



NAVY NEWS

NOVEMBER 2022

A Royal Marine deployed on Littoral Response Group North makes his way across the terrain in Cyprus
See pages 2-3
Picture: LPhoto Mark Johnson

On the front foot

Inside: ■ Montrose strikes again ■ NATO puts uncrewed kit to the test

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THE TIP OF



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SPEAR

ROYAL Marines spearheaded the UK's largest combined amphibious exercises in years as they cleared the way for a formidable joint force to land in Cyprus.

The exercise was a rehearsal of Joint Theatre Entry – military parlance for the landing of lots of different military elements from air, land and sea into a potentially hostile region.

Forces launched from the sea from a Royal Navy task force deployed on a European security mission – known as Littoral Response Group North – which is operating across the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and the Adriatic this autumn.

More than a thousand sailors and Royal Marines are deployed with this response force, which is led by amphibious flagship HMS Albion and includes RFA Argus, RFA Mounts Bay, HMS Defender and three helicopter squadrons.

This potent group came together with elements from the British Army and RAF to operate in the waters around the RAF base in Akrotiri, on the southern-most tip of Cyprus.

Royal Marines of Arbroath-based 45 Commando led the way, forming a beachhead after launching from landing craft from Albion and Merlin helicopters based on RFA Mounts Bay and RFA Argus.

It paved the way for the British Army's 17 Port and Maritime Regiment of the Royal Logistic Corps to offload equipment from cargo ship Hurst Point, with a Royal Navy Puma drone providing surveillance overhead.

After establishing logistics, the joint force was then ready to forge inland and complete further objectives, being tested in a range of real-world scenarios from war fighting to disaster relief and humanitarian aid.

As commandos led the way, a range of infrastructure was brought ashore for Royal Engineers to build a camp able to support 500 personnel and designed to house people in the event of a crisis.

Captain Simon Kelly, task group commander and Commanding Officer of HMS Albion, said: "Very few Armed Forces have the ability to deliver joint amphibious effect on this scale and at this pace.

"The landing craft and helicopters of the Littoral Response Group North task group were a key part of supporting the Army and RAF in exercising this key UK capability.

"Our time alongside in Cyprus also provided a fantastic opportunity to support the British High Commission, demonstrating the UK's commitment to the island."

The exercises – known by the codename Austere Wolf – tested how the Littoral Response Group North operates, looking at how quickly it is able to come together, hit a coastline and push forward inland from a beachhead.

Lieutenant Colonel Paul Timmins Royal Marines, HMS Albion's Amphibious Operations Officer, said: "Exercise Austere Wolf has offered us a unique opportunity to integrate land, sea and air elements in this environment.

"We have had the opportunity to develop the Royal Navy's Littoral Strike capability further, allowing us to deliver joint combined amphibious operations more effectively."

As supplies rolled ashore, 45 Commando strike teams – comprised of small determined bands of commandos chosen for each specific mission – continued to forge inland, tasked with clearing the ruins of Old Paramali, an abandoned village around 16 miles from Akrotiri.

The marines worked closely with the Army's 33 Engineer Regiment and, with fire support from teams, including Viking armoured vehicles, from their brethren in 45 Commando and 29 Commando Royal Artillery, they cleared the village at pace.

1 Military Working Dogs Regiment were then deployed to search the captured village to collect intelligence to shape future operations, while engineers used Dragon Runner bomb disposal robots during a bomb disposal training scenario.

Back at the beachhead, as vehicles streamed ashore, a mock explosive device on the slipway created an emergency for the task force to react to.

This is when support ship RFA Argus and her on-board medical facilities came into their own.

Casualties were rapidly moved from the battlefield to Argus using Merlin helicopters from 845 Naval Air Squadron, and were treated and assessed while trialling new equipment.

Lieutenant David Roper, Officer Commanding of RFA Argus' Medical Facilities, said: "RFA Argus has a world-class medical facility that provides timely access to deployed hospital care for the Royal Navy, along with its allies and partners.

"We deliver consultant-led damage control resuscitation and surgery as well as specialist diagnostics such as Computerised Tomography (CT Scan), x-ray imaging and pathology services. This has allowed us to trial new equipment and techniques to better improve medical support to the frontline."

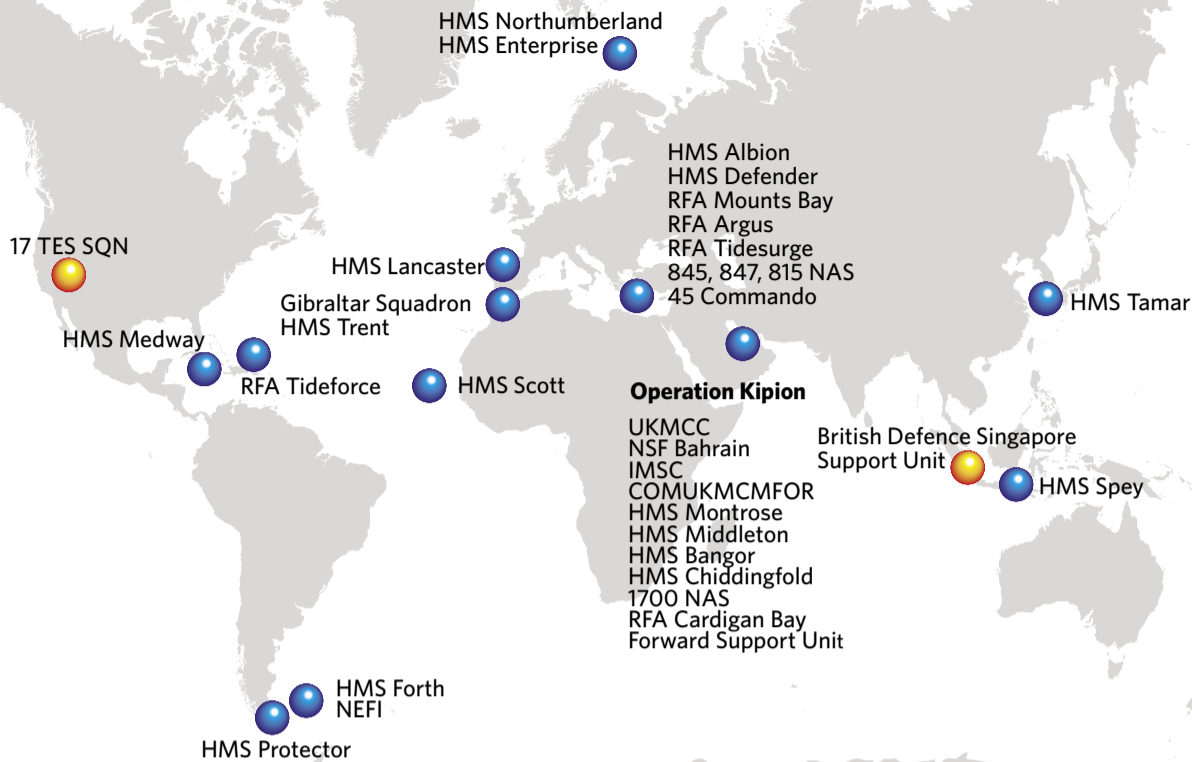
Once Austere Wolf was over, HMS Albion headed to Limassol to conduct defence engagement activity.

The ship's flight deck hosted a reception and amphibious capability demonstration attended by the Defence Minister for the Republic of Cyprus, supporting the culmination of the British High Commissioner's Security Policy Event.



Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Kent Project Wilton
 HMS Northumberland 814 NAS
 HMS Somerset 815 NAS
 HMS Hurworth 824 NAS
 HMS Tyne 825 NAS
 HMS Mersey RFA Tiderace
 HMS Severn
 Coastal Forces Sqn
 XV Patrick Blackett



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



GLOBAL | MODERN | READY

ROYAL Marines spearheaded the UK's largest combined amphibious exercises in years as they cleared the way for a formidable joint force to land in Cyprus (see pages 1, 2 and 3). More than 1,000 sailors and Commandos are deployed with the Littoral Response Group North, led by HMS Albion and includes RFA Argus, RFA Mounts Bay, HMS Defender, and three helicopter squadrons.

The wings of the Royal Marines are central to the success of the Achillean deployment, providing both aerial lift (Merlin Mk4s of 845 NAS, ferrying troops and kit around) and firepower and intelligence (Wildcat AH1s of 847 NAS, guiding in artillery and air strikes). The squadrons made use of Gibraltar's new guardians, patrol boats HMS Cutlass and Dagger, for some combined training in waters around The Rock (see page 11).

HMS Montrose smashed the £100m barrier with her fifth drugs bust of 2022 (see page 5). Her team of sailors and Royal Marines seized around 870kg of crystal methamphetamine from a dhow in the Arabian Sea during a six-hour operation.

Royal Navy ships led the way in "game-changing" NATO autonomous exercises off the coast of Portugal (see centre pages). Frigate HMS Lancaster and minehunter HMS Hurworth tested the use of uncrewed tech – from drones to underwater survey vessels, which could be used by NATO on the front line of operations in the future.

HMS Kent fired a 'fish' as she flashed up her weapons systems following a summer of upgrades during an intensive week of trials/tests ahead of impending deployment (see page 6).

The Type 23 frigate later took part in Joint Warrior (see page 6), a ten-day Allied forces workout on land, sea, and in the air. Involving more than 20 ships, submarines and supporting vessels from Britain and nine NATO allies, plus over 30 aircraft and drones, Royal Marines and US Marines, the workout ranged from Cape Wrath and the Hebrides to the North Sea and finally the waters off the South Coast.

HMS Medway and RFA Tideforce sailed to assist the British Overseas Territory of Turks and Caicos following damage caused by Hurricane Fiona (see page 19). The vessels provided drinking water and made repairs, including to the island's airport.

Fellow OPV HMS Forth joined dozens of ships and aircraft from various nations in Brazil for the longest-running at-sea exercise (see page 7). Sailors on the patrol ship sailed into Rio de Janeiro for Exercise Unitas.

Sister ship HMS Spey received a warm welcome during an historic visit to Bali (see page 9).

HMS Northumberland (see pages 14-15) led an allied force on a freedom of navigation patrol in the Arctic's Barents Sea with the heroes of one of the most important Arctic Convoys of World War 2 very much in their thoughts.

Survey ship HMS Enterprise ventured closer to the North Pole than any other Royal Navy vessel in 2022, sailing within 1,000 miles of the top of the world (see page 9).

Royal Marines raided a compound in the dead of night during intensive combat training in the UK ahead of operations and exercises (see page 13). Marines from Taunton-based 40 Commando carried out a week of specialist training in close-quarters battle.

Personnel from both HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Richmond enjoyed the delights of New York while the carrier hosted the Atlantic Future Forum (see right).

The Royal Navy has commissioned its first 'ship' under a king in more than 70 years (see page 27). HMS Pegasus, based at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset, will serve as the parent unit for the 320 men and women who serve in the Royal Naval Reserve's air branch.

Personnel from the Royal Navy's state-of-the-art frigate HMS Glasgow met the ship's sponsor The Princess of Wales for the first time as they travelled from Govan to Windsor Castle (see page 23).

One of the nation's most senior sailors will steer Jersey for the next five years after taking over as the island's Lieutenant Governor (see page 27). Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd has assumed the role of the King's representative in the bailiwick following an installation ceremony.

As the nation pauses to remember the fallen this month, we take a look behind the scenes at this year's Royal Navy Remembrance video, Letters Home (see pages 16-17), created by the Video Production Unit.

SECOND BITE OF BIG APPLE

FLAGSHIP HMS Queen Elizabeth welcomed a host of dignitaries and guests on board against the stunning backdrop of Manhattan as she rounded off a short stay in the Big Apple.

The aircraft carrier spent a week in New York, giving her ship's company the chance to see some famous landmarks while also hosting a conference to strengthen UK-US bonds.

The two-day Atlantic Future Forum saw speakers and key note speeches focussing on military, political and strategic relations between the two nations.

Hundreds of guests joined the ship for the event which was first hosted by HMS Queen Elizabeth in 2018 as part of her maiden deployment Westlant 18.

This year, speakers and dignitaries included First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key, Chief of the Defence Staff, Admiral Sir Tony Radakin and Chief of General Staff of the British Army General Sir Patrick Sanders.

Guests were also treated to a performance from singer Katherine Jenkins who was joined by the RM Band.

Before the conference started, sailors from HMS Queen Elizabeth and the Royal Marines Band Service were able to go ashore and enjoy some of the sights of New York City.

This included a performance from the band at Grand Central Terminal and Central Park and a moment of reflection for the ship's men and women at the 9/11 Memorial.

Meanwhile, escort frigate HMS Richmond berthed at the Manhattan Cruise Terminal (Pier 88) in midtown Manhattan, opposite the USS Intrepid aircraft carrier and Concorde museums and just 15 minutes' walk from the bright lights of Times Square.

As well as supporting Atlantic Future Forum, she took part in her own events and activities.

A sizeable number of the ship's company paid their respects at the 9/11 memorial where Royal Marines musician Cpl Hayley Holgate performed *The Last Post*; she's embarked on Richmond for the frigate's entire deployment.

Officers from the wardroom were invited to watch the New York Mets baseball team while 20 crew were invited on to the pitch at the MetLife stadium ahead of the New York Jets' American football defeat to Cincinnati Bengals (27-12) in front of an 80,000-strong crowd with the ship's crest displayed on the arena's big screen.

"I joined the Royal Navy to have adventures, and I've just crossed the Atlantic, getting used to some rough seas, and now I'm in New York City at an NFL match," said Sub Lieutenant Oli Perry. "The people here are very welcoming, this has been an amazing experience with an electric atmosphere."

The frigate hosted a capability demonstration/ceremonial sunset for around 100 guests, many from the Maritime Cyber Security Trade Mission which was also holding a two-day conference in New York, with the Corps of Drums from the Royal Marines Band providing much of the pomp and ceremony.

And a handful of sailors - Warfare Specialist Able Seaman Gosling, Marine Engineering Technician Cooksley, Leading Logistician Stafoni Richards and Weapons Engineering Technician Chloe Chapman - toured the city in their No.1 uniforms for a legendary 'rig run', seeing the iconic sights of the Big Apple and being treated to American hospitality.

"It was one of the best experiences of my life. Walking around New York in my uniform was such a proud moment, especially when we got stopped by the public and thanked for our service," said Able Seaman Gosling, paying his first visit to the USA.

"In one day I saw the 9/11 memorial, Times Square, and the Empire State Building. I'll never forget this."

Engineering Technician Chapman added: "You can't get a better run ashore really. We were picked up from the ship in one of those massive American SUVs and driven to the tourist spots. My favourite was Times Square. Walking around in my uniform felt a bit strange but everyone we spoke to was lovely, I even got a free Starbucks."



Top, HMS Queen Elizabeth passes the Statue of Liberty; Above, personnel from HMS Richmond pay their respects at the 9/11 Memorial; Right, members of HMS Richmond's ship's company at the Nasdaq stock exchange in New York. Pictures: LPhotos Belinda Alker and Kevin Walton





PILING ON THE PRESSURE



STACKING up what will eventually total 870kg of crystal methamphetamine on their flight deck, it's another red letter day for the men and women of HMS Montrose.

This is bust No.5 of 2022, £15.5m of illegal narcotics which will never reach dealers and pushers... and the proceeds will never filter back to criminal overlords.

Better still, it was the fifth interdiction of the year while operating under the international Combined Task Force 150, it means Montrose has destroyed nearly £47m of drugs.

The frigate, which has been deployed to the Middle East since the beginning of 2019, also seized two illegal arms shipments earlier this year – all of which underscores the importance of maintaining a major Royal Navy warship in the region on a long-term mission.

"We have disrupted the unlawful use of the oceans. A seizure of this size will deal a huge blow to the criminal or terrorist gangs using these illegal narcotics to fund their activity," said Commanding Officer Commander Claire Thompson.

"This success proves we will persistently deny criminals the freedom to conduct their illegal activity on the High Seas. Disrupting terrorist organisations, criminals and their funding lines is key to keeping to UK, and rest of the world, safe.

"It is a privilege to command HMS Montrose and the incredibly professional, highly-trained and dedicated personnel that I have on my team. I could not be prouder of each and every one of them."

Montrose pounced after her Wildcat helicopter located and tracked the suspect dhow until the frigate was in range to launch her boarding teams in her boats.

Royal Marines from 42 Commando – the UK military's specialists in these operations – seized control of the vessel in choppy conditions, before sailors moved in to search the craft for any illegal cargo, while overhead the Wildcat observed proceedings and provided cover for those scouring the dhow for her illicit cargo.

Persistence from the boarding team led to a secret compartment being found aboard the vessel, revealing a hidden stash.

"The team did really well and I'm really pleased with the outcome. We initially found ten bags, but we suspected there was more. Once we got behind a false bulkhead we found a compartment full of illegal narcotics," said Lieutenant Liam Speed, the Royal Navy boarding officer.

The success came on the back of a few days in the Seychelles working for the Combined Maritime Forces – a partnership of 38 nations dedicated to peace, prosperity and security across a vast area from Suez to the shores of Pakistan and India, from the the Gulf to the Seychelles more than 2,000 miles to the south.

The Bahrain-based force oversees several task groups spread throughout its domain, each charged with a specific peacekeeping/security mission, not least CTF150.

Exercise Southern Readiness focused on building upon each CMF nation's ability to work independently or collectively at sea.

Activities ranged from classroom sessions, including maritime law and search and rescue, through practical training on small boat maintenance to board and search training and operations at sea with the emphasis on preparing the participating countries to tackle the illicit use of the oceans and support the International Rules Based Order at sea.



Seychelles President Wavel Ramkalawan was among national and international guests watching his nation's Coast Guard board HMS Montrose alongside in the port of Victoria, with the Brits playing particularly unruly sailors, forcing Seychelles personnel to show how they would act in potentially violent situations.

The frigate hosted an evening reception on behalf of the Combined Maritime Forces, concluding with a ceremonial sunset for invited guests.

Crew enjoyed their first game of rugby during the deployment, eventually losing to the well drilled Seychelles rugby team.

The sailors and marines also carried out repairs and maintenance at a home for the elderly and three orphanages, and performed a beach clean, organised by the British High Commission on behalf of the environmental charity, Parley.

"This port visit has given me an opportunity to contribute to the Seychelles community, through the outreach projects that were organised," said Leading Seaman Specialist Lewis Davy.

"I was part of a team involved in painting an orphanage in Victoria and it really felt that we were taking part in something worthwhile. During my time in the Royal Navy, this was the first time I have been part of an outreach scheme and I would definitely do it again."



ACTION- PACKED AUTUMN

KENT is lovely in the autumn.

The sights. The sounds. The smells. The colours.

The jarring clang and shudder through the ship as a 4.5in shell thunders out of the barrel, accompanied by a brief flash of fire, then the orange-tinged pulver smoke drifting over the forecastle and the smell of cordite penetrating the ship.

It's been an action-packed autumn for the Portsmouth-based frigate – and anyone she's worked with.

The ship went into the summer break ready for global operations having passed training off Plymouth.

Crew returned from their leave to find Kent had undergone a mix of maintenance and upgrades, which led to a week-long series of tests of key weapons systems and sensors:

- muzzle velocity calibration of the 4.5in main gun (shells should burst out of the barrel at more than twice the speed of sound);
- test firing machine guns both on the ship and her Pacific 24 sea boats;
- streaming the Sonar 2087 towed array (a 1,700-metre 'tail' lined with hydrophones and Kent's best ears when hunting

submarines);

- and a rare Sting Ray firing, not from a helicopter, but the ship's own launchers.

Muscles flexed, time for the workout: ten days of Joint Warrior, the second of the year.

The autumn war game traditionally plays second fiddle to the spring counterpart.

But not this time around.

Planners expanded their ambitions – and expanded the battleground, such that the exercise broke out of its usual stomping grounds (Cape Wrath, Hebrides, North Sea) to embrace the South Coast exercise areas as well.

So Joint Warrior 22-2 climaxed with a four-day naval 'battle' in the Channel.

Over the ten days, the exercise tested 3,000 sailors, soldiers and aviators against the latest threats and technology: submarines, swarm attacks, drones, air raids, missile strikes and more.

Kent was one of more than 20 ships, submarines and supporting vessels from Britain and NATO allies, plus over 30 aircraft and drones, and Royal Marines thrown into the large melting pot.

In company with American and Italian destroyers USS Roosevelt and

ITS Andrea Doria and Polish frigate ORP General Tadeusz Kosciuszko for much of the time, HMS Kent focused the opening phases on hunting the live submarines participating in Joint Warrior.

Crew adopted the 'Patrol Quiet State': every department had to focus on reducing noise to avoid giving Kent's location away to the enemy below.

Engineers carefully managed engine states, auxiliary systems, and radar signatures to ensure the 'ship's signature' was as small as possible enabling Kent to approach stealthily.

The extended period of anti-submarine warfare saw Kent prove her ability to conduct such hunts in concert with other surface ships as well as helicopters and maritime patrol aircraft from across NATO.

And then, as the exercise progressed, the ship found herself thrust into both traditional and unconventional naval warfare as every conceivable threat – real and virtual – was thrown at Joint Warrior participants.

RAF Typhoons made low-level attacks, Wildcats buzzed about, there were cyber threats, and gunnery teams were challenged by fast-moving inshore attack craft (RIBs, jetskis and P2000 patrol boats)

swarming around.

P2000s like HMS Exploit – just 54 tonnes and a mere 21 metres long – but far more nimble than larger craft, twisting and turning at speeds up to 25kts, bringing machine-guns to bear on her 'enemies'.

Over four days, Exploit made 15 attacks against minehunters, frigates and destroyers, trying to overwhelm gunnery teams and defensive weapon systems

"It's been brilliant to interact with warships of different nations, putting their teams to the test when reacting to multiple fast-moving contacts as we attempted to get as close as possible," said Lieutenant Martin Head, Exploit's Commanding Officer.

It's the live-action participation, realistic threats and the scale of the exercise which makes it a big draw for allied navies and NATO, while it allows vessels like Kent, well versed in handling herself independently, can see how she might fit into an international task group, demonstrating that the different nationalities of NATO can quickly combine into a cohesive unit.

"Exercise Joint Warrior was a tremendous opportunity for the ship's company to work with allied nations from NATO

and comprehensively prove our formidable anti-submarine capability," said Kent's Commanding Officer Commander Jez Brettell.

Commodore Jeanette Morang, Commander of NATO Maritime Group 1 added: "Joint Warrior was an excellent high-end training opportunity for NATO's Standing Naval Forces in all maritime warfare areas."

Her force of major Dutch, German, Norwegian and French warships was joined by NATO's northern Europe minehunting force, Group 1 (which includes HMS Hurworth).

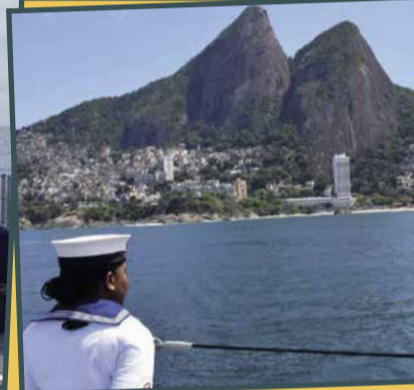
The variety of participants and scale of the exercise, making maximum use of assets and training ranges in the British Isles, made for a successful workout.

"As the United Kingdom and its partners are tested at sea by our adversaries, it's critical that the UK is able to demonstrate its capabilities to deter and defend," explained Lieutenant Commander Matthew Harvey, from the staff who directed the exercise from RAF St Mawgan in Cornwall.

"Joint Warrior gives the UK and its allies the confidence that we can operate together safely and effectively, whatever the conditions, whatever the threat."



Forth joins Unitas in Rio



HMS Forth joined dozens of ships and aircraft from various nations in Brazil for the longest-running at-sea exercise.

Sailors on the patrol ship sailed into Rio de Janeiro for Exercise Unitas which is in its 63rd year.

The exercise coincided with the 200th year of the Brazilian Navy and as such, was hosted by the South American country.

Forth was among 20 ships, more than 20 aircraft and two submarines from 16 nations, including the United States, Spain, Uruguay, France and Chile.

Able Seaman Christine Skippen said: "My experience of Unitas as a Seaman Specialist has been very positive. It offered an unparalleled opportunity to practice skills not often used, such as flashing light and tactical communications, providing an excellent training opportunity for the whole department which has enhanced our abilities, both individually and as a team."

"I was proud to be part of the ship's company for such a high-profile international exercise and to see my department and ship come together to deliver a performance worthy of our reputation. Personal highlights, as well as the tactical communications, were taking part in the sail-past, acting as helmsman whilst undergoing boarding exercises, and observing how other navies operate."

Before the exercise got underway, the ship's company was welcomed into Rio to help celebrate the bicentenary of the Brazilian Navy. One of the first official engagements was a sail past of Copacabana Beach for the entire task group before some members of the crew joined other sailors for a football tournament.

The final day saw Forth take part in a Fleet Review inspected by the President of Brazil Jair Bolsonaro.

Back at sea, and the patrol ship's first responsibility of Exercise Unitas was the planning and execution of the task group's gunnery serials and they even took the final 'kill' of a killer tomato – a floating target designed for gunnery practice at sea.

The training then moved onto boarding operations which HMS Forth conducted with her half-sister Brazilian Offshore Patrol Vessel BNS Amazonas. Forth's embarked Medical Officer Surgeon Lieutenant Talek Nightingale led a group of Officer Cadets from Britannia Royal Naval College as a crew of smugglers for the training with Brazilian marines conducting the boarding operation.

After this phase, Forth split off with a smaller group of patrol vessels to be the opposition forces to harass the main amphibious landings. The meant many complex warfare manoeuvres which the crew took in their stride.

The final role for Forth was to simulate being a fast attack craft where the ship exploited areas of fog in support of a "simulated attack" on the BNS Atlântico (formerly HMS Ocean).

Engineering Technician (ME) Jack Fryer said: "I loved working with other navies. I enjoyed the chance to represent the RN on a multinational level."

Lieutenant William Morris, Operations Officer, added: "The exercise was a valuable opportunity for Forth's Warfare Department to exercise in ways they never usually would – everyone from AB to Officer learned an enormous amount from operating with a multinational task group, and Forth stands ready to conduct future exercises to a similar high standard."

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BACK IN FROM THE COLD

SURVEY ship HMS Enterprise ventured closer to the North Pole than any other Royal Navy vessel in 2022, sailing within 1,000 miles of the top of the world.

The Devonport-based ship headed into the Arctic to update charts and scientific understanding of waters increasingly patrolled by Royal Navy warships to maintain freedom of navigation of the High North.

After receiving specific training for the mission – which saw crew facing water and air temperatures just above freezing, even at the beginning of autumn – Enterprise made for the Barents Sea off the northern coast of Norway.

Passing 66.56° North, crew painted the bull ring on the bow – known as a ‘blue nose’ – a traditional seafaring ceremony to designate a ship has sailed inside the Arctic

Using an array of equipment including single and multi-beam echo sounders, towed sensors and remotely operated bodies to gather hydrographic and oceanographic data, which will benefit scientists, fellow seafarers and Royal Navy operations.

The ship spent two months collecting information, pausing to cast a wreath into Arctic waters in tribute to all those sailors who ran the Nazi gauntlet and braved horrendous conditions to deliver supplies to the Soviet Union on convoy runs between 1941 and 1945.

Following a short stop in the Norwegian city of Tromsø, *pictured top*, to change crew and take on supplies, sailors tackled various adventurous activities: mountain climbing, running all 15 miles around the island on which the port sits, and even braving taking a dip in the Arctic waters.

Enterprise resumed her data-gathering operation first in the Norwegian Sea, then in the Denmark Strait (between Greenland and Iceland).

“Although these waters are challenging due to the environment, they are a haven for marine life, including orcas, sperm whales and puffins,” said Sub Lieutenant Sophie Savage. “After spending so much time in near constant daylight, the Northern Lights



scattered across the sky were a welcome treat for the watch keepers.”

The last act in the Denmark Strait was to hold a service of remembrance over the wreck of the battle-cruiser HMS Hood. Her loss in May 1941 at the hands of Hitler’s flagship Bismarck cost more than 1,400 lives and sent shockwaves through the contemporary Royal Navy.

Enterprise conducted another crew change in Reykjavik which allowed those remaining with the ship to explore Iceland’s unique natural sights which no-one will quickly

forget, then headed for Aberdeen where she hosted a number of visitors and VIPs from the maritime world/North Sea industries.

Commander Malcolm McCallum, the survey ship’s Commanding Officer, said of Enterprise’s Arctic mission: “The whole operation has demonstrated that the Royal Navy retains the ability to sustain operations in the strategically important region of the High North.”

She will later embark on further operations, this time in the warmer climate of the Mediterranean.



WARM WELCOME FOR SPEY AS SHE DANCES INTO BALI

THE people of Bali rolled out the red carpet – and then danced on it – to welcome the first Royal Navy ship in 25 years.

Patrol ship HMS Spey spent four days in the Indonesian province – the latest visit on a five-year deployment reinvigorating the Royal Navy’s presence in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region in company with her sister ship HMS Tamar.

Spey was greeted in the port of Kuta Selatan by Indonesian military, Bali’s Governor I Wayan Koster and traditional Balinese dancers and musicians.

Having presented Spey’s Executive Officer Lieutenant Commander Bridget Macnae with a welcoming garland, she and her sailors were encouraged to take part in the welcome ceremony, *pictured above*.

On receiving headdress and sashes they were ready to join in Poco-Poco and Maumere dancing, which included a display by a local children’s dance troupe.

Speeches followed and then the ship opened for tours to visitors. “I hope this will bring our navies close together as we enjoy the beauty and cultural abundance that Bali offers,” Lieutenant Commander Macnae said.

“This visit is also an opportunity for us to use the logistics services in Bali, taking on the fresh stores and fuel we need to keep HMS Spey at sea on her mission. We are very grateful for the hospitality shown by the Indonesian people.”

The four-day stop also allowed time for sporting fixtures with both the Indonesian Navy and the crew of the futuristic-looking American littoral combat ship USS Charleston, also visiting Bali.

Upon sailing Spey conducted joint exercises with Indonesian warships, including the frigate KRI Raden Eddy Martadinata, *pictured below*.

Prior to visiting Bali, Spey joined Australia’s signature military exercise – the first time a Royal Navy warship has taken part.

Staged every two years, Kakadu – in 2022 played out in the northern Australia with the port city of Darwin as the hub – focuses on the ability of the Royal Australian Navy and her partners/allies to operate and fight together.

Participants spent a week in Darwin in northern Australia getting to know each other and their different working practices before heading to sea for the nine-day active phase of training.

“We were asked to act as smugglers aboard a small vessel and the Australian teams would then carry out boarding actions,” said Petty Officer Marc ‘Bomber’ Brown, Spey’s deputy coxswain.

“Four of Spey ship’s Company were involved and we managed to initially throw them off their game. The team adapted quickly to restrain us and overall it was a good laugh and great to interact with them as a Navy.”

Among the temporary smugglers was 18-year-old Engineering Technician Benjamin Smith from Manchester.

“I thoroughly enjoyed being involved in a boarding exercise. It was good to see how other navies conduct boarding operations and how we are similar or differ. I feel it was a real training benefit; we did not make it easy for the Australians as we role played not very compliant people to see how they react to this. It was fun and this is an exercise I would love to be involved in again and was good to keep up relations with the Australian Navy.”



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LET THE EXCITEMENT BEGIN

NOTHING to see here, move along...

One of Gibraltar's famous barbary apes seems less than impressed by the sight of RFA Argus berthed in the naval base just a kilometre from the top of the Rock.

Luckily, RN personnel serving in the overseas territory were delighted by the auxiliary's presence in their waters – not least because of what she brought.

Argus is both 'aircraft carrier' and floating medical centre for the amphibious element of this autumn's Achillean deployment (see pages 2-3).

For the duration of Achillean she's home to a Tailored Air Group (or TAG) of Merlin Mk2s (845 Naval Air Squadron) and Wildcat AH1s (847 NAS) from the Commando Helicopter Force, the wings of the Royal Marines.

845 provide the heavy lift (troops, kit, 105mm guns, Land Rovers) while 847 supply the firepower and intelligence (guiding in artillery and air strikes, and providing top cover with their 50 cal machine guns).

Combined, in the words of TAG commander Lieutenant Commander Askham, the helicopters "allow the Royal Marines to take the fight to the enemy ashore".

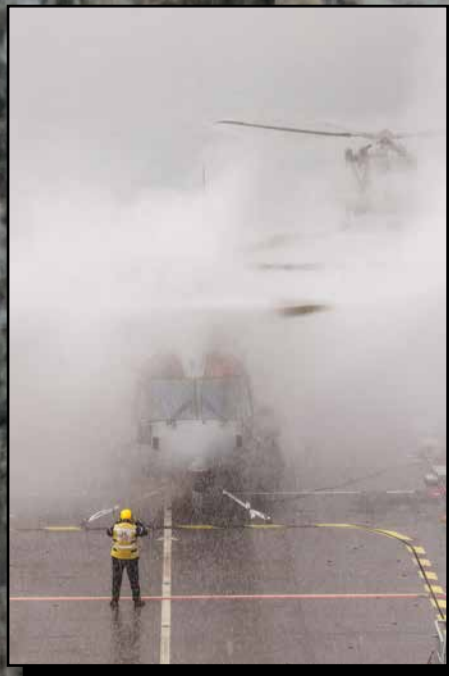
Off the Rock, however, the focus was on saving lives rather than fire and fury and the first chance to exercise with HMS Cutlass, one of the two new fast patrol boats assigned to the RN's Gibraltar Squadron as permanent replacements for Sabre and Scimitar.

Should the TAG be called upon to conduct a rescue for real, there's a good chance her hospital facilities would be required.

There's a possibility Wildcat pilot Lt Mike Pengelly might fly the casualty aboard Argus.

And there's also a possibility that Surg Cdr Steve Pengelly might treat said casualty. Normally a specialist cancer surgeon at Torbay Hospital, he's embarked on Argus as a general surgeon for the duration of Achillean... allowing for a seagoing reunion with his Yeovilton-based brother.

Mike treated Steve to a tour of his Wildcat and in return learned about the basics of surgery courtesy of his brother and Steve showed Mike thing or two about surgery, using a training dummy.



Pictures: PO(Phot) Des Wade



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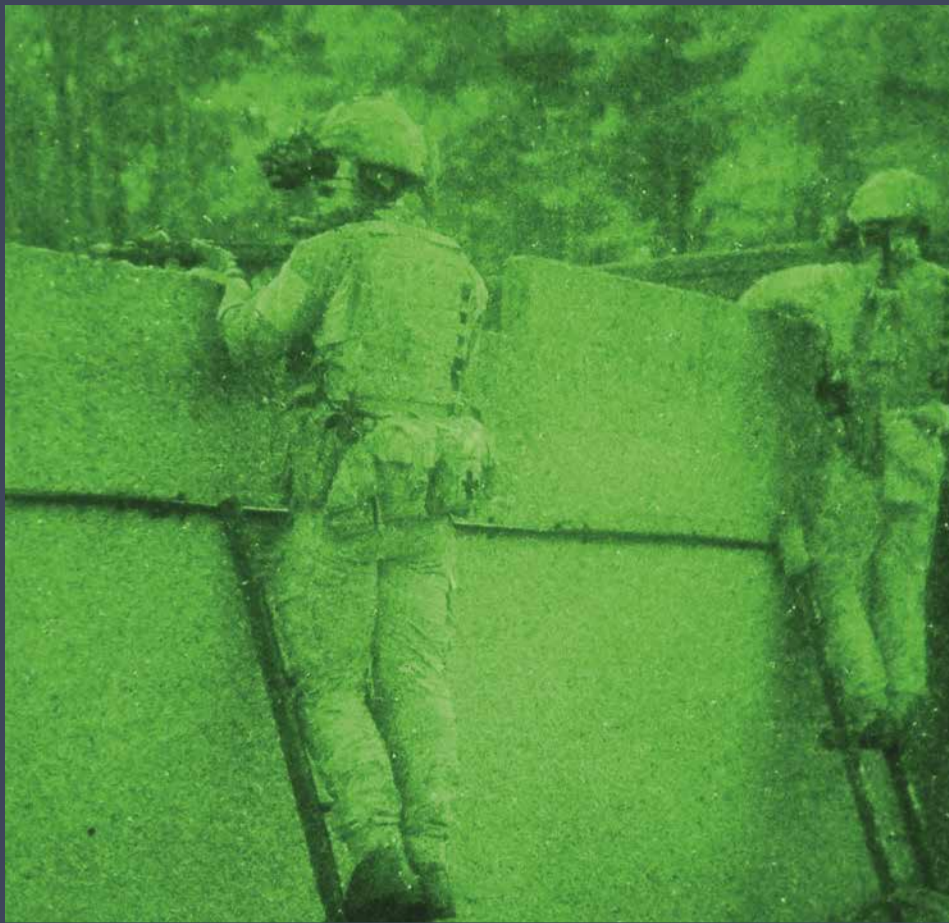
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Royal Marines of 40 Commando during the night urban combat exercises in Bovington in Dorset

AT CLOSE QUARTERS...

40 COMMANDO PREPARE FOR MISSIONS EAST OF SUEZ

ROYAL Marines raided a compound in the dead of night during intensive combat training in the UK ahead of operations and exercises.

Marines from Taunton-based 40 Commando carried out a week of specialist training in close-quarters battle, keeping them sharp for operations in confined spaces and across urban sprawls as they limber up for deployments east of the Suez Canal.

It started with skills development at a specially designed urban compound at the Commando Training Centre in Lymington in Devon, with its series of rooms and corridors testing commandos' reactions and ability to move quickly and decisively through tight spaces.

Alongside search and patrol dogs from 102 Squadron 1 Military Working Dog Regiment and their Army Commando comrades, the Royal Marines undertook increasingly complex missions until a final examination – an attack at night on a secluded compound – at the Bovington Training Areas in Dorset.

"Overall it was a great week of Close Quarters Battle training, combining integration with military working dogs, Army Commandos and 18 Squadron RAF, to test all ranks and prove ourselves ready for future deployments," said Marine Anderson of 40 Commando's Charlie Company.

Before the final mission, commandos had honed skills in entering buildings, learned to work seamlessly with the patrol dogs and used 'simunition' – mock rounds used for training – on increasingly difficult missions to clear rooms and corridors.



40 Commando ready to load onto a Chinook from 18 Squadron

As darkness fell the final attack began as Chinooks of 18 Squadron from RAF Odiham in Hampshire lifted the commandos into action, dropping them near their objective in Bovington.

Scout snipers were already on the ground collecting information and establishing observation posts to carry out reconnaissance on enemy access points around the compound and gain wider understanding of the adversary – their routines and morale.

Teams with patrol dogs were briefed by the snipers before making their move as they made simultaneous entries into the compound using ladders.

The commandos pushed through, methodically clearing sections of the compound, with snipers guiding another team through the compound and alerting them to enemy positions.

As the compound was cleared, the commandos carried out what is known as a Sensitive Site Exploitation – that is collecting information and equipment to understand the enemy better and to inform future operations.

Charlie Company also conducted day and night heavy weapons training at Castlemartin in Wales as part of their preparations.

40 Commando are now heading for a range of exercises and deployments from Oman, across the Indo-Pacific with the United States Marine Corps and the deployment of a training teams to Nigeria.



40 Commando getting some rounds down at Castlemartin in Wales



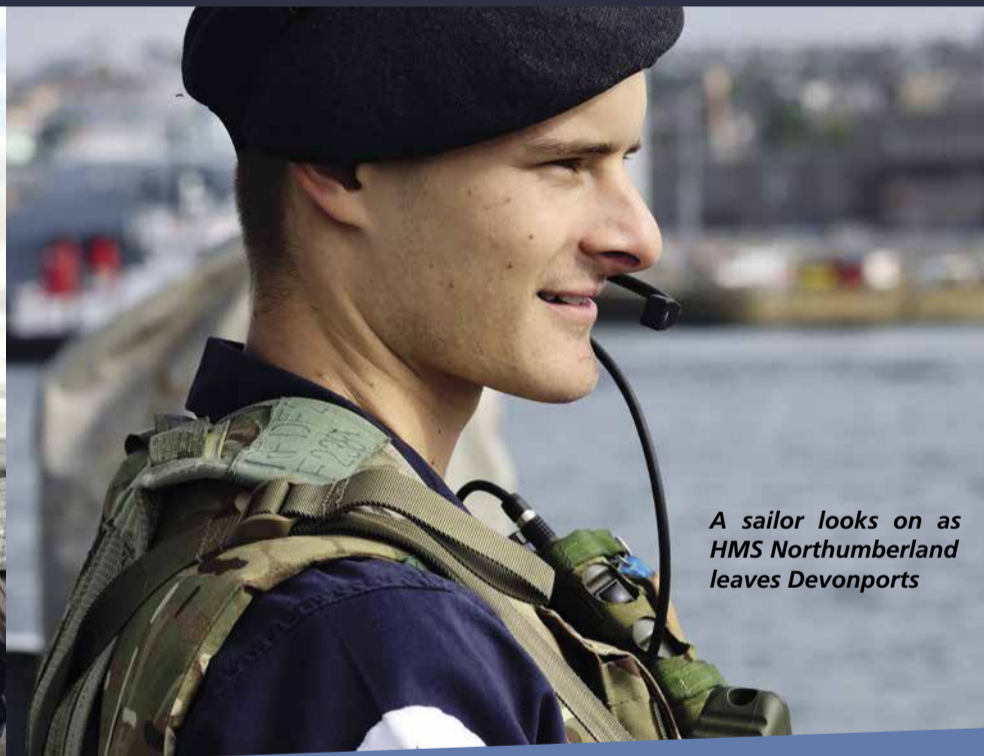
Marines firing heavy weapons at the Castlemartin ranges as they prepare for operations

From left: Norwegian ship HNoMS Thor Heyerdahl, RFA Tiderace and HMS Northumberland sailing in the Barents Sea



NORTH HEADS NORTH

Sailors from RFA Tiderace place a wreath in the ocean as part of a memorial service marking 80 years since the PQ18 Arctic Convoy



A sailor looks on as HMS Northumberland leaves Devonports

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HMS Northumberland led an allied force on a freedom of navigation patrol into the Arctic's Barents Sea with the heroes of one of the most important Arctic Convoys of the Second World War very much in their thoughts.

The Type 23 frigate, which has since been on Exercise Joint Warrior (see page 6), was joined by tanker RFA Tiderace and Norwegian frigate HNoMS Thor Heyerdahl in the Barents Sea, off the northern coast of Norway and Russia.

The allied group tested a range of capabilities, exchanged sailors between ships to provide valuable insight into how one another operate, while Northumberland's Merlin helicopter carried out around 45 hours of flying in the icy Arctic skies.

The temperature, even in these early autumn months, hovers around or just above zero.

"Conditions in the Arctic are certainly a challenge. The environment – especially the temperature – the Polar Code (the international code of safety for ships operating in polar waters) and the proximity to Russia are all factors that we take into account when planning and executing operations in the Southern Barents Sea. But as a task-group, we absolutely achieved what we set out to deliver and there is a real sense of achievement across the whole of our ship's company," said HMS Northumberland's Principal Warfare Officer (Above Water), Lieutenant Commander Kyle Walkley.

The high tempo of operations didn't stop the task force coming together to mark the 80th anniversary of one of the most important convoys of the Second World War.

Together, they held a memorial service to mark the 80th anniversary of the PQ18 Arctic Convoy – a perilous voyage made in September 1942 from Loch Ewe in Scotland to Archangel in the northern Soviet Union.

One in three of the 40 ships were lost as the convoy came under intense attack by the Nazis from above and below the waves as they attempted to deliver vital supplies for the Soviet war effort on the Eastern Front.

The commemoration took place on Northumberland's flight deck and was led by Commanding Officer, Commander Will Edwards-Bannon, and HNoMS Thor Heyerdahl's chaplain.

The service was marked by the laying of a wreath by sailors from RFA Tiderace, representing the Merchant Navy whose losses were the greatest of the Arctic Convoys.

Commander Edwards-Bannon, said: "Although a first for many of my team, operations in the Barents Sea are nothing new for the Royal Navy.

"HMS Northumberland is well-suited to operating her full suite of cutting-edge capabilities in this environment and follows in a long tradition of Royal Navy warships doing so – a legacy underscored by this mission falling over the 80th anniversary of the heroically successful Arctic Convoy PQ18."

The task group exercised its rights of freedom of navigation, transiting together from the Norwegian Sea, all the way to the South Barents Sea, culminating in over 3,500 miles steamed for HMS Northumberland since leaving her home base in Devonport.

To prepare the ship for this operation, the Royal Navy's Fleet Operational Sea Training (FOST) embarked a team to conduct a high intensity training package over two weeks in UK waters.

This ensured the ship's company, who had just returned from summer leave, were ready for high-tempo operations.

The training included exercises in hunting submarines, advanced battle damage control and replenishing food and provisions while at sea, all culminating in a simulated war at the end of the two weeks.

During this period, Northumberland mourned the loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II by holding a ceremonial gun salute at sea and celebrated the accession of His Majesty Charles III, with the ship completing her final Battle Damage Exercise just in time for the crew to gather together in their mess-decks to watch His Majesty The King's accession speech.

Having honed the cutting-edge skills needed to be ready for anything their Arctic mission might throw at them, the crew of HMS Northumberland was then ready to transit north. This is not the first time the ship has



"We absolutely achieved what we set out to deliver and there is a real sense of achievement."

Sailors from HMS Northumberland, RFA Tiderace and HNoMS Thor Heyerdahl take part in a memorial service on the flight deck of Northumberland to remember the PQ18 Arctic Convoy.

operated in the Arctic with regional partners; she took part in Exercise Cold Response 22 in the spring of this year, but this was a first for the current ship's company to deploy to the Barents Sea.

Northumberland also welcomed on board hydrography and meteorology specialists who experimented with oceanographic floats.

The trial explored the use of oceanographic floats for 'autonomous data collection' which will help the Royal Navy better understand the complexity of the oceans they sail in. Oceanographic data will be gathered from deep in the ocean as the floats surface periodically and transmit data over a number of years.

The Royal Navy's hydrography and meteorology (HM) specialists rely heavily on the analysis and interpretation of real-time data, both above and below the surface in order to gain operational advantage.

The ability to gather data from autonomous floats improves the understanding of an operating area and the understanding of climate change.

After a successful trial it is likely the Royal Navy will become early adopters of this technology to best support their operational requirements.

"Military data gathering is conducted by navies throughout the world. The Royal Navy has worked hand-in-hand with the United Kingdom's Hydrographic Office for centuries to gather data that can be processed into the highest quality maritime products that have both military and civilian application. These floats represent the next generation of that cooperation and are just another example of how the Royal Navy continues to be at the cutting-edge of technology" said HMS Northumberland's Staff Warfare Officer Lieutenant Commander Benjamin Read.



HMS Northumberland arrives in Aberdeen

ARCTIC CONVOY REMEMBERED DURING BARENTS PATROL

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HISTORY BROUGHT TO LIFE FOR REMEMBRANCE

ANOTHER volley of dirt crashes down on the sailors, the metallic ping of debris hitting their helmets as they weave their way through smoke-filled trenches.

The hubbub of preparation turns to silence. Eyes widen. The sharp blast of a whistle. The time is nigh to face down the German guns. There's no turning back.

The sailors are in their early twenties, fresh-faced with their lives and careers ahead of them. Their plan is to return home after the war and pick up the threads of their old life.

Their letters home in case the unimaginable happens are written.

Except this isn't France or Belgium in the First World War, this is the Kent Show Ground and The Centre of Military Archaeology's (CEMA) replica trenches, which are based on Railway Wood in Ypres, a segment of trench once part of the Ypres Salient on the Western Front.

These sailors aren't in mortal danger, but they are helping recreate a slice of First World War naval history, which is front and centre of the Royal Navy's Remembrance video named *Letters Home*.

They are playing the role of sailors of the Hood Battalion of the 63rd Royal Naval Division – sailor-

soldiers who fought on the Western Front from 1916 but saw action at Antwerp in 1914 and at Gallipoli in 1915.

Among them is the 'brother' of a sailor serving in battlecruiser HMS Queen Mary which was sunk at the Battle of Jutland whose letter home to their sister creates a powerful narrative for the video.

The premise of the video is to look through the lens of something deeply personal – the letter – and inspire current generations to think about how communication with loved ones has changed over the years but also to bring into sharp focus the sacrifices made in World War One.

It will also be an education for some who did not previously know about the sailors who served in the trenches, as part of the 63rd Royal Naval Division, who wore the insignia of the Senior Service, spoke like Jack, thought like Jack, yet their uniforms were khaki and their home was the Western Front.

Andy Robertshaw is a military consultant for film and television and lead historian at CEMA, which provided World War One uniforms and the replica trenches to make this short film a reality.

The 66-year-old has advised on and featured in films like *War Horse*, *1917* and *They Shall Not Grow Old*, working closely with the likes of Steven Spielberg, Sam Mendes and Peter Jackson.

He was the head of education at the British Army museum in Chelsea and formerly ran the Royal Logistic Corps museum.

The location of CEMA's replica trenches is in itself historic. Kent Show Ground is on the site of Royal Naval Air Service Detling, which was in use from 1915 and was particularly active during the German bomber offensive in the spring of 1918.

The small trench network is on the site of the Chatham Land Front, which was once a maze of trenches, dugouts and land positions created to protect London, in response to fears the German Imperial Navy could get enough marines ashore on the Swale Estuary to attack Chatham, which would mean the gateway to London would be open.

Andy said: "Where we are now is basically a replica based on a mixture of photographs, film but also archaeology which I've been involved in."

"Where the guys are working is basically a recreation of what would have been here, but more importantly what would have been built in France and Belgium."

"This area was a training area before they went overseas. Walking through the trench, wearing the uniform, is as close as we're going to get."

"We can't recreate mortal terror, but what we can recreate are people who eat, sleep and drink and live



Sailors experience lift in the trenches during filming

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in a trench.

He added: "The idea that sailors and marines were serving at the front up and down from France to Belgium is a complete revelation to many people. It shouldn't be, people should know about this."

Tom Lee, a former Royal Marines Commando turned actor volunteered to help make the film, which has been shot and edited by the Royal Navy's Video Production Unit based at Whale Island in Portsmouth.

Tom plays the role of the brother in the trenches. He tells the story through the reading of the letter, with scenes also filmed at HMS M.33 at the National Museum of the Royal Navy and at the Holst Victorian House, the home of composer Gustav Holst, in Cheltenham and at poppy fields at Ranscombe Farm Reserve.

The video takes the large-scale and unimaginable destruction of World War One and homes in on a fictional but personal story.

Andy said: "Taking it to one person and saying 'what is that person's story?' is always interesting. They have a family, they have aspirations, they have a job, they go off to war with the intention of coming back and picking up the threads of their life after the war."

"That's what they wanted to do. Then the unimaginable happens and they die and clearly soldiers wrote letters home to be sent in the event of their death, which basically says goodbye and very often thanks the family for everything they've done."

"It's the last thing they can do."

"It's only really going from the macro, to these one or two stories will allow you to have some understanding of how the war was experienced, not through the pages of the Daily Mail or Telegraph, but through that letter arriving on the hall mat to say that your son or husband has been killed."

Watch out for the release of the Royal Navy's Remembrance video at [YouTube.com/RoyalNavy](https://www.youtube.com/RoyalNavy)

You can find out more about CEMA at [cemahistory.org](https://www.cemahistory.org)



Tom Lee during filming at The Centre of Military Archaeology at Kent Show Ground



Behind the scenes at The Centre of Military Archaeology



Royal Naval Division recruitment poster from World War One



Former Royal Marine Tom Lee plays the lead role in the film



The band of the Hood Battalion, part of the 63rd Royal Naval Division

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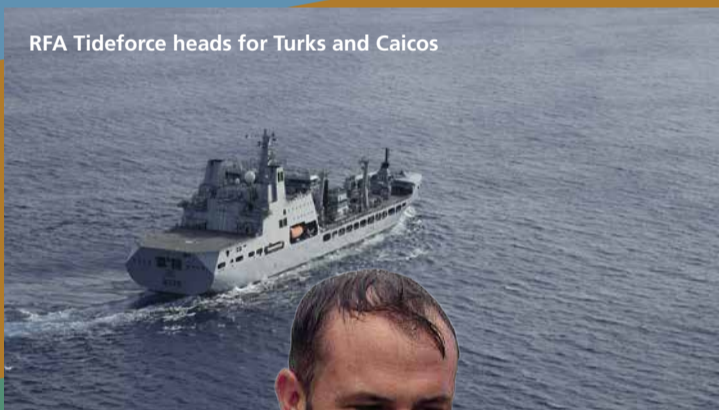
LEVEL PEAKS

HMS Medway in the waters off Turks and Caicos following Hurricane Fiona



THE STORM CHASERS

RFA Tideforce heads for Turks and Caicos



Personnel assist on the Cayman Islands



A Wildcat delivers water on Turks and Caicos



THE Royal Navy delivered drinking water and made repairs as the Turks and Caicos Islands recovers from damage caused by Hurricane Fiona.

The storm caused extensive damage and disruption on the Caribbean archipelago, especially on islands of Grand Turk and Salt Cay to the east, bringing flooding and widespread damage to critical infrastructure. This left many islanders without electricity and drinking water.

In the wake of the tropical storm, patrol ship HMS Medway and the Fleet Tanker RFA Tideforce sailed for the British Overseas Territory to offer assistance and help provide reassurance.

Between the ships and the Crisis Response Troop of 24 Commando, vital drinking water was delivered to remote areas, the prison's generator was repaired, and the airport's perimeter fence fixed enabling critical flights to restart.

Medway – which is on a long-term mission to the Caribbean to provide a reassuring presence and deliver disaster relief during the hurricane season – later sailed for the tiny island of Salt Cay at the south-eastern tip of the archipelago.

There, with the local water plant out of action, nearly 600 litres of water was delivered.

HMS Medway then set off in pursuit of the latest storm of the 2022

hurricane season, Ian, after handing over to Tideforce.

The tanker and her on-board Wildcat

helicopter from 815 Naval Air Squadron continued to support the Governor and National Emergency Operational Centre who were in charge of the recovery efforts.

More drinking water was later delivered by air, a technical team provided assistance and advised on electrical power challenges on Grand Turk, and the Wildcat lifted Turks and Caicos Regiment troops and their equipment from remote areas and islands.

Lieutenant Commander Phil Barron, Wildcat Flight Commander, said: "The helicopter and its embarked Royal Navy Air Engineers and aircrew provide a critical capability that RFA Tideforce can bring to bear.

"Being able to deploy at short notice, at range and in all weathers – to ensure those people affected by this hurricane have the support they need – is an extremely rewarding and uplifting experience."

Air Engineering Technician, Matt Eaton, of 815 NAS who landed ashore, said: "Being on my first deployment with a ship that is at held high-readiness, we are ready to provide assistance where necessary and I was privileged to meet some of the Salt Cay islanders and help ensure they have access to the most basic needs such as water.

"Seeing the aircraft that I help maintain in action is something I'll never grow tired of."

The island's government is now moving on from its crisis and recovery phase with focus now being directed on resilience and preparation for the rest of the hurricane season.

"It's been humbling to see up-close the damage caused by Hurricane Fiona, and we're proud to have been able to help those affected," said Commander Chris Hollingworth, Medway's Commanding Officer.

"We're fully committed to our role providing critical aid and supporting Overseas Territories in their recovery throughout the hurricane season."

"This is the first chance we've had to test ourselves during the deployment," said Corporal Rob Briggs from the Crisis Response Troop, a group of specialists the Royal Engineers.

"Although we've rehearsed this response in Montserrat and Anguilla, it's different doing it for real. I'm really glad we were able to offer our support, and that things weren't as bad as they could have been."

Medway visited the Cayman Islands after Hurricane Ian brushed past the British Overseas Territory.

Thankfully the Cayman Islands – more than 600 miles west of Turks and Caicos – were only lightly impacted by the latest hurricane, but Crisis Response Troop from 24 Commando engineers landed alongside Medway's sailors in capital George Town to show how quickly the Royal Navy is able to come ashore and assist in the event of a more severe storm.

"We were monitoring weather patterns as they came through and saw Ian was developing," said Commander Hollingworth.

"Once we'd finished with Fiona we conducted a quick logistics stop to take on fuel and prepositioned ourselves to come and offer assistance.

"We've had some really good communications from shore. It's clear the islands are incredibly well prepared and all we're doing is offering a bit of extra assistance should it be required.

"I've got a really competent team on board. And what we have is, essentially, it's like a big Yellow Pages: a group of carpenters, electricians, plumbers and everybody else on standby so, anybody you need.

"The damage from Ian has been minimal but this has been a great opportunity for my team to prove to ourselves and partners in the region that we can come in, get equipment ashore and assist as required."

Governor Martyn Roper added: "Cayman has one of the best disaster responses in the region, but to have this additional capacity come in just gives us so much more resilience."

The authorities put the sailors and commandos to good use, clearing fallen trees and assessing damage to jetties – with minor repairs made to one of them.

LIFT-OFF FOR CREWLESS

Royal Navy ships led the way in “game-changing” NATO autonomous exercises off the coast of Portugal.

Frigate HMS Lancaster and minehunter HMS Hurworth tested the use of uncrewed tech – from drones to underwater survey vessels, which could be used by NATO on the front line of operations in the future.

For the month-long trials, more than 11 warships, 120 autonomous vehicles and 1,500 military and civilian personnel from 15 NATO countries took over the waters near the Troia Peninsula, Portugal.

This is the first time the Royal Navy has sent ships to the exercise, with previous participation involving crewless boats and drones. It’s enhanced presence in the exercise, hosted by the Portuguese Navy, comes as this year marks the 650th anniversary of the Treaty of Tagilde between England and Portugal – the oldest alliance in the world.

HMS Lancaster played a key role by serving as the command hub for the multitude of autonomous systems, feeding information to

the other ships in the task force to allow them to make crucial decisions during the numerous scenarios. This allowed the task group to see and utilise the range of drones, underwater vehicles and vessels.

Jim Beaton, the Royal Navy and UK lead for the exercise, said: “REPMUS 22 has been a game-changer, first through the trial of an autonomous asset ready combat system in HMS Lancaster, from where we were able to distribute an autonomous system operating picture to a NATO task group.

“This is a huge advancement, and we have taken that forward to support two NATO Standing Naval Forces. Dynamic Messenger saw us take autonomy to sea in a NATO context.

“Additionally, we have been able to bring some of the navy’s newest operators to the exercise, getting their feedback on the system and starting to push that experience back into the fleet.”

First up was REPMUS – a testing ground designed to allow large-scale experiments

for NATO navies and their industry partners. During this period the ships and crewless technology were put to the test through a range of scenarios above, on and below the water.

Exercise Dynamic Messenger followed, where the tried and tested uncrewed systems were integrated into operations both at sea and ashore. This was the first exercise under NATO command to use autonomous underwater systems, testing readiness across a variety of challenges including submarine threats and sea mines.

HMS Lancaster carried out trials with Puma, an Uncrewed Air Vehicle primarily used for surveillance. The battery-powered, hand-launched UAV is designed to cope with challenging environments across the globe, and is predominantly used for intelligence gathering.

Lieutenant Chris Windsor of 700X, the Royal Navy’s UAV Squadron and drone experts, was controlling the Puma from on board the Type 23 frigate (main picture).

“For me, this exercise has been really exciting,” he said.

“I’m an air traffic controller, and the new technology gives us a lot more opportunity for varied jobs. I used to be only deployable on the two aircraft carriers, now I’ve operated from P2000s, Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels and now a Type 23.

“There are so many other nations making use of autonomous vehicles so it’s important to keep the momentum we’ve generated in this exercise so that the Royal Navy remains at the cutting edge.”

Minehunter HMS Hurworth, currently assigned to Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Group 1, hosted a next-generation variant of REMUS 100 – an Autonomous Underwater Vehicle used for mine countermeasures, harbour security and hydrographic surveys.

On how autonomous vessels will affect the future of mine hunting, Lieutenant Thomas Hourigan, Operations Officer on HMS Hurworth said: “Ultimately, I believe it will make us more

successful and we will grow and adapt to the new technology. We are always going to need people to make the final decisions but it’s all about the balance between the two.”

AB(WS) Jade Martin, was part of a team of six junior sailors who joined the exercise from HMS Nelson, giving newer personnel a chance to see how the Royal Navy and other NATO countries are developing technology.

She said: “Being in a multinational ops room with both military and civilians, getting hands on this kind of kit and testing it to its limits has been really rewarding.

“This is right at the start of my career so the opportunity to get out here and work with other nations trying out new kit that will be the future of the navy has been amazing.”

REPMUS and Dynamic Messenger come at a time when the Royal Navy is looking to increase its use of crewless systems.

It recently took on the XV Patrick Blackett, a testbed ship for autonomous kit, while quadcopters have been launched from flight decks of navy ships to deliver supplies.

Words: Megan Rhodes



CREWLESS TRIALS



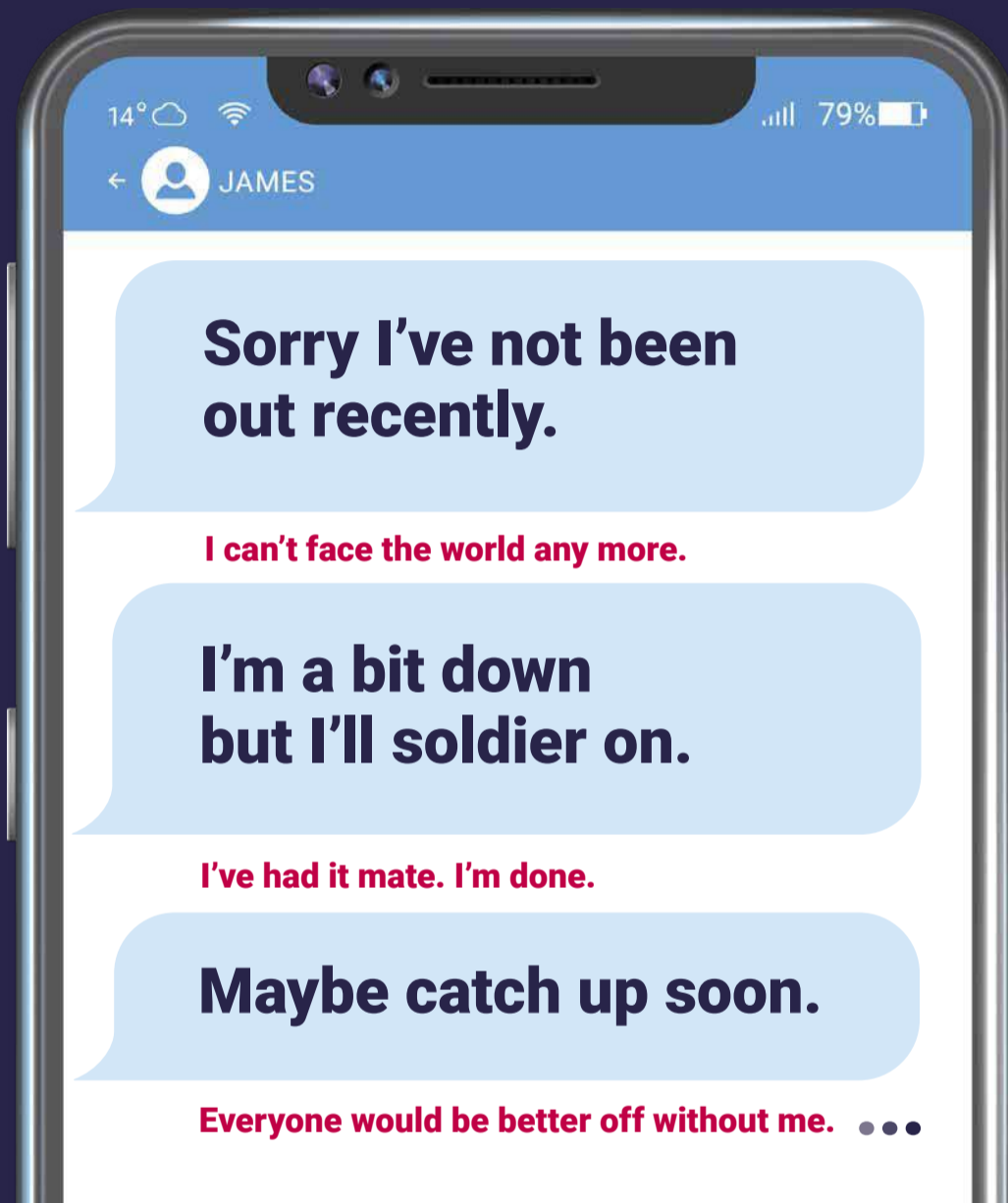
Pictures: Remus underwater survey vessel was launched from minehunter HMS Hurworth; a multitude of autonomous technology was controlled by the operations rooms of Royal Navy ships; Royal Navy crewless boat Madfox was involved in the trials; HMS Lancaster; A Schiebel's CAMCOPTER S-100 Unmanned Air System.

LPhoto Eddy Damulira



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Royal date for Glasgow crew

Personnel travel to Windsor to meet Princess of Wales

PERSONNEL from the Royal Navy's state-of-the-art frigate HMS Glasgow met the ship's sponsor The Princess of Wales for the first time.

The Type 26 vessel is currently under construction at BAE Systems' shipyard in Govan, Glasgow.

To date, fifteen sailors have joined the vessel, the first contingent of the eventual complement of 161 Royal Navy personnel.

The crew were invited to Windsor where they met with The Princess of Wales for the first time since her appointment as HMS Glasgow's ship's sponsor was announced in June last year.

"It was a huge honour to be invited to Windsor Castle and to meet Her Royal Highness The Princess of Wales," said Warrant Officer Darran Sullivan, the ship's Executive Warrant Officer.

"The appointment of sponsor signals an enduring connection between the ship's crew and Her Royal Highness. It is clear from meeting her that she has a real interest in HMS Glasgow and in the lives of those who will serve onboard."

Petty Officer Colin Chalmers, who joined as one of HMS Glasgow's Marine Engineers last month, echoed the sentiment: "It was amazing meeting The Princess of Wales, particularly as there was such a small group of us in attendance."

"The moment she walked into the room her enthusiasm and genuine interest in us really shone through and put us immediately at ease."

During the visit, the ship's company

presented Her Royal Highness with an HMS Glasgow ship's crest and challenge coin.

"The entire ship's company is looking forward to the time when we can invite The Princess of Wales onboard the ship and further develop the relationship between HMS Glasgow and her sponsors," said Commander Phil Burgess, the ship's Senior Naval Officer.

HMS Glasgow is the first of the Royal Navy's new City Class Type 26 frigates. The first batch of the new generation of ships are being built by BAE Systems on the River Clyde, with HMS Cardiff and HMS Belfast following the first of the class.

The ships' main roles are anti-submarine warfare and air defence, although their flexible design means that they can also perform other duties such as counter-terrorism missions, disaster relief, and maritime security missions. The vessels will also deliver critical protection for the Continuous At Sea Deterrent (CASD) and the Royal Navy's Carrier Strike Groups.

Each Type 26 will be equipped with the Sea Ceptor missile defence system, a five-inch medium calibre gun, a flexible mission bay, Artisan 997 Medium Range Radar, and towed array Sonar.

There have been nine ships of the Royal Navy named HMS Glasgow, dating back to the 1700s.

It is estimated that more than 25,000 Royal Navy, merchant, and passenger ships have been built on the River Clyde since the first yard opened in 1711.

Pictures: Cpl Tim Hammond



No fridge too far for Sam



ROYAL Marine Sam Hammond swapped his bergen for a, er, fridge as he yomped to the top of Wales' three highest peaks for charity.

The 29-year-old corporal, who serves as a weapons instructor at RNAS Culdrose, completed covered 17 miles with the refrigerator strapped to his back as he scaled Pen Y Fan in the Brecon Beacons, followed by Cader Idris in mid-Wales and finished with Snowdon, pictured left.

At 29kg the fridge was twice the weight of the bergen rucksacks trainee marines carry on the infamous 30-mile yomp to earn their green berets.

He did so over two punishing days, climbing more than 2,200 metres – 7,200ft – to raise money for mountain rescue.

The fridge wasn't merely a hindrance to Sam's Man vs Fridge challenge: it proved useful for keeping his and drink cool.

"I have a passion for pretty much everything outdoors and Snowdonia is one of my favourite places in the world," Sam said.

"The Welsh three peaks took a total of 22 hours, 57 minutes. A huge thank you to everyone who donated and your kind words of support on the mountains. As far as I am aware, this has never been done with a fridge before."

So far Sam, who lives in Redruth, has raised more than £3,250 for Llanberis Mountain Rescue.

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

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Panto bus returns to bases – oh yes it does



WITH Christmas approaching, pantomime season is nearly upon us ("oh no it isn't!")!

Get ready for songs, dames and plenty of audience participation as The British Forces Foundation (BFF) Panto Bus tour starts next month, putting on shows at bases across the Royal Navy estate.

This tour has been made possible once again thanks to an RNRMC grant of £9,600.

Please see our tour dates. To find out more about performance

timings, locations, and to book tickets, please contact your local base.

■ Cinderella: Nov 16 – Helensburgh – time tbc

■ Jack and the Beanstalk Nov 29 – Culdrose – time tbc

Nov 30 – Devonport – time tbc

Dec 2 – CTRM – 18.30

Dec 3 – Chivenor – 14.00

Dec 4 – Yeovilton – 14.00

Dec 6 – Collingwood – AM

Dec 8 – Excellent – 17.30



More cash to support veterans

THE Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), in partnership with Greenwich Hospital, has awarded Veterans Outreach Support (VOS) a grant of £65,000.

This grant was received through the RNRMC's 'Through Life' funding pathway, which acknowledges that support can be required at any stage in life, and channels funds to make a tangible difference at whatever stage it is needed.

This grant is in addition to the RNRMC's earlier grant this year of £25,000 for another project being delivered by VOS.

Ian Millen, CEO of VOS, said: "With this grant, VOS will be able to continue providing camaraderie, connection and compassion to improve the mental health, wellbeing and resilience of Royal Navy and Royal Marines veterans and their partners.

"Thank you to the continued generosity of the RNRMC, the financial support is invaluable to our delivery to our VOS community."

Veterans Outreach Support delivers support to veterans and their partners in a variety of ways, and funding from the RNRMC is critical in supporting service users.

VOS delivers wellbeing support by organising activities, events and social groups to promote camaraderie, community and fun. Welfare support can take many forms: tackling loneliness, signposting, advocacy and accessing benefits.

Mental health support is often crucial for veterans, serving personnel and their family members, and VOS provides support in the form of cognitive, behavioural and emotional wellbeing therapies or treatments.

For further information on the support available from VOS, visit www.vosuk.org

Little Legs has learning covered

CHILDREN from the Merritime Nursery were treated to a story time and a visit from the Gruffalo at the launch of The Little Legs Library at HMS Sultan.

The Commanding Officer, HMS Sultan, Captain Jo Deakin and guests from local government, service charities also came along to welcome the new library service at HMS Sultan, which has been developed for Service families thanks, in part, to support from the RNRMC.

The Little Legs Library, in the Learning Development Hub Library, will provide parents and carers an area where they can come and take out children's books so they can read bedtime stories to their children, or bring their children in and find time to simply enjoy reading with them.

With personnel on courses for up to two years, having a library on base, where they can choose books, will help them remain connected to their children when they are away from home, by reading to them via a video call, promoting bonding and ensure that parents don't miss out on all the 'good bits'.

The library also includes a newly-created space where parents can engage in reading and creative activities with their children, after school, weekends and during Sultan's main leave periods, when not being used by trainees for study.

The project has been funded through grants from organisations including The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), Reading Force, Aggie Weston's and the Gosport Discovery Centre.

In addition, Aggies have provided further funds to create a sensory zone for children with autism or special educational needs, and will be organising story times and helping RN personnel on base to record a bedtime story for their children through the Storybook Waves programme so their children can listen to them while they're away.

The Storybook Waves project is also supported by funding from the RNRMC.

Project lead, HMS Sultan Resettlement Coord, Hayley Duncan, who is also a veteran and a Naval spouse said: "Periods where one parent is away from home can be really hard, especially on younger children who may be

missing mum or dad or the parent who is away from them on training.

"This new facility will provide them with the opportunity to integrate more and strengthen those all-important bonds.

"It will also provide additional support to those who are looking after the day-to-day care of children and an environment where they can mix with other Service families.

"We are so grateful to everyone who has made this special project a reality. I'd also like to mention Engineering Technician (Marine Engineering) Rebecca Burch who's support was invaluable."

The hub is a 'one-stop' service for advice on all matters relating to resettlement, personal development, vocational training or just learning a new skill for pleasure.

It also serves as a focal point for advice/guidance on matters such as: access to courses for elective learning, including GCSE, functional skills and distance learning; funding for education and resettlement activities; specific learning difficulties and the use of the Personal Development Record.

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Pegasus takes off for reserve air branch

THE Royal Navy has commissioned its first 'ship' under a king in more than 70 years.

HMS Pegasus, based at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset, will serve as the parent unit for the 320 men and women who serve in the Royal Naval Reserve's air branch.

Prince Michael of Kent – Commodore-in-Chief of the combined Maritime Reserves, and promoted to Honorary Vice Admiral of the Royal Naval Reserve – was the guest of honour as the branch was renamed and formally commissioned, the first His Majesty's Ship since the reign of George VI.

He inspected the Royal Guard before the formal ceremony which included a display by the Wildcats of the Black Cats display team and speeches from Vice Admiral Keith Blount, Commander of NATO's Maritime Command, and former First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir George Zambellas.

"The commissioning of HMS Pegasus is a big step towards recognition within the Reserves and the Royal Navy," said Air Engineering Technician Simon Cataldo.

As all units have a definitive call-sign as it were, especially the Reserve Units, it is often assumed at first glance that the RNR Air Branch is simply an extra pool of workforce with 'no fixed abode'.

"For me, it will now be prestigious to cite that I am part of HMS Pegasus rather than simply Air Branch. This fantastic move not only affirms our place and what we do for the RN/RNR but it also cements us as we move forward be it deployment or sporting endeavours."

Commodore Mel Robinson, Commander Maritime Reserves, said in its most recent incarnation, the Air Branch had provided outstanding service and support to the Royal Navy "in times of stretch, crisis, tension and war".

She continued: "The branch has been successfully and independently managed for over four decades and I am immensely proud of what has been achieved during a period that has presented many challenges."

"By recommissioning HMS Pegasus as the Air Branch's parent unit, it is fully aligned with all units under my command and will provide a better service to the men and women who serve as part-time members of the Fleet Air Arm."

Chief Petty Officer Keith Reynolds, Chief of the Air Branch, said that commissioning as HMS Pegasus was a "brilliant combination of looking back, celebrating our past and toasting the future".

"The Air Branch has been one of the biggest knowledge bases in the Fleet, a vital cog in the system of the modern Royal Navy."

The Air Branch has its roots in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve Air Branch, whose members served with distinction between 1937 through World War 2 until 1950 when it was disbanded.

It was re-formed 30 years later, initially to provide additional pilots and observers to the Royal Navy, but later expanded to include all trades and specialisations of the Fleet Air Arm.

As HMS Pegasus – a name which goes back to 1585 and was most recently carried by a WW1/WW2 seaplane carrier which began life as HMS Ark Royal – the unit is one of the largest in the Royal Naval Reserve.



Jerry does Jersey

RN forges iron link with island as new governor appointed

ONE of the nation's most senior sailors will steer Jersey for the next five years after taking over as the island's Lieutenant Governor.

Vice Admiral Jerry Kyd – who commanded three aircraft carriers, including the nation's current flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth – has assumed the role of the King's representative in the bailiwick following an installation ceremony.

A Ceremonial Guard from frigate HMS Iron Duke, which is affiliated with the island, along with a marching platoon from patrol ship HMS Severn, which regularly uses Channel Island waters to train naval navigators, paraded in St Helier during proceedings.

They were joined by the Royal Marines Band of Commando Training Centre in Devon, paraded ahead of the column which included Cadets and service organisations from Jersey.

Vice Admiral Kyd, who left the Senior Service last year as Fleet Commander – a post second only to the First Sea Lord – becomes the first Royal Navy Lieutenant Governor of Jersey in 32 years when Admiral Sir William Pillar stood down.

He relieves Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Dalton for the five-year term of office.

"After a wonderful career of service with the Royal Navy, I am honoured to have been chosen to be His Majesty's personal representative in Jersey," Admiral Kyd said.

"I am looking forward to it all immensely, playing a full part in the life of the island, and in particular, meeting and supporting the people of Jersey into the future."

Royal Marines Brigadier Jock Fraser, Naval Regional Commander for Wales, Western England and the Channel Islands said:

"It was a real privilege to represent the First Sea Lord today at the Installation of His Excellency the Lieutenant Governor.

The Royal Navy takes great pride in Vice Admiral Kyd's appointment to be the Sovereign's representative in the Bailiwick.

"I am delighted that we were able to support the ceremonies today with a full Royal Marines marching band and a ceremonial guard drawn from HMS Iron Duke, Jersey's affiliated ship.

"It was also great to see HMS Severn in St Helier port for the occasion and we look forward to many members of the public visiting the ship over the weekend."

Vice Admiral Kyd served in the Royal Navy for 37 years during which time he has held a number of senior appointments, as well as commands of HMS Monmouth, HMS Ark Royal, HMS Illustrious and Britannia Royal Naval College Dartmouth.

As Fleet Commander, he had command of the British Fleet across all five arms of the of the Royal Navy: Surface Ships, Submarines, the Royal Fleet Auxiliary, the Royal Marines and the Fleet Air Arm. He was also directly accountable for the operational capability, training, safety and well-being of around 25,000 people.



Pictures: LPhot Matt Bradley

Talkin' 'bout my generators

ROLLS-Royce will provide long term service support for all MTU generators powering the fleet.

The firm, MOD and Defence Equipment and Support organisation, signed a contract covering maintenance of more than 90 MTU engines for the next five years.

The contract covers MTUs 183, 396 and 4000 which are fitted – or due to be fitted – in Type 45 destroyers, Type 23 frigates and their successor and City-class Type 26s under construction, Hunt Class minehunters and Astute Class submarines.

Rolls-Royce will provide maintenance and repair support both on and off the vessels, provide spare parts, assist with diagnostics and commissioning, and will also deliver design solutions for the modification and improvement of components if necessary.

The contract includes the sharing of engine data between the Royal Navy and Rolls-Royce.

Based on its advanced digital analysis of this data, Rolls-Royce will be able to suggest through-life efficiency improvements and deliver savings by optimising deployment and maintenance of the vessels.

There's an option to extend the deal by a further two years.

Try Kooth for youth wellbeing

AN ONLINE mental wellbeing community is now offering free, safe and anonymous support to children of military personnel.

Children and young people with a parent serving in the Armed Forces often face moving from place to place with their family, living overseas, attending several schools, leaving friends behind and making new ones.

Being part of an Armed Forces family can also mean long periods of separation from the serving parent when they are deployed or away training.

Kooth will be available for all children and young people aged 11 to 18 with a serving parent or who are living overseas with parents working for the MOD or British Government.

The online platform allows you to chat with a friendly mental health practitioner, find support from a helpful community or use a range of self-help tools.

Sign up at kooth.com/mod.

App access to credits

YOU can now use your MyNavy app to apply for Standard Learning Credits to help support your professional development.

SLCs are easy to use and refund 80 per cent of your chosen course costs, up to a maximum of £175.

The new app feature makes it even easier to complete the whole process, from application to reimbursement, and can be accessed from anywhere and on any connected device.

Alternatively, you could go through a Learning and Development Hub or your Unit Education and Resettlement Officer.

SLCs enhance your personal and professional development by assisting with the costs of relevant training, courses or resources, to help you unlock your true potential.

More information is available in JSP 822, Part 1, Sect 8.4.

RN educating the young Americans

TWO Royal Navy sailors helped train the US Navy's leaders of tomorrow by taking a squadron of patrol boats to New York.

Andy Storey and Mark Heward – a retired and serving lieutenant commander respectively – provide crucial instruction ashore and at sea to Americans passing through the US Naval Academy – the Stateside equivalent of Britannia Royal Naval College.

The academy, located in Annapolis, about 30 miles outside the capital Washington DC, maintains a squadron of Yard Patrol Craft – sort of mini Offshore Patrol Vessels: 118 feet long, accommodating up to 40 personnel and ideal for teaching seamanship, navigation, engineering, damage control, basic warfare drills, and all aspects of naval leadership.

From Annapolis, the craft range up and down the US east coast, travelling as far as Boston or, in this summer's case, New York (the craft are pictured approaching Manhattan).

The exercise is led by the academy's Seamanship and Navigation Department, which is focused exclusively on military training and professional development.

Under a US Navy captain, the 28-strong team – including numerous exchange officers from allied navies including Brazil, France, Israel, Italy, and Japan, plus the RN.

Lt Cdr Heward is the latest in a number of Brits assigned to Annapolis for more than 50 years (there is a US Navy lieutenant at Dartmouth in return as a divisional officer).

"During the academic semester, midshipmen have limited opportunity to get out and see front-line warships underway," said Mark, a specialist navigator and principal warfare officer, who's also commanded patrol boat HMS Dasher and minehunters Hurworth and Cattistock.

"So this exercise presents a fantastic chance for them to learn and build experience, putting into practice what they learned in the classroom."

His fellow Brit Andy is a retired Royal Navy sailor/submariner whose varied career saw him navigate



a hunter-killer submarine to the North Pole, enjoy a three-year exchange at the US Naval Academy, help bring icebreaker/Antarctic survey ship HMS Protector into service, and a stint aboard frigate HMS Sutherland before retiring in 2017.

He now works for a large tech company in Washington DC, but still teaches at the Naval Academy in his spare time as an adjunct professor, providing support and experience which delivers huge value to the academy.

Andy acted as the Officer in Tactical Command and was responsible for developing many of the training objectives and serials delivered underway. This was his 15th time at sea in command of the YP Squadron dating back over the past ten years.

"It takes a lot of effort to get our people and ships ready for summer training, but it really is incredibly rewarding and such a wonderful privilege to command again at sea as a retired officer."

"Our US colleagues really do value the RN expertise and in terms of impact, Mark has had a very successful assignment here in Annapolis."

"Restarting the at-sea-training programme after the operational pause caused by Covid has been a significant challenge, that we've achieved such success is largely due to Mark's outstanding contribution and leadership during a very turbulent period."



New centre cements Clyde links

LINKS between the Royal Navy and the communities of Helensburgh and Lomond were further cemented with the official opening of Argyll and Bute Council's new £22m leisure centre and swimming pool.

Part of the local authority's ongoing regeneration of Helensburgh waterfront, the leisure centre features a 25-metre swimming pool, luxury health suite, steam room and sauna, café and shop, and fitness studios.

Also featuring is the Neptune Suite, the leisure centre gym, named after HMS Neptune – the shore establishment at Clyde Naval Base.

The Neptune Suite enjoys panoramic views of the Clyde, with plans for information boards where gym-goers can learn more about some of the RN vessels they may spot from the fitness facility, and about the nearby naval base.

The complex represents an investment in Helensburgh of more than £22.3m, including £5m awarded from the UK Government Libor Fund, administered by the Royal Navy.

Helping to open the new facility was former World and European Champion, and two-time Olympic swimmer, Ross Murdoch (pictured right) who began his swimming career in Helensburgh by competing at his first swimming gala.



Two VIP guests One Defence

THE balconies surrounding the central atrium are lined with civilian and military personnel of Naval Command HQ in Portsmouth as the new Vice Chief of Defence Staff, General Gwyn Jenkins RM, and MOD Second Permanent Under Secretary Laurence Lee hold a joint Clear Lower Decks.

Having taken up the role at the end of August, General Jenkins RM joined Mr Lee on their first combined visit to Leach Building.

The guests were briefed on the excellent progress the Navy have made since Gen Jenkins stood down as Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff, while reinforcing the importance of the 'One Defence' approach alongside Mr Lee.

A series of updates were provided across the command team and programme leads, with the emphasis on topics such as people, platforms and project delivery. An ever-present theme was the need for digitisation and the enhanced use of data, for which the Navy are at the vanguard for Defence.

Everything was underpinned

by the pioneering work conducted in the building to develop new ways of working which increase productivity and improve the lived experience of staff.

During the address, the senior visitors outlined subjects which top the agenda for the MOD's senior leaders before opening the floor to questions.

The overarching message reflected the unifying purpose of Defence to protect the nation, particularly in these challenging times, and reinforced the central role that the Royal Navy plays in that most important of tasks.

While a refresh of the Integrated Review will underline this at the strategic level, it will be essential that the whole of Defence come together to realise the high levels of ambition which are being placed upon the Services.

This is entirely in keeping with the Navy's current direction of travel and will ensure they remain a world leading force, capable of projecting maritime power and supporting UK prosperity across the globe.

Have you tried knockin' on Haven's door?

SAILORS and Royal Marines based in Devonport have bright new environment and facilities in the revamped Haven at HMS Drake.

Part of the Chaplaincy and managed by Aggie Weston Pastoral Workers, The Haven provides pastoral support to Serving personnel and families by reaching out to those in and around the area, whether through events at The Haven itself, departmental or ship 'pop-up stand-easies' around the base, or by strengthening those establishing links with other agencies of the Royal Naval Welfare Services.

The Haven is now split into two areas: Haven 1 is equipped with comfortable sofas, TVs, DVDs, books, games and a pool table for those wishing to relax after a hard day; Haven 2 is intended as a multi-functional space which is more secluded and peaceful, capable of hosting a range of different activities such as monthly movie and yoga nights run by serving personnel, two weekly ladies' nights including mocktails and a parent and baby/toddler area for storytime sessions during the day, and lots more.

Haven 2 also has a specific area where deploying personnel can record popular children's stories through the Aggies' 'Storybook Waves' programme.

"We've look to make it all feel a bit more accommodating, new art displays on the walls and an art corner where people are invited to try out their artistic capability, new plants, a newly refurbished pool table, hot drinks availability and access to a kitchen area, as well as a tourist corner with up-to-date information on local attractions shopping and entertainment for those new to the Plymouth area. It really is a one-stop shop," said Kate Thorn, one of the new members of the Aggies' pastoral team.

Ofsted chief shares sub links with rescue training team

OFSTED Chief Inspector Amanda Spielman saw the state-of-the-art rescue training given to today's submariners when she visited Faslane – and shared her personal links with the Silent Service.

Beyond schools and colleges across the land, RN training establishments also fall within the bailiwick of Ofsted, which inspects and regulates thousands of organisations providing education and training to young people.

Formally opened by the now-Prince of Wales last year, the Submarine Escape, Rescue, Abandonment and Survival facility at Clyde is arguably the jewel in the crown of the Submarine School's training assets, building on lessons learned over more than 120 years of operating beneath the waves.

In touring the SMERAS complex, Ms Spielman told staff her grandfather, Lieutenant Commander Brian Eoghan O'Brien, was one of hundreds of submariners who had given their lives for the service.

The engineering officer served aboard HMS Thames, lost with all hands in August 1940 off the coast of Norway. It's thought the boat struck a mine. Her loss is commemorated at both the Dundee International Submarine Memorial and the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport, Portsmouth.

Staff in Thetis Building presented their guest with a framed photograph of Thames, which served from 1932 until her loss. The boat patrolled the Mediterranean before joining Dundee-based 9th Submarine Flotilla for operations in the North Sea.

"I was deeply touched to be presented with a photograph of my grandfather on the submarine in which he died, and with a set of Submarine Dolphins," said Ms Spielman.

"My visit to HM Naval Base Clyde was fascinating and gave me real insight into the thoroughness with which submariners are trained."

Ofsted last visited Faslane three years ago when inspectors assessed the provision of care and welfare of submariner trainees as "outstanding".

The 'party piece' of SMERAS is a realistic simulator which can replicate several weather conditions and sea states, and where naval personnel can practise leaving a submarine at sea in escape suits before reaching the relative safety of a life raft. Nearly 3,000 submariners were trained in the facility in the first eight months of this year.

"It was fantastic to be able to welcome His Majesty's Chief Inspector of Ofsted, not only to demonstrate the capabilities of the SMERAS facility, but also to provide an insight into how we train our submariners," said Commander Gareth Batsford, Officer-in-Charge of the SMERAS facility.

"We were excited to learn that Ms Spielman has links to the Submarine Service through her grandfather who served with the wartime submarine HMS Thames."



Take time to study at the new Colling-hub

SAILORS serving at – or passing through – HMS Collingwood can make use of a new learning/studying hub.

Building 671 at the eastern end of Marlborough Building has been converted into the Learning Development Organisation Hub and Study Area.

Equipped with a library (fiction and reference books), the new facility offers MODNET, Fleetfast, JPA and laptop connectivity for users – military and civilian – while they enjoy tea, coffee and snacks from vending machines.

In addition, experienced and knowledgeable staff are on hand to offer advice, guidance and support on education and resettlement issues.

Able Seaman Niall Hickling was also impressed by the new

facility. He said, "I've had a look around and it has all the books you'd ever want or need. It'll really benefit not only Phase 2 trainees but everyone else at HMS Collingwood."

The establishment's CO Captain Catherine Jordan, who performed the official opening honours, added:

"Our focus is on supporting the learner since across the Maritime Warfare School. Around 3,000 people are engaged on various courses on any one day – one tenth of the whole Navy."

"This modern and accessible facility supports those learners' journeys, reflects the importance we place on people and is definitely something to celebrate. It's a great example of the whole force coming together to make a great use of this space."



Keeping Mexico in TRiM

ROYAL Navy personnel helped Mexican counterparts cope with the horrors of combat and the operating theatre.

A specialist Trauma Risk Management (TRiM) team spent a fortnight in Mexico City sharing their experiences and knowledge of helping those

TRiM was embraced by the Royal Navy several years ago. It focuses on the welfare of personnel – serving and civilian – studying their response to traumatic incidents.

The link-up with the Mexican military pre-dates the pandemic when the Defence Attaché in Mexico City, Captain Andy Hancock, turned to the TRiM team to outline the benefits of trauma risk management to Mexican Naval Special Forces and staff at the Naval Military Hospital personnel, followed by Kev Green and WO1 Tony Welch RM who trained

psychologists and medical staff from the Mexican Navy.

Covid put the brakes on further TRiM training for a couple of years, but as the world re-opened, the RN team has been back to Mexico twice, most recently to deliver two five-day courses: one an introduction to trauma management, the other a 'train the trainer' to help Mexican personnel to deliver TRiM courses to their comrades and compatriots.

The first week initially went slowly with time needed to bridge the cultural differences and highlight the positives of TRiM to individuals who have a very 'machismo' attitude when dealing with the aftermath of combat operations. Inroads were quickly made overcoming the cultural barrier when it was highlighted that TRiM keeps personnel operationally effective, some choosing to share personal experiences which enhanced the course understanding leading to the successful completion of week one.

Week two saw 12 participants, seven frontline officers and five psychologists, deliver a TRiM course to the UK instructors.

Although they were to follow the template given by the RN TRiM team, they also had free rein to adjust to Mexican nuances – with excellent results.

Both courses were delivered to a high standard – especially considering every presentation was given in Spanish via interpreters whilst embracing the positive outcomes that TRiM provides.

MyNavy app up for award

THE RN's multi-faceted app which is helping to digitise – and revolutionise – how you organise your lives and careers is up for a major gong this month.

The app – developed jointly by the Navy with Great State – is one of numerous apps, websites and digital media products which are fighting in 20 categories for the British Interactive Media Association Awards 2022.

MyNavy product owner, Lt Cdr Morgan Long, said: "I couldn't be prouder. MyNavy empowers users around the world to take control of their lives, finding what they need, when they need it, via their personal device."

A team of more than 120 judges selected the nominees – including the BBC, Cartoon Network, TIL and mobile phone giant EE – during an extensive process in which they praised the standard of entries as "stunningly high" and "exceptional".

They concentrated on the impact, innovation and skill required. The winners will be announced on November 22.

Hack to the future

THE best and the brightest coders, app designers, tech gurus and thinkers from across the MOD put their thinking caps on to pick technological solutions to challenges facing the Forces.

More than 70 personnel from all three Services, plus the civil service and Reservists shared their expertise at the week-long Defence Hackathon.

Split into eight teams, they were charged with finding digital solutions to a particular issue or challenge in under 48 hours.

Hosted at RAF Henlow in Bedfordshire with the support of Astra Appivate, RAF Digital Services, Digital Academy, and Navy Digital, the Hackathon allows Defence to identify talented individuals in any profession who can support digital and cyber activities.

Within two days, eight teams of individuals from across Defence had designed applications to support the development of future responses to issues such as sustainability and the physical security of the MOD estate.

At the end of the 'hack', teams presented their ideas to an initial panel of expert judges from across the Defence digital field, including demonstrating their working prototype. After lengthy deliberations, two teams were chosen to pitch their ideas in the final.

One designed 'GeoSnap' – an application which allows everyone in the MOD to report suspicious activity and potential security matters directly to the relevant MOD security services,



Two team members confer during the Hackathon

quickly and accurately, using a mobile device.

The other team came up with 'GreenCloud' – an app for everyone in the MOD to collaborate on solutions to sustainability issues while giving local commanders the information they need to make decisions on the effectiveness of their actions.

Highlighting the MOD's commitment to achieving Net Zero targets, the latter project – devised by one sailor, three soldiers, a couple of civil servants and two RAF personnel – will now be considered for full development by Defence digital experts.

Announcing the winners, Chief of the Air Staff Air Chief Marshal Sir Mike Wigston, said: "We've had a taste of the journey we are all taking on the use of cutting-edge technology, and the challenges we face in turning this technology into usable solutions to operational problems."

"Both applications that made it to the final had undoubted utility and confronted the ongoing challenges we face in both security and achieving our Net Zero aims."

"Congratulations to everyone who took part: the skills that have been developed are incredibly important to the future success of the UK Armed Forces."



New field gun medal

DUE to a technical glitch last month, the contact details for a commemorative not-for-profit medal celebrating Pompey field gunners was accidentally omitted.

The Portsmouth Field Gun Crew Lifetime Medal is available from Terry Crossley – terry@greatscottishevents.net or call 0131 336 3620 / 07981779301.

The medal, 90mm in diameter, features the Portsmouth Field Gun Association badge with a gold background on the obverse while the reverse will be engraved with the runner's name and the year(s) they ran for Portsmouth Command.

Nelsonian letters get rare airing

INTIMATE letters and documents by or relating to Nelson can be seen and studied either online or courtesy of a pop-up display at the National Museum of the Royal Navy.

The writings – which span the period covering the Battles of the Nile to Trafalgar and detail not just naval actions and the admiral's career but his colourful personal life as well, including his relationship with Emma Hamilton – have been transcribed and, in some cases, turned into audio files.

Around two dozen letters and papers have been transcribed and can be downloaded, alongside around a dozen audio recordings of some of the transcripts.

Nine days after Trafalgar, John Wells of HMS Britannia, described the battle for his parents.

Wells witnessed the French ship Achille blow up "with a most terrible explosion yet a grand but awful sight as some hundreds of souls must have perished with her." And shortly afterwards he and his shipmates learned of the death of "our Noble Commander... with heartfelt sorrow".

All the documents have been loaned by the Aikaterini Laskaridis Foundation which promotes Greek culture, especially letters, as well as historical and nautical research.

You can listen to extracts of the papers, read them in full, or view the archive catalogue on the exhibition website nelsoninhisownwords.nmrn.org.uk or view the pop-up displays at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.



The mudflats at Dartmouth in the late 1920s with what Lt Tom Kemp (inset) believes are the remains of HMS E52 (centre left)

Historic picture courtesy of Dartmouth Museum

After nearly a century of rumours and urban legends in Dartmouth, has officer Tom finally solved the

Riddle of the sands

DID you hear the one about the submarine under the park in Dartmouth?

No, not a navigational error but something of an urban legend in the town for nearly 100 years.

But now an officer from Britannia Royal Naval College thinks he may have solved the mystery.

Lieutenant Tom Kemp, who teaches navigation to future generations of naval leaders at the college, believes he has identified the submarine unceremoniously buried alongside rubble and other landfill beneath Coronation Park.

The five-acre park at the foot of the hill which is occupied by the naval college was once mud flats.

After the end of the Great War, Britain had a surplus of ships and submarines – not just her own, but also scores of vessels seized from the defeated Germans.

Many were driven ashore, left up creeks and anchorages... and then generally forgotten about as they decayed over decades; two German destroyers beached on Whale Island in Portsmouth were forgotten for a century until historians formally identified them.

Coombe Mud and neighbouring Sandquay in Dartmouth became a similar breaker's yard for unwanted WW1 warships, including at least two of submarines.

The site was purchased by the local authority in the late 1920s and filled in to create the park – opened in 1937 in time for the coronation of George VI, hence the name – and surrounding road network drivers would recognise today.

And ever since, in oral and



The same site today with tennis courts and green space where the rusting submarine once sat and (below) HMS E52 in service in WW1

Historic picture courtesy of the National Museum of the Royal Navy



written histories of the Devon town, Dartmouth folk have referred to the submarine under the park – sometimes claiming it's a British boat, at others a

German U-boat.

"The story of 'the submarine under the park' has fascinated and intrigued visitors to Dartmouth for years – and I count myself

among them," said Tom.

"This has been a case of following a very cold trail of breadcrumbs. I had been desperately hoping to find a bill of sale or something along those lines with a name on it, but I had to go a little further off-piste to find my answers."

He's ploughed through contemporary documents and records and come up with two names as likely candidates: HMS A8 and HMS E52. The smaller A8 was largely broken up by 1923, whereas the larger E52 proved a greater challenge to dismantle.

She was one of 58 boats in her class built for the fledgling Silent Service. The E-Class were the mainstay of the submarine force, especially during the opening month of the war, scoring the first 'kill' by a British boat (the German light cruiser Hela) and VCs earned in the Dardanelles campaign.

As for HMS E52 herself, she sank the German U-Boat UC-63 when surfaced, catching her crew off guard and torpedoing her at point-blank range, killing all but one of the men aboard and earning her skipper, Lieutenant Commander Philip Esmonde Phillips, the Distinguished Service Order for 'services in action with enemy submarines'.

Without excavating the park and formally identifying parts from the boat, Tom believes this is as far as we can go with contemporary documents and records.

"The 'submarine under the park' has a name and a story worth telling," he added. "It's another unseen-but-enduring bond between BRNC, Dartmouth and the Royal Navy's Submarine Service."



See you at my 105th...

MANY, many happy returns to former senior rating Albert Robb – at 104 one of the (but not quite *the*) oldest sailors to appear in these pages.

As well as a card from Buckingham Palace, the centenarian marked another milestone birthday with a visit from HMS Ajax and River Plate Veterans Association's Chairman Nigel Masters and Malcolm Collis.

He was recruited to the association in 2019 aged 'just' 2019 as a former member of the wartime ship's company of cruiser HMS Ajax, which fought at the River Plate off South America in December 1939 and delivered the first major Allied naval victory of WW2: the scuttling of the Graf Spee.

Albert joined the ship the following March as she was undergoing repairs following the bruising South Atlantic encounter.

He spent around 18 months assigned to the Ajax, responsible for all the upper deck guns: 4in and 8in guns, 12 short-range weapons and the aircraft catapult.

Before leaving the cruiser in November 1941, Albert saw plenty of action in the Mediterranean and survived several close calls.

Upon leaving Ajax, he was drafted to destroyer HMS Meynell and stayed in her for the next three and a half years, mainly in the North Atlantic and Arctic convoys, plus the Normandy landings.

He left the navy as a CPO in December 1945 and has an impressive array of medals, including French and Russian ones and is looking forward to welcoming his association comrades – who described him as "bright as a button" – for birthday number 105.

Albert's memories of his time on the Ajax can be found on the Association's website, <https://www.hmsajax.org/subsequent-commissions>.



Edinburgh service honours Scotland's war dead

THE annual Service of Commemoration at the Scottish National War Memorial saw all three Scottish Service Chiefs laying wreaths.

Opened in 1927 by the future Edward VIII, the memorial in Edinburgh Castle and commemorates those who died in the Great War, World War 2, and subsequent conflicts.

Each year the official state ceremonial event is attended by members of the Royal Household in Scotland, representatives of the Armed Forces in Scotland, by Scottish and UK Governments, as well as the Merchant Navy, Royal British Legion Scotland, War Widows

Association, and the Board of Trustees from the Scottish National War Memorial.

Laying a wreath on behalf of the Royal Navy was Brigadier Andy Muddiman RM, Naval Regional Commander Scotland and Northern Ireland, joined by his counterparts from the RAF and Army: Air Vice Marshal Ross Patterson, Air Officer Scotland, and Lt Col Lorne Campbell, Edinburgh Garrison Commander.

The service was led by Reverend Mark Dalton, Chaplain to 43 Commando Fleet Protection Group Royal Marines, based at Faslane, assisted by the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, and

Bishops of Edinburgh and Aberdeen.

Among those conducting a reading at the service was Petty Officer Cadet Zoe Campbell from TS Forth – Grangemouth's Sea Cadet Unit.

The Scottish National War Memorial was established by Royal Charter to commemorate the sacrifice of Scots during conflicts.

Construction began in 1924 and the Memorial displays the Rolls of Honour of those from the Armed Forces, the Dominions, Merchant Navy, Women's Service, Nursing Services, and civilian casualties of all wars from 1914 to the current day.



Leading Air Engineering Technician Tom Evans watches today's Penlee lifeboat laying a wreath at the site of the 1981 tragedy

Culdrose join in Penlee 40 tribute

PERSONNEL from 820 Naval Air Squadron joined families as a new memorial was dedicated to one of the darkest hours in the history of the RNLI.

Sixteen people were killed – all eight crew of the Penlee lifeboat Solomon Browne and eight souls aboard the coaster Union Star – when both vessels were dashed on rocks near Tater Du, near Porthcurno, just before Christmas 1981.

Four decades later – and postponed from last year due to Covid – relatives of those lost gathered on the clifftop overlooking the wreck site to see the new granite monument to the tragedy unveiled.

As part of the Solomon Browne and Union Star Memorial Project the families have fundraised for a new granite memorial to remember the Mousehole lifeboat crew and the crew and passengers of the ship who were all lost in a fierce storm on 19 December 1981.

In darkness, the Union Star had been washed onto rocks immediately below the memorial site. The wind was reported to be 100 mph and waves were up to 60 feet in height.

The crew of a Royal Navy Sea King helicopter, from 820 Naval Air Squadron based at Culdrose, made numerous attempts to rescue those on the coaster, only to be defeated by winds of 100mph and waves up to 60ft.

"It is a real honour that we have been invited to join the families to remember this sad event," said Commander Ian Varley, today's Commanding Officer of 820 NAS.

"As we remember their sacrifice, you get a real sense of the lifeboat crew's

commitment. They had a commitment to each other and to do their duty in the face of insurmountable danger.

"820 Squadron played a role in that day, so it felt only right that we should help make this project a success. Volunteers from the squadron have helped hack and clear the site and create a roadway so the memorial could be installed."

Members of the current RNLI Penlee Lifeboat laid a wreath and there was a fly-past by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's search and rescue helicopter.

Back in 1981 the Sea King was forced to break off the rescue attempt to refuel after numerous failed attempts to lower a winchman on to the Union Star.

The last its pilot, US Navy exchange officer Lt Cdr Russell Smith, heard from either vessel was a report from the lifeboat that it had recovered four of the Union Star's crew.

No more radio messages were received and no one made it back to shore. Debris from the lifeboat was found the following day along with the upturned wreck of the Union Star.

Forty years on Lt Cdr Smith watched a live broadcast of the dedication ceremony from his home in the USA.

He described the rescue efforts by the RNLI crew as "the greatest act of courage that I have ever seen – and am likely to ever see."

"Their spirit and dedication was amazing, considering the horrific hurricane seas and constant pounding they were taking."

"They were truly the eight bravest men I've ever seen who were also totally dedicated to upholding the highest standards of the RNLI."



RBL help with fuel price crisis

THE Royal British Legion has seen an increase in the number of veterans and their families needing help with the cost of living.

Over the past 12 months the RBL has issued 20 per cent more grants to help with food and basic living costs than during the previous year.

It anticipates the number of applications for help with the most urgent needs such as food, clothing and temporary accommodation will jump significantly in the coming months.

As a result, it's offering a new set of emergency energy cost top up grants

which will help those struggling to pay their energy bills with up to £200 per month depending on their financial circumstances.

The energy cost top-up grant is aimed at reducing the impact of the cost-of-living crisis on veterans and their families in need of extra support and is designed to prevent them from reaching a point of crisis.

Any member of the Armed Forces community wanting to access the grants can find further details/apply directly at rbl.org.uk/costofliving or call 0808 802 8080.



Gary explains the 1664 Challenge to the Duke of Edinburgh at the latter's final official engagement in 2017

After 43 years' service, Falklands veteran Lieutenant Colonel Gary Green RM is finally retiring

Corps to the core

BETTER kit. Better educated. Better motivated. Fitter. Same Commando spirit.

That's the verdict on the Royal Marines in 2022 from one of its longest-serving commandos – and one of the last to see action in the Falklands.

After 43 years in the Corps, Lieutenant Colonel Gary Green has finally called it a day and retired from active service.

"It's a long time and it's quite sad, but everyone has to leave in the end," says the 59-year-old from West Sussex.

He leaves a Corps which bears many similarities with the one he joined in 1979 – the green beret is still coveted and a physical and mental challenge to earn, Royal Marines remain the RN's elite amphibious troops, the tip of the spear which the government turns to in times of crisis and emergency, and there's a bond, a spirit, ethos which is even stronger than in the rest of the Armed Forces.

And there is much which has changed. The Corps has undergone some radical shifts over the past few years as it transforms into the Commando Force, exploiting the very latest tech and weaponry at the same time as a renewed emphasis on raiding/commando operations which gave birth to the modern 'format' of the Royal Marines 80 years ago.

"When I began training I was issued equipment going back to the 1950s, nothing was weatherproof, everything was heavy, and we were even given puttees [coverings for boots/lower legs generally associated with WW1 in the trenches]," Gary says.

"Today you're given Gore-Tex water and weather-proof kit, tiny radios, the latest weapons and tech – the battlefield has changed out of all recognition with the likes of drones, artificial intelligence. It's a different way of fighting."

But how would that tech have fared in the austere environment of the Falklands 40 years ago. That was a triumph of training, determination, commando ethos and spirit as much as anything.

Aged 19, Gary was serving with Kilo Company, 42 Commando, freshly returned from winter training in Norway when the orders came to sail with the converted liner Canberra to the South Atlantic.

Six weeks later, he landed at San Carlos, digging trenches and foxholes to safeguard the beachhead.

"That's when the reality of war hit home – always be ready to dig in."

He was then sent forward by helicopter with a small group of about 40 marines to support SAS troops engaged with Argentine troops on Mount Kent, with minimal food, ammunition, snow on the ground and temperatures frequently below zero.

"That's when the commando mindset kicks in, all the training pays off and you



overcome adversity, surviving to fight in the harshest of conditions," Gary says.

His unit was subsequently sent to draw out/test Argentine defences on another peak west of the Falklands capital Stanley, Mount Harriet – 20 Royal Marines versus several hundred enemy soldiers.

"It was a bit hairy," he says with typical British understatement. "The mountain erupted with fire – tracers racing through the night, parachute flares lighting up the battlefield."

"Nothing today compares with the Falklands – it was the last conventional conflict."

What makes a 19-year-old put themselves in such danger?

Gary's interest in the commandos was sparked as a teenager working on a milk round when he was looking to escape a broken home, saw an advert for the Royal Marines in a national newspaper and wrote off for details.

Eight months later he was walking through the gates of Lympstone (and pictured, inset)... followed by walking out of them after another 32 weeks, proudly wearing the green beret as a qualified Royal Marines Commando aged just 17.

A generation later as Corps Colonel, he was responsible for recruiting the Royal Marines of tomorrow: officers and ranks. It proved to be eye-opening – in a positive sense.

"I found that the quality of people joining now was better than when

I joined. Today's recruits are fitter, more determined, slightly older and significantly better educated," he explains.

"And one thing which really struck me; they look after each other first and think about themselves last. That's a fantastic quality, that's the commando spirit we're looking for. So I certainly don't recognise tags like 'snowflake generation'. I see people who are determined to serve their country."

If that country owes a debt of gratitude to someone prepared to serve it in hot and cold spots (Kosovo, Afghanistan, Falklands, and 15 winter deployments to Norway), Gary says he owes a lot to the Corps and military for the opportunities and experiences it's provided.

"I joined at 16 with no education. I leave having passed my GCSEs, went on to complete a Master's degree, received the OBE from the Duke of Cambridge."

That OBE was awarded for Gary's fundraising drive, the 1664 Challenge, which is the umbrella for some remarkable physical challenges commandos have undertaken to support the Royal Marines Charity, from a 1,664-mile run which ended at Buckingham Palace in front of the Duke of Edinburgh – his final official public engagement – to this year's Commando 80 challenge.

In all the various events and activities have raised around £800,000 to help fellow marines past and present.

"For every Royal Marine – serving or retired – wearing the green beret is an honour and privilege. You are following in the footsteps of those who have gone before and have worn that beret with distinction for generations," Gary adds.

So after 43 years as a Royal Marine, what's Gary's first job no longer as a serving green beret?

Corps Secretary – a civil service job which involves working with the Commandant General Royal Marines and units on regimental and heraldic issues (such as possible changes to badges, crests and insignia

with the accession of King Charles and a new royal cypher).

Once a Royal Marine, always a Royal Marine...



Reflective tribute to the Queen

SEA Cadets from across London took part in a Reflections Flotilla on the Thames following the death of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

The pageant, originally planned to mark her Platinum Jubilee, saw a reduced number of craft proceed downstream from Chelsea to the Pool of London in total silence.

The white lights on the boats and on the surrounding buildings, including the Tower of London and the Shard, reflecting off the water to create a river of light.

Sea Cadets from across London Area came together to 'man and cheer ship' on HQS Wellington, which hosted representatives of the City and City Livery Companies, and at the final saluting station, HMS Belfast.

The Royal Barge Gloriana tossed oars in salute and the White Ensign of HMS Belfast was dipped in return as the flotilla processed past towards Tower Bridge.

The flotilla saw 150 cadets take part, holding a one-minute silence for the Queen and then three cheers for HM the King.

In charge of the event onboard HMS Belfast, Commander Michael Chittock, the Senior Staff Officer for London Area Sea Cadets said: "Despite

the last-minute changes that were necessary, this event remained significant in what was our Jubilee events calendar for 2022, with adults and cadets from 19 London Sea Cadet Units coming together in readiness to play their part.

"What followed for all, in very quick succession, was briefings, ceremonial training, feeding for all and then changing into No1 uniform ready for the arrival of the flotilla.

"For the next 90 minutes, the 100+ strong cadet contingent and 30+ adult volunteers displayed absolute professionalism in carrying out their manning ship duties.

"Once again, our cadets stepped up to the challenge and executed their duties perfectly, this reaching a pinnacle when the Royal Barge the Gloriana passed us tossing their oars in

salute.

"The cadets were a credit to themselves, their units and the wider organisation, with the true importance of the event probably only sinking in as they watched the final stages of the event, a very special event which I have no doubt will be a lasting memory to all that took part."

Pictures: Sandra Rowse
www.sandrarowsephotography.com



Supporting role

BOGNOR Regis & District Sea Cadets proudly supported the Town's Mayor, Councillor John Barrett, at the Proclamation of King Charles III and at the National Moment of Reflection for the HM Queen Elizabeth II at the Town Hall in Bognor Regis.

Two cadets from the unit played key roles supporting the Town's Mayor at the civic events; Leading Cadet Amy, 16, and Cadet William, 12, stood tall and smart in their uniforms as a mark of respect for the late Queen, and the announcement of the new King, together with representatives from the Town's Council.

LET Ewan Thomas, a former cadet of the unit and now a member of the Royal Navy, was selected to be part of the State Funeral Gun Carriage Crew.

The unit also marked the passing of HM Queen Elizabeth II and the State Funeral by conducting ceremonial divisions in the evening and holding a Thanksgiving Service, led by the Unit's Padre, Dr Alison Green.

Lt (SCC) Gary Edgington MBE, the unit's Commanding Officer, said: "Not only was HM the Queen the Patron of Sea Cadets, she also inspired many through her loyalty and devotion over her long reign to our country and the Commonwealth. Bognor Regis Unit is fully committed to supporting the local community and we promote the personal development and self-confidence of many local young people."

THE Lord Lieutenant of Kent, Lady Colgrain handed over the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service to Sheppey Unit's Commanding Officer, Leisse Gambell at the unit's headquarters in Barton's Point, Sheerness.

An accompanying certificate, handed over at the unit's headquarters at Barton's Point, Sheerness, was one of the last to be signed by Her Majesty before her death.

The citation commends Sheppey Sea Cadets for "offering activities and education to cadets developing life skills, discipline and teamwork."

This was Lady Colgrain's second visit to Sheppey Unit. She said: "As His Majesty's representative, I am absolutely thrilled to present what is regarded as the MBE of volunteering.

"Her late Majesty rated the importance of recognising the incredible work of organisations like this very highly, as His Majesty The King continues to do."

She expressed King Charles III's 'heartfelt congratulations and thanks' and added: "It is clear to anyone visiting Sheppey

Sheppey receive royal accolade



Sea Cadets that teamwork, dedication and pride are core values of this group. The volunteers are outstanding.

"It is evident that everyone works together to ensure an excellent experience for the cadets."

She described Sheppey cadets as "well-behaved, engaged, fun and self-sufficient" and commended the unit with the words: "This exceptional voluntary group works in one of the most deprived communities

in the country, providing so many opportunities for young people they would not otherwise receive, bringing new skills."

After the presentation, Lady Colgrain toured the premises and took over the controls of the cadets' ship simulator, gently guiding a Channel ferry safely into Dover Docks.

The Commanding Officer of Sheppey Unit, Leisse Gambell said: "We are all very proud to get this honour, especially as this year we are celebrating our 80th

anniversary of our unit.

"We have 40 adult volunteers on board in various roles, some of whom have been with the unit for over 30 years!

"It's the dedication of our volunteers that makes us such a strong unit. We also do a lot in the community, especially for the Remembrance Parade. I think Islanders like that."

After suffering from the Covid-19 lockdowns, the unit has bounced back and now has a total 72 cadets who are part of the unit.

The unit is hoping to raise £6m for a new state-of-art premises which will accommodate up to 66 visiting cadets and aims to become a focus for sail training across the South East.

The site already has access to a canal, a lake and is also near the sea.

The existing concrete barracks-style premises, formerly part of a Royal Navy firing range, have been used by the cadets since 1954.

The buildings have deteriorated considerably over time and have become difficult and expensive to maintain.

Picture: Sheerness Times Guardian/John Nurden



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SURF KAYAKERS TAKE ON WORLD

BURNHAM-ON-SEA & Highbridge may not be at the top of the list for surfing destinations – but two of England’s most successful female surf kayakers hail from this Somerset seaside town.

Sea Cadets’ unit members, CPO (SCC) Jo Sidwell and Leading Cadet Philippa competed individually and for Team England at the World Surf Kayak Championships held for the first time in Bude.

Jo was knocked out of the Ladies Masters High Performance class in the repechage stage, finishing that event in tenth position overall.

Philippa – competing against some of the best Junior Women on the planet – finished in an amazing fourth place. She narrowly missed out on a podium place in the finals of both High Performance and International (Long Boat) classes.

Jo has been surf kayaking for around seven years while Philippa came to the sport just in the last year but has already made her mark.

In the Team event, Philippa represented

Team England in the Junior Long Boat class, helping the team win second place overall.

After competing, LC Philippa commented: “I can’t believe I’ve done the Worlds! This has been an amazing ten days paddling with some amazing surf kayakers. It’s been a great atmosphere and everyone has been so welcoming.”

CPO Sidwell, who is Secretary to the England Surf Kayak Committee and introduced Philippa to the sport, said: “It’s wonderful to think that this sport has such a healthy future.

“We need more women at all levels being represented in the surf kayaking community.”

During the week most of the Team England paddlers, including Jo and LC Philippa, took part in a rescue of a Scottish competitor who had come out of his boat and had a head injury near Cross Rocks (close to Summerleaze Beach).

Burnham-on-Sea & Highbridge Sea Cadets’ Commanding Officer, Lt (SCC) Dom Gregory RNR said: “I’ve been

watching the World Championships from the beach for these last ten days, supporting Joe and LC Philippa.

“I’m really struggling to find the words to express just how proud I am of both Jo and Philippa, in making the most of the opportunities that have been made available both within Sea Cadets and by our partners in England Surf Kayaking.”

“This is quite a niche sport that doesn’t have the same level of recognition as other paddlesports disciplines but demands the highest level of attention to detail, knowledge and observation of the environment.”

He continued: “England has always had a great surf kayak community at the forefront of performance and boat design, and it takes elite athletes like Jo and Philippa to make the most of them.”

This year’s World Championships has been noted as one of the friendliest, most inclusive and environmentally-sensitive events to date. The 2024 World Surf Kayak Championships will be held in Argentina.



Happy 80th Winchester

WINCHESTER sea cadets marked the unit’s 80th anniversary and naming ceremony at the official opening of TS Itchen.

Celebrations included a piping party to greet the VIPs followed by an inspection of the Guard, colours, and stations with cadets demonstrating skills they have learned.

The event was attended by the Mayor of Winchester, Cllr Derek Green, Brigadier Mike EG Caldicott CBE, the President of Winchester Sea Cadets Rear Admiral John Lang RN, and the Lord Lieutenant of Hampshire, Nigel Atkinson, who cut the ceremonial cake alongside AJC Harry, 11.

The Chair of Winchester Unit, Joanne Gallimore, said: “It was an amazing afternoon, the weather was kind to us and we had happy and keen cadets performing what they do best in front of our VIPs, parents and guests.”

S/Lt (SCC) James Chesman RNR, the unit’s Commanding Officer said: “I was a cadet at Winchester Sea Cadets myself, so I know first-hand how many opportunities are available to cadets. As an adult, I joined the unit again as a volunteer to give back for all of the opportunities I was given.”

At the event, cadets demonstrated how they conducted mooring stations and had the guests tie the ship up. Two RS Zests were set up together with the unit’s safety boats, as the cadets talked guests through rigging. A First Aid demonstration was also held, with cadets guiding guests on how to do chest compressions.

Winchester Unit was founded in May 1942, during WW2. The unit moved onto Worthy Down Camp in 2007. In 2011, they moved into a replacement building while building works were being carried out, moving back into their new building on the Camp again in 2020.

Cadet Ben, 13, said: “The new unit is amazing with great facilities. I was also presented my Cadet Forces commissioning scroll by the Lord Lieutenant.”

Hail Harrow’s heroes

HARROW and Wembley Sea Cadets have won the Inspiring Young People category at the Harrow’s Heroes 2022 Awards.

They were nominated by members of their local community for “offering life-changing skills and opportunities to young people. Their dedication and commitment inspires young people learn new skills and go places they thought were not possible.”

The awards ceremony, held at the end of September at the KP Centre in Harrow, was attended by more than 150 guests including the Mayor of Harrow, Cllr Janet Mote, the Borough Inspector and the Deputy Lieutenant.

“Your contributions not only put our residents and communities first – but they have helped change lives, improve local communities and make life that little bit better for our residents,” Cllr Janet Mote said.

Sub/Lt Richard Crick RNR SCC, Commanding Officer of Harrow and Wembley Unit said: “It was an honour to have been nominated and to have won, and to have been recognised by the London Borough of Harrow for all the hard work my staff putt into the successful running of the unit. Inspiring young people is exactly why we are in the corps.”

Each year, Harrow’s Heroes awards celebrate the achievements of local residents who go the extra mile to make Harrow a better place to live and make a real, positive difference to the community. Over 100 nominations were received for the awards this year, which was the largest face-to-face community event held since the start of the pandemic.

The event was hosted by Terence Frisch, actor and Harrow resident for over 30 years, known for his roles in the films *Last Night in Soho* (2021) and *Hugo* (2011).



Top honour for Stoke

HER Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant of Staffordshire, Ian Dudson CBE, has presented Stoke-on-Trent Sea Cadets with the QAVS trophy and certificate at the Unit HQ in Bucknall.

The unit received the Award in June 2022 along with over 200 voluntary organisations across the Country.

The Lord Lieutenant was greeted with a Guard of Honour and a parade of cadets from across all ages from the Unit.

The Commanding Officer, Lieutenant David Eivers, and the Unit Chairman, Mr Darren Ely, received the trophy on behalf of the unit. Each of the unit’s Volunteers was presented with a commemorative pin and certificate.

Many friends and supporters of the unit were in attendance. These included Deputy Lord Lieutenants, Lord Mayor of Stoke and Leader of the Council, Local MP, and Cadet Officers from the area. Admiral Sir Trevor Soar, a former Fleet Commander was in attendance as was Captain Ruth Smeeth RNR, a strong supporter of the Unit.

Volunteers at the unit are both uniformed and civilian. They give many hours of their time to provide the cadets with a varied and enjoyable training programme.

The activities enable the cadets to learn teamwork, respect, loyalty, self confidence, commitment, self-discipline, honesty and how to be best versions of themselves.

The unit offers a range of different activities including sailing, rowing and kayaking. Training involves a nationally agreed syllabus with an emphasis on waterbased activities. The Unit Management Team oversees the work of the unit and helps raise funds.

Cdt Dylan said “The Sea cadet staff are very committed. They’ve always helped me get qualifications for my future life.”

Cdt Will added: “I’ve been here for 4 years and the people in the unit have slowly but surely become family. You develop a strong relationship with the staff who helped me, pushed me and inspire me to be something great in the future.”

Members of the public who are interested in volunteering with the unit can email infostokecadets@gmail.com

Cadets learn about navigation



CADETS at Ramsgate & Broadstairs Sea Cadets (TS Bulldog) have started training on our Navigation Simulator REMBRANT 6.

The state-of-the-art simulator is arguably one of the best systems available in the UK and the same system used by the Royal Navy and cruise liner training facilities across the world.

The cadets can incorporate navigational, seamanship and boat work skills whilst piloting supertankers, tugs, cruise liners and the latest Type 45 destroyer.

Instructors can introduce various sea states and weather conditions to make life difficult if the cadets get too comfortable.

Unit cuts its electricity bill

CARRICKFERGUS Sea Cadets are to benefit from the installation of solar panels to their unit to mitigate the effects of climate change thanks to Belfast-based environment charity, Action Renewables.

Nigel Thompson, Chairman of Carrickfergus Sea Cadets, said: “We are thrilled to have received this programme of support allowing us to generate our own renewable electricity for the Sea Cadets waterfront building.”

“As a non-profit organisation we have been experiencing a sharp rise in operational costs from electricity usage and to have been successful in securing this funding from Action Renewables, which will help us reduce our electricity costs has been fantastic. With the winter months upon us this couldn’t have come at a better time.”

The environment charity, which is working to mitigate against the effects of climate change, has seen a rise in the number of applications for support with utility prices soaring in recent months.

In 2013, it developed a programme of support for locally-based, non-profit organisations with the aim of helping them to generate renewable electricity.

Another recent recipient of the support through the Solar PV programme is the Transport Training Board in Crumlin. William Deane, head of projects at Action Renewables, said: “As an organisation we are thrilled to see these installations take place in Crumlin and Carrickfergus, which will be of great benefit to both charities.”

“They will see a drop in their operational costs due to the reduced renewable electricity tariff which can see savings of up to 50% as part of the programme plus a reduction in their carbon footprint through the production of green electricity.”

“As a country we are striving towards zero emissions by 2050, so to support local non-profit organisations with this journey through our charitable outreach, is extremely rewarding.”



Representing CCF at the Queen's state funeral

COMBINED Cadet Forces RN/RM schools were honoured and privileged to be able to represent and support at the state funeral of HM Queen Elizabeth II.

Cadets and Adult Volunteers from City of London Boys' School, Pangbourne College and Winchester College represented the CCF on the day. They were joined by CCF Sections

from the Army and RAF. In Wales, the CCF RN Section from Fitzalan High School were present when the King and Queen Consort visited Cardiff following the Proclamation.

All hands on deck



CADETS from Wellacre Technology Academy's CCF RN Section travelled to the Waterside Lodge in Southport to take to the water and learn to sail, accompanied by SSI (SSM) Mr Ward.

The CCF RN's Scheme of Work syllabus aims to enhance the skills of cadets through a range of activities.

Afloat training provides essential sailing skills, so Wellacre students visited the Watersports Club to learn how to sail a dinghy.

The day began with an introduction to the dinghy and the essential controls followed by basic instructions including steering by handling the sail and the foils (centreboard), and side-to-side balance.

Wellacre cadets then took to the water in pairs to put all their learning into practice, and great fun was had by all.

Mr Ward, School Staff Instructor, said: "Everyone had a fantastic day completing the afloat training, and made the most of the opportunity and experience."

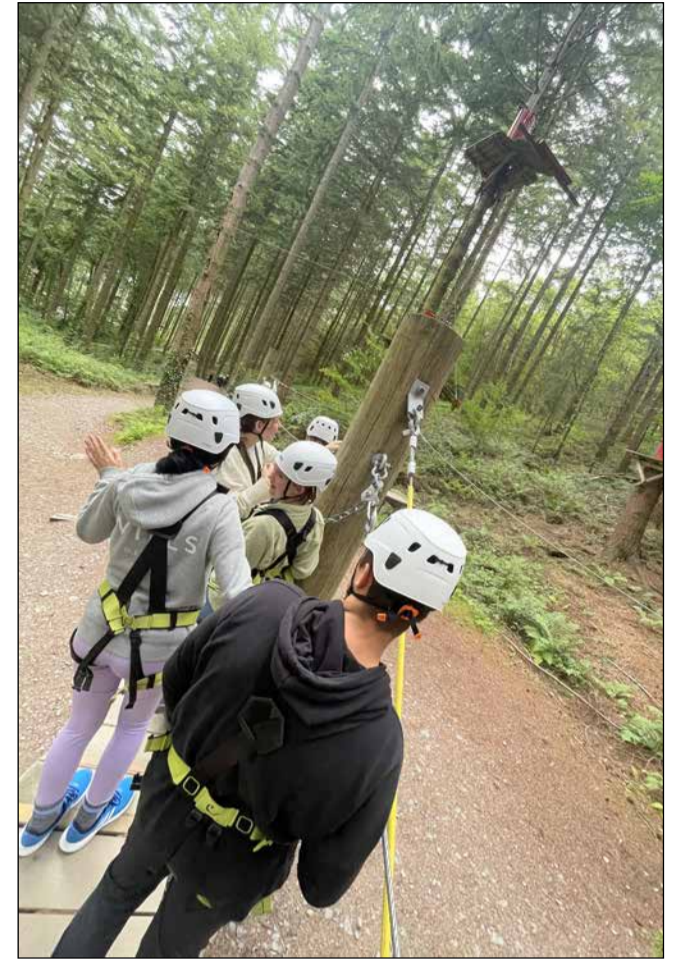
"The cadets' confidence improved throughout the day and they showed exceptional teamwork and communication skills."

Wellacre Cadet J, Year 8, added: "This was brilliant and I really enjoyed the day."

"It was great to be learning new skills and being involved in teamwork."

Outstanding effort to all cadets who took part: Archie and Adam (Year 11), Charlie, Daniel, Luca, Max and Ethan (Year 10), Nathan (Year 9) and Eshan, Jud, Thomas, Mohammad and Brodie (Year 9)

Mrs Sharrock, Principal, said: "It is really pleasing to see the cadets getting the opportunity to engage in such fantastic off-site adventures. Thank you to Mr Ward for organising the training."



Top trekking for Lipson

AS part of Lipson Co-operative Academy's Enrichment Week, Lipson CCF RN embarked on a four-day expedition to Snowdonia, North Wales.

This would be the first expedition that the CCF have undertaken, so it was a very exciting opportunity for all involved.

The aim was to enrich cadets' life experiences, to build on skills learnt on previous walks and expeditions, and to further develop positive relationships with peers and staff.

The cadets were all involved in walking up Mt Snowdon/ Yr Wyddfa on the first day and all 12 cadets summited.

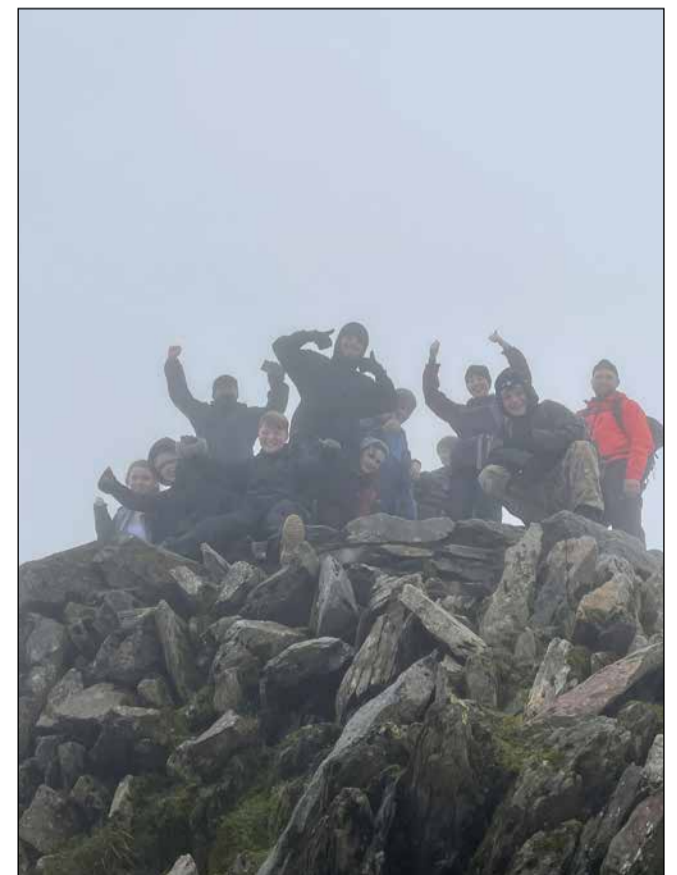
The views weren't great as the weather wasn't kind, however the sense of pride and achievement felt by everyone was clear to see.

For many this was the first time on a mountain of this size and all the cadets showed great resilience, determination and teamwork in their seven-hour ascent/ descent of the highest peak in Wales.

The chosen route was the Pyg Track on the ascent. Due to weather conditions they chose to follow the Miners Track on the descent. This was also due to the mountain becoming very congested at this time of day.

All cadets were exemplary in their conduct during the stay in Betws Y Coed, they got fully involved in all the activities which included a tree-top surfing adventure at Zip World, as well as helping with the cooking and maintaining high standards at the bunkhouse.

The best quote from one of the cadets, which typified the experience of the day on Snowdon was: "Sir, I'm really enjoying this, it's so peaceful and so..... Epic."



Students put through their paces on water

ELIZABETH College, Jersey CCF RN Section enjoyed two days of great training ably supported by the RN's CCF RN Area Instructors.

The cadets spent one day undertaking afloat training on motor training vessels, learning seamanship techniques and navigation methods.

The second day was spent getting familiar with the fabulous Virtual Battle System, learning compartment clearing techniques, taking part in drill and practising how to do the infamous Field Gun Run.

Looking forwards, the cadets are focussing on sailing and raft building at the Guernsey Sailing Trust. Elizabeth College CCF RN cadets are really looking forward to so many exciting opportunities planned in the term ahead with the Combined Cadet Force RN.





Left, the Royal Navy Seniors celebrate winning the Inter-Services contest, while, above, the RN Academy also won their Inter-Services championship

Champions at the double



RNRL's Darren Bamford was the player of the tournament; Below, the RN Wrenagades underwent major changes throughout the season



AFTER a break of two years Royal Navy Rugby League returned to Inter-Services action – and rounded off a remarkable 25th anniversary year by winning Inter-Services titles at both Senior and Academy levels.

This was the Senior team's sixth success in the competition with the Academy side racking up their fourth win. This success was also the first time the Seniors and Academy had won the respective IS titles in the same year.

Preparations for the competition were boosted by the announcement that the Association had been awarded RN Sports Team Of The Year by the Royal Navy Sports Control board.

The RN Senior Brothers won both their matches starting with the home fixtures against the RAF in Portsmouth, the 20-12 win, - giving the Seniors the best possible start to the campaign.

First half scores for Kini Dakuliga and James Tilley with a conversion by Darren Bamford saw the home side up 12:00 at the break and looking comfortable.

Second-half scores for Gavin Duffy, another for Tilley and another conversion for Bamford put the RN up by 20:00.

Despite an RAF fightback Brothers were not to be denied their first IS victory since 2018.

The competition then moved north to the iconic Odsal Stadium in Bradford where the Army were the hosts. A tense and scrappy game saw the RN side go in at the break 6:0 to the good, Jack Bartlett's try and a wonderful 45-metre penalty by Bamford had RNRL ahead by 6:0 at the break.

Unsurprisingly the Army staged a fightback in the second half to lead by 4:10 into the last 15 minutes. Without any sign of panic the Brothers pushed for the equalising score and after one attempt was held up by the Army full back Sean Houghton burrowed through the defence to tie the scores.

Once again Darren Bamford stepped up and launched the perfect touchline conversion to give his side the lead and ultimately the

first IS series win since 2017. The final whistle signalled wild celebrations for the Brothers who dedicated the win to coach Steve Lockton on his last match in charge.

The RNRL Womens team the 'Wrenagades' have undergone major changes throughout the season with a new Coach Matt Bayliss and a host of new players to the squad.

Nonetheless the new-look Wrenagades put up a great fight against the RAF with a fantastic fightback which almost saw them take the game in the last few seconds of the game.

An early RAF try was cancelled out with interest with a score for Molly Ellis brilliantly converted by Sam Alderson. Another try for the RAF had them ahead 6:8 at the break after an exciting fast-paced game.

RNRL took the lead again in the second half, Josie Parnaby leaving the RAF defence in her wake to score in the corner 10:8 A flurry of scores for the RAF pushed them ahead 10:24 into the last quarter.

The Wrenagades showed massive spirit and determination pushing the visitors to the end with tries for Jodie Mills and Becky Bowskill with another conversion by Sam Alderson.

Despite this effort the ref's whistle came with the RN camped on the RAF line so the game ended 20:24. Despite the defeat the Wrenagades came together to present the RBL with a cheque for £500 donated by Batley Bulldogs from gate receipts after the Challenge Cup 4th Round fixture.

Sadly this was the Wrenagades only outing for this years IS, injuries and UKAFRU World Cup commitments stretched player resource too far so the match against the Army did not take place.

Under Coach Frazer Leach the RNRL Academy had been building to Inter-Services with some excellent results throughout the season with a lot of confidence in the squad.

A spikey, physical game throughout saw the home side take the lead after 20 scoreless minutes, Simon Tulakepa touching down under the posts, Jack Cone converting.

The RAF replied with a try of their own

but the Academy Brothers replied through, eventual Player Of The Match, Ben Chambers scoring to give his side a 10:6 lead at the break.

Unfortunately, the RAF took the second half scoring 16 points with Ryan Scott's penalty the only RN response, 10:22.

Move forward a week and what a difference, RNRL producing a magnificent display to convincingly beat the Army 32:12. Tries for Nimlote Nabure and Joey Sugden converted by Jack Cone and Ryan Scott respectively gave RNRL a great foundation to push on in the second half despite a converted try for the Army, 12:6 at the break.

RNRL were straight out of the blocks in the second half, Ryan Scott converting his own try, 18:6. The Army did peg the Brothers back with a six pointer but the RN side were not going to be denied the win.

Scott was on target again with a brace of penalties, Ben Chambers scored his sides fourth try, converted by Tyler Leighton 28:12. Almost on the stroke of full time Joey Sugden went over for his second of the day 32:12.

In his last game before retiring Skipper Marika Tuinabunawa made a valiant effort to convert but was just wide nevertheless a terrific result for the Brothers.

This result meant that the destination of the Academy IS Trophy would be determined by the result of the final match of the series between the RAF v Army.

A close encounter in Salford ended with the Army defeating the RAF 16:4 which gave the title to the RN by virtue of a far superior points difference.

If that was not enough to celebrate the UKAF RL Committee awarded the Inter Services Player of The Tournament, the Scott Stevenson Memorial trophy, to RN Stand Off Darren Bamford for a fantastic series both with the boot and in general play.

Full match reports and game footage can be found at royalnavyrugbyleague.com

Report: Keith Humpleby
Pictures: Keith Woodland
(KWoodlandPhotography.com)



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WISH YOU WERE HERE...

FRIGATE'S CREW ENJOY ADVENTUROUS TRAINING IN HEAT OF DUBAI

HMS MONTROSE Ship's Company experienced some of the Middle East's incredible scenery and arid desert conditions, thanks to a Royal Navy Adventurous Training Team package.

Activities delivered by the RNATT included mountain biking, kayaking, SUP, indoor skiing and climbing.

Each AT discipline took place at a different location around Dubai, allowing ships company to get out and explore Dubai, experience the wide range of activities and operate in a diverse and challenging landscape.

Participants took full advantage of this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to conduct AT in a world-renowned outdoor adventure playground such as Dubai and its surrounding areas.

Sub Lieutenant Joshua Wynn said: "The kayaking adventurous training at Hatta Reservoir, UAE, was an exceptional experience."

"The AT team facilitated a great day of training in a mountainous setting, allowing us to see parts of the country we would not have otherwise had access to during our visit. I will remember it as a personal highlight of the deployment!"

Many of the ship's company were exposed to AT for the first time in their careers.

LET Crapnell said: "Paddleboarding around the 7-star Burj Al Arab hotel in Dubai was a once in a lifetime experience. I am very grateful to the AT team for offering us such a good opportunity."

While in Dubai personnel took advantage of the unique opportunity to try skiing for the first time.

CS Erick Aremo said: "I really enjoyed the activities offered during the AT package, particularly the indoor skiing which was a massive learning experience for me."

RNATT can deliver AT to RN personnel in the UK and overseas. The physical and mental benefits associated with AT are transferrable to the 'Operational' environment. All our sailors and marines should be actively encouraged seek their next AT endeavour.

The Royal Navy Adventurous Training Team is a deployable team of Royal Navy/Royal Marines instructors whose main aim is the front-line delivery of Adventurous and Challenging activities to aid retention, improve morale and increase operational capability. This team's vital role is championed by the Royal Navy's Second Sea Lord.

For further information, contact POPT SMITH – RNATT WEST. Gareth.smith425@mod.gov.uk



Strong show from RN swimmers

ROYAL Navy swimmers competed against the Army and RAF at the Inter-Service Open Water Championships.

Hosted by the RN Amateur Swimming Association, the event at Branksome Beach in Poole, Dorset, saw three events – 4km and 1km individual races and a 4x500m team relay, with the final score determining the overall winner.

The 4km event proved challenging with high waves and the Army took the top three positions with Major Andy Mason finishing a close fourth. In the female race, Surgeon Lieutenant (D) Blaine Small finished in third spot.

The fast-and-furious 1.5km race saw the Army take the top three places, with AB Dan Johnson (HMS Somerset) finishing fourth. Surg Lt Small took fourth spot in the women's race.

The final event saw the Army triumph in the relay, with the Royal Navy finishing fourth.

The RNASA also ran the Royal Navy Open Water

Championships during the 1.5km race which saw AB Johnson winning the male category, Surg Lt (D) Small winning the female and Maj Mason the veterans' category.

The event also concluded the Inter Service Swimming Championships series after the pool, water polo and diving championships were held at Aldershot Garrison earlier in the year.

Despite 2022 being a strong year for Army Swimming, the Royal Navy are undeterred and will be back to fight to regain their title in the 2023 series.

The Royal Navy Swimming Association offer training and competition opportunities across the year in pool and open water swimming, water polo and diving (Spring and Highboard), for all levels of ability.

For more information on the RN Swimming, please email the RN Sports Officer (Swimming), Mr Bob Mitchell: Robert.Mitchell250@mod.gov.uk.

Report: LPT Hutchin



...OR WISH YOU WERE HERE?

AS PERSONNEL FROM SISTER SHIP KEEP THEIR COOL IN NORWAY

MOUNTAIN walking, stand-up paddleboarding, kayaking and indoor wall climbing were on offer to members of HMS Somerset's crew.

The Royal Navy Adventurous Training Team (RNATT) delivered a host of activities during a visit to Norway.

For many of HMS Somerset's young ship's company this was their first exposure to AT and the week in Norway provided an amazing opportunity not to be missed.

Approximately a third of the ship's company conducted activities each day over six days, amongst the rugged and formidable backdrop that the area around



Stavanger offers.

The ship's command team were able to give the time off for the young sailors to be pushed out of their comfort zones, improving physical and mental robustness through taking part in AT.

All participants learned new skills, while experiencing memorable and enjoyable activities.

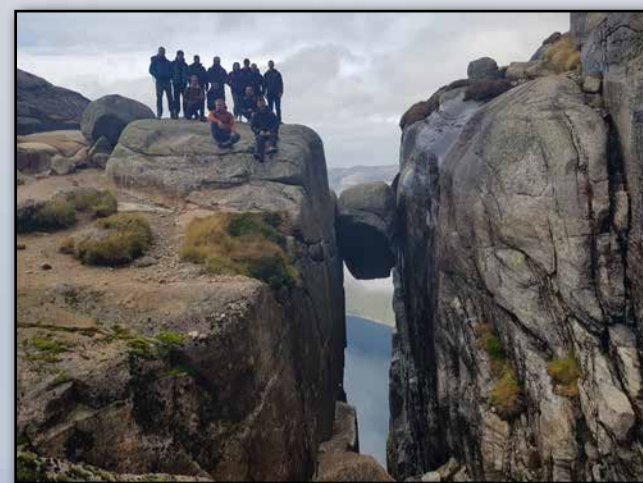
From hiking up steep-sided mountains to earn the mesmerising views to experiencing a challenging journey on paddleboards and kayaks along the lush Frafjord lakes, the programme gave sailors the chance to appreciate the beauty of Norway.

AB (SEA) Travers said: "Having never been to Norway before, I was blown away by the stunning views and tranquillity of the Fjords.

"This was an unforgettable experience that will stay with me for years to come."

ET Blair, who was able to conquer her fear of heights, said: "Indoor climbing is not something I would normally participate in, and I was very nervous, however I conquered my fear of heights. I pushed myself out of my comfort zone with the help of my team. A thoroughly enjoyable day thanks to POPTs Quinn and Higgins."

For further information, contact POPT Quinn – RNATT Eastern Region
Christopher.quinn574@mod.gov.uk



Reservists push themselves at Enduro



A TEAM of reservists from HMS Flying Fox in Bristol tried their hands at grassroots Enduro.

The event, at Rogers Hill Raceway in Dorset, was funded by Royal Navy Sports Development and designed as a team-building exercise.

The unit's operations officer Major Gareth Knowles RM, said: "Enduro is extremely demanding, both physically and mentally, requiring resilience, self-discipline and mutual reliance within your group."

"It was fantastic to see our people really push themselves so far out of their comfort zone."

Commanding Officer, Lt Cdr Sam Imrie, added: "Enduro was a fantastic opportunity to stretch the Flying Fox team and experience something completely different, push boundaries, and it was tremendous to see everyone embrace the opportunity."

The following awards were handed out:

Star rider, SLt Sophie Given; Determination award, AB Mills; Best Wheelie, Lt Cdr Imrie; Most embarrassing crash, Mid Polly Cleaver; Most likely to end up in A&E, Lt Cdr Harry Watts; Most likely to join a



Pictured, far left, Lt Cdr Imrie and AB Mills; Above, ready for the off; Right, Mid Cleaver and Mid Westhead

Navy remain victorious

THE 24-strong Royal Navy sailing team swept away their opposition to claim victory in the 2022 Inter-Services Offshore Regatta.

The team brought home the trophies for the best individual yacht and the Victoria 34 class, and retained the coveted Madden Bowl for the overall winners.

The competition was held over three legs, with the British Army claiming an early lead in races around the Isle of Wight in May and across the channel to Cherbourg in September.

The main event took place in the Solent in early October with the three teams taking to the water in their flagship racing yachts, our own Jolly Jack Tar matching up against British Soldier and Red Arrow, and in six Victoria 34 sail training craft provided by the Joint Services Adventurous Sail Training Centre in Gosport.

The three days of intense racing saw wind speeds ranging from 0 to 27 knots and strong tides, which posed a tactical challenge to all the boats.

None overcame this more successfully than one of the RN's Victoria 34 crews in Callista, who won three of the four races to claim best individual yacht, with the second RN yacht Amoria hot on their heels, leaving the Army and RAF clear astern to guarantee the overall win.

The team captain, CPO(AC) Alexandra Pickles, who started yacht racing through the Royal Navy Sailing Association in 2010, and who has since completed the iconic Fastnet race and represented the team in six inter-services, said: "I am extremely proud of the team's

performance and the huge effort put in by all of our sailors to retain the title – a five-year winning streak.

"It was a close-fought regatta: the standard of services sailing is extremely high and they can be proud of their achievements."

On the team guiding Callista to three race wins was SLt Marianna Voudourogrou, currently undertaking her specialist fleet time as a junior Warfare Officer.

Having joined the RN as an experienced sailor and university-level yacht racer, she has quickly made it into the top tier of Navy Sailing.

She said: "It was great to be a part of the team for my first inter-services event – made all the better by the win. I've had a warm welcome and great fun, and am looking forward to my next event - racing round the Caribbean next year."

The Royal Navy Sailing Association delivers the sport of sailing and associated activities for the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and their associated reserve forces. It offers yacht racing, cruising, dinghy sailing and windsurfing to service people of all experience levels, from grassroots events to participation in world championships and international inter-services regattas.

To find out more, visit www.rnsa.org.uk.



Main image: A Victoria 34 in the Solent; Top, sailors in the yacht Callista; Above, The RN team with their prizes; Far left, Sailors in the yacht Amoria; Left, Sailors in the yacht Jolly Jack Tar

Pictures: Lt Cdr Tom Thicknesse; Cdr James Baker; Lt Vince Pietersz; Sub Lt Alfred Smyth-Roberts; Mr Wyane Shirley



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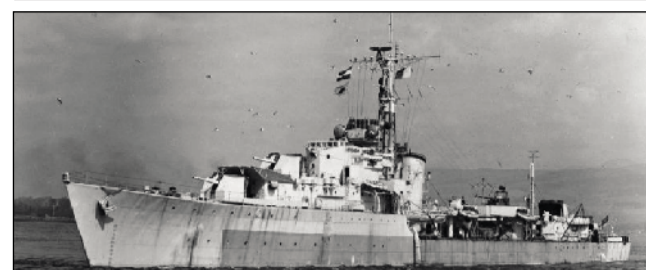
Deaths

Vera Read. Associate member of Norwich Branch of RNA as her late husband Cecil served in the RN between 1940 and 1945. Died September 13, aged 109.
Edward 'Ted' Palin, leading radio operator and diver. Served from 1954 to 1965. Trained at HMS Ganges and served on many ships, including HMS Albion, Meon, Drake, Undaunted, Carisbrooke Castle, Tyne, Mercury, Phoenixa, President, and Victory. Received a medal for diving during the Suez crisis. Died September 18, aged 84.
Roy Patterson, AB. Served from 1954 to 1956 on HMS Theseus, Tyne, and Cleopatra. Member of Norwich Branch of RNA. Died September 27, aged 89.
Vice Adm Sir Robert Walmsley KCB. HMS Otus, Neptune, Churchill, Pembroke. DG Ships, DG Supply, DNOR, DSW Latimer. Controller. Died August 4, aged 81.
Rear Adm Martin La T Wemyss CB. HMS Cleopatra, Neptune, Norfolk. ACNS (Ops), FOF2. DNW. Died September 10, aged 94.

Lt Cdr George A Drake. NATO, HMS Seahawk, Terror, Diana, RMNS Rilabuan. Died September 9, aged 94.
Capt John R S Gorst. HMS Berry Head, Caledonia, Ark Royal. DG Ships. DGME. Dir Post Design Ships. Died August 23, aged 91.
Capt Alan A Hensher MBE. HMS Heron, Seahawk, Albion, Centurion, Def Attache The Hague, UKCICC, C-in-C Fleet, DNAV, RN Dept Ottawa Howard. Died August 28, aged 94.
Capt Charles V Howard DSC. Fairey Swordfish pilot. 828 NAS. 830 NAS. HMS Eagle. Died September 14, aged 102.
Cdr Victor D Jefferson OBE. HMS Osprey, Intrepid, Fearless, Dolphin, Centurion. NATO. DNAP. Died August 10, aged 92.
Cdr Julian M Osborne. HMS Opossum, Dolphin, Neptune. DI Staff. DGNMT. VCDS. Joint Cadet Exec. CINCNAVHOME. Died September 13, aged 90.
Cdr Michael G R Roope. HMS Mercury II, Devonshire, Terror, Dryad, Cochrane, Vernon. ACR. Died September 6, aged 93.

Lt Keith M Davies. 814, 825 and 849 NAS. HMS Bulwark. Died August 2, aged 93.
Artie Elliott, Engineering Mechanic. Served 1956-1965 in Protector, Soberton, Miner IV Vernon, Victorious, Sultan, Scarborough. Member of the HMS Protector Association. Died September 18 at Port Elizabeth, South Africa.
Lt Henry Bell MBE. Joined HMS Ganges in January 1950, served on various ships and establishments including H Bomb Test 1958 on HMS Scarborough and two assignments at MOD, finishing his Royal Navy career in the Careers Service in 1991. Died July 29, aged 87.
Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNOC
Cdr David J Barr. HMS Apollo, Fisgard, Coventry, Blake, Albion. HMAS Kuttabal.
Capt Ian Brannam. HMS Intrepid, Eagle, Amazon, Newcastle. AIB Sultan. DG Ships.

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the September edition of *Navy News* (right) was HMS Bulolo, a former passenger/cargo ship, also a landing ship.



David Webster, from Taunton, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.

This month's mystery ship (*above*) is a destroyer which served the Royal Navy from August 1945 to the 1960s, serving in reserve as an accommodation ship in Rosyth from 1957 to 1969.

1. What was her name and
2. Where is her bell kept?

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 with November Mystery Ship in the header.

Coupons and emails giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner. Entries must be received by December 3.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. The winner will be announced in our January edition.

Ask Jack

Exercise Purple Warrior 1987: I am currently researching this exercise which was unique in the annals of recent British military history being a huge tri-service, non-NATO affair, carried out in part of the UK mainland (SW Scotland) in order to test lessons learned during the Falklands War. It involved 20,000 troops, 39 ships and 40 fixed wing aircraft yet there is precious little information on it. I would appeal to any of your readers who were involved and would be willing to share their reminiscences to contact me at mbritton2@aol.com, particularly if they have any photos of the event. My main interest is focussed on the associated air activity.

Mick Britton

Zara Osman: I am trying to find my biological father who was in the RN and met my mum Zara in Singapore in late 1986. I am now 34 and have been told that I look a lot like him, pictured right.



Elly Lloyd
elleyescosmetic@gmail.com
 +6427 953 8682

HMS Pembroke: I am trying to track down my old shipmates from the Writers training class in 1965. I have found a few but would like to contact as many as possible.

The picture, far right, shows: back row, from left, Colin Jones (deceased), Malcolm Hughes, David Parry, Colin Chrichton, me, David Steele, Peter Butler, Len Bamber, and Peter Devaney.

Front row, from left, Ken Smith, Brian Rowland, Cliff Ball, Peter Denham/Denholm, and Clive Berry.
Tom Smith
dismith8@btconnect.com

HMS Plym: I would like to trace the River-class frigate's unofficial timber crest. She left Devonport reserve in 1951/2 and deployed on Operation

Hurricane in the Monte Bello Islands of Western Australia, where she was destroyed in the UK's first nuclear weapon test. The ship was stripped beforehand and I have discovered an auction house sold a badge said to be from the frigate (K271) in 2007 but I believe it to be unofficial, something confirmed to me by Chatham Dockyard Historical Society. I would like to hear from anyone who can help me track the crest down.

Geoff Robinson
 7 Mountfield, Borough Green,
 Sevenoaks, Kent TN15 8HX

David McIntyre. I am trying to find details about my birth father, who joined the Royal Navy in 1939 and lived in Southsea. He died in 1976. Priscilla Breakspear.

Priscillabreakspear0@gmail.com

FRADU: I would like to contact the following former



Fleet Requirements and Air Direction Unit Hunter pilots who mounted detachments at RAF Gibraltar from 1980 to 1983: Tommy Thompson, Godfrey Underwood, Simon Willoughby and Derek Morter.

Tony Fairburn, Sqn Ldr (Rtd)
tony.fairbairn@btinternet.com

STEAD: Colleagues and friends of the late Lt Edward Keith Stead RCNC are asked to please contact his sister Isobel.

Isobel Stead
isobelstead@gmail.com

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

Peter Pawsey: Geoff Cummings RN (Rtd) is trying to contact Peter, who served in HM Submarines.

Gcumings10@outlook.com

HMS Bulwark, Albion & Centaur Association: The 2023 reunion is confirmed at the Queen's Hotel, Southsea, from May 12 to 15, 2023.

Contact Secretary Denis Askham at 07773651213 or email askhamd3@gmail.com

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

MYSTERY PICTURE 333

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

NOTICEBOARD ENTRIES

- Notices for this page should be brief, clearly written or typed and addressed to - The Editor, Navy News, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY, or email: news@royalnavymail.mod.uk or editor@royalnavymail.mod.uk
- If you are sending your notice via email, please include your full address and telephone number.
- Reunions appear in date order, and requests to place an entry in a particular edition cannot be guaranteed.
- Please send in reunions at least two months (preferably three) before the month of the event. There may be a delay before items appear, due to the volume of requests.
- Entries are free to non-commercial organisations. Items pertaining to commercial work, books and publications for profit can only appear as paid-for advertising.
- The Editor reserves the right to edit or refuse publication of submitted notices.

Reunions

Royal Navy Photography Branch: Reunion Friday November 4 to Monday November 7 at the Royal Beach Hotel, Southsea. All former and serving photographers, plus partners, welcome to mark the 103rd anniversary of the branch formation. Contact Danny du Feu. ddf.photography@gmail.com; Tel: 07711 083465.

Top accolade for charity

THE Royal Navy Officers' Charity (RNOC) was awarded Charity of the Year at the Association of Charitable Organisations Annual Conference and Award Ceremony.

The conference covered key issues relevant to all charities today: cost of living crisis, climate change and sustainability; digital inclusion; and equality, diversity and inclusion.

The awards celebrated the achievements of the sector and the RNOC was recognised for its longstanding and wide-ranging benevolence across the Royal Navy Officer family.

Nominations were invited from amongst other benevolence charities with an income of less than £1m per annum.

Founded in 1739 the charity supports a diverse range of beneficiaries and in 2021 awarded a record amount of individual grants totalling in excess of £500k.

The RNOC supports serving and retired RN, RM, QARNNS, and former WRNS officers and their families.

Every application is considered on its merits and recent grants have included assistance with medical expenses, school and education fees, assistance with transition and retraining, white and brown goods replacement, debts and much more.

The charity works closely with sister organisation the Association of Royal Navy Officers (ARNO) whose members help support the RNOC.

ARNO members can alleviate the cost of living crisis through access to a wide range of benefits.

Recent research shows that the average family can save well over £1k a year via our partnership with Reward Gateway. New members are always welcome - join online at www.arno.org.uk



Barry gets his wings – again

AN informal 'wings' presentation was made to a newly-qualified Royal Navy Merlin helicopter pilot who is shortly to join the aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Lieutenant Commander Barry Briggs already has his wings having previously flown Apache helicopters with the Army Air Corps. The 38-year-old has now retrained with the Royal Navy.

He completed 17-months of intensive training at RNAS Culdrose's 824 Naval Air Squadron to learn how to handle and fight the Merlin Mk2 maritime patrol aircraft.

There was no time for a formal ceremony as he immediately take his skills to sea with 820 Naval Air Squadron, which is dedicated to protecting the Royal Navy's carriers, as the squadron deploys on HMS Queen Elizabeth.

Lt Cdr Briggs, who is originally from Northern Ireland, said: "As an Apache pilot, I've been used to flying over treetops at 15-feet although I've previously done deck landings and flown in the maritime environment.

"I wanted to carry on flying with an aircraft that fulfils a multitude of roles. The range of roles that the Merlin offers appeals to me."

Handing him his Royal Navy wings badge, RNAS Culdrose's commanding officer Captain Stuart Irwin offered



his congratulations and said: "Very well done. You are joining a group of people who do truly extraordinary things but who are themselves just ordinary people. That is what 824 Naval Air Squadron does - it trains people to perform the extraordinary."

The primary role of Royal Navy's Merlin Mk2 helicopters is to provide either anti-submarine protection or airborne surveillance and control. They can also carry out a range of tasks such as transfers of cargo or personnel, medical transfers or provide search and rescue cover.

Pilots, observers, aircrewmen and engineers all train at 824 Naval Air Squadron at RNAS Culdrose before they are drafted to the Merlin Force's frontline squadrons.

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Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Ask Jack columns in next month's Noticeboard must be received by

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