



**ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION**



The Semaphore Circular

No 696

The Beating Heart of the RNA

February 2020



RNA Central Office is on the move within Portsmouth Naval Base. After nearly 12 years in its current Semaphore Tower site the Central Office Team will be moving into Building 1/087, which is only 400m from its current location. Although we've lost our lovely view over the waterfront we should be more visible in our new location once signage is in place - see above. The Association of Wrens will also be moving and will share the new location with us.

This edition is the on-line version of the Semaphore Circular, unless you have registered with Central Office, it will only be available on the RNA website in the 'Members Area' under 'downloads' at www.royal-naval-association.co.uk and will be emailed to the branch contact, usually the Hon Sec

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Glossary of terms

NCM	National Council Member
NC	National Council
AMC	Association Management Committee
FAC	Finance Administration Committee
NCh	National Chairman
NVCh	National Vice Chairman
NP	National President
DNP	Deputy National President
GS	General Secretary
CONA	Conference of Naval Associations
NCBA	National Charter, Rules and Byelaws Advisor



indicates a new or substantially changed entry

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Central Office Team (L to R) - Bill Oliphant, Sarah Clewes, Andy Christie, Michelle Bainbridge, Kathryn Brindley, Nigel Huxtable, Chrissie Hughes (Missing -Mike Gray & Julie Royston)

Find Semaphore Circular On-line

<http://bit.ly/RNADownloads>

or

RNA Website / Members Area / Downloads /
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Snail Trail Mail - Postal Address

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From the General Secretary

Dear Shipmates,

Happy New Year to one and all. 2020.....already! How did that happen? And it's a big year ahead of us with commemoration for the 80th anniversary of Operation DYNAMO at Dunkirk, 75th anniversaries of both VE and VJ Day and, not to forget, on 31 July, the 50th anniversary of Black Tot Day when the daily rum ration to ships' companies was issued for the last time. Frivolous in comparison to the aforementioned key dates but nevertheless entirely significant in its own right. And, on the domestic front, it's a busy time for us too as we gear up for an office move within Portsmouth Naval Base.

Heartiest congrats are in order for a number of highly worthy candidates. Firstly, our Warrant Officer of the Naval Service, WO1 Nick Sharland was honoured with the award of an MBE in the NY Hons List. Nick has been a Council Member for 3 years and will hand over to WO1 "Speedy" Speedman shortly. Nick, the RNA is indebted to you for your support during your time in the National Council and we hope you won't become a stranger. Secondly, to RNA sponsors AW Shipping Management on their award of the prestigious Silver Award in the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme. AW Shipping Management are sponsors and supporters of the RNA. Also, to Jerry and Lynne Fleming of Liskeard Branch for their kindness in supporting the Commonwealth ratings who were accommodated in HMS DRAKE transit block over Christmas. As you will see in a separate article this has spawned the establishment of the "1000 good deeds a day fund" which will be fully announced in next month's Circular. A huge BZ to all!



WO1 Nick Sharland MBE

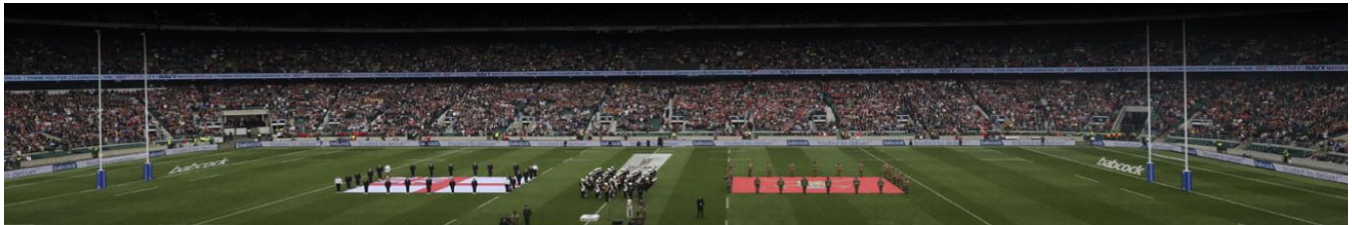
The office move has come earlier than anticipated and Shipmates should be aware that it will necessitate the closure of the office for a week from close of play on Friday 7 Feb until the morning of Monday 17 Feb. Apart from the closure there should be no change to contact details with phone numbers and email addresses remaining the same. The new mailing address will be notified in due course but won't affect business as a redirection has been established.

Andy and I will attend an RBL meeting in mid-February where we hope to be briefed on the Legion's plans for the national VE commemorations which will undoubtedly take place. The Government has already shifted the early May Bank Holiday to 8 May to accommodate VE-75. Details to follow in next month's Circular however intelligence suggests that there is going to be a big shindig in London on 8 May with the RBL co-ordinating several events. In advance, Branch Secretaries are requested to please canvas their WW2 veterans for their availability that day. I'm keen to exploit these national occasions not only for the act of remembrance but also the social opportunity of bringing members together. Indeed, the Royal Navy Royal Marines Charity and Pussers Rum are kindly sponsoring our Black Tot Day commemorative lunch in HMS BELFAST where we hope we will be graced with the presence of a VVIP. A calling notice will be published shortly for volunteers with priority given in this VE/VJ 75 year to those who served in WW2.

As branches are getting smaller and finding it more difficult to find volunteers to take on the committee roles, the model of forming Informal Groups seems to be becoming more popular. The Fleetwood Group are an example of this and are making it work very well. We're all about

camaraderie and if it works this way to keep people socialising then it's got to be good. BZ to Angela Patchett for lending her energies to the group in Fleetwood.

I'm also conscious that as the branches and groups get smaller, I'm keen to try and organise more national events to bring our members together. Or rather, exploit the opportunities which are already available to us. With this in mind, the RNA has 200 £20 tickets for the Army v Navy rugby match at Twickenham on 2nd May which are available on a first come first served basis. Also, a fortnight previous to this, is the Navy v RAF match which will be played on Saturday 18th April. The RNA has 50 x £5 tickets for this, available on the same basis and I can get more should we need them. Applications to Central Office.



The RNA Young Salts: S/ms Burningham, Lias, Mearns, Oliphant and sponsor Nige Amphlett

While I'm on the subject of activities, I would like to report a successful soiree of the *RNA Young Salts* team to the RN ski championships although, after a couple of falls, I have to admit, I did feel my age a bit. What do you mean I'm not 26 any more?! After several years of competing in the downhill events, the Young Salts decided to take a lessons package this year; clearly the racing is safer! In terms of a participation sport, the ski championships are actually the best attended sporting event in the navy sporting calendar. As well as serving RN, it is equally popular with the RNR and there are plenty of vets too so let's see some more RNA out in Tignes next year. I'll put the details for next year's championships on the website when they're available.

Naval News

The second of the hugely imposing Queen Elizabeth Class, HMS PRINCE OF WALES, was commissioned in Portsmouth on Tuesday 9th December. It was a proud and fitting occasion with the ship's sponsor HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, escorted by Prince Charles, leading the impressive ceremony. I had the very great honour of escorting a gentleman, Mr Ian Branwood, accompanied by his wife Val, whose father was killed in the previous PoW when she was sunk by the Japanese in their surprise attack on 10 December 1941. Ian's father saw him only once when Ian was a mere babe in arms when he got a little leave before the ship was deployed to the Far East. During the reception, Ian was introduced to the grand-daughters of Captain John Leach who was in Command of PRINCE OF WALES in 1941 and, like Ian's father, went down with his ship. John Leach left a son too, Sir Henry Leach, who



Ian and Val Branwood with the effervescent PoW EWO WO1 Gary Nicolson MBE at PRINCE OF WALES Commissioning

of course we remember as the First Sea Lord during the Falkland Islands campaign in 1982.

The following day the RNA was also represented at the memorial service for Sir Donald Gosling at Westminster Abbey. It was good to see an appropriately strong turn out for Sir Donald – there was more gold braid than Jack Blair has ever seen! The Countess of Wessex delivered a reading and the beloved Jimmy Tarbuck gave the eulogy, nearly lifting the rafters when, for his finale, he called for a three cheers for Sir Donald. Hip, hip!

Another one for your calendar; the focus of the national Armed Forces Day this year will be in Scarborough on 27 June. The Branch there are already gearing up for what should be a fabulous day.

Please also note that Nigel has achieved getting a new category in the Peregrine Trophy for photography – details in this edition.

Parish Notices

- Pensions. For our overseas members living on the continent, AFPS informs us that the Government advises that entitled personnel living in the EU or EEA will continue to receive uprated state pensions overseas after Brexit, even in a no-deal scenario.
- Remember the deadline for branch motions is 14 February 2020.
- This link <https://www.armedforcesday.org.uk> is a great start for a grant for Armed Forces Day events. Give it a go.
- The Standard Bearers Competition details are in the Circular this time. Please note that we are running a novices' competition. Candidates will be eligible for travel support and the use of RN accommodation. The idea is to have a training session and see the best standard bearers at work. There is a trophy and a tot I am sure.
- Welfare Seminar – 25 Apr 20
- If you are booking into the Royal Maritime Club at Portsmouth (Home Club), the please quote the RNA membership number **7398** and you will get the member's rate for rooms and in the restaurant. Note that if you book on-line the discount will be applied on your arrival and not on-line.

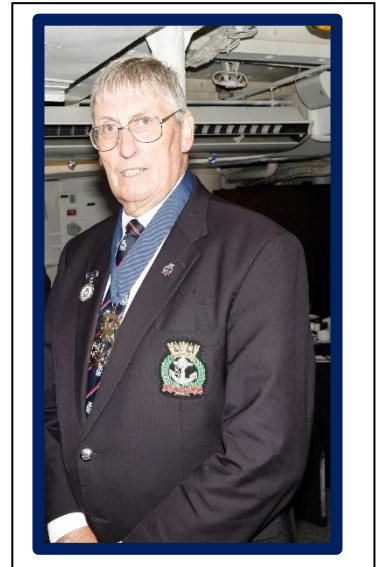
Best wishes from the Central Office Team,

Bill

National Chairman's Chat

As my first 'Chat' of 2020, let me start by wishing everyone a Happy New Year. May it be a healthy one for all of us. This month it is just a brief piece from me to allow you to shake off the cobwebs of the festive season.

Due to reconfiguration work of office space within Semaphore Tower the December National Council Meeting by permission of the Naval Base Commander was held in the Ark Royal Building, purpose built as the Security access point to our new Carriers. It certainly was a first to have £6.6+ Billions of hardware sitting over my right shoulder and within arm's length. The most noticeable thing about these two monsters was the eerie lack of naval personnel buzzing around, a reflection of modern day technology. Considering the fact that Carriers back in the 1960's had a Ship's Company of up to say 1500-1800 (non-embarked squadrons), these monsters tick over with just 700. Let us hope we do not have to wait too much longer for the birds to arrive, albeit HMS QE has sailed again to undertake further F35B flying trials off the East Coast.



Casting my eye through Facebook it is evident that you have all had a most enjoyable festive season. On the up are the veterans breakfast clubs with one started in my hometown of St. Neots. It's a pity that a few resent or dis-allow non-veterans to attend such as family members.

Surely, these clubs are for all members of the military family as we must not forget our partners and children we had to leave behind when deployed. I strongly suggest Shipmates and their families do their best to give such social gatherings every support. In my last chat I mentioned having met Prince Harry & Megan at Westminster Abbey in November. Let me scotch any rumours that I had nothing to do with what followed regarding their domicile. Reading through the December edition of this circular, it was heartening to read articles from some of our overseas Branches; Cape Town & Torre Vieja. Hopefully we will receive more news from our other Branches around the globe talking of which. Our thoughts this past month must be not only our Shipmates down in Australia, but all those families caught up in the terrible fires and their devastating losses. Our thoughts are with them all.

To any of our serving Shipmates who may be reading this circular or the Fleet edition, I would ask if you could hit your keyboard and send and share some news of your Ship/Establishment or some dits to Andy Christie at andy@royalnavalassoc.com Remember, you are serving, we served, but we are all part of one BIG Naval Family. Thank you for being part of our Defence Forces protecting our great nation.

Yours aye

Keith Ridley

1. ★ Central Office Move 7 / 17 February 2020

For those Shipmates who are not aware Central Office is on the move, after nearly 12 years in its current Semaphore Tower site. However, Central Office will be remaining in Portsmouth Naval Base and moving to Building 1/087, which is only 400m from its current location.

Sadly, we will no longer be overlooking the waterfront!

You can see the new building in the photo opposite which will be shared with the Association of Wrens.



Stop Press.....

Operation 'Around the other side of the Moon'

Central Office will be closed from 1500 Friday 07 February and reopen again at 0830 Monday 17 February to facilitate the move to Building 1/087. Regrettably there will be no telephone lines and consequently no e-mail/social media. If you have an **emergency**, please contact your NCM who will decide what course of action should be taken. All email/phone details will remain the same.

2. ★ Finance Corner

Dear Shipmates,

Hope you all had a fabulous festive period.

I would like to start with a little warning Shipmates the bank has advised me that when writing a cheque please ensure that you ensure 'the year' date is written in full i.e. 01/02/**2020** to stop fraud.



Donations

Top 5 donation figures abstracted from various Branches of the 2018 Year End Returns

	2018	2017
Sea Cadets – TS Swiftsure for Dinghies	7025.16	0.00
Donations Misc.	5952.88	1270.00
RNBT	3824.00	3160.00

Sea Cadets (Various)	3480.40	10227.73
RNRMC	3282.84	3348.60

Yours Aye

Michelle

3. ★ 2020 Welfare Seminar – Royal Maritime Club Portsmouth

Calling all Welfare Officers!

We have been working on the plans for the Welfare Seminar and delighted that most speakers have confirmed attendance; we look forward to seeing you on Saturday 25 April 2020, at the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth.

The support and guidance that RNA Welfare Officers provide is invaluable; more than ever, it is so important that we look out for each other, provide an arm around the shoulder as required and ensure that Shipmates know where to turn in times of need.



Please attend the Welfare Seminar if you are currently a Branch or Area Welfare Officer (as a Delegate) or if you are interested the role and would like to know more, please join us as an Observer.

Programme:

Social - If you are arriving on the Friday evening (or indeed if you live locally) please join us in the Bar at the Maritime Club for an informal social and raffle.

If you require accommodation - We have secured a special rate, Dinner, Bed and Breakfast (DBB), for those wishing to stay at the Royal Maritime Club:

£105.00 Double bedroom (based on Two people sharing), inc DBB.

£80.00 Single person (in a double bedroom), inc DBB.

£95.00 Double bedroom (based on Two people sharing), inc Bed & Breakfast

£75.00 Single person (in a double bedroom), inc Bed & Breakfast.

Please book direct and quote the RNA Membership number 7398, stating that you are part of the RNA Welfare Seminar booking (25 rooms have been reserved and will be taken on a first come first served basis).

Saturday - The Seminar will start at 0930, in Below Decks; we hope to offer presentations including Prostate Cancer UK, Age UK (Portsmouth), Seafarers Advice and Information Line (SAIL) and Defence Medical Welfare Services. All relevant Charities for you to share your knowledge in your role as Welfare Officer.

Lunch - A light lunch will be provided for those attending the Seminar; catering numbers will be based on the Delegates and Observers only. A ticket will be issued, as you arrive on Saturday, for those who can join us for lunch.

In the afternoon, we want to hear from you! We are keen to capture your thoughts, ideas, learn about the issues and challenges you deal with. There will also be time for you to speak to representatives from Veterans with Dogs, SSAFA to learn more about Caseworkers and training as well as RNBT and their plans for a new Care Home being built in Portsmouth. The Seminar will finish by 1600.

Let us help you to keep up to date with the range of support and Veteran specific service that exist, and please **help us** to understand what we need to do, so that in your role as a Welfare Officer you feel supported and valued...Once Navy, Always Navy.

Action required by you:

Please respond by Friday 28 February 2020, by email to sarah@royalnavalassoc.com if you can join us for the Welfare Seminar and provide the following information:

- * Your full name
- * Branch you are representing
- *Attending as a Delegate or Observer
- * Any dietary requirements

Please note. Do not just turn up on the day! Even if you live locally, you must let us know, so that your details are on the list and to ensure you are included in the catering numbers for lunch.

The National Welfare Advisor, Shipmate Rita Lock MBE and I are really looking forward to seeing you in Portsmouth and thank you for support.

Sarah Clewes.

4. ★ Central Office Open Days 2020

Central Office are holding a number of Open days in 2020, please see dates below. There are plenty of spaces should branches, HQ Roll members or individual shipmates wish to attend. Central Office staff will be delighted to see them and for those unaware the fun starts at 1100 in Semaphore Tower in the Naval Base at Portsmouth.



On arrival you will enjoy a sandwich lunch and update, by the General Secretary, on both RNA and Royal Navy matters. This followed by a harbour Boat trip round and an opportunity for Nigel to empty your wallets and purses of shekels so you can purchase 'Jackets, buttons and Badges'



The Open Days are all held on a Friday and the 2020 dates are as follows;
22 May, 26 Jun, 24 Jul, 07 Aug and 02 Oct

If you are interested in attending please forward your details to Central office Contact details are at the front of this Circular)

5. ★ RLP Embroidery Clothing Update

Hi Shipmates

Straight off the Gallery range.....

The New RNA Badge for casual wear has been digitalised and is ready to be embroidered onto Polo shirts, hoodies, jumpers and Pilot shirts. So why not pop along to slops at WWW.RLPEMBROIDERY.CO.UK or ring Shipmate Ray 07983 151011.

The photo Sidcup Branch modelling the New Badge.

Yours aye

Ray Pullin



6. ★ Standard Bearers and Novices Competition - Heads Up 16 May 2020

Shipmates may wish to make a note in their diaries for the upcoming Standard Bearer extravaganza at HMS Collingwood. The excitement is brewing for the 2020 competition....It could be your year!

On a serious note, The National Standard Bearers and Novice Standard Bearers competition along with the Association of WRNS competition will take place at HMS Collingwood on Saturday 16 May 2020 and will be the same format as recent competitions commencing at 1000 and on completion will be followed by a presentation ceremony.



The National Ceremonial Officer, Shipmate Bob Coburn is very keen to encourage Novice

Standard Bearers to come along and experience the ceremony, camaraderie and fun in taking part in this competition. It is hoped they will then move onto to enter the main competition and one day become National Standard Bearer which is a prestigious role within the RNA appearing at Conference, Biennial Parade in Whitehall and representing the RNA at national and overseas events such as the



Remembrance Festival in the Royal Albert Hall and other national commemorative events.

So why not give it a go there is plenty of time to practice and lots of Shipmates available to train you.

If you are interested please contact Andy at Central Office andy@royalnavalassoc.com 02392 720782 or the National Ceremonial Officer - Shipmate Bob Coburn robertcoburn001@btinternet.com 07810 300383.

7. ★ A Thousand Good Deeds ONE

This month's story is representative of hundreds of RNA Standard Bearers who support Shipmates funerals all over the country. Mrs Cynthia Thomas wrote to thank Shipmate Graham Warner (RNA Rhondda Hon Sec) who paraded the Branch Standard at the funeral of Giraldu Baker Charles a Second World War Veteran. (*Please also read the article concerning St Helens Branch in the 'D'ye hear there' section towards the rear of this edition*))

Dear Graham

What an amazing response (or 2) from u. We are so pleased to hear how the Royal Navy honours those who cross the bar. My father's name is Giraldu Baker Charles. He was born 6th January 1921 in Ogmores Vale. He went down the Penllwyngwnt mine with his father at 14. When he joined the Royal Navy, because he felt he must take part in the War, he could not swim! He particularly wanted to be a sick bay attendant as he had medals from all the work he did as a youngster for the St John's Ambulance, but he was not old enough.

He went in a steward & subsequently on HMS Dorsetshire he felt he was very privileged to be the Captain's steward. When they were sunk by Japanese bombers on Easter Sunday 1942 he & others were in the Indian Ocean for 30 hours. He had a varied life in Durban after the rescue & served as acting Petty Officer I believe on HMS Camperdown after that. He never regarded that ship with the affection he had for the Dorsetshire and his saints (apart from his paternal grandmother) were the ship mates lost from Dorsetshire & Cornwall that Easter Sunday. He was part of the assignment to bring the boys back from Burma and always felt they had a much worse time than he.

After the war he did many things to try & bring the country to a better place. He did trade union work, fought for Labour Party & NHS with many others. He worked as a Parish councillor, ran youth clubs but I suppose the biggest disappointment of his life was what he felt people turned into. He would not join the 'jobs for the boys' gang and therefore had to (and did) turn his hand to many jobs. In his forties he went to ecumenical college in Swansea and despite very little formal education gained a degree and was entitled to be called Reverend and wear a 'dog collar'. He still always worked, preaching where needed in his spare time. His nick name was Tommy Trouble Senior because of his willingness to help anyone but his inability to accept things he thought were wrong.

God bless u for being such a kind old salt?

Aye aye Sir,

Sincerely

Cynthia Thomas,

*34 Minffrwd Road, Pencoed,
Bridgend, CF35 6SD*

8. ★ Operation Yule - A Thousand Good Deeds TWO

The General Secretary attended the West Country Awards and Recognition lunch held at the China Fleet Club in late November. During the ceremony S/M Bill was informed by HMS Raleigh that commonwealth ratings who were still in training and couldn't get home were to be accommodated in HMS Drake over the Christmas period. After a discussion with the HMS Raleigh Training Commander, Cdr Jez Ussher, Bill enquired what the RNA could do to assist in terms of an 'Up Homers' scheme to ensure the trainees had a lovely time over the Christmas period. The RN had already arranged a number of 'fun filled' activities and the RNA were invited to enhance this package. Step forward Liskeard Branch in the form of Shipmates Jerry and Lynne Fleming, below is their story.....

We are both members of the Royal Naval Association Liskeard Branch and my husband Jerry Fleming is a mentor for Fisher Division HMS Raleigh. When we realised some of the recruits were to be accommodated at HMS Drake over the Christmas and New Year period, we started to think about the possibility of making their leave time a bit more interesting.

We batted around several ideas before settling on the following: RNA Area 4 has a minibus, at the time with the Liskeard Branch. We gained permission to use it. We liaised with HMS Raleigh who were happy for us to draw up a plan and the National Council provided funding for the

venture. Attempts at providing us with passes and a vehicle pass proved less successful but not insurmountable.

Unfortunately, we didn't get to meet any of the recruits before their transfer to HMS Drake. We anticipated 2 or 3 Phase 1 personnel recently recruited from the Caribbean and Commonwealth. There were 16 in all; Phase 1 and Phase 2 trainees from places as varied as South Africa, Kenya, Spain, UK, the Caribbean and we think one from Eastern Europe. All were unable to go home for various reasons.



Our first thought was to provide an orientation trip into Plymouth, a quick sightseeing, then shopping. They wanted to buy chicken and plantain, spare towels, a gift of wine for a sponsor etc. We later learned that they needed a large cook pot, and a deep fry pan to cook a group meal. So back to ours for a kitchen raid, which also included a sharp knife, some wooden utensils and oops, 2 juicy lemons that called to them from the fruit bowl.

During the leave period we offered various ventures, uptake varied. Turn out ranged from one to eight people. One recruit wanted just a room and a book. At the other extreme, one recruit wanted to try everything and has created

an album to remind him of all his new experiences.

We took trips to the Eden Project, to Falmouth National Maritime Museum, to the Sardine Factory at Looe for the Rock Climbing Wall and Virtual Reality Experience of a Lifeboat Rescue Mission. We even took them into an old Smugglers Pub in Polperro where they were intrigued by the open fire, the low wood beamed ceilings and just how many people could be fitted into such small nooks and crannies during a busy lunchtime. We also had a couple of swim and spa days at China Fleet Club and Hannaford Point Hotel. Wherever we went, we were made welcome and people were delighted to meet real live Royal Navy recruits.

As we live in Cornwall, we wanted them to experience the local culture. We bought them a Cornish Pasty, provided scones, clotted cream and jam and allowed them to make their own. Of course, they tried both Cornish and Devonish styles (jam on top for me) and very diplomatically, liked both. Though Jerry says there is really only one way (the cream on top version of course). Those from St Vincent wanted chicken, which was easy to find, goat curry was a bit more difficult but we achieved it, in Falmouth of all places. The owner of Cribbs was also from St. Vincent and introductions led to friendly chat, to phone number swaps. Potentially, a new friendship forged.

Eventually they were ready for something new. The British staple... An Indian Restaurant. We ordered for each of us, then shared and tasted everything. Chicken and banana curry with coconut rice won the vote of us all. Even so, everything was consumed till we were fit to bust.

Not everything was as straightforward. Inevitably, there were blips. One arrived penniless, awaiting pay. We were able to sub him. As a retired nurse my expertise came in handy when a wound dressing leaked and required extra dressings and again when a recruit was faced with dental surgery under general anesthetic.

Jerry used his engineering skills to get the wheelchair lift on the minibus working, which had initially stumped us. Our wheelchair bound recruit was able therefore to join us on three excursions.

Not everyone came fully kitted out. But with foresight, we were able to provide spare swimwear, extra towels and later a free laundry service for wet trunks left behind under the minibus seat.

We also came to learn that one recruit was struggling with providing emotional and financial support to family abroad and hadn't taken on board the bit about Welfare Support through the Royal Navy. We were able to give him the relevant details and advice which he agreed to follow up on.



From left to right: Commodore Bellfield MA, Lynne Fleming Liskeard RNA, Captain Rich Harris and Jerry Fleming Liskeard RNA and mentor to Fisher Division HMS Raleigh

So all this may sound a bit arduous. But we enjoyed every bit of it. The recruits were a joy to entertain, to laugh with, to educate, to support, even to feed. From absolute strangers in all but one instance, we got to watch them grow, listen to their ambitions, their doubts and help encourage and guide them. What better way to spend Christmas?

And we've been invited to a further three passing out parades. A real honour for us both.

Post Operation Yule news.....In recognition of us taking HMS Raleigh recruits out and about during their Christmas leave period (OP Yule), Jerry and myself were invited to lunch with Capt Harris at Trevol House, Torpoint, Friday 10th January 2020. The VIP and inspecting officer for the later passing out parade was Commodore Bellfield who is currently Commander Devonport Flotilla, a previous Captain of HMS Raleigh and President of the Ipswich RNA.

The enterprise was supported by our own RNA Branch of Liskeard, funding by RNA HQ and the minibus from Area 4.

Lynne and Jerry Fleming
Royal Naval Association Liskeard Branch

General Secretary says BZ Lynne and Jerry, Very well done.

9. ★ 'The Belfast Pocket Manual' Book By Shipmate John Blake.

Shipmates may be interested to know that HQ Roll member Shipmate John Blake has written a book entitled 'The Belfast Pocket Manual' published by Osprey Publishers. He says it has received good reviews and that Shipmates may find it very interesting.

10. ★ Why the USN is dry!

Received from one of our correspondents in Kernow, who may have unknowingly embellished the truth, after a few pints of 'Spingoes!'.....as we say why let the truth get in the way of a good dit!

The USS Constitution carried 48600 gallons of Fresh water for 475 officers & men. On 27th July 1798 she sailed Boston to harass & destroy British shipping. She had 48600 gallons of fresh water 7400 cannon shot 11600 lbs of black powder & 79400 gallons of rum. In Jamaica on 6th October she took on 826 lbs of flour & 68300 gallons of rum. At the Azores she took on 550 lbs of beef & 64300 gallons of Portugese wine.



From 18th November onwards she went towards England defeating 12 English ships salvaging only their rum each time. The 26th January she was in the Firth of Forth in Scotland. having no ammunition left, a shore raiding party captured a whisky distillery & removed 40000 gallons of whisky.

Arriving back in Boston on 20th February 1799 with no cannon shot, no black powder no rum no whisky no wine but 38600 gallons of very stagnant fresh water! Is this the reason behind why the USN is dry?

(Photo Courtesy U.S. Navy - Naval History and Heritage Command, 80-G-K-26254)

11. Joke Proud to be Welsh!

The General Secretary has published this joke is in an effort to cheer up our Welsh Shipmates post Six Nations as they are not going to win a lot particularly with Scotland playing so well!

After having dug to a depth of 10 feet last year, Canadian scientists found traces of copper wire dating back 200 years and came to the conclusion that their ancestors already had a telephone network more than 150 years ago:

Not to be outdone by their neighbours, in the weeks that followed, an American archaeologist dug to a depth of 20 feet, and shortly after, a story published in the New York Times:

"American archaeologists, finding traces of 250-year-old copper wire, have concluded that their ancestors already had an advanced high-tech communications network 50 years earlier than the Canadians."

One week later, the British authorities reported the following:

"After digging as deep as 30 feet in North Wales, Alan Williams, a self-taught archaeologist, reported that he found absolutely bugger all.

Alan has therefore concluded that 250 years ago, Wales had already gone wireless."

Just makes you bloody proud to be Welsh, don't it..

12. ★ Down Memory Lane – ‘The PAS Boat’

I was walking through the Dockyard one bright and sunny day.....When I came across this lonely Port Auxiliary Service (PAS) Harbour Launch Dockyard or HLD for short.

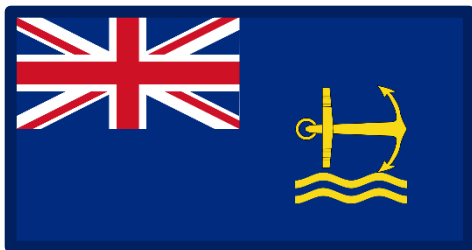
The Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service merged with the former Port Auxiliary Service in 1976 to form a component of Her Majesty's Naval Service that was known as marine services. Marine services existed to support the operations of the Royal Navy, Royal Marines and Royal Fleet Auxiliary.



In the 1990s, marine services were put out to commercial tender by the Ministry of Defence Warship Support Agency (now absorbed into the Defence Equipment and Support organisation) and by 1996, all tugs, lifting craft, various tenders and management of HMNB Devonport, Portsmouth and Clyde were operated by Serco Denholm.

By the mid-2000s, it was decided that the Royal Maritime Auxiliary Service would no longer provide marine services to HM Naval Service, and it would instead be delivered under a Private Finance Initiative instead. Serco were quickly declared preferred bidders and the RMAS was disbanded on 31 March 2008.

RMAS vessels carried the ship prefix "RMAS" and auxiliary (A) or yard (Y) pennant numbers. They also had a distinctive livery or colour-scheme, namely: black hulls with white beading and buff-coloured upperworks. THE RMAS operated a variety of vessels including;



Tugs, Research Vessels, Salvage Vessels, Ammunition transports, Torpedo retrievers, a huge range of tugs, Fleet tenders, VIP fast Fleet tender and Dive tenders.

A number of the vessels were later transferred over to Serco Marine Services who continue to provide 'marine services' in support of the Royal Navy.

13. ★ RNA Sponsor Wins Commitment to the Armed Forces Award

RNA sponsor AW Ship Management were among 34 London-based businesses recognised for their support and commitment to the Armed Forces at a ceremony in the Cavalry and Guards Club, Piccadilly. All 34 received the prestigious silver Employer Recognition Scheme award (ERS) from senior officers from the Royal Navy, Army and Royal Air Force.

The award was received on behalf of the company by Managing Director Paul Trudgeon and Commercial Manager Daniel Taylor. Paul commented: "AW Ship Management have had the opportunity to work closely with serving UK Forces personnel on multiple projects, which has given us a clear understanding of the skills and work ethic present. We are pleased to have been recognised as a company that has committed to support ex-Forces personnel and Reserves and recognise the advantages that their employment brings."

Brigadier Marc Overton, Chairman of the Reserve Forces' and Cadets' Association for Greater London (GL RFCA), who hosted the event, told the audience: "What you have done and continue to do makes a huge difference to the Armed Forces family. Thank you to you and all of your staff for going the extra mile in recognising the important contribution that our serving personnel, veterans and their families make to the nation".



The ERS recognises organisations that clearly demonstrate support for defence personnel, including giving paid leave for reservists to train in readiness for future military operations, offering work placements or interviews to veterans and actively encouraging staff to join the reserve forces.

Brigadier Andrew Wright, Commodore David Elford and Air Vice Marshal Ranald Munro, representing all three military services, presented the awards.

14. ★ 80th of the Battle of the River Plate – River Plate Veterans Association

Chile

On the 1st December 2019, 28 members of the River Plate Veterans Association (including two members from the Exeter Association, Ray London & Steve Bell) gathered at Heathrow for their flight to South America. First stop was Santiago, Chile where we were joined by a member from the town of Ajax, Canada. On the first day, a tour of the city took place followed in the evening by a reception at the British Ambassadors residence hosted by His Excellency Jamie Bowden. Due to the civil unrest in the country, the planned trip to Concepción was cancelled. (HMS Ajax and Exeter provided humanitarian aid to the city after it was hit by a major earthquake in February 1939) A special commissioned plaque was handed over to the British Defence Attaché, Captain Chris Saunders, MBE, RN, who will present at a later date in Concepción. A visit to Santa Cruz, in the wine region of the country was a welcomed alternative.



Uruguay

After a short flight over the Andes, the group landed at Montevideo. Here the group was joined by other members of the association and two from New Zealand, Douglas & Julie Batt, (Douglas father served on HMS Achilles at the battle and is still alive in NZ) Douglas brought over with him his dad's bugle which was played during the battle.

Visits to the Silver River Masonic Lodge, at their invitation, took place, repeating a visit made by crew members of HMS Ajax 80 years before.

On the 10th Dec the group was joined by the Mayor of Ajax, Canada and his charming wife. In the evening the group had a formal reception at the British Ambassador's residence where they were greeted by His Excellency Ian Duddy and the Defence Attaché, Group Captain Robin Smith RAF.



The following day a visit to Punta del Este and the first of our memorial services took place. The location was on the sea front, at a site where the River Plate and Atlantic meet. It is here that an anchor from Ajax is mounted on a small plinth. A small crowd had gathered, along with TV cameras, newspaper reporters and a small detachment from the Uruguay navy, with standards and armed guard. The associations standard was flown by our standard bearers, Dave Lear and Paul Parker. Speeches were made by local dignitaries and a wreath from the HMS Ajax & RPVA was laid.

The next day on a visit to the Museum Andes 1972, the group were joined by Mr Ben Harwood (Grandson of Commodore Harwood) and his family, taking the group to full strength. In the afternoon, after a city tour the group finished up at the Museo Naval where we were joined by Captain

Langsdorff's daughter, Inge Redden and her husband, who had flown over from Germany for the anniversary functions. After speeches and the exchange of gifts, everybody crossed over the road to where a 75th anniversary plinth is located. Here the Association had a 80th anniversary plaque unveiled by the British Ambassador, His Excellency Ian Duddy and the German Ambassador, His Excellency Dr Ingo von Voss.

In the evening a reception was held for the association by the British Society in Uruguay, at the British School Carrasco. After a very informative talk on the Battle of the River Plate, given by Jonathan Harwood (Another grandson of Commodore



Harwood) speeches were made and gifts exchanged, including a special commissioned plaque.

The next day, 13th Dec, the actual date of the anniversary, started with the first of three memorial services that day. The first service took place in the Templo Inglés. Many dignitaries were present and again the associations standard was flown. The associations President, Nigel Masters, unveiled a 80th commemorative plaque next to the impressive Battle of the River Plate commemorative plaque which is a duplicate of the one in St Georges chapel, Chatham (ex-Pembroke). Wreaths were laid by the association, the Mayor of Ajax, the German Ambassador and relatives of the Harwood and Woodhouse families (Capt Woodhouse, HMS Ajax).

The next service took place at the Cementerio Británico, at the common grave three sailors from HMS Achilles. Here all dignitaries from the first service attended plus the ambassador

from New Zealand, Her Excellency Ratline Liufatani. Again, the associations standard was flown, wreaths were laid and the last post played on the Achilles bugle. A lament was played by a piper to complete the service.



The final service of the day was carried out at the Cementer del Norte, at the graves of 36 crew members of the Graf Spee. Speeches were made and wreaths laid by the German delegation, the association wreath was laid by Julie Pullen and Alan Phillips and Exeter's by Ray London & Steve Bell.

It was then a quick bus ride down to the docks and boarding the Uruguay navy's training schooner, "Capitan Miranda" which sailed out into the River Plate to the location of the Graf Spee. Here all "passengers" dropped a white rose over the side in remembrance of all those who had lost their lives in the action.

Back on dry land it was straight over to the German Ambassador's residence for a formal reception where speeches were made by the association and the German ambassador, gifts exchanged, and numerous drinks consumed.

The last day in Uruguay was rounded off by a "secret" visit to a "secret" location to view the bronze eagle from the Graf Spee (recovered in 2006). Only 8 persons at a time were allowed in for the view with the instructions "no photos" or confiscation of phones/camera and imprisonment.

Late in the evening the group caught the fast ferry over to Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Argentina

On the 15th Dec we gathered at the La Chacarita Cemetery (German section) meeting with the Graf Spee Society for a device at the grave of Captain Hans Langsdorff and four of his crew members. Our standard was flying alongside the British Legion standard (Buenos Aires branch)

and the Union Jack, supported by an armed guard from the Scottish Guard and two pipers. Speeches were made and wreaths laid by the association, Langsdorff's daughter, the British Legion, the Graf Spee Society and the German delegation. On completion of the service everybody marched over to the British section where a service was held in front of the grave of A.B. Jim T Fredrick, HMS Exeter, who died from wounds received during the battle. On completion of the services, the association departed and joined the

Graf Spee Society for a luncheon reception at the Sociedad Alemana de Gimnasia. Speeches and gifts were exchanged, including a special commissioned plaque.

On the 17th December we all made our way back to the UK, Canada and New Zealand, with a promise to meet up again at our annual reunion in October at Portland.



15. ★ Shipmate Joseph Billet Awarded Legion D 'Honneur

It is with immense pride that the RNA Torrevieja branch has amidst its members Joseph Billet, affectionately known locally as “Joe The Cat Man” and a previous Standard Bearer for the RNA Torrevieja Branch for over seven years, who was accompanied by his partner Rose Lyon and his son Jimmy at a ceremony where he was presented with the Medal and award by Colonel Xavier Toutain, the French Military Attaché to Madrid, at The French School of Alicante situated in El Campello on 9th July 2019.

Although the Legion D 'Honneur awards are ostensibly for French nationals, other non-French national are recognised for their exceptional contribution to benefiting society and each new cohort tells the richness and diversity of meritorious life paths and depicts the multifaceted contours of French society both civilian and military.

Joe's award was for the Normandy Landing in June 1944 and he is now a privileged Legion D 'Honneur recipient who represent a community of men and women, a reflection of French society and a model for future generations.

Joe's voyage to this award ceremony started in 2014 and has been arduous and needed persistent fortitude from Joe and Rose, which he has demonstrated throughout his life, when the French government announced that they were to award Normandy veterans the 'Chevalier de Legion D 'Honneur'.

In August 2016 Joe received an acknowledgment from the British MOD that his previously submitted application form had been approved by the French Government and that he should receive notification from them in about six weeks.



Substantiating any further progress from the British MOD during the succeeding years through numerous phone calls, messages and letters was unfruitful until after lunch at the June 2019 D-Day 75 ceremony on Southsea Common where the French President, Emmanuel Macron, gave a 20 minute personal address to a group of WWII veterans which included Joe and Rose.

In Rose's words Joe seized this opportunity:

“Joe said to me, now's our chance to speak to Macron and tell him I haven't received my medal. Joe then pushed me to the front of the queue, and I explained to President Macron that Joe had been told he was to receive the award but so far this hadn't happened. President Macron looked really concerned and said that they took these things very seriously. He

called over his Aides and introduced us to the French Military Attaché to London who gave me his business card and I gave him Joe's details”.

Subsequently on arriving home after the trip, they received an email from the French authorities telling them that they would be contacted by Colonel Xavier Toutain the French Military Attaché to Madrid and after several successive emails a ceremony was arranged for Joe to be presented with his award.

At the ceremony Colonel Xavier Toutain the French Military Attaché to Madrid made a speech where he welcomed Joe, his partner Rose, and his son Jimmy and went on to thank various other people for joining them, including individuals in the Spanish and French authorities for enabling and facilitating such a special event. He also made reference to Joe's military service with the reason for the award and the following is an extract from his speech:

"As French Defense attaché in Spain, I had the privilege to be present at Colleville the last 6th of June, to celebrate the 75th anniversary of the first Normandy landings, with the French and the United States Presidents. For me, it is a very special place. I don't say that only because I have Normand origins from my father ("Toutain" is indeed a Norman name), or because my wife's family has a house located at the very Omaha Beach, where I'm used to spending some holidays. I think that from these beautiful beaches of Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno and Sword, with their unique sand colour, and from these impressive memorials spread all along the coast and fields of Normandy, irradiate a very special spirit, like if we were in harmony with all the young soldiers that gave their lives for our liberty.

The United Kingdom's soldiers, close to the American, Canadian, French and many other ones sacrificed themselves for our values to survive, so that we could build together a better world. On one of these five beaches, Gold Beach to be precise, the morning of this 6th of June 1944, soldiers disembarked from many kinds of vessels and boats. On one of them, had been sailing from England the young Joseph Billet, a 17 years old assistant steward. And I'm going to recount you a part of his incredible story.

Joseph joined the Merchant Navy as a boy of 15 in 1942 as a trainee steward. He worked aboard various merchant vessels on Atlantic and Mediterranean convoys, and also went to the Middle East to load aviation fuel, and to Far East with supplies for troops in Burma.

In March 1943 Joseph was working aboard the SS Fort a la Corne, taking war material to North Africa for the 8th Army, mainly ammunition. The ship was leaving empty when a U-boat's torpedo sank it, on the 30th of March 1943. Fortunately, all on board were saved except Joseph's cat, Skipper. I know that many years later, in 1984, Joseph wrote to the commander of the German submarine and they started up a correspondence.

In 1944, Joseph joined the SS Fort Poplar in Newport, South Wales, as assistant steward, and sailed up to Loch Ewe in Scotland, where the ship was transformed in order to carry troops. Then, it was on a bank of the Thames Estuary where the ship's name was changed for a code number and where troops boarded, ready for the Normandy Landings.

On the 5th of June 1944, Joseph and his ship joined the invasion fleet and sailed towards Normandy, where the troops landed, on Gold beach, early on the 6th of June. Then, they went to Saint-Malo where there was a terrible shelling from the ships, especially the HMS Rodney. Joseph later joined the SS Bunting II carrying coal back up the river Seine to Rouen, Le Grand-Quevilly and Caen until March 1945.



Leaving the Merchant Navy in 1946, he joined the Army, first in the artillery, then in the Parachute regiment before becoming a Malay Scout serving in the jungles of the British Malaysia until 1953. The Malay Scouts then became the 22 SAS — The Special Air Service.

Joseph got married in 1953 and as his new wife didn't want him away for months or years at a time, he reluctantly left the SAS in 1953 although he did join the Territorial Army for four years until they were disbanded. He is still a member of the SAS Regimental Association, which he joined in 1953.

In his civilian life, Joseph worked in civil engineering as a supervisor on projects in many different countries until retiring to Spain in 1992 where he is a member of both The Royal Naval Association and The Royal Air Force Association, represented today.

What an extraordinary destiny... I'm sure that Joseph could spend hours telling us much more. As his partner Rose told me, he has many tales to tell and always makes them sound like "a boys own adventure". Maybe we'll have the opportunity to learn more about him after the ceremony.

What I can tell you, is that Joseph has been many times recognized for his actions, and was already awarded the 1939-1945 Star, the

Atlantic Star with France and Germany bar for Atlantic convoys, the North Africa Star with North Africa bar for Sicily and for

Mediterranean convoys, Burma Star for taking petrol supplies to the 14th Army, Defence and Victory Medals, and

Malaysian medal for fighting terrorists in the Malaysian jungles when Malaysia was still a British colony. But the French Republic didn't forget him at all. On the

20th of October 2017, the French President awarded him the Legion of Honor. But because of a combination of factors that I

cannot explain, I have today the fabulous honour to actually give him this exceptional award. Because, in France, the Legion of Honor is the first decoration in the formal order. It was

established by Napoleon Bonaparte in 1802 to unite the nation around a common ideal of public spirit and individual honour... So I'm very proud to be the young 45 year old (since yesterday)

French colonel, who awards the Legion of Honor to a 92 year old very fit United Kingdom veteran, whose whole life and multiple commitments for international liberty, especially during the

Normandy Landing of June 1944, are the best examples for all of us.



Thank you for your attention, and now I'm going to proceed to the presentation of the Legion of Honor”.

Joe and Rose felt very privileged to have been invited to participate in the ‘Voyage of Remembrance’ in June 2019, which was organised by The Royal British Legion to take 300 Normandy Veterans aboard the MV Boudicca (A Fred Olsen Line cruise ship) for the D-Day 75 commemorations in both Normandy and Southsea and an account of their adventure in Rose’s words can be found on the ‘News’ Tab at the RNA Torrevieja Branch website www.rnatorrevieja.com

16. Joke Time One for the Road.....

A Mafia Godfather finds out that his bookkeeper has screwed him for ten million ickies. This bookkeeper is deaf. It was considered an occupational benefit, and why he got the job in the first place, since it was assumed that a deaf bookkeeper would not be able to hear anything he'd ever have to testify about in court:

When the Godfather goes to shakedown the bookkeeper about his missing 10 million klebies, he brings along his attorney, who knows sign language.

The Godfather asks the bookkeeper: "Where is the 10 million ickies you embezzled from me?"

The attorney, using sign language, asks the bookkeeper where the 10 million is hidden.

The bookkeeper signs back: "I don't know what you are talking about."

The attorney tells the Godfather: "He says he doesn't know what you're talking about."

That's when the Godfather pulls out a 9 mm pistol, puts it to the bookkeeper's temple, cocks it, and says: "Ask him again!"

The attorney signs to the underling: "He'll kill you for sure if you don't tell him!"

The bookkeeper signs back: "OK! You win! The money is in a brown briefcase, buried behind the shed in my cousin Enzo's backyard in Queens!"

The Godfather asks the attorney: "Well, what'd he say?"

The attorney replies: "He says you don't have the balls to pull the trigger."

17. RN Veterans Photographic Competition

ROYAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2020 AMATEUR CATEGORY- Class 18 Veterans.

New for 2020 a chance to share your best images which best sum up the ethos of the RNA. The Amateur category is open to Regular & Reserve serving Naval Service personnel including RFA and Civil Servants serving in RN/RM establishments, and who are not Professional Photographers iaw Annex A para 1. Class 18 is for Veterans only. All photographs must have been taken between 21 Apr 2019 - 20 Apr 2020 and not entered in the RN Photographic Competition 2019.

Amateur photographers may submit up to three images in Class 18.

ENTRIES ARE TO BE SUBMITTED ON CD/DVD, this is to contain the images, an electronic copy of the entry form for each image, bio picture and CV. It is to be packaged in a protective envelope to prevent damage in transit. A signed hard copy of the entry forms are to be provided with the disc.

Entries should be sent to;
nigel@royalnavalassoc.com or
Royal Naval Association Central Office. (photo competition)
Room 209 Semaphore Tower PP70,
H M Naval base Portsmouth
PO1 3LT

Judging will take place in May 2020 and prize winners will be informed of their success by signal and invited to attend the prize giving.

Entries need to be forwarded to Central Office by 20 April 2020

********Full competition details are contained at the rear of this Circular.********

RNA Longcast

2020	
01 Feb	Area 5 Quarterly/AGM - Harwich
08 Feb	Area 2 Delegate Meeting - Bromley
29 Feb	Area 3 Meeting - Netley
05 Mar	FAC / SOC
06 Mar	National Council Meeting
6/9 Mar	4 Area Reunion – Bideford
10 Apr	Good Friday
13 Apr	Easter Sunday
18 Apr	Area 2 Committee Mtg - Bromley
18 Apr	RN v RAF rugby (Twickenham Stoop)
25 Apr	ANZAC Day
25 Apr	Welfare Seminar – RMC Portsmouth
02 May	Army v Navy Rugby - Twickenham
02 May	Area 5 Quarterly - Stowmarket
7/10 May	VE Day 75 and Battle of the Atlantic Commemorations in Londonderry
08 May	Early Spring Bank Holiday (VE Day Commemorations – London)
09 May	Area 2 Delegate Meeting - Sidcup
16 May	National Standard Bearers Competition – HMS Collingwood
16 May	4 Area Quarterly Meeting - Plymouth
22 May	Central Office – Open Day
26 May	Inter Services T20 Cricket - Lords
05/07 Jun	National Conference – Liverpool (Area 10)
05 Jun	National Council / AMC/ FAC / SOC Meetings
26 Jun	Central Office – Open Day
27 Jun	Armed Forces Day - Scarborough
06 Jul	Area 2 Committee Mtg - Bromley
31 Jul	Black Tot Day – 50 th Anniversary
24 Jul	Central Office – Open Day
01 Aug	Area 5 Quarterly - Norwich
07 Aug	Central Office – Open Day
15 Aug	Area 2 Delegate Meeting - Chatham
21 Aug	FAC
22 Aug	AMC
31 Aug	August Bank Holiday
12 Sep	National Council Meeting
19 Sep	4 Area Quarterly – Portland
02 Oct	Central Office – Open Day
10 Oct	Area 2 Committee Mtg - Bromley
31 Oct	Area 5 Quarterly - Harwich
20 Nov	FAC
21 Nov	AMC
21 Nov	Area 2 Delegate Meeting – Ramsgate
05 Dec	National Council Meeting
25 Dec	Christmas Day
26 Dec	Boxing Day

D'ye hear there'.....

News from around the Areas and Branches.....

This Month Featuring.....

[RNA Anglesey Branch](#)

[RNA Plymouth](#)

[RNA Llandudno](#)

[RNA City of Glasgow](#)

[RNA Warwick Branch](#)

[RNA Oswestry](#)

[RNA Torrevieja Branch](#)

[RNA Roydon Branch](#)

[RNA Aldershot Branch](#)

[RNA Tewkesbury Branch](#)

[RNA St Neots](#)

[RNA St Helens Branch](#)

[RNA City of Edinburgh](#)

[RNA Merthyr Tydfil Branch](#)

[RNA Christchurch](#)

RNA Anglesey Branch

Our thanks go to Shipmate Gareth Bean the Anglesey Branch Standard Bearer for briefing us on matters Anglesey.

On Friday 26th of October in Rhosneigr on the Isle of Anglesey, a seven-foot statue and a memorial garden was dedicated to Admiral Sir Max Horton, to commemorate the man who helped deliver victory over the U-boats during the Second World War.

The Standard of the Anglesey Branch and Submarine Association were paraded. The Branch Chairman Shipmate John Edwards placed a wreath on behalf of Royal Naval Association. Also present were serving members of the Royal Navy and Royal Air Force, the Royal Naval Association, Submarine Association, British Legion and members of the local community who were responsible for raising the funds towards this project.



RNA Plymouth Branch

Plymouth Branch held their Annual Dinner and Dance recently. It was an outstanding evening attended by 180 shipmates, friends and members from the Royal Marine Association.

Excellent cuisine created by Head Chef Fred 'pastry fingers' Hands (RAF Trained) and his highly skilled team. Our function, always considered to be one of the premier social events in the Mess certainly lived up to its reputation.



Annette Hooper MBE, Contracts Support Manager, Assistant Lorraine abandoning her recent retirement to attend in a supporting role for the evening, waitresses and Bar staff, once again delivering a service comparable to the finest Five Star Hotel.

The presence of Branch Patron, Lord Mayor Cllr Richard Ball (ex-RN), Lady Mayoress, Flag Officer Sea Training, Rear Admiral Will

Warrender CBE RN, Branch President Commodore Peter Coulson ADC, Naval Base Commander, Mess President WO1 Gee Hannah accompanied by their wives, ensured that the evening was special indeed.



Flag Officer Sea Training, Rear Admiral Will Warrender CBE RN, carried out the presentation of Life membership to S/m Graham Fulcher at the Annual Dinner & Dance on Saturday 23rd November 2019.

S/M Graham has provided long ,beneficial and honourable service to the RNA and enhanced the reputation of the Plymouth Branch and Nationally in his role as branch Standard Bearer since 2009.

Graham joined the Rn at HMS Ganges in 1962and completing 12 years' service. He joined the RNA at Swindon where he also assisted the Sea Cadets Unit at Royal Wotton Bassett being appointed S/Lt SCC.

Moving on in 1995 he went back to sea under the 'Red Flag' and RFA for a further ten years settling

in Plymouth.

As a Standard Bearer in one of the larger branches his role is quite demanding including forty-three parades and twenty-six Veterans Funerals in 2018 and this requires dedication, self confidence and discipline and pride in his role he thoroughly deserves this recognition. BZ

RNA Llandudno Branch

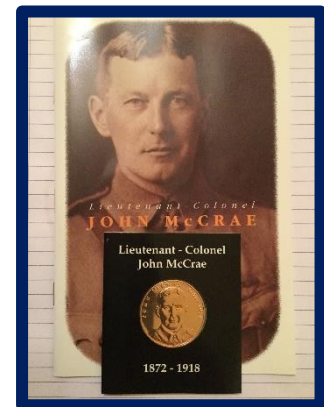
2019 was a benchmark year for us and our 50th year was celebrated with a special Gala Dinner. Founder member Eric Duckenfield and Lady Mayor Angela O Grady were our guests of honour and almost 70 members and guests were in attendance. The event was well supported by local business who provided some excellent raffle prizes. Certificates from RNA Central Office and, the Town Council recognising our contribution to the Town were presented by the Mayor and local Councillors, long serving Committee

members were presented with gifts from the Branch.



Our 50th Annual Trafalgar Day was well attended by Branches from North Wales, Holyhead, Wrexham and Oswestry and Branches from all over the North West and the Isle of Man, including maritime agencies, the RNLI, Coastguard and Sea Cadets. A pre-Trafalgar evening of entertainment was well attended and the day itself was marked by glorious weather. A memorial was also dedicated to past and present members and those who had served with the Naval Service from the locality by our Branch Padre, the post parade Naval hospitality was enjoyed by all participants.

We were recently presented with the John McCrae medal by Collingwood Branch of the Royal Canadian Legion in Ontario for assisting them with their project to help children with learning difficulties. Our last meeting and Christmas function in December will see the end of a busy year starting with the 'Freedom of the Borough of Anglesey' to the Submarine Service. We have been present at dedication ceremonies, parades and events, Area meetings and our Standard Bearers have been present when requested at functions throughout the area. We now look forward to the National Conference in Liverpool in 2020 and our members enjoying another active and interesting year.



RNA City of Glasgow

Recently Shipmates Kenn McKinnon and Brian Mackenzie visited the Sick Children's Hospital play group.

Branch Chairman Kenn handed over a cheque for £420 for their funds and 50 selection boxes for the children in hospital over the Xmas period. BZ Glasgow



Also On Monday 9th December, ten of our Shipmates were invited to join the Not Forgotten Association for Christmas Lunch in the Glasgow Marriott Hotel.

We played the game of Kings and Queens and the winner received a bottle of port. A raffle was held and raised over £500 with an auction of a home- made Christmas cake which raised £120 and it was donated to the Erskine Home. We were entertained by the Swingtime Sweethearts. A big thank you to the organiser of this event Rosie Thompson and her team.

RNA Oswestry Branch

Following the Oswestry branch charity fund raising event in the summer, we have amongst other worthy courses made a donation to both Conway and Chester Sea Cadet units.

The presentations was made by our chairman SM Mike Evans. The sea cadets get no funding from the wider defence budget and do a lot of ground work in nurturing the future naval community.

The Branch felt was to be a very worthy cause.



RNA Warwick Branch

On Saturday, 30 November 2019 Warwick Branch signed the Armed Forces Covenant (Coventry, Solihull and Warwickshire Area). The signing ceremony was conducted in the Great Hall at Lord Leycester's Hospital, Warwick. The signing of the Covenant by the Branch was historic in that it was the first Branch in the country to do so.

As the Covenant usually supports employment criteria, which is not relevant to the RNA, the wording of the pledges was changed to reflect their role as a supporting organisation and the following pledges were incorporated: -

- Promoting the fact that we are an armed forces-friendly organisation
- Providing help and support to veterans in applying for benefits, services and accessing charitable funds
- Providing support for the whole Armed Forces family in establishing an immediate social network for the family and a voice within the community
- Actively working with partner organisations as part of the Coventry, Solihull & Warwickshire Armed Forces Strategic Partnership



- Companionship with like-minded veterans through regular meetings and social events, encouraging mental wellbeing
- Offer support to our local cadet units in the community
- Aiming to actively participate in Armed Forces Day



The signatories were :-

On behalf of the Ministry of Defence Commander PRW Sparke, Commanding Officer , HMS Forward, Royal Naval Reserve.

On behalf of the Royal Naval Association Warwick Branch Lieutenant Commander (Retd) Bob Stevens, President of Warwick RNA

Witnessed by Mr Timothy Cox, Her Majesty's Lord Lieutenant of Warwickshire.

Guests at the ceremony included The Mayor of Warwick, the High Sheriff of Warwickshire, the Police Commissioner for Warwickshire, County Councillors, RNA Area 8-West Midlands, President and Chairman, Branch members of the RNA, Sea Cadet Officers and cadets and Brothers of Lord Leycester's Hospital. The ceremony was concluded with a traditional toast to The Queen and Warwick Branch of the Royal Naval Association with a tot of rum for all present.

RNA Torrevieja Branch

Thanks to Shipmate Tony Jenkins the Torrevieja Branch PRO for letting us know how everyone is faring in the 'Costa's.



Torrevieja Branch sail out from 2019 and prepare for the voyage through 2020 at their Christmas Dinner & Dance.

It was 'all hands in' to 'cackling the fat' in reminiscing over past 'sea time' as well as the various events of the last year and speculating on the expectation for the coming year that created a buzz of excitement to fever pitch, which was reminiscent of 'Channel Night' and could only have been topped by hearing the pipe "up spirits", during the evening at

Lo Crispin Tavern on Tuesday the 10th December.

Astonishingly there were no annual outings of 'crimbo woolly pullies' from any of the shipmates, however the abundance of 'crimbo ties' and splattering of 'crimbo hats' made up for it!!!! and seeing the ladies 'dressed to impress' was the highlight.

There was much 'hooting & cheering' as all hands were 'chuffed' for the 'chuck up' for Carol and her stupendous dedication to organising the event and also to Sandie & Cathy for their masterful and cheerful steering of the 'tombola' and the abundance of prizes.

The scran from the galley was bountiful even without any 'NATO standard' and the festive evening was rounded off with some 'wicked hoofs' being thrown about to the music produced by Woody until it was 'kicking-out-time' and although there had been lots of frolicking and high spirits during the evening everyone 'stood up to muster' and 'presented properly' when disembarking and there wasn't anyone who tried to borrow 'without a chitty' a 'red devil' and ride home on it.

We all look forward next years 'bash'

RNA Roydon Branch

Roydon Branch applied for a grant from the Club and Support Fund, which was supported by the General Secretary. With the grant the Branch was again able to attend the Service of remembrance at the Tabor Academy at Braintree.

The theme this year was the 75th anniversary of the D Day landing on the coast of Normandy. Six members of the branch travelled over to France and were in attendance together with the Branch Standard. The service was attended by a variety of high ranking military officers together with the Lord Lieutenant of Essex and a Naval Veteran who took part in the landings, on completion lunch and refreshments were provided. The Branch was extremely proud to be the only one representing the RNA.

RNA Aldershot Branch

Aldershot Branch presented a cheque for £5000 to Central Office, who were represented on this occasion by Area 3 Chairman, Soapy Watson BEM and Area 3 President, Bob Scott, during Aldershot RNA annual Flight Deck Horse Racing Event. Aldershot Shipmates Ray Pullen and Mick Mills are also present in photo.

The money was donated into the Central Charities Fund.



RNA Tewkesbury Branch

Shipmate and NCM Peter Godwin has forwarded an article on happenings in deepest Gloucestershire.....

2019 proved to be another busy year for the branch. We started in January by hosting the Area 8 Quarterly meeting and attended the following 3 meetings throughout the year in Stroud, Leamington Spa & Coventry. We held our Ladies Night dinner in March in the Fleet Inn, near Tewkesbury. We have been involved in commemorative events; Flower Class Corvettes

(Warwick), D-Day (Cheltenham), Dedication of a new standard (Stourbridge) & the Yangtse Incident at the NMA, as well as National Conference.



Sadly, we have also attended 7 funerals including our former Vice President, Ted Keeper. We have been on parade for Armed Forces Day events, the Biennial Parade, the Garden of Remembrance in Tewkesbury and naturally Remembrance & Armistice Days. Our members have supported the Poppy Appeal throughout the year as well fundraising / recruiting at the local Jet Age Museum. We enjoyed Warwick's Trafalgar Night Dinner and a Trafalgar Day Lunch in Tewkesbury. We were also delighted to attend the RM Band Christmas Concert in Cheltenham and support our padre in his annual local Sea Cadet Carol

Service.

The highlight of the year was our weekend away in Chatham where we enjoyed local hospitality and a full day in the historic dockyard, thanks as well to Darby Allen (No.2 Area). As with all our trips we finish up with late lunch / early dinner on the way home.

All of this is on top of our commitment to monthly meetings; our members organise the Poppy Appeal, Armed Forces monthly breakfast club and sit on various committees within the town. We also visit local senior citizen homes & schools, both holding commemorative services & engaging with the residents / students. We are the first point of call for anyone looking to engage with veterans in Tewkesbury.



Finally, we always look out for each other, home / hospital visits to those in need as well as flowers and cards for the ladies. We are a diverse group and look to recruit new members at every opportunity and we look forward to an equally varied and enjoyable 2020.

RNA St Neots Branch



The St Neots Branch held its annual good causes awards for 2019 in December. This year the worthy recipients, (shown in photo) were;

The St Neots Police Cadets, Cambridgeshire
Hearing Help,
The Papworth Trust,
Falcon Flames Cheerleader Academy
St Neots Timebank.

Each group received a cheque for £500

Standing with the recipients are S/Ms who nominated the recipients, (from left) Elaine Rice (In dark blue top), Geoff Patterson, Mike Milne, John Gibbs and Keith Ridley. Also heavily involved was S/M Tony Webley.

The recipients Facebook comments the following day expressed sincere thanks for the RNA's financial support and the hard work put in collecting for good causes throughout the year. One group said that it had sent their fund raising through the roof!

RNA St Helens Branch

Last November the St Helens Branch Standard and Branch members attended the funerals of two WW2 Veterans funerals, who were not RNA members.

The first was for William Douglas Bretherton aged 98 years, he had served in the Fleet Air Arm, and at one stage was drafted to HMS Fidelity. She was an ex French Merchant ship which after the fall of France sailed into Gibraltar where the Captain offered his services and the ship to the British government.

The ship was converted into a covert ship, it still had the French crew, which included one woman, who all were given RN Ranks. The ship was not only armed but was equipped to carry a seaplane. Naval Airman Bretherton was drafted to the ship to assist with the aircraft. The ships role was to land Commando's and agents onto the occupied lands. Bill Bretherton was onboard the Fidelity for a couple of years before being drafted to join HMS Indefatigable which served with the Far East Fleet. Not long after Bill Bretherton was drafted from HMS Fidelity it was sunk with a large loss of life, which included a number of commando's, after being torpedoed by a U boat in the Mediterranean

The other funeral was for a 96 year old veteran, Cyril Porter, also a FAA Veteran, serving as an air mechanic. He joined the Navy in 1942 and was drafted to HMS Indefatigable as she was finishing being built. The ship sailed on several Arctic Convoys before being sent to join the Pacific Fleet.

(From General Secretary – BZ St Helens Shipmates it is vital we ensure that WW2 Veterans are supported on their final deployment)

RNA City of Edinburgh Branch

City of Edinburgh Branch 25th Anniversary - The City of Edinburgh Branch of the Royal Naval Association had a Branch and Club in Edinburgh in the 50's and 60's. The club closed down and the Branch disbanded sometime in the late 60s. In 1994, whilst a loft was being cleared out in an Edinburgh house, the old Branch Standard of the City of Edinburgh Branch was discovered. It was decided to try and re-form the Branch prior to laying up the Branch Standard. Adverts were placed in local papers calling for ex Royal Navy personnel interested in forming an RNA Branch in Edinburgh to attend an initial meeting.

Some 40 to 50 people attended this initial meeting and from this meeting it was decided that the City of Edinburgh Branch Royal Naval Association would be reformed. The re-commissioning meeting was held in the Royal Scots Club on 15th March 1995 when the then Scottish National Council Member, the late Shipmate Joe Reilly re-commissioned the Branch. The Branch Standard was then re-dedicated at a service in St Giles Cathedral followed by a civic reception in the City Chambers on the 9th March 1996.

The 15th of March 2020 will be the 25th Anniversary of the Branch recommissioning. To celebrate this milestone in the Branch's history, the Branch has organised the following events which shipmates are invited to attend:

- **Friday 13th March 2020 – Inter-Association Quiz Night** at the RN & RM Club, Broughton Road, Edinburgh EH7 4EW. 7pm for 7:30pm. Teams to consist of 4-6 players. All welcome to enter a team, the more teams the better. Names / numbers to be notified in advance to assist with the catering. This event will be jointly hosted by the RNA and the Association of Wrens and Women of the Royal Naval Services Edinburgh & District Branch (the “AOW”). It is hoped that attendees from the Edinburgh & East of Scotland Veterans Group will enter teams, as well as teams from the RNA, AOW, etc., etc. All welcome
- **Saturday 14th March 2020** – the RNA Scottish Area AGM and 1st Quarterly Meeting is being hosted by the RNA City of Edinburgh Branch at the RN & RM Club, Broughton Road, Edinburgh EH7 4EW, from 12noon-4pm. All 11 Branches from the RNA Scottish Area are invited to attend this.
- **Saturday 14th March 2020** – no “official” run ashore planned but shipmates are invited to attend the weekly social at the RN RM Club, Broughton Road. Edinburgh EH7 4EW. Places available on a first come first come first served basis
- **Sunday 15th March 2020 – Church Service** at 11:15am at the Canongate Kirk, 95 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BR. Service of commemoration for the 25th Anniversary of the Branch and to dedicate a ships bell (QHM Rosyth) on long term custodial loan from the Dockyard Museum, Portsmouth to mark the 25th Anniversary of the Branch. Standards paraded from the RNA and also Standards from the attendees of the Edinburgh & East of Scotland Veterans Group.
- **Sunday 15th March 2020** –on completion of the Church service the Scottish Veterans Residences are hosting an afternoon tea reception at Whitefoord House 53 Canongate, Edinburgh EH8 8BS (5 minutes from the Canongate kirk)

Shipmates intending to attend all parts of the celebration are requested to contact the Branch Secretary, Shipmate Bob Cumming Tel 07799890085 or email pitreavie_bob@yahoo.co.uk to give numbers attending each event and if Branch Standards will be paraded at the Church Service on Sunday 15th March. Details are requested by Monday 24th February 2020

RNA Merthyr Tydfil Branch

S/M Selwyn Davies has forwarded a dispatch from Merthyr Tydfil.....

The President of Merthyr Tydfil Branch Des Magness sadly took a tumble over the Christmas holidays (he swears it wasn't due to Rum, pink Gins or G&T despite the evidence on his bedside table!)

Des joined the RN as a writer and then transferred to Seaman as he wanted sea time and co-opted into helping the MAA when the leading reg was sent home injured whilst serving in HMS Indefatigable and was recommended for the branch by the jaunty so transferred to LReg .



So..... our ex leading reg has a new leg, well a hip joint anyhow. He is recovering well. Has extremely good care from his Physio. He had an exercise bike at foot of bed. I am now looking for a yellow jumper for the tour de ward 1. He has been visited by branch members and is kept supplied with navy news, printouts of semaphore and keeping abreast of things on the RNA website when tethering to a phone. (He had opted for a non sim iPad) as he has been in hospital for 7 weeks already and probably for another 5 at least the branch will request a swop out with sim) he really enjoys using the iPad at home and hopefully we can issue a sim variant for his use in hospital.

Sick Bay Ranger! Seriously Des best wishes for a speedy recovery from everyone in Central Office

RNA Christchurch Branch

Christchurch Shipmate Brian Prince has written several poems and this features the Branch.

RNA Christchurch. By Shipmate Brian Prince. (Copyright reserved)

*We have our monthly meeting at the Portfield Hall
To keep us all in touch with naval things
Of guns, and ships, and war
Of naval men who served to keep our country free
And naval women too who served til final victory*

*We are a bunch of Veterans who served so long ago
But we like to stick together to stay in the naval flow
I'm telling you this, children, so you will understand
That we have many Branches, across our pleasant land*

*Christchurch Infants School is coming
The Chairman calmly stated
To sing us Christmas carols
And I want you all elated
They've come to bring some happiness
Of joy and love and cheer
To end our final meeting of the present year*

*They came in on time and stood in a line
With a look of great trepidation
But their teachers brought calm
And eased their alarm
And brought smiles not unease to their faces
Their singing was sublime
With their voices all in time
What a joy to see and hear
In voices sweet and clear
Those children sang their little hearts out
Like nightingales at night
They were a pure delight
And brought tears and smiles on many Veterans faces*

*We would like to thank you good and hard
For every Christmas card
Each one of you made to give away
It really was a great surprise
And we could not believe our eyes*

*You made us very happy on that special day
I'll put mine in pride of place
Above the fireplace and shall keep it
As a very pleasant memory
And when you've grown up to six foot tall
You will remember carol singing at the Hall
That made the RNA so very happy.*

CROSSED THE BAR – Celebrating a life well lived

[Ros Lovell](#)
[Paul Sayers](#)
[Fred Read](#)
[Margaret Smeda](#)

Ros Lovell – Chard Branch



It is with great sadness that Chard Branch report the crossing of the bar on 17th December 2019 of long serving associate member Roselyn Lovell wife of founder branch member and President Roy Lovell.

Roselyn has been a member of the branch in support of her husband life member Roy Lovell who as the secretary of the branch founded the branch and ran it for 27 years until the health of Roselyn caused him to give up the post in order to take more care of her, He has been and is still a member of the branch and holds the office of President of the branch.

The Funeral Service for Roselyn will take place at St. Mary's Parish Church, Chard on Tuesday 7th January at 1.30pm. The family ask that those wishing to give a donation, give for The Dorset & Somerset Air Ambulance and should be sent to c/o B. Gibbs Funeral Services. The Manse, 28 Fore Street, Chard, TA20 1PT. Telephone 01460 66100.

Paul Sayers - Spalding Branch

Paul joined the RN in September 1975 as a WEA, rising to the rank of CPO before his retirement in 1998. Sadly in 1994 whilst at HMS Nelson he was diagnosed with a Brain Tumour.

Paul joined the RNA Spalding Branch in 2003, being elected Branch Vice Chairman in 2014. He fought his illness with determination and humour, never letting it get him down.

In February last year Paul threw a 25th Birthday for his Tumour, mainly to thank his nursing staff and friends. on 24th December 2019, Paul lost his brave fight, but never lost his sense of Humour.

It is a sad loss for everyone who his life crossed.

("Photo Courtesy Lincolnshire Free Press")



Fred Read –Merthyr Tydfil Branch



It is with profound regret That I report the crossing of the bar on January the 24th during the forenoon watch of our esteemed shipmate Fred, He was always ready with a joke and loved sharing a tot with branch and area meeting delegates.

S/m Fred was a founder member, past Chairman, Vice Chairman, Secretary and Welfare Officer for Merthyr Tydfil Branch. He served in the RN and was very proud to be a Submariner reaching the rank of CPO RS.

His efforts in organising fundraising for the branch were unparalleled as was his dedication to visiting branch members often with flowers and chocolates for spouses. He was an Author of several fictional books regaling life in the RN and the submarine service, of which a feature was as branch members, friends and colleagues we would find our names amongst the crew !

He truly lived our values and will be sorely missed.

Margaret Smeda – Paddock Wood Branch

It is with regret that Margaret Smeda, a long-time member of Paddock Wood has crossed the bar. Born on 15.05.1926 she passed away on 09.01.2020 aged 93

Margaret joined the WRNS in June 1943 at Mill Hill in London. After her initial training she was sent to Wesley College, Headingley, Leeds where she spent the next three months on a Writer's course. Her first 'real' draft came in December 1943 when she arrived at the very busy naval dockyard at Rosyth, in Scotland.

In June the following year a supply posting sent Margaret even further north to the bleak Shetland Isles and here she spent three months in Lerwick, the capital town. In October 1944, Margaret was drafted to HMS Hornbill, a Naval Air Station at Culham, Oxfordshire. After a year with the Fleet Air Arm she was sent to HMS Pembroke, Chatham, where she remained until her demob in July 1946.

Margaret was a member of Paddock Wood RNA for a number of years, although ill health meant she had been unable to attend meetings for some time. Margaret was 'over the moon' to receive one of RNA iPads which enabled her to keep in contact via email.

RNA Members Benefits

UK Holiday Group /CONA Holiday Service

- Variety of special deals for both Groups and Individuals. 1% of turnover thorough CONA Holiday Service is returned to the RNA <https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/offers/members-cona-holidays-service/>

Portsmouth Historic Dockyard



PORTSMOUTH HISTORIC DOCKYARD

- RNA member entry just £10 plus four guest at £10 each provides access to the all attractions including the Submarine Museum, RM Museum and Explosion!.

Legal Services



Free 30 minute legal advice with Coffin Mew.
armedforces@coffinmew.co.uk 0800 827168

Breakdown Service



- RAC Breakdown and recovery service
asec@arno.org.uk or 0207 4025231



Organisers of Reunions should be aware the CONA Travel will match or better any other 'like for like' Reunion/Group Trips bookings so why not give them an opportunity to impress you. 0844 264 2122

conatravelservices@justforgroups.co.uk



- Discounts on a large range of new Cars www.motorfinity.uk/rna

Shortcast

Note from the CONA (Conference of Naval Associations) Secretary -

I would be very grateful if organisers of reunions would oblige me by obtaining a quote from the CONA Travel Service, who will not be beaten on like for like price. CONA Travel Service donate 1% of their CONA business back into the Conference totalling to date £2,700 which provides funds to assist members Associations. Oh, and by the way, their service is first class as well.

05 Mar 2020	HMS Cheviot reunion – Torquay Details contact Victor Denham at vic742008@hotmail.co.uk or 07949 95503	Torquay
13/15 Mar 2020	R.N. Communications Association, AGM & Re-Union w/end Friday 13 – Sunday 15 March 2020 Venue, The Royal Bath Hotel, Bournemouth. For more details contact Carl Beeson 07807 347509 secretary@rnca.info	Royal Bath Hotel Bournemouth
2/6 April 2020	The HMS LOCH FADA ASSOCIATION F390 will hold their 23 rd Annual Reunion & AGM @ the Royal Beach Hotel Southsea from 2 nd to 6 th April 2020. This will be our 4 th 4 Day Reunion after the great successes of our 1 st Three. Friday venture into Pompey (Under own Steam) Saturday 1030 AGM & 1830 Reunion Dinner (Black Tot day being Mourned by the Issue of Real Pussers Rum) in the Company of our Special Guests The Lord Mayor & Escort of Eastleigh (our Warship week Town). Sunday Mystery coach tour (towards Southampton). All Bookings & Arrangements are being made by Isle of Wight Tours email iowtours.com or telecom 01983 405116, or F390.sec@virginmedia.com or Snailmail F390 Sec, 91 Ayling Lane, Aldershot, Hants, GU11 3ND. Telecom 01252 310767	Royal Beach Hotel Southsea
17-20 Apr 20	HMS Ganges Association- Annual reunion will be held at Warners Gunton Hall Holiday Village near Lowestoft. Open to all those who served at Ganges, wives and partners also welcome. For booking details please contact tony.wiiders@btinternet.com 07787 106202 or IOW tours 01983 405116	Warners, Gunton Hall Holiday Village Nr Lowestoft

8 May 2020	VE Bank Holiday	
8 May 2020	HMS Cadiz, Saintes and Wizard. A shared reunion takes place over weekend 8/11 May at the Novotel Hotel in Nottingham. All three ships associations will hold their own annual meetings and share all other activities. Details IOW Tours 01252405116 enquiries@iowtours.com	Novotel Hotel Nottingham
23 May 2020	HMS Broadsword Association Biennial reunion takes place in the Royal Beach Hotel Southsea on Saturday 23 May 2020. The reunion is open to anyone who served in Broadsword. For details visit hmsbroadswordassociation.co.uk or contact Bill Skilliter at wistheplumber@yahoo.co.uk	Royal Beach Hotel Southsea
05 Jun 2020	1710 NAS – 10 th Anniversary Dinner for all serving /ex serving will take place in the WO and S/Rates Mess HMS Sultan. Details from Elaine.Rogers683@mod.gov.uk or 02392722758	HMS Sultan
31 Oct 2020	BRNC Entry September 1980 40 th Anniversary reunion dinner, BRNC Dartmouth, Saturday 31 October 2020. Details available from Cdr N J 'Nobby' Hall neil.hall324@mod.gov.uk	BRNC Dartmouth

Swinging the Lamp – February 2020

The RNA is grateful to the Author, Lt Cdr Lawrie Phillips TD, RD, RNR for allowing us to publish a selection from the RN Day by Day. If you would like to read more it can be purchased from - The History Press and is priced £60 ISBN 978 0 7509 8266 5



Date	Year	Entry
1 st	1942	Fourth wheel added to U-boat Enigma. Vital U-boat key Triton lost to Bletchley Park until December after addition of a fifth wheel to the German Enigma machine.
2 nd	1842	'The rating of "Leading Stoker", having been added to the establishments of her Majesty's steam-vessels, by Order in Council of the 2 nd of February, 1842; the commanding officers off all such vessels are hereby acquainted, that the object of this rating is to improve the practice of "stoking", to which too little importance has hitherto been attached . . . By Command of their Lordships.' (<i>Especially for Shipmates Ridley and Tollerton</i>)
3 rd	2009	Trident submarine <i>Vanguard</i> and French SSBN <i>Le Triomphant</i> , 'while on separate routine patrols', collided under the Atlantic. No casualties. Boats returned to their respective bases at Faslane and Brest.
4 th	1997	Able Seaman Jack Gearing, the then oldest surviving naval rating and the last survivor of naval operations in the 1915 Gallipoli campaign

		(cruiser <i>Theseus</i>), died aged 102. Left the Service in 1919. Trained as a lighterman in the family sailing barge <i>Mayflower</i> on the Thames, Gearing was turned down by the RN in 1939 due to age but accepted by the Royal Engineers. Sgt Gearing, aged nearly 50, towed a crane to Normandy in 1944 with the orders 'follow that destroyer'.
5 th	1836	<i>Pike</i> , schooner, wrecked on the Pelican reef off Jamaica through the negligence of the Commanding Officer. But her Mate was also dismissed the Service for having torn a page from her log, which earned him three months in the Marshalsea Prison.
6 th	1912	Submarine A 3 lost in collision with <i>Hazard</i> off Bembridge, IoW.
7 th	1941	W. Approaches command shifted from Plymouth to Liverpool.
8 th	1919	All cruisers on East Indies station to be painted white.
9 th	1825	First operational use of steam vessel: <i>Diana</i> , built at Kidderpore Dockyard, 1823, and bought into the Service on advice of Capt F. Marryat in 1824, engaged a 36-gun stockade with her rockets, receiving 160 shots. First Burmese War.
10 th	1947	Battleship <i>Vanguard</i> , carrying the King, Queen and two Princesses to South Africa, crossed the line. 'The King had begun the proceedings by halting between two ends of a massive 28-in hawser on the foredeck which Capt W.G. Agnew told him was the main-brace. "Well, it's in a sorry state. You had better splice it", said the King, and all hands cheered when the bo'sun, obeying the royal orders, piped "Splice the main-brace", meaning a double issue of rum for all on board as a celebration tonight'
11 th	1964	GC: CPO Jonathan Rogers DSM, RAN, posthumously, for gallantry in the sinking of the Daring-class destroyer HMAS <i>Voyager</i> in collision with the carrier HMAS <i>Melbourne</i> , 11 February 1964. He helped fifty to sixty men escape from the ship's sinking forward section and stayed below leading trapped men in prayer. CPO Rogers, an ex-RN PO, won his DSM when Coxswain of MTB 698 in action in May 1944. He joined the RAN in 1950.
12 th	1942	Unsuccessful attack on the German <i>Gneisenau</i> , <i>Scharnhorst</i> and <i>Prinz Eugen</i> during their escape up-Channel. Ships: <i>Campbell</i> (D 21), <i>Vivacious</i> , <i>Worcester</i> , <i>Mackay</i> (D 16), <i>Whitshed</i> . MGB: 41, 43. MTB: 32, 44, 45, 48, 71, 219, 221. FAA: 825 Sqn – Swordfish V4523, W5907, W5978, W5983, W5984, W5985 (all lost). RAF: Twenty-eight Beaufort aircraft of 42, 86 and 217 Squadrons, one of which, from 42 Squadron, dropped a torpedo which missed <i>Campbell</i> , standing by <i>Worcester</i> , which had been damaged. VC: Lt-Cdr (A) Eugene Esmonde (W5984/825). Posthumous. 'A mothball attack by a handful of ancient planes, piloted by men whose bravery surpassed any other action by either side that day' – a tribute from the German Foreign Office. 'If ever a failure can be glorious, then this must have been the most glorious failure in all British naval history.'
13 th	1940	The Admiralty appealed for the services of 10,000 fishermen for minesweeping.
14 th	1979	<i>Ark Royal</i> , fourth of the name, paid off at Plymouth, twenty-four years to the day after her first ship's company embarked at Cammell Laird, Birkenhead.
15 th	1968	First British Polaris missile fired, by <i>Resolution</i> , Port Crew, Cdr M.C. Henry RN, at 1115 EST submerged 30 miles off Cape Kennedy. The second firing made by Starboard Crew, Cdr F. Frewer RN, on 4 March 1968.

16 th	1762	The French island of Martinique finally taken after a well-planned amphibious operation led by Maj-Gen the Hon. Robert Monkton, who had been Wolfe's second-in-command at Quebec in 1759, and the Leeward Islands squadron commanded by Rear-Admiral George Rodney. The Seven Years War. Battle Honour: Martinique 1762.
17 th	1992	Admiral of the Fleet Lord Fieldhouse of Gosport died at Southampton. His ashes were scattered at sea on 28 February. The first five star submariner.
18 th	1940	Destroyer <i>Daring</i> , Cdr S.A. Cooper RN, escorting Convoy HN12, torpedoed and sunk by U-23, Kapitänleutnant Otto Kretschmer, 40 miles E. of Duncansby Head, S.E. of the Shetlands (58.38N, 0.40E). Captain, eight officers and ten men lost. The first British destroyer lost to submarine attack in the Second World War.
19 th	2010	Landing Ship Dock RFA <i>Largs Bay</i> , Capt Ian Johnson, arrived at Port au Prince, Haiti, with disaster relief supplies following an earthquake. Food was also landed from the ship by mexeflote at Gonaives and Anse a Veau. Operation Panlake.
20 th	1945	<i>Vervain</i> , corvette, sunk by U-1208 20 miles S. of Waterford, Ireland. Last of twenty-eight corvettes lost in the Second World War. <i>Amethyst</i> , 2nd Escort Group, sank U-1208 in S.W. Approaches, S. of Wolf Rock, 27 February 1945.
21 st	1861	Naval Brigade from <i>Arrogant</i> , <i>Falcon</i> and <i>Torch</i> with the 1st and 2nd West India Regiments, destroyed the stockades at Saba, Gambia River.
22 nd	1940	RM Depot at Lympstone opened. Now Commando Training Centre, Royal Marines
23 rd	1979	Former commando carrier <i>Bulwark</i> recommissioned at Portsmouth. She had been brought out of reserve and converted into an anti-submarine warfare carrier to fill the gap between paying-off of <i>Ark Royal</i> and completion of the Invincible-class carriers. A gallant old ship but her electrics were not up to it.
24 th	1944	First U-boat detected by MAD (Magnetic Anomaly Detection); two USN Catalinas detected U-761 of f Gibraltar (35.05N, 05.45W). Catalinas attacked with retro-bombs, destroyers <i>Anthony</i> and <i>Wishart</i> with depth charges and with further contributions from a RAF 202 Sqn Catalina and a USN Ventura. Submarine's Captain and forty seven crew rescued by the destroyers.
25 th	1991	Destroyer <i>Gloucester</i> destroyed Iraqi Silkworm missile with her Sea Dart just short of USS <i>Missouri</i> . Operation Granby.
26 th	1948	GC (ex-AM): CPO J. Lynch (<i>Nigeria</i>) for saving life of rating lost overboard in gale at Port Stanley, Falkland Islands.
27 th	1966	Frigate <i>Lowestoft</i> first ship on Beira Patrol off Mozambique, establishing oil embargo on Rhodesia after UDI.
28 th	2006	The last embarkation of a Fleet Air Arm fixed wing aircraft. Two SHAR FA2 of 801 NAS landed on <i>Illustrious</i> as part of the ship's predeployment work-up. TO DATE!
29 th	1940	A white ensign, 'torn and tattered', which the heavy cruiser <i>Exeter</i> wore as a battle ensign at the Battle of the River Plate, was presented to the City of Exeter by Capt F.S. Bell RN.

Nominations for Standing Orders Committee 2020

For the attention of All Branch Secretaries

Applications are sought for the standing Orders Committee. Two vacancies in 2020.

Each Branch may nominate **one member** as a candidate for election to the Standing Orders Committee, **subject to the approval of the Branch to which the candidate belongs**.

Applicants should be Full or Life members. A nil return is not required.

NAME OF NOMINEE

PROPOSED BY BRANCH

ADDRESS OF NOMINEE

.....

.....

E mail Post code

Brief history of nominee in the Association. Continue on separate sheet if necessary.

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

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

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

Candidate's Branch

We support this Nomination.

Signature of Chairman (Candidate's Branch)

Signature of Secretary (Candidate's Branch)

Candidate - I accept this nomination and undertake to attend as many Standing Orders Committee Meetings as is possible.

Signature of Candidate

This form should be despatched to be received at the Central Office no later than **14 February 2020**. Nominations received after this date cannot be included in the Ballot.

NOMINATION FORM
ELECTION OF MEMBERS AND DEPUTY MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL 2020/2022
(Revised RNA Bye-Law 7)

For the attention of All Branch Secretaries in Areas. 1,3,4,5, 10,12.

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. (See Note Below)

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 14th February 2020.

PROPOSED MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS FOR ANNUAL CONFERENCE 2020

Proposals must reach The General Secretary by **1600 14 February 2020**

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 **14 February 2020**.
- 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)

Delegate to Annual Conference 2020 Liverpool

Branch secretaries should note the following before submitting their application.

Each Branch which has complied with Rule 16(c), *(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 payment of subscriptions 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.)* but subject to Rule 10(c), *(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)* and 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			
Car registration		Passenger Name	
Delegate's Address			
	Telephone No	Post Code	
e-mail			
Number of Observers			
Name of Branch Hon Secretary			
Contact telephone No: (if not branch Hon Sec)			
Contact e-mail address			
Name and Address for correspondence (if not branch Hon Sec)			

NB: A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2019 and Annual Subscriptions for Branch Members for 2020 have been received in RNA Headquarters (Rule 12 C). Should either not have been received in HQ, the Delegate's Status will be deemed to be that of an Observer.

Please note. Conference packs are NOT sent out before Conference but collected on the day by each delegate. A full set of background paperwork will be sent to each Branch early in 2020. Having sent in your application by mail or e mail you may wish to phone Nigel on 023 9272 3747 to confirm receipt of your application.

ROYAL NAVY PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2020 – CLASSES AND CONDITIONS OF ENTRY FOR Royal Naval Association Class 18 entries.

1. The competition is open to Naval Service Veteran amateur photographers.
2. Each photographer may submit a maximum of three photographs.
3. All photographs must have been taken between 21 Apr 2019 - 20 Apr 2020 and not entered in the RN Photographic Competition 2019.
4. Photographs should encapsulate the ethos of the RNA.
5. A completed application form (Annex E) must accompany each entry.
6. Photographs that are personal copyright are **only** accepted for entry on the understanding that they may be reproduced free of charge. Photographs submitted to the competition **will not be returned** and may be used in public relations, marketing literature, official publications and online.
7. Consent must be gained by the photographer of any image depicting members of the public.
8. Image format for submission and acceptable methods of digital enhancement can be found at Annex D
9. **Images should be submitted by e mail as an attachment to an e mailed entry form. One entry form per image. Or on CD/DVD with a paper copy of the entry form for each image. Please note the requirement to include a thumbnail on the entry form.**
10. Entries should be sent to RNA Central Office by the **20 April 2020** for collation before submission to the Competition organisers for judging.
11. Entries should be sent to;
nigel@royalnavalassoc.com or
Royal Naval Association Central Office. (photo competition)
Room 209 Semaphore Tower PP70,
H M Naval base Portsmouth
PO1 3LT