

ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

A summer greeting Shipmates,
After countless years have moved aside a scruffy bag, about two fist sizes, when searching for some other obscure item in my stuff. I resolved last week to open a bag, dhobi contents and iron, then pin to a board, in an orderly manner. The board is yet to be organised, that doesn't mean I cannot share the result; see enclosed pic.,



I make 48 names - 3 H.M.S.. These names all common on the periphery of the floating navy then!

What a time to be a lower-decker, what a time to be a young officer, with prospects of destroyers available to only 2-2½-rings..

Now, senior 4-ring captains following years of ultra safe ticket punching may get a sniff of a solitary frigate.

The question comes up these days: what are you going to do with all that stuff? Have divested myself of some largish cherished items of late and know circumstances are against one when grandkids are daughters, and grandson who has never had a gram of dirt under a toe nail, never mind a finger nail, his interests so high blown I struggle to keep a scratch on his

surface, a maths grad who took to law!!

Commercial barristers have no interest in the beauty of the lens in copper and brass mast head light, or a binnacle from a distant water trawler - but no, I am not despondent, they teach me stuff that has been a mystery these eighty-sixish years, and my cup runneth over.



I take more care of a glass of full-bodied red.

Now, if I wish to draw a line under that bit of domestic gossip, my straight edge is a beautiful Perspex graduated firing bar from an early asdic set; who will ever know its origin? Perhaps, when dug up from a land fill site in 200 years, by a chap in need of a haircut and shave, he will be certain it is an ancient druidic wand for assisting maidens to get a bun in the oven.

Have put in another pic. (left) of nautical stuff lurking in a corner, rarely exposed to daylight. The gyro repeater I liberated from the after conning position on the frigate *Rothsay*, last of the 4.5 turreted class when in breakers' yard at Santander (Spain). The nice column in copper/brass with a pair of port hand lens comes from a reefer *Montego Bay*, registered. in Panama, the

STBD set I used as trade goods. Can anyone suggest a re-use for that port hand set. Barbers had illuminated poles outside their establishments; what retail emporium could use a nice bright pair of red lights outside their shops?

R.N. - P.R. dept. had their valves wide open this week, sailing from Rosyth the super carrier has justified their bloated budget, all papers report its aircraft complement is 24 jump jets (gross untruth). Not one is available at present, plus the R.A.F. are already lobbying to get that proposed compliment reduced in favour of 'conventional' models, which they need to fulfil their mythical remit.

Reports that all available Russian intelligent assets are on scene for the sailing stretches it a bit: if they want to know where it is, just follow the diesel tanker: real super tankers are nuclear. To catch the south Atlantic 'U' boats in WW2 the tankers were sought, then, a needle in a hay stack affair. Today sophisticated satellites can isolate a turd in countless acres of plastic trash that clog the southern ocean, and tell whether it's Anglo-Saxon or Cossack.

A nice selection of pink plastic helmets adorn bodies on the upper deck - health and safety exec. pollute all areas. I feel cash on the super carrier with no planes would be better spent on sets of pink water wings; in case vessel ever gets in harm's way.

In my last letter I mentioned the splendid American-class assault carrier. The second on that class has just been launched by Ingall's Corp., 13 weeks ahead of schedule! Makes build of Rosyth super carrier - 10 years - look a tiny bit sick.

Also spoke about N.A.T.O, Frau Merkel's statement that she cannot rely on the U.K. or the U.S. as defence allies was a slap in the face. 23 of 28 N.A.T.O members do not meet their 2% of G.D.P. agreement spend for mutual defence. Germany spent 1.18%, that's \$28 billion short of its 2%, and the largest short fall of all the 23 members! A learned scholar worked out, if President Trump presents a bill to N.A.T.O. it would be for \$189 billion for last year alone - enough to fund a 32% rise for the U.S. dept. of defence. It seems as certain as dawn is breaking we will wish we were antied up when Vladimir decides he wants the Baltic states back. Frau Merkel dismissed the U.K. as an irrelevance - a much used phrase these days. Proof is not hard to come by. New Zealand's 100 years anniversary fleet review, - 23 nations sent a vessel. The U.K.? Nil! The U.K. was fundamental in creation of both those navies.

My eldest brother, Dave, ex. *St. George I.O.M. Anson* - British Pacific fleet - one time cox'n of Pelican, elicited my opinion on who was at fault in the collision between the U.S.S. Fitzgerald and the container ship ACX Crystal. Every newspaper carried pics. of the result (see below).

We thought U.S.N. appeared to be at fault, conclusion is based on verse drummed in during training. 'If starboard red appear, it is your duty to keep clear'. Any comments that may clear it up for us?

LOST AT SEA

Seven American sailors died after their 8,315 ton destroyer collided before dawn with a container ship four times its size off the coast of Japan.



The USS Fitzgerald was back at its port in Yokosuka Naval Base south of Tokyo yesterday evening after its collision with a Philippine-flagged container 56 nautical miles south-west of Yokosuka.

The Japanese coast guard received an emergency call from the container ship, the ACX Crystal, at around 2.20 am local time. The injured included the captain, Commander Bryce Benson, who suffered a head injury.



My swing round the buoy has run amok,
but I bask in the knowledge of how
liberal and forgiving you all are.

Note the heading date, Hurrah for the
Red, White and Blue.
Tatty bye, watch the sun burn

