

SEMAPHORE SHORT

GREETINGS SHIPMATES Welcome to the second (and last) Semaphore Short of January - next Friday sees the publication of the February edition of the Semaphore Circular, so if you have anything that you would like to be considered for the edition please get in touch sooner rather than later. Hopefully shipmates and branches around the country (and beyond - see the Circular next week!) are well back into their groove now - so let us know what you have been up to and what you are planning. Your ideas, events and initiatives might well be the catalyst for other shipmates to create a successful event of their own, so spread the word through the Semaphore Short or Semaphore Circular - send the RNA Comms team your reports and pictures to comms@rnassoc.org We would prefer it if you could send reports as Word documents, and images as separate jpg files, preferably at a reasonable resolution - anything over 1MB is good, but anything under 300KB is going to be difficult to use to good effect. As we mentioned last week, one of the highlights of 2024 will undoubtedly be the National Conference, which this year will be held in Cardiff, South Wales. Please do your best to make sure your branch is represented at the Conference so that your branch members' views are made known. Details of how to register as a delegate or observer, and information on the programme and accommodation, are in the January Semaphore Circular - go to <https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/downloads/january-2024:1/>

PLAY THE ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION WEEKLY LOTTERY AND WIN UP TO £25,000 [PLAY NOW](#)

CONFERENCE VENUE As we reported in last week's Semaphore Short, the planned venue for the 2024 RNA AGM/Annual Conference, the Coal Exchange Hotel in Cardiff, has ceased trading. An alternative venue in Cardiff Bay has been identified and details will be promulgated as soon as possible, but we have no further information as this edition was being finalised.

Any shipmates who have privately booked themselves in to the Coal Exchange Hotel for Conference should seek a refund through the hotel, their credit card provider or their bank. It is recommended that all bookings for Conference are made through the UK Holiday Group who have negotiated a special deal for the RNA.

MEMBERSHIP DETAILS If you know of someone who is not receiving the weekly Short or the link to the Circular when it comes out please make sure they let us know their contact details. The same goes for branch Branch Chairs, Vice Chairs, Treasurers and Secretaries across the RNA, who should receive a newsletter once a month from Central Office. Please send your contact details to Sara Field on ams@rnassoc.org

FIRESIDE CHATS

The next in our series of popular Fireside Chats, on Monday 29 January, will be an update on NATO activities by Cdre Craig Wood. The following week (Monday February 5) will see one of our regular contributors, Mark 'Dicky' Barton, talking on the subject of Naval Cutlasses. Fireside Chats take place every Monday at 18:30 and to access the chats, log into Zoom here. The meeting ID is 288 830 5105 and the access password is Shipmate.

D-DAY ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATIONS

Do you know someone who served during the D-Day Landings along the coast of Normandy in June 1944? HMS Collingwood, the Royal Navy establishment in Fareham, Hampshire, is searching for individuals who can share their first-hand experiences and stories from this momentous event in our history. If you or someone you know was part of the D-Day Landings, staff at Collingwood would be honoured to hear their story. They are looking to bring those extraordinary days back to life through



captivating images and personal narratives. As part of the commemorative events, they are hosting a special dinner at HMS Collingwood on Thursday, 6 June 2024. They are seeking a keynote speaker who can provide a unique perspective on the D-Day Landings, which was the springboard to the Allies' eventual victory in the war in Europe. They believe the initiative will help them to

commemorate the bravery and sacrifice of those who served before them, many of whom paid the ultimate price for the freedoms we enjoy today. If you are interested in sharing your/their story or know someone who might be, please reach out to the Collingwood PR and Events Team at NAVYOPTRG-CWDCORPCOMMS@mod.gov.uk They would be delighted to hear from you. As the Collingwood team says, let us come together to pay tribute to the heroes of D-Day and ensuring that their legacy lives on whilst remembering the 80th Anniversary of this pivotal moment in history.



FAREWELL TO PENZANCE Clyde Naval Base tugs salute Sandown-class minehunter HMS Penzance as she makes her final departure from Faslane earlier this month on her way to Rosyth, where she is due to formally pay off. Launched in 1997, the minehunter was commissioned in May the following year, and completed 25 years in service with the Royal Navy before she left the front line Fleet . A ceremony was held on the ship at Faslane before she sailed. Her departure also represented the end of more than two decades of Sandowns operating from the Clyde - of the original 15 ships of the class just one, HMS Bangor, remains in service and she is based in the Gulf. Image by LPhot Bill Spurr (©UK Ministry of Defence CROWN COPYRIGHT, 2024)

BARGAIN HUNT The popular BBC TV show, now approaching its 25th year, is marking the 80th anniversary of D-Day with a special episode.

The Bargain Hunt team is inviting applications for teams from serving and former Armed Forces personnel.

The special episode will be filmed on February 24 or 25 at an antiques fair in Carmarthenshire, in the south-west of Wales, and at an auction in Stroud, Gloucestershire, on March 7.

Organisers are especially keen to hear from anyone with personal and family connections to D-Day.

To apply, go to www.bbc.co.uk/bargainhunt and make sure you add DDAY after your surname in the application.

STAY ON THE BALL As we mentioned last week, the Royal Naval Association Football Club (RNAFC) has been created and is gearing up for its first outing, which will take place at HMS Temeraire in Portsmouth next month.

The club is designed to accommodate veterans, spouses and associate members of the RNA, the aim being to reconnect, reminisce and remember through the avenues of football, regardless of the standard at which you play.

The first opponents at the big match, on Tuesday 20 February (1900 kick off) will be the RN Eastern Region Veterans, and all support would be welcomed.

The Association is well aware that loneliness and disconnection from others is a huge factor affecting people's mental health, so whether it be as a player, staff or a spectator we want to see you there, helping us to connect and reconnect shipmates and to allow you to keep checking in with each other at games and events!

Could you support our mission aim? With various games planned around the UK and Gibraltar at the end of 2024, we are looking for sponsors to support what we want to achieve. If you would like to get involved or your business would like to help in any way, please feel free to contact Scouse Reeves via email on scc@rnassoc.org



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