



NAVY NEWS

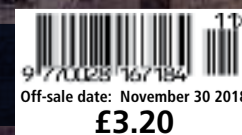
NOVEMBER 2018

Welcome to the Big Apple

HMS Queen Elizabeth makes her way towards the iconic Statue of Liberty as Britain's biggest warship made her debut in New York following a series of milestones in the F-35 programme. See pages 19-21

Picture: LPhot Kyle Heller, HMS Queen Elizabeth

Starring role for Monmouth: Marines join NATO exercise



DAWN CH

THE crack of gunfire splinters the silence.

Royal Marines and NATO allies are on a training raid in the early hours of the morning.

The disused Albanian naval base of Kepi Palit is the target.

Before the storm there is the calm, an eerie quiet in the darkness.

The only noise is the gentle tooting and froing of the Adriatic Sea.

Kepi Palit, a rocky peninsula with a small harbour and collection of abandoned buildings, is deathly still.

That's until NATO Exercise Albanian Lion 18 bursts into full, hell-raising action as the raid sings its deadly dawn chorus.

Launching from RFA Lyme Bay, Alpha Company marines from 40 Commando, 539 Assault Squadron and allied Albanian Kommandos, move rapidly ashore from their hovercraft and Offshore Raiding Craft.

The Royal Marines and their Albanian counterparts must now clear through the Naval Base - the perfect location for this kind of exercise - honing their skills in Close Quarters Battle to clear buildings and secure key targets.

This raid is the culmination of a focused amphibious training programme. Marines and Albanian forces have worked side by side to practise and rehearse landings to the point where they are able to work together seamlessly.

Major Chris Burr is the Officer Commanding Alpha Company. "A group made up of Royal Marines, Royal Engineers, military working dogs have worked with a platoon of Albanian Kommandos and

conducted a three-day training package to help the Albanians understand our procedures," he said.

"We then conducted two very successful raids along the arduous Albanian coastline, where Alpha Company and the Albanian Kommandos worked side by side to achieve the mission."

The amphibious landings are part of a wider exercise. To the east of capital Tirana, in the mountainous terrain surrounding the Bize training area in Dajti Mountain National Park, Bravo Company and Recce Troop have been closely working with Albanian and Kosovan personnel.

Colour Sergeant Lee West, 39, and his team have been training Kosovan Security Forces' Rapid Reaction Unit in navigation, tactics, camouflage and concealment and vehicle checkpoints.

He said: "It has been a pleasure to work with the Kosovan troops. We have formed a real bond with them during the exercise."

In Bize, training included Close Target Recce (CTR) - observing a target of interest in a covert manner - and vertical assault training, which is a specialty of the Royal Marines.

The idea of this exercise is to strengthen ties with Balkan members of NATO but also provide commandos with challenging environments to train in.

Corporal Joe Southam, from Recce Troop, said: "Bize provides the perfect terrain for this kind of training and has been of great benefit to us and the Albanian forces. I was here in 2014 and it's great to be back here with our Albanian partners."

The work has also extended to improvements on the camp in Bize - which sits at a similar altitude to Snowdon in Wales - with 59 Commando Royal Engineers and Albanian engineers building roads and improving facilities together.

To the south of the country, 24 Commando Royal Engineers have been working alongside Albanian and Croatian military divers at Pasha Liman Naval Base.

Having trained alongside the Albanians for the last seven years, there is a long history - going back to World War Two - of the Royal Marines and their Albanian partners sharing expertise.



HORUS

EXERCISE ALBANIAN LION 18



IN PICTURES...

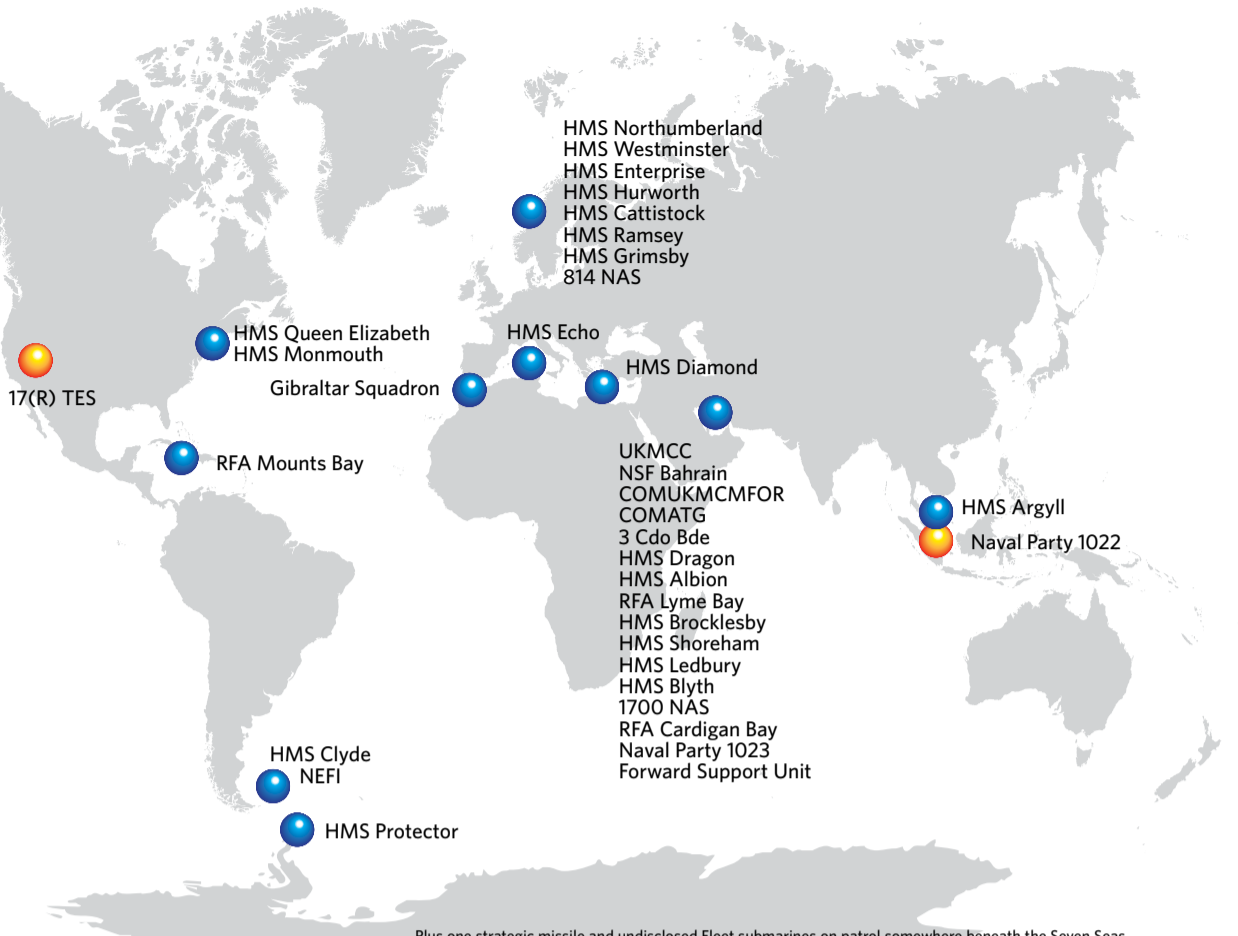
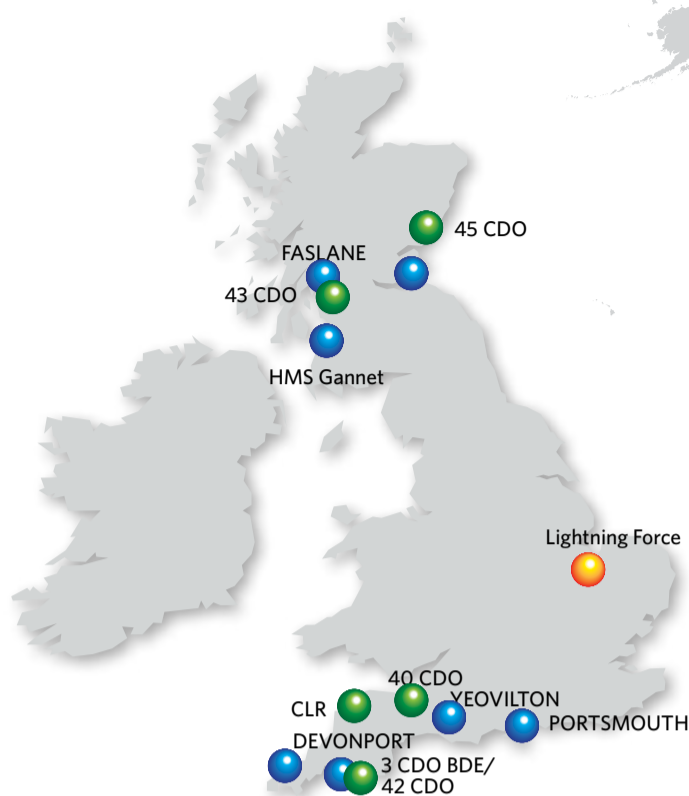
1. Royal Marines rush ashore from landing craft
2. Alpha Company on a dawn raid with Albanian Kommandos
3. Royal Marines teach vertical assault training
4. Bravo Company on exercise in the Bize region of Albania
5. Alpha Company commandos participate in amphibious landings
6. A commando points the way on board an Offshore Raiding Craft

Pictures: Cpl James Clarke

Training or on patrol around the UK

HMS Mersey
HMS Defender
HMS St Albans
HMS Montrose

RFA Tidespring
RFA Tiderace
RFA Tideforce



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

FLEET FOCUS
Protecting our nation's interests

AUTUMN is traditionally the busiest time of year for a Navy which never rests – and the closing season of 2018 confirms the adage with 10,000-plus sailors currently on operations around the world.

Naval personnel are committed to four major exercises right now, beginning with Westlant 18 featuring **HMS Queen Elizabeth** (see pages 19-21) and the UK's new F-35 strike fighter jets.

Over in the heat of Oman, Naval Service personnel are taking part in one of the biggest military exercises in the world – Saif Sareea 3 (see page 5). The exercise features Royal Marines from **3 Commando Brigade**, current Fleet Flagship **HMS Albion**, minehunters **Brocklesby** and **Shoreham**, Type 45 destroyer **HMS Dragon** and RFAs **Lyme Bay** and **Cardigan Bay**.

Looking north and seven Royal Navy warships are currently off Norway for the NATO exercise Trident Juncture 18 (see page 6). **HMS Northumberland**, **Westminster**, **Cattistock**, **Hurworth**, **Grimsby** and **Ramsey**, along with survey ship **Enterprise** and Royal Navy divers, are taking part in the exercise.

Heading south to the Balkans and Royal Marines from **40 Commando** have been taking part in NATO exercise Albanian Lion 18 (see pages 2-3). The Commandos are sharing their specialist military knowledge with Albanian and Kosovan security forces.

Normal business is also taking place around the globe, kicking off with **HMS Argyll** and her Far East deployment (see page 7). The Type 23 demonstrated her firepower during Exercise Bersama Lima, which also involves navies from Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand.

HMS Montrose is also heading off and won't see the UK again until 2022 (see page 6). The Devonport-based Type 23 frigate is to become the Royal Navy's forward deployed frigate in the Gulf.

HMS Brocklesby and **Shoreham** carried out joint training with the Qatari Emir Naval Forces, both in their base and then in the Gulf (see page 15).

HMS Monmouth enjoyed sometime in the spotlight as she broke off from escorting **HMS Queen Elizabeth** to visit the US city of Baltimore for a major naval festival (see page 9).

In Canada, priceless artefacts have been brought to the surface from the wreck of **HMS Erebus**, which sank 170 years ago (see page 15). The ship, along with **HMS Terror**, were lost during an attempt to find the Northwest Passage.

Back in the UK and 14 P2000s from the **1st Patrol Boat Squadron** met up in the Solent for their annual joint exercise (see page 17).

HMS Kent has been welcomed back to the heart of the Royal Navy after an 18-month revamp (see page 9). The refit ended in July, since when the 180-plus crew have been conducting trials in home waters and shaking off the cobwebs of being alongside, before bringing their frigate into Portsmouth for the service of rededication.

The ship's company of **HMS Tyne** have had a challenging but rewarding time as they bring the ship back into frontline operations (see page 11).

The next generation of submarine-hunting frigates, the **Type 26**, will be based in Devonport – following the decision to concentrate all their Type 23 predecessors in the West Country (see page 6).

Royal Navy chefs and stewards tasted success at the armed forces version of **MasterChef**. **Exercise Joint Caterer** (see page 24) saw the Naval Service Culinary Arts Team win gold medals and a best-in-class award.

Divers from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Sub Aqua Diving Association headed to Belize to hone their skills (see page 12).

The Year of Engineering saw sailors from **HMS Albion** go behind the scenes at the Singapore Grand Prix (see page 13).

In this month of annual commemoration, it is revealed that honours earned by sailors of the Royal Naval Division during World War One are to be added to honours boards (see right). And sailors from **HMS Drake** have tidied up war graves in Plymouth in preparation of centenary events marking the end of the Great War (see page 22).

Finally, six pages of achievements (see pages 35-40) feature personnel who have notched up success in the world of sport.

Honours boards for WW1 sailors

VIEW BRIDGE from the BRIDGE

THIS month our nation, and those against whom we once fought, will commemorate the centenary of the Armistice that brought to an end the Great War 1914-1918.

For many, it will be images of 'Tommys' in the trenches, brought to life so vividly through documentaries, dramas and films over the years, that will spring to mind; perhaps an understandable conclusion given the scale and relentlessness of the fighting that took place in that monumental land campaign.

Perhaps less well understood is the role played by the ships and sailors of the Royal Navy, and their Royal Marines counterparts.

The history of the First World War is not exactly littered with great sea battles; the tactics and the immediate aftermath of the Battle of Jutland in 1916 – probably the best-known Naval engagement of the war – are still hotly debated.

Yet whilst Jellicoe's Grand Fleet might not have inflicted the same crushing defeat on the German High Seas Fleet as Nelson had delivered to the combined French and Spanish fleets at Trafalgar a century before, at no stage did the Royal Navy cede control of the seas and the German High Seas Fleet would never challenge the Royal Navy's Grand Fleet for the remainder of the war.

The resultant freedom of manoeuvre on the sea approaches of continental Europe, and the Royal Navy's ability to impose a blockade on the central powers, would prove decisive in both the conduct and the eventual outcome of the war.

The Royal Navy's wartime contribution wasn't limited to the high seas though.

Visitors to Tyne Cot cemetery might at first glance be surprised to find that next to headstones bearing the cap badges of British Army regiments lie others bearing the fouled anchor of the Royal Navy.

The presence of sailors in Flanders Fields, some 20 miles from the sea, is explained by the little-known actions of the Royal Naval Division.

The Royal Naval Division was formed in 1914 from battalions of "Blue Jackets" and Royal Marines, its eight battalions named



● Captured German doctors tend to the wounds of men from the British 63rd (Royal Naval) Division at Grevillers in August 1918
Picture: Q 11 265, IWM

after famous admirals: Anson, Benbow, Collingwood, Drake, Hawke, Hood, Howe and Nelson.

Having fought in the defence of Antwerp in 1914, they saw action again at Gallipoli in 1915, where casualties were so high that the Benbow and Collingwood battalions had to be disbanded.

The remainder of the Royal Naval Division moved to France in 1916 to come under command of the War Office as 63rd (Royal Naval) Division and fought with distinction until the Armistice.

For a century, the contribution and sacrifice of the Royal Naval Division has gone largely unrecognised.

However, the recent rediscovery of

Admiralty Fleet Order 551/25, issued in 1925, proves that the National Honours Committee had in fact awarded a number of hitherto unremembered battle honours.

So now, a century after the guns fell silent, honours earned by the Royal Naval Division during the Great War are to be added to the honours boards of ships and establishments sharing their names with Royal Naval Division Battalions.

Given the scale of fighting and number of battles the Royal Naval Division were involved in between 1914 and 1918, one thing is for certain: **HMS Drake**, **HMS Nelson** and **HMS Collingwood**, and the submarine **HMS Anson** when she emerges from build, are all going to need much bigger honours boards.

NIGHT STRIKE

Royal Marines make the opening moves in largest war games for UK forces since 2002

HIDDEN in the heat of the Omani desert, they wait until nightfall for the chance to strike.

Emerging from cover in darkness, Royal Marines of 3 Commando Brigade's Surveillance and Reconnaissance Squadron strike enemy positions, destroy logistics dumps and command posts before disappearing undetected back into the desert.

The brigade's eyes and ears were among the first to make a move at the start of Saif Sareea 3 – one of the biggest international military exercises in the world which is under way in Oman.

Fighting for information and harassing the enemy, they allow an amphibious force to fully understand the situation ashore prior to the main force landing, as well as keeping the enemy on the back foot.

"We aim to be a constant thorn in the enemy's side, striking hard and then vanishing into the desert," says Marine Oliver Smith.

"This has been a great opportunity for us to work with our Omani partners. Having been to Oman numerous times before we have a very close relationship and are able to conduct complex operations together.

"The desert heat presents a challenging environment for us to work in, as does operating so far in advance of the main force. As Royal Marines commandos this is exactly where we want to be."

Saif Sareea is one of the largest international military exercises in the world.

More than 4,000 British sailors, soldiers and air crews will be tested in the punishing sands of the desert of Oman alongside colleagues from the host nation.

It is intended to reinforce the long-standing and close military relationship between Britain and Oman, strengthening our ability to provide security and safeguard UK prosperity in a vital part of the world.

As *Navy News* went to press, the Royal Navy's contribution to the exercise was assembling in the port of Duqm.

Assault ship HMS Albion – on the final leg of a nine-month deployment which has taken her as far east as Japan – spearheads substantial Royal Navy involvement in Saif Sareea.

She will be joined by Type 45 destroyer HMS Dragon, landing ships RFA Lyme Bay and RFA Cardigan Bay, minehunters HMS Ledbury and HMS Blythe plus military ferry MV Anvil Point.

Following Saif Sareea some elements of the task group will remain in the Middle East to support activity with other nations, while others – including Albion – will return to Britain to prepare for the UK assuming the duty as NATO's on-call Amphibious Task Force in January.

Additional reporting by Major James Smith

FOLLOW SAIF SAREEA ONLINE

See more coverage of Saif Sareea 3 as the exercise unfolds. Follow the Royal Navy and Royal Marines on Facebook and Twitter.



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RN ships join NATO Norway exercise

ROYAL Navy warships were making their way to Norway for one of NATO's biggest exercises in recent years as *Navy News* went to press.

Type 23 frigates HMS Northumberland and Westminster were joining minehunters Cattistock, Hurworth, Grimsby and Ramsey, along with survey ship Enterprise and a fleet diving unit, for Trident Juncture 18.

X-Ray Company from 45 Commando, based in Arbroath, are also embedded in the amphibious assault ship USS Iwo Jima.

Around 150 aircraft, including a Merlin Mk2 from 814 NAS aboard Northumberland, 65 vessels and up to 10,000 vehicles are taking part in the exercise, which is centred around central and eastern Norway, the North Atlantic and Baltic Sea, including Iceland and the airspace of Finland and Norway.

If all the participating vehicles were placed in a line they would form a continuous link of 92km (57 miles). Admiral James G Foggo, commander of NATO's Allied Joint Force Command Naples, is overseeing the exercise, which involves more than 40,000 personnel from all 29 NATO countries plus Finland and Sweden.

The largest military exercise in Norway since the 1980s, Trident Juncture 18 aims to ensure that NATO forces are trained, able to operate together, and ready to respond to any threat.

The exercise, which takes place over 12 days, will see more than 1.8 million meals served, 4.6 million bottles of water consumed, and 660 tonnes of laundry dealt with.

Coverage of Trident Juncture 18 will appear in next month's *Navy News*.

Devonport gets frigates

THE next generation of submarine-hunting frigates will be based in Devonport – following the decision to concentrate all their predecessors in the West Country.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson visited the base to tell serving and civilian personnel that all eight Type 26 frigates would call Devonport their home when they join the Fleet next decade.

The 26s replace the 'souped-up' 23s which are dedicated to anti-submarine warfare, namely the eight ships 'fitted with a tail': the Sonar 2087 towed array.

Due to increased submarine activity in the North Atlantic, the decision was taken to move all the anti-submarine warfare specialist vessels (Richmond, St Albans, Westminster, Kent, Portland, Sutherland, Northumberland and Somerset) closer to the Western Approaches, leaving the five general purpose 23s in Portsmouth.

Four of the 6,900-tonne £1.2bn ships have now been officially named with HMS Birmingham joining lead ship Glasgow, then Cardiff and Belfast.

Whitehall has also signed support deals for RN and RFA vessels totalling more than £1bn.

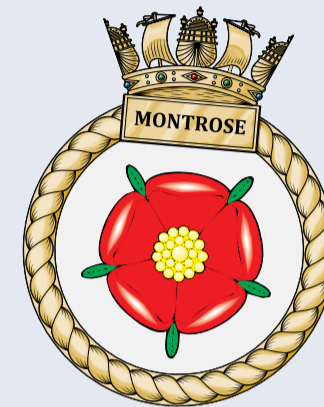
The bulk of the cash – £619m – is being pumped into Cammell Laird in Birkenhead to maintain the RFA's Fort-class supply ships, older Wave and new Tide-class tankers.

A&P in Falmouth will receive £239m to support the three Bay-class amphibious ships, floating hospital/aviation ship RFA Argus and survey vessel HMS Scott.

And UK Docks on Tyneside will be given £150m to keep survey ships HMS Echo, Enterprise and Protector in full working order.



On a voyage of discovery



HMS Montrose sets off to take up an enduring presence in the Middle East as the Royal Navy's first forward deployed frigate

WATCH the families of HMS Montrose wave their loved ones goodbye and you'd be forgiven for thinking they're off on a deployment like any other.

They're not. Because HMS Montrose won't be seeing the shores of the UK again for rather a long time. Three and a half years in fact.

The ship's company, though, will be back much earlier than that, having seen their ship become the first Type 23 frigate to be forward deployed in the Gulf.

The forward basing pilot is the first of its kind to be put into action by the Royal Navy and serves two purposes – to demonstrate the UK's commitment to maritime security in the Middle East while also ensuring those on board can enjoy more stability in their home lives.

"It's been a really interesting challenge to get ready for this deployment and one that everyone on board has risen to," says Commander Conor O'Neill, Montrose's Commanding Officer.

"While crew rotations are nothing new to us, manning systems on this scale are something different and it's presented a real chance to employ a bit of creativity and use our problem-solving skills.

"Everyone from the most junior sailors on board to the heads of department have been encouraged to try new things and see what ideas they can come up with to make this work

smoothly, which I hope has left people feeling empowered."

A busy period of weapons testing and operational sea training has seen the ship's company put through their paces over previous months – and their ability to think ahead has been tested too.

"You have to think about things a bit differently when you know your ship won't be returning to the UK for more than three years," added Cdr O'Neill.

"But what we have here is a chance to do things differently, and to challenge the status quo a bit to really make this work for the better.

"And frankly, we've got an incredible deployment ahead of us – we will cross almost every ocean and sail around the world before we reach our destination.

"There is plenty to look forward to."

Montrose deploys for defence engagement activity and maritime security operations prior to arriving in the Gulf.

The first crew rotation will take place in spring 2019, when her current ship's company will become HMS Montrose Port Crew and depart the ship.

They will be relieved by HMS Monmouth's ship's company, who on completion of their current deployment as an escort ship to HMS Queen Elizabeth, will generate as the HMS Montrose Starboard Crew, later joining Montrose on operations in the Gulf and further afield.

From then on, each crew will spend around four months in theatre followed by four months back in the UK.

The aim behind it all, says Fleet Commander Vice Admiral Ben Key, is to offer people a bit of stability in their home lives while demonstrating the Royal Navy's commitment to security in the Middle East.

"This rotation is designed to offer personal stability when back in the UK, only to be



KEEP UP WITH THE SHIP

Follow @HMS_MONTROSE and @RoyalNavy on Twitter

Pictures: L Phot Barry Wheeler

NIGHT FIRE



HMS Argyll demonstrated her firepower alongside the UK's allies in the Asia Pacific region as part of a major exercise.

The Plymouth-based Type 23 frigate has been working alongside navies from Malaysia, Singapore, Australia and New Zealand in the South China Sea - showing the UK's commitment to the region area as part of a long-standing agreement.

Argyll was joined by a dozen other warships including an Australian fleet replenishment vessel, HMAS Sirius, and Singaporean amphibious landing platform dock RSS Persistence. A submarine from the Singapore Navy was also involved.

Commander Toby Shaughnessy, the Commanding Officer of HMS Argyll, said: "It is a great honour to be representing the UK in Exercise Bersama Lima in this way."

"The opportunity to exercise with our partners in the Five Powers Defence Arrangement allows the UK to demonstrate its long-term commitment to regional peace and security. Slightly further ahead, we look forward to hosting the chiefs of the US, Japanese and UK Navies on board for discussions towards the end of the year."

As well as night-time gunnery practice, maritime security and boarding operations involving Argyll's Royal

Marines and Wildcat helicopter, it was a chance for the Type 23 to show the capability of her new Sea Ceptor missile system.

The £850m weapon system was launched in May and is a powerful shield against airborne threats, including hostile combat jets, helicopters and other missiles.

The gathering of allied navies was also a chance for sailors to sample life in allied navies by swapping ships for sections of the exercise.

HMS Argyll's participation in Exercise Bersama Lima is a demonstration of the UK's continuing commitment to the Five Powers Defence Arrangements.

The arrangement was signed in 1971 and means the countries involved will consult each other immediately in the event of an armed attack but also work with each other to ensure security in the region.

The war games' location meant the frigate was able to detour briefly to pay their respects at one of the most hallowed sites in Royal Navy history.

More than 800 were killed when battle cruiser HMS Repulse and battleship HMS Prince of Wales were sunk by Japanese bombers during World War Two.

Seventy seven years on, Argyll held a remembrance ceremony and laid wreaths to mark the exact spot where the tragedy occurred.

Leading the service, Royal Marines Lieutenant James Cain said: "This battle was, for the allied forces, heroic but catastrophic. Despite the endeavour and suffering of the ship's companies, this was merely the start of a process which saw Singapore and much of this region fall into Japanese hands."

Following her Bersama Lima commitments, Argyll will proceed to north east Asia, where her plans include joint training alongside the Japanese Navy.



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Starring role

HMS Monmouth charms visitors in Baltimore

HMS Monmouth was the centre of attention at a huge United States Navy festival in Baltimore.

The Black Duke has taken a back seat as she escorts HMS Queen Elizabeth across the Atlantic for her Westlant 18 deployment.

But the Plymouth-based frigate did the Naval Service proud on a week-long visit to the US port city for the Maryland Fleet Week & Baltimore Air Show.

She welcomed thousands of visitors during five days at the event, which is one of the biggest naval shows in the USA.

Having peeled away from HMS Queen Elizabeth after shadowing Britain's newest aircraft carrier since leaving Devonport in August, the Type 23 was one of the stars of the show in Baltimore.

Monmouth was on show alongside a dozen warships, classic sailing vessels and even a World War 2 Liberty ship.

Commanding Officer of HMS Monmouth, Commander Will King, was full of pride.

"This visit was a huge success and it continues to demonstrate the close partnership between the UK and US," he said.

"It is my hope that through events such as this the public gain an insight into the professionalism, commitment and sacrifice that all members of the

Armed Forces make every day.

"My team of sailors have been extremely proud in their role as ambassadors for the Royal Navy and the UK and I would like to thank the people of Baltimore and Maryland for their friendship and hospitality during our stay."

Monmouth immediately made her presence felt, making a spectacular entrance with the ship's company stood at attention on the upper with members of the Royal Marines Band performing on the flight deck.

She was berthed on the jetty near the headquarters of sportswear brand Under Armour and welcomed a variation of guests on board – including the cheerleaders from the Baltimore Ravens American Football team, children from local schools and staff from Under Armour.

She also hosted an evening reception attended by Commander Carrier Strike Group Two, Rear Admiral Stephen Evans of the US Navy, the British Naval Attaché, British Embassy staff and local businessmen and women.

Having been on carrier escort duties as HMS Queen Elizabeth began F-35 Lightning fighter jet flight trials recently, this was a chance for a change of pace.

Monmouth's sailors took the short



trip to capital Washington DC to take in all the main tourist attractions and also got involved in sports matches against other visiting ships and local teams in Baltimore.

Sailors put in a decent performance at the Baltimore 5k fun run and were put through circuit training by Under Armour, too.

After Baltimore, Monmouth returned to HMS Queen Elizabeth's side and will shortly be on exercise with the United States Navy Amphibious Task Group.

Pictures: Lt Cdr Craig Devlin, CPO(MEM) Kevin Hewson and LWtr Philip Mountstephens



● Personnel from HMS Kent during the frigate's rededication

Kent returns to service after refit

FAMILIES, friends and former commanding officers helped welcome HMS Kent back to the heart of the Royal Navy after an 18-month keel-to-mast revamp.

The frigate has undergone a major overhaul in the hands of Babcock in Plymouth, work which makes her both the most advanced submarine hunter in the Fleet – and helps sustain her on active duties into the early 2030s.

As well as a new command system, the ship was fitted with the Sea Ceptor missile, replacing the veteran Seawolf across the Fleet. Sea Ceptor is able not merely to protect Kent herself from air/missile attack, but any task group to which she's attached.

The Babcock team also enhanced the ship's command and control system – the computer brains which process the masses of data Kent's sensors gather so that the operations room team can interpret them.

And general machinery, messes and living quarters have all been cleaned, refreshed or overhauled.

The refit ended in July, since when the 180-plus crew have been conducting trials in home waters and shaking off the cobwebs of being alongside, before bringing their frigate into Portsmouth for the service of rededication.

"Being involved in the refit and subsequent regeneration of HMS

Kent has represented one of the most challenging – and rewarding – periods of my career," said marine engineer Chief Petty Officer Philip Shields.

"Seeing the journey from tired metal hull to a rejuvenated, re-purposed capable fighting unit ready to rejoin the fleet has been a privilege."

At the other end of the spectrum is Engineering Technician Owen Pryce's for whom Kent is his first ship.

"I have been made to feel really welcome. The ship is not just where I work, it's also where I live and it's been great to be able to show HMS Kent off to my family," he said.

Commanding Officer Commander Andrew Brown said: "It is the drive and determination, the pride and ownership of each sailor that has taken

HMS Kent from a hull alongside to what you see today; an impressive warship with state-of-the-art technology."

He's the latest in a long line of commanding officers of Kent which began with (then) Commander John Clink back in 2000 when the ship was billed as the 'millennium frigate'.

Eighteen years later, the now-rear admiral – who recently left the Royal Navy after serving as Flag Officer Sea Training – was one of the guests of honour.

HMS Kent will continue with sea trials before going through Operational Sea Training after which she'll be declared fit to resume front-line operations.



Pictures: LPhoto Louise George

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No Tyne to waste

SAILORS in HMS Tyne have thrown themselves back into frontline operations after returning to sea from a period of lower readiness.

After a challenging but rewarding two weeks in the Western Isles under the instruction of Flag Officer Sea Training, Tyne was straight back to work and since August has been busy across a wide range of tasks.

As *Navy News* went to press, she was monitoring the movements of the Yaroslav Mudry, a Russian Neustrashimyy-class frigate passing through the English Channel (pictured below).

Lieutenant Peter Cowan, the ship's Executive Officer, said: "Escorting foreign warships is not only a clear statement of our nation's determination to protect our waters but is also a great opportunity for our people.

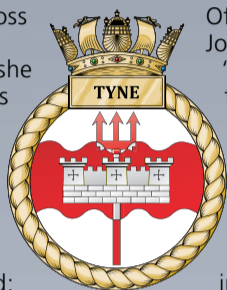
"It challenges the ship's company by asking them to prepare and deliver a dynamic tasking and use their expert knowledge and experience to lead us to a successful mission."

Tyne and her sailors have also helped train and assess the next generation of navigators, conducted defence engagement and taken up their usual role of marine enforcement operations.

"It is hugely rewarding and satisfying to have Tyne back out on operations where she belongs," said Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Jon Browett.

"Monitoring foreign warships through our waters is an important duty, and is just one of many tasks that patrol vessels such as Tyne undertake on a routine basis.

"Since we completed operational sea training in September we have delivered navigation training and assessments, conducted marine enforcement operations with our colleagues from the Marine Management Organisation, and are now demonstrating the nation's determination to patrol and safeguard our borders and waters – a pretty satisfying portfolio of activity and work that is of real value to the country."



Picture: LPhoto Alex Ceolin



It's training (Wild)cats and dogs

CANINES from the Army's 1st Military Working Dog Regiment took to the skies with 815 Naval Air Squadron – part of the work-up for Saif Sareea, the UK armed forces' biggest exercise of the year.

Pearl – a sniffer dog – and German shepherd Indie – an attack dog – were used to neither ships nor helicopters, but quickly settled down on amphibious support ship RFA Lyme Bay and were

never short of attention when being exercised on the upper deck.

Their stint aboard Lyme Bay reached its climax with a morning-long workout with the Wildcat, culminating in flights in the back of the Wildcat (which was packed with Royal Marines from 3 Commando Brigade) – to get them used to the sounds, smells and sensations of a helicopter sortie.

Each dog (and handler) climbed aboard the Wildcat, launched from the flight deck, completed a circuit on board and were delivered back on board via winch transfer – not something many four legged animals get to do.

"We believe this is a first for a Wildcat," said Flight Observer Lieutenant Alex Halliday.

"Getting both dog and handler safely out the aircraft door and down the wire added a level of complexity on top of how we normally operate, but the dogs

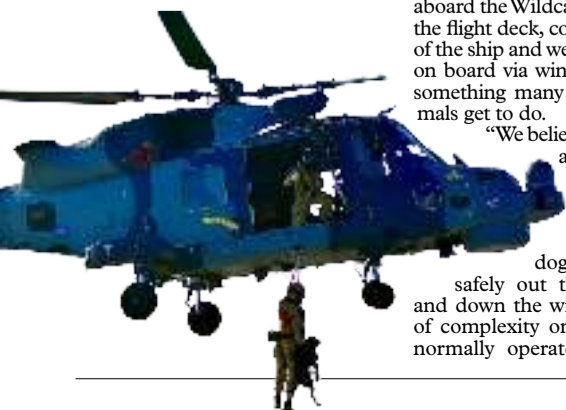
were remarkably well behaved given how strange an environment a noisy aircraft must be to them."

This is one of several firsts for 205 Flight from RNAS Yeovilton in Somerset: the Wildcat Mk2 usually finds itself on a frigate or destroyer, rather than supporting Royal Marines assaulting a beach.

Nevertheless, the helicopter has quickly got used to its new surroundings, as Flight Commander Lieutenant Commander John Phillips says: "While amphibious operations are not a traditional role conducted by 815, the Wildcat demonstrated huge potential to deliver air power from the sea to the land. The excellent sensors on the aircraft deliver the 'find and fix' capability – locating potential targets – to any task group operation."

Which is handy because the ship is now attached to such a group, poised off the coast of Oman with destroyer HMS Dragon and UK flagship HMS Albion ahead of Saif Sareea.

Picture by LAET Chris Watson



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Digging deep to achieve diving goals

Personnel living the dream during expedition to Belize

THE hot Caribbean sun rises early in the day and begins beating down on Half Moon Caye, an island and natural monument 50 miles east of Belize City.

The caye is located in the south-eastern tip of the Lighthouse Reef atoll and is one of the four atolls in the Caribbean, three of which are found in Belize waters.

The heat forces everyone out of their tents by 5am and 12 sailors and marines haul themselves over to the lean-to for some early breakfast and a dive brief.

Today is the final day of diving for members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Sub Aqua Diving expedition Belizean Adventure 18.

Twelve months prior to this and the expedition was just a glint in the eye of Major Lee Piper, expedition organiser and lead diving supervisor.

The workup to a trip like this is long and not easy and it starts with finding 12 willing and eager volunteers. From here the planning can really begin.

The current Belize adventurous training model has been going for more than five years and has taken over since the closure of British Forces Adventure Training Centre in 2011.



The group first met at Heathrow airport and immediately jetted off to Belize city to the British Army Training and Support Unit Belize to set up their base camp.

From here there was a frantic period of gathering stores, hiring vehicles and setting up diving kit before the long drive over the mountains the following day to the town of Dangriga.

In this coastal town the team loaded up and boarded their two skiffs and met their host for the next five days, the ever-cheerful Alex.

After a short transit the team arrived at Glover's Reef where they set up camp on the beach and got their kit ready for the first dip of the trip.

If you fast forward to the last day of the trip and look back you would see flooded tents; broken compressors;



unforgiving heat as well as countless Sandflays and mosquitoes.

You would also see the motivated team that overcame these obstacles to achieve the goals of their expedition.

The team managed to complete depth progression and planned decompression, diving to 50 metres in challenging conditions.

The two weeks of diving culminated in the famous Great Blue Hole.

Lance Corporal Paul Fairholm, on his second sub aqua diving expedition, said: "It was fantastic again to be with a wide range of servicemen, coming together with a common passion to make a success of a difficult and arduous exped."

Visit nrmsaa.webs.com for details about sub-aqua diving.



Hey, what's Cook-ing, commodore?

LOOKING rather dapper – and remarkably cool considering the model of Captain Cook's HMS Endeavour is on fire – retired commodore Martin Atherton poses for an unusual portrait to inspire pupils at his old school.

Forty-one years after leaving Liverpool Blue Coat School – regarded as one of the best state schools in the land – Cdre Atherton, who recently retired as Commodore Regional Forces, was one of 11 alumni selected for the arts project.

They posed for Sane Seven Photographers in a series of 'original and challenging situations'... hence the burning model of Endeavour.

"The invitation to take part in the project came out of the blue, but I didn't hesitate. I owe the Blue Coat School much of who and what I am today, so it was an honour to be asked," said Cdre Atherton who today is receiver general (chief executive) of Canterbury Cathedral.

"What I wasn't expecting was that it would be quite so fascinating, rewarding and such fun to work with Sane Seven to create the image.

"I'm thrilled with my portrait and intrigued by the others too. I hope it does the job for the school and its pupils, as it should if it proves half as captivating for them to look at as it was for me to sit in front of the camera."

The portraits – including Helen Brown, editor of BBC TV sports news, film producer Stuart Ford and international physicist Prof Simon Hands – hang in the new Old Blues' Corridor, dedicated to former pupils who have gone on to excel in their respective fields.

In Cdre Atherton's case, his four-decade RN career saw widespread service around the globe, Faslane, MOD main building, and, as Commodore Regional Forces, overseeing RN involvement in the Queen's Diamond Jubilee events in 2012, and Senior Service participation in the 70th anniversaries of D-Day and the Battle of the Atlantic until retiring in 2016.

WW1 bomb at RAF home

A 'PRESENT' left behind by sailors interrupted business at the spiritual home of the RAF.

Contractors working at RAF Cranwell uncovered a bomb close to the airfield.

It took an RAF bomb disposal team a while to identify the aged ammunition – it turned out to be a 16lb high explosive bomb dating to around 1916... when the base was a Royal Naval Air Station as HMS Daedalus.

Would-be naval aviators were taught to fly both aircraft and airships at Cranwell before the base was transferred to the newly-formed RAF in April 1918.

The bomb was probably carried by a Sea Scout airship – mainstay of anti-submarine operations in the North Sea in the latter years of World War One. It was safely detonated.

The pits? No, it was a highlight



2018. YEAR OF ENGINEERING

N LAUDER. In the pits. At a Formula 1 grand prix? It's not the 70s or 80s.

Ok, so N stands for Niall, not Niki, the surname is Lauder, not Lauda. And he hails from Portsmouth, not Vienna.

The 26-year-old leading hand, who looks after survival equipment on HMS Albion, was one of a select group of sailors from Britain's flagship given an insight into life behind the scenes at the Singapore Grand Prix by the McLaren Formula 1 team.

Niall and six shipmates were invited to spend a day at the races – and compare engineering behind cutting-edge motor sport, with the equipment which is at the heart of the assault ship.

"The whole experience was just amazing," said Niall. "A fantastic opportunity to learn about F1 engineering and see how it compares to what we do in the RN."

"As 2018 is the Year of Engineering I asked if McLaren would consider hosting a group from Albion and from the off we were hosted magnificently. The welcome from the McLaren crew, drivers and TV personalities was absolutely fantastic; they couldn't do enough for us."

Niall's shipmate, Leading Airman Engineering Technician Joe Fisher, 29, from Weston Super Mare added: "The similarities between Formula 1 racing and a ship's flight are striking."

"The McLaren engineering team have to have the team's car ready for the race start and there are no excuses. It is just the same for a flight because on operations we have to make sure that the helicopter is ready to launch on time. Tool control is exactly the same – they are laid out and accounted for meticulously."

"Everything is about precision and attention to detail. Even the camaraderie and banter is a mirror of what it is like onboard. Two members of the pit crew were former Royal Navy engineering technicians and we all got on really well."

He continued: "The car is fully network-enabled with data from all the systems being downloaded and beamed back to the mission control centre in Woking, in near real time. This allows the race team to advise the driver how hard to push the car and optimise performance throughout the race. The RN's helicopters have similar systems to monitor vibration and engine performance but the data is analysed on landing."

Lt Kevin Griggs, 46, from Gloucester, Albion's aviation officer, added: "It struck me that the pit changes were like a double, Stingray torpedo load on a helicopter – in the dark. All the crew had a specific role to play and worked seamlessly for each other."

F1 fan and Albion's senior physical training instructor, Petty Officer Jamie Buttle said



the visit to the McLaren pits was one of the highlights of his naval career.

"Observing the Formula 1 drivers and their ability to deal with the physical and mentally challenging conditions in Singapore, it struck me that the whole team must be able to deal with the physical and mental challenges of the Grand Prix as well," the 38-year-old from Rotherham added.

"All of the scenarios found in a Grand Prix team are metaphorically the same as what is required of those serving in the RN. As the clubz I must ensure personnel are physically and mentally prepared to meet the requirement of operations."

The Albion guests watched Lewis Hamilton take the chequered flag – a British victory, but not for McLaren. The team's lead driver Fernando Alonso came home in

seventh place; teammate Stoffel Vandoorne crossed the line 12th.

HMS Albion returned the hospitality by hosting nine of the McLaren pit crew technicians – including a trip to the bowels to see Albion's four V16 engines. What they lack in F1 power to weight ratio, they make up in size and sheer pulling power (generating 6.25MW apiece).

"It was a real privilege to experience the true professionalism of the McLaren engineers delivering under pressure," said Captain Tim Neild, Albion's Commanding Officer. "It's this positive attitude and ability I see every day in the engineers and across the disciplines of the ship's company of HMS Albion, combined with the latest technology, that makes the Royal Navy such an exciting place to work."



• POAET Tim Moore with Tamiyah Chechi Picture: PO(Phot) Nicola Harper

Taste of navy life for UTC students

STUDENTS from University Technical Colleges (UTC) affiliated to the Royal Navy were given the opportunity to learn more about engineering with the Royal Navy when they visited HMS Sultan and HMS Collingwood.

The students, aged 14-19, from UTCs across the country, spent the week-long visit living on board the Type 82 training ship HMS Bristol, based in Portsmouth.

During the week they visited HMS Collingwood, the home of Royal Navy Weapon Engineering, HMS Sultan, the home of Marine and Air Engineering, visited an operational warship and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

During their visit to HMS Collingwood the students received a briefing on weapon engineering and the career options available. They also witnessed demonstrations and received briefings on the Phalanx, 4.5in gun and automated small calibre gun which is fitted to Type 23 frigates.

Student Dan Poole, 14, from Birmingham, who is currently studying at Aston UTC, said: "It's been really good so far. I'm interested in engineering and joining the navy so this is really good. We're staying on HMS Bristol too which is really cool."

The visit to HMS Sultan was packed full of hands-on air and marine engineering activities, including learning aircraft maintenance skills, about survival equipment and how to maintain a diesel engine.

Student Lucy Robinson, 14, who was also from Aston UTC, said: "It's been brilliant, we've been given a lot of really challenging things to do, like pulling an engine apart. I think we're being given lots of opportunities to see different types of engineering and what's out there and this has really made me rethink what I want to do in the long run."

Fast work for Middleton

HMS Middleton was being returned to the Royal Navy this month with two new state-of-the-art engines, fitted in half the time an old-engine overhaul would take.

This not only increases her availability for operations, but also gives her technology to ensure the minehunter remains undetected at sea.

The ship undertook a ten-week support period, carried out by Hunt-class teams at Portsmouth Naval Base.

As one of six minehunters based in Portsmouth, she was due an overhaul period on her Caterpillar C32 engines when the opportunity arose to update the engines with the latest on-engine 'degaussing' technology and cut the man hours required for the engine work.

John Barnard, Marine Systems Support Engineer, who worked on the engine change programme, said: "This has been an exciting piece of work as it is the first time both a Hunt's Caterpillar C32 engines have been changed simultaneously."

"The new Caterpillar engines are more powerful, reliable, and cheaper to run, needing much less maintenance in comparison to the older Deltic engines. Whilst normally a 'top overhaul' would be carried out at this stage in the engines' lives, fitting a new set now has halved the ship's engine works programme from seven weeks to around three weeks, and allowed the benefit of the new of the degaussing system to be fitted."

Trip down Memory Lane

AROUND 100 engineers who completed their basic training at HMS Raleigh or the former HMS Figsard, took the opportunity to revisit the establishment to meet today's recruits.

After a tour of the establishment, the visitors were invited to form a platoon and take part in the afternoon's passing-out-parade.

The parade marked the successful completion of training for 45 recruits, including 17 engineer technicians.

Captain Matt Bolton, Deputy Assistant Chief of Staff (DACOS) Engineering Support and the Royal Navy's Year of Engineering lead took the salute.

Among those veterans attending was 89-year-old Alex Tongue from Brixham, the oldest former naval engineer visiting HMS Raleigh on the day.

Mr Tongue joined the Royal Navy in 1954 as an artificer, the name given for skilled workers in the military, and spent the first part of his training at HMS Figsard, the Royal Navy Artificer Training Establishment in Torpoint.

HMS Figsard was commissioned in 1946 and closed in 1983, when initial training for engineers transferred literally across the road to HMS Raleigh.

Mr Tongue went on to serve with the Royal Navy for 24 years, which included two years as a Naval Officer in HMS Raleigh before leaving the Service in 1969.

He retained his naval ties by then joining the Royal Naval Reserves (RNR) and got involved with the navy Sea Cadets, coming back to HMS Raleigh for various courses during that time.

Mr Tongue said: "Today has been absolutely amazing, the training facility is out this world. An amazing experience. We have been treated brilliantly today, I don't think the Navy has altered in manpower, same keenness."

Also in attendance for the day was Andy O'Brien, who travelled from Taunton in Somerset. Joining in 1973 as an artificer at HMS Figsard, he is also a current committee member of the Official Figsard Association whose aim is to bring together those engineering veterans who spent their most formative years at HMS Figsard, or in Figsard Squadron, HMS Raleigh.

Mr O'Brien, who specialised in Marine Engineering during his time in the Royal Navy, said: "Today has brought back memories seeing old friends and meeting people that I haven't seen for many years, a great day."

Warrant Officer 1 Pete Simpson, who organised the event, said: "As the majority of Royal Navy engineering ratings since World War II started their careers in Torpoint we were keen that HMS Raleigh marked this significant year to naval engineering. We welcome the engineers back to inspire today's recruits and for them to see how training has moved on."

Raising profile of our profession

THE Royal Navy's Year of Engineering 2018 campaign has continued to make rapid progress throughout the year, highlighting the great work engineers do as the 'beating heart' of its operational capability across the globe.

In support of the campaign there have been numerous events held recently, including STEM events such as the 'Bring It On' festival in Sunderland, and RN engineers have been represented at events as diverse as the Bournemouth Air Festival, a headteachers' STEM conference at MOD Boscombe Down, the HMS Raleigh Year of Engineering Open Day and the Peregrine Trophy Photographic Awards. Early last month the International Naval Engineering Conference (INEC18) took place at the Technology and Innovation Centre in Glasgow, tying in neatly to that month's YOIE18 campaign theme of 'shaping the future'.

Conference chairman, Capt Matt Bolton, said: "INEC18 is an excellent opportunity for the maritime engineering community to discuss innovation and share ideas."

"With 350 delegates from 18 nations, and with over 100 peer reviewed papers presented, it was a clear demonstration of the international nature of engineering."

The conference was the key 'learned society' event of the IMarEST for the year and was accredited as CPD for registered naval engineers.

The conference also hosted 120 students from local schools, making use of the RN STEM Outreach Team's presence on site, using their expertise to explain how and why engineering plays such a key role in our everyday lives.

Events planned for this month include the Solent Festival of Engineering, where the RN will have a significant presence and a number of STEM events for schools across the country.

As part of the RN's YOIE18 ongoing campaign activity the RN-UKNEST Naval Engineering Competition is open to students aged 5-18, with the closing date of December 1.

To access information regarding the competition go to www.uknest.org.uk and download an information pack.

The YOIE18 campaign is seeking to reposition engineering in society, highlighting engineering as a valuable and rewarding career choice.

Every engineer plays a crucial role in delivering the Royal Navy's outputs around the globe, using their core skills in a range of testing environments, but there is one constant – the excellence of their training.

If you want to contribute to the RN's Year of Engineering 2018 campaign read [RNTM 07-064/17](#), and you are encouraged to share your experiences on social media, using [#yoe](#), [#inspireanengineer](#) and [#takeacloserlook](#), and link into [@RoyalNavy](#) and [@YoEGovUK](#).

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Deep frozen treasures

Qatar lessons for mine ships

THESE are priceless artefacts recovered from one of the Royal Navy's most famous - and ill-fated - expeditions.

One hundred and 70 years after they were last above the waves, everyday items from the wreck of HMS Erebus were brought to the surface during the first of many annual expeditions to the wreck.

Erebus and HMS Terror were lost during an attempt to find the fabled Northwest Passage - a route between the Atlantic and Pacific through the waters of northern Canada and the Arctic which saved ships sailing around perilous Cape Horn at the foot of the Americas.

The two vessels and their 130 crew, led by Rear Admiral Sir John Franklin, were last seen in 1845.

Both ships became trapped in ice off King William Island - about 3,000 kilometres from Toronto - and were abandoned by their crew, who spent two desolate winters there before striking south in the hope of reaching civilisation. They never made it.

After more than a century and a half of searching, the wreck of Erebus was finally found in 2014 and Terror two years later.

This summer, historians, maritime archeologists and dignitaries returned to the site of the Erebus for a concerted study of the wreck by Parks Canada.

Items recovered include a pitcher and the roof of an artificial horizon from an officer's cabin (both pictured inset), numerous objects used in the rigging and some 'fearnought' - the protective layer between wooden decking.

Britain's naval advisor to the High

Commissioner in Ottawa Commander Neil Marriott became the first Briton to visit the wrecks - and the forbidding environment where their expedition came to a tragic end.

"Being the first Brit on the site of the Franklin wrecks and the first Royal Navy representative to hold items last touched by an HMS Erebus sailor over 170 years ago was something else - an indescribable emotion," he said.

"I felt a really strong sensation of the teamwork and camaraderie the sailors must have had to allow them to survive for so long; without it they surely would have perished much sooner."

The area's Inuit inhabitants gave their British guest an insight into how to survive in such an unforgiving environment - and how climate change is having a major impact. "Climate change is reducing river flow for fish migration, which results in increased bear activity against humans," Cdr Marriott explained. "The warmer weather - or rather less cold weather - is resulting in more hunters falling through ice."

The remains of Erebus and Terror were donated by the British to the Canadian government and the indigenous Inuit populace - they passed down accounts of the crew's fate through generations and played a key role in helping 21st Century explorers.

This summer's brief stint over the wrecks saw divers go down into the icy waters to assess the state of Erebus' remains; the installation of two moorings for a support barge to conduct further exploration in years to come; and an updated side-scan sonar survey of the wreck.



● A diver feels his way along the wreck of HMS Erebus and (below) a block and tackle rests on some of Erebus' planking

Courtesy of Parks Canada



TWO Gulf-based minehunters made the short trip from Bahrain to Doha to give Qatar's navy an insight into the RN's work in the region.

HMS Brocklesby and Shoreham carried out joint training with the Qatari Emiri Naval Forces both in their base and then out in the Gulf.

The Qataris do not possess any minehunters of more than 80 patrol craft, but they do possess divers.

They plunged into the water with Brocklesby's dive teams to carry out jetty searches - the arduous task of looking for bombs or mines placed in harbours to disrupt shipping.

Brocklesby also welcomed 25 Qatari sailors on board for demonstrations of equipment, such as the Seafox remote-controlled submersible which finds, helps identify and finally destroys mines.

After two days in port, the Brits sailed with two Qatari fast patrol boats for combined manoeuvres, culminating in practice boarding operations with Qatari sailors bringing their Hurricane RIB rubber boat up to Brocklesby ready to clamber aboard for an inspection.

Afterwards, the ships returned to Doha with the Brits given time to explore the Qatari capital - the principal host city for the 2022 World Cup.

"The architecture in Doha is stunning," said Leading Seaman Andrew 'Percy' Pearson from HMS Shoreham. "A lot of effort is being put into making it a modern designer city and no two buildings are the same, which means that every turn gives you a new and exciting view. It will be interesting to see the change once all the stadia are built for the World Cup."

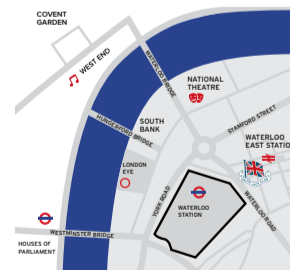
His HMS Shoreham shipmate and diver Able Seaman Frank Martin added: "I really enjoyed the opportunity to visit the Waqif Souq and experience the bustling atmosphere and variety of shops. Seeing the falcon handlers in the nearby Falcon Souq was also really interesting and I was surprised to even find a falcon hospital in the souq too!"

Lieutenant Commander Paul Irving, Brocklesby's Commanding Officer, said he and his crew had thoroughly enjoyed their visit to Qatar - and found it very useful.



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RISING UP

SUBMARINERS don't often climb out from the watery depths in the Royal Navy, but Lieutenant Tom Hunt has risen to the surface for a very good reason.

The Cornishman has leadership ambitions and temporarily becoming a skimmer — as submariners like to refer to the surface fleet sailors — is the best way of climbing the ladder.

Lt Hunt is the Commanding Officer of P2000, Archer Class Patrol Craft, HMS Trumpeter.

With just five crew making up the ship's company, the surroundings of this compact vessel — the smallest in the Senior Service — make it the perfect breeding ground for leaders in the Royal Navy. This is where future admirals cut their teeth.

The fleet of 14 P2000s recently converged in Portsmouth for a rare get-together. The purpose of which was to get this fleet and its young leaders used to working together as a taskforce.

"I love being a submariner and I will go back to the submarines late next year," Lt Hunt explains.

"The difference is quite stark, we don't do Officer of the Watch manoeuvres or the formations we've been doing today — and there's a lot more sunlight here!

"I have learnt a lot doing this which I wouldn't have if I stayed in the submarine fleet.

"The P2000s serve an integral role in the Royal Navy in the training and development of future leaders and also for the training and development of the crew.

"They'll take lessons learnt from this ship out into the fleet. It's a key role for training and training the fleet to go out and operate bigger ships.

"It has opened my eyes. Usually submariners refer to surface people as skimmers as a derogatory term but it's been really good working with them."

Certainly, on this particular day there's a lot more sunlight than Hunt is used to. The P2000s are heading out onto the Solent to practise formations.

It's a sunny late-September day and all 14 of the 1st Patrol Boat Squadron's ships are together.

At 30 years old, Lt Hunt is one of the oldest Commanding Officers in this flotilla. Most are in their twenties and the youngest is 24.

"This is my second crew job in the navy and now I'm getting command experience," Lt Hunt said.

"It's definitely good going into the future and some of us will go onto be commanders of the big ships and submarines. It's really good because you are your own boss and you are your own setter of standards essentially."

Out of Portsmouth Harbour in two lines of seven with each ship 100 yards apart, the P2000s enter into the Solent.

The fleet turn east at Spitbank Fort before creating the first formation of the day at 11.30am with the nearby Type 23 frigate HMS Montrose deploying her Merlin helicopter to dance above.

It makes for a glorious sight and the photo opportunities are endless.

But there is a serious reason for this meet.

Commanding Officer of 1PBS Commander Milly

Ingham said: "It's an excellent opportunity for all the junior officers and their ship's companies to practise a complicated series of manoeuvres out on the Solent as part of their development.

"This is an exercise that happens once a year and it is an incredibly important one, not just for the excellent training it provides but also for everyone to catch up with their counterparts."

For the ship's company in Ipswich-based Trumpeter this is a deployment without barriers.

With so few sailors on board, everyone just has to get stuck into different roles, not just the post they are assigned to.

The P2000s are also the go-to ship for the University Royal Naval Unit, making these craft the ultimate training ground for the Royal Navy.

Students come aboard on weekends and for deployments in spring and summer time to learn unique Navy skills.

It's not necessarily a prelude to joining the Naval Service but a

place where students can pick up skills for life.

"It teaches them teamwork, communication and leadership and we're giving them opportunities to conduct exercises," Lieutenant Hunt adds.

"These skills are key in life not just in the navy."

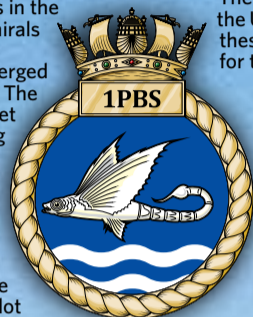
"It's a great package they get from being in the URNU."

ABOUT THE P2000s

- The Archer Class Patrol Craft are the smallest ships in the Royal Navy.
- They have a top speed of 25 knots and are powered by a Caterpillar C18 diesel engine.
- P2000s have a nautical range of 550 miles and have a 54 tonne displacement.
- There are 16 P2000s in total. Fourteen make up the 1PBS and the other two are based in Faslane, where they protect submarines.



P2000s take to the Solent. Pictures by: LPhot Rory Arnold and LPhot Guy Pool



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New age dawning



WHAT were you doing at 3.45pm on Tuesday September 25?

Sending an email? Picking the kids up from school? Stuck in a meeting?

Probably something fairly mundane - so regular, in fact, you've already forgotten.

But say you were 15 miles off the Eastern Seaboard of the USA, somewhere near Ocean City, Maryland, where the local time was 10.45am and things were anything but mundane.

Tuesday began on HMS Queen Elizabeth with Call the Hands - not the usual shrill whistle sound, but a Royal Marines musician performing the *Top Gun* theme on guitar.

And then there was a long wait. Nearly four hours in fact, before two Lightnings banked high above the carrier after their short flight from Pax River, home of the F-35's test team.

Poor weather over Pax had delayed Cdr Nathan Gray and Sqd Ldr Andy



Commander Nathan Gray trails vortices from the wing tips of his F-35 as he and Squadron Leader Andy Edgell make their first pass of HMS Queen Elizabeth and her escort HMS Monmouth off the Eastern Seaboard of the USA. Minutes later the naval aviator made history as he set his Lightning down on the flight deck of Britain's biggest warship, heralding a new age in Royal Navy carrier operations.

Edgell's departure from early to late morning.

By the time the Lightnings appeared over the carrier, the port watch of handlers who would help guide the jets safely on to deck were off duty. CPO Paul 'Rants' Ranson stood down... and his wife PO Emma strode on to the sprawling deck while her husband watched.

Some of the team she marshalled had never been to sea before, but they had practised guiding and lashing down the

F-35s with replicas and old Harriers at Culdrose as well as fire-fighting.

But there's nothing quite like the real thing.

"I was expecting great things, but it was a phenomenal feeling, tenfold what I was expecting," said Emma.

"When the jet came into the hover, the power and the physical feeling of it was more impressive than I'd imagined and made it even more memorable,

"I will always remember the feeling

of the first landing on HMS Queen Elizabeth, because I didn't just see and hear it, I felt it and it filled me with pride. You can't train for that feeling."

Despite the size of the ship and the importance of the moment - the first jet on a Royal Navy flight deck in eight years - goofers were strictly limited.

Instead, a huge inflatable screen was set up for off-watch personnel to follow the first landing live - just as they might watch a key World Cup clash. And then there are the 550 TV screens peppered around the ship.

Even those without access to a gogglebox knew the jet had arrived, for the noise of the Pratt & Whitney engine reverberated through the carrier's bulkheads. At around 155dB, Lightning is louder than Lewis Hamilton's Mercedes racing past you at full throttle around Silverstone.

It wasn't loud enough to distract Cdr Gray as he brought the jet to the hover

alongside the carrier, slipped sideways over the deck, then gently dropped down.

And it wasn't quite loud enough to drown out the cheers and whooping in the hangar.

On a clear day in near-perfect conditions, it was a touchdown the veteran naval aviator and his test pilot colleagues had practised thousands of times.

"That was exactly the same as it has been in the simulator for the past three or four years - except for the emotions," said Cdr Gray.

"At first I was nervous, but those nerves quickly turned to relief and then happiness. To see the ship and task group as we've seen them on the computer but at sea, in real life, and then to land on board is an unbelievable feeling - one I cannot put into words."

Hence a lot of high-fiving his canopy as he parked his jet ready for his RAF

Continued on page 20



Continued from page 19

colleague to join him aboard.

His joy was shared by PO Ranson.

"Everything we've all been working towards came together in that moment, it was really emotional," she said.

Up in Flyco - directly opposite No.3 Spot where Cdr Gray brought his jet in - personnel were shielded from the smell, heat and some of the noise.

"It was a great experience to have the best view of the ship to see that jet land on," said 30-year-old LH Dean Martin, recording the moment for posterity in the Flyco log.

"It's definitely my career highlight, especially after coming to such a new ship, from a ship that has now paid off."

After clambering down from his cockpit, a still-euphoric Cdr Gray presented a White Ensign to the carrier's youngest sailor to mark the occasion.

The flag was in the hands of warfare specialist Able Seaman Aaron Dunning (possibly a distant descendant of the first person to land an aircraft at sea, Edwin Dunning back in 1917) for a week before he donated it to shipmates for display on board.

"I am gobsmacked. It is such a privilege to be singled out to be part of history being made. I was bullied at school, now look at me, right in the middle of this incredible event," the 17-year-old said.

For the carrier's first Commanding Officer, Captain Jerry Kyd, it was the crowning moment of his tenure - and among his last acts, for he was due to hand over command of the future flagship to his successor

Capt Nick Cooke-Priest in New York.

He witnessed the end of the Royal Navy's second jet age - the retirement of the Harrier - as captain of Ark Royal in 2010 and now the dawn of the third age.

On a personal level he was filled with a mixture of "relief and excitement". Professionally, the landing served as a reminder that Britain remains a major naval power.

"We must not forget that there are very few nations which can do this - we are back in that league, playing our part on the world stage, helping to maintain the world order," he explained.

"This has been a national endeavour involving thousands of people. Nations around the world have looked to the UK with admiration at what we have achieved. We should be proud of ourselves as a country."

SO THAT'S the first landing. Followed not that long afterwards by the first take off. Up the ramp. Just like on the simulator.

Land. Take-off. Land. Take-off. Repeat *ad infinitum* (well, 98 times) as the 200 engineers, technicians and scientists from the Integrated Test Force gather the relevant data to help produce the F-35/Queen Elizabeth-class operator's manual.

Ok, now let's repeat everything we've done so far... in darkness. With - and without - night-vision technology.

The four test pilots - ex FAA flier Peter 'Wizzer' Wilson and US Marine Corps Major Michael Lippert complete the quartet - initially flew in using only ambient light and the lights on the carrier's deck.

Then the lights were dimmed and the night-vision function on the helmets



switched on. The display would be dazzled by ordinary lightning, but not the special LED lamps installed on the Queen Elizabeth class.

It makes a night landing easier. Not easy, as Andrew Maack, chief test engineer with the Integrated Test Force, explained: "In daytime there are cues that tell the pilot's brain what the relative motion is between the airplane and the ship."

under each wing.

The F-35 will go into battle with up to 15,000lbs of weaponry on its wing pylons and its inner payload bay - a mix of bombs such as the Paveway, and air-to-air and air-to-ground missiles depending on the mission, plus a 25mm cannon in a pod attached to the fuselage which can spew out all 220 rounds at targets in the air or on the ground in little more than four seconds.

the ship which requested it such as the hangar, flight deck or weapon preparation area.

Next year, the ship will be back in these same waters with RAF 617 and 17 Squadrons embarked, but the Paveways will be live...

AND when you're on a roll, keep on rolling. Rolling to a stop.

Beyond the hover-slide-drop, the F-35 can gently come to a stop on the flight deck. No arrestor wires.

It's like watching a landing in slow motion.

In fact, the shipborne rolling vertical landing - to give the manoeuvre its official designation - requires the Lightning to make a more conventional landing approach, approaching the ship's stern at speed, before using thrust from the nozzle and lift created by air over the wings to touch down and gently come to a stop.

No other nation operating the F-35 is planning on using the revolutionary landing method, which allows Lightnings to land on board the carrier with heavier loads, meaning they won't need to jettison expensive fuel and weapons before landing.

And no other nation has done it for real; for test pilot Wizzer Wilson it was the culmination of 17 years' work (older readers may remember the specially-modified 'VAAC' Harrier which was used to test the theory aboard HMS Illustrious).

He completed more than 2,000 rolling landings in the F-35 simulator before doing it for real. As with Cdr Gray's debut, it played out just as on the computer.

As important as the pilot for the manoeuvre is the landing safety officer. In the hotseat in Flyco was Lt

Christopher Mould - the man who with seconds to go gave Wizzer the green light to proceed.

"It was a pretty intense experience," said Lt Mould.

"It's the first time we've ever done it. As the independent checker, I have to make sure that what we are seeing in the flying control centre is also what the pilot is seeing and call it as I see it."

Sqn Ldr Edgell, the lead test pilot for the flying trials programme, added: "It could not have gone any better and it was obvious to anyone watching that we were watching a moment in history being made for Royal Navy aviation."

SO WE'RE well on the way with our F-35 trials.

But Queen Elizabeth cannot operate with Lightnings alone. She headed across the Pond with Merlin Mk2s and Mk4s aboard (the former to protect against hostile submarines, the latter for general troop/loading lifting duties).

But what if you want a bit of extra lift? Or you want to carry troops into battle further and faster?

Enter two iconic, if very different, American warbirds.

Having already flown on and off the decks of our Harrier carriers and HMS Ocean, the MV-22 Osprey - half helicopter, half turbo-prop - had no trouble flying aboard.

The tiltrotor aircraft can carry 24 troops with all their kit - a similar capacity to the Mk4 Merlins - but higher (25,000ft), faster (over 300mph) and further (over 1,000 miles).

And then there's the gigantic Sea Dragon, the US Navy's largest helicopter,

and most definitely not a regular visitor to any Royal Navy warship due to its size and weight.

At 100ft long and 33 tonnes, the Sea Dragon is one and a half times the length of a Merlin and twice as heavy, but it can carry up to 55 troops.

Neither aircraft is likely to be using Queen Elizabeth frequently, but given the close ties between the two navies, it means there are more options on the table in times of crisis.

"Proving we can operate with yet more US aircraft gives us more flexibility and adds to our own capability," said Cdr James Blackmore, Queen Elizabeth's Commander Air (aka Wings).

"It gives us a lot of options. It is another example of the fantastic relationship we have with our closest naval ally - as we are proving throughout Westlant 18."

Phew. All that in under three weeks.

In fact, the carrier finished DT1 (Developmental Testing Phase 1) having completed many of the trials, tests and manoeuvres planned for the second period, post New York.

"It has been a superb effort by everyone across the Integrated Test Force and HMS Queen Elizabeth so far," said Capt Kyd.

"I could not be more pleased with the team spirit and dynamism from all that has delivered a volume of quality data which has put us well ahead of where we expected to be at this stage. I am very grateful to all the Integrated Test Force folk who have been focused, professional and willing to go the extra mile - more to come!"

With special thanks to Lt Cdr Lindsey Waudby

/// I will always remember the feeling of the first landing on HMS Queen Elizabeth, because I didn't just see and hear it, I felt it and it filled me with pride. You can't train for that feeling.

- Petty Officer Emma Ranson

"At night, especially very dark night, all those cues go away and you become dependent on exactly what the lights are and what the sight of those lights looks like. It's something you can't translate in your mind ahead of time - you don't know it until you see it."

SO NOW we've conquered day and night. Let's start playing with payloads.

Just two weeks after the Lightning made its debut onboard it was 'bombed up' by US and Royal Navy engineers - before the dummy ordnance was dropped into the Atlantic.

Adding the 500lb inert GBU-12 Paveway II laser-guided precision bombs allowed the Integrated Test Force to see how the Lightning behaves at various weights - such as different payloads

Some 66 Paveways were loaded onboard for the WESTLANT 18 deployment, each comprising a head - containing the bomb's computer - the tail and a concrete warhead.

The bombs were built onboard by Royal Navy air engineers, supervised by US Navy ordnance ratings from the carrier USS Dwight D Eisenhower who realised the importance of their assistance because, as Ordnance Chief Michael Dean put it, "without this capability a carrier is just a floating airport".

One big advantage Queen Elizabeth has over like is automation. The Highly Mechanised Weapons Handling System means just 40 crew are needed to make an F-35 ready for combat, delivering the ammunition to the relevant part of



pictures: po arron hoare and lphot kyle heller, hms queen elizabeth, and lockheed martin





Marines get walker back on her feet

THEY'RE the UK Armed Forces' specialists in mountain and cold weather warfare, but a group of Royal Marines from 45 Commando put those skills to the test when they were called to assist a hiltwalker in distress.

Arbroath resident Susan Whitton, 56, was walking in Glen Clova with husband Jimmy when she slipped and took a nasty tumble.

Although she didn't know it at the time, she had fractured her ankle; Susan found she could not go on and was stranded in the remote Glen.

Enter the 25 Royal Marines from 45 Commando's Yankee Company. The Angus Green Berets were on a 'leg stretch', a yomp through the 18-mile Glen to conduct some low-level navigational training, ahead of Exercise Mountain Dagger the following week.

"We had just set out from the Clova Hotel and were around 20 minutes into our route when we met Susan and her husband on the track," explained Sergeant Adam Barton, Mountain Leader

First Class with 45 Commando.

"As Royal Marines we are all given medical training so I could see that her ankle wasn't looking great. I picked four of the Marines and together we made an improvised stretcher – basically carrying Susan back down the hill to her accommodation at the Clova Hotel."

He continued: "It proved to be some useful training for us. When the couple said they were from Arbroath we knew we had to help."

Susan, recovering from the incident, took to social media to express her thanks to the Marines.

"I would just like to say a huge thank you to our 45 Commando Royal Marines who came to my rescue.

"They carried me down the mountain and back to our cabin while reassuring and keeping me calm. They were brilliant. How lucky was I that they just happened to be out on exercise at that time," she said, adding: "extra exercise after having to carry me!"



● Alfie Boe with the Commanding Officer of HMS Hurworth, Lieutenant Commander Mark Heward

What's it all about? says Alfie

WEST END star Alfie Boe learns all about the Seafox mine disposal system as he spent a day aboard HMS Hurworth for a Remembrance season documentary.

The singer – whose clocked up over one million record sales in addition to pulling in punters in top shows such as Les Misérables – features in one of a series of programmes for the BBC about famous people experiencing a taste of what their ancestors went through in the two world wars as part of its coverage leading up to the Festival of Remembrance and November 11 ceremonies.

In Alfie's case, that meant a day with the Portsmouth-based minehunter for a 21st Century glimpse of what his grandfather endured in WW2 aboard RN minesweepers keeping

the sea lanes around the UK clear.

While the Fighting Aces – as Hurworth's crew like to be called – couldn't recreate wartime conditions, the tail end of Storm Ali created rough conditions in the Channel for the Hunt-class ship for an authentic flavour of a patrol.

Sailors treated their guest to a tour of the vessel, the 'tight' 25-man mess, a fire-fighting demonstration and then got down to the business of minehunting, from scanning the seabed in the ops room to Seafox being prepared for launching to investigate – and possibly destroy – underwater explosive ordnance.

The singer said: "To say I was impressed is an understatement – the crew's generosity was beyond compare and I am humbled by

their determination and commitment to their tasks and missions.

"They show such loyalty to each other and their humility and service to the nation made me proud to be British."

Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Mark Heward said: "It was really great so see Alfie interact with the ship's company and for him to gain an understanding of what life might have been like at sea for his family during the war.

"It was also an opportunity for the ship to demonstrate how important the UK's mine hunting capability is to the safety of our international trade."

Hurworth's crew are training in the UK before heading out to the Gulf in 2019.

Engineer braves the shave

AN ENGINEER took on a challenge to 'Brave the Shave' while serving onboard RFA Mounts Bay in the Caribbean.

Chief Officer Dave Smith, 51, the Marine Engineer Officer, decided to set about raising money for MacMillan Cancer Support during his deployment by shaving his head, raising an total of £481.82.

"The MacMillan Cancer Support helps those with cancer, their families and gives vital information to help manage the social problems with living with cancer," he said.

While the ship was alongside on a routine stop in Antigua Dave persuaded a few of his fellow crew members to 'help' with the shave.

Anyone wanting to support Dave should email him at RFAMNTS-MEO@mod.uk

Turning the plastic tide

MILITARY and civilian staff from HMS Collingwood were joined by around 30 Junior Warfare Officers under training at the Maritime Warfare School to help turn the tide on plastic within the borough of Fareham.

Using Hill Head Sailing Club as a starting point the 50-strong team split with one group heading east toward the 'Shack' (a small cafe on the seaford indicating the borough boundary). The rest headed west along the beach and around the cliffs of Meon Shore.

In total six miles of beach and footpath were cleared of plastics and general rubbish left over from summer and washed in by the waters of the Solent. The message about the potential effect of the rubbish on the coastal flora and fauna was reinforced by the discovery of 15 honey bee colonies in the Meon Cliffs.

Event organiser Lieutenant Commander Tom Leonard said: "The idea came from a discussion about the state of the beaches and creeks in the area with Lieutenant Commander Adam Egeland-Jensen, who often collects rubbish while training in the waters around the area.

"Between us we decided that as there is a large pool of manpower at Collingwood and we could go some way to help tackle the problem."

Picture: Lt Cdr Leonard



Remembering their sacrifice

SAILORS from HMS Drake in Devonport volunteered to tidy up war graves, half of which are Naval graves, in St Mary's Church Plympton in Plymouth, ahead of centenary events commemorating the end of WW1.

In all a dozen Royal Navy personnel from the Naval Base's Logistic department spent a day among the overgrown trees, bushes and long grass where they trimmed and cut away the summer's growth over the 29 war graves listed in the church's records.

Many of the stones commemorated sailors who had died in service during both WW1 and WW2, as well as several other naval graves which were not listed on the church's register of Commissioned Commonwealth War Graves.

Phil Smith the Church Warden briefed the sailors on the work to be carried out and what they might expect to find.

"We've had several volunteer days here at St Mary's, where groups come to help," he said.

"It was a chance meeting with one of the sailors from HMS Drake that sparked today, which is concentrating on the graves of forces personnel buried here – especially naval ones. There are 29 graves officially on the list of War Graves, together with ten other graves that appear to be Forces graves but not listed by CWGC. Now we've discovered a few more, thanks totally to the Royal Navy."

One of the graves, newly discovered was that of the 'Fleet Paymaster' which was relevant to some of the naval personnel who work in the HMS Drake's pay office today.

They also found graves of sailors who had been interred during WW1, but later joined by family members who now lay alongside them.

These stones were altered from the original distinctive Commonwealth War Graves head-



stones to reflect these family plots.

"St Mary's Churchyard Plympton has one of the largest deposits of War graves in the Plymouth area," said Mr Smith.

"A few of those buried here served at HMS Drake, and the majority during both World Wars. It's been great to have the Royal Navy here today helping us improve the environment for people to visit and see the graves as well as tidy up the access for others."

The driving force behind the project from the Royal Navy is Leading Writer Suzy Simpson, who lives near the Church in Plympton. She was visiting her father in law's plot when she had the idea to get a team in to cut back the untidy graves.

"It's quite a nice graveyard and a really lovely church and I thought it was a bit upsetting to see it all overgrown, so I spoke to Phil and we organised this volunteer day," she said. "It's important for today's modern Royal Navy to remember the sacrifices of those who served at our base during the two world wars. It's very poignant that a lot of those helping are the same age of these sailors buried here...it really makes you stop and think."



River deep, mountain high



●Ginge pictured far right, with some of his fellow team members at the summit of Ben Nevis

A ROYAL Navy diver wearing historical diving kit on the top of a mountain.

Not your everyday sight. RNR clearance diver Ginge Fullen jumped at the chance to take part in a climb 1,350m – 4,430ft – from under the water at Loch Linnhe to the top of Ben Nevis – wearing kit weighing over 80kg.

“Barring death I did not see any real problems at all in climbing this mountain. After all no simpler a plan has been made and no harder a trip undertaken,” he said.

The Subsea to Summit challenge began with a dive into Loch Linnhe and a 2.5-mile hike through the town.

The team also comprised: Ty Burton (HDS), Lenny Lennox (HDS and ex-Army Diver), Nigel Brockwell (HDS), Gary Reckelhoff (Climber, USA), Megan Haigh (Serving Clearance Diver, Hodgie Hodgkinson and Lee Ord (both serving Army Divers), Chris Betts (RNR Clearance Diver).

The second day of the four-day climb saw the team reach 1,000m. “Those of us who came down the mountain were up at 0500 and back where we had left off by 0900. We were soon back into a cold wet suit but the day was clear and we could sense success.

“We were now down to six walkers in the equipment but were bolstered by three support crew from my RNR unit HMS

Dalraida, Brian Jones, Stevie Allan and Brian Cartledge.

“The final 100 metres leg of the Subsea to Summit project fell to Meg to climb the summit Cairn and for us to be the first team and possibly the last to reach the highest point in the UK in Standard Diving equipment.

“Other people involved in the challenge were a support team from the HDS of John and Una Smillie and Adrian and Jenny Barak.

“They were involved in the diving at the Underwater centre on the Friday and the dive in Loch Linnhe as well as manning a display and collecting monies at the Ben Nevis Information Centre on the Saturday and Sunday and school visits on the Monday and Tuesday

“It’s the hardest things in life that you remember the most and that is so true but to share it with such a team makes this all the more special,” said Ginge.

“It’s been a pleasure to part of the Subsea to Summit team. We came and achieved the aim of the Subsea to Summit Challenge and in the process raised over £7,000 and counting toward three charities”

The funds raised will be shared between the Historical Diving Society, the Lochaber Mountain Rescue Team and the family of Saman Kunan, the former Thai Navy diver who died while trying to rescue young footballers trapped in a flooded cave.



Douglas was our real rock

THE Gibraltar Defence Police said farewell to one of its officers who retired after 35 years of service to the Ministry of Defence.

Police Constable Douglas Bagu joined the GDP in May 1983. During his career he has seen many changes; from the re-naming of the Force through to the manner in which it operates today.

Douglas has also been a very active Committee member of the GDP Social Club, and has willingly given his time to support a number of projects.

He has twice taken part in the Force’s 24-hour cycling marathon and has provided invaluable support to the development of a baby unit at the Village of Hope in Morocco.

In past years Douglas has also been heavily involved in the annual Three Kings Cavalcade, coming up with ideas, drafting out plans and arranging for the collection of numerous items required, all of which resulted in the transformation of a 40-foot trailer into a work of art.

“After over 35 years of service I will definitely miss my colleagues and the good times that I shared with them. There have also been challenging times but these have made me



a stronger person. I encourage the younger generation to pursue a career in policing as it is a rewarding and challenging profession, encountering different situations on a daily basis.”

During the farewell presentation to his colleagues, Acting Chief Inspector Eric Olivero praised Douglas for his loyal service and said: “A dedicated police officer with a wealth of experience is sadly leaving us. I wish you a happy and well-deserved retirement, alongside your family who have supported you throughout your career.”

Time to fly the nest for carrier pigeons



AS F-35 Lightning jets made their first take-offs and landings from HMS Queen Elizabeth, two of the ship's feathered friends also enjoyed their maiden flight.

Two stowaway pigeons rescued from the ship shortly after she left for the USA were returned to Portsmouth and set free.

The fluffy pair, affectionately nicknamed F-35 and Lightning by the ship's company, were around ten days old when they were found huddled together in a secret nest high up on one of the ship's boat decks.

The chicks were looked after by the ship's seamanship department before being sent back ashore to the care of the RSPCA.

They have since been raised into adolescence, before being driven back to Portsmouth and released at the city's naval base.

Bel Deering from the RSPCA, pictured above, said: "When the pigeons came into the centre our vets gave them a full examination and the care from the ship's company had obviously worked very well."

"We've raised them to a stage where they're ready to go back to the wild and as the pigeons are from Portsmouth, we thought it was the right thing to do to bring them back to live here."

F-35 first landings ■ P19-21

Mighty Mersey watches over

HMS Mersey has rounded off a relentless few months at sea with a visit to Liverpool.

The patrol ship has monitored the activities of 11 Russian warships since May, circumnavigating the UK twice on operations.

While conducting escort duties, she also squeezed in operational sea training, two navigation training weeks, supported the Jersey Boat Show and acted as guard ship for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo.

"I am incredibly proud of my ship's company," said Commanding Officer Lieutenant Commander Ben Power.

"Their professionalism, grit and passion ensured Mersey was able to contribute to the integrity of UK waters."



The taste of success



ROYAL Navy chefs and stewards tasted success at the Armed Forces version of the BBC's renowned cookery programme *MasterChef*.

There was gold medal success and a best in class award for the Naval Service Culinary Arts team (NSCAT) in the prestigious Parade de Chefs event at Exercise Joint Caterer, the annual tri-Service culinary challenge at the Defence Capability Centre, Shrivenham.

Chef Hannah Flanagan, from HMS Duncan won the Junior Chef of the Year award, while a team from the Commando Training Centre won gold and best in class in the Vestey Foodservice Defence Engagement Challenge.

The NSCAT was also crowned as the team with the best ethos for the third successive year in the event against the Army and RAF.

First Officer Tim Hill, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Deputy Fleet Logistics Officer, is the person in charge of the Royal Navy's presence at Joint Caterer.

He said: "The skills and the talent we've got within the Naval Service is fantastic. I want the team to go back to inspire the younger trainees in their units."

"I hope also that the people they mix with at home will look at these individuals and think 'I want to do that, I want to join the Royal Navy'."

"This event is not just recognised by the Armed Forces, but also by industry and the Worshipful Companies."

Lieutenant Commander Ellen Laird, HMS Duncan's Logistics Officer watched as Chef Flanagan won her class.

She said: "A big well done to Hannah. I see the merit in our people competing here because they are bringing new skills back to the ship, which they will deliver on a world-wide stage when we deploy again."

The NSCAT also won best in class and silver medals in the Worshipful Company of Cooks team buffet event.

The overall results went down to the wire with the NSCAT just two points off winning this year's title.

Led by Petty Officer (PO) 'Tug' Wilson, who works for the Second Sealord and is a regular at the event, the Parade de Chefs team had six hours to produce a three-course meal for 84 people.

The menu of skate wing with brown butter, scallop and seaweed, followed by glazed beef brisket, beef dripping mash, Swiss chard and carrot, and a dessert of apple tart tatin and vanilla ice cream, earned the team a massive 95 points and victory.

"We produced a menu that we thought had gone smoothly and we had a decent debrief from the judges. Everybody has learned a huge amount along the way. I get a buzz out of it and enjoy it every year," he said.

The Parade team also consisted of Leading Chef (LChef) Stephen Dooley, Leading Chef Robert McCabe, Chef Ben Tebbit and Chef Andy Langstone.

In the Sodexo Field Team Challenge, the NSCAT were represented by a team from 42 Commando (Cdo) who won a bronze medal, having cooked a two-course meal for 20 personnel using two boxes of ten-man operational ration packs and a list of extra ingredients directed by the Chairman of Judges.

Chef Shaun Downs, who is about to join HMS Scott, took a silver medal in the Senior Open Fish event.

Chef Jack Richardson, from HMS Kent, earned a judges' commendation.



Naval Service chefs and stewards competed for top prizes at Exercise Joint Caterer. Nicola Dunwell and LPhot Joe Cater were at the Defence Capability Centre in Shrivenham to capture how the competition unfolded.





3,000 miles on two (tired) feet

COMMANDER Jane Allen set off from HMS Victory on 21 October last year, to walk anticlockwise round the coast of mainland UK for two naval charities, the WRNS BT and RNRMC. Recently she 'clocked' 3,000 miles and walked into Campbeltown. Here she provides a personal reflection on her journey so far.

Like anything in life, it is the extremes – good and bad – that stand out when I think back over my 3,000 miles walked since leaving Portsmouth.

A good proportion of that time has been spent in Scotland – we crossed the border at the end of April – and I had perhaps underestimated just how long the 'Scotland Experience' would take!

I currently feel I'm undertaking two walks in parallel – my Victory Walk and, since passing John o' Groats, I'm also walking to Land's End via the long route.

Like Essex, the North West coast of Scotland has found me feeling demoralised by the apparent lack of progress south, as I've spent most of time going in and out of Scotland's wriggly bits! Meanwhile, the support team (husband Frank) has used another 'd' word – difficult – in his efforts to support me logistically.

Where I've been unable to walk around a peninsula, I have opted to go out and back, hoping the vehicle could retrieve me for the return leg. This has often given the driver white knuckles as he's squeezed through narrow stone bridges or used first gear to inch his way up and down severe gradients. Somehow, we've both survived and agree that each remote hamlet reached at the end of a long windy road has been worth the effort. Every such community has had a different feel about it.

I'm frequently asked if I've ever wanted to 'pack it in' and I can honestly say 'No'. However, there are some days which are enjoyable and others that prove otherwise.

There have been memorable moments because they've been so awful, but conversely others have been very enjoyable.

Rounding a headland and seeing a landmark, be it lighthouse, famous bridge or building is always exciting, although bad weather can easily change my mood when a



long-awaited view is snatched from my hopeful gaze.

Landmarks that mean little to an armchair reader have had the opposite effect on me. Reaching mainland UK's most easterly, northerly and westerly points at Lowestoft, Dunnet Head and Ardnamurchan point respectively have been key moments, whatever the weather. Dunnet Head was particularly memorable because Scotland's extended daylight hours allowed us to watch a stunning sunset at 2230, and total darkness never really arrived.

Naturally, this situation has already begun to change, with evenings depressingly beginning to draw in. On safety grounds alone, this will undoubtedly affect my walking schedule as we go into our second winter on the road.

Throughout the Victory Walk I've had two major concerns: safety and injury. Covering a lot of my route on roads, both major and minor, I am constantly aware of my mortality! Particularly on the snaky Scottish roads, I've regularly criss-crossed from one side to the other depending upon which way the road ahead bends.

Concentration is key, listening for traffic in front and behind and also being aware of what type of vehicle is heading towards me. I always try to get up on a verge, especially when huge articulated lorries approach; my biggest fear is stumbling on a grassy verge into the path of an oncoming vehicle.

One day I was six miles behind my schedule, but those last miles all had to be walked on a busy 'A' road during 'rush-hour'. I knew I wasn't mentally alert enough to complete the walk. Rather than beat myself up for fail-



ing on distance, I acknowledged I'd be a liability to myself and others and stopped walking early.

My other big fear has been injury. Indeed, I probably became complacent as I'd walked over 2,000 miles before suffering a severe tendon strain. That, above all else, was the thing that bashed my self-confidence at a critical time: I was poised to walk out to remote Cape Wrath and that set-back could not have come at a worse moment. It was very hard to postpone that walk for a week and take a rest, but I did. It worked, and I was able to enjoy a worry-free walk out to Cape Wrath.

During the past ten months I've been frequently asked about my feet, but rarely about my mental approach. For me, the feet and legs tend to look after themselves, but walking can take its toll mentally. I've never felt like 'giving-up', but the combination of cramped living conditions in the support vehicle, long periods of bad weather, and the daily grind of having to achieve another day's mileage target are all things that are more testing.

To anyone thinking the Victory Walk is a holiday – think again. Primarily it's a charity walk lasting more than a year and it's hard work. Throughout, we've been struck by people's spontaneous generosity and enthusiasm. Sea Cadet units and the RNA have been particularly helpful, while other kindnesses have included offers of practical help along the route, being given a bag of groceries, handed homemade cakes and of course, cash donations.

To donate go to Virginmoneygiving.com/victorywalk17-18. To find out more about Jane's Victory Walk go to victorywalk.uk

Crane-seiling for staff at Rosyth

ROYAL Navy sailors and adventurous employees at Babcock's Rosyth site have abseiled more than 300ft from the top of the Goliath Crane to raise money for two charities.

Crew members from carrier Prince of Wales, currently being assembled at the Rosyth yard, participated in the vertical drop, with all funds divided evenly between Children's Hospices Across Scotland (CHAS) and the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC).

Sixty brave abseilers took part in the challenge including Able Rate Victoria Marley.

"I was terrified at first, but the team reassured me and I knew that if I didn't do it I would regret it," she said. "It's not every day that you get the chance to abseil from the Goliath Crane – it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

The abseil was run by the

Royal Marines' Corps Colonel's Department – the same team that organised Prince Andrew's abseil from the Shard, Europe's tallest building – in 2012.

Sean Donaldson, Babcock's Managing Director of Energy and Marine at the Rosyth site, said: "Employees across the site worked together to make the event a success, raising almost £7,000 – and counting – for two very worthwhile charities. I'd like to thank everyone for their hard work and efforts."

The Goliath Crane has a span of 120 metres and the capacity to lift 1,000 tonnes.

The massive crane was brought to the UK from Shanghai to help assemble the Royal Navy's new aircraft carriers, HMS Queen Elizabeth and Prince of Wales.

To sponsor the team visit: virginmoneygiving.com/Team/Thegoliathcraneabseil

Tattoo windfall for naval charity

THE world-renowned Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo has awarded the RNRMC a grant of £186,250.

Located at the historic Edinburgh Esplanade, The Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo is an annual international spectacular that sees over 1,200 diverse performers from around the world take part.

Following the Royal Navy's presentational lead in 2017, the year of the Royal Navy, this year they were on hand to support the RAF's centenary under the show's theme The Sky's the Limit with the Royal Marines Band Plymouth taking the lead for the senior service.

It is the seventh year that the tattoo has supported the RNRMC.

Robert Robson, Chief Executive of the RNRMC, said: "Partnerships with wonderfully generous organisations like the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo are invaluable to help continue the important work the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity carries out in support of the United Kingdom's Naval Family.

"We are very proud to have worked with the tattoo and be supported by them for a number of years.

"This year's grant of £186,250, following the 20th consecutive sell-out year for the tattoo, is the largest ever awarded to the RNRMC and will help us take great strides in achieving our mission to ensure that the nation's sailors, marines and their families are valued and supported, for life."

Rucelle Soutar, Head of Finance for the Royal Edinburgh Military Tattoo said: "Charitable giving and social contribution is at the heart of what we do here and we are proud to have given away over £10 million in the 68 years of our history."

"Since 2011, we have donated almost £700,000 to the RNRMC and have helped fund some incredibly worthwhile projects they carry out.

"The Royal Navy is integral to the workings of the tattoo, from providing performers, event support staff, and advisers, they are such an important part of our family."



Comms Shack

LET CIS Specialists 1801s have just completed the first post-Project Faraday qualifying course at HMS Collingwood.

During the 23-week course the seven sailors studied communications management, crypto, message handling systems, data message processing, commercial satellite bearers and networking as well as various other modules.

This course marks a step change from its predecessor in that the sailors are now the first qualified CIS specialists in their field delivering operational capability at sea since Project Faraday.

Top student on the course was 23-year-old LET CIS Spec Reece Potter from Southampton who collected a Herbert Lott award for his efforts – he averaged 98.4 percent in assessments.

“After successfully completing the course I’m looking forward to getting back to sea on HMS St Albans,” he said.

Commodore Ian Annett told the seven successful technicians that they were “at the vanguard of a new course for one of the most technical branches of the RN.

“You are all now ready to meet the challenges that information warfare will present, armed with a high level of competence to support the command. I look forward to seeing you in the Fleet, delivering this essential operational capability.”



EIGHTEEN young Weapon Engineer Officers from HMS Collingwood have finished their 13-week Engineering Principles course, which culminated in presenting their projects to VIPs from around the RN.

This was made possible by the DARE:Hub at HMS Collingwood which has received funding from the Ministry of Defence for Raspberry Pis, Sensor suites, robot sets and a 3D printer.

Course leader Lieutenant Carl Marin-Ortega believes that “by supplying students with the tools and freedom to explore and experiment we empower our engineers to solve problems, come up with innovative solutions, and constructively challenge the system.”

The projects posed were based upon current issues or processes that technology could improve upon; one such issue was the amount of time it takes to account for swords and belts at HMS Collingwood and was resolved by utilising NFC (Near Field Communication) technology with a raspberry Pi to control it.

Another team took on the challenge of prototyping one of the modules they were studying onto the Defence Learning Environment, bringing all course documentation, quizzes, presentations online and more easily accessible to the students.

The third project was conceived by student Mid James Seddon, who said: “I relished the chance to continue my thesis work in acoustics and actually develop a passive scanning sonar; it proves the concept works and gave some interesting results!”

Lt Marin-Ortega said “These projects demonstrate what can be innovated from within the Royal Navy and I hope they take this forward into their future careers.”

Submariners are loud and proud

THE Silent Service turned the volume all the way up to 11 as metal legend Bruce Dickinson helped honour deeps and their families at the second ‘Submarine Oscars’.

More than 450 people converged on Glasgow’s Double Tree by Hilton Hotel for the second annual awards ceremony celebrating all those who go above (or is it below?) and beyond to support our boats.

Serving and retired submariners, their families, friends and affiliates all dressed up in their glad rags for an evening of glitz and glamour hosted by the head of the service, Rear Admiral John Weale and his Command Warrant Officer WO1 Andy Knox.

AB Christopher Knowles was a double winner on the night: firstly as part of the crew of HMS Artful, then with a personal commendation from Rear Admiral Weale for his outstanding demonstration of initiative and core values to engender team cohesion by organising various events to maintain the moral of his Artful shipmates.

“I feel like the celebrity I always knew I would be,” the junior rating joked. “Really though, it is an honour to receive these awards and myself and my family are so proud.”

Joining him on the winners’ podium were:

- Conqueror Trophy for operational excellence: **HMS Vengeance**
- Family Awards: **Gemma Brownson, Jan Brennan, Christine Stewart and Kim Cleminson** for the valuable contribution made to supporting the families of serving submariners
- Howard Johnston Prize for best Principal Warfare Officer (Submarines) student: **Lt Chris Oakley**
- Lord Fieldhouse Memorial Prize for best student on the Intermediate Warfare Course: **Lt Dobson**
- Industrial Partners Awards for support to the Submarine Service: **Mark Davies and Alan Milroy** (Babcock graphics); **Karen-Anne Tryon, Kenny Brown and Kenny McAllan** in the Babcock print room; and **Tracy Lafferty**, HMS Neptune mess manager
- The RNRMW Award for support to children of serving submariners: **Helensburgh and Lomond Carers**.
- The Sovereign Bowl for consistency of performance during manoeuvring room



- training: **Cdr Hopton** and his engineering department
- Submarine Engineering Excellence Award. **HMS Ambush**
- The Max Horton Prize for best officer qualifying for Dolphins: **Lt Kat Bartlett** (HMS Artful)
- The Valiant Trophy for best unit at Operational Sea Training: **HMS Ambush**
- Electronic Warfare Prize. **CPO Lyon**
- The Defence Engagement Award. **HMS Artful**.

As for Iron Maiden frontman Bruce, he’s better known for flying airliners (including the rock band’s specially-adapted jumbo jet). He’s also a self-confessed submarine fan, having toured boats alongside in Faslane... and spent a few days aboard HMS Victorious back in 2012.

He was guest of honour – and presenter of prizes when it came to a charity raffle organised by Military versus Cancer, established by veteran submarine Dave Bathgate, issuing goodies such as a Breitling Submarine Service watch and a Spitfire experience.

“I was delighted and honoured to be invited to the Submarine Oscars,” said the *Run to the Hills* singer. “I was privileged several years ago to spend some time on a Vanguard-class submarine and witness first-hand the incredible dedication of the submariners.”

As well as the main ‘Oscar’ winners Rear Admiral Weale



● Veteran submariner Derek Jenkinson gets ready to take a selfie Iron Maiden frontman Bruce Dickinson

Pictures: LPhoto Ben Shread, FRPU North McLoughlin.

also presented commendations for outstanding performance to Lt Deborah Wiseman, WO2 Andrew MacFarlane, CPO John Budge, PO Graham Kimber, ET George Piper, Faslane Flotilla Recovery Cell and the Mechanical Engineering Department of HMS Artful.

And there was just time to hand out Long Service and Good Conduct Awards to Cdr Jim McGuire for 15 years service, with clasps recognising 25 years service given to WO1s Dean Jones and Mac

“The second annual Submarine Oscars were a truly wonderful evening,” said Rear Admiral Weale.

“I would also like to thank all members of the Submarine Service and those who provide support, including the families of our serving submariners.

“It was wonderful to see so many wives, partners, veterans and industry partners. Without their ongoing support there would not be a Royal Navy Submarine Service.”



Greenwich prizes for top sailors

THREE of the four latest winners of the First Sea Lord’s Greenwich Hospital Prize share a joke before receiving their awards from Britain’s most senior sailor aboard Nelson’s flagship.

Warrant Officer Andrew Sinnett, Leading Logistician Katie More and Lieutenant Commander Mark Hill – plus Lieutenant Commander David Westley who was unable to attend – were singled out for their efforts which went above and beyond what is normally expected of RN and RM personnel.

With combined experience of more than 70 years, Lt Cdrs Westley and Hill have made a tremendous contribution to military aviation.

Lt Cdr Westley was one of the first UK pilots to fly the Apache helicopters, setting the standard on how to effectively use its sophisticated weapons and sensor systems.

During a career spanning nearly 30 years, he also headed training of 847 NAS as the first front-line battlefield Wildcat squadron.

Fellow flier Lt Cdr Hill, a Falklands and First Gulf War veteran who has been in the Senior Service for more than 40 years, has been a leading figure in safety.

He helped introduce the battlefield Wildcat into service and has completely changed the way flight safety is approached – work which has saved lives and aircraft.

LLogs More and WO Sinnett were also given accolades for their work in career management and in command of the Portsmouth Flotilla Warfare Training Squadron respectively.

The Greenwich Hospital Prize awards were introduced in 2015 to recognise up to eight sailors or Royal Marines each year who best embodied the Senior Service’s ethos.

The winners and their families were invited aboard HMS Victory to receive framed certificates from First Sea Lord Admiral Sir Philip Jones.

Picture: LPhoto Sam Seeley

Class role for Sutherland

THE Navy’s engineers of tomorrow are enjoying a 12-week stint aboard HMS Sutherland.

Members of Devonport’s Engineering Training Squadron filed aboard the Fighting Clan to provide the ship’s company with a welcome injection of manpower... and to give the rookie engineers their first concerted spell aboard a working warship.

The squadron was formed in March 2015 to bridge the gap between engineers leaving training – Sultan for marine specialists, Collingwood for weapons – and joining their first ships for two to three-year drafts without having experienced life at sea or practical experience.

Now the engineers are ‘loaned’ to ships in their respective bases which need a boost of engineers to help them through maintenance or training periods.



● Warrant Officer Adam Grimley with Gabriella Grimley Pictures: LPhoto Ben Shread

ROYAL Navy submariners welcomed their loved-ones to their workplace when HMS Ambush held a families’ day at HM Naval Base Clyde.

The Astute class vessel – which is the second of three currently in service with the Royal Navy – welcomed 100 family members for a tour of the submarine.

Commander Sam Owen, Commanding Officer of HMS Ambush, said: “It was a pleasure to be able to show our families around HMS Ambush and give them an idea of what life is like on board.

“As submariners we are always ready to go on patrol and play our part in helping to protect our country. But it is important

to remember that our families are also an important part of the mission. It is their love and support that enables us to go to sea and conduct successful operations.”

There are currently three Astute-class submarines in service with the RN: HMS Astute, Ambush, and Artful. The other four boats – Audacious, Anson, Agamemnon, and Agincourt – are at different stages of construction at BAE Systems in Barrow-in-Furness.

Ambush was launched on January 5, 2011, and arrived at her homeport of HM Naval Base Clyde for the first time in September 2012. All seven will eventually be based on the Clyde.



● Petty Officer Chris Tarr with Liam, 11, and Phoebe, 13



Honorary role for Raj

A PROMINENT Cardiff businessman, pharmacist and public health expert has become the first Indian-born honorary officer in the Royal Navy.

Raj Aggarwal, who is also India's Honorary Consul in Wales, joins a small band of brothers and sisters – about 30 – who act as advocates for the Senior Service around the country, championing its work, its people and the opportunities it offers to young people, often spreading the RN word in communities who might not necessarily consider a career at sea or in the Royal Marines.

Mr Aggarwal (pictured above by LPhot Barry Swainsbury) was appointed an honorary Lieutenant Commander at a ceremony during the RN mela (a Hindu festival, fete or gathering) hosted by HMS Cambria, the Service's home in Wales, just outside Cardiff.

"It is my great honour to accept this position in the Royal Navy as one of the special honourees," he said.

"I want to use this position to create greater diversity in the Navy, to show the community that the Navy will be supportive and that there are amazing careers on offer, with first rate skills-training and opportunities to see the world."

Mr Aggarwal emigrated from Kenya to Wales in 1967 and studied pharmacy at Cardiff University. He settled in the Welsh capital after a career as a senior executive with Boots. He is the chairman of RK Aggarwal Ltd and ran a successful chain of pharmacies across the capital. Besides sitting on several influential boards, as chairman of Kidney Wales he was instrumental in changing the opt-out law for organ donations in Wales, which was introduced in December 2015 and has significantly improved organ donations in a move that will save many lives.

Naval Regional Commander for Wales and Western England Royal Marines Brigadier Graeme 'Jock' Fraser said: "Raj is a great friend and advocate of the Naval Service and his appointment will deepen the relationship between the community and the Royal Navy."

"The Armed Forces are inclusive employers; we recognise the value of diversity and proudly serve all members of our communities at home and overseas."

"As the only Honorary Royal Navy officer in Wales, it is fitting that we celebrate his appointment. He will wear his Naval officer's uniform with pride."

Christmas post dates

The final posting dates for armed forces gifts and cards for Christmas are:

Monday November 26 for operational forces; and **Friday December 14** for static forces

Your views will be heard by top brass

ORDINARY sailors, marines and their families will shape policies which affect them thanks to a revolutionary new board of advisors.

Drawn from a cross-section of the Senior Service and civilians who support it, the ten-strong new 'shadow board' will give naval leaders the views of the rank and file on policies, changes and programmes top brass are considering.

Eight times a year the shadow members will meet to discuss proposals being considered mostly by the Navy Executive Committee, which deals almost exclusively with personnel issues – and occasionally the more senior Navy Board.

As well as giving senior officers an idea of the groundswell of opinion on ideas, the aim of the new board – set up by Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Tony Radakin is also to give more junior personnel an idea of some of the challenges and decisions the Royal Navy's and Royal Marines' leaders face.

"This is super important," said shadow board member Lieutenant Dominic Simonis-Law, a 31-year-old reservist.

"For me it's to feed more understanding from front-line units and how these decisions are borne out on the ground. We hope our feedback will improve some things on the ground."

Civilian colleague Rachael Wilkinson, business manager for maritime capability, added: "I was really interested in this opportunity and I think it's very timely."

"We are providing a challenge and insight to some of the decisions made at a senior level. It's a fantastic opportunity."

Heading the shadow board as its chairman is Commander Ceri Marsh on the staff of the Commodore Naval Legal Services in Leach Building, chairman of the new shadow board.

"I think it's a really innovative idea. It's really important that we



strive to consider the issues that our senior leadership are having to consider," she said.

"It gives us an insight into the kind of dilemmas the NEC are having to deal with and it gives us an opportunity to challenge and ensure we don't fall subject to group-think. It's a really positive concept."

The RN's most senior rating, Warrant Officer of the Naval Service WO1 Nick Sharland, sits on the NEC says that no matter how carefully the committee mulls over decisions, it can be easy to become locked into a headquarters mindset – "we all sit in the same place and all have the same issues on our desks" – so input from the wider Navy is "really worthwhile".

He continued: "Their perspective is absolutely important – they are the people on the frontline. They're the people who can see the problems hard and up close."

"Without their specific we can't possibly make the right decision."

The Second Sea Lord agrees that the Navy must "tap the mass of wealth and richness" of ideas and talent across the Service for the benefit of all.

"This is a new board and we should be willing to try new

ideas," Vice Admiral Radakin explained. "We should be confident about trying new things, giving them a go and we should be very open to different suggestions and perspectives."

"We're a large and brilliant organisation with brilliant people and we want lots more people to have a voice in their Royal Navy."

Where to look

GALAXYS 06-2018: Fleet Commander, Type 26 Base Reporting

07-2018: Fleet Commander, Gulf Forward Deployed Type 23 Frigate

DIN 2018DIN01-113: Revised Mess and Single Accommodation Charges for MOD Civilians Temporarily Residing in Service Messes in the UK

DIN 2018DIN01-117: Branch Transfer to Queen Alexandra Royal Naval Nursing Service, Naval Nurse (Adult) and Naval Nurse (Mental Health) Student Entry Criteria

DIN 2018DIN01-118: Branch Transfer to Medical Technician (Biomedical Scientist) Student Entry Criteria

DIN 2018DIN01-119: Branch Transfer to Medical Technician (Operating Department Practitioner) Student Entry Criteria

DIN 2018DIN01-123: British Armed Forces Rastafarian Network (BAFRN) Gathering – Ampert House, Monday 10 December 2018

DIN 2018DIN01-124: The Defence Humanist Network presents: Remembrance, a Secular Reflection

DIN 2018DIN04-167: Water Safety Equipment Management – RN Lifejacket Policy for MoD Seaboats

DIN 2018DIN07-101: Nijmegen Marches 2019

DIN 2018DIN07-106: Defence Information Management Passport (DIMP)

DIN 2018DIN07-109: Tri-Service University Short Course Programme, Academic Year 2018/2019

DIN 2018DIN07-110: Commando Helicopter Force (CHF) Basic Military Acquaint Course (Air 338)

DIN 2018DIN07-112: Joint Service Sub Aqua Diving Conference, HMS Raleigh, 20 Mar 19

DIN 2018DIN07-116: Training - Institute of Naval Medicine - Courses to be held 1 Apr 19 to 31 Mar 20

DIN 2018DIN09-015: Royal Garden Parties 2019 – Civilian Staff

RNTMs RNTM 01-060/18: Changes to Mine Counter Measures Vessel (MCMV) Environmental Allowance (MEA)

RNTM 01-062/18: FTRS and ADC Personnel and Line Managers - Single Living Accommodation Charge Waivers

RNTM 01-063/16: Project Gunwharf

RNTM 01-064/18: Creation of the Survival Equipment Technician Specialisation within the RN Engineer FAA Branch

RNTM 03-039/18: Employment of Royal Marine Personnel in the Temporary Ammunition Custodian (TAC) Role

RNTM 04-049/18: Out of Hours engineering support procedures for ships in HMNB Devonport

RNTM 05-018/18: Update on the Policy Governing Rank Ranging and the Award of Acting Higher Rank and Substitution Pay

RNTM 07-060/18: Instructions for landing craft specialist maritime boat operator aptitude & training

RNTM 07-061/18: New Standard Award in Information Technology for GS and SM CIS Specialists and SUY(C) Personnel

RNTM 07-062/18: Joining Instructions for Personnel Attending Phase 3 Career and Air Courses at the Royal Naval School of Flight Deck Operations (RNSFDO)

Rush of joiners for intelligence

AT THE beginning of last month, the Project Blinker (new RN Intelligence Ratings Branch, named after the legendary WW1 head of selection board) sat to process the 104 applications for transfer.

All successful candidates will submit a formal request for transfer to the new Intelligence Branch. In due course they will be notified of individual training plans.

Due to the high numbers of volunteers it was decided to bring forward the manning requirements for the next two years – where this did not impact on donating branches.

By April 2019 the Intelligence Branch will have achieved over 60 per cent of the predicted strength required – some three years ahead of schedule.

For those who now wish to transfer – or were unsuccessful with their first bid – the call will go out for a second tranche of volunteers in an RNTM which will be issued early this month.

The next selection board is expected to sit in April.

The high number of volunteers for the initial tranche suggests that places for the 2019 selection are likely to be at a premium.

For more details contact Lt Cdr Baz Basketfield: NAVY-IW-INT-RATINGS-PROJ-OFFR@wayne.basketfield756@mod.gov.uk or 93832 5014.

It's your 2-6 – so contact Sophie Dennis (sophie.dennis100@mod.gov.uk/93832 5532) to include items.

ASK YOURSELF:

- Were you made in the Royal Navy?
 - Do you want to give others the opportunity to make it in the Royal Navy?
 - Are you seeking a rewarding Second Career?
- If the answer to any is yes then...

APPLY TO BECOME A CAREERS ADVISER.

Flag Officer Sea Training is currently seeking RN and RM WOs, Senior Rates and SNCO Service Leavers and Former Service (those that left Service under 3 years), to work in Armed Forces Careers Offices which are listed on the map.

Positions are nationwide, employed on Full Time Reserve Service (FTRS) (NCS) Limited Commitment.

Salary starts from £30k with promotion opportunities to rise to £43k.

FTRS rates of pay apply (Reviewed annually and pensionable)

For more information contact:

PSTN- 01929 403172

Mil- 94374 3172

E-mail- Jane.arnedda513@mod.gov.uk





Insight to the navy

TEN students from Manchester and Salford URNU attended a busy week of adventurous training and visits to RNAS Culdrose.

Their trip commenced with a morning spent mountain biking around the Penrose Trail in Helston, which included an essential tea stop to refuel before the exhilarating, and mostly uphill, ride back to the base.

Visiting 750 Naval Air Squadron gave the officer cadets an interesting insight into the Fleet Air Arm and in particular the role of the observer.

They were thrilled to be shown the simulators used to train the aircrew during their gruelling course. The day concluded with a tour of a Merlin Mk2 from members of 824 NAS, who discussed the equipment they have available in this helicopter and their essential role in anti-submarine warfare.

The following day the group travelled to the water sports centre in Falmouth and, although the weather was a bit grey and drizzly, they enthusiastically tackled a morning of stand-up paddle boarding.

The students were then given the opportunity to visit HMS Enterprise which was just completing its refit in Falmouth. Her primary role is in hydrographic and oceanographic surveys and the cadets learned about the equipment used aboard, including echo sounders and a variety of towed bodies such as a magnometer and side scan sonars.

"It was fascinating to learn about the different pieces of equipment they have available and the variety of roles and operations the ship is used in", said OC Prosser, "and it has inspired me to consider similar roles in the Royal Navy."

During the week the officer cadets also enjoyed rock climbing, dodgeball, indoor cricket, bucketball and tennis, while in the pool the Total Wipeout inflatable assault course proved to be very popular, with OC Cartwright just one second slower than the record of 5.04 seconds.

Report: OC Humphreys

Superb fundraising

IT HAS been a fantastic year for the London URNU who have raised more than £11,000 for their chosen charity-beneficiaries: Seafarers UK, the Royal Marines Charity and the Royal British Legion.

Special mention goes to London Marathon runners Surg SLT Anna Rixon, Mid Reece Clough, AMid Chris Grieco and CPO Daryl Jackson, whose combined efforts raised over £4,000; OC Jacob Gibson and SMid Emma Hunter who both defeated the London Landmarks Half Marathon; the 24 Peaks Challenge team (led by team leader OC Tom White) who ascended 24 peaks over 2,400 feet in 24 hours, raising over £2000 in the process; and Lt Luke Leeves and OC Isobel Larken who cycled an eye-watering 100 miles in the Ride London challenge.

In addition, the year's charity rep Surg SLT Chloé Harwood hosted a wine-tasting extravaganza, raising both a toast to a successful year and an additional £1,000 in the process.

Amsterdam a favourite

HMS Biter's summer deployment with students from Manchester URNU saw the P2000 first travel from Dartmouth to Falmouth via the Channel Islands and St Malo.

A short south-easterly transit from Jersey brought Biter to the Romanesque and Gothic port city of St Malo in the Brittany region of France.

Considered to be among the most beautiful cities in the world, with an exceptionally pretty seaside, the views from the city walls at sunset were breathtaking.

Phase 2 began in Falmouth. While the Commanding Officers of HMS Biter, and her sister ship Charger, engaged in liaison work at the town's annual Sea Shanty festival, the OCs were left to explore the town and went paddle boarding.

While on a transit, the two ships met up with Ross Edgeley, who is undertaking a challenge to swim all the way around England, Scotland and Wales without touching dry land.

After another few days continuous transit, Biter once again arrived on the French coast, in the sleepy port of Roscoff. It was concluded that the beach near the harbour was an excellent place to have a BBQ.

The third and final phase of the deployment began with a ceremonial duty to the navy's largest ever vessel, HMS Queen Elizabeth, as Biter left Portsmouth.

A brief stop in Dunkirk allowed some of the students one afternoon and evening to explore the town's promenade and beach, the scene of one of the most pivotal moments of World War Two.

While not every location from the URNU's summer deployment features in this article, it is certainly worth noting Amsterdam. A favourite run ashore for years within the navy as a whole, the sheer amount of different attractions is almost unrivalled, museums, restaurants and bars, as well as the architecture and parks make Amsterdam an easy city to enjoy.

Zeebrugge is the town at the mouth of the canal leading directly into the Belgian city of Bruges. Similar to St Malo with its gothic architecture, it is a truly beautiful city.

Report: OC W Cartwright



THREE URNU Officer Cadets and an Acting Surgeon Sub-Lieutenant from Bristol URNU competed for the UK Reserve Forces in the annual Military Skills Competition (MILCOMP) in Canada.

The competition is run annually by the Interallied Confederation of Reserve Officers (CIOR) and each year reservists from NATO and associated countries such as South Africa and Switzerland compete in a military-style pentathlon designed to test reservists' leadership and teamwork as well as developing core military skills.

On top of the intense physical challenges, competitors were also assessed in tactical combat casualty care and a written exam on the Law of Armed Conflicts (LOAC).

The four – OCs Henry Dewhurst, Freddy Gregory, Olivia Mannall and Acting Surg SLT Elysia Gregory – were selected as part of a 21-strong UK Inter-Service team led by Lieutenant Kris Smith (Army). The team also included Midshipman Abby Bull from HMS King Alfred.

The team flew out to Camp Ethan Allen in Vermont to complete a week of pre-competition training with other countries before travelling to Valcartier Military Base outside Québec City in Canada.

After the opening ceremony, the competition began with precision and rapid-fire shooting using the Canadian C7 rifle and Browning pistols at 200m and 25m respectively.

For some of the UK competitors it was their first time using a firearm, but all managed to score highly under the tuition of Lt Smith and Major Claire Sapwell.

Following the shooting, came the land and water obstacle courses which



are designed to test the strength, speed and endurance. These involved climbing and jumping from up to 5m obstacles, crawling under simulated barbed wire and a plethora of other events all against the clock. The competition was fierce with just milliseconds separating the highest scoring teams.

Following a cultural evening in Québec City came the combat casualty care aspect of the competition, three of the four URNU cadets are medical students looking to join the RN as full-time medical officers after university and were eager to put their skills into practice.

The teams were dropped off in a mock forward operating base where they entered a battle simulation.

They had to return fire against mock enemy combatants, clear the base and then attend to multiple casualties with simulated injuries from sucking chest wounds to traumatic amputations and catastrophic haemorrhages.

The cadets were praised for their teamwork and professionalism and all passed the event, gaining qualifications in tactical combat casualty care.

Team united in bid for success in Canada

After this, they had time to drop off their bags and went straight into the orienteering.

The 23km run also had stations testing map reading, range estimation, grenade throwing, and the whole event was performed in uniform carrying weapons.

To compound these factors there was a variety of terrain and map types to test the competitors to their navigational limits. The Canadians even threw in a 2km stretch of canoeing, to add a little variety to the event! With no experience, this aspect was extremely challenging and all competitors quickly found out how unstable canoes can be, one team was even seen paddling backwards for a kilometre.

The last night involved an awards ceremony and gala ball where the UK won in several areas. From the RN, OC Dewhurst was awarded medals in the tactical combat casualty care and in the Law of Armed Conflict disciplines of the competition.

"This was a unique and challenging experience but I loved every minute of it," he said.

"It was a fantastic opportunity to interact with other countries' armed forces and also to push myself out of my comfort zone."

"My favourite thing about MilCOMP is getting to know people from all the different countries involved, who I would never meet in everyday life," said OC Mannall.

Acting Surg SLT Gregory added: "One of my favourite parts was canoeing down a river, as part of the orienteering run, in the pouring rain while watching bolts of lightning strike the river banks either side of us. It was a surreal moment where our teamwork and morale really rung high."

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President's men and women debut in rowing challenge

HMS President's adventurous rowing team took part in a new event in the rowing calendar.

The Sheriffs' Rowing Challenge for the Sheriffs' and Recorder's Fund – a charity set up over 200 years ago to help ex-prisoners get a new start in life.

As part of a small rowing flotilla, the unit's cutter, the Arthur Tisdall VC, sailed down the Thames from Westminster Boating Base towards HMS President, with the City of London's cutter, The Lady Gillett, rowed by two sheriffs, one wingman and one consort.

They were joined by the barge Lady Mayoress, crewed by Thames Watermen, RN P2000 HMS Example, the Tower RNLI lifeboat and the Port Health Authority vessel Londinium III.

The journey afforded all those participating in the challenge great views as they made their way down the river from the London Eye past the Millennium Bridge and the Tower of London; furthermore, right on cue as the sun came out, the President reservists

passed through the centre arch of Tower Bridge.

President rowing officer Lieutenant Commander Martin Shouler said: "It was a fantastic day out on the river, and it was a great honour to be involved in such a worthy cause, and to escort Alderman Tim Hailes and Neil Redcliffe, the Sheriffs of the City of London, and the former sheriff Fiona Adler, and Neil's wife, Emma, who acted as wingman and consort respectively."

The reception at HMS President was attended by members of the Worshipful Livery Companies, with the newly-appointed sheriffs promising the event would become an annual fixture.

Lieutenant Commander Craig Blackburn, the Operations Officer at HMS President, said: "It was a great pleasure to see the ship's cutter as part of the sheriffs' flotilla, further strengthening the unit's connection with the City of London."

HMS President, by Tower Bridge in London, is home to over 300 reservist officers and ratings who carry out naval training alongside, and in support of their regular Royal Navy counterparts.

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Endurance endures

THE 50th anniversary of the first commission of HMS Endurance prompted a reunion of former crew in Portsmouth.

They were treated to a VIP tour of the dockyard led by Captain of the Dockyard, David George, who gave an insight into how things have changed in 50 years, and why the skills of 1968 would probably not be needed in the modern Navy.

A pleasant couple of hours were spent recognising old - but familiar - dockyard buildings and not all had changed: Whale Island was still there, the parade ground not yet given over to National Car Parks, and yes there was still dockyard maties, but unrecognisable in their smart boiler suits and yellow hard hats.

Saturday was a chance to recall good times as shipmates dug out dog-eared B&W photos, shared memories of places they'd visited, things they had done - and wished they had not done.

And they recounted the deeds of the Plum herself: surveying SS Great Britain prior to her return to Bristol, the rescue of the BAS Otter aircraft, which nearly saw her becoming the second Endurance to succumb to the pack ice, the occasional cup finals on the sea ice 200 miles from the nearest land and the recovery of Wally Herbert, Fritz Koerner, Ken Hedges and Allen Gill (1968-69 British Transarctic Expedition) plus some 60 huskies way up north of Spitzbergen in the Arctic Circle which gave the crew both red and blue noses.

At the subsequent dinner, Jan Hunt proposed the loyal toast followed by a short speech from Mick Pike and a slideshow of photographs courtesy of Mick Rowsell.



Belfast honours X-man

NOT one but two blue plaques remind the people of Belfast of one of their greatest heroes.

Relatives of James Magennis - led by his son James - joined veteran submariners to reveal a new memorial tablet honouring the Irishman's deeds.

The Ulsterman, together with Lt Ian Fraser, was awarded the Victoria Cross for crippling a Japanese cruiser in the Strait of Johore in a midget submarine just a fortnight before the war's end.

Magennis attached limpet mines to the hull of the Takao - and then spent several minutes free his X-Craft as it became trapped beneath the enemy ship.

He succeeded - and minutes after the submarine fled the scene, Takao was rocked by six limpet mines exploding, which blew a huge hole in her hull, and put her out of action for the remainder of the war.

George VI subsequently presented LS Magennis and Fraser with the highest decoration in the land - in the former's case, the sole VC won by a Serviceman from Northern Ireland in WW2.

Post-war the leading seaman eventually settled in Bradford, where he died in 1986 and where submariners the first of four plaques in his memory.

A second was installed at the family's former home in Castlereagh, East Belfast, and by Belfast City Council and the Ulster History Circle at the RNA's headquarters in the city's Great Victoria Street.

Near to that memorial now hangs the fourth, one of 14 VC-winning submariners being recognised by their veterans' association to remind people that the underwater arm of the RN "has more than its fair share of heroes" in the words of RNA branch secretary Chris Batten.

The unveiling drew a substantial gathering of deeps, led by Rear Admiral Niall Kilgour, head of the Silent Service in 2002-04.



trying to

New found recognition

FOURTEEN shipmates from Londonderry branch accompanied the Newfoundland Escort Force Bell across the Atlantic to St John's to donate it to Canadians in eternal gratitude for their help 75 years ago.

The port and capital city of Newfoundland and Labrador was a key base for British and Canadian naval forces in the struggle against the U-boat during the Battle of the Atlantic... as was Londonderry.

To remind residents of both cities of their key role, the bell was commissioned by shipmates from the Northern Ireland branch as a gift of friendship.

It was dedicated in St Columb's Cathedral, Londonderry, during the annual Battle of the Atlantic Commemorations in May.

And after a 2,000-mile journey from Northern Ireland, it was presented to the Honourable Judy Foote, Lieutenant Governor of Newfoundland and Labrador, and her husband Howard Foote.

The Footes hosted a ceremony at Government House attended



by Canadian shipmates and local dignitaries, plus WW2 veteran Flight Lt Arthur Barrett RCAF, Cdr Corey Bursey RCN, Assistant Naval Advisor at the Canadian High Commission in London and s/m Robert Buchanan RNA.

The few days in Canada allowed shipmates to explore the sights of Newfoundland, including The Crow's Nest Officers' Club - a National

Historic Site due to its World War II character and significant collection of military artefacts.

It is a must see for any seafarer visiting St John's and the Brits were delighted to find a scale model of the 'Foyle Punt', built by s/m Billy Doherty and presented to the Canadian contingent when they made the first came to Ireland in 2005.

It was the venue for a commemorative dinner with Canadian veterans and trustees of Canada's Naval Memorial, HMCS Sackville; the Flower-class corvette is berthed in Halifax as a museum honouring the dominion's role in the Battle of the Atlantic.

There was more hospitality at Branch 56 of the Royal Canadian Legion who hosted a 'meet and greet' for the Londonderry team.

And there was also time for the more able-bodied shipmates to brave a seven-kilometre trek along the rocky coastal paths to reach Signal Hill at the entrance to St John's Harbour which offered some stunning views.

RM's 'flying eyes' mark the big 50

THE 'flying eyes' of the Royal Marines past and present gathered in Yeovilton to celebrate 50 years of keeping the commandos at least one step ahead of their foes on the battlefield.

3 Commando Brigade Air Squadron - which today has morphed into 847 Naval Air Squadron - started life as an aerial reconnaissance unit, but over its varied lifespan (five helicopter types in five decades) has conducted battlefield scouting, overwatch for convoys, tank busting outside Basra, fire support direction and casualty evacuation.

3 BAS - as it was abbreviated - started life in Singapore with the tiny Sioux helicopter in 1968, before relocating to Coypool in Plymouth as part of the withdrawal from East of Suez in 1971 with a mix of Sioux and more powerful Scouts as it became an anti-tank/general duties/reconnaissance squadron.

As the 1970s progressed the squadron received the legendary Gazelle - and took the bulbous helicopters, plus Scouts, to the Falklands in 1982 where the 15 helicopters clocked up over 2,000 hours in support of the islands' liberation.

Air and ground crew faced grim conditions and frequent air attack, especially during the first few days after the San Carlos landings, and three helicopters were brought down by enemy fire; four aircrew were killed and two wounded.

After the Falklands, the squadron moved to Yeovilton and received Lynx armed with TOW anti-tank missiles - the two would be a mainstay

of operations for the next 25 years.

3 BAS became 847 NAS in 1995 - and in that guise enjoyed arguably its finest hour during the 2003 invasion of Iraq when Lynx destroyed more than 40 enemy targets - including heavy armour - around Basra during the battle for Iraq's second city.

The Gazelle was retired in 2005 and the Lynx followed it in 2013 when 847 became the first squadron in the UK's armed forces to receive the new battlefield Wildcat.

Around 80 personnel from the squadron's past and present toasted the centennial milestone at a formal evening in the Fleet Air Arm Museum, where some retired helicopters were on display - providing a talking point for older members of the 3 BAS/847 community to share the odd 'dit' with the younger generation of pilots.

Among the doyens of the squadron attending were Tim Donkin - the first CO - Maj Dave West RM (currently in charge of Clockwork, the annual training exercise in Norway) - the oldest 3 BAS RM pilot ever to have served and Maj Peter 'Nobby' Clarke, 847's Executive Officer - last of the 3 BAS RM pilots still serving with the squadron.

Guest speaker was former 847 NAS senior pilot, now Director Carrier Strike, Rear Admiral Matt Briers, who updated his audience on the future of Commando Helicopter Force, to which the squadron belongs, as well as the wider Royal Navy.



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Sub hunters meet up in Southsea

THE Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructors (ASWIs) Association met for their 63rd AGM/dinner-dance in Southsea with future CO of HMS Richmond, Cdr Hugh Botterill as guest speaker.

The ASWIs (formerly the Torpedo and Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructors (TASIs) Association) trace their history back to HMS Vernon in 1955 and a club behind the main gate.

The name was changed in 1975 to reflect the changes brought about by the introduction of the Operations Branch the previous year.

In 1985 the U Faculty moved to HMS Dryad, since when the ASWIs have led something of a nomadic life.

There was no home for them in Southwick until the association shared premises with the PRIs at the turn of the millennium - a link up ended when Dryad closed and there wasn't enough space to house both associations in the Maritime Warfare School's new home of HMS Collingwood.

Nevertheless, the ASWIs persisted without a permanent base; members meet up for various social events in Portsmouth and Plymouth throughout the year.

The association is open to all serving and former sonar rates and any other ratings or officers who have completed a sonar course. Benefits of membership: ASWI lapel pin, access to subsidised or free events, Sonar course photos and year photographs, the opportunity to contact/meet old shipmates, your page on the website, occasional Seamaster web newsletter and there's an email facility for members who are not online.

The 2019 ASWIs AGM/dinner will take place in Plymouth next September - venue and date to be confirmed.

Membership is £10.56 a year - you can join online via PayPal. See aswassociation.org.uk for details.

WW1 Wren honoured

MEMORIAL services were held on both sides of the Irish Sea to remember the heaviest loss of life in those waters during the Great War - and the first Wren to die in the line of duty.

One hundred years to the day that the Royal Mail Steamer Leinster was torpedoed just off the Irish coast, descendants, government and military leaders and veterans' groups gathered in Dun Laoghaire near Dublin to remember the 500 people killed in the tragedy - just one month and a day before the Great War ended.

In Plymouth, female sailors past and present mustered at the city's imposing war memorial to remember 21-year-old Josephine Carr, a clerk/shorthand typist, who was on her way to her first draft aboard the steamer.

And in Holyhead - Leinster's destination on October 10 1918 - veterans groups and townsfolk held a service of commemoration, culminating in a parade and wreath laying at the Welsh port's cenotaph.

The loss of the Leinster is regarded as Ireland's worst maritime tragedy, although the dead came from across the British Empire. Many of those nationalities were represented in Dun Laoghaire as well as a pilgrimage by boat to the wreck site, where wreaths were cast into the Irish Sea by relatives of those lost in the time-honoured maritime tradition.

The Germans had been negotiating for peace when the steamship - mostly carrying military personnel returning from leave - crossed the path



of UB123, which sent three torpedoes into the Leinster.

She sank in a matter of minutes, taking most of the 700 souls aboard down with her. The majority of the dead were soldiers, but victims included two naval gunners assigned to protect the ship, several naval ratings returning from leave, plus Miss Carr.

She had been a Wren for just three weeks and was last seen in the ship's reading room. Two more members of the Women's Royal Naval Service were aboard and survived: Maureen Waters, also from Cork, and Lilian Barry.

Wren Carr is commemorated on Plymouth Naval Memorial, so the city's Association of Wrens branch, former Wrens and serving personnel placed a floral tribute on the monument.

"We knew that Josephine's name was here on the Hoe with other Wrens' names from World War 2. It's important to all of

us that we remember Josephine and keep that history going for future generations," said former Wren Nancy Hill and driving force behind the centennial commemoration (pictured above addressing colleagues).

Chief Writer Jo Bevan, based at HMS Drake, added: "This was just one lady in World War 1 who had been completely forgotten about. It may seem so long ago now but it is vital we remember them all - I can't imagine what they endured during those horrific few minutes once the first torpedo struck."

Historian Philip Lecane who's spent two decades researching the Leinster tragedy said the 100th anniversary restored the disaster to its rightful place, especially in his native Ireland.

"For the best part of 100 years, these people have been forgotten. They died within sight of Ireland's shores. It's time that we remembered them," he said.



Legendary aircraft legendary people

ELEVEN Swordfish veterans - air and ground crew, officers and ratings - gather in the shadow of the iconic biplane to relive deeds past and celebrate a remarkable aircraft, part of a drive to keep it in flying order.

Pilots, observers, Telegraphist/Air Gunners (or 'tags') and mechanics who worked on the bomber during Britain's sternest test were invited to the Navy Wings Hangar at Yeovilton for a 'heritage day'.

Now all in their 90s they regaled their media and aviation enthusiasts with stories of maintaining and flying the Swordfish, frequently in the most demanding of conditions.

And they met the team of dedicated buffs and aviators who look after the two Swordfish in the Navy Wings collection (only one, 77-year-old W5856 is currently serviceable) to keep the memories and achievements of the Fleet Air Arm alive.

Among the veterans in attendance were

David Barrell, who was forced to ditch his Swordfish in the North Sea while still carrying a torpedo when his engine failed and then flew the disappointing (and dangerous) Blackburn Firebrand torpedo bomber. "They decided I had had plenty of hazardous experiences so may as well have some more!"

SLT John Bowden, now 95, who clocked up more than 140 hours in a Swordfish as part of a hunter-killer group supporting convoys to Russia. The aircraft were mainly committed at night - their night-flying equipment was apparently regarded as superior - and crews had little hope of survival should the aircraft ditch in the icy waters.

"We were ordinary guys doing a fairly unordinary job," he says of his experiences "keeping submarines down" on those Arctic patrols. "And when we were around, they kept out of sight."

Pilot SLT Archie Hemsley, who endured eight Arctic convoy runs flying Swordfish from HMS Campania.

Observer Lt William Reeks, who trained in Swordfish, ended up in the Pacific after his Grumman Avenger was shot down by flak; he spent 27 hours

in the drink before being rescued by a US flying boat.

"We signed up to do a job and, just like police and firemen, when trouble comes you tackle it," said former TAG Peter Jinks - celebrating his 97th birthday on the day of the reunion.

He lived a particularly charmed life, surviving seven crash landings, including toppling off the stern of escort carrier HMS Battler off Gibraltar - earning him membership of the 'Goldfish Club' for ditched aircrew. He was, he says, "a bit twitchy after that".

He added: "Most accidents were fairly minor such as undercarriages collapsing. You would be up flying again in a couple of days because the Swordfish was so sturdy."

And lest we forget those behind the scenes, Wren Air Radio Mechanic Maureen Ascott was posted to RNAS Donibristle near Rosyth - the naval repair station for all aircraft operating in the North Atlantic. She and colleagues ensured Swordfish radios were always serviceable, repairing, replacing and testing them as required.

The Swordfish enjoys its legendary status despite "being out of date and obsolete by the time war came" says the RN Historic Flight's Chief Engineer Howard Read because of its utility: "It was ideal for dropping torpedoes and that's what they wanted it for."

It famously knocked out the heart of the Italian Fleet at Taranto - a raid which inspired the Japanese to attack Pearl Harbor - and crippled Hitler's flagship Bismarck, allowing the big guns of the Home Fleet to send the battleship to the bottom of the Atlantic.

A day early in Derby...

ARMISTICE Day events organised by **Derbyshire Submariners** have been brought forward to Saturday November 10.

Deepes will meet at the main entrance of Nottingham Road Cemetery at 10am to convey down to the graves of two WW1 submariners (ERA John Brooks of HMS C16 and Signalmann Charles Buttle of HMS C25).

At 10.45am they'll join representatives from Derby City Council at the Commonwealth War Graves at Soldiers' Corner.

On completion of that service, proceedings shift to the Jubilee Club in Morley Road, Chaddesden, here a wreath will be laid by the Mayor at the club's war memorial in the foyer.

All the events are open to former Service personnel and members of the public.

Mercury old boys call time

FIFTY years after Hamble's Training Ship Mercury closed, around 90 of its former cadets met in Southsea for a final reunion.

Between 1885 and 1968 the Training Ship Mercury trained over 5,000 boys, most of whom left to join the Royal and Merchant Navies.

Despite an approaching storm the highlight of the weekend was Saturday's march-past of Old Boys through the village of Hamble to St Andrew's Parish Church, where a service of thanksgiving was held. This was followed by the laying of a wreath at Mercury's War Memorial in the churchyard, which commemorates 102 former comrades who fell in the two world wars.

The opportunity was also used to present the village with a fine model of their ship (HMS President ex-HMS Gannet) - made

in Canada by association member Jim Towndrow - for permanent display in the recently-opened Mercury Library and Village Hub.

At the subsequent reception association chairman Captain David Parsons thanked all those from St Andrew's Parish Church, Eastleigh Borough and Hamble Parish Councils, the Mercury Gardens Residents' Association and members of the local community who help maintain the memorials and perpetuate the name of Mercury. The day ended with a reunion dinner in Southsea attended by 160 former Mercury boys and their partners. Later this year the school's cups and trophies will be presented to Hamble's Sea Scouts troop, which is also named after the Mercury.

Captain Parsons said: "Our formative

years spent at Mercury was a testing time with mixed memories and emotions that endure a lifetime. Nevertheless, I believe that it prepared us very well for life in giving us a sense of camaraderie, values, pride and a respect for others, qualities that, sadly these days, sometimes seem all too rare.

"I believe, too, that most of our members - past and present - have huge pride and gratitude for our time spent at the school. Now, 50 years after the closure, all of us are now in our 'third age' and numbers able to travel to reunions and serve on the committee become fewer each year.

"We therefore took the sad decision to use this 50th anniversary as our last reunion. Nonetheless, we will continue, for as long as possible, to maintain our website and keep members in touch with one another."



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THIS is what victory meant to the crew of HMS Barham.

Sailors from the battleship wait eagerly for their first glimpse of the German Fleet - and the greatest surrender in the history of modern naval warfare.

Seen through the prism of World War 2, the poetry of Sassoon, Owen, Graves and Blunden, the slaughter of the Somme, the muddy hell of Passchendaele, it's easy to forget that the Allied powers won the Great War.

Today, November 11 is a day of solemn reflection to remember Britain's war dead since 1914.

Monday November 11 1918 was a day of unparalleled joy across the British Empire, across France, in New York, Washington. People mounted taxis and buses, waved the flags of the Allied powers, soldiers grabbed young women and kissed them - scenes which would be mirrored on May 8 1945.

In Rosyth - which now vied with Scapa Flow as the main wartime naval base - there was "a veritable pandemonium of noise" as the ships in harbour or at anchor in the Forth sounded their horns on a bright autumn night. The cacophony lasted three hours, a correspondent of *The Scotsman* observed. And all the while "on deck Jack danced and shouted and cheered till hoarse and exhausted."

Four years and three months of conflict the likes of which the world had never seen before were over.

Long before dawn that Monday, in the wagon-lit of Allied Commander-in-Chief Marshal Foch, halted in a clearing in a forest near Compiègne, the monocled First Sea Lord Wester Wemyss sat across a table from a German delegation.

The terms laid before the vanquished - written in French - were strict. Every one of Germany's U-boats - some 160 submarines - was to be surrendered to the Allied powers, plus ten battleships and six battle-cruisers, and numerous light and heavy cruisers.

With the stroke of a pen, the second most powerful navy in Europe was reduced to a rump - something which the guns of the Grand Fleet had singularly failed to achieve.

Now, as Wemyss acknowledged in private, Britain enjoyed "a victory far more crushing than any Trafalgar but without any of the personal glory."



Rear Admiral Edward Bruen, who commanded HMS Bellerophon at Jutland, conceded that the war at sea had been "unutterably dull and monotonous for most of the actors."

And therein lay the rub. The Royal Navy had gone to war in 1914 with the public expecting Nelsonian dash and a 20th Century Trafalgar... only to get a handful of largely indecisive clashes, plus the terrible disappointment of Jutland.

The Royal Navy may have controlled the field of battle after the only encounter between the two fleets - but it lost far more men and ships. It had lost its aura of invincibility which had surrounded it since Nelson's iconic triumph.

The 'U-boat peril' - which reached its climax in the spring and summer of 1917 - had threatened to starve Britain with the

Royal Navy seemingly powerless.

In all, more than eight million tonnes of shipping ended up on the seabed - more than 4,000 merchant vessels, taking 15,313 British sailors to their deaths. Convoys, improved anti-submarine measures and air power helped master the crisis.

The Royal Navy suffered grave losses too: 34,654 dead, 5,158 wounded. It lost more than 1,050 vessels - over 1.1m tonnes of shipping, everything from mighty battleships and battle-cruisers through 64 destroyers, 54 submarines down to 13 coastal motor boats.

It ended the Great War as a formidable force - 370 vessels were dispatched to escort the beaten German Fleet into captivity. It numbered more than four million officers and men - it had grown

more than 20-fold since July 1914.

At 7pm on November 11, they toasted victory with an extra tot of rum - splice the mainbrace had been ordered by the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet, David Beatty.

The war the Royal Navy fought was the antithesis of the flamboyant, brave, but sometimes reckless, admiral.

Its strategy between 1914 and 18 was the slow, methodical strangulation of the enemy by blockade. It worked. It gnawed at every facet of German life. Food. Fuel. Raw materials.

By the autumn of 1918, the German people were on their knees. Their daily calorie intake was under half the pre-war level. Wood and cardboard replaced leather in shoes. Lead piping was melted down as were church bells to feed the war

effort.

Coupled with defeat at the front - the failure of the German Army's spring offensive had turned to retreat over the summer and early autumn as a succession of Allied attacks along the front drove 'Fritz' back towards his own frontier - it had prompted Berlin to sue for an armistice.

Helping to push back the Germans from the Somme, through the formidable defences of the Hindenburg Line and into the heart of Belgium were the sailor-soldiers and marines of the Royal Naval Division.

Regarded as an elite unit, the division had suffered 8,590 dead since 1914, plus 20,165 wounded.

They had faced the Germans daily. The crew of the Barham had encountered their enemy for a matter of minutes on the evening of May 31 1916 at Jutland.

The next time was on November 21 1918 at the mass surrender of the High Seas Fleet. Senior RN officers viewed the Germans contempt for giving up without a final battle. (In fact, only mutiny in Kiel and other bases prevented some German admirals leading their fleet on a suicidal charge; the size of the welcoming party the Grand Fleet dispatched to meet its former foe suggested such an encounter would have ended with nothing less than annihilation of the now-deposed Kaiser's beloved fleet.)

And so the second strongest navy in the world meekly entered captivity. The British mockingly called it *Der Tag* (The Day), for before the war German naval officers had raised glasses and toasted the day when they could knock the Royal Navy off its perch as the world's pre-eminent navy.

To reinforce the scale and manner of the Germans' defeat, Beatty ordered: *The German flag will be hauled down at sunset today, Thursday, and will not be hoisted again without permission.*

The Reichskriegsflagge would not fly again until mid-day on June 21 1919 when the crews of the interned German ships illegally hoisted their standards and scuttled their fleet in Scapa Flow.

This picture (Q 19680) are two of 11 million held by the Imperial War Museum. They can be viewed or purchased at www.iwm.org.uk/collections/photographs, or call 0207 416 5309.

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Cream of the crop pay homage to Nelson

EVERY nation has a few events essential to its identity to itself and to the world – and for the United Kingdom, Trafalgar Day is one of them.

The historical event, celebrated throughout the UK and in London on Trafalgar Square, is a military and naval parade in homage to the victorious Admiral Horatio Nelson against the French and Spanish fleets at the Battle of Trafalgar on October 21 1805.

This year the Sea Cadets were commemorating the historical victory on behalf of the Royal Navy and were joined by the Army Cadet Force and RAF Air Cadets.

Four hundred cadets from all across the UK took part in the celebration, marching from the Horse Guards Parade – Whitehall to Trafalgar Square.

For some of them, it was their first-time parading for a world-renowned national event.

Cadet Jason, 13, said: “I am relaxed, but for some other cadets it’s very stressful.”

Another first-timer, Cadet Katharine, playing the drum for the Massed Band, said: “I am nervous but very excited at the same time.”

Captain of the Sea Cadets Corps, Captain Phil Russell RN said that the ‘Sea Cadets are very proud to commemorate such an amazing occasion.’

Not only a commemoration, the parade included various



displaying of the cadets’ skills and talents.

Capt Russell added: “This is not only about celebrating the battle, it is an opportunity for us today as sea cadets to show the talents that our young people have.”

The cadets displayed their various skills polished by their training, starting with the junior

cadets and a dinghy rigging competition, in which two teams were challenged by the ticking clock but cheered and applauded by the crowd.

This was followed by a physical training display by the cadets, accompanied by a song medley of *It’s a long way to Tipperary/Pack up your troubles in your old kit bag*, and a cheerful dancing

performance depicting naval life during the 19th Century. There was also a performance by the Massed Band of the Sea Cadets Corps.

A two-minute silence was observed during the wreath-laying ceremony.

**Report: Laurene Rey-Millet
Pictures: Justin Sutcliffe and Peter Adams**

Captain’s Medal for dedicated Ron

CAPTAIN Sea Cadets Captain Philip Russell visited Jersey to give a very special award to Lieutenant (SCC) Ron Perchard, RNR, who has completed 50 years of service to the unit.

Joining as a civilian instructor in October 1967, Ron made the move into uniform in February 1968 and has over the 50 years taught seamanship and boating to thousands of youngsters in Jersey.

In presenting the prestigious award the captain also commented that Ron was one of only two serving sea cadet volunteers to simultaneously hold both the Captain’s Medal and the Sea Cadet Medal for meritorious service which he received in 2012 for his outstanding services to the cadet movement.

Ron, who previously served as an officer in the Merchant Navy, was commissioned as an officer in the Sea Cadets in 1970.

During his years of service, he has undertaken the roles of boats officer, divisional officer, 1st Lieutenant and for a brief spell, officer in charge. He has also performed as Guard and Colour Officer for innumerable royal visits and public functions.

In September 1998 Lt Perchard moved to a District Reserve appointment but continued to serve with the Jersey Sea Cadets with a primary role of caring for the unit’s fleet of sailing, rowing and power vessels.

In September 2005, he was re-appointed to the Jersey Unit as one of the permanent instructors.

Ron was awarded his long service and good conduct medal in 1980 and his first, second, third and fourth bars to that medal in 1988, 1996, 2009 and 2015 respectively.

The award of the Captain’s Medal recognises Ron’s 50 years of involvement in the Sea Cadets and Jersey Unit in particular.

As a much valued and respected volunteer, who has contributed to the personal development of thousands of young people, the award is thoroughly deserved and places him amongst a small number of Sea Cadet volunteers who have merited this distinction.

TS Jersey welcomed many members of Ron’s family for this special occasion and together with the cadets, volunteers and parents, Ron was given a hearty three cheers by all those present.

Simply the best

Accolade for Allerton from RN Commander

LIVERPOOL’S 4th Allerton Sea Scout Troop is the best in the country, said Royal Navy Commander Richard Bone on a ‘goodwill’ visit to the troop.

“I’ve been with the Royal Navy for more than 30 years and I’ve seen many troops but I reckon the 4th is the best,” he said.

Cdr Bone surprised the troop members when he revealed he had been a Sea Scout in the 4th Allerton 40 years ago.

The ex-south Liverpool lad, a former patrol leader, then regaled today’s sea scouts and parents with amusing anecdotes of camps and activities.

He spoke of days when the troop boasted 58 members and divided into port and starboard ‘watches’ with two identical simultaneous meetings taking place in their old HQ and neighbouring Congregational Church halls.

Troop leader David Hope had invited the commander, currently based at HMS Raleigh, to visit his old troop – and to present Chief Scout’s Gold Challenge Awards to senior patrol leaders Chris McCarthy and Cameron Ward.

The duo were also presented with impressive HM Submarine baseball caps.

Chris and Cameron completed the Gold standard while on this summer’s trip to Loch Etive, Argyllshire with an overnight two-day boat expedition to the head of the loch.

They camped in some of the most remote countryside the Highlands has to offer.

Snow-capped peaks still featured behind their campsite complete with driftwood fires on a white sand beach on which they cooked corned beef hash suppers and doorstep bacon butties for breakfast.

Cdr Bone inspected the troop – one of only



101 in the UK supported by the RN Recognition Scheme – visited the programmed training sessions, answered questions relating to his display of medals.

His medals reflected his service in many parts of the world.

Finally he discarded his cap and jacket, relaxed and joined the cadets in games of deck

hockey and basketball.

“It was great to have a real-life role model along to our meeting, to present the awards and inspire the younger members to strive to be the best they can,” said leader David Hope.

“We’ve extended an invitation to Richard to visit whenever he’s in Liverpool and he in turn expressed an ambition to join in camp.”

Great night on the Tyne



A VISIT to River-class Patrol Vessel HMS TYNE was made by TS Glamorgan (Penarth Unit), during which the cadets had a great evening learning about the vessel and her duties.

They were hosted and guided around the ship by S/LT Graveson, an ex-Preston Unit sea cadet.

The tour included the bridge and engine room, where the cadets were enthralled by the duties being carried by personnel.

CPO(MW) Dave Messer, a staff member of TS Glamorgan, also took time to show the cadets the various fittings and equipment on the fo’c’sle classrooms back at their unit.

The highlight was when two of the senior cadets were asked to assist with the ship’s Evening Colours routine.



Qualifications coup

TWO cadets from Littlehampton have received certificates.

Cadet Shania Garbett, *above left*, received her BTEC Level 1 certificate in teamwork, personal skills and citizenship from president of the unit, Captain John Stoy.

Cadet Ellie Gordon, *above right*, received a BTEC Level 1 certificate from the regional manager of vocational education charity CVQO, Debbie Barry.

Commanding Officer Lt (SCC) Brian Osborne RNR said both cadets had worked hard to obtain these qualifications and they are a credit to the unit.

Deaths

Ken St John. AB Writer. Served from 1945-47. Served in HMS Scylla and Locust. Member of Stourbridge and District Branch of RNA. Died July 28, aged 91.
Leslie (Pedlar) Palmer. LWEM(R). Served on HMS Herald 1981-1983. Member of Survey Ships Association. Died October 2, aged 65.
Vice Adm Sir Barry N Wilson. KCB. MOD: ACDS, VCNS, & DN Plans. FO Sea Trg. RCDS. HMS Cardiff, Osprey, Mohawk, Dryad, President, Eagle, Blackpool, Protector, Saintes, Belton. Died August 29.
Rear Adm Michael F Simpson. CB. MOD: DGA, Procurement Exec, AD(N). RNAY Fleetlands. HMS Nelson, Ark Royal, Eagle, Fulmar, Saker, Heron, Superb, Falcon. Died June 26, aged 89.
Captain Alan R Johnson. UK Mil Rep SHAPE, NATO Rome, MOD Portsdown. HMS Nelson, Collingwood, Sheffield, Fearless, Lincoln, Jaguar, Aurora, Excellent. Died August 28.
Capt Peter H Wright. MOD. DNMT, DNL. HMS Drake, Dryad, London, Pembroke, Rapid, Valiant, Nubian, Devonshire, Alliance, Narwhal. Died September 19.
Cdr Timothy C Line. HMS Mercury, Vernon, Osprey, Diamond, Undaunted, Collingwood. RN College

Greenwich. Died September 1, aged 87.
Lt Cdr William Blanchard. NATO. HMS Mercury, Victory RNB, Albion, Rothesay, Forth, Hartland Point, Lochinvar. Died September 17, aged 83.
Lt Cdr William R Edwards. HM Royal Yacht Britannia. RNEC Manadon. HMS Sultan, Scarborough, Murray, Cochrane, Gambia. Died August 29, aged 93.
Sub Lt RNVR James Benson OBE. HMS Mayina (Colombo) Midget Submarines. Died September 1, aged 93.
CPO MEA(H) Mike 'Chippy' Tillman. Served 1955-1979. Served in HMS Fisgard, Ausonia, Albion, Abdiel, Zulu, Gurkha, Caledonia and Cochrane. Died October 5.
AB Ron Miles. Joined 1947. Served in HMS Vanguard, Wakefull, Chevron, Implacable, Armada and Saintes. Member and treasurer of HMS Saintes Association. Died September 14.
Sub Lieutenant Colin Frederick Challis. Fleet Air Arm; observer in squadrons 891 and 892. HMS Heron and HMS Centaur. Died September 30, aged 79.

Submariners' Association
PO Elec Juelian Roskilly. Served from August 1952 to July

1977 in HM Submarines Tudor, Alaric, Taciturn, Aeneas, Talent, Tally-Ho, Walrus, Tiptoe, and Revenge. Southampton Branch. Died September, aged 86.
Edward Hogben. CCMEA. Served from 1968 to 1988 in HM Submarines Valiant, Warspite, Courageous, and Conqueror. Medway Town Branch. Died September, aged 80.
Colin Bartlett. CPO MEA P. Served from 1971 to 1981, RAN 1983 to 1990 in HM Submarines Alliance (72-73), Odin (73-76), Otway (78-79) and (83-85), Onslow (79-80), Orion (85). Australia Branch. Died September 11, aged 70.
Edwin Garner. AB GL3. Served from November 1952 to January 1955 in HM Submarines Thermopylae. Poole & District Branch. Died September 11, aged 88.

Association of Royal Navy Officers and RNO
Cdr George A Greaves. MOD: Nav Sec, DNMT. HMS Pembroke, Drake, Cochrane, Eagle, Terror, Vernon, Cambrian, Belfast, Ausonia. Died September 24, aged 83.
Lt Cdr Alastair G C Black. Sea Cadet Corps. RNR Clyde. University RN Unit Glasgow.

RN Coll Greenwich. HMS Warrior, Nelson, Lowestoft, Dryad, Danae, Centurion, Chichester, Bildeston, Excellent, Lynx. Died September 15, aged 69.
Lt Cdr Raymond C K Styles. HMS Cochrane, Fearless, Mercury, Wiston. Died September 7, aged 81.
Lt Louis Ellison. Sea Cadet Corps. DCSAHQ Forest Moor. NATO. HMS Gannet, Mercury, Lion, Forth. RANS Harman. Died August 7, aged 94.

Reunions

HMS GANGES: Calling classmates of 54 recruitment (November 1962), Hawke 291 and 292 classes. If you are interested in holding a reunion, please contact Rob Potter at r.potter60@talktalk.net or on 01934 709564.

GAFSC Hamburg. The German Armed Forces Staff College (GAFSC) Hamburg is keen to maintain links with former advanced staff training students and would like to contact the following retired personnel: CAS 'Stuart' Batten (student 1989-90), MJ 'Matthew' O'Grady (student 1993-94), JR 'John' Toon (student 1995-96) and CCE 'Christopher' Robin (student 1996-97). Contact British Liaison Officer Lt Col David Hercus at GAFSC on +49 40 8667 3350 or email davidhercus@bundeswehr.org

CRS Tug Wilson. I am looking for information about Tug, who was from Yorkshire and served in the RNR at HMS President in London in the early to mid 70s. He later received a draft to HMS Scylla and so we lost touch. He was a brilliant mentor and a great bloke. Paul Taylor, 55 Percy Road, Ramsgate, Kent CT11 7JD

2019

HMS Dunkirk Association: Our reunion in 2019 will be held at the Hallmark Hotel in Chester from March 29-30. For further details please contact jcarroll@jandecarroll.plus.com or telephone 01692678721

HMS SURPRISE Association: Our annual reunion will be held at the Hadleigh Hotel, Burlington Place, Eastbourne Sussex BN21 4HR From April 5 to 8. For information contact Geoff Prentice (Chairman). Telephone 01394 274813 or e-mail geoff.prentice@virginmedia.com

Ask Jack

AN Australian TV programme is trying to track down a sailor who rescued a young girl in Portsmouth in the summer of 1963.

Shirley Worrall was seven years old when she found herself in trouble in the water off Whale Island.

A sailor, thought to be based at HMS Excellent, jumped in and saved her but Shirley's family never found out his name.

Shirley has lived in Australia since she was aged nine.

Current affairs programme *Insight* is now trying to track down the sailor and reunite the pair.

Anyone with any knowledge of the incident is asked to contact *Insight* associate producer Madeleine King at Madeleine.King@abs.com.au

£50 PRIZE PUZZLE



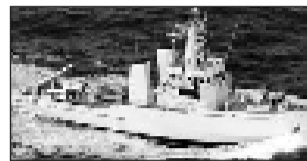
THE mystery boat in the September edition of *Navy News* (right) was HMS Helmsdale, crewed by reservists from Tay Division.

John Ramsbottom, of Leeds, wins £50 for sending us the correct answers.

This month's mystery ship (above) is a frigate launched on July 6 1944 as the first Royal Navy ship to bear the name.

1) What was her name, and 2) in which year was she finally paid off?

Complete the coupon and send it to Mystery Picture, *Navy News*, Navy Command, Leach Building, HMS Excellent, Portsmouth PO2 8BY. Coupons giving the correct answers will go into a prize draw to establish a winner.



Entries must be received by December 14.

More than one entry can be submitted but photocopies cannot be accepted. Do not include anything else in your envelope: no correspondence can be entered into and no entry returned. The winner will be announced in our January edition. The competition is not open to *Navy News* employees or their families.

MYSTERY PICTURE 285

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Submissions for the Deaths, Reunions and Swap Draft columns in December's Noticeboard must be received by

November 14 2018

Honoured for bravery in 1953

ONE of the last survivors of a Royal Navy launch attacked by a Chinese gunboat in 1953 has died.

Stoker Mechanic Eric Milner was aboard HMML 1323, of the Hong Kong Flotilla, on the Pearl River when the attack occurred.

Seven of the 12-strong crew were killed. The surviving five crew members, led by leading seaman Gordon Cleaver, aged 20, and Eric Milner, 22,

extinguished fires, fitted emergency steering gear and navigated the damaged vessel back to the safety of Hong Kong, about 15 nautical miles away.

Mr Milner received an official commendation for bravery, along with AB Ralph Shearman, whose award was posthumous.

The men who died are buried in the colonial cemetery in Happy Valley, Hong Kong.

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Golfers take 'mugs' prize

THE final event of the Royal Navy Golf Association's 2018 season was played in the Cornish Piskey at Newquay Golf Club.

Until now, the RN team had had a fairly successful season under the leadership of WO1 Lee McCathie (HMS Prince of Wales).

They started the season with wins in the Brent Knoll Bowl at Burnham and Berrow GC and against Leeds and District Union County at Temple Newsam GC.

Unfortunately, their quest to win the Inter-Services at Frilford Heath GC was not so successful, with losses against both the RAF and Army.

The last event of the season saw the team of six arrive at Newquay determined to finish their season with a win.

The format for the Cornish Piskey would be scratch foursomes matchplay.

Met by heavy rain and winds gusting to 40mph, the first day's play was difficult.

A close game in the morning against the Somerset over-35's was eventually settled in the RN's favour when Lt Cdr Guy Norris and AB James Smith secured victory on the 20th hole.

In the afternoon the team faced the Warwickshire Bears. Despite a win in the first match for LWtr Ryan Moore and Wtr Alex Kippen, the other matches, although close, were lost and the team was knocked out.

The following day saw a stableford contest. Lt Cdr Al Woodward and AB James Smith shot a gross 2-under-par 40 points and solid scores from the other pairings meant a total of 99 points, good enough to secure victory in the 'Piskey Mugs' by one point over the Army.

The Warwickshire Bears won the Piskey.

Stormy end to the season

ROYAL Navy showjumpers braved a 2,070-mile round trip to attend the RAF Championships at RAF Cranwell.

Cdr Jo Bollen, Lt Cdr Vicki Sollitt, Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark and AB Robyn McFadden saw back-to-back autumn storms wreak havoc.

The challenging conditions for travelling horses by sea and road, and the fact that the team had to rely on borrowed horses stepping into the breach at the final moments, meant that the RN fielding a team for the final leg of the Loriners competition hung in the balance at times.

But their grit, determination and tenacity shone through in spades and their efforts were justly rewarded with no less than 12 rosettes across three disciplines over the weekend of competition.

Spearheading the winning charge was Lt Cdr Suzanne Clark with her veteran horse Rabbit.

Demonstrating the technical skill required for dressage, athletic ability for show jumping and raw courage for cross country, Lt Cdr Clark mounted a haul of seven rosettes, most notable being a win in the 85cm One Day Event, second in a BE100 Dressage and third in Elementary Dressage classes against some very strong competition from the other services.

AB Robyn McFadden, making



bravely by Cdr Jo Bollen and Lt Cdr Vicki Sollitt, didn't disappoint and showed great adaptability as they were tested in dressage, over showjumps and fixed cross-country fences.

Despite their efforts, the final One Day Event Leg of the Loriners competition did not go the RN's way and resulted in the Army winning the overall trophy for 2018.

Despite this, the RN's performance this season, which started with a win at the dressage leg, has been very promising and if these levels of dedication and commitment are anything to go by next year they will pose an even stronger challenge in this closely-fought competition.

Pictures: George Parish Photography

her team debut and inaugural outing for the RN, quickly followed suit and made her mark with her own home produced horse Zephyr.

They produced an outstanding BE 100 Dressage Test and a storming arena eventing jumping round left her in a very close second overall in the Loriners competition, missing out on first place individually by no less than 0.45 of a second.

They also acquitted themselves well in pure showjumping classes, earning a third place in the 1.05m and seventh in the 1.10m classes, closely followed by Cdr Jo Bollen using the 95cm as a warm-up on her hireling and placing fourth.

The hirelings, owned by Jabeena Maslin and ridden



Keeping title in family

AET Ciaran Losh followed in his father WOPT Steve Losh's footsteps in becoming RN Lawn Tennis Champion at HMS Temeraire.

Losh Snr dominated RN Tennis in the late 1990's and throughout 2000's winning the title nine times in 13 years.

A beaten finalist in 2017, Ciaran was determined to get the Losh name once again etched on the trophy and, after comfortable wins against ET(ME) Mason See and Mne Nathan Jackson, he came up against reigning champion and friend LET Scott Nicholls.

The final turned out to be an epic three-set encounter which lasted more than three hours and saw Ciaran run out winner 6-7, 6-3, 6-4.

"I am so delighted to have won the RN Tennis Championships several years after my father's success," said Ciaran. "It's been part of our family lives for over 25 years travelling to and from navy tennis."

The novice entry saw six men and four women compete in a round-robin format with AET Ryan Curtis winning the championships on the percentage of games won from LCIS Alwyn Short.

SLt Emma Field won the women's novice title. Cdr Katharine Armstong took the women's title with wins over SLt Field, Surg Capt Fleur Marshall and Lt Cdr Anna Misiak.

The men's doubles were won by Lt Deveran Chowdhury and Lt Andy Rodgers, who beat AET Losh and LET Nicholls in the final.

Some brave men will sadly remain forever young. But not all.

100

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High hopes for successful times

THE UKAF volleyball teams have been back in action after a short summer break.

Both the men and women took part in the Volleyball England National Cup competition.

After a very successful inaugural season, this year's aims are to bring through more players from each of the services, improve performances with further progress in the VE Cup and work closely with each of the Army, RN and RAF Volleyball Associations to strengthen the pathways and opportunities at all levels for all those that want to get involved.

The UKAF ran a coaching course over the summer with Volleyball England and brought the new squads together for their first fixtures at RAF College Cranwell.

Unfortunately, the men's squad, depleted by operational commitments, lost to the Melton Lions in 3-2.

Melton are a top-placed national league Division 2 team and the men fought back from 2-0 down to earn a match-point that was one of those real nail biters that just didn't go the UKAF way.

The men were tremendously disappointed not to progress but they will now go into the Shield

competition where they will certainly go far if they continue with the magnificent form and attitude they showed – and if the UKAF can get a few more players back into the squad.

The women were even more impressive, earning an outstanding 3-0 victory over Darkstar Derby who beat the UKAF in last year's Shield quarter-final.

For the first match of the season, the standard of play from the UKAF team was superb, with amazing coaching, strong defence and powerful hitting that swept aside an established Div 1 team aside.

On the Volleyball England website, the result was described as 'shock of the round' (to them maybe, but not to us!) and they will now face the University of Nottingham in round two.

The UKAF welcomed a number of new players into the squads this year and the spread of representative talent stretches right across the services and the length and breadth of the UK.

Bringing everyone together has its challenges, but the commitment and dedication of UKAF players, coaches and officials is second to none and all the teams have high hopes for the coming season.



Top grassroots award

RNAS Culdrose Community Football Club have been awarded the FA Charter Standard Club of the Year 2018 for Cornwall at the FA Grassroots Awards.

The club have now won an FA award in four of the last five seasons. There were also nominations for the club in two further categories with Club Chairman Lt Cdr Andrew Plenty being nominated once again for Volunteer of the Year having also won the award on two previous occasions.

AET Ciaran Nash also received a nomination for Coach of the Year in recognition of his dedication to RNAS Culdrose Ladies Football in growing the team of service players, partners and dependents after it almost folded last season.

Club Chairman Lt Cdr Andrew Plenty said: "We are extremely proud that we continue to set the highest standards when it comes to creating a safe and enjoyable environment for all that participate in football within our club."

"We provide an essential link between Service Personnel, their families and the local Community through sport and provide football for all from our Youth players to our Adult teams."

If you wish to learn more about RNAS Culdrose Community Football Club then visit: www.rnasculdrosecommunityfc.com



Women lead way in Caribbean tour

THE Royal Navy's male, female and mixed hockey teams flew 4,000 miles to take on the best teams in the Caribbean over six days at the 33rd Banks' Tournament.

Teams from the UK, New York and Trinidad and Tobago all converged on the Caribbean island who'd lined up its top sides.

In all, 20 clubs mustered 36 teams for the tournament which began with three of the best players in the 32-strong RN squad (Lieutenants Ben Flint, George Cave and Jamie Martin) joining athletes from other teams to form a 'best of the rest' side which beat an U21 Barbados international team.

Their victory set the standard for the rest of the RN teams who faced six busy days of hockey, with some players competing in as many as five games per day.

The group stages pushed the RN teams, battling through the blazing sun and high

temperatures to keep up with the speed of the Bajan teams. Despite the heat – and some torrential rain – all the RN teams made it to their respective plate finals, seeing the women secure a 5-0 victory.

The mixed team narrowly missed out after a highly-competitive match against a UK tour-team, Riverside, which ended in a 3-2 defeat. And the men's team narrowly lost out in their match on nail-biting penalty flicks.

Although the RN teams had hoped to make the cup finals initially, the results do not deflect from the effort and commitment shown by all involved. They are testament to the exceptionally high standard of hockey displayed by the competing teams throughout.

The week before the tournament was used not only to acclimatise but to experience Bajan culture. Along with the obligatory Mount Gay Rum distillery tour, the players swam

with sea turtles and over shipwrecks during a boat trip on the west coast.

The team explored the island by moped and 4x4, venturing to the rugged east coast, visited the famous Oistins Fish Fry, bustling with locals, and to cap off the trip watched the Barbados Tridents lose out to the Trinidad Knight Riders in the T20 cricket at the Kensington Oval.

Through the efforts of RN players', fundraising, sponsorship and welfare funds all contributed to supporting the team throughout the entire visit. Without the support of the units, players would not have been able to attend, while SLt Piers Benton and RNAS Culdrose personnel staged a raffle draw which significantly helped fundraising efforts.

For more details on RN hockey, contact Steve Lemon at NAVY NPS-PEOPLE SPT RNSO1.

Players shine in testing season

A MIXED season was enjoyed by Royal Navy Cricket Association teams this summer.

The Senior Men's side, captained by Sgt John Grasham, won four and lost three in the T20 contest this season.

Five new T20 caps were awarded, Sub Lieutenant Rob Wigley; SLt Doug Naylor; LACMN James Edworthy; ETME Jack Harris; and Marine Sam Radford.

The RN played five games in the longer format and lost them all. Despite this there were some strong individual performances: LETME Richards scored 50s against the British Police and the Club Cricket Conference; Edworthy got 51 against Club Cricket Conference; SLt Buscombe (74) and Mne Evans (51) against Free Foresters; Pollard 43 out of a total 132 against the Civil Service; Grasham 2-36 against the Police, 2-25 against the Civil Service; and Edworthy 2-34 against the British Fire Service.

Fielding was generally of a high standard. However, the batting trend continued into the Inter-Services where new caps were awarded to SLt Wigley, ALACMN Edworthy and ETME Ryan Booth.

The Faye and Bill Izzard Trophy for the most improved player went to SLt Wigley for his progress through the season which culminated in selection for the UKAFCA squad.

The development squad continued to support the senior team and they started their season with four dev T20 fixtures (won three, lost one) in preparation for the 2018 Development Inter-Service Tournament (IST).

The Dev IST began with the RN taking on the RAF, with the visitors winning the toss and batting first. A strong opening partnership allowed the RAF to reach 109 before the first wicket was taken.

AB C Johnson was the pick of the bowlers, finishing with 2 for 45 from four overs, supported by LACMN J Edworthy (four overs for only 22 runs). A total of 150 looked daunting, though in response, a firm base was established by Mne S Radford (47) and LETME J Richards (26), with an opening partnership of 69 runs after 12 overs. However, it was to be LAET A Rendell (25 no) and ACMN Ed-



worthy (53 no) who got the RN over the line in the 18th over, Edworthy's runs coming off a mere 18 deliveries.

A rather surprised Army Lions then defeated the RAF, leading to an RN versus Army 'final'. A positive attitude from the RN captain SLt Wigley led to the RN batting first.

Tight Army bowling restricted the run rate though, with contributions from LACMN Woolnough (34), AET Clarke (22) and LETME Richards (19) building a total of 132. However, there was no acceleration in run rate towards the end, leaving the RN requiring to bowl well to contain the Army, who went on to win the tournament.

Attention then turned to the red ball, 50-over game, including the welcome revival of a fixture against the RMCC. A further seven players were given the opportunity to play for the dev team, making a total of 29 players representing the RN Dev team during the 2018 season.

The team took on the RAF Dev XI and lost by 104 runs but much was learned and taken to the Army Dev game at Aldershot.

With all bowlers taking at least one wicket, and smart fielding to back them up, the pressure soon told on the Army who scored 144 runs before being bowled out in the 44th over.

Chef J John was the pick of the RN Dev bowlers, finishing with three wickets for 17 runs from his ten overs.

The RN response began with a shaky start, being 17 for 2 and then 61 for 4 after 15 overs. Then ETME J Harris (29) and SLt Wigley (54 no) steadied the ship and gradually became more dominant, before a final contribution from Chef John (22 no) allowed the RN Dev team to reach the target in the 31st over.

The women's team, under the captaincy of Lt Cdr Hazelle Garton started the season with the aim of 'defending the double' achieved in 2017. Unfortunately, the 2018 season did not see the same success with a poor start compounded by several hard losses.

In the Inter-service 40 over competition the RN beat the RAF in the last over, with a total of 203 in what was one of the most hotly-contested matches of the tournament.

There were some strong performances from PO Louise Worsfold scoring 70 and PO Laura Raynes scoring 72, together making a fantastic partnership. The RN batted first against the Army and clocked up a total of 201 for 4, a challenging total. Lt Cdr Hazelle Garton put in a great performance in blistering heat to get a total of 85 not out. The Army came out with their usual fighting spirit to get a score of 202 with 11 overs to spare.

In the 20 over competition the Army beat the RAF. The RN scored a solid total of 161 against the RAF with them reaching 87 all out. The decider once again fell to RN vs Army with the RN batting first reaching a total of 61 off 20. The Army achieved a total of 64 with 9 overs to spare, declaring the RN as runners up for 2018. The tournament saw some strong individual performances with the Danks Trophy being awarded to AB Emma Dell for her excellent performance and improvement throughout the season.

2018 also saw the greatest number of returning players for the women's team, with six members also representing the UKAF.

No time to hang around...

MATT RUST makes his way up an indoor climbing wall at the Tri-Service Climbing Championships.

The Leading Medical Assistant joined colleagues from the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Mountain Climbing Association at the event.

There were three categories within the competition, comprising Junior Men (age 24 and under on the day of the competition), Senior Men (25 and over) and Women.

Masters (over 35) Men competed alongside the Senior Men.

The qualifiers consisted of six lead routes.

Picture: LPhot Sam Seeley

Navy driver is Premier league

ROUND five of the Inter-Service Karting Championships saw the Navy enter three karts into the Endurance class and one into the Premier class.

Kart 45, driven by Sub-Lieutenant Jean-Luke Laister and Lieutenant Sam Harris, qualified 12th after struggling in qualifying to get heat into old tyres used due to cost saving.

Laister quickly made amends using the power from the KnighTorque engines to cruise past several drivers on the long back straight and eventually took the lead from the other military drivers.

However, despite the best efforts of Harris and Laister, the old tyres, having done over 12 hours, gave out and reduced them to a respectable sixth place finish.

Kart 89, driven by LAET Sam Cresswell and Sgt Keith Curran (in his first race for the team) put up a decent fight in the mid pack and had plenty of clean tussles with the karts around them until a loose steering wheel that had to be fixed during a pit stop lost them valuable time. In the end the guys were able to bring it home in 28th.

Kart 98 was fortunate to be able to make it to GYG after the chassis sheared due to six years of fatigue at the previous round and was plagued by the issue throughout race day.

After qualifying well, one of the new welds failed. The kart was almost out of the race but was saved by a quick dash to a nearby garage to borrow their welding equipment.

This therefore meant that LA(ACMN) Liam Waterhouse had to start from the pits and began the race from last place with a considerable gap to the rest of the field.

Waterhouse made good progress and



overtook 22 karts in 30 minutes but unfortunately it wasn't to be and drivers Waterhouse and LAET Craig Beesley had to retire the kart after an hour.

Kart 34, pictured above left, was the Navy's only entry into the Premier class and was driven by Laister.

The Premier races saw rain and wet weather for the three heats, where Laister came first, second and fourth, however by the time of the final race the track had dried up.

Laister, pictured above right, had qualified second on the grid and made a great start taking the lead in the first corner.

Laister kept the lead for the remainder of the 15-minute race and crossed the line for the Royal Navy's first Premier win with a gap

of almost five seconds.

There were several positives for the team to take away into the next round despite some of the equipment issues, the main being that the drivers all performed exceedingly well despite none of them having been to the track before.

The team is now well placed to take on the final round of the season at the West of Scotland Kart Club.

For more information on the Royal Navy Royal Marines Karting Team, visit rnrmsa.co.uk/karting-team/

Report: LAET Craig Beesley, RNRM Karting team manager. Pictures: Jessica Maund, Busy Bee Photography.



Youngsters enjoy thrills and spills of car racing

THERE was low flying of a rather different order at RM Condor when a formation of rally cars took to the perimeter roads and runways around the base — some of them driven by 14 year olds.

The occasion was the annual Memorial Garden Stages Rally, a motor sports event held entirely on private ground and therefore not subject to the Road Traffic Act. This allows youngsters to get behind the wheel before they reach 17.

Although youngsters can race karts and motor cycles from the age of seven, those who previously wished to drive four wheel machinery had to wait until they were 17. That changed six years ago when the Motor Sports Association (MSA) relaxed its age restrictions for 14-17 year olds. However, certain rules and regulations have to be in place to allow this to happen, even on private ground.

The youngsters must first pass a practical test at age 14 to obtain a Competition Licence from the MSA which then allows them to contest certain motor rally events on private land.

This was the case at RM Condor where competitors in the Junior 1000 Ecosse Challenge contested round five of an eight-round rally championship.

The youngsters all compete in one litre cars with standard engines and transmissions and which must be fitted with approved roll-cages, competition seats and harnesses.

Crews must also wear the appropriate approved fireproof suits and helmets. These cars are all inspected by qualified MSA Scrutineers before every rally. Also, each youngster must have an older and experienced licenced co-driver.

Once that is all done, the business of competition can get under way. At this event, the Condor Motorsports Club had created a rally comprising six stages. Each stage was around seven miles in length and used the perimeter roads and runways at RM Condor. Competitors were timed from the start to the finish of each stage and the one with the lowest total time was the winner.

With only the best six scores from the eight rounds counting towards the national title, performances were becoming crucial this late in the season and although 17-year-old Johnnie Mackay had a 19-point lead coming into his fifth round, his position was far from secure.

And so it proved, 17-year-old Lewis Haining won the rally by 22 seconds from 16-year-old runner-up, Andrew Blackwood with championship points leader MacKay in third place a further 21 seconds behind. The final two rounds of the championship will now determine which of these young drivers will go on to win the title.

Alongside the junior rally there was a supporting 'standard' event for older and more experienced crews and this was won by Ian Paterson from Dumfries.

Almost 40 cars and crews from all around Scotland contested the event.

Condor Motor Sports Club was set up by ex-military personnel with the aim being that a share of the profits from the event at RM Condor will be donated to the upkeep and maintenance of the Memorial Garden in the grounds of the camp.



Albion's Lions roar in Singapore

HMS Albion's Lions rugby team showed grit and determination as they lifted the historic 1887 Challenge Cup after defeating Singapore's national champions 20-16.

The Lions, made up of Royal Navy sailors and Royal Marines from Plymouth-based warship HMS Albion, were welcomed by Singapore Cricket Club Select XV and edged a tight encounter with Albion's Commanding Officer Captain Tim Neild hailing the team's battling display in the Asian city-state.

He said: "Grit, determination and team spirit were evident throughout the match, and are characteristics I hold dear. I am immensely proud of the tenacity demonstrated by my sailors and Royal Marines. It is something I see every day in the ship's company of HMS Albion."

HMS Albion was alongside in Singapore as part of a nine-month deployment to the Asia Pacific region.

Able Seaman Ollie Newborn, 24, from Hull, put in a man-of-the-match performance, making a sensational run for the opening try and revealed he was always confident Lions would prevail.

He said: "I didn't think when the ball came to me, I just went. That is my job on the wing. I felt ecstatic scoring the try. It was a team effort that I just happened to be on the end of."

"The game was a cracking occasion for both the Royal Navy and Singapore Cricket Club. Training as a squad and the game gave a big boost to morale for me."

"To play rugby with your workmates is just great. I believed that we would win from the kick off and I look forward to playing for HMS Albion in the future."

Lions played in Cyprus, Japan and Vietnam in the lead up to this game as well as training in Albion's well dock.

The team's manager, Petty Officer Personal Trainer Jamie Buttle, 38, from Rotherham, was delighted the hard work paid off.

"The win was a triumph of graft in training that started in the ship's well dock and continued across Japan and Vietnam," he said. "The game was hard fought throughout. The levels of fitness, particularly in the heat, paid off in the last 20 minutes."

This was the first time the Challenge Cup had been contested in more than half a century.

The Challenge Cup was presented to Singapore Cricket Club in 1887, showing the Royal Navy's gratitude for use of their famous Padang sports ground.

However, it vanished for many years before being rediscovered in 1991.

'Best AT week since I joined in 1977'

PORTSMOUTH Naval Gliding Centre has settled into a new home at Upavon in Wiltshire following a move from Lee-on-the-Solent.

Every year the club hosts the Royal Navy Gliding and Soaring Association for its annual training week. This year members went to the Army Gliding Club Wyvern on Salisbury Plain.

Apart from the new location the course followed its normal programme. Monday morning was taken up with safety briefings for the 16 students, after which it was straight into getting out the gear to set up the field and they were soon up and away on their first winch launch.

The weather was ideal, with thermal lift up to over 4,000 feet, so they all had the perfect opportunity to get used to being in the air and the aircraft they would be flying for the week.

Good weather blessed the course for most of the week so the students were taken through the British Gliding Association (BGA) training syllabus step by step by volunteer instructors.

The weather was not so good on Wednesday morning, however, the time was used giving a number of theory briefings to underpin the flying training and exercises completed.

By the end of the week Lt Cdr "Harry" Callaghan went solo for the first time, Cdr Barney Wainwright completed his Bronze Certificate plus Lt Cdr John Butler and Mr Tony Wysocki successfully qualified as BGA Basic Instructors. All other members of the course had made great progress and had a good story to tell about the joys and thrills of service gliding.

Cdr Wainwright said: "The week was probably the best AT week I have ever had

since joining up in 1977. Helped by good weather of course, the effort put in and team spirit engendered in the very mixed group of naval students, with navy, ex-army and civilian instructors, was just fantastic."

LMA Lee Mcpherson said "I found the gliding development week an excellent introduction into gliding."

Lt Cdr John Butler, who completed his Basic Instructor (BI) course, said: "I was keen to become an instructor so I could share this amazing sport so I jumped at the opportunity to complete my BI course on an RINGS development week."

PNGC run a minibus service from Portsmouth to Upavon every weekend for club members. Contact Dave Howell at dhowell45@hotmail.com for details. For links to the clubs and Joint Service gliding AT courses go to www.ringsa.com



Buoyant boats

Successful season on the water for RNSA

MEMBERS of the Royal Naval Sailing Association have enjoyed a highly successful season of offshore sailing, dinghy sailing and windsurfing.

The windsurfing training camp at Vassiliki in Greece, reported in the October edition of *Navy News*, highlighted the thrust for grassroots sailing for all disciplines.

While individual windsurfer sailors such as Warrant Officer Dave Strudwick are consistently on the podium at races representing the RN, the focus of this round up is on the dinghy and offshore disciplines.

An RN dinghy team won the Inter-Services Asymmetric championships in identical 2000 dinghies - pictured top left are Gavin Marshall (RNSA Rear Commodore Dinghies), Jennifer Cory, Will Jones, Joe Howell, Coral Crouch, Kerry Marsden, Matt Irwin and Tom Bernal.

Twenty eight RNSA(P) sailors took to the water to compete for the Fleet Commander's Cup. This was the last-ever Bosun dinghy fleet race before the boats retire.

There were entrants from across the Eastern region including Navy Command, Forward Support Unit, RN Police, RM Band Service, Veterans, HMS Collingwood and HMS Sultan.

Cdr Andy Wood NCQH (RNSA Rear Commodore Dinghies design) and Lt Matt Irwin MWS (Portsmouth Branch dinghy secretary) won the Cup.

The RNSA J109 Jolly Jack Tar, pictured right, competed at Cork Week, Cowes Week and the Dartmouth Regatta. This was after winning the Services Offshore Regatta and crowned National Champions.

At the J109 Nationals the team skippered by CPO(ET)ME Joe Henry (HMS Prince of Wales), was consistently strong throughout the regatta and won two of the five races, posting the best cumulative scoreline and taking the National Championship title.

Other team members were James Baker (MWS), LAET Simon McGee (815 NAS), Lt George Cave (MoD Abbey Wood), AB(D) Jon Ellis (Southern Diving Unit), 2ET(ME) Michael Davies (HMS Sultan), Lt Chris Pascoe (HMS Northumberland) and Lt Paul Harsent (HMS Charger).

The RAF led the Services Offshore Regatta as part of their 100-year anniversary and the fleet of nine yachts raced from Gosport to the Hamble then onto Plymouth.

After a day of close inshore racing in Plymouth Sound the fleet were hosted by the Royal Western Yacht Club.

After a week of nip-and-tuck racing the Royal Navy emerged victorious and prizes were presented at JSASTC Gosport by Air Commodore Al Gillespie, Admiral (desig) of the RAFSA.

The Royal Navy won the Inshore series in the Victoria 34 Class, both the inshore and offshore series for the J109 class, best Victoria 34 (Amoria - skippered by Lt

Laura Blagden), the best J109 (Jolly Jack Tar - skippered by Lt Cdr James Baker) and the Madden bowl.

The latter is awarded to the Inter-Service Offshore sailing champions and it was received by Warrant Officer Mark Durkan (RNSA Rear Commodore Offshore).

Mark said: "We have enjoyed a very demanding week of racing, with over 300 miles raced in a wide spectrum of sailing conditions, all of them demanding a different set of skills."

"Such was the intensity of competition and concentration the best aspects of service ethos was demonstrated by serious competition afloat."

"I am extremely proud of all my sailors; they ranged from complete novice to expert. Regardless of their own ability or experience each gave their all to ensure that the Royal Navy regained the title of Inter-Service Champions."

The dinghy and safety boat replacement programme for the RN Water Activity Centres is progressing well as RNSA-owned Hartley 15s, Fusions, and 2000s together with two types of Ribcraft continue to be delivered.

Activity is not confined to the water as RNSA is on a path to change from being an accepted charity to embrace full charitable status as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation.

RNSA is open to all Royal Naval personnel both serving and retired. To get involved join online at rnsa.org.uk/onlineapplicationform

Cowes Week pictures: Shaun Roster





Team punching above weight

LOOKING to build on the success of last season, the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Boxing Association started this season with several high-profile visits and events.

Under new head coach, Petty Officer Physical Trainer Paul Ormston, the squad are working hard to achieve the standards required to retain the Elite Championship title which will take place at HMS Nelson in March next year.

Having had a successful development weekend, which attracted more than 30 people, the focus has now turned to preparing the team against tough opposition across the country.

Prior to this the squad had a morale-boosting visit from the President, Admiral Clive Johnstone and Col Mike Tanner, who visited the team during training at HMS Nelson boxing gym.

After a local show against the Midlands Select in Drayton Manor, the squad began their season with the UKAF Development Championship Finals at RAF Brize Norton in which the team represented the service in the highest order.

The boxers performed fantastically and contested in some extremely close and hard fought contests. Results included:

Under 10's Light Welterweight - Mne Harry Davidson lost on a split decision to his RAF counterpart.

Under 10's Middleweight - Mne Daniel Francis Ward fought for the second time in a week and won by Unanimous Decision being crowned UKAF Middleweight Champion.

Under 10's Light Heavyweight - Able Seaman Thomas French was boxing well, but sadly had to withdraw from the contest between the second and third rounds due to a potential shoulder dislocation/relocation injury.

Under 20's Light Welterweight - Mne Aiden Thompson had an unfortunate clash of heads with his southpaw opponent two thirds of the way through the first round, cutting the



Army's man. The bout therefore went to score cards and Mne Thompson sadly lost on a split decision.

U20's Welterweight - Mne Kieran Chapman fought a hard contest but lost on a unanimous decision to his Army counterpart.

U20's Light Heavyweight - AB Rhyden Teale fought in the bout of the night, only to miss out on a split decision to the Army's big pick for this season who we will potentially see competing in the Elite Championships in March 2019.

Within the service boxing continues to grow, with well-attended grassroots sessions taking place across all naval establishments, delivered by Steve Penberthy, RNRMBA Coaching Development Officer.

From an elite perspective, Marine George Crotty is firmly established in the GB squad based at Sheffield and is a real prospect to represent the UK at the Olympics in 2020.

He is set to compete in his first three-day tournament of the season in Belarus and has been employed as a regular sparring partner for WBO World Middleweight Champion Billy Joe Saunders.

George is pictured above with World Heavyweight Champion Anthony Joshua,

whom he has had the pleasure of witnessing train for the past nine weeks at GB Boxing in Sheffield in preparation for his successful defence of his WBA (Super), IBF, WBO and IBO titles against Russian fighter Alexander Povetkin.

- Upcoming RNRMBA fixtures and events:
- Nov 9: RNRMBA Vs Southern Counties Select - The Guildhall, Portsmouth (tickets on door);
 - Nov 10-11: Female Boxing Open Development Training Camp, HMS Nelson. (register with POPT Ormston);
 - Nov 16: RNRMBA Vs Liverpool Select - Isla Gladstone Conservatory, Liverpool (tickets on door);
 - Nov 24-25: RNRMBA Under 5 and Under 10's Box Cup - HMS Nelson;
 - Dec 6: HMS Sultan Dinner Show
 - Jan 29-31: Western Region Development Championships - HMS Drake;
 - Feb 7: RNRMBA V RAF - Northwood;
 - Feb 14: RNAS Culdrose Dinner Show;
 - Feb 19-21: Eastern Region Development Championships at HMS Collingwood;
 - Mar 7: Northern Region Tri-service dinner show;
 - Mar 19-21: RN Boxing Championships at RNAS Yeovilton;
 - Mar 26-28: Elite Boxing Championships at HMS Nelson
 - May 28-30: MBA Championships at CTCRM.

If you want to get involved in boxing, please contact the following personnel:

- Secretary - Mr Glen Young MBE - glen.young132@mod.gov.uk
- Head coach - POPT Paul Ormston - NAVY-PERS-DNPT-RNBOXINGCOACH@mod.uk
- Boxing - Major Tommy McPhee RM Thomas.Mcphee645@mod.gov.uk
- Officials - CSGT Phil Reynolds RM Phillip.Reynolds755@mod.gov.uk
- Coaching Development and courses - Mr Steve Penberthy Steve.Penberthy543@mod.gov.uk

Winner inspires new generation

VX expert Lieutenant Dan Raper has inspired personnel at HMS Collingwood to find out more about the sport.

The pilot won the first tri-service VX tournament, which prompted the move at the Fareham base.

Senior coach Paul Hildreth visited Collingwood, along with high-ranking female player Karen Bruin and her daughter SAC Philippa Fowles, who is currently serving at RAF Odiham and who was runner-up to Dan.

As the PTIs asked for volunteers to try the new sport, very few hands went up, but

as soon as the sport was explained there were more volunteers than spaces.

With word having spread about VX - formerly known as rock-it-ball - there was no shortage of volunteers for the second session when Paul returned with Jason Holmes the Head of VX South, and Tom Hildreth - reigning European V2 champion and England captain.

Having seen the impact of the sport HMS Collingwood now has its own set of equipment and is looking for fixtures against other bases. They already have HMS Sultan in their sights.



Anglers net all of the trophies at carp contest

ROYAL Navy angler LET(CIS) Nick 'Errol' Flynn shows off his whopper of a carp.

The catch, weighing in at 27.08lb, was the heaviest of the day at the Inter-Service Carp Championships.

Held at the 26-acre Oxlease Lake Linear Fisheries complex in Oxfordshire, the contest included selected members of the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Angling Association Carp Section.

The format for the match was fairly simple, the lake was divided into four sections A-D with each section further divided into three.

Each section would see a pair from each service competing with each pair aiming to win their section and achieve one point.

Two points would be awarded for second place and three for third place, should you fail to catch any fish then five points would be awarded for the dreaded "did not weigh".

The service with least amount of cumulative points after 48 hours would be this year's winners.

The evening before the match saw the 'team walk' where the lake was walked in order to formulate the order of preference. Each and every permutation of pegging was discussed and from this the teams batting order was formulated.

It would now come down to the draw the following morning. All three services were mustered and the captains called forward for the draw, the RAF was pulled out first and picked peg three followed by the Army who picked the twos which meant the Navy would be in peg one in all four sections.

Conditions were far from perfect with high atmospheric air pressure and cold temperatures at night meaning bites could be few and far between.

The first challenge would be for each pair to try and catch at least one fish to avoid a did not weigh. Thankfully it wasn't long before one of the Navy team landed the first fish, however, the fishing for the duration of the match was difficult and slow.

Never standing still the team continued to vary their approach, making tactical changes throughout the match - this proactive approach led to captures in each of the Navy's sections and with both other services registering a DNW in at least one section the result was confirmed on the sound of the final hooter.

LET(CIS) Flynn landed the largest carp of the competition at 27.08lb and the Royal Navy also had the winning individual pair resulting in a clean sweep for all available trophies.

If you are interested in Carp Fishing or any of the other disciplines then please visit www.rnrmaa.com.



LS(MW) Kieren Kindred with a 23.08 lb mirror carp

DOWNHILLERS ARE ON TOP OF WORLD

ROYAL Marines Reservist Sergeant Sam Shields makes his way through woodland at the Inter-Service Downhill Mountain Bike Championships.

The Senior Service emerged victorious at the event, at Hopton Woods in Shropshire, which also served as the annual Royal Navy and Royal Marines Downhill Championships.

Many of the RNRM team hadn't ridden at Hopton before, but it had recently been used for a National downhill event, so the team riders who had raced here previously led the way on day one of practice.

The track was a perfect mixture of fast-peddling sections, jumps, large roots, small sniper roots and steep sections.

Having rained lightly in the morning, the track was testing, some sections slick and surrounded by puddles, others in the woods bone dry and dusty.

As the day went on, the track quickly dried up and became super-fast and loose, prime conditions for the annual race.

Race day started with pouring rain for the practice races ahead of the first of two races in the afternoon.

The past two years have seen the RNRMDH team growing in numbers and ability thanks to the lads being able to get to many races all over the UK, attending training camps run by the Royal Navy & Royal Marines and being invited to attend the British Army Welsh Epic Training Camp.

In 2016 the RNRM team finished in third, in 2017 the team finished in second spot, so there were high hopes for this season.

The format of the race meant each of the services were required to put forward their fastest eight riders, with the fastest six times going towards the overall Inter-Service Championship.

All the services riders also had the opportunity to take the overall in both the men's and women's categories.

On the last practice run, Sgt John Bennett decided to taste the dirt on the tricky last doubles and was unfortunately advised to take a trip to A&E, meaning AET Pete Sanger was brought into the eight.

After the first run, the timings were close, with a few of the lads having to go back up for a re-run

after their run was red flagged due to Mne Alastair Fothergill having a big crash in the woods on his first run.

With two race runs, it meant the team had the chance of putting in a steady first run, and then letting off those brakes for the second run, trying to better their times.

All 18 of the riders of the RNRM team made it down the hill for their two race runs, all putting in great times and eagerly awaiting the individual and overall results.

In the individual, Cpl Craig Gould stormed down the hill into third place in time of 2:41 and first overall in the Royal Navy Royal Marines Downhill Championships.

He was closely followed by LH Charlie Butterworth in fifth in a time of 2:43, Mne Alastair Fothergill, seventh with a time of 2:44 and C/Sgt Matt Sinclair ninth in 2:46.

The next two fastest riders, also part of the selected eight, were AET Pete Sanger, who ended up in 17th place with a time of 2:53 and LH Tom Baker in 19th place with a time of 2:54.

Team manager, PO Toby Hann, was getting nervous as there was a strong possibility with all six of the eight riders in the top 20, that the Senior Service could take the overall title of Inter-Service Champions 2018 - by three seconds.

Eighteen riders from the RNRM turned up to compete and were backed by volunteers from HMS Sultan, who sat on the hill as marshalls for two days.

Anyone wishing to give this sport a go please contact PO Hann by email at Toby.hann436@mod.gov.uk or telephone 01935 455820 / 93510 ext. 5820.

You can also visit the RNRMCA website at www.navycycling.co.uk.



● Below, from left, AET Pete Sanger, LH Charlie Butterworth, ETME Jamie Woods, PO Toby Hann, Mne Nick Kavanagh, and PO Alan Richardson

Pictures: Sgt Jamie Peters RLC

