



NAVY NEWS

NOVEMBER 2017



Fast and furious

● A Royal Marine fast ropes from a Wildcat on to the confined space of the foc'sle of Type 23 frigate HMS Monmouth during her patrol of the Indian Ocean (see centre pages)

Picture: LPhoto Dan Rosenbaum

DIAMOND DAZZLES – Pages 2-3 HISTORIC DISCOVERIES – Page 9 NEMO TO THE RESCUE – Page 19



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Diamond shines in the Med

AS the sun rises over the Med, HMS Diamond heads towards a vessel believed to be smuggling arms.

She homes in on her target. Missile inbound....

Hands to Action Stations.

Four missiles fired by rebels from a nearby island partially disable the warship, putting her damage-control teams to the test as they deal with fires and floods.

While the battles rage inside the ship, Diamond's Royal Marines and Royal Navy boarding teams reach the MV Rebel.

The Green Berets secure the vessel and the Royal Navy team search the ship, recovering weapons and drugs.

With the boarding successful on MV Rebel, all of the fires extinguished, and floods dealt with on Diamond, the destroyer was ready to resume her patrol and prepare for whatever the rebels of 'Bothnia' had to throw at her next, safe in the knowledge that her team was ready to deal with anything.

Welcome to Exercise Brilliant Mariner. Thirteen nations, 27 warships, two maritime patrol aircraft, one submarine and around 3,500 personnel.

A member of the Royal Navy Boarding Team, ET(CIS) James Mellor, said: "When we got over there we found knives, pistols, an RPG and 6kg of cocaine.

"They did a really good job of making the boarding as realistic as possible, and it is great practice for when we get out to the Gulf and do this for real."

For when Diamond left Portsmouth in September she was headed straight to the Gulf.

Hurricane Irma changed all that.

Diamond, which was taking on stores, fuel and supplies in Gibraltar,

was re-tasked, taking over from HMS Ocean as the Fleet Flagship changed course to the Caribbean (see pages 16-17).

This gave the Type 45 the chance to really shine as flagship of Standing NATO Maritime Group 2, based in the Med and Black Sea.

Following a brief stop in Malta to commemorate the work of the Royal Engineers Bomb Disposal team during and after WW2, Diamond headed to the small port of Bar in Montenegro to take over duties as flagship from sister ship HMS Duncan, and embark the Commander of the NATO force, Cdre James Morley, and his staff.

Diamond's CO, Cdr Ben Keith, said: "This is a hugely important role for the ship and all who are embarked in her, leading a major international security force. We stand permanently ready to perform a range of duties, from exercises to crisis response and operational missions, ultimately contributing to Britain's safety and economic prosperity."

HMS Diamond sailed from Montenegro in company with the French ship FS La Fayette, the Greek vessel HS Limnos, Turkish ship TGS Barbaros and Spanish frigate ESPS Blas de Lezo, conducting a week of integration training with the NATO force, re-learning the skills required when operating in a task force – skills which will be vital in the years ahead as HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Prince of Wales sail for their first deployments.

Diamond's Royal Navy and Royal Marines boarding teams were able to exercise their skills and drills by conducting a boarding exercise on the Spanish frigate, and returned

the favour by allowing the Spanish boarding team to train on Diamond.

Boarding Officer Sub Lt Sam Eason said: "It was a great opportunity to test out our drills in an unfamiliar environment, preparing ourselves for boarding operations we may have to do in the Gulf."

Diamond led the force first through the Aegean Sea, then passed through the narrow Strait of Messina between mainland Italy and Sicily, and finally through the Strait of Bonifacio between Corsica and Sardinia before heading to the French port of Toulon to prepare for the enormous Exercise Brilliant Mariner.

As well as her sandy beaches and shingle coves, Toulon serves as home to the French Mediterranean Fleet.

Co-ordinated by the French Maritime Force Commander, Brilliant Mariner was held over two weeks and saw warships take part in navigation and warfare training off the southern coast of France, and around the waters of Corsica.

France will take command of the maritime component of the NATO Response Force in January for a year and Brilliant Mariner serves as a validation exercise for the French force.

As well as Diamond, the exercise involved fellow SNMG2 ships, the Spanish ESPS Blas de Lezo, Turkish frigate TCG Barbaros, Greek frigate HS Limnos and French frigate FS La Fayette.

They were joined by frigates from SNMG1 – the Canadian HMCS Charlottetown, Norway's HNoMS Otto Sverdrup, NRP Francisco De Almedia

from Portugal, Denmark's HDMS Niels Juel, the Dutch HNLMS Everston, and Spanish ESPS Numancia, along with support vessels, German FGS Rhoen and Danish HDMS Esbern Snare.

Bolstering the force were vessels from Standing NATO Mine Counter Measures Group 2, HMS Enterprise, the Turkish minehunter TCG Dremit and Italy's ITS Crotona.

Completing the line up were the French support ship FS Var, French destroyers Chevalier De Paul, FS Jean De Vienne and FS Languedoc and frigate FS Guepratte, Spanish LHD ESPS Juan Carlos 1, French LHD FS Mistral and minehunters FS Orion and FS Lyre.

"Working as part of a large task group has its challenges, with lots of ships operating in such close quarters," said Diamond's Navigating Officer Lt Kyle Walkley.

"But it's also an amazing demonstration of what NATO is capable of; it's such an impressive sight seeing this many big ships working together at sea."

During the exercise NATO forces worked together to deter the aggression of the fictional nation of Bothnia.

The exercise began with a week-long work-up, with all of the NATO ships working to a serialised programme of air attacks and submarine hunts to make sure they were all up to scratch, able to work together and ready to fight.

Diamond, as the flagship of one of the task groups, was able to display her prowess not only as a world-class air-defence unit, but also a leader in the fight against both surface and underwater threats.

The week culminated in 21 warships

uniting in their effort to tackle Bothnia's villains and bring peace to the fictional country.

While Diamond was dealing with enemy forces, HMS Enterprise had a specific task of her own – dealing with dummy mines.

The survey ship, which also provides fuel and water to minehunters in her task group, was clearing a route off Hyères, east of Toulon.

During the work the Italian minehunter ITS Crotona discovered historic ordnance, probably from World War 2.

Cdr Justin Hains, Commander SNMCMG2, who is onboard Enterprise, said: "I am delighted to return to Toulon, my home for two years, and work again with the French mine hunters and divers.

"Exercise Brilliant Mariner has sharpened SNMCMG2's fighting edge.

"The discovery of historic ordnance proves our capability and is just one of our peacetime roles that keep us ready for operations wherever we are called."

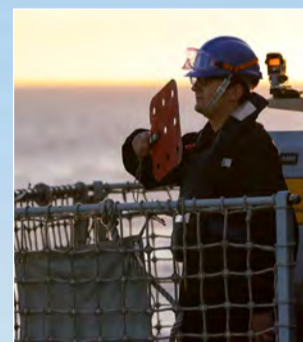
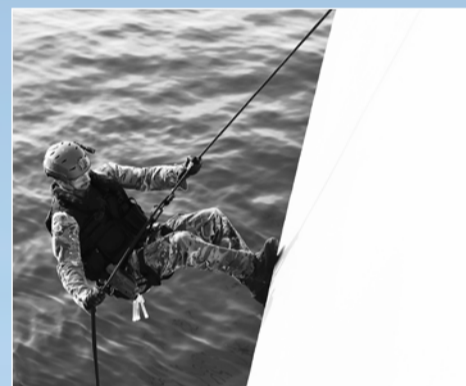
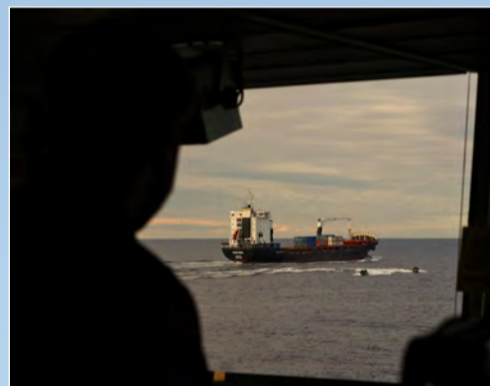
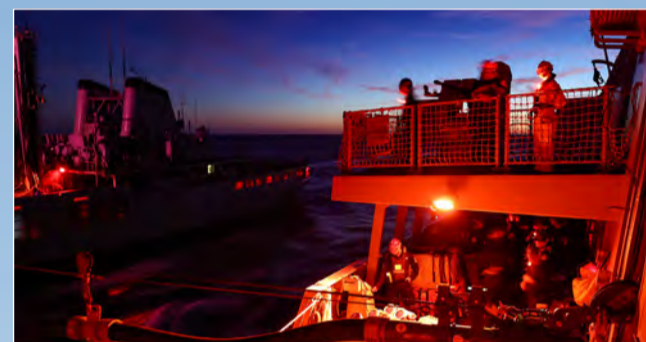
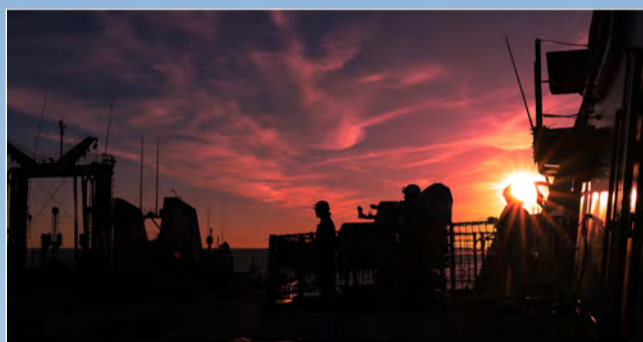
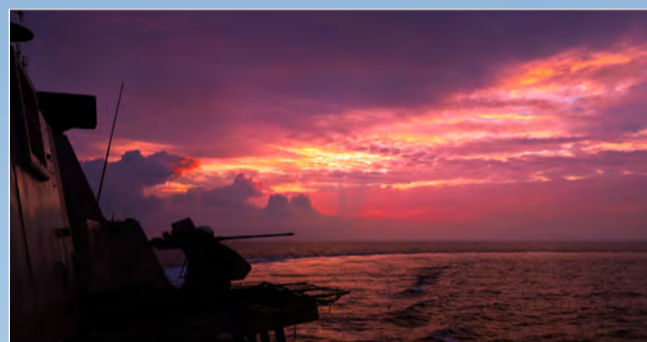
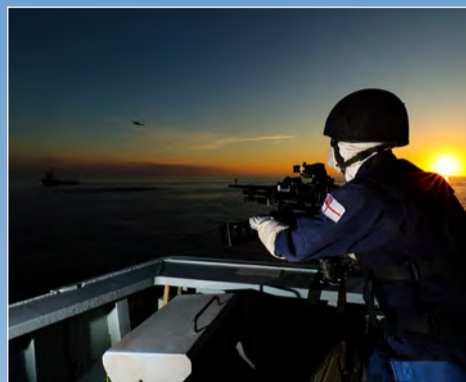
HMS Diamond will continue as flagship of SNMG2 before handing over to Ocean and making her way to the Gulf.

Cdr Keith added: "This is a great example of the adaptability of Type 45s.

"In just a few days we were able to re-role from a ship deploying to the Middle East to conduct counter-piracy, counter narcotics and aircraft carrier escort duties to a flagship of a major NATO maritime group, with an embarked staff capable of commanding a task force of ships in a different part of the world."

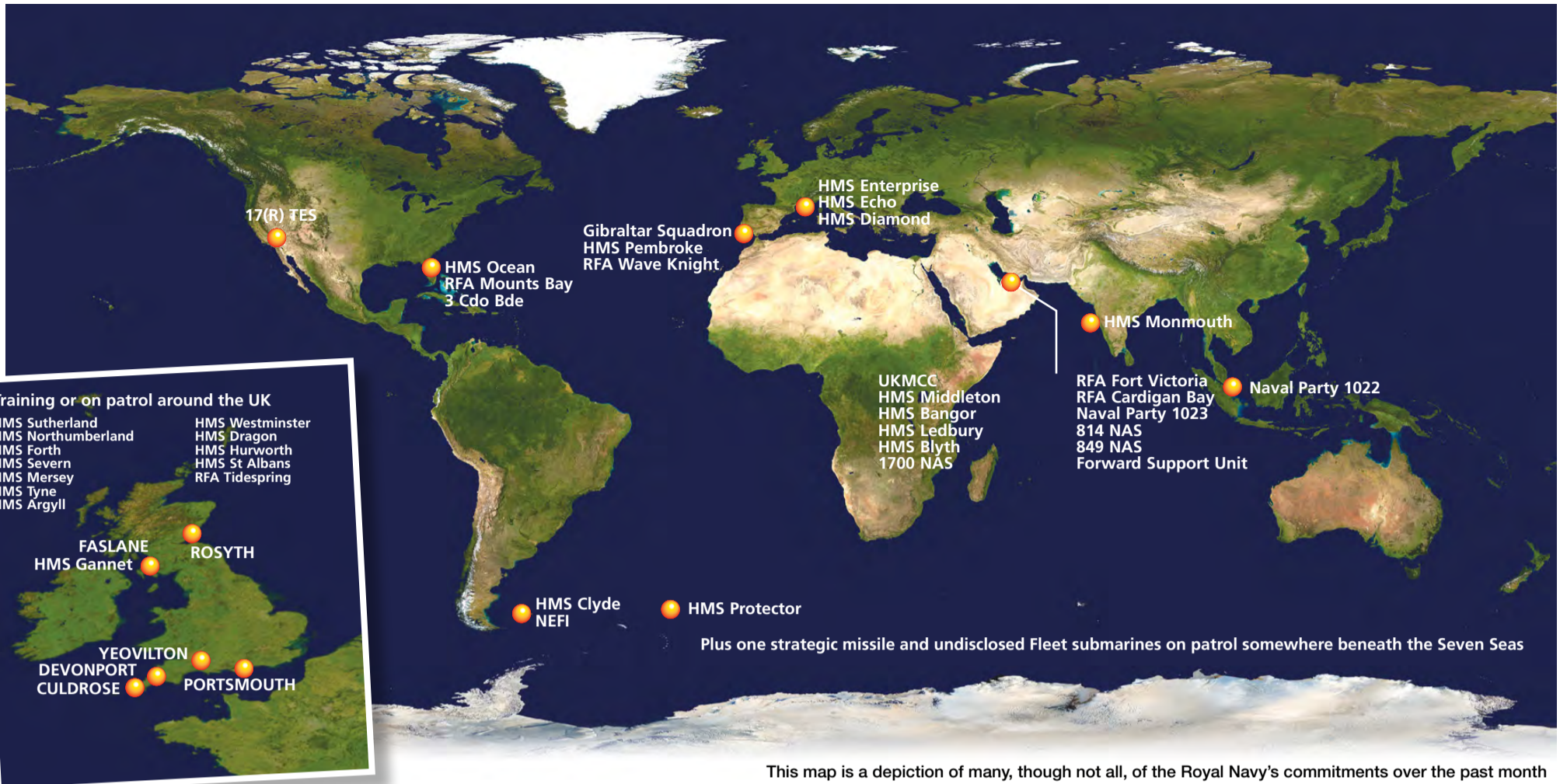
A real jewel in the Royal Navy's crown.





Pictures: LPhot Paul Hall, HMS Diamond and CPO Christian Valverde, French Navy





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

PARTNERSHIPS. Unity. Interoperability. This month we look at how the Royal Navy has been working with other nations around the globe.

We kick off with **HMS Monmouth** (see centre pages) as she worked with the frigate INS Gomati following a trip to Goa. The Type 23 is currently seven months into a nine-month tour east of Suez, part of an international effort to curb terrorism in the Indian Ocean.

The Gulf was the scene for the second major Anglo-American mine exercise of the year, involving **HMS Bangor**, **Blyth** and **Ledbury** and support ship **RFA Cardigan Bay** (see page 5). The exercise also provided an opportunity for liaison officers from the Egyptian and Saudi Arabian navies to witness how the UK/US coalition conducts mine warfare operations.

Working in the eastern Mediterranean were NATO navies practising saving crew from stricken submarines (see page 19). Experts from nine Allied nations committed personnel and equipment for **Exercise Dynamic Monarch** off Turkey. The UK sent Royal Navy divers and the Faslane-based NATO Submarine Rescue System.

Also in the Med are **HMS Diamond** and **HMS Enterprise** (see pages 2-3). Both broke off from their duties – the Type 45 is currently flagship of one NATO task group – to take part in the multi-national NATO Exercise Brilliant Mariner.

Diamond took on the NATO role after Fleet Flagship **HMS Ocean** was retasked to help the hurricane-hit communities in the Caribbean (see pages 16-17). The warship joined **RFA Mounts Bay** and elements of **3 Cdo Bde** in the British Virgin Islands, Anguilla, the Turks and Caicos Islands and Dominica.

Mounts Bay's Wildcat plucked a woman and her two children to safety from the upturned hull of their boat off Puerto Rico (see page 7). The Ferrel – whose skipper is missing, presumed dead – was battered by 20ft waves from Hurricane Maria.

Back in the UK and **HMS Albion** (see page 6) is beginning six weeks of intensive amphibious training as she prepares to assume the title of Fleet Flagship next year from HMS Ocean. Albion conducts her Operational Sea Training with plaudits ringing in her ears, having been formally handed back to the Royal Navy from the Defence Equipment and Support arm of the MOD, who oversaw Albion's £90m two-year refit.

Simple but effective ideas tested in the Royal Navy's own *Dragons' Den*-style forum (see page 15) should save the Senior Service millions of pounds in the future.

Naval Service chefs and stewards were in action this month, competing for medals at **Exercise Joint Caterer** (see page 25).

The intriguing process as to how Royal Navy ships are named is explained in **View from the Bridge** (see right).

Keeping with the historic theme and the Royal Navy Historic Flight's **Sea Fury** took to the skies of Somerset (see page 13) after three years out of action following an engine failure at Culdrose Air Day in July 2014.

Seabed surveys have revealed the final resting place of the submarine **HMS Narwhal** (see page 9), which sank 77 years ago with the loss of 59 lives.

Sonar images have also confirmed the final resting place of WW1 warship **HMS Pheasant** (see page 9), which sank in 1917 after hitting a German mine off Orkney's Old Man of Hoy.

Finally, proving the **Royal Navy** reign supreme on water, Senior Service rowers picked up a host of medals at the Joint Services Regatta on the River Thames (see back page).

What's in a name?

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

EARLIER this autumn the Defence Secretary announced that the name Belfast will return to operational service as a Type 26 frigate. With a new generation of ships, submarines and auxiliaries entering service, it's worth exploring how and why the Royal Navy names its ships the way it does.

Names are proposed by a panel of senior admirals on the advice of the Ship's Names and Badges Committee. The recommendation is sent to the Defence Secretary and is ultimately approved by the Queen.

With five centuries' worth of names to choose from, the committee carefully considers the role of the ship in question, the potential for affiliations and the history of previous vessels.

As such, it's unusual for new names to be generated for major vessels – the last examples were the 1960s-era destroyers Fife and Glamorgan. It also explains why the name Spey – with three battle honours from World War 2 – was recently chosen for a River-class Offshore Patrol Vessel over names from other parts of the UK that didn't have quite the same heritage behind them.

Nuclear submarines carry names once borne by battleships and aircraft carriers, reflecting their status as modern-day capital ships.

It is not surprising that the committee decided to revive Dreadnought – one of the most famous names in world naval history – for the first of four new ballistic

missile submarines. We can expect the next three boats to carry similarly iconic names.

In the Astute-class, traditional stealth-like submarine names (Astute, Artful and Ambush) sit happily alongside those of early 20th Century battleships (Audacious, Anson and Agamemnon).

The seventh and final name has yet to be announced but promises to be an unashamedly bold choice that will perhaps raise a few eyebrows but is entirely in keeping with the example set by our closest international partners.

In recent decades the surface fleet has been dominated by place names, be it counties, cities, towns or dukedoms. When the committee came to consider the Type 45 destroyers at the end of the 1990s, they opted for a change by drawing upon classic destroyer names.

Daring, Dauntless and Defender, are confident, energetic names that hark back to the days when destroyers were the "Greyhounds of the Seas". Dragon entered the naval lexicon in Tudor times and has obvious resonance in Wales. Duncan is named for the Scottish admiral who led the Royal Navy to victory at the Battle of Camperdown, while Diamond brings with her a string of battle honours stretching from the Spanish Armada to the Malta Convoys. Together, they represent a

pleasing sweep of naval heritage.

With the Type 26, the committee has decided to revert to a City theme, starting with Glasgow. Understandably, there is already considerable interest from other cities, but with only eight ships in the class some will be disappointed.

The First Sea Lord has said the Type 26 will honour "the great centres of commerce and industry" which suggests that smaller cathedral and coastal cities are unlikely to be in scope.

However, there are plenty of towns and cities that enjoy strong affiliations without sharing a name – the warmth and affection with which HMS Ocean was greeted by the people of Sunderland during her final visit earlier this year is a case in point.

Looking ahead, a Fleet named entirely by alphabet or geography would not only be tiresome, but would fail to do justice to the great fighting ships of yesteryear.

The committee will wish to ensure that the future Fleet reflects the full pantheon of naval heritage, from admirals and adjectives to battles and birds, with a smattering of characters from ancient mythology.

Next up will be the first five Type 31 General Purpose Frigates. These ships will fly the White Ensign in support of 'Global Britain', representing the finest traditions of the Royal Navy. Should the committee require inspiration, then they could do worse than look to the Navy of Nelson.

● **HMS Diamond**, currently the flagship of Standing NATO Maritime Group Two, bears a name which comes with a rich Royal Navy heritage

Picture: LPhoto Paul Hall





Royal reward for courage

A ROYAL Marine has been honoured for his outstanding performance as a member of the Royal Navy Gibraltar Squadron.

Cpl Adam Carter, pictured above, received the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service from Governor Lt Gen Edward Davis.

His citation referred to Cpl Carter's courage and composure having been tested on a number of occasions as he drove one of the squadron's rigid hull inflatable boats.

"With a complete understanding of the mission, his seamanship and boat-handling skills were exceptional as he dealt with a potentially life-threatening situation superbly, demonstrating admirable restraint and discipline," according to the citation.

Cpl Carter said: "I am incredibly proud to have been awarded the QCVS. The RM core values demand courage and determination and I hope to always exude these qualities."

The CO of the squadron, Lt Cdr James Myhill, said: "The actions of Cpl Carter during a particularly serious incident in British Gibraltar Territorial Waters were exemplary. I am delighted that his professionalism has been recognised in the state award of a QCVS."

This is a shout out to Mine Ex...

ON A matchless autumn day three minehunters, their mother ship and two gigantic Sea Dragon helicopters pose momentarily for the camera at the end of the second major Anglo-American mine exercise in the Gulf this year.

The two premier mine warfare forces in the region combined their hardware and expertise for 11 days.

Both navies maintain a permanent minehunting force in Bahrain – the Americans their Avenger-class boats, the Brits two Sandown-class ships (to hunt in deep waters), two Hunts (for shallower seas), plus a command ship with a battle staff, spare parts, fuel, food, ammunition and other supplies

to sustain long-term operations.

The two forces work independently, or with local navies, for much of the year, but pool their resources once every four or so months for the combined MCMEX (Mine Countermeasures Exercise).

In its third incarnation, Exercise 17-3 (17-1 was actually held in the autumn of 2016...) sucked in HM Ships Bangor, Blyth and Ledbury, RFA Cardigan Bay as their support ship, USS Sentry and enormous HM15 Sea Dragon helicopters to hunt mines on the American side, plus fast patrol craft Squall and Whirlwind to provide the slow-moving force with protection.

The exercise was designed to

ensure the two navies remain at the tip of the mine warfare spear – and that they can work side-by-side seamlessly in the event of a real mine threat.

The exercise scenario required the task group to clear a route of mines in order to allow safe passage for humanitarian aid vessels.

"While the weather was more settled compared with our previous exercise, the environment still presented some significant challenges that needed to be overcome," explained Lt Paul Lane, the task group's meteorological officer.

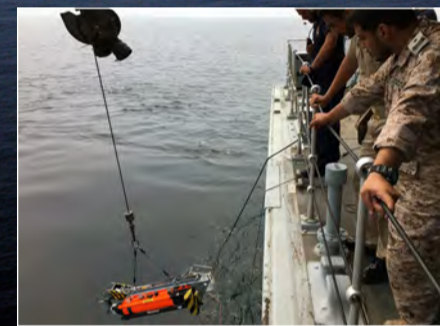
"The Middle Eastern summer affects all aspects of our operations, including sensors, engines and habitability. Knowing in advance how changes in

the environment affect your systems means they can be altered to suit the conditions."

At the same time, the mine warfare staff led by Cdr Ben Vickery on Cardigan Bay were tested on their ability to direct the movements of a sizeable international force and provide vital engineering and logistical support to the minehunters.

The exercise also provided an opportunity for liaison officers from the Egyptian and Saudi Arabian navies – the latter operate Sandown-class hunters – to witness how the UK/US coalition conduct their mine warfare operations.

Main image: MCM2 Victoria Kinney USN



"I still find it difficult to talk about my experiences at sea."

Derek, resident of The Royal Star & Garter Homes

Derek entered the Royal Navy in 1943, aged 18. He later joined HMS Loch Craggie, and took part in the Battle of the Atlantic. On Churchill's orders, his ship found and sank a German U-boat responsible for the torpedoing of seven Allied ships. The memories of this are still with him.

Today, the specialist nursing and therapeutic care that Derek receives from The Royal Star & Garter Homes allows him to retain his mobility and independence. However, as a charity, we can only continue to care for Derek with your help.

The Royal Star & Garter Homes provides award-winning care for veterans and their spouses who live with disability or dementia.

Please show your support for Derek and other veterans cared for at The Royal Star & Garter Homes by making a donation today.

To donate

Call 020 8481 7674 (Quoting A17)

Visit www.starandgarter.org/derek



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PLA(N)ed visit to RN

SAILORS from a Chinese task group were welcomed to the UK – and the home of the RN – in two separate visits.

The trio of vessels from Counter-Piracy TG 26 – frigates Huanggang (577) and Yangzhou (578) and support ship Gaoyouhu (966) – spent five days in West India and Royal Docks in London.

Commander UK Maritime Forces Rear Admiral Alex Burton officially welcomed the sailors of the People's Liberation Army (Navy) to the capital after a colourful ceremony (complete with dragon) laid on for the visitors involving members of the UK-based Chinese community.

Some of the PLA(N) officers left the Big Smoke and headed down the A3 to Portsmouth for a look around the Naval Base and HMS Iron Duke in particular, while 11 sailors took on an RN XI on the football pitch at HMS Temeraire (and lost to the hosts).

Aboard the Iron Duck, the visitors learned about living and working conditions as well as the spirit and ethos which imbues RN personnel.

"As mariners we have much in common and as navies we have many shared security challenges," said the frigate's CO Cdr Steve Banfield. "It is always a pleasure to be able to discuss life in the RN and Naval ethos as well as learning about life in the PLA(N)."

Rear Admiral Wang ZhongCai, Chinese task force commander, said his men and women had enjoyed their few days sampling British culture and thanked the RN for its hospitality.

"Although we are separated geographically from each other, the relations between our two nations and navies are always close," he added. "I hope this visit will strengthen communications and cooperation between our two nations, our two militaries and especially our two navies."

Send-off for amazing Grace

AFTER eight-and-a-half years at the helm the Royal Marines Band Service bade farewell to Principal Director of Music Lt Col Nick Grace.

He was marched from his headquarters office on Whale Island and led to the HMS Excellent gate by a large Royal Marines band, with the roads lined with other serving musicians, including Royal Marines School of Music staff and trainees.

Before that impressive send-off, the finale of a career spanning more than 35 years, he formally handed over directorship of the Forces' premier band service to Lt Col Jon Ridley, previously the director of training at the RMB School of Music in Portsmouth.



Give me the moonlight...

THE clouds do their best to obscure the harvest moon which casts its bright light on a docked-down HMS Albion as a large LCU Mk10 landing craft returns to 'mother', carrying the naval leaders of tomorrow for their first extended period at sea: six weeks aboard the assault ship.

As you read this, the future flagship (she assumes the title next year from Ocean), is beginning a month and a half of intensive amphibious training – her core business – as part of her Operational Sea Training package, after which she'll be able to deploy wherever Whitehall determines she is required.

She conducts OST with plaudits ringing in her ears, having been formally handed back to the Royal Navy from the Defence Equipment and Support arm of the MOD, who oversaw Albion's £90m two-year refit.

The private firms, engineers and ship's company have been praised for the speed and efficiency with which they brought a sleeping giant back to life (Albion was mothballed for four years following the 2010 defence review) and are now turning her into a potent fighting machine.

In a world where it is not unusual for defence projects to take longer and cost more than anticipated, Albion returned to sea three days earlier than planned back in the summer – and has maintained the pace throughout sea trials, conducted with such aplomb that Cdre Rob Bellfield, the new Commodore of Devonport Flotilla, was more than happy to welcome the ship back into the bosom of his 'family'.

He said the regeneration of the ship over the past three years was an example of how the Navy, industry and MOD could work together successfully.

"With a strong command lead and an extremely enthusiastic and engaging ship's company, the ship is immaculate which is indicative of the ship's company's collective pride," he told the 330 sailors and Royal Marines.

Albion has a brief period between the end of sea trials and start of OST – but it's not a lull. *Take a deep breath.*

Two Dutch landing craft have joined the ship as part of long-standing partnership with the Netherlands' *Korps Mariniers* (just 14 months younger than our Royal Marines); Albion took part in the regular Thursday War off Plymouth, including some damage control training; bomb disposal experts from Plymouth's Southern Diving Unit scoured the assault ship from keel to main mast as part of a terrorist homemade bomb training exercise; five female sailors dined on Victory with counterparts past and present to mark the 100 anniversary of the WRNS forming; Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue teams practised evacuating casualties from the 19,500-tonne vessel; helped Falmouth Coastguard save a yachtsman in distress; crew joined the affiliated Army unit (Queen's Own Yeomanry) on their annual live firing exercise on the Yorkshire Moors; visited the affiliated city of Chester to support the Lord Mayor at the Admiral of the Dee ceremony; and somehow there was still time and energy for the Great Albion Cake Off, raising £500 for the ship's Claire House Children's Charity.

You can breathe again now.

As for the 75 officer cadets from Britannia Royal Naval College embarked in the Dart estuary courtesy of Albion's party piece (landing craft/loading dock), the sea time aboard the assault ship almost brings their 30 weeks of education and training at the Officer Corps' *alma mater* to a close.

Initial Sea Time "is their first opportunity to gain a proper understanding of what life is like in a warship – what it is to be a sailor and what makes our men and women tick," explains BRNC's CO Capt Jol Woodard.

They live and work alongside Albion's junior ratings, learning about life on board in every department from the bottom up, and, when the six weeks are up, face pass/fail oral and written exams.



Race for conversion at Falmouth Docks

MEET the newest addition to the Royal Fleet Auxiliary – and the second of four large Tide-class tankers to make the long Pacific-Panama-Atlantic journey to Blighty for military fitting out – RFA Tiderace.

The 39,000-tonne ship completed the epic journey from South Korea to Falmouth, where A&P will install weaponry such as Phalanx automated guns, sensors, secure military communications and MOD computer systems.

She's taken the place of the lead ship in the class in the shipyard, RFA Tidespring, which was undergoing aviation trials off the South Coast last month.

Experts from the Empire Test Pilots School made use of her flight deck to begin writing the manual for all future helicopters operations.

By taking a vast quantity of data readings – such as the flow of air over the tanker's superstructure, the ship's roll, pitch and yaw – and based on the skill and expertise of the fliers, the team will determine in what conditions Merlins and Wildcats can safely land and take-off: known as the Ship Helicopter Operating Limits or SHOL.

And later this month Tidespring will be in Portsmouth Naval Base to be formally transferred to the RFA in a service of dedication, before resuming her trials and training – leading up to a first replenishment at sea with HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Of the remaining two ships, RFA Tidesurge is on her sea trials off the Korean peninsula and Tideforce is being fitted out at the DSME yard in Okpo-dong.

The quartet are all expected to be in service with the RFA by the end of next year and will be the logistic heart of future RN carrier battle groups.

Picture: LPhoto Dean Nixon, FRPU West

QE is back at sea

HOPEFULLY conducting her second period of sea trials as you read this is the flagship of tomorrow, HMS Queen Elizabeth.

After a couple of months in her home port following initial trials in the North Sea, Britain's biggest warship was scheduled to begin several weeks of testing and training as *Navy News* went to press.

The first spell at sea concentrated on basic machinery, manoeuvrability, handling and weapons tests, with around 300 civilian engineers aboard alongside 700 crew to iron out any problems.

The autumn trials off the South Coast focus on the 65,000-tonne leviathan's mission systems, ahead of Queen Elizabeth being formally handed over from Aircraft Carrier Alliance control to the Royal Navy, allowing the ship to be commissioned in time for Christmas.

Meanwhile, the future UK home of the F-35B jump jets is one third of the way through a £250m revamp to host the stealth fighter and the sailors and airmen

who will fly and maintain it.

RAF Marham, near King's Lynn, will be the base for the new aircraft when they're not deployed aboard HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

It's currently an operational Tornado base, but from next summer the RN will move in *en masse* (about 150 personnel, in addition to the vanguard, such as the meteorologists, who are already on site) as the first Lightning IIs arrive from the USA.

Nine 'work phases' to prepare Marham for the jets have been planned – working around a still-active airfield (Tornados are heavily engaged in operations against Daesh in the Middle East).

The third stage of the revamp – resurfacing a substantial stretch of the runway – was completed inside the three-week deadline.

More than 13,000 tonnes of asphalt were ripped out and 18,000 tonnes re-laid, covering an area of five rugby pitches.

Engineers also dug nearly two dozen pits and installed 1,200 metres of ducting for improved ground lighting.

Divers recover fisherman

FROGMEN from Southern Diving Unit 1 recovered the body of a missing fisherman after his vessel Solstice capsized several miles off Plymouth.

Two men were subsequently

rescued by RNLI boats as HMS Argyll stood by to assist.

A diver from SDU1 found the third crew member and recovered his body shortly before the stricken vessel sank.

First female CO takes her place at head of the cod squad

AS THE RN's oldest formation, there aren't many firsts left for the Royal Navy's Fishery Protection Squadron.

Now scratch 'first female commanding officer' off that list, for Cdr Sarah Oakley has taken charge of the Portsmouth-based force at one of the most exciting times in its recent history.

The squadron can trace its history back to 1379, safeguarding North Sea herring grounds in the 16th Century, the Newfoundland fisheries during the 19th Century and more recently it played a key role in the 'Cod Wars' of the 1950s through

to the 1970s with Iceland.

"I'm immensely proud to be the first female officer commanding the Royal Navy's oldest squadron," says Cdr Oakley (pictured right).

"It is a real privilege to return once again to the Squadron I first joined as a gunnery/British seas fisheries officer in HMS Alderney at the start of my career."

Since then she's gone on to command two of the four ships currently assigned to the squadron (HMS Mersey and HMS Clyde).

They are in the process of being retired in favour of the new generation of River-class

ships (bigger, faster, more heavily armed, each with a flight deck) currently being built in Scotland.

There are around 250 souls assigned to the squadron, which is directed by a small HQ staff in Portsmouth and assisted by a training team.

The current trio of UK-based 'fish ships' – Tyne, Severn and Mersey – are the RN's constant presence and eyes and ears in home waters.

In the 2016-17 financial year their crews completed nearly 300 fishing vessel boardings on behalf of the Marine Management Organisation, enforcing UK and EU legislation; more than 120

infringements were discovered.

"Although Portsmouth is the squadron's home port, its ships spend more time at sea than any other RN vessels – up to 320 days a year – and rarely visit their home base," Cdr Oakley says.

"There is a lot of travel involved in my job – I like to speak with the ship's commanding officers on a regular basis and also visit them at sea."

Training is key to the squadron's success, ensuring not only that boardings are conducted correctly and safely but that boarding officers are well versed in current legislation.

The FPS' in-house training

specialist and chief-of-staff is also a female, Lt Cdr Kate Scott; she delivers marine enforcement training and assurance alongside the Marine Management Organisation.

For as Cdr Oakley explains, the work of the squadron is vital in ensuring fish stocks are sustainable for future generations and the livelihoods of the fishermen are protected.

"For all of these reasons the Fishery Protection Squadron exists, and I feel that the majority of fishermen view us as the arbiter of good standards, protector of them and their industry, by patrolling the seas," she says.



Wot no planes?

NO... but without the Fleet Air Arm's newest squadron, many ships – especially RFAs – could not operate helicopters.

1700 Naval Air Squadron has been commissioned at RNAS Culdrose, taking the place of the Maritime Aviation Support Force (MASF).

The unit, which has personnel serving on operations around the world including the recent disaster-relief mission in the Caribbean, provides specialist teams to RN and RFA vessels – chiefly, but not entirely, to meet their aviation requirements such as flight deck crews.

It can supply as few as two or as many as 50 personnel depending on supply and demand – aircraft handlers, fire-fighters, meteorologists, PTIs, RN police, survival specialists, aircraft controllers, logisticians, engineers, medics and many other specialists – to allow the continued operation of naval aircraft worldwide.

“The re-commissioning of MASF as 1700 NAS is a significant step forward in improving awareness across the UK Armed Forces of our global support to maritime aviation and the RFA's operational capability,” said Lt Cdr Chris Roberts, who's been in charge of MASF/1700 for the past two years.

“As an organisation, we look forward to better integration in the Fleet Air Arm – and Culdrose in particular – working closely to deliver the ever-increasing requirement to support RFA operations and aviation support to the Fleet.”

In its only previous incarnation, the squadron operated flying boats in the final months of WW2, chiefly on search-and-rescue missions in support of RN carriers taking part in the final onslaught against Japan.

Wildcat rescue after storm capsizes ship

THE solitary figure of winchman Chris Partridge moves across the upturned hull of the Ferrel as he searches for the family believed to be trapped underneath.

There was no response initially to the knocks he repeatedly tapped against the vessel in the hope people were trapped in air pockets.

But the banging must have had some effect, for as the junior rating was hauled back up into the safety of his Wildcat and the helicopter started its return to RFA Mounts Bay, the whirlybird was directed back to the scene as three people – a woman and two children – were spotted by US Coast Guard personnel.

The Ferrel was caught by the full force of Hurricane Maria – 110mph winds, 20-foot waves – off Puerto Rico. The former survey ship's engines failed... prompting an SOS from her skipper.

Rear Admiral Peter Brown, in charge of the US Coast Guard Seventh District, which covers the Caribbean, said when his team received the distress call from the Ferrel, the boat was “literally in the teeth of a hurricane”.

He continued: “We were obviously concerned. We didn't ask their names and didn't ask why they were out there.”

By the time the international rescue force which responded to the Mayday located the Ferrel, she had turned turtle off an uninhabited island nearly 50 miles from her original reported position.

The crew of the Wildcat – pilot Lt Oliver Bundock and Observer/Flight Commander Lt Cdr Amy Gilmore plus winchman Chris (who's also responsible for maintaining the helicopter as an AET) – spotted debris and a life raft, before Chris was lowered for what initially was a fruitless search for survivors.

As the Wildcat departed the scene, observers in a US Coast Guard Hercules, also scrambled as part of the emergency response, suddenly

spotted three figures trying to climb on to the hull and waving furiously.

The Wildcat immediately returned, Chris was lowered and the three survivors were lifted to safety as the aftermath of Maria continued to batter the unstable wreck.

The three survivors were treated for minor injuries in the ship's sick bay. A fourth person, the boat's skipper, last seen in the wheelhouse, died – tingeing an otherwise successful search-and-rescue mission with sadness.

The three family members were treated aboard RFA Mounts Bay for minor injuries when the Wildcat returned before being landed ashore.

The rescue was probably the most dramatic mission flown by the 815 NAS crew during Operation Ruman – the military response to the devastating hurricanes which battered the Caribbean in September (see pages 16-17 for further coverage).

It meant the Wildcat was heavily in demand – especially before HMS Ocean and her nine helicopters arrived – as the small aircraft flew recce missions to assess damage and transported people and aid, fresh water in particular, around the Caribbean islands.

It meant some 90 hours of flying over the course of the month.

“With two of the most powerful recorded hurricanes hitting the islands in short order, it has been a terrible time for all the people out here. Whilst this has been the most demanding flying I have ever conducted, it has also been the most rewarding,” Lt Gilmore said.

“We have been able to make a real difference in helping the local people recover from the devastation these hurricanes have caused.

“I've been involved in disaster relief previously, but nothing I've seen before compares to this. The British Virgin Islands have been particularly hard hit, and I really hope they are able to get themselves back on their feet soon.”



“Your assistance has helped me close off an irritation that's been bugging me since I left the Service. And I'm now £9,000 better off.”

Jon Gower, FPS Member



Jon had a nagging feeling that he had not received his pension supplement based on his period as a commissioned officer. We reviewed his circumstances and concluded he was right. As a result, he received a supplementary tax free lump sum payment, back payment of pension and interest too. His pension has also been increased to the correct rate. He tells us he's busy advising others to join the Forces Pension Society.

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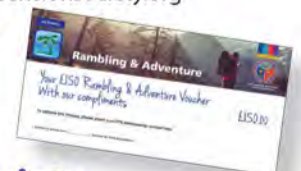
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● Zabor, the Royal Navy mascot horse, at the RNRM Riding Stables, with Lt Gary Smith

RN riders tackle trauma and injury

ROYAL Navy riders have struck a hoofin' deal with the Royal British Legion to help Service personnel and veterans overcome trauma and injury.

The horses at the Royal Navy Royal Marines Riding Stables will increasingly be in demand to help people recover physically or mentally from the scars of battle, or from illnesses they suffer later in life as civilians.

The stables, located opposite 42 Commando's base at Bickleigh, just north of Plymouth, is the only military horse charity in the UK.

There will almost certainly be more equine therapy after the stables were formally affiliated with the RBL after Devonport Naval Base commander Cdre Ian Shipperley and Bernard Noble, chairman of the Legion's Dartmoor branch, put pen to paper to make the arrangement between humans and animals official.

"I know of a former soldier from the 1970s who benefits greatly from coming to the stables as he recovers from illness," said Mr Noble, a former soldier who served in Northern Ireland.

"I am very much aware of the need for rehabilitation for Service personnel who served in armed conflict so I'm proud to be part of this agreement which builds on the existing partnership."

One beneficiary of equine therapy is Chris Marsh, who

had to end his Territorial Army service and job as a health care assistant after suffering multiple injuries and brain damage in a road accident.

"I have been coming to the stables for eight years and have benefited enormously from the therapy organised for me," the 33-year-old said.

"The horses are very understanding of people's condition and I have formed a bond with them.

"Helping at the stables has helped reduce the stress I suffered from the injuries and the aftermath.

"The therapy has also helped me regain confidence. I'm now also seriously planning on taking part in horse competitions and taking equine qualifications, which shows how far I have come in recovery. What started off as therapy has turned out to be my passion and hobby."

The stables were originally established to give serving personnel and their families in the Plymouth area access to affordable horse-riding facilities – but that has widened to embrace the general public.

Cdre Shipperley said the agreement between the stables, of which he is a trustee, and the RBL was "particularly poignant during the 35th anniversary year of the Falklands with veterans who are still in need of assistance."

Wreck located after 77 years

THIS is the unmistakable outline of a submarine – seen for the very first time since she left her base during the Battle of Britain.

This is HMS Narwhal, sent to lay mines off German-occupied Norway in late July 1940. Sitting upright on the seabed about 300ft down around 150 miles east of Edinburgh, she was discovered by Polish deep-sea explorers who were looking to solve one of their nation's greatest maritime mysteries.

In 1939 the submarine ORP Orzel escaped the German invasion of Poland and internment in Estonia and fled to the UK.

She conducted half a dozen patrols – including taking part in the Norwegian campaign – before disappearing on her seventh tour of duty in late May/early June 1940.

The Poles have spent the past decade trying to locate the wreck of the Orzel (Eagle), this year using hydrographic vessel Mewo Navigator to follow the likely route the missing submarine took back to base in Blyth.

Over ten days, the ship scanned 900 square kilometres of seabed – five times the size of Tyneside – but found no trace of its intended target.

It did, however, locate four wrecks, one 88 metres long and seven wide. Based on its dimensions and official British and German records, the Find the Orzel team believe they have discovered HMS Narwhal after 77 years.

Narwhal left the submarine base at Blyth on July 22 bound for Kristiansund.

The German Navy had broken some of the Royal Navy's codes, knew the likely route



Narwhal would take across the sea and dispatched the Luftwaffe to intercept.

On the afternoon of July 23, the fates of bomber and submarine collided as Lieutenant Bernhard Müller's Dornier attacked and sank the Narwhal, which took her skipper Lt Cdr Ronald Burch and 58 crew to a watery grave.

Although disappointed at failing to locate their chief target, the Polish research team have vowed to continue the search for the Orzel – and to track down relatives of the Narwhal's crew to provide them with more details of the submarine's loss.

"It was assumed that Narwhal was sunk in the vicinity of the Norwegian coast during its mission," said expedition leader Tomasz Stachura.

"Study of archival documents and the technical specifications of the submarine operating at the time which could have been sunk in this stretch of water, it is highly likely to be HMS Narwhal."

Bomb damage to the boat's hull – between the fin and stern – matches the description in the German bomber crew's combat report.

Anyone connected with the wartime Narwhal should contact the 'Find the Orzel' team at rafal.rapa@santiodnalezcoria.pl

First view of tragic Pheasant

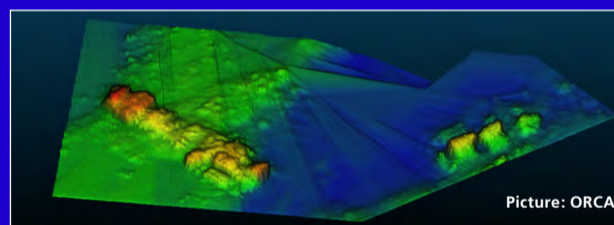
A SURVEY has confirmed the final resting place of WW1 warship HMS Pheasant.

The destroyer sank on March 1 1917 after hitting a mine believed to have been laid by a German U-boat. All 89 souls on board perished.

Sonar images have now been produced of the wreck, which lies close to Orkney's Old Man of Hoy, following a survey by archaeological maritime experts working from the MV Scotia.

The wreck, which was initially discovered in 1996, is protected as a designated vessel under the Protection of Military Remains Act 1986 which means that it can be dived but not entered or disturbed without permission from the MOD.

Pheasant was an M-class destroyer built by Fairfield Shipyard on the Clyde and



Picture: ORCA

launched on October 23 1916.

The ship left Stromness to patrol the waters west of Orkney when she was lost.

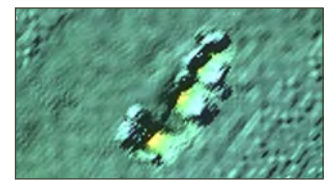
The trawler HMT Grouse was at anchor under Rora Head and two deck hands on watch reported an explosion and smoke but the skipper was not informed for another two hours.

The trawler HMT Cairo, which was patrolling in the Hoy Sound, heard a faint explosion but took it to be gunfire and so remained on

station off Stromness.

Only one body was recovered: that of Midshipman Reginald Campbell Cotter RNR. He was 20 years old and is buried in the military cemetery at Lyness, Hoy, Orkney.

This year marks the centenary of the loss of HMS Pheasant and there is an initiative under way to develop a memorial on Hoy, Orkney, to commemorate all those who lost their lives aboard.



Discovery thought to be Athenia

THIS is probably the outline of the very first ship sunk in World War 2 – the first of 3,500 merchant vessels sent to the bottom of the Atlantic.

The man who found legendary battlecruiser HMS Hood, the Australian cruiser HMAS Sydney and the ill-fated cargo ship MV Derbyshire believes he has located the wreck of the liner SS Athenia.

Helping to provide the most comprehensive map of the waters for the Irish government and European Union, leading shipwreck hunter David Mearns is "98 per cent" convinced the remains of a large ship located 650ft down around 50 miles south of Rockall belong to the Athenia, torpedoed within 12 hours of war between Britain and Germany breaking out.

The liner had been bound for Canada with 1,400 souls aboard, blacked out and zig-zagging, when she was sighted by German submarine U-30, mistaken for an armed cruiser and torpedoed.

Some 117 people – including 28 Americans – were killed by the blast, drowned by the inrush of water, or killed when a couple of lifeboats capsized.

But because it took more than 14 hours for the 13,000-ton liner to sink, most of the passengers and crew were saved as Royal Navy destroyers and merchant ships came to Athenia's assistance.

As the first British ship lost in the war – and the presence of a good smattering of politicians and celebrities aboard (among the latter, actress Carmen Silvera – best known to Britons years later as Rene's wife in sitcom 'Allo 'Allo) – the liner's sinking made front-page news on both sides of the Pond.

During the Phoney War, the Athenia's loss became a *cause célèbre*. The Nazis claimed Churchill had ordered the ship sunk – and even falsified the log of U-30 when she returned to base to 'prove' she'd been nowhere near the liner when she was hit.

"It's a rich, compelling story and there are still survivors alive today – children aged six, eight, ten at the time," said Mr Mearns.

The wreck is roughly the same dimensions as the Glasgow-built liner, broken in two, and knowledge of other vessels lost in the area rules them out.

Image: Geographical Survey of Ireland

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● The Lord Boyce at the service remembering the Channel Dash

Tributes paid to heroes of the air

VETERAN Bill Wedge joined sailors and airmen of today and tomorrow to mark one of the darkest yet bravest episodes in Royal Navy history – the Channel Dash.

The escape of the kernel of the Nazi surface fleet from Brest to the relative safety of Germany in 1942 provoked howls of criticism at the time.

It also gave the Fleet Air Arm one of its most selfless acts of courage as obsolete Swordfish torpedo bombers ran the gauntlet of 200 German fighters and the flak of three mighty warships in a vain attempt to prevent the breakout.

All six Swordfish were shot out of the sky. Just five of the 18 crew were rescued. Their leader, Eugene Esmonde, posthumously earned the Victoria Cross for leading the ill-fated attack.

Those who gathered to mark the 75th anniversary (or rather 75½th as the dash occurred in mid-February) of the ill-fated operation (codenamed Fuller in the UK, Cerberus in the Third Reich) were reminded that the effort to stop the battlecruisers Scharnhorst and Gneisenau and the heavy cruiser Prinz Eugen reaching Germany went beyond the doomed sortie by half a dozen Swordfish.

Destroyers from Harwich and Sheerness were dispatched to stop the break-out, while the RAF tried to bomb the escaping ships.

At 96, Sub Lieutenant Bill Wedge was the sole veteran of Operation Fuller to attend the ceremony. In 1942, he was serving in aged destroyer HMS Worcester.

“We were all pretty appalled at how close we actually got towards the ships,” the veteran recalled.

“I was responsible for the pom-poms on the quarterdeck – it was very scary, everyone was biting their nails. But our captain was very gung-ho and I reckon we got to within 2,000 yards. However none of our torpedoes hit and in return they found their target seven times!”

HMS Worcester wallowed in the Channel for hours awaiting rescue before her stokers managed to get the engines going and she limped back to Harwich.

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Boyce led tributes to the men of the Channel Dash at the Operation Fuller Memorial beneath Dover’s imposing White Cliffs.

“We are here to remember the bravery of Royal Navy aircrew, the destroyers from Harwich and Sheerness and the RAF for their efforts in the air,” he said.

“We must also remember the astute leadership of the German ships who attempted such a daring endeavour.

“Fortunately for us their movements through the Channel resulted in the sinking of two of them soon after by mines and bombing, once they made it to Wilhelmshaven.”

The Germans reached home waters, but both battlecruisers were damaged by mines. The Gneisenau was subsequently wrecked in dry dock by an RAF air attack. Only the Scharnhorst would ever pose a threat to the Royal Navy again – until she was sunk by HMS Duke of York off the North Cape on Boxing Day in 1943.

Representing today’s German Navy was Rear Admiral Axel Deertz. “It is always moving to attend these events and, like many ceremonies, you cannot help get attached to the human losses that result from these actions and fights.”

Flying in the same squadron as Esmonde and his men, Lt Cdr Martin Van Duin, 825 NAS’ senior pilot, represented today’s FAA with a Wildcat flypast.

“It’s an honour to be part of a Naval Air Squadron with such a valiant heritage,” he said.

“Members of 825 NAS are reminded daily of the Channel Dash by our battle honours, which are proudly displayed at Yeovilton.”

Representing the next generation were Sea Cadets from Dover’s TS Lynx.

“It was really good today and very impressive to see such a big turnout by the standard bearers on parade,” said 17-year-old Leading Cadet Tamsin. “You can’t help but be moved when you hear the stories of the brave men who took part in the Channel Dash.”

All the President’s men and women in action on Thames

ROW, row, row your boat gently, er, up the stream...

And not that gently either. Reservists from HMS President took to the water in their Thames Waterman cutter Arthur Tisdall VC, joining more than 330 other craft on the capital’s artery for the Great River Race.

The annual race sees all manner of human-powered boats race upstream from London Docklands to Ham in Surrey – a distance of 21.6 miles.

The fastest Thames Waterman cutter completed the course, despite choppy conditions, in just over two hours.

President’s team posted “a respectable time” but perhaps their progress was

slowed slightly by the presence of a passenger: the Speaker of Tower Hamlets Council, Cllr Sabina Akhtar, who climbed into the newly-restored cutter.

She may not have weighed in on the rowing front, but she did keep the team’s morale up offering encouragement from the first stroke to the last.

A few days after the row, the politician returned to the HQ of London-based reservists, just down the Thames from Tower Bridge at St Katharine Docks, for the change-of-command ceremony as Cdr John Herrmann handed over the reins of President to Cdr Richmal Hardinge, a former XO of the unit and a member of the RNR for 25 years.

Cdr Herrmann was seen on his way by his ship’s company lining the outside decking before, accompanied by his family, he climbed aboard the patrol boat HMS Puncher, which serves London universities, waiting at the jetty to carry the family upriver, past the raised bascules of Tower Bridge.

It was a light-hearted ending to an evening which began solemnly, for President held its annual service of commemoration for the loss of HMS Fittleton, which capsized in 1976 during a training exercise off the Dutch coast, killing 12 men, all but two of them reservists – mostly from the London Division.



A loch, rocks and a few smoking pedals

WE GUESS this is what they mean by a boulder dash... Navy personnel negotiate the boggy, stone-strewn terrain of the Cairngorms – the opening slog of an adventurous training competition for the Forces.

Thirteen teams from across the military – Army engineers, Royal Marines, submariners, sailors, reservists – threw their caps into the ring for the Rothiemurchas Challenge, a triathlon-esque event... only rather more rugged.

Four-strong teams faced an 11km hill walk/run, navigating themselves around checkpoints in the heart of the Cairngorms.

Then they mounted bikes for a 15km ride, once again with checkpoints, before an 800m canoe across the beautiful-but-cold Loch Morlich outside Glenmore.

First past the post were the Royal Marines of O Squadron, 43 Commando, Fleet Protection Group, more used to safeguarding Faslane and the nearby armaments depot at Couplart than running through the wilds.

They completed the challenge in 3h 6m 7s, with their reservist comrades from RMR Scotland second 13 minutes behind them and the Army’s 48 Field Squadron 39 Engineer Regt taking bronze in just under three-and-a-half hours.

“We are delighted to win this year’s challenge,” said Cpl Joe Donnelly.

“Even though we knew the area fairly well – we have conducted adventurous training at the lodge before – we found the event a lot harder than anticipated.”

Sgt Ryan Gorman, AT instructor at Faslane, was delighted both with the turnout for the tough race and how it went.

“This is the third year the event has run and my first year of organising it myself,” he said.



“The challenge is growing in strength each year and it is great to see the competitiveness and banter between all the Services.”

The race takes place during a broader four-day stint of AT, Cairngorm Challenge, run by the team at Faslane and open to RN personnel from across the Northern Area (above a line drawn from the Mersey to the Wash). So that means not just Faslane-based sailors, submariners and commandos, but crew from HMS Prince of Wales, under construction at Rosyth, and Audacious, being fitted out at Barrow, URNU personnel from

Manchester/Salford universities and reservists from HMS Eaglet in Liverpool among others.

From early summer to the beginning of autumn, Cairngorm Challenge is on offer four times to Naval Servicemen and women: hill walking, mountain biking, kayaking, rock climbing and zip sliding.

The MOD has an AT hub at Rothiemurchas Lodge in Aviemore, from where Clyde-based PT staff, a Jack Dusty and two chefs lay on activities and scan for up to 18 personnel at a time.

Pictures: CPO Nick Tryon, FRPU North

Pickle to join Victory

SAILORS stepped back in time more than two centuries by crewing a replica of the ship which brought news of victory at Trafalgar to the mother country.

As *Navy News* went to press, volunteers from Portsmouth Naval Base were taking it in turns to sail the schooner HMS Pickle from Hull to the Solent so that the ship will be in harbour for the event which celebrates its achievements.

Back in 1805, Pickle was dispatched to Britain to report both the crushing defeat of the Franco-Spanish Fleet at Trafalgar and the death of the man who led the Royal Navy to victory, Admiral Lord Nelson.

It took ten days for the 73ft sailing vessel to reach Falmouth – then another 37 hours for her captain Lt John Lapenotiere to reach the Admiralty in London, breathlessly announcing: “Sir, we have gained a great victory but we have lost Lord Nelson.”

The accomplishments of Lapenotiere and his small ship are celebrated each November 4 – the anniversary of Pickle’s arrival in Falmouth – with Pickle Night, an evening for naval ratings to remember the heroes of 1805 and generally let their hair down, often dressed in the uniform of the day.

HMS Victory hosts a special Pickle Night event on the great ship’s lower gun deck with 104 specially-nominated ratings dining with Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock – a reward for their efforts over the previous 12 months.

WO1 Dickie Henderson, Victory’s XO, and other senior ratings serving aboard Nelson’s flagship thought this year that the presence of a replica (the original Pickle was wrecked more than two centuries ago) berthed next to Victory, would give proceedings extra authenticity and poignancy.

“This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity for some Royal Navy sailors and Royal Marines to get ‘hands-on’ experience of what it would have been like to sail a ship that took part in the famous battle,” he said.

The replica – built 20 years ago in the Baltic and subsequently converted to look like Pickle to mark the 200th anniversary of Trafalgar – does feature some mod cons, such as communications, engine and galley.

But on deck, crew toil as Nelson’s sailors toiled to run the ship – in this case hopping from its home in Hull down the east coast and into the Channel in four legs between October 25 and 30.

Thanks to backing from long-time Navy supporter Sir Donald Gosling and his foundation, and the RNRM Charity, sailors from Portsmouth Flotilla will be able to crew the Pickle on each leg (the longest is 36 hours)...and there has been no shortage of volunteers.





IN ZEEBRUGGE harbour, ordinary German sailors – *Matrosen* – prepare one of 18 mines for loading on to a UC-class submarine.

The U-boats of the Flanders Flotilla were proving to be a constant thorn in Britain's side – over 700,000 tonnes of Allied or neutral shipping was sunk by them between March and May 1917.

From Bruges, Zeebrugge and Ostend more than 40 UB (small submarines designed for coastal operations) and UC (minelaying) boats struck out into the North Sea or ran the gauntlet of the Dover Barrage to attack shipping in the Channel.

In the opening months of the year, the Dover Barrage – patrol boats, minefields, anti-submarine nets, guns, searchlights – proved to be a paper tiger, snaring just two German boats trying to slip through. On 122 other occasions, German submarines headed out on or back from patrol safely.

With the barrage proving unsuccessful and shipping losses threatening to knock Britain out of the war, Allied leaders draw up a grandiose plan to neutralise the Flanders Flotilla... by seizing its bases.

The British Army would smash its way out of the Ypres salient and steamroller its way towards the ports, while the Royal Navy would unleash an amphibious assault behind enemy lines on the coast to the east of the Belgian coastal town of Nieuwpoort, unsettling the entire German position in Flanders.

So much for grand plans. The Great War had a habit of throwing them up in the air. A pretty dreadful summer and dogged German resistance caused the army's attack to stall outside the village of Passchendaele... which would eventually give the battle its name.

The failure of the land campaign put the kibosh on the amphibious assault; the 'promised land' of the Flanders ports still lay at least ten miles from Allied lines and there was no hope of a rapid advance; defence, not offence, remained the only protection against the submarines of the Flanders Flotilla.

And by the autumn of 1917 things were at least tipping back in the Allies' favour. Shipping losses had dropped markedly since the almost cataclysmic spring thanks to a variety of measures, from the introduction of convoys, to increased patrols of the North Sea by aircraft and airships and ever-evolving anti-submarine warfare tactics.

But still the German boats were getting through. In his four sorties to date in command of UC-63, *Oberleutnant* Karsten von Heydebreck had mined, torpedoed or shelled more than 30 ships, trawlers, fishing smacks and steamers. His luck would run out as he returned from his fifth sortie.

The entry in our constant companion as we trawl through the picture archive of the Imperial War

Museum, the *Royal Navy Day-by-Day*, describes von Heydebreck's loss in succinct terms. His boat was the victim of "cunning tactics". And, one might add, a distracted officer of the watch.

Having successfully laid his latest batch of 'eggs', 28-year-old von Heydebreck was making his way back to base, waiting till dark to sneak past Dover.

Prowling the same waters was His Majesty's Submarine E-52, which had cast off from depot ship *Arrogant* and headed into the Channel in the hope of catching a submarine.

With the fall of night came a dramatic fall in temperature. On the conning tower, UC-63's navigator and officer of the watch sent a junior rating below to fetch some coffee.

While he was gone, the boat's engineer emerged, eager for some fresh air. He chatted with the officer of the watch for several minutes until the latter suddenly noticed the low silhouette of another submarine to port.

Alaaaarrmmmm!

The German boat began to turn, but too late.

Lt Cdr Phillip E Phillips had skilfully manoeuvred his E-boat unseen into a position where he could torpedo his quarry. November was just 75 minutes old when three Mk VIII 'fish' left E-52's tubes and raced towards UC-63 at 40mph.

Seconds later, one of the torpedoes struck the German boat's outer casing and 320lb of TNT detonated.

Just one German submariner survived. The rest were condemned to a watery grave 100ft deep just south of the Goodwin Sands.

Phillips, subsequently awarded the DSO for sinking UC-63, returned to Dover in time for breakfast.

Despite being destroyed, UC-63 continued to claim victims. At least three merchant ships – nearly 7,000 tonnes of shipping – were sunk by her mines over the following five weeks.

No such tragic fate awaited HMS E-52. Just a strange one. She survived the war and, like many surplus vessels, was quickly paid off in the post-war peace and sold for breaking up. A firm in Brixham, Devon, bought the unwanted hulk in 1921. Stripped out, it eventually ended up on the left bank of the Dart where the submarine slowly decayed with at least one other surplus warship, possibly destroyer HMS *Jed*. The skeletons of the two vessels are believed to have been used as landfill for what is today's Coronation Park at the foot of the hill occupied by Britannia Royal Naval College.

■ This photograph (Q 20345) 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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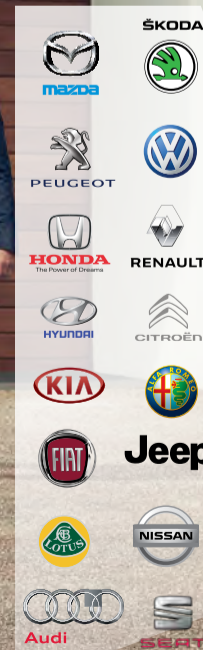
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It's a shame we cannot bring you the unmistakable purr of the Bristol Centaurus engine with this stunning shot of the Royal Navy Historic Flight's Sea Fury.

The two-seat T20 variant of Britain's last piston-engine fighter – and arguably the finest looking aircraft in Fleet Air Arm history – took to the skies of Somerset for an impressive workout in the hands of Lt Cdr Chris 'Goaty' Götke.

Being thrown around nearly as much in the back of the Texan T6 trainer, owned by historic flight supporter Tim Manna, was photographer/aviation historian Lee Howard, recording the Sea Fury's return after three years out of action.

Lt Cdr Götke was also at the controls back in July 2014 when the engine failed catastrophically – mid-display over a packed Culdrose Air Day.

Rather than bail out, he chose to bring the two-seat trainer back down to earth safely. It potentially saved lives in the crowd. It certainly saved one of the last remaining examples of the post-WW2 fighter still flying. And it earned the hugely-experienced test pilot the Air Force Cross.

It also, however, left Navywings – the principal charity supporting the historic flight – with a bill of around £200,000 to find a replacement Centaurus, repair the undercarriage and restore the damaged fighter to flying order.

Lt Cdr Götke took the Sea Fury back up for a test flight at North Weald, where the restoration was carried out, last month, then delivered the fighter/

trainer to its native Yeovilton in time for Sea Fury 65 – a celebration of the aircraft's finest hour.

In August 1952 a formation of RN Sea Furies and Fireflies was 'bounced' over Korea by Soviet-built MiG-15 jets. In the ensuing, very rapid, dogfight, one of the North Korean jets was shot down after 20mm cannon shells ripped into it.

It's the Fleet Air Arm's sole 'kill' of an enemy jet by a propeller-driven fighter, justly celebrated and, for 65 years, attributed to flight leader Lt Peter 'Hoagy' Carmichael.

But more than six decades later, credit for the kill is increasingly being attributed to then Sub Lt Brian 'Smoo' Ellis, who also engaged the MiG in the frantic encounter.

Now aged 86 and one of the few surviving Naval aviators of Korean War vintage, he joined author, pilot and aviation historian Paul Beaver for a day's celebration of the Sea Fury, during which he recounted what he remembered of the MiG encounter, before guests were treated to a display by the Sea Fury and Lt Cdr Götke.

"I think 'awesome' is the word that comes to me," he said as he got up close with the legendary British fighter once more. "What a privilege it was to spend your days flying these aircraft."

Attendees also learned about the complex – and expensive – restoration programme to get the T20 back in the skies.

The Sea Fury 65 event was part of ongoing fund-raising to maintain the fighter – and other vintage Fleet Air Arm aircraft. See www.navywings.org.uk for more details about supporting our naval aviation heritage.



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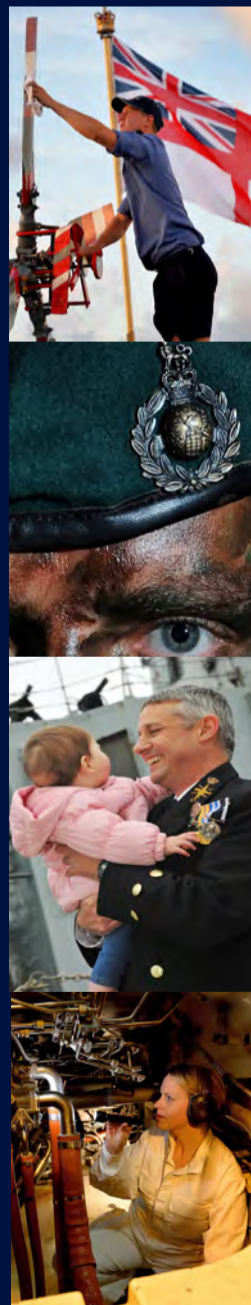
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Den pays dividends

SIMPLE but effective ideas tested in the Royal Navy's own *Dragons' Den*-style forum should save the Senior Service millions of pounds in the future.

And some of the best ideas are indeed the simplest, according to a warrant officer who had two suggestions accepted by the most recent panel.

The idea of the Den is similar to that of the popular BBC series, with innovative schemes being pitched to Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock and other three-star admirals – the *Dragons*.

The ideas take the form of 'spend to save' schemes, whereby a degree of investment can bring much greater rewards.

Some of these ideas are already paying dividends.

If you've served in Type 23 frigates and noticed new light bulbs, that's because Capt JJ Bailey implemented the introduction of LED lights to save on power and procurement costs over the next decade.

This small innovative change will drive savings of millions of pounds.

The *Dragons* approved the approach and provided the resources for Capt Bailey to implement it.

It's not just an officers' game though – ratings have given a very strong showing at the Den.

In the most recent round, WO1 Jonathan 'Taff' Phillips set a record by having two proposals approved.

"Having scrutinised dozens of spend requests as part of my role I grew increasingly tired of seeing requests that to me seemed excessively expensive and overly complicated for the results they were trying to achieve," said

WO Phillips, the Air Engineer Capability Warrant Officer in the Carrier Strike and Aviation (CSAV) Division at Navy Command Headquarters.

"So, having heard about the 2SL *Dragon's Den* Scheme, I took some of the requests I had been working on and decided to test the process of generating innovative solutions and creating efficiencies by putting forward some suggestions to the NEST [Navy Effectiveness and Strategy Team, who manage the Den].

"I did not actually consider my ideas overly innovative, but more pragmatic solutions to what I thought were simple problems.

"Perhaps going back to basic thinking in this era is innovative?"

The first of Taff's proposals was the leasing of a new Underwater Escape Training module, rather than buying it outright.

He followed that up with the purchasing of commercially-available battery chargers for the Wildcat helicopter, which would be used instead of undertaking an expensive integrated refit for ships.

These proposals will save millions of pounds for the Navy over the next years.

Taff joined the Navy in 1998 as an Aircraft Engineer Artificer and spent the first half of his career with the Commando Helicopter Force.

While there he completed operational tours of Croatia, Bosnia and Iraq.

As a CPO he took the first Merlin helicopter flight to Afghanistan in 2007, and in 2015 he joined NCHQ in Portsmouth in his current role.

"After initially broadly relaying my ideas to the NEST they seemed interested and thought the ideas would be considered by

the panel," said WO Phillips.

"Armed with this information, I did some more research and fact-finding into my ideas and started coming up with firm figures and potential savings against current forecast funding lines.

"Once I had gathered this information I presented these figures, which made the case for both my submissions even stronger than initial indications.

"The NEST assisted me with NPV calculations and the presentation that was to be given to the Second Sea Lord, Director of Finance, and Chief of Materiel (Ships).

WHAT a magnificent example of British design and engineering prowess which makes you want to wave the flag furiously.

And a Wildcat.

This is the unusual sight of the Fleet Air Arm's fastest and most nimble helicopter demonstrating its agility beside Gateshead's iconic Sage Centre as two Wildcats from 815 NAS spent a week in the North East to promote Naval aviation and engineering.

Using the Tyne's reservist hub HMS Calliope as their base, the detachment put on displays for locals, conducted winning training with Gateshead-based patrol boat HMS Example, and visited schools, colleges and academies.

The detachment was aimed at introducing reservists and potential recruits to the Navy's latest maritime attack helicopter – currently in action against terrorists and pirates in the Indian Ocean and

"I turned each submission into a five-minute presentation and then spent a few days practising my *Dragon's Den* pitch."

Don't let the name put you off – the process is not nearly as adversarial as it sounds.

"On the day the actual event was far less daunting than I thought it would be," said WO Phillips.

"Unlike the BBC2 series there was no extravagant elevator entrance, no piles of cash sat on tables, and 2SL didn't have any fancy-coloured socks on like Peter Jones..."

"In a very relaxed manner we

all sat round a table in Second's office and I delivered my presentations.

"After a few questions about how I intended to make the ideas a reality, both submissions were approved.

"It was great to know that I had worked on something that would deliver equipment to front-line users 18 months earlier than was forecast.

"The added bonus was the £2.5m that would be saved across the Annual Budget Cycle.

"I'm now looking forward to the next *Dragon's Den* in February where I have a few

more suggestions for efficiencies – but, more importantly, some ideas for where some of the savings can be spent to deliver capability enhancements across the Royal Navy Portfolio."

If you feel like you have an innovative efficiency idea but need resources of money or manpower to achieve it then consider submitting a proposal to the *Dragons' Den*.

Officer or rating, military or civilian, the Second Sea Lord wants to hear from you.

Contact Will Parsons at NEST with your idea: NAVYFIN-NEST2@mod.uk

Wildcat is star of the Sage



Picture: Raoul Dixon NNP

helping hurricane victims in the Caribbean.

Training sorties were mixed with a visit to Newcastle Aviation Academy and several school visits including Jarrow, *alma mater* (in its previous incarnation as Springfield Comprehensive) of one of the Wildcat pilots, Lt Cdr Graeme 'Geordie' McCutcheon.

He grew up on Jarrow's Hill Park Estate, where his mum still

lives... and who was treated to a flyover as the Wildcat headed for the school grounds.

Graeme worked briefly at International Paints in Felling when he left school, but opted for a career in Naval aviation.

He's flown all over the world during his 27-year career, mostly in the Lynx, Wildcat's predecessor.

"It's been great coming back home with a helicopter to

show the next generation what they can sign up for," said Lt Cdr McCutcheon.

"My highlight was counter-narcotics operations in the Caribbean where I stopped over \$200m of cocaine reaching the streets of the USA – but I've had so many adventures flying with the Navy and I hope our trip might inspire some of the students to join up as sailors, aviators or engineers."

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THEY said they would take the relief operation in the Caribbean to the next level.

And how. Though HMS Ocean's presence was only required for around ten days, the 11,000-mile dash across the Atlantic from the western Med and back again was worth it for Britain's flagship.

With nine helicopters aboard – reconnaissance Wildcats of 847 NAS, Merlins of 820 and 845 NAS and RAF Chinooks – and her hangar packed with more than 300 pallets of aid such as food, hygiene kits, water purification tablets and shelter packs, builders' materials, ten pickup trucks donated by the Gibraltar Government, even toys donated by youngsters from the Rock, HMS Ocean was expected to take the UK military's aid effort in the Caribbean following Hurricanes Irma and Maria all the way up to 11.

So barely had the helicopter assault ship dropped anchor off Road Town in the British Virgin Islands – seen here in the main image – than the Wildcats were airborne scouting landing sights, the landing craft and heavyweight helicopters were on the move shifting personnel and material in large numbers.

In the BVIs and, later, Dominica, 300 miles to the southeast, Ocean's fliers completed 81 sorties – 253 hours of flying – lifting aid and material, as well as transferring 1,081 people by air around the various islands.

Her four landing craft from 9 Assault Squadron Royal Marines were launched/recovered nearly 200 times, putting 600 people and stores ashore in 17 isolated locations.

Once ashore, teams from the Mighty O delivered 8,300 man hours – the equivalent of 49 weeks' work – of engineering and logistical support and sheer brute force.

The 3,800-mile passage from Gibraltar had given the ship's company time to hone disaster-relief drills – chiefly first aid – and ensure the 700 personnel aboard did not fall victim to any diseases in places where the fresh water supply had failed and food or drink might become contaminated, threatening dysentery, typhoid and cholera. On top of that, uniforms were soaked with Permapel which repels the insects.

Thanks to the efforts of 40 Commando (see opposite), the British Virgin Islands were starting to get back on their feet even as Ocean arrived so, after offloading 100 pallets of aid, the carrier shifted 100 miles to the south-east and Anguilla.

Islanders received initial assistance from sailors and soldiers aboard RFA Mounts Bay, which arrived off Anguilla within hours of devastating Hurricane Irma smashing its way through.

Team Ocean cleared wrecks from harbours, floated sunken barges, recovered submerged vehicles and repaired electrical generators – not to mention the distribution of tonnes of stores including nearly 1,500 hygiene kits, 130,000 sterilising tablets, over 100 temporary shelters and six pickup trucks.

Engineering squads set about restoring the electrical supply and air conditioning system in the main hospital as well as ensuring all but one of the island's schools could reopen their doors.

Anguilla and the BVI were victims of Irma. Dominica was hit by Maria, which steamrollered her way through the Caribbean a fortnight later.

It was the destruction on Dominica especially which struck the Commando Helicopter Force fliers.

"As we approached the island it was obvious that the damage was catastrophic – There wasn't a single leaf on any of the once lush foliage. The buildings were devastated and the local population were drinking from the streams," said Lt Tom Lofthouse, 845 NAS pilot.

"It was clear from the reaction of the locals as the Merlins approached that they were in desperate need.

"Over the following 36 hours the squadron delivered several tonnes of food, water, hygiene kits and further aid supplies to the villages."

In addition the Merlins provided casualty evacuation for the local population with life threatening injuries and transported surgeons ashore to provide assistance.

As did the grey Merlins of 820. They were scrambled to airlift a frail 80-year-old to safety when medics on Dominica were unable to treat him due to storm damage.

A Merlin helicopter was launched from Britain's flagship when she picked up a plea for help from the hospital in Roseau, the island's capital, where an 80-year-old man was brought in suffering from pneumonia.

With no electrical power, medication or even fresh running water in Roseau hospital, the pneumonia sufferer was not expected to survive the night.

The rear of the helicopter – usually crammed with seats and submarine-hunting equipment – was turned into "a mobile intensive care unit", complete with a Royal Navy

emergency doctor and nurse, said Observer Lt Cdr 'Bernie' Winterton.

"The town was in complete darkness as there was no electricity and residents had lit small fires in amongst the remains of their properties, creating a surreal atmosphere," he continued.

The helicopter landed close to the hospital, the medics stabilised the patient and the Merlin made the short return flight to Ocean.

The patient and his wife spent the night aboard the Plymouth-based warship before being transferred by Merlin again to Barbados for onward transport to the UK.

It was just one of several life-saving missions conducted jointly by Ocean's helicopters and teams of military medics, surgeons and doctors sent west to offer help.

An RAF Hercules carrying a combined Royal Navy Aeromedical Team was dispatched to Dominica, while Role 2 naval medics – who normally patch up battlefield casualties – were mobilised to bolster the help already available in RFA Mounts Bay and HMS Ocean's sick bays.

One of Ocean's Chinooks made a life-or-death dash to Dominica so a premature baby with a chest infection and serious breathing problems could be treated on the French island of Martinique.

"It was amazing to see the team respond," said Sqn Ldr Rebecca Woolley. "The Chinook's rotor blades were turning by the time we arrived, and the crew made sure we had information so that we were mentally prepared for what we'd face. We were able to give the French medics in Martinique a good handover, so the baby had a quick movement on to proper care.

"The things we've seen and done here in the Caribbean have been humbling," she added.

"The Chinook guys have flown similar missions to this before, but this was my first – I always knew it was the sort of thing I might have to do, and was just hoping I'd get it right."

Surg Cdr Andy Nelstrop, in charge of all the military medics mobilised for the Caribbean mission, said there had been "seamless" co-operation between all three Services and his men and women had performed their duties "with empathy and professionalism".

And just for good measure before turning for Miami and the lengthy return journey across the Atlantic, Ocean also evacuated 39 vulnerable British nationals from Dominica.



Calling...

INTERNATIONAL RESCUE

THEY were the first in.

And four weeks later, the Royal Marines of 40 Commando were the last to leave the British Virgin Islands, mission complete, with the "green shoots...returning" after the autumn storms.

Schools have re-opened, hospitals and clinics are treating patients, police have restored order, prisoners are banged up in jail again, customers file through the doors of supermarkets and stores, roads are passable, power stations send electricity through re-erected pylons and re-strung cables, treatment plants provide fresh, clean water, commercial flights in and out of Tortola have resumed after a four-week hiatus, friends and families can talk to each other on the restored phone service, and shattered homes are habitable again.

It would be wrong to say life in Britain's overseas territories across the Caribbean is as it was before the trio of devastating storms – Irma, José and María – barreled through.

But island life has begun to assume "a feeling of a new normality" in the words of Capt George Eatwell, one of scores of Royal Marines on the ground helping out.

For school children that new normality might be school in large tents – put up by the marines – or in patched-up buildings, cleaned and fixed up by marines, assault engineers and vehicle mechanics, medics and training officers.

Many of the schools across the island chain were just two days into the new academic year when Hurricane Irma struck – and were still in a state of disrepair a fortnight later as the second Category 5 storm of the season, María, passed through.

St George's Secondary School in Havers was among the worst affected, battered by 200mph gusts.

"On the first day of term everything was green – you looked out the window and green trees, leaves and grass. Now nothing. Irma took everything green with her," said María Springer, the school's principal of business and accounts.

The commandos were asked to fix the generator and unblock the storm drain which had caused the building to flood so the school could re-open.

In Road Town, teams got stuck in at St George's Primary and Secondary, Isabella Morris, End Scatliffe Pre-primary, and H Lavity Stoutt Community College, plus Cane Garden Bay and Jost Van Dyke schools.

"I'm passionate about education

and seeing the devastation in these schools is quite moving," said 40 Cdo's Education Officer Sub Lt Becky Carman.

"It's rewarding to be able to make these initial improvements and speed up the process of returning the local children to school."

Youngsters are the future of the islands. For the here and now, the island relies heavily on tourism – brought to an abrupt halt by Irma.

Nearly five kilometres of perimeter fence around the islands' principal airport, Terrance B Lettsome on Beef Island, were brought down by the storm, ruling out all commercial flights.

Commandos from 40's Reconnaissance Troop and Bravo Company worked around the clock for two days, making use of individual initiative, sheer effort, and some technical guidance from the assault engineers to ensure the airport was ringed by a fence once again.

The next day, the first airliner flew in... 50 passengers disembarked and several dozen embarked, then flew off.

Not all of those leaving the airport on that maiden flight had two legs. Quite a few had four: vulnerable pets, including strays rescued by commandos, were on the first commercial flight out.

Irma destroyed 600 homes – leaving around 6,000 islanders (or more than one fifth of the populace) homeless, with another 3,600 properties suffering some form of damage, but still habitable.

The disaster not only caused human misery, it also displaced many pets who fled their homes and were not reunited with their owners in the chaotic aftermath of the hurricane, while some householders wanted to get their animals off the islands until homes and services are restored.

More than half a dozen travel cages for animals for adoption with the help of charities in the region were loaded aboard the airliner, including a Russell cross rescued by the military only days before and named Willow.

"We found her on a small beach only a few miles from the airport," explained LWtr Rose Gleghorn of 40 Commando.

"She was sunburnt and dehydrated and in need of some attention. It's great that she is going to get a new home."

Time and again, the commandos were also struck by the spirit of locals, who were appreciative of the military's efforts – but certainly not entirely reliant on outside help.

As the green berets worked to clear up debris and open roads in Carrot Bay on Tortola's south-west coast, they came across Evelyn Dawson's restaurant, D'Coal Pot, turned into a makeshift distribution centre.

Many homes in the remote community

were destroyed by the hurricane and the road serving the 160 families is crumbling into the sea.

While Royal Marines patched up houses and created makeshift shelters with tarpaulin and other items sent by DFID, Mrs Dawson used the emergency food supplies from the local government to provide breakfast to the community and cook numerous meals for the vulnerable and elderly.

Working tirelessly since the storm, she became something of a local hero.

"I've never been through anything so traumatic, the waves were over the roof of the restaurant and they just whipped off the front of the roof," she told the visiting commandos.

"I've never been hopeless before and I can say I truly was the day after. But seeing what devastation others have suffered, I have no reason to be hopeless. That's why I'm doing what I'm doing."

She thanked the commandos for all they had done for the people of Carrot Bay: "It's been nice seeing you lot passing and stopping each day, helping us rebuild and feel safe."

In the capital Road Town, Keith 'Candy Man' Fahie has reopened his small drinks stall. By night a bar and pub entertainer, he hopes to start singing again as soon as they hostilities open their doors again.

"We're getting back on our feet man, you'll have to come back, we'll be sorted soon," he said.

Despite the widespread efforts to restore power stations and lines, many islanders rely on generators as their main or backup source of electricity.

L/Cpl Mario D'Agostino from 40 Commando's Logistics Company spent most of Operation Ruman getting the machines running again.

With seven years' experience looking after Royal Marines' vehicles, he found the failures were more often than not less down to Nature's fury and more to poor maintenance.

So the engineer has turned teacher, not merely fixing generators, but teaching their owners how to care for them and carry out basic repairs with his 'maintain a generator' lessons.

A 40-strong crowd attended a widely-advertised session he held at the Festival Ground in Road Town, capital of Tortola.

"It's not the access to generators and manpower to fix them that's the issue, it's the knowledge on how to maintain them that's the problem," Mario explained. "That's what I'm hoping to teach."

Among those listening and observing was shopkeeper Cornell Batiste. "It was very useful. Now I know that I need to go home right away and clean the spark

plug on my generator!" he said.

Another generator-reliant business is Carine Sutherland's hairdressers in the Leonard's district of Tortola.

Like many, she's reopened her shop as everyday life starts to resume nearly a month after Irma.

"Business is starting to pick up, I've seen a real difference around here in the last few days," she told the commandos. "You guys have certainly made a difference."

Other signs of regular life restarting include the daily ferry resuming its service to Virgin Gorda and petrol supplies getting back to normal. Where once there were 100-car queues on service station forecourts, now there's a regular flow of customers.

Among the public facilities brought back into use post-Irma is the AO Shirley Recreation Ground, a 3,000-seater stadium normally used by the national football team.

"Although some buildings remain roofless and crushed cars sit at the side of the road, there's a feeling of a new normality beginning to make its presence felt across the islands," Capt Eatwell said.

In all the collective UK Forces' effort delivered more than 178 tonnes of DFID aid, including 3,000 shelter kits. And where people were unable to erect these themselves, the military has built the roofs for people.

All those efforts were praised by the BVI's Premier Orlando Smith and Governor Gus Jaspert in a farewell press conference before the green berets departed Terrance B Lettsome Airport – which they had helped to re-open just 24 hours before.

"Although he effects are still being felt there have been noticeable improvements, the green shoots are returning."

"I give my heartfelt thanks to the military for their assistance. The UK military has played an important role... but it is right that the military now move on as we start normalisation."

40 Cdo's Commanding Officer Lt Col Paul Maynard said his men and women returned home struck deeply impressed by islanders' response to the natural disaster.

"Their resilience, warmth and stoicism has been nothing but humbling," he told the premier and governor.

Not all of 40 Commando are coming home; some of the marines have joined HMS Ocean as part of her Special Purpose Task Group to take part in amphibious exercises when she takes over from HMS Diamond as flagship of a NATO task force – the Mighty O's original mission before she was diverted to the Caribbean.





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Faslane-based mini-submarine joins rescue craft from around world at NATO exercise and immediately has a

DEEP IMPACT

A TURKISH officer looks up expectantly through the escape hatch of his boat Burakreis at a glimpse of salvation: the arrival of the Faslane-based NATO Submarine Rescue System (NSRS).

Submariners' 'emergency service' received the ultimate work-out in the eastern Mediterranean as NATO navies came together to practise saving crew from stricken boats.

Experts from nine allied nations committed submarines, submersibles, rescue vessels, specialist medics, helicopters and divers – the full panoply of services available to trapped crews – for a two-week test at Marmaris in Turkey.

Every three years NATO gives its various methods of rescue and escape a full run-out – Exercise Dynamic Monarch, this year played out near Aksaz Naval Base on Turkey's southern Mediterranean coast.

Each day three boats – two from the host nation and one from Spain – pretended to be DISSUB (submarines in distress) whose crews required assistance.

Down to 180m (590ft), submariners can, as a last resort, effect their own escape using their special immersion suits.

That's where the Submarine Parachute Assistance Group come in, parachuting (hence the name) into the waters above the disabled boat, ready to offer medical help to escapees who reach the surface; it was in action off Marmaris (though not the Royal Navy's Gosport-based team) for one of the rescue serials.

Beyond that depth, rescue submersibles are the order of the day, 'mating' with escape hatches on the stricken submarine (in NATO these follow a standard design).

The UK – together with France and Norway – operates the NSRS. Based at Faslane, run from Abbey Wood, it's at immediate notice to go anywhere in the world whenever the haunting signal SUBMISS is received.

Everything revolves around the rescue submersible Nemo, but the 'rescue suite' extends far beyond the rather ungainly-looking sub: a launching system, plus a medical complex (including large decompression chamber) and several workshops.

It requires 23 trucks to move it – 350 tonnes of equipment in all. And that requires more than 400 square metres of deck space to accommodate it, or two C17s and three Antonov 124s if it needs to fly.

There are over 700 vessels around the globe which meet the criteria for hosting the system – VOOs or 'vessels of opportunity', borrowed at very short notice. Most are oil rig/diving support ships.

And the VOO with all the NATO rescue suite embarked is expected to be over the accident site within 72 hours of receiving an SOS. Crew in a stricken boat are expected to survive between five and seven days.

For the exercise, the equipment was moved at a more leisurely pace, first by trucks to the Port of Glasgow, then on diving vessel SD Northern River for the 2,050-mile journey to Turkey.

Nemo can rescue up to 15 people – or two serious casualties on stretchers – per dive. That's a small diesel boat emptied in three trips, ten should anything happen to a submarine the size of a Royal Navy V-boat.

In fact, the submersible carried out 16 dives, from finding target plates 75m (246ft) below on the sea bed to reaching depths of 208 m (682 ft).

Commander Gennaro Vitagliano of the Italian Navy underlined the difference between Dynamic Monarch and most other NATO work-outs.

"This is not about a war exercise," he stressed. "We are talking about saving a life. For us, it's an important brotherhood; for us it's important to be here and be ready to save a life, whatever country this life belongs to."

The exercise reached its climax with a 36-hour mass evacuation exercise testing not just Nemo's handlers but the whole apparatus and operating team, as 'casualties' were brought up from the depths, and transferred directly from the rescue sub into the hyperbaric chamber, where they decompressed over the next four hours with the help of nearly four dozen medics and divers.

Nemo was operating in the warmest conditions it has ever faced – over 38°C in the open air, while the Med was a toasty 27°C; this is in stark contrast to earlier in the year where it successfully operated north of the Arctic Circle with air temperatures down to minus 15°C.

In the past Nemo has been a little temperamental compared with the more 'agricultural' diving chambers some nations use, but for Dynamic Monarch 2017 it was fully available.

"It's invaluable to have real submarines to exercise on," said Lt Cdr Jim McGuire, rescue commander. "It's all very well practising mating with targets. Using a real submarine takes it to another level."

The exercise demonstrated the alliance's ability to respond to a submarine emergency and included search and localisation as well as rescue. The Turks also tried out their new rescue vessel, Alemdar, the Italians their rescue/diving support ship Anteo.

The latter was used to 'vent' – provide fresh air – to a boat on the seabed; a diver attached two hoses – supply and exhaust – allowing air to be pumped in from the surface, all the while maintaining the pressure in the boat before a rescue could be effected.

Also tested was a new underwater communications system, Janus. Rather than the traditional underwater telephone which relies on analogue voice transmission, it's digital and transmits text, making comms quicker and easier to understand.

"The exercise was a positive experience for the NATO Submarine Rescue System," said project manager Cdr Ian Duncan. "All serials were completed without incident or injury and five rescue chamber operators successfully achieved their qualifications."

"The submarine population in the world is growing; to operate a submarine safely requires a lot of skilled personnel, and with new nations operating submarines, the possibility of an accident in the future is always there."

His team also got to see different kit and methods in action, test new equipment and show off Nemo to a host of international observers (56 from 15 nations) as they plumbed the depths of the Eastern Med.

In addition, RN medics and Northern Diving Group and Reserve Diving Group personnel got the opportunity to train alongside their French and Norwegian colleagues.

Pictures: CPO Christian Valverde, NATO



Passage to India

THE crew of HMS Monmouth honed their fighting skills with the Indian Navy after enjoying a few days in the backpackers' paradise of Goa.

Approaching the seven-month mark of a nine-month tour of duty east of Suez, focusing on stopping piracy, arms trafficking and drug smuggling as part of the international effort to curb terrorism in the Indian Ocean, the Plymouth-based frigate enjoyed a four-day break.

As well as being one of the 'must see' destinations for younger travellers especially, Goa is also a key Indian Naval Base on her west coast.

So after a few days of rest in the port of Mormugua, allowing crew to let their hair down, the football team to beat an Indian Navy XI 3-2, officers to visit the Naval Academy and the frigate's Commanding Officer Cdr Ian Feasey to meet senior Indian officers, Monmouth put to sea with the frigate INS Gomati.

About the same size as Monmouth, but with 100 more souls on board (over 300 compared with 205 on the British warship), Gomati was invited to join Monmouth for a day of joint manoeuvres.

"Although it may often seem like there are just two ships sailing around each other, these manoeuvres provide the best opportunity for the officer of the watch to get comfortable handling ships in close proximity to one another. That's of paramount importance, especially when handling a ship during a replenishment at sea, for example," explained HMS Monmouth's Navigating Officer, Lt Daniel Owen-Hughes.

After the choreography of the two ships 'dancing' together in close proximity, the gunnery teams honed their targeting skills by letting rip with the heavy machine-guns and Miniguns (hand-held Gatling guns), typically used for 'quickdraw' drills - responding to sudden attacks from fast-attack craft.

"Being part of the upper-deck weapons crew is definitely something I enjoy," said AB(WS) James Kenyon. "It's not every day that someone can get to fire a weapon such as the heavy machine-gun. But it is still a challenging role with the amount of training that goes in to ensure we all remain ready to react to any threat at any time."

With firings complete, it was the turn of the

Royal Marine Monmouth encountered for a practice

The boarders' boats embarking while the their Indian aboard Monmouth

"The opportunities that under the yet thorough charge of

"The Royal Marine with the Indian it's been a wider Indian

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Pictures: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum, HMS Monmouth



...ines boarding team – embarked on HMS ...n to secure and search suspicious vessels ...ed on security patrols – to use the Gomati ...ice mission.

...rding exercise was designed to test both the ...rding teams in disembarking 'mother' and ...a vessel of interest in a short space of time; ...Royal Marines were boarding the Gomati, ...n counterparts were doing exactly the same ...onmouth.

...portunity to exercise a number of the unique ...at the boarding team has to offer, particularly ...close scrutiny of another nation, was testing ...ighly rewarding," said Lt Seb Chaffe RM, in ...the commandos on Monmouth.

...oyal Marines have founded a close relationship ...dian Marine Commandos in recent years and ...a privilege to extend that relationship to the ...an Navy."

...g off their separate ways with an ever- ...rowing bond between both nations, Cdr ...id: "We've had the chance to build on the ...ose relationship and ongoing engagement ...ur two navies.

...of the ship's company have not had the ...y to visit India before and everyone enjoyed ...historic part of the country had to offer."

...their time at sea, Royal Marines used the ...cat, along with a speed boat, to hone their ...ke-down skills.

...evoted a day in the oppressive heat and ...f the Arabian Sea practising essential board- ...h techniques – systems which have already ...e Royal Navy's biggest drugs bust of the

...benign conditions it's hard work – daytime ...res in the Arabian Sea are still in the high 30° ...en in late September.

...ng a moving vessel in ...rough seas

a

test of nerve and skill, especially when embarking and disembarking up a 15ft ladder wearing body armour, life jacket, rifle and search equipment," explained LS Kyle 'Bruce' Willis, normally one of Monmouth's weapon engineers, but a volunteer in the 'blue' boarding team.

It's down to the 'green' team of Royal Marines to secure a vessel and the 'blue' team of sailors to check paperwork, question the crew and conduct a thorough search for contraband, weapons, suspects if necessary.

Depending on the size of the vessel, it's painstaking and exhausting – but occasionally rewarding; a 60-hour search by the Black Duke's team earlier in the summer yielded a £65m secret stash of cocaine and heroin.

Both of the Black Duke's Pacific 24 seaboats were used for the first part of the exercise, as the teams conducted a few runs embarking and disembarking on the pilot ladder, it was time for them to practise the three-metre hook-on ladder (it hooks over the side of a deck).

During these runs, a dummy was used to act as a 'man overboard', simulating a member of the boarding team who had slipped off the ladder and ended up in the ocean.

"However simple climbing a ladder looks, it's made significantly more difficult when the vessel is moving at speed coupled with a choppy sea-state," said Mne Connor Aldrich.

With the Royal Marines content with their runs, it was the turn of the Royal Navy boarding team to practise their embarkation techniques.

"It was a good chance for us to work alongside the Royal Marines and to keep our boarding techniques slick and current," LS Willis added.

Most board-and-search operations involve the two sea boats carrying sailors and marines, with the helicopter overhead observing, ready to intervene if something goes amiss.

In some cases, stealth and speed are required to secure a vessel before a crew are aware of what has hit them – which requires 'rapid roping' from the ship's Wildcat helicopter, callsign Black Jack.

After a 'simple' practice on to the flight deck in everyday uniform, the commandos donned full boarding kit "which adds some serious weight", said Mne Oli Staite.

"You can feel the increase of speed on the way down the rope. Our final drill was fast roping on to the fo'c'sle of the ship, whilst it was under way at approximately ten knots to simulate the confined space and speeds that we may face operationally."

With both teams happy with the results of the day's combined training, Monmouth has resumed her patrol of the Indian Ocean as part of the international task force committed to stopping terrorism/piracy/smuggling east of Suez.

Members of Monmouth's ship's company were also put to the test during a Crash on Deck Exercise – or CODEX.

The exercise, which simulates a helicopter crash during an attempt to land or take off from the flight deck, involves personnel in challenging and diverse roles, ranging from managing manpower throughout the ship to deploying first-aid parties and organising specialist fire fighters and cutting crews onto the scene.

ET(ME) Joel Rogers, a fire fighter on the simulated scene, said: "An exercise as

large as this is extremely challenging, not to mention in the extremes of the heat we have here in the Indian Ocean. Wearing all the firefighting gear we need to remain protected makes it that much more difficult and realistic."

With the exercise complete and all equipment stowed, it was time for 205 Flight to prepare Wildcat ZZ533 for a routine flying sortie up into the cooler skies of the Indian Ocean.

Flight Commander Lt Ashley Morgan said: "It is essential that not only the flight team, but also the ship's company, are ready to respond instinctively to any emergency. A crash on deck requires the whole ship to pull together and everyone needs to know their role. The conditions make it even harder out here but it's good to see the essential teamwork and vital core knowledge being tested."

Monmouth continues her deployment of the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea and wider Middle East theatre. She is due to return to Plymouth before Christmas.



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Artistic Marine's picture tribute

ONE of the most iconic military images in Scotland has been reproduced by a talented Royal Marine artist based at 45 Commando in Arbroath.

Mne David Griffin wanted to pay tribute to previous generations who put their lives on the line to protect the country.

Taking up his paintbrush, David reproduced the famous Commando Memorial at Spean Bridge, creating a giant black-and-white mural on the side of the unit's sport facility.

"We are well aware that we stand on the shoulders of giants, so I wanted to portray them literally as giants," said David.

"I couldn't hope to match the iconography of Scott Sutherland's majestic sculpture, so

I've tried instead to match its impressiveness by out-doing it in size!"

The mural now adorns the side of 45 Commando's Ben Nowak Centre, named after the eponymous corporal who was killed in action in Iraq in 2006.

"The wall itself is 40 square metres of masonry and capable of drinking over 40 litres of paint," continued David.

"The painting took two weeks to complete, but there were six months leading up to me eventually sticking a brush to the wall where I had to secure various permissions, funding, training, and organise a cherrypicker."

Unveiled in 1952 by the Queen Mother, the Commando Memorial stands around a

mile from the village of Spean Bridge, near where British Commando Forces trained during WW2.

David added: "I wanted to paint something which would silently watch over the unit and impress new joiners, as well as paying tribute to previous generations."

RM Condor in Arbroath is home to 45 Commando Royal Marines, part of 3 Commando Brigade.

The site also houses 7 (Sphinx) Battery, part of 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery, 2 Signals Squadron from 32 Signals Regiment and 30 Commando Information Exploitation Group Royal Military Police Detachment.



Sailors work for their lunch

PUPILS of Leesland Church of England Infant and Junior Schools in Gosport welcomed Naval officers to their school.

Trainees from the System Engineering and Management Course (SEMC) at HMS Collingwood in Fareham went to help clear areas of the garden at the start of the new school year.

One group tackled an overgrown copse of sycamore and hawthorn trees, cutting down branches to create an outdoor space where the pupils can learn about conservation and study the bugs that thrive there.

Another team tackled weeding at the front of the school to improve the areas facing the road and yet another built a compost bin, varnished a wooden sculpture and took the tree clippings off to a recycling centre.

The projects are a way for personnel from the base to engage and offer support with initiatives in the wider community.

To say thank you to the sailors, the school invited them to lunch

with the pupils which proved immensely popular, even if the child-sized chairs proved an issue for some of the taller trainees.

Sub Lt Barnes said: "Lots of the children have relatives in the Royal Navy so they were keen to talk to us about it."

"One of the pupils told us he wants to join the Navy when he's older so we did a spot of recruiting too..."

Headteacher Claire Wilson said, "The sailors have done a fabulous job. They worked tirelessly all day."

"Not only have they really helped improve our school grounds, they proved to be great role models for our pupils. We would welcome them back anytime."

Following their contributions to Leesland Church of England Federation, the SEMC students now return to the classroom at HMS Collingwood as they prepare for their forthcoming assignments as weapon engineering managers at sea.

Crew of Audacious help sick children

A SEVEN-PERSON team from HMS Audacious swapped the sea for land to race in the Great North Run and raise £2,700 for The Sick Children's Trust.

LET Turnbull, LET McHugh, LET Thomson, Sub Lt Head, ET Stewart, ET Jones and ET McClymont have spent the past few months juggling their Naval duties with training for the 13.1-mile route from Newcastle-upon-Tyne to South Shields to raise money for families with seriously-ill children in hospital.

HMS Audacious's crew have been long-term supporters of the Sick Children's Trust after two officers' families benefitted from the charity's free Homes from Home accommodation in Newcastle.

The trust runs ten Homes from Home across the country, supporting families with seriously-ill children in hospital with free accommodation just minutes from their child's hospital bedside.

Officers from the boat have actively supported the charity's Crawford House, located at the Royal Victoria Infirmary (RVI), by decorating, attending fundraising events and, latterly, raising money by taking part in the Great North Run.

LET Turnbull said: "Training was quite a challenge with juggling a busy work schedule and pushing HMS Audacious out of build. We trained whenever we could, mainly running on treadmills that are provided at work."

"On the day, a lot of the lads



set off at 3am to get to the start line on time and most of them drove straight back afterwards. Everyone did brilliantly, and knowing who we were helping by taking on this challenge helped keep us motivated.

"Everyone at HMS Audacious thinks the work of the Sick Children's Trust is so important. Being away from your family can be challenging, however having a poorly child in hospital and not being able to be by their side is unbearable."

"Crawford House makes it possible for families to be just minutes from their seriously-ill child while they are undergoing treatment at the RVI."

Crawford House is one of two Homes from Home in Newcastle,

supporting families across the North East and beyond when their children require specialist treatment.

The property has 23 family bedrooms, 14 bathrooms and shared living spaces including a kitchen, lounge and dining room.

House Manager Gail Stonley said: "On behalf of all the families we support we'd like to say a huge thank you to HMS Audacious for their efforts."

"To have somewhere warm and homely to come back to after a long day on the ward, where parents can make themselves a home-cooked meal and have privacy in their own room makes a world of difference to their wellbeing."

"As a charity we rely entirely on voluntary donations to keep our houses running, so whether it's decorating or raising money through the Great North Run, it helps us to be there for families when they need us the most."

For further information about the Sick Children's Trust, visit <http://www.sickchildrenstrust.org/>

■ MONEY raised by the crew of HMS Audacious and the Barrow branch of the Submariners' Association has gone to a vandal-hit school.

Earlier this year vandals broke into Brisbane Park School and destroyed the outside reading area, which was in the form of a pirate ship.

Teacher Cheryl Hagen is the daughter of a member of the Barrow branch of the Submariners' Association and approached the branch to see if they could help.

Help was promised from the branch's Charity Chest, supplemented by the proceeds from the branch's annual barbecue, which totalled £350.

Many submariners from Audacious, which is currently in build in BAE at Barrow, are also members of the branch.

They went back to their submarine and agreed to match the funding raised by the association.

They have also offered their services to assist in rebuilding the outside reading area, an offer that was accepted by the school.

A cheque for £700 was given to the school, which was represented by governor Sue Hosker, Cheryl and some pupils.

Reward for James

PLYMOUTH-BASED PO James Oakley, 32, was presented with the Navy's Long Service and Good Conduct medal from Cdre Rob Bellfield (commander of the Devonport-based ships and submarines) for 15 years of highly-professional service.

James said: "I am proud to receive my LSGC medal for completing a very worthwhile and challenging 15 years in the RN; I look forward to receiving my LSGC clasp in the years to come."

He joined the Royal Navy aged 17 and after basic training he was drafted to the submarine school in Faslane, Scotland, and spent two years training to become a submariner only to be discharged medically back to the ships.

James, who lives in Plymouth, with wife Clare and sons Thomas and Matthew, served in the Med in HMS Portland and then at RNAS Culdrose, before deploying to the Gulf in HMS Chatham



He joined 829 NAS before joining HMS Monmouth, again deploying to the Gulf. Next was a tour to the UK military command centre in Bahrain.

On return to the UK, James joined the Merlin helicopter training squadron, 824 NAS, and was selected for promotion to petty officer and after qualifications re-joined his first ship, HMS Portland while the ship was deployed. He helped prepare the ship for her maintenance period.

Cheers for gift

COMMANDER Heather Rimmer, Training Support Commander, HMS Collingwood presented a cheque for £1,000 to the WRNS Benevolent Trust.

The money was raised at a raffle during an afternoon tea held in the Wardroom, HMS Collingwood as part of celebrations to mark WRNS100.

The event saw more than 140 guests who had joined the WRNS, together with a small contingent of those still serving, enjoy an afternoon reminiscing, while raising money.

Andrea Cook, Chairman of the WRNSBT, said "It is absolutely brilliant that the ladies could have a really fun day at this event and raise such a fantastic amount of money - thank you."

Bishop visits

THE Roman Catholic Bishop of Plymouth paid his first visit to Britannia Royal Naval College to celebrate mass with Officer Cadets.

The Right Reverend Mark O'Toole met with the CO Capt Jol Woodard and was given a brief on the role the college plays in preparing men and women for their future role as Naval officers.

Bishop Mark said: "I was struck by the dedication and generosity of the cadets, and the staff who are accompanying them at this important time of training and formation. BRNC has a rich history and it was good to see that tradition of service of one's country and those in need, is lived with such courage and selfless sacrifice."

Trainees shine in humanitarian test

PROVIDING aid to a fictional village was among the tasks faced by recruits at HMS Raleigh as they completed the final exercise of their training.

Sent to help a community struck by a hurricane, the recruits set to work to establish headquarters and form working parties to scan the area for casualties and hazards.

The tasks included rescuing injured survivors from a downed helicopter and carrying them back to the first-aid tent, but first they had to build a bridge to carry the casualties over water contaminated by toxins.

They also needed to be aware of rebel forces in the area and take the right precautions to maintain their own safety and the safety of the community.

Recruit Cian Lewis-Davies, from Swansea, who was selected to take charge of the operation for his class, said: "There's a real sense of action and responsibility. The more realistic it is the better, because it gives you an idea of what's to come later in our careers."

"It was the first time I've done anything like this before. I would have been able to give it a go nine weeks ago, but I probably wouldn't have been able to do it as well as I could with the training I've received."

The exercise, known as Bright Diamond, saw the classes act as the crew of the training ship Brecon, moored on the River



● Recruits assist the crew of a downed helicopter during the Bright Diamond exercise by recruits from HMS Raleigh

Picture: Nicki Dunwell

Lynher.

CPO Antony 'Rocky' Challon, one of HMS Raleigh's Assistant Divisional Training Officers, said: "This is simulating a disaster-relief exercise similar to what's run out on board ship at the end of operational sea training, but

simplified for the recruits.

"There's a lot of evolutions they really need to tie in together, so we are really trying to hammer home that emphasis of teamwork, organisation, all pulling together and pushing in the right direction."

The recruits stay on board Brecon for part of the three-day exercise, following the routines they would at sea, such as keeping watches and taking part in flood and fire exercises.

They also take part in navigation exercises on the Rivers Lynher and Tamar, driving the small boats and plotting their course.

Lt Lisa Milner, who works within the Royal Navy Initial Training School at HMS Raleigh, said: "We see Bright Diamond as a confirmation exercise, but there is also an element of introducing new things that the recruits won't have seen before, like the disaster-relief element."

"It's about making things a little more maritime, letting them see what it is to spend time on board a ship, trying out what the bunks are like and things like that."

"There's time on the water to see if they have taken on the seamanship skills they've learnt in week six, as well as the damage control exercises testing the skills they've learnt in week eight."

"We are supposed to be the forward element of a Task Group, and out on the water we are collecting intelligence that we can give to the larger ships when they arrive in theatre."

"We expect to see at this stage an element of independence; that they've taken on their military bearing and that they conduct themselves appropriately at all times – and ultimately that their enthusiasm is still there."



Relatives mark centenary of dramatic air crash

RELATIVES of late Flight Commander Edward de Ville marked the centenary of his rescue from a plane crash at Horsea Island in Portsmouth.

On September 14 1917, a Sopwith Baby seaplane, piloted by Acting Flt Cdr Edward de Ville, took off from the Royal Naval Air Station at Calshot.

He was to act as a target for practice anti-aircraft gunnery training over Portsmouth Harbour. Despite the misty conditions, he refused to cancel the mission, and was soon flying blind through zero visibility.

Horsea Island at the time was a long-range radio transmission station with four 446ft masts, made from huge timbers, spread around the area.

On the ground AB Nicholas Rath, Ordinary Seaman Richard Knowlton and Deckhand (Trawler Section) George Abbott were in a working party, re-painting the masts.

They heard the aircraft flying around but couldn't see it. Suddenly they heard a loud bang immediately above them, the sound of the aircraft's engine stopped but nothing fell to the ground.

The mast was swaying, but Rath immediately started to climb up it, while the others followed with a bosun's chair.

As the mist cleared they found the aircraft impaled in the mast, 300ft up, with the pilot half out of his cockpit, unconscious.

The three reached the stricken aircraft at about the same time. Helped by the other two, Rath reached out, pulled de Ville out of the plane and brought him down.

After a month in Haslar Naval Hospital he made a full recovery. The rescuers were all awarded the Albert Medal (the forerunner of the George Cross).

The commemoration was held in the original wireless telegraphy room at the Defence Diving School, and although the masts are long gone, the assembled crowd were given a feel for what it must have been like for the participants in the daring rescue.

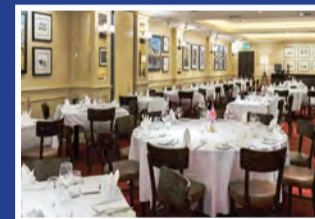
Michael Bayliss, grandson of the pilot, gave an account of de Ville's subsequent life in Venezuela.

Richard Knowlton Jr spoke of his namesake grandfather's life in Salisbury, and Rory McKenna came over from Ireland to speak about his countryman Rath.

Royal Navy Chaplain David Wylie held a short but poignant service of thanksgiving for the saving of Edward de Ville's life. In all, 34 descendants of the pilot and his rescuers attended the service.



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Step into the (RAS) garden Maud

NAVAL Service chefs and stewards finished this year's Exercise Joint Caterer with a haul of medals.

Now in its 17th year, the competition sees the Naval Service Culinary Arts Team (NSCAT) take on the Army and RAF in a *Masterchef, Bake-Off, Hell's Kitchen* and *Ready Steady Cook*-style competition, all rolled into one.

PO Jim Cox won a gold medal and best in class certificate competing in the Open Fish Dish category.

The former Royal Marine, who transferred to the Royal Navy because of his love of cooking, is currently an instructor at the Defence Maritime Logistics School at HMS Raleigh.

He said: "I'm based in Cornwall so it would be rude not to choose fish. We all start with 100 points and I dropped three with some little mistakes, but I'll rectify that next time. I'm ecstatic to win."

The Blue Riband *Parade de Chefs* saw NSCAT serve 84 diners a starter of confit salmon with salmon belly ceviche, fennel and cucumber salad, dill creme fraiche, citrus gel with fennel and cucumber emulsion and crispy salmon skin.

The main course featured faggots wrapped in lamb loin with minted lamb dumpling, root vegetable puree, pickled shallots, salt-baked beetroot, brussels sprouts and port sauce.

Dessert was a Cornish Brie cheesecake with Granny Smith apple sorbet, dark caramel panna cotta, French meringues, balsamic blackberries, spiced compressed apple and blackberry curd.

The competition covers the whole gamut of catering, from fine-dining to a field kitchen, this year provided by Royal Navy Chefs from 42 Cdo, who served up Beef Wellington, chicken biryani and two desserts.

C/Sgt BJ Broadhurst, field kitchen team captain, said: "The scenario here is the team have 20 men coming off a six-hour patrol, very hungry."

"They can use two ten-man ration packs of their choice and create two separate mains and ten portions of hot pudding and ten cold."

"They also get a list of dry goods and fresh goods that they can use. I think this shows what a ten-man ration pack can do. The expertise of the chefs can change those standard ingredients around and make a lot of different things."

This year NSCAT were again joined by representatives from the US Navy and also included seven sailors from the Royal



● Above, PO Scott Furber, from HMS Duncan, in action in the kitchen; Left, ABS Claire Forster, of HMS Queen Elizabeth, and Jordan Weatherill, from HMS Albion, were part of the NSCAT Parade de Chefs team
Pictures: LPhot Barry Swainsbury



● The Parade de Chefs main course and dessert served up at Exercise Joint Caterer

Navy's new aircraft carrier, HMS Queen Elizabeth.

WO1 Billy Shepherd, who heads up HMS Queen Elizabeth's Catering Services Department, said: "This is not just a bit of fun. It's probably harder work than what they would be doing on the ship, and they earn respect from the others on board for doing it."

"Hopefully over the next two years we'll do more of this. The

more we can rotate our chefs and stewards around the various competitions the better.

"They are working as a team here and hopefully they'll bring that back into my galley. They'll be proud, wearing their competition jackets and telling their friends and families, which is a good advertisement for the Royal Navy I think."

Exercise Joint Caterer, which

runs for three days at the Defence Academy at Shrivenham, aims to develop culinary skills as well as building team spirit. Awards are given according to creativity, workmanship, composition and presentation – including taste.

Each Service takes the spotlight for one day of the competition, with the Royal Navy going first.

NSCAT team captain CPO Si

Geldart said: "I couldn't ask any more from the team. With this competition you have to hit the ground running, and with two gold medals and two best in class on the first day, we were in with a good chance."

The final results saw the NSCAT chefs and stewards retain the Team Ethos award, despite finishing in third place behind the RAF and the Army.

New divers rise to the top



● Adm Clink presents the best student trophy to AB Turner

THE Defence Diving School at Horsea Island hosted family and friends to witness their relatives graduate with flying colours.

Seven graduates underwent 22 challenging weeks of training which saw them running the distance from Portsmouth to Plymouth twice, spending the equivalent of three days underwater and surface swimming the circumference of the Isle of Wight.

They received certificates and their coveted divers' badges from Flag Officer Sea Training, Rear Admiral John Clink, while AB Turner also won the overall course trophy for best student.

After the presentation, relatives moved outside to the lake where they watched members at an earlier stage of the course displaying the qualities demanded by the training, by repeatedly diving into the icy water to swim across the lake, jog around half the perimeter and dive in again.

The graduates will now embark on a rewarding career which will see them deployed across the fleet, providing professional diving expertise in response to many challenging situations.

As newly-trained RN Clearance Divers they will initially be employed in either MCM1 based in Scotland or MCM2 in Portsmouth and will deploy in a MCMV as required to support worldwide operations.



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Find out more – further information can be found in 2015DIN 01-213 or call the Firefly team on 023 9262 8784



THE JOURNEY DOES NOT HAVE TO END!



Marathon men bring in cash

SAILORS from HMS Raleigh celebrating crossing the finishing line of their marathon walk along the South Cornwall National Trail to raise more than £2,000 for charity.

The group of seven walkers and two support drivers, who all work within the Defence Maritime Logistics School (DMLS), set-off from Land's End.

Six days later, after trekking for approximately 26 miles each day, the group reached Plymouth Hoe.

PO Jim Cox, who organised the walk, said: "The weather wasn't particularly kind to us and there were a lot of tired feet and blisters when we finally reached the Hoe."

"There's a few people now in the hurt locker, but it was worth it to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity."

The team followed the coastline, breaking for the night at Praa Sands, Coverack, Falmouth, Mevigassey and Polperro, picking up where they left off the next day.

PO Cox added: "Lieutenant Commander Chris Cleary and Warrant Officer Vinny Vincent,

our support drivers were fantastic. Everywhere we stopped there was food and hot drinks waiting for us."

All those involved work within the Catering Services Squadron at the DMLS, providing basic training to newly-recruited chefs and stewards and advancement training for more experienced sailors.

CPOs Simon Wiggin, Matt Rowberry and Jon Spencer, along with POs Rob Casey and Daryl Hall and LCh Leon Hutchinson, were also members of the walking team.

Matt, who is a member of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, was also raising money for a fund he has set up.

He said: "The fund is there to provide a donation or flowers at the funeral of serving and ex-serving members of the RFA who cross the bar. It's just so that their friends and family can see that their loved ones are not forgotten."

Anyone wishing to show their support for the team can donate to the RNRMC online by logging onto www.virginmoneygiving.com/team/dmls

Heaven follows hell for Charlie

A ROYAL Navy trainee from HMS Sultan, took on an impressive challenge to raise funds for a Service charity.

ETME Charlie Brooks took part in the Hell On The Humber (HOTH) challenge, for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

Charlie, who only joined HMS Sultan in April following his initial training at HMS Raleigh, is currently working his way through 30 weeks of training on the Engineering Technician Initial Career Course.

Towards the end of summer leave, Charlie took on the HOTH race. The event, which runs several times a year, sees participants complete as many laps as they can of a four-mile course which includes the Humber Bridge.

Charlie said: "I chose to show my support for the RNRMC, as at Raleigh you get to hear about all the things that the charity can do for you and I thought it would be good to give something back."

"The HOTH challenge allows you to either do a six, 12 or



● Hilary Jukes with ETME Charlie Brooks

24-hour endurance run and it's up to you how many miles you decide you want to achieve. Last October I did the six-hour race and completed 28 miles, so I set my target at 50 miles in 12 hours and I managed to get there slowly which was good.

"So far on my just giving page I've received £465 and through

sponsorship forms I've also raised about £165."

RNRMC regional fundraiser Hilary Jukes said: "We are really grateful to Charlie for all his efforts. To complete the challenge as part of a team would be a massive achievement, but to do this on his own is absolutely fantastic."



Dive tank is top draw

THE Royal Navy helped to entertain more than 50,000 at this year's Southport Airshow.

A full flying display on each of the three days was among many attractions along the length of the beach.

The Military village was well supported by all three services. The RN was supported by the Northern Diving Group with their dive tank, the Youth Engagement Team with their inflatable assault course and the new Mobile Operating Vehicle utilised by careers advisors.

WO1 Terry Miller, Regional Development Manager (Operations), said: "It was a pleasure as always to engage with the crowds at the Southport Airshow."



Fun for all the family

COMMANDO Training Centre at Lymptone in Devon hosted a families day.

Lots of activities were laid on, entertaining both the young and the elderly. It was also an opportunity to show loved ones what the Royal Marines and the Royal Navy do.

■ Corps family values – p28
Picture: LPhot Barry Wheeler

Dinghy duo's record trip

A ROYAL Navy dinghy crew has been officially recognised for a long-distance sailing double in which they broke their own world record.

The Royal Navy sailor and a Ministry of Defence employee, both from Plymouth, were presented with their Guinness World Record certificates at a ceremony.

LS Philip Slade and Mark Belamarich took the record by sailing in adverse wind, tide and weather conditions – despite capsizing on the west coast of England.

The pair achieved the longest distance sailed in a double-handed dinghy – 613.93km (381.48mile, 331.5nm), completed in May this year.

This was achieved less than 12 months after they set their first record in a cramped 14ft Bosun dinghy, used by the Royal Navy for adventurous training.

Rear Admiral John Clink, who heads the Flag Officer Sea Training Organisation, presented the certificates to Mark and Phil at the Plymouth Armed Forces Office.

He said: "This is an amazing achievement – you should both be very proud of yourselves."

The pair set off from the Royal Navy Joint Services Sailing Centre at Royal Marines Stonehouse in Plymouth.

Phil, a qualified sailing instructor and now an Armed Forces career advisor, said:



● Adm Clink is flanked by Mark Belamarich and LS Philip Slade

"Mark and I are very relieved that the record has finally been confirmed. To beat our own record less than 12 months after setting it is a phenomenal feeling, especially as difficult as this attempt was."

"We made two attempts this year, the first attempt we made had to be abandoned after 24hrs due to weather conditions in the Bristol Channel. The second attempt was less than a week later, and again we made really good time to Land's End, and despite a quick capsize going round Land's End we made good time across the Bristol Channel."

"It was really from this point we were struggling to reach tidal gates on time, struggling for wind and with the temperature so cold at night we were fighting the

elements to carry on. We had to abandon this attempt just north-west of Holyhead for safety reasons but it was enough to beat our record, so we were happy."

Mark Belamarich, who works for 1 Assault Group Royal Marines in HM Naval Base, Devonport, said: "It's been an anxious wait, but now we've had the record confirmed it's a huge relief."

The record-breaking voyage was undertaken to highlight Armed Forces adventurous training and to raise funds for two causes – the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity and Bowel Cancer UK. They have raised nearly £4,000. Donations can still be made at uk.virginmoneygiving.com/bosunchallenge500



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Corps family values

THE Royal Marines family came together to celebrate the values of the Corps – and organisers believe the event is destined to become even bigger and better.

An amalgamation of the old Royal Marines Association (RMA) Reunion Weekend and CTCRM Families Day resulted in the first Corps Family Weekend at Lymptstone in Devon, the home of RM Commando training.

Events kicked off, literally, at 11am with rugby and football matches featuring RMA teams.

The Commandant General RM, Maj Gen Rob Magowan, was there to meet the players, who were expertly marched on by the RM Volunteer Cadet Corps Band in a ceremony organised by the Corps RSM and C/Sgt Dutchy Mulholland.

Meanwhile the gates opened on camp to admit families and RMA members – up to 1,500 people turned up on Saturday.

Awaiting them was a parade ground and drill shed full of stalls, funfair rides and food outlets.

There was something for just about everyone, ranging from water zorbing and weapons stances to a popular tea and cake stall run by CTCRM's families.

In the central arena were a number of timed displays, the most complex and entertaining of which was the Corps' Tug-of-War competition, superbly organised by Cpl Benny Benstead.

In between pulls, the crowd was entertained by the RMVCC Band, the Unarmed Combat Display Team, and some impressive drill and PT displays by the cadets.

A short rain shower drove many into the drill shed, where there were stalls featuring the RM Historical Society, Bootneck Tartan and a range of military charities, amongst many others.

Out in the rain many

youngsters carried on regardless, making good use of an inflatable assault course, a zipwire, sporting challenges and go-karts.

The Tug-of-War Final was just squeezed in before the next rain shower saw the drill shed fill up again for the finale of the day's events – a Beat Retreat and Sunset Ceremony performed by the Royal Marines Plymouth Band.

Just before the band struck up, CGRM presented trophies to the winners of the rugby and football matches, and to the Chairman of the RMA Golf Society (the Royals and Ancients), whose team had recorded a rare victory against the serving Corps team the day before.

The Tug-of-War was won by Commando Helicopter Force, whose team had trained at the Braemar Games earlier in the summer. Runners-up were one of 241 Rct Tp's two teams, who proved just how strong and fit you get by Week 21 of training.

One of the teams they knocked out was the PT Staff, so their next Bottom Field session was challenging, to say the least...

The finale was a stirring performance by the RM Band Service as the Colours were hauled down and CGRM took the salute.

Entertainment continued well into the evening with the gym packed for a band concert, followed, after a short intermission featuring the Cadet Drill Display team again, by a buffet supper and dance.

As guests tucked into some great food the cadets once again stole the show, leading a conga around the dance floor in their Blues and shaking a leg with the old and bold.

On Sunday the traditional RMA parade paid tribute to former comrades, and this year's march-past included the RMA Riders parading their standard on wheels ahead of a number of bikes. Around 1,000 people attended.

This year's event was a learning process.



● The Commandant General Royal Marines, Maj Gen Rob Magowan, talks to a veteran of 29 Cdo Royal Artillery, the 'Commando Gunners'

Pictures: LPhot Barry Wheeler

Organisers now have a clear idea of how to make it bigger and better, and the message was loudly and clearly transmitted at the Corps Conference at the end of September – the Corps' Family Weekend is here to stay, and it is hoped that in due course it will become the biggest Corps reunion event of the year.

It doesn't happen, of course, without a lot of hard work, and thanks are due primarily to Richie Puttock, the Operations Manager for the RMA, and his enthusiastic and hard-working team from Hunter Company, who erected, lifted, shifted, guided and supported magnificently over the weekend.

Thanks also go to other unsung heroes – those who sat

for hours at the main and railway gates, the ML dispatchers on the 30ft wall, the signallers, DLs and PTIs, the Provost Staff, MPGS and Corps Security staff; their hard work made it an enjoyable and successful occasion.

Richie, who served 22 years in the Corps, said the event covered the entire Corps family, from the 40 or so Royal Marines Cadets of Alpha Coy (South West Region) to veterans from the Naval Service and associated Army units.

He said: "It was a fantastic weekend – and chance for young and old, serving and retired, to come together to act, live and breathe everything the Corps Family says it is. This is how it is supposed to be."



● (Left) The fallen are honoured at the Lymptstone Memorial Wall

● (Right, from top) Serving and veteran Royal Marines on parade; veterans at the annual parade and remembrance service at Lymptstone; a veteran and a CTCRM recruit 'on duty' at Lymptstone

● (Below) The Last Post is sounded at the Sunday parade



Where to look

- DIBs**
24/17 Civilian Housing Options for Service Personnel – DLE e-learning
- DINs**
01 Personnel
DIN 2017DIN01-145 Defence Adaptive Sport and Adventurous Training for Recovery
DIN 2017DIN01-146 Permanent Transfer Overseas Schooling Allowances
DIN 2017DIN01-148 Service of Prayer for the Armed Forces - Thursday 9 November 2017
DIN 2017DIN01-150 Naval Service Medical Board of Survey (NSMBOS) Dates for 2018
DIN 2017DIN01-153 The Defence Humanist Network presents: Remembrance, a secular reflection
- 07 Training & Education**
DIN 2017DIN07-090 United Kingdom Special Forces Selection Application Instructions-22 SAS, SBS, SRR and 18SR
DIN 2017DIN07-094 RN Career Courses Provided by the Trident Training Facility 2018-2020
DIN 2017DIN07-095 Navy, Army and RAF Reserve nurse speciality and healthcare assistant (HCA) course application process
DIN 2017DIN07-098 Maritime Warfare School (Aviation Warfare) 2018 course dates
DIN 2017DIN07-099 Accreditation of Level 3 Diplomas in Submarine Operation Analyst (Data) to LS WS (SSM/TSM)
DIN 2017DIN07-100 Adventurous Training in Canada – Planning Expeditions to Trails End Camp in 2018
DIN 2017DIN07-101 Adventurous Training Planning Expeditions to Morocco in 2018
DIN 2017DIN07-102 Defence Learning Environment (DLE) and Introduction to Learning Technologies (ILT) Training Courses until July 2019
DIN 2017DIN07-103 LOGFAS (Logistic Functional Area Services) Training Application Procedure
- 08 Finance, Accounting and Budgeting**
DIN 2017DIN08-009 Private Use of MOD-Provided Vehicles by MOD Personnel (including commuting) tax and NI liabilities
DIN 2017DIN08-010 Reserve Attendance and Pay Service (RAPS) – IO
- 09 Honours, Awards, Royal & Ceremonial Events**
DIN 2017DIN09-014 The Shadwell Testimonial Prize
DIN 2017DIN09-015 Honours, Decorations and Medals – Operational Service Medal Iraq and Syria for Operation Shader
- 10 Sports and Social Events**
DIN 2017DIN10-041 Inter-Service Judo Championships 2 Nov 17
DIN 2017DIN10-042 2018 NATO Chess Championship – UK Qualifying Event
DIN 2017DIN10-046 Royal Navy Alpine Championships 2018
DIN 2017DIN10-047 RN/RM Orienteering Championships 2017
- RNTMs**
01 Personnel
RNTM 01-061/17 Sub Streaming Preference of ET(WE)(CIS)/ET(WESM)(CIS) Individual Competence Framework Trained Personnel
RNTM 01-062/17 Re-Configuration of Escort Duties for Detainees Under Sentence to the Military Corrective Training Centre, Colchester
RNTM 01-063/17 RN Logistic Branch roadshow
RNTM 01-064/17 RNR Senior Upper Yardmen and RMR Senior Corp Commission Seniority
- 04 Equipment, Support and Estate**
RNTM 04-030/17 Submarine Weapon Engineer single point of contact trial
- 07 Training & Education**
RNTM 07-050/17 Course Block Bookings - Timeline and Process
RNTM 07-052/17 Naval Review Centenary Fellowship Award 2018



Round-the-clock row for Ethan

MINEHUNTER sailors made it from Portsmouth to Disneyland Paris and back again inside 48 hours. Easy! You cry with Eurostar/the tunnel, regular ferries and motorways on both sides of the Channel. But the 45-strong MCM2 Crew 3 rowed the round trip (plus an extra 100 miles) to send one of their shipmates and his family to the famous entertainment, leisure and holiday complex. Nine-year-old Ethan John, the son of minewarfare specialist Able Seaman Craig John, was in remission after a battle with thyroid cancer... until he was told at the end of September that the disease had returned. Shipmates reacted to Craig and Ethan's bad news as only shipmates can – by offering to do something. They settled on a 48-hour non-stop rowathon to raise £3,000 and send the Johns on a holiday they would never forget. "The crew phoned me and said they were doing this and I was quite amazed to be honest," said Craig, from Swansea, who joined the crew just five months ago. "The crew's support has just been amazing, as well as everyone back home. We just weren't expecting it at all." He was unable to make the start of the rowing challenge... so cracked out 11 kilometres on the machine at his local gym in Swansea, before heading to Pompey with Ethan to support the later stages of the fundraiser. The sailors typically spent around 20 minutes at a time on the machine, covering between four and six kilometres. Over the 48 hours they were expected to row at least four times that figure to hit the target. They covered the 720 miles well in time... so kept going, spurred on by Ethan and Craig who came down to Portsmouth to offer their support – and gratitude. "We heard about Ethan's diagnosis on a Tuesday and by Thursday I had the whole crew on board to support this fantastic event," said coxswain PO Simon Smyth, who organised the fundraiser. "We just knew we needed to do something and it's been an amazing outpouring of support from the crew, the squadron and RNRM Children's Trust." Both the crew and the charity have pledged to continue to help Ethan and his family over the coming months. If you want to donate in appreciation of their efforts, the bank account is sort code 11-12-36, account no 00034410, reference: ROW48. Picture: LPhoto Iggy Roberts



Sultan's smoothie operators

PEDAL faster, I'm waiting for my smoothie... Nutritionist Ebony O'Meally watches as ETME 'Tony' Blackburn uses cycle power to produce a healthy drink – one of numerous 'stances' at HMS Sultan's NAVYfit, Clubs and Wellbeing fair. Rowing, archery and spinning were just some of the physical activities on offer to personnel based at the Gosport engineering establishment, alongside a number of stalls from clubs, Forces services and charities. In addition, there were stalls promoting a healthy lifestyle with the trainees able to enjoy some freshly-cooked scran. Lt Stu Moss who was at the event to promote the Sub7 Indoor Rowing Club, said: "I think it's good to hold these events as there are so many sports out there within the Navy. "There's always a lot of focus on getting work done, but if you can also interest people in getting out participating in sport and the physical side of things, then they tend to be a happier person. "We deliberately came down out of rig so that we could take rank out of the room and the response we had was really positive." More details on sports, clubs, societies and activities at Sultan are available on extension 2325. Pictures: PO(Phot) Nicola Harper, HMS Sultan

Naval Families FEDERATION

IT MAY be November (or even early October as we write this...) but Santa's visit is just around the corner and Operation Christmas is already in full swing. More than 3,000 members of the Naval Service will be spending Christmas deployed overseas. To help families with these additional challenges we have pulled together some great reminders so *Navy News* readers can make the most of the festive period: Parcels weighing up to 2kg go free to all personnel who are deployed over the Christmas period. See the BFPO website for more details: [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-forces-post-office-last-dates-of-posting-for-christmas](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/british-forces-post-office-last-dates-of-posting/british-forces-post-office-last-dates-of-posting-for-christmas). There you'll also find a list of what to – and what not to – send. Service Personnel get an extra 30 minutes of free calls which can be used from a couple of days before December 25 until just after the New Year. See the WelComE website: <https://www.mywelcome.co.uk/index.aspx>. JCCS are open 24/7 for any emergency situations that may arise which require your loved one to return home from overseas. Telephone: 01452 519 951. The RNRMW Portal will close at 12 noon on December 22, re-opening at 8am on December 27. It will then close again at 12 noon on December 30, re-opening at 8am on January 1. During their closed time, cover will be provided by the RNRMW national duty worker, who is contactable via the Officer of the Watch, Duty Naval Base Officer or Stonehouse guardroom. Telephone 023 9272 8777. BFBS are already taking your Christmas messages to send out to loved ones on duty. Upload yours to <http://www.bfbs.com/radio/new-message>. The RN digital team will be running their advent calendar on the Royal Navy website/social media (sorry, no free choccies...). And you can upload your photos to the relevant ship/squadron/unit's official Facebook group. Find these on the RN Forum www.royalnavy.mod.uk/forums (membership required). Money Force (www.moneyforce.org.uk) offer hints and tips on managing money when your loved one is away, including top tips for your Christmas savings. InTouch allows you to send electronic letters to your loved ones <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/intouch-mail-service-for-uk-armed-forces-personnel-service-guide>. You can upload photos, messages and videos to Yule the Waves, the official Royal Navy Tumbler blog. There's info on how to use it on the RN Forum and Facebook page and, if you need some inspiration, you can view last year's posts at <https://yulethewaves.tumblr.com/>. As ever, we offer a range of resources and additional information available to serving personnel and their families via www.nff.org.uk / contactus@nff.org.uk or phone 02392 654374.

Choose a childcare programme

THE Armed Forces Childcare Voucher Scheme (AFCVS) is part of the government's childcare vouchers initiative designed to help working parents pay for childcare. Simple to join and administer, with a minimum salary sacrifice level of £30 per month for vouchers to be used on registered childcare, the scheme can save parents up to £933 and up to £1,866 in tax per family per year (if both parents are part of a current government childcare voucher scheme). The Tax Free Childcare (TFC) initiative is being rolled out, replacing the existing voucher schemes for new members from April 2018. TFC will enable the government to top up a child's account by 20 per cent of childcare costs up to £10,000 – the equivalent of up to £2,000 support per child per year (or £4,000 for disabled children). TFC stop at the age of 12 (17 for disabled children) unlike the existing childcare vouchers which are available up to 15. In April 2018 members of childcare voucher schemes who meet the criteria of the TFC will have the choice of schemes. See 2013DIN01-168 for more information on the AFCVS, while the Childcare Choices website (www.childcarechoices.gov.uk) includes a childcare calculator for parents to compare the government's childcare offers and check what works best for their families.

More mental health care

WHITEHALL has teamed up with the charity set up by Prince Harry and the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to help military personnel and veterans struggling with mental health problems. The Royal Foundation will provide advice and resources to the MOD to improve training, education and information sharing across the Forces with the aim of improving the mental well-being of serving personnel/veterans and their families. Sailors and Royal Marines will be encouraged to use psychology and well-being in the same way as athletes do to maximise performance. Resources will be integrated into training courses and briefing processes across the Forces from the middle of 2018, and will be available online, to strengthen the mental health support and services already available. Rates of mental illness are slightly lower in the Armed Forces (3.2 per cent) than in the general population (3.5 per cent), but the MOD nevertheless has a five-year plan to tackle the problem – prevention, detection and cure – with the partnership with the Royal charity a major strand of that effort.

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Mil- 94374 3172
E-mail- navycnr-rnsrtrainingassist@mod.uk

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Tribute to mines hero

REPRESENTATIVES of Crewe branch attended the unveiling and rededication of a memorial plaque to Lt Cdr Roy Berryman Edwards at Crewe Library.

The plaque was unveiled by his daughter, Mrs Sylvia Hammond, who also unveiled the plaque when it was first displayed at Crewe Baths during World War 2.

In September 1939 Roy Edwards, Superintendent of Crewe Corporation Public Swimming Baths, was re-called by the Royal Navy and promoted to lieutenant commander.

He became the Rendering Mines Safe Officer for the East Coast, and with his team patrolled the beaches disabling mines.

In May 1940 he was awarded the DSO for his courage and skill in securing and stripping live mines – at one point he dealt with around 180 in two months.

He died on June 11 1942, aged 39, at Corton Sands near Lowestoft while attempting to render safe a booby-trapped German mine, killing both him and a young American Ensign.

RN Club celebrates

IN September 1867 HMS Bellerophon, lying at Spithead, was regarded as the latest in Naval technology – perhaps the equivalent of the modern-day carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

In those days facilities for visiting Naval officers were not good, and a plan was hatched in the wardroom of the ironclad to form a club, for officers of all ranks, to provide a base with excellent food, wine and accommodation.

Many officers signed up, and premises were bought in Green Row, now Pembroke Road.

An architect was instructed and a bank, a house and a tavern were converted, in two stages, into the unified building we see today.

The Royal Naval Club was formed.

Throughout the past 150 years the clubhouse, overlooking Governor's Green, has endured gales, wartime bombing and



seen enormous changes in the surrounding area. Throughout that time it has been a meeting place and a refuge for Naval officers.

Members have added an

impressive range of gifts which have greatly enhanced the atmosphere of the club's rooms.

They include Nelson's Studs, a letter written with his left hand and two portraits of him. Many

other paintings have accumulated over years, as has the club's silverware and trophies.

The membership has included many distinguished figures, among them explorers like Scott of the Antarctic, scions of more than one royal family and the founder of the Met Office.

Among the 19 winners of the Victoria Cross who were members were the first VC awarded, the first presented, the first in the Crimea and the first in both world wars.

In the early 1970s the club combined with the Royal Albert Yacht Club.

On September 21 this year, the 150th anniversary of the club's founding was celebrated in style.

Members welcomed 33 distinguished visitors and senior officers, headed by the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson, the High Sheriff the Honourable Mrs Mary Montagu-Scott and Maj Gen Rob Magowan, Commandant General Royal Marines.

The road in front of the clubhouse was closed, allowing the Portsmouth Band of the Royal Marines and an honour guard from HMS Collingwood to perform splendid music and precision drill, including Sunset.

Club chairman Keith Toomey said: "Many of our members were moved by the spectacle."

Former First Sea Lord and club president Admiral Sir Jonathon Band said "Portsmouth is the Naval city, and in a world in which everything is changing it is good to see some really worthwhile things, like this club, surviving.

"Adapting to modern needs but retaining the essential ethos of its founding so long ago."

Portland welcomes Area 4

PORTLAND branch hosted the September 4 Area meeting at the Conservative Club, Easton, on the Royal Manor of Portland.

The meeting was opened by Portland Town Deputy Mayor, Cllr Charlie Flack (a former CPOMA and now a Portland branch member), accompanied by his wife Maria.

Cllr Flack gave an abridged version of the history of Portland.

The standard was marched on by area standard bearer S/M Ben Cartwright, while chaplain Rev Geoffrey Walsh offered prayers.

It was encouraging to see so many branches attending – including Axminster, Bridgwater, Bridport, Chard, Christchurch, Dartmouth, Dorchester, Falmouth, Ferndown, Frome, Launceston, Liskeard, Plymouth, Saltash, South Bristol, Torbay, Torpoint and Rame Peninsula, Weymouth and, of course, Portland.

During the meeting, Portland president S/M David White presented a cheque for £2,300 to Geoff Robertson on behalf of Scotty's Little Soldiers, a charity dedicated to supporting bereaved British Forces children.

Geoff also described the work of the charity. Continuing the charity theme, a presentation by Tim Corke of the RNRMC outlined its work and how branches and shipmates can contribute.

More information on the activities of the charity is available at rnrmc.org.uk

Deputy NCM S/M Gutteridge read a report of proceedings from the National Council.

The president closed the meeting, but not before he had presented a £200 cheque for the Portland branch, which is more than happy to host again.

Branch Chairman Dan Sherren said that without the support of the local businesses and community the success would not have been achieved, and he thanked all those who had contributed to this event.



Christmas Card Appeal

Every year the Shipwrecked Mariners' Society pays over £1m in grants to the dependants of those lost at sea, as well as sick, disabled and retired seafarers struggling to make ends meet. Please help us to continue this important work.



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Diaries available from Central Office

DON'T forget, the RNA 2018 diaries with the new dark blue crested covers are now available from Central Office at £8 each. The diary part only, without cover, is also available, at £5 each.

By popular demand, the address book is available too, at £1 each. Orders should be sent to the Royal Naval Association, Room 209, Semaphore Tower (PP70), HM Naval Base, Portsmouth PO1 3LT, and accompanied either by a cheque or card details.

Order forms are available in the September Semaphore Circular.

Blue plaque for Dame Katharine

A BLUE plaque has been unveiled in Bristol in honour of the first Director of the WRNS, Dame Katharine Furse.

Dame Katharine, who was also the founder of the Association of Wrens, was born in Lower Clifton House, now a hall of residence for the University of Bristol.

And it was the Association that decided, in the year that marks the centenary of the foundation of the Wrens, that Dame Katharine's determination, perseverance and great vision should be commemorated in some way.

So a group of association members, as guests of the university, joined with those visiting the restored 18th Century garden, for a welcoming address from Vice Chancellor Judith Squires, and Alan Stealey, Head of Estates.

This was followed by a WRNS100 and Association presentation by Commandant Anthea Larken, and a brief address by Lori Streich, of Bristol Civic Society, who had been delighted to discover the history of this notable Bristol-born woman.

The group then gathered at the front of the building to witness Commandant Larken unveiling the blue plaque, which had been made by Wards of Bristol.



Members of the Association of Wrens Bristol branch and Gloucester Group; from left: Lt Cdr Sarah Royston RNR, CPO Jane Haywood AFCCO, Connie Gregory (in white blouse), Chair of Bristol branch, LIS Alison Wilmott RNR, WRNS veteran Shirley Melligan in World War 1 uniform

The plaque lists not only her Naval titles, but also those gained from service with the Voluntary Aid Detachment (Red Cross) and the World Association of Girl Guides and Girl Scouts.

The association was represented by vice presidents, trustees, members from Bristol and other branches, local

informal groups, HMS Flying Fox and Gloucester Armed Forces Careers Office personnel.

The visitors were well looked after by university hospitality staff, who provided a well-received buffet.

Association members will be pleased to know that 'The Wren' rose will be planted in the garden.

Fearless veterans meet in Guz

FORMER shipmates from the Communications Department of HMS Fearless during the 1976-8 commission held their second reunion, this time in Plymouth.

Many of the assault ship veterans found each other through Facebook, using a page to exchange dits, memories and photos from their time on board.

Several of the 17 ex-Fearless shipmates, along with wives, friends and relatives, travelled some distance, including S/M Mick Cranswick, who travelled from the Cayman Islands.

A group of the veterans enjoyed a full programme at Devonport Naval Base, including a visit to HMS Bulwark, one of the assault ships that replaced Fearless.

Bulwark's EWO, WO1 Phil Gibson, and his wife gave up their Saturday morning to show the group around.

After lunch in the WOs & Senior Rates Mess in HMS Drake, escorted by Naval Base Liaison Officer WO1 Mark Portman, the group toured former fleet submarine HMS Courageous, decommissioned in 1992 and now open to visitors.

Having also watched a Royal Marine bugler play the *Last Post* at the Naval Memorial on the Hoe with its cascading 'Wave' poppy installation the preceding evening, it was a memorable and enjoyable weekend visit to the city that had been home for a long time for many of the party.

A huge BZ to those without whom the weekend would not have been the success it was: WO1 Portman, WO1 Gibson, CPO Si Mallaby, Angus Kirkaldy and Bob Cook of the Naval Base Heritage Centre, the coach driver from Babcock Transport and the MOD Guard Service.

New opening for chapel door

THE chapel door of battleship HMS Warspite, which survived the Battle of Jutland, has been gifted to the National Museum of the Royal Navy by the RNA.

The door is a focal point in a centenary exhibition about the battle that, in the opinion of many, turned the tide of World War 1.

RNA General Secretary Capt Paul Quinn generously donated the chapel door from Warspite after he acquired it from a Seaman's Society hostel in Falmouth which was being demolished.

The door is displayed alongside a Bible – loaned by the Imperial War Museum to the National Museum for the duration of the exhibition – which is also from the chapel on board the ship.

Paul Quinn said: "I was very excited to save the door – it was such an amazing opportunity as HMS Warspite was a particularly famous ship, having seen so

much action.

"I reflect how many sailors have gone through this door before they went into action and then once again after action, thinking: 'I am still here and haven't let my shipmates down'."

Rebecca Drummond, Curator of Artefacts at the National Museum, said: "We are delighted to accept the RNA's kind offer to donate the chapel door from HMS Warspite to the museum."

"HMS Warspite was an iconic ship, having seen action in both world wars and earning more Battle Honours than any other single ship in British Naval history, including Jutland in 1916.

"It is therefore fantastic to have such a striking item in our collection that enables us to tell the story of the ship and those who served on her."

HMS Warspite saw extensive action at the Battle of Jutland in 1916 and was heavily damaged in the course of the action, resulting in the 14 deaths.

She even escaped encounters with German U-boats on her way home and made it back to Rosyth for repairs.

Warspite also saw action throughout World War 2, including at the Second Battle of Narvik and D-Day, as well as serving in the Mediterranean Fleet and the Eastern Fleet.

Entry to *36 Hours: Jutland 1916, The Battle That Won The War* is included in the Annual All Attraction Ticket to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, and the exhibition will close in the spring of 2019.



● Capt Paul Quinn with the chapel door from HMS Warspite

Association goes back to its roots

THE Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructors Association returned to their roots for the 62nd annual dinner, held at the Hotel Rembrandt, Weymouth.

Portland and the former HMS Osprey were fundamental in developing the modern RN UW Rates.

In 1914 no one could detect a submerged U-boat, and there were no means by which to attack it even if they could, while one torpedo from the U-boat could sink an armoured warship.

A method of detecting submerged submarines was urgently required.

In 1916 the British Board of Invention and Research took on the active sound detection project, producing a prototype for testing in mid-1917 which was cloaked in secrecy – the work of this "Anti-Submarine Division" gave rise to the British ASDIC acronym, derived from 'ASDics' as a term for this work.

Production of ASDIC equipment began in 1922, and two years later an anti-submarine school, HMS Osprey, and a training flotilla of four vessels fitted with ASDIC, were established on Portland.

Development work continued between the wars and into World War 2, in association with the Americans, with the term sonar (sound navigation and radar) taking the place of ASDIC.

The 2018 ASWIs Association dinner will take place in October 2018 in Portsmouth – venue to be confirmed.

For further details see www.aswi.co.uk

Memorial service

A MEMORIAL service for a former Naval Attaché to Washington DC is to be held this month.

Cdr John W H F Dickie also served aboard HMS Bramble (Sqdn MCF Officer) and Wild Goose, and was loaned to the New Zealand Navy.

A member of the *Algerines Association*, Cdr Dickie died on August 18 at the age of 92.

The service will be held at Queen Camel Church, near Yeovil, at 2.20pm on November 18.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery tanker in our September edition (right) was RFA Olna, which played the German supply ship Altmark in the 1956 film *Battle of the River Plate*.

The correct answers were provided by T Warden, of Bridgwater, who wins our £50 prize.

This month's mystery ship (above), the only Royal Navy ship to bear this name, was commissioned in March 1944, decommissioned in 1973 and scrapped at Queenborough six years later.

She was believed to be the last wartime destroyer in service with the Royal Navy.

She served on wartime Russian convoys, and also in the Far East. Modernised in the late 1950s, within a decade she completed a round-the-world deployment.

1) What was her name, and 2) what was the name she was originally given when she was



ordered, in February 1942?

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 December 8.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned.

The winner will be announced in our January 2018 edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

Exeter platoon on parade

THE HMS Exeter Association is unique, encompassing both the World War 2 cruiser and the Type 42 destroyer.

Over the past two-and-a-half years the association has managed to embrace members from all eras of both ships' past, including family members, descendants and those who have a general interest in the ships.

This year is a special one for the association as members remember those lost during the sinking of the cruiser 75 years ago during the Battle of the Java Sea.

Many sailors died at sea, and those that survived endured further hardships as prisoners of Japan.

Members also remember those who fought in the Falklands 35 years ago, countering the Argentine Air Force, and paid tribute to all those who were involved in the Gulf War, 27 years ago.

More than 30 association members are marching for the first time as part of the association at the remembrance ceremony at the Cenotaph in London this month.

↓ 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



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MYSTERY PICTURE 273

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)



Camryn to the rescue

A SEA cadet from Chippenham unit went to the rescue when a woman and child got into difficulties in an inflatable boat.

Cadet First Class Camryn (pictured above) was on a family outing to the beach at Weymouth.

The 13-year-old was staying with his family at a village just outside Weymouth, in Dorset, and at the time of the incident was paddling his kayak just offshore.

Camryn spotted the pair's boat being pushed out to sea by the wind and tide.

So the cadet put the training he had received at his unit to good use by paddling out to the dinghy – by this point the woman was clinging on to the harbour wall – and using a rope to pull it back to the beach.

Describing her son as a hero, his mother Claire said: "Camryn was always a very shy child and he's also dyslexic."

"Being a Sea Cadet really boosted his confidence and he's accomplished so much since being with them."

"I'm really proud of him and the fact that he's a Sea Cadet – it's a really good thing to be part of and I'd encourage everyone to give it a try."

Citizen cadets

SEA Cadets were due to be hosting a second National Citizens Service (NCS) programme as *Navy News* went to press, following a successful pilot last year.

Cadets aged 16-17 from across the UK (apart from Northern Area) were offered the chance to embark on exhilarating challenges whilst building skills for work and life.

The award required participants to complete three stages of a social action programme over autumn half-term, including a residential stay at Sea Cadets Training Centre Raleigh.

High-flyers celebrate Fleet Air Arm links

SEA Cadets from Kettering put on a spectacular parade for the head of the Royal Navy's Fleet Air Arm, Rear Admiral Keith Blount.

The parade was in celebration of the cadets' achievements over the past 12 months in securing a coveted burgee for another year.

Admiral Blount also took the opportunity to present several other awards recognising Kettering unit's high achievements.

"Only the top 30 per cent of Sea Cadets across the country are given a burgee, and I'm extremely pleased to say that again this year Kettering has been awarded the top award," said Admiral Blount.

"This is a remarkable achievement and I know not many units achieve this highest of honours over so many years."

"This unit was on a war footing after the devastating fire that destroyed their boathouse last year."

"But they rallied, organised themselves and rebuilt in a remarkable fashion, and that's something to be incredibly proud of – and it's something the Royal Navy would be extremely proud of to have achieved."

"So do not underestimate what they have done, and they should be very proud of each other."

"Bravo Zulu, as we say in the Royal Navy!"

The unit is unique in the Sea Cadets as being the only one with a direct affiliation to the Fleet Air Arm.

Their cap tally – 800 Naval Air Squadron – is something of



● Kettering unit on parade, with Rear Admiral Keith Blount talking to cadets

which every cadet is proud.

"Whenever we are with other Sea Cadet units they always ask about our cap tally, because it is so distinctive, being named after a Fleet Air Arm squadron," said Cadet Maddy.

"Today was really good, parading for the admiral."

"I was very proud to be in the guard as well – everyone is watching you."

Also on the parade was POC Miriam, who was awarded her Gold Duke of Edinburgh Award badge – the first for a Kettering Sea Cadet.

"I did my expedition in the Peak District and can't thank the people of the unit enough for all

their support they gave me," said Miriam.

"We are a big family, and I hope my efforts go on to inspire others to achieve their goals."

Miriam is one of Kettering's senior cadets, and at 18 will transfer to become Staff, as well as going on to university, where she has already spied out the local cadet unit.

Admiral Blount also formally opened the new boathouse, taking the opportunity to see the cadets in action on the water.

"We've joined together our 75th anniversary celebrations,

the award of the burgee and the opening of the boathouse and once again the cadets are the stars," said CO Lt (SCC) Marc Pether RNR.

"We are really proud of our connections with the FAA – it makes us very distinct and unique."

"In 2010 when the Joint Force Harrier disbanded we were lucky enough to be offered the affiliation with 800 NAS, which we took on, and over the past seven years, we've built on that and been taken into the FAA family."

New CCF unit at Gravesend

THE Royal Navy's most senior representative in the region has formally opened a new cadet unit at Gravesend Grammar School in North Kent as part of the Combined Cadet Force (CCF) Expansion Scheme.

Cdre David Elford, Naval Regional Commander for the East of England (NRCEE), was guest of honour at Gravesend Grammar as cadets from the newly-formed unit paraded for his inspection.

"The Royal Navy is committed to the enduring success of the Combined Cadet Force Expansion Programme, by providing access to world-class facilities and expertise to enrich the development of students," said Cdre Elford.

"I was also a cadet in a CCF unit in my own grammar school in Plympton in Devon, and I know how important this day must be to all of you on parade."

"It is a huge personal privilege for me to be asked to open Gravesend Grammar's Sea Cadet unit, and I wish all the greatest success in the future."

The New RN CCF section at Gravesend is part of the Cadet Expansion Programme (CEP), which aims to promote a military ethos in schools and instil values in young people that will help them get the most out of their lives, as well as contributing richly to their communities.

Pupils learn how to develop qualities such as self-discipline, loyalty, respect, leadership, teamwork and resilience.

The programme focuses on CCF units, ensuring that as many pupils from state schools



● Gravesend Grammar School's CCF RN Section prepares to parade for the formal opening of the unit

have a chance to experience life-enriching activities of military cadets as part of their school life.

This creates positive benefits in all areas of the school including character skills of leadership, teamwork, communication, and integrity and career progression, strongly valued by employers.

Gravesend Grammar currently has a growing group of cadets who are eager to get to grips with the Royal Navy in Portsmouth.

"It has taken a long time to get up and running, and we are all thrilled that we have finally started with a core of 30 Cadets," said Sub Lt (CCF) Claire Warner, CO of the new unit and a Sixth Form tutor in the school.

"Everyone is genuinely excited and we have been really looking forward to this grand official opening parade as well as getting a chance to get on the water as

Eastern Area takes sailing title

THEY may not have monopolised the prizes but consistency was crucial as Eastern Area took the overall title at the National Sea Cadet Sailing Regatta in Southport.

Honours were spread across areas in the sailing classes – the Open Bosun Class was won by North West Area, Northern Ireland Area took the Open Pico Class title while South West Area was successful in both the Open Quest Class and the Junior Topper Class.

Overall winners Eastern Area did register a win in the Open PY Class – the Portsmouth Yardstick is a handicapping system that allows widely different types of dinghy to compete in the same race.

London Area dominated the windsurfing competition – all three classes (Open up to 4.5m, Open up to 5.5m, Open up to 6.5m) were taken by the teams from the capital, and unsurprisingly the London squad also took the overall windsurfing title.

The regatta was held on the Marine Lake, just off the seafront in the Merseyside town, based at the Waterside Lodge Scout Centre.

The success of the weekend owed much to the efforts of SRO Cdr Patterson and HQSO Boats Lt Cdr Frank Cea and their teams.

Sea Cadets North West Afloat and Sea Cadets Crosby Boat Station (Sea Cadets North West) also played their parts, providing boats and safety crews for the racing.

The presentation ceremony was held at nearby Altcar Training Camp.

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● Lt (CCF) Anne Ryder RNVR receives her Meritorious Award from the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L'Isle

Special award for Anne

TEACHER Anne Ryder has been honoured with a Lord Lieutenant's Award for Meritorious Service in recognition of her work training cadets at the Duke of York's Royal Military School, near Dover, and in the community.

As a Combined Cadet Force (CCF) officer and a Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (RNVR), Anne holds the rank of lieutenant and was presented with the award by the Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Viscount De L'Isle, at a ceremony in Tunbridge Wells.

Anne, who has taught Design Technology and BTEC Engineering at the school for ten years, joined the school's CCF Royal Naval section in 2008 and commanded it from 2010.

She supports the South East Reserve Forces' & Cadets' Association and has strong links with local Sea Cadet units.

Lt Col Steven Saunderson, the school's Officer Commanding, said: "This is a hugely important award and we are very proud of Anne's contribution to our Combined Cadet Force and her wider activities with the Royal Naval Cadet community."

"Her section has a well-structured training programme which includes sailing or powerboating off Dover in the summer months, as well as training camps at Dartmoor adding canoeing, windsurfing, raft building, yachting, and gorge walking."

Anne's other duties at the school include tutor to a 45-strong boarding house for girls aged 13-16 and a member of the pastoral team.

The Duke of York's Royal Military School was established in 1803 by the then Duke of York to care for the orphans of soldiers and moved, in 1909, to its present 150-acre site in the Kent countryside.

Positive reception

THERE was good news on fundraising, a talk from TV historian Dan Snow and a performance from the London Area band at September's Sea Cadets reception.

The event at Saddlers' Hall, London, celebrated the charity's successful fundraising appeal for two new yachts, to which the Stelios Philanthropic Foundation contributed £200,000.

As such, it was announced the second yacht will be named "Sir Stelios" after founder Sir Stelios Haji-Ioannou.

TV historian Dan Snow, a former Sea Cadet, also gave a talk on his time at Wandsworth unit, and shared stories of his time offshore.

The London band impressed guests with a ten-minute performance.

TS Forth welcomes HMS Forth

FOLLOWING a full day of training on board new patrol ship HMS Forth in Scotstoun, Glasgow, seven members of the ships' company visited their namesake Sea Cadet unit in nearby Grangemouth.

Formed of officers and ratings from all branches of the Royal Navy, the group were delighted to witness a formal ceremonial Colours service by the cadets and then hold a questions and answers session with the group.

Fielding questions from the large number of cadets in attendance, the sailors of Forth were grilled on topics ranging from the challenges of training and selection to a sailor's adventures around the world.

The ship's company would like to extend their thanks to the unit and all the cadets for their hospitality – and some great questions.

● Cadets from Grangemouth unit fire questions at a group of sailors from HMS Forth, which was built at nearby Scotstoun in Glasgow



● CPO (SCC) John Clements receives his Long Service Medal from Cdr Charles Bagot-Jewitt

Drill display and a great deal more

LOUGHBOROUGH cadets welcomed Eastern Area Officer Cdr Charlie Bagot-Jewitt to their unit for their Royal Naval Inspection.

The evening's programme was well-attended, with nearly 100 friends, family, former cadets and supporters – including the Soaring Dragons dragon boat team, based at Barrow-upon-Soar – turning out to watch as the cadets laid on a continuity drill display.

VIP guests included the Mayor of Charnwood and the Deputy Lord Lieutenant of Leicestershire.

The drill demonstration was followed by groups giving displays of seamanship, meteorology, communications and first aid, whilst the cadets undertaking catering provided homemade tomato soup and cheesy savouries.

At the end of the evening the Area Officer enrolled New Entry Cadets Harrison and Thompson, presented 1st Good Conduct Badges to Cdt Spencer and Cadet 1st Class Wells and a 3rd Good Conduct Badge to Able Cadet Gillet.

He then presented CPO (SCC) John Clements with his Long Service Medal.

A contingent of Loughborough cadets were on duty to help send a special assignment on its way to Belgium.

A set of bells cast at Taylors Bell Foundry were sent off to St George's Chapel at the war cemetery in Ypres, and a ceremony was held in Queens Park, Loughborough, to mark the occasion.

Almost a dozen cadets from the unit attended the ceremony in various roles.

Veterans support Newport

THE Newport branch of the Royal Naval Association have a long-standing friendship with Newport unit, and over the years have supported them both in person at their events and with donations to buy special items of equipment.

This year they gave £607.48 to support their seasonal boating activities.

Cadets have been seen showing off their newly-purchased wetsuits and safety helmets, and the remainder of the money went to buy essential items for the maintenance of their dinghies.

Unit Treasurer and Trustee Ann Bowen said cadets, staff and adult members of the Sea Cadet unit wish to acknowledge and thank the members of the Newport RNA, not only for their generosity but also for their steadfast support and friendship over very many years.

Launch adds a little Zest to the Corps

THE SEA Cadet Corps helped launch its new RS Zest sailing dinghy at the Southampton Boat Show, opening up exciting opportunities on the water to more young people.

The dinghy was designed by international boat firm RS Sailing, in consultation with the Sea Cadets, and builds on the success of the RS Quest dinghy that was unveiled in 2015.

Sea Cadets, which has a membership of 14,000 young people aged between ten and 18 at 400 units across the country, helps them boost their self-belief through water-based adventure, and the RS Zest will give these young sailors confidence, delivering an unforgettable and safe experience.

The Sea Cadet Corps will be match-funding 100 dinghies for units, ensuring that no one misses out on securing the new addition.

The charity currently has a fleet of 7,800 boats, 2,500 of which are sailing dinghies, and working with RS Sailing will allow Sea Cadets to reduce the burden of maintenance and repair.

This means volunteers can focus on the delivery of safe, fun and challenging nautical adventure.

Units with limited access to water will benefit from the design, as RS Zest can operate in shallower water.

They have grown from the RS Quests, with both sharing many of the same design features, including simplicity, ease of handling, positive handhold around the gunwale, keel and bilge rails level so the boat sits on the ground for tiller drills, a self-draining cockpit and high boom.

They can carry youngsters, but can be operated in races by just one.

Tye Shuttleworth, Head of Inshore Boating at Sea Cadets, said: "We are delighted to help launch the new RS Zest dinghy, which will create an even better sailing experience for our cadets.



● An RS Zest dinghy is taken out onto the water

"RS Sailing is the leader in this field, and working with them is a fantastic opportunity for the Sea Cadets.

"We look forward to seeing the

RS Zest in action, and hope they help inspire even more young people to get out on the water."

The Southampton Boat Show, which this year was staged in the

latter part of September, is one of the largest on-water boat shows in Europe, and took place in the city's Mayflower Park Town Quay.

Deaths

REAR Admiral John R S Gerard-Pearse CB joined as a special entry cadet in January 1943 and served in HMS Orion (D-Day landings), Faulknor, Brilliant (Coastal Forces Adriatic 1945), Charity, Alamein, Devonshire, Hedingham Castle and Concord. Attended BRNC 1955, then HMS Tumult, Grafton and in 1960 as Commander Staff Ops Officer to FO Flotillas Med. HMS Defender, then 1966 promoted to Captain Mine Countermeasures and Fishery Protection at HMS Lochinvar. HMS Fearless

(1969), Director of Strategic Policy & Long Range Objectives to SACLANT (1971) then Ark Royal (1973). Rear Admiral FOST 1975, then 1979 Assistant Chief of Naval Staff Ops. Member of ARNO. May 17. Aged 93.

Capt Ian W Powe. Entered BRNC 1946, completed sea training in the Arctic in HMS Devonshire. First main deployment in HMS Kenya, which bombarded communist forces in Korea. First command was Ton-class minesweeper HMS Crofton. Appointed to HMS Dolphin 1963 as torpedo and anti-submarine specialist, and developed tactics to exploit sea conditions which are still used; he became an 'honorary submariner' and was given life membership of their officers' association. 1st Lt of HMS Londonderry in the Far East, then commanded Malta-based 7th MCM Squadron in minesweeper HMS Walkerton and promoted to commander. In Jan 1968, when Sicily was hit by an earthquake, he orchestrated disaster relief and in gratitude had a road named after him. Captain of HMS Yarmouth during the Cod War in 1973. Retired in 1986. Member of the Association of RN Officers. Sept 2. Aged 84.

Capt Nigel A Hoskin. HMS Wizard and Ashton, HMS/MS Sealion, Walrus, Acheron, Narwhal, HMS Euryalus, HMY Britannia,

HMS Danae, Brecon and MCM1, MOD DNOT, HMS Drake, MOD Controller's Office, FO Plymouth ACOS(Ops). Sept 30. Aged 71.

Cdr William J Bingham. Admiralty Interview Board, NATO, Naval Secretary, DQHM Chatham, HMS Centurion, Amazon, Mercury II, Sheba, Tiger, Surprise, Decoy, Messina, Teazer, Modeste, Ganges, Dryad and ASWE. Sept 27.

Lt Cdr Edward B G Aston. HMS Drake, Victory RNB, Vernon, Raider, Adamant, President, Osprey, Plover, Lochinvar and Cheviot. Sept 9. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Dennis Donovan. Dir Gen Aircraft (Navy), Dir Naval Recruiting, HMS Daedalus, Heron, Hermes, Ariel, Seahawk and Fulmar. Sept 23. Aged 93.

Lt Cdr Anthony T Holmes. MOD Engineer in Chief, HMS Pembroke, Ganges, Glory, Corunna, Stag and Redjacket. Oct 1. Aged 97.

Lt Cdr James B Sheridan. 360, 845, 849 NAS, FONAC, HMS Heron, Fulmar, Mercury, Bulwark, Victorious and Goldcrest. Aug 25.

Lt Frederick F Harsant RNVR. HMS Illustrious and Edinburgh, also 813 and 822 NAS. 2017.

Sub Lt Roger B Young. HMS Fulmar, Gannet, Ocean, 810, 849 796 NAS. FNAS Ford, Eglinton, Yeovilton. Sept 6. Aged 88.

Ifor R 'Taff' Roberts CPOMEA. Served 1974-94 HMS Figsard, Caledonia, Norfolk, Nelson, Excellent, Sultan, Drake, Portsmouth FMB, Invincible, Rosyth FEC, York, Rosyth FSU and Cochrane. HMS Figsard Association. July 27. Aged 60.

William L 'Les' Jamesey James FAA. Bevan Boy he served TMS Cornwall then in HMS Triumph. July 31. Aged 91.

Michael M Colborne LVO FCWtr. Served 1951-75 HMS Superb, Daedalus, Jufair, Ganges (2), Corunna, SBNO South Africa, Centurion, Norfolk and Heron. After RN, appointed Private Secretary to Prince of Wales. Helped conceive Prince's Trust and engineered the Prince's support for the Op Drake and Raleigh explorations with the collaboration of Col John Blashford-Snell. Appointed Lt of the RVO 1985. Later PA to the Chairman of the London United

Investments Group, then similar role for Duke of Westminster. Sept 21. Aged 83.

Robert J 'Bob' Gulliver ERA Series 24. Served 1955-69 at HMS Figsard (55) then Caledonia. After Artificer training he served aboard HMS Albion, Whirlwind, Parapet, Osprey, Russell and London, covering the evacuation of Aden and missile-firing trials in the West Indies. Aug 18. Aged 77.

Leslie 'Les' Clancy AB. HMS Cheviot 1952. HMS Cheviot Association. August 18.

Roger Ludlow AB. Served 1956-68 at HMS Ganges, Falcon, Blackpool, Heron, Mercury, Belfast, Dolphin, President, Chichester, Drake and Terror. HMS Ganges Association. Sept 25. Aged 76.

Royal Naval Association

John Reeve AB. Served 1945-47 National Serviceman. Majority of time spent at HMS Royal Arthur, Skegness. Huge supporter of the Naval Service and Lincoln RNA. Aug 27. Aged 90.

Association of RN Officers/RNOC

Capt Alec D Barlow. Director General Ships. HMS Neptune, Drake, Dolphin, Maidstone, Medway, Collingwood, Tyne, Turpin, Totem and ARTE Downreay. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Robert G Carr. HMS Victory RNB, Bulwark, Phoenix, Glasgow and Kenya. Aged 96.

Lt Cdr Peter H Dunn. ASWE, DUW, HMS Dryad, Vernon, Mercury II, Reclaim, Osprey, Carron, Cavendish, Loch Tralraig, Vigo, Daring, Ranpura and BRNC. July.

Lt Cdr Ian G Forman. Weapons Dept MOD, Dockyard & Maintenance, DG Ships, DG Weapons. HMS Excellent, Crossbow, Corunna, Indomitable and Britannia RN College. Sept 17. Aged 87.

Lt Cdr Richard J Pyott Cooper. Cdre Naval Ships Acceptance Portsdown, MOD Bath, HMS Tamar, Juno, Zulu, Collingwood, Nelson and Fife. Sept 2. Aged 74.

Lt Cdr Geoffrey J Shore. HMS Pembroke, Warrior, Decoy, Daedalus, Undine, Highflyer, Belfast, Sussex. Aged 92.

Lt Cdr Richard 'Dick' S Tough. HMS Neptune, Bristol, FO Scotland and NI. Sept 25. Aged 71.

Lt Daniel E G Bicks. HMS Heron, Ariel, Sanderling, Victorious and Dir General Aircraft. May 27. Aged 85.

Ask Jack

HMS Warspite. I am trying to locate Warspite's bell. My father-in-law, Cdr William L Spear, served on board and his son, Michael D C Spear, was baptised on the ship circa 1932/3 and I understand that his name may be inscribed on the bell. I would also like to find out where I can obtain a copy of the baptism certificate. Does anyone remember the name of the Chaplain on board Warspite around this time, and does anyone remember/know of Cdr Spear? Please contact me on 01761410949 or email suelmes@hotmail.co.uk

Battle of Madagascar, 1942. Award-winning author seeks veterans or other eyewitnesses for a new book to be published both here and in the USA. Reasonable expenses paid. Contact John@johngimlette.com or call 020 7797 7562.

Reunions

April 2018
RN Engineerroom Association 27th annual reunion to be held at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from April 13-16. Contact Bob Styans on 0121 422 4115 or at rstyants@btinternet.com
HMS Hermes Cooks 1968-70. Annual get-together will be held at the Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth, over the weekend of April 14. For further details contact Hubert Enright on 07884 040041 or email scouseenright@hotmail.co.uk

Submissions for the Deaths and Reunions columns, and for Swap Drafts, in December's Noticeboard must be received by **November 6**



● The Queen met current and former Servicewomen at the event

Queen marks WRNS100

THE Queen and the Princess Royal attended a reception to mark the centenary of the Women's Royal Navy Service (WRNS) and the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps (WAAC).

During the reception, at the Army and Navy Club in Pall Mall, London, the royals met a number of women who served or are serving, including Betty Webb, 94, who worked at Bletchley Park, and Joan De-Vall, 92, and Barbara Danter, 90, who served in Auxiliary Territorial Service.

WRAC Association, which incorporates the WAAC and the ATS.

In 1945, aged 18, the Queen joined the ATS and became the first female member of the Royal family to joined the Forces as a full-time active member.

The Princess Royal has a long connection with the WRNS - she is Patron of WRNS Benevolent Trust, the Association of Wrens and the WRNS100 Project.

She is also Admiral and Chief Commandant for Women in Royal Navy.

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Editor: Mike Gray 023 9262 5257 or Mil: 93832 5257

Editorial

News editor:
Richard Hargreaves
023 9262 5255

Production Editor:
Lorraine Proudlock
023 9262 5282

edit@navynews.co.uk

General enquiries:
023 9262 3553

023 9262 3553

The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD

Business

Business manager:
Lisa Taw: 023 9262 5235

Subscriptions: 023 9262 5090

subscriptions@navynews.co.uk

Fax: 023 9262 5279

Advertising: 023 9262 3553

advertising@navynews.co.uk

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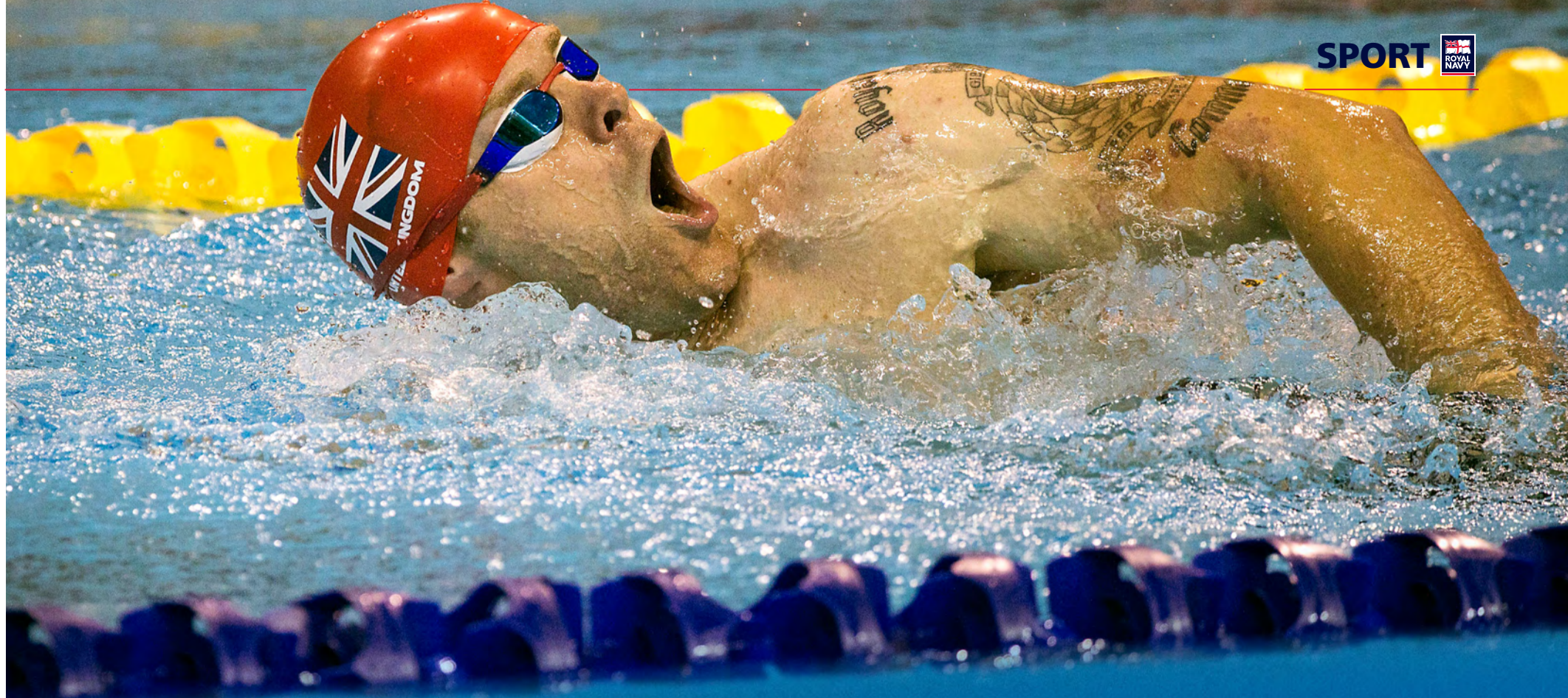
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Hail the medal man

FORMER Royal Marine Mark Ormrod powers his way down the pool to another medal in the Invictus Games.

Mark won two bronze medals in the pool to add to his two silver medals for rowing – and also picked up the Jaguar Award for Exceptional Performance.

“Thanks everyone for all your kind comments and support,” the athlete said.

“The award at Invictus Toronto was a total surprise but I’m eternally grateful.”

The triple amputee was a member of the UK’s 90-strong team who took part in the week-long games designed specifically for wounded, injured and sick Service personnel and veterans.

The UK team picked up 87 medals and recorded more than 170 personal bests. The medal haul comprised 26 golds, 34 silvers and 27 bronzes.

The games saw 550 individuals from 17 nations compete across 12 sports, including archery, wheelchair rugby and sitting volleyball.

Former musician with the Royal Marines Band Service, Poppy Pawsey, provided one of the highlights as she won an unexpected bronze medal in the women’s 100m swimming freestyle race.

Royal Marine veteran Alex Krol won a gold medal with Kevin Drake in the wheelchair doubles tennis contest, while fellow RM veteran Alex Moulder picked up a gold medal as part of the UK mixed 4x50m freestyle relay swimming team.

Royal Navy veteran Jamie Weller – guided by LH Dominic Nott – won bronze on the track in the men’s IT6 100m final, adding to the two other



● Jamie Weller and Alex Moulder at the closing ceremony; Kirk Hughes and Cornelia Oosthuizen, left, were beaten by Alex Krol and Kevin Drake in the wheelchair tennis competition



Pictures: Sgt Ralph Merry

third spots in the 200m and 400m.

Jamie, along with Alex Moulder, also won bronze on his bike in the men’s tandem ITB1 final.

The Invictus Games were founded by Prince Harry, who said at the closing ceremony: “To the thousands who filled the stands this week, and the millions who watched at home, let me issue you a challenge.

“Don’t just move on from these games with happy memories. Instead, make an Invictus goal for yourselves. Let the examples of service and resilience that you have seen, inspire you to take action to improve something – big or small – in your life, for your family, or in your community.”

Civil Servant Richard Osborne, who works at Navy Command Headquarters, helped the Georgia sitting volleyball squad to gold at the games. As in previous Games, Richard provided advice to the squad over the internet, and his coaching paid off as the team beat the UK to take the honours.

The fourth Games will take place in Sydney next year with 500 competitors from 18 nations competing from October 20-27.

WIS members of the British Armed Forces and veterans who have been inspired to get involved in sport are invited to register their interest in the 2018 Games. Registration of interest remains open until December 1 2017.

UK Team Captain Bernie Broad, former Army Major in the Grenadier Guards, said: “Invictus lit a spark in my belly and at the end of the Games it has become a raging fire.

“It has kick-started a new phase in my recovery journey and one that will continue for a long time. I have a renewed purpose and it’s brought back my determination and confidence.

“What it has done for me it will do for many others. So apply for Sydney and potentially watch your life change in ways you couldn’t imagine.”

The Ministry of Defence worked in partnership with Help for Heroes and The Royal British Legion to deliver the UK Delegation for Toronto 2017.



● Above, Mark Ormrod also won two silver medals for rowing
● Below from left, Jamie Weller with Dominic Nott; Faith Fordham; Jamie Weller with Alex Moulder, and Poppy Pawsey





Rising to the top at Rockingham

THE weather played a huge part as the Royal Navy and Royal Marines **Car Race** Team headed to Rockingham Motor Speedway for round four of the Armed Forces Race Challenge.

After sailing through scrutineering and qualifying, the team were set in grid position: Cpl Mark Inman (3 Cdo Bde) in 17th in his VX220; Cdr Richard Scott (PJHQ) / PO James Cantwell (829 NAS) in the RN Peugeot 206 in 23rd; Lt Cdr Keith Attwood (NCHQ) in his Mini R50 in 25th with PO Sean Graham (HMS Dragon) in the Sultan Locost starting in 30th.

Grip is notoriously poor in the wet on the Rockingham Speedway banking, and with rain drops on the windscreen as the cars lined up on the grid, nerves were jangling.

The pack generally got away cleanly, apart from the front row who hesitated for a split second.

Cdr Scott and Lt Cdr Attwood made up a number of places into turn two, coming off the banking, managing to avoid others who locked up or spun.

Cpl Inman made up five places on the first lap and the rain stayed away with Cdr Scott and Lt Cdr Attwood having a proper bonnet-to-bumper race, swapping places and within a few tenths of a second on a 1:55 lap.

Cpl Inman was continuing to make progress up the field, with some of the faster cars having failures.

Just as Cdr Scott came into the pits Lt Cdr Attwood misjudged the final corner, bouncing across the grass but avoiding the wall.

Cdr Scott handed over the Silver 206 to PO Cantwell and he settled into his debut drive at Rockingham. He held his nerve and kept improving his lap times to bring it home in one piece.

PO Graham had issues with a clutch not playing ball and by the finish was forced to be running with only fourth gear.

The chequered flag saw Cpl Inman finish seventh, Lt Cdr Attwood in 18th, Cdr Scott / PO Cantwell in 19th, and PO Graham in 22nd.

Cpl Inman took second overall in group C. PO Cantwell was top RN in the Performance Index standing, Cdr Scott won the Eastern Inter Command Trophy and Lt Cdr Attwood was crowned Armed Forces Novice Champion.

Most importantly the combined RN team standing put them as the top Service team, with a clear win at Rockingham.

Just after the race the heavens opened. Some of the drivers had entered a second handicap race and were juggling with whether the track would dry in time.

Unfortunately, Lt Cdr Attwood had a suspension failure and PO Cantwell lost his auxiliary belt, resulting in both having to retire before the race began. It left only Cpl Inman and PO Graham to represent the RNRM.

PO Graham had wets and was praying for rain; however it remained dry – but wet under foot and slippery. He pushed the Locost on to finish 13th out of 24, with Cpl Inman running in second for most of the race; he had a couple of big slides in the final lap, just losing out to a podium finish by dropping to fifth while four abreast with the Army over the line.

Please contact Cdr Scott (PJHQ J6) or Lt Cdr Attwood (NCHQ) if you wish to find out more about the team.

Photograph courtesy of Nick and Mark Rogers

Trounced by tourists

IT was a disappointing conclusion to the 2017 season for the UK Armed Forces senior cricket team with a heavy defeat at the hands of the touring Bangladesh A side.

Despite the absence of a number of established players, the UKAF side held their own for 65 overs before scoreboard pressure and some excellent slow bowling turned the tide in favour of the tourists.

Flt Lt Kieran Pearce battled bravely with the ball, keeping the team in the game despite their impressive opposition.

Keen to test themselves in English conditions, the tourists won the toss and batted on a bowler-friendly surface, surviving some testing opening spells.

They steadily accumulated

runs throughout the middle overs, laying a solid platform for the final ten overs.

A late flourish from Mohammed Saifuddin, selected in the Bangladesh T20 squad earlier this year, and Mahidy Hason, with nine test appearances to his name, took the visitors to 274-8 at the close.

Losing Maj Storm Green early on, UKAF rallied to 56-1 after 15 overs but a collapse saw five wickets fall for 21 runs and the home side's hopes were effectively ended when Cpl Sherwin Govender – making his last UKAF appearance – became the third of Torick Khan's four victims (8-4, 10-4).

Hill and Simon added 28 for the last wicket before the innings closed at 124 all out, Hill unbeaten on 24.



Banking on some cash

YOU cannot beat a typical British seaside scene.

Unfortunately, we don't have one, so you'll have to make do with two eccentric groups of Brits oddly dressed contesting a **tug o'war** on an occasionally-visible sandbank in the middle of the Solent.

For the second year running, members of the Edgar Evans Club donned Union Flag jackets and headed to Bramble Bank to challenge several other like-minded folk to one of the country's traditional sports.

The bank, which lies about one-and-a-half miles off Calshot, only pokes its head above the waterline at low spring tide... and is the venue for an annual cricket match between local yacht clubs (it's also the perfect place to beach a listing car transporter to prevent it capsizing, like the MV Höegh Osaka in early 2014).

The tug o'war is just one unusual sport in which club members throw their hats into the ring to raise money for Buckland Park Play Centre Association in Portsmouth.

It can be found in Malins Road in Buckland – the very street where, just over a century ago, one PO Edgar Evans lived with his wife Lois and their three children.

The gunner, who served at HMS Excellent, was a former trainer of the Portsmouth Command

field gun team for the inaugural year the contest was run at the Royal Tournament in 1907.

More famously, Evans was one of Capt Scott's ill-fated five-strong party which reached the South Pole after Roald Amundsen and became the first of the team to die after suffering a couple of injuries.

The club which bears his name was set up by LD Eamon 'Ginge' Fullen RNR and former LPT Rob De Silva to follow Evans' spirit of adventure – but with less dangerous pursuits in mind – raising money for the play centre in the process.

So as well as the mid-Solent tug o'war, club members have competed at the World Mountain Bike Chariot Racing and World Custard Pie Throwing championships, PO Graham 'Butts' Butterworth re-took the World Pea-throwing title, and the club hosted the World Elastic Band Pinging contest.

"The club continues to grow in both numbers and events," said WO1 Dickie Henderson, XO of Victory who officiated the tug o'war.

"We aim at making ideas a reality and dreams a memory – and we've raised several thousand pounds for our chosen charity."

Anyone interested in joining the club should contact Dickie on HMS Victory.

Rabbit leads top show for the RN

ROYAL Navy horse riders took part in various disciplines at the **Festival of Equitation** held at RAF Cranwell.

The long trip to Lincolnshire proved very successful in particular for Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark RNR and her horse Rabbit, who were placed third, fourth and fifth in Dressage classes on the Friday and then won the 85cm Arena Eventing on the Sunday.

DTUS Officer Cadet Alex Ward came fifth in the 75cm and first in the 65cm Show-Jumping classes on her hireling Steel – no mean feat considering it was her first-ever equestrian competition.

These two outstanding performances were great examples of how you are never too old to succeed (Rabbit at 19 equates to 57 human years) and that not having a horse should not stand in your way as you can lease a hireling to represent the RN in uniform.

PO Amy Taylor and Zenna returned to senior RN team duties after a summer break, along with Cdr Jo Bollen on Titus and Lt Becca Brown on Gibson, in the final leg of the Loriners Inter-Service competition.

A combined Dressage and Arena Eventing competition was run for the first time and the jumping phase proved influential, resulting in all teams suffering eliminations and thereby finishing on a three-way draw.

Finally, PO Taylor and Zenna made their mark in the final individual class of the Championship – the 95cm Arena Eventing – to earn a well-deserved third place.

Proportionally the RN contingent earned more than their share of the ribbons over the weekend and appreciated the efforts the RAF had gone to significantly improve their cross-country obstacles – roll on next year.

If you are a horse rider who would like to find out more about Dressage, Showjumping and Eventing in the RN please contact Cdr Jo Bollen on royalnavydsje@gmail.com



● Above, Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark on Rabbit; below, OC Alex Ward on Steel



Volley good effort

LONDON Aces provided the first real test for the UKAF Men's volleyball team.

The Aces, who won back-to-back promotions in the last two seasons, were on the back foot almost immediately and finished the first set 21-25 down to the UKAF.

The second set saw coach Al Burdett's blood pressure rise significantly. The London side raised their offensive game and began causing problems for UKAF's defence, with unforced errors beginning to creep in.

However, consistent passing from Sgt Phil Crawford RAF allowed experienced hitters Cpl Kev Colton RAF, Sub Lt Callum Moir RN, and Senior Aircraftman Mike Grainger RAF to regain the momentum in the second half of the set. UKAF took the set 26-24, giving them a 2-0 advantage over their hosts.

With the UKAF players now spurred on by the possibility of a 3-0 victory over a strong National League Division 1 team, the men came back from a six-point deficit in a hard-fought set to slip ahead at 22-21.

Flying Officer Ben Dunkley then notched up both a huge kill block and a powerful hit through the middle, back to back, crushing the Aces' hopes of a comeback and taking the set for UKAF 25-21.

The men then travelled to take on Derby Darkstar in their third cup fixture.

The visitors struggled in the first set, despite good blocks from Flying Officer Dunkley and Sub Lt Johnny Childs.

The set finished 27-25 to the home side with the visitors claiming the second set 25-22. The third and fourth sets were won by the Darkstars.

The UKAF Women were also in action as they took on MK City in the preliminary round of the VE Cup.

The first set was intense and saw the UKAF win 25-22, while the second set brought a drop in performance, finishing 15-22, and the coach, WO2 Nicola Mead, made a dynamic change of the team setup and this brought about wins in the third (25-11) and fourth (25-17) sets.

There was exceptional block defence from Kimi Dreganivula, also strong middle hitting and serving from Kerrie Stevens.

Hockey honours

A TEAM of both experienced and novice players from HMS Collingwood won the Eastern Region Inter-Establishment Indoor Hockey Championships.

The squad beat sides from HMS Sultan, HMS Nelson and HMS Queen Elizabeth to win the championship which selects the best players to represent Portsmouth Command in the Regional event at HMS Collingwood.

Three of the team took part in this year's World Masters Games in Auckland, New Zealand, with six of the current team selected to represent Portsmouth Command.

PO(UW) Timothy Mallett said: "These grassroots tournaments allow us older players to help develop the next generation of RN hockey players, and I am currently getting great satisfaction from seeing the Collingwood group develop and win at tournaments like this one."

Anyone interested in playing hockey should contact PO Mallett at Collingwood ext 4044 or LPT Sam Howard in the SARC.

Brothers celebrate Inter-Service title

THE Royal Navy Rugby League team took the Inter-Service trophy for the third time in four years.

Victory came after a dramatic final fixture between the Army and RAF – a huge points difference meant the RN needed the light blues to win.

And a last-minute converted try saw the RAF win, handing the trophy once again to the Senior Service.

RNRL Chairman Capt Paul Carroll joined players and backroom staff onboard HMS Victory to receive the trophy from Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock.

The Senior Service effectively won the trophy with a brilliant performance in Leeds against last year's champions the RAF.

Despite going behind early on, LS(WS) Darren Bamford's try kept the RN in the hunt as the Brothers took charge of the game.

The RN dominated the second quarter of the game; tries from LET Mike Haldenby and ET(ME) Josh Coupland plus two conversions from Bamford put the RN 16-10 ahead at the break.

The second half of the match belonged to the RN as 24 points were posted against the RAF without reply.

ET Coupland had a fantastic debut at senior level, completing a hat-trick of tries.

Mne Jamie Birdsall took the man-of-the-match award, as well as scoring a try on his own debut at IS senior level.

Once again skipper PO(AET) Ben Taylor led his team from the front as his pack dominated the RAF after the early exchanges.

The IS series then moved to Portsmouth for the second round, with the RN hosting the Army at Burnaby Road.

The Army have had a barren couple of years, losing to the RN on the last three occasions,



● Far left, Logs Roko Kurasasa; Left, LS Sam Alderson in action for the Wrenegades; Below, the RNRL squad receive the Inter-Service trophy from Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Jonathan Woodcock on HMS Victory



however a resurgent side came away with a victory after another enthralling match.

All looked set for another home win when after only eight minutes PO Taylor broke from deep in his own half, finding a way through the Army defence to race 70 metres for the score.

The Army had other ideas however and almost from the kick-off winger Pte Marc Mercer tied things up, and a conversion from Pte Mickey Hoyle had the soldiers in front.

RN indiscipline gave Hoyle the opportunity to take the points, however the RN did

breach the Army lines again before the break.

LAET Mark Robinson, in his last match before hanging up his boots, took the ball on the left to barrel his way over, 10-8 to the Army at the break.

The second half started in heavy rain but despite this, both sides did their best to play expansive rugby league.

But it was the Army who held sway as the game drew to a close, the ever-accurate Hoyle taking his chances to give his side a 14-8 lead as the game drew to a close.

The RN needed a draw at least from the match to be sure

of taking the title and pressed the Army again and again to get the breakthrough, which finally came in the dying minutes of the game.

Logs(SC) Sili Buinimasi punched a hole in the Army defence before passing to fellow Fijian Logistician Roko Kurasasa, who finished the move in spectacular fashion.

Effectively the game now hung on the conversion, it was however disappointment for the RN. Daren Bamford's kick was wide of the mark, and the Army took the game 14-12.

In the other competitions that make up the Inter-Service Rugby League series, the RN Women the Wrenegades returned to the full 13 a-side format.

Led by LS(Sea) Sam Alderson, the Wrenegades pushed the Army and RAF all the way, however once again it was the ever-strong Army women taking the trophy.

Similar results for the Men's Academy side saw them finish behind the RAF and series winners the Army, despite determined performances throughout the squad.

Ocean drive to complete 10k

TWENTY members of HMS Ocean's ship's company took part in the Foot Works Burger King 10k Beach Run in the sweltering 32°C heat of Miami.

The Royal Navy flagship called in on the US port following her work helping hurricane-hit islands in the Caribbean.

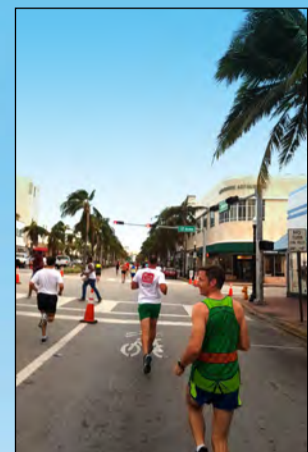
The run, which took place in the 74 per cent humidity of Miami's spectacular Lummus Park and South Beach, raises funds for the McLamore Foundation for underprivileged students in North America and Puerto Rico.

Overall the ship fared very well, with six runners finishing in the top 25 – a great performance considering the race had 337 competitors, the majority of whom were native Floridians well accustomed to the steamy weather of the Sunshine State.

The top Ocean runner was WOET(WE) Alan Fuller, who managed fifth place overall with a time of 41:43.

He was closely followed by CPO(AE) Douglas Veitch in 12th position, CPO Christian Bisgrove in 13th, CPO Dale Johnson in 22nd, CPO Shawn Challen in 24th and Sub Lt Hamish Cooper in 25th. Only six minutes and 22 seconds separated all six runners.

WOET(WE) Fuller said: "It



was great to be able to get some rest time alongside

Miami following our tasking on Op Ruman in the Caribbean. We thoroughly enjoyed the 10k run; the ship's company put in a really good showing despite the heat and humidity."

Commanding Officer of HMS Ocean Capt Robert Pedre said: "It has been a timely visit to Miami for my ship's company following their stalwart efforts to assist the people of the Caribbean in the wake of Hurricanes Irma and Maria.

"This visit has been necessary to embark fuel and stores and afforded a short break before returning to operations."



Captain set to be chasing shadows

THE Commanding Officer of Britannia Royal Naval College is putting on his running shoes to lead the college's fundraising contribution to the Royal Navy's own charity.

Capt Jol Woodard and his wife, Tilda, were taking part in the Great West Run, as Navy News went to press, and is hoping for support from colleagues and friends to raise money for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

While Capt Woodard describes himself as a recreational runner, who has competed in a few distance races over the years, Tilda, a Royal Navy Reservist, is an RN triathlete and seasoned competitor with numerous trophies to her name.

Capt Woodard said: "There is a bit of friendly competitive spirit between us, but normally what happens is we get eight miles in and then she leaves me behind."

"My objective is firstly to finish the race and then to hopefully do it in less than two hours. I've no doubt that Tilda will finish this half marathon much quicker than me."

Lt Cdr Woodard began her military career as an RAF helicopter pilot. She rowed for the RAF and originally ran middle-distance races before



stepping up to long distance and triathlons.

She said: "We've always run as a family. We took turns in pushing our then six-month-old daughter in her buggy around a half-marathon course many years ago."

"With us both working for the Royal Navy it's great to be able to keep any money we do raise in-house. We've set ourselves a target of £500, but it would be great to raise more."

Anyone wishing to show their support can do so online at: <http://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/JolWoodard>

Unique view of Solent for glider pilots

NO, we haven't published the photograph upside down – it's a Royal Navy glider pilot seeking a unique view of the Solent.

Soaring upside down proved the highlight as 19 Servicemen and women tried their hand at gliding.

Organised by the Royal Navy Gliding and Soaring Association, the annual training week was hosted by Portsmouth Naval Gliding Centre at Lee-on-the-Solent.

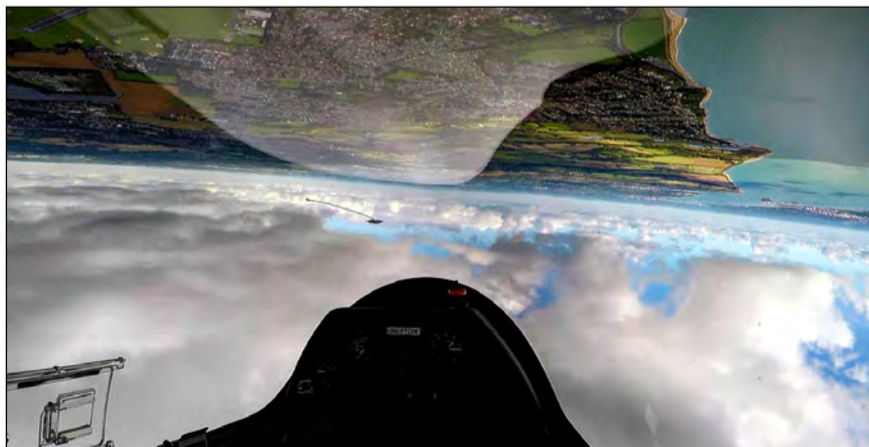
After a morning of safety briefings, the students were soon up and away. All were given an aero-tow launch to 3,000 feet above the Solent to get used to being airborne and to the glider they would be flying for the week.

Good weather blessed the course from Monday through to Thursday morning, during which students were taken through the British Gliding Association training syllabus by the volunteer instructors without whom the course would not have been possible.

This covered effects of controls, flying in a straight line – not so easy as it seems – turning and stalling, followed by more and more of the take-offs and landings as they learned to handle the glider and grew in confidence.

By the end of the week most of the students were competent enough to fly the whole sortie from take-off to landing and to enjoy the wonderful feeling of soaring like a bird over the Solent with only the noise of the wind in their ears and the sea and the Isle of Wight below.

Unfortunately, the weather closed in for the Thursday afternoon but the time was



used to underpin the flying done with a series of briefings on more advanced gliding and a great video of some amazing gliding in New Zealand.

NA(SE) Luke Rhodes from RNAS Culdrose said: "Flying with the Royal Navy gliding club was a great experience and a fantastic week of AT."

"Lucky for the course the weather was good, so we all had a great time. I will definitely be gliding again as it is great fun and well organised so everyone got loads of flying. BZ all round!"

CPO Jamie King from HMS Prince of Wales added: "Many thanks for organising this gliding introductory course."

"I thoroughly enjoyed my time in the glider

and I must especially highlight my gratitude towards my instructor; he was very friendly, accommodating and a great instructor."

Course leader and Chief Flying Instructor Lt Cdr Chris Bryning agreed that it had been a great week which all the students and instructors had enjoyed immensely.

He encouraged the students to continue the sport with one of the three Royal Navy gliding clubs – PNGC at Lee-on-the-Solent, Heron GC at RNAS Yeovilton and the Seahawk GC at RNAS Culdrose, which are open every weekend for Service personnel to enjoy the sport of gliding.

For links to the clubs and Joint Service gliding AT courses go to the RINGS website at www.ringsa.co.uk



Reigning on the river

Awesome performance by Senior Service rowers

ROYAL Navy rowers compete in the men's fours during a triumphant Joint Services Regatta for the Senior Service.

Pictured from left on the Thames are Midshipman Cormac McLaughlin, of 820 NAS, AET Chris Mitchell of CHF, Midshipman Giles Piggott, from HMS Sultan, and OC Sam Knight from BRNC.

They were among the RN sportsmen and women who picked up a clutch of medals at the event in Reading.

The Senior Service's male competitors won both the eights and quadruple sculls races to make it a clean sweep of the Inter-Service event.

Midshipman McLaughlin won the open single sculls final to be crowned Service Champion, while the women teamed up with the Army to beat the RAF in a close-fought eights race.

The Royal Navy had 17 rowers taking part in the 49th regatta, achieving victories at open, masters and novice levels.

The highlight of the day at Thames Valley Park was the Blue Riband Inter-Service Men's Eights.

The Royal Navy, with triple Olympic champion Lt Peter Reed in seat five, were clear favourites, defending the title they have held on to for the previous two years.

And it was the Senior Service side that stormed into a clear lead over the Army and RAF in the first 100 metres.

By the finish line the Navy crew were well ahead of their Army rivals in second, with the RAF in third.

The squad now settle down to a hard winter of individual training, preparing for next March's Head of the River Race, where they have their highest-ever ranking to defend against world-class crews.

Those with excess energy will also be competing in the Royal Navy Indoor Championships at HMS Temeraire on Thursday November 2.

Pictures: LPhot Louise George



● Clockwise from above, Olympic rower Lt Peter Reed in seat five for the Men's Eights; Right, OC Sam Knight; Below right, Mid Giles Piggott; Below, Surg Capt John Clarke, based at INM, on his way to victory in the Men's Masters; Left, The RN Men's Open Eights during the regatta