H.M.S. SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION

A MAGAZINE FOR THE MEMBERSHIP

MAY
2019

CHAIRMAN OF THE ASSOCIATION ROBIN SMITH

CONTENTS

Andy's Musings	Click Here to Go There
Navy Matters	Click Here to Go There
Soldier "F"	Click Here to Go There
Letters to the Editor	Click Here to Go There
Jottings of a Very Ordinary Seaman	Click Here to Go There
Joining Up	Click Here to Go There
Special Offer	Click Here to Go There
First Wren warded M.C.	Click Here to Go There
Morse Code Wrens	Click Here to Go There
What's On	Click Here to Go There
Photo Album	Click Here to Go There
Reunion Reminder	Click Here to Go There
Slops	Click Here to Go There
Crossed the Bar	Click Here to Go There
People Searching for People	Click Here to Go There

ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

Hello Shipmates,

Jo called me to her computer for the April magazine, commenting on how subscribers had multiplied;'

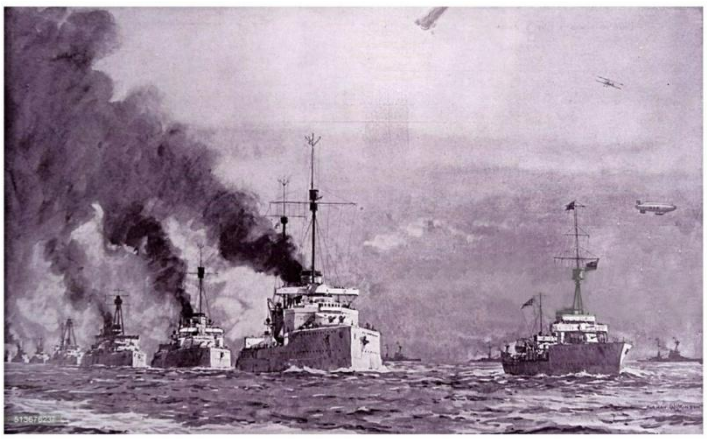
We are not fizzling out like a damp squib'.

This expansion could mean we have to suggest 'relocation' to our 'Editorial Publishing' team to a central Paris location more befitting their station. We will have to lodge faith in Miz Libby's close scrutiny of receipts for 'legitimate expenses' with a Le Follies heading submitted as 'Fact Finding'.

I noted John Ward's (Sharkey) explanation of why wardroom members are called 'pigs'. It varies from my own understanding. All P.A. systems seemed to require an opening utterance of 'Testing, Testing, 1.2.3.' Common alternative to that was; switch on then blow into the mike a couple of times. Puff, Puff comes out exactly like a porker's grunt, hence; grunt, grunt 'Captain speaking…' Always good for a universal repeat and irreverent chuckle. I wonder if such prevails in today's navy?

On TV one sees very senior officers (Captain of Q.E. Carrier for example) mount his box and open to his new crew of youngsters with 'You guys'. That grates on my old fashioned senses and consider it bloody appalling, better educated than I - Yup. Farther up the status pole - Yup. Would I want to follow him to the local boot fair? Nope. Based on his TV persona the exalted position robbed of its gravitas by - himself.

GERMAN HIGH SEAS FLEET OUT AT LAST TO SURRENDER:
LED CAPTIVE INTO BRITISH WATERS



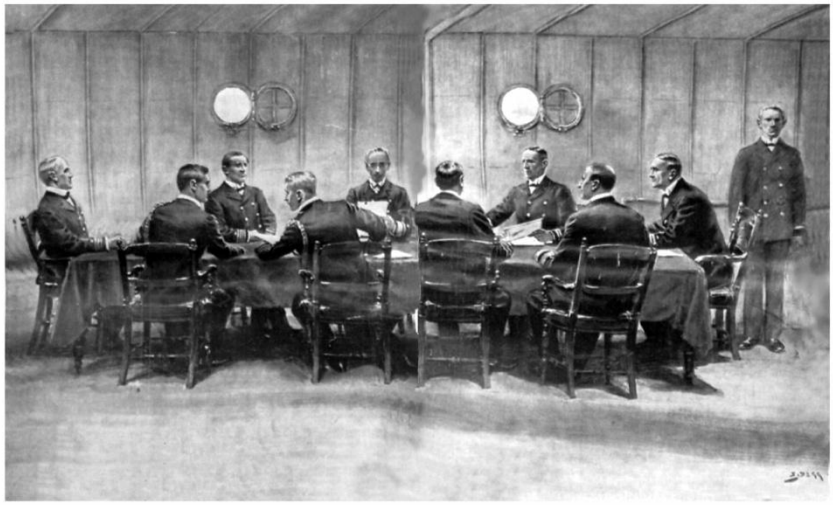
"LEVIATHANS LED BY A MINNOW".
H.M.S. CARDIFF LEADING THE GERMAN BATTLE-CRUISERS
"SEYDLITZ", "MOLTKE", "HINDENBURG", "DERFFLINGER", "VON DER TANN"

Another item in April; surrender of the Kaiser's high seas fleet, an unimaginable event six months earlier. When relocated to Scapa Flow with a covert arrangement amongst German crews to scuttle, it would have been equally unimaginable to know, decades later, that their armour plate was in great demand, to 'line out' nuclear laboratories. Having lain submerged, uncontaminated by residual radio activity from W.W.11 bomb blasts, plus much testing to make them ever more violent by Uncle Tom Cobley and All.

The book Cox's Navy relates salvage of much of that fleet against all naysayers. He had no experience of such a task, used methods that left normal salvagers open mouthed, a prince among scrap men.

"RELATIONS ... STRICTLY FORMAL". THE GERMAN ADMIRAL IN HIS FLAG-SHIP, TAKING ORDERS FROM BRITISH OFFICERS.

DRAWN BY S. BROS FROM MATERIAL SUPPLIED BY AN EYE WITNESS



AFTER THE CAPTIVE HIGH SEAS FLEET HAD ANCHORED OFF INCHKEITH: FOUR BRITISH OFFICERS IN FOREGROUND IN ADMIRAL VON REUTER'S CABIN, CONVEYING ORDERS

Clearing my Father's office, a copy of Illustrated London News, dated 30th November 1918 surfaced. I enclose a picture of the cover, a large magazine by any standard, 2/- price prominent. That must have had a considerable purchase power in 1918. It reports the fleet's surrender and is full of super pictures.

Prominent is Admiral David Beatty, whose mega riches allowed him to flout rules, get away with personal design changes to his uniform etc., later altering Jutland reports and charts and fraudulently signing them. I have him down as a 'hole' of sorts.

On new naval officers, I think it a grave omission their 'modern short course' no longer includes Naval History to any significant degree; it's the foundation of their chosen profession. I am forced to feel faulty foundation forecasts poor support structure to follow, does not bode well for the kids joining at the bottom.

Contrast that with the Royal Marines; a personal booklet is issued to all ranks down to the lowliest boy bugler; the Corp's history that will be absorbed by all, there after conduct that preceded and is expected hence forth is not open to question – hurrah for the Bootnecks.

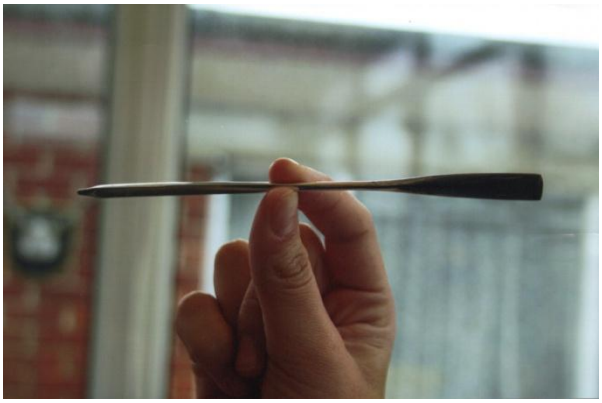
Others' memories of Shotley are illuminating; changes must have been rapid and radical in the first half-dozen years post W.W.11. A brother plus, a pair of uncles, available for questioning whose answers were always 'Don't', excellent catalyst to spur one on to have a go! If Health and Safety executive's dead hand had been alive at that time, last months of '46, naval manning would have been strangled at birth.

Many, many moons ago I read a book called 'Brutal or Beneficial'. Diligent enquiry and search has never brought such a tome to light, or even a clue to track one's existence, but I keep my ear to the ground. Tedious and aggravating often, but nothing to break a fifteen year old of that era; different and interesting from life that went before.

INDEX

Power boat at Shotley pier was a Steam Pinnace, such as capital ships used to have. Beautiful small compound steam engine crouched over by a stoker. Pulling power to speed a tow of half a dozen fully crewed cutters beyond Felixstowe, each boat in charge of a fifteen year old youth, first class cox'n to be cast off and race back to the pier by 'sailing a mile', 'pulling a mile' 'sailing a mile', 'pulling a mile' and so on.

The cutter was a heavy boat, each oar a substantial chunk of wood when a 'sharp stroke' was called. An east wind straight up the estuary made one really 'cream along' when sail set. When racing the mast was let go with a crash sufficient to cut the transom in two, an invitation to severe maiming if not on the ball. Turns taken to hop over the transom and sit astride the rudder caused a water spout up one's front, considered super fun of the first order. Team work required was a joy. Race day proper at end of summer had Hawke boat a clear winner.



At Captain's prize giving we each received a slender blue tin box, inside a replica cutter oar in silver, equally as tiny. Over the years it surfaces every now and again, by accident. Another excuse to exercise my new camera – see picture of granddaughter with it pinched in her fingers. Thoughts of mayhem races to the pier gives me a rush even today!

Felixstowe is a major container port now, was an R.A.F. facility then. From Shotley mast top one could see the last Sunderland's come and go occasionally. Rivers Stour and Orwell always had a dozen or more Thames Barges rafted up ready to get away when the tide changed in or out in their favour.

Of great interest when let free on a Sunday 'make and mend' with our cox'n, was the laid up for scrapping post war navy, long trots two or three deep, 'Algerines' 'Flowers' all the way past Harwich to river head, all dead ships boarded by us at will, strictly forbidden! – but the ultimate playground.

I recall an ex Polish destroyer named Bursa was a particular favourite. Just off Bloody Point, where rivers divide below Ganges was an aircraft's remains visible at neap tide. My head tells me it was the donor of the three bladed prop fixed at half landing in the school block stairs, could be wrong. 'Sea days' invariably taken on Hunts, with H.O. crews waiting for demob, were a savoury that really whetted the appetite to keep the nose clean and get to sea as soon as possible.

I reflect on an adolescence that could not be bought for 'vulgar cash', a Utopia away from gritty, smoky, dirty Corby, who never suffered hurt from a common enemy, or hunger from the vagaries of weather; never a need to fret about my bank stash – didn't have one, Ha!

INDEX

Cannot let Shotley go without a share of a picture from a Plymouth newspaper. It shows our Brian Hill, notable resident of that city, who is standard bearer for local Ganges Branch. Always willing to show their flag and march for the boy entrants, noted for his solo renditions of the Oggie Song, on demand at any venue. As the tallest bearer, with a lovely posture,, square jawed, he struts his stuff with style and grace, wolf whistles galore with a kit bag full of blown kisses from the appreciative Gay Pride contingent are his normal fare, well, if you've got it flaunt it. Miz Carol, his number one supporter, never shows a trace of jealousy, has been heard to say, 'If you have a special chap like my Brian, you must be prepared to share him'. Yea to that I say.

Did you notice any celebrations in Europe last week to mark the 70th anniversary of N.A.T.O.? Neither did I. Could be because not one of them honoured the treaty agreement! Commitment to spend at least 2 percent of their G.D.P. on it. The U.K., nominally European these days, boasts of 'compliance'. An aware single mother on benefit could see through the creative accounting used in Whitehall to achieve that claim. Annual M.O.T, of a M.O.D tea trolley, forward purchase of P.G. Tips plus sticky bun wastage, all entered up by foreign office on the N.A.T.O. ledger.

Vladimir's man on the pay roll in that office visits the Russian embassy's sound proof room frequently so's he can indulge in a good belly laugh with his mates. It is obvious why Europe's leaders all hate President Trump, he will keep reminding them of their perfidy.

As Uncle Sam's agent, he can do that as solitary member of N.A.T.O. that 'pays its way – plus'

My dilemma is whether to recommend you take the Russian language course or Mandarin. Fall back option is wait till they get here and it will become compulsory.

Here the rant better endeth.

Tatty by the noo! Andy

Three retirees, each with a hearing loss, were playing golf one fine May day.

One remarked to the other, 'Windy, isn't it?'

'No,' the second man replied, 'it's Thursday'

And the third man chimed in, 'So am I. Let's have a beer.'

US Navy warships will again fly Union Jack after 17 years

In this March 15, 2015 file photo, Dwayne McCornick, a deck hand on the Natchez steamboat for 16 years, raises the Union Jack naval flag on the Mississippi River in New Orleans.

NORFOLK, Va. – After nearly 17 years, United States Navy warships will return to flying the Union Jack, replacing the First Navy Jack flown in the wake of the Sept. 11 attacks.
A news release says Chief of Naval Operations Adm. John Richardson issued an order calling for the blue banner with 50 white stars to return June 4 to commemorate the World War II Battle of Midway.

The Navy's current maritime flag, the First Navy Jack, features red and white stripes with a rattlesnake and the words "Don't Tread On Me." As the commissioned ship with the longest total period in active status, the USS Blue Ridge will become the only warship authorized to fly the First Navy Jack.

Richardson says the return to the Union Jack accompanies a "new era of competition."

DOES THIS MAKE YOU WEEP?

THE LANGUAGE ROW OVER "FEMALE" SHIPS !

The Royal Navy is committed to the tradition, but academics say it could betray a patriarchal view

Anachronistic and patronising, or benign nautical tradition? The appropriateness of referring to ships as "she" has been challenged by the Scottish Maritime Museum's decision this week to adopt gender-neutral signage for its vessels.

The move has provoked debate over when, if ever, it is acceptable to use the feminine pronoun for inanimate things.

It's not just ships. Cars are often personified as female. How many male owners enjoy "taking her for a spin?" One well-known haulage company, Eddie Stobart, gives its trucks female names.

Planets, forces and countries, rendered as Mother Earth, Mother Nature, and the Motherland, are symbols of the life-giving, and life-sustaining. We no longer have feminised weather systems, but from the 1950s violent destructive hurricanes bore only female names until campaigners forced meteorologists to alternate with male names in the 1970s.

Ella Tennant, from Keele University's Language Centre, said referring to ships as "she" is an example of how language shapes the way we see the world. There is "power and authority" in labelling, she says, and once that label is attached, "we have our own assumptions and preconceptions of what it is when we see that object". From a feminist language perspective, she adds, labelling ships, countries, and other inanimate things as female could be interpreted as "perpetuating the patriarchal view", and as "slightly derogatory and patronising".

Unlike some languages, English is not gendered. But, Tennant argues, gender is often arbitrarily used, and cognitive research suggests that language and the way people use it has a profound influence on the way we see the world.

Some argue it is merely an expression of affection by sailors who see their vessel as a maternal protector. These include the retired naval chief Admiral Lord West who, on Radio 4's Today programme, denounced the move as "an insult to a generation of sailors" who merely saw their ship as a mother. Another theory lies in the idea of goddesses and mother figures playing a protective role. Whatever the origin, it has a long tradition: the earliest known example appears to date from 1375, according to the Oxford English Dictionary.

Otto Jespersen, a Danish linguist described as a foremost authority on English grammar, argues "he" or "she" may be may be used "in order to show a certain kind of sympathy with or affection for the thing, which is thereby, as it were, raised above the inanimate sphere".

Jespersen describes, in Essentials of English Grammar (1933), how "railway-men will speak of the locomotive or train, and the motor owners of their car, as she".

David Mann, director of the Scottish Maritime Museum, said the decision to drop "she" for "it" was taken after two signs were vandalised. "The debate around gender and ships is wide-ranging, pitting tradition against the modern world. But I think that we have to move with the times," he said.

Lloyds List, the 285-year-old daily maritime bible, abandoned "she" for "it" almost 20 years ago. Richard Meade, its editor, said the decision was made to bring the paper "in line with most other reputable international business titles and referring to ships as she seemed anachronistic".

"I get the maritime tradition. In the days of a wooden ship, or an old steam liner, there was a certain amount of romanticism, and these ships had personality. But the modern-day container carrier is about 400 metres long and carries 22,000 steel boxes on board, and I challenge anybody to look at the rusting hulk of one of those and assign a gender to it," he said.

A royal navy spokesman said: "the navy has a long tradition of referring to its ships as 'she' and will continue to do so."

Lissy Lovett, editor of the online feminist magazine, The F-Word, said: "At a time when transphobic rhetoric is being repeated in mainstream newspapers …people in Northern Ireland still don't have access to safe, free abortions and when the majority of people living in poverty around the world are women, I just can't see this as that big a deal."

The Women's Equality party said a particular concern was the failure to recognise the achievements of women in the naming of buildings.

"A recent example is the scandal regarding the naming of a cultural and learning hub in Tunbridge Wells. Instead of respectfully naming the hub 'Amelia Scott' in remembrance of the brilliant Amelia Scott, who was a social reformer and campaigner for women's suffrage, the building was simply named 'Amelia'.

"You wouldn't name a building 'Karl' after Karl Marx, or 'Winston' after Winston Churchill. So why omit 'Scott' from Amelia Scott if not to undermine her significance instead of celebrating it?"

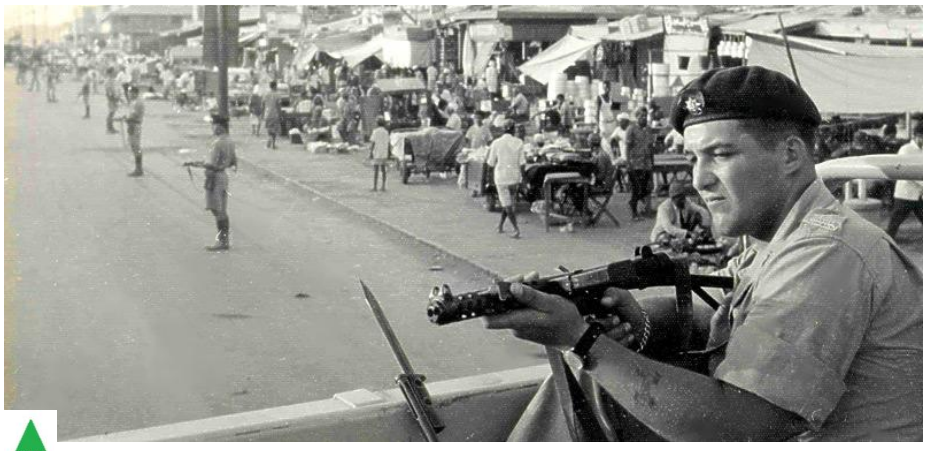
SOLDIER 'F'

By Malcolm Milham

As most of you will know that following my time in the Andrew I ended up for a while as a Pongo in the TA, in an Infantry unit. Then in 1965 I was called up and ended up in ADEN, just as all the troubles were starting there. Hence I have been watching the Bloody Sunday inquiry and the hounding of the guys who served out in NI, with some interest and a little bit of trepidation. Luckily however they don't seem to have any interest in the Tribesmen or Rebels of Middle Eastern countries, plus of course there were no TV cameras or reporters with us.

At that time, the early 60's, we were having problems in several of our old Empire Colonies and of course it was Cold War time. My TA unit was ear marked to defend a Government Underground HQ somewhere in the woods and forests of southern England. So as well as our Military training we also carried out the Aid to the Civil Power stuff, including Riot Control. We sat through all the training films which included who and when you could shoot a rioter, one thing, if you are going to get involved one day in Civil Unrest, do not wear a red shirt, he's the one who gets it. We never expected to have to use this stuff, but then again did not expect to get called up.

I do not know how many of you heard the words of the Lt Colonel Commanding the 1 PARA that day when he was interviewed after the events, he said 'my men were not there to be Aunt Sally's'. They were the backup unit for the Infantry Battalion who were the front unit facing the rioters and taking all the stones and crap being slung at them. Believe me it is not very nice being in that situation and just standing there trying to fend off the brickbats. Those words he spoke were very significant, as they showed his attitude to what was going on and later on in my life I was to hear similar words.



I arrived in Aden on 26th May 1965, joined 3 Platoon, 1st Battalion Royal Sussex as a Section Commander, I now had 9 other guys lives to worry about, most of them aged 19 or thereabouts. 4 days later it was a night time Cordon and Search on suspected terrorist hide outs

INDEX

in amongst the blocks of flats, followed by playing Policemen in the Arab Township with only 5 rounds of ammo in the magazine, if the rebels had known that we would have been slaughtered.

On the 9th June we arrived up in the mountains, 60 miles north of Aden, to join up with 45 Commando RM, whom we had been seconded to. At this point I found out I was the only Full Corporal in the Platoon, somehow we had lost two others. That evening we were involved in a mega firefight with the local Tribesmen, using everything we had available, including 105mm Pack Howitzers, all of our Machine Guns and a HESH round from a MOBAT Anti Tank Gun. Our intention was to let them know if we were fired at then they were going to get a bloody good kicking in return. They were aware that our rifles, the SLR, only had sights up to 600 yds and were really only intended to be used at 300yds, hence they used to fire at us with their old SMLE's from half a mile away or more, but on that night they got a little too close.

Cpl Milham with Cover Group from Ambush Patrol. Missing from group is Pte Sadler an wounded during fire fight at ambush. Photo IWM

The next morning we had a RM Officer come to us and gave us a briefing. Our location was just 400yds from where an SAS patrol ran into trouble 14 months before, of a 12 man patrol only 2 were not wounded, two were killed and beheaded all others had bad wounds, but managed to fight their way out during the night. (Google Capt Edwards and Trooper Warburton). Half a mile to our front was the village of Sheb Tem where most of the attackers came from and a mile to our left the village was Al Naqueal, where the Para's lost several men during the fighting up there in April 1964. Rebel bodies were unknown, they took them away with them, if there was a body it would be Booby Trapped or a Suicide killer with a grenade or an automatic weapon ready to mow you down the moment you touched.

On 1st July was a new moon, start of the moonlit fighting nights. That day we got an intelligence report that a fighting group of about 60 men had crossed the border from the Yemen, also we were hit by friendly fire whilst setting up a DF shoot, nobody hurt, although it hit the centre of our base on the Heli Pad which happened to be about 15ft above our tents. We were right in the path of the 60 fighting men. On the night of 3rd July they tried to attack our base but set off a trip flare and allowed us to Stand-To and belt the area with loads of rounds.

INDEX

On the 6th July we took out an Ambush Patrol on the route we guessed they were using and sure enough they walked into our Killing Ground, we knew we had some down but could not get to them as their support group was already above us and giving it hell, we also had a wounded man and not able to see extent of injuries. So we were ordered out of the area and the mortars and artillery hit the area at various times to keep them away. We returned about 2 hours later so to be in position before first light. As it got lighter we could see two bodies. Not sure if they were lying doggo ready to do a suicide or not we made sure they were dead, then checked for booby traps.

The Army suffered high casualties on 20th June 1965 when the Recruits of the Federal Regular Army (Arab) mutinied, RCT unit passing their base got slaughtered with eight killed, then the Armed Police followed suit and ambushed a mixed patrol of RNF and Argyll's, who were relieving them.

Follow up patrols were sent in to discover details and also got smashed. Then a rescue Armoured Car went in but was refused permission to use its heavy gun to push the rebels back, at the end of the day twenty three lay dead including a civilian Public Works man. This all led to events when 'Mad Mitch' led the Argyll's into Crater, costing him his Army career, because the government of the day wanted the Rebels to be treated with 'Kid Gloves'.

Meanwhile the Paras were in the Arab Township of Sheik Othman, attempting to keep order. They saw the Jewish people from Crater now being killed by being flung off the Minarets of the Mosque into the road.

They were ordered to only observe and defend themselves, whilst around them the two main Rebel groups were fighting for POWER. When some sort of order was restored by the South Arabian Army it was found over three hundred and fifty bodies lay in the streets, with many more in their houses.

One group of Rebels had been wiped out and the NLF claimed to be in charge the SAA joined them and the Paras were pulled out of the town.

During the last 4 months of their stay in Sheik Othman, 1PARA lost 3 killed and 22 wounded. Civilian workers including Government Officials and Newspaper Reporters, TV Announcers etc suffered 51 killed and 132 wounded. The reason for high civilian numbers was that the Armed Services swamped their areas with armed men; the civvies still followed their routines and used non guarded facilities. Favourite killing spots were the 2 filling stations,

INDEX

as they pulled up, entrances to bars and restaurants and food stores.

This was 1967 and many of those young men were still in the Paras when they went out on 'Bloody Sunday' just five years later, what was in their minds, I wonder.

FRONT PAGE HEADLINE FROM THE MIDDLE EAST COMMAND NEWSPAPER 'THE DHOW' 15TH JULY 1965

Thumbs Up For The Royal Sussex!

FOUR DISSIDENTS KILLED IN AMBUSH IN THE RADFAN

THE TWO WOUNDED ADHOC BOTH DIED, MAKING IT 6 KILLED.

FOUR dissidents were killed, another two seriously wounded, and a quantity of arms and ammunition captured in a successful ambush by a patrol of the 1st Battalion, the Royal Sussex Regiment.

The clash took place last week, in a wadi north of Habilayn, in the Radfan.

There was only one British casualty. Private Terry Sullivan of the Territorial Army Emergency Reserve was wounded in the arm.

He was flown to the RAF Hospital Khormaksar Beach, where he is making an excellent recovery from his injury.

Pte. Sullivan, aged 21, told The Dhow about the action.

"There was good visibility from the moon when we set the ambush," he said.

"When we sprung the trap, I could see nine or ten dissidents milling around in confusion before they could place our positions and return our fire with any accuracy.

"I saw one of them — he must have been carrying a mine — explode in a flash."

Terry came to Aden two months ago with the party of "Ever Readies" called up to reinforce Army units in the Middle East.

On his arrival here, he joined the 1st Battalion, the Royal Sussex Regiment.

Wounded but still cheerful, "Ever Ready" Terry Sullivan.

British soldiers deserve politicians' support

SIR – You report (March 14) that a British soldier is going to face prosecution for his actions in Northern Ireland nearly 47 years ago.

Under the 1998 Good Friday Agreement, nearly 500 republican and loyalist prisoners – even those sentenced to life imprisonment for their crimes against the British Army and civilian population – were released. Tony Blair, Britain's prime minister at the time, wrote to more than 200 suspected Irish terrorists giving them immunity from prosecution.

The reason for this was to achieve the long-term goal of peace in Northern Ireland. Surely British soldiers should be accorded the same treatment – immunity from prosecution.

I hope that at least some of our politicians have enough backbone left to ensure that the now elderly soldier concerned will not have to suffer the indignity and very real risks of standing trial for doing his duty for his country.

Alun Williams
Firsdown, Wiltshire

SIR – While Christopher Sharp's point about justice not favouring one side or the other is poignant (Letters, March 16), there is another equally pressing legal issue.

A charge of murder involves a presumption of and the need to prove premeditation, and there can be little doubt of its relevance to fatalities caused by terrorists. However, there must be much greater doubt as to whether fatalities caused by Armed Forces personnel in the line of duty can be presumed to be premeditated, let alone proven.

Kalvin Haley
Pudleston, Herefordshire

INDEX

This from the Daily Telegraph in 2019

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The following message received from **Derek Thompson**, via Facebook on 10.4.2019

Just wondered if any of you gents knew my father Derrick Thompson (Tommo) he was a stoker mechanic (E) 1st class on board HMS Superb in 1955/56. He passed away in 2003 aged 72. I myself was in the Andrew and served for 23 yrs. I would be grateful if anyone knew him.

Hello Brian,
We corresponded in June 2018 in regards to Ted G Davy who passed away November 26th, 2017. We provided a couple of photos of Ted for your "crossed the bar" section.
Further to Ted's demise, my husband and I are executors to his and Doris's estate. Doris passed away February 15th, 2019. Ted saved a number of items from his time in the Navy and we are wondering if your organization might be interested in them. Ted's nieces in England are not. Having always resided in the Canadian Prairies ourselves, and absolutely no naval background in our families, we are seeking to find a good home for these items.

I have taken the liberty of attaching some photos for your information. The bags are water-stained but in good condition (the larger bag has a rope bottom); the tin is a bit battered but in reasonably good shape. These are the major items that we are wondering about and would appreciate hearing from you. We are doing our best to do the right thing with the items they held dear. Thank you! **Rogelle Pelletier,** Edmonton, AB Canada

TED JOINED HMS SUPERB IN DECEMBER 1945 AT CHATHAM AS AN A.B. TORPEDOMAN

IS ANYONE INTERESTED IN RETAINING THESE ITEMS?
IF SO PLEASE GET IN TOUCH WITH ME

The Royal Navy, at the beginning of World War 2, was immense — it was the largest naval force in the world. The 332 warships included 15 mighty battleships, 7 aircraft carriers, 66 cruisers, a whopping 184 destroyers, 45 patrol vessels, and fully 60 submarines.

JOTTINGS OF A VERY ORDINARY SEAMAN

I joined the Royal Navy at *HMS Ganges* and, almost at once, my true potential and value to the Senior Service was recognised and nurtured.

I rose through the ranks rapidly as promotion followed promotion in quick succession and, in a matter of only eight short years I progressed from second-class Boy Seaman all the way to the dizzy heights of Able Seaman.

My first tentative steps were taken in May 1953 where I metaphorically dipped my toe in the water owned by that very same Senior Service.

HMS Ganges was a boys training establishment at Shotley, built on a peninsular of land on the banks of the river Orwell, a few miles east of Ipswich and with Harwich and Felixstowe just across the way, on the other side of the river.

My first port of call, via Ipswich rail station, was a small induction centre called The Annexe where I quickly learned two things: Firstly this was to be my home for the following five or six weeks and secondly, apart from being issued with a kit which included a couple of badly fitting blue sailor suits, there was very little mention of anything naval, navy or maritime to help me feel at home.

However, one little ray of sunshine did help to brighten the day and that was that straight after mid-day dinner break, everyone had to change into sports rig. Not that there was a whole lot of sport to be found in those early days but sports shirt and shorts was far more comfortable during what was a hot, early summer.

After a couple of weeks the routine softened a little and instead of learning to march up and down in sports rig with boots every afternoon, the `*inmates*` were allowed a little latitude and some managed a game of cricket behind the single storey sick-bay.

It was a different story after we had transferred across the road and into the Main Establishment after their six weeks induction period. Although we were still greenhorn Nozzers – a name applied to any naval new entries - we found that afternoon sport meant afternoon sport and there were grass sports fields out the front and a running track

INDEX

down by the river for those inclined in that direction. There were also three gymnasia and an Olympic size swimming pool.

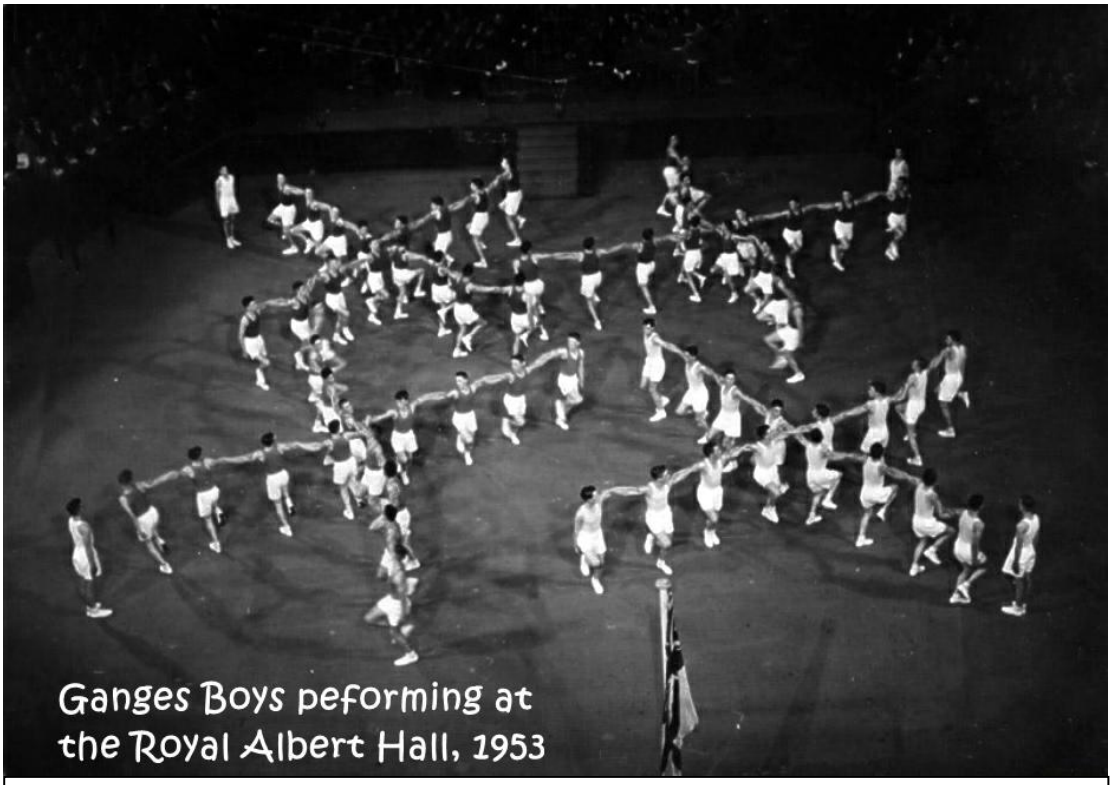
We`d had one taste of the swimming pool already, when one day we were marched over from The Annexe for the obligatory swimming test. My day was a glorious afternoon out in the sunshine, in effect an afternoon off. I couldn`t swim a stroke and once inside, a friendly PTI took control ordering non-swimmers to sit in the seats and watch proceedings while the others went through their `test'. I didn`t get away scot-free though because, until I could swim – and pass the swimming test –my free time, which in effect meant cinema time, would be spent in that pool. So if I wanted to watch my 'Mickey Ducks' and 'Good Old Freds' with everybody else, it was in my interest to pass as quickly as possible.

I loved sport although it would be fair to say that I was not particularly outstanding. Although many years later I was fortunate to be in Sweden for the 1958 World Cup where I saw two England matches. Soon after, my ship was in the Med and we challenged Israeli National team. It was a good game and everyone enjoyed it, despite losing by the very narrow margin of twenty-six – nil!

Each division had their own PTI and ours was a small chap who was quickly dubbed 'Mighty Mouse'. He genuinely wanted to teach and, without the constant threat of bullying that followed us everywhere else, we were interested and wanted to learn. With that man's teaching and our enthusiasm we outpaced the curriculum and on a few occasions he had to find us something to do to lose the odd session, so as not to get too far ahead.

Then, after summer leave, the Festival of Remembrance became the most important subject, as the entire establishment seemed to step up a gear.

All of the senior classes, of which ours was now one, were herded into the main NO 1 gym to learn a complicated Maze Marching Routine. This went on and on for weeks and, because they now had too many participants, they had to start a whittling down procedure.



64 boys plus 4 physical training instructors giving a Maze Marching Display in the Royal Albert Hall in 1953

This was my downfall. I felt I was well up to speed but this 'elimination' process was mind numbingly boring and it wasn`t long before I lost interest. So when the next round of the 'sit-down-stand-up' routine reared its head yet again, I deliberately got up a fraction slower and was immediately singled out for a quick exit and so ended any aspirations I'd originally had for performing in front of the television cameras at the Albert Hall.

The boys, who made the trip, including several from my class, performed well and received the biggest cheers and applause of the evening.

A sailor and a pirate are in a bar recounting their adventures at sea. Seeing the pirate's peg-leg, hook, and eye patch the sailor asks: "So, how did you end up with the peg-leg?"

The pirate replies: "We were caught in a huge storm and a giant wave swept me overboard. Just as me crew were pullin' me out a school of sharks appeared and one of 'em bit me leg off."

"Blimey!" said the sailor. "And how'd you get the hook?"

"Arrrr…" mused the old salt, "I got into a fight over a woman in a bar, and me hand got chopped off."

"Blimey!" remarked the sailor. "And how about the eye patch?"

"Oh that," said the pirate, looking embarrassed. A seagull droppin' fell into me eye."

"You lost your eye to a seagull dropping?" the questioner asked incredulously.

Well…" said the old sea dog, " it was me first day with the hook."

INDEX

HMS SULTAN SUMMER SHOW

On Saturday 15th & Sunday 16th June the gates will open for an action packed weekend of fantastic fun for all at the HMS Sultan Summer Show 2019.

Bolddog Lings Freestyle Motorcross Display Team will be wowing the crowds across the Father's Day weekend with their amazing mid-air stunts at the HMS Sultan Summer Show 2019.

Taking place on Saturday 15 & Sunday 16 June, the Show will feature a Main Arena packed with live entertainment, a large-scale Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) area where the subjects come to life, a Steam Fayre and a kid's zone crammed full of free activities.

In addition, for a very reasonable fee, visitors can ride on the Mayhem Monster Truck, race on mini quad bikes or visit the huge fun fair.

The event also plans to offer a food fayre offering a wide variety of fresh and interesting produce and a road of 'street food' with flavours from around the world.

Gates will open at 10am both days, with tickets available at £25 family (2 Adults & 2 Children*), Adult £10, OAP/Disabled £6, Child £5 (5-14) with under 5s free.

Discounted advance tickets* will be available for purchase both online and from local vendors from the end of April and up until Thursday 13 June at £20 family (2 Adults & 2 Children*), Adult £8, OAP/Disabled £5, Child £4 (5-14) with under 5s free.

FREE PARKING and disabled facilities available. Military Rd, Gosport, Hampshire, PO12 3BY
For further event details and information on how you can save on advance tickets please click

HERE * Conditions apply

INDEX

JOINING UP

Written by Fred Kinsey in 2011

I left school when I was 14. In those days you were allowed to leave at that age. The school's headmaster asked me what I did whilst out of school, in my spare time. I told him and he suggested I visited the King and Harper garage in Hills Road, Cambridge, tell them what I did and they would employ me. Yes, they did employ me, training me for 4 years. I spent the last year working on my own, on cars and lorries, including Army lorries.

Almost at the end of the fourth year I strolled over Hills Road railway bridge and spotted a notice showing head and shoulders of a navy man, who was pointing his finger; the notice said, 'Join the Navy'. I strolled a bit further, saw a recruitment office and walked in.

I was asked what type of work I did, do I wear glasses (which meant I could not join up), then was placed against a wall with a measuring board, stretched up above 5 ft. or I would not be able to join. Strange, this doesn't apply now, a large number are below 5 ft. and wearing glasses, including females. You may have seen the photo in the newspaper showing Prince Charles giving a medal to a female; who stood 5 ft. IN HER SHOES.

Having told him how I worked I suppose that's why I was signed up as a Stoker.

After recruitment training I was sent to *H.M.S. Pembroke* and later, in April 1949, to *H.M.S. Solebay*. I didn't spend much time in the boiler room, only in bad weather whilst going to Ireland. I was sent down to the boiler room to try and stop the sand tank sliding around as it was not secured.

Later on, when we left Ireland, I was sent down to the Shaft Bearing Area to deal with the oil lubrication machinery. While visiting other countries I was twice given the job of driving the captain's boat, with him on it. (No doubt due to my old apprenticeship and driving vehicles).

In May 1950 the *Solebay* was in Chatham dockyard. A number of us were on the upper deck and saw the *Superb* coming into the dockyard. Our Chief Stoker said if we wanted more experience why not volunteer to join the *Superb*. Yes, I did and that's where I got funny jobs, before and after being promoted to a Leading Stoker. My first job, before being promoted, was a Tiffy's Tool Boy, and I worked on steam generators.

INDEX

After promotion I lost that job and had to find the air compressors, learn how to deal with them and follow the pipe-work up to the 4 inch guns, as they had to be used to salute the approach into all harbours, after which the guns could be cleaned, using compressed air.

We had nice tours, plus the R.M's band playing on shore with a R.M parade along side.

When the *Superb* came back to Chatham on 29th October, 1951 my time on board was over. I was sent on a training course for M.T.B.s. Didn't get posted on them though but ended up on *H.M.S. Owen* survey ships, to work in the Persian Gulf, surveying the area to ensure there was room deep enough for oil tanker ships getting into harbour to collect oil.

We also surveyed along the coast of North Cyprus. The harbour was not deep enough for the ship, so we dropped anchor outside, over the weekend.

Some years later Turkey invaded the North, and still controls it with its people living there and taking over. Why didn't the U.K. deal with it instead of hundreds of soldiers getting killed in foreign countries?

FRED'S SHIPMATES

1 - Gordon Truet 2 - Fred Kinsey 3 - Pat Hayes 4 - John Gaynor 5 - Norman Webber

Now read the article regarding the petite female sailor to whom Fred has referred

INDEX

FIRST WOMAN SAILOR AWARDED M.C.

She stands precisely 5ft tall in her everyday shoes and her smile is disarmingly sweet.

Kate Nesbitt doesn't immediately fit the image of fearless military hero, not off the battlefield at least.

But there are probably few people a critically injured soldier would rather meet in the chaos of a desert gunfight than this 21-yearold blonde in full flight.

And the sight of her sprinting through an Afghan war zone under heavy machine gun fire is almost certainly one that Lance Corporal John List will remember for the rest of a life he now owes to her astonishing display of courage.

Kate, a medical assistant serving as an Able Seaman with the Royal Navy, raced 70 yards to the stricken soldier's side as he nearly choked to death from a gunshot wound to the mouth. She cut open a temporary airway and treated him for 45 minutes as rockets whizzed overhead and bullets thudded into the ground nearby.

Yesterday her 'inspirational' bravery was rewarded at Buckingham Palace when she became the Navy's first woman to be invested with the Military Cross.

Then, with a few modest words, she underlined the remarkable spirit of loyalty that bonds Britain's servicemen and women on the front line. 'I promised my friends and comrades I'd be their medic,' she said. 'I promised I'd be there if they ever needed me. They needed me that day - so when the call came, that's just what I did.'

Kate, from Whitleigh, Plymouth, stepped into the history books as only the second woman to be awarded the MC, one of Britain's highest gallantry awards, as well as becoming the only female MC Wren. Presenting her award, the Prince of Wales bowed to what he called her 'extraordinary' heroism.

Her citation read: 'Under fire and under pressure her commitment and courage were inspirational and made the difference between life and death.'

INDEX

Kate, who works at Derriford Hospital in Plymouth, was attached as a medic to 1st Battalion the Rifles on duty in the Marjah district of Helmand when her unit came under fire from a Taliban ambush.

'I heard "man down, man down"' on the radio and I knew I was needed,' she said. 'I got the location details and just sprinted.

'When I first saw him, I didn't think he was going to make it. A round had gone through his top lip, ruptured his jaw and come out of his neck. He was struggling to breathe and choking on his own blood.

'Bullets were whizzing around my head and shoulders and hitting the ground all around us. The Taliban knew they'd got someone and they were targeting us.'

All in a day's work: Just after the incident, with blood still on her face and still wearing surgical gloves

Lance Corporal List, who is also 21 and from Devon, was airlifted to hospital. Back in the battle zone, Kate still had his blood on her face in a photograph taken before she moved on to her next casualty.

Back in the UK and having made a good recovery, Lance Corporal List said of the incident: 'I felt the impact go through my jaw, and the next thing I knew I was on my back. I thought that was it. Then Kate appeared from nowhere, reassuring me everything would be OK. Kate says to be called a hero is too much. I say it could never be enough.'

Kate comes from a Naval family - her father Clive Nesbitt served in the Royal Marines for 22 years, her brother Dan at the time was on *HMS Ocean*, and her other brother Lee undergoing medical training with the Royal Marines.

Her father revealed she had not told him exactly what she did - to stop him worrying. Mr Nesbitt said: 'I was totally surprised when I found out about it from the authorities. She'd completely played it down and only mentioned it in passing.'

On 27th November, 2009 at the palace she held her medal for the cameras and declared: 'It was the biggest shock when I got the news. But being here today made it all seem real. It has been so special. When I looked over and saw my mum and dad in the audience, it was the proudest day of my life.'

Saved: L/Cpl John List's neck wound was dressed by MA Nesbitt under heavy fire from the Taliban. He now has the date of the incident tattooed on his arm

INDEX

Kate Nesbitt, who is now a Chief Petty Officer (Medical Technician) was on her first overseas assignment.

Nearly a decade later, thanks to funding from the Gosling Foundation and Greenwich Hospital Trust, Nick Bashall, one of the country's leading portrait and battlefield artists was commissioned to recreate Kate's bravery on canvas.

The stunning painting of the 21-year-old Naval medic Kate Nesbitt dashing across the battlefield in Afghanistan to save the life of a gravely-wounded soldier will take pride of place at *HMS Raleigh* in Torpoint.

The portrait will hang alongside one of the most famous paintings in Royal Navy history: Jack Cornwell, who was awarded the Victory Cross for staying at his gun aboard *HMS Chester* during the Battle of Jutland despite sustaining fatal wounds.

An elderly guy called the Police on his mobile phone to report that his car has been broken into. He is hysterical as he explains his situation to the dispatcher, "They've stolen the stereo, the steering wheel, the brake pedal and even the accelerator!" he cried.

The dispatcher said, "Stay calm... An officer is on the way."

A few minutes later, the officer radios in. "Disregard." he says. "He got in the back-seat by mistake".

INDEX

SPECIAL OFFER

LONG SLEEVED SWEATER EMBLAZONED WITH THE HMS SUPERB LOGO

Shipmate Ray Lambert has organised supplies from a local firm
which must be Pre-ordered and paid for at the time of ordering.

PLEASE NOTE THERE IS JUST THE ONE COLOUR AS ILLUSTRATED

LOOK OUT FOR THE ORDER FORM IN THE MAY NEWSLETTER

GOOD QUALITY 50% POLYESTER – 50% COTTON

PRICE £13.90

INDEX

Also enquiries are on-going to produce an Association Cap – Details when known will follow

MORSE CODE WRENS OF STATION X

The climate was steamy, alcohol was plentiful and there was a ratio of 200 servicemen to each Navy Wren stationed in Gibraltar during World War II.

Arriving in 1943, an excited Anne Glyn-Jones thought her chances of finding romance 'looked promising', but soon found herself exhausted from the effort of boosting garrison morale and nursing bruised feet from too many dances.

Soon, she and her friends 'decided that on the whole we hated men. We should like to go out for the evening for a quiet, relaxed, uncomplicated visit to the cinema with a girlfriend'.

Clever Wrens like Glyn-Jones played a crucial role in the war. As special ops telegraphists, they were trained to track submarine signals from the depths, translate the Morse code of the German Navy and send the results off to a place called 'BP', which they did not need to know stood for Bletchley Park.

2017 marked the 100th anniversary of the founding of the Women's Royal Naval Service (WRNS) and in this bright, brisk memoir, 94-year-old Glyn-Jones takes us back to a time when women were making their first steps into the British forces.

Like many other middle-class girls of her generation, Glyn-Jones went straight from boarding school into the services, attending her interview in her school coat.

She brushed off an offer from Oxford, only relieved that the war had not ended before she'd been able to do her bit.

To begin with, she was more concerned about her lack of social refinements than her ability to do the job. But after a few weeks in the world of life-and-death decisions, she would struggle to recognise the girl who had fretted over the correct way to hold a cocktail glass.

She was shocked when she realised the significance of her job. 'When I applied to be a telegraphist, I saw myself as a sort of 999 telephone operator,' she writes, 'taking pleas for help and sending ships to the rescue.

INDEX

'Instead, I was to listen to some German sailor then do my best to get him killed. I felt

no animosity whatever toward German sailors with their blue eyes and caps with ribbons hanging down the back. I felt as if I had been appointed a member of an execution squad.'

But after June 25, 1942, at the first report of the Nazi regime's systematic extermination of the Jews, Glyn-Jones steeled herself. 'It had to be stopped,' she writes. 'No matter what.'

Her memory still sharp, Glyn-Jones is surprisingly readable on the technical aspects of the job, straining for strands of Morse Code amid the 'cacophony of the airwaves', surfing the frequencies past the calls of Chicago taxis to zone in on the frantic sounds of sinking ships.

She's great on period detail. Her mum would send her the 'treat' of a sandwich spread made from white sauce, Marmite and parsley to relieve the monotony of beetroot sandwiches made with slices of grey National Loaf.

Glyn-Jones emerges as a bold protofeminist, demanding acknowledgement, promotion and pay rises for the Wrens' valuable work, when the authorities treated them as invisible.

She railed against the impractical skirts they were expected to wear — aboard ships! — stating bluntly that 'it takes a man's clothing to live a man's life'.

After the war, Glyn-Jones had to make the difficult choice between Oxford and marriage to her Navy boyfriend. She chose Oxford and — after years of uniform rules and deck scrubbing — 'the most vulgar and ostentatious' nail polish she could find.

The Wrens did get medals but, she sighs: 'When invitations said that they were to be worn, Wrens would polish up their husbands' miniatures for them. Our own we would leave in cotton-wool in the stocking drawer.'

Glyn-Jones remains unimpressed by the certificate the Government finally sent her in 2009 in thanks for her service.

'For 30p I found a suitable frame in a local charity shop,' she sniffs, 'and hung it in the downstairs loo.'

(This story and others published in the book "Morse Code Wrens of Station X" by Anne Glyn-Jones -Amphora £20)

INDEX

No matter how much you push the envelope, it'll still be stationery.

POEM FOR ELDERLY PC BUFFS

The computer swallowed grandpa.
Yes, honestly it's true!
He pressed 'control' and 'enter'
And disappeared from view.

It devoured him completely;
The thought just makes me squirm.
He must have caught a virus
Or been eaten by a worm.

I've searched through the recycle bin
And files of every kind;
I've even used the Internet,
But nothing did I find.

In desperation, I asked Jeeves
My searches to refine.
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found 'online.'

So, if inside your 'Inbox,'
My Grandpa you should see,
Please 'Copy, Scan' and 'Paste' him
And send him back to me.

This is a tribute to all the Grandmas and Grandpas who have been fearless and learned to use the Computer.
They are the greatest!!!

PHOTO ALBUM

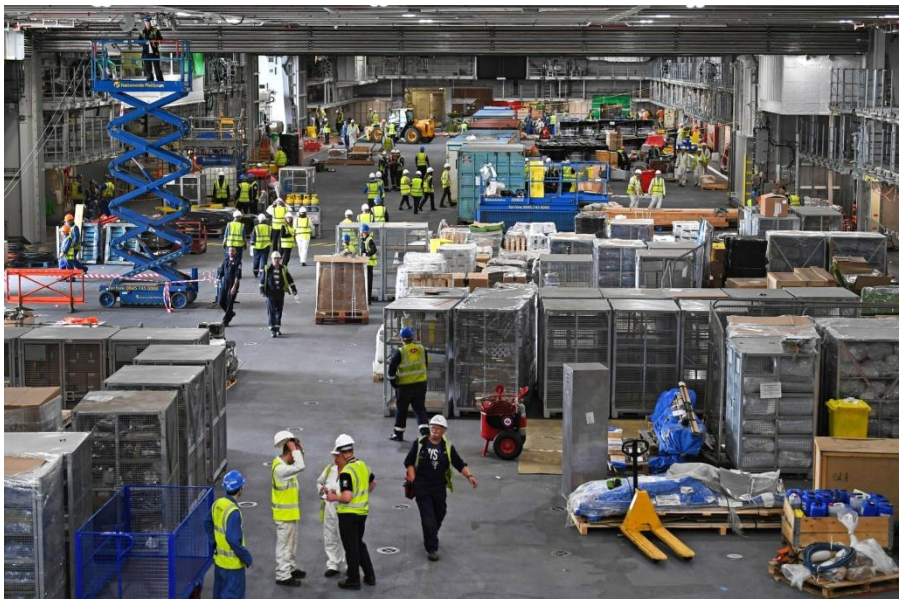
The Gut

Sacked Defence Secretary
Gavin Williamson

The crew members of HMS Gambia, Superb and Ocean in an impromptu concert on 28th May, 1957 on board HMS Albion

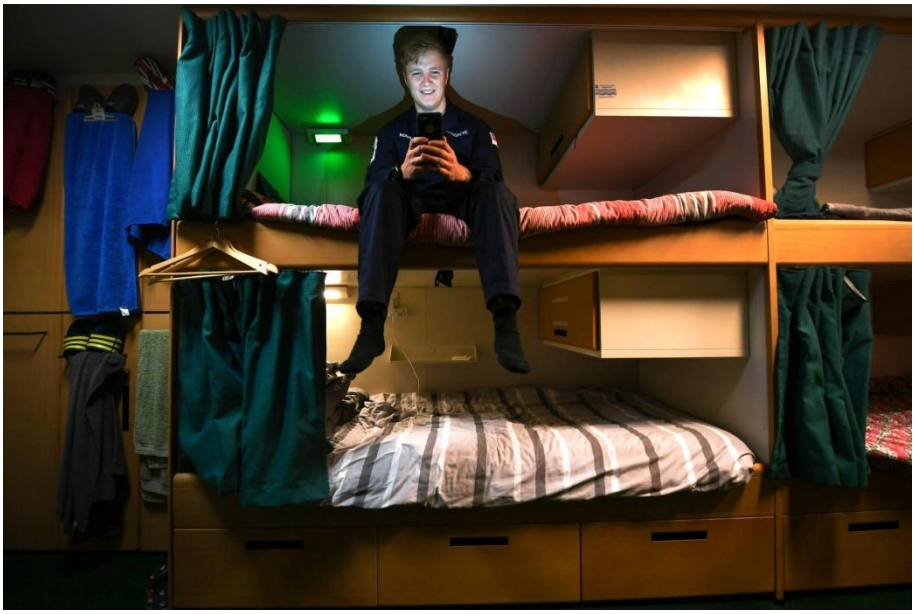
INDEX

Just wonder if anyone remembers this incident or if you have ever served on the Gambia. Ray Thomas who was on board the Gambia is interested about all things Gambian and has an interesting website which you can access by clicking **HERE**



Where's this ?

It's the hanger on HMS Queen Elizabeth



Can't see the Hammock Nettings

No Holystoning here

INDEX

REUNION REMINDER

THIS YEAR'S REUNION WILL BE HELD OVER THE WEEKEND OF FRIDAY 4TH AND SUNDAY 6TH OCTOBER

Robin will be sending out the Booking Forms later in the year
but you can download one here if you would like to book early

To download and print a booking form now click on the badge

SAME PRICES AS LAST YEAR

The main event i.e. The Dinner is held on the Saturday but it's also important to attend the AGM (which is informal & of short duration!) on the Friday evening if you can

The Hotel goes out of its way to make us comfortable - the cost of the 2 nights includes Dinner, Bed & Breakfast on the Friday and Saturday & Breakfast on Sunday morning. There's plenty of good humour and loads of raffle prizes. Why not give it a whirl?

IF YOU CANNOT MAKE THE WHOLE WEEKEND AND LIVE LOCALLY – COME FOR THE SATURDAY DINNER ONLY

INDEX

CROSSED THE BAR

Further details of ex shipmates (but not necessarily members of the Association) who have crossed the bar can be found on the appropriate page our website.

To go there please click **HERE**

Crossed the Bar (Recently Notified)

Eric Nid an L.E.M (Electrical) on 4th April, 2019. Eric was on the Africa Cruise and a close friend of our Chairman

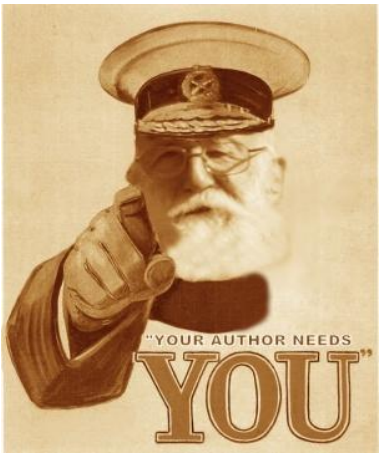
INDEX

SLOPS

This section contains adverts from members. If you decide to purchase an item from them please note you deal directly with the member selling.

If you have something to say about this section or advertise an article please email Brian Saunders at brian@hmssuperb.co.uk

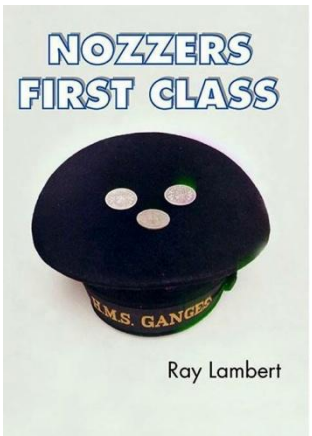
Journalist & Best Selling Author

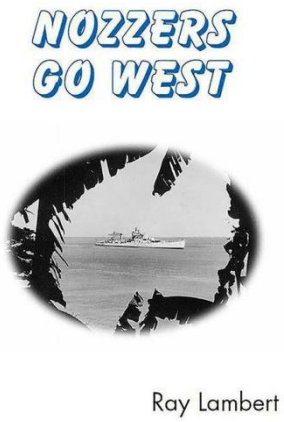


OUR IN-HOUSE **BEST SELLING AUTHOR** IS OFFERING THE FOLLOWING BOOKS AT A SPECIAL PRICE FOR MEMBERS OF THE ASSOCIATION.

Ray Lambert

Follow the author when he was a handsome young man in Ganges and as he joins HMS Superb at Chatham. Go with him as he begins the "Luxury Cruise" of 1954-55. Join him from Punta Arenas to Vancouver and much in between. Learn of Guantanamo Bay and the Falklands before they became headline news. Each book costs £7.99 including UK postage. Click **HERE** for more information & to contact Ray by email

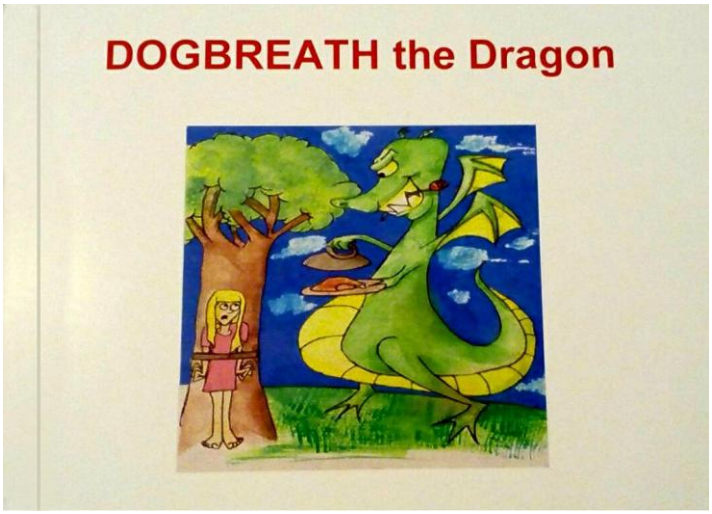




INDEX

Something for the Youngsters

Phil Grimson



Shipmate Phil Grimson offers his latest book for sale targeted at children from 8 years upward. It is a magical tale of chivalry which should enchant most youngsters and lead them into a make-believe world where there's fierce and fiery combat when a princess is captured by a dragon.

There are bold knights charging to her rescue one of who wins her hand in marriage.

KINDLE DOWNLOAD £5.59 **PRINTED VERSION £13.99 + P&P***

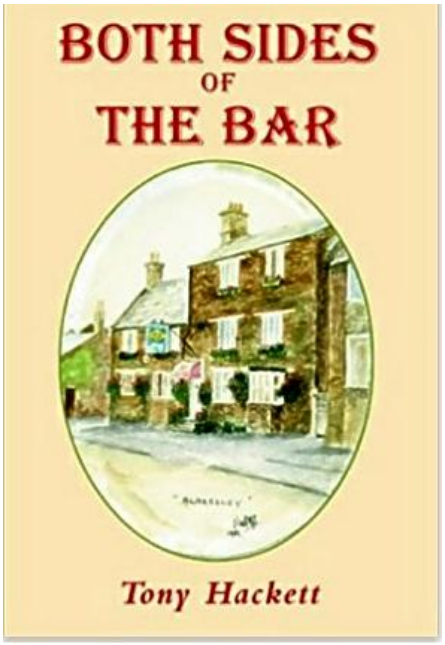
Phil can be contacted by email by clicking on this LINK

*** IF YOU CONTACT PHIL DIRECTLY YOU CAN BUY THE PAPERBACK BOOK FOR ONLY £12.50 + P&P AND PHIL WILL DONATE £1 TO THE HMS SUPERB (CRUISER) ASSOCIATION FUNDS**

INDEX

Life After the Navy

Tony Hacket



Tony, the son of a police officer, joined the Royal Navy aged 15 and spent the next 10 years travelling the world. He entered Civvy street in 1959 and went into the pub trade. This book relates Tony's endeavours in balancing his life between his love of rugby, managing often run-down pubs and his love of the sea and finally his successful ownership of his own free-house.

An interesting insight into the trials and tribulations of being self employed.

Available as a hard back book from Amazon at £12.99

PEOPLE SEARCHING FOR PEOPLE

If you can assist with any of these appeals please contact Brian Saunders in the first instance. No details will be passed on to third parties without express permission. These appeals will be left in the magazine for a few months

The following message received from **Derek Thompson**, via Facebook on 10.4.2019

Just wondered if any of you gents knew my father Derrick Thompson (Tommo) he was a stoker mechanic (E) 1st class on board HMS Superb in 1955/56. He passed away in 2003 aged 72. I myself was in the Andrew and served for 23 yrs. I would be grateful if anyone knew him.

From previous issues

Derek Baldry (Killick Sparker) would like to contact Ginger Dunne from 1956

Stoker Clive Godley would like to get in touch with old shipmates - I have his telephone number and email address so if you'd like it get back to me. (BS)

Larry Boudier who was in the Chatham field gun's crew in 1955 would like to know if anyone knows of others in that crew

Eleanor Ingalls Fochesato from New Jersey, USA would like to contact John Stevens, from the 1953 cruise to Maine, USA.

Bob Butcher known to many as "Butch" & who served on Superb between Nov 1950 to July 1951 wonders if Curly Watson is still around. He would like to make contact.

Laura Kardo researching her grandfather, Charles Harris, who served around 1951 & 1952. would like to know more about him.

Jeff , the son of Jim Stewart who was on board as a Telegraphist between 1947 & 1951, would be happy to receive any information re his dad. Jim was also on HMS Vidal in 1955

INDEX

Click here to contact Brian Saunders by email

ARCHIVED CONTENT

Past Copies of the Magazine can be accessed on-line by clicking on the appropriate month

December, 2018

January, 2019

March, 2019

April, 2019