

# ANDY BRIERLEY'S BLOG

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Greetings Fellow Travellers,

Newsprint tells us it cost £1 million to escort the Soviet Carrier and its chaser 'back up channel'. One 'D' class destroyer plus a couple of R.A.F Typhoons doing a couple of fly pasts. Suspect M.O.D. have done the accounting for this 'legal trip' in an International Waterway. Powers that be would have you believe 'acoustic signatures' were being recorded.

Pure horse feathers for a lame PR stunt. Our tiny but highly adventurous 'submarine service' captured all this at every speed range long years ago when *Kuznetsov* first ventured out of Kola Inlet.

Fortunately the M.O.D. has deep pockets as evidenced by the revelation they have spent £70 million plus on lawyers, both Brit and Iraqi, to hound destroy approximately 3600 service people at the sharp end. What in Hades is that other bureaucratic nonsense Health and Safety Executive doing about the M.O.D. who, under H & S Exec.'s own rules, owes every serving man and woman a Duty of Care.

Why, with Legal Aid assistance, can't those service personnel 'sue the arse off' the M.O.D.- every other job, calling, profession in our land are allowed this facility. I just hate our 'litigation culture', but would applaud the aforementioned exercise.

Back to the Acoustic signatures, Rear Admiral Chris Parry told the defence committee our billion pound a copy "D" Class destroyers are detectable 100 miles distant. To quote him further "They sound like a box of spanners". Went on to state rectification of the "D" (class of six) various ills will take NINE YEARS. As an Asdic Rate, sound signatures were of high interest, exciting even, to me.

Sea classes from Osprey on Castle Class, stuck into the 'rabbit hutch' tacked onto the front of the bridge, with two other bodies and a pipe-smoking instructor jammed in behind us, was a major test of resistance to 'mal de mer'. All whilst doing figures of eight in the Portland Races, the sub. crew must have been enjoying it as well. The instructor, in your ear as soon as you had a target, 'Doppler, Doppler, what's the Doppler telling you?

When new boys got back to Vernon they had the facility to exaggerate this sound change in a simulator, a fabulous training aid, as was various 'miniature screw' types in Plexi-glass tanks to demonstrate sounds of cavitation at different speeds, type of vessel etc.. U.K - R.N., I believe was unique in its cruisers being fitted with 'asdic sets'.

I can testify to *Superb's* set being a surprise to many at Guantanamo. Where I slept, the U.S. subs. diesels could be heard as they left during the early hours. If it was in our sector during the day we always got it. An unusual quirk, hindrance was hearing all the U.S hunters pinging away together on what seemed like the same frequency, this phenomena (for want of a better word) does not occur when operating with R.N. vessels, you hear only your own pulse. Why that

should be I know not - do you? When I see pictures, bits of film of currant sound rooms in escort and subs., a quantum change in how it's now done is obvious and mysterious.

Talk of subs. brings up a bit of 'civil engineering' information I came across. It said development of Faslane to a nuke sub. base was second in cost to only the Channel Tunnel project. Faslane costs have rolled on since - that's an eye opener. We, who have used the tunnel for many years, can be thankful the M.O.D. did not get involved or we'd still be waiting for a ride, at many multiples of the current cost.

I know little of ball sports, other than what's force fed, unavoidably by all media, radio, newspapers, T.V. Most participants seem over-pampered, over paid, over sexed (that will raise some hackles). I did look, listen, in vain, for how the Brit. Alex Thompson was doing in the sailing race, the Vendee Solo Round The World.

Half way round a fin keel broke off under the pressure, he stuck with it, changing tactics, predominately sailing on one tack for thousands of miles and finished second. Best ever by a Brit.. Pure grit did it. His recorded, verified 'best speed' staggers one at 37.2 knots (43 m.p.h.)

At that pace he could overhaul any destroyer in the world. What testes are needed to press a frail plastic sail boat at that pace in the southern ocean.

It is pretty crisp hereabouts this morning, white frost!. I was thinking about John and Janet Ward (Sharky of Norwich). He told me, on the phone, they were off to the Maldives to indulge in their favourite pastime, snorkelling. Lovely climate, can think of fewer finer places to be. Remember they won last year's painting at our reunion. Excellent opportunity, while they are absent, to get in the back window and nick it! That would pale their tans on return to chilly Norwich.

John did say he had no desire to be nosey (ha!) but what did I do for a living on leaving the Andrew? I assured him I never became a Bishop in the Church of England, or yet, a rent boy at Piccadilly, the remainder I had a stab at! and loved it all, a life minus job satisfaction must be deathly. My upbringing, plus re-opening of Shotley for boys were the best possible shoe into life for a youth becoming a liability to his parents at that time.

This is the truth - I broke off scribbling to read Josie's newspaper, Daily Mail Feb. 17. On Readers' Letters page was a note to ring the bell of all steam enthusiasts - as follows:  
If the Ministry of Defence had ordered that Tornado steam locomotive, it would have been delivered 20 years late, cost £100 million and wouldn't have worked.  
Signed Allan Lloyd of Colwall, Herefordshire - a kindred spirit!!!!-

I am a voracious reader and would like to share the opening page of a recent tome, titled *Inside Intelligence*, by Anthony Cavendish, the book the government tried to ban.

I thought it a masterly bit of condensed advice that gave me a hearty chuckle. It's said to be the very first thing said when new recruits join spook central; hope you also get a chuckle.

In the bitter cold of a Russian winter, in a small village some hundred kilometres east of Moscow, during a howling gale and with darkness falling, a Russian peasant is wandering home to his meagre village. Suddenly he stops as he sees a small game bird on the ground, nearly dead from cold and privation. The peasant picks up the bird and warms it. The bird soon recovers and the peasant wonders what to do next.

At that moment a herd of cattle come by and one of them drops a large dollop right in front of him. Realising that if he puts the bird in the steaming cow's dollop the bird will stay warm until morning, and then be able to fly away. He does this then goes home. But a second peasant comes along after the first had gone, hears the bird chirping happily to itself in the steaming mess.

This peasant seizes the bird, breaks it's neck and takes it home for supper.

This old intelligence story has three morals:

- 1 Do not believe that everybody who drops you in the shit is your enemy.
- 2 Do not believe that everybody who gets you out of the shit is your friend.
- 3 Whenever you ARE in the shit - keep quiet about it.

Tatty bye Shipmates!

