

## NAVAL SERVICE MEMORIAL DEDICATION – 1SL ADDRESS

Your Royal Highness, Minister Francois, L&G,

As we come towards the end of this Service, there are a few moments to reflect upon this service, this memorial, and to express thanks.

All those of us associated with the Naval Service, share a common bond, as we stand in the shadow of the White Ensign.

Because all the arms of our Service bear the prefix “Royal” -

from Royal Navy to Royal Fleet Auxiliary - from Royal Marine Reserve to the Queen Alexandra’s Royal Naval Nursing Service. Exactly as His Royal Highness has said.

And the same applies to the Royal Naval Association too.

We are intensely proud of our Royal connection.

And, Your Royal Highness, we are privileged to have you here today - honoured that you are representing Her Majesty - the patron of the RNA - at the unveiling of this new memorial -

- a memorial dedicated to all in the Naval Service who have sacrificed in the service of the Crown.

We also have pride in our naval family.

Because this new memorial is one for all generations of our family - past, present and future - family ties that are so visibly demonstrated at this Service of dedication.

Today, we are joined by:

Our current generation - men and women from Her Majesty’s ships and submarines, naval air squadrons, Royal Marine and Reserve units - all members of an expanding Navy - as new equipment, new responsibilities and new opportunities lie ahead.

We are joined by our past generation - veterans from the RNA.

And by our future generation – represented by the Sea Cadets on parade here.

I'm also delighted that we are joined by relatives of those who have served or are serving –

Because it's the members of our families who are the anchors upon whom we so often depend.

You are all very welcome at this special family gathering.

\*\*\*

Now this memorial - and today's event - has been made possible only by the generosity of members of our naval family.

So I'd like to use this opportunity to offer thanks.

First, to the Gosling Foundation, for their unstinting generosity - not just here, but very widely.

Next, to the RNRMC - our charity - and to Seafarers (UK).

And - to the Royal Naval Association - in this, your Diamond Jubilee year.

Individual members, branches and the National Council have all been extraordinarily generous.

What a fantastic gift from you to mark your 60<sup>th</sup> birthday!

\*\*\*

The design of the memorial itself, unites the Naval Service past and present.

The representation of the world's oceans in the memorial's panels is a reflection of breadth and depth of past sacrifice all over the world.

But they also reflect our role today.

In our increasingly inter-connected and inter-dependent world, the Naval Service is deployed forward –

protecting our nation's interests, right across the globe.

And I'm also sure you will agree with me that the design of the memorial is powerfully cutting-edge.

And that is appropriate too.

Because it reflects the nature of the astonishingly modern equipment which is operated by today's Royal Navy and is coming into service.

And in a few weeks, Her Majesty the Queen will name our new aircraft carrier  
QUEEN ELIZABETH

- a reflection of national ambition, global responsibility and strategic partnership - and the incoming flagship of our - your - modern, credible Navy.

But at its heart, this memorial is about our people.

It is they who have won the Naval Service its enviable reputation.

It reminds me of what Admiral 'ABC' Cunningham said during the Second World War:

"It takes three years to build a ship. It takes three centuries to build a tradition"

Ok - so it takes longer now to build a ship - but it is just as quick to lose a reputation.

He knew then, as we know now, that it is the ethos, professionalism, courage and war-fighting spirit of our people - across the centuries – who have built that reputation - that tradition.

So we are proud to belong to this naval family of ours.

Because in our naval history, lies the nation's history.

This new memorial, so generously created, allows us to reflect upon that history - to remember the sacrifice made by our whole naval family.

And this new memorial allows us to remember just what a remarkable family we are - and will continue to be.