

SHIPMATE CHARLES H. THOMPSON BEM MSM



A feeling of sadness and shock enveloped RNA Area 4 when news from the Area Secretary informed that RNA Life Member and Area Life Vice President, Shipmate Charles H. Thompson BEM MSM 'Crossed the Bar' on Tuesday May 5th 2020, aged 87.

Charles 'H' will be remembered for his forthright manner, his good humour and dedication to the RNA both with Portland Branch and Number 4 Area. A Shipmate who created a vibrant and sincere impact ever present throughout the enjoyable moments in his presence.

Called up for National Service in 1949, joining the Royal Navy as a Photographer training at RNAS Ford (HMS Peregrine) in Sussex. One of only seven National Service RN to serve as a photographer.

Joining the Carrier HMS Theseus in 1951 and operations in Korea, followed by a period in the Mediterranean on the Staff of Admiral, The Earl Mountbatten of Burma.

Drafted to RNAS Culdrose (HMS Seahawk) in 1954 then to Singapore with 848 Squadron for the Malayan Emergency, later, joining Staff of C in C Far East. During this period Charles achieved 1st Class Referee Certificate with Joint Services and Officiated at the 1956 Melbourne Olympic Games.

During the period 1959 to 1966 Instructed at the RN School of Photography HMS Fulmar (RNAS Lossiemouth), joined Staff of Flag Officer Naval Air Command at Yeovilton, returned to Lossiemouth as Chief Phot Instructor for two years, a period in Aden during the Emergency as Joint Services Public Relations Chief Photographer working closely with C in C Middle East, Admiral Sir Michael Le Fanu, then a return to HMS Osprey on the Staff of FOST.

Joined the Weymouth Branch of the RNA 1966, subsequently elected Branch Delegate for Area 4 Meetings and National Conference. Service responsibility as Manager and Community Officer of Portland Married Quarters created the opportunity to set up the local RN Community Centre incorporating the Kimberlin Club.

HRH Prince Charles stationed at Yeovilton 1974 and took part in a Games Night organised between the Wardroom and CPO's Mess. His Royal Highness was drawn against Shipmate Charles in the Darts Match, due to confusion between the names of the two players, **Prince Charles honourably renamed our illustrious Shipmate as 'Charles H'**. A name which he cherished and adopted as his own personal identity.

Awarded British Empire Medal and subsequently the coveted Meritorious Service Medal 1980. Transferred to RNA Portland Branch in 1982.

Finally, 'stepped off' the Royal Navy Gangway in 1992 on his 65th birthday, having served an unprecedented 48 years and 7 months, at the time the longest ever serving CPO Airman. To further enhance his dedication and commitment Charles reached another milestone in 2016 – 50 years as a proud member of the Royal Naval Association.

Manager Kimberlin Club 1974 -1997, Chairman RNA Area 4 Reunion 1975 -1996, Chairman Area 4, 1979 – 1996 Area Life Vice President 1996. RNA National Ceremonial Officer 1995- 1996.

RNA Area 4 President, Shipmate David White MBE MSM conveyed the following message to Area 4 Shipmates: "What better tribute can we pay Charles than, as an Area, to continue along the lines that he led us while he was Chairman, and follow the guidance he gave us as an Area Life President."

On Behalf of RNA Portland.

NCM 4