



SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR



SHOWTIME FOR RNA CHOIR

If you are going to make your musical debut, you might as well do it alongside world-famous musicians. And that is exactly what the Royal Naval Association Community Choir did at a sold-out Portsmouth Guildhall last night.

The occasion was the RNA's 75th Anniversary charity fundraising concert, with Fisherman's Friends and the Band of His Majesty's Royal Marines Collingwood sharing the spotlight.

Both world-class acts were supported by the combined choral groups from Portsmouth, Plymouth and Scotland,

making their official debut as the RNA Community Choir. The concert showcased two distinct and distinctive strands of nautical music.

On the one hand was the precision and pomp of the Royal Marines Band, its members recognised as being amongst the finest in the world of military music.

On the other were the sea shanties and banter of the Friends, based around a group of lobster fisherman from Port Isaac, who are celebrating their own anniversary this year – 30 years since they started performing locally in Cornwall, long before their elevation to global recognition.

Continued on page 3

CONTENTS

RNA Community Choir makes debut in charity concert	1
From the General Secretary	6
Bootnecks take World Uckers titles	7
RNA shipmate wins praise in train stabbing incident	8
Digital Veterans Card available to download	9
Free travel to Remembrance events by train and bus	10
MOD guidance for Remembrance ceremony in Whitehall	11
Shipmate Mark conquers Thames in his kayak	12
Memorial dedicated to Forces LGBT+ community	13
Capture the spirit of the RNA in photographic competition	16
Out with the RNA Motorhome, Caravan and Camping SCG	19
Next year's cruising with the RNA Yachting SCG	20
Trafalgar Night round-up	21
RNRMC Heart of Oak memorial tree unveiled	24
Fireside Chats	27
Sports and Comradeship Groups	27
Branch News	29
Obituaries	37
Welfare and Wellbeing	39
Employment and Training	45
November Swinging the Lamp	46
Longcast	47
Offers	46
2026 Conference documents	48

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 5 December, and the deadline for material is 1000 on Wednesday 3 December. Branch Notes will next be published on Friday 14 November, and Semaphore Shorts on Friday 21 and 28 November.



For the RNA Community Choir the concert represented the first time they had gathered en masse in one place – all rehearsals and practices have until now been undertaken in the three main port areas of the Royal Navy.

And although the project is relatively new – the choir was set up with a view to making its full debut yesterday – there are now plans to expand it, with local groups across the country, reflecting the widespread geographic footprint of the RNA, which now boasts almost 25,000 members across the UK and overseas.

The popularity of choirs has grown dramatically in the past few years, and gold-standard research underpins the simple assertion that singing in a choir is good for you.

Studies undertaken by such august bodies as the University of Oxford recognise that an organised group of singers taps into an ancient trait in humanity, binding individuals together and providing cohesion in communities.

But apart from the community aspect of bringing people together, there are other benefits that help with physical and mental health. Controlled breathing, better posture, the calming effect of music, can all help improve physical



health, while learning new songs and harmonising

keep the brain in tip-top form, while the sense of belonging to a choir helps with a sense of wellbeing and banishes any sense of social isolation.

That fits perfectly into the ethos of the RNA, which aims to foster a sense of community and camaraderie amongst members, so it is no surprise, therefore, that the RNA should embrace the benefits of the community choir.

Former Wren Christine, a member of the Plymouth choir, said: "Singing with the Plymouth choir has been absolutely super – Ben, our teacher, has done an amazing job working with us as a group.

"Many had never sung before, so to actually sing in four-part harmony during our rehearsals was tremendous."

Christine continued: "I am really looking forward to the Concert. I am sure it will be fun being with like-minded people, the Royal Marines Band to accompany us, and of course the Fishermen's Friends, who I am certain will bring much joy to the whole concert!"

Myra Hunter is the Co-ordinator for the Plymouth choir. She loves organising – and singing! – so when the opportunity arose to take up the role, Myra was happy to step in.

"My husband was in the Army, and there are family in the Royal Navy, so when we were invited to join the RNA at HMS Drake we did, and have met some lovely people along the way.

"The choir and its members are so supportive and have become good friends. These past months have been an absolute delight, making new friends and becoming a



Continued on page 4



choir. "The best is yet to come!"

There is always room for more in the existing group as well as those which will be set up, no matter what level of experience or talent you have. If you would like to join an established choir, or start a new branch in another part of the country, please email wws@rnassoc.org

Images by S/M Nigel Huxtable



CONTACTS



Central Office Contacts	
For all contacts and general enquiries 023 9272 3747	admin@rnassoc.org
CEO/General Secretary	ceo@rnassoc.org
Executive Assistant to the CEO	ceo-ea@rnassoc.org
Governance Support Officer	gso@rnassoc.org
Secretary to Boards	dcos@rnassoc.org
Welfare and Wellbeing Support	wws@rnassoc.org
Semaphore Circular and Short	comms@rnassoc.org
Membership Manager	ams@rnassoc.org
Finance	dams@rnassoc.org
Head of Communications	hoc@rnassoc.org
RNA Communications Lead	cml@rnassoc.org
National Advisors	
National Branch Retention and Recruiting Advisor	rna.brre@outlook.com
National Welfare Advisor	geoff@royalnavalassoc.com
National Rules and Bye-Laws Advisor	governancechair@royalnavalassoc.com
National Ceremonial Advisor	nca@royalnavalassoc.com

Find Semaphore Circular online at

www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/news

or navigate to

RNA Website / About / News / Semaphore Circular

Snail Mail – Postal Address

RNA Central Office,
Lanyard House,
Scott Road,
HM Naval Base,
Portsmouth
Hants PO1 3LU

FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Ahoy Shipmates!

As the autumn leaves fall and the year draws closer to its end, it's heartening to reflect on the camaraderie, tradition, and remembrance that continue to define our Royal Naval Association community.

Last month started with a bang with the World Uckers Championships hosted by the RNA in Portsmouth.

The singles final was a rerun of last year's with the same outcome and Stan Patterson RM reaffirming his dominance as World Champion for the second year running – he despatched me in the third round when I thought I had him!

Quite remarkably, this event has drawn over 100,000 views on the RNA social media channels.

For those Uckers fans out there, why don't you consider putting an Uckers board on your letter to Santa Claus to prep for participation in next year's event on 3 October? Why not make a weekend of it at the Royal Maritime Hotel, Portsmouth?

October saw a truly memorable event with the Fisherman's Friends, Royal Marines Band and RNA Combined Community Choirs concert, which brought together shipmates and supporters in a celebration of sea shanties, shared heritage, and good cheer.

The atmosphere was electric, the harmonies stirring, and the turnout a testament to the enduring spirit of Naval fellowship.

A heartfelt thank you to all who helped organise and attend – your enthusiasm made it a resounding success. We're still buzzing!

We've also enjoyed a splendid Trafalgar dinner season, with gatherings across the country honouring one of the Royal Navy's most defining victories.

These dinners are more than just commemorations – they are opportunities to reconnect, to share stories, and to raise a glass to those who came before us.

Whether you attended a formal mess dinner or a more intimate gathering, I hope it reminded you of the pride we all share in our Naval history.

Thank you especially to Wrexham and Chichester Branches, who were kind enough to host me at their dinners this year.

Now, as we approach Remembrance weekend, we turn our thoughts to solemn reflection.

Across the nation, shipmates will stand shoulder to shoulder in honour of those who gave their lives in service and to remember those who have crossed the bar more recently.

The RNA's presence at ceremonies large and small is a powerful symbol of our commitment to never forget.

Whether you're laying a wreath, marching in a parade, or



simply observing a moment of silence, your participation matters.

Only yesterday, our Association Membership Secretary, Sara Field, represented the RNA at the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Cathedral and met Her Majesty The Queen.

Let us also remember those among us who may find this time of year difficult. Reach out, check in, and offer a kind word – our strength lies in our unity and compassion.

As ever, thank you for your continued support of the Association and for keeping the Naval flame burning brightly in your communities.

The Semaphore Circular remains your magazine, so please send in your stories, photos, and reflections of this weekend and other events you are involved in.

Finally, a huge shout out to S/M Andrew Johnson, driver of the LNER train with the horrendous stabbing incident in Cambridgeshire last weekend.

I know it is said that through the good deeds of the membership of the RNA, we conduct one thousand good deeds a day.

Being Navy people, we look after each other – it's just what we do. Normally, those good deeds amount to running an errand or giving someone a lift, but Andrew's contribution to society made the headlines and it was good to hear that he felt that his Naval training allowed him to keep cool, formulate a plan and deliver it under considerable stress. Bravo Zulu Sir!

Fair winds and following seas,

Bill

BOOTIES TAKE UCKERS WORLD TITLES

The Royal Maritime Hotel was buzzing with excitement as the RNA's Uckers World Championships returned to Portsmouth.

This spirited event celebrates the traditional naval board game of Uckers, a beloved pastime among generations of Royal Navy personnel.

Players from across the country gathered to register, with the first dice rolling at 1000. The annual event was open to all – no qualification required – making it a welcoming and inclusive celebration of naval heritage and camaraderie.

Uckers, often described as a mix of strategy, luck, and banter, is played on a distinctive board with dice and coloured counters. Known for its competitive spirit and unique terminology, the game has long been a staple in mess decks and naval clubs.

The championship is supported by Uckers Ya Uckers and the Royal Maritime Hotel,

Spectators and players alike enjoyed the lively atmosphere, friendly rivalries, and shared stories of service and tradition.

Roland Jones, retired Royal Navy veteran from RNA Street won the first Snake-Eyes prize, he said, "I have had a great day. I really miss this interaction, so the banter and camaraderie here is priceless."

Winner of the Champion Single title was reigning champion, Stan Patterson RM. After an epic day of head-to-head rivalry, culminating with a rematch with Brent Latham, he triumphed after a brutal start involving snake eyes, and a brutal end, blocking Brent's progress for much of the second half.

Doubles Champions were the Green Machine (Stan Patterson and Alex Cruikshanks, Royal Marine veterans) who were playing against The Matelot and his Civvy (Simon Mills and Oli Smith).

Stan, veteran Royal Marine and last year's Reining Champion in both Singles and Doubles, said: "I've had a great day and this event is really good fun. I can't wait for next year..."

Players ranged in age from eleven years old to 83, bringing serving, veterans and families together for a day of fun and comradeship.

"This isn't just a game – it's a celebration of naval culture," said Andy Christie, National Chairman of the RNA. "Uckers brings people together, and today's championship is a testament to the enduring spirit of the Royal Navy community."



MEMENTO FROM FRIGATE HMS TORQUAY

Former CPO R Mech 1 William Symington saw reports of the World Uckers Championships on social

media and got in touch regarding heirlooms from his time on board frigate HMS Torquay.

William, who served in the frigate under the command of former RNA National President Vice admiral John McAnally, said: "I was the Mess Social Secretary and when Torquay paid off in 1985 I acquired the Mess Uckers Board [pictured left] and everything associated with it.

"I have no idea when it was made or who made it.

"It is quite intricately

carved around the sides as you can see in the photo.

"The reverse side is completely blank.

"I reckon it must now be at least 60 to 70 years old, if not more, as I left the RN in 1987.

"The wooden board is 2ft by 2ft and the 'men' the originals cut from a broom handle.

"The 'men' and dice are all stored in the original Tickler Tin – you can just about make out RN and Cigarette Tobacco on the lid.

"Alas, like everything else associated with the set (including me), it has suffered from the ravages of use and time!

"It is still regularly used at home, having taught the grandchildren the intricacies of the game."



RNA SHIPMATE PRAISED FOR HIS ROLE IN TRAIN STABBING INCIDENT

The RNA is proud to recognise the bravery of S/M Andrew Johnson, a former Royal Navy CPOWEA and long-standing RNA member, who played a critical role in saving lives during the recent stabbing incident aboard an LNER train.

On Saturday evening, 1 November 2025, a knife attack occurred on the 6.25pm service from Doncaster to London King's Cross.

Amid the chaos, Mr Johnson – now an LNER train driver – acted decisively, getting the train diverted to Huntingdon station within minutes of being alerted to the unfolding

SPEAKERS EXPLORE TURBULENT WORLD

Former Defence Secretary and Royal Naval Reservist Dame Penny Mordaunt is amongst the defence specialists at the 2026 Lewes Speakers Festival who will deliver a series of talks exploring leadership, duty and Britain's place in a turbulent world.

The Festival offers a wide range of speakers on subjects as diverse as the reasons behind Japan's surrender in 1945, child exploitation, the global battle for AI supremacy, Margaret Thatcher's legacy and Moscow's evolving art of war through drones, cyber attacks and disinformation.

For more details on the programme, which runs from Friday 16 to Sunday 18 January at the All Saints Centre in Lewes, see <https://www.speakersfestivals.com/lewes-speakers-festival>

emergency.

His quick thinking enabled armed police and paramedics to reach the scene rapidly, preventing further harm and ensuring the safety of his passengers.

Mr. Johnson served in the Royal Navy for 17 years, rising to the rank of Chief Petty Officer and deploying to Iraq during the Second Gulf War in 2003.

His military experience and composure under pressure were evident during this crisis.

Speaking after the incident, he said: "I was only doing my job; we have been trained to keep a calm head. It was my colleague, who is in hospital, who was the brave one."

RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant commented: "Being Navy people, we look after each other.

"Normally, those good deeds amount to picking up a newspaper for an old boy or giving someone a run to the hospital, but Andrew's contribution to society went way beyond that and it was good to hear that he felt that his Naval training – all those Thursday Wars! – allowed him to keep cool, formulate a plan and deliver it under considerable stress.

"We are immensely proud of his response in such a harrowing situation."

The RNA extends its thoughts and support to all those affected, particularly the LNER staff member who remains in critical condition after intervening to protect passengers.

FRENCH STUDENTS REMEMBER

Since the beginning of the school year, the students of the Defense Class at Collège Saint-Louis in Cabourg, Normandy, have experienced several significant moments with regards to remembrance, including two particular highlights:

■ 'Writing to Remember' – as with every year, students created around 800

greeting cards specially for veterans, widows, families and veterans of UN or NATO missions

■ The Franco-British online ceremony on 4 November, bringing together students from Cabourg and from the Portsmouth Grammar School for a shared moment of remembrance around the World War 1.

KOREA IN THE SPOTLIGHT

A one-day celebration of the history and philately of the Korean peninsula, from 1945 to 1953 with special focus on the Korean War, will be held on 11 November at the Royal Philatelic Society in London. See the flyer [here](#) for more details.

BLIND VETERAN'S CANDLES ARE SUPPORTING MILITARY CHARITY

A blind Royal Marines veteran has made a special batch of scented candles to commemorate Remembrance and is selling them to give back to a military charity that has supported him. 65-year-old Tony Haskey, from Poole, has made a special version of his Rock Salt & Driftwood candle which includes space on the label to write the name of the person being remembered.

Each candle comes with a complimentary wax poppy and Tony is donating 50 per cent of the profits to Blind Veterans UK to thank the charity for the support it has given him.

Earlier this year in May Tony created VE Day 80 'After the Darkness' candles, raising £2,000 for Blind Veterans UK. Tony said: "Making candles helps me focus my thoughts and emotions into something beautiful, and I often think about the warmth and light they bring, just like the support Blind Veterans UK offers to veterans.

"The charity has been a constant source of encouragement, helping me stay connected to my craft and reminding me of the importance of honouring those who gave so much."

"I hope people can light a candle, reflect on those who gave their lives for us, and feel that the flame is burning in their memory. That would mean a lot to me."

Tony first joined up to the Royal Marines at 16-years-old. It was later in his career, while serving on an operation overseas, when he first felt something was wrong with his vision; he saw a medic who advised that he had an incurable eye condition and at the age of 27 was told to return to the UK.

In 1993, Tony discovered Blind Veterans UK and began receiving support. He was sent to the charity's rehabilitation centre to attend a six-week course which included basic housekeeping, cooking and computer literacy skills.

Tony's candle costs £9.99 and can be purchased from seabreezecandles.co.uk

Blind Veterans UK supports thousands of blind veterans across the country. If you, or someone you know, served in the Armed Forces, including National Service, and are now struggling with sight loss, then call 0800 389 7979 or visit: blindveterans.org.uk/gethelp

DIGITAL VERSION OF VETERAN CARD IS NOW AVAILABLE TO DOWNLOAD

Veterans can now apply for and download a secure digital version of the Armed Forces Veteran Card via the GOV.UK One Login app. Nearly two million veterans can now get and benefit from either version of the card, which will make it easier and quicker to access key services and discounts via smartphones.

The digital version gives veterans a seamless way to confirm their status in person and will include information already featured on their physical card, displaying their name, photo, latest service, and date of birth with the security features that protect their personal information.

From registering with GPs to housing support, discounted entry to museums and money off their shopping, the card will ensure former serving personnel can access services quickly and easily online at the touch of a button.

Once an application is approved, downloading the card takes minutes – far quicker than waiting for a physical card to arrive by post.

The card highlights which Service they last served in, which can unlock Service-specific support.

Veterans can download it via the



app and show their digital card.

Technology Secretary Liz Kendall, said:

“Our veterans have given everything by serving for their country and it is only right that we give them all the support they need.

“As we deliver national renewal we are modernising our public services so they work around people’s lives and keep pace with the digital world we live in.

“The digital Veteran Card will help remove barriers, reduce red tape and make it easier for people to access the public services they need.”

Minister for Veterans and People, Louise Sandher-Jones said: “This digital Veteran Card removes barriers and puts convenience back in their hands – whether they’re registering

with a new GP, seeking housing support, or simply getting a discount at their local museum.

“With 1.8 million veterans across the UK now able to benefit from this innovation, we’re making good on our commitment to modernise services for our veteran community.” Veterans will be able to use the digital card to:

- Register their service background with their GP to access the healthcare

opportunities they deserve with security and respect. This can give them access to services in England such as Op Restore for physical health support and Op Courage for mental health and wellbeing.

- Confirm their military background to access supported housing through Op Fortitude, the government’s secure referral system and support service for ex-Service personnel who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

- Get support into high-value careers with Op Ascend, a free government-backed service linking them up with career advisors and veteran-friendly employers.

- Access discounts and services offered by participating businesses. The digital card is optional and will initially be available for in-person use, with functionality set to expand over the coming months to enable secure online use.

The digital Veteran Card works alongside the existing physical Armed Forces Veteran Card, giving veterans greater flexibility and choice. It is the UK government’s first digital document to be stored in the GOV.UK One Login app, which provides the security and functionality for storing digital credentials as part of the national renewal agenda to create opportunity and make lives easier through better digital services. As more credentials are added over time – such as the digital driving licence – and bring this capability to a bigger group of users, the government will transition to talking about it as the GOV.UK Wallet.

The card launch builds on the government’s blueprint for modern digital government – making public services simpler, faster and more accessible through trusted technology that puts people first. Earlier this year, the UK government launched the gov.uk app providing a single, secure place for citizens to access multiple government services, laying the groundwork for innovations like the digital Veteran Card.



CARDS ON SALE NOW

The RNA’s Christmas cards are now on sale from our online shop.

There are two different packs of ten cards, each with two designs, so a total of four designs in all. One pack has five cards of robins wearing an RNA beret and five of donkeys with ban RNA Beret. The other pack has five cards with ships in harbour, and five cards with a robin on red boots wearing an RNA beret.

In all cases the words inside read ‘Merry Christmas and Happy New Year’

Each pack costs £4.50, which includes postage of the pack. You can buy them at the RNA website through the SHOP button (top right of home page), or use this link.

OFFICE CLOSURE DATES

Please note that the RNA Central Office will shut down for the Christmas period from close of play on Friday 19 December. The office will reopen on Monday 5 January. There will be one more edition of the Circular this year (published on Friday 5 December), with the subsequent Semaphore publication being the January Circular, which is due out on 9 January 2026.

FREE RAIL TRAVEL FOR REMEMBRANCE EVENTS...

The rail industry is supporting serving military personnel and veterans by providing free rail travel during this year's Remembrance commemorations.

Serving military personnel and veterans attending Services of Remembrance across Great Britain on Sunday 9 November will be able to travel by train for free. This includes travel to any London Terminal station on either Saturday 8 or Sunday 9 November, with return travel permitted on Sunday 9 November only. For Services of Remembrance taking place outside London, free return travel will be available on Sunday 9 November only. The offer is open to serving military personnel in uniform or carrying a current MOD90 Ministry of Defence-issued identity card, and to veterans with a Veterans Railcard, Veterans Oyster card, MOD-issued Veterans ID or other appropriate proof of service.

As part of this year's bicentenary of rail, the industry also marked the 80th anniversary of VE day, highlighting the vital role that the railway played in the war effort for soldiers and civilians alike, mobilising troops, transporting supplies, and sustaining the country during times of conflict.

Railway stations have also played a vital role. For example, during World War 1, Preston station became a lifeline for millions of Servicemen, with volunteers running a 24-hour buffet that offered food, shelter and comfort for those departing to and returning from battle.

In World War 2, London Paddington served as a key evacuation hub, where thousands of children – including those arriving through Kindertransport, a rescue effort for Jewish children fleeing Nazi-occupied Europe – passed through its platforms in search of safety. Jacqueline Starr, Executive Chair and CEO at Rail Delivery Group, said: "As we celebrate 200 years of rail, it is only right that the industry reflects on the vital role it played in our nation's



war efforts.

"The railway has always been closely connected to Remembrance, with so many rail workers themselves having given their lives during the World Wars.

"Today, we are proud to continue that connection by helping serving personnel, veterans, and volunteers attend the services and events that mean so much to them."

Transport Secretary Heidi Alexander said: "Remembrance services are a vital time for our country to come together, reflecting on the sacrifices made and honouring those who continue to protect our way of life.

"Free train travel will help make it easier for veterans and serving personnel to take part in those moments of national reflection.

"It is only fitting that the rail industry, which played such a significant role in our nation's war effort, marks these occasions by paying tribute to those who gave their lives and those who still serve today."

Lucy Inskip, Director of Poppy Appeal at The Royal British Legion, said: "We would like to thank the UK's rail companies for continuing to honour Remembrance by offering free rail travel to veterans and serving personnel each year.

"We're also grateful that they continue to offer their support for London Poppy Day by allowing our volunteers to do their vital work at no additional personal cost."

...AND ON THE BUSES!

Bus operator Stagecoach is offering free national travel on all its bus services for serving military, cadets, and veterans on Remembrance Sunday, 9 November, and Armistice Day, Tuesday 11 November.

The offer applies to any serving military or cadet in uniform, those with a military ID card, and veterans wearing medals or badges, attending remembrance services.

Stagecoach's dedication to offering free travel for the Armed Forces is supported by its employee-led Veterans Network. This network was established to unite Stagecoach employees, giving them a platform to drive positive change, raise awareness, shape business decisions, and implement new initiatives that enhance the company.

Stagecoach has been a member of the Armed Forces Covenant since March 2015. The Covenant recognises the value of serving military, regular and reservists, veterans and military families across the country. The Company is also a Gold employee award holder, as part of The Defence Employer Recognition Scheme, for its commitment to the Armed Forces community.

CENOTAPH DETAILS FOR RNA MARCHERS

Members of the RNA who are marching on Whitehall at the National Service of Remembrance on Sunday 9 November as part of the official RNA contingent are advised to see the general guidance from the Ministry of Defence on page 11.

Additional information for the RNA contingent is as follows:

The Column letter is A, but look out

for the RNA's National Ceremonial Advisor, Mike Smyth, for guidance. Timings for the day are:

0830: Horse Guards Parade

Accreditation opens on The Mall.

0920: Association leads deadline to collect lapel badges.

0930: Columns F, R and Y move to Whitehall to form up.

0945: Contingents are to be assembled

ready to march onto Whitehall.

0950: Contingents step off from Horse Guards as directed by Parade Marshals.

1050: All contingents to be formed up in Whitehall. No movement after this time.

1059: His Majesty The King arrives at the Cenotaph.

1100: Two Minute Silence.



NATIONAL SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE

On Sunday 9 November, the National Service of Remembrance will be held at the Cenotaph on Whitehall, London. Starting at 11am, the service will commemorate the contribution of British and Commonwealth military and civilian Servicemen and women involved in the two world wars and later conflicts. The Department for Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) co-ordinates the event, alongside colleagues from across government, the Armed Forces and veterans' organisations.

Attending in person:

No tickets or passes are needed for the event and the public are welcome to watch the ceremony from the pavements along Whitehall and Parliament Street. However, all attendees will be subject to security checks and entry may be limited if the area becomes full. There will be video screens north of the Cenotaph, near the green directly in front of the statue of Field Marshal Montgomery, and in the lay-by outside Dover House (between Horse Guards and Downing Street) and close to the junction of Whitehall Place. There is also a screen south of the Cenotaph on the corner of King Charles Street. Space will be available for wheelchair users and other spectators who might find it difficult to view from the general public areas. This area is located on the west side of Parliament Street, close to the junction with King Charles Street. Space here will be offered on a first-come, first-served basis. One carer or guest per person will also be admitted

and a toilet for those with accessibility needs will be available nearby.

Timings:

0800: Whitehall opens to the public.

Space will be limited. Please allow time to clear the police security procedures.

From 1030: All detachments form up on the Cenotaph.

From 1050: Participants process out onto the Cenotaph

1100: National two-minute silence marked by the firing of guns on Horse Guards Parade. Cenotaph Service commences

1125: Cenotaph Service concludes and the Royal British Legion detachments disperse past the Cenotaph.

Security information:

There is an extensive policing and security operation in place on the day. Please allow plenty of time for clearance through police security checks.

■ Please do not bring large bags.

Those with multiple or complex openings or cases will delay yours and others entry into the public viewing areas

■ Please note that the unauthorised use of any drones (including quadcopters/helicopters) in this area and the roads surrounding Whitehall is strictly prohibited at all times

■ Those attending are asked to remain vigilant and should report anything that doesn't look or feel right to a police officer, or via www.gov.uk/ACT. Always dial 999 in an emergency.

Travel information:

■ Please be aware that stations close to the service and surrounding areas

will likely be busy before and after the service times.

■ Plan your journey using the **Transport for London** and **National Rail Enquiries** websites.

■ Check **Transport for London status updates** and **National Rail Enquiries latest travel information** before you travel.

■ Find up-to-date travel information by following **National Rail Enquiries** on X or downloading the **TfL Go app**.

Order of service:

Follow [this link](#) for the order of service (PDF, 435 KB, 2 pages)

Watching the event from home:

You can watch the event on TV on the BBC, Sky and ITV, and follow DCMS on social media for highlights from the service.

Further information:

Queries about the march-past should be sent to the Royal British Legion at cenotaph@britishlegion.org.uk

Photography is permitted, but the Metropolitan Police have powers to remove obstacles such as camera tripods where they obstruct public access or views. Spectators should not take photographs during the two-minute silence when shutter noises can offend.

Temporary public toilets will be located in Whitehall Place

First aid facilities, provided by St John Ambulance, will be available at various locations along Whitehall.

■ **RNA Contingent for National Service of Remembrance – see page 10**

MARK CONQUERS THE THAMES

A team of Forces veterans and firefighters have kayaked the entire length of the Thames in under five days – and one of them was RNA member Mark Robbie.

The challenge was to paddle 156 miles in four-and-a-half days, and the reward was to raise money for their chosen charities.

Mark, we are delighted to say, chose the Association.

"My grandfather and I both served in the Royal Navy," said Mark, pictured right during the challenge.

"My grandfather, Richard Robbie, served as a gunner in HMS Ajax at the Battle of the River Plate. I served from 1988-2011 on a variety of ships – twice in HMS Fearless, HMS Invincible, HMS Atherstone and HMS Lancaster.

"My grandfather was also the Standard Bearer for Stone Branch of the RNA, albeit many years ago, whilst myself, I am currently the Treasurer for Stoke on Trent & District Branch.

"So, as you can see, the RN is in my blood, and I felt it a worthy charity to raise money for, both locally and nationally.

"Currently my crazy Kayak challenge of 160 miles and 45 locks along the River Thames has raised in the region of £1,700 (and \$7!).

"The justgiving link is still open should anyone wish to add to that total. Every donation, no matter how big or small, will make a difference."

During this "amazing adventure" the paddlers stayed at retained fire stations and with the Sea Cadet unit at Twickenham, making it a real team effort.

"I like to do random challenges that push me to my limits and test my physical and mental strength — and this one is



definitely out of my comfort zone!" said Mark.

"It was an epic week – it was quite tough in places. And plenty of digging deep on the final day, especially."

Mark's final thought on the venture?

"What's next?"

If you'd like to support Mark, you can donate here: https://www.justgiving.com/page/mark-robbie-kayak156?utm_medium=FR&utm_source=CL

READING FORCE TO HOST A SPECIAL EVENING



There are still a few tickets available for a special evening of celebration and commemoration at Prince Consort's Library, Aldershot, on Tuesday (11 November, 6pm to 7.30pm), featuring two familiar faces. Reading Force has organised this event, where they will be joined by Dame Penelope Keith, perhaps most famous for her roles in the classic BBC sitcoms *The Good Life* and *To the Manor Born*, and former *Blue Peter* presenter Janet Ellis.

The evening, which is billed as a special way to spend Remembrance evening, will also feature musical interludes by talented

young trumpeter Ben Tugendhat.

Dame Penelope and Janet, both patrons of Reading Force, will read from a selection of poetry and prose curated by Prof Jane Potter, Chair of the Wilfred Owen Association and trustee of the Wilfred Owen Estate, and the founder and director of Reading Force, Prof Alison Baverstock. Tickets to this unique event are available free, but a retiring collection will be held. Tickets are available through Eventbrite – use [this link](#).

Further information available on the Reading Force website – use [this link](#).

NEW OWNERS OF ROYAL HOSPITAL SCHOOL

Greenwich Hospital has looked after the Royal Hospital School (RHS) and cared for its pupils since its founding in 1712. In 1933, as part of a major change, the school moved from Greenwich to Suffolk and, over the following years, widened participation to create the thriving and successful co-educational school that it is today.

When founded, all RHS pupils were children of Royal Navy sailors, but today only a small number of children come from Naval families. As a result, and following extensive review, it was concluded that not only should Greenwich Hospital refocus exclusively on the Naval beneficiaries, to whom they have an enduring commitment, but also that in keeping with the rapidly-evolving educational landscape, the school should not remain as a singular educational entity.

Ownership of the school will transfer to the Inspired Learning Group, although Naval traditions will continue – Greenwich Hospital will continue to provide bursaries to Naval children in particular need, and Greenwich Hospital, as the continuing owner of the school's residential properties and surrounding land, will remain "a close neighbour and friend."

Greenwich Hospital recognises that providing educational support and opportunities to the children of the Royal Naval community requires a more agile approach. Their commitment is demonstrated in their new free sailing and swimming provision to all Naval children regardless of their background or circumstance as well as our ongoing work with to ensure all Naval children get the support they need in order to thrive.

MEMORIAL DEDICATED TO FORCES LGBT+ COMMUNITY

The King has dedicated a memorial to the Armed Forces LGBT+ community at the National Memorial Arboretum.

King Charles was joined by almost 300 veterans, serving personnel and invited guests for the ceremony at Alrewas, in Staffordshire.

According to the influential Forces LGBTQ+ charity Fighting With Pride (FWP): "It was hugely symbolic that the head of the UK Armed Forces chose this event for his first, formal LGBTQ+ event, and was seen by the veterans as the final step needed in the apology from the State that was recommended by the late Lord Ehterton in his LGBT Veterans Independent Review."

Taking their seats in front of the memorial, named 'An Opened Letter', the VIP guests heard speeches by Ed Hall, Chair of the Board of Trustees at FWP, Brigadier Clare Phillips and the new Minister for Veterans and People, Louise Sandher-Jones.

Flowers were laid by the King and other guests accompanied by an a cappella version of 'Something Inside So Strong' by Virtual Q.

King Charles then spoke to Memorial Officer Roly Woods, Nina Bilbey from the Abraxas Academy artist collective, which created the memorial, followed by seven veterans impacted by the

so-called 'gay ban' and seven current Serving personnel.

Although the Sexual Offences Act 1967 partially decriminalised male homosexual relationships in England and Wales, this ban remained in place for military personnel many of whom were either dismissed or forced out before the ban was ended in January 2000.

The memorial, a pierced, aluminium bronze, free-standing sculpture, was funded by the government and delivered by Fighting With Pride, and will serve as a place of reflection and recognition as well as remembrance.

The design represents 'an Opened Letter' of love and devotion, which was once used to shame individuals, containing words from personal testimony and evidence collected from those who experienced discrimination, exclusion, or even loss of life, due to their true identities.

LGBTQ+ veterans and serving personnel visited Holkham Forge in Norfolk during the sculpture's fabrication, each hammering a mark into the bronze base, symbolically linking themselves to the memorial. For more on the memorial follow [this link](#).

According to Fighting With Pride: "This was a wonderful day of reflection and healing.

"It brought veterans, many of whom had had little or no contact with the military since their dismissals and discharges, back into the military family.

"It was hugely emotional but a significant part of the reparations that the Veterans are due.

"The memorial stands in pride of place near the areas for all of the services and is easily accessible for all. It is a

stunning piece of great beauty that has come from the words of our Veterans. It reflects on the hurt and pain of the past, but looks at the positivity of change and hope for the future. This will be a permanent place for veterans and current serving personnel to visit and reflect on the values of service; duty, honour, sacrifice, strength and courage.

www.fightingwithpride.org.uk

Left: The King in conversation with Minister for Veterans and People, Louise Sandher-Jones (right), at the National Memorial Arboretum. Images: UK MOD © Crown copyright 2025



LBGT+ MEMORIAL – A PERSONAL ACCOUNT

I can remember which day it was (maybe a Monday) or the date, but in September 1978 I boarded an evening train in Larbert, Stirlingshire, Scotland, heading to London and then on to Dartmouth, to begin my journey in the Royal Navy as an Officer Cadet, writes *Catriona Wallace, a member of the RNA Riders Branch*.

I'd wanted to go to sea since I was young – my parents were mortified when my elder brother, aged 11, at his joining interview, announced to the headmaster of the Grammar School that he wanted to be an astronaut, so I trumped him a year later (having been pre-warned to avoid the astronaut thing) by announcing that I was going to be a sailor. There was no 'want', I WAS going to be a sailor.

I tried to get in at 16 (as a stoker), was sent back to school to do my highers, tried again at 17 (for Artificer) and got sent back to school to do sixth year studies. I finally wore them down enough, but I had to go to Manadon – there was no way the RN was going to pay me to skip lectures at Strathclyde Uni, and drink at student prices in the Uni bar.

However, I had a secret; I knew I was not a 'normal' male.

It wasn't because I couldn't do male things (mostly I could, but drew a line at football), it was because the real me was female. I had a male body, but it was only a skin I had to wear. I knew the Armed Forces had a ban on being gay – the jokes from my friends would have compensated for any lack of knowledge – but no one said they also had a ban on men who were women.

The AIB didn't ask about it, and if they did, I missed it and wouldn't have known how to answer anyway – how did a naive 18-year-old in 1978 explain that to anyone? What did happen during the AIB was that I got wet, fell into endless chasms and couldn't identify anything other than a submarine and a carrier (is that Ark Royal?).

I got through three months at Dartmouth (no idea how, someone must have seen some potential, somewhere) and the Dartmouth Training Ship (HMS Hermes) by the skin of my teeth (so many rules and shouting), successfully passing out of Dartmouth with a degree of dignity, scraped through some Fleet training (suffice to say I was not the kind of young man to impress people, unlike my mate who clearly was) and on to RNEC Manadon.

Looking back, I got by because I either didn't have time to reflect on me, or because I had shoved me so low that I wouldn't be found. This was macho stuff, and what I wanted (Hornblower has so much to answer for) – maybe not as much as what I really wanted, but this was attainable and what I really wanted was just an impossible dream.

I did struggle with the academia at Manadon – up until then schooling was easy, turn up, sit in class and fool around and the knowledge was absorbed by osmosis.

I lost that ability as I got older so what should have been an easy 1st turned out to be a hard-won 3rd, but it was enough to get me on to the next stage. I also got



to be me occasionally – having a cabin of my own, and a Cabin Steward who drank more than I did so never noticed what were probably obvious clues helped, but there were also girlfriends – more than a few (I was a young Naval Officer after all, and a biker, and I think some films of the time might have helped) – so female clothing in my cabin didn't raise any suspicions.

I wasn't scared of being caught and thrown out – I feared being thought inadequate, inferior, perverted. I gained a wife after I gained my degree, and although no one else knew it, I thought I was sorted, life would be 'normal', and I could focus on being bloody good at what I wanted to do. The application course followed, as did the Nuclear course in Greenwich and the operators course at Sultan, and finally I was released into the fleet as a trainee AMEO, with a warning to my new boss – I would never pass my qualifying board. I did pass, and pass well with a brilliant simulator performance and an oral board which was a short, tetchy session with my Squadron MEO – I knew my submarine, he didn't, and whilst I had no idea what gonads were (who calls them that?), I knew how to stop them getting fried. My reports from HMS Churchill were good, and I was hitting hard enough to get recommendations for early promotion.

Whilst serving in Churchill my family grew, and we had our daughter christened on board – I was proper Jack. I loved my time with Churchill and her crew, and would have happily stayed there, as AMEO, for the rest of my career. No chance to be me at sea and little time ashore, but I was buried deep at that point.

All good things come to an end, and quickly.

I was appointed to Vulcan NRTE, where the new Vanguard class submarine

REMEMBRANCE FIRST

In the 25th year since the lifting of the Ban, *Fighting With Pride* has been provided with a Field of Remembrance in Westminster for the very first time.

In setting this up for the first time they have ordered a number of crosses to be placed in the field. The charity knows that many fields contain named crosses, and other denominational memorials with the names and ranks of individuals.

They were determined to ensure that their own Field of Remembrance was reflective of their community.

For those visiting the Field whilst it is open you can place your own memorial. Wreaths are not permitted due to space limitations.

They will remember those who made the ultimate sacrifice in conflicts, and members of their community who served and lost their lives in secret, and whose names they will never know.



Continued on page 15

reactor prototype was being tested. I wanted to go back to sea as MEO of a conventional boat, but opportunities in the Navy to spend time in your hometown don't come often if that town is Thurso, Caithness. I had a new child, so I grabbed it – and that was my downfall. The prototype Vanguard reactor was fun (in a fancy techy simulator kind of way), but the original prototype was better – make some holes in a submarine reactor plant and see what happens. I do like fireworks, and I'd always wondered how the boffins worked out our emergency drills. We had a second child and life was good. But there was a downside for me – it was a dual role. In peacetime we would play with all things nuclear, in war we would go and do war things in an office somewhere else on a shift pattern. That meant practising, and that meant spending two weeks away with sufficient free time to be me. And I got to think I could handle it. I couldn't, and eventually I got caught in 1989 by the Metropolitan police – do not get drunk and venture outside in London wearing women's attire. Whilst the RN seemed to dislike their officers wearing biker clothing, the Met have a real thing about blokes wearing women's clothing. No restraint or favour was shown, and they then took great delight in handing me over to the Naval Provost. The MoD were no less forgiving, and it

was game over, although the reality is that I did know this as soon as the police car stopped behind me. No quarter was given; I was out in disgrace. I offered to resign so I could leave with my dignity intact – that was refused because I had broken the rules. I was interviewed by the SIB for someone else's pleasure, certainly not mine because I'd already admitted everything. But I wasn't immediately discharged, I had to serve long enough to allow my replacement to be freed from elsewhere in the fleet, although to be fair, this did allow me to qualify for a pension. Nevertheless, I maintained my commitment to my country and my service, to the extent that I was entrusted to present the Royal Navy's opinion on a draft proposal for the disposal of decommissioned nuclear submarines. My last report acknowledged my commitment, but did note that I had allowed my veneer of social grace to slip and I had become scruffy – polishing my shoes had suddenly lost its value when faced with no means to support my family. I hated the Navy when I departed – I'd had an absolute blast and would never have willingly left, but being canned took all that away and it was a long time before I could look back with anything but anger at the RN, the MOD, the world, and disgust with myself, but somewhere, somehow, I knew I was

better than that and I eventually found the strength to find myself and live my life, the way I should have been able to do, so many years ago. The lifting of the ban in 2000 was way too late for me, but Lord Etherton's review of the effects of the ban resulted in many recommendations for reparations for those affected – one of those being the erection of a memorial, and that was what this day was for. Getting a ticket to be present was lucky (I'd applied, missed the first pass but landed a cancellation), however I really wasn't sure what I would take away from the event – the Prime Minister had publicly apologised in Parliament but it meant nothing to me. I'd heard in the morning news that the King would attend the Arboretum that day as I dressed, and I was pleased, as I believe that was his personal choice. **However words cannot explain how I felt when he stopped in front of me, smiled and held his hand out.** Until that moment the reparations were just that, hollow reparations, but when the Senior Royal himself took the time to speak to me, I felt that was genuine and maybe the state apologies did mean something after all. His parting words to me, said with a smile – "Submariners ... special people" – finally validated that part of my life because I was special, in ways they never could neither understand nor accept.

WINNERS SET A FINE EXAMPLE

On Wednesday 22 October, the nation came together at the Park Plaza Westminster Bridge for a night of celebration, pride, and heartfelt recognition at the 15th annual Soldiering On Awards, organised by **X-Forces Enterprise**.

Hosted by broadcaster Jeremy Vine, the glittering ceremony honoured the outstanding achievements of individuals, teams, and organisations from across the Armed Forces community, those whose courage, resilience, and spirit of service continue to inspire and uplift our nation.

This year's Awards were especially poignant, marking 80 years since VE Day and VJ Day – a fitting moment to reflect on the enduring legacy of those who secured peace eight decades ago, and to celebrate their contemporaries who carry that legacy forward today.

From entrepreneurs and volunteers to healthcare champions and community leaders, 38 extraordinary finalists stood as powerful examples of how service extends far beyond the call of duty. Their stories moved the audience to both laughter and tears, each one a reminder of the strength, compassion, and unity that define this remarkable community.

As part of this year's ceremony, the Soldiering On Awards were honoured to receive a personal message from Prime Minister Sir Keir Starmer, who paid tribute to the Armed Forces community and reaffirmed the

government's commitment to supporting those who serve and have served.

Throughout the evening, tributes were paid to the families and supporters who stand beside those who serve, the quiet strength behind every story of success. Corporate partners, charities, and military leaders joined together to applaud the finalists, recognising that collaboration across all sectors is vital to sustaining the Armed Forces Covenant and building a fairer future for all who have served.

For more on the awards and winners see the Soldiering On website at <https://www.soldieringon.org>

TROPHY FUND NAME CHANGE

The Royal Navy Trophy Fund (RNTF) has a new name to better reflect its role – and future possibilities.

It was felt that the name did not adequately explain what the charity does, and that most people thought it stretched no further than sports cups and 'war trophies'.

The new name – the Royal Navy Heritage Collection – captures the fact that there are numerous interesting, historically important artefacts in the collection, while the 'Fund' element (generally meaning 'investment' or 'capital') has been dropped as it does not cover the mission and objectives of the charity, which have been modernised for the 21st century Royal Navy. At the same time, the Royal Navy Trophy Centre (RNTC) will become the Royal Navy Heritage Collection Centre (RNHCC).

The new names will come into effect on 5 January 2026.



**HERITAGE
COLLECTION**

CAN YOU CAPTURE THE ETHOS OF THE RNA IN A SINGLE IMAGE?

Did you take a picture this year that summed up the ethos of Naval veterans? If so, do you reckon it's a winner – an image that stands out from the crowd?

If so, you might like to consider entering that image for the Royal Navy's prestigious Peregrine Trophy photographic competition – not just for the glory, but also for a prize (more of that in due course)...

The annual Royal Navy Photographic Competition will be judged online between 4-11 March 2026, with the winners being announced in mid-March.

The competition is divided into Professional, Amateur, Cadets, Royal Fleet Auxiliary, Veterans and General Public categories – 20 categories in all.

The one of particular interest to the Association is the Veterans category (Royal Naval Association – Category 17)

This category is open to Naval Service Veterans, Royal Navy and Royal Marines amateur photographers and Royal Navy professional photographers.

Each photographer may submit a maximum of three photographs, and all photographs must have been taken between 16 December 2024 and 31 December 2025, and not entered in the RN Photographic Competition 2024.

The photographs should encapsulate the ethos of the RNA.

A completed application form (found at the back of the Circular [here](#)) must accompany each entry.

Photographs that are personal copyright are only accepted for entry on the understanding that they may be reproduced free of charge. Photographs submitted may be used in public relations, marketing literature, official publications and online. Consent should be gained by the photographer of any image depicting members of the public if possible. Images should be submitted by email as a JPEG at the highest quality, along with the entry form to the following email addresses:

dutyphotosr@gmail.com – Place RNA Peres Entry in the subject field.

cml@rnassoc.org - Place RNA Peres Entry in the subject field.

Entries should be sent no later than 21 February 2026.

Online judging will take place on 4-11 March 2026.

Please note – this is a summary of the conditions of entry; the full official conditions of entry will be available shortly in a official Royal Navy publication which will be signposted through RNA social media channels and Semaphore publications.

The Peregrine Trophy 2025 awards ceremony for all entries will be held between July and August at the National Museum of the Royal Navy within Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

Due to no release date for the opening of the new display/halls where the Peregrine Award will be displayed



Image: LPhot Dan Rosenbaum

the actual date will be released when the results are announced after judging has taken place.

Image format for submission and acceptable methods of digital enhancement:

■ Stills images must be submitted in the electronic format JPEG at the highest quality.

■ Digital enhancement of images is only allowed in order to clean and balance to a correct reproduction of the original conditions. Tools that are considered acceptable:

a Brightness control.

b Burning and dodging.

c Contrast control.

d Colour balance.

e Levels or Curves.

f Saturation.

g Unsharp mask.

h Converting a colour image to black and white or sepia tone.

■ Manipulation of the composite elements of images and HDR are not permitted.

■ Where necessary, tools may also be used to remove sensor artefacts from the image.

The Royal Navy Photographic Specialist Advisor retains the right to reject photographs or videos deemed not suitable, manipulated or over enhanced.

FORCES RUGBY REMEMBERS STEFFAN – ONE OF THEIR OWN

On 5 November the UK Armed Forces Rugby Union (UKAF) hosted a poignant Remembrance rugby match at Kingsholm Stadium, Gloucester, in honour of Royal Navy player Steffan Rees, who tragically passed away last year.

The fixture, played against Germany, was a stirring tribute to Steffan's legacy and the enduring spirit of camaraderie and service, and the RNA was delighted to provide the prize for Player of the Match.

The match carried deep emotional significance as Steffan was a bright star on the rugby pitch.

Steffan, aged 29, died in a tragic

accident during a rugby tour in France, leaving behind a legacy of dedication, sportsmanship, and friendship.

Steffan's mother, Anna Williams, and father, Jamie Rees, were present at the match and presented the Player of the Match award to Vereimi Qorowale during the post-game ceremony.

The RNA sponsored the Man of the Match trophy and salver, further underscoring the RN community's commitment

to remembering Steffan's contributions both on and off the pitch. The UKAF shirts all had the number 12 – Steffan's number – embroidered on them.

Steffan's best friend, Jordan Thomas, said: "We were like brothers and I miss him.

"I was the last person who spoke to him before he died and that is a big responsibility.

"It has been such a hard day, because I know Steff would have loved this – he loved his rugby.

"And he was just one of the nicest blokes you could ever meet."

The Remembrance fixture was not



only a tribute to Steffan Rees but also a celebration of the broader Armed Forces rugby community.

It served as a reminder of the sacrifices made by Service members and the role sport plays in honouring their memory. As the UKAF continues its season, Steffan's spirit remains a guiding force. His name, stitched into every jersey and etched into the hearts of teammates, ensures that his legacy will endure.



PLEA TO SAVE AMBUSCADE

The Clyde Naval Heritage group is seeking the support of RNA members in a national appeal for help to save Type 21 frigate HMS Ambuscade, latterly the Pakistan warship PNS Tariq.

Donated by Pakistan, the organisation needs help to meet costs to bring the ship home to the UK.

They are looking for commercial and public support to raise £1.5m to send a heavy lift vessel to collect the Amazon-class warship and make her the latest significant Royal Navy Exhibit ship since cruiser HMS Belfast.

Built at Yarrow on the Clyde and launched in 1973, Ambuscade covers post-war warship design and conflicts, and will meet the need for a museum space to the Forgotten War, forming the centrepiece of a heritage museum depicting the history of shipbuilding along the Clyde.

For more on Clyde Naval Heritage and their plans see <https://clydenaval.org>



WHERE THERE'S A (FREE) WILL...

You don't write a will for yourself – you write it for your loved ones. If you need to update or create a new will click [here](#) for our free service through Octopus Legacy. Simply answer a few questions and choose how you'd like to write your will, online by phone, or home. This is a membership perk of belonging to the RNA.

You do not have to leave us anything, but if you wanted to it would be great to help shipmates down the line.

You can even stipulate what we spend it on, such as Welfare, or leave something to your local branch.

It's your free will – use it or lose it.

CHARITIES HOST SPECIAL DINNER AT GREENWICH

On Thursday 23 October, Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) and the White Ensign Association (WEA) hosted a special dinner in the Painted Hall at the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich, in London.

The event, which marked the 220th anniversary of the victory at the Battle of Trafalgar and the death of Admiral Lord Nelson, was attended by the Patron of RNRMC, The Princess Royal, and Vice Admiral Sir Timothy Laurence, with former Defence Secretary and now television personality Michael Portillo delivering the keynote address.

This year's dinner brought together more than 350 guests, including headline sponsors – Babcock, BAE Systems, Lockheed Martin and Oaklin – alongside loyal supporters, local Greenwich residents, industry partners, friends of both charities, veterans and senior serving members of the Royal Navy.

The evening embraced Naval traditions by taking the form of a typical Trafalgar Night dinner, including the ceremonial 'Parading of the Beef', chocolate 'Ships of the Line', a stirring performance of mess beatings by the Corps of Drums from the Royal Marines Band Service, and rousing sea shanties – all

of which added to the maritime spirit of the occasion.

Reflecting on the evening, Samantha Nicolson, Interim CEO of RNRMC remarked: "It was fantastic to co-host another memorable Trafalgar Night at the Painted Hall with the White Ensign Association, and an honour for it to once again be in the presence of HRH The Princess Royal.

"Nights like these remind us of the strength and spirit which continue to drive RNRMC and WEA forward in support of the Naval community."

Cdre Stuart Wright, Chief Executive of the White Ensign Association, said: "It is a privilege to have partnered with RNRMC to mark the 220th anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar, a defining moment in our nation's Naval history.

"The men and women in today's Fleet do their duty just as the sailors and marines in Nelson's fleet did over two centuries ago and so, alongside the RNRMC, it is an honour to support them, our veterans and their families." Both organisations continue to play a vital role in supporting serving personnel, veterans, and their families, ensuring that the legacy of service and sacrifice is never forgotten.

FUNDRAISING THE RIGHT WAY

THE Fundraising Regulator recently found a military community interest company (CIC) in breach of the Code of Fundraising Practice.

The CIC, which aims to support and rehabilitate serving and ex-military

veterans, had sparked complaints about street fundraising practices, including whether it had the correct licences and permissions to carry out street fundraising. Shipmates are reminded that they must be familiar with such regulations when they

carry out fundraising involving members of the public for the RNA, including street fundraising. This includes making sure you have all the necessary permissions (in writing!) and avoiding misleading or confusing materials to support the activity. In light of the issues raised by this, if you are fundraising for the RNA in public or on a private site, please make sure you have read, and act in accordance with, the Charity Commission's online publication 'Charity fundraising: a guide to trustee duties (CC20)', which is available online at www.gov.uk/government/publications/charities-and-fundraising-cc20

AREA MEETINGS AND AGMS

	Next Meeting in 2025	AGM in 2026
Area 1	7 December Venue tbc	22 March Venue tbc
Area 2	15 November Sellingde	February Venue tbc
Area 3		Date tbc
Area 4		17 January Bude Branch
Area 5		14 February Wymondham
Area 6		14 February Royston
Area 7		Date tbc
Area 8	tbc	17 January West Bromwich
Area 9	6 December Lincoln RNA Club	7 March Lincoln RNA Club
Area 10		31 January Venue tbc
Area 11	6 December (by Teams)	14 March Hartlepool
Area 12	13 December East Antrim	7 February Venue tbc
Scottish Area	6 December Grangemouth	tbc



QUICK QUOTE FOR TRAVEL INSURANCE

As a member of the 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.

https://51bwhwzvnuu.typeform.com/to/UU6CIVe3#association_members_area=xxxxx

Trinity's benefits don't just cover travel insurance – there are also offers and discounts on Personal Accident cover, Buildings and Contents Insurance and Life Insurance.

Speak to the Trinity team on 0345 241 1001 during office hours for insurance help.

STANDARD BEARERS COMPETITION

The RNA Standard Bearers competition will be held at Whale Island in Portsmouth on Saturday 9 May, with a training session on the afternoon of Friday 8 May.

Entries from shipmates of all abilities (including novices) is encouraged. Further details will be published in due course in the Semaphore newsletters and on social media.

HAVING FUN WITH SMALL SPACE LIVING

Some have been doing it for years, some have been doing it since the dreaded lock down days of 2020, and some are just discovering it now.

What's that, I hear you ask?

Why, it's small space living, of course!

This could be a tent, a shepherd's hut, glamping, motorhoming, canal boating or caravanning – whichever method floats your boat – small space living has been around for a long time, and more and more of us are really getting it.

A small get-together back in June 2022 between fellow RNA members and Falklands veterans was set up at a campsite in Gosport, mainly due to hefty prices and lack of accommodation surrounding the Falklands 40 event which also coincided with the RNA AGM. Andy Fletcher and Ron Shilton, amongst others, were in touch with RNA Central Office, who managed to secure a grant from RNRMC (Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity) to allow for transport to and from locations, and that was it for the weekend – until the Sunday evening, when everyone got together over a tot or two and a bit of a BBQ and shared dits, black-catted mates and talked about their time in the Navy. Turns out that talking was good and done very openly, because those few people were amongst others who knew what they were talking about, they 'got' each other and so the question was asked: "I wonder if there is anyone else out there like us?"

A Facebook account was quickly set up (<https://www.facebook.com/groups/294795378948752>) and the link to the RNA Motorhome Caravan and Camping Club quickly spread between various ship associations and the WRNS pages. Pretty soon, by the end of Year 1, more than 200 members were in!

It is free to join, and the only criteria is that at least one member of the party needs to be an RNA member (Full, Life or Associate).

The page also has details about upcoming get-togethers, information and lots of photos.

The RNAMCC even welcomes RAF and Army personnel (providing the aforementioned RNA membership is in place) – Royals will always be part of the RN of course – and they have a few of those.

The only rule is that there is to be no talk of politics, religion, swearing, selling or indecent behaviour, indecent pictures or that type of content.



There are various meetings up and down the UK and these have taken place in the Malvern Hills in 2023 with a cocktail party, games, BBQ and tots.

In 2025 the numbers grew with a Big, Big, Big Meet in Exmoor and another meet in Moreton Hall, Scotland.

Pirates were the theme for this meet in the summer, with more defaulters, games and general hilarious camaraderie.

There was, for the first time, a gathering organised for the ladies, which went down very well. This will be extended in the group in 2026.

The WRNS also have a social gathering for a chat and a coffee.

For 2026 the theme is still very much under wraps but the location for the main Summer meet will be in Oxfordshire, with two other meets planned for Lincolnshire and somewhere 'oop North'.

This autumn, with the group having grown exponentially, they welcomed their 700th member. Everyone is welcome, whether they have a motorhome, tent or caravan – big or small – and they have flags, pennants, stickers, hitch covers and all sorts of other gizzets (including their own beer mats) and discounts for your small space home, making their members stand out from the crowd whatever country they are travelling in.

Has your appetite been whetted by the amount of fun you could have? If you would like to join, please get in touch via the Facebook page – don't forget to answer the three questions to join – or email AdminRnamcc@outlook.com

For all existing members, if you have not already done so, it would be appreciated if you would complete the short survey on the Facebook page or contact the group so they can email you a copy.



A SPRING MEET – OR A CRUISE TO WITNESS A TOTAL ECLIPSE?

If you're already a member or interested in joining the RNA Yachting SCG then here's some idea of what they will be up to in 2026 alongside the RNVR Yacht Club.

They kick off their social programme with an annual Northern Dinner (posh frocks!) which next year will be held on Saturday 28 February at West Lancashire Golf Club, Liverpool, and which is usually very well attended, so if you're interested get in touch quickly to learn more.

The sailing programme gets started in April with members taking part in the Wednesday Racing programme of Hornet Sailing Club in Gosport and for which willing crew are always welcome to join in.

This leads on to a series of Solent and Southern based events, such as:

- a Spring meet involving Yarmouth (IOW) and Lymington harbours,
 - the Solent meet involving Cowes and Beaulieu,
 - the South West Rally and Dinner involving Teignmouth, Brixham and Dartmouth,
- before heading for some more significant voyages:

The Classic Channel Regatta takes place between 7-16 July involving two days of racing round the cans in Start Bay before a Passage Race to St Peter Port in Guernsey, another Passage Race from St Peter Port to Lézardrieux in Brittany, Bastille Day festivities in Paimpol (a short distance from Lézardrieux) before heading for home. This event is not an RNVRYC event but an event with a significant number of RNVRYC members involved.

If you are the owner of a classic sailing yacht designed prior to Dec 31 1974 then think about coming along and joining in. If you like the idea of crewing on a classic yacht then we may be



able to find berths for you.

The Channel Islands Cruise will run between 10–22 July and feature yachts from a variety of southern harbours crossing to Guernsey and Jersey, some of which will continue on to take part in a major voyage:

The Total Eclipse of the Sun Rally – this is a voyage to Avila in Northern Spain and is a planned six-week cruise in company to be able to witness the total eclipse which is due over Avila on 12 August. If you're looking to build miles of experience then this is definitely an event for you as the round-trip from the UK to Avila and back is a total of some 800 nautical miles.

If that sounds too energetic for you then how about a week's cruising the Ionian Sea in Greece between 12 and 20 September? They will be chartering a fleet of superbly-maintained sailing yachts from Vliho Bay in Lefkada on a leisurely island-hopping trip finding great anchorages and friendly tavernas to dine in.

Of course to gain access to any (or all) of these you first need to sign up for the RNA Yachting SCG – snap the QR code (left) to get started or contact the Group Organiser, David Monks on 07932 674894 or email rna.yachting.scg@gmail.com

Image by Nikos Kavvadas on Unsplash



JUST THE THING FOR CHRISTMAS?

For all those of you lovers of the finer things in life, the excellent RNA Anniversary Pale Ale and Pilsner Lager from the Powder Monkey Brewing Company are here!

This might just be the perfect gift for Christmas or as a take-along to parties.



And just to add to the good news, shipmates can use RNA 15 (a 15 per cent discount) which can only be accessed via the dedicated QR code (above).

Cases of 12 cans are available at this special discounted price.

Please note that this offer will end on 17 November.

TAKE A STROLL TO SUPPORT THE ASSOCIATION

The RNA will be taking part in all the Kiltwalks in 2026.

If you would like to raise money for the association while having a great time with a bunch of buddies, then you should consider joining up!

There are different walk lengths to suit all abilities, including accessible walks too. For example, the 2025 Dundee Kiltwalk saw 4,600 walkers raise more than £750,000 for 525 charities. 3,000 Mighty Striders embarked on a 20-mile trek, while 1,600 opted for the Wee Wander, a four-mile walk beside the River Tay before joining the Mighty Striders at the finish line in the City of Discovery.

In the next few weeks we will give you details of accommodation and extra events surrounding the walks and how to book yourself onto exclusive RNA events.

Kiltwalk is a unique charity that enables walkers to raise



money for any Scottish charity of their choice.

By staging events that bring together thousands of walkers who fundraise for their chosen charity or cause, Kiltwalk supports those in need of a helping hand.

For more information please visit the main website at www.thekiltwalk.co.uk

Across all Kiltwalk events, Kiltwalkers made the year 2025 one for the record books, raising more than £8.3 million for 1,800 Scottish charities.

TRAFALGAR NIGHT

Area 7



Isle of Wight Branch held its Trafalgar Night Dinner at the Royal Esplanade Hotel, Ryde, under the leadership of their President, Cdr David Hilton RN (Rtd), and Chairman Ron Boynton. This year's Guest of Honour/Speaker was Admiral Sir Ian Forbes, accompanied by his wife Lady Sally. It was very well-received by 60 members and guests, accompanied by local Sea Shanty band, The Crew. They are a new addition to their functions and proved very popular. The occasion presented the opportunity for three former shipmates of HMS Glamorgan to cut the traditional Victory cake – Admiral Forbes, Shaun Greenwood and Dave Creese (pictured right). "I am myself a Norfolk man and glory in being so," said Admiral Lord Nelson – a sentiment with which members of **Norwich Branch** heartily agree.

85 branch members and guests enjoyed a fantastic evening

of good food, entertainment, tots, dits and dispatches. Chairman Neil Hall started proceedings by reminding everyone that Nelson was Norfolk born and bred and therefore, if he had lived to retire from the Royal Navy, he would most certainly have been a member of the Norwich Branch

Isle of Wight



of the RNA!

Guests of honour this year were WO1 Ronnie Rendall and Mrs Heidi Rendall, and they were also pleased to welcome the Sheriff of Norwich, Stuart Wright, and Sheriff's Lady Catharine Wright. Great food and service, brilliant music, and an astonishing £800-plus raised with the raffle! Some 80 'swashbucklers' enjoyed a spectacular celebration to the Immortal Memory of Lord Horatio Nelson at the **Torrevieja Branch** Trafalgar Night Dinner on 21 October at Hotel Lodomar,

San Pedro del Pinatar, Murcia. This exceptional and successful annual event on the anniversary of the

Isle of Wight



Area 7



Norwich



Norwich



Continued on page 22

Area 7





Torrevieja

Battle of Trafalgar and the passing of our hero, Admiral Lord Viscount Nelson, is filled with pomp, ceremony and fun. Guest of honour was the recently appointed Defence Attaché at the British Embassy Madrid, Capt Antony Crabb and his wife Caroline Tuckett. Among the merry band of matelots were their 'oppos' representing the Merchant Navy, RAF and Army.

St Neots Branch celebrated Trafalgar Day on 17 October at the Three Horseshoes, Gravely, and were delighted to be joined by shipmates from **Peterborough, Royston and Letchworth.**

Amongst those attending was S/M David Berry – 102 years old, and a former Fleet Air Arm Swordfish pilot during World War 2.

And we finish our round-up with a Pickle Night at **Aldershot Branch.**

On Saturday 1 November, 88 members and guests

were joined by RNA National Chairman S/M Andy Christie for their inaugural Pickle Night in Garretts Club.

Shipmates from **Lee-on-the-Solent** and **Horsham** Branches also joined the fun, with even staff at the venue dressing for the occasion.

The evening started with the locally renowned shanty group – Fishermen without Friends – performing for the first time.... They turned out to be Branch members who had formed this shanty group, run a few practice nights and had great fun in the process.

The remainder of the evening followed the normal traditions with dispatches and songs throughout the meal, culminating in a great after-dinner speech by S/M Andy, leading into the Immortal Memory toast.

The night was deemed a great success, and it is now the plan to alternate each year between Trafalgar and Pickle Nights.



St Neots



St Neots



Swansea



Torrevieja



Aldershot

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**



'HEART OF OAK' MEMORY TREE IS UNVEILED IN HISTORIC DOCKYARD

A symbol of remembrance now stands proudly in the heart of Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

On Trafalgar Day – 21 October – Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) officially unveiled the Heart of Oak Memory Tree, a new memorial which honours the lives, legacies, and enduring spirit of all those connected to the Royal Navy.

Set against the iconic backdrop of one of the UK's most historically significant Naval sites, the event brought together Royal Navy representatives, bereaved families, and key partners for a moving day of remembrance and reflection. Crafted from steel and inspired by Heart of Oak, the official march of the Royal Navy, the tree-shaped sculpture stands as a permanent symbol of service and sacrifice.

Each branch holds bespoke metal leaves, individually engraved with the names of loved ones – whether lost in action, passed away in service, or remembered as veterans, family members, or supporters of the Royal Navy.

"Seeing the Heart of Oak Memory Tree unveiled is a deeply emotional and proud moment for our community," said Sam Nicolson, Interim CEO, RNRMC. "It is a beautiful way to honour those



we've lost – and every leaf added ensures their memory lives on, while directly supporting those still serving today."

For Karen, a long-time RNRMC supporter, the tree holds deeply personal meaning:

"Adding a leaf for my late husband on the Memory Tree in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, close to HMS Victory, is incredibly special. It feels like Dean is once again surrounded by his shipmates."

The creation of the Heart of Oak Memory Tree is a testament to collaboration and shared purpose. It was designed and crafted by BAE Systems, and installed by KBS Maritime, in partnership with Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Together, they have created a space that reflects the enduring values of remembrance, service, and connection.

Now open to the public, the memorial

invites everyone to pause, reflect, and become part of a growing tribute – one leaf, one story, one memory at a time. Supporters are invited to dedicate a leaf on the tree by contributing either a suggested donation of £20 per month for a minimum of 12 months, or through a one-off annual donation of £240. Each donation helps fund RNRMC's ongoing work with serving personnel, veterans, and their families, including mental health support, family services, hardship grants, and more.

For those unable to visit in person, a digital version of the Heart of Oak Memory Tree is available. This virtual platform offers a space to view tributes, photographs, and personal stories from anywhere in the world.

To learn more or dedicate a leaf in honour of someone special, visit <https://www.heartfoak.org.uk/>

■ Images provided by PHQ and BAE Systems



WATCH THE RUGBY FROM RNA SEATING SECTION



The Inter-Services men's rugby champions will defend their title against the Army at the Allianz Stadium, Twickenham, on Saturday 2 May 2026 – and you could watch from a section of the stadium exclusively set aside for members of the RNA. Tickets for the 2026 Army v Navy match are now on public sale, but there is a special rate of £44.20 with access to a bar next to the RNA allocated seating area when you book through the Association.

These clashes are invariably worth attending, but the past two years have been particularly thrilling – high-scoring games in the balance until the end, with the Royal Navy holding off the Army challenge by 37-33 in this year's match. The Navy's Senior Women's team will also be in action against the Army, directly after the men's match. Use the link [here](#) buy your tickets – once you have stated your required tickets the Rugby Football Union (RFU) will contact you directly to complete the transaction. For those who have already put in an ordered, don't fret – you will most likely be contacted after the England v New Zealand match, which is on 15 November.

HARD CHOICES

While we love to send you a hard copy of the RNA Yearbook in January, we are also aware that some of you prefer to read it online and save a tree. So if you would prefer us not to send you a copy in the post, please click on [this link](#) to de-select yourself. The Yearbook will be available to read online on our website all year.

GET YOUR GIZZETS AT ONLINE SHOP

Our lanyards and pin badges are available from our online shop. Click the SHOP link on our website, or go to: <https://www.rnagizzet.co.uk/>

DATES FOR YOUR DIARIES

Assoc Management Committees:

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 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 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

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. 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 – 07795 231397

Manchester – David Barlow – dbarlow@hotmail.co.uk - 07747 006100

Portsmouth – Sara Field – 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





TRINITY

YOUR INSURANCE PARTNER



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Enjoy the following member benefits:

- Special Premium Rate for Veterans' Personal Accident cover
- 15% discount on Travel Plus holiday insurance
- 15% discount on Free Spirit travel insurance
- Buildings & Contents Insurance - on purchase, choose a military charity* for your donation
- Life insurance - on purchase our partner, LifeSearch will donate £50 to a military charity of choice
- Eligibility for Trinity's 40+ travel insurance scheme



Associations Line
Speak to the Trinity team on 0345 241 1001 during office hours for insurance help.



Go to your members area
To access all of the products and discounts

*From those charities listed that includes the Royal Naval Association Charity

Trinity Insurance Services Ltd www.talktrinity.com hello@talktrinity.com

MAKE A NOTE TO YOURSELF

The 2026 RNA Diary is now available at a price of £7 including postage. The slim dark-blue diary with integrated cover can be bought from the RNA website shop through [this link](#).

CONFERENCE DOCUMENTATION READY TO GO

We might be more than six months away from the 2026 National Conference in Salford, but the wheels are already in motion – and the paperwork is ready to be addressed. There are three documents at the end of this Circular which are relevant to the weekend in June (click [here](#) to access them).

First is the delegate application form for shipmates who would like to play an active role the discussion and debate of the Annual General Meeting, which will be in the Lowry on Saturday 13. The second document is a nomination



A CENTURY OF CITY PRIDE

for National Council Members (NCMs) and Deputy National Council Members (DNCMs).

The opportunities for NCMs are in **Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10 and 12**, while

the openings for DNCs are in **Areas 1, 2, 9, 10, 11 and 12**.

Finally there is a form for proposed motions and amendments for consideration during the AGM. The Saturday Gala Dinner is scheduled to be held in the Imperial War Museum (North), with a drumhead service on Sunday on Salford Quays.

The plan is also to trial a 'hybrid' attendance system, which will enable shipmates to link up using IT to attend from their own Area and Branches and hopefully increase RNA democracy.

Are you:

Ex-forces?

Eager to travel more this year? ✓

Tired of rising insurance costs? ✓

You could make a saving by

Joining our 40+ travel insurance scheme to benefit from cover that can continue into your later years, with no upper age limit*

Get A 30 Second Quote

*TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY. ALL INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHEME AVAILABLE AT: WWW.COMBINEDSERVICESTRAVELCOVER.ORG.UK



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 to sign up.

PLEASE TAKE NOTE(BOOK)

The Royal Naval Association 75th anniversary notebook with pen is 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

SPORTS AND COMRADESHIP GROUPS

Shipmates might be interested in becoming involved with the popular and successful RNA Sports and Comradeship Groups (SCGs). 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

Choir – Jon Everett: wws@rnassoc.org

Classic Cars – Mike Burnham: hon.secretary@rnarayleigh.org

Cricket – Mark Smith : Markmiff1962@gmail.com

Collectors: Insignia and Badges – Paul Banyard: rna.insignia@gmail.com

Cycling – Craig Fulton: craig@govguide.co.uk

Fishing – Gus Honeywood/Selwyn Davies/John Stephenson: rna.fishing.sig@gmail.com

Genealogy – Mike Wilkinson: mike.j.wilco@gmail.com

Golf – Colin Dinsdale: rna.golfers@gmail.com

Model Makers – Gary Daisley: RNA.Modelmakers@gmail.com

Motorhome, Caravan and Camping – Ron Shilton: rnamcc@outlook.com

RNA Football Club – scc@rnassoc.com

Rugby Union – Steve Phillips: rna.rugby.union.sig@gmail.com

Woodcraft – Graham Warner: vicechair@rna-7area.org

Yachting – David Monks: david.c.monks@gmail.com

If you are interested in forming a Sports and Comradeship Group please contact 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 10 Nov	Cdr Simon McCowan RAN	Australian Naval Attache
Mon 17 Nov	David Monks	The Trafalgar Trail
Mon 24 Nov	Stew Kilby	RN Division Battlefield Tour brief
Mon 1 Dec	Terry Barnes	My Falklands War: 40 Cdo Part 2
Mon 8 Dec	Carl Dixon	Agamemnon – RM
Mon 15 Dec	Holiday break	
Mon 22 Dec	Holiday break	
Mon 29 Dec	Holiday break	

FREEDOM OF BERWICK

On Friday 3 October, former shipmates who served onboard HMS Berwick ('the Bear') travelled to Berwick-upon-Tweed to be granted the Freedom of the town, writes S/M Karl Webb, Life Vice President of Huntingdon and District Branch.

The event was organised by Berwick-upon-Tweed's Civic and Historical Society, alongside the Town Council, as a celebration of the many visits and support to the townsfolk since the early 1960s. Berwick's last visit was in 1985, where a young 'Spider' Webb was serving as a baby RP...

A well-organised event with an evening reception at Berwick's Joint Cadet Centre – 'the Drill Hall' – where shipmates caught up after at least 40 years since serving

together.

Shipmates were able to see a display of all the HMS Berwicks (since 1679) at the Main Guard Museum on the Saturday morning.

Then the main event took place at the Guildhall, where the Lord Lieutenant of Northumberland, Dr Caroline Pryer, the Mayor of Berwick-upon-Tweed, Cllr John Robertson, Lt Paul McKenna RN (representing the regional Armed Forces), civic and local guests gathered to witness 28 members of HMS Berwick ship's company receiving a named scroll granting the title 'Honorary Freeman of Berwick-upon-Tweed'.

A true honour for us all – our thanks go to Berwick's Civic and Historical Society members, Anne Mason Humphrey and Martha Andrews, who were the main people behind the event.

We also thank everyone who supported such a historical occasion.



BRANCH NEWS

BOLTON Branch

Earlier on this year S/M Ian (Tommo) Thomas, chairman of Bolton Branch, decided to check the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website to find out how many war graves are within the Borough of Bolton.

It turns out there are 27 entries, commemorating 23 Royal Navy, two Royal Marines and two Merchant seaman personnel lost in both World Wars. These were spread across 11 cemeteries.

S/M Tommo decided that he would visit all 27 memorial stones and place a Royal British Legion poppy cross on each one. This was no mean feat, and at times he was running around the graveyards, like Eli Wallach in 'The Good, the Bad and the Ugly', as most of the cemeteries didn't have a ground plan.

All 27 were found and are now marked with the poppy cross. S/M Tommo is now trying to find out as much information about the 27 as he can, and is working with Bolton Sea Cadets to look after these memorials and make sure their names are not forgotten.

Whilst walking around one of the cemeteries he came across a memorial stone for a sailor lost in HMS Glamorgan during the Falklands Conflict. A poppy cross was also left as a mark of respect and his widow informed.



S/M Tommo also noted that there are 27 RNA branches within Area 10 and is now planning to visit each branch to raise money for the Royal Navy & Royal Marines Charity. Last month S/M Tommo, along with S/M Chris Houghton, Bolton's PRO, had an epic eight days, that included four Trafalgar Nights, one area conference, one parade, two concerts (Shep Woolley at the Square Tower and the RNA 75 anniversary concert with The Fisherman's Friends), and six days of tippling that was not a problem for seasoned salty old sea dogs.

Bolton branch members also enjoyed a gala night organised by the Royal Society of St George at a local golf club, where all members were treated to welcome drinks, four-course meal, wine and port, and an evening of dancing the night away. A great time was had by all. They are now looking forward to hosting the Area Conference in January, where things are already taking shape for what should be a memorable day. Details will be distributed to all area branches later on this year.



PORTLAND Branch

Ten members of Portland Branch were amongst a congregation of more than 30 who attended the HMS Illustrious Liberty Boat Disaster Remembrance Service on Saturday 18 October in the Portland Salt Marina.

The shipmates met to commemorate the disaster which happened 77 years ago, on 17 October 1948, in which 29 lives were lost.

At the memorial service to those who perished, everyone also remembered the acts of heroism and bravery on that day. These acts were embodied in the attempts to save those perishing and the constant dangers faced by those who 'go down to the sea in ships and do business upon the great waters'.

It is hoped that this memorial will continue to preserve the memory of those who lost their lives that night and be a reminder of the great debt owed by a maritime nation to its countless seafarers, especially those from the Royal Navy.

We Will Remember Them.

Pictured left to right are No 4 Area Deputy Chairman, Branch President and Standard Bearer S/M Ben Cartwright, S/M Lynne Rimell, S/M



Karen Miller, (behind) S/M Mike Howard, (middle) Branch Chairman S/M Alex (Dusty) Miller, (behind) Vice Chairman S/M Nigel Rimell, No 4 Area Deputy NCM and Branch Treasurer S/M Pete Shoesmith, S/M Ian Tate (FAA Assoc), S/M Michael Fox (HMS Ajax Assoc) (both members of the branch). Photo by S/M Bob Featherstone.

The disaster happened when a liberty boat from aircraft carrier HMS Illustrious left Weymouth Pier on

the evening of 17 October 1948 with around 50 sailors on board.

The 36ft long motor launch began to struggle in worsening conditions, and the rising wind and heavy seas capsized the launch around 50 yards from the carrier in Portland Harbour. Many of the 29 who died were young National Servicemen.

A memorial stone located near the marine office honours those who died, and pays tribute to the bravery of the survivors and rescuers.



RIDERS Branch

Members of the RNA Riders Branch took part in this year's Ride to the Wall at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire – the Riders and guests are pictured below, while the image above shows the participants' bikes parked up at the arboretum. Some 8,000 bikes attended this year, with a large contingent from the Riders Branch who paid their respects to those "no longer able to ride by our side", reports Branch Hon secretary S/M Mark Gayton. This was the 18th annual Ride to the Wall, when motorcyclists, families and friends from the UK and Europe come together as one large family for a Service of Remembrance to remember the names on the Armed Forces Memorial – those that gave their lives on active service since 1945.



TYNE Branch

Shipmates from Tyne Branch held a Trafalgar Dinner at Jesmond Masonic Hall in Newcastle with guests from the NE Submariners, Calliope Association and the Tyneside Scottish Royal Artillery Association.

Members were delighted to be able to have their 101-year old veteran shipmate Ron Cunningham join them. This year, the guest speaker was Lt Col Gary Giles, Commanding Officer of HMS Caledonia, who gave a very interesting and educational talk with perspectives on the old and new across the Royal Navy. The Grace was given by Father Mike Hills RN.

They were also entertained by music from the Silver Shantymen, who delivered a personal rendition of the Wild Rover to S/M Ron.

Tyne Branch members also supported two annual local Trafalgar events: On Trafalgar Day itself each year, 'Toast the Admiral' is an event supported by North Tyneside Council where they usually gather at the foot of the Collingwood Monument at Tynemouth to raise a toast to Lord Cuthbert Collingwood (Vice Admiral of the Blue) at midday to mark the time at which the first shot was fired in the Battle of Trafalgar on 21 October 1805.

This year's event was held at the Tynemouth Volunteer Life Brigade Watch House, near to the monument. The Oration was given by Cdr David

King, Commanding Officer of HMS Calliope at Gateshead.

Also present was Ms Lucy Winskell, Lord Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, and Capt Stephen Healy, Master of the Newcastle-upon-Tyne Trinity House. Finally, the annual Trotter Memorial Service was hosted by TS Leviathan (Gateshead Sea Cadets) at St Mary's Heritage Centre in Gateshead, where the family grave of John William Trotter is located.

Master Mariner Trotter saw action on board HMS Leviathan at the Battle of Trafalgar, and was lucky enough to return home afterwards and build a notable career see more at [this link](#).



ALDERSHOT and CORK Branches

On 14 April 1902 twelve sailors from battleship HMS Mars died or were fatally injured when a gun turret explosion occurred as she was anchored at sea off the south west of Ireland. Nine of those men were buried in the Old Church Cemetery outside Cobh.

For the 120th anniversary of the tragedy, Cork Branch undertook the refurbishment of the graves and, as they were not covered by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, requested money from branches to help with the task.

Aldershot Branch decided to donate £1,000 to enable them to achieve their fundraising target, and since 2022 it has been an ambition for the two branches to meet at the cemetery for a short service.

In September this year a group of eight branch members from Aldershot – five full members and three associates – travelled across to Ireland to realise this ambition.

On arrival in Cork the members met up with their hosts, Tom and Mary Steel (Cork Branch), for a meal. On retiring to the bar, they were greeted by Billy Murphy (Chairman of Cork Branch) and Gerry Donovan (Cork Royal British Legion). Needless to say,



due to several pints of the black stuff and Billie's rum, the end of the evening was a bit hazy...

On Saturday the members gathered for a visit to Old Admiralty House, Cobh, and there they took in the stunning views from the balcony over the town and harbour. After a stroll through the gardens, they went to the cemetery where they were greeted by four standards – Cork Branch (Tom Steele), RBL (Seamus O'Brien), ONE (Fred Crudge) and Tom Goulding with the Irish Flag. Many members of Cork Branch, RBL Cork, family and friends were also present.

The service took place at the graveside and was spoken in Gaelic by John Walsh. Following the ceremony, Cork Branch Vice Chair Shaun Higgins and Aldershot Branch Chairman Martin Maguire took the salute at the memorial.

The occasion was overseen by a member of the Garda who was there to, in his own words, "prevent trouble". After the service everyone went to the Commodore Hotel for a meal and social event.

During the meal Martin Maguire presented a bottle of Pusser's to Cork Branch from the shipmates in Aldershot. This was well received! The Garda continued to take his job seriously and remained with us throughout the meal and social...

The occasion was a perfect example of the RNA in action – shipmates from different branches, and indeed different countries, getting together to remember those who have gone before, whilst making long-lasting friendships.

Those who attended from Aldershot met some lovely people in Cork, and hope to keep in touch with them. They would like to thank Cork Branch for their hospitality and comradeship. BZ.



MERTHYR TYDFIL Branch

Shipmate Mike Read of Merthyr Tydfil Branch laid the RNA wreath at Aberfan village cenotaph.

The ceremony is held the week before the main Remembrance ceremonies as there are four cenotaphs holding services on Remembrance Day at 1100, with the main Merthyr Tydfil parade at 2pm



TORFAEN Branch

New member S/M John Williams is pictured receiving his RNA membership card from Torfaen Branch Chairman S/M Jim Attenborough.



HELSTON Branch

Helston Branch celebrated their 45th year in commission. The event was held in the Inn & Still and Mayoress Nicky Boase was there to help with the celebrations. The cake was cut by Shipmate Ron Strong, the longest serving member, with Shipmate Jim Hall, one of the recent joiners. Mayor Nicola Boase helped with the slicing up and distribution of the cake. Branch Chairman George Scott made up a board of events attended by the branch all the years – next on the list was at the Madron parade and Thanksgiving Service for Nelson on 19 October. The shipmates all had a great night; the branch is always on the look-out for new members.

AREA 11

The annual Submariners Remembrance Service took place at 1100 on Sunday 2 November in Blyth, Northumberland.

This is a smaller, but no less poignant, service than the service which takes place at the National Submarine Memorial on Victoria Embankment, London.

The Port of Blyth was used as a submarine base during both World War 1 and World War 2, being commissioned as HMS Elfin – taking the name from a torpedo recovery vessel – in 1940. Pictured (below right) are trainees working with a torpedo at Blyth in World War 2 (image from the Imperial War Museum collection: © IWM (A 10016)).

Despite there being no memorial to HMS Elfin, there is a memorial which consists of the anchor from HM Submarine Tiptoe, mounted on a marble plinth located beside St Mary's Church at Elfin Walk, in Blyth, near the town centre (far right). Shipmates and Branch Standards from Tyne, Wansbeck and Sunderland Branches gathered alongside members of the Blyth & Wansbeck, North-East and Sunderland Branches of the Submariners Association, along with other ex-Service veterans organisations, to pay their respects in a Service of Remembrance to all submariners who have lost their lives whilst serving their country. Also present were members of maritime agencies and local civic dignitaries, including the Deputy Lieutenant of



Northumberland, Cdr Andy Collier DL RNR, and the High Sheriff of Northumberland, Mr George Farr. Music was provided by the Jayess Newbiggin Brass Band.



BRIDLINGTON Branch

Bridlington Branch is a lively group of members, including ex-Service personnel from all arms of service. They regularly organise charity events, such as the recent Macmillan coffee morning at the Moon Tap public house in Bridlington, organised by Branch Welfare Officer and Secretary of the Branch Sarah Newall and Andrew 'Max' Wall, ex-RN retired. Produce on sale in aid of the charity included sausage rolls, cakes and biscuits produced by members, as well as tea and coffee.

There was also a raffle, with the proceeds totalling just over £400 going to Macmillan Cancer. Branch members also enjoyed a special talk at their meeting at the Old Ship Inn, delivered by their very own (and the original!) Delia Smith – local historian, raconteur and Associate Member (pictured below).



Delia gave an enlightening talk about her experiences as a young girl growing up in wartime Bridlington.

As a young girl, one of Delia's most vivid memories is of not seeing the beach for ten years as it was cordoned off to

the general public with barbed wire – Bridlington was seen as a possible landing site for a potential German invasion.

She recalled hundreds of ships in the bay – everything was grey, including the skies. Happily, her next memory of the South Beach was a beautiful sunny day after the war.

Bridlington was heavily bombed from 1940 onwards, with scenes of devastation rivalling other parts of Britain, and Delia included photographs from her own collection, gleaned from the local library.

If people are interested in these there is a permanent exhibition in Bridlington Library.



LICHFIELD Branch

Pictured above is Lichfield Branch Secretary S/M Phil Tootill on day one of the annual National Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, supporting the Tesco store in Lichfield. And it proved worth Phil's while – nearly £1,000 was collected on that day alone.



AREA 2

On Sunday 12 October RNA National President Vice Admiral Duncan Potts joined standards and RNA shipmates for the Freedom of the Borough parade in Tunbridge Wells.

The honour was given to TS Brilliant – Tunbridge Wells Sea Cadet unit – and the parade was formed by 300 Sea Cadets from across West Kent.

AREA 3

The deadline for nominations for Area 3 elections is 24 November. Elections will be held for the roles of Vice Chair, Secretary and Committee member.

For further information and nomination forms, contact current Area 3 Secretary S/M Tracy Reed on t.reed27@outlook.com

SUNDERLAND Branch

Members of Sunderland Branch marked Trafalgar Day with a special commemorative event at Sunderland's own Trafalgar Square – the first of its kind to be held at the historic site.

The event, which took place on the evening of 21 October, honoured the anniversary of the Battle of Trafalgar and aimed to raise awareness of the Square's unique heritage. Trafalgar Square in Sunderland predates its more famous London counterpart by four years. Houses on the square were named in honour of the 66 men from Sunderland who fought at Trafalgar, and originally housed the families of lost merchant seamen, aged sailors, and widows. Today, the square remains home to elderly residents, and veterans have formed a committee to rejuvenate the gardens, clean the Blue Plaque, and host future community events. The event featured a short blessing by Sea Cadet chaplain the Rev David Raine RNR, a speech commemorating the battle and the 66 Sunderland personnel present at the battle. After a ceremonial lowering of the White Ensign by Sea Cadets at sunset, guests joined in the Naval tradition of splicing the



mainbrace to close the evening. Cllr Harry Trueman, Armed Forces Champion for Sunderland City Council, said:

"This event was a powerful reminder of Sunderland's deep maritime heritage and the sacrifices made by our seafaring community."

"It's fitting that Trafalgar Square, built to honour local men who served at sea, should become a focal point for remembrance and pride. "I commend the veterans and residents for coming together to celebrate this history and breathe new life into such an important space."

Brian Turns, Social Secretary of the Branch and Chairman of the Trafalgar Square Sunderland Shipmates, said: "Our aim was to bring Trafalgar Day home to Sunderland and pay tribute to the 66 men from our city who served with distinction. "Trafalgar Square holds a unique place in our local history, and we are proud to have initiated what we hope will become a lasting tradition and annual event." While this year's event was by invitation only, organisers hope to expand it in future years and make Trafalgar Day a regular fixture.



NORWICH Branch

Another busy month for Norwich Branch, starting with a charity collection day in a local Asda (pictured below).

On 11 October shipmates joined veterans, nurses from local hospitals and dignitaries for the Edith Cavell service at Norwich Cathedral, this year being the 110th anniversary of Nurse Cavell's execution.

Former Naval Nurse S/M Rhian Coates laid a wreath on behalf of the RNA and the QARNNS. Afterwards shipmates enjoyed coffee and cake with friend of the branch General The Lord Dannatt, then a few wets at the Edith Cavell pub.

On 26 October shipmates attended the Trafalgar Day Service at Nelson's birthplace, along with shipmates from **Cromer Branch** and a large congregation of local residents – all organised by Wells Sea Cadets.

It was a treat to be shown Nelson's medicine chest and view other artefacts and memorials within the church, which is one of only a few with permission to fly a White Ensign from its tower, and the only church to fly a pre-1801 style White Ensign.

Afterwards shipmates enjoyed tea and cakes at Burnham Thorpe Village Hall, and a few made it over to the Lord Nelson pub to raise a glass to Norfolk's Naval hero.



PORTSEA and PORTSMOUTH Branch

A busy month for Portsea and Portsmouth branch yet again, with members turning out at Gunwharf Quays to support Associate Member Lou Purcell, the area Poppy co-ordinator, at the Portsmouth Poppy Appeal Launch attended by the Lord Mayor of Portsmouth.

Later the same evening shipmates were present at the very enjoyable Trafalgar Night hosted by **Chichester Branch**, with RNA General Secretary Bill Oliphant as the Guest of Honour. A lot of members enjoyed the RNA 75th Anniversary charity fundraising concert with the Royal Marines Band from HMS Collingwood, Fisherman's Friends and the RNA Choir.

The concert, at Portsmouth Guildhall, was also a great opportunity to catch up with shipmates from other

branches at such a great event.

The Branch was also represented at the **Waterlooville Branch** Halloween Party at the end of October.

And in the days leading up to the Remembrance ceremonies in London the Branch was lucky enough to have members watching the final rehearsal (below) at HMS Excellent for the parade at the Cenotaph on Remembrance Sunday. S/M Clive Sutton paraded the Branch Standard at Fratton Park for the Portsmouth v Wrexham Championship match (pictured right).

The Branch will be represented at Whitehall on that day as well as the Portsmouth Services, while shipmates will also be attending the Festival of Remembrance at the Royal Albert Hall on the Saturday evening.



LEE-ON-THE-SOLENT and STUBBINGTON Branch

The Branch is staging a Christmas Band Concert featuring the HMS Collingwood Volunteer Band on Friday 12 December at 7pm at Holy Rood Church in Stubbington. Tickets are £8 for adults (children free), and are available from Blooms Florist in Stubbington and the Holy Rood Church Office, or contact leestubb@live.co.uk



OBITUARIES

S/M JIM LAWSON

St Neots and District Branch members are mourning the death of S/M Jim Lawson, who crossed the bar on 18 September.

Jim served as a Telegraphist, starting his Naval career as a Boy entrant at HMS Ganges.

At one point, he was posted to the RN Signal Station in Trincomalee, Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) as a married accompanied draft with his then wife. They met another couple and became firm friends.

Upon returning to the UK, both couples stayed in touch, continuing their friendship and eventually joining **Uxbridge Branch** and RNA Club.

Following the demise of their respective partners Jim formed a life-long friendship with the wife, Kay Castle.

Jim also served in HMS Brave Borderer, one of the Royal Navy's two experimental 55-knot Motor Torpedo Boats.

The group photo shows Jim and S/Ms John Gibbs (RIP) and Dave Thompson with their wives/partners Kay, Stella and Mavis alongside HMS Trincomalee at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Hartlepool.

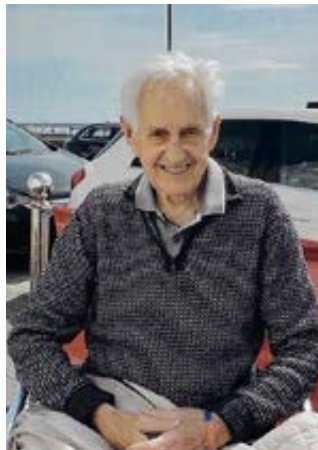
It was particularly poignant for Jim and Kay, as they first met in Trincomalee

John commented: "We found a rum tub in the Captain's cabin, but it lacked the required nectar, so we had to settle for a cuppa in the dockside canteen..."

Jim was a long-serving member of St Neots committee.

As a life-long supporter of Fulham Football Club, he had the personalised car registration FFC4.

Fair Winds and Following Seas, Jim.



S/M WILLIAM KIRK

It is with deep regret, and with the family's permission, that Mike Bennett, Chairman of Port Phillip Bay Branch, has reported that S/M William (Wee Bill) Kirk recently crossed the bar in Melbourne Australia, after a long illness.

William (Bill) joined the Royal Navy as an Artificer Apprentice at HMS Fisgard on 9 September 1957 and

was subsequently drafted to HMS Collingwood in Fareham, Hampshire, qualifying as a Radio Electrical Artificer (REA) in 1961. He served in HMS Corunna (1961-63), HMS Galatea (1963-66), HMS Excellent (1966-69) and HMS Puma (1969-71), and was rated CREA whist serving at Whale Island. Bill 'paid off' from the RN on 18 October 1971 but maintained close ties through membership of the HMS Fisgard

Association and the RNA.

Bill and his dear wife Nancy were both very supportive members of the Port Phillip Bay Branch; Bill served a committee member until 2013, when ill health made him no longer able to travel to meetings and functions.

S/M Bill elected for a private cremation and so no funeral service was organised. VALE Wee Bill, may the seas you sail upon through eternity be calm.



S/M ANDY O'BRIEN

Chard Branch Chairman S/M Andrew (Andy) O'Brien crossed the Bar on 28 August after a relatively short illness. Having moved to Taunton from Leicestershire a few years ago, Andy joined the nearest branch of the RNA at Chard and in January 2025 took on the role of their Branch Chairman.

Andy was a stalwart former 'Tiff' matelot to the end and was very proud to be the official Royal Naval Artificer Apprentice Association standard bearer who attended numerous events throughout the UK on their behalf, and was always first to offer his

services to various events.

During the Covid years as a result of being a member of Taunton Armed Forces and Veterans Breakfast Club Andy would deliver Meals on Wheels to both Service veterans and civilian pensioners alike at Sunday lunchtimes.

He was on the committee of the Poppy of Honour and assisted in the organising of the past two Somerset Armed Forces Days.

Andy remained stalwart to the end and this was reflected by the attendance of 11 various Service standards presented at his funeral. Andy leaves a mother, wife Liz, son and family.

S/M GEORGE BENNING

It is with much sadness that Wansbeck and District Branch report that one of their honorary life members crossed the bar on 3 November peacefully at home.

S/M George Benning, who lived at Newbiggin-by-Sea, was a World War 2 ex-Royal Navy veteran and an RNA honorary life member. George celebrated his 101st birthday in March this year. During the war he was on the trawler Loch Monteith, which escorted submarines to and from Scapa Flow in the Orkneys, among other places. The boat was commissioned and converted specifically for the job with additional armament.

S/M JOHN GIBBS

S/M John Gibbs had his last muster at Roxton Congregational Church on Friday 12 September.

John, a long-time member of the RNA and a former President of the St Neots Branch, was always proud that he had joined HMS Ganges during the reign of King George VI.

His education had been disrupted during the Blitz, and he always gave Ganges credit for furthering his education.

During his Service career he took part in the atomic test exercises in the Pacific, and was particularly proud, among many other deployments, of the minesweeping part of his career. He was also a guide on HMS Victory and good humouredly endured the

leg pulling from other S/Ms that he was "Nelson's cabin boy!" Almost 30 shipmates attended the funeral service, of which eight were from Area 6, demonstrating the deep respect in which he was held. After leaving the RN he joined and spent many years with Charles Wells Brewers, starting in the brewery and moving to the sales force where he had a long and distinguished career and where his people skills made him very popular with clients. John's son Tom gave a moving eulogy which painted John as a father who was devoted to his wife Stella and his two sons, introducing and being involved with the boys in all sorts of outdoor activities.

Apart from the RNA attendees, the church was also filled with family and friends. John will be remembered as a gentleman – a rare plaudit for an ex-matelot – and will be sorely missed by the St Neots Branch, though shipmates are delighted that his wife Stella is now an Associate Member and a regular attendee of the Branch.



ROY WORRALL

Jon Worrall has been in touch to let us know "our lovely, wise and caring dad, Roy Worrall, died peacefully on 6 October.

"07.03.1935 to 06.10.2025. It was a privilege for three out of his four children to be with him at the end.

"Vascular dementia had robbed him and us of so much in recent years but Dad never lost his capacity to love, his strong faith, or his witty sense of humour.

"He simply went to sleep on earth and has woken up in heaven.

"We couldn't have asked for more, but we will all miss him so much!

Rest in peace dad, and rise in glory!

"Leaving the Fleet Air Arm in 1970 as CPO our Dad's Naval record shows time spent at/on all of the following: Collingwood

1951-52, Ariel 1952, Gannet 1952-54, Seahawk 1954, Gannet 1954-55, Ark Royal 1955-56, Royal Arthur 1959, Seahawk 1959, Ariel 1959, Seahawk 1959-60, Ark Royal 1960, Osprey 1960-62, Falcon 1962-63, Seahawk 1963-64, Victorious 1964-65, Osprey 1965-67, Heron 1967-70, Victory 1970. Squadrons included 824 NAS, 849 NAS, 820 NAS, 814 NAS and 849 NAS.

"I wanted to share this detail in case there are any shipmates still out there with a story to tell or a memory to share.

"My email address is jonathan.worrall2@btinternet.com."



CHARLES TOBIAS

Charles Tobias, founder of Pusser's Rum, US Marine, adventurer and entrepreneur, has died aged 91.

Born in Canada, Charles won an athletic scholarship to the University of Southern California after running the fastest mile in Canadian schoolboy history.

Graduating with a dual degree in aeronautical and mechanical engineering, then joined the US Marine Corps.

He was selected as a fighter pilot, and during his second tour in Vietnam was shot down over the Mekong Delta, fortunately being rescued by Navy SEALs.

After his service he founded Veradyne Inc, winning a government contract to develop anti-surface to air missiles and building the company into a \$100 million enterprise.

By now a wealthy man, he acted on a long-held love of the sea by one day (stuck in traffic) deciding to leave it all behind and embark on a five-year voyage around the world on a 57ft ketch with a crew of three sailors, a chimpanzee and a cheetah.

While docked in Gibraltar seeking a spare part for the boat, Charles was invited onto a Royal Navy warship and gifted a flagon of dark Navy rum to help him on his voyages – and so taken with the rum was Charles that a new enterprise was born.

He obtained permission from the Royal Navy to use their unique rum blend and British Navy Pusser's Rum was born, with Charles pledging support to the Royal Navy Sailor's Fund through sales which were channelled into the 'Tot Fund', later consolidated into Royal Navy and Royal Marine Charity (RNRMC).

Pusser's was founded on Tortola in the British Virgin Islands, and for his charitable efforts Charles was made an MBE in the 2011 New Years Honours list.

SUPPORTING OUR MEMBERS

A Welfare and Wellbeing Visit from the Rayleigh Branch

I'd like to take a moment to highlight the fantastic work being done by the Rayleigh Branch as part of our Welfare and Wellbeing initiative. Shipmates Brian Dobinson and Mike Sandbrook paid a visit to Harry Irons and spent over an hour with him, sharing stories and enjoying his company. Harry, who is now 92, looked incredibly well and was full of conversation, reminiscing about his younger days in East London and Leeds. It's heartening to see how much these visits mean – his energy and spirit are truly inspiring.

I want to extend my sincere thanks to Brian, Mike, and everyone involved in the Rayleigh Branch's Welfare and Wellbeing efforts.

These visits are more than just check-ins – they're a vital part of keeping our community strong and connected.



More details will follow soon, but for now, save the date and get ready to dive in.

Trafalgar Night: Honouring the Past, Building the Future

I was recently invited to a Trafalgar Night dinner hosted by the Brixham Branch, and it turned out to be one of the most enjoyable and memorable evenings I've had in a long time. Trafalgar Night is held every year to honour Admiral Lord Nelson and the victory at the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805. But it's not just about history, it's about bringing people together. The evening was filled with tradition, pride, and plenty of laughter.

From the formal toasts to the shared stories around the table, it was clear that this night means a lot to those who've served and those who continue to support the Naval community. Over the past few months, I've spent time getting to know Brixham Branch, and I've been genuinely impressed by their warmth, dedication, and sense of purpose. They've made me feel welcome from the start, and their commitment to keeping Naval traditions alive is something to be proud of.

It's clear that Brixham Branch plays a vital role in the local community, not just for veterans, but for anyone who values connection and camaraderie.

Their efforts are helping to build a stronger relationship between the RNA and Britannia Royal Naval College. With other local branches also playing their part, there's a real opportunity to forge lasting ties with the College. I believe the young officer cadets will welcome the RNA into their fold, recognising the value of shared experience and tradition. In turn, the RNA can play a meaningful role in guiding and supporting their development as they begin their journey into Naval service.

After dinner, a few of us drifted into the hotel bar, where the atmosphere took on a relaxed and joyful tone. A couple were singing and playing guitars, and before long, a few sea shanties were echoing around the room.

It reminded me of the recent Fisherman's Friends concert – a night full of music, laughter, and that unmistakable sense of

Thriving Together 2026: helping to improve your wellbeing

The RNA's Thriving Together programme supports shipmates' mental and physical health through activities and get-togethers.

Resilience is built through peer support and a strong sense of community and each event is led by an RNA mental health first aider, who is on hand to offer signposting and support. We're delighted to relaunch Thriving Together for 2026 with a refreshing new adventure – a Learn to Surf Weekend in Westward Ho!, running from Friday 15 May to Sunday 17 May 2026.

Whether you've never tried surfing before or simply fancy a new challenge, this weekend offers a chance to reconnect, recharge, and enjoy the benefits of shared experience in a safe and welcoming setting.

Accommodation is included, and further details will be shared in due course.

Why Surfing?

Surfing is more than just a sport – it's a brilliant way to support wellbeing:

- Time outdoors and physical activity help reduce stress and lift your mood.
- Learning something new builds confidence and resilience.
- Facing challenges together strengthens bonds and fosters camaraderie.
- The sense of achievement and joy lasts long after the weekend ends.

With expert instructors and a supportive group of shipmates, you'll be encouraged every step of the way. It's not about performance – it's about participation, presence, and the power of trying something together.

Places are limited to just 20, so if you're interested, please contact Jon at www@rnassoc.org to register your interest.

Continued on page 40

WELFARE AND WELLBEING

Continued from page 39

togetherness. It was the perfect way to round off the evening, with voices raised and spirits high.

Looking back, Trafalgar Night wasn't just an evening of tradition, it was a reminder of the strength we find in each other. The friendships I've begun to build, the connections between RNA branches and the Royal Naval College, and the shared pride in our Naval heritage all point to a future where experience and youth walk side by side.

I'm proud to be part of that journey, and I look forward to many more evenings where stories are shared, bonds are strengthened, and new shipmates become lifelong friends.

Wellbeing Wednesdays

After successfully trialling a couple of sessions, we're now rolling the initiative out more widely. The most recent session took place on 5 November, where we reflected on Remembrance and explored the theme of social isolation – a powerful and timely conversation.

Held monthly via Zoom, Wellbeing Wednesdays bring people together from across the country. Each evening offers something different, from creative activities and open discussions to guest speakers from Naval charities. The format is flexible, the atmosphere relaxed, but the focus clear – connection, care, and community.

We understand that the first Wednesday of the month doesn't suit everyone, so dates will vary, some months it may be the first Wednesday, others the second.

These evenings are also a safe space for those who need it. Whether someone is feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or simply in need of a friendly face, Wellbeing Wednesdays offer a calm, non-judgemental environment where everyone is treated with respect.

The sessions are hosted by the RNA Welfare and Wellbeing Support Co-ordinator, Jon Everett, who leads the initiative with a focus on inclusion, practical support, and positive engagement.

Branch Welfare and Wellbeing volunteers are offered training to help them support others with confidence, and guest speakers bring fresh insight and resources to keep members informed and connected.

If you work in the welfare or wellbeing sector and would be interested in joining us as a guest speaker, we'd love to hear from you. Please get in touch via wws@rnassoc.org.

Whether you've served for decades, recently joined, or support someone who has, these evenings are for you. They're not formal, not forced, and not about ticking boxes. They're about showing up, checking in, and making sure no one feels alone.

So, if you're free on a Wednesday evening, log in and join us. You might share a story, hear something useful, or simply enjoy the company – and that, in itself, makes a difference.

The next session will be held on 10 December at 7pm, and the topic will be Voices of the RNA: Festive Favourites and Feel-Good Tunes.

As we head into the festive season, we're celebrating the joy of music and the stories it carries. Join us for a relaxed, uplifting Wellbeing Wednesday where veterans and families are invited to share the songs that lift their spirits, spark fond memories, or simply make them smile.

Whether it's a festive favourite, a tune that got you through tough times, or something that always gets

your toes tapping, we'll be building a community playlist to reflect the voices and experiences of our RNA family. Also, hopefully we will be joined by the RNA Choir (tbc). No pressure to speak – just a warm, welcoming space to listen, share, and enjoy. Expect good company, a few musical surprises, and plenty of feel-good moments.

Please email me your song choices before 30 November at wws@rnassoc.org

All RNA members and families welcome.

Location: Zoom

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3823963619?pwd=fxj1juicx8A1DMq2Vfos0MLNBK3qC3.1&omn=89413728495>

NEW - The RNA Winter Quiz Nights

As the nights get longer and the days colder, it's easy to feel a bit cut off, especially if you're on your own or missing the usual buzz of branch life. That's why we're launching the RNA Winter Quiz Nights – a fun, light-hearted monthly quiz night to bring shipmates and branches together through the darker months.

Whether you're in a branch hall, curled up at home, or joining from overseas, this is your chance to stay connected, have a laugh, and enjoy a bit of friendly competition. From Land's End to John o'Groats and across the world, everyone's welcome. So, grab your team or go solo, pour a brew, and get stuck in!

Why are we doing it?

Winter can be a lonely time for some, and we want to help tackle social isolation in a way that's enjoyable and inclusive. The RNA Winter Quiz is all about connection, laughter, and keeping spirits high – especially during those long, dark evenings.

When's It Happening?

The quiz will run on the third Friday of each month, starting from Friday 21 November and continuing through to March:

- Friday 21 November
- Friday 19 December

Continued on page 41



Continued from page 40

- Friday 16 January
- Friday 20 February
- Friday 20 March

Start time: 7pm

You can play on your own or as part of a team (maximum five people). It's all just for fun — no pressure, just plenty of laughs.

How to Join

The quiz will be held on Zoom, so you can join from anywhere. The link will be shared on the RNA website and across our social media channels, and you'll also find it below:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85082417512?pwd=qpaYv8bpPuzhm0ONrVfdBnrVbYzlh.1>

Quiz Topics and a Fun Twist

Each quiz will include a mix of general knowledge, sport, music, Naval trivia, and a few surprises.

And here's the twist – each month's winner gets to choose a topic to be included in the next quiz! So, if you've got a passion for 80s music, classic films, or even biscuits, your moment could be coming.

Come and join the fun

This is more than just a quiz – it's a chance to stay connected, share a few laughs, and make the winter months a little brighter. So, whether you're a seasoned quizzier or just fancy a bit of fun, come and join us.

Remembrance: Honouring All Who Served and All We've Lost

Each November, as the nation gathers in silence to mark Remembrance, we pause to honour the brave men and women who gave their lives in service to our country. Their sacrifice is etched into our history, and their memory lives on in ceremonies, poppies, and the solemn words of tribute. But for many of us, especially within the Royal Naval community, it's not only about those who fell in war, but also those we've lost in peace. Our shipmates, our comrades, our oppos – those who stood beside us in service and shared the journey, but who have since passed on through age, illness, or quiet circumstance.

These are the voices we still hear in our memories. The laughter in the mess, the stories told over a pint. They may not have died in combat, but they lived lives of service, duty, and loyalty. And they deserve to be remembered just as fiercely.

A Broader Remembrance

Remembrance is not confined to a single day or a single kind of loss. It's a living act – something we carry with us in our hearts, in our conversations, and in the way we look after one another. Every Welfare and Wellbeing visit, every phone call to a fellow veteran, every shared story is an act of

remembrance.

As we lay wreaths and bow our heads this November, let us also remember those who passed quietly, after long lives well lived. Let us honour the legacy of friendship, comradeship, courage, and community they left behind.

So, this November, as we stand in silence and reflect, let's remember not only those lost in war, but also those who served beside us and passed on in peace. Their lives, their stories, and their friendship shaped our community. By remembering them, we honour the values they lived by: loyalty, courage, and care for one another. Remembrance lives on in the way we support each other, every day.

If you need support

RNA Welfare Support

■ Email: wws@rnassoc.org

■ Phone: 023 9272 3744

Veterans' Gateway (24/7 support)

■ Support for veterans and their families

– GOV.UK

■ Phone: 0808 802 1212

■ Text: 81212

Royal British Legion

■ Support Helpline | Contact Us | Royal British Legion

■ Phone: 0808 802 8080 (8am–8pm, daily)

Samaritans (24/7 emotional support)

■ Samaritans | Every life lost to suicide is a tragedy | Here to listen

■ Phone: 116 123 (free, any time)

■ Email: jo@samaritans.org

Combat Stress (mental health support for veterans)

■ Mental health services for veterans | Combat Stress

■ Helpline: 0800 138 1619 (24/7)

■ Text: 07537 404719

Sports and Comradeship Groups (SCGs)

NEW SCG

Join the New RNA Choir SCG – Where Song Meets

Comradeship: Following the success of the Fisherman's Friends concert, a new group has formed – the RNA Choir SCG (Sports and Comradeship Group) – and we'd love for you to be part of it.

Whether you're from Portsmouth, Plymouth, Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland, or anywhere else, this is your choir. It's a space to connect, share, and celebrate the spirit of the RNA through music.

This group is open to all our fantastic choir volunteers, supporters, and friends. Together, we:

- Stay in touch with updates on events and opportunities
- Support one another and keep the camaraderie going
- Celebrate the joy of singing and everything we build together

Rehearsals will take place either in person or via Zoom, so you can join in wherever you are.

To sign up or find out more, email Jon at wws@rnassoc.org

SCGs are a great way to stay connected to your hobby, and to each other. New members are always welcome and we highly recommend you get involved and see what it's all about.

Here is the link to what's currently on offer

Interests Archive - Royal Naval Association

Tackling Social Isolation Among Veterans

As we move into the colder, darker



months, shorter days and chilly weather can make it harder for people to get out, and feelings of loneliness can easily creep in. That's why the work of our Welfare and Wellbeing team is so crucial. A simple visit, a phone call, or even a friendly message can make a huge difference to someone's day. Social isolation is a growing concern across many communities, but for veterans, it can be especially profound. After years of service marked by camaraderie, structure, and shared purpose, transitioning to civilian life, particularly in later years, can leave some feeling adrift. Many veterans face unique challenges – the loss of close-knit bonds formed during service, limited mobility, and the absence of regular social interaction. These factors can lead to loneliness, which is increasingly recognised as a serious public health issue. Research shows that social isolation among military veterans is linked to poorer mental and physical health outcomes, including depression, anxiety, and reduced quality of life.

Why veterans are at risk

Veterans often spent long periods at sea, away from family and civilian life. While this built resilience and independence, it also created a lifestyle that doesn't easily translate into retirement. The sense of belonging that came from shipmates and shared missions can be hard to replicate once service ends, especially for those living alone or far from veteran communities.

What we can do as Branch Welfare and Wellbeing Officers

Combatting social isolation requires more than awareness – it demands action. Welfare and Wellbeing visits are a powerful way to reconnect veterans with their community. These visits offer more than just a friendly chat; they restore dignity, reinforce bonds, and remind veterans that they are not forgotten.

Here are a few ways we can all help:

- Reach out regularly – a phone call or visit can make a world of difference.
 - Encourage participation – invite veterans to social events, branch meetings, or community activities.
 - Share resources – help connect veterans with support services, transport options, or local groups.
 - Listen and learn – their stories are rich with history and wisdom, and sharing them helps build connection.
- If you know a veteran who might benefit from a Welfare and Wellbeing visit, please don't hesitate to get in touch with your local branch. Together, we can ensure that no one is left behind.
- But here is a challenge to you. Over the next week, I challenge each of you to do one thing:
- Call a shipmate you haven't spoken to in a while.
 - Invite someone to your branch meeting.
 - Share a memory with your family.

Life Beyond the Uniform: Supporting Younger Veterans and their Families

Leaving the Armed Forces is a big step, especially for younger veterans. Whether you've served for a few years or longer, whether you've left by choice or due to medical reasons, it's a moment that can feel both exciting and uncertain. One chapter closes, another begins.

But here's the truth: you've already shown strength, courage, and commitment. And those qualities don't disappear when your time in uniform ends, they stay with you, ready to help you take on whatever comes next.

A new start, full of possibility

Life after service can be full of opportunity. You've got skills that employers value – leadership, teamwork, resilience, and the ability to stay calm under pressure. Whether you're starting a new job, retraining, or simply figuring out what's next, you've got what it takes.

For those who've left due to medical reasons, the journey might feel tougher. But it's important to remember: your service still matters. Your story still matters. And you're not alone.

Families matter too

Behind every veteran is a family that's been there through it all – the highs, the lows, the homecomings, and the changes. Partners, parents, children, they've supported you, and now they're adjusting too. They deserve recognition, support, and a community that understands.

What we can all do as Welfare and Wellbeing Officers.

- Be welcoming: Make space for younger veterans and their families in local groups, events, and conversations.
- Offer support: Share advice, job leads, and resources. Sometimes a simple chat can make all the difference.
- Stay connected: Isolation can creep in quietly. A message, a call, or a coffee can go a long way.
- Celebrate the journey: every step forward is worth recognising, no matter how big or small.

To our younger veterans

You've already done something remarkable. Now, as you take your next steps, know this: you're part of a wider family that's proud of you, ready to support you, and excited for what's ahead.

Your service was just the beginning. The future is yours and it's full of promise.

WELFARE CONTACTS

Organisation	Telephone	Website
Aggie's	079 7764 1876	www.aggies.org.uk
Association of Wrens	02392 725 141	https://wrens.org.uk
COBSEO	-	www.cobseo.org.uk
Combat Stress	0800 138 1619	helpline@combatstress.org.uk
CRISIS	0300 636 1967	www.crisis.org.uk
Fighting with Pride	0203 981 3810	www.fightingwithpride.org.uk
For all Ops - GOV.UK	0808 802 1212	www.gov.uk/support-for-veterans
Help for Heroes	0300 303 9888	www.helpforheroes.org.uk
Home-Start	0116 464 5490	www.home-start.org.uk
Kids	0121 355 2707	www.kids.org.uk
Marriage Care	0800 389 3801	www.marriagecare.org.uk
Mind Solent	023 8202 7810	www.solentmind.org.uk
Naval Children's Charity	02392 639 534	www.navalchildrenscharity.org.uk
Naval Families Federation	02392 654 374	https://nff.org.uk
Officers' Association	020 7808 4175	www.officersassociation.org.uk
Op Courage	-	www.nhs.uk
PTSD Resolution	0300 302 0551	https://ptsdresolution.org/
REFUGE	0808 2000 247	https://refuge.org.uk/
Relate	-	www.relate.org.uk
Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity	02393 871 520	www.mrmc.org.uk
Royal British Legion	0808 802 8080	www.britishlegion.org.uk
Royal Marines Charity	0800 468 1664	https://rma-trmc.org
Royal Naval Benevolent Trust	02392 690 112	www.mbt.org.uk
Royal Navy Royal Marines Widows' Association	07462 376850	https://rnmwidows.org
SAIL	0800 160 1842	https://sailine.org.uk/
Samaritans	116 123	www.samaritans.org
Seafarers UK	020 7932 0000	www.theseafarerscharity.org
SSAFA	0800 260 6780	www.ssafo.org.uk
The Poppy Factory	020 8940 3305	www.poppyfactory.org
Veterans Outreach Support	02392 731 767	https://vosuk.org/
Walking With The Wounded	0330 058 5800	https://walkingwiththewounded.org.uk
White Ensign Association	07384 575598	www.whiteensign.co.uk

CAN A DIVORCE EVER BE GOOD?

Good Divorce Week (beginning 10 November) is championed by members of Resolution.

It is an annual diary event which reminds us that even in the most difficult moments, there can be a better way to separate.

I am a member of Resolution (<https://resolution.org.uk/>) which is an organisation of more than 6,500 family law professionals who are all committed to reducing conflict and encouraging co-operation.

I follow a Code of Practice which prioritises children's welfare, clear and non-confrontational communication and problem solving.

This is my day-to-day MO, but it's highlighted in Good Divorce Week each year.

The theme of Good Divorce Week in 2025 is constructively helping families.

How can I ensure correspondence is clear, non-aggressive and helpful?

How can I encourage early agreements between parties and how can I prioritise non-court dispute resolution (NCDR) over court proceedings?

Separation is hard enough. How can I adopt a constructive and helpful approach to resolve any dispute?

1 I will always listen first. I am a family solicitor and every family is different – even my own!

I will understand my client's priorities and the needs of their family and children. I will enquire about their living arrangements and financial landscape as there is no 'one size fits all' approach on divorce and separation.

2 What are the early options? I am an advocate for NCDR. Mediation, arbitration and private hearings (take a look at a previous article for more information).

I will explain the early available forums to resolving a dispute and set out the costs and associated timescales.

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 civvy 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

3 Children are important. The court will always consider the welfare of the child first.

How can this be promoted and encouraged? I will explore options that are in the best interests of the child and may also reduce conflict between separating parents.

This might mean creative handover options or considering the day-to-day logistics of looking after children.

4 Legal jargon is old news. It's understandable that the legal process and approaching a family solicitor can be daunting. The language doesn't need to be.

I will ensure my client recognises the available options and next steps, using

language that they understand and can relate to.

5 Lets solve the problem. I am a family solicitor. I am a problem-solver. I like outcomes.

Good Divorce Week does not mean divorce will be easy. It will be challenging (as will any separation or relationship breakdown) and arguments are normal. It's how those disagreements are resolved that can be good. Less hostility, more information.

How can parties and their representatives (if they choose to have one) work together to make informed, practical decisions about their lives moving forwards?

I'm here to help navigate divorce or separation, and for all other family law questions!

I am an Associate in the family team at Knights and my partner is a Royal Navy Veteran.

I come from a military family and have a little girl who is one year old.

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

www.linkedin.com/in/emmxjones

emma.jones@knightsplc.com

LEAVE A LASTING LEGACY WITH YOUR WILL

If you need to update or create a new will you can take advantage of a free service, where you can also leave a lasting legacy by helping the Royal Naval Association to continue to support Shipmates in need.

We've partnered with expert estate planners Octopus Legacy, so you can write or update your will for free – over the phone, or in person, and home visits

can be arranged as well.

Call 020 4525 3605 and quote 'The Royal Naval Association' to make your appointment. Lines are open Monday to Friday, 0900-1730.

All they ask is that you consider leaving the Royal Naval Association a gift in your will.

For more information see the web page at <https://buff.ly/44BjG39>

BIG BREAKFAST IN BARNSTAPLE

The Veterans Charity is delighted to announce The Big Breakfast Networking & Engagement Event will take place on Saturday 21 February from 9.30am to 12.00 at the Barnstaple Hotel, postcode EX31 1LE.

This exciting morning gathering will bring together members of the Armed Forces community, charities and support organisations for a vibrant networking event designed to encourage collaboration, engagement, and community connection.

Guests can enjoy a breakfast bap with unlimited tea and coffee, while taking part in a morning full of opportunities to connect with fellow veterans, families, and service personnel.

Danny Greeno, CEO of The Veterans Charity, said "We are excited to be bringing The Big Breakfast to Devon, having hosted similar successful events

at both RNAS Culdrose and RAF St Mawgan in the past couple of years.

"The events are a great platform to bring members of the Armed Forces community together and to enhance awareness of the support that is available.

"We would be delighted to welcome employers and signatories of the Armed Forces Corporate Covenant to the event as well as Service charities and support organisations, to give them an opportunity to meet and engage with veterans and Service leavers."

What you can expect:

- Inspiring presentations and information stands from charities and support organisations.
- The chance to network with businesses, recruiters, and employment experts.
- A welcoming environment to connect

with other members of the Armed Forces community.

The Big Breakfast is part of The Veterans Charity's ongoing mission to support veterans through meaningful engagement, practical assistance, and strong partnerships.

The event offers a valuable opportunity for individuals and organisations to share insights, resources, and initiatives that benefit the wider Armed Forces community.

Tickets cost just £8 per person, including breakfast. Spaces are limited, and early booking is encouraged. Organisations can also book a stand space at the event to engage with attendees from the Armed Forces community.

Spaces can be booked for just £25, which includes breakfast for two staff members and a stand space.

For more details follow [this link](#).

VETERANS TAKE TO THE SKIES

Seven Blesma veterans have taken to the skies in a thrilling gliding session that had them soaring over Lancashire.

The members were given incredible views and the experience of riding thermals and swooping through the air courtesy of the oldest gliding club in the country.

The group had a briefing on controls and weather conditions from experts at the Bowland Forest Gliding Club, near Preston, before soaring in the two-seater gliders.

"It was incredible, and the members really loved it," said Catherine Green, Blesma Outreach Officer North West, who organised the event.

"They said it was total freedom; freedom from a wheelchair or a prosthetic limb. They had great flying conditions so were treated to some amazing views. "They were paired up with qualified pilots but had the chance to take the controls for a time during their flights.

"The gliding club is run by volunteers, and they really looked after us."

NOT FORGOTTEN AT CHRISTMAS...

Is that the sound of sleigh bells, and the smell of roast turkey?

It might only be early November, but The Not Forgotten are excited to announce the programme for their Christmas Lunch Tour 2025.

For some Christmas can be a lonely time of year. That's why throughout the first two weeks of December they will be travelling the country to bring veterans and serving personnel together and lift spirits as Christmas approaches.

Escape the house and 'normal life' for an afternoon (12-4pm) and join like-minded veterans for festive food, games and music from our entertainers; sprinkled with conversation, laughter and banter with friends old and new.

This year they are coming to Newcastle (Tue 2 Dec), Hull (Weds 3 Dec), Leeds (Thurs 4 Dec), Walsall (Fri 5 Dec), Truro (Mon 8 Dec), Bristol (Tues 9 Dec), Portsmouth (Weds 10 Dec), Farnborough (Thurs 11 Dec), Watford (Fri 12 Dec) and Bexhill-on-Sea (Mon 15 Dec).

For more information or to register your interest in coming to any of the Christmas lunches, see <https://thenotforgotten.org/events/> for full details of each event.

MORE HOMES FOR VETERANS

More veterans who bravely served our country will get the homes they deserve, as £4.5 million is awarded to 19 housing providers across the UK to build 45 new homes and make critical common area improvements.

The initiative is part of the government's wider £20m Capital Housing investment, and builds on the removal of local connection requirements for all veterans applying for social housing in England.

Minister for Veterans and People, Louise Sandher-Jones MP, announced the funding at The Stoll Foundation's Kings Road Park development in Fulham where she opened Valour House, which will provide secure, long-term accommodation for veterans and their families.

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, telephone 07591 829416
Find the guide on our website: <https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/rna-funeral-guide>

EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING

CHINA FLEET CLUB LAUNCHES NEW COWORKING FACILITY

China Fleet Country Club in Saltash has officially opened its new coworking facility, providing a professional, flexible environment for remote workers, freelancers, and businesses.

The transformation from a simple functions suite into a modern, purpose-built workspace reflects the Club's ongoing commitment to reinvesting in its facilities and responding to the evolving needs of its members and the wider professional community.

Dean Bennett, General Manager of China Fleet Country Club, said: "We wanted to create more than just a workspace.

"This transformation reflects our commitment to our members and the wider community, providing a professional environment where people can connect, collaborate, and thrive.

"With more people working from home than ever, this space offers the perfect solution to combat isolation and maintain productivity."

In recent years the Club, just to the west of Plymouth, has invested millions of pounds to enhance its offering, including a £2.5 million refurbishment of its leisure and hotel facilities, the installation of

a 600kW solar PV system to support sustainability goals, and the launch of the new BOX12 fitness suite.

The new coworking area continues this trajectory, providing a state-of-the-art professional environment that supports productivity, networking, and collaboration.

The facility features dedicated desks with high-speed internet, food and beverage service to your desk, and free parking.

There are flexible usage options including a Full Cowork Membership with full access to the coworking space and Health Club facilities seven days a week plus one free half-day boardroom rental per month; Cowork Flex for single-day access from 6.30am to 10pm; and Kingsmill Boardroom Hire with high-speed internet, presentation screen, and desk-side food and beverage service. For more details see the China Fleet Country Club website [here](#).

BFBS OFFERS AI SKILLS COURSE

BFBS (British Forces Broadcasting Service) has been awarded a £66,884 grant from the Armed Forces Covenant Fund Trust to deliver a groundbreaking AI skills programme exclusively for military partners, helping them develop digital skills, grow career opportunities and strengthen employability in an increasingly tech-driven world.

The programme, which will be the first of its kind and part of the BFBS Academy, launches in January 2026, combining flexible online learning, monthly live evening webinars and four one-off in-person workshops.

The programme will help participants build foundational AI skills relevant to real-world projects, explore how AI tools can support work or business growth, access training in a format that fits around military life and day-to-day jobs, and understand and navigate AI responsibly.

For more about the BFBS Academy see <https://academy.bfbs.com>

RECRUITMENT EVENT FOR NORTH-WEST

SSAFA are collaborating with One Vision Uniformed Services to organise a recruitment event at the Castle Green Hotel, Kendal on Friday 14 November from 8am to 11am.

The event is called Forces, Families & Futures and focuses

specifically on the North Lancashire and Cumbria area.

Organisations attending include Cumbria Constabulary, A.W. Jenkinson, Story Contracting Ltd, TEAM Inc, Enterprising Cumbria, Cumberland Council, Westmorland & Furness

Council, SP Training Ltd, Lancaster & Morecambe College and the University of Cumbria.

If you are interested you can register here: www.trybooking.com/uk/fgru. Breakfast rolls and refreshments will be provided for all.

This event is all about action – bringing together those who are leaving or have already left the Armed Forces with businesses and educators who value their unique skills and mindset.

It's a chance to have real conversations, in person, with employers who are actively looking to recruit and support people from the armed forces community. Whether they're still transitioning or have already made the move but haven't yet found the right fit, this event is designed to help them connect, explore options, and find a role that truly matches their abilities, giving both sides the chance to meet, talk, and discover the incredible potential that comes from combining military experience with civilian opportunity.

YOU'VE GOT WHAT IT TAKES...

An IT Security Manager in Glasgow and warehouse operations manager in Luton are just two of the November opportunities for veterans on the SaluteMyJob job board, alongside training opportunities and careers advice.

According to SaluteMyJob, the IT Security Manager post would be with "an industry-leading Marine Engineering and Fleet Management client," adding "this is an excellent opportunity for a former military service leaver to join an organisation to grow and develop the department."

The warehouse operations manager role would be expected to "lead, motivate, and develop a high-performing team across multiple warehouse departments."

According to the website: "We're especially keen to hear from military service leavers with logistics or warehousing backgrounds. If you've led teams, managed operations under pressure, and kept people safe while delivering results — you already have what it takes."

See www.salutemyjob.com for further details.





NOVEMBER 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 S/M Lawrie Phillips and published by The History Press (www.thehistorypress.co.uk). It is currently available online for around £65 new (search ISBN number 978-0750982665)

On **9 November 1918** – just two days before the Armistice – the young Royal Marine Lt Harry Day was serving in battleship HMS Britannia when she was torpedoed by German submarine UB-50 off Cape Trafalgar on the western approach to the Strait of Gibraltar. After the initial impact a second explosion followed as a magazine detonated, filling the ship with smoke and starting numerous fires, and the veteran battleship developed a list. Day, just 20 at the time, went down to the darkened wardroom after the second explosion to search for survivors, and heard groans from the wardroom pantry, but the heavy connecting door was jammed. Day clambered through the pantry hatch and found a steward and an engineer officer who were both badly injured. Fearing they would be further injured by being dragged through the hatch, Day went back to the quarterdeck and found a group of stokers who he took below to help carry the injured men to safety, though the engineer later died of his wounds. In all, 50 men died but because the 17,600-ton ship sank slowly, 712 sailors were rescued. Britannia was the last major warship lost by the Royal Navy in World War 1. For his efforts, Day was awarded the Albert Medal, which he later exchanged for a George Cross. That act of bravery was merely the prelude to an astonishing military career that earned Harry 'Wings' Day legendary status. After the war Day served in cruisers HMS Isis and HMS Caledon, and battleship HMS Malaya, then switched to the Fleet Air Arm (at that time a part of the new

RAF) as a flying officer. In 1930 he joined 23 Sqn RAF, and led the squadron aerobatic display team at the Hendon Air Show in 1931, when future fighter ace Douglas Bader was one of his team. When World War 2 looming, he turned down a desk job at Bomber Command and instead, as a wing commander, took command of 57 Sqn RAF. The squadron moved to Metz as part of the British Expeditionary Force in the autumn of 1939, and volunteered to fly the squadron's first operational mission, but while on reconnaissance over Germany his Bristol Blenheim light bomber was shot down and Day was captured, having suffered some burns and injuries, though his two crewmen died. There followed an extraordinary period as Day was transferred from prison camp to prison camp, all the while gathering intelligence and setting up escape committees and organising escape attempts himself, usually by digging their way out but on one occasion through a latrine tunnel. At first the life of a POW was relatively relaxed, as there were few men in custody so early in the war, and relations with guards and commandants were cordial, but as the war progressed his actions caused Day some very narrow escapes from the firing squad. In all, Day escaped nine times, only to be recaptured on eight occasions, one of the most ambitious being the so-called 'Great Escape' of 76 men from Stalag Luft III at Sagan. Dressed in a home-made civilian suit Day travelled by train through Berlin and on to Szczecin in Poland, where he was betrayed at a workers camp. He finally escaped for good on 28 April 1945 when he stole a Volkswagen car and drove to the Allied lines in northern Italy. For his actions while a POW Day, who was often the senior British officer, was awarded the DSO and OBE, and was also awarded the US Legion of Merit for assisting American POWs. Day retired from active service in 1950 as a group captain, and died in Malta on 11 March 1977 at the age of 78.

For more events and actions on dates in November see our new History section on the RNA website (<https://www.royal-naval-association.co.uk/history>) – more will be added in the coming weeks and months.

LONGCAST

2025

9 Nov 2025	Remembrance Ceremonies, Cenotaph, Whitehall
15 Nov 2025	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting hosted by RNA Stowmarket
17 Jan 2026	Area 4 AGM hosted by Bude Branch
17 Jan 2026	Area 8 AGM. Other meetings on 18 April, 18 July, 10 October
2 May 2026	Army v Navy rugby match, Twickenham
9 May 2026	National Standard Bearers competition, Whale Island, Portsmouth
12-14 June 2026	National Conference, Salford

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



www.royal-naval-association.co.uk



A SPECIAL OFFER

A 10% discount on food, selected drinks and hotel rooms for members of the Royal Naval Association

The Royal Maritime Hotel is a stone's throw from Gunwharf Quays, the Spinnaker Tower and Portsmouth Historic Dockyard, HMS Victory, The Mary Rose Museum and HMS Warrior. Facilities include Horatio's restaurant, the Victory bar, a small swimming pool, sauna, spa pool and skittles!

Run by a charity to benefit veterans and serving military personnel



Visit royalmaritimehotel.co.uk for more information and to book

info@royalmaritimehotel.co.uk 02392 982 182 Queen Street, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO1 3HS

MORE OFFERS

Ship Anson pub, 10 The Hard, Portsea	10% off food and drink
Portsmouth Historic Dockyard	£20 for a day ticket 30% off annual Ultimate Explorer tickets
Royal Maritime Hotel 182 Queen Street	A 10% discount on food, selected drinks and hotel rooms
Sea Urchin's Gin Navy Strength Gin Arctic Convoy Vodka	10% to RNA from the sale of each bottle Don't forget to tick the box for RNA. P&P is free for orders over £40, otherwise it is £4.50.
China Fleet Country Club	Click on the link for offers for Serving and ex-Serving RN and RM
Trinity Insurance	For offers see https://tinyurl.com/ssy8vt5s

Delegate to Annual Conference 2026 – CITY OF SALFORD

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.

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

NB: A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2025 and Branch Annual Report for 2025 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

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

NOMINATION FORM
ELECTION OF MEMBERS AND DEPUTY MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL 2026
(Revised RNA Bye-Law 7)

For the attention of All Branch Secretaries:

NCM in Areas 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12 and DNCM in Areas 1, 2, 9, 10, 11, 12

Each Branch may nominate **one full or life member** from any Branch within its own Area, as a Candidate for election to the National Council, and **one full or life member** for election as the Deputy National Council Member **subject to the approval of the Branch to which both persons belong.**

Please note that our current governance construct means that National Council Members are automatically Trustees of the Royal Naval Association (Charity no: 266982). Nominees for NCM should therefore ensure that they are not in any way disbarred from holding a trusteeship. If unsure, please check the Charity Commission website.

Names of Nominees

NCM

DNCM

Proposed by **Branch** **Area**

Address of Nominee

NCM.....

..... **e mail**

DNCM.....

..... **e mail**

Brief history of nominees in the Association. (Continue on separate sheet if necessary)

NCM-

DNCM -

Chairman (signed)(dated).....

Secretary..... (signed)(dated).....

If the Candidate is **not** a member the proposing Branch, this section is to be completed by the Chairman and Secretary of the Candidate's **own** Branch.

Candidate's Branch

We are aware of the above nomination.

Signature of Chairman (Candidate's Branch)

Signature of Secretary (Candidate's Branch)

Candidate

I accept the nomination and promise to attend as many National Council Meetings as is possible and to sit on any Committees to which I may be elected.

Signature of Candidate Dated

The envelope containing this completed form should be marked **NOMINATIONS FOR NATIONAL COUNCIL** and must reach RNA HQ no later than **1600 on 20 February 2026.**

Alternatively, you can scan the fully signed form and email it to ams@massoc.org

PROPOSED MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2026

Proposals must reach The General Secretary by **1600 20 February 2026**

Name of Proposing Branch:

Motion / amendment

Explanation of the Motion / Amendment (To be included in the notes for Conference)

Hon Secretary(signed).....(dated)

Name of Seconding Branch:

Hon Secretary(signed).....(dated)

Notes

- a. A motion is submitted in the name of a Branch. Secretaries of proposing and seconding Branches are **certifying** that the motion or amendment reflects the view of the Branch meeting (not a committee); and that voting was conducted in accordance with Rule 20.
- b. A separate form is required for each Motion or Amendment
- c. A manuscript copy is acceptable for additional Motions or Amendments if the printed form is not available.
- d. The Motion or Amendment should be as short and precise as possible avoiding ambiguity. A Motion should normally start with the word 'THAT'
- e. The explanation is to assist the scrutiny of the Standing Orders Committee in understanding the intention behind the Motion so that they may be able to consider its presentation so it can be improved and implemented as soon as possible (Conference Bye Law C4)
- f. Motions may be submitted at any time but must reach the General Secretary by **20 February 2026**.
- g. Motions of Urgency should reach the General Secretary not less than 48 hours before Conference. (In accordance with Conference Bye Law C6.) and include an explanation about the urgency.
- h. Amendments to Motions should also normally reach the General Secretary not less than 7 days before Conference. The provision for the submission of amendments during Conference is in the Conference Bye-Laws.
- i. Bye-Laws. A Motion to Conference may propose that a Bye-Law be set aside or it may ask the Council to consider making or amending a Bye-Law.
- j. The Branch Proposing a Motion **must** have it Seconded by another Branch before forwarding it to the General Secretary. (Conference Bye Law C3a)



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

**Veterans Can...
Pale Ale & Pilsner**



For 75 years the Royal Naval Association has supported the wider Naval Family.

Totally inclusive, we promote the seven components of comradeship (our 7Cs): Connection, Community, Companionship, Care, Compassion, Commemoration and Celebration.

Veterans Can... "connects the global Veteran community, in order to bring balance, pride & positivity." It's about doing good things & focusing on the positives our time spent in the military has on our own lives - and on societies around the world.

Sales from every can supports the Royal Naval Association and Veterans Can...

THE CRAFT BREWERY ON NAVAL SOIL

**ORDER
HERE**



**ORDER
HERE**



**THE LEE ON THE SOLENT
& STUBBINGTON
ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION**

PRESENT A

CHRISTMAS BAND CONCERT

FEATURING THE

**HMS COLLINGWOOD
VOLUNTEER BAND**

FRIDAY, DECEMBER 12, 7 PM

HOLY ROOD CHURCH, STUBBINGTON

Tickets: £8 Adults - Children Free

Available From: Blooms Florist, Stubbington
Church Office, Holy Rood

Or contact: leestubb@live.co.uk

SPONSORED BY:

BLOC



THE LEE ON THE SOLENT & STUBBINGTON ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

Korea - the forgotten war

A one-day celebration of the history and philately of the Korean peninsula from Liberation in 1945 to the Armistice in 1953, with a special focus on the Korean War.

PROGRAMME

10:30 Coffee

10:55 Welcome

Tony Bard FRPSL

11:02 Introduction

**Martin Uden, Former UK Ambassador to South Korea,
President, British Korean War Veterans' Association**

11:15 What Sort of War was the Korean War?

Dr Owen Miller

12:00 British Armed Forces in the Korean War, 1950-53: An Overview

Dr James Goulty

12:45 Break

13:45 North & South Korea: The First Issues after WW2

Dr James Grayson

14:30 Aspects of Korean War Postal History

Tony Bard FRPSL

DISPLAYS

An extensive range of displays will highlight the major aspects of Korean philately and postal history of the period. These have been kindly provided by many of the leading collectors of post-1945 Korean philately worldwide.

Inchon, 15 September 1950: First Lieutenant Baldomero Lopez, USMC, leads the 3rd Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion, 5th Marines over the seawall on the northern side of Red Beach. Lopez was killed in action within a few minutes, while assaulting a North Korean bunker (Naval History and Heritage Command photo 96876).

11 November 2025

Royal Philatelic Society,

15 Abchurch Lane,

London EC4N 7BW

To register, please contact Tony Bard
at koreanwar75@gmail.com



In association with the Korea Stamp Society.

Supporting Korean philately since 1952.

www.koreastampsociety.org

The organisers wish to acknowledge the support provided by the Society for this event.



Ministry
of Defence



Strategic
Command

One Conversation Can Make The Difference

Join others in sharing your travel experiences, it will make a difference now.

Your insights and knowledge from travelling can support understanding and inform the UK Government.

The Ministry of Defence (MOD) conducts voluntary debriefs with individuals returning from countries of interest. These debriefs can provide vital information and contribute to national security.

If you have travelled to a country of interest, then our specialist debriefing team will want to speak to you and learn about your experiences and insights.

You may have picked up a valuable piece of information; please share it with the MOD.



Webpage

ROYAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2025 ENTRY FORM – PROFESSIONAL, AMATEUR AND VETERAN ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION ENTRY FORM

Note: Complete a separate entry form for each photograph submitted.

NAME		RANK/RATE/TITLE		SERVICE NO*	
* if applicable					
SHIP/UNIT/ADDRESS				EMAIL	

Select Category and Class:

Veteran	Category 17a	☐	Amateur	Category 17b	☐	Professional	Category 17c	☐
----------------	--------------	--------------------------	----------------	--------------	--------------------------	---------------------	--------------	--------------------------

Maximum of three images may be submitted in your selected category. Full file names (for professionals) and images to be entered here. Veterans and amateurs are to use the following file naming convention:

20250615-Category17b-MrJamesJohn -001
20250615-Category17b-MrJamesJohn -002
20250820-Category17b-MrJamesJohn -003



Professional photographers are to have full file info as per BR870. RN Amateurs and member of the public, either under or over 18 fill out a line about the photograph.

Concise Description of Photograph – (Who, What, Where, Why, When)
Examples below.

Image 1. Standard Bearers at the Armed Forces Week Flag raising Plymouth Guildhall on 24 Jun 25.
Image 2. A veteran from DDay speak at an event at Arromanche, in France today on 6 Jun 25.
Image 3. Veteran Vera Brett lights the beacon to commemorate DDay in Portsmouth on 6 Jun 25.

Please check as appropriate:

☐ I certify that this photograph was taken by me between 16 Dec 24 – 31 Dec 25 and has not been manipulated outside of the stated rules. This image was not entered into the RN Photographic Competition 2024 and consent for any member of the public in the image has been gained.

Signature: Date:

**FORCES
FAMILIES
AND FUTURES**



WELFARE • EDUCATE • RECRUIT



Working in
partnership with



DISCOVER YOUR VALUE UNLOCK NEW OPPORTUNITIES

17 Friday, 14th November 8am - 11am

📍 Castle Green Hotel, Kendal. LA9 6RG

ABOUT US

Join us for an inspiring event designed especially for the Armed Forces community. A unique opportunity to connect with support delivery, education pathways and recruiters in South Cumbria and North Lancashire.

WHY JOIN US?

- 🌟 Be inspired!
- 🤝 Meet forces-friendly recruiters
- 📚 Find support & welfare groups that fit your needs
- 📍 Connect with education providers in your region

EVENT INFORMATION



Guest Speakers

Hear powerful insights on recognising your true value and how your skills from service translate into success in civilian life.



Who's it for?

- Serving personnel
- Veterans
- Reservists
- Families
- Partners



What to expect

- Connect with local businesses ready to welcome you into their teams
- Explore career pathways and new opportunities
- Discover just how much you have to offer

Register to attend: <https://www.trybooking.com/uk/FGRU>





Private Medical Cover

**Transfer & Save
or Start Today**

- > Your choice of hospital & specialist
- > Avoid NHS waiting list
- > Prompt treatment
- > Open to all ages
- > Claims settled promptly
- > Making a claim will not affect your subscription
- > Excellent UK based service

**EXCLUSIVE
OFFER[†]**

for members of

**Royal Naval
Association**

90% SAVED MONEY
transferring to HMCA*

*Based on data provided by members who joined HMCA between 1st January 2024 and 31st December 2024.

†Exclusive offer available to Royal Naval Association and other selected membership groups.

Call today for a no obligation quote on

01423 799949

or enquire online at www.hmca.co.uk/rna

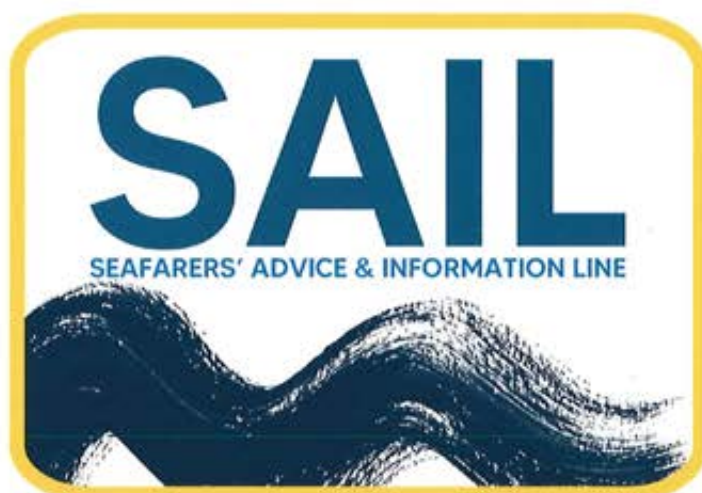


Rated 'Excellent' by our customers on



★ Trustpilot

Do you know there's a Citizens Advice service for the Royal Navy and Royal Marines and their families?



Free and confidential advice on debt,
benefits, housing & family issues

citizens
advice



Freephone 0800 160 1842



<https://sailine.org.uk/contact/>



@SeafarersAdvice



/SeafarersAdvice

We are authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority: FRN 617616
Greenwich Citizens Advice Bureau is funded by the Royal London Borough of Greenwich
Registered Charity Number: 1064404 | ICO Registered No. Z5134152
Company Limited by Guarantee | Registered Number: 3346379 England
Registered Office Address: 30 King William Walk, Greenwich, London SE10 9HJ



**the
seafarers'
charity**



**GREENWICH
HOSPITAL**
SUPPORTING THE ARMY NAVY SINCE 1694



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

just for
groups!

HOLIDAY SERVICE

TAILOR MADE HOLIDAYS
FOR YOUR ASSOCIATION

We are very proud to have enjoyed a special relationship with the RNA for many years, offering a tailored holiday service for RNA Branches and Members, and at the same time contributing funds to help the RNA's vital work in supporting Members and their families throughout the world. Offering a wealth of experience our award winning team are on hand to assist with all your

future association events. Whether you are planning a group holiday, reunion, conference or event you can be sure of our unrivalled service. We will take care of your group needs, from accommodation, transport, excursions, admissions, guides and hotel visits to all those little extras you may require. Simply call our *just for groups!* team on **01603 886740**.

We can offer you:

Complete Tailor Made Packages

Conferences

Accommodation Services

Special Itineraries

Promotional Literature

Bookings & Payments

Personal Service

PLUS SAVE 10%



©Nigel Huxtable

Save 10% off some of Britain's favourite holiday brands **QUOTE RNA25 WHEN BOOKING**

Please visit www.theukholidaygroup.com/our-brands/ to browse our full range of holidays

**GRAND UK
HOLIDAYS**

 **Sunrise**
DIRECT

Palmer Holidays


GLENTON
HOLIDAYS



Are you or your partner part of the Armed Forces? Have you had to relocate your family?

We need your feedback to help Serving families in the Plymouth area.

Please help us and submit your feedback via the QR code below



Action for Children whose registered address is 3 The Boulevard, Ascot Road, Watford WD18 8AG and registered as a charitable company limited by guarantee in England & Wales under number 04764232. Registered charity numbers 1097940/SC038092. © Action for Children 2024. ACT0157.