

SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR

► MEMORIAL TREE PLANTED FOR HMS GLAMORGAN

Exactly 41 years to the day after County-class destroyer HMS Glamorgan returned home to Portsmouth from the South Atlantic, a plaque was unveiled in the Royal Naval Association's Memorial Garden remembering the 14 members of her ship's company lost during the Falklands Conflict.

The dedication ceremony was attended by many members of the ship's company and their family members, and wreaths were laid by Admiral Sir Ian Andrew Forbes, KCB, CBE, who was Operations Officer in Glamorgan, and Vice Admiral John McAnally, CB, LVO, on behalf of the Royal Naval Association.

Remembrance crosses were laid in memory of the 14 who lost their lives, with one in memory of those who have died since the conflict.

Cdr Alan Watt, Chairman of the HMS Glamorgan Falklands Association, said: "We have three major memorials – a memorial window in Portsmouth Cathedral, a bench at the National Memorial Arboretum and a memorial near Stanley, close to the spot the Exocet which hit us was fired.

"We felt that there was still one link missing in the chain and Portsmouth Dockyard was our home port. To have the opportunity to have something in the Naval Base in the Royal Naval Association's memorial garden, which already includes benches for two of the ships lost, HMS Coventry and HMS Sheffield, seemed extremely fitting."

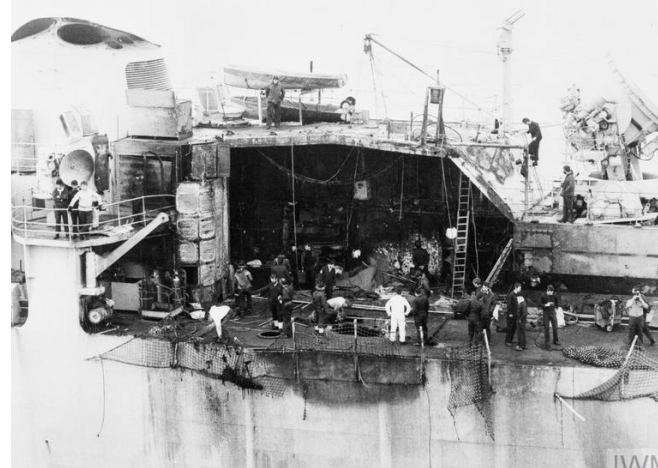
On 12 June 1982 the Falklands Conflict was at a critical stage, with British forces closing in on the Argentine invaders at the islands' capital, Stanley.

The Royal Marines of 45 Commando had been given the task of taking Two Sisters Mountain to the west of Stanley, a tough proposition after their gruelling yomp across the island of East Falkland.

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41 years to the day County-class destroyer HMS Glamorgan returned home from the Falklands, a plaque was unveiled in the Royal Naval Association's Memorial Garden. See full story below.



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HMS Glamorgan covered the commandoes' advance, joining the gunline late the previous evening and, along with frigate HMS Yarmouth, putting more than 400 shells onto Two Sisters and nearby Mount Harriet, further south, during the night.

The warships withdrew around 0530, and as Glamorgan prepared to return to the Carrier Battle Group offshore, her command team was mindful of the threat posed by shore-based attacks and carefully avoided the recognised danger zones around the coast.

But it is thought that the Argentines had managed to move one of their land-based Exocet missile launchers, taken from a warship and mounted on a lorry, further east towards the shore, so while Glamorgan passed that point around 20 miles out to sea, just outside the perceived danger zone, an Exocet was successfully fired.

Frigate HMS Avenger, in company with Glamorgan, spotted the missile and raised the alarm, but Glamorgan only had time to turn sharply to present her stern – the strongest part of the ship – to the threat.

The missile glanced off the upper deck coaming, slid along and exploded near the hangar, killing eight sailors and destroying her armed and fully-fuelled Wessex helicopter, while also blowing a hole in the deck through which burning fuel poured; a further five men died here. All 13 were buried at sea that evening.

A 14th man died of his injuries just over two months later.

The victims were:

PO Michael Adcock	AB David McCann
Ck Brian Easton	MEM Terry Perkins
AEM Mark Henderson	LCK Mark Sambles
AEM Brian Hinge	LCK Tony Sillence
(LA)CAET David Lee	Std John Stroud
Ck Brian Malcolm	Lt David Tinker
AEA Kelvin McCallum	POACMN Colin Vickers

Though the ship's gas turbine engines were temporarily put out of action, within three hours or so the fires were contained and the ship's steam turbines used to move her out of danger and back with the carrier group.

After the Argentine surrender, just two days later, the ship steamed into the sheltered waters of San Carlos for repairs, and she left the Falklands on 21 June, reaching Portsmouth Naval Base on 10 July after more than 100 days continuously at sea.

Glamorgan has the dubious honour of being the first ship to survive being struck by an Exocet.

Our image (© IWM Fkd 75), from the Imperial War Museum collection (<https://www.iwm.org.uk/collections>) shows the damage to the ship's port side and hangar caused by the Argentine Exocet missile.



➤ ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION BIENNIAL PARADE

The Naval Associations' Biennial Parade will take place at the Cenotaph on Sunday, 10 September, falling shortly after the first anniversary of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Facilitated by the Royal Naval Association, it is an important opportunity for the Naval community to join together in celebration and commemoration.

In recent years, the parade has been expanded to the wider Naval community and its associations, including platoons from the Association of Wrens, Association of Royal Yachtsmen, Submariners Association and the Merchant Navy Association. Shipmates will be marching alongside serving sailors from the Portsmouth area.

Second Sea Lord Vice Admiral Martin Connell CBE will be taking the salute with the Royal Naval Volunteer Band Association providing music and the Chaplain of the Fleet, the Venerable Andrew Hillier KHC, conducting the service.

Shipmates wishing to take part should be in King Charles Street ready for a briefing no later than 1025. The Standard Bearers brief will take place a little earlier at 1010.

The parade is due to conclude at approximately 1145 with attendees retiring to the Civil Service Club in Great Scotland Yard for refreshments and to enable serving and veteran personnel from across the Naval Service to gather together.

If you are an RNA Member and would like to march we recommend informing your branch. If you are part of a different Naval association and would like to march, please could your association register by emailing sara@royalnavalassoc.com.

If you have any questions please email comms@royalnavalassoc.com.

➤ CONTACTS



Central Office Contacts	
For all contacts and general enquiries 023 9272 3747	admin@royalnavalassoc.com
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Finance / Membership Support	kathryn@royalnavalassoc.com
Communications	hoc@royalnavalassoc.com
Semaphore Circular	mike@royalnavalassoc.com
Planning – Special Events	malcolm@royalnavalassoc.com
Membership Support	sara@royalnavalassoc.com
Wellbeing Programmes	gemma@royalnavalassoc.com
Project Semaphore	gemma@royalnavalassoc.com
National Advisors	
National Branch Retention and Recruiting Advisor	rna.brria@outlook.com
National Welfare Advisor	geoff@royalnavalassoc.com
National Rules and Bye-Laws Advisor	governancechair@royalnavalassoc.com
National Ceremonial Advisor	robertcoburn001@btinternet.com

Find Semaphore Circular online

<http://bit.ly/RNADownloads>

or

RNA Website / Members Area / Downloads /
Circulars / Code (shipmate)

Snail Mail – Postal Address

RNA Central Office,
Building 1/087,
Scott Road,
HM Naval Base,
Portsmouth
Hants PO1 3LT

➤ GOVERNMENT HOTLINE SUPPORTS HOMELESS VETERANS

Vulnerable veterans across the UK now have access to Op Fortitude, a new dedicated referral pathway for homeless veterans, including those sleeping on the streets.

The innovative hotline is part of a two-year £8.55 million programme to fulfil the government's pledge to end veteran rough sleeping.

The Veterans' Strategy Action Plan 2022-24 sets out the intention to achieve this within the current Parliament, but thanks to new funding it is hoped this will be achieved ahead of schedule.

Run by social housing provider Riverside Group, the £500,000 housing hotline will give homeless veterans a single point of contact to get them the help they need.

Op Fortitude staff will refer callers to a network of support, including housing providers, charities and local authorities.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Johnny Mercer said: "Everyone deserves a place they can call home, not least those who have served their country. Today's launch is a huge milestone in ending veteran homelessness and a clear demonstration of this government delivering on its promises."

Transitioning from the Armed Forces remains a challenge for some and this programme has been designed to support 1,300 vulnerable veterans over two years across almost 60 housing complexes, ranging from apartment blocks to shared houses.

Projects by nine housing providers will target difficult problems so that veterans can get back on their feet and thrive in civilian life. Wraparound services include specialist medical care, connections with local communities and the tools they need to get jobs.

All nine projects will be ready to take Op Fortitude referrals by September, expanding the pathway's network of housing providers from 10 to 14. This includes plugging into a network of 650 homes across Scotland with Veteran Homes Scotland, as well as a brand new consortium of housing across the North West of England.

For full details of the scheme see <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-government-funded-hotline-to-end-veteran-homelessness-now-live-across-the-uk--2>

Veterans who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and the organisations working with them are encouraged to contact the Op Fortitude hotline on 0800 952 0774 or through a secure web portal at riv.org.uk/opfortitude.

Further information can be found at www.riverside.org.uk/care-and-support/veterans/.

➤ UNCLAIMED MEDALS – HELP SHAPE THE MOD SERVICE

If you, or a relative, have previously served in the Armed Forces with an unclaimed medal, the MOD would like to speak to you!

The MOD are working on a digital service that will issue previously unclaimed medals, and they are looking for people to take part in their research.

A research session will last 30-45 minutes, will be held remotely and they will arrange a suitable date and time with you.

They want to speak to a wide range of people – as long as you can:

- join the session from a computer or tablet/phone, with an active internet connection
- come prepared to offer completely honest and open feedback

There is no monetary incentive for this research, but your feedback will help them shape the service for all users.

If you would like to find out more, please contact DBSDIT-AGPFDSUserResearch@mod.gov.uk.

Contacting the MOD to find out more is not a commitment to take part – you can change your mind at any time. If you decide to withdraw, all they ask is that you let them know, and they will remove your details – you do not need to provide them with a reason.



➤ FURTHER PROGRESS ON ARMED FORCES VETERAN CARD

The Ministry of Defence and the Office for Veterans' Affairs are jointly delivering this service as part of ongoing improvements in veterans support – and creating the process to supply these cards has proved to be a significant technical project.

With the MOD now driving the initiative towards the delivery phase, a new verification service to support applications will include:

- online applications via GOV.UK
- identity checks using GOV.UK's new One Login service
- automated service checking to confirm veteran status for most applications using MOD service records databases
- increasing MOD's secure card printing capacity to deal with the expected applications using a new high-capacity card printing machine

The HM Armed Forces Veteran Card will allow veterans to quickly and easily prove their veteran status where required, thereby granting them simpler access to key support from government, charities, local authorities, and other organisations.

Roll-out will be in phases according to service years to manage the volume of requests and prevent any potential delays resulting from demand exceeding capacity.

With more than 1.8 million veterans in the UK, the MOD is focused on building the technology and processes to deal with large volumes of card applications accurately and securely.

Testing started this summer, and they expect cards to become available to veterans later this year. A paper-based application process will also be made available for veterans who are unable to use the online service.

Since December 2018, all Service leavers automatically receive a Veteran Card from the MOD as part of their discharge process and so do not need to apply, though the new verification service will also address how to replace a lost Veteran Card.

Further updates on the application process later in the year will be found at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-veterans-id-cards-rolled-out-to-service-leavers#full-publication-update-history>.

➤ HELP WITH THE COST OF LIVING

Inflation may be falling, but the high cost of living is still causing hardships. Remember that the government has published information that may help you should you need it.

This includes details of different types of support which are available in England, as well as energy-saving tips that could save you money.

Use this link – <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/> – to access the website. If you live in Scotland, Wales or Northern Ireland there may be additional or alternative devolved policies and help available. Use the same link as above but then scroll to the bottom of the page to access the website that is relevant to where you live.

For our more senior veterans, you might also like to take a look at the Age UK website (<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/>), which also features information and advice on helping with the cost of living.

There are also bang-up-to-date tips and ideas for saving money, and taking advantage of the best offers around, through consumer crusader Martin Lewis's MoneySavingExpert website at <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/> where you can also sign up for his weekly email providing a range of tips, guides and offers.



Visit
RNAlottery.co.uk
to see what you
could win, and to
sign up.

➤ RNA WEEKLY LOTTERY

Play the new lottery and you could win up to £25,000!

The Weekly Lottery was officially launched at the RNA's National Conference in Liverpool earlier this year, and by playing the lottery supporters will not only have the chance to win some wonderful cash prizes, they will also be supporting the Association.

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

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

"The RNA is free to join but relies on donations to help continue the good work. Since Covid, we've done so much more in the welfare/wellbeing space with our veterans, and having an RNA Lottery will allow us to do even more. Please do sign up and play our lottery, and if you're not a member – join us!"



➤ SPECIAL INTEREST GROUPS

Shipmates might be interested to become involved with the popular and successful RNA Specialist Interest Groups.

Whether you are already a part of a group or are yet to join one we highly recommend you get involved and see what it's all about.

For more information on each group please contact the designated leaders, listed in no particular order:

Camping and Caravanning – Ron Shilton: rna.camping.caravan.motorhome.club@gmail.com

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

Cricket – Mark Smith: Markmiff1962@gmail.com

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

Decorative Ropework – Bob Jones: oldsalt69@hotmail.co.uk

Divers – Bill Lawless: billylawless40@yahoo.com

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

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

*Riders Branch – Mark Gayton: secnariders@gmail.com

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

If you are interested in forming a Special Interest Group please contact admin@royalnavalassoc.com

**Please note – the Riders are a Branch, not a Special Interest Group, but we have included their contact details for members' convenience.*

➤ WORLD UCKERS CHAMPIONSHIPS

If you can blob with the best then there is still time to enter the World Uckers Championships, which is being staged on Saturday 14 October from 9.30am (playing time from 10am) at the Royal Maritime Club in Portsmouth.

The Royal Maritime Club, in Queen Street, is an ideal venue for the event, as it includes disabled access, catering, accommodation and a licensed bar as well as being very close to transport links.

The competition features doubles and singles events, with some great prizes up for grabs.

To book your place, or if you have any questions, contact Dave MacAskill on engagement@royalnavalassoc.com

The hope is that there will, in future years, be regional championships at different venues besides Portsmouth, so sign up for the 2023 World Championships to get some vital big tournament experience!



➤ GOVERNMENT APOLOGISES TO VETERANS OVER HISTORIC ARMED FORCES LGBT POLICY

The government has apologised for the treatment of LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans) veterans, following the publication of an independent review into the UK Armed Forces' pre-2000 ban on LGBT personnel.

The formal apology by the government was delivered by Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Defence Secretary Ben Wallace, and Mr Sunak described the policy as "an appalling failure of the British state – decades behind the law of this land."

The independent review, chaired by Lord Etherton and co-commissioned by the MOD and the Office for Veterans Affairs, examined the experiences of personnel between 1967 and 2000 who were impacted by the ban on homosexuality in the Armed Forces.

The government has previously said that the treatment of LGBT personnel and veterans in the Armed Forces prior to the year 2000 was completely unacceptable and highly regrettable.

Lord Etherton's report found that investigations in an individual's sexuality were intrusive, invasive, and for some caused long-lasting and severe impacts to the lives of veterans and their families.

The review highlights the government's unwavering commitment to understanding how best to support its veteran and LGBT community and acknowledges that it fully accepts that their treatment before 2000 was not acceptable.

In recognition of this the Prime Minister and Defence Secretary formally apologised in the House of Commons on 19 July to all those who were affected and mistreated in the enactment of the ban.

The review focused on three main areas, with the primary one being the effect the historic policy may have had on those impacted by the ban, including the consequences for their future lives

It also looked at the accessibility of veterans' services for LGBT people and how to ensure that LGBT veterans are recognised and fully accepted as members of the Armed Forces.

Speaking in the Commons, Mr Sunak said: "The ban on LGBT people serving in our military until the year 2000 was an appalling failure of the British state – decades behind the law of this land.

"As today's report makes clear, in that period many endured the most horrific sexual abuse and violence, homophobic bullying and harassment while bravely serving this country.

"Today, on behalf of the British state, I apologise, and I hope all those affected will be able to feel part of the proud veteran community that has done so much to keep our country safe."

Mr Wallace said: "I am pleased that this review has shone a much-needed light on a shameful and unacceptable historical chapter in our Armed Forces history."

Retired Naval officer and RNA member Craig Jones, Executive Chair, and Caroline Paige, Chief Executive of LGBT+ military charity Fighting With Pride, said: "Finally the voices of those who have lived for decades in the shadow of this abhorrent policy have been heard and their truth told.

"Today's apology from the Prime Minister recognises the suffering of veterans who met the challenges of service life but faced many cruel treatments from those in whom they placed their trust.

"Lord Etherton's report is a visceral account of the damage done and the opportunity for this government to put in place substantial reparations. We must wash away the shame felt by these veterans and bring a just and honourable end to this unjust and dishonourable war."

For the full story and further comments see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-apologises-to-veterans-for-egregious-historic-lgbt-policy-in-the-armed-forces>

For the full report see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/lgbt-veterans-independent-review>

For links to support and next steps see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/lgbt-veterans-support-and-next-steps>

➤ THE LAUNCH OF THE LGBT VETERANS INDEPENDENT REVIEW REPORT AND APOLOGY FROM THE PRIME MINISTER AND THE SECRETARY OF STATE FOR DEFENCE

By Shipmate Craig Jones MBE - Executive Chair, Fighting With Pride

In our families today, many of us have children, nephews, nieces, grandchildren, or simply friends and neighbours who are LGBT+. In our modern world we respect people for who they are and recognised that in being themselves they are expressing the peace and freedoms that many members have faced hardship and danger to protect. Today LGBT+ personnel take their place at the front line of operations all over the world, just as so many of us did. They are welcomed in their units, they do a good job and they are respected. Sadly this has not always been the case, and Lord Etherton's LGBT Veterans Independent Review, launched last month, provides in its 270 pages the accounts of over 1100 veterans and families who experienced or witnessed treatment of our shipmates that was cruel and in some cases damaging.

In 2020, with Shipmate Patrick Lyster-Todd, I founded the charity Fighting With Pride to find those who live their lives in the shadow of the cruelty of the ban. Many of these veterans are impoverished by broken careers and little or no pensions, with poor housing, isolated from others and in poor health. I am immensely proud that the RNA has supported Fighting With Pride every step of our journey, helping us ensure that operational service medals are restored, that these veterans can afford a train ticket to

attend the Cenotaph and that they can meet others who faced the same fate, to swing the lamp about better times.

Lord Etherton has made 49 recommendations which aim to ensure that the historic ill treatment of this community of veterans, is confined to history. These veterans must feel the shame they have felt is washed away and that they can wear their medals and march alongside us with pride for their contribution to the defence of the United Kingdom.

The first of the 49 recommendations was that the Prime Minister should make an apology in the House of Commons on behalf the State. He did this on Wednesday 19th July at 1200. For many, this apology reflected that in the 23 years since the ban was lifted, organisations that support veterans were 'sleeping on watch' and not aware of the empty chairs in their mess.

So does this mean that everything at RNA has a rainbow on it!! No! it simply means that the RNA family is now complete, with no empty chair in the mess. Perhaps during Pride Month, we might ask the buntings to run up a Pride flag and we might raise a glass in recognition of their service.





► MONDAY NIGHT FIRESIDE CHATS

For Shipmates who are unaware, there is an ongoing series of 'Fireside Chats' which in the past has featured subjects including the Battle of Jutland, Operation Paraquet (Recapture of South Georgia 1982) and Naval Recruiting in 2020 to name but a few. The presentations are held on Monday evenings commencing at 1830 using 'Zoom'. All are welcome.

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

Our image, from the Imperial War Museum collection (© IWM A 21701), shows an example of a Royal Navy X-craft, or midget submarine, under way.

No Fireside Chats are scheduled for Summer Leave – 7 and 14 August – nor for the Summer Bank Holiday, 28 August

** Lecture subjects may change at short notice.*

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

Date	Presenter	Subject
Mon 21 August	Malcolm Farrow	Colours of the Fleet
Mon 4 September	Brian Finch	The SS Lisbon Maru story
Mon 11 September	Capt John Foreman	Defence Attache in Russia when Putin invaded Ukraine
Mon 18 September	Mark 'Dicky' Barton	The history of the Engineering Branch
Mon 25 September	Paul Godfrey	Operation Source – X-Craft vs Tirpitz
Mon 2 October	Malcolm Farrow	Britain Beyond the Seas
Mon 9 October (provisional)	Craig Jones/ Caroline Paige	Fighting with Pride – government compensation roll-out
Mon 16 October	Susie Martin	History of the Aircraft Handlers Branch
Mon 23 October	Angus Konstam	'The Convoy'

➤ DATABASE UPDATES

The Membership Support Division will be undertaking some updates on the Association database over the coming months, and Branch Secretaries are asked to please keep a close watch for emails from Sara in Central Office.

Branch Secretaries have a fundamental role in ensuring our membership details are kept up-to-date, and Central Office is hugely grateful to them for their support to their Branches and the wider RNA.

➤ TICKETS FOR VETERANS REMEMBRANCE PARADE

We still have places available from our allocation of 120 tickets for this year's Cenotaph Veterans' Parade in Whitehall on Sunday 12 November.

To register your intention to parade, please email Sara at Central Office – sara@royalnavalassoc.com – by 11 August.

➤ CAREERS AND JOBS FAIR IN CORNWALL

Careers and Jobs Fair for the Armed Forces Community

Heartlands in Redruth, Cornwall

*Wednesday 27 September 2023
from 1000–1600*

A free Armed Forces Community jobs and careers fair will be held at Heartlands in Redruth, Cornwall, on Wednesday 27 September from 1000 until 1600.

The fair will bring together a range of businesses from Cornwall's top sectors to help inspire Cornwall's Armed Forces Community.

As well as businesses the event has both support organisations and training providers to give an all-round approach to finding your next career as well as informing you about which pathways you can take to get there.

Tickets are available at <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/armed-forces-community-jobs-and-careers-fair-tickets-650690281147>

The fair is being planned and co-ordinated by Cornwall Council, Reed in Partnership, Active Plus, the Armed Forces Covenant, Wessex Reserve Forces & Cadets Association and Jobcentre Plus. It is open to all members of the Armed Forces Community, including Service leavers, veterans, reservists and Service spouses/family looking for employment or planning their career.

In addition to employers, organisers would welcome the involvement of support organisations and training providers, as the Fair will provide a fantastic forum in which you can meet individuals who will be requiring advice, guidance and support to help them find a job, find the right training, explore possible careers and find out about the full range of transitional support available to them now and in the future.

Stands are free but limited, so if you would be interested in taking part please email cathie.kessell@cornwall.gov.uk.

Armed Forces Community
Step into your next career

MORE THAN JUST A JOBS FAIR.

SUPPORTING CORNWALL'S ARMED FORCES COMMUNITY

WESSEX RESERVE FORCES & CADETS ASSOCIATION | ACTIVE PLUS VETERANS INSPIRING PEOPLE | R | CORNWALL COUNCIL | jobcentreplus | ARMED FORCES COVENANT



➤ FOCUS ON... ROYAL NAVY TRAILBLAZERS

For an organisation with as long a history as the Royal Navy you would expect it to be able to adapt to change, whether that be dictated by the enemy, the environment or technology.

But over the thousand years or more of the RN and its predecessors – the English Navy and the Old Scots Navy – sailors, tacticians and shipbuilders did not simply adapt to change. More often than not they were leading the way, blazing a trail that the rest of the world followed.

A glance through this month's *Swinging the Lamp* encapsulates that pioneering spirit, and in typical Navy fashion that covers land, sea and air.

The innovative ironclad HMS Warrior was commissioned in August 1861, while 40 years later the first warship powered by steam turbines, destroyer HMS Viper, was lost after grounding in the Channel Islands (pictured – Imperial War Museum image © IWM Q 75024).

It was a Royal Navy destroyer, HMS Lance, that fired the first British shot of World War 1, while in a much later war – in Korea – a Royal Navy Sea Fury became the first piston-engined aircraft to shoot down a jet.

Other August Royal Navy anniversaries include the first successful aerial torpedo attack on an enemy warship, the launch of the first warship in the world powered by gas turbines and pioneering wireless communication work.

August is not an unusual month for such events – right across the calendar, and throughout the centuries, you will find examples where a member of the Royal Navy broke the mould and moved everything forward.

Nelson's famous tactical tour de force of breaking the line of the Franco-Spanish fleet at Trafalgar is a classic example – and it wasn't even Nelson's idea in the first place.

By 1805 breaking the line was a well-established option, which had been used in varying degrees of success by, to name but a few, Rodney at the Battle of the Saintes more than 20 years earlier, by Duncan at Camperdown in 1797 and indeed by Nelson himself at the Battle of the Nile the following year.

Breaking the Franco-Spanish line of ships at Trafalgar was a no-brainer for Nelson's forces, which though outnumbered were far superior at gunnery and would thrive in the confusion of the melee which developed from the enemy fleet's dislocation.

But where Nelson so clearly displayed the 'Nelson Touch' was in his preparation for the battle, and his trust in the abilities of his captain and ship's companies. Instead of relying on signals, which were notoriously difficult to read and easy to misinterpret in the heat and smoke of battle, Nelson outlined his plan before battle was joined, but allowed his captains to decide how best to contribute, ensuring his fleet reacted much more quickly to the course of the battle than his opposite number, Villeneuve.

continues →





Such innovative tactics, and adaptation of established principles, is just one aspect of the Royal Navy's trailblazing record.

There is plenty of evidence of the early embracing of technological change and giant leaps forward in the application of that technology throughout the history of the Royal Navy.

Just as the iron-hulled HMS Warrior had in the mid-Victorian era, battleship HMS Dreadnought incorporated numerous innovations, a daring combination of new ideas and equipment, resulting in a revolutionary ship which began sea trials in the autumn of 1906, a year and a day after construction started at Portsmouth Dockyard.

She was a stunning success – the fastest and most powerful warship in the world at her launch, and at a stroke consigning all existing capital ships to footnotes of history (and sparking an arms race as the most powerful nations of the world rushed to copy the Senior Service and upgrade their navies.)

Less than a decade after Dreadnought's appearance on the scene came another stunning Royal Navy first – the appearance on the scene of what would become the first recognisable modern-style aircraft carrier, HMS Furious (pictured – Imperial War Museum image © IWM RAE-O 659), which saw its fore and aft flight decks combined into a through deck after World War 1.

It was on this ship in August 1917 that Edwin Dunning took his courage in both hands and became the first pilot to land an aircraft on a moving ship, though sadly the daring aviator died less than a week later attempting the feat for a third time.

The small island superstructure, angled flight decks, optical landing systems and the steam catapult all first appeared on British aircraft carriers as the Royal Navy continued to lead the way in naval aviation.

And it's not just in the obvious fields of hardware and tactics that the Royal Navy leads – Naval doctors and medics made groundbreaking discoveries over the years, whether it was doctor James Lind's experiments with citrus fruit and scurvy in 1747 – the first controlled clinical experiments in the history of medicine – or the innovative treatment of burns victims during the Falklands Conflict in 1982.

Today sees the Royal Navy and industry partners still at the cutting edge of unmanned vehicle technology as well as continuing to develop world-beating ships, submarines and aircraft, blazing a trail of innovation that stretches back for centuries.





➤ BRANCH NEWS

Bracknell Branch

Bracknell Branch has continued its high tempo of activities over the early summer.

Shipmates enjoyed three entertaining monthly meetings with talks by fellow members on the Falkland Islands Conflict (including the 'HMS Coventry – Sea of Fire' film), 'Minesweeping Trawlers of the Falklands War' and, most recently, on 'Archie Belaney – Grey Owl'.

There was the usual Branch (and standard) representation at the RNA Annual Conference, held in Liverpool, which was combined with the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic.

The Branch Standard and White Ensign were also present at three funerals of local Naval Shipmates, including two former Wrens. Their families and friends said they were most appreciative and grateful for the support.

A group of 17 Shipmates had a very enjoyable visit in early June to Bletchley Park. With so much information to take in, and with new exhibitions since the Shipmates' last visit, as well as all the ground covered, the minibus was pretty quiet on the journey home, while Shipmates dozed or just meditated on the day (our correspondent couldn't really tell which – their eyes were closed...).

Ten Shipmates attended the Annual Service of Remembrance at the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne College on Sunday 11 June, marking the 41st anniversary of the conflict. As always, the service was very moving, and Shipmates were extremely well looked after by the staff and students.

The Branch was again represented at the latest local Armed Forces Veterans' Hub event run by the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, held at Maidenhead Fire Station on 19 June. Because of the heat, cold drinks were made available (rather than hot), as well as the usual 'mixed buffet', which, of course went down very well with both the visiting Veterans, as well as the 'stand-by' Fire Crews.

Branch Shipmates also attended and supported the recent Maidenhead Sea and Royal Marines Cadets' Unit at their Annual Awards Evening at TS Iron Duke – and the Cadets never fail to impress.

Three new Full Shipmates and two new Associate Shipmates will be formally welcomed to the Branch this month, bringing the total number in the Branch to 57 (21 Full and 36 Associate).



Chard branch

Sunday 16 July saw 12 members of Chard Branch make a visit to Bruckland Nature Reserve in what was promising to be a possible wet and windy day, but fortunately the bad weather held off with the group only facing a very light shower.

The reserve was developed on the land of Lower Bruckland Farm as a result of the dairy farmer diversifying due to EU measures – three lakes were dug out and supplied with constant running water that eventually run into the river Axe and into the sea at nearby Seaton. The group were suitably impressed with the reserve and the wildlife found within it.

They all then gathered in Ratties Cafe on site and rounded off the visit with cream teas – and many could not resist purchasing the home-made cakes that were on offer.

The group, many of whom had visited the Falconry Centre in Dorset two weeks earlier, thoroughly enjoyed the afternoon out and are now looking forward to their next 'awayday'.



CALLING ALL EX-WRENS AND RN WOMEN

You are all invited to a fun weekend at
Whitcliff Bay Isle of Wight.

3rd -5th November

A weekend full of activities, archery, axe
throwing, quizzes, bingo and even parade
training. There's even an indoor pool with
chute.

Fund raising on Friday, Fancy dress
Saturday St Trinians theme and a Church
service Sunday. Disco till midnight every
night

For full details and price list email
dauntless22@mail.com

Adult family and friends welcome

Riders Branch

Just a quick reminder (and something of an apology – Ed!) that while the Riders Branch contact details appear under our Special Interest Group (SIG) information section, the Riders are indeed a fully-fledged Branch within the RNA and have been since 2018.

We felt it was still worth putting the contact in that spot as they are not confined to a geographical location, and are unified by a shared special interest.





Tyne Branch

Tyne Branch hosted a Celebration Service of all Seafarers in the community of Tyneside on Sunday 9 July at the Parish Church of St Andrew in Newcastle-upon-Tyne – a service that was planned with and led by Rev Mike Hills MBE, Royal Navy.

That particular Sunday was Sea Sunday in the Church calendar, and the Branch reached out to the full range of the seafaring family and community in Tyneside, inviting representatives of all ages, from Shipmates at the Branch itself as former serving Royal Naval veterans and other former-serving veteran associations through to the Sea Cadet Corps and Sea Scouts.

They included those from the serving Naval families, the fishing community and the organisations who support them all, including rescue services, local authorities and civic representatives.

In this, the 75th year since the formation of the original Branch of the RNA in that area, the Service incorporated the laying-up of the Branch's old Memorial Bell (from RNA Gateshead) alongside their old Branch Standard in the Lady Chapel of the Church.

A new Memorial Bell was blessed and dedicated to the memory of their late Shipmate George Laverick – George was one of the Founder Members of the Branch in 1948. Over his years as a member, he had served in all committee posts (several times in some cases), finishing as Branch President.

He was still attending meetings until his passing in 2021, aged 96, and Shipmates thought it only fitting that they should name their new bell in his honour.

George's descendants joined Shipmates from three generations, and the new Memorial Bell was rung six times by Sonny, his great-grandson aged six (to mark the Change of Watch), accompanied by Emma, his mother and granddaughter of Shipmate George.

continues →



Branch Standards from RNA Area 11, RNA Tyne and RNA Sunderland were paraded at the Service.

Resident Branch Poet Shipmate Andy Mears read out a poem he had composed especially for the occasion, entitled 'Be Calm Still Waters'.

Shipmates were delighted to have the Deputy Lieutenant of Tyne and Wear, Lord Mayor of Newcastle and the Deputy Mayors of Gateshead and South Tyneside as their honoured guests. They were also delighted to have the company of representatives from RNA Sunderland, RNA York, HMS Calliope, NE Submariners, Calliope Association, the Mission to Seafarers, RNLI Cullercoats, and Whitley Bay, North Shields & District Branch Royal British Legion. Cadets and staff from TS Leviathan, TS Whitley and TS Dauntless SCC showed a very smart turnout.

After the Service, which was accompanied by an excellent Choir, they proceeded to the Newcastle Labour Club for refreshments and a game of 'bingo raffle' as well as the opportunity for socialising with guests.

A big thank you to everyone for making the event an impressive celebration, not only for all Seafarers wherever they are, past or present, but for the Branch in its 75th year, and on the Dedication of the George Laverick Memorial Bell, and for all those Branch members who have crossed the bar over the years.

Resident Branch Poet Shipmate Andy Mears read out a poem he had composed especially for the occasion, entitled 'Be Calm Still Waters'.

"We Will Remember Them."





Crosby branch:

Crosby Branch also hosted a memorable event for Sea Sunday, in which they laid down their old Branch Standard at a special service which followed the annual Sea Sunday Service in St Nicholas church, Blundellsands, Crosby.

Rev Beth Anderson, the presiding vicar, conducted the ceremony, while Branch Standard Bearer Shipmate Rob Lawrence marched the standard through the church, handing it over at the altar to be laid down.

The second part of the service saw Crosby branch's new standard being dedicated and blessed by Rev Anderson. The slow untying and unravelling of the new standard is something not many branch members have the privilege in witnessing, and it was the first time Rev Beth had conducted such a ceremony.

The new standard will look resplendent at future events when the standard is required, and Shipmate Rob will, of course, carry out his duties as Standard Bearer with his usual panache and aplomb.

A local company in Liverpool manufactured the new standard, storage bag, strap and leather gauntlets for a reasonable £780 – details of the company are:

Ensign Flag & Regalia Co Ltd - <https://www.ensignflags.com> and they now have the template if other branches are looking to purchase a new standard. The turnaround can be quick upon request, but P&P will need to be considered, unless collection is possible.



Plymouth Branch

HMS Drake hosted the Summer Ball for Plymouth Branch on Saturday 8 June – a glorious summer's evening.

A total of 81 members representing Bodmin and Plymouth Branches from Area 4 were in attendance, as well as members from the ASWI (Anti-Submarine Warfare Instructors) Association, the Royal Marines Association and veteran members of the Senior Rates Mess.

Guest of Honour was Mess President WO1 Steve Harvey MSM, who gave an insightful talk about the complexities and vastness of duties undertaken within the Naval Base at Devonport. Afterwards flowers were presented to his partner Marie Quinn and the Branch Chairman's wife Ann McCarthy.

Guests were treated to a five-course gala dinner and entertainment from former 'X Factor' and 'Britain's Got Talent' contestant Duane, from Cornwall.

£401 was raised for Branch funds from the end-of-evening raffle. It is those same funds that allowed the Branch to heavily subsidise the occasion.

Later the same month a major Armed Forces Day event was, as usual, held on Plymouth Hoe, and this year it was blessed with gloriously sunny weather.

The Branch was allocated a pitch sited at the head of the 'Royal Naval Village', giving advantageous exposure to the RNA 'marquee display' together with one of the Association minibuses, demonstrating its magical chairlift and cavernous seating area!

All was serene until late morning when the Red Arrows appeared from nowhere to thunder past the Hoe, providing a mini display on their way to Falmouth, this year's hosts to the National Armed Forces Day event.

The Branch recruiting team (in the form of Hon Sec) surpassed herself this year by attracting a record number of (potential) new members. The RNA cardboard sailor caps, as ever, were much in demand.

Despite the vast numbers visiting the display the charity tin takings were very average – perhaps a reflection of current inflationary problems. On the upside the opportunity to promote the RNA and all things Naval was hugely successful, which was evident by the interest so many visitors took in the display and stand.

Once again this year HMS Raleigh sent across a team of young Royal Navy men and women who only recently had completed both Part One and Part Two training – they could be seen across the RN Village providing valuable assistance to the many Naval-related displays, including that of the Branch. In doing so they attracted a great deal of praise, gratitude and credit to both themselves and to the Royal Navy.

The many Branch members involved in the event considered it a great day – a great success, all in the shadow of Plymouth's Naval Memorial with stunning views across Plymouth Sound.



St Neots and District branch:

Pictured is RNA National Chairman Shipmate Keith Ridley sharing a GENUINE tot with fellow Shipmate Robert Cookson...

At a family and friends gathering in Cambridge to celebrate the life of Shipmate Chris Day of St Neots and District branch, those present were invited to toast the departed with a genuine Royal Navy tot of rum.

Sadly, Chris had crossed the bar in August 2021 and it was not until recently that his wife Hilarie had discovered Chris's wish list of those he wanted to mark his passing.

The highlight of the gathering was the opening of a genuine flagon of Navy rum contained in a wicker basket with the seal intact which Chris's son Nick had acquired for his father some 20-plus years ago.

After much difficulty the flagon was opened and the appropriate tots drunk, but not before Keith was asked to give a short history of the tot.

"WOW! and what a tot, it was – truly the real McCoy, and I for one had never tasted anything like it," said Keith.

Stepping forward was a longstanding friend of Chris - Shipmate Robert Cookson, who introduced himself as a member of RNA Selsey branch.

Not being one to miss a photograph with the National Chairman, Robert insisted on having a photograph taken with Keith, having first bribed him with a second tot which Keith said he desperately tried to resist but failed...



Area 2 and Chatham Branch:

Shipmate Mike Cox, of Maidstone Branch, has stepped down as Area 2 Public Relations Officer after more than 13 years in the role.

There is a heartfelt BZ from all in Area 2, noting that today the headlines are about Mick! A presentation was carried out by Area 2 Chairman Shipmate Steven Susans.

Meanwhile, Chatham Branch Shipmates have been out and about again spreading the word about the Association, initially at Chatham Carnival (note: next year's theme is Maritime) on Saturday 6 July, then at Chatham Town Football Club on Friday 14 July.

Chatham Town are great supporters of the Association.

Redruth and Camborne Branch:

Another fabulous Murdoch Day at the Cornish town of Redruth found Shipmates from the Redruth and Camborne Branch celebrating a famous past resident.

Murdoch Day 2023 paid tribute to inventor William Murdoch, who came up with the idea of replacing oil and tallow in lighting by using coal gas instead. The great man lived in Redruth in the late 18th Century and his home in Cross Street became the first in the country to be illuminated by gas lighting.

This also presented a great opportunity for promoting the Branch and generating revenue. Despite a forecast of thunderstorms, there were a few sociable drinks to be had on completion.

BZ to Shipmate Dave (Jack) Russell (far right of the image), a stalwart of the Branch who has put so much effort into this event and made such a success of the Branch's involvement in this local annual celebration.



Bodmin Branch:

Shipmate Annette Laurie, Secretary of Bodmin Branch, was photographed recently gracing the front door step of a prestigious-looking address – Number 10 Downing Street.

During National Armed Forces Week Annette, as part of her role as Ambassador to Veterans charity Help for Heroes, was invited to take part in a reception, hosted by Minister for Veterans Affairs Johnny Mercer. Also present were other staff and veterans from Help For Heroes, SSAFA and Scotty's Little Soldiers.

A presentation was given by Mrs Akshata Murty – wife of Prime Minister Rishi Sunak – about the importance of saying thank you to veterans and remembering the work they do and did to protect and serve the UK.

Annette said: "I felt humbled and honoured to have been asked to attend – it gave me a chance to feel veterans like us mattered and that the government were willing to listen to our concerns.

"I was also over the moon to meet and stroke Larry the Cat, who is now a stately 17 years old and still going strong, albeit he was asleep and purring quietly at the time!"

Area 4:

Thanks to the generosity of the members who attended the RNA No 4 Area Dinner Dance Reunion at Bideford in March, £2,000 was raised for Service charities, and this year it was split between Help for Heroes and Blind Veterans UK.

The £1,000 cheque for Blind Veterans UK was presented by Shipmate Mike Lawton, Chairman of the Reunion Committee, to Colin Crawley on behalf of the organisation – Colin is the Community Team Leader for Dorset, Somerset, Avon and Wiltshire. It was a pleasure to meet him and hear about all the good work that they do for veterans.

Blind Veterans UK currently support more than 4,000 veterans nationally through home visits, support groups and any other assistance that is required. They also have a residential home in Brighton where they have been for over 80 years, but will shortly be moving to new premises in Rustington. The new building will be better-suited to providing the care and services needed for present and future veterans who suffer from impaired vision

On behalf of all veterans, Shipmates thank Blind Veterans UK for the support and help it provides to veterans of all ages.



Rosyth and West Fife Branch:

With the kind permission of the Commanding Officer of HMS Caledonia, Cdr Bob Hawkins MBE, a fundraising evening on behalf of the RN and RM Charity was organised by Area Secretary Karen Elliot MBE and her husband and Area Chairman Stephen, hosted by the Wardroom of HMS Caledonia.

The event was well-supported by a dozen members of RNA Rosyth and West Fife, a number of members of Forth Valley and Edinburgh Branches, the WO & SR Mess Caledonia and other invited guests.

The highlight of the evening was a stunning performance by a very young and talented singer, Freya Nicoll from West Lothian, who kindly donated her singing talents in aid of the appeal.

Freya, who has performed on 'Britain's Got Talent' and the junior version of 'The Voice', treated Shipmates to a range of songs by Barbara Streisand, Elvis Presley, Janis Joplin, and from the 'Rocky Horror Picture Show' and many more, entralling them with her amazing vocal range, from raw blues and musical scores to rock and roll and haunting ballads.



Funds on the evening were raised through a prize raffle and bucket collection which brought in the grand sum of £475.



Motorhomes, Caravans and Campers Special Interest Group (MCC SIG):

Shipmates Ron Shilton and Andy Fletcher, from Southend and Monmouth Branches, together with their fantastic organising team, were the masterminds behind this years 'Big Meet', a Special Interest Group comprised of Motorhomes, Caravans and Campers.

A total of 62 shipmates, from Branches including Bodmin, Plymouth, Ipswich, Gosport, Portsea and from HQ Roll, met up at Blackmore in the Malvern Hills of Worcestershire at the beginning of July for five nights of numerous games, many more tots and much fancy dressing took place.

Walks around the area were organised for a few days, with afternoons seeing more social activities, including a cocktail party on Friday with Shipmates attending in banyan rig.

There was a barbecue on the Saturday, and the slight drizzle did not deter the games from taking place – including giant Jenga and Connect 4. There were also quizzes for the less-sporty and more intellectual types, and horse racing, all followed by the RNA tot time at 1800 where it was believed to be the biggest attendance on such a Zoom meeting ever...

There was also the mandatory Defaulters, with such terrible crimes as being adrift, non wearing of name badges and the like. Such frivolity was watched intently by the many dogs who accompanied their humans to the shenanigans.

Sunday afternoon was rounded off with tea and cake – and more rum!

Anyone interested in attending next year's Big Meet (date tbc but possibly in June) please contact Ron Shilton via Selby Branch.



The Annual National Service for Seafarers in St Paul's Cathedral



> STOP PRESS

The RNA have been invited to the Annual National Service for Seafarers in St Paul's Cathedral, London, on Wednesday 11 October at 5pm.

There are a limited number of tickets, so if you are interested in attending, please email sara@royalnavalassoc.com no later than midday on Thursday 10 August.

The Service is an opportunity to commemorate and celebrate all seafarers from across the maritime profession, alongside representatives of all sectors of the seafaring community including the Royal Navy, Merchant Navy, fishing industry, nautical colleges, maritime youth groups and veterans' associations.

► EMPLOYMENT NEWS

The Civil Service – ‘a great place to work for veterans’

In February 2020 the government announced the introduction of a new initiative to make the Civil Service ‘A Great Place to Work for Veterans’.

There are around 2.2 million Armed Forces veterans in the UK and every year around 15,000 people leave the Armed Forces. Around 60 per cent of them are under 35, with most seeking to take up a new career or job opportunities in civilian employment.

As well as making the Civil Service the most inclusive employer in the UK the government is also committed to maximising the support and recognition for veterans in society. This includes those aspects and opportunities, such as employment in high-quality jobs, which help them to flourish and successfully make the transition from life in the Armed Forces to civilian employment.

Veterans also bring with them unique skills and experience and many of the values which the Civil Service also thrives on; a commitment to public service, team work, inclusion, creativity and drive.

Many veterans already work in the Civil Service and make a huge contribution to the organisation, and this initiative aims to encourage more veterans to take this step. These new measures are focused on roles at all grades, functions and professions across the Civil Service.

Under the scheme, veterans who meet the minimum criteria for a role will progress to the next stage of selection. In most cases this will be an interview, but depending on the vacancy it may be another method of selection such as an online test or an assessment centre.

Roles available under the scheme will be clearly marked. If you are an applicant and are unsure, you should contact the vacancy manager or recruitment point of contact. Roles selected for this initiative will be externally advertised, and can be either temporary or permanent, and at any grade.

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To be eligible for this scheme in the Civil Service, you must:

- have served for at least one year in Her Majesty’s Armed Forces (as a Regular or Reserve); this includes time spent training
- be in transition from, or ceased to be a member of, HM Armed Forces
- not already be a civil servant, or be employed by a Civil Service Commission accredited public body

There is no maximum time limit from when you left HM Armed Forces to be eligible for this initiative.

When you apply for a role through Civil Service Jobs, you will be prompted to enter whether you are eligible for the Great Place to Work Initiative and whether you would like to apply for the role through this route.

Please note that during pre-employment checks for a role in the Civil Service, your employment history will be checked. An attempt to use this initiative fraudulently may result in your application being terminated.

The assessment approach, along with the criteria required for the role, will be outlined in the job vacancy or candidate information pack. You can find out more about careers in the civil service at Civil Service Careers and find vacancies at Civil Service Jobs.

In order to use the Great Place to Work for Veterans initiative, you must also meet the minimum standard for the role you would like to apply for – this is the combination of experience, behaviours, strengths, abilities and technical/professional skills that a candidate will need to perform effectively in the role.

The minimum standard will be clearly set out in the job vacancy or the candidate information pack.

It may not always be practicable or appropriate to interview all veterans who meet the minimum criteria for the job. For example, in high-volume recruitment, the employer may wish to limit the overall number of interviews by selecting the candidates who best meet the minimum criteria for the job rather than all of those that meet the minimum criteria.

In these circumstances, organisations can select the candidates who best meet the minimum criteria for the job rather than all of those that meet the minimum criteria.

For more information see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/making-the-civil-service-a-great-place-to-work-for-veterans>

➤ FROM THE GENERAL SECRETARY



Ahoy Shipmates

Welcome to August's Semaphore Circular and thank you Mike for putting together another great edition. Having scanned through the draft, I love the article on innovation within the RN and it makes me laugh when I see the Isle of White ferry proudly announcing on its superstructure that it is using "Hybrid Energy" (see above). It must sail in and out of Portsmouth over half a dozen times a day where HMS WARRIOR 1860 is berthed – another fine example of Hybrid Energy; this time sail and steam. We only beat them by 160 years!

Welcome! What a privilege and genuine pleasure to be asked along (thank you Capt Sarah Oakley) to the Families Day for this term's entry at Dartmouth and have some fabulous conversations with both Officer Cadets and their families at the College and the other organisations who contributed. The immense sense of pride felt by visitors in those new young officers was rightly palpable. BZ to the BRNC team and to the RNPT who did a great job too. Wish it was me starting all over again!

Now to set a couple of things straight. No, the RNA is not just a Ratings membership organisation, nor is it just for veterans. The RNA is there for the whole Naval family. There are rightly many exclusive Naval associations from the HMS Amethyst Association to the RN Widows Association, many of whom we have had much pleasure in working with, however, I would venture to suggest that the Royal Naval Association is the only genuinely inclusive Naval association open to all who serve, have served AND their families.

So, it matters not whether you are or were an AB or an Admiral (we have both and now more than 17,000 in between), male or female, black or white, gay or straight, Muslim or Shinto (our Tokyo Branch is thriving), spouse or parent; rather, it's the pride in our Service which brings us together. And, now that subscriptions have been set to zero and the Association has switched to a donation-based income model why wouldn't you join?

What I'm telling them is that we're not experts in benevolence, finance, employment, health, housing or schooling but we are a membership organisation who know about Comradeship and its many facets. More importantly, we do know and can direct you to that specialist organisation within the Naval charity sector who can provide that support if and when it's needed. In the meantime, it's mainly about fun. If you like, it's the best bits about the Navy, without the bull****!

See you there and, to those young officers and their families, as well as those who pass out of HMS RALEIGH every Friday during term time - WELCOME!

RMC Discounted Rate. We've had a busy month in Central Office as we are already into plans for D-Day 80 and our Cardiff Conference, both in June next year. Also, we've negotiated a great deal with the Royal Maritime Club in Queen Street for RNA members – please see the advert in this edition. Please also note the charitable nature of the RMC with special additional concessions for carers and the like. Many of us will also be members of other associations too so worth remembering when you are organising reunions and the likes.



Events

A reminder of forthcoming events: contact Central Office for more detail/bookings

- 11 Aug – **Central Office Open Day** – HMNB Portsmouth - contact Sara
- 10 Sep – **Naval Associations' Parade** – Cenotaph, Whitehall – office lead Chris
- 29 Sep – **Central Office Open Day** – HMNB Portsmouth - contact Sara
- 14 Oct – **2023 World Uckers Championships** - Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth

The RNA weekly lottery is launched and live! By playing the RNA lottery, you will not only have the chance to win some wonderful cash prizes, but you will also be backing everything we do, particularly in the welfare space. Since COVID, we've done so much more in the welfare/ wellbeing space with our veterans and having an RNA Lottery will allow us to do even more. It's only £1 per line, per week. Every Friday, six numbers are selected at random, and if the player matches three or more in the correct sequence, they will win one of the cash prizes on offer! (up to £25,000). Once players have registered online, they will be given a six-digit sequence, which will be entered into the draw. Sign up here: www.RNALottery.co.uk Thank you and good luck!

Finally, my spies in the Rosyth and District Branch tell me that HMS PRINCE OF WALES is back in the water and undergoing trials in the Forth. Meanwhile I can see the QE is berthed on Victory Jetty in HMNB Portsmouth leaving the primary carrier berth free – clearly the Base team are anticipating her arrival; should be a treat for the next Open Day with both carriers alongside.

Just one more thing, heartiest congrats to the Fighting WithPride charity who have successfully won an apology from the Prime Minister on behalf of the Nation, for the treatment of the LGBT community prior to the ban being lifted in 2000.

Best wishes, **Bill**

➤ AUGUST RNA SEMAPHORE CIRCULAR OBITUARIES

In Loving Memory of

Lt Cdr G. M. Bull

20th April 1935 - 27th April 2023



Shipmate Mike Bull

City of Inverness Branch members are mourning the loss of their Founder Member and friend Shipmate Mike Bull, who will be sadly missed by them all.

Mike is survived by his wife Judith, two daughters and three grandsons. His funeral was well attended by family, friends and members of the Branch, who formed a guard of honour led by Shipmate Bob Coburn carrying the City of Inverness Branch Standard.

Mike was dedicated to the RNA, helping to establish the Inverness Branch and becoming the Founding Chairman. Later he ran the very successful Ancient Mariner newsletter, keeping the membership abreast of the latest comings and goings.

He joined the Royal Navy as a boy seaman aged 15, and by the time he was 18 he had seen more of the world than most people see in their entire lifetime. In all he served on 11 ships and submarines.

In 1957 he qualified as a submariner and earned his gold dolphins, and eight years later he became a minewarfare and clearance diving officer. In 1964 he was commissioned as a Sub Lieutenant, was promoted to Lieutenant four years later, and to Lieutenant Commander in 1973.

By the time of his retirement in 1994 he had been promoted nine times, served on 11 ships and at nine shore establishments, taught at the RN College, Dartmouth, commanded vessels at sea, and developed new tactics and procedures – some still in use today. He had defused bombs, torpedoes and other explosives, and if you asked him, he would tell you without hesitation that he would have done it all again.

Rest easy Shipmate – your watch is done. Fair winds and a following sea.

Stan Keetley

It is with great regret that the Nottingham Branch announce that their Branch/Club President Shipmate Stan Keetley crossed the bar on 8 June at the grand age of 96 years young.

Shipmate Stan volunteered to join the Royal Navy during World War 2 at the age of 16, and was finally called up for service a year later aged 17, going on to train as a Wireless Telegraphist. On completion of training Stan was drafted to a destroyer to join the UK/American task group which was to land troops on the beaches of Japan – he was to have been landed there with them, to act a communications link.

The dropping of the atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki cancelled this operation and he was then drafted to the 10th Minesweeping Squadron (Algerines) clearing mines from the China Sea around Hong Kong.

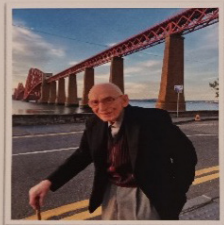
Shipmate Stan joined the RNA in the early 1970s and was always a keen supporter of Nottingham Branch. In November 2020 he was awarded Life Membership in grateful appreciation and recognition of his service to the country during the war.

His cheerful attitude will be sadly missed by members of the Nottingham Branch – Fair Winds and Following Seas, Shipmate.



In Loving Memory
of

John MacKinnon Beaton



13th August 1923 - 6th July 2023

Dunfermline Crematorium
Tuesday 18th July 2023
10.45 am



To Celebrate the Life
Of
Catherine Black McIntosh
"Rena"



25/9/1939 - 28/6/2023

Dunfermline Crematorium
Tuesday 18th July 2023
at
11.30 am

Today's service is conducted Gwen Walker.
A Cherished Memory.

John MacKinnon Beaton and Catherine Black McIntosh

During the month of July the Rosyth and West Fife Branch standard was called upon to attend the funerals of two Royal Navy veterans, whose funerals were held on the same day, Tuesday 18 July, at Dunfermline Crematorium.

The first, in the morning, was for John MacKinnon Beaton, who was born on 13 August 1923 at Ferrindonald, Isle of Skye, the second of three sons. On completing his primary school education, John and his family moved to the island of Islay, where John spent two years attending Port Ellen then Bowmore Secondary schools before moving to lodgings in Dunoon where he resumed his studies for Higher Certificates at the local Grammar School.

On the successful completion of his secondary education, John was accepted for a BSc degree course at Glasgow University.

Coming from a seafaring family – John's father was the Captain of the Islay mail boat MV Lochiel – he spent all of his holidays working with his father on the boat, honing his nautical skills.

In 1939, at the outset of World War 2, John had his calling to arms and joined the Royal Navy as an Ordinary Seaman, which meant that he was compelled to put his studies for a degree on hold.

His Naval career saw him serve on the Atlantic Convoys escorting merchant ships across the ocean. John admitted that service with the convoys was the most frightening and difficult part of his service in the Royal Navy.

He also served with the Pacific Fleet aboard the aircraft carrier HMS Indefatigable, seeing action during the attacks on Japanese-held oil refineries on the island of Sumatra before Indefatigable joined the American forces, in March 1945, as they prepared to invade the island of Okinawa in Operation Iceberg.

Indefatigable later joined the American Fleet in the attack on the Japanese home islands in July and August.

On his discharge from the Royal Navy, John returned home to complete his degree and, following graduation, he took up employment as a teacher of Science and Maths, firstly at Dalmellington Secondary School and then Helensburgh Secondary School.

In recent years John, along with the few remaining survivors of the Russian Convoys, was presented, by the Russian Consulate in Scotland, with the Atlantic Convoys Medal. John had dearly hoped to take up the invitation by the Russian Consulate to make a visit to Moscow but alas, declining health, Covid and finally the invasion of Ukraine prevented this.

John married his sweetheart Jean McCallum in 1955 and in 1965 their daughter Sally was born. Sadly, Jean passed away in 1995.

In 2000 John moved to North Queensferry to live and became a very much-loved and respected member of that small community. He became very active in the community, baking meringue pies for his local church fetes, enthusiastically working with his local Probus, representing his local bowling club and indulging his love of sailing with the local boat club. John's talents also saw him

being interviewed by BBC Scotland in a piece entitled 'Scotsman brings new meaning to Bananas', following his success in cultivating a banana tree in his back garden.

The second funeral held later that morning was for former Royal Navy Wren Shipmate Catherine Black McIntosh.

Her family requested that her funeral be a quiet affair, attended by family and RNA Shipmates with no formal ceremony.

Catherine's husband Peter, also a member of the Rosyth and West Fife Branch, and who is not in very good health himself, was released from hospital for the funeral, and Shipmates were privileged to be able to chat with him before the service. Given the difficult circumstances he is enduring Peter was in good form and pleased to see them all.

There was an excellent turnout from the Branch – both funerals were attended by 12 Branch Members including President Shipmate Alan Bayliss. The Branch Standard along with the Standard of the British Legion were in attendance.

HMS Caledonia was well-represented by a Royal Marine Bugler along with the First Lieutenant of Caledonia, Lt Cdr Morgan McDonald, PO George Larsen and two Reservists from HMS Scotia.

Catherine's funeral was also attended by Submariner WO Stefano Mannucci from HMS Neptune, a long-time friend of Peter and his family.

Our image from the funeral shows Peter McIntosh flanked by members of the Rosyth and West Fife branch.



2 August 1917

➤ AUGUST SWINGING THE LAMP

1 August 1861:

HMS Warrior, the world's first iron-hulled armour-plated warship was commissioned. The ship is now open to the public at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

2 August 1917:

Lt Edwin Dunning RN became the first pilot to land an aircraft on the deck of a moving ship, taking off in a Sopwith Pup biplane from RNAS Smoogro and setting down on the flight deck of converted cruiser HMS Furious at Scapa Flow, Orkney. He relied on colleagues grabbing the plane as it descended to complete the landing (pictured in this Imperial War Museum image, © IWM Q 20637). Dunning, aged 25, made a second successful landing on the for'ard flight deck of Furious five days later, but died later the same day attempting a third landing.

3 August 1901:

Pioneering warship HMS Viper grounded on rocks off Alderney and was abandoned shortly after. The 350-ton torpedo boat destroyer was the first warship in the world powered by steam turbines, making her also the fastest destroyer in the world, with an estimated top speed in excess of 35 knots, though her high rate of fuel consumption limited her potential. She was lost in late afternoon fog on the Renonquet Rocks during exercises, and was wrecked beyond repair the following day.

4 August 1903:

Royal Naval College Osborne formally opened on the Isle of Wight by King Edward VII. Officer cadets joined as young teenagers and trained for two years before going on to Dartmouth. The college, which was part of the Osborne House estate so beloved by Queen Victoria, closed down in 1921.

continues →

5 August 1914:

1,300-ton Laforey-class destroyer HMS Lance fired the first British shot of World War 1 when she challenged converted German pleasure steamer Konigin Luise, which was laying mines in the North Sea – see our entry for 6 August. The German ship was badly damaged by gunfire from Lance and other Royal Navy warships of her squadron, and either sank or was scuttled, with Lance picking up a couple of dozen survivors. The 4in gun that fired the first shot, currently on loan from the Imperial War Museum, is on display at the National Museum of the Royal Navy in Portsmouth Historic Dockyard.

6 August 1914:

Light ('Scout') cruiser HMS Amphion became the first British warship sunk in action during World War 1 when she struck a mine laid by converted German pleasure steamer Konigin Luise off the Thames Estuary. Amphion had been leading the squadron which included destroyer HMS Lance, which fired on the German minelayer the previous day, and the cruiser had picked up a number of the German ship's crew when it sank. But on her return from a patrol off the Dutch coast, despite her captain steaming several miles west of where he believed the German mines had been laid, Amphion ran into one and sank in around 15 minutes, taking more than 130 British sailors – and an unknown number of survivors from Konigin Luise – with her.

7 August 2005:

A Royal Navy-operated remotely-operated Scorpio submersible rescued seven Russian sailors who had been trapped more than 600ft deep in the Bering Sea when their own AS-28 Priz-class deep submergence rescue submersible became entangled in netting and cables. British, American and Japanese teams stepped forward to help, but the Royal Navy team took the lead and successfully cut the cables, releasing the Russian vessel and crew, who had less than six hours of air left.

8 August 1968:

'Broad-beam' Leander-class frigate HMS Scylla was launched from No 3 Slip at Devonport – the last warship to be built at a Royal Dockyard.

9 August 1952:

A North Korean Mig-15 jet was shot down by a Royal Navy Hawker Sea Fury during the Korean War – the first time a piston-engined aircraft beat a jet in combat. Four Sea Furies of 802 Naval Air Squadron, flying from HMS Ocean on a reconnaissance mission over Pyongyang, were attacked by the enemy jets, and at least one was brought down. The kill was originally credited to Lt Peter 'Hoagy' Carmichael, who himself credited it to the whole flight; later evidence suggested Sub Lt Brian 'Schmoo' Ellis may have been the pilot who shot down the Mig.

10 August 1865:

Admiral of the Fleet Sir Francis Austen died at the age of 91 at his home in Widley, north of Portsmouth. The Naval officer was the elder brother of renowned novelist Jane Austen.

11 August 1705:

Fourth rate HMS Plymouth foundered in a summer storm in the Channel with the loss of all hands. Originally built as a 52-gun frigate in 1653, she was rebuilt at Blackwall as a 60-gun fourth-rate in the same year that she was lost.

12 August 1915:

A Short Type 84 biplane piloted by Flt Cdr Charles Edmonds, of the Royal Naval Air Service, became the first aircraft in the world to launch a successful aerial torpedo attack on an enemy ship. The aircraft, operating from seaplane carrier HMS Ben-my-Chree in the Aegean Sea, launched a 14in 370kg torpedo which sank a 5,200-ton Turkish supply ship in the Sea of Marmara.

13 August 1762:

End of the Siege of Havana, a crucial element in the Seven Years War; a fine example of inter-Service co-operation that saw Havana – a major port and naval base in Spanish America – fall to a combined Anglo-American force transported by a Royal Navy flotilla. Imaginative tactics foiled the Spanish defences and delivered a Spanish fleet into British hands, weakening Spanish influence and strengthening Britain's grip on its colonies.

14 August 1877:

Politician William Henry Smith – the 'Son' in newsagents WH Smith and Son – was appointed First Lord of the Admiralty by Prime Minister Benjamin Disraeli, causing some controversy as the businessman had never been to sea. In the event he proved an effective administrator, and later served twice as the Secretary of State for War.

continues →

15 August 1945:

VJ Day – Victory over Japan Day – marked the formal end of World War 2 with the surrender of Imperial Japan. The American commemoration is on 2 September, which marks the day that the surrender document was signed on board American battleship USS Missouri in Tokyo Bay.

16 August 1915:

The villages of Parton, Lowca and Low Moresby, near Whitehaven in Cumbria, were shelled for almost an hour by a German U-boat. A newspaper report noted that a few shells hit a railway embankment, slightly delaying train services, while fires were quickly put out in the villages, and no casualties were reported.

17 August 1951:

The Royal Navy's first operational jet fighter squadron, 800 Naval Air Squadron, equipped with Supermarine Attackers, was formed at HMS Peregrine, RN Air Station Ford in West Sussex. None of the 146 Attacker aircraft, in three variants, produced for the FAA ever saw active service, and they were withdrawn from the front line during 1954.

18 August 1951:

Fast Patrol Boat HMS Bold Pioneer, the first operational warship to be powered by gas turbine engines, was launched at the shipyard of J Samuel Whites of Cowes. The 150-ton experimental ship – one of a pair, the other (Bold Pathfinder) was launched a month later at Vospers in Portchester – was powered by two Metro-Vick gas turbines and had two Mercedes diesels for cruising, later replaced by Napier Deltics. She was actually launched with just diesels, as the turbines were not ready in time, and the two ships proved somewhat unreliable, but attained speeds of over 40 knots and paved the way for the dashing Brave-class attack boats.

19 August 1915:

German battlecruiser Moltke was torpedoed by Royal Navy submarine HMS E1 during the Battle of the Gulf of Riga – believed to be the first such strike on a Dreadnought. The torpedo hit the warship's forward torpedo room, killing eight sailors and flooding some compartments, but Moltke survived and was repaired in Hamburg within a month.

20 August 1896:

HMS Defiance, the last of the 'wooden wall' ships of the line built by the Royal Navy, played a leading role in communications development when she received the first RN wireless transmission. The ship, launched in 1861, was the Devonport torpedo and mines school ship at the time, and her commander, Capt Henry Jackson (later Admiral of the Fleet) was a wireless telegraphy pioneer, working closely with Marconi and developing his own experimental communications devices.

21 August 1740:

Grog rum mixed with water – was introduced to the Royal Navy on the West Indies Station by Admiral Edward Vernon as a way of reducing drunkenness. By mixing the sailor's daily allowance of half a pint of rum with a quart of (often stagnant and unpalatable) water, it not only reduced the immediate effect of alcohol (the issue was also dished out in two stages, morning and evening) but also prevented the spirit being hoarded as the water caused it to spoil relatively quickly. Vernon was known as Old Grog because of the heavy grogram cloth coat he wore, and thus his nickname was also adopted for the adulterated rum ration.

22 August 1918:

Battlecruiser HMS Hood was launched at the shipyard of John Brown on the Clyde. She was the largest warship in the world for some two decades, and steamed to ports around the world to fly the flag for the Royal Navy. The 'Mighty Hood' was sunk in a duel with Bismarck and Prinz Eugen during the Battle of the Denmark Strait on 24 May 1941, with all but three of her ship's company of 1,418 being lost – a significant blow to British morale, and one which brought swift retribution when a strong Royal Navy task force found and sank Bismarck three days later.

23 August 1628:

Lord Admiral of the Navy George Villiers, the Duke of Buckingham – a favourite of King Charles I – was stabbed to death by John Felton, a disgruntled Army officer, at the Greyhound tavern in the High Street, Old Portsmouth. Buckingham was associated with several disastrous military expeditions and diplomatic failures, including a costly debacle at La Rochelle in France, which is thought to have triggered Fenton's plan to assassinate the nobleman.

continues →

24 August 1867:

Eight-year-old Fanny Adams was brutally murdered in Alton, Hampshire, by Frederick Baker, who hanged for his crime on Christmas Eve the same year. A year or so later Royal Navy sailors were less than enthusiastic over the introduction of new rations of tinned mutton of variable quality, and through a macabre sense of humour these rations were dubbed 'Fanny Adams' as they were said to resemble the girl's remains. The large tin containers, which were often used as mess tins, and some larger cooking pots became known as Fannys.

25 August 1553:

Believed to be the date on which King Henry VIII's flagship *Henry Grace a Dieu*, or the Great Harry, was accidentally destroyed by fire at Woolwich Dockyard on the Thames, very close to where she had been built almost 40 years earlier. The four-masted carrack, thought to have displaced well in excess of 1,000 tons, was a more powerful version of the *Mary Rose* but saw very little action, spending more of her time on diplomatic missions.

26 August 1914:

Protected cruiser *HMS Highflyer* destroyed German armed merchant cruiser *Kaiser Wilhelm de Grosse* off Rio de Oro in Spanish Sahara, now the disputed territory of Western Sahara. The German ship had left Bremen just ten days before. The German commerce raider, originally built as a passenger liner, had been coaling in port when she was challenged by *Highflyer*, and having expended her ammunition in the ensuing action, and being unable to escape, she was scuttled by her crew.

27 August 2010:

Submarine *HMS Astute*, the first of her class, was commissioned at Faslane in Scotland. Half as big again as the *Trafalgar*-class boats she replaced, the 7,400-ton vessel and her sisters are regarded as amongst the most advanced nuclear attack submarines in the world today.

28 August 1967:

Royal Fleet Auxiliary tanker *RFA Olynthus* was renamed during a refit in Portsmouth. The ship's name was considered to be too close to that of *HMS Olympus* and liable to cause confusion, so on this day *Olynthus* became *Olwen*, a heroine in one of the 12th Century Welsh folk tales collected in the *Mabinogion*.

29 August 1930:

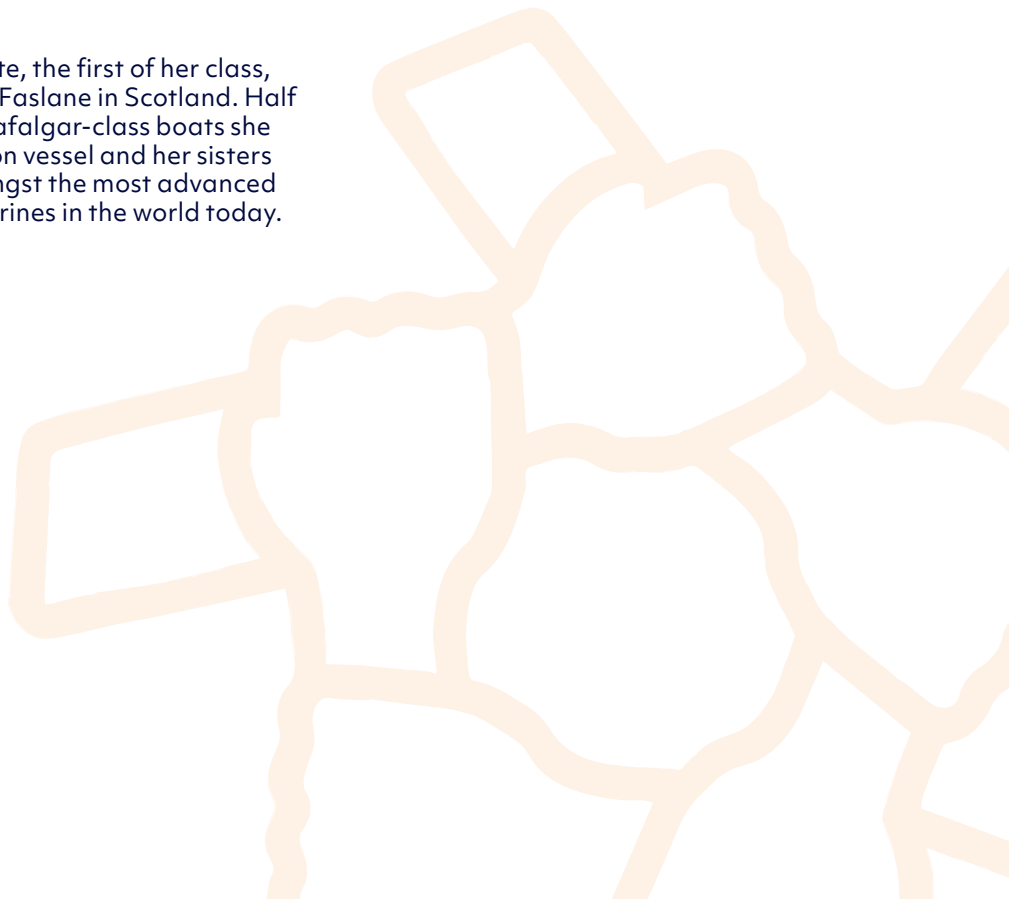
Sloop *HMS Harebell* removed the last 36 inhabitants of the wind-lashed island of St Kilda, 40 miles out into the Atlantic from Benbecula. Life on the remote island, which suffered regular storms and gales, had become intolerable for the islanders and they requested the move – ironically, the morning of the evacuation was a perfect summer's day, with calm sparkling seas and blue cloudless skies.

30 August 1954:

The Royal Naval Association, formed four years previously, received its original Royal Charter from Queen Elizabeth II.

31 August 1962:

Cruiser *HMS Blake*, and frigates *HM Ships Ulster* and *Whirlwind* were on hand to participate in ceremonies marking the independence of Trinidad and Tobago, the most southerly nation in the Caribbean, just seven miles off the coast of Venezuela.



➤ LONGCAST

2023	
11 Aug	Open Day – Central Office
09 Sep	National Council meeting, London
10 Sep	Naval Associations / RNA Biennial Parade - Whitehall
16 Sep	Area 4 Quarterly Meeting – Frome Branch
29 Sep	Open Day – Central Office
14 Oct	World Uckers Championships (Royal Maritime Club, Portsmouth)
21 Oct	Trafalgar Day
28 Oct	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting – Harwich
11 Nov	Armistice Day
12 Nov	Remembrance Sunday
18 Nov	Area 3 Quarterly Meeting (Committee 16 Nov)
08 Dec	National Council meeting (via Zoom)
25-31 Dec	RNA Central Office closed
2024	
01 Jan	RNA Central Office closed
20 Jan	Area 4 AGM – Dorchester Branch to host
May (DTBD)	National Standard Bearers Competition
Jun 14-16	RNA National Conference, Cardiff

Please check the RN Shipmates.co.uk website for a list of further reunions: www.rnshipmates.co.uk



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Sea Urchin's Gin Navy Strength Gin Arctic Convoy Vodka	10% to RNA from the sale of each bottle Don't forget to tick the box for RNA. P&P is free for orders over £40, otherwise it is £4.50.
China Fleet Country Club	Click on the link for lots of different offers for Serving and ex-Serving Royal Navy and Royal Marines

Watch this space for RNA offers on event tickets and lots more to come!