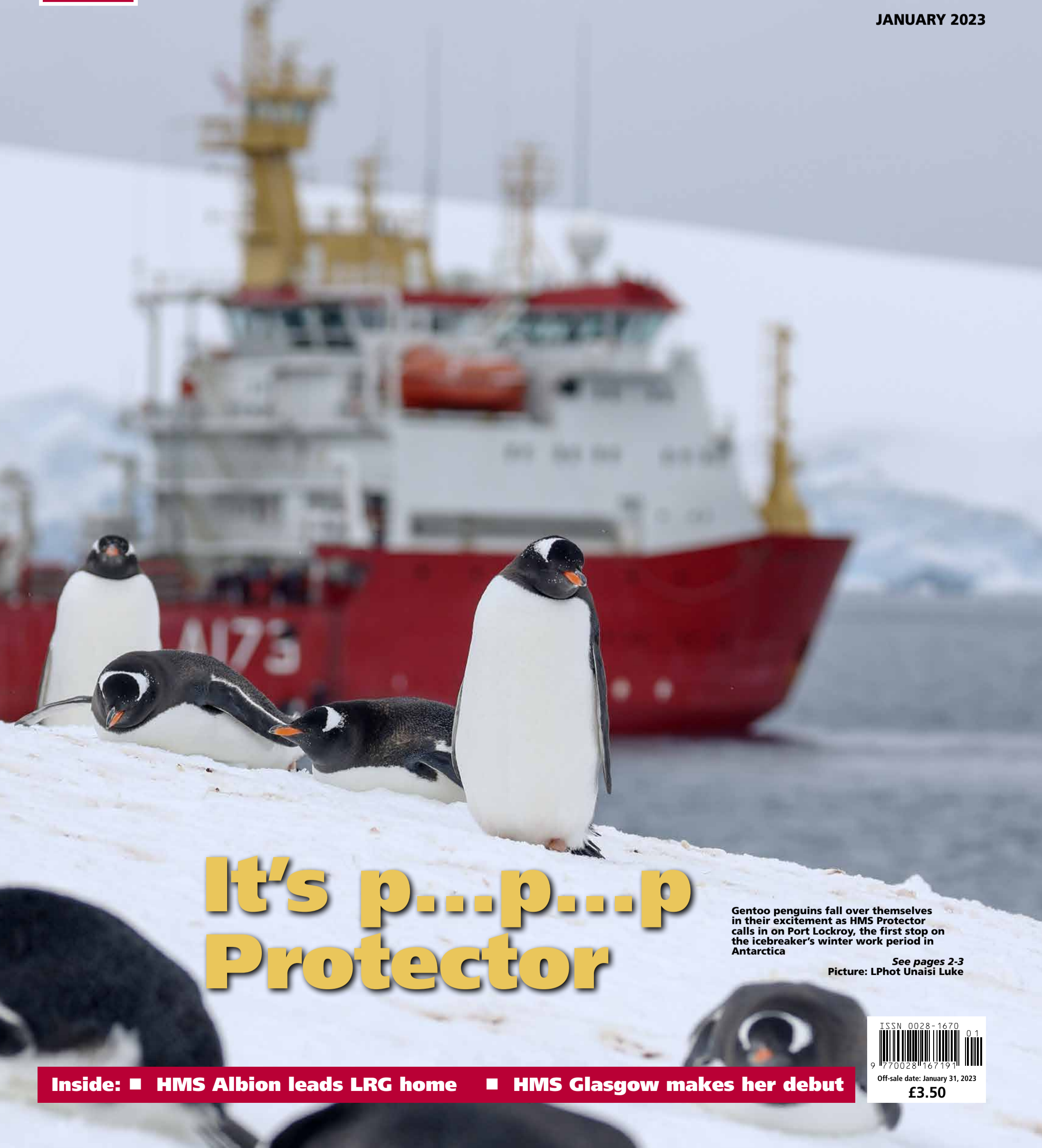




NAVY NEWS

JANUARY 2023



It's p...p...p Protector

Gentoo penguins fall over themselves in their excitement as HMS Protector calls in on Port Lockroy, the first stop on the icebreaker's winter work period in Antarctica

See pages 2-3
Picture: LPhot Unaisi Luke

Inside: ■ HMS Albion leads LRG home ■ HMS Glasgow makes her debut

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PROTECTOR

ONLY three more metres to go...

Marine Engineer Jack Pearce shifts another shovel-full of snow off the top of a building as HMS Protector's work up a sweat helping scientists and adventure-seekers at Port Lockroy.

The first work period for the Navy's unique icebreaker/scientific research/survey ship of the 2022-23 austral summer involved helping out the small team at Lockroy as they faced an overwhelming challenge: too much snow.

The base – which is located on a small island near the tip of the Antarctic Peninsula – is a key historic/tourist site, hitting the headlines earlier this autumn because it's being run this year by a four-strong all-female team.

The site was hit by particularly heavy spring snowfall – between two and four metres deep – which not only buried some of the buildings, but damaged the roof of one key structure.

A team of sailors and Royal Marines from HMS Protector provided some of the muscle power, spending two days clearing snow alongside staff from the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust, and also effecting temporary repairs.

The weight of snow on Bransfield Hut – which houses the base's museum/gift shop/post office – caused the roof to sag, so Protector's marine engineers turned to traditional naval damage control methods to shore it up using wooden stakes and blocks to stabilise the structure... just as they would support a deckhead or bulkhead on a damaged warship.

"It is good for the ship's company to step ashore and help out. The sailors were all smiles and happy to get cracking on with such a worthwhile task," said Warrant Officer First Class Lee 'Rattler' Morgan, Protector's Executive Warrant Officer, paying his second visit of the year to Port Lockroy.

"I was taken aback by the sheer amount of snow and how the buildings had all but disappeared. When I left here at the beginning of the year, the penguins were

lying on bare ground of rocks and mess – at least the snow got rid of the smell."

Lee has served in the Royal Navy for 26 years, but this year has been his first experience of the frozen continent.

"Some lucky younger officers and ratings have had this experience early on in their careers and no doubt it will stay with them. It is such a strikingly beautiful place and it is a total privilege to be here," he added.

Engineering Technician Pearce is one such sailor – at the beginning of his Royal Navy career.

"This is only my second 'run ashore' [port visit] in the Navy having come out of training just three weeks ago," he said. "It's amazing to be here, I have enjoyed the scenery and wildlife but also it feels great making a difference by working with the UK Antarctic Heritage Trust."

Over 600 miles south of Cape Horn – the southernmost tip of the Americas – and more than 900 miles from Stanley, capital of the Falklands, Port Lockroy acted first as a whaling station, then as a research base and, for the past 15 or so years, as a museum/tourist attraction, visited by upwards of 20,000 people during the summer season, while the world's most southerly post office handles around 80,000 cards mailed each year to more than 100 countries.

A seven-strong team was setting up the base for the austral summer: Clare Ballantyne, Mairi Hilton, Natalie Corbett and Lucy Bruzzone who will run the site over the coming months, assisted initially by an electrician, the base manager and heritage conservation manager who are leaving shortly.

Port Lockroy isn't the only human outpost to receive a helping hand from the good ship Protector.

A couple of stops later and the distinctive red and white polar vessel delivered engineering kit, vehicles, stores and spare parts to the Uruguayans at Artigas – following an agreement between London and Montevideo.

The Uruguay capital was the

icebreaker's last port of call before heading to Antarctica.

As well as preparing Protector and her machinery to operate safely and reliably in sub-zero conditions, stores were loaded into the main hold for the team operating Artigas Bay in the South Sandwich Islands.

Delivered after the 1,900-mile journey from Montevideo were: fire extinguishers, paint, electrical components, half a dozen bulk containers and a quad bike.

With no port at Artigas, just a sheltered bay, Protector's small Zodiac boat was used to deliver the kit on to a rocky beach, despite a strong, cold wind and breaking waves. From there crew worked with the scientists to shift the deliveries into the base.

"Despite difficult conditions, we conducted several successful beach landings in the Zodiac, delivering essential stores," said Able Seaman Matthew Miller. "The work was tricky but ultimately rewarding."

Captain Milly Ingham, Protector's Commanding Officer, added: "This was our third base visit of the season but the first that was manned and fully open. We received an incredible warm welcome from Colonel Jose Fonseca and his team. We were delighted to be able to drop off engineering supplies and equipment to assist them in their work."

The offer to deliver to Artigas was made during talks between Armed Forces Minister James Heapey and his Uruguayan counterpart.

The deliveries were well received by Artigas' commander, Colonel Jose Fonseca, who told Captain Ingham: "My team and I really enjoyed your visit, everything was successful and I appreciate your support."

Artigas is the larger of two Uruguayan scientific research stations in Antarctica, the other is named after the Rupert Elichiribehety, a Uruguayan Naval Captain who in 1916 led an expedition to rescue Shackleton's men from Elephant Island.

Pictures: LPhot Unaisi Luke

Training or on patrol around the UK

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



GLOBAL | MODERN | READY

JANUARY – it must be time for **HMS Protector**. The ice patrol ship has undertaken her first work period of the winter, visiting Port Lockroy in Antarctica (see pages 1, 2 and 3). On her way south the ship delivered vital supplies to Uruguayan scientists basted at Artigas in the South Sandwich Islands.

It's also a case of new year, new kit for the Royal Navy, beginning with **HMS Glasgow** (see page 11). The first of the Type 26 frigates entered the water for the first time as she left Govan for Scotstoun, where she will continue her build.

The Royal Navy has also ordered its first crewless submarine to shape the future of underwater warfare (see page 9). In just two years' time **Cetus** will move stealthily through the oceans, monitoring hostile activity, listening out for ships or submarines which may pose a threat to the Fleet, or to key national infrastructure such as deep-sea cables and pipelines.

The firepower of Royal Navy warships will be bolstered with new ship-busting missiles (see page 7). Type 23 frigates and Type 45 destroyers will be fitted with the sea-skimming **Naval Strike Missile**, capable of knocking out major enemy warships at ranges of more than 100 miles away.

Royal Navy warships spent nearly 10,000 hours – 60 weeks – on **NATO** operations in 2022 as the UK led the alliance's most important naval force (see page 5). A ceremony on HMS Victory in Portsmouth Dockyard saw the NATO flag lowered and passed to Turkish Navy chiefs, as they take on the command role throughout 2023.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and her Carrier Strike Group have returned home after three weeks of flying operations in the North Sea and off Scandinavia (see pages 16-17 and page 19). The Fleet Flagship was escorted by **HMS Diamond, Kent, Richmond** and **RFA Tidesurge** and made up the northern 'arm' of the Royal Navy's **Operation Achillean**.

The southern 'arm' saw **HMS Albion** spearhead an amphibious task group in the Med (see centre pages), with **HMS Defender, RFA Argus, RFA Mounts Bay**, plus helicopter squadrons **845, 847** and **815**, along with Royal Marines from **45 Commando, 42 Commando** and **47 Commando**.

Royal Navy survey ship **HMS Scott** has smashed her data-gathering record – and she still has seven more months of work to go (see page 6). In just five months she's already scanned an area of Atlantic that's larger than Germany: some 420,000 square kilometres.

Crew of the Royal Navy's permanent presence in the Caribbean can take a little breather after three months constantly on alert: the hurricane season is over (see page 13). Patrol ship **HMS Medway** has been roaming the region since September, ready to respond in an instant should one of the island communities – British Overseas Territories especially – require assistance in the wake of a tropical storm.

HMS Spey and **Tamar** reunited in Japan (see pages 14-15), where Spey took part in exercise Keen Sword and crew from Tamar joined personnel from 11 other nations to mark the 70th anniversary of Japan's Maritime Self-Defence Force.

A Royal Navy officer whose ship has delivered blows to both drug smugglers and terrorists in 2022 has been decorated in the King's first Operational Honours for the forces (see page 28). **Commander Claire Thompson** will receive the OBE in recognition for her deeds and accomplishments captaining **HMS Montrose** in the Gulf.

We take a look at the Royal Navy's new **Climate Change and Sustainability Team** (see page 29) and their plans for the Royal Navy.

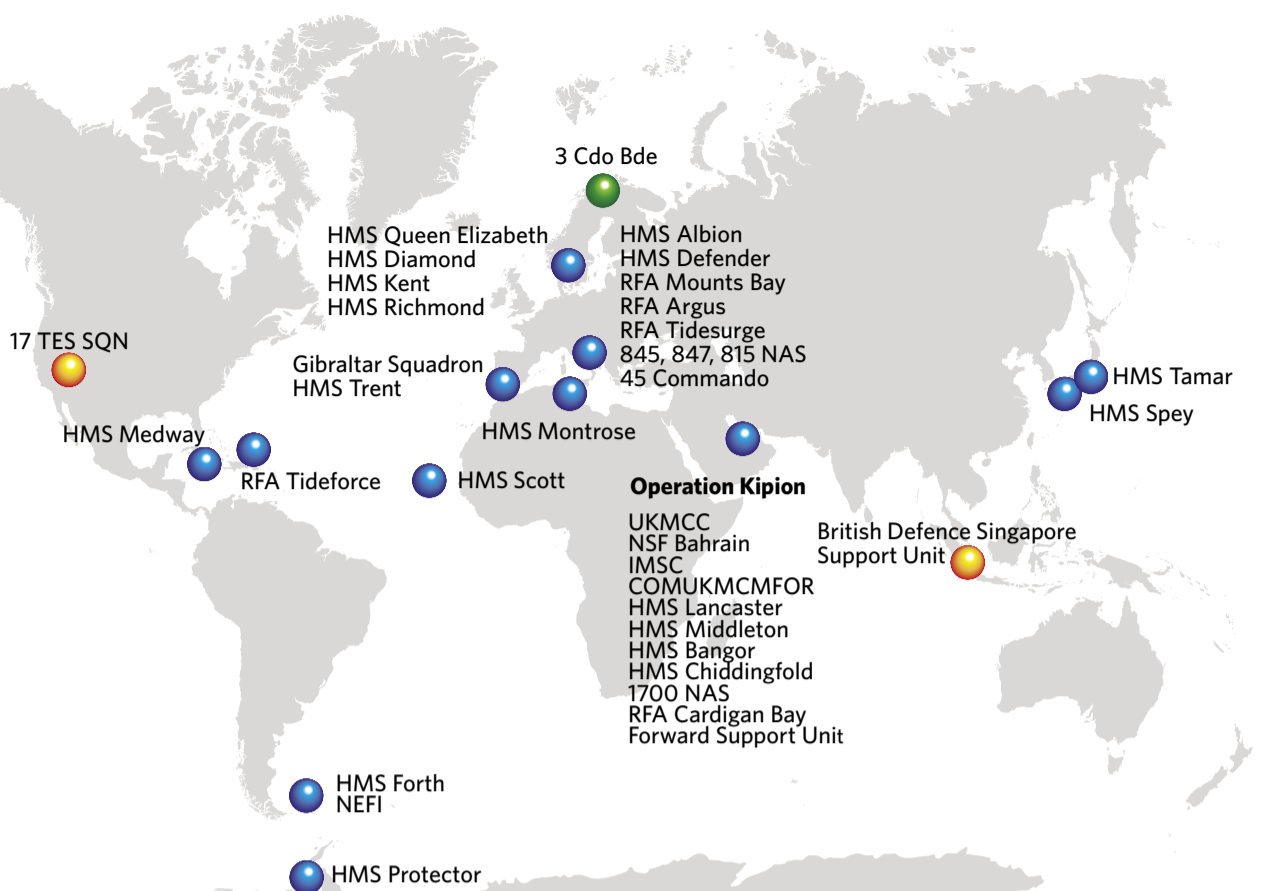
The crew of **HMS Artful** have been singled out for their efforts to promote diversity on the submarine (see page 28) with a Women in Defence Award for inclusive teamwork.

Royal Fleet Auxiliary personnel who have excelled and gone above and beyond the regular call of duty in the past 12 months have been recognised for their efforts (see page 28).

HMNB Clyde has a new centrepiece after graffiti artist 'Barry the Cat' paid a visit to the military site (see page 27).

The **Royal Navy Volunteer Band Association** (RNVBA) has had a busy, challenging and exciting 2022. The ten bands who make up the association have, between them, delivered 130 musical events over the past 12 months (see page 38).

Finally, the **Royal Navy Rugby League** team took the team of the year trophy at the Royal Navy's glittering sports awards evening (see page 37).



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

'MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER'



THE Royal Navy's mission in the Middle East has assumed greater importance as a result of the worldwide energy crisis.

The UK's senior naval commander in the region says now more than ever it is crucial warships ensure the safe passage of shipping and maintain peace and security.

Commodore Adrian Fryer, pictured right, directs the Royal Navy operation east of Suez from his headquarters in Bahrain – and also serves as deputy commander of a multi-national series of task groups, the Combined Maritime Forces, which conduct security missions daily from the Red Sea and Gulf to the Seychelles.

More than 20 million barrels of oil – around one fifth of the world's consumption – pass through the Strait of Hormuz every day, not to mention liquid natural gas carriers and merchant ships.

Many also subsequently pass through the Bab-al-Mandeb narrows at the foot of the Red Sea and the Suez Canal.

When the cargo ship Ever Given became stuck in the canal in March 2021, it cost global trade \$9bn (£7.5bn) per day.

"This part of the world is more important now than people perhaps appreciate given the global energy situation and possibility of a worldwide recession," said Commodore Fryer, UK Maritime Component Commander.

"A strategic shock here would have a more significant impact than three or four years ago. The Middle East may seem a long way from home, but what we do here has a global impact."

Frigate **HMS Lancaster**, pictured left, has just arrived in the region, beginning a three-year mission permanently stationed east of Suez, relieving her sister ship **HMS Montrose** which spent three-and-a-half years operating in the region.

Montrose was called upon to accompany merchant ships through choke points during times of high tension, working with regional and international partners to support security efforts.

Work with CMF allies on patrols led to ten major drugs busts and the destruction of more than £80m of illegal narcotics.

"**HMS Montrose** has had an exceptional time out here – especially over the past year," Cdre Fryer added.

"Sixteen tonnes of narcotics seized is



not just a number. That's a lot of illegal drugs which have been stopped – a wholesale value of £80m. Multiply that by five or ten times for the street value.

"**Montrose** stopped that money ending up in the hands of criminal or terrorist groups – and stopped those drugs being taken by civilians and the huge impact that has on society.

If you can stop the drugs at source, you don't need to stop them in the UK."

The Combined Maritime Forces are responsible for security – counter-terrorism/smuggling/drugs trafficking/piracy – across 3.2 million square miles of ocean, an area roughly the size of continental USA, patrolled by upwards of 40 warships.

"Now imagine 40 police cars with a top speed of 30mph trying to protect the United States and you have an idea of the scale of the challenge," Cdre Fryer explained.

"In our favour, we understand the area, we know the patterns of life, and we, alongside 37 other nations, are committed to its security."

The 'police' role will be enhanced considerably by increasing use of drone technology. Already operating in the Gulf, technology such as sail drones – solar-powered windsails with cameras and sensors – is being added to the 'box of tricks' Cdre Fryer and his 100-strong staff can call upon.

By next summer, there will be more than 100 drones and autonomous vehicles at sea, keeping constant watch on activity.

"Autonomy is the future – and we are making significant strides. Already we have ten to 15 uncrewed systems either at sea or ready to go to sea, giving us persistent eyes on the ocean."

10,000 HOURS AT THE HEART OF NATO



The Northern Lights shimmer over HMS Prince of Wales during exercises alongside NATO allies. The aircraft carrier served as the alliance's command ship

Royal Navy warships spent nearly 10,000 hours – 60 weeks – on NATO operations in 2022 as the UK led the alliance's most important naval force.

From the freezing Arctic and Baltic to the endless grey wastes of the North Atlantic and azure waters of the Mediterranean, Royal Navy warships, submarines and aircraft worked tirelessly with allies and partners for the peace and prosperity of Europe amid Russia's unprovoked invasion of Ukraine.

Aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales served as NATO's command ship as the Royal Navy headed the alliance's Maritime High Readiness Force – an international task group formed to deal with major global events.

Commander UK Strike Force, Rear Admiral Rob Pedre and his predecessor Vice Admiral Mike Utley, took charge of the NATO force as the alliance carried out its largest exercises in the Arctic since the Cold War along with its regular operations across European waterways, channels and chokepoints.

Missions with the alliance will neither cease nor diminish but the Royal Navy is now passing on responsibility for leading the NATO Response Force (NRF) to Turkey.

A ceremony on HMS Victory in Portsmouth Dockyard saw the NATO flag lowered and passed to Turkish Navy chiefs, as they take on the command role throughout 2023.

Rear Admiral Pedre said: "The Royal Navy has delivered at a crucial time for NATO as it has done throughout the history of the alliance.

"The prevailing strategic uncertainty across the globe emphasises once again the critical importance of a unified NATO that is ready to protect the security and prosperity of our allies and partners.

"Throughout 2022, Royal Navy warships, sailors and Royal Marines have been at the forefront of the alliance, working tirelessly not just in our role as the head of the NATO Response Force but across a full range of vital operations.



The NATO pennant is raised on HMS Diamond

"Our work never stops but we now handover responsibility for the NRF to Turkey and wish our close NATO ally every success as they take command for 2023."

The Royal Navy has operated continuously with NATO in 2022 above, below and across the waves as part of galvanised efforts in the face of the illegal invasion of Ukraine by Russia.

Two veteran RN minehunters, HMS Grimsby (62 days) and HMS Hurworth (70 days), spent a combined 132 days working as part of the premier mine clearance task group in the Mediterranean – known as Standing NATO Mine Countermeasures Maritime Group 2.

That was closely followed by Type 23 frigate HMS Lancaster which spent 66 days with high

readiness forces, operating with ships from the USA, Norway, Portugal, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Italy, Spain and Denmark.

HMS Defender operated with NATO for 46 days in the Baltic, Arctic and in the Mediterranean – the lattermost deployment saw her attach to Operation Sea Guardian, the alliance's primary security mission in the region.

Fellow Type 45 destroyer HMS Diamond was also in the Mediterranean, deployed with Standing NATO Maritime Group Two, a task force which operates across the region ready to react to events.



HMS Richmond in the Baltic with Danish frigate Niels Juel

Diamond spent 31 days working with ships from the US, Italy, Canada, Spain and Turkey.

In colder Arctic climes, Royal Navy ships were heavily involved in Exercise Cold Response – Norwegian-led training and the largest allied exercises in the region since the Cold War.



HMS Diamond operating with NATO task group SNMG2

Aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales, HMS Albion, RFA Mounts Bay, HMS Defender, HMS Richmond, HMS Northumberland, RFA Tidesurge, and Astute-class submarine HMS Ambush were all involved as NATO brought a potent force to bear on its northern flank.

Below the waves, HMS Ambush wasn't the only submarine involved in NATO tasking. HMS Audacious, the Royal Navy's newest and most advanced nuclear attack submarine, carried out NATO security patrols in the Mediterranean on her maiden operational deployment.



HMS Audacious heads for a patrol in the Mediterranean

And frigate HMS Portland joined NATO's premier submarine hunters putting the pressure on underwater foes for ten days.

The chilly waters of the 'Greenland gap' and Norwegian Sea were the setting for Dynamic Mongoose, the alliance's largest test of its anti-submarine forces in the North Atlantic.

HMS Lancaster and HMS Hurtworth were at the forefront of NATO autonomous exercises off the coast of Portugal.

For the month-long trials, more than 11 warships, 120 autonomous vehicles and 1,500 military and civilian personnel from 15 NATO countries tested the use of uncrewed tech – from drones to underwater survey vessels, which could be used by the alliance on the front line of operations in the future.

GREAT SCOTT



SURVEY ship HMS Scott smashed her data-gathering record – and she still has seven more months of work to go.

In 2021, the Plymouth-based vessel set a record of 400,000 square kilometres of ocean – roughly one-and-a-half times the size of the UK.

In five months in the summer and autumn of 2022 she scanned an area of Atlantic that's larger than Germany: some 420,000 square kilometres.

Apart from brief port visits to take on fresh supplies and change crew, since leaving Plymouth on July 5 the ship – the fifth largest under the White Ensign (only the carriers and assault ships are bigger) – has been diligently hoovering up vast quantities of data.

Scott's unique sonar system allows her to calculate how quickly sound waves travel through seawater, allowing the vessel to make accurate depth measurements to map the seabed.

The data gathered by the ship is of vital strategic importance to UK Defence and her crew have been working day-in day-out to ensure that maximal time is spent surveying.

"It's been the most successful year in the ship's history, with the most amount of area surveyed since she was commissioned in 1997," said Commanding Officer Commander Tom Harrison.

"We have surpassed last year's record which is testament to the professionalism, dedication, and resilience of my crew. They have worked diligently as a team to operate and maintain Scott and have produced exceptional results. Their efforts have contributed to the UK Defence effort and have been of strategic importance."

Another milestone passed is one million miles sailed since her commissioning 25 years ago – again thanks to the concerted efforts of the 60 crew to maintain and operate a vessel in her sunset years.

"Despite already having travelled the equivalent of 40 times around the Earth, HMS Scott and her crew remain excited about what is to come," Commander Harrison added.

"With seven months left of this deployment, we will continue to gather high-quality hydrographic data and therefore fulfil her crucial strategic role."

In spite of Scott's titanic efforts to date, the Atlantic is 250 times bigger than the area surveyed in 2022.

The small ship's company and size of the vessel means that every single sailor from able seaman to commander, has an important part to play in the ship's success. The hard work has not gone unrecognised with £2,000 in Herbert Lott awards from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity for their achievements.

"The engineering department has faced a number of challenges during this deployment, but overcoming these has made the job rewarding and I've learned lots," said marine engineer Engineering Technician Jacob 'Jimmy' Carr.

"Being away from home has been tough but it is made easier by visiting exciting places and being surrounded by my friends."

Being at sea for long periods place demands on morale so activities such as deck barbecues and a mid-ocean hands to bathe in waters five kilometres deep was a unique experience.

Sailors have also enjoyed port visits in Tenerife, Cape Verde and Gibraltar and ended the year in Madeira.

In Cape Verde the crew enjoyed snorkeling with loggerhead turtles, tried out Europe's largest water park in Tenerife and hosted Commodore Tom Guy and Commander Surface Flotilla Commodore Tim Neild for a Trafalgar Night dinner.

"It has been great to be on Scott as she passed a couple of major milestones. It is incredible that the ship has travelled the equivalent of 40 times around the world over the past 25 years," said Sub Lieutenant Ethan Starmer-Jones.

"And to have surveyed a record-breaking area the size of Germany this year shows she has plenty more miles left in the tank yet."



THE firepower of Royal Navy warships will be bolstered with new ship-busting missiles.

Eleven Type 23 frigates and Type 45 destroyers will be fitted with the sea-skimming Naval Strike Missile, capable of knocking out major enemy warships at ranges of more than 100 miles away.

The MOD ordered the missile system as the interim replacement for the existing Harpoon, which reaches the end of its active life next year.

Defence Secretary Ben Wallace announced the investment in the new weapon on a visit to Royal Navy flagship

HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Norwegian capital Oslo.

Harpoon has been in service for several decades and, despite frequent upgrades and enhancements to keep pace with developments in technology, can no longer meet the demands of mid-21st Century naval warfare.

The Naval Strike Missile will plug the gap between Harpoon and the advent of its permanent successor, the 'future offensive surface weapon', which will become the Fleet's premier long-range, heavy duty anti-ship missile in 2028, carried by the Royal Navy's next-generation Type 26 frigates, currently

under construction on the Clyde.

The Naval Strike Missile is already in service with three navies – the Norwegian, US and Polish – and lined up to be fitted to the warships of half a dozen more.

Travelling at speeds close to Mach 1, the 400kg missile can strike at targets more than 100 miles away, evading detection by skimming over the sea's surface and eluding enemy defences via evasive manoeuvres.

UK defence firms Babcock and BAE Systems will install NSM on the 11 warships, with the first ship due to be operational by the end of this year.



HMS Montrose firing a Harpoon missile



Missile move

RN ships to get replacement for Harpoon

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SUBMARINE TO DOMINATE UNDERWATER BATTLESPACE



THE Royal Navy has ordered its first crewless submarine to shape the future of underwater warfare.

In just two years' time Cetus – named after a mythological sea monster – will move stealthily through the oceans, monitoring hostile activity, listening out for ships or submarines which may pose a threat to the Fleet, or to key national infrastructure such as deep-sea cables and pipelines.

The Royal Navy has experimented with – and in some cases operated – autonomous underwater systems for more than a decade. Most are small, off-the-shelf technologies, largely used in minehunting.

The £15.4m Cetus is in a different league: the length of a bus, it will be the largest and most complex crewless submersible operated by European navies, designed and built specially for the Royal Navy by Plymouth-based tech firm MSubs, creating ten specialist jobs and supporting 70 more.

Funded by the Anti-Submarine Warfare Spearhead programme, run by the Royal Navy's Develop Directorate from their Headquarters in Portsmouth and delivered through

the Submarine Delivery Agency in Bristol, this is the latest in a series of novel underwater technologies being brought to life to deal with the threats of the next decade.

First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key said: "This is a hugely exciting moment for Project Cetus as the Royal Navy surges ahead with the development of autonomous technology."

"This Extra Large Autonomous Underwater Vehicle is a capability step-change in our mission to dominate the underwater battlespace. "And I am delighted that the project is able to support a small, innovative UK company which is at the cutting edge of this sector."

At 12 metres long and 2.2 metres in diameter, the 17-tonne submarine can fit inside a shipping container and be transported around the world to wherever the Fleet needs it.

Cetus is an operational demonstrator and will be unarmed and battery-powered. The goal is for any operational autonomous submarine to work side-by-side with traditional

crewed submarines – such as the current Astute-class hunter-killers or their successors under development – or independently.

The crewless submarine is the latest step taken by the Royal Navy into the world of autonomy.

Autonomous minehunting systems are already operating in Scotland, driverless Pacific 24 sea boats are undergoing testing, numerous aerial drones are employed by ships both for reconnaissance/intelligence gathering and target practice for air defence.

And the Navy has invested in a dedicated tech trials ship, XV Patrick Blackett, to assess this new equipment and help determine how it might be used or integrated into the Fleet.

Cetus will do the same for the Silent Service, explained Lieutenant Commander Andrew Witts.

"One hundred and twenty years ago the Royal Navy had the foresight to invest in Holland I – the UK's first

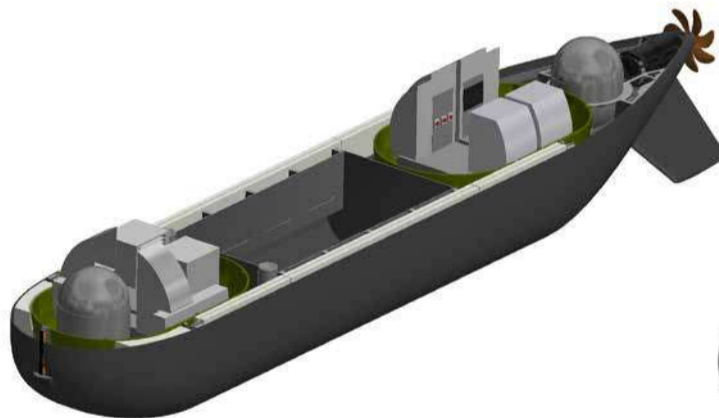
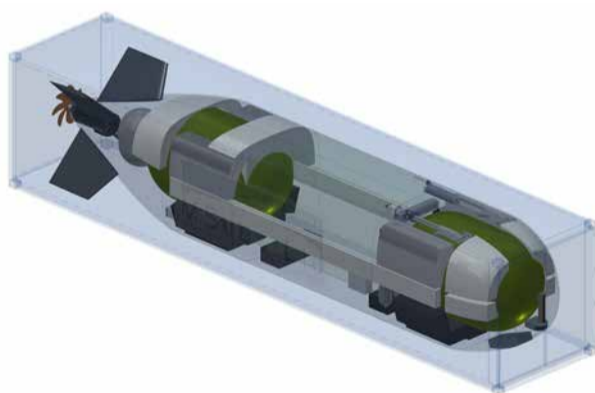
submarine – which helped revolutionise naval warfare above and below the waves," he said.

"Cetus is our first venture into large-scale, uncrewed submarines. It's exciting, the possibilities are enormous, and I like to think Cetus could change the way we fight under the sea as much as those pioneers in Holland I did."

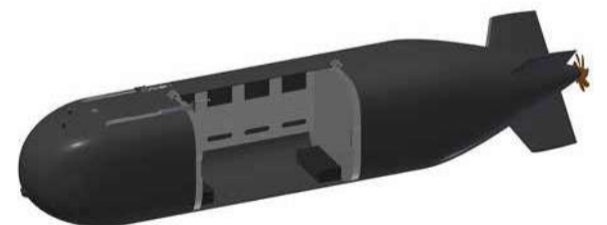
Brett Phaneuf, chief executive of MSubs, said his team was proud to take the lead in developing the next generation of autonomous underwater vehicle for the Royal Navy.

"The faith the Royal Navy has shown in our small business is humbling and we look forward to working closely together in the future, as we have in the recent past, to develop and deploy Cetus, in the national interest."

"I like to think Cetus could change the way we fight under the sea as much as those pioneers in Holland I did."



Pictured from left, Cetus in a 40ft container; A sliced-through view of the uncrewed submarine; A side view of Cetus's payload bay



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Glasgow on the River Clyde

THIS is the moment HMS Glasgow was towed down the River Clyde to Scotstoun where the Type 26 frigate will begin the next phase of her build.

A week earlier, the first of class was lowered onto a barge and entered the waters of the Clyde for the first time.

Further north and a few days later, the barge was sunk slowly into the deep waters at Glen Mallan and the ship's hull touched the cold waters of Loch Long as the sun set in a milestone moment.

The float off process for HMS Glasgow started at Govan shipyard where she has been under construction by BAE Systems.

The ship, currently weighing nearly 6,000 tonnes, undertook a series of complex manoeuvres at Govan starting with being lowered onto the specialist barge.

The first phase of the float off, *pictured bottom far left*, saw BAE Systems engineers monitor her move, having been trained using a 3D visualisation suite giving them access to a

full digital twin of the ship.

Brigadier Andy Muddiman RM, Naval Regional Commander Scotland & Northern Ireland, said: "The floating of HMS Glasgow represents an important milestone in the build of the Royal Navy's latest anti-submarine warfare frigate.

"This is the first of eight Type 26 frigates being built by BAE Systems in Glasgow.

"The Royal Navy's exciting programme of ship building in Scotland, which includes five Type 31 general purpose frigates being built by Babcock International in Rosyth, will generate jobs, skills and economic benefits in Scotland for many years to come."

The float off process is a more modern, efficient and low-risk way for a ship to enter the water compared to the previous dynamic launches.

The process is well-proven, having been used for the five Batch 2 Offshore Patrol Vessels (Tamar, Spey, Trent, Medway and Forth) built by BAE Systems in Glasgow, the last of which was delivered to the Royal Navy in 2020.

Following her successful move onto the barge, Glasgow was then towed past the Titan Crane and the Erskine Bridge, heading to Loch Long, *pictured bottom middle left*.

She arrived at Glen Mallan as the sun was setting, *pictured bottom right*, and there, the barge was slowly lowered into the river until the ship's hull was sitting in the Clyde. The following morning, she was towed upstream to Scotstoun where her construction will continue.

Chief Petty Officer Adam 'Ash' Hallam, one of HMS Glasgow's Marine Engineer Group Heads, was responsible for looking for any issues or faults as the hull entered the water overnight.

He said: "Being on board HMS Glasgow and working alongside our shipbuilding partner for the very first time the ship entered the water to ensure a successful float off was an immensely proud moment."

Commander Phil Burgess, HMS Glasgow's Senior Naval Officer, added: "I

was delighted to have the opportunity to be on board HMS Glasgow for the very first time the ship entered the water – a momentous milestone in the life of any ship.

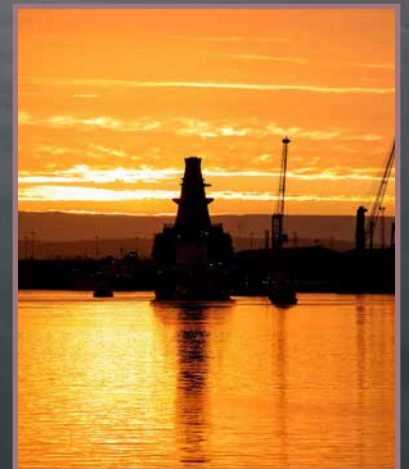
"My team and I worked alongside our BAE industry colleagues for an extended period of time to ensure float off was a success.

"I'm now looking forward to having the ship alongside at the BAE Scotstoun yard where she will commence the next stage of her build. This will see the commissioning and setting to work of the myriad systems that will enable this first of class Type 26 frigate to deliver world-class leading capability when the ship enters service."

Now in Scotstoun, Glasgow will undergo further outfitting, testing and then commissioning.

She is the first of eight City-class frigates to be delivered to the Royal Navy. HMS Cardiff and HMS Belfast are also under construction with Glasgow expected to enter service in the late-2020s.

Pictures: LPhoto Bill Spurr





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MEDWAY'S MANIC MONTHS ON HURRICANE ALERT

CREW of the Royal Navy's permanent presence in the Caribbean can take a little breather after three months constantly on alert: the hurricane season is over.

Patrol ship HMS Medway has been roaming the region since September, ready to respond in an instant should one of the island communities – British Overseas Territories especially – require assistance in the wake of a tropical storm.

The hurricane season traditionally runs from June 1 until the end of November, generally peaking mid-August through to mid-October.

Given the frequency and severity of those storms, the UK has at least one Royal Navy vessel on standby in the Caribbean/Gulf of Mexico/Bermuda.

Medway has been deployed in the region for two years, embarking a 'crisis response troop' – Royal Engineers of 24 Commando Regiment – during the storm season, as well emergency supplies such as bottled water, food, generators and tools to effect repairs.

Medway was activated twice in a matter of days in September in the wake of Hurricane Fiona, arriving in the Turks and Caicos Islands just 12 hours after the storm passed and then, almost immediately, responding to Hurricane Ian when it struck the Cayman Islands, turning up within four hours.

Thankfully, neither storm inflicted extensive damage to the British Overseas Territories. After Fiona, Medway and her specialist disaster-relief team helped

repair the perimeter fence around the airport and restore generators at the prison, while in Cayman only reassurance to the local populace that extra help was available if required was needed.

"Although this year's hurricane season has seen fewer storms than previous years, we have seen some intense periods of tropical cyclone development – and the Caribbean experienced the most active November for hurricanes on record," explained Petty Officer Fred Noakes, Medway's meteorologist.



"Overall, this has made for a rewarding assignment, made all the better for being able to provide assistance and support."

Between storms, the ship and her commandos have worked with island communities' disaster-relief teams to hone skills and speed-up interaction in the event of a real emergency.

The commando engineers joined islanders in the Sir Vivian Richards Stadium to celebrate independence day for Antigua and Barbuda, took part in community projects, notably fixing up a care home, and trained the Antigua and Barbuda Defence Force in basic demolitions techniques, from classroom theory to practical demonstrations, including breaching techniques – to force an entry.

Capt Sebastian Cooke RE, Crisis Response Troop Commander, said his team had thoroughly enjoyed the rich experience of spending several months at sea – and ashore – with Medway.

"My Troop have enjoyed the opportunity to land ashore and provide

support and assistance following Hurricanes Fiona and Ian.

"The versatility and adaptability of the Troop enabled a wide range of support tasks to be completed under tough conditions, helping these islands to quickly recover from storm damage.

"Our time embarked in HMS Medway has been both exciting and rewarding during what has proven to be a busy deployment."

Between island hopping and storm watching, the ship joined US authorities in the international fight against drug trafficking, bagging a £24m haul of cocaine when Medway intercepted – and subsequently blew up – a go-fast laden with bales of illegal narcotics.

After a short spell of maintenance in Jacksonville, Florida, Medway will resume her patrols with the emphasis on counter-narcotics work, reassurance visits to the numerous British territories and preparing for the 2023 hurricane season.

"This has been a busy but productive deployment, with HMS Medway seeing her most successful September to date, providing two humanitarian aid and disaster-relief support packages and interdicting £24m of cocaine while operating under tough conditions with adverse residual weather impacting our operations," said Commander Chris Hollingworth, the ship's Commanding Officer.

"These successes demonstrate the professionalism and dedication of my ship's company and highlight the value we are able to add to the Caribbean region. We now look ahead to replicating these successes during Core Hurricane Season 2023."



Pictures: LPhot Gareth Smith and LPhot Juliet Ritsma



NIGHT in the land of the Rising Sun.

Still the bright lights of Yokosuka Naval Base make it possible still to just about make out the dazzle paint scheme of HMS Tamar, paying a short visit to the harbour before leaving Japan behind to

begin the next leg of her Indo-Pacific adventure.

Just a few days before, the patrol ship had shared the same waters as her sister for the first time in 12 months.

Not since a lengthy visit to Hawaii in late 2021 to prepare the pair for the rigours of a Pacific passage and roaming opposite ends of the Pacific Rim had HMS Tamar and Spey been together.

In the closing weeks of 2022, both vessels converged on Japan's home islands: Spey to take part in Keen Sword 2022, one of the region's largest military exercises; Tamar for maintenance on the back of a busy first three-quarters of 2022, most recently operating around the Philippines.

While the ship received TLC (which, sadly, ruled out her participation in Japan's International Fleet Review), her ship's company marched through the streets of Yokosuka – about 30 miles south of Tokyo – as the country marked the 70th anniversary of its Maritime Self-Defence Force (aka Navy).

Some 30,000 Japanese applauded the Tamar contingent, and marching sailors from 11 other nations, the crowds a far cry from the peace of tranquillity of the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in the suburb of Hodogaya.

It is the last resting place of more than 1,500 Commonwealth servicemen – more than 100 of them Royal Navy, many from the previous HMS Tamar, the

naval base in Hong Kong, who died in captivity.

Eight decades on and relations with Japan have turned about 180 degrees; Tokyo is one of our key allies and partners in the region, its Navy one of the RN's closest partners as Spey found taking her place in Keen Sword.

With 36,000 military personnel, 30 ships and 370 aircraft participating – drawn primarily from Japan and the USA, with Australia and Canada also joining in, the ten-day exercise is a major test of forces by land, sea and air.

This year the ten-day military workout focused on a combined response to armed attacks aimed at testing the readiness of participating countries, and simultaneously improving the ability of the participating nations to work seamlessly together.

"For the crew of HMS Spey, the opportunity to take part in Exercise Keen Sword 23 offered countless opportunities to further develop our ability to work together and continue our great working relationship with the Japanese Maritime Self Defence Force and the many other allies and partners participating in the exercise," said Lieutenant Commander Bridget Macnae, the ship's Executive Officer.

Initially, Spey sailed with Japanese amphibious/landing ship JS Kunisaki, to link up with the core exercise task group.

Twenty warships were spearheaded by a Japanese attack submarine and flanked by the combined strength of

the US aircraft carrier USS Ronald Reagan and the Japanese Helicopter Destroyer JS Izumo.

"It was really impressive seeing such a large mass of warships," said warfare specialist Able Seaman Harry Cox.

"It's not every day that we get to see such a gathering of ships from so many different navies come together. Being led by a Japanese submarine with an American aircraft carrier with their full air-wing embarked, just ahead of us made me realise the sheer scale of Exercise Keen Sword."

The second stage of the exercise built up to a full-scale amphibious assault on to the island shores of Japan with HMS Spey standing coastal guard to provide protection for the larger units against small, highly-maneuvrable fast attack craft.

Meanwhile, Japanese and other partner shipping put troops, armoured vehicles, tanks and artillery ashore by helicopter, landing craft and hovercraft.

"Keen Sword has provided the opportunity for Spey to get involved in our largest multi-national exercise to date, building upon the successes and lessons learnt from previous operations with Japanese units," said Lieutenant Kyle-Davidson, HMS Spey's Operations Officer.

"In particular, it has shown that these Offshore Patrol Vessels can integrate into a joint American/Japanese amphibious task group and operate close to shore, patrolling the flanks of larger operations to police shipping and help maintain assault lanes."

'Keen Sword' was first held in 1985,

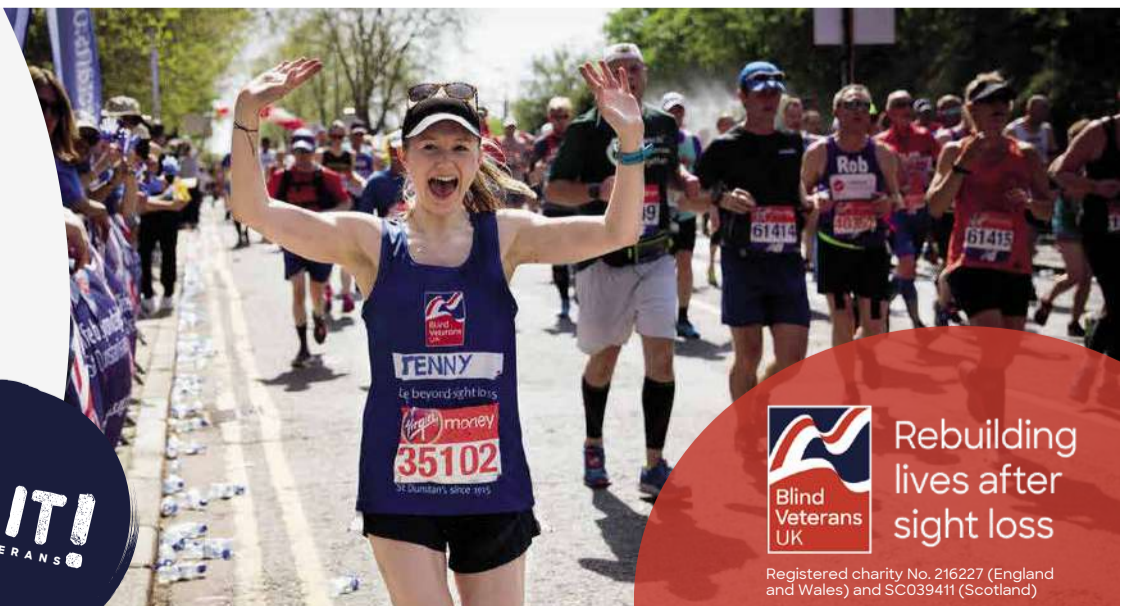
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with field training and command post exercises – also known as ‘Keen Edge’ – alternating every year. This event was the 16th such training exercise.

Her participation in Keen Sword over, Spey sailed into Kure, which allowed the ship’s company to experience the culture, traditions and hospitality of the Japanese for the first time.

“Getting the opportunity to visit Japan as part of my job in the Royal Navy has been amazing. It’s an extremely diverse country with so much history and culture, the Japanese people have been so welcoming and are incredibly gracious.”

– ET(ME) MORGAN REDMAN

Many crew headed to nearby Hiroshima to remember the victims of WW2 in the city’s Peace Memorial Park.

“Getting the opportunity to visit Japan as part of my job in the Royal Navy has been amazing,” said marine engineer Engineering Technician Morgan Redman.

“It’s an extremely diverse country with so much history and culture,

the Japanese people have been so welcoming and are incredibly gracious.

“Visiting Hiroshima was a huge privilege and the Peace Memorial Park was a very sobering experience that will stay with me for life.”

Meanwhile, five of Spey’s Young Officers visited the Maritime Officer Candidates School, Etajima, the equivalent of Britannia Royal Navy College in Dartmouth, where civilians are turned into junior naval officers.

The Brits were given a guided tour of the entire establishment, including the Ceremonial Hall where they witnessed the latest division of ratings rehearsing for their graduation (passing-out parade).

“It was a surreal experience and massively different compared to both my training at HMS Raleigh as a former rating, and at Dartmouth as a Young Officer,” said Sub Lieutenant Calum Dee, undergoing Common Fleet Time, which gives trainees an insight in general life at sea.

“Once the Japanese sailors graduate, they immediately march to the establishment jetty to join their first ship as part of a training squadron.”

Training at Etajima takes about 11 months as cadets learn not just the fundamentals of seafaring and life in the Japanese Navy, as well as fire-fighting, damage control and an extremely physical programme of rowing, martial arts and an eight-mile swim.

The college is also home to many

pieces of history, including one of the twin 41 cm (16.1in) gun turrets from the WW1 Nagato-class Dreadnought JS Mutsu and a two-man midget submarines similar to those used during the attack on Pearl Harbor.

And in the establishment’s museum the visitors saw not just artefacts belonging to Japanese naval heroes such as Heihachiro Togo (victor of Tsushima in the Russo-Japanese War) and Isoroku Yamamoto, who guided the Navy through the first two years of WW2, but also Nelson. A lock of the admiral’s hair was donated to the then Imperial Japanese Navy by the Royal Navy to commemorate the Tsushima triumph.

That victory was built in no small part on studying the methods of the Royal Navy and Nelson.

One hundred and 20 years later it’s the Royal Navy learning from its hosts across the region as it seeks to re-build its knowledge of the Indo-Asia-Pacific region - until the arrival of Tamar and Spey, there’s been no permanent presence here since Hong Kong was returned to China.

Among those eager to know more is First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key, who visited Tamar to learn about the ship’s Pacific mission... and to learn from the ship’s company about their experiences on what is regarded as one of the RN’s most rewarding (and demanding) deployments.

The Japanese element of Tamar adventure is over for now. After sailing from Yokohama – where Spey underwent her own maintenance

period

– Tamar paid a brief visit to Yokosuka for a final pit stop to take on supplies... and to take on Yokohama Country and Athletic Club on the football pitch (the Brits won 5-4) before the next leg of her mission.

“Our time in Japan is complete,” said Commander Teilo Elliot-Smith, Tamar’s Commanding Officer. ‘A maintenance period, crew rotation, defence engagement, sports, the International Fleet Review and Remembrance Parade. Such an amazing opportunity to experience the awesome sights and culture of this beautiful country.”

The emphasis in the coming months will be on the Indo in Indo-Pacific as Tamar concentrates her efforts further west, beginning with her first visit to Brunei.

With thanks to Lt Cdr Shaun Roster



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WINGING IT



HMS Queen Elizabeth and her Carrier Strike Group have returned home after three weeks of flying operations in the North Sea and off Scandinavia.

The fleet flagship was at the heart of a task force consisting of five warships, F-35B Lightning jets from 617 Squadron and Wildcat and Merlin helicopters.

HMS Diamond, HMS Kent, HMS Richmond and RFA Tidesurge formed a protective ring of steel around the aircraft carrier as jets and helicopters flew sorties round the clock, day and night.

The group stopped in Oslo, Norway's capital, to reaffirm bonds with one of the UK's closest NATO and Joint Expeditionary Force (JEF) allies before continuing training in the North Sea on their journey back to Portsmouth – with more fast jet pilots qualifying to

operate from the carrier.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and her Strike Group made up the northern 'arm' of the Royal Navy's Operation Achillean, which has also seen an amphibious task group spearheaded by HMS Albion exercising in the Mediterranean.

Commodore Angus Essenhigh, Commander of the UK Carrier Strike Group, said: "Operation Achillean has been an excellent opportunity to bring together and exercise the complex array of capabilities that make up the UK Carrier Strike Group.

"With our exceptional people at its core I have been very pleased at what the CSG has achieved in a small space of time often in challenging weather.

"With many new faces across the Strike Group, we have gelled as a team and reset our currency, conducting safe yet rigorous training alongside our

bilateral, JEF and NATO partners.

"A fantastic visit to Oslo to reaffirm the strength of the bilateral relationship with Norway was the icing on the cake."

HMS Diamond spent time attached to the aircraft carrier providing air defence. The Type 45 destroyer used her powerful array of sensors in exercises with RAF Typhoons, US Air Force F-15s and F-35As (the land-based variant of the stealth fighter), providing a great test for fighter controllers on board.

Norwegian F-35As were also in action, working with 617 Squadron's F-35Bs in joint exercises over the North Sea, while the US Navy's USS Paul Ignatius and French ship FS Aquitaine operated with the Strike Group, sharing information as part of the security mission.

UK Carrier Strike Group, Commander Air Group, Captain Mark Sparrow, said: "Operation Achillean has





been a great opportunity for the Carrier Air Wing to continue the development of UK Carrier Strike following on from last year's worldwide deployment.

"In particular, the Lightning Force have generated additional 'carrier qualified' pilots whilst also having operated with Norwegian F-35 in the North Sea.

"I am extremely pleased with how the whole team from HMS Queen Elizabeth, Carrier Strike Group and the Air Wing have safely and effectively integrated over a relatively short period."

Submarine hunters HMS Richmond and HMS Kent protected the flagship from threats beneath the waves while tanker RFA Tidesurge provided crucial support with replenishments, keeping the group fuelled and ready for action.

Meanwhile, Royal Marines of 42 Commando and Merlin helicopters from 845 Naval Air Squadron were

involved in an exercise scenario – known as Joint Personnel Recovery – to rescue a downed pilot and equipment from behind enemy lines (*more on page 23*).

The helicopter squadrons were also busy. 825 Naval Air Squadron carried out winning training for search and rescue sorties, while anti-submarine warfare Merlins from 820 Naval Air Squadron worked closely with a P8 patrol aircraft from RAF Lossiemouth.

Wildcat helicopters from 815 Naval Air Squadron trained with HMS Diamond, continuing development of the anti-ship Martlet missile.

There was also an appearance for Chinook helicopters from 7 Squadron from RAF Odiham as they refreshed their ability to operate with the aircraft carrier.

Pictures by LPhoto Kevin Walton

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SUN SETS ON KENT'S MISSION



10,000 NAUTICAL MILES, 6,000 EGGS, 8,000 RASHERS OF BACON...

HMS Kent has returned to Portsmouth after escorting HMS Queen Elizabeth during fast jet operations in the North Sea.

The Type 23 frigate is well-accustomed to protecting the aircraft carrier after accompanying her during the far-reaching Carrier Strike Group deployment in 2021 to the Indo-Pacific and back.

HMS Kent was back at the flagship's side over the last month, providing protection from threats beneath the waves as F-35B Lightning jets and helicopters carried out flying operations from the 65,000-tonne carrier's flight deck.

The frigate joined HMS Queen Elizabeth in Oslo for a high-profile visit which underlined the UK and Norway's enduring friendship.

Away from duties with the carrier, Kent has

steamed more than 10,000 nautical miles on various tasking and on large-scale exercises alongside NATO allies off the western and southern coasts of the UK.

Commander Jez Brettell, Commanding Officer of Kent, said: "This varied and busy deployment has demonstrated the characteristic 'can do' attitude of Kent's ship's company and I am very pleased with the ship's positive impact to all tasking.

"This period of leave is well-earned before another busy year in 2023."

Kent's sailors were kept fueled with 6,000 eggs, 8,000 rashers of bacon and 470 loaves of bread consumed during their hectic schedule.

It all started at the end of September with the biggest military exercise in the UK, with 11,000 sailors, soldiers and aircrew waging a 12-day 'war' around the British Isles.

Kent operated across a large section of the western and southern coasts of the UK, working closely with several NATO ships including US Navy warships USS Roosevelt and Italian destroyer ITS Andrea Doria.

The ship's next task was to conduct Operational Capability Confidence Checks (OCCC), essentially an 'MOT' to optimise Kent's weapons and sensors, at the NATO Forces Sensors and Weapon Accuracy Check Site (FORACS) facility in Stavanger, Norway.

A thorough week of dynamic tests and trials ensued, with particularly long days for the Warfare and Weapons Engineering teams, between the picturesque fjords which tested the range and accuracy of all of the ship's communications fit, navigation aids, radars, sonars, detection equipment and weapons.

Upon completion of the long week of trials,

the ship's company made best use of the weekend alongside in Stavanger after a busy first stage to the deployment including the energetic

Four-hour hike to the top of Pulpit Rock.

Following a period of submarine hunting, and a period alongside in HMNB Clyde which enabled the ship to take on essential stores, Kent visited Amsterdam.

Meeting up with HMS Queen Elizabeth thereafter, an intense period of exercises ensued, including fast jet operations, and integration with the Carrier Strike Group (CSG).

The weather in the North Sea in autumn was not always kind and the ship's company did well to fight through while not always feeling their best.

HMS Kent will begin to work back up to full operations this month.

TOURISTS were enthralled by performances from the Royal Marines Band across iconic sights in Rome as a Royal Navy task group paid a five-day visit to Italy.

HMS Albion is currently spearheading an amphibious task group on the Royal Navy's European security mission, Operation Achillean, which has also seen fleet flagship HMS Queen Elizabeth lead a force for flying operations in the North Sea.

As the three-month deployment reaches its conclusion, Albion stopped in Italy to host events, including a visit from Defence Secretary Ben Wallace and welcoming a group of diplomats from the Baltic and North America in support of Ukraine.

For sailors and Royal Marines it was an opportunity to visit Rome and their trip to the Eternal City included 26 members of the Royal Marines Band who performed at sights including The Colosseum, Spanish Steps and Pincio Terrace.

"It has been an amazing experience for the band to perform in Rome, the reception from the local crowd has been great," said Lance Corporal Frank Rochford.

"I particularly enjoyed playing the bagpipes at the Spanish Steps which displays the unique capability of the Royal Marines Band Scotland, and just before St Andrew's day too."

The band delighted the crowds with a 'Beat the Retreat' and a selection of famous music, which included a rendition from the film *Gladiator*. The band also played the national anthems of Italy and the United Kingdom, marking the friendship between the two NATO allies.

The musicians then crossed the Piazza di Spagna and assembled at the foot of the 18th-Century Spanish Steps for sea shanties and James Bond medley, including the iconic theme tune.

The Corps of Drums then conducted their dramatic synchronised routine at unusually close quarters for the watching public, with the four drummers displaying their impeccable timing and choreography.



Members of the Royal Marines band play in front of The Colosseum in Rome

ARE YOU NOT ENTERTAINED?



Members of the Royal Marines band perform at the Spanish Steps in Rome



A Royal Marines Landing Craft heads back to HMS Albion after a service for the Battle of Anzio
Pictures by LPhoto Finn Hutchins

The band might have saved the best piece till last, as bagpiper LCpl Rochford stepped forward and began a short introductory solo which evolved into a perfectly-pitched riff, with the rest of the band joining in to create a brilliant Scottish cover version of the song *Wake Me Up by Avicii*.

Commanding Officer of HMS Albion, Captain Simon Kelly, said: "I am very grateful to the Italian public for their warm welcome to our sailors and Royal Marines. Being able to bring the Royal Marines Band Scotland to the beautiful city of Rome has been a career highlight for me, and I am very proud of how they have performed across a series of performances."

His Majesty's Ambassador to Italy, Lord Edward Llewellyn, is also HMS Albion's Honorary Captain and spent several short periods at sea with his affiliated ship. He hosted members of the ship's company at his residence in recognition of their efforts on the deployment.

"Watching the Royal Marines Band play in front of the Colosseum and the Spanish Steps was an unforgettable experience – not just for me, but I think for many Romans and many tourists too. Thank you, HMS Albion: fair winds and following seas as you head home."

Berthed in Civitavecchia, the ship supported several high-profile events for the British Embassy during her stay, including a function for British and Italian industrial leaders, an ambassadors' dinner with Baltic and North American diplomats in support of Ukraine, and a visit from Defence Secretary Ben Wallace, who was in Italy to meet the Italian Defence Secretary Guido Crosetto.

There was also a remembrance service at Anzio to commemorate the Allied landings that took place on 22 January 1944 as part of Operation Shingle.

Fifty four members of the ship's company arrived at Anzio harbour on two of HMS Albion's landing craft. Together with ambassador Edward Llewellyn, they paid their respects to the 27,500 service personnel who were killed, captured or wounded during the operation which took place during the Second World War.

Operation Shingle, often referred to as the Battle of Anzio, saw a joint Anglo-American force land close to Rome in a daring attempt to break the deadlock along the Gustav Line halfway between Salerno and the capital.

The Royal Navy and the US Navy were heavily involved in Operation Shingle as part of Task Force 81, commanded by Rear Admiral Frank J Lowry US Navy.

Task Force 81 consisted of two headquarters ships, two submarines, four cruisers, 28 destroyers, 103 minor warships and 241 landing ships and craft. During the operation a number of Royal Navy ships were lost including the cruiser HMS Spartan, the destroyer HMS

Janus and the landing ship LST-366.

Without the logistical and naval gunfire support of the Royal Navy and US Navy ships the Allies would not have been able to sustain the Anzio bridgehead. The lessons learned from Anzio directly fed into Allied planning for Operation Overlord in Northern France on 6 June 1944.

The remembrance service included a wreath laying ceremony at Anzio's war memorial plaque. HMS Albion's Commanding Officer Captain Kelly and His Majesty's Ambassador then attended a second service at the Anzio War Cemetery.

Over the past three months HMS Albion has led the Royal Navy's amphibious task group in an operation across the Eastern Mediterranean, North Africa and the Levant region. The visit to Italy was one of the last stops before the ship returns to its home port of Devonport.

Before her final leg home there was one last piece of business to conduct in Gibraltar as Captain Marcus Hember took command from Captain Kelly.

Capt Hember has previously commanded Type 45 destroyers HMS Daring (2017) and HMS Diamond (2014-16), as well as patrol vessels HMS Severn (2011-13) and HMS Clyde (2013).

He has been in command on deployments to the Middle East and the Black Sea, as well as the Falkland Islands and sub-Antarctic South Georgia.

He said: "I am delighted to be assuming command of HMS Albion, which is a hugely versatile and capable ship. In achieving so much throughout Operation Achillean, she has again lived up to her reputation as one of the most successful ships the Royal Navy."

"Able to transport Royal Marines, equipment and supplies by air and sea thanks to flight and vehicle decks and floodable well dock, HMS Albion is ready to fulfil a host of different roles, including acting as a command platform, carrying out amphibious operations, and providing humanitarian aid and disaster relief."

As he departed, Capt Kelly said: "It has been a privilege to command HMS Albion for the past two years."

"Most recently, our Operation Achillean deployment has demonstrated the utility and relevance of the Royal Navy's amphibious capabilities and has showcased HMS Albion's ability to act as the command platform for the Littoral Response Group (North).

"Once again, I have been made immensely proud of the breadth of achievement of our people; both those who serve in Albion and more widely across the Task Group. I wish Captain Marcus and the rest of HMS Albion's ship's company every success in the years ahead."

In all, the Littoral Response Group sailed a combined 48,459 miles and visited more than a dozen countries across three continents before returning home.

ROYAL Navy helicopters and Royal Marines pounced on their own vessel during pulsating boarding operations training alongside Algerian counterparts.

RFA Argus has been on a Mediterranean mission as part of an amphibious task force – known as Littoral Response Group North – spearheaded by HMS Albion.

The aviation support/casualty ship – with its spacious flight deck for the task group's air group of Merlin and Wildcat helicopters – has been at the heart of the action as it worked closely with NATO allies and partners across the region.

The ship sailed into the historic port of Algiers, where dignitaries from NATO nations and distinguished guests were hosted, before helicopters and Royal Marines sprang into action alongside the Algerian Armed Forces.

Argus became a 'vessel of interest' for the maritime interdiction exercises – military speak for complicated boarding operations of various types which involves teams from 42 Commando taking control of a ship.

A Wildcat maritime patrol helicopter from 847 Naval Air Squadron was first to enter the fray, sweeping the ocean with her radar to localise the target vessel and assess the conditions, laying the foundations of the boarding operation.

Another Wildcat swooped in with a sniper team from 42 Commando embarked. They provide 'top cover' for commandos below, keeping a sharp eye on the battlefield for anything which may threaten their comrades. The snipers are also able to shoot out the engines of drugs-running 'go-fast' speed boats.

Once the vessel was identified as 'unfriendly' the Wildcat crew instructed small boats from 47 Commando, carrying teams from 42 Commando and Algerian counterparts to begin their approach and start boarding.

With the flight deck quickly secured, an Algerian Super Lynx and a Wildcat moved in, allowing marines to fast rope onto the deck and overwhelm their 'enemy'.

"This kind of joint training – with different nations throughout the Mediterranean including North Africa – has been a huge part of the response group's role over the past three months," says Lieutenant Commander Mathew Askham, Tailored Air Group Commanding Officer.

"These interactions are crucial to developing relationships with our military counterparts and allows us to learn from each other for future joint operations."

Argus then went to Vigo in Spain for her final port visit before heading home for Christmas following an intensive workout in Algeria.

The ship is affiliated to Vigo after she rescued twelve Spanish sailors from the Delfin Del Mediterraneo, which sank 248 miles south west of Cape St Vincent in 1998. Argus raced to the scene and launched her helicopter and, despite waves of up to 40ft, was able to rescue the sailors.

The ship received the Silver Medal of Galicia for her crew's actions.

While in Vigo, Argus hosted dignitaries and sailors visited the Villagarcia Cemetery, the British Naval Cemetery.

Royal Navy aviators are raising funds to bring a stray puppy they befriended while deployed in Montenegro home to the UK.

Aircrew and engineers from 845 Naval Air Squadron took in the pooch during a storm and named her 'KT'.

KT was very fond of cable ties and would spend all day around the Merlin helicopter while work was carried out to replace the engine at Podgorica Military Air Base.

The navy fliers were back on operations after four days of repairs but did not go to forget about their new four-legged friend.



Royal Marines approach RFA Argus during boarding operations training in Algeria

They now plan to bring her home to their base at RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset and make her the squadron's mascot.

"Before leaving Montenegro a few of us got in touch with a local charity and also liaised with a few of the Montenegro Air Force (MAF) pilots about getting her back to the UK and giving her a proper home," said Petty Officer 'Frank' Stapleton of 845 Naval Air Squadron.

"As she wasn't scared of noisy aircraft, having spent her short life so far on an airfield which happened to be the home of the MAF and the

international airport for Montenegro, we feel she'll be right at home on 845 NAS."

He added: "We have set up a go fund me page and have already raised over £1,000.

"We believe with will probably take somewhere close to £2,000 to fully vaccinate her and transport her back to the UK.

"She is currently with a Montenegrin dog foster family organised by the charity that we have vetted, and has already started receiving the required medical treatment and care needed to pass customs."

CHEERS ALGIERS



DEFENDER'S EPIC

HMS Defender has put the seal on an epic 2022 after returning to Portsmouth from security operations in the Mediterranean.

The Type 45 destroyer has sailed more than 27,000 nautical miles this year, operating in the high north, the Baltic and, more recently, further south in the Med with HMS Albion's task group in the region.

Sailors have reacted to short-notice activations and been involved in three major operations across an epic 2022.

Commander Peter Evans, HMS Defender's new Commanding Officer, who arrived while the ship was in Gibraltar earlier this month, said: "Although I've only recently joined Defender, it's clear that the focus, ethos and esprit de corps is something special on board.

"Her accomplishments this year read like several ships' worth of activity and having now seen the team first hand, I can see it is well earned.

"I am proud to be part of her ship's company and excited for what 2023 will bring. Defender continues to be the air defender of choice for both the UK and our allies and has had a truly impressive 2022."

Defender returned home yesterday after

being deployed to the Mediterranean since mid-September, working with NATO allies and partners on a European security mission.

The ship operated closely with the Hellenic Navy, including on air defence exercises – a particular area of expertise for the Type 45 destroyer with its cutting-edge sensors and weaponry, including Sea Viper missiles, capable of knocking out moving targets out of the sky from up to 70 miles away.

She sailed into the Adriatic Sea to meet up with the US Navy's supercarrier, USS George HW Bush, as part of a multinational force which included ships from Turkey, France and Spain.

This phase of her deployment was intensive but also invaluable as she worked closely with the US carrier and her task group, and also NATO's leading force in the region – Standing NATO Maritime Group 2.

Defender carried out exercises in a range of naval warfare over four days before heading to Split, Croatia, later working with Croatian warship Vukovar before heading for Taranto in Italy – all after escorting Albion, RFA Argus and RFA Mounts Bay into Bar in Montenegro.

The early months of 2022 saw Defender deploy

to the frozen north as part of the ring of steel surrounding aircraft carrier HMS Prince of Wales as the largest NATO exercises in the High North in 30 years took place.

Known as Cold Response, the Norwegian-led exercises saw 27 nations and 30,000 troops converge on the region in a showing of military might.

As April began, Defender remained in the High North and was leading her own task group in the region, which included Arleigh Burke-class destroyer USS Gravelly and tanker RFA Tidesurge.

On completion of operations, Defender visited the Faroe Islands and worked closely with the Danish ship HDMS Vædderen.

May and June saw Defender head into the Baltic with NATO allies, showing the alliance's staunch commitment to the region's security during the largest military exercises there this year.

Defender provided the firepower and leading-edge technology, while six of the smallest craft in the Royal Navy's inventory – Archer, Charger, Explorer, Exploit, Ranger and Smiter – provided the speed, agility and numbers to swarm around participants in Baltops 22, which involved 47 warships from 16

nations, including Sweden and Finland.

More than 7,000 military personnel were put through their paces in operational training across 13 days designed to forge closer bonds between NATO allies and partners and protect the security and prosperity of the Baltic and its nations.

The NATO ships and around 90 aircraft – the most ever on Baltops – pitted their wits against each other in testing warfare scenarios, battling threats beneath, on and above the waves.

Defender was involved in anti-submarine warfare exercises but also operated in her main role in air defence, including leading Task Force Six Four (CTF 64) of the US Sixth Fleet, which deals in defending against attacks by missiles and fighter jets.

Warships from NATO partners, Finland and Sweden, were for the first time in control of ships in a NATO task group, leading the way during mock battles against surface and underwater threats.

The 51st Baltops exercises also coincided with the 500th anniversary of Sweden's Navy and, to mark this milestone, the Swedish hosted the pre-sail conference in Stockholm. Once Baltops wrapped up, Defender and the six P2000 patrol ships headed to Kiel, Germany.

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Merlin helicopters from 845 Naval Air Squadron fly 42 Commando Royal Marines 'behind enemy line' as part of the rescue exercise

Pictures by LPhot Kevin Walton

IT'S TIME FOR

THE RESCUERS

AN aircraft is down behind enemy lines. The pilot has ejected. The secrets of the cutting-edge aircraft could fall into the hands of an adversary.

A rescue operation is launched from aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth.

At the spearhead is a team of specialist Royal Marines from 42 Commando and Merlin helicopters of 845 Naval Air Squadron. They are the extraction team.

Their daring mission is to secure potentially sensitive equipment and save the downed pilot, flying into a potentially dangerous and uncertain situation surrounded by the enemy.

Supporting them are F-35B Lightning jets from 617 Squadron and a Wildcat from 815 Naval Air Squadron who clear the way for the extraction team, taking out adversary aerial and surface threats.

On ship, the battle staff from Commander UK Carrier Strike Group direct the operation.

A Maritime Medical Emergency Response Team or MMERT are ready to fly in and provide on-the-spot life-saving care to the isolated pilot.

This is Joint Personnel Recovery (JPR), a growing capability which involves many different elements from the Royal Navy, RAF and Royal Marines being drawn together to react quickly and complete the mission, and most importantly bring people and equipment back to safety.

Building on exercises in Guam in 2021 during the Carrier Strike Group deployment to the Indo-Pacific and training alongside the US Marines Corps in Iceland, a JPR scenario was organised as HMS Queen Elizabeth operated in the North Sea during her three-week deployment to Norway and back.

The two-day rescue mission took place off the coast of Northumbria between the North Sea and RAF Spadeadam in Cumbria.

Critical planning took place first of all before jets were dispatched to secure the airspace and take out 'targets' to pave the way for 42 Commando and 845 NAS to move in.

The commandos recovered the pilot and equipment, with the 'military air ambulance' MMERT able to fly in to assess injuries before transferring back to HMS Queen Elizabeth for further care.

Many lessons were learnt during the training which will help improve this growing capability in the future for the Royal Navy.

Lieutenant J Vasquez, who is from the US Navy but part of the UK Carrier Strike Group Air Wing Training, said: "I was pleased to have managed this exercise, allowing our

forces to demonstrate the Joint Personnel Recovery capability under challenging conditions.

"Our aviators and commandos, with support of the surface units, put on a superior display in professionalism and tactical competence.

"These men and women ensure that our equipment will stay secure and that our teammates will return with honour. Every time we sharpen our JPR toolset, we are reminding any of our isolated personnel that they will be recovered."

Commodore Angus Essenhigh, Commander of the UK Carrier Strike Group, added: "It's great to be part of this first demonstration of its type for UK Defence, bringing together many individual aspects of the Carrier Strike Group in support of our people, working at range."



Royal Marines from 42 Commando load up onto a Merlin helicopter

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

 **Naval Children's Charity**

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

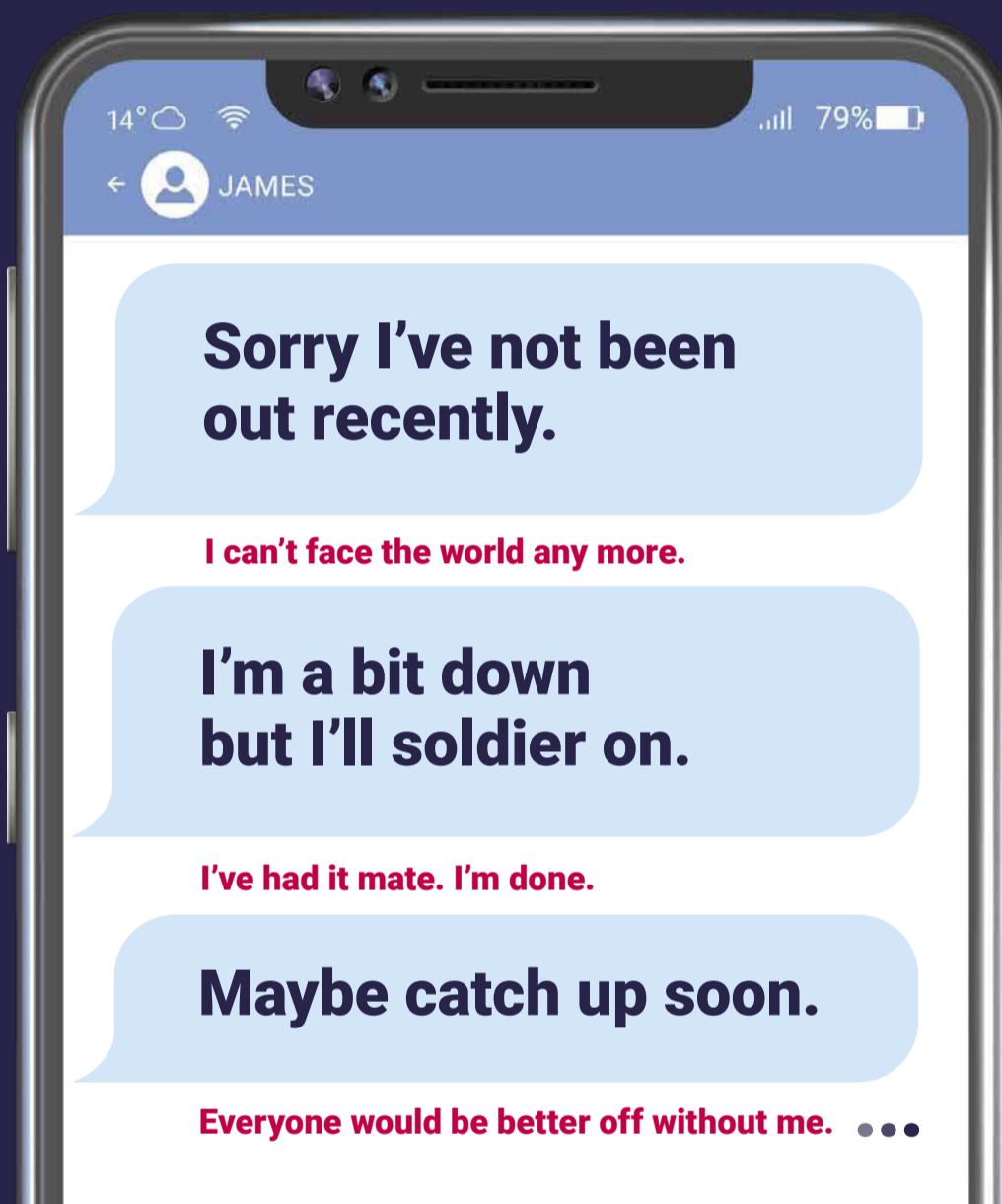


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Vital help for RN parents

AS PART of its commitment to Royal Navy families, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) is funding a new offer specifically designed to support parents.

Royal Navy parents can now access three parenting therapy programmes that will help towards coping with circumstances that can be especially challenging for interparental relationships.

Free and confidential therapeutic sessions aim to give each parent clear and practical strategies to help nurture strong, healthy relationships within the family and reduce interparental conflict.

Sessions are delivered by two organisations with long-standing professional experience of supporting parents and families over the past ten years.

Relate and Home-Start South and West Devon have been contracted to provide these sessions by the Government as part of a nationally-funded pilot programme, and thanks to RNRMC funding they are now available to all parents in Royal Navy families, regardless of location.

Stephen is a veteran, who has taken part in the programmes to help improve his relationship with his children as his marriage broke down.

He said: "Before doing the course I was skeptical, but I am prepared to try anything to be a better parent and I really did get so much out of it."

"I'm really grateful to the facilitators, who did

a great job in keeping the balance right between allowing people the space to confide in each other about the challenges they were facing, but without it becoming all about the individual. We were all able to benefit from each other's experiences."

How are sessions delivered?

The programmes are delivered digitally via Microsoft Teams or Zoom. Parents can access them together or individually. This also allows programmes to be accessed from any location.

Who are the programmes designed to help?

- Parents of a child with challenging behaviors, or diagnosed with ADHD or autism
- Parents who are in conflict, thinking of separating, or separated and who want to reduce conflict in their relationship whether they remain together or apart
- Parents who are struggling with, or are in conflict with, their child or children and want to improve their parenting relationship

Who is eligible?

- Parents where one or both are serving in the Royal Navy
- Royal Navy parents who are making the transition to civilian life, or who recently left the Royal Navy

How to find out more visit: homestart-southandwestdevon.org.uk/navy2

Grant supports veteran care

BROUGHTON House Veteran Care Village in Salford has been boosted by a £40,000 grant from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), working in partnership with Greenwich Hospital.

The grant will contribute towards the care of residents who served in the Royal Navy and the Royal Marines.

The grant has been awarded through the RNRMC's Through Life Pathway programme to improve the health, wellbeing and quality of life of veterans living at Broughton House, and towards providing counselling and welfare benefits advice to those living in the community through its Armed Forces Support Hub.

The RNRMC is a long-standing supporter of Broughton House, which has been redeveloped in a £12.5m scheme to create the UK's first Veteran Care Village.

Broughton House has cared for more than 8,000 veterans since it opened its doors to the ex-service community in 1916.

It has been transformed into a modern complex featuring a 64-bed care home and independent living apartments, an array of modern facilities, a museum and the hub.

Andrew Dinning, Royal Marines Veteran and Broughton House resident, 78, said: "My favourite thing about Broughton House is how the staff motivate us every day with quizzes and activities



and encourage us to join in. They are a delight to be with and make sure that the home and our days here are really great."

Mandy Lindley, the RNRMC's Director of Relationships and Funding, said: "Broughton House provides excellent care for Royal Navy and Royal Marines veterans in the north west, and the RNRMC is pleased to support this service once again."

"Ensuring that our elderly veterans enjoy dignity, care and comfort is part of the RNRMC's core commitment to the Royal Navy community, and our continued partnership with Broughton House is an important part of this."

Life-savers return to action

LIFE-SAVING Royal Navy helicopters will now save Ukrainians thanks to engineers who helped bring them back into service.

Veteran Sea Kings which performed Search-and-Rescue duties with 771 Naval Air Squadron are being delivered to Ukraine to help the war-ravaged country rebuild its rescue capabilities.

The much-loved helicopters were retired from RN service in 2016 (the final Jungly Sea Kings flying with the Commando Helicopter Force two years later).

Three are being donated to Ukraine as part of a broader package of support for the country in its struggle to defend itself against Russia's illegal invasion.

To ensure the aircraft were ready for renewed service, the expertise of 1710 Naval Air Squadron – the Portsmouth-based specialists who advise on modifications, improvements, repairs and a whole host of other scientific and engineering issues impacting the UK military's entire helicopter fleet – was called upon.

The squadron uses some of the most seasoned and experienced engineers in the Fleet Air Arm – and there's still Sea King knowledge around.



So a Petty Officer Air Engineering Technician who'd worked with 771 Squadron when his career began found himself toiling once more on the venerable helicopter.

"It brought back a lot of good memories to be working on a Sea King again – they are good, solid aircraft," he said.

"Working in Search and Rescue was always something I was very proud of. It's nice to think that this aircraft will be back doing what it does best."

The Squadron's Commanding Officer, Commander Nicholas Almond said his teams were "the subject matter experts" when it came to such jobs. "This task has demonstrated the flexibility and utility of the Squadron."

In addition to the engineering support, ten Ukrainian air and ground crews received training in the UK over six weeks to operate and maintain the three helicopters.

Although the Sea King first entered service in the 1960s and the last aircraft rolled off production lines in the 1980s, the aircraft continues to serve with half a dozen nations around the world.



Rehab centre's £230,000 refurb

INJURED service personnel are set to benefit from an upgrade to rehabilitation facilities at Scotland's largest military establishment.

The Primary Care Rehabilitation Facility at HM Naval Base Clyde was officially reopened after a £230,000 refurbishment which will increase its capacity to help members of the armed forces to recover from injury and illness.

Situated in Faslane's Sportsdrome, the facility underwent large scale works to reconfigure the space, including the creation of confidential areas for consultations, and upgrades to improve infection control and prevention.

Cutting the ribbon on the refurbishment was Colonel Sharon Findlay, Regional Clinical Director for Defence Primary Healthcare in Scotland, and Captain of HMS Neptune, Captain Nick Gibbons, representing the Naval Base.

Principal Medical Officer at HMNB Clyde, Surgeon Commander Mike Russell, said: "This refurbishment will allow many more Service people to access the highest quality physiotherapist and rehabilitation instructor-led care and equipment."

"It will help in patients' recovery from injury and illness and return them to fitness so that they can continue to support our defence mission."

Gillian More, Lead Physiotherapist and Facility Manger, who oversaw the refurbishment work, said: "We typically deal with over 500 new patients a year with a wide range of injuries and illnesses."

"We are delighted to have this facility and I cannot emphasise enough what a difference it makes to patient care."

The Primary Care Rehabilitation Centre has five private consultation rooms and a gym which can cater to all levels of fitness and varying injuries.

A highly trained and experienced team of five Physiotherapist and three Exercise Remedial Instructors work at the facility. Patients are offered a detailed assessment and treatment plan tailored to their individual needs with the focus on exercise-based rehabilitation.

Following the official reopening, the facility opened its doors to staff from across the Naval Base with several wellbeing and health promotion stalls available.

CLIMBER and Royal Navy diver Ginge Fullen made a mountain out of a (mole)hill as he completed his 11th climb of the highest points on British Overseas Territories.

The reservist leading diver, who aims to climb most countries' highest points, was in the British Indian Ocean Territory.

He is also trying to be the first person to climb the highest mountain in all 14 British Overseas Territories.

The British Indian Ocean Territory (BIOT), an archipelago of 58 islands covering some 640,000 sq km of ocean, is approximately halfway between East Africa and Indonesia.

"This is a unique challenge that covers the globe," said Ginge. "I had been trying for years, decades even, to visit these remote islands in the Indian Ocean."

Ginge, who spent 20 years in the regulars as a clearance diver, spent five days on the island to find the (low) high point – and the best contender

was the first hole on the nine-hole golf course.

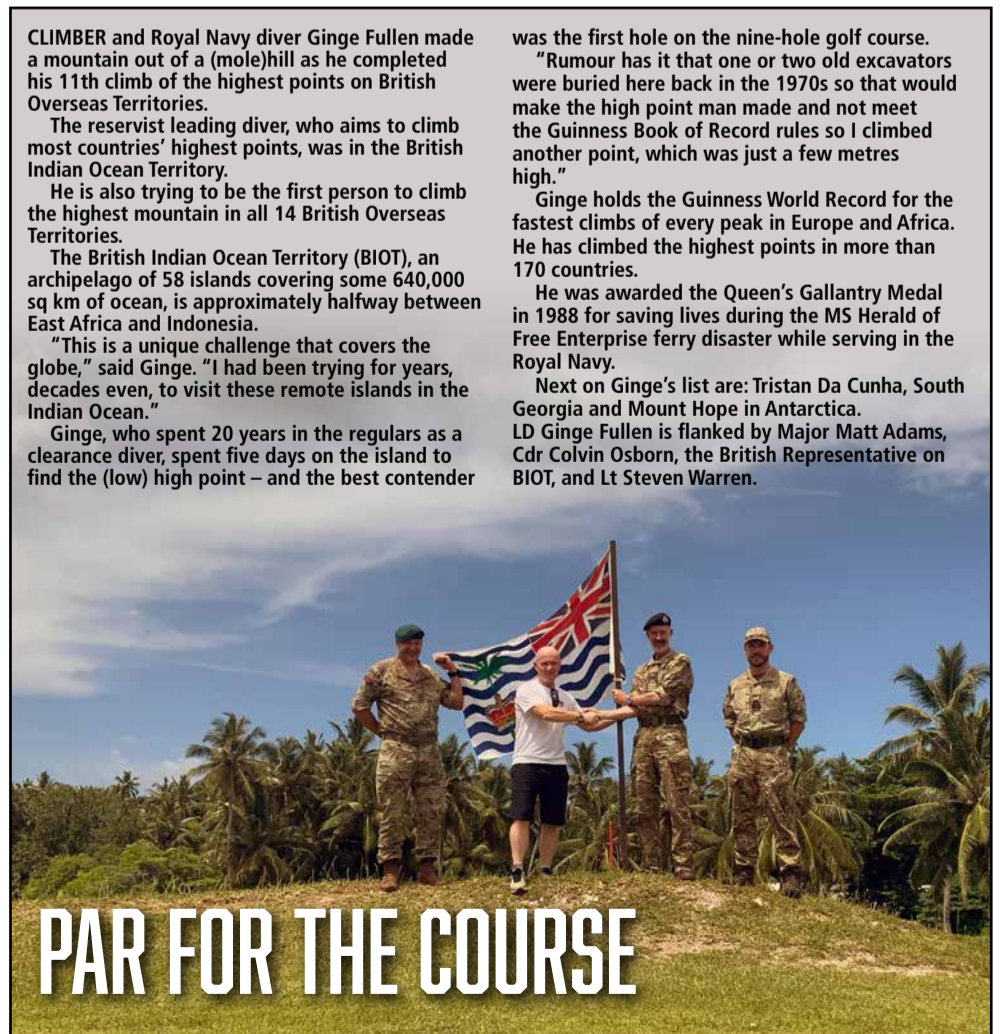
"Rumour has it that one or two old excavators were buried here back in the 1970s so that would make the high point man made and not meet the Guinness Book of Record rules so I climbed another point, which was just a few metres high."

Ginge holds the Guinness World Record for the fastest climbs of every peak in Europe and Africa. He has climbed the highest points in more than 170 countries.

He was awarded the Queen's Gallantry Medal in 1988 for saving lives during the MS Herald of Free Enterprise ferry disaster while serving in the Royal Navy.

Next on Ginge's list are: Tristan Da Cunha, South Georgia and Mount Hope in Antarctica.

LD Ginge Fullen is flanked by Major Matt Adams, Cdr Colvin Osborn, the British Representative on BIOT, and Lt Steven Warren.



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BARRY THE CAT MAKES HIS MARK AT NEPTUNE



HM NAVAL BASE CLYDE has a new centrepiece after graffiti artist “Barry the Cat” paid a visit to the military site. The interior of HMS Neptune Admin Building – the administrative hub of the Naval Base – recently underwent a major refurbishment.

The exterior, however, was a blank canvas and Base Executive Officer, Commander Peter Noblett, saw an opportunity to celebrate HMS Neptune and the Submarine Service.

“During a visit to the Drumfork Community Centre in Helensburgh I was impressed by the large murals that had been painted on many of the walls,” said Commander Noblett. “I found out that the artist was the highly regarded ‘Barry the Cat’ so I got in touch to discuss options for a new HMS Neptune sign.

“I provided some suggestions for the scene and Barry provided several stunning pieces of artwork, based on ancient statues of Neptune. The first draft had a Russian submarine in it, but that was easily sorted!”

Glasgow-based artist “Barry the Cat” – real name Barry Jenkins – merged myth, nature, and the Royal Navy’s cutting edge submarines for the final mural which encapsulates the Silent Service.

Sailors, submariners and civilian staff from the Naval Base gathered as Commodore Bob Anstey, Naval Base Commander Clyde, officially unveiled the mural.

Painting on walls for the past 25-years, Barry first became interested in graffiti art in 1986 through his love of hip-hop culture. His work has brightened up walls throughout Glasgow and the surrounding areas with several local business displaying his artwork on shutters and exterior walls.

“It took me four days to complete the mural,” said Barry the Cat. “The most difficult part was getting the beard and hair right on the depiction of Neptune.

“It’s probably the most unusual place I have ever painted a mural,” he said. “It was quite daunting coming into the high security base, but the sailors from HMS Neptune looked after me well.”

Commander Peter Noblett continued: “There was also a lot of preparation and other work required. I’d like to also thank the Babcock team who rendered the wall to create the perfect painting surface, and who upgraded the lighting.”

Following the unveiling, Commodore Anstey also took the opportunity to present Commander Noblett with a second bar to his Long Service and Good Conduct Medal, signifying 30-years of Service.

Pictures: LPhoto Bill Spurr



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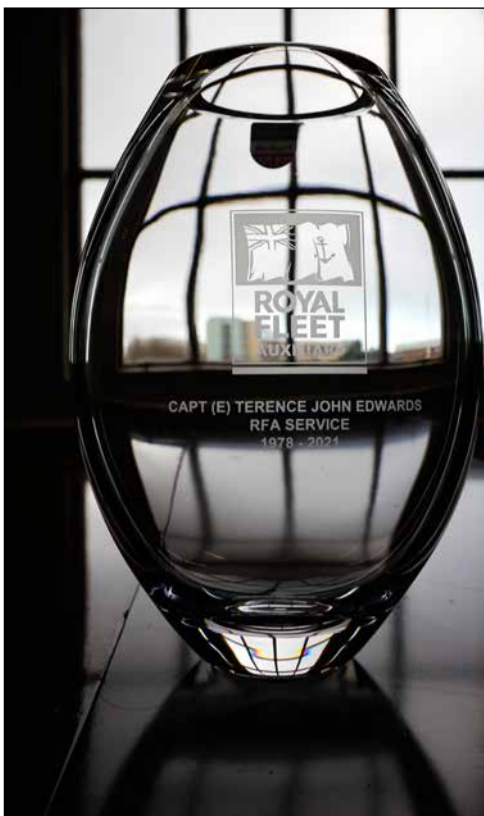


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Efforts honoured on RFA's big day



THIS is the beautiful glass vase presented to Captain (E) Terence Edwards in recognition of 43 years' in the Royal Fleet Auxiliary.

He was one of several long-standing members of the Navy's crucial supporting flotilla to receive valedictory gifts to mark tireless commitment down the years.

The head of the Service, Commodore David Eagles, presented a series of trophies, certificates, commendations and medals at the seventh RFA Service Awards in Portsmouth to those who have gone above and beyond the regular call of duty in the past 12 months

In all, Cdre Eagles presented 13 awards to sailors under his command - or who, like Capt Edwards, had recently left.

Chief Officer Steve McMenemy won the Commodore's Commendation for his hard work

Trophies/Awards

Leadership Trophy – PO(Chef) Grant Bishop
Commodore's Commendation – C/O(X) Steve McMenemy

20-Year Medals

1/O(LS) Anthony Sincok
2/O(C) Gary O'Hanlon
3/O(E) David Aird

40-Year Clasps

Capt(X) Martin Sayer
Capt (X) Karl Woodfield
C/O(LS) Colin Grylls
1/O(X) Peter Lewington

Leaver's Vases

Capt(E) Terence Edwards
1/O(LS) Michael Tyndell
C/O(LS) Colin Grylls
3/O(E) David Aird

and commitment during tanker RFA Tideforce's Fleet Operational Sea Training (FOST).

He displayed drive and determination beyond what would

usually be required onboard and continued to maintain his sense of humour and perspective while outside his comfort zone.

On receiving his award, he said: "It is indeed an honour to have been awarded the Commodore's Commendation and I am thankful to Tideforce's Commanding Officer, Captain Clarke, and Commodore Eagles for their recognition of my efforts.

"Of course, my thanks also go out to the hard-working crew of Tideforce, whose efforts ultimately sealed the reward of an overall 'Very Satisfactory' assessment for FOST."

Petty Officer Chef Grant Bishop received the RFA Leadership Trophy. Having successfully completed the RFA Leadership and Management course, the cook also attended the Coaching

and Mentoring course.

Throughout both courses he consistently displayed passion, professionalism and dedication to attaining and further developing his leadership qualities.

Commodore Eagles used the event to highlight the work of the Royal Fleet Auxiliary – the Royal Navy's support arm key to its global operations and which is frequently found on the front line itself – and give an overview of activities over the past year.

RFA Argus supported HMS Albion and the Littoral Response Group (North) in the Mediterranean while RFA Tideforce deployed alongside Royal Navy warships and worked alongside NATO allies in the Barents Sea and the High North.

Cdre Eagles said: "It is an absolute privilege to recognise and reward those who have excelled over the past 12 months and also to reflect on the careers



Artful puts the 'D&I' into Diving

CREW of the state-of-the-art hunter killer submarine HMS Artful have been singled out for their efforts to promote diversity on board.

They say their efforts over the past 18 months – when the Faslane-based nuclear submarine has been heavily engaged on operations – have made it a better place to live and work... and a more effective military machine.

Judges at the annual Women in Defence awards agreed, presenting the boat with the Inclusive Teamwork Award for its efforts.

From March 2021 Artful's team began developing what has been described as "a modern approach to inclusivity".

While preparing for operations, the boat held self-generated forums on key topics of inclusivity, empowering crew from diverse backgrounds to challenge archaic opinions, educating shipmates in the process.

As well as ensuring Artful remained at the top of her game on patrols, the continued efforts in inclusivity training – and the generation of a reasonable challenge culture – resulted in the Faslane-based boat receiving a number of RN awards for engineering and operational excellence.

While some submariners were sceptical initially, crew realised they could talk about such issues, and challenge prejudices where necessary. It led to increasing interest in diversity and inclusion 'hot topics' with crew delivering presentations based on personal experiences.

And presentations – dubbed 'A cup of D&I', 'A Pint of D&I' and 'A Cocktail of D&I' – were designed to generate discussion on key topics of diversity and inclusion.

The net result was a drop in disciplinary issues to "unprecedentedly low" levels while crew from an array of diverse backgrounds maximised their output, enabling professional development at both the unit and individual levels.

The boat's leading medical assistant and a senior rate nuclear engineer collected the award on behalf of their shipmates.

"It's an honour following a period of seagoing operations with Artful to attend the Women in Defence Awards 2022, representing both my unit and the submarine service," said the LMA.

"It was inspiring meeting many strong, high achieving women and acknowledging the talents they bring to defence. I am extremely proud to be part of Artful who have deservedly been awarded this year's inclusive teamwork award."

The CPO added: "It was an honour to attend such a prestigious event and witness the recognition of Artful, who are truly leading the way with inclusion within the Submarine Service."

Elsewhere at the Women in Defence Awards, Lieutenant Commander Annabel Roberts scooped the Most Collaborative Award, having been instrumental in working with industry partners to bring HMS Dauntless back to sea after the she underwent PIP, the Power Improvement Project, which addresses the resilience of the engines and power generation driving the many hi-tech sensors, systems and



Global successes are recognised

A ROYAL Navy officer whose ship delivered blows to both drug smugglers and terrorists in 2022 has been decorated in the King's first Operational Honours for the forces.

Commander Claire Thompson (pictured right) will receive the OBE, recognition for her deeds and accomplishments captaining HMS Montrose in the Gulf.

The frigate has proved to be one of the Royal Navy's most successful and effective warships this year, with Commander Thompson and her 200-strong team of sailors and Royal Marines scoring four major drugs busts, plus two illegal arms caches.

The frigate returned to Plymouth last month after more than four years away from the UK, ahead of paying off this spring after a spell of operations in home waters and a 'goodbye tour'.

Cdr Thompson said she felt "extremely humbled" by the news she had been awarded an OBE.

"It is an incredible honour, and for me this award represents each and every one of my ship's company and their hard work, professionalism and dedication whilst deployed on operations over significant periods of the last year.

"The success of HMS Montrose over that period is well documented but the selfless commitment of the men and women who serve in her must be highlighted as without them none



of that success is possible.

"In addition to those on board there are also the families and friends we leave behind, yet who support us wholeheartedly in our endeavours and therefore also deserve to be recognised in moments such as these.

Meanwhile, the senior officer who led HMS Queen Elizabeth and the UK Carrier Strike Group 49,000 nautical miles on their maiden operational deployment



has been handed the CBE.

Rear Admiral Steve Moorhouse (pictured above) is recognised for his command of the international force of warships, F-35 Lightning jets, helicopters and a nuclear-powered submarine on their mission to the Indo-Pacific and back, during which they worked with 44 different nations, strengthening UK friendships across the globe.

"Receiving this national

recognition is humbling and I feel incredibly privileged," he said.

"However, none of the successes we saw during Carrier Strike Group 21 and the inaugural HMS Queen Elizabeth deployment would have been possible without the truly exceptional commitment from the nearly 3,500 men and women who deployed with the Strike Group at the height of Covid.

"Their professionalism, dedication, and resilience along with the unwavering support of our families underpinned all that we achieved."

Indeed, a whole host of Carrier Strike Group sailors and officers join the admiral in being recognised for their efforts during the global mission.

Chief Petty Officer Laura Perry is awarded the MBE after her tireless work in logistics, keeping the Strike Group's ten ships, submarine and 32 aircraft supplied and ready for action wherever they were in the world, overcoming challenges during the height of the pandemic.

Warrant Officer 1 Clint Wheeler is also awarded the MBE for his role keeping HMS Queen Elizabeth's complex propulsion system in full operation during the global mission.

And Petty Officer Tim Dodge, Lieutenant Commander Alexandra Harris and Leading Warfare Specialist Jake Hobday all receive the Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service for their roles in the carrier deployment.

Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE)
Rear Admiral Steve Moorhouse

Officer of the Order of the British Empire (OBE)
Commander Claire Thompson

Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE)
Chief Petty Officer Laura Perry
Warrant Officer 1 Clint

Wheeler

Queen's Commendation for Valuable Service (QCVS)
Petty Officer Timothy Dodge
Lieutenant Commander Alexandra Harris
Leading Warfare Specialist Jake Hobday
Warrant Officer 1 Chris Robbins

Thanks a million to Sid's mates

MORE than £3,000 will give families a beacon in their darkest hours, thanks to friends of a Navy sporting stalwart.

Chief Petty Officer Graham 'Sid' Street died last year after a five-year fight with bowel cancer.

A mainstay of RN rugby union on and off the pitch, Sid used his passion for sport to raise more than £250k for good causes, not least Charlie's Beach Hut in Perranporth, Cornwall.

It serves as a holiday home for families of children with life-limiting illnesses – or the families of firefighters killed or gravely wounded in the line of duty.

Sid's pals – and fellow rugby stalwarts – Lieutenant Commanders Kerry Packer and Michael 'Doc' Cox decided the best way to

honour his memory was to fundraise for his favourite cause.

The result was the M6/50 challenge: 50 hours in the saddle, cycling 'More than a Million Metres in Memory of My Mate' (hence the six Ms, nothing to do with the motorway...).

The pair chose remembrance weekend at Sid's beloved Portsmouth Rugby Club, ending in time to pay their respects at the November ceremony.

"Sid was a huge character and was always there when anyone needed help or advice," said Kerry, who works at Navy HQ in Portsmouth. "During his illness Sid raised over £250k for various cancer charities and it seemed fitting to keep his memory alive in raising funds for one of

his personal favourites, Charlies Hut.

"This was about matelots honouring the memory of oppos who have crossed the bar – we're here to support each other in all circumstances, even after our demise!"

The pair spent 17 hours in the saddle apiece. Collectively, they peddled 1,000,010 metres... 621 miles (18 more than the distance between Land's End to John O'Groats). Volunteers, including Commander Ed Moss-Ward, added another 366 kilometres to the total cycled on the machines.

Kerry was joined at the finish by Sid's widow Alison plus Steve and Karen Codling – parents of the late youngster who gave his name to the seaside retreat (pictured right).





NOW IS THE TIME: WE MUST ACT

2023 sees the Royal Navy's Climate Change and Sustainability plan take centre stage and the newly-formed team are looking to all of us to make a difference as COMMANDER SALLY WEBSTER (pictured) explains.



WHAT'S your vision for the future?

Living on a ship that stays cool in the Gulf?

Working in quiet, clean engine spaces as business as usual?

Cycling or walking to work breathing clean air?

Kids playing on clean beaches?

No longer paying for petrol or diesel?

Cheap energy bills? Going into a foreign port and not even having to do "out all gash" ...or not having to put the bins out each week – because there's just nothing to throw away?

How about tree-lined streets, gardens and green spaces? What about innovative, cutting edge technology giving us the operational advantage? How about nutritious, affordable food available to everyone, globally? How about good health, free of avoidable disease?

I'm not trying to pen a speech for a beauty pageant – but think about the planet you'd like to live in in the future, what might it look like? For my vision, everything I hope for would come about by considering the planet and making changes to the way we currently live.... so how do we get there?

We have all heard about "climate change." We know the world is becoming warmer, ice caps are melting and that the Amazon is being destroyed (almost 4.8 million acres in 2021 alone) but have we really grasped what that means for us as individuals, for our

families for the future of Defence?

Two months into my role in the Royal Navy's new Climate Change and Sustainability (CC&S) team and I am horrified at the undeniable consequences of inaction – but also excited about the alternative we could create together.

Human action is driving the world to become so unbalanced that the consequences are already irreversible. Our increasing use of fossil fuels is driving up greenhouse gas emissions.

The world currently releases 52 billion tons of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere every year; this is an emergency.

The reduction of forests and green space so important in absorbing these gases is releasing more as well as reducing the carbon stores available to hold it.

As a result, the earth is warming. Extreme heatwaves, drought and devastating flooding have affected millions and cost billions this year.

Global warming is affecting us all now – socially, economically, politically.

Climate-related disasters have jumped 83 per cent in the past 20 years: from 3,656 events (1980-99) to 6,681 since 2000.

Major floods have more than doubled and severe storms have risen 40 per cent.

As our climate continues to warm, the apocalyptic world in which we will all live will drive the mass migration of

people as they search for shelter, food, energy, livelihoods. Scarce resources will increase conflict, crash economies and fuel war and terrorism. Look around you – it's already started.

The Paris Agreement is a legally-binding international treaty on climate

on nine lines of development, all coordinated through Director Naval Staff, Adm Beattie. While the plan provides distinct workstreams, much of it will take time; time to implement new policy, acquire new equipment and place new contracts with prioritised "green" user requirements.

Despite our best efforts, much of this will not happen quickly and thus the only actions that will make a difference immediately is to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions through reducing our usage and improving our efficiency.

As Commodore Stuart Henderson (Navy Safety) rightly points out "The challenges are numerous, including financial, commercial, skills-related and organisational, but where we must start is with ourselves – each and every one of us."

Each of us needs to understand that reducing our individual contribution to greenhouse gas emissions both at home and at work whether in office or at sea – it all makes a difference.

So where can you use less energy? Create less waste? Use less water? What can you do in your mess deck, in your section, in your unit, your ship?

How can you influence your friends, your colleagues, your chain of command to consider greenhouse gas emissions and sustainability in every decision they take?

What's your vision for the future – the world you want to live?

Take every small step you can to create it – then tell us where you are being stopped and we, the Navy's CC&S team will help.

We'll also drive much of what we need to deliver in the future, but it is you and I, all of us, at every level, that can make an immediate difference now.

WHAT IS THE RN DOING?

- 2023 will see growing engagement between the Climate Change and Sustainability team's growing engagement and the RN community, promoting its work through existing networks, raising awareness and asking individuals to understand their role in the fight against climate change;
- A pan-Defence education programme will be rolled out, while FOST will look at what can be done on the frontline via Climate Change and Sustainability training, assessment and even competition between ship types;
- A new Climate Change and Sustainability Sharepoint site will provide information and initiatives, allowing you to understand – and unblock – any impediments, and share good practice;
- Opportunities to use the MyNavy App are being explored;
- RN Comms and Influence are working on a Climate Change and Sustainability plan to raise awareness and also the level of responsibility taken for emissions and waste.
- The team will grow, hoping to exploit skills from across the Naval family, especially the RNR, where skills and experience in civilian roles can benefit the RN.

“As members of the Royal Navy we need to act. We need to prepare for operations in a new world changed by our global warming.”

change, signed up to by 196 countries in 2015. It agreed to "limit global warming to below 2 degrees, preferably 1.5." Within this range, the effects of this warming will still be bad – but the worst effects will be avoided.

To achieve this, the world needs to be "net zero" by 2050... Within 27 years, we need to be absorbing more carbon than we are releasing.

As members of the Royal Navy we need to act. We need to prepare for operations in a new world changed by our global warming and concurrently play our part in preventing the climate change of any more than 1.5 degrees by 2050.

The RN has a three-phase plan to address both actions. Phase 1 focusses

WANT TO KNOW MORE?

- ▷ The new RN Climate Change and Sustainability page will be on the RN home page by January: [Navy-Climate Change and Sustainability](#) – on Sharepoint
- ▷ Join the Navy Green Network (modgovuk.sharepoint.com/sites/Navy-GreenNetwork)
- ▷ Look out for initiatives in your area and through the [MyNavy App](#).
- ▷ Contact your local Change Advocate Network (CAN) representative
- ▷ Read more from the UN on Climate Change: www.un.org/en/climatechange www.unfccc.int/cop27

Sim training extends to strike group

THE Royal Navy's carrier strike groups could prepare for future deployments by training together digitally.

Last year HMS Kent's warfare specialists were trained using their own operations room, with various battle scenarios fed into the frigate's combat systems by experts from QinetiQ and Inzpire via secure comms from Portsmouth Technology Park just outside Portsmouth.

The training allowed multiple scenarios difficult or impossible to recreate safely/accurately in real-world exercises such as at FOST or the twice-yearly Joint Warrior war games to be played out with the added benefit of Kent's team working together in their own ops room for added realism... and without the need to travel to shoreside simulators.

Known as Platform-Enabled Training Capability, the Navy wants to see whether the concept successfully delivered on Kent can be applied to part of – or an entire – carrier strike group, whether the ships are together at sea or spread around the globe.

As a result, the RN has signed a contract with QinetiQ, Inzpire and also BAE Systems – use of their 'digital twin' of the Queen Elizabeth-class combat system is vital to the success of the synthetic training while the combined industry team will simultaneously emulate the combat systems of multiple vessels across the task group – to deliver the concept demonstration phase.

As with Kent, the goal is to test warfare teams in a far more complex and realistic environment than can be represented in live training.

Captain Paul Brooks, in charge of Defence Operational Training Capability (Maritime), said the next-level synthetic collective training would ensure crews were "ready for the demands of a future warfighting environment. It will help us to understand how this capability fits into the wider training programme."

Christina Balis, Global Campaign Director, Training and Mission Rehearsal at QinetiQ added: "This next phase enables the simulation of high-end warfare and interaction between the platforms not possible in the live environment."

"In addition, enabling the crew to train while they are on deployment is more cost-effective for the Royal Navy than training ashore, as they can combine the training with other elements of the deployment."



All hail Culdrose's McHale

AIR Engineering Technician Charlie McHale has been named the RNAS Culdrose Navy Wings Young Engineer of the Year.

The 22-year-old from York was commended for his diligence during his recent draft maintaining the Merlin Mk2 helicopters of 814 Naval Air Squadron, both at the Cornish air station and at sea.

Presenting him with an award at a recent Wings Parade was Dave Paterson of Safran Helicopter Engines UK.

Albion's strength in Reserve

FIVE Royal Naval Reservists from across the UK put their day jobs on hold to ensure the success of the Service's key autumn deployment to the Med.

Mobilised from their regular jobs as lawyers, civil servants, and a quantity surveyor, they joined HMS Albion, flagship of the Littoral Response Group for Operation Achillean.

Lieutenant Commander Andrew Yong and Lieutenant Charles Aldridge, both from HMS President, acted as Ship-To-Objective-Manoeuvre (STOM) watch keepers for the entire three-month deployment.

The Royal Naval Reserve's cohort of STOM watch keepers are specialist augmentees to amphibious ships, responsible for co-ordinating the movements of Royal Marines, their vehicles, and their kit during operations.

On a deployment which took in nearly a dozen countries, they've ensured the smooth running of a 'wader' exercise with 45 Commando in Devon, a substantial offload of vehicles in support of Exercise Austere Wolf in Cyprus, and a helicopter assault by Royal Marines in Montenegro as part of Exercise Lion Strike.

Both amphibious warfare officers have also been involved in the wider work of the deployment, from helping to plan Albion's visit to Tunisia to supporting capability demonstrations for local dignitaries and military leaders. They've also acted as mentors to junior Royal Naval Reserve personnel embarking for their first time at sea.

"Being part of such an important and ambitious deployment, reinforcing the United Kingdom's relationships with NATO allies and beyond, has been an immense privilege," said Lieutenant Aldridge. "It has absolutely delivered on the 'join the navy: see the world' cliché, and highlights how reservists really do have the opportunity to serve at sea on operations alongside their regular counterparts."

Midshipman Emily Clifton, also from President, undertook her initial period of training at sea on board HMS Albion – a world away from her civilian job as Director of Protocol at the US Embassy in London. She joined the reserves last summer, completing the Accelerated Officer Programme at Dartmouth.

"It has been incredible to spend time at sea on board HMS Albion," said



Midshipman Emily Clifton takes a navigational fix

Midshipman Clifton. "It seems like only yesterday that I was in the classroom at Dartmouth learning about the theory, and now here I am seeing it all in action. The ship's company have been so



Lieutenant David Lukic tours Fort St Angelo - formerly HMS St Angelo - in Birgu, Malta

supportive, and I can apply much of what I am learning to my civilian life."

Lieutenants David Lukic and Daniel Paine are the ship's media officers. The former is a barrister from West Yorkshire normally attached to HMS Ceres in Leeds, while Lieutenant Paine is a chartered quantity surveyor from Oxfordshire, attached to HMS King Alfred in Portsmouth.

In their role as media officers they help inform the public about the exercises and engagements that the ships and Royal Marines are carrying out. They have been working closely with British Embassy staff, journalists, and press officers

in countries including Montenegro, Malta and Tunisia to promote the ships' activities in national and regional press, and on social media.

"It is a fantastic opportunity to work as a media officer at the heart of the operation," said Lieutenant Lukic. "I have been working with ships across the whole task group, including HMS Albion, Defender, RFA Argus and Mounts Bay. I have also had the opportunity to work with multiple NATO task groups across the Mediterranean which has been a particular highlight."

Port visits have also given the reservists unique opportunities to explore the history and culture of the region, not least visits to the pyramids in Egypt, the ancient city of Ephesus in Turkey, and the ruins of Carthage in Tunisia. Lieutenant Commander Yong was also able to celebrate his promotion to Lieutenant Commander by ringing the bell in HMS Albion's wardroom.

"This is a real change from the day job and I have been learning lots while living and working on board HMS Albion," said Lieutenant Paine.

"One of the attractions of joining the Navy was being able to travel to new countries and this deployment has truly delivered. Visiting Montenegro and Tunisia for the first time and getting to know the ship's company and fellow reservists has been amazing."

Captain Simon Kelly, Albion's Commanding Officer, said the specialist knowledge and skills of the reservists were vital "to make our operation a success".

He continued: "Reservists often fill unique roles, which makes their inclusion essential. I am proud of how well all of our reservists have performed during Operation Achillean, and they will continue to form a vital component of the ship's company as we move forwards."

The five RNR officers embarked on Albion for Achillean - left to right Lts David Lukic and Daniel Paine, Mid Emily Clifton, Lt Charles Aldridge and Lt Cdr Andrew Yong - pay their respects at Medjez El-Bab Cemetery in Tunisia. Among the fallen buried here, the great grandfather of Albion's Chief Petty Officer Khalid Kahn. Private Cecil Moseley was killed on January 31 1943 fighting with the Royal East Kent Regiment in the closing stages of the North African campaign.



RN backs new tech college

THE Royal Navy is at the heart of a new £13 million tech education project which opens its doors for the first time in September.

The South Coast Institute of Technology draws on the expertise and knowledge base of five Hampshire further education colleges and two universities, plus leading employers in the region – IBM, QinetiQ, Portsmouth International Port and the Royal Navy – with the goal of improving and increasing education and employment opportunities across the maritime, engineering, and digital industries.

Backed by over £13 million in funding from the Department for Education, the institute expects to welcome more than 1,000 students in its first academic year.

Cooperation between employers and industries have shaped the high-level skills courses being offered from apprenticeships to degree level, and the institute will not just welcome students looking to begin their working lives but also older men and women looking to re-train and embark on a fresh challenge.

The institute is a collaboration of five further education colleges (Fareham, Eastleigh, Brockenhurst, Isle of Wight and Havant and South Downs) and two universities (Southampton Solent and Portsmouth), with building work now under way on the respective campuses to create the facilities needed to support and host the new seat of learning/training.

Rear Admiral Jude Terry, Director of People and Training, says the new institute presents "a once-in-a-generation opportunity to tackle the higher technical skills shortage – not only in the region but nationally – and it is essential in supporting a much-needed growth in productivity, particularly in the maritime, engineering, and digital industries."

"The Navy's strong support underlines the importance that we place on skills initiatives, and we look forward to collaborating with the IoT."

Further details: visit www.southcoastiot.ac.uk or email hello@southcoastiot.ac.uk.

Amphibious reins pass to Greece

THE baton of leadership in amphibious thinking in European and Mediterranean waters has passed from Britain to Greece as experts in the most complex art of warfare gathered in Portsmouth.

The Royal Navy Warfighting Centre hosted the annual get together of senior figures involved in the European Amphibious Initiative, which allows leading European navies to share the latest thinking in amphibious/littoral strike warfare, make the best use of shared training opportunities, and harmonise tactics, techniques and procedures so they can work together seamlessly in the event of a crisis.

There are six 'full' members – UK, France, Italy, Netherlands, Spain and Greece – and associate members: Belgium, Finland, Sweden, Germany, Portugal and Turkey, all focused on improving amphibious ops.

The presidency rotates annually around the full members, with Brigadier Paul Maynard helming in 2022. He handed over to Commodore Dimitrios Gounaris of the Hellenic Navy.



Officers of principal

PRINCIPAL Warfare Officers past and present converged on the modern-day home of the branch to mark 50 years of the course which trained them.

The PWO course taught today at HMS Collingwood in Fareham traces its history back to 1972.

To mark the milestone and recognise the role PWOs have played in times of war and peace, a series of events were hosted at Collingwood – coinciding with the next generation of warfare officers graduating upon completion of Course 196.

Attendees were treated to demonstrations and briefings on close-range gunnery, navigation and the Maritime Composite Training System (MCTS) training and facilities, which drew comparisons with the infamous Cook simulators which had been used by generations at HMS Dryad.

An evening reception in the presence of Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Andrew Burns who addressed guests, underlining the Fleet's current missions around the globe and the key role the training of PWOs played in those missions.

To commemorate the landmark anniversary the Surface Warfare Association commissioned PWO50 challenge coins, issued to each course representative.

The evening culminated with a ceremonial sunset including a display by the Royal Marines Corps of Drums from RM Band Collingwood, supported by a Guard of Honour made from Phase 2 trainees of Victory Squadron.

The following day, guests were invited to attend HMS Collingwood 'period zero' training divisions to witness the current generation of trainees parading ahead of their day's instruction.

That was followed by the graduation ceremony for the latest batch of PWOs, who received their pins and course certificates from Surface Flotilla Commander Commodore Tim Neild before tucking into refreshments which included PWO50 cakes.



Ten tiffs travel in time

TEN tiffies travelled in time nearly 60 years to receive their training courtesy of HMS Sultan.

The group of ten trained as Artificer Apprentices between 1954-1964. They spent 16 months learning generic skills at Fisgard, in Torpoint, before continuing their apprenticeships in specialist trades at HMS Collingwood (Electrical), HMS Condor (Aircraft) and HMS Caledonia (Engineering, Ordnance and Shipwright).

HMS Figsard closed as a separate establishment in 1983, when it became Figsard Squadron for Artificers at HMS Raleigh.

In 2010, the final artificers passed out of HMS Sultan, which has been home to the Figsard museum since 2004... and a draw for veterans ever since.

Peter Davies spent 35 years in the RN as an Electrical 'tiff' between 1961-1996, finishing his career on Trident submarines.

"I'm very much into the nostalgia and

this is probably one of the last places where the history and mystery of artificer training is celebrated, so I'm very pleased to be here.

"Coming through Figsard was a real shock, I remember being away from home for the first time, but we were in amongst a group of guys who were all in the same boat, sharing the same experiences.

"There are so many happy memories, even in the toughest of times we had so many amazing experiences that 99 per cent of people will never go through and that's what binds us together."

The Figsard association offers us all artificers great opportunity to revisit the old times and share stories. If you are an ex-tiff

Details of the Marine Engineering Museum can be found at marine-engineering-museum.org.uk/index.html, while former tiffs can learn about the Figsard Association at www.thefigsardassociation.org.

AEW veterans mark 70 years

FIFTY years? Add another 20 and you have a weekend of celebration for veterans of Airborne Early Warning (AEW) at RNAS Yeovilton.

More than 100 people converged on the air station for Anyface 70, celebrating seven decades of the Royal Navy's 'eyes in the sky' in various guises from the Skyraider, through Gannets to 'bagger' Sea Kings and today's Merlin Crowsnest.

Guests of honour were Admiral of the Fleet Sir Ben Bathurst, instrumental in the introduction into service of the Sea King Mk2 AEW in 1982, and Commodore Andrew Rose, former CO of 849 NAS and the Anyface Association's senior serving member.

The RM Band Lympstone provided the music and the evening served as the launch for the official history of rotary wing AEW, *Eyes of the Fleet*, by naval historian Richard Scott (£25 from shop.navywings.org.uk/products/eyes-of-the-fleet-by-richard-scott).

The day after the dinner, a Service of Commemoration for AEW personnel was held at the Fleet Air Arm Memorial Church.

The AnyFace Association (Anyface is the codename for an AEW aircraft) was established in April 2020 and is open to all personnel who have served in Fleet Air Arm AEW squadrons; 849, 854, 857, 824 D Flt and now 820 ASaC.

Portland joins '82 plaque list

PORTLAND became the latest site/naval base/port which provided vital support to the fleet sent to liberate the Falklands in 1982 to recognise those hitherto unsung efforts.

A Falklands Memorial Plaque was unveiled at Portland Port by South Dorset MP Richard Drax, commemorating the work carried out by dockyard employees over a few dramatic weeks in the spring of 1982.

The first vessel to depart the UK ahead of the Operation Corporate Task Force was RMAS Typhoon, an ocean-going tug, which left Portland on April 4 1982 – just two days after the Argentinian invasion.

The task force would begin leaving the next day, while a second wave underwent a reduced two-week Flag Officer Sea Training (FOST) package in Portland before heading off to join them, and helicopters were prepared at HMS Osprey

Among those present at the dedication was Paul Charles... in 1982 the youngest crewman of RMAS Typhoon aged just 18.

"Our destination was unknown when we set off, everyone thought RMAS Typhoon would be turned around as we headed down the Channel – we believed the Argentinians would have second thoughts when they saw our ships leaving

port," he said.

"But we sailed further and further south, eventually arriving at Ascension Island, we were on our own, then other warships started to arrive.

"Typhoon was very seaworthy, she was an Ocean-going Tug she was built for Sea, she was a beautiful looking ship and had beautiful lines, she was like a greyhound."

Mr Charles said the new monument was "a fitting reminder of all those who fought and were part of the effort.

He continued: "Turning all those ships around in such a short space of time was absolutely incredible, you've got to take your hat off to them."



Unicorn takes preservation title

THE team who look after one of the world's oldest warships have been singled out for their conservation efforts.

HMS Unicorn – a former 19th Century frigate which serves as a museum in Dundee – collected the Excellence in Maritime Conservation Award at this year's National Historic Ships.

The title is all the more timely as the preservation society which cares for the 200-year-old vessel are looking to raise around £1m to give her the most comprehensive overhaul of her long life.

The society received the award for its work to understand the state of the ship courtesy of structural analysis, laser and photogrammetry surveys. From this work a complete model of the ship has been created, allowing for an astounding insight into the structure and construction of the ship, in a way which would not be possible without these modern methods.

Despite her age, Unicorn is in relatively good condition, a complete

structural analysis and survey work has uncovered structural weakness which will cost around £1m to rectify as part of a wider programme of work – such as replacing/removing missing/rotten timbers – which will require dry docking.

"This award shows the serious commitment and behind-the-scenes hive of activity that has been HMS Unicorn over the last three years," said museum director Matthew Bellhouse Moran.

"Good conservation practice is based around careful recording, planning and consideration and it is wonderful to be recognised for our approach to vessel conservation."

Unicorn is the third oldest ship in the world, Scotland's only preserved warship, and has been under the care of the preservation society since 1968.

When her active career at sea ended in 1873 after 49 years' service, HMS Unicorn was moved to Dundee where she served as a training vessel and ultimately headquarters of Dundee's Senior Naval Officer before the transfer

of the Tay Division Royal Naval Reserve to the new HMS Camperdown in 1967.

Originally berthed in the Earl Grey Dock, Unicorn was moved to her present home in Victoria Dock in 1967 to make way for the Tay Road Bridge where she has remained ever since.

Unlike her sister HMS Trincomalee, which is also a museum ship further down the east coast in Hartlepool, Unicorn has no masts or rigging – she sailed only once in her career, and that was under tow from Chatham to Dundee.

That lack of active service meant she did not endure the strains other vessels of similar age suffered, but even so two centuries of exposure to the elements have taken their toll.

Once the necessary funds have been raised and the structural work has been undertaken, Unicorn will be moved to East Graving Dock in Dundee from its current location at the heart of the new Dundee Maritime Heritage Centre.

There the goal is to take her out of the water in a dry dock, supported on props rather like HMS Victory.



History is made in Boston

FOR the first time in Boston's history, Lord Mayor's Cadets have been appointed, with representatives being selected from Sea Cadets, Air Cadets and the Police.

The Worshipful Mayor of Boston, Councillor Anne Dorrian, Admiral of the Wash, appointed cadet representatives to attend and support her at public civic events throughout the year.

The first cadet chosen to represent Boston Sea Cadets is fourteen-year-old Ordinary Cadet Ethan Bain, who his Commanding Officer describes as "having shown great leadership skills and enthusiasm".



"It has been fantastic to start seeing results after the hard work put into getting the unit recognised in the community over the last year starting to take shape," said PO Jenny Harvey, Commanding Officer of Boston Unit. "We hope this continues as engaging with the community and civic duties massively helps our young people develop, gain confidence which all very important for their life skills."

OC Bain joined Boston Sea Cadets as a junior cadet in November 2018. He is visually impaired, but that hasn't stopped him from indulging in his love of adventure and taking part in a host of activities.

OC Bain has qualifications in basic marine engineering, offshore power grade 1, intermediate first aid, powerboat stage 1, rowing and kayaking. He has also achieved a Bronze Medal in his DofE.

The young cadet is also a junior member of the Royal Institution of Naval Architects (RINA) and hopes to study Naval Architecture and Marine Engineering after completing his schooling.

"The opportunities that Sea Cadets has given me are incredible, in addition to the amazing honour I have now been awarded as the Mayor's Sea Cadet of Boston," said OC Bain. "I look forward to my new role and being invited to take part in the mayoral events for Boston."

The Mayor of Boston also had a scroll of the King's proclamation printed and the attendance of people with certain roles were added to the scroll. OC Bain was the flag-bearer at the reading of the proclamation at Boston Memorial and was later invited into the Chambers at Boston Municipal building to sign the scroll. The proclamation that OC Bain signed is now stored the Boston Town historical archives – alongside the original document that was signed 484 years ago, the proclamation of Queen Elizabeth I on 17 November 1558.



Brilliant hosting

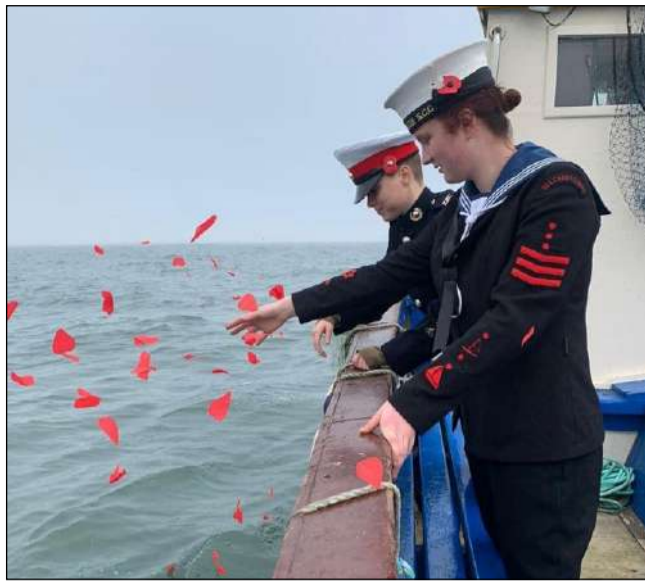
TUNBRIDGE Wells Sea Cadets hosted visitors from Wiesbaden in Germany, the twin town.

The guests attended a formal reception and joined in classes with cadets from TS Brilliant.

The visitors represented the Red Heralds band that the cadet unit has been associated with since 1970

It's hoped they will return in 2023 with the entire band to perform alongside TS Brilliant's own band

Lt Cdr Jon Vanns said it was a pleasure to host our friends and we look forward to welcoming back the band next year.can



We remember them

SEA CADETS around the country took part in Remembrance Day to honour armed forces members who have died in the line of duty.

King Charles III led the country in the annual Remembrance Sunday ceremony attended by most Commonwealth representatives. Sea Cadets joined veterans, members of the Royal Family and politicians (including six former Prime Ministers) to lay wreaths at the Cenotaph in Central London after the national two minutes' silence, *bottom right, and Guildford unit are pictured bottom left.*

Guernsey Sea Cadets Unit paraded alongside the Elizabeth College Combined Cadet Force, the Army Cadet Force, and St John Ambulance cadets before 60 wreaths of poppies were placed at the town war memorial by organisations and groups in the island. Everyone present then took a moment in silent tribute to remember all those who sacrificed their lives in the line of duty.

Chelmsford's annual Remembrance Sunday Service and Parade took place at the War Memorial on Duke Street. Residents, veterans, members of the Royal British Legion and community group representatives joined the Mayor of Chelmsford, Cllr Sue Dobson at the War Memorial on Duke Street to pay tribute to service personnel who have died during conflicts. The service also recognised the brave contributions of those who continue to serve the Armed Forces today.

"It was particularly moving to see so many young people taking part in the service and parade in

Chelmsford," said Vicky Ford, MP for Chelmsford.

"After the service, I met Bobby, who has just joined the Sea Cadets and, at the age of 10, was one of the youngest wreath layers. This year, our thoughts of remembrance are especially poignant as we are also thinking about the men and women of Ukraine who are defending their country so bravely."

Scarborough also fell silent to remember those who gave their lives for their country. The service at Oliver's Mount was attended by hundreds of community members despite a thick fog.

Remembrance Sunday also saw the 75th anniversary of 'The Laying of Poppies on the Sea' Remembrance Service, which was held in Scarborough's Queen St Methodist Church. Scarborough's Sea Cadets and Queen St Boys Brigade concluded the church party all intent on showing their respect in a most moving service which saw the enacting of the Drumhead ceremony, the poppy drop and blessing of the Standards and wreaths, *pictured top left.*

Leading Cadet Megan Connell from Scarborough Sea Cadets read the story of the importance of the ceremony to the congregation and Scarborough Unit's Corporal Gemma Carr had the honour of reciting the Kohima Epitaph. Scarborough Sea Cadets Unit's marching band led the parade that followed.

A selection of cadets and staff then went to sea on a local fishing boat with the towns dignitaries to lay the poppies in the bay to remember those in the Royal and Merchant Navy's who lost their lives

in at sea.

Able Cadet Kaitlyn Byram from Scarborough Sea Cadets said: "I felt so proud marching through the town with my fellow cadets and it's important that we show our respect." Junior cadet Tommy Skilton added: "We have practised marching so that today we could show everyone what being a sea cadet is all about."

Sea cadets in Rye collaborated with scouts and guides to lay 153 wooden crosses at the base of the town's war memorial to commemorate all those remembered on the war memorial.

PO (SCC) Phil Whiteman, commanding officer Rye and District Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets, said: "I was extremely proud of the way everyone connected to the unit conducted themselves at the Remembrance Parade and Service in Rye."

Rugby remembered the fallen with a Remembrance Service and parade at the War Memorial gates in Hillmorton Road, led by the Mayor of Rugby, Councillor Carolyn Watson-Merret.

Methil Unit launched their Remembrance events on Friday morning, which ended on Sunday evening with a beacon lighting. They also took part in the Community Festival Remembrance, where they performed and displayed their British Sign Language skills during the event, *pictured top right.*

"All the cadets did amazingly, going above and beyond to show the community the true values of what it means to be a member of Sea Cadets," said their Commanding Officer, SLT (SCC) RNR Kevin Watters.



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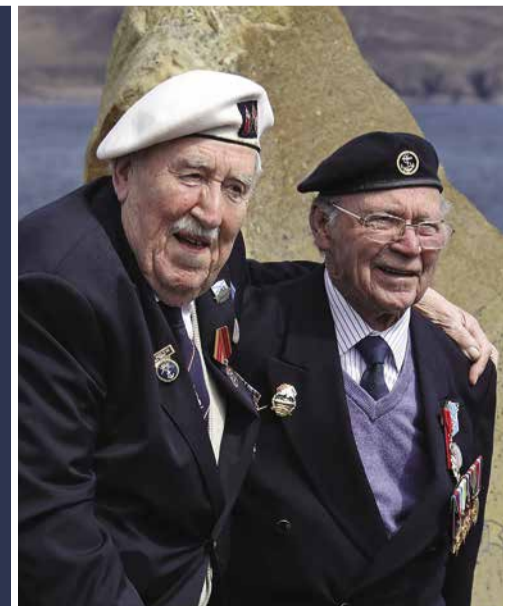
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Double donation delight for two units

CADETS and volunteers at Whitehaven Sea Cadets were thrilled to receive two generous donations in the space of two weeks.

The first donation came in the form of a new boat. Formerly an inshore patrol boat used by the North Western Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA), it had become surplus to requirements and was gifted to the unit to be used as a training vessel and safety boat.

The second donation were two cheques totalling £2,300 from the Provincial Grand Masters initiative match funding. David Bowden, West Cumbria group chairman Provincial Grand Lodge and Keith Straughton, charity steward, Lewis Lodge number 872 Whitehaven called into the unit to meet the cadets and hand over the cheques.

CPO (SCC) Stuart McCourt, Commanding Officer at Whitehaven Sea Cadets said: "We have been absolutely blown away by the generosity of these donations. The new boat means that we can get even more young people out onto the water having fun and developing their boat handling skills."

Simon Ferguson, Unit Chair said: "The cheques from the two lodges mean the world to a small charity like ours and moves us ever closer to our long-term ambition of a permanent home. We can't thank both organisations enough."

In December 2013, Whitehaven's former unit building on Old New Quay was damaged beyond repair by a tidal



surge. The local community came to the rescue and they temporarily paraded at the Whitehaven Police Station before being granted temporary use at their current premises on Carter Lane. The unit is currently trying to fundraise for a permanent base. If you would like to support the unit, please visit <https://cafondote.cafonline.org/17688#!/DonationDetails>

Hartlepool Unit has also received financial support from two charities to help them buy new water equipment. The unit received an £8,000 charity grant from The Teesside

Charity and The Teesside Family Foundation.

The funding has helped the unit to buy six paddleboards as well as a safety boat. The unit also offers its cadets sailing, power boating and rock climbing.

"We used the equipment immediately after receiving it to allow the cadets to access the water using our newly qualified paddle instructors," said the Commanding Officer of Hartlepool Unit, Jane Fox. "It has allowed some cadets who previously didn't have the opportunity to gain qualifications in paddleboarding."

Future is bright



POOLE Sea Cadets is the first Sea Cadets unit in the country to implement a solar panel scheme at its premises at Sterte Avenue West in Poole – and they are now selling electricity back to the grid.

The unit's environmental success was celebrated at their recent AGM and prize-giving ceremony.

The prizes were presented by the unit's patron, the Mayor of Poole, Cllr Tony Trent and the Sheriff of Poole, Cllr Mike Brooke.

The cadets' President, Rear Admiral Nick Lambert, RN (Retd), was also present. The evening was held with the large audience sitting under lighting which didn't have to tap into the national grid at all.

Unit Trustee, Bruce Grant-Braham said: "In these

times of rapidly rising energy bills our unit is pleased that we embarked on what has proved to be a timely green agenda.

"The electricity bill for our headquarters used to be substantial but we are now becoming self-sufficient. We do, of course, have some capital costs to cover, but to be able to send electricity back to the grid after less than a year is excellent news. Money saved here is freeing up resources to directly spend on the Cadet Experience."

Cdt 1st Holly (13) said: "We are really pleased to use less electricity with the solar panels as it helps the environment. It also shows that cadets care about the environment, I think they are a brilliant

idea."

POC Kori (16) said: "I am so proud of my unit as we are one of the few sea cadet units in the UK with solar panels. This is a great opportunity for myself, fellow cadets and staff to lead the way and show the benefits of green energy. It's great to make a difference."

Poole Unit's solar panel scheme, which the cadets have named 'Project Liquid Sun', was achieved through a grant bid to Low Carbon Dorset. As a result, solar panels were installed to provide clean energy and feed battery storage. During the year, the unit's 60 cadets have achieved a total of 492 qualifications.



Happy birthday 'Boro

MIDDLESBROUGH'S Sea Cadets have been honoured at a special ceremony to mark their 80th anniversary.

The Mayor of Middlesbrough, Andy Preston, invited Middlesbrough Sea Cadets to the Town Hall, where he presented the unit with a Certificate of Recognition on behalf of the town and thanked them for the positive contribution they've made to the lives of the young people of Middlesbrough.

"The Sea Cadets are an amazing part of Middlesbrough life, and it is right that we all recognise this important anniversary, Mayor Preston said.

"Volunteering is great for young people – they learn new skills and make new friends, and the experience will stand them in good stead for later life. I'd also like to say a big thank you to all the adults who volunteer their time in such a good cause – it really does change lives, so here's to the next 80 years and beyond."

The Chairman of Middlesbrough Unit, Ian Stubbs, said: "The presentation marks a milestone in the life of the Middlesbrough Sea Cadets. Our young people strive to follow the example put forward over three quarters of a century ago, when the unit was first formed.

"They are a group who are keen to learn, and show commitment to the ethics and example of the Sea Cadets and the Sea Cadets motto reflects our young people and their work: 'Ready Aye Ready'."

Middlesbrough Sea Cadets received their official status from the Navy League in September 1942, becoming Sea Cadet Corps Unit 241 and launching off from a house in Clairville Road. From 1942 to date they have moved seven times, before finally settling into Albert Park's East Lodge, where they are still based today.

Top honour for Irvine's CO

THE Commanding Officer of Irvine Sea Cadets has been honoured with a top award.

He was nominated by the young people he works with, and the cadets also presented the award to him.

Sub Lieutenant Robert Duncan won the Cadet Adult Recognition Award (CARA) for the west of Scotland region at the Cadet Force Adult Volunteers annual award ceremony.

He was one of three Ayrshire award recipients, alongside Company Sergeant Michelle Cook and Euan Sockell, both from the West Lowland Battalion of the Army Cadet Force.

Robert said: "It means so much more that our cadets have taken the time out of their day to nominate me and they recognise exactly what I'm doing for them. I'm extremely grateful to my team, without them I couldn't do what I do."

"Never ever did I think I'd be standing in an officer's uniform, back when I was a 10 year old Junior Sea Cadet, let alone in command of my own unit. I'm proud to be part of an organisation that offers such amazing opportunities and experiences to our young people and CFAVs alike. The reason I'm in the Cadets is for the cadets so the fact that it's coming from them, that really makes a difference."

Kate Johnston from the Lowland Reserve Forces and Cadets Association, which organised the awards, said: the adult volunteers' efforts were "utterly inspiring" and said they all "deserve a big public thank you".



Littlehampton are in great shape

LITTLEHAMPTON Unit made a fine impression during its Royal Navy annual inspection.

The unit was presented with awards by Sea Cadets Southern Area Officer and Commander Royal Navy, Trevor Price, who conducted the inspection.

Some of the cadets were awarded promotions to Ordinary Cadet and Able Cadet. Commander Price presented two offshore sailing badges, a rowing coxswain, one bronze Duke of Edinburgh's Award and two BTEC Level One Certificates in Personal Development and Teamwork.

He also presented the first aid competition team with their bronze medals for coming third and AC Smallbone with her gold medal for winning the individual competition with maximum marks at the Southern Area First Aid Competition, held at Reigate Unit. The team had won through to the Area competition by winning the Central District Competition at Gosport Unit.

"Littlehampton Unit is in Central District and one of my 69 units within the Southern Area," said Commander Price. "It is always a pleasure to see such a vibrant active unit committed to delivering an exciting and varied Sea Cadets Experience. For a small unit their output is exceptional and the variety of badges and awards presented is testament to the dedication and sheer hard work put into the unit by Lt Cdr Brian Osborne (the unit's Commanding Officer), Mr David Moore (the unit's Chairman) and all the staff – a great evening!"

Ordinary Cadet Williams said: "Sea Cadets, in my opinion, offers many opportunities for later life and you'll have extremely good fun there. That's why I think cadets is such a good place to be."

"I've been in the Sea Cadets for five years now and I've never looked back," said Able Cadet Smallbone. "It makes proud and happy to be in uniform. I have always been encourage by my brilliant instructors at Littlehampton Unit and I am looking forward to a career in the Royal Navy."

New fund supports Sea Cadet units

THE Gosling Foundation have just launched a fund specifically for Sea Cadets units, the Gosling Foundation Cadet Fund.

With grants of up to £5,000 up for grabs for Sea Cadets units around the country, a dedicated portal has been set up by the Gosling Foundation to make the application process as simple as possible. The aim of the fund is to try and fill some financial voids in Sea Cadets Funding during this time of economic hardship for many, so units are able to focus on training young people in a safe environment, enhancing the Sea Cadets Experience.

Sea Cadets and the Gosling Foundation have a solid relationship and a long history, with the foundation's year of support having positively impacted thousands of cadets across the country. The Gosling Foundation has provided funding for a variety of projects for Sea Cadets units in the past, from revamping their main deck to purchasing vans to get cadets from A to B. It's hoped that many more cadets will be supported through the launch of this new fund.

Sea Cadets units are grateful to have been provided with a dedicated fund – in the two and a half weeks since the fund launched, 32 units have already registered their interest in applying for the grant.

Applications must have a defined goal, whether that is to support the purchase of a capital item, help fund training or simply to help give cadets the experience of a lifetime which would otherwise be financially out of their reach. A unit can apply for anything that supports or makes possible the delivery of Sea Cadets activity. The first applications window closes on December 31, 2023.

Established in 1985, the Gosling Foundation funds organisations that support multiple serving personnel and veterans of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines as well as projects that preserve naval heritage, among other things.

For more information, visit <https://www.thegoslingfoundation.com/>



Silver lining for Joshua

HAVING completed the Bronze Wings Course earlier in the year in Weymouth, I was selected to continue with the Silver Wings Course in RNAS Yeovilton, HMS Heron, Somerset, writes Joshua, from Sedburgh School Combined Cadet Force.

A smaller group, six of us this time, got the incredible opportunity to fly a Grob T115 which is the teaching aircraft used by the Royal Navy. One of my friends filmed her loop...I think she is still smiling!

I was privileged enough to be able to talk to Lt Joel F, a Wildcat pilot.

Joel was an Army Cadet himself for two years and really loves what the CCF offers across the Services with children who want to learn how to be part of a team, how to work together and to be a family.

He describes the CCF as a vehicle to progress in any career because cadets learn how to be good leaders, when to follow and how to follow leadership and support each other's ideas for the benefit of their team.

I asked Joel what inspired him to join the Royal Navy. He started a career in the law, but quickly decided to make a change.

He started out in the RN as a rating, as an aircrewman. This was one of the best decisions of his life because he was able to learn the true meaning of the word 'team', experience the comradery that it brings and understand the trust that underpins it all.

This also gave him an opportunity to see what he wanted to do. In his case, to become an officer and become a pilot for the incredible Wildcat helicopter.

He started officer training at BRNC Dartmouth and made friends there that he will keep for life; some of them still serve with him in 825 squadron.

Lt Joel F is an inspirational person, and I was incredibly happy to be able to talk to him on the Silver Wings Course. I would like to thank everyone in the team for making this a very special week.



All in tune for Admiralty Service

FIRST Sea Lord Admiral Sir Ben Key is pictured with some of his cadets at the Admiralty Service in London.

The link between the Admiralty and St Martin-in-the-Fields, celebrated at this event, dates back to at least 1672.

At the time, under the Test Act, all Government officials were required to demonstrate their membership of the Church of England.

Admiralty officials would have done this at St Martin's. Over the years, the Admiralty has maintained this relationship with St Martin's. This relationship was later recognised by the installation of an Admiralty pew, which was reserved for the Admiralty Board – sadly since lost over time.

For this year's 11 First Sea Lord Cadets – who are drawn from the Sea Cadet Corps, the Volunteer Cadet Corps and the Combined Cadet Force RN/RM – the Admiralty Service represents the final event of their one-year tenure.

They handed over the role to a new cohort of 11 First Sea Lord Cadets on December 31.



Wellacre join nation in honouring the fallen

EVERY year Wellacre joins the National Remembrance Day commemorations to reflect and recognise all those who have died in the service of Britain during times of war.

As well as joining the nation in a two-minute silence, we held a reflective Whole School Assembly and a Remembrance Ceremony in school led by Wellacre's CCF Cadet unit. Cadets also marched alongside other CCF Contingents in the Urmston Remembrance Parade, pictured left.

Members of Wellacre's CCF unit represented the school at the Urmston Remembrance Parade at Davyhulme Circle. For the first time, SSI W was invited by Trafford Council to act as the Parade Marshall alongside another volunteer from the Army Cadet Force to lead the community ceremony.

Wellacre Royal Navy Contingent joined other Contingents from the Boys' Brigade, Armed Forces Veterans, Royal British Legion, Civil Service Representatives and ACF, ATC Cadets, Guides and Scouts, Primary Schools from Flixton,

and Sports Clubs from across Flixton and Urmston.

The parade was marched from Eden Square to the Cenotaph at Davyhulme Circle and a service commenced. Lt B laid a wreath along with other representatives. SSI W led the whole parade, ensuring everyone was brought up to attention at the following parts of the service: the act of Remembrance, the Kohima Epitaph and the National Anthem.

SSI W said: "The CCF understands the importance of Remembrance and by taking part in the parades, they are grateful for the opportunity to remember those men and women who have made the ultimate sacrifice in war."

Cadet Zac added: "I have waited a whole year to join the CCF for this reason - so I could pay my respects."

Principal Mrs Sharrock said: "We are all very proud of the respectful attitudes of all students around Remembrance. Thank you to the CCF Contingent and staff."



SUNSET SAIL FOR PGS



PORTSMOUTH Grammar School CCF RN Section were able to make the most of their proximity to the sea with an evening sail for their Parade Night.

Always more fun on the water than in a classroom, safety cover was provided by Area Instructor, CPO(M) George S, whilst the CCF Sailing Instructor, Alice M, set up courses for the more experienced Cadets and provided instruction to some of the new recruits.

The sun shone, there was a light breeze, and it was even (relatively) warm! Now the dinghies have been stored for winter, Easter cannot arrive too soon for the cadets who are eager to get back on the water.



Whistle-stop tour

SEVEN 1SL Cadets (four Sea Cadet Corps and three Combined Cadet Force RN Cadets) arrived at Plymouth Station for a four-day tour of the Royal Navy in the South West.

On the first day, they travelled to HMS Raleigh, where they stayed overnight.

The next day, courtesy of some amazing organisational skills from WO1 Orr, all seven 1SL Cadets travelled to the HMNB Plymouth for a Serco Boat Tour of the Plymouth Sound and the dockyard.

The cadets then moved to an outside tour of HMS Portland and a really informative chat with the Commanding Officer of the Type 23 frigate HMS Portland.

From there, the cadets moved on to visit FOST, and to understand what role FOST plays.

This was followed swiftly by a 'fireside chat' with Captain G MacDougall, Head of Cadets/Youth and STEM/UTC, as well as Captain A Canale, FOST South, with some really incisive questions being posed by the cadets to both captains.

A highly-competitive evening of Ten Pin Bowling concluded a really busy day.

On the third day, all the 1SL Cadets visited Jupiter Point, and enjoyed a tour of HMS Brecon.

The CCF based at Jupiter Point and the Jupiter Point River staff took advantage of some glorious weather to organise a PAC 24 Rib ride.

Moving swiftly on, the cadets visited HMS Raleigh Submarine School, kindly arranged by Lt C Rackham, to look at torpedo construction, hear some sonar sounds and witness a mock-up attack session.

The day was rounded off with a dinner in HMS Raleigh Wardroom kindly hosted by the HMS Raleigh Senior Leadership Team, which included the Commander, Commander (Training) and the First Lieutenant.

The evening was appropriately rounded off with a Concert performed by the Royal Marines Band.

On the final day, 1SL's Cadets visited the Damage Repair Instructional Unit (DRIU) at HMS Raleigh where, under the careful instruction of WO1 Hewitt, the cadets all took part in two thrilling runs: a blocking flooded messdeck and a complete flood and swim out of a confined space.

The final item in a fully packed itinerary was for the 1SL Cadets to witness the training establishment's Passing Out Parade before jumping on a train from Plymouth Station for the return journey home.

RN fencers foiled in annual match

A ROYAL Navy fencing team visited Guernsey to do battle with the Sarnia Sword Club in their annual encounter.

The Royal Navy fields a formidable fencing team when at full strength. The RN Team recently enjoyed much success at recent UK Combined Services events, winning several annual team matches against the two other UK Armed services.

More recently, reduced manpower has meant that several RN fencers who might have participated in this match were unavailable due to deployments at sea or overseas.

This was to prove a telling factor against the visitors as the fencing matches unfolded at Elizabeth College.

The weekend's event began with the two Men's Foil 'A' teams taking to the piste. First blood in this match was drawn by the Sarnia 'A' Team who cruised to a comfortable victory by 45 hits to 24. Notable performances from the Royal Navy fencers kept the RN score respectable when all seemed lost. This prowess was balanced by Sarnia's Jamie de Carteret, whose skill the Navy found difficult to contain.

The two sides' Epeeists then took to the piste in a much closer struggle. The Royal Navy team took the fight to their Sarnia counterparts and built up a significant lead, halfway through the match.

By the end of the match, however, Sarnia had recovered enough hits to even the scores. So the result of the entire match rested on the last fight. Sarnia emerged victorious by the wafer-thin margin of 45 hits to 42.

Sabre has traditionally proved to be the Royal Navy's strongest weapon. So it was no surprise when a formidable RN team took to the piste.

Several of Sarnia's Sabre fencers were unavoidably absent, so the Sarnia team was supplemented by two young Sabreurs from Elizabeth College.

The weapon match was forfeited to the Navy as Sarnia was fielding an incomplete team. Despite this handicap, the 'home' team gave their RN counterparts a hard-fought match, which Sarnia won by 45 hits to 33.

As the Royal Navy women's teams were incomplete, they also forfeited their matches to their Sarnia opponents.

The RN fencers were, however, given an opportunity to show their prowess on the piste



by participating in weapon matches, augmented by some of the Sarnia fencers. Sarnia's Georgie Lindsay, a good Foil and Epee fencer, ensured that the 'home' side emerged as comfortable winners for these matches.

After a short break for lunch, it was the turn of the 'B' teams to resume hostilities. In the Epee match, Sarnia fielded some of its newer members against their Royal Navy opponents. Sarnia opened up with two comfortable wins which gave them a considerable lead. Despite heroic efforts by their RN opponents to close such a large gap, the result of the match was never in doubt, and Sarnia emerged victorious by 45 hits to 29.

The Foil 'B' match followed a similar course, with the relatively-young Sarnia team proving too powerful and emerging winners by 45 hits to 29.

A combined Sarnia and Elizabeth College team faced the Royal Navy in the final 'B' Sabre match of the afternoon. Because of an incomplete team, Sarnia once more forfeited the match score. On the piste, however, the Royal Navy gave a good account of themselves before succumbing to a 45 hit to 33 hit defeat.

When the match scores were tallied up at the end of a very enjoyable day of fencing, Sarnia emerged victors by seven match victories to the Royal Navy's two.



Sarnia's Meyrick Simmonds stop-hits against the Royal Navy; Right, the Royal Navy hits Sarnia's Blake Batiste



Excellent time training with best

THE Royal Navy, Royal Marines, British Army, and Royal Air Force Judo teams trained with the Great British Judo squad at the GB Judo Centre of Excellence in Walsall.

The line-up of coaches included Chris Barry, Yoko Tanabe (twice Olympic silver medallist, twice world silver medallist), Ian Johns, Nigel Donohou, Ben Quilter (twice world VI world champion and London 2012 Paralympic bronze medallist) and Jamie Johnstone.

Other notable appearances were made by Chris Skelley MBE (2020 Paralympic gold medallist), Evan Malloy, Chelsie Giles (2020 Olympic bronze medalist), Dan Powell, Emma Reid, Lucy Renshall (Abu Dhabi Grand Slam Gold medallist), Nekodo Smythe Davis, Gemma Howell, Wesley Greenidge and many more.

The week consisted of Randori (practice fighting), conditioning circuits, technical sessions, endurance sessions and the favourite yoga.

Fighters from across the Royal Marines and Royal Navy competed at the We Will Remember them held at Dartford Judo club.

The team came away with the three gold medals (MNE Dan Netherwood RM, LH Leanne Black RN and MNE Joe Gurney RM), four silver medals (MNE Dani Garcia green RM, AB Libby Gainsford RN, MNE Michael McKenzie RM and MNE Alexander Henry RM), and four bronze medals (MSCN Patrick O'Hagen RMBS, AB Ken Harris RN, SLT Jack Noble RN, MNE Neil Golding RM)

The Royal Navy judo team also won the services team award over all other uniformed services.

Report: AB Libby Gainsford



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SETTING THE BAR



Rugby action from HMS Albion's stop in Bar, Montenegro

HMS Albion's rugby team went down fighting in an 18-0 defeat to the Montenegro President's XV at the Stadium Madzarica in Bar.

The early phases of this tie – which was shown on Montenegrin TV – were hotly contested and it remained that way with two Sidran Popvic kicks the difference, making it 6-0 at the break.

Dusan Vucicevic made it 11-0 soon in the second half before Martin Mijuskovic added to another try with Popvic converting to make it 18-0.

Albion put on an impressive defence early on, with CPL Cal Southgate and MNE Deano Seals standing out, but the Montenegrin's greater height and organisation frustrated the visitors.

By 34 minutes Montenegro created a scrum penalty from which, for the first time, they chose to kick to goal, as Popvic converted.

Straight from kick off, the hosts worked the

ball up the field and when Albion gave a penalty away for hands in the ruck.

That man Popvic made it 6-0 on 44 minutes.

Albion made another raft of changes across the back line and changed some of the pack at half time, but it wasn't to prove a fruitful move.

Montenegro gained a firm foothold in Albion territory – they were able to consistently bring fresh players in – and finally one missed tackle saw Vucicevic nip in to score.

Raonic Novica missed the kick, but Popvic made no mistake from the next conversion seven minutes later as Mijuskovic ran in after a well-worked move.

In the last quarter after another host of changes Albion stepped up again and spent most of the quarter in the Montenegrin half with play directed by S/Lt Jamie Wiltshire ably supported by MNE Dean Seals.

In the back line good running lines were met

by stiff Montenegrin resistance and Albion could not score the points that their play deserved.

When LH (AH) Jon Lowe took a blow to the head after driving up the field he had to be replaced with a non front row member.

This meant the last 10 minutes were played with uncontested scrums which suited Albion's desire to play faster. To attempt to score a try, kickable penalties were turned down to go for either a lineout, scrum or quick tap penalty but the score line remained 18-0.

MNE Deano Seals was nominated Man of the Match for Albion for the sheer determination of his defensive effort but all who played could have been nominated for the way they played against a stronger set of players, with the Montenegrin RFU using this fixture to develop strength in depth for its Union, meaning they had players from experienced internationals to some that had only played a few times before.



TOUGH TUNIS TEST

HMS Albion's rugby team came unstuck 55-0 to the Tunisian Under-20s at the Terriens De Rugby Stadium in Tunis on Remembrance Sunday.

A clean take by Tunisia set them up to drive the ball out of their half but defensive work by Ton Hind, Dean Seals and all the team meant that Tunisia had to clear for touch.

Tunisia stole the Albion line out and quick hands moved the ball across the Tunisian line, creating space wide outside for a try by the Tunisian No. 14.

Despite Albion working hard in defence, the better-drilled and swift interplay between backs and forwards for Tunisia worked the ball up field.

When needed the Tunisian No. 10 dropped Garry Owens to put Dom Dodds under pressure and, although he dealt with each bomb with ease, the follow up tackles meant Albion swiftly lost territory until in a ruck Albion lost the ball.

Again, with good hands and support lines the Tunisian No. 9 went in for the try under the posts, converted by No. 15 to make it 12-0.

Minutes later Albion needed to make its first subs with Jordan Brown and Steve Smallman off injured replaced by Shane Perry and birthday boy Mark Mueankeaw.

Tunisia continued to press with Albion doing well to clear lines and create turnovers and penalties to keep them out.

However, Tunisia were better drilled in the line out and this meant they continued to steal the ball.

Finally Tunisia broke off the back of a scrum to Albion's 10m line.

After one missed tackle they were behind the defence using their speed and passing, working the ball to the left wing and No.11 scored in the left corner, the conversion is missed by No.15 to make it 17-0.

During the course of this play Albion lose

the hard hitting Cal Southgate to injury and is replaced by Jamie Wiltshire.

The referee called a 1m water break and Albion swap out Dean Seals for Tom Blythe.

Albion seemed to work out how to play the faster Tunisians and the next period resulted in Albion working well around the fringes and pushing the Tunisians back using the scrum as a solid base to work from. From resulting rucks Albion's pack, led by Tom Chatwin, attack around the fringes to push the Tunisians back towards their try line. The Tunisian defence stands up.

Albion could get no further than 10m from the Tunisian try line before the ball is stripped in the tackle by Tunisia and again through passing between forwards and backs swiftly create a try for No. 12 near the posts, which is converted by No. 15 to make it 24-0 at the half.

Albion started well after the break but Tunisia's speed around the park in both attack and defence meant the visitors never got beyond the 22.

Again Albion pushed forward but one small error leads to an interception by Tunisian No. 12 on the Tunisia 22m line.

Although he is caught he pops the ball to the flying No. 10 to score in the right corner to make it 31-0.

The game is now more firmly swinging in Tunisia's favour. Albion struggle to move the play further than the Tunisian 10m line and when the Tunisians have the ball they look like they can score with only best efforts keeping them out.

Off a lost line out through swift interplay, Tunisia score via the No. 6 with the conversion missed by No. 15 (36-0).

The dam has burst and, over the next 12 minutes, three more tries are scored to take it to 55-0.

At the end of the game, his last as a player,

Albion club captain Bungy Williams stated he was "proud of the efforts of all the squad".

At no point did Albion let their heads drop even at the end when the score was moving up swiftly.

Tom Hind was voted in as new playing captain and Albion's man of the match was Dom Dodds, with the Tunisian No. 10 taking the honours for them.





Shining stars



Marine Taylor Lawrence, above left, was named RN Sportsman of the Year and Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Rachel Aldridge, above right, won the RN Sportswoman of the Year award; Left, Fleet Commander hands the Young Sportsman of the Year award to AB Britney Walker, pictured below left in red in action in the ring; Below, the Royal Navy Rugby League Team won the coveted Team of the Year trophy
Awards images: Andrew Fosker and Cat Goryn / Alligin



RUGBY League, athletics, indoor rowing and bobsleigh took the spotlight at the Royal Navy Sports Awards.

The **Royal Navy Rugby League Team** took the Team of the Year accolade, while **Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Rachel Aldridge** was named Sportswoman of the Year for her success in athletics and indoor rowing. **Marine Taylor Lawrence** was awarded the Sportsman of the Year trophy for his success in bobsleigh.

The awards, held at Lord's Cricket Ground in London, saw 48 citations from 27 different sports compete for the six awards handed out on the night by Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Andrew Burns.

The Royal Navy Rugby League team boasted the most successful Challenge Cup run for a service side in more than 30 years of Armed Forces Rugby League.

The team also remained unbeaten all season, with the exception of a top-level Championship side ending the Challenge Cup run, held a successful warm weather training camp in Spain, and won the coveted Inter-Service Championship.

Surgeon Lieutenant Commander Rachel Aldridge has represented the Royal Navy in three athletics disciplines and latterly in the past two years for indoor rowing. Previously twice a double medallist at 400m and 800m at UKAF Inter Services Track and Field Championships in 2018 and 2019, Rachel concluded the 2021/22 Indoor Rowing season as the overall winner of the Global Indoor Rowers League as well as for her age group.

Alongside her as Sportsman of the Year was Mne Taylor Lawrence, who's commitment to bobsleigh as the 'brake man' saw him represent Team GB at the 2022 Winter Olympics in the four-man crew.

Lieutenant Commander Andrew Holley was named Official of the Year for his dedication to motorsport for over a decade. He has been recognised at National and International level Motorsport UK Marshal of the Year 2011 and FIA World Marshal of the Year 2012.

Boxer, **Able Seaman Britney Walker** was named Young Sportsman of the Year. Britney has had an incredible first year as a Royal Navy Boxer.

Inter Service Elite Champion and England Elite Semi-finalist, she has outshone all other female service boxers. In recognition of her relentless dedication, she was awarded Best Female Newcomer of the Year at the RNBA End of Season Dinner.

A new award for this year was the Coach of the Year, which went to **LSC Silivenusi Buinimasi** for Rugby Union and Rugby League. Silivenusi or 'B' has demonstrated a steadfast commitment to coaching both forms of rugby in the Royal Navy. He has volunteered for every coaching role that he could across both codes, from unit, 7s, under 23 or Senior level, 'B' rapidly developed his coaching skills.

Five Outstanding Achievement Awards were also handed out:

CPO Chris Martin: Powerlifting. With a competitive lifting career approaching 20 years', Chris was one of the founding members of the Royal Navy Powerlifting Association (RNPA) in Dec 2007.

He helped develop the sport from just a handful of lifters to an association with nearly 60 active members that has produced 12 National Champions, Six World Champions, and Five National/International record holders.

In his role of Technical Secretary, Chris has updated the BDFPA Rulebook, trained several Divisional & National referees and is involved in the upgrading of some National Referees to International status.

Lt Cdr Paula Bennett-Smith: Rugby Union. Paula has played an outstanding contribution to RN Women's Rugby Union.

She advocated that the sport was to be inclusive and welcoming for all. Paula was one of the original Women's Squad and excelled at the No8 position.

PO Tim Lawrence: Winter Sport. A remarkable contribution of over three decades to the development and success of Ice sports across the Royal Navy, UK Armed Forces and Great Britain. Tim was part of the British Skeleton support team during the 2007-2010 Olympic cycle. The pinnacle of this period was Team GB's first Skeleton Gold at the 2010 Vancouver Winter Olympics. During his time as a National coach for Great Britain, he has contributed to no less than five gold, ten silver and 16 bronze medals.

CPO Helen Richardson: UKAF Football, Rugby Union and Rowing. In 2010 Helen became the Liaison manager to the Scottish Team during the Women's Rugby World Cup. During the 2016 Women's Six Nations, Helen was selected as England Women's Team Manager. RN Indoor Rowing have yielded considerable success at RN, Regional, National, and the World Rowing Indoor Championships 2km races. UKAF Football Operations Manager since 2018, she has led the planning and support to all Men's training camps, friendlies, and international fixtures.

CPO Steve Lockton: Rugby League. A high calibre and credible Rugby League player, prior to joining the RN Steve played for various teams including his home city of Hull and Hull FC Academy.

His talent was recognised early in his Service career and resulted in selection to the Royal Navy Senior and Combined Services teams.

Following retirement as a player in 2013, he took up the position of RN Rugby League Head Coach, reaching the pinnacle of his Rugby League career. Steve's drive, determination and immense passion for Rugby League has been unequivocal for 23 consecutive seasons, 13 as a player and the following nine as head coach.



Let's hear it for the bands

THE Royal Navy Volunteer Band Association (RNVBA) is looking forward to another busy year, with the ten bands having notched up 130 musical events in 2022.

Spring 2022 saw a musical workshop at RNAS Yeovilton, where 32 musicians from Heron, Drake, Collingwood, Northwood and Nelson were put through their paces.

Heron Volunteer Band represented the Air Station by leading the St George's Day Parade in Yeovil; and the wider Royal Navy by performing for the President of the Association at the RN Chaplain's Conference at RNAS Yeovilton.

Spring 2022 saw Northwood Volunteer band return to mess life, delivering accompanying music for a Dining In Night in April. They also

delivered community engagement courtesy of the Big Band at the Croxley dance.

HMS Queen Elizabeth and HMS Seahawk bands both received new side drums from the Royal Marine Band Service (RMBS) and these have already been put to good use.

RNVBA HMS Neptune took the lead for a collaborative gig in May at the National Memorial Arboretum, attended by HRH Prince William for the dedication of the Submarine Memorial. The band comprised members from seven bands and played before, during and after the ceremony.

RNVBA HMS Seahawk had a busy summer representing RNAS Culdrose both behind and outside "the wire".

They bravely took on the Freedom of Helston parade, marching through

the streets of the town. Additionally, they supported a commemorative service for the decommissioning of 736 Naval Air Squadron. Conversely RNVBA HMS Drake, with support from RNVBA Britannia Royal Naval College played in the scorching July heat for the re-commissioning ceremony of HMS Vanguard attended by the Fleet Commander.

A combined band took on Tottenham Hotspurs Stadium for the RFL Challenge League Cup Final in May.

With HMS Queen Elizabeth undergoing operational sea training, they were unable to participate however, all nine remaining RNVBA Bands were represented in a marching band of 68.

The event included pre-match music, the National Anthem and had the added bonus of enabling band members to

watch the RFL Challenge Cup Final.

The RNVBA added a musical touch to the Southsea Race for Life in early July when a marching band dressed in pink (including the side drums!) providing musical accompaniment for fellow runners and entertainment for the supporting sun-drenched crowds.

An opportunity for reflection, the event was a time to celebrate life and to commemorate those taken too soon by cancer.

Throughout the year, individual association bands continued to deliver at their units with mess dinners, Jubilee celebrations, local outreach and community engagement, all in addition to the collaborative Defence Engagement events described above.

In the autumn further collaborative gigs were delivered in Hertford

for the Sea Cadet's Trafalgar Day Parade, inspected by Admiral Soar and the Merchant Navy Parade in Trinity Gardens, Tower Hill, in early September, was equally sun soaked and enabled a combined band to deliver Defence Engagement and be inspected by Admiral Lord West.

As the year drew to a close, the majority of the RNVBA bands delivered at Armistice Day services up and down the country, as well as providing Christmas music for unit concerts, carol services and Christmas balls.

If you wish to find out more about the RNVBA or where your closest band is located please contact susan.schofield684@mod.gov.uk or daniel.page759@mod.gov.uk



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£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



THE mystery ship in the November edition of *Navy News* (right) was the destroyer HMS Chevron, whose bell is kept at the Collingwood Area School in New Zealand.

Alan Millson, from Luton, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.

This month's mystery ship (above) is a Dido-class light cruiser which served from May 1942 to March 1951.

1. What was her name? and
2. What was the name of her first operation?

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 January 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 February 12.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. The winner will be announced in our March edition.



IRON DUKE FIRST FOR FITNESS

ABLE Seaman Engineering Technician Nathan Treacy tries out the new gym onboard Type 23 frigate HMS Iron Duke.

Incorporating equipment typically found in military gymnasiums ashore, the new facility has been custom fitted onto pre-determined weld points.

Project lead, Chief Petty Officer Physical Trainer Keir Woodhead, Assistant Regional Physical Development Officer (West), based in Devonport, said: "It's been a long process and I feel the trickiest hurdle is fine tuning the needs of the ship."

"We're entering a new era of sailors who understand more about strength and conditioning and if there's scope to have a premium facility onboard a warship then we should strive for perfection and give them one. If people have a clean, new and modern facility it will be used."

The ship's commanding officer, Commander Charlie Wheen, added, "It is hard to overstate the value to the ship of this bespoke gym. The gym represents a really important element of our drive to deliver an irresistible 'lived experience' onboard and I am hugely grateful to all those involved in the design and installation."

Picture: LPhoto Barry Swainsbury

Deaths

George 'Scouse' Holden. Served from 1950 to 1976 in HMS Fisgard, Caledonia, Ocean, Loch Insh, Murray, Puma, Tartar, Ark Royal. Seconded to Malaysian Navy from 1965-68. Also served in Shoutlon, FMG, and Ariadne. Member of Ton Class, Loch Class and Fisgard Association. Died November 1, aged 88.

PO Brendon Noel O'Hare. Served from the late 1970s to early 1990s, majority of service spent at RNAS Yeovilton where he worked on the Harriers as an electrician. Died November 26, aged 66.

Admiral of the Fleet The Lord Michael C Boyce

KG GCB OBE. Second Sea Lord, CINNAVHOME, HMS Anchorite, Valiant, Vernon, Dolphin, Conqueror, Neptune, Opossum, Brilliant, FOST, FOSF, RCDS, FOSM, DN Plans. Died November 7, aged 79.

Lt Cdr David B Burstall. HMS Delight, Vernon. Died November 1, aged 91.

Capt Harry G DeCourcy-Ireland. HMS Vernon, Achilles, Drake, Dryad, Southampton, Rooke, FO Gib, RCDS, ACDS, FOF2, DNS. Died November 12.

Cdr William J M Faulkner. HMS Fulmar. DSAW(N). ASWE. Died November 3, aged 94.

Cdr Patrick Grace. HMS Osprey, Gavinton, Vernon, Leander, Vernon, Dryad, Saker, NATO. Died November 24, aged 86.

Lt Cdr Michael B MacDowell. HMS Victorious, Hermes, Grenville, Blake, Dryad, NATO. Died November 23, aged 87.

Lt Col RM Peter J A Montgomery. 42 Cdo RM, RM Eastney, HQ 3 Cdo, ITCRM, HMS Saker, NDC, CTCRM. Centurion. Died November 8, aged 92.

Cdr Leslie M Saunders-Watson CBE. HMS Broadsword, Mercury, Malabar, DNAP, DSS. Died November 8, aged 88.

Ask Jack



ELLY Lloyd: I am looking for my biological father. He was in the Royal Navy during the 80s and met my mother Zara Osman in Singapore during late 1986.

He was having a boogie with another navy man when mum

spotted them being told off for dancing together, as men and men dancing was not allowed back then and she thought it was funny.

My mum Zara is very short 4'11 and she was with a friend Trish. My bio father is tall, dark hair, very loud and goofy so mum says. He also had a German accent.

I have also been told I look a lot like him. This is my final plea to anyone who was in the Navy in the late 80s who went to Singapore. If you know anyone who fits the description, any information would be hugely appreciated. I am aged 35 and from New Zealand

Elly
+64 279538682
Ellylloyd19@outlook.com

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

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.

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

Reunions

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 askhams3@gmail.com

HMS Carysfort: A reunion will be held at the Orida Hotel in Maidstone from May 19 to 22, 2023, in a joint venture with HMS Cavalier. The

reunion is open to all who served in the ship throughout her seven commissions (1945-1969) and their wives/partners. Contact SF Events Ltd at The Withyholts, Paul Mead, Stroud Glous. GL6 6PG Tel: 01452 813713 or email associationmembers@sarahfletcher.events.co.uk

Further details can also be found at www.hmscarysfort.co.uk or email hmscarysfort@

gmail.com Registration will close on January 31.

HMS Mohawk Association: Our next reunion will take place at Grand Atlantic Hotel, Weston-Super-Mare from Friday March 31 to Monday April 3 2023.

For details call IOW Tours on 01983 405116 or contact Bob Proud via e-mail rob.proud@mypostoffice.co.uk

MYSTERY PICTURE 335

Name

Address

My answers: (1)

(2)

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Editor: Lorraine Proudlock
Email: news@royalnavymail.mod.uk

Editorial	Business
News@royalnavymail.mod.uk	Business manager: Lisa Taw
Richard.Hargreaves@royalnavymail.mod.uk	bm@royalnavymail.mod.uk
Peter.Howard@royalnavymail.mod.uk	Mistrala Harries
Elisha.Quade@royalnavymail.mod.uk	subs@royalnavymail.mod.uk
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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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