



# NAVY NEWS

JUNE 2022

## Diamond delivers for NATO

Type 45 destroyer HMS Diamond is pictured in the Mediterranean where she conducted routine operations on behalf of NATO (see pages 2-3)

Picture: LPhot Rory Arnold

**WIN**  
a copy of Chris Terrill's book on aircraft carriers  
- see page 27



**Inside: ■ Future Royal Navy ■ HMS Montrose drugs bust**

ISSN 0028-1670 06  
9 770028 167191  
Off-sale date: JUNE 30, 2022  
**£3.50**

**ROUGH CUT:** HMS Diamond's Wildcat helicopter, Rough Cut, is loaded up with the Sting Ray Torpedo during operations in the Mediterranean.

Picture by LPhot Rory Arnold



# ON MED ALERT

**THE illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine by Russia brought HMS Diamond into the Eastern Mediterranean in a show of unity and force by NATO.**

The Type 45 destroyer bolted itself onto the premier NATO task force in region – Standing Maritime Group 2, which is designed to react to world events and protect the security and prosperity of the Mediterranean.

As part of NATO's galvanised efforts in the region, Diamond worked closely with Italian, Spanish, Turkish, Canadian, Romanian and Greek warships, forging stronger bonds and learning ways of operating together in a range of naval warfare scenarios.

Diamond had been in the midst of maintenance but was rapidly readied for deployment after Ukraine was invaded by Russia on February 24.

HMS Diamond's Commanding Officer, Commander Peter Barfoot, said: "I am extremely proud of my team on board HMS Diamond for rising to the challenge when confronted by what has been a very short notice change to the ship's programme, they

have really stepped up to the mark.

"The transition from a scheduled maintenance period, post our extended 'out of area' operations as part of the UK's Carrier Strike Group (CSG21) deployment last year, to deploy on operations has been achieved in record time.

"Our integration as part of the NATO task group in the eastern Mediterranean has enhanced overall air defence capability, while supporting the NATO Alliance and allies to bolster maritime operations."

After sailing from Portsmouth, Diamond endured heavy seas in the Bay of Biscay before entering the Mediterranean and continuing through the Straits of Messina (between mainland Italy and Sicily).

She made a quick stop in Augusta, on the eastern coast of Sicily, before joining the NATO task group, which sits under the command of the Italians, with Admiral Mauro Panebianco leading from his flagship, the frigate ITS Carlo Margottini.

Like the UK, other NATO nations bolstered the NATO task group in the wake of events in Ukraine, with the Italians sending

ITS Vulcano, Spain ENS Blas de Lezo, Greece HS Aegan and the Canadians the HMCS Montreal.

That was all part of a wider effort, which saw the likes HMS Richmond and HMS Northumberland escort supply ships heading through the Baltic to deliver military vehicles and equipment to re-supply the UK-led NATO Battlegroup in Estonia.

In the Mediterranean, Diamond was on air defence duties in her specialist role, but the task group together practised surface warfare and carried out anti-submarine exercises to improve not only sailors' warfighting skills but also the rest of the NATO task group.

During this work, the task group often had Russian aircraft flying overhead keeping an eye on activity and Russian warships came to take closer look as the allied ships operated together.

Up in the skies, Diamond's Wildcat – the aptly named Rough Cut from 815 Naval Air Squadron – was in regular action, most notably fitting the Sting Ray Mod 1 Torpedo.

The torpedo's installation means the Wildcat can carry out anti-submarine operations, giving the helicopter extra teeth alongside



**FROM TOP LEFT: Diamond's warfare department in full swing during an air defence exercise; Diamond's Wildcat loaded with Martlet missiles; a matelot in action during Diamond's live firing exercises; Diamond sails in the Mediterranean. Pictures by LPhot Rory Arnold**

its Martlet lightweight multirole missile – that can take out aerial and surface threats – which Rough Cut also fired during deployment to the Mediterranean.

Diamond's sailors also regularly carried out man overboard and live firing exercises to keep them razor sharp for operations.

Capturing all the action was Leading Photographer Rory Arnold, who joined HMS Diamond in the middle of February at short-notice ahead of the deployment.

"I was not sure what to expect or what was going to happen which made the trip even more exciting," said LPhot Arnold.

"Whilst on Diamond I was tasked to cover life on board an operating warship, this ranged from photographing the marine engineers working in the main machinery spaces, chefs in the galley, flight operations, NATO exercises and gunnery.

"It is almost impossible for my job to get boring, every day I have a plan on what I am going to photograph and by lunchtime everything I had planned would be out the window as plans often change on an operating warship due to the environment you are in. I often found myself on the bridge wings taking intelligence imagery of Russian Maritime Patrol Aircraft and ships that would come in close proximity of the NATO task group.

"The deployment took me to Sicily, Greece, Turkey and Portugal. The ship's company were fantastic and made me feel very welcome. It was my first time on a Type 45 for a longer period of time, but I quickly got used to navigating around the ship and making myself at home for the few months I was there for.

"It is extremely satisfying to know that my imagery is often viewed by the highest ranked people of the armed forces structure

and also at ministerial level.

"Words can't express how amazing my job is and why I believe I have the best job in the Royal Navy. I travel all over the world taking photos and creating videos to be seen worldwide, and I help document the Royal Navy operations that I am on. It can be extremely stressful at times yet very rewarding."

Meanwhile, Diamond's sister Duncan is back at sea after a major overhaul that primes the Type 45 destroyer for the next five years at the sharp end of naval operations.

The cutting-edge warship left her home of Portsmouth on Sunday for the first time since November 2019 and has been in the waters off the South Coast putting her revamped equipment and systems through a series of comprehensive trials, and her sailors through intensive training.

The destroyer spent six rigorous years deployed across the Mediterranean, Middle East and Black Sea before spending 30 months undergoing her upgrade at the hands of specialists from BAE Systems, the MOD's Defence, Equipment and Support organisations and the Royal Navy at Portsmouth Naval Base.

Commanding Officer, Commander Ben Martin, hailed his ship's return to sea. "This is a significant event in the life of HMS Duncan as she continues her journey back to front line operations," he said.

"This has only been possible due to the strong relationship between BAE Systems, DE&S, our industrial partners and the Royal Navy.

"I am immensely proud of the sailors of HMS Duncan and what they have achieved so far; it is a real honour to lead such a

capable, enthusiastic and professional team."

Major changes were made to the pipework that provides cooling for the propulsion and high voltage equipment on board the cutting-edge air defence destroyer.

Her rudders were replaced and new software was installed, while the distinctive spherical radar system that sits atop the destroyer's foremast was completed refurbished.

The powerful radar is one of the centerpieces of the Type 45 destroyer, providing the warship with the ability to detect and track hundreds of targets at once.

The refit also saw a further 40 upgrades across systems, including enhancements to the satellite communications equipment, the installation of the latest radar that helps identify targets (known as Identification Friend of Foe) and updates to the IT kit used aboard.

All remaining equipment has been checked and tested by experts to ensure it is ready for the stresses and strains of another five years on the front line.

Among the 207 sailors aboard Duncan, there are many who are going to sea for the first time in their naval careers, including Able Rating Kayleigh Hearn, the youngest member of the crew.

"It is really exciting to be going to sea and putting into practice everything we have learned over the past few months," she said.

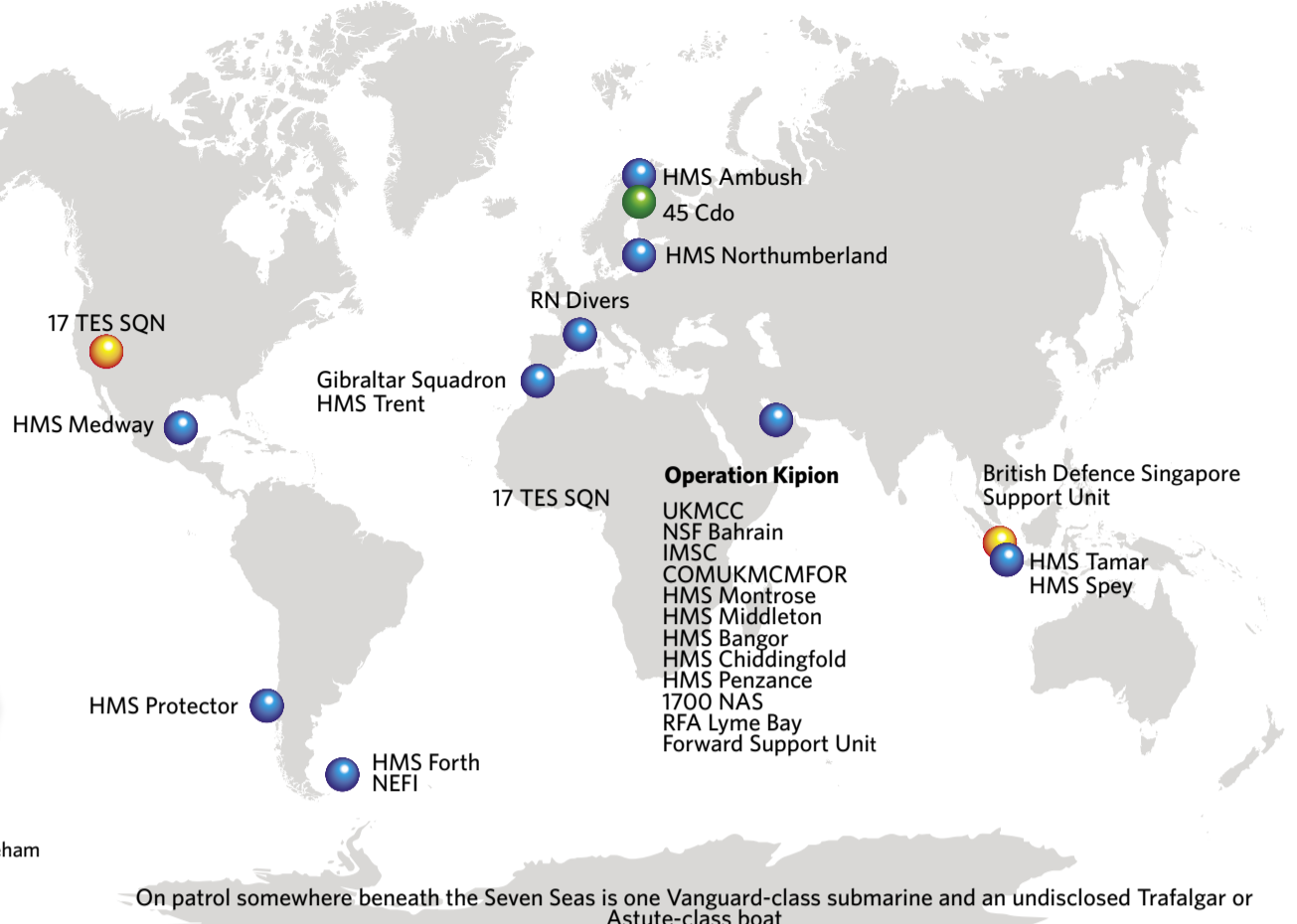
"Bringing a ship out of refit is really challenging but also hugely rewarding."

HMS Duncan spent time off the South Coast conducting sea training and putting her equipment through a series of trials, but was back alongside in Portsmouth periodically as she builds up.

### Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Queen Elizabeth  
HMS Lancaster  
HMS Portland  
HMS Duncan  
HMS Tyne  
HMS Mersey  
HMS Severn  
HMS Magpie

Project Wilton  
RFA Tidesurge  
RFA Argus  
814 NAS  
815 NAS  
824 NAS  
825 NAS



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



## GLOBAL | MODERN | READY

OUR main focus this month is on Type 45 destroyers as **HMS Diamond** joined a NATO task force in the Eastern Mediterranean in a show of unity and force by the organisation (see pages 1, 2 and 3).

Sister ship **HMS Duncan** (see page 3) is also back at sea after a major overhaul which primes the ship for the next five years at the sharp end of naval operations.

Personnel from the Royal Navy's Diving and Threat Exploitation Group worked with their French counterparts in disposing of land-based bombs and underwater mines (see pages 20-21).

The future Royal Navy fleet started to take shape as the construction of the first of five new frigates began (see page 5). In the new assembly hall in Rosyth dockyard in Scotland, the keel of **HMS Venturer** was laid in a ceremony which blended cutting-edge shipbuilding with naval history.

Defence contracts worth more than £2bn have been awarded to BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce to begin the third major phase of the future submarine nuclear deterrent programme – **Dreadnought** (see page 5).

The first of two new £5m patrol boats charged with guarding the waters around Gibraltar has been commissioned into the Royal Navy fleet (see page 7). The White Ensign was hoisted for the first time on **HMS Cutlass** in a ceremony at Gibraltar Naval Base and she has now started patrols of territorial waters around The Rock after months of rigorous trials.

The Royal Navy delivered its fourth blow to drug traffickers in the Middle East in as many months as **HMS Montrose** seized nearly £2m heroin (see pages 14-15). And among a flurry of activity in the Gulf, **HMS Bangor** received supplies from a robot boat (see page 15).

**HMS Northumberland** completed four months at the vanguard of naval operations from the Mediterranean to the freezing temperatures of the Arctic Circle (see page 6). The Type 23 frigate sailed more than 20,000 miles, escorting supply ships across the Baltic with the Joint Expeditionary Force, protecting the integrity of UK waters as the Royal Navy's very high readiness warship and working with NATO allies in the Arctic Circle.

The Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers are now more prepared for the rigours of Arctic operations (see page 11) thanks in part to ice man, Commander Harald thor Straten, of the Royal Norwegian Navy. He joined **HMS Prince of Wales** for a month during Arctic exercises, sharing more than 40 years' experience of operating in the extreme cold.

**HMS Albion** and **HMS Richmond** have returned to their home port of Devonport after spending weeks in the frozen fjords of Norway (see page 9). The pair had been working alongside other UK ships and units on NATO exercise Cold Response.

**First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key** spoke about the need for the RN and defence to futureproof themselves by embracing technology and how countries can work together against aggression (see right).

He also told an international conference in Australia that focusing on sea power in the Pacific was crucial to the UK's prosperity and security (see page 27).

Admiral Key's address came as the lead ship of the Royal Navy's renewed permanent presence in the region, **HMS Tamar**, completed her latest exercise with the Malaysian and Singaporean navies and on the back of last year's hugely-successful Carrier Strike Group deployment led by **HMS Queen Elizabeth** (see page 27).

**HMS Shoreham** paid an emotional final visit to the Sussex seaside town bearing her name (see page 19). Locals turned out in force to cheer the sailors through the town – and tour the minehunter – as she bade her goodbyes to various groups and associations who've been linked with the ship throughout her 20-year-career.

A Royal Navy warship has been found by divers on the Scottish seabed – almost 105 years to the day it sank (see page 13). Torpedo boat destroyer **HMS Jason** has not been seen since she struck a mine and sank off the island of Coll in the Inner Hebrides in April 1917.

An 80-year-old maritime mystery has finally been put to rest with the unveiling of a memorial to a Royal Navy submarine lost off Malta (see page 13). Serving Submariners from HM Naval Base Clyde and relatives of the crew of **HMS Urge** travelled to the Mediterranean island for a memorial service recalling those who perished when the wartime submarine struck an Axis mine off the coast.

Finally, it's competition time and you can win a copy of **Chris Terrill's** latest book, *How to Build an Aircraft Carrier* (see page 27).

# 1SL: Think global

## First Sea Lord's address at Sea Power Conference

BRITAIN'S most senior sailor said the Royal Navy's commitment to operating with international partners and embracing technology are as important as ever amid the ongoing conflict in Ukraine.

Speaking at the Sea Power Conference at Arundel House, in London, First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key reflected on the last defence review and said Russia's illegal and unprovoked invasion of Ukraine reinforced the Integrated Review's conclusions.

In his speech to the conference, held in conjunction with the International Institute of Strategic Studies, Admiral Key also spoke about the need for defence and the Royal Navy to futureproof themselves by embracing technology and how countries can work together against aggression.

Addressing both physical and virtual attendees, he said his 'call to arms' speech delivered in Rosyth in February (in the shipbuilding hall where Type 31 frigates are being built) recognised a huge and ambitious investment in the Royal Navy.

"Of course, we now know that at the same time, President Putin was making his final preparations for operations against and subsequently invading Ukraine," Admiral Key said.

"So has Ukraine changed the IR? Do we need to revisit its conclusions? In fact, I think it doubles down on some of those conclusions.

"We will have to react, we will have to respond to the reality of what we see going on around, we have to recognise that some of our assumptions about Russia are clearly wrong and what they mean."

He said the Review concluded there was an increasing risk of a return to state-on-state conflict; saw the importance of alliances and partnerships; reaffirmed the need for those in Defence to futureproof, by embracing technology and innovation and reiterated the need for joined-up approach across Government.

"When we talk about the return to state-on-state warfare, when we talk about the need to operate at high levels of intense warfare, we know that we're not going to do so alone," he said.

"NATO remains the key cornerstone of what we are going to do. As signalled in the IR, we have to be ready to defend our homeland.

"But we are not constrained to the Euro Atlantic and I welcome the announcement today by the Prime Minister about closer Defence ties with Japan. Just as we have made long-standing commitments with our



friends and allies including in New Zealand and Australia.

"So we count on the strength of our alliances and partnerships."

Delivering his 20-minute speech at the conference, also attended by Minister for Armed Forces and keynote speaker James Heappey, Admiral Key spoke about the Royal Navy's efforts to become the foremost naval power in Europe.

He added: "It's about mindset, it's about an impact and it's about being bolder, it's about being operationally effective. It's about being globally deployed, persistently present alongside those who matter to us and espousing the values of our nation."

"Operating at the heart of an integrated force and a leading contributor to defence and deterrence of what we hold dear. To achieve that, we will have to be digitised, we will have to be data driven and innovative."

"But we will only achieve all of that if at our heart we are people orientated. We must attract, train and retain the very best of the

talent available to us across our diverse and wonderful nation."

The Royal Navy's relationship with the United States was also highlighted, with the UK Carrier Strike Group working with US Marine Corps personnel and being escorted by US Navy ship USS The Sullivans.

The First Sea Lord also confirmed HMS Prince of Wales would host the Atlantic Future Forum in the US later this year.

He finished: "I'm heartened by the strength of everything that I see. And while I know that there are huge challenges ahead for our Service, we have the opportunity, working alongside all of you, whether international friends, commercial and industrial partners, or those who are at risk as well."

"I'm confident we can achieve what has been asked of us."

■ Read the speech in full at [royalnavy.mod.uk](http://royalnavy.mod.uk) and click on news and activity  
■ 1SL's speech to Pacific Sea Power Conference, see page 27



# Ace Venturer



THE future Royal Navy fleet has started to take shape with the construction of the first of five new frigates.

In the new assembly hall in Rosyth dockyard in Scotland, the keel of HMS Venturer was laid in a ceremony which blended cutting-edge shipbuilding with naval history.

Although the first steel was cut for the Inspiration-class Type 31 warship back in September last year, laying the keel is formally regarded as the moment construction of a ship begins.

Over it in coming months will rise a 6,000-tonne warship and, alongside it from next year, the second ship in the class, HMS Active; the Venturer Hall is large enough to allow two frigates – each longer, wider and heavier than the Type 23 warships they replace – to be constructed side by side.

"Today's keel laying ceremony connects Royal Navy tradition with 21st-Century shipbuilding," said Rear Admiral Paul Marshall, the Royal Navy's Director Navy Acquisition. "The short seven months between HMS Venturer's first steel being cut and her keel being laid demonstrates the continuing pace of the Type 31 programme building on cutting edge processes, skills and facilities in Scotland and the UK which should ensure that the Royal Navy gets the capability it needs on time."

The keel was placed upon a coin minted especially for the occasion – in keeping with Royal Navy tradition – watched by representatives from the Navy and the shipbuilding industry.

The special coin – designed by seven-year-old Josh Duffy, whose mother works for Babcock, the firm constructing HMS Venturer – is said to bring the ship and her crew luck.

Each ship is larger than the current Type 23s they replace but slightly shorter and lighter than HMS Glasgow and the seven other planned Type 26 frigates also being built for the fleet in Govan, just 35 miles

away. The 26s will focus on anti-submarine warfare – like eight Type 23s fitted with towed arrays – leaving the 31s to carry out patrols wherever they are needed, from conducting counter-terrorism/drug smuggling patrols in the Indian Ocean to helping out in the aftermath of a disaster.

The 31s have been designed and are being built for the Royal Navy, but with one eye firmly on the export market; the Polish and Indonesian Navies have selected the design for their future fleets.

Each ship is equipped with three Pacific 24 boats – crucial for board-and-search/counter narcotics work – a 57mm gun and two 40mm secondary guns, Sea Ceptor air defence missiles – also fitted to Type 23 and 26 frigates – with off-the-shelf sensors and computer systems.

And the flight deck can host helicopters up to the size of a Chinook, although more typically Royal Navy Merlins and Wildcats.

A typical crew will be just over 100, but with space – notably for Royal Marine detachments – for up to 187 personnel on board.

All five ships being built take their names from previous predecessors which wrote their name large in naval annals thanks to inspirational actions and deeds.

In Venturer's case, she's named after the first submarine to torpedo and destroy another boat while both craft were submerged. After Venturer and Active come HMS Formidable, Bulldog and finally Campbelltown.

The construction of the Type 31 frigates is part of a wider investment in UK yards and industry under the Government's National Shipbuilding Strategy of more than £4bn over the next three years alone.

The money spent by the MOD alone directly supports around 25,000 jobs across the United Kingdom, plus some 20,000 jobs supported indirectly.



## Milestone reached in securing future of nuclear deterrent

£2bn contracts worth more than £2bn have been awarded to BAE Systems and Babcock to begin the third major phase of the future submarine nuclear deterrent programme – Dreadnought.

The overall programme supporting 30,000 jobs across the UK, from design to build, Delivery Phase 3 presents the most significant stage of the programme so far.

Phase 3 alone, it supported around 13,500 jobs in the North-west of England and a further 6,300 over the rest of the UK, making a significant contribution to the Government's industrial strategy.

The investment is the latest financial commitment between the Ministry of Defence, Babcock and Rolls-Royce, and is the initial phase within a planned overall total of £10bn for the whole delivery phase.

The programme will see the first of four submarines, the Dreadnought Class, exit the Barrow-in-Furness shipyard to begin sea trials, laying the foundation to sustain the Continuous At-Sea Deterrence (CASD) for as long as the

international security situation makes it necessary.

Defence Procurement Minister, Jeremy Quin, said: "The Dreadnought-class will be crucial to maintaining and safeguarding our national security, with the nuclear deterrent protecting every UK citizen from the most extreme threats, every minute of every day."

The Dreadnought programme also brings huge benefits to the BAE Systems' Submarines Academy for Skills and Knowledge, based at the Barrow-in-Furness site. Opened in 2018, the academy is currently training more than 1,050 apprentices and graduates, with a further 230 craft apprentices, 110 degree apprentices and 90 graduates set to join this year.

The Dreadnought Class will be one of the most complex machines constructed and it will operate in one of the most hostile environments on the planet.

As the largest class of submarine ever built for the Royal Navy, each boat will boast 26.4 miles of pipework and more than 20,000 cables stretching 215 miles – further than

traveling between London and Leeds.

First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir Ben Key, said: "We welcome the faith shown in the Royal Navy and our people that submarines remain the optimum means of securely deploying the independent nuclear deterrent. This investment will enable the transition from the Vanguard to Dreadnought-class submarines – an enormous challenge, and one we in the Royal Navy willingly accept."

"We have provided over 50 years of unbroken Continuous At Sea Deterrence and we will ensure that the Royal Navy provides the ultimate guarantee of security for the United Kingdom for the next five decades and beyond."

Looking ahead, a £160 million contract has been awarded to Raytheon UK for the Dreadnought crew training at HM Naval Base Clyde.

This will see more high-quality jobs being based on the Clyde, further highlighting the importance of the base and the Dreadnought programme to Scotland and the defence of the UK and its allies.



# From sun to snow and then home



HMS Northumberland completed four months at the sharp end of naval operations from the Mediterranean to the freezing temperatures of the Arctic Circle.

The Type 23 frigate sailed more than 20,000 miles, escorting supply ships across the Baltic with the Joint Expeditionary Force, protecting the integrity of UK waters as the Royal Navy's very high readiness warship and working with NATO allies in the Arctic Circle.

After operating across the Atlantic, Mediterranean, North Sea, Norwegian Sea, Arctic, Baltic and Gulf of Finland, the warship returned home to Plymouth last month.

Engineering Technician (Weapons Engineering) Aaron Jenner said: "This is my first time away in the Royal Navy. I've had a fantastic time and it's been really good to experience life at sea and to learn more about what the ship can do beyond its primary role of ASW."

Commander Will Edwards-Bannon, the Ship's Commanding Officer, added: "I couldn't be more proud of the way my ship's company responded to fast-changing events over the past four months."

"Time and again, they proved they were ready for anything and demonstrated an impressive – and typically Northumbrian – sense of resilience whenever our mission changed or the seas were particularly rough."

"They have been fantastic ambassadors for the UK while working alongside our NATO allies and JEF partners, with whom we have been proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder during these difficult times."

Northumberland departed in January for anti-submarine warfare tasking around UK waters and the North Atlantic.

She trained with an Astute-class submarine to test her sailors' abilities to deal with underwater threats and after a short pit-stop in Faslane, became the Royal Navy's Fleet Ready Escort – the warship working at very high readiness to respond to security threats around the UK and anything the British Government required.

Expecting to return to anti-submarine warfare operations, Northumberland was tasked to head to the Baltic Sea in support of the Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF): a UK-led task force which is held at high-readiness to respond to global events.

In this case, Northumberland helped escort a ferry carrying Danish military equipment through the Baltic en-route to Estonia, through simulated hostile waters and accompanied by the Danish frigate Niels Juel – relishing the opportunity to train alongside her Danish military counterparts.

Next up for the ship was Exercise Cold Response – NATO's largest military exercise in the Arctic for 30 years. In support, Northumberland headed to Norway and joined the Standing NATO Maritime Group 1 - returning to her primary role as an anti-submarine warfare platform in support of the aircraft carrier, HMS Prince of Wales.



Throughout this busy period, the crew had to endure heavy seas and cold weather, regularly sweeping snow and chipping ice off the decks. They were also treated to stunning displays of the Aurora Borealis and were able to conduct a spot of whale watching, including a pod of orcas.

The ship's Meteorological Officer Lieutenant Olivia Floyd said: "We've had some significant wave heights during our time away and we really have seen all the seasons during the past four months. But when the weather did clear, the views in the fjords were magnificent."

Apart from offering an opportunity to enjoy Norway's scenery and wildlife, Exercise Cold Response tested the frigate's ability to defend against air, surface and sub-surface threats as well as learn to fight as part of a task group.

After a brief visit to Narvik, almost 82 years to the day since the Royal Navy's battles there in World War Two, Northumberland returned to escorting duties – this time accompanying the Italian aircraft carrier Giuseppe Garibaldi to the English Channel and once again capitalising upon opportunities for international training – culminating in a flying visit by Italian sailors and aircrew from the carrier.

After wishing following seas to the Giuseppe Garibaldi, Northumberland returned to the Baltic, re-joining warships in SNMG1 and participating in a busy programme of training and conducted security operations.

Towards the end of her time with NATO, she visited the Estonian capital Tallinn where her Ship's Company took full advantage of the opportunity to enjoy a trip ashore.

During this four month deployment, Northumberland sailed more than 20,000 miles across the Atlantic, Mediterranean, North Sea, Norwegian Sea, Arctic, Baltic and Gulf of Finland.

Pictures: LPhoto Robert Oates





# Welcome to the family

THE first of two new £5m patrol boats charged with guarding the waters around Gibraltar has been commissioned into the Royal Navy fleet.

The White Ensign was hoisted for the first time on HMS Cutlass in a ceremony at Gibraltar Naval Base and she has now started patrols of territorial waters around the Rock after months of rigorous trials.

Cutlass will soon be joined by her sister ship HMS Dagger to complete a £10m investment in new small, fast and agile patrol boats for the Gibraltar Squadron.

More than 100 sailors – their friends and family – gathered to watch the commissioning ceremony, which saw Lieutenant Commander Adam Colman assume command of Cutlass.



Gibraltar's Commander British Forces, Commodore Steve Dainton, His Excellency Sir David Steel, Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and Mrs Justine Picardo were also in attendance.

Prayers and the Naval Hymn were conducted by Reverend David Conroy, Deputy Chaplain of the Fleet.

Mrs Picardo, *pictured top right*, has been named the Lady Sponsor of HMS Cutlass, which is the first time a Gibraltarian has been appointed the sponsor of one of Her Majesty's ships.

Commander Colman said: "It is an honour to be able to mark this very special occasion today."

Cutlass has now started duties



around The Rock, replacing P2000 HMS Pursuer, which has been operating alongside sister HMS Dasher in Gibraltar's waters.

Cutlass and Dagger are the permanent replacements for the now decommissioned HMS Sabre and Scimitar which safeguarded Gibraltar's waters for nearly two decades.

P2000 patrol ships HMS Dasher and Pursuer have acted as the Royal Navy's presence around Gib, joining the squadron's Pacific 24 RIBS on patrol, but Cutlass and Dagger will soon both be permanent replacements.

Built by Merseyside-based Marine Specialised Technology, whose team is working with the RN squadron to introduce Cutlass into service, the new boats are 19 metres long – slightly longer than Sabre and Scimitar, slightly shorter than Dasher and Pursuer – can hit speeds of 40 knots and are equipped with three machine-guns and the latest electronic/optical equipment to assist in identifying potential threats.

The Gibraltar Squadron provides security in British Territorial Waters, keeping close watch over Gibraltar's shores, reassuring its 34,000 inhabitants, demonstrating UK sovereignty, exercising with local and visiting forces, and provide protection to visiting warships, submarines and support vessels alongside their civilian counterparts in the Gibraltar Defence Police force. Its boats are on the Rock around the clock – 365 days a year.



## The Forces Pension Society exists to help you make better pension choices.

Join us. Job done.



Making choices affecting your pension income is unavoidable. But making the choices that work best for you and your family can involve complex pension calculations.

And now even greater complexity has been added as a consequence of the McCloud Remedy. This affects all those serving on or before 31st March 2012 and on or after 1st April 2015 (including service leavers). You will have to choose between the entitlements of your legacy scheme and AFPS 15 for the Remedy period. This decision will need to be made from October 2023 onwards.

So it's reassuring to know when faced with pension choices, that our Forces Pensions Consultants will be there to provide individual guidance to our Members. Job done.

### Independent, not-for-profit

Independence is vital to our work, calling governments to account whenever we spot unfairness or injustice in the system. We also give you a voice where it counts, on the representative bodies for Armed Forces and Public Services Pensions.

We are funded by our Members' subscriptions. Any surplus helps fund our outreach programmes of Roadshows, Webinars and our attendance at CTP Employment Fairs.

### Visit: [forcespensionsociety.org/join-now/](https://forcespensionsociety.org/join-now/)

Annual membership for you and your spouse/partner is just **£42**. You will have exclusive access to our Forces Pensions Consultants, our informative Members' Webinars and you'll receive our bi-annual e-newsletters and magazine, Pennant.

You'll also have access to our wide range of membership benefits from discounts on new cars and white goods, to insurances, including our latest range of Covid-protected travel policies, plus a great deal more.



Scan to join

**IT PAYS TO UNDERSTAND YOUR PENSION**

### Forces Pension Society

68 South Lambeth Road, Vauxhall, London SW8 1RL.

T:020 7820 9988 E: [memsec@forpen.co.uk](mailto:memsec@forpen.co.uk) [www.forcespensionsociety.org](http://www.forcespensionsociety.org)



*Atkins & Co.*  
*Chartered Accountants*



# CASH FOR YOU

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

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

**FIXED FEE OF £120 PER YEAR**  
**NO REFUND – NO FEE**

- Over 14 years experience
- Family connections with RN and RM
- Bootneck and Matelot friendly
- Qualified accountants covering all areas of accounts, tax returns and Ltd Companies
- Self Assessment tax returns including rental property, child benefit, Pension excess, income over £100k

**E: [info@atkinsandco.com](mailto:info@atkinsandco.com)**

**W: [www.atkinsandco.com](http://www.atkinsandco.com)**

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





Picture: LPhot Barry Swainsbury

# ARCTIC OPERATION: COMPLETE

ROYAL Navy ships have returned to their home ports after spending weeks in the frozen fjords of Norway.

HMS Albion was welcomed back to Plymouth, followed by warship HMS Richmond. The pair had been working alongside other UK ships and units on NATO exercise Cold Response which saw 30,000 personnel from 26 nations train together in Arctic warfare.

Type 23 frigate Richmond spent time operating with NATO command ship HMS Prince of Wales, protecting and escorting the aircraft carrier as she went through her cold-weather trials and directed the operations of other allied vessels.

Meanwhile, Albion was the spearhead of amphibious elements of Cold Response with her embarked Littoral Strike Group practising raids along the shoreline.

HMS Richmond left Devonport Naval Base in February after two months of maintenance

following her global deployment with the Carrier Strike Group last year.

First she headed to the Baltic Sea where she worked with ships and personnel from Denmark, Sweden, Lithuania, Latvia, Poland, Estonia, the United States and France.

After conducting patrols and escorting supply ships, the frigate headed north to join up with aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales for Cold Response.

The harsh environment of the Arctic Circle tested the ship and her sailors but they handled the below freezing temperatures and were able to operate successfully alongside NATO allies and partners.

With the exercise finished, she headed to Iceland – an enjoyable for many of the ship's company.

"A highlight has been the opportunity to visit new countries I wouldn't necessarily visit in Civvy Street, both Stavanger and Iceland were great port visits," said Able Seaman John Robson, 31.

"Going so far north and seeing ice sheets was another experience I wouldn't necessarily get outside the Royal Navy. It has been an interesting and challenging experience operating in cold environments."

Going so far north also meant the sailors were able to see the Northern Lights which for AB Aiden McCabe was one of his highlights.

The 22-year-old added: "Seeing the Northern Lights on my birthday was something I won't forget. Also a snowball fight on the flight deck in the middle of the ocean."

"I've enjoyed working in a job with a wide variety, each day was something different."

For HMS Albion's time in the Arctic Circle, the focus was on the Royal Marines and the amphibious elements of Cold Response.

Against the stunning backdrop of the Norwegian fjords, at times under the backlight of the Aurora Borealis, landing craft from Albion transferred Royal Marines and their

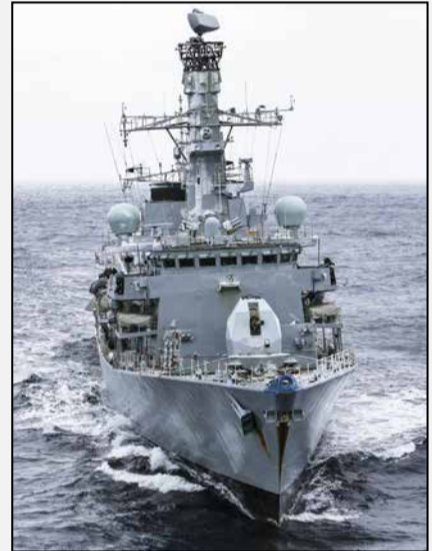
equipment ashore.

She was also the base for defence engagement visits during her time alongside in Stavanger where she hosted 60 staff from NATO's Joint Warfare Centre.

Captain Simon Kelly, Commanding Officer of HMS Albion, said: "We have conducted a busy couple of months training with our NATO partners in the High North. The Norwegian Fjords have been an incredible and challenging part of the world to operate in."

"They have provided us with a fantastic opportunity to successfully deliver amphibious effect in one of the most extreme environments on the planet."

"After a busy start to 2022, Exercise Cold Response was a great opportunity to integrate UK Commando Forces into a larger multi-national maritime task group, whilst demonstrating to our NATO partners the capability and versatility of the UK's high readiness amphibious assault ship."



● HMS Richmond on operations in the Arctic.

Pictures: LPhot Ben Corbett



Reference code: NAVY

**The Royal Alfred Seafarers' Society**

Providing the highest standards of residential, nursing, dementia and respite care, including sheltered housing for independent living, for former seafarers and their dependents. Set in a 14 acre estate, our Surrey based care home provides like-minded companionship and support for seafarers and a safe haven for those in old age.

IF YOU KNOW SOMEONE WHO NEEDS OUR HELP, PLEASE CONTACT US  
 T- 01737 360 106 E- admin@royalalfred.org.uk www.royalalfredseafarers.com

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

## Worcestershire Medal Service Ltd

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



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

See our web site where you can order securely on-line

[www.worcmedals.com](http://www.worcmedals.com)

or call 01527 835375 and our team will be pleased to help you.



## THERE THEN, HERE NOW

In 1982, SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity helped support all those who were part of the Falklands Taskforce. Those incredible members of the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force and their families affected by the conflict received practical, emotional or financial support they deserved. And we still provide it today.

Whether you needed help then or do so now, reach out to Forcesline for free and confidential help that lasts - **don't keep quiet, talk to us.**

**0800 260 6767**

Free and confidential. Open weekdays,  
09:00 to 17:30 Or get in touch online at

**[ssafa.org.uk/forcesline](https://ssafa.org.uk/forcesline)**

**ssafa** | the  
**Armed Forces**  
charity

**Regulars | Reserves | Veterans | Families**

Registered as a charity in England and Wales Number 210760 in Scotland Number SC038056 and in Republic of Ireland Number 20202001. Established 1885.

**40**  
**FALKLANDS**  
1982 - 2022

The Royal Norwegian Navy's Liaison Officer, Commander Harald thor Straten, spent time deployed with HMS Prince of Wales in the Arctic

Picture by LPhot Bill Spurr



## ICE MAN HELPS ROYAL NAVY RAISE ITS ARCTIC GAME FOR AIRCRAFT CARRIER OPERATIONS...

**THE Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers are now more prepared for the rigours of Arctic operations thanks in part to ice man, Commander Harald thor Straten, of the Royal Norwegian Navy.**

Cdr thor Straten joined HMS Prince of Wales for a month during Arctic exercises, sharing more than 40 years' experience of operating in the extreme cold.

HMS Prince of Wales recently sailed within 900 miles of the North Pole, demonstrating the ability of the UK's two 65,000-tonne Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carriers to operate in the harshest environmental conditions.

Harald is an expert in ice, ship and aircraft operations in cold climates, using his knowledge of how the ice affects navigation and warfare operations to increase the Royal Navy's understanding in conducting its own cold weather operations.

"The next time a Queen Elizabeth-class aircraft carrier will be sailing into these waters, they will be more ready and prepared by using the reports of the trials and operations the ship has covered," he said.

"It will be of great importance that this experience has been updated in 2022 as a reference for other navies. I feel very privileged to have been able to offer advice and ideas as to what the Norwegians do when we face similar cold weather challenges.

"You can't control nature, it controls you. One of the hardest things when operating in the ice is knowing what to do. Sometimes nature can do unexpected things that can put you in a challenging situation. The main danger is doing nothing, that's when a small situation can turn dangerous if you don't react immediately."

As HMS Prince of Wales began her journey deep into the Arctic, Cdr thor Straten's expertise was extremely valuable; he held regular meetings with the various departments on board to discuss ice operations.

When different challenges arose, Harald was on hand to offer opinions and ideas as to the approach of the Royal Norwegian Navy when they face similar challenges.

Harald offered advice on meteorological factors, what plummeting sea temperatures mean for daily life, the effects of ice on the ship and its surfaces and equipment.

He also provided expertise on the dangers of drifting ice and from drifting timbers from cargo ships around the Arctic.

It didn't end with the ship's material ability to operate, with Harald looking at the impact of the conditions on sailors – from sharing information on ice bites, protective clothing, survival suits and making sure

# BEFORE THE THAW, THERE'S THOR



the crew working outside had the correct clothing.

Lieutenant Commander Chris Poulson, the navigation officer on HMS Prince of Wales, worked closely with Harald.

He said: "His advice has been pivotal in supporting and confirming courses of action. He has been an invaluable addition to command. Cdr thor Straten's extensive experience operating in the Arctic is evident and myself and the Royal Navy are very grateful to him and the Royal Norwegian Navy."

Cdr thor Straten is now close to finishing his career with the Royal Norwegian Navy, having joined 40 years ago.

Harald – who is nearly 60 – has worked with fast patrol boats, in the coast guard, on exercise planning and he even taught at the Naval Academy in Bergen, Norway.

He also served at the Norwegian's Joint Headquarters as a coast guard officer and completes another first with HMS Prince of Wales.

"This is my first time sailing with a carrier, I'm very excited," he said. "It's a privilege to come onboard this fantastic ship, the crew have been so friendly and helpful."

"It's been a real pleasure working with the Royal Navy and getting to know its people onboard HMS Prince of Wales.

"They have all been so eager to get to know me, and friendly and helpful. I've had many people ask me if I could help them with their reports on the cold weather operations, and I said – I'm here to serve, I'm available 24/7, so use me."

China Fleet  
Country Club  
\*\*\*\*



## **WE WANT YOU TO STAY WITH US**

**For Only £90.00 per night**

(valid until 31st May 2023)

Sleeps 2 adults and 2 children, includes use of the health club facilities

Book online - Use Promo Code: RNRM

(ID must be produced before stay. Available for all serving and ex-serving Royal Navy personnel.)

## **YOU ARE A MEMBER!**

**All serving RN personnel**

Join online for FREE to receive amazing discounts for you and your family

T&Cs apply to all

Call 01752 848668

[www.china-fleet.co.uk](http://www.china-fleet.co.uk)



# WW1 WARSHIP FOUND AFTER 105 YEARS



A ROYAL Navy warship has been found by divers on the Scottish seabed – almost 105 years to the day it sank.

Torpedo boat destroyer HMS Jason has not been seen since she struck a mine and sank off the island of Coll in the Inner Hebrides in April 1917.

But after five years of research and surveying, the wreck of the Jason was found first on sonar – then confirmed by a team of divers who plunged 93 metres into the chilly waters.

They found the warship in surprisingly good condition – but minus her bow, blown off when she struck the mine... ironically during a minesweeping operation in company with HMS Circe.

The depth, weather and water conditions, the undulating seabed and the fact that dives are only possible at certain times of year have meant the wreck had not been found – despite Jason's loss being accurately documented, even photographed, at the time.

The discovery is the work of historians Wendy Sadler and Kevin Heath from Lost in Waters Deep, who research contemporary records and the personal history of crew, and a team from Orkney-based SULA Diving led by Steve Mortimer and their support boat MV Clasina, skippered by Bob Anderson.

A sonar scan earlier this year suggested HMS Jason had been found – no other wrecks were known in the area – but it needed visual confirmation.

At 93 metres down, divers had just 20 minutes to inspect the wreck before returning to the surface.

They found tell-tale features of a warship: a pointed stern, a distinctive propeller, two 4.7in guns and Admiralty crockery.

Among the dive team was Royal Navy officer Lieutenant Jen Smith who works at the Fleet's headquarters in Portsmouth.

"There was excitement at finding the wreck, but that's quickly tempered by the fact that it's a war grave – 25 men died here," she said.

"It's incredibly moving to think that no-one has seen the ship since her stern disappeared 105 years ago. Families knew the fate of the ship, but now they



will know where she is and that can bring closure."

Mr Mortimer added: "It was a privilege to help identify the remains of this vessel. 25 families can now take comfort that the location of their relatives' ship is precisely known. We think that's important."

Twenty-five men were killed but only one body was recovered – that of 25-year-old Stoker James Blackman from Southsea.

The warship – built in 1892 as a torpedo gunboat but turned into a makeshift minesweeper – ran over a mine laid by German submarine U-78, part of a field intended to block the Minches. She went down in little more than five minutes, enough time for three quarters of her crew to escape.

Steps will now be taken to ensure HMS Jason is protected under UK law as an official war grave, allowing divers to visit – but not touch – the wreck, while the team who discovered the site plan to return to document the warship more thoroughly.

"Documenting the ship, showing people what she's like today is important to me," said Lieutenant Smith, who has 25 years' experience as a diver.

"Naval war graves are often forgotten, as it's hard for people to remember what you can't see. Whilst land battlefields and cemeteries such as those in Normandy or the Somme can be visited by anyone, only a few of us can visit a shipwreck. So the more we can show, explain what happened to her and her sailors, the better. It's important to make sure those who served are not forgotten."

You can learn more about the ship and her crew at: [www.lostinwatersdeep.co.uk/hms-jason.html](http://www.lostinwatersdeep.co.uk/hms-jason.html)



# WW2 BOAT MYSTERY SOLVED AFTER 80 YEARS

AN 80-YEAR-OLD maritime mystery has finally been put to rest with the unveiling of a memorial to a Royal Navy submarine lost off Malta.

Serving submariners from HM Naval Base Clyde and relatives of the crew of HMS Urge travelled to the Mediterranean island for a memorial service recalling those who perished when the wartime submarine struck an Axis mine off the coast. Thirty-two crew, eleven naval passengers and one civilian were lost in the tragedy.

For almost eight decades the final fate of HMS Urge was unknown and it was only thanks to a remarkable feat of historical detective work that the mystery was solved.

The U-Class submarine, which was commissioned in 1940 and initially based at Dundee, was assigned to the Tenth Submarine Squadron in Malta in April 1941.

During her time in the Mediterranean she served with distinction, completing some 18 patrols, torpedoing an enemy battleship, sinking an enemy cruiser, and attacking enemy ships supplying the Axis troops in North Africa.

The submarine was even involved in top secret missions to land intelligence agents and some of the earliest Special Boat Service (SBS) Commandos on enemy-occupied soil.

But the intensity of attacks on Malta during this point in the War forced the Royal Navy to eventually move their vessels to Alexandria in Egypt. Out of the five submarines which sailed only four made it to their destination. HMS Urge was never heard from again.

It was assumed that the Commanding Officer of Urge, Lieutenant Commander Edward Tomkinson DSO\* and his crew fell victim to enemy action. But it wasn't until Francis Dickinson, the Lieutenant Commander's grandson, teamed up with the University of Malta and a Canadian naval researcher that their final fate was known.

"Malta was among the most heavily bombed places during the Second World War and it got to the point that it was safer to be at sea than in harbour there," said Francis Dickinson. "In my search for HMS Urge, naval researcher Platon Alexiades and I contacted Timmy Gambin at the University of Malta and together we formed a search project."

He continued: "Records of HMS Urge's patrols are held in the National Archives, including records of the route which she was to take on leaving Malta."

"Using these, and my grandfather's Wartime letters, we began putting together the answer to what happened."

"Timmy Gambin's expert knowledge of the waters and wreck sites around Malta and search capabilities were vital, and Platon Alexiades provided invaluable research on Axis plans which revealed that they had laid a minefield on the route HMS Urge was to take, just a few days before she sailed for Alexandria."

Using this knowledge, in October 2019 the University of Malta team pinpointed what they believed was the wreck of Urge a few miles off the Maltese coast. Although they were almost certain, a dive of the wreck was needed to confirm it.

Unfortunately, the COVID-19 pandemic interfered with plans and it was only in 2021 that Timmy Gambin could coordinate the dive team which made the 300-foot descent to the resting place of the submarine.



The team were able to positively identify lettering on the hull confirming that it was HMS Urge and also confirm evidence that she had been damaged by a maritime mine.

The new memorial to HMS Urge is situated at Fort St Elmo, facing out to sea in the direction of the remains of the submarine. The solemn unveiling was also attended by President of Malta, George Vella, and British High Commissioner, Katherine Ward. Members of the Armed Forces of Malta performed a gun salute in honour of HMS Urge.

There was also the opportunity for families and submariners to lay wreaths in the sea above the wreck and a service at St Paul's Pro Cathedral on the island. Head of the Royal Navy Submarine Service, Commodore Jim Perks, also gave a talk at the University of Malta the day before the memorial unveiling.

Francis Dickinson, said: "One of the best things about the discovery of HMS Urge has been the way it has brought together families of crew members. About 35 of us have made the journey to Malta for the memorial service with many more following in the UK and beyond."

"It is a privilege to remember all those who were lost in HMS Urge," he said. "This is also a story of appreciation for Malta and the Maltese people. I would like to pay tribute to them and their endurance and spirit during the War years and the connections formed with Malta today through this work."

Commodore Jim Perks, the Head of the Submarine Service, who also attended the memorial unveiling, said: "It has been an absolute privilege and an honour to be able to represent the Royal Navy Submarine Service at the commemoration events held this week."

"To meet the families and the team from the University of Malta and Malta Heritage who have made this possible has been genuinely humbling. Our heritage and history remain important to all Submariners today."

Pictures: Jeremy Wonnacott, Heritage Malta and Francis Dickinson



## LIVE Gulf of Oman

**DRUGS bust.** Cutting-edge drone tech. Explosions. A new international task force. Another 'tick' for Anglo-American naval cooperation.

Barely any of it has made a ripple in the news agenda. But every day for the past month Royal Navy ships, sailors and Royal Marines in the Middle East have knuckled down on operations... as they always do.

**HMS Montrose** is coming towards the end of her extended stint in the Gulf (three years, four months and counting)... and once again underlined the importance of her presence with her fourth blow to drug traffickers in as many months.

The frigate pounced on a dhow while conducting a sweep of the Gulf of Oman as part of Combined Task Force 150.

After a team of Royal Marines secured the suspect vessel, sailors scoured the craft from bow to stern in a nine-hour operation.

They discovered numerous sacks hidden aboard – sacks which tests showed contained heroin. Weighed back on HMS Montrose, the seizure came to 90 kilogrammes, worth £1.8m on the streets of the UK according to the National Crime Agency.

"Being part of the team that secured the vessel and then discovered the drugs in large sacks hidden within the dhow, was really satisfying,"

said Lieutenant Chris Bonnick, the Royal Marine in charge of HMS Montrose's commando detachment.

"At 42 Commando we train for this type of work constantly and it is fantastic to see that training deliver operational success with our



Royal Navy colleagues."

It brings Montrose's haul since mid-January to £97m of illegal narcotics – heroin, cannabis and methamphetamines.

Busts 1-3 were scored by Starboard crew, before a crew swap and Port crew took their place.

Lt Bonnick's boarding team joined the US Coast Guard, NCIS (yes, they're real) and the UK's National Crime Agency for intensive training in Bahrain ahead of Montrose's patrol.

The NCA's international liaison officer in Bahrain, Kevin Dawson offers expert advice, intelligence and provides the context explaining the impact of drugs seizures in the Indian Ocean.

"Searching a dhow is a long, dirty process in what can be uncomfortable circumstances, many thousands of miles from

home. Being able to highlight how this will have a positive impact on our communities back in the UK was especially important," he explained.

To underscore that last point... since arriving in theatre in January 2019, Montrose has kept more than

18 tonnes of drugs off the streets of the UK – or other countries..

"I am very proud of my ship's company for their efforts in disrupting the global drugs trade and preventing this illicit activity at sea," said Montrose's Commanding Officer Commander Paul Irving.

"It requires my whole team to work together in this type of operation, and once again they have delivered."

**M**ontrose's busts have come under the banner of the Pakistani-led Combined Task Force 150 – run by the parent organisation, Combined Maritime Forces.

The coalition of 34 nations has added a fourth group to its operation. After 150, 151 and 152 comes... 153... focused on the security of shipping in the Red Sea, especially through one of the world's

most dangerous 'choke points'.

Every 24 hours around 50 large merchant ships pass through the BAM – as it's known by many seafarers: tankers, gas carriers, container ships, car carriers.

Should it become blocked or unsafe for merchant shipping the impact on the UK alone – which relies on regular supplies of liquid natural gas from the Gulf for example – would be severe.

Last year's accidental blockage of the Suez Canal, when the Ever Given became stuck – cost global trade more than £280m per hour, or £6bn per day.

The BAM is just as much of a trade 'choke point' – roughly 20 miles of water separating Yemen and Djibouti – and passing shipping has been threatened on occasions by missile-armed rebels.

For 153's inaugural patrol, command ship USS Mount Whitney was periodically joined by Egyptian frigate ENS Alexandria, autonomous US systems, a P8-A maritime patrol aircraft, Montrose, support ship RFA Lyme Bay, guided-missile destroyers USS Gonzalez and USS Fitzgerald, as well as fast transport ship USNS Choctaw Count.

Alongside Royal Navy ships assigned to 153 at times, RN personnel will also serve on its staff.

Lieutenant Commander Dave Smith, who normally concentrates on maritime security and stability within the Gulf, was drafted in to help set up the new task group and its staff, as well as work with allies and partners

in the region.

"It is a privilege to have been appointed to the leadership team of CTF 153 and chosen to establish its command afloat, and to be representing the Royal Navy and its commitment to the Combined Maritime Force and the region," he said aboard USS Mount Whitney as the



new force's pennant was raised for the first time.

**W**hile Montrose spends much of her time working in one of the four main multi-national task groups, the core of the Royal Navy's presence in the Middle East (4 x minehunters, plus an RFA mother ship and staff – a good 300 personnel in all) largely works under the dedicated mine warfare group, CTF 52.

The two navies' mine forces share the same waterfront when alongside in Bahrain, and a lot of the same kit when

they on patrol.

So could a British team of clearance divers work from an American vessel?

**HMS Middleton** asked – and answered – the question, assisted by her US Navy counterpart, USS Sentry.

The biggest challenge? American minehunters don't have dive teams... whereas they're an integral part of any RN mine warfare operation.

We employ them to identify, neutralise or recover mines (depending on the dangers/mission).

First, the Brits had to sort out the basics of logistics: where to sleep, store equipment, fitting into the daily routine onboard an American ship.

The most important drills to rehearse were launching a seabot – the W525 rigid inflatable is different from the craft used by Sentry; exercising recovering and treating a diving casualty; and using the Americans sonar operators to guide the divers onto an underwater contact.

That is something the US Navy rarely practices as their minehunters don't have their own permanent dive teams.

"It was a challenging yet rewarding experience," said Petty Officer Lewis Watson, Middleton's coxswain and diving supervisor.

"The team worked extremely hard to 'pathfind' a way to allow a dive team from a Royal Navy mine countermeasures vessel to operate from a US Avenger-class ship.

"This has been a success and has given the command an extra capability if called

## BREAKING NEWS

### ROYAL NAVY POUNCES ON SUSPECT DHOW

HMS MONTROSE'S BOARDING TEAMS APPROACHING FISHING VESSEL SUSPECTED OF SMUGGLING 90kg

RN NEWS 18:05 JCK ■ NEW TASK FORCE FORMED TO PROTECT RED SEA SHIPPING ■ RN DIVERS E

## Take on a challenge and transform lives

Join Blind Veterans UK for the London Marathon, Great North Run or London to Brighton Cycle. Already have a place in a challenge event? Let us know and we will support you to raise vital funds to enable blind veterans to regain independence, dignity and purpose.

### For more information

0300 111 2233

fundraising@blindveterans.org.uk

blindveterans.org.uk/navy



Rebuilding lives after sight loss

Registered charity No. 216227 (England and Wales) and SC039411 (Scotland)

# Turning up the HEAT



concept of 'interchangeability' day or night."

As Middleton and Sentry were perfecting the human interface between the two navies, HMS Bangor and a specialist US unit were pushing technological boundaries.

For the first time, an unmanned craft delivered supplies to a Royal Navy minehunter on operations.

Sailors from HMS Bangor collected equipment ferried out to their ship by a small American boat to allow them to continue the hunt with their Seafox submersible.

The unmanned jet boat has been used by the US Navy to hunt mines, lowering sonar into the water and patrolling a pre-planned area of ocean looking for suspicious objects on or tethered to the seabed.

But it's also capable of carrying supplies – currently no larger/heavier than can be lifted by human beings – with the goal of re-supplying a ship without it having to break-off operations... and crucially without endangering sailors delivering those supplies.

As trials and tests continue, the crewless craft could deliver larger, heavier supplies which could be craned aboard a minehunter at sea.

The autonomous boat was launched and operated from RFA Lyme Bay, leaving

her dock before heading for Bangor's position.

The Brits launched their sea boat to collect the delivery – although ultimately the goal is for the robot craft to berth

the RN uses Seafox – which is also operated by the US Navy, while American clearance divers directed the Brits on to mines they'd found.

Bangor used a combination



alongside the minehunter and the supplies lifted off.

"The idea is that a minehunter will be able to be in the middle of a minefield hunting mines and that it wouldn't need to break task to go to replenish – it would be able to be sent stores autonomously towards its position, maintaining minehunting operations," explained Bangor's Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Rob Couzens.

Other elements of the US-UK exercise were more conventional. Bangor hosted a US sailor and showed how

of Seafox and her divers to identify mines in operations running around-the-clock 24/7 with the divers 'disposing' of five devices using explosive charges.

"Diving is always my core role but rarely do we get to do so much of it in a short period of time," said Diver Zak Harris. "Handling real explosives and actually blowing something up not once but five times was incredible! It's also fantastic to be able to prove to a wider audience just how capable we are."

The biggest task, however, was recovering numerous drill mines which had been laid

over the years so that they could be re-used on future exercises.

Traditional tethered/ buoyant mines lurking beneath the surface were cut from their chains by a Sea Dragon minesweeping helicopter, allowing the devices to bob to the surface for Bangor's sailors to recover.

Otherwise, the divers fixed lifting strops to mines – some of which were partially buried in the seabed.

By the end of the ten-day exercise Bangor and her crew had recovered 17 drill mines and the dive team executed 24 successful dives in total!

"The exercise has been extremely rewarding from a professional sense," said mine warfare specialist Lauren Stone. "It's exciting to put into action everything that we learned during training. Seeing all of the mines on the jetty after the exercise really brought home how hard we all worked as a team and made me proud of the ship."

Lt Cdr Couzens added: "The whole exercise provided a fantastic opportunity to hone our mine hunting techniques in partnership with our allies and learn from each other. It was brilliant to see the crew throw themselves into it with the drive and passion that they always show."

upon. The Sentry team were very welcoming and we look forward to working with them again in the future."

They put their training to the test during the week-long US-UK exercise – one of several dedicated mine warfare tests run by the two navies to ensure both forces are at the top of their game.

Though not a diver, mine warfare specialist Petty Officer Mine Warfare Luke Brady proved a vital member of the team. Using his years of experience, he worked with Sentry's sonar operators to help them guide the divers on to their targets – so effectively that the pace of training

surpassed what the teams had expected, with round-the-clock operations, including night diving.

"It was impressive how fast the tempo of diving operations was able to pick up as USS Sentry, supported by Petty Officer Brady in the ops room, quickly gained confidence in deploying and directing the clearance divers on to underwater contacts to identify," said Lieutenant Michael Merritt, Middleton's Diving Officer.

"The training culminated with Sentry successfully deploying Middleton's clearance divers at night to identify a contact, proving the



HEROIN

EXPERIENCE OPS ON US SHIP ■ DRONE DELIVERS SUPPLIES TO HMS BANGOR

SPORT

ARMY BREAK F

UNIVERSITY OF  
PORTSMOUTH



## STUDY NAVAL HISTORY ONLINE

Our established MA Naval History online course offers a unique opportunity to study the history of the Royal Navy at postgraduate level. Studied either full time or part time by distance learning, you will have the option to blend your online study with archival visits and enrichment activities both in the UK and abroad. This includes unparalleled behind-the-scenes access to both the National Museum of the Royal Navy's experts, archives and historic ships in Portsmouth and Lloyd's Register in London.

[port.ac.uk/ma-naval-history](http://port.ac.uk/ma-naval-history)

A Royal Marines Reservist, with a fine moustache, in action in the final phases of training in Cyprus.

Picture by LPhot Mark Johnson



# INTO THE THICK OF IT

ROYAL Marines Reserves carried out a mission to rescue a downed pilot at the end of two weeks of intensive exercises in Cyprus.

It was the first exercise of its type for three years and was an opportunity for commandos from across the reserves to hone critical skills to keep them sharp for operations around the world.

The sun-baked Eastern Mediterranean provided a realistic and challenging environment, with the marines operating in the heat across the Dhekelia training areas.

It started with refreshers in weapons skills before the marines were tasked with rescuing a pilot shot down in the final challenging workout of the fortnight.

Griffin helicopters from the Royal Air Force's 84 Squadron, which operates out of RAF Akrotiri in Cyprus, dropped the commandos in behind enemy lines.

Marine Gareth Breddy, with RMR Bristol's Cardiff

detachment, said: "We were in a forward operating base and simulated mortars came in and we were assembled as a quick reaction force to save a downed pilot."

"The training we've received is second to none. These instructors are the best in the world when it comes to weapons drills especially."

Calling on the skills honed throughout the exercise – named Commando Phoenix – the marines moved in, taking out three 'enemy' positions before rescuing the pilot on what's known as a Joint Personnel Recovery (JPR) mission.

JPR – rescuing downed aircrew, their passengers and, if necessary, their equipment from behind enemy lines – is a mission relatively new to the Royal Marines, brought about by the advent of the Queen Elizabeth-class carriers.

A dedicated unit has been formed from 42 Commando based at Bickleigh near Plymouth specifically for the

mission, a unit which has trained extensively around the world.

The reservists are trained and equipped to the same level as their regular counterparts and regularly called upon to mobilise and work alongside 3 Commando Brigade, so training like this in Cyprus is crucial to ensure they are kept ready for action.

Marine Harry Bloomfield from RMR Bristol said: "It was the accumulation of a two-week shooting package here in Cyprus where we worked up to a full section attack before three targets that we had to take one after the other."

"It's been tough. The heat was blasting down but it has been good nonetheless."

"After we fought through three targets we eventually got to a plane where there was mock casualty and we had to extract them out the area."

RMR Bristol led Exercise Commando Phoenix, but

marines from across the reserves were involved, including RMR London, RMR Merseyside, RMR Scotland and their 20 satellite detachments.

The RMR is the elite amphibious element of the Maritime Reserves and is just 500 strong but must stay at the very top of their game physically and professionally to stay ready.

Former regular Royal Marines are a fundamental part of the RMR, using their previous full-time military experience, while enhancing and developing those skills within the RMR.

Ex-Bootnecks who left service less than two years ago are often eligible for seamless transfer into the reserves. Those with previous military experience outside the Royal Marines are also encouraged to apply, but will need to complete the same rigorous commando course as a regular or reserve recruit in order to earn their coveted green beret.





# Deep impact

GLANCING up slightly as if looking to the surface, fresh air and potential salvation, the figure of a submariner stands twixt the two halves of a conning tower.

This is the beautifully-haunting new monument to all those who ply their trade beneath the waves, the Submariners Memorial at the National Arboretum, unveiled with full honours by the symbolic head of the Silent Service, the Duke of Cambridge.

The monument will serve as a focal point for all who serve/have served with the waves above them to contemplate separation and sacrifice which has characterised the Royal Navy's Submarine Service since it was established in 1901.

Nearly 400 submariners past and present, family members, and VIPs converged on the site in Staffordshire to witness the unveiling, just a couple of years

after the plan for a central memorial was suggested.

Since then a national competition has been run to design the structure – fittingly the brainchild of a family who are Silent Service through-and-through – and more than £400,000 raised by an appeal to realise that vision.

Paul Day, behind the Battle of Britain Memorial on London's Embankment and the Meeting Place sculpture at St Pancras Station, turned the sketches and concept – fittingly the brainchild of the Groves family, who are Silent Service through-and-through – into a full-sized monument.

Prince William said the finished memorial – two halves of a conning tower split, allowing people to walk through, passing the statue of a submariner as they do – captured “all the elements of the Submarine Service of which I am immensely

proud to be the Commodore in Chief – the loneliness of separation, the anticipation of return, the fortitude and the sacrifice.

He continued: “I'm sure you will agree with me that, inspired by the competition winners and their ideas, Paul Day has created a truly fitting memorial to those lost, and sadly to those who yet may give, their lives.

“That all parts of the submarine community: serving, veterans, families and the submarine industries have come together to raise the large amount of money needed is testament to your spirit and energy.”

Barely any of the 5,349 men lost in submarines in 121 years of the Silent Service have graves.

Most are entombed in the hulls of 170 boats lost – often with all hands – since the first tragedy in March 1904.

Although the Royal Navy has,

mercifully, not lost a boat at sea in seven decades (HMS Affray, sunk with all hands in the Channel in 1951), it remains a dangerous trade, with tragedies such as the Kursk or the San Juan serving as bitter recent reminders.

And this past month we have seen the wreck of HMS Urge officially recognised (see page 13), 80 years after she set out on what would be her final patrol.

“For many, we must also acknowledge the enduring pain caused by the memory of lost shipmates, who made the ultimate sacrifice on our behalf. I know that this memorial, this arboretum, means something to every one of us,” said Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson, chairman of the appeal.

“There is no more challenging environment in which to work – the great oceans of the world are tough enough, but to operate safely and

effectively, deep under their surface demands great skill and dedication.”

Today's Silent Service was represented by serving submariners, led by their senior officer, Commodore Jim Perks, who oversees a small, but elite cadre of men and women operating nuclear-powered boats which are at the cutting edge of naval technology – and the sharp end of underwater operations 24/7/367.

“Today's Vanguard and Astute-class and the future Dreadnought-class submarines bear little resemblance to those of yesteryear but the spirit, professionalism and ultimately sacrifice of the people who serve in them are identical,” he said.

“Today's submariners remember with pride those who have gone before and support the new memorial with all their hearts.”

Picture: LPhoto Kev Walton



## 40 YEARS ON, WE ARE BY THEIR SIDE.

2022 marks the 40th anniversary of the liberation of the Falklands Islands. Will you help us to support those who have served their nation, as well as those who still make sacrifices, day in, day out?



**MAKE A  
DONATION**



**FUNDRAISE  
FOR US**



**CREATE A  
TRIBUTE**

**SCAN HERE TO  
GET INVOLVED**



or visit  
[rnrmc.org.uk/falklands-40](https://rnrmc.org.uk/falklands-40)  
Email: [fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk](mailto:fundraising@rnrmc.org.uk)



# SHOREHAM BIDS FAREWELL

HMS Shoreham paid an emotional final visit to the Sussex seaside town bearing her name.

Locals turned out in force to cheer the sailors through the town – and tour the minehunter – as she bade her goodbyes to various groups and associations who've been linked with the ship throughout her 20-year-career.

The 41 men and women who've carried the town's name around the world on front-line operations since 2002 exercised their Freedom of the District with a march and parade through the heart of Shoreham-by-Sea for the fourth and last time since being honoured in 2011.

Then they returned the Scroll which granted them the district's highest honour to Adur Council for safekeeping.

"It has been a real privilege to bring HMS Shoreham back to her home town where she was first commissioned – and to hand-back the Freedom of the District awarded," said the final Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Andrew Platt... who began his RN career aboard the ship.

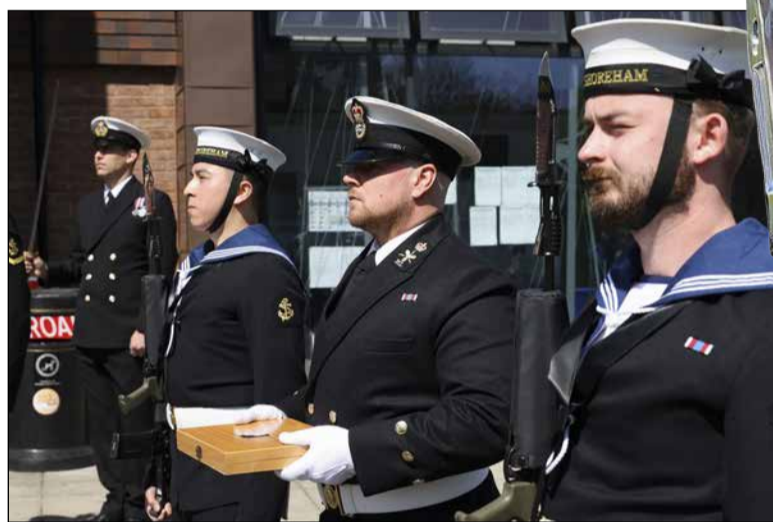
"Over her 20 years of service – with nearly half of these spent deployed in the Gulf, HMS Shoreham's strong maritime links with our hometown have been of great support to a generation of sailors – and it is right that we express our thanks to Shoreham-by-Sea during this visit.

"It is a little bit sad, but it's been an amazing journey."

Councillor Stephen, chairman of Adur Council, said the visit – and especially the farewell parade – had been "an emotional, but stirring occasion".

He continued: "There has been a fantastic relationship between residents of the district and HMS Shoreham and we have watched her serve with distinction around the world helping to keep it a safer place."

The Shoreham story in the Royal Navy goes back to January 1694 with five ships named



after the town. Before the present-day vessel, Shoreham No.4 was a sloop which served extensive in the Gulf, Mediterranean and Indian Ocean before and during World War 2.

The current HMS Shoreham, No.5, was commissioned in Shoreham-by-Sea on July 20 2002, since when she has maintained close ties with the town despite conducting prolonged operations either in home waters, as part of NATO task groups in European waters, or in the Gulf.

Shoreham spent several years at a time deployed to the Middle East, swapping her entire crew every few months to sustain her on operations alongside other Royal Navy minehunters based in the region.

The ship has clocked up more than 120,000 nautical miles – enough to take her around the world five and a half times – and visited more than 30 ports at home and abroad while serving under the White Ensign.

All 1,500 (free) tickets allowing the public to tour the ship, berthed in nearby Shoreham Port, for the last time were snapped up.

Crew also hosted naval associations, cadet groups and other affiliates on board, and they also paid their respects at the town's war memorial.

The ship is now heading for Rosyth in Scotland to prepare for her decommissioning.

**Pictures:**  
LPhotos  
Belinda Alker  
and  
Finn Hutchins



# Training at Toulon



Pictures: L'Phot Lee Blease



A team of Royal Navy mine clearance divers deployed to work with their French counterparts in the disposal of improvised explosive devices, bombs, booby traps and sea mines in a series of simulation training.

The group of nine clearance divers and an engineer from Echo Diving Unit 1, as well as three mine warfare specialists deployed to Toulon and Port Vendres for a fortnight of training and exercises.

Exercise Cutaway saw the UK divers from the navy's Diving and Threat Exploitation Group work with the French GPD Méditerranée (Mediterranean Mine Clearance Divers Group), French Foreign Legion and fellow divers from the United States and Slovenia.

To begin the exercise, the teams completed combat enhancement and force integration training – giving the divers from all nations the chance to hone their skills both on the land and at

sea, test their equipment and become an integrated team.

This initial part of the exercise also allowed them the opportunity to dive on a wreck of a French submarine, permitted only to military divers.

Demonstrating the flexibility of mine clearance divers, as the exercise built, the team seamlessly moved from underwater devices to the land and were presented with more complex devices in challenging, contested scenarios.

Conducting Improvised Explosive Device Disposal (IEDD) training saw them clear booby-trapped houses, free hostages with devices attached and deal with IEDs targeting friendly forces.

The team used their state-of-the-art drones with surveillance equipment and Remotely Operated Vehicles (ROVs) to support with their operations.

Chief Petty Officer Gavin Speer, of

Echo Squadron, said: “We are at home in the water, dealing with underwater threats in and around maritime infrastructure but operating in the field with the French Foreign Legion has meant we have had to adapt some of our skills.”

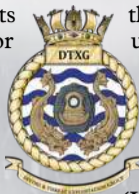
Meanwhile, the three mine warfare specialists embarked on a French Navy ship to train with autonomous submersibles.

Their job was to locate and mark an possible sea mines.

The scenario saw a port littered with IEDs, unexploded ordnance, sea mines and booby traps and it was the job of the divers to clear the port for follow-on forces and return the area to a state of stability and safety.

“The overall objective of Exercise Cutaway was for the French Foreign Legion to retake the port and strategic points further in land,” added CPO Speer.

“Our job was to facilitate this by offering EOD and IEDD cover to the army once we cleared the port.”





1982 - 2022



LEVEL  
PEAKS



# Generation game

## Father and grandfather watch midshipman pass out

THREE generations of the Carter Family were at BRNC for the Easter Passout of Royal Navy Officer Cadets at Britannia Royal Naval College.

Joining 150 other future leaders of the Royal Navy was the youngest family member, Midshipman Alexander Carter, 23, who is set on an engineering career after his time in Dartmouth, where he has been over the past six months.

Witnessing the parade was father, retired Commander Ashley Carter, 59, who was on the same parade ground at BRNC in July 1981 and retired Lieutenant Commander George Carter, 89, who completed his time at Dartmouth in 1951 having joined the college in 1949. Both served over 20 years as Engineering Officers.

"It's been a long journey to get here today," said Alexander. "It's been good fun getting to know the other cadets and through all the challenges along the way."

"I knew all about the Royal Navy from a very young age, with both my father and grandfather serving, but it wasn't something I was pressurised into doing. Then as I finished university, I began to look at my options and thought seriously about joining. I thought if it was good enough for them, then it would be good enough for me."

"After over six months of training, I'm very proud of my achievement. Not everyone makes it through, and it is challenging in many aspects and at times you do think is this meant for me, especially when you are getting up at half five in the morning for a run around the college."

Ashley Carter dusted off his uniform for the occasion and reminisced about his time at Dartmouth.

"It is great to be able to watch Alex pass out," said Ashley. "It has taken me back 40 years, on one hand everything changed in terms of the training scheme, but almost nothing has changed in terms of the buildings and the challenges young officers face in the college, on the river and on the moors."

The senior member of the trio, George Carter, is also proud to be attending this special day with Alexander and shared his personal thought on the day.

"It is sort of the end of a dream for me, both my son and now my grandson passing out at Dartmouth, all three in the Royal Navy, couldn't be better," said George. "Now Alex has got to have a son as well to carry on the tradition, no doubt about it."

"I didn't get too emotional, watching Alex slow march through the college doors on his way to a career in the Fleet. I remembered the day when Ashley passed out here, and when I was on the parade ground as well. This is really the start of Alex's journey in the Royal Navy, it was brilliant for me and Ashley and I'm certain Alex will have a similarly brilliant time."



Ashley Carter, left, and George Carter looks at his class photo, below



## Devorne's a real Diamond in galley

A JUNIOR Royal Navy chef has been named Armed Forces Caterer of the Year after impressing judges with his commitment to using local produce while deployed and using themed meals to keep morale high.

Able Seaman Devorne Gibson spent seven months of 2021 at sea with Type 45 destroyer HMS Diamond as part of the UK Carrier Strike Group.

His efforts and hard work, both in and out the galley, throughout the global operation were highlighted in his winning citation, which also championed his determination to excel.

Devorne said: "When I saw the nominees from the other services – all of whom were a much higher rank than me – I said to myself there was no way that I could compete with them."

"When I discovered I had won, I felt that it was a massive achievement for me in such a short time within the Royal Navy."

He explained that his determination and will to work hard was to set an example for his children, saying he wanted them to know they can achieve anything and see him as a hero.

He joined Diamond in May 2020, straight from basic and professional training and his impact made in both the galley and wider ship was described as "simply immense".

"Throughout last year's gruelling seven-month Op Fortis deployment, his irrepressibly affable nature and unrelenting professionalism truly shone through," read the citation.

"Junior he may be, yet he has stood out among a competitive field of caterers on board as the one who consistently delivers the highest-quality food."

"His role in managing the ship's catering account has been equally impressive... he has also carefully considered the availability of local produce from foreign ports and adapted menus accordingly, demonstrating a seemingly instinctive appreciation for the finer nuances of his trade that normally only come with considerable experience."

The junior chef's efforts to keep his shipmates happy and boost morale was also underscored in the citation; many of Diamond's port stops were restricted by Covid-19 regulations.

The citation added: "Recognising the significant restrictions placed on the ship's company throughout the deployment, through his own initiative he actively sought out opportunities to lay on numerous themed Caribbean evenings."

"Exceptionally well-executed, these events proved hugely successful and important catalysts to unite the ship's company, offering a major boost to morale when it was sorely needed."

"Simply put, Gibson is a superstar; even at this early stage in his career he is deservedly established as an outstanding role model to junior sailors of all branches."

Devorne was once again deployed when the Armed Forces Caterer of the Year awards ceremony were held, so his trophy was collected by Warrant Officer (CS) John Connor, Fleet Warrant Officer Catering Services.



## Survival skills to raise vital funds

SAILORS spent 24 hours in a life raft in Port Solent Marina in Portsmouth to commemorate people lost at sea and the developments that now save countless lives.

Chief Petty Officer Gareth Edwards, from the Sea Survival Training Centre at Horsea Island, and fellow sailors – serving and veterans – raised funds for the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity by spending 24 hours in the 25-person life raft.

Before deploying on ships around the world, sailors go to the Sea Survival Centre to learn techniques and use equipment critical in saving lives, including the use of life rafts if the worst were to happen and the call was given to abandon ship.

"If sailors were to abandon ship, we deliver the required training, giving that individual the best chances of survival," said Gareth.

"These individuals may find themselves inside one of these highly-equipped 25-person life rafts



for up to 24 hours and beyond, depending on the circumstances.

"To that end we would like to honour all the lives lost at sea during all wars, the celebration of the advancement of equipment and praise to all personnel that are deployed overseas aboard naval and naval support vessels."

"We are all proud at the training centre on what we achieve and what we teach and we are confident that the training we deliver with help prolong life during the unfortunate case of abandonment at sea."

"That is a little background of why we are looking to do this charity event and the charity we have chosen is close to all of our hearts, they are great at what they do for all serving and former serving members of the armed forces."

Find out more: <https://justgiving.com/fundraising/sstc-team1>

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

### Naval Children's Charity

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

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

[www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk](http://www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk)  
023 9263 9534  
[caseworkers@navalchildrenscharity.org.uk](mailto:caseworkers@navalchildrenscharity.org.uk)



# You don't write a Will for yourself

**For the security they deserve, write  
your Will for FREE today**

In the Armed Forces you never let your comrades down. Now you can protect the people you care about by making a Will. It's easily done in 30 minutes through our trusted partner's Will-writing service, which we make available free to you.

You can write your Will online or face-to-face with a solicitor. Please consider including a gift in your Will to support our vital support services for the Armed Forces community in the future.

Write your Will online today with our trusted partner at  
**[farewill.com/rbl-gift](https://farewill.com/rbl-gift)**

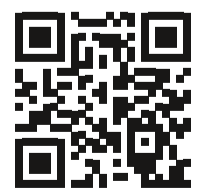
Or for a **Free Wills Network** guide to participating solicitors in your area, please call our Supporter Care team on 0345 845 1945.



Registered Charity Number: 219279



**ROYAL BRITISH LEGION**



Scan this code to write your Will  
at [www.farewill.com/rbl-gift](https://www.farewill.com/rbl-gift)





From left, Bill Oliphant, Cdre Peter Coulson, Maddi Bridgeman and Adrian Bell at the new centre

# Support centre opens at Drake

ROYAL Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) have opened a walk-in centre at the heart of HMNB Devonport, inside HMS Drake's shopping village in Plymouth. There to cut the ribbon was Deputy Lord Mayor of Plymouth, Councillor Maddi Bridgeman.

The new regional hub for RNRMC is set to be a strong physical presence within HMS Drake, giving the charity an opportunity to increase its profile with the serving community, and make people more aware of the support available to them and their families. Prior to this, the charity's staff would have had to visit on day trips or occasional overnight stays.

It is hoped this unique 'Shopfront' will provide a welcoming and accessible space to drop-in for advice, get support and generally find out more about RNRMC, including volunteering opportunities.

"The support from the Naval Base Commander and his team in providing the RNRMC with such an overt presence in Devonport, is truly a watershed moment for us," said Adrian Bell, Chief Executive of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity.

"It has enabled unprecedented engagement by the charity with its beneficiaries across the naval base and the south-west. More importantly it gives us a direct interface with the serving personnel and their families in and around Plymouth and explain what we can do for them."

"The opening of this new 'Drop-in' centre for the naval base in HMS Drake's main catering facility, will become a focal point for serving personnel and their families," said Commodore Peter Coulson ADC, Naval Base Commander for Devonport.

"I would like to thank the RNRMC for all their support to the ships and units that frequent Devonport and know that their continued efforts are greatly appreciated across the whole Naval Service."

## RNRMC increases death in service grant

THE Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) has announced that it will increase the 'Death in Service' grant for all Royal Navy personnel.

It was decided that the amount available should be increased from £15k to £20k, bringing the RNRMC grant in line with the equivalent support for Army and RAF families. This will come into effect from



"RNRMC have also very supportive during the pandemic, where people were isolating before joining their ships across the world, especially over Christmas periods."

Over the past five years a total of 76 separate grants have been awarded in support of projects in HMS Drake & HMNB

Devonport. These include funding for the refurbishment of both the Junior Rates and Senior Rates messes, creation of a boxing ring, audio and televisual equipment, and even yacht sails. As well as these Devonport-specific grants, RNRMC funding positively impacts on personnel across the Southwest.

April 2022. For those unfortunate enough to experience the death of a serving loved one, the RNRMC will now provide a £20k support grant, with the intention of helping a Royal Navy family through a difficult period in their lives. The grant is provided to all Royal Navy families, including RFA.

Originally delivered as a subscription fund, the RNRMC began managing the Naval

Service Dependents Fund (NSDF) in 2007.

Director of Relationships and Funding, Mandy Lindley, said: "No amount of money can replace the life of a loved one, but we hope this immediate support will help them through a particularly distressing time."

Since 2007, the RNRMC has helped 258 families following the death of a loved one in uniform.



## RFA moves under charity umbrella

THE Royal Fleet Auxiliary (RFA) Service has now formally joined the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

Serving RFA workforce and veterans are to be placed on an equal footing as beneficiaries of the RNRMC. They will be supported and valued for life like any other beneficiary of the charity.

This means recognising both Service and sacrifice. The charity seeks to have a positive impact on their career journeys with Quality of Life and Through Life Support, Transition to external Employment and assistance in Retirement. In the unfortunate and rare occasion of a Death in Service an immediate payment from the RNRMC of £15,000 to the next of kin.

Since 2007, the charity has funded projects and facilities that boost morale for those who serve today. It also distributes millions of pounds annually to military charities which care for the children, families and veterans of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines. Through grants, the charity is able to support serving personnel, veterans and their families.

"I wish to acknowledge the extraordinary generosity of the RNRMC in welcoming the RFA into affiliation with the charity; integrating our service and people into the many and varied services the charity provide and deliver across an incredible spectrum of activity," said David Eagles, Commodore Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Head of Services and Deputy Director of Royal Navy Afloat Support.

RNRMC CEO Adrian Bell added: "I am delighted to welcome the RFA into the RNRMC. The RFA is an integral part of the Royal Navy, and its personnel are as deserving of the support and recognition from this charity as it affords to all its beneficiaries. This charity's commitment to helping alleviate the consequences of service to the nation, and honouring that service, is full-square behind all we do. The inclusion of the RFA now makes that commitment feel complete."

RFA CPO Martin Etwell, who has over 50 years service said: "I have seen many changes in the RFA since the 1970s, working alongside RN/RM personnel in all theatres of operations during conflict and peace times, to now be invited to be a part of the RNRMC Charity recognises what the RFA delivers operationally and is a huge benefit to the workforce, especially for those in need."

## Supporting mums

PREGNANCY and new motherhood can be incredibly challenging, as many aspects of life change suddenly and dramatically. Without the right support and guidance, safely maintaining fitness during pregnancy can be difficult, and with a new baby, demands on time, sleep deprivation, and the physical and mental drain that come with these can make a workout feel like an impossible task.

Physical fitness however, is an important aspect of maintaining overall health and wellbeing during and after pregnancy.

For women serving in the Royal Navy there is an additional dimension to this, as a certain level of fitness is a requirement of their job.

As a parent to a toddler and with another child on the way, Lt Cdr Marie Whitehouse knows personally how much this can weigh on new mothers serving in the Royal Navy.

"One of the big things when you come back from maternity leave is passing that fitness test, and a lot of people get really nervous about it."

Returning to fitness can be exacerbated by the fact that exercise environments are often unsuitable and unwelcoming for expectant and new mothers.

To help support women in the Royal Navy, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity have stepped in to help develop a range of specialist maternity fitness suites across the RN estate.

Contributing over £20,000 in grant funding, the RNRMC have helped establish maternity suites on HMS Excellent, HMS Nelson, HMS Sultan, HMS Collingwood, and most recently HMS Drake.

The maternity fitness suits are managed by the base's Physical Training team, and all Physical Training Instructors (PTI) now have pre and post natal fitness qualifications.

"It's about building back confidence, as well as fitness," said LPT Lee Owens, who is based at HMS Collingwood. "We're here for advice and guidance, and these facilities allow mothers to slowly work their way back up to a point where they are comfortable returning to the main gym."

If you are serving in the Royal Navy and want to find out more about maternity fitness facilities near you, please contact your local PT branch.





# NAVY NEWS

Subscribe online at [royalnavy.mod.uk/navynews](http://royalnavy.mod.uk/navynews)

12 copies for the price of 10 (UK Only)

**1 year: £35.00** UK

**3 years: £95.00** UK

**1 year: £43.00** Overseas

**3 years: £103.00** Overseas

**Or Tel: 07773 155321**

OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF THE ROYAL NAVY

**SUBSCRIBE NOW**

Don't miss out...  
Get Navy News delivered to  
your door – and save money

SENDING two patrol ships to the Indo-Pacific is part of Royal Navy renewed interest – and presence – in the region.

The head of the Royal Navy told an international conference in Sydney focusing on sea power in the Pacific that the region was “crucial” to the prosperity and security of the UK.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key said the Royal Navy returned to the Indo-Pacific “with renewed vigour and commitment to our friendships and alliances. But we come too with humility.”

Admiral Key’s address came as the lead ship of the Royal Navy’s renewed permanent presence in the region, HMS Tamar, completed her latest exercise with the Malaysian and Singaporean navies and on the back of last year’s hugely-successful Carrier Strike Group deployment led by HMS Queen Elizabeth.

HMS Tamar has been committed to the Indo-Pacific with her sister HMS Spey since the autumn, making them the first Royal Navy vessels stationed in the region since the handover of Hong Kong a quarter of a century ago.

Whilst her sister Spey delivered aid to Tonga following a tsunami earlier this year amid operations in the South Pacific, Tamar has been operating further north, helping to enforce UN sanctions imposed on North Korea and conducting exercises with the UK’s key allies and partners in the region.

She lined up with Malaysian frigate Selangor and Singaporean frigate RSS Valour to test their combined abilities to work side-by-side, build close



the region is a real honour! It is incredibly exciting and rewarding to be here working with other nations, and as part of such a motivated team.

“We are all proud to represent the Royal Navy in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region and look forward to continuing to deepen our friendships with partners in months and years to come.”

Admiral Key told the Indo-Pacific Sea Power Conference hosted by the Royal Australian Navy in Sydney that such exercises were vital – not least to broadening the Royal Navy’s understanding of a region it once knew so well.

“Global Britain is back,” he said. “We come with renewed vigour, and commitment to our friendships and alliances. But we come too with humility. We have much we can do to benefit each other, boosting prosperity, peace and security. And we have much to learn from you.”

The Admiral said our friends, allies and partners across the region could expect to see the Royal Navy working with them on a range of issues – from traditional naval co-operation and exercises, to tackling crime on the high seas, global warming and illegal fishing.

And he underlined the importance of the Indo-Pacific to UK trade and industry – £36bn imports/exports pass between Britain and the ten nations of the ASEAN economic union, which includes Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Vietnam and Singapore.

He continued: “This is all part of a Global Britain, that is confident, outward looking, that wants to operate, trade and develop together.”

“If my message isn’t clear: the Indo-Pacific is crucial to us.”

working relationships and ultimately safeguarding and protecting the nations.

Bersama (“together”) Shield has been run in various formats for nearly 20 years under the banner of the Five Power Defence Arrangement which, since 1971, has demonstrated the commitment of Singapore, Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand and the United Kingdom to defence cooperation and regional security.

The 2022 iteration saw HMS Tamar practise gunnery, force protection exercises, and regular fleet

work.

“It was an absolute privilege to work with friends in the region to build on such long-established previous successes, strengthening our ability to come together and affirm regional support where it is needed,” said Commander Teilo Eliot-Smith, Tamar’s Commanding Officer.

“We all learned a great deal from each other, as we always do in the spirit of openness, and with Tamar now an enduring presence here I’m excited to build further on such partnerships in future.”

Sub Lieutenant Antonio Valente from Formby in Liverpool is a Royal Navy Reservist from HMS Eaglet, the Navy’s home on Merseyside, who’s been mobilised to join Tamar on her Indo-Pacific adventure.

“Being part of Team Tamar in



## Tidesurge paves way for NATO tankers plan

THE Royal Navy has been paving the way for NATO to use commercial tankers in times of crisis.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary ship Tidesurge – which is typically found in a Royal Navy task group to keep fuel tanks topped up – linked up with the civilian MT Maersk Peary in Lyme Bay to see whether oil could be transferred between the two vessels.

Calling upon civilian oilers to sustain the fleet could prove crucial if the military tankers are unable to stock up on supplies by putting into port.

The Royal Navy relied on extensive support from civilian tankers during the Falklands conflict 40 years ago – sustaining a task group 9,000 miles from the UK.

But in more recent years, that support has not been needed, nor training practised.

The Royal Fleet Auxiliary – whose support and supply Royal Navy warships on operations around the globe – joined forces with its American counterpart, US Military Sealift Command, who chartered the Peary for the trials.

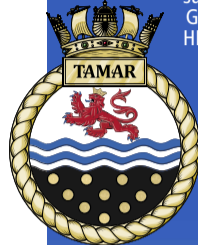
The resulting link-up in the Channel – known as a Replenishment at Sea or RAS in naval parlance – saw the refuelling rig from Tidesurge successfully sent across to the Peary where it hooked-up with its replenishment station.

Although no fuel passed between the two ships, the successful connection proved the ability of the civilian tanker to connect with a military vessel.

The trial’s success extends between the two support forces to the rest of NATO as equipment is largely standard across the alliance.

“Replenishment at Sea from a commercial tanker to a Fleet Replenishment Oiler can ensure our navies remain supplied and supported in a contested environment when port visits for resupply can’t be accomplished,” said Captain Douglas Jaarsma, the US MSC Exchange Officer with the RFA.

Captain Sam Shattock, the RFA Chief Operator involved with the trials, added: “This exciting trial is the first step for the Royal Navy in developing an organic national capability to consolidate Fleet Replenishment Oilers from commercial vessels. It has delivered assurance to both nations that the ability to work together remains a key tenet of our operational outputs.”



# Specifically Pacific

## Argyll’s crew prepare to move aboard HMS Iron Duke

CREW of HMS Argyll are swapping ships to bring their sister back to life.

The 200 sailors on the Plymouth-based frigate are crossing the gangway to breathe new life into HMS Iron Duke as she emerges from a massive overhaul... while their ship prepares for her latest revamp and refit.

After five years of trials, training and operations since her last extended spell in dock for maintenance and upgrades, the Navy’s longest-serving frigate bows out of active duties for her final life extension and upkeep.

Those five years since Argyll’s last upgrade have seen her heavily engaged at home and abroad, including:

- First firing of the now-standard Sea Ceptor missile system (July 2017).

- Gulf/Indo-Pacific deployment including enforcing UN Sanctions off North Korea (June 2018-March 2019)

- Rescue of all 27 crew of car transporter MV Grande America off Brittany (the ship’s medical team were subsequently awarded the George Beeching Prize by the First Sea Lord) (March 2019).

- Representing the Navy, UK and defence industry at DSEI in London (Sept 2019)

- At the height of the pandemic protecting shipping on Op Sentinel in the Gulf region\ (Spring 2020)

- Trials of new equipment – autonomous boats, new mountings to improve heavy machine-gun accuracy and another Sea Ceptor firing. (2021)

“Since joining HMS Argyll I have had the chance to work in all the marine engineering sections onboard, which has helped improve my engineering

knowledge and developed core maritime skills,” explained Engineering Technician Evan Lane, the longest-serving member of Argyll’s ship’s company with three years and nine months aboard.

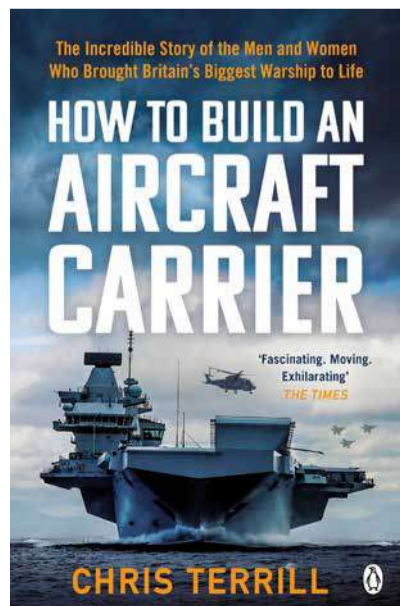
“I have learnt many things such as general maintenance on a diesel engine and how to conduct a cylinder head change.

“During my time onboard I have had the opportunity to do two deployments, firstly a Far East deployment where I got to see countries such as Japan, Malaysia and many more.

“And I have been on an operational deployment to the Gulf, escorting vessels through the Straits of Hormuz.

“While onboard I have seen the crew change multiple times which has allowed me to make lots of friends (shipmates) and given me the chance to develop my personal and professional skills.”

He will now be using those same skills on HMS Iron Duke, the latest frigate in the Duke class to complete the life extension upgrade under defence firm Babcock, the Royal Navy and MOD in Devonport.



# HOW TO BUILD AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER

Win a signed copy of Chris Terrill’s *HOW TO BUILD AN AIRCRAFT CARRIER*

We have 6 copies to give away.

Navy News has teamed up with Penguin Random House to bring you this great competition.

To enter, just answer this question: *Who was HMS Queen Elizabeth’s first sea going Captain?*

Either email your answer to: [bm@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:bm@royalnavymail.mod.uk) or write to:  
Navy News, NCHQ, HMS Excellent, Whale Island, Portsmouth PO2 8BY

Closing date: July 13 2022

## FlexiRooms extend to Nelson

THE new flexible accommodation system – helping personnel book somewhere high-quality to stay short-term – has been extended from HMS Excellent to nearby HMS Nelson.

The naval base's accommodation zone now offers several 'FlexiRooms' available to officers and senior ranks permanently assigned to both establishments who just want short term occupancy (up to four nights at a time).

Wider eligibility and expansion for FlexiRooms will be reviewed in due course as feedback and data is gathered.

The rooms can be booked via MyNavy, which continues to be improved; it now displays an availability calendar if the requested dates are not obtainable.

Full details can be found in [RNTM-01-007-22](#).

## Play time resumes at Dartmouth

THERE'S a new play area for youngsters at Britannia Royal Naval College.

Situated on the top playing field, it is intended for the use of staff member's children as well as by visiting youngsters during family events and passing-out parades.

It replaces the existing play park on site which was installed about 15 years, was worn out and beyond repair.

Funded by a grant from the Navy, Army and Air Force Institutes Fund and with help from Newton Abbott-based Rhino Play, the facility was designed by the team on site.

"We are committed to including the wider Service Family in our day-to-day business and this project is a big step in our ability to achieve this," said Warrant Officer Reggie Slaughter, Base Warrant Officer.

"The comments of excitement from our families are a clear indicator of how popular this project has been."

# Six(ty) of the best

PROUD gunners from 29 Commando Regiment Royal Artillery paraded in near-perfect sunshine through the streets of Plymouth to celebrate their 60th birthday.

The Regiment, whose soldiers wear the coveted green beret and support Plymouth's Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade on operations, marched with their guns and regimental veterans from their home in The Royal Citadel.

Members of the public turned out to applaud them as they proceeded along Royal Parade where senior military officers, civic dignitaries and special guests were there to greet them and take their salute. VIP for the Commando Gunner 60 celebrational Freedom of Plymouth parade was General David Richards, Baron Richards of Herstmonceux, former Chief of Defence Staff and onetime commando gunner himself (pictured below by LPhoto Juliet Ritsma taking the salute in the grounds of The Royal Citadel).

"We are incredibly proud of Plymouth's long military history and the vital role that the city still plays today, as home to many military personnel," Plymouth's Lord Mayor Councillor Terri Beer told the gunners.

"This parade has been a fantastic opportunity for everyone to show their support for – and thanks to – both the current serving regiment as well as its veterans, celebrating 60 years of hard work, bravery and dedication."

The unit traces its history back to the dark days of the Cold War when tensions between Moscow and Washington were at their height.

The commando role – shared by the Army and Navy during the war – passed to the Royal Marines post-war... but the Corps found themselves lacking firepower by the late 1950s without their own gunnery formation, so they turned to the Army to help out.

In 1962, 29 Field Regiment RA was deployed in Aden and Kuwait, deterring Iraq from invading the oil fields.

Off the back of these operations, the regiment was chosen to re-role as Commando Artillery. The men of the newly formed 29 Commando Regiment RA trained for and passed the All-Arms Commando Course at Lymington, where it is still held to this day.

Over the past 60 years the Regiment has fought in every major conflict the Brigade has been involved in from Brunei in its formative year to the most recent conflicts in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Also on parade... but for a 70th anniversary was the Band of HM Royal Marines Portsmouth.

They headed up the A34 to the West Midlands to join their counterparts from the RAF Regiment and the Army from Tidworth to form the Massed Military Bands for a tattoo at the University of Birmingham celebrating both the Queen's Platinum Jubilee (much more on that in our July edition...) as well as the impending Commonwealth Games, due to be hosted in the great West Midlands city at the end of July/beginning of August.

The combined bands provided a musical backdrop, through a journey the United Kingdom's Armed Forces have undertaken during Her Majesty The Queen's 70 years reign, as well as looking forward to the future for all three services.

Regular units, Reservists and Cadets from across the West Midlands all contributed to proceedings by showcasing their areas of expertise and military capability, with a series of stalls around the central University green.

Taking the salute was Colonel George Marsh, Deputy Lord Lieutenant of West Midlands, alongside the Army's regional Commander, Colonel Shove Gilby, 11 Signal Brigade.



## ...and six(ty) of the best, part 2

MORE than 60 sailors and Royal Marines who've served their nation with distinction were recognised by the Navy's Second Sea Lord.

Vice Admiral Martin Connell invited exemplary personnel – plus their families – to join him at his official residence in Portsmouth Naval Base, Admiralty House.

There they were presented with various awards including Meritorious Service Medals – to senior ratings/senior NCOs – for long and meritorious service to their nation, plus Second Sea Lord Commendations which the admiral awards to individuals (civilian and military) who've gone above and beyond the normal call of duty to the benefit of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines.

Among those receiving MSMs from Admiral Connell were Royal Marines Warrant Officers 1st Class Craig McMillan and Simon 'Si' Tripp.

Craig has spent 25 years in the Corps, most of them as a Mountain Leader – the experts in cold weather/mountainous warfare.

He's served extensively around the globe: Kosovo, Afghanistan, the assault on Al Faw in Iraq (during which he was a pillar of strength to comrades after a helicopter crash wiped out Brigade Reconnaissance Force Headquarters personnel).

After a stint in Northern Ireland, Craig was twice deployed to Afghanistan; on his first tour (Op Herrick 5) he suffered life-threatening injuries after triggering an IED.

He returned to the fray and proved to be an inspirational leader on Op Herrick 14 – and beyond. Many fellow Royal Marines who were injured have been motivated by his unwavering courage and sense of responsibility.

WO1 'Si' Tripp (pictured right with his partner) is one of the best-known figures in the Royal Marines Band Service – holding the coveted post of Corps Bandmaster (its senior enlisted musician).

During training he suffered a serious, sudden, life-changing medical condition which left him in hospital.

Over a period of several months, he showed enormous grit and determination to become Bandmaster first of the Plymouth Band, then at the Royal Marines School of Music in Portsmouth before being appointed to his current post.

In that role he's been instrumental in propelling the Mountbatten Festival of Music to the forefront of Royal Navy's signature events as its producer.

He's also overseen the creation of spectacular commemorative pieces of music, set to video, to mark the anniversaries of Jutland, Operation Overlord and the 1918 Armistice – and helped the event to reach a wider audience.

He also finds time to serve as chairman of governors of a school, on the board of the Royal Navy Benevolent Trust and fundraises for the Stroke Association.



# Architects deliver

THE 436 civilians packed in the hold of this RAF C-17 transporter – a record-breaking figure – owe their new lives outside Taliban-occupied Afghanistan to men and women now decorated for their efforts over a few demanding weeks last summer.

The architects and organisers of Operation Pitting – which became the largest military evacuation and airlift in decades – were singled out in the latest operational honours awarded by Ministry of Defence.

Royal Marines Brigadier Dan Blanchford (pictured inset, top) headed up that operation, which ensured more than 15,000 people were evacuated from Kabul Airport last August, and is made a Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE) for his efforts.

"It is an honour to have been recognised," he said, "but this is really a story about the incredible and humbling work from all the soldiers, sailors, aircrews, RAF police and movements team whose selfless and compassionate commitment around the clock in very difficult conditions enabled us to evacuate 15,000 vulnerable Afghans."

Brig Blanchford also led on the repatriation of UK nationals from overseas during the Covid-19 pandemic and the disaster relief response to the explosion in a Beirut Port, in Lebanon, in August 2020.

Lieutenant Commander Will Durbin (pictured inset, centre) receives the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service for his role in the same airlift.

The 35-year-old, who is now serving aboard Portsmouth-based destroyer HMS Duncan as the senior warfare officer, was posted to Qatar as a liaison officer between the Royal Navy and RAF assisting with operations across a vast area from Cyprus to Afghanistan.

The air base at Al Udeid is the hub of the Royal Air Force's mission in the region – and Lt Cdr Durbin was expecting air operations to focus on Operation Shader, the destruction of ISIS forces in Syria and Iraq – including strikes from UK flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth passing through the region as part of her maiden deployment.

In addition, after a short time at the headquarters, he found himself as the de facto Chief of Staff Operations planning – and conducting – the largest airborne evacuation in decades.

Although the 30-or-so-strong team had done some planning for a possible evacuation, it was never on the scale – or at the pace – that events on the ground in Afghanistan panned out.

"As the RN liaison officer, the pace of operations increased significantly from arriving in post starting with the Carrier Strike Group arriving in area, and culminating in the non-combatant evacuation operation from Kabul," he said.

"At the height of the operation we were running



- Commander of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (CBE)  
Brigadier Daniel Blanchford RM  
Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)  
Lieutenant Commander Andrew Dennis  
Lieutenant Commander William John Durbin  
Queen's Commendation for Bravery (QCB)  
Chief Petty Officer Jamie Andrew Ward
- FOREIGN AWARDS LIST**  
US Legion of Merit  
Brigadier Chris Ordway RM  
US Bronze Star  
Captain James Lythgoe RM  
NATO Meritorious Service Medal  
Colonel Robin Forster RM  
Australian Operation Service Medal  
Captain Nicholas Wood

twice the planned number of flights in and out of Kabul – eight to ten a day – which meant long days, returning to your bed in the early hours of the morning, up again to be ready for the next briefing a few hours later."

Although he prefers the time at sea, the father of three found the demanding operational tour last summer one of the most rewarding of his career in the Royal Navy. "To witness the relief and joy of those being evacuated from Kabul, particularly the children, brought home the importance of our efforts in the operation. To hear the laughter of children as they were able to take their minds off their recent ordeal was a

# ts of nce

operational honours

poignant moment for us all," he added.

"I really enjoy being at sea, and the opportunities and experiences the Navy has given me. Here we could see the immediate effects of our work and actions, particularly across all Services."

Away from Afghanistan, Chief Petty Officer Jamie Ward (pictured inset, bottom) gets a Queen's Commendation for Bravery after a fire rescue while off duty.

CPO Ward and his wife, Elaine, found smoke filling their neighbour's house in Yeovil and reacted quickly with little thought for their own safety.

"We could smell burning and I asked Elaine if we'd left something on," CPO Ward said.

"We looked outside and could see smoke filling our neighbour's house. At that point, I didn't think and just ran upstairs knowing their baby might be up there. It was very smoky but we managed to get our neighbour out who was asleep on the sofa.

"Thankfully the front door was unlocked, but it's something I just did naturally. I would hope someone would do the same for our family. We have to look after each other."

The 40-year-old has worked as an engineer with the Commando Helicopter Force since joining the Royal Navy aged 16.

CPO Ward, who is originally from Tamworth but lives in Yeovil, served in Iraq and Afghanistan on Sea King helicopters and now maintains Merlin aircraft at nearby air station Yeovilton.

"It's really nice to be recognised. Obviously, I feel the need to be humble about it. I'm sure the wife will be asking where her award is," he added.

"I just didn't think about it and did what came naturally. We go through fire training at HMS Raleigh and there's an element that your training kicks in – you just look out for each other at the end of the day."

Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Martin Connell, praised the senior rate's bravery.

"Our people are the beating heart of our organisation. Chief Petty Officer Jamie Ward's heroic and selfless actions saved a life and prevented any further injury and damage in the process," he said.

"He has shown exemplary courage in the face of adversity, a fine example of the core values the Royal Navy upholds."

Lieutenant Commander Andrew Dennis gets the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service after protecting the health of nearly 4,000 service personnel who deployed as part of the Carrier Strike Group led by HMS Queen Elizabeth last year.

Effectively liaising with more than 40 countries, he personally developed and managed the successful vaccination programme across the Strike Group that resulted in every individual being vaccinated against Covid-19.

He said: "It was a complete surprise to receive an award, and a great feeling to be recognised for my work with the CSG."

"Getting nine platforms to sea safely from a COVID-19 perspective was really challenging. Policies had to be agile and working across government was essential to creating a safe environment enabling us to successfully deploy."

Main photo: PO(Phot) Ben Shread



operational honours

# Shining in t



**W**ith water brought all the way from the ocean where their ship now rests, veterans of HMS Sheffield watched her memorial dedicated – 40 years to the day she was fatally attacked.

The monument honours all who served in 'The Shiny Sheff': the wartime/post-war cruiser which helped hunt down the Bismarck; the Type 42 destroyer lost in the Falklands; and the Type 22 frigate which was built to replace losses in 1982.

But it was with the victims of the Falklands with which the monument – designed by artist Peter Naylor – was most closely associated at its dedication, given the date and the guest of honour.

Penny Salt, whose late husband Captain 'Sam' Salt commanded the destroyer in the Falklands, anointed the new £15,000 monument at the National Memorial Arboretum with South Atlantic sea water.

"I think Sam would be delighted that there is a memorial here, he said that there was never a day that went by when he didn't remember those who had died," said Mrs Salt.

"He was able to talk about it in a professional capacity, but found it difficult talking about it emotionally, it cut very deep."

John Galway, chairman of HMS Sheffield Association which drove the fundraising campaign to create and

install the memorial, added: "A lot of the former crew members have said it's long overdue, but as well as remembering the ones we lost in the Falklands, we're also remembering all who have served in previous HMS Sheffields."

"We'd been out in the Gulf for six months and we'd bonded together, so yes, I did lose friends. Everyone was a friend. We were a Sheffield family."

Veterans were left drenched by frequent Staffordshire showers as the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable Andrew Hillier led the service of dedication and remembrance, assisted by, among others, Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence – who served as the destroyer's navigator in 1980-81 – and Commander Mike Norman, Executive Officer in 1982.

Styled as a replica of the bows of a warship's (made cutting through the waves. The sea is framed by a pentagon with rope detailing as used in the wartime cruiser's crest.

It will serve as a focal point for anyone who served on a ship bearing the steel city's name – HMS Sheffield will return as one of eight new Type 26 frigates being built over the next dozen or so years – to remember forebears and comrades, and good times as well as tough.

As the new monument was being dedicated, sailors at HMS Sultan paused to



remember one of their own, lost in the Shiny Sheff.

The death of engineer David Briggs, victim of the toxic fumes spilling around the destroyer as fires raged, has inspired colleagues to save lives.

Known to friends as Basher, the petty officer (pictured inset right as a junior rating) bravely led efforts to help shipmates out of damaged compartments, only to collapse on his third attempt.

The 25-year-old was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Service Medal for his actions.

But his death inspired an award – presented to this day at the Royal Navy's school of engineering, HMS Sultan, in Gosport – and inspired friends to ensure every effort is made to ensure no other sailor shares his fate.

Chief Petty Officer Alan

## More plaques for dockyard efforts

FORTY years to the day hospital ship Uganda left Gibraltar for the Falklands a memorial honouring those who made it possible was unveiled.

Over the past couple of years, plaques have begun to appear at key sites – starting with Portsmouth Naval Base – thanks to a campaign spearheaded by former HMS Hermes sailor Andrew Cave who felt those who worked around the clock to prepare, fix, convert, load and store the Operation Corporate task force in rapid time.

Among them, employees of Gibraltar dockyard whose contribution to life-saving in the 1982 conflict has been acknowledged with a plaque at Raged Staff Gates.

In just 65 hours, veteran cruise ship SS Uganda – which took groups of schoolchildren on educational holidays – was turned into a hospital ship. Some 600 hospital beds were loaded, wards, operating theatres, an intensive care unit, X-ray facilities and laboratories were built and kitted out.

A flight deck for helicopters was added to the stern and satellite communication was installed to maintain contact with other ships in the task force.

The Gibraltar yard also converted survey ship HMS Hecla into a 'floating ambulance', to ferry casualties from the

battlefield to Uganda for longer-term care.

Some 700 personnel from both sides were treated on board.

The overseas territory's military and civilian leaders joined veterans, former dockyard workers, the Gibraltar Heritage Trust and UK-based Friends of Gibraltar Heritage Society for the ceremony, plus Governor Vice Admiral Sir David Steel, Chief Minister Fabian Picardo and Commodore Steve Dainton, Commander of British Forces.

Another yard where a memorial plaque has been installed is Rosyth whose employees in 1982 converted five trawlers into makeshift minesweepers.

Around 50 current and former employees, Royal Navy personnel, veterans and representatives from the local community attended the unveiling ceremony, including Alf Ramsay, today a production engineer on site.

"During the Falklands conflict I was working in Bay 5 at the dockyard, just a stone's throw from where I am currently working to help deliver the Royal Navy's new Type 31 Inspiration class frigates, full circle in 40 years!"

"When ships returned to Rosyth from the Falkland Islands, including HMS Plymouth, the entire yard was down at the South Arm to cheer them back in."



## Royal approval for D-Day ship

THE Princess Royal became the latest visitor to be impressed by the last surviving ship which landed tanks in Normandy on D-Day.

She was invited to formally open the LCT 7074 display at the D-Day Story in Southsea – the museum's largest relic from the 1944 invasion and already an award-winning exhibit.

The ship put ten tanks ashore on as D-Day neared its end, landing a Cromwell, two Shermans and seven Stuarts on Gold beach and 45 tank men.

As patron of the National Museum of the Royal Navy – which worked side-by-side with the D-Day Story to save, restore and finally display the Landing Craft (Tank) under a specially-built canopy – Princess Anne thanked the organisations and individuals involved in the challenging project.

The 200ft vessel – one of 235 Mk3 LCTs built – has been on show on the Southsea seafront since the late summer of 2020.

Despite the impact of Covid which has severely limited tourist activity for the past couple of years, LCT7074 has welcomed near 40,000 visitors to date.

It took six years to turn what



Nick Hewitt, who oversaw the project for the NRMN, and museum Director General Dominic Tweddle show Princess Anne a Sherman tank on the deck of LCT 7074

was a sunken wreck into a tourist attraction – and living memorial to those who risked their lives crewing or sailing such vessels.

"The sheer scale of LCT 7074 is breath-taking and we were honoured to bring her back to life," said Professor Dominic Tweddle, Director General of the

National Museum of the Royal Navy.

"We were delighted to welcome The Princess Royal and for her to give personal thanks to the skill and dogged determination of the project team to save LCT and the story of D-Day for future generations."

## H4H needs buddies for veterans

HELP For Heroes is looking to veterans in Wales to support comrades in a 'Buddy' scheme to combat isolation and loneliness.

The initiative aims to connect socially-isolated/lonely veterans with a volunteer who has completed the switch from service to civilian life completely.

The buddy provides companionship and emotional support while helping the beneficiary become involved with their local or wider communities.

Any former Serving person living in Wales can volunteer, although only H4H beneficiaries will be assigned a buddy.

The charity reckons two out of three veterans struggle to adjust to leaving the Services – rising to three in every four for those who live alone.

Buddy volunteers will receive comprehensive training, after which the charity will pair them with a suitable beneficiary.

Anybody interested in volunteering as a buddy can either contact Sarah.Hattle@helpforheroes.org.uk, or visit the H4H website.

## Naval Quirks



# the rain



'Sharkey' Ward is one of a small band of Falklands veterans still serving in today's Royal Navy and has dedicated most of his career to the art of fire-fighting and damage control on a ship. As a junior engineer he was a friend of Basher – "a good bloke, nothing was too difficult for him and he was always encouraging the lads. He was always on top of his game and a stickler to have things done by the book, which he learnt to do from his teaching at Sultan."

After the missile hit HMS Sheffield on the fateful May 4 1982, David was forced to abandon his regular breathing apparatus as it was too cumbersome to fit through a hatch.

Instead he used a respirator – but the filter was unable to protect him from the fumes emitted by the blazing ship and he succumbed to smoke inhalation on his third venture into the compartment.

"It just goes to show that in

the heat of battle you make some courageous decisions whether they are right or wrong," said Sharkey, who joined the Royal Navy in 1977 and continues to serve 45 years later, passing on his knowledge to future generations of engineering technicians at Sultan.

"I have spent most of my career teaching firefighting and damage control and saying just because you have been told you can doesn't mean you should use equipment that is not meant for that purpose."

He asks sailors under his tutelage to think: "Would Basher have done this and would he approve. I'm sure he would give you his blessing and thanks for thinking of him and doing it by the book."

Aside from the David Briggs Trophy, presented to the trainee who has demonstrated outstanding leadership, courage and dedication to duty, the senior rating is remembered in the Marine Engineering Branch Falklands Memorial Garden (alongside another victim of HMS Sheffield, Leading Marine Engineering Mechanic (Mechanical) Allan Knowles) and his medals can be seen at the Marine Engineering Museum.

Pictures: LPhot Ben Corbett, FRPU East



## 'Care village' for veterans now open

THE UK's first 'veteran care village' has welcomed its first residents.

Broughton House has replaced its existing home in Salford – which has provided accommodation for 8,000 veterans over more than 100 years – with a £12.5m complex.

It comprises a 64-bed care home and six retirement apartments, designed with the purpose of offering trailblazing provision for the North West's ageing armed forces community.

The Stoller Wing of the newly-built care home – named in honour of busi-nessman and philanthropist Sir Norman Stoller, who donated £4m to the project – pays homage to Broughton House's rich history going back to 1916, with a museum brimming with fascinating sto-ries of former residents, rare war medals and historic memorabilia, keeping the memories of the fallen well and truly alive.

It's also home to a gym, a hairdressing and barber's salon, and a restaurant and bar for residents.

And the Jellicoe Wing – named after the WW1 Grand Fleet commander and First Sea Lord who opened the original Broughton House building – has two 16-bedroom households, one of which is dedicated to veterans with dementia.

The wing also houses the retirement apartments and an Armed Forces 'support hub', which offers welfare support and counselling for ex-service personnel of all ages.

The retirement apartments are aimed at those who are more independent but want to be part of a veteran community and its camaraderie.



## 847 dedicate Basra monument

SIXTEEN years after one of the darkest days in the history of the squadron, 847 Naval Air Squadron dedicated a memorial to the victims of a Lynx brought down over Basra.

All five people aboard the helicopter were killed when it was hit by a surface-to-air-missile during a routine patrol over the Iraqi city on May 6 2006.

The stricken helicopter – Lynx Mk7 XZ614 – crashed into a residential building, claiming the lives of 847's then Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Darren Chapman (pictured in front of his Lynx just six weeks before the tragedy), Captain David Dobson Army Air Corps, Marine Paul Collins, and RAF Wing Commander John Coxen and Flight

Lieutenant Sarah Jayne Mulvihill.

The monument to the five aviators was erected on the grass in front of Commando Helicopter Force's headquarters at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset last year in time for the 15th anniversary.

But Covid restrictions did not allow a full service and ceremony of dedication befitting the memorial or the lives lost.

With the pandemic in retreat, families, relatives and those close to the five aircrew, as well as serving personnel gathered in the spring sunshine to pay tribute and dedicate the Basra Memorial, culminating in a flypast from a Wildcat AH1, the squadron's successor to the Lynx Mk7.

Picture: PO(Phot) Des Wade, CHF



## Big-hearted Torre Vieja's handouts

ROYAL Navy Association Torre Vieja branch chairman Anthony Jenkins presented €300 to Senor Javier Penalva from the local branch of the Spanish Alzheimer's Association.

It's one of three good causes the branch's annual general meeting determined should benefit from shipmates' generosity, each receiving €300 (about £250):

the Naval Children's Charity, MABS of San Javier, and the Alzheimer group, who presented the former sailors with a commemorative plaque in gratitude.

The branch meets at 1700 hrs on the first Wednesday of each month all year around at Che Loco Restaurant, El Chaparral Urbanization, Calle Fray Angelico 11, 03184, Torre Vieja.

Details from S/M Tony at [Chairman.RNATB@mail.com](mailto:Chairman.RNATB@mail.com) / +34693866709 or +4470576117222 (What's App), or vice chairman Dusty Miller [ViceChairRNATB@mail.com](mailto:ViceChairRNATB@mail.com) Mob +34711006670 (What's App).

## Plymouth's parlour treat

FOLLOWING an invitation by the Patron of the Royal Naval Association's Plymouth branch, the Lord Mayor of Plymouth Cllr Terri Beer, members of the Branch visited the Lord Mayor's Parlour.

After an informative talk the members had a tour of the Parlour and admired the Mayor's formal apparel and regalia, this being followed by tea and stickies.



## Sweet sound of music

LITTLEHAMPTON sea cadets returned to their winning ways, taking first prizes in the first district drill and piping competition after a two years' absence of the event due to Covid-19.

The team came first in the colour party competition as well as winning the individual piping competition. Additionally, a combined team from Bognor Regis and Littlehampton won the junior trophy. The competition was held by Central District Sea Cadets at HMS Excellent in Portsmouth.

Lt (SCC) RNR Brian Osborne, Littlehampton Unit's Commanding Officer, said: "Littlehampton unit came a well-deserved first. It was a great result after training for only three weeks, since Covid-19 restrictions were only recently lifted by our organisation."

The team members were AC R. Orchard, Cdt 1st Class B. Williams, Cadet 1st Class A. Barratt and Colour Party Commander AC A. Smallbone. The pipers were OC R. Ward and Junior Cadet E. Hill.

Littlehampton cadets went on to compete in the area competition, where the senior piping team taking the third place and the combined junior team placed fourth.

## Special reward for Adam

LEADING Cadet Adam Newby from Fleetwood Sea Cadets Unit has been given special recognition by Fleetwood's regimental association, alongside two other cadets from local cadet forces.

The Duke of Lancaster's Regiment Association Fleetwood and District Branch made the presentations during its AGM at the Kings Own Old Comrades Club in Fleetwood.

This followed the Association's request to Sea Cadets, Army Cadets and Air Force to each nominate a cadet who had demonstrated exceptional commitment, teamwork and achievements.

Norman Gallagher, President of the Association, presented Leading Cadet Adam Newby (Sea Cadets), Corporal Ellis Heslop (Army Cadets) and Corporal Kaydon Harwood (Air Forces Cadets) with a personal gift of £20, a glass trophy and a larger shield for each cadet's unit.

A spokesman for the Association said: "The qualities of commitment, teamwork and leadership are all commendable attributes and we are pleased to be able to give recognition to these young cadets who have demonstrated them. We are proud to support the town's cadet units and this is one way we are able to do that."

The Association is open to serving and ex-serving members of the Armed Forces, Merchant Navy, members of the emergency services including the RNLI and cadet forces over the age of 18.

## Ben meets RM challenges

A ROYAL Marines Cadets instructor has raised hundreds of pounds for the Royal Marines Charity Commando 80 appeal.

Ben Felton, who instructs at Maldon in Essex, took part in three of the famous Commando Tests – six, nine and 30 mile yomps.

"I had a team of former Royal Marines advising me and providing support," said Ben.

You can support Ben at <https://rmatrnc.enthouse.com/pf/ben-challenge/post/1514292>



## Injured seagull 'Cadet' is rescued



A SEAGULL stuck in the River Exe with a suspected broken wing was rescued thanks to the help of Exeter Sea Cadets.

After bird rescuer, Jenny Steer, was unable to get to the ailing bird, who was stuck in the river near The Port Royal at Exeter Quay, she reached out to Exeter Sea Cadets Unit, whose base is located close by.

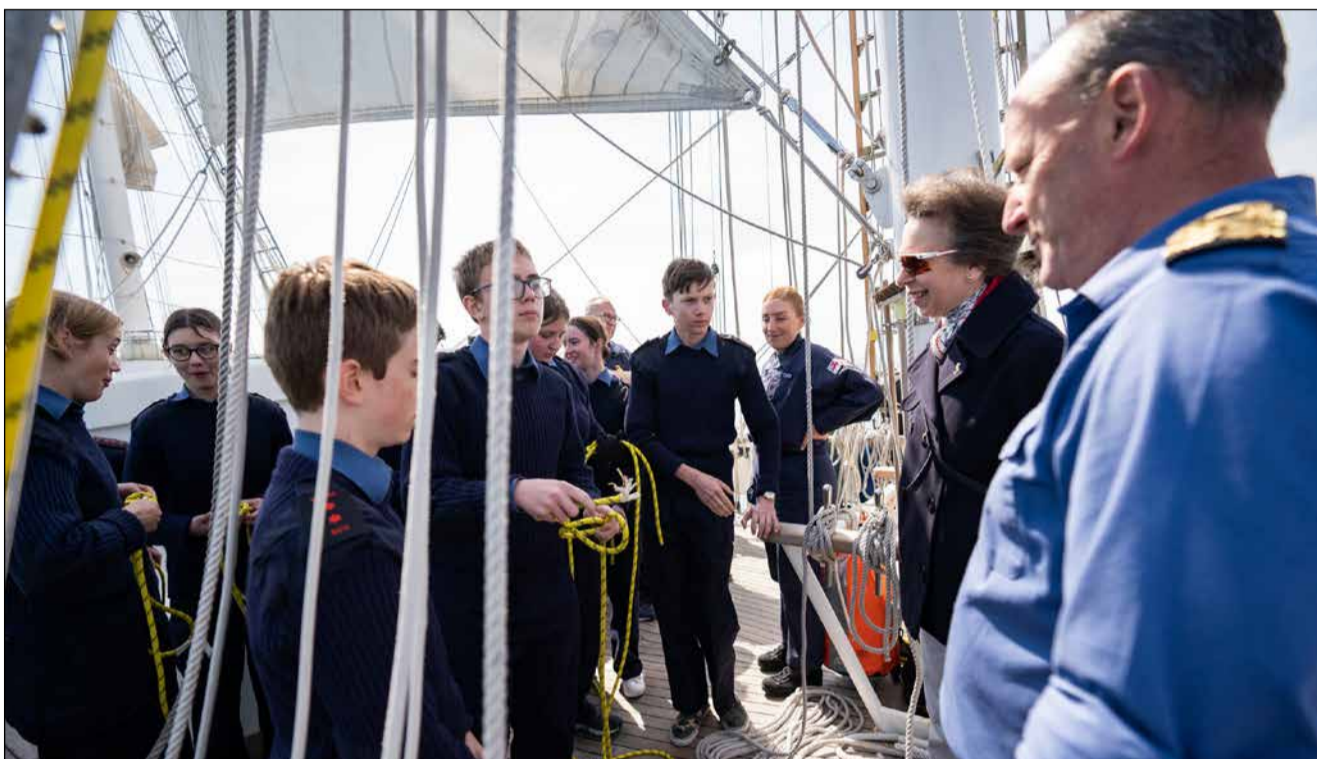
The cadets and volunteers at the unit used one of their powerboats and canoe to save the seagull.

The bird – who has been named 'Cadet' in honour of its rescuers – was taken to a

rescue aviary in Exeter.

Jenny said: "I went into the Sea Cadets building and asked the Commanding Officer if they could please help. Two adults and two cadets took a canoe and put it on the powerboat and then used the canoe to get into the tricky area – they were absolutely brilliant! The gull is now healed and has been set free again."

A Gofundme fundraiser has been launched by Jenny to ensure she can continue rescuing wild birds in Exeter. For more information, visit [gofundme.com/f/help-for-our-rescue-wild-birds](https://gofundme.com/f/help-for-our-rescue-wild-birds)



## Anne at the wheel

THE Princess Royal was able to enjoy time with sea cadets during her first voyage as Admiral of the Sea Cadet Corps.

She was joined by Martin Coles CBE, Chief Executive, and Captain Neil Downing RN, Captain Sea Cadets.

Cadets from 12 units around the country piped her arrival onboard TS Royalist, the Sea Cadet's flagship, and promptly set sail for the Solent.

"We were delighted to welcome The Princess Royal for her first voyage with Sea Cadets since becoming our Admiral," said Captain Sea Cadets, Neil Downing.

"Cadets getting together for a voyage is a key aspect of the Sea Cadets experience, encouraging young people from many different backgrounds to get to know each other and work together as a team. The cadets were clearly excited for the occasion but certainly demonstrated their exceptional skills throughout the voyage."



Commander (SCC) Andy Phenna RNR, Head of Offshore for MSSC, said: "It was a great privilege to host our Admiral onboard the flagship. The weather could not have been better and the cadets onboard showed off their sail-handling skills to a very high standard. I think the Princess enjoyed her time with us, particularly her time on the wheel."

"It was a great experience", enthused one cadet, while another said: "I enjoyed the day,

it was really fun. The Princess Royal spoke to us all and made us feel included."

The Princess Royal has a long history of actively supporting the youth charity and has special links with the TS Royalist, having named and commissioned the original TS Royalist in 1971 as well as the new replacement ship of the same name in 2015.

At the beginning of this month, HRH officially opened the new Sea Cadets boat station in Port Edgar, Edinburgh, where she praised the charity for the opportunities it offers young people, telling the cadets: "Sea Cadets has quite a history – a history that you keep adding to."

The TS Royalist sleeps 24 cadets and offers young people all around the country to experience voyages up to six days in length. Offshore voyages give sea cadets a great opportunity to enjoy nautical adventure and fun while developing the skills and confidence to launch them well into life.



**THE ROYAL NAVAL BENEVOLENT TRUST**  
SERVE A DAY, SUPPORTED FOR LIFE



**Our vision is: Sailors and Marines helping Sailors and Marines – now and always.**

RNBT provides a helping hand to serving and ex-serving men and women and their families. Help, opportunity and care in times of need.

We don't just help you to weather the storm, we try and help you navigate your way out of it.

If you need help or would like to donate or volunteer contact RNBT.

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust, Castaway House, 311 Twyford Avenue, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO2 8RN

T: 02392 690112 E: [rnbt@rnbt.org.uk](mailto:rnbt@rnbt.org.uk)

[www.rnbt.org.uk](http://www.rnbt.org.uk)

Registered Charity Number 206243







## Egg-cited to help children's charity

BALLYMENA sea cadets joined forces with Glengormley High School army cadets to support the Children's Cancer Unit Charity's campaign to provide Easter eggs to the children being treated by them at The Royal Belfast Hospital for Sick Children.

The cadets donated 90 Easter eggs to the children as well as some treats for the hard-working staff.

The Children's Cancer Unit Charity (CCUC) was formed to support the unit, which is the only facility in Northern Ireland used to treat children diagnosed with cancer.

Ruth Verner, Chairperson of Ballymena Sea Cadets Unit, said: "As youth organisations, it was important for us to support CCUC's campaign as they provide such vital work."

Cadet Jake (13) said: "I thought this was a very thoughtful and kind thing to do."

Lt Shirley Montgomery, Detachment Commander of Glengormley High School ACF said: "I was overwhelmed by the generosity of our cadets, and also welcomed the opportunity to collaborate with another youth organisation for this worthwhile campaign."



## Great drills at Torpoint

TORPOINT Sea Cadets have achieved their best-ever result in the National Drill Competition, winning silver at the event held at HMS Raleigh.

The team of eight performed a 'continuity' drill display to music composed of over 200 movements committed to memory, beating hundreds of competitors from across the country.

The sea cadets have been rehearsing every week since January to produce a marching drill display without orders to military music. The pieces include: Soldier an' Sailor Too, Flight of the Silverbird, The Stars and Stripes Forever, Clash of the Dreadnoughts and Auld Lang Syne.

"We're all so pleased with this to have won silver at the national competition after so many hours of practicing over the past few months," said Ordinary Cadet Charlotte Ashdown from Torpoint Unit.

Able Cadet Will Wooller said: "We've been practicing our routine for months but were still quite nervous before we performed. The hard work was worth it for our national silver medal – it's great sharing this achievement with friends."

The team's coach, Lieutenant Rhys Tanner RN said: "The cadets have really done themselves proud with this result. Their teamwork and dedication has amounted to a fantastic display with immaculate drill."

Admiral Sir Philip Jones, former First Sea Lord and current President of the Marine Society and Sea Cadets, presented the Torpoint team with their medals, saying he was "very impressed with the standard of drill" the cadets had demonstrated.

# City's tribute to Sheffield's fallen

SHEFFIELD city centre came to a standstill as civic leaders, veterans of the Falklands War, sea cadets and members of the public gathered together to mark 40 years since the sinking of the HMS Sheffield.

Members of the public watched as Sheffield Sea Cadets paraded by the war memorial in Barker's Pool, outside the City Hall.

The Lord Lieutenant of South Yorkshire, Professor Dame Hilary Chapman DBE and the Lord Mayor of Sheffield, Councillor Gail Smith, took the salute accompanied by other senior dignitaries. Wreath laying and a service followed at the HMS Sheffield Memorial in Sheffield Cathedral.

In her speech, the Lord Mayor of Sheffield said the loss of HMS Sheffield was a "significant event in our city's and our country's history."

"As well as losing our prestigious warship, many lives were



lost during the conflict in the Falklands and we mustn't forget the sacrifices made by those who fought, and all those who still do today, to protect our freedom."

SLt (SCC) Chris Camps RNR, Officer in Command of the Sheffield Sea Cadets Unit said: "For the people of Sheffield the sinking of HMS Sheffield was such a significant event, the majority can remember where they were and what they were doing on that day. Sheffield Sea Cadets felt an obligation to make the 40th Anniversary something special – a day of celebration as well as commemoration."

HMS Sheffield Survivor, John Galway commented: "How teary and emotional we felt, walking through the Sea Cadets escorts as we went into the Cathedral."

"I felt privileged to get the opportunity to do a reading in front of the Admiral and other dignitaries," said Cadet David from Sheffield Sea Cadets Unit. "I also felt like it was a great opportunity to pay respects to survivors and the fallen of HMS Sheffield."

Able Cadet Ben, who is also from the local unit, said: "I was honoured and very proud to represent Sea Cadets on this very memorable day."

Twenty crew members died and many more were injured when the ship was hit by an Argentine missile on May 4 and sunk on May 10 1982.

The Royal Navy warship, named after the Steel City, carried many fixtures and fittings manufactured in Sheffield, including a great number of stainless steel items, leading to the nickname the 'Shiny Sheff'. HMS Sheffield was the first British warship to be lost in enemy action since World War Two. The shipwreck is now a protected war grave.

A new memorial sculpture made of Sheffield steel was also unveiled at the National Memorial Arboretum, see pages 30-31.

Pictures: Ian M Spooner Photography



## River clean up hailed a success

OLD shoes, mops, loft insulation and plastic bottles. These items were among the 120 bags of rubbish picked up near the picturesque Pulteney Bridge in Bath.

City of Bath Sea Cadets recently helped to collect more than 120 bags of litter along the River Avon as part of this year's Great British Spring Clean.

Teaming up with ten other volunteer groups – including Avon Fire and Rescue, Canoe Avon and Bath Canoe Club – cadets and adults from the unit rolled up their sleeves to make sure their local river, in close proximity to their unit, looked clean and sparkling once more.

"Our cadets were proud to help in improving our local waterway and use their boating skills to achieve something really important," said Lt (SCC) RNR, Tim West MA (Cantab), Commanding Officer of the City of Bath Sea Cadets Unit. "Not only is the waste harmful to the environment, but it's also unsightly, especially so near to the prominent tourist spot of the iconic Pulteney Bridge. I'm also very grateful for the efforts of our volunteers, who make such a huge contribution to our community here in Bath."

The Great Avon River Pick saw over 170 people of all ages working together.



## Kindness at food bank

THE St Vincent de Paul foodbank in Rutherglen has received a bumper donation from East Kilbride Sea Cadets – and the young people are planning to hold a monthly foodbank collection from now on for those less fortunate.

It all started when the manager of a local charity, Rain or Shine, visited the unit to give a presentation on what a social enterprise is all about.

"The talk really captured the imagination of the cadets," said CPO (SCC) John Leber the Commanding Officer of the unit. "They were keen to get involved."

A number of cadets at the unit who are doing their DofE have joined forces with Rain or Shine and the local foodbank as volunteers.

The manager of Rain and Shine, Paula Mc Nee, said she is really impressed with the commitment of the cadets.

"I think this has really opened their eyes up to the poverty in the area," she said.

Cadet Charlotte, aged 13, was one of the cadets who delivered the food items to the local foodbank. "I realise now that people can take it for granted that they will have enough to eat," she remarked. Charlotte, who is currently working towards her DofE Bronze Award, now volunteers with Rain or Shine.



## Pride at promotions

SEA cadets from Severn District were awarded their promotion bands by Stroud MP, Siobhan Baillie during her visit to their headquarters.

Ms Baillie met with Lieutenant Adam Whitehead, Commanding Officer, and the cadets of TS Severn, where she watched their ceremonial session, before being asked to inspect their uniform.

Ms Baillie also chatted with the 25 cadets who form part of the unit, finding out more about their offshore events and other activities, as well as the skills and qualification they are gaining through being part of Sea Cadets.

"I was very impressed with all the cadets and the adult volunteers who turned out so smartly for their meeting," said Ms Baillie. "Speaking to the cadets, it was obvious what a friendly and confident group they are. They clearly enjoy their time together but the skills they are learning will stand them in good stead into adult life."

"This charity is undertaking sterling work for our local young people. They teach discipline, resilience and teamwork – all skills much needed in the wider world. One young man told me that having cadet service on his CV assisted him to secure a much sought after aerospace apprenticeship."



## 'If you need to fight for democracy, then so be it'

JOE Morton, now aged 64, works as a civil servant at Culdrose in the stores. In 1982, he was in the operations room of frigate HMS Antelope which was subjected to ferocious air attacks on May 23 in 'bomb alley'.

Mr Morton said: "The first waves of attacks from Argentine Skyhawks swept into Bomb Alley in the early evening, giving it all day had with 20mm cannons. In return every ship and gun returned fire.

"Mayhem ensued for a good hour with several attacks up and down the alley as the Skyhawks picked their targets for the bomb load they carried."

HMS Antelope was hit twice but the bombs failed to explode, being released too low. Later that night, experts attempted to defuse one of the bombs but it detonated, fatally damaging the ship in a huge explosion.

At the time, Mr Morton was aft, in the aircraft hangar, when he was suddenly flung backwards by the enormous blast.

### RAINING ALUMINIUM

"All hell broke loose as the bomb went up, with Antelope lighting up the night sky and at the same time breaking her back," he said.

"I soon discovered aluminium melts quickly and, having been thrown out of the hangar by the force of the explosion, I got rained on with molten lumps of the stuff.

"My biggest fear was the old girl turning turtle and trapping her crew. She had started to list and there was a massive hole midships. There was a blaze and the fire-main was breached in the explosion."

Mr Morton helped move a badly injured sailor up to the deck when the order was shouted to abandon ship.

He said helicopters appeared from the surrounding ships, despite the dangers of approaching the crippled frigate, and began lifting people from the deck.

Mr Morton said he was contemplating jumping overboard when a boat from HMS Argonaut came alongside to pick up survivors. Explosions continued throughout the night as the ship burned.

Looking back now, he said: "Those images will stay with me forever. I remember the shipmates we lost down south. But after all that happened, it was still worth it.

"It's still a free country. If you need to fight for democracy, then so be it."



Collingwood's Commanding Officer Captain Catherine Jordan chats with veterans before the joint parade through the heart of Fareham

Picture: Keith Woodland

# Freedom past, freedom present

PERSONNEL at Culdrose and Collingwood used ceremonial events to welcome back Falklands veterans and thank them for their sacrifices in liberating the islands 40 years ago.

Men and women of 1982 were invited to parade through the heart of Fareham as the town marked the anniversary of the conflict, combined with a Freedom parade by Collingwood personnel.

The 82-year-old establishment has enjoyed the borough's highest civic honour almost since it was created in 1974.

Commanding Officer Captain Catherine Jordan chatted with veterans during a light-hearted 'inspection' of their ranks, while the borough's mayor, Councillor Mike Ford took the general salute in West Street before an arms drill display and speeches.

"I'm delighted to welcome our Falklands Veterans and personnel from HMS Collingwood," he told those gathered in the town's main street.

"A very special thank you to HMS Collingwood for making the special event possible."

After the parade Cllr Ford joined Falklands veteran Derek Kimber in unveiling the new memorial plaque at the Falklands Arch, and 40 Pale Maiden flowers, the national flower

of the Falklands, were affixed to the arch as a lasting tribute.

"It is good that friends and neighbours remember us and our lost brothers, particularly as the world seems to turn at such a pace now," said Mr Kimber, who as a chief petty officer survived the sinking of destroyer HMS Coventry on May 25 1982.

Capt Jordan said her sailors felt privileged to share the streets of Fareham with the veterans, honouring them and thanking townsfolk as well as Service families for the continued support for the thousands of sailors who are based at or pass through Collingwood every year.

"The training establishment and borough have had a relationship of mutual respect and support since 1940 which goes from strength to strength," she said.

At Culdrose, some three dozen men and their families were invited to watch a ceremonial divisions parade by the ship's company of HMS Seahawk.

They were either former veterans of the two remaining naval squadrons at Culdrose which took part in the conflict (820 and 824), or members of the South Atlantic Medal Association 1982.

The event was brought forward to May rather than this month - when 40th anniversary commemorations reach their peak - because 820 are away on exercises with carrier HMS

Prince of Wales.

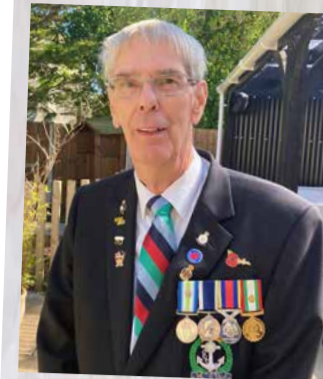
"Two hundred and fifty-six British service personnel laid down their lives," Rear Admiral Steve Moorhouse, the head of the Fleet Air Arm told those assembled in a hangar. "They sailed to the far side of the world and never returned."

Present was the commanding officer of 820 back in 1982, Commander Ralph Wykes-Sneyd; the 11 Sea King HASs embarked in HMS Invincible flew anti-submarine patrols, search and rescue missions and general sorties throughout the conflict.

He was welcomed 820's current commanding officer, Commander Ian Varley, and introduced to the men and women who serve today, performing many of the same roles, only now with the Merlin Mk2.

John 'Soups' Campbell, a retired chief petty officer aircraft handler, and his wife June were joined by their son Leading Air Engineering Technician Bill Campbell of 824 NAS, who said: "My dad's career definitely influenced me to join the navy, and my wife comes from a naval family too. I am really proud of him serving in the Falklands."

And veterans Joe Morton (left) and Peter Cherry (right) shared their experiences of the Falklands with Culdrose's press officer, Graeme Wilkinson.



## 'I thought: Well, that's it. We've had it'

CONTAINER ship SS Atlantic Conveyor shared Antelope's bitter fate, turned into a burned-out hulk when hit by two Exocet missiles on May 25 1982.

The ship was carrying supplies and spare Wessex and Chinook helicopters.

Peter Cherry, now aged 75, served aboard as a petty officer air engineering mechanic.

"They were aimed at the carrier Hermes, but she put her chaff up and the missiles changed course," he said. "The next ship put her chaff up but we were unarmed - we put our hands up."

"I was on the bridge at the time and heard them both hit. I thought: 'Well, that's it. We've had it.'

"She was all on fire and the order was given to abandon ship. I tried to make my way down from the bridge, but I couldn't see for the smoke."

### ABANDON SHIP

When Mr Cherry eventually reached the lifeboat station, he helped a small number of men lift the heavy inflatable life-rafts over the side.

As he was climbing down the side of the ship, an explosion inside blew Mr Cherry off the ladder and he fell into the icy waters of the South Atlantic.

"I saw a man jump from the deck with his life vest inflated. He broke his neck. Another man died in my arms."

"You know, the training kicks in at the time. It's not until you are safe afterwards that you realise what's just happened."

When Peter Cherry reached a life-raft he was told it was already full. He had to cling to the side of the raft despite the freezing conditions and wait until he was rescued. He said his cold weather training helped save his life.

Despite suffering poor health as a result of his ordeal, Mr Cherry said he felt immense pride, adding: "I am proud to have served in the Royal Navy and to have served my country. That's what I signed up for."

## OPEN DAY HMS Collingwood - 2nd July 2022 - 09:30 to 17:30



### Attractions:

- Annual Royal Navy, Royal Marines Field Gun Competition
- Royal Marine Marching Band
- Spitfire Flypast
- Funfair (13 piece)
- Various displays of military capability
- Flight simulator
- Petting Zoo
- Vintage car show
- Static aircraft display
- Numerous stalls including food and drink

Scan the QR code to obtain tickets prior to the event from: [qrsecure.ticketzonestore.co.uk](https://qrsecure.ticketzonestore.co.uk)





# HEROES OF THE HAGUE

## IMPRESSIVE MEDAL HAUL FROM INVICTUS GAMES



**THE Royal Navy's Lieutenant Commander Richie Gray, left, took silver in the freestyle swimming as part of an impressive medal haul from serving and veteran sailors and Royal Marines at the Invictus Games.**

The Bristolian was the captain of the UK's cycling at the event at The Hague, in the Netherlands, but shone in the pool with second place after a 37.97 second swim over 50 metres on day two of the games.

"The medal doesn't matter. To get everyone on that start line. To get them to do their best. To finish. To get that sense of achievement. That is the ultimate goal for team UK," said Richie during a powerful interview with the BBC, in which he spoke about his serious shoulder injury and battle with cancer.

"I really thought I was superman. Nothing is going to faze me but actually when you are hit with something that does

restrict you then you have to reevaluate your life."

On the bike, Richie finished fourth behind Lieutenant Commander James Rogers who won bronze during a pulsating time trial event that saw impressive performances from across the UK team.

Ex-sailor Jonathan Platt, who left the Royal Navy after a back injury, took gold in the middleweight powerlifting, lifting an impressive 181kg, while former Fleet Air Arm man Nigel White lifted a personal best.

Veteran matelot Russell Hunt and ex-Royal Marines Paul Hartley and Paul Gray were silver medallists after a dramatic wheelchair rugby final that saw them narrowly defeated 23-20 at a packed out Invictus Games Stadium.

Former commando Paul Gray was also part of the UK wheelchair basketball that beat Georgie 26-25 in the final seconds to take bronze.

Meanwhile, Scotsman Stuart Padley, a former aircraft handler with the RN, took a silver medal in the archery during nail-biting finale against France but also recorded a personal best while competing in the rowing events.

Those medals put the seal on the long-awaited fifth Invictus Games, which had been postponed since 2020

because of Covid-19.


The games, which were established by the Duke of Sussex in 2014, aim to provide an opportunity for wounded, injured and sick service personnel and veterans to compete in sport.

Read Admiral Jude Terry, the Royal Navy's Director of People and Training and Naval Secretary, attended the games.

She said: "When people are first faced with the reality of sickness or injury, many experience a loss of confidence and depression. This has a huge impact on them and their families and makes them vulnerable to psychological and emotional stress. Sport and teamwork are a huge part of life in the services and the perceived loss of opportunity to engage in it can add to the feeling of not fitting in.

"Adaptive sport participation allows individuals to focus on what they can do rather than what they can't. It can be used as part of a recovery plan to offer opportunities to build confidence, encourage integration, within and outwith the wervice, and promote independence as well as encouraging social interaction beyond their immediate circle."

The next games will take place in Dusseldorf in Germany in 2023.




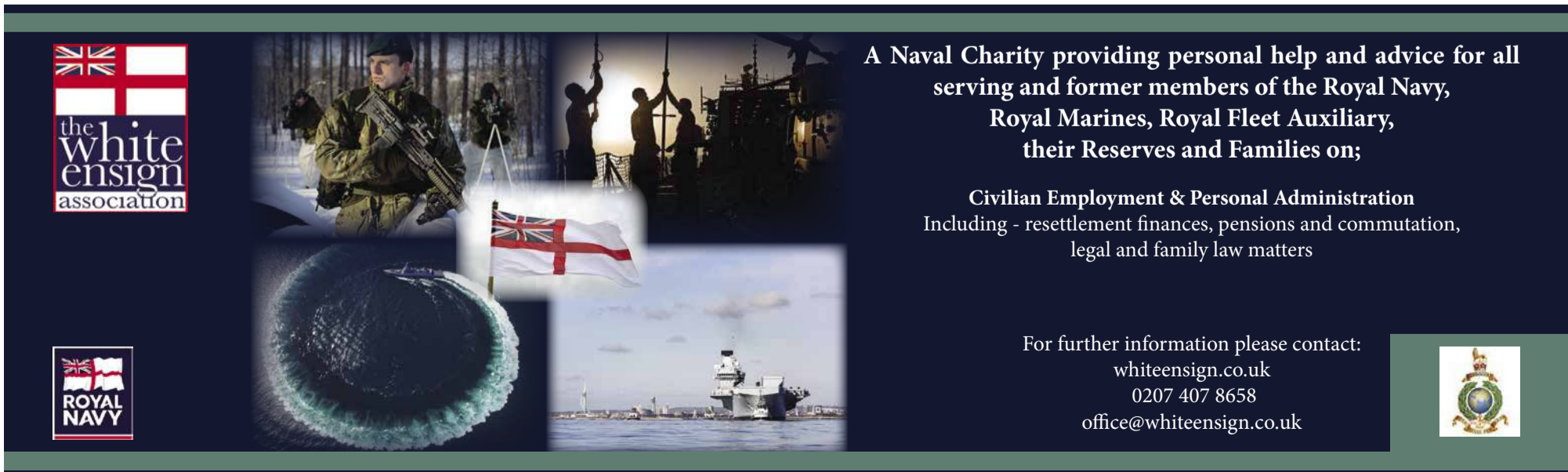
the white  
ensign  
association

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

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

For further information please contact:  
whiteensign.co.uk  
0207 407 8658  
office@whiteensign.co.uk







## Navy take honours in dinghy regatta

ROYAL Navy dinghy racers picked up the Inter-Service Team Racing Regatta as well as the B team trophy as normal service was resumed on the water.

The event was sailed in the last week of March in blustery conditions which included a blizzard and biting cold Northerly winds.

Laser 2000 dinghies were used (which all three Services own). These are identical two-person boats, which because of the gusty conditions were sailed with reefed mainsails to ensure a controlled, safe and level playing field.

Despite the reduced sail area there was still enough power in the gusts to capsize the unwary, and there were a number of cold swims during the racing. The team racing format involves a series



of matches between three boat teams, and the overall sum of their scores counts (first receives one point, the second two and so on) and the team with the lowest score wins. This format encourages boat control, precision, a thorough understanding of the rules, the ability to sail fast and a degree of aggression.

However, it is unimpeded on the water and while voices are occasionally raised there is a strong sense of friendship and camaraderie between the teams off the water.

Emerging from the winter, the Royal Navy and RAF showed up with two full teams, but for the first time in living memory the Army couldn't field a team at all. The event was well organised by the RAF and took place at the relatively sheltered Bowmoor Sailing Club, near Lechlade in Gloucestershire. It was sponsored by Nova Systems and supported by a number of volunteer race officers and judges (Martin Smethers, Nigel Vick, Steve Watson, Tom Whittingham) without whom the event couldn't happen.

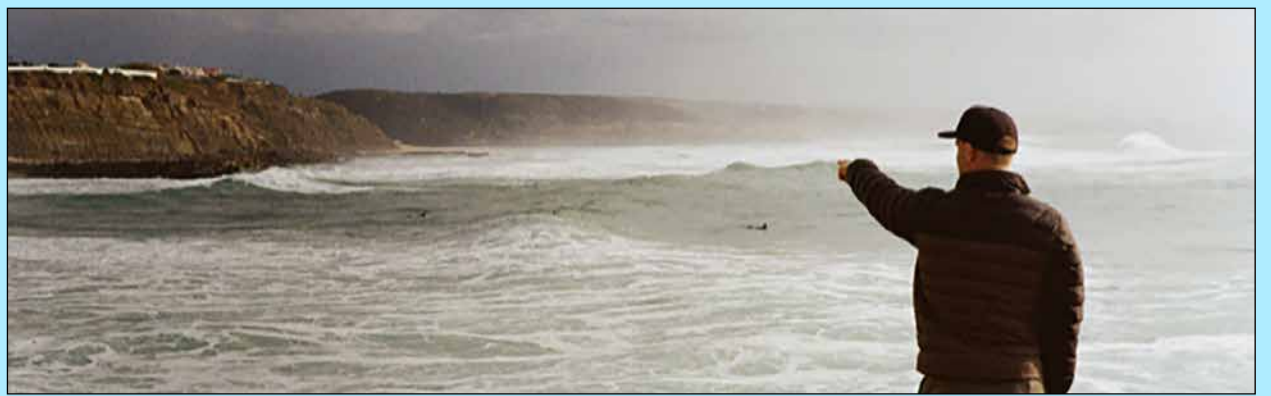
The Royal Navy teams were a healthy mix of experienced campaigners and enthusiastic first timers with an impressive seven out of the 12 representing the Royal Navy for the first time. This turnout was due to a successful marketing, recruiting and training regime run by: Team Captain, Lt Cdr Hamish Walker; RN Sailing Coach, Wayne Shirley and outgoing Rear Cdre Dinghies, Cdr Andy Wood who has done a brilliant job over the last three years.

Navy 'A' Team: Hamish Walker/ Todd Dharangit\*; Natalie Johnson/ Harry Thomas; Dan Vincent/ Beth Catchpole\*  
Navy 'B' Team: Annie Knott\*/ Callum Heggs\*; Douglas Calder\*/ Alastair Smith\*; Katy Baines\*/ Kat Juniper

\*representing the RN for the first time and eligible for Colours.

Anyone interested in giving sailing a go should contact the RNSA at /join <https://members.rnsa.org.uk/OnlineApplicationForm.aspx> . Visit our <https://www.rnsa.org.uk> or contact Deborah on [admin@rnsa.org.uk](mailto:admin@rnsa.org.uk).

Words: Captain Dan Vincent RN  
Pictures: Nigel Vick



# Surf-seekers

## Portugal offers wave catchers ideal conditions

THE annual Royal Navy and Royal Marines Surfing Association's overseas training camp saw sportsmen and women decamp to Ericeira in Portugal.

The trip to Europe's first World Surfing Reserve was planned to ensure the team attending the upcoming Inter-services Surfing Championships had access to top-quality waves in the lead-up to the event.

The group, made up of both RN and RM Ranks and Rates, had high expectations for the conditions.

The forecast had predicted swell pulses as big as 11ft @ 17 seconds meaning the surf was likely to be heavy and very powerful. The report was not wrong.

With much of the west coast producing waves bigger than houses, the group decided to search the south coast for more manageable spots.

Here they could take advantage of the elusive 'wrap-arounds' and more user-friendly waves in the sheltered beaches in the vicinity of Lisbon.

The search brought the group to a beach break named Carcavelos, aptly named after a sweet Portuguese white wine.

The beach felt tropical with white sands and blue seas, but the wave itself was anything but friendly. Carcavelos was a fast, heavy, and hollow head-high shore dump breaking onto shallow sand; many of the group felt the 'Portuguese punch' that first morning.

AB Blake proved that if you took the drop late you were guaranteed to take a flogging as he went on to snap his prized surfboard later in the week.

AB Jake Sage was seen hunting barrels and getting absolutely 'shacked' on the inside, perfectly slotting into turquoise blue tubes and getting spat right back out; a skill to be expected from a semi-professional surfer!

After detailed analysis of Google maps and surf report websites, the team then recce'd a potential point break further along the coast.

A small bay, named Estoril and only a few miles from Carcavelos, produced a fat and slow peeling right hander. The waves were in the double overhead range and the take-off zone full of local surfers highly talented in catching the best waves; it was a fight for the team to find themselves in the



right spot to catch a bomb and avoid getting smashed on the head when sitting in the wrong position!

In between sessions, AB Leni Milne was camera duty capturing the likes of PO Laura Davies, LH Ben Lenderyou, and RM Ciaran Pudner trading waves and having a wicked time, honing their skills ahead of the competition at home.

Mne Shoey Schuneman was never seen without a wet in his hand, chasing more tail than he was grabbing rail but doing his part for improving international relations.

On his trusty 7'0 twin pin, Sgt Adz Lison was making the most of his final trip with the association, often being the first in and last out of the ocean.

He could be seen picking a high line and rinsing the wave for everything it had, showing his confidence in often challenging, large waves over a rocky sea floor.

Lt Ryan Woodridge, Lt Simon Schentler and WO2 Andy Williams were all on form, ripping the waves up and blowing the back out of the lip whilst also taking care not to blow out their own aged backs!

When not surfing from sun-up to sun-down, the group made the most of Portugal's rich culture. This included exploration of the surrounding towns and sampling the tasty local delicacies with CSgt John Caulfield taking the lead in the search of anything covered in pastry, specifically the delicious *pastels de nata*.

Overall, this trip was a great success: at the recent Inter-services AB Jess King came third in the Womens' Open, Lt Ryan Woodridge third in the Bodyboard, AB Jake Sage third in the Mens' Open and Mne Rhys Barfield second.

The training camp, partly funded by the Sports Lottery, is one of many regular trips and events held by the RNRMSA, such as beginner weekends, intermediate training sessions, and other surf camps/tours abroad.

To find out more and to become a member visit [www.surfnavy.com](http://www.surfnavy.com) or search for the Surf Navy group on Facebook.

Report: Marine William Schuneman  
Pictures: AB Leni Milne and Mne Schuneman





# History makers

"THIS is just the beginning" said Royal Navy Senior Women's Captain Rose Dixon as she summed up her team's first appearance at Twickenham where the Navy were on the wrong side of a large scoreline.

In sunny South-West London in front of a healthy crowd the Army were dominant from the start. Full-back Louise Dodd set the tone as she tapped and went from inside her own 22, gliding through the Navy defence with ease, making meters at will. It was from this break that Player of the Match Sally Scott scored the first try of the afternoon just six minutes in. She bundled over from close, driving over two Navy defenders who could do little to stop her. Winger Cortney Pursglove converted to deservedly put the Army 7-0 up.

The Navy had some decent possession but found it hard to string together more than a few phases so had to kick to release pressure put onto them by the Army. Army fly-half Jade Mullen made some excellent tackles in midfield early on, flashing up in defence and shutting down any Navy attacks before they had the chance to grow. Less than ten minutes after the Army's first, Dodd scored a try of her own. She hit a great line through the midfield and stepped the covering fullback Chloe Sopp to dot down under the posts.

The one-way traffic continued as the Navy found it difficult to live with the Army's rush defence, led by Scott who was tremendous all game. A try from Dainton and a second from Scott put the Army even further ahead. Just before halftime, Pursglove scored her first try of the afternoon. Some great hands from the Army backs gave Dodd the ball in a two v one situation. She drew the last defender, giving Pursglove an easy finish. Pursglove then converted her own try with a great kick to give side a 33-0 lead at halftime.

It was much of the same in the second half, the Army continued their dominant performance. Just two minutes in, prop Sarah Batley bundled over from close following another strong carry from Scott. Try of the afternoon came in the 57th minute. From a scrum on halfway on the left-hand side of the pitch, the Army shipped the ball wide excellently, creating space for the speedy Pursglove, who pinned her ears back and ran in from 40 meters. Pursglove's fine day was completed when she scored her hat-trick try just eight minutes later. She was once again put through by Dodd. Pursglove converted her own try to take her points tally to over 20 for the day.

The Navy must be commended for their effort which did not waver all game despite the ever-increasing scoreline. Their determination and bravery, both in defence and with ball in hand were commendable and each player gave a superb account of themselves. In the final play of the game, the Army's Bethan Dainton showed incredible pace and stamina as she sprinted past four Navy defenders to score her second try of the afternoon. Dodd stepped up to nail the conversion from the touchline to complete a historic 68-0 victory for the Army.

Meanwhile the Navy men were pipped in a pulsating Army-Navy fixture which saw end-to-end action from minute 1 to 80.

The Army and Royal Navy men's teams kicked off the hotly-contested afternoon of action at Twickenham Stadium.



Both sides fought valiantly for the prestigious Babcock Trophy, in a back and forth contest which could truly have gone either way.

In the end, it was the Army who won on the day. Two tries within the final ten minutes secured an astonishing comeback for the men in red, with the final score reading 35-27. Michael McDonald and Viliame Kotobalavu's late scores won the day for the Army, yet full credit must go to the determined and resilient Navy.

After a ten-minute opening battle of attrition in the London sun, the Navy were the first to get points on the board.

Foul play at the breakdown lined up for fly half Jordan Gott to successfully slot his penalty attempt, after missing his previous two attempts at goal. The ball sailed through the posts for a three point lead.

The Navy followed this up with the opening try of the match. Full back Craig Duncan broke effectively into space, and shipped the ball wide to Henry Hughes. The right winger exploded along his flank, before offloading the ball back in field to hooker Ben Priddey, who crashed over the

line to score. Gott added the extras for a ten point lead.

The Army responded in full force after half an hour's play. A textbook lineout move set up a powerful rolling maul, yet the strong Navy defence halted its momentum. The Army changed tactics, and began to push through the Navy blue wall with short drives. Flanker Matt Dawson crashed over after the Navy's defence was worn down. However, fly half Jack Johnson failed to convert.

The Army followed this up with an equalising score, as hooker Peter Austin grounded another impressive rolling maul, just seven minutes later. Another missed conversion from Johnson sent the two sets of servicemen off for half time, with the sides leaving the pitch at a 10-10 halftime stalemate.

Johnson's penalty kicked the Army into the lead for the first time, shortly after the re-start. Yet this lead was only short lived, as was the theme of this ever-changing, end-to-end contest. Duncan responded with a try for the Navy, once again neatly linking up with Hughes. The 14 and 15 combined to effectively exploit an overlap, and Gott's conversion added extra breathing space to the 13-17 lead.

The Army's replacement number eight Senitiki Nayalo took matters into his own hands, as he took a quick tap penalty and charged through the Navy defence. The Fijian charged over the defenders from five metres out, and regained the lead for the Army, with Johnson adding the conversion. Johnson then followed this up with a penalty just past the hour mark, to extend the Army's lead to 23-17.

Gott's accuracy from the tee narrowed the match once again, with an impressive penalty, struck from just inside the Army half. The battle continued with navy number eight Sam Matavesi powering over from close range, as the Navy regained the lead with only ten minutes remaining.

Yet the Army fought valiantly to comeback, with two tries to close off the contest. Replacement scrum half Michael McDonald caught the Navy defence off guard to run in unopposed, before Viliame Kotobalavu drove over from close range to secure the Army's victory.

Report: Niall Copeland  
Pictures: Alligun Photography



## Ready to race

SEVENTEEN cyclists from the Royal Navy Royal Marines Cycling Association (RNRMCA) headed to Mallorca for the road cycling warm weather training camp last month.

Mallorca is often regarded as the home of cycling. Offering jaw dropping and astounding views across the Tramuntana mountain range to the west, to sleepy villages peppered with quiet fincas and orange groves, Mallorca has it all.

The training camp aimed to prepare both established and developing members of the Association for races later this year and was funded by the Sports Lottery.

Traditionally cycling teams head to warmer climates in order to build a base of fitness ahead of the racing season.

The 20-30 hours of cycling along with the experience of riding within a group that this training camp provided will no doubt help the riders perform better in the future races both regionally and nationally. Ultimately this will hopefully lead to a strong performance at the Inter-Services in September.

Whilst the training camp was called a "warm weather" training camp and Road captain Alistair Stubbs told the riders that they would come back with "tan lines that'll last the full year", it was a rather chilly start to the camp. Nevertheless, the riders embraced the conditions and made the most of the training opportunity.

During the training camp the riders were burning 4,000-6,000 calories a day. The hotel was very well accustomed to teams coming to Mallorca for a training camp and provided a great selection of food both for breakfast and dinner every day to allow the riders to refuel and recover.

The team's most challenging ride was traversing the Tramuntana mountain range. This consisted of 100 miles of Mallorca's biggest climbs with over 10,000 feet of ascent resulting in around seven hours on the saddle.

Those wishing to join the RNRMCA to take advantage of opportunities such as this and the many discounts available should visit [navycycling.co.uk](http://navycycling.co.uk)



## Gamers enjoy Insomnia

THE Royal Navy Video Gaming and Esports Association (RNVGEA) spent a busy and productive weekend at this year's Insomnia Gaming Festival, held at Birmingham's National Exhibition Centre.

This was the first physical event that the association had attended since it was established in 2021, as the Navy's club house for video games alongside the RN Esports Team, who represent the service in electronic sports.

For the sailors it also proved a landmark event by attending the biggest gaming expo in the UK and representing the Royal Navy alongside the other two services.

"Insomnia is an opportunity for gamers across the country to meet, challenge each other to friendly competition and talk about one of the most rapidly growing hobbies across the country," said Royal Naval Survival Equipment Technician, Jimmy Kernick.

"For a first-time team, I think we've pulled this off brilliantly. With our arsenal of 12 computers and 16 highly-motivated people, we made our stand a hive of activity fun to engage with."

The Royal Navy brought along two Virtual Reality simulators, one for an F-35 and the other for PAC-24 Ship's Boat simulator for the public to try. They worked with Novatech and brought computers for the public to challenge the sailors at *World of Warships*, *Halo* and *League of Legends*.

As well as events with the public, the RNVGEA took part in competitions with the British Army and representatives of other esports teams attending the festival. They also took the opportunity to compete in the qualifying rounds for the HADO League.

This is the start of the Navy's attendance at gaming festivals; the RNVGEA will continue to represent the Senior Service at such events in the future, as well as the RN Esports team on behalf of the Navy at competitions.

It was also a great chance to arrange a tri-service friendly tournament in the game *Halo*, this was live-streamed by the RAF, with the Army taking the Tri-service crown.

# Fitness festival returns to Clyde

AFTER a long "time out", the NAVYfit festival returned to HM Naval Base Clyde.

Sailors and Royal Marines, along with civilian naval base staff, turned-up at the site's Sportsdrome facility in their droves to see what sports and activities were on show.

NAVYfit was launched across naval establishments up and down the country in 2016. Its main aim is to promote healthy living, fitness and introduce Royal Navy personnel to new and exciting sports and adventurous activities.

Leading Physical Trainer (LPT) Andy Lowes was the event organiser for the Northern region festival.

"It's great to be able to get sports back up and running with the gymnasium full of people getting involved in various sports," said LPT Lowes.

"The atmosphere has been uplifted recently due to COVID restrictions being relaxed and the reinstatement of sports and activities."

This year's NAVYfit festival emphasised the pathway to recovery for sport and wellbeing after recent lockdown restrictions.

LPT Lowes continued: "The main aim is to promote the benefits of living a healthier lifestyle that not only has benefits on physical wellbeing, but also your mental wellbeing as well."

Research undertaken for health professionals shows effects of COVID on people's mental health. One study of 775 adults revealed that 55 percent reported negative effects on their mental wellbeing. There were also higher rates of mental distress during lockdown, with frustration, low mood and potentially depression thought to be likely consequences.

The good news is that there is plenty of evidence that being physically active can help, improving mood and decreasing the chances of depression and anxiety.

It wasn't just sports and activities on offer at the event. Any sports star will tell you that food is fuel and nutrition is just as important as exercise itself. With this in mind, organisers brought in contractor ESS to provide cookery demonstrations showcasing a wide variety of healthy snacks and treats.

"There are many positives coming out of the pandemic and getting back into sports and fitness." Said LPT Lowes. "We have people on hand to provide nutrition advice, aiming to promote healthy foods as a replacement for unhealthy snacks. We are giving people the information to make better, more informed, food choices."

## Ben set for Lord's showdown

AB Ben Johnston is relishing his first trip to Lord's as Royal Navy skipper where he will lead his side out in the Inter-Services T20 contest on June 16.

Johnston is no stranger to the Home of Cricket, having played there for his club side Nantwich CC in 2019 in The ECB National Club Championship Cup.

The left-handed batting all-rounder said: "What I'm hoping for this year is to turn up at Lord's demonstrating a positive, aggressive style of cricket and just to really focus on executing what we do well as a side and as individuals. Also, and most importantly, try and enjoy playing the game together."

Last year's tournament, which was played at Arundel Castle Cricket Club, was won by the Army on net run rate after all three Forces won one game and lost one game. This month also sees the three Forces return to Lord's for the first time since 2019.

This year also sees the United Kingdom Armed Forces Cricket Association Women's XI grace the hallowed turf in London for the first time on Inter-Services T20 Day. They are set to face an MCC Women's XI in a 20-over contest.

For tickets visit [interservicest20.co.uk](https://interservicest20.co.uk) and [tickets.lords.org/en-GB/shows/armed%20forces%20day/events](https://tickets.lords.org/en-GB/shows/armed%20forces%20day/events) for more details.

## Sporting shows from personnel

FOOTBALL and rugby players from HMS Prince of Wales played some matches during a three-day stopover in Iceland.

The carrier visited Reykjavik during her Arctic deployment, during which she was the NATO command ship.

Two teams took on sides from HMS Richmond and the Icelandic Police, with Richmond winning their game 7-0.

The rugby match was the first time the carrier's team had played in two years, taking on Richmond at Valur FC's ground. HMS Richmond walked away with the second win of the day beating HMS Prince of Wales 20-10.

LPTI Bowskill said: "As the new LPT on-board both fixtures were equally as important so I could see what the ship's company had to offer in terms of sporting ability and managerial set up."

"It is important to get as many teams participating in representative sport as possible when the possibility is available."



# True Heroes get Chip back on bike

I HAVE been motorcycle racing as a rider in the Royal Navy Royal Marine Road Race Team (RNRMRRT) for the last six years, but after a bit of bad luck with racing over the last 18 months I was going to take a break, writes *Charlie 'Chip' White*.

Then just before the end of the 2021 season True Heroes Racing Team approached the RNRMRRT looking for a rider, as it can be a struggle to find someone who races with a military background.

After a visit to the team at one of the British Super Bikes (BSB) round they decided to select me to represent the Royal Navy as part of True Heroes Racing.

For those that don't know True Heroes Race Team are a team made up of injured service personnel and their aim is to not just support them but help them regain a sense of direction through competitive motorsport. The team races at BSB and has a massive paddock, attracts large crowds and usually has about four-five bikes a year spread over two-three classes.

The bike I ride for the team is a Ducati V2, which we race in the Ducati Tri Options race. This class has everyone riding the same bike and has rules around this to ensure the racing is as fair as possible.

For the 2022 season there are three of us riding on Ducati V2's; myself, Leon Wilton (a racer from the Army Road Race Team) and Chris Ganley (a veteran, who incredibly manages to ride with one arm). The other two bikes are in the Superstock 1000 class ridden by Dave Mackay and Dave Sellers,



who are ex-Army and ex-Navy.

We were expecting the bikes from Italy in December and hoping to get them out to Spain in January / February for pre-season testing. Unfortunately the bikes arrived in late February, meaning we only had a few weeks to get the bikes race ready and get some testing done in the mixed British weather before the first round in April.

The True Heroes Racing mechanics had done a fantastic job in getting the bikes ready in time for the three tests before the first round. Over these three tests we had a steep learning curve for all riders and mechanics as none of us had any experience with this new bike, and with the snow affecting a test day at Donington we had very limited seat time.

So on to the first round of the year on Easter Weekend at Silverstone. We had been

there the week before to get some testing done as part of the official testing, so pretty much all riders were happy with how their bikes were set up. The Ducati Tri Options have their free practice and qualifying on Friday, a race Saturday and a race Sunday. For us as a team the most important day is the Friday as if you don't get within 110 per cent of the quickest qualifying time you don't race for the rest of the weekend. Unfortunately Chris Ganley didn't manage to qualify due to some mechanical problems meaning he missed the required lap time and not being able to race. Myself and Leon were able to get some good times down in qualifying meaning we would be in the races for the rest of the weekend.

Race 1 on Saturday starting 24th, I got a half decent start and picked up a few places finishing in 21st.

Race 2 on Sunday I started 25th and it ended up being a case of if you stayed in the bike you did well and as I managed to do just that I finished 17th.

All in all it was a great weekend, and an incredible experience to be a part of the BSB Paddock. There are another seven rounds including a race weekend with World Super Bikes at Donington Park in July.

I would like to say a massive thank you to the RNRMRRT and True Heroes Racing Team for giving me this opportunity and to everyone that helped me get racing.

If you are interested in racing or being a part of pit crew with RNRMRRT the get in touch email [rnrmrrt@hotmail.com](mailto:rnrmrrt@hotmail.com)

## WALL SHIELDS OF ROYAL NAVY SHIPS



Hand painted on wooden base 6" x 7"  
**£65.60 including UK postage and packing**  
**REDUCED PRICES** given for orders of 3 or more  
**SPECIAL PRICES** given for 10, 25, 50 and 100  
**CRESTED TIES TO YOUR OWN SPECIAL DESIGN**  
 (minimum 50)

Specialist experience over 100 years

**C.H. MUNDAY LTD**  
 Rosemary Cottage, Churt Road, Headley,  
 Bordon, Hants GU35 8SS  
 Telephone: 01428 714971  
 email: [enquiries@chmunday.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@chmunday.co.uk)  
[www.chmunday.co.uk](http://www.chmunday.co.uk)

Some friendships are meant to last



#navywomen

Scan the QR code and join now!

Join the Association of Wrens and connect with friends old and new

Association of Wrens and Women of the Royal Naval Services

Tel: 02392 725141

Email: [office@wrens.org.uk](mailto:office@wrens.org.uk)



[www.wrens.org.uk](http://www.wrens.org.uk)

**Deaths**

**Douglas Alfred Marks 'Alfie', Fleet Chief Radio Supervisor.** Former FCRS (RCI), from 1946 to 1976. Served in HMS Ganges, Sheffield, Seagull (SML327), Uplifter, Dolphin, HMS Submarines, RGP, Seascope, Seneschal, Thule, Telemachus, Tactician, Seahawk, Gannet, NAS 825, Mercury, NAS 815, HMS Ocean (Suez), Ulster, Camperdown, Afrikander, Eagle, Nelson, Focas (FMST5), RN School of Management. Member of RN Communication Chiefs Association and Indefatigable Old Boys Association. Died April 4, aged 91.

**Capt Richard J Bates.** HMS Fulmar, Cansford, Blake, Sultan, Ajax. RCDS. DNSC. FOSNI. Died April 7, aged 91.

**Lt Cdr Anthony A Browne.** HMS Ulster, St Angelo, Hawea. Signal

Division. Died April 22, aged 93.

**Lt Cdr Giles B Cross.** HMS President, Victorious, Jufair. Died April 23, aged 93.

**Capt RM Christopher R Dutton.** HMS Seahawk, Bulwark. RM Deal. 45 Cdo RM. 3 Cdo Bde RM. HQ Trg Gp RM. Died March 31, aged 80.

**Cdre Nicholas R Harris.** HMS Saker, Victory RNB, Heron, Bristol, Centurion, Serice Attache Rome. RCDS. RNPT. DNAS. Died April 18, aged 93.

**Cdr David M A Howard.** HMS Greatford, Barrosa, Mercury, Eagle, Sheraton, Wasperton, Ajax, Dolphin, Hermione, Arethusa, DNOR, SCU Leydene, BDS Washington. President RBL. Died Feb 26, aged 82.

**Capt Nicholas B Kirby.** HMS Grampus, Dolphin, Osprey, Neptune,

Swiftsure, Weapons Dept Naval, RNSC Greenwich, JSDC, DG Submarines Portland. MOD Bath. AIB Sultan. Died April 9.

**Inst Lt John E McGeorge.** HMS Collingwood. Died April 19, aged 81.

**Lt Cdr Robin R Richards.** HMS St Angelo, Osprey. Died April 11, aged 93.

**Col RM Richard C Sidwell OBE.** 40 Cdo RM. DPRO RM. ATU Instow. Centurion. CGRM. Died April 15, aged 93.

**Lt Cdr B G Giffin.** RNAS Culdrose, Lossiemouth, Brawdy, HMS Eagle, Ark Royal, Victorious. Died Mar 6, aged 87.

**Lt Cdr Chris Brockway.** Served from April 1961 to May 1968 at BRNC. Served at Linton-on-Ouse, Seahawk, Ark Royal, Hermes, Goldcrest, Ariel,

Little Rissington, Daedalus, and Fulmar (750 NAS); Member of Bude Branch. Died April 30, aged 84.

**Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNO**

**Lt Cdr John Arkell.** Died May 2, aged 69

**Lt Cdr Richard Y C Sharp.** HMS Terror, Dolphin. RN Staff Coll.

**Lt Cdr Ronald E H Childs.** HMS Tamar, Collingwood, Osprey, Excellent, President, Nelson, Vernon.

**Lt Col RM Michael M Phillips.** RM Eastney, and Plymouth. 40 Cdo RM. CGRM. HMS Saker. HQ Cdo Forces RM. Died April 8, aged 88.

**Cdr Norman T J Skitt.** NATO. CND Haslemere. Centurion. Mercury. ACR.

**£50 PRIZE PUZZLE**



THE mystery ship in the April edition of *Navy News* (right) was the Arethusa-class light cruiser HMS Penelope, which CS Forrester dedicated his book *The Ship* to.



Rob Griffin, from Gloucester, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers. This month's mystery ship (above) is a battleship built during WW2, the last battleship to be built for the Royal Navy.

1. What was her name and
2. Which ships were her guns taken from?

Please complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY.

We will also accept emailed entries to [subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk) with **June Mystery Ship** in the email header.

Coupons and emails giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Entries must be received by July 12.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted.

Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. The winner will be announced in our August edition.

**MYSTERY PICTURE 328**

Name .....

Address .....

My answers: (1) .....

(2) .....

**NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES**

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to – The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: [news@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:news@royalnavymail.mod.uk) or [editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk)
- If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
- Please send in reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event. There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
- Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
- The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

 **NAVY NEWS**

Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY

**JUN 2022 No. 815: Founded 1954**

**Editor: Lorraine Proudlock**  
Email: [news@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:news@royalnavymail.mod.uk)

**Editorial**  
[News@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:News@royalnavymail.mod.uk)

Richard.Hargreaves  
[@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:@royalnavymail.mod.uk)

Peter.Howard@royalnavymail.mod.uk  
Elisha.Quade@royalnavymail.mod.uk

**Graphics**  
[Andrew.Brady150@mod.gov.uk](mailto:Andrew.Brady150@mod.gov.uk)

**General enquiries**  
[news@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:news@royalnavymail.mod.uk)

**Business**  
Business manager: Lisa Taw  
[bm@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:bm@royalnavymail.mod.uk)  
Admin assistants:  
[Georgina.skingsley@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:Georgina.skingsley@royalnavymail.mod.uk)  
[Mistrala.Harries@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:Mistrala.Harries@royalnavymail.mod.uk)

Subscriptions and advertising:  
[subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk](mailto:subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk)  
[www.royalnavy.mod.uk/navynews](http://www.royalnavy.mod.uk/navynews)  
Telephone 07773 155321

*The views expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect the views of the MOD*

© Crown copyright  
This publication is licensed under the terms of the Open Government Licence v3.0 except where otherwise stated.  
To view this licence, visit [nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/version/3)  
Or write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU,  
Or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk)  
Where we have identified any third party copyright information you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.  
Published by Navy News, Navy Command HQ, Portsmouth and printed by Walsdean UK.

**Talking Navy News**

Navy News is available free of charge as a digital file on memory stick or email from Portsmouth Area Talking News for those with difficulty reading normal type. Contact 07770 088388 and leave a message, or email [studio@patn.org.uk](mailto:studio@patn.org.uk). A speaker that will take a USB plug is required but this can be obtained from the Talking News, or the file can be played back through a computer.

Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Ask Jack columns in July's Noticeboard must be received by  
**JUNE 14 2022**

**Reunions**

**HMS Aisne Last Commission 1966 to 68:** A reunion is planned at the Best Western Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea, from June 10 to 13. Contact the hotel or [NigelJest@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:NigelJest@hotmail.co.uk)

**HMS Troubridge:** Final Commission Association 1966-69 2022 reunion will be at the North Euston Hotel, The Esplanade, Fleetwood FY7 6BN October 3 to 7, 2022. Contact Bryan Pace at [Romft1@GMail.com](mailto:Romft1@GMail.com) or visit <http://HMSTroubridge.com>

**HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association:** Reunion and annual meeting takes place at the Union Jack Club in London from October 7 to 9. For details email: [h.m.s.ajax.rpv@gmail.com](mailto:h.m.s.ajax.rpv@gmail.com)

**Loch Class Frigates Association:** Annual reunion takes place at The Sketchley Grange Hotel, Hinckley, Leicestershire, from October 7 to 9. For details

please contact Andrew Nunn Hon. Sec. LCFA Email: [andrew.nunn@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:andrew.nunn@blueyonder.co.uk) or tel: 0117-9505835. Membership is open to all who served on any of the Loch Class ships or their variants (Bay Class, Admirals Yachts, survey ships and repair ships). Some of these types of ships have their own 'Associations' but you can always join both.

**AREA 3 RN Association:** Our reunion will take place at the Holiday Inn, Sittingbourne in Kent, from Friday October 14 to Monday October 17. A Trafalgar Night gala dinner takes place on the Saturday. Ken B Chandler. [Kencathcpa@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Kencathcpa@hotmail.co.uk)

**Undaunted/Yarmouth/Eagle Association:** Annual Dinner and Dance Reunion 2022 will be held from October 28 to October 31 at the Holiday Inn Hotel, Castle Road, Cardiff, CF10 1XD. For further details contact Alan (Whiskey) Walker on 01268 548041 or

email:- [whiskey666@outlook.com](mailto:whiskey666@outlook.com).

**Royal Navy Photography Branch:** Reunion planned for Friday November 4 to Monday November 7 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. All ex and serving photos, plus partners, welcome to mark the 103rd anniversary of the branch formation. Contact Danny du Feu. [ddf.photography@gmail.com](mailto:ddf.photography@gmail.com); Tel: 07711 083465.

**BENBOW 41:** A reunion of the class from HMS Raleigh in October 1982 is planned. Please contact Glenn Gowling on [ggowling37@gmail.com](mailto:ggowling37@gmail.com) or call 07581 468527

**HMS Ganges:** A 60th anniversary celebration is planned for 54 Recruitment November 1962 Hawke 291 and 292 classes at Chatham in November. Any old boys who are interested please contact Robin Potter at [r.potter60@talktalk.net](mailto:r.potter60@talktalk.net)

**Ask Jack**

**Johnny Craig:** We are trying to contact Johnny for our 40th secondary school reunion. We know he joined the Royal Navy and served in submarines. He left St Columba's College in Dublin in 1982, aged around 18.

**William Simpson**  
[Whpsimpson@gmail.com](mailto:Whpsimpson@gmail.com)

**Peter Pawsey:** Geoff Cummings RN (Rtd) is trying to contact Peter, who served in HM Submarines.

[Gcumings10@outlook.com](mailto:Gcumings10@outlook.com)

**HMS Kent.** My father Ronald Tinsley served aboard the WW2 cruiser, I believe in 1941-1942, during the Arctic Convoys to Murmansk and the attack on Tirpitz. He said very little about his experiences so would love to hear from anyone who had a father or grandfather aboard who may have known him.

**David Tinsley**  
[david2tinsley@btinternet.com](mailto:david2tinsley@btinternet.com)

**HMS Dainty:** My father is trying to contact Dave Irwin and 'Crash Carl', with whom he served with aboard HMS Dainty. My dad's name is Reg Grogan.

**Lisa Hughes**  
07834269050

**PITTOCK:** I have two grandparents who died in action during WW1 and WW2 and cannot obtain photographs of them. One was AB James Arthur Pittock P/SSX5991, who died April 8 1940 on HMS Glowworm. The other was Stoker John Cooper 5685s who died on HMS Vanguard, on July 9 1917. I have tried all records with a nil result.

**John Pittock**  
ex Leading Stoker  
[johngp46@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:johngp46@yahoo.co.uk)

**Admiralty Civilian Shore Wireless Service:** My father Dermot Kirwan worked for the service during WW2 at the wireless stations in Lydd, Cooling Marshes, HMS Flowerdown, Wick, and Jamaica. Does anyone know anything about the

Jamaica one?

**Michael Kirwan**  
[MichaelKirwan53@gmail.com](mailto:MichaelKirwan53@gmail.com)

**HMS Matchless:** My step father served on the Matchless and ran the Matchless Association until his death a few years ago. We still have two of the association's ties and would like to reach any of the veterans (or their relatives) who might treasure one?

[Norman.haynes@ntlworld.com](mailto:Norman.haynes@ntlworld.com)

**Charity Front Line Naval Chaplain:** We are for information about a WW2 'bish', the Rev Martin Martin-Harvey DSC. Records about Martin-Harvey, a temporary RNVR chaplain, are incomplete. He served in the Pedestal convoy to Malta in 1942. Later, he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. He went ashore on D-Day, possibly serving with the Royal Marines at the time – he is listed at Bickleigh in 1946. After the war he became the chaplain of St Lawrence College, Ramsgate.

**Simon Springett**  
[frontlinebish@gmail.com](mailto:frontlinebish@gmail.com)

**Belfast becomes 16th RN URNU**

WELCOME to the newest member of the Royal Navy's student family: Belfast University Royal Naval Unit.

The unit – which will give undergraduates studying in Northern Ireland a taste of the Royal Navy – was formally opened at its new headquarters in Thiepval Barracks, Lisburn.

The Senior Service's first female admiral Rear Admiral Jude Terry – Director of Personnel and Training – was guest of honour, joined inter alia by Olympic gold-winning pentathlete and honorary Royal Navy Reserve Captain Lady Mary Peters and the Lord Lieutenant of County Antrim, David McCorkell.

The opening of the new unit – Belfast is the 16th member of the URNU family and the first to serve institutions of higher learning in Northern Ireland in the scheme's 54-year history – effectively doubles the capacity of the Forces to offer places on its student initiatives.

There are already Army Officer Training Corps and an RAF University Air Squadron in Northern Ireland.

The URNU is offering 20 places to



Rear Admiral Jude Terry at Belfast URNU Below left, Lt Cdr Barry McWilliams and coxswain CPO Stefan Johnson

undergraduates every year – 60 people over the course of a standard three-year degree – with the opportunity to go to sea, take part in adventurous training and sport, practise drill and learn about the global role of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and RFA.

The Belfast unit was established last year – but Covid restrictions prevented a formal opening until this spring with the RM Band Plymouth providing a quintet and a ribbon cutting/plaque dedication.

Guests were given a tour of the Maritime Reserve's training ship facility (which the URNU use) and observed a Command, Leadership and Management exercise by

Belfast Officer Cadets.

They then witnessed a presentation by Liverpool Officer Cadets in their final year, describing their journey through the URNU and what they have benefitted from the experience.

"It is an honour to lead the development of the newest URNU in the UK," said Belfast unit's first Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Barry McWilliams. "We are recruiting Officer Cadets and training officers right now, so keep an eye out on social media for us – and you will see what our first year of Officer Cadets are doing as the year progresses."



# The Personalised Military Watch

Specially commissioned for all those who served Crown and Country this stylish watch is personalised with the Royal Navy or Royal Marines emblem and engraved with your initials and years of service or service number making a practical and handsome timepiece in recognition of your Service.

## Hand-crafted in gold and silver

The emblems have been exquisitely decorated with 24 carat gold to highlight the superb design and milled to the precise thickness of a fine watch dial. These exclusive 28mm die-struck dials, available in two-toned gold and silver or matt silver finish are fitted within a classic 40mm steel alloy case with a matching two toned or silver stainless steel bracelet or anti-allergenic leather strap. The high precision Swiss parts Quartz movement guarantees accuracy within seconds per month and is backed by a 3 Year, International Renewable Warranty for the life of your watch.

## Your Exclusive Military Watch features:

- Die-struck watch face with Royal Navy or Royal Marines emblem in two tone gold and silver or matt silver finish.
- Swiss parts High Precision Quartz Movement
- Classic 40mm Steel Alloy Case and Stainless Steel Bracelet or Anti-allergenic Leather strap
- 3 ATM/30 metre water resistant
- 3 -Year, International, Renewable Guarantee

## FREE Engraving

As a unique and lasting reminder of your Service the reverse of your exclusive timepiece can be engraved with up to 4 initials and your years of service or service number. Please clearly state engraving required.



### Made in Britain

Your exclusive Military Watch is brought to you by Award Productions Ltd, internationally renowned medalist. Each watch features a dial, die-struck in England to the same exacting standards as AWARD's medals. The watch arrives in a distinctive presentation box and makes a unique and timely gift for all occasions.




*Royal Marines emblem also available.*

## How to order

**Order Online - [www.awardmedals.com](http://www.awardmedals.com)**

**Order by Phone -** Call us between 9am to 5pm on Monday to Friday **01952 510053** Alternatively, please complete the order form enclosing a cheque/ postal order or completing the credit card details and send to:  
**Award Productions Ltd, PO Box 300, Shrewsbury, SY5 6WP, UK**

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms .....

Address .....

..... Postcode .....

Daytime Tel. No. ....

I enclose my cheque/postal order for £ ..... made payable to Award Productions Ltd or please debit my card account no: (Switch only)

Security Code:	Cards accepted:	Switch Issue No.
<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>		<input type="text"/> <input type="text"/>
Expiry date: <input type="text"/> / <input type="text"/>		Valid from: <input type="text"/>

Signature .....

If cardholder's name, address and signature are different from the one shown, please include these details.

## AWARD PROUD TO SERVE ORDER FORM

AWARD Productions Ltd, PO Box 300, Shrewsbury, SY5 6WP, UK

**Please tick box.**  
**Yes, please send me the following**  Royal Navy or  Royal Marines watch(es).

Code	Description	Price	Qty	Total £
RWBB	Two tone Emblem & Bracelet	£149.95		
RWBL	Two tone Emblem & Brown Leather Strap	£119.95		
RWSB	Silver Emblem & Bracelet	£139.95		
RWSL	Silver Emblem & Black Leather Strap	£109.95		
Postage/Packing/Insurance				£6.50
<b>Engraving required (PLEASE USE BLOCK CAPITALS)</b>				<b>Total £</b>

Years of service :

Initials: ..... or service number : .....

Delivery Subject to availability. Please allow up to 28 days for delivery.  
Award Productions Ltd, Registered in England No. 2001900, Shrewsbury SY4 4UG

**NN20**