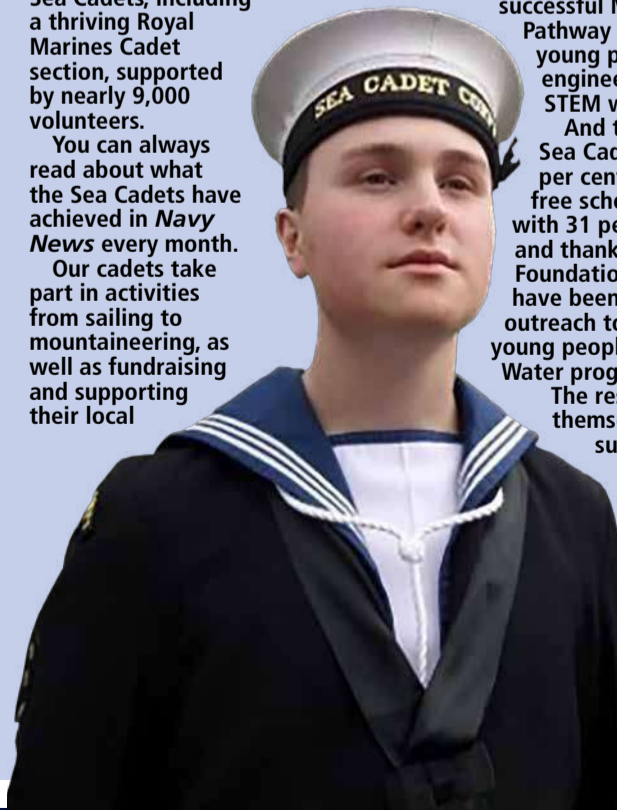
He also worked with his fellow First Sea Lord Cadets to unite cadets in thanking the NHS via a "thank you" video.

His actions helped a huge number of young people, tackling mental health concerns, keeping them in touch with one another and building support networks that stretch right across the country.

As a result, he was awarded the British Empire Medal in the recent Queen's Birthday Honours List, one of the youngest members of the Royal Navy ever to be honoured in this way.

Although we still live in uncertain times, John and his fellow cadets are still working to ensure that the Sea Cadet experience continues to benefit everyone.

These are the qualities of selflessness, dedication and teamwork that epitomise the whole of the Royal Navy family, and are why the Sea Cadets continue to flourish. Sea Cadet honours, see page 33 Royal Navy honours, see page 25



SUBSCRIBE ONLINE AT ROYALNAVY.MOD.UK/NAVYNEWS News@royalnavymail.mod.uk advertising@navynews.co.uk



Dragon's fruitful visit

HMS Dragon spent a week in Ukraine's premier port forging closer ties with the country's navy.

The Portsmouth-based destroyer broke away from the UK's amphibious task group currently operating in the Mediterranean to patrol the Black Sea, working with Britain's allies and partners in the region to guarantee freedom of movement.

She sailed through the Dardanelles and Bosphorus bound for the historic Black Sea port of Odesa, home of the Ukrainian Navy, for a high-profile visit focused on diplomacy and combined training, before members of the ship's company paid their respects to the city's World War 2 dead.

Ukraine is at the beginning of a 15-year plan to build up its navy, support facilities, shipbuilding and ports on the Black Sea and Sea of Azov with the goal of becoming a major regional maritime force by 2035.

Dragon's visit to Odesa builds on the solid foundations laid by Operation Orbital, which has already seen more than 18,000 Ukrainian troops train alongside UK Armed Forces personnel.

The destroyer's Commanding Officer Commander Giles Palin joined senior members

of the Ukrainian Navy, including its head Rear Admiral Oleksiy Neizhpapa.

The ship's passageways and compartments turned into a training ground for elite Ukrainian commando forces, 73rd Marine detachment, who practised board-and-search skills.

And staff from the Ukrainian Navy's damage control school were shown how Royal Navy sailors respond to fire and flood on board, while the team behind the destroyer's Wildcat discussed operating a helicopter safely at sea from the deck of a modern warship and survival equipment with their Ukrainian counterparts.

Lieutenant Dimitrii Rudnev, in charge of the new Ukrainian reconnaissance ship UKRS Lahuna joined Dragon for the day of manoeuvres with three of his nation's patrol ships off the coast of Odesa to learn about the Royal Navy's routines at sea – and how it conducts close, complex manoeuvres with foreign vessels, assisted by standard NATO terminology and procedures.

"It means a lot to be here on HMS Dragon – particularly so soon after President Zelenskyy visited HMS Prince of Wales in England," he said. "Both navies working alongside one

another is further affirmation of strong UK-Ukrainian bonds."

In addition, the Wildcat shared Black Sea skies with an Mi-14 from 10 Naval Aviation Brigade, painted in Ukraine's national colours of light blue and yellow.

"We are delighted to be working alongside the Ukrainian Navy while in Odesa – and to be learning valuable insights from one another through joint training," said Cdr Palin.

"We've tested our reactions to emergencies through practising advanced fire-fighting techniques and honed the ability of both nations' specialist teams to conduct interdiction operations through boarding training.

"By capacity building with allies in this way, we bolster their resilience and ability to defend themselves in the face of any aggression – as well as enabling us to learn from their experiences."

Odesa enjoys a

Mediterranean-esque climate – it's still in the low 20s Celsius in early October – and feel with tree-line boulevards and grand 18th and 19th Century buildings.

But it was laid waste during a bitter siege in WW2 from German and Romanian troops, while as many as 60,000 men and women sacrificed themselves defending the city.

The sailors and marines who took part in the autumn battles of 1941 are remembered by the impressive red granite Monument to the Unknown Sailor which rises 21 metres above Shevchenka Park.

Dragon's ship's company paid their respects to Odesa's heroes by laying a wreath at the foot of the memorial.

And on a lighter note, the Band of the Ukrainian Navy performed on the jetty next to the Portsmouth-based destroyer – with the ship's company lining the side in appreciation.

Pictures: LPhot
Fin Hutchins

KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

Follow @HMSDragon and @RoyalNavy on Twitter



A Naval Charity providing personal help and advice for all serving and former members of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines, their Reserves and Families on;

Civilian Employment & Personal Administration
Including - resettlement finances, pensions and commutation, legal and family law matters

For further information please contact:

www.whiteensign.co.uk

0207 407 8658

office@whiteensign.co.uk



Last but not least

THE fifth and final of Britain's next-generation patrol ships was expected to make her debut in Portsmouth as *Navy News* went to press.

HMS Spey underwent fine-tuning and final tweaks following an intense ten-day workout around the Firth of Clyde and waters of western Scotland before preparing for a long-term mission thousands of miles from the UK.

The 2,000-tonne patrol ship is at the vanguard of the Royal Navy's ongoing programme of stationing warships around the world in areas key to Britain's interests.

HMS Forth and Medway are already deployed to the Falklands and Caribbean, with the patrol areas of Trent, Tamar and Spey herself yet to be announced.

For now, the ship's company and shipwrights and technicians from BAE Systems were making the final preparations for Spey's 700-mile journey from the Clyde to the Solent.

As with her maiden voyage, the delivery trip will see the ship crewed jointly by Royal Navy personnel and merchant crew – Spey was to enter Portsmouth under the Blue Ensign (denoting a vessel in government service, rather than one in the Fleet).

Her trials focused largely on the basics of seafaring, testing machinery, propulsion, steering, sensors, winches and cranes, and communications.

The ship's guns, led by her main 30mm

armament – fired remotely from the operations room – were flashed up off the island of Ailsa Craig, pictured, against a giant red 'killer tomato' inflatable target.

Spey also encountered one of her first-generation River-class sisters, HMS Mersey – although she had to slow down from her regular 24kts speed to allow the 17-year-old fishery protection vessel to keep pace with her.

Blessed with perfect weather conditions, all trial serials were completed on time and met the high standards demanded of them – much to the delight of Spey's first Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Commander Ben Evans.

"It was great to see how the ship performed at sea," he said.

"These trials allowed the ship to really be put through her paces for the first time, and we were able to witness first-hand how the last of the five brand new Offshore Patrol Vessels performs.

"It has taken a lot of planning and hard work to get to this point, made

especially difficult due to the ongoing pandemic, and I am thankful to everyone involved for getting us to this milestone.

"Everything has been conducted with safety in mind and I am really pleased with the results. Next stop: Portsmouth!"

Once in Portsmouth there will be further trials and training, the ship will be formally transferred to the Royal Navy and commissioned, before being ready for front-line operations by the early summer of 2021 so she can take her place alongside her four sisters.

She'll also foster closer ties with her affiliated county of Moray in Scotland – the river Spey flows through it into the North Sea – and its principal town, Elgin.



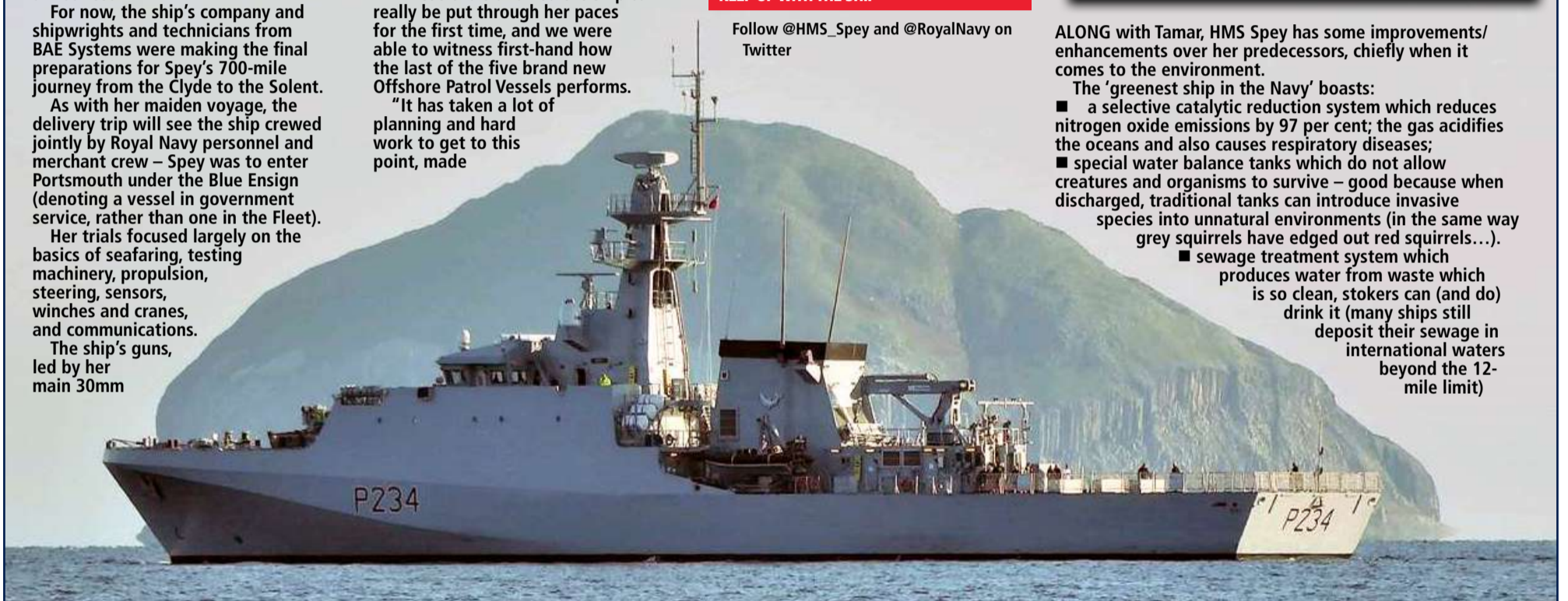
KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

Follow @HMS_Spey and @RoyalNavy on Twitter

ALONG with Tamar, HMS Spey has some improvements/enhancements over her predecessors, chiefly when it comes to the environment.

The 'greenest ship in the Navy' boasts:

- a selective catalytic reduction system which reduces nitrogen oxide emissions by 97 per cent; the gas acidifies the oceans and also causes respiratory diseases;
- special water balance tanks which do not allow creatures and organisms to survive – good because when discharged, traditional tanks can introduce invasive species into unnatural environments (in the same way grey squirrels have edged out red squirrels...).
- sewage treatment system which produces water from waste which is so clean, stokers can (and do) drink it (many ships still deposit their sewage in international waters beyond the 12-mile limit)



Frigate rescues dad and son from boat

A FATHER and son were saved by HMS Westminster seconds before their fishing boat capsized in Weymouth Bay.

The frigate raced through the bay at top speed after receiving a mayday from the crew of the Ocean Echo, which capsized in heavy seas about three miles off Portland Bill.

As she arrived at the scene 15 minutes later after a five-mile dash, Westminster's bridge team quickly spotted flares waved by the 40-year-old skipper and his 17-year-old son.

The Portsmouth-based warship put one of her boats in the water to rescue the pair. The crew of the boat – Leading Seaman Cameron Evans and Able Seamen Leah Mears and Kai Turner – found the Ocean Echo's two sailors had taken to a life raft.

The pair received a quick medical survey by the Westminster sailors, who decided their minor injuries meant they could be handed over to Weymouth RNLI lifeboat which arrived shortly after the warship.

The fishermen were taken back to land by the RNLI boat, while the fishing vessel turned turtle as the rescue was taking place.

"Unfortunately Ocean Echo was quickly lost which shows the speed at which incidents like this can escalate and that the swift actions of HMS Westminster enabled a good outcome for the casualties," said Commander Lou Ray, the frigate's Commanding Officer.

"This is exactly the sort of reactive incident that the Royal Navy is able to conduct at short notice.

"My ship's company and I are always prepared to assist our fellow mariners when in difficulty and wish a speedy recovery to the affected fishermen and their families."

Her ship only sailed from Portsmouth the previous day following an extensive two-month package of work, including fitting a new diesel engine and an upgrade to some of her key radar systems.

The new engine immediately proved its worth, while the improved radar will be tested off the south coast as the frigate gears up for an exceptionally busy 2021.

Montrose in record drugs haul

SAILORS and Royal Marines from HMS Montrose seized more than 450 kilograms of methamphetamine, with a wholesale value of £18m – the largest such haul to be made in the Gulf.

The operation, which was part of the Combined Maritime Forces' (CMF) Operation Sea Shield, was an international effort involving several of CMF's 33 member nations and partners.

In rough seas, and aided by the ship's Wildcat helicopter, sailors and Royal Marines conducted the boarding of the suspicious vessel, and during an extensive search discovered the 450kg haul hidden among the boat's cargo.

The ship's medical team was responsible for de-contaminating all personnel and all equipment, and specialist PPE was used throughout the boarding process.

Commanding Officer of HMS Montrose Commander Charles Collins said: "Every sailor and marine, airman and woman, alongside our international partners, should be proud to have contributed to the success of this operation which has undoubtedly kept millions of pounds of drugs off our streets."

The Royal Marine Boarding Team's Officer Commanding from 42 Commando Lt Joe Martin said: "For many of the Royal Marines in the team, this was their first operational tasking.

"It's good to see all of our hard work and training come to fruition



in an operational environment where we are truly making a positive impact to regional maritime security."

With four mine countermeasure vessels, a forward deployed Type 23 frigate and a Royal Fleet Auxiliary support ship permanently deployed in the Middle East, the Royal Navy remains committed to keeping the region's critical sea lanes free from

illegal activity in order to maintain maritime security.

The CMF, whose deputy commander is currently Commodore Dean Bassett, is a multinational maritime partnership that works to counter illicit activity in the Gulf.

100 days of success, see page 11.

Carrier hosts Atlantic summit

HMS QUEEN Elizabeth has once again hosted the annual Atlantic Future Forum.

The conference saw political and business leaders and military personnel come together to discuss how the UK and United States can continue to work closely together while facing future challenges.

The scaled back event, complying with COVID-19 restrictions, saw panellists and speakers talk about important matters from the digital age to climate change, both in the hangar of carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth and virtually.

During the two-day event, held as *Navy News* went to print, an update on the programme for the Fleet Solid Support was given, including the ships now being considered warships and how they will support the navy's Carrier Strike Groups.

First and Second Sea Lords, Admiral Tony Radakin and Vice-Admiral Nick Hines, co-hosted the summit while it was chaired by former Cabinet Secretary Lord Mark Sedwill.

Plans are underway for a Pacific Future Forum to be hosted on the aircraft carrier in 2021.

BOLDLY GONE

Enterprise returns to Plymouth after 15-month deployment to Asia-Pacific

WITH blue skies and calm harbour waters, it was a return home sailors on HMS Enterprise have been looking forward to for months.

Although their families and loved ones had to watch on from a distance, complying with current COVID-19 guidelines, it was still a homecoming to remember for those on board the Royal Navy survey ship.

Enterprise returned to Plymouth following an epic 15-month deployment to the Asia-Pacific which started last July when she sailed from London.

Since then, the ship has sailed a total of 53,000 nautical miles through two oceans and six seas, visiting 15 different ports in 11 countries.

As well as having the chance to come alongside in places the Royal Navy has not visited for years, Enterprise was also part of some memorable moments, from hosting royalty in Japan to offering critical aid to Lebanon.

The ship's journey started in Brest, France, and then continued east to Crete, through Suez, past the Middle East and on to Singapore.

She then stopped in Japan, before tracking Super Typhoon Hagibis to Tokyo where the ship hosted the Prince of Wales. Enterprise was in Japan as part of the enthronement of its new emperor Naruhito and worked with the country's navy, meeting up with destroyer JS Teruzuki.

After leaving Japan, the ship headed back to Singapore before spending Christmas in South Korea where the crew won a Christmas Eve

football match against the Korean navy team while alongside in Busan.

After a brief stop in Vietnam, Enterprise started the long journey home.

It was while the ship was in Cyprus, she was called upon to help in Beirut after the devastating explosion at the city's port.

As well as dropping off crucial supplies and personnel, Enterprise surveyed the port to ensure it was safe for future shipping.

Then, she was able to continue her travels back to the UK.

Hydrographic specialist AB James Carruthers said: "When we travelled to Beirut, we delivered some important medical supplies. We were berthed right next to where the explosion had happened.

"You could see all the destruction which had been caused, buildings damaged, a thick layer of dust everywhere that hadn't been cleared away yet – it was pretty humbling I would say."

HMS Enterprise operates a three-crew system – sailors spend three months on board before flying home to complete courses and training.

AB Carruthers added: "It was nice to see Plymouth as we came back in to Britain, I'm looking forward to be going home to Staffordshire and seeing my girlfriend and family, as well as having some time to myself.

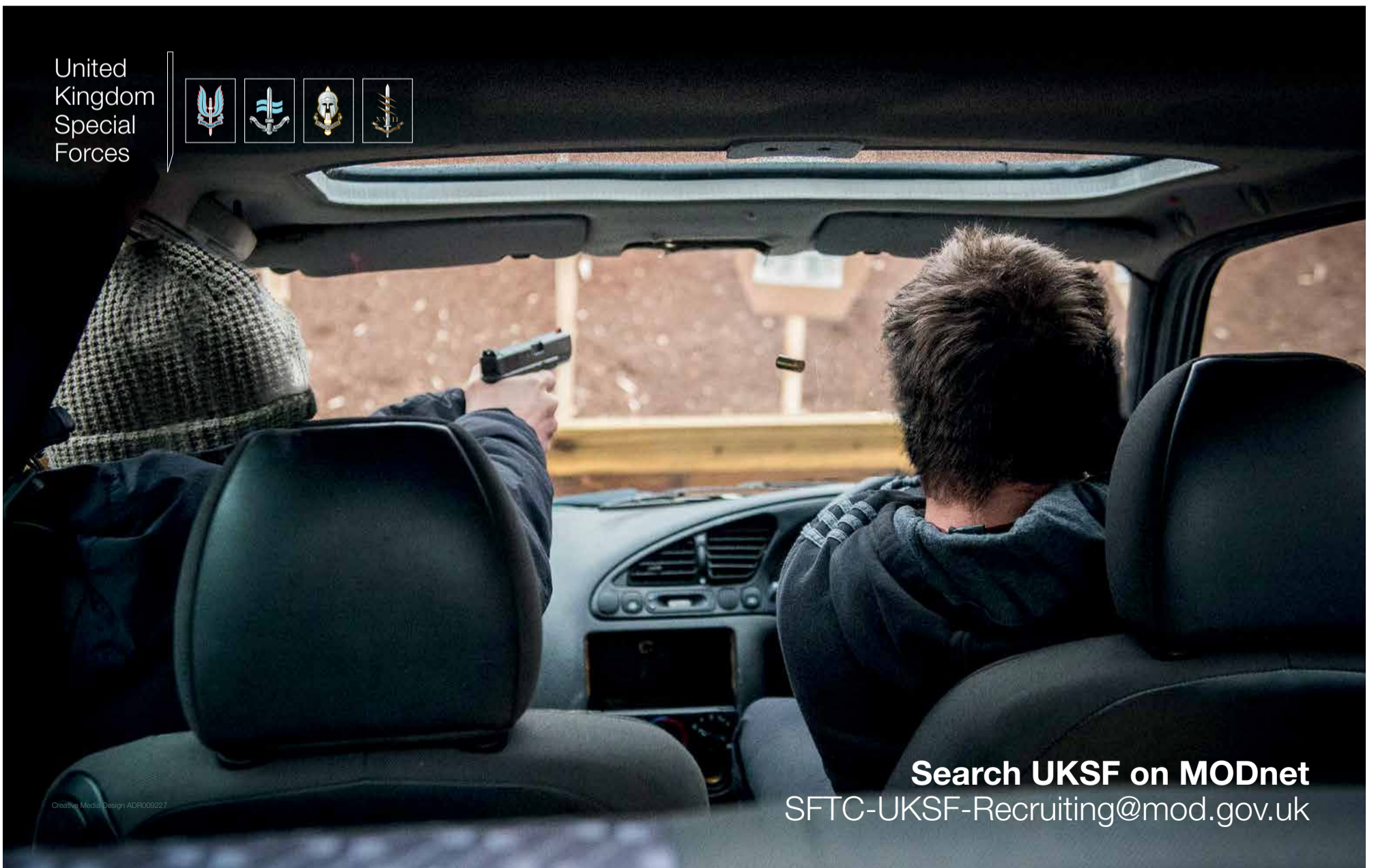
"It was nice to see some friends and families on the shore as we came in on Plymouth Hoe. I think everyone on board was glad to be back in Devonport safe and sound."



Picture: LPhoto Phil Bloor



United Kingdom
Special Forces



Search UKSF on MODnet
SFTC-UKSF-Recruiting@mod.gov.uk

Atkins & Co.
Chartered Accountants



CASH FOR YOU

Do you drive from home to work?
Do you own your own car?
Have you worked in different locations?

You could be entitled to thousands of pounds in TAX REFUNDS. Millions have already been received by your colleagues.

- Over 10 years experience
- Family connections with RN and RM, so you know you are in safe hands
- Bootneck and Matelot friendly
- We'll square the admin away!
- Specialist areas:- Maritime security, Overseas and UK security sector, Diving, Pilots and Rental Property

**GET YOUR TAX REFUND NOW!
CONTACT US TODAY**

**FIXED FEE OF £100 PER YEAR
NO REFUND – NO FEE**

E: info@atkinsandco.com

T: 01934 527888

W: www.atkinsandco.com

Atkins & Co. Chartered Accountants are fully regulated by ICAEW (Institute of Chartered Accountants in England & Wales)



TUNNEL

VISION

ROYAL Marines held at high-readiness for maritime security operations have pushed themselves in a vast underground complex ahead of being deployed to the Mediterranean.

Marines from Juliet Company of Plymouth-based 42 Commando work in small teams on Royal Navy warships around the world, ready to react to emergencies and specialist missions, like counter-piracy and boarding operations.

J Company is also the home of the Fleet Contingency Troop (FCT) – experts in a range of security missions and the UK's only force trained in opposed boarding operations (known as Level 3 (Opposed)) outside of Special Forces.

The FCT have been training in a subterranean world that became a facility for the potential relocation of the government in times of crisis during the 1950s with the threat of nuclear war looming large.

These days, parts of it are a useful training area; a place where the commandos can push themselves in the art of close-quarters combat, testing their well-rehearsed tactics, techniques and procedures to quickly assess and deal with threats in even the trickiest of environments.

This is all ahead of deployment to the Mediterranean to join their 42 Commando comrades from Support Company – plus elements from 40 Commando, 47 Commando and 30 Commando IX – as the future of commando forces is shaped on the Littoral Response Group (Experimentation) deployment this autumn, see pages 20-21.

“Training such as this, in unfamiliar training areas, with an enemy provided from outside of our own unit, is of exceptional

value to driving the FCT capability and to honing our skillset within the UK,” said Captain John Morrow, second in command of J Company.

The Fleet Contingency Troop worked in small teams against ‘enemy’ troops, who were tasked to hold a network of corridors and rooms that would require great skill to liberate.

The FCT quickly entered the tunnels, calling on experience and intuition as they conducted a hasty estimate of how best to proceed.

The enemy were tasked with firing simulated munitions at the advancing marines and causing havoc, providing the FCT with a tough test as they worked methodically through the dark and tight corridors to achieve their objective. The FCT are held at very high-readiness for level 3 (opposed) maritime and land-based operations – that is to say the adversary will attempt to block any boarding attempt and fighting will be involved – around the world.

because you're there for us

Our team of lawyers have many years of experience providing specialist legal advice to forces personnel. Our military law experts will not only advise you on issues arising from the line of duty but with your home life as well.

There for you supporting the forces

wilkin chapman llp
inc. gilbert blades
solicitors



Contact: **01522 512345** or visit wilkinchapman.co.uk
Out of hours for Military Discipline Matters only, contact Gordon Holt on **07973 667869**



By Appointment to
Her Majesty The Queen
Medallists
Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd
Bromsgrove

Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd

Specialists in Orders, Decorations and Medals
56 Broad Street, Sidemoor, Bromsgrove, B61 8LL



Medals mounted for wear and display
Miniature and full size replacement medals supplied, all made in the UK to the highest standard.

See our web site where you can order securely on-line
www.worcedals.com
or call 01527 835275 and our team will be pleased to help you.



Thinking about ADOPTION?

SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity is a Registered Adoption Agency, covering the whole of the UK and has been rated 'Outstanding' by Ofsted.

We are military specialists, who understand your adoption needs. We promote equality and welcome applications from all members of the serving community.

To find out more

Call 020 7463 9326

Email adoption@ssafa.org.uk

Visit ssafa.org.uk/adoption



“Prospective adopters chose this agency because they felt understood as military families, offered a non-judgemental approach and saw strengths which other agencies had considered as weaknesses. Adopters can share any issues without being judged, in the knowledge that they will receive unconditional support.”

- OFSTED



With the help of SSAFA, Navy Officer Mitch and his disabled wife Susie were able to adopt a sibling group of two and continue to receive regular support.



Prestigious UK award for US flier

THE British naval attaché to the United States presented a US aviator with the prestigious Britannia Award.

Rear Admiral Andrew Betton presented the award to Lt Ian Arbuckle at NAS Oceana in Virginia Beach.

Lt Arbuckle, a pilot with VFA 106 – aka the Gladiators – said: “It is the culmination of the dedication, and the professionalism of the T-45 strike instructor cadre involved in training future pilots such as myself.”

Lt Arbuckle, who is from Houston, received his commission from the US Naval Academy in 2017. He is currently in the strike phase of his training on the F/A-18E and F Super Hornet at VFA-106.

The Britannia Award is part of the Chief of Naval Air Training's annual Aviation Awards programme. It is given to the Navy or Marine Corps student aviator graduate of the strike pipeline who demonstrates the highest overall weapons score and performance in the advanced phase of strike training.

Lt Arbuckle won the award for his record at NAS Kingsville, while attached to VT-21.

The Britannia Award, established in 1956 by the Lord Commissioners of the Admiralty of the United Kingdom, is an annual award consisting of a scroll and a trophy.

It was given as a token of appreciation for the assistance rendered by the United States Navy in training Fleet Air Arm pilots in WW2 and the 1950s.

More than 250 British trainee pilots passed through US air training centres, where they were instructed by US Navy instructor pilots and brought up to US Navy operational standards.

A decade earlier, more than 28,000 naval pilots were trained and qualified with the US during the war years.

The trophy is a sterling silver model of the Vampire jet fighter which made the first scheduled jet deck landing in the world aboard HMS Ocean in December 1945.

WW2 bomb made safe

ROYAL Navy bomb disposal experts successfully made safe a piece of World War 2 ordnance on the southern shore of the Bristol Channel.

Called to a report of an unknown object exposed by the unusually low tide a few hundred metres off the National Trust beach at Middle Hope, north of the Somerset holiday resort of Weston-Super-Mare, the team from Devonport's Southern Diving Unit 1 – SDU1, carried out a controlled explosion on the device.

The piece of ordnance turned out to be an anti-submarine mortar bomb, thought to have been used in the area when the near-by MOD weapon research facility was in operation.

Petty Officer Diver Rob Bishop, team leader of the duty bomb disposal crew, said: “It was important to dispose of it, because of the vicinity to the beach and both Bristol and Cardiff Airports, it's was directly in line with their runways.”

100 DAYS OF SUCCESS

SIX hundred and 50 merchant ships sailing through Middle East hot spots owe their safety and security to HMS Montrose.

The British frigate has completed 100 days on Operation Sentinel – an international mission providing reassurance and protection to thousands of cargo transporters, oil and gas tankers passing in and out of the Gulf region.

Sentinel – run by the eight-nation International Maritime Security Construct from Bahrain – originally focused on safe passage through the Strait of Hormuz, gateway to the Gulf.

The operation's domain has since expanded to cover other 'choke points'/danger zones, notably the Bab-el-Mandeb narrows (aka 'The BAM') at the foot of the Red Sea and an invisible highway through the Gulf of Aden, the International Recognised Transit Corridor (previously known as 'Pirate Alley') which merchant ships are encouraged to use and receive protection/assistance from warships.

The BAM is the gateway to Suez, the Mediterranean, Europe and ultimately the North Atlantic and UK

used by around 50 merchant ships every day... while one sixth of the world's oil and a third of its liquefied natural gas pass through Hormuz.

Montrose acts as one of several 'sentinels' – larger warships – and smaller 'sentries' which, in connection with patrol aircraft and helicopters, build up a picture of life in the region, spot anything unusual and provide protection where necessary.

It's a demanding, relentless task, daily, nightly, requiring Montrose to be at the very top of her game.

"Being in charge of a 4,500 tonne, 133-metre-long warship, manoeuvring her at high speeds amongst dense merchant shipping is probably the greatest challenge faced out here," said Sub Lieutenant Connor Brain, one of the Officers of the Watch on duty on Montrose's bridge.

Lieutenant Commander Martyn Harris, Montrose's Principal Warfare Officer, added: "Maintaining constant vigilance and readiness to respond to any challenge 24 hours a day, seven days a week, thousands of miles from my home and family can be difficult but these crucial sea lanes have to be open to allow free flow of maritime commerce.

"If this flow stops it will impact on everyone in the UK and around the world. I feel real pride knowing that families all over the UK have gas and petrol because of the hard work we do here.

"When we act as a sentinel we are the guard dog on the Strait of Hormuz, deterring illegal activity and hostile acts so that everyone can benefit from the trade in this region."

In her 100-plus days on Sentinel, Bahrain-based HMS Montrose has broadcast more than 1,300 radio messages assisting and guiding merchant sailors safely – as well as accompanying vessels, including British minehunters, through the choke points on occasions.

"Ensuring the free flow of international commerce is our top priority and we do this through the three tenets of our mission: vigilance, surveillance, and assurance," explained Commodore Rob Bellfield, the Royal Navy officer who's overseen Operation Sentinel since the end of April.

"I have served more than 30 years – much of it at sea or in supporting operations – which has helped me develop a keen insight into the merchant maritime community

particularly in this region that is vital to international trade."

Montrose has also joined the navies of the USA and Pakistan on Operation Sea Shield, in the Gulf of Oman looking for arms traffickers and drug smugglers.

And the frigate found time to conduct a range of training in between key operational tasks, such as combat-readiness drills for surface engagements and ongoing training with her Wildcat helicopter from 815 Naval Air Squadron in Yeovilton, which is vital for providing intelligence and 'top cover' and supporting boarding operations.

Her entire ship's company is changed every four months, trading places with colleagues from the UK who train at home then fly out to Bahrain to take charge of the frigate.

"The training was tough but with such regular support, we know that we are at the top of our game and ready for anything," said Leading Engineering Technician Alexander Dawkins.

KEEP UP WITH THE SHIPS

Follow @HMSMontrose, @IMSC_Sentinel and @RoyalNavy on Twitter



STRAIGHT INTO THE THICK OF THE ACTION

MINEHUNTERS HMS Chiddingfold and Penzance knuckled down to their first test – within a week of arriving in their home for the next three years.

Barely had the two ships completed the demanding 6,000-mile journey from Portsmouth and Faslane to Bahrain than they were back at sea for a testing eight-day workout.

The two ships joined US forces and the UK's minehunting mother/command ship RFA Cardigan Bay for the latest in a series of Anglo-American exercises which ensure the two navies' mine warfare forces are the very tip of the spear.

The Gulf waters off Bahrain – which is the hub of both US and Royal Navy operations in the Middle East – were littered with dummy mines and contacts ready for the participants to find them.

Joining the two British warships in the hunt was their American counterpart USS Dexters, American explosive ordnance disposal technicians (similar to Royal Navy clearance divers) and huge HM-53E Sea Dragons – for which the UK has no equivalent; the helicopters pull minesweeping sleds or sonar through the water.

For the new arrivals it was a chance to acclimatise both to Gulf conditions and to working side-by-side with the US Navy so that both can work seamlessly together in the event of a major incident.

The exercise consisted of realistic mine-hunting simulations as mine warfare teams practised detecting and classifying training aids shaped like mines – typically using sonar and the Seafox remote-controlled submersible – and then neutralising them, again using Seafox (which carries an explosive charge) or by putting divers in the water to manually place charges and detonate devices safely.

All of which is standard minehunting/exercise fare. For an added frisson, the US Navy sent in its Mark VI Patrol Boats to see how the force defended itself (pictured below chasing Chid).

Minehunters are slow – 17kts top speed – and minehunting operations especially so as the ships crawl along at a couple of knots on safety grounds.

The patrol boats are nearly three times faster and armed with 25mm chain guns – but the Brits fought

back with 30mm cannon, Miniguns and SA80s.

Commanding the British and US minehunters from RFA Cardigan Bay was Commander Richard Talbot, who is responsible for the RN's mine warfare assets in the Gulf.

"This exercise has been hugely important to choreograph and employ air, surface and underwater mine countermeasure capabilities required to defeat a potential threat," he said.

"It's given our sailors and airmen and women a chance to work alongside one another, share knowledge and build on the already strong relationships we have."

The value the US Navy places on the RN's mine warfare expertise is underscored by the fact that the deputy commander of its minehunters in Bahrain – collectively Combined Task Force 52 – is a Briton, Captain Donald Crosbie.

"With almost 30 years working in the Navy's mine clearance specialism, it is good to be sharing my experience with our US partners within Task Force 52," he said.

"It's particularly special to be working with HMS Penzance again, a ship that I commanded in 2003."



WELCOME

home with a Barclays mortgage

We're proud to support the Forces Help to Buy scheme, which lets you apply for an interest-free loan of up to half your salary (£25,000 maximum) to put towards your deposit, and estate agent and solicitor fees.

Get in touch to see how we could help you find the right mortgage. Contact us 24/7, except on UK public holidays, from anywhere in the world.

[Search Barclays Forces Help to Buy](#)

Make money work for you



All mortgages are subject to application, financial circumstances and borrowing history. T&Cs apply.

Barclays Bank UK PLC. Authorised by the Prudential Regulation Authority, and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority and the Prudential Regulation Authority (Financial Services Register No 759676). Registered in England. Registered no 9740322. Registered Office 1 Churchill Place, London E14 5HP. August 2020.



Picture:
LPhoto
Will Haigh

New gun systems for Type 31s

THE Royal Navy's new Type 31 frigates will carry multi-purpose gun systems following a contract award.

BAE Systems is to produce Bofors 40 Mk4 and Bofors 57 Mk3 naval guns for the general-purpose frigates.

The agreement, through a contract with Babcock International, will supply the Royal Navy with a set of gun systems for its fleet of five ships, with the first ship expected to go into service in 2027.

The contract includes five Bofors 57 Mk3 medium calibre guns and ten Bofors 40 Mk4 small calibre guns. Both close-in weapon systems are designed to protect the ships against modern and future complex threats.

"We will be providing the most cutting-edge gun system technology available which can adapt to different levels of conflict, including peacekeeping missions, local coastguard operations, and military operations," said Lena Gillström, managing director for BAE Systems Bofors.

"This contract increases the number of European nations deploying our advanced, flexible weapon systems."

BAE Systems' scope of work for the Type 31 programme also includes services, tools, spares, documentation and support.

Both naval gun systems will be manufactured at BAE Systems' facility in Karlskoga, Sweden, with deliveries expected to take place in 2023 and 2024.

The Bofors 57 Mk3 is used by eight nations, including Canada, Finland, Germany and Sweden, as well as the United States, where it is known as the Mk110 naval gun. The Bofors 40 Mk4 is the latest generation in the 40mm family, and with this contract, the Royal Navy will become its fifth operator.

End of an era on the Rock

PATROL vessels HMS Sabre and Scimitar have left Gibraltar after 17 years of service at the Rock.

The two Scimitar-class vessels were hoisted onto MV Anvil Point, ready to begin their journey back to the UK.

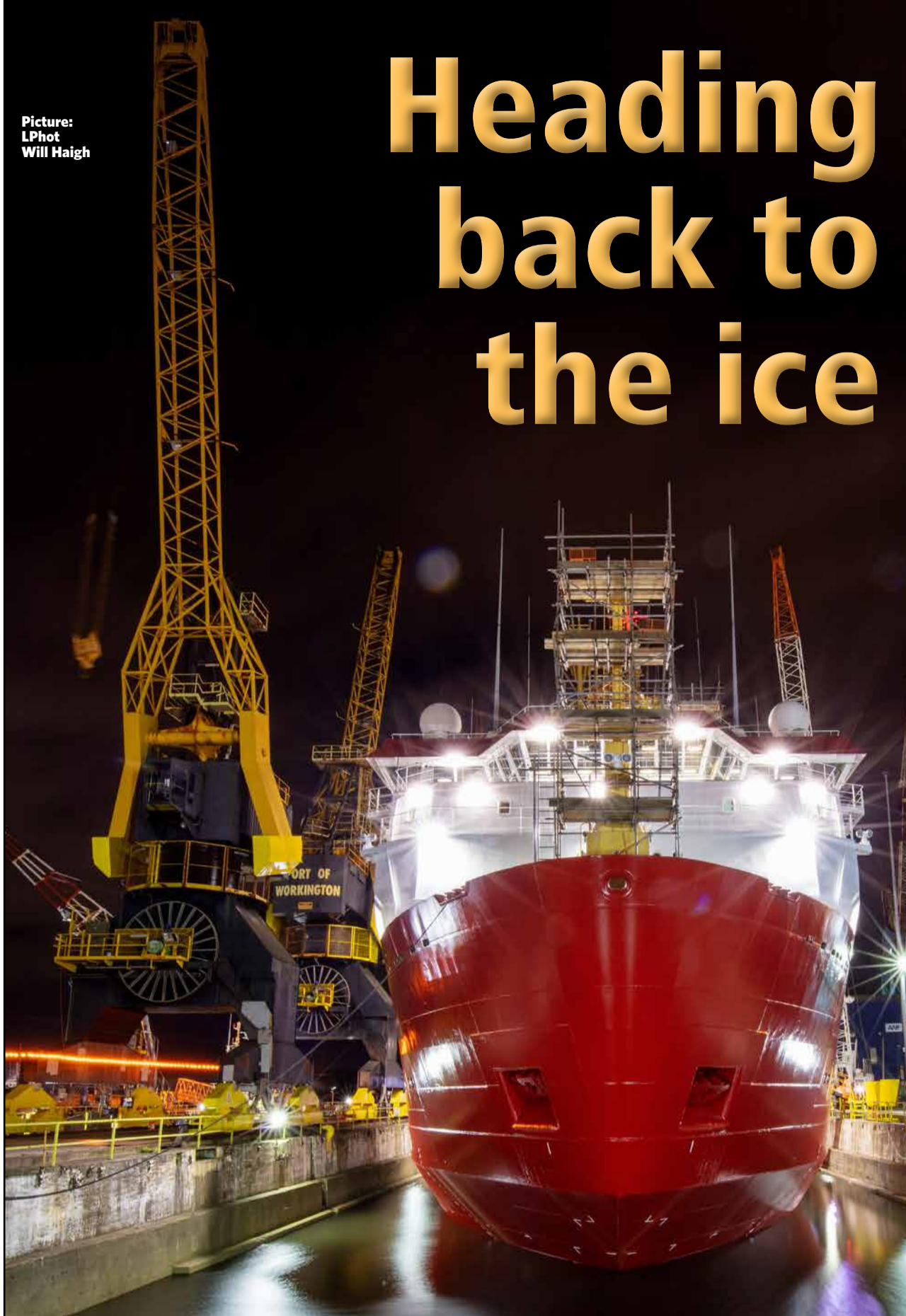
Since their arrival in Gibraltar in 2003 and up until recently, the two vessels had been operating in Gib, providing security and demonstrating the sovereignty of British Gibraltar Territorial Waters as the key units within Royal Navy Gibraltar Squadron.

The vessels have been temporarily replaced with P2000s HMS Dasher and Pursuer and the Archer-class vessels have brought a significant increase in capability to both tackle greater sea states and provide much improved crew facilities.

Squadron Commanding Officer Lieutenant Lloyd Cardy said: "Sabre and Scimitar have provided an exceptional service in contributing to the demonstration of UK sovereignty of British Gibraltar Territorial Waters over the past 17 years.

"Their departure marks the end of an era. Dasher and Pursuer will continue to maintain that capability as we prepare for their long-term replacements arriving over the next 18 months."

Heading back to the ice



THE UK's sole ice patrol ship is gearing up for a return to the ice after two years away.

HMS Protector is now floating on the waters of the Tees after emerging from dry dock following extensive work on her hull since May.

She is on track to head to the frozen continent for the Antarctic Summer, supporting the work of British and international scientists studying the unique Antarctic environment and conducting hydrographic surveys to chart this pristine and frozen wilderness.

The revamp in Middlesbrough has been conducted by UK Docks working side-by-side with Protector's crew.

After grit blasting in dry dock, five square kilometres of specialised paint has been painstakingly applied to the hull – by hand, by both contractors and the ship's company.

The propeller shaft was removed, sent to Denmark for inspection, then re-installed. All the engines and generators have been refurbished and the quarterdeck rebuilt to make more space. Her 60-ton crane, the largest afloat in the Royal Navy, has been removed and refurbished.

There's now considerably more space aboard for containers and supplies – particularly important on this deployment; Protector will take vital building materials and fuel to help in the modernisation of the British science station at Rothera, located toward the centre of the 17 million square kilometres of the British Antarctic Territory.

"The British Antarctic Survey have reduced their footprint in the region because of Covid, so we'll be delivering a lot of their stores and supplies for them to help them through the winter – far more so than on previous deployments," explained Lieutenant Commander Chris Gardiner, Protector's Logistics Officer.

Extra BAS engineers will join the icebreaker on her voyage south, as will an artist from the Scott Polar Research

Institute. And once in the southern hemisphere, officers from our South American friends will clamber aboard to visit some of the remote polar outstations.

Protector will also conduct her own scientific and survey work, using a Remotely Operated Vehicle in Antarctica for the first time to gather data, and a new, British-made Unmanned Air Vehicle to scout ahead searching for safe routes among the sea ice.

In addition, many of Protector's crew will have changed since she last visited the Antarctic, so this deployment will be a special experience for the 90-strong ship's company – although there are some polar veterans and Royal Marine cold weather survival specialists and Royal Navy divers embarked to provide extra capability.

"This is going to be a new and fantastic experience – and definitely one to tick off the bucket list," Lt Cdr Gardiner added.

"After all the hard work everyone has put in over the past eight months, we're keen to get out there, do what we're trained for and return HMS Protector to her rightful domain."

Commanding Officer, Captain Michael Wood, added: "I am proud of this unique ship. Her incredible people, together with the company, worked through lockdown without interruption and despite frequent challenges to restore Protector to the Fleet.

"For many, our journey to Antarctica and back promises the adventure of a lifetime."

Upon leaving Teesside Protector will conduct pre-deployment training in home waters.

KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

Follow @HMSProtector and @RoyalNavy on Twitter



Marines ready for Atlantic

TWO Royal Marines and two former commandos plan to row the Atlantic this December to help fellow green berets.

Sam 'Nuttie' Edwards and David 'Brucey' Bruce – both serving with 42 Commando at Bickleigh, near Plymouth – will join Afghan veterans Junour McIlhiney and Will Schweppe in crossing the Atlantic between Gran Canaria and Barbados.

Their goal? Apart from covering the 3,000-mile expanse of ocean is raising awareness of – and well over £10,000 for – the Cockleshell Endeavour Foundation and Royal Marines Charity Fund.

The former is named after the legendary Royal Marine canoeists who attacked German raiders in Bordeaux in 1942 and uses water-based endurance sport to help Royal Marines veterans struggling with mental and physical injuries to get their lives back on-track.

"Taking on the Atlantic Ocean row is a fantastically exciting project," said 28-year-old Sam.

After joining the Marines in 2007, Junour was injured by a large IED in Helmand Province in 2011, when he was flung from an armoured troop carrier during a routine patrol. Since leaving the Corps, he has trekked the Himalayas, gig rowed for a local Plymouth rowing club and participated in sea kayak expeditions.

Will joined the Marines aged just 17 in 2009 and served alongside Junour. He too was wounded in Afghanistan in 2011 – but by an enemy sniper who left him with permanent nerve damage in his hand, leading to medical discharge in 2013. He struggled to adjust to civilian life.

"I suffered from bouts of anger, depression and anxiety. I refused help and felt like a failure. In my head, I had let the lads down and lost all the confidence I had gained from being part of the Royal Marines," Will explained.

The rowers intend to set off on December 1 and you can back the guys at: cockleshellendeavour.com/

VIP visitors for Tamar

THE Mayor and Mayoress of Truro, Bert and Sue Biscoe, paid a visit to their affiliated warship HMS Tamar.

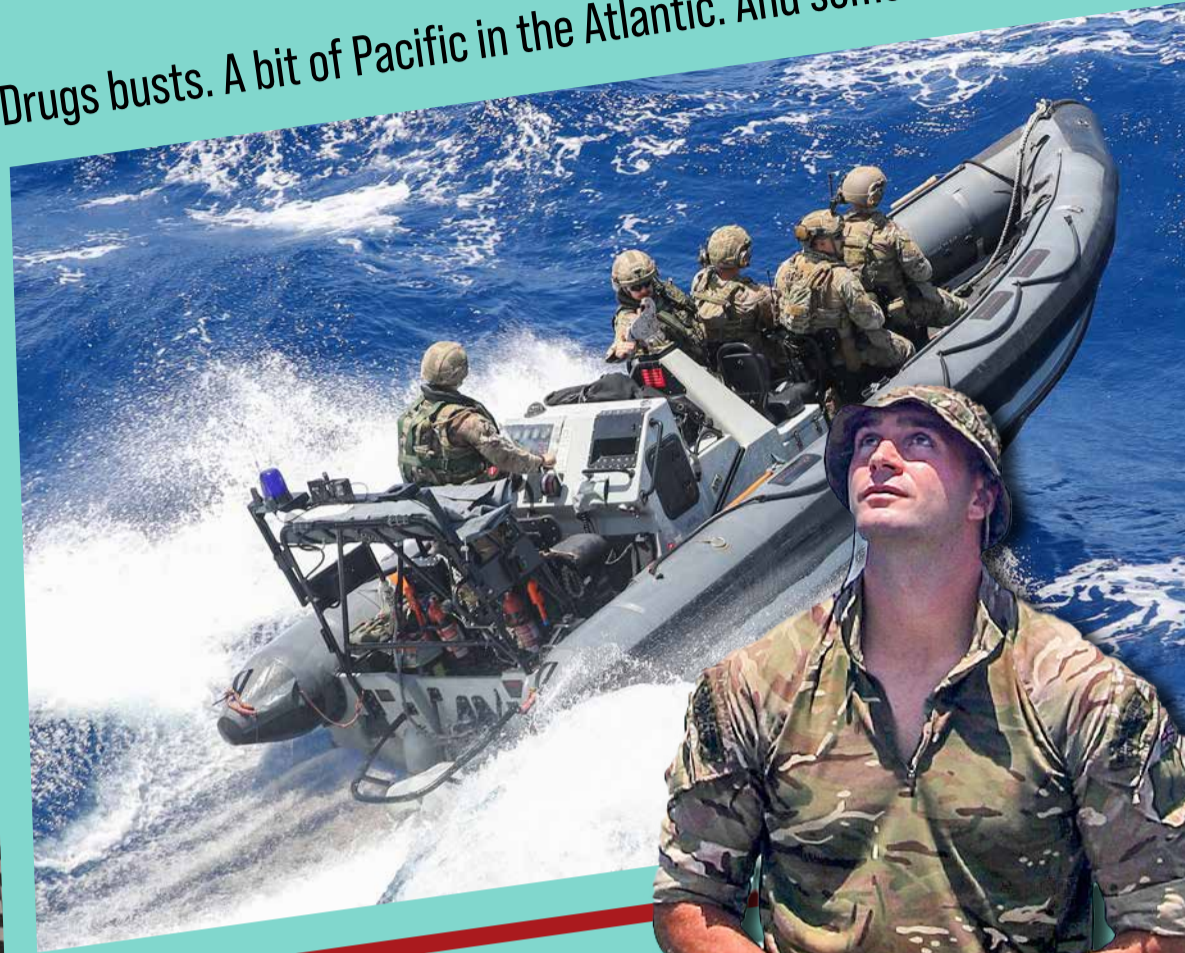
Having been ceremoniously piped aboard by the ship's company, the couple sat down with a cup of tea for chat with the Executive Officer Lieutenant Lucy Robus, before a tour of Tamar.

The mayor said: "Sue and I were made very welcome by the officers and crew and we got a very strong impression of two things – firstly the confinement of everything – below deck a naval ship is incredibly well organised, and secondly by the commitment, dedication and good cheer of everybody we met."

Lt Robus handed the couple a ship's crest, while the mayor gave the ship an inscribed wooden plate made by Truro craftsman, Barry Pettit.



The next chapter in RFA Argus's Caribbean mission. Drugs busts. A bit of Pacific in the Atlantic. And some droning on.



BACK AT IT AGAIN

Reporting by Lt Joe Howell // Pictures by LPhot Joe Cater

RFA ARGUS has seen many things in all her 40 years but it's only now that she's getting a taste for giving drugs traffickers a run for their money.

Last month, *Navy News* reported on the hat-trick of drugs busts carried out by support ship Argus and fellow Caribbean task group ship HMS Medway that landed £81m worth of cocaine.

Well old gal Argus, and her versatile crew of sailors and commandos, have been back at it again and seized drugs worth

more than £160m on Britain's streets in a double bust.

Argus is in the Caribbean as part of a Royal Navy task group with Offshore Patrol Vessel Medway to respond to any Covid-19 crisis in the region, react in the wake of a hurricane sweeping through one of the islands, but also to disrupt the flow of illegal drugs.

On that final front it has been a very fruitful time, with these latest busts part of an international effort to deal a blow to traffickers.

Argus joined the Dutch Navy patrol ship HNLMS Groningen

in a mission that saw 1.7 tonnes of cocaine and 28kg of amphetamines hauled in.

That came after a separate operation that saw Argus seize 284kg of cocaine, meaning the Royal Navy task group has stopped nearly quarter of a billion pounds-worth of drugs reaching Britain's streets in the last few months.

All of the drugs busts are carried out alongside the US Coast Guard, who have detachments stationed on Argus and Medway ready to be dispatched and detain suspects for processing in the United States. >>>>



Your WelCome account card...

A **WelCome account card** is assigned to you for your entire military career and can be used to access **telephone** and **Internet** services whilst deployed.

You should receive it after basic training. If you haven't been given it, speak to your admin officer. For more information visit: www.mywelcome.co.uk

Lost your account card? No worries! Speak to your admin officer who will be able to provide you with your WelCome account number and a password to reset your PIN.

WELFARE

WelCome Customer Contact Centre
customer.support@mywelcome.co.uk | www.mywelcome.co.uk

WelCome
Welfare Communications Everywhere



These are challenging times and we ask a lot of our people so it is encouraging to see that our training and professionalism continues to shine through.

▶▶▶▶ Captain Kevin Rimell, commanding officer of Argus, said: "The recent interdiction is yet another example of multi-national co-operation in the Caribbean."

"I am proud that the team in RFA Argus, utilising 815 and 845 Naval Air Squadron helicopters alongside boats manned by RFA personnel and the team from 47 Commando Royal Marines, was able to take the lead in such an operation alongside our US Coastguard and Dutch Navy colleagues."

The first of the two busts came when two suspicious vessels were spotted near to Argus and patrol ship Groningen.

A Wildcat helicopter from Yeovilton-based 815 Naval Air Squadron was launched with a sniper team from 42 Commando on board.

Using their powerful sensors and cameras, the helicopter discovered and stopped the suspect vessels before a boarding team from 47 Commando, the US Coast Guard and troops from Groningen were dispatched to investigate.

During the chase, packages were thrown overboard and a Commando Merlin helicopter from 845 Naval Air Squadron was launched to keep track of the vessels and their offloaded cargo. These were then picked up and recovered as evidence.

Just 48 hours later, Argus was conducting routine training when one of its Merlin helicopters, carrying out drills, spotted a suspicious craft nearby.

The 28,000-tonne ship changed course to give chase, helped again by the Merlin and Wildcat and her embarked US Coast Guard team.

With Groningen out of sight over the horizon, the

helicopters herded the craft towards the Dutch ship while the US Coast Guard team intercepted.

Captain Rimell added: "Collectively we secured and apprehended a number of smugglers and a large quantity of contraband."

"These are challenging times and we ask a lot of our people so it is encouraging to see that our training and professionalism continues to shine through."

Of course, while there isn't the thrill of the chase on a drugs bust unfolding, there is time for perfecting skills associated with their hurricane season tasking.

If a storm were to devastate an island community, Argus is ready to react and has a versatile team aboard ready for a range of crises.

Among them are Royal Marines from 47 Commando's 539 Raiding Squadron who are increasingly using drones to assist their work.

The commandos are specialists in small boat operations, in raiding and boarding. To complement that, they now carry drones in their deployed kit.

The marines can use the small drones during recce and raiding missions, giving them an extra edge and giving them situational understanding on potential targets.

The drones are lightweight and can be stashed in a bergan. They are fitted with a high-quality camera and thermal imaging, allowing the squadron to work more covertly and detect people or vehicles under the cover of darkness.

Marine Rory McLeod is one of the drone operators.

He said: "539 have used drones before on exercise in Norway for raids and insertions, and here in the Caribbean we can use them for beach recce. We are testing and improving the ways in which we use these drones which is important in developing Future Commando Force capabilities."

"The view the drones provide from above mean we can build up an important picture and we can do it independently of the helicopters on board ship. They are also handy for some internal training as the thermal imaging shows heat sources on our boats and so we can identify areas where we need to cover if we are going covert."

In the Caribbean, beach reconnaissance is an important first step in enabling the UK Task Group to land ashore and provide disaster relief in the event of a hurricane. They were also used on exercises where the Crisis Response Troop, from 24 Commando Royal Engineers, were landed ashore in British Overseas Territories to provide information on the surrounding area.

There was also a bit of the South Pacific in the North Atlantic for the Argus crew, as the ship celebrated the 50th Fiji Day.

Four proud Fijians working in difference departments on board came together to cook a traditional meal to mark the day Fiji became independent from the British Empire on 10 October, 1970.

Due to Covid lockdown many of the traditional parades and parties that would have taken place in Fiji and the UK were not able to go ahead, so a lot of Fijians have instead

marked the event by cooking traditional meals in family groups.

The four sailors on board Argus decided to do the same and cook food in a traditional style for all their shipmates.

The Fijians are all working in a true range of departments; Petty Officer Blanche Chute works as a pharmacist in the Maritime Role 3 Hospital, Leading Supply Chain Apenisa Daunibau works in the stores department, Steward Vila Lagai and Chef William Malugu work in catering services on board.

A dish called a Suruwa was cooked as the main course, this is a seafood curry made with coconut milk and to make enough for the whole ship's company 15kg of prawns had to be deshelled.

The team stayed up prepping the food and chopping vegetables late the night before in preparation for the feast. The Suruwa was served alongside a beef noodle dish and a butternut squash pie was served for dessert which was made using a family recipe added by Apenisa Daunibau.

He said: "it was good fun to be in the galley, and to celebrate Fiji Day with the food I cook at home. The pie is a biscuit base and we would usually use pumpkin with butter, condensed milk and sugar to make a creamy topping, but out here there is no pumpkin so we used butternut squash!"

The results were delicious, and a treat for the whole ship's company to enjoy and one that celebrates the heritage of a people who continue to be essential to the ongoing Caribbean patrols of Argus, and to wider Royal Navy activity across the fleet. ■

ASK YOURSELF:

- Were you made in the Royal Navy?
- Do you want to give others the opportunity to make it in the Royal Navy?
- Are you seeking a rewarding Second Career?

If the answer to any is yes then...

APPLY TO BECOME A CAREERS ADVISER

Captain Naval Recruiting (CNR) is currently seeking Royal Navy Service Leavers and those who have left Service under 3 years, to be employed as Royal Navy Careers Advisers in one of the Armed Forces Careers Offices, listed on the map. These positions are for the following Rates only: WO's, Senior Rates, SNCO's, LH's and CPL's.

Positions are nationwide, employed on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) (NCS) Limited Commitment.

Salary starts from £32k and with promotion opportunities could rise to £45k. FTRS rates of pay apply (Reviewed annually and pensionable).

For more information contact:

PSRN 01929 403172 | Mil 94374 3172 | E-mail navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.gov.uk

navygraphics 17/0551





BOARD YET?

ROYAL MARINES PREPARE FOR SECURITY MISSIONS ON INTENSIVE TRAINING

A group of Royal Marines refined specialist skills to combat pirates and terrorists during intensive training as they readied for security operations across the globe.

The Royal Marines Boarding Course, which reached its fiery end at the Bovington Training Area in Dorset, is eight weeks of high-level training that keeps the commandos ready to respond to emergency tasks anywhere in the world.

The marines from Mike Company of Plymouth-based 42 Commando completed the training in preparation to begin maritime interdiction operations (MIOPS), which will see them held at high readiness to deploy worldwide on missions of national interest.

The course prepares the commandos for boarding vessels to counter illegal trafficking, piracy and terrorism, developing close-quarters battle skills, practising fighting in small teams in enclosed spaces and the methods used to covertly enter battle, plus getting them ready for life on Royal Navy warships.

"The Royal Marines boarding course is designed to push our commandos and prepare them for the most challenging missions around the globe," said Lieutenant Colonel Doug Pennefather, Commanding Officer of 42 Commando.

"As we look to upskill across the Corps to deliver a Future Commando Force, the techniques Mike Company have mastered will prove indispensable."

The final exercise at Bovington brought together weeks of hard work, using the skills developed to take down two isolated compounds suspected of being used as narcotics laboratories and having close ties with terrorist organisations.

This mission was designed to test a range of commando skills, with the fictional scenario seeing the marines dropped by helicopter from a Royal Navy warship charged with taking down the terrorists.

The opening phases saw the marines dispatched into the undergrowth in Future Commando Force formations – small teams with each commando taking on a specialisation to deliver the specific mission.

Moving with stealth and precision, the marines moved to the target location to link up with fire support elements, before making their move.

The specialist forces used ladders to quickly enter the first compound, establishing a foothold before conducting a clearance of the complex, scouring for evidence, the injured and any threats within.

"The commandos made this look effortless with every man explicitly understanding his individual and team role," said Sergeant Adam Sperry.

"The troop then moved off to strike the second narcotics cell, which they did with control and precision throughout, professionally dealing with captured and injured personnel as a matter of course."

During the eight-week course the troop have developed and rehearsed their ability to conduct level two and level three ship's boarding operations and this exercise was a culmination of that, bringing together tactics and techniques.

It is the first time Mike Company will have the MIOPS role as 42 Commando begin to rotate the responsibilities of each of their companies.

The Bickleigh-based marines are specialists in maritime operations, with each of their companies taking on a specific expert role.

Up until now Juliet Company held all of the unit's Royal Marines boarding teams, but those roles and 42 Commando's others, including Joint Personnel Recovery (the rescuing of isolated personnel), Force Protection, and contingency tasks, will be rotated between their four companies, Juliet, Kilo, Lima and Mike.

The boarding course coincided with a busy period for the Royal Marines as a whole, with Future Commando Force work continuing in earnest (see pages 20-21 and page 9).

For 45 Commando their focus is starting to shift towards heading to the Arctic in the new year.

Mortar Troop of the Arbroath-based cold warfare specialists took on a

five-day tactical exercise that saw them tested in Future Commando Force small-team tactics in various environments.

They also used small drones to bring an edge to the patrol training missions in Wales.

The commandos used small remotely-piloted aerial systems – in other words, drones – to aid decisions made on the patrols at the Sennybridge Training Area in the Brecon Beacons.

The drones fed real-time footage back to their Android Tactical Assault Kit (ATAK), which is a tablet that provides useful information for navigation and situational awareness.

This gave the commandos better foresight and a decisive edge when it came to reconnaissance and patrolling.

Colour Sergeant Jonathan Mosley, of Mortar Troop, said: "This has been the first opportunity for the marines to incorporate drone and ATAK navigation devices into their training. The response was very good. I'm really pleased with what we achieved."

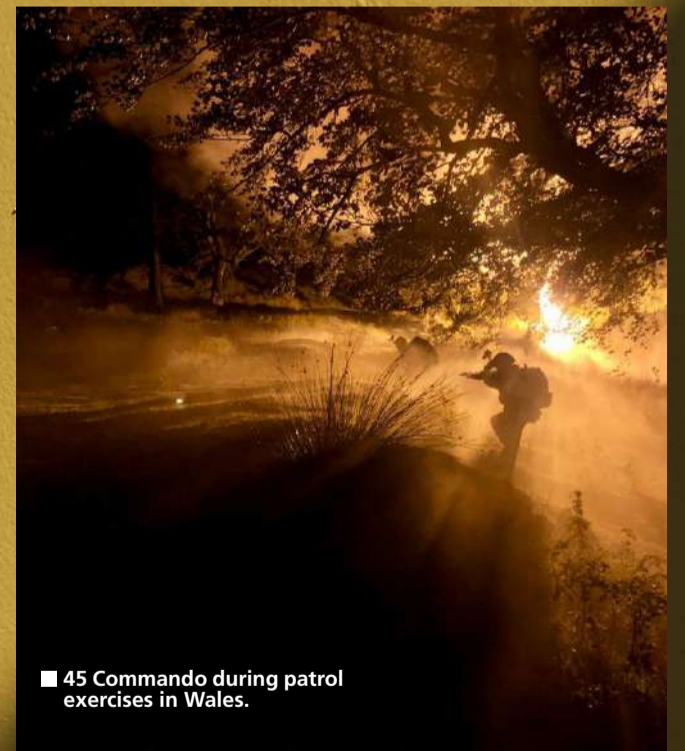
The exercise was designed to push the marines in essential patrol skills, but also to see the impact of intertwining those traditional skills with the new pieces of kit.

During two hours of preparation time, the commandos used the tablets to study areas of interest, targeting locations and assessing the lay of the land using footage gathered by their drones.

Sgt Ash St-Hill added: "Incorporation of cutting-edge technology not only complemented our basic soldiering skills, but really added another dimension and provided a good insight into what we can expect as we develop the FCF concept."

The marines were tasked with carrying out reconnaissance patrols to gather information, fighting patrols to disrupt their adversary and set up observation posts to study enemy movements.

Using their tablets and drones throughout, the marines worked in Sennybridge's mock town training area testing urban and close-quarters battle skills and across wooded areas to push themselves in a range of environments.



■ 45 Commando during patrol exercises in Wales.

Picture by PO (Phot) Si Ethell

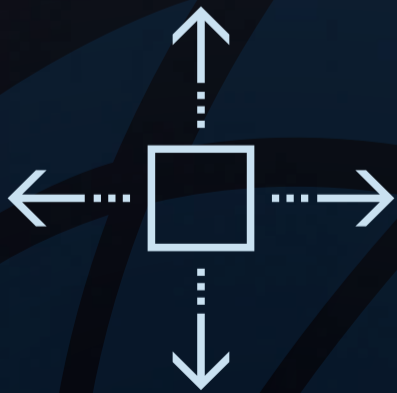


Independent technical expertise and consultancy

BMT remains a trusted partner to help overcome the complex engineering and programme challenges faced when delivering, and supporting, the world-class equipment used by the Royal Navy.

With over thirty years of defence maritime experience and a wealth of professional engineering, asset management and programme management expertise, we are proud to play our part in ensuring that naval assets remain safe, capable and available.

With a long-term commitment to R&D and innovation, we solve the problems of today and shape the ideas of tomorrow.



www.bmt.org

Find out more about BMT's design, acquisition and support expertise



THE PIC OF THE BUNCH

STRIKING images have captured the lives of Royal Navy sailors and Royal Marines as they serve on vital operations around the globe.

The pictures have all been taken by the Royal Navy's own dedicated photographers, who are behind the lens capturing the significant moments as the Senior Service carries out missions across the world's oceans, in the skies and on land, from Arctic to desert and jungle.

Now these skilled photographers – all of them serving sailors or Royal Marines – have been recognised for their stunning imagery in the Royal Navy's annual photographic competition, the Peregrine Trophy.

The hardy bunch of photographers follow warships and commandos wherever they go, sharing their important missions with the world through still images and video, providing a behind-the-scenes look at life in the Royal Navy, from emotional homecomings to frontline ops.

In the last year, the photographers have been there on the frontline as the Royal Navy continued to deliver during the Covid-19 global pandemic, protecting the UK's interests at home and abroad.

Leading Photographer Kyle Heller was named the Royal Navy's photographer of the year by the judges for his portfolio of imagery from HMS Queen Elizabeth's historic deployment to the east coast of the USA, which saw the first British F-35B Lightning jets land on the aircraft carrier.

Kyle said: "This is a job like no other – it sounds clichéd, but it's true. I'm still trying to get my head round winning the award, in all honesty. I'm not one for the plaudits at all and for me it's about the opportunities, experience and variation that you get with this

job. There really is nothing like it.

"Life is never dull and you're there as part of history in those big moments. Seeing the Lightning jets land for the first time is that part of history you're there for and won't forget. I've seen so much around the world as a photographer and I'm very thankful for those opportunities. This is a proud moment for me."

Kyle joined the Royal Navy in 1998 aged 17 and served on HMS Beaver, Sheffield and Cornwall, before becoming a Royal Navy photographer in late 2009. Among numerous other things, he has covered operations in Antarctica, the South Atlantic, South America and the disaster relief work in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria in the Caribbean. He's now based at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose in Cornwall.

Joining up as any other rating into a particular trade such as logistics, engineering or warfare specialists, Royal Navy photographers work hard to excel at their chosen field before being accepted into the elite photographic branch.

The Peregrine Trophy dates back to 1961 and is named after the HMS Peregrine Royal Naval Air Station in Sussex. The award's primary purpose is to encourage the production of eye-catching, powerful imagery and video that can be used in the media to demonstrate the Royal Navy and Royal Marines operations.

More than 250 images and videos were submitted for this year's awards, which were judged by Richard Pohle of The Times, Steve Parsons of the BBC, Jack Ashdown of Great State and director of photography and cinematography Vince Knight. While there is no formal awards ceremony this year – due to Covid-19 restrictions – the images will be on public display at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire from December to March.

THE WINNERS

- 1. People's Choice Award. By LPhoto Kyle Heller
- 2. Part of the Commandant General Royal Marines Prize won by HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Dan Shepherd
- 3. Student of the Year Award. By Marine James Clarke
- 4. Part of the Commandant General Royal Marines Prize won by HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Dan Shepherd
- 5. Royal Navy Amateur Open Category. By Captain Martin Harvey RM
- 6. Part of the Peregrine Trophy winning selection from HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Dan Shepherd
- 7. Part of the Peregrine Trophy winning selection from HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Kyle Heller
- 8. Part of the winning selection by Photographer of the Year LPhoto Kyle Heller. It also won the Maritime Air Prize.
- 9. Part of the Peregrine Trophy winning selection from HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Kyle Heller
- 10. Royal Navy Amateur Maritime Image Award. By AB Bill Spurr
- 11. Part of the Commandant General Royal Marines Prize won by HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Dan Shepherd
- 12. Part of the Peregrine Trophy winning selection from HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Dan Shepherd
- 13. The Spirit of Diversity Prize. By LPhoto Ben Corbett
- 14. Part of the Peregrine Trophy winning selection from HMS Queen Elizabeth. By LPhoto Dan Shepherd
- 15. Part of the winning selection by Photographer of the Year LPhoto Kyle Heller
- 16. Global Operations Prize. By LPhoto Stevie Burke
- 17. Part of the winning selection by Photographer of the Year LPhoto Kyle Heller
- 18. Part of the winning selection by Amateur Photographer of the Year Marine James Clarke
- 19. Part of the winning selection by Amateur Photographer of the Year Marine James Clarke
- 20. Best Maritime Image. By LPhoto Ben Corbett
- 21. Royal Navy Association Award. By AB Chris Sellars
- 22. Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity Family and Friends Award. By LPhoto Barry Swainsbury
- 23. Engineering Prize. By PPhoto Jay Allen
- 24. Part of the winning selection by Photographer of the Year LPhoto Kyle Heller

CAPTAIN'S LOG, STARDATE 20201012.9

We are off the coast of a Mediterranean island after dark. Our Wildcat is spinning up on the flight deck ready for a reconnaissance mission. After a month's passage from our home, we are on the cusp of new tactics, new technologies, new ways of thinking...



Yes, after four weeks of varied training and exercising, the UK's new Littoral Response Group is ready to put some of the lessons learned into practice in Cyprus – the crux of the experimentation phase of its autumn deployment.

The eastern Mediterranean island is the setting for the amphibious/commando-focused Exercise Olympus, while simultaneously a whole host of automated systems will be rolled out during Exercise Autonomous Advanced Force 3.0.

Together, they will help shape the amphibious forces and Royal Marines of tomorrow.

The road to Cyprus for the force – flagship HMS Albion, RFA Lyme Bay and HMS Dragon – has been almost breathless:

- some eye-catching abseil assaults conducted by the Royal Marines at Devil's Camp in the shadow of the Rock;
- a short link-up with the Dutch Navy's HNLMS Johan de Witt and Rotterdam – rough counterparts of Albion which were their navy's autumn amphibious deployment;
- a quick photographic exercise with the group together off Gib before Dragon broke away to patrol the Black Sea (see page 5);
- Albion's maiden visit to Tunis, completed in just 24 hours;
- urban combat and helicopter training on the ranges in Crete...
- ...and Royal Marine sniper training off the island
- hands to bathe on the way to Cyprus, reward for the crew's efforts since leaving Plymouth.

Experimenting since the very first day of the deployment is Phantom Flight, the three-strong team from the RN's sole drone squadron, 700X, based at Culdrose.

The team brought the small, lightweight Puma with them.

It's launched pretty much as you'd throw a paper dart...

... but possesses considerably more capability, durability and endurance...

Just over 4½ft long, with a wingspan of 9ft and weighing as much as six bags of sugar, Puma flies for up to two hours potentially monitoring an area of up to 270 square miles of ocean – that's larger than the size of Greater Manchester.

It requires a vehicle operator to control the camera in flight, a mission operator to pilot/navigate the Puma and a Flight Commander who integrates the drone with the ship and other aircraft in the area.

"One of the reasons that I joined the navy was to work with cutting-edge technology and straight after my specialist training I was lucky enough to get a draft with the RAF's 617 Squadron working with the F-35 stealth fighters," said Able Seaman Tom Halton.

"I'd always wanted to work with unmanned air systems and when I heard there was a position at 700X I didn't hesitate to show my interest and I'm now part of the Royal Navy's first deployable unmanned squadron."

Puma provides the operations team with extra 'eyes in the sky', feeding back a live image in various weather/environmental conditions, allowing commanders to make quick and accurate decisions.

With a top speed of over 50mph it can keep up with and track fast inshore attack craft threatening Albion or her task group, or 'go-fasts' used by drug-runners to traffic illegal narcotics, providing high resolution images and video for intelligence purposes, and provide oversight of Royal Marines as they carry out raids.

As well as the work being carried out by 700X, Puma is being tested by the the Royal Marines as they develop their ability to target enemy defences close to shore.

"It is a brilliant opportunity for Phantom Flight to develop its tactics on a multi-platform, international deployment," explained Flight Commander Lieutenant Ash Loftus, normally a Royal Navy air traffic controller.

"We aim to prove the utility of remotely-piloted aerial systems in the maritime battlespace and pave the way for their support to the future Fleet."

One key aspect of the Future Commando Force being created now will be deploying marines around the globe in anything from small training teams up to 50-strong detachments on the second-generation River-class ships or company-size units on larger vessels – rather than deploying an entire battlegroup like 40 or 42 Commando for months on end as has been the case.

It means the marines will be pretty much always be on hand. It also means they've got to be ready for any eventuality.

Like, say, stepping out of helicopter 200ft above a target.

In Gib, 42 Commando abseiled and rapid roped (the former is slower, but safer as you're attached to the rope) from altitudes of up to 200ft from the rear of an 847 NAS Wildcat.

More than 250 times they slithered swiftly down the cables on to the tarmac at Devil's Camp.

Or perhaps they may be expected to bring drug traffickers in a speed boat racing over the waves to a halt – as has often been the case in the Caribbean.

It's not a case of simply blasting the

boat to smithereens, but stopping it with pinpoint accuracy by shooting out the engine – from a moving helicopter some distance away.

Lyme Bay floated out her large, red inflatable 'killer tomato'.

Easy you might think.

It's big and unmissable – up close. But pull away at a distance – and at altitude as much as 400 metres (over 1,300ft), with the 'tomato' pitching and rolling and wind, temperature and humidity all affecting the flight of a bullet, and a helicopter which never stops vibrating and it becomes a different prospect.

The snipers are equipped with the 7.62mm Sharpshooter rifle which fires a single shot. Or they can turn to the .5 calibre heavy machine-gun which can lay down some seriously lead but without the pinpoint accuracy and precision of the sniper rifle.

"As we are held on very high readiness, it has been great to practise our marksmanship and aerial firing skills out here on deployment," said sniper Marine 'Smudge' Smith.

"The Wildcat helicopter is a very stable platform to deliver accurate and effective rounds on target."

Smudge and his comrades got in a four-hour shoot – including more than 3,000 machine-gun rounds fired – which tested not just the

marksman in the rear of the Wildcat, but the pilot and observer, ship and air traffic controller, all in a different environment from the English Channel.

"While we routinely conduct aerial gunnery back home in the UK, operating from a ship in a very warm climate brings with it challenges and realism more difficult to replicate back home," explained Wildcat pilot Captain Tom Arkell RM.

Or perhaps the RM detachment might be called on to rescue hostages from some warlord's village.

Once again the Wildcat and 42 Commando were sent into the fray, this time in Crete's coastal urban training area

The marines were charged with clearing through a village, testing tactics and techniques used in close-quarters combat after landing from RFA Lyme Bay.

The training also included boarding and clearing of suspect vessels in preparation for missions around the Med.

With strong winds and high temperatures, the RNAS Yeovilton-



based Wildcat crews put their aircraft through its paces, practising attack runs using the on-board .50 calibre heavy machine gun and using its powerful sensors to identify 'enemy' positions and calling them in for fast jets to attack.

"Impromptu training opportunities overseas not only give us tough environments from which to operate the Commando Wildcat, but also replicate the challenging nature of operations which is more difficult back home in the UK," explained Helicopter Warfare Instructor, Lieutenant Olly Leisk.

Which rather sums up why Cyprus was chosen for the LRGX deployment's key exercises: plenty of sea space, large ranges and relatively good weather even at the end of October.

You'll learn how they played out in next month's edition.

THE EDGE OF TOMORROW





The Royal British Legion
understands what it means to serve.

THE ROYAL BRITISH
LEGION



And we'll always be here for you.

rbl.org.uk

Registered charity number: 219279

EVERY poppy counts

The Royal British Legion facing challenging Remembrance

THE Royal British Legion is asking the Armed Forces community to back this year's Poppy Appeal like never before, stressing that every poppy counts.

Simon O'Leary, pictured right, Assistant Director of Fundraising for The Royal British Legion and a former Royal Navy Officer, said: "Each year 40,000 volunteers make the Poppy Appeal happen, however as a result of Covid-19 a significant number of these volunteers are not able to help deliver the appeal in their communities.

"Whilst this creates challenges for the appeal, the Legion still has a job to do.

"The pandemic has had a devastating impact on communities and families across the country and we have seen a significant increase in requests for help and support from people suffering from social isolation, bereavement, financial uncertainty and mental health concerns.

"Every poppy makes a difference to the lives of people in our Armed Forces community which is why we've worked with our volunteers, partners, and suppliers to ensure that the public can support the appeal via a range of traditional and new activities."

The Legion uses donations from the appeal in many ways including providing crisis grants, sport and art-based recovery programmes, specialist dementia care, and advising and supporting with benefits and money issues.

Claire Rowcliffe, the Legion's Director of Fundraising and a former officer in the Royal Military Police, said: "For almost 100 years, the Legion has supported the Armed Forces community, making a difference to the lives of



thousands of serving and ex-serving men and women and their families. From the eldest World War 2 veterans to the newest recruits, money raised during the Poppy Appeal goes towards our work providing help and support to any member of the Armed Forces community who is in need.

"You may have to do something different to support the Poppy Appeal this year; like ordering poppies through the post for your ship, unit or establishment, printing a poppy and displaying it in your window, or undertaking a virtual Poppy Run. It doesn't matter what you do, as long as you help make every poppy count."

Fundraising ideas can be found at rbl.org.uk/poppyappeal and you can share your support with the Legion online:

- Twitter @PoppyLegion
- Instagram @RoyalBritishLegion
- Facebook

@OfficialPoppyLegion
You are also asked to use the following hashtags: #everypoppycounts and #poppyappeal

Please support your charity and spread the following ways to donate far and wide:

- Text POPPY2, POPPY5 or POPPY10 to 70545
- Donate online at rbl.org.uk/donate

How the Legion helps

THE Legion's work is split into a number of areas:

- Physical and mental wellbeing – which includes the Battle Back Centre and recovery through the arts projects assisting wounded, injured and sick serving personnel and veterans
- Financial and employment support – including immediate needs grants for those most in need, benefits, debt and

money advice to support those in financial difficulties and training and education funding to assist people into work

- Care and Independent Living – six care homes and support for more than 300 families who care for a family member living with dementia
- Expert guidance – on individual's rights, pensions and entitlements.



THERE are several ways in which you can either fundraise or support this year's Poppy Appeal.

■ Poppies in the post – request poppies in the post from our website to share and raise donations from your friends and family following social distancing guidelines.

■ Free Fundraising Packs – already have an idea to raise funds? Maybe you're a keen runner, obsessive cross-fitter or fancy getting creative with the family? Order your free fundraising pack from rbl.org.uk/poppyappeal and the Legion will keep in touch throughout Poppy Appeal on your progress.

■ Virtual Poppy Runs. The Legion's park run events usually bring thousands to local parks across Remembrance-tide. However, due to social distancing measures we have launched Virtual Poppy Runs to help support the Poppy Appeal. Set yourself a goal and walk, jog or run, whether it's a distance on one day, or over days or weeks, get out there and do your bit knowing others are running with you. It's free to register via the Legion website and participants can also purchase a medal and T-shirt.

■ Printable Poppy. The downloadable poppy to display in your window is available via the Legion's website. Either download and print off a colour version or the version to colour in yourself. We simply ask for a small donation.

■ Poppy Shop – choose from a range of products at the Legion's poppy shop to support and donate to the Legion, including regimental and service poppy pins. Visit poppyshop.org.uk

How you can donate this year

WHILST the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted the ways in which we can deliver the Poppy Appeal this year, our community of staff, volunteers, partners and suppliers have been working together to ensure that the 2020 Poppy Appeal is able to go ahead and the nation can take part in Remembrance activity.

The safety of the public, our staff, members and volunteers is our top

priority and we are working with charity regulators and the relevant local and national authorities to ensure that all activity is safe and in alignment with both national and regional regulations.

Local collectors will have new ways for people to donate including unique QR codes and contactless machines to ensure the safety of those collecting and those

choosing to donate in person.

- You can also donate by:
- Text POPPY2, POPPY5 or POPPY10 to 70545
 - Donate online at rbl.org.uk/donate
 - Or find out what you can do to support the Poppy Appeal at rbl.org.uk/poppyappeal





Award winner's careers advice

LT CDR Kevin Giles is the first recipient of the RNRMC's long service award.

Given to recognise those who have served for 40 or more years, he received his award from Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Nick Hine.

"Unlike the majority of those who join the Armed Forces today, at the age of 16 I decided that a full career in the Royal Navy and more specifically, as a mine warfare and clearance diving specialist, was to be my professional life," said Kevin.

"Although this is far from the modern norm, I can only say that for me it worked and I have been fortunate to have an amazing time.

"My only regret is that I did not fully take advantage of the personal development opportunities. I used my annual AT week on only four occasions and have not claimed any of the learning credits, these are part of the package and I would encourage everyone to use them.

"Among the many highlights, command is of course up there, but my two years on exchange with the USN is particularly noteworthy.

"In my view, everyone should try to live and work aboard at some stage, particularly so, if accompanied is an option.

"Today's Navy is unrecognisable compared to the one I joined in 1979.

"The ability to connect instantly, from anywhere, at will (almost), to anyone, is most stark.

"I trust this doesn't detract from the camaraderie, developed by living and working together in ships, submarines, air squadrons and commandos, which is so necessary for operational success."

Fish(er) by name and by nature

A 26-YEAR-OLD Royal Navy Officer has braved the cold water of the River Dart to complete a ten-mile swim for charity.

Sub Lieutenant Lily-Mae Fisher, who is currently training to be a pilot at Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC), entered the water at Totnes, Devon, and swam down-river to Dartmouth, where she was greeted by friends and colleagues.

Her efforts have so far raised £1436, exceeding her original target of £1000, for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Sub Lt Fisher said: "It was a brilliant day. The challenge began with a stunning morning swimming in glassy water through Totnes, morale was high between myself and my support crew.

"We were even lucky enough to receive a fly-by from a Royal Navy Wildcat helicopter, which was just fantastic.

"After stopping for food around half-way, the senior officer mentioned pulling me out if I became any bluer from the cold.

"However, that was more motivation to just put down the pedal, warm up and keep going.

"The Captain and First Lieutenant of the college came and greeted me about a mile out which was a great little push for the final half an hour.

"All in all, a lot of money raised for a great charity which was certainly a big motivation at times when it got tough."

A regular pool-swimmer this was the first time that Sub Lt Fisher had taken to the water for a charity swim.

Her training for the challenge included a nine-mile swim, with, she said, "a big break and warm up half-way."

Sub Lt Fisher swam regularly as a child but gave it up in her early teens.

She said: "I now just swim, on and off depending on pool availability with different bases, to keep fit and because I enjoy it.

"Because I've been based in the same location for a few months now, I normally swim about two kilometres three or four times a week.

"This year I wanted to do something worthwhile with everything that has gone on and I wanted to challenge myself with something I had never done before. I think the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is a great charity and helps out all



members of the Royal Navy and Marines, both past and present."

With this challenge under her belt, Sub Lt Fisher, who joined the Royal Navy in 2019, is already planning the next.

She said: "Next year, when the weather improves again I plan to cycle from the Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton in Somerset to RNAS Culdrose in Cornwall and then run back along the South West Coastal path.

"It's over 250 miles, so I'm aiming for around 15 marathons in 15 days across very hilly terrain.

"Along with the IronMan training, which I also plan on doing next year, the training for this challenge will start now that the swim has been ticked off."

The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is the principal charity of the Royal Navy. It exists to support sailors, marines and their families, for life.

There is still time to support Sub Lt Fisher's fundraising swim by visiting: virginmoneygiving.com/LilyMaeFisher



Summer camps triumph against odds

THE Covid-19 pandemic has caused many areas of life to come to a standstill. Cancelled events, closed businesses and staying at home has been the story for much of 2020, but as lockdown restrictions eased across the country this summer, a degree of normality began to return.

Like many organisations, the Kings Active Foundation have not had an easy year, as their ever popular Kings Camps ground to a halt during lockdown.

Thanks to a long-standing partnership with the RNRMC, sports and activity camps are usually available during school holidays at a discounted rate for children and young people from Royal Navy families.

This offer is available in 55 locations nationwide, as well as at ten UK Royal Navy establishments from Cornwall to Helensburgh.

As a result of the pandemic however, all camps were cancelled during the Easter break and it was looking unlikely that the summer holidays would be any different.

Against the odds though, Kings Camps have taken place this summer across the country, with a limited number of camps



even managing to return to Royal Navy establishments. The Kings Active Foundation, the Royal Navy and the RNRMC have worked hard to ensure that as many children as possible had the opportunity to return to camp, or experience it for the first time, with safety being the number one priority.

"We're really pleased to have pushed through the challenges and uncertainties to operate Kings Camps for children from Navy

families this summer", said Richard Holmes, Kings Active Foundation CEO.

Adaptations have been made to the camps, such as smaller 'bubble' group sizes, regular breaks for hand washing or sanitising, and stringent monitoring of children for any signs of infection.

"There's never been a time when getting children active, having fun and learning together has been so important, and it was clear from day one that children were desperate to do so", said Richard.

"The feedback from parents has been phenomenal, with many stating that being able to get their children back to some sort of normality was a real boost to family life."

One parent commented: "Amazing, safe venue for kids! Great staff who engaged kids from the outset. This is the only camp my kids actually enjoy."

Another parent added: "My daughter absolutely loved it. She turned five last year, so this is the first time she has been able to do it. I picked her up every night and she is so excited to tell me all about the new sports she has played, what she has done and the new friends she had made."



Queen's belated birthday present

SAILORS and Royal Marines from across the Royal Navy are among the recipients of this year's Queen's Birthday Honours List.

Delayed because of Covid-19, a Royal Navy surgeon working on the frontline during the pandemic, the officer in charge of training sailors for ceremonial duties, and the Head of the Submarine Service, are among those named on the 2020 list.

In total 22 men and women from across the Royal Navy and Royal Marines have had their work acknowledged.

Five Royal Navy officers receive OBEs, including **Surgeon Commander Sam Hutchings** for his tireless work during the Covid-19 pandemic.

The intensive care consultant from Portsmouth-based Joint Hospital Group (South) worked at London's Kings College Hospital to ensure that it and others nationwide had enough critical care beds for patients requiring the highest level of medical care.



I didn't do anything that hundreds of people didn't do. It is a team effort and every single person deserves praise.

SURG CDR SAM HUTCHINGS

"Myself and a military colleague, both intensive care specialists here at Kings, developed a command-and-control structure," said Sam, 47, from Hampshire, who joined the RN in 1993. "Kings is incredibly large and the busiest intensive care hospital in the UK in terms of Covid, but we had a lot of different areas."

"We ended up at one time having nine intensive care units in the hospital so the command-and-control structure ensured everyone and everything was in the right area. It is not something we normally do so we have written it up and will get it published. Our model was useful for larger intensive care units."

Sam, who has been based at Kings since 2011, described this year as "pretty frenetic, alternating between flat-out working in March, April, May and June, some recovery over the summer and now a lot of uncertainty as we head into the winter."

The medic, who has seen service for the RN on submarines, in Iraq, Afghanistan and in Sierra Leone during the Ebola crisis, was humble about his honour.

"I was surprised and a bit embarrassed because I didn't do anything that hundreds of people didn't do. It is a team effort and every single person deserves praise."

The Navy's State Ceremonial



Colour Sergeant Mike Beaton from Torquay is made an MBE for heading the Royal Marines' Educational Awareness Team.

It roams the country spreading the word about the work of the RN/RM and has had a positive impact on recruiting, in particular in the BAME arena – all through the subject of food, using it as a platform to enthuse, inspire, educate young people and to get them to think about their next step in life.

In addition, Mike has built up a legion of social media followers – and has continued to keep them entertained throughout the pandemic with his energetic cooking sessions from his home kitchen and his trademark catchphrase: Boom!

Known online as the @CommandoChef Mike's rapid-fire cookery lessons draw thousands of viewers.

But the news of the MBE has left the senior non-commissioned officer stunned for the first time in his 34 years as a Royal Marine.

"Wow. It's unbelievable. From leaving school with no education to being on Her Majesty The Queen's Birthday Honours List and being awarded the MBE. I can't really believe it!" he said.

"What a privilege – and what a privilege to work with young people as a serving Royal Marine. Boom!"

Mike says the success of his EAT isn't down to him, but support and advice from people across the Forces, elite sports coaches, tutors, teachers, council leaders, social media following and many more – and especially his wife.

"Then we went into lockdown and the Commando Chef was born, getting the word out there through social media from my kitchen in Torquay."

"Now we're well past three million views. Fast recipes, chat, washing on the line, burning food, stepping on the dog – it has been a roller coaster of a journey on social media, all done in one take because life is real."

Training Officer, **Warrant Officer 1 Eddie Wearing**, was left speechless when he was told of his MBE.

Eddie (*main image*), who delivers training for Royal Navy personnel at high-profile events, such as Remembrance and Palace Guarding, was rewarded for "demonstrating selfless dedication and delivering the highest ceremonial standards, bringing credit to the Royal Navy and United Kingdom."

"I was absolutely amazed to hear," said Eddie. "I've just come back from Bahrain after a six-month sabbatical and I'm in isolation. The captain (of HMS Collingwood) rings me and says "are you sitting down?"

"When she told me I didn't know what to say. "Mr Wearing, I don't think I've known you to be speechless."

"It was my dad's 70th birthday and, as he is ex-forces, I have told them. My mum is already buying a hat."

"I have been in this role since 2015 and I absolutely love the job. It is made very easy by the staff working for me."

Eddie, who joined the RN in July 1991, lists Battle of Jutland centenary commemorations in Kirkwall in 2016 and the D-Day 75 parade last year as his two stand-out moments of his current job.

Leading Writer Rebecca Fyans, who works at the Navy's headquarters in Portsmouth, is made an MBE for her commitment to disability and inclusion and diversity issues, both across Defence and in her local community.

Well known in the RN and in Portsmouth for her charity work, she is a carers' advocate for the Armed Forces CanDID network.



It is quite amazing. I didn't think something like this would happen to me.

LOWTR REBECCA FYANS

"I was really shocked to hear about the honour, it is quite amazing. I didn't think something like this would happen to me," said the mum-of-two, whose husband is also in the RN.

Rebecca, whose son Seby was born in 2013 with Down syndrome, last year helped launch CanDID with an event attended by senior Armed Forces personnel and ministers.

"I was one of the speakers and bought the entire room to tears with my story. It has given people, especially senior decision-makers, an insight into what it is like to be a carer in the Armed Forces, really shone a light on it," said Rebecca, who was named a Rising Star in Defence in 2018.

"It is a voluntary role and without the support of my family I wouldn't have been able to do it," added the 40-year-old, who earlier this year was named one of the most inspirational people in Portsmouth by BAE Systems.

Head of the Submarine Service, **Commodore Jim Perks** is made a CBE for his work as Commander of Faslane Flotilla.

Cdre Perks said: "I am hugely honoured and humbled by

this award, but it is the superb commitment and dedication of our submariners and particularly their families, that truly deserve this honour – my thanks go to them.

"Having joined the Royal Navy, as a junior rating, 36 years ago, to find myself as Head of the Submarine Service; this has been an incredible journey for me and my family – I am very much 'Made in the Royal Navy!'"

Admiral Tim Fraser, Vice Chief of Defence Staff, becomes a Sir. He is made a Knight Commander in the Military Division of the Most Honourable Order of the Bath for his outstanding contribution to the defence of the UK.

Companions of the Bath go to **Rear Admiral Jim Macleod**,

Defence Services Secretary, for his work, including the management of D-Day 75 and the Invictus Games, **Rear Admiral Mike Utley**,

for his work as Commander UK Carrier Strike Group and the Maritime Lead for the D-Day 75 commemoration, and a CBE to **Commodore James Parkin**, for his work as Commander Littoral Strike Group.

Also honoured, the following personnel receive OBEs: **Commodore Bob Anstey**, Assistant Chief of Staff Submarines, Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland; **Commodore Paul Carroll**, head of Type 31 Frigate and Innovation and Future Capability Team, Defence Equipment and Support; **Colonel Mike Geldard**, Defence Attaché at the British Embassy in Harare, South Africa; **Captain Kevin Noakes**, Combat Systems Design Authority – Surface Warships.

The following personnel receive MBEs: **Captain Thomas Buck**, Regimental Signals Officer, 45 Commando; **Lieutenant Colonel Will Clarke**, Officer Commanding Special Services Support Group/Staff Officer Plans Headquarters 3 Commando Brigade;

Submariners Petty Officer Engineering Technician (Weapon Engineering Submarines) Andrew Hey and engineering officer **Lieutenant Ian McInnes**; **CPO Communications Technician M McLaughlan**;

Lieutenant Commander Joel Roberts, Operations Officer aboard HMS Dragon; **Colour Sergeant R Selbie**, Leading Assault Engineer, 45 Commando;

Major David West, Officer Commanding Environmental Training Team, Commando Helicopter Force; **Lieutenant Commander Louise Wooller**, First Lieutenant HMS Raleigh.

Colour Sergeant D Hill, Company Quartermaster Sergeant, Commando Company, Royal Marines Reserve London, is awarded the Queen's Voluntary Reserve Medal.





New dolphins mark out new submariners

THIS is the badge all men and women will receive when they commit to joining the family that is the Silent Service from now on.

The inaugural Training Dolphins have been issued to rookie submariners – a badge they will swap for a gold emblem when they complete their demanding instruction and become fully-fledged deeps.

Up to now, those joining the Submarine Service have had no insignia recognising their commitment to a career beneath the waves.

Which is where the new insignia come in.

All new entry officers and ratings on streaming submarines at Britannia Royal Naval College and HMS Raleigh will be eligible to wear the badge, which will better recognise career progression and mark entry into the Submarine Service.

The Navy's most senior submariner, Commodore Jim Perks, presented students of the current Submarine Qualification class at HM Naval Base Clyde with the first Training Dolphins.

"The introduction of the submarine training badge marks an important step in the career of those choosing to serve as submariners," he said.

"The badge will rightly recognise the progression within the Submarine Service from trainee to fully qualified submariner.

"Training dolphins will increase our Service's visibility within our training establishment and potentially increase the number of volunteers.

"With the skills and knowledge, they will attain going forward, they will turn their training badge into gold."

The 'Gold Dolphins' – which depict two dolphins and an anchor with a crown – have been the official mark of a qualified submariner for nearly half a century.

First new title to Team Talent

CREW of veteran hunter-killer submarine HMS Talent are the first winners of a new award recognising those who go above and beyond the call of duty.

The sonar team from the Faslane-based boat – Talent's 'eyes and ears' beneath the waves – are the inaugural recipients of a Royal Navy Commendation.

These replace the long-standing commendations presented by the Fleet Commander – focusing on operational effectiveness – and the Second Sea Lord – rewarding efforts across all lines of development.

Under the Navy's Transformation programme, they've been merged and renamed to enhance their significance – and make receiving a commendation a particularly special moment in someone's career.

In Talent's case, she's been heavily in demand this year and last, and the sonar operators stood out in particular among an already impressive crew.

It is down to them to constantly listen out for potential threats to the Trafalgar-class boat: hostile submarines, hostile ships,

hostile aircraft – all can be identified by a well-honed team and Talent's sonar suite.

It's a challenging, painstaking job, one made all the more demanding by Talent's busy programme and considerable fluctuations in personnel.

As a result, the lean-manned and junior department often sacrificed leave and personal downtime to maintain and improve the submarine, and also helped with the training of other departments to maintain safety and preserve seamanship standards.

Throughout the small and extremely busy team demonstrated excellent leadership and dedication – making them worthy winners of the new distinction.

"The award of the first Royal Navy Commendation to Talent's sonar department is a significant achievement, and justly reflects the hard work and dedication that each member of the team has consistently demonstrated while on operations," said Commander Paul Jamieson, the boat's Commanding Officer.



Tap into your RN potential

LAST year we published *New Navy* – our blueprint for transformation.

This little booklet – available electronically on the Intranet and in a limited print run – is our updated blueprint for transformation.

Fulfilling Our Potential is the follow-up to *New Navy* which, 12 months ago, got the transformation ball rolling.

The refreshed blueprint explains how the RN is tying together its plans and activities to forge a force which is modern, ready and global.

Fulfilling Our Potential runs through some of the changes and improvements to date: the My Navy App, the creation of the People & Training Directorate, developed the Future Commando Force concept, deployed more ships around the globe under the forward presence programme – and revised crewing models to embrace Gulf-based MCMVs.

We've increased training capacity, assembled the Carrier Strike Group in preparation for its maiden deployment, and started work on Programme Hecate to review how we do what we do – with the aim of improving stability for our people and our effectiveness as a world-class Navy.

For a copy, see the intranet or speak to your DO.

At the heart of the transformation programme are four key pillars:

Availability By transforming the way we operate and manage our people, ships, aircraft and units, relationships, data and infrastructure, we will get more out of our existing resources

Sustainability With a forward-deployed Navy at the heart of our agenda, with better environmental protection, better infrastructure, and less bureaucracy, we will improve our productivity.

Lethality By embracing cutting-edge and ground-breaking technology, we will maintain our competitive advantage.

and transformation will give our people **Opportunity** Through enhanced professionalisation, better training opportunities, greater empowerment, with more stability and predictability in career and deployment plans, we will create exciting opportunities for our people.



Sam's top Forces caterer

HIS work creating a catering organisation able to feed 800 men and women daily – plus royalty on special occasions – earned HMS Prince of Wales' WO1 Sam Hogg the title Armed Forces Caterer of the Year.

The 38-year-old was nominated for the award for his leadership and creativity in the day-to-day running of the aircraft carrier's galleys, including providing 800 sailors with up to four meals a day, as well as delivering food for prestigious events.

WO1 Hogg spent 2019 building the ship's catering service up from scratch, transforming both galleys into fully-functioning workspaces and being at the heart of the ship's catering for her commissioning ceremony attended by the carrier's Lady Sponsor The Duchess of Cornwall and the Prince of Wales.

As part of his creative thinking he implemented a 'Quick Bites' menu in an effort to satisfy the changing demands of the customer base – a trial deemed a success by those on board.

His nomination for the Public Sector Catering Award said: "Under WO1 Hogg, HMS Prince of Wales has successfully integrated Able Seaman and Leading Hand stewards, NAAFI chefs, Army chefs and civilian staff within the galleys.

"He has doggedly searched for innovative ways to ensure consistent, and sustainable support to the ship's company. He refused to settle for common practise and recognised a need to think creatively.

"He successfully applied for approximately £22,000 worth of more efficient kitchen machinery, which helped to reduce preparation and cooking times in the galley."

WO1 Hogg said: "It is really good to receive recognition for assisting to shape the future feeding model on board Royal Navy ships and I couldn't have done it without a superb, young and enthusiastic team."

A jolly good fellow(ship)

A TRAINING programme giving the Royal Navy's people the chance to immerse themselves in technology and innovation has been hailed a success.

Sailors, Royal Marines and civilian staff from across the five fighting arms took part in the inaugural Percy Hobart Fellowship scheme.

The 12-week course saw personnel take part in online courses and work with start-up businesses to learn how they operate.

The programme aims to drive a culture of innovation in defence – teaching Royal Navy staff to identify the needs of today's service and secure the most effective technologies and tools to meet them.

First Sea Lord Admiral Tony Radakin said he had been "hugely impressed by what this first cohort of Percy Hobart Fellows have achieved during this programme.

"Their skills and experiences will be invaluable as we continue to drive forward Royal Navy Transformation, embracing modern and dynamic working practices and embedding technology at the heart of all that we do."

Personnel attended virtual lectures on emerging technologies such as AI and facial recognition, learned about the importance of understanding the needs of those using the technology and heard from entrepreneurs on their successes and the challenges of running a start-up business.

Royal Marines heavy weapons specialist Marine Colt Callaghan wanted to see changes happen at a faster pace and saw the fellowship as an opportunity to help him push his ideas forward.

"Initially I was unsure of what I could do for a start-up, but after the first few weeks I was more confident that I could make a meaningful difference for

a small company," he said.

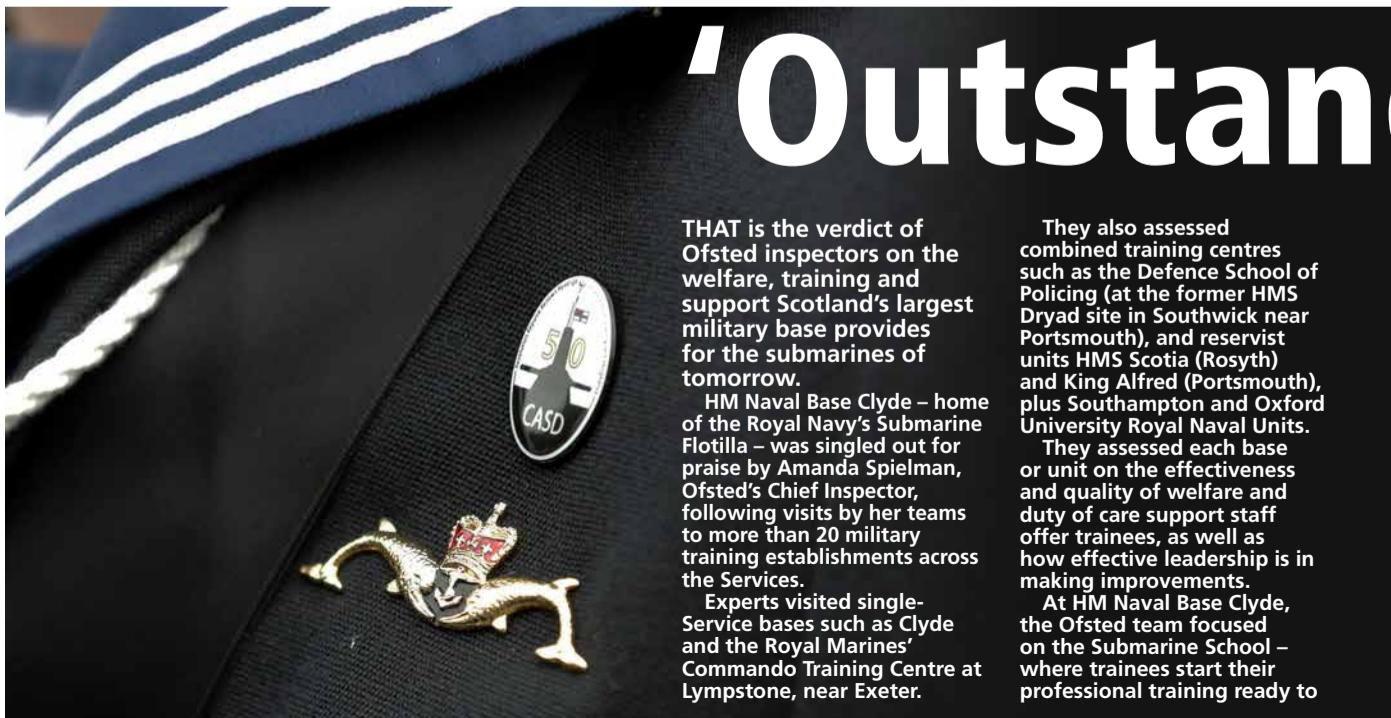
"While I was sometimes outside my comfort zone, the work was always achievable with a bit of determination."

Colt worked with firm The Future Fox to develop a community gallery of Covid-safe public spaces (you can see them at [tactical.space](#)), carried out competitor analysis and market research, and tested his coding skills by writing some of the Tactical Space site.

Fellowship graduate Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Louise McMenemy said the course gave large organisations like defence the chance to innovate.

"The Royal Navy needs to participate in initiatives like the fellowship to remain relevant and foster talent.

"The benefits to the service should not be overlooked. Providing opportunities like the fellowship enthuse personnel and ensure new thinking is brought into the service."



'Outstand

THAT is the verdict of Ofsted inspectors on the welfare, training and support Scotland's largest military base provides for the submarines of tomorrow.

HM Naval Base Clyde – home of the Royal Navy's Submarine Flotilla – was singled out for praise by Amanda Spielman, Ofsted's Chief Inspector, following visits by her teams to more than 20 military training establishments across the Services.

Experts visited single-Service bases such as Clyde and the Royal Marines' Commando Training Centre at Lympstone, near Exeter.

They also assessed combined training centres such as the Defence School of Policing (at the former HMS Dryad site in Southwick near Portsmouth), and reservist units HMS Scotia (Rosyth) and King Alfred (Portsmouth), plus Southampton and Oxford University Royal Naval Units.

They assessed each base or unit on the effectiveness and quality of welfare and duty of care support staff offer trainees, as well as how effective leadership is in making improvements.

At HM Naval Base Clyde, the Ofsted team focused on the Submarine School – where trainees start their professional training ready to

Two new award schemes

TWO new Senior Command Warrant Officers schemes are now up and running, following the success of the SCWO reward and recognition awards.

Through promotion and engagement, the RN has seen an increase in Herbert Lott awards being presented, 218 in 2020, compared to 101 in 2019.

In addition, family respite and recognition breaks have been awarded at the Victory Services Club and the Union Jack Club, with liaison underway to expand this offer to organisations such as the China Fleet Country Club and Park Dean resorts.

The new schemes are:

■ **Long Service Recognition Awards.** As Royal Navy Service rarely exceeds 35 years, this will recognise the small proportion of personnel, whom have served for at least 40 years. A gift, funded by the RNRMC, symbolising their exceptional time in Service will be presented along with the Valedictory Certificate as they leave the Royal Navy. See [RNTM 09-012/20](#).

■ **Longer Separation Allowance 5,000 Days Award.** LSA is banded from 1 to 16, with no further increases in financial rewards past 3161 days. Within the Royal Navy there are some exceptional individuals that have accrued more than 5,000 days. In order to recognise their service and the impact that it would have had on family life, this award has been introduced. A voucher, funded by the RNRMC, will be presented along with a SCWO Commendation. See [RNTM 09-014/20](#).

Reward and recognition is an important part of Service life and aside from being vital in identifying the valuable contribution personnel make, it can also aid retention. Divisional Officers and Troop Commanders should feel empowered to recognise their personnel from one of these schemes or the wider awards laid out in [RNTM 09-18/20](#) or on the Honours and Awards Portal.

Latest awards:

Herbert Lott Awards: CPO Hills (Ledbury); WO1 Scott, CPO Causer, PO Gibson, LET McCormella, LET McGill, ET Jeffery, ET Gloster and ET Dunster (all HMS Blyth)

Long Service Recognition Award:

Lt Cdr Giles (MCM MW); PO Killeen (Richmond); PO Robinson (RNAS Culdrose/ATC)

LIEUTENANT Commander David Roberts is presented with a certificate to mark the successful completion of a course.

Nothing new here, you might think.

Except the course was in German. For two years.

The 37-year-old warfare officer made history as the top naval student on the German military's most prestigious course training the leaders of tomorrow.

David stood out from more than 120 German and overseas military personnel attending two years of demanding learning in Hamburg.

It's the second time the officer, originally from Croydon, has demonstrated his language skills on a long-term exchange with one of the UK's closest allies.

Back in 2014, he served aboard French flagship FS Charles de Gaulle as a fighter controller, directing the actions of Rafale and Super Etendard jets.

A few years later and David was selected for the mentally-challenging German Advanced Staff Course at the *Führungsakademie der Bundeswehr* (German Armed Forces Command and Staff College) – roughly the equivalent of the UK's Staff College in Shrivenham.

Around 120 German military personnel attend the two-year course in the Hamburg suburb of Blankenese, plus NATO and European allies.

Apart from presentations towards the end when students must demonstrate their English-speaking ability to work in multinational staffs, the course is taught entirely in German.

The six Britons attending underwent 12 months of intensive German language training at Shrivenham before tackling the course itself.

Its focus is very much on growing the German military's understanding of combined global operations and expeditionary warfare.

The German Armed Forces are going through something of a transformation. Defence spending has been increased well above the rate of inflation and Berlin is keen for its military to get more involved in areas of tension abroad which threaten Germany's interests – such as the new HQ it's building to direct multinational naval operations in the Baltic region.

And with Germany spreading her wings, its military has a thirst for knowledge about expeditionary armed forces –



Know your German

- **Kessel** Literally 'kettle' but in the military a 'pocket'
- **Matrosen** Matelots
- **Panzerkampfwagen** Tank
- **Schwerpunkt** Focal point / centre of gravity
- **Streitkräftegemeinsame taktische Feuerunterstützung** Joint fire support
- **Zusammenarbeitfähigkeit** Interoperability, although you can use **Interoperabilität**.

like the UK's, allowing British students to share their expertise with the hosts, at the same time as gaining a continental insight into coalition operations.

"This is quite challenging and draining, particularly at first," David said. "The pace and breadth of subjects covered in the course does take a bit of time to ease into. I previously worked in the Charles de Gaulle as a fighter controller, and that experience definitely helped me with acclimatising in a new language and generally settling in in a new country.

"That and our naturally-aligned national interests and societal norms and mores made it easier to make a significant contribution to the course, as well as to draw lessons which can be useful for the UK Armed Forces."

After two years' study he

was named both the best naval student, the first non-German officer ever to receive this honour, and best international student on the course – recognised by both the German Navy and, at the graduation ceremony, by the college's Commanding Officer Generalmajor Oliver Kohl.

Lieutenant Colonel Ben Davenport, the British Army liaison officer at the staff college, said given the high standard of Britons selected for the course, they traditionally performed strongly – especially so this year.

He said their presence meant the UK's armed forces were "better understood by a key ally" and would form friendships and relationships with tomorrow's leaders of the German Navy, Army and Air Force which would "bear fruit in the future".

For the course's top international and naval student, the German experience – both military and civilian – has been unforgettable.

"Living in Hamburg has been very enjoyable and interesting. The city is bustling and has plenty for both single students or, in my case, young families.

"There is a strong British presence in Hamburg, which helps students to feel at home."

He now moves on to a job with NATO's Maritime Command headquarters at Northwood in northwest London – with a better understanding of "the challenges that colleagues have living and working in a foreign country and language, as well as the broad experience they bring and valuable contributions they can make."

Women's network on Argus

WHILE ploughing the waters of the Caribbean, RFA Argus held its first Naval Servicewomen's Network get-together.

The network aims to improve the experience of women serving in both the RN and RFA, whatever their rank, background, culture and so on to allow them to feel empowered, inspired and ultimately to fulfil their potential.

For a good hour RN, RFA and Army personnel from every department and every rank up to the senior Royal Navy officer aboard Argus, Commander Kate

New group sheds light on neuro diversity

IF YOU are a serving member of the Royal Navy and suffer from a neurodivergent condition, support will be available from next month.

Dealing with conditions such as autism, ADHD, dyslexia, dyspraxia and dyscalculia, the Royal Navy Neurodiversity Network is being set up to help personnel with such a condition – or their loved ones, or perhaps a colleague they manage.

The network is also open to anyone with an interest in neurodiversity, in whatever form.

The group aims to act as a focal point for all forms of neurodiversity within the Royal Navy and to increase understanding, awareness and accommodation of neurodivergent conditions.

It will provide support, advice and guidance to neurodivergent personnel and their line managers. It will also be able to link Royal Navy personnel with responsibility for neurodivergent family members to the appropriate disability and support networks.

The network will be formally launched on December 3.

For more information, get in touch with Cdr Rebecca Warren or Lt Cdr Gordon Jones via MODNET.

Stub it out

ALL RN ships and submarines will be 'smoke free' from January 1 – and all RN establishments by the beginning of June next year.

Only in specific areas allocated for occupants of single living accommodation will lighting up be permitted.

Vaping will be permitted in designated areas.

Further details can be found in the [RNTM-05-017-20](#).

Muir, discussed a wide range of issues.

"I first experienced a Naval Servicewomen's Network event when I was on board HMS Queen Elizabeth in 2019," explained organiser medical technician Chief Petty Officer Carolyn Wilson, who works in Argus' impressive hospital facility.

"It was a good introduction to the network for those who attended, and it was a chance to speak to new faces from around the ship."

ding' submariner support

join a nuclear-powered boat.

The inspectors found the school's instructors went beyond 'merely' supplying the Fleet with men and women highly trained to meet the demands of the Silent Service, doing their utmost to ensure trainees felt at home at Faslane or sorted out transport to and from the base – particularly important given its somewhat isolated location.

Ofsted says the combination of quality training and care/welfare support has paid off as "trainees worked hard, supported one another well and were fiercely proud of their role as submariners" and joined front-line boats having

received "excellent training for the rigours of their role ahead."

The inspectors spent time with both Royal Marines young officers and recruits at the Commando Training Centre in Lympstone.

They rated the quality of welfare and care arrangements as 'outstanding', with particular care shown to recruits under 18, while the specialist rehabilitation unit, Hunter Company, offers 'excellent support' to help injured recruits resume their training.

And given the relatively high percentage of recruits who don't complete the 32-week/15 month ranks/officer

course, Ofsted were impressed by help and guidance given to those returning to civvy street – having made every effort to persuade them to remain in the military.

The inspectors identified areas for improvement – more and better food options, improved laundry facilities – and better education of would-be officers about the demands of training before they arrive at Lympstone.

"We are delighted that the efforts made by instructors and trainers into the care and welfare of our trainees has been recognised by Ofsted, particularly at Faslane and Lympstone," said Colonel Ade Morley, Commandant of the

Training Management Group.

"The Royal Navy regards itself as a tight-knit family – especially true of the Submarine Service and the Royal Marines – something which is reflected by the support and assistance recruits receive throughout their training, and the pride and sense of achievement they feel when they pass out.

"The report has identified areas for improvement – and we are addressing these, although many of them sit outside our direct control, because we are committed to improving them to ensure the 'lived experience' for trainees matches their expectations."

Southampton's URNU

gives undergraduates a solid grounding in life – whether they subsequently choose to join the RN or not – combining good training with excellent opportunities to work with the Navy all around the world.

It's a similar case at Oxford, with welfare support impressing the inspection team while efforts by the unit's staff had improved recruitment, retention and the training environment.

Welfare support at Portsmouth-based reservist unit HMS King Alfred was found to be good – but trainees often struggled getting their hands on the right kit due to 'excessive' bureaucracy.

Ofsted would like to see improved information for reserve trainees arriving at HMS Scotia – especially information about fitness levels demanded of the Service – and better provision of courses and training to spare personnel having to make the lengthy journey to southern England.

The full report can be read at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/welfare-and-duty-of-care-in-armed-forces-initial-training-welfare-and-duty-of-care-in-armed-forces-initial-training-2019-to-2020-summary-reports-in-date-order-reserve-establishments



Trainee pilot helps isolated veteran

A NAVY veteran hailed a trainee helicopter pilot as an 'unsung hero' for helping him through the pandemic.

Former sailor Maxton Scotland – originally from St Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean, but now living in East London – said he felt "like an ant in an unfamiliar world" when advised to cut himself off from everyone during the pandemic following a spell of chemotherapy.

His rock throughout has been 26-year-old Sub Lieutenant Daniel Camp who volunteered to provide the physical and emotional support – chatting with Maxton regularly and delivering food and essential medication.

Daniel was on leave from training to become a Fleet Air Arm helicopter pilot when a fellow officer told him about Maxton's plight: the former Royal Navy linguist had just completed chemotherapy treatment for a serious medical condition, leaving him vulnerable to infection, and had been told to shield himself.

With no immediate support from friends and family thousands of miles away in the Caribbean Maxton, who left the Navy in 2015 through ill health and worked for the United Nations before setting up a consultancy, found the prospect of isolation daunting. The regular calls and deliveries from Daniel were, says the veteran, "one of the only forms of human interaction I have had during the crisis and reignited hope during a very onerous period for me."

Maxton continued: "Daniel is an unsung hero, I have benefitted immensely from his selfless efforts during this pandemic. He went above and beyond by maintaining daily contact, enquiring about my mental health and ensuring that I did know that he was ready and willing to assist."

"Often small acts of kindness go unnoticed, but they really can make an enormous difference to someone's life."

Daniel, who hopes to fly helicopters from new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth when he completes his many

years of flight training said he was "delighted to step in and help somebody from my local community. Not only has it given me a purpose during lockdown, it feels really good to give something back to a veteran."

Maxton continues to remain in isolation due to his on-going medical condition and is hoping to receive assistance from a Naval Reservist when Daniel returns to his pilot training in Lincolnshire with No.3 Flying Training School.

The junior officer says he's learned a lot from helping the veteran – and the pair will keep in touch.

"It's been great meeting Maxton and hearing all about his time in the Royal Navy – it's given me a real insight into what to expect on the front line and an insight into the qualities that make a good Junior Officer – this is something I will take with me as I progress through my career," Daniel added.

"Experiences like this reaffirm the need to look after those around you, including both their physical and mental well-being. I know Maxton was reassured by knowing that I was only a WhatsApp message away if he needed help."

Commander Roger Wyness, Senior Naval Officer at RAF College Cranwell – naval aviators train alongside their air force cousins – said the young officer had impressed everyone through his selfless actions.

"Sub Lieutenant Camp has set the bar high and has been without doubt an example for all of us to follow, not only as a servant of the Armed Forces but as a member of broader society," he added.

"Through an unprecedented period of uncertainty, confusion and concern, the Nation has had to grow with Covid 19. It has been tolerated by many, however for some it has been an incredibly difficult journey. Sub Lieutenant Camp has managed both elements of this challenge with vivacity and unconditional selflessness; both qualities expected of an Officer in the Armed Forces. Camp's efforts are truly deserving of recognition."

Milestone men

Duo mark 108 years in RN

IT'S a Royal Navy career which started just before the Cuban missile crisis and ended nearly six decades to the day.

At 74 Lieutenant Commander Al Cronin is finally hanging up his naval uniform as Britain's oldest and longest-serving sailor.

Except for a brief spell in civvy street at the turn of the century, Al has served his nation for 58 years.

So it was only fitting that the nation's senior sailor bade Al farewell, with First Sea Lord, Admiral Tony Radakin, presenting a Gold Valedictory Certificate to bring a remarkable career to a close.

Al leaves the Royal Navy as First Lieutenant – Second-in-Command – of HMS Excellent, the establishment on Whale Island in Portsmouth which is home to the Fleet's headquarters.

It's just one role in a remarkable career which has also seen Al lead a team of 50 military interrogators/linguists during the Gulf War, command the Royal Navy Survival School, earn the Green Beret, represent the Fleet Air Arm in the famous Field Gun competition at the Royal Tournament – and represent his country in three sports (karate, athletics and bobsleigh)

He started out as a junior electrical mechanic training at HMS St Vincent and Daedalus, taking a pay cut in 1962 as a 15-year-old when he gave up £3 a week as a paperboy to take the Queen's 15 shillings instead.

HMS Ark Royal took him on his first overseas (and global) deployment in 1965 with the Sea Vixens of 899 Squadron, taking in the Far East heat without the comfort provided by chilled water plants and a hammock stretched along a hot water pipe for extra discomfort.

"There is nothing in my career I have regretted, and I would do it all again," he said.

"I count myself fortunate to have served in the finest Navy in the world and to have made many lasting friendships across the years."

Being pre-1970 vintage he was entitled to the daily rum ration, but there was no tear shed for its abolition – midday alcohol and working on complex jet electronics and safety systems weren't compatible in Al's mind. "Honestly, the best thing that could have happened was getting rid of that tot; I never drank mine." *The Guinness Book*



of *World Records* recognised Al for being the "Most Versatile Sportsman", representing the national teams in athletics (110 metre hurdles), bobsleigh and karate.

As captain of the Great Britain karate team he beat the visiting Japanese in a blood-and-guts encounter of which a film was made, *The Empty Hand*, thanks to the involvement of Wings drummer Geoff Britton in the squad and the determination of Paul McCartney to see the contest despite being overseas (he commissioned the film).

In retirement Al will spend time with his five grandchildren. And as you'd expect from a triple international sportsman there'll be no let-up in his training regime after he returns his kit; he'll still be on 100-150 press-ups a day, over 500 sit-ups, weights and cardio work to keep his six-pack intact.

- In 1962
- New TV shows included popular police drama *Z Cars* and Roger Moore debuting as *The Saint*.
- Cliff Richard's *Young Ones* spent 20 weeks in the UK charts – six of them in the No.1 spot.
- The Beatles released their first single, *Love Me Do*.
- England lost out to eventual winners Brazil in the quarter-finals of the World Cup.
- The average house (£2,670) cost just over three times the average wage (£800 a year)
- A pint of milk cost 6½p, beer 11½p and a daily newspaper 1-1½p.

In May 1971
■ Edward Heath was Prime Minister of a Conservative government.

■ Michael Caine's revenge thriller *Get Carter* was getting bums on seats in UK cinemas.

■ TV viewers were getting used to a new double act, *The Two Ronnies*.

■ Mick Jagger married actress Bianca de Macías (they divorced in 1978).

■ Arsenal completed the Double by beating Liverpool 2-1 in the FA Cup Final.

■ And topping the singles chart, early '70s supergroup Dawn with *Knock Three Times*.



A NAVY chef is on the verge of making history – 50 years of cooking for fellow sailors and Royal Marines.

Chief Petty Officer Martin Etwell from Newbury is believed to be the first person in the 115-year history of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary – whose ships support Royal Navy operations around the globe – to reach the milestone.

The 65-year-old, currently serving in the Gulf aboard RFA Cardigan Bay, has spent 49 years working in ship's galleys – mostly at sea.

Working in a bakery as a teenager sparked his interest in a career as a chef and, with the promise of travelling the world while doing a job he'd love, he signed up for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary as a 'galley boy' in May 1971 aged just 16.

He learned his craft quickly, spending his first 11 months away from home sailing to the Far East, including stops in Australia, New Zealand and Singapore.

"I've had the opportunity to travel all over the world throughout my 49 years in the RFA," said Martin. "From the Far East to the US and Caribbean, and everywhere in between. I recently made it to Japan, a lifelong ambition."

He's also prepared meals in the line of fire, serving aboard RFA Fort Austin during the Falklands conflict as the ship's second cook and baker.

The vessel accompanied assault ship HMS Fearless into San Carlos Water when the landings to liberate the islands began. Fort Austin's gunners claimed one aircraft shot down, while the ship survived near misses from Argentine bombs during four days in 'Bomb Alley'. She subsequently took survivors from destroyer HMS Coventry aboard.

"After being in the Merchant Navy for 11 years, I wasn't fazed by going to the Falklands," he said. "This was my first taste of conflict, but we knew we had an important job to do, so we got on with it."

After a varied career spanning almost 50 years, Martin has served on every class of RFA ship, from vessels long out of service, to the latest Tide-class tankers. His current ship acts as the command and mother ship for all the Royal Navy's minehunters operating in the Gulf.

"My favourite ever ship was RFA Diligence back in 2001. You always knew you were going somewhere on that ship, somewhere new. There were only 50 people on board so the camaraderie was brilliant. It was always a happy ship!"

His career hasn't been spent entirely at sea, however. Between 2006 and 2010 he passed on his skills and experience at HMS Raleigh in Torpoint, teaching recruits as a chef instructor.

"This was a whole new challenge for me," he said. "But seeing people come in the

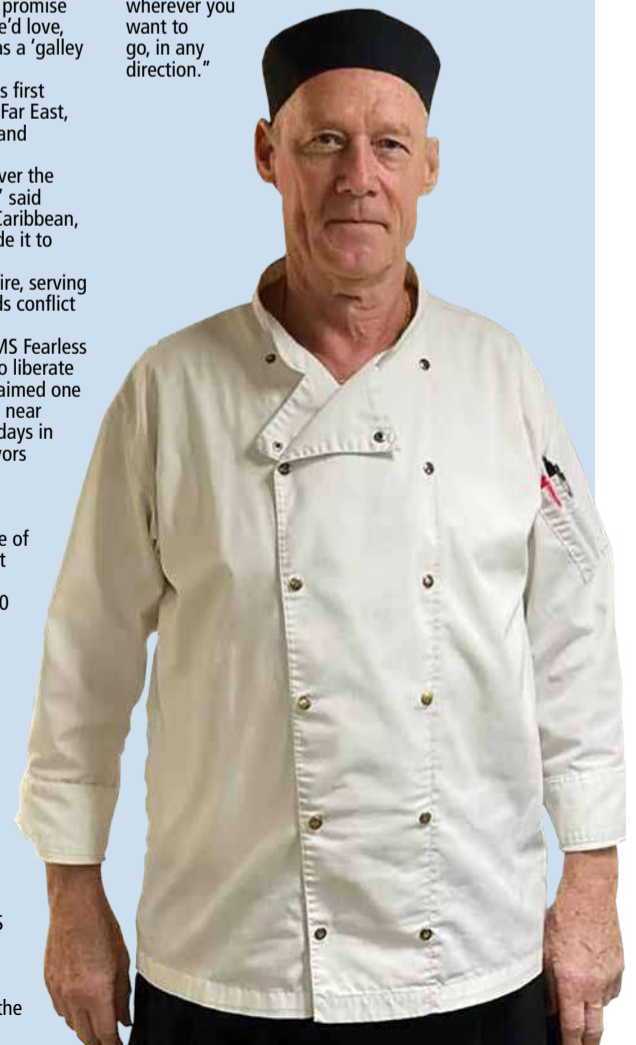
door who were unsure, and then seeing them come out at the end, it was really rewarding to see how they'd grown."

"Now I even work with one of the recruits who I taught on my very first course!" he added.

At 65 he has no plans on stepping ashore for good just yet.

"I love the job, and I like to be busy," he said. "I'm not ready to hang up the chef's whites just yet."

"It's a good life, camaraderie is great and it gives you a chance to go wherever you want to go, in any direction."



Registered charity number: Royal Navy & Royal Marines Children's Fund 1160182

Naval Children's Charity

Supporting children whose parents serve or have served in the Naval Service.



Naval Children's Charity, 311 Twyford Avenue, Stamshaw, Portsmouth, PO2 8RN

www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk
023 9263 9534
caseworkers@navalchildrenscharity.org.uk

Welcome to family

Brother and sister among 42 new officers

THERE are 42 men and women who are 'twice the citizen' in the Royal Navy's officer corps after completing their training.

The head of the Maritime Reserves Commodore Mel Robinson reviewed the parade of men and women who'd successfully completed the Accelerated Officer Programme.

Run by Britannia Royal Naval College in Dartmouth – the spiritual home of the officer cadre – the eight-week intensive training package transforms civilians, all of whom have day jobs, into officers and chaplains.

In what was the most diverse course yet, with chaplains training alongside their Reserve counterparts for the first time, the course also included Officer Cadets from University Royal Navy Units across the country, who transferred to the Royal Naval Reserve to complete this challenging but rewarding programme.

Among the successful cadets, brother and sister Midshipmen Toby and Pippa Blunden, continuing the family's service to their nation going back more than seven decades.

Their grandfather, John Blunden, was a fighter pilot who, after leaving the RAF, saw action with the Fleet Air Arm in the Korean War and Suez Crisis. It was his sword from 1945 which Pippa carried at the ceremony.

Dad Jeremy passed out of Dartmouth in 1982 and went on to command HMS Newcastle and HMS Bulwark before retiring as a commodore. And sister Katie, a lieutenant, passed through BRNC 30 years later.

Pippa said "The Royal Navy is very much in my blood – it has been a passion for my entire family from siblings to grandparents; I often think we as a family represent the sheer diversity of opportunities available. I am delighted to join the family trade and hope also to make a meaningful contribution, bringing the skillset that I continue to develop in my corporate career into the unique environment that is the Royal Navy."

Cdre Robinson said: "We are a family-orientated organisation in the Maritime Reserves.

"The Young Officers who have completed



their training can now start to tell their own family's Royal Navy story and, in time, their children and grandchildren may even follow their parents and grandparents into the Royal Navy and Maritime Reserves of the future."

A number of awards were presented at the parade, held not at Dartmouth but HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

Midshipman Henry Dewhurst was named Best Officer Cadet and received the Reserve Forces and Cadets Association 'Sword of Honour'; Midshipman Oliver Kenzie made the most positive contribution to this year's course. Chaplain Will Sweeney and Midshipman Derek Player were the Best Officer Cadets in their respective Training Divisions (Gosling and Cumberlege, respectively).

As with many passing-out parades over

the past six months, many families, friends and employers were unfortunately unable to travel to Portsmouth to witness their loved ones and colleagues complete their training.

"Without the support of our families, friends and employers, the Maritime Reserves would not be able to deliver the level of operational support to the Royal Navy around the world," Commodore Robinson added.

"I am so incredibly proud of the Young Officers who have successfully completed the course, which compresses around two to three years' learning into just eight intensive weeks.

"What an achievement! I look forward to watching them continue to flourish as they develop and establish themselves as the next generation of officers, both in the Royal Naval Reserve and the regular Royal Navy."

It's all change for three reserve units

A NUMBER of RNR units have welcomed new commanding officers.

Commander Greg Young has taken charge of the UK's largest Maritime Reserves Unit, HMS President in London, from Commander Richmal Hardinge.

Elsewhere, Commander Carolyn Jones has taken over at Cardiff-based HMS Cambria and Commander Laura Wellington has taken charge of Fife-based HMS Scotia.

Cdr Young, who first joined President as a Sub Lieutenant in 1997, said: "As the incoming Commanding Officer I want to pay tribute to Cdr Hardinge's outstanding leadership over the last three years."

Cdr Jones, pictured right, joined the RN in 1986 and was among the first intake of women to be fully integrated into the RN.

She said: "I am honoured and delighted to take command of HMS Cambria. This is a career highlight and I look forward to meeting the wider community and being part of the dedicated and professional Cambrian team."

Cdr Wellington, pictured bottom right, said: "I am absolutely thrilled to be given the opportunity to command HMS Scotia. To be selected for command is a career's ambition realised and an absolute privilege."

HMS Scotia is the principal Royal Naval Reserve unit for the entire East of Scotland. Based within MOD Caledonia in Rosyth, it recruits and trains reservists from across Edinburgh, Fife and East Central Scotland. It also maintains a satellite unit, Tay Division in Dundee, which serves areas around Dundee, Perth and Aberdeen.



Your Exclusive Official Royal Navy Calendar

12 AMAZING IMAGES OF THE FLEET The 2021 Royal Navy/Navy News Calendar

STILL ONLY
£8.99
inc p&p (UK)
or £12.99 inc p&p
(overseas)
GLOBALAMBITION
21

Order Now!

Our official calendar for 2021 celebrates the awesome Global Ambition of our Royal Navy featuring images that show its role sailing the world's seas protecting and helping in areas in much need of aid and assistance.

There are 3 ways to purchase your copy –

- **Online** – click on onlinecalendarshop.com/navynews and go through the simple order procedure to secure your copy. Navy News readers please quote code (GLOBALAMBITION21) when ordering online. Don't forget to have your credit card details handy when you go online.
- **By post** – send a cheque or postal order to **Onlinecalendarshop.com Ltd, 2 Ringway Business Park, Richard Street, Birmingham B7 4AA.** Please make your cheque payable to **Onlinecalendarshop.com Ltd**
- **By phone** – call **0121 333 1553** to place your order direct with one of our friendly customer service operators. Don't forget to have your credit card details handy when you call. Please allow 28 days from order for delivery.



AMAZING
FREE
SHIPS OF THE FLEET
POSTER



Onlinecalendarshop.com Ltd,
2 Ringway Business Park, Richard Street,
Birmingham B7 4AA



New for 2021
Amazing official military calendars with powerful emotive images. See opposite and choose one of our 3 easy ways to place your order **Only 8.99** inc p&p. Please don't forget to include your discount code when ordering.

This official calendar makes the ideal Christmas gift, order now to beat the Christmas rush whilst stocks last.



Tragedy prompts dad and son to run marathon

A FATHER-and-son team ran a unique London Marathon to help fellow service families. Former Chief Petty Officer Andrew Bowen and his leading hand son Curtis completed a 'virtual marathon', spurred on by a personal tragedy and a desire to help military personnel cope with mental health issues.

Three years ago, Andrew's youngest son and Curtis' youngest brother Ryan took his own life aged just 18 – a reaction to something he saw on social media. "Needless to say that this tragic event has caused our whole family massive heartache and trauma," said 54-year-old Andrew, from Llanelli in South Wales. "Ryan was an organ donor and gave life to many other people as his vital organs were transplanted – we have letters from the organ recipients thanking us for the new lease of life and hope that Ryan's unselfish gift has given to them."



"That is one of the reasons why we want to honour his memory so much." Andrew (pictured in the middle above post-virtual marathon) served in the RN for 23 years between 1983 and 2006, leaving as a Chief Weapon Engineering Artificer after time in HM Ships Cardiff, Glamorgan, Southampton, Intrepid, Amazon, Manchester and Gloucester.

After helping to commission both new aircraft carriers, his 25-year-old son is currently providing logistic support to HMS Forth – and any other RN vessel making use of East Cove Military Port with the team at Naval Engineering Falkland Islands. Curtis was already a keen runner and fund-raiser before deploying to the South Atlantic. He ran ten ten-kilometre runs in as many days during lockdown to raise £3,000 for his local NHS Trust in Llanelli, Hywel Dda, to help towards the cost of a ventilator.

The pandemic put the kibosh on the traditional race around the capital at the end of April. Instead, some 45,000 people ran the distance on Sunday wherever they could, using an app to prove they'd completed the marathon. For dad, that meant around his native Llanelli – accompanied by friends and Curtis' older brother Luke – in the tail of Storm Alex.

For Curtis (pictured inset), it meant the rather cold, bleak surroundings of Mount Pleasant and East Cove in the Falklands.

He said the four hours and 45 minutes he spent battling 30mph winds in solitude were among the most physically and mentally demanding of his life.

"Having nobody there in person was a challenge in itself, the last ten miles I wanted to give up and throw the towel in."

"Then I would remember why I am doing it: for my hero, my late younger brother Ryan. I was not totally alone, I knew that he was looking down on me, proud of his big brother!"

His dad, who completed the run ten minutes faster than Curtis, added: "It was an extremely emotional day for me – achieving my ambition to complete a marathon and not only that, I became a marathon runner on the same day as my two sons. I am so proud of them both, I shed a few tears of pride."

The family has already smashed the £5,000 target they set to help Forces charity SSAFA, but is continuing the virtual collection tin rattling. You can support the BOWENS at [justgiving.com/fundraising/Andrew-Bowen-London-marathon2020](https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Andrew-Bowen-London-marathon2020).

Divers honour Royal Oak dead

FOR the first time in nearly 40 years, Royal Navy divers were unable to make their annual pilgrimage to the Royal Oak.

Instead, they held a special service of commemoration in Faslane to mark the tragedy which claimed the lives of 835 men and boys 81 years ago.

Battleship HMS Royal Oak was torpedoed in the Royal Navy's wartime base at Scapa Flow by German U-boat U-47, sinking in a matter of minutes.

The disaster rocked the nation and Navy – many of the victims were boys, and Scapa was believed to be a safe haven.

A buoy in the vast natural harbour in Orkney marks the wreck site – the upturned, crumpled hull lies on the seabed just below the surface of the water – and has served as the focal point for acts of remembrance down the years (sadly, all survivors of the sinking have now crossed the bar).

And each autumn since the ship's bell was recovered in 1982, Northern Diving Group personnel descend to the wreck to check the state of the hull, inspect for any fuel leaking, and replace the Royal Navy's standard 'hoisted' by their predecessors 12 months earlier.

Except this year due to Covid. Petty Officer (Diver) Guy Rudkin, who had started planning the 2020 visit to Orkney, was determined that the battleship's tragic loss should not pass without commemoration and, with Chaplain Mark Noakes, organised a special service in Faslane.

Divers were joined by personnel from the Clyde-based 1st Mine Countermeasures Squadron and the rest of the naval base.

Wreaths were laid, and a White Ensign placed below a photograph of HMS Royal Oak and a list of the names of all those who lost their lives.

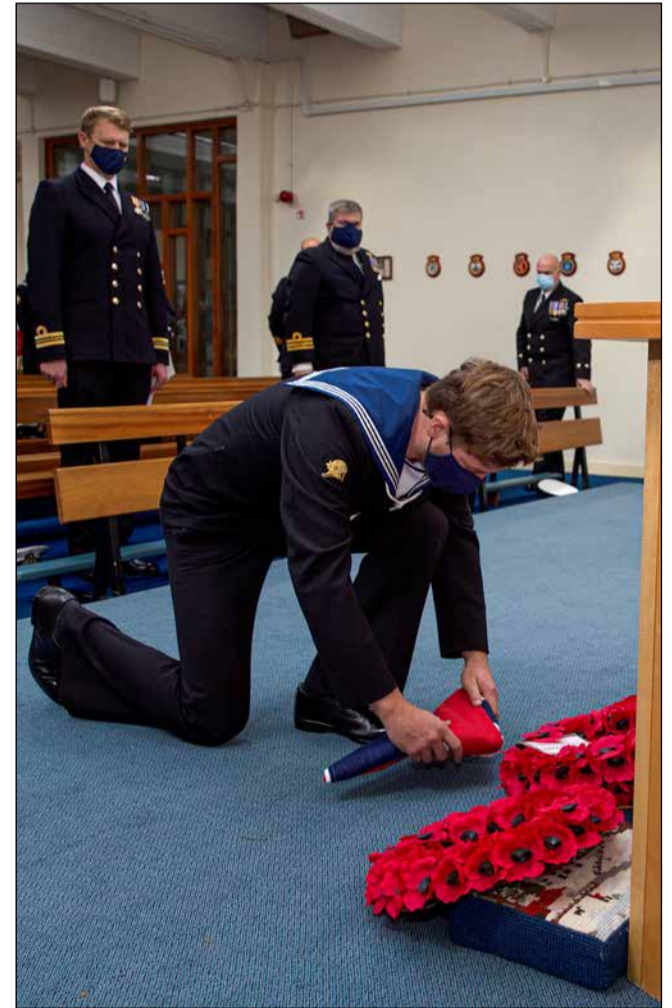
In addition, there were readings from divers Able Seaman Toomey and Leading Seaman Lund.

"It is a shame we have not been able to dive on the wreck as usual, but we are pleased to have had the opportunity to pay our respects in this way," said Northern Diving Group's Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Mark Shaw.

"We have a long history with HMS Royal Oak and the people of Orkney and we are looking forward to deploying to Scapa Flow next year."

Able Seaman (Diver) Paul West, who was one of those who made the trip last year, added: "After having the privilege of diving the Royal Oak last year and having the honour of changing the ensign, the news that this year's commemorative dive would not take place was disappointing."

"Only after diving and seeing the ship first hand does her story humble your bones. The sailors that were aboard on that night in 1939 will not be forgotten. We shall remember them."



Lifeline for vintage aircraft

THE Navy's vintage aircraft – which keep the memories of Fleet Air Arm personnel alive – have been thrown a £280,000 lifeline to mitigate the impact of the pandemic.

Navy Wings, which cares for classic naval aircraft including two Swordfish (one pictured on display over Yeovilton in 2018), a couple of Sea Furies, and Sea Vixen and Sea Hawk jet fighters is one of 445 heritage organisations to be helped out by the Government's Culture Recovery Fund in a £1.57 billion rescue package.



The money helps plug the gap created by the decimation of the 2020 display season by the pandemic – one of the mainstays of funding for the vintage

aircraft collection, based at RNAS Yeovilton.

Typically around three million people see the charity's aircraft at air shows, displays and events each year.

But the chief executive of the charity, which took over responsibility for the vintage aircraft and Wasp helicopter from the RN Historic Flight in March last year, said the collection had been grounded by Covid.

"This funding is a lifeline for Navy Wings" said Commodore Jock Alexander. "We are absolutely delighted. The money will be used to keep essential staff working to maintain our historic aircraft and continue our vital fundraising work allowing us to emerge from the pandemic with renewed strength and resilience."

"With aviation and heritage among the sectors most severely impacted by the crisis, Navy Wings has faced a double hit of challenges and we could not be more grateful for this transformational grant."

The National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire has also been hit by the virus, with opening limited to pre-booked visitors.

It has received £297,000 from the government to meet the shortfall and remain open until the pandemic loosens its grip.

Discount rail travel

YOU can now apply for a veteran's railcard to cut the cost of your train travel by one third.

Around 830,000 people are thought to be eligible for the card – available to buy at a discount introductory price of £21 until March 31 2021.

It is available to anyone who has served at least one day in the Armed Forces or members of the Merchant Marine who have seen duty on legally-defined military operations.

The card will allow holders to enjoy 33 per cent off most rail fares for them and their companions, and 60 per cent off for up to four children aged five to 15.

Holders will be able to choose from a physical card which they can carry in their wallet – or a digital version for smartphones.

The cards will be valid for use on journeys from November 5.

See [railcard.co.uk](https://www.railcard.co.uk) for details.





Family inspire boats' tribute

RIISING out of mock ice in a clearing in the Staffordshire countryside, this is the impressive design selected as the new national memorial to submariners.

And fittingly it was a family with the Silent Service in their blood who came up with the winning plan for the monument at the National Memorial Arboretum.

Judges were inspired by the idea of walking into the memorial seeing the water above, represented by blue glass.

Captain Chris Groves, who commanded hunter-killer boat HMS Torbay in the mid-2000s, said of the team effort: "We brought in our three generations of submariner, my father Adrian who joined the navy in 1960 and joined submariners and did his training on HMS Opportune."

"I then joined and I too did my training on HMS Opportune. My son Nick, who is away on patrol, joined and did his training in HMS Victorious... on which I was the navigator."

"Nick's partner Emma also joined us and is a submariner and Si Ellis, whose dad was on HMS Rorqual as a submariner."

"We are really passionate about the Submarine Service and we wanted to create a design that would fittingly be a memorial for all the submarine family. We will be hugely proud of the eventual memorial."

Head of the Submarine Service, Commodore Jim Perks, said: "The Vanguard, Astute and future Dreadnought-class submarines bear little resemblance to those of yesteryear but the spirit, professionalism and ultimately, sacrifice, of the people who serve in them are identical. Today's submariners remember with pride those who have gone before and support the new memorial with all their hearts."

The under-11 category winner was ten-year-old Heather Dent, from Ulverston, whose brother is a serving submariner, while Zoe Perowne, from Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, won the 11-18 category. Her grandfather is a retired submariner and Zoe is a Sea Cadet at TS Dauntless in Gosforth.

The competition's three categories were open to members of the public of all ages, including nearly 15,000 Sea Cadets from over 400 units around the country.

The prizes were £100 for the category winners and £1,000 for the overall winner, runners up received £50 and a number of entries were awarded Highly Commended certificates.

The winners are also invited, to attend the opening

of the memorial, planned for 2022, by Prince William, Commodore-in-Chief Submarines.

In the meantime, fundraising by the Submariner Memorial Appeal continues. See submarinermemorial.uk for details.

There's been a memorial to submariners 'on eternal patrol' in Dundee for more than 11 years and to mark the 81st anniversary of the first British boat lost in WW2, HMS Oxley, the RN's ranking officer north of the border crossed from west to east coast to pay his respects.

Cdre Bob Anstey, Senior Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland, visited the International Submarine Memorial to honour the 296 sailors and commandos lost on operations from HMS Ambrose, the RN's submarine base on Tayside.

He joined Lord Provost Ian Borthwick, Russian Consul General Andrei Yakovlev, Steven Collins from the International Submarine Association, Ian Vickers, Secretary of the National Submarine Association, Dennis Rawle, Chairman of the Scottish Branch of Submarine Association, Cdr Chris Leggett from the West of Scotland Submarine Association Branch; and Mr and Mrs Reitveld, representing the Dutch Submariners Association in remembering the wartime dead, while observing the appropriate social distancing.

Six Dundee-based boats were lost between 1939 and 1945: two Dutch, a Norwegian, and a Soviet boat alongside Oxley, which was sunk in error by HMS Triton on September 10 1939 while patrolling the Norwegian coast.

In western Scotland on the same day a small service was held at Lochranza Harbour on the Isle of Arran to remember the crew of HMS Vandal. The Submariner's Prayer was read before a wreath laying and minute's silence, in a simple service attended by four volunteers to comply with Covid guidance.

Vandal was a U-class submarine, holding the tragic record of the shortest career of any Royal Navy submarine. She was lost with all 37 souls onboard just four days after commissioning in the vicinity of Lochranza due to unknown circumstances in 1943; mistakes in the search and rescue effort at the time meant that she lay undiscovered for more than 50 years before being found by minehunter HMS Hurworth in June 1994.

There are more than 100 memorials around the United Kingdom commemorating 116 boats and 5,450 submariners who have lost their lives in peace and war in the Submarine Service's 119-year history.



Boom time in the land of fire and ice

ROYAL Navy bomb disposal experts faced down the latest threats when they joined NATO experts for ten days in Iceland.

A team from the newly-formed Expeditionary Diving Group joined more than 60 experts dealing with over 300 bombs, mines and homemade explosives to ensure they can neutralise them.

The Britons were presented with threats as diverse as drone-delivered explosives devices, 3D-printed limpet mines and a suicide bomber as they practised alongside nine teams from seven nations on NATO's premier such exercise, Northern Challenge.

The RN divers, based at Horsea Island in Portsmouth, left their usual fins, masks and diving sets behind in favour of a lightweight remotely-controlled vehicle, Dragon Runner, cumbersome X-ray equipment (pictured above) and an awkward 38kg bomb suit (think *Hurt Locker*) to deal with devices on land, rather in the water or on the shoreline.

Instead, Northern Challenge was played out on unforgiving volcanic terrain at Keflavik – next to Reykjavik's international airport – exposed to relentless winds and low temperatures.

"All NATO nations train their explosive ordnance disposal operators to a common standard but decades of experience in Afghanistan, Iraq and Northern Ireland have permitted the UK to hone its skills to a tee," explained Lieutenant Commander Rory Armstrong, the Expeditionary Diving Group's Commanding Officer.

The exercise allows a unique insight into the equipment, tactics and teamwork other nations' bomb disposal experts use.

As important as rendering a bomb safe – or detonating safely if necessary – is collecting forensic evidence to understand how the device worked, and to help the authorities catch the perpetrators.

That's particularly relevant to the Royal Navy team which was called

on last year to evaluate attacks on oil tankers in the Middle East – and need to remain at the leading edge of disposal. The stakes were raised during the exercise with devices targeting the individual disposal operators.

"Northern Challenge was an amazing opportunity to train with live explosives against a threat which is both challenging and extremely realistic," said Petty Officer (Diver) James Shell.

"Every action of the operator has a consequence and any lapse in attention to detail risks your own life and that of the operator called upon to deal with the next bomb. There is simply no better place to train."

Able Seaman (Diver) Matt Latimer prepared and operated the suite of tools either attached to the Dragon Runner or carried to the target by the No.1 operator.

"There's something surreal about firing a weapon to disrupt an explosive device while a passenger flight comes in to land what feels like a stone's throw away – but like any weapon we observe strict safety distances," said Matt.

"This was my first Northern Challenge and it's been fascinating to see how other nations go about business. The equipment and accents might be different, but we have a common language as bomb disposal experts."

The Expeditionary Diving Group has been formed this year in place of the long-standing Fleet Diving Group, taking responsibility for specialist diving teams who deploy around the world to protect Royal Navy and British shipping, key ports and infrastructure, and also take on a new mission: a dedicated bomb-disposal team accompanying the UK's new carrier task groups.

The divers returned to Portsmouth having benefited hugely from their Icelandic experience, said Lieutenant Commander Armstrong.

"I'm tremendously proud of my team's ability to more than match the capabilities of our multinational counterparts in what is in effect a secondary role," he said.



Christmas Card Appeal

Every year the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society pays over £1M in grants to the dependants of those lost at sea, as well as sick, disabled and retired seafarers struggling to make ends meet. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic we have received an unprecedented level of demand for financial assistance from members of the maritime community experiencing hardship and distress. Please help us to continue our important work – thank you.

- QUALITY CHRISTMAS CARDS
- GIFT ITEMS
- CORRESPONDENCE CARDS
- BIRTHDAY CARDS
- MARITIME PHOTOGRAPHY CALENDAR

To receive a copy of our new 2020 brochure and order form please contact:
SMS,1 North Pallant, Chichester PO19 1TL
Tel: 01243 789329
e-mail: general@shipwreckedmariners.org.uk

To view and order cards online visit:
www.christmas-cards.org.uk/shipmariners/



www.shipwreckedmariners.org.uk

Reg Charity No 212034
Inst 1839



HMS Nightingale

Introduction

Throughout the design process of the HMS Nightingale, we had one main goal at the forefront of our minds: to rescue and return to safety as many as possible as fast as possible. And I can confidently say that we have achieved that goal. Our design has a people carrying capacity of 2000 souls as well as 4000 cubic ft of air travel at speeds upwards of 30knots with a range comparable to the best of modern-day destroyers, all whilst not contributing to the rise of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere.

Below is our first design iteration and to the right is our final design.

3D Model

Front entrance to the hanger.
Large area for helipads.
Rig towing mechanism.

Summarized Specifications

- 185 metres length
- 36,000 tonnes total displacement
- 2500 people carrying capacity
- 30 knots top speed
- 100 crew
- 500 medical staff

Quick Overview

Six meter high hanger for holding primary helicopters or vertical take-off aircraft.

Both port and starboard hulls support the main structure, these aerodynamic figure allowing for fast movement and efficient travel.

Orthographic views

All measurements are in meters.

185m
135m
15m 30m 15m
65m

WHITGIFT

Whitgift_HMSNightingale_Year8

Ground floor **1st floor** **2 floors** **Submarine**

Control tower
Landing tower
Sitting area
Helipad
Coke
beds
submarine
Food storage
Engine Room
Toilets
Toilets
Toilets
Food
claw 1
mini hospital
claw 2
Diesel

H.M.S Prince of Scotland

Lewis Liam Ella-Nai Cairn

Engineering success

FOLD-OUT bridges, swarms of drones and a tadpole tail loading jetty were among the designs submitted for an annual engineering contest.

The contest, a collaboration between UKNest and the Royal Navy, promotes the importance of engineering across Years 1 to 6 and 7 to 11, encouraging innovative technical thinking by pupils.

Students were charged with designing a specialised vessel for delivering humanitarian aid in the aftermath of a natural disaster – very much in keeping with the Royal Navy’s role in responding to such instances.

All entries were reviewed by an expert panel of judges who considered their initial concept, proposed design and artwork.

Pupils from St Joseph’s RC Primary School in Kelty, Fife, Scotland, won the Years 1-6 category with their HMS Prince of Scotland submarine

design, while Whitgift School in South Croydon took the honours in the Years 7-11 category with their futuristic vessel HMS Nightingale.

Commander Neil Benstead, one of the competition judges, said: “Once again, the quality of the entries was very high and made the judges consider the various aspects of the designs produced by the entrants.

“The participants used their imaginations to develop innovative ways to provide aid in real-world situations which we often see in the media. The challenge set by the UKNest Naval Engineering Competition encourages young people to solve problems and open their eyes to the wonder and opportunities of a career in engineering.

“This year’s competition entries exhibited some



ENGINEERING
TAKE A CLOSER LOOK

wonderful examples of creativity and out-of-the-box thinking, providing innovative solutions to the problem of how to provide aid in challenging conditions.”

Muir Macdonald, UKNest Chair, added: “The future of our extraordinary industry lies firmly with the next generation of aspiring engineers and scientists. It is our responsibility to inspire them – and be inspired by them.

“The Naval Engineering Competition is a superb opportunity for young people up and down the country to identify with the sea and the technology we will need as a forward-thinking maritime nation.

“This year’s entries showed much thought and expression as the young teams got into the minds

of the Royal Navy or a naval architect or a systems engineer to solve real and genuinely difficult problems.

“Bravo to all the pupils and teachers who were up for the challenge and worked hard to come up with fabulous ideas that we very much enjoyed assessing. Congratulations to the winners, runners up and to everyone – the very people who could be our naval technologists of the future.”

Runners-up in Years 1-6 were HMS Pearl – Echline Primary School, South Queensferry and HMS Sunset – Overmonnow Primary School, Monmouth.

Runners up in Years 7-11 were HMS Damianos – The Thomas Hardeye School, Dorchester

All entries demonstrated a great deal of effort and fresh thinking. All winners and runners up will all receive an iPad for their school, which will be presented during a special virtual awards ceremony.

ROYAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL

BUILD COURAGE AND COMMITMENT

Experience an education underpinned by 300 years of heritage, embracing values and standards designed to establish the skills to pursue purposeful lives.

MOD CEA eligible Services Families receive discounted fees.
RN and RM personnel, retired and serving, can apply for means-tested bursaries.

COME AND SEE FOR YOURSELF
WWW.ROYALHOSPITALSCHOOL.ORG
Suffolk, IP9 2RX

NAVIGATING SUCCESS

Kayleigh takes camera honours

THIS image of Sea Cadets taking time out on a sea wall earned Kayleigh Fairbairn first prize in the Sea Cadet Amateur Open Category of the Peregrine Trophy awards.

The picture shows cadets from Bognor Regis Sea Cadet Unit, TS Sir Alec Rose, and cadets from the Training Ship John Jerwood.

Sponsored by the Sea Cadets, the award goes to the single best photograph of a Sea Cadet theme that combines technical excellence, creativity and impact.

See page 19 for the other Peregrine Trophy winners.



In right direction

THE Marine Society is launching a course for those seeking to use navigation skills for leisure or in a career at sea.

Part of the Marine Society's growing Learn@Sea portfolio, Navigation@Sea will help learners to acquire the underpinning knowledge in an engaging, virtual environment.

The course allows the learner to plan and chart a voyage from Plymouth to Dover, learning how to plot and calculate a course while creating a passage plan. It also shows the effect of tides and weather and helps the learner understand electronic navigational aids. Written in accordance with MSQ Unit 95 – Introduction to Navigation, the course will suit anyone who does not have prior knowledge in this area. Those interested can contact the Marine Society at learning@ms-sc.org.

Darrell Bate, Director of Maritime Training and Development at the Marine Society, said: "This is a much-needed addition to our growing suite of maritime contextual upskilling courses that will help individuals build their navigational knowledge."

Everyone a hero

Sea Cadets and volunteers recognised for work in birthday honours list

TWO Sea Cadets and eight volunteers have been recognised for their outstanding service in the Queen's Birthday Honours list.

They are to receive national awards for their part in supporting their communities and workplaces during a difficult 2020, four of them for actions during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Many continue to play a vital role in keeping essential services running as key workers during the pandemic, such as within the NHS and other public services.

Each have helped Sea Cadets adapt, innovate and emerge through these troubled times with resilience, often using new technology to ensure our cadets remain engaged.

Petty Officer Cadet **John Challenger**, 17, was awarded the British Empire Medal for his voluntary service in support of young people, maintaining morale and cohesion of North West Area Sea Cadets.

He ran a weekly virtual cadets quiz during lockdown and represents their voice among adults, raising awareness of the difficulties some face in getting connectivity.

John joined Connah's Quay Sea Cadets in 2013 at the age of ten, achieving the highest rank of Petty Officer Cadet at 16 – the earliest age possible.

John said: "When I got the email, I had to read it two or three times and it was quite a shock. I'm very proud to be recognised but this is for everyone within Sea Cadets and the impact it has on young people."

"A lot of what I've been doing has been through my unit and my area and they've pushed me to do these things, to become the person that I've become."

Oliver Chambers, 38, from Birmingham, was made an MBE for his voluntary service to young people and the community in Birmingham.

An MBE also went to **Gareth Davies**, 41, from Scarborough for services to young people and the local community through Sea Cadets.

Nicole Geraghty, 27, from Southampton, receives an MBE for



• From left, John Challenger, Oliver Chambers, Gareth Davies, Nicole Geraghty and Cadet Hayward



• From left, Gemma McDonald, Toni Salmon, Liz Stephens, Suzanne Sweeney and Michelle Welsh

services to essential engineering with Southern Water and voluntary service with the Sea Cadet Youth Development Charity during Covid-19.

Cadet Hayward, 17, from Brentwood was honoured with a BEM for his voluntary service in the community in Essex.

BEMs also went to **Gemma McDonald**, 32, from Pontypool, for her services to the NHS and Sea Cadets community and to **Toni Salmon**, 50, from Monmouth for services to the community.

Liz Stephens, 66, from Runcorn in Cheshire was made an MBE for her

services to Sea Cadets in the North West of England.

Suzanne Sweeney, 48, from Bexley in Kent, receives an OBE for services to neo-natal provision in the NHS and to youth services provision through Sea Cadets.

Lieutenant Commander Royal Naval Reserve (Sea Cadet Corps) **Michelle Welsh**, 51, from Colwick, Nottinghamshire received an MBE.

Her citation read: Her commitment to the Sea Cadets, the development of disadvantaged young people and to a wide range of charitable causes over a long period has been outstanding."

Sea Cadets is a growing uniformed youth charity, with 15,000 cadets spread over 400 locations across the UK.

9000 volunteers deliver a stimulating programme for young people from a variety of different backgrounds ages 9 to 18, helping to shape the lives of young people by helping them develop essential life skills whilst engaging in enjoyable activities many with a nautical theme.

Captain Phil Russell RN, Captain Sea Cadets, said: "It is incredibly gratifying for a charity our size to see so many recognised in such numbers, clearly demonstrating the commitment and

dedication of our amazing volunteers whose passion and commitment to their local communities has been unwavering during this pandemic.

"On behalf of the entire Marine Society and Sea Cadets Charity I send hearty congratulations to all seven recipients.

"Recognising that many more of our 9,000 volunteers and 15,000 cadets are equally dedicated to supporting their communities, they are great exemplars of the unique Sea Cadets values and ethos which have helped make a difference to so many young lives."



China Fleet
Country Club
★★★★



YOUR RATES

If you are serving Royal Navy, Royal Marine, RFA or a reservist, you and your immediate family can enjoy **unlimited** use of the Health Club facilities, by paying these greatly reduced monthly membership fees:

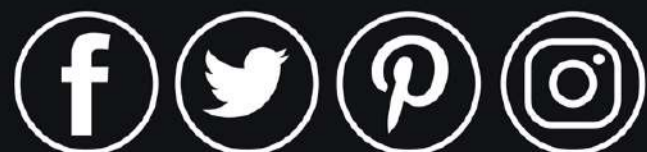
Joining Fees (Normally £40.00)	FREE
Single Full Leisure	£42.75
Couple Full Leisure	£63.00
Under 6 years	FREE
Over 6 years starting from	£10.25



Single Golf	£48.50
Single Golf & Leisure	£83.00
Couple Golf	£93.00
Couple Golf & Leisure	£148.00
Couple 1 Golf and both Leisure	£104.00

Prices valid until May 2021. T&Cs apply

Call 01752 848668
www.china-fleet.co.uk





Any winch way you can

“Our initial aircrew training began at RAF Shawbury in June 2018. It is a joint services course for all *ab initio* aircrew.

We learned the basics skills at 705 Squadron – we were only the second course to train on the new Airbus helicopter, the Juno H135.

We were given a good grounding in all aspects of aviation and taught to how to manoeuvre the helicopter into a wide variety of landing sites, navigate and carry underslung loads.

On completion we continued our training at 60 Squadron and were introduced to formation flying and mission management in a tactical scenario, culminating in an exercise over several days.

After a short break, we started with 846 Squadron’s Operational Conversion Flight to convert to the new Merlin Mk4 and become the finished product.

Before setting foot in an aircraft, however, we first went to Merlin Ground School at Culdrose to get a thorough education in all of the technological and engineering aspects of the helicopter.

We learned all about the airframe, engines, electrical systems, hydraulics, fuel system, defence aids suite and emergency procedures in great detail.

We had the benefit of instructors who had spent most of their careers working on all types of Merlin as well as a fully-powered (although non-flying) aircraft in a hanger to reinforce the theory of what we had learned.

Such an in-depth course give us the knowledge to fault find and assess problems if and when they arise, as well as the full understanding of all working parts of the aircraft to better carry out our role. On successful completion we returned to Yeovilton to begin flying training.

We were the first course to train on the new Mk4 aircraft and the entire

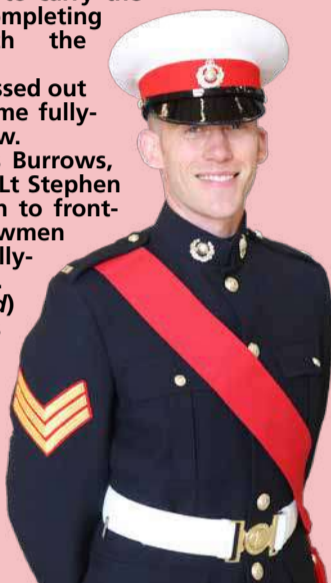
THERE are ten new aviators ready to carry the Royal Marines into battle after completing their demanding training with the Commando Helicopter Force.

Four pilots and six aircrewmembers passed out at 846 Naval Air Squadron to become fully-fledged Merlin Mk4 front-line aircrew.

The four pilots – Lt Cdrs Thomas Burrows, Timothy Frost and Adam Dean and Lt Stephen Ingamells – have already moved on to front-line duties, allowing six new aircrewmembers to take centre stage at a socially-distanced parade at RNAS Yeovilton.

Sergeant Jack Warwick (pictured) describes the training he and his fellow newly-qualified aircrewmembers – Sgts Brendan Feeney and Samuel Hardy, PO Elliot Hulme and LACMN Tomas Curtis and Luke Gillatt – went through to join the wings of the Royal Marines.

The 32-year-old from St Albans is a former City broker, turned Royal Marine, who then decided he wanted to push himself even more.



system consumed a large portion of our initial training.

Just as we were getting started, world events caught up with us and the prospect of lockdown looked like it was going to put a hold on our training.

Consistency is key when learning high-intensity new skills and we were despondent, bracing ourselves for a long pause in our training.

Fortunately, recognising the importance of training continuation, the squadron soon put plans in place to restart training and we were told to prepare to return to training albeit on a basis that would best mitigate the risks of Covid.

All the standard measures such as hand-washing stations and deep cleaning were implemented throughout the squadron, however, maintaining social distancing in the close confines of a helicopter was obviously impossible. This was taken on-risk although all other measures were taken to minimise exposure.

We only briefed in the largest planning rooms where there was the ability to distance ourselves and time in the squadron was limited to hours necessary to achieve flying training. Other duties were conducted from home where possible.

On this basis we were able to continue training and our flights carried on mostly as normal. The only serious downside was not being able to socialise as a course.

We left the basic phase behind and progressed to new skills such as operating at night – important as it is when we would be operating most of the time in an operational theatre. This was something we had not been exposed to at RAF Shawbury but was also the first time using any kind of night vision device for the direct entry lads.

We re-learned how to navigate at low altitude, transport underslung loads

and land in confined areas – all at night which was a steep learning curve but one that we all enjoyed.

One area of the course impacted by Covid was the continental navigation/mountain-training phase. This usually involves crossing multiple countries across Europe to a mountainous area such as Norway or the Pyrenees. We were still taken through the planning process and this is something which we will get plenty of exposure to on front line squadrons in the future.

Knowing that we were unable to do this part of the course left us with low expectations for the amphibious phase of our course. However, control measures on ship, and full squadron Covid testing (all negative) meant that we were able to embark on RFA Fort Victoria for a two-week training package.

For most of us this was the highlight of the course. As well as experiencing landing on the deck of a ship, both day and night, and other secondary roles, we learned how to conduct search-and-rescue operations. This pushed the limits of our trust in each other as we took it in turns to winch our course mates on to the back of a moving boat!

Fortunately we all survived and the package culminated in a formation amphibious assault, simulating dropping troops on to landing sites on Dartmoor in ‘enemy territory’.

This provided the build-up to our final assessment; a final week-long exercise working in field conditions and conducting real life troop moves within a simulated tactical environment.

We can now look forward to joining 845 Squadron and a fully-packed year of deployments including Arctic training in Norway, desert training in Jordan and a six-month stint on HMS Queen Elizabeth on her first deployment – a very exciting reward for over two years of hard work. ”

pictures: jason bryant and sgt jack warwick

Merlin course was re-written from scratch for it.

Instructors had to be re-familiarised with the new systems. An entirely new rear crew trainer was designed and built to assist the new course, comprising a complete mock-up of the rear of the helicopter complete with working rescue hoist and cargo hook.

Problems with the simulator meant switching to ‘live’ sorties. There is no substitute for the experience of flying in a live aircraft, however, and we benefitted greatly from extra hours which we wouldn’t have had otherwise, albeit with a steeper learning curve.

The course was structured to initially re-teach the basics we had learned at

RAF Shawbury. While that sounds simple was a significant change for us.

The Juno is just large enough for two people to kneel in the back and you can look out both sides of the aircraft just by leaning over. The Merlin is the size of a bus and carries more in fuel than the Juno weighed fully loaded!

Just learning our way around was our first mountain to climb. The rear of the Merlin is also equipped with a touch screen unit which allows the crew to access all available flight data, predict performance, calculate load plans, input flight plans and many more features to allow us to do our job more efficiently and lessen the pilot’s workload. Learning to use this new



The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust
Supporting The RNBT Family

Men and women of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines serve their country, often at times of danger. Established in 1922, the RNBT helps non-commissioned Sailors, Marines and their families (The RNBT Family) throughout their lives.

Your donation will help us to help them.

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, Castaway House,
311 Twyford Avenue, PORTSMOUTH, Hampshire, PO2 8RN

T: 02392 690112 F: 02392 660852 E: rnbt@rnbt.org.uk www.rnbt.org.uk



FOUR dozen sailors and Royal Marines clambered into kayaks for a week's adventurous training on (and off) the Isle of Wight.

Solent Splash is the Royal Navy's annual sea kayak exercise, aimed at beginners through to experts with the goal not only of improving their kayaking ability, but also leadership skills and adding a bit of steel and determination to participants' character.

Some of the training – delivered against the backdrop of the Needles – was provided by top civilian coaches Phil Hadley and Howard Jeffs, assisted by organiser Warrant Officer 1 James 'Batch' Batchelor and the Royal Navy Adventurous Training Team (RNATT).

All participants increased their experience levels and, where relevant, earned sea kayak qualifications.

"Ex Solent Splash has run annually since 2010, providing sea kayak training for over 350 students," Batch explained.

"Sea kayaking itself offers a means of delivering sea sense training, enabling sailors and Royal Marines to experience the effects of tides and deal with the challenges that are presented by the ocean both as an individual and member of a team."

As it's classified as adventurous training, sea kayaking is accessible to all Royal Navy personnel.

personnel.

"Solent Splash has been a stand-out success story," said Captain Steve Jose, chairman of the UK Armed Forces Canoeing Association.

"It has proved massively successful at pulling in grassroots participation and honing leadership skills which work both on the water and for the wider RN.

"Running an adventurous training exercise of this magnitude against the constraints of Covid restrictions and uncertainty has required phenomenal tenacity and determination."

Making a splash in the Solent



VC winner will inspire cadets

A NEW state-of-the-art gymnasium, named after a World War I hero, has been formally opened at Britannia Royal Naval College by England's World Cup winning captain Martin Johnson.

The former rugby player was invited to BRNC to see the facility, which has been named after Lieutenant Commander Arthur Harrison VC.

Arthur Harrison, who was born in Torquay in 1886, lost his life during the Zeebrugge Raid in 1918 and was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross, the highest award for gallantry in the face of the enemy.

Captain Roger Readwin, Captain of BRNC, said: "Arthur Harrison was capped by England twice, winning the Grand Slam in 1914, and is believed to be the only England rugby union international ever to have received the VC.

"When we were looking to name our new gym, Arthur Harrison was a natural choice and we hope his story will go on to inspire our Officer Cadets and recruits."

Martin Johnson said: "It is a real privilege to officially open BRNC's new gymnasium. But to do so, in memory of a former England and Navy Rugby player, who made the ultimate sacrifice so we can enjoy our freedom today, is very poignant indeed."

Warrant Officer Mac McCormick, BRNC's Physical



● Arthur Harrison pictured for England v France in 1914 – courtesy of the World Rugby Museum, Twickenham

Development Officer, said: "This facility is a real game changer and will allow us to deliver 21st Century physical training to modern Royal Navy standards."

Lt Cdr Harrison's first posting in the Royal Navy was to HMS Mars as a cadet in 1902. He went on to be Mentioned in Despatches during the Battle of Jutland in 1916. Almost two years later he was in charge of the Naval Storming Parties at the Zeebrugge Raid; an attempt by the Royal Navy to block the Belgian port and stop the German U-boats taking to sea.

Early in the action Lt Cdr Harrison was knocked unconscious when a fragment of a shell struck his head and broke his jaw as his ship, HMS Vindictive, was coming alongside the stone structure, known as a mole.

Lt Cdr Harrison regained consciousness and took his place in command of his party. They were charged with the important task of silencing the guns on the mole head. In a fully exposed position Lt Cdr Harrison led the attack and was killed by enemy machine-gun fire at the age of 32. His body was never recovered. The men serving with him were either killed or wounded.

In 1967 his family donated his VC, awarded to him for his 'indomitable resolution and courage', to BRNC, where it remains today.



● Martin Johnson with WO1 McCormick

Trophy win was real team effort

THE penultimate round of the shortened 2020 season saw us at Oulton park which was only a one-day (Saturday) meeting but with double points up for grabs, writes CPO Stu Goodson, pictured right.

Testing was held on the Friday which I had booked for the whole day as I was running two bikes in two different classes; a late 1990's Suzuki GSXR750 in the Golden Era Superbike Class (GESBK) and a 2008 Suzuki GSXR1000 in the GP1 class for modern Superbikes. I planned to test the 750 in the morning and the 1000 in the afternoon.

It was very cold in Cheshire on the morning of test day which meant that the track temperature would be low.

I went out for my first track session early in the morning and took it steady for my out lap and then started to up the pace on my first full lap, unfortunately, as I accelerated down the fast downhill section towards 'Cascades' I applied a bit too much throttle causing my back tyre to lose traction and slide round sideways before gripping and catapulting me off!

As I flew through the air, I knew it would be a painful landing as I've experienced a 'Highside' crash before and they are always a hard landing. I tumbled and rolled across the tarmac and into the gravel trap which seemed like forever!

My bike also cartwheeled alongside next to me, gradually destroying itself with every spin. When I came to rest, I had the wind knocked out of me and couldn't move for a while but managed to walk away. My leathers and helmet had pretty much done their job but were no longer fit for purpose.

The rest of the day was spent in the local hospital waiting for an x-ray on my right arm where the leathers had worn through and so had my skin. After a few hours of waiting, I got the all clear and returned to the track, where the doc in the Medical Centre deemed me fit to ride as long as I felt able to.

Fortunately, I always take spare leathers, helmet, boots and gloves...just in case, and this time I was so glad I did.

I managed to get out for the last two sessions of the day on my 1000cc bike but really struggled with the pain, and a bit of a loss of confidence, so didn't push as hard as I would have liked to, but at least I managed to get out again.

One of the team pit crew members who definitely deserves a mention is CPO(AET) Adam Myhill who was planning to drive up from Gosport on the Friday evening after



work, knew that I had a spare GSXR750 at home in Southsea which I use as a wet weather race bike but didn't have room in the van to take with me. He kindly offered to collect it for me and bring it with him in his van. What a legend!

Waking up aching all over, race day commenced with qualifying. First, I went out on my 1000cc bike for GP1 in a damp qualifying session but unfortunately it was red flagged after three laps due to a crash.

When I came in my engine stopped as it at overheated as no water seemed to be circulating in the coolant system. When I checked the radiator, the water was emulsified with oil, so I knew that my head gasket had probably been damaged and my cylinder head warped... another bike down!

But, thanks to Adam, I now had a spare bike for GESBK qualifying. By the time I got out for this qualifying session the damp patches had dried out and I managed to qualify 14th on the grid for the GESBK race and 4th for the Military race.

Race one was a dry race but very cold, when I did the warm up lap my visor kept misting up so I knew the race was going to be very difficult.

I made a good start but every time I exhaled, I kept losing more and more visibility so had to try and open my visor on

every bit of straight I came to just to try and keep clearing my visor. I had to do this for the whole of the eight-lap race which caused me to be a bit slower than normal and hence lost a few valuable places. Despite the pain in my right arm, I finished 16th overall but fourth in class.

For the second GESBK race I managed to borrow a different visor for my helmet, fitted with an anti-fog insert to prevent the same problem as I suffered in race one. Again, I managed a good start but got barged wide into turn one almost pushing me off the track which caused me to brake and lose a few places. I managed to make a few places back and finished 11th overall, fifth in class.

The last race of the day was the one we were all there for and the Navy team especially, we weren't just battling for the Inter-Service championship, this round, the Navy riders were battling for the 'Matt Page' Trophy.

Matt is an ex-team member from a few years ago who suffered a huge crash causing extensive damage to his leg and ankle which ended his racing career. The trophy would be awarded to the rider who finished first out of the Navy team.

This race was immediately after my second GESBK race so I was already really tired, and in a bit of pain, but I was also still full of adrenalin so couldn't wait to get going again.

Starting from fourth on the grid behind two RAF riders and an Army rider on Pole, I was hoping for a great start to try and hold on to my place but unfortunately my start was poor due to an unexpected wheelie from the line.

I then got swallowed up by a few riders going in to turn one so had to push hard to try and get those places back. Unfortunately, it wasn't to be as I tried a bit too hard and braked too late going into a chicane, leaving me no choice but to let off the brake and roll across the grass to re-join the track after another rider had passed.

I was getting more and more tired as the race progressed, and almost made the same mistake on the last lap but just managed the corner, but really wide, this allowed another rider to pass me. Fortunately, I managed to finish the race in one piece, in tenth place but miraculously, first out of the Navy riders meaning I won the trophy!

This was a great end to an otherwise very unlucky and expensive weekend, only made possible by Adam saving the day.

Olympic dream

Sailors complete tough challenge

A SAILOR from HMS Sultan has set her sights on competing at Beijing 2022, after being granted Elite Athlete status by the Royal Navy.

Leading Physical Trainer Melanie (Mel) Haslam made her International debut for the British Bobsleigh Team in Igls, Austria, in January and is now joining the development squad with the aim of competing at the next Winter Olympic Games, and beyond.

Mel 32, joined the Royal Navy over 15 years ago and in this time, she has served on several different ships and establishments along the way.

Mel has also achieved notable success as a world record holding powerlifter with the British Drugs Free Powerlifting Association (BDFPA), but her pathway to finding success has been far more unusual than most.

Surprisingly Mel, who became a Physical Training Instructor in 2015, found the physical side of training very difficult and after eight years in Service she was placed on a final warning for her fitness level in 2011.

Mel subsequently passed her Royal Navy Fitness Test before going to serve on the front line as an Intelligence Exploitation Analyst in Afghanistan, a tour which changed her life forever.

Mel said: "There aren't many people who can say that they've been to war, but it was a real eye opener that completely changed my perspective of the world.

"I worked hard in Afghanistan on improving my lifestyle and managed to lose three and a half stone in the process, but when I returned my fitness test still filled me with fear. When I took the test, I passed so well that the Physical Training Instructor suggested with that score I should be doing his job. I'd never even considered being a PTI but thought why not and what a story that would be to help encourage others.

"Once I made the transfer in 2015, I was exposed to so many different sports. I realised I was quite well built, so when an Eastern Region

Powerlifting event came up, I thought I'd give it a try.

"I broke a Royal Navy record for deadlift and went on to do the same again as part of the Royal Navy Powerlifting team. From there I went to the BDFPA South West Competition and the British Championships breaking records at both before doing the same at the World Championships in February 2019, with a record that stands to this day.

"Outside of lifting I'd also been part of the UK Armed Forces Skeleton Team. In February 2019, I was also invited to try out for British Bobsleigh. I'm well suited for the sport, as the breakwoman's role is very similar to powerlifting in that it relies on explosive power and technique, with the starting position for a deadlift also the same as you need in the back of a sled.

"Not many people will find a job which will support them in training full time to achieve their sporting dreams, but the Royal Navy has given me the remarkable opportunity to fulfil my potential as an elite athlete.

"I'm proud to be part of the Royal Navy; for me it's all about representing the flag and putting on the uniform, with all its traditions, on the World stage. Everything that the Navy has taught me in terms of discipline and professionalism helps me represent our Nation in the best light possible and gives me the edge to perform to the best of my own abilities."

The Commanding Officer of HMS Sultan, Captain John Voyce, said: "The Royal Navy has a long tradition of supporting sportsmen and women and sport plays an important role not only in maintaining physical fitness, but in developing many of the skills that are imperative throughout military life.

"I am proud of LPT Haslam and her journey to elite status. Elite athletes make an important contribution to our Service ethos not least by providing inspiration to other Service personnel to strive to be the best they can be."



SAILORS, marines and soldiers in Bahrain chose the hottest month of the year for their toughest charity challenge.

Throughout August British personnel pounded the roads, pavements and jetties at the UK Naval Support Facility on behalf of the Childhood Cancer Eye Trust.

The Bahrain base is home to the RN's Middle East headquarters, UKMCC, plus Brits who serve on the staffs of the multi-national Combined Maritime Forces and International Maritime Security Construct, as well as engineers and logisticians supporting UK naval operations in the region.

It's also home to Physical Training Instructor Petty Officer Dave Berry who thought it would be a wheeze to walk or, better still, run five kilometres every day in August... 155km in all (97 miles).

Fifty-one fellow Brits agreed, trying to pick the coolest hour of the day to complete the daily slog... although it never dropped below 32 Celsius in the small kingdom all month long.

"The challenge was gruelling, and with temperatures reaching 40 Celsius on most days, the participants really had to push through to complete all 31 runs," said Dave.

There was moral encouragement on the final 5K as the core runners were joined by many of the remaining base personnel who donned fancy dress ranging from a lobster costume to a Christmas angel (who performed carols to match).

Their collective efforts raised £500.



Sole game of season so worth the effort

ROYAL Navy cricketers held their first – and only – match of the season at Goodwood House in West Sussex.

The match was able to go ahead as it followed government Covid-19 guidelines and a full risk assessment was held.

The weather was perfect as Goodwood won the toss and elected to bat first for the 40-overs game.

The hosts scored a handsome 262 for eight, with the bulk of their tally coming from their opening batsman, who scored 149.

But, the match was played with a difference – all personnel, including spectators were accounted for, changing rooms were closed, no drinks brought out and no high teas – social distancing was the norm and after every sixth over, the umpire would make the call for all players to clean their hands with steriliser.

Then with a low and glaring sun, the RNCC struggled and were all out for 148 from 31 overs.

Although this looked like a convincing win of 114 runs by

Goodwood, the teams were much more balanced, had it not been for their opener.

Notwithstanding, this was a fantastic day of cricket at a cracking venue against a team which can give development within the RNCC an excellent match.

If you are interested in becoming involved in cricket, as a player, umpire, coach or official, or you just want to follow some of the games; further details on the RNCA can be found at the RNCA website: royalnavycricketassociation.com



Marines put sporting skills to the test

PERSONNEL from 40 Commando enjoyed a period of Adventurous Training during pre-deployment training in the south west and north Devon.

The multi-activity package which was organised by the Royal Navy AT team south west (RNAT SW).

AT is a form of military training that gives Royal Marines and sailors the opportunity to take a break from their normal routine and take part in controlled risk AT activities, thus affording them the ability to be challenged and refreshed.

Bravo Company took part in the activities arranged by NSATT SW.

The package was organised over a four-day period and activities included stand up paddle boarding, mountain biking, sailing, coasteering and surfing.

Sgt Marc Bird of Bravo Company said: "RNAT organised and planned a really enjoyable and challenging AT package that pushed the boundaries of individuals preparing them operations around the world."

After a tough three-hour coasteering route Sgt Paul Spacagna, RNAT instructor, said: "Every marine was challenged physically and mentally during the coasteering, testing their mental resilience and building team morale within the troop."

Report: WO2 Warren Bloomer

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the September edition of *Navy News* (right) was the Orion-class dreadnought HMS Monarch, which was sunk in 1925.

Mr G Hall, from Leeds, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.

This month's mystery ship (above) is a seaplane tender transferred from the Royal Australian Navy to the Royal Navy in 1938 and took part in the Normandy landings.

1. What was her name? and 2. What was she renamed in 1948?

Please complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

During the COVID-19 pandemic we will also accept emailed entries to bm@navynews.co.uk with **November Mystery Ship** in the email header.

Coupons and emails giving the correct



answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Entries must be received by December 4. More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our January 2021 edition.

The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 309

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

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: news@royalnavymail.mod.uk or editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk

■ If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.

■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.

■ Please send in reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event. There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.

■ Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.

■ The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

ROYAL NAVY NAVY NEWS

Mail Point 1-4, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY

NOV 2020 No. 796: Founded 1954

Editor: **Lorraine Proudlock**
Email: editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Editorial

News@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Sam.Bannister@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Richard.Hargreaves@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Peter.Howard@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Elisha.Quade@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Graphics

dtp@navynews.co.uk

General enquiries:

news@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Business

Business manager: Lisa Tav
Admin assistants: Georgina Skingsley and Mistrala Harries
bm@navynews.co.uk

Subscriptions:
www.navynews.co.uk
subscriptions@navynews.co.uk

Advertising:
advertising@navynews.co.uk

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

© Crown copyright

This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated.

To view this licence, visit nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3 Or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, Or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Published by Navy News, Navy Command HQ, Portsmouth and printed by Walstead UK.

Talking Navy News

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 07770 088388 and leave a message, or email studio@patn.org.uk A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Swap Draft columns in December's Noticeboard must be received by

NOV 12, 2020

Deaths

Betty Pattison, WRN. Served on Winston Churchill and Clement Attlee's staff. Life member of WRNS Association and member of City of Glasgow RNA. Died September, aged 93.

Lt Cdr David Philip John Lloyd. Served from 1978 to 2006. Any shipmates wishing to remember David can do so at www.funeralcare.co.uk/tributes-and-donations. All donations go to the RNRMCC. Died September 26, aged 61.

Lt Cdr Edward (Ted) Davies. Joined RN as Boy Seaman and specialised in communications. He was an early promotee to Senior Rate and then SD Officer. Left the Royal Navy and joined the Royal Naval Reserve (RNR) and led the National Communications Design Team which he led until he retired. Appointed In Command as Lt Cdr when commissioned HMS Sherwood at Carrington Street Nottingham, Oct 14, 1984 and completed Sherwood move to Chalfont Drive as CO until retired in 1991.

Cdr Martin J Rogerson, HMS President, Russell. ACDS (Ops). Died September 25, aged 88.

Lt Andrew C Halliday, HMS Heron,

Hermes, Seahawk, RAF Leeming and Linton-on-Ouse, 750 NAS. Died September 1.

Lt John S Cosgrove. 812, 703 NAS. Died August 31.

AA1 Donald Triggol. S17 Figgard. Died September 18, aged 84.

WO1 (Photographer) Paul Wellings BEM. Joined RN at HMS Ganges. Served HMS Fulmar, Hydra, Drake, Ark Royal, Excellent, Hong Kong, Portugal, Pensicola in Florida, Germany, and DPR(N) London. Played football for several seasons for the RN. Member of the RN Photographers Association and recently marched with the RNPA at the Cenotaph Remembrance ceremony. Served 27 years from 1967 to 1994. On leaving the RN he worked for both the BBC and ITN as a cameraman. Died September 28, aged 68.

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association

Alexander Todd, LREM(A), HMS Centaur 1961/63. Died March 18 in Canada.

Admiral Sir Brian Brown, HMS Bulwark 1960/61. Died April 27, aged 85.

George Eyre, AH3. HMS Centaur 1958/60. HMS Bulwark 1961/65. Died May 15.

Leigh Easton. HMS Bulwark 1960/61. Died July 2 aged 82.

Fred Hodgson, AB. HMS Albion 1954/56. Died July 2.

John Finley, MEM1. HMS Bulwark 1969/73. Died October 1, aged 64.

Submariners' Association

Mick Rowe Lt. Served 1955 to 1961 in HM Submarines Sentinel, Sealion, Thule, and Scorcher. Member of Essex Branch. Died September 4, aged 80.

Peter Lever AB UW3. Served 1954 to 1966 in HM Submarines Alcide (60-62), Ambush (62-63), Andrew (63-64), and Alliance (64-65). Member of Colchester Branch. Died September 11, aged 83.

Andy Clarkson LRO. Served 1963 to 1975 in HM Submarines Orpheus (63-65), Civilian (66-69), Auriga (70-71), Aeneas (71-72), Oberon (72-73), Odin (73-75), and Oracle (75). Member of Espana Levante Branch. Died September 12, aged 78.

Robert Cliff LME. Served 1959 to 1967 in HM Submarines Trespasser (60-61), Alderney (62-63), Otus (63-

64), Odin (64-65), and Thermopylae (65). Member of Derbyshire Branch. Died September 29, aged 80.

Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNOC

Vice Adm Geoffrey T J Dalton KCB. HMS Victory RNB, Relentless, Nubian, Dryad, Eagle, Andromeda, Jupiter. SACLANT. ACNS. DGNPS. DN Plans. Died September 26, aged 89.

Lt Cdr Terence Ambrose. HMS Lowestoft, Daedalus, Saker. BRNC Dartmouth. Dir Naval Education. Died September 10, aged 82.

Lt Cdr Pierre J Bale. HMS Dryad, Hubberston, Galatea, Ajax, upton, Cuxton, Juno, Centurion. C-in-C Fleet. Died September 5, aged 75.

Lt Cdr John R Buchanan. HMS Nelson, Pembroke, Dolphin, Collingwood, Drake. C-in-C Nav Home. Died September 17, aged 73.

Lt Patrick M W Welch. HMS Plymouth, Raleigh, Figgard, Excellent. Died September 15, aged 88.

Lt Anthony S Battison. HMS Excellent, Leverton, Hampshire, Minerva, and Dryad. Died September 6, aged 75.

Reunions

738 Kings Squad, Royal Marines. Our reunion will take place from August 12 to 14 2021. I have contacted 18 members so far but are after details of the following: Andrewartha; Bateman; Cheney; Comper; Denver; Ellis; Graham; Lambert; Merry; McFarling; Plant; Saunders.

Roger 'Taff' Sheppard
01656 670224
shep9409@gmail.com

HMS Londonderry. A reunion of the first commission July 1960 to October 1962 is planned for the Royal Beach Hotel at Southsea from June 18 to 21 2021. If you served on her during this first commission and are

interested in joining us please get in touch with Brian Coward (email briancoward39@btinternet.com) for details.

HMS Liverpool Association: Next year's reunion will be held on June 12. For membership details contact the secretary John Parker at info@hmsliverpoolassociation.org.uk or call 02392521222.

RMBS 1/70 and 2/70 Squad. A joint 50th anniversary reunion of 1/70 and 2/70 squads is planned for August 2021 in Deal. Contact Nick Buckley on nickbuckley55@aol.com
BRNC Entry Sept 1980 40th anniversary reunion

dinner, BRNC Dartmouth, March 27, 2021. Details from Cdr N J 'Nobby' Hall, neil.hall324@mod.gov.uk

HMS Undaunted, Eagle and Yarmouth Associations: Annual reunion, Hallmark Hotel, Midland Road, Derby, April 23 to April 26 2021. Contact Alan (Whiskey) Walker on 01268 548041, whiskey666@outlook.com

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association: Reunion will now take place on May 7-10 2021 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. Contact Secretary Denis Askham at 07773651213 or email askhamd3@gmail.com

Ask Jack

HMS RALEIGH: Bobby Moore, pictured second from right enjoying his first pint, is trying to put names to the other faces in this photograph, taken in February 1956. Anyone who can help is asked to email him at bobbymoore@manx.net

HMS Ganges Class 283, January 2 1961: It is 60 years since we first met in January 2021. I am in touch with a number of members and we are thinking of possibly meeting up in the Birmingham area. If there are any members who are interested in a class reunion next year, please contact me.

Alan Barry
Barryaj@virginmedia.com

THE Mountbattens: The author of the biography of Earl Mountbatten of Burma and his wife Edwina would like to talk to anyone who has information about them.

Dr Andrew Lownie at lownie@globalnet.co.uk or telephone 0207 222 7574

Gerald Smith and James Murphy: I am trying



died. James was born May 5 1878 in Ireland but I cannot find a record of his death. I would appreciate any help in this search.

Kay Smith
Smith_kay@sky.com or 07887 872009.

TRNTT Kenya Navy Reunions. I would like to contact the person in charge of these reunions. Having moved to Spain 20 years ago, I have lost all contact.

John Dymond, ex-Chief Engineer of KNS Ndovu
Johndymond1936@icloud.com

Anson 35s: I am trying to contact the Scribes who joined up with me in August 1976 (D161). Our WAFU classmates managed a meet up in 2016 and we want to get the whole class together, if we can, in 2021 on our 45th anniversary. Contact Guy Musgrove on Facebook or email guy_musgrove@hotmail.co.uk

RN's Trafalgar Day tribute

SECOND Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Nick Hine, led Trafalgar Day commemorations on board HMS Victory marking the 215th anniversary of the battle.

The day started at HM Naval Base Portsmouth, as always, with the daily naval ceremony of Colours, with the White Ensign and the Union Flag raised, followed shortly afterwards by the flag sequence indicating Nelson's famous message to the fleet: "England expects that every man will do his duty".

Lieutenant Commander Brian Smith, Victory's 101st Commanding Officer, said: "Being Commanding Officer of HMS Victory is a huge privilege and Trafalgar Day is the most important day in our calendar. Having greatly admired Admiral Nelson since childhood it is a great honour to take a lead role in the Trafalgar Day Service. It is a poignant and significant event when we remember the courage of Nelson, our greatest naval hero but also remember the sacrifice of many hundreds of men on both sides."

"Trafalgar Day remains relevant today to the modern Royal Navy as we continue to maintain the legacy of Nelson's Navy to this maritime nation, protecting our interests across the globe. As we honour the memory of Nelson and the sailors of Trafalgar, we also remember our fellow servicemen and women serving in today's Royal Navy and



Royal Marines." The Battle of Trafalgar changed the course of British history and sealed Royal Navy dominion of the seas for more than a hundred years.

Nelson's tactical genius in splitting the line of enemy ships had already set the pre-conditions for victory, when only an hour into the battle, Nelson was hit by a French sharpshooter's musket ball as he paced Victory's quarterdeck, directing the battle.

He subsequently died of his wounds, having been told his men had won the day.

Thirty years of living the dream

THIRTY years' service in the RN and RFA were recognised aboard RFA Argus with an LSGC badge for veteran comms specialist Howard Jackson.

The chief petty officer joined the RN in 1988 and after leaving for civvy stree, soon went back to sea by signing up for the RFA in 1999.

"What I love about this job is that I get to go to places that are rarely visited by the other people in the world," said the Leighton Buzzard native.

"I have been to the Pitcairn Islands in the Pacific Ocean and also to St Helena, where Napoleon was exiled."

"Today the only new places in the world I still want to go to are the South Sandwich Islands and Tortola, and we came so close to that last one on this trip to the Caribbean. Tortola was within sight."

Under the White Ensign, he served in carrier HMS Invincible and frigate HMS Richmond and has been drafted extensively around the RFA flotilla, including a Far East tour to Singapore and Australia with now-retired tanker RFA Bayleaf.



Jennifer enjoys Pelican brief

LEADING Seaman Jennifer Whalley stands proudly on the upper deck of Tall Ship Pelican with HMS Belfast in the background, her five-week mission to help young scientists complete.

The hydrographic specialist joined the tall ship to lay the foundations for a two-year scientific adventure sailing around the world, retracing the route legendary naturalist Charles Darwin took in HMS Beagle nearly 200 years ago.

The 31-year-old from Bournemouth in Dorset works with the Royal Navy's mobile hydrography unit based in Plymouth, travelling wherever the Fleet needs the latest data about the oceans to support front-line operations.

At the end of August, however, she joined the 75-year-old tall ship in Liverpool on a voyage through the Irish Sea, past the Hebrides, through the Pentland Firth and down the East Coast of Scotland and England, before sailing up the Thames.

While aboard, the leading hand helped install a bathymetric recorder – used to measure the depth of ocean. It's bread and butter work for Jennifer in her day job – but not to the Pelican, which typically gives people the chance to experience a more traditional life at sea in old-school sailing vessel.

Next year, Pelican will lead the Darwin 200 project, which is intended to attract 200 scientists, naturalists and conservationists, taking them around the world to conduct research and inspire as many as 200 million people in science, conservation and the environment.

Ahead of that epic adventure, the Pelican has been sailing around the UK in preparation, testing new kit such as the bathymetric echo sounder.

It's far simpler than the one Jennifer is used to in Royal Navy vessels – but then she found pretty much everything more basic than life in the Hydrographic flotilla: cabins for six rather than two, particularly cramped living conditions (Pelican is just seven metres – 27ft – wide) and a huge open deck where the sailor performed watch, fully exposed to the elements night and day.

"It was tiring work – the ship's wheel is about five feet in circumference, heavy," she explained. "I've steered Royal Navy ships. The wheel is tiny, you're inside, shielded from the elements."

"Also while some of the phrases and activities on board are the same as in the Navy – sailors clean the ship for the captain's evening rounds, there are regular watches and meal times – there were times when I had to double take."

"To me 'square away' means to make sure everything is safe and



secure in the Royal Navy. On the Pelican it means setting the sails a particular way.

"I've also come to appreciate food in the Royal Navy a lot more. The galley was about half the size of those on ship's I served in. The chefs did their best but..."

As well as getting the instrumentation set up for next year's mission, Jennifer's time aboard Pelican has sowed the seed of an idea in the minds of organisers for a possible permanent Royal Navy presence throughout her circumnavigation.

Late summer storms kiboshed some of Pelican's planned visits during her five-week voyage from Liverpool to London, and made for some uncomfortable periods at sea as the tall ship has a habit of corkscrewing, while the pandemic

ruled out calling in at larger ports.

But Jennifer and her 45 shipmates nevertheless stopped at some of the most remote places in the British Isles such as the Outer Hebrides, the huge wind farm off the Caithness coast (pictured above) and Bass Rock in the Firth of Forth.

"Bass Rock is home to half a million gannets – the whole rock looks white from a distance. It's absolutely unbelievable – but so is the stink," she said.

"I was also at the helm when we passed through Tower Bridge with people lining the main mast. That was very special. But the whole voyage was – the trip of a lifetime."

"I've met people from different walks of life and that has given me the chance to show to them that there is more to the Royal Navy than just firing guns."



• *Mutiny avenged*: John Augustus Atkinson's depiction of British sailors boarding the former HMS Hermione (under the Spanish flag as Santa Cecilia), two years after crew mutinied

Forgotten mutiny under scrutiny

Most have heard of the mutiny on the Bounty in 1789 but a bigger and more spectacular and violent event occurred in 1797 on board the frigate Hermione in the Caribbean, writes Prof Eric Grove.

Her commanding officer, Captain Hugh Pigot, was an unpredictable and sadistic officer who terrorised his ship's company in a way that was remarkable even by the standards of the time.

Pigot had been kept under some form of control by an effective First Lieutenant but the latter was unjustly court martialled and removed. This was followed by Pigot losing his temper with his foretopmen under the command of a popular midshipman who, unusually for a young man of his rank and age, was flogged with the cat and disgraced.

Experienced maritime author Angus Konstam, the author of this new study of the incident, *Mutiny on the Spanish Main: HMS Hermione and the Royal Navy's Revenge*, argues convincingly that "this marked a real turning point" as it exposed their CO as a "petty vindictive tyrant".

The breaking point that finally pushed the men over the edge, almost a week later, was another unreasonable reaction to perceived failures of the including the deaths of three of them as they fell.

Having ordered them to be 'started' aloft, Pigot then sentenced 13 of them to be flogged the following day. The men were shocked and discipline had effectively broken down at last. "Self preservation was all that remained."

The leading mutineers rushed Pigot in his cabin and heavily wounded him in two attacks with cutlasses, axes and a bayonet. The (perhaps almost) dead captain was pushed out of a broken stern window. The officer of the watch was also attacked and thrown over the side but was caught in the rigging before

hitting the sea. He attempted to get back on board but was attacked again and thrown over the side this time definitively. Two other unpopular officers were also murdered next. In all, ten men were murdered, including the boatswain whose wife was desired by a mutineer (there may have been history there).

The mutineers then surrendered the ship to Spain who recommissioned her as Santa Cecilia. The Royal Navy was determined to get her back and succeeded in a very daring 'cutting out' operation carried out by the frigate HMS Surprise. She was returned to service as HMS Retribution, although the unfortunate ship did not last long.

Retribution was soon visited on the mutineers, despite the difficulties of running them down in a diverse maritime environment. The first four mutineers to be captured were tried and executed in 1798, one further mutineer turning King's Evidence against them. Ten loyal survivors, including the flogged midshipman, were released by Spain that helped the case against the guilty to be developed. As the evidence added up, more executions occurred, sometimes the campaign against the mutineers caused international incidents with the USA.

By 1806 two dozen mutineers had been hanged and one transported to Australia. The author points to the fairness of the trials and that eight were found not guilty and two given clemency. A large number of mutineers did, however, escape to make new lives in the Caribbean or the welcoming USA. As the author concludes: "Today their descendants are probably oblivious to the part their ancestors played in the bloodiest mutiny in British naval history."

Mutiny on the Spanish Main (Osprey, ISBN 978 1 4728 3382 2, £25) features 320 pages plus colour illustrations and excellent maps. It is a highly informative and accessible account of an incident that deserves to be better known; highly recommended.



WALL SHIELDS OF ROYAL NAVY SHIPS

Hand painted on wooden base 6" x 7"

£58.60 including UK postage and packing
REDUCED PRICES given for orders of 3 or more
SPECIAL PRICES given for 10, 25, 50 and 100
CRESTED TIES TO YOUR OWN SPECIAL DESIGN
 (minimum 50)

Specialist experience over 100 years

C.H. MUNDAY LTD

**Rosemary Cottage, Churt Road, Headley,
 Bordon, Hants GU35 8SS
 Telephone: 01428 714971
 email: enquiries@chmunday.co.uk
 www.chmunday.co.uk**



ASSOCIATION OF WRENS AND WOMEN OF THE ROYAL NAVAL SERVICES



Blue and Gold Together

www.wrens.org.uk | office@wrens.org.uk | 02392 725141
 Facebook: Association of Wrens | Charity Reg No. 257040

The Personalised Military Watch

Specially commissioned for all those who served Crown and Country this stylish watch is personalised with the Royal Navy or Royal Marines emblem and engraved with your initials and years of service or service number making a practical and handsome timepiece in recognition of your Service.

Hand-crafted in gold and silver

The emblems have been exquisitely decorated with 24 carat gold to highlight the superb design and milled to the precise thickness of a fine watch dial. These exclusive 28mm die-struck dials, available in two-toned gold and silver or matt silver finish are fitted within a classic 40mm steel alloy case with a matching two toned or silver stainless steel bracelet or anti-allergenic leather strap. The high precision Swiss parts Quartz movement guarantees accuracy within seconds per month and is backed by a 3 Year, International Renewable Warranty for the life of your watch.

Your Exclusive Military Watch features:

- Die-struck watch face with Royal Navy or Royal Marines emblem in two tone gold and silver or matt silver finish.
- Swiss parts High Precision Quartz Movement
- Classic 40mm Steel Alloy Case and Stainless Steel Bracelet or Anti-allergenic Leather strap
- 3 ATM/30 metre water resistant
- 3 -Year, International, Renewable Guarantee

FREE Engraving

As a unique and lasting reminder of your Service the reverse of your exclusive timepiece can be engraved with up to 4 initials and your years of service or service number. Please clearly state engraving required.



Made in Britain

Your exclusive Military Watch is brought to you by Award Productions Ltd, internationally renowned medalist. Each watch features a dial, die-struck in England to the same exacting standards as AWARD's medals. The watch arrives in a distinctive presentation box and makes a unique and timely gift for all occasions.

AWARD
PROUD TO SERVE



Royal Marines emblem also available.

How to order

Order Online - www.awardmedals.com

Order by Phone - Call us between 9am to 5pm on **01952 510053**

Alternatively, please complete the order form enclosing a cheque/postal order or completing the credit card details and send to:

Award Productions Ltd, PO Box 300, Shrewsbury, SY5 6WP, UK

AWARD
PROUD TO SERVE

ORDER FORM

AWARD Productions Ltd, PO Box 300, Shrewsbury, SY5 6WP, UK

Please tick box.

Yes, please send me the following Royal Navy or Royal Marines watch(es).

Code	Description	Price	Qty	Total £
RWBB	Two tone Emblem & Bracelet	£149.95		
RWBL	Two tone Emblem & Brown Leather Strap	£119.95		
RWSB	Silver Emblem & Bracelet	£139.95		
RWSL	Silver Emblem & Black Leather Strap	£109.95		

Postage/Packing/Insurance £6.50

Engraving required (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)

Total £

Years of service :

Initials: or service number :

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms

Address

Postcode

Daytime Tel. No.

I enclose my cheque/postal order for £ made payable to Award Productions Ltd or please debit my card account no:

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

Security Code:

--	--	--	--

Last 3 digits on signature strip

Cards accepted:



Expiry date:

--	--	--	--

(Switch only)

Switch Issue No.

Valid from:

--	--	--	--

Signature

If cardholder's name, address and signature are different from the one shown, please include these details.

Delivery Subject to availability. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery. Award Productions Ltd, Registered in England No. 2001900, Shrewsbury SY5 6BT

NN02