



# SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR



## WIN-WIN AT TWICKENHAM

A big day for Royal Navy rugby – and a big day for the RNA. When the RNA was chosen as the Charity of the Day for the annual Army v Navy clash at Twickenham, we couldn't really have asked for more. Well, apart from a Navy win in the men's match.

And that was exactly what we got – so it was a win-win for our second major event in our 75th anniversary year.

We aimed to raise awareness – and a little money – to support our benevolent activities, but our expectations

were exceeded due to superb weather and thousands of delighted RN supporters.

The Association brought more than 600 of our shipmates to the Allianz Stadium in south-west London, including some of the Royal Navy veteran residents of Admiral Jellicoe House, a Naval residential home in Portsmouth.

Mabel Kidney, aged 99, a World War 2 veteran and AJH resident, said: "I have never been to Twickenham – going there was on my bucket list and I'm so grateful that we have

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**Semaphore Shorts and Semaphore Circular:** The monthly Semaphore Circular appears on the first Friday of each month, notes for branch officers on the second Friday and Semaphore Shorts on the remaining Fridays of each month. On occasions the publication date might be delayed for operational reasons – if so we will endeavour to tell you in advance by email and/or through our social media channels.

**The next Semaphore Circular will be published on Friday 4 July, and the deadline for material is 1000 on Thursday 3 July. Branch Notes will next be published on Friday 13 June, and Semaphore Shorts on Friday 20 and 27 June.**





been given tickets."

Mabel, from Portsmouth, was only 13 when the war started, and she joined the Wrens when she was 17 in order to see the world.

Ironically, she was then posted to HMS Daedalus, just around the corner from home.

The RNA collected more than £4,500 on the day in donations, and engaged with many members of the Naval community to let them know what support they can offer.

RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant said: "Given that the day was primarily an awareness-raising exercise, we were delighted to have raised so much money.

"The extra funds will go towards supporting Shipmates in need, and hopefully lots more people will know who we are, and how to contact us in future.

"I would particularly like to thank Babcock, who donated £1,000, the RNRU, who have pledged further donations, and an even bigger thanks goes to Victory Squadron, HMS Collingwood for their wonderful support in uniform on the day – we could not have raised so much without their help." As for the men's clash, it started badly for the Navy, with their opponents scoring an early try, but the Dark Blues hit back midway through the first half.

The Army went further ahead but were pegged back again with a glorious Navy break, leaving the game at 14-12 and in the balance at half time.

The nip-and-tuck nature of the match continued in the second half; the Navy took the lead but the soldiers edged back in front 21-19 with 20 minutes to play.

At that point the Navy put their foot down on the gas, and scored two touchdowns – one a penalty try – and a penalty to open up a 13-point gap of 34-21.

Memories of last year's last-minute heartbreak loomed as

the red-shirted Army came back again, and as the clock ticked down the Army was just four points behind and knocking on the Navy door.

But the sailors held out for a magnificent 37-33 win, clinching the Inter Services championship – a fitting end

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to the illustrious career of head coach Dave Pascoe. Sam Matavesi took the accolade of Player of the Match. Sadly, the senior men's triumph could not be repeated by the other two representative teams.

The Royal Navy veterans – the Mariners – played the day before the Twickenham clash, and were comfortably beaten 49-5 by the Army Masters.

And the senior women's clash, played at Twickenham after the men's game was over, ended in a predictable win for the formidable Army squad, with the final score of 96-0 being a record, though there was no sense of shame for the Dark Blues who put in a commendable performance against a tidal wave of red shirts.

*Images provided by S/M Nigel Huxtable*





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# FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

## Ahoy Shipmates!

Welcome to the June issue of the Semaphore Circular and, I must tell you, Central Office is buzzing with excitement in anticipation of our Conference weekend (new Programme of Events to be found in the back of the Circular [here](#)). For those attending, please check this as there have been a few minor amends to timings and rig.

Looking back over the last month, the highlight was our status as Charity of the Day for the Army v Navy rugby match, which was cemented by a resounding win for the Navy. We obviously brought good luck to the Navy team – maybe they'll ask us back?!

It was great to be part of a huge section of the crowd which was all RNA – having our own bar in the stadium certainly helps. The Association was seen by thousands of people on the day, with a lot of help from the HMS Collingwood Victory Squadron, who were brilliant ambassadors, raising hundreds of pounds. Thank you to all who supported us either as volunteers or those who put a bob or two in the coffers. If you are interested in coming with us next year, grateful if you would register your interest (without commitment) on the link [here](#).

Well done to all the Branches who got involved locally with the VE80 commemorations and celebrations, especially those who used the opportunity to put on a 'Standeasy' and raise some funds for the RNRMC – it's much appreciated. I had the personal pleasure of attending a VE80 event in Chiddingstone which spanned the decades from primary school children to RNA member Eric Bateman, who served in the Arctic Convoys in World War 2 (see [here](#)).

It was heartwarming to see the interest the children showed in Eric's time in service and the pleasure Eric and his family evidently felt for his life to be celebrated across so many generations. As Eric was too young to draw the tot during the war, he was delighted with the bottle of Pussers I was able to present to him on behalf of the Association. As you'll see from the accompanying photo (below), I thought it one of those rare occasions when digging out the old uniform was appropriate. Fortunately, those in close proximity were wearing specs



so there were no health and safety issues with flying buttons!

I was also delighted to represent the Association in Scotstoun for the naming ceremony for the new HMS Glasgow, which is rapidly taking shape in the BAE Systems yard there – she looks a beaut (see [here](#))!

It was great to catch up with some of the T42 1982 Falklands Ship's Company who had been invited along too: Tim Rampling (Riders Branch), John Huxtable (Lanyard Branch) and Ian George (Rayleigh Branch) (pictured above). I'm 'Old Ships' with Glasgow but much later than the excitement of 1982. Great to see elements of the RNA Choir in action too, singing alongside the BAE Systems Choir at the event. A first outing for the RNA Choir – fabulous!

Thank you to Shipmates Sean Connachie and Colin Dinsdale who both work for <https://www.oracle.com/uk/> who have promoted the RNA within Oracle's Military Affiliated Veteran Employee Network (MAVEN). At an event in London last week, I was privileged to share a stage with the RBL, the Army Benevolent Fund and Help for Heroes; all big hitters literally with £millions in resources.

So, to be able to articulate to this audience how the RNA operates upstream, tackling loneliness, improving our members' wellbeing and supporting mental health resilience through fostering comradeship was a fantastic opportunity. Much appreciated Shipmates! It goes without saying, if you are working for a company who you think might be able to support what we do in the RNA then please get in touch – we'd be delighted to hear from you on [cml@rnassoc.org](mailto:cml@rnassoc.org).

Now, off to the Pride event in Portsmouth this weekend to emphasise our strong ethos that the RNA is a safe space for all.

Safe winds and following seas,

*Bill*





# ROYAL GUEST NAMES HMS GLASGOW

The Princess of Wales, Sponsor of HMS Glasgow, gave her blessing to the Royal Navy's newest warship.

And amongst those welcoming the new ship to the Fleet was the RNA's Scottish Community Choir, making their public debut.

Smashing a bottle of whisky against the hull for good luck, the princess formally named Glasgow, the first of eight cutting-edge Type 26 frigates.

To cheers from hundreds of friends, family, workers, VIP guests and the 45-strong ship's company at BAE Systems shipbuilding facility in Scotstoun, the Duchess of Rothesay, as she is known in Scotland, uttered the time-honoured words: "I name this ship Glasgow. May God bless her and all who serve in her."

The princess was accompanied throughout her visit by her husband, the Prince of Wales.

Proceedings opened with an inspection of the Royal Guard, then a fly-past from an RAF Poseidon from HMS Glasgow's affiliated CXX Squadron; when operational the ship will work side-by-side with the maritime patrol aircraft in the hunt for hostile submarines.

That was followed by the 25-minute naming ceremony, during which Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Martin Connell thanked the royal guests for their support and all those involved in the Type 26 endeavour to reach this milestone in the programme.

"From the first-ever HMS Glasgow, sailing under the Royal Navy flag at the end of the 17th Century, to the ship we see here in the 21st Century, HMS Glasgow has evolved and adapted to meet the warfighting and operational demands of its day," said the Admiral.

"Each metamorphosis saw shipbuilders adapting materials and designs so that crews could operate each successive HMS Glasgow on operations and in conflict and war.

"The result of this being 11 Battle Honours – HMS Glasgow's pedigree is awe-inspiring."

He hailed the latest ship as "a pure-bred anti-submarine warfare platform, setting the standard for naval warfare", ready to "meet the global and geopolitical challenges of today".

He continued: "HMS Glasgow and her class represent the next chapter of naval innovation, safeguarding the UK's interests and contributing to national prosperity."

Following prayers for the new ship, led by Chaplain of the Fleet the Venerable Andrew Hillier, the princess was invited to step up to the ceremonial platform and activate the device which blessed the hull with whisky.

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Once the service was over, The Prince and Princess were given a short guided tour of the frigate.

They then met some of those responsible for building the 8,000-tonne warship, the sailors charged with bringing the vessel to life, and the families of both who support them. Her Royal Highness accepted the honour of Royal Sponsor – historically, the title has served to bestow good luck and divine protection upon a ship – to HMS Glasgow four years ago. Although the Princess of Wales has hosted members of the Ship's Company at Windsor Castle, she has never seen the 8,000-tonne warship until now.

Regarded as a permanent member of the ship's company, Sponsors attend milestones in a vessel's life – such as the naming ceremony – are kept regularly informed of the sailors' activities and deeds, send messages of support in return in hard and challenging times, and generally act as ambassadors for and champions of the crew and their vessel.

RN Writer Lola Nicholson, who looks after the many administrative requirements of her 44 shipmates, cannot believe the difference between HMS Glasgow and the previous ships in which she's served.

"When I look at Glasgow, she's impressive, like no ship I've ever seen before – and it's the same on board, really impressive and exciting and much better accommodation for the sailors," she said.

One guest who could make a direct comparison with today's Glasgow and her predecessor, a Type 42 destroyer, was RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant, who served on the letter.

"As a former HMS Glasgow 'old ships' it was a huge privilege for me to represent the RNA at this, the naming ceremony of the first-of-class Type 26 in Scotstoun," said Capt Oliphant.

"She's a beaut!"

Work continuing to fit out HMS Glasgow, installing and testing sensors and systems, resumes next week.

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# NEW FIRST SEA LORD TAKES UP ROLE

General Sir Gwyn Jenkins will lead the Royal Navy of the future as he takes up the mantle of First Sea Lord, becoming head of the nation's Senior Service. A formal supersession took place last month in the historic setting of HMS Victory's Great Cabin, in Portsmouth. He was joined by Acting Chief of Naval Staff, Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Sir Martin Connell, for the official handover.

Gen Gwyn takes over following his role as Strategic Advisor to the Secretary of State for Defence, playing key roles in UK's Defence Agreement with Germany and strategic partnership with Norway. The General said: "It is a huge honour to formally start in the role of First Sea Lord today.

"Leading the incredible sailors, Marines and civil servants of the Royal Navy is a

true privilege.

"I have always been driven by our mission to keep the UK safe – now, more than ever, we must strengthen our combat readiness, modernise faster and shape the Navy our country needs." During his time as First Sea Lord, General Gwyn will be in command of more than 30,000 personnel, more than 50 warships, nuclear submarines and support vessels, the helicopters and jets of the Fleet Air Arm and the elite Naval infantry of the Royal Marines.

He will oversee the continuing build of the Type 26 and Type 31 frigates, expected to become operational towards the end of his tenure; the steel cut of the first Solid Support Ship; the seventh Astute-class submarine entering service and the continuing development of the Dreadnought-class of submarine. A graduate of the Advanced



Command and Staff Course at the Military College Shrivenham, he went on to oversee global operations in Permanent Joint Headquarters before serving in Afghanistan, where he was awarded an OBE. Moving to No 10 Downing Street as the Military Assistant to the Prime Minister, he then worked in the Cabinet Office and led 3 Cdo Brigade. Rising to the position of General as Vice Chief of the Defence Staff in 2022, he was responsible for running the Armed Forces aspects of defence business, and in 2024 he was appointed Commandant General of the Royal Marines, a role which he will continue to hold.



## FOUR DAYS, 500 MILES – GET YOUR SKATES ON!

The BBC's Race Across the World reaches its climax next Wednesday (June 11) when the final four pairs vie to reach the last checkpoint.

Teams have travelled more than 7,500 miles across the two most populous countries in the world – China and India, via Nepal – in pursuit of the £20,000 prize.

If that has whetted your appetite, then how about attempting a 500-mile dash across two countries (Scotland and England, though there's nothing to stop you including others if it helps!) to raise money for Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity?

The RNA is aiming to enter four teams in the RNRMC's Race Across the UK on September 2-5.

One team already signed up is RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant and Communications Lead Sarah Bewley.

But Sarah would like to hear from three more pairs of shipmates who think they might be able to race from the Scottish capital to the West Country, raising vital funds for RNRMC in the process.

Teams will have four days to reach Dartmouth, relying on ingenuity, stamina and teamwork to get there before any of their rivals. You'll need to partner with someone you trust – someone who will motivate you and help power through when the journey gets tough.

Together, you will tackle the UK's stunning and diverse landscapes, without the help of navigation apps, and without resorting to the use of cars, or aeroplanes.

You will rely solely on your wits, a traditional map, and whatever you can carry on your back as you make your way from one checkpoint to the next.



This challenge offers a unique opportunity to test your limits, all while raising vital funds for an exceptional cause.

There is a strict limit of 50 participating pairs – 100 people in all, and a fundraising target of £1,500 per person.

The RNRMC will support you to reach and smash that target, and the RNA will be weighing in to help the teams racing in their colours.

Participants must be 16+. By signing up for Race Across the UK, you will play a significant part in improving the lives of those who serve our nation.

With spaces limited to just 50 pairs, apply now to secure your place and help the RNRMC make a difference.

If you would like to be one of the RNA teams, please contact Sara on [cml@rnassoc.org](mailto:cml@rnassoc.org).

For more details of what the event entails, see <https://lupine.co.uk/race/2025-rnrmc-race-across-the-uk.html>



# PATRICK BUSHBY – A REMARKABLE CENTURY

As the oldest member of Worthing Branch, Patrick Bushby's 100th birthday on 6 May was celebrated by shipmates at Caer Gwent, where he now lives.

His life is a tapestry woven with service, family, and an enduring zest for life, making him a remarkable individual whose story continues to inspire all who know him. He has lived a full life of extraordinary experiences, has lived a story marked by service, hard work, and a deep love for family.

Born as one of eight siblings, he followed his older brother Gordon into the Royal Navy, a choice that would profoundly shape his early years. Tragically, Gordon lost his life at just 18, torpedoed during the war, unable to swim – the memory of his brother is one Patrick cherishes and often speaks of with great emotion.

Patrick's Naval career saw him serve during the war, braving the perilous Arctic convoys, a service for which he was awarded a medal just eight years ago. He also undertook the Atlantic run and was called up for the Korean War, demonstrating unwavering dedication to his country.

After his Naval service, Patrick embraced a variety of roles, from window cleaner and milkman in the days of bicycles and horse-drawn deliveries to owning businesses as a greengrocer, newsagent, and post office proprietor. He even served in the fire brigade, embodying resilience and adaptability in all his pursuits. The majority of Patrick's long life has been spent in Worthing, with brief periods in Horsham and Littlehampton. His second wife, Jean, desired a new house in Littlehampton, but after 18 months, the couple returned to Worthing. Family has always been central to Patrick's life. He was married to Joyce, his first wife and the mother of his children, before later marrying Jean. Both have since passed away. Patrick is the proud father of three children, grandfather to six, great-grandfather to nine, and even a great-great-grandfather to one – a testament to the enduring legacy of his life.

Even into his later years, Patrick maintained a vibrant and active lifestyle. He rode motorbikes well into his 70s, enjoyed gardening, and was a passionate member of an amateur video and film group, showcasing his knack for technology. Though health challenges in recent years have limited his independence, he remains spirited and reflective, celebrating a life well-lived.



## BETTY'S 100TH BIRTHDAY



The Royal Naval Association wishes the warmest congratulations to Betty Withers on her 100th birthday.

Betty, a member of Letchworth Branch, was a cook on Hayling Island during the war and served some of the lads their final supper the night before the Allied invasion force left the South Coast for the D-Day Landings. Betty is an astonishingly kind and wonderful woman, who lights up the lives of everyone she meets.



# NEW COMMUNITY FOR AFGHAN VETERANS

A decade on from the end of combat operations in Afghanistan, a new organisation set up for veterans who served there is seeking cross-party backing so that those who sacrificed to stabilise the country can get the support they need.

The UK Afghanistan Veterans Community (AVC) released in Parliament the findings of their groundbreaking study so that politicians better understand the needs of the 150,000-strong veteran contingent.

The study reveals that:

- 92 per cent of UK Afghanistan Veterans believe that their sacrifices will be forgotten;
- 90 per cent said more should be done to commemorate the UK contribution;
- 94 per cent stated that being an Afghanistan veteran was an important part of their identity.

The research is the first time that the feelings of Afghanistan veterans have been captured since the end of warfighting there.

Speaking about it, AVC Chairman Christine Emmett said: "Veterans of Afghanistan have overwhelmingly indicated that more needs to be done to support them and their unique needs, and that is why we have set up AVC.

"Now we call upon politicians, and people across the UK, to get behind our new community, so that we may learn the lessons of the past, help those who served and not forget their sacrifices."

The report was presented to Parliament at an event at the end of last year chaired by the AVC with cross-party support from two MPs and Afghan veterans, Tom Tugendhat and Louise Jones.

Research revealed that shared experiences of Afghanistan are deemed more important to individuals than traditional regimental or Service affiliations, with 94 per cent agreeing. 85 per cent said that they would want to join a new organisation set up for them, which included a mix of veterans of those already engaged with existing associations to those completely disengaged until now. The need for a community is clear, with 92 per cent of veterans fearing that they will be forgotten in the wake of the withdrawal from Kabul in 2021. Although this sentiment is hard to hear, it is a step forward in that veterans feel empowered to share their feelings.

Having this presented to a packed room full of MPs and Third Sector service providers has provided the community with a sense of hope, that something will be done, and that they are being listened to.

They ask for an organisation that they can call their own, regaining the sense of pride the majority feel about their individual service.

The setting up of AVC seeks reconciliation, with the three top requests from the community being:"

1. The need to commemorate the fallen of Afghanistan, (steps that AVC has already taken at both the National Memorial Arboretum and the Cenotaph this year);
2. Support to veterans' wellbeing and mental health, that a sense of community can provide; and
3. Giving veterans a safe space to talk with other veterans, that the new AVC will fill the void.

Around 1,600 veterans took part in the groundbreaking research, undertaken by leading global communications agency M&C Saatchi World Services as part of their commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant, across a series of focus groups and a wider veterans' survey.

Commissioned by AVC, it sought to understand the hopes and fears of veterans today, inspired by the example of previous conflict 'associations' such as the Normandy Veterans Association which for decades has provided a

sense of community for the UK element of over 156,000 Allied Service personnel who landed on the beaches on D-Day. Those who responded from this current generation were from diverse backgrounds, but unified in their desires, with women and men, veterans young and old, living North to South, covering all ranks, overwhelmingly calling for the setting up of a community specifically for veterans of Afghanistan like those before.

150,000 UK Armed Forces personnel served over the 20-year campaign in Afghanistan – the largest deployment of UK troops in living memory.

This is a diverse veterans group from across the UK, Commonwealth, all three Services of the Armed Forces and the Reserves, and saw women regularly on the front line in the most intense period of fighting for a generation.

457 paid the ultimate sacrifice, with many more living with life-changing injuries. Though the youngest veterans are around 21 and the oldest in their 70s, most are of working age. Industry recognises the value that veterans add to their workforce, evidenced in the recent 'Veterans Work' report by Deloitte. Business is getting behind a cohort of people who do good in the workplace, and it's clear that this needs to be mirrored more widely in society, starting today.



Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © Crown copyright reproduced under delegated authority from The Keeper of Public Records. Image: IWM (LAND-02-012-0444)





# LITTLE SHIPS RETURN TO DUNKIRK

Royal Navy warships escorted a flotilla of legendary 'Little Ships of Dunkirk' across the Channel for the anniversary of the World War 2 evacuation.

Eighty-five years ago – between 26 May and 4 June 1940 – some 850 private boats of all shapes and sizes sailed through heavy enemy fire on a rescue mission to help save Allied troops stranded on the beaches and harbour at Dunkirk as the Nazis swept through France.

Re-enacting the Operation Dynamo voyage, which saw more than 338,000 soldiers rescued to fight another day, was a flotilla of 66 little ships which left Ramsgate at 6am and arrived late afternoon in Dunkirk, escorted by seven Royal Navy patrol vessels, as well as RNLI lifeboats, as well as scores of spectator craft.

Making the commemorations even more poignant was the death of one of the last-known Naval veterans of Dunkirk – telegraphist Duncan McInnes, who died at the age of 105 in mid-May in Australia.

Duncan served in S-class destroyer HMS Saladin during Operation Dynamo and the little ships lowered their ensigns to half-mast to mark his passing.

"This will be the first time when we've gone over when there are no veterans,"

said Ian Gilbert, Honorary Vice Admiral, Association of Dunkirk Little Ships. "The little ships are the veterans because the living link has now gone and we have to keep these boats alive to keep the memory alive."

More than 20 sailors from Victory Squadron at HMS Collingwood were also involved, embarking in the little ships for the crossing.

Musicians of the Royal Marines Band Portsmouth paraded in Ramsgate as Prince Michael of Kent, Commodore-in-Chief of the Maritime Reserves, took the salute and unveiled a statue that commemorates the events on Dunkirk. Coastal Forces Squadron Commanding Officer, Cdr Carla Higgins, said: "It is hugely important to continue to commemorate such events in our history and highlighting the role such little ships had to play in Operation Dynamo."

"Coastal Forces Squadron is very proud to be a part of this event, particularly since it has been ten years since the last commemoration of this scale."

While the Little Ships take centre stage, the facts behind the evacuation are a little more complicated.

Many of the small craft were used to ferry troops out from the beaches to larger vessels, often destroyers, offshore – some 220 warships and auxiliaries were



also involved in Operation Dynamo. Many of the Little Ships were crewed by Royal Navy personnel for the evacuation, and the whole operation was planned and led by Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsay from Dover Castle.

# LISBON MARU MEMORIAL UNVEILED IN CHINA

A monument commemorating the rescue of British prisoners of war by courageous Chinese fishermen has been unveiled at Zhoushan.

On 1 October 1941, the Japanese vessel Lisbon Maru, carrying more than 1,800 British POWs was torpedoed off the Dongji Islands. On the following day local fishermen risked their lives to rescue hundreds of British prisoners from under the noses of hostile Japanese forces – though 828 men died in the sinking.

The need for a monument was brought to the attention of Chinese President Xi Jinping in late 2021 by Mrs Denise Wynne, daughter of survivor Dennis Morley, and the President answered in 2022 that this would be done.

Mrs Wynne was present when the monument was unveiled close to the shore, as was the British Defence Attaché in Beijing, Air Cdre Don Stamp.

■ The distributor of a documentary on the sinking of Lisbon Maru is currently working on arranging screenings of the film during the period surrounding VJ Day (15 August).



For more details of the film and dates when it is being shown, see <https://www.ukchinafilm.com/the-sinking-of-the-lisbon-maru-cinemas-marathon/>

# BAND HOSTS REMEMBRANCE FESTIVAL

The Betteshanger Colliery Welfare Band based in Deal is planning to host a Festival of Remembrance at St George's Church in Deal on the evening of Saturday 8 November and would like to take the opportunity to invite local Royal Naval Association members to join them.

Organisers believe this will be a great opportunity to bring the local community together to honour the service and sacrifices made by British and Commonwealth Armed Forces. Although they are in the early

stages of planning, they already have the backing of the Royal British Legion, the Royal Marines Association and the Salvation Army, and are seeking support from various other military organisations, veterans organisations and other clubs to ensure they have the presence required for such a prestigious occasion for the local community of Deal and surrounding areas.

They are also actively seeking standard bearers, and representatives

from local Cadet Forces.

In March the band was crowned Champions of the Third Section of the London and Southern Counties Regional Championships, meaning it qualifies for the National Brass Band Championships in September.

For more details of the band see the website <https://betteshangerband.org>, and for more details of the Festival of Remembrance email [betteshanger@gmail.com](mailto:betteshanger@gmail.com)



## QUICK QUOTE FOR TRAVEL INSURANCE

As a member of the Royal Naval Association, you have access to an exclusive annual travel insurance scheme from our insurance partner Trinity.

You can access this via the quick quote tool below to find out the annual price.

Select your age band, European or Worldwide cover and who is to be covered to get your premium.

Once completed, you'll be directed to the website to sign up. It's that easy!

Any questions call: 02392 419 856.

The link is <https://tinyurl.com/yxvwvsy5>

## AIMING HIGH

If you're up for a challenge (and have a head for heights), Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity would like to hear from you.

The charity is staging a Spinnaker Tower Abseil at Gunwharf in Portsmouth on 5 July, promising participants "a challenge that will test your nerve to the limits".

It is open to people of all ages and fitness levels. You will be met with an incredible view of Portsmouth Harbour – in return there is a registration fee of £45, and an expected fundraising target of £400 per person.

For more details see <https://www.rnrmc.org.uk/2025-spinnaker-tower-abseil>

# EDEN CAMP PARADE CALL

The annual Eden Camp All Services Parade and Service of Remembrance will take place at the museum on Sunday 7 September

The format and timings will be the same as in previous years: the museum will be open free to veterans and serving members and their husbands/wives/partners/carers/chauffeurs and Cadet groups from 10am, and the parade will assemble at 2.10pm for the march to the Heritage Hall Display arena at 2.30pm.

The Yorkshire Volunteers Band will lead the parade, followed by the Standards and those wishing to take part in the parade.

If people wish to attend as a group, the museum would be grateful if you could advise them of approximate numbers of members.

It would also help considerably if you can let them know if you will be coming by coach or minibus so that they can arrange parking for you on site.

Eden Camp Modern History Museum is a family-owned and run business in Malton, North Yorkshire, that started more than 30 years ago. Originally a prisoner-of-war camp for Italian POWs, Eden Camp was built on agricultural land in early 1942. In the 1980s businessman Stan Johnson bought the site and invested in the facility, creating what was described as 'the world's only Modern History Theme Museum.' Prisoners' huts have been converted to tell the story of 'the People's War – the social history of life in Britain from 1939-45, using tableaux with moving figures, authentic sounds and smells to transport people back in time. Each hut covers a different aspect of the war, such as the rise of the Nazis, rationing, evacuees, the Home Guard and the Munitions Factories.

For more information, including special events, see <https://edencamp.co.uk>.



RNA member and author Angus Konstam delivered a lecture on his book 'The Convoy – HG-76: Taking the Fight to Hitler's U-Boats' to personnel on board aircraft carrier HMS Queen Elizabeth, part of a series by Osprey Publishing. Angus is pictured here (left) with Editor Marcus Cowper of Osprey Publishing on the flight deck of the carrier in Portsmouth.





Ministry  
of Defence

# Strategic Defence Review 2025

## The world has changed.

The threats we now face are more serious and less predictable than at any time since the end of the Cold War.

This Review sets out a vision to **make Britain safer, secure at home and strong abroad.**

## Contributions to the Review

**8000** responses

**1700** contributions from individuals, political parties, and other organisations

**200** industry contributions

**150** experts in their fields

## A landmark shift in our deterrence and defence:



### Move to warfighting readiness

With a more lethal 'integrated force' equipped for the future and strengthened homeland defence.



### Engine for growth

Driving jobs and prosperity through a new partnership with industry, radical procurement reforms, and backing UK businesses.



### 'NATO first'

Stepping up on European security by leading in NATO, with strengthened nuclear, new tech, and updated conventional capabilities.



### UK innovation driven by lessons from Ukraine

Harnessing drones, data, and digital warfare to make our Armed Forces stronger and safer.



### Whole-of-society approach

Wider participation in national resilience and renewing the Nation's contract with those who serve.



# Key Announcements

**The SDR is the Plan for Change for Defence.** It sets out a new vision for UK Defence:

## Move to warfighting readiness



**‘New Hybrid Navy’:** Dreadnought and SSN-AUKUS submarines, cutting-edge warships and support ships, transformed aircraft carriers, and new autonomous vessels.

**10x more lethal British Army:** armoured capability, AI, software, long-range weapons, and land drone swarms—and aim to increase full-time troops to at least 76,000 into the next Parliament.

**Next-generation RAF:** F-35s, upgraded Typhoons, next-generation fast jets through GCAP, and autonomous fighters.

**Sovereign warhead programme:** £15bn this Parliament, supporting 9,000+ jobs.

**Homeland air and missile defence:** up to £1bn new funding.

**New CyberEM Command:** defending Britain from daily attacks in the grey zone.

## UK innovation driven by lessons from Ukraine



**World-leading innovation in autonomy:** doubling investment in autonomous systems this Parliament to boost UK export potential.

**New Digital Targeting Web in 2027:** up to £1bn for the digital integration of our Armed Forces.

**New ‘Drone Centre’:** accelerating the use of autonomous systems across our Armed Forces.

## Engine for growth



**Munitions:** £6bn this Parliament—including £1.5bn in an ‘always on’ pipeline and at least 6 new munitions and energetics factories in the UK, creating 1,000+ jobs.

**Continuous submarine production:** up to 12 conventionally armed, nuclear-powered attack submarines through the AUKUS programme.

**UK Defence Innovation:** £400m to invest in UK-based companies.

**New Defence Exports Office:** driving exports to our allies and growth at home.

## ‘NATO first’



**First European hybrid airwings:** transforming our aircraft carriers, combining fast jets, long-range weapons, and drones.

**First European laser directed energy weapon in service:** through nearly £1bn of new funding.

**Greater European deterrence:** up to 7,000 new long-range weapons and supporting around 800 jobs in the UK.

## Whole-of-society approach



**Renewal of military accommodation:** at least £7bn this Parliament, with £1.5bn+ new investment to fix forces family housing.

**More opportunities for young people:** delivering a 30% increase in cadets by 2030 and introducing a voluntary ‘Gap Year’ scheme.

**Whole-of-society approach:** a new UK Strategic Reserve by 2030 and the Navy taking a leading role in protecting undersea infrastructure.

**New Defence Readiness Bill:** legislating to improve national preparedness.



# NEW COMMEMORATIVE STONE WILL HONOUR HMS DAEDALUS PERSONNEL

HMS Daedalus, just four miles east of Portsmouth at Lee-on-the-Solent, has been the site of significant Naval aviation activity for almost 80 years. On Friday 20 June at 1030 at what is now known as the Solent Airport a commemorative stone will be unveiled at a ceremony presided over by the RNA's National President, Duncan Potts.

The stone is dedicated to the Service and civilian personnel who served, fought and died at the Royal Naval Air Station between 1939 and 1996.

Daedalus took its name from the master craftsman, inventor and architect of Greek mythology, a byword for wisdom, power and knowledge and the creator of wings of feathers and beeswax with which he and his son Icarus planned to escape imprisonment on Crete; Icarus is said to have ignored his father's warning and soared too close to the sun, melting the wax in his wings and plunging to his death.

The air station started out on the shore of the Solent as the RN Air Service's Naval Seaplane Training School, then became an RAF station in April 1918 when the RNAS merged with the Royal Flying Corps – though Naval aviation training continued throughout the light blue years. The first elements of the airfield appeared with a grass-strip runway in 1931, and a period of major development ensued, with the airfield assuming the role of HQ RAF Coastal Command in 1936.

Towards the end of the decade it was decided that the Fleet Air Arm should be transferred to Admiralty control, and to facilitate the change four RAF stations were handed over to the Navy, with Lee-on-the-Solent being one of them.

On 24 May 1939 HQ RAF Coastal Command switched to Northwood on the northern outskirts of London, and HMS Daedalus was commissioned; that same day the first two Naval Air Squadrons settled in – 765 NAS (basic seaplane training) and 771 (torpedo bombers and amphibian) – and two further squadrons were formed, those being 753 (torpedo, spotter, reconnaissance) and 754 (amphibian, floatplane and trainers). Under Naval control, grass strips were replaced by concrete runways, and on the outbreak of war in September 1939 several more second-line squadrons took up



**British Hovercraft Corporation SRN3 craft attached to the Inter Service Hovercraft Trials Unit at HMS Daedalus, Lee-on-the-Solent, in the early 1960s. Image from Imperial War Museum: © Crown copyright reproduced under delegated authority from The Keeper of Public Records. Image: IWM (CT 307)**

residence, including 772, 778 and, in November, 770 deck landing training unit.

In August 1940 the station suffered serious damage in an air raid, with five killed and two hangars destroyed.

Over the subsequent years of the war further development was carried out at Daedalus, with a third runway added, a new control tower and numerous hangars amongst the improvements, and the station took on responsibility for front-line squadrons as well as training.

In 1944 Daedalus took a pivotal role in the Normandy Landings. Front-line FAA squadrons were joined by RAF and American units, many of them fighter and spotter squadrons featuring Spitfires or Seafires, Typhoons and Mustangs.

The first Allied aircraft to take part in the D-Day Landings on 6 June 1944 took off from Daedalus at shortly before 0500, with fighters operating in pairs – one to spot the fall of shot for the naval bombardment, the other covering for the spotter. By the end of D-Day a total of 435 sorties had been flown from Daedalus in support of Operation Neptune – the highest number by any British airfield

that day.

After the war Daedalus continued to be at the heart of Naval aviation, and in October 1959 was renamed HMS Ariel, reflecting an increased role for electrical, radar and ground training, though the station reverted to Daedalus on 5 October 1965, by which time a Joint Service Hovercraft Unit had been formed on the foreshore, close to the site of the original seaplane station. There was also a search-and-rescue unit which took over civil duties from early 1973 with the closure of the RAF SAR flight at Thorney Island, 12 miles to the west.

Daedalus continued as a military airfield until 1996 when it was decommissioned, and after changing hands a number of times it is currently known as Solent Airport Daedalus, with mixed uses, including business and commercial units (the airfield is home to the Solent Enterprise Zone), educational facilities, public open space and some residual aviation capacity. The new memorial stone is sponsored by the Royal Naval Association and the Fleet Air Arm Association, with thanks for the financial support of RNRMC.

# WELFARE AND WELLBEING

## KEEPING YOU IN THE LOOP

As our Welfare and Wellbeing network continues to grow stronger across all branches, we're excited to bring you the latest updates, reminders, and opportunities to stay connected and supported.

Whether you're a seasoned volunteer or just starting your journey, there's something here for everyone.

### Stay connected, stay supported

Communication is key to a thriving support network.

That's why we're asking all branches to keep the **Welfare and Wellbeing Support Coordinator** informed of any changes to your **Branch Welfare and Wellbeing Officer (BWVO)**.

Keeping our records up-to-date ensures we can provide the best possible support across the board.

Send updates to [wws@rnassoc.org](mailto:wws@rnassoc.org)

And here's a top tip: if you haven't already, get to know your **Area Welfare Officer**.

They're a fantastic source of knowledge and guidance—don't hesitate to reach out!

### DBS checks: let's get the ball rolling

We're making great progress with DBS checks, and many

BWVOs have already submitted your details – thank you! If you haven't yet, now's the perfect time to get started.

**Attending the National Conference?** Great news! You may be able to begin your DBS Enhanced check on-site. Just bring along, for example:

- Your passport
- Your driving licence
- A utility bill or council tax bill

For a full list of acceptable documents, visit the UK Government website [here](#).

### New ID cards are on the way

Once your documents are verified and your DBS check is complete, you'll receive your brand-new photo ID Card. These will be sent directly to all registered volunteers—another step toward a more connected and professional network.

### Volunteer Guide: hot off the press

We're thrilled to announce the release of the new **Welfare and Wellbeing Volunteers Guide!** This comprehensive resource will be included with your ID card and will also be available at the Conference.

It's packed with practical advice, best practices, and everything you need to feel confident in your role.

### Safety First: A gentle reminder

When it comes to home visits, safety is paramount.

Only **Branch Welfare and Wellbeing Officers** with a **current DBS check and safeguarding knowledge** should conduct visits to veterans in their homes. Please refer to the new Volunteer Guide for detailed guidance on safe and effective visits.

### Come say hello at the Conference

We're looking forward to seeing many of you at this year's National Conference! Be sure to stop by the **Welfare and Wellbeing** table—whether you have questions, need support, or just want to connect, we'd love to meet you.

## FUNERAL GUIDE NOW AVAILABLE ON WEBSITE

**"The RNA has launched our Funeral Guide, and reminds shipmates that we offer ceremonial and administrative support for our members and all those who have served in Our Naval Forces." – Jon Everett, Welfare and Wellbeing Support Co-ordinator [wws@rnassoc.org](mailto:wws@rnassoc.org), telephone 07591 829416**

**Find the guide on our website: <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/rna-funeral-guide>**

Organisation	Telephone	Website
Op Courage	-	<a href="http://www.nhs.uk">www.nhs.uk</a>
Samaritans	116 123	<a href="http://www.samaritans.org">www.samaritans.org</a>
SSAFA	0800 260 6780	<a href="http://www.ssafa.org.uk">www.ssafa.org.uk</a>
Naval Children's Charity	02392 639 534	<a href="http://www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk">www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk</a>
Royal Marines Charity	-	<a href="http://www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk">www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk</a>
Association of WRENS	02392 725 141	<a href="https://wrens.org.uk">https://wrens.org.uk</a>
RNBT	02392 690 112	<a href="http://www.rnbt.org.uk">www.rnbt.org.uk</a>
RNRMC	02393 871 520	<a href="http://www.rnrmc.org.uk">www.rnrmc.org.uk</a>
RBL	0808 802 8080	<a href="http://www.britishlegion.org.uk">www.britishlegion.org.uk</a>
Naval Families Federation	02392 654 374	<a href="https://nff.org.uk">https://nff.org.uk</a>
COBSEO	-	<a href="http://www.cobseo.org.uk">www.cobseo.org.uk</a>
Seafarers UK	020 7932 0000	<a href="http://www.theseafarerscharity.org">www.theseafarerscharity.org</a>
CRISIS	0300 636 1967	<a href="http://www.crisis.org.uk">www.crisis.org.uk</a>
REFUGE	0808 2000 247	<a href="https://refuge.org.uk/">https://refuge.org.uk/</a>
Veteran Outreach Support	02392 731 767	<a href="https://vosuk.org/">https://vosuk.org/</a>
PTSD Resolution	0300 302 0551	<a href="https://ptsdresolution.org/">https://ptsdresolution.org/</a>
White Ensign Association	-	<a href="http://www.whiteensign.co.uk">www.whiteensign.co.uk</a>
GOV.UK for all OPs	0808 802 1212	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/support-for-veterans">www.gov.uk/support-for-veterans</a>
Officer Association	020 7808 4175	<a href="http://www.officersassociation.org.uk">www.officersassociation.org.uk</a>
Fighting with Pride	-	<a href="http://www.fightingwithpride.org.uk">www.fightingwithpride.org.uk</a>
Help for Heroes	0300 303 9888	<a href="http://www.helpforheroes.org.uk">www.helpforheroes.org.uk</a>
The Poppy Factory	-	<a href="http://www.poppyfactory.org">www.poppyfactory.org</a>
SAIL	0800 160 1842	<a href="https://sailine.org.uk/">https://sailine.org.uk/</a>
Combat Stress	0800 138 1619	<a href="mailto:helpline@combatstress.org.uk">helpline@combatstress.org.uk</a>



## LEAVE – AND THEN JOIN

A Service Leavers event at the China Fleet Club in Saltash provided a valuable opportunity to connect with Royal Navy personnel transitioning out of Service after many years of dedication.

Jon Everett, RNA Welfare Co-ordinator (pictured above), said: "I engaged with the recent Service leavers, promoting the RNA and its benefits.

"As they prepare to leave the best club in the world, I warmly invited them to join the second-best club – the RNA – where they can continue to enjoy the camaraderie and support that comes with being part of our community."



# PRE-NUPS ARE NOT JUST FOR THE STARS

**To pre-nup, or to pre-not? What are Pre-Nuptial Agreements and why do they matter to me?**

Pre-nuptial agreements are not just for the super-rich billionaires, or the next breakthrough Hollywood actor.

The agreements at their very simplest are designed to provide financial security to both parties, and peace of mind. And you don't need to be a superstar for that.

There is perhaps too much stigma surrounding the agreements which seem to suggest marriage is about to start off on the wrong foot, but they are not a symbol of uncertainty or because there is little trust between the couple.

A pre-nuptial agreement is not a document setting the relationship up for failure. It is quite the opposite, and instead encourages the parties to be practical and honest with each other.

Isn't that exactly what marriage is, so why wouldn't you at least consider it?

Pre-nuptial agreements can cover pensions – hoorah!

If you have spent years accumulating an Armed Forces Pension Scheme, especially before getting married, then you may well want to explore how this could be protected in a pre-nuptial agreement.

The agreement is designed to cover all assets, including property, savings, business interests and personal belongings. It can also cover debts and liabilities too. It is a broad-brush agreement bespoke to the couple entering into it – it is not a one-size-fits-all document.

In addition to assets, it might record:

1. How you want to manage the day-to-day spending during the marriage.
2. How inherited assets might be treated in the marriage, current and future.
3. What happens to the gifts received during the marriage?
4. How the finances might be influenced by children, ie if one party takes time away from work to look after the child(ren).
5. Who looks after the dog?

A pre-nuptial agreement can provide clarity and encourage communication between the parties, but it will not necessarily be binding – and it's important to

**Emma Jones has significant experience in dealing with legal issues arising from the breakdown of relationships involving serving or former Armed Forces personnel, their families and current or former MOD individuals.**

**Emma – herself a member of the RNA – has represented several personnel in the Royal Navy, from ABs to Vice Admirals. She understands the difference between civvie and military life and the impact this may well have on a relationship and/or a family.**

**Knights is a business and leading law firm offering premium professional services everywhere in the UK.**

**The team is made up of 1,100+ professionals across 26 (and growing) locations in the UK from Carlisle all the way down to Exeter.**

**The national family team at Knights are familiar with all aspects of family law, including contact arrangements for children, divorce and finances and pre/post-nuptial agreements.**

**They have a handful of individuals who specialise in the treatment of Armed Forces pensions on divorce and appreciate the complexities of these schemes.**

**It's important to seek specialist legal advice when considering the financial arrangements on divorce, and they are there to help.**



## Knights



*Photo by Ernesto Alvarez on Unsplash*

acknowledge that.

The court does have the ability to make financial orders of its own accord on divorce, but if a pre-nuptial agreement is entered into freely by each party, it's likely to give effect to that agreement unless it would be unfair to uphold otherwise. The agreements carry a lot of weight, and they will be considered in detail by the court.

It's only unlikely to be upheld if there is such a significant change in circumstances (ie children not accounted for, wealth that was not disclosed at the time or there's been

a Euromillions win along the way).

The provisions in a pre-nuptial agreement could also be covered in a Will to some extent – which would not have half as much stigma. Sorting a Will, good life planning. Getting a pre-nup? How unromantic!

But why wouldn't you cross the t's and dot the i's before getting married and recognise that this is an attempt to avoid any future conflict at the earliest opportunity.

Talking about money is always awkward. It can be difficult too. But so is divorce.

The investment of time and money into a pre-nuptial agreement can save on significant legal fees and the emotional toll of separation and divorce.

It's a tool to promote trust and financial security – so if you are considering popping the question but have a few pennies or assets that you would like to protect, it is worth exploring what options are open to you.

It is important to seek legal advice to make the process as simple as possible.

I'm here to help navigate these issues, and for all other family law questions!

<https://www.knightsplc.com/company/our-professionals/emma-jones/>

[www.linkedin.com/in/emmxjones](http://www.linkedin.com/in/emmxjones)

[emma.jones@knightsplc.com](mailto:emma.jones@knightsplc.com)

# Royal Naval Association Lottery



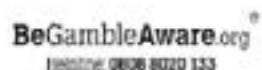
**Win up to £25,000**

**We rely on your help to  
deliver outstanding  
support throughout  
every stage of our  
members' lives.**



**Help us continue our work  
by playing the RNA lottery**

**Enter by using the QR Code  
or visit [RNAlottery.co.uk](https://RNAlottery.co.uk)**







The RNA's Ken Benbow RN and George Boothby RN FAA, jet off on BEA Systems' private plane to celebrate VE80 in Europe. What a wonderful experience. Ken travelled to the Netherlands to take part in the Liberation of the Netherlands Parade in Wageningen on 5 May.



The RNA's National President, Duncan Potts joined the Royal Family, serving personnel and World War 2 veterans at Westminster Abbey to mark 80 years since the end of the war in Europe.

# SCHOOL HONOURS NAVAL VETERAN AT VE80 EVENT

The RNA had the honour to be invited to the VE80 event at Chiddingstone School in Edenbridge, Kent – a very special occasion as World War 2 Royal Naval veteran Eric Bateman, of nearby Edenbridge, was their special guest.

Eric, aged 99, attended a Victory in Europe Day service at St Mary the Virgin Church, where a vignette of his life during wartime was played out by the children.

This was followed by a question and answer session, where the children, aged three to 11, asked Eric about his wartime service.

Eric then unveiled a plaque at the school dedicated to himself and all those who served in the war.

Eric had never even seen the sea when he joined the Royal Navy in 1942.

"I joined the Home Guard when I was 15 and we had to go on Army camps for training. I didn't like getting up early and shaving. And all the nice girls like a sailor, so I joined the Navy," said Eric.

Indeed, Eric's plan was successful as he met his lovely wife, Pauline, in 1947.

Capt Bill Oliphant, RNA General Secretary, presented Eric with Life Membership of the



RNA and a bottle of rum (to make up for Eric being too young during his wartime service to qualify for the tot).



## PORTSMOUTH TO STAGE SEAFARERS' SERVICE

This year's annual Seafarers' Service celebrating Portsmouth's maritime significance and present-day seafaring connections will take place on Sunday 29 June.

A brief outline of timings is:

**11am:** Service to be held at Portsmouth Cathedral. Donations towards the cathedral's work can be made at the service, or to the seafaring charity designated in the order of service.

**11.50am:** As part of the Service, the Civic Procession and congregation will depart the cathedral by the West Door to walk the short distance to the Nelson Statue in Grand Parade.

**Midday:** Wreath-laying ceremony at the Nelson Statue.

**On completion:** The Civic Procession will proceed to the Saluting Platform for a short Act of Committal led by the Lord Mayor, which ends the

service.

Where applicable, uniform (medals, no swords) may be worn.

In the event of wet weather, the wreath-laying ceremony and the Act of Committal will still go ahead.

## NOT FORGOTTEN AT GARDEN PARTY

**More than 200 associations, units and organisations were represented at this year's The Not Forgotten Buckingham Palace Garden Party,. Together, they brought over 800 guests into the gardens, representing over a third of all those attending alongside the Royal Family and celebrity guests. The Not Forgotten receives no statutory funding, instead relying entirely on the generosity of donors, sponsors, and legacies to deliver events like the Garden Party and**

**their year-round programme of support for veterans and serving personnel.**

**Hosting the Garden Party event on behalf of the entire Armed Forces community is a privilege the Association holds dear – but it comes with significant financial responsibility, as they fund it entirely themselves, and have done so since 1920.**

**For more on the Not Forgotten see <https://thenotforgotten.org/events/>**



## LOOK SHARP FOR BADGES

Three new limited edition pin badges are now available to buy through the RNA online shop, all carrying the RNA 75th anniversary logo. Costing £7.50 each (with discounts for bulk purchases) they will not hang around for long – see <https://www.rnagizzet.co.uk> for full details.



## RNA IS NOW 24,000 STRONG

The RNA is delighted to announce we now have 24,000 members! Our 24,000th Shipmate is Sean Connachie, Senior Director at Oracle, who served during the Falklands Conflict in HMS Glamorgan, and is seen here (right) with RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant at Central Office in front of our HMS Glamorgan memorial tree.

## CENTRAL OFFICE OPEN DAY

Central Office Open Days have proved popular with shipmates, giving them the chance to see how the office works and meet some of the people they normally deal with by phone or email. Due to a busy 75th year, we are only able to squeeze in one more Open Day to Central Office this year – 11 July.

If you are interested or would like more information, please email Sara on [ams@rnassoc.org](mailto:ams@rnassoc.org). Please contact her early to avoid disappointment. Usual service will resume in 2026, as we plan to hold many more Open Days next year.

# MINIBUSES ARE AN ASSET FOR ALL

The RNA has three minibuses, located in Plymouth, Manchester and Portsmouth, for use by shipmates.

The minibuses are a great asset to us all, and we are proud to offer this membership benefit. As you can appreciate, it costs a significant amount of money to keep all three minibuses on the road, and this year we have received

a generous grant from the Seafarers' Charity, for which we are extremely grateful.

We are also extremely grateful to our RNA volunteers who manage the minibuses regionally, including the bookings. To book a minibus, the contact details are:

**Plymouth** – Les Yeoman - [lesyeo3@gmail.com](mailto:lesyeo3@gmail.com) – 07795 231397

**Manchester** – David Barlow – [dbarlow@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:dbarlow@hotmail.co.uk) – 07747 006100

**Portsmouth** – Sara Field – [ams@rnassoc.org](mailto:ams@rnassoc.org) – 023 92 723747

For insurance purposes, there are certain criteria for driving the minibuses and these, along with additional details, can be found on our website at [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/mini-bus-hire](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/mini-bus-hire)

# RALEIGH MENTORS CELEBRATE

HMS Raleigh veteran mentors have celebrated the 17th birthday of the start of the mentoring programme at the training establishment. The Royal Naval Association Mentoring Programme began at Raleigh in 2008, after having been run successfully at the Commando Training Centre RM at Lymington. The model was taken on by the RNA and formulated with Royal Navy staff at Raleigh, where a working model of the mentoring programme was developed for Naval recruits. The programme has gone through changes over the years but is still running successfully, providing new recruits with a different perspective on their ten-week training. Mentoring is carried out by RNA volunteer veterans who have served in the RN over the years in various branches and bring a different perspective to the new recruits. The mentors bring a range of support

functions, from a listening ear to words of encouragement which is outside of the chain of command. RNA volunteers give of their time freely and build up a strong relationship with the divisions that they are attached to, fostered by the mentors attending a number of evolutions that the recruits undertake. This bears fruit ten weeks later when they see their recruits become just a few inches taller, when they march onto the parade ground for their Passing Out Parade in front of very proud family and friends. Mentors pictured are (below): Susan Rogers and lead mentor Terry Whitty; (below left, from left) Lee Hayward, Pat Cassidy and Terry.



## SHHH – ALL QUIET AT FAA MUSEUM

The next Quiet Afternoon at the Fleet Air Arm Museum at Yeovilton will be Thursday 17 July, 2pm – 4.30pm

During quiet afternoon sessions, sounds, lights and interactive elements are lowered or turned off to create a low-sensory environment.

These sessions are intended to support a range of visitors of all ages, including neurodiverse individuals, people with social, emotional, or mental health needs, those living with dementia, and anyone who may benefit from or simply enjoy a quieter, more relaxed environment.

Access during this event will require a valid museum ticket.

See the museum website at <https://tinyurl.com/5cdxj9wd> for tickets.



# WRENS SEARCHING FOR MISSING DETAILS

The post-war Wrens could do with your help!

According to Mandy Powell, these Wrens, aka the girls who trained at Burghfield, Reading (HMTE Burghfield/HMS Dauntless) have discovered that their history, in the form of the Dauntless Ledgers, has gone missing. These massive books listed every Division in date order with all of the trainees' names along with their branch details and official numbers.

In fact, it is believed it is the only record that 'officially' lists the Division/class numbers, such as Warspite 305.

The Ledgers were last seen in the 1990s when they were moved from one store to another in HMS Raleigh.

Some say that they were loaned to RNAS Yeovilton for the WRNS Centenary celebrations in 2017, but staff at Yeovilton say they don't and did not have them.

An extensive search has been carried out in Raleigh and there's no trace of them.

It is now feared that they may have been accidentally destroyed.

The MOD estimate that somewhere near 33,000 ladies joined up and trained through HMS Dauntless.

Some of that number are trying now to find those ladies or their descendants so they can rebuild their history in digital form.

Trying to find 33,000 of anything is a very tall order and they need all the help they can get.

If you or a family member joined up between 1946-81 and trained at Burghfield please get in touch with the WRNS Burghfield-Dauntless Project 46-81 via email: [ddpwrens@gmail.com](mailto:ddpwrens@gmail.com)

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\*TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY. ALL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME AVAILABLE AT: [WWW.COMBINEDSERVICESTRAVELCOVER.ORG.UK](http://WWW.COMBINEDSERVICESTRAVELCOVER.ORG.UK)





## DIARY DATES

### Assoc Management Committees:

Fri 18 July 2025 (Zoom 0900)

Fri 17 Oct 2025 (Zoom 0900)

Fri 27 Feb 2026 (F2F RMH)

Fri 8 May 2026 (Zoom 0900)

Fri 17 July 2026 (Zoom 0900)

Fri 16 Oct 2026 (F2F RMH)

### FACs (finance):

Fri 1 Aug 2025 (Zoom 0930)

Fri 14 Nov 2025 (Zoom 0930)

Fri 13 Mar 2026 (Zoom 0930) Accounts ready

Fri 15 May 2026 (Zoom 0930)

Fri 24 July 2026 (Zoom 0930)

Fri 23 Oct 2026 (Zoom 0930)

### National Councils:

Fri 13 June 2025 (0900 Zoom)

Sat 13 Sep 2025 (1400) UJC London

Fri 12 Dec 2025 (0900 Zoom)

Fri 20 Mar 2026 (F2F RMH)

Fri 29 May 2026 (Zoom 0900) Pre-Conference

Fri 7 Aug 2026 (Zoom 0900)

Fri 6 Nov 2026 (F2F RMH) Annual Report

# UCKERS GOES INTERGALACTIC

On Star Wars Day, with the help of intergalactic celebrities, the Force truly was with the RNA. Launching the Intergalactic Uckers championships, Lord Vader (pictured below) and others were keen to show their support. The Mandalorians have promised to become guardians of the game and the Jawas (pictured right) were keen to steal the pieces until they found out it was made of wood. May the Fourth be with you!



## CONVOY BELLS PLAQUE PRESENTED

This special plaque (right), crafted by Don Soulsby from St John's Newfoundland, was presented to Londonderry Branch during the 80th anniversary of the end of the Battle of the Atlantic – a struggle for supremacy in the North Atlantic that lasted the entirety of World War 2.

It depicts the three Convoy Bells that have been created and presented to the three Escort Bases serving the North Atlantic Convoys – Halifax Nova Scotia, St John's Newfoundland and Londonderry, Northern Ireland. Don added notes on the reverse side, explaining how the project came together.

Over a number of years, Londonderry Branch had participated in a project with the Canadian Naval Memorial Trust, the Naval Officers Association of Canada and other Naval Veterans, which resulted in



three commemorative Ship's Bells being placed in the respective North Atlantic Convoy Escort bases.

The Shipmates of Londonderry Branch thank Don very much for this thoughtful gift and assure him that it will have pride of place on their memorabilia wall.



## CLOSE LOOK AT NAVAL LINKS

Manchester University Press recently published *The Royal and Russian Navies* by David Fields (retired Royal Navy officer, former Naval Attaché in Moscow and current defence consultant) and Robert Avery (retired Principal Burnham Lecturer, Defence Centre for Languages and Cultures). This book offers a behind-the-scenes look at Royal Navy-Russian military cooperation at the end of the 20th Century, and asks what the future holds in light of the ongoing war in Ukraine. Drawing on the authors' lived experiences and full of personal interactions, it provides an illuminating new insight into the character of Russian naval leadership.

You can find out more about the book at <https://tinyurl.com/5n77xjy8>

## CONFERENCE DOCUMENTS

There is still time to organise a delegate to attend the RNA's Annual Conference in order to ensure your Branch's shipmates' views are represented – see the form at the back of the Circular here.

Conference documents are available to view on the RNA website, including the Conference agenda – see <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/documents>



# BE A WINNER WITH THE RNA LOTTERY

You could win up to £25,000 in our very own Weekly Lottery, which gives supporters the chance to win cash prizes as well as backing our rank-blind network of serving, veterans and family members of the Naval community.

Once players have registered online they will be entered into the draw every Friday they are in credit (£1 per line, per week).

RNA General Secretary Capt Bill Oliphant said: "Our lottery is an exciting way of fundraising and with at least 50 per cent from each £1 donated supporting the work we do, we will be able to help those in our community who need it most."

Visit [www.RNALottery.co.uk](http://www.RNALottery.co.uk) to sign up.

## PLEASE TAKE NOTE(BOOK)

The Royal Naval Association 75th anniversary notebook with pen is now available – looking gorgeous, and a great little gift!

Black ink, £6.

See the Gizzet store on the RNA website at <https://tinyurl.com/3ufm4fbd> where you will also find the RNA 75 jute-style bag for £7.50.



## GET YOUR SLOPS HERE

Shipmates are reminded that items such as blazer badges, pin badges, ties, beret badges etc are still available for purchase from Central Office. If you would like to obtain such items, please contact Central Office on the main office number (023 9272 3747) or via the 'Shop' button at the top of the RNA website home page at [www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)

# SPORTS AND COMRADESHIP GROUPS

**Different name but same objectives...** Shipmates might be interested to become involved with the popular and successful RNA Sports and Comradeship Groups (SCGs), formerly known as Special Interest Groups (SIGs). Whether you are already a part of a group or are yet to join one we recommend you get involved and see what it's all about. For more information on each group please contact the designated leaders, listed below:

American Football – Steve Phillips: [rna.american.football.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.american.football.sig@gmail.com)

Classic Cars – Mike Burnham: [hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org](mailto:hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org)

Cricket – Mark Smith : [Markmiff1962@gmail.com](mailto:Markmiff1962@gmail.com)

Collectors: Insignia and Badges – Paul Banyard: [rna.insignia@gmail.com](mailto:rna.insignia@gmail.com)

Cycling – Craig Fulton: [craig@govguide.co.uk](mailto:craig@govguide.co.uk)

Fishing – Gus Honeywood/Selwyn Davies/John Stephenson: [rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com)

Genealogy – Mike Wilkinson: [mike.j.wilco@gmail.com](mailto:mike.j.wilco@gmail.com)

Golf – Colin Dinsdale: [rna.golfers@gmail.com](mailto:rna.golfers@gmail.com)

Model Makers – Gary Daisley: [RNA.Modelmakers@gmail.com](mailto:RNA.Modelmakers@gmail.com)

Motorhome, Camping and Caravanning – Ron Shilton: [rnamcc@outlook.com](mailto:rnamcc@outlook.com)

RNA Football Club – [scc@rnassoc.com](mailto:scc@rnassoc.com)

Rugby Union – Steve Phillips: [rna.rugby.union.sig@gmail.com](mailto:rna.rugby.union.sig@gmail.com)

Woodcraft – Graham Warner: [vicechair@rna-7area.org](mailto:vicechair@rna-7area.org)

If you are interested in forming a Sports and Comradeship Group please contact [cml@rnassoc.org](mailto:cml@rnassoc.org)

# MONDAY NIGHT FIRESIDE CHATS

■ For shipmates who are unaware, there is an ongoing a series of 'Fireside Chats' on subjects of Naval and wider maritime interest. The presentations are held on Monday evenings commencing at 1830 using 'Zoom'. All are welcome.

Meeting ID – 288 830 5105 Password – Shipmate (case sensitive) Or, click on the link [here](#)

\* Lecture subjects may change at short notice.

\*\* Shipmates, please note that the 'Fireside Chat' commences at 1830

Date	Presenter	Subject
Mon 9 June	Mike Milne	HMS Kelly and the Crete campaign
Mon 23 June	Emily Witcher	Serving RN Navigator
Mon 30 June	Craig Chapman	The Resurrected Pirate – George Lowther
Mon 7 July	Emma Jones	Type 31 Frigates – HMS Venturer
Mon 14 July	Gordon Meadows	TBC
Mon 21 July	Cdr Simon Cowan	TBC



# REASONS TO ATTEND YOUR AGM

## YOUR BEST CHANCE TO BE HEARD

If you have any concerns of branch/area life or want to propose changes to the association, then the AGM is the perfect opportunity for you to raise this with and in front of your fellow shipmates.



## TAKE CONTROL OF IMPORTANT DECISIONS

Remember, the Royal Naval Association is YOU, the members who have joined collectively. Your AGM is the perfect opportunity to take part in the decision making process



## REPRESENT YOUR BRANCH

Your voice and attendance matters; and the conference is the chance to take any issues from a local level to a National platform. Shipmates from all around the UK gather - ideally this is the ONE time your branch can stand up and be counted



## MORE THAN A MEETING

What happens in branches under the name of the Royal Naval Association is remarkable

A number of prizes are awarded at Conference for shipmates' contribution to the Association - These are presented during Conference - the only time of the year the RNA is ALL together

*COMRADESHIP*

*CONNECTION*

Comradeship is the lifeblood of our Association - friendships are secured by getting to know each other sharing experiences and making new memories

*COMMEMORATION*

Tradition, respect and honour  
We are all rightly proud of our Naval history and service; commemoration and ceremony is a huge part of the RNA's identity

**ONCE  
NAVY  
ALWAYS  
NAVY**

[royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://royal-naval-association.co.uk)





# BRANCH NEWS

## LONDONDERRY Branch

Londonderry Branch's 25th annual Battle of the Atlantic (BoA) and VE 80 Commemoration was launched in fine style on Thursday 15 May by the arrival of the Princess Royal at Ebrington Place, formerly HMS Sea Eagle.

The Princess was greeted by the Lord Lieutenant of the County Borough of Londonderry, Ian Crowe, who introduced Rear Admiral Steve McCarthy, the RN's Chief Naval Engineering Officer, Brig Andy Muddiman RM, Regional Commander for Scotland and Northern Ireland, and Cdr Tom Wardley Senior Naval Officer Northern Ireland.

The Princess was then escorted to the International Sailor Statue, where she was introduced to Capt Chris Peschke RCN, Naval Attaché to the Canadian High Commission in London, S/M Robert Buchanan, Chair No 12 Area (Ireland) and Londonderry Branch, 95-year-old S/M Eddie Lavery, past treasurer, Londonderry Branch, and S/M Lesley Buchanan, Branch Welfare Officer – S/M Eddie's carer for the day. S/M Buchanan gave an account of how the idea of the statue was conceived when he and S/M Eddie, accompanied by their wives, travelled to Halifax, Nova Scotia, for the BoA commemorations in 2006. The statue was unveiled by Prince Michael of Kent during the BoA Commemoration in 2013.

Her Royal Highness was then escorted into the Ebrington Hotel, where S/M Buchanan introduced her to assembled shipmates from the various branches that make up No 12 Area RNA.

S/M Buchanan also introduced some international visitors from Canada and Spain who had travelled especially to attend 80th Commemoration events. Cdr Tom Wardley then introduced some of the assembled Royal Navy personnel. The VVIP reception came to a close with the Lord Lieutenant thanking the Princess Royal for her visit and he invited S/M Robert Buchanan to present their royal guest with a framed photo of the International Sailor Statue.

Following the VVIP event, the Royal Navy team from HMS Hibernia reconfigured the hotel setup in preparation for a Royal Navy reception for industry and business leaders, an event hosted by Rear Admiral McCarthy, Brig Muddiman and Cdr Wardley. The third event on the Thursday was a meet and greet held in the Waterside RBL Club for the arriving international visitors, and others who had travelled to Londonderry for 80th Anniversary Commemoration events. Shipmates welcomed members of the Crow's Nest Officers Club in St



John's Newfoundland and a group from Canada's Naval Memorial Trust in Halifax, which was led by Cdr Gary Reddy RCN (rtd), the current CO of HMCS Sackville. Guests were treated to tots of Pusser's Rum, a selection of wines and a light supper. On Friday morning, 16 May, it was time to board the transport to Fort Dunree to commemorate the World War 1 Battle of the Atlantic campaign and the loss of the crew of HMS Laurentic. It was another beautiful sunny day in County Donegal, overlooking Lough Swilly – the home to the Royal Navy's Grand Fleet for a period during that conflict. Hosts for the day were the Ulster Canada Initiative (UCI), and visitors were welcomed by their Chair, Donny McNeill, originally from Newfoundland. The Chair of Fort Dunree, John McCarter, led the commemoration, assisted by the Chaplain of Londonderry Branch, Rev Canon David McBeth. Wreaths were laid at the Laurentic Memorial on behalf of the organisations represented on the day. On completion, refreshments were served in the Saldana Suite, named after HMS Saldana, which was lost with all hands in a storm off Lough Swilly on 4 December 1811.

Continued on page 27







The venue for Friday evening was Foyle College in Londonderry for a concert performed by the Royal Marines Band Scotland – a fantastic festival of music. On Saturday at noon, some visitors, guided by S/M Nigel Stott, were treated to a civic reception in the Mayor's Parlour, welcomed by the Mayor of Derry City and Strabane, Cllr Lilian Seenoi Barr. Saturday afternoon featured a council-led event on Ebrington Square based on re-enacting the surrender of the German submarines in Londonderry to Admiral Sir Max Horton in May 1945. That evening a BoA 80 Commemoration Dinner was held in the local Army Reserve Base, Caw Camp. VIPs included the Lord Lieutenant, Deputy Mayor Ald Darren Guy, Rear Admiral McCarthy, Capt Peschke, Cdr Reddy and other distinguished guests. Area and Branch standards were escorted into dinner to Heart of Oak, played by RM Band pianist L/Cpl Poppy Wehrle, who continued to entertain guests throughout dinner. On completion of dinner, S/M Buchanan read a letter of greetings received from King Charles, and then proposed the Loyal Toast. Rear Admiral McCarthy proposed a toast to all who served during the Battle of the Atlantic.

Guests then retired to the Mess for tea/coffee and other refreshments. On Sunday morning the Royal Marines Band led the parade from the RBL Club to All Saints Church Clooney for the Commemoration Service, during which 15 standards, led by No12 Area (Ireland) Standard Bearer S/M Alan Ashcroft, were presented at the altar. Music at the service was enhanced by an RM Band quintet wind section. Readings were done by Rear Admiral McCarthy, Capt Peschke and S/M Buchanan. The Newfie-Derry Convoy Bell was rung by S/M Jack Garfield during the Act of Remembrance and an RM Bugler played the Last Post and Reveille. S/M Frank Brown quoted Binyon's Ode. Wreaths were laid on behalf of Canada by Cdr Reddy, the Royal Navy by Rear Admiral McCarthy, the RAF, the RNA by S/M Bob Lindsay, Branch President, and the Merchant Navy by S/M Ivan Gillespie. On completion of the service, the RM Band led the parade back to the RBL Club with a march-past. On the saluting dais were the Vice Lord Lieutenant, Mr Alan Moore, Rear Admiral McCarthy, Capt Peschke, Hon Capt Alastair Adair



RN and Hon Capt Paul Little RN. On arrival at the RBL Club the parade was addressed by S/M Buchanan, who thanked all who turned out and called for a round of applause for the RM Band – there was a very enthusiastic response. The 80th Anniversary of VE Day and the end of the Battle of the Atlantic Commemoration concluded with a light lunch for all, courtesy of Londonderry Branch. The Shipmates of Londonderry Branch would like to take this opportunity to thank those people who assisted and supported the 80th Anniversary Commemoration, including the aforementioned VIP guests and Capt R J Gibson RLC | PSAO | 152 (North Irish) Regiment. Caw Campa and Shipmates from other branches in No 12 Area (Ireland).



### **HELSTON Branch**

Members of Helston branch manned a stall marking VE 80 during the Helston Flora Day outside the Inn & Still public house. The table was supplied by Craig, the landlord of the Inn & Still, where the branch holds its monthly meeting.

It was a successful day, reaching out to the community to tell them about the RNA and its objectives. "Apologies for the Jack Nicholson pose!" On the funny side, one boy thought they were veterans from World War 2. Do they look that old?



### BOGNOR REGIS Branch

On Saturday 31 May a Rededication service was held on Aldwick Bay beach, West Sussex, in honour of a brave RNR officer, Lt Walter Erskine Prior (pictured right).

The service, at the end of Dark Lane, was led by Rev Dr Alison Green, Chaplain to the University of Chichester, and also Bognor Regis branch.

Also in attendance were Cdr Craig Woolhead, the Commanding Officer of HMS Excellent, shipmates from Bognor Branch, members of T/S Sir Alec Rose (Bognor Regis Sea Cadets), and members of the public.

The service was held to commemorate the return of a plaque to the wall of Strange Gardens in memory of Lt Prior. Three days before Christmas, 22 December 1945, Lt Prior and a team of Naval ratings was called upon to inspect a British coastal protection mine which had slipped its moorings and was now resting against a breakwater on Aldwick Bay beach, having been washed ashore by atrocious weather conditions.

Having taken into consideration the danger the mine posed to the members of his crew and to members of public, Lt Prior ordered members of his crew and local civilian police officers to clear the

area of the public whilst he dealt with the mine alone, giving no thought to his own safety.

Sadly, while attempting to disarm the mine, it exploded and Lt Prior, who was 23 at the time and had volunteered for mine disposal training during the war, was badly injured, and died of those injuries shortly afterwards.

It was clear throughout the whole situation that Lt Prior's main concern was for the safety and wellbeing of the Naval ratings and members of the public.

The selfless bravery that he displayed that day is beyond words.



### EASTBOURNE Branch

At Eastbourne Branch's monthly meeting on 1 May, and with VE80 just a week off, shipmates took the opportunity to honour the memory and service of George Charles Thornton, the father of their shipmate Val Thornton.

George, who sadly crossed the bar five years ago, served in the Royal Navy during World War 2 and spent much of his service on Arctic convoys.

George was awarded the Arctic Star in 2013 by the then Mayor of Eastbourne Mike Thompson (pictured below).

Many of you will know that the Russian Federation has issued its



own medals to people who served on the Russian Convoys, to places such as Murmansk and Archangel, taking much-needed supplies to the Red Army.

George was one of those people, and towards the end of April this year Val received, on behalf of her father, the 80th anniversary commemorative medal from the Russian Ambassador in the UK.

George had previously been awarded the 70th and 75th Commemorative medals, and in 2014 he was awarded the Ushakov Medal, a solid silver, high-ranking Russian medal given mainly to Naval personnel for acts of courage and bravery.

S/M Val is pictured (right) at the meeting holding her

father's British medals and the 80th commemorative medal. With her is Eastbourne Branch Secretary, S/M Stuart Ramsden, who is holding the Ushakov medal.

The pictures (left) show George as a young man joining the Royal Navy and just before he joined his first ship, Flower-class corvette HMS Marigold HMS Marigold.

A brave man and we thank him for his service.







### GRANTHAM Branch

Here are some photos from Grantham Branch's VE 80 celebrations. Shipmates welcomed the local Vicar who gave a reading, and there were prayers and hymns. There was a raffle and an auction of a few items, and shipmates enjoyed a singalong featuring 1940s wartime songs. The buffet was enjoyed by all – cakes and additional sandwiches were made by members.



### LOSSIEMOUTH Branch

S/M Ian White, president of Lossiemouth Branch, was invited to represent the branch at a special service of remembrance at the town's market cross in memory of three airmen and eight civilians who died when a Wellington bomber crashed into a housing block on 20 May 1945, shortly after taking off from RAF Lossiemouth. Six members of the same family, including five children, were lost that day, so soon after VE day. The service was organised by the local Men's Shed and RAF Lossiemouth.



### GRANTHAM Branch

Lichfield Branch members ran a stand for over eight hours on Bank Holiday Monday last month. It was a very busy day, with five public ex-RN and ex-RM declaring an interest in joining Lichfield Branch. One chap, his wife declared, "has waited 40 years to 'spin some dits'" when asked if he would consider joining them. The person lives in Uttoxeter, so they gave him details of his local branch. All in all a successful day.



### MONMOUTH Branch

If you were not in the Blake theatre in Monmouth on the evening of 26 April you missed a treat!

The Band of His Majesty's Royal Marines Commando Training Centre RM put on a performance in support of Monmouth Branch.

The performance was attended by the Lord-Lieutenant of Gwent, Brig Robert Aitken, the Mayor of Monmouth, David Evans, and RNA General Secretary Capt Bill Oliphant, along with a full house of supporters, many of them shipmates. The event is a fundraiser for Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC), Woody's Lodge and Ross & Monmouth Se Cadet Corps/Royal Marines Cadets unit. When all the receipts were gathered in and the bills paid, organisers confirmed that the concert raised £6,000, with £2,000 going to each of the three charities.



### SPALDING Branch

On 8 May Spalding Branch had the honour of taking part in three key events to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day, joining the wider community in paying tribute to all those who served and sacrificed during World War 2. Shipmates were humbled by the support and appreciation shown by the people of South Holland, who stood alongside them to remember the fallen. The day began at 1045 with a flag-raising ceremony at South Holland District Council's offices. Shipmates mustered smartly as the Union Flag was raised by Council Chairman Cllr Andrew Woolf. The Branch extend their sincere thanks to SHDC and Cllr Woolf for their warm welcome. At 1:45pm, they gathered at the Peace Gardens and War Memorial in Ayscoughfee for a moving

Remembrance Service (below). Wreaths were laid by Cllr Woolf and S/M Yvonne Crawford. Prayers were led by the Association Padre. The final act of remembrance took place in the evening, when shipmates joined the village of Moulton for the symbolic lighting of the beacon - a tradition that has long marked moments of national significance and remembrance. The honour of lighting the beacon was bestowed upon Chairman S/M Richard Brown (right). As the beacon was lit, the faces of those gathered were illuminated not only by flame, but by shared gratitude and solemn reflection. Throughout the day, Spalding shipmates conducted themselves with the highest standards of Naval pride and discipline, honouring the fallen with quiet dignity and purpose. They are proud to have stood shoulder

to shoulder with the community in remembrance, and they were deeply touched by the warmth and respect shown in return.







## PORTSEA and PORTSMOUTH Branch

Yet another busy month for the branch, which saw good support from members at both social and formal events

Highlights included:

The Branch standard was paraded at the Portsmouth Lord Mayor-Making Ceremony, at which Chairman S/M Tom Frank and Vice Chairman S/M Paul Henty met up with Pompey's legendary former goalkeeper Alan Knight, who was awarded the Freedom of the City of Portsmouth. The outgoing Lord and Lady Mayoress and Consort are all active members of the Branch.

There was a good turnout at the Area 3 VE Day Celebration hosted by **Waterlooville Branch**. It is a fantastic clubhouse and well worth a visit – you will be made most welcome, as the Branch and Area 3 members were.

S/M Lee 'Bagsy' Baker was awarded a Gold Poppy Pin from the RBL Poppy Appeal Manager for the South West, Clare Peppiatt, for his sterling work collecting for the Poppy Appeal. Branch members were present at the Royal Marines Association Falklands 43 Memorial Service held at the Yomper Statue and the RM Remembrance Garden (yet another fantastic place to visit).

Also present was Cpl Peter Robinson RM, on whom the Yomper Statue was modelled.

Shipmates and members of the public were also out in force at the VE Day Service at Governors Green in Old Portsmouth, which was followed by the HMS Sheffield Memorial Service, also in Old Portsmouth.

Meanwhile, S/M Ted Hawkins was the star attraction at the Cornwell Court VE Day Party with his 'portable rum bar'!

Finally, members of the Branch enjoyed a great day out at Twickenham, basking in the glorious sunshine and in a Royal Navy victory.







### RNA RIDERS Branch

16th May 2025 greeted the 3rd Annual 'Deep In Cider' motorcycle camping weekend with blazing sunshine and a very friendly welcome from Tuckers Grave Cider pub. 15 RNA riders from all over England and Wales joined together to enjoy good ride-outs, good food and cider and, most importantly, excellent company. This year being slightly different as Mark Low, the event organiser, had very recently lost his father, Ted. Ted was an ex-Royal Marine Colour Sergeant who had spent his final months at Admiral Jellicoe House (AJH), Southsea, an RNBT Care and Nursing Home. Mark decided to use the weekend as a fundraiser for AJH.

Friday saw the group assemble, some staying in tents, some in camper vans and some in the pubs Air BnB accommodation. The first meet up at the pub garden revealed that there were a few more ex-Navy and serving Navy staying on the campsite, so the group grew quickly to over twenty in number.

The newbies being quickly and actively roped into the fund-raising philosophy of the weekend ☐

The first night established the ground rules for fund raising (basically anything that attracted attention was liable to a £5 fine, there would be £5 charge for joining the organised ride-outs and a £5 fine for not joining the same. There would also be a donated bottle of

Pussers Gunpowder proof up for raffling ☐).

That evening saw a formal tot time to toast the king, ourselves and those who had departed.

Despite the glorious sunny days, those in tents felt the overnight cold and were easily up and ready for the Saturday ride-out. This took us down through Shepton Mallet, Crewkerne to West Bay for lunch and coffee, then down the wonderful coast road to Portesham for some cross country, narrow roads up across the top of Dorchester, up to Yeovil and the Haynes Museum at Sparkford for another coffee before heading back to Tuckers for the debrief and supper. Tuckers have a band on in their barn most Fridays and Saturdays during the summer, so the entertainment was top line, even if some of the dance moves had distinctly originated in the 70's. Of note, some of those who had decided to relax at the

**Continued on page 33**





campsite instead of riding organised a small exped to explore the local river and pubs in Norton St Phillip. Others, new to rough country cider, spent the day sleeping!! Again, the night was chilly for those camping, but again, we set off on the Sunday ride-out. This ride, considerably shorter than Saturday's, saw the group take some of the most interesting roads in Somerset. We went to investigate a new café 'Quickshifter' (owned by an ex Royal Marine) in Wells. The food and welcome there was great. We along the Cheddar valley, up Cheddar Gorge, down Burrington Combe and arrived at Blagdon Lake for Ice Creams just before 500 or so charity bikers on the Distinguished Gentlemen's Ride came along for their Ice Creams!!! An amazing sight.

We then proceeded to the south of Bath via the old MOD Foxhill site so we could test the newer riders on the very steep Brassknocker Hill!!! A couple of bikes definitely took the exceptionally tight corners safely but just a wee bit wider than they expected!!

Sunday night saw the Rum raffle take place; 60 tickets being sold at the now routine £5 each. Highly appropriately the bottle was won by a serving member of the Navy, CPO Caterer 'Zippy' Wightman serving at HMNB Portsmouth. Zippy was one of those newbies roped into riding with us and supporting the fund- raising aims of the weekend.

Several new members of the RNA Riders Branch



have been enrolled as a result of this weekend, and even better, several serving bike riders have witnessed first-hand the camaraderie and ethos of the RNA. There was also much positive discussion (over good cider in the sunshine) around how to address current service recruiting and retention issues.

The weekend concluded for the core group on Monday morning. As in previous years Tuckers Grave have been really pleased to host us and continue to invite us back. Next year's event will cover Friday 15th May until Monday 18th May and will be at Tuckers Grave. Most importantly, Mark Low, accompanied by Dave Doran and Steve Robertson and their bikes, handed over a cheque for £1000 to Admiral Jellicoe House on Tuesday 20th May. This was a very impressive amount to be raised

amongst such a small group.

This weekend has now identified several local sites (museums and cafes) that would be of great interest to RNA motorists and camper enthusiasts. All would be welcome to next year's event.





## STOWMARKET Branch

The tranquil setting of the John Appleby Rose Garden in Bury St Edmunds was transformed into a place of solemn reflection and heartfelt tribute on 4 May as more than 100 people gathered for a special Dedication Service to honour those who have served in the Royal Navy.

The event marked the unveiling of a new memorial which now stands proudly alongside existing tributes to the Army, RAF, and American military within the garden.

The memorial is the result of a campaign led by Stowmarket Branch, who also funded it as a lasting tribute to the service and sacrifice of RN personnel.

The service drew RNA shipmates from across the region, including branches from **Stowmarket, Beccles, Colchester, Cromer, Harwich, Ipswich, and Norwich**. They were joined by distinguished guests such as Cdre Robert Bellfield RN (representing Lady Clare, Lord Lieutenant for Suffolk), the Mayoress of Bury St Edmunds, local councillors, the CO and XO of HMS Vengeance, and the MP for Bury St Edmunds and Stowmarket.

Representatives from across the Armed Forces and support communities were also present, including Suffolk's Armed Forces Commissioner Andy Smith, Col Mark Wenham of the Royal Anglian Regiment, Sqn Ldr Chris Collins of RAF Honington, members of the US military from RAF Lakenheath and Mildenhall, the RBL, Sea Cadets, RAF Cadets, and numerous family members and supporters of Royal Navy personnel.



The service began with the march-on of Standard Bearers from the RNA, RMA, RBL, and cadet units under the direction of S/M Jason Sewell of Stowmarket Branch. Attendees were warmly welcomed by S/M Chris Faulkner, Chair of RNA Area 5, before Revd Canon Tiffer Robinson of St Mary's, Bury St Edmunds, and Revd Richard Stretch of St Peter's and St Mary's, Stowmarket, led the service.

A poignant two-minute silence was observed, framed by the haunting call of the Still on the bosun's whistle and the uplifting Carry On, piped by a Sea Cadet from TS Bury St Edmunds. A pledge was read by S/M Julie Turner of Stowmarket Branch, the Exhortation and the Kohima Epitaph were delivered by Stowmarket S/Ms Andy Tween and Katrine Sallows. A highlight was the ceremonial passing of the Standard of the now-decommissioned Bury St Edmunds Branch to the Sea Cadet Unit. This symbolic gesture, performed by S/M Pete Chivers, RNA National Vice



Chairman, ensures the legacy and spirit of the branch and Association continue through the next generation.

After the service, attendees gathered at St Mary's Church for a buffet and a tot of rum, where a toast was raised to "Absent Friends and Loved Ones." The day concluded at the Dog and Partridge pub in Bury St Edmunds, where the bonds of shared service and community were celebrated in true Naval tradition. Thanks to the generosity of those present, £203.77 was raised for Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity, supporting their work with serving personnel, veterans, and families. A heartfelt thank you goes out to everyone who organised, participated in, and attended this memorable day. Bravo Zulu to all involved for a fitting tribute to our Royal Navy.





# OBITUARY

## S/M WILFRED OSBORNE

It is with great sadness that **Dorchester Branch** reports that their Life Vice President and founding chairman, S/M Wilfred George Edwin Osborne, has crossed the bar at the grand age of 103. Known to shipmates as George, he was known to many in the wider naval community as Ossie.

CPO Osborne served in the Royal Navy for almost 24 years, throughout World War 2 during which he saw action against Bismarck and Scharnhorst.

He was on board cruiser HMS Sheffield during the sinking of the Bismarck and took part in the Victory Parade in Paris in 1944.

George was awarded the 1939-45 Star, the Atlantic Star (with Arctic Star), the African Star, the Italy Star, the 1939-45 War Medal, the Malta Medal, the Russian Medal, the General Service Medal (Minesweeping), the Coronation Medal, and the Good Conduct Medal.

Highlights of his career include being promoted to CPO by Lord Louis Mountbatten whilst serving in HMS Surprise when it was acting as the Royal Yacht.

In 2002 the local hospital radio recorded an interview with him about the Navy, Mountbatten and the RNA, and a tape of the interview was placed in the Dorset Records office. The following year the Imperial War Museum recorded George's recollections of his Service career for the Museum Archive.

George, who was Branch Chairman for almost 20 years, was born in the village of Goudhurst in Kent, a rural, agricultural area, but his mother wanted something better for her son, so on his 16th birthday she took him to the Navy recruiting office in Tunbridge Wells where George enlisted.

He started at HMS Ganges on 28 March 1938, then went to Chatham before joining heavy cruiser Sheffield in August 1939.

When war was declared on 3 September 1939, Sheffield was at sea and was tasked to carry out northern patrols between Iceland and Greenland until March 1940 when the ship was deployed to escort convoys to and from Norway, landing and evacuating troops in April. In May 1941, having been on Mediterranean convoys, Sheffield joined the Home Fleet in the hunt for Bismarck in the North Atlantic. George was then 19 years old.

Sheffield was soon in the thick of it, and nearly sunk by both sides – Bismarck fired on his ship and if the trajectory had been a bit different he would have been a goner. The cruiser was also mistaken for Bismarck by Swordfish from HMS Ark Royal – fortunately the torpedoes they fired failed to do any damage.

George told this story at a presentation in Dorchester Town Hall on the 70th anniversary of the sinking of Bismarck. By remarkable coincidence, in the



audience was the widow of the Swordfish pilot who identified Sheffield and called off the attack.

Sheffield subsequently served on Russian Convoys – on her first trip the temperature fell to -45° C. She was also involved in the search for German battleship Tirpitz, then it was back to the Northern Patrol.

On 4 March 1942 the ship detonated a mine off the north coast of Iceland, subsequently undergoing repair and refit until June, during which time George joined the RN Barracks Chatham for sentry duty. He rejoined his ship in January 1943, and was straight back on Arctic convoys.

Sheffield was back in dock at a Clyde shipyard the following month having sustained extensive structural damage in appalling weather during passage - the top of A Turret was completely removed – and did not sail again until the summer.

In June she left for the Mediterranean to escort a troopship convoy to Algeria for landings, and was damaged in collision with a minesweeper. She was then deployed in the South West Approaches to cover the passage of convoys to Gibraltar for military operations in Sicily, and was also deployed in the Mediterranean. At the end of November the ship returned to the UK, expecting Christmas in harbour, but was diverted to Scapa Flow and rejoined the Home Fleet for Russian Convoy duties. By now George was a gun-layer in A Turret.

On 23 December the ship sailed from Kola Inlet to provide cruiser cover for incoming convoy JW55A and



return Convoy RA55A, and on Boxing Day was ordered by CinC Home Fleet to close convoy JW55A that was under imminent threat of attack.

Sheffield obtained a radar detection of German battleship Scharnhorst and was soon in action with HM Ships Belfast and Norfolk against the German, and obtained hits with the second salvo but had to disengage when bearings of the port inner shaft were damaged, reducing her maximum speed to 22 knots.

The ship returned to Birkenhead in January 1944 for repairs and then rejoined the Home Fleet for Fleet duties in the North Sea and North West Approaches.

At the end of March Sheffield sailed from Scapa Flow with a powerful escort force and destroyer screen to provide cover for passage of outward Russian Convoy JW58 and return Convoy RA58 before detaching for air attacks on German battleship Tirpitz on 3 April. In mid-April she escorted Escort Type aircraft carriers during A/S operations in the North West Approaches before undergoing refit at Greenock.

Operations off Norway were followed by a passage to the USA for refit in Boston – though not for George, by now a Leading Seaman; he was drafted back to the RN Barracks at Chatham.

George completed a 2nd Class gunnery course in November 1944, then went to France to attend the Victory parade in Paris on Armistice Day.

He later served in light cruiser HMS Arethusa and minesweepers.

George was drafted to join HMS Aisne at Portland in November 1947. Changing trains at Dorchester on a damp, foggy morning, his first impression was "what a bloody dump!" Little did he realise that he would meet his future wife and spend all of his civilian life living in Dorchester...

In 1958 George was on the Staff of the Chatham Field Gun Crew as the Buffer responsible for the gun, gun carriage and the limber – his abiding memories of those days was arriving at Earl's Court in the morning with a hangover and having to endure "the smell of all those bloody horses!"

George left the Navy in 1962 and within two years, having worked for British Railways as a booking clerk and as an insurance agent for Pearl Assurance, he was back in uniform as a postman.

He was to stay with the Post Office for the rest of his working life, becoming a counter clerk in Weymouth and finally a clerical officer in the admin department at the Marabout Barracks working on sub- postmaster audits. George played cricket for St George's and Stratton at the weekends, and was also a handy darts player.

Gardening was another passion, and he also had an allotment, becoming their representative on the allotment committee. It was through this association with the Town Council that he became the Town Beadle for a number of years.

On 4 January 1965, his son Maurice stood on the up Platform of Dorchester West about to embark on his Naval career. His mother hugged him gave him a kiss and said "Take care"; George said, "Son, you don't have to go if you don't want to". Maurice said "I'm going"; George shook his hand, gave him a hug and said, "Good luck".

In October 1998, the late John Antell, then Mayor of Dorchester, proposed the setting up a branch of the RNA in Dorchester, and John asked George to be chairman – George was an ideal candidate as he had served on the Algerines Association's Committee, becoming Assistant General Secretary and then General Secretary. He actively supported his local group of the Algerines for over ten years until its de-commissioning.



A chance meeting, whilst on a poppy appeal collection opposite the Cenotaph, with a group of children from Sunninghill school, who were taken in by his row of medals, led to a request from their teacher for George to visit the school to talk about his war experiences. He readily agreed, and it became an annual event for him to talk with the children in Year 7 about the war.

George, as always, led from the front, and the Dorchester branch flourished under his leadership. He was chairman for 20 years and much was achieved by the branch. The highlight of what George achieved was in 2005 when he organised a lunch in Dorchester for veterans, including Land Girls, to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. The lunch was funded by generous donations, arranged by George, from individuals, businesses and other organisations in the Dorchester area.

George's passion for remembering what veterans had achieved in World War 2 also extended to remembering our allies. Money remaining in a memorial fund was used to purchase two Benches and two picnic tables for a Visitors Centre in 2007.

One bench was dedicated to the American and Commonwealth Forces who were based in the Dorchester area just before D-Day 1944. The second bench was donated by Dorchester RNA and the HMS Surprise Association.

After his wife's passing in 2000, George's interests keep him going, and he embarked on a full world cruise. With the family's help and that of his neighbours, Brian and Pauline Walbrin, he retained his independence until a fall a few weeks prior to his 102nd birthday made him realise that he could no longer cope alone and he asked to go into a home.

His last 15 months were spent in Wolfeton Manor where his character shone through. The family are grateful to the staff for their excellent care of him. I am sure they will miss his requests at bathtime and his singing. Not always the right words and sometimes not the right song. George passed away peacefully at Wolfeton on 8 March 2025; his age by far outweighing any score he achieved at cricket...



HMS Penelope arrives in Gibraltar after enduring intense Axis air attacks, demonstrating how she got the nickname HMS Pepperpot. See 1 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © IWM (A 8602)

## JUNE SWINGING THE LAMP

**'Swinging the Lamp' events are drawn, by permission, from the definitive Naval history reference book *The Royal Navy Day by Day*, written by Honorary Shipmate Lawrie Phillips and published by The History Press ([www.thehistorypress.co.uk](http://www.thehistorypress.co.uk)). The book is issued to all HM Ships and Establishments and is 'probably one of the most well-thumbed and valued books that Captains of HM Ships possess'. It is currently available online for around £45 (search ISBN number 978-0750982665)**

### 1 June 1943

Light cruiser HMS Penelope, along with destroyers Paladin and Petard, bombarded the Pantelleria on 1 June 1943. The bombardment of the Mediterranean island was a precursor to landings by the British 1st Infantry Division. The Arethusa-class cruiser, which acquired the name HMS Pepperpot as she was so heavily punctured by bomb and shell fragments, was hit once but suffered little damage. Penelope's involvement was part of a wider operation ('Corkscrew' to take the Italian island, which lay around 60 miles south-west of Sicily and was an essential milestone in the plan to invade the larger island (Operation Husky)). From mid-May warships, bombers and fighter-bombers pounded Pantelleria with a view to

taking the island and preventing Axis forces using it as an air base to support operations over Sicily. The pummelling took out radar installations and damaged or destroyed nearly half the gun batteries, but hopes that bombardment alone would do the trick proved unrealistic – or so the Allies thought. Accordingly, the planned amphibious invasion went ahead on 11 June, but as the first British commandos went ashore they found that the 12,000-strong Italian garrison had been given permission by Rome to surrender that very morning, and the landings were thus unopposed. The nearby islands of Lampedusa and Linosa followed suit in the next few days, and the way was clear for Operation Husky to proceed the following month. Penelope, a product of Harland and Wolff in Belfast and commissioned in November 1936, continued to play an active role in the area, bombarding targets in Sicily during Husky. Later that year she also provided gunfire support for landings on mainland Italy, and also served out of Haifa and Gibraltar, the latter in a (successful) hunt for German blockade runners. On 15 February 1944 she left Naples to return to the Anzio area, but was struck by a torpedoes, 15 minutes apart, from German submarine U-410. Almost 420 men went down with their ship, with just over 200 sailors being rescued.

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### 2 June 1981

Light aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal was launched by the Queen Mother on 2 June 1981. The ship was the third and last of the Invincible-class through deck cruisers to be ordered, a description that was a result of an original concept as escort cruisers to work with the ultimately-cancelled new class of large aircraft carrier. By the time the ship was launched at Swan Hunter on the Tyne the class was being formally referred to as aircraft carriers. Ark Royal was originally earmarked as HMS Indomitable (following the naming pattern of her older sisters Invincible and Illustrious) but was eventually renamed after the fourth Ark Royal, as that popular ship's withdrawal had left its mark on public opinion. At an initial 22,000 tons she was slightly larger than her sisters, and often assumed the role of Fleet Flagship while in commission. She saw service in the Bosnian War in 1993 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003, and took part in the somewhat unusual evacuation of tourists stranded in Europe by the eruption of an Icelandic volcano in 2010, which grounded flights around the continent for periods of up to eight days at a time. Following a final overseas visit to Hamburg in November 2010 the ship returned to Portsmouth, and she was formally decommissioned on 11 March 2011, some five years earlier than originally planned because of cuts to the defence budget. Plans to reuse her as a museum ship, a hospital ship, a static helipad on the Thames or even a hotel, casino or sunken artificial reef all came to nothing, and she was towed from Portsmouth on 20 May 2013 bound for a Turkish scrapyard.

### 3 June 1805

Stone frigate HMS Diamond Rock was surrendered to the French in the face of overwhelming odds on 3 June 1805 – though not without a fight. The rock is a basalt island that juts 175m high out of the sea close to the main port on the southern coast of Martinique

in the Caribbean. Its strategic position on the sea lane between Martinique and Saint Lucia meant that British warships blockading the area in the early 19th Century took a closer look, particularly the schooner Ma Sophie, which had been captured in December 1803 by HMS Centaur. The former privateer was set to work patrolling the strait between Diamond Rock and Martinique, and Ma Sophie's commander Lt William Donnett frequently visited the uninhabited island to gather a green plant that helped prevent scurvy amongst his crew. Between December 1803 and February 1804, when conditions were calm, the Royal Navy crew managed to transfer two 18pdr cannon ashore and haul them to the top of the rock, where rudimentary fortifications and a garrison were built. With around 120 British sailors manning the island, it was formally commissioned as HMS Diamond Rock as a sloop-of-war on 7 February, and further strengthened with a 24pdr cannon in a cave half-way up, two more at the base of the rock and a 24pdr carronade covering the only landing site. At some time during this process Ma Sophie was destroyed in an explosion, killing all but one of her crew. HMS Diamond Rock proved an austere (but stable) unit – ratings slept in caves, officers in tents, livestock was kept to supplement the spinach-like greens that grew naturally and supplies were hauled up from supply boats by a system of pulleys. A rudimentary hospital was created in a cave near sea level, and passing Royal Navy ships were obliged to show due respect to the island as they would to a more conventional warship. At one point a disgruntled Martinique slave revealed to the British that the French were planning to build a gun battery on the coast to attack the rock, so a small British landing party went ashore, walked to the local plantation house and seized the only French engineer on Martinique, as well as a party of soldiers, and whisked them away to captivity. With Diamond Rock commanding the entrance to Fort-de-France, the main port on Martinique, French

shipping was forced to give the rock a wide berth, making them vulnerable to other blockading British warships. This continued for a year and a half, with French attempts to take the rock failing – until mid-May 1805, when a 16-strong combined Franco-Spanish war fleet under Admiral Villeneuve (the fleet that would later form the core of the enemy fleet at Trafalgar) began a blockade of Diamond Rock. Having cut British supply lines, the French actually landed on the rock on 31 May, though they were trapped in sea-level caves for a period until the British garrison, short of water and ammunition and under

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**Newly-built HMS Illustrious sails past HMS Ark Royal on the Tyne on 18 June 1982. Ark Royal was being fitted out by Swan Hunter at the time. See 2 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Crown copyright reproduced under delegated authority from The Keeper of Public Records. Image: IWM (SFPU-ILL-CN-5058-06)**



fierce bombardment from French 74-gun warships, surrendered to a far-superior force on 3 June. The 110-strong British garrison lost two men killed and one was wounded, the French are thought to have had between 50-60 dead and wounded, and lost three gunboats. British prisoners were repatriated a few days later, and a subsequent court-martial exonerated the defenders of Diamond Rock for the loss of their 'ship' and praised them for their plucky defence. Diamond Rock was recaptured by the British in February 1809 as part of the ongoing Napoleonic Wars, but was handed back to France in 1815 as part of a deal that saw Martinique returned to French control.

#### 4 June 1943

HMS Truculent sank brand-new submarine U-308 in the Norwegian Sea off the Faeroes on 4 June 1943. The T-class boat was launched by Vickers Armstrong at Barrow on 12 September 1942, and went on to sink nine enemy vessels before peace was declared. Initially based at Lerwick, Truculent set out for her first war patrol off Northern Norway on 15 February 1943, and continued to prowl cold northern waters on patrols until she sank her first victim, U-308. The U-boat, launched at Lubeck just weeks after Truculent first hit the water, was at 860 tons little more than half the displacement of the British boat. She set out on her first war patrol from Kiel on 31 May, three days before Truculent left Shetland on her fourth patrol. Their paths crossed far to the north of the Faeroes in the early afternoon of 4 June, when Truculent spotted U-308 three or four miles distant. Truculent dived and attacked with six torpedoes, two of which ripped into the U-boat, causing her to rapidly sink with all 44 men on board. Truculent's next two patrols were far out into the Atlantic and in the Bay of Biscay; the seventh proved significant when she towed midget submarine X6 to the Altenfjord in September 1943 and the little vessel went on to cause German battleship Tirpitz serious damage. Two months later Truculent was on her way to Trincomalee via Gibraltar, Beirut, Port Said, Aden and Colombo, starting her eighth war patrol on 8 February 1944. Three more patrols followed, all in the northern Indian Ocean, and she sank eight enemy ships, the majority Japanese, including an Army transport and merchantman 'hell ship' Harugiku Maru, which unknown to the submariners was carrying more than 700 Allied prisoners of war, of which nearly 200 died in the sinking. Truculent survived the war and continued in service, but on 12 January

1950, following post-refit trials, the submarine was struck by Swedish tanker Divina in the Thames Estuary, the collision being caused by confusion over the lights borne by the Swedish vessel. Truculent quickly sank, and it is thought most of her crew survived the accident but were swept away and died in the freezing river. A total of 64 men died, including some dockyard workers; 15 men were picked up by Divina and a further five by a Dutch ship. The submarine's loss led to the development of a formal Port of London control system, and the introduction of a highly-visible white steaming light on the bows of British submarines, known as the 'Truculent light'.

#### 5 June 1916

Armoured cruiser HMS Hampshire was sunk by a mine off Orkney on 5 June 1916 while on passage to Russia with a top-level military delegation on board. The 11,000-ton cruiser, launched on the Tyne by Armstrong Whitworth on 24 September 1903, spent some time in reserve and the Mediterranean before joining the China Station at Wei Hai Wei, from where she hunted German commerce raiders on the outbreak of hostilities. At the end of 1914 she was assigned to the Grand Fleet, and was part of the 2nd Cruiser Squadron at the Battle of Jutland, though she played a very minor role in the action. Just days later, she was given the task of carrying the British Secretary of State for War, Field Marshal Lord Kitchener, to Arkhangelsk in Russia on a diplomatic mission. She sailed from Scapa Flow into the teeth of a gale on the afternoon of 5 June 1916, and as her two escort destroyers struggled in the heavy seas it was decided to send them back to harbour as it was very unlikely German submarines would be active in such conditions. Shortly before 2000 that evening, around two miles west of Orkney, Hampshire struck a mine laid a week before by U-75, blowing a hole in her hull forward of her bridge. As she began to sink boats were lowered, but in the gale-force winds most of them were smashed against the cruiser's hull. A total of 737 men were lost with the ship, including Kitchener and his entire staff; a dozen sailors managed to struggle ashore on Carley floats. Rumours swirled that the cruiser was carrying a significant amount of gold, perhaps as a loan to the Russian government, but there has never been official confirmation. The sinking, and the loss of Kitchener was a blow to British morale, following so close on the heels of the inconclusive clash of the great naval fleets at Jutland.

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**HMS Truculent under way at Barrow-in-Furness.  
See 4 June. Image from the Imperial War  
Museum collection © Image: © IWM (FL 8671)**







**HMS Hampshire. See 5 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © The rights holder (Q 75301)**

#### **6 June 1779**

Post-ship HMS Daphne captured the American privateer Oliver Cromwell on 6 June 1779 during the American Revolutionary War. The 430-ton Sphinx-class sixth rate, which initially carried 20 guns, was launched at Woolwich in 1776, one of a class of ten such vessels built in the Royal Dockyards, and was serving on the East Coast of North America when she spotted privateer Oliver Cromwell on 6 June 1779. Oliver Cromwell, a 300-ton, 20-gun corvette, was the largest ship in the Connecticut State Navy, and had captured two British ships the previous year. On 6 June she was off Sandy Hook, New Jersey, when Daphne, along with HMS Delaware (a frigate captured from the Americans two years before) and the privateer Union, showed up. The battle raged for several hours until Oliver Cromwell was forced to strike her colours. The ship was fitted out locally as the Restoration immediately following the battle, then formally bought by the Royal Navy later the same year and renamed HMS Loyalist. Her Royal Navy career was not lengthy; after taking some prizes, she was captured by the French in August 1781 on the Chesapeake River, and she entered French service as Loyaliste, though by the end of the year she had been presented to the Americans, bringing her career full circle. HMS Daphne, which was in French hands between January 1795 and December 1797, was sold in May 1802.

#### **7 June 1915**

Flt Sub Lt Reginald Warneford won the Victoria Cross for destroying a Zeppelin near Ghent on 7 June 1915 – the first VC to be won by the Royal Naval Air Service (RNAS). Warneford was born in Darjeeling, India, on 15 October 1891, where his father was a railway engineer. He was brought to England while still very young and attended

school in Stratford-upon-Avon, but then returned to India with his family. After school he joined the British-India Steam Navigation Company, and was in Canada, awaiting passage back to India, when war broke out. Warneford sailed to Britain instead and signed up, first for the Army, then to the RNAS to train as a pilot. He completed his training in February 1915 (his instructors noting both his high level of skill and his tendency to over-confidence) and after a brief spell with 2 Wing in Kent he joined 1 Wing on the coast of Belgium, his first operational unit, on 7 May 1915. The following month saw him prove his mettle in ground attacks as well as aerial combat, so much so that he was given a free hand and his own aircraft on a roving commission. On 17 May he encountered Zeppelin L-39 as it set out

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**Flt Sub Lt Reginald Warneford. See 7 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (HU 127072)**

to raid Britain, but his machine-gun attack did not stop the airship, which climbed out of range. He was more successful on 7 June, when he was on patrol in his French Morane-Saulnier Type L monoplane. Warneford spotted Zeppelin L-37 near the Belgian coast and attacked, managing to evade its defensive gunfire before flying above it and dropping six 20lb Hale bombs, one of which set the airship on fire. The German craft crashed onto a convent school near Ghent, killing eight of its crew, as well as two nuns in the school. Warneford's aircraft was flipped over by the blast from the Zeppelin, stalling the engine and forcing the Naval pilot to glide down behind enemy lines. He spent more than half an hour tinkering with the engine before he got it restarted, and took off just as German troops turned up to see what was going on (he reportedly told the Germans to "give my regards to the Kaiser!") His exploits won him the Victoria Cross, but he did not live long enough to receive the medal in person. Ten days after downing the Zeppelin, and on the day he received the Legion d'honneur from French Army Commander-in-Chief General Joffre, Warneford took a test flight in an aircraft he was tasked with delivering to the RNAS at Veurne. An American journalist flew as Warneford's passenger, but shortly after take-off the wings collapsed and the aircraft disintegrated, throwing both men from their seats. The journalist died instantly, and Warneford succumbed to his serious injuries on the way to hospital. He was buried at Brompton Cemetery in London, with thousands attending the funeral procession of one of the first military aviation heroes.

#### 8 June 1944

Frigate HMS Lawford was sunk by German aircraft off Juno Beach shortly after D-Day. Lawford was an American-built 1,160-ton Captain-class frigate, launched at Boston, Massachusetts, in August 1943 and commissioned into the Royal Navy in November under the Lend-Lease scheme. She was converted

to a headquarters ship for the Normandy Landings in June 1944, which involved removing her aft 3in gun, extending her superstructure to provide more accommodation and providing a much more powerful radio and aerial fit. She oversaw the activities of Assault Group J1 at Juno Beach on 6 June, but her brief career came to an end just two days later in the Bay of the Seine when she was hit by either a bomb or possibly a rudimentary guided missile, the Henschel Hs 293, in the early hours of the morning. She sank quickly in more than 20 metres of water, and 37 members of her ship's company died in the attack.

#### 9 June 1931

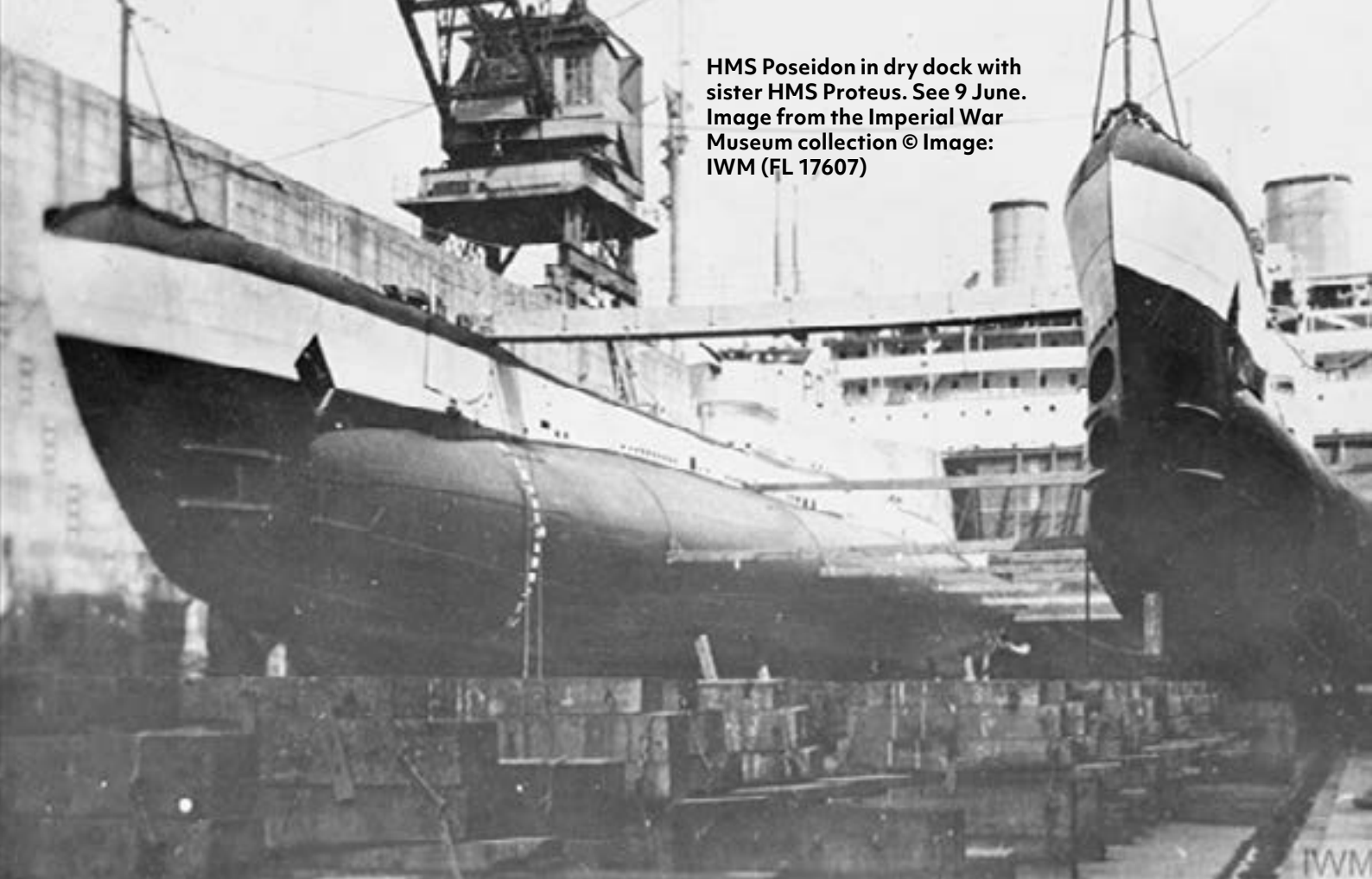
Submarine HMS Poseidon was lost in a collision with SS Yuta off Wei Hai Wei in Northern China on 9 June 1931 – the first time DSEA (Davis Submerged Escape Apparatus) was used operationally. Poseidon was built by Vickers Shipbuilding at Barrow and launched on 22 August 1929 as part of the Parthian class. After commissioning she was assigned to the 4th Submarine Flotilla, based in the Far East and operating in and around the Yellow Sea. Shortly after midday on 9 June 1931 Poseidon was exercising on the surface with HMS Marazion, a minesweeper converted to submarine tender, around 20 miles off Wai-Hei-Wei, a pocket of territory with a port leased from China. Despite good conditions and as series of manoeuvres in an attempt to avoid each other, Poseidon collided with the Chinese merchantman SS Yuta and sank within two minutes, although more than 30 of her crew of around 50 who were in the centre section of the boat managed to scramble up the fin and jump clear before she went down. She settled on the sea bed, some 40 metres down, and a number of Royal Navy vessels nearby steamed in to join the rescue operation, including aircraft carrier HMS Hermes and cruiser HMS Berwick. Poseidon had been fitted with DSEA equipment – a closed-circuit oxygen breathing system introduced

**HMS Lawford pictured at Liverpool in February 1944, four months before she was sunk. See 8 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (A 21818)**

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HMS Poseidon in dry dock with sister HMS Proteus. See 9 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (FL 17607)

to the Royal Navy two years earlier – and eight men managed to escape from the forward section of the boat, although two failed to surface and a third man died shortly after ascending. A further 18 men died trapped in the sunken submarine, which was secretly salvaged by the Chinese more than 40 years later.

#### 10 June 1941

Patrol vessel HMS Pintail was sunk by a mine off the Humber Estuary on 10 June 1941. The Kingfisher-class vessel, based at Harwich, was escorting a coastal convoy which had arrived off the Humber Estuary when one of the merchant ships, SS Royal Scot, set off an acoustic mine and sank. Pintail hurried over to rescue survivors but also detonated a mine and quickly disappeared below the waves, taking her Commanding Officer and 54 of his ship's company with her. Despite the violence of the explosion, more than 20 sailors survived, and were picked up by two destroyers, one British and one Norwegian. Pintail had been built on the Clyde by William Denny and Bros at Dumbarton, and commissioned shortly after the war began. The convoy she was escorting in June 1941, FN44, had sailed from Southend, on the Thames Estuary, bound for Methil on the Firth of Forth, and was one of the 1,660 such convoys that ran from the first days of the war through to VE Day.

#### 11 June 1930

Three Rainbow-class submarines were launched in one day by Vickers Armstrong at Barrow on 11 June 1930, two of which failed to survive the war. Rainbow-class submarines were successors to Parthian-class boats, and at 2,060 tons were designed for long-range patrols, particularly on foreign stations. HMS Regulus spent

much of her operational life in the Far East with the 4th Submarine Flotilla based in Hong Kong, but moved to the Mediterranean and the 1st Squadron Flotilla in 1940 and was sunk by a mine in the Straits of Otranto in late November or early December 1940 with her entire crew of 55 – she was marked down as overdue on 6 December when she failed to return to base on that day. HMS Regent's career closely followed that of Regulus. She too was sent to the China Station, and like sister boat Rover she was on patrol when war broke out in September 1939. She completed three war patrols from Singapore and visited Hong Kong before sailing with her sisters to the Mediterranean via Colombo and Aden. She began her fourth war patrol, out of Alexandria in Egypt, in August 1940, notching up a number of successes in attacks on Italian shipping in the eastern Med over a further 10 patrols, the last of which was from Gibraltar. In early 1942 she sailed to England, then crossed the Atlantic to Philadelphia in the United States for a refit – a journey fraught with difficulties. She lost depth control on two occasions, and also suffered engine problems which required a five-day visit to the Azores. The day after she resumed her passage she narrowly escaping an attack by submarine HMS Clyde, which was unaware her compatriot was passing through the area. After her refit and a spell off the east coast of America on trials and defect rectification she returned to the Mediterranean. She managed two further patrols, during the second of which she was lost with all 63 of her crew off the coast of Italy, probably having struck a mine on or close to 19 April. The first indication that she had sunk came on 1 May when the body of a British sailor, in DSEA apparatus, was washed ashore near Brindisi. Three further bodies were washed ashore in the following month. The final boat of the

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Rainbow class launched on 11 June 1930 was HMS Rover, which again started her career in the Far East, first at Hong Kong, then at Singapore, from where she sailed for patrol on 31 August 1939 which became her first war patrol just days later. She conducted three further patrols, and extensive exercises, in the area before a refit in Singapore and passage to Aden then the Mediterranean at Alexandria. Rover completed six further patrols before being ordered to Souda Bay in Crete where heavy cruiser HMS York, damaged in the Battle of Crete in April 1941, was being patched up. Rover provided electrical power for the ship's systems, particularly her anti-aircraft guns, but the submarine suffered bomb damage (a smashed battery and holed hull) and had to be towed away, first to Alexandria where she was patched up, then Port Said and Aden, and ultimately to Singapore for a permanent repair (which had to be completed in Bombay when the Japanese advance threatened the British territory). She then operated out of Trincomalee, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka), mainly escorting convoys, and did not get the opportunity to carry out further attacks on enemy shipping. She was sold to South African scrapyard Joubert of Durban after the war, and scrapped on 30 July 1946.

#### 12 June 1924

An official dinner was held on board flagship HMS Hood in Honolulu on 12 June 1924, the evening before the Special Service Squadron (SSS) departed Hawaii for Canada. The SSS, a powerful flotilla of warships led by battlecruisers HM Ships Hood and Repulse, had sailed from Devonport in November 1923 on the Empire Cruise, a circumnavigation that was designed to both support nations of the British Empire and demonstrate to the rest of the world the power of the Royal Navy. Ports were visited in Africa (including Sierra Leone, Cape Town and Mombasa), Asia (including Singapore), Australia (including Fremantle, Adelaide, Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane), New Zealand (Dunedin and Auckland), the United States and Canada, with the visit to Honolulu scheduled as a refuelling stop after the long Pacific crossing. It was also, after 190 days of steaming, the first port which the Squadron visited that was not part of the British Empire – and a bit of a shock to the system for British sailors, as the United States was a dry country at the time and SSS commanders

declared an alcohol ban out of respect to their hosts (though Prohibition was not quite as restrictive as it seemed – Royal Navy personnel soon found that most Americans could lay their hands on supplies of alcohol if required, of varying quality...). The Squadron's first evening in Pearl Harbor, 6 June, featured a formal dance which drew some 3,000 people, and a full programme of parades, social gatherings, sports contests and entertainment followed, ending with the dinner on board Hood. The British squadron sailed the following morning, escorted out of harbour by American seaplanes, and spent the following week at sea, using the time to exercise both day and night, until they reached British Columbia. The SSS subsequently headed south to the Panama Canal via San Francisco (the light cruisers continued to South America, with visits including Valparaíso, Buenos Aires, Montevideo and Rio de Janeiro), re-entering the Atlantic and visiting the east coast of Canada before returning to Britain in September 1924.

#### 13 June 1943

Destroyer HMS Nubian received the surrender of the island of Linosa, west of Malta, on 13 June 1943. Nubian was a powerful 2,600-ton Tribal-class vessel, launched at Woolston by Thornycroft just before Christmas 1937, and she saw action in several key moments of World War 2, including the Norwegian Campaign in May 1940, Matapan (March 1941), and Crete (May 1941), during which she was struck by a bomb which blew part of her stern away, killing seven of her ship's company. Though her rudder was destroyed, her propellers were undamaged and she managed to steam back to Alexandria at speeds up to 22 knots, accompanied by destroyer HMS Jackal, but had to move on to Bombay in August for full repairs, which were completed at the end of October 1942. Back with the 14th Destroyer Flotilla in November 1942 she was quickly back in action. On 11 June 1943 she was present at the formal surrender of the Italian island of Pantellaria, the following day another island, Lampedusa, followed suit, and the hat-trick was completed on 13 June when she arrived at Linosa with cruiser HMS Newfoundland and destroyer HMS Troubridge, and found the small Italian garrison ready to surrender. Nubian landed a shore party which formally accepted the surrender, then destroyed anti-aircraft guns and took almost

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**HMS Pintail under way after escorting a convoy to Britain. See 10 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection © Image: IWM (A 7577)**





**HMS Nubian retires under a smokescreen during the bombardment of Pantellaria. See 13 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © Image: IWM (A 17259)**



170 Italians prisoner. The ship made it four in a row on 14 June, accepting the surrender of the tiny (ten acre) rocky island of Lampione. Nubian then took part in the Tunisian Campaign and supported the landings at Sicily and Salerno before steaming back to Tyneside for a refit at the end of the year. On completion the destroyer was assigned to Arctic Convoys and attacks on German warships in Norwegian waters. Early in 1945 Nubian set off to join the East Indies Fleet, and saw action in the closing stages of the war in the Indian Ocean and South-East Asia. The destroyer survived the war and, after being used for ship target trials, was scrapped at Briton Ferry in 1949.

#### **14 June 1943**

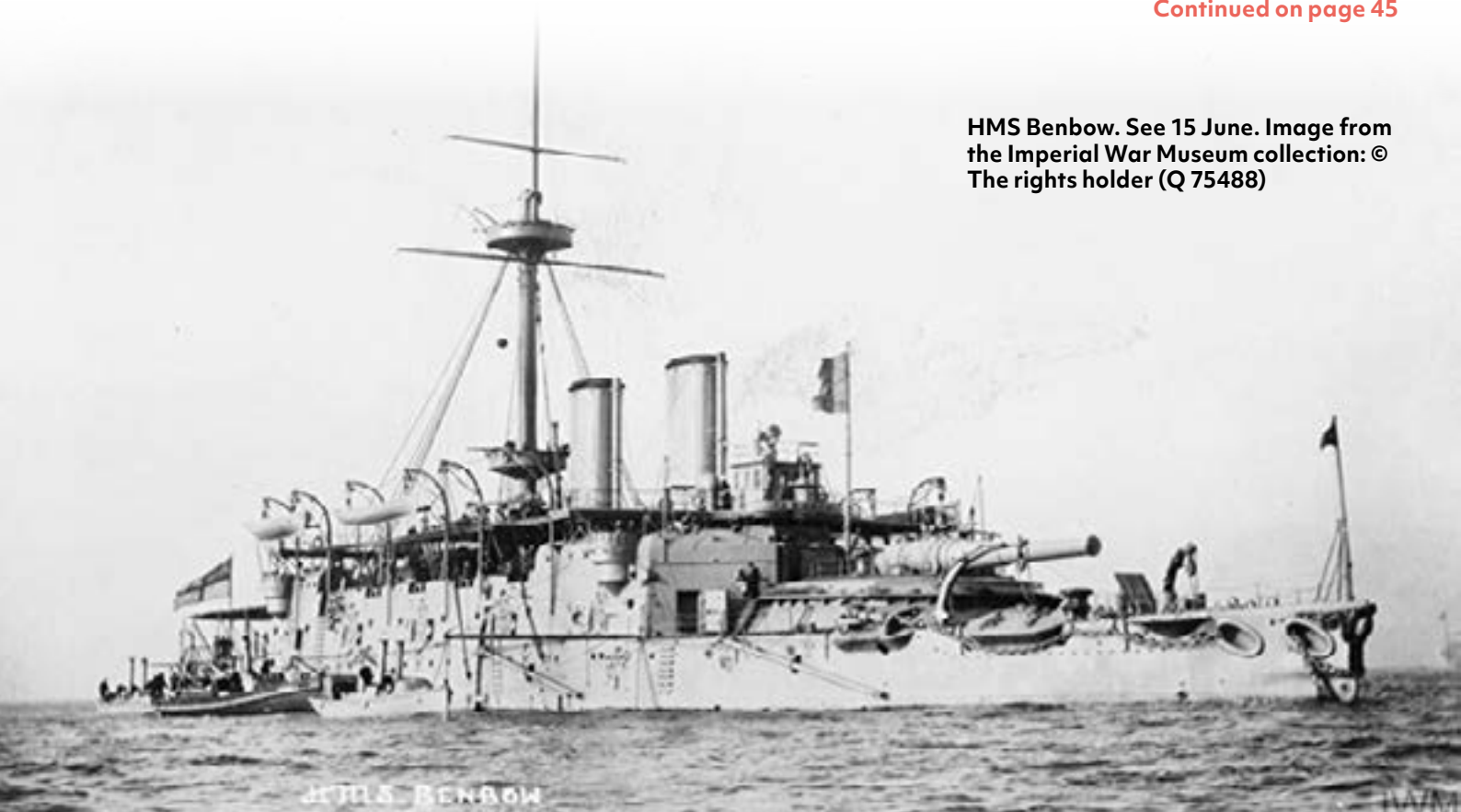
Frigate HMS Jed and sloop HMS Pelican sank U-334 in the North Atlantic on 14 June 1943. The River-class frigate had only been in service for seven months when U-334 was destroyed, but by that time she had already

either sunk or helped sink two other submarines, U-438 in the Western Approaches (sloop HMS Pelican actually sent the boat to the bottom) and U-954, which was sunk in the North Atlantic by Jed and sloop HMS Sennen. U-334 was spotted by escorts of Convoy ONS (Outbound North Slow) 10 to the south-west of Iceland as the slow-moving formation made its way from Liverpool to Canada. The German submarine was on her fourth patrol, having left Bergen on 5 June and sailed between Iceland and the Faeroes to take up her position, but before she could find any targets she was depth charged by Jed and Pelican, killing all 47 men on board. Jed continued to play an active role against U-boats, either escorting Atlantic and Mediterranean convoys or undertaking anti-submarine patrols.

#### **15 June 1885**

Battleship HMS Benbow, the first ship to carry Elswick's 110-ton 16.25in breech-loading (BL) guns, was launched

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**HMS Benbow. See 15 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © The rights holder (Q 75488)**

at Thames Ironworks on 15 June 1885. The ship was far from a success, and barely registers even a footnote in the annals of the Royal Navy, apart from the fact she mounted two of the largest calibre guns, only exceeded by HMS Furious (two 18in monsters) and a number of specialised monitors. The Admiral-class battleship, which displaced 10,600 tons, should have been fitted with 13.5in guns, but they were in short supply at the time of her building, so instead of going for the 12in version (readily available but seen as inferior for a ship of her class, even though they were powerful enough to sink a ship) designers chose the Elswick 'superheavy' option, manufactured by Armstrong Mitchell and Co in Newcastle, and already supplied to the Italian Navy. Benbow had two such guns – only a dozen were ever built – in single turrets fore and aft, firing shells that weighed 820kg. There were good reasons why only 12 such guns were built. As breech loaders, the rate of firing was slow (anywhere between three to five minutes per round), there was the distinct possibility that the muzzles would develop a droop, and the violence of the action of firing the gun meant the lining of the rifled barrel was only good for 75 rounds, after which a costly, lengthy and difficult replacement process would be needed. As it turned out, none of the 12 Elswick 110-tonners were ever fired in anger, and Benbow herself proved only slightly more useful. Commissioned in June 1888, she served with the Mediterranean Fleet until the autumn of 1891, then spent most of the next two years in reserve, briefly recommissioning for manoeuvres. She spent ten years, until April 1904, as Greenock guardship, then languished in reserve until she was sold for breaking in 1909.

#### 16 June 1940

HMS Grampus, the first of two Malta-based submarines lost in three days in June 1940, was sunk by Italian torpedo boats off Syracuse on 16 June. Grampus was a 2,200-ton minelayer, built at Chatham and commissioned on 10 March 1937. She began her active career on the China Station, then moved to the Mediterranean, arriving in Malta on 13 May 1940. She

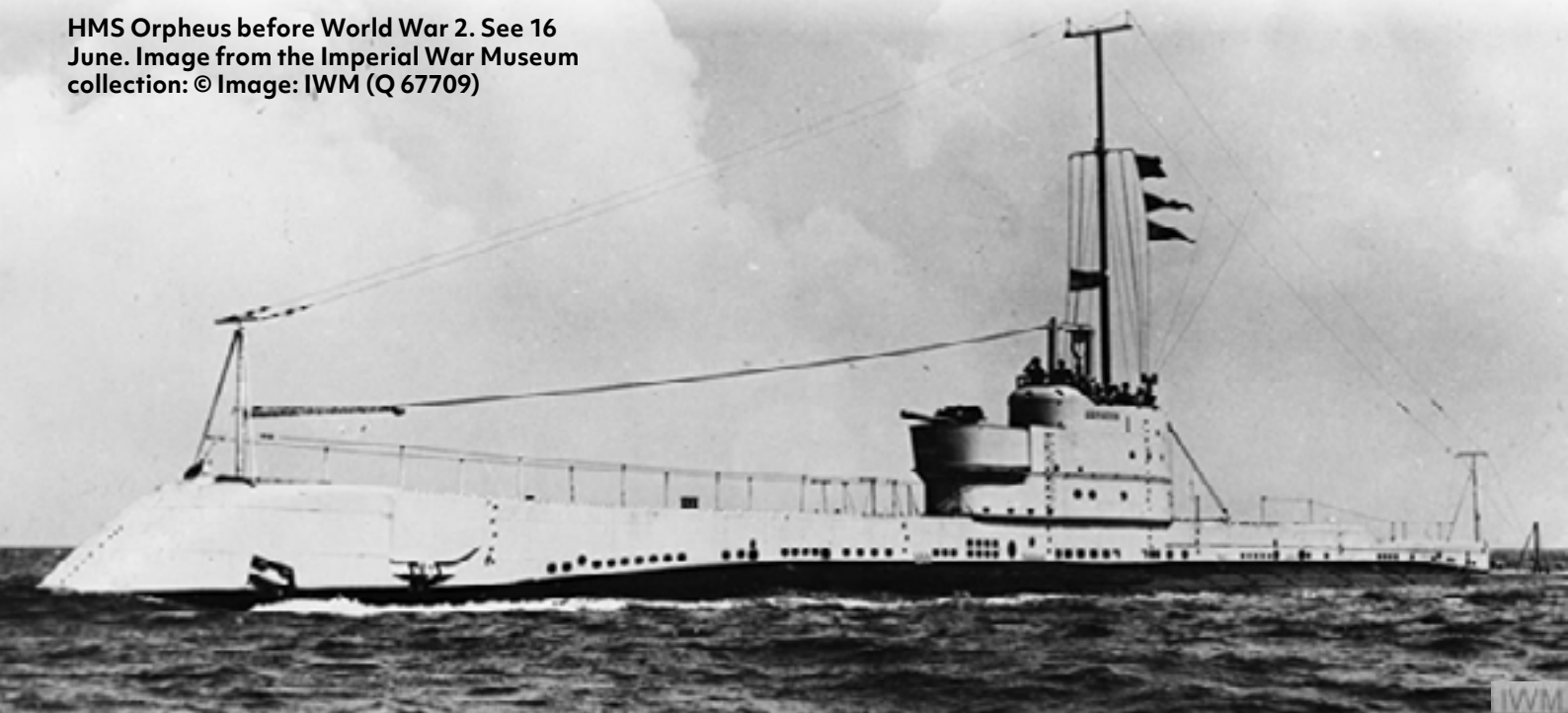
sailed from Malta on her second Med war patrol late in the evening of 10 June, and six days later was spotted in the early evening laying mines off Syracuse and Augusta in Sicily. Italian torpedo boat Circe, leading an anti-submarine patrol with sister boats Polluce, Calliope and Clio, saw Grampus's fin and opened fire with 100mm and 20mm guns, closely followed by Clio. Grampus fired two torpedoes at Polluce then dived to escape, but saturation depth charging is thought to have caused the British submarine to sink with all 60 hands – there were reports of oil being spotted on the sea but no wreckage was found. The Italians marked the incident as a 'probable' sinking, and the Royal Navy officially recorded the boat as being lost on 24 June when she failed to return to base. The 1,900-ton O-class submarine HMS Orpheus sailed from Malta on 10 June 1940, the same day as Grampus, to take up her patrol off the coast of Libya. As with Grampus, the exact circumstances of her loss, along with the fate of her 54 sailors, are unknown, but it is thought that she struck a mine off Benghazi late on 19 June, shortly after she sent her last signal. She was declared overdue on 27 June.

#### 17 June 1871

Iron screwship HMS Megaera arrived at Ile Saint-Paul in the Indian Ocean on 17 June 1871 with her hull on the verge of falling apart. Megaera was one of the first iron ships to be built for the Royal Navy, and at 2,060 tons was one of the largest – and last – ships to be built by the William Fairbairn yard at Millwall, where she was launched on 22 May 1849. Although designed and built as a frigate, the Navy was still learning about the strengths and weaknesses of iron as a shipbuilding material, and as the ship entered service it was determined that the type of iron used would splinter under impact, putting her at a major disadvantage. Accordingly, all armament was removed from Megaera and four sisters, and instead of a frigate she saw service as a transport and troopship – though she was not much better in this new role, as she was ill-suited to carrying large numbers of personnel and was somewhat underpowered. She broke down on her maiden voyage

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**HMS Orpheus before World War 2. See 16 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © Image: IWM (Q 67709)**





in June 1851 and had to be towed back into port for repairs, and even when she was back in business her commander was instructed to use sails where possible to conserve coal. She served as a storeship during the Crimean War then resumed her mundane role as an auxiliary. On 22 February 1871 *Megaera* sailed from Britain on what would be her final voyage, carrying a party of nearly 70 sailors who were due to relieve the crews of two Royal Navy screw sloops in Australia. Her officer cadre were uneasy at her condition, as she appeared to be overloaded and sailing low in the water; almost immediately she ran into trouble in the shape of a winter storm, and had to call in at Queenstown in Ireland for repairs. She managed to sail on to Simons Town in South Africa, which she reached in May. Having resupplied, *Megaera* set out again on 28 May 1871, but on 8 June a leak was found to be slowly flooding her hold, which at first was managed by hand pumps and bailing out. A week or so later the ingress of water had become too much for the hand pumps, and more powerful steam pumps were brought into play which held their own, but the leakage cast doubts on the sense of continuing the passage to Australia. On 15 June her Commanding Officer, Capt Arthur Thrupp, ordered that she head for the nearest land to allow the ship to anchor and allow divers to examine her hull. The nearest land was Saint Paul Island, a small uninhabited volcanic island in the southern Indian Ocean, where she arrived on 17 June. After some difficulty in anchoring, divers went down to inspect the hull and found an iron plate which was so badly corroded there was a large hole in it, and the metal edges of the hole could be folded back by hand. Further examination showed that iron beams near the keel were also badly corroded and separating, more plates were found to be very thin, and the rusty iron that was flaking away were continuously blocking the pumps. With Australia still more than 1,800 miles distant and stormy weather brewing, *Megaera's* Chief Engineer, George Mills, conferred with two colleagues (engineers who were in the relief party) and they advised Capt Thrupp that *Megaera's* useful life was at an end. The following day Thrupp told his ship's company they would need to move ashore, and on 19 June, with her anchorage increasingly unsafe in the high winds and seas, the ship was driven onto a sand bar at full speed. Over the following 11 days stores and equipment were brought ashore, after which the ship was officially abandoned as too dangerous to board. It was more than a fortnight before a passing Dutch ship spotted a flagpole the *Megaera's* sailors had erected, and Lt Lewis Jones sailed with the merchantman to Java, arriving on 2 August and raising the alarm. Wooden screw sloop HMS *Rinaldo* was dispatched from Hong Kong to rescue the marooned sailors, but she was blown off course and took so long to arrive that *Megaera's* crew had already been taken off by Dutch and British merchant ships. A court martial later that year exonerated Thrupp and his crew, accepting that the beaching and subsequent wreck was entirely justifiable, and the focus turned instead to the poor durability of the iron hull of the ship and the level of maintenance that put her sailors in such a dangerous position.

#### **18 June 1806**

Haulbowline naval establishment was set up by Order in Council at Queenstown in Ireland on 18 June 1806.

Haulbowline Island, now the main base of the Irish Naval Service in a deep part of Cork Harbour, has been a military establishment since the start of the 17th Century when it was fortified to create a garrison for the British Army. The soldiers moved out in 1806, and part of the island was handed over to the Royal Navy, who established a base under an Order in Council on 18 June that same year. Over the next couple of decades the land was rapidly developed into a thriving naval base, with a defensive tower, storehouses, magazines, workshops and all the infrastructure required to support the yard. And the workers (and their families) who lived in a collection of houses and cottages. The island was also extended through land reclamation, and although the Navy closed the yard at the start of the 1830s they returned with a vengeance ten years later, and Haulbowline became a fully-established Royal Dockyard in the 1860s, both building and repairing warships. More land was reclaimed, virtually doubling the size of the island, and at its peak it had a large central basin, a dry dock, a victualling yard, a fuel depot and a small Naval hospital in a converted storehouse. The facility was handed over to the newly-established Irish Free State in March 1923.

#### **19 June 1940**

Armed trawler HMT *Moonstone* captured Italian submarine *Galileo Galilei* off Aden on 19 June 1940. The submarine later became X2, then P711, and hence numbering of British X-craft began with X3. *Moonstone* began life as the 615-ton *Lady Madeline*, launched by Cook, Welton and Gemmell on the River Hull on 31 July 1934, and she was operated by Jutland Amalgamated Trawlers of Hull until war broke out. Requisitioned by the Admiralty, she was converted for anti-submarine operations and renamed HMS *Moonstone*. The armed trawler was almost immediately sent to the Mediterranean where she worked as part of the 4th A/S Patrol Group. On 16 June 1940 *Moonstone* rescued the crew of a Norwegian tanker that had been sunk by Italian submarine *Galileo Galilei* south of Aden earlier that day, and the submarine was spotted two days later. *Galileo Galilei* was launched at Taranto just four months before *Moonstone*, but was a more seasoned warship, having participated covertly in the Spanish Civil War in 1936-8. The Italian boat had left her Red Sea base of Massawa on 10 June on what turned out to be her final patrol under the Italian Ensign, and the destruction of the Norwegian tanker prompted a response from the Allies. *Moonstone* was sent to find her, and first contact was made on 18 June when the submarine challenged a Yugoslav freighter with a shot across the bow. *Moonstone* was near enough to hear the gunfire and rapidly closed in. *Galileo Galilei* dived but stayed in the area as the appearance of the little trawler did not seem a particularly aggressive response to the submarine's activities. An intense depth-charge attack by *Moonstone* appeared to do little damage, though while the submarine lay on the sea bed the first signs of toxic fume poisoning became apparent. *Moonstone* picked up the enemy boat on her ASDIC again on 19 June and dropped two depth charges. The Italian captain, Capt Corrado Nardi, weighed up his options and fancied his chances on the surface against the trawler. The submarine surfaced and her two 100mm guns were manned, but the sights on one were faulty, and this inaccuracy, along with

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Moonstone's agility, caused the Italian gunners a good deal of trouble. Shots were exchanged for around ten minutes before Moonstone's 4in gun hit the submarine's bridge, killing several men and wounding Capt Nardi. Another shot killed the crew of the bow gun, the aft gun jammed, and Moonstone then hit the bridge again, killing the remaining sailors there including Nardi. At this point destroyer HMS Kandahar arrived on the scene, and with a quarter of her crew dead the most senior officer left on board Galileo Galilei – a humble ensign – surrendered the vessel, which was towed to Aden by Kandahar. and was secured by Moonstone. The submarine was later taken in tow by destroyer HMS Kandahar and delivered to Aden. Moonstone suffered no casualties in the encounter, and the action won a DSC and DSM for members of her crew. The trawler survived the war and returned to fishing duties as Red Lancer until she was scrapped in 1964. Galileo Galilei also continued her war service, but this time on British books. She spent several months at Port Said as a generator, charging submarine batteries, and was then commissioned in June 1942 as HMS X2, later changed to HMS P711, operating as a training boat east of Suez. She was scrapped in January 1946.

## 20 June 1940

Destroyer HMS Beagle landed a demolition party at Bordeaux on 20 June 1940 as part of the evacuation of St Nazaire. The 1,820-ton B-class destroyer, completed on 9 April 1931 by John Brown on Clydebank, was very active during World War 2, usually on escort and patrol duties, and took part in the Norwegian Campaign of 1940, Operation Torch, the Allied invasion of French North Africa in 1942, the Battle of the Atlantic, Arctic Convoys and the Normandy Landings. She also took the official German surrender in the Channel Islands in May 1945. However, in June 1940 she was helping to cover the evacuation of both British troops and civilians from western France in the face of German advances, known as Operation Aerial. On 17 June Beagle was instrumental in saving hundreds of lives from the sunken Anchor Line liner-turned-troopship HMT Lancastria. The liner had been tasked with embarking as many people as possible from St Nazaire, and estimates of the final total on board vary between 4,000 and 9,000, with one loading officer estimating the figure to be at least 7,200 – mainly fighting men, but including Embassy staff and industrial workers. Her departure was delayed by an air raid, which proved a fatal move;

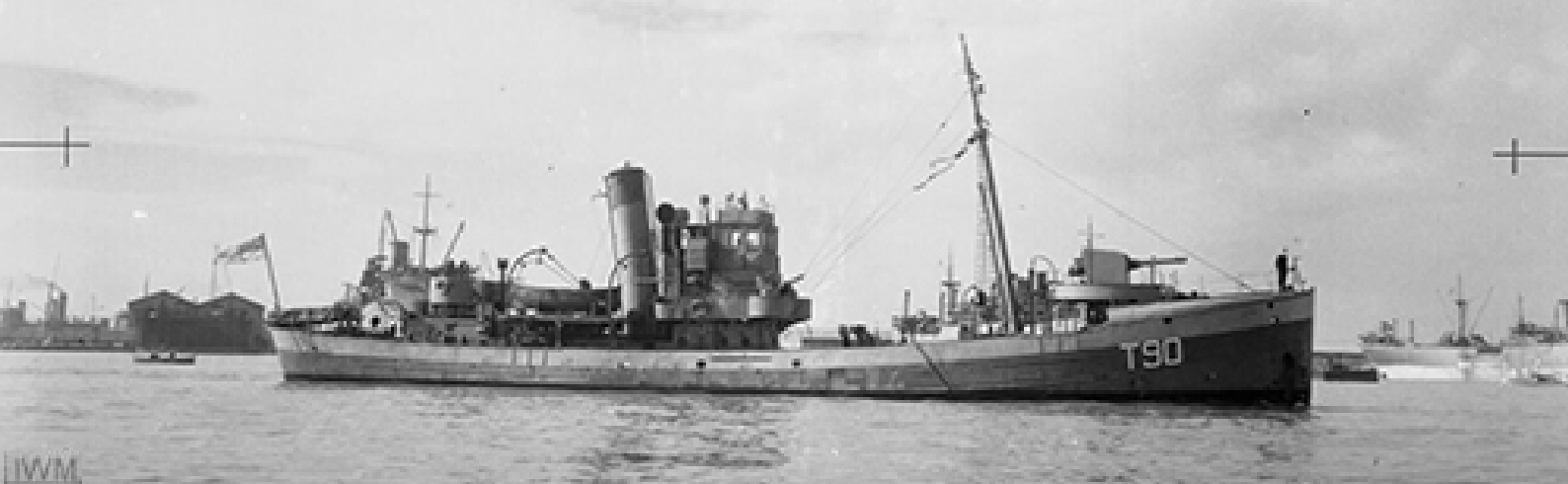
just before 1600 on 17 June she was struck by at least three German bombs, one of which was reported to have gone straight down a funnel and exploded in the bowels of the ship. She sank within 20 minutes, and many died from drowning, hypothermia or being trapped in the holds, and it was said there were numerous broken necks caused by the lifejackets when men jumped from height into the water. With the ship heavily overloaded there were nowhere near enough lifeboats or lifejackets, and although the death toll will never be known for sure, it is thought to be between 4,000 and 6,500. There were almost 2,500 survivors, with the armed trawler HMT Cambridgeshire picking up 900 of them, while HMS Beagle rescued another 600. Having disembarked the shipwrecked troops and sailors at Plymouth on 18 June, Beagle returned to the fray the following day, and on 20 June she started to land demolition parties to destroy infrastructure at Bordeaux and La Pallice, rendering it useless for German occupiers. She was also involved in flurries of diplomatic activity until she returned to Plymouth on 25 June. Beagle's active career ended with the war in Europe. Just 15 days after she took the German surrender in St Peter Port she was placed in reserve, and the destroyer was scrapped in January 1946.

## 21 June 1898

Battleship HMS Albion was launched on the Thames on 21 June 1898 in a botched operation that ended up killing dozens of onlookers. The pre-dreadnought battleship was ordered in 1896 as part of Canopus class, slightly smaller and faster than the preceding Majestic class and intended for service in the Far East. Displacing 14,500 tons, Albion was laid down on 3 December 1896 by the Thames Ironworks and Shipbuilding Co of Leamouth, in London, at the mouth of the Bow Creek near Canning Town – a rather narrow part of the channel. Her launch, on 21 June 1898, should have been a day of celebration. Mary of Teck, the Duchess of York, was the dignitary given the honour of christening the ship, and thousands of people crowded into vantage points around the yard to watch Albion glide into the Thames. Also on hand were film pioneers Robert Paul and E P Prestwich, who were there to capture the occasion for posterity. What they captured was one of the first disasters ever filmed. As the warship slid down the slipway she created a powerful wave which swamped a temporary stand on the bank of a side creek, causing it to collapse into the river. Small

**HMT Moonstone. See 19 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © IWM (FL 16385)**

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boats swarmed around plucking Londoners from the river, but by the time the rescue effort was over it is estimated that 34 people, mainly women and children, lost their lives in the accident. There was much debate at the time as to whether the film should be made public, but it was, and the launch and its aftermath can be found on YouTube. Albion was not completed until June 1901 because of a shortage of machinery, and on commissioning on 25 June 1901 she sailed straight to join the China Station, where she served for four years. Further spells with the Home Fleet and Atlantic Fleet, and spells in reserve, saw her through to the outbreak of war, when she joined the Channel Fleet and acted as flagship before moving on to the Cape Verde and Canary Islands Station and the Cape of Good Hope Station. In January 1915 she joined the Dardanelles Campaign, including the bombardment of Turkish forts in failed attempts to force the narrows and support for the landings at Gallipoli. She also helped blockade Bulgaria and Greece before taking over as guardship at Queenstown in Ireland in April 1916. After a move to the Humber in August the same year she was converted to an accommodation ship shortly before the Armistice, and in 1919 was put up for disposal. She was scrapped at Morecambe the following year.

#### 22 June 1841

First rate HMS Trafalgar was launched in the presence of Queen Victoria and Prince Albert by Horatio Nelson's niece Lady Bridport on 22 June 1841, using a bottle of wine which had been on board HMS Victory at the Battle of Trafalgar. The massive ship, mounting 120 guns, attracted a vast crowd, estimated at half-a-million people, to Woolwich Dockyard and the surrounding area to watch her launch; it is reported

that 500 people were on the ship itself when it went into the water, around 100 of whom had been present at Trafalgar 36 years before. She represented the ultimate in wooden sailing warships, and was a powerful statement, but she was also doomed to be sidelined early on in her career by the development of iron ships and steam propulsion. Trafalgar saw action once, during the Crimean War at the bombardment of Sevastopol on 17 October 1854, but otherwise benefited from the relative calm of Pax Britannica, when the Royal Navy helped keep the peace on a global scale as it served the extensive British Empire. Trafalgar was fitted with screw machinery and propulsion in 1859, and in 1873 was converted for use as a training ship at Portland, taking the name HMS Boscawen. She was sold by the Admiralty in 1906.

#### 23 June 1883

Two officers from composite screw gunboat HMS Stork were drowned in a river near Mayumba in West Africa after their boat was attacked by a hippopotamus on 23 June 1883. Stork, a 465-ton Banterer-class gunboat of four guns built at Samuda Brothers' yard in Poplar the previous year, was operating along the west coast of Africa when she was ordered to sail south to St Paul de Luanda (now the capital of Angola), and call in at Mayumba, now part of Gabon, along the way to inquire over an allegation of the attempted murder of a British subject. When Stork arrived on 22 June, a 'palaver' (impromptu conference) was held with locals, and when business was completed, arrangements were made for a shooting party the following day. Accordingly, merchant's agent Mr Preuslau joined Stork's Commanding Officer, Lt Arthur Blennerhasset, Lt Henry Leeke and Dr Robert Anderson, the ship's

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doctor, for the 'sporting trip' on the nearby river, setting out in a large whaleboat manned by a dozen Kroomen (skilled local sailors and fishermen) in the early afternoon. Around 1830, not far from reeds lining the banks of the river, the boat was attacked by a hippopotamus which stove in the port quarter. The boat quickly filled and capsized, throwing the men into the water. Lt Blennerhasset and a Krooman clung onto the boat then struggled ashore, while the rest of the Kroomen swam to the riverbank. Mr Preuslau could not swim, and it is thought that the other two Royal Navy officers – both competent swimmers – went to his aid. It was suggested that the hippo, which was still mid-stream, could have been attracted by the white uniforms of the sailors and continued its attack; when their bodies were found two days later they bore marks that indicated they had been trampled. Having reached the riverbank, Lt Blennerhasset ran a mile to fetch a canoe and returned to search for his men, but despite the fact that the river was dragged and locals dived for five hours the following day, they could not be found. Lt Leeke and Dr Anderson were buried with military honours on 27 June at a ceremony attended by the remaining officers from Stork who were not on watch, ten sailors and a detachment of Marines. Both were described as popular shipmates, and it was Dr Anderson's first service on a foreign station. Stork was converted to a survey vessel in 1887 and later served as a Navy League training ship for boys before being broken up in Kent in 1950.

#### 24 June 1916

The body of Cdr Loftus William Jones, killed on the Battle of Jutland on 31 May 1916, was recovered off the Swedish coast and buried at the Swedish village of Fiskebakskil on 24 June 1916. Cdr Jones, who was born in Southsea on 13 November 1879, was educated at Eastman's Royal Naval Academy – not unexpected, as his family had strong Naval links; his father was an admiral, and several other relatives served as Naval officers. He joined HMS Royal Sovereign as a midshipman in 1896 – the first of almost 30 ships in which he served during his Naval career, many of them torpedo-boat destroyers. He also served for a spell at HMS Tamar in Hong Kong. His final command was Acasta-class destroyer HMS Shark, which on the afternoon of 31 May 1916 led a division of destroyers into action against a German battlecruiser squadron. Shark took a fearful pounding, quickly disabling her steering from the bridge and damaging her engines. Another British destroyer, HMS Acasta, placed herself between Shark and the enemy, but Cdr Jones warned her off and made his way aft to help steer the ship, being wounded in the face and leg by shrapnel as he did so. At

that point Shark's fore and aft guns were destroyed, killing most of their crews, so Cdr Jones went to the midship gun to help keep it firing – with some success, as they managed to damage German destroyer V48. Cdr Jones was hit by a shell which took his right leg off above the knee, but he continued to help fire the gun as a rating put a tourniquet around his thigh; the officer also had the presence of mind to notice that his ship's Ensign had been dislodged from the mainmast, so he ordered another be raised to replace it. With Shark reduced to a floating wreck, Cdr Jones ordered the remaining crew to don lifebelts to prepare for her sinking, and as they did so a torpedo delivered the coup de grace and Shark went down, taking Cdr Jones with her, though seven of his crew managed to cling to rafts and floating wreckage long enough to be picked up by a neutral ship when the fighting subsided; one man later died of his wounds. Cdr Jones was one of three bodies washed ashore at Fiskebakskil and buried in the village churchyard; one of the others was PO Stoker Harry Hughes, born the same year as Cdr Jones just a mile or

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**Cdr Loftus William Jones. See 24 June.**  
Image from the Imperial War Museum  
collection: Image: © IWM (VC 658)



so away. PO Hughes was in a sister destroyer of HMS Shark which also faced the might of the German navy at Jutland, HMS Ardent being sunk by the battleship SMS Westfalen – only two of her crew of 80 survived. Cdr Jones was awarded a posthumous VC on 6 March 1917, when the facts of the incident were established. The three graves were kept neat and tidy by villagers for decades, with letters and photographs being sent back to the families of the three men back in Britain. Eventually the bodies were reinterred at Kviberg Cemetery in Gothenburg, Sweden, alongside six other victims of Jutland.

### **25 June 1907**

On 25 June 1907 Tribal-class destroyer HMS Tartar was the first ship launched by Thornycroft at their new Woolston yard in Southampton, following a move from their old site at Chiswick in London. The London site was created in 1864 when the 21-year-old John Isaac Thornycroft started building steam yachts and launches – John had shown himself to be a precocious talent when, at the age of 16, he began building his first steam launch, the Nautilus, which three years later made headlines by being the first such vessel with sufficient speed to keep up with the University Boat Race. In 1873 the Church Wharf yard built a small torpedo craft for the Norwegian Navy, and the Rap proved to be something of a pump-primer, with other nations following in the Norwegians' footsteps. HMS Lightning followed in 1877, being the first seagoing vessel to be armed with self-propelled Whitehead torpedoes. Thornycroft torpedo boats were in great demand, and became larger and faster as designs matured, but by the time the 810-ton HMS Speedy torpedo gunboat emerged it was quite apparent that the yard had reached the limit of its usefulness – ships had to pass under Hammersmith Bridge to reach the open sea, requiring the lowering or removal of masts and funnels, so new premises were sought for the construction of larger ships. That search ended on the banks of the River Itchen at Woolston in Southampton, when an existing boatyard was bought in 1904 and production moved to Hampshire; the original Chiswick yard closed in August 1909. Tartar was the first destroyer built at Woolston, but 36 more such vessels were built for the Royal Navy before the outbreak of war, with several others being sold abroad. Another 26 RN destroyers were built there during World War 1, along with three submarines and numerous smaller craft, though their famed Coastal Motor Boats were built at Hampton on the Thames. Between the wars the emphasis was more on commercial craft, including ferries, but World War 2 saw a return to warship-building, as Woolston turned out a string of destroyers and corvettes. In 1966 Thornycroft merged with Vosper and Co to form Vosper Thornycroft, and through a series of subsequent sales and mergers the lineage can now be traced to BAE Systems Surface Ships. As for Tartar, the first ship down the slipway, she served initially in the Channel out of Dover during World War 1, patrolling, screening capital ship formations and carrying out anti-submarine sweeps. On 17 June 1917 struck a mine which killed 43 of her crew, including her Commanding Officer, though the ship was towed back to harbour. After repairs, she served out the war based in Blyth, in Northumberland, and was scrapped in 1919.

### **26 June 1854**

Wooden paddle sloop HMS Prometheus recaptured British brig Cuthbert Young on 26 June 1854, after it had been taken by Rif pirates in Zera Bay off Morocco. The 1,280-ton Alecto-class ship, formally classified as a Steam Vessel 3, later altered to 3rd Class Sloop, was built at Sheerness and launched on 21 September 1839. Her first commission took her to the Mediterranean, where she spent just over a year before returning to Woolwich and Limehouse for a refit, including work on her boilers. Within a couple of months she was off to the west coast of Africa, taking ten slave ships in two years. Further refits were followed by another two-year spell on anti-slavery patrols off West Africa, returning to Woolwich in early 1853. She recommissioned a year later at Devonport, and was straight back to North and West Africa, where on 26 June 1854 she took part in action against Rif tribesmen, who had been causing grief to many nations along the coast of Morocco. The coastal pirates had captured the British merchant brig Cuthbert Young, based in South Shields, on 20 June around ten miles to the south west of Cape Tres Forcas, and taken whatever could be removed from the ship. Most of her crew, and her master, managed to escape to Gibraltar, but Prometheus was sent along to sort things out. The Naval paddle steamer found the brig anchored in an inlet, and despite musket fire from onshore a party of British sailors managed to attach a hawser, weighed her anchor and Prometheus slowly backed out of the inlet with the Cuthbert Young in tow. During that commission Prometheus also saw service in the Black Sea. The paddle steamer undertook one final commission off Africa in 1860-61 before she was paid off on 21 June 1862. She was taken to Woolwich for further repairs, but surveyors deemed her hull too rotten for further use, so she was sold to local shipbreakers Henry Castle and Sons for scrapping.

### **27 June 1829**

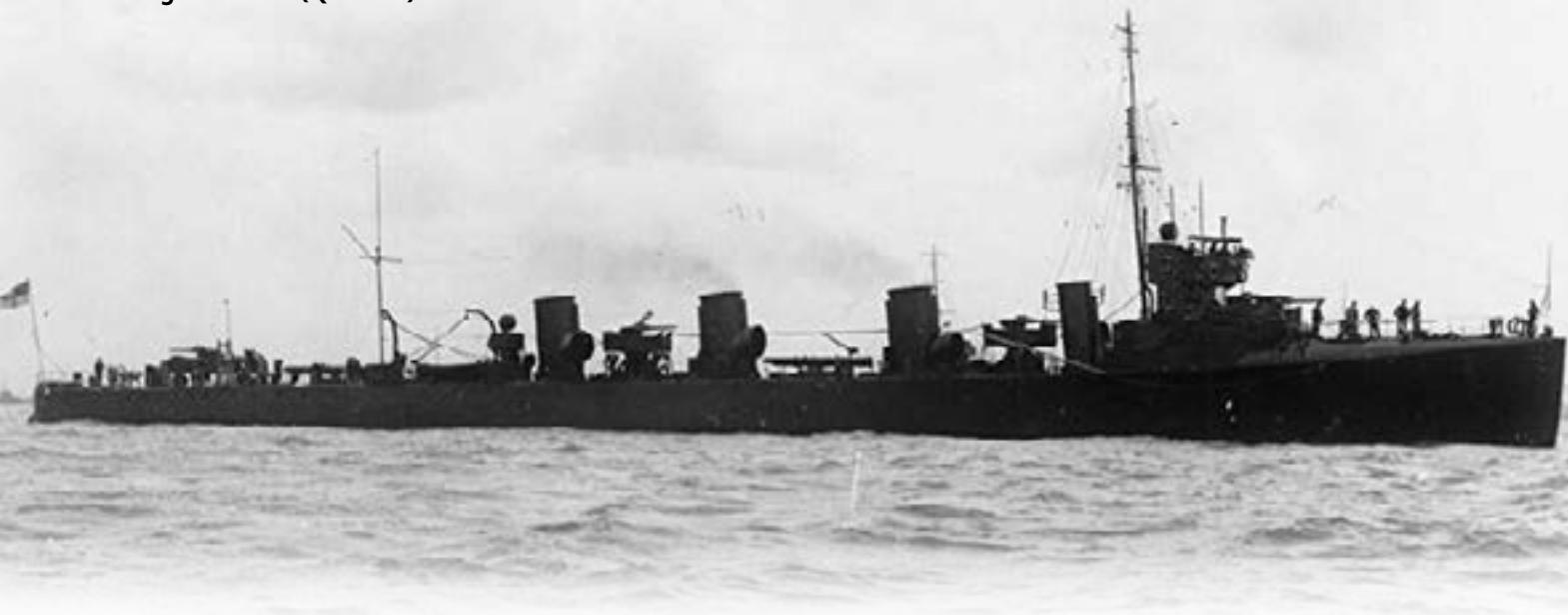
Schooner HMS Monkey captured the Spanish slave ship Midas off Little Stirrup Cay on the Grand Bahama Bank on 27 June 1829, despite the slaver being much larger, more heavily armed and with twice the number of sailors on board. Monkey, around 75 tons with a crew of 26, was built in Jamaica and served with the West Indies Squadron. She captured the American slave ship Borneo on 14 March 1829, and less than a month later took the Spanish schooner Josefa in the Bahamas, freeing 206 slaves. On 27 June she encountered the 350-ton slave ship Midas near Bimini, a ship with a crew of more than 50 and mounting four 18pdr and four 12pdr guns. Despite only having a single 12pdr on a pivot and a crew of 26, Monkey took the slaver in an action of just over half-an-hour. Midas had sailed from West Africa in April 1829 with more than 560 slaves on board, but fewer than 370 were still alive when she was captured by Monkey, and a further 72 died of disease before the ship was escorted into Havana. The British schooner was lost on 13 May 1831 off Mexico; she was being towed into the port of Tampico by a steam tug but was run aground. Her crew were rescued, but the ship was quickly broken up by the sea and sold as a wreck within a fortnight.

### **28 June 1961**

HMS Leander launched at Harland and Wolff in Belfast

**Continued on page 51**

**HMS Tartar. See 25 June. Image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © The rights holder (Q 75048)**



on 28 June 1961 – the first of the 26 frigates of her class. The 3,200-ton workhorse deployed widely throughout her career, from the Caribbean and the Americas to the Far East. She took part in the Cod Wars, sustaining damage in ramming two Icelandic gunboats in January and May 1976. She was placed in reserve in the summer of 1986, and with no sale forthcoming she was decommissioned in April 1987. She ended up as a target during naval exercises in 1989, succumbing to the combined assault of Sea Dart and Exocet missiles and an air-dropped bomb.

### **29 June 1962**

First Lord of the Admiralty, Lord Carrington, unveiled a plaque on the west wall of RN Hospital Stonehouse on 29 June 1962 to mark the bicentenary of its foundation. Built between 1758 and 1765 beside Stonehouse Creek to the west of Plymouth on land close to tidal mills, the hospital began taking patients in 1760 and was considered to be fully functional by 1762, making it the second great Naval hospital after Haslar in Gosport. The design of Stonehouse was considered revolutionary at the time, but proved hugely influential; wards were built in such a way that they benefited from good ventilation and were separated sufficiently to greatly reduce the spread of infection – principles championed by Florence Nightingale 100 years later. By the late 18th Century the hospital – formally known as the Royal Naval Hospital (or simply Royal Hospital) Plymouth – had capacity for 1,200 patients in 60 wards arranged in ten three-storey blocks around a colonnaded courtyard that provided space for patients to exercise while convalescing. Patients usually arrived by boat on Stonehouse Creek. An Army hospital (Stoke Military) was built on the opposite (north) bank of the creek around 1797 which mirrored the Naval facility, and was decommissioned at the end of World War 2. A burial ground was created at Stonehouse in 1826, and between 1898 and 1906 the site was widely upgraded and the range of facilities expanded. Buildings on the site were damaged in the German air raids of the spring of 1941,

but the hospital remained operational throughout the war, admitting more than 60,000 patients during the period. The hospital closed in March 1995 as part of the government's 'Options for Change' defence restructuring programme, and the former buildings are now used for a variety of purposes, including residential, business units and educational facilities. Clinical services shifted to Plymouth's Derriford Hospital.

### **30 June 1917**

30-knotter destroyer HMS Cheerful was sunk by a mine off Lerwick on 30 June 1917 with the loss of more than half of her crew. The 405-ton three-funnel Hawthorn Leslie ship was launched at Hebburn-on-Tyne on 14 July 1897 and commissioned two years later, going straight into the Harwich Flotilla at Chatham. In the summer of 1912, under a Fleet-wide reorganisation, Cheerful was assigned to the C-class of destroyers alongside other 30-knotters. At the outset of World War 1 she was operating with the 8th Destroyer Flotilla, based at Sheerness, on anti-submarine and counter-mining patrols in the North Sea and eastern Channel, but at the end of September 1914 she moved to Scapa Flow on the Shetland patrol, hunting submarines and protecting the Fleet anchorage. On 30 June 1917 Cheerful was part of the escort force for a nine-ship convoy that had originally left the Humber on 28 June, with ships joining and leaving off the Tyne before heading on to Lerwick. In the late morning of 30 June a drifter warned convoy commanders that mines had been seen in the area, and around midday Cheerful struck a mine, the violent explosion near the aft boiler room splitting the ship in two. One part sank immediately, but the forward part of the ship capsized and remained afloat as other ships of the convoy approached to rescue survivors. Knocking could be heard from inside the hull, and so cutting tools were found and efforts made to break in to rescue the survivors. However, as soon as a hole was cut the trapped air within the hull rushed out and the remains of Cheerful "sank like a stone", taking the last of the 40 victims with her.



## 2025

<b>20-22 June 2025</b>	RNA75 Annual Conference 2025, Portsmouth
<b>28 June 2025</b>	HMS Collingwood Open Day, Fareham
<b>9 August 2025</b>	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting online
<b>15 August 2025</b>	VJ80 ceremony, Lanyard Building Memorial Garden
<b>30 August 2025</b>	Scottish Area Quarterly Meeting hosted by Aberdeen Branch
<b>14 Sept 2025</b>	Naval Associations Biennial Parade, Whitehall
<b>4 October 2025</b>	World Uckers Championships, Portsmouth
<b>22 Oct 2025</b>	Fisherman's Friends Charity Fundraising Concert, Portsmouth
<b>9 Nov 2025</b>	Remembrance Ceremonies, Cenotaph, Whitehall
<b>15 Nov 2025</b>	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting hosted by RNA Stowmarket

Please check the **RNA website** and the RN **Shipmates.co.uk** website for a list of further events



[www.royal-naval-association.co.uk](http://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk)



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<b>Portsmouth Historic Dockyard</b>	£20 for a day ticket 30% off annual Ultimate Explorer tickets
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<b>Sea Urchin's Gin</b>	10% to RNA from the sale of each bottle
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<b>China Fleet Country Club</b>	Click on the link for offers for Serving and ex-Serving RN and RM
<b>Trinity Insurance</b>	For offers see <a href="https://tinyurl.com/ssy8vt5s">https://tinyurl.com/ssy8vt5s</a>



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## Delegate to Annual Conference 2025 - PORTSMOUTH

Branch secretaries should note the following before submitting their application.

*No Branch shall be permitted to send a delegate to the Conference unless it has observed the regulations of the Association in regard to the return of balance sheets, the Branch Annual Report and the formation of Branches. This provision has no application to the right of, and expectation for, ships and establishments to send a delegate to the Conference. Associate members are eligible to act as a Branch Delegate at Area meetings and Conferences, provided that they have completed three years continuous membership of the Association immediately prior to election as Delegate.*

Each Branch which has been in commission for at least three months by the date of a Conference shall be entitled to nominate one eligible Association Member as its Delegate to attend a Conference.

Each Branch nominating a Delegate shall send details to the Council **to arrive not less than one week before the date of Conference**. A Branch may change its nominated Delegate provided the Council is notified not less than twenty four hours before the Conference.

<b>Branch</b>		<b>Area</b>	
<b>Name of Delegate</b>			
<b>Delegate's e-mail</b>			
<b>Number of Observers if known</b>			
<b>Name of Branch Hon Secretary</b>			

**NB:** A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2024 and Branch Annual Report for 2024 have been received in RNA Central Office.

Should either not have been received in Central Office, the Delegate's Status will be deemed to be that of an Observer.

Branch Secretaries are to ensure that their nominated Delegate, receives the copies of the agenda and minutes of the previous years' AGM prior to representing their Branch at the AGM. Copies will be made available at the AGM, but sight of these prior to the day is considered essential. Branch Secretaries will be forwarded this paperwork from Central Office as soon as it is finalised.

Please forward the completed form to RNA Central Office, Lanyard House, Scott Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3LU or email to [ams@rnassoc.org](mailto:ams@rnassoc.org)

**To check ahead of Conference, please call Sara on 023 92 723747**



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**Annex A:  
Conference 2025 Admin Order  
6 June 2025**

**Programme of Events**

Shipmates are reminded to bring some form of Photo ID to Conference so you can prove your identity & gain access to the Dockyard. A driving licence, Veterans ID Card, local authority bus passes, passports are all examples of acceptable forms of ID.

**Friday 20 June - HMS Warrior**

Rig – Business / Smart Casual (Jackets may be relaxed if the weather is hot), or female equivalent. No stiletto heels or shoes with metal fittings on the sole are to be worn.

1825 - Victory Gate opens for access to HMS Warrior in the Historic Dockyard

1830 – 2115 Canapé & drinks reception

2130 - Ceremonial Sunset

2200 - Shipmates to be clear of the Historic Dockyard

**Saturday 21 June - AGM**

Rig – RNA No1s or female equivalent, negative medals

0815 - Victory Gate opens for access to Boathouse #5 in the Historic Dockyard

0815 - Refreshments available in Boathouse #5

0900 – VIPs arrive

0925 - Shipmates are requested to be seated in Boathouse #5

0930 - AGM Commences

Time to be confirmed, a comfort break with refreshments will take place

1230 – 1300 Buffet Lunch

1305 – As required AGM recommences

As required AGM ends

1530 – Boat house # 5 to be cleared and secured.

**Gala Dinner**

Rig - Black tie or female equivalent with miniature medals

1815 - Victory Gate opens for access to Boathouse #7 in the Historic Dockyard

1830 - Drinks reception

1900 – Call for Dinner in Boathouse 7

1915 – Shipmates to be sat at appropriate tables

1930 - Dinner is served with Wine on the table. Additional drinks may be purchased, this will be a **card only Bar**.

This is followed by an evening of entertainment and dancing

2300 – Last Orders at the Bar

2320 – Bar Closes

2359 – All Shipmates are to be clear of the Historic Dockyard





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### **Sunday 22 June - Church Service, St Ann's Church**

Rig –Standard Bearers RNA No1s with medals, Shipmates as preferred.

0845 - Victory Gate opens for access to St Ann's Church in the Historic Dockyard

0845 – Central Office open to support Standard Bearers

0900 – Standard Bearers Muster at the Falklands Memorial Garden outside Central Office

0930 - Standard Bearers step off for St Ann's Church

RNA Standards Paraded outside St Ann's Church

0955 - Shipmates to be sat in St Ann's Church

1000 – Church Service commences

### **Admiralty House / Royal Navy Embassy Reception**

On completion of Church Service Standard Bearers lead Shipmates to Admiralty House / RN Embassy

1115 – 1130 RNA 75 Photograph

Retire to the Garden for drinks and refreshments

1230 - Cutting of the RNA 75 Cake

1330 - Reception Concludes

Shipmates proceed towards Victory Gate en masse leaving HM Naval Base and entering Historic Dockyard

End of Conference 2025



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# British Naval Intelligence through the Twentieth Century

Author: Andrew Boyd

Foreword by Andrew Lambert

## Highlights

- First comprehensive account of British naval intelligence in the modern era
- Challenges established perceptions of its role in the two World Wars
- Revised and affordable paperback edition

## Description

When published in 2020 it offered the first comprehensive account of how intelligence influenced and sustained British naval power from the mid nineteenth century through to the end of the Cold War.

The book describes why and how intelligence was collected and assesses its real impact on policy and operations. It confirms that naval intelligence was critical to Britain's survival and ultimate victory in the two World Wars but significantly reappraises its role, highlighting the importance of communications intelligence to an effective blockade in the First, and according Ultra less dominance compared to other sources in the Second. It reveals that coverage of Germany before 1914 and of the three Axis powers in the interwar period was more comprehensive and effective than previously suggested; and while British power declined rapidly after 1945, the book shows how intelligence helped the Royal Navy to remain a significant global force for the rest of the twentieth century, and in submarine warfare, especially in the second half of the Cold War.

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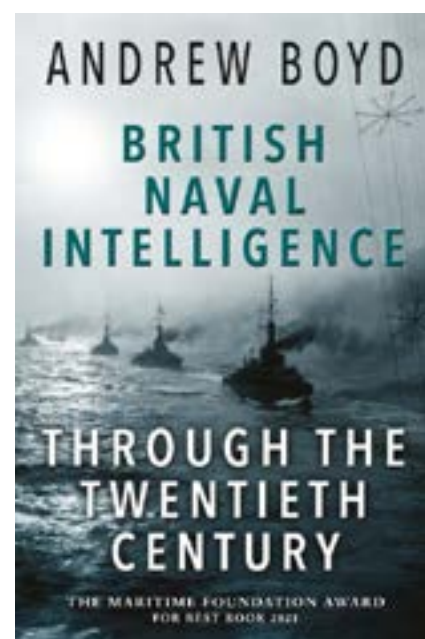
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'A remarkable book which for the first time puts intelligence in its place and tells us what happened and why. For any modern naval officer, gives a systematic picture of naval warfare in a way not done by anybody else.' *Rear Admiral James Goldrick*

## Author Details

ANDREW BOYD CMG, OBE, DPhil was educated at Britannia Royal Naval College and St Johns College, Oxford. He served as a submariner in the Royal Navy before joining the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in 1980. He has had a long standing interest in 20th-century naval history and was awarded a research fellowship to undertake a DPhil. This was the basis of his first book, *The Royal Navy in Eastern Waters*, which was followed by the critically-acclaimed *British Naval Intelligence through the Twentieth Century*. His most recent book, *Arms for Russia and the Naval War in the Arctic 1941–1945*, is a fascinating reassessment of Allied support for the Soviets.



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