



NAVY NEWS

May 2017

Ocean wave

● AB Courtney Smith can't hide her delight at returning home as Fleet Flagship HMS Ocean arrived back in Devonport following her six-month deployment to the Mediterranean and Gulf, where she led a US carrier task group – the first time a Royal Navy ship has done so. (see page 5)

Picture: LPhoto Ken Gaunt

Tigers on the prowl

Merlin squadrons on Dynamic Manta

Starship returns

Enterprise's epic deployment





Starship goes the ex

SHE spent 35 months deployed.

She steamed approximately 150,000 nautical miles – the equivalent of circumnavigating the globe seven times.

She crossed the equator in both directions twice and transited the Suez Canal twice.

She has navigated four of the seven seas, visited 20 countries and 33 ports across five continents.

She has a ship's company of just 78, who have put in a combined 63,835 days at sea – or, put another way, 175 years away from home.

So it's only fitting that HMS Enterprise received the warmest of welcomes as she arrived back in Devonport.

The Echo-class survey ship last saw her Plymouth home in June 2014 – three months before the Scottish Referendum and two years before

the EU Brexit vote – as she headed to the Mediterranean and found herself diverted to the coast of Libya.

Unrest in Tripoli saw Enterprise rescue more than 200 people fleeing the troubled capital.

Next Enterprise, which operates three-watch-manning – meaning two-thirds of the ship's company are onboard at any one time – steamed to the Gulf to spend ten months working from the Gulf of Aden and the Red Sea to Aqaba in Jordan and the Gulf of Oman.

Downtime gave the crew a chance to visit Port Victoria in the Seychelles and Goa in India, where personnel refurbished and rewired classrooms at the Mango Tree Trust Orphanage, as well as building swings and a trampoline for the children.

In 2015 Enterprise joined the new EU Naval Force in the Med –

EUNAVFORMED – formed to address people smuggling.

Over the course of the next year, Enterprise rescued 9,180 souls attempting to make the deadly crossing – believed to be the highest number of people to have been rescued by a Royal Navy ship.

Enterprise, which also destroyed 117 unseaworthy craft and surveyed some 2,600 square nautical miles of the ocean floor, was awarded the Firmin Sword of Peace, the Naval Capability Prize and the HM Efficiency Award, as well as receiving a personal commendation from the Chief of the Defence Staff.

The Sword of Peace was presented to the ship by Armed Forces Minister Mike Penning during a stopover in Gibraltar.

"This award recognises not only the commitment of my sailors, but also

the sacrifices made and separation endured by their families," said Cdr Philip Harper Enterprise's CO.

The ship was also praised by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones in a speech at the Founders' Day dinner at the Navy Club in London.

Speaking about the accomplishments of sailors and marines, he said: "A young Leading Medical Assistant from HMS Enterprise led the triage process for hundreds of rescued migrants, dealing with pregnancies, gunshot wounds and everything in between.

"We can be very proud of the compassion and professionalism of our sailors and marines in responding to what is possibly the largest humanitarian crisis in our lifetimes."

The survey ship's work in the Med also led to 20 suspected smuggling ringleaders being identified and

subsequently arrested by Italian authorities.

In addition to Enterprise, several other RN ships have deployed to support operations in the Mediterranean, including HMS Bulwark, Diamond, Echo, Richmond and RFA Mounts Bay.

From the heat of the Med it was time for Enterprise to experience the South Atlantic as she headed south to stand in for patrol vessel HMS Clyde during her refit in South Africa.

"Having successfully mastered integrating with the Italians and other EU partners the ship now had to integrate with the RAF and Army," said Navigating Officer Lt Kyle O'Regan.

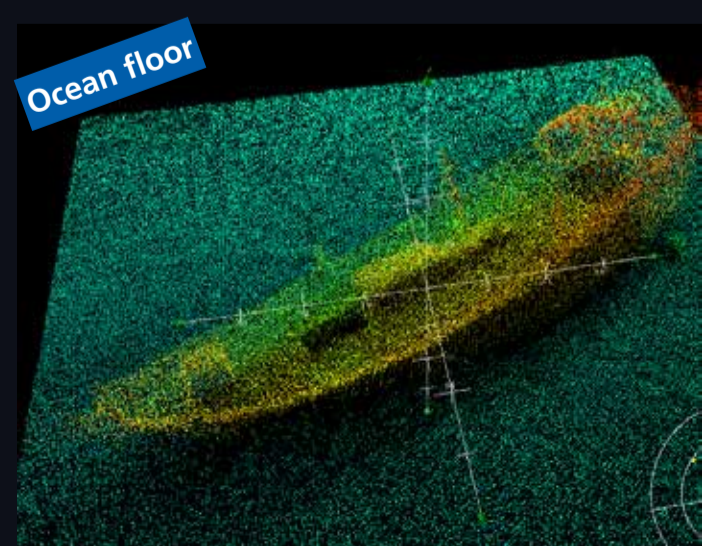
"A very busy time followed, conducting training with Typhoon aircraft, winching with Chinook helicopters and still managing to fit in



Libya



India



Ocean floor



Extra (150,000) miles

some survey operations.”

Enterprise’s survey motorboat Spitfire surveyed Port Howard, while the ship surveyed North Falkland Sound, as well as investigating and charting an area previously recorded as dangerous.

A number of current meters were also installed to provide tidal stream data to enable mariners to more easily access parts of the islands.

The visit also allowed Enterprise to strike out for South Georgia, with the senior officer in the Falklands, Cdre Darren Bone, aboard as well as British Antarctic Survey experts, troops from the Roulement Infantry Company and the island’s Rapier air defence battery.

They faced a choppy three-day journey across 800 miles of open sea with visibility fluctuating between ten miles and just 300ft, making it tricky

for the scientists to record any whales or dolphins as planned.

Enterprise finally reached Gold Harbour, about 30 miles along South Georgia’s coast from the capital Grytviken. Despite its name, there’s no gold here – the name was given by sealers impressed by the yellow glow cast by the sun on the snow and ice at dawn and dusk.

Once at anchor, teams were sent ashore to meet the wildlife populace. Fur seals proved a little ferocious, but the vast penguin colony amounted to “an over-abundance of cuteness”, in the words of the New Zealand exchange officer Lt Robin Khun.

The visit to the island chain concluded with a sail through the Bay of Isles on the north coast. Fog and mist prevented Enterprise launching her sea boat to land at Salisbury Plain, a flat stretch of shore which serves as

a breeding ground for 25,000 pairs of penguins.

“It’s fair to say that no-one aboard Enterprise will forget this incredible patrol any time soon,” said Lt O’Regan. “As one of my shipmates put it: it’s the thing recruiting adverts, never mind dreams, are made of.”

Still, all good things and all that... And so it was on April 18, six weeks short of three years away, the moment had come to say: *Come in H88, your time is up.*

Enterprise made her way up a sun-bathed Hamoaze to be greeted by the great and good of HMNB Devonport and, more importantly, friends and family.

CPOET(WE) John Williams joined the ship part way through the deployment. He was overwhelmed by the welcome from his wife Claire, and children Gabby, 15, and 19-year-old

Kane, a junior RN engineer on HMS Somerset.

“This is the third time I’ve served on the ship and she’s a great vessel to serve in. It’s been a long time away from her homeport for Enterprise – the trophies and accolades we have been awarded are testimony to that. It’s good to see her back home.”

Kane added: “I don’t see dad much when he is home, let alone when he’s away, or I’m busy at work with the Navy. So it’s extra special to see him come back home after a busy deployment.”

The youngest person on the jetty was five-week-old Isaac, son of the ship’s navigator Lt Nicholas Radue, who scooped him out of the arms of his wife Alex as soon as they stepped onto the ship. : “It’s wonderful to see little Isaac again. Even though the Navy kindly allowed me home to see

him when he was born before I had to rejoin the ship for the journey back – I have missed half of his short life and he is a different boy already!”

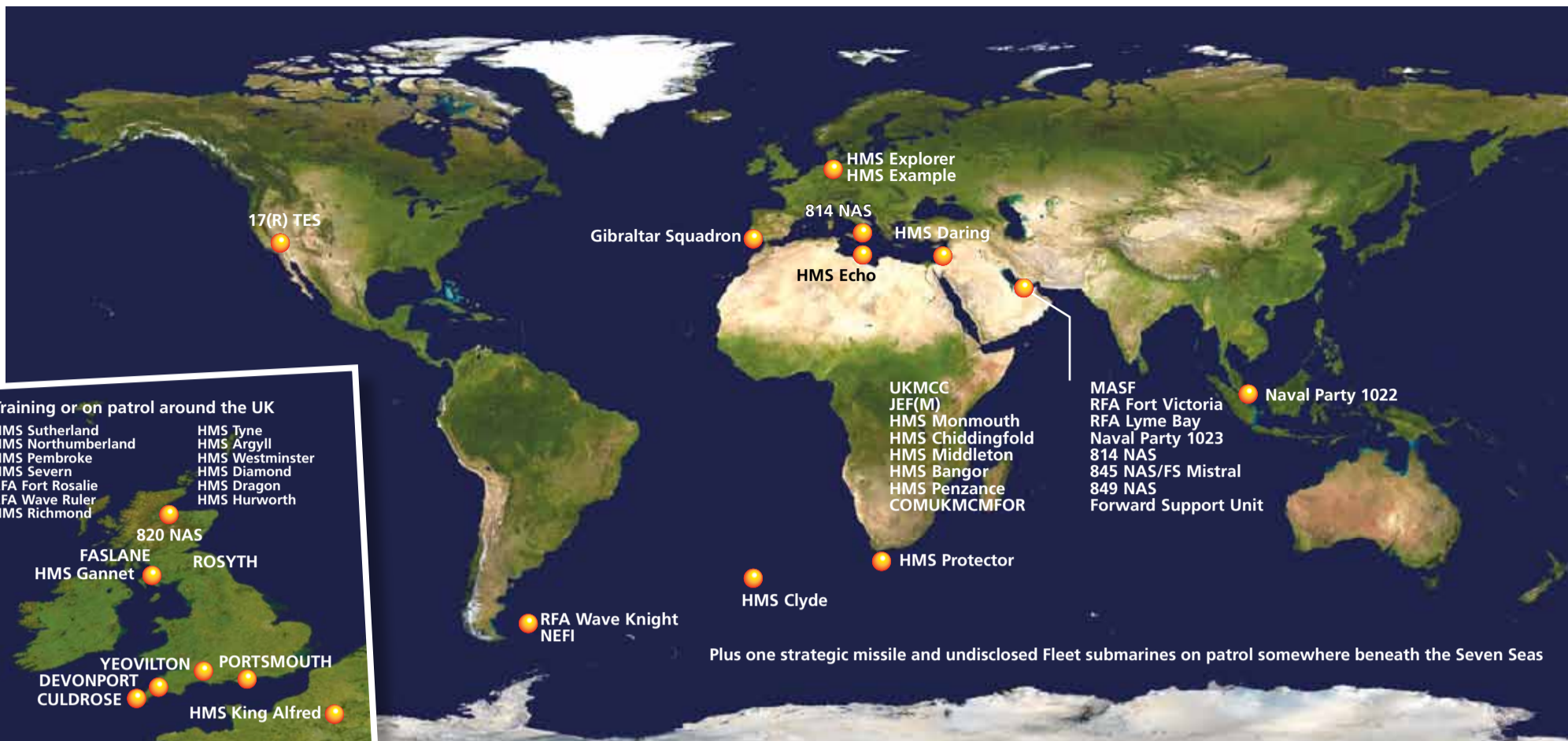
Alex said: “I’m used to seeing Nicholas off and welcoming him home again. But from now on it will all be different with our first child. It makes homecomings extra special for a start.”

Cdr Harper said all those who’d served aboard the ship over the past three demanding years could be “justly proud of the work they have done since deploying – the wide variety of operations will be hard to match in the rest of our careers.

“The results of our deployment speak for themselves.”

After two months of maintenance in her home port – and two months’ rest for the crew – Enterprise is due back on patrol in July.





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

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

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

SICILY is our first port of call this month as we report on the two aircrews from **814** and **829 NAS** who took their Merlin helicopters to join a ten-ship NATO task force for an anti-submarine exercise (see pages 14-15).

Back to the UK and pilots and aircrew from **820 NAS** decamped to Scotland to prepare for their role guarding **HMS Queen Elizabeth** (see centre pages). A Merlin from the Flying Fish squadron is due to become the very first to land on the carrier's deck when trials begin.

In Lancashire, a new simulator is helping RN and RAF **F-35B** pilots land the new strike fighter on HMS Queen Elizabeth's vast deck (see page 13) ahead of doing it for real.

Staying in the skies, and **RFA Wave Ruler's** Navigating Officer 2/O James Wright, joined Falcons and Hawks for an exercise in which they simulated sinking the FOST tanker (see page 11).

Two Jungle Merlins from Commando Helicopter Force's **845 NAS** are making their operational debuts aboard the FS Mistral (see page 17) as the French ship heads for Vietnam on the French Navy's key Jeanne d'Arc deployment.

Wildcat airmen from **815 NAS** are to make history (see page 6) by joining a German warship, first for its training off Plymouth, then on an overseas deployment.

Back down to earth, or water, and **HMS Enterprise** returned home to Devonport (see pages 2-3) following an epic 35-month deployment around the globe.

Weeks earlier, more than 2,000 loved ones gathered at Plymouth to welcome home Fleet Flagship **HMS Ocean** (see opposite) following her six-month tour of duty in the Med and Gulf.

Making her debut in the UK was the newest addition to the British Fleet, **RFA Tidespring** (see page 7) as the 39,000-tonne tanker arrived in Falmouth for the final stages of fitting out.

P2000s **HMS Example** and **Explorer** have been enjoying an epic Easter deployment (see page 22) to Europe, giving officer cadets a taste of life at sea.

HMS Protector completed her final ice patrol of the Austral summer in Antarctica (see page 21) but will return later in the year.

The next chapter in the history of **HMS Westminster** has begun with the frigate's rededication in Portsmouth following a major refit (see page 21) while her sister **Montrose** has welcomed crew aboard for the first time in over 12 months (see page 7).

How to deal with the threat of cyber warfare (see right) was the theme of **Exercise Information Warrior** (see pages 18-19) which saw Royal Marines from 30 Cdo IX Group demonstrate what they can bring to the present-day battlefield.

Royal Marines from **45 Cdo** marched through Arbroath to mark their 45-year association with the Angus town (see page 20).

Three of the most hallowed sites in Royal Navy history – the remains of **HMS Hogue**, **Aboukir** and **Cressy** – have been given special protection by the government (see page 23). They are among 14 Great War vessels added to the list covered by the 1986 Protection of Military Remains Act.

Last month marked the 100th anniversary of the Battle of Arras – one of the more successful Allied ventures in the Great War – which involved Naval aviators and sailor-soldiers of the RN Division, whose sacrifices were remembered by reservists from **HMS King Alfred** on a battlefield tour (see page 26).

And finally... One dozen personnel from **RNAS Culdrose** made the long journey to Ascension Island (see page 29) for a two-week scuba diving trip, Exercise Black Fish.

Leading the charge in cyber warfare

VIEW BRIDGE from the BRIDGE

IN the latest of our monthly features on the future of the Royal Navy, we look at maritime power in the information age.

WE are living in a data-driven age, in which the conventional and unconventional are increasingly blurred.

Today, the threat we face at sea could come from an enemy submarine 100 miles away or a sophisticated hacking operation on the other side of the world.

Meanwhile, our adversaries are already exploring the boundaries of Information Warfare in a way that is greater in scale and agility than anything we can currently muster. We must be ready to respond in kind – and fast.

This may feel new, but the Royal Navy has always been a pioneer in the digital realm, from the famous Admiralty cryptologists of Room 40 in World War 1, through to the development of the world's first programmable computer – Colossus – which was operated by the Women's Royal Naval Service.

Now, as we reshape the Fleet and the Royal Marines around a new generation of ships, submarines and aircraft, the Royal Navy is ideally positioned to project power and influence into cyberspace, just as we do at sea, over the land, in the air and in space.

Our aim is simple: to establish

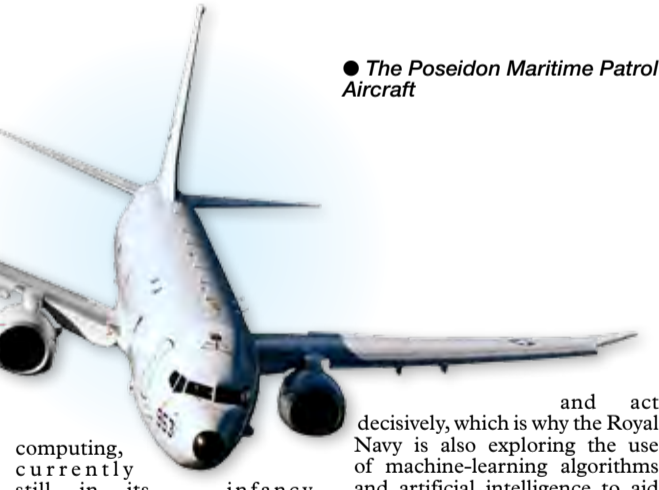
the Royal Navy as a leading advocate, innovator and practitioner of Information Warfare, within the UK Armed Forces and among our Allies.

Last month's Exercise Information Warrior was our most ambitious attempt yet to identify existing capabilities that can be delivered into service quickly and to establish a lasting network of partners from academia and industry who will help keep us ahead of the curve in the future.

However, the challenge and opportunity of the Information Age is so much more than cyber; it's about the growth of data that is changing the way we live and work, and will change how we fight too.

The new F-35B Joint Strike Fighter and the Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft will present commanders with astonishing levels of information, in real time, and yet this is nothing compared to what is to come.

Autonomous systems and distributed networks of sensors are fast becoming a reality and within the 50-year lifespan of our new aircraft carriers developments in quantum



● The Poseidon Maritime Patrol Aircraft

computing, currently still in its infancy, could herald astonishing advances. Data on this scale is a raw material: it is how we collect, handle and exploit it that will determine our fighting edge.

Many of the UK's most significant military operations are conducted in partnership, and the need to work more closely together will grow as allied navies contribute people and ships to the Royal Navy's Carrier Strike Group and as the future Type 31e General Purpose frigates are based overseas.

So we must develop the connectivity and bandwidth to share large volumes of information within a multi-national operating environment, together with the shared instincts and mutual trust required to deliver integrated military effect.

Within this complex and fast moving battle-space, our greatest asset will be the ability to think

and act decisively, which is why the Royal Navy is also exploring the use of machine-learning algorithms and artificial intelligence to aid decision-making.

Impressive as this technology may be, the human touch will remain crucial. Within this new domain there is a particular role for Royal Marines, skilled as they are in Information Exploitation, and for the Maritime Reserves with their existing specialisations in areas like intelligence and media operations.

However, the hunt for talent may also lead us to people who do not fit the usual military mould, and we must work with industry to steer more young people toward a career in computing, networking and cyber security.

Put simply, if the cry at Trafalgar was to "engage the enemy more closely", then today we must do so digitally. The Royal Navy stands ready to lead the charge.

■ Information Warrior, pages 18-19



O, it's good to be back home

JUST look at that cheeky grin.

Three-year-old Declan looks pretty delighted too...

A big thumbs up from POET(WE(CIS)) Chris Orkney and his son as they're reunited on the Devonport jetty, bringing HMS Ocean's six-month autumn-winter-spring deployment to an end.

Crew and family made the most of the Mighty O's penultimate homecoming from active duty with one of the biggest welcomes for a returning warship in some time.

Upwards of 2,000 family and friends were waiting for Ocean as her tour of duty – beginning in the Med leading the JEF(M) task group, reaching its high-point as flagship of the US CTF50 carrier strike group in the Gulf and ending back in the Med with a spot of diplomacy and flag-flying in Beirut and Malta – came to an end.

PO Orkney rushed off the ship to be met by his cheering wife Nicola and their children, Declan – who's recovering from a heart condition – and baby Locklan, just one, plus parents-in-law Pauline and Tom Williams.

The senior rating is taking part in a mad week-long dash around the UK this month to raise money for the Children's Heart Foundation and Newcastle's Freeman Hospital, whose staff helped Declan with his condition.

Chris hugged Declan and gave him a mini version of his operational medal: "It's amazing to see everyone and especially Declan, who is a hero for recovering so well from his heart op," said Chris, from Morpeth. "I'm so happy to catch up with them after a very rewarding deployment."

Nicola said: "Declan's such an upbeat and ever-happy star. He's having a check-up soon to see if his op has been long-term successful. He's been looking forward to seeing his dad. And it's lovely to have him back to keep the children amused, and to go swimming. He's missed Locklan beginning walking and Declan starting nursery and their birthdays and Christmas – so a lot to catch up with."

PO Ollie Dugmore, who married Heidi just before deploying, added: "It's been a long old six months away, but absolutely amazing to see the kids and family."

Capt Rob Pedre, Ocean's CO, was overwhelmed at the turn-out – the biggest in many years at Devonport – despite less-than-clement spring weather.

"It's a huge honour to bring HMS Ocean home after such an historic – and remarkable – operational deployment to the Middle East. I am particularly proud of how my ship's company, through their committed dedication to duty, professionalism and good humour, have delivered. "I'd also like to pay tribute to the stalwart support we have all had from our families and friends who have remained back in the UK, which is invaluable and hugely appreciated. Everyone is delighted to be back with their loved ones again – as can be seen by the large emotional crowds."

After a farewell visit to Sunderland, the Mighty O's affiliated city, there's only one deployment left for Ocean to conduct – NATO duties in the Mediterranean in the autumn – before she leaves service next spring after just shy of 20 years' service.

Pictures: LPhot Caroline Davies, FRPU West



Sutherland's smart and astute Easter...

WHILE you were chomping on your chocolate eggs, the men and women of HMS Sutherland were bouncing around in a choppy Channel keeping an eye on the latest moves of the Russian Fleet.

The Fighting Clan was activated as Fleet Ready Escort – the on-call frigate or destroyer which responds to major events in and around the UK – over the Easter break to monitor the progress of Steregushchiy-class corvettes Boikiy (Smart) and Soobrazitelny (Astute).

The Devonport-based Type 23 located the two Russian ships in the early hours of Good Friday off the Dutch coast as they sailed through the North Sea towards the Strait of Dover.

The Russian duo were joined later in the afternoon by a Russian support tanker and an ocean-going tug.

Sutherland remained with the Russian ships throughout their passage through the Channel, monitoring their movements both visually and with the onboard suite of sensors and observing flight deck operations by an ungainly Ka-27 'Helix' helicopter.

Picture: LPhot Guy Pool

Belated break for Wave Ruler

TANKER Wave Ruler's Easter holiday started a little later than planned as she responded to an SOS from a stricken yacht.

The RFA was returning to Portland after taking part in a Thursday War off Plymouth when she picked up a mayday from the Frangi, which had broken down a dozen miles off Portland Bill.

Within 90 minutes, the ship was on the scene and engineer PO(E) David Hardy was ferried across by sea boat to effect repairs.

Whilst trying to fix the engine he found that a circuit had tripped, so he located the breaker and the Frangi was ready to sail again.



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Mine crews return to fish duties

IF YOU can find a mine, you can find a fishing vessel...

Minehunting crews are returning to fishery duties after a decade's absence – so their counterparts can bring a new generation of patrol ships into service.

Since April 1, sailors who normally crew Hunt-class ships have been the ship's company of HMS Tyne... whose sailors are heading to Scotland to crew Tyne's successor, HMS Forth.

Under Project Jicara, two crews from Portsmouth's 2nd Mine Countermeasures Squadron, will join the Fishery Protection Squadron to man and operate one of the River-class vessels while their own Hunt-class ships are out of action undergoing major engine changes.

Normally Hunt crews rotate around the class of eight ships – two of which are based in Bahrain as part of the RN's permanent minehunting presence in the Middle East.

And when they've been called upon in the past to conduct fishery patrols, they've done so in their own craft.

Now they'll have to do so in ships more than twice the size they are used to, several knots faster – although the act of minehunting takes place at crawling pace – two decades newer and with considerably more comfortable and spacious living quarters.

They also have to swot up on fish species... and grow used to their odour.

"The opportunity to man and operate an offshore patrol vessel for a Hunt-class crew is quite unique," said Lt Alex Coleman, Executive Officer of MCM2 Crew 6, who've only recently returned from the Gulf and were due to take over Atherstone... which is about to go through her 'Project 50' revamp (notably replacing ageing Deltic engines with modern, more efficient Caterpillars).

"This is a great chance for many of our sailors to broaden their skills on different machinery and shows just how adaptable and employable the guys really are."

Coxswain PO(D) Toby Jones added: "For some there is very little difference in their everyday role, but for others, especially the engineers, their roles onboard and the equipment they will operate is very different."

To ensure the safe transition, the mine crew have spent a lot of time working alongside the Fishery Protection Squadron both in harbour and at sea to get used to the ships, their equipment, routines and their roles and responsibilities and gaining the qualifications required.

"The prospect was a bit daunting at first, but having completed my training in HMS Tyne, 2017 is going to be a great opportunity to learn more about the different roles of the Royal Navy and work with new equipment," said ET(WE) Danny Bowles.

Mine warfare expert LS 'Eddie' Edmonson added: "Pretty much the entirety of a mine warfare rating's career is spent in minehunters operating in the Gulf. This is a great opportunity for me and the other lads to do something different, expand our skills and maybe get a run ashore somewhere different."

He and his crewmates will be in charge of Tyne until the end of the year, when they'll return to the mine world, MCM2 Crew 7 (currently aboard HMS Ledbury) will take over HMS Mersey, allowing the latter's crew to move onboard HMS Trent.

Pictures: Lee Howard and LPhoto Dan Rosenbaum



The Lynx family gathered en masse at RNAS Yeovilton to say their goodbyes to

'A steadfast friend'

7.40PM precisely on Thursday March 23 2017 – a cold, pitch black early spring night – at RNAS Yeovilton and the newest Lynx becomes the last Lynx.

This is the final act in a Fleet Air Arm career stretching back to the second half of the 1970s as ZF563 touches down for the last time at RNAS Yeovilton.

Perhaps by luck, perhaps by design, the final mission – delivering Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Ben Key to HMS Ocean off Plymouth – fell to the very last Lynx to roll off the Westland production line for the Royal Navy back in 1988. Fittingly, her career mirrors the rest of the Lynx force: Ship's flight for a string of frigates (HMS Monmouth, Brave, Campbeltown, Chatham, Norfolk, Montrose, Somerset) among many other duties, dealing with piracy and terrorism in the Gulf and Indian Ocean, delivering aid to Sri Lanka in the aftermath of the 2004 Boxing Day tsunami.

And so one of the greats of 118 years of Naval aviation passed into history, mission complete after just short of half a million hours in the heavens, from the searing heat of Iraq and the Gulf, to the punishing cold of Antarctica and the South Atlantic.

After a farewell flypast by four of the final variants of the helicopter around southern England the previous week, the formal act of a decommissioning the Lynx – which began to take shape back in 1963 – took place at Royal Naval Air Station Yeovilton in Somerset, just a few miles from its birthplace at Yeovil's Westland works (today Leonardo).

Former air and ground crew, doyens of the Fleet Air Arm, friends, family and personnel of 815 Naval Air Squadron gathered to hear the final commanding officer of a Naval Lynx formation, Cdr Phil Richardson, tell them: "We intend to give the Lynx the farewell it deserves. It is with celebration of this aircraft tinged with sadness that the Fleet Air Arm says goodbye to a trusted aircraft. Farewell Lynx you will be missed!"

The Lynx has been the cornerstone of frigate and destroyer operations – not just for the Royal Navy; its successful design and potent firepower meant fleets around the world snapped it up. It was armed with Sea Skua anti-ship missiles in the Falklands conflict 35 years ago and in the Iraq Conflict. Lynx has also been repeatedly instrumental in drug seizures by the Royal Navy in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean, supported disaster relief operations from the Gulf of Mexico to the Philippines,

carried out rescue missions, and helped with scientific research on the frozen continent.

Guest of honour at the aircraft's decommissioning was the Fleet Commander – a former Lynx Observer (responsible for navigation, sensors and weapon systems) – who passed on the thanks of First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones to the audience:

"Whether painted green or grey – or for those of you, like me, old enough to remember – blue – the Lynx has served our nation with distinction in times of conflict, proving itself to be as fierce as it was fast. From the South Atlantic to Afghanistan, from the Adriatic to the Gulf, the Lynx has been an essential element of our power projection.

"I will never forget my own experience as captain of HMS Coventry in 2001 when our Lynx tenaciously pursued a speedboat laden with drugs through the mangrove swamps and cays of Belize for three hours with no thought to their own safety, hauling off only when its quarry was beached and abandoned."

The First Sea Lord continued: "So it is with a heavy heart that the Royal Navy bids goodbye to a steadfast friend. But we do so in the knowledge that, in the Wildcat, the Fleet Air Arm has a worthy successor and one that is already making its mark on operations today. I congratulate all those who have contributed to this seamless transition.

"The story of the Lynx is more than that of a machine. It's about generations of men and women who dedicated their careers to design, build, train, operate and maintain these aircraft, and all those who supported them, at Portland, at Yeovilton, around the UK and across the globe.

"The Royal Navy will not forget your technological and operational accomplishments, and the standards and reputation established by the Lynx Force will continue to guide the Wildcat Force, and indeed the Fleet Air Arm, as we enter a new era of maritime aviation."

The Admiral signed off with the Royal Navy's traditional signal for a job well done: BZ and thank you.

Guests were treated to a solo Lynx flying display before the final operational Lynx was readied for its last mission. With Vice Admiral Key at the controls, it headed for the UK's flagship HMS Ocean off the Cornish coast to welcome her back after a six-month deployment – and perform the final Lynx deck landing in the process.



Helping Hans with a helo

WILDCAT fliers are to make history by joining a German warship first throughout its training off Plymouth then on an overseas deployment.

The state-of-the-art helicopter – which has just taken over from the Lynx to provide air support for Royal Navy frigates and destroyers – is being assigned to the 'Lucky Lübeck'.

The frigate arrives in Plymouth later this spring for seven weeks of intensive instruction and assessment by experts at the Flag Officer Sea Training organisation.

Described as 'pre-season training' for warships, it prepares all British and many foreign vessels for operations on the front line.

Lübeck normally operates a Sea Lynx – the German version of the British-built helicopter which has just retired from service with the Fleet Air Arm after four decades.

But following 18-months of talks between the two navies, the 27-year-old frigate has been offered the use of the new Wildcat.

213 Flight from 815 Naval Air Squadron – 11 aircrew, engineers and a controller in the operations room as the link between the ship and the helicopter – have been selected for the unique mission, led by Flight Commander Lt Oliver Brooksbank.

To pave the way for the groundbreaking deployment, a British team joined Lübeck's sister Karlsruhe when the frigate visited London last autumn.

Then a Wildcat flew to the spiritual and physical home of the German equivalent of the Fleet Air Arm, Nordholz air base near Bremerhaven on the North Sea coast to demonstrate to the German Navy what the helicopter can do.

Back home, the 11 selected personnel have gone through a comprehensive German language course over several months – dubbed Operation Language Barrier by the Germans – to make it easier for them to fit in with their 220 new shipmates.

"The arrival of a Wildcat on the Lübeck will be the first landing of one – including flight crew – aboard a German Navy ship," explained *Fregattenkapitän* Alexander Gottschalk from the German Navy's headquarters in Wilhelmshaven – also Lübeck's home base.

"Wildcat is to be embarked for approximately seven weeks for the duration of the preparatory training at FOST – it is important to work together to co-ordinate, smooth over any differences and reach a level of operational readiness for a planned joint overseas deployment in the near future."

Marine A's conviction reduced

A ROYAL Marine jailed for killing a wounded insurgent fighter in Afghanistan had his murder conviction reduced to manslaughter by the Court Martial Appeal Court.

42-year-old former Sgt Alexander Blackman – known for much of the case as 'Marine A' – received a life sentence in 2013, but has been re-sentenced to seven years for the lesser charge.

The 2011 shooting took place after a British patrol base manned by men of 42 Commando came under fire.

Blackman was convicted of manslaughter on the basis of diminished responsibility.

His dismissal from the Service remains, although it is no longer dishonourable.

Anglo-French staff clear way for CJEF

AN ANGLO-FRENCH team is leading the fight against terrorism in the Indian Ocean for the next four months – a curtain-raiser to the new combined naval task force the two nations are forming.

Two dozen French and British sailors took over Combined Task Force 150, policing more than three million square miles of sea on the lookout for vessels smuggling weapons and drugs which fund or support terrorism.

At their disposal on a typical day: half a dozen warships from across the globe – including, at times, frigate HMS Monmouth and tanker RFA Fort Victoria – plus air power such as French maritime patrol aircraft and Bagger Sea Kings, which search hundreds of miles of ocean looking for suspicious vessels.

The task force frequently scores drugs busts – the Sea Kings from Fort Victoria ensured £40m of heroin was seized by the US Navy in March following a day/night chase.

Personnel from across the Combined Maritime Forces – a coalition of more than two dozen of the world's navies – take it in turns to direct operations from their headquarters in Bahrain, with the British-French team replacing the Canadians.

The joint command is the first front-line test of a combined Anglo-French staff which has been tested on several occasions following the 2010 Lancaster House agreement between the two countries to work together ever more closely.

At the heart of the agreement is the creation of a Combined Joint Expeditionary Force to respond to world events.

MEET the newest addition to the British Fleet – and right now the nation's largest military vessel.

After a journey of more than 15,000 miles from the Korean shipyard where she was built, via Japan, Hawaii, and the Panama Canal, RFA Tidespring arrived in Falmouth on a beautiful spring day for the final stages of fitting out.

The 39,000-tonne tanker is the first of four vessels in the class built for the Royal Fleet Auxiliary to replace Leaf and Rover-class vessels and, above all, to sustain Britain's new carriers when they conduct operations.

All four Tide-class tankers – -race, -surge and -force complete the quartet – have been built by the DSME yard near the southern tip of South Korea (no UK firm bid for the £300m four-ship contract).

Some £150m is now being spent in the UK – sustaining 300 jobs – as A&P in Falmouth turn a tanker into a military tanker (weaponry such as Phalanx automated guns, fitting of secure communications and computer systems). Each ship requires 37 alterations or additions, work which will take about four months.

When she enters service following trials, Tidespring will be crewed by 63

Royal Fleet Auxiliary sailors plus up to 46 military personnel to support a Merlin or Wildcat flight, and, when necessary, a Royal Marines detachment.

Her tanks can carry 19,000 cubic metres of fuel – enough to fill up more than 34,000 family cars – and 1,400 cubic metres of fresh water, which would quench the thirst of a capacity crowd at Wembley Stadium with one litre bottles 15 times over.

Her title as Britain's largest military vessel will be taken from her later this year when 65,000-tonne HMS Queen Elizabeth begins her sea trials.

Picture: Andrew Linnett, DE&S



The Tide is nigh

Reshuffle as 42 Commando become amphibious experts

BICKLEIGH-based 42 Commando will be the go-to guys if you want to storm beaches and invade anywhere by sea as part of a reshuffling of the Royal Marines which will see numbers reduced by 200 over the next three years.

Around 100 'backroom' jobs and training posts across the Corps are to go with sailors or civilians filling the

positions where suitable/necessary.

Turning 42 into the 'Maritime Operations Commando' will involve it losing about 100 personnel – heavy weapons specialists, logistics support staff and some riflemen – by not replacing them when they leave the Corps.

But the unit will be bolstered by

permanently transferring 120 personnel from 43 Commando in Faslane to Bickleigh, allowing the remainder of the Scottish unit to concentrate on safeguarding the nation's nuclear deterrent when not at sea.

There will be no redundancies as part of the reshuffle which First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones said was

necessary as the RN and RM adapted "to meet the challenges of a dangerous and uncertain world."

"The Royal Marines remain bound in to every part of the Royal Navy's future. "They will continue to be as vital to the defence of the realm in the years ahead as they have been for the past 350."

"Three short paragraphs all of which I understood, written in plain English and very much appreciated."

Jonathan Elliott, FPS Member



Jonathan wrote to us with a complex series of questions that involved two pensions, a divorce and a child's pension entitlement. We were able to answer his queries, though (as he put it) the response was "good news mixed with not so good news but fair and understandable".

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Ledbury extends hand of friendship

BECAUSE you never know when a plastic hand on a long pole may come in useful...

HMS Ledbury's CO Lt Cdr Jim Harkin 'shakes hands' with his opposite number on HMS Blyth, Lt Cdr Peter Harkin – a spot of light relief during an extensive period of training for both minehunters.

Britain's oldest operational warship – 36 years' service – is gearing up for a marathon stint in the Gulf of three years or more.

To prove she and her 45-strong ship's company are ready for the 7,300-mile sea journey from Portsmouth to Bahrain, home of the five-strong Gulf mine force (four minehunters, one RFA mother/command ship), Ledbury endured several weeks of Operational Sea Training – culminating in the fortnight-long Joint Warrior international exercise off western Scotland.

Big ships are put through their paces off Plymouth. Fishery protection, survey ships and minehunters head for western Scotland for their assessments – described by some as akin to footballers' pre-season training.

Ledbury's crew of 45 dealt with simulated fires, floods, casualties, enemy vessels and even the salvage of a distressed ship. Real aircraft and surface craft were used to simulate threats and practise the ship's reactions.

A highlight was the opportunity to take charge of a live gunnery exercise with three ships blazing away at a remote-controlled

target vessel.

It ended rather too soon for the gunners' liking as they were having a blast (literally) until they put the attacking craft's aerials out of action – which proves they are spot on with their aim.

The following fortnight focussed on the ship's primary duty – to find and neutralise enemy mines. The ship's company cleared an allocated area using sonar and her Seafox unmanned underwater vehicles.

Once training mines were found, then the ship's mine clearance divers dealt with the threat using high-explosive underwater charges – or by dispatching the 'live' version of Seafox to remotely detonate a simulated mine.

"I'm immensely proud of my team, who have consistently proved themselves over a sustained period of high tempo Operational Sea Training," said Lt Cdr Harkin.

"This year we are away from our families for eight months, but the ship's contribution to UK defence, economic security and wider geopolitical stability is considerable.

"My ship's company and their families can be very proud of what they do."

After taking part in the first of this year's Joint Warriors, Ledbury is due to trade places with her sister Chiddingfold when the latter begins her return to Portsmouth after over three years in Bahrain.



It's Lewis Middleton...

YOU could call this a selfie...

Formula 1 ace Lewis Hamilton poses with the crew of HMS Middleton in the bowels of their minehunter (with a cheeky guest appearance from CO Lt Cdr Charles When in the corner) – a memento of a weekend to remember for some of the RN's MCM force in the Gulf.

Thanks to the military charity Tickets for Troops, 40 passes to the Bahrain Grand Prix were provided to RN personnel based in the kingdom and a visit by Lewis organised to the Hunt-class ship after the race.

The 32-year-old three-times F1 champion posed for photos with the ship's company, signed autographs, received a whistle-stop tour and clambered inside the (rather tight) dive chamber.

Lewis came second behind Ferrari's Sebastian Vettel, averaging over 130mph per lap... compared with a top speed on Middleton of 20mph... and minehunting speed of about 3mph...

Picture: Stuart Higgins

Monmouth picks up the Bataan

ONE of HMS Monmouth's Pacific RIBs returns to mother from the American carrier/assault ship USS Bataan during the opening stages of a fortnight-long amphibious workout for US-Anglo-French forces off Djibouti.

The Black Duke was Britain's contribution to Alligator Dagger 17 (there are no alligators in the Middle East, if you were wondering... except in zoos), linking up with the formidable force that is the US Navy's PHIBRON 8 (8th Amphibious Squadron) – flagship USS Bataan, assault ship USS Carter Hall, the US Marine Corps' 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit, support ship USS Ponce (pronounced 'pon-say' before you start Carry-on-style giggling) and France's 5th Marine Regiment.

The amphibious forces focused on getting ashore and 'fighting' their way inland, making use of Djibouti's live-fire ranges for more authentic

training, while Monmouth concerned herself with protecting the task group, small boat operations and maritime security operations – known by US forces as vessel board search and seizure (VBSS).

Monmouth took her place in the line having just relieved HMS Daring as the Type 45 destroyer turned for home after a good six months east of Suez. Daring handed over key equipment and top tips from her experiences policing the Gulf region before receiving a traditional send-off from the Black Duke's crew as they set their fire hoses to squirt jets of water of appreciation.

For D32, after passing through Suez, visits to Haifa – the third RN vessel in a year to call in on the Israeli port – then a rare foray into the Black Sea to see Romania and Bulgaria before thoughts of the 240 souls aboard turn to home and a return to Pompey later this month.

Picture: MC3 Raymond Minami, USN



Fancy a RM assault course?

FANCY a 6.64-mile slog around the Angus countryside through ditches, tunnels, ponds and over obstacles – and paying up to £45 for the privilege?

If you do, then you're just the person 45 Commando are looking for to participate in their Commando Raid event on June 24.

The team at RM Condor have organised the fun run around Arbroath to raise money for the Royal Marines Charity and the Woodlands Garden Trust.

The course will feature 16 obstacles (each named after an historic battle, raid or hero of the Royal Marines Corps) including balance beams, monkey bars, trench up-and-over, tunnels, hay-bale pyramids, water slide and cam nets.

The Commando Raid event costs £45 to enter (there are a few 'early bird' tickets left at £35). See www.royalnavy.mod.uk/RMRaid or search 'Royal Marines Commando Raid' on Facebook to book your ticket.

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Pride 'shines through'

THE first visitors to the new-look HMS Brocklesby were (a) rather young (b) rather exacting as children from Churcher's College History Club toured the minehunter post-refit.

The eight youngsters were visiting museum piece HMS M33, recently restored in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard in tribute to the men of Gallipoli, and wanted to compare the monitor with the present-day M33 (Brocklesby's pennant number).

The minehunter has weeks to go before she begins sea trials, thus ending an overhaul by BAE engineers and technicians which has kept her out of action for more than 12 months.

Brock is the latest Hunt to undergo 'Project 50', extending the life of the class beyond 2030, not least by replacing the Deltic diesel engines (like those which powered locomotives) with modern, more efficient Caterpillar engines.

A 100-strong team of engineers and technicians carried out 9,000 improvements, repairs and overhauls to the 34-year-old hunter – work which collectively devoured 190,000 hours (more than 21½ years by a single person...) in BAE's Vernon Complex – named after the spiritual home of mine warfare in Portsmouth (now occupied by the Gunwharf shopping/leisure complex).

Gunnery officer Lt Dan Buttar and shipmates gave the Petersfield pupils a tour of Brocklesby – 20ft shorter than M33, but otherwise a world away from the Great War vessel: air conditioning, televisions, bunks not hammocks, computers, mobile phones, emails.

The children learned about the basics of minehunting, navigating and weaponry, before testing some of the firefighting and diving equipment.

"We're at a key point in our regeneration process," said Lt Buttar, "and being able to demonstrate our capabilities and equipment to an outside group has allowed the crew's pride and sense of ownership to shine through."

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● 2/0 James Wright stands by Amber 1; The navigating officer's view of his ship RFA Wave Knight

Sailor takes to skies for new view of ship

Let's turn and burn

THE navigating officer of RFA Wave Ruler got to 'sink' his ship as he enjoyed a different perspective of the Naval Service. 2/0 James Wright writes about his liaison visit to Cobham, the company that flies the Falcon aircraft, at Bournemouth Airport.

We've all been there, on the bridge on a Tuesday or Thursday at FOST, when someone shouts: 'Aircraft inbound. Green 20', and you spot the silhouette of a Hawk or a Falcon screaming its way towards you.

Having a fast jet buzz past your bridge wing, sometimes looking down at the pilot as he flies beneath you, is all very exciting, but how do they organise themselves to arrive at the same time and de-conflict lots of fast-moving aircraft?

I had the opportunity to find out and it's fair to say that I arrived at Cobham a little over-excited.

I'd watched *Top Gun* the night before, I had my "aviators" with me, and I was all set to go fly jets.

Once the pilots had gathered we went for the sortie briefing. They briefed the timings for the mission, including the time that each target would take a hit, which was quite intricate, co-ordinating for this mission three Hawk aircraft and two Falcons. The targets were briefed, and a picture of each was shown for recognition.

After the briefing, the crew did their own pre-departure checks and then we walked out to our aircraft, Amber 1. One of the aircrew showed me the pods mounted under the wings that are used to transmit the frequencies required to simulate various aircraft types and weapons.

Once in the aircraft, he then showed me the console where he controlled the Electronic Warfare (EW) side of the serial, setting the frequencies on the pods and simulating weapon activation and targeting radars. Amber 2, the other Falcon taking part, would be doing something different, using her EW suite to jam ships' radars.

Once all the aircrew were embarked and pre-flight checks correct we took off and once over the sea, Blue 11, a Hawk aircraft, joined us.

The first attack involved the Falcon I was flying in pretending to be an enemy aircraft launching the missile, and the Hawk would simulate the missile. To achieve this illusion, the Hawk tucked in very close to the Falcon so that when he was 'released' it would appear on radar as if a small contact had

detached from the Falcon.

We arrived at the position where the targeting radar was turned on then off, simulating the aircraft finding its target. Then a countdown to the missile release point, and when we arrived, a message to the Hawk to release.

The Hawk pilot, clearly enjoying himself (*well you would wouldn't you?*) threw his plane into a screaming turn and dive and sped off - like a missile.

We then made our own sharp turn away from the targets, before turning back in so we were behind the Hawk on the same bearing. When the Hawk was a set distance out, the EW operator turned on the radar for the simulated missile's seeker head turning on.

As the Falcon was directly in line with the Hawk, to the warship looking for these emissions it would appear that the missile was transmitting the radar. The Hawk arrived at the target dead on time.

I had up to this point been sat at the rear of the aircraft with the EW operator while the pilots did some in-house training, however this was over so I was invited to join them up front.

Aviators on. I got to see how intricate the speed adjustments were to get the timings correct. Some of the attacks

had a bit of leeway with timings whereas others had to be spot on, which meant arriving at the various points of release etc at precise times.

The other aircraft, Amber 2, had a technical difficulty, which meant they had taken off late so the flight crew on Amber 1 had to adjust the plan and for the second attack we would launch two Hawks as missiles instead of one.

After the second missile attack, we set up for a run acting as a land-launched missile. We flew away from the targets and headed for land where we set up for the attack.

There were now two Falcons and three Hawks all flying around in quite a small airspace.

Watching the crew calculate the speeds required to reach the targets on time based on the target distance was all very familiar as a navigator, albeit at faster speeds.

Once we were at the 'gate', which was the launch position, we descended, eventually hitting 300ft as we headed towards the targets. Our targets were in sight and we headed straight for them.

We flew over our targets and returned to Bournemouth having sunk them (*sorry Wave Ruler*).

Meanwhile, aboard the FOST tanker, personnel were put through their emergency drills.

A 'blaze' in the auxiliary diesel generator compartment saw the ship's Standing Sea Emergency Party tackle the fire using portable kit as well as the vessel's fixed Watermist system.

Once all personnel had been accounted for, the initial attack was then backed up with intermediate attack using a five-man fire-fighting team wearing protective suits and breathing apparatus.

1/0 Katherine Morgan said: "By conducting regular exercises like these we build upon skills learnt and consolidate our training, building confidence in our teams in order to be able to deal with any emergency safely and effectively."



Andrew takes salute

The Duke of York took the salute at Britannia Royal Naval College as 155 Officer Cadets celebrated the end of their training.

In front of around 800 visitors, the Duke inspected the cadets on behalf of his father, the Duke of Edinburgh, the Lord High Admiral.

Those passing out included nearly 100 destined for careers in the Royal Navy, one recruit to the Queen Alexander Royal Naval Nursing Service, 38 officers promoted from the ranks, 14 members of the RFA and seven international cadets.

Prince Andrew said: "You have undergone a period of hard work. Some of that hard work is now done, but life in the Royal Navy never ceases to be hard work, but at the same time it never ceases to be fun. You have a great deal to look forward to."

Mid Bethany Ward, 18, who is following in the footsteps of

her father, Cdr Steven Ward, said: "I've joined to become a Mine Clearance Diving Officer, to challenge myself and start a varied and interesting career."

"I've found training a challenge; however it has been hugely rewarding. Most importantly it has shaped me as a person, and given me new experiences and lifelong friends."

The parade also saw the first presentation of the Lord High Admiral's Banner, funded by the Britannia Association.

The Banner will be carried by the Division that achieves the best overall assessment results during the 30-week course. The first winners were Lightning Division led by OC Lloyd Jones.

The title of Lord High Admiral dates back to the 14th Century, and was conferred on Prince Philip by the Queen on his 90th birthday in 2011.

Picture: Craig Keating



Charles views Audacious

THE Royal Navy's newest Astute-class submarine Audacious towers over the Prince of Wales.

A visit to the Devonshire Dock Hall was one of the highlights for the Prince as he called in at BAE Systems' submarines site at Barrow-in-Furness.

The Prince, who is also an Admiral of the Fleet, met staff and toured the assembly shop as well as the dock hall, where the Astute-class and Dreadnought-class submarines are being built

for the Royal Navy.

Audacious is the fourth of the Astute-class and the Duchess of Cornwall is sponsor of HMS Astute.

BAE Systems Submarines Managing Director Tony Johns said: "Having such a prestigious guest demonstrates to our workforce how vital a role they play in building the Royal Navy's submarines."

In 2013, the Duke and the Duchess of Cambridge also toured the Cumbria facility.

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SAILORS in trademark 'dixie cup' caps on the depot ship USS Melville gather around a fund-raising board to see how much has been donated for America's war effort.

Not a month since the United States had resolved to enter the war and the first contingent of American warships and personnel arrived in Queenstown (today Cobh) in southern Ireland, the first infusion of fresh blood to a Royal Navy severely under the cosh in May 1917.

Britain's remained the world's pre-eminent navy, but its reputation was now bruised and battered. The aura of invincibility earned at Trafalgar vanished on May 31 1916 when it failed to defeat the German High Seas Fleet at Jutland... and suffered much heavier losses than its foe.

Jutland had largely, though not entirely, cowed the activities of Germany's big ships, forcing Berlin to look elsewhere for means to bring Britain to her knees.

On February 1, the Kaiser played his hand: he unleashed his U-boats to attack all shipping inbound for and outbound from British ports, irrespective of the flag they flew.

The sinkings brought the United States to the brink of a declaration of war against Germany. British Naval Intelligence tipped Washington over the edge, intercepting a telegram from Berlin urging Mexico to retake the territory it lost to the USA the previous century.

"The world," President Woodrow Wilson declared, "must be made safe for democracy."

Within days of proclaiming hostilities with Germany, Washington had dispatched one of its senior naval officers, William Sims, to London to discuss a joint plan of action by the two fleets.

He arrived in Britain at the height of the U-boat campaign; April 1917 was the very worst month of the war for Allied fortunes at sea – more than 850,000 tonnes of merchant shipping lay on the seabed when its 30 days were up. The losses were unsustainable. On such a scale, Britain would be starved out of the war.

In 1917, there appeared little in the way of antidotes. The only way



to locate a submarine was either when it surfaced or if spotted lurking just beneath the surface by the new 'blimp' airships entering service, the Sea Scouts. Gunfire could destroy a surfaced boat, the depth charge if submerged. Either method demanded skill and persistence, but above all luck in locating the enemy submarine in the first place.

If the U-boat could not be defeated actively – ie hunted down – perhaps a passive method might work.

In the age of sail, the Royal Navy had turned to convoys – merchant ships grouped together, protected by warships – to keep Britain's lines of

trade open.

Convoys were slow, difficult to form, harder to maintain. And, as laid down by the Geneva convention, any vessel in a convoy was fair game for a U-boat; any vessel sailing independently was not.

Above all, convoys needed escorts – and the world's largest fleet could spare few.

On paper the Royal Navy had a formidable fleet of destroyers: 311.

Only one third of those were assigned to the Grand Fleet in home waters.

A quarter of those were in refit or undergoing repair, leaving 79 for duty

– almost all required to protect the battleships when they sortied from Scapa Flow and Rosyth.

Another 76 destroyers were devoured safeguarding the ports of Harwich and Dover – and almost all were too old and slow.

By the time the Admiralty weighed up all its commitments, it reckoned it only possessed 30 vessels actually available to escort convoys. Estimates suggested it needed 45, more likely 72 destroyers to safeguard the merchantmen.

So when William Sims arrived at the Admiralty, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir John Jellicoe – promoted from

Commander of the Grand Fleet after Jutland – told him of Britain's plight and pleaded for assistance. Sims was shocked. He thought Britain was winning the war. The documents Jellicoe and his staff placed at the American's disposal told an entirely different story.

"Unless the appalling destruction of merchant tonnage which was then taking place could be materially checked, the unconditional surrender of the British Empire would inevitably take place within a few months," he wrote.

And so in late April 1917, the first division of six US Navy destroyers struck out across the Atlantic for southern Ireland.

The Americans' arrival in Queenstown was the cue for a charm offensive by civic leaders, the Royal Navy and the press.

"The streets were full of curious people and there seemed to me a great many men for a country supposed to be at war," the US destroyers' surprised commander, Joseph Taussig noted as he attended an official reception.

"I have learned since that the Irish people have generally held aloof from any participation in the war and do not consider themselves a party to it."

By the end of the summer three dozen American destroyers had crossed the Atlantic – and the U-boat crisis was on the wane. Sinkings were still high – half a million tonnes of shipping were sunk in August. And U-boat losses were rising; Germany would lose three times as many submarines in 1917 as she did in 1916.

Above all, the convoy system was working. On average only one ship in every 100 sailing in convoy was torpedoed.

But Britons had to tighten their belts. Rationing and a concerted effort to increase home-grown output had to make up for imports falling by around one fifth.

■ This photograph (Q 19223) is one of more than ten million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/photographs, or by calling 0207 416 5309.

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DRIVING THE ROYAL NAVY COMMUNITY FORWARD ONE JOURNEY AT A TIME

Navy's F-35B pilots practise landing on new carrier

Lightning inbound!



AN F-35B Lightning II jet makes a vertical landing on the flight deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth.

A new simulator is helping Royal Navy and RAF pilots land the new strike fighter ahead of doing it for real.

The simulator, based at BAE Systems' plant in Warton, Lancashire, will test pilots' skills to the limits as they practise landing on the deck of the carrier in a range of difficult sea and weather conditions.

The bespoke £2m simulator offers a 360-degree immersive experience for pilots to fly the jet to and from the carrier.

It comprises a cockpit moved by an electronic motion platform and a full representation of the ship's flying control tower (FLYCO), where a Landing Signal Officer on board the carrier will control aviation operations.

The 360-degree view for pilots is vital as potential obstacles on an aircraft carrier are often behind the pilots as they land. Over the coming months the simulator will be used by UK and US military test pilots who have experience of flying F-35s on US carriers.

The pilots will practise thousands of ski jump short take-offs and vertical landings (STOVL) that use both the vertical thrust from the jet engine and aerodynamic lift from the wings, allowing the aircraft to take-off and land on the carrier with increased weapon and fuel loads compared to predecessor aircraft.

Peter 'Wizzer' Wilson, BAE Systems' test pilot for the STOVL variant on the F-35 programme, said the simulator trials will provide engineers with the data to begin flight trials on HMS Queen Elizabeth.

He said: "The immersive experience is as near to the real thing as possible. The data will show us exactly what will happen when F-35 pilots fly to and from the Queen Elizabeth carriers."

"The trials we can run through the simulator are far more extensive than what we will do in the actual flight trials because we can run and re-run each trial until we have all the data we need. The simulator provides greater cost efficiency for the overall programme and is extremely important to the success of the first flight trials."

The new simulator replaces a previous version which was first built in the 1980s to develop technology for the Harrier jump-jet and the Hawk advanced jet trainer before being converted for F-35s.

Wilson, a former Royal Navy pilot, has been landing the F-35B for real ever in the USA.

He was part of the team that spent three weeks embarked on the USS America for the third and final phase of developmental testing, as reported in *Navy News* in January.



● The simulator includes a representation of HMS Queen Elizabeth's FLYCO, above; left, Peter 'Wizzer' Wilson, BAE's lead STOVL test pilot, also pictured right in his F-35B during developmental trials aboard the USS America



"We had three weeks of exciting flying; day flying and night flying and we really do know how to take the F-35B to sea, we've done it so many times now," he said.

"One of the very impressive things we did was look at high ship motion. We clearly had the carrier moving around in the big Pacific seas and the F-35 really behaved tremendously well – it did great, really good."

"We also took asymmetric store loadings, loading up the right wing and then the left wing with a lot of weapons and nothing on the other side, carrying twice the amount of asymmetry than the Harrier. We brought that back to the ship and again the aeroplane did really well."

"Night time was interesting for us, using the night-vision camera for some trials and we found some interesting things. We were really glad we could put the aeroplane through its paces and found some things we don't want the Fleet to do because there are some safety questions."

"It was a big success and has been the highlight of the last six months for me."

The pilot added that one of the biggest tests for the F-35B would be the carriers' ski jump.

"When we go off the ski jump for the first time on the HMS Queen Elizabeth class, that is going to be the first time ever we will have done it on a ship, although we have done it at Pax River on the fixed land-based ski jump."

"The trial really helps with some of the things we're going to do on the Queen Elizabeth."

Also in the USA, another milestone was reached in the Lightning II programme with the dropping of a Paveway IV bomb over the Atlantic test ranges.

RAF test pilot Sqn Ldr Andy Edgell released two inert 500lb dual mode precision-guided bombs from the jet called BF-03 during a test overseen by the Integrated Test Force (ITF) at Patuxent River.

The Paveway firings follow the first firing of a British-designed missile from the Lightning II off California, which also involved Sqn Ldr Edgell.

The trials of the MBDA Advanced Short Range Air-to-Air Missile –



● Above, a Paveway IV bomb is dropped by an F-35; right, the test firing of ASRAAM from BF-03

Pictures: Darin Russell and Dane Wiedmann, Lockheed Martin



ASRAAM – were also overseen by the Pax team, which includes around 20 UK personnel, led by Cdr Toby McCann.

The firings are part of the UK's F-35B weapon delivery accuracy phase which includes US-UK test teams from both Pax in Maryland and Edwards Air Force Base in California.

The latter is home of 17 (R) Test and Evaluation Squadron, commanded by RN pilot Cdr Ian Tidball.

The weapons trials are set to continue throughout this year and are a final step in the verification of the overall system performance for the fighter jets.

"Our recent ASRAAM live fire test points were the first of several required to clear the weapon on the F-35B, paving the way for the UK to declare Initial Operating Ability with a full complement of air-to-air weapons," said Cdr J Ryan Murphy, director of the test team at Pax.

"The exemplary co-ordination and teamwork of the joint US-UK test team enabled the safe and efficient achievement of these test points and are a testament to the dedication of everyone involved within and beyond

the Pax River team."

The aircraft's primary role will be ground attack with a secondary air-to-air role.

The test firings involved US and UK personnel, along with BAE Systems, QinetiQ and Paveway manufacturer Raytheon UK.

A new contract was also announced for a maintenance hub at RAF Marham in Norfolk, which will be home to the UK's F-35s.

The US Department of Defense's F-35 Joint Program Office has awarded a contract worth more than £80m to Lockheed Martin to deliver the initial training, engineering, maintenance and logistics support for the UK's jets.

Lockheed has subcontracted work worth £40m to BAE Systems and together the two firms will establish a team of more than 100 skilled technicians at Marham.

HMS Queen Elizabeth, currently under construction at Rosyth in Scotland alongside her sister Prince of Wales, is expected to travel to the eastern seaboard of the USA to embark her first Lightning II jets.

Send a Tiger to catch

IT'S the eye of the tiger,

It's the thrill of the fight,

Rising up to the challenge of our rival...

The words of *Eye of the Tiger* crackle in victory over the radio. A few hundred feet below, the vanquished – Spanish submarine *Mistral* – skulks away. The 'enemy' has been Found, Fixed and Finished.

This is routine business for Royal Navy aviators. This is what they do. They are the 'eyes in the sky' – the protectors of the fleet.

They find, fix and finish off enemy submarines. Only the setting is different. No cold, grey wastes of the Iceland Gap or Western Approaches.

No, the warmer, clearer, more inviting waters of the Ionian Sea off Sicily, setting for Exercise *Dynamic Manta*, the largest anti-submarine warfare exercise run by NATO in the Mediterranean.

Ten nations, ten surface ships, nine maritime patrol aircraft, three helicopters and six submarines have all come together; each nation taking turns to play the 'hunter' and 'hunted'.

It's been run under different names and in different iterations for years, but there are a few constants such as the setting and the presence of submarine hunters from Cudroze.

Dynamic Manta gives the Cornish fliers the opportunity to pitch their highly-regarded submarine-hunting skills against some of NATO's most advanced submarines.

It's a 'game' which accrues added importance with the imminent arrival of the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers – the UK's flagship, the *Surface Fleet's* ultimate weapon...and a submarine's ultimate target.



As Mount Etna spewed fire and fury into the Sicilian sky, two Merlins from Cudroze waged war against their eternal foe. Lurking in the cobalt-blue waters of the Mediterranean, six submarines determined to wreak havoc against a ten-ship NATO task force. EMMA RELTON joined the helicopters for a dip in the Ionian Sea.

"This exercise will help improve our submarine-hunting skills with a focus on the sailing of the Queen Elizabeth Carrier and our role to protect her as she goes around the world," explains Cdr Brendan Spoor, CO of 814 Naval Air Squadron, the Flying Tigers.

"For us, it is all about 'hunt the sub', but we also get exposure of working with our NATO partners and experience of organising ourselves within a ten-nation force. This will enable us to go and fight together effectively.

"We have six different submarines to play with, each with different tactics, each operating in different ways.

"Our task is to get into the minds of the submariners, and stop them getting an effective fire solution on our 'High Value Unit'. God forbid, we would never want our massive and capable carriers to sink to the bottom of the sea."

High-endurance maritime patrol aircraft have already been on scene for several hours searching the sea for signs of the (almost) invisible enemy. They have intelligence that there could be an enemy attack on the NATO task group transiting through the area.

A 'fighting pair' of Merlin helicopters from 814 NAS and sister squadron 829 NAS are called to join the mission.

NATO wants the Royal Navy aviators to use their Merlins to find the submarine and put an end to its threat.

Following a briefing at HQ, the Flying Tigers quickly return to their temporary hangar at Sigonella Air Station to prepare for battle.

At home or away, a team of air engineers works round the clock to ensure the aircraft are ready 24/7 for any mission.

After discussing the battlescene, roles and threats, the two teams of four – two pilots, one observer, one aircrewman – walk out to their helicopters, which are surrounded by maritime patrol aircraft. The MPAs can search for longer and carry more sonobuoys – expendable buoys fitted with sonar to either actively hunt a submarine by pinging, or simply listen for a submarine's tell-tale signature.

"Merlin is a world-beater," says observer Lt Max White.

"It brings a lot of highly advanced sensors together in one unique package. If you look at the maritime patrol aircraft from other countries, they will be crewed by about 18-20 people. They bring endurance and carry a lot more sonobuoys.

"What you get with a Merlin is exactly

the same sensor array but we are doing our job with only four people. We bring agility and can really put the pressure on. We are able to get closer to the sea, closer to the submarine. Bang for buck, we bring a lot to the table. It's about layering – the MPAs are a big-search-area asset. They send us in for the localised search and targeting. We find, fix and finish."

The aircrewmen have already loaded the sonobuoys and following a thorough check of the aircraft, the rotors are running, the chocks are taken away, and after a short flight over Catania, avoiding the cloud of volcanic ash from the erupting Mount Etna, the Flying Tigers are over the battlefield.

Looking out across the vast blue expanse of sea, it appears an impossible task. Somewhere out there is a submarine. To protect the task group, the Flying Tigers have to find it. It is good practice for the exact role that they will perform protecting our nation's new aircraft carriers.

"It is classic task group protection," experienced aircrewman WO Ian Macmeikan explains.

"We have a high-value unit – which in our case will be the QE in the future. It's our job to ensure that task group is safe from attack. There is a submarine out there which will try to take out the most important asset. The mission started early this morning, a Turkish maritime patrol aircraft on task already. They will be out there using their sonobuoys to try to find the contact. We will go out and make the search. It's very true to real life.

"When we get on scene, we will go into an active search using sonar to find and classify the submarine. If it does surface, we can use the WESCAM [the electro-

optical/infrared camera] to find it."

As the first helicopter enters the search area, the observer makes the joining call. Commanders on the ship welcome the assistance and direct the Merlin to the datum – the last-known location of the submarine.

And so Tiger 1 starts its search, first ensuring that the area is clear of marine mammals and then listening for intelligence whilst 'fighting the battle' with guidance from the operations room of the ship on scene.

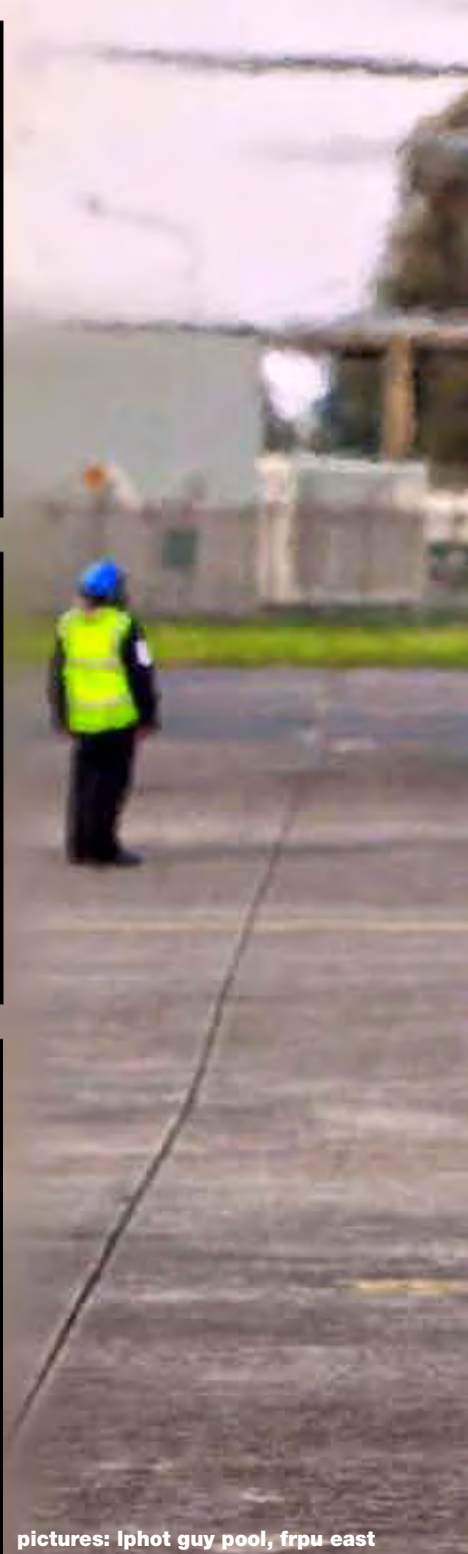
It is not the easiest task: a quick moving mission involving several nations, all with different accents, tactics and flying slang. But this is the very reason for the exercise, to iron out any differences before a real NATO deployment.

"It is so important to work with other nations and their assets. Task groups are made up of many different nations and it is essential that we have experience of working together before we are tasked," says Max.

"Most NATO countries adhere to the same anti-submarine warfare bible, but there are nuances. Throw in a language barrier and different ways of working into a fast-moving battle, and it could be a nightmare – you need to have had an opportunity to iron out the basics first. This exercise has given us that opportunity. It's all about all of the NATO partners, tasking together, working together, learning together and debriefing together."

At the datum – the last location where the ship had a 'hot target' – Merlin goes into the first dip.

The pilot moves into the hover – and once 'in the dip', the dipping sonar is lowered into the water.



pictures: lphot guy pool, frpu east

a mouse

Ian monitors his screen and analyses the data sent back while Max monitors his radar readout for a periscope and keeps up to date with what Ian is seeing.

"When you are in the 'mission bubble', the aircrew are performing a juggling act," Max explains. "It's an intense experience. Focus is paramount."

The pilot keeps a watchful eye on fuel, weather, movement on the surface and in the skies – just in case the enemy submarine has some 'friends'.

The observer and aircrewman focus on the task, and using a suite of sensors and data, concentrate hard on locating the enemy.

The submarine has not been located.

"Break dip right."

The helicopter moves closer to the task force, believing the submarine is closer to the task group than first assumed.

Using all the data from the various hunters, command gives direction and the Merlin's crew swiftly react, the aircraft banks to the right to get into position, and into the hover once more. The pilot has the aircraft virtually stationary over the waves, Max has decided to start 'pinging': "Lower the body." The £1m array is away again.

Once submerged, the listening game begins. Max 'checks in' with the second Culdrose helicopter – 'playmate' as it is called on the mission – which is also waiting for data to return from its dipping sonar. One aircraft dipping and the other pinging. The pair work together to find the sub.

"Good contact," Ian shouts, then whispers with a grin: "Now the fun begins. It's close..."

Using audio and tracking, he identifies the enemy. But the submarine has

realised we are here and is moving away north.

Once again Merlin's sensors are his undoing and he's in the helicopter's grasp again. "Hot sonar contact – we are causing it some serious aggravation. Got him!"

Keeping an eye on fuel, the crew request clearance to prosecute – attack. "Request weapons free to attack with playmate."

At this point, Merlin would ordinarily unleash a Sting Ray torpedo – just 8ft 6in long, but capable of speeds over 50mph and packing a 100lb explosive charge to ruin any submariner's day.

Today, an Electric Underwater Sound Signal – marking the position of the weapon drop – lets the submarine know its been attacked... and there, at 5 o'clock low, appears the periscope of the 'enemy' submarine.

In real life it would no longer exist, but today, in this mock battle, the Spanish submarine gets to fight another day.

The jubilant voices – French, American and Canadian – over the radio thank the Brits for their efforts.

"Job done," says Max. "Once the mouse is caught, it is almost impossible to get away. Hence the reason they never want to get caught in the first place. There is no hiding. They've got no chance. Job done. Found. Fixed. Finished."



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The mpg figures quoted are sourced from official EU regulated test results (EU Directive and Regulation 692/2008), are provided for comparability purposes and may not reflect your actual driving experience.

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d'Arc Skies



WITH one Merlin safely lashed down on No.1 spot, a second airborne (it's where this photograph was taken from by Marine Nationale lensman Nicolas Fernandez) and a French Navy Dauphin conducting rapid roping drills over No.6 spot, the French Navy's Jeanne d'Arc task force punches through the Indian Ocean for Mumbai.

After a month *apprenant les ficelles* (learning the ropes) of the basics of living aboard a foreign warship, to the fundamentals of flying on and off it, a detachment from 845 Naval Air Squadron is knuckling down on the plum deployment of 2017.

Two Merlins and 60 personnel from the CHF squadron, normally based at Yeovilton, are assigned to the amphibious assault ship FS Mistral for six months.

Joan of Arc is not only the Merlins' first deployment on a French vessel, but the aircrafts' first operation since transferring to the Commando Helicopter Force from the RAF.

Crossing the Indian Ocean, the Merlins quickly became the *bêtes de somme* (workhorses) of the task force.

One of the two green Mk3 helicopters is at constant readiness to scramble as the duty crew work or are on call 24 hours a day.

As a result, search and rescue skills have been honed with several

mock 'survivors' (*cruciforms*) dropped into the ocean for the aircrewmembers to practise their grappling skills.

More typically, the Merlins have been called upon to shift loads between the Mistral (a sort of hybrid HMS Ocean/Albion) and her escorting frigate FS Courbet.

Mistral is hosting 80 French Officer Cadets throughout the deployment as part of their basic training.

That's meant spending quite a lot of time on the Courbet.

Shuttle runs ferried the cadets across to the frigate... and gave the Merlin pilots and aircrewmembers the chance to practise approaches to a flight deck much smaller than they're used to.

All this has been carried out with the Dauphin buzzing about as well.

French and CHF aircrew share a planning space – and often the deck – for flying operations.

All flying briefs are delivered in English to ensure that there is no confusion with who is doing what... assisted by a series of mini 'exchanges' with engineers spending a day with their counterparts learning how they go about their business and bringing back any lessons which might improve the way the respective air arms conduct their business.

Mistral will take the commando fliers as far east as Japan and Guam and as far south as the northern coast of Australia, with visits to Vietnam, Singapore and Sri Lanka on the

24,000-mile round-trip.

Three crew – two pilots, two aircrewmembers in the back of the helicopter, responsible for the safety of passengers, manning guns when fitted and helping to navigate at low altitude or in tight spots – plus 50 engineers and technicians have accompanied the two green Mk3 helicopters.

Pilot Lt Steve 'Doffty' Doughty is responsible for language training, translating on behalf of his countrymen and creating a 'useful phrase book' to allow our sailors to communicate with their French opposite numbers.

Such as the PRERAM – *présentations au ravitaillement à la mer* – as routine in the French as it is in the Royal Navy, except that Brits call it a RAS, replenishment at sea, taking on board fuel and supplies while on the move.

"It's quite a challenge coming up with a communication plan, especially as the majority of our sailors don't speak a word of French," Lt Doughty explains.

"We are relying on the few fluent French speakers we have and the patience of the French, many of whom speak perfect English."

Not only are French speakers few in number in the British detachment, but many of the personnel are novices – the Mistral is their first

experience of life at sea – and some of the pilots have only recently qualified on the Merlin.

They used the passage across the Med and trip south through Suez and the Red Sea to get used to French routines, safety procedures and methods, and above all taking off from and landing on a flight deck – even if it is one 650ft long.

Both Lt Steve Irwin and Lt Doughty needed to earn their deck qualifications before they could consider exercises and operations with the French and 125 American marines embarked upon the Mistral.

Both pilots were required to complete 24 deck landings: eight by day, 16 by night (eight wearing night vision goggles and eight without).

"It's great to finally be able to get to sea and carry out deck landings – it's seen as a milestone to becoming a true Naval pilot and I'm really happy to have achieved it," said Lt Doughty.

The weather hasn't always been kind with the Merlins moving to Mistral's hangar when heavy rain and wind are forecast. As the helicopters weren't designed for operating from a French ship, it means engineers have to remove all four rotor blades so the 14 tonne machines can fit on the ship's lift.

"The first leg of the deployment was interesting – we had members of our squadron, the ship's crew of the Mistral, a French Army Gazelle

helicopter detachment, French and US Marines all working together," said Lt Pete 'Creasy' Crease.

"The company of FS Mistral have been extremely accommodating, changing their routines where possible in order to make life easier for the many different detachments onboard."

After a 2,000-mile crossing of the Indian Ocean, Mistral and her Merlins arrived in Mumbai for a five-day visit to the Indian metropolis.

A meeting with members of the famous Royal Bombay Yacht Club was organised with the CHF folk invited to take part in the Gurkha Cigars Yacht Race when members of the Yacht Club were pitted against an Indian Navy team.

Four CHF officers, led by CO Cdr Matt Punch, took part and were distributed among the three largest craft.

Unfortunately, conditions on the day favoured the smaller yachts and the British were not among the victors this time.

Other members of 845 took the opportunity to visit Mumbai's cultural and natural landmarks such as the iconic Gateway of India, from where some of the CHF team made trips to the ancient Elephanta Caves.

Having enjoyed their 'Bombay mix', the 845 team rejoined Mistral as the French assault ship continued eastwards

Next stop: Vietnam.



WARFARE IN T



FLY, little fella, fly...

A Royal Marine of 45 Commando launches Black Hornet, a tiny helicopter fitted with a camera as the green berets embrace the information technology age to give them the edge on the battlefield.

World-renowned for their brawn, Royal Marines spent a fortnight challenging their brains, harvesting technology during the largest foray into data-driven warfare the Royal Navy has ever made, Exercise Information Warrior.

Using miniature helicopters, satellite and streaming technology, low-energy-use computers, live camera feeds and wireless headquarters, the men of 3 Commando Brigade tested their ability to direct a real-time raid on an old fort in Plymouth by landing craft.

Like last autumn's Unmanned Warrior – used to showcase robot/drone technology and how it might be used by the Royal Navy of tomorrow – Information Warrior

has been run side-by-side with the twice yearly international war games the UK Armed Forces, Joint Warrior, staged in and off western Scotland.

The exercise covered the gamut of information warfare – artificial intelligence, cyber attacks, exploiting intelligence, surveillance of the enemy, command and control – pooling the expertise of military personnel, academics, and industry.

It's the task of Plymouth-based 30 Cdo IX Group – a 21st Century successor to a specialist unit established by James Bond creator Ian Fleming in World War 2 to obtain intelligence behind enemy lines – to keep the main assault groups of 3 Cdo Brigade at least one step ahead of their foes.

To demonstrate what they can bring to the present-day battlefield, they set up a unique operations centre at their home in Stonehouse Barracks.

Built in three weeks and requiring

2.5 kilometres of cabling, the digital headquarters featured more than 30 screens operated by personnel from all three Services, plus industry and educational experts. The whole set-up drained as much power as just seven kettles.

Nearly 450 miles away in Arbroath, an entirely wireless HQ was set up by the men of RM Condor to feed real-time information directly into the hi-tech operations cell.

It wasn't the only feed coming in. Another outstation on Dartmoor at Okehampton Camp, and some cutting-edge cameras and minute drones ensured 42 Cdo's storming of Victorian fortifications in Plymouth after coming ashore on landing craft was streamed live.

While 30 Cdo IX Gp were dealing with data, 45 Cdo went FISHing on Salisbury Plain.

The Arbroath marines were



Pictures: LPhot Joel Rouse, Cpl Daniel Wiepen



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THE INFORMATION AGE



invited to join the Mercians and RAF Regiment in testing new kit for the battlefield – everything from cutting-edge IT down to self-sterilising water bottles and a 56ft 'Easibridge'.

Some 72 items were tested at Army Warfighting Experiment 17 (AWE17), centred on the replica village of Copehill Down, designed to teach the art of urban warfare (aka Fighting in Someone's House, or FISHing).

45 Cdo got their hands on

new assault ladders, the DMM Urban Vertical Access system (a sort of climbing pole combined with abseil for entering – and quickly leaving) multi-storey buildings – the Deployable Situational Awareness system (think battlefield Satnav/comms system) and Black Hornet miniature helicopter.

Just ten centimetres long and weighing only 16 grammes, the tiny remote-controlled helicopter feeds live imagery back to its controller.

It can fly up to two kilometres and, once airborne, is virtually silent and invisible to the human eye, and allows its operators to look behind walls, hedges and buildings, giving them unprecedented knowledge of the enemy's location.

Combined, it means that the Royal Marines are "constantly

pushing the boundaries of innovation" in the words of Lt Col Nik Cavill, in charge of 30 Cdo IX Gp.

He continued: "The lessons learned here will give the brigade options to better operate in future areas of conflict."

"Information Warrior has displayed what a digitalised operations centre can look like and the command and control it can generate.

"It's also demonstrated that 3 Cdo Brigade is well-placed to plan and deliver these innovative technologies when supported by industry and academia."

The man driving the development of information technology is Royal Marine Col Dan Cheesman.

In his role as Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (DACOS) IW-Development, Col Cheesman has a wide battlespace in which to operate.

"The whole point of Information Warrior and future activities is to bring to life what WITIA – Warfare In The Information Age – means to the Royal Navy and Royal Marines," he said.

"So what does it mean?"

"It means anything we want it to be, so long as it covers computers and information technology, big data, artificial intelligence, electronic warfare, cyber warfare, drones, social media and intelligence."

"It's a broad and deep topic, and in the civilian world it is moving at an extraordinary rate. The pace of change is breathtaking."

"Historically, high-end tech was with the military and government, but now it's the other way round – the technology is owned by people like Google, Apple etc, and not by companies which are part

of the defence industry.

"All of those things cause the Royal Navy operational threats and present operational opportunities – it could bring harm in hands of the wrong people, but it could also help in the development of Royal Navy/Royal Marines capability."

"The plan is to use Information Warrior, without the '17', as continuous and innovatory activities to accelerate our ability to operate in the information age."

Information Warrior 17 and any subsequent spin-offs are expected to bring technology to bear much more quickly than the successful RN-hosted Unmanned Warrior last autumn.

"Unmanned Warrior was lots of things flying, floating and sinking and they flew, floated and sank very well,"

said Col Cheesman.

"In contrast, Information Warrior focussed on exploiting the data collected through modern hardware and better analytics."

"We are interested in the kind of things we can buy today from Maplins or Tandy, and put into the hands of people right now to reduce the risk."

"The proven ability of Information Warrior 17 is that we have already made changes in a number of areas – it is already proving its worth as an approach."

"Information Warrior was designed to deliver a significant number of world and NATO firsts, and UK MOD firsts, and Royal Navy firsts, where the Royal Navy will be on the front edge of developing its Information Warrior warfare capability and helping the rest of defence in the process."



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"I was medically discharged, and it took me three years to find my feet in civilian life."

Janina Sweeny, Royal Navy Veteran



'I liked the control room and the biscuits'

CHILDREN were treated to a day onboard one of the Royal Navy's frontline frigates in Portsmouth Navy Base.

The children, who all have parents who are serving members of the Armed Forces got an exclusive tour around the Type 23 frigate HMS St Albans, nicknamed the 'Saint', before she continues her duties as the Fleet Ready Escort.

"Today the children got a chance to see, touch and a real feel for the environment where their mums or dads work," said Logistics Officer Lt Cdr James Thompson.

"The Naval Families Federation organised the visit and work closely with a lot of local schools and their after school clubs. An opportunity like this gives the children a greater

insight to what we do and how we live at sea. It explains a lot more than any phone call or video link, when we're deployed."

In total 32 children explored the inner depths of the Saint as crewmembers took them around the bridge, operations room, forecabin and also to see some of the equipment they use every day.

"This really is a great opportunity to see what their parents get up to when they at work," said Rachael Osborne, head teacher of St Jude's School in Portsmouth.

"It was really nice being on the ship, I liked the fire hose bit, it was awesome," said Orin, six, from Solent Infant School. "My daddy works on this ship and I liked the control room and the biscuits."



We're having a giraffe

OFFICER Cadets from Britannia Royal Naval College spent two days helping out at Paignton Zoo.

Cadets are required to undertake a community project to test their leadership, organisational and communication skills.

The group helped the keepers care for the animals, including the Rothschild giraffes, at the environmental park.

Another group of cadets spent time at Rowcroft Hospice, working in the distribution centre in Newton Abbot.

They helped drivers unload and pack vans full of donations. They also hung and sorted through donated clothing, helped build beds and packed them down for collection and assisted

in the hospice's furniture outlet and online shopping site.

They spent the second day supporting the hospice's fundraising team, holding a bucket collection and helping to pack shopping bags at Marks and Spencer's in The Willows, Torquay.

OC James Shilling said: "The Navy has taught us to look after communities, and as we are training and living in Dartmouth we wanted to give back to the South Devon community as a thank you for supporting us."

Distribution Centre manager Paul O'Callaghan said: "We estimate the value of this help to be worth over £2,500, saving us over 100 man hours. On a personal note they were great to have around."



Meeting of medical minds

ISTHERE a doctor in the house?

That was certainly the case if you were at the Institute of Naval Medicine, which hosted the largest gathering of Royal Navy Reserve Medical Officers in recent memory.

An inaugural symposium saw officers from the specialities of general practice, general surgery, microbiology, occupational

medicine, microbiology, emergency medicine, trauma, and neurosurgery.

The meeting had a theme of current and future operations and featured briefings from the Development, Concepts and Doctrine Centre, an introduction to cyber warfare and detailed updates and presentations from each speciality.



● Award winners, from left, LMA Joel Magory, Lt Cdr Russell Scott and LNN Elizabeth Crofts, listen to the First Sea Lord during the ceremony aboard HMS Victory
Picture: LPhoto Guy Pool

Trio uphold values set by Lord Nelson

THREE members of the Naval Service have been rewarded at a special ceremony onboard Nelson's flagship HMS Victory in Portsmouth's Historic Dockyard.

The First Sea Lord and Chief of the Naval Staff Admiral Sir Philip Jones welcomed the trio of sailors, who each received a prestigious First Sea Lord's Greenwich Hospital Prize in recognition of their commitment and high level of excellence, over and above which might be expected of them.

The prizes embody the values of today's Royal Navy and distinguish individuals who constantly go beyond the call of duty.

The recipients were Lt Cdr Russell Scott for his outstanding work on the HMS Queen Elizabeth delivery programme; Leading Medical Assistant Joel Magory for his commitment on exercises and operations in the past two years; and Leading Naval Nurse Elizabeth Crofts for her extraordinary leadership and courage during a road traffic incident involving multiple casualties.

"Loyalty, courage, discipline, commitment, integrity and respect were the values of

Nelson and have not changed from one generation to the next," said Admiral Jones.

"These have served us from Trafalgar to Jutland, from the North Cape to the South Atlantic, in Normandy and Helmand, and they serve us today, wherever we are and whatever we are doing."

In its second year, the 1SL Greenwich Hospital Prize was established as a 4* Commendation to celebrate individuals who have shown an outstanding commitment to the Naval Service.

Supported by the oldest of Navy charities – Greenwich Hospital – which has since 1694 been affiliated to the Royal Navy, the location for the awards was no coincidence.

Many veterans of the Battle of Trafalgar saw out their days at the Royal Hospital for Seamen in Greenwich.

Although the institution closed over 150 years ago, the charity still supports today's sailors and Royal Marines as well as Reservists and the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

"Today has been a very proud moment for me," said LNN Crofts.

"It was emotional listening to the history

of the connection with Greenwich Hospital and I feel very privileged to receive the prize from the First Sea Lord on his flagship, HMS Victory."

Admiral Jones added: "Before the end of the year, the 18th Century silhouette of HMS Victory will be joined on the Portsmouth skyline by the decidedly 21st Century superstructure of a 65,000-tonne aircraft carrier."

"This is an exciting new chapter for British maritime power. But I know that the Royal Navy's greatest strength will always be its men and women; and in celebrating the calibre of these three recipients we can take enormous pride in the Royal Navy of today and have great confidence of the Royal Navy of tomorrow."

Last year's prize winners were: Lt Bryce-Johnston of Northwood Medical Centre, who managed the public health database of MOD workers returning from OP Gritrock; WO1 Steve Thorpe as the Executive Warrant Officer for HMS Portland; WO1 Terence Miller for his services as Careers Advisor in the Naval Careers Service.

Marines mark 45 years at Arbroath

ROYAL Marines brought the heart of Arbroath to a standstill as they celebrated a proud four-and-a-half-decade association with the Scottish fishing port.

Residents of the Angus town applauded the marines of 45 Cdo, the RM Band and the commando gunners of 29 Regiment RA as they marched through the town centre.

It is 45 years since 45 Cdo moved into the former naval air base at Condor on the edge of the coastal town (pop. 23,902) – and that warranted a civic celebration.

As it's a relatively small town, the march to and from the High Street from Victoria Park only took about ten minutes each way.

In between, there was a salute for the Provost of Angus, Alex King, who inspected the band and marchers and thanked them for their contributions to peace and stability on the world stage – and for playing a key role in community life in this part of Scotland, which granted the marines their highest civic honour, Freedom of the Royal Burgh of Arbroath and the county of Angus, in 2003.



Provost King told the massed ranks – including Army gunners of 7 (Sphinx) Battery Royal Artillery, part of 29th Cdo Reg RA – that their 'adopted town' was proud of them.

"We are proud of the valour and the resilience of 45 Commando," he said.

"You serve at a time of continuing conflict and unrest, exercising your duty with courage and compassion wherever you

are deployed across the globe.

"You are a valued part of our Angus family and are superb ambassadors for the county."

The parade brought the town – famous the world over for its smoked haddock (Arbroath smokies) – to a standstill as shoppers and the general public put their usual routines on hold, stood several deep on the pavements and applauded those marching through their streets

for the first time since 2009.

Lt Col Tony Turner, 45 Commando's CO, said: "We've been privileged over the years to have such great support from the local community of Arbroath and Angus."

"That shared history is what, I think, makes our organisation and our connection to Arbroath so unique. It is a very special place for 45 Commando."

Picture: LPhoto Will Haigh

Summer's over for Protector

SKIING, football and a barbecue were among the highlights for the crew of HMS Protector as the ice patrol ship completed her final work period of the austral summer.

The ship first visited Rothera Station to transfer personnel, stores, and fuel to the British Antarctic Survey base in the Adelaide Islands – a place the crew regard as a home from home.

Next stop was Horseshoe Island, to deliver personnel from the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, along with one-and-a-half tonnes of stores. The Trust maintains the historic monument of the refuge hut Blaiklock on the 12km by 6km island, named for its shape.

Another highlight soon followed as Protector called in at Port Lockroy – the flagship base of the AHT – and the crew spent time walking freely among the penguin population as part of an ongoing study into human interaction with the birds.

Helping BAS staff saw members of the ship's company visit remote islands such as Pourquoi Pas, Lagotellerie, Dismal and Kidd.

Each visit focused on different areas of scientific research, including biological assessments, GPS maintenance and the capability of weather stations. The results will be used to gain a better understanding of the Antarctic environment.

As Protector bid farewell to Antarctica, she headed to Uruguay for port visits to Montevideo and Punta del Este.

The ship then sailed to Cape Town for maintenance work before heading to the remote island of Tristan de Cunha where its survey boat James Caird IV scanned areas close to the shore.

The visit gave some of the crew the chance to walk to the top of the island's dormant volcano.

Protector began her 2016-17 season commemorating the centenary of the rescue of Shackleton and his men from Elephant Island before making the journey to South Georgia for survey operations.

Her second work period saw Protector make her way to the Antarctic Peninsula and the Weddell Sea before travelling to Chile.

After the port visit Protector returned to the peninsula in order to support the BAS base on Signy Island and assist with providing passage to Malaysian and Indonesian scientists who will be working there.



● A chinstrap penguin cares for a chick

A transit to Brabant Island followed to conduct a successful clean-up operation to remove the last traces of human habitation left as a result of a cancelled Joint Forces expedition in the early 1980s. The clean-up involved the removal of much equipment and a large sled.

Survey operations along the Gerlache Strait and Lemaire Channel were conducted on the way to visiting the Ukraine-owned base of Vernadsky and the USA-owned Palmer Station.

Lemaire Channel, *main image*, was by far the ship's highlight of this period with picturesque Antarctic surroundings and amazing views amid bright sunshine.

Protector will now spend the austral winter in warmer climes before returning to the Antarctic towards the end of the year.

The ice patrol ship is now halfway through her two-and-a-half-year deployment and is due to return to the UK in the summer of 2018.

Words: Sub Lt Zach Blow
Pictures: LPhot Kyle Heller



West is the best

THE next chapter in the long, proud history of HMS Westminster began with the frigate's rededication in Portsmouth following a major refit.

Lady Sally Livesay, the Type 23's sponsor (*pictured by LPhot Kyle Heller inspecting the Guard and RM Band*), was guest of honour as the 200-strong ship's company lined South Railway Jetty for the formal act of returning the 24-year-old warship to the family of the Fleet.

Having been out of action for nearly two years, for mast-to-keel and bow-to-stern improvements, the ship returned to sea at the end of January to conduct initial trials, working her way up to the thorough assessment of Operational Sea Training off Plymouth in the summer.

Friends and family were invited to join loved ones on the jetty for the celebrations, not least a piece of the rededication cake, lovingly prepared by the chefs and carved up by the youngest sailor aboard, warfare specialist AB Joshua Stretton, and Sqn Ldr Samantha Kelly, the wife of Westminster's CO.

The ship entered refit as the Navy's premier submarine hunter, a title Cdr Simon Kelly is determined to re-take; enhancements to her sensors and systems during the overhaul make the 'capital ship' the RN's most-advanced anti-submarine warfare vessel.

That hi-tech kit counts for nought, however, without highly-skilled men and women working it – and working as a team, a challenge which rests at the door of Cdr Kelly, and a challenge he relishes.

"It's always been an aspiration of mine, throughout my Naval career, to take command of a ship, lead a newly-formed crew and watch them come together as a team as well as a family. It is the pinnacle of my career."

He was also one of several recipients of Long Service and Good Conduct medals; also decorated were XO Lt Cdr Chris L'Amie, POET(ME) Darren Wilce and LWtr Sarah Feltham.

Fifth Beatle's car will help Fly Navy

THE Fly Navy Heritage Trust is to be the beneficiary charity of a percentage of the sale of a bespoke Rolls-Royce – inspired by songwriter and producer, Sir George Martin, who has supported the trust for years.

The George Martin Wraith, which is one of a series of nine 'Inspired by British Music' Rolls-Royce cars celebrating the legacy of some of British music's most revered rock and vocal artists, was unveiled in London.

Sir George's son Giles said: "My father had a huge impact on British music during his career and this magnificent car is a tribute to a lifetime of achievement."

"I am delighted that this collaborative venture with Rolls-Royce will also support his chosen charity, the Fly Navy Heritage Trust."

Sir George, known as the fifth Beatle, served as an observer in the Fleet Air Arm for four years, joining as soon as he was old enough, at 17 in 1943.

"My father always said that joining the Fleet Air Arm was the best thing he ever did," added Giles. "He enjoyed the banter and camaraderie, but more than that, the ethos, professionalism and approach to technological problem-solving inspired him for the rest of his life."

Sir George was an ambassador for the Fly Navy Heritage Trust for many years, actively helping to raise funds to keep the Navy Wings collection of aircraft flying and giving back to a cause that had personally given him so much as a young man.

The series also includes tribute cars to Who frontman Roger Daltrey, Sir Ray Davies of the Kinks and Francis Rossi of Status Quo.

REWARDING JOB VACANCIES IN RECRUITING

Apply to become a Careers Adviser

Flag Officer Sea Training is currently seeking RN and RM WO's, Senior Rates and SNCO Service Leavers and former Service (those that left Service under 2 years), to work in Armed Forces Careers Officers around the UK, as listed on the map.

Employment is on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) (NCS) Limited Commitment.

Salary starts from £29k with promotion opportunities to rise to £41k.

FTRS rates of pay apply (Reviewed annually and pensionable).

For more information contact:
PSTN- 01929 403172 Mil 94374 3172
E-mail-
navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.uk





● HMS Example left Whitby, left, and later met up with HMS Diamond off East Anglia; Example and Explorer then joined forces for the journey to the German port city of Hamburg

Epic deployment aboard P2000s Example and Explorer Hamburg and ships

WHITBY, Scarborough, Great Yarmouth, Chatham, Ramsgate, Dunkirk...

Bowie and Jagger's *Dancing in the Street* would have been far less exotic with such an opening line...

But for students, rookie sailors and reservists, they're just perfect – perfect ports of call after learning the basics of seafaring with a P2000 patrol boat on its Easter deployment.

That deployment took HMS Example and Explorer as far as Hamburg, the furthest point on a six-week odyssey from the UK.

Cadets from Northumbrian Universities Royal Naval Unit and two sub-lieutenants under training from HMS Clyde – undergoing a refit in South Africa – joined the regular ship's company of five souls in Example for the opening stages out of Tyneside.

Sister ship HMS Explorer left Hull with ten students from Yorkshire Universities Royal Naval Unit, one young officer and her crew of five.

"Being joined by another ship is great as you can conduct in-company training such as Officer of the Watch manoeuvres, as well as the social aspect that occurs when two different units come together," said YURNU student Mid Oliver Brown.

When students are aboard there are no overnight passages – so no direct route from the Tyne or Hull to the Elbe.

Instead, Example hopped from port to port each day, first down the east coast of England as far as Ramsgate, then over the Channel to Dunkirk and then Zeebrugge to join forces with sister Explorer, and along Europe's north-western seaboard via

some of the continent's great ports and cities – Bruges, Antwerp, Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Emden, Heligoland – and the Elbe estuary leading to Hamburg.

Explorer's first stop was Great Yarmouth before heading to the Belgian port of Zeebrugge to catch up with Example.

"The first day of sailing was a great time to refresh on skills that we had been working on recently and to get used to life on Explorer," said OC Ryan Parker.

The cadets aren't just on board for sightseeing; each leg focuses on developing their core seamanship skills such as chart work, helmsmanship and other tasks required on board such as seamanship duties on the upper deck, while the junior officers are trained by the ship's crew to further increase their own navigation experience.

Each student was assigned a role such as senior student, navigator and public relations officer, with cadets given the opportunity to complete their task book.

Example's first day – heading for Whitby – involved getting to grips with life aboard, with many of the cadets feeling as though they were in over their heads.

"At the start of the day I felt as though I was a rabbit in headlights, but as the day went on I felt more confident as the crew showed me the ropes – literally," said Sam Powell, a Defence Technical

Undergraduate Scheme cadet.

The crew and officers provided basic training to the cadets, helping them to settle in.

"The first couple of days are when the students learn the most about Naval life, learning to live in a messdeck with others and adhere to the ship's routine and their own watchbills [rosters]," said Example's Commanding Officer Lt Thomas Stapley-Bunton.

Strong winds and choppy waters meant everyone aboard – seasoned sailor or not – fell victim to seasickness, but all hands fell in when there were some lively distractions.

HMS Diamond asked Example to play the enemy when the patrol boat encountered the Type 45 off East Anglia.

"As we approached, a warning bellowed out on the radio," said Cadet Katie Reid. "We played deaf and went full-steam ahead towards the destroyer and so they directed their aircraft to attack us."

"Example continued to close in on the destroyer, getting in range of their guns, which simulated opening fire on us as we circled and harassed the destroyer now towering over us."

The waters of the Medway were rather more welcoming as a stop in Chatham allowed all aboard to catch up on RN history in the old dockyard, while the final port in Blighty before reaching out for Dunkirk and the Continent, Ramsgate, also meant a last traditional British meal – fish and chips from the town's top-rated Shakey Shakey Fish Bar.

After visiting Amsterdam, Explorer visited the industrial port of Emden in Germany, arriving under the cover of night, providing the students with an invaluable opportunity to perform a night pilotage, a skill which many of the students will not have previously had the chance to develop.

From Emden Explorer and Example sailed to Heligoland, a small German island off the coast of Denmark, where

the two P2000s held their own five-a-side football tournament.

"The stop in Heligoland for me was the highlight of the trip, not only did we enjoy ourselves with the football, it was amazing to visit somewhere that I wouldn't have done without the URNU and HMS Explorer," said OC Poppy Powell.

From Heligoland the two vessels set sail bound for the small North Sea town of Cuxhaven in Germany – the penultimate voyage for the students onboard.

It was on this journey that HMS Explorer reached the milestone of 75,000 miles steamed, an exciting occasion for the ship. During their stay in Cuxhaven the students and the crew of Explorer held a dinner to celebrate the achievements and work of the students.

Sailing from Cuxhaven with Commander 1PBS, Cdr Mark Hammon, embarked, Example and Explorer made their way down the River Elbe towards Hamburg.

A warm welcome from members of the German Navy was received with the two Commanding Officers calling on the regional commander for the area.

Hamburg also marked the end of the first phase of the Easter deployment, with another group of eager students joining the ships as they continued their voyages around Northern Europe.

"The last nine days have been some of the hardest I have faced, however they were some of the most enjoyable and most educating which heavily outweighs the hardship," said YURNU student Ben Farrar.

"As the week progressed, the crew and cadets pulled together excellently and we now work proficiently as a team," said Example's XO CPO Graeme Stroud.

"The five students aboard have adapted well to life at sea and have become valuable members of the ship's company."



● Explorer and Example berth in Hamburg in the shadow of the city's iconic 'Elphi', the Elbphilharmonie concert hall, far left



Walking in Wales for WRNS100

THE longest-serving female senior rate in the Naval Service and the first female Command Warrant Officer are taking on a 100-mile walk in Wales this month to mark the centenary of the founding of the Women's Royal Naval Service.

WO1 Barbara McGregor and WO1 Annette Penfold are planning to set off on May 13, and the walk should take them around nine days.

They will start on the Pembrokeshire Coastal Path and head eastwards via the Gower Peninsula, Swansea, Porthcawl and Ogmore, before picking up the Taff Trail into Cardiff.

They will finish the walk at HMS Cambria, the Royal Naval Reserve unit in Cardiff.

Guests are expected to join the pair for sections of the walk.

Barbara is currently the Regional Development Manager in the Wales and West of England Region and Annette is based at the Maritime Reserves HQ.

But it is not just about enjoying the views along the way – the Warrant Officers will also be raising money for the WRNS100 Appeal, co-ordinated by the Association of Wrens.

At the end of the year any surplus funds will be donated to Women's Royal Naval Service charities and the RNRMC.

For further information on the walk, and to donate to their cause, see <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/WRNS100WalkinginWales>

Winning ways

TWO sets of winners have been drawn for competitions in *Navy News* in the March edition.

In our Dazzle Competition we asked you for the name of the last battleship built for the Royal Navy.

The answer was HMS Vanguard, and the three winners of the Dazzleship Battleships games were John Pittock, Steeton, W. Yorkshire; David Bradbury, London and Anthony Faulkner, Hoddesdon, Herts.

To win a Haynes Westland Lynx Owners' Workshop Manual we asked you the name of the supersonic airliner which was the result of Anglo-French collaboration in the 1960s and 1970s.

The answer, of course, was Concorde, and the five winners were Keith Adlam, Isle of Wight; Pete Bevan, Purley, Surrey; John Harley, Ansdell, Lytham St Annes; Patrick Allen, Sheffield, S. Yorkshire; Rob Griffin, Hucclecote, Gloucester.



WW1 wrecks safeguarded

SITTING upright on the seabed of the Channel one mile off the Kent coast, this is the wreck of His Majesty's Hospital Ship Anglia – finally protected from potential plunderers more than a century after she sank.

Thirteen more hallowed sites from the Great War now enjoy protection – added to a register of shipwrecks granted special status by the government.

Renewed interest in the Great War as a result of the centenary and illegal salvaging of some of the more accessible wrecks prompted calls for more sites to be added to a list of sites already covered by the 1986 Protection of Military Remains Act.

The Anglia was among those deemed at risk by campaigners. She sank in under a quarter of an hour after striking a mine off Folkestone as she brought wounded troops back to the UK in November 1915. More than 130 people drowned.

Her remains lie in around 75 feet of water – well within the reach of divers.

Some lawful salvaging of the Anglia took place half a century ago – but in more recent decades both the public and government have taken a dim view of anyone disturbing Royal Navy shipwrecks around the globe.

Any salvager now faces prosecution as the Anglia now comes under the 1986 act – but it does not prevent divers from visiting the wrecks, as long as they 'look but don't touch or enter'.

Also safeguarded are three of the most hallowed sites in Royal Navy history.

More than 1,450 men died when the cruisers HMS Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy were sunk in the space of an hour by a single German submarine in September 1914.

The loss of the three outdated warships while patrolling the North Sea off the Dutch coast provoked outrage a century ago and earned the vessels an unfortunate nickname – the Live Bait Squadron.

Kent and London suffered particularly heavily; six in every seven men who drowned were from the Chatham Port Division – 1,264 of the 1,459 souls lost.


The three wrecks lie about 100ft down some two dozen miles off The Hague. After a century only about 30ft of the three warships protrude from the seabed, which is littered with shells, cordite charges and personal effects such as shoes.


No wreck is intact thanks to the ravages of the initial torpedo strikes, effects of the weather and salvaging – pre-1945 steel is particularly highly valued as it is not tainted by radioactive particles from nuclear explosions.


As with the Anglia, the British government in the past granted a salvage licence – but such permission has long since expired.

Henk van der Linden, chairman of the Live Bait Squadron Society, who was recently awarded the British Empire Medal for his decade-long efforts to ensure the men of the three cruisers were properly remembered in the UK and his native Netherlands, said he was "very glad" that the three wrecks were now protected.


The wrecks added to the 1986 act's 'protected places' list are:


 **HMS Hogue, Aboukir and Cressy**
HMHS Anglia


 **HMS Pheasant**, destroyer sunk by mine in March 1917 off the Orkneys with 88 men lost.


 **HMS Moldavia**, armed merchant cruiser torpedoed off Beachy Head in May 1918; 56 American personnel died.


 **HMS E49**, submarine mined off Shetland in March 1917. All 31 hands lost.


 **HMS Viknor**, armed merchant cruiser, lost to a German mine off Donegal, May 1915, with 295 crew.

 **HMS E47**, submarine lost in the North Sea in August 1917, cause unknown. All 31 crew lost.

 **HMS Falmouth**, torpedoed off Flamborough Head in August 1916. All crew rescued.

 **HMS Laurentic**, a former liner converted into an armed merchant cruiser mined off Lough Swilly, January 1917. 354 men lost, 391 saved. Also lost was gold bullion worth about £1.5bn in today's money.

 **HMS Lady Patricia**, 'Q ship', torpedoed by U46 off Skellig Island, May 1917. All 31 crew lost.

 **SS Armenian**, horse transport, torpedoed off Trevose Head, June 1915, with the loss of 29 men and 1,400 mules

"They are still regarded as war graves and deserve to be respected as such. Nevertheless, the underwater site has developed into a popular diving location, not least because of the precious new fauna and flora that came into being in and around the wrecks," he continued.

"Divers are generally known to show great consideration for the sunken ships.

"The same can't be said, however, of the so-called salvagers whose dismantling actions caused a lot of commotion although eventually their destructive acts were brought to an end – one day, when the wreck salvagers were putting into port in the Netherlands, the authorities were waiting for them and their haul was sequestered."

The act has already been used to offer protection to HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse, sunk by the Japanese off Malaysia in 1941, all Royal Navy vessels lost in the Falklands Conflict in 1982 and many of the wrecks of the Battle of Jutland.

Head west down memory lane...

TWO West Country Naval training establishments are hosting events to mark the 100th anniversary of the formation of the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS).

First up is Britannia Royal Naval College at Dartmouth, where the celebrations will be held on Saturday May 13.

Former members of the WRNS are invited to attend an afternoon reception on the College Quarterdeck, where they will be able to meet some of today's Officer Cadets and share their experiences of training.

The ticketed event is also open to those still serving who wore the 'blue stripes', former members of BRNC staff (officers and ratings) from 1976 onwards, members of the Naval Service

Women's Network and invited guests of the above.

WRNS training moved from Greenwich to BRNC in 1976, and as part of the celebration WRNS uniforms, photos and line books from the College archive will be on display.

Guests will also be able to tour the College and see a display of current training, and each attendee will receive a commemorative gift.

The event will start at 2pm and finish at 5pm. An afternoon tea will be available.

Tickets to the event cost £15 and are available from Lt Maxine Stiles on 01803 677108 or email navytrgbrnc-qa@mod.uk

Places are limited to 150 guests – the closing date for



● WRNS at Dartmouth circa 1980

applications is midday on Friday May 5.

Guests are also invited to attend a church service on

Sunday May 14 in the College Chapel, starting at 10am.

HMS Raleigh's contribution to the celebrations is a "trip

down memory lane" for former members of the Women's Royal Naval Service on Friday June 16.

The Torpoint establishment's programme for the day includes a film on recruit training, a tour of the base, lunch, and the chance to watch a passing-out parade.

There is even talk of a WRNS100 platoon during Divisions...

For more information contact WO Jennifer Morton on dmls-wtrto@mod.uk or by post to Logistics Training Officer (Writer), DMLS, HMS Raleigh, Torpoint, Cornwall PL11 2PD.

Because of limited numbers, space can only be allocated to the first 50 applicants.

The closing date for applications is Wednesday May 17.

For further information on the WRNS100 programme and specific events, see www.royalnavy.mod.uk/wrns100

Look out for RN aircraft

IF YOU want to catch the RN Historic Flight in action this summer, the guardians of Naval aviation have set out their display schedule.

With the Sea Fury still being repaired/restored following its accident at Culdrose back in 2014, it falls to Sea Vixen G-CVIX XP924 and Swordfish W5865 to wow the crowds.

Weather and other factors allowing, the aircraft can be seen at:

- Abingdon Air Show, May 14 – Sea Vixen
- Duxford Air Show, May 27-29 – Sea Vixen
- Torbay Air Show, June 3 – Swordfish
- Shuttleworth Fly Navy Air Show, June 4 – Sea Vixen, Swordfish
- Weston Air Show, June 17 – Swordfish
- Caernarfon Armed Forces Day, June 17 – Swordfish
- National Armed Forces Day, Liverpool, June 24 – Swordfish
- Yeovilton Air Day, July 8 – Sea Vixen, Swordfish
- Sunderland International Air Show, July 21-23 – Swordfish
- Scotland National Air Show, East Fortune, July 22 – Swordfish
- Eastbourne International Air Show, August 17-20 – Swordfish
- Biggin Hill 100 Festival of Flight, August 19-20 – Swordfish
- Bournemouth Air Festival, August 31 – Swordfish
- Freddie March Spirit of Aviation, Goodwood Revival, September 7-10 – Swordfish
- Jersey Air Show, September 14 – Sea Vixen
- IWM Duxford, September 23-24 – Swordfish

New owners for Warrior

THERE'S a 'new' addition to the RN Fleet this month, but don't expect her to deploy.

Three decades after HMS Warrior arrived in Portsmouth as a museum piece, the revolutionary iron warship is now under the RN banner.

The ship – the most powerful in the world when launched in 1860 – has been cared for by the Warrior Preservation Trust for years.

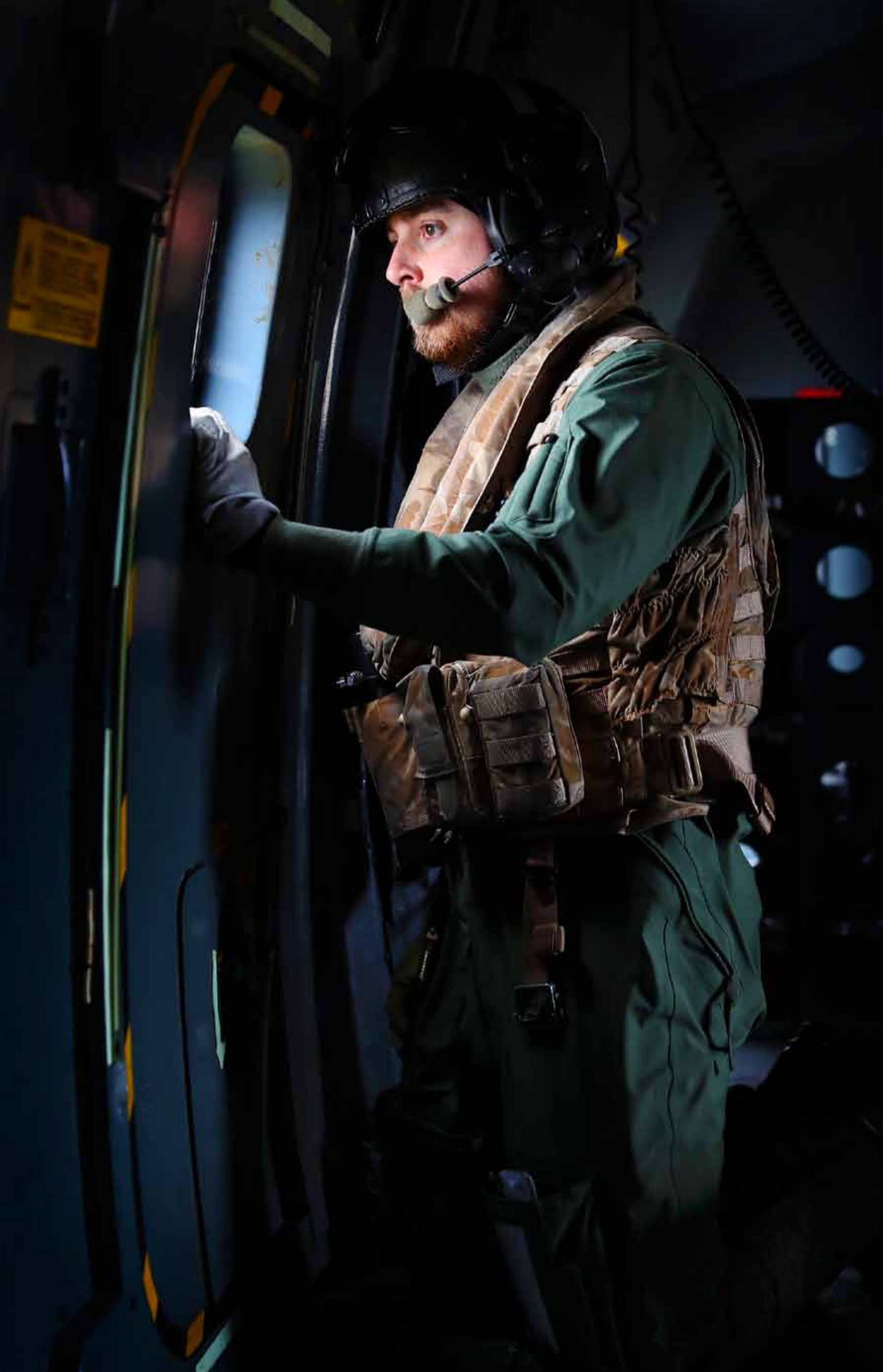
Now she belongs to the National Museum of the Royal Navy – official preservers and guardians of the RN's long, proud history – and its growing arsenal of classic British warships from Victory, Cold War submarine Alliance and small WW1 monitor M33 to 19th-Century frigate Trincomalee.

Warrior is in the middle of a £4.2m revamp to conserve her upper deck; that project, due to be completed by Easter 2018, continues unaffected, as do any hospitality bookings such as weddings.

It takes a team of 40 staff and 70 volunteers to maintain and run the 157-year-old warship; their positions will be unaffected by the merger with the NMRN for the time being.

The Warrior team hope the extra clout of being under the national museum's wing will make telling the ship's story to the 330,000 visitors she receives each year even more vivid.

Since it was established in 2009, the NMRN has secured more than £100m of investment in the dockyard, buildings and ships, and increased visitor numbers more than threefold to over one million tourists a year, making it the third most popular attraction in the UK outside London.



HARE

WE'RE not in Mounts Bay any more, Toto...

LACMN Jonathon Holding peers out of the cargo door window on his Merlin Mk2 at the cold, bleak expanse of the Moray Firth.

These waters will soon be a home from home for the Flying Fish as they become guardians of Britain's biggest warship.

One of 820 Naval Air Squadron's helicopters will be the very first to set down on the enormous deck of HMS Queen Elizabeth when the carrier begins trials.

The nose cones of the helicopters have long since been inscribed with the new ship's name while personnel talk of belonging to the "Queen's first squadron".

More importantly, it will be 820's long-standing duty to protect the 65,000-tonne leviathan from the threat of enemy submarines.

To get used to both missions – and the environment and conditions they might face when the carrier sails – the bulk of 820 decamped to RAF Lossiemouth for Exercise March Hare.

The Culdrose-based squadron is taking its Queen Elizabeth role very seriously.

Quite rightly. The carrier is a highly valuable piece of naval hardware, the product of a national effort which has taken two decades, not to mention the several

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... understand the environment
 ... you are flying in," said newly-
 ...qualified pilot Lt Tim Wills.
 ... "Preparation is key in aviation,
 ... and the first step is to make sure
 ... you understand any hazards
 ... which may impact flight safety."
 ... The Merlins also carried out
 ... invaluable search-and-rescue
 ... training with the RNLI's Buckie
 ... lifeboat crew, as well as with
 ... the RIB crews of the
 ... Moray Inshore Rescue
 ... Organisation.
 ... Over to the west coast
 ... for week two, flying
 ... took a tactical 'edge'
 ... involving Naval assets
 ... on, under and over the
 ... sea.
 ... The transfer to
 ... Gannet coincided with
 ... the (in)famous Submarine
 ... Command Course - better
 ... known as 'Perisher' - occurring
 ... in the Irish Sea, assessing
 ... whether would-be submarine
 ... commanders possess the
 ... 'right stuff' to take charge of a
 ... nuclear-powered boat.
 ... And it allowed 820 NAS to
 ... exercise the 'ripple' technique
 ... - ensuring one Merlin Mk2 is
 ... always at the 'scene of action',
 ... hunting a submarine, while other
 ... Merlins are on their way out to,
 ... or back from, pinging, or are
 ... being refuelled back at base.
 ... "Anti-submarine warfare when
 ... a Merlin Mk2 is involved isn't so
 ... much a game of cat and mouse,
 ... more like mousetrap," said
 ... observer Lt Dominic Rotherham.



... "Once you understand what
 ... it is the submariner is trying to
 ... achieve and the underwater
 ... battlespace he has to work
 ... with, the likely location of the
 ... submarine starts to become
 ... clear. It's at that point that you
 ... begin to shape that battlespace
 ... to how you want the fight to
 ... unfold."
 ... Dominic continued: "Honestly,
 ... when you land after an
 ... exercise having given the
 ... submarine a really bad
 ... day, there's nothing more
 ... satisfying."
 ... However important
 ... the flying may be,
 ... aviators need a
 ... robust and tested
 ... engineering and
 ... logistical 'backbone' on
 ... which to achieve successful
 ... operational output.
 ... March Hare was as much an
 ... exercise in proving longevity of
 ... support to Merlin operations at
 ... an unfamiliar airfield 700 miles
 ... away from base.
 ... "Engineering is all about time
 ... management, prioritisation
 ... and manpower," explained
 ... Lt Dan Smyth, one of four Air
 ... Engineering Officers at 820
 ... NAS.
 ... "All of these are key to
 ... ensuring serviceable aircraft
 ... are delivered to the flight line on
 ... time.
 ... "Sometimes you have to
 ... be realistic and just say no,
 ... but there is a great deal of
 ... satisfaction just seeing your

... aircraft come and go or, for
 ... that matter, an aircraft that has
 ... caused you a few headaches
 ... finally hit the skies."
 ... Submarine hunting is also
 ... hungry/thirsty work; the
 ... helicopters guzzled 100 tonnes
 ... of aviation fuel while aircrew
 ... chomped their way through 300
 ... Pusser's bag meals.
 ... "The training objectives for
 ... March Hare were broad - on
 ... purpose - but focussed in their
 ... method of execution," explained
 ... Lt Andy Mitchell, 820's training
 ... officer, who celebrated his 33rd
 ... birthday on detachment.
 ... "We made full use of the
 ... extreme environments Scotland
 ... offers, as well as the many Naval
 ... and civilian craft available in
 ... Scotland.
 ... "Having achieved those
 ... objectives, our crews and
 ... engineers have come away
 ... from this exercise ready in all
 ... respects to react to the needs
 ... and demands of Britain's new
 ... carrier."
 ... And just as it takes more than
 ... pilots and aircrew to create a
 ... viable Naval air squadron, it
 ... requires much more than one
 ... Naval air squadron training on
 ... its own to ensure HMS Queen
 ... Elizabeth will be safe.
 ... The Cornish fliers had the
 ... RAF, the Royal Engineers, RNLI,
 ... MIRO, two submarines, a Dutch
 ... warship, a British frigate and
 ... countless air traffic agencies
 ... across England, Scotland
 ... and Wales to thank for two

... particularly fruitful weeks.
 ... March Hare ended as HMS
 ... Ocean returned to Plymouth.
 ... Aboard throughout her six-
 ... month deployment to the Middle
 ... East and Mediterranean were
 ... a pair of 820 Merlins, working
 ... on their own or with other
 ... helicopters (including Culdrose's
 ... eye-in-the-sky Bagger Sea
 ... Kings) to protect the Mighty O
 ... and her task group.
 ... It meant HQ back in Culdrose
 ... was a tad tumbleweedy
 ... (technical term): all five of the
 ... squadron's Mk2s and nearly
 ... all 140 men and women on
 ... the Flying Fishes' books were
 ... deployed, meaning March 2017
 ... was one of the busiest in 820's
 ... recent history.
 ... The combined experience of
 ... March Hare and the two Merlins
 ... on Ocean prepares 820 for
 ... the challenges ahead "in any
 ... environment, embarked at sea
 ... or deployed on land anywhere in
 ... the world," in the words of CO
 ... Cdr Jon Holroyd.
 ... "Our imminent tasking may
 ... well be in support of the Navy's
 ... new carrier, but my men and
 ... women haven't merely provided
 ... what was tasked - they have
 ... gone above and beyond; serving
 ... with aplomb and good humour,
 ... in the way 'WAFUs' have always
 ... delivered, ostensibly giving their
 ... all to achieve the seemingly
 ... impossible.
 ... "I am immensely proud of
 ... my team and what they have
 ... accomplished."





● Sub Lt Graeme Nolan relates his great grandfather's story at Spanbroekmolen Mine Crater – the Pool of Peace – south of Ypres

Reservists pay tribute to the fallen of Arras

AS DAWN broke over the sleepy French town of Arras, the crowd slowly gathered to take their seats in the grandstand located above the entrance to the subterranean caverns and network of tunnels that spread out beneath them, writes Lt Cdr Heather Lane RNR.

Wrapped warmly against the bitter chill of the spring morning, the guests had travelled from across the globe to pay their respects at a memorial service arranged by French authorities to commemorate the centenary of the Battle of Arras.

This British offensive was a diversionary tactic in support of the French Army's surge from the South to break the German lines along the Western Front in 1917.

Amongst the ambassadors and defence attachés were visitors from as far afield as New Zealand, Canada, India, South Africa and Australia.

Standing out amongst the dark uniforms were Maori leaders, resplendent in floral headdresses and sweeping robes.

Lt Martin Heighway RNR from HMS King Alfred had been selected to take part in the dawn ceremony, reading a reflective letter sent home by soldier Frank Steenberg, written to his father on the eve of battle as the young machine gunner awaited the call to arms from the tunnels.

A dedicated historian and Naval lecturer at HMS Sultan, Martin is the Junior Officers' Training Officer at the Portsmouth-based RNR unit.

He led the group of reservists and new recruits from King Alfred across France and Belgium as part of Exercise Reserve Lace, a battlefield tour he had organised requiring each reservist to develop their briefing skills in the field at each of the sites visited.

At the Dawn Service, a new monument was unveiled entitled The Earth Remembers, dedicated to the New Zealand tunnel companies, with Maori prayer and song – the *Whakaria mai*.

The monument features the silhouetted figure of a soldier set in an earthen tower that can be walked through.

The previous morning, the reservists explored the Carrière Wellington, a section of tunnels opened as a museum in 2008. Fitted with running water and electricity, the tunnels provided accommodation for the soldiers to live and sleep in, and a large hospital was housed in a labyrinth of rooms with enough space to fit 700 beds and operating theatres.

Wearing Great War replica helmets with WiFi-activated headphones, the reservists experienced the sights and sounds of troops a century before as they cooked a last meal, prayed and sang hymns at an underground communion service the night before the big push.



● A moment of reflection for a reservist from HMS King Alfred at the Faubourg d'Amiens Cemetery, Arras

At dawn the soldiers charged from the tunnels onto the battlefield above.

After their underground tour the reservists headed to Ypres, where they lined the route of wreath-bearers for the Last Post ceremony at the Menin Gate, built in 1927 to honour those lost in war with no known grave.

The early morning mist drifted across the Belgian landscape lending the Pool of Peace a ghostly atmosphere.

Spanbroekmolen (the Lone Tree Crater) lies amongst undulating Flanders fields, now

encircled by trees.

When the pale sun rose through the trees, birdsong broke the eerie silence around the still, dark pool as the reservists listened to the poignant story told by Sub Lt Graeme Nolan RNR.

In June 1917, Graeme's great grandfather, 2Lt Aubrey Turpin, had taken part in the Battle of Messines Ridge, serving with the 36th Ulster Regiment alongside the Royal Irish Rifles, and was amongst the soldiers charging across the landscape when huge blasts tore through the earth.

Nineteen massive underground

mines of the 25 that were excavated between 1915-16 and were finally blown at 3.10am on June 7 1917, instantly wiping out 10,000 German soldiers in their defensive lines.

It was sheer luck that the young soldier was not killed amongst many in his platoon caught in the massive blast of the mine creating a crater 75m wide and 12m deep.

"If the mine had detonated any later," Graeme said, "2Lt Turpin would not have survived the war, or returned to Dublin, where my grandfather would never have been born, nor his daughter and then her son and I would not be here today to tell this tale."

This was Graeme's first visit to the site, where he looked out across the dark waters, holding his great grandfather's medals.

Standing amidst daffodils, atop a stone table, the red dragon of Wales watched over the next stance at the Welsh National Memorial for the next field briefing.

On this occasion Recruit Emma Gravett, was anointed Bard in a mock Gorsedd ceremony. CPO Dawn Brown (from Swansea, and a former flower girl at the Eisteddfod), re-enacted the call: "Is there Peace?" in Welsh to which the group responded "Peace!" three times while an invisible sword was sheathed by Lt Heighway above the new reservist 'Bard'.

Emma delivered her field briefing on celebrated Welsh poet Hedd Wyn, who was killed near Ypres during the Battle of

Passchendaele.

During its short existence, the Royal Naval Division suffered more than 45,000 casualties, of whom about 11,500 were killed. 33,000 of the casualties were sailors, mainly drawn from the RNVR and RNR. Near Varlet Farm and Gavrelle, where Passchendaele was fought, there is an anchor memorial to the RND, surrounded by a broken-down red-brick wall, symbolising the red dust from shattered buildings that covered soldiers' faces, uniforms and equipment.

King Alfred's reservists joined musicians from the Royal Marines Band singing the Naval Hymn while Capt Chris McGinley RM provided a dedication followed by the *Last Post* and wreath laying.

Emma Gravett carried out the Reserves' tribute, tying the unit cap tally to the anchor besides those of other RNR units. Prior to the ceremony, AB2 Max Howitt gave a field briefing to the group, describing the actions of the RND at Gavrelle Point-du-Jour in 1917.

The final word goes to AB Stewart Schomberg, who laid the RNR wreath at the Dawn Memorial Service at Arras.

Following the ceremony he said: "Walking around the cemeteries gave me a chance to reflect how lucky we are to inherit the privileges we have been given, through their sacrifice, and also to reflect how lucky we are to be born in this generation."

Victory – but at great cost

ALTHOUGH the Battle of Arras – an umbrella title for a number of individual attacks and actions in April and May 1917 – is usually described as a British victory, it came at considerable cost.

At first the signs had been encouraging.

Designed as part of the Nivelle Offensive which would see the French crash through the German lines some 35 miles to the south of Arras, the British and their Commonwealth allies made impressive gains in the first few hours.

German defences had been subjected to a withering bombardment of more than 2.5 million shells; the strategic high ground of Vimy Ridge came under artillery fire on March 20, and the rest of a relatively narrow front on April 4.

The original assault day of Easter Sunday,

April 8, was postponed by 24 hours at the request of the French; instead of relatively spring-like weather, the attacking troops had to contend with heavy snow.

Advances were made, especially at Vimy Ridge, which was captured in a well-planned and well-executed attack by the Canadians.

But the impetus was lost as the logistical train caught up and heavy losses against deep German defences slowed the advance.

Amongst the attacking formations was the 63rd Division – once the Royal Naval Division, now part of the Army order of battle – which in the Second Battle of the Scarpe (April 23-24) achieved their objective of the village of Gavrelle.

Three more pushes captured more territory, but by the time the Battle of Arras petered out on May 16 the British had suffered some

150,000 casualties and progress after the first couple of days had been negligible. A total of 25 Victoria Crosses were won at the battle.

German casualties in the sector were believed to have been of the same order as those of the Allies.

Some valuable lessons were learned, and the use of tunnelling for both offensive and defensive purposes was a feature of the battle, with much of the muscle being provided by New Zealand companies.

But the French offensive to the south had also failed, and the limited gains made around Arras are not regarded as strategically significant.

● (Right) Reservists gather at the Welsh National Memorial Park at Langemark near Ypres
Pictures: Lt Cdr Heather Lane RNR



● Tyne Cot Cemetery, near Passchendaele, the largest cemetery for Commonwealth forces in the world

Diversity of advocacy and advice

THE Naval Service's commitment to diversity in its workforce has been demonstrated with the broadening of its advocacy programme.

Two more elements have been added as the Naval Secretary appointed ten Diversity Advocates and assistants for the protected characteristics – Race and Ethnicity; Gender; Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT); Disability; and Social Mobility, the last two being the new additions.

The Naval Service is committed to advancing equality of opportunity as required by the Public Sector Equality Duty, which came into force in 2011.

First Sea Lord's 1SL's Equality and Diversity Directive and Second Sea Lord's Leadership Challenge clearly demonstrate the Naval Service commitment to the broader case for diversity and inclusion in the Naval Service as a mainstream leadership activity.

In order to achieve 'effortless inclusion', Diversity Advocates are recognised as playing a central role in demonstrating senior leadership, disseminating good practice and encouraging the promotion of equality, diversity and inclusion within the Naval Service.

This also mirrors best practice adopted by both the private sector and many other areas of the Public Sector.

Advocates are expected to support the relevant Diversity Focus Groups and associated networks, provide senior leadership advice and support, and articulate the business and operational case for diversity at the highest levels.

The advocates are: Cdre Andrew Betton (Gender Advocate), WO1 Garry Parkes (Gender Assistant Advocate); Brig Peter Cameron (LGBT Advocate); WO1 Vic Parsons (LGBT Assistant Advocate); Surg Cdre Peter Buxton (Race & Ethnicity Advocate), WO1 Kieran Anthony Roe (Race & Ethnicity Assistant Advocate); Matt Hopper (Disability Advocate), John Cole (Assistant Disability Advocate); Deana Rouse (Social Mobility Advocate), WO1 Simon Ashdown (Assistant Social Mobility Advocate).

For further information please see the D&I web page.

Equality and Diversity Advisers (EDAs) are the focal point for impartial advice and support to both Service and civilian personnel on equality and diversity issues.

All personnel have access to EDAs – who can be either military or civilian. Their role is to assist in implementing Ministry of Defence Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) policies, initiatives and training/awareness-raising, to ensure policy is being followed and to monitor effectiveness.

Civilian staff are encouraged to approach their unit EDA for impartial advice on bullying and harassment issues in accordance with JSP 763.

In many cases, this will allow the matter to be resolved quickly, informally and at the lowest level, without the need to raise a formal complaint.

Civilian staff must also inform Defence Business Services (DBS) Contact Centre so they can raise your issue with the Wellbeing, Conduct and Absence (WCA) Team, where you will be assigned an HR Consultant to support you through the process.

Unit EDAs are requested to make sure their availability is known to civilian staff – a list of EDAs should be available on ship and establishment D&I noticeboards.

Aggie's is still a friend Education is key to success

AGGIE'S might have clocked up more than 140 years – but it is still the sailors' friend in the 21st Century.

More formally known as Dame Agnes Weston's Royal Sailors' Rests, Aggie's was founded by Dame Agnes in Devonport in 1876.

Her first 'Sailors' Rest' provided fairly-priced wholesome food, accommodation and entertainment for Royal Navy

sailors near the dockyard, and other homes followed around the country.

Queen Victoria recognised the importance of the movement when she bestowed the 'Royal' prefix in 1892.

Dame Agnes introduced a range of initiatives to improve the lives of the Blue Jackets and their families, and on her death in 1918 she became the first woman to be buried with full Naval honours.

Her epitaph sums up her impact – "The Sailors' Friend".

The charity continued to flourish through the 20th Century until improved accommodation for Service personnel, and faster transport links, marginalised the Rests and they closed one by one.

The focus then passed on to the charity's pastoral work – and Aggie's desire to meet the needs of the day and support sailors, marines and their families still thrives today.

Aggie's defines pastoral support as "listening, encouraging, comforting, supporting, practically helping and signposting."

"It is about helping and enabling beneficiaries to cope with the unique challenges of Naval life."

The key is to help individuals voice and recognise their own feelings, identify the source of their concerns, and help themselves as much as possible.

Independent of the command chain, Aggie's is founded on Christian principles – but the charity's pastoral workers will not force their faith upon anyone, nor will they judge.

Pastoral workers are based in and around various Naval Service locations – Arbroath, Helensburgh, Culdrose, Devonport, Bickleigh, Stonehouse, Lymington, Yeovilton, Poole, HMS Sultan, HMS Collingwood and Portsmouth Naval Base.

Working closely with local chaplaincies, you will find them manning coffee bars (usually called The Haven), running crèches or organising social events for families.

They are also behind practical initiatives such as Storybook Waves, which helps deployed Service personnel maintain links with their children through reading books, or through their Welcome to Scotland scheme which offers families of personnel drafted to Faslane the chance to get to know the area with a weekend visit.

On an average working day, some 375 people received some sort of help or service from a member of the Aggie's team last year, and around 150 people a month had a pastoral conversation with an Aggie's worker.

See www.aggies.org.uk for more information.



● Maj Sandy Wood RMR attended the signing of the Armed Forces Covenant by the Board of Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

Hospitals sign covenant

SENIOR officials at Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust have demonstrated their support for the Forces by signing the Armed Forces Covenant.

The signing, at a Trust Board meeting, followed a short film featuring a number of staff giving their views on what it is like 'caring on the front line'.

For the signing of the Covenant Trust members were joined by Maj Sandy Wood RMR, who leads the Tyne Detachment of RMR Scotland based at HMS Calliope in Gateshead, and who is also a locum consultant in the Major Trauma Centre.

The Covenant is a pledge that the Trust recognises the valuable contributions its Reservists make to the nation's Services, and a commitment to supporting them fully.

Leeds THT has a proud history of working with the Forces stretching back to World War I.

The Trust would like to hear from its Reservists as it is developing its arrangements in this area and would appreciate their input.

Also knowing where its Reservists are based means it can more actively support them.

Craig takes the Fast Track

APPRENTICESHIPS are not all about spanners, hods or rakes – how about playing a part in a procurement programme for a new class of warship?

While the more traditional roles – engineering, construction, horticulture and the like are still available, there are also plenty of opportunities in fields such as public services, the arts, tourism and education.

The Civil Service Fast Track Apprenticeship (CSFTA) Scheme began in 2013 and supports the Civil Service Reform Plan in developing and managing future talent.

It is run across government by Civil Service Resourcing (CSR).

The two year scheme offers "a real alternative to university", providing significant work experience, a Level 4 Higher Apprenticeship qualification (equivalent to a foundation degree) and a springboard to a Civil Service career.

Apprentices are recruited centrally, through a challenging selection process, and allocated to a department in a permanent role at Executive Officer (EO) grade.

Roles are quality assured in advance and apprentices are normally expected to remain in this role for the duration of the apprenticeship.

The Civil Service currently has some 1,500 apprentices on its Fast Track scheme, one of whom is a member of the Type 26 programme team at Navy Command HQ in Portsmouth.

Craig Bond, 21, from West Sussex, completed his A Levels but as he did not want to go to university, he opted to apply for the CSFTA scheme, working within Project Delivery (alternatives are Business, Commercial, Finance, Digital & Technology).

The successful completion

● An artist's impression of the Type 26



of the course will bring him a permanent Civil Service job.

The CSFTA offers placements from Plymouth to the Clyde Valley, and as Craig wanted to work within the Ministry of Defence he was offered a place on the Type 26 (T26) programme.

T26 is preparing to move into its first manufacturing phase this year and Craig's role will be to develop the programme plans to ensure compliance with Managing Successful Programmes methodology and with MOD project, programme and portfolio management (P3M) processes.

Craig is already four months into his placement and has supported the drafting and update of the T26 Through Life Management Plan (TLMP), producing an Executive Summary supporting Main Gate Business Submission and supported the implementation of Business Agreements.

Craig is managed from within the T26 team, reporting to Michelle McKenna, who has set objectives that will enable the skills and knowledge to meet his qualification.

"This scheme has been ideally suited to me as someone who chose not to go to university after finishing my A Levels," said Craig.

"It is a chance to get internationally accredited qualifications in a growing field of expertise, whilst getting to put the knowledge learnt into

practice, as part of a real project delivery team.

"In addition being posted in Portsmouth, on a programme developing the new T26 frigate, has been really interesting, especially at such a key time with it moving into manufacture phase this year.

"I have always been interested in the Navy, so it has been great to be placed inside Navy HQ as

part of the team of Navy and civilian workers.

"There are plenty of opportunities available to give civilians an insight into how the Navy works.

"At the end of the scheme, there are many options available including the opportunity to apply for the Fast Stream.

"Whatever happens, there are plenty of different ways to advance in Project Delivery within the Civil Service.

"Project Delivery is the newest addition to the fast track apprenticeship scheme and a skill that is currently in much demand throughout the civil service and private sector."

For details of the scheme see www.gov.uk/guidance/the-fast-track-apprenticeship

Do you need a home in London?

- Well placed in the heart of Mayfair, the Naval Club is the only London Club providing a Naval and maritime environment where all those interested in the sea can feel at home.
- It is NOT necessary to have been a Naval Officer to become a member. We welcome all those with an interest in maritime affairs and the sea in general.
- The club is open 7 days a week throughout the year for accommodation and meals, and offers special weekend break rates of two nights for the price of one.
- Private meeting, conference and function rooms available. Corporate members also welcome.

For more information visit our website www.navalclub.co.uk



FUNDRAISER OF THE MONTH
HMS PURSUER



WHAT'S more eye-catching than the sight of a Royal Navy warship flying the White Ensign in the middle of the Highlands? Possibly a group of costume characters running alongside a Royal Navy warship flying the White Ensign in the middle of the Highlands?

As if navigating the narrow and tricky Caledonian Canal wasn't enough for the crew and students of HMS Pursuer, they set themselves the challenge of running the length of the waterway three times over in the four days it takes the patrol boat to cover its 60-mile length.

The speed limit on the canal is a mere 5 kts (about 6 mph), not to mention 29 locks to slow progress even more.

The runners – drawn from the ship's company of five, some RN reservists and students embarked on Pursuer for the first stage of her Easter deployment – had already hit the 120-mile mark after two days of pounding the tow path.

For the final leg, they threw in the added challenge of fancy dress.

The goal was to raise £700 for the Navy's leading charity, the RNRMC, and Erskine Care Homes, which look after Scotland's veterans. A near-identical challenge last year brought in £400.

You can follow the patrol boat's progress via her Twitter feed: https://twitter.com/HMS_Pursuer and you can support her chosen charities at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser-web/fundraiser/showFundraiserProfilePage.action?userUrl=hmspursuer&un_jtt_redirect

Personnel raise cash to mark Twickenham 100

They're good sports

NAVAL Service personnel have been doing their bit to raise funds for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity to mark the centenary of the Navy v Army rugby match at Twickenham.

Recruits at HMS Raleigh challenged LPT Taff Jones to complete 250 rope climbs in one day.

The 31-year-old, pictured right, took 15 hours to complete the climbs, breaking off regularly to take classes and complete his daily work.

He said: "Rope climbs are very exhausting and it's one of the toughest things the recruits have to do during their training. I knew people would appreciate how arduous the challenge would be and donate some money."

Having joined the Royal Navy 13 years ago, LPT Jones started his career as a chef and transferred to the PT branch to combine his love of food with physical exercise.

Using his original skills the proud Welshman also made 100 Welsh cakes to sell to supplement his fundraising and in total raised £372 for the RNRMC.

Two teams of Royal Navy New Entry Medical Officers (NEMOs) have been doing their bit for charity as well as passing on their skills to the people of Portsmouth.

Seventeen NEMOs based at the Institute of Naval Medicine (INM) in Gosport, dedicated a whole day to raising funds for the RNRMC and make people aware of basic lifesaving methods.

They came up with the idea of running from the Royal Marines Museum at Eastney to the Naval Base – a distance of 6.3 kilometres, then across the Gosport Ferry and onto their base at INM – a further 9.8 kilometres. And if that wasn't enough they decided to do it with an Army Pattern Stretcher and a 40kg man overboard mannequin.

While one team, pictured middle right, ran the first leg from Eastney, the second team set up an interactive activity inside the Historic Dockyard for members of the public. There they taught basic life support techniques in accordance with the Resuscitation Council UK guidance.

"Many people have not been taught basic life support, which could prove to be lifesaving in an emergency. We aimed to get the message out there and teach hopefully over 100 people some lifesaving techniques," said Surg Lt Andora Holden.

You can add to their fundraising by texting Navy Nemo to 70500 (£5 per text) or by visiting <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/team/NEMO2017>

Personnel at HMS Collingwood set themselves a gruelling task to raise money for charity and also raise awareness of the martial art of Muay Thai.

Their aim was to complete 100 rounds of Muay Thai and the team, pictured below right, cycled through the bouts, each undertaking two before resting.

Muay Thai is a martial art that involves the entire body, using punches, kicks, elbows and knees to gain points against an opponent.

Cdr Perry Stowell, Officer in Charge of Warfare Support at Collingwood, was also there to lend his support to the cause.

"Muay Thai encourages discipline, fitness and fighting spirit, with the emphasis on 'spirit', leading to respect and understanding of your opponent. These are great Naval qualities that we can use," he said.

The group completed 100 rounds, raising £713.71 for the RNRMC which celebrates its tenth anniversary this year.



THE MASSED BANDS OF HER MAJESTY'S ROYAL MARINES

Bournemouth Pavilions

Saturday 27 May 2017
7.30pm

Tickets: £20 £25 £30



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box office 0844 576 3000

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Solicitors waive will fees

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity will hold its first Make a Will Fortnight, running from May 22 to June 4.

During this time, three solicitors firms have agreed to waive their fees for writing basic and mirror wills in return for a donation to the charity.

Thousands of people die every year without making a will or without one that has been properly drafted. If you die without a will your final wishes may well go unheeded, and your loved ones may have to cope with additional financial stress at a time of bereavement.

Life changes such as getting married, moving house, having a family or retirement are all times when it is important to make a will or update your existing one. A carefully-planned will can also help you reduce the amount of inheritance tax you pay.

The suggested minimum donation is £80 for a single will and £120 for a mirror will. Please note that more detailed wills may incur an additional

charge and should be discussed with your solicitor before your will is completed.

If you would like to take part in the RNRMC Make a Will Fortnight, simply follow these steps:

■ Contact a solicitor of your choice from the list below and make an appointment between May 22 and June 4, stating 'RNRMC Make a Will Fortnight' when you call.

■ Attend your appointment and make your will at the appointment. Your solicitor will provide you with an envelope to put your donation in. Please make cheques payable to 'The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.'

Participating solicitors are: Churchers (Portsmouth; Southsea; Cosham; Fareham; Lee-on-the-Solent; Gosport); Walter Gray & Co (Ryde, Isle of Wight); O'Hara Solicitors (Waterlooville).

Places are limited, so contact your chosen solicitor now to avoid disappointment. Visit www.rnrmc.org.uk/makeawillfortnight for more information.



● The team encountered plenty of Galapagos sharks; LAET James Rogers poses by the 'China' wreck anchor; CPO Mick Evans swims with a turtle during Exercise Black Fish in Ascension Island

Turtle recall

Navy divers discover delights of Ascension

GREEN sea turtles, black triggerfish and Galapagos sharks were regular sights for personnel taking part in a scuba diving expedition to Ascension Island in the South Atlantic Ocean, writes LAET James Rogers.

A dozen personnel from RNAS Culdrose took part in the two-week Exercise Black Fish, organised by 824 NAS, which saw them dive on some of the most pristine underwater eco-systems, as well as take part in land-based conservation walks and experiences.

We spent the first day travelling to the remote island of Ascension sitting in the middle of the Atlantic just south of the equator.

The only way for us to get to the island was to fly: on the RAF Air Bridge from RAF Brize Norton on a nine-hour flight.

After a restless sleep on the overnight flight we arrived on Ascension at 8am and it was already hot.

After a short journey we reached the accommodation and quickly unloaded what we needed before driving on to our expedition centre where we took stock of what we had and checked the three ribs moored up in the bay. We spent the rest of the day prepping kit and giving a quick first aid and what to do in an emergency brief to those new to scuba diving.

The next three days were spent getting our new divers qualified in the incredibly warm and clear waters of Ascension.

On day one we had our first encounter with a green sea turtle – they featured in most dives throughout the expedition.

Black triggerfish were abundant and would shoal in the thousands. We travelled to numerous sites throughout the first three days with some of the highlights being Red Rock and Clarence Bay Arch which, as the

name suggests, are underwater arches, within which an uncountable number of squirrel fish would shoal resulting in you swimming through a huge ring of fish.

We also managed to get our first shipwreck, called the 'China' wreck, of the expedition. Spread out over a large area but with a very large anchor, which provided an excellent photo opportunity.

Our first day off from diving allowed us to take a better look at the island, and in the morning went to the beach to see the green turtles heading back into the sea. One exhausted green turtle was trapped in the rocks so we quickly freed the turtle and carefully carried her back to the water's edge where she caught her breath and headed back into the sea.

We then travelled up Green Mountain in order to traverse some of the mountain walks in the tropical jungle. It was an odd transition of landscapes on the lower slopes, where only small bushes seemed to grow, and then all of a sudden in the top third of the mountain large trees suddenly appeared and it quickly went from very dry to very wet and humid. The walk consisted of a walk through various caves and gullies around the top part of the mountain with the occasional appearance by the local land crab.

We finished the day off with a walk to the peak of the mountain where the island's original Royal Marines barracks still remain and an anchor and chain marked the peak – as it was difficult to tell due to being surrounded by bamboo.

We spent another three days diving in the turquoise sea around the island with a particular highlight of getting a larger boat to take us all to an even smaller island on the north-eastern part of Ascension called Boatswain Bird Island, which was completely coated in nesting birds.

But the big surprise was under the water. We quickly discovered it was well worth the long transit to this dive site, with dozens of Galapagos sharks swimming around the diving pairs and being quite visible even from the boat. Another highlight during this phase of diving was the night dive that allowed us to see some of the more unusual aquatic creatures around the island.

Our second day off allowed us to undertake some conservation work. We went down to the conservation centre, and after a short video headed out on to the beach to find green turtles laying their eggs. We learned a great deal about the turtles themselves, including that it's quite common for green turtles to become trapped on the beaches and rocks and the conservation teams periodically check the nesting beaches to free the trapped turtles.

The last diving phase we spent visiting some of the better dive sites, including going back to Boatswain Bird Island to dive with the sharks again.

We finished our trip with a walk to see the annual land crab migration. Thousands of female land crabs come down from the mountain to a few beaches to lay their eggs in the sea. The rocks surrounding the beach were covered in the crabs and as the sun went down they spread across the beach to get to the water's edge to lay their eggs.

The expedition to Ascension was a very challenging, but enormously rewarding trip that we would do again in a heartbeat.

LAET Rogers was joined by: PO Lynn Reed, LAET Justin Nutland, AET Jon French, AET Sophie Bennett and civil servant Pete Hawkins, all of 824 NAS, CPO Mick Evans, WO1 Jay O'Donnell, L/Cpl Mark Wiley, and Lt Owen Mawdsley, all based at Culdrose, WO2 James Melhuish of 3 Cdo and WO1 Paul Stevenson from NCHQ.



● Divers James Rogers, Justin Nutland, Sophie Bennett, Jon French, Mick Evans, Paul Stevenson and Lynn Reed pose with the White Ensign on the seabed; Below, a turtle makes her way back to the water



● LAET Justin Nutland swims with a turtle and fish



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Find out more – further information can be found in 2015DIN 01-213 or email the Firefly team on NAVYPERS-CMFFMAILBOX@MOD.UK



THE JOURNEY DOES NOT HAVE TO END!



Sweet victory for Navy chefs

ROYAL NAVY chef PO Scott Furber prepares his chocolate pudding as his team heads for victory at the Inter Flotilla Cook and Serve contest.

PO Furber, along with fellow Portsmouth Flotilla Team Two members LCH Martin Northeast and LStd Louise Sandy, beat three other teams at the final at Admiralty House – home of the Second Sea Lord – in Portsmouth.

Each team consisted of two chefs and a steward who were given a set amount to buy and produce a three-course meal within 90 minutes. They also had to choose wines to accompany each dish and explain why they made their selections.

“It can be quite daunting for some of the younger chefs and stewards,” said CPO Joey Murray, who runs the Retinue Support Pool in Portsmouth.

“This is a great springboard to progress on to bigger competitions. It’s not ration-pack cooking, these are high-end culinary skills and they can be expected to produce these standards in front of a large audience, where there could be up to ten judges analysing everything.”

For this particular competition the teams represented Devonport, Faslane and Portsmouth, and have already fought through their respective heats to get this far.

From Devonport the HMS Ocean team had only just returned from deployment.

“It’s been very frantic in our galley,” said CH Ashleigh Durston, Team Ocean leader.

“During our deployment in the Gulf over the past seven months we’ve catered for up to 1,000 people, three times a day, so there’s no room for complacency. This is a great chance to really show what you can produce.”

Std Abby Washington of Team Ocean said: “It’s quite nerve-racking being the face of the team, and at first I was very nervous, but working as a team has helped us all.”

The winning team members received their prizes from Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Personnel) and Naval Secretary, Rear Admiral Simon Williams, pictured below.

CPO Murray added: “Competitions like this are a massive eye opener. As much as you can cook and produce some amazing meals, when the pressure’s on, when you feel the heat in the galley, when you’re being judged and all eyes are on you, it can get pretty tough, but everybody gets a lot of joy from it as well.”



● CH Matthew Ward prepping his main meal for the FASFLOT team; Below LCh Mark Penlington

Pictures: LPhoto Barry Swainsbury



● Std Abby Washinton prepares the table; Left and below, two of the dishes



● 3/O (E) Matt Williams and 3/O (SE) Chris Gorschkov take part in the rowing challenge

Hats off in Panama for Wave Knight crew

RENOVATING an orphanage, chatting to children about life in the Naval Service, playing football and rowing the Panama Canal – it’s all in a day’s work for the crew of RFA Wave Knight.

Personnel were in demand during a recent visit to Panama where, along with their embarked US Coast Guard personnel, they volunteered to do up a local orphanage and play centre.

The crew worked with students from King’s College School in Panama City and later visited the school for lunch and a game of football.

Personnel then visited a careers fair at the school where they were quizzed about life on board the RFA tanker.

“Everyone rolled their sleeves up and worked hard at the orphanage,” said 3/O (X) Jed Bower.

“It was brilliant to see the difference made in just one day, and to meet the children at the end of it all was one of the positive memories I will take from this deployment.”

Inspired by the enthusiasm of the children, the ship’s company and USCG team then decided to raise money for the orphanage for further maintenance work.

The challenge was to row the Panama Canal, and back in under the time it takes for a ship of Wave Knight’s size to transit through (around eight hours).

The combined teams completed the task, on two static rowers, in six hours, 41 minutes, 35 seconds and raised around £400 in the process.

Wave Knight’s Communications Officer 2/O (C)



Steve Jobling said: “It gave us an added incentive when rowing the canal and back whilst at sea, as we knew how much any money raised would benefit the orphanage.”

“Thankfully many hands made light work and we completed the challenge in good time.”

The charity work continued during Wave Knight’s next few port visits, where the ship’s company firstly assisted renovating RFA war graves in Bermuda, and then helped at a local charity day assisting in repairing and repainting a football pitch and play area in Curacao.

Lord Mayor calls in on squadron

THE Lord Mayor of Portsmouth Councillor David Fuller and Lady Mayoress Leza Tremorin were treated to a special visit to 1710 Naval Air Squadron based in Portsmouth Naval Base.

Their visit was organised to thank the squadron in adopting ‘Help 4 Special Children’ as the unit’s chosen charity, of which Keith Shaw is the CEO.

During the visit, the Lord Mayor, who has also adopted the specialist children’s charity as one of his for the year, thanked members of the tri-Service engineering repair and enhancing organisation who came along to a briefing.

“The support from 1710 NAS recognises what we do as a charity for Portsmouth Children,” said Mr Shaw.

“I was very impressed with what the squadron does, and it was marvellous to see where they work.

More importantly however, it was good to chat with them and incredible to see everyone who turned up to listen to my talk. People have already come up and offered ways they can help.”

The squadron is made up of both military engineers and civil servant scientific specialists with the ability to repair helicopters and unmanned aerial vehicles, as well as carry out research and monitoring that provide engineering solutions to the Armed Forces.

“I think sailors are a pretty generous lot as a whole,” said Lt Paul Matthams, First Lieutenant of 1710 NAS.

“The charity’s work contributes directly to the Portsmouth community which we are part of. The squadron is unique and we believe we can help in more ways than others can.”



● Recruits Amanda Hall and Sian Lewis help care for a cat

Sailors take lead at animals' home

TRAINEE sailors from HMS Raleigh took a break from their normal routine to help out at Gables Farm Dogs and Cats Home.

The group of trainees, who are currently undergoing rehabilitation after illness or injury, spent the day at the home in Plympton, weeding some of the paddocks and helping to care for the animals.

Liam Fraser, 28, from Liverpool said: "I've got two dogs at home, so it was nice to spend some time with the dogs."

"I took Toffee, one of the chocolate Labradors, for a walk. She was as bouncy as anything. Being there helped to build on our team-working skills."

The charity, which cares for approximately 1,000 cats and dogs each year, relies completely on the generosity and support of the public through donations and legacies. The charity also depends on volunteers to supplement the staff in caring for the animals and raise vital funds to ensure its future.

Sadie Parker, Fundraising and Events Assistant and Volunteer Co-ordinator for Gables, said: "We were so thankful that HMS Raleigh picked Gables Farm Dogs and Cats Home to volunteer with for the day."



● Liam Fraser and Calum Blair walk two of the dogs

They were absolutely fantastic. With their help we were able to accomplish maintenance jobs such as removing all the weeds in the paddocks.

"They also worked in the cattery grooming, cuddling and cleaning out the cats. With all the extra hands we were also able to get a lot of dogs out for walks. It was great to see them all playing and socialising with the recruits, they really enjoyed the extra attention."

Recruits recovering from injury or illness are part of Crean Division at HMS Raleigh. Each recruit has an individual rehabilitation package to aid their recovery, with the ultimate aim of returning them to full training.



Re-learning skills

A NEW facility supporting veterans who have lost their sight, limbs, or both, has been opened by the Countess of Wessex at a military charity's training and rehabilitation centre in Llandudno, North Wales.

Built in partnership between Blind Veterans UK and Blesma, The Limbless Veterans, the Life Skills building will provide a rehabilitation environment to support essential life skills for independent living.

The visit was the Countess's first as the new patron of Blind Veterans UK.

The building has been built after a £1.25m grant received from the Veterans' Accommodation Fund as well as through donations of several other groups and individuals.

All of the accommodation has been designed to integrate seamless adaptations to support physical disability whilst providing a realistic home environment.

As well as opening the new

building at the Blind Veterans UK training and rehabilitation centre, the Countess also got to see first-hand some of the other services the charity offers to veterans who have lost their sight.

Bill Mooney, 74, from County Durham, regularly visits the Blind Veterans UK centre in Llandudno after losing his sight due to retinal detachment.

He had been a wood turner since 1959 but stopped when he lost his sight. He has since been trained by Blind Veterans UK staff to use a lathe again and continues to be an extremely talented Master Craftsman. He presented the Countess with a handmade pen that he turned himself as well as three other pens for her family.

If you, or someone you know, served in the Armed Forces or did National Service and are now battling severe sight loss, find out how Blind Veterans UK could help by calling 0800 389 7979 or visit noonealone.org.uk

Welcome breaks for children

ARMED Forces charity SSAFA is taking bookings for this year's short break weeks.

Each year, the UK's oldest Armed Forces charity offers two free week-long adventure breaks; the Siblings and Young Carer Break for children aged 8-12, and the Family Break for families with a child with an additional need or disability.

The Siblings and Young Carer Break, from May 28 to June 3 at Kingswood, Staffordshire, is an opportunity for children to gain independence and bond with other children from a Forces background.

Children are encouraged to relax and have fun, whilst taking part in a range of activities, such as go-karting, quad biking, bush-craft games, abseiling, archery, low ropes, and other team-orientated games.

Children are accompanied by trained and vetted volunteers, along with SSAFA staff and trained instructors from the residential

and activity centre.

The Family Break, from July 29 to August 4 at the Calvert Trust, Exmoor, is an occasion for Naval families to spend quality time together.

Families attending this break must have a child with an additional need or disability in their family.

There must be at least one parent attending this break alongside their children (aged 8-14 only).

Family members are given their own room on site, and invited to take part in a variety of activities throughout the week, including horse riding, kayaking, biking, sailing, swimming, archery, abseiling and bush craft.

Frances Robinson, SSAFA Short Breaks Leader, said: "We are extremely excited about this year's Siblings and Young Carer Break and Family Break."

The breaks are an invaluable opportunity

for young people and families to challenge themselves and have fun together in a safe, supported environment.

"They are also an incredibly rewarding experience for those of us at SSAFA who are there to provide help and support."

"The breaks are always very popular among the Naval community and spaces get booked up very quickly, so we encourage families to submit their bookings as soon as possible."

Recent veterans – those who left the Services in the last year – may also apply however priority for spaces will be given to serving families and reservists.

For more information about the holidays, visit www.ssafa.org.uk/help-you/currently-serving/holidays-and-events-service-children. To apply for the breaks or to find out about volunteering opportunities, contact Hannah Wiltshire on Hannah.w@ssafa.org.uk or call 0207 463 9275.



Solent swim marks fitness milestone

A MEMBER of the Military Provost Guard Service at HMS Collingwood is marking a five-year fitness milestone by swimming from the Isle of Wight to the mainland for charity.

Pte Richard Watson, pictured above taking a break on the beach with his copy of *Navy News*, is hoping to raise funds for the Ian Pratt Motor Neurone Disease Foundation from the swim in July.

"I run about five times a week, ranging from sprint workouts to endurance steady state," said Richard. "I swim about four times a week. I also am getting acclimatised to the Solent by taking dips when I can."

Richard got into fitness when he joined the MPGS, rekindling his love of running and also quitting smoking. He has competed in the Southampton half marathon, Toughguy and the SF10.



He chose the foundation as 100 per cent of its funds raised go directly into fulfilling charitable objectives.

Motor Neurone Disease is a 'progressive' disease that effects the communication between the brain and the nerves, and to the muscles.

Without effective communication

it can affect day-to-day life, resulting in an uphill struggle to perform what we would consider to be trivial tasks.

The Motor Neurone Disease Association says as many as six people a day are diagnosed with the condition, with the same number dying from it each day.

"I myself have recently experienced the effects of limited

movement and feeling like I am in a 'shell'. My uphill struggle was similar to Motor Neurone Disease in some ways. However, the most significant difference was I made a recovery," said Richard.

"This does not happen with Motor Neurone Disease and I cannot begin to imagine what it must feel like."

"I would like this to not only raise funds for the Ian Pratt MND foundation, but awareness for Motor Neurone Disease and similar conditions that limit people in living their lives."

Anyone wishing to donate can visit: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/Richard-Watson31>

For information about the foundation visit: <http://www.swimmingthesolent4mnd.com/ian-pratt-mnd-foundation/>

For more information about MND visit www.mndassociation.org

Merlin magic for youngsters

CHILDREN from Blackawton Primary School and a delegation from the German Navy have been among the visitors to Britannia Royal Naval College (BRNC).

With the college hosting the Fleet Air Arm Commanding Officers annual conference, the youngsters were invited to BRNC to take a close look at a Merlin helicopter.

The helicopter is assigned to the Royal Navy's new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

CO of BRNC Capt Jol Woodard said: "We were delighted to welcome the children into the college and grateful to the helicopter crew for allowing the visitors to climb into the cockpit."

"Hosting the conference not only provided a fun learning opportunity for the children, but also helped our Cadets who were



Picture: Craig Keating

able to put their questions to senior members of the Fleet Air Arm and get a better feel for the role air assets play in supporting operations."

During a three-night visit to BRNC, the German delegation were given an insight into the initial naval training course for

officers and were shown some of the facilities available at the college.

Capt Woodard added: "We have a long-standing and close relationship with the *Marineschule Mürwik*, the German Navy equivalent of BRNC. Their cadets are regular visitors to the

college to train alongside ours and they have recently worked together at sea on board HMS Ocean."

"The German Navy are in the process of reviewing their initial naval training course and we were delighted to compare notes on methods and ideas."



Engineers help prepare for summer

A GROUP of Air Engineer Officers from HMS Sultan took a break from their studies to provide some voluntary support to the Hovercraft Museum.

The museum in Lee-on-the-Solent in Hampshire occupies the same site as the Interservice Hovercraft Trials Unit which operated at HMS Daedalus from the early 1960s.

It houses the largest collection of hovercraft in the world, with models including those seen in James Bond and *Scrap Heap Challenge* as well as ex-military, racing and commercial models.

The AEOs are currently working towards their Systems Engineering and Management Course for Air.

Class leader, Sub Lt Matthew Shaw said: "We've done lots to help move the exhibits around and also helped to clean things up a little ahead of the museum reopening for the summer. It's actually really interesting to see everything that they have on offer."

"I think exercises like this are really good for team building, thankfully we're all quite a tightly knit class, which means we all work together and will chip in."

"It's great to be out making a positive contribution within our local community."

Hovercraft Museum Trustee Stephen Henderson said: "It's fantastic to have them here, they're a godsend."

"I used to be based as an aircrewman within the training unit and we've had a good chat about the history and I think the interest is there."

For further information on the Hovercraft Museum please visit www.hovercraft-museum.org



Taste of life in the Royal Navy

STUDENTS from across Plymouth and Tavistock have been given a look around HMS Raleigh to see how the Royal Navy trains its chefs, stewards, writers and supply chain specialists.

Nearly 80 students were invited to attend an Open Day at the Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS) organised in conjunction with the Armed Forces Careers Office.

The visitors were shown the facilities used for training and were able to talk to serving sailors about life in the Royal Navy and question trainees on their experiences so far.

Louis Parsons, 16, who attends Stoke Damerel Community College, said: "I want to join the Navy eventually. We saw the chef training and the hospitality, which I'm really interested in, and we saw the firearms and found out a little bit about basic training."

Those attending also included a group of 14 students who are undertaking a public services course at Tavistock College.

The students tucked into a lunch, cooked in field kitchen conditions by a team of three chefs, made up of two trainees and their instructor.

Trainee Chef Mark Crech, from Malta, who has been in the Royal Navy for eight months, said: "It's the first time I've cooked in a field kitchen, but I've really enjoyed doing it."

"I finish my training in May. It's been tough at times."

Princess praises recruits' families



THE Princess Royal takes the salute at a passing-out parade at HMS Raleigh, from a dais depicting WW1 VC hero Jack Cornwell.

The Princess was the guest of honour at the parade, which marked the successful completion of Initial Naval Training for 44 recruits, who now move on to their professional training to become engineers, warfare specialists, medics and communication and information specialists.

After inspecting the guard, the Princess was invited to address the 500-strong parade, which also included members of HMS Raleigh's ship's company and recruits at various stages of their training.

She said: "Parade and drill are probably the epitome of teamwork. This is very much the beginning of what I know will be an exciting career."

"Here you have learned the basics of Naval life and the importance and emphasis that is placed on knowing, understanding and living up to the requirements of the Naval core values."

She also thanked the training staff at HMS

Raleigh and the families and friends of the recruits, watching from the stands.

"I know that your support for these young men and women today is very important to them as they move out into the Fleet. Separation is an inherent part of Naval life and knowing one has the support of loved ones left behind is of vital importance."

During the ceremony the Princess presented prizes to the top recruits and medals to members of HMS Raleigh's ship's company recognising long service.

Among them was Master-At-Arms Ian Gritt who received the clasp to his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal. MAA Gritt, who is set to retire later this year after a 38-year career, is currently working in the Initial Naval Training school.

He said: "It was an absolute privilege to receive the bar to my Long Service and Good Conduct medal. I am very humbled and this occasion completes many years of fond memories."

Picture: Dave Sherfield

Top trio are rewarded for service

THREE Warrant Officers have been presented with the prestigious Meritorious Service Medal by Vice Admiral Clive Johnstone aboard HMS Victory.

To be awarded the MSM, an individual must have "good, faithful, valuable and meritorious service with conduct judged to be irreproachable throughout." Other key qualifications are at least 20 years' service and involvement with charities or social organisations outside of the military.

WO1 James Batchelor, 44, grew up on the Isle of Wight before joining the Royal Marines at the Commando Training Centre at Lympstone in Devon in 1990.

He was recognised with the MSM for his long and exemplary service in the Royal Marines as well as his dedicated contribution to promoting kayaking and canoeing across the Naval Service.

"Throughout my career I have always tried to help others on adventure training activities, and help develop teamwork and leadership in the Royal Marines and Royal Navy. I have only been able to achieve this with the full support of my wife Michaela," said James.

He currently oversees Leadership Training for all Royal Navy Leading Rates at the Royal Navy Leadership Academy. He is also the lead for the restructuring and improvement to leadership training and has established a culture of coaching and mentoring of students.

James and Michaela have three children.

WO1 Ian Gibbs, 53, grew up in Pagham, West Sussex, and joined the Royal Navy in September 1979 as an Air Engineering Mechanic at HMS Raleigh near Plymouth.

From there he went on to complete his Air Engineer Training at HMS Daedalus, at Lee-on-the-Solent near Portsmouth.

He was recognised with the MSM for his long and exemplary service and his contribution to Air Engineering within the Royal Navy and the Fleet Air Arm.

He said: "I was totally surprised, but pleasantly so, as the letter telling me about my award arrived just before Christmas, it was a very nice present after 37 years' service."

During his long career, Ian has served on many Royal Navy squadrons with Commando Helicopter Force, in a variety of locations and war zones, from the snowy wastelands inside the Arctic Circle to the deserts of Iraq and Afghanistan.

He also served on operations in the former Yugoslavia during the early 1990s and the Falklands Conflict in 1982.

He has also been awarded a Long Service and Good Conduct medal from the Royal Navy with clasp, in recognition for over 30 years of recognisable Service and excellent conduct.

Ian is married to Louise and has two children.

In his spare time he enjoys sea angling, and in 2011 was the Royal Navy and Inter-Service champion for both beach and boat disciplines.

WO2 Richard Smith, 49, grew up in Oakham in Rutland and joined the Royal Navy in 1986 as a Junior Marine Engineering Mechanic.

He qualified as a submariner in 1987 after completing his first operational patrol in HMS Revenge. Soon after he deployed again, this time in HMS Resolution, and remained part of the ship's company for a further four years.

Since then he has completed several tours in the Vanguard-class submarines and in 2011 qualified as a nuclear reactor plant supervisor and was responsible for the operation and maintenance of all electrical systems on board the submarine.

Richard is married to Nicola and has two children.



● WO1 Batchelor



● WO1 Gibbs



● WO2 Smith

1 per cent pay rise, and WESM bonus

SPECIALIST pay is being introduced for submarine weapon engineer ratings – one of the changes to pay and charges across the Forces recommended by the Armed Forces Pay Review Body.

The independent assessors say core pay for individual sailors or Royal Marines should go up by 1 per cent from their April pay packets.

It means that the most junior personnel (ABs and Mnes) will take home a minimum of £18,488.76 per year, POs and RM Sgts start at £33,490.32 and WOs £47,487.96.

And for the officer cadre, newly-qualified lieutenants/RM 2LTs will earn £40,025.04 a year, lieutenant commanders/majors £50,417.04, and commanders/lieutenant colonels £70,760.04.

All compensatory payments such as long separation allowance, unpleasant living allowance and MCMV environmental allowance are also increasing by one per cent.

The new Recruitment and Retention Payment for WE(SM) will see Chiefs and WOs receiving £20 a day, POs £12 and ABs £3.

All other RRP's will go up by one per cent apart from Royal Marines' mountain leaders; their payments stay at 2016/17 levels.

There will be no increase to the daily food charge (£4.79) or the Pay as You Dine core meal is fixed at £5.74.

And charges for single and family accommodation will either go down 3p per day, or rise no more than 27p daily.

The body's recommendations have been accepted by the MOD.

There's more detailed information on the changes and increases in DIB 2017/08.

Thistle help your kids settle in

NAVAL families moving to Scotland have a useful guide to help them find school places.

Donna McCartney, one of the Parent Support Officers from CEAS, has written a guide for those personnel drafted to Faslane or Arbroath.

Education in Scotland – An Introductory Guide has been produced with the full backing of the Scottish government, and will provide personnel either in Scotland or moving to Scotland a comprehensive guide to all phases of education, with handy information and advice.

The booklet is available as a pdf at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/childrens-education-advisory-service#education-in-scotland> and click the link.



'...In the interests of our three nations...'

FLANKED by the heads of the Navies of France (left) and the United States (right), First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones puts pen to paper as the three fleets pledge to work ever more closely.

Joined by Admiral Christophe Prazuck, Chief-of-Staff of the Marine Nationale and Admiral John Richardson, the US Navy's Chief of Naval Operations, the three senior officers held talks at the Ministry of Defence's Main Building on future co-operation involving three of the world's most powerful fleets.

"The world is becoming more competitive – and less stable – which is why it is instinctive for NATO's three strongest navies to come together regularly to review how we can provide leadership and example to assist in the maintenance of security and stability at sea and the upholding of the rule of law," said Admiral Jones after what he hailed as an "historic meeting".

"Our agreement to strengthen the co-operation between our navies is a sign of their confidence in the Royal Navy's ability to fight alongside them in the most demanding scenarios."

In the joint statement signed at the end of the discussions, the trio said that as partners for well over a century, shared ambitions (a global reach of operations); shared capabilities (nuclear-powered submarines, amphibious assault ships, aircraft carriers); and a shared belief in freedom of movement on the high seas were fundamental to global peace and prosperity.

Their declaration continues: "We also share many national security challenges, including the threats posed by violent extremism and the increasing competition from conventional State actors."

"More than ever, these threats manifest in the maritime domain. Given these common values, capabilities, and challenges it makes sense for our navies to strengthen our co-operation."

"Today, we have agreed upon a course consistent with our shared national interests, which offers options for deeper co-operation and interoperability to our commanders in both operations and exercises."

"We believe this increased trilateral co-operation will help secure a future that is not only in the interests of our three nations, but in the common interests of our allies, partners, and all like-minded nations who are committed to peace, prosperity, and maritime security."

Picture: PO(Phot) Owen Cooban, DDC

The Empire slaps backs – service for medal winners

SOME of the most decorated people in the land are invited to attend a unique service of celebration and thanksgiving to mark the 100th anniversary of the Order of the British Empire.

The Queen has ordered that the centennial be marked with an act of commemoration in St Paul's Cathedral to recognise the achievements of everyone appointed to the Order since it was founded in 1917.

The May 24 service will be attended by those who have been appointed to the Order of the British Empire – that's holders of GBEs, KBEs, DBEs, CBEs, OBEs and MBEs – or who have received the British Empire Medal, from military personnel to performers, community workers and ground-breaking scientists.

To apply for a ticket for the 11am service, see www.centralchancery.org.uk, email service@ccok.org.uk or write to the Registrar of the Order of The British Empire, Central Chancery of the Orders of Knighthood, St James's Palace, London, SW1A 1BH.

WONS upon a time...

HANDING over the most important symbol of office for RN ratings is outgoing Warrant Officer of the Naval Service Steve Cass (left) presenting his cane to his successor WO1 Nick Sharland, now the most senior non-commissioned sailor in the Royal Navy.

After 31 years as a marine engineer, Nick is now the voice and conscience of all ratings at the highest levels of the Service – including the Navy Board, the Naval Command Operating Board and the Personnel Executive Group.

He took the reins, or rather cane of office – made from wood from HMS Victory – from his predecessor during a ceremony at Mountbatten House in Portsmouth.

His responsibility as the Warrant Officer of the Naval Service – commonly known as WONS – is to act as a conduit between the non-commissioned ratings and ranks of the Naval Service and senior officers.

Nick will also represent his Navy and nation at high-profile public and private events at home and abroad (among Steve's last acts was to witness the decommissioning of former RN carrier HMS Hermes in India).

"I want to thank Steve for his dedicated service and I know I am going to reap the rewards of his hard work in the past," said Nick, who hails from Hereford but today lives in Plymouth.

"I am determined to ensure that not only will I clearly communicate the intent and direction of our leaders, but equally I will provide comprehensive and honest



feedback upwards.

"I am looking forward to getting out there and meeting people and starting to make a difference."

Nick joined HMS Raleigh as an artificer apprentice in 1986 and has mostly served in West Country-based vessels such as HMS Cumberland and Argyll, plus minehunter Bridport, and has served two stints with the RN's premier training organisation, FOST.

His most recent posting has been of Naval Engineer Warrant Officer for the past three years providing the Chief Naval Engineer Officer and the Naval Engineering Board with an understanding of the issues that affect engineering ratings across the Naval Service. He was then selected for the position of WONS.

For Steve, whose Naval career has been mostly spent in the

Fleet Air Arm, the handover marks the end of more than three years in the post, in which time he travelled to meet men and women across the Service in each fighting arm.

"The past three years and three months serving as the Warrant Officer of the Naval Service have been busy, diverse and invigorating," said Steve. "Wherever I have travelled, I have met outstanding sailors and marines – both regulars and reservists – in each fighting arm."

"Representing all who protect our nation's interests directly with senior officers, ministers and the third sector has been an immense privilege and honour. Nick will have a similarly rewarding appointment as the senior non-commissioned rating within the Naval Service I am sure, and I wish him every success."

Picture: LPhot Barry Swainsbury, FRPU East

Proceeding in an easterly direction from Raleigh...

THE first RN Police to be recruited directly from civvy street have begun the conversion from rookie sailors into rookie RN police officers.

Traditionally, sailors have transferred to the branch having first experienced life in the Navy as able seamen before showing an interest in/inclination for policing.

Now, however, the process has changed with would-be regulators joining the branch directly like seamen specialists, loggies, chefs and stewards.

The first five of the new influx were part of an entry of 51 trainees who completed the ten-week course which converts civilians into fledgling sailors at HMS Raleigh.

The 'sideways entry' scheme is continuing, but a special training package has been designed for the direct-entry candidates, said Lt Greg Fergus-Hunt, who's heading the new initiative.

"A training package has been designed for the new entrants to give them some in-depth professional sea training in preparation for spending time on a warship," he explained.

"They will then join the sideways entry candidates to complete their Royal Navy Police Course, before progressing on to their Leading Rates Leadership Course, after which they will be fully trained and ready to take their place within a unit or at sea."

RNP candidates must be aged 21-37 and have GCSEs in English and maths.

Suite dreams are made of this...

A DISUSED snooker room in the junior rates' accommodation block at HMS Drake has been turned into a multimedia entertainment centre.

Following similar rooms which proved popular in Afghanistan, the team in Plymouth decided to create a suite equipped with comfy chairs, large flat-screen TV, video games consoles and DVD players.

The idea is to rediscover the art of mess life – something somewhat lost in establishments across the military with the introduction of single-living accommodation.



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For regular and reserve members of the Naval Service



Naval Families FEDERATION

CAROLINE Nokes, Minister for Welfare Delivery at the Department for Work and Pensions, took up an invitation from the NFF to meet some of the Naval families and Serving personnel that her department is working to support under the banner of the Armed Forces Covenant.

She heard about some of the areas which need attention, and why they are so important to the Naval Service community. As could be anticipated, the views from those in uniform and the family members did showcase a different 'take' on what her department might focus on, but there were areas where key topics most certainly united and gave the minister a clear agenda on where effort and spotlight should fall.

Topics raised included spousal employment in relation to the support offered by job centres, National Insurance, maternity allowance and the challenge of working and managing childcare.

We received some feedback comments from the

spouses who attended the forum:

"It was so refreshing to speak so honestly. It is important for those in Parliament who are looking to make changes, to hear it from the spouse's mouths. Not just polls or statistics."

"There was such a good variety of spouses. I think all of the comments from both sides were well thought through, and heart felt."

And: "Thank you so much for inviting me to the discussion, I found it really interesting and nice for the minister to see the challenges first-hand that we have experienced (and continue to experience)."

There has already been some progress regarding the topics under discussion and full information can be found via www.NFF.org.uk.

We are currently hosting an open poll to collect your views on the Pay Awards announced for 2017. Please let us know what you want us to take forward to the AFPRB and ministers

Firefly

PROJECT Firefly offers the Service leaver an opportunity to seamlessly transfer from the Regular Service into the Royal Naval or Royal Marines Reserve.

Since the initiative's inception in March 2013, more than 800 highly-skilled personnel have done just that.

The project has attracted considerable political, public and media interest and is influencing the size and shape of the Reserve Forces – an integral part of the UK's Defence capability.

The project is widely advertised through both internal and external media channels, such as: *Navy News*, *Globe and Laurel*, Personnel Support Briefs and various resettlement magazines. The Firefly team also regularly attends CTP Career Transition Workshops and employment fairs.

On September 28, Firefly together with the FTRS scheme will be holding an insight and recruitment fair at HMS King Alfred, the RNR unit on Whale Island in Portsmouth. For further information and to register your interest in attending e-mail the team at the address below. There is also a limited number of places for ex-regulars.

As a reservist you are well rewarded for an annual commitment of 24 days (RNR) or 26 (RMR). You will earn extra money, accrue an (additional) pension and receive an annual tax-free bounty (currently up to a maximum £1,742). It provides opportunities for continued professional development and promotion and offers a chance to remain part of the Naval/Corps Family.

It should be noted that all benefits received through service in the MR are in addition to any civilian pay/benefits received and does not affect any Service pension accrued.

The maximum joining age is 56 for RNR and 51 for RMR.

For further information contact the team at: navypers-cmffmailbox@mod.uk.

Change at top of RNBT

THE Royal Naval Benevolent Trust's (RNBT) Chief Executive for the past ten years, Cdr Stephen Farrington, has handed over the reins of the charity to Cdr Rob Bosshardt.

Stephen is retiring following a full RN career initially as a shipwright and latterly as a marine engineer followed by a spell running a 2,000MW coal-fired power station before taking on the RNBT.

Rob left the RN in 2006 and has worked in the education sector since.

"I'm sad to be leaving such a super organisation that has done and continues to do so much good for so many people over so many years but I'm pleased to be handing over a slick and caring operation and I know Rob is looking forward to leading the Trust through its next chapter," said Stephen.

Check your nominations

ALL Armed Forces Pension Scheme Members in the 05 and 15 Schemes should ensure that their nominations for death benefit are up-to-date as the benefit forms are legally binding and the benefit will go to the nominee – even if there has been a change in the member's circumstances. Your admin office will be able to advise.

The relevant Death Benefit Nomination Forms are available from www.gov.uk/government/publications/service-personnel-and-veterans-agency-spva-pensions-forms

From Temeraire to Toronto?

AROUND 30 wounded and disabled sailors and Royal Marines sweated and strained in Portsmouth as they fought to represent the UK at this year's Invictus Games.

More than 550 personnel from 17 nations will converge on Toronto in Canada for the third incarnation of the sporting event – the military counterpart of the Paralympics.

Team GB's powerlifting coaches visited the home of Royal Navy sport, HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth, to see whether some of those lifting had the potential for the 90-strong British squad.

Among those bidding for glory in Canada at the end of September was Lt Cdr Emma McCormick, recovering from a serious leg injury.

She lifted 50kg – but realistically needs to lift over 70 kilos to make Toronto.

"Getting to the games would be a reward – not just for me, but for all those who have supported me during the hell that I've gone through over the past year," she said.

"I would be inspired by all those around me, by their determination, but also their wicked sense of humour in the face of adversity.

"In terms of my recovery, I'd have access to world-class coaches with the Invictus team – having them 'on tap' at Temeraire was a double win for me."

The powerlifting squad meets regularly under the direction and tutorage of head coach Ben Richens, who was paying his first visit to a Royal Navy establishment.

Each squad member has a dedicated training plan put together which helps them with their individual recovery but also goes towards building strength in a safe way.

Ahead of the weekend training and assessment session, Temeraire staff and Help 4 Heroes worked together to ensure the safety and comfort of all those lifting weights.



● Ethan Cruz, an Army powerlifter, watches as Lt Cdr Emma McCormick lifts

Picture: LPhot Sean Gascoigne, FRPU East

"Watching the athletes hone techniques and train has been inspirational – there was serious weight being put up on the bench!" said Cdr Ed Evans, Temeraire's CO.

"Sport is such an essential part for many on their 'recovery pathway' that it was a natural step for HMS Temeraire – the Home of both welfare and Royal Navy Sport – to support Invictus and Help 4 Heroes.

"We hope that this is the start of a supportive partnership that sees us working together closely in the coming months so that these talented athletes are successful at the games in September."

After the Temeraire workout, the team moved on to a four-day trial at Bath University, where Invictus patron Prince Harry joined hopefuls in athletics, archery, wheelchair basketball, road cycling, golf, powerlifting, indoor rowing, wheelchair rugby, swimming, sitting volleyball and

wheelchair tennis to offer his encouragement.

Of the 306 people hopeful of a place in the UK squad, 212 are newbies using sport as part

of their recovery; most are ex-Forces, but 53 serving personnel are bidding to become team members. Final team selection takes place this month.



HOW many photographers does it take to do a grip and grin?

On this evidence... seven (clockwise from left PO Des Wade, LPhot Barry Swainsbury, PO 'Simmo' Simpson, PO 'Donny' Osmond, PO 'Digital' Ray Jones – filming rather than focusing on stills – and LPhot Sean 'Gaz' Gascoigne... plus LPhot 'Nobby' Hall behind the lens on this particular shot).

And in the middle of the photographic maelstrom... Naval Secretary Rear Admiral Simon Williams presenting the branch badge to LPhot Louise George.

Not any old branch badge too for that matter, but the specialisation's new insignia, created by *Navy News*' graphic artist Andy Brady, in the wake of a reshuffle of the phot world.

For decades, the branch came under the umbrella of the Fleet Air Arm (in the early days they acted as spotters for the guns of the Surface Fleet, taking to the skies in observation aircraft), but following a recent shake-up to reflect their 21st Century role, the small branch (40-plus lensmeisters) is now part of the warfare world.

So farewell LA(Phot)... hello LPhot.

If you fancy joining them look at [RNTM 26/16](#)

Where to look

RNTMs

01 – Personnel

01-029/17 Rebalancing lives fund grant applications

05 – Management, Organisation & Business Practice

05-007/17 Authorisation and Allocation of Relocation Leave

06 – Safety, Health, Environment, Fire

06-004/17 Surface Ship and Submarine 'Safe Guardian' Safety Awards

06-006/17 HMNB Clyde Diving Permit to work (PTW) amendment

06-007/17 Diving permit to work (PTW) guidance

07 – Training and Education

07-026/17 Refund of Engineering Professional Body Fees for the Naval service

09 – Honours, Awards, Royal & Ceremonies Events

09-006/17 Royal Navy Photographic competition 2017

09-005/17 The Worshipful Company of Engineers – Royal Navy Operational Engineering Award 2017

10 – Sports and Social

10-018/17 Western Region Golf Championships 2017

10-017/17 Learn to fly on the Portsmouth Naval Gliding Centre training week 22-26 May 17

10-016/17 Royal Navy northern region golf club championship 2017

Galaxy briefs

04-2017 Armed Forces' Pay Award 2017

03-2017 Warrant Officer of the Naval Service supersession

DIBS

10/17 New chip and pin withdrawal limits at Forces Post Offices (FPOs)

DINS

DIN 2017DIN01-073 Changes to rules for First Adult British Passports Issued to Service Personnel

DIN 2017DIN02-001 Volunteers for Specialist HUMINT Duties – Agent Handler (Op SAMSON) OS [Supersedes DIN 2016DIN02-005]

DIN 2017DIN02-002 Volunteers for Specialist HUMINT Duties - Interrogation OS [Supersedes DIN 2016DIN02-006]

DIN 2017DIN10-022 Royal Navy Sailing Association Offshore Inter-Command Regatta 2017 – Notice of Race

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Atlantic adventure for Alistair

A NORTHAMPTON unit volunteer was part of a crew that sailed across the Atlantic.

Acting PO (SCC) Alistair Mansfield, 19, made the six-week 5,000nm (5,754 mile) journey from La Rochelle in France to Fort Lauderdale in Florida.

The trip included stops in Lisbon and Madeira and was the first such voyage that Alistair (above) – an instructor at Northampton – has made. The furthest he had sailed previously was across the Channel.

Alistair, who was a cadet before becoming a volunteer, praised Sea Cadets for giving him the confidence and skills required for the journey.

“Sea Cadets is how I got into sailing. I went offshore quite a few times, and really enjoyed that. I would encourage my cadets to do the same,” he said.

“With Sea Cadets, I have earned lots of qualifications, and it improved me as a person. I was quite shy before.”

Alistair accompanied two experienced sailors, one of whom has crossed the Atlantic 36 times, in delivering the 44ft catamaran to its new American owner.

He was given just six days’ notice after one of the original crew members dropped out.

“It was quite tough. It was a different skillset to what I’m used to, and I was living with people that whole time,” he said.

“I found it all right; I have three brothers myself, so I’m used to it, and I learnt a lot, as the others were very experienced.

“I really enjoyed it, although obviously there isn’t much to do in the middle of the ocean! I listened to a lot of music.”

After arriving in Florida, Alistair had hoped to explore the area, but instead spent a week in hospital with appendicitis.

He is off to university this year to read International Relations.

Reigate change

REIGATE unit’s Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Jane Mitchell RNR has stepped down after nine years at the helm, during which time she has seen the unit and cadets winning competitions and fully engaging in all the activities that the Corps provides.

She also oversaw the unit’s 75th Anniversary celebrations.

Jane has been involved with the unit for more than 30 years and will maintain her link with it.

The new Officer in Charge is Lt (SCC) Peter Bishop RNR, who joined the unit in 1992 and has held various posts, including Executive Officer for ten years.

Peter is highly qualified in Sailing, Seamanship, Adventure Training and Cadet Training.

A parade was held for the changeover, which was attended by cadets, officers and instructors, unit chaplain Rev John Kroenberg, the Management Committee, parents and friends.

First all-girl Navy CCF section opened

THE first all-girl Combined Cadet Force in the country has officially opened at Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School with the dedication of its Royal Navy section.

Four years after the school set up an Army section of the CCF as part of the government’s expansion programme for cadet forces, the Senior Service has been added – with 21 girls signing up.

They paraded for HMS Raleigh’s Commanding Officer Capt Ellie Ablett, guest of honour at the formal opening of the unit, with the Corps of Drums from the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth providing the percussion.

“The parade was very exciting,” said Cdt Charlotte of Year 9.

“I was quite nervous before it began but when we started, it was more fun.

“Capt Ablett was really friendly and it was nice that she took time out to come and open our Navy section.

“It was very inspirational to meet her and we feel very special as the very first all-girl CCF unit in the country.”

The principal aim of CCFs is to develop leadership skills among young people with a military content and, in the case of the new section, to give the girls a wider understanding of the Naval Service.

Tunbridge Wells Girls Grammar School has already run some CCF RN taster days for the students and leadership training



● Cadet Hannah on parade during Capt Ellie Ablett’s inspection

Picture: LPhoto Louise George, FRPU East

for the cadets.

“It’s exciting to have a Royal Navy section as part of the school’s cadets,” said head teacher Linda Wybar.

“We are one of the first schools to take part in the programme and the girls have embraced the opportunities with enthusiasm.

“We value the chance for the girls to grow and to take on leadership in many different ways.”

Lt Jeremy Scott, in charge of the new section, said he was impressed with pupils’ performance as well as their smart turnout.

“It was also a delight to have such a significant figure as Capt Ablett along to open our Navy section,” he said.

“We are now the only national all-female Royal Navy section of the CCF and it’s a great landmark for the school.”

Capt Ablett thanked the school and cadets for inviting her to open the RN section.

“It was a tremendous honour, privilege and fun to meet everyone – as well as get a taste of the activities they will be getting up to in the future,” said Capt Ablett.

“I wish them every joy and encourage them to seize every opportunity of their time in the CCF and with the Royal Navy.”

From field to parade ground

TWO key aspects of the Volunteer Cadet Corps (VCC) were to the fore in mid-March for Portsmouth area youngsters.

Members of the Portsmouth Division Royal Marines VCC took part in a two-day exercise which tested a wide range of their military skills.

And a couple of days later a group of cadets from the same unit, plus colleagues from the HMS Excellent Royal Naval VCC, were in a passing out parade at their home on Whale Island.

The weekend training exercise – dubbed March Hare – took place on Bramshott Common in the Longmoor training area on the Hampshire-Surrey border.

A total of 23 cadets aged between 11 and 17 deployed into the field, sleeping under ‘bivvies’ and each carrying their ‘fighting order’ – a bergen containing overnight kit and arm clothing, a cadet version of the SA80 rifle, and radios.

The aim of the exercise was to develop leadership, teamwork and test the cadet’s tactical and field skills.

This was utilised as practical preparation for promotion within the Corps.

The cadets undertook a variety of evolutions during the exercise including camouflage and concealment, stalking, first aid and field cooking.

The high point of the exercise for many was a demonstration



● WO2 Langworthy instructing a cadet in camouflage and concealment

Picture: Oli Seebohm

of a section assault by the senior cadets, which gave them a chance to show off their skills to the younger members of the unit.

The training team for the exercise consisted of a mix of serving, ex-Service and civilian staff, with leading roles taken by Officer Commanding Exercise Capt Chris Spratt (RM Cadets), Lead Training Officer WO2 Gaz Langworthy RM and Exercise

Planning Officer C/Sgt Gav Collar RMC.

Two days after March Hare ended and it was drill rather than field skills that were on display.

After more than five months of training cadets from the Recruit Companies of the HMS Excellent Royal Naval and Portsmouth Division Royal Marines VCC passed out in front of a packed audience of family

and friends.

The nine Royal Naval and 36 Royal Marines cadets were proudly led onto parade by the Recruit Company Commander, C/Sgt Oli Seebohm RMC, and CPO Trevor Coleman RNC, watched by the Commander VCC, Lt Col Terry Wing RMC.

Cadets were presented with their RN and RM caps by the inspecting officer, Rear Admiral Chris Gardner, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Ships).

Recruit Robbie won the Trafalgar Cup as the top RNVCC recruit, while Recruit Libby won the Belle Isle Award and Commanding Officer’s Cup as the Top RMVCC recruit.

Parade Commander for the event was Cadet WO1(RSM) Aaron.

Royal Naval Volunteer Cadets were the first to join the newly formed HMS Excellent VCC.

The cadets represented the largest single recruit intake in memory.

This is largely due to the outstanding efforts of the Recruiting Sergeant, Sgt Debbie Stroud RMC, who has taken every opportunity to advertise the VCC and grow the new HMS Excellent RNVCC almost single handedly.

The VCC is open to boys and girls between the ages of nine and 17 who can join as a Royal Naval or Royal Marines Cadet.

For more information visit www.volunteercadetcorps.org



Flooded HQ is back in business

WAKEFIELD unit has opened its newly-refurbished building, 15 months after it was flooded by Storm Eva.

The unit had to work hard to raise funds to bring the building back into use after it was damaged on Boxing Day 2015 (above).

Although forced to seek temporary accommodation and having no fit-for-purpose base for 15 months, Wakefield still managed to host the West Yorkshire District Trafalgar Day Parade, was nominated for a national Sea Cadets trophy and represented the area at the National Regatta.

The building was officially reopened at the end of March and also incorporated an awards night, which began with Rosemary McBeath awarding the McBeath Trophy to the CO, Lt (SCC) Jean Pickering RNR.

This was followed by the presentation of the Burgee for 2016 by Eastern Area Officer Charles Bagot Jewitt, and the unit’s annual awards.

The evening finished with a presentation of certificates of gratitude to local businesses and organisations for their support over the period of closure.

Unit chairman Mark Pugh said: “The event went very well, and the building was full to bursting with cadets, volunteers, parents and guests from Wakefield and the satellite division of South Elmsall.”

Linton service

NEWPORT unit cadets supported the Newport branch of the RNA at the annual memorial service for heroic submariner Cdr John ‘Tubby’ Linton.

The service, which is arranged around the anniversary of his death at the age of 37 on March 23 1943, was held at the memorial on the banks of the River Usk, into which a memorial wreath was dropped.

Cdr Linton, who was born in the Welsh town (it was granted city status in 2002), was awarded a posthumous Victoria Cross for his actions as CO of submarine HMS Turbulent, which was lost with all hands – including Cdr Linton – in March 1943 after being attacked by Italian MTBs in the Tyrrhenian Sea.

Bursary awards

OFFSHORE bursary awards were given to seven cadets ahead of the Shipwrights Dinner at Fishmongers Hall, London.

Certificates and money were handed to the seven cadets from London Area when the Livery Court of Shipwrights met before the dinner.

The cadets are: RMCdt 1st Class James, AC Sam, RMCdt 1st Class Max and CCpl Ted from Bexley unit; Cdt 1st Class Louie from Greenwich unit; OC Emma from Sutton; and Cdt 1st Class Ben from Southwark.

First's XI will raise awareness

ELEVEN Naval Cadets from across the country have been selected to become the inaugural First Sea Lord's Cadets at a ceremony on board HMS Victory in Portsmouth, hosted by First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones.

The teenagers were chosen for the prestigious role after being nominated and approved by the Sea Cadet Corps (SCC), Combined Cadet Force (CCF) and Volunteer Cadet Corps (VCC) organisation HQs.

The principal aim of the 1SL Cadets is to raise the profile of the Naval Cadet community through exposure of a top-quality cadet to professional bodies and social contacts with Navy Board members and high ranking Royal Navy officers.

The appointment offers the 11 youngsters a privileged insight into the higher echelons of the Naval Service.

Each cadet will serve for a year, normally starting on January 1 and not be older than 16 when appointed.

They will remain within their parent Naval Cadet organisation during their appointment and hold a senior Leading/Corporal or Petty Officer/Sergeant rank.

During their time as a 1SL Cadet they can expect to be exposed to the Navy Board, trustees of their parent organisation, organise and build area forums and provide feedback to their respective HQs. They will also attend parades, ship visits, Royal occasions, openings and awards ceremonies as well as presentations and formal receptions.

"It has been a pleasure to be here today and rewarding to bask in your achievements," said Admiral Jones.

"Our success as we go forward is resting on people like you, your ambition, your achievement and your sense of commitment.

"I look forward to working with you through the year, seeing you at many events and with the Navy Board to bind you in to the family of what the Royal Navy is as well as representing ourselves to the nation."

The 1SL Cadets for 2017 are: LC Samantha (SCC Northern Region), POC Emily (SCC Southern), LC Nicole (SCC North West), LC Emma (SCC South West), CCpl Alisa RMC (SCC London), POC Brandon (SCC Eastern), POC Connor (CCF Trinity Teignmouth), POC Annabel (CCF Taunton School), Cdt Sgt George RMC (CCF Harrow School), POC Alexandra (VCC HMS Sultan) and POC Lewis (VCC HMS Collingwood).

Training rifle handed over

A TRAINING rifle held by Worthing unit has been presented to Newhaven Fort.

CPO (SCC) Duncan Picknell, Training Officer at Worthing SCC and a member of the town's RNA branch, handed over a Swift Mk3 Training Rifle to Philip Dogbody, the curator of the fort.

Former Lt (SCC) Melvyn Simmons RNR had inquired at the fort on behalf of CPO Picknell and found that they did not have such a weapon in their collection – and would be delighted to receive such a fine specimen in very good condition.

CPO (SCC) Picknell said the rifle had been with Worthing for some years, but had to be found a new home.

CPO Picknell and Cllr Simmons met Mr Dogbody to hand over the rifle, which will be put on display shortly.

300th Quest dinghy goes to Westerham

THE 300th RS Quest sailing dinghy has been delivered to a Sea Cadet unit.

The boat – developed by the Sea Cadet Corps and world-leading company RS Sailing – is now in the hands of Westerham unit in Kent.

Quests are 14ft dinghies with a crew of up to four people, offering advancement through Sea Cadets' pathways.

The Corps is committed to enabling young people aged between 10 and 18 to realise sailing opportunities, and aims for every cadet to spend at least 30 hours afloat each year.

Industry-standard RS Quests are light and easy to launch, and have been used at national sailing and windsurfing regattas.

Cadets and instructors are quite taken with their relative spaciousness and speed.

Every unit with qualified sailing instructors either have RS Quests or access to them via a Sea Cadets boat station or host unit boat station, while all dinghy sailing within the charity is conducted under the Royal Yachting Association (RYA) sailing schemes.

Thanks to LIBOR funding from the Treasury – fines levied on the banking industry for manipulating crucial inter-bank loan rates – 500 Quests will be provided to units across the UK over a three-year period.

In the first year, 167 Libor-funded Quests were delivered



to 108 Sea Cadet units, while MSSC (Marine Society and Sea Cadets) provided match-funding for 110.

Tye Shuttleworth, Head of Inshore Boating at the Sea

Cadet Corps, said: "We are delighted with how popular the RS Quest is proving with our units, the feedback we have had is great.

"Sailing is one of Sea Cadets'

most popular activities, and with the evenings now getting lighter and the weather getting warmer, we hope to see as many young people out on the water as possible."

Flying start for course

THIS year's Sea Cadet Aviation (SCAV) programme got off to a good start when 16 cadets travelled to Weymouth for ground school and a chance to win their Bronze Wings.

The week began with three days in the classroom where the cadets studied subjects including basic instruments and controls, human factors, air law and basic radiotelephone.

Captain Naval Recruiting's Lt Christian Smith RN (Observer) and Sub Lt Tommy Brownlee RN (trainee pilot) gave a talk on the current roles of the Fleet Air Arm, its aircraft and new aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

There then followed lessons on meteorology and navigation, ending the day with a practical lesson on flight planning.

Storm Doris was at its peak when the course travelled to RNAS Yeovilton for a visit to 727 NAS later in the week – 50 mph winds put a stop to flying, so 727's CO Lt Cdr Jim Ashlin and Ops Officer Lt Jon Duke organised visits to squadron aircraft, the control tower and the Royal Navy Historic Flight.

After much hard work the cadets sat their written and practical exams, and all gained their Bronze Wings.

Cdr Gus Carnie, the Lynx Wildcat Maritime Force Commander, made the presentations on the final day of the course – including the Daedalus Trophy for top student to OC Eve from Avonmouth unit.

Ten cadets will now be invited to attend the week-long Silver Wings course, held at Lee-on-the-Solent this month.

The course includes classroom study and air experience flights in a Grob 109B motorglider.

Lottery supports Corps

SEA Cadets is launching a lottery offering people the opportunity to support the charity while being in with the chance of winning money.

Entry to the scheme, run by Unity, costs £1 per entry. The money will go where it is most needed – whether that is renovating buildings damaged by floods or funding offshore voyages for cadets.

The draw takes place every Saturday, and those who sign up are allocated a six-digit Unity lottery number.

A random winning number is drawn.

Players can win up to £25,000, plus £2,500 for Sea Cadets, if they match six digits, while prizes of £1,000, £25 and £5 are also up for grabs.

All winners are notified and prizes posted automatically.

To sign up to the lottery, visit: <http://www.unitylottery.co.uk/charity/display/marine-society-and-sea-cadets>, where you can also find out more about the rules.

If you have any queries, please call our hotline on 0370 050 9240.

Calls cost no more than calls to geographic numbers 01 or 02.

The lottery is only open to people aged 16 and over. The lottery is licensed by the Gambling Commission under the Gambling Act 2005, licence number 45856.

If you feel you have a problem with gambling, please visit www.gamblaware.co.uk



● World War 2 veteran sailor John Higgins, who received the Légion d'honneur, with members of the Ryde unit band

Picture: John D Henry

Ryde provide the music for veteran

MEMBERS of Ryde Sea Cadets Band were invited to take part in a medal presentation ceremony for a World War 2 veteran sailor.

John Higgins was presented with the Légion d'honneur, France's highest military distinction, by Maj Gen Martin White, the Lord Lieutenant of the Isle of Wight.

The Ryde unit band, led by C/Sgt Lee Hodges, provided musical performances to support the event.

John Higgins was a Leading Seaman in the Royal Navy during the war.

This honour was presented to thank him for the role he played in the D-Day landings, assisting

to free Continental Europe from the grip of the Nazis.

Similar ceremonies have been held around the country as British veterans have been recognised for their part in liberating France in June 1944.

John lives at the Blackwater Mill Residential Home at Newport, the county town on the Isle of Wight, which has links to Ryde unit.

Unit Management Team member Angie Thorne works there as a carer, and her three sons are all in the cadet unit.

Blackwater Mill is managed by Lesley Shaw, who oversaw the medal presentation ceremony and celebration party for John.



● Sir Steve Redgrave with his five Olympic rowing gold medals at the launch of Wave-tricity in Milford Haven

Milford Haven unit meet Olympic hero

MILFORD Haven unit rubbed shoulders with five-time Olympic champion Sir Steve Redgrave at the launch of a new company.

The young people met rower Sir Steve at the event in honour of Wave-tricity, a renewable wave energy company on the Haven Waterway that has chosen the unit as its affiliated charity.

The unit's Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) William Elliott RNR, said: "It was a pleasure and privilege to meet Sir Steve Redgrave and for the cadets to take part in such a launch event.

"The cadets did really enjoy themselves – and they couldn't

believe how tall he was!"

The company aims to develop a commercially viable wave energy converter, and is run and managed by former Royal Navy officers – with more than 100 ocean-going years between them – who wanted to link up with their local Sea Cadet unit.

Sir Steve Redgrave is product ambassador for Wave-tricity, representing the company to industry and the public as well as helping the engineering and simulation team in developing products.

Cadets stewarded at the launch, and even got to try out some of the wave technology.



Veteran Bill celebrates anniversary

A FORMER Royal Navy sailor and his wife celebrated their 75th wedding anniversary last month, according to his great-niece CPO(Wtr) Dhana Morris, of HMS Albion.

George 'Bill' Harlow married Edith on April 4 1942 in Nottingham (pictured above) – though the start of the marriage was not auspicious, as the church in which they planned to tie the knot was bombed so they had to move the ceremony to another church.

George served in cruiser HMS Penelope during the war – in April 1940 she ran aground during operations in a Norwegian fjord, sustaining damage, which was temporarily repaired by British personnel and Norwegian villagers at Skjelfjord before she returned to the UK for more permanent repairs.

The couple – who share the same birthday, February 12 – moved to Adelaide, South Australia, in 1967 and earlier this year celebrated their 96th (Bill) and 94th birthdays.

We are also told that Bill is a fan of *Navy News* – so congratulations from us at *Navy News* Towers, Bill, and thank you for your custom!

Type 42 date at Excellent

THE third Type 42 Association reunion is to be held at the sports field at HMS Excellent, Whale Island, in Portsmouth on Saturday July 22.

The afternoon starts with association business at 12.30pm, with the reunion itself getting under way at 2pm; the evening is due to finish around 9pm.

Tickets are £10 for full or associate members, and £10 for one guest.

Non-members will pay £30. Cheques and postal orders should be made out to 'Type 42 Association' and sent to T42A Membership Secretary, 30 Hayling Avenue, Portsmouth, PO3 6EA. Please include an SAE (A6 size).

You can also pay via bank transfer or Pay Pal.

For further details of the event, see the association's Facebook page or the Type 42 Forum at www.type42association.co.uk

Digital link could enhance quality of life

AS PROJECT Semaphore gains momentum it would appear to be riding an upsurge in interest which was flagged up in a university study from 2015.

Semaphore is a programme to get 'digitally isolated veterans' online – and researchers at the University of Worcester found that a well-managed roll-out of computer tablets (in this case iPads) has significant potential to enhance the quality of life of older people,

and particularly those living with dementia. The study found that, with correct training and support for users and staff, groups of users could be formed to use the machines for activities such as music or games.

Tablets were rolled out at 75 per cent of Anchor's care homes and an eight-month study used a range of methods to evaluate the approach and benefits of their scheme.

Among the findings were that iPads

overwhelmingly created new activities or developed existing ones, enriching lives rather than just digitising what already existed.

The iPads also allowed greater interaction between residents as groups, and allowed residents greater interaction with relatives.

Project Semaphore manager Sharon Brown is keen to hear how candidates and volunteers are getting on with their RNA iPads and if they have any tips to pass on to shipmates.

Biennial offer from Uxbridge

ANY RNA shipmate who is attending the Biennial Parade in Whitehall London on September 10 is most welcome to visit Uxbridge unit after the parade on your way home – and they hope to lay on a free buffet and tots to all who pop in.

So instead of paying London prices (an average of £4 to £5 a pint, according to the branch) they suggest you join them at a "proper RNA club" where you can purchase properly discounted beers, many at £3 or less per pint.

All the club asks is that you let them know in advance that you intend to visit, for catering purposes.

Telephone 01895 230071, email rna.uxbridge@hotmail.co.uk or see the website www.uxbridgerna.com

For non-navigators the postcode is UB10 9PG.

The club is located westbound just off the A40 at Hillingdon, 14 miles from the West End – turn off at the junction just after RAF Northolt (which is to the north of the A40) and it is on the left at the end of the slip road.

The nearest tube station – Hillingdon on the Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines – is a two-minute walk away.

Plaque rededicated

A MEMORIAL plaque to Naval Reservist Lt Cdr John McMaster, who was murdered in Belfast in 1991, has been rededicated by his widow Muriel at HMS Hibernia in Lisburn.

The plaque was originally on board HMS Caroline but was presented to the McMaster family when the historic battleship was taken over by the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

Now, at a ceremony in the Royal Navy Headquarters at Thiepval Barracks in Lisburn, the plaque has been rededicated.

Lt Cdr McMaster was shot at Church Lane in Belfast in July 1991. The killing was claimed by the Irish People's Liberation Army (IPLA).

Chard forges link with HMS Somerset

PRESENT-DAY Royal Navy personnel met up with veterans and associate members of Chard branch at an affiliation dinner held at the Lordleaze Hotel in the Somerset town.

Chard branch joined in an affiliation with the appropriately-named Royal Navy frigate HMS Somerset, starting a friendship bridging the gap of old and new.

The Commanding Officer of Somerset, Cdr Tim Berry, was born and bred in Chard and was educated at Combe St Nicholas Primary School and Holyrood Secondary School prior to attending the Richard Huish College, Taunton.

He also played rugby and cricket for the town.

His parents still live in the area, so the officer is a frequent visitor to the south of the county.

Also attending the celebration dinner of affiliation was the Executive Officer of Somerset, Lt Cdr Vince Owen, who also hails from the southern part of the county.

Chard shipmates enjoyed an introductory speech by Cdr Berry highlighting the changes from past ships of the Royal

Navy to the current day, and the changes in crew – 33 members of his crew are women.

Chard branch received a print of HMS Somerset together with a ship's plaque, and in return HMS Somerset was presented with three framed photographs of iconic buildings within Chard – the Guildhall, the Toll House and Chard School – together with an RNA flag which can be flown on HMS Somerset at appropriate times alongside their ship's ensign.

It was made clear during the evening's events that this was the start of a friendship that will grow, and all looked forward to meeting up again when day visits can be made for Chard members to visit the ship.

An open invitation was also extended to all members of HMS Somerset who wished to attend any forthcoming meetings or join Chard branch shipmates at social events.

Chard members are extremely proud to have this friendship, and believe it is a real honour to have both their patron – Cdre David Pond – and the current Commanding Officer of HMS Somerset associated with the branch.



● Chard RNA S/M Dick Moon presents Commander Tim Berry with an image of Chard

'Rookie' was veteran skipper

ONE hundred years ago this month an experienced sailor was commissioned as a Lieutenant RNVR.

And when we say 'experienced' that is something of an understatement – this officer was just three months shy of his 62nd birthday, and had skippered some of the most famous vessels in the world.

Lt Edward Isaac Sycamore RNVR – usually known as Syc – is believed to be the oldest person to have been directly commissioned into the RN and immediately given command of a warship.

His great-grandson, Cdr David Frost RN, said Syc had no formal qualifications and started as a fisherman at the age of 12.

At 20 he began a career in yachting, launching his career with the Marquis of Ailsa. Within 15 years he was one of the world's best-known racing yacht skippers – and the one that everyone wanted to beat.

His yachting career, which ran until 1929, included two challenges for the America's Cup and an extended spell in charge of Shamrock, the racing yacht owned by grocery magnate Sir Thomas Lipton.

But in May 1917, on commissioning, Syc was

appointed in command of Naval Motor Launch (ML)350 at RN Air Station Newlyn, moving on to ML5 at Calshot in September that year.

He had already had an interesting brush with the Boche in 1914 when, in command of a German 15m yacht, war broke out as his yacht (and that of the Kaiser) was being towed by torpedo boat to England for Cowes Week.

Towed straight back to Germany, he and his crew were briefly interned before being repatriated via Denmark.

Records of ML350's exact movements under the command of Syc are lost, but in the preceding three months it undertook mundane patrols in the Irish Sea, while ML5 spent the majority of her time at Dundee.

On demob in September 1919 he resumed his yacht racing career, and was still in command of Shamrock at the age of 74 in 1929.

Syc died on April 9 1930.



● Capt Paul Quinn (right) discusses details of the specifications for the RNA's three new minibuses at Stanford Coachworks in Essex

'Fantastic' new buses take shape

MEMBERS of RNA Central Office paid a visit to a vehicle works in Essex to attend a 'pre-build meeting' for the Association's three LIBOR-funded minibuses.

The Peugeot vans are being converted into minibuses with disabled access by Stanford Coachworks in Stanford-le-Hope.

While there, the visitors – including Association General Secretary Capt Paul Quinn – decided on options for details including lettering on the sides of the buses, luggage racks, satnav, air conditioning, grabrails and steps.

They also discussed wheelchair

accessibility, made possible by a Ricon taillift.

The colour scheme did not need too much discussion – seats will be navy blue (with matching seat belts), with other trim being a combination of navy and light blue.

It is planned to bring the first bus to the National Conference in Perth early next month.

The buses will eventually be based at Salford, Portsmouth and Ferndown in Dorset.

Capt Quinn said: "These are going to be fantastic – I cannot tell you how pleased I am with them."

"And it was all done under budget."



Atlantic struggle is marked

BATTLE of the Atlantic Commemorations will be held over the weekend of May 6-7 under the auspices of Londonderry branch.

A dinner will be staged at the City Hotel on Saturday May 6, 1900 for 1930.

The following day the parade will muster at the Royal British Legion Club Waterside at 1015, marching off at 1030.

It will arrive ten minutes later at All Saints' Church, with a service starting at 1100.

At 1210 the parade will head back to the RBL Club, where light refreshments will be served.

Dress for all functions will be RNA Rig.

Should any changes to the programme arise branches will be informed as soon as possible.

For further details please contact Frank Brown, Hon Sec Londonderry branch, on frankf22brown@gmail.com

Squad search

JE 18 Squad (1963-64) will be holding a reunion on Sunday June 11.

This will be held during the Royal Marines Association annual service, parade and lunch at the National Arboretum at Alrewas Staffordshire.

Organisers are still searching for Bill Gardner, Spike Kelly, Andy Large, Sandy May, Jim Moody, Pete Smith and Spot Watson.

Former recruits and instructors of JE 18 Squad are welcome.

For further details, please contact Jumper Collings, telephone 0752 858 3533, or email him at jumperma@aol.com

Conference venue guidelines appeal

DELEGATES will have seven National Council and Branch motions to consider at this year's National Conference in Perth.

Branch Motion 1 addresses the staging of the National Conference itself and calls on the National Council to "review the guidelines relating to future Conference venues."

Proposed by Plymouth and seconded by Liskeard, the proposers state that "it has become apparent that Branch members' enthusiasm/ability to attend Conference is being severely curtailed by the financial cost of distant travel and expensive accommodation."

The same two branches also proposed and seconded the second branch motion, which asks the National Council to "create a Conference Byelaw to allow a discussion period if there is time in the Conference due to insufficient Motions of other Business."

Topics for such a 'discussion period' should be submitted to the National Council, Plymouth proposes, and "the outcome of such discussions will not have the force majeure of a conference motion."

Plymouth believes that such an opportunity to debate topics outside the formal motion process would provide useful guidance for National Council members in future strategy

discussions – and would also inspire branches to generate formal motions to be debated at subsequent conferences.

Branch Motion 3, proposed by St Neots and seconded by Huntingdon, aims to ensure all members of a branch can take part in Association Business.

It proposes that Rule 20(c) be amended to read as follows: "For the election of a Member for an Office or other purpose from a group of candidates, the candidate receiving the highest number of votes shall be elected."

"A member unable to attend a Branch meeting may have a postal vote, in which case the deadline for nominating candidates will be 31 days before the AGM."

By way of explanation, St Neots say that those Branch Members who are prevented from attending an AGM due to illness or are elderly and do not venture out to meetings during the darker evenings will be able to participate in the election of Branch Officers and Committee

Members at Branch AGMs.'

The four Conference motions are of a more technical nature, in the main concerned with tidying up anomalies or loose ends in the RNA rulebook.

National Council (NC) Motion 1 addresses Rule 20(b), which is the only one of 13 articles, rules or bylaws requiring a weighted vote that includes the phrase 'the votes cast by'.

Removing the phrase brings it into line with Articles 16(2) and 19, and the proposal also includes the codicil "Except as provided for in Standing Orders."

NC Motion 2 is designed to "legitimise the practice by which a branch appoints a member of another branch as its delegate to an Area meeting or to National Conference."

To achieve this Rule 4(d) – concerning members who are in more than one branch – would be amended, as would Byelaws B14 and C1.

NC Motion 3 proposes to amend Rule 10(c) which would

read: "Associate members are eligible for election to an Area committee or to act as a Branch Delegate at Area meetings and conferences, providing they have completed three years continuous membership of the Association prior to election."

This, according to National Council, will legitimise the final sentence in Byelaw A3(a), and the practice by which some Areas have elected an associate members for the position of Area welfare officer etc.

The final NC motion helps sort out an anomaly in which serving members of the Association may be aged 16 on entry to the Naval Service but under Rule 2(c) cannot be an Associate Member of the RNA.

In its explanation, the National Council states that it will "issue guidelines for branches admitting under-18s as Associate members."

Conference begins at 10am on Saturday June 3 at the Station Hotel in Perth.

Nelson is given fine send-off

THE standards of Lincoln and Cleethorpes branches, accompanied by Royal Naval personnel based at RAF Waddington, attended the funeral of former PO Nelson Ord to give him the send-off he deserved.

Mr Ord's family were said to be extremely touched by the presence of the branch standards, as well as representatives of the Royal British Legion and SSAFA.

Mr Ord, who died at the age of 96, joined up in 1937, completing basic training at HMS Ganges before undertaking gunnery training aboard the training ship HMS Iron Duke, a converted dreadnought that had served as the flagship of the Grand Fleet at Jutland little over 20 years earlier.

His first sea draft was in the battleship HMS Hood during her time in the Mediterranean – members of the HMS Hood Association were also at his funeral.

Mr Ord was drafted off in 1939 during Mighty Hood's refit, whereupon he joined HMS Greyhound and was rated Able Seaman. On the outbreak of war, Greyhound was transferred to the Western Approaches Command and the 22nd Destroyer Flotilla, taking part in operations in Norway and supporting the evacuation at Dunkirk, where she was damaged by German bombers.

In the summer of 1940 the G-class destroyer escorted aircraft carrier HMS Argus to Gibraltar and joined the Mediterranean Fleet, as part of the 13th and 14th Destroyer Squadrons.

In early 1941 Mr Ord was briefly drafted to the training base HMS Canopus in Alexandria before joining Fleet repair ship HMS Resource as an acting Leading Seaman.

He returned to the UK in August 1941, passing through the HMS Victory Naval Barracks in Portsmouth before joining the light cruiser HMS Hawkins as Leading Seaman.

Hawkins was assigned to convoy escort duty from the UK to India and then operated in the Indian Ocean theatre as escort to a number of convoys as well as undertaking various escort duties.

Mr Ord remained in Hawkins until her refit at Simons Town in South Africa in the summer of 1943, by which time he had made Petty Officer.

He was briefly on the books of the naval base in Simons Town, HMS Afrikander, then returned to UK and joined HMS Abatos – a tender to Southampton training establishment HMS Shrapnel.

Abatos was the former Supermarine works at Woolston, where the PLUTO project – Pipe Line Under The Ocean – was developed for the Normandy Landings.

And there Mr Ord remained throughout the Allied landings until he was discharged from the Royal Navy on December 30 1945.

Throughout his career, Mr Ord's character was assessed as 'Very Good', his efficiency as 'Superior' and no disciplinary actions appeared on his Service Record.



Recce for Dublin 2018

WE MIGHT be on the threshold of the 2017 National Conference in Perth, but RNA General Secretary Capt Paul Quinn has been on a fact-finding mission to help smooth the way for the 2018 event in Dublin.

The Conference itself will be at the Royal Marine Hotel in Dun Laoghaire, a seaside town seven miles from Dublin city centre.

Capt Quinn also visited the National Maritime Museum of Ireland, where a service is planned.

The museum is housed in the former Mariners' Church.

● *The National Maritime Museum of Ireland (above) and (right) a detail of the building, which used to be the Mariners' Church*



Destroyer victims remembered

ON January 9 1942 V and W-class destroyer HMS Vimiera detonated a mine in the Thames Estuary and sank with the loss of 93 men out of a complement of just under 130.

Her CO that day, Lt Cdr Angus Mackenzie, had been 1st Lt to John McBeath in HMS Venomous at Boulogne on May 23 1940 when six V & W-class destroyers, including Vimiera and Venomous, brought home 4,368 troops on the day the harbour city fell to German forces – one of the most glorious wartime achievements of the class.

The 75th anniversary of the loss was marked by the laying of a wreath on behalf of the V & W Destroyer Association at the war memorial of the Clydeside Division of the RNVR in Graham House, Glasgow, formerly HMS Graham.

Many of the men who died when Vimiera sank were from Clydeside and Cdr Roger Hicks, the CO of Vimiera during the Boulogne evacuation, presented the ship's bell to HMS Graham as a memorial to the men who died. The whereabouts of the bell today is unknown.

↓ RNA Central Office, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT.
↓ admin@royalnavalassoc.com
↓ 023 9272 3747
↓ www.royal-naval-association.co.uk

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in our March edition (right) was HMS Wren, which was built at the yard of William Denny and Brothers, or Denny's.

The correct answers were provided by D Harrison of St Austell, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's mystery ship (above) was ordered as a Loch-class frigate but completed by Harland and Wolff as a Bay class ship.

She was commissioned in the final months of World War 2, and spent most of her subsequent career in the Far East, Pacific and Australasia.

She returned to the UK in late 1961 and was towed from Portsmouth to Faslane the following year to be scrapped.

1) What was her name, and 2) under what name was she ordered as a Loch-class warship? Complete the coupon and send



it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.

Entries must be received by June 12.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our July edition. The competition is not open to Navy News employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 267

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

In a Royal Navy Supply Chain role, as well as making sure your ship is fully equipped at sea, you'll also be providing humanitarian aid where it's needed around the world.

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Reunions

May
HMS Hood. A commemoration service is to be held at St John Baptist Church, Boldre, Hampshire, on Sunday May 21 at 1100. Details from Keith Evans on 01428 642122.

June
HMS Hood Association. AGM and reunion to be held at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, on June 3. AGM at 1500 and dinner at 1900. Further details from Keith Evans on 01428 642122.

September
HMS Gambia Association. Reunion and AGM to be held at the Bosworth Hall Hotel, Market Bosworth, September 7-10. Details from IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or John Andrew 01970 358095.

HMS Invincible (Falklands 82) Reunion Association. Reunion in Portsmouth, September 22-24, for anyone who served on board between April 5 and Sept 17 1982. Contact Tim 'Gonzo' Jenkins on 07753 766875 or g0nz0big0n0se@aol.com for details, or visit www.hmsinvincible82.co.uk

October
HMS St Vincent Association. Reunion weekend will be held at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, Friday October 6 to Monday October 9. Details at www.hmsstvincentsassociation.com. IOW Tours 01983 405116 or Soapy Watson 01329 310078.

RN Photographic Branch. Reunion to be held at the Telford Hotel and Golf Resort from Friday October 6 to Monday October 9. All past and serving photos, wives/partners/guests welcome to celebrate 98 years since the branch was formed. Visit to RAF Museum at Cosford Friday followed by a 'meet and greet' in the evening with local entertainment. Various tours/visits to the world heritage site at Ironbridge (incl Blists Hill Victorian Town). Saturday Gala Dinner and traditional 'Up Spirits' enactment, dancing and entertainment in the ballroom. AGM Sunday followed by a visit to the Joint School of Photography at RAF Cosford. Good hotel accommodation rates. Further details from the Social Sec Ray Whitehouse, ray@chilston.com, 01903 366505 or Exhibitions Co-ordinator Danny du Feu, ddf.photography@gmail.com, tel 07711 083465.

HMS Troubridge. Last Commission Association reunion to be held at the Mercure Royal Hotel, 170 Ferensway, Hull HU1 3UF from October 6-8. Contact Bryan Pace at Romft1@gmail.com or visit <http://HMSTroubridge.com>

HM Ships Undaunted, Eagle & Yarmouth. Reunion at the President's Hotel, Blackpool from Friday October 20 to Monday October 23 with Gala dinner on Saturday. Entertainment all three nights to include 'Up Spirits'. Book for two or three nights. Contact Alan 'Whiskey' Walker on 01268 548041 or email alan666@blueyonder.co.uk for details.

Submissions for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in June's Noticeboard must be received by May 10

Deaths

Rear Adm Sir Nigel A C Oswald KBE CB. HMS Royal Arthur, Tenby, Scarborough, Afrikander, St Angelo, Corunna, Roebuck, Carron, Swiftsure, Fly, Saker, MTB54, MMS1579. London Div RNR and MOD DNOR. Mar 10. Aged 91.

Rear Adm John R Hill. HMS President, Dryad, Duchess, Drake, Roebuck, Albion, Chevron, MOD DN Plans and ACDS Pol. Defence Attaché The Hague and Flag Officer Admiralty Interview Board. Mar 25. Aged 88.

Rear Adm Trevor O K Spraggs CB. HMS Collingwood, Victory (Ship), President, Falcon, Ariel, Vernon, Dryad, Leander, BRNC, RNEC Manadon, RN College Greenwich and DN Education. Mar 18. Aged 90.

Capt Frederick N Buckler. HMS Cambridge, Forth, Warrior, Cochrane, Nelson, Duchess, Phoenicia, Eastbourne, Excellent, Newfoundland, Snipe, Def Intel Staff and Service Attaché Santiago & Quito. Mar 24. Aged 93.

Capt William H M Mackilligin. HMS Mercury, Drake, Vigilant, Agincourt, Ursa, Terror, Ceylon and NATO. Mar 9. Aged 92.

Capt William E Morris. HMS President, Ark Royal, Fulmar, Orion, RNEC, MOD DGA, Ministry of Tech and Ministry of Aviation Supply. Mar 14. Aged 93.

Col Jon David Shallow MC. Joined the Royal Marines as a probationary 2nd Lieutenant 1945, spent a year at sea in HMS Leander in the Med and two years as a troop subaltern in 40 Cdo RM in Cyprus, Malta, Hong Kong and Malaya. At the outbreak of the Konfrontasi he was appointed a company commander in 40 Cdo RM where he served for two years. In 1951 he hunted bandits through the dense forests of Upper Perak during the Malaya Emergency for three days until they surrendered; he was awarded the MC. He specialised in physical training and served three years at BRNC then RM Barracks Eastney as PT and sports officer. 1958 he commanded the Royal Marines in HMS Newfoundland (Far East), returning to be military assistant to the Commandant General RM. Promoted to major 1963, he was an assistant secretary on the Chiefs of Staff Committee and planned amphibious operations in support of NATO. 1972-3 as Lieutenant Colonel he was RM Liaison Officer to the USMC Development & Education Command at Quantico, Virginia. As a full colonel he was CO of RM Eastney and Commandant RM School of Music at Deal. Chairman of North Yorkshire SSAFA branch until 1999. Feb 1. Aged 89.

Cdr Geoffrey C Pell. HMS Arrow, Berwick, Tiger, Belton, Russell, Maidstone, Norfolk, Torquay, Lewiston, Letterston, Dryad and Daedalus. Feb 3. Aged 70.

Cdr Paul M Stevenson. HMS Goldcrest, Daedalus, Sea Eagle, Heron, Centurion, NATO, Flag Officer Sea Trg, DGA(N), Project OASIS and RNAY

Fleetlands. Mar 10. Aged 82.
Cdr John D Stokoe. HMS Glamorgan, Rooke, Cochrane, Collingwood, Rothesay, Vernon, Ulysses, Ariel, Mars and MOD Weapons Dept. Mar 21. Aged 91.

Major Arthur J Hawley. HQ 3 Cdo, 41 & 45 Cdo, RM Poole and Eastney, ITCRM and HMS Glasgow. Mar 4.

Surg Cdr David R B Mends. HMS Cochrane, Nelson, Drake, Venus, ITCRM, HQ 3 Cdo, CTCRM, Naval Hospital Plymouth and BRNC Dartmouth. Feb 28.

Lt Alan Dodgson. Joined 1952 as a junior stoker at HMS Raleigh and served in HMS Diamond (twice), Defender, Sheffield, Mull of Galloway, Brighton, Scott and Fife; also at the atomic warfare range in Maralinga, Australia, 1957-58 and an instructor at HMS Ganges 1971-72. March 21. Aged 81.

Sub Lt Adam K Bergius RNVR DSC. Joined the RN 1942 and after seaman training at HMS Ganges was drafted to an auxiliary minelayer and employed laying the Northern Barrage minefield in the Iceland-Greenland gap. He underwent officer training at HMS King Alfred in 1944 and volunteered for special and hazardous service as a 19-year-old midshipman. He trained as a diver, which involved leaving and entering X-craft midget submarines and learning to cut underwater nets and place explosives at HMS Varbel II, the home of the 12th Submarine Flotilla. Subsequently he travelled to Faslane by train - which was pulling XE-4, heavily disguised as a food transporter - and in 1945 he embarked in HMS Bonaventure, sailing via the Caribbean and the Panama Canal to Pearl Harbor. Bonaventure proceeded to Australia for a work-up at Whitsunday Island in the Great Barrier Reef. His orders were to trawl for and cut the underwater telephone cables from Saigon to Singapore and Hong Kong to Saigon, forcing the Japanese to use wireless which could be intercepted and deciphered. Hampered by the tide and in rough weather he succeeded on his second attempt. He was awarded the DSC for gallantry, perseverance and outstanding skill. March 3. Aged 91.

Sub Lt Derek R E Lewiston RNVR. 752, 753, 750, 793 NAS and RNAS Ronaldsday. Mar 7.
Sub Lt Sir Roger W Young RNVR. HMS Tanatside. Feb 15. Aged 93.
Michael Aldred WO(OPS)(R). Served 1959-88 HMS Ganges, Rhyll, Verulam, Tamar, Undaunted, Dryad, Antrim, Rooke, FOST, Bristol and FOF3. After leaving he took up an RO position at HMS Collingwood until retirement. Active PRI Association member during his Service. Feb 26. Aged 73.

Francis 'Frank' Mould, Chief OA. Joined HMS Figard as Artificer Apprentice, Entry Series 7 completing training at Caledonia. Served 1949-65 HMS Whirlwind, Pembroke (Gunnery School), Carron, Chichester, RN Portland, Vernon, Hermes, Excellent and Collingwood. Member of Magnificent Seven. Feb 22. Aged 83.

Anthony 'Tony' Gillett Chief ERA. Served 1949-63. Joined HMS Figard as an Artificer Apprentice and completed Artificer training at Caledonia. The Magnificent Seven, Figard Association. Dec 19. Aged 83.

Richard 'Mick' Couser. Served on board HMS Illustrious 1942-47 and a member of the association. Nov 15.
Claude E Houghton, Chief PTI.

Ask Jack

Warrior Block, HMS Vernon. The upper brick design part of the wall of this accommodation was used to calibrate periscopes of the submarines berthed at HMS Dolphin back in the time when the Army used the northern part of what is now called Gunwharf. Does anyone know the purpose of the higher ceilings on the ground floor compared to the other floors. Were there stables here? If readers have any information, please contact Mick Hilder on 01305 246072 or email mick_hilder@hotmail.com

Henry Johnson. His son Joe Johnson, living in New Zealand, would like further information relating to his late father who served in the RN 1915-19 including the ships in which he served. Please write to 4 Campbell Grove, Levin, New Zealand 5510 or email via Tom Murphy at mrphythom@aol.com

HMS Duncan. Does anyone have an historical photograph showing the ship's company for HMS Duncan? Contact John Turley 119 Seacroft Gate, Lock 2, Leeds, LS14 6LW.

Frederick E Collins RM and ex-45 Cdo. Served 1942-46 at Eastney Barracks and Bexhill (Sussex). Fought at D-Day - Amfreville, Merville, Franceville and Benouville. One of the first to enter Bergen-Belsen. His son Philip would very much like to get in contact with anyone who knew him or knew of his service. He would also like to obtain a battle dress of the time. Tel 01778 343114 or 07946 880285.

Talking Navy News

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 07770 088388 and leave a message, or email studio@patn.org.uk A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Served 1939-69. Chatham Rating, HMS Kenya (40-43), Bermuda (43-45), Swiftsure (53), London (67) and Eagle (68). March 13. Aged 93.

John Long PO Cook. Served 1956-84. Joined St Vincent D972 class as a Seaman and served Heron, Pembroke, Ganges, Hermes, Eagle, Ashanti and Goldcrest. March 20. Aged 75.

Royal Naval Association

Lt Cdr John W Graham. Joined HMS Ganges as a Boy Seaman 1947 and served in HMS Theseus, Vernon (L/Seaman), Crispin, Charity, Undine, Loch Ruthven, Barrosa and Ottringham. Promoted Sub Lt (SD) then HMS Vernon (1963), Tenby, Dido, Vernon (Lt), Sultan, Ariadne, Dryad, Neptune and Den Helder (1976), Royal Netherlands Navy (Lt Cdr) Vernon, BUTEC Kyle. Life Member and former Branch Chairman of the City Inverness RNA. March 31. Aged 86.

Nelson Ord PO. Served 1937-45 at HMS Ganges followed by gunnery training in Iron Duke. First sea draft was HMS Hood in the Med then Greyhound (rated AB). At outbreak of WW2 served Western Approaches, operations in Norway and the Dunkirk evacuation; 1940 escorted HMS Argus to Gibraltar. 1941 drafted to HMS Canopus (Alexandria) before joining HMS Resource (rated Act L/Seaman). Returned to UK and joined HMS Hawkins as L/Sea for convoy & escort duties in the Indian Ocean. Rated PO 1942 and left Hawkins in Simonstown Naval Base for her refit and joined HMS Afrikander. Returned to the UK to HMS Abatos (Shrapnel) former Supermarine works at Woolston. Lincoln & Cleethorpes RNA. Feb. Aged 96.

Harold 'Jim' Green. Served 1941-46 in HMS Violet, K35, Flower-class corvette, Radar and Postman. RNA Nuneaton branch and Burma Star member. March 10. Aged 96.

Trevor Beesley. Stoker Mechanic on board HMS Illustrious 1952-54. HMS Illustrious Association and the RNA. Dec 26.

Richard L Seaman Tel. Served PQ18 (Russian Convoys - Ushakov medal), RFA Black Ranger and HMS Vindex. Fund raiser for RNLI Stanmore and Founder Member of Harrow Macular Group. Kingsbury & Kenton RNA. Feb 2. Aged 92.

Association of RN Officers and RNO

Cdr E D M 'David' Floyd. HMS Gurkha, Tartar, Devonshire, Collingwood, Camperdown, RN College Greenwich, NATO, MOD Weapons Dept, DN Education and DG Ships. March. Aged 84.

Cdr Geoffrey Straw. HMS Gurkha, Daedalus, Intrepid, Rooke, Sultan, Excellent, Tyne, Victory RNB, NATO and CinC Naval Home Cmd. Mar 29. Aged 85.

Cdr Jeffery F Webb. HMS Maidstone, President, Pellew, Howard, Dolphin, Talent, Anson, Glasgow, Naval Attaché Madrid, MOD DG Ships, DNAP and DGNMT. Mar 25. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Frank N Ayling. HMS Terror, President, Centaur, Fulmar, Daedalus, Heron, Albatross and MOD DGA(N). March. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Percy J Grigsby. HMS Excellent, Fulmar, Neptune, Terror, Eagle, Ark Royal, Heron, Daedalus, Dolphin, Ariel, Sanderling, RAF Cosford and Joint Services Photographic School. Mar 28. Aged 83.

Lt Cdr Peter L Roach. HMS Maidstone, Dolphin, Onyx, Forth, Osprey, Daedalus, Speedy, Artful, Tudor, Seascout and MOD DNOR. Aug 2016. Aged 83.

Lt Cdr Robin J B Whiteway-Wilkinson. HMS Excellent, Burnaston, Heron, Ark Royal, Seahawk, Gannet, Fulmar, 809 NAS, NATO, Belize, Loan Oman and FO Plymouth. Mar 17. Aged 72.

Sub Lt Leslie L Berker. March. Aged 95.

Submariners Association

Kenneth Jones AB. Served 1948-54 in HM Submarines Seraph (48), Thorough and Telemachus (50-53). Colchester branch. Feb 10. Aged 87.

Charles Payne PO, WEM(O). Served 1976-2000 in HM Submarines Superb, Spartan, Trafalgar, Torbay and Reserve then Reserve Service from 2006. Plymouth branch. Feb 26. Aged 58.

Lt Adam Bergius DSC RNVR. Served 1943-45 in HM Submarines X-25 (44), XE-4 (44-45) and Spearhead (45). West of Scotland branch. Mar 3. Aged 91.

Vic Arnold L/Tel. Served 1943-53 in HM Submarines H50, Tantivy, Sleuth, Selene, Satyr, Amphion and Sanguine. Norfolk branch. Mar 6. Aged 91.

Algerines Association

Phillip Hayes, Coder. Served 1943-46 in HMS Rosario. Oct 18.

Eric Husband, Tel. Served 1947 in HMS Octavia. Nov 16.

Sub Lt John Stradling. Served 1944-45 as a Coder onboard HMS Sylvia. Jan 25. Aged 93.
Lt Handley Barrett. Served 1953-54 in HMS Michael. Jan 26.

Royal Marines Band

Roy Morgan Bandmaster RM. Joined Portsmouth Div RM Band 1939.

Already an accomplished cornet player, he also learnt the trumpet and post horn. At the outbreak of war he was on the Royal Tour of Canada. 1946 the Band went to India then embarked HMS Vanguard for the Royal Tour of South Africa in 1947 then 1952 the Commonwealth Royal Tour, cut short by the King's death, and continued again 1953 using Gothic. Promoted Bandmaster 1955 whilst on board HMV Britannia. He played solo trumpet and his recordings of *Trumpet Voluntary* and *The Huntsmen* are still available on compact disc. Left the Corps 1961. Oct 5. Aged 94.

Herman 'Nobby' F Clarke RM. Enlisted as a boy musician 1955, he played the tenor horn, piano and flute and travelled widely at home and abroad serving HMS Victory, Hermes, Drake, Raleigh, Excellent, Eastney, HQ 3 Cdo Bde, Pembroke and Chatham and also based in Singapore. Nov 7. Aged 76.

Roy W Kaighin RM. A professional musician aged 16 when he joined the Royal Marines Band as a flute/piccolo and piano player: he also played the violin, trombone and trumpet and composed and arranged music. A full career with the Royal Marines playing in various bands, and was an instructor at the military School of Music in Deal. He retired in 1994. He moved to North Vancouver where he conducted the 15th Field Regiment Band before accepting a position with the Naden Band in Victoria 1997-2012, where he conducted, composed and arranged hundreds of pieces of music and was the only musician in Canadian military history to be awarded the Navy Bravo Zulu award for his legacy of music. Dec 2. Aged 65.

Keith Boswell RM. Drafted to HM Flag Officer Scotland & Northern Ireland where he was Band Secretary. Spent time in Malta before joining BRNC in 1974. He joined the newly-formed BRNC Volunteer Band in 2009. Jan 1. Aged 72.

Sports Lottery

March 11: £5,000 - LH G Westman; £1,800 - PO C Smith; £800 - WO2 M Patterson; £600 - AB M Bothwell; £500 - ET(WE) A Twidell; £400 - Lt G Morgan.

March 18: £5,000 - AB M Tagg; £1,800 - AB J White; £800 - AB D Leland; £600 - PO C Sheehan; £500 - Mne M Delaney; £400 - AB Z Baxter-Kennedy.

March 25: £5,000 - Capt T Wallis; £1,800 - AB T Nunan; £800 - LH N Hamilton; £600 - PO C Thomas; £500 - Lt N Burns; £400 - LH M Smith.

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Dealing slavery a blow

THE Royal Navy's campaign against the Atlantic slave trade that was one of its main activities in the 19th Century is well known in general terms, but not so much in detail.

Now the gap is filled – at least in part – by this new account by Commodore Peter Grindal, a distinguished Naval officer in more modern times, and a former valued colleague of mine at the Royal Naval College at Dartmouth, writes Prof Eric Grove.

The book opens with a foreword by Professor Andrew Lambert of King's College London, the leading expert on the period, who has encouraged and supported the commodore's work. The author then provides a useful account of anti-slave trade legislation, the trade itself and "the slave coasts and seas" – a subject where the author's seamanlike professionalism comes vividly through. This part of the book especially benefits from its excellent maps.

The main part of the book is a detailed chronological account of the activities of the British anti-slavery cruisers from 1807 to 1839, when the sources unfortunately dry up. As the author puts it: "the loss, by neglect, in Victorian times of almost all the Admiralty archives for the period 1840-55 and the disappearance of relevant Vice Admiralty Court records has rendered a similarly detailed account of the second half of the



● Boats from HM Ships *Penelope*, *Lame* and *Eclair* burn barracoons in West Africa during the RN's 19th-Century campaign against slavery
Picture: National Museum of the RN

campaign impossible."

Cdre Grindal allows himself a short conclusion to complete the story but this leaves the reader with a rather unfinished result. It seems a pity that the author, whose understanding of the dynamics of slave-trade suppression cannot be bettered, did not allow himself to use the available material, however inadequate in comparison to produce a more comprehensive study. As I proved, I think, in *Vanguard to Trident*, one can transfer expertise gained from

documents to other sources to produce a comprehensive account that can stand the test of time.

Nevertheless this monumental account – 863 pages long – provides what will be the standard account of the first three decades or so of anti-slavery operations.

Cdre Grindal covers the activities of a range of ships used by the Navy for suppression work. Some stand out, notably HMS *Black Joke*, the former American-built Brazilian slaving brig *Henriquetta* and one of

the fastest vessels in the trade. "Under the command of a succession of outstanding officers she was destined to become the most successful of the squadron's tenders and the most famous cruiser of the campaign."

The author's command of the subject extends not just to operations but also to the complicated legal background to the Royal Navy's activities against the slave trade. The complexities of which slavers could be captured and which could not are made clear and one cannot but sympathise with the officers who had to cope with such a legal minefield, at some cost to their own pockets if a decision was taken that was found in court to be illegal.

One gets the impression that most officers took a liberal interpretation of their rights, reflecting a real aversion to the slave trade, whose horrors none understood better. The author sums up the attitude of the Royal Navy personnel very well: "Hard though his own conditions were, the Royal Navy's sailor was a kindly creature and the brutality, degradation and squalor he found in most slavers, as well as the notion that men, women and children were mere merchandise, horrified him. Few were not lastingly affected by the experience, and some officers became dedicated, with missionary zeal, to the

eradication of the slave trade."

One interesting technical note is the utility for anti-slavery work of the ships designed by Sir William Symonds. 'Symondite' ships generally get a bad press from naval historians for their weaknesses as gun platforms but their yacht-like agility was at a premium for anti-slave trade work. This is an interesting example of the balance between warfighting and maritime security roles in a balanced fleet.

Cdre Grindal is critical of the Admiralty's attitude to slave trade suppression as it did not deploy sufficient ships in quality and quantity. Nevertheless the quality of the Royal Navy ships' companies usually made up for this, providing "a sailing prowess rarely achievable in a merchant vessel. This superior ability not infrequently overcame a theoretical speed disadvantage."

The Royal Navy crews also had a moral advantage that stood them in good stead against the slavers: "The will to win of the officers and men of the cruisers reflected the Royal Navy's tradition of victory founded on the best part of a century of almost unblemished success, and the possibility of failure, probably never crossed the minds of the bluejackets and marines. The slavers had no answer to this confidence and determination, and, as the Navy's fighting

ascendency became clear to them, they generally decided against resistance."

The effect of their exertions was sadly limited. As Cdre Grindal puts it: "The first 30-year phase of the campaign... was largely ineffective. This was partly because of the inadequacy of the resources allocated to the task, but primarily because the only part of the trade under attack was the one least likely to deliver ultimate success, namely the Middle Passage. The markets in the Americas were beyond Britain's reach but the African source was not, and the later use of local treaties showed that legal difficulties in striking at it could be overcome."

Although later treaties and offensive action against factories (which justify a further volume) were more effective, only by abolishing the market in Brazil and Cuba was the slave trade truly doomed.

The only serious problem with this excellent book *Opposing the Slavers: The Royal Navy's Campaign Against the Atlantic Slave Trade* (I B Tauris, ISBN 971-1-78453-3878) is the list price of £75. One can obtain it for less than £50 on the internet and this approach is recommended. Otherwise for Kindle addicts it is available for about £20 as an E-book (eISBN 978-0-85773 938-4). Or get your library to acquire it. It is a formidable but extremely worthwhile read and a major contribution to the history of the Royal Navy for which the author is to be congratulated.



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Riders on the storm

Road race team ready for new season

SOME of the Royal Navy Royal Marines Road Race Team line up for a pre-season photo.

The eight are among 20 riders chosen to represent the Senior Service for the 2017 Inter-Service Championships.

The full squad looking to defend the RN title are: Cemal Oram, Jon Hunt, Stuart Goodson, Max Wilmot, Alan Curtis, Ben Hollingworth, Brian Fuidge, Callum Scott, Charlie White, Dave White, James Cottrell, Jonathan Atkinson, Lee Howarth, Lewis Roberts, Patrick Burlton, Sean Gascoigne, Steven Bryson, Stevie Elliott, William Griffin, and Tom Arkell.

With some newcomers the team is in a good position to build on the success of last year.

The first round of the Inter-Service took place at Brands Hatch, where the RN team emerged unscathed.

The military race saw 29 riders from all three Services on the grid. The start was good but on the second lap Dave 'Tinks' White lost control at Paddock Hill Bend and ended up in the gravel.

It was the first time since the end of 2015 that the podium did not have a rider from every Service.

Unfortunately, the RN team did not get up on the podium but a good showing means the riders are still in the hunt for the title.

Donington Park hosted the first round of the RN/RM Championships.

The sun shone throughout the weekend, allowing for some good racing and the chance for the riders to push themselves.

Riders get one point for starting, one point for every rider you finish ahead of (including fallers) and one point for a podium place.

With riders like Jon Hunt and Steve Bryson returning after a year out, it was good to see them back on the track.

Tom Arkell was competing in the Golden Era GP1 and had a good start, however after a few laps he was not seen.

It soon became apparent he had thought it best to take a rest in the gravel again "curse of the new paint job". The rider was OK and the racing continued and over the weekend he gained in confidence, showing some smooth riding by the end of the weekend.

In the CB 500s Lee Howarth did an amazing job, with Jon Hunt adapting well to the machine.

Max Wilmot and 'Tinks' were racing in the Golden Era Supersport and pushed each other all weekend, resulting in their times tumbling.

The team are next in action at Cadwell Park on May 27-29.



● Cemal Oram



● Jon Hunt, riding No.28, and, far right, Charlie White takes a bend



● Max Wilmot, left, and Lee Howarth, right



● Brian Fuidge



Thrills and spills on four wheels

FOR the first time in many years, a comparable number of the Royal Navy Car Team lined up against the other Services for the first round of the Armed Forces Racing Challenge at Donington Park.

It was the first time in his new car for Mne Adam Dewis, driving a Vauxhall Astra.

Old hands from last season were also out - Cpl Mark Inman (3 Cdo) Vx220, CPO 'Stirling' Moss (HMS Cattistock) in another Astra and CPO Steve Hutchings (HMS Sutherland) in a Peugeot 106.

They were joined for their first-ever race by PO Jim Cantwell (829 NAS) and PO Stu Balls (Wattisham) in the Team Peugeot 206 and Lt Cdr Keith Attwood (FOST) in a Mini Cooper.

Practice was emotional with a number of spins and waved yellows, however Team Navy all made it back.

Cpl Inman was the team's highest qualifier and quickly started making up

places, followed by CPO Hutchings and Mne Dewis, who were battling with an R32 Skyline. Unfortunately CPO Hutchings didn't finish lap one due to a mechanical failure on the final bend.

Likewise Mne Dewis was holding the much more powerful Skyline under braking and cornering speed, but spat a hose off and emptied his oil on to his front tyres.

This was the first proper run out for both cars so some issues were to be expected.

CPO Moss was having a good race in the middle of the field and Lt Cdr Attwood was keeping up with much more experienced racers.

PO Cantwell had a good first stint and had made up four places before being the first to pit and was the only driver to handover to PO Balls.

The other teams were also suffering and a number of cars were pulled up around the track with failures.

Unfortunately a newly-painted RAF Fiesta ran wide at Craner Curves and hit the gravel side on, causing a roll. Luckily the driver was fine but the car definitely will need more than T-cut and filler.

It was a great start to the season for the team, with a Class C win for Cpl Inman as the highest RN driver on track, best novice for Lt Cdr Attwood and two class wins in his Mini Cooper challenge races.

The team had its first RN veteran join this season - Andy Yeomans, who finished seventh, behind Lt Cdr Attwood in sixth, although a spin on the final corner by Andy nearly took them both out.

CPO Moss was 18th, PO Cantwell 19th, Cpl Inman 22nd and PO Balls 30th of 54 results. The performance scoring system sees Lt Cdr Attwood currently sitting in joint third place in the AFRC standings.

If you are interested in car racing, contact Cdr Richard Scott at PJHQ or Mne Adam Dewis at RM Poole.



● The RN Under-23s celebrate success at the Inter-Service contest

U23 footballers celebrate title

THE Royal Navy Under-23 football team led the way at the Inter-Service championships with convincing wins against both the Army and RAF to take the title for the first time since 2009.

The women also remained undefeated - however, they lost out narrowly on goal difference to the RAF. The men were soundly beaten 4-0 against the Army and then a narrow 1-0 defeat against the RAF at Shrewsbury Town FC, meant they finished with the wooden spoon.

The opening fixture for the U23s saw them take on the Army, who had previously lost to the RAF. Both teams had a player sent off but the RN emerged victors 4-2. The final match saw the RN host the RAF at the Victory Stadium in Portsmouth.

Both sides nullified each other till the last third when the Navy edged in front which gave them the momentum eventually going on to win the match 3-0, prompting jubilant celebrations.

"The preparation this year has been first class, integral to the team's performance on the pitch," said manager WO1 Marty Wallace. "The commitment of both players and staff throughout the season has been exceptional and everyone through the winning of Championship has been rewarded for this."

The Royal Navy Women remained undefeated but could not do enough to take the title.

Their first game was at RNAS Yeovilton against the Army, which finished goalless. They needed a victory against the RAF to secure success.

AB Boylan put the RN in the lead after 65 minutes at RAF Cosford but then controversially the RN had a player sent off with 20 minutes remaining.

They fought bravely but could not prevent the RAF from equalising and consequently stealing a draw and the Inter-Service title.

The RN Men had prepared well for their Inter-Service

matches with victories over Brighton FC Youth and Jersey FA.

Their first game was against the Army at Yeovil Town's Huish Park ground and LAET Roy Emmerson was the first-half hero as he saved three times to make it 0-0 at half time.

The Army continued to dominate in the second half and it was no surprise when they went ahead. Minutes later it got worse for the RN as a free kick from 25 yards out was dispatched with precision and power to give the RN keeper no chance and double the score.

The RN did not give up and fought to the bitter end however the Army did add two more goals ensuring the score finished 4-0. The RN man of the match was LLogs Shawn Benjamin.

The men's final game was against the RAF at Shrewsbury Town but with the Army already taking the Inter-Service title, the RN were playing for second spot.

The RN were quick to get into stride and caused the RAF many problems in every area of the pitch with half chances to Cpl Ben Hebditch and Cpl Shea Saunders.

It was clear the RN were on top and then after 30 minutes of play the RAF landed a killer blow against the run of play when a driven cross was met at the far post for a tap in to give the home team an undeserved lead.

The RN showed great belief to get back into the game again creating more chances to draw level. Unfortunately it wasn't to be as CPOET Andrew Todd was inches away from connecting with crosses on two occasions when the goal was at his mercy. The RN man of the match was POPT Ben Booker.

After the fixture manager Lt Fraser Quirke was presented with a framed shirt ahead of his impending departure from the Service. Fraser, who boasts over 100 caps as a player, has won the Inter-Service competition as both player and manager.



● RN Men lost their final game against the RAF at Cosford

Picture: Sgt Paul Oldfield



● The match officials for Le Crunch 2017, from left, Andy Watson (RAF Rugby Union Referees), Luke Pearce (Rugby Football Union) and Cdr Andy Coles (Royal Navy Rugby Union Referees)

Starring roles for men in the middle

IT'S not just the players who were in the spotlight at this year's **Rugby Union Six Nations Championship** – there was plenty to keep Royal Navy referees busy too.

Regular Aviva Premiership Assistant Referee Paul Burton was selected as assistant ref for the Wales U20 v Ireland U20, while Roger Baileiff, also a regular in the Aviva Premiership, was fourth official for the Calcutta Cup clash between England and Scotland.

In internationals the match ref is supported by two assistants (formerly known as touch judges), while assistants four and five manage the team technical areas. For high-profile and televised games a Television Match Official and an Official Time Keeper are also appointed. All are assessed by the Match Observer.

Fellow members of the Royal Navy Rugby Union Referees' Society were also in action for the Army Rugby Union Premiership Cup Final between the 12 Yorks and the 2 Royal Artillery. For this match the referee was Cdr Dunx McClement, an Elite Scottish Rugby Union referee.

He was assisted by Paul Burton and Cdr Andy Coles,



● RNRU Referees ahead of the Army Premiership Cup Final; from left, Simon Long, Paul Burton, Dunx McClement, Andy Coles and David Martin



● Referee Roger Baileiff with the Calcutta Cup

the latter of whom is a National Panel Assistant Ref. The No 4 and 5 were Lt Cdr David Martin and Capt Simon Long RM, both developing referees within their respective counties.

Two RNRU referees accompanied an Army Rugby Union Referee and Hampshire Society Referees at the Bryanston School Sevens Tournament.

This tournament precedes the National School Sevens competition at Rosslyn Park that took place in late March.

The Bryanston School Sevens allowed the Service referees to fly their respective Service flags (hopefully encouraging some of them to consider joining) as well as showing another important facet of the game of rugby.

The Navy officials were also involved at the annual RN v Marine Nationale in Plymouth. Lt Tim Bailey RNR was in the middle for the women's game, supported by WO2 Gaz Fairbairn as assistant referee, and Si Aldridge and Lt Cdr Martin as No 4 and 5.

The men's game in the evening saw Cdr Coles as assistant referee and WO2 Fairbairn as No 5.

The RNRU referees will be out in force at the Inter-Services competition, where they will be officiating at the Army v RAF Senior, Women and Vets games.

If you are interested in taking up the whistle then get in touch with WO2 Fairbairn at rugbytime@hotmail.co.uk

Black Dukes rocked in debut encounter

HMS MONMOUTH'S rugby team kicked off their deployment with a match against Gibraltar RFU Development side.

The heat made it all the more difficult for a team that had deployed from the cold, damp conditions within the South West of the UK.

The game would be played in four 20-minute quarters to accommodate the climate change for Monmouth as she headed for the Gulf. The match was being played on a 4G pitch with no posts, so there wouldn't be any conversions.

Gibraltar RFU, started with Logs Ratu 'Roko' Rokobiau catching the ball and falling outside the sideline on the first touch of the game. Medics rushed on to assess the situation with 'Roko' limping off.

Lineout to Gib RFU, with both sides lifting, Gib RFU collected the ball and ran over the try line to score.

Monmouth hoped for an instant reply but once again the team were caught off guard and allowed a second try to be scored.

With the game already looking very one-sided in the first ten minutes it seemed the pressure wasn't going to stop.



Monmouth knew their weakness and needed to rectify it to quash the deficit. With the first scrum upon the teams the Gib RFU looked the heavier side but Monmouth held their own as the ball was taken by ETWE Nick 'Coach' Carter, who worked tirelessly to move it up the pitch.

After perseverance Monmouth found their way through to get a try of their own, bringing the end of the first quarter.

Gibraltar RFU piled on the pressure for long periods of time, and although Monmouth were not going to give up easily,

Gibraltar RFU ran through with a further three tries to take the half-time score to 25-5.

The second half began with Monmouth making four substitutions, compared to Gib's eight as the home side had more players to call on.

Monmouth piled on the pressure but were hit time and time again on the counter, conceding three more tries.

A loose ball found its way to ETME Billy Spry, who powered forward and was taken down several times. But CPO Alan Richards was let loose to take the ball over the line for Monmouth's

second try.

The fourth quarter started with both teams looking tired, but they worked hard into the dying stages and both teams allowed a few slip ups which in turn allowed each team to score a try.

Gib won the match 45 to 15 but Monmouth learned a great deal from the game to take forward to their next fixture.

Rugby debutante LReg Doug 'Ginge' Baird said: "I have had such an amazing time. I never thought I would get the opportunity to play rugby with such a good group of lads."

"Playing today in the second row was hard but is the first time I have played in a team event. I enjoyed it and will play again."

The team from Black Duke next took part in a training session with the Cretan Gunners at their next stop of Souda Bay.

The Gunners are the first rugby union team to be established in Crete and have been going a year and played two matches. The Cretan league consists of 12 amateur teams.

Coaches Dave Sibson and Speedy Carr joined forces with Gunners' head coach Phil Elcock to deliver a training session at the national athletics stadium.

French take the honours in Le Crunch



● Vice Captain Sarah Jenkins

Picture: LPhoto Caroline Davies

PLYMOUTH Albion RFC played host to the French Navy, in the 13th fixture in the Babcock International competition between the Royal Navy and their French counterparts, the Marine Nationale.

The series was drawn at six wins apiece but with their 19-15 victory over the Royal Navy Senior XV the French Navy take the lead with seven wins.

The French side were the first team to put points on the scoreboard with a penalty kick from their fly half, Gregoire.

But it wasn't long before the Navy Senior XV got into their stride, with some lovely passing, and a kick chased by winger Matt Bowden, who touched down into the corner.

The conversion was missed; the Royal Navy stood 5-3 ahead.

The Navy conceded another penalty, and Gregoire added another three points to the scoreboard to make it 5-6, which is how it remained at half-time.

Both teams played fast exciting rugby, and the crunching tackles began to take their toll. Navy centre Jack Basher was replaced by no 23 Seta Raumakita following an injury.

The Navy took the lead early in the second half, with full back Jon Humphrey returning

to form, kicking a penalty.

However the joy didn't last long as the French Navy No8, Filiation, found some space with a run down the wing to touch down under the posts. With another successful kick by Gregoire, the French had the lead 8-13. Then a penalty for an over-enthusiastic tackle by Navy No8 David Fairbrother allowed Gregoire to score more points, increasing the French lead to 8-16.

Fairbrother powered past a number of French defenders before flying over the line, and with Humphrey slotting the conversion, the Navy closed the gap to one point.

The clock was counting down but there was still time for the Royal Navy to go ahead; however, the next score, when it came, went again to the visiting French team following another penalty.

With the score at 15-19 the home side needed a try to clinch the match but, despite throwing everything they had at the French, they ran out of time.

Fairbrother was named the Navy's man of the match, while Rich Cadywould, Jack Basher, Ollie Mason and Lewis Cooper were all awarded their first representative caps.

The RN Women were also beaten, 17-35, by their French counterparts.



● Gorst (No10) scores in extra time

Late goal ensures victory for BRNC

A WINNING goal in extra time saw Britannia Royal Naval College Football Club steal a victory in the Thomas Westcott Devon FA Midweek Cup Final against the University of Plymouth.

Three goals in the last 15 minutes saw BRNC achieve a significant comeback after being two goals down for most of the game.

The deadlock was broken after half an hour when the university team gained a free kick on the edge of the box. The UP captain curled the ball into the bottom right-hand corner of the goal to give UP a 1-0 lead.

BRNC came out in the second half trying to make amends for the below-par performance, but after a better start things quickly went from bad to worse – a UP striker was played in behind, latching onto a through ball and tucking it past PO Al Pipe to double UP's lead.

BRNC started to work their way back into the game, and with 75

minutes gone, the superior fitness of Dartmouth meant they started to dictate play and control the game.

On 76 minutes, Lt David Clark's efforts paid off. A corner was cleared by UP but OC Aaron Deakin was able to get to ball back to OC Just on the edge of the area, and the captain passed the ball out wide to LPT Jamie Le Page. His in-swinging cross into the area was headed in by Lt Clark.

With less than ten minutes left on the clock, BRNC levelled the score as OC Elliot Gorst scored with a half-volley.

The scores were tied after 90 minutes and it looked like the game may go into extra time, but BRNC did not let up, and after 91 minutes they finally took the lead. A slick one-two between OC Gorst and OC Andrew Goudie in the middle sent OC Gorst away and he put the ball into the bottom left corner for victory.

Aiming to peak at UK contest

ROYAL Navy officer Cdr Stu Blackburn took to the skies in preparation for the UK Armed Forces Paragliding Championships in June.

He joined fellow paragliders from the Army and RAF over the Peak District at the first of three UK-based training camps.

Peak Wings, a two-week activity based in Topley near Sheffield, allows for pilots to dip in and out as work commitments permit.

Further training camps will be held in the Lake District and Wessex over the next two months.

The Royal Navy also hosted the RAF in a training camp in Algodonales Spain, which you can read about in next month's *Navy News*.

All paragliding activities are supported by the RNRM Sports Lottery.

If you feel like taking to the skies then you can learn how to paraglide through the Joint Services Adventurous Training Scheme, with schools in South Wales and Bavaria. For more details please contact Lt Cdr Tim Oatley on 07528 069052.



Making memories in the mountains of Norway Flexing wings in the Arctic

THE frozen wastes of northern Norway wouldn't normally be the first pick for microlight flying.

But Lt Jon Crawford, pictured flying south along a valley towards Setermoen, jumped at the chance during his deployment to nearby Bardufoss.

Every winter, elements of Commando Helicopter Force decamp from their home at RNAS Yeovilton to the RNoAF base at Bardufoss for Exercise Clockwork.

Lt Crawford explains how he came to fly a microlight in the Arctic.

THE 'flying my microlight in northern Norway' seed was sown last year when our Norwegian liaison officer (and good friend) Maj Fred Eilers casually said: "You should bring your microlight out here to fly."

I initially cast the thought off as being a logistical headache in freezing temperatures. However, after some pondering I realised it was actually achievable.

I had a means of aircraft transportation to Norway. Secondly, I had the use of a heated hangar (a very impressive heated hangar, built into a rock during the Cold War era).

I knew it would be very cold in an open cockpit but I had good warm, windproof clothing. Finally, I needed some local flying knowledge; Fred was a GA flying instructor. This golden opportunity for someone more used to flying over the Somerset Levels was now becoming a reality.

Before I travelled to Norway I had the opportunity to have a good chat about mountain flying in the Arctic with Arfur Bryant, a fellow member of Yeovilton Flying Club and experienced Arctic aviator, who gave me lots of sound advice regarding hazards with mountain flying.

My flying in Norway did not begin until late February for two very good reasons. Firstly, it is only from late February/early March onwards that there is enough good daylight to safely fly a microlight VFR. Secondly, the temperature is beginning to rise. This is all relative but it's now typically only -10 to -15°C rather than minus -20 to -25°C.

Although the air at this location was very cold, it was very dry and so as long as I avoided any cloud and picked nice sunny days, there was very little chance of the engine icing over or indeed any ice forming on the airframe. The cold may have also had an effect on the battery during engine starting, however I ensured my normal 12v Varta 11 Ah 230 A battery was fully charged before flight.

Flying in Norway is stunningly beautiful in the winter but there are a number of issues to be aware of.

Firstly, take note of any local rules or regulations regarding the airfield you are operating from. Secondly, plan the flight meticulously. The Arctic is pretty unforgiving to those who get 'navigationally challenged'.

Finally, everything takes longer to do in the Arctic so plan accordingly. This includes very thorough pre-flight aircraft checks, fuel weight calculations, getting all the layers of clothing on (including briefing and kitting out passengers) and everything being ready before you open the hangar doors.

At -10 to -15°C you need your engine starting quickly so as not to cold soak the engine and, more importantly, the battery. Despite having an oil thermostat fitted to my aircraft it still took a good ten to 12 minutes for the engine oil temp to rise to a safe take-off temperature.

It goes without saying you must be dressed appropriately, not just for static sub-zero temperatures but also add on the wind chill of typically 65kts. As a guide, I wore the following which allowed me to fly comfortably for a good hour: thermal base layer under cotton trousers and thermal mid layer. Duvet trousers and jacket, then a one-piece quilted windproof 'Dew liner' over the top of all that. My feet had good-quality woollen loop stitch socks with high thinsulate boots (laced loosely to allow good blood circulation and warm air entrapment). For my hands, I wore thin but warm gloves inside thick mittens (tethered to my wrists).

The permanent attachment of windproof gauntlets to my control bar made up the third layer, again no issues if you make an effort to relax your grip on the control bar and wriggle your fingers to maintain circulation.

For my face, I wore a balaclava under my helmet. This covered up any exposed skin around



my mouth, neck and cheeks, however this also contained my warm breath within the helmet which misted up my glasses and visor when static on the ground. Raising my helmet visor during taxiing alleviated this issue and when airborne, there was enough relative airflow around my helmet to remove this misting problem.

Planning for the possibility of making a forced landing (be it due to weather or mechanical failure) cannot be ignored, and when there are several feet of snow on the ground, you know it's going to be a one-way journey. Most of the areas I flew over were uninhabited and if forced to land out, safety was a short trek to a house.

However, you couldn't avoid some isolated areas where a trek to safety or recovery at the landing site could be extended. Standard survival equipment I

carried included aviation and ground maps, GPS, compass, removable VHF radio, mobile phone, full large flask of sweet drink, dry food, head torch, basic first aid kit, pocket knife, whistle, fire-lighting kit, yeti gaiters (worn when flying), snow shoes, bothy shelter and telescopic walking/ski poles.

Almost all of my electronic equipment operating off AA batteries and I kept numerous spares warm in internal pockets.

If I didn't have a passenger, the rear seat would contain a secured bergen which would hold an Arctic sleeping bag, sleeping roll mat, more food and extra clothes, all waterproofed.

Time spent analysing the weather forecast is not time wasted; I chose to fly only on a very good clear day. However, the weather can change rapidly in the mountains therefore be

prepared for this and turn back home early if the weather looks as if it's deteriorating. Likewise have options of escape routes if the weather suddenly changes.

When flying down a valley it's wise to stay to one side rather than straight down the middle. If you get caught out with the weather and suddenly have to turn around, you know you have the width of the valley to turn in.

Be aware of the wind direction at all times; it tends to weave its way around mountain features like water down a stream, therefore its direction isn't necessarily constant.

When approaching a ridgeline in a climb to cross it, make your approach at 45° rather than straight on. This way, if you have misjudged its height and find yourself struggling to get over the ridge it's easier to bank away to safety from an angled approach

rather than approach head on and potentially 'plough in.'

Finally, one of the biggest hazards in Norway is power lines looping across fjords and logging wires spanning valleys. Logging wires (used for transporting logs across a valley) are particularly thin and are not always marked on maps and could catch you out. These wires can be anywhere as low as 20ft and power lines, up to 2,000ft and are not a hazard if you stay above 2,500ft; however, if low cloud forces you to fly lower, then you may have a problem.

Flying a microlight in the mountains is spectacular when done safely and flying in sub-zero temperatures is very achievable when using the correct equipment. When you can combine both in the wilds of northern Norway, you have truly unforgettable memories.



Scaling new heights

TWO Royal Navy climbers competed against some of the world's best at the Climbing Works International Festival. Lt Cdr Lee Packer and LNN Lizzie Crofts are the only two Senior Service climbers selected for the Armed Forces team. Lt Cdr Packer finished 159th out of 252 and was the fifth best male in the Armed Forces side. LNN Crofts was 91st out of 113 and joint first female in the AF team. "It was an honour just to compete," said LNN Crofts. "To witness the strength, technique and power of some future Olympic athletes was truly breath-taking." If you would like to give climbing a go or join the team then contact Tom, the team manager, on sportscimbing@climbnavy.com. Alternatively, attend the RN and RM Climbing Competition at The Quay in Exeter on May 10.



URNUs battle for glory

SOUTHAMPTON University Royal Naval Unit took the title of the best sporting unit during the annual URNU tournament held in Portsmouth. The 15 URNUs gathered for the two-day event which aims to give the students the chance to meet and engage in some friendly competition. The teams included representatives from Devon, the newest URNU, as well as two teams from Scotland, who had both travelled 400 miles by road to take part. This year's tournament included the normal sports of rugby, hockey, netball and bucket-ball along with two new events in the form of swimming and a relay race, in place of sailing and football. The keenly-contested rugby element of the competition was played this year on a knock-out basis. OC William Mathewson, from the Edinburgh URNU, said: "Much talk surrounded the supposedly best rugby team, Wales, with Edinburgh, arguably the second best. Edinburgh put up a stiff fight, but were unfortunately not victorious, narrowly losing by three tries to two. In the end, after a solid showing from all teams, Southampton came away as rugby champions." Southampton also won the hockey tournament, while in the swimming Glasgow won. After a fancy-dress social organised by the Glasgow URNU, the sport started the next day with a win for Southampton in bucket-ball. However the Hampshire team seemed to let their guard down in the netball, which allowed Liverpool to snatch the win. Edinburgh set an incredible pace in the 8 x 400 metre dash relay race, which kept them in the running for first place after the first and second heats. However it was not to be for the Scottish team. Bristol ran through to win beating Edinburgh into third place by just six seconds. The tournament finished with Southampton in first place and Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow and Wales filled the other top five places.



● Action from last year's Navy Cup Final featuring HMS Seahawk and HMS Heron

Regions united in quest for success

ROYAL Navy cricketers are hoping for a successful season this year with plenty of work on and off the pitch aimed at delivering silverware.

The mainspring of RN cricket is considered to be ship's cricket, played in every corner of the world and on some 'interesting' pitches.

Today, cricket is played at various standards in the Service at inter-ship and establishment levels in all parts of the world.

However, the major competition between all ships and establishments is the Navy Cup, played on a knock-out basis, the final being held on the main ground at Portsmouth.

Additionally over two days in Portsmouth, an annual Inter-Region T20 competition began in 2005. All Regions take part with players viewing it as an opportunity for selection for the Inter-Service T20 at Lord's.

Royal Navy Cricket Club (RNCC) Chairman Cdre Mike Beardall said: "We approach the 2017 season with renewed optimism and a more settled approach, notwithstanding 2016 where once again on the days that really mattered we failed to produce those elusive match-winning performances despite everyone's hard work.

"Our squads are more mature and the level of preparation and coaching continues to improve the standard of the game, but as ever availability is key.

"The support received from Commanding Officers and their organisations in facilitating time for representative sport and enabling us to compete is very much appreciated."

Touring abroad by the RNCC has previously included trips to Germany, Hong Kong, USA, Barbados, Malaysia, South



● HMS Seahawk won the Navy Cup last year; Right, RNCC Chairman Cdre Mike Beardall



Africa, India and Australia.

Royal Navy cricket sides continue to play County 2nd XI's and Minor Counties plus other national representative sides such as the Civil Service, British Police and Fire Service as well as prestigious teams such as MCC, Incogniti, the Royal Household and Free Foresters.

The RNCC Inter-Region T20 cricket competition took place in Portsmouth in May last year.

The final pitched Eastern Region against the Royal Marines, with the latter winning by four runs to retain the trophy for the second successive year.

The Navy Cricket Cup is the major community contest of the year, with the final last year featuring HMS Seahawk and HMS Heron. Seahawk convincingly retained their title for a second year.

For establishments and ships alongside in the Eastern (Portsmouth) Region there is an Evening 20 over League and over the winter an Indoor 6s League. DSTL won the ER Indoor Cricket League, while HMS Excellent won the Eastern Region Indoor Cricket Competition Day

at HMS Collingwood.

The Western Region finished third in the Inter-Region contest, while HMS Raleigh had a bye against 40 Cdo in the Navy Cup and were then unable to fulfil their match against CTCRM because of a number of phase two trainees going on draft.

In the Northern Region, HMS Neptune's team were only able to fulfil one competitive match last season - beating HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Navy Cup.

In the Fleet Air Arm Region, RNAS Yeovilton enjoyed a successful season despite only playing away matches.

RNAS Culdrose began the season in the WR 6 Competition, winning the final - not surprising as it was contested by two Culdrose teams.

Culdrose also retained the Navy Cup by beating RNAS Yeovilton in the final at Burnaby Road.

The Royal Marines Cricket Club enjoyed mixed fortunes last year, retaining their Inter-Region T20 title before suffering a run of four games being called off because of bad weather.

CLR beat 40 Cdo to take the

Meade Cup in the Inter-Corps Cricket Championships and the Royals had six out of 11 players representing the Royal Navy at Lord's for the Inter-Service T20.

Membership of RNCC is open to all officers, ratings and other ranks of the RN, RM, RNR, RMR and Commonwealth Navies and their Reserves. Annual subscription is £10 and officers or ratings who subscribe £100 may become life members.

Anyone wishing to join should contact the RNCC secretary and treasurer Lt Cdr BJ Smith on 023 9272 2921.

The RNCC's coaching organisation is affiliated to the United Kingdom Armed Forces Cricket Coaches Association (UKAF CCA) and offers a range of opportunities for anyone interested in becoming a coach, or developing their existing skills and enhancing their qualifications.

Details of the current coaching qualification levels and structure are available on the ECB website at <https://www.ecb.co.uk/be-involved/coaching/coaching-courses>

Time for us to deliver on the field



● Sgt Jon Grasham

ALMOST ten years ago as a young Marine I stumbled almost accidentally into my first Royal Navy training session, completely unaware of the opportunity that would prevail.

Initially I felt completely out of my depth - after all, I was just a New Forest club cricketer.

It wasn't too long before I had made the adjustments and had settled into the squad before being named U25 captain in 2009.

My early foray into Royal Navy cricket was interspersed with tours of Afghanistan, along with many other deployments overseas, an era that for all the Services saw a decline in most of its sporting arenas.

In 2009 I was awarded my first Senior Cap. Unfortunately, my first Inter-Service competition didn't go quite the way I had hoped; this though was soon to be a distant memory as I was part of the winning IST20 team the following season in July 2010, which still remains my biggest cricketing achievement to date - but sadly the last time the Senior Service was crowned champions during an Inter-Service contest.

I have experienced the full spectrum of Royal

Navy cricket from unbelievable opportunities like playing at Lords, being coached by Mike Gatting and touring Australia, the list goes on and on. With these fantastic times come the lows - injury, the losses and the struggle for availability.

For the majority now, regular six-month deployments are fewer and further between; with availability starting to become a little better, it's time for the Royal Navy to start becoming a real threat to our sister Services - a promise that we have failed to deliver in recent years.

2017 is showing early promise to be the comeback season for the Royal Navy after several seasons of regeneration. We have some unbelievable talent and I am genuinely excited for the prospect of my young team this season. I'd be lying if I said I wasn't proud to be a Royal Marine captaining a Royal Navy team, after all the last time this happened was 13 years ago with Sgt Tim Burt. The individual skill and talent this year along with some 'Commando Spirit' will see us if not win, at least fight to the bitter end and make us a very hard opponent for all.

Sgt Jon Grasham Royal Marines, RN Cricket captain



● Royal Navy boxers, from left, Mne Nathan Greenaway, Mne Brad Ferrie, Diver Robbie Matthews, ETME Luke Fisher, Mne Jack Stringer, Mne George Crotty, Mne Bobby Foreman, and AB Nathan Levers

Little belters

Team pack a punch at UKAF championships

ROYAL Navy boxers took on the reigning champions the Army at the UK Armed Forces **Boxing Championships** held at CTCRM.

First up was Mne Nathan Greenaway who, in his first season as an elite boxer, faced the current England Title Champion, L/Cpl Khan, in the bantamweight category.

It was a tall order for the Royal as he battled to pin down the elusive and unorthodox Army man, who took the fight.

Next to step into the ring were the lightweights with Mne Brad Ferrie representing the Royal Navy and Spr Webster the Army.

Ferrie counter-boxed well from the ropes in the first two rounds. Choosing a more positive stance in the final round, Ferrie convinced the judges to award him the win in a split decision.

Diver Robbie Matthews faced Gnr Fillingham in the light welterweight category – their second meeting, with Matthews winning the earlier affair.

Fillingham was too cute at times for Matthews and put shots together well to land some convincing shots. On the last bell, the result was difficult to call but after a period of deliberation by the judges, the Army man was awarded the win by split decision.

ETME Luke Fisher was next to make his way to the ring and he faced the most experienced of the Army's boxers; Cpl Stead in the welterweight category.

Stead entered the ring with no fewer than 166 bouts and three ABA Championship titles, so Fisher was in for a tough challenge.

He met this challenge head-on however, and gave the Army man no respect.

Barely giving Stead space to breathe or any opportunity to throw his own shots, Fisher secured a convincing win and an important scalp for his record, levelling the team score at 2-2. He was also awarded the best boxer trophy by the judges.

In his first year in the Corps, Mne Jack Stringer stepped into the ring at middleweight to face Gdsmn Plummer.

Stringer, an international representative at junior and youth, found himself in his first elite national championship. He comfortably took the first round, with the Army man taking round two.

Stringer landed some solid body

shots and his capable defences meant that the Army man struggled to land scoring shots and the win was awarded to the Royal by split decision.

Arguably the Royal Navy's most talented male boxer for many years, Mne George Crotty, faced L/Cpl Jones at light heavyweight.

Jones, an exceptionally tall boxer, should have made it awkward for the Royal, but Crotty started fast and strong to put Jones on the back foot.

Such is Crotty's talent that the Army man barely laid a glove on him, forcing the judges to award the decision to Crotty in unanimous fashion and giving the Navy a 4-2 lead with two bouts to go.

Another new member to the squad made his debut for the Navy – Mne Bobby Foreman, who faced L/Cpl Marvin in the cruiserweight category.

Despite having stepped up a weight category and facing an England international, Foreman won the first round and was in control in the second until Marvin caught Foreman on the temple to win by a knockout.

Last up was the squad's youngest competitor, AB Nathan Levers, who faced the national No2 seed and reigning Southern Area heavyweight champion L/Cpl Ngwenya.

Levers began confidently, forcing Ngwenya to miss and punishing him on the counter to take the first round.

In the second round a clash of heads resulted in a bad cut on the forehead of the Navy man, forcing the referee to seek the doctor's intervention.

Requiring multiple pauses for the doctor to stem the blood, the momentum of the bout was unbalanced but Levers kept his cool to the final bell.

Despite the performance, the result was awarded to Ngwenya to give the Army the UKAF team trophy again.

Despite the team result the Royal Navy Boxing Squad has enjoyed its most successful season in over a decade as it secured four boxers through to the pre-quarter finals of the National Championship; all with a real chance of winning.

Boxers from 42 Cdo ensured their unit were victors at the Corps Boxing Championships at CTCRM. Fighters competed from 30, 40, 42 and 45 Cdo, along with CTCRM, Cdo Logs and 1AGRM.

Each unit was able to score points for each boxer who made it to the finals. Seven boxers from 42 Cdo made their respective finals with Marines Sam Deller, Shane Cornally, Toby Gordon and James Relf achieving maximum points.

For information about RN boxing visit www.rnrmbboxing.co.uk, follow the association on Twitter [@rnrmbboxing](https://twitter.com/rnrmbboxing), Instagram [royalnavyboxing](https://www.instagram.com/royalnavyboxing) or on Facebook at www.facebook.com/rnrmbboxing



● Mne Toby Gordon of 42 Cdo in action at the Corps Boxing Championships

Picture: LPhot Barry Wheeler, CTCRM



● From left, Maj Andy Bridson RM, POAET(AV) Scott Higgins, Lt Cdr John Wood, Lt Cdr Jan Creek and CPOET(WE) Roly Childe

Five net second place in contest

FIVE members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Angling Association (RNRMAA) Sea Section.

Individuals qualify for the team on merit through a series of previous matches. The Association is open to both serving RN and RM personnel and veterans and is keen to help develop individual skills with coaching sessions planned throughout the year in a number of locations.

New members are always welcome; if you are interested in joining the Sea Section please contact the secretary by email: sea-secretary@rnrmaa.org.uk or by calling (military) 9382 53473 or (civilian) 01329 333473.

The Armed Forces' 15-strong team competed at Weybourne in Norfolk against some of the country's top sea anglers, some of whom compete for the England national team.

Despite unfavourable weather conditions, the UK Armed Forces team managed a respectable second place overall, with the Sea Angling Match Federation side taking the honours.

In order to compete for the UK Armed Forces Team you must be a member of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Angling Association (RNRMAA) Sea Section.

New members are always welcome; if you are interested in joining the Sea Section please contact the secretary by email: sea-secretary@rnrmaa.org.uk or by calling (military) 9382 53473 or (civilian) 01329 333473.



Titles up for grabs at cycling festival

COMPETITORS went all out for glory at the Royal Navy Cycling Festival.

Five titles were up for grabs at the event at Merryfield, in Somerset.

Riders from across the Naval Service took part, including three from the RFA – the first time that arm of the Service has participated.

A number of local civilian club riders were also invited.

Rear Admiral Paul Bennett, President of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Cycling Association, was delighted with the turnout of 80 competitors, which was a significant increase on previous years.

The races passed with only one minor crash in the Development Criterium Race, which saw two riders needing their bikes and themselves patching-up before going on to compete in the remaining events.

Results:

Solo TT: First, Ian Cullen, MDCC; second, Aled Jones, CTCRM; third, Dan McQuillian, Tri UK; First veteran, Andrew Perkins, MDCC; First woman, Rachel Hackman, RNRMAA.

Dev Crit Race: First, Mark Halliwell, RM; Second, Joshua Clark, CTCRM; Third, Steve Tidswell, HMS Heron; First female, Lucy Aslett, RMBS

2up TTT: First, Ian Cullen



● Alice Hudson and Lucy Aslett

and Andrew Perkins, MDCC; Second, Chris Martin and Julian Lockwood, Yeovil CC; Third, Si 'The Beast' Rogers and Aaron Kneebone, RM.

Main Crit Race: First, Dan McQuillian, TriUK; Second, Ian Cullen, MDCC; Third, Ollie Yates, 40 Cdo.

Sup Team TTT: First, HMS Heron/YeovilCC/TriUK; Second, CTCRM; Third, MDCC.

About time

Divers surface for showdown in the boxing ring

THEY both ply their trade underwater for the Royal Navy but mine clearance divers Bradley Chapman and Robbie Matthews surfaced in the boxing ring.

Bradley, in red, and Robbie were giving a demonstration of the art of pugilism at the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Development Box Cup at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth.

The duo were taking part in the Royal Navy Box-Offs, where elite boxers from the RN/RM squad compete for the elite Navy Championship title.

Designed to give young boxers an opportunity to develop their skills, the Development Box Cup is aimed at boxers who are relatively new to the sport, and against opponents with comparable experience to enhance their sporting growth.

Both Bradley and Robbie are experienced boxers and took part in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Boxing Association's tour to Australia at the end of last year.

The Box Cup structure seeks, as far as possible, to provide boxers with the maximum opportunity to compete in at least one bout over the competition.

"It is open to both males and females," said Lt Lucy O'Connor, of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Boxing Association.

"For some young boxers this is the first time they've stepped through the ropes into a competitive bout.

"It's pretty important they are matched fairly.

"A lot of effort goes into making the event an occasion to be remembered, including the use of lights and music so that they enjoy the feeling

of being in the spotlight and experience the 'rush' of boxing – even if they only do it once."

From the three Royal

Navy Box Cups and the Royal Marine Corps Championships, boxers are selected to represent their region at the Inter-Regional Championships at Royal Naval Air Station Culdrose.

The 'Royal Navy box-offs' also saw elite boxers compete for the chance to represent the Naval Service at the UK Armed Forces Boxing Championships at Commando Training Centre Royal Marines at Lympstone.

The Royal Navy had one of the strongest squads for years as they faced the Army for the title.

UKAF Boxing Champs, Page 47



Picture: LPhot Sean Gascoigne