

Navy News

PLAIN ENGLISH CAMPAIGN AWARD WINNER

APRIL 1999

80p



Easter holiday extra for our young readers



The big move for Sea Harriers
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PLYMOUTH NAVY DAYS

25 family tickets to be won!

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Meet the film stars of Marlborough

THE SHIP's company of HMS Marlborough take a bow in this shot by LA(PHOT) Chris Brick after the Type 23 frigate had starred in a new, Hollywood-style film.

The £2-million, Bond-type adventure movie featured the Royal Navy in a modern-day role of combating piracy on the high seas. Entitled *Navy in Action*, the

25-minute film was commissioned from BBC Resources by Portsmouth Naval Base Property Trust and - and shown in a 275-seat cinema - will form the centrepiece of a £13-million, interactive development at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

A 20-strong film crew joined Marlborough for two days during which leading parts were taken by actors.

Earlier, the ship was fulfilling her West Indies guardship role by joining the Independence Day ceremony in Grenada and St Lucia.

She also checked up on volcano-hit Montserrat where her ship's company helped with community work, including renovation of a police station.

Marlborough was due to be in Barbados for Easter.

JACK'S OUT OF THE ORDINARY!

All sailors to start as ABs

THE RATE of Ordinary Seaman has disappeared from the Royal Navy. The lowest rank in the Service is now that of Able Seaman, effective from April 1.

Also out is the new entrant rate of Junior Seaman, as well as the equivalent rates in the Royal Marines and Queen Alexandra's Royal Naval Nursing Service.

The Naval Board has approved the move as part of the continuing measures to streamline rank structures and to make them more appropriate for today's Naval Service.

Promotion will be based much more on the attainment of skills and experience rather than on age, length of service or specialisation.

In a general signal, the Second Sea Lord, Admiral Sir John Brigstocke, said

the three-rank structure below leading rate or RM corporal required little, if any, difference in leadership and management skills, and potentially undermined the purpose of rank in a disciplined organisation.

The simplified structure aims to reinforce the authority, leadership and experience of leading hands.

Now, the rank of AB will apply, from new entry, to all ratings below leading hand. All Royal Marines below the rank of corporal will be ranked as Marines,

with the exception of lance-corporals who are seen as providing a specific level of leadership and responsibility applicable to a particular job.

QARNNS below leading rate will continue to be called Naval Nurses, but will equate to ABs.

Pay, based on a points system, is unaffected, and branch and specialist qualification badges will continue to identify AB expertise. Individuals will continue to be addressed as MEM, OM, Mne, Nurse, etc.

RN Tomahawks off Kosovo

WITH NATO air strikes against Serb forces looking likely as *Navy News* went to press, Defence Secretary George Robertson took the unusual step of confirming the presence in the area of HM submarine *Splendid*.

He said *Splendid*, which in November conducted the first live firing of a Royal Navy Tomahawk cruise missile, was in the Adriatic and armed with her new weapons.

Meanwhile, last-minute diplomatic

efforts were being made in a bid to persuade the Milosevic government in Belgrade to agree to a peaceful settlement of the war in Kosovo.

Other British forces in the Adriatic include the Type 23 frigate HMS Iron Duke, while RFAs Sea Centurion and Sea Crusader were ferrying heavy equipment to the British Army battle group standing by in Macedonia for possible peace-keeping duties.

Boxer gets a Vietnam welcome in Royal fashion



THIS ROYAL ENCOUNTER in Vietnam came for HMS Boxer when the Duke of York visits the Type 22 frigate at her berth in Ho Chi Minh City. Boxer, interrupting her Gulf deployment to sup-

port a British defence industry exhibition, welcomed Prince Andrew who was there for the same reason. Our picture shows the Prince being introduced to Boxer's heads of department

— (l-r) Lt Cdrs Andrew Spring, Malcolm McKenzie, Damien Rawlings and Keith Barnwell. Boxer, under the command of Capt Richard Ibbotson, later called at Hong Kong and Shanghai.



EAST MEETS WEST on the catwalk — sailors from HMS Boxer take part a fashion show held jointly by British and Vietnamese designers. Lending their arms here are POMEM Mick Brau (left) and PO(M) Steve Lewis. During the ship's visit to the former Saigon, runs ashore included sightseeing trips via the city's ubiquitous 'xichlos' — motorised rickshaws.

Recruiting hope over museum's new show

AN EXHIBITION which brings the story of the Royal Marines and Royal Navy bang up to date has been opened by the Second Sea Lord, Admiral Sir John Brigstocke, at The RM Museum, Eastney.

The display, *RN of Today*, complements historical exhibits and is funded by the Navy's Director Public of Relations, Commodore Hugh Edleston, who attended the opening. Similar displays have already opened at the RN Museum, the Fleet Air Arm Museum, the RN Submarine Museum and in HMS Belfast.

Admiral Brigstocke said they were designed to bring in lots of extra business for the museums — and lots of extra recruits. It was planned to update the display every five years.

Tele suprise

SAILORS figured in a special Mother's Day edition of Cilla Black's TV show *Surprise, Surprise*.

Jason Mills and Daniel Amor were flown from HMS Newcastle in the Gulf and Marlborough in the Caribbean, to appear on the recorded LWT show for a reunion with their unsuspecting mums.

Service deafness: Medical review brings 'no change'

THE GOVERNMENT has said it cannot change its stance on the assessment of awards of War Pensions for hearing loss.

Social Security Minister Baroness Hollis said in a reply to a Parliamentary question that the War Pensions policy adviser's report confirmed that there was no new scientific evidence to raise a reasonable doubt over the Department's current approach to assessment of hearing loss.

There was no evidence that noise-induced hearing loss deteriorated once a person was removed from the cause, and that the combination of noise-induced hearing loss and subsequent hearing loss due to age was more than additive.

Campaigners who have sought to widen the Government's policy on the assessments will be disappointed by the announcement. However, Baroness Hollis said that her Department would review its

VIRTUAL REALITY TO CUT COST OF WARSHIP DESIGN

VIRTUAL REALITY has entered the world of ship design — and promises to save money for the taxpayer.

A 3-D simulation facility has been launched at Bristol which could revolutionise the way that weapon platforms, including ships and aircraft, are designed, built, tested and operated.

Wearing special goggles, customers and designers can "walk" through a virtual-reality ship, and see aircraft land and take-off from flight decks. Images are displayed on to a wide, cylindrically curved screen for viewing by an audience of up to 20.

It is hoped that the facility, at the Ministry of Defence procurement establishment at Abbey Wood, will be available in time to help in work on the Royal Navy's future aircraft

Brave returns home for the last time

HMS BRAVE returned to her home base of Devonport on March 22 at the end of her final operational deployment before she decommissioned.

The 13-year-old Type 22 frigate marked her entry into port by wearing her paying-off pennant, watched by relatives and friends of the ship's company.

Her last task took her to the Mediterranean where she took part in exercises with the US and Italian Navies and visited Gibraltar, Turkey, Malta, Spain and Portugal. Back in home waters, she took part in an anti-submarine exercise off the Hebrides, and visited the Clyde Naval Base and Liverpool. She was due to become non-operational on April 1.

carrier — flagship for the MOD's Smart Procurement initiative.

The simulation set-up, which is shared with Systems Engineering & Assessment Ltd, was opened last month by the Chief of Defence Procurement, Sir Robert

Walmsley. He said: "This is an enormously exciting development.

We expect to make full use of modelling and simulation during the assessment phases of the RN's future aircraft carrier and the aircraft it will carry."

Britannia gets her 100,000th visitor at Leith

AS THE former Royal Yacht Britannia welcomed her 100,000th visitor since she was opened to the public last October, her owners were preparing for a far greater influx of sightseers than even they had expected.

When Britannia was berthed at Leith docks near Edinburgh, her new owners expected that 200,000 people would visit the vessel over 12 months. Now they have revised that figure to 300,000.

The 100,000th visitor mark was reached when newly-weds Julie and Ian Tigg went on board on March 3. They were welcomed by the yacht's General Manager, Bob Downie, who presented them with a bottle of champagne.

The yacht is raising the cost of adult tickets by £1 to £7.50. A spokeswoman for Britannia said the increase was due to the restoration and other development work costing £4 million — twice as much as originally expected.

She said: "Included in the additional work has been an extension to the cafe alongside the ship. That has been necessary due to the larger than expected number of visitors."

She said the cost of tickets for senior citizens had also risen — by 75p to £5.75 — but children's tickets were remaining at £3.75.

■ Britannia's new guide book — page 24.

Cavalier funding drive is 'on hold'

A CAMPAIGN which aimed to raise at least some of the £95,000 needed to complete the funding of Britain's last World War II destroyer, HMS Cavalier, has been postponed.

The week-long campaign, planned in the Medway area by the HMS Cavalier Association, was due to be launched on March 27.

Rear Admiral John Hervey, President of the Association and a member of the HMS Cavalier (Chatham) Trust, said the campaign had been "put on hold" after members of the Trust expressed the view that any fundraising campaign could be better co-ordinated after the ship arrived at Chatham Historic Dockyard.

He said repairs to Cavalier are progressing well at Hebburn-on-Tyne and it is estimated that she will be in her Chatham berth by mid-May.

The decision to postpone the campaign has led to the resignation as chairman of the Cavalier Association of Sid Anning. Over a year ago, he was instrumental in launching the successful fight to save the ship for Britain.

Both Mr Anning and Admiral Hervey said he had stepped down, at least for the time being, to preserve amity within the organisation.

Russian envoy's Thursday War

THE RUSSIAN Ambassador to Britain, Mr Yuri Fokine, joined HMS Richmond off Plymouth for a Thursday War exercise. He was a guest of Flag Officer Sea Training, Rear Admiral John Lippitt.

Also visiting FOST was the Commander of the German Destroyer Fleet, Flotillenadmiral Christoph Diehl who embarked for the Thursday War in the FGS Luetjens.

Latest Lynx hot on the trail



THE LATEST aircraft to join the Fleet Air Arm — the Westland Lynx HMS 8 (DSP) — has been delivered to the Lynx Operational Evaluation Unit of 815 Naval Air Squadron. The aircraft, bulging with additional equipment, is the most up-to-date version of an aircraft that first entered Fleet Air Arm service 28 years ago.

The new helicopter incorporates an integrated GPS navigation suite and a digital signal proces-

sor for the radar. The observer's ability to track multiple targets has been greatly enhanced, and the changes are the first in a programme designed to maintain the Lynx's operational effectiveness well into the next century.

The evaluation unit, the first of the Portland contingent to move to RN air station Yeovilton, is conducting intensive trials with two of the new aircraft before the type becomes operational at the end of the year.

SABITA HAS DESIGNS ON THE NAVY

PERSONALLY spearheading the Navy's ethnic recruiting drive at the London *Evening Standard's* Jobs Fair, Second Sea Lord Admiral Sir John Brigstocke gave the hard sell to Sabita Gottumukkala (24), from Finchley.

"He joked with me and said the fact that I was having my photograph taken with him meant I was all signed up already," said Sabita, who has just completed a post graduate degree in International Marketing at the University of Manchester Institute of Science and Technology. She also has a degree in Design Management from Leicester University.

"I'm actually quite looking forward to doing the three-day selection tests. I definitely intend taking this further and I am very interested in a career in the Navy."

"I always thought it was only about ships, flying and submarines - but I found out from Admiral Brigstocke that there is a whole range of careers available to someone with my background."

Admiral Brigstocke told *Navy News*: "This year the percentage of Navy recruits from the ethnic minorities has doubled. This is a spectacular achievement."

□ No home for racism - see back page. Overall recruitment up 6 per cent - see page 20.



RM ranks set to fall into line with the rest

OFFICER rank comparisons between the Royal Marines and other Services, which date back to the 19th century, are being changed in the light of increasing Joint Service activity.

At present rank equivalents between the RM and other Services differ according to whether a Royal Marines officer is serving at sea, in an RN establishment or ashore in a non-Naval environment.

In a Naval environment, for instance, a major RM equates to a commander RN in terms of rank and pay. But when outside that environment, the major would appear to rank alongside a Army major, while still performing the duties and receiving the pay of a commander RN and an Army lieutenant colonel.

From July 1, RM officers from lieutenant to lieutenant colonel will be realigned one substantive rank and one NATO grade higher so that rank badges will properly reflect an RM officer's professional experience and current entitlement to pay, pensions and benefits.

There will be no further need for Local Higher Rank adjustments, and the rank of acting lieutenant will be absorbed into that of lieutenant.

An officer with five years' seniority as a lieutenant will be automatically promoted to captain, substantive lieutenant colonels will become colonels and remain in their incremental pay bracket, and all substantive colonels with a seniority date on or before June 30

this year will continue to receive one-star pay and - when filling appropriate appointments - will wear brigadier rank.

Relative seniority, appointing, pay and pensions will be unaffected. There will also be no effect on

Careers Service officers, retired officers and representative and honorary titles.

□ Details of the realignment are published in General Defence Council Instruction 39/99.



New study on cancers in test veterans

MULTIPLE myeloma cancers in British nuclear test veterans of the 1950s are to come under a medical study funded by the Ministry of Defence, Parliamentary Under Secretary John Spellar announced.

The study comes after recent analysis of the National Radiological Protection Board database, which noted a recent rise in the incidence of MMs in test participants and the control group.

It will be carried out by the independent NRPB and reviewed by another independent committee including eminent academics and scientists.

Two prior studies by the NRPB have looked into the health and mortality of UK test veterans, each involving some 23,000 of the latter and a similar sized control group.

They concluded that participation in the weapons tests had no detectable effect on expectation of life, nor on risk of developing cancer or other fatal diseases.

JACK ET JACQUES

La Lettre Home à Mum

(On board HMS Marlborough dans les Indes Occidentales)

"Je déteste ce job, Jacques. Je n'ai jamais aucune idée what to say."

"C'est très simple, Jack! Écoute: 'Chère Mum, j'espère que cette lettre vous trouve aussi bien que moi. Je miss votre fantastique cooking et -"

"Ha! C'est un joke! Ma Mum, elle est la plus lousy cook de tout le monde. Elle ne peut pas cuire un oeuf. Quand je suis arrivé à HMS Raleigh, j'étais en danger de blowing away dans un puff de vente."

"Quel dommage! Ma mère, au contraire, elle est le tops dans la cuisine! Michel Roux est nowhere à côté de ma mère. Sa Filet de Boeuf Sauté Stroganoff! Sa Canard à la Rouennaise! Sa Suprêmes de Poulet à la Vinaigrette de Noix! Sa -"

"OK, OK! Ça suffit! Forget la cuisine. C'est un non-starter chez nous. Mon Dad, il est un martyr à dyspepsia. C'est pourquoi il m'a dit: 'Get votre self into un bleu suit pour Christ's sake, Jack - vous êtes destiné pour une early tombe si vous stick around ici'."

"Mmm... Alors, 'Ow about: 'Chère Mum. Mes socks sont plein de trous et -"

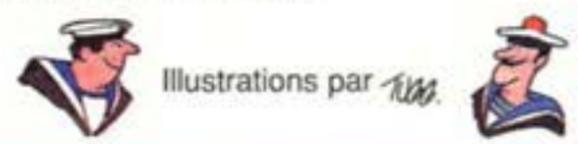
"Pardon, Jacques! Mes socks? Ils étaient toujours plein de trous. Depuis quand j'étais un petit toddler dans mon premier sailor suit. Si ma Mum a fait le knitting les comforts pour les matelots, elle would 'ave been arrêté pour le traison."

"Mon Dieu! C'est plus difficile que j'ai cru! Votre Mum est un non-starter dans tous les départements, je crois!"

"Watch what vous dites about ma lovely Mum, Jacques! Elle pouvait boire quelqueun dans la Marine Nationale sous le table!"

"Merveilleux! Maintenant nous sommes getting somewhere! 'Ow about: 'Chère Mum. Mon ami Jacques, il m'a proposé de faire la course avec vous - combien de Harvey's Bristol Cremes dans trente minutes!"

"C'est great, Jacques! Merci beaucoup! Je crois qu'elle commencera le training tout de suite!"



Illustrations par TUBS

Hi-speed, hi-tech transfer

READY in just 14 weeks - HMS Sultan's new pre-engineered library/lecture theatre building, built by Terrapin of Milton Keynes for the relocation of personnel from the Department of Nuclear Science and Technology formerly at Greenwich Naval College.



Drafty... The Submarine Service



The new Commodore Musters at Centurion

THERE IS A new man at the helm of the Naval Drafting Directorate with the arrival of Commodore John Musters.

And he steps into the job with impeccable credentials - Commodore Musters took over as Commodore Naval Drafting on March 5 after two years as Director of Naval Officer Appointments (Supply) and Deputy Director Naval Manning.

He joined the RN in 1966 and spent four years training and completing specialist courses before undertaking a variety of secretarial and supply appointments in HMS Andromeda, RNAS Lissie, HMS Intrepid, the RN Supply School at Chatham, and HMS Active.

Promoted to Lieutenant Commander in 1979, he served as Captain's Secretary HMS Raleigh before returning to sea as Deputy Supply Officer of the aircraft carrier Invincible, a period which included the Falklands War.

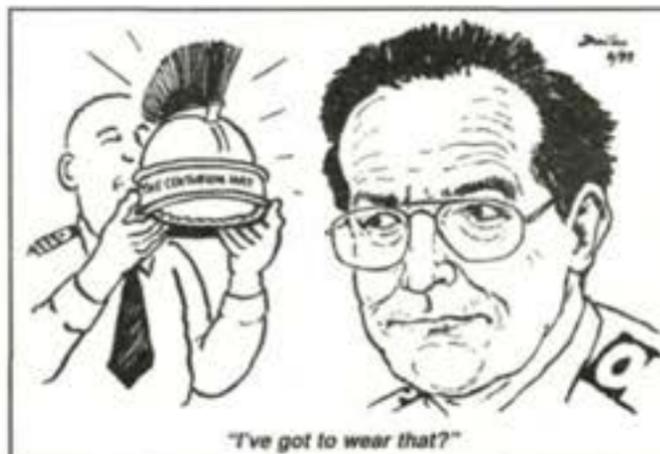
Promoted Commander in 1983, he was appointed Secretary to the Chief of Staff, Commander-in-Chief

Fleet at Northwood, and then to the last of the County class destroyers, HMS Fife, as Commander (S).

He qualified as an Italian interpreter after a one-year course at the Italian Naval War College at Livorno in 1987 and was then appointed to the staff of Defence Commitments (Rest of World) at the Ministry of Defence in London.

In 1991 he joined the staff of CINCNAVHOME in Portsmouth as the Command Supply Officer.

On promotion to Captain in 1993, he returned to Northwood as Secretary to Commander-in-Chief Fleet, Channel and Eastern Atlantic, before joining the staff of Second Sea Lord in 1996 as DNOA(S).



Career-minded have plenty to think about

CAREER-MINDED submariners should be aware of a number of issues which will effect them.

For a start, the Submarine Drafting Preference Card (DPC/C232) has been revised in a number of areas and will now be called the Submarine Drafting Preference Form (DPF/C232) to bring it into line with the General Service and Fleet Air Arm.

New stocks of Submarine DPFs will be issued automatically from stores on demand when stocks of the old Submarine DPCs have been depleted.

There are a number of changes which will be promulgated by both SGM/STMs and RNTMs and you are strongly advised to read these publications.

The January 1999 edition of Navy News gave a very good dit on the Drafting Preference Form which is applicable to Submariners despite being in the Fleet Air Arms Drafty's Corner.

Remember that Drafty does not have access to your Divisional Docs, nor does he have a crystal ball therefore the importance of correctly completing the DPF cannot be over stressed - it is the only



means of fitting people to jobs.

Shore time

Minimum Time Ashore (MTA) is the minimum authorised time allowed, as a condition of sea service, by Drafty between sea service. BR 14 (Drafting Instructions) shows the MTA Graph for all RN rates.

However, your Actual Time Ashore (ATA) may be in excess of MTA for a number of reasons; Sea Roster compressed by ratings completing courses, in particular for

the technical ratings undertaking NPSC, NPOC, NPSupC and the MEMCCSM; Ratings volunteering to go back to sea service Early Out Of Turn (EOOT) and finally the Category may be in surplus.

Be aware that some categories are already very close to or at MTA, particularly CPOSASM, POSASM, WSM and POSSM, whilst in others such as WTRSM and all ME/Nuc Engineering Categories, the ATA is slowly moving towards MTA.

Availability

Working out your Sea Availability Date (SAVDATE) is quite easy and will give you a rough basic date to work to.

Once you have completed your Red Crossed Drafting Preference Form (RXDPF) you will have two dates: The date of leaving the Submarine and your Availability Date (AVDATE); the difference between the two is your Leave After Sea Service (LASS).

First work out your MTA by calculating how many months you have been on Sea Service, ie from date of joining your sea draft to the date of leaving your sea draft and then utilising the Graph in BR 14. Then add the MTA onto your SAVDATE. This will give you your SAVDATE which is the date that

you are available for Sea Service having had all LASS and MTA.

Although it is not necessarily the date you will go back to sea it is a very useful planning date for you to remember.

Early release

Submission of 18 months notice is your right providing that you have fulfilled the prerequisites, see BR 8748 Chapter 2 Articles 0222 and 0223.

However, Early Release once you have submitted your 18 months notice is based on the individual's situation and the Service needs and as a rule of thumb early release will not normally be approved any earlier than the last two months before the end of the notice engagement.

This applies even if the rating has secured a civilian job and can be spared by his current employer as we are short of personnel overall and have many gaps to fill.

If as a Divisional Officer or Commanding Officer you believe a case to be exceptional then please make and argue the case clearly.

Withdrawal

Withdrawal of notice is only possible in underborne branches and it is not a right and many have been surprised when an application to withdraw has been refused.

Remember, the original PVR application may have triggered a promotion or an increase in the recruiting target. Each application is considered on a case by case basis.

Leaving?

As the manpower squeeze continues to bite, time ashore before Terminal Date is slowly reducing. The rules are quite clear in BR 14 Article 0111, ratings going to pension are allowed four months ashore before terminal leave.

Ratings on ZOE, where possible, will be allowed their last year ashore. Ratings completing an engagement which does not qualify them for an immediate pension will only be allowed a period of shore service in accordance with their total length of service.

Essential billets

There are a number of billets within the shore employer's Scheme of Complement (SOC) that require long continuity. One billet is the Submarine Essential Billet (SEXX) where the XX shows the required period of continuity which can range from 12 - 36 months.

In addition these billets are required to be manned to above 95% as they are in direct support of nuclear safety.

There are other billets normally associated with long on job training and where experience and is essential. These are Continuity Billets (CXX) where again the XX denotes the required Continuity.

However, it is the Sea Roster that dictates the deployment of manpower. Therefore as ATA approaches MTA, Continuity will always be broken in favour of the Sea Service requirements. This additional turbulence will continue to give major headaches to the Shore Employer.

Manning priorities

DCI(RN) 55/98 provides the Manning Priorities for the Naval Service and is a must for bedtime reading. Once read, you will understand the guidelines that Drafty is directed to follow.

Situations vacant

CPOAEA(L) for SSA Bristol. A shore billet at Bath. Engineering U/W Weapons, required April for 18 months.

LAEM(M) A shore billet at Waltham exchange with the Army. LAEM duties with REME, required September for two years.

AEM for HMS Dryad. A shore billet near Portsmouth, security duties, required June for a year.

NA(METOC) A shore billet at HMS Drake, Devonport. Security duties, required October for a year.

NA(METOC) A shore billet at Britannia Royal Naval College, Dartmouth. Security duties, required October for a year.

MAA A shore billet as Manager of Birmingham Career Liaison Centre, required April for a year.

LMEM(M) A sea-going billet based at Devonport with 539 Assault Squadron. LCU LMEM(M) duties, required April for 30 months.

MEM for NEFI. A sea-going billet based in the Falklands. MEM duties, ideally driver qualified, required December for four months.

MEM A Falklands billet in HMS Dumbarton Castle. MEM duties, AMC, required from November for six months.

MEM A sea-going billet in HMS Kent, now building at Glasgow but destined for Portsmouth. MEM duties, AMC. Required November for 30 months.

Working abroad

Why can't submariners have fun in the sun like General Service? Basically because there are not enough billets allocated to Submariners.

There has been a lot of effort put into the creation of Submarine Local Foreign Service (LFS) Billets but at the end of the day it is the shore employer, via his SOC, that states the requirement and not Drafty.

Although the Submarine LFS market remains small, there has been a slight increase over recent years. But the total number is still only 24, based mainly in Gibraltar and Italy and restricted to ratings of the OPS Branch. That said, three billets remain gapped because there are no volunteers!

Access to Drafty

Finally, as with so many things in life, good communication is the key, but at the right level.

□ Heads of Department and Divisional Officers are always welcome to visit and arrangements should be made directly with the appropriate desks.

□ DOs or Div SRs are encouraged to speak to desks by telephone, so if there are any questions relating to the above snippets please do not hesitate to contact the appropriate desk.

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YOUR SUBMARINE DRAFTING TEAM FOR 1999

Cdr Stephen Carter, Drafting Commander and WO Appointer, ext 2381. CPORS(SM) Rod Steiger, Office Manager, assistant WO Appointer and Coxn's drafty, ext 2516.

Lt Cdr Dave Hubbard, ME Drafting Officer, ext 2042.

POWWTR Wanda Leader, ME Senior Rates and LWWTR Hazel Mears, ME Junior Rates, ext 2518.

Lt Cdr George Hill, WE/OPs Drafting

Officer, ext 2043. POWTR Ollie Burton, WE Artificers, ext 2519.

POWWTR Diane Collier, Comms/WEM/WSM all rates, ext 2517. LWWTR Alison Leitch, Sonar/TS all rates, ext 2519.

Lt Cdr Chris Lloyd, Medical Drafting Officer, ext 2570. POWTR Robbie Roberts, medics all rates, ext 2445.

Lt Cdr Bryan Ward, SA, WTR Drafting Officer, ext 2455. POWTR Harry Lymer,

SA's all rates, ext 2444.

POWWTR Many Houghton, WTRs all rates, ext 2505.

Lt Cdr Terry Morris, CA/CH and STD Drafting Officer, ext 2456. POWWTR Tracy Evans, C/POCAs and LWWTR Bev Dickson, L?CHs, ext 2446. POWTR Neil Taylor, C/POSTDs and WTR Matt Prime, L?STDs, ext 2575.

POMEM Taff Maund, SM Course Liaison, ext 2339.



Facts and figures

Class: Hunt-class mine countermeasures vessel converted as Northern Ireland patrol vessel
Pennant number: M32
Builder: Yarrow's Glasgow
Launched: February 9, 1982
Commissioned: June 24, 1983
Displacement: 685 tonnes
Length: 60 metres
Beam: 10 metres
Draught: 3 metres
Speed: 15 knots (diesel), 8 knots (hydraulic)
Complement: 35 (four officers)
Machinery: Two Ruston-Paxman 9-59 Deltic diesels; one Deltic Type 9-55B diesel for pulse generator and auxiliary drive; two shafts; one bow-thruster
Armament: 30mm gun

BATTLE HONOURS

North Sea1941-45
 English Channel1942-44
 Normandy1944



● New job – HMS Cottesmore in her role as Northern Ireland patrol vessel, helping to replace the River-class ships which were sold to Brazil.

Cottesmore takes on additional role

Former destroyer served for 46 years

The current ship is the third and smallest of the Royal Navy's HMS Cottesmores.

The first was a 750-ton twin-screw minesweeper launched in February 1917.

Her career was short, as she was paid off in October 1919.

The second Cottesmore was a Hunt-class destroyer built by Yarrow and Co at Glasgow and launched on September 5, 1940.

She displaced 1,000 tons, and entered service in December that year.

She spent much of the war with the 21st Destroyer Flotilla, based at Sheerness, escorting convoys, attacking enemy shipping and covering minelaying operations.

She won three Battle Honours, and was paid off in August 1945.

She was sold to Egypt in 1950 and at first renamed Mohamed Ali.

Renamed Port Said, she served until 1986, when she was believed to be the last remaining of the original Hunt class in service.

HUNT-CLASS warship HMS Cottesmore is undertaking a new role – but that does not stop her from fulfilling her original purpose.

The mine countermeasures vessel was the first of the Hunts con-

verted for service in waters around Northern Ireland.

This enhanced her performance in her secondary role as a patrol vessel, but she retains the ability to hunt mines with her high definition sonar.

Enhancements made to the ship include the addition of two Caley davits which enable Cottesmore to carry two Pacific boats and one Arctic, allowing her boarding teams to react rapidly.

Mine warfare gear removed in the process is easily reinstated.

Cottesmore, the fourth of 13 ships of the class, was built at Yarrow and launched on February 9, 1982.

She was rededicated at Rosyth

on November 20, 1997.

Cottesmore sailed for her first patrol a year ago this month, but to ensure the ship and her company were not missing out on her prime role, she took part in Operation Pike at the beginning of this year.

The ship is due to undergo operational sea training next month.

Built of glass-reinforced plastic (GRP) to reduce the ships' magnetic signature, Hunt-class vessels can both sweep for mines using towed wires and hunt individual devices using high-definition sonar.

Although the hull material is lightweight, the ship is built to withstand the explosive shocks

likely to be encountered while it goes about its tasks.

The ship is powered by two Deltic diesel engines driving fixed-pitch propellers through ahead/astern clutches and reverse reduction gearboxes, giving her a top speed of 15 knots on main engines.

To allow for slow running during operational mine warfare, a third Deltic provides power via hydrostatic transmission systems, air clutches and main gearboxes.

In order to manoeuvre at slow speeds, Hunts have a hydraulic bow-thruster, which does away with the need for activated rudder systems found on more conventional minesweepers and hunters.

AIRCRAFT OF THE ROYAL NAVY No 30

● Curtiss's world-renowned 'Jenny' – the JN-4 – and (below) the company's less successful R-2.



Curtiss JN-4 and R-2

THE CURTISS JN-4, which became one of the most widely operated trainers in the world, was an Anglo-American brainchild.

It was a combination of Curtiss's Type J and Type N, designed respectively by the Briton B. D. Thomas and Glenn Curtiss himself.

No fewer than 6,400 were built and became affectionately known as the Jenny, the favoured mount of US barnstormers in the 1920s and 1930s.

Eighty of them saw service as RNAS trainers in World War I, as did 97 JN-3s, the Type 4's very similar forerunner. The Jenny's 90hp Curtiss OX-5 engine produced a max-

imum speed of 70mph and a climb rate of ten minutes to 3,500ft.

The success of the JN-4 was not, however, matched by its cousins, the Curtiss R-2 and R-4. One hundred were ordered as reconnaissance

aircraft for the RNAS in 1915, but they proved to be overweight, and their 160hp Curtiss XV engine was unreliable.

A few were believed to have been used as armament trainers as late as 1918.



'When only the best is good enough..'

THE QUEEN ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL HOME, a registered charity, provides a permanent home with medical care for disabled ex-servicemen. Anyone who has served in HM Forces at any time or in any capacity and requires residential nursing care is eligible for admission. While most of the 60 patients are long term, patients are also welcomed for convalescence after hospital treatment or to provide short-term respite for carers. We keep costs as low as possible and depend on donations and legacies to subsidise fees.

In the Hospital Home the emphasis is on 24-hour nursing care supported by specialised treatment, activity and enjoyment. A fully-equipped physiotherapy department is complemented by a hydrotherapy pool, enabling patients to improve and maintain their limb mobility. Speech therapy and ideology services help patients to overcome their communication disabilities and to join in the social life of the Home.



The sitting room with its bar, library and television is the centre for community activities. The leisure activities department provides a range of practical work and encourages the development of personal hobbies and interests. The extensive grounds are easily accessible by wheelchair, and specially adapted coaches take patients on regular outings and visits.

If you would like more information about the Queen Alexandra Hospital Home or would like to arrange a visit please contact the Chief Executive.

1919 Our 80th Anniversary. Please help us to 1999 make this a really special year!



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JACK

BY TUB

A DRAFT TO OCEAN!!

'ARD LUCK MATE

YOU'LL 'AVE 'UNDREDS
OF SUPERFIT BOOTNECKS
CLOMPIN' AND YOMPIN' ALL
OVER THE SHIP - IT DON'T
BEAR THINKIN' ABOUT.

OH YES IT
DOES!



Bismarck question

RE "Whose Swordfish Sealed Bismarck's Fate?" (March issue) the article you refer to is NOT by Les Sayer and Percy Gick, it is an incorrect extraction by the author Max Arthur from my book TAG on a Stringbag.

Neither I nor Admiral Gick have ever claimed our aircraft was responsible for the hit on Bismarck which jammed her rudders.

This embarrassing error is compounded by the statement: "There was only one known hit and that was amidships, and we thought we'd got it. It jammed the Bismarck's rudders and she was seen to make two big circles."

These two contradictory sentences pose the question: "How can a hit amidships jam rudders which are astern", further illustrating that someone somewhere got their facts a little mixed. - L.Sayer, Colchester.

I TOOK part in the attack on the Bismarck from HMS Ark Royal. Mr A. Griffiths (March issue) is correct that aircraft from the Ark obtained two hits, one of which jammed the rudder. I was in the leading flight of three forming on the leader of the attack, Cdr T. Coode, the other pilot was Dixon-Child.

The weather on May 26 1941 was Force 10 gale and high seas. There were 15 aircraft on that attack and I defy anyone to say they dropped the crucial torpedo that hit the rudder.

In those conditions who could honestly say that their torpedo was a genuine "runner"?

Every pilot and crew that day deserve equal praise to come out of the clouds and face the firepower of a ship of that calibre. - Lt Cdr J.Moffat, Dunkeld, Perthshire.

I WAS a photographer attached to 810 Sqn on board the Ark at the time and it was left to 810, on their second strike, to score two hits on the Bismarck, including the vital one on the port side screws and rudder.

I have always felt they were not fully recognised for the job they did in atrocious flying weather. - J.Caton, Hockley, Essex.

No 'two tiers' in fitness for life at sea

IN DECEMBER's *Navy News* you announced that the Royal Navy would be introducing compulsory annual fitness tests, which in my opinion have been very long overdue in coming.

Unfortunately, yet again, the Royal Navy in its infinite wisdom has come up with a two-tier system. In the climate that the Royal Navy is operating in - i.e. racial equality, political correctness, Investors in People, front line first etc - we are still giving women in the RN second-rate equality due to their gender.

In the fitness runs women get another two minutes spare time to complete the fitness runs - how are matelots and officers going to look at women as their equals on a Type 42 or 22 when allowances are being made like that?

When a commanding officer takes his ship into hostile waters you can't exactly call up the enemy on Comms and ask them to give us an extra couple of minutes more to get ready at battle stations as we have women on board.

From what I've seen of the modern day Wren she can work hard, play hard better than some matelots I know. So let's give the girls a chance. - G. Mooney, HMS Trenchant.

RNFT replies:
I was pleased to see that you thought the test was long overdue. However, your letter argues strongly that the tests will introduce a "two-tier" system and

for the sake of equality the girls should be tested to the same standards as the men. I should like to explain that the RNFT will not be introducing a discriminatory "two-tier" system, but will have two elements - a stamina test and one for power and strength.

The stamina element will comprise of a 2.4km run or multi-stage shuttle run. The physiological differences between males and females have been taken into account, such as heart volume, blood capacity and the ability to take in and transport oxygen around the body.

Additionally, the degradation in performance with age has been included in the assessment. Any attempt to set a common standard for all in the stamina test would be open to legal challenge on grounds of discrimination. If the stamina standards were set at the average female levels, the majority of males would have little problem passing (indeed the pass standard would equate to below the national average of fitness in the general male population).

Similarly, if the standards were set at the male levels, only those females with a high level of fitness would pass the test. Interestingly, the same gender-fair fitness test has been successfully used by the RAF for the past four years.

You indicated that the women should be given a chance. Well, the test for power and strength will be taken by male and female alike, to an equal standard, a "gender free" test which will be carried out by all personnel under the age of 50 and which will be based on shipboard tasks such as damage control, fire fighting and casualty evacuation. This test is currently being researched and developed and will be introduced in 2000.

The RNFT has been introduced carefully and with extensive research and consultation and I hope this reply clearly explains the issues. You can read more about it in DCI Gen 233/98 or speak to your PT staff.

Incorrect operation

I THOUGHT you might appreciate the enclosed cutting in the Cyprus Weekly: "Capt James Burnell-Nugent is the Captain of HMS Invincible, one of the Royal Navy's three 20,000-ton aircraft carriers. 1,200 men operate the ship and women."

It caused quite a talking point among ex-matelots here. Really enjoy the *Navy News* I receive. - D.Dawson, Paphos, Cyprus.

Letters to the Editor should always be accompanied by the correspondent's name and address, not necessarily for publication.

SHIPS THAT WENT LIKE LIGHTNING

REGARDING HMS Cavalier being the fastest ship in the Fleet, the incident in question related to the fastest major warship in the Fleet - excluding patrol boats and hovercraft. A "race" took place in 1971 between HMS Cavalier and HMS Rapid.

At the time the Type 15 frigate HMS Rapid was the engineering training ship attached to HMS Caledonia. HMS Cavalier was in her final commission. The race took place on July 6 in the Firth of Forth and was run over two hours being won by a small margin of ten yards by HMS Cavalier at an average speed of 31.8 knots. It is generally believed that actually HMS Rapid was faster, however the premature lifting of a safety valve caused her speed to drop.

Over the years I believe the following were the fastest ships in the Fleet:

□ 1907-21 HMS Swift (destroyer) exceeded 40 knots in 1914.

□ 1939-late 1950s Abdiel-class fast minelayers with a designed speed of 40 knots. HMS Latona is reputed to have exceeded 49 knots on one occasion. HMS Manxman could cruise at 44 knots when "clean".

□ 1960 Fast patrol boats HMS Brave Borderer and Brave Swordsman. Designed speed was 50 knots but well exceeded on trials.

□ 1970 Sword-class fast patrol boats - HMS Scimitar was reported in August 1970 *Navy News* as achieving 58 knots.

□ 1980 HMS Speedy, the experimental hydrofoil had a designed speed of 43 knots.

As originally designed, the Amazon-class frigates which entered service in 1974 had a top speed of 35 knots which was reduced to 32 knots following the addition of ballast to counter stability problems. Currently the Batch 3 Type 22 frigates Cornwall, Cumberland, Campbelltown and Chatham have a speed "in excess" of 30 knots. - I. Richardson, High Shincliffe, Durham.

I WAS serving in HMS Manxman in February 1957 when she reached 41½ knots on a speed trial from Toulon to Malta prior to paying off. - J. D. Hoodless, Rosyth.

WHILE I endorse the Fast Minelayer's claim, I think the record should go to HMS Codrington (sunk Dover July 26, 1940) whose 43 knots was certainly fact in pre-war days. Incidentally, HMS Manxman is reputed to have sailed from Colombo to Fremantle at over 40 knots. - F. H. Spenslow, Newport, Mon.

WITH reference to R.Thake's letter (February issue) 1942 saw HMS Apollo mine-laying off the coast of France and on to Belgium. It was witnessed by the 10th Destroyer Flotilla that ORP Blyskawica, an attached Polish destroyer, did in fact catch and pass HMS Apollo during the said sweep. She had a turn of speed to almost 45 knots and in maintaining it used all her oil and fuel in a little over an hour. - J. J. F. Bull, East Ham. (Blyskawica is Polish for Lightning - Ed).

● HMS Scimitar pursued by a Wasp helicopter, Staff College Sea Days, 1975



Navy News

No.537 45th year

Editorial and Business address: Leviathan Block, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, Hants, PO1 3HH

Editor: Jim Allaway

Deputy Editor: Anton Hanney

Assistant Editors: Dominic Blake and Mike Gray

Business Manager: Anne Driver

TELEPHONES

Editorial: 01705-294228/724163 Fax: 01705 838845

(Mil. PNB 24163)

Advertising: 01705 725062

Distribution and accounts: 01705 724226

Additional direct lines to all business departments:

01705-826040 (24-hour service)/291525

Fax: 01705-830149

LACK OF COAL LED TO LOSS OF VALERIAN

I WRITE to ask if you could enlighten me about an event which occurred over 72 years ago. My father AB George Howell was serving in the sloop HMS Valerian which capsized and sank in a tornado/hurricane about 20 miles south of Bermuda on October 22, 1926.

He was one of only 20 survivors who were rescued after being in the water for 24 hours and died some six years ago at the age of 92.

A good friend of mine who lives here in Halesworth told an acquaintance of his this story – and by an extraordinary coincidence this man, himself now 92, was serving in HMS Scarborough, which took over from the Valerian.

He claimed that although the hurricane was extremely severe it was not to blame for the Valerian's fate. 1926 was the year of the General Strike and it was believed that the ship was not allowed to take on all the coal it needed in America because it was so expensive. She thus did not have sufficient to power her way through the rough seas. – N. Howell, Halesworth, Suffolk.

HMS Valerian, a sloop of 1,230 tons, was on her way to Bermuda from Nassau, where she had been employed taking the Acting Governor of the Bahamas to visit the outlying islands, devastated by an earlier hurricane, when she was herself struck down.

The Court-Martial report in The Times of November 3, 1926 goes some way to bearing out your informant's story. As was the practice at the time, all 20 survivors, who included her CO, Cdr W. A. Usher, were court-martialed at Bermuda – and honourably acquitted.

"The report of Cdr Usher on the sinking of his ship and the events that led up to it says the scarcity of coal in the Bahamas necessitated his sailing with bunkers so depleted that economical steaming was essential. On Thursday at 200 miles from Bermuda, he received warnings and increased his speed to 9^{1/2} knots maximum with one boiler. On receiving further warnings he started a second boiler, and by midnight was steaming at a rate of 11^{1/2} knots. The bearings becoming heated, he slowed down to 10 knots.

"The ship was five miles from Gibbs Hill on Friday at 8 a.m. and there was every expectation of making port, as the conditions were

not indicative of the violence of the approaching storm. A subsequent message showed the impossibility of their arriving, so he headed south-east. With the wind increasing steerage way was not to be secured with the maximum engine-power at their disposal.

"The ship was seaworthy until 1 o'clock, when a series of squalls, begging description, ensued, following their passing the centre of the cyclone, and the Valerian heeled over 70 deg., but righted again. Then there were more squalls and the engines stopped and the ship was apparently aground, though no breakers could be seen. She turned over slowly, and her funnels became submerged; her boilers exploded and she sank.

"The men who had got on rafts were tossed about and turned over day and night until HMS Capetown arrived at 10 on Saturday, just when the exhausted survivors were beginning to lose their hold. On the Captain's raft 12 were saved out of 28.

"Survivors say that the Captain sank with the ship, clinging to the bridge, was washed off and hit his head, but caught hold of a raft." – Ed.

Letters

Sea training for Cadets in crisis

DURING the hype over the Strategic Defence Review there appeared on the list of ship disposals the names Appleby and Anmouth.

These fleet tenders have provided sea training for Sea Cadets over many years succeeding their MFV predecessors. This means that the Royal Navy no longer provides any sea training for the Corps and the only sea training is either with the Marine Society (now only one vessel), the training brig Royalist or those units fortunate to have an affiliated warship.

The loss of the Fleet Tenders means that there is virtually no opportunity for cadets to go to sea as a unit.

Why not use some of the advertising/recruiting budget for sea training? The Sea Cadet Corps is a source of excellent recruits. – Lt Cdr R. J. Horner, Halifax.

THE LETTER "When Left Meant Right" (February issue) reminded me of "The Rule of the Road" taught to me in 1931 whilst training on board the Marine Society's ship Warspite (previously HMS Hermione):

Green to green or red to red
Perfect safety go ahead

When both lights you see ahead
Port your helm and shew your red

When to Starboard red appear
It is your duty to keep clear
To act as judgement says 'tis proper
To Port or Starboard, back or stop her.

When upon your Port is seen
A Steamers Starboard light of green
There's not so much for you to do
As green to Port keeps clear of you.

When in danger with no room to turn
Ease her, stop her, go astern.

– L. B. W. Clowes, Eastbourne.

Nelson to the life



RE the various portraits of Nelson (February issue), in the foyer of the Lord Nelson Hotel, Millford Haven is a full-length painting of Nelson. The artist is R. Bowyer. Whether it is an original painting or a copy, I do not know. – G. J. Gardner, Manningtree, Essex.

Presumably a copy. Robert Bowyer was a miniaturist who made two portraits of Nelson. The first (1800, above) is in the Royal Collection. Whereabouts of the second (1805), a drawing possibly watercolour, unknown. – Ed.

MDs who were VCs

IN THE December issue it is stated that the only VC to be awarded to a Naval medical officer was that of Staff Surgeon William Maillard at Crete in 1898. This is not correct. A French Canadian doctor was awarded the VC and also a Bar in the 1914-18 war.

This can be seen on the plaques in the Union Jack Club at Waterloo.

I believe another doctor also gained a VC in that war. – J. R. Burrows, Belfast.

Dr Arthur Martin-Leake was the first man ever to win a Bar to the VC. Dr Noel Chavasse held the same decoration. Both were Army officers. – Ed.

Alliance threat

THE ARTICLE on the submarine HMS Alliance reminded me of an incident of which you may not be aware.

One day in 1952, when I was outside ERA in the control room of Alliance, we were dived in Stokes Bay and preparing to carry out practice firings of angled torpedoes. The captain sighted the liner United States coming up the Solent at the end of her record-breaking transatlantic voyage. He invited anyone interested to take a look through one periscope while he kept look-out through the other.

Then he spotted a small surface vessel entering our training area and when the crew began to make preparations with the obvious intention of grappling our periscope he ordered "Flood Q" (quick diving tank).

In addition to the noise of the tank flooding, there was the unmistakable sound and reverberations as two torpedoes were discharged. A National Service sub-lieutenant who was standing by in anticipation of firing the torpedoes had confused "Flood Q" with the instruction to fire.

Someone in the control room originated what was later to become something of a cliché in Cold War films by remarking: "The Yanks will never believe this was an accident." No damage was caused and I believe that the torpedoes were later recovered from Hayling Island beach. – S. Bottrill, Faringdon, Oxon.

False alarm

I HAD the honour to serve with John Luxton (Tales of the Sea, January issue) in the battleship HMS Nelson, when he was our Messdeck "Dodger".

When the ship was mined in Loch Ewe early in December 1939, I remember that on entering the loch during the morning watch AA stations were stood down and I left No 2 4.7in to join up with the Side and Cable Party on the foc's'le. On the way I nipped down to our messdeck to put a book in my locker.

John Luxton was already there having a quick shave. This involved propping a piece of broken mirror against a mug of hot water on top of a kit locker and wielding an open cut-throat razor.

Suddenly we were airborne and our immediate world was filled with flying lockers, attache cases, ditty boxes and a cloud of dust.

When the ship stopped bounce-



● HMS Nelson – mined in Loch Ewe, December 4, 1939

ing, we both swiftly made our way to the upper deck and emergency stations. Breath recovered, John, with shaving soap still on his face, turned to me and said "Lofty, for a minute I thought I'd cut me bleeding 'ed off!"

John was one of our select band of three-badge men. Full of experience and good advice when asked and giving a quiet form of leader-

ship. – A. W. A. Stevens, Achnashree, Wester Ross.

□ The magnetic mine laid by U-31 caused extensive damage and repairs were not completed until the following September. No-one was killed but there were 73 casualties. In the heads forward, many lavatory pans shattered and their occupants suffered lacerations. – Ed.

DEBTS

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It was at this point we were contacted. Following our assessment of his situation it became clear that he owed around £21,000 to various Creditors including the CSA, his bank, several credit card companies and Student Loans, the interest was mounting and there was no way he could ever hope to repay them. We helped the client to restructure his finances and make realistic proposals to his Creditors for full and final settlement of his debts. This was a great relief to the client concerned who felt able to make a fresh start in his life.

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A ten word advertisement in this column costs from as little as £10.

Due to great demand we can now accept advertisements of up to 15 words in the penfriend section. Each additional word costs £1.

HOW TO ADVERTISE: Simply write your message (MAX 15 WORDS) enclose cheque/PO for £10 (or more depending on the number of words) and send to: 'Penfriends', Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Replies to your box number will be forwarded on daily. (Payment by credit card/switch please use coupon on page 4)

HOW TO REPLY: Any person who writes to an advertiser must use a stamped envelope bearing the advertiser's box number clearly in the bottom left hand corner. The letter should then be enclosed in a second envelope and addressed as above. We cannot guarantee that unstamped letters will be redirected.

WRITE MESSAGE HERE

Name:

Address:

Tel. No.:

TWO ATTRACTIVE, fun loving NAAFI birds. Seek penfriends with G.S.O.H. Box April 1

SINGLE WOMAN, Quiet, gentle, educated. Seeks new male partner 40+ for mellow, trusting, complicated relationship. Box April 2

WIDOW, 65, seeks tall Naval/Ex-Naval gentleman correspondent. Similar age, status, sense of humour. Box April 3

ATTRACTIVE SINGLE working mum, 31, blonde, 5ft, curvy. Seeking male penfriends. Box April 4

PLYMOUTH BASED female (31). Seeks tall dark sailor for friendship/romance. Box April 5

SINGLE FEMALE 24. Brown hair, 5'6" Looking for male penfriend. Box April 6

ESSEX GIRL 28. Seeks single Navy guys, G.S.O.H. Aged 30+ for friendship/romance. Box April 7

SMUDGE, 20, fun loving hunky prince. Looking for his gorgeous princess. Box April 8

SHARON, ATTRACTIVE, slim, into clubbing/dance music. Wishing to correspond with like minded males 28+. Box April 9

3 LIVELY GIRLS. Enjoys socialising, dancing, travelling abroad. Please write! Box April 10

ANDI, 34, attractive, fun loving. V.G.S.O.H. Enjoys socialising, swimming. Seeks Servicemen for correspondence/friendship. Box April 11

SLIM FEMALE, 28, dark hair. Likes pubs, clubbing, eating out, G.S.O.H. Honest + much more. Box April 12

SHY BRUNETTE, 32. Seeks male penfriend 30-45, G.S.O.H. Drop a line to Caroline. Box April 13

MALE Ugandan, aged 25 years. Seeks penfriends of either sex. Box April 14

EVE, 30, Loves animals, boresiding, horticulture, crafts. Seeks friendship only. Box April 15

ANDREA, ATTRACTIVE brunette, 44, 5'9". Slim, children, G.S.O.H. Seeks male, similar, 35-45. Friendship/possible relationship. Box April 16

DEB, 26, needs lots of letters from Marines/Sailors to liven up my life. Box April 17

CATHY FROM LIMEKILNS seeks ex-HMS Battleaxe friend. Please write. Box April 18

NOTICE

All advertisements submitted for entry into the Navy News Penfriend Column are subjected to copy approval. Navy News reserves the right to make any amendments which it considers necessary or to edit copy which is in excess of the number of words paid for.

BRUNETTE, TALL, 43 years. Loves cooking, motorbikes & walking. Seeks penfriend. Box April 19

MARGARET, 30, G.S.O.H. Likes pubs/clubs. Seeks Navy penfriend 30-40. Box April 20

HELEN, 18, single, 5'2", brown hair. Likes walking, music, swimming. Box April 21

FOXY LADY (24), Seeks handsome hound (24-32) fun/friendship. 'Ashley's need not respond'. Box April 22

FOUR BORED Damsels seek Sinbads G.S.O.H. Fun filled letters, A.L.A. Box April 23

PERSONAL

STEWARDESS, EXTREMELY PRETTY, slim, mixed race lady. 5' 5", 31 years old. Warm ebullient personality. Enjoys the arts, literature, rugby, working out. Seeks penpals aged 25-40. Box No 9670

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IN MEMORIAM

Robbins Norman Norris.
Lt. R.N. Ret'd.

Suddenly at his home on Sunday 28th February 1999. Beloved husband of Margaret - sadly missed by all his family and friends. Service took place at St Ann's Church, Naval Base, on Thursday 11th March, and was followed by a private cremation. Donations if desired for the Rowans Hospice, c/o Barrells Chapel of Rest, 380 London Road, Waterlooville.

EDGAR (TAFF) MAIDMENT

Ex-Gunner HMS Implacable
1943-45.
Member of HMS Implacable
Association.
March 14th, Aged 73



People in the News



Sailor saves four from burning flats

FIRE FIGHTING training in the Navy helped a Faslane submariner to save four women from a burning block of flats.

Leading Operator Maintainer Ken Walker from Dumbarton kicked down doors and fought his way into a smoke-filled building in the town's Meadowbank Street after hearing cries for help.

He led two women to safety and rescued another after going back into the blazing building for a second time.

But on his third attempt to rescue the fourth and last occupant of the flat, he was overcome by the smoke and forced to leave.

But by then the fire brigade had arrived and Ken was able to direct them to the fourth woman, who was only semi-conscious, before being taken to hospital himself to be treated for the effects of smoke.

Ken, who was serving on the Faslane-based Trident submarine HMS Vanguard at the time of the incident, said modestly: "I don't feel like a hero."

"I just did what anyone else would do in the circumstances,



● **BRAVERY AWARD:** Kenneth Walker, who saved four women from a burning block of flats, receives a commendation for bravery from Strathclyde Firemaster John Jameson. Picture: FOSNNI Photographic

and my fire fighting training came in useful."

But his bravery did not go unrecognised, LOM Walker was invited to Strathclyde Fire

Brigade Headquarters at Hamilton to be presented with a certificate of commendation by the Service's Firemaster John Jameson.

Mr Jameson said: "He pressed on in the face of adversity displaying selfless courage in the process and was responsible for saving the lives of four people."

Faslane launches fitness campaign

A HEALTH and fitness campaign has been launched at Clyde Naval Base to encourage staff to keep themselves fighting fit.

The Health Awareness Week is the first of its kind to take place at Faslane and it comes in the run-up to the introduction of the compulsory Royal Naval Fitness Test which is being phased in from the beginning of April.

The aim of the project is to raise awareness of health and fitness issues and to encourage them to lead a healthier lifestyle and all Naval personnel have been invited to attend a series of lectures covering diet, fitness and exercise.

The initiative was launched by the base's Physical Training Department which is providing personal fitness assessments and individual exercise programmes.

And one of the first to sign up for an assessment was Flag Officer Scotland, Northern England and Northern Ireland, Rear Admiral Mike Gregory.

Faslane's Leading Physical Trainer Steve Losh said: "This week is just the start of a full-blown fitness campaign at Faslane."

"We hope that it will encourage everybody at Faslane to follow a more healthy lifestyle."

● **ON HIS BIKE:** Rear Admiral Mike Gregory (left) helped to get Faslane's fitness week off to a good start by setting FOSNNI staff an example to follow. Picture: FOSNNI Photographic



Airman clocks up 4,000 hours

THE SENIOR pilot of the Navy's first Merlin Squadron clocked up his 4,000th flying hour on the first operational flight of the new helicopter.

Lt Cdr Nick Dunn, one of the Service's most experienced Merlin pilots, was congratulated on his return by fellow members of 700M Intensive Flying Trials Unit who presented a cake to mark the occasion.

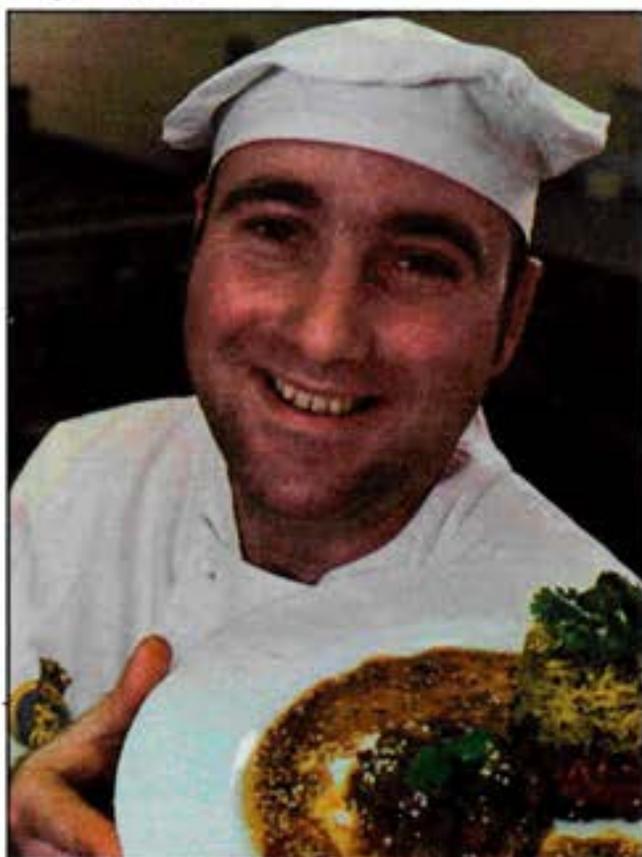
Nick (39) joined the RN in 1982 and began his flying training at RN Air Station Culdrose with 705 NAS. After that he flew Gazelles and five different marks of Sea King before moving on to the Merlin.

He said: "It was a nice surprise to find that my colleagues had organised a do to mark this milestone. It's great to share an occasion such as this with some of the people who have been part of it."

● **CONGRATULATIONS:** Lt Cdr Phil Shaw, CO of 700M Squadron, presents a cake to Senior Pilot Lt Cdr Nick Dunn (right) who has clocked up 4,000 flying hours. Picture: RNAS Culdrose



People in the News



Kevin's cooking is really hot!

NAVY CHEF Kevin Williams beat over 3,000 curry connoisseurs to reach the final of the International Indian Chef of the Year competition.

The 24-year-old from HMS Fearless is the youngest person ever to reach the final of the competition and compete for the prestigious title and a £1,000 prize.

Kevin was up against seven other experts including the head chef of one of the country's best Indian restaurants and an executive of Britain's biggest producers of Indian food products, and he had just three

hours to prepare and present his menu of two meat and two vegetable dishes to a 30-strong panel of judges at Edinburgh's Corstorphine College which included TV chef Nick Nairn.

The competition, set up by Edinburgh businessman Tommy Miah, was eventually won by Asian chef Sumit Malik, but Kevin's efforts were highly praised.

Kevin, from Wales, joined the RN in 1991 and has swept the board in a number of cooking competitions, the latest being the Navy's Young Chef of the Year title in 1998.

When his time in the Service is up later this year he will be joining his wife Stephanie and daughter Liana-Denise in Washington DC where he plans to open a restaurant.

● **HOT STUFF:** HMS Fearless's Chef Kevin Williams (left) with one of the dishes he served up at the final of the International Indian Chef of the Year competition. Picture: FOSNMI Photographic



Engineer 'chillingly efficient'

HMS IRON DUKE'S CPO Tommy Tucker has won a Herbert Lott Award for his tireless dedication.

One of his many achievements was to get all three water chilling plants on board working for the first time in two years, just before a deployment to the Bahamas.

Recruit's reward is King's Badge

ROYAL MARINE Robert Condy has been awarded the King's Badge for being the best recruit in his troop to graduate from the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone.

The badge was first presented by George V during a visit to recruits at RM Deal, Kent, in 1918 when he also decided that the senior recruit squad in Royal Marines training would be known as the King's Squad.

Since then the badge, which sports the King's Royal Cypher inside laurels, has only been awarded to recruits who measure up to exacting standards. Marine Condy (23) from Leominster, is entitled to wear the badge on his left arm in every rank.



● King's Badgeman: Royal Marine Robert Condy.

Portrait honours Admiral Pillar

A PORTRAIT of the most successful engineering officer of modern times has been unveiled in the Wardroom at HMS Sultan.

The painting, by Royal artist Theo Ramos, honours the achievements of Admiral Sir William Pillar who was the first non-seaman officer to be made Commandant of the Royal College of Defence Studies and is a former Lieutenant Governor of Jersey.



● Admiral Sir William and Lady Pillar underneath the new painting. The smaller portrait was a personal gift from the artist.

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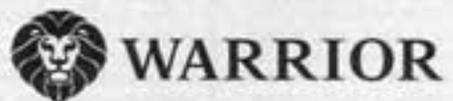
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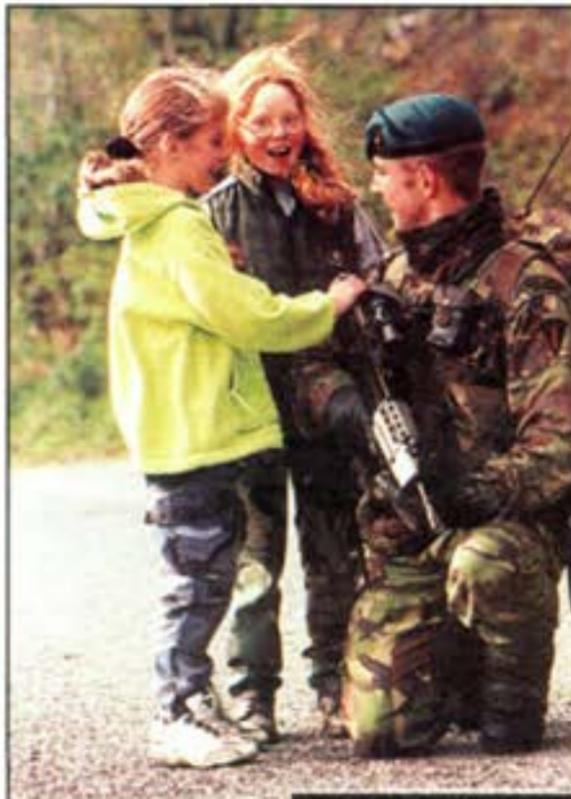
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42 Commando find Ulster still a land of stark contrasts . . .



● For six months, LA(PHOT) Steve Lewis has been with 42 Commando in South Armagh. These are some of his pictures – of an area now largely at peace, but uncertainly so. Above, a joint RM and RUC boat patrol on Carlingford Loch near Warren Point. Left, this Marine is the centre of attraction for these two little girls. Below left, on guard under a still-ominous terrorist 'road sign'.



GETTING A PEACE OF THE ACTION

THE FIRST Royal Marines commando unit to operate in Northern Ireland since last year's Good Friday agreement is nearing the end of its tour in what used to be known as 'Bandit Country' – South Armagh.

For 42 Commando, six months of living and working in bases throughout the area have been notable for the fewer violent incidents than those experienced during previous deployments. But the dissident terrorist threat is still present – and the RUC still have to be escorted on the beat, or even when conducting such routine duties as delivering court orders.

And in the midst of a nervously-held peace, the Marines have found that Northern Ireland is still a land of stark contrasts . . . terrorist propaganda along the roadways extolling the sniper . . . shoppers surrealistically going about their business among, and seemingly oblivious to, troops crouching at street corners . . . a wet and chilling boat patrol on Carlingford Loch . . . children making friends with a Marine in the bright sunshine of early spring.

It is a more peaceful spring than many another experienced in the Province, but while the uncertainties linger, caution cannot be thrown to the winds. There are still no 'runs ashore' from the confines of the bases that punctuate the peace in South Armagh.

● 42 Commando will be returning with this four-legged local recruit named Honk (parentage unknown). His oppo here is Lt Chris Paton.



£65m jetty revamp milestone reached

WORK ON the first replacement jetty in a £65 million project to renew Portsmouth Naval Base's western waterfront is due to be completed in June.

By then jetties at Kings Stairs, Pitch House and Boat House will have been replaced by a new, 350m jetty long enough for the bigger aircraft carriers, due to enter service in 2012.

Work to build a second jetty of similar length is due to be completed in June next year, replacing Sheer Jetty and North Railway Jetty.

As well as providing greater jetty frontage and area, the new construction will solve the problem of

the decay of the old jetties built around the turn of the century and meant to last only 20-30 years.

Later stages of the programme will replace South Railway Jetty in 2003-4, and repair North West Wall and Fountain Lake Jetty in 2007.

Meccano-style construction incorporates pre-cast concrete and hollow steel supporting piles driven 30m into the sea bed. Designed to last 60 years, the jetties will provide a full range of shore support services for ships, including water, fire hydrants, sewage and surface water disposal points, compressed air, electrical supply – and facilities for ships to connect their computers to the shore network.

To guard against damage to the nearby Maritime Heritage Area, vibration monitors have been installed around the site.

TRIALS TO IMPROVE THE SA80

TRIALS ARE under way with the SA80 rifle to improve its reliability and inter-operability in extremely dry and hot conditions.

A spokesman for the Ministry of Defence said the rifle, which has equipped Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel since it was introduced in 1986, had undergone earlier trials to improve its inter-operability with other NATO ammunition – trials which had thrown up a "possible problem" in hot and dry climates.

Designers Heckler & Koch were carrying out tests that had identified a range of minor improvements which were being studied to find the most cost-effective solution.

Health concerns block to women in subs

SERVICE in submarines will not be opened to women – at least for the time being.

The decision has been made after results of a medical study revealed that the build-up of contaminants in submarines could exceed the levels considered safe for the foetus of a pregnant woman.

The contaminants are not harmful to adults but could expose an unborn child to hazards – and could also, therefore, have an effect on the health of the mother, too. The damage could be done before a woman realised she was pregnant.

In a general signal, the Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff, Rear Admiral Jonathan Band, said that even if female

personnel were prepared to accept the risk and volunteer for submarine service, the Ministry of Defence could not compromise its duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

He said the exclusion also applied to using women for mine clearance diving (MCD) work.

"In the specialised area of MCD there are substantial medical risks to an unborn child – and hence the mother – caused by the very high pressures to which mine clearance divers are subjected."

In the case of women who are not pregnant there was also evidence of a risk during menstruation.

He said: "While the factors dictate that service in sub-

Ship fires reach a new low

FIRES IN Royal Navy vessels have dropped to their lowest level since data collection began in its present form in 1990.

Last year there were 84 fires, only 12 of which required more than first-aid. Highest number of fires since 1990 occurred in 1993 when there were 110 outbreaks, while the previous lowest figure was in 1994 when 87 fires were experienced.

Though the drop may be explained in part by the reduction in the number of ships and submarines during the decade, the figures are being seen as an encouraging trend.

Most of last year's fires – 59 – occurred in surface warships, 13 in submarines and 12 in Royal Fleet Auxiliaries. The biggest single cause was electrical or electronic problems (28), and the most common location was in machinery spaces (40).

There were no cases of fires being caused by negligence.

The incidence of floods has also dropped – to 16, compared with 25 in 1997, 22 the previous year, and 17 in 1995.

Details are published in RN Defence Council Instruction 29/99.

'Enormous scale' of Chatham Navy Days

CHATHAM Navy Days on May 29-31 is foreseen as an event "of enormous scale" after an international meeting of naval representatives was held to discuss the show.

The meeting, at the Historic Dockyard, included the naval representatives of the USA, France, Germany, Portugal, the Netherlands, Belgium, Italy and Poland, as well as Britain.

Admiral Sir Nicholas Hunt, Chairman of Chatham Historic Dockyard Trust, said: "It is most warming to see Chatham gain such enthusiastic support from so many of the world's navies. Chatham Navy Days is now firmly set to be an international event of enormous scale."

The Americans will be sending a warship, while the Germans said they would send three, and the Italians were hoping to send one.

Navy Days director Bill Fowler said that with the international interest so strong, the event was gearing up to be the biggest in the South East this year.

The Navy Days information hotlines are 01634 823807/823800.

Aircraft repair agency debut

THE DEFENCE Aviation Repair Agency (DARA) was being launched on April 7 by Under Secretary of State for Defence John Spellar. The agency will provide service and repair facilities for all Britain's military aircraft.

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LUSTY CATERS FOR ALL

HMS ILLUSTRIOUS played host to 14 Mayors and Mayoresses at a dinner to strengthen her affiliation with the Cinque Ports.

Her Commanding Officer, Capt Mark Stanhope, welcomed the guests on board and, after dinner, spoke of the importance of the links between the ship and the ports.

In reply, the Speaker of the Confederation of the Cinque Ports, Cllr Robert Beecroft, thanked Capt Stanhope and Wardroom Mess President Cdr David Dickens, for their hospitality and continued mutual support.

□ Chef Paddy McCullagh came up trumps when HMS Illustrious was asked for help in celebrating the silver anniversary of Brockenhurst Infant School in Gosport.

After many hours slaving away in the galley he produced a superb cake and delivered it to the delighted children in person.



● **Chef Paddy McCullagh**

Iron Duke leads flotilla of NATO submarines

HMS IRON Duke led the largest anti-submarine exercise in the Mediterranean this year and has become the first ever Type 23 frigate to take tactical command of nuclear-powered submarines.

The ship was taking part in NATO Exercise Dogfish with nuclear and diesel electric submarines from Spain, Italy, Turkey, Greece and the USA and Standing Naval Force Mediterranean ships FGS Rheinland Pfalz, ITS Zeffiro and HNLMS Bloys Van Treslong.

HMS Iron Duke was also anti-submarine commander and helicopter controller, directing three warships, two submarines, two further surface units and co-ordinating four days of continuous cover from Maritime Patrol Aircraft.

Extra staff from both Commander Submarines Mediterranean and the Fourth Frigate Squadron joined HMS Iron Duke for the intense exercise which tested the frigate's sensors, command and control systems and Ship's Company to the full.

As well as taking command of almost every aspect of the exercise, Iron Duke was also called upon to carry out two emergency transfers of personnel from submarines taking part in as many days.

The first was a helicopter transfer of a compassionate case to Sicily for an onward flight home but the second was a casualty evacuation which required a 100-mile dash to pick up a man whose injuries dictated that the transfer be made by sea boat.

Iron Duke rendezvoused with the submarine at night and her medical officer climbed the conning tower into the submarine to prepare the casualty for transfer.

As the helmsman held the ship steady alongside the vessel, the injured man was ferried across, stabilised in the aircraft hangar, and flown to the US naval base at Sigonella in the ship's Mk 8 Lynx.

Despite her busy operational schedule Iron Duke made time for a run ashore at Bari and several sporting challenges. At football, Iron Duke beat a Spanish team 6-1 and a grudge match between the POs and CPOs saw the Petty Office's win 4-0.

Meanwhile, The Wardroom lost all their matches 2-0 but defeated all comers at a rowing competition held while the ship was at sea.

□ During Exercise Dogfish, HMS Iron Duke also enjoyed a flying visit from Vice Admiral David Blackburn, Chief of Staff, COMNAVSOUTH.



● **IN COMMAND:** HMS Iron Duke and her Ship's Company during NATO Exercise Dogfish, the biggest anti-submarine exercise in the Mediterranean this year. Picture: HMS Iron Duke

Charity needs £2.3 million to upgrade veterans' home

THE ROYAL Naval Benevolent Trust needs £2.3 million to help safeguard the future of Britain's only residential home for elderly former sailors and Royal Marines.

Pembroke House in Gillingham, which is close to the former Royal Naval Dockyard at Chatham, needs a radical overhaul to be able to offer the level of care that local authorities and Service pensioners now expect.

When the Trust began running the home 46 years ago, multiple-occupancy rooms were the norm, but almost all those who are seeking care nowadays want private rooms.

In addition, changes in Government policy such as the introduction of Care in the Community, tightening local authority budgets and more

stringent criteria for homes which can register and apply for grants, have put extra pressure on Pembroke House's finances and led to a significant fall in the number of residents.

The RNBT's solution is to convert Pembroke House into a 52-bed facility with 44 single rooms and four doubles, all with en suite facilities, with nursing care and accommodation for females on offer for the first time in the home's history.

The refurbishment will also include day rooms and dining rooms on each floor, two conservatories with balconies looking out over the gardens, and a large second floor day room with panoramic views over the River Medway. The Trust hopes to attract sponsorship to cover the majority of the expenditure and expects to complete the work by Spring 2000.

Prime Minister boards Navy's newest ships

PRIME MINISTER Tony Blair visited two of the Navy's newest ships during a recent trip to Marconi Marine (YSL) Shipbuilders.

His first stop was the fourteenth Type 23 frigate, HMS Kent, which begins sea trials this month. HMS Kent is due to be accepted into Service in December and join the Fourth Frigate Squadron at Portsmouth.

On board HMS Kent, Mr Blair met members of the Ship's Company and was presented with three HMS Kent baseball caps for his children Ewan, Kathryn and Nikki which, the PM said, would make him extremely popular when he returned home from his official engagements.

And before he left the shipyard, there was time for a visit to HMS Portland, which is due to launch in May.

● **TO CAP IT ALL:** HMS Kent's CMEM Andy Gatherer and CPOMEA Stan Bowes present the PM with baseball caps for his children.



In brief

First visit

HMS PEMBROKE, the RN's newest minehunter, has paid her first visit to Pembrokeshire in Wales.

Her CO, Lt Cdr Brian Mair, said: "It is a great honour for us to visit Pembrokeshire for the first time. We look forward to forming strong links with the local community and to sharing their ship with them."

Home Club

THE RETIRING President of the Royal Sailors Home Club Management Committee was called upon to officially re-open the newly refurbished Portsmouth facility.

Commodore JJ Hart, the former Commodore of HMS Nelson, cut a ribbon to mark the completion of work in the foyer and Compass areas of the club.

Royal event

THE DUKE of Edinburgh will visit the Port of Portland to mark the 150th anniversary of the laying of the first breakwater stone by Prince Albert in 1849.

The visit, on July 14, takes place at the start of the six-week Portland Festival.

St Dunstons

ST DUNSTONS, the charity which cares for men and women blinded in the service of their country, has been afforded a special favour by Her Majesty the Queen.

They have been granted a charity day in the grounds of Frogmore House, Windsor Castle, on Wednesday May 5. For tickets, costing just £2.50, call 0171 723 5021.

HMS Beaver

FIFTY MEMBERS of HMS Beaver's Ship's Company paid a farewell visit to Bolton to present their affiliated town with the ship's battle honours. Beaver was decommissioned as part of the Strategic Defence Review.

Acting offer

THE RN Theatre Association is auditioning for a production at this year's Edinburgh Fringe Festival.

The group plans to stage Lucy Gannon's 'Keeping Tom Nice' at this year's event, and is holding auditions for prospective cast members at HMS Sultan on Saturday April 24. For details, contact Lt Cdr Tim Finch on 01705 724261.

Cadet plea

BOGNOR REGIS Sea Cadets need more instructors. For details, call Mr Batterson on 01243 863182.

Salvage loot

Crew members involved in the following salvage operations who have not been paid should contact Mrs B Seaman, EDS AJPAA Centurion, DSNPP/Act/2C, Grange Rd, Gosport PO13 9XA.

MV Elm Major (Feb 86), HMS Ogprey, Faryalyn, Edinburgh, Alacris, Apponist, Galatia and RMAS Kibrazac, TV Emily Jane (Sept 87), RMAS Faithful, MV Atlas (Mar 89), HMS Heronion, Eastern Falcon (Mar 89), RMAS Scythian and Capable, MV Draconius (Jan 89), HMS Heronion and REA Olan, MT Fair Play (Oct 89), HMS Soberton, Yacht Spirit (Jul 90), HMS Ark Royal, MV Mexico Horana (Mar 91), HMS Brilliant, Our Holly Anne (Mar 91), HMS Shortland, World Hitachi Zosen (Apr 92), HMS Campbellton and REA Gold Rover, Cruise ship Europa and MV Incheon Glory (Apr 92), HMS Praxiteles, Tanker Scantia (Apr 92), HMS Pioneer, F&O Pride of Winchester (Aug 92), RMAS Boulder and Powerful, MV Danica Green (May 93), RMAS Salmon and Collie, Jack crew HMS Garnet, Diving Team and Salvage Officers, Avon (Jul 93), RMAS Balfucker, Powerful, Boulder and Pilot Boat L303, River Breeze (Sep 95), RMAS Capable and Seahorse, HMS Transporter and Gibraltar Defence Fire Service.

HELLO GIRLS.

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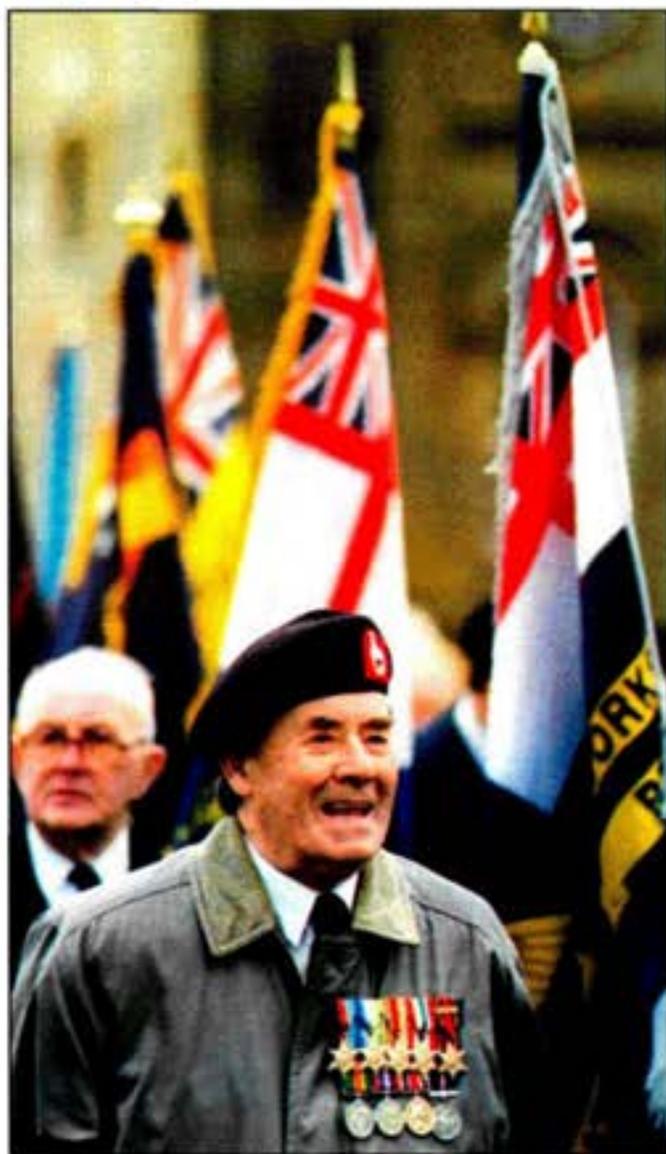


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NAVY DAYS

29th - 31st May 1999



**WORLD
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THE HISTORIC DOCKYARD
CHATHAM KENT



● Shipmate Bernard Hallas – in the York Evening Press picture that hit the spot.

Naval Quirks

THE CANNY DESIGN OF THE "24 CLASS" SLOOP WITH ITS STRAIGHT STEM AND STERN, DUMMY BRIDGE AND DAZZLE PAINTING -



-MADE IT DIFFICULT TO DETERMINE WHETHER IT WAS COMING OR GOING..



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RECRUITING POSTER 'STAR' ON TV

Bernard's face set to launch 1,000 members

YORK branch public relations officer Shipmate Bernard Hallas has been chosen as one of the faces of the RNA for the Association's current recruiting drive.

The picture of Bernard, whose bemedalled figure was snapped by his local paper during a remembrance parade at

York cenotaph, was chosen as one of those to appear on the Association's new recruiting poster.

It was seen as a vivid image of the RNA's commitment to remember the fallen – and to remind the Royal Marines that they are as much a part of the Association as anyone.

Spin-off publicity included a TV feature on Bernard, his remarkable wartime record, and his work for the RNA in York. The item was used by both Tyne Tees and Yorkshire Television.

Further high-profile coverage came on the same day when No. 11 Area PRO – Shipmate Brian

Jowett of Headingley branch – featured twice on Radio Leeds.

The station ran a feature on the city's links with HMS Ark Royal, and a call to Leeds RN Careers Office found Area chairman, CPO John Utley – who served on board the carrier – ready to grasp an opportunity to promote the RNA.

Yet more broadcast coverage was secured that day when Yorkshire Television confirmed that they would give the Association eight free commercial slots as part of their community service announcements. It was the second YTV coup in recent years by the Area's president, David Dennis, and secretary, Mike Cooper.

Death of 10 Area stalwart

SHIPMATE Tom Gallagher, who made his mark as a stalwart of the RNA, has died aged 74.

Tom, a life vice president of the Association, was National Council member for No. 10 Area from 1985-95.

During his time as chairman of the RNA Social and Ceremonials Committee he was instrumental in moving the biennial National Reunion out of London and into the provinces where it is now run in conjunction with Conference.

In 1974 he founded Irlam and Cadishead branch which disbanded last year. He served in World War II, mainly in HMS Norfolk.

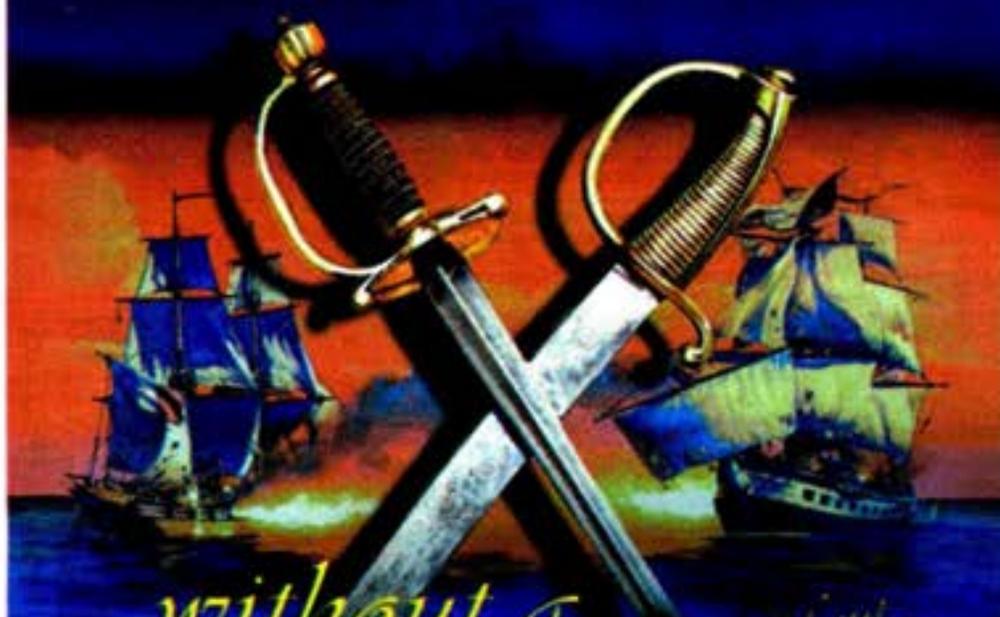
THIS PLAQUE to mark the 50th anniversary of the liberation of the Netherlands and its dependencies presented a problem for No. 3 Area.

It is a gift from the people of the Netherlands to each RNA Area – but No. 3 Area had no premises in which to display it.

Word reached the Senior Rates Mess of HMS Nelson which offered to house it.

Our picture shows the handing-over ceremony at Nelson, involving (l-r) Area committee member Alan Knapton, CPO Paula Price (mess manager), WO Andy Page (mess president) and deputy National Council member Rita Lock.

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Around the Branches

Arbroath

A plaque in memory of the late chairman of the National Council, Shipmate Joe Riley, was presented to Erskine Hospital near Glasgow, with a £1,000 cheque. The money came out of local Association funds, boosted by the sale of the Condor Chronicles, charting the history of HMS Condor.

Joe represented the Scottish Area on the National Council.

Wallasey

Forty-nine shipmates visited their twinned branch at Nijmegen in the Netherlands, and attended a social at which there were 3,000 members of the Dutch Association. They also visited a World War II

museum, Arnhem Bridge, took a cruise down the Rhine and attended a party for 104 children.

Blackpool & Fylde

Chairman of Blackpool and Fylde branch, Shipmate Ken Long and his wife, Valerie, were guests at the 13th annual reunion of the HMS Penelope Association at Blackpool. During the evening £425 was donated to charities.

Enfield

The Mayor and Mayoress of Enfield, Cllrs and Mrs Stanley Carter, were guests of honour at the branch's annual dinner dance attended by over 100 shipmates and wives. Cllr Carter, an Arctic

convoys veteran, presented the branch's Shipmate of the Year award to the vice chairman, Jack Carter. Shipmate Gladys Armstrong was elected Associate of the Year.

Perth & District

The branch has recommissioned after being defunct for 20 years. It was re-started with 30 members thanks to Rosyth & West Fife member, Shipmate Duncan Simpson. He found the old Perth standard in an attic and calculated correctly that if he advertised the fact he would get a response.

He now hopes to get another branch started in Inverness, and he can be contacted on 0131 332 2871.



Association

RNA reaches 500th branch with Drifffield

THE Royal Naval Association has reached a milestone with the inauguration of its 500th branch.

The honour of fulfilling the Association's target - set to be achieved by the Millennium - went to Drifffield branch, Yorkshire.

To mark the historic occasion, 250 shipmates from throughout the north-east region attended the event.

The new branch was launched by the Chairman of the National Council, Shipmate Fred Chambers, in the presence of the Mayor of Drifffield, and the president of No. 11 Area, Shipmate David Dennis.

Already the branch is 41-strong - but the size of the celebration came as a surprise to all of them. "A dream come true" was how the event was described by the newly

recruited branch chaplain, the Rev Stephen Bales.

Founder member and branch welfare and public relations officer, Shipmate John Boyes, said: "The town has always had strong ties with the Navy from its days when it adopted HMS Crocus during the war.

Crocus, a Flower-class corvette, served throughout World War II from 1940 and fought in the Battle of the Atlantic.

All five branch founders are also members of Bridlington branch, 12 miles distant. With John Boyes, they are Shipmates Stuart Thorn (president), Don Braithwaite (chairman), Fred Robson (secretary) and Albert Edlington (treasurer).

"I'm also the standard bearer for the time being," said Shipmate



● Drifffield branch founder member, Shipmate John Boyes, toasts the 500th inauguration in traditional style. He is flanked by the vice chairman of No. 11 Area, Shipmate Mick Farrington (left) and the chairman of York branch, Shipmate Stan Hudson.

Picture: Prospect Photo Agency

Boyes. "The trouble is, we haven't got a standard yet - that will cost about £400."

The branch is now exploring ways in which to raise the money. "In the meantime, donations will be very welcome," said Shipmate Boyes.

In Brief

THE BIENNIAL competition to select a standard bearer for No. 3 Area takes place on April 25 at the Drill Shed, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth. Details from Shipmate Fred Flood (01243 603186).

THE Commander of Devonport Naval Base and president of Plymouth branch, Commodore Jonathan Reeve, presented cheques on behalf of the branch to Alexandra House, the Joint Services Hosanna House Group, TS Golden Hind, TS Manadon and the Cavitron Fund.

PADDOCK Wood branch has awarded life membership to Shipmates T. Whitcher, formerly of HMS Manchester, and A. Fry, branch secretary and former Royal Marine.

SHIPMATE Dave Baker, public relations officer of Wigston & District branch, raised £765 for the annual Poppy Appeal, while fellow member, Shipmate Bill Wenlock, raised £639.

REDRUTH and Camborne branch held their annual dinner dance at which one of the most desirable raffle prizes, a cut-glass decanter, was won by Shipmate Mick Evans.

MEMBERS of South Bristol branch visited the Type 23 frigate HMS Somerset when she called on the city. Also, to celebrate the branch's 100th meeting, an American supper was held at the RNR establishment HMS Flying Fox.

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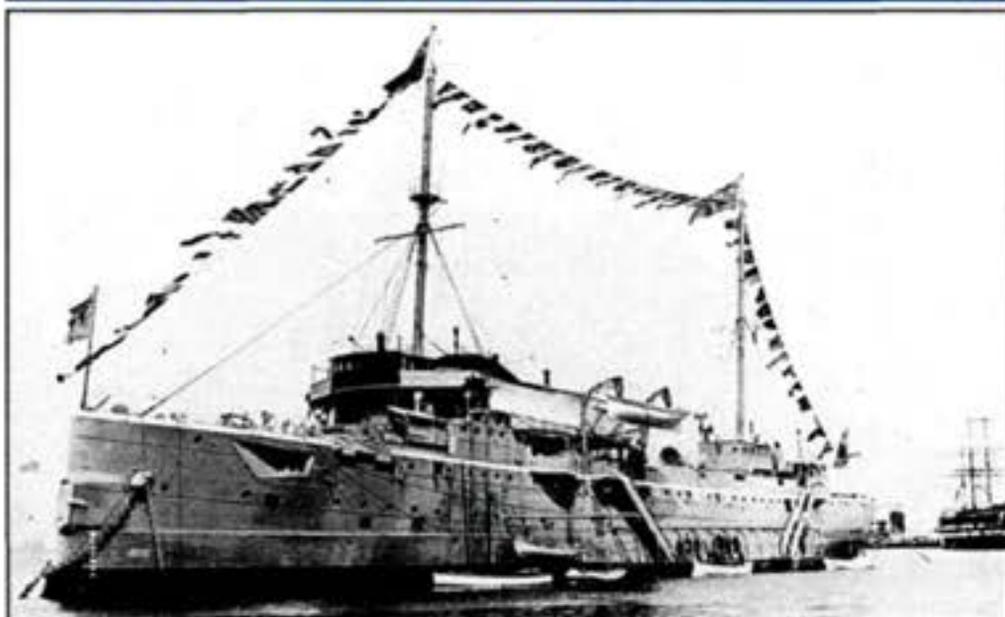
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PICTURE PUZZLE



OUR FEBRUARY puzzle picture prizewinner is Mr Alan Cobb of Bath, who correctly identified the ship as HMS London.

Built in 1927-29 as a County-class cruiser with three funnels, London underwent a radical reconstruction in 1939-41, emerging with two funnels.

It is in that configuration that she is best remembered by her wartime and post-war sailors. She was scrapped in 1950.

Mr Cobb receives our prize of £30.

Another £30 prize is offered for a correct answer to this month's mystery:

What links this vessel with one of Britain's most famous battleships, and a Leander-class cruiser of the 1960s and 1970s?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH. Coupons giving correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Closing date for entries is May 15. 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 June edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 50

Name

Address

My answer

... but it's curtains for Battersea's ailing club

BATTERSEA branch's club has closed its doors for the last time, and has ceased to trade as a club.

"The grim reaper, declining membership and good old-fashioned apathy have made the club no longer financially viable," said branch secretary, Shipmate J. D. Best.

"Battersea branch members would like to thank all those branches who have visited the club over the years and thereby helped to extend its life over and above what it would normally have been."

Communications for the branch should now be addressed to Shipmate Best at 139 Totterdown Street, Tooting, London SW17 8TE (tel 0181 767 0514).

Fire-hit Bristol in new home

THOUGH devastated by the fire which hit their club premises, Bristol branch have bounced back, and now have a new home.

They now meet at the RAFA Club in Eastfield, Bristol, on the third Monday of each month - and have a new president, Shipmate Ron Tremlett, the first from the lower deck to hold the office.

Ron has been a branch member for 45 years after serving with the Fleet Air Arm. He is a life vice president of the RNA and of No. 4 Area, having held several branch and Area offices, including that of Area president.

The branch's new vice president is Shipmate Ken Ruddick, a D-Day veteran.

Branch membership secretary, Shipmate Brian Davey, is being awarded the Gold Badge of the RNLi in recognition of long and devoted service to the Institution.

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Fortune favours the Brave

RAFFLE winners have been making the most of their good fortune in HMS Brave.

A day on board the frigate was top prize in a raffle held for the St Luke's Hospice Thanks a Million campaign, won by RAF sergeant Julie Barrow.

Commanding Officer Cdr Gary Pettitt invited Julie, her parents and her friend to lunch – but the tables were turned in another raffle, which raised £470 for the hospice.

Winner OM Andrew Spoores' prize was to assume command for a day en route to Gibraltar. He enjoyed use of the captain's cabin and was waited on by his personal steward – Cdr Pettitt.

Submariners cycle to Dubai

CYCLING 5,450 miles to Dubai was the challenge taken up by the ship's company of HMS Turbulent to raise money for the Warrington Hospital Children's Ward.

Organiser PO Scott Hill arranged for relays of submariners to complete the distance, on an exercise bike, just before arrival at the Gulf port, and the event is likely to have raised more than £1,000.

Cycling began on Turbulent's departure from Devonport in January, and an average of 160 miles was completed each day, with individuals covering 25 miles.

Two-way help

SSAFA FORCES Help has provided three people with new cars – and also picked up a healthy cheque itself.

The three VW Golfs were top prizes in the Service charity's draw, with charity worker Elizabeth Smart being the winner.

Natocars of Bridgwater and VW co-sponsored the draw.

Meanwhile Marks and Spencer has made its annual donation to the charity to be used for welfare cases, their latest £10,000 taking the total since 1943 to £82,660.

Lucrative path

THE LORD Bishop of Truro, the Rt Rev Bill Inl, and Commodore Tony Hogg, Commanding Officer of RNAS Culdrose, were among those who took part in a fund-raising cycling and rowing event at the air station's sports centre.

Participants covered 500 miles, the length of the South West Coastal Path, to aid the Bishop's Forum Activity Centre for disadvantaged children and those with behavioural difficulties.

Legion runner

JOHN Brennan hopes to collect £1,500 for the Royal British Legion's Maurice House refurbishment project by running in the London Marathon on April 18.

The HMS Collingwood petty officer welcomes donations, and can be contacted on 01329 332312.



Grimsby party collects cash on the bridge

A NAVAL party took their own bridge tolls to raise money for a disabled children's centre in Southampton.

The ship's company of HMS Grimsby collected for the Rose Road Children's Appeal on the Itchen toll bridge, raising £700 in the first hour and £1,200 in total for the forenoon.

The day-long city-wide collection, headed by Rose Road mascot Matty Mole in a 1928 Model 'A' Ford Phaeton open tourer, raised £7,000 towards a new centre for profoundly disabled children which will include a school, respite facilities and meeting rooms.

HMS Grimsby, the third of the Batch 2 Sandown-class minehunters, is fitting out at the Vosper Thornycroft yard at Woolston, Southampton.

● Bridge party – pictured with Matty Mole in the Model A Ford are (from left) Lt Andy Willis, WOM1(C) Emma Crawley, LRO Taff Glover, WOM1(C) Zoe Hodgson, Lt Cdr Tim Lewis, CPOMEA Al Macey, CPOWEA Sid Sidebotham, PO(D) Mac McKeever.

Trust helps disabled boy get around his home



● Dylan Scott.

A YOUNG boy has been given a little independence thanks to the RN Benevolent Trust.

Five-year-old Dylan Scott, a surviving twin who suffers from cerebral palsy, walks using a Roloator frame and leg splints, and found it difficult to get through the doorways of his Portsmouth home.

Dylan's occupational therapist suggested Daniel's parents, Simon and Jo, should seek help from the local council, which approved a disabled facilities grant for house alterations, to include a stairlift, widening of doorways, raising floor levels, safety work and handrails.

A contribution of £2,757 was required from the family – which is where the RNBT stepped in.

Simon, currently serving in HMS Illustrious, applied for financial assistance, and the Trust was able to grant the cash to allow the

Dylan goes independent

building work to begin.

The new stairlift allows him to pop upstairs to retrieve a favourite toy on his own, and he can now get out into the garden on his own, instead of waiting to be carried.

Dylan, who is in his first year at infant school, is delighted with his new independence.

The RNBT helps serving or ex-

serving ratings in the Royal Navy or other ranks in the Royal Marines, and their dependants.

Cases of need include financial grants that cover a wide range of individual requirements, including children's education and care, disability and mobility aids, training courses for second careers, medical and dental treatment.

Sister runs the Rock in memory of brother

THE SISTER of a senior rating who died while serving in HMS London has run the Rock of Gibraltar in his memory.

CPO Keith Summerhayes was 27 when he died on shore leave in November 1997.

Now his sister, Mrs Elaine Bayliss, and brother-in-law Brian have pounded the steep slopes of the Rock to raise funds for a new incubator in the Special Care Baby Unit at Burton-on-Trent hospital, where Mrs Bayliss is a midwife.

The couple chose Gibraltar as it was one of Keith's favourite runs ashore, but it did not prove quite so pleasant for them on the gruelling 2.7 mile course.

Mrs Bayliss clocked up a creditable time of 31m 50s, and her husband followed up

in 33m 10s.

As a result the pair raised nearly £1,000 towards their target, but will continue to collect cash back home in the UK.

Hooters on parade

MEMBERS of the Petty Officers' leadership course 2379 at HMS Excellent provided a novel form of salute on their passing out parade – they marched past the dais and squeaked their red noses.

The special parade was held on Red Nose Day itself, and apart from the funds from buying the noses, the 16 course members pooled the money they would have spent on socialising and donated it – £262 – for research into aplastic anaemia.

In Brief

NAVY runner Lt Cdr Trevor Grace hopes to complete his third London marathon – and help charities as well.

Trevor, of the Defence Communication Service Agency, seeks sponsors for his run in aid of the International Spinal Research Trust, St Patrick's School, Leafy Lane Playing Fields Project, and Mansion House Playgroup, all of Corsham.

Contact Trevor on 01225 814797.

THE CONGREGATION of the Church of St George with St Gabriel at HMS Collingwood gave £1,683 to various charities during 1998.

FORMER engine room artificer Tony Cook has been rewarded for 40 years voluntary service with the RNBT. Trust president Rear Admiral Tony Norman said: "Tony thoroughly deserves recognition for his long-standing and continuous efforts in helping others."

THE Baby and Toddler Group at HMS Dryad received £600 from the Plotting and Radar Instructor's Association – taking the association's donations to over £30,000 in 20 years.

WHILE their ship has been in refit the Chiefs' Mess of HMS Campbelltown has raised funds for Heartswell.

Eight men gathered £320 in the Endurance Challenge at CYCRM, Lymington – and the mess followed up with a beard-growing competition, which raised £80.

LT CDR John Greene will be cycling from Lands End to John o'Groats in May.

John, who works for DNSC in Portsmouth, is raising money for The Pilgrimage Trust – HCPT(RN) and The Foundation for Children with Leukaemia. Potential sponsors can ring him on 01705 727643.

SIX Royal Marines from Y Troop, HQ and Signals Squadron are aiming to cycle from John o'Groats to Lands End in April in aid of the NSPCC and CLIC.

Sponsors can contact Sgt Darren Cox on 9375 36513.

AN ATTEMPT to pull HMS Lancaster into dock at Devonport failed when Simon Ford's harness restricted his breathing after the ship moved eight metres.

Simon raised about £2,000, for charity but hopes to try again in the summer, possibly with HMS Cornwall.

Support for sport

GRANTS made by the RN and RM Sports Control Board last year totalled £213,742 – just over £2,400 less than 1997 when income from the Voluntary Sports Sub-scription scheme was greater by almost £12,000.

Last year's income from the scheme stands at £84,476, and since it was started in 1980 has continued to provide a valuable addition to the public funds available to support Naval sport.

Commanding officers are being asked by the Naval Sport

Directorate to continue their efforts to encourage 50p monthly contributions from individuals' pay. Of those eligible to take part in the scheme, 59 per cent do not do so.

Last year, the Control Board's grants to nine ships totalled £10,500. Command areas got almost £40,000, RN and RM sports associations were granted £142,800 and 19 individuals received a total of over £10,000.

Full details appear in RN Defence Council Instructions 30/99.

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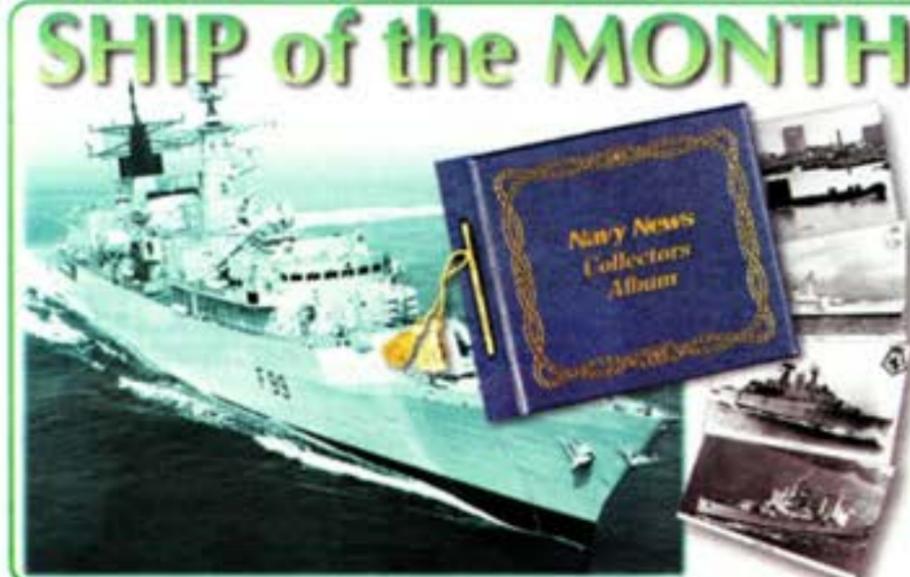
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Display marks Phot Branch's anniversary

NAVY Photographers are marking their Branch's 80th anniversary with a major exhibition at the Fleet Air Arm Museum.

The display entitled 'Through A Lens' includes over 100 of the most outstanding pictures taken in recent years and gives a fascinating insight into the Branch's history.

Also on display are British, American and German reconnaissance cameras, some of which have never been seen in public before.



The Photographic Branch was formed in December 1919 when 11 volunteers were trained at the gunnery school at HMS Excellent, where their duties included spotting the fall of shot as well as photography.

They graduated from the course as Photographers (2nd Class) and some went to sea in the battleship HMS Queen Elizabeth and in the Mediterranean gunnery trials vessel Snapdragon.

Others stayed behind at Excellent to prepare a workshop and darkroom at the Tipner site which is still used by the Surface Flotilla Photographic Unit today.

Early photographers were also trained in the use of aircraft cameras, equipment for triangulating and plotting hits during naval gunfire, and in the use of 35mm cine cameras.

In 1920 the rate of Photographer (1st Class) was introduced and one of the first three to qualify in March 1921 took over from the civilian instructor at Tipner and developed the syllabus which forms the basis of Naval photographic training to this day.



● **BLUE SKIES:** A Harrier pilot prepares for a mission over Iraq. Picture: PO/PHOT Colin Burden.

During WWII the photography of Naval air operations assumed huge importance and, with the RAF, the science of photographic interpretation of target images was born.

By 1944 the Navy had its own reconnaissance squadron equipped with Helicat fighters (888 NAS) and the unit produced a photographic mosaic of the entire Malay Peninsula for its planned reconquest in 1945.

The squadron was embarked in HMS Indomitable and was responsible for all post strike target analysis carried out by the

British Pacific Fleet in the last year of the War.

After WWII the school moved to HMS Peregrine, the RN air station at Ford which gave its name to the Branch's annual photographic competition, and then moved again to RNAS Lossiemouth.

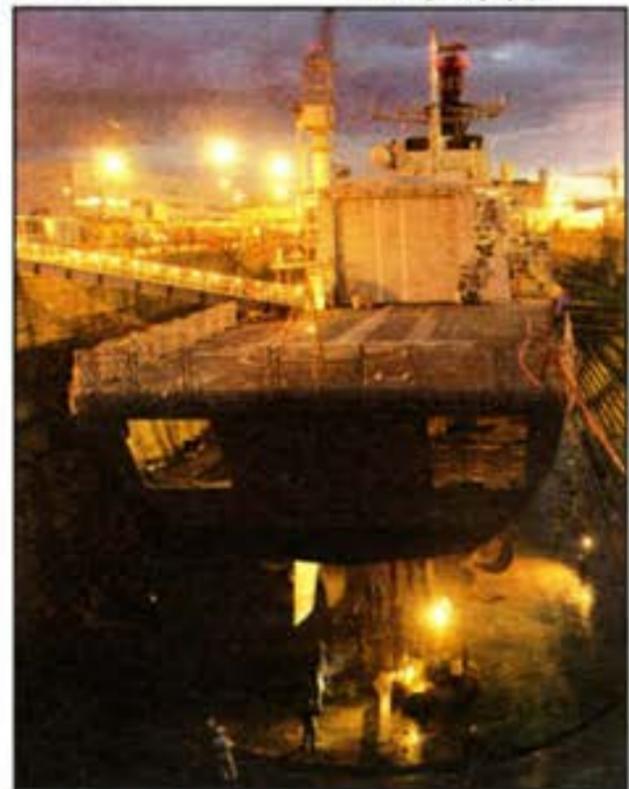
Lossiemouth closed in 1972 when photographic training became a tri-Service venture at RAF Cosford where it remains today, and the Navy's Photographic Branch has now grown to include over 80 professionals in the Fleet Air Arm.

The exhibition, which is included in the museum's usual entrance fee, was opened by the CO of RNAS Yeovilton, Commodore Richard Clapp.

He said: "This is a splendid example of the Photographic Branch's work, taken in operations all over the world including the Gulf, the Congo, Sierra Leone and Montserrat..."

"We are blessed with an extremely high standard within the Branch and I'm sure that the past masters who are here today will find the work to their liking."

□ **Newsview: Page 20**



Grand reunion in November

A GRAND reunion for past and present members of the Photographic Branch is being planned by ex-Phot Ian Wrightson.

It will coincide with the AGM of the Ex-Naval Photographers Association on the weekend of November 20 and events will include a buffet, dance, and visits to photographic sections on ship and shore.

Mr Wrightson said: "We want to get as many Photos to come as possible, and also we'd like to see anyone who has worked with the branch over the years."

For more details, write to Mr Ian Wrightson, c/o Kingfisher Lodge, Brambridge, Eastleigh, Hants, or ring 01329 845413.

● **ON DISPLAY:** Left: Round-the-clock refit by LA(PHOT) Dave Whittaker. Right: Royal Marines stand easy by LA (PHOT) Dave Coombs. Below: HMS Torbay by LA(PHOT) Adrian Hughes.



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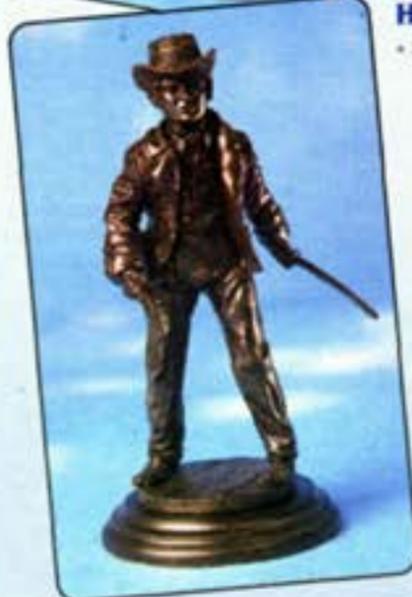
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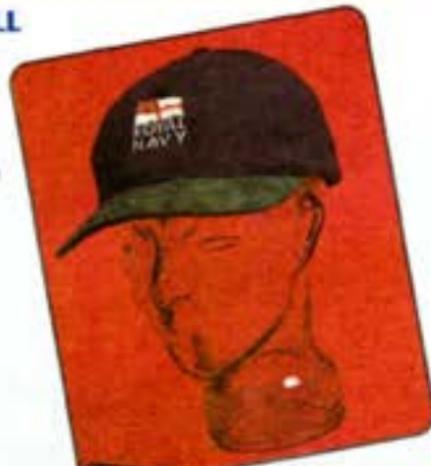
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NAVAL JETS TO LEAVE YEOVILTON FOR COTTESMORE AND WITTERING

HARRIERS TO JOIN FORCES AT RAF BASE

AN 'HISTORIC step' in the formation of a joint RN and RAF air fleet has been taken with the decision to combine the two Services' Harrier forces at RAF stations in Leicestershire and Cambridgeshire.

The new group, initially titled Joint Force 2000, will form in 2003 at RAF Cottesmore, with a joint conversion unit 15 miles away at RAF Wittering.

By April 1 next year, the HQ of a joint maritime group, encompassing the Harrier force, will be set up under the command of the man steering the project's implementation team - Rear Admiral Iain Henderson, currently Flag Officer Naval Aviation.

He will have two RAF air commodores subordinate to him - one commanding the Harriers of JF2000 and the other heading search and rescue helicopters and the RAF's Nimrod maritime patrol aircraft.

The radical move, foreshadowed by last year's Strategic Defence Review, sets the two Services on course to establish a flexible, powerful and highly capable air group of multi-role combat jets.

They will be equally effective either embarked in aircraft carriers or operating from bases at home or overseas, and will meet the needs of the Joint Rapid Reaction Force.

With the transfer from RN air station Yeovilton of 28 Sea Harriers and over 500 Service personnel, the air station's 60-year history as a centre for the Fleet Air Arm's fixed-wing combat aircraft

will come to an end. It is regarded as impractical to concentrate up to three times as many Harriers there, whereas together Cottesmore and Wittering do have that capacity - and their proximity to each other will enable

Joint Force 2000 'will bring to an end the history of inter-Service rivalry in Naval aviation'

them to be run as a single unit. But in announcing the plan, Defence Secretary George Robertson gave assurances about the future of Yeovilton, the FAA's current nerve centre.

It will, he said, continue its key role as a helicopter base. With the transfer of Navy helicopters due to the closure of RN air station Portland, a net increase of over 340 personnel was envisaged at Yeovilton.

It would be difficult, however, to predict whether there would be any need for redundancies among the 300 civilian posts at the Somerset base. Trades unions would be consulted, and every effort would be made to find alternative employ-

ment locally for those who might be made redundant.

Describing the collocation decision as an historic step towards a truly joint force, he said the initiative for the plan came from the previous First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Jock Slater, and the Chief of the Air Staff.

"It will bring to an end the history of inter-Service rivalry in Naval aviation," said Mr Robertson. "By creating Joint Force 2000 in the way that we are, we will ensure that the Future Carrier Based Aircraft (FCBA) programme benefits from the early co-operation of the two Services producing a co-ordinated approach to the Future Carrier programme."

When the FCBA has replaced the last of the Harriers - expected to happen by 2018 - the Navy and RAF joint force will be operating a common aircraft, multi-role and supersonic, able to fly from bases ashore or operate from the new carriers which are due to enter service in 2012.

At that stage four front-line squadrons of about 12 aircraft each would operate from a single British base, with a joint conversion unit of about 18 aircraft. Two squadrons, one mostly FAA and one mostly RAF, would be teamed with each of the new carriers.

Admiral Henderson said the



Sea Harrier and RAF Harrier GR7s operating together during last year's Gulf crisis. It set the scene for Joint Force 2000.

new aircraft would have the punch and survivability to engage in the first wave of air operations in most

There is need for 'a flexible, deployable, joint force with its eyes set firmly on the future'

weather conditions, day or night, from afloat or ashore.

No decision has yet been made as to which aircraft, or development programme, Britain will choose. Top option remains the Joint Strike Fighter - either a Lockheed or Boeing design with a Harrier-like short take-off and vertical landing capability. Other possibilities include a navalised

Eurofighter, or off-the-peg purchase of the French Dassault Rafale or the Boeing F/A-18E from America.

"The FCBA will significantly upgrade Britain's maritime force projection capability and make a tremendous contribution to the rapid reaction force," said Admiral Henderson.

The aircraft could take part in operations from a carrier, from a forward air base ashore, or could be flown from a carrier to a forward air base to operate from there. Meanwhile, the combined strengths of the Sea Harrier FA2, mainly an air defence aircraft, and the Harrier GR7 ground attack aircraft, provided formidable air power.

"In the short term, the Strategic Defence Review recognised the need for closer harmonisation between the existing Harrier forces to provide a flexible, deployable joint force with its eyes set firmly on the future."

Separate identities - page 20

Navy Days planned as Plymouth's biggest in decades

OVER 20 major warships and three tattoo performances are expected to make this year's Plymouth Navy Days event the biggest to be held there in decades.

Planners anticipate that the three-day spectacle over the August bank holiday weekend will eclipse even the 1997 show when attendance rocketed to 55,000 - an increase of over 60 per cent on the previous Devonport event.

The 1997 Navy Days was seen as a milestone which brought the show out of the doldrums, largely through improved marketing, and vessels being subject to more focused programming for attendance at the event.

As well as British and foreign surface warships, the show - which normally alternates every other year with Portsmouth - will include submarines and demonstrations of amphibious warfare.

Foreign warships will also be there, and air displays are planned by the Fleet Air Arm and the RAF's Red Arrows aerobatic team on Saturday, August 28.

Each day there will be a parachute display by the the Army's Red Devils.

The tattoos will be held at 8-10pm on August 27-29. Navy Days themselves will run from August 28-30, 9.30am to 6.00pm.

Advanced tickets can be obtained for £7.50 (adults), £3.75 (pensioners, students, disabled and children under 16) and - for a family of two adults and children under 16 - £15. They will be available from June 1 from Plymouth Tourist Information Centre (tel 01752 266031, fax 01752 266033).

Tickets bought on entry will be, respectively, £10, £5 and £20.

Tattoo tickets - at £5 for adults and £2.50 for children, students, pensioners and the disabled - will be sold on a first-come, first-served basis, and can be reserved from June 1 at the Tourist Information Centre.

Parking is free for cars, coaches and motorcycles.

Ocean is checked out for Chinooks - with a little help from her friends



HMS Ocean's first encounter with a Chinook helicopter and (above) three RNR officers who took charge of the ship and her flying operations during a recent flying exercise.

They are (l-r) Lt Simon Turner, officer of the watch; Lt Dave Constant, flight deck officer; and Lt Cdr Rob Sleeman in Flyco.

They have a collective total of over 60 years service in the Navy. Lt Cdr Sleeman, who flew with 846 and 815 Squadrons, now flies Jumbo jets for Virgin Airlines.

Lt Turner, who has been selected for promotion to lieutenant commander, has been recalled to full-time service and will remain with Ocean until the end of May.

HELICOPTER assault ship HMS Ocean has completed first-of-class flying trials with a Chinook helicopter.

Already cleared to operate Sea King, Lynx and Gazelle aircraft, she added the Chinook to the list after the transport heli-

copter from Boscombe Down made 227 deck landings over four days.

During that time, the lean-manned ship was augmented by civilian trials officers, Navy and RAF test pilots - and even a US Air Cavalry major.

Ocean has now almost reached the end of her trials programme, and is expected to be fully operational by July.

She was having her staff sea check on April 6 and was due to conduct basic operational sea training by the end of the month. Immediately after, she will deploy with 40 Commando and aircraft from 845 and 847 Naval Air Squadrons.



Malta task for Herald

SURVEY ship HMS Herald is undertaking work with Maltese government agencies to update navigational data around the capital, Valletta.

During her four-month deployment she will also make oceanographic and bathymetric studies in the eastern Mediterranean, collecting data from some areas that have not been surveyed for about 140 years.

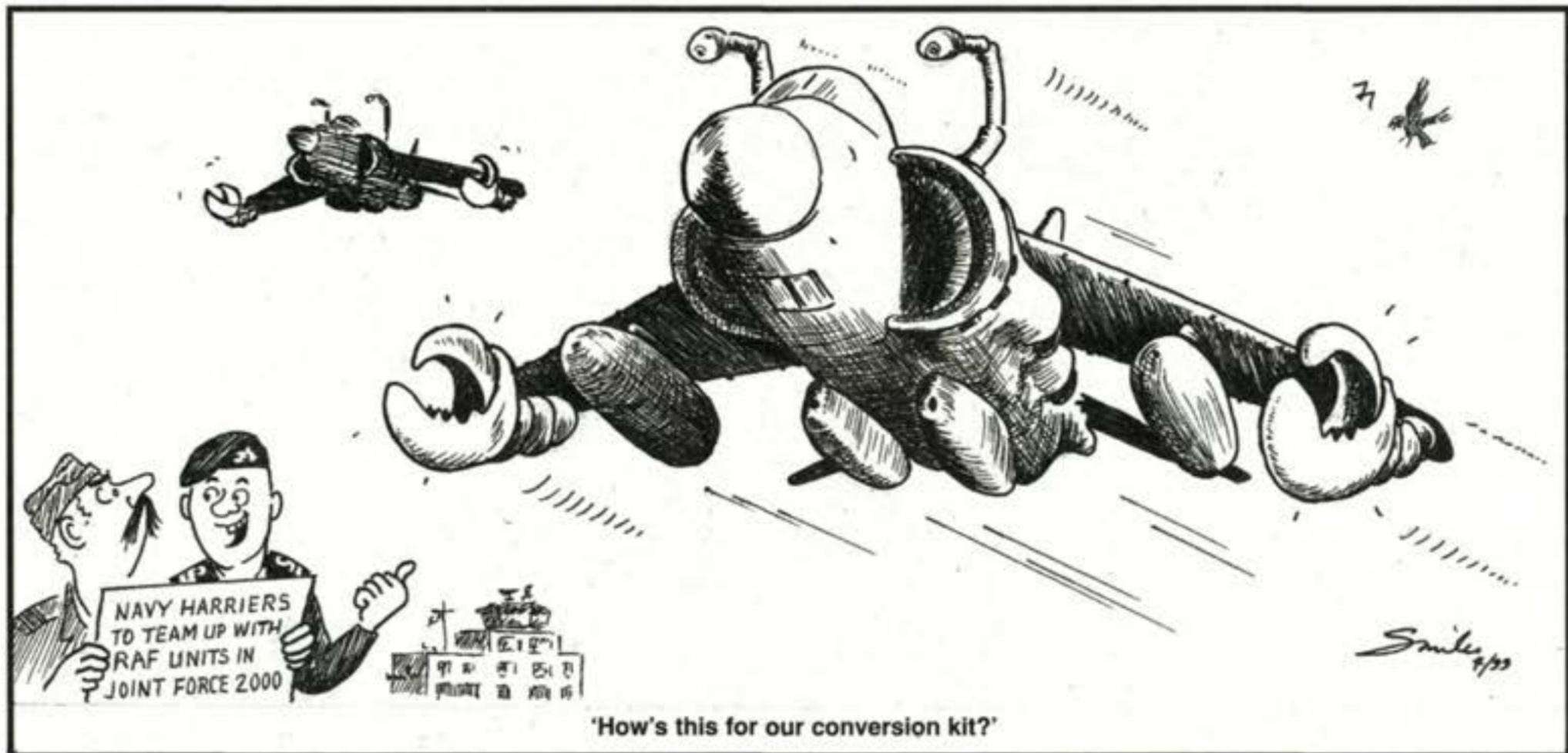
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'How's this for our conversion kit?'

NEWSVIEW

Jaundiced eye of the Fleet

IN THE bibliography to his *Camera at Sea - The History of the Royal Naval Photographic Branch 1919-1998* (Airfile £24.95) ex-CPO(PHOT) Neil Mercer cites "Navy News' Ad Nauseum" (sic). Elsewhere he complains: "Navy News' has received many awards for its use of Branch-produced pictures; it would therefore be appropriate for it to play a more prominent role in the matter of acknowledgement before its pictures are permanently supplied by the gifted amateurs that grace their pages with some monotony."

Well, there speaks a somewhat confused and bitter man. If our amateur snappers are truly gifted, how is that their work can grace our pages with monotony?

There are unfortunately many more contradictions in this book than there are in the sentence quoted, but hopefully his grievance is not shared by too many of his RNPB colleagues, some of whom, apparently, have also wounded him ("The project was assembled without the authority, knowledge or help of particular elements. They know who they are.")

Navy News' awards list does indeed regularly feature their work, a record we have always been happy to acknowledge since the consistently high standard of RN photography goes a long way towards keeping the Navy in the public eye.

They receive their annual showcase in the Peregrine Trophy competition - to which Navy News duly accords a double-page feature and to which we supply our own trophy and cash prize for our own chosen Best Picture.

Mercer accuses us of existing "in a niche market due to a captive audience and no outside competition". The truth is that we are sustained by a readership estimated at half a million worldwide, fully 40 per cent of which has no Naval connection whatsoever, and compete against a wide range of publications, both external and - increasingly - internal.

He has a good point to make about the mass of historic material that has been destroyed over the years. We have often deplored the scant attention paid to the nation's photographic archive in general. Far too much of it is lying in store, poorly documented and, especially in the case of film, mouldering away. This is truly scandalous: it is a part of our heritage which is as irreplaceable as anything in our art collections.

Mercer has produced a closely researched and, it goes without saying, well-illustrated history (though the bulk of the pictures span the period of his own career in a colour portfolio, 1985-98. Navy News' own archive, dating back to 1954 and beyond, could have widened his scope considerably, had he asked to access it, and afforded more space to past practitioners in glorious black-and-white who deserve much more than they are given here).

The RNPB celebrates its 80th anniversary this year. It was in October 1919 that Lt Humphrey Joel RNR was appointed the first Fleet Photographic Officer in the Royal Navy. The RN School of Photography - one of the oldest in the world - opened the following year.

It was introduced specifically to record fall of shot in assessing the accuracy of gunnery and intelligence and technical reports still take up the bulk of the Branch's time. It is only in recent years that its role in public relations has moved up in the scale of prioritised tasks - and we feel it should rate higher still. As the late Lord Fieldhouse famously remarked, PR is the Navy's first line of defence in peacetime.

The Navy's own photographers are best placed to provide that first line as *Camera at Sea* ably demonstrates. Its author would have done their cause even better service if he had viewed it with a less jaundiced eye.

Navy in lead on peak assault

A NAVY-LED attempt on the summit of one of the most difficult peaks in the Himalayas is planned for the Millennium year.

In spring next year the 14-man Joint Services team will assault the 28,200ft high Kangchenjunga Mountain, only about 800ft lower than Everest and which was thought by mountaineer Sir John Hunt to have been a more difficult climb.

In the lead will be Lt Cdr Steve Jackson, currently serving at the HQ of C-in-C Fleet at Northwood. His team will include four other Naval members - Surgeon Cdr Andy Hughes from the Permanent Joint HQ at Northwood, Lt James Raitt RM and Sgt Andy Cole RM of the Commando Training Centre, Lympstone, and Sgt Dave Pearce RM of the Commando Logistic Regiment.

They are getting advice from the first two climbers to scale the peak in 1955 - George Band, president of the British Mountaineering Council, and Tony Streatheir.

Lt Cdr Jackson said: "We're taking the route they did, and they've been giving us a lot of help. Kangchenjunga is an extremely difficult peak with huge amounts of snow. There have only been about 100 ascents over the last 45 years, and the success rate is 50-50 - but we hope to shorten those odds through hard training."

Training is taking place this year and next in Scotland, North Wales and Switzerland.

A 13-strong reserve team has been formed, and a junior team of 12 will be introduced to Himalayan climbing by ascending the 22,862ft Ramtang peak as part of the expedition. They will be led by Army engineer Andy Edington whose deputy will be Lt Cdr Neil Hicking on the staff of C-in-C Fleet.

The team's mentor will be the current Commander British Forces Falkland Islands, Brigadier David Nicholls RM. Other Naval members will be Lt John Craig of HMS Bridport, Lt David Goldsmith of Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth and Cpl Lee Johnson of 42 Commando.

□ This summer a ski mountaineering expedition is being planned to the Garhwal-Himalaya range in India. Details of both expeditions appear in Joint Service DCIs 4/99 and 7/99.

Joint forces to retain separate strengths

NAVAL planners are emphasising that the formation of Joint Force 2000 will not mean the end of the Fleet Air Arm.

"Joint will not mean the loss of single-Service identity, since the very strength of each Service must be maintained," said Rear Admiral Iain Henderson at the announcement of the JF2000 plan. "Their unique ethos, expertise and aspirations are some of those key strengths."

Admiral Henderson, who spent two years on attachment to the RAF as a fighter pilot in the 1970s, gave an assurance that the Navy and RAF would remain in full command of their own Services - and in particular would still be responsible for their own personnel in JF2000, including career management.

"One has to remember that the Fleet Air Arm is expert at operating from sea, and the RAF from shore," he said. "The sea is not going to get any calmer by 2018, and therefore it will still require those experts to be specifically tied to embarked ops, and I envisage the Navy will still be in dark uniforms flying fixed-wing aeroplanes."

The Sea Harrier community was "tickled pink" by the initiative and relished the prospect of getting involved in JF2000 and moving to Cottesmore.

Lt Nick "Speedy" Weightman, Air Warfare Instructor for 800 Sqn currently with HMS Invincible in the Gulf, said: "Yocvilton is a nice part of the world, and has always been the home to the Fleet Air Arm and Naval fixed-wing aviation, so in that respect it's sad that it's moving."

"But we are pretty upbeat. We have got to go forward, and the cross-polling of Royal Navy and RAF pilots is vital if we are going to go on in JF2000."

Defence Secretary George Robertson said that the indications were that some of the Service people involved - especially pilots - who may have been considering leaving, were attracted by the new concept of working together. "It's given them a sense of stability," he said, "an idea for the future, and that in itself will mean retention by adding a bit of excitement to their prospects."

Admiral Henderson said what the term 'joint' was going to bring was an enhancement of operational capability, plus a single home base and joint training - not just for aircrew, but for engineers.

"We will develop common procedures and set common standards. On the engineering side we will aim to merge the trade structures as far as possible and look to providing a common support system."

Terms and conditions would also be harmonised. "The RAF people involved will come into it with their eyes open and understand that they won't be home based all the time."

"They will expect to be deployed in carriers, and I certainly wish to ensure that the Navy helps them to become embroiled in sea-going."

Female and ethnic recruits on the increase

RECRUITMENT for the Navy rose by six per cent last year - but numbers leaving increased at the same rate. The serving strength as of January 1 was 43,747 - compared with 63,214 on April 1, 1990.

In the past year, the number of recruits from the ethnic minorities has nearly doubled, from 0.8 to 1.6 per cent.

Entry numbers of female recruits have also increased. There are 3,321 women in the Service compared to 3,232 a year ago and the proportion has risen from 6 to 7 per cent since 1990.

Speaking on International Women's Day last month, Armed Forces Minister Doug Henderson welcomed the latest figures.

"This is a positive affirmation of our policies. Women are reaching the most senior ranks - including Navy Captains and Commodores. The Services only promote the brightest and best regardless of gender and very few organisations can boast the recruitment of women to one in every five management posts."

UNITED FRONT LINERS

- THE SQUADRONS and their strengths involved in JF2000 are:
- 800 NAS with 7 operational Sea Harrier FA2s.
 - 801 NAS with 7 operational FA2s.
 - Reserve aircraft - 4 FA2s.
 - 899 NAS with 7 FA2s, 4 TB trainers and 3 aircraft in reserve.
 - 1 Sqn RAF with 16 operational Harrier GR7s, 1 T10 trainer.
 - 2 Sqn RAF with 16 operational GR7s, 1 T10.
 - 16 Sqn RAF with 16 operational GR7s, 1 T10.
 - 20(R) Sqn RAF with 10 GR7s, 7 T10s.

The implementation team which he headed had a huge amount of work to do on integration. "If it doesn't work properly the concept cannot work. And I am very confident that everything is being tackled down to the last shred."

From Mike Gray with the Royal Navy Task Group in the Gulf

THERE were no cruise missiles raining down on Baghdad, and the Sea Harriers were nominally riding shotgun for reconnaissance flights over Southern Iraq.

The Iraqi Navy, shattered during the Gulf War, amounts to a couple of gunboats – though potentially still dangerous.

And the press were nowhere to be seen; Operations Bolton and Southern Watch did not merit more than the occasional cursory mention, or a brief visit by UK media.

But HM ships Invincible, Cumberland and Newcastle, as well as RFA's Fort Austin and Brambleleaf, were still on the alert for anything which might threaten themselves or the stability of the region.

The ships stayed out of Iraqi missile range when in the northern Gulf, with Newcastle's air defence umbrella adding an extra envelope of protection.

But the Gulf is a busy waterway, littered with oil platforms, ships and dhows, and any attack on an Allied warship – even if it caused only minor damage from a hand-held weapon – would be a major public relations coup for Saddam Hussein.

The Navy's pilots were at greatest risk, with the Iraqi leader offering a bounty for any downed Allied aircraft.

"This is measurably different to last year, because Saddam has said he is going to violate the No Fly Zone, and he has said he wants a coalition pilot," said Lt Nick Weightman, Air Warfare Instructor with 800 Squadron.

"The tempo of operations now is closer to the 1992 Gulf War than it has ever been."

Invincible is known to the other Task Group ships as the Deathstar, a brooding presence which sucks everything in, but it is a joke which the carrier herself shares – programmes on her closed circuit TV carry the title "Deathstar Productions".

There is a general sense that morale is better than at this stage last year.

"There are three key ingredients that affect us; there are three conditions to satisfy for good morale," said Capt James Burnell-Nugent, Commanding Officer of HMS Invincible.

"First, a clear mission for the ship; second, for people to be busy, and third, to have a date when we will get home."

"If you have got those three things you are 80 per cent home and dry on morale. We didn't really have any of them last year; this year we have."

And the teamwork theme figures prominently in the Captain's mind.

"With a Harrier flying over Iraq, one

● Rainbow warrior – HMS Invincible pre-wetting during Operation Bolton in the Gulf.



Teamwork is vital in Gulf operations

can visualise the pilot in the aircraft. "But he has to have lunch, have a shower, have clean clothes. One of my jobs is to emphasise everyone's involvement."

"There's a huge pyramid of involvement for getting a jet into the air."

"The whole ship is an extremely complicated and interdependent lattice of involvement, a very complex matrix. Any effect on that matrix can have very far-reaching effects."

"The carriers have evolved in a very Darwinian way, a lot like a micro-organism. If you start splashing bleach about and killing the micro-organism then things can change very quickly. No genetic modification here, please!"

The team effort spreads to the shore, where people like Cdr Steve Bennett, RN Liaison Officer at the British Embassy in Dubai, who is responsible for the smooth running of port visits by Task Group ships.



HMS Newcastle's Commanding Officer Cdr Steve Kenny agreed that the collective principle was paramount. "It is a team effort. Cumberland's galley couldn't produce bread one morning, so Invincible sent some over. "It is definitely not HMS Isolation – it's 1,800 or more people all in this together."

The teamwork stretches as far back as the UK, for the families of the men and women in the Gulf are also affected.

Home life continues, and there are those who are watching the calendar – and others who have already fallen foul of it.

Chef Phil Pettitt of HMS Newcastle is getting married in Telford three days after the ship is due back, and arrangements have had to be left to fiancée Julie. He hopes there are no delays for Invincible – his best man is on board.

For Newcastle's Lt Cdr Bob White there will be birthdays to catch up on – again.

"It's a clean sweep – exactly the same as last year when the ship was in the West Indies," he said.

"Apart from my wife Karen, my twin daughters Amanda and Deborah were five on February 28, and number one daughter will be nine on March 28."

Many ways to keep in contact

SAILORS of the Task Group are making the most of a range of methods of contacting home.

HMS Invincible has a Cyber Shack, where anyone can drop in to write e-mails, which are sent home daily by satellite.

The Shack proved so popular a second PC has been added, and the carrier sends on e-mails brought on disk from HMS Newcastle. HMS Cumberland also has e-mail facilities.

In addition, sailors are entitled to a free ten-minute satellite call each week, free airmail letters ("blueys"), and Capt Burnell-Nugent and the ship's company of Invincible have been trialling an Iridium mobile phone, backed by Motorola, which uses a low earth orbit satellite network.

Regular mail is still essential; one sailor, who e-mailed home almost daily, was upbraided by his wife for "never putting pen to paper."



● Long-distance call – WSTD Sharon Dean uses the Iridium satellite phone to call home from HMS Invincible.



● Back safely – Flight deck officer MAA Bob Shore brings HMS Cumberland's Lynx in after an airborne surface sweep.



S. Hussain spotted in Invincible

S. HUSSAIN has an important role in the Gulf – helping the allies put pressure on Iraq.

The name is not quite the same, but Lt Cdr Shayne Hussain is firmly against dictator Saddam Hussein.

Hussain RN, of 814 Naval Air Squadron, works in the meteorological office of HMS Invincible, where he briefs aircrew on weather conditions.

"I was out here last year when it kicked off," said Lt Cdr Hussain, whose father came from Kashmir.

"But I was in the States in 1991 when it all started. I had great fun trying to get through Customs."

● Weather man – Lt Cdr Hussain amends charts on board HMS Invincible.

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Hive of activity exists under flight deck of the flagship

THE CONCEPT of teamwork is perhaps best demonstrated by the community on board the flagship of the Task Group.

A common analogy is that of a small town, and the comparison bears scrutiny. The clank of chains on the deck, usually followed by the howl of the Pegasus engines which power the Sea Harriers as they are tested, often herald a new day.

Down in the depths of the carrier the "night-workers" are nearly done, including LCH Alan Smelt, the ship's baker.

"I do approximately 720 baguettes, 80 to 120 loaves, and 300 breakfast rolls every day, as well as any other extra requirements like burger baps or finger rolls," he said.

"I think we in the galleys are the biggest morale-boosters on board; you speak to the lads and they are wondering what is for tea tonight, rather than anything else."

Just next door in one of the ship's four galleys the subject of tea, dinner, lunch or breakfast, plus the meal in the small hours of the night for those on defence watches, is occupying the thoughts of the

three dozen or so chefs on board, who must deliver more than 3,000 meals a day.

"We have to put on four shows a day, and I think on the whole people are quite happy," said POC Duncan Crawley.

LCH Stephen Holden agreed, adding "It does get a bit tiresome, but you feel you have got a worthwhile job on board. If we stopped working it would all go pear-shaped."

Just along the passageway personnel in the ship's main communications office have been making the most of technology to push back the boundaries for both professional and personal gain.

For CRS Mick Elliott, the ship's video-conferencing (VTC) capability, linking Invincible by satellite in a simultaneous broadcast with shore bases and the American carrier USS Carl Vinson, has confirmed that Invincible is at the cutting edge.

"I suppose we are the role model for the Fleet where whole-ship communications is concerned - that's by necessity," he said.

"We are their trials platform, too;

because we are reasonably good at what we do, we get tasked with the job of making it work.

"We have been very successful at integrating with the US Navy and other forces.

"We have performed a five-way VTC, and that is a first - it worked like a dream, and an American admiral who witnessed it was very surprised we achieved it as well."

The VTC allows face-to-face meetings at all levels, from task group commanders down to pilots who will be flying together on a sortie over Iraq.

Mick was also instrumental in setting up the Cyber Shack, which uses military satellites to send an average of more than 600 messages a day.

Up in the hangar above can be found much of the Air Engineering department, which supports the squadrons' own engineers - currently embarked on Invincible are the FA2 Sea Harriers of 800 Squadron and Sea Kings of 814 Squadron and 849 A Flight.

In charge is Cdr Joe da Gama, who in addition to his responsibilities for airworthiness of aircraft and handling of ammunition, bombs and missiles, is also the ship's visitors officer - an important role, given the alternative definition of the carrier's acronym CVS as civilian visitors ship.

"Britannia has gone now; she used to be a big platform for showing off the Navy at a high level to visitors, particularly in the UK," said Cdr da Gama.

"The carriers are popular now because they are big and successful. But we have only got three, and recently we have had to carry it all alone.

"Invincible is probably more famous than the others, because of the Falklands and the Gulf War, and everybody wants to visit her.

"When recruitment is a problem - and we are seeing the peace dividend here - it's terribly important for the Navy to be visible in the public eye; it is getting people on board to see what we do, how we do it, and why we do it."

Elsewhere, in a warren of offices and workshops around the hangar, groups of people are working on the pieces of the jigsaw that add up to a familiar picture of Harriers blasting off the ship's ramp.

From complex avionics down to aircraft batteries, solutions are found to problems or faults in order to keep pilots flying.

The hangar also doubles as a sports field for Sports Officer Lt Martin Jukes, whose staff of CPTI Glen Young and LPTI Cherry Cherrington organise everything from RN fitness test bleep test trials to four sets of circuit training which attracts up to 250 people a day.

The team also arranges sporting fixtures for port visits.

Up on the flight deck is where all the activities of the ship

come into sharp focus.

The flight deck party pulls the three squadrons together into a cohesive flying programme - "the end product", as Flight Deck Officer Lt Cdr Neil Cottingham says.

To those who have limited exposure to the open air because of flying operations it may seem a pleasant prospect, but the heat can make eight-hour stints in fireproof suits or manhandling aircraft pretty unpleasant, he says.

"But there is a huge amount of job satisfaction on the flight deck," said Lt Cdr Cottingham.

"It's a lot easier to get them out working on deck in these conditions than a Joint Maritime Course in February in the North Atlantic."

He added there is no need for management on the flight deck - that happens before they get there - but leadership is vital on the busy air strip, especially at night.

Teamwork here comes with a typical Naval edge - a Trivial Pursuit-type knock-out quiz to keep minds alert in the small hours of the night reveals the "Thickie of the Watch", whose additional job it is to make tea.



'Train is the

HMS IN

Newcastle when the

A furious bus saw the destruction of two weeks' rier group work.

But that could just be dropped. And on combination time, as the business.

A typical preparatory ship's

Lynx or Lt radar trust past not

sc



● Flight deck chores (above) - one of the flight deck party vacuums up debris which could cause major damage to Harrier jet engines. In high temperatures, clad in hot protective clothing, "chockheads" are vital to flying programmes, marshalling and securing aircraft on deck and keeping the floating airfield open for business.

Auxiliaries stay flexible in their front-line role

THE Royal Fleet Auxiliary ships in the Gulf, as always, occupy a strange half-way house on the front-line between the military and civilian ships that speckle the Gulf.

"I think we sometimes have the best of both worlds, working with the Navy and being civilian," said Capt Alan Roach of RFA Fort Austin.

"I describe it as being like a paramilitary organisation, according to the dictionary - we are civilians carrying out a military role.

"It's hard work in fits and starts; there are times we are able to go to anchor because we have not got much on, but there are other times when we have a big replenishment programme and it is very busy. We have to remain flexible at all times."

The ship carries dry stores - including food and spare equipment, and works in conjunction with the tanker Brambleleaf, which supplies fuel.

Capt Roach has been at sea

since 1964 and in the RFA since 1970.

"If you are going to be in the Merchant Navy I think the RFA is the only place to be, because you have the way of life," he said.

"The job you do is interesting, and there are a variety of jobs - replenishments at sea, working alongside the Navy and other navies, and the various classes of ships we have got.

"In a tanker you are doing a lot more replenishment than we would be here. On these there is a lot more helicopter work, and we have got an amphibious role with the landing ships, as well.

"I think morale is fairly high. I'm a firm believer in working hard and playing hard and I think we have got a very good team here."

Fort Austin was also helping RN personnel advance their careers by providing practical experience; Cumberland had sent five or six over to work on communications and the bridge, with the added benefit of seeing how it works from the other side of the RAS.

Pictures by POA(PHOT) Kev Preece, LA(PHOT) Rich Matthey, LA(PHOT) Nathan Dua and LA(PHOT) Gary Davies

to work – a boarding team embarks in HMS Cumberland's for a fast-roping insertion in the Gulf.



'Train hard, fight easy' the key to success

INVINCIBLE'S escort HMS Newcastle left Portsmouth in a hurry as the Task Group was formed.

First of activity by the ship's company was to get ready for business little more than 24 hours after the announcement that a carrier battle group would be going to the Gulf.

It didn't mean the ship's routine could be disrupted – life goes on. HMS Newcastle that meant an odd mix of cautious watchfulness and routine for the 230-plus men went about their business less than 100 miles off Iraq.

The task for the Type 42, during its deployment for Sea Harrier sorties, saw the ship keep the waters ahead of the carrier.

Commander Lt Mark Jameson and observer Cdr Andrew Betton checked out contacts by using radar and the "Mark One Eyeball" – clattering electronic ships and dhows to ensure there is nothing suspicious on deck.

Back on the ship operators were manning displays in the muted lighting of the Operations Room, guaranteeing HMS Invincible and other allied vessels a 200-mile air-defence umbrella.

Newcastle was on defence watches; seven hours on, seven off, five on and five off for most sailors, with off hours used to piece together disrupting sleep patterns as well as pursue other pressing matters.

Training and education of all sorts was going on at a relentless pace – a situation reflected across the Task Group.

A dozen young marine engineering mechanics listened as PO Hepburn talked about the importance of trials and tests.

● **Rough and smooth** – HMS Newcastle in calm seas (left) and taking stores from Fort Austin (below).

part of a closely-monitored 15-month timetable.

Elsewhere an RN maths and English course was led by Weapon Engineering Officer Lt Cdr Bob White, and shortly afterwards a group of ratings and a young officer were drilled by PO Al Tonge on stripping down SA80 rifles.

The Lynx was pressed into action to allow boarding party personnel to practise rapid-roping techniques on to the flight deck – skills which would soon be put into practice during MIOps (maritime interdiction operations), where RN sailors swoop on to ships suspected of breaking UN trade sanctions against Iraq and carry out extensive checks of paperwork and cargoes.

A brisk fitness session around the decks, which included Cdr Kenny, was held with an eye to the RN Fitness Test. And all the while one man had his mind on other things – sitting hours of exams to climb his career ladder.

“Training is important. It has to be continuous, and if continuous turns to monotonous, then you vary it,” said Commanding Officer Cdr Steve Kenny.

“It's the imagination you put into it which ultimately keeps the protection level high. It all comes down to 'train hard, fight easy'.”

As the sun set the ship darkened, but still men pored over the Ops Room displays.

“People are sitting there seeing a picture which never really changes,” said Cdr Kenny.

“It's a bit like the fire brigade, waiting for the bell to ring, ready to go. I think over a period of time that starts to grate with people – which is why operational stand-offs are so important.”

“When we anchored off Bahrain it was more about man maintenance than anything – we shut machinery down and check it, but it's important the men shut down as well.”

“You've got to get ashore, meet some people, play some sport. We try to maintain normality as much as possible.”

“It is like *Groundhog Day*. Every day seems the same, but we have to be ready for the day when you wake up and find it's different. It cannot be allowed to faze you.”

Deputy Commander UK Task Group, Commodore Anthony Dymock, pointed out that the role carried out by the Navy in the Gulf is nothing new.

“Embargo operations – blockades, if you like – take a very long time by their nature. It is almost like a siege.”

“You have to apply a tight blockading regime over a long period before you see results.”

“So it's not dispiriting – the Navy is used to long-drawn out blockade operations. We have been doing them successfully for hundreds of years.”



● Form an orderly queue – Harriers from 800 Squadron are recovered to HMS Invincible after a sortie.

Frigate relaxes – but still plenty to do

AS DUBAI came into view, an officer remarked that “you can almost hear the sigh of relief from the ship.”

Type 22 frigate HMS Cumberland had just spent nearly four unbroken weeks at sea, and the stand-off for a well-earned breather and essential maintenance marked six months since the ship sailed from Devonport.

For the sailors of Cumberland this long deployment – apart from that of sister ship HMS Boxer, Cumberland's will be the last such programme – has been marked by the kind of change which reflects the volatile political world.

En route to the Gulf for their planned Armilla Patrol stint, the ship was diverted to the Adriatic in case of an evacuation in the Balkans.

Port visits to the Seychelles and Maldives were also shelved as the routine of Armilla – patrolling the Gulf in search of sanctions-busters – was superseded by the needs of the Task Group, although the Christmas stand-off in Durban, South Africa, went ahead and was well received.

Even the weather has been relatively unkind. Gulf deployments in the early part of the year are not always blessed by the sort of weather you would expect in the Middle East, and this time there have been many days when it was indistinguishable from the North Sea as cold, blustery winds brought rough seas.

Even on fine days there were usually more pressing matters to attend to than topping up a tan.

Men, women and machinery have been tested hard in constant defence watches and long periods between maintenance, but spirits were still high

as another phase of Operation Southern Watch came to an end and the Task Group dispersed temporarily into the southern Gulf and south of the Straits of Hormuz.

“This is a very long deployment,” said the ship's Commanding Officer, Capt Alan Richards.

“We have been doing MIOps, close in to the Iraqi coast, and we have had the excitement of the arrest of the blockade runner MV Himna.”

“We have also had a wide range of different exercises and operational defence diplomacy visits, during all of which the guys and girls have conducted themselves extremely well.”

“They are a very dedicated ship's company, and even though they have been deployed for more than six months they get stuck in and get on with the job in a pretty cheerful way, which is to their credit.”

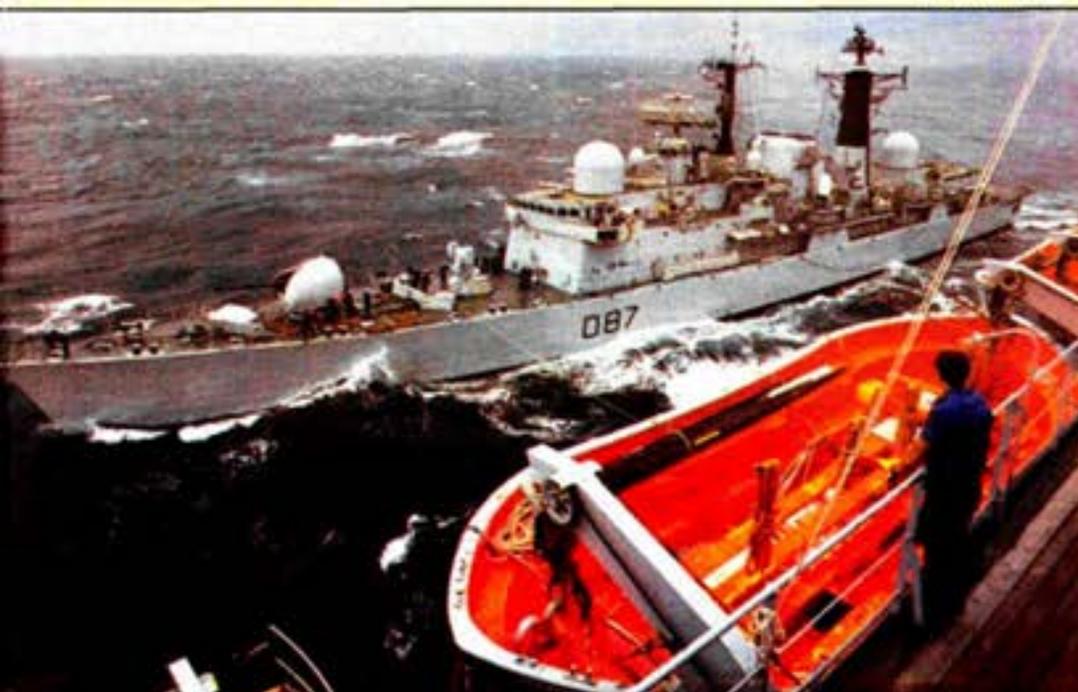
“When you are at sea for long periods of time there is no weekend to give you a break; in defence watches working seven days a week, close into the Iraqi coast for a month or more: that's a stressful and tiring situation.”

The change from the vigilance of the Northern Gulf to the more relaxed cruise to Dubai was evident throughout the ship – but as always there was work to be done and requests to be met.

Cumberland glided gently into her berth in a tight corner of the giant Port Rashid complex – assistance from the tugs was politely declined – and the ship's company made the most of the sun, already becoming fierce at 10am, as they went about their work in shorts.

Once the ship was secured, some made plans for sightseeing, others were coerced into the rugby, hockey and netball teams which were scheduled for fixtures that evening, while a sizeable part of the ship's company had a long list of jobs to do on equipment and machinery, and would therefore be staying at their posts for at least a day longer.

Such port visits are not just for recreation and maintenance, as the notion of defence diplomacy is becoming more and more central to RN policy – and as such, Cumberland has been a familiar sight in Gulf ports, hosting receptions which have included royal families as well as military commanders.





At Your Leisure



Britannia revealed

BRITANNIA – The Royal Yacht Revealed is the new official guidebook to the much-loved floating palace, now open to the public at Edinburgh's port of Leith, available from Blackboard Publishing, 99 Giles St, Edinburgh at £8.95 inc pp.

It features pictures of the Royal Family on board and of the reinstated interiors by leading Scots photographer Eric Thorburn – like this one of the Drawing Room.

Ex-Yachties are invited to point out any mistakes in the arrangements and decor!

For all the work of preservation, the one vital element that made Britannia what she was is irrevocably missing – her people.

"My abiding memory is not of places but of people, the Royal Yachtsmen, a ship's company who have no equal. I felt that I could call on them to do anything and it would be done, cheerfully, efficiently and quietly."

– Lord Lewin (Comdr HMY Britannia 1957-58).

Breezing along

CONGRATULATIONS to *Sea Breezes*, one of Britain's oldest established magazines, on its 80th birthday.

Originally the house magazine of the Pacific Steam Navigation Company, *Sea Breezes* deals primarily with the merchant service, but also carries RN items. Write to Units 28-30, Spring Valley Industrial Estate, Braiddan, Isle of Man IM2 2QS for subscription details.

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BBC presenter Howard Leader narrates the story of The Channel Dash Heroes on an audio cassette in aid of the Swordfish Heritage Trust.

On February 12, 1942 six Fairey Swordfish torpedo bombers led by Lt Cdr Eugene Esmonde launched a suicidal attack on the battleships *Scharnhorst* and *Gneisenau*, the cruiser *Prinz Eugen* and more than 30 destroyers, flak ships and E-Boats as they escaped up the Channel from Brest under cover of bad weather which had been accurately predicted by the German

meteorological service.

Not one of the aircraft survived the hail of fire thrown at them by the greatest fleet the Germans were ever to assemble in World War II and all but five of the 18 Fleet Air Arm men they carried were killed. Esmonde was awarded a posthumous VC – having a few days before received the DSO from King George VI for his action against the *Bismarck*.

This year two of the survivors, Lt Cdr Edgar Lee DSO and Lt Cdr Pat Kingsmill DSO were among those who attended a memorial lunch given by the Fleet Air Arm Association of Kent at RAF Manston, from where the attack by 825 Squadron was launched.

Special guests were the station commander, Wing Cdr Peter Kennedy, and the Flag Officer Naval Aviation, Rear Admiral Iain Henderson who

was presented with a cheque for £1,400 for the Trust.

The cassette, with accompanying booklet by Ted Powell, is available from 2 Enticott Close, South Tankerton, Whitstable,

Kent at £8 inc pp. Cheques payable to Swordfish Heritage Trust.

● *Scharnhorst during the Channel Dash, Feb 12, 1942.*



Thin Red line is stretched too far

IMAGINE being confined below deck for days on end, crammed in with a couple of thousand other men as you steam slowly through the tropic heat. Then finally you're allowed to come up into the fresh air. It's dawn, the South Seas, exotic jungle scents from a nearby island waft across on the breeze. It would be bliss, except the air is full of flying metal and you're heading straight into it, the scene being Guadalcanal, November 1942.

This is a moment from James Jones's novel *The Thin Red Line*, clearly the work of a man who was there. The new movie adaption likewise makes much of the contrast between the extravagant beauty of the setting and the blood-soaked, grotesque horror being visited upon it.

But this is a very peculiar war film. On the one hand it's a megabudget spectacular, featuring on-scene cameos by the likes of John Travolta and George Clooney.

And on the other it's quite unlike a Hollywood movie, in that it's more concentrated with poetry than with prose and constantly turns away from conventional story-telling.

For instance, an artillery bombardment on a hillside is less about explosions than about such images as the texture of a leaf which a terror-stricken soldier focuses on, the groggy movements of a stunned bird, even the changing patterns made by the wind and sun on the lush grass over which the shells are passing.

The most disconcerting aspect is the series of voice-overs by different characters, ruminating not on the specifics of what's happening but on the religious, metaphysical implications thereof. (Or so it seems, the lines being delivered in such throaty regional accents, it's hard to identify the words, let alone ascribe a meaning to them).

The movie runs for three hours, and perhaps mindful of the saying that war is nine-tenths tedium and

one-tenth terror, the film makers have succeeded in making parts of it seem very tedious indeed.

But after all that's been said, it's rare to find a picture so ambitious as to portray a huge event like a battle through so many separate viewpoints – the general to the lowliest pfc all have their moment – and on a number of levels besides the purely physical one of bullets smacking into bodies, though there's a surfeit of that, too.

Nobody is going to like all of it, though there should be few who will find nothing in it to appreciate at all. Incidentally, anyone watching the end credits may be struck by the number of researchers and craftspeople it took to reproduce the soldiers' webbing; a sign, tiny but telling, that World War II is passing into the realms of distant history and now requires specialists to access its paraphernalia, just as they do for stories about the Roman legions and the battle of Waterloo.

ScreenScene – by Bob Baker

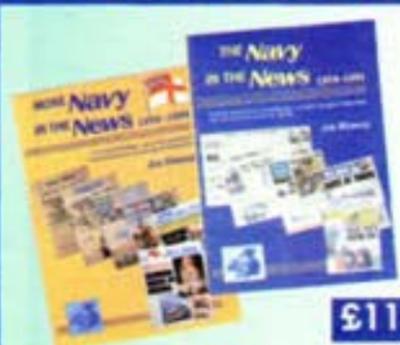
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At Your Leisure

Hood on the cards

Cigarette cards enjoyed their heyday between the wars and many series were devoted to RN ships, then also in their prime as "ambassadors of Empire".

David Johnston, librarian at Neville Lovett School, Fareham was intrigued by a project prepared by one of his pupils with the help of his neighbour Ted Briggs, now the sole survivor of HMS Hood's final ship's company.

The result is HMS Hood on the Cards, a celebration of the battlecruiser in cards supplied by The London Cigarette Card Co, of Somerton, Somerset, available from the Chairman of the HMS Hood Association, John Williams, 14 Elizabeth Road, Stubbington, Hants at £3.50 inc pp. All proceeds will go to the Association, of which Mr Johnston has been made a member.

The selection shown here comes from series produced by Player's, Wills and Churchman's.

Left, from the top:

□ One of the best non-photographic representations of the warship is provided by Frank Mason's painting, No. 5 in Player's *British Naval Craft*. The text mentions "Aircraft are being added in 1939 ... although over 18 years old, is still reckoned as a first-class fighting unit."

□ From Wills's *Life in the Royal Navy* No 15 describes the Hood's 15in guns: "... 52ft long, weighs 97 tons and fires a projectile weighing nearly 2,000lb." A Seaman Gunner is shown polishing the breech.

□ No 17 in the same set features a gun crew loading a 5.5in gun: "The only ships in the Royal Navy which mount guns of 5.5in calibre are the battlecruiser Hood, the world's largest warship, in which they form the secondary battery, and the aircraft carriers Furious and Hermes, which carry them as their main armament."

□ Hood is bedecked with flags in No 42 of Wills's *Speed* set issued in 1938: "On trial she did 32 knots through a gale but recent improvements in steam engines and boilers would give her a far greater power for the same space and weight, and it is expected that she will be re-engined."

Below right:

□ No 45 in Churchman's *The Navy at Work* shows the Chief Shipwright and his assistants at work in the Cable Locker flat while No 31 depicts "... a Chief Engine Room Artificer on duty at the main regulating valve (which admits steam to the turbines) in the engine room". The card

revealed that they were the highest paid ratings in the RN and earned a pension of about £85 a year for life after 22 years' service. Both cards have inset the appropriate distinguishing badge.

Top right:

□ No 7 in Wills's *Ships Badges*: The crest of the Hood features a Cornish chough and is that of Admiral Viscount Hood.



Tapping a rich vein

SOURCE of many of C. S. Forester's *Hornblower* stories - now revived by the acclaimed TV series - was *The Navy Chronicle*, a contemporary publication that covered the years 1799-1819. Many other authors, Douglas Reeman included, have tapped this rich vein.

Editor Joyce Gold set out to preserve the achievements of the Naval personnel of the age so that it was quickly recognised at the time as the most reliable record of the Napoleonic Wars and it remains by far the most important source.

Now the 40 volumes of action reports, intelligence, biographies, anecdotes, stories and poetry have been condensed in a five-volume edition published by Chatham at £18 each.

The first issued deals with the period 1793-98 and includes the occupation of Toulon, the Glorious First of June, the Spithead and Nore mutinies, Camperdown - and the Battle of the Nile: "The Bay of Aboukir was covered for a week with the floating bodies of the slain, exhibiting a most painful and horrid spectacle; and though men were continually employed to sink them, many of the bodies, having slipped off the shot, again appeared on the surface. It was a great mercy to our brave countrymen, considering the excessive heat of the weather, that some pestilential disorder did not take place in consequence."

Veteran author attracts young readers



Reeman: writer as recruiter

THE LATE Lord Fieldhouse said he was the Navy's best recruiting officer ... Forty years after the publication of his first book *A Prayer for the Ship*, Douglas Reeman is still writing stirring stories of the sea - and inspiring new generations of readers.

"A lot of them are young - very young - and that's enormously encouraging. Because I get asked to go around the schools to give talks and I find there's no space in the curriculum these days for filling in the background of our nation, its history and culture.

"Many years ago I was children's welfare officer for the London County Council and it was already happening then - if you started talking about the war you were met with blank faces."

One of our foremost writers of Naval fiction, Douglas has produced over 30 World War I and II titles - and 23 in the Richard Bolitho series, under the name of Alexander Kent.

The Bolitho saga mirrors C. S. Forester's *Hornblower* books, covering the years 1768-1815. Other distinguished authors have also ploughed this furrow - notably Dudley Pope with the *Ramage* series and Patrick O'Brien with his character Nathaniel Drinkwater - and found the period has wide-ranging appeal.

"Half the letters I get about Bolitho are from women - whereas this is far from the case with the Douglas Reeman books. "Bolitho's period is the last era

of the independent sailor - once out of sight of land he's his own man and I think that's the big attraction. In the ships of the World Wars, everyone's packed into tin boxes whereas you're standing on the deck of a sailing ship you can see practically everybody who's in the story at the same time.

"Research is vital - it's amazing what people will pick up on. I think I've only been caught out once - and that was on my own account. In one story Bolitho is setting off to sea and when he reaches the bottom of the staircase of his house he comes across the portrait of his grandfather and he wonders what he felt like when he was leaving for duty.

"After the book was published someone wrote and said: 'You said in such and such a book that grandfather's portrait was on the landing.' So I had to write back and say we'd been Spring cleaning ..."

Douglas Reeman joined the Navy in 1941 and served in destroyers and Light Coastal Forces - the subject material of his first novel. He came out in 1946 and was recalled as a Reservist for Korea - and for Suez in 1956 ("but

that coincided with Cowes Week so we never left Portsmouth").

He read Forester avidly as a boy. "But I think it's a great shame that people only ever talk about *Hornblower*, because he wrote some beautiful stories that are now forgotten - like *The General*, which is probably one of the greatest descriptions of trench warfare ever written."

Unlike Forester, Reeman aka Kent has recently taken the rash step of killing off his hero (Bolitho dies in action in 1815, in *Sword of Honour*).

"I had to, finally - it's been no secret that it was going to happen. He was 59 by then and getting past his sell-by date as an action hero."

His fans need not fear, though - Bolitho's nephew Adam takes up the sword in *Second to None*, to be published by Heinemann in September.

"People keep on asking me what my incentive is, to keep on writing. There's only one - the Inland Revenue ..."

The paperback *Sword of Honour* was published by Arrow last month at £5.99. *Dust on the Sea*, published by Random House, is the next "Reeman". Featuring the Royal Marines and set in Sicily, this is due to appear in June. Douglas is now planning a novel on the Falklands campaign.

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Somerset sails with the French

A BRITISH warship came under the command of a French Admiral for the first time in 100 years when HMS Somerset deployed to the Adriatic.

Somerset is currently operating with a French task group which includes the aircraft carrier Foch, escort frigates Cassard and Tourville, a repair ship and a tanker.

Relations between the two navies have been friendly for a long time, but Somerset's presence in the French task group is a direct result of the Prime Minister's talks on closer co-operation at the St Malo summit last December.

The ship left Devonport in February and called at Gibraltar and Toulon before joining the group.

Joint exercises have seen Somerset 'waging war' on French ships and submarines and acting as an embargo-breaker to test the mettle of French boarding parties.

And the cuisine on board the French vessels has also ensured plenty of volunteers to swap places with their French counterparts and the Lynx helicopters of Somerset

and Tourville have also swapped several times.

During the deployment, HMS Somerset has also enjoyed visits to Bari in Italy and to Venice, and taken on the French at football, rugby, hockey and basketball, with the honours being even to date.

The Commanding Officer of HMS Somerset, Cdr the Hon Michael Cochrane, said: "This deployment is understood to be the first Royal Navy ship under the command of a French Admiral for over 100 years.

"It is a marvellous opportunity to work alongside our French allies and for both navies to learn from each other while demonstrating the flexibility of sea power."



● POMA Valorie Robson-Heatley demonstrates medical skills in the sickbay of HMS Northumberland to 'evacuees' Kate-Anne Gallagher, Mary-Dawn MacDonald and Lucy Davidson.

Civvies 'rescued' in joint exercise

TWENTY five civilians were 'rescued' from Loch Ewe by Royal Navy ships taking part in the latest Joint Maritime Course in Scotland.

The men, women and children from Aultbea, Wester Loch Ewe and Gairloch had responded to a call for local volunteers to play the part of evacuees from a war zone.

HMS Bridport began the non-combatant evacuation operation (NEO) by securing the jetty at Aultbea, embarking the volunteers and taking them safely off the 'mined' shore.

HMS Bulldog's boats made the final transfer to HMS Northumberland, where the volunteers remained overnight before being helicoptered ashore.

JMCs are held three times a year to ensure that the Navy and the Royal Air Force can work effectively as a joint task force whenever necessary, but the latest course was the first to involve civilians.

The volunteers, some of whom role-played as casualties, made the exercise much more realistic and tested the humanitarian skills which have been needed in recent operations such as the evacuation of civilians from Honduras after Hurricane Mitch.

Other ships involved in the JMC were HM ships Cardiff, Richmond, Coventry and Middleton, RFA Fort George, the Spanish and Dutch frigates Canarias and Karel Doorman, Dutch minesweepers Maassius, Schiedam and Scheveningen and the Belgian MCMV BNS Lobelia.

And the submarines taking part were HMS Trafalgar, Holland's HNLMS Dolfijn, Denmark's HDMS Nordkaperen and Norway's HNOMS Ula.

British, American, French and Canadian aircraft flying from RAF Kinloss, RAF Lossiemouth, RAF Leuchars, RAF Waddington and RNAS Yeovilton, were all controlled by RAF Strike Command through the Maritime Operations Centre at Faslane.

Street star opens the Boat Show

CORONATION Street Star Denise Welch zeroed-in on the Royal Navy stand at the National Boat Caravan and Leisure Show.

Denise, who plays Natalie Barnes in the TV soap, officially opened the show at the National Exhibition Centre in a ceremony which included Her Majesty's Royal Marines Band Portsmouth.

Afterwards, she was shown around the RN stand by Lt Cdr David Grindel from DPR(N).

● Right: Denise Welch at the NEC. Picture: LA(PIH07) MacDonald, GPPU



In brief

Lord Lewin

SUCH was the popularity of the late Admiral Lord Lewin that a second memorial service has had to be arranged to allow more friends to pay their last respects.

The Service, organised under the auspices of the RNA, RMA, The Russian Convoy Club and the George Cross Island Association, will be held at the Church of St Thomas the Martyr, Greenwich, at noon on May 1. For details, contact Mr Dewert on 01661 853197.

Run ashore

HMS CROMER had over 500 visitors after paying a courtesy visit to Aberdeen while on route to Rosyth for refit.

The visit also gave a team of eight members of the Ship's Company, led by Lt Steve Hollis, the chance to visit Upper Doonside and the Lecht for some skiing.

NATO talks

ARMED Forces Minister Doug Henderson breakfasted on board HMS Montrose and met many RN personnel stationed ashore in a recent visit to Norfolk, Virginia.

The Minister was at Allied Command Atlantic in the USA to discuss NATO's new strategic concept.

FOST visit

REAR ADMIRAL Nigel Essenhigh, Commander-In-Chief Fleet, was brought up-to-date with developments in Operational Sea Training during a two-day visit to Devonport.

During the visit, hosted by Flag Officer Sea Training, Rear Admiral John Lippitt, Admiral Essenhigh was also given a full tour of FOST HQ and the disaster relief training facilities at Bull Point.

Sound move

USERS of NAAFI XL Leisure clubs across the country will notice a big improvement in the quality of music on offer. Fourteen clubs, including those at HMS Drake, Raleigh and Nelson, have been fitted out with a new sound system giving greater variety.

DESIGN 2000

Millennium Competition Winners

Remember the Navy News Millennium Calendar Competition?

A big "Thank You" to the many, many readers who sent in their designs. It has been a very difficult task choosing the winners as all of the entries were superb.

We were impressed by the skill, and attention to detail, shown by the older age group, and amazed and delighted at the imagination of the very young readers... Well done to you all!

The twelve winning designs of a Futuristic Navy will appear alongside the present day Fleet, in the prestigious Navy News Millennium Calendar.

Supplies anticipated from September 1999 Price £6.

We are expecting a huge demand and orders will be taken from August.

The Business Manager, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth, PO1 3HH.

Winners of the Navy News Millennium Calendar Competition

Overall Winner, 12-18 age group... James Beedle of Hampshire. Overall Winner, 6-12 age group... Michael Roberts of Powys.

... Jenny Leggot of Surrey, Bryan Bowdell of Lancs, Chris Braid of Fife, Jade Fraser of Cleveland, Cheryl Marr of Peterhead, James Duncan of Peterhead, Tom Wilson of Hants, Nicholas Gyte of Suffolk, Matthew Vanns of Kent and Richard Bowdell of Lancs.

We regret we cannot show all the winning designs within this advertisement, but look out for them in future issues of the Navy News and in the Calendar. They are not to be missed!

At Your Service



Reunions

Ipswich Sea Cadets, TS Orwell: Reunion proposed for all cadets, staff and committee members who served during the 25 years as Commanding Officer of Lt Cdr (SGC) G.T.C. Partridge RNVR, Contact John Porter, tel/fax 01394 211157, or e-mail porter@seecad.net

April

HMS Cayton Association welcomes shipmates from all commissions. Reunions are held every year. This year will be at Babbacombe on April 16-18. All enquiries with SAE to J. McLeish, 2, Millford Hill, Harpenden, Herts AL5 5BH.

Bounty Boys Association reunion will be held at Granville Lodge Hotel, Scarborough from April 16-19. Ex-Bounty Boys should contact Jack Brown on 0171 228 7237 or Fred Parton on 0171 228 2379.

HMS Leader: This years reunion will be at the Royal Fleet Club, Devonport on April 17. All ex-standards and guests are welcome. Details from Danny Nave on 01752 562973.

HMS Adamant, Submarine Depot Ship will hold their third reunion in Sheppess on April 23-26. For details ring Arthur Walker on 01793 700033.

HMS Sene 1944-46: 20th reunion on April 24 at Longfield, Surrey, when old hands must be drummed out of 1954. Details from Eric Drummond, 5, Green Way, Scarroft, Leeds LS14 3BJ, or tel 0113 2852222.

HMS Duke of York Association: Reunion at Blackpool on April 23-25. Contact Secretary R. Draper, 'Rose Cottage', 103, Orchard Park, Elton, Chester CH2 4HQ, tel 01928 725175.

May

TS Barham, Elham Valley Sea Cadet Corps reunion at St Peter's Church Hall, Aylesham, on May 1 at 3pm. For details ring 01304 840991 or 01303 273545 / 254602.

HMS Peacock Association reunion May 1-2 at Royal Leamington Spa. Further details from E.T. Collier, 8, Aston Lane, Remembrance Hill, Henley on Thames, Oxon RG9 3EL.

HMS Phoenix Association reunion from May 7-9 at the Commodore Hotel, Scarborough. All ranks welcome. For details phone Roy Paveley on 01235 211501.

HMS 45 Association: HMS Flagard, Jan 1945 entry reunion at the County Hotel, Llandudno, from May 7-10. Details from Geoff Locker, 136, The Dale, Willey, Waterlooville, Hants PO7 5DF, tel 01705 363585 or e-mail geoff@flooker.demon.co.uk

HMS Renown: All ex-Renown, officers, senior rates, junior rates, port and stbd crews: a reunion is planned for May 8-9 at Leicester Senior Club. Interested parties or individuals contact Cdr Dai Evans RN (ret), through the President of the LSSA, or write to Colin Pimrose, Leicester Senior Service Club, 295, Loughborough Rd, Leicester LE5 4PN, or Gerry Rogers on 0116 230 6370.

723 (CS) Squad RM (59-60): Second reunion, all ranks, 2000hrs, May 14 at IMA Club, Deal, Kent (New date). Details from Dave Prochard, 01222 790233.

HMS Comus Commodore Association: Northern reunion in York May 14-15. All old and new members welcome. Contact Geoff Harper on 01302 708135.

HMS Orion Association are looking for shipmates 1934-39. Reunion at Blackpool on May 14-15 - see September for Plymouth. Contact Grant West, 28, Stretton Rd, Great Glen, Leicester LE8 9GN, tel 0116 259 2171.

HMS Barham Survivors Association reunion will take place on May 22 at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Queen Street, Portsmouth at 1730 for 1800. Details from G. Elliot, Flat 4, Greenwath Court, 25, King Street, Southsea, Hants PO5 4EU, or tel 01705 755734.

Cheltenham Sea Cadet Unit 60th Anniversary social evening on May 28. Mess Dinner on May 29 and parade on May 30. All former cadets are invited to contact the unit for full details. The unit address is: the OO, Cheltenham SCC Unit, Stoneville Street, Cheltenham, Glos GL53 8PH, or tel 01242 261824, 01242 226206 or 01684 577851.

June

HMS Selsey: A new association is being formed (118 members and rising), with a 2nd reunion planned for June. If you served, any commission, your shipmates would like to hear from you and meet up with you again. Contact Malcolm Clarke, 53 Montague Court, Kingsdown, Bristol, BS2 8HT. Tel 0117 942

Joker winner
MR J. JOHNSON, of Crediton in Devon, is the latest reader to see through Jack's jokers - and he wins a luxury holiday at the China Fleet Club for his efforts.

The jokers were:
■ A bark is not named after the tale of Dogs;
■ Paddle steamers never had hand paddles as emergency propulsion;
■ The title commodore did not derive from the privilege of a sea-going commode.

■ Material submitted for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed, and addressed to The Editor.
■ Entries are free of charge.
■ Items cannot normally be repeated.
■ Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot always be met.
■ There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
■ Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit may be declined through lack of space - in such circumstances the advertising department can help with a paid-for advertisement; contact 01705 725062.

0139 (after 6pm) or 0117 9220437 (daytime).
Submarine Coxswains Association Annual reunion at HMS Raleigh, Plymouth from June 4-6. Contact S Hayden on 01329 315913.

HMS Brissenden (L79) 1942-48 Association: Reunion in Southsea at 1300hrs on June 5. Any ex-shipmates contact C. L. Lawrence, 31, The Limes, Bitchley, Milton Keynes MK2 2JN, tel 01908 547665 or Nevil Fokard on 01945 589382.

HMS Slinger 1943-46: Reunion on June 22 at the Stafford Hotel, City Rd, Chester. Details from A. Kallett, 31, Manscombe Rd, Alston, Bradford, BD15 7AQ or tel 01274 487495.

July

Roaden Old Boys Association: Sixth annual lunch at Roaden School on July 8. Details from Sam Morley, 113, The Ridgeway, Northam, Hants, GU46 4BG, tel 0757 872720 or fax 0757 873444.

Devonport Field Gun Association: The 1999 reunion will be held on July 10 at HMS Drake. Full details from the secretary, Derrick Pearce, tel 01752 366778.

TS Arethusa, Salcombe entries: Reunion on July 13 at Teasemach Hotel, Salcombe, to coincide with return visit of present Arethusa. Details from A. Devin, 'Arethusa', Lower Lipton, Rochester ME2 4XB, tel 01634 711556, fax 01634 295805.

HM Ships Gallies, Gapes, Glowworm and Greyhound: Four trees are to be planted in the National Memorial Arboretum, Crossak, Staffs, in memory of all who served in these four ships. A dedication service, alongside these trees, will be held at 11.30 on July 22, to be followed by a reunion lunch. Anyone wishing to join us, please contact Capt Robin Graham RN, 15, Chantry View Rd, Guildford, GU1 3XW, tel 01483 564426.

August

Portland FMG Work Free Duet Shop Club circa 1975: Calling the following unlocated former members who were party to the pact to meet at The Four Lords, Par, Cornwall on Aug 11 to view the total eclipse. Andy Andrews, Buster Brown, Zeke Hockley, Barry Mackay, Ginge Rowlands, Jed Stone and Slinger Woods. Also looking for two honorary members Lt Cdr Peter Woods and Lt John W. Wizeeman. Contact Bernard Bryer on 01205 772096 or 0797 1299721 with any information on the said suspects.

September

HMS Gattica (K475): Reunion September 4 at the Union Jack Club, Waterloo, London. Contact 'Puffy' Reed, 37, Cottesmore, Bracknell RG12 7YL, tel 01344 55072.

HMS Orion Association are looking for shipmates 1934-39. Reunion at Plymouth on September 9-10. Contact Grant West, 28, Stretton Road, Great Glen, Leicester LE8 9GN, tel 0116 259 2171.

HMS Flagard, series 7, Boy Artificer Entry, 12 Sept 1949: The 50th anniversary reunion will take place at the De Montford Hotel, Kenilworth, Works, on September 10-12. Currently 61 Old Boys of the original 185 are hoping to attend, but there is room for more. Contact Mick Herbert, 20, Peaham Way, Cottenham, Cambridge CB4 8TG, tel 01954 250014.

HMS Burghed Bay 1946-59 are holding their reunion on September 11. Contact Rod Jenkins, 33, Paston Ridings, Paston, Peterborough PE4 7UR or tel 01733 751019.

HMS Euryalus Association: Dedication of new Standard followed by dinner at the Royal Sailors Home Club, Portsmouth on September 22. Members from all commissions are invited to this unique celebration. Details from Eric Owen, 82, Heath Park Drive, Cardiff CF4 3QJ, tel 01222 750022.

HMS Duke of York Association reunion at Blackpool on September 24-25. Contact secretary R. Draper, 'Rose Cottage', 103, Orchard Park, Elton, Chester CH2 4HQ, tel 01928 725175.

HMS Widgeose Association reunion will be held at the Burlington Hotel, Eastbourne, from September 24-27. Contact K. Hayes, 10, Stratford Way, Titchhurst, Reading RG31 5XT for details.

HMS Tanetside (L69) 1942-46 will hold their reunion at the Lord Leicester Hotel, Warwick, from September 24-27. Contact Art Wright, 10, Banwell Rd, Ashton, Bristol BS3 2DW, tel 0117 966 1342.

HMS Porlock Bay Association hold their reunion at Trecarn Hotel, Babbacombe, on September 24-27. Details from Ken Faulkner, 22, Clovelly Rd, Swinton, Manchester M27 0FU, tel 0161 794 8992.

October

HMS Arethusa Association: This year's reunion will take place in York in October. All who served on this ship are welcome. Details from Tom Sawyer on 01924 948 191.

Div 8 Pay Office Staff, RNB Chatham, 1947-49: Will an ex-members of this staff, both RN and WRNS, please note that this reunion will take place at Edinburgh in October. Any ex-members of the Writer Branch who served at Chatham in this era are also welcome. Even if you can't be there, Les Keen on 01279 771580 would be pleased to hear from you.

HMS Crane Association will hold its second reunion at the Gateway Hotel, Nottingham, from October 1-3. Details from Tony Nutall, 85, Conroy Road, Nottingham, NG4 2PW, tel 0115 952 6963.

HMS Queen Elizabeth reunion will take place on October 2 at Southsea. Details from the secretary on 01705 472248.

RNPtAs, London and Medway hold their annual dinner at the King Charles Hotel, Gillingham, Kent, on October 3. Please ring secretary C.E. Houghton on 0181 304 6169 for details.

HMS Duff reunion at Solihull on October 8-9. Contact N. Johns, The Old Chandlery, New Road, Instone, Bideford, Devon EX39 4LN, tel 01271 860578.

Ten class Minesweepers/Hunters Association hold their 11th reunion at the

Thistle Hotel, Glasgow, from October 15-17. New members are invited to join the association which provides a 36-page bi-monthly newsletter. Details from Jack Worth, 42, Trenart Road, Tywardreath, Cornwall PL22 0QJ, tel 01726 815314.

December

HMS Ajax & River Plate Veterans Association will hold a Memorial Service in St George's Centre, Pembroke Galls, Dock Road, Gillingham at 1100 on December 13 - the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the River Plate. There will then be a reunion dinner at the King Charles Hotel in the evening. Former relatives of late crew members will be welcome to attend. Details from the secretary on 01255 502007.

June 2000

Royal Navy Motorcycle Club will have been around for 20 years in 2000. A reunion is planned for June 25-27 at HMS Sultan. Will all past members of the RNMCC contact Martin Sang at MAJU Transport Section, Pleinfelds, Farnham Road, Gosport, Hants PO13 0AA, tel 01705 544514 or cell 9280 44514, giving details of their whereabouts and address for invitation mailing purposes.

October 2000

HMS Brilliant WRMS ("The Originals") reunion is planned for the original WRMS who joined Brilliant on Oct 8, 1950, and those who joined prior to the Gulf deployment in Jan 91. Details from POWWTR Jan Webster, SED(PA) PQNA HQ, Yeovilton, Somerset BA22 8HL, tel 01935 455089 (daytime).

HMS Cavalier
DID you serve in the destroyer HMS Cavalier?
If so, Navy News would like to hear from you.
If you have any information, anecdotes or photographs (which will be returned), we would like to see them for a forthcoming major feature on the ship.
Write to Anton Hanney, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.

Over to You
Walter Alfred Hawkins (CH 23574), HMS Reputee 1909/31: The daughter of Walter, who is very ill, desperately wants to know more about her father, who died in Norwich in 1946. Her parents separated when she was very young. If you have any information regarding Walter, including pictures, contact Howard Johnson, 31, Edwinstowe Rd, Oakwood, Derby DE21 2HL, 01332 280318.

MEM 'Mar' Olive: Desperately seeking past shipmates of MEM 'Mar' Olive, to surprise him on his forthcoming wedding celebrations in April, especially 'Tato', 'Niamal' and 'Annie', or anyone who served with him aboard HMS Jupiter, Cherry B (Charlybds) or Roebuck. For details call 01202 891490.

HMS Burwell / HMS Newmarket: Dave Wright, of 45, Orchard Way, Burwell, Cambridge CB5 0EQ, tel 01638 610711, would be interested to hear from any former members of the ships' companies of the two World War II four-stackers.

Captain Hector Archibald McDonald, former Dean of Royal Naval College, Greenwich, having recently become a grandfather, Carolyn McLeod would like to find out more about Captain McDonald, her step-grandfather. She knows he died on February 16, 1970, with his wife probably dying in 1960. He served in Dauntless, Kamikaze, Valiant, King George V and Spatiate. If anyone can provide information contact Carolyn at 105, Black Boy Lane, London N15 3AS, tel/fax 0704 4001720.

Able Seaman Ben Gordon Phelps: Enlisted 1939, killed in action November, 1944. Served in HM Ships Lucia, Sheba, Fowey and Whitaker. Would any former shipmates please contact Peter Phelps (son), 1, Bigbury Way, Torquay, Devon TQ2 8BA, tel 01803 322252.

Michael Dolan: Can anyone give Tom Deakin any information about his relative Michael Dolan. They lost touch in 1974. He served as a nurse in the Royal Navy. Portsmouth Contact Tom at 47, South Carrott Avenue, West Derby, Liverpool L12 6QY, tel 0151 208 9896.

V and W destroyers: Can anyone help with World War II photographs of the following V and W destroyers: MacKay (Pendant D1 78), Valentine (L69), Venetia (D1 83), Warwick (D1 25), Westcott (D1 43), Whitford (D1 30), Whitley (L23), Witherington (D1 76), Wren (D1 88) and Wymech (L54). All correspondence to Charles Goodwin, 2121, S. Ocean Dr, Apt 213, Hallandale, FL 33009-7266, USA.

Tobruk Harbour, 1941: If any of the ship's crew of SS Barrera, HM Ships Glovinia, Ladybird, Voyager and Bagshot was in Tobruk Harbour on March 18, 1941, John Doughty wants to hear from them. Contact him at 63, Chapel Lane, Burtonwood, Warrington, Cheshire WA5 4JU.

Peter Arthur Cottingham served in the Navy on the (2nd) HMS Dido between 1940 and 1945. When he was alive he showed Tim Cottingham a photograph, stating that he was in a line-up of people, meeting King Hussein of Jordan. This photo cannot be found. Tim would like any information regarding his father, his mates and the ship, especially any photographs. Contact Tim at 151, London Road, Dover, Kent CT17 0TG.

Lt Cdr Norman Blackford: David Blackford would be grateful to hear from anyone who has any photographs or other memorabilia in relation to the career of his father, who will

Calling Old Shipmates

Rangoon 1945, HM Tanc Tug V132 and ASDP 55: Anyone left? Give Roy Fowler a ring on Doncaster (01302) 884025.

HMS Luffington: Seeking crew members of the minesweeper, especially Ldg Ck Jim Gates, ME Tally Roberts and any other ships in the squadron (104th MSS - Mediterranean). Reunion in October, bi-monthly newsletter. Contact Jack Worth, 42, Trenart Road, Tywardreath, Par, Cornwall PL22 0QJ, telephone 01726 815314 for details.

R Connolly Gordon is trying to trace anyone who knew him during 1941-1947 at Aulbea or Trincomalee. He has written a book about his experiences in the Navy as a degaussing officer on the Clyde, at Manchester, Aulbea, Trincomalee and Colombo, and as Electrical Officer and DOWD of HMS Springdale. Contact him at 20, Shirley Way, Shirley, Groydon, Surrey GU9 5PJ.

Series 8, HMS Flagard, January 1950: A 50th anniversary reunion is being arranged. Of Artificer Apprentices who joined the Royal Navy at HMS Flagard on January 9 1950, also known as Series 8. Please contact David Eaton, 19, Briar Close, Hornedean, Waterlooville, Hampshire PO8 9ED, tel/fax 01705 503887.

Ron Blanchard, Boy Seaman to Chief Yeoman 1953-1977: Always promised to keep in touch - but never did if you remember him, please write to 177, Kinghorn Road, Burntisland, Fife KY3 5JP, or telephone 01592 872309. He served on the following ships: Implacable, Theseus, Defender, Sheffield, Adamant, Loch Lomond, Corunna, Gurkha, Blake and Campden, as well as a spell in the Merchant Navy.

HMS Louis (K515) 1942-46: Jack Roberts (Blonde) O/Swd, would like to hear from any old shipmates such as "Scouser". Officers Cook PO/O/Swd Geoffrey Kingham-Eagle, L/O/Swd Basil Crane and AB Jack MacCall. Any information regarding reunions would be appreciated. Contact J.V. Roberts, 28, Breck Road, Sprowston, Norwich, Norfolk NR7 9HR, tel 01603 460974.

HMSM Sirdar 1943-46: Having had a successful reunion last year they will have another this year and are looking for Jimmy Green, Ted Baisey, Norman Cloke, Bernard Gavin, Arthur Scully, Ginger Tallowin, Bringham Young, Willie Redpath, Bobby Beresford and John Nussey. Contact Sidney Davis, 26, Luttrells Crescent, Saltdean, Brighton, East Sussex BN2 5AR with any information.

Darby Allen, HMS Adamant: Les Thurgood was on HMS Adamant in 1967, including a trip to Gibraltar and would like to get in touch with 'Darby' Allen who was an

shortly be celebrating his 70th birthday. In particular, he would like to obtain photos of the rugby teams he played in for Combined Services, Royal Navy, US Portsmouth and Devonport Services. In addition, he is also trying to locate a photograph of his qualification as a PTL. Contact David at 40, Cornus Close, King Alfred's Fields, Winchester SO22 5DS, with any information.

'Ships' crests/badges regarding Royal Australian, Canadian and Indian Navies are required for 20th century display by a voluntary historical group which is working to set up a museum. Badges/crests to keep, borrow or copy. Contact Chris Howat, Seaway, 28, Fore Street, Torquay, Devon TQ1 3LA, or tel 01803 328008.

HMS Kelvin: Bill Sanderson would like to hear the recollections of any crew member of HMS Kelvin, which was damaged in 1940 en route to the Second Battle of Narvik. Can you tell him where she docked and any anecdotes on travelling astern? Contact Bill at 'Sandy-Garth', 4, Springfield Gardens, Keadyway, West Yorkshire SO20 6JU, or tel 01535 609774.

William Brookes, HMS Campana: W.R. Brookes' grandfather, William Brookes, was a PO on board HMS Campana the day she was sunk. He was discharged to Pembroke on November 8, 1918. A pencilled note on his record shows that he was issued with a rail card to his home in Sheffield. Clearly unwell, he was admitted to hospital where he died on March 15, 1919. Mr Brookes wants to hear from anyone with more info on this incident. Contact W.R. Brookes, Garden Cottage, Easton Common Hill, Winterston, Wills SP5 1GD, or tel 01980 863253.

HMSZ Arbutus: Can any member of the ships company tell Chris White the dates, course and complement of this repair ship, which joined the 8PP Fleet Train in 1947? Contact Chris at Apr 30B, Edif Valdecarlos, Paseo Maritimo 9, 29000 Marbella, Spain, tel/fax 95 282 87 66.

A/B S/G Peter Fitzgerald (SS City of Worcester 1945), please contact Phil Lister at 60, Cranham Road, Hornchurch, Essex RM11 2AA - have news of Virginia Elliot.

Chris (Robby) Roberts, ex-HMS Flagard and Caledonia, seeks copy of 592 Class entry photo, Jan 1968, HMS Flagard Artificer Apprentice School. Contact Chris at 4, Welland Drive, Connaught Quay, Deeside, Flintshire CH5 4TZ, tel 01244 815995.

HMS Comorant: Information requested regarding fatal road accident involving GWA Hoare CPO Supply and gunners E.C. Routledge and G. Lyons who were killed in Gibraltar and buried in Garrison Cemetery on May 3, 1942. Mrs Dora Craig's late father Eric Charles Routledge served with the 18th Defence Regt RA at the time of his death. Contact Mrs Craig at 72, Park Winding, Enkine PA8 7AT, or tel 0141 961 6783.

World War 8 Ships: The Naval Historical Collectors and Research Association can now offer details of more than 730 ships which saw service from 1939 to 1945. Information includes operations, dates, convoys escorted and actions up to the time the ship was lost or the end of hostilities. Send minimum 64p SAE for list to: John T Mook, 17, Woodhill Avenue, Portsmouth, N. Somerset BS20 7EX. The small profit generated goes to worthy Naval causes.

Arctic Convoys PQ18 'HMS Avenger': Three aircraft ditched on this convoy with all five pilots being saved, one by 'Faulstich'. Who saved the other two? Can anyone tell Harry Robinson the names of the three pilots? Contact Harry at 15, Glenhome, East Meon, Petersfield, Hants GU32 1PY.

HMS Cavalier Reunion Showcase: Debbie Dejonghe, owner of the King Charles Hotel at Gillingham, has requested Naval menus, suggestions and instructions for her chef to use during the showcase on May 7-9. Any information to Debbie at the King Charles Hotel, Brompton, Gillingham, Kent ME7 5QT.

LRO(T) on Adamant, and came from South London near the Oval. He would also like to get in touch with AB Jim Jenks who he served with on HMSM Aeneas. Les was an LRO(G) RAN submarine then. Contact him at The Graft, Mt Macedon, Victoria, 3441, Australia, or fax 61 3 6621222, or e-mail (Lburgood@btm.gov.au).

No2 CPO's Mess, HMS Glamorgan: Would any ex-members or "Honorary Social Members", who served in HMS Glamorgan between 1963 and 1964, especially during the Armilla deployment, please contact CPO Ron Almond at the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Careers Office, Dunstable House, Dunstable Road, Luton LU1 1EA, telephone 01582 721501, as soon as possible. It is hoped to arrange a get together in Portsmouth in the near future.

STD Sandy McEwan from Cumnock or Old Cumnock, Scotland, last seen in Gibraltar 1957 on HMS Ocean with STD Doug Foster from Warrington. Maybe Sandy remembers when they were in Devonport and Jack (Mac) McCallaghan painted his suit for a run ashore. Also STD Mike Milverton from London and STD Bill McManus from Paisley, both on HMS Ark Royal. Contact Jack at Via Monte Cenozo 3, Lago (Cosenza), Italy 87035. Jack lived in Airdrie whilst in the Royal Navy, then the United States for 36 years before moving to Italy.

Peter Mays, 1957-58, Petty Officer Instructor HMS Ganges (Collingwood/Eamouth Divs), Non Sub RP2 believed commissioned 1959/60. Member of the Association of Royal Navy Officers. Retired from the service in 1981. Rank was believed to be Lt S D. P. R. please contact Andrew Thorburn, Newton of Melrose Cottage, Garmna, Banff AB45 3EQ.

St Vincent Boys, Feb 4, 1947 entry, Anson 150 class then Wakeful, for 2000 get-together. Hawkins, Stratton, Cordes, Mannings, Culler, Vincent etc. Contact T (Taff) Hodgins, 21, Belmont Road, Abingdon, Monmouth NP7 5HN, or tel 01873 852896.

Raymond Hall (Nobby?) aged mid 60s: You were at HMS Raleigh in early 1955 with Derek Hyde, who would love to hear from you. You were best man at Derek's wedding in September 1964 at West Ewell, Surrey. Anyone with any information on Raymond can contact Mrs J. Reece (Derek's daughter) at "Shambles", 44, Philip Rudd Court, Pot Row, Kings Lynn, Norfolk PE32 1WA, or telephone 01485 609090.

CKLCK/POCK Burgess aka Budgie or

Fred, served on Hermes 66/68, Osprey 71/72, 74/75, 77/79, Matapan 72/73, Rooke 76/77 as well as Invincible and on Stena Seaspread in the Falklands. Anyone who knows Budgie is welcome to a reunion on his 50th birthday on May 18. Also looking for Buster Brown, last known in Kings Road, Gosport. Contact Victoria Burgess, 'Trebeka', 11, Kharoum Road, Rodwell, Weymouth, Dorset DT4 9LG.

C-class destroyers: Seeking those who served in C-class destroyers, i.e. CA, CO, CH and CR, to join the 6th Destroyer Association. Our sister shipmates are welcome to join whenever they may have served. Reunion details from Cliff Langfoot, Chief Press ganger on 0151 226 3675.

556-557 Aircraft Artificers Apprentices, HMS Concor: Keith Nichol and Dave Barber would like to contact any former classmates with the view to a reunion. Please contact Keith Nichol, Naval Party 1023, SFPPO 490.

HMS Vengeance 1945-46: Frank Clark TEL(5) would like to hear from anyone who served on this ship during the visit to Hiroshima in January or February, 1946. Contact Frank Clark, 5, Monwick Place, North Ferriby, Newcastle upon Tyne NE15 3LB, or phone 0191 242 1494.

Former Ship's Company of HMS Morecombe Bay, 1949-56, interested in renewing old acquaintances, contact Geoffrey Harcourt, 18, Tarnella Way, Botley, Hampshire SO30 2NY, or telephone 01489 787111.

HMS Dakins K550: Telegraphist T.P. Shiner Wright is searching for old shipmates. Harrington Seaham from County Durham, Charlie Young from East London or any others. Please ring 01243 265454.

LCA 127 Flotilla, Sicily, Salerno, Anzio, Elba and the South of France, also LCM 660 Flotilla, Arrnhem to Nijmegen crossings: Contact Ron Jackson, 44, Beggins Wood Road, Folkestone, Kent CT19 4NE, or tel 01303 278363.

HM SHIPS LION, TIGER AND BLAKE
Author Neil McCart is compiling a book about the three cruisers and would appreciate any memories, photographs, commission books from those who served in the ships between 1957 & 1979.
Write, 17 Wymans Lane, Cheltenham, Glos GL51 9QA.

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A large quantity of Ships Bronze Badges, Tampions, Ceremonial Badges recently released by the MOD.
Enquiries, prices and ships names from:
RICHARD PARKER<

BINOCULARS THAT GAVE 'A DEADLY ADVANTAGE'

Glass in a class of its own

A hundred years ago Carl Zeiss produced a pair of binoculars that has kept the German company's name as the benchmark of excellence ever since. But for nearly half a century a Glasgow firm matched them with their own Admiralty Pattern 1900A. William Reid traces the history of "the admirable Barr & Stroud 7X50".

BRITAIN'S Defence Staff decided in 1979 that a single design of binocular field glass could meet the requirements of all three Services. This was a radical philosophical change after a century when the Army, the Navy and then the RAF had each demanded and been allowed to specify its own choice of patterns.

It was not entirely rational, for the new instrument was optimistically intended to meet the needs of observers in Army Air Corps helicopters and Nimrod surveillance aircraft, lookouts on board frigates and infantry engaged in border surveillance from a basha.

The precursor of the modern binocular, a "double-barrelled" telescope, was made in the Low Countries in the early years of the 17th century, but as technical difficulties prevented its achieving pop-

ular acceptance the great majority of observations was made with a single telescope until the 1820s.

The Viennese inventor Friedrich Voigtlander then made the first modern binocular field glass using a simple optical system that was little different from those that Galileo had improved for his astronomical observations two centuries earlier.

The so-called "Galilean" or, more correctly, terrestrial binoculars of the 19th century had a relatively low magnification of only three or four times. They first came

into military use around the middle of the last century when individual British officers embarking for the Crimean War (1854-56) were equipping themselves with the new instrument that allowed them to use both eyes.

For a time, Naval officers continued to prefer the single telescope which, as well as being a useful tool, has something of the wand of office about it, but it was not long before a Galilean binocular was introduced for Naval general service. The British Army handbook where it is first mentioned



● AB Alfred Newall, HMS Suffolk, who first sighted Bismarck (inset) and Prinz Eugen on May 23, 1941. A Barr & Stroud CF41/AP1900A binocular fitted with ray-shades and eyepad is clamped on the bearing director. — IWM

illustrates the Binocular, Night, Mark I, an instrument that is identical to an example that is marked on the leather cover of its barrels with the form of broad arrow that occurs exclusively on binoculars issued by the Admiralty.

A hundred years ago, in the mid-1890s, the innovative prismatic binocular designed and made by the great German firm of Carl Zeiss came on the British scene. As its optical system allowed a higher magnification in a more compact instrument and gave the enhanced stereoscopic vision that is so useful when judging distance and a target's rate of movement, it quickly supplanted the Galilean models for most serious purposes.

The Royal Navy adopted as the Admiralty Pattern 343 a British-made version with a 6X30 specification. That is, its magnification was six times and the diameter of the lens furthest from the eye was 30mm. There were more than 11,000 in the Navy's storehouses when the guns fell silent in November 1918, the majority made during the war by Ross, Kershaw and other London and Leeds firms.

In the course of the 'War to End All Wars' the Royal Navy learned that the Imperial German Navy introduced the 7X50 Service binocular in 1915 that was a noticeable improvement over the smaller 6X30 at dawn or dusk, and even at night.

This was a significant factor, for binoculars were continually in the hands of designated lookouts wherever and whenever action was remotely conceivable. It was obvious to Their Lordships of the Admiralty that when an engagement was imminent, the side that first spotted and identified the enemy had a potentially deadly advantage. The brighter and clearer the glass, the greater the benefit, and the *Doppelrohr* was better — by far.

Within a few months of the Armistice the Admiralty declared its intention to improve the quality of its night glass and to standardise on a single model with minor variations according to its function. Britain's optical industry was invited to submit designs. Most of the competitors were old hands at supplying binoculars to the Services, but the Glasgow firm of Barr & Stroud were novices in the field. They had earned a high reputation as suppliers of excellent rangefinders to the armies and navies of the world for 30 years past, but their first range of binocular glasses for field, marine and theatre use was not launched until early in 1919.

prototype, identified by the company product code CF12. Before undergoing sea trials, it and binoculars by Ross, Zeiss and others were examined at the National Physical Laboratory and the Admiralty Research Laboratory, neighbours at Teddington just west of London. The Glasgow binocular came up trumps. In the words of a 1921 trial report the CF12 was "an exceptionally good glass".

For the next few years insignificant Admiralty orders did little more than keep the Barr & Stroud binocular workshop ticking over. But it remained in business, experimenting with new methods and materials, and was not forgotten by the authorities.

The CF12 underwent many modifications, including the use of substantial quantities of Bakelite in its construction to reduce its weight, before it became the company's 7X50 CF41, which the Royal Navy adopted in 1935 as its Admiralty Pattern 1900A.

When war broke out in September 1939 Barr & Stroud were firmly established as the Navy's principal supplier of hand-held binoculars.

No binocular collection can be considered complete without an example of the ubiquitous AP1900A. It should retain the features that make it unmistakable in appearance. The integral filters

that the user may introduce quickly to enhance contrast in dull light, or reduce it when looking towards bright sunshine or a searchlight's rays are always present.

Some owners have removed the vents, like little tyre-valves on each prism box that allowed optical artificers to dry its internal surfaces with desiccating pumps. Many survivors have had the company's patent "ray-and-spray shades" removed as being heavy and rather clumsy. A clicker device that makes it possible to focus the AP1900A and adjust the distance between the eye-lenses in darkness is often too worn to use.

Barr & Stroud's AP1900A served the Royal Navy well on all the oceans of the world. It even received a unique commendation following the 1941 night action off Cape Matapan, and a disinterested observer later described it as "probably the equal of the Zeiss at night". Before the war ended in 1945 HM ships had been provided with approximately 70,000 binoculars, 24,000 being made in 1944 alone. It remained in service until the Binocular Prismatic General Purpose, 7X42 L11A1 steamed over the horizon in 1979.

Watchkeepers, Dusty Jacks and Optical Artificers who still remember the AP1900A do so with varying degrees of fondness, though. For, it must be confessed, it is not the easiest of instruments to service.



● EYES OF THE FLEET: There were 11,000 AP343s (front) in the Navy's storehouses at the end of World War I. About 1930 they were replaced by Barr & Stroud's CF30, the AP1900 (rear).

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SIR DON AT SEVENTY

I DO believe that the success I've been fortunate to make in my life is to a great degree due to the training, discipline and loyalty bred into me by the Royal Navy. Some of today's youngsters who come straight out of school or university into business have no experience of life or of being in a crisis, or of dealing with men and women of all descriptions, classes and creeds. That's something they lack.

"When I was nine years old my mother took me to Portsmouth to see the warships going in and out of the harbour. It was a very impressive sight and it was then that I made up my mind to join the Navy as soon as I could.

"When war broke out, like many London school children I was evacuated to the country and moved from school to school. I applied for a place in the Nautical Training Ship *Arethusa* - to speed things up I added a year to my age and joined in August 1943.

"The training and discipline

were excellent, but tough on those who broke the rules. Being caught smoking was an automatic sentence to 12 strokes of the cane in front of the ship's company. It certainly put me off smoking!

"In 1944 I joined HMS *St George* based in the Isle of Man along with several hundred others straight from civvy street. That's when I appreciated the benefits of *Arethusa*. In no time I became a Petty Officer Boy and finished the course with flying colours ready to join the cruiser HMS *Liverpool* in the West Indies.

"Then disaster struck. Standing in the Master at Arms Office hearing him say 'falsifying naval documents' I realised that my real age had come to light. I was charged and marched in front of Capt 'Hookey' Bell (the captain of Exeter at the Battle of the River Plate).

"I was stripped of my rank and nearly reduced to tears by the verbal lashing I got from him, marched out - and then marched in again. I was expecting the worst - a prison sentence!

B ut then he said that while my action was wrong in principle it was right in the spirit of the Navy - and he promoted me to Instructor on the Staff for one year to allow my age to catch up!

"I really enjoyed passing on my knowledge to the new entries and taking long haired spivs and drilling them into shape ready for training as seamen. Then the great day arrived in July 1945 when I joined my first ship HMS *Leander* to become an Upper Yardsman Leading Seaman. *Leander* steamed through most of the Mediterranean and for some time we were on the Haifa Patrol chasing illegal immigrant ships. We were part of the task force in the Corfu Channel when HMS *Saumarez* and *Volage* were mined



● **CHARTING SUCCESS:** Sir Donald Gosling surveys a career that owed its start to the Navy.

Docs on disc as a lighter option

NEW COMPUTER systems entering service in the Royal Navy will mean that the amount of paper will be reduced as electronic publications are phased in.

All technical publications will be converted as interactive electronic technical publications to be stored on CD-ROM or in a common database.

Another system - which provides a screen image identical to the paper version - is more suitable for publications designed to be read as a book, such as fleet operational, tactical and administrative publications.

Among the documents which already have been or are being converted to electronic publications (EPs) are the Submarine Command Guidance Handbooks, tactical manuals for the Sea Harrier and Lynx helicopter, updates for beach intelligence and survey database, defence profiles, intelligence briefing memoranda and missile handbooks.

Over the next few years there will be an increasing number of NATO operational publications available on CD-ROM.

Eventual savings in space and weight in ships, and costs resulting from future reductions in hard-copy publications are seen as significant.

EPs are foreseen as becoming a key element of day-to-day operations and administration, and an RN study on the storage and retrieval of electronic documentation throughout the Navy is due to be presented soon.

Details of the policy on the subject are published in RN Defence Council Instruction 37/99.



Fanfare for the working man

ROYAL MARINE buglers and Nelson's flagship HMS *Victory* provided the backdrop for the launch by Portsmouth City Council of the Government's New Deal for the unemployed, designed to create more job opportunities for the over 25s - with special "passports" to provide access to advice and skills training.

Seen with members of the city's Employment Service is Second Sea Lord's Chief of Staff Rear Admiral Peter Dunt (centre).

by the Albanians.

"Then we were ordered home in December 1947 due to the Government's plan to drastically reduce the 1,000 ships then in commission. We were an early victim. I was due to go for pre-commission training but all courses were stopped for nine months.

"It was a terrible disappointment. The Navy had an imbalance of officers to ratings ratio due to the mass exodus of Hostilities Only ratings as quickly as possible whilst a large number of HO officers elected to stay on.

"After a temporary job in Chatham I put in for release as I

"I joined Westminster City Council as a trainee surveyor where I was given some interesting tasks helping to reproduce council records lost in the war. This took me out and about and I very quickly learnt my way around the city. Then one day a young man called Ron Hobson called at my office to enquire how he could open a car park.

"The land he had found was in the adjacent borough of Holborn - but I was able to help and that one chance meeting led to a great successful partnership. The first car park opened in Red Lion Square under the name Central Car Parks

have never lost my love for the Royal Navy, ships and the sea - and it was 30 years ago when a friend, Maurice Buxton, then a director of Barclays Bank, asked me if I would become involved in the White Ensign Association. This is a charity started in 1958 on the inspiration of Lord Mountbatten to help Naval people coming outside preserve their cash 'Golden Bowler' and help them find new careers.

The Association now goes from strength to strength and is an ongoing link between the City, industry and commerce. There is no better way to let the captains of industry see the quality of the men and women of today's Navy than to take them to sea for a day in one of HM ships.

"We are there to help anyone who is serving or has served in the Navy, Royal Marines or under the White Ensign across a whole variety of problems arising from pensions, house purchase, mortgages, insurance, school fees. And what we offer is impartial, confidential and free.

"I am sure that there is no better foundation for life than to be trained in the Royal Navy. The standards and opportunities today are better than ever.

"My advice to those serving is the more you put in the more you get out - make the most of it while you can and the same will apply in civvy street."

'I am sure that there is no better foundation for life than to be trained in the Royal Navy'

was totally demoralised. I loved the Navy but I did not want the uncertainty. In those days you had to get on the bottom rung of the ladder by the age of 20 to make anything of your career. I am so pleased that this has all been changed in today's Navy.

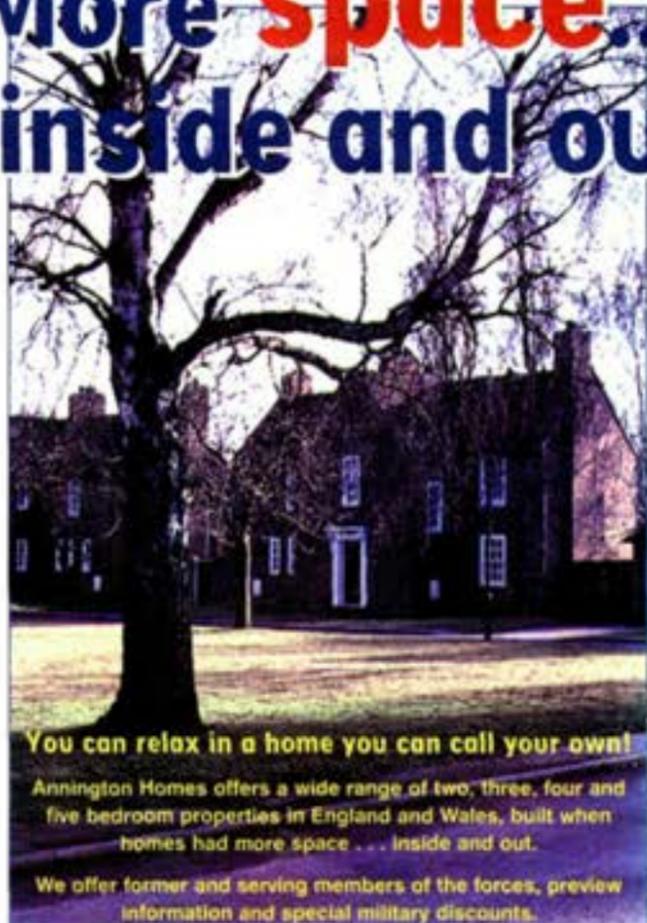
"It was quite a shock to find oneself looking for a new career - but I had had the most marvellous training and experience of life over the past five years and I stepped into a new job with confidence.

- NCP was already in existence although we eventually acquired it and integrated our company.

"It took many years to get the business into profitability such that I could join Ron full time - and it was only last year that we decided to let 'our baby' go following a substantial bid from an American company, which now gives us more time to concentrate on our European Parking interests and develop our property investments.

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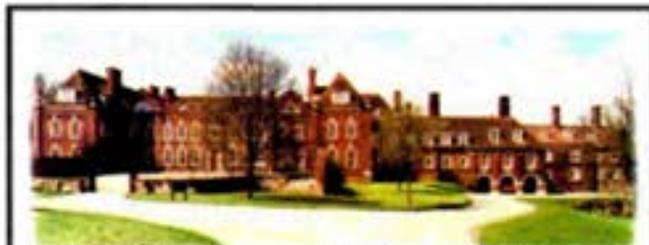


...A GOOD EDUCATION IS AN

A Navy News Advertising Feature

Service Children's Education (UK)

Providing advice and information for the education of Service children



The Princess Helena College

(Founded 1820)

Independent Boarding and Day School for Girls, aged 11 to 18
 "A modern education in a beautiful historic setting"

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For further details and a prospectus contact:

The Admissions Secretary

The Princess Helena College, Preston, Hitchin, Hertfordshire. SG4 7RT
 Telephone: (01462) 432100 Fax: (01462) 431497 Email: head@phc.bcrs.sch.uk

"A registered charity which exists to provide high quality education for girls" Number 313064

Service Children's Education (UK) is the focus for advice and information regarding the education of Service children. This includes:

- Advice on educational provision within the UK and overseas
- Information on provision for special educational needs in the UK and overseas
- Information on UK boarding schools
- Advice on MOD educational allowances
- Educational advice to Service personnel and finance branches in MOD organisations
- Liaison with Local Education Authorities and SCE overseas
- Information on education legislation
- Advice to parents with problems concerning mandatory/discretionary awards
- Arranging escorts for children with special educational needs who are registered with SCE(UK)

SCE(UK) will respond to direct enquiries from Service families and we will also provide information to other organisations and support services who may be working with a Service family. We also provide training support to staff in the support services.

We have specific expertise in boarding school advice and special educational needs. Our education Officers make visits to UK independent and state-maintained boarding schools. We can also put families in touch with others who have children at a particular school.

We are regularly in contact with various boarding school organisations and are a member of the Boarding School Association. Our position within the MOD makes us ideally placed to support families who may require information or guidance on:

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- Issues concerning child protection

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For further information contact HQ SCE(UK), Upavon, Pewsey, Wilts SN9 6BE. Tel 01980 618244. Fax 01980 618245.

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For further details contact Susan Cunliffe Tel. 01323 490000
 Fax: 01323 898420 or e-mail: newlands1@msn.com

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*For more information please contact the Registrar at Cranbrook School, Cranbrook, Kent TN17 3JD
 Telephone 01580 712554 Fax: 01580 715365
 e-mail: registrar@cranbrook.kent.sch.uk
 Cranbrook School (GM) exists to promote education in Cranbrook.*

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- Extensive programme of sport, music and extra-curricular activities;

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*For a free prospectus or to arrange an interview please contact:
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INVESTMENT IN THE FUTURE



A Navy News Advertising Feature

Royal Ascot is just a stone's throw ...

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Both Junior and Senior school follow the National Curriculum 'Plus', but with the added feature of a wide range of GCSE, A-level and GNVQ options, catering for each individual pupil's strengths.

Pupils are encouraged to give of their best, whether the goal is Oxbridge entrance, success at GCSE, honour on the sports field, artistic endeavour - or simply coping with the trials and tribulations

of growing up.

This is a school for all the family, providing a seamless progression through the years and across the full ability spectrum.

NEWLANDS Preparatory School was recently included in *The Sunday Times* list of the top 500 independent schools in Britain.

The report commented on the school's Key Stage 2 results, the broad curriculum and discipline, noting the improvements made by headmaster Oliver Price over the past year: "Newlands has a very strong sense of community, which permeates the educational and pastoral life of pupils."

A new purpose-built Sports Hall was opened last September by Lord Cowdrey of Tonbridge, the former England cricket captain. In addition to a magnificent hall with maple wood sprung floor, there is a fully equipped dance studio and a recreational viewing gallery.

Newlands dances to the top 500



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For details of the next Navy News Education Feature Call 01705 724226

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The Independent Schools Information Service (ISIS) provides you with up to date information about independent fee paying schools. Phone for a free regional ISIS handbook giving details of schools in the South and West.

Tel: 01736 799250
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PATRON: HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN
HEADMASTER: DENIS MULKERRIN MA

Gordon's is a small, Grant Maintained, co-educational school which caters for some 480 boarders aged 11 to 18. Thirty minutes from Heathrow, the School is situated in fifty acres of Surrey countryside and has quite outstanding facilities.

Gordon's has a strong emphasis on academic standards, self discipline, high expectations and traditional values. In its recent Ofsted Inspection Gordon's was described as "a very good School with a number of unique features". For the last two years Gordon's has been ranked in the top twenty most improved schools in Britain.

As a Grant Maintained School there are no tuition fees, parents pay only the boarding fee which is well within the Forces allowances.

For further information and School video, please contact:
The Headmaster, Gordon's School, West End, Woking, Surrey GU24 9PT Tel: 01276 858084.

Gordon's School is a registered Charity which exists to provide education for children. Registered Charity No. 312092

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Boarding (full or weekly) from 7 years.
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An almost unknown museum at HMS Collingwood is a unique reminder of . . .

HOW BRITANNIA RULED

THE AIR WAVES



OCCUPYING three small buildings in HMS Collingwood is one of the most historically important – yet little known – collections of naval electronic equipment in the world, writes Anton Hanney.

Salvaged, donated, discovered, preserved, it has been carefully husbanded by the Navy's weapon and electrical engineering school over the years and now – in seemingly eccentric sculptures of wood, metal and Bakelite – it represents the tangible story of the development of electrical engineering at sea.

Here are the brass spheres, metal drums, rods and wiring by which a torpedo school captain rivalled Marconi's invention . . .

Here, from the scuttled pocket battleship Graf Spee, is the salvaged remains of a radar set recovered in an operation mounted to answer urgent questions about how advanced in electronic warfare the enemy had become . . .

Here, too, is perhaps the only surviving example of the first highly effective shipboard radar which helped to turn the tide against Hitler's U-boats.

At the centre of this treasury of valves and switches – and an archive of over 8,000 books and documents – is Lt Cdr Bill Legg, a retired, uniformed officer who has presided over the museum's expansion as a unique, international collection.

"Collingwood's Radar and Communications Museum was established here in 1946 when the Naval Electronics Branch was formed," he said. "At first it just amounted to a few bits of equipment on benches in a laboratory, but gradually expanded to occupy an instructional cinema and, 12 years ago, three one-storey buildings."

Lt Cdr Legg relies on the help of



● Lt Cdr Bill Legg, curator of HMS Collingwood's Radar and Communications Museum in one of its most complete displays – a ship's W/T office from the inter-war years. Pictures: Jason Baker

a group of dedicated, voluntary workers – among them ex-Service people who actually operated some of the equipment types on display.

And interest in the collection is growing. Though it is housed behind the wire of a Naval establishment – making group or individual visits strictly by appointment only – over 1,500 people saw it last year, 300 more than the previous 12 months.

"Ideally, the collection should be outside the establishment so as to be more accessible," said Lt Cdr Legg. "We are hoping that it might be transferred eventually to somewhere like Portsmouth Historic Dockyard."

The father of Naval electronics, Capt Henry Jackson, figures prominently in the display. Later to become an Admiral of the Fleet and First Sea Lord at the time of Jutland, Jackson had a genius for electronics.

While a captain in command of the Torpedo School ship HMS Defiance, he evolved a successful transmitter and receiver. In 1896 trials using the old gunboat HMS Scourge resulted in the successful transmission of a message over almost three miles at ten words a minute.

All that had been done without knowledge of Marconi's work, but soon the two men met, compared notes and found the two kinds of apparatus very similar. By 1899 a version of Jackson's set – less sensitive, but easier to maintain and more reliable than Marconi's – was fitted in a number of ships.

By 1903 the Fleet's standard set consisted of an amalgam of Jackson and Marconi components, using the best features of each.

By the end of the First World War, wireless transmission had progressed apace – and one of Collingwood's most remarkable exhibits from the inter-war years is a complete W/T office dating from the early 1930s and taken from the fleet repair ship HMS Resource.

Other of the museum's riches include early Morse equipment – and early radar, the aerials of which during the 1930s were rotated by hand.

Pride of place among the wartime radars are components from the Graf Spee, behind which there is an intriguing story.

Anxious to ascertain how effective enemy radar was, the British were desperate to get their hands on the equipment still in the pocket battleship. She had been scuttled six miles off Uruguay after the Battle of the River Plate in December 1939 – but in the shallow water her conning tower remained high and dry.

The British cheekily bought the wreck, then sent out a team of Naval Constructors under a man named Ken Purvis to climb into the superstructure and remove the vital evidence.

For the British the operation reaped reassuring rewards: they found that the German radar possessed much lower frequency than Britain's, demonstrating that Hitler was significantly behind in the radar stakes.

Later in the war, the British maintained that lead by making a vital breakthrough in the develop-

ment of Type 271, a radar whose sensitivity and accuracy could detect a contact as small as a U-boat periscope at long range.

"It was a decisive weapon in the fight against the U-boats," said Lt Cdr Legg. "It was the first British centimetric radar made possible through magnetron development."

Most sets were scrapped with the ships after the war, others were removed and discarded when more up-to-date equipment became available. But Collingwood has a set, and Bill Legg thinks it may be the only one to survive.

Among the hundreds of other artefacts at the museum are a silver-plated electric radiator and telephone from the Royal apartments of HMV Albert and Victoria, one of only two revolving drum typewriters known to be in existence, a working crystal set, and HMS Collingwood's original switchboard.

"We're still adding to the collection," said Lt Cdr Legg, "and we intend to restore as much of the equipment as possible to full working order."

Warning over a history 'in danger of being lost'

MUCH of the history of defence electronics is in danger of being lost because too few people are collecting information and recollections which provide the key to how ground-breaking equipment was operated.

This is the fear of Dr John Beavis, Director of Bournemouth University's Centre for the History of Defence Electronics – CHIDE for short – who, with Bill Legg is seeking to spread the word. Their latest efforts include a symposium on the 1950s Flyplane weapon systems, due to be held at HMS Collingwood on June 4.

"We want to bring the his-

tory of this technology alive," he said. "Our members are designers, engineers, operators and maintainers, but their age spectrum is narrow. There is a gap in the process of recollections, and we want to record the experiences of younger as well as older people who have been involved with defence electronics."

"Not only do we want to study the way technology changes, but also its impact on society. We must try to give this dead equipment a human voice."

Dr Beavis can be contacted on 01202 595169 (fax 595255). Lt Cdr Legg of HMS Collingwood Museum is on 01329 332535.



● ABOVE: The most prized exhibit at the Collingwood Museum – the first naval wireless transmitter. It was invented by Capt Henry Jackson (left) who worked in parallel with the man credited with inventing radio – Marconi.

● BELOW: Parts of the Graf Spee's radar set snatched by British experts in a raid on the wreck soon after she was scuttled off Monte-video in 1939. The part on the left housed the pocket battleship's radar screen, while the surrounding pictures show the radar antenna and her destruction in 1939.





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• The new Rover 75 "sets new standards of styling, interior design, ride comfort and refinement in a hugely demanding class".

— Julian Rendell, editor
What Car magazine

Winning start for Rover executive

THE NEW Rover 75 executive car has got off to a winning start months before it goes on sale, named Car of the Year by *What Car?* magazine, beating 15 other category winners for outright honours after taking the award for best compact executive car.

"The 75 sets new standards of styling, interior design, ride comfort and refinement in a hugely demanding class," said editor Julian Rendell.

Proclaimed as Rover's first all-new car for 20 years, the 75 is critical to the future of Rover under BMW's ownership.

Although unveiled at last October's Birmingham motor show, the first cars will not be delivered to customers until mid-June, and these will be the Club and Connoisseur versions priced from £19,525 for the 1.8 Club, rising to £25,625 for the 2.5-litre V6 Connoisseur SE.

The entry-level Classic models, with prices from £18,250, will not be available until the end of the year.

But while taking styling cues from the Rovers of the 1940s and 50s, and the name from the classic Rovers of the same era, it is a thoroughly modern range. There will

be a choice of 1.8, 2-litre and 2.5 V6 petrol engines, plus a 2-litre diesel – a super-refined BMW turbo diesel power plant – and choice of five-speed Getrag manual or five-speed Jatco electronic transmissions.

The result of a £700 million investment programme, the up-market new Rovers all have electric front windows, full-width wooden dashboard, dual-harness "armchair" seats, leather trimmings, six-speaker radio/cassette, and pollen filter. Safety features include zinc-coated high-strength steels, four-wheel sensing ABS brakes, electronic brake-force distribution and front and side airbags for the front seat occupants.

Club models gain air conditioning, alloy wheels and rear electric windows, while the Connoisseurs add leather seats, powered and heated in the front, and details like chrome mirrors and passenger lumbar support.

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Satellite navigation in new Mitsubishi

MITSUBISHI has long excelled in the up-market 4X4 niche with the Shogun range but now it has a new addition called the Challenger which is more affordable but just as able and with all the presence you expect from the stable, writes *Glynn Williams*.

Although it has the capabilities and ground clearance for off-roading, this is more the machine for the urban cowboy (or girl) who likes to ride high for better command of the road and enjoy a robust all-rounder which drives like a car rather than an agricultural spin-off.

Prices start at just under £20,400 for the 2.5 turbo diesel GLX which has dual airbags in the front and electric sunroof and mirrors, and the part-time four-wheel-drive fitted across the range which means that most of the time you simply use rear-wheel-drive boosting economy.

Main rivals in the price range and specification are the Jeep Cherokee, Vauxhall Frontera and Nissan Terrano.

The Challenger model tested was the GLS trim 2.5 turbo diesel, which is priced at £23,675 and has a high standard specification, adding anti-lock brakes, air conditioning, electric windows front and rear, roof rails and front fog lights.

There are also countless optional extras, like wheel arch extensions at around £300 the set, and a boot liner tray for £92.53 - ideal if you're taking the dogs out regularly or enjoy other messy pursuits.

But the test car had another extra which is a real boon for those who roam the country calling at obscure destinations - satellite navigation. The Philips CARIN system costs from £1,399 but fits in the space of a normal stereo. Key in your destination down to the



● The new Mitsubishi Challenger - a more affordable 4X4

name of the street and it will take you there, with clear voice messages and a visual display, giving ample advance notice of turnings you need to prepare for.

It doesn't take the most direct route, sending you down obscure lanes, but the best optimum, making the most of motorways and A

roads and I found it spot-on for my regular runs.

But back to the Challenger itself, it's roomy but not so high that it precludes entry to multi-storey car parks or special booking on ferries and the Channel Shuttle. In fact it is designed to fit the standard garage!

It drives extremely well, surprisingly responsive and yet also impressively frugal for this class, happily averaging around 30mpg, and quietly and smoothly at that - you easily forget it's a diesel.

And it also has presence; it's a good-looker that's going to be around for a long time to come.



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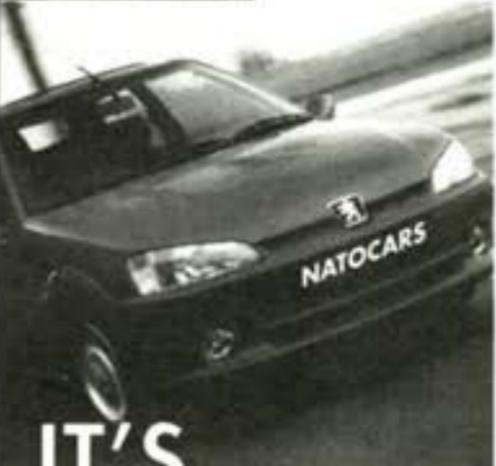
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ENGINE: 2.5-litre turbo diesel producing 98bhp.

TRANSMISSION: Part-time four-wheel-drive with limited slip differential, high and low ratios and five-speed manual change.

ECONOMY: 29mpg combined cycle.

PERFORMANCE: 90mph maximum.

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MARINE SOCIETY STANDS ALONE IN SEA TRAINING

School of the sea opens new classes

FOR nearly 250 years The Marine Society has been encouraging young people to become seafarers – originally as a humane alternative to the Press Gang! Now, with shortages of personnel in the RN, RFA and the merchant service, that support is needed more than ever.

Sea training is perhaps the prime carrot to dangle before any would-be mariner – and The Marine Society is now the only source of offshore power training provided in the UK.

"The available fleet of ships for this purpose has shrunk dramatically – down to the Society's own ship, in fact, the *Earl of Romney*, which is the only one we operate now," Director Capt Jeremy Howard told *Navy News*.

"We had to give up our other ship, the *Jonas Hanway*, last year. This was primarily for financial reasons. The service we offer is heavily subsidised for prospective seafarers – we only charge cadets

£12 a day all in – and it was just getting too expensive."

An even bigger blow fell on the Sea Cadet Corps on December 31, when the Fleet tenders *TS Appleby* and *TS Abnouth* were returned to the Ministry of Defence after they failed the Department of Transport's new marine safety rules (although *Appleby* has just been acquired by the Maritime Volunteer Service and may soon return to help plug the gap. See back page).

"London is still the world's prime centre of maritime affairs – but it has no God-given right to remain so," Capt Howard warned.

"It became so when the country was in its maritime heyday and

remains so because the skills and expertise built up during those halcyon days are still available – just. It will not be so when the experienced seafaring seedcorn is no longer available and companies, institutions and businesses – which are increasingly internationally orientated these days anyway – have to move elsewhere to find the personnel they require.

"The training of more British seafarers, by whatever means, has a far greater imperative than merely to satisfy nostalgic longings for the way we were. It is vital if we are to prevent the loss of an important part of the nation's economic growth."

Since World War II the Society has concentrated more and more on the educational side of its operation. In 1976 it amalgamated with several other charities, including the Seafarers Education Service and started to get seriously involved in long-distance learning. The 'College of the Sea' provides sea-going tutors, supported self-study, examinations at sea and a comprehensive continuing education and advice service.

Today the Royal Fleet Auxiliary – and since last year the Royal Navy – is one of its biggest customers.

We do what the Instructor Branch used to do for the RN. Nowadays a sailor has the choice of taking his GCSEs and A-levels through a number of approved centres and they are all commercial – except for ours, and so our charges are generally a bit cheaper.

"RN students can recover some of the cost of their tuition under the Forces Distance Learning Scheme – and our experience so far is that they are far more committed than their Merchant Navy counterparts.

"I think that may be because they will have an immediate goal in view – a promotion that requires a certain qualification – whereas the merchant service seafarer may have a slightly longer term view: 'It might be nice to get a few GCSEs'."

The Society also offers scholarships and interest-free loans for the pursuit of academic qualifications and provides a library service to over 500 merchant and RFA ships (but not to the RN which has its own arrangement).

"There is still, even in the computer age, an amazing demand for this service – which has actually grown over the past two years. But there is also soon to be an explosion in access to communications for seafarers with the latest INMARSAT technology set to become much cheaper.

"On the educational side we are already into CD-ROMs and so will be taking full advantage of that – to which end we are looking at offering our own IT and computer



training courses."

The Society has also taken over the British Ship Adoption Society to produce Sea Lines – a scheme to arrange partnerships between seafarers and schools throughout the UK to promote an interest in maritime affairs.

"With all our schools getting computers on line, this has become an increasingly popular way of maintaining these links. We aim to bring a breath of sea air into our schools – which are the nurseries for all the seafarers of the future."

● **Above:** On board *the Marine Society vessel Earl of Romney*, Cadets Alex Hulme (left) and Daniel Pollitt carry out bridge watchkeeping duties under the guidance of Capt Chris Roberts. **Inset:** Cadets Becky Luckman, Heather Mills and James Calvert receive instructions from the captain on the bridge.



Jonas Hanway – the first Recruiter

The Marine Society is the world's oldest public maritime charity, set up in 1756 by a group of merchants who met at the King's Arms, Cornhill to discuss ways of supplying sailors for the Navy – then in desperate need of recruits at the beginning of the Seven Years War against France.

Jonas Hanway (1712-86), merchant, writer and philanthropist, was its chief mover and shaker until his death 30 years later. The Society took upon itself to interview poor boys from the streets of London and pass them on to the Navy equipped with new clothes, bedding, seaman's knife, Testament and prayer book. As he wrote: "Many are polluted with filth and covered with rags the very stench of which is pestilential; then to review them cured of these maladies, rendered clean and purified, dressed in the most proper clothing and made as new creatures."

Hanway interested himself in the best quality of cloth to keep out bad weather and insisted that the boys be well cared for. Instructions to the Master of the Taphouse at Clerkenwell, where they were sent before joining their ships, stated: "They must always be supplied with three meals a day, and particularly with milk-porridge and good bread, some fresh butcher's meat, roots and suchlike ..."

By the end of the war the Society had recruited over 10,000 men and boys, many subsequently transferred to the merchant service.

Soon after Hanway's death the Society bought a small merchant ship, the *Beatty*, renamed *Marine Society*, to be moored in the Thames off Deptford and provide nautical training for the boys – thus making it the world's first pre-sea training ship. Other ships followed (best known being the three in succession all named *Warspite*). Today practical experience is provided on board the training vessel *Earl of Romney*.

□ To find out more about The Marine Society, write to 202 Lambeth Road, London SE1 7JW. Tel 0171 261 9535 fax 0171 401 2537 email enq@marine-society.org.uk Or visit their website at <http://www.marine-society.org.uk> where you can request information online and find out the latest news.



● **Jonas Hanway, founder of The Marine Society**

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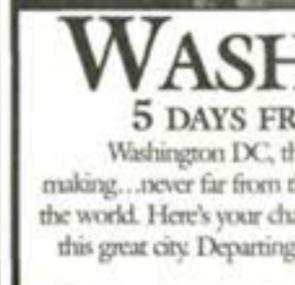
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In Brief

BRITISH Judo Association national coach Seth Birch dropped in on the RN Judo Association trials and squad training – and gave a three-hour coaching session.

Overall open winner was AEM James Clement (HMS Heron) in a competition in four weight categories which featured 20 of the Navy's top players.

THREE teams battled it out in a round robin for the RN Squash Rackets Association knockout trophy, with HMS Seahawk having to withdraw from the semi-finals at the last minute through injuries.

HMS Neptune found Bath and HMS Nelson too strong, losing 5-0 in both matches, and in the title decider the final game went to a final set, Ian Binks winning that set 9-3 against Chris Dugate to give Nelson a 3-2 victory and possession of the John Jacques trophy for another year.

A PENALTY flick in extra time gave RNAS Yeovilton a 3-2 victory over hosts BRNC Dartmouth in the Royal Navy Cup.

Goals from CPO Mitchell (two) and PO Morgan proved enough to see the air station through.

DEVONPORT Services rugby team have beaten a touring American military side 28-10.

Services opened the scoring against Norwich University Military Academy, from Vermont, when MEM Scott Witt put flanker Brian Crichton away for a try. Further tries from Richard Turner and Shaun Nicholls put the Devonport side ahead by 17-10, a lead extended by Scott Williams in the second half after RM bandsman Karl Long burst through on a short pass.

The Academy is a private school for officers training for the US armed forces.

A CHARITY golf tournament in support of SSAFA Forces Help is to be held at the Langdon Hills Golf Club at Bulphan in Essex.

The event, on April 27, is organised by the Rayleigh branch of the Royal Naval Association, and is expected to feature around 140 golfers.

THE NAVY fared badly at the Inter-Service basketball championships hosted by the Army at the Prince William of Gloucester Barracks in Grantham.

The RN juniors lost narrowly to the RAF by 52-47, and kept within 20 points of the title-winning Army team before losing 85-66.

The women took a battering, losing 82-18 to the RAF and 88-3 to the Army, who won the section, and the Seniors could do nothing to break the losing streak, going down 69-48 to eventual winners the RAF and 82-36 to the Army.

REAR Admiral Jonathon Band has officially opened the newly-refurbished HMS Collingwood Rugby Club.

Admiral Band, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff and president of the RN Rugby Union, cut a ceremonial ribbon and thanked the Sailors and Fleet Amenities Fund and the Collingwood CAF for providing the funding for the work.

New format promises more fun

FUNDAMENTAL changes in the RN/RM Windsurfing Championships are to be brought in for this year's event in May.

There will be a move away from the standard racing format of using longboards around the same old course, no matter what the conditions.

This year, at the RN Championships at Browdown Camp in Gosport, any equipment can be used in an unrestricted open fleet, though there will still be a restricted

fleet for novices or the "equipmentally challenged".

The RN event is on May 22-23, and it is hoped the new race format will make it a more relaxed and enjoyable series.

There are also plans to stage a windsurfing festival weekend in late October, based on the popular funboard course run by the RAF at Anglesey.

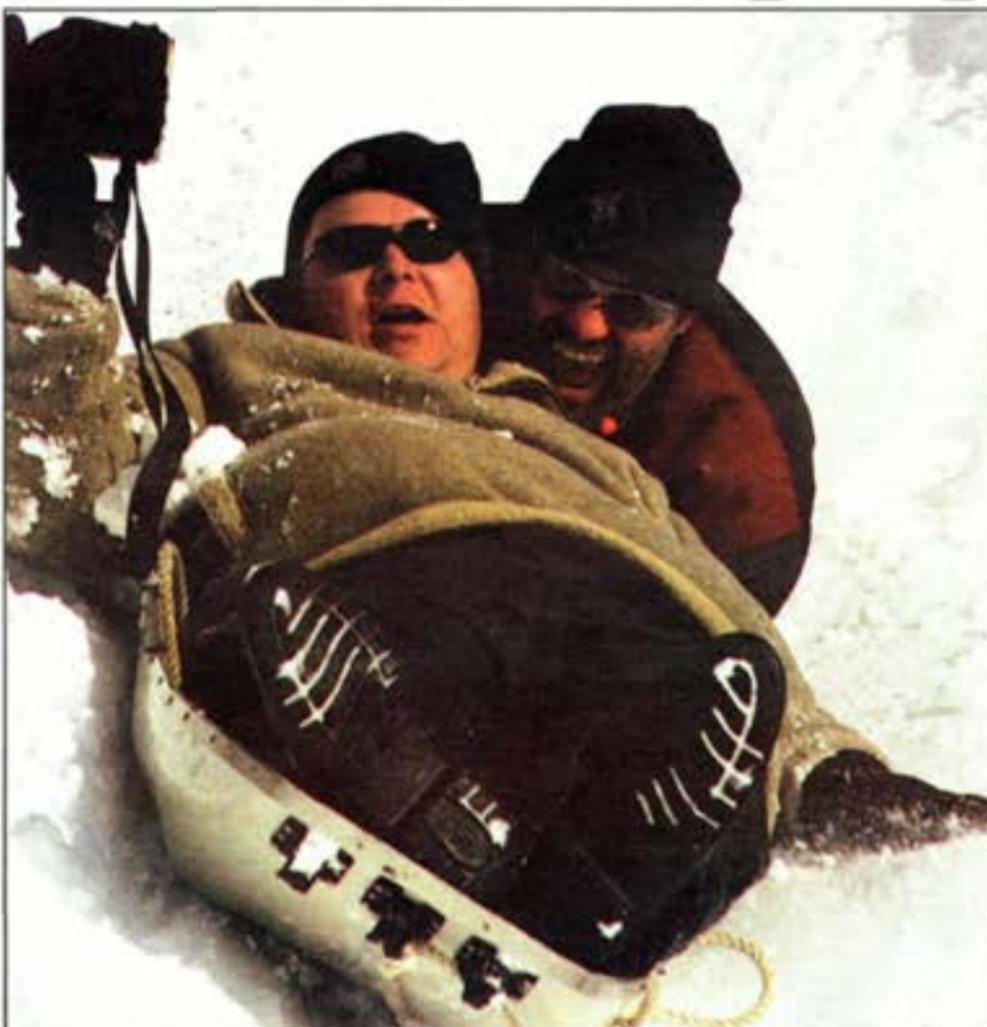
This weekend will be for any member of the RN or RM who feels they need a few tips towards windsurfing techniques.

Rumour has it that it may be held at the Calshot Activity Centre in Hampshire.

For entry forms and details about the weekend, which will promise top personalities and demo kit, contact Lt Cdr Simon Kingsbury, WEO in HMS Lancaster.

For information on beginners courses, which are held throughout the summer term, contact CPO Ian Seward at RNAS Yeovilton on ext 5440.

Endurance contests 'Winter Olympics'



On the skids – AB(MW) Socs Gulson and AB(R) Kev Pownall push it to the limit on the Antarctic Winter Olympics luge course.

A VISIT to an Antarctic ice base gave HMS Endurance the opportunity to compete for a Naval version of the Winter Olympics.

And the ship's football team is laying a claim to have played the most southerly match by a Navy vessel – 64 miles inside the Antarctic Circle.

Organised by POPT Dean Steer and C/Sgt Nige Lane, the Olympics pitted the Navy's bravest and best against staff from the British Antarctic Survey base at Rothera in events which included downhill, dual slalom and a skidoo rally.

But the most popular event proved to be the 60 metre luge, which had been dug out in two hours that morning.

On completion of the formal 'Olympics' there was a free-for-all, with half of the ship's company sledging, skiing and making gash-bag runs.

The ship's footballers faced a trickier challenge, with a bitterly cold cross-wind bringing the wind-chill mark below zero.

On a gravel pitch normally used to park aircraft, against a backdrop of ice cliffs and glaciers, the two teams were evenly matched in the first half.

Goals from AB Scouse Fewtrell and AB Deano Hadlow gave Endurance a 2-1 interval lead, and after a rapid half-time break the fitness of the sailors began to count and they finished 4-1 winners, second-half scorers being Fewtrell and LS General Booth.

With Rothera situated 67 degrees 37 minutes south, the team wonders if anyone has played a proper match further south.

Veteran pairings in close contest

A LARGE turnout made for a busy RN badminton championships, held this year at HMS Neptune in Scotland.

The top three veterans doubles pairs gave tournament organisers a headache when they finished with identical points. The eventual winners were Lt Cdr Rowlands (HMS Osprey) and Cdr Steel (HMS Sultan), who pipped CPO Balmforth (HMS Neptune) and AEM Edwards (Yeovilton).

Lt Cdr Rowlands received a presentation to mark the end of his long stint as RNBA secretary.

LPT Losh (HMS Neptune) put in a good performance in the final against Moe O'Connor (JCdo), giving him the open singles title for the third year in succession.

In the women's event PO Phillips beat her great rival PO Murray, though they later teamed up to win the doubles, while WOM(AW) Stevenson (HMS Exeter) achieved a runners-up spot on her debut, partnering Lt Webber in the doubles.

Other winners were:
U21 singles: Moe Ewens
Men's rest. doubles: CH Tate and Moe Ewens
Ladies' rest. doubles: WRN Mehen and Lt Collins
Vet men's singles: CPO Balmforth
Mixed doubles: Lt Cdr Rowlands and PO(W) Murray
Men's doubles: Lt Cdr Rowlands and CPO Frisby

Finalists square up

HMS COLLINGWOOD is two thirds of the way to a cup treble after a second 5-1 final victory.

Having won the Charity Cup by beating HMS Osprey, the Collingwood team fell a goal behind to RM Poole, but goals by Quirke and Peachey put them ahead at the break.

Constant second-half pressure saw both Collingwood scorers double their tally and Dunnley add a fifth to take the Senior Challenge cup back to Fareham.

The third leg of the triple is the Navy Cup final, against HMS Culdrose, to be played at HMS Drake.

Culdrose reached the final with a narrow win over HMS Drake.

The winning goal of three was scored by S/Lt Malcolm Ellison in a frantic period of extra time.



Bowing out – Bob Chapman at his last Inter-Service Cross Country Championships.

Navy runners up the pace

NAVY teams may not have won the titles, but the 1999 Inter-Service Cross Country Championships will long be remembered as the moment when Navy endurance athletics really came of age, writes Lt Cdr Bob Chapman.

The Juniors and Ladies finished second, the Veterans finished a close third, and the Seniors lost by only four points to the Army, finishing second for the first time in more than 30 years.

On top of this, the Navy won three individual medals.

The Army and RAF now know that future Inter-Service championships will be three-way contests.

Since the summer, Navy endurance athletes have been guided in their training by coach Chris Jones under the watchful eye of team manager Bob Dunkley.

Monthly weekend training sessions, along with a dedicated build-up to the championships, proved worthwhile on a muddy, undulat-

ing course at HMS Raleigh.

First in action were the Juniors, with local athlete Mark Adams recovering from a heavy fall a half-mile from home to take the silver. Ben Novak (CTCRM) and James Buckle (HMS Newcastle) finished just outside the medals.

The Army team finished just ahead of the Navy, with the RAF well back in third.

The Veterans' chances were badly dented by the withdrawal of English international and reigning Services champion John Rye in the

week of the race, and Al Rich had to pull out during the race.

But Steve Payne (40Cdo) grabbed individual glory, winning by more than half a minute, and Ginge Gough (Collingwood) just beat an Army runner to take the bronze; the pair almost helped lift the Navy into second place.

Bob Chapman (Yeovilton), despite being well over 50, followed up strongly in 12th, in what was his last Inter-Services after more than 30 years of RN running.

In the Ladies' event the Army

Belinda notches a first first

CULDROSE runner Belinda Fear ran a great cross country race to win the Westward League fixture at Paignton.

The course was flat and not too muddy, which suited Belinda's track speed, and she took charge of proceedings during the second lap to finish more than 60 metres clear and register the first-ever victory in this league by a female Navy runner. With one race to go, Belinda looks set to finish in the top three overall positions.

Meanwhile, on the roads Tim Watson, of the RM Band, Portsmouth, continued his preparations for the Inter-Service cross country championships by finishing sixth in the Chichester 10km on a windy course.

made the early running, but a domestic battle between Vicky Norton (HMS Cambridge), Belinda Fear (Culdrose) and Lindsey Gannon (HMS Warrior) saw them edge up and finish fifth, sixth and seventh respectively, with only six seconds separating them.

The Men's race provided a thrilling climax, with Tim Watson (RM Band, Portsmouth) tucking in the leading group early on.

With half a lap to go the Army was in front, but the Navy had seen off the RAF and was closing fast.

At the line Watson was clear in fourth, with Garry Gerrard (Gloucester Careers) fifth and Mark Crossdale (Cdo Log RM) sixth, but despite a tense closing lap the Army had just maintained the advantage by just four points.

Other good runs came from Terry Pares (CTCRM), George Roper and Paul Levick (Yeovilton) in the Men's, Roger Saynor (HMS Temeraire) in the Veterans' and Janet Beaton (HMS Drake).



Rugby 13 learn from Academy

THE ROYAL Navy rugby league side took on Huddersfield Academy in a pre-season game at HMS Collingwood – and were taught a lesson by their opponents.

The 17-19-year-olds of the Academy had the Navy under pressure from the start, and skilful passing and co-ordinated game plans put the visitors well ahead, though the RN bagged a try before the break to make it 24-6.

The Navy scored first in the second half, but the Academy was soon back on the attack, and a late rally by the sailors could only bring the final score back to 34-14.

■ A special appearance is on the cards when the RN faces the Civil Service in another friendly, at Burnaby Road, Portsmouth.

Lt Bill Meechan, vice chairman of the Navy team, will don his boots for the last ten minutes, his finale to the organisation he helped establish. Lt Meechan is going to Canada with his family.

The game, on April 15, kicks off at 1800hrs, and entry is free.

■ This year's involvement in the Public Services Cup begins at the Victory Stadium on May 13 when the Navy entertain the RAF.

Squash teams knocked flat

THE NAVY had few successes to cheer at the Inter-Service squash tournament at HMS Temeraire.

The senior team lost 5-0 to both the Army and RAF, and the veterans fared little better, losing 3-2 to the Army and 5-0 to the RAF.

The Under 25s team and the women both tasted victory of sorts. The junior side had a 5-0 walkover against the RAF, who couldn't raise a team, but lost in the final match to go down 3-2.

The women lost 5-0 to the Army, but rallied to beat the RAF 3-2 to take second place.

Dryad prove top anglers

HMS DRYAD took the honours at the Solent Area RN and RM Sea Angling Association presentation evening.

The association numbers 50 civilians and service personnel, including all Portsmouth shore establishments and HM ships Grafton, York, Manchester and Fearless.

Dryad won most boat and beach team trophies and Sultan won the Midweek League team trophy and were runners-up to Dryad overall.

Adventure wins

ADVENTURE, the RN entry in the Transglobe 98 round-the-world yacht race, won the third leg from Panama to Hawaii, leaving all three Service yachts level overall.

Having lost the second leg when a squall broke a boom as they were leading, this text-book victory put them in good heart for the next leg, which started on March 20 and should end in Hong Kong towards the end of this month.

RN sinks students

BOXERS from HMS Sultan proved too strong for the students of Cambridge University, with the sailors finishing 7-3 ahead.

MEM Kav Kavanagh was the first in the ring, and forced his opponent to take two standing counts before winning on points.

OM Kev Davie, a newcomer to RN boxing, also won, and CPOMEA Taff Breeds not only punished his opponent, but also won best boxer award.

Team captain MEM Max Maxwell gained a majority decision against an experienced boxer, and MEM Andy Farrow put Sultan 5-0 up with a first-round KO.

NA Brum Brumpton, on his boxing debut, gave away weight and height to a rugged opponent but fought well, losing on a majority decision.

Team-mate MEM Chris Carr had to be withdrawn by coach Q Shillingford after he was cut inside his mouth, but AEM Adie Myers put Sultan back on course by forcing the Cambridge corner to throw in the towel.

MEM Nobby Noble outpointed his man, but the final bout of the night went to the visitors, LPT Neil Howe losing a tough heavyweight contest.

■ The annual RN v RM boxing show was a great success, despite the main challenge only providing three contests at HMS Heron.

After a good light middleweight fight between Mnes Tang (RMR) and Guthrie (40Cdo), MEM Kav Kavanagh stopped AEM Chris Herrity (HMS Heron).

The first team match saw OM Kev Davie under attack from Mne Swaynstone, but the sailor upped the pace in the third and fight was stopped 90 seconds into the final



● Cooling down – HMS Sultan coach Q Shillingford sprays boxer MEM Kav Kavanagh.

round. Davie won the best boxer vote.

The second team match saw Mne Andy Andrews (42Cdo) break the nose of CPOMEA Taff Breeds (CFM Portsmouth) in a bout which was well-received by the Yeovilton crowd. Breeds took best runner-up award.

AEM Adie Myers' superior fitness paid off when the Culdrose man outpointed OM Johnson (HMS Beaver), but the next bout, between AEM Al Houghton and MEM Chris Carr, featured big punches, and the referee stopped it in the third in favour of Houghton.

The final team match was an exciting heavyweight contest between LPT Howie and Mne Buick, the Navy man defending and covering well against the Marine's bulldozing forays.

Howie was awarded the bout on points.

Fighters are edged out

NAVY boxers lost narrowly to the Home Counties in front of special guest, soccer and now film star Vinnie Jones.

MEM Tommy Lawton lost a gruelling bout on a majority decision, but MEM Kav Kavanagh evened the score by stopping his man in the second round.

LOM Naz Colbourne's fancy footwork and fast hands were undone when he was stopped by a thunderous right, but OM Jono Johnson survived a knock-down to drop his opponent.

MEM Max Maxwell, CPOMEA Taff Breed and AEM Adie Myers all ran their opponents close, but MEM Nobby Noble and OM Kev Davie won to make the final score 5-4.

Command coaches POPT Q Shillingford (Portsmouth) and CPOMEA Kev Hay (Plymouth) have training sessions as follows: Portsmouth: Mon and Weds 1645-1800 at HMS Sultan, Tues and Thurs 1730-1900 at HMS Nelson.

Plymouth: Mon and Weds 1200-1300, Tues and Thurs 1630-1800, all at HMS Drake. All are welcome.

Sailors win football title

THE NAVY has taken the Inter-Service football title – but slipped up against civilian opposition.

The Navy men started off with a draw against the RAF at Uxbridge. Play flowed from end to end with both sides going close before the RAF had a goal disallowed.

The sailors immediately rubbed salt into the wound by taking the lead through POPT Fraser Quirke, but were pushed back in the second half, and the airmen went level in the 76th minute.

Two late Navy chances went begging, and the game ended 1-1.

With the RAF sneaking a win at Aldershot, the Navy needed to beat the Army to take the title.

In front of a capacity crowd the Navy missed early chances and fell behind, but Quirke and O'Neil put them ahead, and Clapham scored the vital third after the break.

The soldiers pulled one back, but were on the defensive for the rest of the match.

Meanwhile the final match of the SWCC competition saw the Navy return to early-season form, thumping Hampshire 5-0 with a

brace of goals from POAEM Nigel Thwaites and POPT Fraser Quirke, AEM Paul Clapham grabbing the fifth.

But a mid-season slump, which saw two draws and a defeat, meant the Navy failed to win its group.

A weakened side slipped to defeat against the Civil Service.

With three making their debut, the Navy struggled to settle early, but despite taking the game to the civilians after the break the visitors nicked the winner on 64 minutes.

The Navy team is now looking forward to a football break in Dallas later this month – which is also the destination of the RN Youth team, who came back from Molesey with a hard-earned draw against Surrey in the Home Counties League.

The Navy team took a nearly lead through Mark Nichol (HMS Collingwood), but by the quarter-hour were 2-1 down.

Collingwood's George Walker scored twice in the second half to restore the sailors' lead, but Surrey finished strongly to make it 3-3.

Lusty loses to Bath

BATH and England winger David Trick led a Bath Select XV to a 71-0 victory over HMS Illustrious in a challenge match – but the carrier's Welfare Fund benefited to the tune of £4,000 through various fund-raising events.

The Bath team, including members of the University of Bath and University College, London, were on the ship as part of the Bath PLC rugby day held on board the ship in Portsmouth.

■ The Combined Services Under 21s secured a late victory over the Royal Military Academy Sandhurst during a training weekend at Aldershot.

In wet conditions the combined side started hesitantly, and soon found themselves 21 points down.

They had almost halved the deficit by the break, and stepped up a gear in the second half – but only went ahead in the final ten minutes, winning 27-21.

● Confrontation – the Bath and Illustrious front rows prepare to scrum down.



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WILLIS CORROON
INSURANCE BROKER TO THE WORLD

President's thanks for Westminster in Sierra Leone

HMS WESTMINSTER has been thanked by the President Kabbah of Sierra Leone for the ship's continued presence in his troubled country.

The President expressed his personal gratitude when he was welcomed on board the Type 23 frigate berthed in the capital, Freetown, on March 17. He was accompanied by Ministers of

State and the British High Commissioner, Peter Penfold.

While rebels continue to pose a threat, life seemed to be getting back to normal. Under their Commanding Officer, Cdr Jeremy Stanford, the ship's company has been involved in a wide variety of tasks, including surveying the port area, repairing schools damaged during the fighting, and providing

medical support and advice.

The ship's football team played a Displaced XI in the national stadium, losing 3-0. And, in more sombre mood, a guard from the ship was present, at the invitation of the Sierra Leone Ex-Servicemen's Association, at a memorial service in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery.

The service was conducted by the Chaplain

to the Fourth Frigate Squadron, the Rev Michael Brotherton.

During her deployment in support of Operation Basilica, Westminster has been somewhat crowded, her normal complement of 170 being swelled to 225 by the presence of personnel from the Permanent Joint HQ, the Fleet Standby Rifle Troop from 45 Commando, and 539 Boat Group RM.



This young citizen of Freetown gets a helping hand from Mne Tom Griffen, on guard while a medical team from HMS Westminster were providing support in a nearby hospital.

Picture: LA(PHOT) Steve Wood

Many to get extra leave warrants

MORE LEAVE travel warrants will be available to many Service personnel under a new scheme being introduced this month.

The arrangements replace the 50-year-old UK Leave Travel Scheme (UKLTS) which was amended in October to give equal entitlement to single and married personnel.

Now, following a thorough review, two new schemes will be introduced - a Get You Home (Early Years) scheme and a Get You Home (Stability Assistance) arrangement. As before, the Early Years scheme allows four warrants a year for the first three years of Naval service - recognising the need of young personnel to maintain stability with their families.

After three years service, that entitlement is replaced by Stability Assistance for those who retain a permanent base - owned or rented - away from their place of duty. That allows single and married personnel three warrants a year - but only if they cannot or do not wish to take advantage of the Service's relocation package.

The Stability Assistance warrants will also not be available to those taking advantage of the GYH (Posting) package for married personnel posted unaccompanied.

During the last decade of its operation, UKLTS had shifted its focus progressively towards junior personnel with an emphasis on home-base destinations. Although the Independent Review recommended abolition of the scheme in 1995, the Ministry of Defence preferred to retain the warrants, but to target them more at junior levels and single personnel.

As a result, reduced entitlements were introduced last April, giving single personnel four warrants a year in the first three years, and one from three to nine years. The allowance for married people was two in the first three years and none after.

On legal advice that those arrangements contravened laws on marital discrimination, the amendment in October gave married people the same entitlement as single personnel.

The Royal Navy has agreed to the new tri-Service scheme on the basis that it would wish to increase the Stability Assistance in the future, even if the other Services do not wish to do so. The new scheme is seen as a step towards that.

Chinese honour Yangtse dead

FOR THE first time the Chinese have honoured the 46 officers and men who died during the Yangtse Incident which began 50 years ago this month.

During HMS Boxer's visit to Shanghai, wreaths were dropped aboard by the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, and Admiral Zhao Goujun, Deputy Chief of Staff of the Chinese Navy. Almost half the dead were killed in the frigate HMS Amethyst when she came under fire from Communist Chinese shore batteries while on a mission to Nanking. She was trapped in the Yangtse river for three months before breaking out.

■ HMS Boxer in Vietnam - page 2.

Ex-Soviet bloc trio join NATO

THREE former Soviet bloc countries - Hungary, Poland and the Czech Republic have joined NATO in the Alliance's 50th anniversary year.

Foreign Secretary Robin Cook welcomed the move as "an historic step on the road to a united Europe." He said NATO remained open to more members and was a force for good.

MSV take on cadet vessel

ONE of the Sea Cadet auxiliary training vessels has been acquired by the Maritime Volunteer Service.

Built in 1968, the 24m fleet tender Applby has been refitted with the help of the George John Livanos Charitable Trust. She will be based on the Medway and will operate in the Thames region and the Solent, which provides an ideal training ground for MVS units.

■ Profile of the oldest maritime charity - page 37.

Fresh bid to solve wreck mystery

IN A RENEWED bid to solve the mystery of what could be wreckage of Shackleton's ship *Endurance*, a team from the current HMS *Endurance* has taken samples for examination. The material has been sent to the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge.

The wreckage was discovered on Elephant Island in 1971, but a survey by *Endurance* last year failed to identify it conclusively as that of Sir Ernest Shackleton's ship which was destroyed by ice over 80 years ago. Research at that time tended to indicate the wreckage was of an American sealer.

During her deployment, *Endurance* revisited Argentina, calling at Mar Del Plata.

Crew airlifted to safety

A ROYAL NAVY helicopter lifted three seamen to safety from their gale-battered cargo ship and transferred them to the supply ship RFA Fort George.

The Sea King aircraft from HMS Gannet lifted the crewmen from the 600-tonne Belize vessel Royal One after her timber cargo shifted in rough weather.

The master managed to bring his ship under control and make port with a tug standing by.

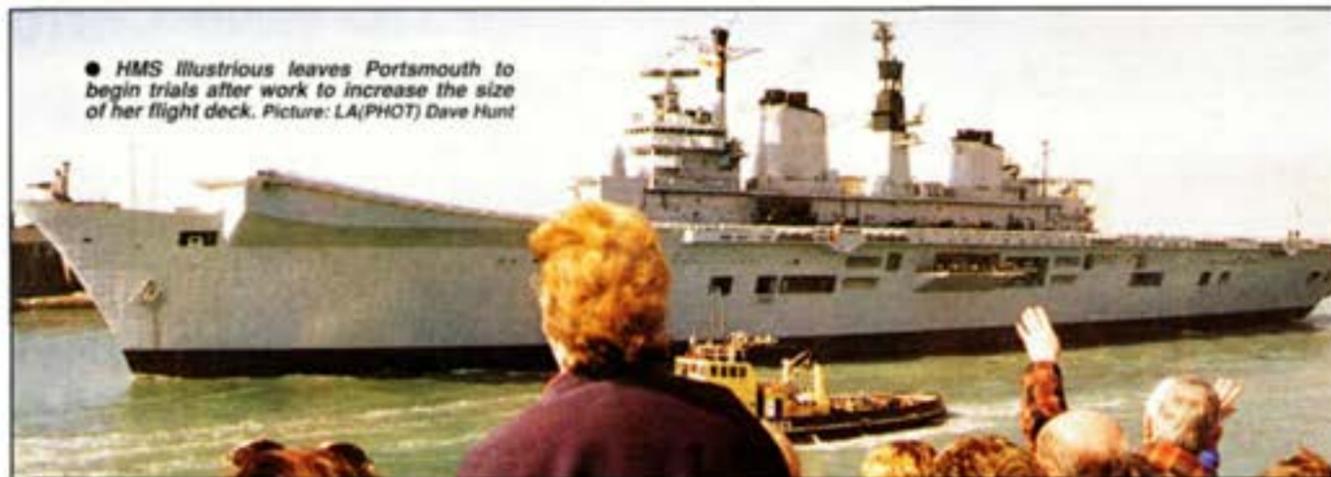
Leisure grants top £3 million

GRANTS totalling £3 million have been made to innovative projects which are designed to enhance the quality of life in the Royal Navy - including £600,000 for ships and submarines.

The grants, by the Sailors' Fund, the Fleet Amenities Fund, and the RN Sports Fund were given final approval on March 18 and include:

A fitness training facility for HMS Dryad (£486k), a new

sports training hall for HMS Neptune (£477k), a Naval Air Command riding centre at RN air station Yeovilton (£328k), a welfare chapel and theatre project at HMS Warrior (£387k), a new all-weather sports pitch at RM Condor (£340k), a new ceremonial seating facility at HMS Raleigh (£166k), refurbishment of the Home Club at Portsmouth (£381k), and an RN/RM water sports centre at the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone (£180k).



● HMS *Illustrious* leaves Portsmouth to begin trials after work to increase the size of her flight deck. Picture: LA(PHOT) Dave Hunt

'No place for racism'

A WARNING that strict disciplinary procedures will be meted out to anyone in the Armed Forces engaged in racism has been given

by the Chiefs of all three Services.

In a joint statement, the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Michael Boyce, and his Army and RAF counterparts reminded their Services of the part they have to play in combating racism.

They said the Armed Forces had long had powers to deal with cases of membership of or support for groups or organisations which incited racial hatred or violence.

"There is no place whatsoever for racism in the Armed Forces," they said.



Ark to be first modern carrier in Rosyth refit

HMS ARK Royal is due to be towed from Portsmouth to Rosyth early in May to undergo a two-year refit.

Ark will be the first Invincible-class carrier to be refitted in Scotland under a comprehensive package being negotiated with Babcock Rosyth Defence Ltd. She is due to enter No. 1 Dock at Rosyth, currently occupied by RFA Fort Victoria.

To coincide with the carrier's journey north, a joint team from the ship and from Babcock will stage a sponsored cycle ride from Portsmouth to

Rosyth in aid of various charities, including a children's hospice in Scotland.

Meanwhile, Ark's sister-ship, HMS *Illustrious* has started trials after completing an extended docking period in which she became the first Invincible-class carrier to have her Sea Dart system removed and the flight deck extended almost to the bow.

The work package has provided the ship with significant improvement in aircraft and weapon handling and storage capabilities.



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Easter Eggstravaganza!

CHAT PAD
 THANK YOU for all your great letters, keep them coming. Your poems were brilliant. Congratulations to our four winners Catherine Hartland, Ashley Smith, Laura Worsley and Jennifer Hall.
 We've printed the winning entries so that you can all have a read. It's a shame everyone can't win a prize but you should all give yourselves a pat on the back.
 Congratulations also to Alex Hamp, winner of the Lockheed competition. There's lots more to win in this issue so keep reading!
 We are glad that Keith Stevens and Louise Beavan enjoyed the Boat Show in London. We enjoyed being there too. Hello to Amy Walker who has joined the Gang Plank Club through the Sea Cadets. We look forward to welcoming lots of other Sea Cadets and hearing all about your news and events.

Happy Easter to ye all, my ship's fair full with all them chocolate eggs that Jim, Susie and Technocat have smuggled on board.
 They've eaten so many they are looking a bit green. I think I might have to heave to before they heave ho!! You better watch out or you lot will be feeling a bit under the weather too.
 As it's April and the first is a jolly important date I thought I would tell ye all about some new brussel sprouts that are being grown. Because most of you don't like them there green things the clever scientists have decided to grow them in different colours so you will eat them. You can choose what colour you would like. Clever eh! You'd better tell your mums and dads!
 All pirates missed out on most of their lessons cos they were busy sailing around the world so I am going to put in port for a while and go to them there museum things to catch up. I hear tell you Gang Plank members can get special entry to some museums, so read on and enjoy your Easter supplement.



Easter is also busy for birds

Technocat explores the internet

WOW! Technocat has had a purr-fect time on the net this month.
 Do you remember last month Captain Plank asked Technocat to find out about Captain Cook? Well he did just that and he found it all so fascinating he did a general search on Explorers.
 For some serious exploring fun check out the kids area of the National Geographic site at: www.nationalgeographic.com/kids/index
 Kids in America have been tuning into a TV programme called Young Explorers. Why not visit the site and find out about the programme: www.pbs.org/wttw/web_ne/wexp/home

If your head is in the stars then you need to go to www.space-explorers.com It's a really top space site.
 The Scientific Exploration Society of the UK are off on a millennium exploration, find out where at: www.kotamama.awc.co.uk
 Exploring the oceans is pretty risky stuff, find out how they do it at: www.unexo.com

CAPTAIN PLANK and the crew are eggstremely eggcited about all the lovely chocey eggs they'll be guzzling at Easter.
 But they're not the only ones with eggs on their mind - spring sees the start of the bird breeding season and the hatching of young chicks is eagerly awaited.
 Birds lay their eggs in many different ways, depending on how they live. Seabirds who spend their lives out at sea only come ashore when it is time to breed, usually laying one single egg on a ledge out of harm's way.
 Wading birds lay their eggs close to the water's edge where they have to rely on camouflage for protection. The smaller land birds will lay their eggs in all sorts of places, from hedgerows to chimney stacks, from window ledges to abandoned kettles!
 Some birds lay clutches of up to fifteen eggs, others lay just one or two. The eggs can take several weeks to hatch with the albatross having the longest incubation period of any bird. Would you believe the parents have to sit on a single egg for two and a half months?! You can probably guess what the cuckoo does. It's a bit of a sneak and lays its eggs in the nests of other birds for a spot of egg-sitting!!
 If you've ever dropped an egg on the kitchen floor you'll know that they smash very easily. But cracking the shell is not so easy for the little chick inside and it can take hours or even days to break through into the outside world. He pecks and pushes with his feet and stops for long rests before eventually smashing open the egg.
 Did you know that it is against the law to handle or collect wild birds' eggs? The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds has a special team who keep a lookout for people trying to steal eggs.
 If they are caught either disturbing the birds or taking the eggs from the nests they can be fined thousands of pounds. If birds aren't left in peace to build nests and lay their eggs then we are in danger of losing some species altogether. We all know what happened to the dodo!!
 The best way to have a look at birds' eggs is either by visiting a museum collection or going along to your local library where you will find reference books with some superb illustrations and lots of 'eggy' facts.

Eggstra-ordinary facts and figures

- Going back in time, the elephant bird laid monster eggs weighing up to 12 kg each making them the largest ever laid.
- The ostrich lays the largest egg of any bird living today, they weigh up to 1.5 kg and have shells almost two millimetres thick.
- Hummingbirds lay the smallest eggs. The tiniest of them measures about ten millimetres from end to end.
- The Australian emu lays eggs that change colour. They start off a dull green colour but within a few days they turn black and glossy.

NATIONAL SEAL SANCTUARY

SEALIFE

the Dungeons

FIVE FAMILY PASSES TO BE WON!
 To ONE of the following - SEAL SANCTUARY - SEALIFE - THE DUNGEONS (London & York)
PLUS 20 FREE Memberships of the Sealife Explorers Club

THE SEA SQUARE

B	T	L	E	E	R	E	G	N	O	C
I	U	O	E	T	U	R	B	O	T	E
B	B	U	K	O	E	F	O	A	M	O
C	G	W	F	P	O	D	M	U	F	E
N	U	R	S	E	H	O	U	N	D	H
S	R	A	T	A	N	G	L	H	I	S
U	N	S	I	L	E	F	L	S	B	I
P	A	S	N	H	A	I	E	I	A	F
O	R	E	G	S	O	S	T	F	R	W
T	D	U	R	I	C	H	E	T	C	A
C	B	L	A	O	E	N	C	A	O	R
O	D	C	Y	E	D	O	R	C	E	C

Hidden in our Sea Square are 14 Sea creatures, see if you can find them!

1) Nursehound	2) Tub gurnard
3) Conger eel	4) Stingray
5) Crawfish	6) Octopus
7) Dogfish	8) Turbot
9) Catfish	10) Mullet
11) Wrasse	12) Tope
13) Crab	14) Bib

For more information on the above attractions please telephone 01202 440022



● A newly-hatched cuckoo ejects reed warbler eggs from a nest.

When you have completed your Sea Square send your completed entry to:
 "THE GANG PLANK CLUB" HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 3HH

Name: _____ Age: _____ DOB: _____ Address: _____

 Postcode: _____

Closing date for entries - 8th June 1999

The judges decision is final. Employees and relatives of Navy News are ineligible to enter. Sorry we are unable to return your entry.

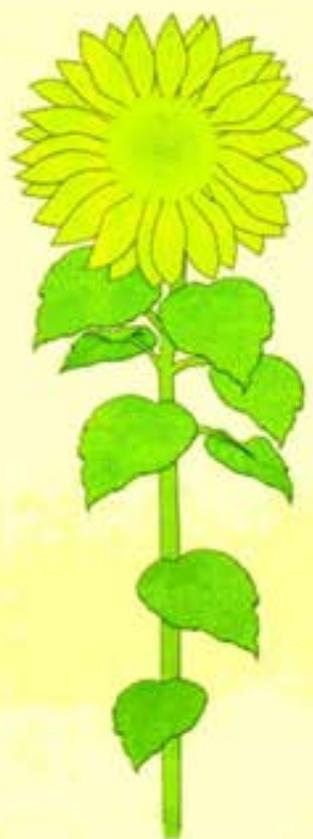
Try the Sporty Scramble on the next page, then check your answers here.

Green (Show Jumping)
 (Formula 1) Denise Lewis (Heptathlon) Lucinda Michael Owen (Football) David Coulthard Jane Sixsmith (Hockey) Laura Davies (Golf) Tracy Edwards (Sailing) Iwan Thomas (Athletics) Tim Henman (Tennis) Stephen Hendry (Snooker)

Captain Plank's Ea

Happy birthday from all the Gang

Gang Plank Club members with birthdays this April are: Alexander Merrett, Lloyd Robinson, Francesca Ingram, Padraig Anderson, Jonathon Burford, Benjamin Skelton, Guy Hart, Nichola Smith, Jonathon Bird, Andrew Evans, Luke Johnson, Robert Jenkins, Hannah Merna, Ian Danielson, Sarah Lockie, Daniel Thomas, Danny Siggers, Rachel Emma Thomas, Felix Healey, Chloe Martin, Nadeen Mian, Samuel Whiteley, Lewis Whitmill, Peter Sharp, Daniel Dalton, Marianne Chapman, Ashley Golding, John Payne, Sarah Gathergood, Jasmin Rands, Jody Cousins, Stephen Shaw, Anne Stevens, Sophie Francis, Ben Pullen, Stephen King, Bronwen Hopkins, Siobhan Tebbutt, Rebecca Langley, Remie Woodburne, Edward Hone, Ewan Christie, Leo Cooper, Amy Wilkes, Robert Gibson, Victoria Phillips, Marc Fryatt, Gokhan Cakir, Daniel Orrin, Victoria Kathryn Parr, Matthew Smith, Nicola Lowrie, Paul Pilgrim, Heather Rickhuss, Christopher Moir, Jay Kimber, Charlie Mullaard, Nathan Lawns, Oliver Sturdy, Gavin Moule, Wayne Skait, Jason Lee Mills, Emma Louise Paton, Luke Silvester, Louise Smith, Laurence Marshall, Dean Perry, Andrew Nobes, James Spencer, James Marsh, Kaylee Herbert, Glenn Wright, Maria McAvoy, Henry Gladdis, Luke Girling, Mark Allen, Karen Gray, Richard Peter Hegume, Steven Anthony Falls, Matthew Garrett, David Windle, Adam Robinson, Emma Roberts, Elliott Keer, James Howard, Andrew Clements, Dale Melville, Bobby Berwick, Gary Falconer, William Wincer, Andrew Michael Golts, Ashley Harvey, Zoe Fortune, Rachel Lockstone, Matthew Holland, Calum Waddell, Samuel Jack Ryan-Fessitt, Ewen Bury, Michala Bedson, James Tatum, Glenn Drewery, Lucy Hardman, Lewis Taylor, Thomas Griffin, Mark Smith, Stuard Tilling and Sam Hodgkinson.



Grow your own super sunflower

As high as a house! As tall as you! As bright as the sun! We're talking about those mega plants, sunflowers!

Forget the mustard and cress, cos we're talking big-time plants. We're talking Jack and the Beanstalk style!

Get your green fingers into gear and start planting. You don't need any special equipment, just a flower pot, some soil or compost and, of course, some sunflower seeds!

Sunflowers are fun to grow and very easy too. You could have a competition with your brothers and sisters or a friend to see who can grow the tallest sunflower. Then you can send us a photo of your giant plant at the end of the summer and let us know how tall it grew.

Take your sunflower seeds (you can buy them at garden centres or pet shops) and plant them in some soil in medium-sized pots, 30 cm apart, between April and July. Put them on a sunny window ledge and keep the soil moist, but not soggy! You will now

need to be patient and wait for the seeds to sprout. They could take a couple of weeks.

Once the seedlings have grown about 10cm tall, you can plant them out in the garden. As the sunflowers grow taller you may need to support the stems with straight sticks and twine.

Keep them well watered and you'll be amazed at the speed they grow. Of course, some people cheat a little bit and feed the flowers with a plant food and a good dose of manure!

Eventually the big green buds will burst into enormous yellow flowers. Watch them as they turn their faces to follow the sun.

At the end of the summer when the petals have faded, you can either leave the seeds for the birds to eat or take the seeds out of the flower and keep them in a dry place ready to plant next spring. Even if you have a garden you can still have a go by planting the seeds in window boxes or tubs. We look forward to seeing some really super sunflowers!



Sporty scramble

USE THE clues to unscramble ten of the UK's top sporting heroes then draw a line to match them with their sport. If you're stuck, the answers are on the previous page.

He's an ace, but not of clubs. MTI EMNHAN	HOCKEY
Right on cue to pot the black. ENPTSHE DYRHNE	ATHLETICS
Sailing the seven seas, but she's no pirate! CRTAY WDRSEAD	FORMULA 1
You're on the right track with this one. WNIA MOHSAT	SAILING
Bully Off! But this team player is no bully. ENAJ MITHSXIS	TENNIS
This sportswoman needs a driver but not for a car. URLAA VADSEI	SHOW-JUMPING
This young star is always on the ball. HLCMEIA ENWO	GOLF
He's so slick in the pits. VADDI URDHACLOT	HEPTATHLON
Lucky number seven for this female athlete. NSEDEI WSIEL	FOOTBALL
Riding high in her sport for many years. DACINLU	SNOOKER

Try your hand at Easter Eggsperiment

THE GANG PLANK Crew are a pretty talented lot by all accounts, and between voyages they manage to find time for some pretty interesting hobbies.

Susie is the 'boffin' of the crew, in other words she's a bit brainy and likes trying out experiments whenever she gets the chance.

She discovered the following experiment by accident the other day when she was down in the galley, attempting to whip up an omelette for the rest of the crew (by the way, cooking is not one of her many talents and most of the crew's omelettes went overboard!)



You can have a go at this easy experiment which is really about starting and stopping and how hard it is to get an object to start moving and then even harder making it stop; all because of something called inertia.

For example, when you're cycling fast and suddenly pull on the brakes, what happens? Your bike stops but

inertia keeps you moving forward and you can't stop!

For Susie, she needs a raw egg to do an adult test!

Set the egg on a table and then lightly stop it. As your finger moves away, the egg will stop it. Answer on the egg!

When you're on the egg, it keeps you from falling!

When you're on the egg, it keeps you from falling!

POET'S CORNER

My mum is on a diet
My Dad is on the
booze,
My Gran's out playing
bingo,
And she was born
to lose.

My brother's stripped
his motorbike,
Although it's bound
to rain,
My sister's playing
Elton John,
Over and over again.

What a dim old family.
What a dreary lot,
Sometimes I think
that I'm the only
superstar they've
got!
Laura Worsley

Flower power wordsearch

SPRING has sprung and that usually means lots of lovely spring flowers to look at.

Have a look around you when you you're out and about and see how many different flowers you can spot.

Alternatively, you could have a go at our wordsearch and spot the spring flowers listed under the puzzle.

Watch out for the weeds though, there are three in amongst our pretty flowers!!



Easter activity deck

POET'S CORNER

THE SILLY PIRATE

I'd love to be a pirate
I'd roam the seven seas
I'd have a big black beard
That flapped up in the breeze
We'd sail off in our pirate ship
With a loyal pirate crew
The ones who weren't so loyal
I'd fix to the deck with glue

The ship would have a tough name
To match its real tough look
The name we all decided on
Was to call it the Fluffy Duck
I'd wear a coat and a floppy hat
I'd carry a cutlass and a gun
Cos when I stop to think about it,
Being a pirate's fun!

Jennifer Hall aged 9

THE GANG PLANK

When I was on the Gang Plank
boat they were kind to me,
They gave me food and water
as we drifted on the sea,
We waited to be rescued for
over thirteen weeks,
We got seagulls up our
jumper and sunburn on our
cheeks,
When at last we spied our
shore we all cried out for joy,
I was Oh! so happy, I even
kissed a boy!
When we reached the shore
they all went to the pub,
But I just wrote this poem,
For my favourite Club.

Catherine Hartland aged 8

Are you fit for fun?

ONCE YOU'VE eaten all your choccy eggs this Easter you'll probably be feeling decidedly egg-bound and looking distinctly egg-shaped.

Fear not, for here are some excellent outdoor game ideas for you and your friends to enjoy.

□ Fill old large milk containers with sand or water, space out evenly in a straight line and use as a slalom course for:

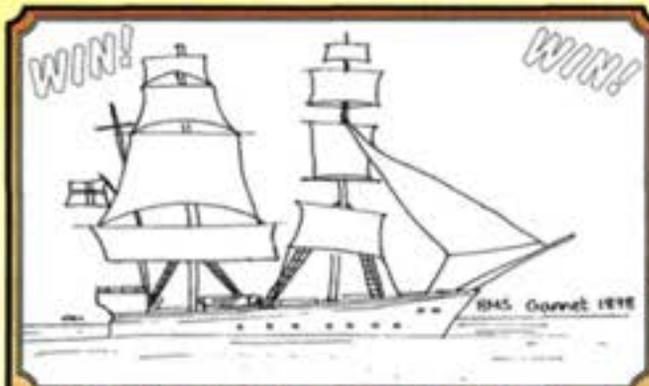
- a) dribbling a football
- b) riding a bicycle
- c) rollerblading

□ Make bean bags from old socks half-filled with rice or dried peas. These can be aimed at targets such as old clean baked bean cans stacked on a box. Each tin is worth five points, or you can aim them into a bucket or bowl.

□ Make a bicycle course where you can time each other from beginning to end. Here are some ideas to get you started but see what you can come up with yourselves:

- a) Slalom between evenly spaced milk containers, without knocking any down!
- b) Transfer a plastic cup from one chair to another.
- c) Ride between two lengths of hose-pipe or broom handles, placed 30cm apart, without putting your foot down. If you do, you have to dismount, crawl under a chair, remount and try again.

□ Our thanks go to the Lower School at Portsmouth Grammar School for their help with these games.



GANGPLANK MEMBERS

10 FAMILY TICKETS TO BE WON TO CHATHAM NAVY DAYS - 28TH TO 31ST MAY 1999
Colour in this drawing of HMS Gannet and you could WIN one of these Family Tickets.

Send your entry with your name, age and address to:
Captain Plank, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

The Judges decision is final and employees and relatives of Navy News are ineligible.
Closing date for entries - 30th April 1999

Pets win prizes!

WHAT ABOUT this for a star pet! Sarah Lockie from South Yorkshire sent us this fab picture of her Border Collie Bess enjoying a sneaky snack. She's also a dab hand with door handles and fights with her mum's vacuum cleaner! Sarah wins a prize for her daring doggy story and photograph. Keep them coming in!



POET'S CORNER

I am going to Derbyshire in May,
My mum and dad have to pay,
At night we will be talking,
And by day we will be walking,
On the next day we will play,
All, day, all day, all day,
I am going to Derbyshire in May!

Ashley Smith aged 9

WIN A FANTASTIC 'LEARN TO SAIL' COURSE WITH SUNSAIL!

Answer three easy questions and you could win a FREE five day sailing course at Sunsail's Sailing School in Portsmouth.

Sunsail is the biggest, most experienced sailing company in the world and at our Sailing School in Portsmouth we run a wide range of courses which combine first-class teaching with plenty of fun!

As the prize winner, you'll follow one of the dinghy courses on the RYA (Royal Yachting Association) Young Sailor's Scheme. It doesn't matter whether you're a complete beginner or you already have some experience - we've a course that's right for you.

The competition is open to anyone aged 8-17. Those of you between 10 and 17 years old can even stay over in one of our crew cabins which you'll share with other children. If the winner is under 10 years old the course will be on a daily basis.

Safety First

At Sunsail's Sailing Schools the first thing you learn is that nobody is allowed out on the water without a buoyancy aid and whenever you're afloat, there's always a qualified instructor and safety boat keeping a close watch.



To Win

Just answer the following three questions, then send your completed entry form to the address below.

- 1. How old do you have to be to sail with Sunsail?
- 2. Where is Sunsail's Sailing School?
- 3. What do you have to wear wherever you go sailing?

Name: _____ Age: _____
Address: _____
Postcode: _____
Name of parent/guardian: _____
Signature of parent/guardian: _____ Tel: _____

All entries must be returned by closing date 30th June 1999. The winner will be the first correct entry drawn at random and will be notified by post. Employees of Navy News and Sunsail, and their relatives, are not eligible. Entries are non-refundable. No photocopies accepted. No cash alternatives. Navy News shall not be liable to the winner in contract or tort in respect of the conduct of the course by Sunsail or arrangements made in connection with it. Send your entry to: "The Gang Plank Club", Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth, Hants PO1 3HH Telephone: 01705 733558



our ment

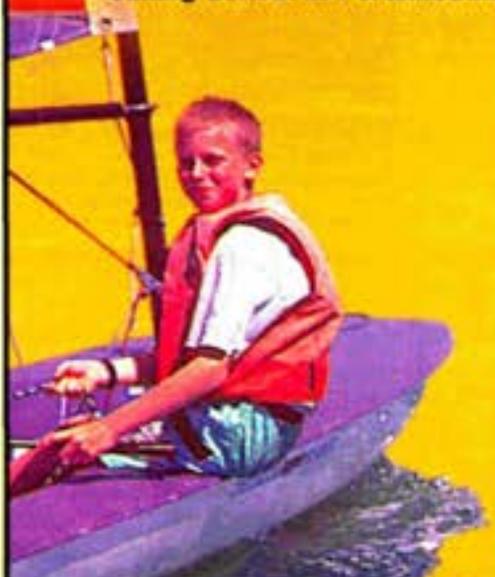
When you put your finger on the shell but underneath the white and yolk spinning. You let go, the moving centre the egg start spinning

When you put your finger on the shell but underneath the white and yolk spinning. You let go, the moving centre the egg start spinning

B	F	E	D	B	L	U	E	B	E	L	L
Z	X	L	A	R	J	K	V	A	J	K	L
S	F	E	F	Q	J	H	L	O	D	F	K
L	E	J	F	F	X	Z	L	T	I	P	L
N	C	R	O	C	U	S	R	U	T	Z	S
O	E	A	D	L	I	P	A	L	E	R	I
I	X	I	I	L	P	A	F	I	V	E	P
L	J	Y	L	L	A	Y	Y	P	C	P	P
E	B	U	T	T	E	R	C	U	P	I	O
D	T	P	T	P	T	S	Y	L	J	P	R
N	E	S	O	R	M	I	R	P	L	K	D
A	I	R	T	J	Y	R	S	Y	J	Y	W
D	K	L	T	R	K	I	J	T	K	L	O
L	I	E	P	A	S	S	C	R	V	R	N
Y	S	I	A	D	A	T	K	S	T	K	S

TULIP
BUTTERCUP
DANDELION
IRIS
DAFFODIL

SNOWDROP
DAISY
CROCUS
BLUEBELL
PRIMROSE



PART 4: APRIL 26, 1949 - HMS AMETHYST HAS BEEN AGROUND FOR SIX DAYS OFF ROSE ISLAND ON THE YANGTSE RIVER AFTER COMING UNDER FIRE FROM CHINESE COMMUNIST ARTILLERY ON THE NORTH SHORE ...

The Yangtse Incident

26 APRIL 0010 IN THE DEAD OF NIGHT, A SECOND ATTEMPT TO FREE AMETHYST FROM THE MUD IS SUCCESSFUL AFTER SHE HAS BEEN LIGHTENED FORWARD.

"FULL ASTERN BOTH" SHE PROCEEDS UP RIVER AND ANCHORS HALF AN HOUR LATER OFF FU TE WEI.

1930 A SIGNAL IS RECEIVED: HM SHIPS LONDON AND BLACK SWAN ARE MOVING UP RIVER TO ESCORT AMETHYST DOWNSTREAM. BE READY TO MOVE BY 1130

BUT CONCENTRATED FIRE FROM THE BATTERIES NEAR BATE POINT HITS BOTH SHIPS. HMS LONDON IS HOLED 12 TIMES ON THE PORT SIDE AND LOSES 12 KILLED AND 20 WOUNDED. BLACK SWAN HAS 7 WOUNDED.

RELUCTANTLY, THE ORDER IS GIVEN FOR BOTH SHIPS TO RETURN DOWN RIVER.

1630 A SUNDERLAND FLYING BOAT ARRIVES WITH MEDICAL SUPPLIES AND DISEMBARKS AN RAF DOCTOR.

BUT SHORTLY AFTER LANDING, A SALVO OF SHELLS HITS THE WATER 100 YARDS AWAY, FORCING THE AIRCRAFT TO TAKE OFF AGAIN.

2000 SAMPANS EVACUATE THE WORST OF THE WOUNDED.

4/7

To be continued.

© JAMES HAWITT 1997

BONZER BOOKS, FILMS, VIDS

There is absolutely no excuse for being bored these Easter holidays. Take a look at the latest book releases, films and videos available:

First, the best under elevens' football team returns in two more soccer-packed adventures, along with their illness and accident-prone coach and Springer the ghost goalie.

Tigers on Television. The Tigers are playing the under eleven league match. Dad's trousers get shut in the car door and Springer the ghost goalie has to act as stand-in coach again. But things are complicated by the presence of a film crew who have the oddest effect on Springer's actions!

Ghost Striker! The Tigers have an important away match against a team from another county. Dad as usual is laid low and can't coach - so Springer helps out. But to his horror the opposing team also have a ghostly helper - and this one doesn't like Springer at all! Age: 5-7. Authors: Sara Vogler and Janet Burchett.

The Magnificent Misfits. A hilarious, mad-cap new series

about six unsuspecting children who are mistakenly transformed into super-heroes. Armed with spacehoppers and not a lot else, their mission is to guard a jar of pickled onions from the Vile family who are planning to take over the world!

Age: 7-9. Author: J. J. Murhall. **Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets.** This is the sequel to the hugely popular *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone* and features Harry and his friends in their second year at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. This is a brilliantly spine-tingling story of magic for all those devoted Harry Potter fans.

Age 9+. Author: J. K. Rowling. (The above books are published by Bloomsbury and are available at all major bookshops).

If cinema is more your scene, here are a couple of new films to look out for:

The Rugrats Movie. This is a full-length animated feature for all the family, where the action turns

on the character of Tommy Pickles, whose world is turned upside down with the birth of his brother Dil who causes all sorts of problems for Tommy and the rest of the gang. This film is being billed as "a movie for anyone who's ever worn diapers."

Mighty Joe Young. Zoologist Gregg O'Hara stumbles upon a 15ft gorilla while exploring in Central Africa. Fearsome and dangerous when provoked, the ape is tame in the hands of Jill who raised the gorilla and named him Joe. When Joe's life is threatened by poachers, Gregg and Jill move him to a California animal preserve, only to discover he could be in more danger. Joe escapes, leaving a trail of destruction and chaos in his wake. It becomes a race against time, to save Joe's life before he is destroyed by the authorities.

For home entertainment this Easter, why not go quackers with Hans Christian Andersen's classic fairytale *The Ugly Duckling*, now out on video.

If you want to recommend any favourite books, films or videos to other Gang Plank Club members, then please write to us with your suggestions.

Membership Application Form

Please enrol me as a member of The Gang Plank Club. I enclose a PO/cheque (payable to Navy News) for £3.25.

Name:

Address:

Postcode:

D.O.B: Tel No:

Do you have any Brothers Sisters Ages

Special Interests: Sport Music Film/TV

Friends Reading

Who does this copy of Navy News belong to?

Parent Grandparent Other

We will also accept payment by:-
Visa, Solo, Delta, Access, Mastercard or Switch

JOIN THE GANG PLANK CLUB AND YOU WILL RECEIVE A GOODIE BAG SIMILAR TO THE ONE SHOWN.

Send your completed form, together with a postal order/cheque for £3.25 to: **Captain Plank's Club, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Portsmouth PO1 3HH.** If you would like any further information before applying, call 01705 733558 or 01705 826040 (24-hour answerphone)

BUNNY JOKES!



Why was the policeman up a tree?
 Because he was a member of the Special Branch.

Who is the patron saint of playgrounds?
 St Francis of a see-saw.

Who sits at the bottom of the sea and makes an offer you can't refuse?
 The Cod Father.

What do you get from an educated oyster?
 Pearls of Wisdom.

Why did the man dress his teeth up?
 Because the dentist was taking them out

Many thanks to Jade Fraser and Christopher Kane for these jokes. Don't forget to keep sending your jokes in to Captain Plank!

50 FREE TUBES FACTOR 25 SUNTAN CREAM TO GIVE AWAY!

To the First 50 Gangplank Members to write in with their name, membership number and address on a postcard to:

Captain Plank, Navy News, HMS Nelson, Queen Street, Portsmouth PO1 3HH

Closing date 8th June 1999

EASTER OUTINGS - MUSEUMS

CAPTAIN Plank has sent all Gang Plank members a great Easter card with some very special offers for museums. These days museums are not the dusty and boring places they used to be - so why not get out there and enjoy them?

- Here's just a few suggestions:
- The Royal Navy Submarine Museum, Gosport, Hampshire. Tel 01705 510354

- National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, London. Tel 0181 858 4422
- The Fleet Air Arm Museum, Yeovilton, Somerset. Tel 01935 841524. Easter Egg Hunt over four days of Easter.
- The Royal Air Force Museum, London. Tel 0181 205 9191
- Newark Air Museum, Nottinghamshire. Tel 01636 707170
- The Modern History Museum, Eden Camp, North Yorkshire.