



**ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION**



The Semaphore Circular

No 698

The Beating Heart of the RNA

April 2020

Bell kindly provided by Portsmouth NB Historic Trust,
painstakingly restored by Shipmate Geoff Williams,
and blessed in Cannongate Kirk to celebrate the 25th anniversary
of the reformation of the Edinburgh Branch of the RNA



Shipmates Please Stay Safe

If you need assistance call the RNA Helpline on 07542 680082

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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Find Semaphore Circular On-line

<http://bit.ly/RNADownloads>

or

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

Snail Trail Mail - Postal Address

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Semaphore Tower,
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From the General Secretary

Dear Shipmates,

Well what a month! I finished last month's GS's intro with a rather glib *Catch it, Bin it, Kill it*, but who knew a month later we'd be on a war footing?

Just be careful because people are going crazy from being in lock down! Actually, I've just been talking about this with the microwave and toaster while drinking coffee and all of us agreed that things are getting bad. I didn't mention anything to the washing machine as she puts a different spin on everything. Certainly not to the fridge as he is acting cold and distant. In the end the iron calmed me down as she said everything will be fine, no situation is too pressing. The Hoover only gave matelot's sympathy... told me to suck it up, but the fan was more optimistic and hoped it would all soon blow over! The toilet looked a bit flushed when I asked its opinion and didn't say anything but the door knob told me to get a grip. 😊 The front door said I was unhinged and so the curtains told me toyes, you guessed it 😊pull myself together.

You can blame the National President for that one....thank you Admiral John.

Seriously shipmates, it's really not a joke and I know of at least two shipmates already who have tested +ve and are ill in hospital – best wishes to you both. So here we are in lockdown and working from home with all the family. At least we're trained for it, being cooped up in a box with loads of people! But it has been a whirlwind month at Central Office where we have adapted the focus of our output away from the organisation and delivery of national events to Welfare Support.

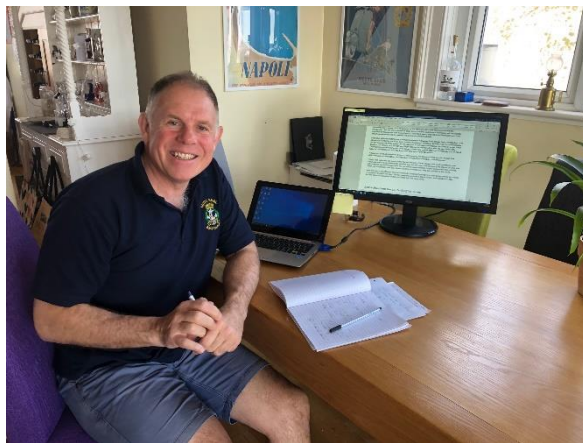
We've established a **Helpline (07542 680082)** aimed primarily at the HQ Roll members who don't have a Branch support system to fall back on and we have now extended that across the Conference of Naval Associations which the RNA administers. The good news is that local communities, families, etc have, by and large, been looking after their own so the helpline has not yet been inundated. However, where we have had calls, we have been able to link up shipmates for support.

For example, in Haslemere, we discovered a tech savvy 93-year-old shipmate who was having to break Government guidelines to go out to shop for him and his wife because he couldn't book a slot for his Tesco delivery as they were all full. A swift shift at the database revealed another couple of HQ Roll shipmates living close by and, after a phone call from Chrissie, a support mechanism was put in place and the situation resolved. Thank you Shipmate Caroline Kirkland – BZ to you Ma'am.

In addition, Nigel has been proactively phoning all the HQ Roll members, initially to improve the quality of the data in the database, but now as an outreach to check that all are well and that they are being appropriately supported. The retired First Sea Lord, Sir Jock Slater was one such member who was delighted to receive Nigel's call – he's doing well. You look after yourself Sir. It's clearly having the desired effect as Nigel had another email back from a Shipmate who wrote,

"I had a phone call from you this afternoon, you in the office of the R.N.A will not know in a million years just how so much that phone call meant to me. I am still reeling from it, it has once again shown to me, but must add also to my wife, what the R.N.A is about..... it signifies what the meaning means, that once a Jack always a Jack."

I must say, this is a real test for our Association and I have no doubt that we will rise to it, after all Camaraderie is our raison d'être and, with feedback like that, it is very rewarding to know that we are adding value during these difficult and strange times.



Bill captured working from home

Nigel has asked me to commend the partners and younger families of elderly shipmates who are clearly doing a great job of looking after some of our older members which he has spoken with – please explain to them the meaning of BZ! Please note too that we have slightly amended the criteria for the use of the 1000 Good Deeds a Day Fund so if you are out of pocket on a mercy mission for an oppo please apply for a grant. A simple email to me will do.

I know that I am preaching to a very stoic element of society – “We’ve weathered The Bay in a Force 10; we’ll get through this” sort of attitude - but, please, please, please, use the **Helpline** if you need it (**07542 680082**) or if you know of an isolated shipmate or widowed partner who could do with some help. That’s what it’s there for. We just hope the requests might not be as challenging as S/m David Walters plea which started “Stranded in Bogota!”

We’ve also taken steps to alter course with the Shipmates and Oppos programme for those transitioning from Service to civvy life. We’ve turned it around and called them to arms to join the RNA and buddy up with an older shipmate. So from a SUPPORTED position, I have now challenged them to step into a SUPPORTING role.

We already knew that our central database was somewhat limited however during this crisis we have discovered that is simply not fit for purpose as it is extremely difficult to communicate with the membership. We are taking immediate steps to improve this, and Branch Secretaries will be asked to contribute to this process over the next period. And thank you to those Branch Secretaries who have already answered the call for updated lists of branch members details.

Shipmates will know that this year’s Annual Conference in Liverpool has already been cancelled as have all national events this side of 30 June. Indeed, the planned event on HMS BELFAST to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of the end of the rum ration on 31 July sadly also looks in jeopardy or, as we say in Scotland, it’s hanging on a shoogly peg! Nigel tells me the one thing that won’t be cancelled is the Cenotaph Remembrance Parade. We’ll simply have to form up line astern at 2m intervals, (or, for naval types, at one fathom intervals) but it may take until Tuesday to complete!!!

A thank you too to Michelle in the Finance Office juggling our pennies during a period of cash flow difficulties and supporting Branches and Clubs through this challenging economic period.

Finally, I am extremely sad to announce that we are losing Sarah Clewes who is off to pastures new. Sarah has been a tireless servant to the RNA over the last years and her legacy will always be what she did for digitally isolated veterans with her marvellous award-winning Project Semaphore iPad scheme. Sarah, we are going to miss you, please don’t be a stranger and very best wishes for the future.

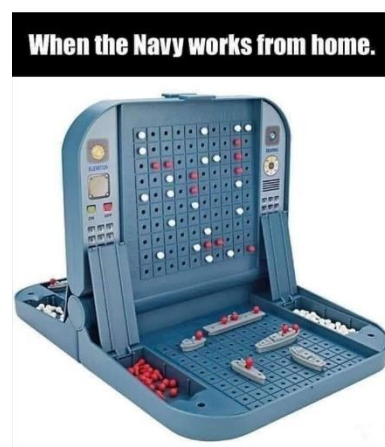
Well done too to the RN ships here in Portsmouth; I enjoyed hearing you giving several loud blasts in support of the NHS heroes last night. Please everyone, continue to follow Public Health guidelines, whichever country you’re in, stay indoors where at all possible and do your bit to fight this nasty virus.

Best wishes from the

Central Office Team,

Stay safe!

Bill

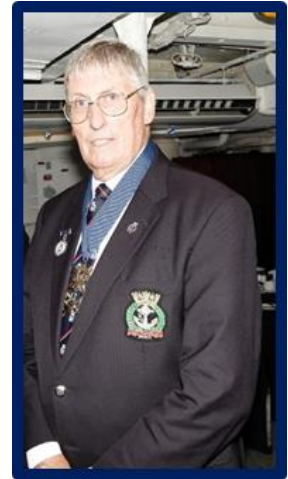


Chairman's chat

With grateful thanks this edition of the Semaphore Circular is a first as it comes from S/M Andy Christie's Man Cave.

Shipmates, we find ourselves in a challenging time fighting a war against an invisible enemy, not knowing when it will end, and what the outcome will be. Let us hope it will be a successful one for us all. That said it is of great importance to keep safe and follow the advice we are being given by the Government. Every day we are faced with the sad news in the media regarding the devastation to life that COVID-19 is wreaking.

In the middle of March with the pandemic spreading, the National President and myself, advised by Bill Oliphant, took the decision just ahead of the Government's Lockdown to recommend to all Branches to cease all branch meetings and social gatherings. At that time some members expressed the view that we had over reacted – did we? My thanks go to our General Secretary who although on leave, drafted the letter to the membership and circulated it without delay. Although Area, Branch meetings and socials have come to an emergency stop, it is imperative that the spirit of the RNA is maintained.



The unprecedented situation the association is now faced with has thrown up all kinds of challenges for the National Council and indeed for Central Office Staff who, although working from home, are working over and above their normal hours rising to the challenge for which I thank them.

Without doubt we thank the staff of the NHS, Carers, Support Workers and the 700,000 Army of volunteers along with members of our Armed Forces working to defeat COVID-19 and you the membership for the amazing support you are giving to those of our members in need of assistance. From a personal viewpoint, my own Granddaughter aged 22 and in her last 3 months of graduating as a Paramedic Science Degree Student, has, along with her fellow students, been put on the frontline as the No 2 crew member on Blue Light Duty. Having attended COVID-19 callouts her only personal protection equipment has been gloves and a mask!

A BZ to those Branches & Shipmates for the various humorous ideas surfacing on Facebook to keep the comradeship alive and bring a smile to our faces with the banter.

The central office move in February, forced upon us earlier than expected, went well thanks to cooperation of the CO Team who had to endure a lack of toilet facilities and put on a brave face to walk 200 yds/mtrs to the Heads in No 7 Boathouse. On the bright side, I understand the General Secretary's bladder control has improved!! Thank you, Team, well done.

The past two months have been busy dealing with a range of queries from Branches with answers to some questions easily found in the Association's Rules and Branch Bye-Laws, a suggested good read during Lockdown. My thanks for the hospitality of Areas 7, 12 (Ireland) &

the Scottish Area for inviting to and hosting me at their AGM's. It is a continuing experience to see how well organised meetings are. I just knew I should have worn my RED Rugby strip to the Scottish Area AGM on the Day Wales were due to host Scotland in Cardiff, but being a hospitable nation, we spared them the embarrassment and postponed the match! Like all major events, final outcomes have been put on hold.

Early in February I attended the second Breakfast club in my home town of St. Neots which was well attended. Having regards to my comment last month '*Of concern is that a few resent or disallow 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 was pleased to see that my own Town's event was well supported by families. To 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. Dits are always welcome by Andy Christie at andy@royalnavalassoc.com at this time sitting in his Man Cave in readiness to hit his keyboard and share them. Remember, although you are serving, we served, and all our families are part of one BIG Naval Family. Thank you for being part of our Defence Forces protecting our great nation.

To all Shipmates and their families here in the UK and not forgetting our Worldwide Branches, keep safe and adhere to all the advice being given by your Governments. Let us set our sights on all of us coming out of this virus war together.

Yours aye,
Keith Ridley

nationalchairman@royalnavalassoc.com

PS. Please see the below email received by Nigel in Central Office – well played Di – BZ!

From: Di Smith

Dear Nigel,

Thanks for your kind call - a really nice RNA touch.

My wife passed away not so long ago - and have had minor cancer issues but it seems OK now. My dad was a POW with the Japs, at Dunkirk and was in China in the 30s when the Japs lay siege to Shanghai - he told me always never give up never give in and always believe - this plus 22.5 years in RN gives me great confidence. He tried to join the RN but could not spell Constantinople, so he went around the corner and joined the Army. He said it's all written down in a book - some book.

Anyway thanks to u and all the RNA staff for thinking of me and others - pretty special to say the least. I am fine and managing well.

Sincerely, take care - and ONCE NAVY ALWAYS NAVY - a brilliant motto which I cherish.

Thanks
Kindest regards

THOMAS SMITH

Ex CPOWTR D087384C UP AND AT EM CHATHAM.

You can leave the RN but the RN never leaves you that's for sure.

1. ★ Project Semaphore iPads comes to an end

Please see the article below from Sarah Clewes the Project Semaphore Project Manager concerning the rundown of Project Semaphore.

Dear Shipmates,

I have shared the announcement below on the Project Semaphore Facebook page with further posts all about avenues for support ie links to Apple free training and online courses. All applicants have a Sponsor, that is a fellow Shipmate or Project Semaphore Volunteer who helped to set up the iPad and live locally to offer ongoing help.



Having issued over 1,000 iPads, delivered Project Semaphore for an extended period (beyond 2 years) worked in collaboration with over 60 Charities and organisations, enjoyed the support of our amazing band of Volunteers, attracted further funding from the Royal British Legion and RNRMC, Project Semaphore has now come to an end. Most importantly we have addressed issues around social isolation and loneliness and this has prompted us to review RNA Welfare support.

We are therefore unable to issue any more iPads, but will of course continue to offer guidance; please join our Facebook group where we share top tips with the Project community of nearly 200: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/307288932964500/> Bringing like-minded people together, the RNA Branches should encourage Shipmates to learn from each other either in branch, alongside meetings or as an opportunity to form new friendships and meet socially. Thank you so much to all involved in delivering this award-winning Project!

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/307288932964500/>
<https://vimeo.com/286178772>
<https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/campaigns/>

2. ★ Launch of New RNA Fund – ‘1000 good deeds a day’ Fund

The RNA takes pride in maintaining naval ethos, having fun with like-minded people whilst supporting the serving navy and each other when needed; in short, we thrive on delivering ‘1,000 good deeds a day’ (in numerous guises).

In December 2019, the National Council approved a new fund, to offer small grants on request to enhance quality of life, remove barriers to enable Shipmates to look after each other, for one off or extraordinary events. Examples are limitless and may include:



A Covid-19 related mercy mission.

Transport costs/admission fees to take an otherwise isolated shipmate out for the day.

Repair costs as a result of a break-in or deliberate damage to property.

Contributing to additional or unexpected costs relating to providing new and relevant services or historic events for Veterans.

Application process

Requests to Central Office should be made by email admin@royalnavalassoc.com or letter for consideration by the General Secretary, one of the Central Office team as well as the National Welfare Adviser (or Deputy National Welfare Adviser).

Applications submitted by 10th of each month, will be considered, processed and paid the following month.

Applications are limited to £100 each; this is a new Fund and separate from the Branch and Club Support Fund.

Whilst applications are not limited, the General Secretary has the final decision regarding numerous requests from the same Branches and/or individuals.

Conditions of payment

We will want to know how the money was spent and the impact made! Therefore, a short story with photographs where possible (having sought permission from all those in photographs) should be sent to Central Office for inclusion in the Semaphore Circular and or the RNA website and social media channels. Your stories may inspire others to apply!

This new initiative will be reviewed in December 2020 to ensure it is sustainable and that as intended, it supports what the RNA stands for, that is to enhance Members' quality of life as well as to address need, distress or hardship.

We look forward to hearing from you!

W Oliphant
General Secretary
RNA Central Office

3. ★ WW2 – Castries, St Lucia - U Boat Attack Mar 1942

Shipmate (and Ops Manager) Andy Christie whilst 'self-isolating' in St Lucia recently discovered, that German U Boats had been operating in the Caribbean during WW2.

One such attack which was quite daring, it took place at 0430 on 09 Mar 1942 when U 161 slipped into the harbour of the islands capital Castries. It managed to torpedo and sink two Allied ships: RMA Lady Nelson (Ocean Liner 7,988 tons) and SS Umtata (Steam freighter 8,141tons).

The Germans being allied to the Vichy regime in France, based U Boats in Martinique, a French colony, as a base from which to attack British and other allied ships in the Caribbean.

Lady Nelson and Umtata were both carrying passengers and cargo and the attack which failed to sink them severely damaged both vessels and sadly resulted in the tragic death of three crew members,



two gunners and 15 passengers in Lady Nelson, along with seven dock workers; and four crew, four gunners and 33 passengers were killed in Umtata.

Both ships were eventually repaired with Lady Nelson being turned into a Canadian Hospital Ship capable of carrying 518 patients, she was commissioned in April 1943. Sadly Umtata being taken to Port Everglades in Florida under tow was attacked and sunk by U571 just off Key West incredibly none of the Ships Company lost their lives.

(Our thanks go to Earl Bousquet who provided detailed information in an article contained in www.telesurenglish.net/opinion)

4. ★ Joke Time - The Twist!

It was a hot Saturday evening in the summer of 1961 and Fred had a date with Peggy Sue. He arrived at her house and rang the bell. 'Oh, come on in!' Peggy Sue's mother said as she welcomed Fred in 'have a seat in the living room. Would you like something to drink? Lemonade? Iced tea?' 'Iced tea, please,' Fred said.

Mum brought in the iced tea. 'So, what are you and Peggy planning to do tonight?' she asked. 'Oh, probably catch a movie, and then maybe grab a bite to eat at the malt shop, maybe take a walk on the beach...' 'Peggy likes to screw, you know,' Mum informed him. 'Really?' Fred replied, his eyebrows rising. 'Oh yes,' the mother continued, 'When she goes out with her friends, that's all they do! Screw, again and again!!' 'Is that so?' asked Fred, incredulous. 'Yes,' said the mother. 'As a matter of fact, she'd screw all night if we let her!' 'Well, thanks for the tip!' Fred said as he began thinking about alternate plans for the evening.

A moment later, Peggy Sue came down the stairs looking pretty as a picture, wearing a pink blouse and a hooped skirt and with her hair tied back in a bouncy Ponytail. She greeted Fred. 'Have fun, kids!' the mother said as they left. Two hours later, a completely dishevelled Peggy Sue burst into the house and slammed the front door behind her.....

"The Twist, Mum!" she angrily yelled to her mother in the kitchen. "The bloody dance is called the Twist!!!"

5. ★ Sailors Advice and Information Line (Sail) - Operation during the Coronavirus

Sail Manager Miles Cowley reports that all the SAIL team continues to operate, despite the current restrictions as the staff are now working from home. The SAIL phones are all VOIP so can be plugged in anywhere. Phone calls and emails to SAIL should be answered exactly as before, so for most users of our service there should be no noticeable change.



Incoming and outgoing letters will be handled a little slower than usual as we have 2 admin staff who are self-isolating. These will be dealt with twice weekly for the moment. Overall, the service is very busy as you'd expect with Coronavirus affecting so many.

6. ★ VC Series - Petty Officer George Samson VC

George McKenzie Samson VC (7 January 1889 – 28 February 1923) was a Scottish recipient of the Victoria Cross, the highest and most prestigious award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces, for his actions during the Gallipoli Campaign of the First World War. Samson was from Carnoustie in Angus, 26 years old, and a seaman in the Royal Naval Reserve when he was awarded the VC.



On 25 April 1915 during the landing at V Beach on Cape Helles, Seaman Samson, along with three other men (George Leslie Drewry, Wilfred St. Aubyn Malleon, and William Charles Williams) was assisting Commander Edward Unwin of their ship HMS *River Clyde*, securing the lighters to make a 'bridge' so the soldiers onboard could get ashore.

Samson was most prominent through 25-26 April working under continuous heavy fire. He effected many daring rescues of the wounded, stowed them carefully away in the hopper, and treated them himself until medical assistance was forthcoming. In the intervals he devoted his time to attending to snipers and was very involved in the close fighting on 'V' beach on the night of 25 April. He was eventually shot by a Maxim machine-gun and wounded in nineteen places."

He later achieved the rank of petty officer and rejoined the Merchant Navy after the war, ultimately dying of pneumonia. He is buried in the new St. George's Military Cemetery off Secretary Lane in St. George's, Bermuda. His VC is in the Lord Ashcroft Gallery in the Imperial War Museum in London.

He was a Scottish Freemason, having been Initiated in Lodge Charleston of Aboyne, No.281, (Aboyne, Aberdeenshire) on 17 March, Passed on 2 July and Raised on 19 July 1916. His membership registration reads: 'George McKenzie Samson, V.C., Petty Officer, aged 27.

(Picture and words courtesy of BBC and Wikipedia)

7. ★ RNA Veterans Photo Competition Entry Update

Shipmates should be aware that currently the RN Photograph Competition has been postponed till September with the possibility of its cancellation this year. This means that the closing date for the RNA Entries can now be moved right to Friday **31 July 2020**. Please continue to use the application form as previously sent out.

8. ★ Amusing Photos Competition

The Semaphore Circular editorial team would really appreciate if you could forward any photo 'Funnies' which you may have taken during the current crisis, as I sure you will agree that some light relief is probably what is required during these very serious and frightening time.

We though we would start a competition with the winning photo starring on the front cover of the next edition. So budding David Bailey's starting clicking those phones and send them into andy@royalnavalassoc.com.

9. ★ Joke time - Matelot v Barber

A Pompey matelot walks into the barber shop in Queen St and the barber whispers to his customer, "Lofty here must be the daftest sailor in the world. Watch while I prove it to you." The barber puts a fiver in one hand and 2 x £1 coins in the other. He calls the sailor over and asks him, "Which do you want son?"

The matelot takes the 2 x £1 coins and leaves.

"What did tell you?" said the barber. "That sailor never learns!"

A little later, when the customer leaves, he sees the matelot coming out of the local Wetherspoons after downing a swift half. "Excuse me, may I ask you a question? Why did you take the £1 coins instead of the fiver?"

The matelot wiped the froth of his lips and replied, "Because the day I take the fiver, the game is over!"

10.★ A Poem – Shipmate Pete Seaborn (HQ Roll)

Shipmate and WW2 Veteran Pete Seaborn forwarded this the rather apt poem. He was a poet and he didn't know it! "Have just written a poem (I think!)"

In 1943 an Angel came to me,
You must join up to keep your country free.
However, God will let you live you stay alive,
Because only bad boys will survive!

You will see both shot and shell,
Your shipmates will endure as well.
Throughout your traumas, you will find,
Your Captain to you, will be so kind!

Many shipmates will perish in the sea,
But you will live, till you're ninety three.
Angels will abound for them aplenty,
While you will live to twenty twenty!

Then of course you'll be past your prime,
As you didn't get to paradise in time.
All your young mates will look at you with glee,
What can YOU do now..at ninety three!

11. ★ Hospital and Medical Care Association

The Royal Naval Association has agreed with HMCA to offer discounted rates for medical plans, dental plan, hospital cash plans, personal accident plan, travel plan, income protection and vehicle breakdown products.

Are you paying too much for your present private medical plan? Why not



take a look at the HMCA plans and compare the benefits and subscriptions offered? You may transfer to HMCA at any age and without a medical examination; there will be no break in protection and there is a 14 day money-back guarantee.

HMCA only offer medical plans to membership groups and can offer up to a 40% discount off the underwriter's standard rates. This is a comprehensive plan which provides generous cash benefits for surgery and other charges

Who are HMCA? - HMCA has specialised in providing benefits and services to associations and professional groups since the 1970s. HMCA is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority.

For further information and quotations contact HMCA by telephone on 01423 799949 or visit the exclusive HMCA Royal Naval Association website here: <https://www.hmca.co.uk/rna>.

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13. ★ Launch of Submariners Memorial Appeal

National President, Vice Admiral John McAnally visited the UK's Submarine builder, BAE Systems in Barrow for the launch of the Submariners Memorial Appeal recently and has forwarded an article concerning his visit.

This account might take your minds off self-isolation. Shortly before our worlds changed, on 28th February courtesy of BAE Systems a small piston engined aircraft took the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Nick Hine, Rear Admiral Rob Stevens and your National President through low cloud and driving rain from Farnborough to Walney Island Airport near Barrow in Furness. We went to act as VIPs at the launch of the Submariner Memorial Appeal. Let me first give you my impressions of one of the world's most advanced shipyards whose output has been summarised as more complex than the Space Shuttle.

It has not always been plain sailing for the UK's only remaining submarine building yard. In 2009 the House of Commons Defence Select Committee found that the ASTUTE class building programme was nearly 5 years late and 53% or £1.35B over budget. It is worth examining how this came about before joining the chorus ever ready to condemn MoD procurement and UK Defence Industry.

The programme began in the 1980s. The staff requirement was actually being written in an office a few doors from the one I then worked in. The boat was designed to replace the SWIFTSURE and TRAFALGAR classes and was then known as SSN-20. It was to be a revolutionary design able to counter the best the Soviet Union might produce.

But by 1990 the Berlin Wall came down and the Cold War ended. Cost control became a key objective and the concept was scaled back. SSN-20 was renamed the Batch 2 Trafalgar Class or B2TC. Following two years of studies a draft invitation to tender was announced and a formal competition began between two consortia led respectively by GEC Marconi and VSEL who were then the owners of Barrow which was already the only shipyard in UK able to build nuclear submarines.

Their design having been given preference in 1995 GEC Marconi mounted a successful takeover of VSEL and with it the Barrow Shipyard. A new price was negotiated at £2.4B for the first three submarines plus in-service support with any cost overruns to be assumed by the contractor. However, as the ASTUTE design developed it became apparent that a much larger boat would be required to accommodate the desired reactor and that significantly improved acoustic quieting was needed. MoD and GEC Marconi reached an understanding that this would be an entirely new class and far more complex than earlier envisioned.

Then in November 1999 British Aerospace bought GEC Marconi and created BAE Systems. No less than 20 years had passed since Barrow had designed the VANGUARD SSBNs and some 8 years since they had completed the last TRAFALGAR SSN, a class designed in the 1970s. Not surprisingly key skills had been lost as the work force fell from 13,000 to 3,000. By 2002 both BAE and MoD recognised they had underestimated the technical challenges and costs leading to BAE Systems issuing a profit warning in December of that year. A year later a renegotiated contract was signed with both parties sharing the increased costs. General Dynamics, the US Navy submarine builder provided advice and expertise including the Astute Project Director.



General Dynamics also helped resolve software issues associated with novel Computer Aided Design and introduced vertical outfitting. Much rework was needed on ASTUTE now that detailed designs were complete. She was launched in June 2007. Orders for the final 4 boats (AUDACIOUS, ANSON, AGAMEMNON and AGINCOURT) were placed over the next 12 years with the last being ordered in 2017.

So to the tour that preceded the Appeal's formal launch. My first impression was of the tidiest shipyard I've ever seen. The second was of a confident work force proud of what they were achieving. No fewer than 6 nuclear submarines are under various stages of construction. All under cover in 3 vast halls. This contributes greatly to build quality. We were informed (I think it was mostly a joke) that you can no longer follow a UK SSN by a trail of dislodged anechoic tiles. It also provides much greater security including from satellite photography.

In the first hall we went up to a gallery more than a 100 feet above ground. Thankfully there was a lift. Does anyone have any problem with heights we were asked? No one responded but I bet I wasn't the only one to be grateful for a sturdy chest high rail. We looked down on some 12 enormous rings. These are the first stages of vertical construction of HMS DREADNOUGHT the first of the VANGUARD SSBN successors. She is already about 25% complete. And about 10% of her successor HMS VALIANT is in the adjacent hall. It is surprising that some elements of the commentariat are still trying to fight the battle over whether we should replace the Deterrent. It is already happening and going well.

Next we moved to the Devonshire Dock Hall where the final stages of construction take place. Built between 1982-86 it was first used for the VANGUARDs. It now has the last three ASTUTES all at successive stages of construction with 24/7 working in three shifts. Outside the hall having been transferred by the 24,000 ton capacity shiplift was HMS AUDACIOUS who was undergoing a "fast cruise" or dummy day at sea prior to sailing for Faslane.

All in all the considerable early difficulties seem to have been triumphantly overcome. The ASTUTES are already proving themselves to be highly effective submarines. We should be proud of this real Northern Powerhouse where 14,000 people work. Compare that with Barrow's

67,000 population and its second largest employer which is the NHS with (on 28 February) 1400. Are there any lessons we could draw from this story? I think there are though few of them are new. What are the ingredients of success? A firm design and a steady requirement. Changes in either invariably lead to big delays and increased costs. A steady ordering pattern allows shipyards to invest in equipment, in skilling their workforce and sees costs reduce with later hulls. This is already forecast to happen with the last 3 ASTUTES. Finally the long gap between VANGUARDS and ASTUTES should not be repeated. It is encouraging therefore to know that work begun on designing the next class of SSN which will follow the DREADNOUGHTs. Having been shown round the DDH we then took our seats before HMS ANSON (Boat 5) for the formal Appeal launch. The audience included members of ANSON's crew, submariner veterans, representatives of the builders and a large class of of surprisingly well behaved primary school children.



Thus the whole submarine community, builders and operators past, present and future were represented. A trio of complementary speeches were made by the Barrow Managing Director, by Vice Admiral Peter Wilkinson, Chairman of the Appeal and by the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Nick Hine.

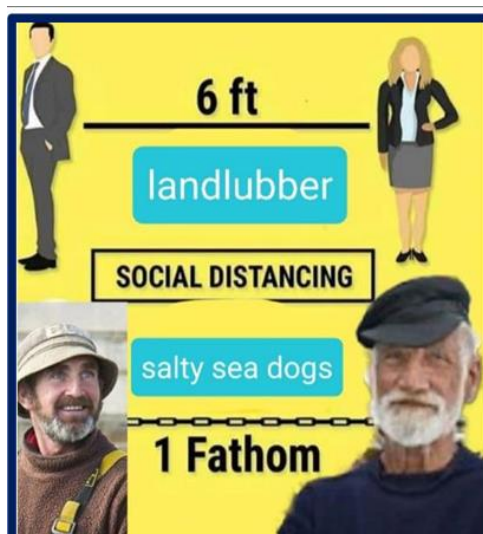
There are two objectives. Firstly, a competition to design a fitting memorial to commemorate Submariners past and present and crucially their families.

Perhaps as eye catching as the RN Association's own Naval Service Memorial. Secondly It is hoped to raise some £300,000 to construct the memorial ready for unveiling next year at the National Memorial Arboretum by His Royal Highness Prince William in his capacity of Commodore of the Submarine Service.



I suggest that we in The Royal Naval Association should give it all our support by doing what we can to publicise the endeavour and for those of you with the bent submitting designs.

12. ★ Joke Time – RNA Style Social Distancing



RNA Longcast

2020	
Until 30 Jun	All National RNA Events Cancelled
27 Jun	Armed Forces Day – Scarborough (Cancelled)
06 Jul	Area 2 Committee Mtg - Bromley
24 Jul	Central Office – Open Day
31 Jul	Black Tot Day – 50 th Anniversary
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 Torrevieja Branch](#)

[RNA St Helens Branch](#)

[RNA Chard Branch](#)

[RNA St Neots Branch](#)

[Area 6](#)

[RNA Londonderry Branch](#)

[RNA Peterborough and District](#)

[RNA Christchurch Branch](#)

RNA Torrevieja Branch



The shipmates of the Torrevieja Branch converged at San Miguel del Salinas in the restaurant Meson El Prado where they were 'piped aboard' (a Royal Navy term for 'officially welcoming someone on board' and 'formally saluting them if they are a military personnel' by means of blowing a specific tune with a 'boatswain's [bos'n] whistle') their family and friends to join them for a stupendous Menu del Dia on the 20th February 2020.

Mustered within the members and guest visitors were ex-military personnel from other UK service, Dave & Liz visiting from the UK RNA Purley branch (Purley squire famous place nudge, nudge, wink, wink - say no more!) and of course there was the essential contingent from the Torrevieja branch of the Royal Marines Association (what would we do without them – a very integral and historical part of the Royal Navy).

It goes without saying; that when you put

40 likeminded people together, there is going to be a great deal of chatter with the requisite 'swinging of the lamp' (Royal Naval slang or "jack speak" – for telling stories of time on-board ship or adventures during your time in the service) and there is always a 'black cat' story (jack speak for – a more exhilarating escapade than yours).

The staff of the restaurant Meson El Prado were exceptional with their friendly service and amazingly patient whilst trying to serve a 'mess' of people who were preoccupied in talking and the lull in 'chatter' once served was a signal of the superb quality of 'scrان' (jack speak for -food/meal).

Following the essential tombola/raffle it was time for them all to drift apart and merrily sail home with the two important R.N. greetings of farewell in mind



Sadly, Shipmate Paul Edwards stood down from the post of Chairman of the Royal Naval Association Torrevieja Branch at their AGM on 4th March 2020. The members saluted Paul for steering the ship through the branches voyage over the last 5 years.

The branch committee including the Vice Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer, Social Secretary and Welfare Coordinator give a big thanks to Paul as Chairman for aiding the branch in increasing the membership and social events over the last 5 years.

A quote from Paul about his time as Chairman is:

"I have enjoyed being Chairman and would have continued except for the fact that during the past year my attendance to meetings and social events has been limited due to other commitments and illness.

I felt that I was not giving the Association my full attention and it was unfair to continue when I knew the situation was not about to improve overnight.

Besides, after about 5 years in the Chair , it is a good time for another member to take up the mantle and I feel sure that the new Chairman will bring the required enthusiasm to enable the Association to continue to go from strength to strength.

The most important thing I adhered to when I was in the Chair was to listen carefully to what everyone had to say, then from this information come to a decision myself. Communication is the key with our members and after removing emotions a correct decision can be made.

Needless to say, that without the support of a good Committee (thanks to Danny – the Vice Chairman) nothing would have been achieved.

I am now looking forward to attending meetings and social events including the Menu del Dia's as a simple "Jolly Jack" and will remain involved with the Branch".

All the branch shipmates bid him farewell as Captain of the ship and welcome him as a valued crew member of the branch.

Our thanks go to Branch PRO Shipmate Tony Jenkins for keeping us up to date with matters 'Eldorado'

RNA St Helens Branch



St Helens Branch used their initiative, despite the fiasco with tickets for the RNA, and managed get a tour of HMS Prince of Wales during her visit to Liverpool at the end of February. Luckily a Branch Shipmate managed to contact an 'oppo' who was a member of the Ships Company. Petty Officer Oswald met the fortunate six Shipmates and very kindly provided an excellent look around the carrier.

A couple of the gang found it 'hard going' due to the number of ladders involved, the eldest being 90 years old S/M Arthur Gillon. Arthur served aboard the 'old' HMS Illustrious so was keen to look around a modern carrier. Those

attending were most impressed by the size of the ship and the size of its passageways and wide ladders, one remarked "you can't slide down them like you could on the old ships"

RNA Chard Branch

Eight members of Chard Branch of the association enjoyed their weekend away at the Area 4 reunion 2020.

The weather was reasonable and time on Saturday was spent visiting Barnstable and Bideford.

The concert after the short church service on the Sunday saw their shipmate Malcolm Day come away with the rose bowl for

outstanding solo performance after he gave a performance of 3 songs by well-known crooners.



Guest speaker on the occasion was Rear Admiral Will Warrender CBE, Flag Officer Sea Training, who gave a speech covering his involvement as FOST and informing those present of the future role of the service to come.

Shipmate Dick Moon said "For those having never been to a reunion may I say that you would enjoy the weekend amongst so many like-minded people, so do think about partaking next March which is always the first full weekend in March".



Thanks to S/m Dick Moon for providing the articles and photo's. The pictures show S/M Malcolm during his award winning performance and on the staircase from top to bottom – Paula and Dick Moon, Sue Fisher and Mike Kirkland, Daisy and Gary Pennells, Helen and Malcolm Day.

RNA St Neots Branch

The St Neots branch collect for local good causes annually at Morrisons in Cambourne, a township close to St Neots, and which is also a venue that adds significantly to their funds for worthy organisations.



The people of Cambourne have always responded generously, and, as a way of giving back to the community, the branch donated a cheque for £250 toward the 105 (Cambourne) Air Cadet Squadron. (There being no Sea Cadets)

Seen here holding the cheque are Flight Lieutenant Adam Kelly, Officer Commanding, and S/M Ian Cameron, a resident of Cambourne, who sponsored the donation.

The funds will go toward camping equipment, as this is one of the many activities the Squadron offers.

Youngsters from the age of 12 onwards, boys and girls, are welcome to apply to join, or ask for information about

the Cambourne Air Cadet Squadron at e mail- 105@aircadets.com

Cambourne has an exceptionally large number of children of school age and under, indeed at one time it had the highest birth rate in the UK! Any group, therefore, that offers constructive and developmental activities for youngsters such as the Air Cadets is considered by the branch to be worthy of support, subject to members agreement.

Area 6

The Area 6 AGM was held at the Jackman's Community Centre, Letchworth on 21/22 February courtesy of the RNA First Garden City Branch.



Events kicked off with a Social on the Friday night which was held at the Letchworth Garden City Rugby Club. The evening was well attended by Area 6 members and guests who enjoyed the get together and buffet: as well as the bar!

The 6 Area AGM took place on Saturday followed by the Area meeting and as normal at these events covered many aspects of business including presentations for 'Shipmate of the Year' which was awarded to Shipmate Geoff Apperley and the 'Efficiency Cup' awarded for the Best hosting Branch of 2019/20, which was won by Letchworth Branch. You can see S/M penny Jarvis receiving the trophy on behalf of the branch in the photo below. of various Awards, as you can see in the pictures below. For information the Area 6 AGM will be held in Peterborough in 2021.



RNA Londonderry Branch

Please see below a note from Shipmate Robert Buchanan on behalf of the Londonderry Branch BoA and VE day 75 Committee.

Shipmates and friends.

In line with the letter of recommendations received from the Royal Naval Association Central Office, the Londonderry Branch regretfully announce the cancellation of the VE Day 75 & BoA 2020 Commemorations which were planned for 7th to 10th May 2020.

Our duty of care is to ensure the well-being of our Veterans and their families and we encourage everyone to take care of each other and keep in touch with your shipmates and friends by phone and social media.

Londonderry Branch apologise for any inconvenience caused by this. We also wish to thank everyone who has supported our events over the years, and we look forward to welcoming you back in the future.

Yours aye,

Robert

By GS – Sorry Robert, had no choice really. I'm still hopeful we might be able to do something for VJ-75. 😊

RNA Peterborough and District Branch

The branch held its AGM on 03 March 2020 which included the presentation of 'Shipmate of the Year Trophy'.

This was awarded to S/M Ken Tinkler (right in the picture) in recognition of his long-standing commitment to the branch and his valued input at both branch meetings and events. Always willing to support whoever and wherever he can, Ken is a stalwart member of not only the Branch but the RNA. Branch Social Secretary – S/M Trevor Chapman made the presentation to S/M Ken.



RNA Christchurch Branch

The Royal Naval Association Christchurch & District Branch have followed Government guidance and cancelled all meetings and events until further notice including the AGM and Fund-raising occasions.

Those invited to the Dedication of the New Standard at Christchurch Priory will be advised of a new date as soon as a Service is allowed. The RNA can still be contacted if help is needed by Shipmates or their families and any other 'Seagoers'. Recruiting of new members never stops and enquiries are always welcome while we are looking forward to the day when we can resume our monthly meetings and other events.

On a positive note, Members are encouraged to keep in contact with each other by telephone or email and our Welfare Officer will frequently be in touch with them all.

Branch Chairman S/m Rick Squibb is planning a regular newsletter to all members and the Branch is still planning to hold its Annual Trafalgar Dinner on October 21st 2020. Places may be booked for the Dinner and any further information can be had from

Christine Payne: Branch PRO. Tel. 01202 474819. christinepayne3@btinternet.com

By GS – Fingers crossed for Traf Night Rick!

CROSSED THE BAR – Celebrating a life well lived

[Peter Bailey](#)
[Derek Parkin](#)
[Bernard Leigh Nightingale](#)

Peter Bailey – Lee on the Solent and Stubbington Branch

It is with considerable sadness that the Branch has to report that Shipmate Peter Bailey crossed the Bar on 15 January 2020 after a number of weeks in and out of the Q.A. Hospital in Portsmouth and Gosport War Memorial Hospitals over the last few months.

Shipmate Peter first came to the attention of the Branch when his wife Mollie, now sadly widowed, phoned Secretary Kate in August 2017 to say she had seen our advertisement in the Lee Advertiser and as her husband Peter, an ex-CPO Chippy aged 88 had been reminiscing about his time in the RN, wondered if we had someone who could possibly pop round to their house to have a chat with him for an hour or so.



Peter had completed a 'Chippies' Apprenticeship in Portsmouth Dockyard joining the RN in 1944 as a Shipwright Apprentice. His first ship was HMS Sirius 1949/50 before being drafted to HMS Maidstone which was then the submarine depot ship in Portland. From there he went to the Firefighting School HMS Phoenix for 2 years before joining HMS Newcastle in 1955. HMS Dolphin, HMS Keppel, HMS Albion, HMS Ariel, HMS Falmouth and HMS Bellerophon followed before his discharge to pension in May 1969. In addition to Peter being a keen swimmer, he was also a keen footballer, becoming a referee.

On discharge Peter went to work at Bishops Waltham Technical School, teaching mainly Technical Drawing and running the Trades Department until he finally retired.

Peter's funeral took place at the Portchester Crematorium on Friday 31st January 2020 at 13:45 hours. Shipmates Alan and Peter Sitch attended with Shipmate Tony Fenn carrying the Branch Banner. Retired Naval Chaplain Reverend Colin Noyce RN, OCM, was kind enough to conduct the service at which 'Born Free' by Matt Monro, 'I vow to thee my Country' and 'Eternal Father with Sunset' by the band of Her Majesty's Royal Marines were played, all of which were Peter's favourites.

Peter will be much missed by his family and everyone at Lee on the Solent and Stubbington Branch.

Derek Parkin – City of Sheffield Branch

It is with the deepest regret that Sheffield Branch have to inform Shipmates that their President S/M Derek Parkin has Crossed the Bar on Saturday 14th March 2020.

Derek leaves a wife Jackie, son Craig, daughter Tracey, son-in-law Paul, daughter-in-law Beverley, grandsons Joseph (Joe) and Arun and granddaughter Ruby.

Derek was just 18 when he joined the Royal Navy in October 1950 serving on various shore bases and ships and he left in October 1957 where he had reached the rank of LME. Derek joined the Sheffield branch of the RNA in May 1982 and during that time he has served his branch as Social Secretary, Welfare Officer, Sea Cadet Liaison Officer, Standard Bearer, Chairman and finally as President. For all his hard work and dedication for our Branch, he was made a Life Member in 2016.

Derek was also a member of the Royal British Legion for whom he did exceptionally good work for the Poppy Appeal delivering and collecting poppies and collection tins in the Sheffield area. He was also a member of the Sheffield Joint Services Council and, for a period of time was Vice Chairman and a member of Sheffield 218 Branch of the Fellowship of the Services.

Nothing was too much trouble for Derek, and he was always willing to help people whenever and wherever he could.

Rest in Peace - Gone but not Forgotten- We will Remember you.

Bernard Nightingale – Uttoxeter and District Branch

Uttoxeter and District are sad to report the "crossing the bar" of their former President S/M Bernard Leith Nightingale. Bernard resigned his Membership and his position of President in July 2017 after a long and active service to the Branch. His medical condition deteriorated and after many hospital and doctor visits and a long and loving nursing by his wife Averil he "crossed the bar" on the 2nd February 2020. A private funeral was held at Stafford Crematorium and a Remembrance Service held at St. Cuthberts Church, Doveridge with RNA members and Standard attending.



S/M Bernard learned to fly while attending Hampton Grammar School (Greater London) and at 17 and a half was accepted by the Fleet Air Arm but failed the medical for operational flying due to colour blindness. He went on and was commissioned in the RNVR as Midshipman serving from 1943 to 1947. On demob he was serving as an Acting Lieutenant.

Bernard's Active service included HMS "Collingwood", HMS "Jervis" (on Atlantic convoys) HMS "Plym" on "Operation Overlord" HMS "Loch Ailort" on Combined Ops, HMS "Courier" (an "Algerine" class minesweeper). He also attended a Short Navigational Course at Royal Naval College, Greenwich, probably could have been a bit longer for as Navigational Officer on one ship he put the vessel about 200 miles from their destination.

After demob. Bernard worked for and represented various Companies in Sales and Directorship including; Picot Perfumes, English Grains, Granary Haulage, Bovril, Beecham plc and many more including Business Adviser and Consultant to the Polish Business Advisory based in Warsaw, Wroclaw and Krakow.

Bernard was an ardent sportsman and supporter being President of Burton and District Cricket Assoc. and President of Burton and District Umpires Assoc.

He will be Greatly missed by Family, Shipmates and Friends.

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

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- 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



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The 'Shortcast' Editors Note

Due to the current Coronavirus situation Shipmates should contact the individual Association to ensure that the reunion is still going ahead.

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.

By GS – It goes without saying that these events may no longer be possible, please check with the organisers.

	Please check go to link for RN Shipmates.co.uk for a comprehensive list of further reunions. www.rnshipmates.co.uk	
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 Cancelled
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

5/9 Oct 2020	<p>The HMS LOCH FADA ASSOCIATION F390 will hold their 23rd Annual Reunion & AGM @ the Royal Beach Hotel Southsea from 5th to 9th October 2020. This will be our 4th 4 Day Reunion after the great successes of our 1st Three.</p> <p>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).</p> <p>Sunday Mystery coach tour (towards Southampton).</p> <p>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</p>	Royal Beach Hotel Southsea
31 Oct 2020	<p>BRNC Entry September 1980 40th Anniversary reunion dinner, BRNC Dartmouth, Saturday 31 October 2020. Details available from Cdr N J 'Nobby' Hall neil.hall324@mod.gov.uk</p>	BRNC Dartmouth

Swinging the Lamp – April 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
1st	1853	First provision for lower-deck pensions, after twenty-two years' service.
2nd	1945	VC: Cpl Thomas Peck Hunter, 43 Cdo, RM. Battle of Comacchio, Italy. 43 Cdo was advancing northwards up the coast road north of Ravenna between Lake Comacchio and the sea, heading towards Porto Garibaldi. Hunter, in charge of a bren-gun section, charged across open ground, firing a bren from the hip, and cleared a German position, allowing his troop to advance. He was killed soon afterwards. His award was gazetted 12 June 1945 and his VC presented to his parents at Holyrood Palace, Edinburgh, 26 September 1945. The only RM VC of the Second World War.

3rd	1982	Rear-Admiral J.F. Woodward sailed from Gibraltar, flag in Glamorgan, with Antrim, Arrow, Brilliant, Coventry, Glasgow, Plymouth and Sheffield with Appleleaf and Tidespring.
4th	1581	Francis Drake knighted by Queen Elizabeth I on board Golden Hind at Deptford.
5th	1957	Centurion commissioned at Haslemere as Central Drafting authority.
6th	1776	Glasgow (20) fought off five American ships under Cdre Esek Hopkins (Alfred) 24 miles S.E. of Block Island.
7th	2011	3 Cdo Bde deployed to Afghanistan on Operation Herrick 14. Brig E.G.M. Davis took over command of Task Force Helmand from Brig James Chiswell, Commander 16 Air Assault Bde at Lashkar Gah on 9 April.
8th	1940	VC: Lt-Cdr Gerard Broadmead, Roope, (Glowworm). Posthumous. Glowworm sank after ramming the German cruiser Admiral Hipper off the coast of Norway. First naval VC won in Second World War but not first gazetted. Battle Honour: Norway 1940.
9th	1777	Horatio Nelson passed his examination for Lieutenant.
10th	1918	Light cruiser Dauntless launched at Palmers Yard on the Tyne. Served in the Baltic in 1919, in the Particular Service Squadron on the Empire cruise in 1923–4, in the Mediterranean and on the America and West Indies Station; wartime service on the China and East Indies Stations. Sold 1946. Battle Honour: Atlantic 1939.
11th	1997	White Ensign hauled down at Tamar, Stonecutters' Island, 100 years to the day after the troopship Tamar arrived in Hong Kong waters as Receiving Ship. Tamar was Britain's last naval base east of Suez.
12th	1943	Lt-Cdr Robert Hichens, DSO and bar, DSC and two bars, RNVR, peacetime Cornish solicitor, killed in action in MGB 112 off the Dutch coast; the most highly decorated RNVR officer of the Second World War
13th	1945	Task Force 57 including Indefatigable attacked the airfields at Matsuyama and Shinchiku, Formosa. Operation Iceberg Oolong. FAA Sqns: Avenger: 820; Seafire: 887; Firefly: 1770.
14th	1958	RN Supply School, which had moved from Ceres at Wetherby, opened at Pembroke, RN Barracks, Chatham.
15th	1797	Mutiny began at Spithead in Bridport's flagship, Queen Charlotte. Ended 17 May.
16th	2003	Turbulent returned to Devonport after ten months and having steamed 50,000 miles. Longest-ever deployment of a RN nuclear Submarine. Fired Tomahawk missiles against targets in Iraq. Operation Telic.
17th	1941	Portsmouth Dockyard bombed. 'We had a real blitz . . . a very big fellow . . . knocked poor old Admiralty House to pieces' recorded the C-in-C Portsmouth, Admiral Sir William James, who moved his office into Hardy's cabin in HMS Victory. Tactical School in the Old Naval Academy damaged.
18th	1905	Launch of A 13, first RN submarine with diesel engine.
19th	1956	Cdr (Special Branch) Lionel Kenneth Philip 'Buster' Crabb, OBE, GM, RNVR, clearance diver, disappeared at Portsmouth during the visit of Soviet leaders Krushchev and Bulganin in the Sverdlov-class cruiser Ordzhonikidze. Prime Minister Sir Anthony Eden told the House of Commons that it would 'not be in the public interest' to disclose the circumstances of Cdr Crabb's death.

20th	1949	Amethyst, frigate, fired on by Communist PLA batteries in Yangtze River east of Nanking. Opening of the Yangtze Incident
21st	1941	German air raid seriously damaged Devonport Naval Base, including St Nicholas' Church
22nd	1982	Wessex helicopter from destroyer Antrim retrieved SAS and FAA personnel from Fortuna Glacier, South Georgia in unusually bad weather. Operation Corporate.
23rd	1856	Queen Victoria reviewed Fleet at Spithead; 240 ships, many having just returned from Baltic and Black Sea.
24th	1916	Submarine E 22 conducted 'float-off' trials of two Sopwith Schneider seaplanes (Nos 3730, 3743). The purpose of this first submarine/aircraft trial was to achieve an up-threat interdiction of Zeppelins over the North Sea.
25th	1953	The extension of the Portsmouth naval war memorial commemorating officers and men from Portsmouth-manned ships and ratings of the Portsmouth port division lost in the Second World War unveiled by HM Queen Elizabeth The Queen Mother.
26th	2011	Admiral of the Fleet Sir Henry Leach, First Sea Lord 1979–1982, died.
27th	1937	The National Maritime Museum at Greenwich was opened by HM King George VI. His Majesty, with HM The Queen and HRH Princess Elizabeth, and the First Lord of the Admiralty, embarked at Westminster Pier in the launch of the C-in-C The Nore and, escorted by the destroyer Wishart and MTBs 3, 4, 5 and 6, went downriver and disembarked at the RN College, Greenwich. At the Museum 'the male staffs were all in morning dress, the hire of which they paid for themselves, the warders in their recently provided uniforms'. The Museum opened to the public on 29 April.
28th	1972	Patrol vessels Wasperton, Wolverton and Monkton arrived at HMS Tamar to join the Sixth Patrol Craft Squadron in Hong Kong after a 16,461-mile voyage, having sailed from Britain on 12 January. They joined Yarnton and Beachampton which had arrived the previous September from service with the Ninth MCM Squadron in Bahrain.
29th	1867	Canned meat added to ships' victualling stores.
30th	1943	The Man Who Never Was. Operation Mincemeat. A corpse given identity of Captain, Acting Major, William Martin, RM, put into the sea from the submarine Seraph off Huelva, Spain. He carried secret papers intended to deceive the enemy, through German agents in Spain, that Allies intended to invade Sardinia and not Sicily. The story was told by the intelligence officer who planned the operation, Lt-Cdr Ewen Montagu, RNVR, in his book The Man Who Never Was, and by former First Lord, Duff Cooper, in his novel Operation Heartbreak.