



**ROYAL NAVAL
ASSOCIATION**

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Month... ish



The Semaphore Circular

No 727

The Beating Heart of the RNA

March 2023



Watching proceedings at the RNA Welfare and Wellbeing workshop at HMS Nelson in Portsmouth during February, from left, workshop organiser Lynda Pearson, RNA Vice President WO1 Clare Robson and General Secretary Bill Oliphant. For the full story on the workshop click [here](#).

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Staff Photo (still) coming soon.....

Daily Orders (follow each link)

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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/ Governance Committee

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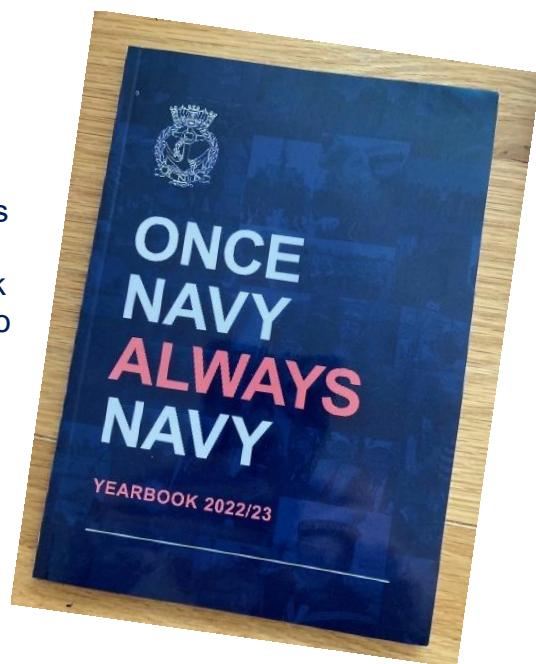
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From the General Secretary

Ahoy Shipmates

The weather forecast tells me it's going to turn cold again this week so a little while yet before you dig out your tropical kit. Hopefully, your 2022/23 Yearbook hit your doormat last week so at least you'll have something to read if you are not able to get out and play in the forecast snow. Well done Dave MacAskill for stitching that together.

My Yearbook covering letter reminds everyone that we are working on a donation-based income model now and I have requested that members sign the Standing Order for only £1 or £2 per month to help keep us going. I urge you to do just that as we need your support to operate.



I've just finished watching the latest Warship series featuring HMS Queen Elizabeth's 2021 Far East deployment, and I hope you enjoyed it as much as I did. What will be very obvious of course to those who were in the Mob a few decades ago, is that it is a very different Royal Navy to the one they were in. One thing's for certain though, it's a very capable Navy with young people who are clearly as devoted and professional as the Navy has always been. Good to see – well done to the BBC and the producer Chris Terrill.



Good news for rugby fans! The National Council has kindly granted me a wee pot of money to allow me to offer RNA members a £5 reduction on the ticket prices for this year's Army v Navy match at Twickenham on Saturday 13 May. Look out for the booking form which will be promoted in next week's Semaphore Short. Also, if Branches or Clubs are considering organising a coach or minibus, remember, you are able to apply for a grant of £250 from the Branch and Club Support Fund towards this. In the meantime, if you are in the Plymouth area on Wednesday 15 March, the RN play their French counterparts – see advert to the left. It would be good to have a strong RNA presence there supporting our teams.

I should also take a moment to say that the Inter-Services T20 Cricket this year will take place at Lords on Wednesday 10 May. More details at the link [here](#). If you haven't been to this great event previously, it's a great day out. Take a picnic and enjoy the sunshine!



The Normandy Memorial

I was in France for the weekend last week and took the opportunity to inspect the RNA bench at the Normandy Memorial. It was the first time I had been since it was dedicated by the then PM, Theresa May in 2019. It's truly impressive and I can commend a visit if you haven't been there already. It's located at Ver-sur-Mer, about 30mins drive from the Caen ferry terminal at Ouistreham.



The RNA Bench is the first sponsored bench you come to as you walk from the car park to the memorial - my modelling budget is restricted so Mrs O was pressed into service!



Finally, some staff changes at Central Office. Sadly, after delivering a hugely successful Welfare/ Wellbeing Workshop, Lynda has bowed out of her role as the Welfare Programme Manager and I thank her most sincerely for all she has done to lift this important element of comradeship up the agenda. I wish you well in the future Lynda. The team of Geoff Apperley (National Wellbeing/ Welfare Advisor), his Deputy, Selwyn Davies, and Gemma Swanson in Central Office will lead going forward. Also, I am delighted to welcome Alice Farrow onto our staff as our new Head of Communications. Alice joins us from SSAFA so is no stranger to the Naval charities sector. Comms is a vital element of what we set out to achieve in the RNA so bringing her expertise onboard is an exciting part of taking the organisation forward. Welcome Alice.

Best wishes, Bill

Chairman's chat

... or not, this month!

You will be well aware that National Chairman Shipmate Keith Ridley works his socks off on behalf of the Association, and the past few weeks have been pretty much to the max.

Keith has been wading through reams of emails, attending meetings, and will be away from home for four long weekends on the trot, all on RNA National-level business.



Something had to give eventually – and it was the Semaphore Circular. So no words of wisdom from S/M Keith this time round, but we'll try again in April.

nationalchairman@royalnavalassoc.com

RNA Welfare and Wellbeing Workshop

On Friday 3 and Saturday 4 February, the RNA held a wide-ranging Welfare and Wellbeing Workshop at the WOs and SRs Mess at HMS Nelson, in Portsmouth, with the aim of supporting the Association's Welfare/Wellbeing Officers.

As part of the workshop, we had guest speakers from a variety of military support charities and organisations who support both the serving and veteran communities and their families. The speakers

included the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT), the Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association (SSAFA), the Armed Forces Covenant lead for Queen Alexandra Hospital in Portsmouth, who explained the Veteran Aware initiative taking place throughout NHS England, and Op Courage - the Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service.



The workshop also aimed to educate our Welfare/Wellbeing Officers on safeguarding policies and procedures, and personal and professional boundaries to support them in their role.

In addition to the charities and organisations who support serving and veteran members, we also had Cdre Kris Nicholson, who was there to provide an overview of the current Naval Service, their priorities and strategies for the future and to provide context on the needs, expectations and requirements of our future members as they look to transition from the Naval service, but to maintain the camaraderie that we, as the RNA pride ourselves on providing.



Over the course of the weekend, 95 people attended the workshop, including Area and Branch Welfare Officers, Branch Chairpersons, Secretaries and Treasurers, who take an active role in the welfare and wellbeing of shipmates in their branches and areas, as well as both the National and Deputy National Welfare Advisors.

The event was a huge success and, following on from the evaluation conducted, both during and post workshop, we received excellent feedback on the weekend which will help shape the future of our support to our Shipmates.

Included in this feedback were comments such as:

“I had a wonderful time; I met lots of new people with whom I'll keep in touch, I learned a lot and I'll go back to our branch feeling so much more confident in my role as a Welfare and Wellbeing Officer.”

“The content and presentations were good. I certainly feel much more informed and confident about my role. I have had some intense cases but now am much more able to approach these issues with less guesswork and more confidence knowing where to get all appropriate supporting information.”

“I thought the whole weekend was a great success. It was clear that a lot of hard work had been put into this and this hard work paid off. Of note, the collegiate ethos was almost palpable and if nothing else the weekend was worth attending for that. Although relatively new in post and to the RNA per se, I now feel the Welfare and Wellbeing organisation has a structure and credence not previously perceived.”

From the post evaluation form completed by attendees, we received an outstanding 92 per cent response rate with an overall rating of 4.5 out of 5 for the whole weekend.

As part of this evaluation attendees were asked: **Was the workshop relevant to you and supported you in fulfilling your role as Welfare and Wellbeing Officer?**

94 per cent of attendees responded with a resounding “YES! It was relevant and supportive”, one per cent said no and five per cent said they were not sure.

Through the process of conducting the evaluation, several things were raised and suggested, as areas for future improvement, both from an RNA Welfare and Wellbeing perspective, but also for any future workshops and training provided to Welfare and Wellbeing Officers. The RNA Central Office Team will be working over the coming weeks and months to address and investigate the recommendations, to ensure our Welfare volunteers and our shipmates are supported.

Within our offer of welfare and wellbeing support to shipmates, the key role is the camaraderie and the sharing of lived experiences. However, there is a global need for an increased focus on those who may need support for a variety of reasons, such as mental health concerns, financial difficulty and housing issues as well as a plethora of other issues which may present themselves. It will therefore become the responsibility of those who have a role of welfare support in Branches and Areas to effectively and appropriately signpost to those best-placed to provide support.

The Central Office Team will be providing more information on the RNA Welfare and Wellbeing initiatives and aspirations over the next 12 months as we work to improve the support available to our shipmates.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss Welfare and Wellbeing further or have an interest in becoming an RNA Welfare Officer, please contact Gemma Swanson at gemma@royalnavalassoc.com

RNA Complaints Policy

S/M Nick Purkis, RNA Head of Governance, has details for shipmates on the Association's new Complaints Policy.

S/M Nick writes:

In December, the National Council approved a new Complaints Policy for the Association. The previous policy had, over the years, become confusing and there were some contradictions within the policy and the rules. The Governance Committee therefore prepared a new policy for approval by the National Council.

One of the guiding principles of the new policy is that as an Association, we need to turn away from convening a tribunal every time there is an issue in a Branch. Over the last few years, we have seen an increase in the number of tribunals formed, very often, for disputes which should have been settled easily.

The new policy therefore works on the principles of dispute resolution:

- Negotiate
- Mediate
- Arbitrate

What this means is that in the first instance, we will seek to resolve all complaints at Branch level, by the Branch Chair or other official, speaking with the parties involved to see if the issue can be resolved amicably. If this can be, then the matter can be put to bed and the Branch can move on.

If it is not possible to resolve informally, the complaint moves to the next stage in the process, known as 'Mediate'. At the Mediation stage, the Complaint must be placed in writing and the Branch Chair/Official formally discusses the complaint with the parties involved and any other witnesses who can assist and to see whether the matter can be resolved.

Where the Branch Chair is able to conclude the mediation phase, then the matter is referred to Central Office. The General Secretary, in discussion with the National Chairman and Head of Governance, will then convene a Commission of Inquiry to formally investigate the matter and to review the investigations already carried out locally. This is known as 'Mediation (Part Two)'. At this stage in the process, the General Secretary may also direct that any Shipmate against whom the complaint was raised, may be suspended from Office or from Branch Membership and moved to the HQ Roll.

The Commission of Inquiry, having investigated the matter will then report back to National Council, with one of the following findings:

- The matter is trivial and no further action should be taken
- The matter is relatively serious but in the opinion of the Col, no further action should be taken

- The matter is (relatively) serious, but if the parties agree, a censure should be issued to the party against whom the complaint has been raised
- Further issues have arisen, which National Council should investigate
- The matter cannot be resolved and should progress to the 'Arbitrate' phase.

If the finding is that the matter should proceed, then the 'Arbitrate' phase of this process will commence, with National Council appointing a panel to hear the complaints and proceed to make a finding, using the Civil burden of proof, of 'balance of probabilities'. The new Complaints procedure also outlines an appeals procedure, where applicable.

The above is only a high-level summary, so please do take the time to read the new policy. We will set up an online session where we will further explain the policy and answer any questions in the coming weeks.

If you have any questions in the meantime, please reach out to me at governancechair@royalnavalassoc.com

1. 2023 RNA Conference - Liverpool

Hopefully the message has got around the bazaars by now that this year's AGM/Conference will be held over the weekend 26-28 May 2023 in Liverpool to coincide with the Battle of the Atlantic 80th (BOA80) commemorations are taking place that weekend.

The RNA's programme is centred on the Adelphi Hotel, right in the city centre, and will include entertainment on the Friday, Saturday, and Sunday nights, the RNA AGM on Saturday, with a black-tie Gala Dinner on Saturday evening.

Liverpool will be busy, with a civic reception on the Friday night, a military village at the Pier Head with visiting naval vessels alongside, and a Royal Marines Band concert on the Saturday (see His Majesty's Royal Marines Band in Concert – <https://liverpoolphil.com/whats-on/all-shows/his-majestys-royal-marines-band-in-concert/5543> - for bookings). There will also be a drumhead parade and service on the Sunday morning, with some of our BOA veterans taking the salute.

A number of rooms were ringfenced at two hotels for shipmates, but they will be released to the general public if they are not taken up, so don't delay – just mention the RNA when you book. The hotels are the Adelphi (3-star hotel – 0151 709 7200) and the Novotel (0.5km away, for those preferring a 4-star establishment – 0151 702 5100). Costs and booking forms are available at the end of this Semaphore Circular [here](#), or in previous editions at <https://royal-naval-association.co.uk/members/downloads/2022>.

Do please book as soon as possible and come and join in the fun...

And Central Office is still keen that as many Branches and Areas as possible should to bring along their Standards for the various ceremonies that will be taking place over Conference weekend in Liverpool this year. Please let Bob Coburn and Mike Smyth know of your intentions on projects@royalnavalassoc.com

2. Golf Special Interest Group event on National Conference weekend

There will be a Special Interest Group (Golf) event on Friday 26 May in the lead up to the National Conference and BOA80 weekend activities. This event follows on from the success of last year's event in Portsmouth.

The event will be held at West Derby Golf Club, and organiser Kev 'Mac' McAllister has ten four ball tee times reserved. For more information on the course see <https://www.westderbygc.co.uk/>

Timings:

Arrival: 0900-0930 Tea, coffee and bacon baps on arrival
First Tee: 1018
O/C Tea and coffee available

If you wish to take part in the above event, which is open to all genders, please send Mac the following details:

Name
Handicap
Area / Branch

He will need details of all those wishing to play **NO LATER THAN FRIDAY 28 April 2023** – this will give him enough time to sort playing groups, tee times and confirm numbers with golf course caterers

Email: kevinmac31@tiscali.co.uk

West Derby Golf Club can easily be reached from the M62, M57 and M58, and is four miles from the Adelphi and Novotel Hotels – again easy to reach! Please use the link above to view the golf club and course – there are practice areas available pre tee times to warm up and an ample car park.

If there are any questions please contact Mac soonest.

3. News from the Membership Support Division!

This month's notices, in no particular order:

- RNA Branch Treasurers: Most of you will be in the throes of pulling your accounts together for your Branch/Area AGMs if you have not already done so. Many of you have already forwarded a copy – thank you. However, for those who have yet to do so, this is just a gentle reminder of the extant requirement to submit an annual Branch Return to Central Office by 30th April in accordance with Bylaw B18.

Some of you may wonder why this is necessary now that Association subscriptions have been abated to zero. However you will appreciate that there remains an element of governance which remains to be carried out. A blank form is available at the end of this Circular.

General Secretary Bill Oliphant sends his best wishes to you all, and says he is grateful for the manner in which you attend to the duties of Hon Treas in your Branch or Area – is much appreciated.

- For those attending the Conference, please remember to highlight or flag up any dietary requirements you may have to the Adelphi or Novotel hotels as early as possible.

- This year's Conference raffle tickets are now on sale from Central Office. Tickets have been sent out to Branch Secretaries for sale locally, but if individuals and members of the HQ Roll would like to purchase tickets directly, please email Sara in Central Office on sara@royalnavalassoc.com or call 023 9272 3747. The draw will take place during the AGM in Liverpool on Saturday 27 May and, as always, all proceeds will go towards the Central Charities Fund which supports the RNA with its charitable endeavours.



4. Battle of the Atlantic 80th Anniversary Commemorations

Liverpool is going to be a pretty busy place in May this year.

Early in the month the city hosts the Eurovision Song Concert on behalf of last year's winners, Ukraine, with the Grand Final on Saturday 13 May.

Two weeks later Merseyside will not only be hosting the RNA National Conference, but will also be marking the 80th anniversary of the Battle of the Atlantic (BOA80) – the weekend will be the culmination of a programme of events that is already under way.

In broad terms, BOA80 organisers have planned a programme that includes:

- A celebration of seafarers, veterans, and the communities that made them.
- A celebration of the BOA shore-side effort, including shipyards, dockers, the defenders of UK ports, logisticians, factory workers, Wrens, and their families.
- A Battle of the Atlantic public lecture series, a one-day academic conference delivered in partnership with Liverpool John Moores University, and an enduring educational legacy via the Western Approaches Museum.
- New original theatre inspired by the experience of the Wrens who served in the Western Approaches Tactical Unit, written and performed by drama students of Liverpool John Moores University.
- A new national memorial for the Liverpool City Region to be proud of, to be part of the city's permanent heritage at St Nick's / Liverpool Parish Church.
- A poignant – and permanent – light installation, *Atlantic Lights*, on the shores of the River Mersey at Woodside, which will appeal to local people as well as tourists and other visitors to the region.

On the BOA80 weekend itself (26-28 May) highlights will include:

- The unveiling of a new national memorial at Our Lady and St Nicholas Church.
- The unveiling of the *Atlantic Lights* installation.
- A military village on the Mersey waterfront with 1940s music and entertainment.
- Royal Navy and Merchant Navy vessels in the Mersey, open for visitors.
- Flypasts by the Battle of Britain Memorial Flight as well as historic Fleet Air Arm aircraft – Seafire and Swordfish.
- A concert by HM Royal Marines Band at Liverpool's Philharmonic Hall.
- Events at Liverpool, Wallasey, and Bootle Town Halls.
- Family and veterans' days at the Western Approaches Museum.
- A March of the Medals, including the families of those who served.
- A drumhead ceremony at Pier Head on Sunday 28 May.

- A commemorative black-tie dinner.
- A Convoy Sails on the Mersey to close the event, with Beat Retreat and Raise a Tot ceremonies.

5. Discount at the Ship Anson and Visits to Portsmouth Historic Dockyard

We are delighted to report that the Ship Anson on The Hard in Portsmouth has reopened following the fire at the beginning of January – and the good news just keeps on coming, because the historic Greene King pub, which rates 4.4 stars out of 5 from more than 2,000 reviews on Google, is still offering 10 per cent discount to RNA members on both food and drink.

Shipmates should also be aware that there are still discounted prices available for RNA members when visiting the historic dockyard in Portsmouth.

Annual Ultimate Explorer ticket offer: Save 30 per cent off the annual Ultimate Explorer tickets at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. Tickets are valid for the year allowing you to return again and again. The Ultimate Explorer tickets give you access to: • The Mary Rose • HMS Victory • HMS Warrior • HMS Alliance at the Royal Navy Submarine Museum • Harbour Tour • Plus more/ Offer is valid on one family Ultimate Explorer ticket or up to four adult, senior or child Ultimate Explorer Tickets.

To get this discount, simply show your Royal Naval Association Membership card in the Visitor Centre, Portsmouth Historic Dockyard. The discount is only available for 'walk ups'

6. Help for Households with Cost of Living

With the cost of living 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 – [Help for Households - Get government cost of living support](#) – 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.

7. MoneySavingExpert

While we are on the subject of making your money go as far as possible, shipmates might find it useful to sign up to the free **MoneySavingExpert** weekly email.

MoneySavingExpert is the UK's biggest consumer help website, having been founded in 2003 by consumers' champion and campaigner Martin Lewis, and more than eight million people have signed up for the free weekly MSE email.

These emails, like the website, cover a massive range of issues and subjects, offering news, hints, tips, guides and warnings on matters that affect all of us, whether it's the cost of energy, supermarket discounts, scams, saving on insurance or budgeting with a limited income.

The latest email, for example, looks at the latest rise in energy costs, beating the increases in broadband prices, how some people could boost their state pension by thousands of pounds, a 'rare' 20 per cent off code for Aldi, discounted fruit and veg from Sainsbury's and the possibility of claiming money back from council tax.

To sign up for the free MSE email go to <https://www.moneysavingexpert.com/>

8. Monday Evening Fireside Chats

For Shipmates who are unaware, a series of 'Fireside Chats' featuring some fascinating subjects including; Battle of Jutland, Operation Paraquet (Re-capture of South Georgia 1982), 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](#)

Date	Presenter	Subject
Monday 6 March	WO1 Jim Wright RM	WO of the RN – Naval Update
Monday 13 March	Kevin Casey	Diving Museum No2 Battery Stokes Bay
Monday 20 Mar (tbc)	Cdr Tom Sharpe	HMS Endurance near loss
Monday 27 Mar (tbc)	Cdr Bryan McCavour	RN Battlestaff Update

* *Lecture subjects may change at short notice.*

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

9. Veterans Welfare Review

A major review into the veteran welfare services for veterans has been announced by the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the Ministry of Defence. The review will focus on examining the effectiveness and efficiency of the range of welfare services for veterans, and identify any duplication, or gaps in support.

With the creation of the Office for Veterans' Affairs and the developments and changes that have been brought about in veterans' care in the past ten years, it's important that current support systems in place are examined to make sure there is clarity in the scope and capacity of current services.

Support which is being looked at includes services such as the Veterans Welfare Service, which comes under the banner of Veterans UK, providing one-to-one support to veterans and their families through a network of welfare managers across the UK. The Defence Transition Service, which supports military personnel as they move into civilian life, is also part of the review.

Minister for Veterans' Affairs Johnny Mercer said: "We recognise that supporting veterans to access appropriate support is critical to this government's success in making the UK the best country in the world to be a veteran.

“This review will enable us to better align the workings of a range of support services, with the needs of the veterans community, and enhance the quality of the services veterans are offered.”

Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families Dr Andrew Murrison said:
“We are eternally grateful for the service of all our veterans it’s only right that we provide them with the support they deserve.

“This is why I and the Minister for Veterans’ Affairs have called for a review into the welfare provisions for veterans. This is in no way a reflection of the efforts of every one of our fantastic teams, who are working so hard to provide enduring support, but part of our ongoing commitment to improving our offer for our serving personnel, veterans and their families.”

Other services which are part of the review include:

- Integrated Personal Commissioning for Veterans
- The Northern Ireland Veterans Support Office
- The Veterans’ Gateway
- The Veterans Advisory Pensions Committees
- Ilford Park Polish Home

The work will complement the Quinquennial Review of the Armed Forces Compensation Scheme, which is already under way

The joint OVA and MOD review will be conducted by an independent civil servant, who will be supported by a joint secretariat from the MOD and Cabinet Office. The review will focus on examining each organisation’s performance and practices, identifying areas for improvement and enhancing efficiency.

Engaging extensively with stakeholders, including other government departments, the charity sector and independent veterans advisors will be an important part of the work.

The review is expected to take three months, and will report back to the Minister for Defence People, Veterans and Service Families, and Minister for Veterans’ Affairs, with recommendations for the future role of welfare support and provision of services. Following the completion of the review, MOD and OVA will develop an action plan to address the findings and recommendations, with a focus on implementing meaningful change that will enhance service effectiveness and delivery.

10. Lisbon Maru

Maj Brian Finch (retd) has the latest on the documentary about the sinking of the Lisbon Maru. This was a Japanese unmarked troopship which was carrying Japanese forces and British POWs from Hong Kong to Japan when it was torpedoed by American submarine USS Grouper on 1 October 1942, the submarine being unaware of the presence of prisoners on board.

As the ship began to list and then sink, six miles off the Zhousan Islands south of Shanghai, Japanese troops were evacuated but prisoners were deliberately trapped in the holds; some made it out and into the sea (where they were reportedly fired on by the Japanese) and many hundreds were saved by the efforts of local Chinese fishermen, but it is thought more than 800 Allied prisoners died.

“After five years in the making, Fang Li’s documentary film about the Lisbon Maru is nearing completion,” said Brian, who has worked tirelessly for years to collect material on the sinking and make sure it is properly commemorated. “Final Chinese bureaucratic approvals are expected shortly. This is to be a major, full-length feature film and it will be submitted to the Cannes Film

Festival... This is, of course, a highly competitive arena and there is no guarantee of success. But the fact that it is being submitted speaks volumes about the producer's view of the film's significance.

"A ready-to-view version should be ready by the end of April, and Fang Li plans to hold premières simultaneously in Zhoushan and the UK, the latter for the benefit of relatives and invited guests such as the Service associations concerned.

"Details of the UK première have not yet been decided, but it is hoped this will be in London. I will send out details as soon as they are known. The film will then go on general release later in the year.

"As many of you already know, Denise Wynne, the daughter of Dennis Morley, the last survivor of the Lisbon Maru, wrote to President Xi Jinping of China asking that a memorial be put up in China for the victims and to honour the courage of the Zhoushan fishermen who saved so many lives. She had a reply last year, delivered by the Chinese Ambassador in London, Zheng Zeguang.

"President Xi said that he had instructed the relevant authorities to look into the question of a memorial. He also stressed that the story of the Lisbon Maru was an example of friendship 'forged in the flames of war' and stressed the importance of building on this to develop personal relationships.

"Ambassador Zheng has been keen to follow up on this theme and to meet relatives of the POWs. I have been helping him and yesterday he hosted a gathering of some 120 relatives.

"Denise Wynne read out the letter she had written to President Xi and his response. I provided the update on Fang Li's film, and the Ambassador explained that preparations for a memorial in China were well under way. The rest of the day was devoted to various aspects of Chinese culture and provided the opportunity for the relatives to mingle with members of the Embassy and start building personal relationships."

A report on the Chinese New Year reception commemorating the rescue of Lisbon Maru survivors by fishermen can be found on the Chinese Embassy website at http://gb.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/dshdjih/202302/t20230222_11029669.htm

Brian Finch continued: "I will let everyone know about the première as soon as I have news.

"Separately, I am expecting to be able to organise an event at the National Memorial Arboretum on 2 October to mark the 81st anniversary of the sinking. There are currently no specific plans for this and I will make further announcements as appropriate."

11. Northumbria University Northern Hub – Tri-Service Food Poverty Survey

Another reminder that former Royal Navy officer Prof Matthew Kiernan is keen to hear from shipmates about food insecurity and financial hardship within the veterans and families community of the UK – and there has been a modest return from the Senior Service so far...

Prof Kiernan, a Professor of Mental Health and Veteran Studies, said: "Northumbria University's Northern Hub for Veterans and Military Families Research is carrying out research on food insecurity and financial hardship within the veterans and families community in the UK. There is currently very little research or understanding of the risk of financial hardship, food insecurity and how that is impacted by Service-attributable injury or illness after retirement within our community.

'We will be asking you to participate in a survey so that we can better understand the current situation. All members of the RNA will be asked to take part. The survey will be online, which means that you will receive an email with a link to take part. We understand that for some this might not be ideal, but the cost of paper-based surveys has made it impossible for us to send out surveys in this project.

"The survey will take five to ten minutes to complete and the questions will cover your food situation over the last 30 days as well as some questions on disability and Service-attributable injuries. If you have received an Armed Forces Compensation Scheme payment or are in receipt of Armed Forces Compensation Scheme regular income, we are very keen to understand that more and will ask you, if possible, to provide the details of your award in the survey. In particular we would ask for the Table Number, Item Number and Level Number given in your award letter.

"In light of the current living crisis, the government and the Armed Forces sector are very keen to better understand the current situation that veterans and their families face, and we would be very grateful if you would consider taking part in this survey."

Please email gemma@royalnavalassoc.com if you would be interested in taking part.

12. RN/RM Personnel who served at Camp LeJeune between 1953 and 1987

Another call for Royal Navy and Royal Marines Personnel and their families who were stationed at Camp LeJeune in North Carolina, USA. Any such personnel and veterans who served at Camp LeJeune at Jacksonville in the United States between 1953 and 1987 should see the press release from Irwin Mitchell in the link below. It contains very important information regarding potential claims over possible exposure to contaminated water which you might not otherwise get to hear about. See <https://lnkd.in/e5znhhWq>

13. Royal Naval Benevolent Trust trustees

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust is looking for two Trustees, one an 'Ordinary Member' Trustee, the other an 'Admiralty Governor' Trustee.

For the first vacancy the RNBT is looking for a wide range of competences, with the current Trustees wishing to continue to encourage diversity; applications from Junior Rates/Ranks as well as from minority groups are very welcome, in particular those with service in the Royal Marines or Submarine Service.

The second vacancy is a reflection of a time when the Admiralty Board appointed a retired senior officer onto the RNBT's Central Committee. Although that no longer happens, the title was retained, and the position requires that the volunteer should be a retired senior officer of the Naval Service, ie a Captain RN or Col RM or above.

The closing date for both positions is 31 March 2023.

For full details see the RNBT notices at the end of this Circular – click [here](#).

14. RNBT and Lightning Reach

[The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust](#) (RNBT) has partnered with [Lightning Reach](#) to accept applications for financial support available to individuals of up to £750 through the Lightning Reach Portal.



Lightning Reach is a free online portal that connects financial support from various sources to the people that need it, quickly and securely. Once someone completes a profile, they can see all available support they are eligible for in one place, get updated when more support is added, and apply for multiple sources of support directly through the portal.

The financial support available to apply for through the portal from the RNBT is available to all serving or ex-serving Royal Naval ratings or Royal Marines of other ranks (including Reservists), including their dependents, during times of need or crisis. This can include help paying for food costs, utility bills, rent, home repairs and disability adaptations, mobility aids, respite breaks, employment-related training courses and more.



Last year, the RNBT gave grants worth £1.4m overall to 2,584 individuals facing financial hardship. The RNBT also runs its own 55 bed care home Pembroke House in Gillingham, Kent, which specifically cares for the needs of RN/RM Veterans, and a six-unit alms-house in Hornchurch, Essex. They were also able to assist 759

people last year through their Regular Charitable Payments, and can also assist people with non-financial and holistic support, such as counselling.

“The RNBT is currently celebrating its centenary year and part of the focus has been awareness of who we are and what we do. After discussions with other Service charities who had already taken the step, RNBT decided to join Lightning Reach as an additional means of reaching out to our Naval family,” said Sam Allardyce, Grant Administrator at the Royal Naval Benevolent Trust.

“We understand that there are many of our beneficiaries out there who may not know how to engage with us or have just disconnected over a period of time. Lightning Reach is the perfect opportunity for those who require assistance, not only in the current cost of living crisis, but in the future.

“We have had a pretty seamless and speedy on-boarding process with the Lightning Reach team who have been supportive throughout and continue to respond to little tweaks to meet the Trust’s own requirements.”

Ren Hooi, founder of Lightning Reach, said: “RNBT provides invaluable support to the Royal Naval and Royal Marines communities during times of crisis, and whose support is vital during the current cost of living crisis. We hope we can help the RNBT to reach more people eligible for their support who may not have known about them or approached them before.

“We also aim to streamline the process of applying for financial support both for their Service users and for the charity so they can get support to those most in need quickly and efficiently.”

Lightning Reach has also been working with other military charities, including the Royal British Legion (RBL) and RAF Benevolent Fund, to enable individuals to apply for crisis support available from these charities through the Lightning Reach Portal. With over 10,000 military users

registered on the portal, over £2m in grants has been facilitated over just the past few months through the portal to serving personnel, veterans and their dependents.

For more information about support offered by the RNBT via Lightning Reach visit: www.rnbt.org.uk/how-we-help/wide-ranging-financial-help/how-to-apply/

For more information about the Lightning Reach Portal visit: www.lightningreach.org

15. Veterans Tour of Chelsea Hospital, London

Calling all Pensionable Service Veterans – come along and enjoy a tour of the Royal Hospital Chelsea and some friendly banter with the Chelsea Pensioners on Thursday 30 March 2023 between 10.00-14.00.

Royal Navy and Merchant Navy veterans are welcome to attend the day, which includes a tour and sandwich lunch.

You will need to bring along photographic ID (such as a passport or driving licence) and any documentation confirming your status as a veteran.



If you require support you can bring along a carer, family member or friend, but this is limited to a 'plus one'.

See the notice at the end of this Circular for more details – click [here](#).

16. Biennial Parade

At this time of the year, understandably, all eyes are on Liverpool and the Association's National Conference, tied in with the Battle of the Atlantic 80th anniversary commemorations.

But this is by way of a gentle reminder that no sooner are the events of May out of the way (which also include a little matter of the Coronation of King Charles III, a shipmate of some of you...) than we will be in the run-up to the Naval Associations / RNA Biennial Parade in Whitehall, London, on 10 September, so please watch out for further information through the usual channels – the Semaphore Circular, the weekly Semaphore Short and the RNA website.

17. Specialist Interest Groups – Contact details

Shipmates will be interested to know how popular and successful the Specialist Interest Groups has become.

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 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 – Dave Ives: secrnariders@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

18. Battle of the Atlantic 80 free lecture

Title: The Naval Review Lecture: Understanding our Enemy – Why it matters

Time: Wednesday 8 March, 1730 – 1930

Place: St Nick's Church, Liverpool City Centre

Admission: Free, including a complimentary drink, but guests must [register in advance](#)

About the evening:

You are invited to join an evening with Sir Clive Johnstone for a FREE lecture which considers the impact of geopolitics on maritime trade, and the weaponisation of supply chain.

The evening, which will take place at St Nick's Church, Pier Head, will start with an opportunity for some networking with refreshments, followed by a short lecture and Q&A session

This lecture has been organised by the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial Charity, and is part of a series of free lectures in the run up to the 80th Battle of the Atlantic Commemoration in May. It has been enabled by the generous sponsorship of Peel Ports.

Attendance at this exclusive event is **FREE**, but you must register in advance. Please do so [here](#).

Sir Clive's lecture will look at the Russian Navy and why understanding it (and other naval forces) better matters. He will link this thread with current and historic examples of insight, and of ignorance. He will use as one of his examples the Battle of Atlantic, highlighting the role that Liverpool, the Royal Navy and Merchant Navy, and WATU played in the Allies' eventual victory.

19. 100th Birthday – BZs and Congratulations – S/M Connie Gregory



RNA South Bristol Branch joined ranks with members of **Bristol Branch Association of Wrens (AoW)** to provide a 100th birthday celebration afternoon tea on 4 February in honour of Shipmate Constance (Connie) Gregory in the Junior Rates Mess, HMS Flying Fox. Besides Connie, the other principal guest attending the celebration was the Lord Lieutenant of Bristol and Honorary Capt RNR, Mrs Peaches Golding OBE, who assisted Connie in the cutting of her birthday cake.

Connie, daughter of a Bristol river pilot, was born on 31 January 1923 and at an early age showed an aptitude for music, a passion that has stayed with her until this day. When 14 years old, Connie joined the Bristol Accordion Band, but very soon the world changed with the

commencement of World War 2. Connie was keen to 'do her bit' and hardly surprisingly at the age of 16, joined the Bristol Wartime Entertainers and toured with the Seven Elliotts musical act to entertain the troops at various venues, including 1,000 airmen at RAF Hullavington.

At 17 years of age, Connie worked at the Bristol Aircraft Company (BAC) in Filton, Bristol, as a 'Baffle Inspector' on warplanes. During the war the aircraft works was a prime target for German bombers and on one air raid, 200 workers were killed at the Rodney Works. Despite losing some of her friends, Connie remained unscathed and continued her work with the Bristol Wartime Entertainers.

In 1943, aged 20, her involvement with the war effort led her to join the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) and serve at HMS Tormentor in Warsash, on the River Hamble in Hampshire, as a Teleprinter Operator, some of her work relating to landing craft being prepared for D-Day.

In 1944, she met her future husband, and married in September of that year. Her time in the WRNS finished soon afterwards when she was honourably discharged in order to prepare for family life, initially for the imminent arrival of daughter Anita, who was later joined by daughter Veda and son Marcus.

Later, when her family had grown up, Connie became an active member of Bristol Branch Association of Wrens based at HMS Flying Fox, and often carried the Branch Standard during Remembrance Day Parades. In due course, Connie became Branch President.

In November 2017, when aged 94, she was the oldest participant in the WRNS Centenary celebrations at RNAS Yeovilton. She has also been a Full Member of RNA South Bristol Branch for 32 years, and as a World War 2 Veteran, was awarded Life Membership of the Association with effect from 15 August 2020 in recognition of her service to the country. .

Connie's musical interests continued, and when in her 80s she joined the Pilning Church Choir. She also became a volunteer on the SS Great Britain, initially helping with office work and then later playing the piano for visitors on board the ship, often being complimented by the public including celebrities such as Lucy Worsley (then Chief Curator of Historic Royal Palaces) and Elvis Costello.

Connie recalls that on one occasion during a school visit, a cheeky young boy asked if she personally knew the ship's designer Isambard Kingdom Brunel...

Always being game to support the charity, at the age of 91 Connie climbed 15 rungs of the rigging on SS Great Britain during a sponsored rigging climb. Two years later she was climbing again; this time Connie took herself off to Italy where she climbed to the crater rim of the volcano Mount Vesuvius.

During the afternoon tea Connie entertained those attending the event by playing some music on her keyboard, including her own 'Happy Birthday' tune.



Pusser's...

Calling all 'Rum Rats'...

Shipmates may wish to be reminded that 'Pusser's' is now available from the online 'Navy Shop', with all profits from Rum going back to the charity.

Please follow the link <https://royalnavyshop.co.uk/collections/rum>

For those who would like to find out more about Pusser's Rum, go to www.pussersrum.com where there is plenty of information on the history of the brand, the rum itself, cocktails and loads more besides.



Forces Cars Direct

Veteran-owned Forces Cars Direct is celebrating 20 years of service to the military community and we're delighted to welcome them to the Royal Naval Association and our members in an exclusive partnership.

Offering unique new car discounts with savings up to 35 per cent on a full range of makes and models, you can be sure to find the right car for you! Forces Cars Direct is endorsed with 5-star TrustPilot ratings from its customers, was named Veteran Business of the Year in the English Veterans Awards, and has support from the Chairman of the Defence Select Committee, so you not only save thousands, but can be assured of the highest level of service too.



With Forces Cars Direct you will also benefit from:

- UK nationwide, Covid-safe delivery
- Cash purchase and full finance options available
- Leasing service available
- All part exchange vehicles welcome
- Serving and veterans
-

Find out more about the service and savings available at <https://www.forcescarsdirect.com/rna> where you can browse and make your enquiry.

Hayes Travel - Foreign Exchange Rates

Shipmates will be pleased to know that Hayes Travel are offering all of RNA members special rates on foreign currency at any of the Hays Travel branches nationwide.



Your members would simply need to produce membership card for the discount to be applied at the time of transaction.

RNA Slops – RLP Embroidery

WWW.RNASLOPS.CLOTHING

The RNA Officially Licensed supplier of embroidered garments.

Polo Shirts, Hoodies, Sweatshirts, Fleece, Jackets, Knitwear, Blouses, Pilot Shirts, Softshell, Headwear,



RNA SLOPS

RNA Slops is owned by RLP Embroidery and we pay Royalties to the RNA

The RNA Logo is included in your garment price. All you have to do is select New or Blazer Style badge and add your Branch Name, of which is optional.

Tel: 07983 151011 E. Mail: ray@rnaslops.clothing



RNA Longcast

2023	
06 May	His Majesty King Charles III Coronation
06 May	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting – Cromer
11 to 14 May	Londonderry Branch will be Commemorating the Battle of the Atlantic
20 May	Area 4 Quarterly Meeting – Bodmin Branch
26 to 28 May	RNA Conference - Liverpool
26 to 28 May	Battle of the Atlantic 80 Commemorations - Liverpool
16 Jun	Open Day – Central Office
24 Jun	National Armed Forces Day – Falmouth
14 Jul	Open Day – Central Office
05 Aug	Area 3 Quarterly Meeting (Committee 03 Aug)
05 Aug	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting – venue TBD
11 Aug	Open Day – Central Office
10 Sep	Naval Associations / RNA Biennial Parade - Whitehall
16 Sep	Area 4 Quarterly Meeting – Frome Branch

29 Sep	Open Day – Central Office
28 Oct	Area 5 Quarterly Meeting – Harwich
18 Nov	Area 3 Quarterly Meeting (Committee 16 Nov)
2024	
20 Jan	Area 4 AGM – Dorchester Branch to host (note change of date and venue)
May (DTBD)	National Standard Bearers Competition

HMS Collingwood sailors spread the love...

Sailors based at HMS Collingwood were delighted to be asked to join in Valentine’s Day festivities at a neighbouring nursing home.

Staff served the residents with a special three-course Valentine’s lunch and a group of trainees arrived afterwards to present all the ladies living at the home with a long-stemmed red rose. The young sailors were keen to spend more time with the residents, some of whom were veterans, sharing experiences and hearing stories of their lives.

AB Sam Hinks was especially keen to visit since his grandmother, Pam, was one of the residents. He said: “I recently arrived at Collingwood, but my course hasn’t started yet so I was keen to volunteer to come along before I realised it was where my Nan was. It’s just a nice thing to be able to do and the staff have been so lovely.”

Pam was equally delighted to see Sam (pictured right) and said: “I’m really proud of him and it’s so good to see him here today. It’s great to have all the young sailors visiting.”



Ruby Abbott, known as Pat, was interested to talk to today's trainees and she especially noted how the uniforms have changed. The visit brought back memories of her days as a Wren and later being married to a sailor.



Pat said: "We did our job but also had great fun in the WRNS. Later I had the chance to travel with my husband across the world, including Aden and Kenya."

HMS Collingwood enjoys close links with its near neighbour and trainees are always thrilled to be able to take some time away from their busy training schedules to visit the residents there, whatever the celebration.

D'ye hear there'...

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

This Month Featuring.....

[RNA Bodmin](#)

[RNA Torrevieja \(Spain\)](#)

[RNA St Neots](#)

[RNA Birchington](#)

[RNA Chard](#)

[RNA Portsea & Portsmouth](#)

[RNA Area 2](#)

[RNA Falmouth](#)

[RNA Ashford](#)

RNA Bodmin Branch

No goodbyes were necessary – just a large vote of thanks – on Friday 3 February when S/M Mike Frost, Vice Chair of Bodmin Branch, stepped down.

Mike, known to many as Jack, joined the Branch in 1987, following his and his wife S/M Isobel Frost's return to live in Bodmin.

There, for the following 36 years, he remained a stalwart rock of the Branch as a member, Committee Member, Chair for 15 years and Vice Chair for seven years.



Bodmin Branch Chairman Ian Laurie presents S/M Michael Frost with his Certificate of Thanks

Mike represented the Branch at many Area and National meetings, ceremonies and memorials, the most recent being Remembrance Sunday in Bodmin in November 2022.

At almost 84 Mike, a former Chief Petty Officer Artificer, felt it was time to step back and allow others to fill his shoes. He does not say goodbye though, and will remain a member of the Branch.

Mike joined the Royal Navy in September 1955, leaving some 14 years later in April 1969 to emigrate to Australia – taking his family as £10 Poms!

He rejoined the Royal Navy in February 1972, eventually leaving for good in 1982 – a sum total of 24 years served. Amongst the ships that were graced with his presence were HMS Ark Royal (the BIG one!), HMS Forth, HMS Adamant (not the pop star) , HMS Blake, HMS Centaur, HMS Eagle, HMS Fisgard, HMS Sultan, HMS Fearless and HMS Kent.

S/M Isobel stood down as Social Secretary last year – and was replaced this year by their daughter S/M Fiona Hawkey. Their son, S/M Peter Frost, is the standard bearer for the Branch and their eldest daughter, another former CPO, is the current Secretary.

They also have two son-in-laws involved in the Branch, one of whom is the Chairman, so it seems S/M Mike Frost has made sure that family will continue to support both the Branch and its ethos well into the future.

He was presented with a Certificate of Thanks from the Branch by the Chair S/M Ian Laurie.

S/M Mike said: “I have been proud to have been associated with Bodmin Branch RNA for so long, and feel the RNA is just a natural extension of our days in the RN and the camaraderie that we all share.

“I am now looking forward to the RNA Area 4 Reunion in Bideford on 3rd March, where I can let my hair down and enjoy getting together with everyone from all around Area 4.”

RNA Torrevieja (Spain)



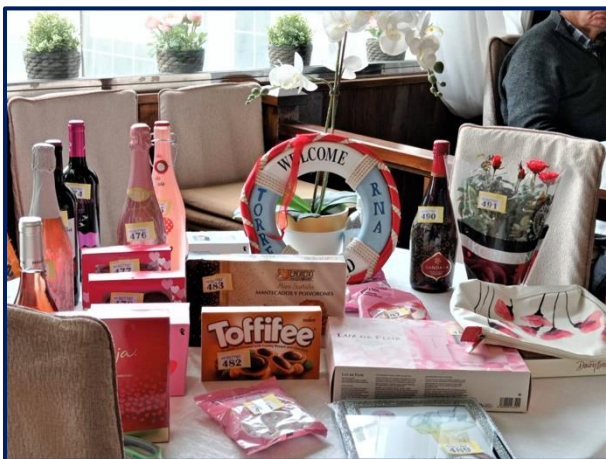
Once again more than 30 RNA Torrevieja Branch (RNATB) shipmates showered their Valentines with affection and made it a day to remember at the Restaurante Rendezvous on 14 February.

It was another spectacularly successful event which was extremely well-orchestrated by ever-resourceful RNATB Social Secretary Sally Miller and her team.

All the ladies loved their individually handmade cards, their personal red rose and their own bottle of Cava, along with the heart-shaped balloons, lovingly decorated table seating plans and mini red hearts strewn all over the tables, all presented with panache.

And of course, the RNATB shipmates had another magnificent raffle, with more than 20 prizes, steered by their very successful Raffle Co-ordinator, S/M Nicola Louden.

The whole celebration was a 'steaming success' and won a universal **BZ**. Shipmates are already looking forward to next year's event, as well as some more immediate up-and-coming entires in the social calendar, including a **Murder Mystery Dinner**, a **Cava Reception and High Tea to celebrate King Charles' III Coronation** and their **Trafalgar Night Dinner**, to name but a few.



Torrevieja Branch, which is named after the city on the Costa Brava (the south-east coast of Spain) in the province of Alicante has a diverse mix of members, who are a friendly and engaging group of people who embrace their ethos of **Comradeship, Loyalty, Patriotism & Unity** while enjoying a variety of social events.

If you would like to join them, contact:
Chairman Tony Jenkins at
Chairman.RNATB@mail.com or on Mob: +34 693866709, What's App +44 7576117222.
Vice Chairman Dusty Miller at

ViceChairRNATB@mail.com or on Mob/What's App: +34 711006670.
Treasurer, Carl Louden at carllouden@msn.com or on Mob: 711019915, What's App +44 769585518.

Or just come along and meet them on the **first Wednesday** of each month at **1700** at **Lakeview Bar & Restaurant**, Calle Toledo 16, Ciudad Quesada, 03170, Alicante.

RNA St Neots Branch

Although St Neots had a presentation evening at their December meeting, some recipients for good causes awards could not make the meeting because of inclement weather.

Luckily, those who were absent were able to attend the February meeting instead.

First up was the presentation of a cheque to Sister Dawn Haws of the Sue Rider St Johns Hospice at Moggerhanger, just to the south of St Neots.

S/M Maureen Ridley presented the cheque to Sister Haws (right) – and S/Ms Helen Patterson and John Lee are clearly enjoying the occasion!

Next was the presentation of a cheque to John Rawlings, Executive Manager of the Huntington Society for the Blind, by S/M Jayne Miller.



The St Neots branch have close links with the RAFA as they use their premises for their meetings and on special occasions.

RAFA Steward Nettie Hockley often opens the club for the RNA when it is her day off, so it was therefore decided to present Netty with a special award in appreciation of her generosity.

Pictured above is S/M John Gibbs presenting a Certificate of Appreciation to Nettie with S/M Tony Webley looking on.

Finally, S/M John Lee is pictured (right) presenting Branch President S/M John Gibbs with two cut-glass Globe Decanters with a beautifully embossed Ship motif in commemoration of the branch's 50th anniversary.

As well as being a shipmate, John is also President of the St Neots RAFA. S/M Geoff Patterson, Branch Chairman looks on. This thoughtful gift will be especially useful on events such as Death-of-the-Tot evenings.



RNA Birchington Branch

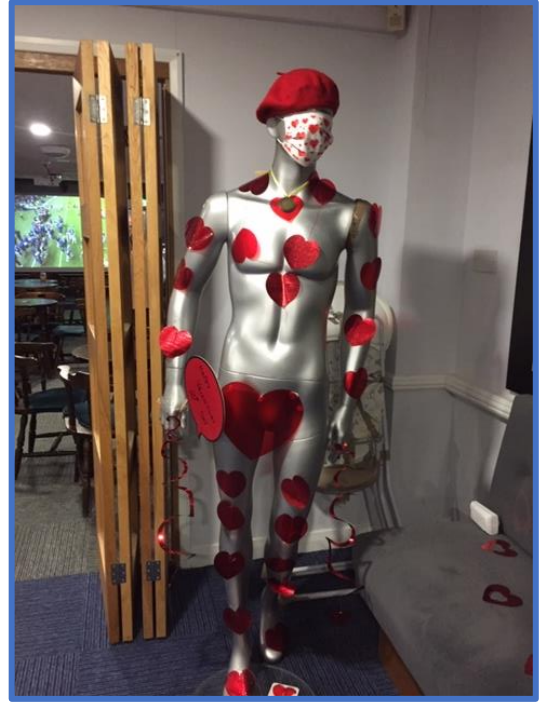
Birchington Branch held their post-Christmas Valentine Banyan at the Minster Royal British Legion club on 11 February, attended by 24 members and their partners.

A Silly Quiz was started, an essence dinner was served, and a very good and funny 1960s singer entertained those who attended.

Shipmates had Pussers and the partners had a Baileys, and everyone had the chance to remember their shipmate Eric Smith, who recently crossed the bar.

Eric will be fondly remembered for, amongst other things, always wearing port anhd starboard socks...

Shipmates – including the unnamed individual pictured here – thanked the Legion for hosting the Banyan.



RNA Chard Branch

Sunday 12 February saw the first-ever Chard Branch Valentine's Breakfast, held at the Chard Cricket Club.

The event was well-attended, attracting 19 branch members and seven guests – four from the Chard Royal British Legion and three guests invited by members.

As something of a bonus, the invitations resulted in two future members being recruited.

The breakfast was deemed an all-round success, and thanks go to branch secretary Ian for organising, and of course for the excellent breakfasts produced by Claire and partner Ian of the cricket club.

On the strength of this it is hoped to hold further breakfasts in the near future.

The Chard branch were entertained (and educated!) during their latest social on 10 February by Cllr Alan Hall, the vice chairman of West Monkton (Taunton) Council, who is responsible for Country Parks.



Alan has been responsible for organising the many aspects of securing the necessary land/ground and planning in which to plant the Somerset Wood commemorating those who gave their lives during World War 1.



The land will consist of 23 acres in which 11,281 various native trees will be planted to match the number of names listed in the Somerset Book of Honour kept in the transept of Wells Cathedral for every man woman and child of Somerset killed during World War 1.

Progress has been made to the point that permission has been granted to build a museum, cafe, observatory and indoor

auditorium in order to view live images from the telescope.

A Memorial stone has been carved and fixed in honour of the Falklands Conflict and it is hoped to permanently house the Poppy of Honour which contain Poppies all of which have the names, ranks and ages hand written on of all those lost on World War I.

Access to the site will be made to the public in June of this year.

A vote of thanks was given by S/M Dick Moon, who also took the images above, and the social was rounded off with a few sherbets – all in all a great night was had.

RNA Portsea and Portsmouth Branch

An historic AGM took place on 17 February when the Portsmouth Branch amalgamated with the Portsea Branch and to be known as the Portsea And Portsmouth Branch.

44 members were present, including former National President of the RNA Vice Admiral John McAnally, who was voted in to be our first President.

Pictured right are shipmates who attended the AGM, and pictured below are some of the guests who attended – from left, RNA National President Vice Admiral Duncan Potts, RNA National Chairman S/M Keith Ridley, Portsea and Portsmouth Branch Chairman S/M Mike Noonan and RNA General Secretary S/M Bill Oliphant.





On Tuesday 21 February the Standard and members of the Portsea & Portsmouth Branch attended the memorial and wreath laying service for SS Mendi at Milton Cemetery.

The event was also attended by the Lord Lt of Hampshire and Lord Mayor of Portsmouth.

SS Mendi was launched in 1905 and was chartered as a troopship in 1916.

On February 21 1917 she sank after being

involved in a collision with the large cargo ship Darro in the English Channel, 11 miles south of the Isle of Wight. 646 men lost their lives, including a large number of Black Southern Africans who had answered the call to war and were part of the South African Native Labour Corps, en route to work in French ports.

Photos Courtesy of Louise Purcell Portsea & Portsmouth RNA



RNA Area 2

After almost six years in the role of Area 2 Treasurer Shipmate John Richards has decided to retire.

Before taking up the role John was the Gravesend Branch Treasurer for a number of years, when the Area could boast 27 Branches.

That was hard work, and the workload remained considerable even with a collection of branches much reduced in numbers, with John responsible for the administration of Branch subscriptions and accounts..

John has managed to keep his cool and, over the years, submitted an easy-to-read statement of accounts, thereby keeping the Area in good order.

Area Chairman S/M Steve Susans was delighted to present John with an Area Hip Flask at the Annual General Meeting.



A sad farewell to a gentle man and a gentleman who, although suffering poor health, is now thinking about joining a Branch in the Area.

RNA Falmouth Branch

Shipmate Mick Stevens, Chairman of Falmouth branch, highlighted the views of his shipmates, alongside representatives of other veterans groups when they met with Shadow Armed Forces Minister Luke Pollard, Labour MP for Plymouth Devonport.

Wide-ranging discussions included Labour's vision for the future Armed Forces, Base Porting, what the Fleet might look like, veterans' concerns, social prescribing and a range of other issues.

This was the first of a proposed series of meetings with local politicians, councillors and veterans groups

RNA Ashford Branch

On Tuesday 28 February Ashford Branch shipmates helped honour the 81st anniversary of HMS Albacore, Warship Week and the formation of Ashford's Sea Cadet Unit.

RNA members were there to witness the raising of a specially-designed ensign for HMS Albacore.

At a service conducted by the Rev Dr Sue Starkings, in the presence of the Mayor of Ashford, Cllr Jenny Webb, the Ensign was raised outside the Civic Centre, watched by members of Ashford RNA, Royal British Legion, and Civic Centre staff.

CROSSING THE BAR – Celebrating a life well lived

[John Gordon](#)
[Bill Silvester](#)
[Bill Blount](#)
[Jack Harris](#)
[Dean Rogers](#)

John Gordon - City of Inverness Branch

John Duncan Gordon, a member of Inverness Branch, died on Saturday 28 January, just two days before his 95th birthday.

Eleven RNA members attended his funeral service held in Inverness; Bob Coburn (Chairman) carried out Standard Bearing duties, and Gordon Ross (Secretary) delivered a short speech about John's life in the Navy, commencing at the age of 14 when he joined the Naval Canteen Service in 1942, serving aboard MFVs supplying the warships of the 1st Minelayer Flotilla.

Thereafter he served time in warships operating out of Scapa Flow in the North Sea and Norwegian Sea, and later spent time in the Far East operating round China and on the Yangtze River during the Chinese Civil war (1949).

John left the Royal Navy in 1951 and became a founder member of RNA City of Inverness branch in 1999.



Following the service, RNA members formed a guard of honour and Bob Coburn carried out the required ceremonial duties at the graveside.

Wilfred 'Bill' Silvester

S/M Richie Farman, of Portsea and Portsmouth Branch, said that his good friend Bill Silvester went on his Final Draft on the evening of 6 February 2023.

"I had known Bill for three years when SSAFA brought him back from France and we met at the Salisbury Armed Forces And Veterans Club," said Richie. "He moved to Portsmouth after the first Covid lockdown and I used to make the journey regularly to visit him. My personal circumstance changed and I also moved back to Portsmouth when we had regular days out and visits.

"He fell ill again and his accommodation was not suitable, and he was not getting suitable care. RNA Welfare Manager Lynda Pearson was amazing in getting Bill moved to Admiral Jellicoe House, where he spent his last months.

He was involved with Project 71, who sponsored his name on a brick at the D-Day Museum in Portsmouth.

The following is a tribute by SSAFA, who gave permission for me to use their words; the photos were taken by myself."

World War 2 Arctic Convoy veteran, Normandy hero and SSAFA beneficiary Wilfred 'Bill' Augustus Silvester, 98, passed away peacefully in his sleep on 6 February.

Bill joined the Royal Navy in 1938 at the age of 15, attending Naval training school for 18 months to learn about signals and communications, before serving in the heavy cruiser HMS Berwick. This took him to the Arctic, defending and protecting the Russian Convoys in the Denmark Strait between Iceland and Greenland.

In January 1943, Bill and a friend volunteered for special service as communicators, not knowing that they would be taking part in the Normandy Landings a year later in 1944.

After further training in Portsmouth, he was set to work as part of a small beach group, sending communications between Port-en-Bessin, near Arromanches, and warships off the Normandy coast.



From France, Bill was posted to Antwerp in Belgium before returning to Port-en-Bessin to marry local girl, Simonne. Having been given two weeks leave, the couple spent their honeymoon in Paris.



In January 1946, Bill was posted to Singapore and Borneo for two-and-a-half years, followed by a period serving in HMS Belfast whilst it was in dry dock in London, before being drafted to HMS Cygnet and finishing up back in the Arctic! Bill also spent time in Malta before finally being discharged from the Royal Navy in 1954.

Deciding that they might find a better life overseas, Bill and Simonne left Blighty in 1960 to settle in New Zealand with their two daughters. Simonne sadly passed away 20 years ago and so Bill returned to live in Normandy.

In 2020, Bill approached SSAFA, the Armed Forces charity, to help with his repatriation to England. SSAFA's Branch Secretaries in France and Wiltshire coordinated Bill's return home, and Bill saw out his days in the brand new Royal Naval Benevolent Trust's Admiral Jellicoe House Nursing Home in Portsmouth. A sailor to the last.

Long after the war, on top of his British Service medals he'd been given for his

service and sacrifice, in the 1990s Bill was also awarded the Soviet Union's Russian Convoy Medal. And in 2014, for his part in the Normandy Invasion, he was awarded the Légion d'Honneur, the highest civilian award in France.

Bill Blount – Woking Branch

Woking branch announced the death of S/M Bill Blount at the age of 97 on 2 January 2023. Bill joined the Royal Marines in 1943 at the age of 18, following in the footsteps of his father and uncle.

Formerly of 40 Cdo RM, was a 19-year-old Royal Marines gunner at D-Day, serving aboard a landing craft that led the way in for Canadian troops to storm the beaches, losing one of his friends in the initial assault when a shell exploded close to the craft.

He went on to serve in the Far East, and for his efforts on D-Day Bill was awarded the French Legion d'Honneur.

Bill, a Life Member of Woking branch, played football for Woking FC for three seasons before a badly broken ankle ended his top-level playing career; he went on to be a leading light in football in the local community.

Jack Harris – Chatham Branch

Last month we told you about S/M Jack Harris, of Chatham branch, who had crossed the bar.

A very well attended service added to the tributes paid to S/M Jack Harris on Wednesday 22 February at Chatham Crematorium.

Jack's daughter Sheila and son David would like to thank all who attended, and especially: The Standard Bearers, which included two from the Merchant Navy, were led by Parade Commander and Area 2 Chairman Steven Susans.

They subsequently lined the Nave in the Chapel, and amongst their number were S/Ms Steve Champion, Gerry Brown, Gerry Hines, Ron Dorey, Martyn Evans, Mark Stanford and Alan Oliver.

Shipmate Susan Plummer with her brilliant staff very kindly made the facilities of the University restaurant available, and prepared the buffet for the wake.

Jack joined the RNR in 1964 at HMS Wildfire in Chatham (Collingwood Block Brompton Barracks), where he rose to the rank of Fleet CPO, serving 15 years.

He joined the RNA in the summer of 1982 and became a life member in 1994. Jack was a very well-respected man inside and outside the RNA, and a great friend to many.



WO Dean Rogers

It is with the deepest sadness that we announce the sad passing of our Shipmate Dean Rogers, after a long and courageous battle with cancer.

WO Dean Rogers MBE joined the Royal Navy in 1976 and went on to enjoy a distinguished 35-year career as a submariner.

Dean joined the Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity (RNRMC) as its first professional fundraiser in March 2011. He singlehandedly set up the Royal Navy's multi award-winning Payroll Giving scheme, and during his time at the RNRMC he raised in excess of £12 million.

In March 2019, Dean received an MBE in recognition of his services to charitable fundraising from the Queen at Windsor Castle, something of which he was enormously proud.

Although he left the Royal Navy a dozen years ago, Dean espoused the key tenets of leadership, teamwork, morale, humility and respect for others. He will remain unparalleled in the history of the RNRMC in dedicating himself wholeheartedly to supporting the Naval family from the newest recruits to the oldest veterans.

A memorial service is being held for Dean at HMS Excellent, Whale Island, Portsmouth, on Friday 10 March 2023. If you knew Dean personally and would like to attend, please contact Sara Field in Central Office – sara@royalnavalassoc.com

It would also be wonderful to have the Local Area Standard Bearers in attendance if available, please also contact Sara for access permits

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UK Holiday Group /Just for Groups

Variety of special deals for both Groups and Individuals. 5% of turnover returned to RNA to reinvest in CONA and other programmes.

www.justforgroups.com

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- RNA member - Day Ticket Offer just £20 plus 3 guests at £20 each provides access to the all attractions including the Submarine Museum, RM Museum and Explosion!.
- RNA Member – 30% discount on Annual Ultimate Explorer Ticket (featuring all attractions)

Legal Services



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

Breakdown Service



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



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

conatravelservices@justforgroups.co.uk



- *Discounts on a large range of new cars*
<https://www.forcescarsdirect.com/rna>

Shortcast

The 'Shortcast' Editor's Note

Please forward any reunions for 2023/2024 to mike@royalnavalassoc.com and I will publish them here

	Please check go to link for RN Shipmates.co.uk for a comprehensive list of further reunions. www.rnshipmates.co.uk
2023	
31 March	HMS Hermes Association reunion weekend at the New Continental Hotel in Plymouth. For details see https://www.hmshermesassociation.com/
14 April	County-Class Destroyers Association reunion in Rosyth.
15 April	Scottish Area AGM 2023 and 2 nd Quarterly Meeting, 12.30 for 1300, at RBLs Club, The Square, Grantown-on-Spey PH26 3HF. Existing, returning, new and visiting shipmates welcome.
	<p>Calling all RN Chefs / Cooks / Caterers past and present. You are invited attend the next reunion in Cardiff on 12-14 May 2023.</p> <p>Reunions have taken place reunions in Birmingham, Liverpool and Paisley, which have been well supported. We have a raffle, a book of remembrance for fallen chefs / caterers, an auction in aid of Bravehound, which supports former Servicemen and women and their families, by providing training and dogs to support veterans. We were delighted to have one of the dogs named Paisley, after a previous reunion, and its veteran owner to come and chat with us all.</p> <p>For further details please contact Martin McDonough (ex-Leading Cook) at martin.mcdonough@sodexogov.co.uk</p>

Swinging the Lamp – March 2023

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, and to use this excellent book as a source of inspiration. If you would like to read more it can be purchased from The History Press, ISBN 978 0 7509 8266 5



Date	Year	Entry
1 st	1907	The end of the home-made Royal Navy uniform. Up to this point sailors used material to make their own uniforms, more or less to Admiralty specifications - though the tendency to go all-out for a 'tiddy suit', with

		exaggerated features which allowed a sailor to dress to impress on special occasions, was widespread. From March 1 onward sailors were issued with ready-made uniforms (though the tiddy suit persisted...).
2 nd	1953	806 Naval Air Squadron was recommissioned at HMS Goldcrest (RN Air Station Brawdy, in Pembrokeshire), and in doing so became the first front-line Fleet Air Arm unit to operate the reliable Hawker Sea Hawk jet fighter.
3 rd	1971	HMS Dreadnought became the first British nuclear submarine to surface at the North Pole, gently surfacing by breaking through a patch of thinner ice close to the top of the world, and remaining there for around eight hours.
4 th	1960	Colony-class light cruiser HMS Gambia reached Port Louis, the capital of Mauritius, to join the aid effort after tropical cyclone Carol swept through the Indian Ocean at the end of February. The storm, with winds reaching almost 160mph, killed more than 40 people, destroyed or seriously damaged tens of thousands of buildings and devastated the island's sugar crop. Naval parties restored power and telephone links, and helped provide emergency shelters.
5 th	1954	Experimental 1,000-ton submarine HMS Explorer launched at Barrow, based on German technology from captured U-boat U-1407. The British submarine, along with younger sister HMS Excalibur, used highly-volatile High Test Peroxide (HTP) fuel, which had a habit of exploding unexpectedly (hence her alternative name, HMS Exploder). Also known as the 'blonde boats' (from the hair-bleaching aspect of hydrogen peroxide), they were very fast but unreliable, and the introduction of nuclear power rendered further development unnecessary. After a spell as a high-speed (25 knots) target boat, Explorer was scrapped in 1965.
6 th	1945	Midget submarine HMS XE11 drifted out of her exercise area at Loch Striven in the Firth of Clyde and collided with boom defence vessel Norina. Two of her crew of five escaped when XE11 sank, the others – including her CO, were lost. The boat was later salvaged.
7 th	2003	HMS Echo, the first of a pair of multi-role surveying ships, was commissioned on this day. The ship carried out a variety of roles, including survey work in the Gulf and Mediterranean, fishery protection duties, migrant patrols and defence diplomacy, and was part of the search for missing Malaysian Airlines Flight 370 in March 2014. She was decommissioned in June last year.
8 th	1916	Fred T Jane, founding editor of All The World's Fighting Ships, died in Southsea at the age of 50. Jane was an accomplished illustrator and wargamer, and the first Fighting Ships books, from 1898, were part of a wargame system he created. Their accuracy (particularly ship silhouettes) made them a standard reference book on the bridges of warships around the world. Jane also wrote satirical science fiction novels and was actively involved in politics.
9 th	1942	Fleet Air Arm torpedo bombers from HMS Victorious make an unsuccessful attack on German battleship Tirpitz off the coast of Norway during the Operation Sportspalast foray against Allied Arctic convoys. All torpedoes missed (one by only a few metres) and the warship returned to the safety of Narvik that evening, having shot down two of the 12 Fairey Albacores (for the loss of six men) from 817 and 832 Naval Air Squadrons.
10 th	1956	With Lt Cdr Peter Twiss at the controls, the Fairey Delta 2 aircraft smashed the world air speed record, clocking 1,132mph on a

		measured course over West Sussex. That was more than 300mph faster than the existing record, held by the Americans, of 822mph, and made Twiss, a 34-year-old former apprentice tea-taster turned test pilot, the first man to exceed 1,000mph.
11 th	2011	Aircraft carrier HMS Ark Royal was formally decommissioned at Portsmouth Naval Base under the 2010 Strategic Defence and Security Review, some five years earlier than expected. She was towed to Turkey to be scrapped in the summer of 2013.
12 th	2009	21-year-old Royal Navy Medical Assistant AB Kate Nesbitt ran 70 metres under Taliban rocket attack and gunfire to save the life of a wounded British soldier during Operation Herrick in Afghanistan. As the battle raged around them, Nesbitt treated L/Cpl John List, of 1 Rifles, for 45 minutes after he had been shot through the jaw and neck. List was later airlifted out, and Nesbitt was awarded the Military Cross – the first woman from the Royal Navy to be thus honoured, and only the second woman in the British Armed Forces.
13 th	1801	In a letter to Lady Emma Hamilton, Nelson showed his impatience with the diplomatic approach to international issues with Denmark, writing “I hate your pen and ink men; a fleet of British ships of war are the best negotiators in Europe.”
14 th	1958	The final parade was held at HMS Ceres, the Royal Navy Supply School at Wetherby in Yorkshire, before the establishment close at the end of the month. The School moved to Chatham, then eventually to HMS Raleigh at Torpoint in Cornwall in Kent.
15 th	1942	The first operational Royal Navy midget submarine, HMS X3, was launched on the River Hamble in Hampshire. Also known as Piker 1, the boat was part of a class of submarine designed to attack enemy ships in harbour, but was lost on 4 November the same year in Loch Striven, on the Forth of Clyde, through a leaking valve. Her crew survived.
16 th	1889	Steam corvette HMS Calliope became one of the most famous ships in the world when a fierce cyclone hit the island of Samoa. Calliope was at anchor in the cramped, primitive harbour at Apia, which was crammed with more than a dozen ships, in mid-March to protect British interests in Samoa. A cyclone developed over two days, and by 16 March winds of over 100mph were causing the ships to collide and drag anchor in the V-shaped harbour. Capt Henry Kane had the ship’s engine working at full power to take the strain off anchor cables, but they began to part. Two American warships in close proximity were being driven ashore, so Calliope got under way and inched her way between ships and coral reefs, covering less than half a mile in two hours. Cheered on by the admiring Americans, Calliope continued to crawl along in heavy seas, eventually making open water where she remained for two days, riding out the storm. When she returned to harbour on 19 March, all the other ships had been wrecked or sunk. Calliope later sailed to Sydney where she and her ship’s company were welcomed as heroes.
17 th	1941	The first confirmed sinking of a U-boat using radar happened when the World War 1-vintage destroyer HMS Vanoc spotted the damaged U-100 on the surface and rammed the submarine, sinking her with all but six of her crew. Shortly after, U-99 was also damaged by depth charges and attacked by Vanoc and another destroyer. The U-boat was scuttled, and in the space of a few hours two German U-boat aces had been removed from the Battle of the Atlantic.

18 th	1904	The first British-designed submarine, HMS A1, sank after being accidentally rammed by mail steamer HMS Berwick Castle in the Solent. The submarine was carrying out practice attacks on cruiser HMS Juno when her conning tower was struck, and despite sinking in only 12 metres of water the hull flooded and all hands on board drowned. She was the first British submarine loss (and the first to suffer fatalities), but that was not the end of it – she was raised, recommissioned, and sank a second time in 1911 due to a petrol explosion after she had been converted to an unmanned test vessel.
19 th	1946	Audacious-class aircraft carrier HMS Eagle launched by Princess Elizabeth at the Harland and Wolff yard in Belfast. With a displacement of over 50,000 tons fully loaded, Eagle and sister HMS Ark Royal were, until the arrival of the current Queen Elizabeth-class, the largest aircraft carrier built for the Royal Navy. Eagle was decommissioned in 1972 after a 20-year career, and scrapped in the late 1970s.
20 th	1858	Cork beds were introduced to the Royal Navy as an experiment, potentially replacing coir (coconut fibre) or horsehair mattresses. The experiment was not a success.
21 st	1944	The Rev H C W Mauger RNVR, of 42 Cdo Royal Marines, was killed in action at Arakan in Burma (Myanmar) – the last of the 16 chaplains who died on active service during World War 2.
22 nd	1942	Explosives expert Lt Dennis Copperwheat was awarded the George Cross for his heroic actions in scuttling a blazing ammunition ship in Valletta Harbour, Malta. The officer, from HMS Penelope, led a party laying charges on the freighter Talabot, then saw his men to safety before firing the charges while fully exposed to the blast – the length of the electric firing cables prevented him from seeking shelter. The ship sank, Copperwheat was uninjured, and much of the ammunition on board (which would have severely damaged harbour facilities if left to burn and detonate) was salvaged and used in the invasion of Italy.
23 rd	1941	450-ton anti-submarine trawler HMS Visenda sank U-551 – twice her displacement – in the North Atlantic south of Iceland using depth charges. All 45 sailors in the German submarine, which was just five days into her first patrol having been commissioned the previous November, went down with their boat.
24 th	1927	Royal Navy and US Navy ships bombarded areas of Nanking (Nanjing) to drive off soldiers of the National Revolutionary Army (NRA) and rioting Chinese who were looting and burning foreign businesses and homes, and had killed several foreign citizens including two Britons. NRA commanders restored discipline by 26 March, and the so-called Nanking Incident was over by the following day.
25 th	1944	Fabled Royal Navy test pilot Lt Cdr Eric 'Winkle' Brown carried out the first deck-landing of a high-performance heavy twin engine aircraft, using a modified de Havilland Mosquito FB (fighter bomber) Mk VI on board aircraft carrier HMS Indefatigable off the Ayrshire coast. This aircraft was the prototype TR Mk 33, the first of the Sea Mosquito torpedo bombers.
26 th	1945	Kingfisher-class sloop HMS Puffin rammed and destroyed a German Seehund midget submarine in the North Sea off the Suffolk coast, but in doing so she detonated the German vessel's torpedoes, badly damaging her own hull. She limped back to port, but was deemed too badly damaged to repair, and declared a constructive total loss the same day.
27 th	1976	The culmination of a series of 'incidents' between frigate HMS Diomedes and 740-ton Icelandic armed trawler Baldur during the third

		Cod War. The two had collided several times in the weeks before in the ongoing dispute over fishing rights in the North Atlantic, but on 27 March Diomedea collided with Baldur's unusual sharp stern, ripping a six metre gash in her hull and forcing her back to the UK for repairs.
28th	1967	Blackburn Buccaneer bombers from 736 Naval Air Squadron were part of a coordinated effort to destroy the wreck of supertanker SS Torrey Canyon, which had gone aground on the Seven Stones Reef, between the Isles of Scilly and Cornwall, on 18 March. The accident caused the largest oil spill in the world to date, with oil and chemicals used to mitigate the disaster polluting hundreds of miles of coastline in the UK, the Channel Islands, France and Spain. The bombing raids by the Buccaneers, from Lossiemouth, and RAF Hawker Hunters from Chivenor ignited the oil, but exceptionally high tides and rough seas limited the success, and further bombing runs were carried out by Buccaneers from Brawdy and Sea Vixens from Yeovilton. The wrecked tanker finally sank the following day
29th	1944	Modified Black Swan-class sloop HMS Starling, supporting Arctic convoy JW58, sank U-961 as the submarine made its way to the Atlantic. The attack added to the ship's burgeoning reputation as a submarine killer under the command of Capt Johnnie Walker – Starling ended the war as the Royal Navy's most successful anti-submarine warfare ship. U-96 was under a week into her first patrol of the war when she approached Convoy JW58 more than 150 miles north of the Faroes. She was immediately picked up by Starling's underwater sensors and the sloop attacked with depth charges, sinking the submarine with all 49 hands.
30th	1912	Capt Robert Falcon Scott RN died around 30 March 1912, along with his colleagues during the doomed Terra Nova expedition to the Antarctic. Scott and four companions had reached the South Pole on 17 January 1912, only to find that rival explorer Roald Amundsen, of Norway, had claimed the honour of being the first to reach the pole just five weeks earlier. The dejected Britons began their 860-mile trudge back to base on 19 January, but after initially good progress the party were hampered by injury and illness, with one man – Edgar Evans – dying in mid-February and the rest suffering hunger and fatigue. Supplies at depots proved insufficient, the weather was particularly severe, and a planned rendezvous with a supporting dog-sled group failed to materialise; the result was that the remaining four men set up a final camp just 12 miles from their next depot and possible salvation. As the temperature plunged to -40C they were trapped in their tent by a fierce blizzard with their supplies running out. When their tent was found eight months later it seemed apparent that Scott had been the last to die.
31st	1984	Chatham Dockyard closed its gates for the final time after more than 400 years of Naval activity on the Medway. The yard is thought to have built and provided more than 500 ships for the Royal Navy, and at the height of its powers employed more than 10,000 skilled workers. A year later the Georgian part of the yard reopened as a visitor attraction, and now it attracts thousands of visitors each year.

Annual Conference 2023
 Room Rates 25th - 28th May 2023
 For those not attending the Gala Dinner

Rates per room (2 Nights minimum stay)			
		B&B	H/B
2 Nights (Fri & sat)	Single	£205	£212.50
	Double/Twin	£320	£335
3 Nights (Fri to Sun)	Single	£299.50	£314.50
	Double/Twin	£377	£407
4 Nights (Thurs to Sun)	Single	£370	£392.50
	Double/Twin	£476	£521

Afternoon Tea/ Coffee & Cakes on arrival in the grand lounge area.
 Dinner in restaurant
 Breakfast served in the Pearce Suite.

Live entertainment Friday and Sunday

Happy hour in the Wave Bar between 11am - 5pm each day .

Car Parking £15.00 per car for duration of weekend.

Accommodation can be booked on

0151 709 7200 Ex 2 or 3

ADELPHI HOTEL LIVERPOOL

Royal Naval Association Annual Conference 2023

Room Rates 25th - 28th May 2023

250 Rooms available for the Gala Dinner

Rates per room (2 Nights minimum stay)			
			CODE
2 Nights (Fri & Sat)	Single	£240.00	RNA2
	Double/Twin	£390.00	
3 Nights (Fri to Sun)	Single	£342.00	RNA3
	Double/Twin	£462.00	
4 Nights (Thurs to Sun)	Single	£420.00	RNA4
	Double/Twin	£576.00	

Afternoon Tea/ Coffee & Cakes on arrival in the grand lounge area.

Dinner in restaurant on Friday and Sunday.

Breakfast served in the Pearce Suite.

Saturday Gala Dinner in the Banqueting Hall.

(Wrist bands will be given to you on arrival and must be worn to gain entry to the Gala Dinner).

Live entertainment Friday, Saturday and Sunday Evenings

Happy hour in the Wave Bar between 11am - 5pm each day

Car Parking £15 per car for duration of weekend.

Accommodation will be booked centrally on 0161 923 9170 (Using the code)

NOVOTEL HOTEL LIVERPOOL CENTRE
 (4 Star Hotel)
 Royal Naval Association Annual Conference 2023
 Room Rates 25th - 29thMay 2023

Rates per room (2 Nights minimum stay)		
2 Nights (Fri & Sat)	Single	£350
	Double/Twin	£370
3 Nights (Fri to Sun)	Single	£450
	Double/Twin	£480
4 Nights (Thurs to Sun)	Single	£525
	Double/Twin	£565

Rate inclusive of - Breakfast, guest Wi-Fi,
 use of leisure facilities [pool, gym, Sauna] and VAT
Guests to pay in full 28 days prior to arrival

The Gala Dinner (£27.50 pre-paid) can be booked
 directly with the Adelphi on 0151 709 7200 ext. 2 or 3
 Those staying at the Adelphi have the dinner included with their
 package so additional places will be limited. For those who are able
 to book, wrist bands will be available at the Adelphi reception from
 Friday evening and must be worn to gain entry to the Gala Dinner.

You are welcome to attend the live entertainment
 at the Adelphi on Friday and Sunday nights.

The hotel does not have car parking. They advise their guests to use
 Q park Hanover Street, just opposite to the hotel, postcode L1 4AF.
 They provide 30% discount at the reception which only needs to be
 obtained when taking the car out of the car park

To book email the booking form to H6495-sb@accor.com

Hotel contact details
 40 Hanover Street, Liverpool, L1 4LN
 Tel: 0151 702 5100



Booking and Payment Form for
Royal Naval Association Annual Conference 2023

26th -28th May 2023, 2 nights minimum, Bed and Breakfast

GUESTDETAIL

Main occupant name:

Occupant name:

Nights per stay:

Room Type required:

Date of check in:

Email:

Contact number:

Additional comments:

PAYMENT DETAILS

Total Rate of Stay: £

Name of the Cardholder [as it appears on the card]:

Full Address of Cardholder:

Credit card type and number:

Card expiry date:

Name of the bank that issued the card:

I authorise Novotel Liverpool to debit my credit card as per the above details, payment is due 28 days prior to the arrival date of this booking only.

Name:

Signature:

Delegate to Annual Conference 2023 Liverpool

Branch secretaries should note the following before submitting their application.

Each Branch which has complied with Rule 16(c), (*No Branch shall be permitted to send a delegate to the Conference unless it has observed the regulations of the Association in regard to the return of balance sheets, the Branch Annual Report and the formation of Branches. This provision has no application to the right of, and expectation for, ships and establishments to send a delegate to the Conference.*) but subject to Rule 10(c), (*Associate members are eligible to act as a Branch Delegate at Area meetings and Conferences, provided that they have completed three years continuous membership of the Association immediately prior to election as Delegate*) and has been in commission for at least three months by the date of a Conference shall be entitled to nominate one eligible Association Member as its Delegate to attend a Conference.

Each Branch nominating a Delegate shall send details to the Council **to arrive not less than one week before the date of Conference**. A Branch may change its nominated Delegate provided the Council is notified not less than twenty four hours before the Conference.

Branch		Area	
Name of Delegate			
Car registration		Passenger Name	
Delegate's Address	Telephone No	Post Code	
e-mail			
Number of Observers if known			
Name of Branch Hon Secretary			
Contact telephone No:			
Contact e-mail address			
Name and Address for correspondence			

NB: A Delegate will not be confirmed as such unless or until the Branch Balance Sheet for 2022 and Branch Annual Report for 2022 have been received in RNA Central Office (Rule 12 C). Should either not have been received in Central Office, the Delegate's Status will be deemed to be that of an Observer.

Please forward the completed form to RNA Central Office, Building 1/087, Scott Road, HM Naval Base, Portsmouth, PO1 3LU or email to sara@royalnavalassoc.com

If you would like to check confirmation ahead of Conference please call Sara on 023 9272 3747

Branch Year End Returns



ROYAL NAVAL ASSOCIATION

BRANCH BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2022				
RNA BRANCH		RNA AREA		
CHARITY NUMBER (If applicable)		ANNUAL ACCOUNTS		
BRANCH FUNDS			£	
Balance B/Fwd. from 31 December 2021				See box 2 in 2021 returns
Add: Difference of Income over Expenditure for Year (OR)				See box 5
Deduct: Difference of Expenditure over Income for Year			(-)	See box 6
Balance C/Fwd at 31 December 2022			TOTAL £	Box 1

LOCATION OF FUNDS		£	
Investments			
Balance in Deposit Account			
Balance in Current Account			
Balance in other Bank Accounts			
Cash in Hand, including Petty Cash			
Loans (outstanding), if any		(-)	
Un-Presented Cheques (Cheques written out 2021, cleared on Bank Statement 2022)		(-)	
Box 2 should agree with Box 1		TOTAL £	Box 2

The Balance Sheet is a snapshot of the worth of the Branch at Financial Year End. It shows what the Branch owns (Bank, Cash etc) and what it owes (e.g. a Loan)

The Income & Expenditure Statements shows the main items in and out of the Branch accounts during the year.

Accounts scrutiny (by a competent finance person)

I/We certify that:

- a. All Branch accounts and supporting records have been scrutinised and, as far as appears from my/our scrutiny of these, proper books of accounts have been maintained by the Branch.
- b. The above Balance Sheet and attached Income & Expenditure Account have been prepared from the books and records of the Branch, and according to the information and explanations given to me/us by Branch Officers, and in my/our opinion, these are in accordance therewith.

Signed.....

Print Name.....

Date.....

Name & Address of Branch Bank:

This form explains charitable activity during the year. This information is used in the report to the Charities Commission.

It is important that all donations are in accordance with the RNA's charitable objects.

All Branches should be individually registered with the Charity Commission if total annual income exceeds £5,000

If your Branch is currently a registered charity and your income from all sources is regularly less than £5,000, then you should de-register with the Charity Commission.

<https://forms.charitycommission.gov.uk/enquiry-form/>

Charity Commission Returns criteria Income:

Less than £10,000 – Annual update Report required (easy online form)

More than £10,000 – Annual Return required (complete form online & download accounts)

We certify that:

- a. The Balance Sheet and attached Income & Expenditure Account have been prepared from the books and records of the Branch; they are a true record of the Branch's financial activity during the year.
- b. If Income is less than £25,000 the accounts have been proved by a competent person who is not the Treasurer. Above £25,000 Charity Commission rules have been obeyed.

Chairman Sign..... Print Name.....

Date

Secretary Sign..... Print Name.....

Date

Treasurer Sign..... Print Name.....

Date

One copy to Central Office and one copy to Area Secretary.

Branches that own/lease Building or Land

Does your Branch own a Building	Yes	No	Who holds the Deeds

Does your Branch own Land	Yes	No	Who holds the Deeds

Does your Branch lease a Building	Yes	No	How much per year does this cost	How many years remaining on the Lease	Who holds the Lease
			£		

Does your Branch lease the Land	Yes	No	How much per year does this cost	How many years remaining on the Lease	Who holds the Lease
			£		

Is the Branch or Club responsible for maintenance of the Property/Land	Branch	Club

Who holds the Public Liability for the Insurance on your Property/Land

What is the cost of Depreciation on the Land / Building	£

Does your Branch rent a room in a	Club	RBL Building	Pub	Other	How much per year does this cost

Branches that own/lease Building or Land – continued

Do you employ staff	Yes	No	Do you hold Employers Liability	Yes	No



**THE ROYAL NAVAL
BENEVOLENT TRUST**
SERVE A DAY, SUPPORTED FOR LIFE

The RNBT is looking for a Trustee

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) is a well-established naval charity that has been delivering support to serving and veteran Ratings of the Royal Navy and their families, quietly and efficiently since 1922. It is a modern charity with an annual turnover of £10m and up to 250 staff.

A fundamental characteristic of the Trust is that a significant proportion of our Trustees are serving and ex-serving Royal Naval ratings and Royal Marine other ranks. Accordingly 'Ordinary Member' trustees are people who have been or are RN ratings and RM other ranks. Only those who are or have served as Ratings in the Royal Navy make decisions on the approval of grants to individuals: **Sailors and Marines helping Sailors and Marines – now and always.**

The RNBT efficiently and effectively help Royal Navy and Royal Marines personnel and their families in times of need, whether through the provision of wide-ranging financial assistance or the superb care offered to older members of the Royal Naval family at Pembroke House in Gillingham, Kent and the Trust's Centenary Year Project - Admiral Jellicoe House in Southsea, Hampshire which opened in June 2022.

The Ordinary Member Trustee position will commence from early May 2023 and election will take place during the first week of April. We are looking for a wide range of competences and the current Trustees wish to continue to encourage diversity, with applications from Junior Rates / Ranks as well as representation from minority groups very welcome. In particular, those with service in the Royal Marines or Submarine Service would be very welcome.

If you are interested and would like an application pack, please contact Michele Stanley on 02394 216292 or email Michele at michelestanley@rnbto.org.uk

The closing date for applications is 31 March 2023.



**THE ROYAL NAVAL
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SERVE A DAY, SUPPORTED FOR LIFE

The RNBT is looking for a Trustee: the ‘Admiralty Governor’ Trustee

The Royal Naval Benevolent Trust (RNBT) is a well-established naval charity that has been delivering support to serving and veteran ratings of the Royal Navy and their families, quietly and efficiently since 1922. It is a modern charity with an annual turnover of £10m, capital assets of £57m and up to 250 staff.

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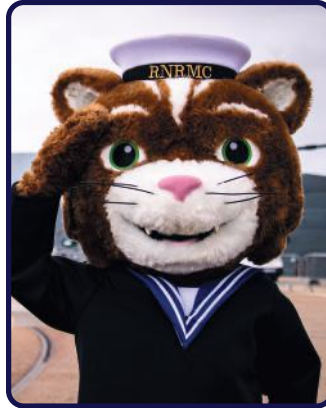
The governance of the Trust is delivered through the 16-strong Central Committee (CC) - the Board of Trustees whose role is to provide strategic direction to the charity, exercise high level oversight of its operations and provide appropriate support to the executive. One of the trustee positions carries the historical title of Admiralty Governor, which dates back to an earlier time when the Royal Charter allowed for the Admiralty Board to appoint a retired senior officer onto the Central Committee. This process no longer happens, but the trustees decided to retain the title, recognising it as part of the RNBT’s history and heritage. The position requires that the volunteer be a **retired senior officer of the Naval Service i.e. a Captain Royal Navy or Colonel Royal Marines or above.**

RNBT is committed to creating an inclusive environment which encourages diversity of thought in its decision-making processes. To achieve this, applications are encouraged from all eligible people, and representation from minority groups is very welcome. In particular, female applicants and those with service in the Royal Marines or Submarine Service would be very welcome.

If you are interested and would like an application pack, please contact Michele Stanley on 02394 216292 or email Michele at michelestanley@rnb.org.uk

The closing date for applications is 31 March 2023.

As part of the RNRMC Volunteer Team, you could support us in the planning and delivery of lots of fun events, such as attending homecoming parades, helping during Armed Forces Day or taking part in sporting challenges - the list is endless!



INTERESTED?

Pop along to our Meet & Greet event to find out more. We will introduce you to some of our current volunteers and explain more about the activities you could get involved in.

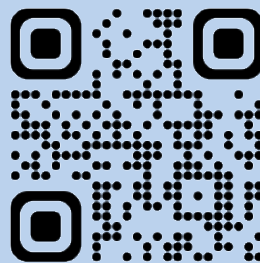
To represent our wider armed forces community, we would welcome RN, RM and RFA serving personnel, including their spouses & partners, as well as veterans, and reservists.

**VOLUNTEER MEET & GREET
FOR TEA & CAKE**

Date: Wednesday 22nd February **Time:** 1330 - 1530

Location: HMS Drake, Pierhead Jump Meeting Room, Junior Rates mess

To find out more and to register for the Meet & Greet, please complete the form via the QR code.



Can't make the event but interested in volunteering? Then sign up here:
rnrmc.org.uk/support-us/volunteer

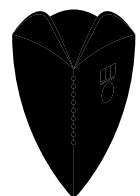
The Royal Navy and Royal Marines Charity is a company limited by guarantee registered in England and Wales (no. 6047294) and is a registered charity (no. 1117794) and Scotland (SC041898).



Calling all Pensionable Service Veterans

**Come along and enjoy
a tour of the Royal
Hospital Chelsea and
some friendly banter with
the Chelsea Pensioners**

**Thursday 30 March 2023
10.00 - 14.00**



CHELSEA
PENSIONERS

Are you a Service Veteran in receipt of your State Pension?

If you are and would enjoy
**a tour of the Royal Hospital Chelsea and some
friendly banter with Chelsea Pensioners**

we would love to see you at
**The Royal Hospital Chelsea
Thursday 30 March 2023**

**Veterans of the RN/RM, the British Army, RAF and
Merchant Navy are all welcome to attend**

PROGRAMME

- **09.45 - 10.00 Arrive**
 - **10.00 - 10.30 Introduction to RHC Veterans' Outreach with tea/coffee**
 - **10.30 - 12.00 Tour of the Royal Hospital Chelsea**
 - **12.15 - 14.00 Sandwich Lunch and Banter**
-

Royal Hospital Chelsea Delivery Partners

The following Service Charities and our Delivery Partners will also be represented at this event and available to offer advice and support:

**SSAFA, BLESMA, Combat Stress, Op Courage, DWP,
Samaritans, Fighting With Pride** and others

Please come along to: Chelsea Gate, Royal Hospital Chelsea, Royal Hospital Road SW3 4SR

Please bring: Photo ID (passport/driving licence or similar) and any documentation confirming your status as a veteran. If you need support, you are welcome to bring along a carer, friend or family member but this is limited to a plus one.

We look forward to meeting you!

VeteransOutreach@chelsea-pensioners.org.uk